

SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH OF SMALL-SCALE ONLINE RETAIL BUSINESS OWNERS FROM SANTIAGO CITY

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Abstract

The Covid-19 Pandemic hampered the growth and sustainability of small-scale online businesses. Companies were forced to devise strategies that would allow them to survive the economic downturn. The complex issue of small business growth necessitates further investigation. This study looked into the sustainability and growth of small-scale online retail businesses. This study used a qualitative research, particularly, phenomenology conducted at Santiago City, Philippines. The participants were twelve (12) purposively selected small-scale online retail business owners. The research study involved face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. The open-ended nature of the questions allowed the participants to express their personal experiences. The themes which arose from the experiences and factors associated with the sustainability and growth of small-scale online business owners are linked with the following themes: establishing the business name, knowing whom to do the business with, resorting to online business, decision-making is well-planned, the going still gets tough, uncertainties in financial management, poor access to finance and customer relationship related themes. The themes which depict the challenges and coping mechanisms of the entrepreneurs are also presented. The entrepreneurs employed strategies aligned with contingency management and they relied to their skills and knowledge in running their business in order to attain sustainability and allow the firm to grow. The retail business owners have gone through financial difficulties such as cash flow shortfall, scarce fund and unforeseen reparation, more so challenged by cut-throat competition. And in order to cope, the entrepreneurs enforced the entity's unique selling proposition, financial management and cultivated a steadfast mindset.

Keywords: Small-scale business, Sustainability, Covid19 pandemic.

1. INTRODUCTION

Small businesses are the instrument of growth and development of any economy, generating jobs and income, stimulating competition, sources of innovation, creating possibilities for business ventures, etc. (de Kok et al., 2011).

The world economic crisis, which caused a series of unexpected events, further demonstrated the vulnerability of large companies and the consequences. Even more, it revealed the importance of small businesses for economic recovery in the post-crisis period. The colossal presence of small businesses in any economy provides a basis for reviewing various aspects of their operations. Small scale enterprises are generally more labor-intensive than large scale industries.

These small businesses are commonly solely owned. Their significant economic presence throughout history recognizes small businesses. Small businesses are among the longest-lived, most prevalent institutions in the world (Astrachan, 2010). Nowadays, these small businesses are regarded as a significant form of business organization. Small businesses are the traditional way of doing business within the private sector and are found to be active in all economy sectors (Mandl, 2008).

Small-scale businesses are highly different in terms of the size, the structure, and the legal form. Aply, the significance of a business depends on the long-term stability it brings to the economy as well as the commitment to local communities, and the entrepreneurs' social responsibility. According to Ernst & Young (2012), small businesses are typical, environmental, and have economic and social responsibility, resulting from the long-term focus and sustainability outlook.

These terms correspond each other to some extent, and thus, the concept of business failure is uncertain, as it can have different interpretations by different people. The many different interpretations and meanings of success and failure make it difficult to compare findings on the research papers conducted to measure the performance of small firms. The terms 'success,' 'survival,' and 'growth' are often closely linked and regularly used equivalently. Besides the multi-dimensional aspects of success, variables that contribute to the success of entrepreneurs are not consistently agreed upon by various research authors. While there are analysts who suggested that the dynamics of the success of small-scale businesses continue to be a black box. Others also argued that the success of these enterprises is a result of both external and internal factors.

Small-scale online retail businesses form a turbulent part of the national economy because of the large-scale movements in and out of sector. Many new ventures are created every year, but an almost equally large number of small businesses close down for various reasons. Challenges facing small businesses are a combination of less controllable internal and external factors arising from personal attributes, technical skills, management competencies and behavior of the owner-entrepreneur that influence the chances of growth of entrepreneurship (Stoke and Wilson, 2006). Motives vary from those factors which 'pull' someone into starting their own business such as search for independence to those which 'push' an individual into self-employment such as the lack of employment alternatives.

Once the business is set up, the founder's personal skills and management behavior largely determine how the firm is managed in crucial functional areas. Evidence from several studies suggest that the success of small enterprises depends more upon the policies it adopts rather than the buoyancy of the market in which it operates. External influences are less important than individual factors such as the management behaviors, competency and personal attribute with which to cope in the small business environment. Some individuals succeed as entrepreneurs when the odds seem stacked against them, while others fail when the conditions for success are relatively good (de Kok et al., 2011).

Small scale online retail businesses face challenges especially in areas of marketing, accounting, finance and management of people. Various experts describe today's global economy as one in transformation of knowledge economy. Information technology came at the beginning of the 21st century. However, it is not only the information technology, but also working with information itself which conveys the change of thinking and creation of value in modern approaches to business management. These changes are reflected in current economy (Graham, 2002).

Utilization of resources is being shifted from current capital strategic resources to strategic resources in the form of information knowledge, creative thinking and innovation. Skills and knowledge belong to critical factors of production. Enterprises can gain competitive advantage by implementing continual and on-going innovations and the managerial skills and knowledge that are at the center of this process of innovation. Often, these facts are underestimated by small entrepreneurs and overlooked by support programs for development of this size of entrepreneurship.

Growth is an essential phenomenon in small enterprises such as those that are considered as online small business. Business success will be examined from three perspectives: learning and growth, financial, and internal business processes. Employees' satisfaction measures learning and growth, the financial aspect is measured by increases in company assets. The internal business process is measured by increasing production volumes, improving physical working conditions, and business expansion. In fact, the survival of these businesses essentially depends on their ability to partake in the market along with bigger companies. With this, Growth reduces the chances of closing small-scale businesses.

Strengthening business growth is essential not only because of the enterprises and their owners, but also for all of the stakeholders since these companies thrust forward the economy by underscoring diverse types of products and services. The growth of small-scale enterprises had been extensively analyzed within entrepreneurship. One motive is because most businesses fail to expand during their life span and small-scale businesses do not grow, not even sustain itself (Davidsson et al., 2010; McKelvie & Wiklund, 2010).

However, the growth and sustainability of these small-scale online businesses were affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Companies were forced to develop strategies that will make them remain resilient despite the economic breakdown. One is the digitalization of the business and the shift to online retailing as it is the most ideal way to be safe during this pandemic, since this is a type of e-business involving goods, services and information in which the parties involved do not always meet physically, but interact electronically (Abdallah & Jaleel, 2014).

In terms of boosting the importance of small firms to the global economy's recovery and growth, the expansion of small enterprises imposes itself as a vital and significant research field. The complicated issue of small business growth demands additional investigation, as various studies have been conducted to quantify the phenomenon. Additionally, supplementary investigations may be essential because theories produced to explain the expansion of large organizations in past works have not been adapted to emphasize the same phenomenon in small businesses, particularly small-scale online retail businesses.

Hence, the study aimed to explore experiences of the small scale online retail business owners along ownership, decision-making, financial performance and difficulties and customer relationship. The researchers also aimed to unveil the factors associated with the growth and sustainability of small-scale online retail businesses as experienced by the owners, the challenges faced by small scale online retail business owners before business growth and the coping mechanisms of small-scale online retail business owners that helped overcome the challenges they encountered

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative research, particularly, phenomenology. Phenomenology is utilized when researchers are interested in how individuals interact with and make meaning of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). While there are many types of phenomenology, transcendental or descriptive phenomenology is the form that was utilized for this study. Originated by Edmund Husserl, transcendental phenomenology seeks to understand how people experience abstract ideas in what Husserl refers to as lifeworld, which allows individuals to make meaning of the world through consciousness (Husserl, 1970). Phenomenological research design focuses on the experiences of an individual or group. It attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of a particular situation.

The participants for this study were the small scale online retail business owners. The researcher made sure that the participants selected for this study met the requirements needed to provide in-depth and rich information to answer the research questions designed for this study. The criteria for selecting interview participants were established based on the following specifications: (1) Each participant is a small scale

online retail business owner located in the Poblacion area of Santiago City who were once traditional business owners with a physical store who shifted to online retailing business on the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, (2) Each participant must have started and operated their own small business for 2 or more years up to and through the COVID-19 pandemic and has an active online business operation. The participants of the study were twelve (12) purposively selected small scale online retail business owners.

This study was conducted at Santiago City where small scale online retail businesses are operating. The economic structure of the City of Santiago is dominated by the service sector with an 84% in revenues, followed by manufacturing, at 16%, and agriculture at 0.22%. In terms of number of establishments, 93% is from the service economy, 7% from manufacturing, 0.26% in agriculture. The top enterprises are in the service economy, specifically wholesale and retail trade, tourism (accommodation and food services), health and social work, financial intermediation, other services, and real estate and renting (Lopez, 2017).

The research study involved face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher develops a set of questions as a guide for conversation. The chosen instrument gave the researcher the freedom which allowed open and authentic responses within the structure of a set of questions that prompted the discussion. The participants in this study were asked questions that helped them open up about their businesses' sustainability and growth – which they personally observed and experienced.

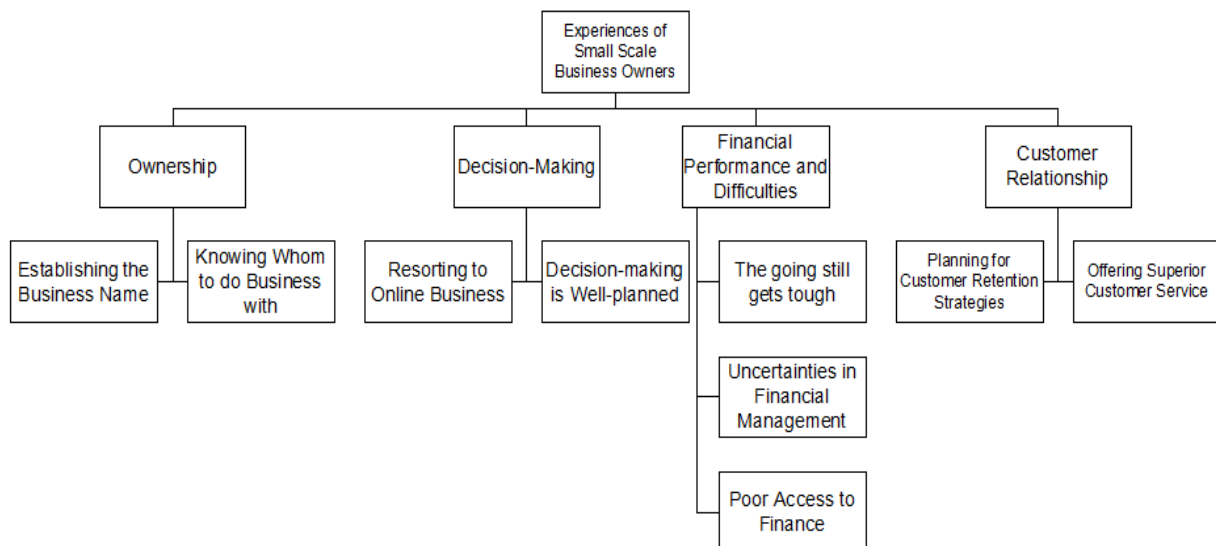
Prior to the interview, the participants were given a consent form and were informed about the security of their anonymity. The consent letter contained details about the study, including each participant's consent to be audio-recorded during the interview process. They were also informed about the option to opt out of the study at any time. It was emphasized that under no circumstance was participation mandatory or the lack thereof punitive. To ensure anonymity, real names were replaced with code names. A list of semi-structured questions was used to guide the interviews. As a follow-up step to the distribution of the consent form, the researcher scheduled an individual appointment with each participant, the purpose of which is to answer any additional questions pertaining to their involvement in the study and to collect the signed consent form.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Experiences of Small-Scale Online Retail Business Owners Relating to Ownership, Decision-Making, Financial Performance and Difficulties and Customer Relationship

Themes are particular conception or view of something to be done or of the method of doing it or a system of rules or principles. In the conditions of the

entrepreneurs' online retailing venture, the following themes characterize how the business climbed the stairs towards success.



THEME 1: Ownership

SUBTHEME 1: Establishing the Business Name

The theme best describes how the entrepreneurs set their first steps in establishing a name in the virtual market as small scale retailers. An entity's business name is the name it uses in its transactions. The fact that all the companies nowadays are recognized as subjects in commercial transactions and legal entities implies obligation of such a legal entity to have a name. Company builds its business image on its business name and that very name makes it recognizable in the market.

True to the impressions of the participants, it is really a must that owners should establish their business name because it is what makes the identity of their business.

From the moment it starts operations, until the moment of its termination, the company creates its business reputation in the market and in commercial transactions, i.e. its image. If we compare the term identity with the term image, we could say that a company's identity is what it really is, while its image is what others perceive it to be. A perfect situation is when business identity and business image differ only as much as it takes to operate successfully, i.e. when business image is slightly better than the company's identity. However, unlike identity, image is a category created through a longer period, and as a rule it is much harder to gain a good name and reputation than a bad one, which is much harder to fix later (Škorić, 2016).

SUBTHEME 2: Knowing Whom to Do the Business with (Stakeholders)

The foremost step in doing business is to know who are to do business with and how they are going to affect the business and to what degree. Giving emphasis to each stakeholder appeared to have greatly contributed to the entrepreneur's business endeavor.

Furthermore, getting concerned of the different aspects and organizations which can affect the business greatly matters, as shared by another participant:

Conclusively, this phenomenon pictures that familiarity of the owner to its stakeholders serves as a guide for the entrepreneurs in their business endeavor. Freeman, E. (2010), highlights why organizations need to be able to identify their stakeholders and also judge the level of power they hold to affect the decisions and outcomes of the organization.

All of these stakeholders can then be placed into one of three broad categories: Internal Stakeholders are usually members of the organization; Connected stakeholders, also called primary stakeholders, are those that have an economic or contractual relationship with the organization; and external or secondary stakeholders are those who are not directly connected to the organization. These stakeholders will have an interest in the organizations activities or they might be impacted by the organizations activities in some way.

THEME 2: Decision-Making

SUBTHEME 1: Resorting to Online Business

It is also worth noting that things do not end with just knowing the stakeholders but also how to address circumstances which may arise due to the involvement of such stakeholder, hence, exercising their decision-making function as owners to shift to online retail business.

These traditional business owners noticed that due to the massive restrictions imposed by the pandemic, online shopping has grown, and entrepreneurs have embraced the internet trend even more.

The accelerated growth of the convenience of the online shopping movement boosts economic activity, and an increase in GDP is interpreted as concrete evidence that the economy is still thriving.

SUBTHEME 2: Decision-Making is Well-Planned

As businesses grow, it is worth noting that owners face come to bear many decisions; from marketing to funding, expansion, investments, operations, logistics, staffing, technology adoption, all to enhance the business productivity.

The decisions which are made by entrepreneurs in occupation is the heart and substance of entrepreneurship (Dekart et al. 2010). Developing countries discovered the entrepreneurs' incumbency in industrial success, so identifying new methods and recognizing affective factors on decision making, decision making techniques and cooperating with other people is of great importance. Benefiting from these methods and tools individual's ability in making decision will be more affective and profitable.

THEME 3: Financial Performance and Difficulties

SUBTHEME 1: Uncertainties in Financial Management

The significance of finances has been viewed as a critical element for financial performance of micro and small business enterprises;

The significance of finances has been viewed as a critical element for financial performance of micro and small business enterprises. However, the sudden shift towards online retail business is overwhelming for the participants making them uncertain on their financial decisions when it comes to managing their finances.

According to Saito and Villanueva (2018), smaller enterprises face higher transaction costs than larger enterprises in obtaining credit. Lack of proper management experience and the application of poor accounting practices are also major factors that deter financial performance of small enterprises and it hinders the ability to raise finance. Researchers have also acknowledged shortage of access to external finance and weak capital base, lack of experience in the field of the business, particularly lack of technical knowledge, inadequate managerial skills, lack of planning and lack of market research are causes of small businesses failure (Van Stel & Store, 2004).

SUBTHEME 2: Poor Access to Finances

The online business startups typically lack access to traditional bank financing and therefore must be more creative about obtaining the financing they need.

According to Boyd and Kannan, this can be a great challenge because they are not well positioned financially to secure financing from traditional lending institutions. Shifts, and downturns in economic activity have often lead to financing difficulties for small businesses that require a steady supply of capital for growth (Li et al., 2018). Business owners who have readily available capital ensure that whenever there is a threat to the survival of the firm, they are able to finance revenue shortfalls through working capital lines of credit and other bank financing (Lindh & Rovira, 2017). Despite the need for a constant supply of capital, many small businesses lack access to capital through traditional financial intermediaries when needed (Mikic et al., 2016).

THEME 4: Customer Relationship

SUBTHEME 1: Planning for Customer Retention Strategies

Customers are the lifeblood of every business. As such, building positive customer relationships should be a top priority for every business, regardless of size. But as a small business owner, their ability to forge strong customer relationships is even more critical.

Increasing competition and decreasing customer loyalty have led to the emergence of concepts that focus on the nurturing of relationships to customers.

Day and Van Den Bulte (2002) define customer relationship as a cross-functional process for achieving a continuing dialogue with customers, across all their contact and access points, with personalized treatment of the most valuable customers, to increase customer retention and the effectiveness of marketing initiatives. This helps businesses enhance its growth by attracting more profitable customers and establishing stronger and more durable customer relationships.

SUBTHEME 2: Offering Superior Customer Service

Customer satisfaction is described as how satisfied customers are with a business' products, services, and capabilities. The main focus of an organization should be the satisfaction of its customers. It applies to industrial companies, retail and wholesale companies, government agencies, service companies, non-profit organizations, and all subgroups of an organization (American Society for Quality, 2021).

Customer satisfaction through premium customer service leads to sales; sales translate into longevity and income. Knowing how to sail the world of e-commerce to provide the best experience for your customers will help you produce leads and build the business' reputation. According to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (2021), customer satisfaction is critical in attracting repeat customers, creating a good reputation, and succeeding in the highly competitive digital marketplace. Making a successful customer experience on a solid foundation will ensure the success the online retail business.

B. Factors Associated with the Growth and Sustainability of the Small-Scale Online Retail Businesses as Experiences by Owners

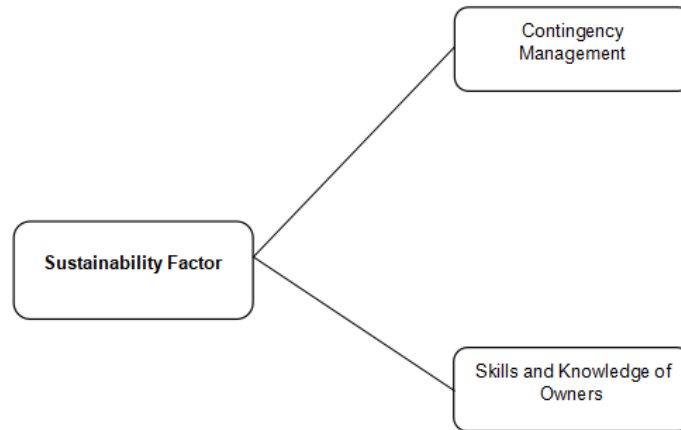


Figure 2. Concept Map on the Factors Associated with the Growth and Sustainability of Small-scale Online Retail Business

THEME 1: Contingency Management

Versatility in management gives business a long way to go. As the business environment is unstable and ever changing, it is a must that business owners are adaptive and versatile in order to keep the business afloat whatever may be the circumstances that the business may be subjected into and navigate towards success.

Indeed, there is no ideal method to run a business, structure a team, or make choices, according to the contingency management theory, an organizational theory. Instead, the best course of action depends on both the internal and external circumstances.

According to Pratono, (2016), Contingency-based organizations gain competitive advantage through assessing their business environment and set strategy, which are appropriate for each level of environmental turbulence. That involves integration whole in firm's interactions with business environment. That presents dynamic capability is equated with environmental turbulence. Hence, contingency theory indicates behavior of firms, which is necessary for survival.

THEME 2: Skills and Knowledge of Owners

Improving the quality of human resources is highly needed among small – scale online retail business, especially in the field of human resource competencies such as knowledge, skill, ability and attitude to entrepreneurship. The skills and knowledge of

the owners in managing the business is believed by the participants to have paved the way for their business growth.

Also, the fact that the majority of enterprises are micro and small indicates that established enterprises find it difficult to grow to the next stages of middle and large scale industries. Hence, it is necessary for the small scale online retail business owners to equip themselves with the right skills and knowledge to be able to foster the growth and sustainability of their business.

The small business owner’s expertise can be regarded as a strategic capability that when utilized offers the owner the competency to super-perform (Zhao, Huo, Flynn & Yeung, 2018). For instance, the small business owner might possess management expertise or special marketing skills. In such a case, management expertise will ultimately lead to performance effectiveness and efficiencies; hence, superior business while special marketing skills will eventually culminate in increased market share, sales volumes and financial performance for the small business. Thus, the small business owner’s expert knowledge of a specialized area leads to high levels of business performance. In light of this view, small business owner’s expertise is expected to impact positively on a small business performance.

C. Challenges Faced by Small Scale Online Retail Business Owners Before Business Growth

Small scale enterprises in the Philippines face a wide variety of challenges. Despite being the backbone of nearly every economy in the region, smaller businesses often struggle. Many go out of business while others fail to make the leap from small size to greater economic growth.

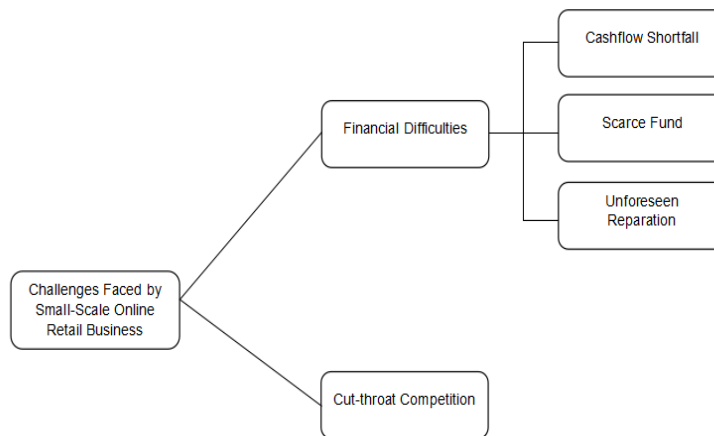


Figure 3. Concept Map on the Challenges faced by the Small-scale Online Retail Business Owners

THEME 1: Financial Difficulties

Small business maintenance is not for the weak of heart. Nearly half of small business owners who close their doors cite a lack of funding as the reason. Simply put, they did not have enough revenue coming in to pay their staff or cover other costs. It is a common difficulty therefore for starting businesses to suffer financial difficulties, in particular, within this context, the difficulties are subdivided into cashflow shortfall, scarce fund and unforeseen reparations.

SUBTHEME 1: Cashflow Shortfall

Cash flow is the most accurate predictor of a company's financial health since it tracks the amount of money coming into and leaving the company. A company's cash flow can be unpredictable, which is the main cause of failure for organizations. Cash flow shortfall, therefore held back the business as they began their course in the market.

There is indeed a comprehensive evidence on the relationship between Working Capital Management and SMEs' performance by taking into consideration the plausible effect of cash flow. Evidence from the study reveals the importance of cash flow on SMEs' Working Capital Management and performance. Findings therefore suggest that managers should be concerned about the economic implications of the cash flow availability on investment in working capital. In the event of cash flow unavailability, managers should strive to reduce the investment in working capital in order to improve performance (Afrifa & Tingbani, 2018).

SUBTHEME 2: Scarce Fund

For businesses of all sizes, a lack of working capital is an issue, but it may be particularly harmful for smaller organizations with fewer resources. While having enough cash on hand each month to cover expenses and have some left over is a good thing, a small business may be unable to hire new employees, expand into new areas, or take advantage of new possibilities due to a shortage of money.

Undoubtedly, lack of financial support is a major stumbling block to SME development as supported by Xiangfeng (2007). Notwithstanding the potentials for small town growth that SME clusters fuel, certain problems still hound these enterprises, which limit such potentials for growth. Small enterprise clusters depend highly on local resources for their operation. SME operations are generally family run enterprises with limited, instead of large-scale, factory production. The industrial structure tends to be rigid, with limited entrepreneurial and managerial skills. Such

factors inhibit the enterprises' competitiveness and result in a lack of enterprising spirit or willingness to take calculated risks, as well as management inefficiency.

SUBTHEME 3: Unforeseen Reparation

Even the best-laid plans for a small business can be derailed by unforeseen costs. Thus unpredicted yet inevitable expenses hinder firms to grow the way it is planned because of unforeseen reparations.

Unforeseen expenses poses challenge to businesses as aided by the study of Saleh and Manjunath (2020), who found that sticking to the budget significantly impacts the performance of small and medium enterprises. Generally, budget goals whether they are easily achievable or tightly achievable motivate employees and entrepreneurs to make efforts towards achieving such goals. Further, the formal and tight control mechanism for the budgetary process contributes towards increasing the performance among SMEs.

THEME 2: Cut-Throat Competition

Online retailers have become rampant in the digitalization age, hence, many businesses have emerged through the online platform, taking advantage of the opportunity which the internet accessibility has provided. Alongside this, the retailers face serious competition.

Both small and big retailers, traditional and non-traditional are competing against each other, offering competitive pricing, retail variety, retail assortment and retail location in order to offer more value to customers. In order therefore to succeed in the market, retailers have to be flexible in terms of format, time of entry, and even pricing strategy as well as efficient management system (Fox, E. J., & Sethuraman, R. 2020).

D. Coping Mechanisms of Small Scale Online Retail Business Owners

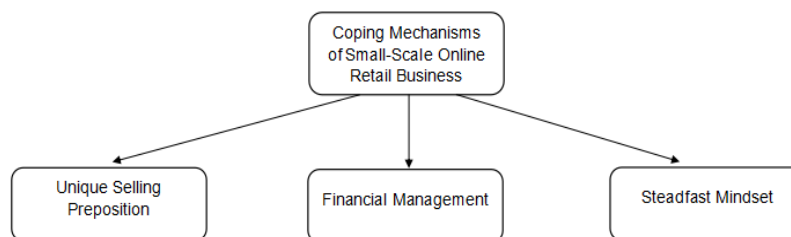


Figure 4. Concept Map on the Coping Mechanisms of the Small-scale Online Retail Business Owners

THEME 1: Unique Selling Proposition

Emphasizing the one thing that distinguishes the company from the competitors helps a lot in competing in the market. Utilizing the unique selling point of the retail business compared to other companies in the market, gave a specific characteristic that differentiates the company.

Every business owner needs to concentrate on what makes his or her company unique and special in order to successfully advertise their goods or services. Positioning is the process of differentiating and upping the value of your offering compared to that of your rivals and implanting that notion in the minds of a target market of consumers. By giving your business and its offers a distinctive and positive brand, positioning draws in customers. Positioning is essential for differentiating your offering from those of your competitors. Your clients are constantly bombarded with advertisements in a world where there are more and more goods and services available every day (Miremadi, A. 2010).

THEME 2: Financial Management

Every firm needs finance in order to properly promote its goods or services. Finance is the foundation of any prosperous company. No firm can continue for very long without finance, whether it is manufacturing, wholesaling, or even retailing. Long-term survival and provision of goods and services to customers are possible for retail businesses that generate steady earnings. Financial management is therefore necessary for a retail company's operations and day-to-day needs. Managing the finances of the business is a rather important facet to focus on.

The importance of financial management is backed by the study of Mustafina, et. al. (2021). According to the study, retail businesses are now interwoven network structures rather than standalone commercial enterprises. The standards for professional management in all functional areas, including financial management, are rising in these types of businesses management. The study focused on the rise of innovative methods to the financial management of distribution expenses, as well as the diversity of scientific points of view on recognizing patterns in the potential development of retail chains.

THEME 3: Steadfast Mindset

There needs to have enough courage for entrepreneurs to succeed in their business venture. There are set of qualities paramount, which includes persistence and undeterred spirit to pursue their endeavor.

The relationship between positive qualities of entrepreneurs and the rate of success of business is supported by the study of Bockorny and Youssef-Morgan (2019). The study states that there are many dangers and uncertainties involved in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs might benefit from having positive psychological assets like courage, as well as confidence, hope, optimism, and resilience (together referred to as psychological capital).

The relationship between an entrepreneur's courage, psychological capital, and life satisfaction is examined in the study. Even after taking into consideration a variety of factors of the entrepreneur (demographics and human capital) and the enterprise, the results indicate that entrepreneurs' boldness is related to their level of life happiness (venture size and survival).

4. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORKS

Based on the objectives and findings of the study, the following are drawn:

1. The small scale online retail business owners' experiences' revolve around establishing the business name, knowing whom to do the business with (stakeholders), resorting to online business, making sure decisions are well-planned, uncertainties in financial management, poor access to financial finance, planning for customer retention strategies, and offering of superior customer service.
2. The entrepreneurs employed strategies aligned with contingency management and they relied to their skills and knowledge in running their business in order to attain sustainability and allow the firm to grow.
3. The retail business owners have gone through financial difficulties such as cash flow shortfall, scarce fund and unforeseen reparation, more so challenged by cut-throat competition.
4. In order to cope, the entrepreneurs enforced the entity's unique selling proposition, financial management and cultivated a steadfast mindset.
5. A proposed strategy for small scale online retail business owners is forwarded.

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