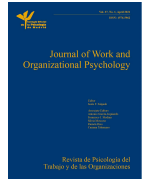




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## Emotional Intelligence, Mental Health, and Job Search Behaviors during Unemployment: The Mediating Role of Resilient Coping

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### ABSTRACT

The scientific literature has shown interest in identifying psychological strengths that predict mental health and job search behaviors in the unemployed population. Emotional intelligence (EI) and resilience are key psychological resources, although there is a lack of understanding of underlying mechanisms involved during unemployment. In this study we aimed to examine whether resilient coping serves as a mediator between EI and depressive symptoms, happiness, and job search behaviors in unemployed. To prove whether resilient coping mediates this link, we recruited 401 unemployed through LinkedIn and asked them to complete self-report questionnaires. Correlational results showed significant relationships in the expected way. The results of the mediation analyses showed that resilient coping mediated the link between EI and job search behaviors, happiness, and depressive symptoms. The findings suggest that career counseling units should incorporate EI and resilience modules into their employability programs to promote the mental health and employability of the unemployed.

### La inteligencia emocional, la salud mental y la búsqueda de empleo en desempleados: el papel mediador del afrontamiento resiliente

### RESUMEN

La literatura científica ha mostrado interés por identificar los recursos psicológicos que predicen la salud mental y los comportamientos de búsqueda de empleo en la población desempleada. La inteligencia emocional (IE) y la resiliencia son recursos psicológicos fundamentales, aunque existe una falta de comprensión de los mecanismos subyacentes en el desempleo. El objetivo del estudio ha sido examinar si el afrontamiento resiliente sirve como mediador entre la IE y los síntomas depresivos, la felicidad y la búsqueda de empleo en desempleados. Para probar si el afrontamiento resiliente media en este vínculo, reclutamos a 401 desempleados a través de LinkedIn y les pedimos que cumplimentaran cuestionarios de autoinforme. Las correlaciones indican relaciones significativas en la dirección esperada. Los resultados de los análisis de mediación mostraron que el afrontamiento resiliente mediaba el vínculo entre la IE y las conductas de búsqueda de empleo, la felicidad y los síntomas depresivos. Los resultados indican que las unidades de orientación profesional deberían incorporar módulos de IE y resiliencia en sus programas de empleabilidad para potenciar la salud mental y la empleabilidad de los desempleados.

Unemployment in Spain has recently turned into one of the country's most important social problems. The unemployment rate is one of the highest in Europe; in the last quarter of 2021, the rate was 13.33, a number that remained stable in 2022, at 12.48 (INE, 2022). In addition, the impact of unemployment is significantly associated with higher stress levels and worsened mental health (Paul & Moser, 2009). In particular, unemployment has been associated with depression, low self-esteem (Tiggemann & Winefield, 1984), and low life satisfaction (Kassenboehmer & Haisken-DeNew, 2009; Lucas et al., 2004). Moreover, most studies have found that unemployed

people generally are unhappier than their employed counterparts (Daly & Wilson, 2009). One of the best predictors of reemployment is active job search behaviors. Active searching and the intensity with which it is performed predict the speed of reinsertion into the labor market (Kanfer et al., 2001; Wanberg et al., 2002).

Understanding the personal factors that foster job search behaviors and employment success is a significant challenge in research (van Hooft et al., 2021). In addition, identifying the key factors that protect people from the adverse effects caused by job loss and knowing the underlying mechanisms involved in the

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coping process represent one of the challenges of psychosocial research (Extremera & Rey, 2016; Paul & Moser, 2009).

### Emotional Intelligence

Researchers have attempted to identify the risk and protective factors of the negative psychological consequences of unemployment, underlying the importance of emotion skills during unemployment (Wanberg, 2012). Emotional intelligence (EI) may be one of the potential dimensions with significant impact on ability to successfully cope with particularly stressful and tough times such as unemployment (Hodzic et al., 2015). Although different approaches exist, from an ability perspective, EI is defined as the ability to perceive and appraise emotions, to access and generate emotions to enhance thought, to understand both emotions and emotional knowledge, and to regulate emotions that favor emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). The literature has focused on the role of emotional skills as predictors of affective strategies that enable people to cope with stress and thus improve psychological well-being (Van Heck & Den Oudsten, 2008) and their predictive role in health outcomes (Keefer et al., 2009; Woolery & Salovey, 2004). In regard to unemployment, EI has been found to be associated with lower depressive symptoms, higher psychological well-being, and greater levels of employability (Berrios et al., 2016; Extremera & Rey, 2016; Hodzic et al., 2015; Knopp, 2016; Peláez-Fernández et al., 2019, 2020).

### Resilience

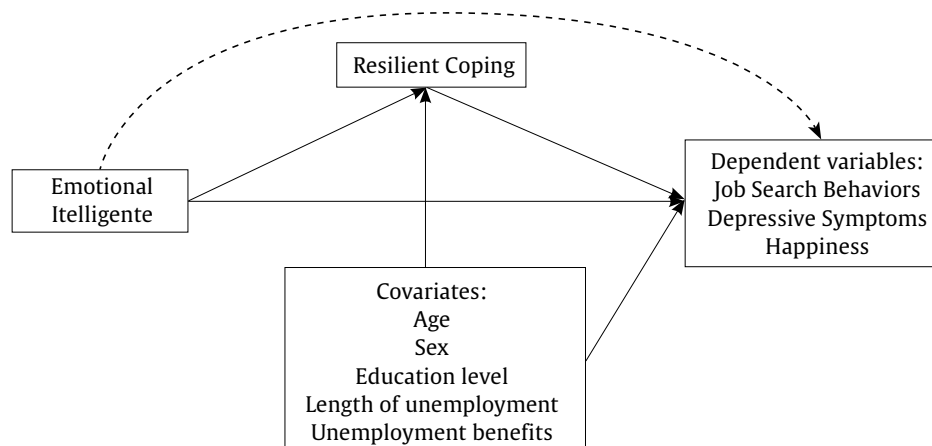
Another protective factor that has gained importance in recent years is resilience. Resilience has been typically defined as reduced vulnerability to environmental risk experiences, the overcoming of a stress or adversity, or a relatively good outcome despite risk experiences (Rutter, 2012). Unemployment is considered as a stressful context that leads to repeated failures in the job active search. A resilient attitude in the face of unemployment allows people to maintain an active search regardless of how long the job search lasts (Moorhouse & Caltabiano, 2007). Moreover, some studies have found that resilient people are less likely to develop depressive symptoms (Moorhouse & Caltabiano, 2007). Similarly, research has also documented that unemployed people with high levels of resilience report a healthier coping style over time (Sojo & Guarino, 2011), suggesting its protective role in long-term unemployment.

### Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Resilience

Both EI and resilient coping are key resources for managing stressful situations and associated negative emotions. People with higher levels of EI cope more effectively with stressful situations (Salovey et al., 1999). In adverse circumstances, emotionally intelligent people can cope with, or even recover from, them using more appropriate resilient coping strategies (Earvolino-Ramírez, 2007). Although the link between dimensions is key for managing stressful situations, most studies have examined only the direct relationships between EI and resilience. However, resilient strategies may be a key in the relationship between EI and mental health (Zeidner et al., 2012).

Some prior studies have found that individuals with higher levels of emotional competence are more prone to develop resilient coping strategies in stressful situations when they come up (Salovey et al., 1999; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2002, 2004; Zeidner et al., 2006). These findings support the notion that whereas emotional abilities are related to mental health, other variables more related to resilient coping may play an important role in this link. It is plausible that certain emotional abilities might lead people to develop more resilient coping strategies, and this development might account, to some degree, for their levels of psychological adjustment and positive outcomes. Furthermore, there are some reasons to consider a mediational approach to examine the impact of EI on positive outcomes through resilient coping among the unemployed (Chan, 2006; Peláez-Fernández et al., 2021). First, EI has been reported to be linked to adaptive resilient coping (Armstrong et al., 2011; Jayalakshmi & Magdalin, 2015). Second, resilient strategies have shown to be negatively correlated to negative indicators of mental health and positively linked to positive indicators of mental health (Hu et al., 2015). So, these findings are in line with the necessary criteria of resilient coping to be considered a potential mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Third, there is growing body of literature to support that emotionally intelligent people experience higher levels of better mental health and well-being outcomes (Sánchez-Álvarez et al., 2016).

On the basis of this review of the literature, a mediation model might be considered in which resilient coping strategies are an underlying mechanism linking EI and job search behaviors or mental health. As seen in Figure 1, the ability to perceive, facilitate, understand, and manage one's emotions may guide people's behavior to handle stressful situations in a more resilient way (Zeidner et al., 2012). In addition, resilient coping might



**Figure 1.** Path Diagram of the Direct and Indirect Relations of the Model. Direct Relations Are Shown in Continuous Lines and Indirect in Discontinuous Lines.

facilitate feelings of positive affect and engagement in job search activities that may foster employability and reduce negative moods attention over the unemployment situation (Chan, 2006; Peláez-Fernández et al., 2021). Also, in the proposed model the covariates were included to provide stringent test on the possible underlying mechanism of resilient coping. Consistent with previous research, age and sex differences have been identified as key factors during unemployment (Bartelink et al., 2020; Strandh et al., 2013), as well as unemployment rates vary considerably according to the educational level of unemployed (Christensen et al., 2006). Additionally, length of unemployment and the received unemployment benefits have been associated with differences in mental health and job search behaviors (Janlert et al., 2015; Wanberg et al., 2020) Therefore, these variables were included as covariates to control for potential confounding effects in the mediation model.

The purpose of the present study was twofold: (a) to examine the relationship among EI, resilient coping, job search behaviors, happiness, and depressive symptoms and (b) to analyze the potential role of resilient coping as a mediator in the relationship among EI, depressive symptoms, job search behaviors, and happiness after controlling for the confounding effect of age, sex, education level, length of unemployment, and unemployment benefits. Overall, considering prior research on the significant association among EI, resilience, and dependent variables, we stated the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): EI is positively related to resilient coping, and both are positively related to job search behaviors and happiness and negatively to depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Resilient coping mediates the relation between EI and job search behaviors, such that EI positively predicts resilient coping and resilient coping positively predicts job search behaviors.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Resilient coping mediates the relation between EI and depressive symptoms, such that EI positively predicts resilient coping and resilient coping negatively predicts depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Resilient coping mediates the relation between EI and happiness, such that EI positively predicts resilient coping and resilient coping positively predicts happiness.

## Method

### Participants and Procedure

The sample comprised 401 Spanish unemployed individuals (67.7% women, 32.4% men), whose ages ranged from 21 to 62 years ( $M = 37.43$ ,  $SD = 10.88$ ). Their education level was as follows: 3.5% had primary studies, 9.2% had first-degree studies, 22.9% had second-degree studies, 15.0% had medium university studies, 24.7% had higher university studies, and 24.7% had postgraduate studies. The length of time they had been unemployed ranged from 1 to 216 months ( $M = 16.04$ ,  $SD = 22.25$ ), and 64.6% did not receive unemployment benefits.

The sample was recruited between 2021 and 2022. Participants were recruited with a professional profile through the LinkedIn social network. We sent an online questionnaire to those who showed their profile as unemployed or with the hashtag #opentowork. Therefore, inclusion criteria were being unemployed and actively looking for a job at the time of the survey. Unemployed people who connected with the profile and voluntarily agreed to answer the questionnaire were asked to share it within their network of unemployed LinkedIn contacts. This snowball methodology expanded the questionnaire to a more significant number of unemployed participants.

## Instruments

### Emotional Intelligence

We used the Spanish version of Wong and Law's Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong & Law, 2002) to measure self-reported EI. This scale contains 16 items ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*). We calculated a global EI score where higher scores indicate a greater EI. The WLEIS has shown high levels of reliability and validity in Spanish samples (Extremera et al., 2019). In this study, the reliability coefficient was .97.

### Resilience

We used the Spanish version of The Brief Resilient Coping Scale (BRCS, Sinclair & Wallston, 2004) to measure resilient strategies. The BRCS is composed of four items ranging from 1 (*does not describe me at all*) to 5 (*describes me very well*) designed to capture adaptive strategies for coping with stress. We calculated the global resilience score by adding the four items for which high scores denote a flexible, optimistic, creative, determined coping style that includes a tendency to reframe losses into challenges that can be overcome. The BRCS has shown high reliability in the Spanish population (Limonero et al., 2014). In this study, the reliability was .79.

### Job Search Behaviors

We measured job search behaviors with two subscales, one composed of 12 items referring to preparation and active job search behaviors and a four-item scale referring to job search efforts (Blau, 1993). The first subscale asks about the frequency of the respondent's behaviors in the past 6 months. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale on which 1 = *never* (0 times), 2 = *rarely* (1 or 2 times), 3 = *occasionally* (3 to 5 times), 4 = *frequently* (6 to 9 times), and 5 = *very frequently* (at least 10 times). The second subscale asks about agreement or disagreement with the items during the past 6 months; again, items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). We translated the items into Spanish, and some adaptations were included due to unemployment use of new tools and resources of employability; for example, "Listed yourself as a job applicant in a newspaper, journal or professional association" was changed into "I listed myself as a job applicant in job search platforms (e.g., Infojobs, LinkedIn, etc.)." An overall index is calculated from the two subscales of the questionnaire. The job search questionnaire has shown high reliability (Blau, 1993, 1994; Saks & Ashforth, 1999). The reliability of this Spanish adaptation was .93.

### Depressive Symptoms

Depressive symptoms were measured with the Depression subscale from the DASS-21 scale (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). This subscale is composed of 7 items ranging from 0 (*it did not happen to me*) to 3 (*it happened to me a lot or most of the time*). The Spanish version of the questionnaire (Bados et al., 2005) has shown satisfactory reliability and validity. In this study, the reliability was .93.

### Happiness

We measured happiness with the Spanish version of the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS; Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). The SHS is a 4 item Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 7. The SHS has shown high internal consistency and high convergent and

**Table 1.** Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of the Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Emotional Intelligence	5.03	1.31									
2. Resilient Coping	3.85	0.70	.575**								
3. Job Search Behaviors	3.92	0.87	.175**	.270**							
4. Depressive Symptoms	1.13	0.86	-.281**	-.308**	-.002						
5. Happiness	4.76	1.38	.363**	.530**	.136**	-.623**					
6. Age	37.43	10.88	.084	.079	.087	-.178**	.152**				
7. Education Level	5.22	1.45	-.025	.004	-.109*	.008	-.119*	-.299**			
8. Length of Unemployment	16.04	22.25	-.075	-.104*	-.147**	.023	-.088	.183**	-.084		
9. Sex			.049	.083	.103*	.057	.066	-.092	-.067	-.024	
10. Unemployment Benefits			.118*	.098*	.091	-.149**	.190**	.431**	-.153**	-.199**	-.100*

\* $p < .05$  (bilateral), \*\* $p < .05$  (bilateral).

discriminant validity (Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2014). In this study, the reliability was .86.

**Analysis Plan**

The data were analyzed in the IBM SPSS 20 package program. First, descriptive analyses were conducted to examine sociodemographic variables. Then, descriptive analyses and correlations were performed between all variables. Subsequently, we used the PROCESS macro, version 3.5 (Hayes, 2018) to analyze the mediational model proposed in Figure 1. In every model, EI was the independent variable; resilient coping was the mediating variable, and sex, age, education level, length of unemployment, and unemployment benefit were the covariates. Sex and unemployment benefit were recoded as dummy variables (dummies): males = 0 and females = 1, having benefits = 1 and 0 = not having them. This scheme was repeated for all the dependent variables: job search behaviors, depressive symptoms, and happiness. Therefore, three simple mediated regression analyses were made following Model 4 of the PROCESS 3.5. macro for SPSS.

**Results**

**Descriptive Analysis**

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations of examined variables. As expected, EI was significantly and positively correlated to resilient coping. Thus, EI and resilient coping were significantly positively associated with job search

behaviors and subjective happiness and significantly negatively associated with depressive symptoms.

**Mediation Analysis**

Three simple mediations analysis were carried out independently to test the hypotheses proposed for resilient coping as a mediator, including age, sex, education level, length of unemployment, and unemployment benefits as covariates. Table 2 shows the regression results. First, EI had a significant effect on resilient coping, while none of the covariates were significant. In general, EI explained 35.9% of the variance,  $F(6, 384) = 35.793 p < .001$ .

For job search behaviors, a regression analysis showed that the total effect of EI on this outcome was significant ( $B = .104, SE = .034, p < .05, 95\% CI [.038, .171]$ ), but the inclusion of resilient coping dissipated the direct effect ( $B = .013, SE = .041, p > .05, 95\% CI [-.068, .093]$ ). These results provide evidence that resilient coping might be a full mediator between EI and job search behaviors, as indicated by the indirect effect ( $B = .092, SE = .026, p < .05, 95\% CI [.044, .146]$ ). Only one covariable, length of unemployment, was significantly and negatively associated to job search behaviors, though this effect was almost null ( $B = -.006, p < .05$ ). Together, the simple mediator model was significant, accounting for 11.3% of the variance in job search behaviors,  $F(7, 383) = 6.956 p < .001$ .

In regard to depressive symptoms, the regression analysis showed that the total effect of EI on this outcome was also significant ( $B = -.184, SE = .033, p < .05, 95\% CI [-.248, -.120]$ ), and the direct effect was still significant when resilient coping was included as a mediator ( $B = -.103, SE = .039, p < .05, 95\% CI [-.181, -.026]$ ). The indirect effect showed significance ( $B = -.081, SE = .025, p < .05, 95\% CI [-.129,$

**Table 2.** Coefficients of the Mediation Analysis

	Resilient Coping				Job Search Behaviors				Depressive Symptoms				Happiness			
	B	SE	LLCI	ULCI	B	SE	LLCI	ULCI	B	SE	LLCI	ULCI	B	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Direct EI effect	.316*	.023	.272	.361	.013	.041	-.068	.093	-.103*	.039	-.181	-.026	.093	.056	-.018	.203
Indirect EI effect	----	----	----	----	.092*	.026	.044	.146	-.081*	.025	-.129	-.030	.288*	.042	.207	.374
Resilient Coping	----	----	----	----	.290*	.075	.142	.438	-.256*	.072	-.398	-.114	.910*	.103	.707	1.114
Sex	.084	.062	-.039	.206	.157	.092	-.024	.338	.110	.089	-.065	.284	.107	.127	-.142	.356
Age	.004	.003	-.003	.010	.006	.005	-.003	.015	-.011*	.005	-.020	-.002	.007	.006	-.006	.019
Education level	.010	.021	-.031	.052	-.058	.031	-.119	.003	-.015	.030	-.074	.044	-.088*	.043	-.172	-.005
Length of unemployment	-.002	.001	-.005	.000	-.006*	.002	-.010	-.002	.000	.002	-.004	.004	-.002	.003	-.008	.003
Unemployment benefits	.000	.070	-.138	.138	-.002	.103	-.206	.201	-.091	.099	-.287	.105	.284*	.142	.004	.563
	$R^2 = .359$				$R^2 = .113$				$R^2 = .144$				$R^2 = .322$			
	$F(6, 384) = 35.793, p < .001$				$F(7, 383) = 6.956, p < .001$				$F(7, 383) = 9.178, p < .001$				$F(7, 383) = 26.044, p < .001$			

Note. LLCI = lower 95% confidence interval; ULCI = upper 95% confidence interval; SE = standard error. Job search behaviors, depressive symptoms, and happiness as dependent variables; emotional intelligence as the independent variable; resilient coping as mediating variable; and sex, age, education level, length of unemployment and unemployment benefits as covariates.

\* $p < .05$ .

-.030]), suggesting that resilient coping partially mediates the effect of EI on depressive symptoms. In this model, age was significantly and positively associated with depressive symptoms. Together, the simple mediator model was significant, accounting for 14.4% of the variance in depressive symptoms,  $F(7, 383) = 9.178$   $p < .001$ .

For happiness, the regression analysis showed again that the total effect of EI on this outcome was significant ( $B = .380$ ,  $SE = .050$ ,  $p < .05$ , 95% CI [.282, .479]), but the inclusion of resilient coping as a mediator dissipated the direct effect ( $B = .093$ ,  $SE = .056$ ,  $p > .05$ , 95% CI [-.018, .203]). This suggests that resilient coping is a full mediator of EI and happiness, as indicated by the indirect effect ( $B = .288$ ,  $SE = .042$ ,  $p < .05$ , 95% CI [.207, .374]). Only education level and unemployment benefits showed a significant effect. Together, the simple mediator model was significant, accounting for 32.2% of the variance in happiness,  $F(7, 383) = 26.044$ ,  $p < .001$ .

In general, our results suggest that EI levels in unemployed people were positively linked to resilient strategies, which may lead them to experience high levels of job search behaviors and subjective happiness and lower levels of depressive symptomatology.

## Discussion

In the present study, we examined whether resilient coping mediated the relationship between EI and two indicators of mental health (depressive symptoms and happiness) and job search behaviors (a behavioral indicator) in a sample of Spanish unemployed participants.

First, the correlational results showed that unemployed participants with higher EI reported higher levels of resilient coping. Both emotionally intelligent and resilient unemployed participants reported more job search behaviors. These findings are in line with previous research, which has found that developing these skills might foster coping with different types of stressors during the job search (Kotsou et al., 2011; Nelis et al., 2011). Also, unemployed reporting higher levels of EI and resilient coping showed less depressive symptomatology and higher subjective happiness. Similarly, these findings are supported by prior research reporting that EI levels and resilient coping are linked positively with well-being and negatively with a range of psychological maladjustment outcomes (Armstrong et al., 2011; Peláez-Fernández et al., 2019, 2020). In sum, these findings support the first hypothesis ( $H1$ ) and shed light on both the linkage between EI and coping strategies variables and its associated correlates of well-being among unemployed adults.

The mediation analysis results indicated that resilient coping mediated the link between EI and job search behaviors, happiness, and depressive symptoms. Job search behaviors seem to be associated indirectly by resilient coping. In line with past research, emotional skills and resilient coping appear to be individual resources that significantly explain job search behaviors (Nieto-Flores et al., 2015). It is important to note the relevance of these findings as they suggest proximal factors associated with active and intense job search behaviors (Kanfer et al., 2001; Vinokur & Schul, 2002). EI was found to be directly and indirectly associated to depressive symptoms through resilient coping. Likewise, unemployed people who report more resilient coping strategies might cope more effectively with adverse and negative symptoms associated with the stressful experience of unemployment. Previous research is also in line with our results, indicating that EI and resilient coping generally protect people from the adverse effects of unemployment (Armstrong et al., 2011; Moorhouse & Caltabiano, 2007; Peláez-Fernández et al., 2021). In regard to happiness, the results also showed an indirect mediation effect on resilient coping in the link between EI and subjective happiness levels. Again, the findings suggest the importance of developing emotional skills and resilient coping to increase well-being (Ramos-Díaz et al., 2019). The evidence corroborated in the

three proposed models of this study narrows the gap of potential underlying mechanisms associated with EI and mental health and job search behaviors. As these results suggest, unemployed with higher EI typically use more resilient strategies to cope in the aftermath of job loss, thus increasing their levels of well-being and active search behaviors. In addition to this, the findings remained constant across the three models even when other variables associated with unemployment came into play. So, our findings support the last three hypotheses ( $H2$ ,  $H3$ , and  $H4$ ) and provides support for the assumption that EI is a protective resource for psychological adjustment in unemployed people both directly and through the mediating role of coping strategies.

The above results provide novel and preliminary evidence of promising underlying mechanisms to be used for intervention programs. In past research, adaptive coping with stressful situations was associated as a possible underlying mechanism of EI (Zeidner et al., 2012). These findings contributed to the present study to support this hypothesis of how resilient coping might be an underlying mechanism of EI. In summary, EI may be a key factor in establishing how unemployed people cope with stressful situations and may guide the future design of job counselor interventions. In this way, our findings also have practical implications for training and counseling programs of unemployed adults. Low EI and a lack of resilient coping may be markers of vulnerability to psychological and behavioral maladjustment outcomes which, if assessed after job loss, could identify the individuals most likely to benefit from early intervention programs that target emotional skills and resilient strategies (Kinman & Grant, 2010; Y. Liu et al., 2012, 2013). In this sense, there are programs that encourage job search and prevent the adverse psychological effects of unemployment (S. Liu et al., 2014) and psychological intervention programs that incorporate EI (Hodzic et al., 2015). However, the findings shed light on the need to design intervention programs that foster resilient strategies to cope more adaptively with the stressful experience of unemployment. The development of both emotional resources and resilient coping can contribute to preventing depressive symptomatology, increasing employability due to persistence in job searching, and improving the person's overall happiness.

There are some limitations to be addressed in the present study. First, the nature of the study was cross-sectional; therefore, causal inferences remain impossible to determine. Longitudinal studies are required to examine the temporal nature of the relationship between both personal resources and psychological and behavioral unemployment consequences. Second, the sample was obtained through an online platform (LinkedIn), and so further research is required to compare our results with those gained from participants assessed with paper-and-pencil questionnaires in unemployment offices to strengthen the generalizability of the results. Nevertheless, given the pandemic and post-pandemic context in which this research was conducted, this online self-administered survey appeared as the most feasible and safe for sample collection. Third, our study used only self-reported data, which depend on participants' perceptions and thus may lead to reporting biases, such as those related to common method variance and social desirability. Finally, given that adverse psychological effects of unemployment are likely to be determined by the interplay of demographic, psychological, social, and cultural factors, it would be important for researchers to consider the role of other aspects in developing a more complete understanding of the impact of unemployment on people's well-being. Further research should include other potential underlying mechanisms in the linkage between EI and personal well-being (e.g., social support or self-esteem).

Despite these limitations, we found some novel evidence that greater EI is associated with both higher psychological well-being and active search job behaviors, and its influence on resilient coping process may be one mechanism of action by which it increases

well-being and job search efforts. Although preliminary, our findings suggest the need to integrate into employability programs modules that promote emotional skills and resilient strategies to foster psychological adjustment and a more effective job search.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors of this article declare no conflict of interest.

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