

# Cultivating Resiliency and Agility: A Vital Characteristics of Enactus-Bulacan State University

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## Abstract

Entrepreneurial Action Us-Bulacan State University (EnActUs-BulSU) is a recognized university-wide student organization that aims to reach out to communities that need empowerment through social entrepreneurship. From its inception in 2011 to its current state, the Enactus-BulSU has been striving to achieve its mandate and objectives, despite problems and challenges in sustaining its projects, funding, membership retention, annual changes in leadership, and keeping the organization compliant to requirements of the university. This study aims to assess the internal and external factors that help cultivate resiliency in the organization and its agility in response to changes and challenges. A mixed-method design was applied using quantitative and qualitative techniques in data gathering. A survey questionnaire was prepared to quantitatively determine how resiliency and agility are cultivated in an organization. To corroborate the results of the survey, focused group discussion with the current officers and document analysis were also conducted. The results show that the following cultivate resiliency having the highest weighted mean; a clear purpose of an organization that motivates members and officers to survive anything; strong support from the faculty adviser; the willingness of members to contribute anything possible to accomplish any project. On the other hand, agility is cultivated through the following; our organization considers legality above everything; our organization conducts assessment and pre-planning before initiating any plans and activity. It is also recommended to conduct a further study on the correlation of organizational practices that develops resiliency and agility to organizational performance, such as members' retention, project success, and other key performance indicators.

**Keywords:** Resilience, Agility, Enactus, Characteristics, Organizational

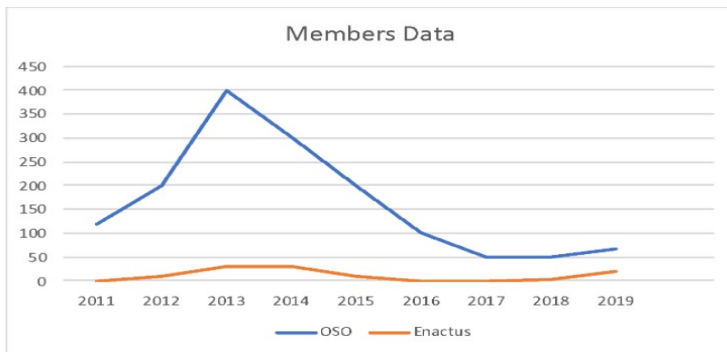
# 1 Introduction

The Bulacan State University, which is commonly referred to as BulSU, is a state-operated institution of higher learning in the Central Luzon region in the Philippines. The main campus is located in the City of Malolos, Bulacan. BulSU originated as a secondary school in 1904, ran by the Americans, and has now progressed into one of the biggest educational institutions in Region III. The University is mandated to provide higher professional, technical training and promote research, advanced studies, and progressive leadership. The University fosters the holistic development of the students and supports the establishment of a diverse student organization that will hone the talents, skills, knowledge, and advocacies of the students. Student organizations are categorized as either university-wide or collegewide. The organization's scope, purpose, and target members are the basis of its category. The Entrepreneurial Action Us or commonly known as Enactus BulSU, is one of the recognized university-wide organizations that officers students an opportunity to develop a community and a chance to change the world for a better place. From its inception in 2011, the organization has experienced challenges that have taught significant value to its officers, members, and the entire organization. These challenges have shaped the organization into what it is now today.

Our normal biological response to change is to fight it. We seek balance and routine, and the more we can keep our lives stable, the better we feel [1]. According to records, the Enactus-Bulsu had experienced a tremendous decline in membership. Figure 1 shows the membership status of each batch.

It can be gleaned in the graph, that in 2017, we have hit the floor with regards to the number of members participating in the Enactus Philippines. However, the student organization is now recovering as its membership had increased and the number of members participating actively to the projects of Enactus BulSU.

Another challenge identified is the lack of support from the ad-



**Figure 1. Recorded Members in BulSU OSO and Enactus Philippines**

ministration, especially on funding. The Enactus BulSU student organization sources its fund primarily from its membership fees collected from members and income-generating projects, which is based on the approval of the administration. Income-generating projects include selling organizational t-shirt, conducting seminars, and selling items or goods. However, these are not enough to support all the projects and events of the organization.

The most difficult challenge that almost all student organizations have experienced is the fact that officers and leaders are still students who have a responsibility to make a good grade in their academics. Their time and efforts are twice demanded by the organization and their eagerness to perform well in their academics.

Finally, establishing and maintaining a community project requires financial support, efforts, time, knowledge, and energy to continuously monitor and guide the community in every step towards success. The students Enactus members must balance their time and energy to ensure the projects' completion, and it includes sourcing of funds to finance all the necessary procedures and events.

## 2 Methodology

The study is founded on the concept of organizational change that includes change in the officers after an academic year, change in the membership, that from a regular active member to alumni, change in the project that is beyond control, and other factors that will result to modification or alteration of the usual practice or plans. Organization change might also focus on any of the basic components of organization structure or on the organization's whole design [4]. Since change is inevitable, an organization's strategy is to boost its agility to overcome challenges and mitigate their effects and cultivate the value of resilience to embrace the change.



**Figure 2. The Conceptual Framework**

Resilience refers to the capacity of the organization to adapt or recover quickly from any difficulties or challenges[5]. On the other hand, agility refers to the ability of the organization to move towards embracing changes in a positive way while keeping its vision and identity as an organization.

The study aims to identify the observed practices that cultivate resilience and agility. A descriptive mixed-method design was applied using quantitative and qualitative techniques in data gathering. An online survey questionnaire was prepared and answered by current and former members and current and former officers of the Enactus BulSU to quantitatively determine how resiliency and agility are cultivated in an organization. To corroborate the results of the survey, focused group discussions with the current officers and document analysis were also conducted. The survey questionnaire consisted of 19 items and demographic items to describe the organization during

their time. The questionnaire is an adaptation of the study of John McCannof Jacksonville University and James Lee of the University of Tampa entitled Building Agility, Resilience and Performance in Turbulent Environments[6].

A total of eight past presidents plus the current president of Enactus-Bulsu served as the key informants of the study. A total of 50 active members participated in the online survey. Most of them play a role in the organization either as an officer, team presenters, project leaders, or volunteers.

### 3 Results and Discussion

The result of the online survey questionnaire reveals the following observed practices that cultivate the character resilience: a clear purpose of the organization strongly motivates members and officers to survive anything; strong support from the faculty adviser; the willingness of members to contribute anything possible to accomplish any project; and utilization of free technology such as Facebook and other social media whenever necessary.

Table 1 shows the quantitative results.

Table 1. Organizational Practices that Cultivate Resilience

Organizational Practices	WM	SD	Interpretation
Our organization's purpose and advocacy strongly motivate us to survive anything.	4.67	0.4972	Very High Extent
Our organization has a strong support network from external partners.	3.56	0.9750	High Extent
Our organization continuously seek alliances, sponsorship and partnerships with other organizations	4.00	0.6993	High Extent
Our organization works on a budget system, that each year's activity is based on budget.	3.67	0.7845	High Extent
Our organization members willingly contribute anything possible to accomplish any project.	4.11	0.6993	High Extent
Our organization has a strong support from the university	3.33	1.1387	High Extent
Our organization utilize free technology such as facebook and other social media whenever necessary.	4.11	0.7449	High Extent
Our organization usually creates fund raising activity whenever possible.	3.67	0.9972	High Extent

The table shows that clearly imbibing the organization's purpose among the members and officers strongly motivates them to face any challenges that the organization faces. A deeper understanding of the reason why they are in the organization gives them a feeling of being a student with a purpose and a sense of being different from another student organization. As stated by one of the informants, other student organization focuses on academics, on how to supplement their knowledge on a particular field. Unlike in Enactus-BulSU, they felt that they were more than a student; they felt that they had the responsibility and ability to change the world for the better. They also

explained that being an Enactus member gives a higher meaning of being a person, not just a plain student who needs to learn and focus on academics.

During the focused group discussion, the informants explain show they were able to overcome challenges and develop the value of resilience.

*“There were 3 solutions we had in mind while dealing with the problems by that time- good time management, self-development and strong will. Although it is easy to say that it’s all about time management, we should also make ourselves, as part of the team, work more efficiently. Given that we have problems with schedules, funds and other organizational matters, we were pushed to develop ourselves more by learning new technical skills or enhancing what is already present, trying to be more creative and resourceful, developing intrapersonal and communication skills. And having our hands full with these things, we had to keep our strong will. Because being in this kind of organization, a socio-civic organization, is never easy given that we were still students and what we are doing are affecting real people who needs more than just a student’s project result but real impact that can change their lives. That’s why we took all the risk and faced them with strong hearts. Another thing that helped us greatly are the guidance from the advisers, alumni, every student members of the team that have different perspective when it comes to org management and community development projects, and the Enactus Philippines and other college/University Enactus teams and most importantly, our partner community and their officials. The diversity of people helped us to see different angles of the problems we encountered and opening ourselves for their opinions to be able to solve our blind spots. The people in the organization and our partners also became great motivators to never give up and take things lightly.”*

The transcription corroborates the top four answers in the survey. It is clear that these observable practices cultivate the value of resilience as an important characteristic of the Enactus BulSU student organization. It shaped the entire organization from its officers,

advisers, partners, and down to its members. It motivated them to continuously improve and maintain the organization.

Table 2 shows the organizational practices that cultivate agility towards changes in the organization. Change is inevitable, as is commonly said, and changes bring both negative and positive impacts in the organization. It could either improve it as compared to what it is before the change, or it could destroy it, which is worst than what it was before the change. The result of the survey shows that agility is cultivated through the following; our organization considers legality above everything; our organization conducts assessment and pre-planning before initiating any plans and activity; our organization quickly secure necessary permission, licenses, waivers, and other necessary documentary requirements before initiating any project, during implementation and after completion. This shows that despite changes and challenges that occur, an organization can withstand any turbulence as long as all its actions are in compliance to any regulations.

Table 2. Organizational Practices that Cultivate Agility

Organizational Practices	WM	SD	Interpretation
Our organization quickly identifies opportunities and takes advantage of it.	4.00	0.6112	High Extent
Our organization is open to any disruption or changes in any planned activity.	4.00	0.6112	High Extent
Our organization is good at quickly deploying and redeploying resources to support any changes in project execution	3.78	0.7300	High Extent
Our organization quickly secure necessary permission, licenses, waivers and other necessary documentary requirements before initiating any project, during implementation and after completion.	4.11	0.8926	High Extent
Our organization has sufficient members and officers that complement and support each other	3.67	0.7703	High Extent
Our organization has sufficient resources and supplies to support any changes of plans.	3.56	0.6993	High Extent
Our organization promote collaboration among members and officers in conducting any project.	3.89	0.7703	High Extent
Our organization conducts assessment and pre-planning before initiating any plans and activity.	4.11	0.7263	High Extent
Our organization is good at making sense of ambiguous, uncertain situations	3.78	0.8287	High Extent
Our organization considers legality above everything	4.44	0.5189	High Extent



The priority of the organization is to ensure that everything is in compliance with all necessary permission and legality. It is the utmost consideration before the implementation of any projects and events that the organization conducts. It is also important to conduct pre-planning before initiating any project to help the organization assess the viability, problems and hindrances during implementation and monitoring. When everything is legally permitted, any changes that may affect the operation of the organization or the project, the organization can easily adjust and move towards the positive change. With these practices, the value of agility is cultivated and developed, and hence, any changes that the organization may face can move quickly towards that changes [7].

The organization's agility was also embedded among the officers. Their display of commitment and decision to stay with the organization has also contributed a lot to where the organization is today. On the focused group discussion,

*I know that at some point and particular people, I have made them see the things that I found in Enactus worth committing for. I can see that the new people in the organization has the same aspirations like what Enactus members have. We may be just starting again but through all the experiences I can say that my team has learned a lot from it and are willing to learn more. I know that they will do better than what we did in my term as their president. We are now in a more stable state after all the efforts and hard work from the past. I know that they have the fire to work harder and smarter for the next academic year. And these things would not be possible if I didn't took the risk and made my decisions to stay and to never give up on the opportunities that this organization waited to be opened.*

## 4 Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, for an organization to withstand any challenges and adapt to changes, it should cultivate resilience by strengthening

the acceptance of all the members of the organization, the very purpose of why the organization exists, and why they are doing what they must do. The organization should also strengthen its agility towards change. It will require time and a lot of experience, both good and bad, to realize that change is constant, and it should be dealt with. It is also recommended that a further study on the correlation of organizational practices that develops resiliency and agility to organizational performance such as members' retention, project success, and other key performance indicators of the student organization be conducted.

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## 6 Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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