
RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTUALIZATION IN SOCIAL RESEARCH

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Don't listen to the person who has the answers, but listen to
the person who has the questions.
Albert Einstein

1. Introduction

Social research as an effort to find answers to the social problems requires a systematic and integrated approach. Because social research generally involves many parties and is carried out by many researchers, it is very important to have guidelines that can channel perceptions of all parties into one clear research direction. The framework and conceptualization of research are essential, being the "spirit" or "brain" of the searching effort for empirical answers. The research framework serves as a guide for all parties involved in bringing together various research activities and various researchers for purposes of the research. Without a research framework, research activities will become random-sporadic, consume a lot of resources, but fail to answer the main purpose of the research.

Meanwhile, research conceptualization is a bridge that will connect social phenomena that occur with social theories that have existed so far. Furthermore, research conceptualization translates the relatedness of phenomena-theories into a research agenda. This can be likened to taking a photo shoot. Social phenomena are objects of shooting that social theories try to capture it as "camera lens". So that the results of the photo shoot can be seen by many parties, a "viewer media" is needed in the form of a research agenda. Therefore, this article attempts to review this with four main topics: (1) behavior-based research, (2) social phenomena, (3) developing research models, and (4) outlined research agenda. The assumptions used in this article are social research conducted in the form of a survey (using a list of questions or statements to obtain data), quantitative (primary data collected in the form of numbers), causal (to test and explain the relationship between research variables), and cross-sectional (only one time data collection). Meanwhile, the broad scope of social science is limited to the narrower scope in microeconomics or management science perspective.

2. Behavior Based Research

One of the most practical approaches to conducting social research is to view social phenomena from a behavioral perspective. From various sources, behavior is defined as follows:

- Behavior is an individual's response or reaction to stimuli or the environment (KBBI Online, 2021).
- Behavior is anything that an organism does involving action and response to stimulation; the response of an individual, group, or species to its environment. (Merriam Webster, 2021).
- Behavior is the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially toward others; the way in which an animal or person acts in response to a particular situation or stimulus; the way in which a natural phenomenon or a machine works or functions. (Oxford Dictionaries, 2021)
- Behavior is the actions and mannerisms made by individuals, organisms, systems or artificial entities in conjunction with themselves or their environment, which includes the other systems or organisms around as well as the (inanimate) physical environment. It is the computed response of the system or organism to various stimuli or inputs, whether internal or external, conscious or subconscious, overt or covert, and voluntary or involuntary. (Wikipedia, 2021)

Based on those various definitions, this article defines behavior, as follows:

- **Behavior can be observed (observable).** Behavior is something that can be observed. If something cannot be observed with the senses - using the five senses, then that something is not behavior. Thoughts, feelings, attitudes, emotions, perceptions, or assumptions are not behavior. Because these things exist and occur within a person. As long as thoughts, feelings, attitudes, emotions, perceptions, or assumptions are not expressed or communicated by that person to others, then during that time these things are not behavior.
- **Behavior in the form of words (the talks) and/or actions (the walks).** Behavior is something that can be identified or observed using the five senses. Is it in the form of sound or visual that is conveyed in one's words and actions. Not saying or doing nothing when someone responds to something is also behavior.

- **Behavior is influenced by internal and/or external factors.** Behavior has antecedents or influencing factors in the form of external factors - the influence of the surrounding environment, both the physical environment and the social environment. In addition, behavior is also influenced by internal factors – in the form of unobservable things that exist within the person – such as perceptions, attitudes, motivations, emotions, and also the values that are believed by the person.

For understand more deeply how these external and internal factors affect a person's behavior in an organization or community, the ABC formula may explain it well. This ABC formula was adopted from the concept developed by the leading US psychologist Dr. Albert Ellis (Bernard, 2011; David, Lynn, & Ellis, 2010). The formula explains that the behavior appears or is displayed because there are situations or conditions or circumstances that allow behavior to occur. These conditions or circumstances or situations are called antecedents. For example, drinking a glass of water in the class room as displayed behavior. Of course it is impossible to do if there is no available water to drink and there is no thirst. The availability of water in the classroom and the emergence of thirst are antecedents. Meanwhile, taking water and putting it in the mouth is behavior. Then, there is a feeling of relief and teaching becomes smoother, and a few moments later the urge to urinate arises, which is a consequence of drinking behavior.

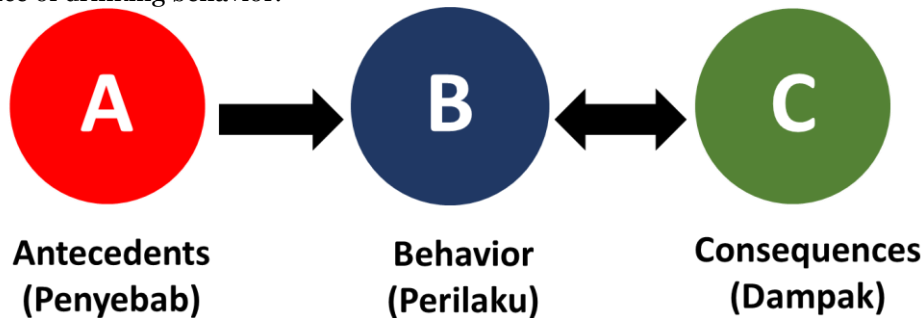


Figure 1 The ABC Formula in the Behavioral Perspective

Likewise, in a social context, behavior can be described into ABC formula. Behavior is central element of the study. From many behaviors are available and possible to capture, it is focused on choosing one behavioral theme to be studied. For example, the resilience or resilient behavior of the owner or management of small medium enterprises (SME) during COVID-19 crisis. This behavior is chose as the Y variable in the study. Then, it is traced that the resilience of SMEs appears, grows, and increases influenced by any causative factors. It could be that a behavior is caused by many things, but to make the research more focused and sharp, the most influential key factors were chosen. For example, the causes of SME resilience are business flexibility (X1), capability to collaborate (X2), utilization of digital technology (X3), pro-social leadership from owners or managers (X4), and practice of spirituality in the workplace (X5). Of course, there are many other causes, but researchers have only been able to capture five phenomena. From the five antecedents, researchers may choose two or three that are most suspected of having a strong effect. For example, business flexibility (X1) and utilization of digital technology (X3).

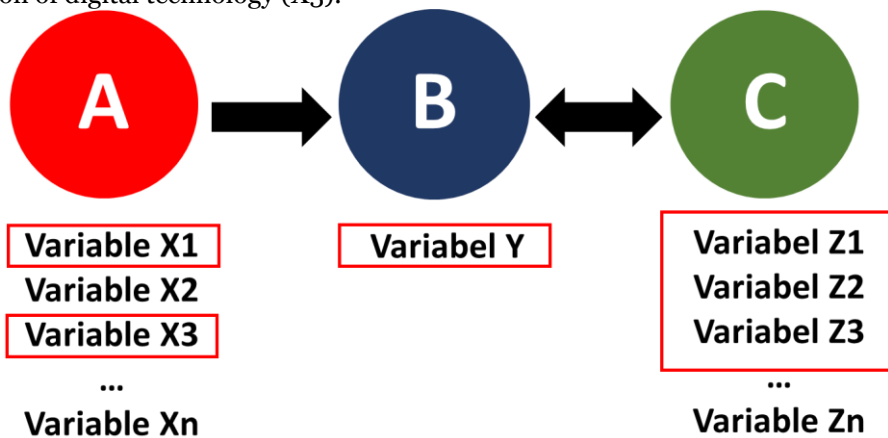


Figure 2 Elaborating Research Ideas into The ABC Formula

While the resilience of SMEs can be developed or improved, what are the impacts for various social system coverages. The impact on the SME business itself (Z1), the impact on the lives of employees and their families (Z2), the impact on society (Z3), the impact on economic and national resilience (Z4) and other impacts that are thought to have the potential to emerge can the behavior under study be improved.

3. Social Phenomena

In research planning - including social research or management must produce a research proposal. The proposal answers at least three important things about research, namely: (1) WHY - why is it important to do research? What's interesting or useful from the research theme raised? (2) WHAT - what social concepts or theories were discussed and served as background in the research? (3) HOW - how will the research design and stages be carried out? This is in line with the standard format regarding the research framework in general which consists of five elements:

- 1) Introduction, which is in the form of background and explains what social phenomena occur that cause problems. If the problem is left unchecked, it will have an increasingly disturbing impact. To solve this problem, intervention is needed on the influencing factors. That's why it's important to do research.
- (2) Theoretical Reviews and Hypothesis Development (Theoretical Reviews) which discuss theoretical concepts related to research subjects, both those that underlie the behavior that is the subject of research (variable Y) and those that are thought to be influential factors (variable X). In addition, it also contains previous studies that have proven the influence or not between the factors suspected of having an effect on the behavior under study.
- (3) Research Methodology (Materials and Methods) explains the technical aspects of the research such as the type of research, population and sampling method, research instruments, and data analysis selected for use.
- (4) Results and Discussions discuss the data obtained along with the results of the statistical analysis carried out and the discussion is related to the facts in the field as well as the relationship with previous research or current theoretical concepts.
- (5) Limitations, Conclusions, and Implications (Conclusions) discusses the existing limitations of the current research and what recommendations can be made for further research. In addition, it also contains the implications of research results on the practice of social life and also the contribution of research to theories that are currently developing. Does it strengthen or disprove these theories? As well as conclusions from the overall research to ensure that the research questions can be answered adequately by this research or not.

So based on the five elements, the research proposal includes at least three first things. Those are the introduction related to the WHY aspect, the theoretical reviews related to the WHAT aspect, and materials and methods related to the HOW.

This section on "research phenomenon" will provide a more in-depth review of the WHY aspect of the research, the introduction. In the introduction, it can generally be divided into two main zones: Problem Zone and Solution Zone. The problem zone contains problems that occur in various social circles. Starting from world or global coverage, regional or regional coverage, national coverage, industry coverage, regional coverage, and finally organizational or company coverage. The phenomenon that occurs is due to the absence or weakness of the behavior under study (the absence of the Y variable). This is reinforced by secondary data from various relevant sources, both from government agencies or other credible institutions at home and abroad.

While the Solution Zone presents the idea that to overcome the problems that occur it is very important to improve the behavior under study (variable Y). From the empirical evidence of previous studies, it has been proven that the behavior under study is influenced by any antecedents. From a lengthy description of the problem zone and solution zone, the introduction section closes with the sentence "locking" as follows: "Based on the description above, it is it is important and necessary to conduct research on the effect of variable X on variable Y in ABC company or ABC region".

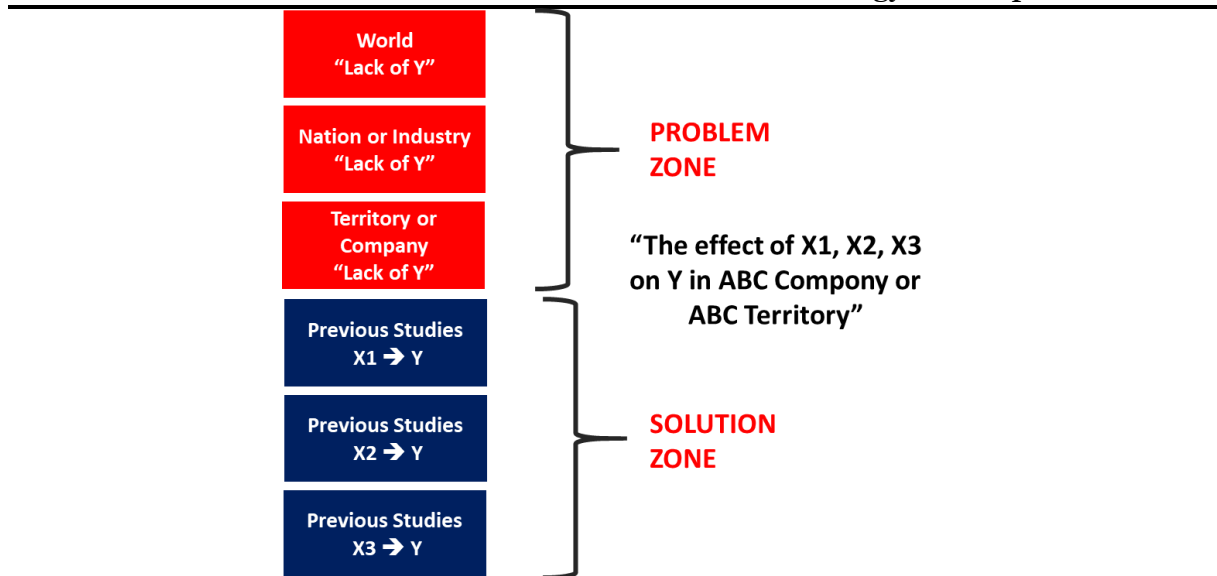


Figure 3 The Ideal Structure of Introduction

For example as follows. In problem zones with global coverage, the COVID-19 pandemic was chosen as the main theme. How did COVID-19 start until it finally spread to all countries globally. Secondary data is shown for supporting and strengthening this global phenomenon. On a national scale, secondary data show the impact of COVID-19 in Indonesia, which not only causes physical health problems with a high mortality rate, but also mental health and other social problems such as the declining quality of online education for children, rising unemployment, soaring divorce rates, violence against children and women, rising suicide rates, rampant crime, widespread human trafficking and drugs, the number of micro and small businesses that go bankrupt, and so on. In this session the author may present secondary data to strengthen this national phenomenon. In the scope of industry, author may state how importance of SMEs as backbone of the national economy. SME is a pillar that absorbs a lot of workers. Compared to other economic pillars, SMEs were the most resistant to crises in the previous periods. At the regional level, author may show specifically the profile of SMEs in the region, the challenges faced and the importance of SME resilience for the wider community. What are the positive impacts that will arise when in this COVID-19 pandemic condition the resilience of the MSME business is increased. Atuhor may state the data related to the impact of SME resilience on business adaptability (Z1), employee engagement (Z2), organizational citizenship behavior (Z3), social risk (Z4), and national resilience (Z5). That's why resilience of SME becomes important and strategic issues to be improved.

For being able to improve business resilience, researchers may conduct a literature study, looking for references that have proven that SME resilience has been shown to be significantly influenced by several antecedents such as business flexibility (X1), collaboration capability (X2), use of digital technology (X3), pro-business leadership. social (X4) and spirituality at work (X5). From many antecedents and consequences, the researcher can decide to choose or focus on discussing only several of themt. For example, the antecedents only focus on discussing business flexibility (X1) and the use of digital technology (X3) while the consequences focus on social risks (Z4). Thus the research narrows to "the influence of business flexibility and the use of digital technology on the resilience of MSMEs which in turn affects the decline in social risk."

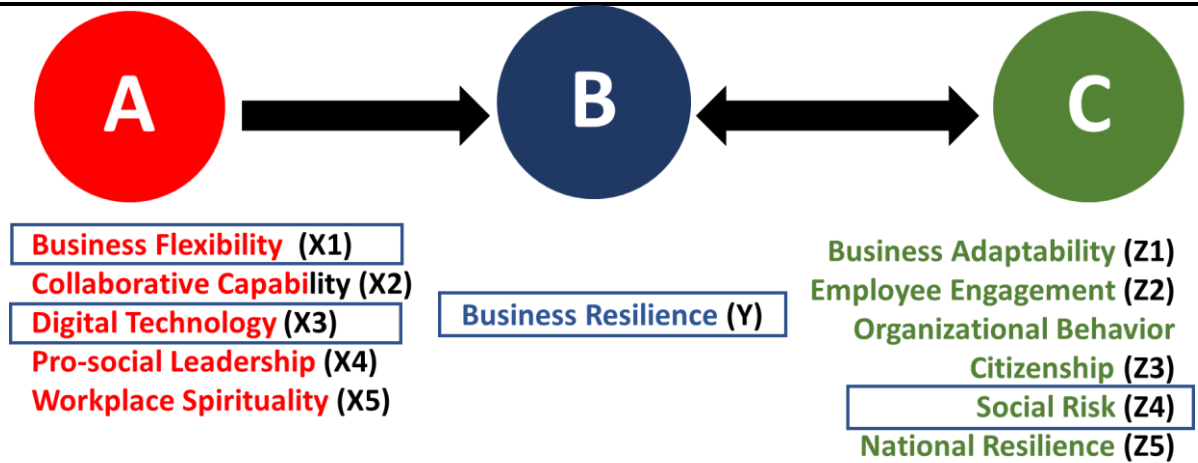


Figure 4 Conceptualization of Research Idea

4. Developing Research Model

After capturing and realizing the social phenomena that occur, the next step is to prepare a research model. The research model is a holistic picture of what variables will be discussed and what hypotheses will be statistically tested. The research model is a chart that describes the research variables and the relationship between the variables mentioned. In general, there are several types of research variables: (1) independent or exogenous variable is a variable that is not influenced by other variables but instead affects other variables. (2) dependent or endogenous variable is a variable that is influenced by other variables, but does not affect other variables. (3) the mediating variable or mediator is a variable that is influenced by other variables as well as affects other variables. A variable is a media variable if it succeeds in providing a greater indirect effect than the direct effect on a relationship between variables.

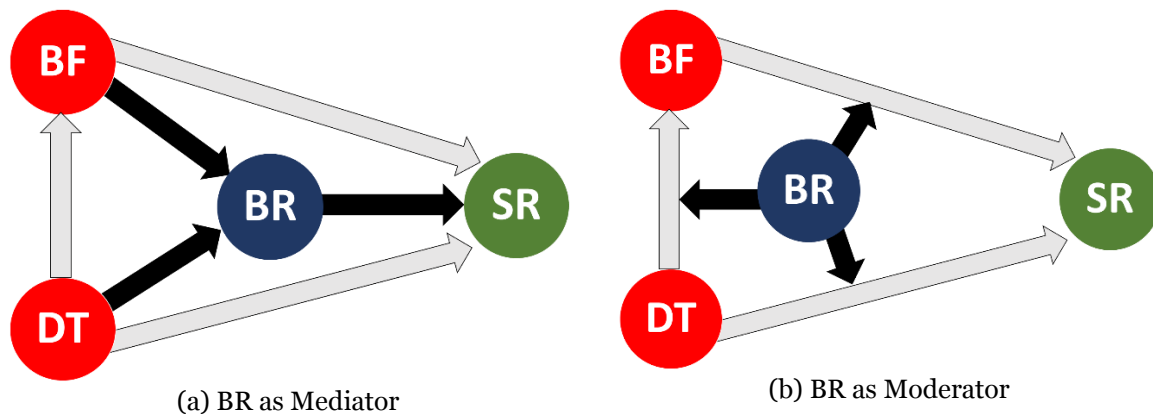


Figure 5 Mediator dan Moderator

As in Figure 5a above. Social Risk (SR) is the dependent variable because it is influenced by other variables, namely Business Resilience (BR), Digital Technology (DT) and Business Flexibility (BF). DT is the only independent variable in the research model. While Business Resilience (BR) plays a role as a mediating variable in Figure 5a with a note in the relationship between BF's influence on SR, BR gives an indirect effect that is greater than the direct effect. BR also plays a mediating role in the relationship between DT and SR, as long as the indirect impact is greater than the direct impact. Likewise with BF on the effect of DT on BR. So, in model 5a there is one independent variable (DT), one dependent variable (SR) and two mediator variables (BR and BF). While in Figure 5b, BR acts as a moderating variable, because of the influence of BR, the effect of BF on SR, DT on SR, and DT on BF becomes stronger. Thus BR plays a mediator role in the three inter-variable relationships. Meanwhile in Figure 5b BF plays a mediating role in the relationship between DT and SR. Thus, in research mode 5b, there is one dependent variable (DR), one independent variable (DT), one mediator variable BF, and one moderator variable (BR) in three relationships.

After capturing the overall social phenomenon by collecting secondary data from various sources, the next step is to create a research model. Suppose we refer to the case in Figure 4. The COVID-19 pandemic captured by the "camera lens" of management science resulted in four variables, namely: social risk (SR), business resilience (BR), business flexibility (BF), and digital technology (DT). . To

ensure the relationship between the variables of the four variables, the researcher conducted a literature study to find state-of-the-art (SoTA) which is a number of empirical articles that explain that the relationship between one variable and another has been statistically proven and published in reputable national journals or reputable international journals. . here is also the number of articles needed, how many are determined by the researchers themselves. I personally usually stipulate a minimum of six articles in the last five years that have been published in Sinta1 or Sinta 2 indexed journals or Scopus Q1 and Q2 indexed journals. As for knowing the index of a national journal, according to Sinta, it can be accessed on the <https://sinta.ristekbrin.go.id/journals> and the Scopus indexed international journal can be accessed on the <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php>. By using a number of the best and latest research, we can develop hypotheses so that they become research models such as Figure 5a or Figure 5b or other research models.

In Figure 5a, the research model is composed of six hypotheses, namely: (1) H1 the effect of BR on SR, (2) H2 the effect of BF on SR, (3) H3 the effect of BF on BR, (4) H4 the effect of DT on SR, (5) H5 the effect of DT on BR, and (6) H6 the effect of DT on BF. Meanwhile in Figure 5b also composed of six hypotheses, namely: (1) H1 the effect of BR on SR, (2) H2 the effect of DT on SR, (3) H3 the effect of DT on BF, (4) H4a: BR moderates the effect of BR on SR , (5) H4b BR moderated the effect of DT on SR, and (6) H4c BR moderated the effect of DT on BF. Based on this research model, the data will be collected and then the collected data will be processed and analyzed using statistical applications to prove whether the hypothesis is true.

5. Outlined Research Agenda

After getting the research model agreed upon by the research team, the next step is to outline the research agenda. At least there is some important information to be prepared in the research agenda, namely: research design, population and sampling method, research instruments, and data analysis chosen to be used.

Based on the research design, researchers can determine the right design to achieve the research objectives that have been defined. Research design can be seen from the type of data collected whether in the form of words (qualitative research) or in the form of numbers (quantitative research). Research designs can also be distinguished according to the data collection method used. Is it through observation, or opened verbal communication (interviews) or closed written communication (survey). Meanwhile, when referring to the analysis carried out, the research design can be in the form of: exploring new things (exploration), or explaining the whole perspective (description), or testing the relationship between concepts (causal). Meanwhile, when viewed from the frequency of data collection, research can be divided into one time taking (cross-sectional), several times taking (experimental), or repeatedly over a long period of time (longitudinal).

When referring to the previous example of SME resilience, the research design determined is in the form of quantitative research, because the data collected and processed are in the form of numbers, not words. Research is also a survey, because it collects data through limited written communication. Meanwhile, based on data analysis used is research that uses descriptive statistical analysis as well as causal research because it examines the effect of one variable on another variable. Meanwhile, data collection is only done once, so this research is cross sectional.

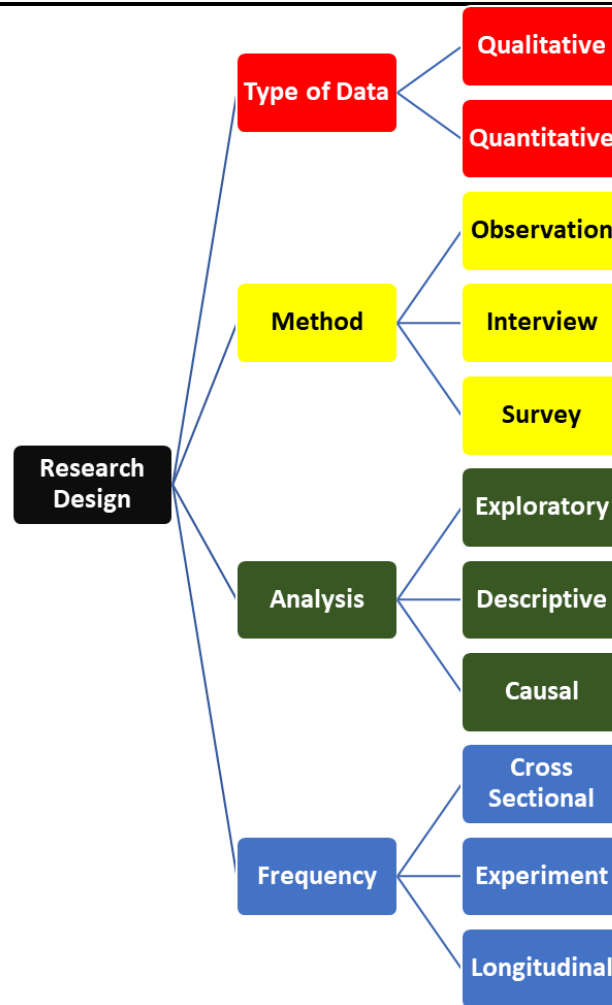


Figure 6 Type of Research Design

After determining the research design, defining the population is also something that needs to be prepared. Because the results of these studies will explain the conclusions and provide recommendations for the behavior of a particular social system. Whether at the level of individuals, groups, organizations, regions, countries, regions, or the world. In the previous example regarding SME resilience, the defined population is a business that manages less than 100 employees with assets of up to Rp 10 billion, and an annual sales turnover of up to Rp 50 billion (V2C Consultant, 2021). Population of Indonesian SMEs currently are around 64 million businesses (Sari, 2020). By knowing the population, the researcher can determine the number of samples needed for data analysis. For such a large population such as the SME population in Indonesia, researchers can provide additional limits based on area coverage, type of business, or other attributes. To limit the coverage area, the SME population can be reduced in size to narrow the area, for example SMEs in the Ciracas Jakarta DKI Jaya. After getting the right restrictions, the researcher can use the table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). For a population of approximately 1,000,000 units or more; the minimum number of respondents needed is around 384 units.

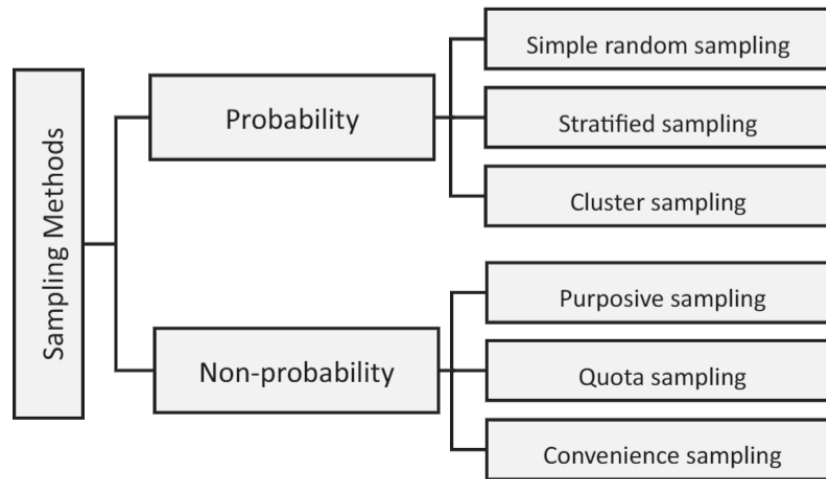
Table 1 Population based Sample Size

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

(Sumber: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970)

While the sampling method is generally divided into two major groups, namely the probabilistic and non-probabilistic methods (Sarstedt, Bengart, Shaltoni, & Lehmann, 2018). The probabilistic method explains that each unit of the population has an equal chance of becoming a respondent. Therefore, researchers must have a sample frame or list of names from all units in the population. Then selected randomly. The approach can be direct random sampling of the population, or the population is grouped into certain levels and then randomly selected based on each level (stratified random sampling), or the population is divided into clusters and then randomly selected based on each cluster (cluster random sampling).). If it is not possible to obtain a sample frame, then the sample collection method is non-probabilistic. That is, not all units in the population have the same opportunity to become respondents.

Ideally sampling is probabilistic. However, due to field conditions and also because of the large population size, it is often not easy for researchers to apply probabilistic methods. The most frequently used approach is convenience sampling. Researchers collect data from people they already know or are easy to access, regardless of the randomness aspect of the selected respondents. Sometimes the convenience sampling method is combined with a snowballing approach. From the respondents who were successfully obtained, they were asked for references or recommendations to get the next respondent.



Source: Sarstedt, Bengart, Shaltoni, & Lehmann, 2018).

Once the research design is established, the population is defined, and the sample size is known; then other things that are also important to be prepared are the instruments used for data collection and data analysis methods. The discussion of research instruments will be described in the next section. Meanwhile, there are only three generic methods of analysis:

- (1) Test the validity and reliability. This analysis is to ensure that the instrument used in data. Reliable is the consistency of the instrument in providing information. For the same object, even though it has been measured many times, the information provided is the same.
- (2) Descriptive statistical analysis. An analysis that explains the description of the respondents based on the respondent's profile data, the measurement results of each variable, and also the differences in the results of the variable measurement of each respondent's profile.
- (3) Regression statistical analysis. If the research is causal, then regression analysis is needed to test the hypothesis, to prove whether one variable has a significant effect or not on the other variables. Therefore, it is very important to be able to translate the research model into a mathematical equation.

The following is an example or illustration of how to translate a research model into a mathematical equation. Consider Figure 8 as a research model consisting of four variables and six hypotheses. The number of mathematical equations needed is a number of variables or circles pierced by arrows. In the following model there are three variables pierced by arrows, namely SR, BR, and BF. So there are three equations needed to be able to explain the model

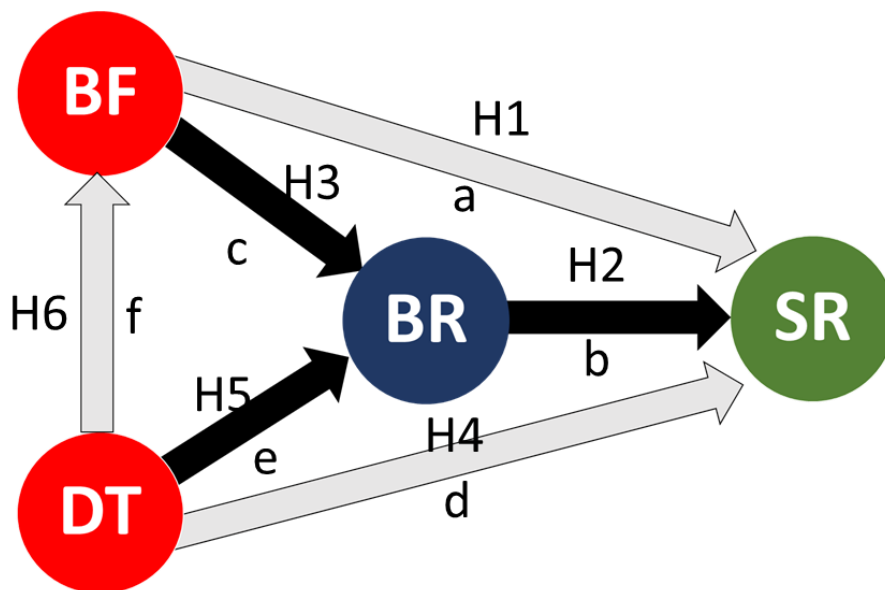


Figure 8 Interpreting Research Model into Mathematical Equations

The three equations are as follows: (1) $SR = k_1 + a.BF + b.BR + d.DT + error_1$ where k_1 is a constant of the first equation. (2) $BR = k_2 + c.BF + e.DT + error_2$, where k_2 is the constant of the second equation. (3) $BR = k_3 + f.DT + error_3$. The first equation is used to test the hypotheses H1, H2, and H4. The second equation is used to test the hypotheses H3 and H5. While the third equation is only to test the hypothesis H6.

A hypothesis is accepted if the beta values (a, b, c, d, e, and f) have a t-statistics score more than 1.98 or a p-value of less than 0.05. For example, from the calculation of the regression analysis for the three equations, the following results are obtained:

- First equation: $BR = 1.21 + 0.8BF + 0.02BR + 0.11DT$ (t-Statistics for a is 5.34; for b = 1.82; and for d = 2.67). If the t-Statistics score is less than 1.96; then the beta value is not significant. Because the beta value is not significant, the hypothesis is rejected. Of the three beta values in the first equation, only b has t-statistics less than 1.98; then b is not significant. This means that the value of b is equal to zero. Because the value is zero, the line connecting BR and SR is not visible. Thus hypothesis H2 is rejected. BR affects SR not significantly. As for a and d, the value of t-statistics is greater than 1.98. This means that a and d are significant, so hypotheses H1 and H4 are accepted.
- Second equation: $BR = 1.33 + 0.31 BF + 0.67DT$ (t-statistics for c is 2.34; for e = 5.82). Because the t-statistics is more than 1.96 then the values of c and e are significant. Thus the hypothesis H3 and H5 are accepted.
- Third equation: $BR = 0.98 + 0.01DT$ (t-statistics for f is 0.46). Since t-statistics is less than 1.96, then f is not significant. Thus hypothesis H6 is rejected.

Based on the results of the regression analysis of the three equations mentioned above, out of the six hypotheses, two hypotheses were rejected, namely H2 and H6, while the other hypotheses were accepted.

That is all what we would like to share about research framework and conceptualization in social research. This is a simple explanation about how to start make a social research in the specifically in management science. The approach used is based on organizational behavior. The assumption used in this article is that the research planned is a survey, descriptive and causal, and carried out in one data collection. Hopefully this article provides you a idea for starting a research.

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