



## **RESILIENCE CAPACITY AND FAMILY CONTRIBUTION IN THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS**

**Wakid Evendi, Rafadi Khan Khayru, Sarwo Waskito**

Universitas Sunan Giri Surabaya

correspondence: dr.wakidevendi@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

This literature study examines the psychological resilience of job seekers facing recurrent rejection and the role of family support as an external reinforcing factor. The analysis elaborates cognitive mechanisms of reappraisal and affective mechanisms of emotion regulation that enable individuals to maintain psychological well-being and motivation amidst adversity. Drawing on multidisciplinary resilience literature, the study conceptualizes resilience not as a static trait but as a dynamic capacity that interacts with available social resources. Family support functions as a psychosocial buffer when characterized by unconditional acceptance, respect for autonomy, and open communication. The synergy between internal resilience and external family support allows job seekers not merely to survive setbacks but to transform difficult experiences into opportunities for growth. This solution-focused perspective shifts attention from structural barriers to modifiable psychological and social strengths. The findings provide theoretical foundations for designing interventions that strengthen job seekers' cognitive-behavioral skills and for educating families on empowering support patterns. Future empirical research is recommended to test the proposed propositions through longitudinal and comparative approaches.

**Keywords:** resilience, job seeking, family support, rejection, psychological well-being, emotion regulation, social support

## Introduction

Job hunting is a critical phase in an individual's life trajectory, a transition period laden with both hope and uncertainty. In the contemporary era, this process is no longer merely about connecting individual qualifications with available vacancies. It has evolved into a long and winding journey that demands perseverance and strong mental stamina. This aligns with research showing that factors such as age, work experience, and individual backgrounds often significantly influence how long a person must struggle before securing employment (Khayru et al., 2022). Individuals entering the job market are faced with a series of increasingly complex and competitive selection procedures, ranging from administrative screening, psychological and technical ability tests, to multi-layered interviews. Therefore, the mastery of clear competency standards is vital for every job seeker to align their perception with company needs and enhance their future performance (Irfan et al., 2015). Each of these stages has the potential to become a source of pressure, especially when the expected results remain elusive. This condition is exacerbated by the reality that the number of applicants often far exceeds the number of available positions, creating an intensely competitive atmosphere.

In such a fierce competitive situation, the experience of rejection becomes an almost unavoidable consequence. Unanswered application letters, delayed test invitations, or news of rejection after a long and arduous process are bitter realities that job seekers must face. The accumulation of these failures can trigger various negative psychological responses, such as deep disappointment, frustration, and feelings of worthlessness. This mental pressure often becomes a major challenge, where individuals must strive to maintain a balance between personal life and career demands to prevent their mental health from being compromised (Hariani et al., 2020). This pressure does not only stem from within but is also reinforced by social expectations, both from friends and family, who frequently question an individual's status and success in obtaining work. Repeated failure can erode self-confidence, trigger doubts about personal competence, and ultimately manifest as anxiety that hinders further progress.

Amidst these pressures, fundamental questions arise regarding what factors differentiate individuals who are able to persevere and

continue the struggle from those who eventually give up and face stagnation. Responses to these difficulties vary greatly. Some individuals may sink into despair, isolate themselves, and halt their job-seeking efforts. Others, despite experiencing similar failures, are able to bounce back, reflect on their shortcomings, and continue their efforts with renewed spirit. The ability to endure is usually influenced by an individual's personality profile, where positive psychological characteristics are proven to be the main capital in supporting performance and toughness when facing work challenges (Darmawan, 2017). The ability to recover from pressure, adapt to difficulties, and remain positively functional amidst adversity is known as resilience or psychological elasticity. Resilience is the key that allows a person to navigate the storm of rejection and uncertainty without losing their direction.

The resilience of a job seeker is not built in a vacuum. It is the result of a complex interaction between internal individual strengths such as optimism, emotional regulation, and cognitive flexibility and the external resources available in their environment. Among these external resources, social support, especially from the smallest unit, the family, plays a very crucial role. Furthermore, positive support from the professional environment, such as colleagues, also plays a significant role in improving a person's mental well-being in the workplace (Rojak & Darmawan, 2016). Family can function as a safeguard that dampens the psychological impact of failure. Conversely, without appropriate support, the family can become an additional source of pressure that exacerbates the job seeker's mental condition. This depends heavily on how cultural values within the family can be aligned with the professional and evolving work behavior demands of today (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2017). The dynamics of support provided, whether it is positive and empowering or negative and pressuring, will greatly determine how an individual perceives their job-seeking experience.

Therefore, deeply understanding how resilience works and how family support can be optimized has become a necessity. Focusing on solution-oriented aspects emphasizing the individual's mental strength and the positive potential of their immediate social environment offers a different perspective. Instead of merely describing the problems of unemployment or the difficulties of job hunting, it is important to explore

the internal and external mechanisms that enable an individual not only to survive but also to remain productive and optimistic throughout the long process of seeking employment. After all, the quality of resilient human resources is a valuable investment that will have a direct impact on employee loyalty and productivity within a company (Darmawan et al., 2020). This study attempts to theoretically examine the role of resilience as a primary psychological asset and the contribution of family support as a social foundation that strengthens the fighting spirit of job seekers amidst intense competition.

The prolonged job-seeking process, often filled with rejection, frequently triggers a series of significant psychological problems. Individuals who fail repeatedly in selection processes may experience an erosion of their self-concept. Confidence in their competence and self-worth slowly erodes, replaced by feelings of inadequacy and imposter syndrome the persistent feeling that they are not as qualified as they truly are. Anxiety about an uncertain future becomes a constant cognitive burden, hindering concentration and lowering the motivation to apply for new jobs. The impact extends to the physiological realm, such as sleep and eating disorders, which further weaken the energy and vitality needed to undergo exhausting selection processes. On the other hand, every work group needs to manage conflict effectively so that existing dynamics remain supportive rather than becoming an additional trigger for stress (Jahroni et al., 2015). At an extreme point, this unmanaged pressure can lead to symptoms of clinical depression, where individuals lose interest in daily activities, including the effort to search for work, and withdraw from the very social interactions they desperately need.

Beyond individual internal problems, family dynamics often become a source of issues that are no less complex. Instead of being a safe haven, families often unconsciously add to the psychological burden of the job seeker. The pressure to secure employment quickly frequently accompanied by interventions such as the forced pursuit of specific jobs deemed "prestigious" or "safe" by parents can create internal friction. When a child's interests and talents do not align with parental expectations, inner conflict arises. The child is faced with the difficult choice between following their own aspirations or fulfilling family expectations to maintain financial and moral support. This situation is

exacerbated when parents or other family members express disappointment, resentment, or even reproach regarding the child's "failure" to obtain work. Such unhealthy communication isolates the job seeker, making them reluctant to share their struggles and reinforcing the feeling that they are fighting alone.

The modern job market is characterized by high volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Industrial revolutions, automation, and shifts in the global economic structure have fundamentally altered the employment landscape. Traditional jobs are beginning to erode, while new professions emerge with different competency demands. To answer these global challenges, companies consistently strive to innovate their human resource management to increase competitiveness amidst fierce rivalry (Abdullah et al., 2021). This condition creates a gap between the qualifications held by job seekers especially new graduates and industry requirements. Consequently, implementing the right leadership strategies within organizations becomes crucial for managing change and maximizing team performance (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2022). The process of adapting to these new demands requires time and effort, meaning the transition period between graduation and securing one's first job tends to lengthen. It is during this extended transition that an individual's mental health is tested. The inability to immediately integrate into the workforce not only impacts economic conditions but also has the potential to create "psychological wounds" that can affect an individual's productivity and well-being in the long term. Therefore, equipping individuals with the ability to sustain themselves mentally is just as important as equipping them with technical skills.

The family as a primary social unit continues to undergo functional transformations. Amidst the weakening of community ties and broader social networks, the family often becomes the sole primary support system for individuals experiencing difficulties. Furthermore, the application of good knowledge management and a quality of work life have been proven capable of increasing an individual's commitment to achieving their professional goals (Eddine et al., 2023). However, not all families possess the readiness and capacity to perform this supportive function optimally. Many parents still rely on outdated paradigms when viewing career success,

resulting in their responses to a child's job-seeking difficulties often being judgmental and pressuring. Failure to perform this support function can backfire, damaging family relationships and exacerbating the mental condition of the already vulnerable individual. Studying effective and empowering family support patterns is highly relevant. Such understanding can serve as a basis for educational efforts to improve mental health literacy at the family level, transforming the role of the family from mere spectators or sources of pressure into true partners who strengthen the fighting spirit of their members.

This study aims to conduct a comprehensive theoretical review of the role of resilience and family support in the job search process. Specifically, this research is directed toward analyzing internal mechanisms, such as emotional regulation and optimism, that enable individuals to bounce back after experiencing failure in job selections. Furthermore, this study also aims to identify and elaborate on the forms of family support that are effective in strengthening the psychological resilience of job seekers. The theoretical contribution of this research is to enrich the body of knowledge, particularly in industrial psychology and family psychology, by providing a conceptual synthesis of the interaction between internal factors (resilience) and external factors (family support) in the context of job searching. As for its practical contribution, it provides a fundamental basis for career counselors, psychologists, and families in developing a more supportive and empowering approach to accompanying individuals struggling in the job market.

## Method

This research is designed as a literature study with a qualitative approach, a systematic method for identifying, analyzing, and synthesizing literature relevant to a specific topic. As explained by Arshed and Danson (2015), a literature review is not merely a summary of articles, but rather a critical analysis that evaluates and connects various scientific works to build a complete understanding of a phenomenon. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to delve deeply into theoretical constructs such as resilience and family support without the need for primary data collection in the field. By examining various bibliographic sources, this study aims to build a coherent conceptual argument regarding how these

two factors interact in strengthening the fighting spirit of job seekers. This process involves critical reading, the identification of major themes, and the synthesis of findings from diverse theoretical perspectives previously developed by experts.

The data sources in this research are derived entirely from academic literature, including textbooks, scientific journal articles, and relevant conference proceedings. The literature search process was conducted by utilizing prominent electronic databases, using keywords related to resilience, job searching, social support, and family dynamics. In this context, Stratton's (2019) guidelines on literature review methods emphasize the importance of transparency in the source selection process so that the resulting study is academically accountable. Inclusion criteria were applied to ensure that the analyzed literature has direct relevance to the research questions and originates from credible sources. Selected literature was then grouped by theme to facilitate the analysis process. This approach ensures that the theoretical foundation built is not only broad but also relevant and deep, in accordance with the basic principles of research methodology put forward by Chapman, McNeill, and McNeill (2005).

Data analysis in this literature study uses the thematic synthesis method, in which the researcher identifies patterns, themes, and relationships between concepts emerging from the reviewed literature. This process is iterative, meaning the researcher moves back and forth between reading, categorizing, and interpreting data to build an increasingly sharp understanding. Patel and Patel (2019) explain that in qualitative research, the researcher themselves is the key instrument who is active in constructing meaning from the available data. Therefore, the validity of the findings depends heavily on the thoroughness and depth of the analysis performed. The interpretation of academic texts is conducted carefully to capture the nuances of the original authors' thoughts. As emphasized in various methodological literatures, including the work of Crowther and Lancaster (2012), this approach demands that the researcher be able to position themselves critically toward the reading material, not merely accepting it at face value, but questioning the underlying assumptions of an argument. The final result of this process is

a structured synthesis capable of answering the previously established problem formulations.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Psychological Resilience of Job Seekers: Cognitive and Affective Mechanisms in Facing Rejection**

Resilience has become one of the most crucial psychological competencies in navigating the dynamics of a work world fraught with uncertainty. In the context of job seeking, resilience is not merely the ability to endure; it is a dynamic capacity that enables an individual to function adaptively when faced with repeated adversity (Burrows, 2022). Kuntz (2020) asserts that resilience should be understood as a capacity that can be developed and strengthened through interaction with the environment, rather than as a static personality trait. This understanding is highly relevant for job seekers experiencing a series of rejections, as it positions them as active agents capable of learning and growing from every negative experience. When an applicant fails a document screening or an interview, the initial response may be disappointment, but resilient individuals are able to shift their focus from the bitterness of failure toward learning for future improvement. This process involves a series of cognitive mechanisms that allow for a reevaluation of difficult situations, whereby the negative meaning of rejection is transformed into valuable information regarding areas that require enhancement. Thus, resilience becomes the primary foundation for job seekers to continue developing amidst repeated pressure.

Understanding cognitive processes is essential to observe how resilience works internally. The cognitive mechanism underlying the resilience of job seekers operates through what experts term "reappraisal" of a situation. When a job application is rejected, individuals tend to automatically activate negative thought schemas that link the failure to their permanent personal shortcomings. Thoughts such as "I am truly incapable" or "no company will ever hire me" are examples of cognitive distortions that, if left unchecked, will lead to learned helplessness. Resilient individuals possess the ability to catch these automatic thoughts and perform cognitive interventions. They begin to challenge the evidence supporting such negative beliefs and search for more realistic alternative

explanations, such as a lack of fit with company culture or the high level of competition for that specific position. This cognitive process does not happen instantaneously; rather, it requires practice and self-awareness that must be continuously honed throughout the job-seeking journey (Bunting, 2022). This demonstrates that changing one's way of thinking becomes the key to maintaining mental stamina during the job-hunting process.

Beyond the cognitive aspect, the emotional dimension plays an equally important role in shaping resilience. The affective aspect, or emotional regulation, is fundamental in building psychological elasticity (Kay & Merlo, 2020). Job rejection triggers strong emotional reactions, ranging from sadness and anger to deep-seated shame. Lu and colleagues (2022), in their study on navigating unemployment, found that job seekers engage in what is termed "emotional labor" in their efforts to remain resilient. They consciously manage their expression of emotions, both in the presence of others and toward themselves, to maintain an image of being competent and optimistic. This emotional management is exhausting, but it serves as a critical strategy to prevent negative emotions from dominating all aspects of life. Resilient job seekers do not attempt to suppress or ignore negative emotions; instead, they provide space for these emotions to be felt and processed, then gradually shift their focus toward concrete steps that can be taken. They understand that negative emotions are a natural response to difficult situations and that these emotions will pass if they are not continuously nurtured. Consequently, the ability to manage emotions becomes an essential component of an individual's resilience in facing rejection.

Optimism is a psychological element that maintains the sustainability of efforts amidst failure. Optimism, as an affective-cognitive component of resilience, functions as fuel that keeps motivation burning in the face of consecutive failures. Optimistic individuals have a tendency to expect positive outcomes in the future, even when their past experiences indicate otherwise. It is important to distinguish between naive optimism that ignores reality and realistic optimism that acknowledges difficulties while remaining confident in the possibility of improvement. Job seekers with realistic optimism are able to say to themselves, "I know the job market is difficult and I have failed several times, but I also know that I have valuable skills and will continue to look

for suitable opportunities." This belief allows them to keep sending applications, attending interviews, and participating in competency-enhancement training without being overcome by the fear of subsequent rejection. Optimism becomes a lens that colors the interpretation of experiences, so that failure is viewed as temporary and specific, rather than permanent and encompassing (Knight, 2023). Therefore, realistic optimism functions as a primary driver to keep moving forward.

Empirical approaches provide a clear picture of how resilience functions in daily life. A study conducted by John Albert and his team (2024) on workers impacted by layoffs during the pandemic provides a real picture of how resilience works in crisis situations. The researchers found that workers who were able to survive and recover from economic shocks did not only rely on internal strength, but also actively reconstructed the meaning of their job loss experience. They began to view their unemployment period as an opportunity to re-evaluate career paths, consider new industries, or even develop skills that had previously been neglected. This meaning reconstruction process is a high-level cognitive mechanism that allows individuals to not only return to their original state, but to reach a better state than before (Brown et al., 2019). These findings underscore that resilience is not about returning to the baseline, but about jumping forward, a concept that is then reinforced by the thinking on bouncing forward. This shows that crisis experiences can be the starting point for a better transformation.

The theoretical concept of resilience continues to evolve along with the changing dynamics of modern life. The concept of "bouncing forward" introduced by Hynes and his colleagues (2020) provides a more progressive perspective in understanding resilience. Unlike the traditional view that sees resilience as the ability to return to the state before a crisis, bouncing forward emphasizes that a crisis can be a catalyst for positive transformation. In the context of job seeking, individuals who experience rejection do not only try to get a job similar to the previous one, but may actually find a new calling that is more in line with their values and interests. This process involves deep learning from difficult experiences, identification of systemic weaknesses in the job search approach that has been used, as well as the development of new, more effective strategies (Wanberg et al., 2020). Thus, every failure is not the end of the journey,

but a turning point that opens up new possibilities that were previously invisible. Resilience is not only restorative but also transformational.

The psychological impact of job rejection also touches on aspects of individual identity. The experience of repeated rejection in job searching has the potential to trigger what is called a professional identity crisis (Jaremka et al., 2020). Individuals who have spent years preparing themselves through education and training are suddenly faced with the reality that the identity they have built is not recognized by the job market. This shock to identity can be very painful, because a profession is often an integral part of a person's self-concept. Resilience in this situation demands identity flexibility, which is the ability to separate self-worth as a human being from status as a worker. Resilient individuals are able to say, "I may not be working right now, but my value as a human being has not diminished in the slightest." They are able to maintain a stable core identity while remaining open to exploring new possibilities in the professional realm. This flexibility allows them to consider work outside their field of study or industries that were previously unthought of, without feeling that they have betrayed their identity. This confirms that identity flexibility will be an important part of individual resilience.

Beyond individual factors, social relationships also play an important role in shaping resilience. The social dimension of resilience is often overlooked when we focus too much on individual aspects. In fact, the ability to remain connected to others amidst pressure is an important manifestation of resilience. Job seekers who experience repeated rejection have a natural tendency to withdraw from social interactions, both because of shame and because they want to avoid uncomfortable questions about their employment status (Peterie et al., 2019). This isolation behavior actually worsens psychological conditions by eliminating access to much-needed social support. Resilient individuals do the opposite; they consciously maintain social networks, both with fellow job seekers and with those who are already employed. These interactions provide opportunities to share experiences, obtain job information, and receive emotional validation that what they are experiencing is a natural part of a difficult process. Social support becomes a vital source of external strength.

The ability to adapt is a key characteristic of individuals who are able to survive in difficult situations. Muzykina, Aljanova, and Yousafzai

(2024), in their study on female migrant entrepreneurs surviving amidst turbulence, provide valuable lessons on how flexibility and adaptation are keys to resilience. These entrepreneurs did not have the option to quit when a crisis hit because their survival and that of their families depended on the ability to keep moving. They demonstrated what is called agility, which is the ability to respond to environmental changes quickly and appropriately. Job seekers can take a lesson from this experience by adopting the same mentality. When old job-seeking strategies do not yield results, resilient individuals do not hesitate to change their approach. Perhaps they need to update their resumes with more attractive formats, learn new skills that are in demand by the market, or expand their networks into different industries. This ability to adapt shows that resilience is not about surviving in the same way, but about developing in different ways (Niemiec, 2020). Therefore, flexibility becomes an important element in facing dynamic changes.

The balance between effort and choice is an important factor in maintaining the sustainability of resilience. The long job-seeking process often causes acute physical and mental exhaustion. This exhaustion is different from ordinary fatigue because it is accompanied by feelings of futility and the loss of meaning in the efforts made. Resilient individuals have a sharp awareness of their internal state and are able to recognize early signs of exhaustion before reaching a critical point. They then take restorative steps, such as taking a break from job hunting, engaging in enjoyable activities, or simply giving themselves time to rest without feeling guilty. The ability to recognize one's limits and stop for a moment is not a sign of weakness, but a smart strategy to maintain the sustainability of efforts in the long term (Sewchurran et al., 2019). Just like a marathon runner who regulates their breathing in the middle of a race, resilient job seekers understand that forcing themselves continuously will only lead to total failure. Thus, maintaining balance becomes the key to surviving in the long term.

Effective self-management can be an important strategy in dealing with uncertainty. Self-regulation in the context of job seeking includes the ability to set realistic goals and monitor progress periodically (Dillahunt et al., 2021). Resilient individuals do not set targets that are too high, nor too low. They understand that the job market has complex dynamics and many

factors beyond personal control that influence the final outcome. Therefore, they focus their energy on aspects they can control, such as the quality of applications, interview preparation, and competency development. When these small targets are met, even if they do not yet lead to obtaining a job, they continue to celebrate them as a form of progress. Recognition of these small achievements is very important to maintain psychological momentum amidst a long journey filled with uncertainty. Every application sent, every interview undergone, and every new skill mastered is proof that they are continuing to move forward. This shows that small consistencies can produce a large impact in the long term. A global crisis provides a real context that tests individual resilience to the extreme. The COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the world since early 2020 has been a major test for the resilience of job seekers worldwide. Lockdowns, social restrictions, and economic contraction caused unemployment rates to jump drastically and job competition to become increasingly fierce (Tesso, 2020). In extreme situations like this, individual resilience is tested to its maximum limit. Kuntz (2020), in his analysis of resilience during the pandemic, emphasized that organizations and society have a responsibility to create an environment that supports the development of resilience, rather than just demanding that individuals survive on their own. The pandemic taught that resilience is not just a personal matter, but a collective phenomenon that requires structural support. Job seekers who were able to survive during this time were those who did not just rely on internal strength, but also actively utilized various available external resources, such as online training programs, virtual support communities, and government assistance. Thus, resilience is also influenced by adequate environmental support.

Self-discipline is an important foundation for maintaining productivity during times of uncertainty. The ability to maintain a productive routine amidst uncertainty is another trait of resilient individuals. When there is no external structure forcing them to wake up early and be active, job seekers must create their own structure. Resilient individuals are able to discipline themselves to continue undergoing daily routines that support productivity, even though there is no boss watching or an urgent deadline (David, 2024). They allocate specific time to look for vacancies, improve resumes, attend training, and network. This routine is

not only useful instrumentally, but also provides a sense of order and predictability amidst a highly uncertain situation. When the world outside feels chaotic and unfriendly, the ability to create order on a micro-scale becomes a very valuable source of psychological stability. Therefore, routine becomes an important tool for maintaining mental stability.

Ultimately, resilience has an existential dimension related to an individual's meaning in life. Resilience in job seeking is about the courage to continue to be present and try even though all evidence seems to indicate that the effort is futile. This is an existential courage that stems from the belief that every human being has a dignity that does not depend on their employment status. Resilient individuals are able to separate failure to obtain a job from failure as a person (Illous, 2020). They continue to step forward not because they are naive about the difficulties, but because they understand that the job search process itself, with all the learning and growth that accompanies it, already has its own value. Every rejection is an invitation to reflect on oneself, every obstacle is an opportunity to find a new path, and every day spent continuing to try is a victory over despair. This is the essence of true resilience. Thus, resilience is not just about surviving but about how to determine meaning in every process undergone.

### **Building Personal Resilience: Resilience as a Psychological Support in the Job Search**

To understand this concept comprehensively, it is important to view it from various complementary perspectives. Resilience as a concept has long been a concern in various disciplines, ranging from developmental psychology to disaster management. Zolli and Healy (2013), in their comprehensive work on resilience, explain that the ability to recover from shocks is found not only in individuals but also in systems, communities, and organizations. This cross-disciplinary understanding is important because it opens the insight that the resilience of job seekers can be strengthened through interventions at various levels (Borg et al., 2022). An individual struggling to find work does not rely solely on personal mental strength but is also embedded in larger systems, such as labor policies, macroeconomic conditions, and social norms regarding success. When the surrounding system is supportive, the psychological burden that must be

borne becomes lighter. Conversely, when the system creates obstacles, even individuals with high resilience can reach their limits. Therefore, understanding resilience in its entirety requires us to look at the interaction between individual and structural factors simultaneously. Thus, resilience is understood as the result of a complex interaction between the individual and their environment.

A critical perspective is needed so that the discussion of resilience does not remain simplistic. Harrison (2013), in his study on resilience during recessions, criticizes the tendency of neoliberal discourse that overly emphasizes individual responsibility to bounce back, without considering the structural limitations they face. In the context of job seeking, the pressure to always be "positive" and "productive" can be an additional, unfair burden. When the job market is contracting and job vacancies are very limited, even the best efforts may not yield results (Mackay et al., 2024). Demanding that individuals remain resilient in such situations, without acknowledging the structural realities that hinder them, is equivalent to blaming the victim for their misfortune. This critical perspective is important to ensure that the discussion of resilience does not fall into the trap of victim-blaming. Resilience is indeed important, but it must be understood as a capacity that interacts with external opportunities and obstacles, not as a magical solution that can overcome all forms of structural injustice. A fairer approach must consider the balance between individual and structural factors.

A cross-disciplinary approach provides a richer understanding of the concept of resilience. The approach to resilience that has developed in disaster management literature offers a valuable perspective on how systems respond to shocks. McEntire (2021), in his work on disaster response and recovery, emphasizes the importance of anticipatory readiness and adaptive capacity in facing shocks. Resilient communities are those that not only react after a disaster occurs but also proactively build physical and social infrastructure capable of cushioning the impact of shocks (Colker, 2019). This analogy is relevant for job seekers, where the "disaster" in question is repeated rejection or a long period of unemployment. Resilient individuals are those who have built psychological and social "infrastructure" before the storm arrives. They possess emotional savings in the form of past experiences in overcoming

difficulties, a solid support network, and trained self-regulation skills. When rejection comes, this infrastructure prevents them from collapsing completely. Thus, readiness before facing a crisis becomes an important factor in building resilience.

An anticipatory approach is key to facing future uncertainty. Linnenluecke, Griffiths, and Winn (2012) bring the discussion of resilience into the organizational realm when facing extreme weather events. They argue that companies capable of surviving environmental shocks are those that develop anticipatory and adaptive capacities long before a crisis occurs. These capacities include the ability to scan the environment, detect early signals of change, and respond quickly before impacts worsen. Job seekers can adopt a similar mindset by actively monitoring job market trends, identifying growing industries, and anticipating what skills will be needed in the future (Grip, 2023). Instead of waiting until they lose their job or experience repeated rejection, they proactively prepare themselves by learning new skills, expanding their networks, and exploring various career options. This anticipatory approach prevents them from being easily shaken when changes occur, as they have already prepared for various possibilities. Therefore, readiness in facing change becomes an important part of a more sustainable strategy.

Social inequality becomes an important factor in shaping individual resilience capacity. A study on vulnerability and responses to disasters in coastal communities in Bangladesh by Alam and Collins (2010) provides a clear picture of how socio-economic factors shape a community's capacity to survive. They found that poor and marginalized groups have higher vulnerability to cyclone impacts, not because they do not try hard enough, but because their access to resources and information is very limited. This finding reminds us that in the context of job seeking, not all individuals start from the same position. Those who come from disadvantaged educational backgrounds, limited professional networks, or financial constraints face much larger obstacles than those who possess privilege. Resilience in this situation is not just a matter of mental strength, but also about how individuals navigate structural limitations and utilize even the smallest available opportunities (Ungar, 2019). Ignoring this dimension of inequality means producing a biased understanding of resilience. Thus, conditions become the most significant factor in resilience.

Collective experience is often a valuable source of learning. Porio (2011), in her research on riverside communities in Metro Manila that are vulnerable to flooding and climate change, introduces the concept of adaptation as a complex social process. She found that communities do not passively accept the impacts of disasters but actively develop creative strategies to survive, even though their resources are very limited. They build houses on stilts, store valuable items in high places, and develop early warning systems based on local wisdom. These innovations are born from repeated experience in facing disasters and from strong community solidarity. Job seekers experiencing repeated rejection can also learn from this pattern. They begin to develop their own version of "local wisdom," such as reading the signs in the selection process, understanding patterns of interview questions, or knowing which companies truly value employees. This knowledge accumulates from experience and is shared within networks of fellow job seekers, creating a form of "cultural capital" that increases the chances of future success (Olliff et al., 2022). Thus, collective experience and learning become a source of significant strength.

Flexible thinking ability is the core of cognitive resilience. The concept of cognitive resilience introduced by Dewald and Bowen (2010) in the context of responses to disruptive innovation offers an interesting perspective on how individuals and organizations process information that threatens the status quo. They argue that cognitive resilience involves the ability to interpret threats as opportunities, to remain clear-headed amidst uncertainty, and to maintain mental flexibility when faced with information that contradicts held beliefs. Job seekers require this type of cognitive resilience when they receive negative feedback from selection processes. Instead of being defensive or blaming others, they are able to process that information objectively, take valuable lessons, and adjust their strategies. They are also able to maintain the belief that they will eventually find suitable employment, even if temporary evidence seems to suggest otherwise. This cognitive resilience allows them to continue learning and growing from every experience, rather than simply repeating the same strategy and hoping for a different result (Dolcos et al., 2021). Thus, flexibility of thought becomes an important foundation in facing uncertainty.

Transformation has become an essential aspect in the development of the modern resilience concept. A comprehensive literature review by Linnenluecke (2017) on resilience in business and management research identifies several key themes emerging in this field. One important finding is the shift in focus from resilience as a capacity to endure toward resilience as a capacity for transformation. Resilient organizations are not only capable of surviving shocks but are also able to use those shocks as momentum to change for the better. They conduct in-depth evaluations of their existing business models, identify weaknesses that have previously been overlooked, and build new structures that are stronger and more adaptive. Job seekers who experience repeated failure can do the same by auditing their job-seeking approach (Bashug & Sharone, 2024). Perhaps they have been too focused on specific types of jobs that are currently sluggish, or perhaps the way they present themselves in applications and interviews needs fundamental improvement. Difficult times are precisely the opportunity to make fundamental changes that might not occur if everything were going smoothly. Therefore, failure can be a starting point for a better transformation.

The dimension of time provides an important perspective in understanding individual resilience. Resilience also possesses a temporal dimension that is often overlooked. The ability to endure in the short term may differ from the ability to thrive in the long term. A job seeker experiencing their first rejection may still possess high energy and optimism. However, after the tenth or twentieth rejection, psychological resources begin to dwindle, and exhaustion starts to set in. Long-term resilience demands wise energy management, the ability to recover between job-seeking efforts, and strategies to maintain meaning and purpose amidst a long, grueling journey. Individuals who are able to survive in the long term are those who do not just focus on the end goal but also find satisfaction in the process itself. They enjoy learning new skills, appreciate the connections built during networking, and celebrate small achievements along the way (Akkas, 2023). In other words, they transform a difficult journey into a meaningful experience. Thus, long-term resilience requires different strategies compared to short-term resilience.

The balance between physical and mental conditions is an important foundation for resilience. The physical dimension of resilience also deserves attention. The body and mind are an inseparable unit, and physical exhaustion will have a direct impact on cognitive and emotional abilities. Job seekers who spend hours in front of a computer screen, sending application after application, often neglect basic needs such as adequate sleep, good nutrition, and physical activity. In fact, research in health psychology shows that prime physical condition is the foundation for optimal psychological function. Resilient individuals understand the importance of caring for the body as part of their survival strategy. They ensure they remain physically active, maintain a healthy diet, and allow sufficient time for rest amidst the busyness of job hunting (Holms, 2019). This self-care is not a form of luxury or a waste of time, but a long-term investment in maintaining the sustainability of their efforts. A healthy body provides the energy needed to keep moving, while a clear mind allows for better decision-making. Therefore, maintaining physical health is an integral part of a resilience strategy.

Social relationships play a vital role in strengthening an individual's endurance. The ability to ask for help is also a component of resilience that is often misunderstood as a weakness. In cultures that highly value independence, admitting that we need others is often seen as a sign of incompetence. In reality, resilient individuals possess the courage to acknowledge their limitations and seek assistance when necessary. This aligns with social exchange theory, where an individual's psychological well-being is strongly influenced by the quality of social interactions and the reciprocal relationships they build with their surrounding environment (Darmawan & Gani, 2024). They understand that resilience is not about surviving alone, but about knowing when and from whom to seek support. This help can come in various forms, such as friends willing to listen to grievances, mentors providing career guidance, or mental health professionals helping to process difficult emotions. This support network becomes a safety net that catches individuals when they fall, preventing a slip from becoming a total collapse. The ability to build and maintain this support network is a social skill just as important as technical skills in job hunting (Eisenman et al., 2020). Thus, social support is an essential element in maintaining resilience.

Realistic expectations serve as a pillar in the importance of the long job-seeking journey. A prolonged search for employment also tests an individual's ability to maintain hope without becoming naive (Cooper & Khun, 2020). Hope is the fuel that keeps the engine of motivation running, but unrealistic expectations can lead to deeper disappointment when they are inevitably unmet. Resilient individuals develop what is known as "managed hope" a belief that the future can be better, accompanied by a realistic understanding of the challenges at hand. They do not close their eyes to difficulties, but neither do they let these difficulties extinguish the fire within. This balance is achieved through a continuous process of reflection, where they honestly evaluate progress and acknowledge failures while maintaining a commitment to keep moving forward. Managed hope is more stable and enduring than the naive optimism that easily shatters when faced with harsh reality. Therefore, maintaining a balance between hope and reality becomes an essential strategy in sustaining motivation.

Deep reflection can open new understandings regarding the meaning of life. At a certain point, a long job-seeking journey can lead to existential questions about the meaning of work in life (Smith et al., 2024). Why do I desire a specific job so much? Is work truly that important to my happiness? What am I actually looking for in this life? Resilient individuals do not run from these questions; instead, they face them with courage. They use difficult times as an opportunity to reflect on their core values and true life priorities. Perhaps they discover that happiness does not depend solely on a job, but also on relationships with loved ones, personal development, or contributions to society. In the modern work environment, the balance between life and work, along with perceived organizational support, strongly determines an employee's overall psychological well-being (Darmawan, 2022). This discovery can free them from the excessive pressure to secure a specific job, opening up space to explore other options that may be more aligned with the values they hold. Thus, difficult times can be a starting point for a deeper search for meaning.

Human values serve as the primary foundation for facing systemic pressure. Resilience in job seeking is ultimately about the courage to remain whole as a human being amidst a system that often reduces us to

mere numbers and qualifications (Schwartz, 2021). When the job market treats individuals as commodities judged by skills and experience, resilience reminds us that human value far exceeds what is listed on a resume. Resilient individuals are able to maintain a sense of self-worth that does not depend on external recognition. This relates to how organizations place innovative human resource management as a key to increasing competitiveness in a globalization era that demands organizational effectiveness (Abdullah et al., 2021). They know that rejection from a company is not a rejection of them as people, but a business decision influenced by many factors. This understanding frees them from the trap of external validation and allows them to keep moving with their heads held high. Therefore, maintaining self-esteem becomes the key to surviving amidst external pressure.

A comprehensive understanding is required to view resilience in its entirety. Understanding resilience as a whole demands that we acknowledge its complexity and multidimensionality. It is not an innate trait that one either possesses or lacks, but a capacity that can be developed through experience, reflection, and appropriate support. In line with organizational development, resilience can be viewed as part of the six major factors that increase organizational effectiveness in the long term (Darmawan, 2024). It is not only an individual matter, but also a product of the broader social, economic, and cultural environment. In the context of employee commitment, effective knowledge management and a good quality of work life are proven to be the foundations that strengthen individual attachment to organizational goals (Eddine et al., 2023). With this rich understanding, we can approach the phenomenon of job seeking with a more humane perspective, acknowledging the struggles of job seekers while honoring the strength and creativity they demonstrate every day in facing the never-ending storm of rejection (Aitsi-Selmi, 2002). Thus, a holistic approach will be the key to understanding and developing resilience.

## Conclusion

This literature study has theoretically elaborated on the role of resilience as a psychological capacity that enables job seekers to persist and remain productive amidst an accumulation of rejections. Resilience operates

through cognitive mechanisms in the form of reappraising failure experiences and affective mechanisms in the form of managing negative emotions and maintaining realistic optimism. This ability does not stand alone but is significantly strengthened by family support, which functions as a social foundation that buffers the psychological impact of repeated failures. Effective family support is characterized by unconditional acceptance, respect for individual autonomy, and open and supportive communication. The interaction between the internal strength of resilience and the external resources from the family creates a synergy that enables job seekers not only to survive but also to transform difficult experiences into momentum for growth. Thus, a solution-oriented approach focusing on mental strength and social support proves relevant in understanding the psychological dynamics of job seekers amidst the intense competition of the contemporary labor market.

The findings of this study have theoretical implications for the development of resilience studies in industrial psychology, particularly in enriching the understanding of the interaction between internal and external factors in the context of job searching. Practically, the results of this analysis can serve as a foundation for designing intervention programs aimed at strengthening the resilience capacity of job seekers through cognitive-behavioral skills training and emotional management. For career counselors and psychologists, the understanding of effective family support dynamics can be integrated into counseling approaches that involve the family as a supportive partner. Educational and training institutions can also utilize these insights to equip job seekers not only with technical skills but also with the mental readiness to face rejection and the ability to build a healthy support network.

Future research is suggested to conduct empirical studies to test the theoretical propositions formulated in this review. A longitudinal approach could be used to track the dynamics of job seekers' resilience over time, identifying critical factors that influence changes in resilient capacity. Comparative studies between groups of job seekers with different socio-economic backgrounds are also important to understand how structural inequalities moderate the effectiveness of resilience and family support. For policymakers, the results of this study can serve as a basis for designing psychosocial support programs for job seekers that are

integrated with public employment services. Families, as the primary support unit, need to be educated on communication and support patterns that are empowering rather than pressuring, so they can perform their supportive functions optimally.

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