

University of Zagreb

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Psychology

**INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES OF COPING WITH UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG
DISPLACED SPANISH WORKERS**

Master thesis

Tihana Virkes

Mentors:

Prof. Dr. Darja Maslić Seršić (Department of Psychology, University of Zagreb,
Croatia)

Prof. Dr. Esther López Zafra (Department of Psychology, University of Jaén, Spain)

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SAŽETAK

Cilj ovog istraživanja bio je utvrditi doprinos temeljnih samoevaluacija u objašnjavanju strategija proaktivnog traženja posla i umanjivanja značenja posla, te ispitati mogući moderacijski utjecaj proaktivnog traženja posla i medijacijski utjecaj umanjivanja značenja posla na odnos između temeljnih samoevaluacija i pozitivnog i negativnog iskustva nezaposlenosti. Strategija proaktivnog traženja posla obuhvaća ponašanja usmjerena na kontrolu stresne situacije gubitka posla te kao krajnji cilj ima ponovno zaposlenje, dok je strategija umanjivanja značenja posla izbjegavajuća i koristi se u svrhu smanjenja razine stresa. Istraživanje je provedeno u Jaénu u Španjolskoj te je u njemu sudjelovalo ukupno 178 osoba koje su ostale bez posla, uz minimalno trajanje trenutne nezaposlenosti od mjesec dana. Uz socio-demografske varijable i radne karakteristike, Skalu temeljnih samoevaluacija i Ljestvicu iskustva s nezaposlenošću, korišten je i Upitnik suočavanja s gubitkom posla razvijen u Hrvatskoj, koji je za ove potrebe bio preveden na španjolski jezik. Općenito, osobe s višim razinama temeljnih samoevaluacija su istovremeno i proaktivnije tražile posao i više umanjivale značenja posla. Uz njih, obrazovaniji pojedinci su u pravilu više tražili posao od onih s nižim stupnjem obrazovanja. Nadalje, pokazalo se da osobe s višim razinama temeljnih samoevaluacija doživljavaju svoje iskustvo nezaposlenosti pozitivnijim, i istovremeno manje negativnim, u odnosu na one s nižim razinama temeljnih samoevaluacija. Pritom nije potvrđena pretpostavka o moderacijskom utjecaju strategije proaktivnog traženja posla na odnos između temeljnih samoevaluacija i pozitivnog, odnosno negativnog iskustva s nezaposlenošću. Ipak, proaktivno traženje posla se uz temeljne samoevaluacije ispostavilo važnim u predviđanju pozitivnog iskustva nezaposlenosti, a kod negativnog iskustva uz njih treba uzeti u obzir i rod. Detaljnije, osobe s višim temeljnim samoevaluacijama koje nisu bile toliko angažirane u aktivnom traženju posla su izvješćivale o pozitivnijem, a žene, osobe nižih razina temeljnih samoevaluacija, kao i osobe koje su proaktivno tražile posao o negativnijem iskustvu nezaposlenosti. Uz to, osobe s duljim trajanjem trenutne nezaposlenosti i višim temeljnim samoevaluacijama su doživljavale svoje iskustvo nezaposlenosti pozitivnijim, a taj je odnos bio djelomično posredovan strategijom umanjivanja značenja posla. Kod negativnog iskustva nezaposlenosti umanjivanje značenja posla nije bilo medijator, ali se općenito pokazalo češćim kod osoba ženskoga roda te onih s nižim razinama temeljnih samoevaluacija i umanjivanja značenja posla. Premda bi ovo istraživanje bilo dobro ponoviti u drugim, više naseljenim gradovima Španjolske, kao i pratiti promjene strategija suočavanja kroz vrijeme longitudinalnim nacrtom, ono može poslužiti kao temelj u kreiranju novih programa pomoći usmjerenih na poboljšanje temeljnih samoevaluacija i iskustva nezaposlenosti kod Španjolaca.

Ključne riječi: iskustvo nezaposlenosti, proaktivno traženje posla, strategije suočavanja s nezaposlenošću, temeljne samoevaluacije, umanjivanje značenja posla

Individual strategies of coping with unemployment among displaced Spanish workers

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to determine the contribution of core self-evaluations in explaining the coping strategies of job search and job devaluation, as well as to test the potential moderation effect of job search and mediation effect of job devaluation on the relationship between core self-evaluations and both positive and negative experience of unemployment. In total 178 unemployed individuals from Jaén, Spain, participated in this study. Coping strategies were measured by a questionnaire constructed in Croatia, which was translated to Spanish for this purpose. Generally, higher core self-evaluations were related to higher levels of active job search, as well as job devaluation. Also, higher educated people tended to search for jobs more than the lower educated. Job search did not moderate the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment. However, people with higher levels of job search and lower levels of core self-evaluations had a less positive, and at the same time more negative experience of unemployment. Additionally, females had a more negative experience of unemployment. Individuals with a longer duration of the current period of unemployment and higher core self-evaluations had a more positive experience of unemployment, and this relationship was partially mediated by job devaluation. Negative experience of unemployment was more common among female participants and among those with lower core self-evaluations and job devaluation levels. These findings could be used in creating new intervention programs focused on improving core self-evaluations and the positive experience of unemployed people in Spain.

Key words: core self-evaluations, experience of unemployment, job devaluation, job search, strategies of coping with unemployment

INTRODUCTION

Work has been recognized as a highly important aspect of life, not only because it provides income and security, but also because it gives daily structure and purpose and plays a role in identity formation. It ensures a certain level of social contacts and is connected with one's social status too. Its central role in society shapes all other activities and relations a person has, affecting daily routine and even family life. Moreover, by contributing to feelings of self-worth and self-esteem it clearly has psychological benefits. Additionally, for young people finding a job represents the beginning of independent adult life. Therefore, it is clear that work represents the central process around which society is structured (Çelik, 2006).

On the other side, unemployment rate is a relevant economic indicator and unemployment currently appears to be a global problem affecting society as a whole (Wanberg, 2010). It has always been present and it is caused by a great number of factors. Apart from the cases in which workers quit their jobs voluntarily, unemployment may be a result of seasonal layoffs, which can be seen mainly in agriculture and tourism (e.g. a poor harvest or tourist season) because of the seasonal nature of these work sectors. Also, ever since the industrial revolution, technological changes (the automation of manufacturing processes and an increasing number of self-service machines) represent another important cause of job loss. Jacob (2011; as cited in Holland, 2012) states that other reasons for recent unemployment are due to jobs being outsourced to other countries and the increase in the population.

However, since 2007 the leading cause of massive organizational downsizing and unemployment has definitely been the worldwide economic crisis. Starting from the beginning of 2007, the unemployment rate has been almost steadily increasing – EU started the crisis with unemployment rate of 6.8%, which increased to 10.4% in April 2014 (Eurostat, 2016). Labor markets in some countries have suffered from the crisis significantly more than others. Spain, Greece, Portugal and Croatia are typical examples of countries with a rapid increase of unemployment rates. In Spain, unemployment rates jumped from 8.2% in 2007 to 24.5% in 2014 (Eurostat, 2016), out of which 12.9% individuals were unemployed for more than 12 months. Another great problem which arose from the still lasting economic crisis is increased youth unemployment. In

general, youth unemployment rate, defined as the number of unemployed people aged 15 to 24 as a percentage of the labor force of the same age, is always higher than unemployment rates for all ages, and sometimes up to twice as high (Eurostat, 2016). More detailed, in April 2014 the youth unemployment rate in the EU was 22.5%, while at the same time Spain had reached an extreme rate of 53.2% unemployed young people. Unexpected layoffs and long periods of unemployment among all age groups led to an increased employment uncertainty not only on individual, but also on company, industry and national levels (Mantler, Matejicek, Matheson & Anisman, 2005).

Individual effects of unemployment

Over the past few decades, numerous studies have examined negative consequences of job loss on an individual. The most obvious problem is the sudden loss of income, which can cause a change of lifestyle and habits, as well as result in serious financial challenges and running out of lifetime savings. Single-income families are specially affected and sometimes even face the risk of becoming homeless (Chen et al., 2012). Furthermore, previous research has established a relationship between unemployment and poor physical health. Since unemployed individuals experience high levels of stress, they often face minor or even serious medical symptoms. For example, Mayo Clinic (2011; as cited in Holland, 2012) reported that unemployed people might suffer from headaches, muscle tension or pain, fatigue, change in sex drive, upset stomach or sleep problems. Also, the lack of money and motivation might affect their level of physical activity and diet – they might not be able to afford going to the gym or could start to opt for more affordable, yet less healthy food. This, along with higher levels of stress hormones, could in turn lead to various metabolic, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension and coronary heart disease (Chen et al., 2012).

Alongside financial problems and the deterioration of physical health, most studies focused on negative effects of unemployment on mental health and general well-being (e.g. Ferreira et al., 2015). Common emotions that go along with unemployment are worry, fear, hostility, anxiety and loneliness (Kapuvari, 2011), and over time those can cause numerous psychological disorders, such as depression. For example, Kasl and

Cobb (1980; as cited in Vansteenkiste, Lens, De Witte, S., De Witte, H. & Deci, 2004) found that somatic symptoms were associated with unemployment, Henwood and Miles (1987; as cited in Creed & Moore, 2006) discovered that unemployed people showed high psychological distress and McIntyre, Mattingly, Lewandowski Jr. and Simpson (2014) reported that the unemployed had lower self-esteem. Also, some people experience high levels of self-blame (Gordus, 1986) and look for the mistakes that got them fired, which then leads to feelings of guilt and depression, and lower levels of self-esteem. It is also important to mention that unemployment is often linked to alcohol and drug abuse, as well as the increase in suicide attempts (Argyle, 1989).

Lastly, unemployed people suffer from a great number of other problems. Their social interactions usually decrease, causing them to spend even more time at home and feel lonelier (Åslund, Starrin & Nilsson, 2014). Additionally, the number of family conflicts caused by the lack of money can rise, with other family members putting pressure on the unemployed person and expecting them to find a new job soon. Also, Sidelman and Bason (2001; as cited in Venesaar & Luuk, 2004) showed that long-term unemployed people are highly likely to lose their working habits and professional skills and competences, causing difficulties in their reemployment. Moreover, Helgesson, Johansson, Nordqvist, Lundberg and Vingård (2013) found that early unemployment predicts future unemployment – their longitudinal study showed that periods of unemployment in young adulthood increased the risk of future unemployment even after fifteen years.

However, not all individuals experience negative consequences of their job loss. For some, it is an opportunity to avoid daily stress and responsibilities, or even escape undesirable and dissatisfying work. Some might see it as a chance to rethink their career path and aspirations, as well as work on their skills or take an educational course of their interest. Also, some people might gladly accept their new role of taking care for the family and spend more time on other meaningful activities.

There are several theories which offered an explanation of the impact of unemployment on individuals, and they can in general be grouped in two major perspectives: the deprivation perspective by Jahoda (1982) and Warr (1987), and the personal agency perspective by Fryer and Payne (1984; as cited in Hoare, 2007). One of

the earliest and most influential theories was *Jahoda's deprivation theory*, which was based on Freud's idea that work represents our strongest link to reality (Kapuvari, 2011). Jahoda stated that work provides not only manifest benefits, such as a steady income, but also certain latent benefits that are important for one's well-being and serve to maintain a link to reality. She claimed that those benefits could only be gained through employment and identified five latent benefits of employment: time structure, social contact, sharing of common goals, status, and enforced activity (Wanberg, 2010). While unemployed, people are unable to satisfy these benefits and thus become passive, feel deprived and suffer poor mental health.

Warr's vitamin model is somewhat similar to Jahoda's theory, and its main premise is that the environment influences mental health in the same way as vitamins affect physical health. He found nine aspects of the environment related to mental health: opportunity for control, opportunity for skill use, externally generated goals, variety, environmental clarity, availability of money, physical security, opportunity for interpersonal contact and valued social position (Perttilä, 2011). Just like in Jahoda's theory, Warr said that unemployed individuals are deprived from the crucial environmental features, and that this deprivation leads to poor psychological well-being. However, according to this model individuals do not need to be completely passive, but can rather search for or even create an environment with more of the beneficial aspects.

A somewhat different approach was described in *personal agency perspective* by Fryer and Payne. According to them, unemployment does not necessarily mean only deprivation, but can also have some positive features, which then evoke proactivity and bring positive outcomes to the individuals (Perttilä, 2011). This perspective, therefore, provides an explanation of the fact that some people experience unemployment as something positive.

The transactional model of stress and coping

In order to provide a broader perspective of individual differences in experience and coping with unemployment, some researchers turned to the transactional model of stress and coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), which was also used as the basis of this research. The model itself connects cognitive appraisals, coping resources and coping strategies in trying to explain the relationship between stressful events in the

environment and one's reactions. Lazarus and Folkman (1984; p. 141) defined coping as *constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person*. In terms of job loss, coping refers to *cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage the taxing demands posed by job loss* (Latack, Kinicki & Prussia, 1995, p. 4). According to the model, events in one's life go through the process of primary appraisal (when a person evaluates whether an event was significant and harmful) and, if necessary, secondary appraisal (when the person decides how to respond to the situation and how to cope with it). In case that the event was not seen as important and stressful, the process will stop after the primary appraisal and the event will be ignored. On the other hand, major events, such as unexpected job loss, are marked as harmful and threatening during the primary appraisal (Kinicki & Latack, 1990), and thus in the secondary appraisal demand from a person to revise their coping resources and, finally, decide which coping strategy to use.

Coping resources consist of both internal attributes (e.g. self-esteem, positive beliefs) and external resources (e.g. material resources, social support) that influence the way a person copes with involuntary job loss (Hoare, 2007). McKee-Ryan and Kinicki (2002) named three categories of coping resources relevant for coping with unemployment, and those are personal, social and financial ones. Among them, personal resources have attracted special interest of researchers because of their impact on well-being of jobless people. In their meta-analysis, McKee-Ryan and Kinicki (2002) found one's self-perception of worth and perceived control over life events to be significant predictors of the coping process. More specifically, self-esteem, locus of control, self-efficacy and neuroticism (which together form core self-evaluations) seem to influence the way of coping: higher self-esteem and self-efficacy, lower neuroticism and internal locus of control are associated with positive cognitive appraisals, which are in turn connected with more effective coping strategies. Beside them, some studies (e.g. Wanberg, 1997; Lai & Wong, 1998) defined other personality predispositions, such as optimism, as part of one's coping resources.

Coping resources have both direct and indirect effects (by affecting one's appraisal of the unemployment) on the selection of coping strategies (Latack et al.,

1995). Together with cognitive appraisals, they are necessary antecedents of coping, and therefore can be seen as mediators between an event and an individual's response to it. Once the cognitive appraisal finishes, the process of coping starts with the chosen coping strategies.

Latack et al. (1995) described coping strategies as the cognitive and behavioral efforts made by individuals to deal with a stressful situation. Originally, coping strategies were divided on problem-focused (the ones that directly try to resolve the stressful event) and emotion-focused ones (with purpose of reducing the emotional distress). Problem-focused strategies were usually seen as behavioral and trying to control the situation, and emotion-focused ones as cognitive and aiming for escape. However, Latack (1986; as cited in Latack et al., 1995) thought of this distinction as too simple, since there are also cognitive problem-focused strategies, as well as behavioral emotion-focused strategies. Thus, she proposed two new dimensions of coping strategies: control- and escape-oriented ones (Wanberg, 2010). In terms of job loss, control-focused strategies refer to cognitions and behaviors directed to manage the problem of unemployment, and the examples are looking for a new job, relocating to a place with more job opportunities, joining a training program and reviewing skills and qualifications. On the other hand, escape-oriented strategies would be the ones that try to reduce the stress and negative affects caused by the job loss, and the examples are seeking social support, using hobbies as a distraction, avoiding to think about the job loss and drinking or using drugs.

To put it all together, after unexpected job termination, a person might evaluate the job loss as stressful and highly significant (primary appraisal), and then consider available coping resources to decide how to act (secondary appraisal). This person might conclude that they possess a set of skills relevant for the job market and be confident that potential job applications would bring success in terms of reemployment (high core self-evaluations, representing available personal coping resources). In the end, the person could decide to work on their CV, ask previous employers for recommendations and look for job opportunities online on a daily basis (use of control-oriented coping strategy).

Folkman (1992; as cited in Ramlall, Al-Sabaan & Magbool, 2014) stated that individuals normally use control-oriented strategies in situations which are perceived as manageable, while the escape-oriented ones are more often used in situations which are seen as uncontrollable. Usually, control-focused strategies were considered as more adaptive and beneficial for one's well-being, but the relationship turned out to be more complex, and even reciprocal. For example, if someone sees the job loss as highly stressful, it might be useful to turn to escape-focused strategies for a while to reduce anxiety and restore balance. Recent meta-analysis by McKee-Ryan, Kinicki, Song and Wanberg (2005) found that people who use both control-oriented and escape-oriented strategies more intensively usually have higher levels of well-being than people who use coping strategies less intensively, with job search being the main exception. It seems that individuals see the experience of applying for jobs and receiving rejections as extremely negative.

Finally, various studies (e.g. Kinicki, Prussia & McKee-Ryan, 2000; Kinicki et al., 1990) concluded that coping is a dynamic process that changes over time. The same person can use different control- and escape-orientated strategies to cope with unemployment, and the choice will depend on the changes in the situation and the results of a certain strategy. A person who spent weeks applying for different job openings might, for example, decide to wait for some feedback from the companies and meanwhile engage in a hobby.

This research investigated coping strategies of job search and job devaluation. The first strategy was job search, which is a control-oriented strategy consisting of proactive and planned activities with reemployment as a final goal. Examples of such activities are writing a CV, asking friends about open positions in their companies and searching and applying for job openings online. Meta-analysis by Kanfer et al. (2001; as cited in Wanberg, Glomb, Song & Sorenson, 2005) showed that the active use of this strategy is related to future job acquisition, number of job offers and shorter duration of unemployment. Also, it is found that individuals with higher self-esteem, self-efficacy and perceived control over life (components of core self-evaluations) show more intensity and effort in their job search (Kanfer et al., 2001; as cited in Wanberg, 2010). However, it is important to mention that successful reemployment doesn't depend only

on job-seeking activities, but also on other factors, such as labor market (Seršić & Šavor, 2012). Other studies on job search focused on its relationship with well-being and demonstrated that, although job search generally increases the chance of reemployment, it affects well-being negatively (Wanberg, 1997; McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). As it was mentioned earlier, it appears that seeking a job over a longer period of time is a discouraging process that leads to higher levels of psychological distress because of constant rejections and uncertainty. Another interesting study was of Song et al. (2009; as cited in Wanberg, 2010), which suggested that the relationship between active job search and higher levels of distress is reciprocal - not only does job search lead to increased psychological distress, but higher levels of psychological distress also seem to increase job seeking behavior.

Another coping strategy examined in this research was job devaluation. It is an escape-oriented strategy through which an individual tries to perceive the event of job loss as less negative and cognitively persuade themselves that there are more important things in life than having a job (Kinicki et al., 1990). The objective of this strategy is cognitive revision of goals and attitudes in order to reduce the negative experience of unemployment (Latack et al., 1995). According to De Witte, Hooge and Vanbelle (2010), this strategy is common among long-term unemployed individuals who get tired of constant job search and therefore their employment commitment levels drop. Once the role of work in their life becomes peripheral, psychological distress decreases and their overall well-being improves.

Core self-evaluations

Several individual variables (self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control and emotional stability) were often examined as coping resources influencing the choice and persistence of coping strategies. Because of their high intercorrelations, Judge, Locke and Durham (1997) suggested they could be united in a higher order construct, which they named core self-evaluations, and defined as *fundamental premises that individuals hold about themselves and their functioning in the world* (Judge et al., 1997, p. 154). Since some of its subtraits, such as self-efficacy and locus of control, rose from motivation theories, it has been suggested that core self-evaluations represent a motivational trait (Erez & Judge, 2001; as cited in Kammeyer-Mueller, Judge & Scott,

2009) useful for prediction of various goal setting activities and coping strategies. When dealing with a stressful event, individuals with high core self-evaluations typically focus both on trying to solve a problem and deal with their negative emotions. In the domain of coping with unemployment, various studies (e.g. Hoare, 2007; Wanberg et al., 2005) proved the positive relationship between core self-evaluations (or its subtraits) and control-oriented coping strategies, such as job search.

Experience of unemployment

A common point of interest of all theories on the impact of unemployment is individual experience, which, as has already been mentioned, varies from extremely negative (e.g. depression) to positive. In terms of the transactional model of stress and coping, one's experience of unemployment can be seen as an outcome of the applied coping strategy and can further influence new cycles of cognitive appraisals and potential strategy changes. Previous research mainly focused on positive and negative experience (e.g. De Witte et al., 2010; Vansteenkiste et al., 2004), as well as positive and negative affect (Hoare, 2007), and generally confirmed the results of meta-analysis by McKee-Ryan et al. (2005), showing the connection between job search strategy and negative experience of unemployment on one side, and escape-oriented strategies and positive experience on the other.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

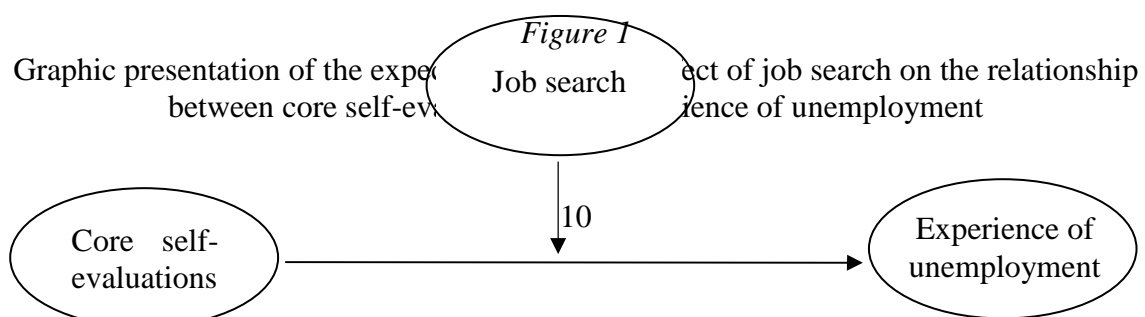
The objective of this research was to enable a more thorough insight into the mechanisms of individual variations in coping with job loss. The thesis examines predictors and outcomes of individual strategies of coping with unemployment among displaced persons in Spain.

PROBLEMS

The problems of this research were to examine whether and to what extent core self-evaluations predict strategies of coping with unemployment as well as to test the potential moderation effect of job search and mediation effect of job devaluation on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment.

HYPOTHESES

1. It is expected that core self-evaluations will contribute significant additional variance to predicting both job search and job devaluation, after the socio-demographic variables (age, gender, level of education, average monthly income) and work characteristics (total period of current unemployment, duration of last tenure) have been controlled for. Specifically, higher core self-evaluations will be positively related to higher levels of job search, as well as higher levels of job devaluation.
2. Job search will moderate the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment. Specifically, people with higher core self-evaluations will have higher levels of positive and lower levels of negative experience of unemployment, but among them those who search for a job more actively will have a less positive and more negative experience of unemployment. Figure 1 shows the expected relationship between core self-evaluations, job search and experience of unemployment.



3. Job devaluation will partially mediate the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment. Again, core self-evaluations will affect experience of unemployment in a way that people with higher core self-evaluations will have higher levels of positive and lower levels of negative experience of unemployment. Also, core self-evaluations will be associated with higher levels of job devaluation, which will in turn lead to more positive and less negative experience of unemployment. The expected relationship between variables is presented in Figure 2.

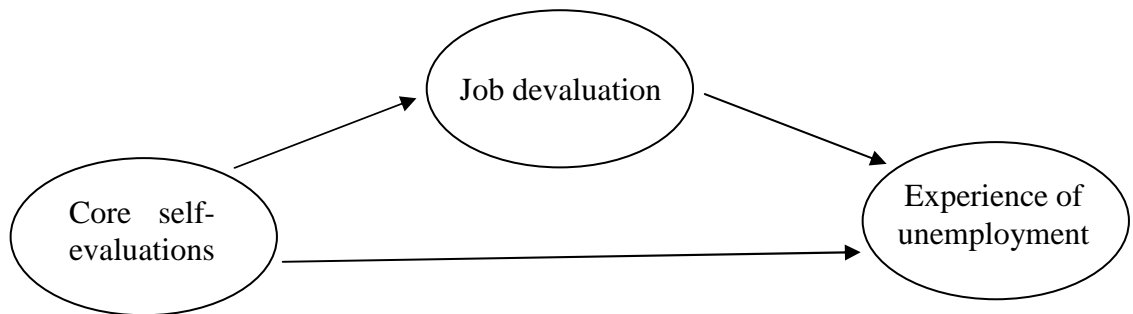


Figure 2

Graphic presentation of the expected mediation effect of job devaluation on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment

METHOD

Participants

The data for this study was collected on a convenience sample of displaced people in Jaén, Spain. Only individuals who lost their jobs involuntarily were involved. An additional criterion for the sample recruitment was that the participants' current period of unemployment was longer than 1 month. In total, 200 questionnaires were completely filled in, out of which 9 were discarded from further analysis because of too many aberrant answers, and additional 13 because they contained data from participants who had never been employed before. The final sample consisted of 178 participants, with a slightly greater number of female participants ($N=95$). The majority of participants were between 26 and 35 years old (38.8 %) and between 36 and 45 years old (32 %). 41.6 % of participants indicated elementary school (equivalent of 10 years of education) as the highest level of education attained. For the greatest number of participants the total period of current unemployment ranged between one and two years (28.6%) and two and four years (25.1%), and the average duration of last tenure in months was between less than a month and 324 months ($M=38.97$; $SD=57.62$). Most of the participants' families received between 645.3 and 1000 euros (31.2%) and under 400 euros (30.6%) of average monthly income. Further details of socio-demographic variables and work characteristics of the sample can be found in Table 1.

Table 1
Socio-demographic variables and work characteristics of participants (N=178)

	Category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Men	46.3
	Women	53.7
Age	18-25	15.7
	26-35	38.8
	36-45	32.0
	46-55	11.2
	56-65	2.2
Education	Elementary school	41.6
	High school	35.3
	University degree	23.1

(Continued on next page)

Table 1

Socio-demographic variables and work characteristics of participants (N=178)

(Continued from previous page)

Total period of unemployment	1 to 2 months	5.7
	2 to 6 months	14.3
	6 to 12 months	15.4
	1 to 2 years	28.6
	2 to 4 years	25.1
	More than 4 years	10.9
Average monthly income	Under 400 euros	30.6
	645.3 euros	12.4
	Between 645.3 and 1000 euros	31.2
	Between 1216 and 2095 euros	21.2
	Between 2095 and 4190 euros	4.1
	Over 4190 euros	0.6

Instruments

Beside socio-demographic and work characteristics, this study examined participants' coping strategies (job search and job devaluation), core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment. Socio-demographic variables included age, gender, level of education and average monthly income in the family, while work characteristics focused on the duration of the current period of unemployment and last organizational tenure in months.

Coping strategies. Coping strategies were measured by a questionnaire constructed by Seršić and Šavor in Croatia (2011). The construction of the questionnaire started from a 17-item questionnaire by Kinicki et al. (1990), several Croatian studies on Lazarus's stress theory and qualitative data obtained during counseling work with unemployed people. The final version measured a total of four coping strategies, out of which the strategies of job search and job devaluation were used in this study. Since the questionnaire was originally in Croatian, we needed to translate it and adapt it to

Spanish. In order to do it, ITC test translation and adaptation guidelines (2005) were followed: the questionnaire was first translated from Croatian to English by a native Croatian speaker familiar with the study, then back-translated from English to Croatian by another native Croatian speaker, and finally two versions (original and back translated Croatian version) were compared until the consensus on all items was reached. Later, the same procedure was followed to translate and adapt the questionnaire from English to Spanish, with two native Spanish speakers working on the translation. In total, job search was measured by 7 items, and job devaluation by 6, and participants indicated their responses on a scale from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*always*). The job search subscale, with a typical question "*I dedicate a lot of time to job search*", showed acceptable reliability (7 items, $\alpha=0.775$). The job devaluation subscale, with a typical item "*I am telling to myself that there are more important things in life than employment*" originally had a questionable reliability (7 items, $\alpha=0.69$), but after discarding one item (based on its low convergent validity) the reliability became acceptable (6 items, $\alpha=0.705$). For both subscales, the total score was defined as an average score on all the items.

Core self-evaluations. In this study, we used the Spanish version of the scale available by Judge, Van Vianen and De Pater (2004) to measure core self-evaluations, defined as fundamental premises that individuals hold about themselves and their functioning in the world (Judge et al., 1997). The scale was basically a Spanish adaptation of the original scale constructed by Judge, Erez, Bono and Thoresen (2003). The scale consisted of 12 items, and participants were asked to answer on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). In this study the scale showed good metric characteristics (12 items, $\alpha=0.76$), and a composite measure of core self-evaluations was calculated as an average of scores (or reversed scores) on all the items.

Experience of unemployment. For the purpose of this study, 14 items related to the positive and negative experience of unemployment were taken from the original questionnaire developed by De Witte et al. (2010). The items were originally in English, and their translation was again done in line with the ITC guidelines: first they were translated from English to Spanish by a native Spanish speaker with an excellent level

of English, then back-translated from Spanish to English by another native Spanish speaker. Next, the two versions were compared and discussed until an agreement was reached for all the items. Participants had to respond to each item by choosing *often*, *sometimes* or *never*, with a typical question related to the positive experience of unemployment being "*I can finally do the things I find important since becoming unemployed*". Items measuring negative experience of unemployment were generally focused on deprivation a person might have experienced, e.g. "*It feels as if I am no longer part of society*". To test the original factor structure, principal components analysis with Oblimin rotation was performed. The rotated solution mostly confirmed the structure, except for one item which was expected to describe positive experience of unemployment, but was found saturated on both factors, and was therefore discarded from further analysis. This resulted in a reliable 8 item scale for negative experience of unemployment ($\alpha=0.877$) and a slightly less reliable 5 item scale for positive experience of unemployment ($\alpha=0.627$). Again, the total score for both positive and negative experience of unemployment was calculated as an average score on all the items. The complete item correlation matrix with Oblimin rotation can be found in Table 6 (Appendix A).

Procedure

This study and the questionnaire used were a part of a larger cross-cultural research of strategies of coping with unemployment in Belgium, Croatia and Spain. The data for this study was personally collected by the author of the thesis in Andalusian Service of Employment – Center of Employment of Jaén 1, in March and April of 2014. Data gathering consisted of approaching everyone in the waiting room of the agency and asking them to participate in the study. It was always stressed out that the participation in the study would be anonymous and voluntary, and that it would serve purely for academic purposes. In order to exclude people who had been unemployed for less than one month or had never been employed, before giving them the questionnaire each person was asked about the duration of the current period of unemployment. The ones who met the conditions and agreed to participate were given the questionnaire with further instructions on its first page. All the participants were offered to sit at a separate table in the corner of the waiting room, but most of them preferred to stay where they had already been standing or sitting. Most of them filled in the questionnaire by

themselves in 10 to 20 minutes, but additional help was offered to some participants who were not certain how to reply to some questions. The completed questionnaires were left in a box put on the separate table.

RESULTS

Basic descriptives for the continuous variables of this study are shown below in Table 2. As it can be seen, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality demonstrated that all the distributions significantly differ from a normal one, which affects the prerequisites for parametric analysis. However, since the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test itself is quite sensitive, and visually the distributions do not appear to be too distorted, it was decided to use parametric tests after all.

Table 2

Basic descriptives for the continuous variables (core self-evaluations, job search, job devaluation, positive experience of unemployment, negative experience of unemployment) ($N = 178$)

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max	K-S test	Skewness	Kurtosis
Core self-evaluations	3.4	0.62	2	5	.098**	.280	-.269
Job search	3.4	0.48	1.86	4	.123**	-.622	-.168
Job devaluation	2.4	0.61	1.17	4	.097**	.424	-.215
Positive experience of unemployment	1.9	0.41	1	2.8	.106**	.091	-.365
Negative experience of unemployment	2.0	0.55	1	3	.090**	.082	-.875

** $p < 0.01$

Pearson bivariate correlations

Before focusing on our research objectives, *Pearson* bivariate correlations between all the relevant variables were tested and are presented in Table 7 (Appendix B). Most of the observed correlations were small ($r < 0.2$) and insignificant. Out of socio-demographic variables and work characteristics, age was negatively correlated with the level of education ($r = -0.17$; $p < .05$) and positively correlated with the duration of current period of unemployment ($r = 0.21$; $p < .01$) and last tenure ($r = 0.33$; $p < .01$), suggesting that older participants were more likely to be less educated and the duration of their current period of unemployment was more likely to be longer, while their last tenure lasted longer as well. Level of education had a significant positive correlation with the average monthly income ($r = 0.38$; $p < .01$), indicating that despite losing their job, more educated

people were still more likely to have higher incomes than the others. Between all the socio-demographic variables and work characteristics, only average monthly income and duration of last tenure were significantly related to the core self-evaluations, and even these correlations were rather small ($r=0.2$; $p<.05$ for last tenure, and $r=0.17$; $p<.05$ for average monthly income). It seems that people with a longer duration of their last tenure, as well as those with higher average monthly income, probably also show higher levels of core self-evaluations. An interesting observation is that none of the socio-demographic variables or work characteristics were related to the control-oriented coping strategy of job search. On the other hand, higher levels of escape-related strategy of job devaluation were connected with higher levels of education ($r=0.26$; $p<.01$), higher average monthly income ($r=0.25$; $p<.01$) and higher core self-evaluations ($r=0.31$; $p<.01$). As for the outcomes of coping strategies, positive experience of unemployment was shown to be in a positive relationship with the duration of current period of unemployment ($r=0.15$; $p<.05$), core self-evaluations ($r=0.31$; $p<.01$) and job devaluation ($r=0.45$; $p<.01$). Furthermore, negative experience of unemployment was negatively related to core self-evaluations ($r=-0.6$; $p<.01$) and job devaluation ($r=-0.39$; $p<.01$), implying that individuals with lower core self-evaluations and those who use job devaluation as their strategy less often are more probable to experience their unemployment negatively. Lastly, positive and negative experience of unemployment were negatively correlated ($r=-0.29$; $p<.01$).

Contribution of socio-demographic variables, work characteristics and core self-evaluations to the predicting of coping strategies

In order to test the first hypothesis, a total of two separate linear hierarchical regression analyses were conducted, each one in two steps. The measured coping strategies (job search and job devaluation) were used as the criterion variables. In each analysis socio-demographic variables (gender, age, level of education and average monthly income) were entered in the first step together with work characteristics (duration of current period of unemployment and last tenure in months), while core self-evaluations were entered in the second step. The results of the two analyses can be found in Table 3.

None of the steps made a significant contribution to the prediction of job search. However, the second step explained 5.4% of the total variance and showed *a trend towards statistical significance* ($F_{(7,118)}=2.02$; $p=.058$), with the level of education and core self-evaluations being significant independent predictors. Individuals with higher level of education and a higher level of core self-evaluations are more likely to use the strategy of job search while coping with unemployment.

When job devaluation was used as the criterion variable, in total 13.1% of the variance was explained ($F_{(7,117)}=3.66$; $p=.001$). Socio-economic variables, entered together with work characteristics in the first step of the analysis, accounted for 7.5% of the total variance ($F_{(6,118)}=2.67$; $p=.018$), and average monthly income was a significant predictor ($t=2.047$; $p=.043$), indicating that individuals with higher average monthly income used this coping strategy more than those with lower income. Core self-evaluations, added in the second step, were shown to be a significant independent predictor. At the same time, adding them into the regression equation reduced standardized beta coefficient of average monthly income, which became insignificant. According to the analysis, this strategy is more common among individuals with higher core self-evaluations.

Table 3

Results of two linear hierarchical regression analyses with job search and job devaluation as criterion variables ($N = 178$)

Predictors	Job search		Job devaluation	
	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)
Gender	.10	.13	.05	.09
Age	-.10	-.12	-.16	-.18
Education level	.18	.20*	.15	.16
Average monthly income	-.15	-.19	.20*	.16
Current period of unemployment	.10	.11	.03	.05
Last tenure	.17	.15	.02	-.02
Core self-evaluations		.19*		.26**
Adjusted R^2	.029	.054	.075*	.131**
ΔR^2	.075	.032*	.120*	.060**

*p<.05 ; **p<.01

Moderating effect of job search on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment

As it can be seen in Table 7 (Appendix B), core self-evaluations were positively related to positive experience of unemployment and negatively related to negative experience of unemployment. To test the potential moderating effect of job search on these relationships, a total of two hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed, each one in three steps. Before the analyses, job search and core self-evaluations were transformed to their standardized values, and a new moderating variable was created as a product of these two variables. Socio-demographic variables (gender, age, level of education and average monthly income) and work characteristics (duration of current period of unemployment and last organizational tenure in months) were entered in the first step of each analysis, followed by job search and core self-evaluations added in the second step and the moderating variable entered in the third. Experience of unemployment (positive or negative) was used as the criterion variable. The results of both analyses can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4

The moderating role of job search on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment: results of the two linear regression analyses ($N = 178$)

Predictors	Positive experience			Negative experience		
	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)	Step 3 (β)	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)	Step 3 (β)
Gender	-.02	.05	.05	-.06	-.18*	-.18*
Age	.03	-.02	-.03	.04	.12	.12
Education level	.03	.09	.09	.04	-.03	-.03
Average monthly income	.23*	.14	.14	-.25*	-.13	-.13
Current period of unemployment	.12	.16	.16	.08	.02	.02
Last tenure	-.05	-.05	-.05	-.09	-.05	-.05
Core self-evaluations		.31**	.31**		-.62**	-.62**
Job search		-.19*	-.19*		.17*	.17*
Core self-evaluations X Job search			.02			.01
Adjusted R2	.03	.12**	.11**	.02	.37**	.36**

ΔR^2	.07	.10**	.00	.07	.34**	.00
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*p<.05 ; **p<.01

In general, both analyses rejected the hypothesis of the moderating role of job search on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment. When positive experience of unemployment was used as the criterion variable, core self-evaluations and job search were significant independent predictors, but adding the moderating variable did not result in a significant change in the explained variance. Moreover, the moderating variable was not a significant predictor of positive experience of unemployment. These results indicated only that people with higher levels of core self-evaluations and those who search for a job less have more positive experience of unemployment.

The analysis with negative experience of unemployment as a criterion variable had a similar result. Gender, core self-evaluations and job search were significant independent predictors of negative experience of unemployment. However, moderating variable was not shown to be a significant predictor, nor did its addition to the regression equation affect the amount of explained variance. In total, women and people with lower core self-evaluations and higher job search levels are more likely to experience their unemployment negatively.

Mediating effect of job devaluation on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment

In order to test the third hypothesis, the first step was to examine the intercorrelations between core self-evaluations, job devaluation and experience of unemployment, shown in Table 7 (Appendix B). As it can be noted, job devaluation correlated significantly with both the predictor (core self-evaluations) and criterions (positive/negative experience of unemployment). In line with Baron and Kenny (1986), we can thus consider job devaluation to be a potential mediator.

To test this hypothesis, a total of two linear hierarchical regression analyses were conducted. The criterion in each analysis was either positive, or negative experience of unemployment, while core self-evaluations and job devaluation served as predictors. Apart from them, variables of gender, age, level of education, average monthly income,

duration of current period of unemployment and last tenure were controlled. Each analysis had a total of three steps: the first one with control variables, in the second one core self-evaluation were added, and lastly job devaluation was entered.

The results of the two analyses can be found in Table 5. As it can be noted, both core self-evaluations and job devaluation appear to be significant independent predictors for positive experience of unemployment as a criterion. The differences in the amount of explained variance are also significant - after controlling socio-demographic factors and work characteristics, core self-evaluations accounted for an additional 9%, and job devaluation further 6% of the variance. In total, 15% of the variance of criterion was explained based on these predictors. Standardized beta coefficient of core self-evaluations was reduced after job devaluation was added into the regression equation, but still remained significant, which suggests a potential partial mediation effect of job devaluation on the relationship between core self-evaluations and positive experience of unemployment.

Table 5

The mediating effect of job devaluation on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment: results of the two linear regression analyses ($N = 178$)

Predictors	Positive experience			Negative experience		
	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)	Step 3 (β)	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)	Step 3 (β)
Gender	-.06	-.02	-.04	-.09	-.18*	-.16*
Age	-.05	-.08	-.02	.08	.13	.10
Education level	-.00	.01	-.04	.05	.03	.06
Average monthly income	.18	.13	.09	-.23*	-.14	-.11
Current period of unemployment	.18	.20*	.18*	.05	-.01	-.01
Last tenure	-.03	-.09	-.08	-.12	-.00	-.00
Core self-evaluations		.31**	.24*		-.62**	-.57**
Job devaluation			.27**			-.18*
Adjusted R^2	.02	.10**	.15**	.07	.41**	.44**
ΔR^2	.07	.09**	.06**	.07	.34**	.03*

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

The results were similar when negative experience of unemployment was used as a criterion. Gender and core self-evaluations were significant independent predictors

after the second step of the analysis, and in total accounted for 41% of the variance. Adding job devaluation to the equation resulted in explaining further 3% of the variance, and this step was also shown to be significant. Both gender and core self-evaluations stayed significant predictors, but their standardized beta coefficients decreased, which again indicated a potential partial mediation effect of job devaluation.

To test this possibility, Sobel test for the significance of mediation was conducted. Preacher and Hayes (2004) stressed the necessity of such direct testing of the significance of mediation effects in psychological research. When positive experience of unemployment was set as a criterion, the result of Sobel test was 2.07 (S.E. = 0.002; $p=.038$), thus confirming the hypothesis of the effect of partial mediation. In other words, Sobel test supported the idea of job devaluation being a partial mediator of the relationship between core self-evaluations and positive experience of unemployment, which is also presented in Figure 1. On the other hand, the result of Sobel test with negative experience of unemployment as a criterion was -1.698 (S. E. = 0.002; $p=.090$), demonstrating that here job devaluation can not be considered as a partial mediator. In this case it rather has an additive effect and can only be treated as one of the significant independent predictors.

DISCUSSION

This research examined the contribution of several variables to predicting the coping strategies, and their further effect on an individual's overall experience of unemployment. Previous studies revealed many factors that affect the way people deal with involuntary job loss, and here the focus was put on core self-evaluations, which represented an individual coping resource.

Generally, people tend to use control-focused strategies, such as job search, when they believe their actions could cause a change in an unpleasant situation they are facing. With this in mind, the finding that people with higher levels of education, as well as those with higher core self-evaluations tend to use the strategy of job search more often is logical and expected, and confirms the previous results on Croatian sample (Seršić & Šavor, 2012). Unemployed individuals with higher levels of education might believe that they will find a new job easier, and therefore focus to a higher extent on the job search. Since core self-evaluations are a construct made of self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control and emotional stability, individuals with a higher score tend to see themselves as worthier, are more confident in their ability to successfully handle various situations, feel they are in control of situations and are generally more stable and adjusted, all of which leads them to start with and persist in actions related to job search. Even when faced with unsuccessful job search and long-term unemployment, these traits help individuals to keep on searching for a job (Wanberg et al., 2005). On the other hand, individuals with lower levels of core self-evaluations see their potential actions as useless and believe that not much can be done in order to obtain reemployment, and because of that they do not use the job search strategy as much.

It is, however, interesting to note that none of the other socio-demographic variables or work characteristics were significant predictors of this active coping strategy. Specifically, previous research conducted in Croatia (Seršić & Šavor, 2011; Seršić & Šavor, 2012) also demonstrated the negative relationship between the duration of the last tenure and the use of job search strategy, but this finding was not replicated on Spanish sample. One of the reasons behind it might be a specific, positive

asymmetric distribution of the mentioned variable, which included a relatively homogeneous group of participants with a quite short duration of the last tenure.

Another unexpected finding was the absence of the moderation effect of job search on the relationship between core self-evaluations and both positive and negative experience of unemployment. It appears that job search can only be considered as one of the significant predictors of both positive and negative experience of unemployment when it is observed together with core self-evaluations. However, it does not affect the strength of the relation between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment. Specifically, people who actively search for jobs will have a less positive and more negative experience of unemployment, compared to those who do not. Additionally, women will be more likely to experience their unemployment negatively. This finding is in line with previous research, which has also shown the connection between active job search and negative experience of unemployment (MyKee-Ryan et al., 2005; Vansteenkiste et al., 2004). Considering that job search is a very stressful activity followed by numerous rejections and often a complete lack of feedback (Seršić and Vukelić, 2012), it is logical that people who look for jobs more will have a less positive experience of unemployment than those who do not.

The fact that the connection between job search and other variables was not as expected and rather low can be explained with the specificity of the sample. Although the job search scale was reliable, its distribution was negatively asymmetric, and the majority of the participants scored 3 or higher (with theoretical range going from 1 to 4). More precisely, it appears that only 17.8% of the sample had a total score lower than 3 on job search, indicating a reduced sensitivity of the scale. This small variance of the results could have decreased the correlations with other variables and thus failed to support the hypothesis. One of the possible reasons which could have caused such a distribution of the results is socially desirable responding. Holtgraves (2004) states that people have a tendency to reply to self-report questions in a way that creates an overly positive image of themselves. This distorted self-presentation happens more often in studies on socially sensitive topics, where people seem to adjust their answers to the culturally accepted norms (Ganster, Hennessey & Luthans, 1983). Since the data for this study was collected in the official governmental center of employment, it is likely that

the participants were replying in a more socially desirable manner and exaggerating their job search efforts, therefore lowering the validity of the scale. Another possible explanation for the small variance of the results could be the size of the city where the research was conducted. More specifically, the data came from a city of a size relatively small for Spain (with just a bit over 100.000 inhabitants), so it is possible that the number of new job openings is limited and people not willing to relocate simply do not have wider options to seek for jobs more actively, despite their available coping resources. Replicating the study in other, bigger cities with more job opportunities would perhaps show a greater variability among participants' job search scores.

Job devaluation was taken as an example of escape-oriented strategy in this research. Generally, this strategy is manifested in a reduced importance people give to the idea of having a job, and they use it in order to deal with unpleasant emotions, psychological distress and frustration caused by the involuntary job loss. Although only a small amount of previous research was focused on job devaluation, the expectation was that people with higher core self-evaluations would use this strategy more, and the results confirmed this hypothesis. The potential explanation could be that individuals with higher core self-evaluations are simply better at handling both their behavior and emotions, and therefore focus more not only on job search activities, but also on regulating their emotions in spare time (Hoare, 2007). Along with this goes the fact that emotional stability - a trait determining the intensity of one's emotional reactions and success in managing them - is a part of the core self-evaluations concept.

Another problem examined in this study was the potential mediating role of job devaluation on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment. The results of Sobel test confirmed that job devaluation indeed mediates the relationship between core self-evaluations and positive experience of unemployment, but the same does not hold true when it comes to negative experience of unemployment. Generally, this study showed that individuals with longer duration of current period of unemployment and higher core self-evaluations will probably have more positive experience of unemployment. These findings are in line with previous studies stating that the long-term unemployed experienced their unemployment more positively (De Witte et al., 2010), and that core self-evaluations had a significant

positive relationship with both life satisfaction (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005) and positive emotional consequences of unemployed people (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2009). Job devaluation partially mediated this relationship, by reducing the direct connection between the duration of current period of unemployment, core self-evaluations and positive experience of unemployment, but still keeping it significant. In short, it means that people with higher levels of core self-evaluations are more likely to have positive experience of unemployment not only because of the direct relationship between these two variables, but also because of the indirect impact of job devaluation. In contrast, the results of the analyses did not support the hypothesis of job devaluation mediating the relationship between core self-evaluations and negative experience of unemployment. In this case, job devaluation appeared to be only one of the significant independent predictors, along with gender and core self-evaluations. Specifically, women and those with lower levels of core self-evaluations and job devaluation will have more negative experience of unemployment. Combined, these variables explained in total 44% of the variance in negative experience of unemployment.

These findings are relevant not only because they give more information about the processes behind one's experience of unemployment, but also because they explain previously noticed inter-individual differences in the ways people deal with unexpected job loss. As such, they have important practical implications, especially for people who work with the unemployed (e.g. career development professionals) and create training programs for them.

In total, the results of this study are only partially in line with previous findings about the relationships of the observed variables and require further investigation.

Study limitations and future research

It is important to mention several limitations of the presented research. Firstly, all the variables were measured in a single point in time (cross-sectional study) when a more extensive longitudinal study would have been more appropriate. As shown before (e.g. Wanberg et al., 2005; Kinicki et al., 2000; Kinicki et al., 1990) coping is a dynamic process, and its components (including coping strategies) keep on changing over time. Besides constant changes in the environment (e.g. beginning of olive harvest season), individuals keep revising their emotions, resources and the efficacy of

expressed behavior, and adjust their strategies if necessary. Connected with this, since the analyses in this study were correlational, no causal conclusions can be made. A stronger, longitudinal study would be needed in order to provide a better explanation of the relations between the used variables.

Furthermore, the strategy of job search was measured only by participants' self-reports, and for future studies it would be useful to develop additional methods. Since job search is clearly expressed through one's behavior, more questions related to the frequency of various job search actions could provide further interesting information, while at the same time make the data more comparable. Another scale that should be improved for future studies is positive experience of unemployment, since its internal consistency was quite low (0.63).

Lastly, to get a wider picture of the coping strategies of Spanish population, similar studies should be conducted in other, bigger cities. This way the sample specificity which affected this data could be avoided, and the differences in labor market around the country would be evened up.

Practical implications

Considering the lack of previous research on coping strategies in Spain, this study provides valuable information about the ways individuals deal with job loss and variables involved in that process. Since the variables used here have not been examined together before, this study also broadens general scientific knowledge. Although the results need further empirical confirmation, they can be of high importance in the creation of intervention programs for unemployed people. Currently, the majority of such programs focuses on developing skills relevant for work (e.g. courses for tour guides, graphic design courses) and soft skills crucial for finding a new job (e.g. communication skills, language skills, CV writing). However, it seems that additional programs enhancing the components of core self-evaluations should be designed. Instead of simply teaching unemployed people how to improve their job applications, these courses should also work on their self-esteem, realistic goal-setting and stress management, therefore increasing their core self-evaluations and making their overall experience of unemployment more positive. Also, this study could serve as a basis for further investigation of similar variables within the framework of the transactional

model of stress and coping in domains other than unemployment, such as educational and work psychology, resulting in an integrative model of coping, its antecedents and outcomes.

CONCLUSION

In this study a higher level of education and higher core self-evaluations were shown to be related to more active job search. Job search, together with core self-evaluations was shown to be related to individual experience of unemployment: people with lower core self-evaluations and those who searched for a job more actively had a less positive and more negative experience. However, the moderating effect of job search on the relationship between core self-evaluations and experience of unemployment was not found. Higher core self-evaluations were also associated with higher levels of job devaluation. A longer duration of the current period of unemployment and higher core self-evaluations predicted more positive experience of unemployment, and this relationship was partially mediated by the escape-oriented coping strategy of job devaluation. When predicting negative individual experience of unemployment, the mediation effect was not proved. Women and people with lower core self-evaluations or job devaluation levels were more likely to experience their unemployment negatively.

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APPENDIX A

Table 6

Correlation matrix of experience of unemployment items after Oblimin rotation
(N=178)

Item	Component	
	1	2
1	.434	-.182
2	-.136	.763
3	.721	-.237
4	.618	-.264
5	-.103	.468
6	.623	-.127
7	.804	-.256
8	-.247	.659
9	.765	-.144
10	-.329	.753
11	.816	-.215
12	.793	-.143
13	-.135	.505
14*	-.426	.388

* This item was discarded from the further analysis

APPENDIX B

Table 7

Intercorrelations of all the observed variables (N=178)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Gender	-											
2. Age	.07	-										
3. Education	.12	-.17*	-									
4. Duration of current unemployment	.13	.21**	.01	-								
5. Last tenure	-.06	.33**	-.04	.06	-							
6. Average monthly income	-.10	-.11	.38**	-.04	.10	-						
7. Core self-evaluations	-.15	.08	-.04	-.05	.20*	.17*	-					
8. Job search	.08	-.02	.14	.09	.10	-.03	.07	-				
9. Job devaluation	.01	-.15	.26**	.03	-.01	.25**	.31**	.11	-			
10. Positive experience	-.03	.02	.09	.15*	.01	.13	.31**	-.12	.45**	-		
11. Negative experience	-.06	.07	-.08	.03	-.07	-.19*	-.60**	.11	-.39**	-.29**	-	
12. Moderator	-.01	.11	.02	-.01	.12	.11	.00	.02	-.08	.03	-.03	-

*p<.05; **p<.01