

Original Article

Organizational resilience and adaptive capacity: a case study in a family business in Rio Grande do Sul

Resiliência organizacional e capacidade adaptativa: um estudo de caso em uma empresa familiar no Rio Grande do Sul

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study aimed to understand the dynamics of the relationship between organizational resilience and the adaptive capacity of a family company from Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to sustain its performance in the midst of the pandemic caused by the coronavirus.

Design / methodology / approach: The research was operationalized by means of a case study, carried out in a family company in the food industry in the city of Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Afterwards, the material was transcribed and entered into NVivo® software to perform the content analysis.

Findings: The results indicate that the resilience dimensions enabled the emergence of the company's adaptive capacity to sustain itself amidst the turbulent environment. Therefore, the findings indicate that the organizational resilience of the company analyzed in this case study provided the company's adaptation to the pandemic context through coping, recovery and resumption of the company in the face of change and uncertainty.

Limitations / implications: We highlight the non-participation of the researchers effectively in the field, due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. This fact prevented the expansion of data triangulation through non-participant observation of the daily life of the family business.

Practical implications: The study enables managers to reflect on how to sustain their companies in crisis environments through anticipatory or reactive actions, characterized based on dimensions of organizational resilience, which enable the company's adaptive capacity.

Originality / value: The originality of this study is confirmed by a bibliometric survey that found a lack of studies which use the approaches of organizational resilience, adaptive capacity, and perceived performance together, in the light of the socioemotional wealth theory.

Keywords: Organizational resilience; Adaptive capacity; Health crisis; Family business; Case study

RESUMO

Finalidade: O estudo objetivou compreender a dinâmica do relacionamento entre a resiliência organizacional e a capacidade de adaptação de uma empresa familiar gaúcha visando sustentar seu desempenho em meio ao período de pandemia gerado pelo coronavírus.

Desenho / metodologia / abordagem: A pesquisa foi operacionalizada por meio de um estudo de caso, operacionalizado em uma empresa familiar do ramo alimentício da cidade de Pelotas/RS. A coleta de dados ocorreu por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas e análise documental. Após, o material foi transcrito e inserido no software NVivo® para realização da análise de conteúdo.

Constatações: Os resultados indicam que as dimensões da resiliência possibilitaram a emergência das capacidades adaptativas da empresa para se sustentar em meio ao ambiente turbulento. Portanto, os achados apontam que a resiliência organizacional da empresa analisada neste estudo de caso proporcionou a adaptação da empresa ao contexto de pandemia por meio do enfrentamento, recuperação e retomada da empresa frente a situação de mudança e incerteza.

Limitações / implicações da pesquisa: Destaca-se a não participação dos pesquisadores efetivamente em campo, em virtude das restrições impostas pela pandemia. Este fato impediu a ampliação da triangulação de dados por meio da observação não participante no cotidiano da empresa familiar.

Implicações práticas: O estudo possibilita a reflexão de gestores sobre a sustentação de suas empresas a ambientes em crise por meio de ações antecipatórias ou reativas, caracterizadas a partir de dimensões da resiliência organizacional, as quais promovem a capacidade de adaptação da empresa.

Originalidade / valor: A originalidade deste estudo se comprova a partir de um levantamento bibliométrico que constatou a ausência de pesquisas utilizando em conjunto as abordagens de resiliência organizacional, capacidade adaptativa e percepção do desempenho à luz da teoria da riqueza socioemocional.

Palavras-chave: Resiliência organizacional; Capacidade adaptativa; Crise sanitária; Empresa familiar; Estudo de caso

1 INTRODUCTION

Brazil has faced a severe economic recession over the past eight years, with the period from the second trimester of 2014 to the fourth trimester of 2016 being the longest since the early 1980s, as evidenced by the Comitê de Datação de Ciclos Econômicos (the Brazilian Economic Cycle Dating Committee) (2017). Mendes (2017) explains the 11-trimester crisis period as being due to the fiscal and financial behavior of the Brazilian government. However, according to the Exame magazine (2019), in the period from 2017 to the first trimester of 2019, the country grew by 3.2%. In this regard, Ferreira et al. (2017) point out that the recovery from this troubled period has been slow compared to previous times, due to uncertainty, a

factor that reverberates in a slow recovery in the economic area, which generates negative effects in several areas, for example, in internal and external investments and in consumer spending.

The slow prospects for improvement that the country presented began to face a new threat, however, this time not originating from fiscal and financial behavior. Such threat refers to the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) that had its first case in the city of Wuhan, China, in December 2019 (Gautret et al., 2020). It spread to Brazil and cases of the disease have been confirmed since February 2020, as pointed out by the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* (2020), thus configuring a global health crisis, which generates consequences for various sectors.

In this scenario of health crisis, the State Decree No. 55,240 of May 11, 2020 stands out. It established the flags system, in an attempt to keep social distance and try to keep companies open, according to the scenarios of the regions where they are located. The flag system scenario presents conditions for day-to-day business. Thus, regions that had better situations (yellow and orange flags) were allowed to resume their activities with fewer restrictions. For example, in the food sector, they had the freedom to reopen their doors to the public for internal consumption, as long as with restricted service, delivery and takeout, modifying only the number of employees and customers (75% for the yellow flag and 50% for the orange flag), while in situations or regions with red or black classification, only services via delivery or takeout were admitted, with a greater reduction in employees: 50% and 25%, respectively.

Faced with this environment that showed signs of recovery from a severe economic crisis, and experienced a new crisis, specifically a health crisis, this research addresses organizational resilience with a perspective of adaptation to change, as Hanson et al. (2019) point out. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that, in a bibliometric survey conducted in September 2020, with the keywords that guide this study, only the research of Beech et al. (2020) addressed the constructs of this research

simultaneously through a theoretical essay. Differing from the aforementioned study, this research empirically studies a family business in a period of health crisis.

The literature on organizational resilience was chosen in view of the need for organizations to face, recover and flourish under crisis situations (Jakimovski et al., 2022). In this perspective, we selected the resilient dimension of adaptability (Nogueira et al., 2017) to deepen the discussions that this article proposes on the adaptation and consequent support of organizations to times of crisis through proactive or reactive actions (Burnard & Bhamra, 2011; Annarelli & Nonino, 2016).

In addition to these theoretical elements, the theory of socio-emotional wealth was brought in as a theoretical background, in view of the peculiar characteristics of family businesses, such as: emotional attachment, identification of family members with the company and the social ties between family members and the managerial and operational team (Berrone et al., 2012).

In light of the above, there is an opportunity to study the relationship between organizational resilience and adaptive capacity during periods of crisis. Given the above, the following research question arises: How does organizational resilience relate to the adaptation of a family business in Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to sustain its operations in the midst of the pandemic caused by the coronavirus?

This study is organized as follows: it starts with the introduction, already presented, and is followed by a literature review, the methodological procedures, the analysis and discussion of the results, and, finally, the final considerations.

2 ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE

The term “resilience” comes from the Latin word “resilire”, which means “the return to the original stage” (Martins, 2019). Since the concept was first used, in the physics field, the term “resilience” has gone through several areas of knowledge, adapting to each perspective, until arriving to the study from the perspective of organizations (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Burnard & Bhamra, 2011).

Linnenluecke (2017) points out that, in the late 1980s, the concept of resilience began to be researched with organizations as its object of study. Meyer (1982) pioneered the use of the term “resilience” in the field of business and management. Similarly, the research of Staw et al. (1981), although it involves aspects of resilience, does not exactly address the term. These studies analyzed how companies responded to threats from the external environment that could pose risks to their survival. The studies of these authors also explain that companies tend to respond to the environment based on past knowledge, as pointed out by the resilience theories.

Based on this, research has turned to the concept of organizational resilience seeking to understand how firms survive in a turbulent environment (Linnenluecke, 2012; Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). Herbane (2019) emphasizes that resilience in the organizational context is a crucial factor in maintaining business activity, given that it involves the responsiveness of the company, enabling an adaptive process to crises through an organizational renewal in specific aspects of the plans once laid out.

Understanding the way in which organizational resilience enables companies to adapt to the context of crisis can involve two distinct perspectives, the first of which is through waiting for an external change to occur and adapting to it by changing internal processes and developing crisis coping strategies to fit the new context (Burnard & Bhamra, 2011). On the other hand, there is the perspective that organizational resilience can be seen as an attempt to anticipate external changes through a strategic idealization of organizational managers (Annarelli & Nonino, 2016).

To understand both the phenomenon of waiting for environmental changes and then reacting, and anticipating them, McAslan (2010) and Nogueira et al. (2017) present dimensions that characterize organizational resilience and argue that, based on them, organizations can sustain themselves within a crisis environment. Figure 1 brings these dimensions together, along with their definitions.

Figure 1 – Dimensions of organizational resilience

| Characteristics | Definition | References |
|---|---|---|
| Adaptive capacity/Adaptability | The organization's ability to perceive, understand, and adapt to environmental changes. | McAslan (2010); Nogueira et al. (2017). |
| Ability to learn/gain experience | The organization's ability to learn from previous situations in order to face future situations. | McAslan (2010); Nogueira et al. (2017). |
| Preparedness | Ability to absorb or recover from environmental turbulence. | McAslan (2010). |
| Positive results | Ability to survive even if some unexpected event occurs. | McAslan (2010). |
| Agility | The organization's ability to be agile when it's necessary to make decisions and delegate functions to other managers | Nogueira et al. (2017). |
| Leadership | The organization's ability to encourage managers at all hierarchical levels to participate in the decision-making process. | Nogueira et al. (2017). |
| Change/Willingness or commitment to survive | It involves accepting extreme external conditions and recovering from them, as well as being able to take advantage of new opportunities. | McAslan (2010); Nogueira et al. (2017). |
| Communication/Collectivity and coordinated response | Exchange of knowledge and values between individuals or companies in the search for the best reaction to an unexpected event. | McAslan (2010); Nogueira et al. (2017). |

Source: the authors (2021)

The adaptive capacity is related to resilience in the attempt to recover from a period of crisis, aiming for companies to overcome this period, providing strength for future moments of turbulence (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003). Furthermore, Carmeli and Markman (2011) point out that companies that make potential use of resilience to overcome such periods tend to exhibit organizational longevity.

3 ADAPTATIVE CAPACITY

Based on the construction of organizational resilience, and on the clear relationship of this construct with the adaptation of organizations, this theoretical section will deepen the dimension of adaptive capacity. For that, we based ourselves on Folke et al. (2010) to define adaptation as a moment when organizations respond to events in their environment in a gradual, evolutionary or disruptive way, in order to sustain themselves in the environment in which they operate.

In this sense, companies in a turbulent environment make use of their resources and capabilities to respond in the best way to situations in the external environment (Vohra, 2015), emerging adaptive capacity from the theory of capabilities (Teece et al., 1997). Corroborating the proposed argument, Fiedman et al. (2016) point out that a major question has arisen in recent years in the area of strategic management knowledge, namely, how companies build capabilities to adapt to their constantly changing external environments.

Drucker (1995) identifies adaptive capacity as a continuous adaptation to new environmental contexts, or in other words, the anticipation of changes, flexibility, and quick decision-making. Zhou and Li (2007) present adaptive capacity as a way to reconfigure organizational business activities in an agile manner to respond to changes in the environment in which they operate.

Carmeli and Sheaffer (2008) point out that adaptive capacity refers to the abilities that firms have to respond to the dynamic and often turbulent environment in which they operate. For the authors, their definition involves those companies that do not resist change. From a different perspective, D'ávila and Silveira-Martins (2018) state that adaptive capacity corresponds to the identification of new market opportunities by firms, and the use of their resources and capabilities to capitalize on such opportunities.

The research results of Lengnick-Hall et al. (2011) pointed out that, through the adaptive capacity of organizations' strategic human resource management, it is possible to respond resiliently when companies face severe crises. Nogueira and Melo (2017) analyzed the perspective of the influence of organizational resilience on adaptive capacity through university management. They found that subjects showed levels of resilience through adaptive capacity since they were able to perceive, understand, and adapt to changes in their environment.

Based on the scenario presented above, this study assumes the definitions listed in this literature review section regarding adaptive capacity to make it possible

to understand the dynamics of the relationship between organizational resilience and adaptive capacity of a family business from Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to sustain its performance in the midst of the pandemic caused by the coronavirus. Finally, we highlight the formation of two analysis categories for the adaptive capacity construct based on Drucker's (1995) views: agile decision making and flexibility.

4 PERCEIVED PERFORMANCE

To investigate the sustenance of the family business analyzed in this research, the perceived performance approach highlighted in the study by Singh et al. (2016) was chosen. The study by Bititci et al. (2012) presents the possibility of understanding the sustenance of organizations in the environment from their performance. From the perspective of perception of financial performance, Hult et al. (2008) defend the use of this type of measure to assess organizational performance, citing as one of their justifications that certain organizations make it impossible to collect objective data on this construct.

Thus, for the purposes of this investigation, the performance was understood based on the subjective perception of the family business managers during the period of the coronavirus pandemic studied. Therefore, we aimed to describe how managers perceive the organization's performance from three indicators: competitiveness, an indicator adapted from Crespo et al. (2019), and sales revenue and market share, proposed by Singh et al. (2016).

5 FAMILY BUSINESS

Songini et al. (2013) point out that there is not a single, fully accepted definition of a family business. However, for the authors, scholars in the field seem to converge, at the theoretical level, on aspects that distinguish a family business from another type of business. Based on this convergence, Chrisman et al. (2005) argue that a

family business has a structure based on 4 factors: the influence of a family in the strategic direction, the intention of the family to have control of the business, the business following the beliefs and values of the family, and the involvement of the resources and capabilities of the business with the interactions of family members. Grzybovski (2007) defines this type of company as one in which family members are involved in the day-to-day operations, such as the owner of the business, as well as being involved in the entire organizational structure throughout several generations.

For the purposes of this research, the concepts previously presented by Chrisman et al. (2005) and Grzybovski (2007) were taken as a basis for the definition of family business. Thus, the definition is: that in which there is the influence of family members in the strategic direction, with family interactions in the involvement of resources and capabilities of the company, as well as in the daily control; finally, the beliefs and values that permeate the day-to-day business are the same as those of the family.

It should be added that, when studying the context of family businesses, whether in the national or international scenario, research has relied on different models or theoretical perspectives to discuss their data. Frezatti et al. (2017) point out, among some of these perspectives, the following: F-PEC model, resource-based view and socioemotional wealth.

Among the theories discussed, for the purposes of this study, in an attempt to facilitate the understanding of how managers/owners make their decisions, we chose to analyze the results based on the socioemotional wealth theory of Berrone et al. (2012). It is also possible to defend this choice considering that this type of organization differs from traditional organizations due to the socioemotional attribute (Berrone et al., 2012).

Based on the study by Berrone et al. (2012), the socioemotional wealth approach has five dimensions for analyzing family businesses, as shown in Figure 2. These dimensions form the categories of analysis referring to family businesses.

Figure 2 – Synthesis of the Dimensions and Definitions of the Socioemotional Approach

| Dimensions of the Socioemotional Approach | Definition |
|---|---|
| Family Control and Influence | Daily monitoring and control of the business by the founder or family members. |
| Identification of Family Members with the Firm | The union of the family with the business in a single actor, that is, the company is seen as an extension of the family due to the family culture rooted in the organization. |
| Binding Social Ties | It encompasses the company's connection with its stakeholders - customers, suppliers, community in general - through the sharing of family values in the company's daily operations. |
| Emotional Attachment | It involves the feeling of affection that the family members develop for the company because of the adversities faced in sustaining the company and obtaining results. |
| Renewal of Family Bonds to the Firm through Dynastic Succession | It involves the succession process in the company, passing on the business to future generations, making the company a family tradition and not just an enterprise with potential monetary value. |

Source: the authors (2021)

Given the notorious differentiation between family businesses and traditional ones, the dimensions of socioemotional wealth are expected to substantiate the analyses, since socioemotional aspects are present within the structure of family businesses, influencing their decision making (Berrone et al., 2012).

6 METHODOLOGY

To operationalize the investigation, we chose to carry out a research with a qualitative approach, to understand the dynamics of the relationship between organizational resilience and adaptive capacity of a family business in Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to sustain its performance in the midst of the pandemic caused by the coronavirus. The research strategy employed is a single and retrospective case study. The option for the case study is based on the indications of Stake (1995) who understands it as a concrete and contextualized research method aimed at the interpretation of the reader, seeking depth in relation to a specific case. Furthermore, it is evident in the literature that a case study is an ideal research technique to answer research questions such as "how?" or "because?" (Yin, 2016). As for the retrospective

aspect, it stands out due to the selection of a past period in which relevant facts that characterize the history of the organization occurred (Voss et al., 2002).

As for the case selected for analysis, it is a family business, which fits the definition adopted based on Chrisman et al. (2005) and Grzybovski (2007) in section 2.4. This company is a gastronomic reference in the city of Pelotas/RS, selling approximately 2,000 snacks on peak days, as disclosed on the company's website, thus having great visibility in the food sector of its city and region. Furthermore, throughout its history, studies such as those by Silveira-Martins et al. (2017), Leite et al. (2019) and Leite et al. (2021), that "Alfa Lanches" faced several environmental disturbances that required managers to adapt in order to maintain the organization in the market in which it operates. "Alfa Lanches", founded in 1991, located in Pelotas, a city in the south of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, has about 80 employees, distributed in 5 units. In addition, we justify the choice of case considering that the selected organization: (i) suffered direct impacts and had to suddenly change its strategies; (ii) offers an essential product (food sector), but superfull; (iii) continued operating with limitations, following the recommendations of state and municipal decrees in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was possible to collect data through interviews supported by a semi-structured script and document analysis. The difference between Stake's (1995) approach and Yin's (2016) positivist one is emphasized; meanwhile, in order to preserve the validity and reliability of the data collected, a case study protocol was established, as indicated by Yin (2016). Additionally, the Informed Consent Form (ICF), based on Oro (2015), was used.

To carry out the interviews, a script was prepared based on authors that address organizational resilience, adaptive capacity and perceived performance (Figure 3), as well as the relationship between the constructs, totaling 13 questions. The in-depth interviews were carried out between September and October 2020 through digital platforms with prior authorization from the interviewees. For purposes of characterizing the interviewed managers, we present Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Characterization of the respondents

| Interviewee | Position in the Organization | Belonging to the Family Axis? | Interview Time | Transcript Pages |
|-------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| E1 | Manager and Co-Owner | Yes | 1h50 | 12 pages |
| E2 | Unit Manager | No | 1h | 9 pages |
| E3 | Unit Manager | No | 40min | 7 pages |
| E4 | Unit Manager | No | 30min | 6 pages |

Fonte: the authors (2021)

As for data collection through document analysis, scientific articles were consulted, as well as a book that tells the company's history, and its institutional website, totaling 136 pages.

In the universe of research that uses the qualitative approach, Modell (2005) and Coutinho (2008) argue that researchers should use the triangulation technique to obtain a more reliable picture of the reality under analysis. The impossibility of the effective presence of researchers in the field imposed by the coronavirus pandemic made it impossible to triangulate by methods of three or more data collection techniques. Therefore, to achieve this extremely important item for qualitative research, data triangulation occurred through different data sources, and such an approach was highlighted by Coutinho (2008). In practical terms, we carried out the collection through documents (website, articles, books), interview with the manager (partner-owner) belonging to the family axis and also with managers (of units) external to the family axis.

For data preparation, we chose the content analysis technique advocated by Bardin (2011) to analyze more rigorously and systematically the information obtained in data collection. The NVivo® version 11 software was used for coding all the material collected through the interviews and the secondary data.

According to Bardin (2011), content analysis can be divided into three fundamental phases: pre-analysis, exploration of the material, and treatment and interpretation

of the data. In the first phase, an analysis plan was assembled, organizing the data to preliminarily systematize the ideas and define the indicators that would guide the analysis and interpretation of the data, as indicated by the author.

Subsequently, the second phase of content analysis occurred, called exploration of the material, which addresses the coding of the material into categories and subcategories, based on the literature review (Bardin, 2011). To carry out this step, a priori categories were defined based on the theoretical constructs from the literature covered in section 2, which are presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4 – Categories of Analysis

| Theoretical Construct | Categories | References |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Organizational Resilience | Adaptive capacity/Adaptability; Ability to learn/Gain experience; Be prepared; Positive results; Agility; Leadership; Change/Willingness or commitment to survive; Communication/Collectivity and coordinated response. | McAslan (2010); Nogueira et al. (2017). |
| Adaptive Capacity | Flexibility and Agile Decision Making. | Drucker (1995). |
| Perceived Performance | Revenue and Market Share; Competitivity. | Singh et al. (2016); Crespo et al. (2019). |
| Family Business | Family control and influence, Identification of family members with the firm, Binding social ties, Emotional attachment, and Renewal of family bonds to the firm through dynastic succession. | <u>Berrone et al. (2012).</u> |

Source: the authors (2021)

Based on the categories listed above, the data collected was coded within each category in order to discern the interviewees' statements, as well as the documentary data from the literature. Through this, it was possible to distinguish which codings involved each research construct and, in this way, make it easier to understand the dynamics of the relationship between organizational resilience and the adaptive capacity of a family business from Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to sustain its performance amidst the pandemic caused by the coronavirus.

Finally, Bardin (2011) indicates treating the results obtained and interpreting them, thus making the raw results meaningful and valid. In the last step recommended

by the author, a synthesis and selection of the main results was performed, followed by inferences about the results. Finally, the analysis of the results was completed by interpreting the data. These results are explained in section 4, which deals with the analysis and discussion of the results.

7 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

This section presents the analysis and discussion of the relationship between organizational resilience and the adaptive capacity of the family business analyzed in this study. The crisis period analyzed contemplates the period from March to October 2020, when data collection was finalized. However, it should be noted that a new wave of coronavirus contamination has occurred, so there is still a crisis even after the data collection has been completed.

Organizational resilience can enable the anticipation of environmental trends (Annarelli & Nonino, 2016), or the development of an organizational posture of response to events in its environment (Burnard & Bhamra, 2011). As highlighted by Lengnick-Hall et al. (2011) and Nogueira and Melo (2017), organizational resilience can enable an effective adaptive process to its changing environment through its influence on the organization's ability to adapt, that is, provide a continuous adjustment to new environmental contexts (Drucker, 1995).

In the analyzed case of the family business, the crisis context emerged from changes in its external environment caused by the proliferation of the coronavirus as of March 2020. According to the organization's family manager, over the nearly 30 years of the company's operation, it has gone through several difficulties that needed to be circumvented in order to maintain it in the market, but none of these difficulties caused as much interference in the management of the business as the Covid-19 crisis.

The interference of the health crisis in the management of the business can be explained initially by socioemotional attributes, as the family manager said:

We are a family company and we are very close to the people; we are very proud to have this close bond [...], our decisions are very much guided by our feelings, by our heart. [...] And because we are a family business, the operation is very different from a non-family business, [...] (Family Manager).

The presence of the attributes binding social ties and emotional attachment highlighted by Berrone et al. (2012) is noticeable. These attributes are the main differentiators of how family companies make their decisions and how non-family companies make them, and, as seen before, decisions based on feelings can generate consequences for the family business. As an example of this, it is possible to highlight that the family manager also commented that she always tries not to disconnect employees from the company, especially in periods of crisis, because of their closeness and the feeling of belonging to the family that runs the business. This inherent behavior of family businesses makes coping strategies necessary (Burnard & Bhamra, 2011) to adapt to new environmental conditions (Drucker, 1995) to manage the business amidst severe crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

Such aspects from the socioemotional approach generated, at first, an attempt by the family company to prepare itself to face the changes that the pandemic would cause. Initially, according to Alfa Lanches' administrative manager, the company renegotiated contracts with its service providers, thus providing 90 days of discounts on monthly installments and a preparation for the health crisis that was beginning. Such anticipatory aspect is one of the premises of organizational resilience (Annarelli & Nonino, 2016). The authors point out that companies that seek to anticipate market trends tend to sustain themselves in their operating environment. In line with the anticipatory aspect, it is possible to add the view of Nogueira et al. (2017), that is, the issue of agility in the face of turbulent circumstances. These two points can be clearly seen in the family business analyzed; in the face of the sanitary crisis that emerged and amidst decrees restricting the company's operations and the circulation of people, Alfa Lanches sought to anticipate in an agile manner to withstand the crisis that was taking place in its environment.

However, the anticipatory decisions to face the Covid-19 crisis were not enough for the company not to face difficulties. As the months went by, the State Decrees became stricter regarding customer service and circulation, which affected Alfa Lanches' daily routine. In addition, the manager of the organization's mobile unit commented that the closing of the universities also affected the company's sales revenue, and also that the lack of information regarding Covid-19 was another factor that caused the decrease in orders and, consequently, of revenue. In addition, the following is a report from the family manager and another from the unit manager responsible for the Alfa Lanches delivery unit.

I think we were not prepared, we were caught by surprise [...], we did not have the understanding that this would take so long, and as time went by, we had to adapt to the situation. [...] besides the sanitary concern that we have, [...], there is also the fear of the economic situation, of keeping the business healthy and everything else (Family Manager).

For us here (at the delivery unit), winter is the best time, where we get a lot of orders, and when it rains especially... The deliveries do take longer to arrive because we are full of orders and deliveries to make, but this year there was a drop because of Covid (Delivery Unit Manager).

Faced with the pessimistic scenario regarding the actions taken previously, it was noted that Alfa Lanches changed its strategy from trying to anticipate environmental trends, since these did not have the necessary effect, to coping strategies. According to the family manager, the company started to offer promotions for its products and combos, and to produce digital content through lives to encourage customers to continue consuming, demonstrating the care taken regarding the hygiene of the work environment, as well as the employees who carry out the processes and deliveries.

Such coping strategies relate to what Burnard and Bhamra (2011) point out in their research, that is, organizational resilience cannot only be seen as a way for organizations to anticipate what will happen in their environment, but also as a way to cope with the scenario of disruption. In the case of the family business analyzed, such practice was notorious in the managerial action highlighted in the literature, since Alfa

Lanches employed strategies to sustain itself in the environment, keeping up with its commitments. Such a change in the organizational strategy through resilient dimensions influenced the company's adaptation to the health crisis context even with the reduced revenue scenario. In line with the findings, it is possible to see that such actions relate to the study by Carmeli and Sheaffer (2008), which points out that adaptive capacity refers to the ability of companies to respond to the changing environment.

The already pessimistic scenario, meanwhile, presented new turbulences after the moment depicted above. Between July and August 2020, the city that is home to the analyzed company was on lockdown, which caused customers to feel insecure, thus leading to further consequences to Alfa Lanches. Elucidating this moment, an excerpt from the interview with the family manager of the analyzed company is presented below.

I wrapped up the month of August yesterday (08/31) and it was horrible, because the red flag and then the lockdown caused a stir in people that led the consumption of external products to reduce drastically. In addition, people themselves spend less and try to save money for not knowing how tomorrow will be, if they will still have their jobs and everything else, and this affected us directly [...], so much so that, today, we no longer even talk about growth, we talk about not suffering a loss, pay the bills and stay alive (Family Manager).

Faced with the perception that the company needed to sustain itself during the pandemic, according to the family manager, the worst crisis the company has ever faced in its history, the option found was to reduce the number of employees to honor its commitments. The delivery unit manager commented that several employees who were on temporary contracts were dismissed from the company, thus reducing the number of employees - given the reduction in orders and revenue - but seeking to retain those who had been with the organization the longest.

In this way, Alfa Lanches achieved its maintenance in the troubled period while needing, in a way, to give up attributes that are present in a family company, such as binding social ties and emotional attachment, for the company to survive to the health crisis. This was possible through the coping strategies advocated by Burnard and Bhamra

(2011), which were highlighted earlier - from promotions to the reduction of employees - and that can be understood through the resilience dimensions of being prepared, agility and change/willingness or commitment to survive (McAslan, 2010; Nogueira et al, 2017). These dimensions enabled the adaptive process through actions decided and deployed quickly, as highlighted by Drucker (1995), which demonstrate a rapid reconfiguration of the way to run the organization daily to respond to changes in the environment, as Zhou and Li (2007) conclude in their study as being a good adaptation to the organizational context.

After this turbulent period, from the reports of the interviewed managers, prospects for improvement in the scenario were noted, from the increase in the number of orders and sales, to an increase in revenues, consequently. The manager responsible for the administration of the family business pointed out that the drops in sales were a result of the turbulent moment caused by the pandemic, not of the loss of customers to competitors, and that, as soon as the health crisis scenario was stabilized in the city from mid-September 2020, the company's revenue began to show signs of recovery. The manager responsible for Alfa Lanches' mobile unit commented that going through this crisis taught and showed the organization that it is possible to endure strong crises, even the unexpected ones. She further stated that: "if we can withstand a crisis as strong as this one, we can withstand any other".

The perspective cited by the mobile unit manager allows us to establish a parallel with the theory of resilience by Martins (2019) addressed in the literature review of this research, that is, that resilience can be understood as the return to a normal stage after going through an external stress, a fact that occurred in the company analyzed, considering the recovery pointed out earlier. It is also possible to compare this moment of resilience at Alfa Lanches with the ways that the company sought to survive, as indicated by Staw et al. (1981), with such ways ranging from anticipatory aspects, as indicated by Annarelli and Nonino (2016), to the search for survival from crisis coping strategies, as highlighted by Burnard and Bhamra (2011).

Another point in this analyzed trajectory of Alfa Lanches is the aspect of learning, highlighted by Nogueira et al. (2017), or gaining experience (Mc Aslan, 2010). For the authors, this dimension of organizational resilience is of utmost importance in facing future crises, considering that the knowledge or the experience acquired in that troubled period may be essential for future periods, based on the premise that managing a business with fewer resources in the middle of a crisis period is an excellent lesson for future periods, and this fact is also related to what the manager of the mobile unit commented. However, not only learning or experience in the form of actions can be seen as an aid in coping with crises. The family business analyzed in this case shows that, in addition to learning through actions, it is possible to learn better management methods. In addition, the dimension of communication manifests itself at this time, providing new ideas for the organization's prior preparation (Mc Aslan, 2010; Nogueira et al., 2017) on how to deal with stressful situations (Jakimovski et al., 2022), the which reverberates in the trust that the family manager maintains with the other members of the company, reinforcing the unity of social ties in the theory of socio-emotional wealth (Berone et al., 2012). These facts are presented from the reports of the family manager and the manager responsible for the company's administration:

I think that, unfortunately, this is not an Alpha thing, but we (companies in general) usually don't have the habit of putting money away, of making savings for future crisis situations. In the face of all this uncertainty, the most correct thing to do is to put money aside to face situations like this and, for sure, this is something that I will take with me for future moments, to face future crises (Family Manager).

I can also mention that the company makes decisions quickly and acts in this agile way, always trying to be aware of what is happening outside the company [...], but of course all this must be accompanied with good cash management, always saving as much as possible in these crises. [...]. The family manager thinks a lot ahead, she is always on to overcome all these moments, we learn a lot from her, but she always thinks about everything, she has decisions that only she makes, she listens to the managers, but only she can make, seeking be quick to get around any eventuality. And also, if she has an idea, she passes it on to the girls to hear their opinions and then the decision is made, this when you don't need to decide right away, right? She listens to everyone, it's a feeling of team, team, family in here that the function of the family business

facilitates all this and helps us to face these situations (Manager Responsible for the Administration).

As it is a company in the food sector, the organization faced few situations of impossibility to serve its customers through Municipal and State Decrees. At first, this could lead to a feeling of few consequences of the pandemic. However, given the economic situation that the pandemic has provided, it is clear that Alfa Lanches was not prepared to face the changes arising from the Covid-19 pandemic due to the lack of financial reserves for a moment like this, thus generating a situation learning for future situations.

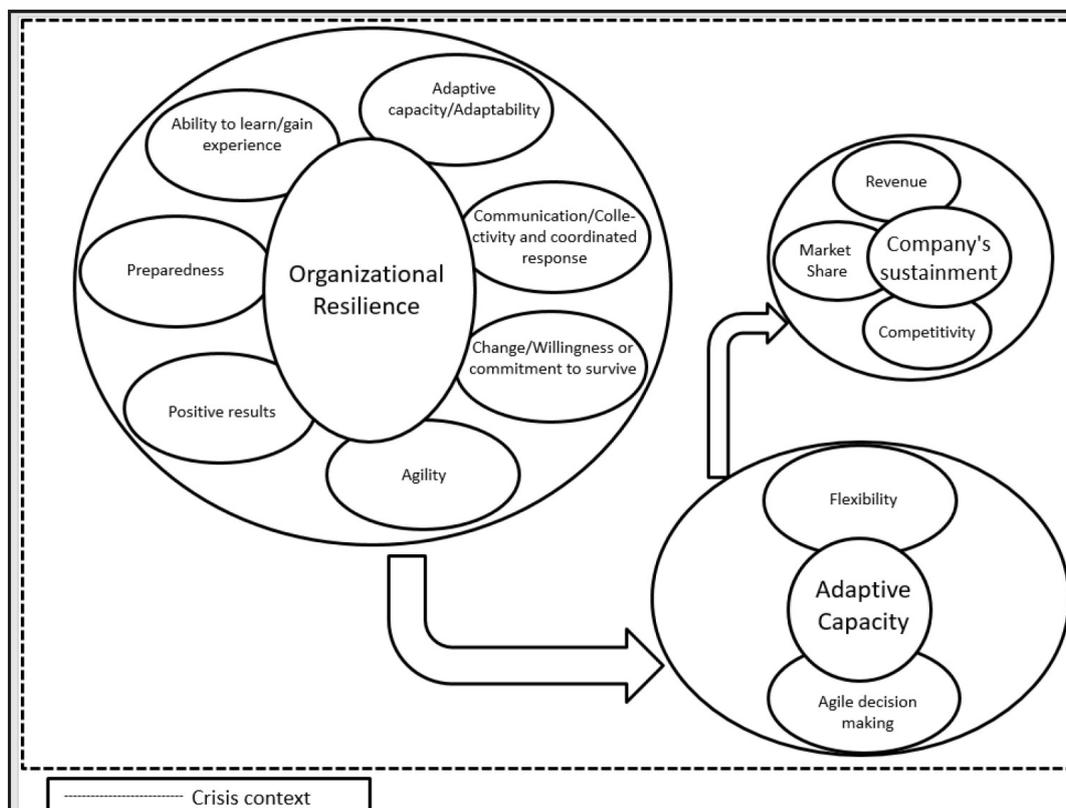
From this, it is also noticeable that Alfa Lanches needed to be able to adapt to this situation, which was achieved through the characteristic of agility in the decision-making of the family manager in the face of external events, seeking to minimize the impacts of the pandemic. In addition, in the aforementioned reports, it is noted that communication between members of management and operations enables a better adaptation to the environment, since the experiences of other actors can provide ideas not previously thought of, strengthening the capacity for adaptation through their relationship with organizational resilience.

The relationship between organizational resilience and adaptive capacity in the search for sustainment in the health crisis was evident in the case of Alfa Lanches. This finding is supported by Herbane (2019), who points out that organizational resilience involves an adaptive process to crises through the agile characteristic in adapting the previously proposed strategic planning for the business. It is also possible to mention, although under other conditions and different object of study, that the work of Nogueira and Melo (2017) found evidence of high levels of resilience enabled through adaptive capacity. This finding is justified by the authors with the perception of the external environmental moment in which the organization found itself, which allowed it to adapt to the changes that occurred in its environment.

Given the aspects presented and discussed throughout this section, the interrelation between organizational resilience and adaptive capacity is evident, a factor that allowed Alfa Lanches to sustain itself in the Covid-19 crisis. Thus, based on the findings that emerged from the field, a framework was developed (Figure 5) as a way to illustrate the relationship between organizational resilience and adaptive capacity in the case of Alfa Lanches, considering the context of seeking to maintain activities during a health crisis.

Figure 5 shows the relationship between the constructs analyzed in this study, with the aim of showing how the analyzed elements of organizational resilience (adaptive capacity/adaptability, learning ability/gaining experience, being prepared, positive results, agility, leadership, change/willingness or commitment to survive, communication/collectiveness and coordinated response) bring out the adaptive capacity (flexibility, agile decision-making), enabling adaptation and, thus, providing support for the organization (revenue and market share, and competitiveness) in the face of to a period of crisis.

Figure 5 – Empirical findings framework



Source: the authors (2021)

Finally, it is important to highlight that the findings are in line with the evidence of the study by Nogueira et al. (2017), which found that organizational resilience associated with the ability of organizations to adapt to turbulent environments enables an effective adaptive and sustaining process of the organization to its environment. It is also possible to state, in agreement with the authors, that these two constructs are becoming indispensable for studies involving risks or crises in the environment in which the companies are inserted.

8 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research addressed the relationship between organizational resilience and adaptive capacity and its influence on sustaining the family business analyzed in the midst of the health crisis period caused by the coronavirus. From this investigation, it was possible to understand the dynamics of the relationship between organizational resilience and adaptive capacity of a family company from Rio Grande do Sul, aiming to sustain its performance in the midst of the pandemic caused by the coronavirus. Additionally, this investigation included the socioemotional aspect, present in family businesses, to understand how the organization adapted to turbulent situations through the influence of resilient characteristics and behaviors present or developed during its period in the market, creating a “new fact” for this article.

The turbulent changes that occurred in the organizational environment with the economic crisis and, especially, with the health crisis caused by Covid-19 led to several changes in the organization studied. Although the theory of organizational resilience highlights the anticipatory and survival aspects of companies seeking to adapt to environments in crisis, through the findings of this research, we can also highlight the issue of learning. This was the main factor taken into account by the managers, regarding potential crises after the current one, since, after what was faced in this crisis, it is possible to overcome future ones through the union of these three aspects within the organizational adaptive process, with the influence

of these aspects in the reorganization of the company's configurations to respond to its environment.

As a conclusion of this investigation, it is possible to point out two aspects that contribute to the theory on the topic. The first comprises an empirical study in a family business working simultaneously with the constructs organizational resilience, adaptive capacity and perceived performance, which was found only in the study by Beech et al. (2020), addressed in a theoretical way. Based on this premise, it is also noteworthy that the authors have indicated, as future research, understanding how family businesses are able to learn and develop capabilities that improve their preparedness for future events. Based on this, it is possible to position such contributions as relevant for research in the field of strategy using organizational resilience and adaptive capacity, especially given the moment of health crisis experienced since the beginning of the pandemic. Complementarily, the reading of the research findings in the light of the socio-emotional approach of business family members can also be pointed out as an element that contributes to the advancement of knowledge about the researched themes.

In addition to the contributions listed as theoretical, the results obtained in this study present managerial contributions for coping with crises in family and non-family companies. The first one involves the attitude of the managers of the family organization analyzed, concerning the adaptation to the environment in order to sustain its market performance through quick actions and to be prepared for changes, aiming, when possible, at anticipating possible environmental disturbances or sustaining the environment in which it operates. Finally, the learning aspect is also highlighted, since, with the lessons learned from previous crises, it is possible for organizations to suffer less with future environmental disturbances, and thus sustain themselves in the market in which they operate.

As for the limitations of this research, we highlight the non-participation of the researchers effectively in the field, due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. This fact prevented the expansion of data triangulation, in order to achieve a more

reliable portrait of the reality analyzed, since it was not possible to be in the field for the non-participant observation technique in the environment where the family company operates.

For future studies, we highlight three possible fronts: (i) we suggest an analysis of adaptive capacity in the light of contingency theory; (ii) Researchers are also encouraged to replicate this study with a new look, when the Covid-19 crisis is effectively overcome, after the application of immunizers; And (iii) analyze how the resilient characteristic of learning generates knowledge, providing or not overcoming periods of crisis.

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| 2. Development of hypotheses or research questions (empirical studies) | √ | √ | | | |
| 3. Development of theoretical propositions (theoretical work) | √ | √ | √ | | |
| 4. Theoretical foundation / Literature review | √ | √ | | | |
| 5. Definition of methodological procedures | √ | √ | | √ | |
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