



Antecedents of Female Managers' Resilience: Conceptual Discussion and Implications for HRM

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3 **Antecedents of Female Managers' Resilience:**
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5 **Conceptual Discussion and Implications for HRM**
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10 **ABSTRACT**

11 Resilience is a strength considered crucial for women to advance in the business world by
12 overcoming traditional hurdles placed in their path to success. However, there is a dearth of
13 literature focusing on resilience in the context of glass ceiling in organisations. The purpose
14 of this paper is to fill this gap by reviewing existing literature in relation to understanding the
15 factors contributing to a resilient workforce. Interactive experience with work environment,
16 career adaptability and positive HRM interventions have been identified as main antecedents
17 of resilience. This paper contributes to the limitations within the area of resilience (Bhamra et
18 al., 2011) specifically in the identification of the factors that foster resilience (Egeland et al.,
19 1993; Markman and Venzin, 2014; Pangallo et al., 2015). Moreover, the HR strategies put
20 forward for future implications intend to contribute to the limitations in the strength of the
21 relationship between specific HR practices and resilience (Bardoel et al., 2014). The factors
22 identified would enable women workforce to deal with stressful situation and progress in
23 their career having learnt from negative experiences.
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Key Words:

Resilience; Female Manager; HRM; Conceptual framework.

Antecedents of Female Managers' Resilience: Conceptual Discussion and Implications for HRM

1. INTRODUCTION

The persistent gender gap in management is considered an important issue globally. An increasing number of studies have indicated that gender inequalities extract high economic costs, leading to social inequities and environmental degradation around the world (e.g. Stevens, 2010; Beneria et al., 2015). Moreover, empowering women and promoting gender equality have become critical objectives for both emerging and developed nations, besides, are the focus of the third United Nations Millennium Development Goals (KPMG, 2012). Although several measures have been taken by countries worldwide to address gender inequality, it is noticed that there are still discrepancies between the job opportunities and wages available to women and those of their male counterparts (Zahidi and Ibarra, 2010). Over the years, a significant increase in women participation in the workforce has been observed globally; however, women have yet to achieve full equality in management. For instance, women hold only 22% of senior management positions worldwide (ICR Thornton, 2015). The scarce representation of females in leadership positions has been documented in countries like United Kingdom (Thomson et al., 2008); United States (Fassinger, 2008); Australia (Still, 2006); China (Tan, 2008); France (Barnet-Verzat and Wolff, 2008) and South Africa (Booysen and Nkomo, 2010).

The reason behind scarcity of women had variously been ascribed to traditional attitudes, the glass ceiling or the old boys' network (Stevens, 2010). Research suggested several factors contribute to creating glass ceiling effect at workplace, such as gender stereotypes and discrimination (Mihail, 2006; Weyer, 2007), biased recruitment and promotion systems (Powell, 1987), gender segregation at work (Galanaki et al., 2009) and family responsibilities. Numerous countries have introduced quotas to boost the number of women in corporate boardrooms. Despite such quotas, women are still under-represented in boardrooms (Larkin et al., 2013, p. 132). However, as quotas fail to improve female representation in managerial and leadership positions, we argue that resilience in female managers is necessary to help support their development and progression. Therefore, the

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3 current paper aims to address this topic conceptually by specifically concentrating on
4 resilience, its antecedents and implications in the context of HRM.
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8 The concept of resilience being associated with the ability to withstand difficult situations
9 and self-regulate at times of stress (Cooper, Flint-Taylor and Pearn, 2013) and the ability to
10 break the glass ceiling (Smith et al., 2012), is particularly relevant for women in
11 organisations. It is important to mention that a large body of literature has tried to address
12 different factors which hinder career progress of females (e.g. Mihail, 2006; Weyer, 2007;
13 Powell, 1987; Galanaki et al., 2009; Konrad and Karam, 2015; Rowley et al., 2016).
14 However, academic studies so far have not specifically focused on resilience in this context
15 (at least to our knowledge), despite the fact that resilience in managers better prepares them
16 to cope with unprecedented pressures and challenges (Whetten, Felin and King, 2009).
17 Pangallo et al. (2015) confirmed the gap in the literature on investigating the core antecedents
18 (adversity) and consequences (positive adaptation) of resilience. At the level of the employee,
19 how HR practices support or undermine psychological, social or instrumental resources
20 associated with resilience are under-examined (Bardoel et al., 2014). Therefore, we
21 acknowledge this gap in literature, and aim to address it by conceptually addressing
22 antecedents of resilience in female managers.
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35 The current paper contributes to the employee-centric resilience discussion in HRM
36 literature. By offering a behavioural framework of employee-level resilience, it attempted to
37 clarify and unify the vast literature into resilience that is yet in agreement on a universal
38 definition for this phenomenon. It also endeavoured to study resilience in an occupational
39 context, apart from the already existing clinical streams (e.g. Alvord & Grados, 2005; Lee,
40 Sudom, & Zamorski, 2013; Wagnild & Young, 1993), as well as differed from other trait-
41 based qualities such as those of the PsyCap framework (Avey et al., 2009) and disintegrated
42 process-based perspectives that attempted to link resilience to self-regulatory, protective and
43 situational processes (King & Rothstein, 2010; McLarnon & Rothstein, 2013; Moenkemeyer
44 et al., 2012). By investigating HRM based organisational antecedents of resilience, such as
45 interactive experience, career adaptability and positive HRM interventions, the current paper
46 stresses their importance of understanding factors contributing to a resilient workforce.
47 Moreover, the current paper conceptually establishes and proposes moderating relationship
48 between female managers' resilience and work stress and burnout. Therefore, our paper
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3 advances HRM literature by focusing on resilience as well as offers useful implications for
4 both academic and managerial audience.
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6 The paper is organized as follows. The next sections offers theoretical background and
7 conceptual discussions leading to development of study propositions. These propositions are
8 presented as part of conceptual framework. Finally, the last section of paper offers discussion
9 on study implications, limitations and future research directions.
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13 14 15 16 **2. THOERTICAL BAKGROUND AND STUDY PROPOSITIONS** 17

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20 Resilience had been of greater interest to researchers for decades in a range of social and
21 natural sciences. However, embracing the idea of resilience in organisations has become an
22 important topic of discussion rather recently, motivating researchers to undertake further
23 research on resilience (Coutu, 2002; Seville, 2009) specifically, considering the gender
24 perspective. The concept of resilience was originated in the literature since mid-17th century
25 from the Latin verb “resilire” meaning “to leap back” (Soanes and Stevenson, 2006, p.1498)
26 and extends till present time (Jackson et al., 2007). The term has been initially used in science
27 and mathematics, (Geller et al., 2003). However, later its use has extended to different fields
28 of natural and social sciences. Resilience has been conceptualised in a variety of ways
29 (Bhamra et al, 2011; Mamouni Linnios et al., 2014). However, Bhamra et al. (2011, p. 5375)
30 emphasised on the fact that “the concept is shown to remain essentially constant regardless of
31 its field of enquiry”. The authors have justified their views by revealing that although the
32 conceptualisation of resilience has found to be significantly different but the meaning
33 remained closely related with ability of an element to return to a state after a disruption
34 (Bhamra et al., 2011, pp. 5376). Likewise, Cooper, Flint-Taylor and Pearn (2013) have
35 defined resilience as being the ability to bounce back from hindrances combined with staying
36 efficient in difficult situations and continue to grow stronger in the process.
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50 In an organisational context, resilience has been used in a number of ways, for example,
51 concentrating on organisations as entities (Hutchins, 2012), individuals in organisations
52 (Smith and Charles, 2013), resilience of business processes such as supply chains
53 (Ponomarov and Holcomb, 2009) and other organisational systems (Bovaird, 2013),
54 organisational resilience with territorial perspective (Dobson et al., 2015). From an individual
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3 perspective, resilience has been defined as the ability to leap back from misfortune (Connor
4 & Davidson, 2003; Fredrickson, 2001; Fletcher and Sarkar, 2013) whilst in an organisational
5 perspective, resilience is the ability and the capacity to be vigorous under conditions of
6 enormous pressure and change (Coutu 2002).
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12 In this paper, we conceptualise resilience as the capacity of an individual to move forward
13 learning from negative experiences and incorporating their consequences in a meaningful
14 way (Jackson et al., 2007) and retaining sense of control necessary to break the glass ceiling
15 (Smith et al., 2012). Glass Ceiling is a concept that refers to barriers created by attitudinal
16 and organisational prejudices which prevents women from senior executive positions (Wirth,
17 2001). Certainly, there is inadequate participation of women in senior managerial positions as
18 the role congruity theory, developed by Eagly and Karau (2002) suggested that as leadership
19 skills are more ascribed to men than women, a prejudice is existent against prospective
20 female leaders. In this aspect, Jackson et al. (2007) have argued that developing personal
21 resilience can reduce defencelessness, thus, enabling women to be more robust in achieving
22 the leadership positions in organisations. Academic literature recognises that resilience is an
23 essential quality in a CEO (Bennis, 2003; Collins, 2001) and for a female CEO to overpower
24 adversity is a common experience (e.g. Fitzsimmons et al., 2014). Therefore, it can be said
25 that resilience plays an important role in enabling female leaders to bounce back from
26 adversity and achieve leadership positions.
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40 There is an emerging debate about resilience being either a trait or a process (Windle, 2011).
41 Resilience as a trait is defined as an accumulation of physical appearance that enables
42 individuals to adjust to the difficult situations they experience (Connor and Davidson, 2003).
43 The idea of resilience being a trait had been introduced by Block and Block (1980) using the
44 term “ego resilience” and outlining resilience as a set of characteristics that replicates
45 creativity, power of charisma and operational flexibility to fulfil various environmental
46 demands. The authors also pointed out that as a consequence of possessing ego resilience,
47 individuals are more likely to be positive and be able to separate and analyse problems. These
48 characteristics have been considered as defensive factors in the literature and well-defined by
49 Rutter (1985). Psychological resilience was outlined by Rutter’s (1987) as the Besides,
50 several of factors such as “positive role of individual differences in people’s response to
51 stress and adversity” and this idea was sustained by the recognition of several defensive
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3 factors such as hardiness (Bonanno, 2004), positive emotions (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004),
4 extraversion (Campbell-Sills, Cohan, & Stein, 2006), self-efficacy (Gu & Day, 2007),
5 spirituality (Bogar & Hulse Killacky, 2006), self-esteem (Kidd & Shahar, 2008), and positive
6 affect (Zautra, Johnson, & Davis, 2005). Contrariwise, several other authors have argued that
7 resilience is a process that varies from time to time. For instance, according to Egeland et al.
8 (1993) the skill that is developed gradually through an interaction between individual and
9 respective environments is resilience. Moreover, Galli and Vealey (2008) defined resilience
10 as a process of distress whereby individuals are found to use a number of coping or adjusting
11 strategies in order to deal with a mixture of unfriendly sentiments and psychological clashes.
12 For example, it was reported by the athletes that through various shifts of thought, positive
13 adaptation happens over time (Galli and Vealey, 2008). In this paper, we specifically address
14 resilience as a process, which is developed in employees over time. We have identified
15 interactive experience with work environment, career adaptability and positive HRM
16 interventions as main antecedents, which are addressed as follows.
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Interactive Experience with Work Environment: Women are noticed starting their careers
28 in business and management world with the same level of intelligence, education, and
29 commitment as that of men but unfortunately very few manage to reach the top echelons
30 (Zahidi and Ibarra, 2010). Bilimoria et al. (2007) discussed that women in managerial
31 positions still face tokenism by their male counterparts. The factors influencing the act of
32 tokenism as stated by the author were discriminatory visibility, polarisation and assimilation.
33 On related context, a study had been conducted by Gatrell and Cooper (2007) exploring the
34 relationship between tokenism and gender stereotyping. The author explained that as women
35 managers progress to the next positions, they are more likely to experience the stress
36 associated with tokenism and the first woman to progress often experience discrimination and
37 stereotype from the majority group.
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48 Furthermore, Talmud and Izraeli (1999) and Nieva and Gutek (1980) enlightened on the fact
49 that the decision process of the board is dominated by the male board members and less
50 weightage is given to the opinions and ideas of the women members as women members are
51 perceived as kind of tokens only and not as worthy colleagues. As women are seen first as
52 female and sex role stereotype, hence is difficult for them to be heard and measured on an
53 equal basis with the other board members (Kanter, 1977). In this aspect, the contemporary
54 stress and emotion theory best explains the role of resilience in the stress process. The theory
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3 proposes that as a result of operating in a stressful environment, individuals respond in a
4 constructive or destructive manner influenced by the processes of observation, evaluation and
5 coping (Fletcher & Fletcher, 2005; Fletcher & Scott, 2010).
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10 It has been also mentioned that a number of personal and situational characteristics such as
11 self-esteem (Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1995) and self-efficacy (Schaubroeck & Merritt, 1997)
12 play a role in regulating such continual process. In line with the idea of resilience being an
13 on-going process, it can be argued that women at workplace could gain the skills over time
14 through an interaction with their respective environments, most importantly, with help of
15 HRM practices which would enable them to adopt coping strategies to deal with stressful
16 situation and progress in their career having learnt from the negative experiences.
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20 Based on this discussion, we propose that:
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25 **Proposition 1: Interactive experience with work environment strengthens female**
26 **managers' resilience in an organisation.**
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30 **Career Adaptability:** Work-related stress adversely affects performance of individuals at
31 work and disrupts their mental wellbeing (Rees et al., 2015). Individuals are often stated to
32 suffer from high rates of despair, anxiety, traumatic stress and compassionate exhaustion due
33 to occupational stress (Figley, 2002; Bride et al., 2007). Besides, Bridger et al. (2013)
34 revealed about stress being associated with several negative organisational consequences
35 such as deteriorated work performance and high turnover. A number of research advised that
36 psychological resilience enables individuals to respond positively to a potentially stressful
37 situation (Jackson et al., 2007; Fetcher and Sarkar, 2013; Rees et al., 2015). There has been a
38 shift in studies examining individual resilience where researchers changed from focusing on
39 risk factors leading to psychological problems to identifying the characteristics of individuals
40 (Richardson, 2002) such as easy temperament, good self-esteem, planning skills and a
41 supportive environment inside and outside the family influencing them to prosper in difficult
42 situations (Rutter, 1990; Garmezy, 1991; Werner & Smith, 1992).
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55 Psychological resilience had been explored and its relevance demonstrated in both advanced
56 and emerging economies considering a range of perspectives. While considerable work on
57 individual resilience focused on recovery from traumatic or highly stressful situations and
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3 chronic illnesses (Jacelon 1997, Hunter & Chandler 1999, Bonanno, 2004; Linley & Joseph,
4 2004; Killic et al., 2013; Heetkamp and de Terte, 2015), researchers have also explored
5 resilience in the organisational setting focusing on recovery from work-related stress (Rees et
6 al., 2015; Grunberg et al., 2008; Demerouti et al., 2012; Shin et al., 2012; Bimrose and
7 Hearne, 2012). However, it is only recently that researchers have been interested in the
8 development of resilience in women at the workplace (McDonald et al., 2013; Owuamalam
9 & Zagefka, 2014; Holder et al., 2015).

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17 On the other hand, a substantial research has been undertaken to address resilience in
18 workplace at a general level (Grunberg et al., 2008; Demerouti et al., 2012; Shin et al., 2012;
19 Bimrose and Hearne, 2012; Stephen et al., 2013). For example, Bimrose and Hearne (2012)
20 had undertaken four studies between 2003 and 2012 in England, Norway and Republic of
21 Ireland exploring the dual concepts of resilience and career adaptability in career counselling
22 for both counsellors and their clients. A total of 131 participants, 119 of whom were clients of
23 career counselling, together with 12 career professionals were considered for the purpose of
24 empirical data collection. The findings from all four studies had demonstrated the inter-
25 relationship between the concepts of resilience and career-adaptability. It was found that
26 career counselling has a distinct role in building career resilience and career adaptability in
27 individuals. For example, from collected in-depth, longitudinal data from mid-career adults in
28 England, it was found that an individual although demonstrated commitment as she had been
29 involved in a range of different activities and jobs, had not exhibit confidence to undertake
30 retraining to achieve a career goal. Moreover, there was no evidence of her developing
31 positive and optimistic attitude towards her future. It was found that she had not completed
32 the courses she had enrolled on and thus, did not show the evidence of being resilient.

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45 On the other hand, a longitudinal case study in Ireland found that clients of career counselling
46 who had undertaken educational programs during an eight year period, demonstrated
47 resilience and career adaptability over time. Similarly, the purpose of the study by Demerouti
48 et al. (2012) was to investigate the impact of recovery efforts at work and detachment from
49 work on the relationship between work-related flow and energy after work. The study tracked
50 83 participants comprising 40 German and 43 Dutch who completed daily surveys over four
51 consecutive days. The findings indicated a significant relationship between energy after work
52 and absorption and enjoyment. Redesigning the work to be more favourable to flow enhances
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3 energy and decreases exhaustion in employees, thus, ultimately helping to personal resources
4 and resilience for successful recovery from stressors and energy draining events. Moreover,
5 recovery at work and detachment from work moderated the relationship between flow and
6 after work energy. Hence, it is important to help employees to preserve their energy resources
7 while being at work or during off time by providing them with sufficient recovery
8 possibilities during work to help create flow and enhance conditions and stimulate the
9 recovery strategy of detachment from work related issues.
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16 **Proposition 2: Career adaptability strengthens female managers' resilience in an**
17 **organisation.**
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21 **Positive HRM Interventions:** Now, we address an important issue of metastereotyping and
22 discuss how positive HRM interventions can play a role in this context to strengthen female
23 managers' resilience. In their study, Owuamalam and Zagefka (2014) had examined the
24 impact of metastereotyping on employability beliefs of members of disadvantaged groups.
25 The purpose was out to test three propositions: (a) that activating negative metastereotypes
26 would undermine employability beliefs of members of stigmatized groups, (b) that such an
27 undermining effect may be explained by momentary self-doubts arising from external regard
28 for one's social groups and (c) that people who are high in dispositional self-esteem would
29 experience the proposed undermining effect more. They undertook studies in Keele and
30 Staffordshire Universities, and their results supported the propositions. Moreover, in these
31 cases, importance of positive HRM interventions emerged to overcome this metastereotyping.
32 In similar vein, the study by McDonald et al. (2013) had reported the effects of a work-based
33 educational intervention to promote personal resilience in a group of nurses and midwives in
34 a busy clinical environment. Three major themes emerged from the findings in relation to the
35 effects of the intervention: personal gains from resilience workshops; professional gains from
36 resilience workshops; and personal resilience initiatives.
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49 In emerging economy context, Liu (2013) had undertaken a study to ascertain the hurdles
50 women face in their journey to senior management positions and explore the strategies
51 adopted by few women who managed to reach the top echelon. Although, it has been noticed
52 that since the global economic downturn, an increasing number of women are escalating to
53 top management positions, only one in four have made it to senior management positions in
54 China. Moreover, 53% of women are caught in sticky-floor situations and never advance
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3 beyond lower-level positions in the workplace. Six senior women managers aged between
4 35-49 working in SOE, non-SOE and foreign-invested companies in China in the position of
5 CEO, vice president, or director of HRM, finance, or sales have been interviewed. The
6 findings have shown that women managers' beliefs regarding glass ceilings, organisational
7 barriers and individual barriers contribute to the obstacles faced by the Chinese women
8 managers following the path to achieve leadership positions. The participants have shared the
9 strategies they had followed such as work hard and work smart, letting the feminine strength
10 shine, continuous learning and winning the support of families.

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17 The need for being resilient for individuals, specifically women have become more
18 noticeable due to the existence of scarce representation of women in leadership positions.
19 Leadership is found to be a male privilege in corporate, political, military and other sectors of
20 society. Women remained quite rare as elite leaders and top executives though managed to
21 reach supervisory and middle management positions (Eagly and Karau, 2002). As Ridgeway
22 (2001) argued that gender stereotypes contain status beliefs regarding women's ability and
23 competencies whereby women are assumed to lack leadership skills and assertive ability and
24 are less competence as compared to men.

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32 Moreover, a number of researchers have been interested in the development of specific
33 interventions to build or increase resiliency. These interventions include work site training
34 (Waite and Richardson, 2004), clinical interventions for youth (Waaktaar et al., 2004), and
35 adventure programming for military soldiers and veterans (Ewert et al., 2011). This paper
36 focuses on the aspect of the significance of building resilience in incorporation with HRM
37 practices in women workforce to deal with gender stereotyping and glass ceiling at
38 workplaces. Based on this discussion, we propose that

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45 **Proposition 3: Positive HRM interventions strengthen female managers' resilience in an**
46 **organisation.**

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50 Now, we address moderating influences of female managers' resilience on work stress and
51 burnout. Work stress and burnout has been shown to significantly influence female workers
52 and managers more than their male counterparts in literature (Melin et al., 1999; Rosenthal
53 and Alter, 2012; Rees et al., 2015; Otsuka et al., 2015). Stress in the workplace poses a major
54 problem for both the organisation and employees as it negatively affects the employees'

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3 general well-being as well as organisational performance and high turnover (e.g. Spangler et
4 al., 2012; Bridger et al., 2013). As employees engage more time in their work, work stressors
5 are also increasing the risk of adversely affecting the employees' psychological and physical
6 well-being (e.g. Snow et al., 2003). Individuals are often stated to suffer from high rates of
7 despair, anxiety, traumatic stress and compassionate exhaustion due to occupational stress
8 (Figley, 2002; Bride et al., 2007).

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14 Literature has also further shown that stress working conditions lead to absenteeism, mood
15 disorders, tardiness and intentions to quit in female employees (Snow et al., 2003; Sandmark
16 & Renstig, 2010). Moreover, a unique source of stress for female managers come from rather
17 prejudiced attitude to their performance by their male colleagues (e.g. Nair, 2011). Therefore,
18 for female managers, coping with work stress and burnout originating from multiple sources
19 requires specific attributes. Research has indicated that psychological resilience enables
20 individuals to respond positively to a potentially stressful situation (Jackson et al., 2007;
21 Fetcher and Sarkar, 2013; Rees et al., 2015). Consequently, we also argue for resilience as a
22 strategic trait that can help deal with these aspects and weaken their influences on employees
23 and specifically female managers.
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33 Some recent studies have also shown that psychological resilience of employees can play a
34 positive role in a competitive and busy work environment, where stress and burnout are a
35 realistic possibility (e.g. Shin et al., 2012). In this study, a longitudinal survey research was
36 conducted on a sample of employees and managers recruited from an IT company in South
37 Korea. The results indicated that organizational inducements and psychological resilience
38 were directly and positively related to employees' normative and affective commitment to
39 change and that these effects were mediated through state positive affect and social exchange.
40 Moreover, it was learned from the findings that employees tend to be strongly committed to
41 organisational change when they receive a high level of organisational incentives as it helps
42 them to develop a high-quality social exchange relationship with the organisation. Besides,
43 employees with high psychological resilience tend to be strongly committed to change
44 because of the positive emotions they experienced during organizational change.
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54 Furthermore, Hao et al. (2015) had conducted a cross-sectional study to examine the
55 mediating and moderating effect in the association between resilience, stress and burnout
56 among civil servants in China. A sample of 541 civil servants had completed self-report
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3 questionnaires for the purpose of the study. In addition, three scales were used measuring
4 participants' resilience, stress and burnout. Data collected, were analysed through correlation,
5 multiple regressions and structural equation modelling. According to the findings of the
6 study, work stress was found to have a direct and indirect impact on burnout, through
7 resilience. Resilience was suggested to play an important role in relieving work stress, as a
8 result, preventing the development of burnout. The reason behind is the portrayal of partial
9 mediating role of resilience between work stress and burnout. Therefore, it can be argued that
10 resilience can work as moderator between work stress and burnout, thus, resilience could
11 serve as a barrier to alleviate the adverse effects of work stress. Based on this discussion, we
12 propose that

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21 **Proposition 4: Female managers' resilience moderates (weakens) the influences of work**
22 **stress and burnout in organisations.**

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26 The conceptual framework of study based on developed propositions is shown in the
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42 **IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

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44 The current conceptual paper focusses on antecedents of resilience in female managers in
45 organisation, as well as moderating influences of resilience on work stress and burnout. The
46 paper offers rich conceptual and theoretical discussion leading to identification of interactive
47 experience with work environment, career adaptability and positive HRM interventions being
48 identified as key antecedents. The study also conceptually established the moderating
49 relationship between female managers' resilience and work stress and burnout. The study
50 offers both theoretical as well as practical implications. The key theoretical implication of
51 study emerges from conceptually addressing resilience, its antecedents and its moderating
52 influences. HRM literature in recent years has been stressing importance of resilience for
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3 female managers to progress in career and break glass ceiling. By identification of key
4 antecedents of resilience, the current study has not only enriched HRM literature theoretically
5 but also paved way for future studies to go further in-depth and address these antecedents in
6 different organisational, industrial, institutional and macro contexts. Moreover, although, the
7 current paper established that female managers' resilience moderates influences of work
8 stress and burnout, an area that requires further in-depth analysis by HRM researchers.
9 However, this aspect can be further researched by analysing which antecedent plays
10 important role in moderation of stress and burnout in different contexts.
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18 The practical implications of this paper come from the discussion offered earlier concerning
19 resilience, its antecedents and its influences. Based on this discussion, we suggest following
20 tools to HR managers of organisations in order to develop and promote resilience in their
21 female managers.
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- 26 ▪ Offer Coaching: Coaching plays an important role in building resilience in female
27 managers. Organisations should offer coaching programme for women leaders to help
28 build resilience. Research suggested the significance of the
29 supportive coaching relationship during times of challenge where resilience was
30 required. Coaching was found beneficial for leaders to reclaim their self-belief,
31 contributed to their learning, helped them see the wider perspective and provided a
32 supportive relationship and a thinking space (Smith, 2015).
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- 39 ▪ Offer Career Counselling: Organisations should offer counselling to build resilience
40 women workforce to help their career adaptability and career progression. The impact
41 and potential of career counselling have been argued in enhancement of career
42 adaptability and facilitating individuals to be resilient so as to gain competency in
43 supporting themselves (Bimrose and Hearne, 2012) and career progression.
44 Organisations should offer career counselling to women workforce which could
45 enhance resilience within individuals enabling them to deal with career related stress.
46 For example, Bimrose and Hearne (2012) undertaking a longitudinal case study in
47 Ireland found that clients of career counselling who had undertaken educational
48 programs during an eight year period, demonstrated resilience and career adaptability
49 over time. Resilience, in the study was displayed in the form of personal attributes
50 such as being tenacious, determined, single-minded, flexible and adaptable, much
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3 needed when faced with a range of barriers such as age, low confidence, stressful
4 situations, family demands, organizational intransigence and financial considerations.
5 Life events, be it promotion or redundancy or gender discrimination at work affect
6 individuals accustomed life style and this highlights the need for career counselling to
7 help individuals develop strategies like resilience and career adaptability, so that they
8 might navigate better volatile labour markets (Savickas et al., 2009; Sultana, 2011).

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15 ■ Offer Mentorship: We recommend that resilience-building be incorporated and that
16 professional support should be encouraged through mentorship programmes. Several
17 authors have mentioned that the presence of mentoring functions was found to be
18 positively related to resilience (Kao et al., 2014; Arora and Rangnekar, 2014). A study
19 conducted by Kao et al. (2014) proposed that the presence of mentoring functions was
20 found to be positively related to resilience. For the purpose of the study, a total of 209
21 sales professionals from an insurance company out of 495 were surveyed including
22 questions about their mentors, demographic information, and their job attitudes. It was
23 found that resilience was stronger for same-gender and supervisory relationships than
24 for cross-gender and non-supervisory relationships. Moreover, majority of the
25 participants indicated that their mentors were female. Similarly, the study by Arora
26 and Rangnekar (2014) considering a sample of 205 managers from public and private
27 sector organizations in North India reiterated the significant contribution of
28 mentoring in influencing career outcomes such as career resilience.
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30 ■ Offer Resilience Training: Research has suggested the significance of resilience in
31 organisations for employee well-being. Organisations should offer resilience training
32 interventions to improve mental-health and subjective well-being outcomes and
33 enhance psychosocial functioning, physical outcomes and performance outcomes of
34 employees at workplace. Provision of one to one training and support depending on
35 individual needs would be useful (Robertson et al., 2015).
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41 ■ Develop strong networks and support group of women: Jackson et al. (2007)
42 suggested that individuals can actively participate in the development and
43 strengthening of their own personal resilience to reduce their vulnerability to
44 workplace adversity. Thus, women being discriminated and stereotyped as vulnerable
45 at workplace should focus on participating in the development to build and strengthen

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3 their psychological resilience so they can support themselves against gender
4 discrimination at workplace. It is important to develop networks with people outside
5 work area for guidance and support when needed. Moreover, sometimes individuals
6 might get exposed to unnecessary vulnerability seeking support within own
7 workplace. Building positive and nurturing professional relationships, maintaining
8 positivity, developing confidence and becoming more reflective are suggested to
9 achieve through professional networks.
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16 ■ Provide positive role models: Organisations should provide positive role models to
17 women leaders to help them be focused, confident, positive, resilient and successful.
18 Women at workplaces are usually perceived as emotional, illogical and intuitive
19 decision maker (Green and Casell, 1996). Such belief about women in the workplace
20 causes stereotypic thinking. This concern for women being considered as intuitive
21 decision maker is consistent with the expectancy driven model of behavioural
22 confirmation effects (self-fulfilling prophecies) by Chen and Bargh (1997) whereby
23 perceivers cause others to confirm their preconceived biases. Self-fulfilling
24 prophecies occur when people hold beliefs and expectations which lead them to
25 change their behaviour and in turn cause the expected behaviours to be exhibited by
26 people who are targets of the expectancies (Hilton and Von Hippel, 1996). Women
27 should follow role models to be resilient in dealing with gender stereotyping at
28 workplace. For instance, Carly Fiorina can be considered as an example of a role
29 model who has shown her resiliency in dealing with gender stereotyping and other
30 stressful incidents at workplace. She had started her career as a secretary to CEO of
31 Hewlett-Packard and today the former Hewlett-Packard CEO is standing as a
32 candidate for president in the 2016 United States Presidential election. Carly Fiorina
33 had mentioned being called by her boss as “our token bimbo” and three decades later
34 she has been mocked by Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump by
35 uttering that “Look at that face! Would anyone vote for that?” In a reply she shrugged
36 it off mentioning that she had experienced it before. She has also added that “whether
37 a man thinks you’re homely or beautiful, it’s not a topic of conversation when a
38 woman is trying to do a job - whether that’s president of the United States or
39 secretary.” (Westfall, 2015, pp. 76-78).
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3 Like all academic endeavours, the current study also has certain limitations. Firstly, the
4 current paper is conceptual, and hence the developed propositions are not tested empirically.
5 However, future studies can build on our work to empirically analyse these propositions and
6 test their validity in different contexts. Moreover, our paper addressed resilience at a rather
7 general level taking insights from both private and public sector organisations focused
8 research. However, due to different nature of these organisations, it is important to go one
9 step further, and research their relative importance in particular organisational contexts.
10 Finally, culture (national as well as organisational) has been shown to influence a range of
11 organisational HRM strategies significantly. Therefore, it could be interesting for future
12 studies to bring this aspect in discussion surrounding resilience, and empirically analyse
13 female managers' resilience, their antecedents and influences in a cross-cultural comparative
14 context.
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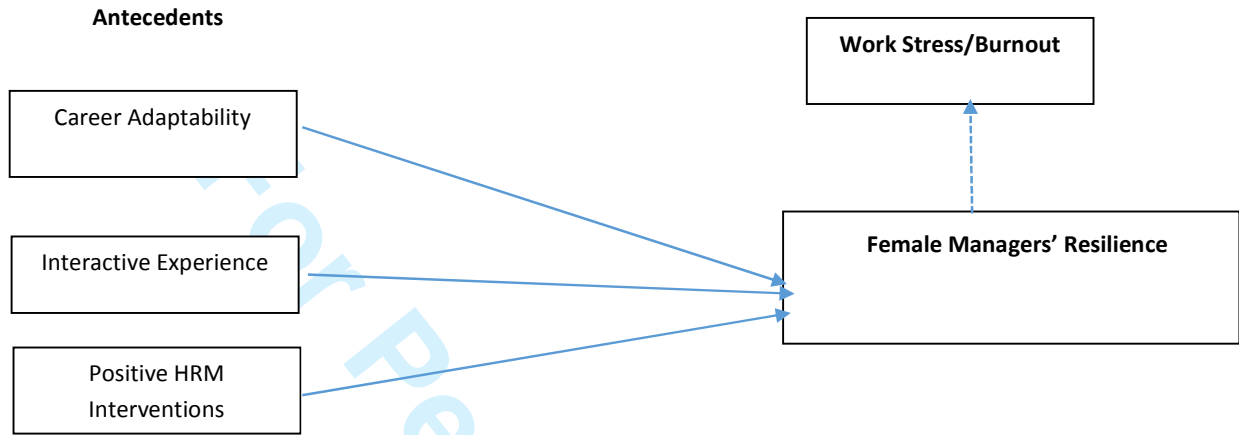
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Figure1: Conceptual Framework of the Study



Note: -----> Moderating (Weakening) Influences