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Supply Chain Resilience: A Case Study of Small-Medium Wholesale Company in Saudi Arabia

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[Amir, Adibah](#)^a ; [Bashanfar, Mohammed Khaled](#)^{a, b}

^a Department Manufacturing and Materials Engineering, Kulliyyah of Engineering, International Islamic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Abstract

This case study investigates the resilience and flexibility of supply chain mechanisms in a small to medium sized wholesale business (SME) based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It focuses on the company's ability to handle and recover from disruptions in supply chain management. A critical issue is the impact on the SME's resilience due to inadequate performance evaluation, particularly since the business heavily relies on the lucrative seasonal peaks of Ramadhan and Hajj for its trading operations in Jeddah. The business was severely affected by geopolitical tension arising from Israel's occupation of Palestine. Using root cause analysis, potential causes of these disruptions were examined and validated, revealing four main contributing factors; underlying, immediate, direct and indirect causes. It was found that underlying issues like poor communications with suppliers could be improved by fostering harmonious supplier-manufacturer relationships. The identified immediate cause of value-added government tax can be managed through proactive tax management strategies such as investment decisions and capital restructuring. A direct cause, a

significant increase of USD 3500 in shipping costs for the traditional route from China to Jeddah between September 2023 and January 2024, can be mitigated by practising cost-sharing shipment arrangements. A significant indirect cause was the USD 100,000 sales loss in February 2024 due to missing lucrative sales during seasonal peaks, which can be minimised through efficient forecasting strategies and inventory management. Ultimately, this study provides valuable insights for SMEs aiming to enhance their supply chain resilience amidst global economic challenges. © The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd. 2025.

Author keywords

Geopolitical tension; Saudi Arabia; Seasonal peaks; SME wholesale; Supply chain

Indexed keywords

Engineering controlled terms

Decision making; Resource allocation; Sales; Strategic planning

Engineering uncontrolled terms

Case-studies; Chain management; Chain-mechanism; Geopolitical tension; It focus; Saudi Arabia; Seasonal peaks; SME wholesale; Supply chain resiliences; Wholesale business

Engineering main heading

Enterprise resource planning

Corresponding authors

Corresponding author	A. Amir
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Affiliation	Department Manufacturing and Materials Engineering, Kulliyyah of Engineering, International Islamic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
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Email address	adibah@live.iium.edu.my
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