

RESILIENCE COMMUNICATION OF UMKM ACTORS IN JEPARA CASE STUDY ON FAZA FURNITURE

Ahmad Rudyt Haidar^{1*}, Lusy Mukhlisiana²

^{1,2} Universitas Telkom, Indonesia

ahmadrudyth@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id^{1*}, lusymj@telkomuniversity.ac.id²

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the resilience communication strategy implemented by Faza Mebel, a micro-enterprise in the furniture sector in Jepara, in responding to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a qualitative approach and a single case study design, the research explores how internal and external communication practices are carried out to build business resilience. Buzzanell's (2010) Resilience Communication Theory serves as the main analytical framework, covering five dimensions: crafting normalcy, affirming identity anchors, maintaining communication networks, putting alternative logics to work, and legitimizing negative feelings while foregrounding productive action. The findings reveal that Faza Mebel's success in sustaining its business is not solely driven by digitalization, but also by a structured, participatory, and long-term communication strategy. This study contributes theoretically to the development of organizational communication studies in the context of MSMEs and offers practical recommendations for micro-business actors to face crises through resilient and adaptive communication aligned with market changes.

Keywords: *Adaptive Strategy, Digitalization, Faza Mebel, MSMEs, Resilience Communication*

INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a vital role in Indonesia's economy, contributing more than 60% of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorbing over 90% of the country's workforce. However, this sector is also among the most vulnerable during times of crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 87.5% of MSMEs were adversely affected, with significant declines in sales, revenue, and cash flow (Bank Indonesia, 2021). Despite these challenges, a small proportion of MSMEs not only survived but even experienced growth, revealing important variations in resilience strategies. These differences suggest that the ability of MSMEs to withstand disruption is not solely determined by financial or operational capacity, but also by their communication competencies. In this context, resilience communication becomes a critical factor. Buzzanell's (2010) theory of organizational resilience communication highlights that resilience is not a static trait, but a dynamic process constructed through everyday communicative practices such as crafting normalcy, affirming identity anchors, maintaining networks, and foregrounding productive action amid adversity. During crises, communication is not merely about transmitting information it is also about meaning-making, coordination, and collective adaptation.

While digital transformation offers substantial opportunities for MSMEs to increase efficiency and reach broader markets, digital adoption alone does not guarantee success. Many enterprises that shifted online still failed to survive due to the absence of structured and strategic communication systems. In contrast, resilient MSMEs integrate both digital innovation and sustained communicative processes that enable organizational learning, flexibility, and stakeholder trust. Faza Mebel a micro-scale furniture enterprise based in Jepara offers an illustrative case. Unlike many other businesses that relied on traditional methods such as word-of-mouth or customer loyalty, Faza Mebel had already embraced digital channels prior to the pandemic. They utilized social media and e-commerce platforms not only for marketing but also to foster real-time customer engagement and internal coordination. Moreover, the enterprise proactively participated in training programs organized by local trade agencies, improving their digital literacy and adaptive capabilities. This proactive approach enabled them not only to survive the pandemic but to expand their market reach.

Table 1.1 Graph showing MSME contribution to Indonesia's GDP and employment

Years	Number of MSMEs (million units)	Contributions to GDP	Manpower Absorption
2020	64,2 million	37,3 % (estimate Rp4 235 trillion)	97 %
2021	64,2 million	61–62 % (estimate Rp8 574 trillion)	97 %
2022	65,4 million	63,1 % (estimate Rp8 574 trillion)	97 %
2023	–	60 % (estimate Rp9 580 trillion)	97 %
2024	65,5 million	61 % (estimate Rp9 300 trillion)	97 %
2025	>64 million	>60 % (more than 60%; the government calls it “more than 60%”)	97 %

In 2023, the number of MSME players in Indonesia reached around 66 million units, with a contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 61%, which is equivalent to IDR 9,580 trillion. In addition, MSMEs also absorb around 97% of the total national workforce. According to research by Ramdani et al. (2025), which used a descriptive method, obtained a contribution figure of 61.07% of MSMEs to GDP and 97% of labor absorption. The Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs (2023) report also supports this figure, stating that the number of MSMEs reached 64.2 million units with a contribution of 61.07% of national GDP and employment of 97% of the total workforce. Furthermore, a study by Firdaus et al. (2024) stated that in 2022, MSMEs contributed 60.3% to GDP, absorbed 97% of the workforce, and contributed up to 14.4% of exports.

Table 1.2 Comparing MSMEs negatively affected vs. those that grew during the pandemic

Category	Negatively Affected UMKM	UMKM That Grew/Survived
Proportion affected	82.9% affected; 87.5% experienced revenue loss (Katadata, 2020)	5.9%–12.5% benefited or were resilient during the pandemic (Katadata, 2021)
Revenue impact	63.9% lost more than 30% of revenue	27.6% recorded increased sales (Katadata, 2021)
Business closures	37%–40% closed temporarily or permanently (Bank Indonesia, 2021)	12.5% maintained or improved performance
Supply chain disruptions	28% had difficulty sourcing raw materials (Trenggalek study, 2021)	–
Distribution constraints	37% faced distribution problems (Trenggalek study, 2021)	–
Digital transformation	Minimal or absent	Digital adoption became the key to resilience (BI Institute, 2022)
E-commerce transaction rise	–	Transactions rose from 80M (2019) to 140M (2022) (BI Institute, 2022)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, most Indonesian MSMEs were severely affected. Katadata (2020) reported that around 82.9% experienced negative impacts, with 63.9% losing over 30% of their revenue. Bank Indonesia (2021) also noted that up to 87.5% of MSMEs suffered setbacks, and approximately 37–40% were forced to shut down due to limited demand, logistical disruptions, and capital constraints. However, a smaller portion about 5.9% to 12.5% managed to survive or grow. Of these, 27.6% even saw an increase in sales, while the rest maintained their business performance (Katadata, 2021). These resilient MSMEs typically adopted digital technologies, which proved essential for sustaining operations. Bank Indonesia (2022) highlighted that e-commerce transactions surged from 80 million in 2019 to 140 million by August 2022, driven largely by MSME participation. Supporting studies, such as one in Trenggalek, found 28% of MSMEs had difficulty acquiring raw materials and 37% struggled with distribution, especially in food-related sectors (Rahmah et al., 2021). Despite these issues, MSMEs with better digital infrastructure especially in urban areas like Greater Jakarta demonstrated stronger resilience (Hidayat & Nurcahyo, 2022). Overall, MSMEs that embraced digitalization were more likely to endure or grow during the crisis, emphasizing the need for greater support in digital capacity building.

Data Industri Kecil Dan Menengah Berdasarkan OSS di Kabupaten Jepara, 2021

Terakhir Diperbarui : 30 September 2024

← Kembali Unduh </> JSON Bagikan

Data Industri Kecil Dan Menengah Berdasarkan OSS di Kabupaten Jepara, 2021
Small and Medium Industry Data Based on OSS in Jepara Regency, 2021

Jenis Usaha Type of Business	Jumlah Bidang Usaha Number of Business Field	Jumlah Perusahaan Business Companies	Jumlah Investasi Number of Investment
(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
0031 Industri Furnitur	3	156	7 771 301 000

Image: Data on IKM in Jepara Regency in 2021

Between 2021 and 2023, Jepara Regency OSS data recorded rapid growth in the furniture industry. In 2021, this sector consisted of 3 business sectors with 156 companies and a total investment of around IDR 7.77 billion. Two years later, in 2023, the number of business sectors increased to 5, while the number of companies jumped to 522 with an accumulated investment of IDR 338.66 billion (BPS Kab. Jepara, 2021; 2023). Based on the OSS data, this shows the rapid growth of the Jepara furniture industry in terms of the number of businesses and investment. However, the pre-research revealed a different reality where many unregistered businesses went out of business during the pandemic because they failed to adjust to market changes. In other words, the increase in registered data does not necessarily reflect the resilience of all MSMEs; those that are innovative and proactive in utilizing the digital market dominate the statistics, while less adaptive businesses disappear from official records.

Data Industri Kecil Dan Menengah Berdasarkan OSS di Kabupaten Jepara, 2023

Terakhir Diperbarui : 3 September 2024

← Kembali Unduh </> JSON Bagikan

Data Industri Kecil Dan Menengah Berdasarkan OSS di Kabupaten Jepara, 2023
Small and Medium Industry Data Based on OSS in Jepara Regency, 2023

Jenis Usaha Type of Business	Jumlah Bidang Usaha Number of Business Fields	Jumlah Perusahaan Companies	Investasi Number of Investment
(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
22 00031 Industri Furnitur	5	522	338.659.882.102

Image: Data on IKM in Jepara Regency in 2023

This study focuses on Faza Mebel to analyze how resilience communication strategies are operationalized within an MSME context, particularly in the furniture sector a niche often overlooked in communication and organizational resilience research. The study aims to identify key elements that contribute to the company's ability to sustain operations and growth in times of uncertainty. By exploring this case, the research seeks to contribute both theoretically to the development of organizational communication studies, and practically by offering insights for MSMEs seeking to enhance their strategic resilience amid ongoing economic and technological disruptions.

LITERATURE REVIEW**Resilience Communication**

Resilience communication refers to an interactive and dynamic process through which individuals and organizations build the capacity to adapt and recover in the face of crises. It is not merely about exchanging information, but involves collective efforts to construct meaning, reinforce identity, and maintain stability through social interaction. In organizational contexts, resilience communication is crucial for sustaining operations, fostering internal trust, and strengthening external networks, particularly amidst uncertainty and change.

Resilience Communication Theory by Buzzanell (2010)

Buzzanell (2010) conceptualizes resilience as a communicative process rather than a static attribute. She outlines five key communicative dimensions that contribute to organizational resilience: crafting normalcy (creating new routines), affirming identity anchors (reinforcing shared values), maintaining and using communication networks (sustaining support systems), putting alternative logics to work (employing innovative solutions), and legitimizing negative feelings while foregrounding productive action (acknowledging emotions while maintaining focus on progress). This framework emphasizes that resilience is constructed through everyday interactions and communicative choices, enabling organizations to adapt meaningfully to disruption.

Strategies and Processes of Resilience Communication in MSMEs

Within MSMEs, resilience communication is often manifested through the integration of digital tools to facilitate both internal and external communication. Resilient MSMEs typically adopt open, adaptive communication systems that ensure transparency, foster collaboration, and maintain engagement with customers, partners, and communities. These strategies not only help MSMEs survive during crises but also lay the groundwork for long-term innovation and business transformation. Support mechanisms such as digital training, mentoring, and participation in local networks also contribute to the development of communicative resilience among MSMEs.

Characteristics of Resilient MSMEs

Resilient MSMEs are marked by operational flexibility, openness to innovation, and a strong capacity for adaptation in response to market dynamics. They are able to transform their business models, marketing strategies, and communication approaches when needed. Participatory leadership is often present, enabling collective decision-making and a sense of shared responsibility across the organization. In terms of communication, resilient MSMEs are capable of managing crises with structure and turning disruptive experiences into opportunities for reinforcing identity and social connection.

Factors Influencing MSME Resilience

Resilience in MSMEs is shaped by a combination of internal and external factors. Internally, digital literacy, managerial competence, and a culture that supports innovation are essential. Externally, government policies, access to training and financial support, and participation in business and social networks enhance MSMEs' readiness to face crises. Social capital such as support from industry associations, local communities, and loyal customers provides crucial resources, information, and emotional encouragement during turbulent times. The synergy between these internal and external factors enables MSMEs to build comprehensive and sustainable resilience.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design. This approach is chosen to enable an in-depth exploration of how resilience communication strategies are implemented by Faza Mebel, a micro-scale furniture enterprise, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research is grounded in the constructivist paradigm, which views social reality as something constructed through human interaction. This paradigm allows the researcher to explore the subjective experiences of the business owner in developing adaptive and meaningful communication practices within a micro-organizational setting. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with the owner of Faza Mebel, observations of communication practices, and document analysis of the company's digital presence, including social media, website content, and business records. To enhance the validity of the findings, data triangulation was employed by comparing information obtained from different sources. Data analysis was carried out using a thematic approach, guided by the five dimensions of resilience communication proposed by Buzzanell (2010). The researcher identified emerging communication patterns and aligned them with the theoretical framework to understand how organizational resilience is built through daily communication processes.

Table 3.1 Unit Analysis

Analysis	Sub-analysis
Resilience Communication Theory (PM.Buzzanell)	<i>crafting normalcy</i>
	<i>affirming identity anchors</i>
	<i>maintaining and using communication networks</i>
	<i>putting alternative logics to work</i>
	<i>legitimizing negative feelings while foregrounding productive action</i>

The analysis of this study is based on the framework of Resilience Communication Theory as developed by Patrice M. Buzzanell. This theory explains how individuals and organizations navigate crises through communicative practices that help them adapt and recover. One core element is *crafting normalcy*, which involves the effort to maintain routines and a sense of normal life despite disruptions. Through this, individuals and groups try to restore a sense of order amid uncertainty. Another crucial aspect is *affirming identity anchors*, where people reaffirm values, roles, and self-definitions that give them stability and meaning during difficult times. This helps sustain their sense of purpose and direction. The ability to *maintain and use communication networks* is also vital. These networks serve as channels for emotional support, information sharing, and collective problem-solving, enabling affected individuals or groups to stay connected and mobilize resources. In times of crisis, people often engage in *putting alternative logics to work*, which means reinterpreting the situation creatively and finding new ways of thinking that allow for adjustment and innovation. Lastly, resilience is also built through *legitimizing negative feelings while foregrounding productive action*. This involves acknowledging fear, stress, or grief as valid emotional responses, while simultaneously encouraging constructive steps forward. Taken together, these five dimensions form the analytical lens used in this study to understand how communication practices foster resilience in the face of adversity. The research focuses on the period before, during, and after the COVID-19 crisis, with Faza Mebel serving as a single case study. The case was selected purposively, as the company represents a successful example of an MSME that sustained and expanded its operations through strategic and adaptive communication practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study found that Faza Mebel, a micro furniture enterprise, was able to develop organizational resilience through adaptive and collaborative communication strategies. This resilience emerged as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced many micro-businesses to rapidly adjust and survive amidst uncertainty. Through interviews with seven informants including the owner, employees, marketing team members, and external stakeholders such as academics and local government representatives it was evident that communication played a central role in how the business adapted and sustained itself. In line with Buzzanell's resilience communication theory, the process of *crafting normalcy* was observed in how Faza Mebel adjusted its operations during the pandemic. They shifted their sales from offline to online platforms and established new work routines that prioritized flexibility and efficiency. These practices became key to maintaining workflow stability and consistent production during the crisis.

The process of *affirming identity anchors* was reflected in the business's efforts to maintain its local values and cultural identity. Although they embraced digital transformation, they continued to position themselves as a Jepara-based furniture brand rooted in craftsmanship and sustainability. This identity was consistently communicated through visual branding and storytelling on digital platforms. The element of *maintaining and using communication networks* was evident in their active engagement with external stakeholders such as the Department of Industry and Trade, as well as MSME communities. Their participation in training programs, digital marketing workshops, and business forums helped them expand their knowledge and reach while sustaining support systems during the crisis. The application of *putting alternative logics to work* was seen in their marketing shift from traditional catalog-based promotion to a more narrative-driven approach. Faza Mebel started emphasizing the stories behind their products, sustainability values, and social roles within the local creative economy, thereby building stronger emotional ties with consumers. Lastly, *legitimizing negative feelings while foregrounding productive action* appeared in their ability to acknowledge the emotional toll of the pandemic while maintaining a focus on progress. Some employees mentioned in interviews that open communication with the owner and a spirit of mutual support were essential in preserving motivation and morale during the most difficult periods.

Discussion

From these processes, it is clear that Faza Mebel's communication strategies were digital, collaborative, and adaptive. They combined internal training, the use of digital platforms, and continuous network building to create a resilient organizational culture. This supports the view that well-planned, flexible communication strategies are essential for MSMEs to maintain business continuity during times of crisis. The characteristics of a resilient MSME were also clearly reflected in this case: operational flexibility, continuous innovation, and participatory leadership. Faza Mebel encouraged inclusive decision-making and fostered a responsive, team-oriented working environment. Innovation was applied not only to product design but also to communication and marketing systems. Factors influencing resilience included supportive local government policies, adequate digital literacy among management, and strong social networks. Informants from the Department of Industry and Trade highlighted the importance of digital training programs and facilitated online marketing efforts. Meanwhile, business owners emphasized the value of moral support, peer learning, and information-sharing within MSME communities. Overall, these findings reinforce the idea that communication is not merely a technical function but a foundation for building resilience, shared meaning, and collective strength. Open, adaptive, and strategic communication serves as a key driver of long-term sustainability for MSMEs in the face of crisis and change.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that communication plays a central role in building business resilience among MSMEs, particularly during times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The case of Faza Mebel shows that organizational resilience is not solely determined by financial resources or technical skills, but also by the ability to develop communication that is adaptive, collaborative, and strategic. By applying Buzzanell's five resilience communication processes crafting normalcy, affirming identity anchors, maintaining communication networks, putting alternative logics to work, and legitimizing negative feelings while foregrounding productive action Faza Mebel was able to sustain and even grow its business under challenging conditions. These communicative processes served as the foundation for managing change, building trust, and creating shared meaning within the organization.

The study also finds that digital communication strategies, participatory leadership, and active engagement with external networks and communities are key factors supporting MSME resilience. Faza Mebel stands as a concrete example of how communication, when managed thoughtfully and purposefully, can enable small enterprises not only to survive but to transform toward more sustainable business models. In conclusion, resilience communication is not only a relevant theoretical framework but also a practical approach with tangible implications for MSME development. These findings are expected to inform MSME practitioners, policymakers, and scholars in designing empowerment strategies that prioritize long-term resilience. Moreover, this research offers a valuable contribution for future studies examining the intersection of communication, crisis management, and small business sustainability. It encourages researchers to explore resilience communication not only in the context of health-related crises, but also in other disruptive events such as economic downturns, environmental disasters, or rapid technological shifts. The integrative use of Buzzanell's theory in the context of a local MSME presents a flexible framework that can be replicated or adapted to other sectors and geographic regions. Consequently, this study lays the groundwork for comparative research, longitudinal case studies, or cross-cultural analyses that seek to understand how communication practices shape organizational resilience across different contexts and scales.

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