

**Keep Moving Forward and Strive for Excellence:  
A Sequential Mediation Model on Grit, Psychological Capital, Job Search Behaviors, and  
the Quality of Reemployment**

by

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## Abstract

The primary purpose of the study is to develop and examine a theoretical framework encompassing grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors to gain deeper insights into their impact on the quality of reemployment outcomes. The purpose is achieved by collecting data through an online survey targeting individuals currently employed who have experienced termination, layoff, furlough, or business loss across different regions and industries in the United States. Covariance-based structural equation modeling, implemented using SPSS 29 and SmartPLS 4, is utilized to examine the proposed relationships. The principles of conservation of resource theory and self-determination theory guide this investigation. It is discovered that grit demonstrates a notable positive effect on psychological capital. Moreover, grit positively influences the quality of reemployment outcomes, particularly when the relationship is mediated by psychological capital. Furthermore, the level of individuals' psychological capital significantly influences their job search behaviors and the quality of reemployment. In addition, the present investigation unveils a sequential mediating effect, elucidating the importance of newly developed psychological capital and job search behaviors. These elements intricately connect the concept of determination with the quality of relationships formed during reemployment, thus adding to a thorough comprehension of the underlying dynamics. This research contributes to the existing literature by introducing a novel theoretical framework explaining how job seekers' perceptions influence the quality of their post-hire employment within organizations. This comprehensive approach aims to provide a deeper understanding of the reemployment process, shedding light on the role of personal traits, psychological resources, and proactive behaviors in facilitating successful transitions back into the workforce amidst challenging circumstances. The study also examines the significance of establishing and

maintaining an optimal work environment that accommodates the diverse needs of employees,  
bridging theoretical insights with practical implications for organizational management.

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*“Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.”*

- Thomas A. Edison

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgments.....	4
Table of Contents .....	5
List of Tables.....	11
List of Figures .....	12
Chapter 1. Introduction .....	13
Background .....	13
Statement of the Problem .....	16
Purpose of the Study .....	19
Research Questions .....	20
Significance of the Study .....	21
Definition of Terms .....	23
Organization of the Study.....	27
Chapter 2. Literature Review .....	28
Introduction .....	28
Purpose of the Study .....	28
Research Questions .....	29
Adult Education.....	30
Andragogy .....	31
Self-Concept.....	32
Experience.....	33
Readiness to Learn .....	34

Orientation to Learn .....	34
Motivation to Learn.....	35
The Need to Know .....	36
The Three Dimensions of Learning .....	37
Content Dimension of Learning.....	38
Incentive Dimension of Learning.....	38
Interaction Dimension of Learning .....	39
Workplace Learning and Development.....	40
Human Resource Development .....	42
Effectiveness of Learning and Development.....	45
Grit .....	47
Psychological Capital .....	50
Positive Psychology.....	50
Psychological Capital .....	52
Hope .....	53
Efficacy .....	53
Resilience .....	54
Optimism.....	55
Job Search Behaviors .....	56
Quality of Reemployment .....	58
Person-Organization Fit.....	58
Person-Job Fit .....	60
Job Satisfaction.....	61

Intention to Remain .....	62
Employment Quality.....	63
Conceptual Framework .....	63
Theoretical Foundations .....	63
Conservation of Resource Theory.....	63
Self-Determination Theory .....	64
Hypotheses Development .....	65
Grit and Quality of Reemployment.....	65
Grit, Psychological Capital, and Quality of Reemployment.....	66
Grit, Job Search Behaviors, and Quality of Reemployment.....	68
Mediation Effects of Psychological Capital and Job Search Behaviors .....	70
Research Model .....	74
Chapter 3. Methods.....	75
Introduction .....	75
Purpose of the Study .....	75
Research Questions .....	76
Research Design.....	77
Sample Methods.....	78
Instrumentation.....	79
Short Grit Scale.....	80
Psychological Capital Questionnaire-12.....	81
Job Search Behaviors .....	83
Quality of Reemployment Outcomes.....	84

Ensuring Data Quality .....	88
Pilot Study .....	89
Data Collection.....	90
Data Analysis.....	91
Descriptive Data Analysis.....	92
Measurement Model Analysis .....	92
Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling .....	94
Fit Indices.....	95
Ethical Considerations.....	96
Chapter 4. Findings.....	98
Introduction .....	98
Purpose of the Study .....	98
Research Questions .....	99
Demographic Results .....	100
Response Rate.....	100
Demographic Characteristics.....	101
Examining the Measurement Model .....	105
Model Fit .....	106
Common Method Variance .....	106
Reliability of the Scale.....	108
Construct Validity of the Scale .....	108
Convergent Validity.....	108
Discriminant Validity .....	110



Structural Equation Modeling .....	110
Examining the Theoretical Model .....	110
Examining the Mediation Effects .....	112
Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusions.....	117
Introduction .....	117
Purpose of the Study .....	117
Research Questions .....	118
Summary .....	119
Study Overview .....	119
Findings of the Survey.....	121
Conclusions .....	122
Implications.....	126
Theoretical Implication.....	127
Conservation of Resource Theory.....	127
Self-determination Theory .....	129
Practical Implication.....	130
Adult Learners Practices .....	131
Human Resource Practices.....	133
Limitations .....	137
Recommendations for Future Research .....	139
References.....	142
Appendix A .....	210
Appendix B .....	212

Appendix C .....	213
Appendix D.....	220

## List of Tables

Table 1. Summary of Hypotheses .....	72
Table 2. Demographic Characteristics .....	102
Table 3. Industry Sectors.....	104
Table 4. The Results of Factor Loadings and Testing the Convergent Validity.....	109
Table 5. The Results of Testing Discriminant Validity .....	110
Table 6. The Results of Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling .....	112
Table 7. The Results of Testing Mediation Effects .....	113
Table 8. Summary of Hypotheses Testing .....	115

## List of Figures

Figure 1. The Three Dimensions of Learning.....	40
Figure 2. Research Model.....	74
Figure 3. Examining Measurement Model in SmartPLS 4.....	106
Figure 4. The Results of the Conceptual Model .....	114

## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

What is the typical duration an individual dedicates to their professional occupation throughout their lifespan? Based on the findings of the American Time Use Survey conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2023, individuals employed full-time typically allocate an average of 8.01 hours per day to engage in work or work-related tasks (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023a). This time frame represents approximately 43.7% of their average daily engagement. In the United States, the typical workweek is 40 hours, resulting in a cumulative total of over 90,000 hours spent in the workplace throughout an individual's lifetime (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023b).

The pursuit of employment is an important aspect of being an adult. Therefore, finding a job that offers both personal satisfaction and fulfillment, particularly given the inevitable presence of numerous setbacks and challenges, is critical.

### **Background**

The job search process is characterized by its inherent challenges, complexity, and uncertainty, often accompanied by various obstacles, setbacks, and instances of rejection (Kanfer et al., 2001; McKee-Ryan et al., 2005; Paul & Moser, 2009; van Hooft, 2014; Wanberg, 2012). The process of seeking employment is primarily self-directed, requiring job seekers to exercise self-regulation in their actions and navigate through potential setbacks and adversities (Kanfer et al., 2001; van Hooft et al., 2013). While the majority of individuals seeking employment perceive the job search process as a source of stress, it is imperative for them to consistently engage in and sustain job search behaviors in order to secure high-quality employment opportunities (Lim et al., 2016; Sun et al., 2013; Wanberg, 1995). In essence, individuals who succeed in their job search are more inclined to possess a characteristic known as grit,

demonstrating elevated levels of perseverance and passion. Grit can be defined as psychological strength, not related to cognitive abilities. It encompasses two main components: passion, which refers to the consistency of one's interest, and perseverance, which pertains to the sustained effort exerted in the pursuit of long-term goals (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009).

When considering the process of overcoming failure in the pursuit of success, Thomas A. Edison is among the foremost individuals who come to mind. He is widely regarded as the most prominent American inventor in history, having created enduring technological innovations that have had a profound global impact on individuals' lives. Success, however, did not come to him immediately. When asked about his personal odyssey, he articulated one of the most renowned aphorisms: "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." This quote sheds direct light on his mindset, providing another perspective on failure (The National Academy of Sciences, 1932). It is often argued that failure is commonly perceived as the lack of achieving a desired outcome. But how many brilliant ideas have been squandered because someone decided to give up too soon? Thomas Edison exhibited a passionate mindset by refraining from considering surrender as a viable alternative. Instead, he saw failure as a valuable event for acquiring knowledge and improving his work (Josephson, 2018). In the narrative of his life, it is widely recognized by both practitioners (e.g., Bolles & Brooks, 2021) and academics (e.g., Barber et al., 1994; Fleig-Palmer et al., 2009; Saks & Ashforth, 2000; Wanberg et al., 2016) that successful reemployment is frequently preceded by failure and rejection. Edison demonstrated perseverance and passion even through the adversity and setbacks he encountered. Did Edison's grit contribute to his ability to persist in his innovation until he succeeded?

The scholarly exploration of the concept of grit has gained significant attention in recent years, particularly following the impactful TED talk delivered by Angela Duckworth (2013). Grit entails working vigorously toward the challenge, devoting effort, and maintaining determination and motivation over long periods regardless of failure, obstacles, and adversity in progress (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Individuals who report higher levels of grit tend to accomplish high achievement at work and in training, promote better educational results, and engage in more deliberate practice (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Duckworth et al., 2011; Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2014).

Gritty individuals, those who possess high levels of grit, think strategically about failures as opportunities to learn and seek the necessary resources required to attain their meaningful goals when a task reaches a point of frustration (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth et al., 2011; Park et al., 2018; van der Vaart et al., 2021). Gritty people do not solely achieve superior performance due to their innate talent or skill, but rather, they demonstrate a more significant commitment to exerting additional energy and effort in their professional endeavors or training (Duckworth et al., 2011). They can persevere and engage in tedious and challenging behaviors that demonstrate a certain level of resilience towards impediments or undesirable feedback (Disabato et al., 2019). Again, being gritty is an essential component for achieving success and attaining goals. Therefore, this non-cognitive psychological strength is vital in shaping the job search process for a high-quality job (Credé et al., 2017; van der Vaart et al., 2021).

In recent years, there has been a great deal of academic interest towards the notion of grit, which can positively affect achievement, goal pursuit, and social functioning, ultimately resulting in advantageous outcomes (Hill et al., 2016; Li et al., 2018). In contrast to other cognitive factors, the development of grit is contingent upon an individual's skills, passion, and

mindset (Duckworth, 2016). A study have indicated that doctoral students who exhibit higher levels of determination tend to allocate a greater amount of time to their academic pursuits, consequently yielding more exceptional academic outcomes (Cross, 2014). A positive correlation exists between higher levels of job satisfaction and engagement and the trait of grit (Cho & Kim, 2022; Dugan et al., 2019; Holter, 2022; Suzuki et al., 2015). Suzuki et al. (2015) proposed that individuals who possess higher levels of grit tend to exhibit superior performance in both professional and educational settings due to their heightened levels of engagement.

However, there is a need for more research that has specifically examined the concept of work-related grit. A particular study investigated the relationship between grit and the retention and performance of novice teachers (Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014). Additionally, gritty leaders were more likely to influence their followers positively (Caza & Posner, 2019; Gilson et al., 2016; Schimschal & Lomas, 2019). Individuals with grit tend to exhibit a heightened self-awareness regarding their future career paths and dedicate more time and effort toward pursuing suitable employment opportunities with persistence (Kaufman & Duckworth, 2017). Consequently, studying grit could contribute to a deeper comprehension of the factors that drive certain individuals to demonstrate perseverance and a passion for becoming reemployed with excellent quality.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Duckworth and her colleagues described grit as a higher-order personality dimension, defined as “perseverance and passion for long-term goals” (Duckworth et al., 2007, p. 1087). This positive psychological construct dedicates efforts without giving in to obstacles and failures that might be encountered in the process of accomplishing their goals (Kleiman et al., 2013). As grit requires a resilient nature towards inevitable adversity, this concept suggests a valid predictor



of long-term success shared by the most eminent leaders in the field of business, art, athletics, journalism, academics, medicine, and law (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Duckworth, 2016). Research has demonstrated that grit is a reliable predictor of numerous favorable outcomes in diverse fields and among different population groups. These outcomes encompass achievement, retention, self-efficacy, performance, self-regulated learning, well-being, and conscientiousness (Arifin & Puteri, 2019; Caza & Posner, 2019; Credé et al., 2017; Datu et al., 2017; Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2014; Ion et al., 2017; Jachimowicz et al., 2018; Kleiman et al., 2013; Lee, 2018; McGinley & Mattila, 2020; Neroni et al., 2022; Schimschal et al., 2020; Southwick et al., 2019; Suzuki et al., 2015; van der Vaart et al., 2021).

The existing body of evidence indicates that grit is a personal attribute that is cultivated through the interplay of mindsets, skills, and supportive environments (Christopoulou et al., 2018; Duckworth, 2016). Individuals with a high level of grit, i.e., gritty individuals, are more inclined to attain their objectives successfully. Furthermore, they exhibit a strategic mindset when faced with setbacks, viewing them as valuable learning experiences. Additionally, these individuals actively engage in purposeful and focused practice while also actively seeking out the resources necessary to achieve their meaningful goals (Bashant, 2014; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Duckworth et al., 2011; Duckworth et al., 2021; Munro & Hope, 2019; Park et al., 2018; Park & Kim, 2023; van der Vaat et al., 2021). As previously mentioned, numerous studies have provided evidence that individuals who possess a substantial degree of grit are capable of overcoming various challenges in their professional lives by virtue of their passion and perseverance, thus sustaining a considerable degree of involvement in their work. Moreover, these individuals are also more likely to report higher emotional, psychological, and social well-

being levels (Aswini & Deb, 2017; Bozgün & Akin-Kösterelioglu, 2020; Datu & Restubog, 2020; Duckworth, 2016; Jin & Kim, 2017; Orines et al., 2023; Sallis & Saelens, 2000; Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2023; Vainio & Daukantaitė, 2016). As a result, those possessing these qualities are considerably more likely to achieve sustained professional success and accomplish long-term goals in comparison to those who exhibit lower levels of grit (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2014; Suzuki et al., 2015; Olckers & Koekemoer, 2021; van der Vaat et al., 2021; von Culin et al., 2014).

From a theoretical perspective, there appears to be a plausible connection between grit and career success; however, limited research has been conducted to explore this association (Duckworth et al., 2007; Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2014; Olckers & Koekemoer, 2021; van der Vaart et al., 2019; van der Vaart et al., 2021). However, there has been a notable focus in the academic and personality literature on evaluating positive outcomes within the field of grit research (Ceschi et al., 2016; Kim & Lee, 2015; Luthans et al., 2019; Southwick et al., 2019; Vainio & Daukantaite, 2016). Examples of such outcomes include the grade point average achieved by Ivy League undergraduate students, the retention rates of cadets at the United States Military Academy West Point, and performance rankings in the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which go beyond measures of intelligence quotient (Biangone, 2020; Duckworth et al., 2007; Matthews & Edmondson, 2022). Credé et al. (2017) acknowledged the importance of examining the influence of grit on job search processes and work environments in their meta-analytic synthesis of the existing literature on grit. The implementation of job search strategies that prioritize grit has the potential to yield significant advantages and positive outcomes for unemployed individuals seeking reemployment, despite the fact that certain researchers arguing that grit is a malleable personality trait (Credé et al., 2017; Duckworth, 2016; Park et al., 2018).

Even so, the number of studies investigating grit as a potential factor contributing to the comprehension of employment quality still needs to be improved (van der Vaart et al., 2019; van der Vaart et al., 2021). Further investigation is warranted regarding the constructs of grit, psychological capital, and job search within the context of reemployment quality outcomes. Specifically, there is a need to explore their relationship with factors such as person-job fit, person-organization fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain. Several scholars have also proposed that the notion should be examined within occupational environments (Arifin & Puteri, 2019; Duckworth, 2016; Dugan et al., 2019; Ion et al., 2017; Olckers & Koekemoer, 2021; Southwick et al., 2019; van Vaart et al., 2021).

In order to fill the existing void in scholarly research, the present study aimed to examine the impact of grit on the psychological capital and job search behaviors of individuals seeking employment. The objective was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations underlying these associations in relation to the attainment of reemployment and, ultimately, their satisfaction, performance, and intention to stay in the workplace.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States. There was a need for a more comprehensive understanding of grit and its relationship with the quality of reemployment outcomes. This understanding was crucial in order to grasp the underlying mechanism that influences individuals' person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain in their current employment. Consequently, this study

endeavor has undertaken the task of formulating and evaluating a theoretical framework on the construct of grit, with the ultimate objective of enhancing the overall effectiveness of reemployment outcomes. This framework drew upon the principles of the conservation of resource theory and self-determination theory. In that regard, the aim was to thoroughly analyze (a) if quality of reemployment scores vary according to grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors, (b) the mediating effect of psychological capital in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, (c) the mediating effect of job search behaviors in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, and (d) the sequential mediation roles in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment.

### **Research Questions**

This study was grounded in a set of research questions concerning the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States.

1. To what extent does grit affect psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
2. To what extent does psychological capital affect job search behaviors and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

3. To what extent does job search behaviors affect the quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
4. Can psychological capital mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
5. Can job search behavior mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
6. Do psychological capital and job search behavior have sequential mediation effects in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

### **Significance of the Study**

The outcomes of this study may contribute to the existing body of knowledge by further investigating grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors in the context of job search and reemployment circumstances. In particular, this study develops the theoretical and practical implications pertaining to individuals who experienced termination from their prior employment. Consequently, applying the research findings to the job search population may yield recommendations that can enhance job satisfaction and organizational retention, contingent upon

individuals' assessment of the extent to which their job and organization meet their needs and align with their personal characteristics.

The construct of grit has been observed to correlate positively with a diverse array of advantageous outcomes. For example, grit has been associated with increased life satisfaction and harmony (Vainio & Daukantaitė, 2016), high achievement in a range of individual performance (Southwick et al., 2019), improved psychological well-being (Salles et al., 2014), longevity in the workplace and marriage (Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2014), positive effect on the job-search intensity (Yu et al., 2022), dedication to a chosen career (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009), performance and well-being (Credé et al., 2017; Datu et al., 2017), successful academic achievement mediates the influence of psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2019), career success and career engagement (Lechner et al., 2019), organizational performance (Olckers & Koekemoer, 2021), reduced counterproductive behavior (Ceschi et al., 2016), effective aging for the elderly (Kim & Lee, 2015), and effective sales performance through the use of psychological capital (Coomer, 2016). Despite the extensive research conducted in this field, there has been a need for more endeavors to comprehend the mechanism through which the grit of job seekers influences the quality of reemployment outcomes, including person-job fit, person-organization fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain.

Drawing from prior research, the investigator postulated a close relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment, suggesting mutual influence among these variables. The study conducted by Sulaiman et al. (2023) revealed a significant relationship between psychological capital and grit, as well as flourishing in job seekers. Grit played a significant mediating role in the relationship between psychological capital and flourishing. The findings suggested that psychological capital and grit significantly foster the

growth of individuals' potential in seeking employment opportunities. Mashod et al. (2023) have also proposed grit as a plausible moderator in the association between psychological capital and the employability of graduates. Consequently, applying the research findings to the job search population may yield recommendations that enhance job satisfaction and organizational retention, contingent upon individuals' assessment of the extent to which their job and organization meet their needs and align with their personal characteristics.

The data obtained from this study can be utilized to assist leaders and organizations in understanding the impact of an employee's grit on their intention to remain within the organization. Additionally, the findings of this study can provide leaders with valuable insights into the significance of adopting a proactive approach to identifying employees who possess the characteristic of grit. Similarly, organizational leaders should proactively provide personnel with training opportunities and strive to enhance the overall job satisfaction of their staff to foster employee retention.

The study provides valuable insights into the importance of recruiting employees who possess high levels of grit and psychological capital, as well as creating and maintaining an ideal work environment for individuals in the workplace. Additionally, the findings indicate a significant importance and requirement to prioritize positivity within the workplace. This can be achieved through various means, including the careful selection, disposition, training, and development of employees, as well as cultivating positive attributes in both current and future leaders.

### **Definition of Terms**

The study provided an exposition of key definitions and theoretical considerations that are crucial for comprehending the research.

*Active Job Search.* Proactively pursuing specific job opportunities involves disseminating resumes to targeted prospects, refining the list of prospects, and engaging in interviews with prospective employers (Blau, 1994).

*Adult Education.* An educational endeavor that is intentionally and specifically designed for adult learners. The pursuit of adult education is an ongoing and multifaceted endeavor that has the potential to persist throughout an individual's entire lifespan. (e.g., collaboration and leadership, problem-solving, effective oral and written communication, conflict resolution, information literacy, initiative, and entrepreneurialism) (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020).

*Andragogy.* The theory of adult learning which considers six assumptions that adult learners have, (a) the self-concept to direct one's own learning, (b) prior learning and experience, (c) readiness (or need) to learn, (d) the orientation to learn and interested in the application of knowledge, (e) intrinsic motivation to learn, (f) and need to know the value of learning (Forrest III & Peterson, 2006; Knowles et al., 2015; Merriam, 2001; Merriam & Brockett, 2007).

*Efficacy.* Efficacy is defined as one's conviction or confidence about his or her ability to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to execute a specific task within a given context successfully (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998a).

*Grit.* Grit is defined as passion and perseverance for long-term and meaningful goals. Grit entails working vigorously toward the challenge, devoting effort, and maintaining determination and motivation over long periods regardless of failure, obstacles, and adversity in progress. Grit is unrelated to talent and can be built through a growth mindset (Duckworth et al., 2007).



*Hope.* Hope is a cognitive state in which a person can set realistic but challenging objectives and expectations and then work toward them with self-directed determination, energy, and a sense of being in control (Luthans et al., 2007b).

*Human Resource Development.* Human resource development (HRD) is a specialized domain within the realm of adult education that pertains to cultivating knowledge and skills in the workplace. It constitutes an integral facet of adult education that the professional association endeavors to integrate and harmonize (Watkins & Marsick, 2014).

*Intention to Remain.* Intention to remain pertains to employees' deliberate and conscious determination to stay employed within an organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993). The terms "intention to stay (or remain)" and "turnover intention" are often used interchangeably.

*Job Satisfaction.* Job satisfaction (JS) is defined as the positive emotional response to a job situation resulting from attaining what the employee wants and values from the job (Locke & Latham, 1990) and the overall sense or feeling an employee has for the job situation (Arndt et al., 2006).

*Job Search Behaviors.* Job search behaviors (JSB) encompass individuals' various activities to gather information about alternative opportunities within the labor market (Brown et al., 2006). These activities include (a) preparatory job search, which are activities targeted at obtaining job information and identifying potential job leads, and (b) active job search that involve behaviors related to actual job seeking (Blau, 1994).

*Optimism.* Optimism is an explanatory style that attributes positive events to personal, permanent, and pervasive causes and interprets negative events in terms of external, temporary, and situation-specific factors (Luthans et al., 2007b).

*Person–job Fit.* The concept of person-job fit (P-J fit) refers to the alignment between an individual’s knowledge, skills, and abilities, and the requirements of a job, or the preferences and aspirations of an individual and the offerings provided by the job (Edwards, 1991; O’Reilly III et al., 1991).

*Person-organization Fit.* Person-organization fit (P-O fit) refers to the level of compatibility between individuals and organizations, which arises from one of three conditions: (a) the provision of necessary resources by one party to fulfill the needs of the other, (b) the presence of shared fundamental characteristics, or (c) the simultaneous occurrence of both conditions (Kristof, 1996).

*Psychological Capital.* Psychological Capital (PsyCap) is defined as an individual’s positive psychological state of development and is characterized by (a) general self-efficacy, (b) hope, (c) optimism, and (d) resilience (Luthans et al., 2007).

*Preparatory Job Search.* The practice of acquiring job-search information and potential jobs leads from diverse sources such as newspapers, the internet, relatives, previous employers, and current colleagues (Blau, 1994), without engaging in active applications.

*Resilience.* Resilience can be conceptualized as the inherent ability of a dynamic system to effectively respond and adjust to external disruptions that threaten its operational functionality and ongoing growth (Masten, 2015).

*Self-directed Learning.* Self-directed learning refers to a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating their learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes (Knowles, 1975).

## **Organization of the Study**

The present study was structured into five distinct chapters. In Chapter 1, the study was introduced by presenting several key elements. These included providing a general background of the topic, stating the problem being addressed, outlining the purpose of the study, formulating research questions, highlighting the significance of the study, establishing the theoretical framework, and providing explicit definitions of key terms. Chapter 2 provided a comprehensive literature review on various topics, including adult education, workplace learning and development, grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, quality of reemployment, theoretical foundations, and conceptual framework. In Chapter 3, the methods utilized to carry out the quantitative study were detailed, encompassing aspects such as the research design, sample selection process, the instrumentation employed, method of data collection, and the plan for data analysis. The findings of the research were presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 covered an analysis of the outcomes presented in Chapter 4, as well as the limitations of the study. Chapter 5 concluded with the implications, future research, and recommendations for further studies.

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

The first chapter described the study by providing the general background information of the topic, statement of the problem, theoretical framework, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, assumptions of the study, definition of terms, and organization of the study. The second chapter was a review of the literature which presented a variety of relevant angles to give perspective on the adult education, andragogy, workplace learning and development, human resource development, grit and positive psychology on job search processes and work settings, job search behaviors, quality of reemployment, and effectiveness of learning and development outcome. This chapter provided a synthesis of scholarly research consulted to build upon for the current study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States. There was a need for a more comprehensive understanding of grit and its relationship with the quality of reemployment outcomes. This understanding was crucial in order to grasp the underlying mechanism that influences individuals' person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain in their current employment. Consequently, this study endeavor has undertaken the task of formulating and evaluating a theoretical framework on the construct of grit, with the ultimate objective of enhancing the overall effectiveness of reemployment outcomes. This framework drew upon the principles of the conservation of

resource theory and self-determination theory. In that regard, the aim was to thoroughly analyze (a) if quality of reemployment scores vary according to grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors, (b) the mediating effect of psychological capital in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, (c) the mediating effect of job search behaviors in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, and (d) the sequential mediation roles in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment.

### **Research Questions**

This study was grounded in a set of research questions concerning the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States.

1. To what extent does grit affect psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
2. To what extent does psychological capital affect job search behaviors and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
3. To what extent does job search behaviors affect the quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

4. Can psychological capital mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
5. Can job search behavior mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
6. Do psychological capital and job search behavior have sequential mediation effects in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

### **Adult Education**

Adult education comprises a vast array of educational and learning activities and was defined in numerous ways in the literature (Cross, 1981; Elias & Merriam, 2004; Foley, 2020; Knowles, 1988; Knowles et al. 2015; Merriam & Brockett, 2007; Peters et al., 1991). Some scholars view adult education as non-compulsory, intentional, or voluntary learning activities that comprise a lifelong process of ongoing education (Muller, 1994; Tuijnman & Belanger, 1997). Other researchers argue that adult education is a mandatory activity in their definitions, as many individuals are compelled to engage in career or work-related adult education for the sake of continued professional development (Cervero, 1988; Jacobs, 1990; O'Donnell & Tobbell, 2007). Another definition of adult education combines formal instruction with non-instructor-led informal educational activities. However, there was widespread agreement that adult learners

have distinctive motivations, demands, and requirements for participating in educational activities (Cervero, 1988; Jacobs, 1990; Merriam & Brockett, 2007; Maddalena, 2015; Muller, 1994; O'Donnell & Tobbell, 2007; Scott et al. 2020).

### **Andragogy**

Andragogy is a concept that is commonly linked with adult education, and its foundation is based on the notion that adults and children learn in different ways (Birzer, 2004; Cross, 1981; Forrest III & Peterson, 2006; Knowles, 1968, 1970, 1975, 1978, 1980, 1984; Knowles et al., 2005, 2015; Merriam et al., 2006; Taylor & Kroth, 2009). Although there are no clear distinctions in how adults and children learn, there are some differences and similarities between adult and non-adult learning.

Andragogy was coined in 1833 by Alexander Kapp, who attempted to characterize Plato's training method when instructing his young adult students (Knowles et al., 2005). In the 1960s, andragogy emerged in modern educational literature by practitioners to describe the distinctive characteristics of adult learners (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). The term's use is mainly due to Malcolm Shepherd Knowles' substantial work. He first introduced it in 1968 with his book *Adult education: Andragogy versus pedagogy*; the term started being used throughout the educational community. Knowles (1968) proposed a theory of andragogy that distinguished between learning in childhood and learning in adulthood, emphasizing the need for scholars to acknowledge adult learning as a distinct area of study (Merriam et al., 2006). Through the application of andragogy by Knowles, the adult education profession attempted to become more integrated, thereby separating the concepts of adult education from those of child education (Forrest III & Peterson, 2006). Knowles revised the relationship between pedagogical and andragogical concepts in the 1980 edition of *The modern practice of adult education*. According

to Knowles, the objective of adult education ought to prioritize self-actualization, necessitating a comprehensive integration of emotional, psychological, and intellectual dimensions within the learning process. The primary purpose of adult educators is to facilitate the ample growth of adults, and the pedagogical approach employed to attain this objective is known as andragogy. According to Knowles, the role of the teacher is that of a facilitator who assists adult learners in developing self-directed learning abilities (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). Additionally, adult educators “should involve learners in as many aspects of their education as possible and in the creation of a climate in which they can most fruitfully learn” (Houle, 1996, p. 30).

The theory of andragogy posits that there should be distinct approaches to teaching adults as opposed to children, as the learning processes involved are significantly divergent (Birzer, 2004; Brown et al., 2006; Cross, 1981; Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982; Forrest III & Peterson, 2006; Knowles, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1984, 1990; Knowles et al., 2005, 2015; Norrie & Dalby, 2007; Terehoff, 2002). Knowles succinctly outlined six fundamental assumptions regarding adult learners, which serve as the foundation of adult learning: (a) the possession of a self-concept that enables them to guide their own learning independently, (b) the influence of prior learning and experiences on their current learning endeavors, (c) their state of readiness or perceived need to engage in learning activities, (d) their inclination towards learning and interest in the practical application of acquired knowledge, (e) their intrinsic motivation to engage in the learning process, and (f) their inherent desire to understand the rationale behind the knowledge they are acquiring.

### ***Self-Concept***

Adults are self-directed. Knowles acknowledged that adult learners become increasingly competent in taking charge of their learning as they mature. Therefore, adult learners create their



learning activities and goals within the course objectives. Merriam (2001) demonstrates that self-directed learning is a cornerstone of adult learning theory. Knowles (1975) noted that self-directed learning is “a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes” (p.18). Self-directed learning has three goals: (a) to help the learner become more self-directed (Brockett & Hiemstra, 2018; Knowles, 1975; Tough, 1967, 1979), (b) to encourage transformational learning (Brookfield, 1986; Mezirow, 1985), and (c) to encourage emancipatory learning and social action (Andruske, 2000; Brookfield, 1993; Collins, 1996). Blondy (2007) also pointed out how important it is for the facilitator to stay in constant contact with the learners to find out how independent they are and give them personalized help and direction.

### ***Experience***

Adults draw from life experiences. Knowles recognized that adult learners accumulate a growing pool of experience that serves as a resource for learning. Unlike children, adults tend to enter adult education with a richness of past experiences. If these previous experiences can be used, they become the richest resource available (Knowles, 1980; Knowles et al., 2015). Furthermore, Nelken (2009) argued that adult learners are not “blank slates” (p. 183) and that they enter learning settings having substantial life experiences, often accompanied by solid perspectives, attitudes, opinions, and viewpoints. Knowles recognized that adults were the best resources for one another; therefore, he encouraged and emphasized group discussions and collaborative tasks that drew on the diversity of knowledge within groups. He talked about how important it is to create a welcoming environment where students can freely express their

thoughts, share ideas, and talk about facts and experiences that are important to them (Palloff & Pratt, 2004). This way, they can share their own knowledge and experiences. However, Knowles et al. (2015) noted that adult learners might be negatively impacted by their earlier experiences, defining themselves based on some of these events. Consequently, he suggested that facilitators try to get learners to be open to other people's experiences.

### ***Readiness to Learn***

Social roles help to determine an adult's readiness to learn. Knowles (1980) found that circumstances often precipitate adulthood by requiring new knowledge acquisition. Consequently, adult learners often wish to comprehend why they need to know anything before acquiring it (Knowles et al., 2015). Thus, facilitators must take initiatives to assist learners in identifying their learning requirements (Knowles, 1984). Blondy (2007) suggests that discussing a learner's motivation for enrolling in a course or encouraging learners to consider what they want to achieve in the learning environment may be beneficial. Therefore, readiness to learn depends on an appreciation of the topic's relevance to the student.

### ***Orientation to Learn***

Adults are problem-centered than subject-centered. Knowles (1984) argued that individuals pursued education because they needed to apply what they were learning to real-world problems quickly. Knowles et al. (2015) referred to adult learners as life-centered. They felt that the learning experience should be oriented around living events rather than subject matter and that learners want to be aware of the connection between what they learn and their life tasks or objectives (p. 46). Blondy (2007) proposed using assignments and group projects to encourage students to adapt academic principles to their personal experiences and needs. Hence, and adult is more problem-centered than subject-centered in learning (Knowles, 1980, p. 44-45,

as cited by Merriam, et al. 2007, p. 84). According to Brookfield (1986), Knowles “does not present andragogy as an empirically based theory of learning painstakingly derived from a series of experiments resulting in generalizations of increasing levels of sophistication, abstraction, and applicability... it should be treated as a set of assumptions” (p. 91). In later works, Knowles added a fifth and sixth assumption to andragogy, as noted by Merriam et al. (2007).

### ***Motivation to Learn***

Adults are internally motivated to learn. Knowles (1984) believed that people were driven by external rewards, such as a better job or promotion. However, they were most motivated to learn by internal variables such as self-esteem, job satisfaction, or recognition. He thought adults were most driven to achieve their educational objectives when their unique contributions were acknowledged and valued. Cyril O. Houle (1961) performed study on the reasons why adults pursue continuing education at the University of Chicago. Based on Lindeman’s (1926) view that adult education is holistic and anchored in particular life circumstances, Houle’s research established three motivational groups of adult learners: (a) goal-oriented, (b) activity-oriented, and (c) learning-oriented (Houle, 1961).

Goal-oriented learners participate in learning so as to achieve a particular objective or fulfill a particular set of life or work needs. Typically, learning activities are intermittent and arise out of necessity. This group includes adults actively pursuing a college degree or professional certification for job objectives. Learners who are activity-oriented engage in learning for their social environment or activity. Beyond the social interactions of the activity, there is not necessarily a definite objective or aim in mind. Community center programs, gardening workshops, and travel groups are examples. The majority of learning-oriented learners learn for the sake of learning. Various approaches, such as activities, classes, and reading, are

frequently utilized in the pursuit of education (Houle, 1961). These adults may undertake formal education programs to further their education or for a sense of personal fulfillment. Houle proposed a fundamental instructional design concept for adult students. Houle's design is predicated on contextual learning, human experience, education as a practical art, cooperative education, and the notion that education is a complex system comprised of interdependent events and aspects (Knowles et al., 2015). Houle's methodology is a good fit for adult degree completion and previous learning assessment programs as they are currently practiced. Tough (1979), building on the work of Houle, concentrated on self-directed learning in adulthood, mainly through learning projects. Tough (1979) depicts the instructor as an aid who spends time with the student and demonstrates care, support, and friendship.

Moreover, motivation for adult education can be categorized into three major categories: work/economic, personal, and social. Adult students are typically aware of their goals, needs, and values (Schunk & Meece, 2014). In addition, they are typically highly motivated, self-directed, focused on relevance, and learn best through experience. These insights and characteristics make them easier to motivate. However, many adult learners were educated in conventional classrooms and may be unfamiliar and uneasy with the new technology and instructional and learning methods. Additionally, they may have obligations that hinder their motivation to learn (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Schunk & Meece, 2014).

### ***The Need to Know***

Adults need to know why they need to learn what they are learning. Adults must comprehend why they are studying a particular topic. The instructor's first responsibility in adult education is to help the student recognize the need to know. Adults will devote substantial resources (e.g., time and energy) to studying a topic they believe to be necessary (Forrest III &

Peterson, 2006; Kidd, 1973; Knowles, 1984; Knowles et al., 2005, 2015; Lindeman, 1926; Ozuah, 2016; Thompson & Deis, 2004). Knowles offers these six assumptions with the knowledge that adults have more life experience than children and have developed preconceived concepts. Experience is the most significant factor as adults emphasize the learning process rather than the substance being taught. “Andragogy is an organized and sustained effort to assist adults to learn in a way that enhances their capacity to function as self-directed learners” (Mezirow, 1981, p. 21). This perspective transforms these assumptions into a personal interactive agreement between the learner and the learning attempt, the experience (Birzer, 2004).

### **The Three Dimensions of Learning**

While Andragogy is widely recognized as a prominent adult learning theory model, it is important to acknowledge that other models offer alternative perspectives on adult learning. In 1999, Knud Illeris, a prominent scholar in the field of lifelong learning based in Denmark, presented *The three dimensions of learning* as a conceptual framework (see Figure 1). This framework is among several perspectives utilized to examine the process of adult learning. In his scholarly work titled “How We Learn: Learning and Non-Learning in School and Beyond,” the author presents a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted nature of learning, elucidating the processes, mechanisms, and underlying factors that contribute to both successful learning and instances of non-learning (Illeris, 2016). The most comprehensive explanation of the theory can be found in his book, “the basic conception of learning in this presentation thus suggests both that learning always consists of two integrated processes of interaction and internalization, respectively and that learning simultaneously comprises a cognitive, an emotional and psychodynamic, and a social and societal dimension” (Illeris, 2002, p.19). He developed an eclectic theory that learning comprises three dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and social.

According to Illeris, knowledge, understanding, and skills comprise the cognitive dimension, and the emotional dimension consists of emotions, motivation, and volition. Cognition and emotion concurrently interact with internal psychological processes in acquiring knowledge and skills. The sociality dimension labeled by Illeris entails external interaction processes such as action, communication, and cooperation, and this dimension involves interacting with others as people learn.

### ***Content Dimension of Learning***

The content dimension of learning relates to what is actually learned. Knowledge, skills, and attitudes are three conventional keywords frequently used to describe this content dimension and are fundamental aspects of learning content. However, Illeris emphasized that the content dimension must be viewed in a broader context. First, it involves additional elements such as understanding, meaning, coherence, and overview. This is because humans, as learners, do not merely acquire knowledge and skills; they also attempt to create meaning and understanding from learning situations they encountered. This learning content also includes understanding the cultural and social contexts with which the learner interacts. Finally, self-knowledge, which is the understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses, is an essential element of the learning content because it lays the groundwork for developing the learners' ability to function appropriately in various contexts (Illeris, 2016, 2018).

### ***Incentive Dimension of Learning***

The incentive dimension of learning encompasses fundamental concepts such as motivation, emotions, and volition. These are the mechanisms by which the learner mobilizes the energy that drives the learning processes. The incentive component is indispensable and integrated into all learning situations. In fact, it has a close relationship with the content

dimension. Typically, these two dimensions are stimulated simultaneously by the interaction between the learner and the learning environment. In other words, the amount of learning content is determined by the energy generated by the incentive dimension. Similarly, new knowledge or improved skills can inspire or change the learner's old emotional and motivational patterns. Illeris used this argument to combine the two dimensions into a single, double-headed arrow and place it horizontally on top (Illeris, 2016, 2018).

### ***Interaction Dimension of Learning***

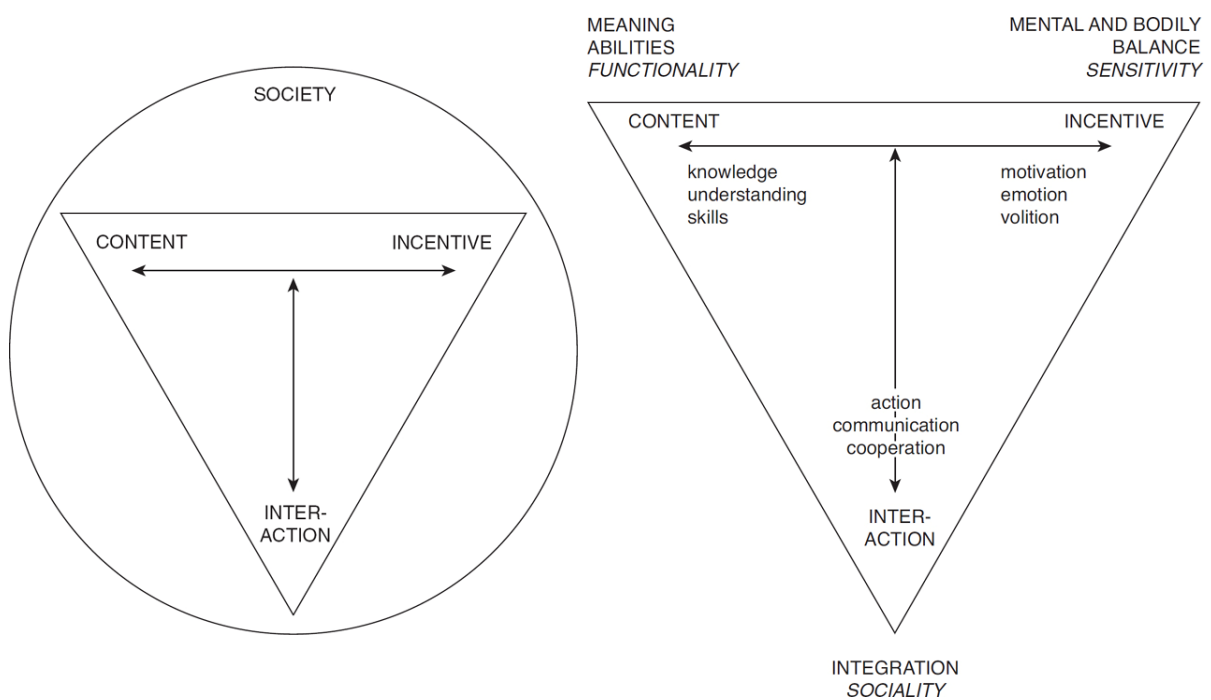
The interaction dimension of learning is concerned with how people interact with their material and social environments on a variety of levels because learning always occurs in a particular social and societal context or learning environment. This interaction dimension consists of two levels: (a) the immediate or personal social level with which the learner interacts directly. For instance, learning takes place in a classroom or a working group, and (b) the general societal and global level establishes the conditions for interaction and is more influenced by societal norms and structures. As a result, learning is a reflection of the social and societal conditions with which the learner can interact. The forms of interactions range from the most basic to the most complex, including perception, transmission, experience, imitation, and participation. This interaction dimension includes the keywords action, communication, and cooperation (Illeris, 2016, 2018).

As depicted in this model, the double vertical arrow represents the external interaction between the learner and the learning environment. The learning environment, the general foundation, is positioned at the bottom, while the individual, the specific learner, is positioned at the top (Illeris, 2003, 2009). The double horizontal arrow represents the internal acquisition process of learning. Because there is an integrated interaction between the content and incentive

dimensions in all learning, the double arrow of the acquisition process is positioned horizontally at the top of the interaction process and between the content and incentive poles. Finally, the triangle is placed within a circle representing the social and societal conditions under which learning takes place (Illeris, 2003, 2009).

**Figure 1**

*The Three Dimensions of Learning*



### **Workplace Learning and Development**

The establishment of adult education programs in the United States was motivated by the desire to enhance individuals' educational attainment in response to societal progress. The origins of individual and societal advancements, such as the expansion of literacy and civil rights, can be traced back to historical periods (Swanson, 2001; Watkins & Marsick, 2014). The field of adult education often prioritizes marginalized individuals within society, aiming to



provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to advance in social, intellectual, and economic domains. Illustrative instances encompass individuals who have migrated to a new country, those residing in impoverished urban areas, minority groups, members of labor unions, workers in industrial sectors, and women and individuals belonging to ethnic and racial minority communities (Walter, 2009). The influences on adult education as a field of study reflected these practical concerns, including community development, literacy, citizenship, and primary education for underserved populations (Watkins & Marsick, 2014; Watkins et al., 2018).

Over time, there has been a proliferation of new areas of expertise that have arisen in response to the recognition of evolving societal demands. These specialized fields include community colleges and other higher education institutions, professional practice, continuing education, and workplace training (Grubb et al., 1998; Watkins & Marsick, 2014). Adult education has advanced beyond andragogy, which in many ways represents the contemporary perspective on how adults learn. Merriam et al. (2006) extensively explored the influential studies and conceptual frameworks that have significantly shaped the field of adult learning throughout recent decades. Experiential learning, self-directed learning, and transformational learning serve as illustrative instances. In addition, they examine adult development, a burgeoning subfield of developmental psychology that impacts how the discipline interprets a person's learning preferences and ability, as well as cognitive science, which has dramatically enhanced our understanding of how the brain functions (Merriam et al., 2006). However, despite the fact that the field of study has progressed beyond andragogy, it remains primarily concerned with individual learning and development. This includes acquiring basic skills, lifelong learning, participating in higher or continuing education, professional development, and workplace

training (Watkins & Marsick, 2014). Adult education is predominantly viewed as work-related education (Jacobs, 1990; O'Donnell, & Tobbell, 2007).

As a result, the majority of research and general literature on adult education development is derived from studies in which participation is for work-related reasons, and the majority of adult education practice is also for work-related circumstances (Akdere & Conceição, 2006; Dixon, 1992; Ulrich & Dulebohn, 2015; Walton, 2004).

### **Human Resource Development**

Human resource development (HRD) is a discipline gaining recognition as its theoretical and practical underpinnings are being established. Moreover, HRD can be classified as a subfield within the realm of adult education, explicitly concentrating on the learning needs within the workplace. This aspect of adult education is a focal point for the professional association, which aims to integrate it seamlessly. However, some scholars argue that HRD extends beyond the scope of adult education, as it also addresses organizational demands (Bell et al., 2017; El Mansour & Dean, 2016; Han & Stieha, 2020; Kuchinke, 1999; Watkins & Marsick, 2014).

Between the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a notable surge in the proliferation of educational institutions that provided graduate programs specializing in HRD and its related fields, with a growth rate exceeding 100 percent (Fimbel, 2002; Kaeter, 1995; Kuchinke, 1999, 2001). A greater number of training articles were published during the 2000s compared to any previous decade (Bell et al., 2017; Onwuegbuzie & Corrigan, 2014). This was partly because new theoretical models, constructs, and assessment tools were created during this time. This compelling academic picture appears to be more evidence of the significance of HRD in the rapidly transforming workplace (Bell et al., 2017; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001; Torraco & Lundgren, 2020).

According to Russ-Eft et al. (2014), Watkins (1989) defined the field of human resource development as “the field of study and practice responsible for fostering a long-term, work-related learning capacity at the individual, group, and organizational level of organizations” (p. 427). Swanson (1995) defined HRD as “a process of developing and/or unleashing human expertise through organization development and personnel training and development for the purpose of improving performance” (p. 208). McLagan’s studies from 1983 and 1989 were perhaps the most significant. Many of these HRD competency studies were conducted by McLagan (1983), who described a Human Resource Wheel that included personnel research and information systems such as training and development, organization development, organization and job design, human resources planning, selection and staffing, personnel research and information systems, compensation and benefits, employee assistance, labor relations.

Reviewing the definitions and foundations of HRD, McGuire (2011) validates the 1980s roots of the HRD discipline and McLagan’s Human Resource Wheel. This effect is evident in the human resource development textbooks that focus on the *Models for HRD Practice*, such as Gilley and Egglund (1989) and Rothwell and Kazanas (1989). Mainly through competency studies, the Association for Talent Development has played a vital role in defining the area of HRD. The Association for Talent Development (ATD), previously recognized as the American Society for Training & Development, is a professional organization dedicated to advancing individuals who contribute to the enrichment of employees’ knowledge and abilities in global business settings (Association for Talent Development, 2023). For a considerable duration, this organization has provided support for numerous studies focused on defining the field of HRD through the examination of various competencies. According to the ATD, the field of HRD entails several

primary roles, namely learning and development, training, career development, and organization development.

Despite numerous attempts to define human resource development, there is still no consensus on what it is and what it entails (McGuire, 2011; Russ-Eft et al., 2014). Academics have been attempting to define HRD for many years, resulting in much journal debate (McGuire, 2011; McGuire & Cseh, 2006; McLean & McLean, 2001; Ruona, 2000; Weinberger, 1998). This led Ruona (2000) to assert that a significant issue with HRD is that people do not comprehend the job of HRD academics and professionals or what HRD entails. According to Lincoln and Lynham (2007), HRD integrates concepts from various disciplines to create its own theory. A solid theory is also required for excellent, informed practice and the discipline to continue improving and growing. Human resource development is an interdisciplinary field of study by its own definition (Bell et al., 2017; Swanson, 2001; Yoo et al., 2019). The concept of an interdisciplinary body of knowledge refers to the notion that it is comprised of multiple fields of study that are interrelated. HRD is an applied field whose theoretical foundations are derived from various theories (Swanson, 2001, 2022). Numerous scholars have put forth the proposition that HRD ought to be regarded as a multidisciplinary domain of inquiry, as opposed to a singular discipline (Bell et al., 2017; Chalofsky, 2004; Kuchinke, 2001; Swanson, 2001, 2022; Yoo et al., 2019). These researchers posited that HRD has historically been associated with various disciplines, suggesting that a more precise characterization of HRD could be achieved through the lens of human and organizational studies (Bell et al., 2017; Chalofsky, 2004; Kuchinke, 1999, 2001, Lincoln & Lynham, 2007; Ruona, 2000; Swanson, 2001, 2022; Yoo et al., 2019).

## **Effectiveness of Learning and Development**

In order to maintain competitiveness, it is imperative for organizations and nations to ensure that their workforce engages in continuous learning and skill development. Training and development incorporate systematic procedures aimed at molding and equipping individuals through enhancing their skills, talents, knowledge, and behavior. The ultimate goal is to enable individuals to perform their work with greater efficiency, effectiveness, and rationality (Indeed Editorial Team, 2020). According to Salas et al. (2012), training and development assist firms in adapting, competing, performing better, generating new ideas, producing, remaining safe, enhancing customer service, and achieving their objectives. Through the process of receiving specialized information, individuals have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills that can be further developed and applied in a professional setting (Indeed Editorial Team, 2020).

The annual expenditure on employee training in the United States was \$92.3 billion in 2021 increased from \$83.5 billion in the previous year; these figures have been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (Freifeld, 2021). Companies allocate resources towards training and development initiatives as they perceive a skilled workforce to confer a competitive edge. Developing and maintaining a workforce consisting of highly skilled and extensively trained personnel has the potential to offer organizations a sustainable competitive advantage of significant longevity (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; Huselid & Becker, 2011; Salas et al., 2012). For example, Delaney and Huselid (1996) discovered a clear correlation between perceived organizational performance and effective procedures related to staffing and training. In a study of roughly one thousand organizations, Huselid (1995) found that using high-performance work practices, such as successful recruiting and selection, compensation systems, and training, predicted employee retention and performance as well as long-term measures of corporate

financial performance. Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) mentioned that much of the European research establishes a correlation between training techniques and organizational effectiveness metrics. These studies demonstrate that training is a crucial aspect of constructing and sustaining an effective employee workforce, affecting various corporate well-being measures. Additionally, training is a crucial aspect of leadership development, another feature crucial to the success of an organization (Salas et al., 2012).

At the societal level, the significance of workforce development, achieved through investments in training, is widely recognized as a crucial factor contributing to the overall economic growth of a nation. Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) presented a number of case studies illustrating the function of training in fostering economic development within nations. As previously mentioned, an effectively designed training and development program has the potential to enhance employee productivity and performance, thus providing a rationale for salary augmentation. Understanding how to best utilize training and development programs enables a company to develop a qualified and competitive talent pool (Salas et al., 2012).

Therefore, it is imperative for policymakers to have a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which practical workforce training and development can ensure the presence of a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. Establishing effective rules and standards is of utmost importance in order to enhance human capital (Bell & Moore, 2018; Bell et al., 2017). The effectiveness of training and development within organizations, as well as the extent to which desired outcomes are achieved, can be influenced by human resources executives, business leaders, and learning officers. In the realm of training and development, the efficacy of such endeavors can be greatly influenced by the actions and signals exhibited by senior leaders. Consequently, these leaders must ensure that their organization allocates resources efficiently

toward training and development initiatives. The allocation of resources towards training and development initiatives ought to be regarded as an investment in the human capital of an organization, rather than a mere operational expense (Salas et al. 2012).

### **Grit**

In recent years, there has been a growing interest among scholars in the emerging personality trait known as grit. The concept of grit was introduced by Duckworth et al. (2007) in order to emphasize the importance of a non-cognitive construct in assessing successful learning. Extensive scholarly investigations have been undertaken to examine the significance of grit, as it has the potential to be cultivated and fostered to achieve enduring success throughout one's lifetime. Duckworth et al. (2007) defined grit as "perseverance and passion for long-term goals ... working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort, and interest over the years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress" (p. 1087), and research revealed that people with more substantial degrees of grit persevere longer when completing difficult tasks (Duckworth et al., 2007). This characteristic predicts college dropout rates, workplace learning, and performance in spelling competitions (Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2014; Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009).

As per the literature, grit is a non-cognitive trait that consists of two fundamental components for achieving long-term goals: perseverance and passion. Perseverance, consistency, and long-term interest are attributes that define the grit-type personality, which is correlated with endurance, conscientiousness, self-control, awareness, and ambition (Duckworth et al., 2007). It is about progressing consistently and having a decision-guiding compass. According to a recent study, grit comprises determination, resilience, perseverance, fortitude, tenacity, and stamina (Aparicio et al., 2017). The concept of grit is strongly tied to intrinsic motivation (Duckworth &

Gross, 2014; Duckworth et al., 2007). It also has been demonstrated that grit is a predictor of academic accomplishment (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Perkins-Gough, 2013) and metacognition (Arslan et al., 2013). For example, grittier doctorate students spent more hours studying each week and earned higher marks (Cross, 2014). Developing grit among students may boost their probability of achieving higher grades, more concentration, and outstanding educational achievement in completing an education. Therefore, grit is a crucial aspect of student involvement and academic achievement. It is then again thought that the likelihood of overcoming potential difficulties and attaining success favors those who not only exert more significant effort but also enjoy their work (Duckworth & Gross, 2014). Even though high levels of grit do not necessarily imply equal engagement of passion and perseverance in all life endeavors, grit has proven to be a valid indicator of success and achievement in the most important long-term goals (Duckworth & Gross, 2014). Duckworth (2016) suggested that grit predicts success more accurately than talent and emotional intelligence. Being gritty entails pursuing a single passion, as opposed to several passions, with consistent interest and sustained effort over time (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Furthermore, studies show that grit is strongly linked to age and level of education (Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Duckworth et al., 2007), and it has been shown that grit is a good predictor of better learning outcomes in education. While the concept of grit is becoming a buzzword (Hoover, 2012) among those concerned with the perseverance and retention of traditional-aged college students, the word is not currently associated with the literature on adult education (Olson, 2015).

Scholars examine grit as a new method for evaluating performance-related character strength, which is utilized to achieve one's potential in a particular situation (Soutter & Seider, 2013). The same level of evaluation can be extended to employees in the workplace. According



to Duckworth et al. (2007), grit, a non-cognitive quality, gives a tremendous advantage to an individual in acquiring the character to pursue long-term goals with perseverance and determination. Employees with grit tend to have greater confidence and can overcome failures in stressful working situations without thinking they have failed. It encourages the employees to reach their full potential. In addition, gritty personnel focus on the outcome they can influence and do not waste time or energy on matters outside their control. Those with perseverance understand that learning from mistakes is part of the learning curve, and they view it as a challenge and move on to avoid it from happening again (Rasidi, 2021). Therefore, cultivating grit enables individuals to become self-improvers and problem-solvers. Individuals with more grit are typically determined, often overconfident workers who perceive themselves as achievers and contributors. The improved form of self-determination theory that incorporates psychological nutrients necessary for individual adaptation, integrity, and development is emphasized by Deci et al. (2017). Because character development has not been recognized, this definition excludes human motivation and goals. Later, professionals in positive psychology began developing well-being theories such as flow by Csikszentmihalyi (2008) and flourish by Seligman (2012). Previous research has revealed that grit is predictive of job performance. Agarwal (2014) mentioned the Social Exchange Theory to assess justice, trust, and inventiveness. In employer-employee relationships, social interaction is frequently related to the employee's psychological well-being. This concept stems from Human Resource Management (HRM) and refers to workplace expectations shared by employers and employees. Employees drive innovation because their jobs necessitate process or product improvement. According to the literature on HRM, innovation can only occur when employees actively generate and implement ideas (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017). In other words, self-learning is an excellent way to foster

innovation because motivated or self-directed employees are eager to seize opportunities and devise solutions (Rasidi, 2021).

Since Duckworth et al. (2007) introduced the concept of grit to the world, it has attracted significant interest and has been the subject of extensive study. However, the following research findings generated a few questions requiring clarification. The first difficulty involved the definition of grit. According to the meta-analysis by Credé et al. (2017), two sub-factors of grit (consistency of interest and perseverance of effort) might have different effects on academic achievement, necessitating an examination of the effect of grit on academic achievement in terms of consistency of interest and perseverance of effort. Second, it has been questioned if grit is a quality distinct from other personal characteristics, such as self-control and conscientiousness, which are proven indicators of social success. The third and most critical issue is that research findings are inconsistent on whether grit has a beneficial effect on academic accomplishment. While much empirical research has proven the favorable relationship between grit and academic achievement (Duckworth et al., 2007; Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2014; Mendolia & Walker, 2014; Slick & Lee, 2014; Strayhorn, 2014), others have not (Bazelais et al., 2016; Datu et al., 2016; Davidson, 2014; Ivcevic & Brackett, 2014). Lastly, recent research on grit has been focused on school-aged learners and traditional college students. The age, educational achievement, and motivation of students enrolled in distance learning institutions vary from those in traditional institutions, and these disparities warrant further examination.

## **Psychological Capital**

### **Positive Psychology**

At the turn of the twentieth century, Martin Seligman, the president of the American Psychological Association in 1998, issued a call for increased research that would shift the field

of psychology away from its near-exclusive focus on pathological or dysfunctional human functioning and toward a more balanced concern for the optimization of human functioning (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Since 1998, when he shifted his focus to positive psychology, mainstream scientific psychology has benefited from considerable empirical research and theoretical progress. Seligman has argued in favor of a more positive approach to psychology, emphasizing people's positive resources and capacities while enhancing and developing their strengths and competences as opposed to emphasizing people's flaws and striving to make up for them (Luthans & Jensen, 2005; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017).

Positive psychologists have recently shifted their attention from just mending flaws to creating, maximizing, and fostering subjective, individual, and group-level strengths, positive qualities, and skills. Positive psychology at the subjective level is concentrated on the individual's valued subjective experiences of well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past), flow, joy, sensual pleasures, and happiness (in the present), and constructive cognitions of hope, optimism, and faith (in the future). At the level of the individual, this refers to positive characteristics such as love, courage, interpersonal competence, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, a focus on the future, and wisdom. At the group level, these include accountability, nurturing, benevolence, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic, among others (Seligman, 2002).

Seligman and other psychologists called for a refocus of psychological research on two forgotten goals: helping healthy people become happier and more productive and realizing human potential. The result has been not only a revival of academic interest but also theoretical and empirical research in the field now known as "positive psychology" (Luthans et al., 2007b,

p. 9). Since then, positive psychology has spawned two related fields: workplace positivity and strength-based management.

### **Psychological Capital**

The core concept of psychological capital, or PsyCap, is derived from positive psychology and positive organizational behavior (Luthans et al., 2015). PsyCap's first-order positive psychological resources consist of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism, also known as the HERO within (Luthans et al., 2004; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Luthans et al., 2007a). These four best meet the criteria for inclusion: they are based on theory and research, are positive, can be measured in a valid way, are similar to states, and have an effect on attitudes, behaviors, performance, and well-being (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017; Luthans et al., 2007b). PsyCap is defined as

an individual's positive psychological state of development characterized by:

(a) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (b) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (c) persevering toward the goals, and when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (d) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success (Luthans et al., 2007b, p. 3).

PsyCap has been demonstrated theoretically (Luthans et al., 2007b) and empirically (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017; Luthans et al., 2007a; Luthans et al., 2015) to be a higher order core construct (Avey et al., 2010; Lorenz et al., 2016). A state-like capability is a crucial prerequisite for PsyCap. Prior research has established that each of the four PsyCap capacities is, to some extent, flexible and amenable to growth (Luthans et al., 2007b; Luthans et al., 2015).

## *Hope*

Hope theory combines the conception of objectives, the tactics for achieving those goals (pathways), and the motivation to pursue those goals (agency) (Snyder et al., 1991, p. 287). In other words, hope is a cognitive state in which a person can set realistic but challenging objectives and expectations and then work toward them with self-directed determination, energy, and a sense of being in control (Luthans et al., 2007b). Snyder et al. (2002) discovered that higher hope scores among incoming first-year students significantly predicted overall grade point averages, even after controlling for entrance exam scores. Students who reported higher levels of hope were also more likely to stay in school and eventually graduate. Research also has shown that there is a positive connection between hope and workplace performance, such as the level of hope held by employees and the profitability of the organization (Adams III et al., 2010), as well as the level of hope held by organizational leaders and the profitability of their units, and the level of employee satisfaction and retention (Peterson & Luthans, 2003). Moreover, Youssef (2004) also found that a manager's level of optimism affected how well employees did their jobs; how happy they were at work; how satisfied they were with their jobs; and how committed they were to the organization.

## *Efficacy*

The term efficacy reflects the theoretical and scientific foundations of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) as well as the more applied approach associated with confidence (Kanter, 2006; Luthans et al., 2007b). It is defined as "one's conviction or confidence about his or her ability to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to execute a specific task within a given context successfully" (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998b, p. 66). Five characteristics distinguish people with high self-efficacy: (a) they set high goals for themselves

and self-select into challenging tasks; (b) they welcome and thrive on challenges; (c) they are highly self-motivated; (d) they invest the necessary effort to achieve their goals; and (e) they persist in the face of obstacles (Luthans et al., 2007b, p. 38). Individuals with a high level of efficacy can perform efficiently with minimal external input for lengthy periods. In addition, they generate their disparities by continually challenging themselves with more significant self-set goals and actively seeking and choosing strenuous activities (Luthans et al., 2007b; Luthans et al., 2015). Numerous studies have found strong and positive correlations between high levels of self-efficacy and academic achievement (Richardson et al., 2012; Valentine et al., 2004). Self-efficacy has been identified as a mediating factor that influences students' effort, persistence, and perseverance (Zeldin & Pajares, 2000).

### ***Resilience***

Garmezy (1985) created the term resiliency and subsequently described it as “the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten its ability to function and continue developing” (Masten, 2015; Cutuli et al., 2018). The concept of resilience in PsyCap has been expanded to encompass not only the ability to recover from adversity but also very positive and demanding situations, as well as the desire to push beyond the norm and equilibrium point (Avolio & Luthans, 2006; Luthans et al., 2007b). These psychological resources appear especially relevant for academic achievement. Wasonga et al. (2003) has seen, for instance, that resilient learners demonstrate a sense of competence and strong problem-solving abilities. They possess great self-esteem, self-discipline, adaptability, an even temper, and an eagerness to engage in new activities. Additionally, Martin and Marsh (2006) discovered that academic resilience was a substantial predictor of crucial outcomes like class involvement, enjoyment of school, and general self-esteem. The association between resiliency and workplace

outcomes, such as improved employee performance (Luthans et al., 2007a; Luthans & Jensen, 2005; Luthans et al., 2015; Youssef, 2004), job satisfaction (Luthans & Jensen, 2005; Luthans et al., 2015; Youssef, 2004), work pleasure (Luthans et al., 2015; Youssef, 2004), and organizational commitment (Luthans et al., 2015; Youssef, 2004), has been found to be favorable.

### ***Optimism***

Optimism is “an explanatory style that attributes positive events to personal, permanent, and pervasive causes and interprets negative events in terms of external, temporary, and situation-specific factors” (Luthans et al., 2007b, p.90). Some researchers found the negative consequences of false optimism, including the detrimental effects of repeated unpleasant life events on physical health and psychological well-being (Peterson & Chang, 2003) and learned helplessness (Seligman, 1998). Schneider (2001) stressed the need for realistic optimism. PsyCap optimism grounded in realism has a strong intuitive appeal and is frequently correlated with several favorable results. Optimists are more inclined to embrace change, recognize prospects, and concentrate on capitalizing on such chances (Luthans et al., 2007b). According to previous studies, differences in exposition style can substantially affect academic achievement. For instance, empirical research has proven that individuals with more optimistic attitudes perform much better in the classroom than those with pessimistic views (El-Anzi, 2005; Solberg et al., 2009). Seligman (1998) proved that optimism influences the performance of the enormous Metropolitan Life Insurance sales force. It has also been demonstrated that PsyCap positivity increases motivation for long-term performance (Youssef-Morgan & Petersen, 2019) and professional resilience (Waterman et al., 1994; Waterman et al., 2013). Employees with career resilience recognize that they are accountable for their careers and work to make their

capabilities relevant and valuable to current and prospective employers (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017).

### **Job Search Behaviors**

Job searching has become so omnipresent and common as individuals seek employment following graduation, pursuing career opportunities, or a job loss that it is now viewed as an intrinsic aspect of working life (van Hoyer, 2018). Simultaneously, there has been a considerable rise in research on job search and unemployment, including a meta-analysis that finds job search behavior as a significant factor in gaining employment (Kanfer et al., 2001). Kanfer et al. (2001) described job search behavior as the outcome of a self-regulatory process that begins with identifying and committing to an employment target. Job seekers must engage in self-regulation because job searching is primarily self-managed, often time-consuming, and usually competitive (van Hooft et al., 2021). For instance, job searchers must choose their employment objectives and strategies and then plan, organize, and execute search behaviors that are congruent with these objectives and strategies. Nonetheless, a job search is stressful for many people due to its uncertainty, financial pressure, and multiple setbacks (Song et al., 2009; Wanberg et al., 2010).

This objective motivates subsequent search behavior oriented toward obtaining the desired result. When the employment objective is attained or abandoned, the job search process and related efforts and activities are said to conclude. More recently, it refers to individuals' actions to gather information about available labor market opportunities (Brown et al., 2006). These include (1) preparatory job search and (2) active job search (Blau, 1993, 1994). During the preparatory phase of a job search, individuals receive information about potential employment leads from various sources, including job sites, job ads, and acquaintances. After following up on these leads, job searchers engage in active job search behaviors such as contacting and applying



to prospective employers. It involves behaviors associated with actual job seeking. Formal job search involves public sources such as the Internet, university recruitment, newspapers, and employment agencies. In contrast, informal job search involves private sources such as friends, family members, and business contacts. Though all four components of job search intensity are expected to positively correlate with the number of interviews, employment status, and job offers, stage theories indicate that active job search has stronger correlations than preparatory job search. According to recruiting literature and descriptive data demonstrating that many people get jobs through their networks (Franzen & Hangartner, 2006), informal job search contains more relationships than formal job search (Barber, 1998; Zottoli & Wanous, 2000).

According to the findings, both active and preparatory job search behaviors are positively associated with employment outcomes (Saks & Ashforth, 1999; van Hooft et al., 2021; van Hoyer, 2018). Nevertheless, active job search behavior is a more significant predictor (Blau, 1993; Saks, 2006; Saks & Ashforth, 2000; van Hooft et al., 2021; van Hoyer, 2018) and, consistent with a sequential perspective on job search, it mediates the effects of preparatory search behavior (Blau, 1994). In addition, individuals do not continuously actively pursue their job search following the preparatory phase, such as when no attractive work opportunities are located. In this vein, Blau (1994) discovered that job seekers with firmer job search self-efficacy beliefs had a more vital link between preparatory and active job search behavior (Liu et al., 2014).

Additionally, job search behavior can be analyzed along two fundamental parameters: Job-search intensity relates to the amount of effort, time, and scope individuals dedicate to job search activities. Examples of actions include speaking with others (e.g., friends or ex-colleagues) for advice on jobs and search techniques, studying internet job advertisements,

visiting employment agencies, and sending job applications. Researchers have highlighted the importance of job search quality in predicting employment success, in addition to job search intensity. The quality of a job search refers to the thoroughness of the job search activity. It demonstrates the extent to which the job seeking is organized and well-prepared, with behaviors and products (e.g., resume, cover letter, application, networking, or interview) that meet or surpass the expectations of potential employers (van Hooft et al., 2013). For example, Wanberg et al. (2000) underlined the importance of professionally written resumes and job applications, while Koen et al. (2010) concluded that seeking intelligently (rather than laboriously) is critical for employment success. Van Hooft et al. (2013) proposed that a successful job search necessitates tailoring one's behavior and products to the needs of prospective employers.

Although job seekers engage in a number of job search behaviors during a job search, the majority of studies have focused on only one sort of job search behavior (Saks, 2006). Consequently, it is uncertain which job search behaviors are the most effective. In addition, if numerous job-seeking behaviors are not included in a single study, the impact of specific activities may be exaggerated (Chen & Lim, 2012). For instance, Wanberg et al. (2000) discovered that networking intensity predicted employment status but not when job search intensity was controlled. Unsurprisingly, there has been a request for job search research that investigates a broader range of job search behaviors and outcomes in a single study (Brasher & Chen, 1999, Manroop & Richardson, 2016; Schwab et al., 1987; Wanberg et al., 2016).

## **Quality of Reemployment**

### **Person-Organization Fit**

Person-organization fit (P-O fit) is concerned with the congruence of an individual's values, beliefs, and personality with an organization's goals, norms, and culture (Bowen et al.,

1991; Netemeyer et al., 1997; Kristoff, 1996). For example, Kristof (1996) defined P-O fit as “the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both” (p. 4-5). Judge et al. (2000) suggested that P-O fit is determined by the correspondence between a person’s and an organization’s attributes. As subsidiary criteria of P-O fit, many additional factors, such as interests, needs, monetary compensation, and organizational structure, have been discussed (Cable & Judge, 1997).

The relationship between person-organization fit and organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational productivity, organizational commitment, and organizational attractiveness, has been found to be positive (Jutras & Mathieu, 2016; Pfeffelmann et al., 2010). Furthermore, P-O fit has a negative effect on employee turnover intentions (McCulloch & Turban, 2007). Because of the positive effects of P-O fit on organizations’ outcomes, a significant amount of research has been conducted on the perceptions of organizations by both their current employees and new employees joining the organization.

Consequently, researchers have also examined the connection between job seekers’ perceptions of P-O fit and their job-searching behavior. For instance, Wei et al. (2016) discovered that P-O fit increases job seekers’ intention to apply when the organization’s image is positive. Saks and Ashforth (1997) also suggested that job seekers develop P-O fit by evaluating various aspects of organizational characteristics and that the assessment of their P-O fit substantially impacts the acceptance of employment offers. In conclusion, P-O fit has been identified as an essential predictor of employee performance and job search and outcome of job seekers (Cable & Judge, 1996; Carless, 2005).

This strategy distinguishes between supplementary and complementary fit. When an individual possesses characteristics similar to others, this exemplifies supplementary fit. Complementary fit, on the other hand, occurs when the needs of both the individual and the situation are met.

### **Person-Job Fit**

The relationship between a person's characteristics and those of the job or tasks performed at work (Kristof, 1996) is referred to as the Person-job Fit (P-J fit). P-J fit matches a person's knowledge, skills, and abilities with what the job requires or between their needs and wants and what the job gives them (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Edwards, 1991; O'Reilly III et al., 1991). According to research on realistic job previews, accurate and realistic job information allows candidates to evaluate the degree of congruence between their knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) and the job requirements (Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Wanous, 1977). Applicants who perceive a match between their KSA and the job requirements are likely to advance in the hiring process and accept an offer of employment. According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the research conducted by Realistic Job Previews (RJP) demonstrated that accurate job information provided during the recruitment and selection process is associated with favorable employment outcomes such as high job satisfaction, low attrition from the recruitment process, high work performance, and low voluntary turnover (Meglino et al., 2000; Phillips, 1998). Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) also discovered that P-J fit has the strongest correlation with future employment intentions, such as turnover. More recently, a service industry study found that employees' P-J fit is negatively associated with turnover intentions (Babakus et al., 2010). Other studies have established a correlation between P-J fit and job seekers' future behavior and

attraction to companies (Thompson et al., 2015). Nur Iplik et al. (2011) demonstrated that P-J compatibility is associated with job satisfaction as well.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a crucial element for an organization seeking to enhance and retain its employees. Job satisfaction refers to the subjective evaluation of employees regarding their job and their overall contentment with various aspects of their work (Spector, 1997). The degree to which a person finds enjoyment in the workplace is reflected in the expression of job satisfaction and it is described the extent to which an individual derives pleasure from their work within an organization. The reflection is the result of the combining of individual personal interests with what is provided by the organization (Baotham et al., 2010). Spector (1997) stated that previous researchers primarily concentrated on the aspect of addressing employees' needs. In addition, job satisfaction is dependent on the extent to which a job meets an employee's physical and psychological needs, such as compensation and benefits. When organizations meet the fundamental needs of employees, employees are more likely to remain with that organization. Nevertheless, the study of job satisfaction has shifted its emphasis from an employee's desires to an employee's cognitive mechanisms (Lee et al., 2012). Therefore, it encompasses both cognitive and affective responses to the extent of alignment between an employee's expectations and the actual rewards gained from their current job, as well as their emotional affinity towards the job itself (Carmeli & Weisberg, 2006). Job satisfaction is often cited as a significant determinant of employees' intention to stay, as an improvement in an employee's attitude towards their job typically correlates with an increased willingness to remain in their position. Early meta-analyses have provided support for the association between job satisfaction and intention to leave

(Griffeth et al., 2000; Tett & Meyer, 1993), and subsequent studies have continued to validate this relationship (Baruch et al., 2016).

### **Intention to Remain**

Employees' intention to remain with or leave an organization was considered the most accurate indicator of their voluntary decision to continue working or quit (Hom et al., 2017). Research has shown that the intangible costs associated with voluntary turnover behaviors were significant for employees as well as organizations, as they were required to undergo reorganization and adjustment to accommodate new working conditions. The identical principle applied to the concrete expenses associated with recruiting, hiring, and training an individual employee, which could vary from 90% to 200% of the annual salary designated for the specific role (Allen et al., 2010). Given the impact on organizations and individuals, it was expected that there would be more and more attempts to forecast and encourage professionals' intention to remain and their corresponding behavior. The intention to remain within an organization, often referred to as organizational commitment, has been a topic of considerable interest and investigation in organizational psychology and management literature (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Organizational commitment encompasses an individual's psychological attachment toward their organization, influencing their willingness to stay with it and engage in discretionary efforts to contribute to its success (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Multiple studies have consistently demonstrated that increased levels of organizational commitment are linked to a range of favorable results for both employees and organizations. Employees who demonstrate high levels of commitment experience increased job satisfaction, job involvement, and overall well-being (Meyer et al., 2002). Regarding the organization, greater levels of dedication are linked to decreased intentions

to leave, enhanced job performance, and increased engagement in organizational citizenship behaviors (Allen & Meyer, 1996).

### **Employment Quality**

Conceptually, high levels of grit, higher psychological capital, and intensive job search behavior should lead to higher-quality employment. Saks and Ashforth (2002) equated employment quality with a good fit between the individual, the job, and the organization. Existing research on reemployment has primarily focused on job search intensity as a predictor of quantitative reemployment outcomes, such as the number of jobs offers obtained, whether or not to find a job, and the time required until reemployment. However, these studies have been unable to predict meaningful differences in the quality of reemployment, such as how satisfied individuals are with their jobs; how well their new organizations meet their values; or how well their new jobs meet their demands and needs (Kanfer et al., 2001; Vinokur & Schul, 2002; Wanberg et al., 2016). It appears that one's job-search efforts do not guarantee that one will find a suitable position, and more likely, it is the focus of this effort that determines the quality of reemployment. Consequently, this study hypothesizes that psychological capital and job search behaviors influence the quality of the new job following termination from the previous position.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Theoretical Foundations**

#### ***Conservation of Resource Theory***

The Conservation of Resource (COR) theory assumes that (a) individuals seek to invest their resources to cope with threatening conditions and protect themselves from resource loss, and (b) individuals not only strive to preserve but also accumulate their resources (Hobfoll,

1989). According to the COR theory, individuals experience stress when they lose their resources or are placed in a position where they may lose them (Hobfoll, 2002). Consequently, individuals with more substantial job resources may be less sensitive to resource loss and better able to manage job demands. On the other hand, individuals with fewer resources may be more sensitive to resource loss and less able to manage job demands.

### ***Self-Determination Theory***

Self-determination Theory (SDT) exemplifies a variety of academic achievement and learning strategies. According to the SDT, individuals with higher levels of grit are more persistent in pursuing goals despite setbacks, disruptions, or other forms of interference than their peers with lower levels of grit (Duckworth and Quinn, 2009; Maddi et al., 2012; Strayhorn, 2014). The widely used theory of motivation known as SDT also has been successful in identifying psychological factors and how they influence attitudes, behaviors, and well-being in a variety of contexts (Ryan & Deci, 2017), including employment or reemployment (van der Vaart et al., 2019). SDT states that a person's behavior and well-being are affected by both the amount and type of motivation they have. This theory differentiates between engaging in an activity. After all, one feels obligated to engage in an activity because it is valuable or enjoyable (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2017). Per this theory, different types of motivation are associated with distinct job search outcomes (van der Vaart et al., 2022). Even though SDT divides these various types of motivation into groups and asserts that they exist on a continuum, researchers agree that they all exist simultaneously for behavior to be multidetermined (Howard et al., 2018; Vansteenkiste & Mouratidis, 2016).



## **Hypotheses Development**

### ***Grit and Quality of Reemployment***

In recent years, there has been a great deal of academic interest in grit, which can have a positive effect on achievement, goal effort, and social performance and can lead to positive outcomes (Hill et al., 2016; Li et al., 2018). In contrast to other cognitive factors, grit is developed through a person's skills, passion, and mindset (Duckworth, 2016). Several studies, including one by Cross (2014), found that more determined doctoral students devoted more time to study, resulting in superior performance. Greater levels of job satisfaction and engagement were associated with grit (Dugan et al., 2019; Suzuki et al., 2015). According to Suzuki et al. (2015), individuals with more grit perform better in both the workplace and the classroom because they are more engaged.

Few studies have addressed work-related grit. One study, for instance, examined the relationship between grit and novice teacher retention and performance (Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014). Additionally, gritty leaders were more likely to influence their followers positively (Caza & Posner, 2019; Gilson et al., 2016; Schimschal & Lomas, 2019). Individuals with grit are typically more aware of their future career paths and spend more time persistently searching for employment (Kaufman & Duckworth, 2017).

Fit has been identified as a performance factor among college students and employees (Edwards & Rothbard, 1999; Gilbreath, 2004; Gilbreath et al., 2011; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). In addition, the literature suggests that fit leads to greater social integration, which has a positive impact on student outcomes (McKenzie & Schweitzer, 2001). Whipple and Dimitrova-Grajzl (2021) identified grit and P-E fit as the most critical noncognitive predictors of achievement. They discovered that grit positively affects college grade point average and that the

fit predicts academic achievement in the first year at a military college. Hence, individuals with high grit are highly capable of enhancing their quality of reemployment, including person-organization fit, person-job fit, and turnover intention. Individuals with a high level of grit are characterized by their determination to achieve their goals, their resilience in the face of adversity, and their concentration (Clark & Malecki, 2019). Therefore, when faced with a job search and reemployment, individuals may be more determined and exert great effort.

Grit comprises two dimensions: perseverance of effort and consistency of interest. Given the explicit distinction between these two dimensions, it is currently unclear whether these aspects of grit predict the essential quality of reemployment and whether they predict these outcomes similarly. With this in mind, the current study decided to use grit as a critical variable and empirically test its effects on individuals currently employed who were terminated from their previous job. Based on the previously discussed information, grit is expected to significantly influence the quality of reemployment outcomes. Consequently, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

*Hypothesis 1: Grit has a positive effect on quality of reemployment.*

### ***Grit, Psychological Capital, and Quality of Reemployment***

Psychological Capital (PsyCap) is a concept comprised of four positive individual strengths distinct psychological resources in the workplace (Luthans et al., 2007b). Hope entails recognizing potential routes to a goal and having a strong desire to reach that objective (Snyder et al., 2002). Self-efficacy is characterized by confidence in one's abilities (Bandura, 1997). Resilience reflects the capacity to recover from adversity (Masten, 2015). Optimism reflects positive cognitive orientations toward the future and the expectation of favorable outcomes (Schneider, 2001).

The positive core concept of PsyCap has been demonstrated by a large and continually expanding body of research. Strong relationships exist between these constructs and practical workplace outcomes, such as employee performance (Avey et al., 2010; Paterson et al., 2014), employee attitudes (Luthans et al., 2007a; Schulz et al., 2014), job satisfaction (Luthans et al., 2010), innovative work behaviors and overall company financial performance (Newman et al., 2014), behaviors (Simbula et al., 2011), and employee well-being (Avey et al., 2010). More specifically, Luthans and Youssef-Morgan (2017) suggested that students must cultivate PsyCap to compete in the marketplace. According to research conducted by Avey et al. (2008), Guan (2019) and Terry et al. (2023), individuals with higher PsyCap levels are better able to endure and overcome daily challenges at work than their peers. Additionally, the literature revealed that graduates with PsyCap perceived themselves as demonstrating superior job performance and were more committed to their jobs (Larson et al., 2013). PsyCap is therefore an influential workplace construct; it has been identified as an essential intervention target (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory frequently models it as a psychological resource (Hobfoll, 2002; Hobfoll et al., 2018).

In addition to these direct relationships, the role of PsyCap as a mediating variable has drawn the attention of researchers from a variety of contexts and industries, such as education, healthcare, and business. Given that grit was defined as persistently pursuing a long-term interest, it was probable that this ability required PsyCap elements. Those who have a high level of grit can show that they are confident in their ability to achieve their goals (efficacy), have the ability to recover quickly from setbacks (resilience), believe that they will achieve their goals in the future (optimism), and try new approaches (hope) in order to achieve their goals. For example, in a recent study that examined the relationship between grit and grade point averages

among business students, PsyCap predominantly mediates the relationship between their grit and grade point averages (Luthans et al., 2019). It was also discovered that PsyCap mediates the relationship between occupational stress and psychological well-being among healthcare workers and law enforcement officers. In this study, PsyCap helped participants combat the stress caused by the pandemic and maintain a higher level of psychological well-being during the pandemic response (Ravikumar, 2023). According to research performed by Luthans et al. (2008b), PsyCap was discovered to mediate the relationship between a supportive work climate and performance. Moreover, it has been illustrated that PsyCap mediates the relationship between work-family conflict and depressive symptoms among nurses (Hao et al., 2015) and between occupational stress and job burnout among bank employees (Li et al., 2015). A study investigated the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction among township leaders; PsyCap was found to be a crucial mediating variable (Shang Guan et al., 2017). Psychological capital, consisting of the psychological resources (hope, efficacy, resiliency, and optimism), seems to help drive gritty individuals' quality of reemployment who were terminated from their previous job. The preceding discourse gives rise to the subsequent hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 2: Grit has a positive effect on psychological capital.*

*Hypothesis 3: Psychological capital has a positive effect on quality of reemployment.*

### ***Grit, Job Search Behaviors, and Quality of Reemployment***

Individuals with high levels of grit work persistently and passionately toward meaningful goals despite adversity and obstacles (Duckworth, 2016; Duckworth et al., 2007). As one develops grit through their mindset, abilities, and passion (Duckworth, 2016), they tend to be more aware of their future career goals and spend more time persistently searching for jobs (Kaufman & Duckworth, 2017). Similarly, passion and perseverance are required for

performance; mastery requires many hours of deliberate practice and is marked by initial failures through which a person must persevere (Ericsson et al., 1993). It is unlikely that a person engages in a deliberate practice that enables performance if he or she does not persevere through obstacles or constantly change their interests (Credé et al., 2017).

In the job search context, job seekers face various challenges, including a mismatch between the requirements of the job market and the knowledge, skills, abilities, or experience they offer, as well as the financial burden that comes with looking for employment (van Hooft, 2014). In an effort to find a job or re-enter the workforce, it will be crucial to demonstrate perseverance, determination, hard work, and a willingness to accept failure (Datu et al., 2017). During the arduous job-searching process, job seekers would also need to maintain focus and enthusiasm, as well as establish priorities (Datu et al., 2017).

Self-determination Theory (SDT) exemplifies a variety of academic achievement and learning strategies. According to the SDT, individuals with higher levels of grit are more persistent in pursuing goals despite setbacks, disruptions, or other forms of interference than their peers with lower levels of grit (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Maddi et al., 2012; Strayhorn, 2014). Accordingly, individuals with high levels of grit are highly capable of enhancing their job search behaviors, including being more prepared and more active. Individuals with a high level of grit are persistent in pursuing their goals, resilient in the face of adversity, and goal-oriented (Clark & Malecki, 2019). Therefore, when individuals are faced with the challenge of job searching, they may exert greater determination and tremendous effort. Therefore, these arguments lead to the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 4: Grit has a positive effect on job search behaviors.*

*Hypothesis 5: Job search behaviors has a positive effect on quality of reemployment.*

### ***Mediation Effects of Psychological Capital and Job Search Behaviors***

The vast majority of reemployment research conducted to date has focused on job search behavior or job search intensity as potential predictors of employment outcomes. These outcomes consist of finding employment (i.e. whether an individual found a job), number of job interview or job offers obtained (van Hooft et al., 2013), and the time required to find reemployment (i.e. the time spent to obtain employment) (Kanfer et al., 2001).

For example, people with greater hope exhibited greater goal-directed energy (Snyder et al., 1991) and, consequently, experienced less stress and anxiety during the job search (Georgiou & Nikolaou, 2019). Job search self-efficacy also influences job search behaviors (Kanfer et al., 2001; Saks & Ashforth, 1999, 2000, 2002; Sun et al., 2013), the number of interviews (Brown et al., 2006; Saks, 2006), job offers (Kanfer et al., 2001; Sun et al., 2013), and employment status (Kanfer & Hulin, 1985; Saks & Ashforth, 1999). Similarly, resilience can assist job seekers in recovering from the numerous rejections that accompany the job search (Fleig-Palmer et al., 2009; Lyons et al., 2015). Finally, optimism influences job search behavior (Kanfer et al., 2001). Individuals who responded to job loss with optimism consistently had positive reemployment-related thoughts, demonstrating increased motivation; Optimistic reemployment-related thoughts demonstrate increased motivation (Leana et al., 1998). The combination of these four factors constitutes PsyCap, or an individual's positive psychological state of development (Luthans et al., 2015). The ability of PsyCap to influence job search success through the application of job search behavior could make it an indispensable tool for easing the process of finding quality of new employment.

However, these studies have not been able to predict significant differences in the quality of reemployment, like how well their new jobs meet their needs, how happy people are with their

jobs, and the degree to which the organization or job is a good fit for individuals (Carrier et al., 2014; Kanfer et al., 2001; Koen et al., 2010, 2016; Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Vinokur & Schul, 2002; Wanberg et al., 2002; Wanberg et al. 2016; Wanberg et al., 2019). It appears that one's job-search efforts do not guarantee that they will find a suitable position. The focus of this effort will likely determine the quality of reemployment.

The adoption of positive attitudes and behaviors requires an optimistic mindset. In their job search, individuals who are persistent, independent, determined, and resilient are more likely to be aggressive and assertive (Moorhouse & Caltabiano, 2007). The Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) implies that resource levels, such as participation in decision-making and social support, positively influence active coping strategies. In other words, the greater an individual's psychological resources, the greater their capacity to engage in additional resource-generating activities, such as maintaining a positive attitude, seeking advice or assistance, and working harder (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Ito & Brotheridge, 2003). Therefore, on the one hand, individuals with greater job resources may be less sensitive to resource loss and better equipped to manage job demands. On the other hand, individuals with fewer resources may be more sensitive to resource loss and less capable of meeting job requirements.

Based on the evidence from previous research and the imperative of investigating the effects of mediation, a job seeker who possesses the positive psychological resources measured by PsyCap has a greater likelihood of engaging in resource-generating activities such as job searching. This body of literature indicates that PsyCap has the potential to increase job search behavior, which could affect the quality of job search results. These outcomes encompass a person's fit within their new organization (i.e., person-organization fit) and role within that organization (i.e., person-job fit), which is necessary to examine mediation effects.

Consequently, drawing upon prior empirical evidence, the researcher formulated the subsequent hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 6: Psychological capital has a positive effect on job search behaviors.*

*Hypothesis 7: Psychological capital mediates the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment.*

*Hypothesis 8: Job search behavior mediates the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment.*

*Hypothesis 9: Psychological capital and job search behavior have sequential mediation effects in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment.*

The summaries of hypotheses are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Summary of Hypotheses*

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H<sub>1</sub>: Grit has a positive effect on quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

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H<sub>2</sub>: Grit has a positive effect on psychological capital for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

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H<sub>3</sub>: Psychological capital has a positive effect on quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

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H4: Grit has a positive effect on job search behaviors for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

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H5: Job search behaviors has a positive effect on quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

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H6: Psychological capital has a positive effect on job search behaviors for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

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H7: Psychological capital mediates the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

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H8: Job search behavior mediates the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

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H9: Psychological capital and job search behavior have sequential mediation effects in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

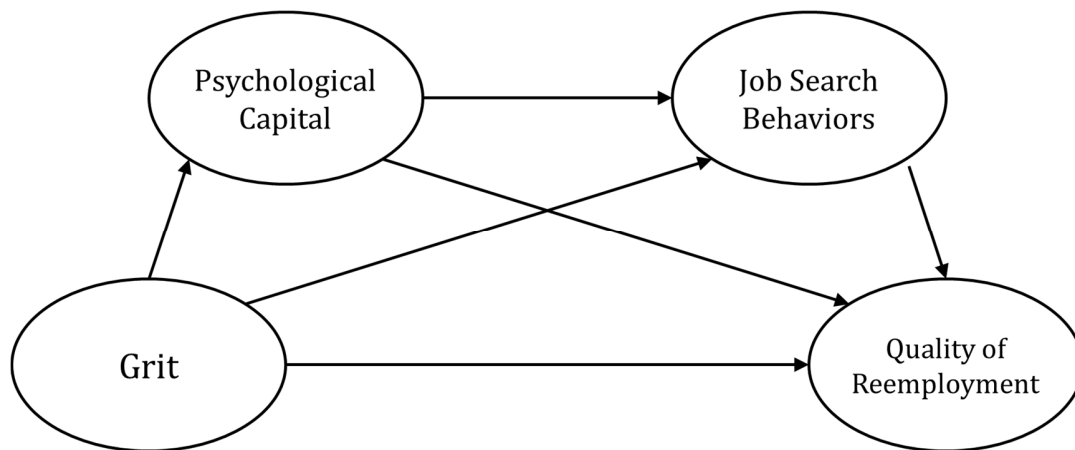
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## Research Model

Based on the principles of resource conservation theory and self-determination theory, the proposed conceptual model (see Figure 2) suggests that grit, psychological capital, and job search behavior have an impact on the quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

**Figure 2**

*Research Model*



That is, grit, hope, efficacy, resilience, optimism, preparatory job search behavior, and active job search behavior may be introduced as variables of quality of reemployment, including person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain. In particular, this model incorporates psychological capital and job search behavior as potential mediators that explain how grit influences the quality of reemployment. The model contains demographic characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, educational attainment, marital and familial status, employment status, annual personal income, employee tenure, and job classification.

## **Chapter 3. Methods**

### **Introduction**

The first chapter of the study encompassed various aspects, including the general background information pertaining to the topic, a clear statement of the problem being investigated, the theoretical framework guiding the study, the purpose of the research, the research questions being explored, the significance of the study, the limitations encountered during the research process, the definition of key terms, and the overall organization of the study. The literature review in the second chapter provided a comprehensive examination of various aspects related to adult education, workplace learning and development, grit, and positive psychology in the context of job search processes and work settings. It explored topics such as job search behaviors, the quality of reemployment, and the practical outcomes of human resources training and development. The measurement procedures employed in the present study were delineated within this chapter. This chapter provided an overview of the research methodology, including the data collection and analysis approach. It outlined the steps taken to examine the relationships between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and the quality of reemployment.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States. There was a need for a more comprehensive understanding of grit and its relationship with the quality of reemployment outcomes. This understanding was crucial in order to grasp the

underlying mechanism that influences individuals' person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain in their current employment. Consequently, this study endeavor has undertaken the task of formulating and evaluating a theoretical framework on the construct of grit, with the ultimate objective of enhancing the overall effectiveness of reemployment outcomes. This framework drew upon the principles of the conservation of resource theory and self-determination theory. In that regard, the aim was to thoroughly analyze (a) if quality of reemployment scores vary according to grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors, (b) the mediating effect of psychological capital in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, (c) the mediating effect of job search behaviors in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, and (d) the sequential mediation roles in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment.

### **Research Questions**

This study was grounded in a set of research questions concerning the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States.

1. To what extent does grit affect psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
2. To what extent does psychological capital affect job search behaviors and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or

furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

3. To what extent does job search behaviors affect the quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
4. Can psychological capital mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
5. Can job search behavior mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
6. Do psychological capital and job search behavior have sequential mediation effects in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

### **Research Design**

The investigation employed a cross-sectional and nonexperimental research design to explore four constructs, namely grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment. The variables of the research were assessed through the questionnaire. An online survey was utilized to gather information from currently employed individuals who had experienced termination, layoff, furlough, or incapacity due to business loss across various

regions of the United States from their previous positions. The acquisition of research data were accomplished via Qualtrics platform, wherein online questionnaires were distributed directly to respondents in order to collect the requisite data pertaining to the research variables. The study adopted a quantitative research design and analyzed the data using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 29 and SmartPLS 4 software. Quantitative research involved the measurement and quantification of ideas and expressions in order to establish a statistically significant relationship between variables (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

### **Sample Methods**

The target populations for this study consisted of individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States. The sample was designed to as closely as possible represent the entire labor force population. The administration of the survey involved two distinct steps. Initially, the researcher received approval from the institutional review board (IRB) at the researcher's institution (see Appendix A). Secondly, Qualtrics, an American marketing firm that makes software for online research, engaged participants for the purpose of data collection. The proposed participants were recruited, and the online survey was administered through the Qualtrics platform. Qualtrics proactively involved both respondents and sample providers in order to obtain participants who met the predetermined criteria for inclusion.

Qualtrics recruited participants from various sources, such as website intercept recruitment, targeted email lists, member referrals, permission-based networks, gaming sites, social media networks, or customer loyalty web portals. Before becoming a panel member, it is customary for a third party to authenticate the identities, residential details, and dates of birth of

potential panelists. Those who met the requirements were compensated for their participation in the online survey. The researcher enlisted the services of a project manager to assess the question pool, offer constructive feedback, oversee the allocation of quotas, and the overall data collection process. According to scholarly research, online recruiting firms have been found to exhibit a high level of efficiency when compared to traditional methods of data collection. This efficiency is particularly evident in several key areas, including the diversity of participants' demographic characteristics, the sample's representativeness, the reliability of the collected data, and the time and effort required for the recruitment process (Boas et al., 2020; Buhrmester et al., 2011; Caza et al., 2015; Douglas et al., 2023; Newman et al., 2021; Paolacci et al., 2010). Quantitative statistical analysis conducted with Qualtrics is frequently referenced in various professional and academic journals (Boas et al., 2020; Churchill & Iacobucci, 2009; Johnson, 2021; Miller et al., 2020; Ritter & Sue, 2007).

This study employed covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) for its analysis. According to Boomsma (1982; 1985), Kline (2013), and Wolf et al. (2013), a sample size of 200 was previously suggested as the minimum for SEMs. In anticipation of receiving some invalid responses and with a minimum sample size requirement of 200, the researcher gathered responses from 535 participants.

### **Instrumentation**

The introductory section of the survey provided an overview outlining the characteristics and objectives. The researcher obtained consent from the participants and ensured that they were informed about the guarantee of their anonymity. Participants who provided their consent were subsequently allowed to proceed with the survey.

The questionnaire consisted of five sections: grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, quality of reemployment, and demographic questions. The study encompassed three second-order measurements, namely grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors. Quality of reemployment was the first-order measurement. The survey concluded by including demographic questions that covered various aspects such as age, gender, ethnicity, educational attainment, marital and familial status, employment status, annual personal income, employee tenure, and job classification.

The study employed measurement instruments that have been previously validated scales and utilized in prior scholarly investigations. A formal request was made to acquire authorization to utilize each instrument in the current research. The score for each scale and subscale is determined by calculating the meaning of all the items within that scale. It is also important to observe that certain items are reverse scored. These items are marked with an asterisk (see Appendix C).

### ***Short Grit Scale***

The initial comprehensive grit scale was developed by Duckworth et al. (2007) with the purpose of assessing the noncognitive trait of grit. Duckworth et al. (2007) define grit as perseverance and passion for long-term goals. High grit levels were found to be predictive of success in challenging situations. The initial self-report measure consists of 12 items (Duckworth et al., 2007). The Short Grit Scale (Grit-S), developed by Duckworth and Quinn (2009), is an assessment consisting of eight items and demonstrates enhanced psychometric qualities. The 8-item Grit-S questionnaire contains a mix of four positively worded items (e.g., “Setbacks don’t discourage me” and “I finish whatever I begin”) and four negatively worded items (e.g., “I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one” and “I have been obsessed with a certain



idea or project for a short time but later lost interest”) named reverse-coded (see Appendix C). Items 1, 3, 5, and 6 were formulated with positive wording, while items 2, 4, 7, and 8 were formulated with negative wording. The overall Grit score is determined by calculating the average of all items in the Grit-S. Participants assess their level of agreement with each item using a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging 1 (*not like me at all*), 2 (*not much like me*), 3 (*somewhat like me*), 4 (*mostly like me*), and 5 (*very much like me*). This scale has the maximum score of 5 (extremely gritty) and the lowest score of 1 (not at all gritty). Therefore, higher scores indicated a grittier participant. However, when a scoring system is reversed, the numbers go in the other direction. Accordingly, *not like me at all* would receive a score of 5, *mostly like me* would receive a score of 4, *somewhat like me* would still equal 3, *not much like me* would become 2, and *not like me at all* would receive a score of 1.

Duckworth and Quinn (2009) provided substantial evidence for the validity and reliability of the Grit-S across six studies with distinct participant samples from the United States, including adults, university and military academy students, adolescents, and children. The internal consistency of the 8-item Grit-S scale was determined to be satisfactory, as evidenced by alpha coefficients ranging from .73 to .84 (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). A recent metanalysis study revealed that the internal consistency reliability estimates for the Grit-S ranged from .68 to .73 (Rocha & Lenz, 2023). Duckworth and Quinn (2009) discovered that the Grit-S possesses robust construct validity, convergent validity, and criterion validity.

### ***Psychological Capital Questionnaire-12***

The measurement tool utilized in this study was the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ), which assesses the mediating variable of Psychological Capital (PsyCap). In 2007, Luthans developed the PCQ and the PCQ was chosen for this research because it was a reliable

predictor of work outcomes and a widely used self-reported measure of PsyCap (Harms & Luthans, 2012). The Psychological Capital Questionnaire-12 (PCQ-12) contained 12 items that were scored using a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*somewhat disagree*), 4 (*somewhat agree*), 5 (*agree*), and 6 (*strongly agree*). The PCQ-12 assessed the four dimensions of PsyCap: self-efficacy (e.g., “I feel confident contributing to discussions about the organization’s strategy” and “I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues”), hope (e.g., “If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it” and “I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals”), and resilience (e.g., “I can get through difficult times at work because I’ve experienced difficulty before” and “I usually take stressful things at work in stride”), and optimism (e.g., “I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job” and “I’m optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work”), with no reverse-coded items (Luthans et al., 2007a; Rus et al., 2012). There were three items measuring self-efficacy (items 1-3) and resilience (items 8-10); four items measuring hope (items 4-7); and two for optimism (items 11-12) (see Appendix C). The mean value of each item on the PCQ-12 was used to determine the overall PsyCap score. Participants with higher scores demonstrated more significant levels of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience toward themselves.

The PCQ-12 has been tested through extensive psychometric analyses and received support from samples representing service, manufacturing, education, technology, military, and cross-cultural sectors (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Luthans et al. (2007a) conducted a study to assess the reliability and validity of the PCQ across four distinct samples in the United States. These samples consisted of two groups of university students specializing in management and two groups of employed individuals. The alpha coefficients for each subscale in the four

samples indicated that the internal consistency of the PCQ was generally considered satisfactory to excellent. The alpha coefficients for hope ranged from .72 to .80, for self-efficacy from .75 to .85, for resilience from .66 to .72, and for optimism from .69 to .79. Furthermore, the overall PsyCap demonstrated a high level of reliability in all four samples, ranging from .88 to .89.

The validity of the PCQ was established based on multiple criteria. The construct validity of the PCQ was examined using CFA, which supported a four-factor model comprising the four subscales and the higher-order factor of PsyCap. Each subscale of the PCQ demonstrated convergent validity by correlating positively with the Big Five personality traits of extraversion and conscientiousness, which were theoretically related. The divergent validity of the PCQ was demonstrated through zero-order correlations between its subscales and the distinct traits of neuroticism and agreeableness (Luthans et al., 2010). Moreover, the predictive validity of the PCQ was shown through its statistically significant capacity to forecast job satisfaction and performance in both employee samples (Luthans et al., 2007a; Luthans et al., 2010).

### ***Job Search Behaviors***

The present study utilized the scale developed by Gary Blau (1994) to assess preparatory job search behavior (items 1, 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12) and active job search behavior (items 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 11). This instrument consists of 12 items: six associated with preparatory job search behavior (e.g., “I read a book or article about getting or changing jobs” and “I prepared/revised my resume”) and the other six focusing on active job search behavior (e.g., “I had a job interview with a prospective employer” and “I posted my resumes on recruitment websites”) with no reverse-coded items (see Appendix C). The overall job search behaviors score was determined by calculating the average of each item on both preparatory job search and active job search scales. Responses were recorded using the following 5-point Likert-type scale metric where 1 (*never*), 2

(rarely), 3 (occasionally), 4 (frequently), and 5 (very frequently) (Blau, 1994). According to Blau (1994), the term “never” can be understood as representing a frequency of 0 times, “rarely” corresponds to 1-2 times, “occasionally” indicates 3-5 times, “frequently” suggests 6-9 times, and “very frequently” implies a minimum of 10 times. A higher score indicated a job seeker who frequently sought employment opportunities.

The scale of job search behaviors has undergone significant transformations since the beginning. An illustration of this phenomenon is the growing reliance of job seekers on the Internet as a tool for finding employment opportunities. Blau (1994) provided validation evidence for his measure, which has been utilized in prior research (e.g., Blau et al., 2006; Saks & Ashforth, 1999, 2002; Turban et al., 2013; van Hooft et al., 2004; Wanberg et al., 2000). Blau (1994) reported that the coefficient alpha for 6-item preparatory job search behavior scale was .87, while for 6-item active job search behavior scale was .94. As noted by Saks and Ashforth (2000), the alpha values were .72 and .74 for the preparatory job search behavior, and .76 and .69 for the 6-item active job search behavior.

### ***Quality of Reemployment Outcomes***

**Person-Organization Fit.** The goal of measuring Person-organization Fit (P-O fit) is to assess values congruence, which refers to the alignment between an employee’s personal values and the organizational culture (Werbel & DeMarie, 2005). Cable and DeRue (2002) employed the concept of values congruence in the development of the Perceived Fit Scale (PFS). The primary fit of the PFS was to assess employee perceptions of their compatibility with their work environment. Individual components of person-fit, such as organization-fit and job-fit, can be measured independently using the PFS components. The items indicate the employees’ perception that their individual values and cultural background align closely with the values and

culture of their affiliated organization. The PFS is comprised of multiple components that measure aspects of an individual's fit with the workplace.

The overall quality of reemployment score was calculated using the average of all items in the P-O fit scale. The measurement of P-O fit was conducted by utilizing three items derived from the PFS (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Examples of items from the 3-item P-O fit scale include "My personal values match my current organization's values and culture" and "My organization's values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life," with no reverse-coded items (see Appendix C). The responses were scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*neither agree nor disagree*), 4 (*agree*), and 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores indicated a participant's likelihood of having personal values that fit well with the organization's culture. Cable and DeRue (2002) reported that the reliability coefficient of the scale was .91 for the sample consisting of a single firm and .92 for the sample consisting of multiple firms.

**Person-Job Fit.** The Person-job Fit (P-J fit) domain refers to the correlation between an individual's characteristics and the tasks they carry out in the professional setting (Kristof, 1996; Kristoff-Brown et al., 2005). Cable and DeRue (2002) connected P-J fit to work-related attitudes and behaviors, including job satisfaction, career satisfaction, quality of work life, occupational commitment, and positive adjustment to new organizations.

The P-J fit, as conceptualized by Edwards (1991), consists of two components. The first form of P-J fit is the need-supplies fit, wherein the work performed by employees effectively satisfies their needs, desires, or preferences. The second component is the demands-abilities fit, which refers to the alignment between employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities and the job requirements. These two fundamental assumptions are the foundation for determining whether or

not an employee is a good fit for a particular position (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This P-J fit 5-point Likert-type instrument consists of a 6-item subscale: three associated with need-supplies fit and the other three focusing on demands-abilities fit with no reverse-coded items (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Cable and DeRue (2002) found that the scale had a reliability coefficient of .89 for the sample from a single firm and .93 for the sample from multiple firms.

***Need-Supplies Fit.*** The need-supplies fit was first introduced by Cable and DeRue (2002) as a crucial component of P-J fit. They utilized this concept in developing their psychometric tool, the PFS, which was discussed in the preceding section prior to the one focusing on P-O fit. The overall quality of reemployment score was determined by averaging all the items in the need-supplies fit (items 1-3). The need-supplies fit was measured with three items with no reverse-coded (see Appendix C). A sample item for need-supplies fit included “There is a good fit between what my job offers me and what I am looking for in a job.” Answers were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*neither agree nor disagree*), 4 (*agree*), and 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores indicated the degree to which a participant is well-suited for the job. The reliability of the fit portion of the PFS was assessed through the utilization of a single firm sample with a reliability coefficient of .89, and a multi firm sample with a reliability coefficient of .93 (Cable & DeRue, 2002).

***Demands-Abilities Fit.*** The demands-abilities fit with items discovered by previous research conducted by Cable and Judge (1996). The overall quality of reemployment score was determined by averaging all the items in the demands-abilities fit (items 4-6). The demands-abilities fit was measured with three with no reverse-coded items (see Appendix C). The statement “The match is very good between the demands of my job and my personal skills” was included as part of the sample item. Answers were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale where

1(*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*neither agree nor disagree*), 4 (*agree*), and 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores indicate the degree to which a participant is well-suited for the job. The scale's reliability was determined to be .89 in the sample comprising a single firm and .84 in the sample comprising multiple firms (Cable & DeRue, 2002).

**Job Satisfaction.** Judge et al. (1998) utilized five components derived from the job satisfaction scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) to evaluate the overall level of job satisfaction. The mean of all 5 items in the job satisfaction scale was used to calculate the overall quality of reemployment score. Sample items included “Most days I am enthusiastic about my job” and “I find real enjoyment in my work.” A couple of items (items 3 and 5) have reversed scoring. The items with reverse-coded included “Each day of work seems like it will never end” and “I consider my job rather unpleasant.” (see Appendix C). The researcher employed a 5-point Likert-type scale to assess participants' responses, which incorporated a range of options where 1(*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*neither agree nor disagree*), 4 (*agree*), and 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores expressed greater job satisfaction with the participant's current position. However, as previously stated, the numerical values are inverted when a scoring system is reversed. Consequently, a score of 5 would be assigned to strongly disagree, a score of 4 to disagree, a score of 3 to neither agree nor disagree, a score of 2 to agree, and a score of 1 to strongly agree.

The reliability and validity of this scale have been established through previous research (Brooke et al., 1988; Judge et al., 2008; Pillai et al., 1999). The respective reliability coefficients for these items were .83, .82, and .88 (Brooke et al., 1988; Judge et al., 2008; Judge et al., 1998). A positive correlation existed between overall job satisfaction and various job facets, including

autonomy, performance, employee attitude, and job involvement (Aryee et al., 1999; Judge et al., 1998; Judge et al., 2010; Saari & Judge, 2004).

**Intention to Remain.** The study evaluated the participants' inclination to continue working in their current organization using a 3-item measurement developed by Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2008) with no reverse-coded items. The overall quality of reemployment score was determined by calculating the average of all the items with the intention to remain scale. Two of the items included were "If I were completely free to choose, I would prefer to continue working in this organization" and "Barring unforeseen circumstances, I would remain in this organization indefinitely" (see Appendix C). A 5-point Likert-type scale was employed, where higher scores indicated a greater intention to remain. The scale utilized in this study represented a range of values, 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*neither agree nor disagree*), 4 (*agree*), and 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores assessed the participants' tendency to stay employed by their current employer. The satisfactory internal consistency of the Intention to Remain scale was established through the determination of alpha coefficients of .83 (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2008).

### **Ensuring Data Quality**

One effective strategy to mitigate survey fatigue and order-related bias is implementing randomization techniques. By randomizing the sequence of questions, pages, and answer choices in the survey, the researcher can minimize the potential impact of these factors on respondents' perceptions and responses to enhance data reliability, survey engagement, and objective insights (Blair et al., 2015; Brookes et al., 2018; Suresh, 2011; Warner, 1965). Thus, this study employed a randomization process to determine the order of sections within each variable.



Researchers suggest that utilizing attention checks to identify participants who are not paying close attention and to extract significant variations in levels of inattentiveness (Berinsky et al., 2012). To promote thorough reading of the survey questions, attention check questions were incorporated to ascertain that participants were carefully engaged with each item (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016; Newman et al., 2021). The participants were prompted to select a particular numerical value across various scales. Individuals who did not choose for the selection of filtering numbers were subjected to termination. Excluding participants who fail attention checks can improve the reliability of research findings by reducing false positives and false negatives, in so doing enhancing the study's internal and statistical validity (Cheung et al., 2017; Curran, 2016).

### **Pilot Study**

The objective of the pilot study was to assess various aspects of the research, including the comprehensibility of the study's instructions, the feasibility of the data collection approach, the time required for respondents to complete the survey, strategies to enhance the efficiency of the study, and the necessity for any potential modifications. This procedure guaranteed that the survey was suitably phrased and pertinent to the investigation before the surveys were distributed (Thabane et al., 2010; van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2010). A panel of nine research experts specializing in education and social sciences from the United States and Canada conducted an evaluation and assessment of the pilot survey. The participants were given instructions to note the duration required to complete the survey and identify any items or questions that necessitated further clarification. The average time to complete the survey was about eight minutes, and every participant agreed the questionnaire showed face validity. Modifications were implemented based on the feedback provided by the research experts.

## **Data Collection**

Numerous factors were taken into account in the study to guarantee the safeguarding of the participants throughout each stage. Prior to beginning the recruitment procedures, the IRB at the researcher's institution granted approval. Qualtrics was employed to identify, recruit, and screen participants under the specified inclusion and exclusion criteria. The selection criteria employed in this study ensured that the participants possessed the necessary qualifications and characteristics to address the research questions effectively. Following the recruitment of participants by Qualtrics, an online company proceeded to evaluate them based on the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria outlined in the screening questions. Following that, the participants were provided with an informed consent form, mandating their review and signature after an initial qualification question at the beginning of the survey.

The participants' qualifications were assessed by implementing a judgmental sampling technique (Elfil & Negida, 2017; Perla & Provost, 2012) in the form of an introductory question. Individuals who did not belong to the particular category were compelled to conclude their participation by being redirected to the disqualification page of the survey. The participants were asked to choose this qualification question: "Which of the following options most accurately characterizes your present circumstances?" There were five options for selection, and only individuals who had chosen one of these two options were eligible to continue with the study. The responses included "I am currently employed who was terminated, laid off, or furloughed from my previous job." or "I am currently employed but was unable to work because the contract expired or my employer lost business."

The informed consent form that was given outlines several crucial elements as stipulated by the IRB regulations. The provided document contained essential details such as the study's

title, objective, and the primary investigators' names and affiliations. The consent letter explicitly communicated that the participants had the autonomy to take part in the study willingly and were free to terminate their involvement in the survey at any given point. The informed consent document also contained a provision stating that all collected data would be securely protected and maintained in an anonymous manner. The questionnaires comprised a comprehensive set of 59 items, including 10 demographic inquiries. On average, participants required approximately eight minutes to complete the survey.

After confirming feasibility of research, an initial email containing an operational link was dispatched to potential participants, inviting them to participate; the survey period spanned 24 days. Sampling was halted when a portion of 10% of the intended population was acquired. Afterward, the investigator obtained the data of 36 participants in order to assess data quality and identify any inconsistencies in the responses. Upon initial review and analysis of the preliminary data, no concerning indicators were identified. Consequently, the data was deemed suitable for inclusion in the study. Following the researcher's authorization, the data collection activities were recommenced.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis procedure was conducted in three stages (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). First and foremost, ensuring that the data collected is efficient and appropriate for subsequent analysis is imperative. Additionally, it is important to assess the reliability and validity of the data. Finally, it is necessary to conduct tests on the hypotheses and examine the relationships among the constructs within the conceptual model.

## **Descriptive Data Analysis**

The process of data screening and preparation involved several essential steps, including the identification and handling of missing data and examination of outliers. The identification of missing data patterns is crucial during the process of data screening, as the existence of a non-random pattern has the potential to undermine the generalizability of the results. According to Little and Rubin (2019), it is recommended to identify errors and take appropriate measures to correct or eliminate subjects in situations where their scores cannot be corrected. The data underwent analysis utilizing the SPSS 29 software to perform data scrubbing procedures. SPSS was employed to establish criteria for determining values that deviated from the standard range (Little & Rubin, 2019; Pituch & Stevens, 2015). The assessment of reliability was conducted using Cronbach's alpha. This statistical measure evaluates the reliability of both the indicators of a construct and the internal consistency among the items of a scale (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The assessment of reliability was conducted by examining the range of values, which fell within the range of .70 to .95.

## **Measurement Model Analysis**

A parcel refers to a composite score formed by multiple items that measure the same primary construct. The items contained within each measure were utilized as indicators of latent constructs by creating item parcel indicators. Parceling is a widely employed measurement practice, particularly in the context of multivariate approaches. It is primarily utilized when combined with latent variable analysis techniques (e.g., exploratory factor analysis, structure equation modeling) (Little et al., 2002; Williams & O'Boyle, 2008). According to Williams and O'Boyle (2008), the use of item parcels as indicators of latent constructs in structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis is suggested as a means for addressing issues related to the need for

large sample sizes, unreliable measurements, and nonnormal or coarsely measured item-level data. The examination of item parceling within the path analysis framework has been the subject of multiple studies, which have found that using parcels as indicators of a latent construct is more effective than a path analysis model that relies on total scale scores (Bandalos, 2002; Coffman & MacCallum, 2005; Little et al., 2002). Within this methodology, the item indicators serve as mere instruments that enable the development of a measurement model for a desired latent construct (Little et al., 2002; Williams & O'Boyle, 2008). In this study, the constructs of PsyCap, JSB, and QOR were divided into sub-scales. The mean values were utilized as a method to decrease the complexity of the model (Nasser & Wisenbaker, 2003). Consequently, the study's model comprises four latent constructs and 18 reflective indicators.

In order to evaluate the dependability and accuracy of the research constructs and their corresponding indicators or measures, one may perform measurement model analysis. In a more specific manner, the analysis of the measurement model involves the utilization of various techniques such as reliability, internal consistency, and item-total correlations, as well as factor analysis techniques, including exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Cronbach, 1951; Hair et al., 2014). However, EFA was not conducted for the purpose of this study because all constructs were measured using previously established and validated scales. CFA was employed to evaluate the validity of the measurement model, confirm the construct validity, and check several statistical assumptions before conducting an SEM to test the research questions according to a two-step approach (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). CFA analyzes a priori measurement models in which the number of factors and their correspondence to the indicators are specified explicitly (Jackson et al., 2009). Hair et al.

(2014) also asserted that CFA is widely acknowledged as a robust method for evaluating a predetermined hypothesized factor structure that aligns with the observed data.

### **Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling**

The research hypotheses were evaluated using covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) in the SmartPLS 4 software. SEM is a valuable tool for conducting comprehensive examinations of theories and concepts. SEM is a statistically sound approach that can be employed to examine the relationships between multiple variables (i.e., measurement and latent variables) and estimate the path coefficients associated with both direct and indirect effects in structural hypotheses (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Byrne, 2013; Hair et al., 2014; Hoyle, 1995; Kline, 2023). The data were analyzed using a two-step approach as recommended by most researchers. The two-step approach involves initially examining a measurement model that includes all variables, followed by the subsequent testing of the hypothesized model. The purpose was to analyze the relationship between latent variables and the measurement items that served as indicators for those variables. The measurement model investigates how observed variables amalgamate to represent the underlying theory as latent constructs, while the structural model elucidates the associations between stated latent constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Byrne, 2013; Hair et al., 2014; Hoyle, 1995; Kline, 2023). Multiple fit indices were utilized to evaluate the model's fit using SmartPLS 4, which included the chi-square test of model fit ( $\chi^2$ ), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The three-path mediated effect model was tested (Taylor et al., 2008) including the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment through the following: (a) mediation effect of psychological capital; (b) mediation effect of job search

behaviors; and (c) sequential mediation effect of psychological capital and job search behaviors. The significance of the single mediation effects of each mediator and the sequential mediation effects of both mediators were determined.

### ***Fit Indices***

The model fit indices indicate that the measurement model demonstrated a suitable overall fit to the data. Each of these indices offers a distinct viewpoint on the adequacy of the model, and it is customary to present them to ensure a thorough assessment. The specific threshold values mentioned in the literature can vary slightly, and the context of the analysis and the complexity of the model should also be considered when interpreting these indices. In addition, it is crucial not to depend exclusively on these indices but rather take into account theoretical justification and the plausibility of the model.

The chi-square test of model fit ( $\chi^2$ ) evaluates the overall model fit and the discrepancy between the observed and expected covariance matrices. A chi-square value that is not statistically significant ( $p > .05$ ) suggests that the observed data fit well with the expected values (Kline, 2023).

The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is a measure of the standardized discrepancy between the observed and predicted correlations. The p-value below .08 are typically regarded as indicative of a satisfactory fit (Byrne, 1994).

The Normed Fit Index (NFI) of .90 and above indicates a good model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). However, due to its significant reliance on sample size, it cannot be considered alone. The Tucker and Lewis Index (TLI), also known as the non-normed fit index (NNFI), is a solution to the NFI problem. The p-value should be .90 and above (Byrne, 1994; Hu & Bentler, 1999) or .95 and above (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004).

The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is a revised form of NFI. It compares the model fit with a null or independent model. A p-value close to .95 and above (Hu & Bentler, 1999) or .90 and above (Byrne, 1994; Maydeu-Olivares et al., 2018) indicates a good fit.

The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) quantifies the level of approximation error per degree of freedom in the model. Values approaching 0 indicate a good fit. The p-value should be less than .08 or less than .07 (Byrne, 1994; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2023; Maydeu-Olivares et al., 2018).

### **Ethical Considerations**

The completion and submission of the Auburn University human subjects exempt study review form to the institutional review board (IRB) occurred prior to any engagement with human subjects. The IRB form presented the comprehensive summary of the research, encompassing its objectives, the target population of participants, the methods used for recruitment and informed consent, the procedures, and the methodology utilized in the present investigation. Additionally, the researcher had successfully fulfilled the required human subjects research assurance training, such as the social and behavioral emphasis course, responsible conduct of research, as stipulated by Auburn University. The IRB determined that the study was exempt from compliance with human subject protection regulations (see Appendix A). The research was granted approval in accordance with Protocol No. 23-444.

Subsequently, the IRB has reviewed and approved the proposed modification to the dissertation project title (see Appendix D). Despite the modification to the title, all other aspects of the research protocol, including the study design, procedures, and participant involvement, remain unchanged. This approval confirms that the revised title accurately reflects the scope and



objectives of the study while maintaining compliance with ethical standards and regulatory guidelines governing research involving human subjects.

## **Chapter 4. Findings**

### **Introduction**

The first chapter of the study presented an overview of the topic, including background information, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, and the definition of key terms. In second chapter, an extensive examination of the literature was conducted, which was categorized into eight primary sections: adult education, workplace learning and development, grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, quality of reemployment, theoretical foundations, and conceptual framework. The third chapter provided an exhaustive account of the research methods utilized for this study. The author delineated five distinct sections in the study, namely research design, population and sample selection, instrumentation, method of data collection, and the plan of analysis. The purpose of this chapter is to present a description of the findings from the research investigation. Initially, a comprehensive depiction of the respondents' characteristics is provided. The study then provides descriptive statistics for each factor, such as mean values, reliability, and indicator correlations. Finally, the chapter discusses the measurement and structural equation modeling results, as well as the direct and indirect effects of constructs.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States. There was a need for a more comprehensive understanding of grit and its relationship with the quality of reemployment outcomes. This understanding was crucial in order to grasp the

underlying mechanism that influences individuals' person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain in their current employment. Consequently, this study endeavor has undertaken the task of formulating and evaluating a theoretical framework on the construct of grit, with the ultimate objective of enhancing the overall effectiveness of reemployment outcomes. This framework drew upon the principles of the conservation of resource theory and self-determination theory. In that regard, the aim was to thoroughly analyze (a) if quality of reemployment scores vary according to grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors, (b) the mediating effect of psychological capital in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, (c) the mediating effect of job search behaviors in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, and (d) the sequential mediation roles in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment.

### **Research Questions**

This study was grounded in a set of research questions concerning the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States.

1. To what extent does grit affect psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
2. To what extent does psychological capital affect job search behaviors and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or

furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

3. To what extent does job search behaviors affect the quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
4. Can psychological capital mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
5. Can job search behavior mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
6. Do psychological capital and job search behavior have sequential mediation effects in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

### **Demographic Results**

#### **Response Rate**

A total of 535 individuals agreed to participate in the study, and 358 completed the survey, with a completion rate of 67.0%. However, certain instances were excluded in order to enhance the integrity of the survey data by implementing measures such as scrutinizing for robotic accounts, eliminating duplicate submissions by verifying the IP address, identifying

respondents who completed the survey too quickly, and detecting fraudulent responses. For example, the Qualtrics software identified survey respondents who completed the survey too quickly as speeders and removed those who completed it in less than half the allotted time. In some cases, the invisible reCaptcha technology was applied to identify fraudulent responses and determine which were most likely bots. In other cases, the project manager detected responses that were deemed potentially questionable, thereby allowing the researcher to evaluate their credibility and make informed decisions regarding whether to retain or exclude them. The dataset used for analysis consisted of 323 samples.

### **Demographic Characteristics**

The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 2. The average age of the participants was 46.16 years, with a range spanning from 19 to 82 years ( $SD = 13.57$ ). Upon examining the age distribution of the research participants, it was found that the majority of them, or 24.1%, were in the age range of 31 to 40 years old. In the 41 to 50 years old category, the second highest percentage observed was 23.8%, while the 51 to 60 years old group accounted for 22.6% of the participants. The proportion of respondents aged 61 to 70 years was 13.0%, while 12.1% fell within the age range of 21 to 30. The age group of individuals aged 71 years or older constituted 3.1% of the sample population. The participants in the study consisted of 113 individuals, accounting for 35.0% of the total sample, who identified as male, and 207 individuals, representing 64.1% of the total sample, who identified as female. The largest proportion of participants identified as White, accounting for 74.3% of the total sample. This was followed by African American individuals, who comprised 13.0% of the respondents. In terms of educational attainment, approximately 32.2% of the participants possessed some college with no degree while 19.2% held a high school degree or equivalent. The data revealed that a majority of

the respondents, 45.2%, self-identified as married or in a domestic relationship, while a relatively smaller proportion, 31.3%, reported being single. About 18.0% of the respondents identified themselves as divorced, while 3.1% selected the category labeled as bereavement. The job status of the respondents was primarily characterized by full-time employment, with a majority of 60.4% being engaged in such positions. Additionally, a significant proportion of 26.9% were found to be employed part-time. A total of 12.7% of the participants in the study reported being self-employed. In relation to the duration of professional experience, it was found that 24.1% of the participants reported having worked in their professional occupations for a period ranging from 6 to 10 years. Additionally, 21.4% of respondents indicated having less than 5 years of professional experience, while 13.9% reported a professional tenure of 11 to 15 years. Furthermore, 10.8% of participants reported having worked for a duration of 21 to 25 years, and 10.5% reported professional experience ranging from 16 to 20 years.

**Table 2**

*Demographic Characteristics*

Demographic Category	Characteristics	Frequency	%
Age	20 years or less	4	1.2
	21-30 years	39	12.1
	31-40 years	78	24.1
	41-50 years	77	23.8
	51-60 years	73	22.6
	61-70 years	42	13.0
	71 years or older	10	3.1
Gender	Male	113	35.0
	Female	207	64.1
	Non-binary / third gender	3	.9
Ethnic Origin	African American / Black	42	13.0
	American Indian or Alaska Native	3	.9
	Asian American / Asian	11	3.4

	Hispanic / Latino/a	22	6.8
	European American / White	240	74.3
	Multiracial	5	1.5
Education	Less than a high school diploma	11	3.4
	High school degree or equivalent	62	19.2
	Some college, no degree	104	32.2
	Associate degree	48	14.9
	Bachelor's degree	60	18.6
	Master's degree	27	8.4
	Doctorate or professional degree	11	3.4
Marital Status	Single	101	31.3
	Married, or in a domestic partnership	146	45.2
	Widowed	10	3.1
	Divorced	58	18.0
	Separated	8	2.5
Employment Status	Employed full time	195	60.4
	Employed part time	87	26.9
	Self-employed	41	12.7
Personal Income	\$0-\$9,999	15	4.6
	\$10,000-\$24,999	42	13.0
	\$25,000-\$49,999	109	33.7
	\$50,000-\$74,999	68	21.1
	\$75,000-\$99,999	40	12.4
	\$100,000-\$124,999	21	6.5
	\$125,000-\$149,999	10	3.1
	\$150,000+	11	3.4
	Prefer not to answer	7	2.2
Years of Experience	5 years or less	69	21.4
	6 to 10 years	78	24.1
	11 to 15 years	45	13.9
	16 to 20 years	34	10.5
	21 to 25 years	35	10.8
	26 to 30 years	29	9.0
	31 to 35 years	12	3.7
	36 years or more	21	6.5

*Note.*  $N = 323$ . Participants were on average 46.16 years old ( $SD = 13.57$ )

Table 3 presents the industry sectors within the demographic profile of the sample. The healthcare sector was most represented among respondents, with 14.6% of responses. Retail

came in second with 11.1%, and hospitality, events, leisure, sport, or tourism came in third with 9.3%. The proportion of individuals employed in engineering and manufacturing, as well as in IT or computing, was found to be 6.2%, while the proportion of various sectors consisted of 5.6% of the respondents. Other categories in which these participants were categorized included insurance, veterinary medicine, research and development, and religious facilities. The data also showed that 5.3% of respondents identified themselves as being employed in the fields of business or management, property or construction, and transport or logistics. Additionally, 4.3% of participants indicated that they were engaged in the banking or finance sector. Also, 3.7% of individuals were employed in public services or administration, while 2.8% were engaged in education or training, as well as media or digital professions.

**Table 3**

*Industry Sectors*

Industry Sectors	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Accountancy, banking, or finance	14	4.3
Business, consultancy, or management	17	5.3
Charity and voluntary work	3	.9
Creative arts or design	6	1.9
Education or training	9	2.8
Energy and utilities	5	1.5
Engineering or manufacturing	20	6.2
Environment or agriculture	2	.6
Healthcare	47	14.6
Hospitality, events, leisure, sport, or tourism	30	9.3
IT or computing	20	6.2
Law	8	2.5
Law enforcement and security	2	.6
Marketing, advertising, or public relations	5	1.5
Media or digital	9	2.8
Property or construction	17	5.3



Public services or administration	12	3.7
Recruitment or human resources	5	1.5
Retail	36	11.1
Sales	13	4.0
Science or pharmaceuticals	4	1.2
Social care	4	1.2
Transport or logistics	17	5.3
Other	18	5.6

*Note.*  $N = 323$ .

### **Examining the Measurement Model**

This study involves four latent constructs: grit, psychological capital (self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience), job search behaviors (preparatory job search, active job search), and quality of reemployment (person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain).

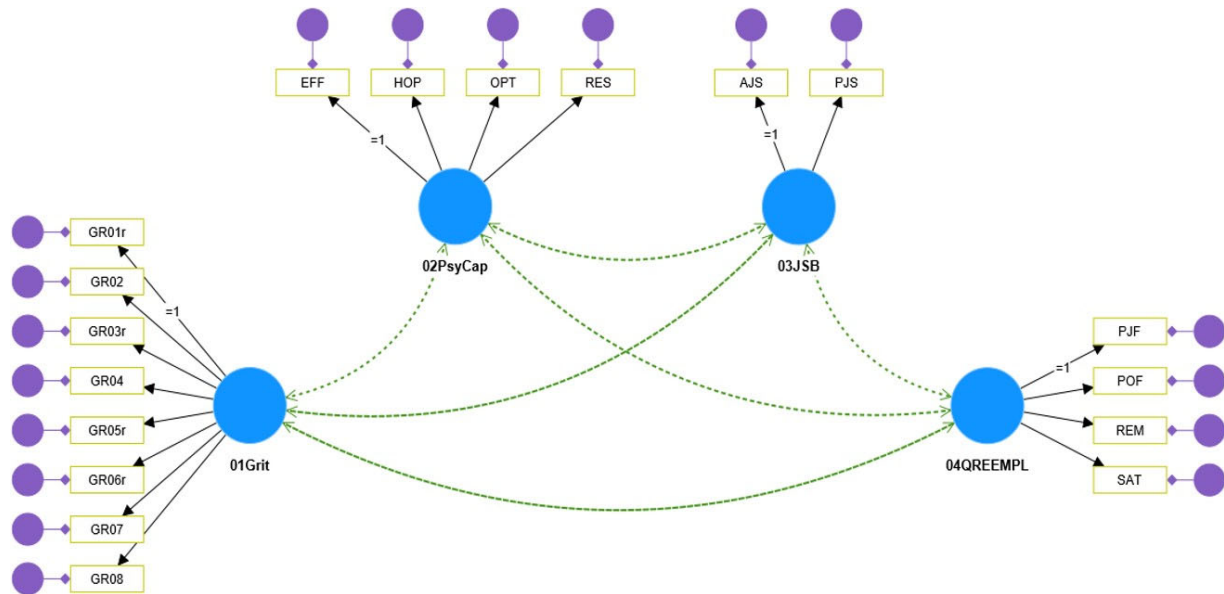
The measurement model and theoretical model were examined using SmartPLS 4. The researcher employed a two-step approach (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) to assess the measurement model, initially conducting a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), followed by subjecting the proposed model and hypotheses to empirical examination. CFA involves the examination of predetermined measurement models, wherein the number of factors and their alignment with the indicators are explicitly defined (Kline, 2023).

The initial measurement model should have exhibited a more optimal fit to the collected data, despite the fact that all factor loadings exceeded a minimum threshold of .7. Accordingly, the measurement model underwent modification through the utilization of item random parceling assignment methods, wherein the items were grouped together using a random procedure (Little et al., 2002). Based on a domain sampling rationale, a straightforward approach to parcel construction involves the random and non-replacement assignment of each item to one of the parcel groupings (Little et al., 2002; Williams & O'Boyle, 2008). In other words, a random

assignment signifies that the selection is either inconsequential or devoid of any logical justification (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

*Examining the Measurement Model in SmartPLS 4*



*Note.* GR: Grit. PsyCap: Psychological Capital. EFF: self-efficacy. HOP: Hope. OPT: optimism. RES: Resilience. JSB: Job Search Behaviors. AJS: Active Job Search. PJS: Preparatory Job Search. QREEMPL: Quality of Reemployment. POF: Person-organization Fit. PJF: Person-job Fit. SAT: Job Satisfaction. REM: Intention to Remain.

**Model Fit**

The model fit indices suggested that the measurement model exhibited an appropriate overall fit to the data:  $\chi^2_{(129)} = 254.147$  ( $p < .001$ ), normed  $-\chi^2 = 1.970$ , SRMR = .037, NFI = .933, TLI = .959, CFI = .966, and RMSEA = .055.

**Common Method Variance**

The current investigation employed a cross-sectional research design to gather data exclusively from individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed

from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business. The data were obtained from a single source or through a self-reported survey conducted within a limited period of time, making it vulnerable to common method variance (CMV). The factor responsible for CMV is the measurement method itself, not the constructs that the measures attempt to represent (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Williams & Brown, 1994). Measurement error has been identified as a significant concern in behavioral research, as it substantially threatens the validity of conclusions drawn regarding the relationships between various measures.

To mitigate the potential influence of CMV, the researchers implemented various procedural remedies as suggested by Min et al. (2016) and Podsakoff et al. (2003): First, the careful design of research procedures and second, the implementation of statistical controls (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Thus, various techniques were utilized in the current investigation. The researcher employed distinct cover stories for each instrument, enabling participants to establish psychological separation for each measurement. In addition, the researcher assured that the confidentiality of the participants' responses was maintained.

Based on the study's findings, the measured marker variable had an average factor loading of .087. The CMV accounted for an average of 1.1% of the variance in each item. The significance of this discovery outweighs the method variance that a two-wave research design identified by Min et al. (2016). As a result of the various procedural remedies implemented in the study, the potential contamination of the results by CMV does not raise much concern.

Given that the researcher evaluated all factors using a self-administered survey in a cross-sectional study, this analysis cannot definitively conclude that the measurement model was completely unaffected by a potential CMV issue (Choi et al., 2017; Podsakoff et al., 2012, Podsakoff et al., 2003, Williams & Brown, 1994). However, the researcher took steps to

minimize the CMV by implementing procedural solutions during the survey design phase. As a result, the researchers are confident that the CMV did not significantly impact the parameter estimations.

### **Reliability of the Scale**

The data in Table 4 displays each factor loading, reliability of the measurements, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR) associated with each theoretical construct. The researcher assessed the internal consistency of the measures by conducting an analysis of various statistical indicators. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the constructs of grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment were estimated to be .933, .836, .841, and .897, respectively.

### **Construct Validity of the Scale**

The researcher confirmed the construct validity, which encompassed both convergent validity and discriminant validity. This involved calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR), as recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

#### ***Convergent Validity***

Convergent validity was demonstrated by establishing a relationship between the observed variables and the latent variables. All the indicators included in the proposed constructs exhibited significant loadings, as indicated in Table 4. The satisfactory scale reliability of all constructs was demonstrated by the CR of each construct, which surpassed the threshold of .70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017). The CR values observed in this study ranged from .833 to .933. The AVE fell within the range of .563 to .726. It is important to acknowledge that all of these values surpassed the corresponding AVE threshold of .50 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017). Consequently, the findings illustrate a robust level of

reliability for every scale. The statistical significance of the factor loadings in the measurement model was also observed, with values exceeding .70, thereby indicating the validity of the constructs. The conducted tests demonstrated that the constructs examined in the study exhibited favorable levels of convergent validity.

**Table 4**

*The Results of Factor Loadings and Testing the Convergent Validity*

Latent Variables	Indicators	Factor Loadings	AVE <sup>c</sup>	CR <sup>d</sup>	Alpha <sup>e</sup>
Grit	Grit1 <sup>a</sup>	.792	.637	.933	.933
	Grit2	.868			
	Grit3 <sup>a</sup>	.767			
	Grit4	.812			
	Grit5 <sup>a</sup>	.780			
	Grit6 <sup>a</sup>	.787			
	Grit7	.804			
	Grit8	.772			
Psychological Capital	Efficacy <sup>b</sup>	.739	.563	.833	.836
	Hope <sup>b</sup>	.795			
	Resilience <sup>b</sup>	.733			
	Optimism <sup>b</sup>	.732			
Job Search Behaviors	Preparatory Job Search <sup>b</sup>	.859	.726	.841	.841
	Active Job Search <sup>b</sup>	.845			
Quality of Reemployment	Person-organization Fit <sup>b</sup>	.810	.684	.893	.897
	Person-job Fit <sup>b</sup>	.871			
	Job Satisfaction <sup>b</sup>	.823			
	Intention to Remain <sup>b</sup>	.803			

*Note.* All factor loadings are significant ( $p < .001$ ).

<sup>a</sup> Reverse coded.

<sup>b</sup> Parceled indicators.

<sup>c</sup> Average variance extracted.

<sup>d</sup> Composite reliability.

<sup>e</sup> Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients.

### ***Discriminant Validity***

The researcher also tested discriminant validity using the AVE statistics. Discriminant validity is observed when the measures employed to assess distinct constructs demonstrate minimal correlation with one another. Discriminant validity is supported by the observation that the square root of the AVE for each construct exceeds the magnitude of the inter-correlations among the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017). Diagonally across Table 5 is displayed the square root of the AVE value for each construct. Any of the correlation coefficients did not exceed the values of the square roots of AVE. Sufficient evidence supports the discriminant validity of all four constructs, as indicated by the results.

**Table 5**

*The Results of Testing the Discriminant Validity*

	Grit	PsyCap	JSB	QOR
Grit	<b>.798</b>	.507	.353	.221
Psychological Capital (PsyCap)	.508	<b>.750</b>	.636	.580
Job Search Behaviors (JSB)	.351	.627	<b>.852</b>	.521
Quality of Reemployment (QOR)	.222	.572	.524	<b>.827</b>

*Note.* All correlation coefficients are significant ( $p < .001$ ). The lower triangular matrix shows bivariate correlation coefficients. The upper triangular matrix indicates HTMT (heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations). The figure with boldface diagonally displays the square root of AVEs.

### **Structural Equation Modeling**

#### **Examining the Theoretical Model**

The present study employed covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) to investigate the proposed theoretical model. The author utilized the bootstrapping method, a nonparametric technique for assessing the statistical significance of results obtained from SEM,

such as path coefficients. This statistical technique involves the resampling of a singular data set in order to generate multiple simulated samples (Hair et al. 2017; Preacher & Hayes, 2008). This method involved generating 5,000 samples to estimate the direct, indirect, and total effects, accompanied by a default significance level of 5% corresponds to a 95% confidence interval.

According to the findings in Figure 4, the overall fit indices between the observed data and the proposed model suggest that the data align well with the model at an acceptable level  $\chi^2_{(129)} = 254.147$  ( $p < .001$ ), normed  $-\chi^2 = 1.970$ , SRMR = .037, NFI = .933, TLI = .959, CFI = .966, RMSEA = .055. Both the SRMR ( $< .08$ ) and RMSEA ( $< .07$ ) fit indices exhibited satisfactory performance to the combinational cutoff criteria (Byrne, 1994; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2023; Maydeu-Olivares et al., 2018; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004).

The findings from the CB-SEM analysis indicated that the level of grit exhibited by the participants accounted for 25.8% of the total variance in psychological capital and 39.5% of the variance in job search behaviors. Moreover, the results displayed that grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors explained 38.0% of the total variance of employed individuals who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous jobs on their quality of reemployment.

Table 6 and Figure 4 present the estimated path coefficients and the corresponding statistical significance of the structural model. The estimated path coefficients of the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment were negative ( $\gamma_1 = -.105$ ) and not significant ( $t = 1.627; p < .001$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 proposed a negative relationship and was not supported. The relationship between grit and psychological capital were found to be positive ( $\gamma_2 = .508$ ) and significant ( $t = 9.318; p < .001$ ), as well as psychological capital positively ( $\beta_3 = .451$ ) and significantly ( $t = 4.953; p < .001$ ) influenced the quality of reemployment. Hence,

Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 3 proposed a positive relationship and was supported. The standardized coefficients of the path of the relationship between grit and job search behaviors were not positive ( $\gamma_4 = .044$ ) and significant ( $t = .673; p < .001$ ), while job search behaviors had a positive ( $\beta_5 = .278$ ) and significant effect on quality of reemployment ( $t = 3.910; p < .001$ ). Therefore, the hypothesized relationship between grit and job search behaviors, as stated in Hypothesis 4, was not supported. However, the finding support the hypothesized relationship between job search behaviors and quality of reemployment in Hypothesis 5. The last examination discovered that psychological capital exerted a positive ( $\beta_6 = .604$ ) and significant impact ( $t = 8.584; p < .001$ ) on the job search behaviors. Consequently, the outcomes supported Hypothesis 6.

**Table 6**

*The Results of Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling*

Paths	Standardized Coefficients	SE	t-values
Grit → PsyCap	.508	.054	9.318*
Grit → JSB	.044	.066	.673
Grit → QOR	-.105	.065	1.627
PsyCap → JSB	.604	.070	8.584*
PsyCap → QOR	.451	.091	4.953*
JSB → QOR	.278	.071	3.910*

*Note.* 5,000 bootstrap resamples were generated to test the paths. An asterisk indicates the path is significant ( $p < .001$ ).

### **Examining the Mediation Effects**

The study employed the three-path mediated effect model to examine the relationship (Taylor et al., 2008) between grit and quality of reemployment through the following: mediation



effect of psychological capital, mediation effect of job search behaviors, and sequential mediation effect of psychological capital and job search behaviors. Examining the mediation effects was the statistical significance of both the individual mediation effects of each mediator as well as the sequential mediation effects involving both mediators.

The term partial mediator describes a mediator in which both the direct and indirect effects between an independent and dependent variable are statistically significant. On the contrary, a full mediator argues that the sole significant factor in the association between an independent and dependent variable is the indirect pathway (Baron & Kenny, 1986; MacKinnon et al., 2017).

**Table 7**

*The Results of Testing Mediation Effects*

Mediated Paths	Effects	SE	t-values
Grit → PsyCap → JSB	.307	.051	6.036*
Grit → JSB → QOR	.012	.019	.635
Grit → PsyCap → QOR	.229	.053	4.311*
PsyCap → JSB → QOR	.168	.044	3.822*
Grit → PsyCap → JSB → QOR	.085	.024	3.535*

*Note.* 5,000 bootstrap resamples were applied. An asterisk indicates significance ( $p < .001$ ).

As shown in Table 7, the results demonstrated that the mediation effect of grit on quality of reemployment was fully mediated by psychological capital (effect size = .229;  $p < .001$ ).

Psychological capital is a full mediator in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment because only the indirect effect of psychological capital is significant in those relationships. However, the results demonstrated that the single mediation effect of job search behaviors (effect size = .012;  $p < .001$ ) between grit and quality of reemployment was not

significant. The sequential mediation effect via psychological capital and job search behaviors in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment (effect size = .085;  $p < .001$ ) was significant. Hence, the outcomes supported Hypothesis 7 and Hypothesis 9, while Hypothesis 8 was not supported. The results of the conceptual model present in Figure 4 and the hypotheses testing are summarized in Table 8.

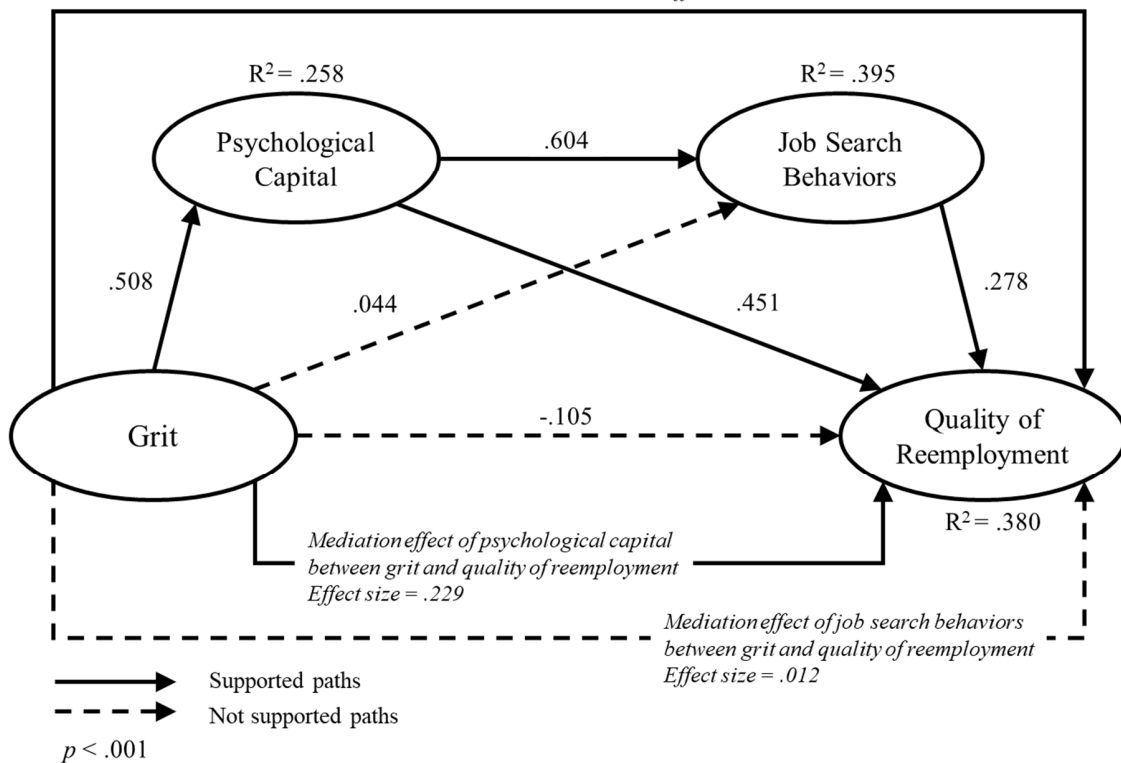
**Figure 4**

*The Results of the Conceptual Model*

Model fit indices:

$\chi^2_{(129)} = 254.147$ , normed  $-\chi^2 = 1.970$ ,  
 SRMR = .037, NFI = .933, TLI = .959,  
 CFI = .966, RMSEA = .055

*Sequential Mediation effect of psychological capital and job search behaviors  
 Effect size = .085*



**Table 8***Summary of Hypotheses Testing*

Hypotheses	Significance
H1: Grit has a positive effect on quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.	Not Supported
H2: Grit has a positive effect on psychological capital for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.	Supported
H3: Psychological capital has a positive effect on quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.	Supported
H4: Grit has a positive effect on job search behaviors for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.	Not Supported
H5: Job search behaviors has a positive effect on quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.	Supported
H6: Psychological capital has a positive effect on job search behaviors for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or	Supported

furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

H7: Psychological capital mediates the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

Supported

H8: Job search behavior mediates the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

Not Supported

H9: Psychological capital and job search behavior have sequential mediation effects in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business.

Supported

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## **Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusions**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provided a summary and discussion of the study's findings and conclusions drawn from the results. The application of the study's findings was discussed, including an explanation of how these findings can be implemented. The literature review encompassed a discussion on the fundamental constructs of grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment, which were identified as the focal points for this study. The readers are presented with the findings and an analysis of how those findings relate to the fields of grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment. Additionally, this study included an analysis of its relationship to previous research conducted on the subjects. The discussion and conclusions involve the following main elements: a reexamination of the results and a concise overview of the study's findings, the presentation of both theoretical and practical implications, and an exploration of the limitations of this study along with recommendations for future research.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States. There was a need for a more comprehensive understanding of grit and its relationship with the quality of reemployment outcomes. This understanding was crucial in order to grasp the underlying mechanism that influences individuals' person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain in their current employment. Consequently, this study

endeavor has undertaken the task of formulating and evaluating a theoretical framework on the construct of grit, with the ultimate objective of enhancing the overall effectiveness of reemployment outcomes. This framework drew upon the principles of the conservation of resource theory and self-determination theory. In that regard, the aim was to thoroughly analyze (a) if quality of reemployment scores vary according to grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors, (b) the mediating effect of psychological capital in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, (c) the mediating effect of job search behaviors in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment, and (d) the sequential mediation roles in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment.

### **Research Questions**

This study was grounded in a set of research questions concerning the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States.

1. To what extent does grit affect psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
2. To what extent does psychological capital affect job search behaviors and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

3. To what extent does job search behaviors affect the quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
4. Can psychological capital mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
5. Can job search behavior mediate the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?
6. Do psychological capital and job search behavior have sequential mediation effects in the relationship between grit and quality of reemployment for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business?

## **Summary**

### **Study Overview**

The primary objective of this research endeavor was to contribute to the existing body of scholarly work and enhance understanding of the significance of grit in both job search contexts and workplace settings. Grit is a variable that is frequently described as contemporary and modern. However, there has been a lack of extensive research that has specifically examined the connection between the construct of grit and the quality of reemployment strategies, such as person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, or intention to remain.

The purpose was achieved by collecting data to examine research questions using an online survey. Quantitative research design was used to investigate the relationship between grit, psychological capital (PsyCap), job search behaviors (JSB), and the quality of reemployment (QOR) outcomes among individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States. After collecting the data and appropriately coding the values, statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 29. The proposed relationships between the variables were examined using Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modelling (CB-SEM) in the SmartPLS 4 software. The conservation of resource theory and self-determination theory were provided as the framework for this study.

Grit showed a positive effect with PsyCap. Grit was found to have a positive impact on the QOR outcomes, but only when the relationship was mediated by PsyCap. The level of individuals' PsyCap influenced their JSB and QOR. It was also discovered that PsyCap and the JSB had a combined mediating effects between grit and QOR. Therefore, this study highlights how crucial grit is to understand QOR. The significance of the influence exerted by PsyCap and JSB was indisputable.

This research made a valuable contribution by presenting a novel theoretical framework that sheds light on how job seekers' perceptions can impact the quality of their employment within an organization once they are hired. The study underscores the significance of recruiting individuals who possess high levels of grit and psychological resources for their pursuit of employment. It suggests that these qualities can contribute to greater resilience, perseverance, and success in the workplace. Additionally, the research emphasizes the importance of fostering an optimal work environment that caters to the needs of all employees. This inclusive approach



can enhance job satisfaction, productivity, and overall organizational performance. By recognizing the value of grit and psychological resources in recruitment and prioritizing the creation of supportive workplace environments, organizations can cultivate a motivated and resilient workforce.

### **Findings of the Survey**

Research Question 1, which represented Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4, examined the influence of grit on psychological capital (PsyCap), job search behaviors (JSB), and the quality of reemployment (QOR). The results of the analysis revealed that gritty individuals have no statistically significant influence on JSB and QOR. However, the relationship between grit and PsyCap was discovered to be positive and significant.

Research Question 2, comprising Hypotheses 3 and 6, investigated the impact of PsyCap on JSB and the QOR. Individuals with PsyCap positively and significantly impacted their JSB. Also, individuals who possessed PsyCap positively and significantly influenced the QOR.

Research Question 3, encompassing hypothesis 5, explored the impact of JSB on the QOR. The finding indicated that there was indeed a connection between JSB and the QOR.

Research Question 4, including Hypothesis 7, investigated whether PsyCap functions as a mediator in the relationship between grit and the QOR. The finding showed that the relationship between grit and QOR was influenced by PsyCap. PsyCap played a crucial role in the connection between grit and QOR, as it served as a complete mediator. It is worth noting that the significance lies in the indirect effect of PsyCap on these relationships.

Research Question 5, comprising Hypothesis 8, examined whether JSB acts as a mediator in the relationship between grit and the QOR. The result demonstrated that the relationship between grit and QOR was not significant when considering JSB as a mediator.

Research Question 6, referred to as Hypothesis 9, investigated whether PsyCap and JSB have sequential mediating effects in the association between grit and QOR. The finding indicated that the relationship between grit and the QOR was found to be influenced by PsyCap and JSB sequentially. Therefore, the overall QOR was found to be influenced by a combination of PsyCap and JSB.

### **Conclusions**

The goal of this study was to develop and test a conceptual model of grit to enhance comprehension regarding the fundamental mechanisms that contribute to the quality of reemployment (QOR) for individuals currently employed who were terminated, laid off, or furloughed from their previous job or unable to work because their employer lost business across different regions of the United States. The principles of conservation of resource theory and self-determination theory guided this investigation.

The findings of this study revealed that while grit alone may not be sufficient to encourage higher QOR among job seekers, it plays a crucial role when combined with psychological resources because psychological capital (PsyCap) serves as a full mediator between grit and the QOR. In other words, possessing high levels of grit is not enough for achieving improved QOR outcomes. These findings align with previous research and meta-analyses, indicating that grit may lack adequate predictive accuracy for specific outcome measures. Although grit is commonly praised for its connection to perseverance and passion for long-term goals, its direct impact on specific outcomes, such as QOR, may be more complex (Credé et al., 2017; Datu et al., 2017; Fosnacht et al., 2019; Gross, 2019; Guan, 2019). The findings of the study also discovered that while grit may be a valuable trait in certain aspects of life, such as perseverance and long-term goal achievement, it may not directly influence

individuals' specific measures of seeking employment opportunities. Organizations and individuals should prioritize other factors or traits that are more directly related to job search behaviors. These factors may encompass networking skills, adaptability, proficiency in resume writing, and interview strategies.

However, it is essential to provide job seekers with the necessary psychological resources during their pursuit of reemployment. While examining the reemployment outcomes of the participants, it was observed that both grit and PsyCap had individual predictive capabilities. However, the analysis revealed that the influence of grit on QOR was significantly improved when PsyCap was included in the data analysis. Due to the increased grit displayed by those with PsyCap, the results suggest that PsyCap can be used as a predictor of the QOR. Therefore, the mediation analysis results presented compelling evidence that the association between grit and the QOR was influenced by the extent of PsyCap among individuals who were presently employed but had experienced termination in their previous occupations. The predictive relationship between grit and QOR outcomes is contingent upon the presence of PsyCap. This discovery holds significance as it demonstrates the necessity of possessing self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience, collectively referred to as PsyCap, to cultivate grit.

The present study employed a PsyCap measure, initially formulated by Luthans et al. (2007a), which encompasses the subscales of self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience. This measure aimed to assess the extent to which individuals currently employed but have experienced termination from their previous jobs exhibit positive reemployment outcomes. This implies that PsyCap encompasses essential psychological resources which are crucial for successful reemployment transitions. This PsyCap likely influences individuals' ability to secure reemployment that is not only more frequent but also of higher quality, potentially resulting in

improved person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain. The discovery supports recent research on the grit construct, emphasizing its intricate function through the mediating impact of PsyCap. This is supported by the positive association with various outcomes across different contexts, including the work engagement of nurses (Park & Kim, 2023), sales performance in a business-to-business sales setting (Coomer, 2016), motivation to lead in the military (LaRocca et al., 2023), supportive organizational climate and employee performance, such as satisfaction, performance, and commitment (Luthans et al., 2008b), and ratings of positive employee emotions (Avey et al., 2008). These findings collectively underscore the significant mediation impact of PsyCap on diverse aspects of individual and organizational performance.

The research findings indicate statistically significant evidence to support direct correlations between psychological capital (PsyCap) and the measures of job search behaviors (JSB) and quality of reemployment (QOR). This implies that the psychological resources inherent in PsyCap have a profound impact on shaping job seekers' behaviors throughout the job search process, thereby influencing the quality of their reemployment experiences. This study enhances PsyCap and job search literature by emphasizing the importance of positive psychological resources in the job search process. The results are consistent with Georgiou and Nikolaou's (2019) research, highlighting the positive impact of PsyCap on enhancing individuals' engagement in job search activities. Luthans et al. (2004) discovered a correlation between the positive psychological capacities of self-efficacy and optimism and a job seeker's reemployment. Extensive previous research (Crossley & Stanton, 2005; Eden & Aviram, 1993; Kanfer et al., 2001; McArdle et al., 2007; Oglensky, 2013; Shamir, 1986; Wanberg, 1997; Waters & Moore, 2002; Winefield et al., 1992) corroborates these results. Fleig-Palmer et al.

(2009) also indicated that a positive state of resilience could effectively lead job seekers to find new employment and proposed a theoretical framework for empirical investigation. Therefore, identifying job seekers' PsyCap offers a chance to enhance the theoretical foundation of positive psychology in connection to the process of finding new employment.

The current research study also demonstrated that there is a direct correlation between the construct of job search behaviors (JSB) and the quality of reemployment (QOR). It implies that the course of action people take in their pursuit of employment directly affects the caliber of opportunities they end up landing. This emphasizes how crucial proactive and successful JSB techniques are to getting the desired results when it comes to finding new employment. Additionally, it stresses the value of investing time and effort in optimizing JSB to enhance the likelihood of securing high QOR opportunities. The evidence provided by various studies emphasizes the crucial role of JSB in predicting QOR outcomes. Individuals with a positive attitude toward job search were more likely to search for jobs actively and ultimately find reemployment (Carlier et al., 2014). Actively engaging in job search significantly impacted voluntary turnover more than less active approaches (Blau, 1993). Using a JSB strategy increased the likelihood of receiving job offers and finding QOR, consistent with findings by Crossley and Highhouse (2005) (Koen et al., 2010; Koen et al., 2016). Meta-analyses supported the role of job search intensity in predicting employment success outcomes quantitatively (van Hooft et al., 2021). These findings emphasize that proactive JSB and strategic are crucial for successful QOR outcomes.

Lastly, this dissertation introduces a new model to investigate the complex connections between grit, psychological capital (PsyCap), job search behaviors (JSB), and the quality of reemployment (QOR). Specifically, the study investigates how grit influences PsyCap and JSB,

which, in turn, jointly mediate the QOR among individuals facing various employment disruptions such as termination, layoff, furlough, or business loss by their employer across diverse regions of the United States. This comprehensive approach aims to provide a deeper understanding of the reemployment process by illuminating the role of personal traits, psychological resources, and proactive JSB. By investigating how factors such as grit, PsyCap, and JSB influence the QOR, this study seeks to identify crucial mechanisms that facilitate successful transitions back into the workforce, particularly in challenging circumstances such as termination, layoff, furlough, or business loss. This nuanced examination not only enhances the understanding of individual experiences during the reemployment process but also offers valuable perceptions for developing effective support strategies and interventions to help individuals overcome obstacles and achieve meaningful reemployment outcomes. The significance of this research goes beyond the immediate context of reemployment, providing insightful information to support people in navigating career transitions and building sustainable career paths in the face of adversity.

### **Implications**

The findings of this study have significant theoretical implications for enhancing reemployment outcomes among individuals facing various employment disruptions such as termination, layoff, furlough, or business loss by their employer across diverse regions of the United States. The implications pertain to the utilization of grit, PsyCap, and JSB as predictors for the assessment of QOR in various domains, including person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain. The rationale behind this proposition is that individuals with elevated levels of grit, PsyCap, and JSB are more likely to achieve favorable employment outcomes. Consequently, companies seeking to hire new employees may exhibit a preference for

candidates who already possess high levels of grit, PsyCap, and JSB. Furthermore, given the trainability of PsyCap, it is advisable for organizations to allocate resources toward training and development initiatives in order to cultivate a workforce that is deeply committed and actively involved, thereby enhancing performance and productivity.

Overall, this new model offers valuable insights into the complex dynamics of reemployment and underscores the multifaceted nature of the factors contributing to successful transitions back into the workforce. By understanding these relationships, stakeholders can develop targeted interventions and support mechanisms to enhance reemployment outcomes for affected individuals.

### **Theoretical Implication**

The study utilized the Conservation of Resource Theory (COR) and Self-determination Theory (SDT) to investigate the importance of personal traits, psychological resources, and proactive job search behaviors in determining individuals' reemployment quality post-hiring. By applying the COR and SDT to a sample of employees from different regions and industries, a more comprehensive comprehension was achieved regarding the impact of employees' perception of grit on their QOR. COR and SDT propose that the perseverance and passion of job seekers impact their level of PsyCap, which subsequently influences their JSB, resulting in a better QOR.

### ***Conservation of Resource Theory***

The job search process is widely acknowledged as a demanding and exhausting endeavor that necessitates substantial allocation of resources (Sun et al., 2013). The conservation of resource theory (COR) proposes that individuals have an inherent drive to obtain and protect resources, viewing any decrease in resources as a possible threat or weakness (Hobfoll, 2002).

COR provides valuable insights into how individuals handle their resources while searching for a job. Individuals are inclined to obtain and preserve resources, which encompass psychological assets like resilience and optimism. This suggests that actions taken to protect and replenish these resources might mitigate the negative effects of losing one's job and make finding new employment easier. COR also emphasizes the value of investing resources in proactive job search practices, including networking, skill development, and customized job search tactics. Individuals can improve their chances of finding new employment as well as the outcomes they achieve by investing in these initiatives (Liu et al., 2014).

COR cautions about the risk of a resource loss spiral after losing a job, where individuals may struggle to engage in effective job search activities due to depleted resources. It is essential to acknowledge and deal with this risk to help individuals in their efforts to find new employment and achieve positive outcomes in reemployment (Egozi Farkash et al., 2022).

The results of the study demonstrate a noteworthy correlation between diminished resource availability and heightened levels of exhaustion. Therefore, the strategic significance of resource availability in the reemployment process not only influences an individual's likelihood of being reemployed, as previously established by McArdle et al. (2007), but also impacts the nature of the jobs they eventually secure and their overall reemployment outcomes in terms of person-organization fit, person-job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain.

Individuals with limited resources are more prone to terminate their employment prematurely and subsequently engage in the arduous process of seeking new job opportunities, which is an unfavorable circumstance. It is highly probable that they will secure another employment opportunity of substandard quality (Koen et al., 2010; Lim et al., 2016). Examining exhaustion and resource management within the existing body of research on job loss and job



search is important in facilitating the recovery of individuals who have experienced unemployment by mitigating the adverse effects of resource depletion cycles.

Consequently, the COR offers an understanding of how individuals handle and distribute their tangible and intangible resources to deal with the challenges and requirements of finding quality new employment.

### ***Self-determination Theory***

Self-determination theory (SDT) provides a framework for understanding human motivation and behavior, particularly in contexts where individuals are striving to achieve specific goals (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2017), such as finding new employment after experiencing job termination, layoff, furlough, or business loss.

SDT emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation in influencing individuals' actions and choices during the process of seeking employment. Encouraging intrinsic motivation through autonomy and skill mastery opportunities can improve reemployment results (van den Broeck et al., 2010; van der Vaart & van den Broeck, 2019). According to the findings of van der Vaart and van den Broeck (2019), it is suggested that interventions targeting unemployment should be implemented within a context that fosters a need-supportive environment (Deci et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2017; van den Broeck et al., 2016), wherein individuals are able to genuinely perceive a sense of ownership over their cognitive processes, emotional experiences, behavioral patterns, social connections, and personal efficacy. The present study employed SDT as a guiding framework to explore the concept of need-support in job search and its implications for career counselors. To provide a comprehensive understanding of the theory, the focus shifted towards elucidating the strategies that career counselors can employ to foster a need-supportive

psychological climate (van der Vaart & van den Broeck, 2019), thereby facilitating the growth and success of gritty job seekers.

SDT highlights the significance of fulfilling individuals' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Sheldon et al., 2001; van den Broeck et al., 2010). Environments and interventions that cater to these needs are thought to enhance well-being and optimal performance during the process of finding new employment (Ellingsen-Dalskau et al., 2016; Koen et al., 2010; Koen et al., 2016; van der Vaart et al., 2019).

SDT underlines the role of self-determination in guiding individuals' behavior and choices. Empowering individuals to take ownership of their reemployment journey and make autonomous decisions is proposed to lead to more positive and sustainable reemployment outcomes.

Recognizing and incorporating these theoretical implications into reemployment support programs can aid in promoting individuals' well-being and facilitating successful reintegration into the workforce (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Koen et al., 2016; Vansteenkiste et al., 2005; van den Broeck et al., 2010).

### **Practical Implication**

The result of this study provides valuable insights by highlighting the significance of gaining a thorough understanding of the reemployment process through examining the influence of personal traits, psychological resources, and proactive job search behaviors. This study improves our comprehension of individual experiences during the reemployment process. It provides insights for creating successful support strategies and interventions to assist individuals in overcoming obstacles and attaining significant reemployment outcomes. This research has significance not only for reemployment but also for offering valuable guidance to individuals in managing transitions in their careers and establishing sustainable career trajectories despite

challenges. Additionally, the research highlights the significance of establishing and maintaining an optimal workplace environment that accommodates the needs of all employees. There are two ways that the findings of this study can be applied at the individual levels as well as organizational levels.

### ***Adult Learners Practices***

In line with the conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989), individuals are intrinsically motivated to preserve their existing resources (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Xanthopoulou et al., 2009), such as skills, knowledge, social connections, and psychological well-being. In the realm of job search, it becomes imperative for individuals to prioritize the preservation of these resources by actively maintaining professional networks, engaging in relevant training or skill-building endeavors, and upholding a resilient attitude despite encountering setbacks. Additionally, the theory underlines the significance of investing resources in activities conducive to enhancing reemployment prospects (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989; Saks & Ashforth, 2002). This entails dedicating time and effort to crafting tailored resumes and cover letters, cultivating relationships with potential employers or industry contacts, and proactively pursuing job opportunities aligned with one's professional trajectory (Lim et al., 2016). On the contrary, prolonged unemployment or repeated rejections may lead to resource depletion (Nonnis et al., 2023), including self-confidence, motivation, and optimism (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989; Saks & Ashforth, 2002). To counteract such losses, individuals may adopt proactive self-care practices, seek social support networks, and sustain a sense of purpose and direction throughout their job search journey. On a contrasting note, effective resource investment in the job search process can yield a positive spiral of resource gain (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 2002). For instance, individuals who invest in expanding

their professional network may gain access to valuable job leads and opportunities, thereby amplifying their reemployment prospects. Similarly, those engaging in skill development initiatives may augment their employability and self-assurance, consequently translating into more fruitful outcomes in their job search endeavors.

Based on self-determination theory, a sense of empowerment and capability is paramount for individuals to navigate the job search process and achieve successful reemployment (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vansteenkiste et al., 2005). This entails granting individuals autonomy in setting job search objectives, selecting strategies, and evaluating potential opportunities (van den Broeck et al., 2010). Those afforded autonomy are more inclined towards heightened motivation, engagement, and satisfaction in their job search endeavors. Moreover, competence plays a pivotal role in the job search and reemployment process (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vansteenkiste et al., 2005), as it pertains to individuals' perceptions of their skills, abilities, and qualifications pertinent to the job market (van den Broeck et al., 2010). Individuals who perceive themselves as competent are more inclined to participate in proactive job search behaviors, including networking, skill enhancement, and pursuing challenging opportunities. Furthermore, the experience of success and progress throughout the job search journey amplifies individuals' sense of competence, thereby reinforcing their motivation and perseverance towards reemployment (Ryan & Deci, 2000; van den Broeck et al., 2010). Additionally, fostering connections and support within one's social milieu is imperative (Glazer & Beehr, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2000). This encompasses interactions with family, friends, mentors, and professional networks (Liu et al., 2014) who provide emotional encouragement, practical aid, and social validation during the job search endeavor. Robust social support networks enhance individuals'

resilience, confidence, and motivation, rendering the job search journey more manageable and rewarding (Ataç et al., 2018; McArdle et al., 2007).

Lastly, a growth mindset has a substantial impact on grit (Tang et al., 2019). Dweck (2007) asserted that mindsets represent an individual's belief regarding whether the human condition is malleable or unchangeable. Dweck (1986) stated that individuals with a growth mindset excel in goal orientation and perceive challenges as learning opportunities. They welcome and accept failures and continue to work hard despite challenges and obstacles. They actively learn and develop from criticisms and derive insights from the successes or triumphs of others (Stoycheva & Ruskov, 2015). Job seekers must actively cultivate and sustain a growth mindset to help them secure meaningful employment.

### ***Human Resource Practices***

The findings of the study suggest that prioritizing positivity in the workplace is crucial. This can be achieved through employee learning and development, talent management strategies, and positive organizational climate for current and future managers. Organizations also can foster a culture of positivity, collaboration, and innovation by investing in the personal and professional development of employees and managers, leading to benefits for both individuals and the organization.

**Learning and Development** Learning and development as part of human resource development (HRD) strategies initiatives that bolster employees' grit and psychological capital are essential for those currently employed. Elevating these two can foster quality of employment, boost fit and satisfaction levels, and subsequently decrease voluntary turnover.

Contrary to popular belief, the environment influences personality more than heredity (Vukasović & Bratko, 2015). In other words, one's personality can be significantly influenced,

shaped, and developed (Bouchard Jr, 1994; Tang et al., 2019). According to Duckworth (2016), grit is a malleable quality that can be fostered by both external and internal sources, including career counselors and gritty cultures, as well as internal elements like interest, purposeful practice, and hope (van der Vaart et al., 2021). Therefore, grit intervention can enhance employee resilience, perseverance, and overall performance in organizations. Grit intervention in organizations includes workshops, coaching, or online courses aimed at improving employee resilience, perseverance, and performance. The program emphasizes goal setting, resilience building, persistence strategies, mindfulness, and self-awareness to cultivate a more adaptable, resilient workforce dedicated to achieving long-term goals (Steinfort, 2015). Companies integrate grit intervention into their organizational development programs to foster a workforce that is adaptable, resilient, and dedicated to achieving long-term goals. This can result in enhanced employee satisfaction, engagement, performance, and retention, ultimately leading to organizational success.

Organizations can enhance employees' positive psychological resources through psychological capital interventions to create positive behavioral changes (Luthans, 2012). These interventions are designed to develop a positive psychological state among individuals, enabling them to deal with workplace challenges, setbacks, and stressors effectively (Luthans et al., 2010). These interventions often utilize HRD techniques and strategies such as goal-setting exercises, cognitive-behavioral techniques, role-playing, mindfulness practices, and feedback mechanisms, increasing participants' efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience (Lupşa et al., 2020; Luthans et al., 2008a). The main goal of psychological capital intervention training is to provide participants with the necessary psychological resources to succeed in the professional environment, increase job satisfaction and effectiveness, and promote overall well-being (Lupşa et al., 2020). Investing

in the enhancement of psychological capital can help organizations build a more resilient and engaged workforce, resulting in better organizational performance (Luthans, 2012; Luthans et al., 2010). Every effort should be made to highlight the significant components of employees' positive resources in the current competitive environment.

**Strategic Talent Management** When the tasks assigned to an employee align with their needs or desires in their role, it is referred to as a needs-supplies fit (Kristof, 1996). According to this analysis, the work environment and individual attributes are essential for achieving satisfaction and retaining employees. Human resource managers play a role in the hiring process by evaluating the compatibility of potential employees and helping them assess their own employability. One method by which potential employees can enhance the alignment of their qualifications is by utilizing realistic job previews (RJP). RJP are utilized during recruitment to offer candidates a thorough and precise depiction of a job, encompassing its duties, tasks, work setting, and difficulties (Earnest et al., 2011; Phillips, 1998). Prospective employees can use this factual information to evaluate their requirements, determine if they are a good fit, and decide whether to continue pursuing the job (Buckley et al., 2002). Transparency in the hiring process decreases turnover rates and increases job satisfaction by providing candidates with a clear understanding of job expectations (Buckley et al., 2002; Earnest et al., 2011; Phillips, 1998; Raub & Streit, 2006).

Another possible strategy is investigating strategies for speeding up filling vacant positions in order to alleviate the perception among existing employees that their working conditions are deteriorating as a consequence of the increased workload resulting from the departure of personnel within the organization (Lievens & Chapman, 2019; Qureshi et al., 2013).

Leaders may also establish and maintain effective internal recruitment systems to support and enhance the professional development of current employees within the organization.

Human resource (HR) managers should establish criteria for recruiting and hiring employees with high levels of grit, psychological capital, and proactive behaviors in terms of the selection process. This requires evaluating candidates based on their demonstrated resilience, persistence, self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and proactive approach. To effectively recruit individuals with these talents, HR managers may incorporate specific assessment methods such as behavioral interviews, personality questionnaires, situational judgment tests, and reference checks that evaluate candidates past experiences and behaviors related to grit, psychological capital, and proactive behaviors to assess how well individuals' characteristics align with the organizations' values and culture. Also, HR managers should clearly outline these desired attributes in job descriptions and advertisements to attract candidates with these traits. Employees who possess these traits are self-assured in their ability to contribute to the company's strategy and goals within their workplace. They have a positive outlook and possess problem-solving abilities to navigate challenging situations (Walumbwa et al., 2010). Accordingly, they are more inclined to be actively involved in their work.

**Positive Organizational Climate** One potential approach involves investigating the perspectives of existing employees regarding their anticipated employment circumstances. The results of this study suggest that there is a positive sequential mediated relationship between grit, PsyCap, and JSB and various employee outcomes, including organizational fit, job fit, job satisfaction, and intention to remain in the organization. Hence, organizational leaders possess the capacity to implement various approaches to improve the quality of employment outcomes throughout the organization (Sonmez Cakir & Adiguzel, 2020). For example, it is recommended



to conduct surveys among all employees in order to collect feedback regarding their overall level of organizational fit or job fit, engagement, commitment, or satisfaction. The presence of data on employees' perceptions encompassing the entire organization can facilitate leaders in cultivating a more favorable workplace climate, potentially leading to a decrease in turnover. This allows leaders to implement strategies that enhance the overall level of fit, engagement, commitment, or satisfaction among their current employees (van Vianen, 2018), particularly in areas of the company where turnover rate is a prominent issue.

Furthermore, implementing interactive strategies at the individual level involves facilitating engagement between department heads or general managers and subordinate managers within the organization (Barrick et al., 2015; Bourgeois & Brodwin, 1984). Acknowledging the concerns of subordinate managers regarding their work quality, it is critical to begin discussing these issues to mitigate these concerns. It is also advisable to actively interact with their subordinates and refrain from evading the subject matter. Having knowledge about a prominent industrial issue and taking proactive measures can contribute to alleviating the concerns of subordinate managers, which has the potential to enhance organizational retention (Moss & Sanchez, 2004).

### **Limitations**

This study improves our comprehension of individual experiences during the reemployment process. It provides insights for creating successful support strategies and interventions to assist individuals in overcoming obstacles and attaining significant reemployment outcomes. However, Similar to many other studies, the present study is susceptible to certain limitations in its design.

First and foremost, the central focus of this study lies in exploring human motivation and behavior, with a particular emphasis on the significance of personal traits. The investigation aims to assess the impact of personal traits, psychological resources, and proactive job search behaviors on individuals' reemployment quality following job loss. This concept can be interpreted and measured through various theoretical perspectives. For this study, Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resource theory and Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory were employed as the primary frameworks for evaluation. These theories were chosen to delve into the core construct, especially in scenarios where individuals are striving to achieve specific objectives. Consequently, the findings of this research regarding the fundamental components of individuals navigating diverse job disruptions, circumstances, resources, and behaviors may differ from studies employing alternative theoretical frameworks.

Second, the study employed a cross-sectional design to investigate the relationships between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and the quality of reemployment. It is important to note that while the research questions were formulated based on established theories, the data collection approach employed in this study has limitations in establishing cause-and-effect relationships (Setia, 2016). The utilization of cross-sectional data hinders the ability to draw robust conclusions regarding the established relationships among the variables under investigation. The method under consideration needs to effectively analyze behavior patterns over an extended duration or establish enduring trends. The temporal aspect of the cross-sectional snapshot may not accurately reflect the overall behavior of the entire group (Spector, 2019).

Third, the scales employed in this study assessed variables that influence participants' self-rating responses. Hence, it is plausible that the responses provided by participants on

specific items may not precisely reflect their genuine perceptions due to social desirability bias. When self-report measures are employed in business environments to evaluate individuals' personal attitudes or perceptions regarding their jobs, there is a potential for employees to provide socially desirable responses (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002; Sallis & Saelens, 2000). Typically, individuals offer responses that present a favorable perception of themselves. Consequently, a substantial body of scholarly work has extensively investigated the phenomenon of social desirability bias in the context of job evaluations, consistently reaffirming findings from previous studies conducted over several decades (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002; Moorman & Podsakoff, 1992; Sallis & Saelens, 2000).

Further, statistical tests necessitate a larger sample size in order to ensure the sample's representativeness of a population and the generalizability of statistical findings to a broader population (Bartlett et al., 2001). The study sample consisted of individuals who were presently employed and had previously undergone job terminations. It should be noted that this sample may only represent a subset of previously terminated individuals, including those subjected to layoffs or furloughs within the United States.

One additional limitation of the study is that the analysis of the groups did not include an examination of certain potentially influential variables that could have impacted the levels of grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors within small sample sizes of specific groups, primarily due to uneven proportions.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Given the findings and limitations of the study, several future research directions can be suggested:

1. While this study applied conservation of resource theory and self-determination theory, future research could investigate different theoretical frameworks to enhance comprehension of how personal traits, psychological resources, and proactive behaviors influence the quality of reemployment. Theories concerning resilience, motivation, organizational support, economic conditions, social networks, or social support can provide valuable insights into individuals' experiences after losing their job.
2. Future research could utilize a longitudinal approach to investigate how the quality of reemployment changes over time, as opposed to the cross-sectional design used in the study. This involves tracking individuals' experiences and results after losing their jobs at various intervals to understand how personal traits, psychological resources, and job search strategies impact long-term reemployment success.
3. To mitigate social desirability bias in self-report measures, future studies may employ mixed method approaches that integrate self-report surveys with objective measures or behavioral observations. Researchers could use implicit measures or experimental designs to reduce the impact of social desirability bias on participants' responses.
4. Building on the study's sample of individuals who experienced job terminations, future research could aim to recruit more extensive and diverse samples to enhance the generalizability of the findings. This could involve including individuals from various industries, geographical locations, and employment statuses to capture a broader range of reemployment experiences.
5. Conduct targeted research focusing on specific demographic, occupational, or geographic groups within the sample to explore how unique characteristics may influence levels of grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors. One approach is to analyze

subgroups by age, gender, education level, ethnicity, family status, income, industry, or job tenure to reveal detailed insights.

6. Examine possible interactions among variables, including demographic characteristics, grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors, to reveal intricate relationships and identify potential mediators or moderators. This comprehensive approach can deliver a more complete understanding of the factors affecting reemployment outcomes in particular groups.
7. Further investigation is warranted to examine additional variables that may impact levels of grit, psychological capital, and job search behaviors. Future studies could explore factors such as personality traits, various psychological resources, socioeconomic status, social support networks, and organizational characteristics to provide a more comprehensive understanding of reemployment outcomes.

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## Appendix A

### Informed Consent and Human Subjects Approval



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS,  
LEADERSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

#### INFORMATION LETTER

for a Research Study entitled

*"Individuals' Grit and Quality of Reemployment: A Sequential Mediation Model of Psychological Capital and Job Search Behaviors"*

You are invited to participate in a research study to investigate the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment. The study is being conducted by Jeanna Lee, a doctoral candidate, under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Taylor in the Auburn University Department of Educational Foundations Leadership and Technology. You are invited to participate because you are currently employed, have previously been terminated, laid off, or furloughed, and are age 19 or older.

**What will be involved if you participate?** If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to respond to 60 survey questions on the Qualtrics platform. Your total time commitment will be approximately 10 minutes.

**Are there any risks or discomforts?** There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. The risks associated with participating in this study are the potential for psychological distress or discomfort associated with answering questions. You can mitigate these risks by choosing to stop at any time or by omitting any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

**Are there any benefits to yourself or others?** There are no direct benefits associated with participation in this study; however, generalizable benefits, such as study results, may advance the understanding of adult education and improving adult learning opportunities. You may contribute to the data that could provide valuable knowledge and insight on improving the grit and psychological capital of individuals in leadership positions. I cannot promise you that you will receive any or all of the benefits described.

**Will you receive compensation for participating?** Each participant is compensated differently based on the incentive for which they enrolled with. You will be compensated the amount you agreed upon with your panel provider before you entered into the survey.

4036 HALEY CENTER  
AUBURN, AL 36849-5221

TELEPHONE:  
334-844-4460

FAX:  
334-844-3072

www.auburn.edu

The Auburn University Institutional  
Review Board has approved this  
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09/07/2023 to -----  
Protocol # 23-444 EX 2309

**Are there any costs?** If you decide to participate, you will not incur any costs associated with participation in this study. Auburn University has not provided for any payment if you are harmed as a result of participating in this study.

**If you change your mind about participating,** you can withdraw at any time by closing your browser window. If you choose to withdraw, your data up to the point of withdrawal will be saved but is not identifiable. Once you've submitted anonymous data, it cannot be withdrawn since it will be unidentifiable. Your decision about whether to participate or stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the Department of Educational Foundations Leadership and Technology.

**Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous.** We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by not collecting any identifiable information about you. Information collected through your participation may be used to fulfill an educational requirement, published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting.

If you have questions about this study, please contact Jeanna Lee at [jzl0095@auburn.edu](mailto:jzl0095@auburn.edu) or Dr. Jonathan Taylor at [jonathan.taylor@auburn.edu](mailto:jonathan.taylor@auburn.edu).

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or e-mail at [IRBadmin@auburn.edu](mailto:IRBadmin@auburn.edu) or [IRBChair@auburn.edu](mailto:IRBChair@auburn.edu).

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION ABOVE, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW. YOU MAY PRINT A COPY OF THIS LETTER TO KEEP.**

The Auburn University Institutional  
Review Board has approved this  
Document for use from  
09/07/2023 to -----  
Protocol # 23-444 EX 2309

## Appendix B

### E-Mail Invitation for On-Line Survey

#### E-MAIL INVITATION FOR ON-LINE SURVEY

Dear Participants,

You are invited to participate in a research study as part of my Ph.D. dissertation that examines the relationship between grit, psychological capital, job search behaviors, and quality of reemployment. The study is being conducted by Jeanna Lee, under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Taylor in the Auburn University Department of Educational Foundations Leadership and Technology. You are invited to participate because you are currently employed, have previously been terminated, laid off, or furloughed, and are age 19 or older.

If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to complete a confidential online survey. Your total time commitment will be approximately 10 minutes.

Your participation is completely confidential and voluntary. There are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study.

You will be compensated the amount that you and your panel provider agreed upon prior to your participation in the survey.

You are free to withdraw from participation at any time simply by closing your web browser window if you change your mind about participating.

If you encounter any technical difficulties or have any questions regarding the survey or the research study, please feel free to contact Jeanna Lee at \_\_\_\_\_ or jz10095@auburn.edu. I will be more than happy to assist you and address any concerns you may have.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or e-mail at IRBadmin@auburn.edu.

Proceeding with this online survey indicates that you consent to participate in this study. Please use this link to begin the survey.

Thank you for considering this invitation to participate in the survey. Your time and valuable input are immensely valued and will contribute to the advancement of adult education research.

Sincerely,

Jeanna Lee

<p>The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from 09/07/2023 to _____ Protocol # 23-444 EX 2309</p>
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## Appendix C

### Survey Instrument

#### Short Grit Scale

Please respond to the following items. There are no right or wrong answers, so just answer honestly!

*1: Not like me at all, 2: Not much like me, 3: Somewhat like me, 4: Mostly like me, 5: Very much like me*

Short Grit Items	Scoring				
New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.*	1	2	3	4	5
Setbacks don't discourage me.	1	2	3	4	5
I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest.*	1	2	3	4	5
I am a hard worker.	1	2	3	4	5
I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one.*	1	2	3	4	5
I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete.*	1	2	3	4	5
I finish whatever I begin.	1	2	3	4	5
I am diligent.	1	2	3	4	5

*Note.* The asterisk symbol (\*) indicated a reverse-coded.

#### Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ-12)

##### Self-Rater Short Form

Below are statements that describe how you may think about yourself right now. Use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

*1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Somewhat disagree, 4: Somewhat agree, 5: Agree, 6: Strongly agree*

PCQ-12 Items	Scoring					
I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel confident contributing to discussions about the organization's strategy.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5	6

If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Right now I see myself as being pretty successful at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6
At this time, I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I can be “on my own,” so to speak, at work if I have to.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I usually take stressful things at work in stride.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I can get through difficult times at work because I’ve experienced difficulty before.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
I’m optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6

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### Job Search Behaviors

Please indicate how frequently you have performed the following activities during your previous job search.

1: *Never (0 times)*, 2: *Rarely (1-2 times)*, 3: *Occasionally (3-5 times)*, 4: *Frequently (6-9 times)*, 5: *Very frequently (at least 10 times)*

Job Search Items	Scoring				
I looked up the help wanted/classified ads from a newspaper, journal, professional association, the internet, an image, or a video.	1	2	3	4	5
I listed myself as a job applicant in a newspaper, journal, professional association, or the internet.	1	2	3	4	5
I prepared/revised my resume.	1	2	3	4	5
I sent out a resume to a potential employer.	1	2	3	4	5
I filled out a job application.	1	2	3	4	5
I read a book or article about getting or changing jobs.	1	2	3	4	5
I had a job interview with a prospective employer.	1	2	3	4	5

I talked with friends or relatives about possible job leads.	1	2	3	4	5
I contacted some type of job search organization (e.g., job search sites, executive search firm, employment agency).	1	2	3	4	5
I spoke with previous employers or business acquaintance about their knowing of potential job leads.	1	2	3	4	5
I directly contacted (e.g. via telephone, e-mail, website) a prospective employer.	1	2	3	4	5
I used current organizational resources (e.g., colleagues) to generate job leads.	1	2	3	4	5

### Person-Organization Fit

For each statement below, use the following scale to indicate which is most descriptive of your current organization.

*1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neither agree nor disagree, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly agree*

P-O Fit Items	Scoring				
The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organization values.	1	2	3	4	5
My personal values match my organization's values and culture.	1	2	3	4	5
My organization's values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.	1	2	3	4	5

### Person-Job Fit

For each statement below, use the following scale to indicate which is most descriptive of your current job.

*1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neither agree nor disagree, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly agree*

P-J Fit Items	Scoring				
There is a good fit between what my job offers me and what I am looking for in a job.	1	2	3	4	5
The attributes that I look for in a job are fulfilled very well by my present job.	1	2	3	4	5
The job that I currently hold gives me just about everything that I want from a job.	1	2	3	4	5

The match is very good between the demands of my job and my personal skills.	1	2	3	4	5
My abilities and training are a good fit with the requirements of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
My personal abilities and education provide a good match with the demands that my job places on me.	1	2	3	4	5

### Job Satisfaction

Some jobs are more interesting and satisfying than others. We want to know how you feel about your job. For each statement below, use the following scale to indicate which is most descriptive of your current job.

*1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neither agree nor disagree, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly agree*

Job Satisfaction Items	Scoring				
I feel fairly well satisfied with my present job.	1	2	3	4	5
Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.	1	2	3	4	5
Each day of work seems like it will never end.*	1	2	3	4	5
I find real enjoyment in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
I consider my job rather unpleasant.*	1	2	3	4	5

*Note.* The asterisk symbol (\*) indicated a reverse-coded.

### Intention to Remain

For each statement below, use the following scale to indicate which is most descriptive of your current job or your organization.

*1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neither agree nor disagree, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly agree*

Intention to Remain Items	Scoring				
Barring unforeseen circumstances, I would remain in this organization indefinitely.	1	2	3	4	5
If I were completely free to choose, I would prefer to continue working in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
I expect to continue working as long as possible in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5



Please answer the following demographic questions **as honestly as possible**. This data is collected **solely to analyze** the different respondent groups for the current study. No one will have access to the responses, which will be **strictly confidential**.

1. What is your age?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. With which gender do you most identify?
  - Male
  - Female
  - Non-binary / third gender
  - Prefer not to say
3. With which racial/ethnic group do you most identify?
  - African American / Black
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian American / Asian
  - Hispanic / Latino/a
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - White
  - Two or more races / Multiracial
  - Self-identify (please specify in text box): \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?
  - Less than a high school diploma
  - High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED)
  - Some college, no degree
  - Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)
  - Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)

- Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)
  - Doctorate or professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, PhD, EdD)
5. What is your marital status?
- Single (never married)
  - Married, or in a domestic partnership
  - Widowed
  - Divorced
  - Separated
6. What is your current employment status?
- Employed full time (40 or more hours per week)
  - Employed part time (up to 39 hours per week)
  - Self-employed
7. Which of the following best describes your personal income last year?
- \$0-\$9,999
  - \$10,000-\$24,999
  - \$25,000-\$49,999
  - \$50,000-\$74,999
  - \$75,000-\$99,999
  - \$100,000-\$124,999
  - \$125,000-\$149,999
  - \$150,000+
  - Prefer not to answer
8. How long have you been working with your current organization? (year(s))
- 
9. How many years of work experience do you have in your profession?
-

10. In which industry do you currently work?

- Accountancy, banking, or finance
- Business, consultancy, or management
- Charity and voluntary work
- Creative arts or design
- Education or training
- Energy and utilities
- Engineering or manufacturing
- Environment or agriculture
- Healthcare
- Hospitality, events, leisure, sport, or tourism
- IT (information technology) or computing
- Law
- Law enforcement and security
- Marketing, advertising, or PR
- Media or digital
- Property or construction
- Public services or administration
- Recruitment or HR
- Retail
- Sales
- Science or pharmaceuticals
- Social care
- Transport or logistics
- Other (please specify in text box): \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Protocol Modification Approval

Revised 06/09/2022

1

#### AUBURN UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM (HRPP)

#### REQUEST for MODIFICATION

For Information or help completing this form, contact: The Office of Research Compliance (ORC)  
Phone: 334-844-5966 E-Mail: [JRBAAdmin@auburn.edu](mailto:JRBAAdmin@auburn.edu)

- Federal regulations require IRB approval before implementing proposed changes.
- Change means any change, in content or form, to the protocol, consent form, or any supportive materials (such as the investigator's Brochure, questionnaires, surveys, advertisements, etc.). See Item 4 for more examples.

1. Today's Date	3/4/2024
-----------------	----------

<b>2. Principal Investigator (PI) Name: Jeanna Lee</b>			
PI's Title:	Doctoral Candidate/Graduate Research Assistant	Faculty PI (if PI is a student):	Jonathan E. Taylor, Ph.D.
Department:	EFLT – College of Education	Department:	EFLT – College of Education
Phone:	[Redacted]	Phone:	[Redacted]
AU E-Mail:	jzl0095@auburn.edu	AU E-Mail:	jonathan.taylor@auburn.edu
Contact person who should receive copies of IRB correspondence (Optional):	Click or tap here to enter text.	Department Head Name:	William M. Murrah, Ph.D.
Phone:	Click or tap here to enter text.	Phone:	[Redacted]
AU E-Mail:	Click or tap here to enter text.	AU E-Mail:	wmm0017@auburn.edu

<b>3. AU IRB Protocol Identification</b>	
3.a. Protocol Number: 23-444 EX 2309 (Doctoral Dissertation)	
3.b. Protocol Title: Individuals' Grit and Quality of Reemployment: A Sequential Mediation Model of Psychological Capital and Job Search Behaviors	
3. c. Current Status of Protocol – For active studies, check ONE box at left; provide numbers and dates where applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/> Study has not yet begun; no data has been entered or collected	
<input type="checkbox"/> In progress If YES, number of data/participants entered: <small>Click or tap here to enter text.</small>	Current Approval Dates From: 9/7/2023
<input type="checkbox"/> Is this modification request being made in conjunction with/as a result of protocol renewal? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
<input type="checkbox"/> Adverse events since last review If YES, describe: <small>Click or tap here to enter text.</small>	To: <small>Click or tap to enter a date.</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Data analysis only	
<input type="checkbox"/> Funding Agency and Grant Number: <small>Click or tap here to enter text.</small>	AU Funding Information: <small>Click or tap here to enter text.</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> List any other institutions and/ or AU approved studies associated with this project: <small>Click or tap here to enter text.</small>	

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from  
03/19/2024 to                       
 Protocol # 23-444 EX 2309

Page 1