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Strategic Risk Management and Business Continuity: A Framework for Enhancing Enterprise Risk Governance

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Introduction, the paragraph discussing digital transformation and cyber exposure is relevant, especially where it refers to "emerging technology risks, cyber-risk exposure, automation-related vulnerabilities, and the governance implications of Industry 4.0 and Industry 5.0 systems." However, the transition from digital and cyber risks to the empirical variables of the study is not fully developed. The authors should clarify whether cybersecurity and digital transformation are treated as contextual risk drivers, components of strategic risk management, or external factors motivating the need for enterprise risk governance. Without this clarification, the literature review appears broad but not always directly connected to the empirical framework.

In the final paragraph of the Introduction, the authors state that "there is a need for an integrated framework that positions strategic risk management as the foundation of risk-informed decision-making, business continuity as the mechanism of operational resilience, and enterprise risk governance as the oversight system." This sentence effectively summarizes the proposed logic of the study, but the Introduction should end with explicit research questions or hypotheses before the aim statement. Because the Findings section later reports six hypotheses, the Introduction should present these hypotheses formally and link them to the literature review. This would create stronger alignment among the Introduction, Methods, Findings, and Discussion sections.

In the Data Analysis section, the authors state that data were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS, including Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and structural equation modeling. This section should include more detail about assumptions and estimation procedures. Specifically, the authors should report how missing data were handled, whether multivariate normality was assessed, which estimation method was used in AMOS, whether bootstrapping was applied for mediation, and how common method bias was evaluated. Since all variables were measured through self-report questionnaires at one time point, common method variance is a serious methodological concern that should be addressed.

In the Findings section, the demographic paragraph reports detailed distributions by gender, age, education, experience, and organizational sector. However, the manuscript does not indicate whether demographic variables were examined as control variables or whether they differed significantly across the main constructs. Since managerial level, organizational sector, education, and work experience may influence perceptions of risk governance and business continuity, the authors should consider adding preliminary analyses to determine whether any demographic or organizational characteristics should be controlled in the regression or structural model.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the Methods and Materials section, the Study Design and Participants paragraph states that the study used "an applied, quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design with a cross-sectional survey approach." This is appropriate, but the authors should further explain why this design is suitable for testing a structural framework. Since the study uses structural equation modeling and mediation analysis, the manuscript should acknowledge that the cross-sectional design supports testing theoretically specified associations but does not establish causal direction. The language throughout the manuscript should therefore be adjusted to avoid implying causality too strongly.

In the Study Design and Participants paragraph, the authors report that "the final sample consisted of 384 participants selected through stratified random sampling based on organizational sector and managerial level." This is an important methodological statement, but the manuscript does not explain how the sampling frame was obtained, how strata were defined, how many organizations were approached, how many participants were invited, and what the response rate was. The authors should provide more procedural detail about participant recruitment, sectoral distribution, organizational access, and non-response. Without this information, it is difficult to evaluate the representativeness of the sample and the credibility of the stated sampling method.

In the same paragraph, the inclusion criteria include "having at least three years of professional experience, employment in an organization located in Tehran, familiarity with risk-related or strategic management processes, and willingness to participate." These criteria are reasonable, but the manuscript should clarify how "familiarity with risk-related or strategic management processes" was assessed. Was this based on job title, self-report, organizational role, prior training, or screening questions? The authors should also specify exclusion criteria more objectively, particularly regarding "inconsistent responses," including whether attention-check items, response-time analysis, straight-lining detection, or missing data thresholds were used.

In the Data Collection Tools section, the authors state that data were collected using "a structured questionnaire composed of four main sections." However, the tool appears to be researcher-made, and the manuscript does not provide enough information about item development. The authors should describe how items were generated, whether they were adapted from validated scales, whether translation or localization was needed, how expert judgment was conducted, and how many experts reviewed the questionnaire. If the instrument was newly developed, the manuscript should present stronger evidence of validity beyond content review and Cronbach's alpha.

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In the Data Collection Tools paragraph, the manuscript states that "all items were scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree." The authors should specify the exact number of items for each construct in this section, consistent with Table 1, where strategic risk management has 18 items, business continuity has 16 items, and enterprise risk governance has 20 items. It would also be useful to include example items for each construct. This would improve transparency and allow readers to assess whether the operational indicators accurately reflect the theoretical constructs.

In the Data Collection Tools section, the authors mention that "a pilot study was conducted with 30 participants who were similar to the main sample but were not included in the final analysis." This is appropriate, but the manuscript should report the results of the pilot study more specifically. For example, the authors should indicate whether any items were removed or revised, what preliminary reliability coefficients were obtained, whether respondents reported ambiguity in any items, and whether the pilot informed the final structure of the questionnaire. Merely stating that a pilot study was conducted is insufficient for methodological rigor.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

2. Revised

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