#### **ORIGINAL PAPER**



# From growth goals to proactive organizational resilience: first evidence in women-led and non-women-led Italian wineries

Elena Casprini<sup>1</sup> · Tommaso Pucci<sup>1</sup> · Lorenzo Zanni<sup>1</sup>

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#### Abstract

In a fast-changing world, characterized by evenly unexpected challenges and shocks, being resilient is a crucial aspect for every organization. Drawing from the goal setting theory and the double standards of competence perspective, this study aims at understanding the antecedents of organizational *proactive* resilience. More precisely, it looks at the impact of quantitative and qualitative organizational growth goals on proactive resilience, distinguishing between women-led and non-women-led firms. Based on a unique sample of 167 Italian wineries (67 women-led and 100 nonwomen-led), this paper tests this theoretical model using path analysis techniques. The wine sector is a particularly interesting context to study the phenomenon due to its exposure to natural disasters, new consumers' behaviours that are requiring firms to continuously innovate and differentiate in a traditionally low-tech sector, but also changes happening at wineries' management level. In fact, the sector has been traditionally male dominated, but women are increasingly taking the lead. The findings indicate that growth goals differently contribute to proactive organizational resilience, but their effects vary in women- and non-women-led businesses. Specifically, these results suggest that in women-led wineries, proactive organizational resilience depends on quantitative growth goals while in non-women-led wineries businesses this depends on qualitative growth goals.

**Keywords** Organizational resilience · Goals · Women · Winery · Path analysis

Mathematics Subject Classification 62J05 Linear regression; mixed models

Department of Business and Law, University of Siena, piazza San Francesco 7/8, 53100 Siena, Italy



Elena Casprini elena.casprini@unisi.it

#### 1 Introduction

In an uncertain world, characterized by natural disasters, volatile financial markets, fast-changing governments (Branicki et al. 2019), but also new disruptive technologies and laws (Akgun and Keskin 2014), being able to cope with threats and difficulties is a key feature for every organization. In defining this characteristic, management scholars have often adopted the concept of *resilience*, commonly understood as "an attribute that defines individuals who are able to thrive with difficulties and uncertainties and to feel better after something unpleasant happens" (Conz and Magnani 2020: 400).

Born in psychological research, since late 1970s/early 1980s, resilience has also attracted a lot of interest in management studies (Coutu 2002; Hillmann 2020; Hillmann and Günther 2021, Linnenluecke 2017). Many recent literature reviews on the theme (Conz and Magnani 2020; Fisher, Ragsdale and Fisher 2019; Hillmann and Günther 2021; Linnenluecke 2017) have shown that resilience has been investigated from different theories and defined in different manners, thus leading to uncomparable results. These studies have also clearly pointed out that (i) resilience can be viewed as the *outcome* of specific choices (Carayannis et al. 2014), as a process (Conz and Magnani 2020) encompassing multiple stages (Duchek 2020), or a *capacity* (Akgun and Keskin 2014; Duchek 2018); (ii) resilience is a multi-dimensional concept (Hillmann and Günther 2021); and (iii) resilience encompasses multiple level of analysis, from individual to industry. The complexity of the phenomenon requires to be very specific when approaching it in terms of theory, outcome/process/capacity perspectives, measurement and level of analysis.

Recent contributions have shown that in its process perspective, what is called "proactive" organizational resilience (i.e. resilience as an attribute before an event occurs) has been scantly investigated (Conz and Magnani 2020). This is very surprising since proactive resilience preceeds all the others types of organizational resilience, letting the firm anticipating and being prepared before the critical event occurence (Duchek 2020; Iftikhar et al. 2021). But, what does lead a firm to develop proactive resilience? Which are those factors that could help firms in anticipating and preventing potential critical events? At the moment, literature has focused on prior knowledge base (Duchek 2020), resource endowments, developing networks and coordination (Williams et al. 2017; Iftikhar et al. 2021), while putting at the core the importance of resilience evolution over time due to the interactions between the actor (e.g. individual or organization) and the environment (Williams et al. 2017). However, one factor that has not been previously investigated is the importance of the organizational goals in determining proactive resilience and a more focused investigation about whether CEOs' (micro-level) characteristics (such as gender) could influence it. Organizations, in fact, possess different types of goals and these could influence how a firm is alert towards internal and environmental signals. Furthermore, extant studies have noticed that women have different goals for their business and this influces business outcomes (Cliff 1998; Fairlie and Robb 2009).

Moving from the goal setting theory at macro-level (de Haas et al. 2000; Young and Smith 2013), this paper investigates the *antecedents* of proactive



organizational resilience (Conz and Magnani 2020; Hillmann and Günther 2021), defined as "an attribute that firms possess before an event occurs" (Conz and Magnani 2020: 405), focusing on a specific natural resources-based context. In particular, this paper investigates the relationship between goal setting and proactive resilience (measured through two dimensions, i.e. the willingness of the firm to survive in the long run and the attitude of the firm to preserve the environment and be environmentally sustainable). Furthermore, considering extant gender-related studies and moving from the double standards of competence model (Foschi 2000), the paper explores whether this relationship differ between women-led and non-women-led firms in a traditionally male-dominanted business, that of Italian wineries.

The paper is structured as follows. In the next section we provide the conceptual background of the paper describing what we know about the concept of proactive resilience, summing up the key assumptions of the goal setting theory and distinguishing between different types of goals. We then introduce an overview of the influence of gender on organizational outcomes. In the third section, we describe the sample, the operationalization of the variables and the path analysis technique adopted. Due to the context specificity of resilience (Hillmann and Günther 2021), we tested our hypotheses over a sample of small- and medium-sized Italian wineries. Then, results are shown. Finally, a discussion about the results and research and managerial implications are provided.

# 2 Conceptual background and hypotheses

## 2.1 Resilience in organizations

The concept of resilience has been mainly investigated by psychologists (Locke 1996), in ecology (for a review see Hillmann 2020) and only more recently by management scholars who have focused on the individual (Coutu 2002; Mallak 1998) and the organizational resilience (Conz and Magnani 2020; Fisher, Ragsdale and Fisher 2019; Hillmann and Günther 2021; Linnenluecke 2017; Williams et al. 2017). The recent literature reviews on the topic have pointed out several aspects such as (i) the different streams of research about resilience as from adaptability of business model to supply chain design (Linnelucke 2017), (ii) the conceptual and operational issues, with particular reference to the need of disentangling resilience as a process, resilience as a capability and resilience as an outcome, a behaviour, a strategy and a mix of these (Hillman and Günther 2021), and (iii) different categories of resilience, as in the case of resilience as a proactive attribute (before event occurrence), resilience as absorptive and adaptive attributes (during event occurrence), resilience as reactive attribute (after event occurrence), and resilience as dynamic attribute (before, during and after an event) (Conz and Magnani 2020). The importance of distinguishing among different stages of resilience is also pointed out by others. Duchek (2020), inspired by process-based studies and focusing on resilience capabilities, has identified three resilience stages, namely anticipation, coping and adaptation. Williams



et al. (2017) have defined resilience as "the process by which an actor (i.e. individual, organization, or community) builds and uses its capability endowments to interact with the environment in a way that positively adjusts and maintains functioning prior, to, during, and following adversity" (p. 742). If that et al. (2021), focusing on the supply chain resilience field of research, have distinguished among proactive, reactive or dynamic resilience, defining proactive resilience as the supply chain's ability to be alert, ready and prepared for disruptive events thus adopting ex ante measures.

Similar to other studies (Borekci et al. 2015; Conz and Magnani 2020; Duchek 2020; Hillmann 2020), this paper focuses on resilience as a proactive attribute, that can be conceived as an attitude towards future uncertain events (Conz and Magnani 2020, p. 405). Still based on previous research recommending the importance of conceptualization of resilience (Hillman and Gunther 2021), we have recognized the need to further detail the dimensions constituting proactive resilience in order to measure it. We advance the proactive attribute of resilience distinguishing two dimensions, thus embracing the importance of considering resilience as a multi-dimensional construct (Hillman 2020; Hillman and Günther 2021). More precisely, as emphasised in some literature reviews where resilience has been considered as a way to engage with internal failures or a way of avoiding external impacts (Linnelucke 2017) and "an ability to detect critical developments within the firm or in its environment and to adapt proactively" (Duchek 2020, p. 225), we distinguished an *inward* and a *outward* looking dimensions. The first refers to the willingness of the firm to survive in the long run. This is an attitude that spurs companies, being family and non-family firms, public or private, towards being viable in the future. Albeit being a naïve dimension, we think that this simplified dimension could advance knowledge about proactive resilience due to the forward looking nature of this category of resilience. In other terms, in line with other studies that have measured resilience as "survival" (see Hillman and Günther 2021, for a review), our conceptualization look at proactive organizational resilience as the willingness for a long-term survival of the firm. This is important since in order to survive in the long run, firms need to plan and organize resources over time to be prepared and anticipate events.

The second dimension is more *outward* looking and refers to the attitude of the firm to preserve the environment and be environmentally sustainable. Sustainability has gained momentum in management research, but it is often seen as a 'driver' of financial performance, rather than a constitutive element of an attitude towards overcoming threats. A fairly recent paper by Ortiz-de-Mandojana and Bansal (2016) has shown that social and environmental practices contributes to organizational resilience assessed through long-term outcomes (no latter survival rates). We think that, due to the context specificity characterising studies about resilience (Hillman and Gunther 2021), in the case of natural-resource-based contexts (Hart 1995), such as in the one of wineries where the environmental sustainability aspect is at the core of several behaviours and strategies (e.g. Pucci et al. 2019a, b), considering environmental sustainability as one of the dimensions constituting of proactive resilience is necessary.



## 2.2 Goal setting theory, growth goals and proactive resilience

Resilience has been studied throughout several lenses such as evolutionary theory, normal accident theory, high reliability organizing, but also psychological capital development and sensemaking (Linnenluecke 2017). These theories are linked to high-tech environments or stress capabilities that companies develop to face uncertainties. Theoreof, they are mainly concerned with resilience as absorptive/adaptive attributes, reactive attribute and dynamic attributes. On the contrary, they badly fit with resilience as proactive attribute (Conz and Magnani 2020) since that concept deals with an attitude about uncertainty before an event occurs. Hence, we think that the goal setting theory would predict to what extent an organization could be resilience-oriented better than other theories. According to the goal setting theory, an individual sets a goal (or other individuals set the goals for her/him) and this influences the effort in accomplishing that goal and, in turn, performance (Locke 1996). More specifically, the more difficult is the goal, the higher is the perfomance. The goal setting theory rises in the social cognitive theory of organizational management (Wood and Bandura 1989). Goals "provide a sense of purpose and direction, and they rise and sustain the level of effort needed to reach them" (Wood and Bandura 1989, p. 367).

Goals have been usually studied at individual (micro-) or team/group (meso-) levels, while in this paper we look at organizational goals (macro-) level. Aguinis et al. (2011) note that there is a challenge in linking micro and macro domains in management studies and that multi-level research capable of linking antecedents and consequences is needed. In this paper, we use goal setting theory at macro-level (Young and Smith 2013), emphasising the relationship between goals and proactive resilience, and then looking at the individual characteristics of CEO (see next section).

The rational resides in the fact that, especially in small- and medium-level enterprises (as the ones considered), the CEO's individual goals (micro) are reflected, transmitted and shared, at employees level (meso) and consequently at organizational (macro) level. In our case, the "what to achieve?" question (de Haas et al. 2000) points to a result-oriented aim (i.e. organizational resilience). In other terms, what we are arguing is that the goals that the CEO aims to reach are linked to proactive resilience. This is explained by the fact that leaders, who detain authority, are committed to goals and since they put effort over time, they are able to create trust, facilitate communication, enhance commitment about goals priorities also among employees (Young and Smith 2013). For example, very recent studies (Tripathi et al. 2020) have shown that leadership style and employee behaviour are important for reaching sustainability goals, thus linking individual-level factors to the macro-level goal of sustainability.

According to Locke (1996), goals possess two attributes: *content*, i.e. what a person is looking for, and *intensity*, i.e. how difficult and specific is a goal. These attributes influence performance since, according to the theory, the more difficult and specific the goal, the highest the performance. This study focuses on the *content* of the goals, exporing to what extent the type of the goal would influence the attitude towards uncertainty.



Organizations possess multiple kinds of goals. Young and Smith (2013) have noted that firms may have multiple goals and they can choose among temporal differentiation (i.e. focus on one specific goal for one period and then move to the next goal to the next period), to focus on one of them (goal myopia), or to assign different goals to each unit (spatial differentiation). In this paper, we argue that firms tend to focus on multiple goals simultaneously even if they can be pursued in different time periods or be pursued by different units. Due to the vast realm of organizational goals, we distinguish between two broad clusters of growth goals. First, quantitative goals refers to the search of higher turnover, higher profit, more employees and new markets. These objectives have been often studied in management research as demonstrated by the several literature reviews (e.g. Hausknecht and Trevor 2011; Shepherd et al. 2015). As examples, we can cite studies that have looked at growth of small firms as the change in sales and profitability (Coleman 2007; Gupta and Somers 1996). Business survival also depends on the resources that companies have in terms of possessing better financing and employees (Headd 2003). Therefore, we advance that:

**Hypothesis 1** Quantitative growth goals will positively influence proactive resilience.

For what concerns qualitative goals, they embrace multiple factors such as being innovative, reinforcing the brand, reinforcing the relationship with other firms and improving the quality of the products/services. Innovation represents an important challenge for firms. Innovation is highly linked to resilience since organizations that pursue innovation goals have to deal with risk and uncertain decisions. This is clear when considering that organizational resilience has been studied as a determinant of innovativeness (Akgun and Keskin 2014), but also as the outcome of innovation, such as business model innovation (Carayannis et al. 2014). Some preliminary works on corporate reputation have also shown that working on reputation before that a critical event occurs, rather than working once crisis occurred is important for supporting resilience (Koronis and Ponis 2012). Gao et al. (2017), for instance, have advanced that firm reputation is the basis for long-run survival in emerging markets. Others have stressed the importance of maintaining good relationships with other stakeholders. For example, Borekci et al. (2015) have looked at the fact that relational behaviour among multiple actors, such as buyer's supplier-supplier, positively influences resilience of this triad, especially when there is co-opetition or cooperation. Finally, some recent studies have highlighted the importance of quality as a driver for resilience (Ali et al. 2017). Therefore, we suppose that:

**Hypothesis 2** *Qualitative growth goals will positively influence proactive resilience.* 

### 2.3 The influence of gender on organizational outcomes

Whether companies led by men or women differ with respect to their performance or processes is a matter of concern of a quite broad stream of research



(e.g. Dezsö and Ross 2012), from family business related studies (e.g. González et al. 2020; Chadwick and Dawson 2018) to entrepreneurship (e.g. Morris et al. 2006; Pardo-del-Val 2009). Nonetheless, literature still presents very fragmented results on whether and how gender influences organizational outcome (e.g. Robb and Watson 2012; Rosa et al. 1996).

Empirical studies have in fact highlighted that women present unique characteristics that might shape how the business is managed (for an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of women's unique contributions see Hoobler et al. 2018). For example, women are different from men in some propensities, such as risk aversion. Women seem to be more risk averse than men, as shown by some studies where it has been found that the higher presence of women in the board of directors leads to lower levels of indebteness (López-Delgado and Diéguez-Soto 2020) and possess a different attitude towards financial capital request (Coleman and Robb 2009; Khan and Vieito 2013). Then, women and men differ about what they consider success (Buttner and Moore 1997; Powell and Eddleston 2008), For example, Hechavarría et al. (2017) have noticed that women focus more on social value goals than economic value creation. Reichborn-Kjennerud and Svare (2014) conduct a multiple case study on women- and men-dominated firms finding that they differ in terms of ambitions such as the importance of securing employees' jobs in the case of women-led firms or expanding in the case of men-led firms. Furthermore, women also differ from men in their willingness to growth and the strategies adopted for growing (Rosa et al. 1996).

From this broad overview, we expect that gender has an influence on how the business is managed and on its organizational outcomes. Therefore, we argue that:

**Hypothesis 3** The effect of growth goals on proactive resilience differs between women-led and non-women-led firms.

Furthermore, some empirical evidence has shown that women-led firms outperform men-led firms in both financial and non-financial performance, thus supporting a female leadership advantage (Chadwick and Dawson 2018; Hoobler et al. 2018). To the extent of this study, we think that an interesting perspective is provided by the so called double standards of competence model (Foschi 2000), according to which "stricter requirements tend to be applied to individuals of lower level status" (Chadwick and Dawson 2018, p. 240). Individuals are judged via different standards that can based on individual characteristics, such as gender, and this differentiates individuals in either higher valued or lower valued categories when infering on specific outcomes, such as competences (Foschi 2000). In particular, in genderrelated studies, it has been ascertained that women face more difficulties in having been attributed the same level of competences of men. Therefore, we might expect that when women reach the top management positions, thus breaking the so called "glass ceiling", women possess higher competences than those that are possessed by men occupying the same position (Chadwick and Dawson 2018; Foschi 2000; Hoobler et al. 2018). This could be especially evident in those sectors that have been



traditionally male-dominated, such as forestry (Johansson et al. 2020), construction (Daintym et al. 2000) and also wine (Livat and Jaffré 2022).

Therefore, based on the double standards of competence, we further refine our hypothesis suggesting that when women are at the lead, then they are more capable than men in strenghtening the influce of growth goals on proactive resilience:

**Hypothesis 3a** The effect of quantitative growth goals on proactive resilience is higher in women-led firms than in non-family firms.

**Hypothesis 3b** *The effect of qualitative growth goals on proactive resilience is higher in women-led firms than in non-family firms.* 

Consequently, our model (Fig. 1) is tested using two different samples, one women-led and one not-women led, in one specific context that has been traditionally considered as a male-dominated sector (Italian wine sector).

## 3 Methodology

## 3.1 Sample

This study analyses the context of Italian wineries. This context is particularly interesting for studying resilience since it is characterized by several shocks from natural disasters and problems linked to weather conditions to increasing competition, institutional barriers and a lower demand due to the economic crisis (Corrado and Odorici 2009; Alonso and Bressan 2015). Additionally, in many of the Old World countries, wineries build their competitive advantage also on the family name and the winemaking traditions that pass from business to business. Furthermore, consumers are increasingly concerned with environmentally issues thus requiring wineries to invest in new green technologies and pay attention to the environment (Pucci et al. 2019a, b). Being resilient, thereof, is a key characateristic for wineries. However, resilience in the wine industry has been scantly investigated and has

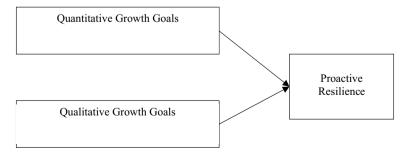


Fig. 1 Conceptual model



mainly concerned the strategies adopted (Alonso and Bressan 2015), rather than the antecedents of organizational resilience. Furthermore, the wine industry is still male dominated (Livat and Jaffré 2022), thus making it an interesting setting to test our hypotheses.

The sample of this study consists of 167 questionnaires that were collected between June and December 2019. There are 67 women-led wineries and 100 non-women-led wineries. The questionnaires were sent to 900 wineries that belonged to a Wine Association at the Italian level. The questionnaire was validated by the President of the Association and by 2 wine managers. The respondents were contacted by phone calls and asked to fill the questionnaire online in Italian. A total of 167 questionnaires were received, i.e. 18.6% response rate. There are no missing data. This can be explained by the fact that the respondents belong to the Association and therefore they take care about what the Association is doing and asking them to do. Furthermore, the questionnaire was quite short, requiring respondents to spend on average 8 min, and this allows the respondents to better focus on questions.

The questionnaire is structured into three main sections. First, a section dedicated to general information about the company (e.g. its legal form, number of employees, turnover, etc.). Then, a section referring to the goals of the company as seen by the respondent and the importance of sustainability and continuity of the firm in long run. Third, a section dedicated to information about the respondent (e.g. age, previous experiences, education, motivation of joining the company). It also presented a section dedicated to the management of the firm. In this way, we were able to distinguish between wineries that are women-led, i.e. where women play a role in the top management team, from the rest.

## 3.2 Dependent variables

There is a lot of inconsistency in the conceptualization of resilience (Conz and Magnani 2020; Fisher, Ragsdale and Fisher 2019; Linnenluecke 2017). In this paper, *Proactive resilience* is defined by two items. On the one side, the survival in the long run. This aspect is crucial to every single business and refers to pass the business year after year. On the other side, there is a dimension linked to environmental sustainability. These two items have been measured with two questions and load on proactive resilience.

## 3.3 Independent variables

We distinguished between quantitative and qualitative growth goals. Quantitative growth goals refers to the search of higher turnover, higher profit, more employees and new markets. Qualitative growth goals are made up by judging important innovation, to reinforce the brand, to reinforce the relationship with other firms and to improve the quality of the products/services. All these variables were measured throughout a multiple-item Likert scale. More precisely, we asked each respondent to reply to the following question: "Below you find multiple goals for your firm. On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a complete extent), tell us for each of them how



you consider them important ...". These items were also validated with wineries' managers.

Additionally, we considered multiple factors that could defined the individual-level characteristics: previous experiences and entrepreneurial motivations. More precisely, about previous experiences we looked at whether the manager has joined the business after study, directly from the family, if she/he works in the same or other sectors. For what concerns entrepreneurial motivations, we distinguished among having entered the firm due to succession, pushed by the partner, following the tradition, because of her/his entrepreneurial spirit or due to passion.

#### 3.4 Control variables

We control for Age and Education as individual-level characteristics (Ayala and Manzano 2014; Giménez and Calabrò 2018; Santos et al. 2018). Several empirical studies have shown that training in management, for example, mediates the relationship between opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial orientation (Santos et al. 2018).

Table 1 presents a summary of the variables and items considered, while Table 2 the descriptive statistics and correlation.

**Table 1** Measurement items and validity assessment (N = 167)

Measure	Item description	Rotated fac- tor loadings
Proactive Resilience <sup>a</sup>	Please rate	
$\alpha = 0.823$	$x_1$ . Survival on the long run	0.694
	x <sub>2</sub> . Sustainability	0.773
Quantitative growth goals <sup>a</sup>	Please rate	
$\alpha = 0.877$	x <sub>3</sub> . Turnover	0.870
	x <sub>4</sub> . Profit	0.890
	x <sub>5</sub> . Occupational level	0.574
	x <sub>6</sub> . New markets	0.719
Qualitative growth goals <sup>a</sup>	Please rate	
$\alpha = 0.912$	x <sub>7</sub> . Innovation	0.786
	x <sub>8</sub> . Brand reinforcement	0.867
	x <sub>9</sub> . Reinforcement of relationships with other companies	0.818
	$x_{10}$ . Product quality	0.798

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup>Five-point scale anchored at 1 = not at all and 5 = to an extreme extent



Table 2 Descriptive statistics and correlation

[14]														1.000	0.240	0.428
[13]													1.000	-0.241 1.000	0.156	0.364
[12]												1.000	-0.322	-0.420	0.359	0.481
[11]											1.000	-0.284		-0.213	0.126	0.333
[10]										1.000	-0.101	-0.199	-0.114	-0.149	990.0	0.249
[6]									1.000	- 0.044	0.094	-0.034	-0.041 $-0.114$ $-0.163$	0.001	0.150	0.358
[8]								1.000	-0.168	-0.106	0.006	-0.046	0.164	-0.061	0.138	0.346
[7]							1.000	-0.088	-0.062	0.091	-0.028	0.021	-0.070	0.005	0.222	0.417
[9]						1.000	-0.098	-0.154		-0.071	-0.160	0.254	-0.130 -0.070	0.003	0.497	0.501
[5]					1.000	0.222	-0.188	-0.004	-0.040 -0.115	-0.087	-0.075	0.035	0.010	0.026	0.527	0.501
[4]				1.000	-0.360	-0.271	0.187	-0.162	0.064	0.202	0.066	-0.175	0.120	-0.034	49.299	11.494
[3]			1.000	-0.066	0.004	0.081	0.079	0.014	0.030	-0.035	-0.058	-0.016	-0.015	0.121	4.222	0.834
[2]		1.000	0.490	-0.108	0.031	-0.009	0.024	0.095	0.070	-0.106	-0.013	-0.000	0.013	0.071	4.254	0.810
[1]	1.000	0.480	0.521	0.059	-0.038	0.020	0.140	-0.128	0.044	0.009	0.098	-0.063	-0.056	0.069	4.521	0.749
	1] Proactive resilience	2] Quantitative growth goals	3] Qualitative growth goals	t] Age	5] Education (Degree/high school)	5] Previous experiences (Study)	7] Previous experiences (Family)	3] Previous experiences (Work in the same sector)	[9] Previous experiences (work in other sectors)	[10] Entrepreneurial motivation (Succession)	[11] Entrepreneurial motivation (Partner)	[12] Entrepreneurial motivation (Tradition)	[13] Entrepreneurial motivation (entrepreneurial spirit)	<ul><li>[14] Entrepreneurial motivation (Passion)</li></ul>	Mean	St. Dev
<b> </b>		2	[]	4	[5]	[9]	7	[8]	5]							

N=167. Correlation coefficients greater than 0.154 in absolute value are statistically significant at 95%



Table 3 Path analysis

	No Woma	n (n = 10	00)	Woman (n=67)			
Paths	Coeff	S.E	z	Coeff	S.E	z	
Proactive resilience							
← Quantitative growth goals	0.020	0.080	0.25	0.468***	0.128	3.66	
← Qualitative growth goals	0.753***	0.112	6.71	0.135	0.134	1.01	
← Age	-0.002	0.005	-0.46	0.005	0.007	0.62	
← Education (Degree/high school)	-0.132	0.119	-1.12	0.085	0.169	0.50	
← Previous experiences (Study)	-0.188	0.114	-1.64	0.096	0.184	0.52	
← Previous experiences (Family)	0.198	0.127	1.56	0.100	0.218	0.46	
←Previous experiences (Work in the same sector)	-0.175	0.165	-1.06	-0.537**	0.242	-2.22	
← Previous experiences (work in other sectors)	-0.042	0.154	-0.27	-0.111	0.234	-0.47	
←Entrepreneurial motivation (Succession)	0.429	0.324	1.33	-0.266	0.448	-0.60	
←Entrepreneurial motivation (Partner)	0.458*	0.256	1.79	0.282	0.420	0.67	
←Entrepreneurial motivation (Tradition)	0.278	0.227	1.22	-0.237	0.381	-0.62	
←Entrepreneurial motivation (entrepreneurial spirit)	0.160	0.266	0.60	-0.086	0.389	-0.22	
← Entrepreneurial motivation (Passion)	0.405*	0.240	1.69	-0.128	0.382	-0.34	
$\chi^2$	395.33						
p	< 0.001						
$\chi^2/d$	1,427						
RMSEA	0.072						
CFI	0.902						
SRMR	0.080						
Overall R <sup>2</sup>	0.991						

N = 167. \* p < 0.100; \*\* p < 0.050; \*\*\* p < 0.001

#### 4 Results

Table 3 presents the results of this study. Due to the nature of the variables we adopted a path analysis. In simple terms, path analysis is the results of linear regressions of the relations that make the structural equation model (Hair et al. 2009). The model of structural equations takes into account the two distinct samples of women- and non-women led businesses. Hypotheses 1–2 state that qualitative and quantitative growth goals will positively influence proactive resilience. Our results show that different goals types influence resilience on the basis of whether the business is women- or no-women-led (Hypothesis 3). The results of the path analysis show that in women-led businesses, quantitative growth goals positively influence the proactive resilience (thus supporting our Hypothesis 3a), while in non-women-led businesses, only qualitative growth goals matter (thus not supporting our Hypothesis 3b). For what concerns the goodness of fit, the



 $\chi 2$  is significant and the  $\chi 2/d$  (chi squared over degrees of freedom) is 1427, and therefore under the threshold of 2.

We performed post-hoc analysis on the individual-level characteristics since possessing an attitude towards uncertainty may also depend on them. Some literature reviews on the topic, clearly state that personal attributes might influence resilience (see Fisher et al. 2019). This study has considered two main factors that might explain why some organizations are more oriented towards resilience than others: *previous experiences* and *motivations* to run the businesses.

Extant studies have shown that business resilience may depend on human capital variables such as age, education and experience (Ayala and Manzano 2014). However, these factors have been mainly used as control variables in the field of business. Rather, in psychology and health research, these are components that have been identified as important for building both community and individual resilience (e.g. Buikstra et al. 2010). A study on farmers has also shown that, in context such as agriculture where knowledge base is very dynamic nowadays, it is necessary to draw from multiple knowledge sources to make agriculture resilient, such as exchange with peers, passed through generation, but also with formal education (Šūmane et al. 2018). However, all these studies are mainly qualitative in nature, thus asking for more quantitative evidence.

Additionaly, other studies have shown that the motives a person joins a business are important in predicting resilience. For example, Grubbström et al. (2014) looked at how students view their opportunities in becoming farmers. Interestingly, these authors conduct a focus group with students in order to understand which are those factors that influence their choices in entering their parent's farm. They identified five factors helping in building resilience namely, learning to cope with change and uncertainty (a factor that depends on their motivation and relationship with the family), diversifing for reorganization (thus stressing the fact that it is important to assure multiple sources of income), developing skills and knowledge (especially throughout spending time with the father/mother working in the farm), and creating opportunities for self-organization (stressing the importance of networking and collaborations), and creating a functioning work-love balance (dealing with a potential housband/wife). Another key motivation explaining resilience is represented by passion. The case study of Salcheto winery described by Pucci et al. (2019a, b) shows that entrepreneurial passion is important for pursuing sustainability issues. The owner-manager's profile described in the paper clearly demonstrate that a firm needs to have clear goals in mind and adapt, react, but also change the surrounding environment.

The post-hoc analysis has shown that only previous experiences working on the same sector has a significant, and negative, influence on proactive resilience in the women-led business, while only having joined the firm (entrepreneurial motivation) due to the partner and being passioned about wine significantly and positively influence proactive resilience in the case of non-women-led businesses.



#### 5 Discussion and conclusions

The objective of this paper was to determine the antecedents of proactive resilience. Previous research has shown that little is known about proactive resilience and has mainly focused on family firms and resources. Focusing on the proactive organizational resilience is important from a process-based perspective since it is the starting point of the whole chain (resiliece as an attribute before, during, and after the event) (Conz and Magnani 2020; Ducheck 2020; Williams et al. 2017). Understanding the antecedents of proactive resilience is necessary since proactive resilience preceeds resilience, thus making a firm able to reconstruct after turbulent times and critical events.

Drawing from the goal setting theory and applying it at macro-level (Young and Smith 2013), this paper shows that not all goals are equal in determining proactive resilience and that this is also contingent with management gender. We adopted a unique database on 167 Italian wineries. Our findings show that proactive resilience is determined by growth goals and also by previous experiences (work in the same sector) and entrepreneurial motivations (partner), but only when distinguishing between women-led and non-women-led businesses.

From our results, it appears that quantitative growth goals (i.e. Turnover, Profit, Occupational level and New markets), positively influence business' attitude towards uncertain and risks when women are the managers. In other terms, when organizations are focused to increase sales, profits, employees and new markets they are more oriented to face difficulties when managers are women. On the other hand, when the firm's goals are linked to increase innovations, brand reputation and relationships with other firms, firms are more oriented towards being resilient when they are nonwomen led. These results open up a reflection that adds to extant studies rooted in the double standard of competence model (e.g. Chadwick and Dawson 2018). The fact that we found different results between women-led and non-women-led businesses in terms of growth goals-proactive resilience relationships based on whether these growth goals are quantitative or qualitative, led us to questioning why. We think that one reason could reside on women legitimation of authority. Especially in male-dominated sectors, such as that of wineries (Livat and Jaffré 2022), female leadership is not accepted due to lack of fit perceptions and feminine stereotypes (Vial et al. 2016). The consequence of a lack of legitimation of authority is reflected on the fact that subordinates are often not willing to follow the management strategic choices, with a threat for reaching the organizational outcome. Then, in the case of quantitative growth goals, that are easier to be measured and to be understood at all employees level, women managers could find easier to reap authority legitimation from the whole organization, thus receiving the needed support to pursue the goals. On the contrary, when the winery pursues qualitative growth goals, their positive influence on proactive resilience is present when these firms are non-womenled. This is against about what we expect from the double standards of competences and requires further investigation.



#### 5.1 Contributions to research

This study presents a threefold contribution. First, it sheds light on proactive resilience that, according to previous literature reviews (Conz and Magnani 2020), has little evidence. In particular, this study contributes to scholars' knowledge about resilience applying the goal-setting theory at macro-level. In doing that, we start from assuming that CEO's goals are reflected in organizational goals especially when firms are small, where CEO can easily share meaning and purpose with the whole organization. Literature on resilience highlights the importance of "shared identity, purpose, values and beliefs" (McCann et al. 2009, p. 48). Therefore, setting the right organizational goals can thus support shared meaning and purpose. Proactive resilience is important also from a managerial perspective: identifying which are the antecendent that could explain why some firms are more oriented than others to deal with difficulties could be useful for investors and for those owners who need to choose among different managers. In a complex world characaterized by several exogenous shocks such as natural disasters, but also new disruptive technologies, resilience is becoming a must.

Second, this study distinguishes between qualitative and quantitative goals growth. This enriches previous studies on macro-goal setting (Yound and Smith, 2013) since usually goal setting theory has been applied at micro- (individual) or meso- (team/group) level. The goal setting theory states that the content of a goal is important in determining the commitment, and then the perfomance. Our results confirm this providing evidence that not all goals are equal in terms of content and that content (qualitative or quantitative) has a different impact on proactive resilience, but also shed light that this is contingent to gender.

In fact, the third contribution of this paper is related to gender influence on organization behaviours. Gender has deserved incresing attention in management. Recent meta-analsis results have pointed out a positive influence on women's leaderhsip, especially on firm sales, but have also called for more studies on the broader concept of organizational performance (Hoobler et al. 2018). Therefore, our paper provides additional evidence on that respect, considering proactive resilience. Our findings suggest that in women-led wineries, proactive resilience depends on quantitative growth goals while in non-women-led wineries this depends on qualitative growth goals. This puts forward that women- and non-women-led businesses tend to be oriented towards uncertainty differently when the organizations have different growth goals. The reason for such a kind of relationship should be investigated in future research, especially throughout multimethods approaches.

Finally, our paper also sheds light on the role of two individual-level characateristics that might influence resilience: having previous work experience and entering the business due to passion or partner. This, once again, help in linking the micro- to the macro-level since CEO-level characteristics (micro-level) could help in explaining why some organizational growth goals have different impact on proactive resilience, thus enriching our understanding of resilience from a multi-level perspective. A review by Fisher, Ragsdale and Fisher (2019) has noticed that resilience is organized in three main approaches. One of them is the attribute/resource-based approach that focuses



on "various personal attributes and/or situational resources that can be drawn upon to help with adversity if/when it occurs" (p. 588). Our results show the importance of personal attributes, although our paper has not investigated the personality traits that might lead to a higher resilience orientation. Interestingly, having a past experience in the same sector, i.e. having worked in another winery, has a negative effect on resilience orientation in women-led wineries, implying that an organization is less inclined to be resilience oriented. This might be explained by the awareness deriving from past shocks, as becoming disengaged about future success in the case that another similar uncertainty would arise. On the contrary, when managers are led by passion or by partner, organizations are more resilience oriented, at least in non-women-led wineries.

## 5.2 Practical implications

The results provide practical implications for businesses. First, the appointment of women in management positions in male-dominated sectors is relevant in the presence of quantitative growth goals. When the firm is looking for improving turnover, profits, occupational levels and markets, its attitude towards being able to face uncertainty and risk is positive when the organization is women-led. However, it seems to be important to avoid selecting women with previous experience in the same sector of activity, since this could worsen the growth goal-proactive resilience relationship.

Second, qualitative growth goals positively influence the proactive resilience in non-women led wineries. This implies that when firms are keen on introducing innovation, improving the quality of products/services, the brand reputation and the reputation with other companies, having a management led by men strenghten the influence that qualitative growth goals have on the business' attitude towards uncertain and risks.

#### 5.3 Limitations and future research

This study is no without limitations. A first limit is linked to the fact that we have talked about women- and non-women-led businesses, while we have not considered the ownership of the firm. Indeed, in the specific case of Italian wineries, often the ownership is the same of the management. A second limitation is that we have not controlled for external incentives. The Italian government has dedicated lot of attention to female entrepreneurship in the past years and this could have influenced some of the interviewees' answers. Finally, a third limitation may be linked to the specific sector investigated. As said, we identified the wine sector in Italy as a male-dominated one, but extending our model to other sectors could allow generalizability.

Future research might investigate whether proactive resilience leads to resilience. This could be done, for example, throughout longitudinal case studies that could better unveil the relationship between goals, orientation and performance, but also quantitative research. We think that an interesting avenue for future research is reprensented by studying resilience in specific organizational contexts such as family businesses. These organizational archetypes possess, in fact, unique goals, both business- and family-related, that might have different impacts on resilience attitude.



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