

HARDIPRENEURSHIP: A NOVEL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR MIGRANT REINTEGRATION IN THE ERA OF ECONOMIC DISRUPTION

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Abstract

Global economic disruption characterized by geopolitical uncertainty, technological acceleration, and market pressures has had a major impact on the economic resilience of vulnerable groups, including retired Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI). Many of them have difficulty adapting economically due to limited local skills, low digital literacy, and lack of psychosocial support. This research develops the concept of Hardipreneurship, which is an entrepreneurial approach based on mental resilience, which is built from the integration of positive psychology theory (hardiness) and entrepreneurship theory. The research uses an exploratory mixed method approach, with qualitative data collected through interviews and FGDs, as well as quantitative data through a survey of 250 retired migrants in Central Java Province. The research variables include six main components: hardiness, innovation & creativity, digital technology, socio-economic networks, adaptation to global disruptions, and readiness to become hardipreneurs. The instrument is developed from 17 dimensions and more than 30 indicators. The results of the exploration show that mental resilience, business innovation, and technological adaptation are the main factors in building the resilience of migrant retirees. This research offers a conceptual framework of Hardipreneurship that can be the basis for policies, entrepreneurship training, and empowerment of migrant retirees in a holistic and sustainable manner.

Keywords: Retired Migrants, Hardiness, Entrepreneurs, Hardipreneurs, Global Economic Collapse

INTRODUCTION

Global economic disruption caused by geopolitical instability, inflation, as well as technological changes and industrial trends have created major challenges to economic resilience in various countries. In this context, vulnerable groups such as migrant workers who have returned to their homeland (retired migrants) face the dual challenge of navigating their economic life after a contract of employment abroad. Globally, this phenomenon has become a concern because many retired migrants do not have the economic or mental readiness to adapt to the uncertainty of the domestic labor market (Bartolomé et al., 2022; Duan et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) make a major contribution to the national economy through remittances. Data from the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency (BP2MI) noted that in 2023, as many as 274,965 migrant workers were placed abroad, and Central Java Province became one of the largest contributing areas with a total of 59,009 people (BP2MI, 2023). However, when these workers returned to the country, many of them had difficulty adapting to the domestic job market. The barriers faced are not only skills gaps, but also low financial literacy,

dependence on consumptive patterns, and psychological impacts such as post-migration anxiety and trauma (Darmawan et al., 2024; Handayani, 2025; Susanti et al., 2025).

In addition to individual barriers, the limited holistic transition program also exacerbates this condition. Most of the existing empowerment programs focus more on technical skills training and access to micro business financing, but there is little in terms of psychosocial strengthening and mental resilience (Pospintar, 2024; Ramadani, 2021; Susila & Pribowo, 2023). Meanwhile, traditional approaches in entrepreneurship that emphasize innovation, risk-taking, and opportunity creation, often ignore the important role of psychological factors such as mental resilience and individual resilience (Endarwati et al., 2023; Franco et al., 2021).

In this regard, Positive Psychology makes an important contribution by emphasizing the importance of individual internal strengths such as optimism, self-efficacy, and hardiness. Hardiness, developed by Kobasa et al., (1982), consists of three main dimensions: commitment, control, and challenge, which have been shown to increase one's resilience in the face of life stress and uncertainty (Kobasa et al., 1982; Nurjan et al., 2023). This approach is relevant to retired migrants who have to readapt in an economic ecosystem that is very different from their work environment abroad.

In response to the complexity of these challenges, this study proposes the concept of Hardipreneurship as an integrative approach that combines entrepreneurial principles with mental resilience. Hardipreneurship is not just a business model, but a frame of mind that encourages retired migrants to become mentally resilient, innovative, adaptive to change, and utilize social networks and digital technology to support their businesses (Bagis et al., 2024; Utami et al., 2025). Thus, a hardipreneur is not just an entrepreneur, but an economic survivor who is able to transform through psychological strength and business skills.

However, based on recent literature reviews, there are still important gaps that have not been answered by previous research. First, there is no effective approach that integrates the psychological and economic dimensions simultaneously in the context of the empowerment of retired migrants in Indonesia. Second, the concept of hardiness has indeed been studied in various contexts, such as job security and psychological well-being, but it has not been explained in depth in relation to entrepreneurial development (Susila & Pribowo, 2023; Tubastuvi et al., 2023). Third, no studies have been found that explicitly build a conceptual model that links hardiness with post-migrant economic resilience through adaptation-based entrepreneurship.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the survival mechanism of Indonesian migrants, especially in Central Java Province, in the face of global economic disruption through the development of hardipreneurship. This research uses the approach of hardiness theory and entrepreneurship theory to formulate a synthesis framework that is expected to be able to make new theoretical contributions and practical solutions in post-migrant economic empowerment policies. The novelty of this research lies in the merging of the two major disciplines of positive psychology and entrepreneurship into one strategic approach called hardipreneurship, which has so far not been comprehensively discussed in the context of reverse migration in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Positive Psychology Theory

Positive psychology is an approach that focuses on the strength, resilience, and potential of individuals to grow and develop in the face of life's challenges (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). One of the key concepts in this approach is hardiness, which is a person's ability to survive psychologically in situations of stress and uncertainty. Kobasa, (1979) defines hardiness as a combination of three components: commitment (willingness to engage in life and work), control (the belief that a person can influence events), and challenge (the belief that change is an opportunity to grow).

In the context of migration, hardiness has been shown to contribute to the mental resilience of migrant workers who face changes in the work environment, family separation, and social and economic risks (Nurjan et al., 2023). Susila & Pribowo, (2023) emphasized that retired migrant women with a high level of hardiness are able to rebuild their lives better socially and economically. Therefore, hardiness is an important foundation in developing an entrepreneurial resilience model for retired migrants.

Entrepreneurship Theory

Entrepreneurship theory emphasizes the ability of individuals to recognize opportunities, take risks, and create value through innovation and creativity (Duan et al., 2020). Entrepreneurship is not only an economic activity, but is a process of social learning and adaptation to the dynamics of the business environment.

In the research of Franco et al., (2021), the success of small entrepreneurs is strongly influenced by intrinsic motivation, personal resilience, and product innovation. However, many entrepreneurial approaches that are developing among retired migrants are still limited to technical training, such as financial management or production, without exploring the psychological and social dimensions as supporting factors for long-term success (Endarwati et al., 2023; Utami et al., 2025). Integration between positive psychology and entrepreneurship is needed to address the challenges of migrant retirees who require not only technical skills, but also mental strength and adaptability to economic uncertainty and global disruption.

Development of Variables and Dimensions of Hardipreneurship

Based on the integration of the two theories and field exploration, a conceptual framework of Hardipreneurship was developed consisting of six main variables, each of which has dimensions and indicators that have been tested conceptually.

Table 1. Synthesis Formation

Variabel	Dimension/ Subvariabel	Indicator	Questionnaire Statement Item (Likert Scale 1–5)
Hardiness	Commitment	Perseverance in the face of adversity	I continue to run my business despite facing many challenges.
		Clear goals in the business	I have a clear goal in my business.
		Responsibility to family through business	I feel a responsibility to help my family through my business.
	Control	Confidence in controlling efforts	I believe that I can control the direction of my business.
		Independent decision-making	I made important business decisions based on my own judgment.
		Resilience to stress	I felt able to cope with the pressure and not give up easily.
	Challenge	Attitudes towards economic change	I see economic change as an opportunity to grow.
		Interest in business challenges	The ability to learn from failure
Innovation & Creativity	Product/Service Innovation	The ability to learn from failure	I learn from failures and use them for improvement.
		Product/service uniqueness	Saya menciptakan produk/jasa yang berbeda dari pesaing.
		Product changes	I often make changes or improvements to products.

Variabel	Dimension/ Subvariabel	Indicator	Questionnaire Statement Item (Likert Scale 1–5)
		Response to the market	I answer the needs of the market with new ideas.
Digital Technology	Technology Adaptation	Use of digital platforms	I use social media to market products.
		Digital transactions	I accept orders through digital applications (WhatsApp, Shopee, etc.).
	Digital Competence	Efficiency with technology	I use technology to improve business efficiency.
		Learn new technologies	I learned a new application to manage my business.
		Take digital training	I am taking digital training or online learning for my business.
Socio-Economic Networks	Community	Involvement in the business community	I collaborate with fellow retired migrants or local business actors.
		Participation in training/MSMEs	I participated in MSME community activities or entrepreneurship training.
		Psychosocial support from the community	I feel more confident in running a business because of the support from the community.
Global Disruption Adaptation	Survival Strategy	Planning in times of crisis	I prepare a backup plan for my business in case of an economic crisis.
		Resilience in difficult situations	I continue to run my business even though the economic conditions are difficult.
	Global Awareness	Keeping up with economic developments	I follow global economic developments because it can have an impact on my business.
		Lessons learned from previous crises	I am looking for information or learning from previous economic crises.
Readiness to Become a Hardipreneur	Integrative Capacity	Confidence as a resilient entrepreneur	I feel ready to become a strong entrepreneur.
		A combination of mentality, skill, network	I have the combination of mental resilience, business skills, and networking to succeed.
		Optimism of business resilience	I am optimistic that my business will survive in uncertain economic conditions.
	Training & Programs	Partisipasi dalam pelatihan kewirausahaan	I have attended entrepreneurship training from the government/LSM.
		Access business assistance information	I know how to access capital assistance from official programs.
(Opsional) Akses Dukungan Eksternal		Relevance of government assistance programs	I feel that the program from the government is quite relevant to my needs.

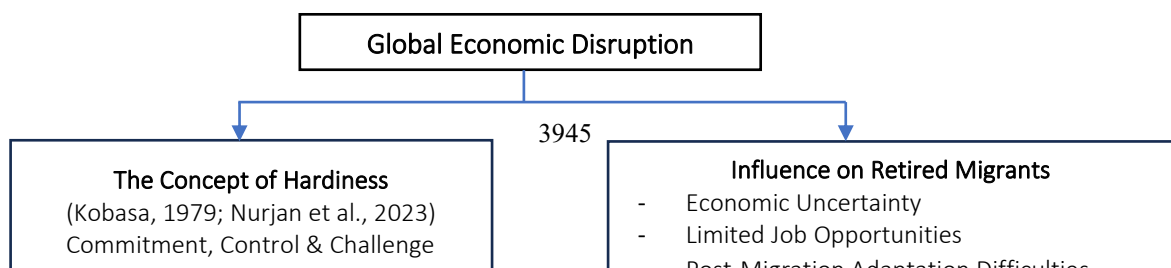


Figure 1. Synthesis of Hardipreneurs

This model assumes that resilient migrant retirees have not only business competence, but also a mentality that is ready to face pressure, uncertainty, and change. The model also includes digitalization and social aspects that are essential for business continuity in the context of the post-pandemic global economy.

This conceptual framework supports the development of entrepreneurial resilience as a whole, which includes mental (internal), social (community), and technological (digital adaptation) aspects. Thus, Hardipreneurship is not simply an individualistic approach, but also based on a broader support system.

Research Novelty

- a. Theoretical novelty
 - Formulating a new concept of Hardipreneurship as an integration of positive psychology theory (hardiness) and entrepreneurship theory.
 - Broaden understanding of entrepreneurial resilience in the context of reverse migration.
- b. Empirical novelty
 - Develop and measure six key variables based on field-based indicators and academic validation.
 - Provide a contextual measurement scale for Indonesian migrant retirees.
- c. Contextual novelty
 - The focus is on retired migrants in Central Java Province, which is one of the largest migration pockets, but has not been extensively researched integratively.
 - Adding variables for adaptation to global disruption and digital readiness that are highly relevant in the post-pandemic era and digital economy.
- d. Practical novelty

- It is the basis for the development of Hardipreneurship training modules by the government, LSM, or the MSME community based on mental toughness and innovation.
- Provide recommendations for training interventions that cover psychological, social, economic, and technological aspects.

RESEARCH METHODS

Types and Approaches to Research

This study uses an exploratory-sequential mixed method approach, which begins with the collection of qualitative data through interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) to explore the experiences of retired migrants in building businesses, then continued with a quantitative survey to test the conceptual structure of Hardipreneurship. This approach is used to produce a complete understanding both narratively and statistically (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

Location and Research Subject

The research was carried out in Central Java Province, which is one of the regions with the highest number of retired migrants in Indonesia based on BP2MI data 2023. The subject of the study is retired Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) who have returned and run a micro or home-based business for at least 1 year. The technique of determining qualitative informants is carried out purposively, while for quantitative surveys, proportional random sampling techniques are used.

Data Collection Techniques

- a. Data collection is carried out through three stages:
- b. Literature Studies: to compile theoretical bases and initial indicators.
- c. Interviews and FGDs: for local context validation and exploration of indicators.
- d. Questionnaire Deployment: using a Likert scale of 1–5 that covers all dimensions of Hardipreneurship.

Research Instruments and Indicators

The research instrument was developed based on 6 variables and 17 main dimensions of Hardipreneurship, with a total of more than 30 indicators as follows:

- a. Hardiness: Commitment, Control, Challenge (9 indicators)
- b. Innovation & Creativity: Product/service innovation (3 indicators)
- c. Digital Technology: Technology adaptation and digital competence (5 indicators)
- d. Socio-Economic Networks: Community and social support (3 indicators)
- e. Global Disruption Adaptation: Survival strategies and global awareness (4 indicators)
- f. Readiness to Become a Hardipreneur: Integrative capacity and external support (5–6 indicators)

All items are arranged in the form of positive statements with a choice of answers from "Strongly Agree (1)" to "Strongly Agree (5)".

Data Analysis Techniques

Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed using thematic methods to support the validation of indicators. Quantitative data is analyzed in two stages: 1). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to identify the factor structure of the indicators used. 2). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to test the validity and reliability of variable constructs in the Hardipreneurship model.

In addition, structural models can be tested using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach where it is possible to validate the relationship between dimensions and readiness to become a hardipreneur.

Research Proposition

Based on the synthesis of the literature and conceptual models, propositions are formulated as the basis for the following theoretical tests:

Q1: The hardiness dimension (commitment, control, and challenge) contributes positively to readiness to become a hardipreneur.

P2: Innovation and business creativity improve the adaptability of migrant businesses to economic challenges.

P3: The use of digital technology plays a significant role in strengthening the efficiency and sustainability of migrant retirement businesses.

Q4: Social network and community support increases the confidence and psychosocial resilience of post-migrants.

P5: Adaptability to global disruption increases business readiness to face economic changes.

P6: The combination of mental resilience, business skills, social networking, and digital skills forms the ideal readiness of a hardipreneur.

These propositions will serve as the basis for structural testing and the development of hardipreneurship-based retirement empowerment policy recommendations.

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