

Leading and Navigating Chaotic Situation: How Leadership Through Resiliency Play a Role in the Process of Responding to Emerging New Situation Induced by Novel Coronavirus Outbreak

Ika Tuning Kartika* and Hary Febriansyah

School of Business and Management, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia

Email: ika_kartika@sbm-itb.ac.id

Abstract - The Novel Coronavirus outbreak causing a chaotic context. Characterize by VUCA, the prolonged and situation induced by the outbreak also challenge the leader's stamina, including the leader of PT. Olefin Mono (*). In this Chaotic, leaders face such an environment that needs a different set of capabilities. This chaos may help identify the action and leader quality when facing any upcoming challenges in the future. This research introduces the Cynefin-Framework as a sensemaking process to understand the context of the problems induced by the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak. The Conceptual framework adapts from the integrated model of resilience for employees by Britt, T. W., Shen, W., Sinclair, R. R., Grossman, M. R., & Klieger, D. M. (2016). The framework shows complementing aspects in a leader's resource capacity (1). Attributes (2). Leadership, actions performed by the person. The research found that profile of resilient leaders clustering into (a). Leader's Resilience Action (b). Leader's Resilient System Thinking (c). Leaders' Resilience Capacity Building Skill. The research also found that leadership styles and actions tend to change during chaos.

Keywords - Novel Coronavirus, VUCA, CynefinFramework, Chaotic context, Resiliency, Leadership, Resilient Leader."

I. INTRODUCTION

The Novel Coronavirus outbreak has emerged as an unprecedented problem and affecting almost all sectors of life. This outbreak is also causing a new situation that giving uncertainty to people and businesses. Considering the size and the scope of another pandemic in history, the spread of the COVID-19 virus has quickly eclipsed other pandemics (Deloitte Insight, 2020). The magnitude and speed of collapse in different activities appear in different scopes and have never been experienced before in our lifetime (Gopinath, 2020). Due to this collapse, the situation will never be the same anymore; new "normal" will be created (BCG Report, 2021). Facing the result of the virus where the situation shuffling human psychological, social, and economic norms is considered one of the turning points in the history of humankind and is triggering a new human era (Dirani et al., 2020).

As the new situation induced by a novel coronavirus outbreak causing turbulence. This uncertain turbulence brings doubt and challenges leaders' efforts to restore business financial confidence. The same doubt and challenge are getting into the petrochemical business as a global. The low demand and negative forecast worsen from the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak situation (Figure 1.1 Global Petrochemical Demand and Forecast). PT. Olefin Mono (*), as the leading player in the Petrochemical business in Indonesia, is also facing this negative sentiment from the market. Their forecast datashows a negative projection. Their leader needs to overcome this situation and instruct all leadership layers to work hand in hand to navigate this situation.

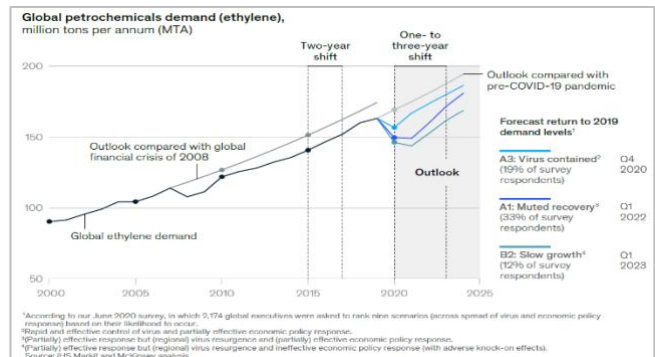


Figure 1. Global Petrochemical Demand and Forecast (Source: McKinsey Chemical Practice Report, 2020)

Seeing conditions emerged by the Novel coronavirus outbreak in real life, volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) causing chaos is happening now. When facing challenges, not all leaders could achieve the same desired result. Each leader' has many varieties of decisions and different responses that they took. As a reference to the Cynefin framework (Snowden, D.J &Boone, M.E., 2007), the environment caused by the Novel coronavirus outbreak is too turbulent, unstable changes, spreading fast, and need an immediate response, all those characteristics refer to Chaotic context. Leaders in chaotic contexts do not have time to identify patterns. This Chaotic context has a different type of handling compared to a familiar crisis (Bennett & Lemoine (2014).

Too many problems arose caused by the novel coronavirus outbreak and emerged into a new situation in PT. Olefin Mono (*). Most of them coming simultaneously; the volume of the problems can be overwhelming to process to survive. In this situation, many interconnected variables appear, also creating chaos. Almost all those problems seem significant and need to take care of at the same time. Due to the Novel Coronavirus outbreak, we never come back to the original "normal" situation that we knew. This outbreak is getting prolonged. In this situation, the leader will face a critical period when they need to strengthen their resiliency and instill resilience in their member. Therefore, resilience in people (leader), process, and organization is key to handling novelty.

This turbulence situation leads to some insight. The organization and its people have to prepare themselves by maintaining their function. They have to prepare action that supports the recovery process and push their capacity of thriving to respond to the acute challenges. This problematic situation (induced by a novel coronavirus outbreak) may help identify the potential target behavior for facing any upcoming challenges in the future. Unfortunately, there is no exact reference for leading an organization through this chaos. Leaders must gain experience and insight by themselves. All those insights are essential in facing future challenges since humans can learn and get stronger from experience.

This research is conducted almost one (1) year after the coronavirus outbreak hit Indonesia and impacted PT. Olefin Mono in specific ways (start from April 2020). Therefore, the challenge for the leader slightly transitions. Their position is responding to recovery and thriving action during the changes while maintaining to survive and cope simultaneously. Indeed, a Novel coronavirus outbreak is the vessel pressure in which resilient leadership gets a test to its maximal limit.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The unpredictable situation and significant changes of the event surrounding the crisis will affect people in the organization and threaten the organization's existence (Klann, 2003 as cited in A. Elliadis, 2019). As described above, a situation caused by an unexpected external factor or disturbance always brings some explanation about a leader. As explained, the characteristic of novel coronavirus has a high frequency, unpredictable, high intensity, and prolonged duration categorized as significant adversity (Chaotic). For this purpose, the researcher needs to explore the characteristics that support leaders to navigate the situation and remain optimistic, categorized as individual (leader) resource capacity. Moreover, this research also wants to see the action taken by the leader in processing their capability in responding to coping, recovery, and thriving during chaotic. Figure 3 below

illustrates the conceptual framework used in this research adapts from the integrated model of resilience for employees by Britt, T. W., Shen, W., Sinclair, R. R., Grossman, M. R., & Klieger, D. M. (2016).

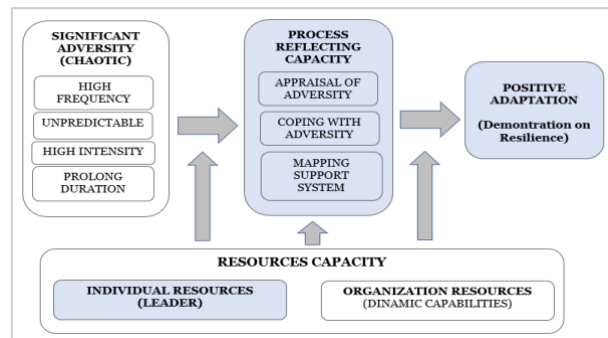


Figure 2 Conceptual Framework
(Source: Personal Analysis adapted from Integrated model of resilience for employees by Britt, T. W., Shen, W., Sinclair, R. R., Grossman, M. R., & Klieger, D. M. (2016).

During the Novel Coronavirus outbreak, the leader's immediate job is to move a quick action. Many interconnected variables are not following any cause-effect relationship and create a new situation to face. The Novel Coronavirus Outbreak induced the VUCA world and has critical characteristics as a Chaotic context. The element is fitted with Chaotic context, whereas the relationship between cause and effect is impossible to determine because they shift constantly and no manageable pattern exists – only turbulence (Snowden, D.J & Boone, M.E., 2007). In a chaotic situation, the decision-makers can come up with a new path of solutions. This prolonged chaos needs more than an average crisis management strategy to handle since having chaos as a context will lead a leader to see the problems and discover possible solutions differently (novelty). The concept of humanity and resiliency tend to be the key for people (leaders) and the organization in the chaotic.

Seeing the role of leader and leadership in the changing environment that emerged by a novel coronavirus outbreak. Chaotic situations test leaders to identify the context of the situation and learn how to change their behavior and match the context. They also prepare their organization to understand the different contexts and conditions for their transition (Snowden, D.J & Boone, M.E., 2007). Leadership in this research refers to the way leaders influence people in their team to achieve the organization's goal. Among the many varied definitions and frameworks of leadership, the study will focus on leadership in a time of chaos linked to positive organizational outcomes.

The literature review identified three theories that bridge the leadership application to handling specific roles in

crisis events (Hughes, Ginnett & Curphy, 2006 cited in Tertychny, G. P. (2013)). Those three are (1). Leadership Contingency Theory, (2). Leadership Transformational Theory, (3). Decision-Making Theories. However, since we agree initially that the COVID-19 outbreak cannot categorize as a typical crisis, an unclear, uncertain, and prolonged crisis can merge into a new situation. The research adds the 4th leadership style. In these challenging and turbulent times, there is a growing recognition among scholars (Luthans & Avolio, 2003) and practitioners (George, B. 2003) that a more (4th) Authentic leadership development strategy becomes relevant and urgently needed for desirable outcomes.

Referring to Luthans and Avolio, 2002 (cited in Ledesma, J.,2014), resilience defines as the positive *psychological* capacity to rebound, bounce back from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or even positive change, progress, and increase responsibility. The resilience concept is a backbone of psychological capital (PsyCap); according to Luthans, Youssef & Avolio (2007), in psychological capital (PsyCap), resilience involves a framework to cope with the situation but also to be able to respond and recover from those that we cannot predict or avoid. With the increase of changes induced by the Novel coronavirus outbreak, organizations are learning that the past is no longer a good predictor of the future (Resilience shift report, 2020). Having a resilient leader is essential in turbulence since the leader is in charge of keeping the organization on a steady focus in the face of external disturbance and stress (Allison, 2012 as cited in K.E Lane, T.J McCormack, & M.D, Richardson 2013). The importance of a resilient leader in a chaotic situation, argued by Kuntz et al., 2016 is beneficial to preparing a successful resilient organization. Therefore, one crucial topic that needs attention in a chaotic situation is the individual who led the organization(leader).

The Resilience leader in the organization adopts fir this research framework. Each variable and sub-variable explained based on the literature are picturing as a basis-thinking of the connection of variable. This framework is suitable to describe the movement of a leader's action, from acceptance to learning and ready to adapt. This research workflow correlation is prepared based on the metatheory of resilience by Richardson (2002), identified three waves of inquiry and analysis to be able to have a whole picture about resiliency (as process and outcome) as below: (1). Identified resilient qualities of individual/ leader and support system that predict social and personal success (referred to Bonnano 2004) consist of 4 qualities: Positive emotion, Self-enhancement, Locus of Control and Hardiness, (2). Understanding the process of coping with the stressor, adversity, change, or opportunity resulting in identifying, fortifying, and enriching protective factors (Referred to Youssef & Luthans, 2005) consists of Risk

Focus- strategy, Asset Focus Strategy, and Process Focus Strategy. (3) motivation.

III. METHODOLOGY

It is essential to understand how business leaders remain resilient in a Chaotic situation induced by a Novel Coronavirus Outbreak. The primary purposes of this research are to (1). have the information on what leaders do in responding to emerging new situations induced by the pandemic. (2). identify leadership quality that supports the leader in dealing with a chaotic situation like COVID-19. (3). To gaining insight that can lead to strengthening HRM proposals for sustainability purposes in facing future challenges. By determining the profile and action taken of resilient leaders. The researcher will discover what fundamental elements are necessary to improve in the internal leadership team. With these findings and organizational strategic objectives and mission, the company focuses on growing and strengthening its leadership position. Recommendations to improve the resilient profile will base on the critical success factor and urgency finding.

This research uses qualitative methods to discover the essence of participants' experiences leading to chaotic and turbulent times during the Novel coronavirus outbreak. The primary data will collect by interview method using an open-ended question. The interview method allows a researcher to appreciate another person's perspective assumed to be meaningful and accurately described. The secondary data will use qualitative documents coming from the company's documentation and education literature. The triangulation process is using by check the response with a Subject Matter Expert (SME) in the same industry and HRM area.

The participant selected for this research was senior management level (one layer below C Level) at PT. Olefin Mono directly reports to the board member (Line Director). They represent clustering working arrangements during the COVID situation (Critical, Core, and Supporting) with the highest number of members (subordinate) under their respective divisions. All Participants were the appointed member of the COVID-19 Taskforce during the pandemic Outbreak in PT. Olefin Mono (*). Purposive sampling participants select by targeting participants' quality, behavior, and action to specific contexts and circumstances. The participants for this research are the first layer who understand the research subject and received direct instruction from the C level and a chain command to lower level managerial. They expect to provide a representative answer to the research questionnaire.

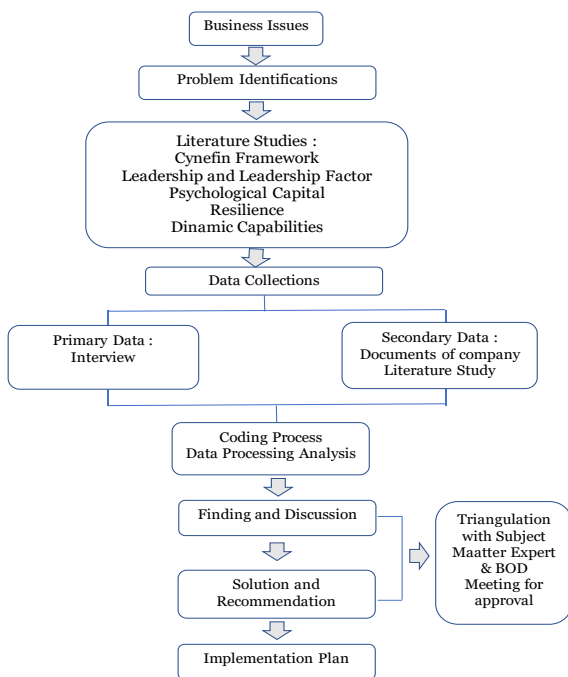


Figure 3 Research Flowchart
 (Source: Internal Data Analysis)

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Psychological Capital & Leadership

Leadership, positive psychology capabilities, and resilience are interconnected factors (Luthan & Avolio, 2003). Leadership itself, represent by quality in the leader (mind and attribute) and actions (behavior and style relationship). Those qualities and activities will support the leader's well-being (Luthan & Avolio, 2003). The decision of a leader will affect by their capacity, which can lead to success or failure. The interview reinforced the findings that Leader capacity identifies as an influence by combining personal characteristics, professional experience, the skill set of knowledge (developed by additional knowledge), and some practices in life. This interview finding is suitable with what explains in the Integrated model of resilience for employees by Britt, T. W., Shen, W., Sinclair, R. R., Grossman, M. R., & Klieger, D. M. (2016).

Leaders experienced in handling adversity situations affecting how they see themselves in the future. The better leader was coping with the thriving situation in their past experiences, the more optimistic they would face the future. They were creating positive self-efficacy in accepting future challenges. This can be beneficial if the leader has high self-efficacy since high self-efficacy links with some benefits such as resilience to adversity and stress (Badura, 2006). The quality of the leader, such as being

positive, aware of own emotions, focused, the ability to deal with reality, make meaning, adapt to new situations, are the highlight attribution of the leader. All those attributes are linked and representing resiliency.

Profile of Resilient Leader

The research found that the qualities and skill set aligns with a resilient leader's qualities from the metatheory of resilience by Richardson (2002). This quality links with psychological capital and positive psychology point of view come from Bonnano (2004). According to D. Reed and J. Patterson (2009), the profile of resilient leaders clustering into leader's Resilience Action and Leader's Resilient System Thinking & Leaders' Resilience Capacity Skill.

Answering the first research question on what leaders do in responding to emerging new situations induced by the pandemic, below are the stages of action taken by the leader to overcome the new situation induced by a Novel coronavirus outbreak.

A. Leader Action

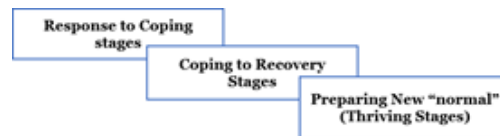


Figure 4 Stages on action taken during the outbreak.
 (Source: Internal Data Analysis)

Response to Coping stages

- Leader searches for as much information as possible to understand the situation.
- Leaders should sense and put their perspective on the onset of the problem since the signal of the problem is coming and act immediately.
- Quick manner remapping the organization and take care of the critical business process.
- Developing a team that sits together as one risk management team that adopts the principle of disaster management.
- Act and respond fast, top-down decision.

Coping to Recovery Stages

- Supporting employees in a prolonged crisis; focus on employees' well-being.
- Create a sense of facing altogether.
- Empower their team and embrace collaborating a cross boundaries.
- Adapt to the new pace.

Preparing New "normal" (Thriving Stages)

- Prepare scenarios best and worst case, not only risk mapping and forecast.

- Having data before deciding as a habit (data-led).
- Having strong business leaders across the level
- Support learning organization
- Prepare to set an agile mindset.

Resources Management and Workforce Preparations

After the workable certainty lead by sensemaking, the leader must create possible scenarios to prepare and provide interventions. Scenario planning itself is prepared to assess what can conceivably happen and what will happen in the future. By scenario planning, the organization can prepare the best option and solution to overcome the upcoming problem and take advantage of any best and worst situation to grow. (Garvin and Levesque, 2005). This scenario planning allows the organization to stand in a stable mode in each possible quadrants of the scenarios. The scenario planning pursues a backbone thinking of crisis management* to make the situation workable certainly, shown in the participant's response from the higher-level organization.

The research also found that resilience leaders are also sharpening by absorbing much knowledge. The study suggests educating organizational leaders and members on the change management process to better cope with the outcome of crisis/uncertainty by fostering Crisis-prepared organization culture. (Barnett & Pratt, 2000 as cited in Lockwood, 2005). This is beneficial to creating temporary, workable certainty to the situation. Translating this culture, the leader will prepare clear, actionable strategic guidelines, including resources management, workforce preparations, and the communication channel (including how to convey information). These approaches are beneficial in preparing a leader to transfer decisions firmly. (Barnett & Pratt, 2000).

B. Leader System Thinking & Capability Building Skill (Resource Capacity)

Answer the 2nd research question about leadership quality that supports the leader in dealing with a chaotic. This research finds 11 qualities to keep a leader during turbulence and reflect a resilient leader. Those 11 qualities are Decisive, Collaboration, Mental Agility, Self-Awareness, Communication, Self-Efficacy, Trustworthy, Hardiness, Sense-making process, and Risk management. Five (5) qualities (Self-Awareness, Self-Efficacy, Trustworthy, Hardiness, and Mental Agility) match Penn's resilience Skillset. Bonnano, 2007 (as cited in A. Elidis, 2019) explains that the higher the level of resilience a leader has, the lower the emotional exhaustion level in facing difficulties changes. This research finding is an excellent start to identify our senior leadership team's strength that can be treated as a lesson learn in the leadership development process for lower-level managers to remain resilient in facing future challenges.



Figure5 Resilient Leader Profile
(Source: Internal Data Analysis & Literature Study)

Leadership Style in Handling Chaotic

The Crisis management approach usually uses at the beginning of the pandemic. This approach aims to contain the spread of the virus and protect the workforce by having immediate short-term action. Start from making immediate priorities and setting constraints, creating confinement and social distancing practices, including remote and teleworking to flatten the curve. The decision was taken top-down, with no explanation and more instruction. This action seems like a tough act, more authoritarian at the beginning that reflects contingency leadership style.

After setting and implementing the urgency and containment system (workable certainly), the focus embraces the relationship and people. This communication intends for those closest to the situation (people on the grass-root). The purpose is to get the know-how better and motivate the team—this reflects the transformational leadership style.

Some participants in higher-level (Sr. GM) and one GM level stated that the leader must stay true in facing turbulence. To see them as trusted leaders, they have to be sincere both in their words and actions. They focused on not only bring the team to achieve leader goals but growing together—this tendency showing the vague sense of authentic leadership style. As a theoretical, Luthans and Avolio, 2003 (as cited in Cotter-Lockard, D.,2018) identified authenticity as the top leadership success factor in a problematic situation. This leadership style follows by showing vulnerability (you and I are human), intuitive thinking and decision making, and empathy. Authentic leaders have seen from their behaviors like promise-keeping and trusting, respectful, fair treatment (Luthans and Avolio, 2003 as cited in Cotter-Lockard, D., 2018)

The Capacity of Resilient Leader

Most participants use the asset-focus strategy as the coping mechanism by maximizing their assets, including their human capital in handling difficult situations. The organization needs to support this critical practice by helping the leader to be able to mitigate their stressful situation using their assets. The organization must fulfill

and upgrade the leader's skillset (functional, Social, and Emotional Skills) and lead them to be more authentic by understanding themselves; this can positively impact leader resiliency.

As for the Capacity Skill part, a Resilient leader has to shows positive self-awareness, positive self-efficacy, excellent communication, trust (trustworthy), and always finding meaningful purposes in life. They also have to believe that they can learn and grow from their negative and positive life experiences (Hardiness). This research recommends examining the current leadership role and actions and leadership challenges in facing a new situation that emerged by Coronavirus outbreak and targeting the desirable future state that supports leader actions in facing uncertain difficulties.

To have the correct understanding of the leadership competency status of PT. Olefin Mono (*) suggested creating 360 degrees feedback and assessment as part of the corporate culture. (Yeung & Ulrich, 2019). To support leader's self-awareness, positive self-efficacy, and hardiness, some leadership training/webinars on resilience such as PsyCap Training or Hardiness Training or tutorial on mindfulness (De Cieri, Shea, Cooper, and Oldenburg, 2019 as cited in Caligiuri et al. 1, 2020) or preparing employee assistance programs that beneficial to strengthen well-being initiatives suggested.

One of the insights from the leader also that leader has to learn from difficult experiences. The organization can actively conduct sharing knowledge and store the actions taken by the leader in the library of knowledge. This sharing knowledge categorizes as promoting organizational learning (facilitate changes resulted from crisis) by having organizations' crisis knowledge-based (Argyris & Schon, 1996). This activity aims to transfer tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge that anybody can assess as a lesson learned. The area of expertise needed is related to the stages; learning for challenges future (to anticipate), learning as the way leader reacts to turbulence (in coping), and learning from turbulence – lesson learns (for adaptation).

Empowering Leader

One of the crucial skills for the leader when facing turbulence/ challenges is having a correct sensemaking process. Empowerment is needed to give the leadership experience and sense the problem. Besides fulfilling the leader with a sensemaking framework and knowledge, they must experience the actual situation. Push empowering by preparing a system targeting empowerment activities such as developing successor or support job involvement on assignment programs (employee learning journey) is beneficial. The organization also needs to give a window of opportunity for leaders to have real-field experience in

handling the problem and future challenges by having an integrated career management system.

Empowering also can bring leaders to integrate diverse perspectives and come with an integrative solution. Another suggestion is by having a corporate initiative that brings leaders to see from a higher and different view of the organization. This suggestion enforces the activity of cross-functional collaboration. In a hierarchical organization, the barrier is more boundaries; therefore, virtual collaboration is a good start to test the limits and push the cross-functional collaboration.

As practical support, McKinsey & Company (2018) found that the organization as machines is shifting by Disruptive trends brought by the digital revolution. This shifting caused no boundaries that push the agility of people insight organization. For this purpose, although the current situation already reflects the usage of technology (tools and resources), this adoption of technology culture needs to speed up. Once these matters, the organizations need to rapidly leverage their tools and technique in support people interactions and works, these areas coming into IT infrastructure and policy management.

	Initial crises start to the break (Response to Coping stages)	During the wave of the outbreak (Coping to Recovery Stages)	Preparing New "normal" (Thriving Stages)
Onset of the situations	Unclear, Uncertain, Unpredictable	Start to maintain as "temporary stable"	Showing consistently "higher level of functionality" than before
Action taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensemaking process to understand what happened. Reset corporate priority, remapping the organization arrangement on critical business process Check internal capabilities (Resource management) and workforce preparation including infrastructure (IT and its facilities) Built Strategic and Tactical Taskforce Select communications channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a sense of facing altogether Keep moving forward (Do not feel threatened by not knowing) Empowering team and collaborating across boundaries. A lot of influence, diplomacy, and dialogue (including with labour union) Dealing with uncertainty; if no longer exist may need to be suspended or changed - all at the speed. Supporting employee well-being during prolong crisis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize action by data-led decision making. Strengthen leadership team across-level. Preparing agile leader and organization.
Quality of leader (Leader skillset & Capacity)	Sensemaking, Decisive, Communicate (with clear and absence of panic), Risk Management Ability.	Collaboration, Communicate (including listening), Trustworthy	Hardiness & Mental Agility
Planning	Contingency Planning	Contingency Planning to Scenario Planning	
Management	Solid Crisis management mechanism	Resilient to Agile Management	

Figure 6. Conclusion Leader Actions and Quality of a leader
 (Source: Internal Data Analysis)

V. CONCLUSION

This research approach and basis theoriesenrich the leadership literature study, whereas the research related to a cynefin framework and resilient leadership are still more minor. This research contributes to explaining individual resilience, fostering resilient leadership, and contributing to the organization's success in coping, recovering, and thriving from chaotic situations.

This research shows that resilience is more a process of adaptation and thrive to grow, be better within a risky situation. Strong leadership with resilient leadership will

promote organization survival and thrive in facing upcoming change and uncertainty. Chaotic situations like the coronavirus pandemic test leaders to know how to identify the context of the situation and how to change their behavior and the decision to match the context that brings organizations to be resilient and sometimes grow even more robust.

The strategic imperatives that can synthesize from this research finding are that leaders have to move their strategy by seeing the context of the problem to be successful. In handling chaos firsthand, a solid crisis management mechanism needs to prepare to get certain workable situations, prepare new normal, suggest using the scenario as strategic planning, and not only forecasting or pivoting actions. This scenario planning allows the organization to stand in a stable mode in each possible quadrants of the scenarios and create the difficulties into opportunity—conduct a future study on this specific finding is suggested.

This research has reviewed and analyzed the proposed integration of leadership development programs within organizations. The recommendation derived from this research is that the organization has to support leaders by preparing and developing a broad and diverse knowledge base to anticipate changes (both internal and external changes), not just knowledge related to the core business/functional but also contextual social knowledge.

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