

Workplace Psychology

Mental Health Issues

by

M. J. Thornbush

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Abstract

In this introductory chapter to the book, the author explores potential issues affecting mental health where people work in an interactive work environment. Interpersonal dynamics affecting communication and performance can lead to stress and anxiety and worse conditions of depression that can impede performance and promotion. The theory is grounded in social psychology and sociobiology, both of which are relayed in the current chapter. Later chapters will be more applied and focus on organizational scenarios (case vignettes) where human experiences have impeded work performance and progression. It is first necessary to lay the foundation for the book by conveying the evolutionary theory that informs the interpretation of cases. Additionally, the chapter draws on the theory of in-/out-group membership as a social psychological perspective that develops through interactions and hierarchical rankings established by positionality. Social exchange theory involving power dynamics also represents a lens for interpretation influencing workplace interactions and outcomes, including the need for promotion and merit. The end result is competitiveness that can be counteractive to situations requiring cooperation, such as teamwork and teambuilding. This chapter introduces the adopted framework of negative emotions that evoke negative outcomes in the workplace.

1.1. Introduction

Human behavior in the workplace is not always objective and rather is laden by subjective interactions that are shaped by interpersonal social dynamics. “Organizational politics” can hinder human expression and performance and affects human well-being and organizational success. Negative attitudes go beyond cause-consequence of positivist organizational approaches and represent a “dark side” to organizational behavior. These are irrational human behaviors that can have negative consequences and have become an important research area in recent years (Köse, 2023). Negative emotions, such as jealousy, anger, enmity, hatred, and revenge, shape work performance and advancement. For example, “repressed or hidden disturbing desires, motivations can lead individuals to lie, cheat, steal, bully, and even kill someone” (p. 5). Therefore, there is a need for continued address of the dark side of organizations in current organizational theory, and as part of interdisciplinary studies, especially since it is new and often overlooked (Köse, 2023).

If emotions are divided as either being positive or negative, then the latter constitutes the dark side of emotions (**Figure 1.1**). These can either benefit or harm individuals (self/others) or the organization. Whereas emotions that can benefit self/others include teamwork and teambuilding, those that are harming can manifest as violence, including different forms of psychological (verbal) and physical violence. Suicide attempts can result from self-oriented physical violence, whereas rape is an example of a violent act directed at another person. There are also other manifestations of self-oriented physical violence, such as alcohol and illegal drug use and smoking, that damage the body either in

the short- or long-term. In addition to violence, behaviors can constitute harassment, such as sexual harassment and bullying – both forms of harassment directed at others. Harassment is construed as psychologically violent behavior that is directed at others. In addition, there are general unsafe behaviors that can be directed either privately or in public. The filled boxes in **Figure 1.1** represent the focus of this book, namely negative emotions evident in the workplace that harm either the self and/or coworkers and are psychologically violent.

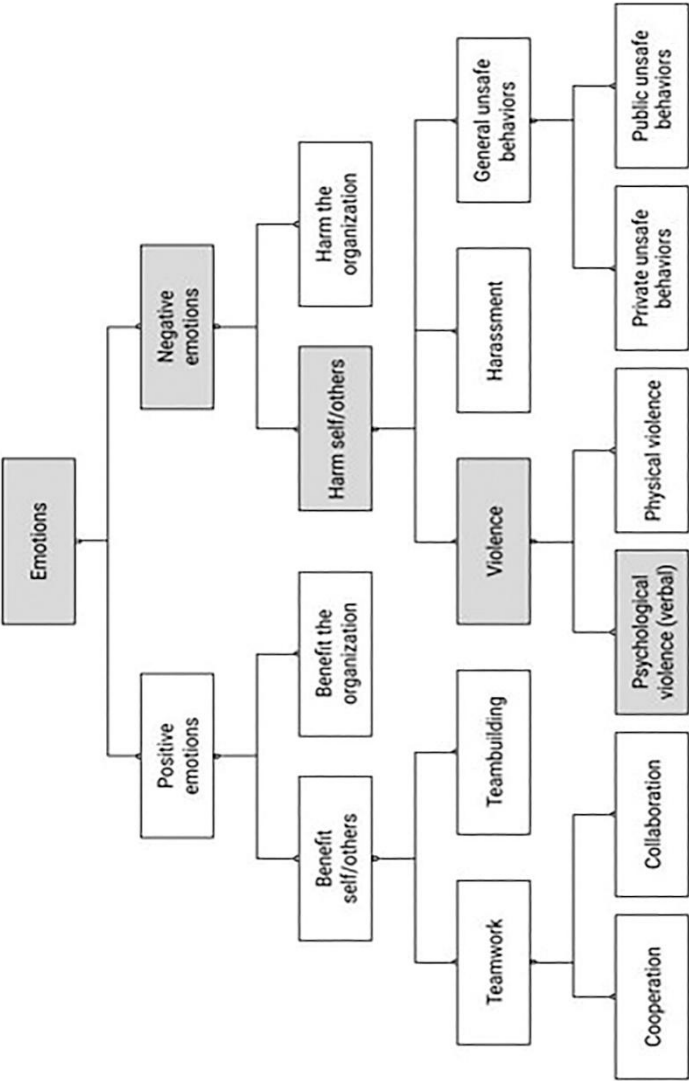


Figure 1.1 – Hierarchy of workplace emotions (modified from Köse, 2023, pp. 5–6)

There are behaviors that Köse (2023) considers to be on the dark side of organizational behavior and in the organizational behaviors literature that have negative consequences. Those like mobbing, workplace rudeness, sexual harassment, revenge behaviors, gossip and rumor, and destructive political behaviors (p. 7) are directed either by individuals or groups toward others in the workplace. These are examples of psychological violence, physical violence, and public unsafe behaviors stemming from the negative spectrum of emotions. Behaviors directed at the organization, on the other hand, include anti-production behaviors, cynical behaviors, organizational silence, careerism, social loafing behaviors, and cyberloafing. The chief intention with the latter is the rational choice to harm the organization, which has negative consequences. Felt stress and anxiety, stemming from a perceived “lack of control, uncertain work conditions, economic conditions, family problems, alcohol and drug use, and social status” (Köse, 2023, p. 11), contribute to the emergence of dark behaviors.

According to Vaughan (1999), routine nonconformity, mistake, misconduct, and disaster are systematically produced by a combination of cognition and choice on the individual side as well as organizations and environment representing the situation or context. Her essay indicates that routine nonconformity (or organizational deviance) has been examined for a long time, and a substantial body of scholarship exists about the dark side of organizations in the sociological literature (p. 272). Routine unconformity, according to her, involves connected components that encompass the environment of the organization, characteristics of the organization, and the cognitive practices

(culture, cognition, and choice) or sociocognition of the individuals within them (p. 274), affecting individual choice and action. Ultimately, competition for scarce resources that are essential for survival is a basis for misconduct (p. 289). While powerful individuals “compete for scarce resources to sustain rank, others may compete for upward mobility, and still others to keep from losing ground or dropping out of the competition altogether.”

This book aims to contribute toward recent literature on the dark side of human emotions. As such, it focuses on negative emotions as causes of negative consequences to others and is approached from a reductionist, positivist organizational perspective. It provides theoretical background (in the next section) necessary to support understanding such negative human behaviors. Importantly, the three main theories examined are derived from social psychology as well as sociobiological theory. The emphasis is less on the organization than on analysis of individual behavior in conjunction with other workers as a situational context for interaction.

1.2. Theoretical Background

The book by Ashkanasy et al. (2002) examines emotions in the workplace, which has a growing literature in a still young area of study (p. 4). Four domains encapsulate the work in this area (**Table 1.1**).

Table 1.1 – Four theoretical domains concerning emotions in the workplace (based on Ashkanasy et al., 2002, pp. 5–14)

Theory	Notes
Affective Events Theory	- Everyday emotional states (e.g., hassles and uplifts) affect our emotional states at work - Emotions are initiated by the work environment, including environmental conditions, roles, and job design, as “affective events” that lead to attitudinal and behavioral outcomes - It also encompasses trait affectivity as “a personal disposition that conditions the formation of positive or negative emotions” (p. 5)
Emotional Labor	- Addresses why and how employees display particular emotions - Evident when workers display emotional states that are typical to their jobs (e.g., flight attendants expected to smile at their customers, p. 8), as they are required to conform to role expectations
Mood Theory	- Attitudes and behaviors of organizational members determine their positive and negative mood states - Moods are more diffuse and last longer than emotions - They have pervasive effects, and an individual’s mood state affects thoughts that are congruent with the mood state that is most accessible in memory and other mental processes (p. 11) - For example, a positive mood is an asset, and negative mood is a liability for creativity (p. 12) - Since negative mood like depression is associated with greater accuracy and unaffected by the

Theory	Notes
	optimistic biases of positive moods, it may benefit some tasks and work
Emotional Intelligence	- Ability to read the emotional states - Involves “the identification, selection, and training of critical competencies involving emotional abilities” that are “a set of abilities dealing specifically with emotion” (p. 13) - Emotional intelligence can be defined as “the perception, identification, understanding, and management of emotion” - It constitutes a set of social skills (e.g., empathy, time management, decision-making, and teamwork) - It encompasses the ability to identify and perceive emotion (in self/others) and assimilate and use the information to successfully manage emotions (p. 14)

This section introduces theories relevant to understanding negative emotions in the workplace. Evolutionary theory will be developed in more detail in Chapter 3. It is noteworthy that other theories could well be construed as relevant to interpretations of negative emotions in organizations; however, for the purposes of this book, the emphasis is on social psychology perceptions of in-/out-group membership and power dynamics (which draw from sociology) as well as sociobiology – with evolutionary theory representing this domain. For example, cognitive behavioral theory and social exchange theory can be used to explain the negative perceptions of organizational employees, who produce corresponding coping behaviors (Köse, 2023, p. 11). Such an

adaptive response, however, could also stem from an innate instinct as individuals compete to gain acceptance and leverage in these organizations.

1.2.1. Evolutionary Theory

Darwinian natural selection, placing human behavior within a broad evolutionary framework, has genetic as well as environmental influences (Ilies et al., 2006). Heritable constructs (e.g., intelligence, personality, and attitudes) are key to behavior in organizations, since traits, attitudes, and behaviors that are relevant to the workplace have a genetic component. For example, attitudes have a genetic component, with a mean heritability of 0.30 (p. 127). Where affect is concerned, negative affectivity “are enduring dispositional characteristics of individuals that predispose them to experience certain emotions, emotional reactions, or moods” (p. 128). The behavioral approach and inhibition systems evolved through natural selection and have adaptive value (p. 129). Person-situation interactions, however, reflect environmental factors influencing individual responses. These authors (Ilies et al., 2006) espoused that person-based constructs are genetically influenced, and they affect specific evaluative reactions, such as affect and attitudes, that influence behavior (p. 135).

1.2.2. In-/Out-Group Theory

Human interaction involves in some way the communication of emotions (Hareli & Hess, 2025). What is communicated depends on internal states as well as action tendencies or values and motivations (p. 105), and there is also an appeal function of emotional expression. Emoters, therefore, convey information

about the expresser and the situation eliciting the emotion. From the perspective of appraisal theory (p. 107), internal/external change is evaluated according to the pleasantness of the event and whether the change is in line with the motivational state of the individual or posits goal obstruction. Individuals gauge whether they can cope or adjust to the change as their coping potential. Furthermore, individuals evaluate whether the event corresponds to social and personal norms and judge it based on their normal compatibility (ethical, moral, or social norms). Outcomes are affected by the person's personality as well as their personal values and beliefs were affected by social norms (p. 108), and divergent behavior becomes salient when coming from another in-group member (p. 109).

1.2.3. Social Exchange Theory

Studies on the social signal value of emotions in the expression of anger have tended to focus on the expresser (Hareli & David, 2017), rather than on reactions. These researchers addressed the question: How can different emotional reactions to an angry expression affect perceptions of social power? Reactions are considered as part of the context in emotional communication. The emotional responses of targets affect judgments of social power in the expresser as "reactive emotions" (p. 718). Since social power reflects one's ability to control others, the expresser's power/dominance can be signaled by appearance cues and expressions of emotion. Anger expressions signal high social power, and, in appraisal theory, this can be attributed to the appraisal that the expresser is capable of controlling the social environment and influence it. Social exchange theory stipulates that the targets' response affects whether the expresser's claim is

validated or disputed. While submissive responses (e.g., fear or sadness) signal acceptance, reactions of emotional power or neutrality are disempowering to the expresser in the interaction. Based on the perceptions of 54 undergraduates at the University of Haifa, a study by these authors (Hareli & David, 2017) has shown that gender stereotype-incongruent emotions (e.g., angry or neutral reactions by women) resulted in perceptions of the expresser's lesser power.

1.3. Negative Emotions

The book will focus on negative emotions toward others that stem from interpersonal interactions involving work-related situations. For this reason, the spectrum of emotions is restricted to those aroused by competition (e.g., rivalry) and power dynamics. Jealousy is one of the key relevant emotions and it appears in the following subsection along with notions of dominance or control and anger.

1.3.1. Jealousy/Envy

From an evolutionary theory perspective, the feeling of jealousy originated toward competitors for sexual mates in intimate relationships. It evolved in individuals based on action taken to prevent having a mate be unfaithful or from altogether abandoning the relationship (Buunk et al., 2010, p. 672). In evolutionary history, men and women competed with same-sex others, with women competing for physical attractiveness (e.g., having a tighter waist) and men for high status and dominance (e.g., having broader shoulders). Other attributes may be added to this, including social power dominance (e.g., behaving more

provocatively) and social-communal attributes (e.g., being a better listener). In work relationships, rivals can interfere with valued relationships with coworkers (p. 673). Both intimate and work relationship contexts may result in reduced self-worth and feelings of inferiority. When viewed from an evolutionary perspective, jealousy in the workplace is evoked by mechanisms that function automatically and unconsciously. Jealousy is part of intrasexual competition, spurred by comparing a rival to oneself – so that social comparison orientation can be deployed for understanding competitiveness with rivals (p. 675). Feelings of envy may also creep in with craving attributes of the rival and are often a part of jealousy; however, both jealousy and envy imply that there is competition and rivalry over valued resources (p. 676). One can also argue that coveting is part of this triad of emotions.

A follow-up study by these authors (Buunk et al., 2016) noted the importance of gender and attractiveness in work jealousy, which may hinder attractive women in particular from attaining promotions. Since women tend to observe other women's attractiveness, they will also do so in a work environment (p. 791). Because males tend to hold high positions (e.g., managerial roles), attractive women are more likely to be promoted. Intrasexual competitiveness affected their results, since jealousy was positively correlated with intrasexual competition; also, the participant's career advancement expectation was found to be negatively correlated with jealousy (p. 796). Attractive rivals evoked more jealousy and lower career advancement expectations in participants than unattractive rivals. Regardless of their attractiveness, rivals evoked more jealousy in women with high intrasexual competitiveness, and this effect was controlled by the perceived unfriendliness of attractive rivals (p. 798). Women

participants with high intrasexual competitiveness have lower career expectations when there are attractive rivals, especially if the rivals are considered to be unfriendly. Popular rivals, regardless of their attractiveness, evoke lower career advancement expectations in participants.

Jealousy functions to address relationship threats, and it is an aversive emotion that could lead to feelings of anxiety, anger, betrayal, and being hurt. These feelings can arise when any valued relationship, with implications for advancement or survival, can be usurped by a rival (DeSteno et al., 2006, p. 627). These authors posited that threatened self-esteem is the mediating mechanism of jealousy (p. 628), and maximizing self-esteem derived from the relationship partner safeguards tangible resources. Aggression may be an adaptive response used to prevent the relationship from being usurped and preventing any associated benefits. From a self-esteem maintenance perspective, jealousy intensity depends on an individual's self-definition of import (e.g., intellectual, athletic, or other abilities). In their studies (DeSteno et al., 2006), reduced self-esteem was measured when there was favorable interaction with a rival, and this was directly associated with jealousy intensity (DeSteno et al., 2006, p. 632). Furthermore, when a situation involving social rejection threatened self-esteem and mediated jealousy, it affected aggressive behavior directed at partners and rivals (p. 635), and this may be more pronounced in less securely attached individuals. These authors (DeSteno et al., 2006) anticipated that longer lasting relationships (of greater value and investment) would be susceptible to more intense jealousy (p. 637).

Studies have shown that negative emotions like jealousy can impact employee attitudes and behaviors (e.g., commitment, satisfaction, and performance). In the Chinese cultural context at least, it is evident that social expectations influence women's behavior – where they are expected to be less ambitious in reacting to work achievements – and their reactions to jealousy (Peng, 2017). As a negative emotion, jealousy can engender a sense of being mistreated and a desire to detach oneself from the job or get revenge (p. 3); and it can result in less commitment and counterproductive work behaviors. Accordingly, culture and context dictate how individuals respond to emotion-evoking situations. From a functional perspective, which advocates that each emotion has its own adaptive or coping function in an environment, this suggests that emotional experiences in the workplace are linked to job outcomes. This author (Peng, 2017) indicates that: “The functional or evolutionary perspective on emotions is an important, if not dominant, approach in the area of psychology” (p. 4). Since jealousy involves the fear of loss and the suspicion of betrayal (p. 5), it is capable of triggering strong attitudinal and behavioral responses to relationship maintenance or withdrawal. The study by Peng (2017, p. 11) reveals both attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (e.g., performance, organizational citizen behaviors, and counterproductive work behaviors) for women experiencing jealousy in the workplace, but only attitudinal outcomes for men (e.g., affective commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intention). Jealousy has a negative impact on women's job performance, which “is consistent with the observation of Chinese culture that women are expected to react more strongly to jealousy and work achievement is less important to them.” (p. 13) This quote supports normative theory at work in this cultural context.

1.3.2. Dominance/Control

Research into victimization at work has found that those with a high cognitive ability (e.g., linked to skill and knowledge acquisition, task performance, and creativity at work) were victims (Kim & Glomb, 2010). The article supports research indicating that victims of workplace bullying are smart and talented employees. Bright individuals are often targets of interpersonal aggression, and this has been attributed to their high level of ability in work-related environments – be it at school or in the workplace. Using the victim precipitation model (p. 890), emphasizing submissive and provocative victim typologies, the study extends this to include smart victims. Two interpersonal traits linked to favorable interpersonal interactions (e.g., agency and communication) are examined by how they interplay with cognitive ability and victimization, respectively encompassing self-oriented (e.g., dominance: being assertive, dominant, and task-oriented) and group-oriented (e.g., communality: agreeable, cooperative, reasonable, approachable for advice, dependable, content, team players and easily fit in with others) behaviors. Their Agency scale consisted of Dominance, Social Presence, Capability for Status, and Independence, while their Communion scale was composed of Communality, Socialization, and Responsibility (p. 894). These authors (Kim & Glomb, 2010) found that agency traits exacerbate the relationship of cognitive ability to victimization and communion traits buffer it (p. 895). According to reciprocity theory, these two traits respectively correspond to negative and positive reciprocity (p. 892), which moderate the relationship between cognitive ability and victimization, with the former (negative reciprocity between the giver and taker) increasing the likelihood of victimization. Two types of victims could be

susceptible to victimization in school settings, including “submissive victims” that are quiet types who tend to be cautious, anxious, and sensitive; and “provocative victims” show highly aggressive and dominating interpersonal behaviors (p. 890). Similar types of victims (submissive and aggressive) have been implicated in organizational contexts as evident in school settings. Envy may be one of the emotions linked to bullying and other forms of smart victimization (e.g., toward gifted students) in these contexts. Perpetrators envy the target’s competence and abilities and treat them as competitors or challengers who threaten their own superiority.

1.3.3. Anger

Anger is a social emotion that can have adaptive purpose in organizational settings (Ewusi Boisvert, 2020). For example, the expression of moral anger – arising from feelings of moral violations with ensuing actions to rectify the situation – in the workplace can particularly lead to better individual and collective behaviors, while maintaining ethical organizational practices. Anger becomes problematic when it happens multiple times a day or when it becomes chronic (p. 211). It can become damaging to individual health and can damage relationships and bring toxicity to their environment. Anger triggers a fight-or-flight response and is associated with intense arousal that can impede one’s ability to concentrate and clearly remember information. Serotonin levels affect anger regulation as well as sleep and anxiety (p. 212). Among anger triggers are internal or external sources – the latter triggering episodic anger either inside or outside the work environment. Internal sources can be memories (past events or past trauma). Anger can be a symptom of mental health disorders, such as post-

traumatic stress disorder, acute stress disorder, and major depressive disorder. In organizations, anger can stem from perceptions of unfairness, moral transgressions, and low frustration tolerance (p. 213). Anger in the workplace can be explained by intra- and interpersonal perspectives. The author (Ewusi Boisvert, 2020) uses vignettes of fictional workplace situations to contextualize hypotheses and theories concerning the expression of anger in the work environment. Such an approach (use of case vignettes) will be likewise employed in Chapter 4 of this book.

1.4. Book's Organization

Following the introduction provided in this chapter (Chap. 1), a literature review (Chap. 2) of job loss will provide examples of the contemporary literature on grieving job loss. The book focuses on the theory guiding interpretations of workplace behavior. When applied to the workplace, evolutionary theory constitutes one of the theoretical approaches framing behaviors (Chap. 3). Cases will ensue after this, in Chapter 4, as demonstrative of emotional situations or events that affect human behavior and social interaction in work-related settings. Following this, it is necessary to link case vignettes with different lenses, such as trauma-, grief-based, and decolonial lenses (Chap. 5). The contributions of this book appear in the final chapter, including some resources (Chap. 6), which highlights some takeaways to be gleaned by the reader.

1.5. Conclusion

Chapter 1 establishes the essential foundation for understanding the emotional, psychological, and social forces that shape human behavior in the workplace. By foregrounding the “dark side” of organizational life, the chapter argues that negative emotions like jealousy, envy, dominance, anger, and related affective states are not peripheral disturbances but central drivers of interpersonal conflict, psychological violence, and impaired performance. These emotions emerge from deeply rooted evolutionary mechanisms, are reinforced through in-/out-group social dynamics, and are amplified by power imbalances described in social exchange theory. Together, these frameworks reveal that workplace behavior is rarely objective or rational; instead, it is shaped by subjective perceptions of threat, competition, belonging, and reciprocity.

The chapter also highlights how organizational environments can activate maladaptive emotional responses when modern workplaces collide with ancient psychological systems. Competition for scarce resources, perceived unfairness, and ambiguous social hierarchies can trigger instinctive reactions that undermine cooperation and well-being. By situating these reactions within broader theoretical traditions, the chapter prepares the reader to interpret the case vignettes that follow in Chapter 4 not as isolated incidents but as patterned expressions of human social behavior.

Ultimately, Chapter 1 positions negative emotions as both a lens and a warning: for understanding the interpersonal tensions that permeate work settings and inadvertently cautions that ignoring

these emotional undercurrents can lead to harmful consequences for individuals and organizations alike. This theoretical grounding sets the stage for the applied analyses in later chapters, where these concepts are brought to life through scenarios of conflict, exclusion, and emotional strain.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Abstract

The systematic review in this chapter is based on 24 research articles denoting studies that address coping with job loss. The research question guiding the search was: What are effective coping strategies for individuals who have experienced job loss? Search engines for literature selection encompassed (APA) PsycArticles and PsycBooks and were limited only according to whether they were peer-reviewed sources and whether a PDF was available. A breadth of journals and two book chapters were represented among included sources. Studies were varied, including a wide range of sample size, sex/gender ratio, ages, occupation, income, and study year. However, studies predominantly represented White participants in the USA. All sources were written in English. The results indicated various emotions resulting from job loss, including negative emotions (e.g., distress, depression, sadness, anger, etc.). Financial stress was a known issue to affect individuals and their families. Individual problems can extend to families and result in problematic behavior, such as smoking among adolescents. Key recovery recommendations for coping with job loss revolved around reemployment, led by skills training and jobseeker services. Meanwhile, ongoing therapy assists with emotional distress and other psychological ramifications of job loss.

2.1. Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on experienced (actual) involuntary job loss based on existing publications. The literature includes many publications on job insecurity (e.g., Kriz et al., 2021; Kuhnert & Vance, 1992; Naranjo et al., 2021; O'Neill & Sevastos, 2013; Petitta & Jiang, 2020; Probst, 2002; Rudolph et al., 2025; Stevenson et al., 2024), although the threat of job loss differs from actual lived experience. The literature also focuses on the period beyond job loss to reemployment (Caplan et al., 1989; Vinokur & Schul, 2000, 2002; Wanberg et al., 2016). However, by addressing (negative) emotions and coping strategies experienced ensuant with job loss (before reemployment), it is possible to gain an understanding of the therapeutic needs and evidence-based best clinical strategy to deploy for grieving and coping with job loss.

Evidence-based research helps to inform practice in healthcare fields. For this, reviews synthesize information in a structured format that provides insights into the effectiveness of interventions or the state of knowledge on the topic (Beidas & Kendall, 2010). Such evidenced-based studies provide reliable summaries of the existing research, thereby helping practitioners make informed decisions based on the available evidence. Review articles help clarify the overall picture and identify any knowledge gaps.

The purpose of doing this review is to examine the mental health issues that are emergent from coping with job loss. These issues are addressed in clinical interventions and other studies. This is a far-reaching issue that affects many individuals, couples, and families in different national contexts. With the pandemic (Crayne, 2020) and ensuing automation affecting much workplace displace-

ment (e.g., Armstrong-Stassen, 2005; Luxton, 2014), unemployment is becoming a reality for many people. Other reasons, which could stem from age, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, and more could be triggers for unemployment and provide a further rationale for understanding the issues and adopting an evidence-based approach to therapy.

2.2. Methods

This chapter constitutes a systematic review of existing research on the topic of job loss and stemming mental health issues apparent in therapy. As such, the chapter synthesizes the available evidence to answer the research question: What are effective coping strategies for individuals who have experienced job loss? As a systematic review, the primary purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive overview of the current evidence (state of knowledge or “state of the art”), while minimizing bias and ensuring that the findings are reliable and applicable to real-world scenarios.

2.2.1. Search Strategy

Several databases were considered for executing this chapter’s systematic review (**Table 2.1**). For example, Google Scholar, PsycINFO, PubMed, American Psychological Association (APA) databases, including PsycEXTRA, PsycNET, PsycArticles, and PsycBooks. The final publication search engines used for this review were APA sources; these included PsycArticles and PsycBooks. It should be noted that PsycNET retrieved information in PsycArticles, so that they were the same sources of information.

Table 2.1 – Search engines/ databases explored in the literature search (from the University of Guelph Library)

Database	Description	Results
Google Scholar	Searches articles, theses, and reports from academic publishers, including universities, and preprint depositories.	432,000
PsycINFO	Accesses scholarly literature in psychological, social, behavioral, and the health sciences, including journals, books, reviews, and dissertations, with full-text links (where available).	1595
PubMed	Provides citations for biomedical and life science literature from MEDLINE, PubMed Central, and the NCBI Bookshelf.	1588
PsycEXTRA	Grey literature from the APA, including conference papers, programs, and abstracts; theses and dissertations; bibliographies; press releases; amicus briefs; documents from APA history and more.	89
PsycNET	An APA resource comprising a powerful platform that enables the discovery of research content with ease and precision.	76
PsycArticles*	Grants access to full-text journal articles in subject areas including applied psychology, health, theory, research, social/personality, and more.	76
PsycBooks*	Full-text books published by the APA. Also includes entries from the <i>Encyclopedia of psychology</i> .	12

*Selected search engines in this study

The search was executed in September 2025, broadly on “job loss” as a search string. These were to include publications with APA full-text in peer-reviewed journals. This search was for English sources without any temporal constraint being placed on the

outputs. Duplicate documents were assessed at the point of downloading the PDFs, which were inputted into a Zotero database for referencing.

2.2.2. Selection Criteria

Studies included interventions and other studies, excluding nonpeer-reviewed items and those that did not include full-text access via the University of Guelph Library. Data were extracted for studies with any sample size, so long as a method was provided. This often led to the exclusion of book chapters, with few exceptions. Tests on job loss scales were not included in this assessment. A retracted study was excluded. Also, unpublished content (e.g., theses) was further excluded. Furthermore, off-topic items were excluded, including those concerning job insecurity rather than involuntary job loss and those studies that addressed reemployment. The focus was on job loss and coping with it, including grieving – which is why “job loss” was employed in the search rather than “unemployment.”

2.2.3. Data Extraction and Synthesis

Data were collected relating to the mental health issue or emotion, etc. The context included the date (year) when the study was conducted, the sample size of participants (n), and country where it was executed. Furthermore, the model or theory employed for guiding the assessment was noted, as were examples of (known) measures or instruments. In addition, participants’ demographic details were summarized for relevant emotions, including mean age, sex, most common educational level, industrial sector or job tenure, ethnicity/race, and income.

2.2.4. Transparency and Openness

The sampling strategy, data exclusions, and manipulations have been outlined in this section. While data are not available in a repository, they can be accessed by contacting the author. The research questions, analysis strategy, inclusion criteria, and projected sample size were not preregistered. Data were analyzed based on descriptive information (frequency analysis) performed on tabulated data.

2.3. Results

A total of 24 items form the basis of this chapter's systematic review (**Figure 2.1**), including journal articles and (two) book chapters.

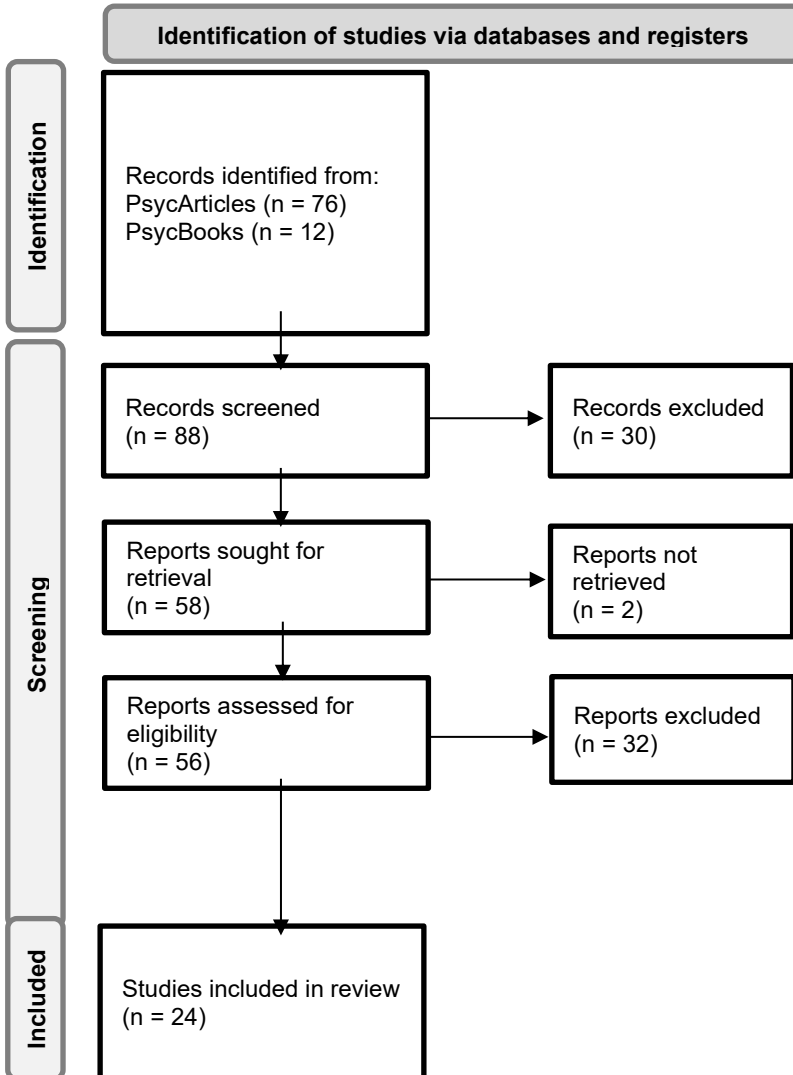


Figure 2.1 – PRISMA flowchart of the literature search (modified from Page et al., 2021). This work is licensed under CC BY 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>