Integrating Public Values into Organizational Resilience: A Case Study of the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA)

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Abstract

This research aims to explore how public values can be integrated into organizational practices to enhance resilience in public sector organizations, using the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA) as a case study. This study employed Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory methodology, using purposive and snowball sampling to conduct interviews and focus groups with 22 BMTA leaders and staff, complemented by documentary analysis. Data were analyzed through open, axial, and selective coding to develop a substantive theory on the process through which public values shape organizational resilience. Findings reveal that BMTA maintained legitimacy and ensured service continuity by taking a compassionate, reactive approach that was based on efficiency, accountability, and collaborative governance during the recognition and response to core vulnerabilities. In the subsequent stage of strategic adaptability, leadership that promotes employee participation, equity, innovation, adaptability, trustworthiness, employee well-being, and public service motivation facilitated organizational transformation and strengthened public trust. This study offers a substantive theory that connects public values to management strategies, showing that organizational resilience stems not only from structural and procedural capacities, but also from the beliefs, behaviors, and collective commitment of its members.

Introduction

Organizational resilience has become a key topic of concern among academics and practitioners for many years. The main focus of studies has been to understand how various organizations bounce back from hardships that escalate into a crisis. Research on organizational resilience has become increasingly relevant to management as it provides a framework for organizations to anticipate, cope with, and adapt to adversity. (Boin et al., 2010; Duchek, 2020). Using bibliographic coupling analysis of 1,667 articles, prior studies have synthesized fragmented literatures into distinct themes, showing that resilience informs managerial strategies, structures, and practices for dealing with uncertainty across multiple organizational levels (Raetze et al., 2022).

Scholars in the field of public administration have also noted the growing influence of resilience in both research and practice (e.g., Kim et al., 2021; Duit, 2016; Boin et al., 2010). In this context, there is an increasing need to better understand the conditions and mechanism for creating public values such as robustness and equity, which are essential for legitimate governance during turbulent times (Duit, 2016). This growing interest has led to a shift from merely addressing short-term crisis responses toward exploring how public values can be sustained and strengthened, and which practices should be retained in the long run, by examining the contexts and processes of public service delivery (Dudau et al., 2023).While the literature has expanded significantly, much of it focuses on structural capacities rather than normative dimensions that shape how public organizations respond in practice. At the same time, values such as equity, accountability, trust, and transparency not only reflect societal expectations but also lead the organization's direction. This gap is particularly salient in developing-country contexts, where public organizations often face acute financial constraints, political pressures, and high expectations, making values as equity and trustworthiness critical to both legitimacy and survival.

This research addresses this gap through an in-depth case study of the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA), Thailand's state-owned bus operator. The BMTA has faced a financial crisis, accumulating substantial debt over the years. By fiscal year 2023, the BMTA reported a net loss of more than 5.3 billion baht, with accumulated losses exceeding 147 billion baht. The situation was severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, during which the BMTA was required to comply with government regulations even as the number of passengers drastically declined, resulting in severe revenue losses and service disruptions. Drawing on grounded theory analysis of interviews with stakeholders and documentary evidence,

this study examines how public values were integrated into BMTA's resilience processes. Identifying public values embedded in organizational practices is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the beliefs and values within the organizations during times of crisis and contribution to the advancement of organizational resilience theory.

Research Objectives

This research aims to explore approaches to integrating public values into the organizational practices to enhance the organizational resilience of the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA).

Literature Review

The review of relevant literature and prior research conducted by the researcher covers the following topics:

1. Concepts of Public Values

Organizational values are reflected in an organization's missions, vision, and daily practices, playing a key role in shaping organizational culture and enhancing its reputation (Varlaj et al., 2023; Moore, 1995). These include general organizational values, which relate to internal operations and norms, and public values, which emphasize outcomes that benefit society. The concept of public values has been widely debated as a means of understanding what public organizations should prioritize and deliver (Bozeman, 2007; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). There are two main academic approaches to study the concept of public values. The first approach, derived from Mark Moore's (1995) perspective on public value, highlights the "strategic triangle", which requires public managers to ensure that strategies are valuable, politically legitimate, and operationally feasible. Moore further argues that public value exists when citizens perceive that the government is producing something meaningful and beneficial to society (Moore, 2021)

In contrast, the second approach, public values, is articulated by Barry Bozeman (2007, p. 13), who defines public values as society's normative consensus regarding: (1) the rights, benefits, and privileges to which people should (or should not) be entitled; (2) the obligations of citizens to society, the state, and to one another; and (3) the principles on which government policies should be based. Bozeman suggests that public values can often be identified through laws as a starting point. Over time, they may evolve into national myths that become embedded in public policies and political discourse. Furthermore, Bozeman and his colleagues offered a more systematic perspective on public values by compiling 72 values grouped into seven categories, ranging from internal administrative concerns to citizen engagement (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). Since then, the concepts of public value and public values have been examined through multiple philosophical and empirical lenses to reflect what democratic society expects from public administration.

In this study, the researcher employs Bozeman's public values framework alongside Moore's public value perspective to analyze organizational resilience. Bozeman (2007) conceptualizes public values as normative principles, such as equity, accountability, and transparency, which guide organizational action. This perspective helps identify which societal values should underpin resilience-building in public organizations. Moreover, Moore's (1995) concept is applied to examine how managers can translate such values into practice through the strategic triangle of value creation, legitimacy, and operational capacity. Integrating these two approaches bridges normative and managerial dimensions, providing both conceptual guidance and practical tools.

The integration of Moore's public value management and Bozeman's public values frameworks bridges managerial and normative dimensions of public administration, offering a holistic view of how public organizations translate societal values into resilience practices. Rather than proposing a new theoretical model, this study applies both frameworks contextually to analyze how BMTA navigates value-driven resilience efforts in the aftermath of organizational crises. The comparison of Public Value and Public Values Frameworks is shown in table 1

This study also adopts Jørgensen & Bozeman's (2007) Public Values Inventory to the BMTA case, focusing on three categories of values that proved most salient in practice: (1) the relationship between public organizations and the citizens; (2) intraorganizational aspects of public administration; and (3) the behavior of public employees. This application contributes to refining the public values framework by illustrating how various categories gain prominence depending on organizational conditions and crisis contexts. These perspectives are particularly relevant to the BMTA, where recovery requires aligning sustainability and equity with feasible plans while addressing political and financial constraints.

Table 1

Comparison of Public Value and Public Values Frameworks.

Aspect	Moore (1995): Public Value	Bozeman (2007); Jørgensen & Bozeman (2007): Public Values	Application in BMTA Study
Core focus	Managerial approach linking value creation, legitimacy, and operational capacity (Strategic triangle).	Normative approach identifying shared societal values.	Combines managerial and normative perspectives to analyze value-driven resilience.

Aspect	Moore (1995): Public Value	Bozeman (2007); Jørgensen & Bozeman (2007): Public Values	Application in BMTA Study
Nature of values	Values are created by managers through strategic action.	Values are socially agreed norms reflected in laws and policies.	Public values such as equity, trust, and adaptability guide management practices.
Analytical dimension	Practical, outcome-oriented, emphasizing public managers' role.	Descriptive and normative, emphasizing moral foundations of governance.	Integrates both to explain how values translate into organizational behavior.
Expected outcome	Effective, legitimacy, and feasible public service delivery.	Consistent, transparent, and equitable governance reflecting public expectations.	Strengthened legitimacy and organizational resilience in crisis recovery.

2. Organizational Resilience

Resilience has become a central concept in public management and organizational studies, often defined as the capacity to withstand, adapt to, and recover from disruptions (Boin et al., 2010). Several models conceptualize resilience as a cyclical process of anticipation, coping, and adaptation (Duchek, 2020; Burnard & Bhamra, 2011), while Linnenluecke et al. (2012) proposed a five-stage model that includes proactive adaptation, coping, restoration, organizational redefinition, and future adaptation. McManus, Seville, Vargo, & Brunsdon (2008) extended by focusing on the resilience management process, which connects crisis response with routine organizational operations. Their model identifies three crucial functions: situational awareness, which enables decision-makers and networks to share a common understanding of the crisis context; identification of keystone vulnerabilities, both intangible and tangible, that have the potential to cause major disruptions; and adaptive capacity, which reflects the operational readiness and organizational culture to respond effectively. In this research, researcher adopted McManus et al. (2008)'s conceptual framework to analyze how organization respond to and recover from crisis. This approach emphasizes resilience as a structured management process encompassing identification of keystone vulnerabilities, and adaptive capacity.

3. The Relationship Between Public Values and Organizational Resilience

Public values are crucial in directing the crisis response and recovery efforts of public organizations, which are legally required to serve the common good of the society (Meynhardt et al., 2017; Fukumoto & Bozeman, 2019). These values are embedded in organizational missions, institutional structures, and decision-making frameworks, influencing both everyday operations and responses to disruptive events. By shaping how organizations prioritize, interpret, and manage crises, the integration of public values into institutional systems strengthens the alignment between administrative action and political expectations (Bozeman & Moulton, 2011). Values also support transformative change during times of uncertainty, influence stakeholder decisions, and help frame the perceived goals of recovery (Cretney, 2014).

Empirical studies highlight that deeply held organizational values enhance resilience by promoting flexibility, innovation, and learning, particularly in bureaucratic systems where standard procedures may constrain adaptation (Stark, 2014). Rogers et al. (2020) identify two interpretive approaches to values in resilience: the instrumental narrative, which focuses on improving efficiency and managing risks, and the critical narrative, which examines which values shape recovery

and whose are excluded. These narratives reveal that values are not peripheral but foundational in defining what resilience means, for whom it is intended, and how it should be operationalized. Overall, existing research rarely examines the role of public values in shaping strategic choices. This study addresses this gap by analyzing how the BMTA integrates public values into its organizational practices during a period of crisis and adaptation.

Research Methods

In this study, a qualitative research approach, grounded theory, was employed to develop a theoretical framework for integrating public values into organizational operations during a period of resilience, based on data collected from the BMTA. Following Strass & Corbin's (1990) framework for data collection, analysis, and theory building, the researcher adopted this structured approach to highlight and explore participants' perceptions through face-to-face interviews and focus groups. A total of 22 participants were involved, including organizational leaders, senior executives, middle managers, supervisors, bus drivers, and fare collectors. The sample of 22 participants was determined by data saturation, reached through concurrent data collection and analysis, when no new insights were emerging.

The sample was selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques, focusing on individuals directly involved in the organizational recovery plan and in efforts to steer the BMTA through the crisis. This approach enabled the study to capture a diverse range of perspectives across hierarchical levels and functional areas. Interviews were conducted between April to June 2025, each lasting between 45 and 90 minutes, and were audio-recorded with participant consent. In-depth interviews were conducted with eight executives (36% of participants) due to their strategic roles in recovery planning, while three focus groups were held with fourteen frontline and supervisory staff (64%), whose insights reflected operational realities. Structured interview questions were used to ensure that all responses addressed the research questions. The scope of research questions covered two main issues: (1) the BMTA's response to the Covid-19 pandemic during 2020-2022 and its financial crisis, and (2) the organization's internal operational adjustments aimed at aligning with the organizational resilience.

Additionally, the researcher conducted a documentary review of work plans, organizational mission and vision statements, codes of conduct, and annual reports that reflected the organization's responses to various crises between 2020 and 2024. These sources enabled cross-validation of the interview data and strengthened the reliability of the interpretations.

Data were analyzed using Strauss & Corbin's (1990) grounded theory methodology, which involves open, axial, and selective coding. The process began with open coding, in which the interview transcripts were broken down into discrete segments. These data clusters were carefully examined and grouped based on conceptual similarities, resulting in the identification of initial categories and subcategories. Next, axial coding was applied to explore the relationships among categories through the use of a coding paradigm. This paradigm model focused on identifying causal conditions, contextual factors, strategies, actions or interactions, and their consequences, thereby enabling a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon. Finally, all categories were integrated into the core category, from which an emergent theory was developed.

This study also adopts Lincoln & Guba's (1985) framework to establish the trustworthiness of qualitative data, focusing on four key dimensions: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was enhanced through triangulation of data sources across five organizational levels: executives, middle managers, supervisors, bus drivers, and fare collectors, as well as

through multiple data collection methods, including interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. To support transferability, the research provides rich descriptions of participant contexts, data collection processes, and organizational settings. Dependability was addressed by maintaining a clear and traceable record of methodological procedures. Confirmability was achieved through systematic documentation of original data and analytic processes, enabling external review and verification.

The researcher adheres to three ethical principles for human research: (1) Respect for persons by ensuring informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality through secure data storage; (2) Beneficence/non-maleficence, minimizing risks by using stress-free questions and creating a comfortable interview atmosphere; and (3) Justice, in which the researcher established clear criteria so that all qualified volunteers had an equal opportunity to participate. By following these principles, the study ensured the protection of participants' rights and autonomy, thereby enhancing its credibility.

Results and Discussion

This research presents empirical findings on the emergence of public values during organizational resilience, at two stages of resilience process: (1) recognition and response to core vulnerabilities, and (2) strategic adaptabilities. The analysis examines the arising of public values within the BMTA context and how they influence individuals, operations, strategies, policies, and practices. The discussion begins with an examination of the public values embedded in the state's foundational goals for establishing the BMTA, which represent macro-level values. Next, the researcher explores which public values appear in the data and align with the results, highlighting their relationship with resilience processes.

According to the Royal Decree in the Establishment of the BMTA (B.E. 2519), the agency's primary objectives are to provide land-based public transportation in Bangkok (Section 6(1)) and to conduct related operations (Section 6(2)). The amended decree (No. 5, B.E. 2564) further emphasizes the use of BMTA's assets for public benefit (Section 4(3)). Together, these legal mandates underscore three foundational public values shaping the organization's mission: efficiency, equity, and fairness. Moreover, a review of BMTA's vision ("Busses for all"), mission ("Committed to providing excellent bus, related, and other services for the benefit of people in general"), and legal framework reveals additional public values including fairness, transparency, accountability, adaptability, and trustworthy management. These principles serve as normative guidelines for integration public values into BMTA's operations and are particularly critical for supporting organizational resilience during crises.

From the analysis of interviews with 22 key informants from the BMTA, on the integration of public values into work practices during periods of organizational resilience, the study identified public values that were shared across the organization in two stages of the resilience process: (1) recognition and response to core vulnerabilities and (2) strategic adaptabilities. The findings can be summarized are as follows:

(1) Recognition and response to core vulnerabilities

The core category of this stage is maintaining the mission and key role of the BMTA during crises to avoid disruptions to the public's basic land transportation system. This reflects the organization's commitment to addressing two major crises: the Covid-19 pandemic and its ongoing financial difficulties. Despite constraints in finance, human resources, and information technology, the BMTA adopted a reactive strategy to safeguard essential public services during the pandemic, emphasizing compassion for both the public and employees through safe, effective, and accountable service delivery. Despite all the challenges, the organization remained committed to its mission of providing public service, as explained by a manager:

We consider the changes our responsibility, but we don't forget to think about our context and our existing role. We must add services that meet the needs of our customers. The core of the BMTA is our users. For the BMTA, it's not about making profit, but it's the public service provider to make sure that everyone is satisfied and convenient. These days our ticket costs 8 baht, we can't make any profit from that.

This statement illustrates that responding with empathy and maintaining the value of responsiveness requires employees to shift their mindset and take new actions while fulfilling their public service duties. Consequently, management transformed communication from top - down directives to empowering approach that encouraged employees to think and act collaboratively. This change reversed the traditional managerial mechanism, enabling upward decision-making, faster response time, and improved employee skills.

At the same time, the BMTA sought to address its financial challenges by reinforcing accountability, efficiency, and collaborative governance. BMTA's adoption of collaborative governance can be understood through a paradigm model. The causal condition was its chronic financial losses and debt, combined with contextual pressures from society demanding modern and digitalized services. Intervening conditions, such as government policy priorities, political oversight, and limited organizational capacity, further constrained the scope of feasible reforms. In response, the BMTA adopted collaborative governance as a strategy by engaging with state agencies, ministries, and policy actors to secure subsidies, develop digital platforms, and initiate environmentally friendly projects such as the leasing of electric EEV buses. These strategies were reinforced through dialogue, inter-organizational coordination, and shared problem-solving with both governmental and societal stakeholders. The consequences of this paradigm include enhanced

legitimacy, gradual improvement of service quality, and the repositioning of BMTA as a citizen-centered public organization committed to equity, sustainability, and accountability. Thus, the paradigm model demonstrates that collaborative governance functioned not merely as a managerial tool but as an institutional mechanism for resilience and adaptation under crisis conditions.

In parallel with collaborative governance at the policy level, the BMTA also demonstrated responsive practices within the organization to cope with various tensions. The crisis drove a shift toward more flexible and participatory practices, exposing persistent problems such as outdated systems resistant to change and a lack of modernization. This process enhanced the organization's responsiveness to evolving public needs and improved resource utilization through data-driven decision-making. as explained by several employees: "In each bus trip, we must enter the data, including fuel cost, gas fees, the number of gas refills, and the volume of fuel. Management collects this information from us daily." Such systematically reporting enabled transparent cost analysis and service adjustments.

Through this process, frontline staff and supervisors collaborated to optimize schedules and ensure efficient resource utilization, reflecting employee empowerment and collective problem-solving: "From line operators, pier operators, inspectors, drivers, and fare collectors, only some receive daily allowance. But how to make it equal to everyone? this problem encourages us to think critically together to adjust the bus schedule." Through this internal collaboration, the BMTA not only optimized resource utilization but also fostered equity, accountability, and efficiency, reinforcing the paradigm model of resilience through collaborative governance. Employee empowerment became a powerful mechanism for improving performance and generating saving through regular reviews.

To verify the reliability of these findings regarding efficiency and accountability, the researcher examined the BMTA's annual reports for 2021-2024. The data show that in 2022, operating expenses increased slightly from 2021 (approximately 10,292.81 million baht), mainly due to higher energy and maintenance costs. However, operating expenses fell to 9,555 million baht in 2023 and further to 9,321 million baht in 2024, as a result of greater emphasis on efficiency and reduced numbers of idle buses. These results indicate that the BMTA has maintained public confidence in its role as a public provider of land transportation services and strengthened its institutional legitimacy by embedding these values into organizational procedures. This foundation has also facilitated the organization's progression toward comprehensive structural reform.

The BMTA's experience supports to the argument made by Ansell, Boin, & Keller (2010) that both coordination and mobilization are essential for an effective crisis response. The BMTA relied on data-driven management, collaborative decision-making, and employee empowerment to maintain its public service mission in the face of COVID-19 and ongoing financial challenges. These behaviors demonstrate self-organization that not only strengthened institutional legitimacy and resilience but also enhanced responsiveness and resource efficiency.

(2) Strategic adaptabilities

The core category of this process is organizational transformation through the integration of public values. This transformation emphasizes equity, trustworthiness, adaptability, and innovation as guiding principles to enhance employee well-being and to respond to public needs equitably and effectively. Three operating approaches were identified: (1) A public values approach at the center of policy design and the organizational resilience (2) Promoting employee participants in organizational change, and (3) Leadership that exemplifies trust and equity for all stakeholders.

Together, these approaches embed public values into BMTA's practices at three levels:

Level 1 The relationship between BMTA and citizens: To affirm its role as a non-profit organization, BMTA seeks to reduce citizens' cost of living through affordable fares, especially during crises. It integrates equity into operational guidelines and collaborates with the government to rent new EEV buses that improve quality of life and environmental sustainability. At the same time, employees also exercise their considerations of humanity in serving passengers with special needs. These practices enhance positive image of the BMTA as a leading public transport provider that prioritizes human dignity, good welfare, equity, and fostering public confidence.

This level reflects Constellation 7 of Jørgensen & Bozeman's (2007) Public Values Inventory. Reasonable fares and a non-profit orientation uphold citizens' rights and equity, while EEV buses demonstrate a commitment to environmental protection and societal well-being. By prioritizing humanity and fairness, BMTA reinforces integrity and citizen-centered legitimacy.

Level 2 Intraorganizational transformation: Addressing internal problems and resource constraints was central to recovery. Previously, BMTA suffered from politicized practices, opaque evaluations, and poor communication of organizational vision, all of which weakened resilience. In response, the BMTA leader introduced new values and mindsets, offering participatory management tools and opportunities for staff to share ideas and contribute to decisions.

This innovative work transformation was designed by integrating public values of equity, innovation as value-driven, adaptability, employee well-being, and trustworthiness. These values were realized through strategies that fostered understanding and collaboration without conflict, such as the Bhor Or Kor Prompt Kui ("Director Ready to Talk"), which became a turning point in promoting dialogue, trust, and unity among employees.

As one female employee reflected, "I was shocked to be able to see the Director in person. We had never experienced this before. He was very friendly, listened to everyone's problems, and then offered the solutions to bring us back to unity. It made me feel good about him and put me at ease." Similarly, a bus driver recalled, "He (the director) came here. He had all employees sit down and talk. If I had a problem, I could write it down without having to sign my name, and put it in a box. Then he drew lots to read the message. He came to listen directly to everyone. It made us feel that the social class we had in the workplace was reduced". These statements reveal how the project functioned as an action mechanism, reducing hierarchical barriers and strengthening trustworthiness between leaders and employees.

The director himself confirmed this intention: "My first concept was to visit every location and build understanding. If anyone needs anything, just ask and we'll provide it. Once we've built relationships and understanding, we then explained that without the organization, they couldn't survive. So, if everyone still wants to survive, to maintain it, we must help ourselves. The first thing to ensure our survival is credibility. If we keep fighting with one another, and news spreads that we're having troubles, no one outside will want to support us. But if we stay strong and united, we can work together to make things better, then others will be willing to support us." This highlights how equity and trust became foundational values in guiding BMTA's recovery.

Beyond building trust, the project also created opportunities to address employees' welfare needs. Direct medical reimbursement replaced the burdensome system of advance payments, reducing financial stress for staff and their families. As one employee explained, "With a salary like ours… if our parents need to go to the hospital, we have to pay in advance. But with direct payment, it helps us save a lot." A supervisor added, "Now employees don't have to borrow money with interest… which has reduced their burden. Employees therefore see that management is taking care of them." These accounts demonstrate how the value of employee well-being emerged, improving morale and motivation.

This illustrates how direct medical reimbursement helped alleviate employee anxiety. Consequently, employee well-being enhanced morale at work, as employees were no longer concerned with the expense of maintaining their own and their families' health. Employee well-being has become core value in the BMTA, inspiring employees to perform at their best.

Moreover, the BMTA has also embedded the values of innovation and adaptability as the organization strives to transform and improve itself by promoting digital systems such as mobile applications, ERP, GPS bus tracking, and e-ticketing. Through collaboration with the ICT office, employees gained access to operational data and management updates, while also contributing ideas for organizational development. In conclusion, the Bhor Or Kor Prompt Kui project acted as the catalyst for generating public values of equity, trustworthiness, and employee well-being, which in turn strengthened employee motivation and organizational harmony. Together with innovation and adaptability, these values formed the foundation of BMTA's resilience paradigm, enabling improved performance and long-term sustainability.

The BMTA's intraorganizational transformation aligns closely with Constellation 5 of the Public Values Inventory (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007), which emphasizes robustness, adaptability, stability, reliability, and innovation. The Bhor Or Kor Prompt Kui project fostered trust and equity by reducing hierarchical barriers and promoting open communication. Employees' reflections demonstrate how equity and trustworthiness became foundational for organizational stability and cohesion. At the same time, engagement in

decision-making and collective problem-solving enhanced flexibility and responsiveness, exemplifying adaptability in practice.

Digital transformation initiatives, including ERP, GPS tracking, and e-ticketing, reflect BMTA's value-driven innovation, while direct medical reimbursement strengthened employee well-being, motivation, and morale. These interventions demonstrate how stability and innovation, reliability and risk readiness, can be reconciled to support organizational resilience. By integrating equity, employee well-being, trustworthiness, adaptability, and innovation into daily operations, BMTA demonstrates a resilience paradigm in which public values guide organizational performance and sustainable public service delivery.

Level 3 Behavior of the BMTA's employees: Initially, employees demonstrated negative attitudes toward internal management due to weak welfare systems, lack of effective problem-solving, and unmet demands, which hindered organizational resilience. However, leaders' exemplary conduct, working diligently for the common good and refusing to let the system collapse even amid multiple crises, gradually fostered a cultural shift. This leadership example cultivated a new organizational culture, prompting employees to adopt a renewed mindset toward their jobs and develop a stronger sense of civic duty, benefiting both the public and them. As one frontline staff member reflected: "Even though the organization has financial problems, we must ensure that passengers get to their destinations safely. If we do not care about them, what will they think about BMTA?"

Employees' working behaviors reveal clear evidence of Public Service Motivation (PSM) through their focus on organizational goals and their active participation in public service delivery. A collaborative learning network further supported this transformation, enabling employees to recognize the broader value of working for the public good. Furthermore, employees' compassionate care for passengers demonstrates empathy and

commitment: "Sometimes passengers with disabilities board the bus, and we try to help them even if it takes more time. They must feel safe with us."

Leadership efforts to foster a collaborative, family-like atmosphere reflect their dedication to the common good. These public values have led to significant adaptation of the organizational ethics, core values, structure, and operational methods, preparing the BMTA for future changes.

The Level 3 behavior of BMTA employees aligns closely with Constellation 6 of Jørgensen & Bozeman (2007), which emphasizes values associated with individual conduct in the public sector. Initially, weak welfare provisions and unmet needs led to disengagement from core values. Through leaders' exemplary conduct and cultivation of a service-oriented culture, employees internalized values such as integrity, accountability, and ethical consciousness. Their public service motivation, empathy toward passengers, and dedication to the common good illustrate the internalization of altruism, professionalism, and moral standards, bridging personal and organizational values. This transformation illustrates how individual employees actively contribute to organizational resilience and uphold the civic responsibilities expected of public-sector staff.

In sum, the BMTA case shows that embedding Public Service Motivation within organizational practices enables public organizations to sustain their missions during crises. This is achieved by integrating equity, compassion, adaptability, innovation, and trustworthiness into daily work. Based on this, researcher has come to the conclusion of the substantive theory from this study as below:

> Public, and non-profit organizations can integrate public values into organizational practices by adopting a reactive and compassionate approach to maintain essential public services during crises. Furthermore,

collaborative governance, efficiency, and accountability approaches should be pursued to restore public confidence during the stage of recognizing and responding to core vulnerabilities. In building strategic adaptabilities and organizational capabilities, approaches such as public values-centered policy design, employee participation in organizational change, and value-based leadership can be leveraged to integrate public values of equity, innovation, adaptability, employee well-being, trustworthiness, and public service motivation. These public

values collectively build public trust and sustain public service missions.

This substantive theory explains the process of integrating public values into organizational practice to enhance resilience. It identifies key public values that public organizations can utilize to adapt to change, links these values to actionable strategies, and clearly demonstrates the outcomes that result from implementation. The conceptual framework was developed by the researcher, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Integrating Public Values into Organizational Practices for Resilience
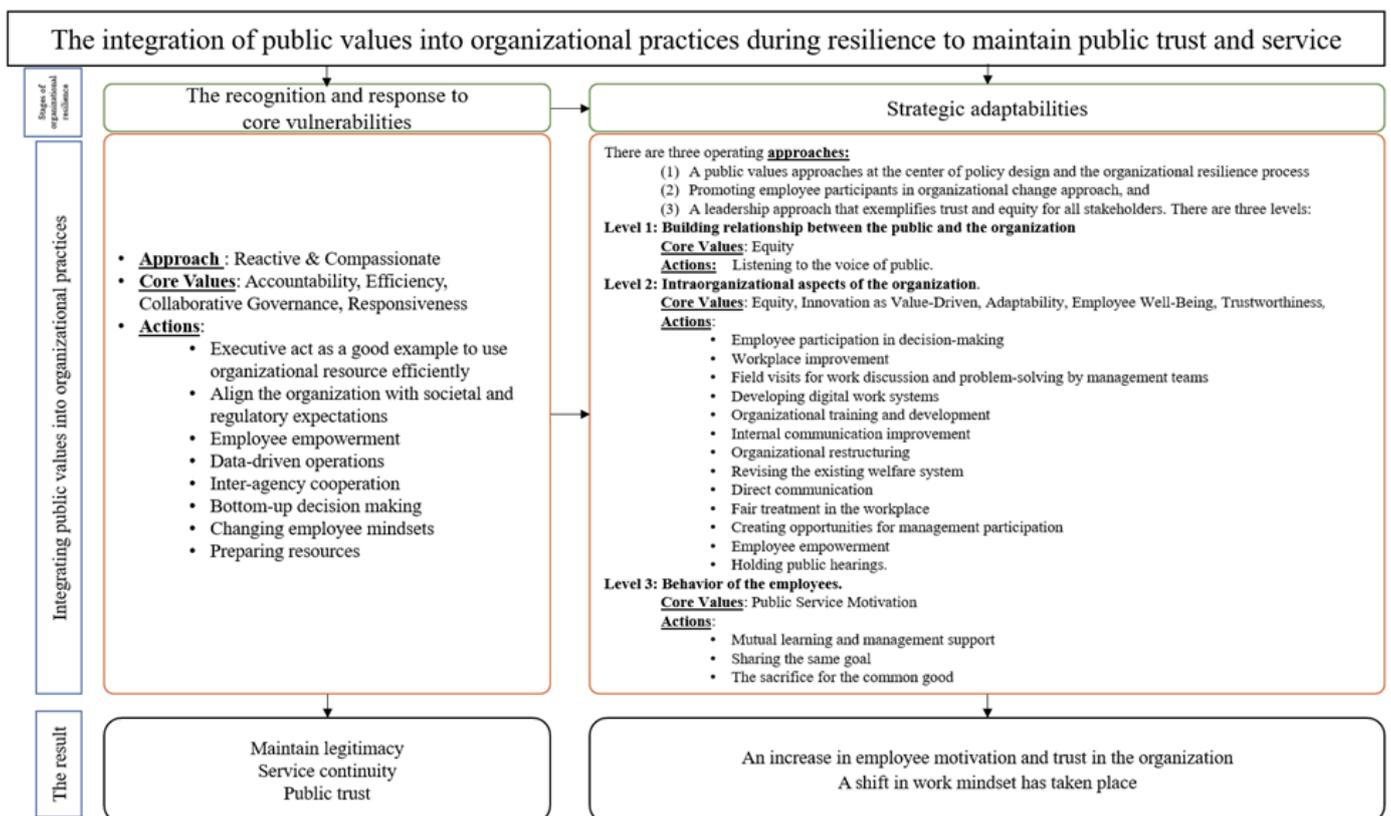
The conceptual framework illustrates the substantive theory developed in this study. It shows that organizational resilience in public organizations emerges through two interrelated stages: (1) recognition and response to core vulnerabilities, and (2) strategic adaptabilities. In both stages, public values function as guiding principles that shape managerial actions and collective behaviors. Efficiency, accountability,

and collaboration enable the organization to maintain legitimacy and service continuity under crisis conditions, while equity, trustworthiness, innovation, adaptability, and employee well-being foster long-term transformation and sustainability. Together, these mechanisms demonstrate how public values are embedded in management strategies and organizational practices, forming the foundation of resilience in public service organizations.

The findings highlight the adaptive and transformative role of values in resilience processes, derived through a grounded theory approach. This extends the relationship between these two theoretical traditions. They provide a nuanced understanding of how these concepts are interconnected by revealing the mechanisms through which public managers translate values into operational practices and strategies. This extends Moore's (1995) framework by showing how public values are translated into concrete managerial practices and resilience mechanisms in public organizations. It also helps Public Administration scholars to better understand the conditions, action/interaction, and consequences of effective public value management during two organizational resilience processes: the recognition and response to core vulnerabilities and strategic adaptabilities. This directly responds to Duit's (2016) and Rogers et al.'s (2020) inquiry into how resilience can be generated in public organizations.

This study extends resilience theory by illustrating that organizational resilience is derived not only from structural capacities and adaptive processes but also from the integration of public values. The BMTA case demonstrates that values embedded at different organizational levels can guide leadership behavior, enhance employee motivation, and improve service delivery, thereby reinforcing organizational legitimacy. In hierarchical and collectivist contexts such as the Thai public sector, resilience arises as much from shared values and cultural dynamics as from formal structures. At BMTA, the vision of "Buses for All" fosters a family-like climate of trust, collaboration, and adaptability, while respect for hierarchy enables leaders to mobilize change that employees willingly embrace. These culturally grounded mechanisms highlight how integrating public values can strengthen organizational resilience and recovery beyond structural reforms.

Additionally, the results refine Bozeman's (2007) conceptualization of public values as collectively generated preferences that guide public action. While Bozeman provides a normative foundation, the BMTA case shows how values such as equity, employee well-being, accountability, and trustworthiness can be embedded in organizational practice to restore legitimacy and public trust. Mapping BMTA's value integration onto Jørgensen & Bozeman's (2007) constellations not only empirically validates their typology but also demonstrates the dynamic interconnection between constellations, as value of equity at the citizen interface (Constellation 7) intersect with robustness and adaptability in intraorganizational transformation (Constellation 5) and integrity/professionalism in employee conduct (Constellation 6).

In this way, the BMTA case not only offers practical insights but also contributes to refining the theoretical relationship between public values and organizational resilience in the context of public sector management. This study thus contributes a substantive theory that connects public values with practical management strategies, extending Duchek's (2020) capacity-based view of resilience by highlighting values as key drivers of organizational adaptability. It complements Bozeman & Moulton's (2011) perspective on publicness and performance, and underscores that resilience is not only a structural or procedural capacity but is also deeply rooted in the beliefs, behaviors, and shared commitments of organizational members (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Fischer et al., 2023).

Conclusion

In order to enhance the resilience of public organizations during crises, the incorporation of public values into organizational practices is not only feasible but essential. Using the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA) as a case study, this research showed how values such as compassionate response, efficiency, accountability, equity, innovation as value-driven, adaptability, employee well-being, trustworthiness, and public service

motivation can be progressively embedded in both daily operations and strategic management to sustain core missions despite severe constraints. The findings also reveal that the public values emerging through BMTA's resilience efforts are consistent with its legal foundation, which emphasizes efficiency, accountability, equity, fairness, and trustworthiness. This alignment underscores how organizational resilience remains compliant with the original intent of the law while adapting to contemporary challenges.

The substantive theory developed in this study can be applied to other state enterprises and local authorities that share similar governance and cultural contexts. Although it is grounded in the BMTA case, the key mechanisms, including value-based decision guided by public values, collaboration, and the pursuit of equity under limited resources, are common to many public organizations. Its transferability depends on the extent to which these organizations operate under comparable administrative traditions and social expectations.

This study reconceptualizes organizational resilience as a value-infused capability, showing that resilience in public organizations emerges through the translation of shared values into adaptive practices and institutional routines. The findings extend Moore's (1995) and Bozeman's (2007) frameworks by illustrating how public values are embedded in managerial practices that foster resilience, thereby empirically enriching Jørgensen & Bozeman's (2007) value constellations.

In summary, public and non-profit organizations can maintain credibility and deliver essential public services, even while addressing core vulnerabilities, by adopting a reactive yet compassionate response that prioritizes efficiency, accountability and collaborative governance. At the stage of strategic adaptability, leadership that fosters participation, equity, innovation, and empowerment builds stakeholder trust and facilitates organizational transformation.

For policymakers and public managers, the implication is clear: integrating public values into management practice is strategically crucial to long-term sustainability. Future research should expand upon these findings by examining comparative cases across sectors and cultural contexts, thereby advancing our understanding of how public values shape organizational resilience under diverse governance environments.

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