

Father Involvement as a Psychological Resource: A Literature Review on Building Resilience and Career Confidence in Emerging Adults

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Abstract

This literature review explores the role of father involvement as a psychological resource in shaping the resilience and career confidence of emerging adults. As social and economic changes demand greater adaptability, understanding the father's contribution to emotional and developmental outcomes becomes increasingly essential. Using a narrative literature review method, this study analyzed 25 empirical and theoretical articles published between 2014 and 2025, selected through keyword searches and snowballing techniques in Google Scholar and Scopus. The findings are organized into three main clusters: (1) father involvement as a psychological resource that enhances emotional regulation, self-confidence, and motivation; (2) resilience as a developmental outcome reflecting the influence of paternal warmth, autonomy support, and consistent engagement; and (3) career confidence as a capability strengthened by fathers' encouragement and guidance in decision-making and self-belief. Across studies, father involvement emerges as a key determinant of adaptive functioning and emotional well-being, serving as a foundation for self-reliance and personal growth. The review concludes that fathers' emotional presence and active participation play a transformative role in preparing young adults to navigate life challenges and career transitions. Father involvement, therefore, represents not only a familial relationship but also a form of psychological capital essential for developing resilient and capable future generations.

Keywords: Career Confidence, Career Self-Efficacy, Emerging Adults, Father Involvement, Resilience

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INTRODUCTION

The world of work has undergone rapid transformation due to technological disruption, automation, and the rise of artificial intelligence (World Economic Forum, 2023). These changes have disrupted traditional career paths and created increased demands for adaptability, resilience, and lifelong learning. In Indonesia, youth unemployment remains one of the highest in Southeast Asia, with unemployment rates ranging between 16 and 18 percent for individuals aged 18 to 25 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). As a result, many emerging adults experience uncertainty about their futures and struggle to align their educational backgrounds with real job opportunities. In this context, internal psychological resources such as persistence, adaptability, and self-confidence become essential for navigating career transitions.

Two theoretical frameworks offer insight into these resources: Adversity Quotient (AQ) and Career Self-Efficacy (CSE). AQ, developed by Stoltz (1997), refers to an individual's ability to withstand and overcome challenges through dimensions of control, ownership, reach, and endurance. Meanwhile, CSE, rooted in Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1997) and elaborated by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994), refers to a person's belief in their ability to explore, plan, and succeed in career-related tasks. Both constructs are shaped significantly by environmental factors, especially family dynamics. Recent studies emphasize that father involvement serves as a key environmental determinant in cultivating these psychological traits (Palkovitz, 2019; Sari et al., 2025).

Father involvement encompasses emotional, cognitive, and behavioral participation in children's lives. Fathers who are emotionally present and actively engaged support the development of emotional regulation, self-confidence, and motivational resilience as key components of AQ and CSE (Sawitri & Creed, 2016; Youn et al., 2023). This influence extends beyond childhood, playing a continuing role in shaping how emerging adults approach stress, uncertainty, and career-related decisions.

In the Indonesian context, the relevance of this topic is magnified by the rise of the "fatherless" phenomenon. The National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) reports that Indonesia ranks among the top three countries globally in the number of children growing up without an active father figure. As of 2023, only 37.17 percent of children under five are raised by both parents (BPS, 2023). Factors such as divorce, labor migration, and emotional disengagement contribute to this trend (Antara News, 2023). Research has shown that the absence of a father figure is often associated with emotional insecurity, low self-confidence, and a diminished sense of direction, factors that impede the development of resilience and career confidence.

Although parenting has received growing research attention, few studies specifically examine father involvement as a standalone psychological factor. Most existing literature emphasizes general parental influence, leaving the distinct role of fathers underexplored. Furthermore, limited studies have contextualized father involvement within established psychological frameworks such as AQ and CSE in the developmental stage of emerging adulthood. Therefore, this study aims to explore father involvement as a psychological resource that contributes to the development of resilience and career confidence in emerging adults. This literature review identifies key themes and patterns from empirical and theoretical studies, highlighting how paternal warmth, support, and guidance play a transformative role in fostering

adaptive capacities during early adulthood.

METHOD

Design

This study employed a systematic narrative literature review approach to examine how father involvement functions as a psychological resource that supports resilience and career confidence in emerging adults. The review synthesized findings from both international and Indonesian studies published between 2014 and 2025, providing cross-cultural insight into the topic.

Data Sources and Search Strategy

Literature searches were conducted across three academic databases: Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and ResearchGate. The search strategy utilized combinations of keywords: *father involvement*, *father absence*, *fatherless*, *resilience*, *adversity quotient*, *career confidence*, *career self-efficacy*, and *emerging adulthood*. Boolean operators (AND, OR) were applied to refine search results (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016). To capture additional relevant sources, a snowballing technique was employed (Wohlin, 2014), particularly to trace studies addressing father absence within the Indonesian context (Ashari, 2017; Febriani & Iswinarti, 2025).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were selected based on three inclusion criteria: (1) examined father involvement or absence in relation to psychological outcomes such as resilience, confidence, or career adaptation; (2) focused on adolescents or emerging adults; and (3) utilized empirical or review-based methods published in peer-reviewed journals in English or Bahasa Indonesia. Exclusion criteria were applied to non-empirical papers, studies lacking a clear paternal focus, and publications unrelated to psychological or career development.

Article Selection Procedure

The literature selection process followed a four-stage procedure: initial keyword search, title and abstract screening, full-text evaluation, and snowballing. The initial search yielded 51 articles, of which 32 were retained following title and abstract screening. A full-text review identified 21 eligible articles, and an additional 4 were incorporated through snowballing, resulting in 25 studies included in the final synthesis (see Figure 1). For transparency, a list of excluded articles from the initial screening is provided in the appendix.

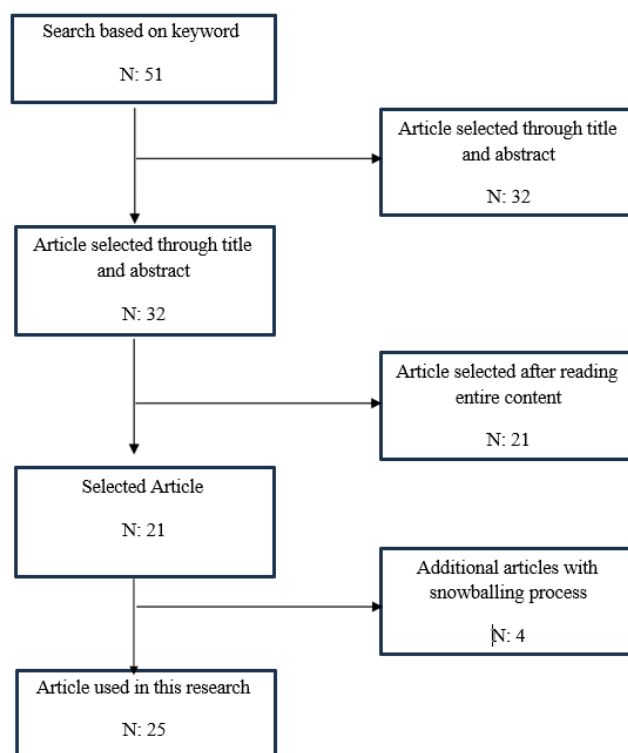


Figure 1. Flow Diagram of the Article Selection Process for the Sytematic Narrative Review stages

Data Analysis

The selected studies employed diverse methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, and theoretical approaches, enabling a comprehensive analysis of how father involvement supports resilience and career confidence. A thematic synthesis approach (Booth et al., 2016) was applied to identify recurring ideas, theoretical connections, and conceptual patterns. Articles were systematically coded based on author(s), publication year, research method, population, and key findings. This coding process generated major conceptual themes, including paternal warmth, emotional presence, autonomy support, resilience, and career self-efficacy. To ensure methodological rigor, all included studies were evaluated for credibility, relevance, and scholarly contribution. This structured assessment facilitated the development of a cohesive synthesis that highlights both empirical trends and conceptual advancements regarding the role of father involvement in the emotional and career development of emerging adults.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that father involvement functions as a critical psychological resource that fosters resilience and career confidence in emerging adults. This analysis synthesized findings from 25 peer-reviewed articles published between 2014 and 2025, encompassing quantitative, qualitative, and theoretical designs sourced from both Scopus-indexed and SINTA-accredited journals.

The synthesis revealed three overarching themes: (1) father involvement as a psychological resource, (2) resilience as a developmental outcome, and (3) career confidence as a career-related capability. Across the selected studies, actively engaged fathers were consistently found to contribute substantially to the emotional, cognitive, and motivational development of their children, thereby cultivating adaptive traits that persist into emerging adulthood.

Fathers who model persistence, emotional regulation, and problem-solving provide children with behavioral frameworks that reinforce key components of the Adversity Quotient (AQ). Likewise, consistent paternal support—particularly in fostering autonomy and validating children’s competencies—strengthens their belief in navigating career-related challenges, aligning with core dimensions of Career Self-Efficacy (CSE).

Empirical studies conducted in Indonesia and other collectivist contexts underscore that paternal warmth, open communication, and consistent presence are essential in helping emerging adults navigate uncertainty. Conversely, father absence or minimal involvement is consistently associated with heightened anxiety, diminished self-confidence, and reduced resilience. The distribution of reviewed studies across these thematic areas is presented in the accompanying tables. As detailed in Table 1, the majority of studies utilized quantitative designs (16 articles), followed by qualitative approaches (6 articles) and theoretical or review papers (3 articles). This methodological distribution reflects a research landscape grounded in empirical validation, further enriched by conceptual frameworks and narrative analyses, thereby deepening the scholarly understanding of father involvement as a multidimensional psychological construct. Each thematic cluster was subsequently categorized according to research focus and methodological design, as comprehensively summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Categorization of Articles Based on Concept and Research Method

Theme	Number of Articles	Example Studies
Father Involvement as a Psychological Resource	10	Sari et al. (2025); Ashari (2017); Devi et al. (2025); Silpiani & Wahyudin (2024); Anwar et al. (2024); Su et al. (2017); Aufizzahra & Primanita (2024); Carbone et al. (2025); Kumalasari et al. (2023); Kusumawardania & Syakarofath (2025)
Resilience	7	Nathaniel & Lesmana (2024); Az Zahra & Pratiwi (2025); Putri & Priyanggasari (2024); Ulfaysha et al. (2025); Aprianti & Juliana (2021); Hidayati & Taufik (2020); Hadi & Salim (2024)
Career Confidence as Career-Related Capability	8	Sawitri & Creed (2016); Youn et al. (2023); To et al. (2021); Liang et al. (2022); Sawitri, Creed, & Zimmer-Gembeck (2014); Ginevra et al. (2015); Wang & Dong (2024); Syafitri & Dariyo (2025)
Quantitative	16	Anwar et al. (2024); Su et al. (2017); As Syafiyah, A., & Primanita, R. Y. (2024); Nathaniel & Lesmana (2024); Az Zahra & Pratiwi (2025); Putri & Priyanggasari (2024); Wang & Dong (2024); Hadi & Salim (2024)
Qualitative	6	Devi et al. (2025); Ulfaysha et al. (2025); Syafitri & Dariyo (2025); Aprianti & Juliana (2021); Hidayati & Taufik (2020); Ashari (2017)
Theoretical/Review	3	Sari et al. (2025); Carbone et al. (2025); To et al. (2021)

Table 2. Reference List for the Systematic Narrative Review

Author(s) & Year	Research Method	Result
Sari, Hanifah, Dewi, & Riady (2025)	Systematic Literature Review	Found that father involvement positively affects adolescents' mental health, higher self-esteem, lower anxiety, and improved coping. Establishes father involvement as an emotional and psychological resource.
Ashari (2017)	Narrative Review	Identifies the rise of fatherlessness in Indonesia and its psychological effects, low confidence, emotional instability, and weak self-regulation. Provides conceptual foundation for "psychological fatherlessness."
Devi et al. (2025)	Qualitative, Phenomenological	Fatherless youth report low self-confidence and emotional withdrawal; highlights emotional and behavioral absence of fathers as barrier to resilience.
Silpiani & Wahyudin (2024)	Quantitative, Regression	Found that low father involvement predicts reduced Adversity Quotient (AQ). Suggests that early paternal engagement cultivates resilience.
Anwar, Mushtaq, & Alyana (2024)	Quantitative, Regression	Demonstrated that paternal warmth and autonomy support predict career adaptability and confidence. Father involvement operates as psychological capital for emerging adults.
Su, Kubricht, & Miller (2017)	Quantitative, SEM	Father involvement enhances self-esteem and emotional regulation, while reducing behavioral issues, key foundations for resilience and self-efficacy.
As Syafiyah, A., & Primanita, R. Y. (2024)	Quantitative, Correlational	Found that greater father involvement strengthens self-worth and reduces dependency on external validation, supporting emotional autonomy.
Carbone, Pestell, Nevill, & Mancini (2025)	Quantitative, Path Analysis	Father self-efficacy influences children's mental health through emotion regulation. Suggests fathers' emotional stability is transmitted as psychological strength.
Kumalasari et al. (2023)	Quantitative, Correlational	Reported that father-child attachment and communication predict adolescents' resilience and confidence. Emotional connection fosters adaptability.
Kusumawardania & Syakarofath (2025)	Quantitative, Regression	Nurturant fathering correlates with better psychosocial adjustment and emotional resilience in Indonesian youth.
Nathaniel & Lesmana (2024)	Quantitative, Correlational	Perceived social support predicts resilience among fatherless emerging adults; paternal presence acts as a buffer against psychological stress.
Az Zahra & Pratiwi (2025)	Quantitative, Regression	Resilience improves life quality among fatherless college students. Adaptive capacity offsets negative effects of paternal loss.
Putri & Priynggasari (2024)	Quantitative, Regression	Found that father absence decreases resilience among adolescent males. Confirms the father's protective psychological role.
Ulfaysha, Fadilah, & Indrawan (2025)	Qualitative, Thematic	Migrant students who lost fathers develop emotional maturity and resilience through

Author(s) & Year	Research Method	Result
		independence and social connection.
Aprianti & Juliana (2021)	Quantitative, Correlational	Father attachment correlates with optimism and emotional regulation. Alienation from fathers lowers adaptability and confidence.
Hidayati & Taufik (2020)	Qualitative, Case Study	Explored AQ in high-achieving students without fathers; found that gratitude and maternal modeling partially compensate for missing paternal role.
Hadi & Salim (2024)	Quantitative, Path Analysis	AQ mediates the relationship between parental support and career adaptability, highlighting resilience as a bridge to confidence.
Sawitri & Creed (2016)	Quantitative, Correlational	Parental (esp. paternal) support predicts career decision-making self-efficacy (CDSE). Father involvement provides emotional base for career confidence.
Youn, Kim, & Lee (2023)	Meta-Analysis	Parental support (esp. autonomy support from fathers) strongly predicts career self-efficacy and persistence in collectivist cultures.
To, Yang, Lau, Wong, & Su (2021)	Meta-Analysis	Parental cognitions and support predict CDSE; fathers' emotional warmth and modeling enhance career confidence and AQ-like endurance.
Liang et al. (2022)	Longitudinal (LPA)	"Supportive congruent" fathers strengthen confidence and emotional regulation; links emotional availability to adaptability.
Sawitri, Creed, & Zimmer-Gembeck (2014)	Longitudinal	Paternal expectations and congruence predict career confidence and exploration—illustrating resilience in collectivist context.
Ginevra, Nota, & Ferrari (2015)	Quantitative (SEM)	Found that father support indirectly predicts self-efficacy via emotional trust and coping, demonstrating family-driven adaptability.
Wang & Dong (2024)	Meta-Analysis	Found strong correlation ($r = .325$) between parental (father) support and career adaptability—reinforcing link between father involvement and resilience.
Syafitri & Dariyo (2025)	Qualitative, Case Study	Fatherless women regain confidence through independence and social networks; resilience and autonomy emerge as coping outcomes.

The reviewed studies collectively reveal that father involvement functions as a multifaceted psychological resource that nurtures emotional regulation, confidence, and adaptive functioning among emerging adults. Fathers who demonstrate warmth, autonomy support, and open communication help their children manage adversity effectively, a process reflected in the development of resilience or Adversity Quotient (AQ). This psychological foundation further strengthens career self-efficacy and adaptability, enabling young adults to face uncertain labor markets with greater confidence and persistence. The conceptual framework below visually represents this relationship, illustrating how father involvement operates as a psychological foundation that promotes resilience and career confidence in emerging adults.

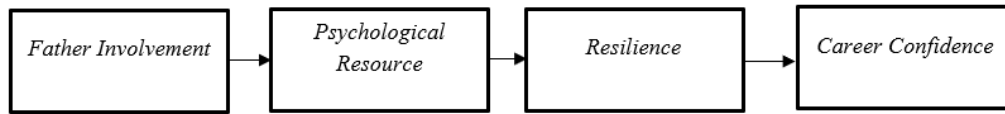


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework Illustrating The Relationship between Father Involvement, Psychological Resources, Resilience, and Career Confidence

The first cluster, Father Involvement as a Psychological Resource, emphasizes that emotional engagement and behavioral modeling by fathers offer not only external support but also internalized coping mechanisms that foster self-regulation and motivation. The second cluster, Resilience as a Developmental Outcome, highlights how consistent paternal presence and encouragement enable individuals to transform stress into growth, reflecting Stoltz's (1997) Adversity Quotient framework, which stresses perseverance and endurance. The third cluster, Career Confidence as a Career-Related Capability, illustrates how father involvement contributes to career self-efficacy, aligning with Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory and Lent et al.'s (1994) Social Cognitive Career Theory. Paternal warmth and autonomy support reinforce a sense of competence and persistence in pursuing career goals.

Taken together, these findings suggest that father involvement transcends its familial context and operates as a psychological investment that shapes adaptive, confident, and resilient young adults. This perspective positions paternal engagement as a foundational source of emotional stability and employability, linking family dynamics to broader developmental and societal outcomes.

The conceptual framework above visualizes this dynamic relationship, demonstrating how father involvement serves as a central psychological resource that nurtures resilience and, in turn, strengthens career confidence. Paternal warmth, emotional support, and autonomy encouragement cultivate emotional regulation and self-belief—core elements of resilience—which subsequently promote problem-solving and perseverance. Through these mechanisms, consistent paternal engagement indirectly enhances young adults' confidence and adaptability, establishing fathers as key agents in supporting psychological readiness and professional growth.

Father Involvement as a Psychological Resource

Across studies, father involvement consistently emerges as a key protective and developmental factor in young people's psychological growth. Fathers who express warmth, communicate openly, and encourage autonomy contribute significantly to their children's emotional regulation and sense of competence (Anwar, Mushtaq, & Alyana, 2024; Su, Kubricht, & Miller, 2017). This reflects Bandura's (1997) view that self-efficacy develops through mastery experiences and positive feedback. When fathers model perseverance and emotional control, children internalize these as strategies for coping and problem-solving (Silpiani & Wahyudin, 2024; Kumalasari et al., 2023).

In collectivist societies such as Indonesia, paternal roles often include moral guidance and emotional stability (Devi et al., 2025; Ashari, 2017). However, the growing issue of fatherlessness—whether physical or emotional—has been associated with diminished self-confidence and emotional dysregulation (Febriani &

Iswinarti, 2025). These findings parallel attachment theory, which posits that consistent paternal involvement fosters security and autonomy (Carbone, Pestell, Nevill, & Mancini, 2025). Collectively, these studies position father involvement as a form of psychological capital, one that fosters resilience, self-efficacy, and agency in emerging adults

Resilience as a Developmental Outcome

Resilience, defined as the capacity to adapt and thrive under adversity, frequently appears as a developmental outcome of positive paternal engagement. Fathers who are emotionally available and encouraging help their children reframe challenges, develop endurance, and maintain optimism (Nathaniel & Lesmana, 2024; Az Zahra & Pratiwi, 2025). These processes align with Stoltz's (1997) AQ framework, which identifies control, ownership, reach, and endurance as key elements of resilience.

Indonesian studies reinforce this pattern: consistent paternal support is linked with stronger emotional endurance and problem-solving abilities (Putri & Priyanggasari, 2024; Aprianti & Juliana, 2021). In contrast, youth raised in fatherless contexts often report lower adaptive capacity and higher emotional distress (Ulfaysha, Fadilah, & Indrawan, 2025). From a developmental systems perspective, father involvement promotes resilience both through role modeling and emotional scaffolding. Fathers who grant autonomy and support controlled challenges help children develop coping strategies that prepare them for future difficulties (Hidayati & Taufik, 2020; Sinulingga et al., 2024). Resilience, therefore, acts as a bridge between paternal involvement and career adaptability.

Career Confidence as a Career-Related Capability

The third cluster highlights how career self-efficacy and confidence are shaped by early family dynamics and ongoing paternal support. Grounded in Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), the reviewed studies show that supportive father-child relationships provide mastery experiences and social encouragement that enhance beliefs in one's career competence (Sawitri & Creed, 2016; Youn et al., 2023). Empirical findings indicate that young adults who perceive strong paternal involvement are more decisive, optimistic, and persistent in career exploration (To et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2022).

Parental emotional availability particularly from fathers serves as a motivational anchor, reinforcing the confidence to take risks and engage in goal-oriented behaviors (Ginevra et al., 2015; Wang & Dong, 2024). Moreover, studies by Hadi and Salim (2024) and Sawitri and Creed (2016) suggest that career confidence mediates the link between family support and career adaptability, showing how internalized paternal encouragement translates into self-efficacy and goal persistence. These results reaffirm that father involvement contributes to the psychological infrastructure necessary for navigating modern career transitions.

CONCLUSION

This review concludes that father involvement is a powerful psychological resource influencing both emotional and career development in emerging adults. Across diverse cultural and methodological contexts, evidence consistently demonstrates that paternal warmth, guidance, and autonomy support foster resilience, emotional

regulation, and career confidence. Three interconnected psychological pathways were identified: (1) father involvement builds internal strength such as self-efficacy and motivation; (2) resilience develops through consistent emotional presence and support; and (3) career confidence arises from guided autonomy and validation in decision-making. Together, these pathways illustrate how father engagement nurtures young adults who are both emotionally resilient and professionally adaptive. Beyond individual outcomes, active fatherhood contributes to broader social resilience by enhancing employability, emotional well-being, and self-reliance. These findings reaffirm that father involvement is not simply a familial matter, but a societal investment in building future generations equipped to face complex personal and professional challenges. Future research should explore these dynamics using longitudinal designs and culturally contextualized measures. Moreover, policy and practice should prioritize father-focused parenting interventions to strengthen this often-overlooked yet transformative dimension of youth development.

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APPENDIX

The following references were identified during the initial stages of the literature search but were excluded from the main analysis. These articles were reviewed and assessed based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, such as topic relevance, population focus, methodological alignment, and language accessibility. Although not included in the final review, listing them here demonstrates the transparency and rigor of the selection process.

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