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Resilience in Women Entrepreneur's Leadership for Sustainable Business

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Social and organizational pressures, which call for resilience to ensure company sustainability, are only a few of the major obstacles that women's leadership frequently faces. The purpose of this study is to investigate the elements that influence women's leadership resilience and how it contributes to sustainable business.

Methodology: Purposive sampling, a case study design, and in-depth interviews and observation are the methods used in this qualitative study. We used NVivo 14 software to analyze the data and identify thematic patterns after selecting eight female company executives as informants.

Finding: Research findings indicate that a variety of values, such as compassion, dedication, self-assurance, bravery, optimistic thinking, and difficult life events, influence the resilience of female leaders. Strong resilience supports the survival of businesses by enabling female leaders to be more creative and flexible when under duress.

Conclusion: These results provide business women with practical advice on how to provide training that upholds resilience's fundamental principles. This study makes a valuable contribution by introducing fresh perspectives not fully explored in previous studies, by explicitly identifying fundamental values that impact resilience and presenting a conceptual framework that links resilience to corporate sustainability.

Keywords: Women's Leadership; Resilience; Sustainable Business; Qualitative research; NVivo14.

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INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic and complex world of business, resilience has become an important component of leadership, especially for women entrepreneurs. Women's leadership often faces unique challenges, including social and organizational pressures, gender bias, and limited access to resources, making resilience necessary to achieve sustainable business success. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (2024), the proportion of women in managerial positions in Indonesia was 35.09% in 2023, reflecting gradual but slow growth compared to male leadership. This condition highlights the importance of conducting more in-depth research on the resilience of female leaders in facing these challenges. This research is

significant because it discusses how resilience in women's leadership can drive sustainable business growth. The increasing complexity of the global market, economic fluctuations, and gender-based gaps require women leaders to adapt and remain innovative.

The importance of resilience as a driver of strategic leadership can provide practical insights for developing effective leadership models and fostering an inclusive business environment. Research by Anugraheni et al. (2020) shows that female leaders demonstrate greater resilience due to their ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities. Additionally, Fernández et al. (2021) emphasize the relationship between women's entrepreneurship and sustainable practices, arguing that resilient leadership fosters adaptability and long-term business success. However, despite these findings, women still face systemic challenges in advancing to leadership positions, as evidenced by the limited representation of women in executive roles (Anggraeni, 2023). How can the values of women entrepreneur leaders shape resilience, and what are those values? Previous studies have explored general leadership traits and their impact on business sustainability but lack a focused analysis on how resilience uniquely affects women entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, models that incorporate resilience into a sustainable leadership framework specifically for women are scarce. This gap necessitates a comprehensive study on resilience in women's leadership for sustainable business development. This study offers a new contribution by developing a resilience-based leadership model specifically for women entrepreneurs. Unlike previous research that broadly discusses leadership and sustainability, this study explicitly identifies resilience traits—such as compassion, commitment, self-confidence, positive thinking, courage, and the ability to overcome difficulties—as factors that can shape resilience and drive sustainable business performance in women-led companies. The aim of this research is to analyze the values possessed by female entrepreneur leaders that can shape resilience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resilience is an important aspect of leadership, especially in a dynamic and uncertain business environment. Resilience is defined as the ability to bounce back from difficulties and adapt to changes, enabling leaders to remain effective during crises and face challenges. In the context of women's entrepreneurship, resilience becomes increasingly significant due to the unique challenges faced by women, such as gender bias, social expectations, and limited access to resources (Southwick & Charney, 2020). Recent studies emphasize that resilient female leaders possess qualities such as compassion, commitment, self-confidence, positive thinking, and the courage to overcome difficulties. Anugraheni et al. (2020) highlight that female entrepreneurs often have stronger resilience than men due to their ability to balance personal and professional responsibilities. Fernández et al. (2021) found that resilience in leadership significantly influences sustainable business practices, promoting adaptability and long-term success. Additionally, Lyndon & Pandey (2020) found that shared leadership and collaborative environments enhance resilience among women in entrepreneurial teams. Similarly, Li (2023) identifies continuous learning and leadership education as factors that enhance the resilience and adaptability of female leaders in changing industries.

Theoretical Framework The theoretical framework integrates Transformational Leadership Theory and Cognitive-Behavioral Theory, Lia Wijaya Sari, Mochamad Soelton (2024). Transformational Leadership Theory emphasizes inspiring and motivating teams to achieve

organizational goals, which aligns with resilient traits such as adaptability and vision, Supriyadi, Soelton, M. (2024). Cognitive-Behavioral Theory explains how individual thought processes and perceptions influence their resilience and coping strategies (Southwick & Charney, 2020).

By combining these theories, the framework suggests that the resilience traits in female leaders promote adaptive leadership, enabling them to face challenges and drive sustainable business growth. This model addresses the shortcomings in previous research by specifically focusing on how resilience contributes to sustainable leadership among female entrepreneurs. Research by Fernández et al. (2021) and Anugraheni et al. (2020) reinforces the importance of resilience in women's leadership for sustainable business. Lyndon & Pandey (2020) provide evidence that shared leadership strengthens resilience, while Li (2023) emphasizes the role of education in building adaptive capabilities. The literature consistently highlights resilience as a key factor in effective leadership and sustainable business practices. However, the specific mechanisms by which resilience affects the leadership of women entrepreneurs are still underexplored. This research aims to fill the gap by identifying the characteristics of resilience and analyzing its impact on sustain.

Based on the explanation above and supported by previous research, the conceptual framework used in this study is briefly as follows.

FRAME WORK

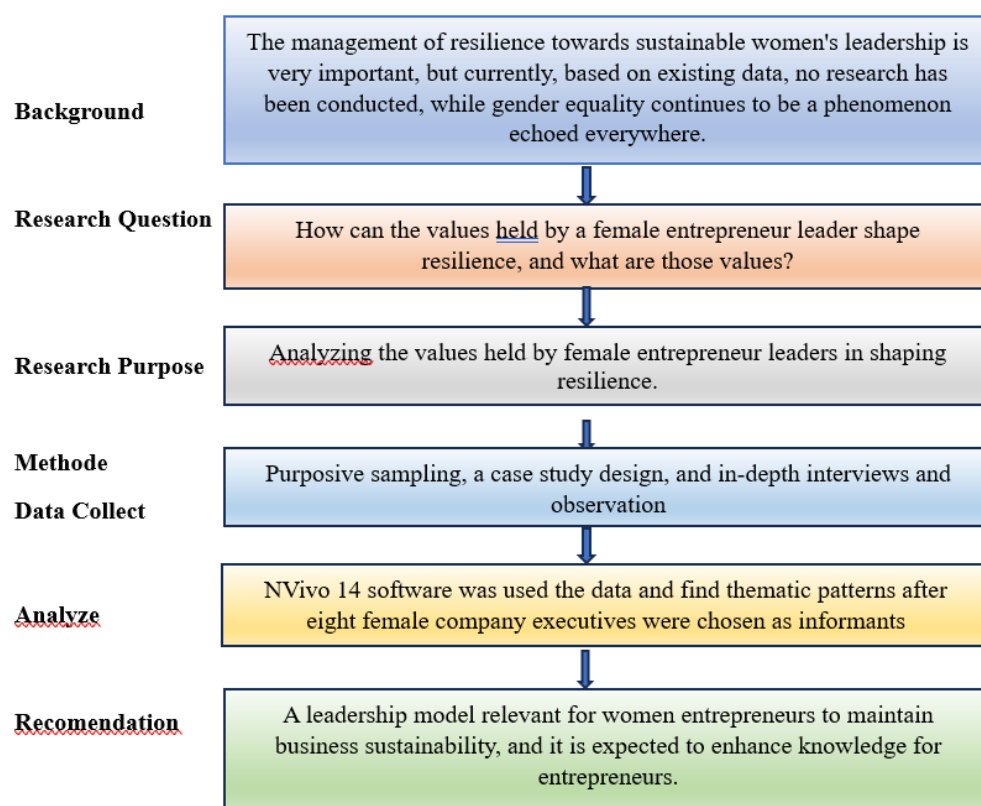


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

METHOD

Paradigm is a research perspective used by researchers regarding how they view reality, how they study phenomena, the methods used in research, and the methods used in interpreting findings.

The design of this research is qualitative with a case study approach in building sustainable leadership through resilience analysis among female entrepreneurs. Qualitative research aims at the exploration and in-depth understanding of data. The research subjects are female entrepreneurs in several large companies in representative cities, namely Jakarta, Surabaya, and Malang. This research uses key informants who are business owners/CEOs of female entrepreneurs from several companies that are the subjects of the study, with the selected business sectors being Schools, Hospitals, Retail Industry, and large-scale Bakeries with an annual turnover of over one hundred billion. This was chosen by the author because most female entrepreneurs operate in that field. The technique used in this research is the purposive technique, which involves selecting key informants based on certain considerations. Data collection techniques are divided into two methods: interviews, observations. In this study, the researcher applied two primary data collection techniques, namely the interview method and observation. The validity of data in qualitative research using the triangulation method.

The techniques used to verify the validity of the data in this study are as follows:

1)Continuous observation, 2)Triangulation, 3) Conducting member checks,

High validity can be achieved by using NVivo because the research team can conduct analysis effectively. Additionally, to support the validity of qualitative research, NVivo also provides researchers with extensive opportunities to work within NVivo. Thus, NVivo is effective for data triangulation and researcher triangulation (Sherly). & Nawangsari. 2022). Therefore, the researcher used the software application Nvivo 14 for data processing.

Analysis in NVivo 14 can also utilize the Text Search and Word Frequency Query features. This feature is used to search for the most frequently occurring words during the interview process with informants; it can also search for dominant words that the researcher wants to find according to the researcher's desires and research objectives. In NVivo, the analysis produced is the Pearson Coefficient, which is used to determine whether there is a relationship between the variables and the informants' responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study selected four sizable businesses with yearly sales exceeding fifty billion rupiah as its sample. A number of female entrepreneurs who served as key informants for this study own businesses in the school, hospital, retail, and bakery sectors, including PT Nibras Corp, Loop Institute, RS Mata MKU, and Dea Bakery. We used NVivo 14 software in the data analysis procedure to assess the reliability of the study findings. The fundamental idea that underpins this study is to understand the significance of resilience in the leadership of female entrepreneurs in achieving company sustainability in retail establishments, hospitals, educational institutions, and the baking industry. The purpose of this case study is to comprehend the phenomena that the research participants encountered, including their thoughts, behaviors, and so forth. The researcher conducted interviews to gain a comprehensive

The image reveals the dominance and frequent appearance of these words in the interviews, as demonstrated by the word tree. We then conducted an analysis on the words appearing in the word tree, aligning them with the research theme, and compared them with the interview results, uncovering several facts.

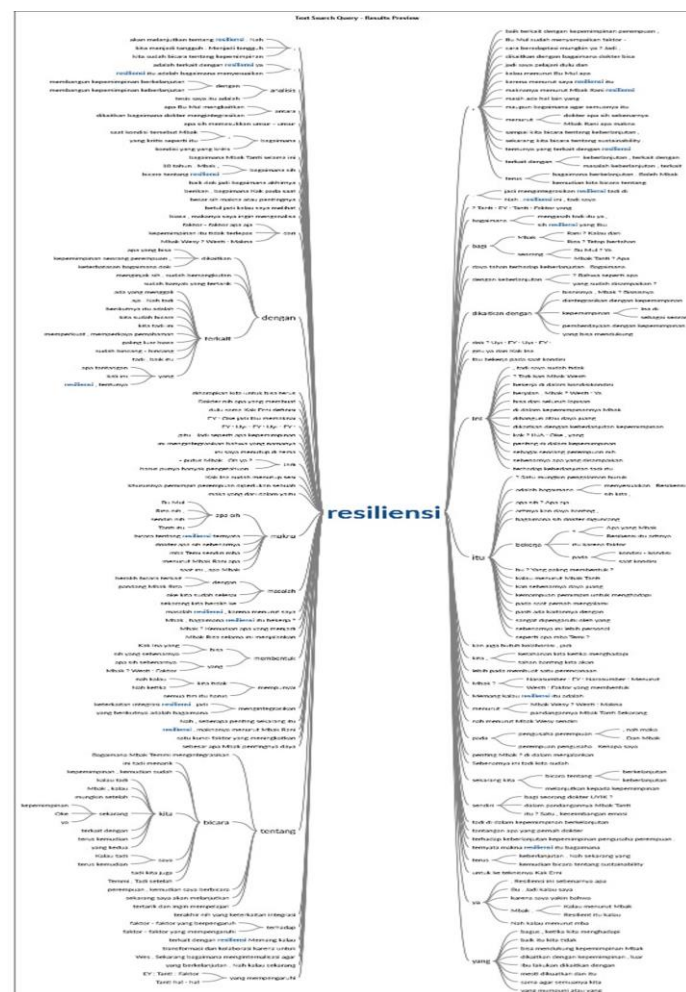


Figure 1: Word tree From the word "Resilience"

Discussion

After the analysis of the coded words is complete, a discussion is conducted regarding matters aligned with the problem formulation, namely:

How can the values held by a female leader shape resilience—and what are those values? (RQ1)

The analysis of the word tree and the recap of informant interviews revealed that the experiences of female leaders can generate values that shape their resilience. The values are commitment, compassion, self-confidence, growth mindset, helpfulness, abundance mentality, and bravery. These values hold significant importance as they form the foundation of a woman's resilience, particularly in the current volatile and unpredictable business environment.

Based on the theoretical study, the definition of popular leadership theory is explained, which explores the unique challenges faced by women in the workplace, including the confidence gap and the impact of the glass ceiling (an invisible barrier in women's careers). This theory discusses ways to overcome gender barriers and how women can be more confident in accessing leadership opportunities (Sandberg, 2020). According to Andriani (2015), women's leadership involves giving a woman the power and authority to lead, influence, mobilize, organize, supervise, manage, and take responsibility for everything her subordinates do.

Making women leaders in both small and large organizations is not impossible. People are currently discussing the role of women's leadership, particularly in strategic positions. Potential within a woman becomes a significant asset in the formation of productive human resources. Men do all of this, but women are also beginning to make their mark in achieving their goals, particularly in public environments (Said, 2018). Self-efficacy, or self-confidence, affects women's ability to lead and actively participate in organizations. Women in leadership positions often encounter expectations and obstacles that require them to develop self-confidence. (Kay & Shipman, 2014)

According to theory, to become a leader, strong self-confidence, responsibility, competency, care, and self-efficacy are required. Meanwhile, previous research in leadership requires bravery, responsibility, care, and innovation. Meanwhile, in this research, the values possessed by a leader are compassion, commitment, self-confidence, a growth mindset, helpfulness, and bravery.

Based on theory, previous research, and the research, the values of confidence and bravery intersect with all three. Additionally, other factors can support and complement these values, shaping the resilience of female leaders and ensuring the sustainability of their businesses. In this case, the researcher argues that by observing the above correlation, the researcher agrees that to become a leader, especially a woman with dual roles, one must possess strong values so that in running her business, the female leader becomes resilient in facing all future business challenges. Becoming an entrepreneur requires a strong mentality, and it all starts with how business owners build their mindset. Therefore, a growth mindset serves as the foundation for the values that must be present, such as the ability to embrace challenges, the refusal to give up easily, resilience under pressure, great effort, continuous learning, and the willingness to accept feedback. These values complement bravery, commitment, and confidence. Being a mother and a female leader, one cannot ignore the importance of compassion and its ability to provide benefits.

CONCLUSION

According to research on the role of resilience in female entrepreneurs' leadership to achieve sustainability in their businesses, it's crucial to understand resilience and put it into practice so that women who balance their dual roles as mothers, wives, and leaders can still run successful businesses and be sustainable.

From this research, we can draw the following conclusions:

While existing literature acknowledges the positive impact of female leadership on sustainable business practices, there is a paucity of research focusing specifically on the resilience factors that empower women leaders to achieve business sustainability. Most studies have explored general leadership traits without delving into the unique challenges faced by women and the resilience mechanisms they employ. This gap underscores the need for targeted research to identify and analyze the resilience factors pertinent to women's leadership in sustainable business contexts.

Female leaders possess values such as compassion, commitment, self-confidence, positive thinking, helpful, brave. By having these values, female leaders can be more resilient.

Women encounter significant problems and challenges in running their businesses. As a business owner, running a business from the beginning until it becomes sustainable requires having fundamental values in order to be resilient. Based on the experiences that have shaped female leaders, they possess values of compassion, commitment, self-confidence, a growth mindset, helpfulness, and bravery to overcome difficult situations. By possessing those values, women leaders can be more resilient.

The implications of these findings highlight the importance of resilience training for female leaders, emphasizing personal development and organizational support to strengthen resilience, which should be internalized in a structured manner to become a culture within the organization. This study also emphasizes the need for inclusive policies and practices that empower women in leadership roles, ensuring equal opportunities and representation in the business world. To address this challenge, organizations should implement structured resilience-building programs specifically designed for women leaders. Additionally, fostering an organizational culture that supports collaboration, adaptability, and emotional intelligence will further enhance the resilience of leaders.

Future research directions for upcoming studies should explore resilience in women's leadership across various cultural and industrial contexts, with the aim of uncovering universal and specific resilience traits, such as in multinational corporations or state-owned enterprises (BUMN), to obtain a more complex picture. Longitudinal research can provide insights into how resilience develops over time and affects long-term business sustainability. Additionally, integrating the application of tools that can perform analysis deepens the understanding of the impact of resilience on organizational outcomes.

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