

# THE BUSINESS CONTINUITY STRATEGIES OF SELECTED FILIPINO-CHINESE OWNED ENTERPRISES IN ROXAS CITY, PHILIPPINES

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## ABSTRACT

*Business Continuity Strategy refers to the ability of an organization to continue providing goods or services at previously established acceptable levels in the wake of a disruptive. Filipino-Chinese population has dominated Philippine business for generations, since they play a significant role in the country's economic sector. The study dealt on the assessment of preparedness of Filipino-Chinese owned enterprises. This study used the descriptive survey method. A researcher-made questionnaire was used as the main instrument for data collection. The statistical techniques used were mean, standard deviation, and Kruskal Wallis. The results revealed that the highest pillars are operations and marketing management. The health and safety of employees and customers is top challenge. The intervention scheme that mostly adopted during COVID-19 is maintaining connections with suppliers and customers. It was revealed in the survey that 55% of the respondents have 2 generations involved in the business and a local business existed for as long as 41 years with 4 generations of family members involved. The study concludes that the business continuity strategies of Filipino-Chinese business owners were similar across all business types. Having family members manage the business strengthens the strategies utilized by the organization. The study recommends for research on the next generations of the family business to determine their competencies to manage into the new age.*

**Keywords:** Business Continuity Strategies, Filipino-Chinese Enterprises, Family Business, Family Business Succession.

## INTRODUCTION

Business is an activity that is a part of and contributes to human society. Without business, society would not exist. There will always be business if people have needs and wants. For business to thrive, it needs strategies to sustain their status in the market (Raghubanshi et al., 2021). The concern of succession is a multifaceted challenge facing family businesses. Intergenerational succession is certainly a priority for most family business owners who wish to see the endurance of the establishment and legacy passed on to their family members (Miller & Le Breton-Miller, 2021; Montoya, 2017; Noe et al., 2018).

The Filipino Chinese families had developed innovative business continuity strategies that helped their enterprise establish serious economic significance in the Philippines and overcome threats that their ancestors had to face; yet, these enterprises continue to come across adversities (Brown, 2018; Cabrera & Cabrera, 2019; Chen, 2001). Quarantine due to the novel corona virus has drastically affected the business community and Filipino-Chinese owned enterprises are no exception, wherein the Philippines had its worst with regards to the impact the COVID pandemic had on businesses.

In Roxas City, the research gap concerns a dearth of studies of business continuity. There were only two-family business-related studies but none of these discusses on business continuity strategies (Bajador, 2021; Barney, 1995; Block et al., 2018; Borge, 2001; Boyd, 2002). The same goes in Philippine context where no similar studies have been undertaken to explore the same elements of Filipino- Chinese communities in the past. This study focuses on the area of business continuity strategies to analyze the extent to which these plans of action are implemented especially in small cities like Roxas. Alternatively, the impacts of the global pandemic on Filipino-Chinese owned enterprises can be studied in an in-depth manner bringing a contribution to eliminating the gap in literature in the context of economics and business. This study will satisfy an area in Philippine history accommodating how these enterprises overcome adversities like the global pandemic.

Practical implications of this research relate to assisting specific practical problems of Filipino-Chinese owned enterprises in Roxas City, seeking to recommend improving continuity strategies for future generations. The research is devoted to the analysis of impacts that the pandemic has brought on business profiles and management of these enterprises. Moreover, this study will hopefully contribute to the level of professional development of the researcher and future researchers who chooses or has been part of the Filipino-Chinese community who are engaged in economics and business by providing in-depth knowledge of the extent to which business continuity strategies are implemented among the selected Filipino-Chinese owned enterprises in Roxas City contributing to their chances of success in their chosen career path.

More specifically, the study seeks to answer the following objectives:

- To determine the extent to which the business continuity strategies are implemented among the selected Filipino-Chinese owned enterprises in Roxas City.
- To identify the challenges faced by the business owners during the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- To describe the intervention schemes that the business owners adopted during the pandemic.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This research is based on the family business theory, which states that family members have a strategic influence on the firm's management, whether they are active in the company's management or serve as board members or shareholders (Wilson & Gilligan, 2012; Chu, 2011; Collier et al., 2020; Morrow, 2000; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Dyer & Handler, 1994; Dushie, 2014). There is typically a presence of a family member and a unique source of competitive advantage coming from the direct involvement of the family members especially when family unity is high (Poza & Daugherty, 2018; Raghubanshi, 2021; Ram & Jones, 2002).

The structure by which an organization is controlled and operated, as well as the technique by which it and its members are held accountable for their activities, is referred to as governance (Otley, 1999). It entails balancing the interests of a company's numerous stakeholders, including shareholders, management, suppliers, consumers, the government, financiers, and the public (Gopinath, 2021; Hanson et al., 2014; Heizer, 2020; Iacobucci, 2018; Jacobson, 2014; Kinicki, 2011). It has also attracted public attention in recent years as policymakers and others realized the importance of effective corporate governance in maintaining financial market stability and driving economic growth. Governance includes business ethics, risk and crisis management, compliance, and administration (Gephart et al., 2018). The phrase "corporate governance" refers to a set of connections between a company's

management, board of directors, shareholders, and other stakeholders, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Abu-Tapanjeh, 2009). It outlines the distribution of rights and obligations among different members in the company and is all about controlling one's enterprise.

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Zamoum & Gorpe (2018). It involves a period of disruption, poses a danger to the organization's essential principles, and necessitates important decision-making on the part of management. The effect could be destabilizing to the organization and its stakeholders, more issues may arise, procedures or errors are anticipated during this period (Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018).

The Chinese Mandarin character for crisis comprises "risk" and "opportunity," according to the same authors. This idea is beneficial to the fact that situations that impose threats may create opportunities for organizations. For the Chinese, danger may be an eye opener to new possible positive outcome. Just as the business world paused for a while due to the Covid 19 pandemic, some had to close or trim down their business operations; for others it was an opportunity to open a new business (Chen & Biswas, 2021).

The part of an organization's operations that produces and delivers its products and services is known as operations. Every organization has an operation function. This is where inputs like raw materials are turned into outputs that satisfy customer needs. Operations managers are responsible for balancing the costs and revenues and focuses on maximizing net operating profit. Operations management was once called production management focused on manufacturing of products. Efficiency in production is the optimal objective of this area of management. It is also a multidisciplinary discipline that coordinates with all the department's functioning and management business process. Internal processes are not the only concern of operations management, awareness of the shifting demands in the economy and marketplace are also essential (Schmidheiny & Timberlake, 1992).

Customers' requirements, wants, and demands are the emphasis of the marketing function. Food, water, shelter, and clothing are examples of basic human needs. When needs are directed to specific objects that meet those needs, they become wants. Wants turn into demands when the customer is willing and having the capacity to pay that product or service. Needs are inherent to people. Marketers respond to the stated needs of people.

According to the majority of marketing failures are caused by bad management as a result of a lack of understanding of what motivates customers. Consumer understanding, according to the authors, is a reliable path to success. As a result, the 4 as of customer-centric marketing

management framework acceptability, affordability, accessibility, and awareness – are the most significant consumer values (Sheth & Sisodia, 2012; Slack & Lewis, 2002; Smith, 2020; Social Progress Imperative Index Action Impact, 2021).

To run a business, money is needed to keep it afloat. It is required to purchase assets, pay rent, make payments to creditors, pay employees, and pay taxes. (Susanto, 2013; Sykes, 2022; Timbang, 2016). Management's job is to make the most of the organization's limited resources in order to achieve the organization's goals and objectives. Funds are acquired at the least cost and these funds are utilized to fund projects or investments that will maximize benefits including profits to the organization. The use of funds collected should be able to maximize wealth, the organization's worth, and the shareholders' value (Froud et al., 2000; Girling, 2013).

Financial management, according to Kothari (2017), is the planning, acquisition, allocation, and utilization of financial resources with the goal of fulfilling the organization's objectives. It begins with recognizing financial needs, assessing financial situations, establishing financial targets, devising financial plans, making financial decisions, and assuring effective financial control systems to ensure the organization's success by accomplishing certain predetermined goals.

The phrase "human capital," according to Schultz (1993), refers to a critical component in strengthening an organization's assets and people in order to boost productivity and maintain competitive advantage. Human capital is an instrument in sustaining competitiveness and used to increase productivity (Serrano, 2016; Deepak & Jayakumar, 2019). Human capital includes education, training, and other professional activities that develop an employee's knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and social assets, resulting in increased employee satisfaction and performance. Human capital, according to Rastogi (2000), is a critical component of an organization's performance, particularly in terms of employees' ongoing development of knowledge, skills, and capacities.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 depicts the extent of implementation of Business Continuity Strategies among Filipino-Chinese owned enterprises in Roxas City, Capiz in the areas of Governance and Strategic Development, Crisis and Risk Management, Operations Management, Marketing Management, Financial Management, and Human Capital Development.

<b>Business Continuity Strategies</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
Operations Management	3.54	0.46	Great Extent
Marketing Management	3.48	0.58	Great Extent
Financial Management	3.39	0.64	Great Extent
Governance and Strategic Development	3.2	0.55	Moderate Extent
Human Capital Development	3.1	0.75	Moderate Extent
Crisis and Risk Management	2.79	0.78	Moderate Extent
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>Moderate Extent</b>

The business continuity strategy highly practiced by Filipino-Chinese business owners is Operations Management ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.54), followed by Marketing Management ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.48), and Financial Management ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.39). All these strategies are implemented in great extent. Meanwhile, the business continuity strategies implemented in moderate extent includes

Governance and Strategic Development ( $\bar{x} = 3.20$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ), followed by Human Capital Development ( $\bar{x} = 3.10$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ), and lastly, Crisis and Risk Management ( $\bar{x} = 3.54$ ,  $SD = 0.78$ ).

The three topmost implemented strategies are operations management, marketing management, financial management which are the most essential functional areas in the business. Operations are those that create and deliver the products or services to the customers. Marketing is the revenue generator of the business. Lastly, finance is the lifeblood of the business that keeps the operations going.

### **Operations Management**

The extent of implementation of Operations Management among Filipino-Chinese enterprises. Generally, operations management among Filipino-Chinese enterprises is implemented in great extent ( $\bar{x} = 3.54$ ). All strategies in this domain were found to be practiced in great extent as well, with developing and sustaining supplier and vendor relationships being the most implemented strategy ( $\bar{x} = 3.80$ ). It is followed by forming relationship with customers ( $\bar{x} = 3.68$ ), then innovating and bringing new products and services to the market ( $\bar{x} = 3.45$ ), managing unexpected interruptions in daily operations ( $\bar{x} = 3.45$ ), and lastly, making use of technology to improve operational efficiency ( $\bar{x} = 3.33$ ).

For the Chinese, they value trust profoundly that they create a trust relationship with their suppliers and customers. Guanxi is a Chinese term that refers to having personal trust and a strong relationship with someone, which might include moral obligations and favor exchanges. The Chinese do not trust other people easily which makes it slower to build relationships, but once trust has been established business transactions can go smoothly.

### **Marketing Management**

The extent of implementation of marketing management among Filipino-Chinese enterprises. Generally, marketing management among Filipino-Chinese enterprises is implemented in great extent ( $\bar{x} = 3.48$ ). Practicing customer relation management to keep loyal customers and ensuring that customers are delighted with their transactions in the organization are the most implemented strategies in this domain ( $\bar{x} = 3.63$ ). The importance of developing the company to satisfy the requirements and wishes of the target markets ( $x = 3.55$ ) and studying the competition ( $x = 3.35$ ) were then acknowledged. On the other side, developing distinct offerings and marketing plans for different sectors of the market ( $x = 3.23$ ) is the least implemented strategy in this domain. The Chinese values their relationships with their customers that they tend to maintain loyal customers by keeping them delighted with their transactions in the business enterprise. Having the owners attending to their business personally, the customers may reach out to them easily with their queries and requests. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), the Chinese business owners possess the current 4Ps of marketing management, which include People, Processes, Programs, and Performance, which offers them an advantage over other business owners.

## Financial Management

The extent of implementation of financial management among Filipino-Chinese enterprises. Generally, financial management among Filipino-Chinese enterprises is implemented in great extent ( $\bar{x} = 3.39$ ). All strategies in this domain were found to be practiced in great extent, with meeting short term obligations being the most implemented strategy ( $\bar{x} = 3.50$ ). It is followed by meeting long term obligations ( $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ), utilizing financial data to improve performance ( $\bar{x} = 3.40$ ), then reviewing and improving financial performance ( $\bar{x}=3.35$ ), and lastly, setting financial targets ( $\bar{x}= 3.28$ ).

The results show that Filipino-Chinese business owners are very diligent when it comes to their finances. Setting financial targets is the most evident practice in this table. Financial obligations both short term and long term are met by the organization.

## Governance and Strategic Development

The extent of implementation of governance and strategic development among Filipino-Chinese enterprises. Generally, governance and strategic development among Filipino-Chinese enterprises is implemented in moderate extent ( $\bar{x}=3.20$ ). The strategies in this domain that are highly practiced by Filipino-Chinese business owners include promoting objective, ethical and responsible decision making ( $\bar{x}=3.45$ ), and providing direction and support for the organization ( $\bar{x} = 3.28$ ). Meanwhile, the strategies that are also implemented but in moderate extent only include achieving the goals and objectives of their organization ( $\bar{x}=3.23$ ), balancing short and long-term priorities when developing and implementing strategies ( $\bar{x}=3.18$ ), and allocating enough budget for corporate social responsibility programs ( $\bar{x}=2.85$ ).

The results show that Filipino-Chinese business owners are keen when it comes to objective, ethical and responsible decision making. Direction and support for the organization is also a concern for the business owners.

Chinese companies define practicable goals and strategies based on their capabilities, competitive advantages, and resources to succeed internationally. It is a prime concern in the first stage of internationalization process to learn the other countries' experiences and technology (Larçon, 2009; Mariano, 2014; Marker, 2020; McCarthy, 1960; McCoy, 2015).

## Human Capital Development

The extent of implementation of human capital development among Filipino-Chinese enterprises. Generally, human capital development among Filipino-Chinese enterprises is implemented in moderate extent ( $\bar{x}=3.10$ ).

The strategy in this domain that is mostly practiced by Filipino-Chinese business owners is encouraging employees to learn new things ( $\bar{x} = 3.33$ ). Meanwhile, the strategies that are also implemented but in moderate extent only include having a functional performance and reward system ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$ ), giving employees challenging job assignments ( $\bar{x} = 3.20$ ), conducting periodic evaluation of employees' performance ( $\bar{x}=3.03$ ), and lastly, conducting trainings and seminars to employees ( $\bar{x} = 2.73$ ).

The table also reveals that human capital development is moderately practiced by most Filipino-Chinese business owners. Most of the respondents encourage their employees to learn new things to motivate them to acquire more skills which in turn can benefit organization.

## Crisis and Risk Management

The extent of implementation of crisis and risk management among Filipino-Chinese enterprises. Generally, crisis and risk management among Filipino-Chinese enterprises is implemented in moderate extent ( $\bar{x} = 2.79$ ). The strategy in this domain that is mostly implemented, albeit in moderate extent only, is preparing a contingency or operations continuity plan ( $\bar{x} = 3.15$ ). It is followed by hiring experts when needed ( $\bar{x}=3.00$ ), performing evaluation of the effectiveness of various steps in the assessment of the comprehensive risks faced by the business firm ( $\bar{x} =2.73$ ), and implementing a formal comprehensive risk management system in place ( $\bar{x} = 2.55$ ). The strategy that was shown to be least implemented is formulating a separate risk management committee chaired by a key person ( $M = 2.50$ ).

The Chinese never give up easily and can work for long hours without losing their enthusiasm. They have a high level of perseverance, patience, and the ability to react rapidly in a variety of situations (Sustanto, 2013). The perseverance and patience of the Chinese are qualities that not many businessmen have. They do not give up easily during rough times.

As mentioned by Zamoum and Gorpe (2018), the Chinese character crisis includes “danger’ and opportunity. Situations that pose threat is an opportunity for business. During this pandemic, operations of big companies have been affected but many small entrepreneurs have sprouting everywhere.

BUSINESSS CONTINUITY STRATEGIES	Type of Business			t-value	p-value	Decision	Description
	Merchandising	Manufacturing	Services				
Human Capital Development	3.02 (A)	2.45 (MA)	3.41 (SA)	6.408*	0.041	Reject Ho	Significant
Governance and Strategic Development	3.15 (A)	3.05 (A)	3.31 (SA)	1.222	0.543	Failed to Reject Ho	Not significant
Crisis and Risk Management	2.57 (A)	2.5 (MA)	3.2 (A)	5.078	0.079	Failed to Reject Ho	Not significant
Operations Management	3.55 (SA)	3.20 (A)	3.62 (SA)	2.647	0.266	Failed to Reject Ho	Not significant
Marketing Management	3.49 (SA)	2.90 (A)	3.61 (SA)	2.602	0.272	Failed to Reject Ho	Not significant
Financial Management	3.42 (SA)	2.95 (A)	3.46 (SA)	1.167	0.558	Failed to Reject Ho	Not significant

*Difference is significant at 0.05 alpha level*

Table 2 shows the results of the Kruskal-Wallis Test to determine if significant differences exist on the implementation of business continuity strategies among Filipino-Chinese business owners when compared as to the type of business they own.

Among the business strategies assessed, the results revealed that there is a significant difference on the implementation of Human Capital Development among Filipino-Chinese business owners in Roxas City, Capiz when classified as to Type of Business (t-value = 6.408,  $p = 0.041$ ). As shown, the p-value of 0.041 is less than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. The result indicates that the practice of human capital development among Filipino-Chinese business owners varies according to the type of business they own. Post hoc analysis using a series of Mann-Whitney U tests further revealed that Filipino-Chinese business owners with “Service” type of business implements more strategies related to human capital development as compared to business owners with “Merchandising” and Manufacturing type of business.

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Health and safety of employees and customers	36	90	1
Decreased revenue	33	82.5	2
Disruption in operations due to government regulations	26	65	3
Uncertainty about the economy and society	25	62.5	4
Keeping existing customers	24	60	5

*Note: Multiple Responses were recorded. % = Percent of cases*

Table 3 presents the challenges faced by Filipino-Chinese business owners during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The greatest challenge faced by Filipino-Chinese business owners during COVID-19 pandemic is maintaining the health and safety of employees and customers (90%). This was followed by decreased revenue (82.5%), disruption in operations due to government regulations (65%), uncertainty about the economy and society (62.5%), keeping existing customers (60%), supply chain difficulties hindering operations (57.5%), finding new customers (52.5%), changes in market demand and customer spending (50%), difficulty of funds to cover expenses (45%), cash flow shortages (45%), uncertainty of timing when to re-open business (45%), change in the delivery of products and services (40%), and technology (32.5%). The least challenge Filipino-Chinese business owners seem to find is coordinating and managing employees (20%).

The COVID-19 Pandemic has brought many challenges to the business industry. There are businesses that had to close temporarily either due to government regulations or they are financially incapable to continue operating their business. For those who were adversely affected had to close permanently. The health and safety of employees and customers became the foremost concern of most business. Arrangements in work schedule and set up changed like employees have been working alternately as work from home and on-site to adhere with the government’s social distancing policy. Due to quarantines and lockdowns, businesses have lessened their operating hours and the clients that they could accommodate thus the decrease in revenue.

Due to the constant changes in government regulations, business operations were often disrupted which resulted to closure of some non-essential businesses. Businesses that were greatly affected were the ones paying huge amounts on rent for they can no longer afford to maintain their business operations given the limitations on the capacity and the workforce



regulations. The economy was greatly affected which made it unstable and behavior of the society had to adapt to the new normal. Many lost their jobs due to business closures and decrease in business operations. The buying power of the society shifted and their means of purchasing their needs also changed to online buying and delivery. This new behavior made the current businesses redesign their way of doing business to be able to survive in the market. Businesses were forced to make changes to the way they delivered their products and services in order to keep their existing clients.

At the beginning of the pandemic, almost all businesses had to be closed due to government mandate and there was constricted movement which affected the supply chain operations. Supplies were deficient and delayed due to limited workforce and transportation.

Challenges in any business tests the stability of the organization. A growing business face a range of challenges that may have either a positive or negative outcome or both. Recognizing and overcoming the common pitfalls associated to growth is essential for the continuous growth of the business.

<b>Intervention Schemes</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Maintained connections with suppliers and customers	28	70	1
Maintained the most essential part of the business	27	67.5	2
Minimized inventory, accounts receivable and accounts payable	24	60	3
Reduced manpower	21	52.5	4
Adopted new ways of delivering services	20	50	5

*Note: Multiple Responses were recorded.*

*% = Percent of Cases*

Table 4 shows the intervention schemes adopted by Filipino-Chinese business owners during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data on the table revealed that the top intervention scheme adopted by Filipino-Chinese business owners during the COVID-19 pandemic is maintaining connections with suppliers and customers (70%). This was followed by maintaining the most essential part of the business (67.5%), minimizing inventory, accounts receivable and accounts payable (60%), reduced manpower (52.5%), adopted new ways of delivering services (50%), introduced new technology processes (37.5%), shifted to digital processes (25%), explore financial assistance (7.5%), and others (7.5%). The least intervention scheme considered by Filipino-Chinese business owners during the COVID-19 pandemic is shifting to a different business (2.5%).

Staying afloat amidst the pandemic is one of the toughest challenges that businesses encountered. For most of the businesses, it was their connections with their suppliers that helped them by extending their credit line. Maintaining customers was very essential for business to

continue. Most of the businesses may not fully operate due to a lot of constraints, thus maintained only the most essential parts of the business.

Based on the discussion with selected representatives of Filipino-Chinese owned enterprises in Roxas City, it was mentioned that the Chinese way of doing business has a higher degree of intensity and discipline compared to the Filipino way of doing business. They retained the migrant mindset of the Chinese. Even in the Philippines, they still must do their best since things were a lot worse in China when they left. Ensuring the future of the next generation on foreign soil is an imperative. They can lose everything if they do not take things seriously. Most of the Chinese businessmen live in the same buildings where their businesses are to have close monitoring and easy access.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the Filipino-Chinese owned businesses are strong in the areas of operations management and marketing management in the aspect of continuity strategies. However, the lowest rating were risk and crisis management and human resource capital development.

The strengths are attributed mainly to the family's organization capacity to developed and sustain its suppliers and vendor relationship coupled with the growing relationship with its customers. Another pillar of strength of business continuity strategy is marketing management mainly due to management's ability to ensure that the customers are delighted with the transactions in the organizations and the management practices customer relation management to keep loyal customers.

The weak part of the business continuity strategy is the risk and crisis management area which are mainly attributed to inadequate separation of risk management committee chaired by a key person and the lack of formal comprehensive risk management system in place. Another weak part of the result of the study is the human capital development attributed mainly to inadequate trainings and seminars to employees' performance.

Thus, the findings support Poza and Daugherty's (2018) theory of family business, in which family members have strategic influence on the firm's management and the presence of a family member is a unique source of competitive advantage, especially when family unity is high.

## RECOMMENDATION

Running a business after pandemic poses higher risks that need to be managed and control. Thus, this study recommends for research on the next generations of the family business to determine their competencies to manage into the new age. This will mitigate the uncertainty and a sustainable family business in the future.

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