PRESENTED BY
Wulan Permatasari

A hybrid bibliometric–systematic literature review

BEYOND INDIVIDUAL COPING: SYSTEMIC SUPPORT AS THE MISSING DIMENSION OF WORKFORCE RESILIENCE

Master of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

WHY WORKFORCE RESILIENCE MATTERS NOW

(001)

PANDEMIC SHOCK

COVID-19 reorganised work at unprecedented scale and speed.

Kniffin et al., 2021

(002)

STAFF SHORTAGES

The global health workforce gap is projected to last until 2030.

Boniol et al., 2022

(003)

GENERATIVE AI

AI is changing skills, jobs and employment relationships.

Budhwar et al., 2023

Organisations need a workforce that can absorb, adapt to and recover from repeated disruption — but what is a "resilient workforce"?

ONE LABEL, THREE VERY DIFFERENT MEANINGS

(001) **INDIVIDUAL**

Psychological resilience helps employees cope with workplace stress

(002) **COLLECTIVE**

A shared responsibility of employees, leaders and HR development

(003) **SYSTEM**

The whole workforce's capacity to absorb and adapt to shocks

Individual resilience training alone gives only modest, short-lived benefits (Collett et al., 2026; Kunzler et al., 2020).

RESEARCH GAP

- The only integrative review was published before the pandemic boom
- Nobody has mapped how large and how connected the field is
- The dimensions of workforce resilience are still unknown



THREE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1	**GROWTH**	How has research on workforce resilience developed in volume, impact and use of the construct?
RQ2	**DISTRIBUTION**	How is this research distributed across countries, sources and sectors?
RQ3	**STRUCTURE**	Which themes and dimensions characterise the literature, and how do they differ by level of analysis?

METHOD: A HYBRID BIBLIOMETRIC–SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

(001)

1. SEARCH

Scopus, TITLE-ABS-KEY ("workforce resilience"), 7 Oct 2026

297 RECORDS

(002)

2. SCREEN

PRISMA 2020, four criteria, AI-assisted second reviewer (κ = 0.99)

198 ARTICLES

(003)

3. MAP

Performance analysis and VOSviewer networks of countries and keywords

2 NETWORKS

(004)

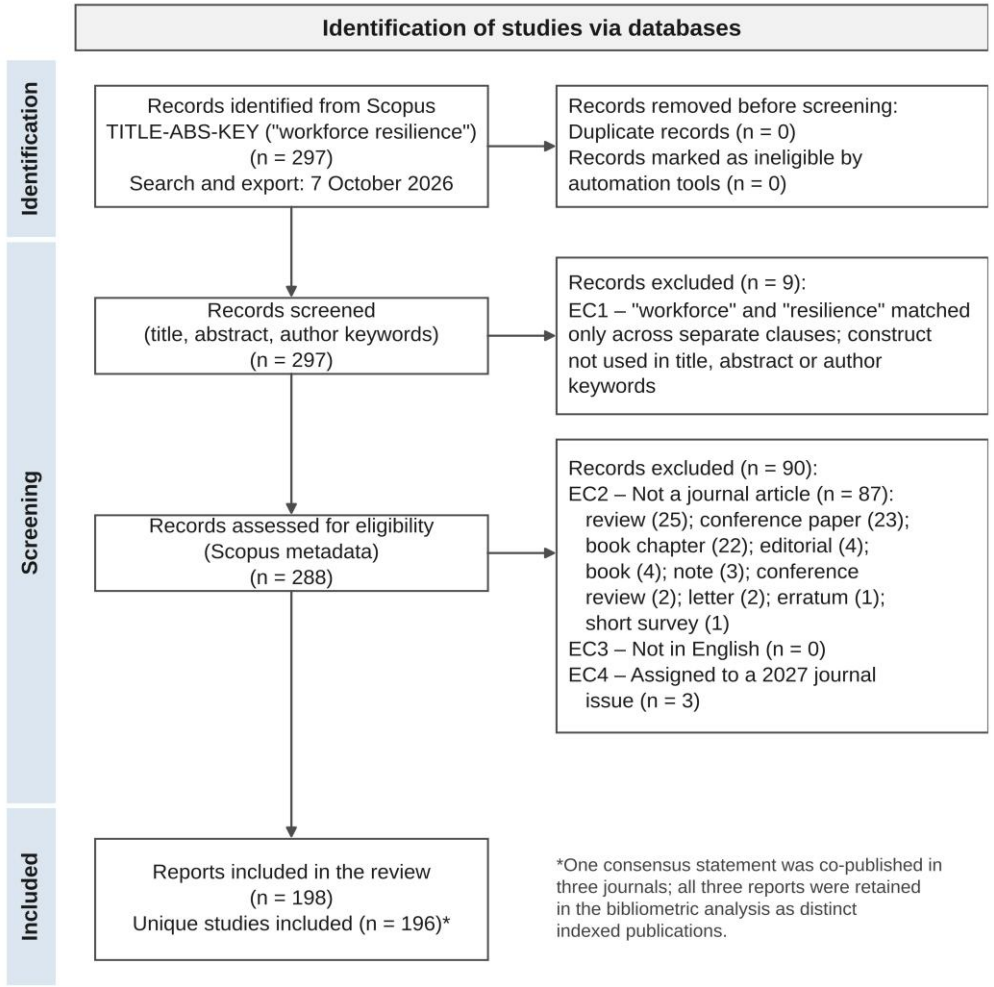
4. SYNTHESISE

Thematic coding of role, level, sector and dimensions (κ = 0.89–1.00)

5 DIMENSIONS

Guidelines: PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021); bibliometric–systematic review steps (Marzi et al., 2025); thematic synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

FROM 297 RECORDS TO 198 ARTICLES

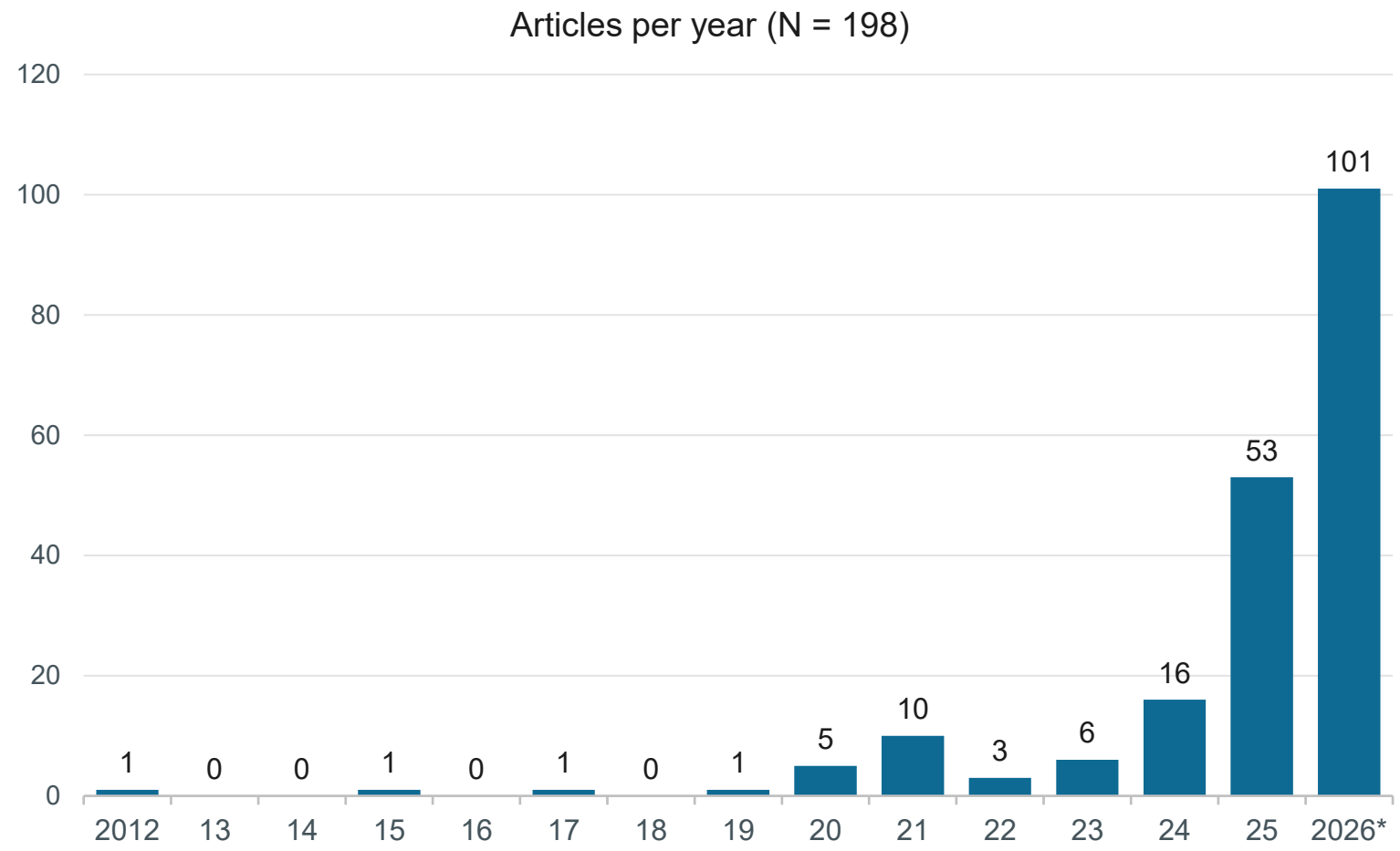


297 records identified in Scopus

99 excluded: 9 off-topic, 87 not journal articles, 3 assigned to 2027

198 **articles included (196 unique studies)**

RQ1 THE FIELD IS BOOMING…



*up to 7 October 2026

(001)

77.8%

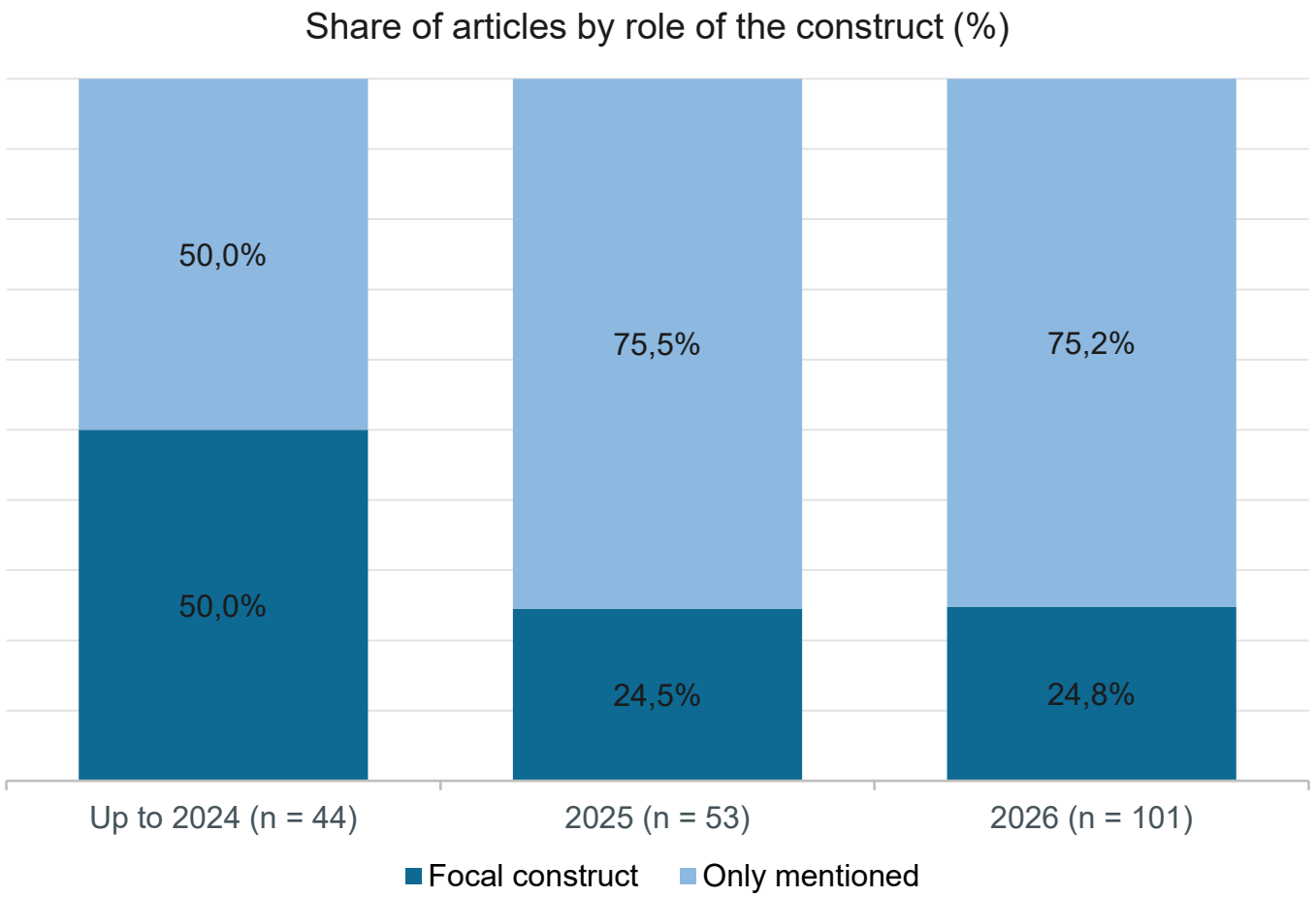
of all articles appeared in 2025–2026

(002)

1,457

citations; most cited: Rees et al. (2015), 248 citations

...BUT MOSTLY AS A BUZZWORD



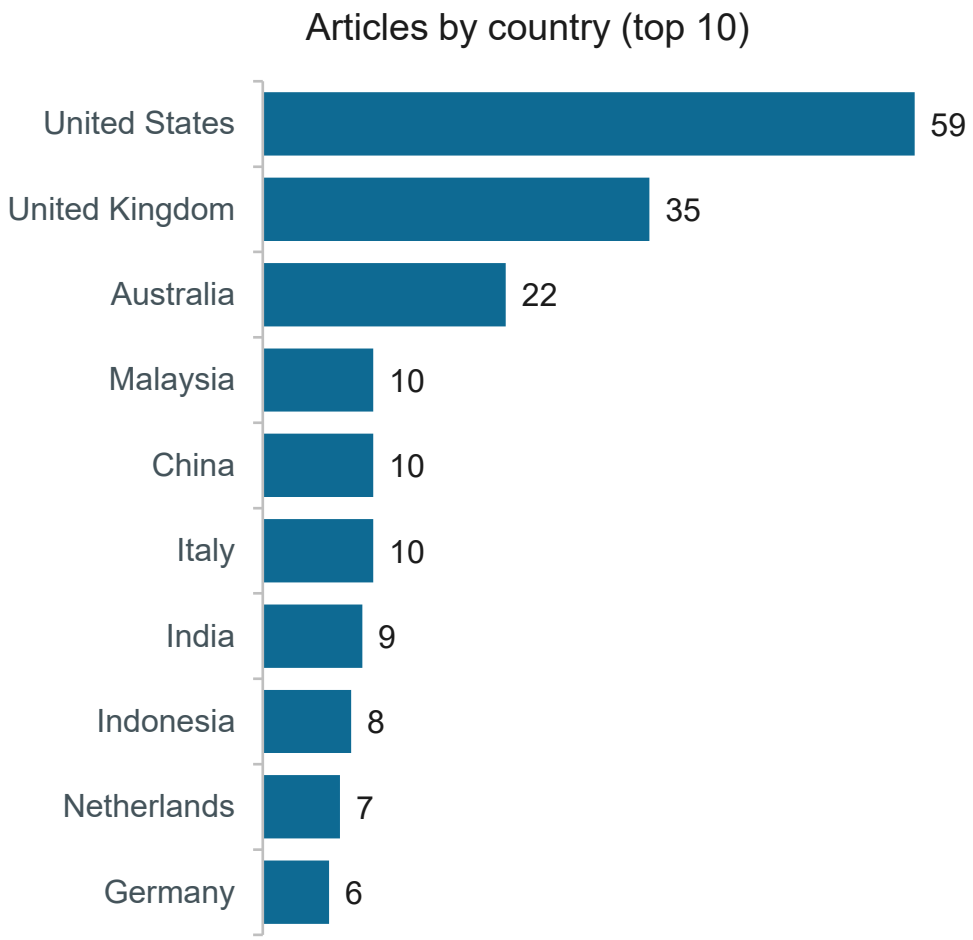
(001)

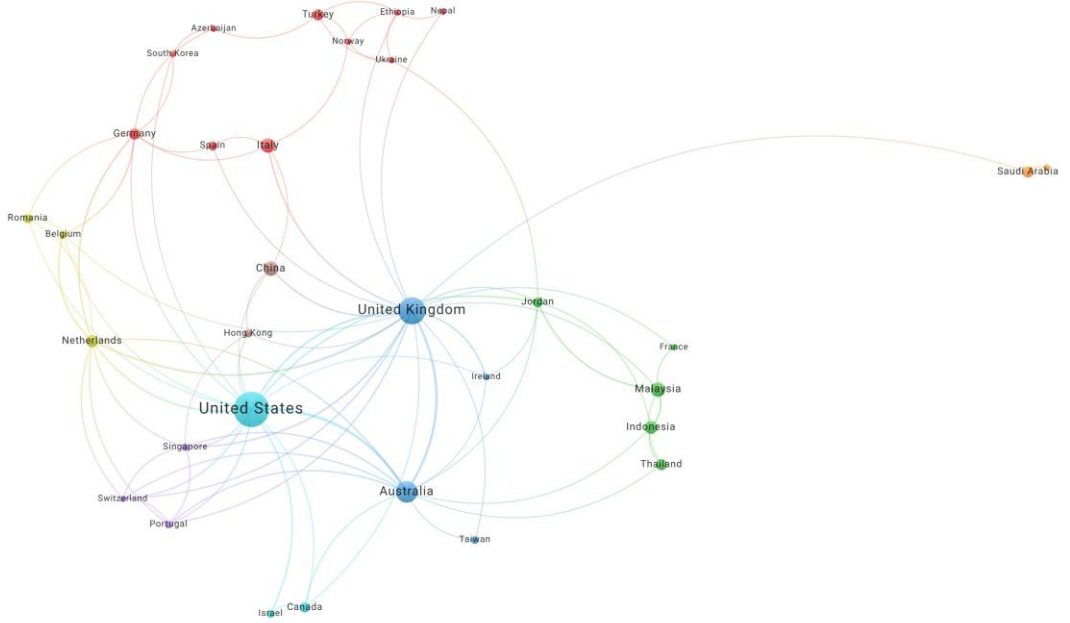
WHAT WE FOUND

- Studies that really examine workforce resilience fell from 50.0% to 24.7% ($\chi^2(1) = 9.23$, $p = .002$)
- Most new studies only mention it as background or as a recommendation
- The term spreads faster than it is defined or measured: conceptual dilution

Vague constructs lose explanatory power (Podsakoff et al., 2016).

RQ2 RESEARCH IS CONCENTRATED IN A FEW PLACES





Co-authorship network: 32 countries, 8 clusters

3

countries (US, UK, Australia) lead

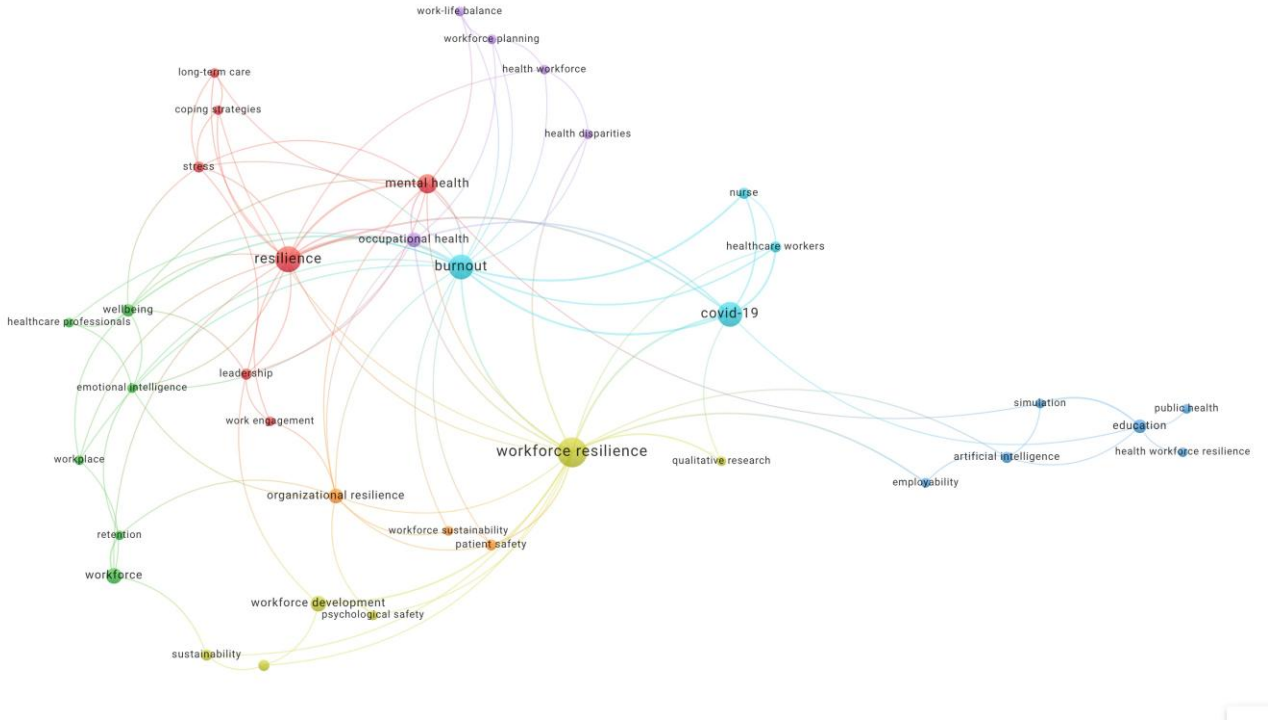
62.6%

of articles are in health and social care

84.6%

of 149 journals published only one article

RQ3 TWO RESEARCH STREAMS THAT RARELY MEET



Author-keyword network: 37 keywords, 7 clusters. "Burnout" has the strongest links (33).

(001)

CLINICAL–PSYCHOLOGICAL

Resilience as a personal buffer against stress and burnout in health workers

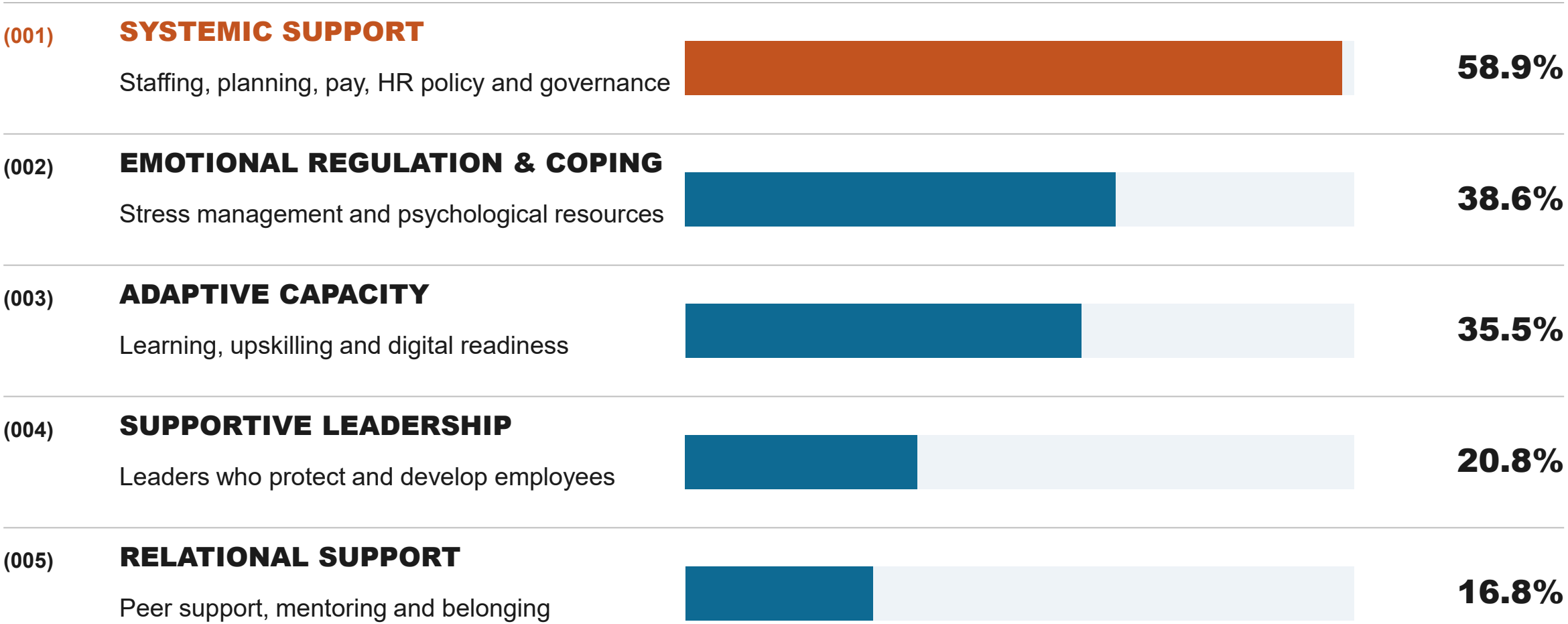
(002)

DEVELOPMENTAL–SYSTEMIC

Resilience linked to workforce planning, skills, employability and organisations

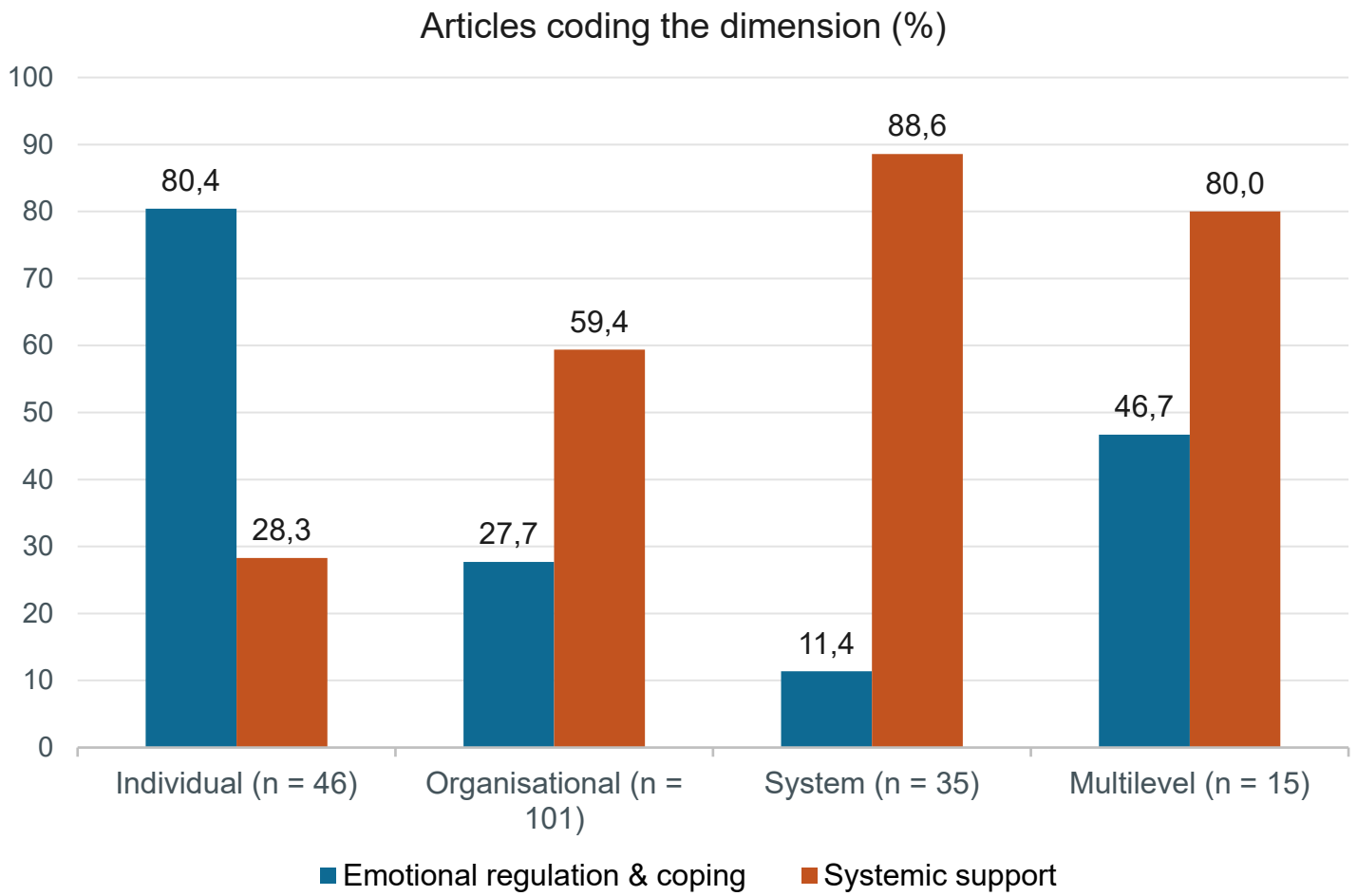
Only 25.4% of all keyword links connect the two streams

FIVE DIMENSIONS OF WORKFORCE RESILIENCE



Share of 197 codable articles. No article covered all five dimensions; most covered only one or two.

THE LEVEL OF ANALYSIS DECIDES WHAT YOU SEE



Cramér's V = .51 (emotional regulation) and .41 (systemic support), both p < .001

(001)

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES

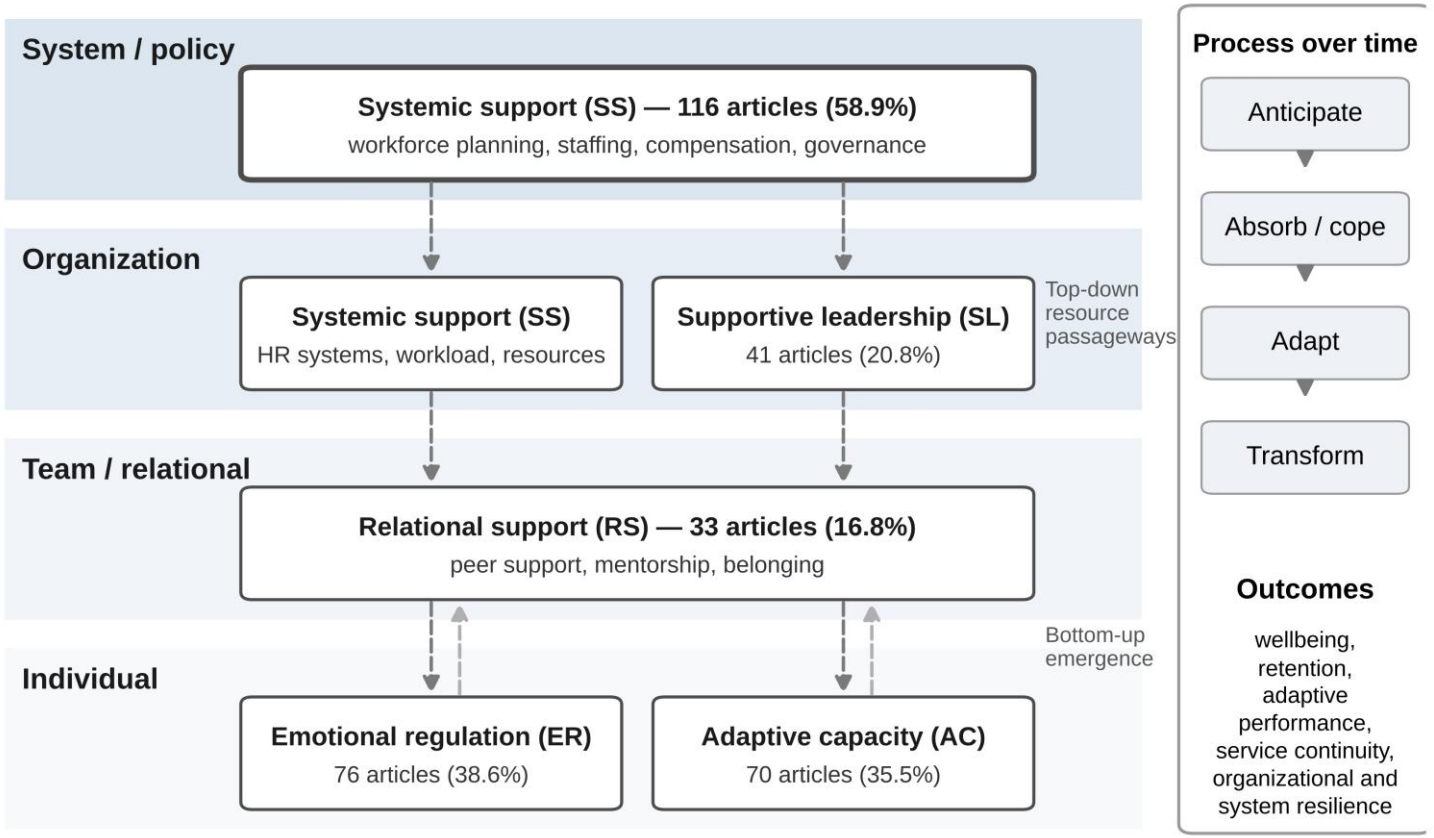
see coping (80.4%) and rarely the system behind it (28.3%)

(002)

SYSTEM STUDIES

see support (88.6%) and rarely the people (11.4%). Only 7.6% of studies link levels.

A MULTILEVEL FRAMEWORK OF WORKFORCE RESILIENCE



- - - - cross-level link (explicitly examined in only 15 of 197 articles, 7.6%)

Article counts are from the thematic synthesis (n = 197 codable articles); bold border = most prevalent dimension.

THREE TESTABLE PROPOSITIONS

(001) **P1 Top-down**

System support reaches employees through leaders and peers

(002) **P2 Boundary**

Individual training works less when systemic support is weak

(003) **P3 Bottom-up**

Peer support and psychological safety turn personal coping into team adaptation

WHAT THIS MEANS

(001)

FOR RESEARCHERS

- Define the level, form and adversity of resilience clearly
- Use multilevel and longitudinal designs
- Study sectors and countries beyond health care and high-income settings

(002)

FOR MANAGERS AND POLICYMAKERS

- Do not use resilience training as a substitute for adequate staffing
- Invest in workload design and supportive leadership
- Treat systemic support as the foundation for individual programmes

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Limitations: one database (Scopus), exact-phrase search, abstract-level AI-assisted coding.

A RESILIENT WORKFORCE IS BUILT BY SYSTEMS, NOT ONLY BY INDIVIDUALS

Thank You