



# Unlocking Entrepreneurial Resilience: Investigating the Role of Strategic Frameworks in Strengthening the Independence and Resilience of MSMEs

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**Abstract.** This study aims to identify the critical success factors that affect the effectiveness of strategic frameworks in enhancing the resilience and independence of Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs), with a particular focus on the role of digitalization. Data were gathered through interviews with key informants and additional informants using a structured list of questions. The primary informant in this research was the Head of the SMEs Division at the Department of Industry, Trade, and Cooperatives in Palu City, while additional informants included SME practitioners from various business sectors, such as health services, culinary, and handicrafts. Secondary data sources were obtained through the review and analysis of various documents related to SME development at both local and national levels. This study employed a qualitative research methodology, and the data analysis process utilized the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman & Saldana, followed by validity checks of the findings and conclusions.

**Keywords:** Strategic Framework, Business Resilience, MSMEs.

## 1 Introduction

In today's business environment, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are key drivers of economic growth and job creation [1,2]. However, these businesses encounter numerous obstacles, such as limited resource access, market instability, and external challenges [3,4]. Entrepreneurial resilience is essential for these enterprises to endure and succeed in such conditions [5]. Some studies emphasize that resilient MSMEs can quickly adapt and recover from difficulties [6], while others stress the importance of building long-term self-reliance and independence [7]. Exploring strategies that cultivate both independence and flexibility is critical for MSMEs' sustainable development, making strategic frameworks a promising tool to investigate.

Strategic business frameworks, such as the Business Model Canvas (BMC), have gained recognition for their ability to help entrepreneurs visualize, analyze, and strengthen their business models [8]. These frameworks enable MSMEs to define their value propositions, customer segments, revenue sources, and key activities [9]. Research by Reis et al. [10] suggests that strategic frameworks like the BMC help MSMEs identify weaknesses in their business models, promoting the adaptability

required to navigate dynamic market conditions. However, Sosna et al. [11] caution that an overemphasis on adaptability may undermine independence, as it can dilute the uniqueness and competitive advantage of the business.

Several studies have examined the role of business frameworks like the BMC in enhancing MSMEs' resilience across various industries and regions, with positive outcomes. Pham et al. [3] reported that MSMEs employing the BMC demonstrated stronger financial performance and higher survival rates during economic downturns. Conversely, Giourka et al. [12] highlighted that the framework's effectiveness varies across industries and does not always lead to improved resilience. Furthermore, Gamble et al. [13] found that the BMC's impact on independence depends significantly on how its components are strategically aligned with the firm's core strengths.

While many studies recognize the value of the BMC for MSME survival and growth [8], others present contradictory findings. For example, Madhavan et al. [14] argue that the BMC may not be universally applicable, with its success contingent on industry-specific factors. Moreover, comparative research between the BMC and other business modeling approaches, such as Lean Startup and SWOT analysis, is limited [15], leaving unanswered questions about which approach is most effective in fostering MSME resilience. This research aims to explore how strategic frameworks like the BMC contribute to MSME resilience and independence, providing a comparative perspective on their advantages in coping with market disruptions and external challenges.

This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of how MSMEs can use strategic frameworks to enhance their survival, resilience, and independence. It offers practical insights for entrepreneurs, policymakers, and support organizations by examining the unique advantages that frameworks like the BMC provide, while addressing the contextual factors influencing their effectiveness in diverse industries and regions.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Strategic Management

Strategic management has always been a fundamental aspect of business operations, helping organizations achieve competitive advantage and sustainable growth. Over time, numerous theories and models have emerged to enhance strategic decision-making. Two of the most influential frameworks are the Resource-Based View (RBV) by Barney [16], which emphasizes leveraging internal resources and capabilities, and Porter's Five Forces model [17], which focuses on external forces influencing a company's competitive position. These approaches, while impactful, differ in focus, leading to ongoing debates in the field [18].

The evolution of strategic management theories can be traced back to the work of Hoskisson et al. [19], who advocated for structured and long-term strategies. This laid the groundwork for later strategic planning research [20]. Kaplan and Norton's [21] balanced scorecard further shifted the strategic focus towards a more holistic approach to performance measurement. Each theory has built on the foundation of its

predecessors, demonstrating the evolving and dynamic nature of strategic management [22].

A key debate in strategic management revolves around the balance between environmental determinism and strategic choice. Proponents of environmental determinism, such as Hillman et al. [23], argue that external factors predominantly shape organizational strategy. In contrast, advocates of strategic choice, such as Beckert [24], highlight the role of managerial agency in influencing strategy. This tension continues to be central in strategic management, particularly in the context of MSMEs, which must navigate external constraints while making agile managerial decisions [25].

In the context of MSMEs, the balance between environmental determinism and strategic choice is especially relevant. As Keffel [25] suggests, MSMEs must constantly adapt to external constraints while making strategic decisions with limited resources. MSMEs face heightened uncertainty, necessitating flexible and strategic choices to ensure resilience and growth [26]. This adaptability, as Antony & Bhattacharyya [27] point out, often results in an "adaptive synergy" that drives MSME growth by combining environmental awareness with effective managerial decisions.

## 2.2 Entrepreneurial Capabilities

Entrepreneurial capability has been identified as a key factor in business growth. Studies [28] have shown that businesses with strong entrepreneurial capabilities tend to achieve superior market performance. This capability encompasses the ability to identify and exploit market opportunities [29]. Entrepreneurial capability accelerates innovation and the development of new market opportunities, thus enhancing organizational performance.

Entrepreneurial competence is often described as a combination of innovation, risk-taking, and strategic foresight [30]. The ability to access resources, take calculated risks, and demonstrate leadership are crucial components of entrepreneurial capability [31]. This capability is closely linked to improved innovation performance and enhanced knowledge management [32].

Entrepreneurial competence also benefits small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Research indicates that SMEs with high levels of entrepreneurial capability are more responsive to environmental changes and are better able to thrive in dynamic markets [33]. According to Manfield and Newey [34], resilience, defined as a positive response to adversity, plays a critical role in the entrepreneurial success of businesses.

## 2.3 Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

MSMEs often adopt diverse strategies to assert their independence in competitive environments [35]. Traditional resource-based theories focus on the role of tangible and intangible assets in building competitive advantage [18,36]. However, Troise et al. [37] argue that MSMEs achieve greater independence through strategic flexibility and adaptability, rather than purely resource-based approaches.

The concept of resilience, which is essential for MSME survival, refers to the ability of an enterprise to recover from adversity [6]. Classical theories like those of Kirkland & Chandler [38] emphasize organizational structure and efficiency as key elements of resilience. Recent research, such as that by Antai & Eze [39], highlights the importance of relational resilience, suggesting that MSMEs strengthen their resilience by nurturing robust supplier-customer relationships and fostering collaborative networks.

There are various perspectives on how supplier-customer relationships contribute to MSME innovation. Early studies underscore the role of these relationships in facilitating knowledge transfer and collaboration [40]. More recent research, however, indicates that innovation can also flourish in competitive environments where MSMEs engage with diverse stakeholders [41]. Thus, MSMEs can continue to innovate and compete through technology and collaborative efforts that enhance their resilience and capacity for innovation [42].

### 3 Method

This qualitative study aims to explore the impact of strategic frameworks on the resilience and independence of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Palu City. The research begins by providing an overview of changes observed in the business models of participating MSMEs, focusing on the nine key elements of strategic frameworks. The study captures MSME owners' insights, particularly their understanding of these elements and their relevance in a competitive industry environment [43].

MSMEs typically operate with focused, often singular business outcomes, which are overseen by top-level managers. This contrasts with the more complex structures found in larger organizations [44]. To overcome the limitation of relying on single key informants, who may not fully capture the complexities of organizational phenomena [45,46], this study employed a qualitative approach. Qualitative methods are well-suited to explore managerial issues in detail and provide rich data that extend existing research [47,48]. Given the limited research on the effects of strategic frameworks on MSMEs, particularly in the context of new technologies, a multi-case study design was chosen to contextualize findings, enable cross-case comparison, and increase the reliability of the results [49].

#### 3.1 Data Collection

This study employed in-depth semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. Semi-structured interviews offer several advantages: they allow for flexibility in questioning, provide deeper insights into individual perspectives, and encourage participants to share more detailed information than in group settings [50]. This approach ensures that each participant can express their unique views and experiences without being influenced by others, which is particularly important when exploring sensitive or strategic topics like business model adaptation and resilience.

A representative sample of MSMEs was selected using data from relevant government agencies [47,48,49]. These MSMEs were chosen for their competitive

business models and potential for growth, as it can be difficult to assess competing business models within the same company [51]. Interviews were conducted with key decision-makers, such as CEOs and business owners, who were well-positioned to provide insights into their companies' strategic choices [52].

### 3.2 Interview Process

The interview guide, developed based on the research objectives, consisted of two parts: the first part gathered background information about the company and the interviewee, and the second part focused on the business owner's knowledge and use of strategic frameworks, along with their perceptions of resilience and adaptability. The interviews were conducted over two phases, allowing participants to reflect on their responses and share additional insights in follow-up sessions. This iterative process ensured richer, more nuanced data. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes, depending on the depth of responses.

### 3.3 Data Triangulation

In addition to the interviews, secondary data from publicly available documents and internal company records were used to triangulate findings. This approach helped validate the qualitative data and ensured the robustness of the conclusions [47,53,54].

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. After the interviews were transcribed, they were coded and categorized based on recurring themes and patterns related to strategic frameworks, resilience, and adaptability [55]. This systematic analysis allowed for a deeper understanding of how MSMEs in Palu City adapt their business models to enhance their resilience and independence.

All participating companies met the criteria for MSMEs as defined by the MSME Research Institute of Indonesia: a maximum of 100 employees and an annual turnover not exceeding IDR 50 billion [56].

In total, 40 MSMEs participated, including 20 from the food and beverage sector, 13 from the creative industry, and 7 from the beauty industry.

### 3.5 Research Model

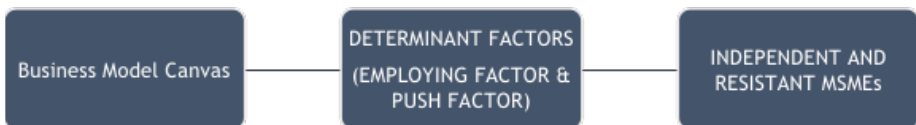


Figure 1. Research Model

## 4 Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Identifying the Nine Elements of Strategic Frameworks

The findings from our study on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Palu City provide insights into the application of strategic frameworks across key business elements. The following are the results based on the analysis of nine core business components:

**Customer Segments.** MSMEs in Palu target a wide range of customer segments, encompassing individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds. A large portion of their customers comes from both local and regional markets, including neighboring cities. Customers tend to purchase products for personal use or as gifts, and sales are often conducted through direct interactions at physical stores or via individual resellers.

**Value Propositions.** The MSMEs in Palu offer a diverse range of products, including food and beverages, handicrafts, clothing, accessories, and beauty products. These products reflect the local culture and traditions, providing unique selling points that distinguish them from competitors. Additionally, MSMEs focus on providing affordable products accessible to customers from lower- and middle-income groups, which adds to their market appeal.

**Channels.** The main distribution channels for MSMEs in Palu include direct sales at physical stores, participation in government-sponsored bazaars and expos, and partnerships with local businesses. MSMEs also increasingly utilize digital platforms such as social media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook) to promote their products and reach a broader audience. These digital platforms provide additional avenues for building customer relationships and increasing brand visibility.

**Customer Relationships.** MSMEs in Palu emphasize building strong, long-term relationships with their customers, primarily through direct, personalized interactions at their shops and with resellers. Social media also plays a key role in nurturing customer loyalty and expanding customer reach, as businesses engage directly with customers online and address inquiries or feedback promptly.

**Revenue Streams.** The primary revenue sources for MSMEs in Palu come from direct sales in physical stores and through individual resellers. While digital platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, also contribute to revenue generation, face-to-face transactions remain the dominant source of income. Exhibitions and bazaars also serve as important revenue-generating opportunities.

**Key Resources.** The MSMEs in Palu leverage local resources, such as raw materials sourced from the region's natural resources and cultural heritage, which are central to their product offerings. The ability to craft high-quality, distinctive products also serves as a significant resource, enabling MSMEs to maintain their competitiveness in the market.

**Key Activities.** MSMEs engage in essential activities, including product manufacturing, packaging, marketing, and distribution. Innovation and continuous product development are prioritized to maintain competitiveness and meet evolving customer demands. MSMEs have also adopted digital marketing strategies to complement traditional advertising efforts.

**Key Partnerships.** MSMEs in Palu have established strategic partnerships with both local and external suppliers. Collaborating with local suppliers allows them to obtain high-quality raw materials at reasonable prices, while partnerships with other stakeholders help to expand their operational capacity and market reach.

**Cost Structure.** Although not mentioned directly in the previous sections, it is important to note that MSMEs face challenges in managing production costs, especially with rising raw material prices and limited access to advanced production tools. The study found that some MSMEs have sought partnerships or collaborated with government programs to alleviate financial constraints.

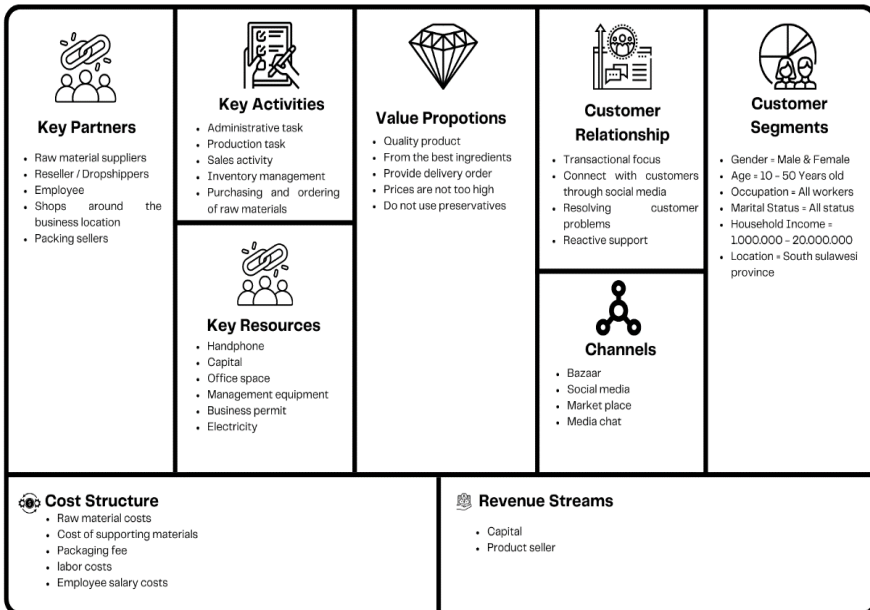


Figure 2. Business Model Canvas Initial Version

4.2 SWOTAnalysis

**Customer Segment.** The strength of MSMEs in Palu lies in their broad and diverse customer base, offering products at affordable prices to a wide range of socio-economic groups. Promotional efforts are tailored to different segments, which enhances market reach. However, a significant weakness is the lack of focus on specific customer segments, which limits the ability to cater to niche markets. There are opportunities to tap into unique customer needs and capitalize on increasing purchasing power. Nevertheless, the threat of heightened competition and economic fluctuations affecting consumer spending remains a challenge.

**Channel (Distribution Channel).** MSMEs in Palu benefit from strong customer relationships, efficient interactions with staff, popular promotional activities, and a responsive approach to customer inquiries and complaints. These factors have helped

to build a loyal customer base. However, the businesses face challenges in maintaining long-term loyalty from customers in certain segments, and the need to improve the speed of responses remains a concern. Opportunities include increasing purchase frequency and encouraging product recommendations. On the other hand, competitors with more attractive promotional programs pose a threat to maintaining customer engagement.

**Value Propositions.** MSMEs in Palu offer a wide variety of products with timely and high-quality service, alongside well-executed product packaging. However, weaknesses include limited accessibility to products and a relatively low level of brand recognition. Opportunities lie in a market that is constantly seeking quality products, with competitors not offering similar goods and rare items being in demand. The primary threats include new market entrants and substitute products that may erode market share.

**Key Partners.** Key partners of MSMEs in Palu provide easy access to raw materials, support through strong relationships with suppliers, competent employees, and strategic collaborations with key partners, such as government bodies and banks. However, the businesses suffer from a lack of investors or financiers, remote business locations, and non-strategic sales venues, along with the absence of formal standard operating procedures. Opportunities exist in government programs supporting MSMEs and the availability of training and business assistance initiatives. Nevertheless, threats such as more established competitors, the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and rapid technological advancements pose challenges.

**Key Resources.** The strengths of MSMEs include having proper business licenses, established brand recognition within the community, and a variety of physical assets. However, they struggle with limited financial capital, inadequate business facilities, and a brand that is not yet well-known outside of local markets. Raising brand awareness and securing additional financial resources are key opportunities for growth.

**Key Activities.** MSMEs benefit from relatively simple production processes, but these are often conventional and outdated. Moving towards more innovative and efficient methods represents a major opportunity for these businesses to enhance their productivity and competitiveness.

**Cost Structure.** The ability of MSMEs to differentiate between fixed and variable costs is a strength, as is the preparation of budgets for unexpected expenses. The ability to lower costs when production volume increases further supports cost efficiency. However, the businesses face weaknesses in accurately estimating costs, a lack of contingency funds, and limited knowledge of variable costs. Opportunities for improvement include adopting financial management tools, while threats such as rising electricity and water costs, as well as expensive raw materials, remain significant concerns.

**Revenue Streams.** MSMEs in Palu enjoy the strength of reliable business payment methods and revenue generated through both offline and online channels. However, weaknesses include the failure to generate sufficient income to cover capital and the vulnerability to being misled by new market methods. Opportunities lie in serving markets that seek lower-priced goods and expanding income opportunities through marketplaces. Nonetheless, the constant pressure to offer lower prices and intense competition in the market pose ongoing threats to sustainable revenue growth.

**Four Action Framework / ERRC Analysis.** ERRC analysis was first introduced by Kim & Mauborgne (2017), this analysis is a strategic framework that helps analyze and evaluate the components of a business model, it stands for Eliminate, Reduce, Raise, and Create. When applied to the Business Model Canvas (BMC), the ERRC analysis provides a structured approach to identify areas for improvement and innovation within the business model (Fajar Wahyudi, 2019). Furthermore, ERRC analysis helped startups identify unnecessary or outdated components of their business models (Eliminate), optimize existing elements to reduce costs and complexities (Reduce), identify opportunities to enhance value and differentiation (Raise), and explore new possibilities for innovation and growth (Create) (Oh et al., 2022). The following is the ERRC analysis in this study:

*Customer Segmentation*

- Create = Niche markets
- Eliminate = The segment divide is too large
- Raise = Same pricing for all segments
- Decrease = Products that are identical to those of rivals in some markets

*Channels*

- Create = effective connection with loyal customers, discounts or promotions for loyal customers, create a loyalty member or community
- Eliminate = slow and hostile customer service personnel
- Raise = Good customer relationships, Popular promotions, Responsive and communicative staff

*Customer Relations*

- Create = Promotions, discounts, and special pricing for exhibition activities, Extend product marketing reach.
- Raise = Brand recognition on social media
- Decrease Indirect advertising on markets

*Value Propositions*

- Create = New product: a customizable or on-demand product, High quality products, Cost reduction, Expand product marketing reach
- Eliminate = Products that are not selling well
- Raise = Product variants, Serving accuracy, Product packaging
- Key Partner
- Create = A positive relationship with the government supporting small and medium-sized businesses, training for workers from professional institutions
- Eliminate = Non-strategic location
- Raise = Supplier relationship, successful staff performance
- Decrease = The availability of raw resources for manufacturing is unknown

*Key Resources*

- Eliminate = Undefined costs
- Raise = Brand strength: bolster advertising efforts

*Key Activities*

- Eliminate = Conventional manufacturing method
- Raise = Productivity and effectiveness in production

*Cost Structure*

- Create = Utilizing financial management software / apps
- Eliminate = Undefined costs
- Raise = Prepare a contingency budget, boosting production
- Decrease = Production expense, utilization of energy and water

*Revenue Stream*

- Create = Products at economical rates
- Eliminate = Payment procedure upon goods receipt. (COD).
- Raise = Simple payment, product sale
- Decrease = Products that are too costly

### 4.3 The New Business Model Canvas

The updated business model canvas consists of nine key elements, each incorporating insights from the SWOT and ERRC analyses, aligned with the strategic focus on MSME resilience and independence in Palu City. The following outlines adjustments to the business model:

**Customer Segmentation.** In the new model, businesses should focus on developing niche markets to target specific customer needs more effectively. This approach will help eliminate overly broad customer segments, enabling companies to fine-tune their offerings. Businesses can raise their pricing strategy by applying consistent pricing across all segments, while reducing their reliance on products that are too similar to competitors' offerings.

**Channels.** To strengthen distribution channels, companies should focus on creating deeper connections with loyal customers by offering discounts, promotions, and even establishing loyalty programs or communities. Eliminating inefficient or slow customer service processes will improve customer experience, while prioritizing positive relationships and responsive, communicative staff can enhance customer retention and satisfaction.

**Customer Relations.** Improving customer relations can be achieved through the creation of promotional activities, special pricing for loyal customers, and extending marketing efforts via exhibitions and online platforms. Companies should focus on raising their brand recognition, particularly through social media, while reducing dependence on indirect advertising in traditional markets to maximize cost-efficiency.

**Value Propositions.** To enhance their value propositions, businesses should introduce customizable or on-demand products, prioritize high-quality offerings, and work on reducing operational costs. Expanding product marketing reach and eliminating underperforming products are critical for optimizing value. Additionally, focusing on product variants, improving service accuracy, and enhancing product packaging will further raise the brand's appeal.

**Key Partners.** Building stronger partnerships will be crucial. Companies should establish stronger ties with the government and seek training opportunities for their workforce. Eliminating partnerships with non-strategic locations and focusing on improving supplier relationships and staff performance will contribute to operational success. Addressing uncertainties related to raw material availability will help stabilize production processes.

**Key Resources.** Businesses need to optimize their key resources by eliminating undefined costs and bolstering their brand strength through advertising and promotional efforts. By reducing undefined expenses, companies can streamline their operations and focus on more profitable areas. Increasing brand awareness will help boost customer loyalty, resulting in higher revenue and profitability.

**Key Activities.** To remain competitive, MSMEs in Palu should eliminate outdated manufacturing practices and adopt innovative methods to improve productivity and operational efficiency. Enhancing these key activities will contribute to long-term sustainability and market growth.

**Cost Structure.** In terms of cost management, businesses should implement financial management tools and prepare contingency budgets. This will help reduce unnecessary expenses, optimize energy and resource use, and ultimately boost production efficiency. Addressing cost structure improvements will be critical in maintaining competitive pricing while managing rising production costs.

**Revenue Streams.** To enhance revenue streams, businesses should prioritize affordable pricing strategies, implement straightforward payment procedures, and actively promote product sales. Reducing reliance on expensive product offerings and eliminating cash-on-delivery (COD) payment methods will help streamline revenue collection and improve overall financial performance.

### Business Model Canvas



**Figure 3.** Business Model Canvas New Version

#### 4.4 Discussion

This study highlights the transformative impact of strategic frameworks on how MSMEs in Palu City approach their business operations, particularly in times of crisis. Drawing on elements of frameworks such as the Business Model Canvas (BMC), MSMEs can identify vulnerabilities, develop contingency plans, and enhance their resilience. This comprehensive approach allows businesses to reassess customer segments, value propositions, and other critical components to remain agile and responsive in challenging environments [57].

One key benefit of the strategic framework is its ability to help MSMEs anticipate and mitigate risks during crises. By closely examining each element of their business model, MSMEs can adjust their value proposition and customer engagement strategies to align with shifting market demands [58,59]. Additionally, optimizing cost structures and resource management has proven vital for maintaining operational stability [60].

Collaboration and partnerships also play an important role in resilience building. The findings emphasize that strong alliances with suppliers, distributors, and other stakeholders enable MSMEs to pool resources and share knowledge to overcome crisis-related challenges [61]. Strategic partnerships foster innovation and collective problem-solving, further enhancing business continuity.

### 5 Conclusion

#### 5.1 Conclusion

To enhance MSME resilience, higher education institutions should consider incorporating strategic business frameworks, such as the Business Model Canvas, into their curricula. This would equip future entrepreneurs with the skills to navigate crises while fostering independence and business growth. Further research should focus on identifying the best methods to teach and implement these strategies.

#### 5.2 Limitations

Although the strategic frameworks, particularly the BMC, offer valuable insights for MSMEs, this approach may not suit all businesses. Some entrepreneurs may struggle to grasp the concept of "value," limiting the effectiveness of the framework. Additionally, the BMC may not be universally applicable across all sectors, suggesting that it should be adapted to meet specific needs. Therefore, caution should be exercised when generalizing these findings from case studies.

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