Embracing the BANI World: Which Leadership Type Will Save Tourism Managers in Turbulent Times?*

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Abstract

The principal objective of this research is to determine the leadership characteristics required for success in the BANI (Brittle, Anxiety-inducing, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible) world for those working in the tourism industry and to identify the leadership style that these characteristics would imply. This paper employs a qualitative research methodology, drawing upon a review of the relevant literature and the insights of expert scholars, to examine the leadership characteristics and styles that are most conducive to success in the BANI context. Ultimately, the commonalities in the leadership characteristics derived from the literature and the responses from the academic experts were considered, and it was determined which leadership types these characteristics align with. The data obtained from these processes were analyzed using a word cloud.A synthesis of the opinions of academics and the results of studies in the literature indicates that the most fundamental leadership trait that can facilitate success in the BANI world for tourism managers is "agility." The analysis yielded the conclusion that the leadership style most closely aligned with these characteristics is "agile leadership.

Keywords*: BANI world, Leadership, Agility, Tourism, Management*

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1. Introduction

The pandemic and its aftermath have brought about a significant change in the lives of every working individual, affecting workers, businessmen, professionals, and industrialists alike. As a result of this transformation, the contemporary business environment has become exceedingly intricate and uncertain, with abrupt shifts becoming an inherent feature (Chowdhury, 2024). The capacity of organizational leaders to navigate this change has become increasingly crucial in recent years, particularly in light of "black swan" events such as Brexit and the advent of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) (Chen et al., 2022). The accelerated pace of change in our environment has resulted in a pervasive sense of chaos, anxiety, and a compelling need to redefine ourselves and our understanding of the world around us in the context of this new reality. Consequently, the VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) world has evolved into a BANI (Brittle, Anxiety-inducing, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible) world (Baskoro, 2022; Cascio, 2022; Evseeva et al., 2022; Godoy & Filho, 2022; Grześ, 2023; Podolchak et al., 2023). The BANI environment has become a prominent feature of our lives in a relatively short period of time. Consequently, it is imperative that managers conduct further research in order to enhance their decision-making abilities with regard to the formulation of management strategies (Nataliia & Olena, 2023).

It has also become evident that the environment in which businesses operate exhibits characteristics associated with BANI, underscoring the necessity for innovative approaches to leadership within the tourism sector. In light of the rapid changes and complexity of the contemporary business environment, the selection of an appropriate leadership style has become a pivotal concern, influencing the strategic direction of leadership implementation (Ratnawati et al., 2024).

A substantial body of research has been conducted by social scientists with the objective of defining the characteristics of the BANI world in which organizations are situated and of identifying the opportunities and threats that this environment may present. Furthermore, studies have been conducted on the development of strategic plans, the implementation of these plans, the management of teams, and the fostering of competition within this environment (Bushuyev et al., 2023; Bushuyev et al., 2023b; Cascio, 2023; Kusuma & Sarma, 2023; Nataliia & Olena, 2023; Sridharan, 2023; Tekin Özden, 2023). Nevertheless, the number of studies that focus on the specific type or characteristics of leadership that can effectively fulfill these activities and succeed in such an environment is relatively limited (Ray, 2023). Moreover, no study has proposed the leadership qualities that tourism managers require, given the characteristics of the BANI world in the field of tourism. In light of these considerations, the study identifies two key research problems.

(1) What are the required leadership traits for tourism managers in the BANI world?

(2) What leadership style most closely aligns with the leadership traits required of tourism managers?

In line with the research questions, this study aims to identify the leadership traits that tourism managers may require to succeed in the BANI context and the leadership style that encompasses these traits. The rationale for concentrating on the requirements of tourism managers in this context is that the tourism sector has a distinctive operational structure in comparison to other sectors. The tourism sector is characterized by a high level of labor intensity. Furthermore, the sector is characterized by a dynamic and complex structure, shaped by a number of factors including flexible and variable demand, high staff turnover rates and the inability to store services (Köroğlu, 2011). Consequently, it is imperative that tourism businesses possess the capacity to adapt to the ever-changing environment, ensuring their continued dynamism and ability to navigate the evolving global landscape and competitive market (Cinnioğlu & Salha, 2019). It is therefore important to determine the leadership traits required by tourism managers in the context of the BANI world. It is believed that the leadership traits identified in the context of business management will facilitate the adaptation process and the continuity of the business.

In order to achieve the research objective, a three-stage methodological process was undertaken. In the initial phase of the study, a document review was conducted to identify the traits and characteristics of leaders within the BANI context. This was achieved by examining secondary data sources. This process

was concluded when the data exhibited a high degree of repetition. In this manner, numerous existing characteristics of leaders in the BANI world, as documented in the literature, were identified as priorities. In the second phase of the study, the opinions of academic experts were sought to facilitate a comparison of the findings and to explore the potential for diverse leadership characteristics. At this phase of the study, research questions were posed to academics from a range of countries who had previously conducted scientific studies on leadership. In the third phase of the study, the responses from the academic community and the identified leadership characteristics from the literature were considered concurrently. This allowed for an examination of which of the identified leadership traits align with the existing literature. The leadership traits identified at each phase were subjected to a word cloud analysis, with the most prominent traits highlighted.

The study is significant for two reasons: its method design and its contribution to the existing literature. The study employs a three-stage process to determine which leadership style aligns with the leadership traits of the BANI world. The process is consistent and rigorous, ensuring that the results are reliable and valid. Concurrently, it is believed that the findings will offer tourism managers a novel perspective, as they will gain insight into the leadership traits that enable them to navigate the evolving global landscape and the type of leadership they should adopt.

2.Conceptual Framework

Information on the conceptual framework of the study is provided in this section.

2.1. BANI World

The accelerated pace of technological advancement, the political turbulence and upheavals triggered by technology, and the global pandemic that ensued have collectively contributed to a heightened state of chaos and unpredictability in human affairs. The temporary nature of these changes has been rendered uncertain and vulnerable as a consequence of the aforementioned developments and alterations. As a result of this process, society has begun to perceive the world as a systematic entity characterized by anxiety and non-linearity, rather than as an uncertain environment (Damayanti, 2022). As a result, the VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) paradigm is becoming increasingly inadequate in terms of its capacity to represent the strategic environment of the contemporary business context.

In light of the fact that the business world is also subject to changes and developments, it is evident that this world has become more volatile and unpredictable. In light of these developments, models such as BANI (Brittle, Anxiety, Non-Linearity, Incomprehensible) have assumed greater significance. They provide a valuable framework for individuals and organizations to gain insight into the rapidly evolving landscape, avoid being left behind, and develop proactive strategies and roadmaps. In contrast to alternative models, such as VUCA, the BANI model enables businesses to anticipate and respond to the disruptive effects of chaos and unpredictability on their operations, thereby maintaining competitiveness through adaptation to transformation (Tekin Özden, 2023).

The advent of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) infectious disease pandemic has precipitated a profound transformation in how we conceptualize the modern world and contemporary reality. At that time, numerous intellectuals, particularly futurologists, proposed that the previously dominant VUCA paradigm should be transformed and adapted to the new conditions. Consequently, an alternative approach to conceptualizing the modern world was proposed, encapsulated by the BANI acronym. The architect of this novel conceptualization of the world is Jamais Cascio, a futurist, anthropologist, historian, and political scientist, in addition to being a researcher at the Global Network and the Center for Responsible Nanotechnology (Mousioł, 2022). In contrast to the VUCA model, which was developed by military analysts, the BANI model originated within the business environment and is more narrowly focused on the challenges and consequences of the pandemic (Bushuyev et al., 2023). The model's structure

enables businesses to identify and address the constraints, uncertainties, and complexities inherent to the contemporary business environment (Bushuyev et al., 2023b).

The term "BANI" is an acronym that stands for "Brittle," "Anxiety," "Non-Linearity," and "Incomprehensible." The term "brittle" is used to describe the tendency of a system (such as a business model) to be highly fragile and unstable in the context of rapid change and related uncertainties. For example, in conditions of fragility, any business organization is susceptible to the risk of insolvency due to shifts in market dynamics and customer behavior. In an interconnected world, it is possible that vulnerabilities that were previously limited to specific locations and groups may give way to processes that can cause ripple effects on a global scale. This fragility can affect the security of businesses facing the risk of bankruptcy and transform the way the market behaves. Furthermore, businesses that are constructed on unstable foundations may not evade bankruptcy (Temmen, 2021; Cascio, 2022; Bushuyev et al., 2023; Trieflinger et al., 2023; Think Insights, 2024). *Anxiety* is a psychological state that reflects health-related insecurities, worry, and stress, which are intensified by the risk of contracting the novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19). Anxiety has become a prevalent phenomenon in both personal and professional spheres, persisting as a pervasive symptom in the ongoing flow of life. Anxiety can be defined as the fear of making decisions in such an environment. When managers and leaders feel that they are unable to effect change, this often results in a passive approach to problem-solving. In an environment characterized by anxiety, the potential consequences of any decision can appear to be catastrophic. Ultimately, this can be closely linked to depression and fear (Temmen, 2021; Cascio, 2022; Bushuyev et al., 2023; Trieflinger et al., 2023; Think Insights, 2024). *Non-Linearity* - In a world where cause and effect are not necessarily linear, the relationship between the two can appear to be disconnected. There is a discrepancy between the two. This is due to the influence of other factors (e.g., rapidly changing customer behavior) on the relationship between cause and effect. In other words, the impact of events and variables on a system is unpredictable and non-linear. In a non-linear environment, even a minor decision can have significant and potentially catastrophic consequences. Conversely, a great effort may not yield optimal results. The consequences of any cause can manifest rapidly, or they may take months to emerge. Therefore, it is imperative that no assumptions are made, and that strategic planning is sufficiently flexible to accommodate any challenge (Temmen, 2021; Cascio, 2022; Bushuyev et al., 2023; Trieflinger et al., 2023; Think Insights, 2024). *Incomprehensible* - Incomprehensibility refers to a situation in which individuals are unable to discern the relationship between the causal factors and the consequences of an event. As a consequence of the ongoing process of development and change, individuals are increasingly confronted with occurrences and decisions that appear to be illogical or devoid of meaning. In response to these occurrences, individuals seek to identify explanations for the events that play out in this process. However, the responses provided do not appear to be logical, and the rapid pace of change seems to be leading to a decline in comprehension (Temmen, 2021; Cascio, 2022; Bushuyev et al., 2023; Trieflinger et al., 2023). These characteristics of the BANI world are clearly reflected in the tourism sector. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many travel businesses collapsed rapidly due to sudden travel restrictions and a sharp decline in demand. Today, tourists are often reluctant to plan trips in advance because of ongoing concerns about pandemics, natural disasters, and political instability. Moreover, a single negative review on social media can significantly impact hotel bookings. In addition, tourism businesses frequently struggle to understand sudden shifts in customer preferences or the effects of complex online algorithms on their visibility.

2.2. Leadership in the BANI World

The contemporary era is witnessing a notable increase in volatility, unpredictability, complexity, and instability. The current climate of uncertainty has resulted in elevated levels of anxiety and diminished confidence among individuals and business organizations alike. Concurrently, the accelerated and unpredictable evolution of the business environment has created a discrepancy between the prospective opportunities and the evolving requirements for the competencies of contemporary managers. This is a

significant factor in the effective functioning of modern managers in the BANI environment (Baskoro, 2022; Nataliia & Olena, 2023).

In light of these circumstances, it is of paramount importance for managers to identify the most effective methods for enhancing both professional and staff competencies (Podolchak et al., 2023). Global leaders have analyzed a multitude of complex situations occurring worldwide, encompassing phenomena such as turbulence, dynamism, uncertainty, rapid change, market disruptions, hyper-competition, complexity, high-velocity markets, flux, and more (Chawla, 2023). In particular, the values of security, security culture, leadership, and trust have become indispensable to the BANI world (Bushuyev et al., 2023b). BANI is a valuable new framework for understanding the shortcomings of traditional institutional forms of strategic planning and leadership in the business environment. Such projections are predicated on the assumption that the BANI world will offer greater stability than the current reality or is likely to do so in the future (Mullooly, 2022).

The significance of organizational agility is on the rise, influenced by a multitude of factors, including continuous development, uninterrupted progress, technological advancements, and the ever-increasing demands of the market, both social and economic. The capacity to adapt expeditiously to evolving circumstances can be defined as organizational agility. The degree of organizational agility exhibited by a given business is contingent upon a multitude of factors. The capacity for agility in adapting to change—a factor that drives innovation and development—will determine the success or failure of the organization (Grześ, 2023). One of the internal factors that is of significant importance for the course of agile transformations in organizations and, consequently, for the effectiveness and efficiency of an agile organization is the competencies of leaders and employees (Grześ, 2023).

In order to effectively lead diverse and fragmented organizations, it is essential for leaders to possess the agility to navigate the complexities of an ever-changing world while maintaining a sense of stability and coherence within their organizations (McKenzie & Aitken, 2012). The implementation of agile traits among leaders is a prerequisite for the realization of benefits associated with leadership in an agile organization. In such an environment, the leader is required to respond promptly to changes in the business landscape. Moreover, it is essential for leaders to prioritize the ongoing advancement of their competencies and to conduct periodic evaluations of their proficiency in these areas. Additionally, the capacity for rapid adaptation to new working conditions is essential. It is similarly advisable to share power and involve subordinates in decision-making processes (Rzepka & Bojar, 2020).

In their 2023 study, Nataliia and Olena identified several key characteristics that a manager should possess in a BANI environment. These include creativity and innovative thinking, emotional, social, and cultural intelligence, critical thinking, self-criticism, honesty, and digital competence. In a 2023 study, Grzesiek classified the characteristics that leaders of agile organizations should possess into four distinct categories. The human aspects of leadership, including emotional intelligence, responsibility, respect, and trust, are essential for effective leadership. The strategic aspects of leadership encompass strategy, partnership, global vision, and decision-making. The technological aspects of leadership include proficiency in new media, innovation management, data management, and security. Finally, the operational aspects of leadership involve planning and organization, goal achievement, managing change, and knowledge management.

Grabmeier (2020), Cascio (2023), and Sridharan (2023) offered recommendations for addressing BANI. The suggestions include the implementation of brittle systems, anxiety-inducing systems, nonlinear systems, and incomprehensible systems. Brittle systems require resilience, defined as the capacity of a system, organization, or individual to withstand sudden shocks. System resilience frequently entails the development of resources that serve as a buffer against unforeseen circumstances. In lieu of a fragile state, it is imperative that we adopt a flexible one. It is crucial to recognize that a truly resilient system must be constructed in advance of a crisis (Cascio, 2023). A plan for dealing with a fragile situation can be developed and implemented with the aid of a solid Plan B. Even a well-designed plan should be

accompanied by an alternative plan. One effective method for adapting and fostering growth in the context of fragility is to enhance the capabilities of the team. In order to enhance the resilience of a business, it is recommended to pursue a culture of collaboration, implement well-distributed structures, and allocate resources to training initiatives (Sridharan, 2023).

Anxiety-inducing systems require empathy, which can be defined as the recognition and acceptance of the negative effects of a broken or chaotic system on an individual. In its most fundamental sense, it is the capacity to extend kindness and forgiveness, both to others and to oneself. From the perspective of BANI, empathy can be cultivated by recognizing the existence of algorithmic manipulation and appreciating its capacity to induce stress and chaos, which are universal experiences (Cascio, 2023). In the event of experiencing anxiety, it is essential to seek empathy and mindfulness. The most effective method for managing anxiety is to enhance one's awareness. It is impossible to control that which one cannot perceive. To achieve control, one must first recognize the uncontrollable (Sridharan, 2023).

Nonlinear systems require the capacity for improvisation and the ability to adapt expeditiously to unforeseen changes and developments. In typical circumstances, predetermined options may prove optimal for individuals. However, when circumstances deviate from the norm, persevering with the same approach—or, worse, being compelled to do so—can occasionally result in catastrophic outcomes (Cascio, 2023). If something is non-linear, it necessitates contextualization and adaptability. In a non-linear business environment, inflexible planning can be a burden for organizations. Organizations that do not innovate and rely solely on "proven" methodologies frequently find themselves at a competitive disadvantage and unable to adapt swiftly enough to changes in their operating environment (Sridharan, 2023).

Incomprehensible systems require an intuitive approach that allows us to recognize hidden connections and to discern when something does not feel right, even when everything seems fine. The subconscious mind is capable of drawing conclusions by assembling evidence that is present but not consciously perceived (Cascio, 2023). In the event of incomprehensibility, the necessity for transparency and intuition becomes apparent. In the event of incomprehensibility, the development of intuition is essential for the discovery of the underlying reality before the formulation of decisions (Sridharan, 2023).

At the very least, an initial examination of the components of the acronym may suggest potential avenues for a response (Cascio, 2020).

- Brittleness can be addressed by fostering resilience and flexibility.
- Anxiety can be alleviated by promoting empathy and mindfulness.
- Nonlinearity necessitates contextualization and adaptability.
- Incomprehensibility requires transparency and intuitive understanding.

In a different vein, Kusuma and Sarma (2023) set forth a list of requisite skills for navigating the circumstances of the BANI world: creativity, emotional intelligence, resilience, continuous learning, collaboration, agility, transparency, critical thinking, risk management, empathy, cooperation, and systems thinking. When the literature on the subject is reviewed, it becomes clear that the characteristics of the BANI world are well defined, along with the basic elements businesses may require and the management skills likely to succeed in this environment. However, there appears to be a lack of clarity regarding the specific type of leadership that business managers should adopt in the BANI world.

3. Methodology

The objective of this research is to identify the leadership traits that are essential for success in the BANI context and to determine the leadership style that encompasses these traits. The ethics committee permission document required for the collection of research data was obtained from the Iskenderun Technical University Ethics Committee with decision number 5 and dated 28/03/2024. The research process is comprised of three stages, as outlined below:

In the initial stage of the study, an in-depth examination of the leadership characteristics exhibited by BANI leaders was conducted in order to identify the specific characteristics that define these leaders within the context of BANI. In order to obtain the data, the survey method was utilized. In the search process, "Google Scholar", which is used for extensive scientific literature search, was preferred as a database. This database was chosen because it provides access to a wide range of interdisciplinary resources and contains different types of publications. The keywords "BANI", "BANI World", "BANI+Leadership" and "BANI+Tourism" were taken into consideration in the search process. The data corresponding to the keywords were analyzed through document analysis respectively. During the analysis process, the data were evaluated within the scope of "leadership characteristics". This process was completed when the data started to repeat itself.

The second stage was conducted to evaluate the outcomes of the initial stage and to investigate the potential for disparate leadership characteristics. At this point in the process, the input of academic experts was sought. In order to select the appropriate academics for this stage of the research, certain criteria had to be established (purposive sampling). The fact that the academics have previously conducted scientific studies on leadership, have publications in the "Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies" and "Journal of Leadership Studies" (SSCI Index) journals, which mainly publish on leadership, and diversity. In accordance with the aforementioned criteria, interviews were conducted with academics from a multitude of countries via email. Eleven academics were interviewed between February and April 2024. In the course of the interviews, the participants were asked to respond to two questions that had been approved by the ethics committee. The questions posed during the interviews are presented below. The responses to the questions were collated according to the same codes as in the initial phase.

(1) What are the characteristics of the environment in which businesses operate?

(2) What are the basic characteristics that a leader should have in this environment?

In studies employing interview or observation as the data collection technique, it is recommended that one or two samples (individuals or groups) be sufficient to elaborate on the subject matter (Collins et al., 2006; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Conversely, it is proposed that a minimum of five individuals may be adequate for a sample size in interviews aimed at obtaining fundamental information (Başkale, 2016). In such studies, it is argued that data saturation also plays an important role in the determination of the appropriate sample size (Yağar, 2023). At the stage of obtaining the interview data, a systematic analysis was conducted of the opinions of academic experts. At the point of data saturation, the input of academic opinion was terminated. Accordingly, the sample size of 11 participants is deemed sufficient for the purposes of presenting and elaborating basic information.

In the third stage, the common aspects of the leadership characteristics obtained from the literature and the responses received from academicians were considered alongside the question of which leadership type characteristics these characteristics are best seen to meet. It was observed that the leadership characteristics identified at this stage exhibited significant overlap with the characteristics associated with "agile leadership." To substantiate this observation, the concept of agile leadership was further elucidated, and the leadership characteristics were consolidated according to their shared codes.

Given that multiple data sources were employed in the study, it can be stated that data source triangulation was employed. The term "triangulation" is used to describe the process of comparing the results obtained from two or more data collection techniques (such as document review, interviews, and observations) or two or more data sources (as outlined by Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). The conditions of validity and reliability were met to a significant extent by triangulation through the adoption of different methods in the data collection process and the comparison of research findings. Furthermore, the research process was conducted in a transparent manner, with each step clearly documented and presented in the text. This approach facilitated the identification of results that were consistently corroborated, thereby ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings (Başkale, 2016).

The data obtained from all three stages of the process were subjected to analysis using word clouds. Word clouds represent a robust data visualization technique that enables individuals to readily identify the content of a substantial corpus of textual documents (Kalmukov, 2021). Additionally, word clouds offer a visual representation of the most frequently utilized words within a given context. They provide researchers with a comprehensive overview of the prevailing themes within a text, thereby facilitating the analysis of individual or collective narratives. Consequently, they serve as a tool for depicting the primary themes that emerge from the data (Williams et al., 2013; DePaolo & Wilkinson, 2014).

4. Findings

In the first stage, as a result of the document analysis of the reviewed literature (McKenzie & Aitken, 2012; Cascio, 2020; Rzepka & Bojar, 2020; Grabmeier, 2020; Temmen, 2021; Grześ, 2023; Cascio, 2023; Sridharan, 2023; Kusuma & Sarma, 2023), 75 codes were identified for the basic leadership qualities that should be possessed. The aforementioned codes were subsequently subjected to analysis, the results of which are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Basic leadership characteristics that should be possessed (A review of the literature)

A review of the literature reveals that the majority of studies identify agility as the most fundamental characteristics of the BANI world. The other salient characteristics are "resilience" and "transparency."

In the second stage of the process, the opinions of academic experts were sought. Table 1 provides information regarding the participants who were interviewed. As the participant list encompasses individuals from a multitude of nations, the study's findings reflect a notable diversity of backgrounds representing a variety of countries. It can be stated that the majority of academics are employed in the field of management.

Table 1. Information regarding the Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Country	Department
P1	M	40	Australia	Business Administration
P2	M	44	China	Business management
P3	F	51	USA	Logistic
P4	M	54	United Arab Emirates	School of Business
P5	F	39	China	Faculty of Business Administration
P6	M	53	South Korea	Business Administration
P7	F	41	Portugal	Economics Management
P8	M	--	Germany	School of Management
P9	M	29	Germany	School of Management
P10	M	47	Netherlands	Management Department
P11	F	39	Türkiye	Tourism Management

The resulting word cloud, which was created in alignment with the insights provided by academic experts on the subject of the business environment, is presented in Figure 2. A total of 47 codes were identified. The two most frequently occurring terms are "anxiety" and "brittle." The next most frequently occurring terms are "non-linearity," "complexity," and "far-reaching impact," in that order. The term "multi-faceted" was identified as the least utilized word. In light of these findings, it can be posited that the business

environment in which the enterprises are situated exhibits characteristics akin to those identified in the literature review.

Figure 2. The characteristics of the environment in which businesses operate (Opinions of Academic Experts)

Figure 3 presents the opinions of academicians regarding the fundamental characteristics that a leader should possess in the context of the environmental conditions in which the businesses operate. The results are illustrated with a word cloud. The results indicate that the most fundamental characteristic a leader should possess is agility. Subsequently, adaptability and resilience are identified as the most essential characteristics. The least frequently mentioned key characteristic are strategy, inclusive, creativity, and emotional intelligence. Nevertheless, it is evident that a considerable degree of overlap exists between the two sets of word clouds. The analysis revealed that the term "agility" was the most frequently occurring word in the opinions of academic experts and the findings of the literature review. The second most frequently occurring code is "resilience."

Figure 3. Basic leadership qualities that should be possessed (Opinions of Academic Experts)

A comprehensive literature review and analysis of academic opinions have led to the conclusion that the environment in which the businesses are situated exhibits characteristics associated with the BANI model. Additionally, numerous leadership styles have been identified as conducive to success within these environmental conditions. In order to identify the leadership style that aligns with the emerging leadership characteristics, an extensive review of existing literature was conducted. This included

examining various leadership types, such as transactional and transformational leadership (Bass, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1995), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), visionary leadership (Sashkin, 1988), charismatic leadership (Conger & Kanungo, 1987), and strategic leadership (Pisapia, 2009). The analysis leads to the conclusion that the leadership type that most closely aligns with these characteristics is "agile leadership." In order to elucidate the rationale behind the aggregation of the aforementioned characteristics within the domain of agile leadership, a series of fundamental explanations pertaining to the nature of agile leadership will be presented in the following section.

Agile Leadership

In light of the enduring nature of the VUCA world, coupled with the emergence of the BANI model, it can be posited that agility and the capacity to pursue it are crucial characteristics for organisational survival and success (Grześ, 2023). It is becoming increasingly challenging to make precise predictions about future developments. Two distinct trends are emerging in this context. The pace of change is expected to continue accelerating, while the complexity and interdependence of the systems in question are likely to grow concurrently. For over a decade, organizational change experts have been discussing the necessity for businesses to develop "agile" companies, in light of the aforementioned strong trends. In order for businesses to achieve sustainable success, it is necessary for them to develop a level of organizational agility that is commensurate with the increased rates of change and complexity that are characteristic of their business environments (Joiner & Josephs, 2007).

The advantages of implementing an agile transformation initiative are numerous. They include the establishment of a trusting environment, an openness to innovation and adaptation to change, an increase in technological skills, the creation of empathy and synergy teams, the development of an understanding of cooperation, an increase in the emotional flexibility of employees with the support of the leader, and the development of a proactive understanding. The role of leaders in providing this organizational environment is of paramount importance (Özdemir & Çetin, 2019).

In the current business environment, the ability of leaders to adapt to emerging challenges and seize emerging opportunities will be a key determinant of organizational success (Chen et al., 2022). As organizational agility becomes a more significant factor in business success, organizational managers are increasingly adopting more flexible management processes and exhibiting agile leadership characteristics (Özdemir, 2023). In order to succeed in our volatile, complex, and uncertain world, it appears that we must develop the capacity to adapt and learn. The capacity for agility represents a crucial determinant of adaptability. Learning agility, being agile, and agile leadership can be defined as the capacity to learn, adapt, and apply oneself in ever-changing conditions (Akkaya & Yazıcı, 2020).

In the contemporary business environment, which is characterised by volatility and intense competition, organisations must adopt an agile and innovative approach if they are to succeed in the long term. In order to adapt to the rapid evolution of both internal and external environmental conditions, organizations require leaders who possess both the courage and competence to drive this change (Bayram & Öztırak, 2023; Kaya, 2023). Agile leaders can optimize the efficacy of the transformation processes they oversee by implementing suitable solutions aligned with the technological era and exhibiting adaptive behaviors and attitudes. An agile leader demonstrates a range of abilities, including the capacity for speed, change, flexibility, competence, cooperation, result-orientation, and self-awareness. The individual in question occupies the role of group leader. The emphasis is on teamwork and collaboration. The leader disseminates knowledge to all team members (Akkaya & Yazıcı, 2020). Agile leadership is a type of leadership that is oriented towards anticipating and adapting to change (Ratnawati et al., 2024). Agile leadership is characterized by the capacity to pursue an adaptive, multifaceted approach that is responsive to external and internal dynamics. This approach entails the ability to examine, analyze, and react swiftly to a range of scenarios from broader perspectives (Shaha et al., 2022).

An agile leader may be defined as an individual who is capable of adapting to environmental and technological changes in complex situations through the implementation of intelligent and effective

actions (Horney et al., 2010). Parker et al. (2015) identified several key principles that underpin agile leadership. These are as follows: Agile leaders should possess an intrinsic capacity to adapt to change, a perspective of business as a dynamic, evolving system comprising intelligent individuals, a humanistic approach to problem-solving that recognizes the value and capabilities of stakeholders in team management, the significance of responsiveness to shifting circumstances, and the capacity to anticipate and plan for future change. The hallmarks of agile leadership include the ability to rapidly assess situations, maintain a focused perspective, and adapt flexibly. Additionally, agile leaders consider a wide range of perspectives before making decisions, a quality that contributes to their ability to navigate complex situations effectively. By demonstrating empathy, nurturing, passion, and motivation, they establish an environment that encourages individuals to assume greater responsibilities and strive for more significant achievements. Agile leaders foster a culture of trust and transparency in the workplace, ensuring the timely dissemination of pertinent information among team members (Uddin & Rahman, 2023).

The Agile Leadership Model is a framework that emphasizes swift, adaptive, and responsive decision-making, risk-taking, crisis management, and the development of leadership qualities. The Agile Leader prioritizes strategies for optimizing productivity and fostering teamwork in the context of ongoing change. However, the agile leader is a highly adaptive type of leadership, adept at navigating the complexities of the surrounding environment and societal dynamics. The characteristics of an agile leader can be distilled into six key characteristics, as outlined by Prasongko and Adianto (2019). These include the capacity to remain calm, adaptability, innovation, a willingness to learn from experience and provide feedback, and a readiness to assist others. Agile leadership is a style of leadership that prioritizes customer sensitivity as a driving force for change, establishes flexible structures, guides agile teams, adapts swiftly to environmental conditions, is solution-oriented, enables prompt decision-making, and fosters an open perception of opportunities. It has been argued that this leadership style is shaped by the need to respond to the evolving circumstances of the 21st century. Adaptation to these circumstances is therefore essential (Güler, 2023).

As outlined by the Forbes Coaches Council, the characteristics of an agile leader can be defined as follows: openness, acceptance, and presence; the capacity to collaborate; the ability to adapt to challenging circumstances; active listening; a commitment to continuous learning; resilience; the capacity to navigate frequent disruption; curiosity; a high level of developmental capacity; the ability to create inclusive and empowered teams; the willingness to lead by example; courageous cooperation; adaptability (Forbes, 2020). Özdemir (2023) identifies the fundamental competencies that an agile leader should possess, including the capacity to integrate agility, the ability to develop a strategic plan, the establishment of a culture of empathy and trust, a commitment to organizational empowerment, the motivation of personnel to achieve goals, the fostering of collaboration, and the ability to make prompt decisions. As posited by Geffers et al. (2024), agility in leadership can be classified into five distinct categories: person-based, purpose-based, result-based, position-based, and process-based. Agile leaders are characterized by humility, adaptability, vision, and engagement. The objective of Agile Leadership is to align employees with a clear vision, foster a learning organization, increase transparency, and establish decision-making at the team level. The practice is observed among executives, agile accountabilities, and team members. Agile leaders engage in experimentation, collaboration, facilitation, enabling, and resilience (Geffers et al., 2024).

The necessity for businesses to adapt to a multitude of factors, including ever-changing environmental and business conditions, protracted crisis processes, and shifts in the political landscape, has become a defining characteristic of the contemporary business environment. In order to adapt to these factors in business, to ensure their continuity and sustainability, and to gain a competitive advantage, it is essential that businesses possess the capacity for agility. Agile leaders are the individuals who facilitate the development of agility within business organizations. It is therefore crucial for managers to adopt an agile

leadership approach in order to facilitate the adaptation of businesses to the aforementioned factors (Akkaya et al., 2020).

In light of the findings from the aforementioned studies elucidating the characteristics of agile leadership, a set of shared codes was identified that pertain to the aforementioned characteristics. The codes were subjected to analysis using a word cloud, resulting in the generation of a visual representation (Figure 4). As illustrated in the figure, the most pivotal agile leadership characteristics are agility, adaptability, empathy, transparency, and resilience.

Figure 4. The Essential Characteristics of Agile Leadership

The fundamental leadership characteristics that managers should possess in the BANI context are illustrated in Figure 2, which presents the findings of studies in the literature, in Figure 3, which presents the opinions of academic experts, and in Figure 4, which presents the essential characteristics of agile leadership. The three word clouds are presented together in the figure below (Figure 5). Upon analysis of the figure, it becomes evident that the codes within the word clouds, which represent leadership characteristics, exhibit notable similarities. In light of these findings, it can be concluded that both the results of the studies in the literature and the opinions of the academics indicate that the effective leadership style for the BANI world is agile leadership.
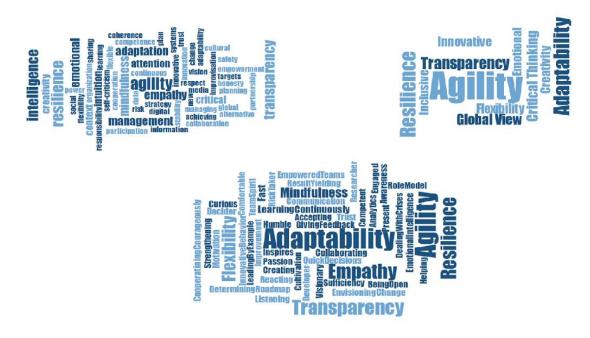

Figure 5. The results of all word clouds

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The objective of this research was to identify the leadership characteristics required for tourism managers in the BANI sector and to determine the leadership style that these characteristics would imply. In alignment with the stated objective, a comprehensive literature review and interviews with leading academic experts were conducted. The data were subjected to word cloud analysis. The research yielded insights into the role of the leader in an organization within the BANI context, delineating the leadership style that can be effective within this framework. Upon examination of the results of studies attempting to elucidate the characteristics of the business environment, it has been determined that these environments exhibit BANI characteristics. Additionally, the same outcome was reached through interviews with expert academics to elucidate the environmental characteristics. A review of the literature on basic management skills for effectiveness in the BANI world reveals a consensus on the importance of agility. The research findings indicate that one of the leadership styles that tourism managers can adopt to be successful in the BANI world is agile leadership.

Theoretical Contribution

One of the most significant theoretical contributions of the research is the provision of a theoretical framework for the BANI world, which has been relatively understudied. Another significant contribution is the revelation of a particular leadership style that can prove effective in such an environment. The research findings indicate that the primary leadership quality that can be effective in the BANI context is agility. Subsequently, resilience, transparency, and adaptability were identified as the most crucial characteristics for managerial effectiveness. In the context of an increasingly interconnected business environment, organizations must navigate a landscape of uncertainty and evolving demands in order to remain competitive. This necessitates the establishment of a processual foundation for expedient communication and collaboration. Those in leadership roles who develop comprehensive agile capabilities throughout the organization, prioritizing agile practices designed to manage change, can effectively master such transformations (Fasnacht & Proba, 2024). According to Grześ (2023), businesses aiming to succeed in an environment akin to BANI should prioritize agility. Similarly, Rzepka and Bojar (2020) posit that developing agile capability among leaders can yield significant outcomes.

In particular, the cultivation of agile leaders who are capable of navigating complexity can facilitate the emergence of agile organizations that are better equipped to survive, flourish, and innovate in a turbulent world (McKenzie & Aitken, 2012). In the context of a volatile environment, resilience emerges as a pivotal factor in navigating challenges (Kusuma & Sarma, 2023). It is imperative that resilience be reinforced within the BANI framework. It is imperative that we cultivate the capacity to rebound expeditiously from adversity and to adapt effectively to alterations in our environment. The development of internal strength is not solely concerned with physical resilience; it also encompasses mental resilience and emotional resilience (Tan, 2023). The effective management of information flow and transparency appears to be an effective solution to ambiguous environments (Tekin Özden, 2023). The implementation of a culture of collaboration can facilitate enhanced communication and transparency between individuals, teams, departments, and branches (Sridharan, 2023). In order to achieve success in a competitive environment, businesses must ensure that their goals, plans, and strategies are aligned. Adaptability is a critical factor for success in a BANI environment (Kusuma & Sarma, 2023). In order to enhance adaptability and flexibility, it is essential to cultivate a culture of continuous improvement. This is achieved through the dynamic allocation of resources and the implementation of sustainable feedback mechanisms for the assessment of sustainability indicators in an ever-changing environment (Salun & Zaslavska, 2024).

Practical Contribution

The findings of this study offer significant insights for tourism managers seeking to thrive in challenging environments, including those characterised by Brittle, Anxiety, Non-Linearity, and Incomprehensible conditions. First and foremost, there is a need for leaders who can devise a roadmap that will enable employees to reach the targeted result in a faster and more efficient manner in situations of instability and

unpredictability that will be brought about by the rapid changes in the tourism industry (Bir & Koç, 2022). Boateng and Olexová (2023) posited that the distinctive attributes and capabilities of agile leaders can facilitate expedient responses, thereby enabling effective management of the rapid changes occurring in the external environment. Similarly, Horney et al. (2010) asserted that business managers should possess agile leadership qualities in an environment of change and instability that is incomprehensible. It is therefore important for businesses to invest in the development of agile leadership skills amongst their managers, in order to facilitate rapid adaptation to environmental conditions and ensure managerial willingness to develop these skills (Güler, 2023). The capacity of tourism managers to guarantee sustainable competition in the BANI world or to successfully attain their strategic management objectives may be contingent upon their capacity to comprehend and analyze these environmental characteristics effectively. However, it is imperative for tourism managers to recognize that the crux of success in the BANI world does not reside in conventional forms of leadership. Success in this environment can only be achieved through the adoption of agile leadership behaviors.

Limitations and Future Research

The objective of this research is to identify the leadership style that can be effective in BANI conditions. The findings indicate that the agile leadership style is a potentially effective approach in this context. Further research could be conducted on alternative leadership styles that may prove effective in the BANI context. For example, transformational, quantum and adaptive leadership that can be effective in the BANI world can be examined on the effects of distribution on adaptation to change. In this way, it is possible to reveal the unique advantages of management strategies and BANI conditions more clearly. As the concept of agile leadership is explored theoretically in this research, future studies could concentrate on the ways in which this style of leadership can be developed and implemented in managers. Concurrently, the data in this study were obtained exclusively through interviews and a literature review, with the objective of acquiring comprehensive information. To extend the boundaries of this research, future studies could employ a range of data collection methods. Moreover, the interview process was conducted with academics who met specific criteria (i.e., those who had previously conducted scientific studies on leadership in the field of tourism, published in SSCI journals related to leadership, and demonstrated diversity). Subsequent studies may be conducted with academics exhibiting disparate characteristics. Furthermore, the perspectives of tourism managers could be incorporated into the study. Ultimately, this study concentrates on the leadership style that is most effective in a BANI context. Subsequent research could investigate alternative management strategies that can guarantee the success of businesses in this environment.

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