

Phenomenology of A *Paggadde-Gadde*'s Resilience in Managing Their Business Post-Quarantine of Covid-19 Period

Dien Triana^{ab,1}, Andi Sri Wahyuni^{ac,2*}, Rizky Utami^{d,3}

^aPoliteknik Negeri Ujung Pandang, Perintis Kemerdekaan Street, Km. 2, Tamalanrea, Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan 90245, Indonesia.

^bUniversitas Islam Negeri Alauddin, H. M. Yasin Limpo Street, No. 36, Romanglompong, Gowa, Sulawesi Selatan 92118, Indonesia.

^cUniversity of Szeged, Kalvaria sgt 1, Szeged 6722, Hungary.

^dUniversitas Hasanuddin, Perintis Kemerdekaan Street, Km. 2, Tamalanrea, Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan 90245, Indonesia

dientriana@poliupg.ac.id¹, andisriwahyuni@poliupg.ac.id², rizkyutami55@gmail.com³

^{2*} corresponding author

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received 23 June 2022

Revised 18 August 2022

Accepted 1 September 2022

Keywords

Covid-19;

Financial Management;

Gadde-gadde;

Traditional Small Retail.

ABSTRACT

The covid-19 pandemic has changed the lives of economic agents, making survival a critical issue and attention to small businesses sectors is crucial because they lack savings for survival. For example, Mama Aris was a gadde-gadde businesswoman who survived the pandemic and financial issues after her husband retired. Therefore, this study aimed to unravel Mama Aris's resilience as a paggadde-gadde in managing her business finances during the pandemic. Using phenomenology methodology, the study showed toughness from speech, tears, voice intonation, and body language of informants while telling their stories. The triangulation technique was used in order to obtain accurate data. The results showed that the tears and words of paggadde-gadde were caused by the financial difficulties and life during the pandemic in the isoman period. However, mama Aris had hopes again when talking about diversifying products. gadde-gadde's income was turned into capital for making new products orders by the management. Moreover, there was an additional capital for gadde-gadde supplies. Mama Aris gained knowledge that was used as a new finding in small and medium enterprise study. This had important implications in solving small business actors with financial difficulties in the future.

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1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has threatened the lives of people and negatively affected all sectors, specifically economic ones [1][2][3][4][5]. However, everyone including the lower-middle class needs to survive the pandemic despite financial issues [4][6][7]. Although Indonesians lack adequate social security, families are expected to provide for themselves [6]. Everybody in society should enjoy legal services and social security [8], though this is challenging for those lacking power to ask the government for their rights.

Gadde-gadde is a traditional small retail in Makassar, Indonesia, which is generally done by housewives and set up in front of the house where the house is occupied by taking up little space, generally the size of a bedroom in the house [9][10][11]. *Gadde-gadde* tends to be the same as other traditional small retail in other provinces of Indonesia. *Paggadde-gadde*, a businesswoman of *gadde-gadde*, faced financial challenges and struggled to survive

during the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Wahyuni & Sitanggang's [6], *gadde-gadde* businesses shopped due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The government implemented Large-Scale Social Restrictions (Indonesian Language: Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar/PSBB) during Covid-19, resulting to a lack of money in *gadde-gadde*. Mama Robi consumed stocks her family with no customers seen in the *gadde-gadde*'s stalls. PSBB served *gadde-gadde* customers and *paggadde-gaddes* who stayed at home from using stalls stalk for basic needs.

Mama Aris, who was A3 *gadde-gadde* owner, narrated a painful story than Mama Robi. She was a *paggadde-gadde* in Makassar with an extended family infected with Covid-19 during the PSBB. In July 2021, the family was quarantined, and two members were hospitalized because of the hurdles faced during the pandemic. She survived with her family and restarted her *gadde-gadde* business after quarantine. Mama Robi's *gadde-gadde* business closed during quarantine [6], while Mama Aris' *gadde-gadde* enterprise survived and diversified its products. Besides Mrs. R's *gadde-gadde* initiatives, other *paggadde-gadde* evaluated by Wahyuni et al [4] endured the pandemic's difficulties in 2020. This research focused on Mama Aris, the *paggadde-gadde* affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Wahyuni & Sitanggang [6] and Wahyuni et al [4], there was resilience of *paggadde-gadde* operating their stalls during the pandemic without becoming infected. Therefore, this study aimed to unravel and analyze Mama Aris' resilience in managing the *gadde-gadde* stalls and her family's finances when infected with Covid-19.

The results will support other previous studies [9][10][11] on *gadde-gadde* to aid the government in developing targeted policies for traditional small retail such as *gadde-gadde*. This study aimed to reach out to the small and voiceless economic players to map and discuss them more seriously in academia.

2. Method

The study used a qualitative research design in the analysis and interpretation process [12]. This single case study also used an interpretive strategy to record results accompanied by emotions that naturally radiated from the informant's face. This process is known as phenomenology [13]. The results were recorded from the respondent's emotional speech. High-quality and open data were obtained through an emotional interview approach [14]. Interviews were fully and intimately used for emotional proximity from the respondents [15]. Additionally, it was used to gather informants' facial expressions, body language, and speech tone. The study, directly and indirectly, identified the language spoken by the informants.

The data was collected using the triangulation method entailing information from multiple sources. According to Denzin [16], the triangulation method is the use of multiple data collection methods. This study comprised three additional triangulations, including: i) triangulation between researchers, ii) data source, and iii) theoretical triangulation. Triangulation between researchers involved directly meeting with informants and listening to taped interviews to minimize interpretation bias. The events were cross-checked using interviews during the interpretation process. Results showed that the atmosphere and emotions were used during data collection. The study was conducted in collaboration with other academics to collect and analyze data. Therefore, there was no misinterpretation of the respondent's feelings, as Hoskins & White [17] advised during the discussion of emotional interview procedure risks.

Data source triangulation is gathered from recorded interviews, informants' images, facial expressions, and body language in Mama Aris house, Makassar, Indonesia. The semi-structured interview process was conducted from September to October 2021 and took approximately 100 hours in total, writing the transcripts included. The main question asked is how the informant was able to maintain her family finance and business when all family members were affected by Covid 19. The recordings were listened to severally, sentence by sentence to check the intonation. The data was acquired from interviews with the *paggadde-gadde* family.

Theoretical triangulation was used to analyze data. The results showed that the obtained data combined existing and well-established ideas about women's financial empowerment [18][19] and theories about working capital turnover. Large corporations frequently use this term [20][21][22][23]. The results were processed using all types of triangulation. This highlighted the interpretation of Mama Aris' *paggadde-gadde*'s phenomena, subsequently presented in the following results and discussion chapters.

3. Results and Discussion

This chapter focused on reporting the results of Mama Aris' resilience in managing funds. It is divided into sub-chapters to elucidate the ultimate outcomes of this research, directly addressing the fundamental questions. Each sub-chapter discusses the past to current situation during the pandemic to provide data.

3.1. *Gadde-Gadde* as a Support

Mama Aris's *gadde-gadde* stall was established before her daughter was born in 2001. The stall has lasted for more than 20 years and supports Mama Aris' family's economic finances. Financially, she depended on her husband, a Civil Servant (Indonesian Language: Pegawai Negeri Sipil/PNS) in the Makassar City Government, and the *gadde-gadde* income. Mama Aris was married with three children and lived with two other family members. From her stall, she earned between Rp. 150,000 to Rp. 250,000 before the outbreak. Mama Aris made a modest profit and saved some money from her *gadde-gadde* company. All the basic needs were present in the stalls, including oil, sugar, and soap, while rice was the only thing to be shopped from a different store. Mama Aris used *gadde-gadde* as a storage space for basic household items that satisfied her family's demands. She only bought rice which was depleted from her stock for her family consumption.

Mama Aris found the supply of *gadde-gadde* purchased or consumed at home helpful. Profits were made from the buying and selling from customers, and when used for daily needs, there was cost-saving. She used prices directly from distributors. Additionally, Mama Aris saves time by walking a few steps to the front of her house to acquire a household. Mama Aris encountered limited obstacles during her *gadde-gadde*'s business management due to the lack of supplies. They consumed the stock at home. These obstacles were considered "*begitu-begituji* (it is normal)". Makassar people used this term when they encountered something every day. "*Begitu-begituji*" response was not to be overthought because it was a normal problem. "*Ji*" indicates that the issue is only as it is, and the issue is not something to worry about. Therefore, Mama Aris found her business path effortless with the help of *gadde-gadde*.

3.2. Feel the Difference: *Gadde-gadde's Condition since the Pandemic*

Gadde-gadde stalls were home-based businesses mainly maintained by housewives vulnerable to going out of business [9]. In Makassar, the grassroots business developed by establishing a tiny shop or kiosk in front of the house. Generally, *gadde-gadde* was centered towards survival rather than wealth accumulation [11]. *Gadde-gadde's* small business purely existed for the owner's survival, and the family's in the future [11]. This is in contrast with large corporations seeking to maximize profits to increase shareholders' assets value. Mama Aris used the "no improvement" phrase to express exactly what she meant. Her fortune was not interfered with because she owned and operated the *gadde-gadde* business for two decades.

The challenges began when Indonesia was infected by Covid-19 in March 2020. PSBB's deployment resulted in Mama Aris losing her customers. She barely made Rp. 50,000 per day from her past income of Rp 200,000. She became desperate because it was difficult for her to survive on IDR 50,000 per day with seven family members. Central Statistics Agency's (Indonesian Language: *Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS*) official website (<https://www.bps.go.id/site/resultTab>) stated that, Rp. 1,950.000,00 is the minimum monthly income required to cover the demands of a good life in South Sulawesi Province. According to the official government agency, the daily quality of living is Rp. 65,000.00. Residence of South Sulawesi province must have at least Rp 65,000.00 to be able to survive. Unfortunately, there has been no data since 2015, and there is an inflation rate from year to year.

Mama Aris fed her entire family with Rp. 50,000 per day, and this was amusing. Her tears unraveled the answer to the question, and her responses explained its resilience.

"It's been difficult since the pandemic... wedede eh..."

[since the pandemic... (complaining term)... the suffering is real]

The most honest psychological phenomenon of this *paggadde-gadde* was her tears when she stated "very painful" after the complaint "*wedede eh*," to emphasize that the word "very" is not only preceded by the word "painful." The term "very" was similar to "truly sad" and was used severally. Mama Aris expressed her dissatisfaction with the pandemic's impact on her *gadde-gadde* business, saying, "it seems so different."

According to the Big Indonesian Language Dictionary Online (Indonesian Language: *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia/KBBI*), published by the Development and Agency, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (2016) <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id>, the word "*betul*" (truly) etymologically means the truth or not lie. It also means really. "*Sekali*" (very) is also referred to the same as really or very. The word "*betul*" (truly) is side by side with "*pedis*" (painful), and "*sekali*" (very) is flanked by the words "*terasa*" (feel) and "*perbedaannya*" (the different). Mama Aris meant very, very, or the most. It can be interpreted as Mama Aris' intention to say very painful.

The word "*pedis*" (painful) does not exist in the *KBBI* Online (2016). According to Asmani [26], the word "*pedis*" (painful) is a change in the sound of the letter "a" to "i" and referred to the common word "spicy," one of the flavors captured by the human sense of taste. In the *KBBI* (2016), spicy was connected with sambal or kitchen spices having a chili taste. The word spicy was used for presuppositions or criticism to mean sharp or harsh. Therefore, Mama Aris's meant very sharp when she stated "truly spicy." The pandemic gave

a very sharp pain to the financial pockets of *paggadde-gadde* and impacted Mama Aris's family condition.

3.3. Managing Finances, Measuring Resilience

Mama Aris managed the difficult times with her family because she had a plan, and her *gadde-gadde* stall business is still going strong presently. In July 2021, Mama Aris and her family were infected with Covid-19, including the second son, husband, and other members. Her husband and son were rushed to hospital while other family members were quarantined at home for a month. The remaining stock of *gadde-gadde* was consumed by the family members during quarantine, including eggs and instant noodles. Mama Aris faced difficult conditions during this period. They were expected to eat nutritious foods that boost the immune system [27, 28], but they could not afford it.

“... yang paling parah barangkali itu Nak...saya. Karena sepuluh hari di rumah, tidak pernah betulka bangun. Baaaaaring terus di tempat tidur. Na keluar mi om di rumah sakit, na saya masih di tempat tidur.”

("... the worst one is probably... me. Because ten days at home, I can't get out of bed, keep lying on the bed. My husband has recovered from the hospital, but I am still lying weak on the bed.")

After recovering, Mama Aris resumed *gadde-gadde* business. She chose to maintain the *gadde-gadde* business because she had invested much in it. Her tenacity and battling spirit backed up. In fact, women's had resilience in running small businesses and households [18][19]. Mama Aris used the *arisan* group fund to replenish the supplies at her *gadde-gadde* stall. *Arisan* is a prevalent phenomenon in Indonesia, having a favorable impact on *arisan* members' family income. *Arisan* is a local gathering for conducting a lottery [24].

Mama Aris was the *arisan* treasurer, and she used the money for capital to cover the shortage of *gadde-gadde* supplies. These supplies consumed during the quarantine period inventories were greatly reduced. The increment of the *gadde-gadde* capital using *arisan* money was inadequate to repair the family's financial situation. An income of IDR 50,000 per day, as clearly shown in the preceding months during the pandemic, was insufficient. Additionally, Mama Aris' husband had retired. She expanded her company by selling yellow rice in the mornings. Her voice sounded light and relived while talking about her yellow rice business, as indicated in the interview excerpt:

"... yellow rice in the morning... every day. Thank God, that kind of yellow rice. Usually, I get until one o'clock. I get two and a half. This was two hundred thousand rupiahs I got. I also have experience obtaining three hundred thousand rupiahs. Yes... compared to the income obtained only from *gadde-gadde* business (laughs...)."

Moreover, Mama Aris receives Cantik Manis cakes and jalangkote orders—a local Makassar snack that looks like pastel cakes. Jalangkote was sold at IDR 1,000.00 and IDR 2,000.00 per piece for the stuffed without eggs and small pieces of boiled eggs, respectively. This was a standard price for homemade snacks. in contrast, the local snacks in everyday shop prices were two to three times as much. The yellow rice was regularly made, but the cakes were made on order.



Chart 1. Cantik Manis Cake

Source: Mama Aris



Chart 2. Jalangkote Snack

Source: Mama Aris

Mama Aris bought cakes ingredients using proceeds from her *gadde-gadde* stall and boosted her *gadde-gadde*'s supply using the cake money. The profits from the *gadde-gadde* company were used to make money by helping Mama Aris and his family with their daily needs. Diversification of her products helped in generating income used for baking cakes. Mama Aris was experienced in managing *gadde-gadde* companies and faced hardships during Covid-19 pandemic. She changed her income from *gadde-gadde* business to cake baking. Moreover, cake sales proceeds were used are to re-finance the shop. She practiced the working capital turnover idea reiterated by Walker and adopted financial management theory from scientific classes [20][21][22][23].

Mama Aris' business methods allowed her to stay a float during pandemic and sustained her family. According to [25], knowledge is acquired in class and western scientists and personal life experience [26][27][28][29]. In the case of Mama Aris, she gains knowledge from everyday cultural experiences as Makassar-Buginese woman who is though in trading and running her *gadde-gadde* business [30]. What Mama Aris did also proves the resilience of *paggadde-gadde*, as has also found in previous studies on *gadde-gadde* [9][10][11].

4. Conclusion

The tears that fall from the eyes and phrases of *paggadde-gadde*, including "really painful" and "feels very different," reflected their financial troubles and lives during the pandemic in the month of isoman. This study was conducted using interpretation and analysis of data. Yellow rice and pastries gave Mama Aris expectation in life, which was seen from her laughter and bright voice.

She turned *gadde-gadde*'s income into capital for making cake orders and sold them. The additional income was used for *gadde-gadde* supplies. She gained self-knowledge that can be used in small and medium businesses. The results were not investigated in previous studies (Wahyuni & Sitanggang, 2021; Wahyuni et al, 2021; Wahyuni & Nentry 2017; Wahyuni, 2015). Therefore, Mama Aris's techniques to maintain her *gadde-gadde* can be used by other *paggadde-gadde* in the future during a financial crisis.

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