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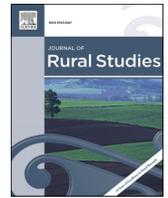
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Resilience and confidence in entrepreneurial self-efficacy: Evidence from rural women entrepreneurs in Oman

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the psychological and institutional determinants of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) among rural women entrepreneurs in Oman, using a cross-sectional survey of 190 respondents analysed through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The findings show that resilience is the strongest predictor of ESE and also mediates the relationship between confidence in business decisions and ESE. Confidence itself has a positive direct effect, highlighting the importance of internal psychological resources in shaping entrepreneurial capability. In contrast, social support, institutional support, and perceived business skills mastery show no significant direct influence, pointing to persistent structural gaps and the limited reach of formal and informal support mechanisms in rural settings. By demonstrating the central role of resilience and decision-making confidence under institutional voids, the study extends Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory to a rural, gendered context. Practical implications include designing resilience-building and confidence-enhancing training programmes and developing policies that address the structural constraints faced by rural women entrepreneurs. The study contributes to global debates on women's entrepreneurship in underserved regions and offers insights for inclusive rural development.

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is widely recognised as a key driver of regional economic development, contributing to innovation, job creation, and community resilience (OECD, 2023). In rural regions, entrepreneurial activity assumes particular significance, often functioning as a primary mechanism for income generation, economic diversification, and poverty alleviation (Ghouse et al., 2021). Across the Global South, rural women entrepreneurs have increasingly emerged as important contributors to socio-economic development in contexts such as Oman (Ghouse et al., 2017), Nepal (Buisson et al., 2022), Myanmar (Ragasa et al., 2023), Pakistan (Zhou et al., 2023), Zambia (McElwee and Wood, 2017), Guatemala (Krause, 2024), and Uganda (Lourenço et al., 2014). Despite their increasing economic participation, rural women continue to face persistent challenges, including restricted access to finance, weak institutional support, limited professional networks, and entrenched socio-cultural norms that constrain entrepreneurial agency (Brush et al., 2009; Dana, 2007; Muhammed et al., 2017). These constraints not only shape the nature and scale of women's ventures but also influence their confidence in navigating entrepreneurial tasks and sustaining business

activity over time.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE), defined as an individual's belief in their ability to perform entrepreneurial roles effectively, has been identified as a critical determinant of entrepreneurial intentions, behaviours, and persistence (Chen et al., 1998; Ghouse et al., 2024). In rural environments characterised by scarce resources and institutional voids, psychological mechanisms such as resilience and decision-making confidence become particularly salient. Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory emphasises that self-efficacy is shaped through mastery experiences and coping capabilities, positioning resilience as central to sustaining entrepreneurial action under uncertainty. Empirical research further highlights resilience as a critical asset for women entrepreneurs who confront gendered and structural barriers in their entrepreneurial journeys (Bullough and Renko, 2013). Similarly, confidence in decision-making strengthens belief in one's capacity to manage business challenges, increasing the likelihood of entrepreneurial engagement and endurance in uncertain and resource-constrained contexts.

Alongside psychological resources, skill-based competencies are often viewed as important enablers of entrepreneurial success. Prior research suggests that competencies such as opportunity recognition,

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financial management, and strategic planning positively influence entrepreneurial intentions and outcomes, particularly among women operating in resource-limited environments (Ghouse et al., 2019, 2024). Perceived mastery of such skills may therefore contribute to the development of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, especially where access to formal training opportunities is constrained. However, skill mastery alone may be insufficient to offset the structural limitations imposed by weak institutional mechanisms and fragmented social support systems, which remain persistent features of many rural entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Despite growing scholarly interest in women's entrepreneurship, important gaps remain in understanding how entrepreneurial self-efficacy develops and operates in rural contexts. Much of the existing empirical and theoretical work on ESE has focused on urban, formal, and predominantly Western settings (Murimbika and Urban, 2023), offering limited insight into how self-efficacy is shaped among rural women in developing economies. Moreover, while resilience and decision-making confidence are increasingly recognised as important psychological resources, their interactive role in shaping ESE under conditions of resource scarcity remains underexplored (Barraket et al., 2019). These gaps are particularly evident in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and in Oman specifically, where rural women's entrepreneurship has received limited empirical attention despite its socio-economic relevance (Ghouse et al., 2021; Durrah et al., 2024).

Addressing these gaps, we examine the psychological, social, and institutional determinants of entrepreneurial self-efficacy among rural women entrepreneurs in Oman. By integrating resilience and decision-making confidence as core psychological antecedents of ESE, and by empirically assessing the roles of perceived business skills mastery, social support, and institutional support, we offer a comprehensive and context-sensitive analysis of entrepreneurial capability in a rural, gendered setting. In doing so, it extends Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory into an under-researched context characterised by institutional voids and socio-cultural constraints.

The study contributes to entrepreneurship and rural studies literature by demonstrating that psychological resources, particularly resilience and confidence, play a more decisive role in shaping entrepreneurial self-efficacy than formal institutional or social support in marginalised rural environments. These findings challenge assumptions about the universal effectiveness of support mechanisms and foreground the importance of internal psychological capabilities in sustaining entrepreneurial activity where structural supports remain limited. From a practical and policy perspective, we provide insights relevant to rural development strategies, highlighting the need for interventions that strengthen resilience, enhance decision-making confidence, and align support mechanisms with the lived realities of rural women entrepreneurs. In the Omani context, these insights resonate strongly with national priorities related to inclusive growth, women's economic participation, and regional development.

2. Literature review

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) is widely recognised as a central determinant of entrepreneurial behaviour, shaping both the formation of entrepreneurial intentions and the ability to sustain a venture over time (Bandura, 1997; Chen et al., 1998). In rural settings, its role becomes even more critical, as women entrepreneurs frequently operate within conditions characterised by institutional voids, constrained mobility, limited access to markets, and entrenched socio-cultural norms. Although global scholarship has established the importance of ESE in predicting entrepreneurial outcomes (Newman et al., 2019), limited research has examined how psychological and contextual factors combine to influence ESE in marginalised rural environments, particularly within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

This study focuses on two interrelated sets of factors that shape the entrepreneurial experiences of rural women in Oman: psychological

resources (resilience and decision-making confidence) and social and institutional supports. These themes are theoretically important in extending Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory to contexts where external resources are scarce and gendered constraints are pronounced. Resilience and confidence highlight the internal psychological mechanisms that enable rural women to navigate uncertainty, respond to setbacks, and maintain belief in their entrepreneurial abilities despite limited structural support. Social and institutional support, by contrast, represent the wider ecosystemic conditions that can either reinforce or undermine women's entrepreneurial efforts.

By integrating these factors into a unified conceptual framework, we address an important gap in the literature. While previous research in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America has examined how resilience and support networks influence women's entrepreneurship (Bullough and Renko, 2013; Korber and McNaughton, 2018; Krause, 2024), evidence from the MENA region remains scarce. Oman provides a particularly compelling case: cultural expectations, patchy institutional support, and uneven rural infrastructure combine to create a setting where psychological resources may be more decisive than external enablers. Positioned within this global discourse, we advance theoretical understanding by showing how ESE is shaped in contexts marked by structural disadvantage, gendered constraints, and limited institutional reach.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) is widely recognised as a central psychological driver of entrepreneurial behaviour. Drawing on Bandura's social cognitive theory, ESE refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform entrepreneurial tasks, manage uncertainty, and solve problems arising in the creation or sustenance of a venture (Bandura, 1997). A substantial body of research shows that individuals with higher levels of ESE are more likely to form entrepreneurial intentions, act on opportunities, persevere during setbacks, and continue entrepreneurial activity even when resources are scarce (Chen et al., 1998; McGee et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2019). ESE therefore shapes both the initiation of entrepreneurial action and the commitment required to sustain a venture over time.

Despite its prominence, existing knowledge of ESE is shaped largely by studies conducted in urban, formal, and predominantly Western contexts. Evidence consistently indicates that women tend to report lower levels of self-efficacy than men, a pattern linked to gender norms, limited access to business networks, and reduced exposure to entrepreneurial role models (Shinnar et al., 2012). These disparities are often intensified in rural settings, where institutional support is weaker and social expectations surrounding women's roles remain deeply embedded (Roomi and Parrott, 2008). In such contexts, ESE is shaped not only by individual beliefs but also by the wider social and institutional environment in which entrepreneurial decisions are embedded.

Research from rural and resource-constrained environments suggests that ESE may play a particularly decisive role where formal market structures are underdeveloped. Studies from Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia show that women with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to sustain entrepreneurial activity when confronting cultural restrictions, unstable markets, and household-level economic uncertainty (Bullough and Renko, 2013). Newman et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis similarly identifies ESE as one of the most consistent predictors of entrepreneurial behaviour, while noting that empirical evidence remains concentrated in non-rural and high-income settings. Consequently, limited attention has been paid to how ESE operates under conditions of restricted mobility, weak institutional reach, and informal economic activity.

Within the Middle East, and particularly in Oman, emerging research suggests that self-efficacy forms an important component of the entrepreneurial mindset among women and youth, especially where access to formal training, finance, and advisory support remains uneven (Ghouse et al., 2024). However, how rural women develop entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and which factors strengthen or undermine it, remains insufficiently theorised. In rural Oman, entrepreneurial activity is

shaped by traditional gender expectations, family responsibilities, and evolving institutional arrangements, suggesting that ESE is likely to emerge from a combination of personal resilience, confidence in everyday decision-making, and informal social support.

Accordingly, we conceptualise ESE not simply as an individual psychological attribute but as a capability shaped through the interaction of personal, social, and contextual conditions. By examining the roles of resilience and decision-making confidence in shaping ESE among rural women entrepreneurs, we extend social cognitive theory into a rural and gendered context marked by uncertainty, informality, and institutional limitation. In doing so, it responds to calls for more context-sensitive theorisation of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and provides insight into how psychological capability develops under the everyday conditions of rural livelihood entrepreneurship.

Resilience is commonly understood as an individual's capacity to withstand setbacks, recover from adverse experiences, and maintain purposeful action over time (Connor and Davidson, 2003). Within entrepreneurship research, resilience has moved beyond its original focus on crisis response to become recognised as a dynamic psychological capability that supports adaptation, resource reconfiguration, and continuity in the face of ongoing uncertainty (Korber and McNaughton, 2018; Shepherd et al., 2019). These qualities are especially important for rural women, who often confront structural challenges such as limited access to finance, restricted mobility, gendered social expectations, and weak infrastructural support. Under such conditions, resilience becomes embedded in the everyday work of sustaining entrepreneurial activity rather than an exceptional response to episodic shocks. This understanding of resilience as an ongoing adaptive capability aligns with rural entrepreneurship research that conceptualises entrepreneurial action as continuous adjustment under constraint rather than episodic response to crisis (Gittins & McElwee, 2023, 2024).

Empirical evidence shows that resilience contributes to entrepreneurial outcomes both directly and through its interaction with other psychological resources. Resilient entrepreneurs tend to display stronger problem-solving confidence, persistence under conditions of scarcity, and a heightened belief in their ability to meet business challenges, reinforcing entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Bullough and Renko, 2013). In institutionally thin environments, resilience enables entrepreneurs to translate motivation and skills into sustained business behaviour by helping them manage uncertainty, test alternative strategies, and remain committed to entrepreneurial goals.

Decision-making confidence, defined as belief in one's capacity to make sound business judgements under uncertain or constrained circumstances, plays a complementary role in shaping entrepreneurial behaviour. Prior research links confidence to opportunity recognition, proactive strategic adjustment, and a willingness to take calculated risks—behaviours central to early-stage and subsistence entrepreneurship (Bandura, 1997; Morris et al., 2002). In rural settings characterised by fluctuating demand, limited market information, and uneven institutional support, confidence becomes essential for navigating ambiguity and responding to unforeseen challenges.

Evidence from South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa suggests that women entrepreneurs who combine confidence with resilience are more likely to sustain their ventures, even when facing entrenched socio-cultural barriers or chronic resource shortages (Roomi and Parrott, 2008; Bullough and Renko, 2013). Confidence supports the initiation of entrepreneurial decisions, while resilience enables those decisions to be carried forward in environments where outcomes are uncertain and support mechanisms remain limited.

Taken together, resilience and decision-making confidence form the psychological foundations underpinning entrepreneurial self-efficacy in rural contexts. This study positions resilience as a mediating capability that channels the effect of decision-making confidence into entrepreneurial self-efficacy. By examining these interrelationships among rural women entrepreneurs, we extend social cognitive theory into a context where gendered norms, informal structures, and persistent uncertainty

shape psychological capability, deepening understanding of how confidence and resilience jointly support entrepreneurial behaviour in resource-constrained rural environments.

In rural environments, social support from family, kinship groups, and community networks often forms the primary foundation upon which women's entrepreneurial activity depends. These networks commonly provide informal finance, shared labour, childcare assistance, and social legitimacy—resources that are especially important where formal market structures remain weak (Brush et al., 2009; Jennings and Brush, 2013). However, while these informal systems offer crucial day-to-day support, they are unevenly distributed and can fluctuate over time. Their capacity to compensate for limited formal infrastructure is therefore constrained, particularly when business growth requires stable access to finance, market information, or training.

Formal institutional support, comprising credit facilities, entrepreneurial training, regulatory clarity, and market access, is widely acknowledged as an important enabler of entrepreneurial performance. Yet in many developing and rural economies, institutional offerings are often poorly aligned with the realities of women's work and mobility. Gendered norms, bureaucratic complexity, and uneven policy implementation can restrict women's ability to access credit, register businesses, or participate in training programmes (Khoury and Prasad, 2016; De Rosa et al., 2021). These constraints reflect institutional voids in which weak or absent formal structures reduce the reliability of external support and compel entrepreneurs to rely more heavily on personal judgement, resilience, and social networks (Mair and Marti, 2009).

Comparative rural studies reinforce these dynamics. In Sub-Saharan Africa, limited institutional outreach and cultural expectations surrounding women's roles often prevent female entrepreneurs from converting self-efficacy into sustained enterprise performance (Amine and Staub, 2009). Evidence from South Asia shows that kinship networks are frequently used to offset limited institutional access, yet such arrangements may embed dependency and constrain business expansion (Roomi and Parrott, 2008). Research from Latin America similarly demonstrates how weak institutional structures intersect with socio-cultural barriers, exposing women entrepreneurs to market unpredictability and policy inconsistency (Krause, 2024). Across regions, women's entrepreneurial efforts are shaped by a complex interplay between supportive social relationships and institutional deficiencies.

In Oman, institutional support for rural women entrepreneurs remains at a formative stage. Access to finance in rural areas is limited, formal training initiatives rarely reach remote communities, and targeted policy interventions continue to evolve (Ghouse et al., 2021). In this context, social networks may provide immediate assistance but cannot substitute for the stability offered by formal institutions. This raises important questions about how psychological capabilities, such as resilience and decision-making confidence, support entrepreneurial self-efficacy where institutional systems remain underdeveloped, an issue particularly salient in rural Oman, where entrepreneurship unfolds within traditional norms, economic diversification efforts, and uneven institutional reach.

Resilience is increasingly recognised as a dynamic capability that translates internal psychological resources into sustained entrepreneurial action. Rather than serving solely as a coping mechanism, resilience enables entrepreneurs to adapt business strategies, recombine limited resources, and persist in the face of uncertainty and institutional voids (Korber and McNaughton, 2018; Shepherd et al., 2019). In rural contexts, where structural barriers such as weak financial systems, limited infrastructure, and socio-cultural constraints are pervasive, resilience becomes a critical psychological resource that sustains entrepreneurial engagement over time.

From a theoretical standpoint, resilience mediates the relationship between decision-making confidence and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE). Entrepreneurs who exhibit confidence in making business decisions may still fail to translate this into effective entrepreneurial behaviour unless resilience enables them to maintain focus and

adaptability when challenges arise. In this way, resilience acts as a conversion mechanism: transforming psychological confidence into actionable outcomes that reinforce entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Cardon et al., 2013; Bullough and Renko, 2013).

Empirical studies across the Global South support this mediating role. For example, women entrepreneurs in conflict-affected environments demonstrated that resilience moderated the negative impact of instability, thereby sustaining their self-efficacy and business continuity (Bullough et al., 2014). Similarly, research in Sub-Saharan Africa shows that resilient women entrepreneurs were better able to transform confidence and skills into sustained enterprise growth despite systemic barriers (Amine and Staub, 2009).

In the Omani rural context, resilience is particularly salient because women entrepreneurs often face overlapping constraints of limited institutional support, restricted access to finance, and gendered norms that limit their mobility and visibility. These challenges heighten the importance of resilience as a mediating mechanism that links psychological readiness with entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

Social support plays a pivotal role in entrepreneurial ecosystems, particularly in rural contexts where institutional mechanisms are weak or absent. Support from family, peers, and community networks provides resources such as labour, advice, and informal finance, which are often essential substitutes for underdeveloped formal systems (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003; Brush et al., 2009). For rural women entrepreneurs, this support is not only material but also psychological, mitigating the effects of gendered barriers and reinforcing entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Jennings and Brush, 2013).

From a theoretical perspective, social support moderates the relationship between institutional mechanisms and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE). Even when formal policies or training programmes are in place, their effectiveness depends on the extent to which entrepreneurs can leverage social networks to access and apply institutional resources. For instance, entrepreneurs with stronger family and community backing are better positioned to convert institutional interventions into confidence-building experiences, while those lacking such support remain constrained (Greve and Salaff, 2003; Roomi and Parrott, 2008).

Evidence from the Global South illustrates this moderating role. In South Asia, family approval has been shown to significantly amplify the benefits of training programmes for women entrepreneurs, while in Sub-Saharan Africa, peer networks facilitated market access and reduced attrition among women-led enterprises (Amine and Staub, 2009; Bullough and Renko, 2013).

In Oman, where institutional frameworks for rural women's entrepreneurship are still nascent, social support acts as a critical moderator that determines whether formal initiatives translate into enhanced entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Without such support, institutional efforts risk remaining ineffective or underutilised.

Entrepreneurial competencies are widely recognised as critical enablers of business performance, encompassing the ability to recognise opportunities, plan effectively, and mobilise resources (Man et al., 2002). In rural contexts, where access to financial, educational, and institutional support is often limited, perceived mastery of such competencies becomes especially important for sustaining entrepreneurial activity (McElwee and Bosworth, 2010).

Despite their relevance, the relationship between perceived business skills mastery and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) remains underexplored in the context of rural women's entrepreneurship. Bandura's (1997) theory highlights that self-efficacy develops through mastery experiences, yet many rural women have limited exposure to formal training, constraining their ability to gain confidence in applying business skills. Structural barriers such as limited access to entrepreneurial education and weak institutional support further restrict opportunities for capability development.

Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia shows that women entrepreneurs who perceive themselves as competent in areas such as

financial management and marketing are more likely to sustain enterprises under adverse conditions, even when external support mechanisms are weak (Roomi and Parrott, 2008; Amine and Staub, 2009). Such findings suggest that perceived mastery not only enhances individual self-efficacy but may also compensate for institutional voids that characterise many rural economies.

Skill development initiatives tailored to rural contexts therefore remain an important avenue for strengthening perceived business skills mastery. Programmes that combine practical training with mentorship and locally relevant guidance have been found to help women apply business competencies more confidently and navigate the challenges of operating in resource-constrained environments (Shet et al., 2024). Enhancing perceived mastery of business skills is thus likely to contribute meaningfully to the development of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and support more resilient forms of rural entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) is not only a psychological construct influencing individual behaviour but also a factor that contributes to wider regional development outcomes. By shaping business creation, survival, and growth, higher levels of ESE can support job generation, poverty reduction, and community resilience (Bullough and Renko, 2013). In rural settings, women entrepreneurs play an especially important role in diversifying local economies, mobilising underutilised resources, and generating social and economic value (Thomas, 2025).

The relevance of ESE therefore extends beyond personal capability to collective impact. When rural women possess greater confidence and resilience, their ventures tend to be more sustainable, fostering stability and longer-term development within communities. Women-led enterprises frequently reinvest income locally, support household welfare, and stimulate micro-level economic activity, contributing to global policy agendas such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) are closely associated with efforts to strengthen women's entrepreneurial capacities in rural regions (Raman et al., 2022).

However, the developmental potential of rural women's entrepreneurship depends on the presence of supportive institutional structures. Without adequate policy frameworks, infrastructure, and access to resources, the contributions of rural women entrepreneurs remain constrained and vulnerable to external shocks (Khoury and Prasad, 2016; Shepherd et al., 2019). In Oman, where rural entrepreneurship is gaining attention within national development strategies, the findings of this study suggest that psychological resources such as resilience and confidence may help women compensate, at least partially, for institutional shortcomings.

By situating ESE within broader rural development discourse, this study underscores both its theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, it positions ESE as a multi-level construct with implications beyond entrepreneurial outcomes to regional pathways towards inclusive and sustainable development. Practically, the findings highlight the need for policies that strengthen women's psychological capacities alongside improvements to the entrepreneurial ecosystem, enabling rural women to contribute more fully to regional development goals.

Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory provides the foundation for understanding how beliefs in personal capabilities influence entrepreneurial behaviour. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) has been widely examined as a predictor of intentions, opportunity recognition, and venture creation, yet its application to rural women's entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) remains limited. We extend Bandura's framework by incorporating resilience, decision-making confidence, social support, and institutional support to explain how psychological and contextual resources interact to shape ESE in resource-constrained rural settings.

Resilience is positioned as a mediating construct that translates decision-making confidence into entrepreneurial self-efficacy. While confidence reflects belief in one's judgment, resilience enables entrepreneurs to sustain this belief when facing setbacks, uncertainty, or

resource scarcity. In rural contexts, where institutional and market conditions are often volatile, resilience plays a central role in converting cognitive readiness into persistent entrepreneurial action (Cardon et al., 2013; Shepherd et al., 2019).

Social support is theorised as a contextual factor that may strengthen or weaken the effects of institutional mechanisms on ESE. While policy initiatives or training programmes may encourage entrepreneurial engagement, their influence can be limited unless reinforced by family or community networks that validate women's entrepreneurial choices (Brush et al., 2009; Jennings and Brush, 2013). This highlights the importance of considering both formal structures and informal social dynamics in understanding ESE.

Institutional support is included as a structural determinant that can facilitate or constrain entrepreneurial capability. In contexts characterised by institutional voids, such as rural Oman, formal mechanisms may provide uneven or limited assistance, thereby shaping how women internalise and act upon their entrepreneurial beliefs.

Together, these relationships provide the theoretical basis for the conceptual framework developed in this study. The next section outlines the proposed model and the hypotheses derived from the reviewed literature.

3. Conceptual framework and hypotheses development

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) is a pivotal construct in entrepreneurship research, representing the belief in one's ability to successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks (Chen et al., 1998). ESE is particularly relevant for rural women entrepreneurs who operate in challenging environments with limited resources and institutional support. The conceptual framework integrates psychological, social, and institutional factors to explore their combined influence on ESE. This framework is grounded in Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory, which emphasises the role of task-specific confidence in shaping behaviour, as well as resilience theory (Connor and Davidson, 2003) and social network theory (Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986), which highlight the importance of adaptive capacities and social capital in entrepreneurial success.

3.1. Hypotheses development

3.1.1. Confidence in business decisions and ESE

Confidence in business decisions, as conceptualized by Bandura (1997), is critical for entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Entrepreneurs who are confident in their ability to make informed financial and operational decisions are more likely to perceive themselves as capable of handling entrepreneurial tasks. Empirical studies, such as those by McGee et al. (2009), have demonstrated that decision-making confidence significantly enhances entrepreneurial performance by reducing the perceived risks and uncertainties associated with business operations.

(H1). Confidence in business decisions (CB) positively affects entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE).

Resilience, defined as the ability to adapt to and recover from adverse situations, is a key psychological factor in entrepreneurship (Connor and Davidson, 2003). Rural entrepreneurs often face resource constraints, cultural barriers, and institutional challenges, making resilience a critical determinant of their self-efficacy. Studies by Newman et al. (2022) highlight that resilience not only helps entrepreneurs overcome setbacks but also fosters long-term persistence in business ventures.

(H2). Resilience (RE) positively affect entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE).

Social support encompasses the emotional, informational, and financial assistance provided by family, friends, mentors, and community networks. For rural women entrepreneurs, social support is

particularly vital in navigating gendered cultural norms and institutional barriers. Recent research by Newman et al. (2022) shows that social support has a significant impact on enhancing entrepreneurial confidence and resilience, particularly in challenging environments.

(H3). Social support (SS) positively affects entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE).

Entrepreneurial competencies, such as financial management, marketing, and strategic planning, are fundamental to business success. Man et al. (2002) highlight that perceived mastery of these skills is directly linked to an entrepreneur's ability to manage risks, capitalize on opportunities, and sustain business operations. In rural contexts, where access to formal training is often limited, perceived business skills mastery plays a critical role in fostering self-efficacy.

(H4). Perceived business skills mastery (PB) positively affects entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE).

Institutional support, including government policies, funding opportunities, and training programs, is essential for creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship. Isenberg (2010) highlight the critical role of institutional frameworks in mitigating systemic barriers, thereby fostering an environment that supports entrepreneurial confidence and enhances the ability to scale ventures. For rural women entrepreneurs, institutional support can bridge critical gaps in resources and knowledge. However, Bergman and McMullen (2022) note that the effectiveness of support often depends on its alignment with the specific needs of the target population.

(H5). Institutional Support (IS) positively affects Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE).

3.1.2. Social support as a moderator

Social support not only provides resources but also mitigates the negative impact of institutional barriers on ESE. Gao et al. (2021) argue that strong social networks amplify the benefits of institutional support by facilitating access to information, mentorship, and collaborative opportunities. This moderating effect is particularly pronounced in rural settings, where institutional support is often limited or inconsistent.

(H6). Social Support (SS) moderates the relationship between Institutional Support (IS) and Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE).

Resilience acts as a psychological bridge between confidence in business decisions and ESE. Entrepreneurs with high decision-making confidence are better equipped to develop resilience, enabling them to navigate uncertainties and setbacks effectively. Empirical studies underscore the mediating role of resilience in enhancing entrepreneurial outcomes, enabling individuals to adapt to adversity and maintain business continuity (Cardon et al., 2013; Connor and Davidson, 2003).

(H7). H7: Resilience mediates the relationship between confidence in business decisions and entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

The conceptual framework integrates psychological (confidence, resilience), social (support networks), and institutional (support systems) dimensions to provide a holistic understanding of ESE (Fig. 1). By testing these hypotheses, the study aims to offer actionable insights into fostering entrepreneurial self-efficacy among rural women entrepreneurs, contributing to both theoretical advancement and practical applications in entrepreneurship development.

4. Research methodology

The research was conducted in the Dhofar region of Oman, which presents a distinctive socio-economic and cultural context for examining women's entrepreneurship (Ghouse et al., 2021). Rural women entrepreneurs in Oman remain under-researched despite their increasing contribution to local economic development and their potential to

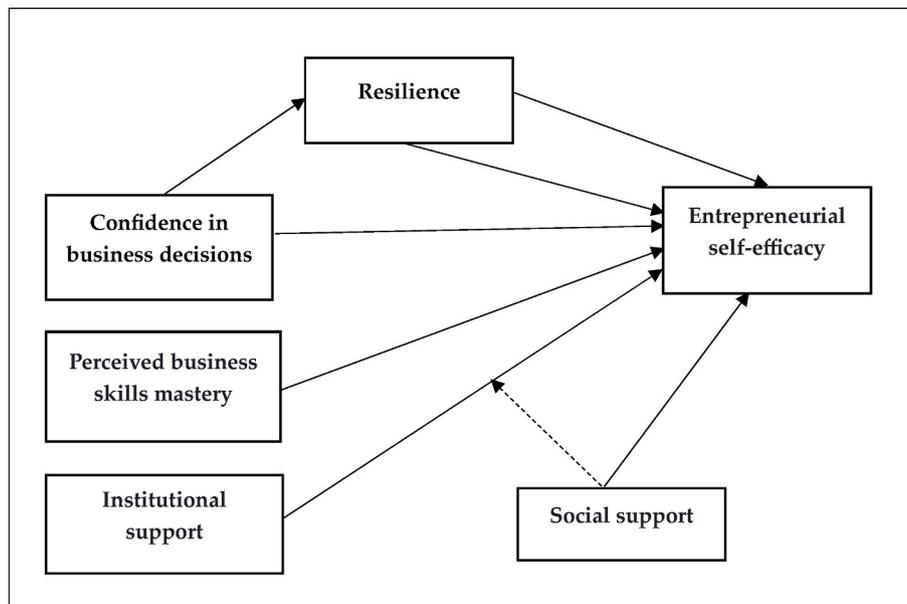


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of entrepreneurial self-efficacy among rural women entrepreneurs. Source: Developed by the authors.

reduce regional disparities.

Epistemologically, the research is situated within a post-positivist paradigm, assuming that entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) can be measured empirically while recognising the influence of social and structural conditions (Creswell, 2014). Ontologically, a critical realist stance is adopted, acknowledging that entrepreneurial behaviour reflects both underlying psychological mechanisms and contextual constraints (Bhaskar et al., 1998).

A cross-sectional, quantitative survey design was employed to test the hypothesised relationships among decision-making confidence, resilience, social support, institutional support, and ESE. This design is appropriate for examining the structural links between psychological and contextual factors in rural entrepreneurship.

The study focuses on rural women entrepreneurs operating micro and small-scale businesses across the Dhofar governorate. As no formal registry of rural women-owned enterprises exists in Oman, purposive and snowball sampling were used. Several respondents were first identified through the Regional Chamber of Commerce, and additional participants were reached through referrals from these initial contacts, enabling access to informal and home-based entrepreneurs across rural wilayats such as Taqah, Mirbat and Thumrait, as well as rural settlements adjoining Salalah.

A total of 235 questionnaires were distributed, and 190 valid responses were obtained (80.8% response rate). This sample size meets recommended thresholds for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), with guidelines suggesting a minimum of 150–200 cases for models with multiple latent constructs (Hair et al., 2019).

A small pilot study with ten rural women entrepreneurs was conducted to refine the wording and cultural suitability of the instrument. Although the pilot sample was small, such numbers are considered appropriate for assessing clarity and cultural relevance in pre-testing instruments within small or hard-to-reach populations (Van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). The main survey was administered in Arabic with the assistance of a female Omani research assistant native to Dhofar, whose cultural familiarity improved communication and respondent trust. Participation was voluntary and anonymous.

The survey instrument was developed using validated scales adapted for cultural appropriateness in the rural Omani context. The constructs included.

- Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Chen et al., 1998)
- Resilience (Connor and Davidson, 2003)
- Social Support (Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986)
- Perceived Business Skills Mastery (Man et al., 2002)
- Decision-Making Confidence (adapted from Bandura, 1997; McGee et al., 2009)
- Institutional Support (drawn from Khoury and Prasad, 2016)

All items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The questionnaire was bilingual (Arabic and English), and back-translation procedures (Brislin, 1970) were employed to ensure linguistic and conceptual accuracy.

A pre-test with ten rural women entrepreneurs was conducted to refine item wording, ensure clarity, and confirm cultural relevance. The instrument was further reviewed by three academic experts in entrepreneurship and rural development to validate content appropriateness.

Data was collected through a combination of in-person surveys and online administration (WhatsApp and email) to accommodate geographic dispersion. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and respondents were assured of confidentiality. The involvement of a local female research assistant enhanced cultural sensitivity and facilitated access to respondents who may have been reluctant to participate.

Data was analysed using AMOS and SPSS. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) assessed construct validity and reliability (Hair et al., 2010). Convergent and discriminant validity were confirmed via Average Variance Extracted (AVE), composite reliability, the Fornell–Larcker criterion, and HTMT ratios. SEM was employed to test hypothesised relationships among constructs.

Procedural and statistical remedies were applied to minimise common method bias, including item randomisation, varied scale anchors, and Harman's single-factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Our work complies with rigorous ethical standards. Participants received clear information sheets, provided voluntary consent, and were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The bilingual instrument enhanced accessibility, and the involvement of a trusted Omani female research assistant ensured respect for cultural norms in Dhofar.

5. Data analysis and results

The demographic profile of the 190 respondents (see Table 1) highlights key characteristics of rural women entrepreneurs in Oman. A significant majority (79.5%) operate sole proprietorships, while 20.5% are in partnerships. Most businesses (68.9%) are self-established, and 31.1% are family-owned. Regarding age, 90% of the respondents are under 25 years, followed by 9.5% above 45 years, and only 0.5% in the 25–36 age group. Marital status distribution indicates that 60% are married, 31.6% unmarried, 6.3% divorced, and 2.1% widowed. Educational qualifications show diversity, with 42.6% graduates, 34.2% diploma holders, 14.7% below high school, and 8.4% postgraduates. Industry-wise, 40% belong to the “others” category, followed by apparel/clothing (21.6%), perfumes/aromas (18.4%), and food and beverage (11.1%). Income distribution reveals disparities, with 50% earning below 254 Omani rials, 24.7% between 254 and 544 rials, 15.8% between 544 and 1444 rials, and 9.5% above 1444 rials. These demographics reflect the economic and social diversity of rural women entrepreneurs in Dhofar, aligning with studies emphasizing the heterogeneous nature of rural entrepreneurship (Dana, 2007; Brush et al., 2009).

The reliability and validity of the constructs were confirmed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) (see Table 1). Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceeded the threshold of 0.70, ensuring internal consistency (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Composite reliability (CR) values were above 0.70, confirming construct reliability, while the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeded 0.50, establishing convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was verified by ensuring the square root of AVE for each construct was greater than its inter-construct correlations. These results, presented in Tables 2 and 3, align with best practices in structural equation modelling (Hair et al., 2010), ensuring the robustness of the measurement model.

The hypotheses proposed in this study were tested using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), which explained 55% of the variance in Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE). The findings provide insights into the relationships between confidence, resilience, social and institutional support, and ESE.

The results for each hypothesis are presented below and summarized in Table 4 at the end of this section.

H1. Confidence in Business Decisions → ESE

Confidence in business decisions significantly influenced ESE ($\beta = 0.147, p = 0.008$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Entrepreneurs with higher confidence in their decision-making abilities reported greater levels of self-efficacy. This finding highlights the role of individual psychological factors in enhancing entrepreneurial capabilities.

H2. Resilience → ESE

Resilience emerged as a strong and significant predictor of entrepreneurial self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.537, p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 2. The capacity to recover from setbacks, adapt to challenges, and continue pursuing business goals substantially strengthened the entrepreneurs' belief in their ability to perform entrepreneurial tasks. This result reinforces the central role of psychological resilience in shaping self-efficacy within rural entrepreneurial environments, where uncertainty, limited resources, and structural constraints are common.

H3. Social Support → ESE

Social support did not have a significant effect on ESE ($\beta = -0.034, p = 0.401$), leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 3. While social support is often considered critical in entrepreneurship, the findings suggest that its impact on ESE may vary depending on the nature and quality of the support available.

H4. Perceived Business Skills Mastery → ESE

Perceived business skills mastery was not a significant predictor of

Table 1 Demographic Details.

Demographic Attribute	Category	Frequency	Percent
Company type	Sole proprietorship	151	79.5
	Partnership	39	20.5
Business type	Family business	59	31.1
	Self	131	68.9
Age	Under 25 years	171	90
	25-36 years	1	0.5
	36-45 years	NIL	NIL
	Above 45 years	18	9.5
Marital status	Unmarried	60	31.6
	Married	114	60
	Divorced	12	6.3
	Widow	4	2.1
Education	Below High school	28	14.7
	Diploma	65	34.2
	Graduate	81	42.6
	Postgraduate	16	8.4
Industry	Apparel/clothing	41	21.6
	Traditional/handicrafts	8	4.2
	Perfumes/Aromas	35	18.4
	Wholesale & retail	7	3.7
	Food & beverage	21	11.1
	Others	76	40
Income	Agriculture/fishing	2	1.1
	Below 254 Omani Rials	95	50
	254-544 Rials	47	24.7
	544-1444 Rials	30	15.8
Above 1444 Rials	18	9.5	

Source: Developed by the authors

ESE ($\beta = 0.003, p = 0.945$), resulting in the rejection of Hypothesis 4. This result may reflect a gap between perceived and actual mastery of business skills among the respondents.

H5. Institutional Support → ESE

Institutional support did not significantly influence ESE ($\beta = 0.007, p = 0.800$), leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 5. Despite the availability of institutional frameworks, their limited relevance or accessibility in the rural context may have reduced their impact on ESE.

H6. Moderation of Social Support on Institutional Support → ESE

The interaction term (IS × SS) for the moderation analysis showed a coefficient of $-0.130 (p = 0.071)$, indicating that social support does not significantly moderate the relationship between institutional support and ESE. Consistent with this, the direct effect of social support on ESE was also not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.034, p = 0.401$).

H7. Mediation of Resilience in Confidence and ESE

Resilience partially mediated the relationship between confidence in business decisions and ESE. Path a (CB → RE) was significant ($\beta = 0.620, p < 0.001$), as was Path b (RE → ESE) ($\beta = 0.523, p < 0.001$). The direct effect of CB on ESE remained significant ($\beta = 0.149, p = 0.007$), confirming partial mediation. This indicates that confidence in decision-making enhances resilience, which in turn positively affects ESE.

The results underscore the importance of confidence and resilience in shaping ESE, highlighting resilience as a critical mediator. However, the limited influence of social support, perceived business skills mastery,

Table 2
Construct reliability and convergent validity.

Construct	Latent constructs	Factor loading	Cronbach alpha (α)	Composite reliability	AVE
SE	SE1	0.85	0.879	0.917	0.712
	SE2	0.87			
	SE3	0.88			
CB	CB1	0.82	0.845	0.905	0.694
	CB2	0.84			
	CB3	0.85			
RE	RE1	0.83	0.856	0.913	0.703
	RE2	0.86			
	RE3	0.87			
SS	SS1	0.80	0.812	0.884	0.677
	SS2	0.81			
	SS3	0.82			
PB	PB1	0.81	0.823	0.892	0.685
	PB2	0.82			
	PB3	0.83			
IS	IS1	0.84	0.837	0.902	0.701
	IS2	0.85			
	IS3	0.86			

Source: Developed by the authors

Table 3
Discriminant validity; Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Construct	SE	CB	RE	SS	PB	IS
AVE	0.7513	0.7058	0.7087	0.6713	0.6640	0.7267
SE	0.867					
CB	0.543	0.840				
RE	0.612	0.581	0.842			
SS	0.498	0.511	0.507	0.819		
PB	0.471	0.501	0.496	0.473	0.815	
IS	0.482	0.489	0.505	0.466	0.472	0.852

Source: Developed by the authors

Table 4
Hypotheses testing table.

Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistics	P value	Result
CB → SE	0.147	0.15	0.055	2.673	0.008	Supported
RE → SE	0.537	0.54	0.051	10.529	0.001	Supported
SS → SE	-0.034	-0.03	0.041	-0.829	0.401	Not supported
PB → SE	0.003	0.005	0.043	0.07	0.945	Not supported
IS → SE	0.007	0.01	0.026	0.269	0.8	Not supported
IS × SS → SE (Mod.)	-0.13	-0.12	0.072	-1.806	0.071	Not supported
CB → RE → SE (Med.)	0.322	0.32	0.045	7.156	0	Supported

Source: Developed by the authors

and institutional support underscores systemic barriers and resource gaps in the rural entrepreneurial ecosystem. These findings align with prior research emphasizing the role of psychological resources over

structural factors in resource-constrained environments (Newman et al., 2022).

6. Discussion

This study examines the determinants of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) among rural women entrepreneurs in Oman by analysing the roles of confidence in business decisions, resilience, perceived business skills mastery, social support, institutional support, and the mediating and moderating mechanisms linking these factors. The findings offer important insights into how entrepreneurial capability is constructed in rural contexts characterised by resource constraints, gendered norms, and uneven institutional reach. Rather than reinforcing assumptions about the primacy of external support systems, the results highlight the decisive role of internal psychological resources in shaping entrepreneurial self-belief.

Consistent with the proposed framework, resilience emerged as the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial self-efficacy. This finding confirms that the capacity to recover from setbacks, adapt to uncertainty, and persist despite adversity plays a central role in sustaining entrepreneurial confidence among rural women. In line with earlier research (Connor and Davidson, 2003; Bullough and Renko, 2013), resilience appears to function not simply as a reactive coping mechanism but as an enabling psychological capability that supports ongoing entrepreneurial engagement. In the rural Omani context, where access to finance, markets, and advisory services is limited, resilience compensates for structural deficiencies and allows women to maintain belief in their entrepreneurial abilities despite repeated challenges.

Confidence in business decision-making also demonstrated a positive and significant relationship with ESE. This finding aligns closely with Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, which emphasises belief in one's judgement as a key determinant of perceived capability and action. For rural women entrepreneurs operating in environments characterised by informal transactions, limited market information, and weak institutional guidance, confidence becomes particularly salient. The ability to trust one's judgement in pricing, sourcing, and managing risk appears to reinforce entrepreneurial self-belief, enabling women to navigate business complexity despite uncertainty.

By contrast, perceived business skills mastery did not exert a significant influence on entrepreneurial self-efficacy. This result challenges dominant assumptions within entrepreneurship research that skill acquisition automatically translates into enhanced self-belief (Man et al., 2002). In rural settings such as Dhofar, entrepreneurial activity is often shaped by experiential learning, improvisation, and informal knowledge rather than formalised competencies. The finding suggests a potential disconnect between perceived competence and internalised efficacy, particularly where opportunities to validate skills through business growth, formal recognition, or market expansion remain limited.

Similarly, social support and institutional support did not demonstrate significant direct effects on ESE. These findings are consistent with scholarship on institutional voids and gendered constraints in rural and peripheral economies (Brush et al., 2009; Jennings and Brush, 2013). While family and community networks are culturally significant in Oman, the support they provide may be largely emotional rather than instrumental, offering encouragement without materially strengthening entrepreneurial confidence. Institutional mechanisms, meanwhile, may be insufficiently accessible or poorly aligned with rural women's needs due to bureaucratic complexity, mobility constraints, and uneven policy implementation. Together, these results indicate that external support structures are not yet strong or responsive enough to shape entrepreneurial self-efficacy in meaningful ways.

The analysis further demonstrates that resilience partially mediates the relationship between confidence in business decisions and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. While confidence enhances cognitive readiness and willingness to act, resilience enables women entrepreneurs to

sustain this confidence when faced with repeated adversity. In this sense, resilience operates as a psychological bridge that converts belief into durable entrepreneurial capability. This finding reinforces perspectives that conceptualise resilience as both a protective and enabling resource in entrepreneurship, particularly under conditions of uncertainty and institutional fragility (Cardon et al., 2013; Shepherd et al., 2019).

In contrast, the hypothesised moderating role of social support on the relationship between institutional support and ESE was not supported. This suggests that informal social networks cannot compensate for weak or misaligned institutional arrangements. While social ties may provide legitimacy or moral support, they rarely substitute for sustained access to finance, markets, or technical expertise. This finding challenges assumptions within social capital theory that networks can routinely offset institutional deficiencies (Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986), highlighting instead the need for functional and contextually relevant institutional mechanisms.

Theoretically, this study extends Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory by demonstrating how entrepreneurial self-efficacy is shaped under conditions of rurality, gendered constraint, and institutional limitation. The findings position resilience as a central psychological capability that not only directly influences ESE but also mediates the effect of decision-making confidence on entrepreneurial self-belief. This advances existing theorisation by showing that confidence alone is insufficient; it is resilience that allows confidence to be enacted and sustained over time in adverse environments.

The non-significant effects of perceived business skills mastery, social support, and institutional support further contribute to debates on institutional voids and context dependency in entrepreneurship research. Rather than assuming universal effectiveness of skills and support mechanisms, the findings highlight the importance of theorising when and why such factors fail to influence psychological outcomes. By foregrounding rural women entrepreneurs, an underrepresented group in mainstream entrepreneurship scholarship, the study contributes to a more inclusive and context-sensitive understanding of entrepreneurial capability in the Global South.

6.1. Practical implications

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that entrepreneurship development interventions targeting rural women should move beyond a narrow focus on skills training or financial provision and place greater emphasis on strengthening psychological capabilities. Programmes that incorporate resilience-building components, such as scenario planning, stress management, reflective learning, and peer support, can enhance women's capacity to persist through uncertainty and adversity.

In addition, initiatives designed to strengthen decision-making confidence should be central to entrepreneurship support strategies. Experiential learning, mentorship, and practice-based workshops that allow women to engage with real business challenges can reinforce belief in their entrepreneurial judgement. The limited impact of institutional support also underscores the need for better alignment between policy design and rural women's lived realities, including flexible microfinance arrangements, mobile advisory services, and locally embedded training hubs that reduce mobility and time constraints.

At the regional level, the findings highlight the importance of psychological capability development as a pathway to inclusive rural development. By strengthening resilience and confidence among rural women entrepreneurs, policymakers can enhance the sustainability of micro- and small-scale ventures that contribute to household income, community stability, and local economic diversification. This aligns closely with Sultanate of Oman, 2021 objectives, which prioritise women's economic participation and rural development.

Beyond Oman, the insights are relevant to other Global South contexts where women's entrepreneurship plays a critical role in sustaining

livelihoods under conditions of structural constraint. Interventions that cultivate resilience and informed decision-making can support more durable forms of entrepreneurship, even where institutional barriers persist. In this way, the study reinforces the broader contribution of rural women's entrepreneurship to regional development goals related to gender equality, decent work, and reduced inequalities.

7. Conclusion

This study examined the psychological, social, and institutional determinants of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) among rural women entrepreneurs in Oman. The findings underscore the central role of resilience, which emerged not only as the strongest direct predictor of ESE but also as a key mediating mechanism through which confidence in business decisions translates into entrepreneurial self-belief. Confidence itself was shown to be an important driver of ESE, reinforcing the value of psychological capabilities in enabling rural women to navigate uncertainty, manage risk, and sustain entrepreneurial momentum in resource-constrained environments. In contrast, perceived business skills mastery, social support, and institutional support exerted limited influence, reflecting the persistent structural and contextual constraints that continue to shape women's entrepreneurship in rural settings.

Theoretically, the study advances understanding of entrepreneurial self-efficacy by demonstrating how resilience functions as a bridging mechanism that converts confidence into sustained entrepreneurial capability. By foregrounding psychological resources over external supports, the findings challenge assumptions about the universal effectiveness of institutional and social mechanisms and contribute to debates on institutional voids, gendered entrepreneurship, and agency in peripheral economies. By focusing on rural women entrepreneurs, an underrepresented group in mainstream entrepreneurship scholarship, the study adds contextual depth to existing theory and strengthens links between entrepreneurship research and rural development literature.

From a broader development perspective, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening psychological capacities as a pathway for supporting women's entrepreneurship in rural Oman. This emphasis aligns closely with , particularly its focus on inclusive growth, women's economic participation, and regional development. More broadly, the study offers a transferable lens for understanding entrepreneurial capability in other Global South contexts where women entrepreneurs contend with similar socio-cultural norms, institutional limitations, and livelihood-oriented entrepreneurial conditions.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design restricts causal interpretation, and future longitudinal research would be valuable in tracing how confidence, resilience, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy evolve over time. Second, the reliance on self-reported measures may introduce response bias; future studies could incorporate objective performance indicators or qualitative approaches to strengthen validity. Third, the focus on rural women entrepreneurs in Dhofar limits generalisability, suggesting scope for comparative research across other regions of Oman or across different Global South contexts to examine how variations in cultural and institutional environments shape ESE. Finally, the limited influence of social and institutional support observed in this study points to the need for more fine-grained examination of the quality, accessibility, and cultural fit of support mechanisms available to rural women entrepreneurs.

Future research that addresses these limitations would deepen theoretical understanding and inform more effective policy and programme design. In particular, further work exploring how resilience is cultivated and reinforced—through training interventions, peer networks, or community-based initiatives—would offer valuable insights into how psychological resources can be strengthened to support sustainable rural women's entrepreneurship.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Suhail Mohammad Ghouse: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – original draft. **Gerard McElwee:** Writing – review & editing.

Declaration of interest

We declare we have no other interests.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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