

# Resilience at work: a comparative analysis between functionalist and critical theories

ADRIANA DE AZEVEDO VIEIRA

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL FLUMINENSE (PPGAD/UFF) / FACULDADE DE ADMINISTRAÇÃO, CIÊNCIAS CONTÁBEIS E TURISMO, NITERÓI - RJ, BRAZIL

CARLYLE TADEU FALCÃO DE OLIVEIRA

UNIVERSIDADE DO ESTADO DO RIO DE JANEIRO (FAF/UERJ) / FACULDADE DE ADMINISTRAÇÃO E FINANÇAS, RIO DE JANEIRO - RJ, BRAZIL

## Abstract

Resilience is a term that began to be used in the organizational context in the late 1990s; however, today it is required as a competence or “profile” for particular openings in the job market. At the same time, a line of research emerged with the fundamental role of analyzing labor relations with focus on the individual and his subjective universe, as well as questioning the functionalist ideas that had prevailed for years in organizational contexts. From this idea, this paper has as an objective to interpret the concept of resilience in literature, focusing on the subjective universe of the worker. For this, an investigation was conducted on the internal and external factors and their influences on the way a worker thinks and acts (subjectivity), with a focus on the concept of resilience. The research was qualitative, exploratory and descriptive in regards to its purpose, and bibliographic in regards to its means, with 59 papers, published between 1999 and 2014, analyzed. The results revealed that the concept of resilience from a functionalist perspective continues to dominate the organizational discourse.

**Keywords:** Resilience. Subjectivity. Worker. Functionalism.

## *Resiliência no trabalho: uma análise comparativa entre as teorias funcionalista e crítica*

### Resumo

A resiliência foi um termo que começou a ser empregado no contexto organizacional no final dos anos 1990; porém, atualmente, é exigida como uma forma de competência ou um “perfil” para determinada vaga de emprego no mercado de trabalho. Na mesma época, surgiu uma linha de pesquisa que tem papel fundamental em analisar as relações de trabalho com foco no indivíduo e em seu universo subjetivo, questionando as ideias funcionalistas que predominavam há anos no contexto das organizações. Partindo dessa ideia, este trabalho tem como objetivo interpretar o conceito de resiliência na literatura com foco no universo subjetivo do trabalhador. Para isso, foi realizada uma investigação sobre os fatores internos e externos e suas influências na forma de pensar e agir (subjetividade) dos trabalhadores com foco no conceito de resiliência. Esta pesquisa foi de cunho qualitativo, exploratório e descritivo quanto aos fins e bibliográfico quanto aos meios, tendo sido analisados 59 trabalhos publicados no período de 1999 a 2014. Os resultados revelaram que o conceito de resiliência, na perspectiva funcionalista, continua dominante no discurso organizacional.

**Palavras-chave:** Resiliência. Subjetividade. Trabalhador. Funcionalismo.

## *Resiliencia en el trabajo: un análisis comparativo entre las teorías funcionalista y crítica*

### Resumen

La resiliencia es un término que comenzó a emplearse en el contexto organizacional a finales de los años 1990, pero actualmente se requiere como un tipo de competencia o un “perfil” para determinada vacante de empleo en el mercado de trabajo. En la misma época, surgió una línea de investigación que tiene un papel fundamental al analizar las relaciones de trabajo centrándose en el individuo y en su universo subjetivo, cuestionando las ideas funcionalistas que predominaban desde hace años en el contexto de las organizaciones. A partir de esta idea, este trabajo tiene como objetivo general interpretar el concepto de resiliencia en la literatura enfocando el universo subjetivo del trabajador. Para ello, se realizó una investigación sobre los factores internos y externos y sus influencias en la forma de pensar y actuar (subjetividad) de los trabajadores con foco en el concepto de resiliencia. Para esta investigación, que fue de carácter cualitativo, exploratorio y descriptivo cuanto a los fines y bibliográfico cuanto a los medios, se analizaron 59 trabajos publicados en el período de 1999 a 2014. Los resultados revelaron que el concepto de resiliencia, en la perspectiva funcionalista, sigue siendo dominante en el discurso organizacional.

**Palabras clave:** Resiliencia. Subjetividad. Trabajador. Funcionalismo.

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## INTRODUCTION

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An individual's identity is not only based on his social experience. Work, for some, can be as much as a source of pleasure, achievement, and happiness as it can be a source of suffering, anguish, dissatisfactions, insecurity, estrangement, fear, frustration, uncertainty, alienation, depression, impotence in the face of sudden changes, vulnerability, disorientation, wear, sadness, discouragement, physical and emotional distress, devaluation, guilt, tension and anger (DEJOURS, 2006). It is understood that the subject experiences suffering at work, individually or collectively, frequently, always searching for satisfaction and recognition, often getting frustrated in this search (MENDES, COSTA and BARROS, 2003).

In regards to defense strategies, it is important to mention the concept of resilience in one's subjective universe and the way organizations have appropriated this and many other terms to stay competitive and productive in the marketplace.

It is worth highlighting that resilience is a concept that evolves and becomes part of the organizational context. In other words, the term refers to a new competency that has the objective of making the subject work in a more flexible manner (SOBOLL, 2008).

Despite the author's vision, this research will explore its conceptual origin, as well as different ways to comprehend the inclusion of resilience in the organizational context.

To Alderson (2004), the psychodynamics and clinic of work is supported by three important premises: the search for self-realization of the subject; the capacity for development of subjectivity so that the subject can deal with the prescribed and the actual work; and, lastly, the importance of recognition of the subject by its peers. Furthermore, according to the author, "the construction of identity at work is supported from a psychodynamics of work perspective, on the necessity of the other's eye, either a work collective or a belonging community" (ALDERSON, 2004, p. 253).

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Image source: DinaCoach. Available at: <<http://www.dynacoach.galeon.com/enlaces2011098.html>>. Accessed on: Aug. 2, 2017.

It's important to clarify the environment in which the worker is developing. To Gaulejac (2007), the subject finds himself in the midst of adversities, lack of control and pressure from the workplace. That is, the individual does not have any power or even comprehends the meaning of his work anymore. Different and constant paradoxes are created just for the organizations' profits; and the subject, therefore, does not know anymore "to which meaning to dedicate himself to" (GAULEJAC, 2007, p. 147).

In this context, the individual is challenged to adjust to new ways of working and leadership, coming from changes that are social, economical, political, environmental, etc. During this complex adaptation process, sometimes the individual can transform work adversities in creation and lean on pleasure perspectives (creative suffering), sometimes he can not achieve this transformation and starts to use defense mechanisms to not fall into physical or psychological illnesses (MORAES, 2013). In the words of Heloani (2003, p. 105), "what can be noticed is that the worker's quality of life, specially the ones in third world countries, has been degrading day after day".

To Conner (1995, p. 116), who defends the functionalist concept of resilience, people who "face adversity in a 'positive' way go through the following stages: uninformed optimism, informed pessimism, hopeful realism, informed optimism and conclusion. The ones that face it in a 'negative' way go through the following stages: stability, standstill, denial, anger, bargain, depression, test and acceptance".

Based on this, Soboll states:

Work can also be a source of pleasure, human development, improvement of psychosocial health, identity construction, with positive impact on emotional and family life. Unfortunately, the work that sickens has taken front stage in the everyday life, accentuating the demand for research and studies about the suffering inflicted over the other perspective, which is always possible, of building up work also as a source of pleasure. (SOBOLL, 2008, p. 187)

This suffering can be creative or pathogenic and not be trivialized or minimized, because from it will arise the impulse to action and resolution of a specific problem. From this lens, the perspective of the psychodynamics of work in regards to the way the concept of resilience is discussed in articles with an organizational and academic focus becomes fundamental, considering that the complexity of human relations, individualism, hostility, distrust and the fear of failure walk side by side with the interest in profits and increased productivity at work, according to Gaulejac (2007).

## SUBSTANTIATION

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### Functionalism in organizations

Before contextualizing the concept of resilience, it was necessary to read the functionalist approaches in organizational studies that, to this day, impact and dominate the workplace. Many norms and rules are created with these approaches in mind, which originated from Comte's (1855) positivism. He believed that a theory can only be accepted as real or true if proved through valid scientific techniques. To this author, the only sciences considered positivists are math, physics, chemistry, biology and sociology. Aranha and Martins (1993, p. 188) highlight that "this need to transform the subject of human sciences into one similar to natural sciences strongly marked this methodological tendency". To Comte (1855), creator of sociology, society meant an organism in which each individual or group has a specific function and contributes somehow to the operation of the whole.

Today, in capitalist societies, functionalist sociology is the most common one around the world. The North American sociologists Robert K. Merton and Talcott E. F. Parsons returned to Émile Durkheim's ideas about functionalism, bringing them to modern capitalist society, developing them as a new order, a new social system to be followed. Martins (1988, p. 50) states that sociology's function "would be to detect and find solutions to 'social problems', restoring the 'social normality' and this way converting itself into a technique of social control and maintenance of current power".

According to Merton (1995) and Talcott (1968), functionalism aims to observe any individual from a social system through the way he will interact with the others and vice versa, analyzing society as a whole, deeply observing the consequences that might interfere with the system, provoking a conflict or alliance between them, in which rules and norms are reinforced, keeping them connected and functioning in performing their roles in this new modern and capitalist society.

To sociologist Durkheim (1999), the collective conscience was formed from the moment a group of individuals followed a certain conduct and social behavior.

The functionalist philosophy tends to value, excessively, the attributes that each individual plays in an organizational context, always aiming for precision and not allowing any type of flaw in the process. This automated thinking did not stay only in manual and physically distressing work, but grew and evolved to every instance of organizations, “capturing the subjectivity” of workers that, many times, would end up mixing their personal objectives and achievements with the ones of the organization (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2011).

According to Bryman (1982, p. 32), “despite the changes in the field of organizational studies in the course of this century, the scientific focus, grounded in functionalist parameters, is still the prevailing *ethos* of research”, in other words, what identifies a certain group or society.

According to Burrell and Morgan (1994), functionalism is present in all social sciences: sociology, anthropology, psychology, jurisprudence, linguistic and management, since Taylor and Fayol until the current prevailing organizational theories. This happens with the movement towards quality of life in the workplace, heavily widespread in organizations at the end of the 1970's. This movement was positioned as a positive factor for workers, creating a false sense of embracement and social support in the workplace. However, the real intention of this altruist discourse was to increase productivity and profit for organizations.

Through this discourse, organizations create order and control in the organizational context, while the subject works according to the goals set by the organization.

Tannenbaum states that:

[...] this control process helps restrict idiosyncratic behavior and keep it according to the rational plan of the organization. It is up to the control function to establish conformity with the organizational requirements and achieve organizational objectives. The coordination and order created by the diverse interests e potentially diffused behaviors of the members are, largely, a function of control. It is at this point that many of the issues related to the functioning of the organization e individual adjustments arise. (TANNENBAUM, 1975, p. 16)

This control can be seen as a form of power over the individual, especially as a way to guarantee the survival of organizations in the capitalist system. It is fundamental to involve the subject in the goals of the organization, in order to get his commitment of even more time and energy towards work.

Functionalism uses control, now in a more subtle and “intelligent” way, always highlighting the success stories, workers’ victories, but in a way that makes them feel as part of these accomplishments. The key matter is the sense and reaction of the subject when the opposite happens, meaning failure and the negative impact that it has on the worker.

In the same functionalist way, the concept of resilience is applied in organizational policies, being valued as a competency or behavioral value that can define the permanence of the subject at work. Therefore, this paper will investigate the shaping of the functionalist concept of resilience in the workplace, as defined on the specific objective.

## Resilience in the subjective universe of the worker

Resilient attitude can't be seen as a fixed attribute of an individual, if circumstances change, resilience changes. This means that, as the rubber band, metaphor used for resilience, a resilient attitude can bring gains, but also losses for the individual-worker. (POLETTI and KOLLER, 2006, p. 24)

From the moment the individual internalizes to his subjective universe that professional success or failure is connected to the interests of the organization, as if everything was dependent solely on his performance and competence, the consequences can be disastrous. According to Sennett:

The most direct is the introjection by individuals of the requirements imposed by the organization. [...] On his side, the individual fully submitting himself (body and soul, as we would say in other times) works for the organization as if it was himself. He believes the organization is a part of him, the same way he is part of the organization, which connects him to the future of the organization. (SENNETT, 2001, p. 158)

It is known that the psychic apparatus of the subject suffers great impact when it needs to resolve, in an extremely efficient way, issues of individual or collective nature, focusing excellence of service on internal or external clients, in achieving goals set by organizations, having to always keep himself updated and properly qualified.

According to Japiassu and Marcondes (2001, p. 179), in philosophy the subjective terms and subjectivity mean

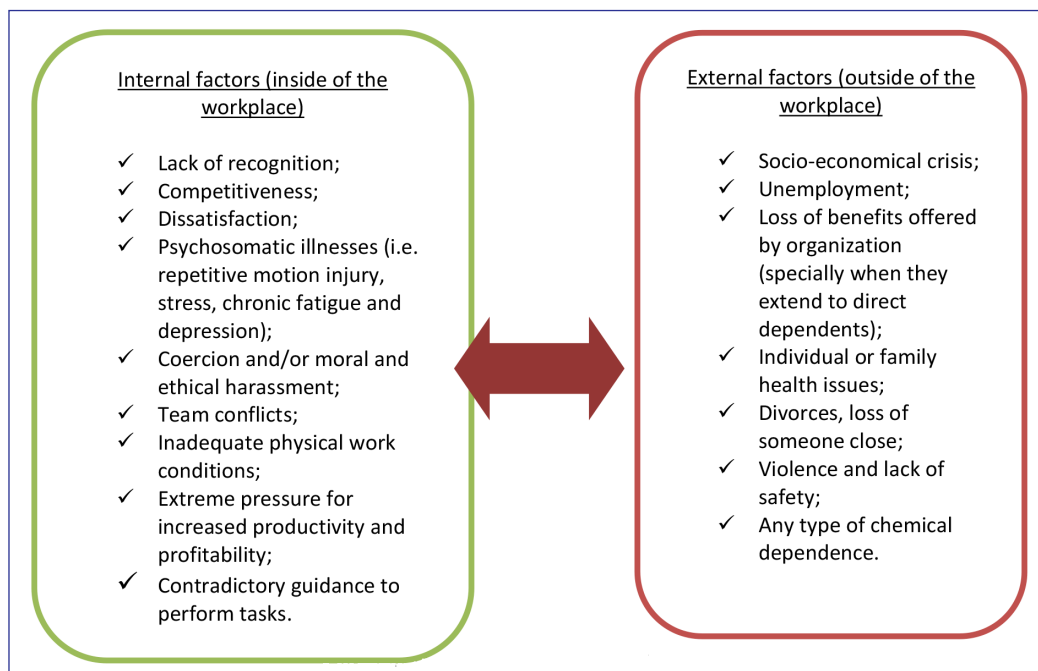
[...] subjective (lat. *subjectivus*) referring to the subject of knowledge, to \*conscience, to interiority. Relative to the individual, to the individual experience. i.e. subjective point of view. See subjectivity. [...] subjectivity characteristic of a subject; what is personal, individual, that belongs to the subject and only to him, being therefore, not accessible to others and incommunicable. Interiority. Internal life. Philosophy calls "subjective" the secondary qualities (hot, cold, colors), because they are not properties of objects, but "feelings" of the subjects that perceive them. [...] Every impression is subjective. (JAPIASSU and MARCONDES, 2001, p. 179)

In regards to subjectivity, the reaction of the individual in a situation of adversity will heavily depend on the intensity of the psychic suffering he is going through inside and outside of the workplace. The degree of resilience of this subject will be connected to his life story, his projects, his dreams, his yearnings, his hopes and achievements, which are all ignored by organizations. Subjectivity encompasses not only the mind and body of the worker, but also a multitude of feelings, sufferings, ambitions, fragilities and conflicts that are with him wherever he is. According to Lipovetsky (2004, p. 55), "even individual behaviors are caught in the cogs of the extreme, of which are proof the consumerism frenzy, the *doping*, the extreme sports, the serial killers, the bulimia and anorexia, the obesity, the compulsions and addictions".

In the chart below, internal and external factors are highlighted, as well as their influences in the way a worker thinks and acts with a focus on the concept of resilience.

Chart 1

Resilience in a worker's subjective universe



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

These are a few of the factors that can initiate psychic suffering on the subject with disastrous consequences to his health, affecting his relationship with work if he cannot deal with his own feelings, be it adapting to change, be it fighting to overcome difficulties, creating, then, healthy mechanisms to alleviate tensions.

Most times, the workers deals with crisis situations in the day-to-day life counting on his own potentiality, his faith or belief in order to have the strength to overcome life's obstacles. This is the "collaborator profile" valued in organizations, since he has "learned" to distance personal issues from professional issues, performing his role with pro-activeness and competence.

To face these challenges, the subject develops self-defense strategies. Houaiss (2001, p. 1201) defines the term defense in the psychoanalysis fields as "the set of unconscious operations that aim to lessen the influence of danger sources that threaten an individual's integrity".

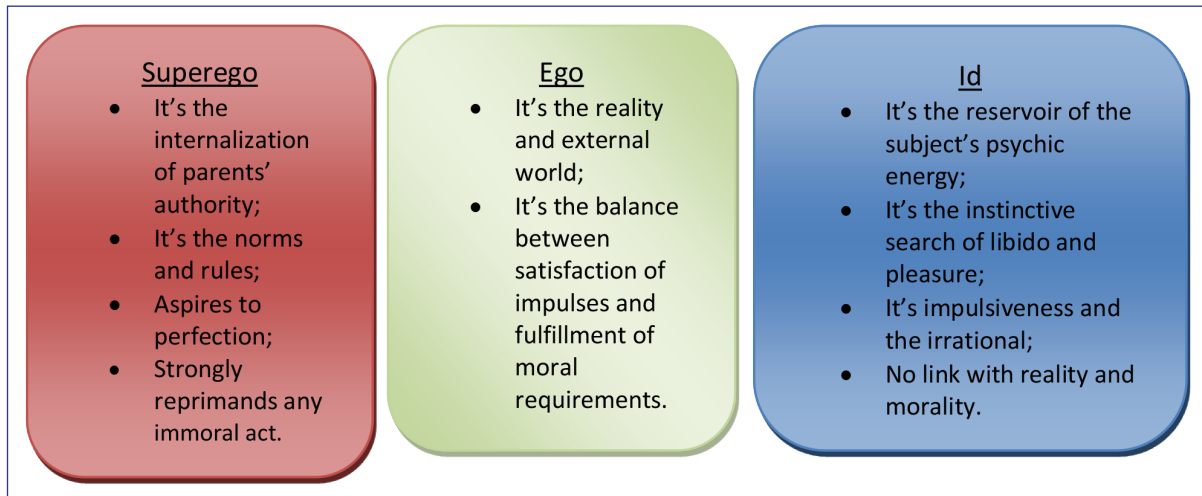
Freud (2006, p. 252) states that "the self uses several procedures to perform its task, that, to express in general terms, consists in avoiding danger, anxiety and displeasure. Many call these procedures defense mechanisms". Freud deepened his studies on human psyche identifying three instances: taboos, culture and family. They act in combination with the psychic apparatus, shaping the reactions, behaviors and tendencies that will surface along the subject's life.

To comprehend the individual's defense mechanics, Chart 2 was created, featuring Freudian theories in a simplified manner.

In this Freudian scheme, the following psychic structures can be seen: Superego (psychic level partially unconscious), Ego (also partially unconscious) and Id (psychic level fully unconscious).

Chart 2

Simplified Freudian psychic structures



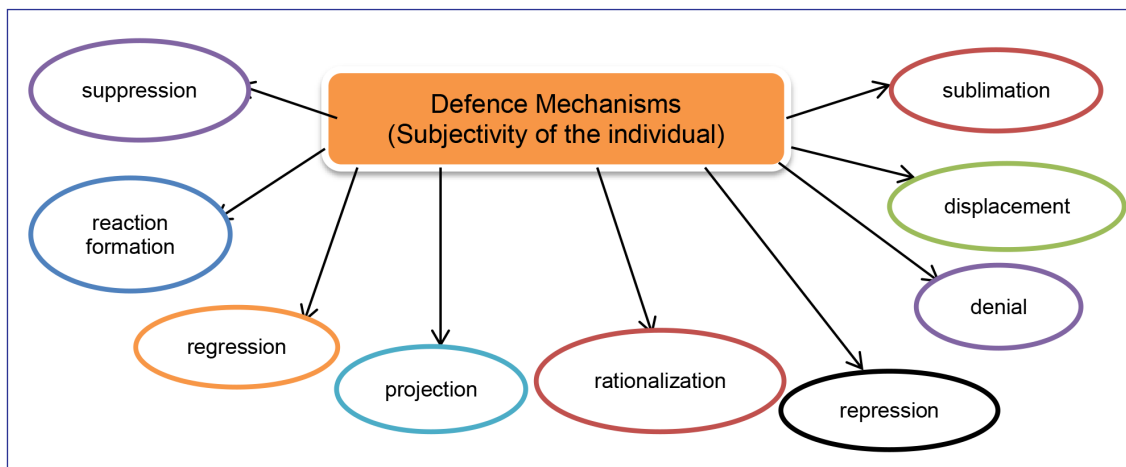
Source: Elaborated by the authors based in Freud (2006).

When considering the complexity of human behavior, its reactions, satisfactions and dissatisfactions, its fragilities and fears that create tension on a subject's psychic apparatus, it is understood that resilience becomes more a defense mechanics or a way to face adversity in the personal and professional field.

Thinking of resilience as a defense mechanism, this concept, then, would be one more to make up an individual's subjectivity. In view of that, Freud (2006) pointed out the existence of the mechanisms exposed in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Brief scheme about Freud's studies (2006)



Source: Elaborated by the authors based in Freud (2006).

From the Freudian perspective, the mechanisms are defined as follows:

- a) suppression: fully radical – subject suppresses part of reality;
- b) reaction formation: distancing from desire – hiding from himself the real motivations;



- c) regression: most primitive expression – return to previous moments of his development;
- d) projection: resort used frequently – projection of the undesired in himself into others;
- e) rationalization: justifying an inevitable or not recommend act;
- f) repression: flight from what is anxiety inducing – feelings contained at any cost
- g) denial: non-acceptance of consciousness and reality of facts;
- h) displacement: substitution of an act for another that is socially acceptable;
- i) sublimation: impulses that are not accepted by social rules, channeled to acts that conform to moral requirements.

In human relations, both in personal life and in the work environment, it is natural and instinctive that the individual comes to use these defense mechanisms, consciously or unconsciously, to that he can retain control and is able to face challenging situations. However, the effort required from the individual to keep himself in constant emotional balance and resilient when facing challenging situations, be internal or external to the workplace, is usually very high. Even more when he finds himself in an organizational context that is competitive and has a collective spirit already weakened by the high productivity system, with full focus on maximizing short-term profit.

According to Faria (2004, p. 214), “the pressure imposed by the new standards of competitiveness, productivity and profitability will also establish new mechanisms of oppression, control and suffering”.

To Ferreira (2009), as highlighted by the psychodynamics of work perspective, the strengthening of work relations and experience exchange between individuals open the door to collective mobilization for improvements in the organizational context, reinforcing trustworthiness, acknowledgement and cooperation between workers.

In face of the complexity of keeping the worker under control, believing in the ideals proposed by the organization and dedicating himself more and more to accomplishing his tasks, even if this will sacrifice his leisure and resting time, the use of language in the sense of capturing and/or sequestering the subjectivity of the individual has become a device *sine qua non* for the survival of the capitalist system (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2001; MOTTA and FREITAS, 2000; ANZIEU, 1993; FARIA, 2003, 2004, 2011, 2013; RAMOS, 2013; REGATIERI, MORAES, JOST and SOBOLL, 2010; TARGA, 2006; BRUNING and RAGNINI, 2011; SCHMITT and LEAL, 2006).

Faria highlights that:

[...] the role of reality in social relations and creation of quality of life conditions affects the acts and relationships of the subject, as a social subject, and has a fundamental space in shaping his subjectivity, being then important to highlight the importance of a collective imaginary, of the group connections that a subject establishes, of the production processes that the subject submits himself to and of the ideology that influences him. (FARIA, 2013, p. 384)

In this context, the functionalist discourse about “being resilient” is very effective and convenient to the organizations’ interests, opposite from the concept of resilience analyzed from the lens of psychodynamics of work, in which questions come up about the conflicts and causes that lead to suffering in the workplace.

## **THE CONCEPT OF RESILIENCE FROM THE FUNCTIONALIST AND PSYCHODYNAMICS OF WORK PERSPECTIVES**

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In an organizational context, resilience, as other management innovations, is mixed with other concepts, possibly being used as a way to manipulate workers so they police themselves on how they act within the organizations and reproduce this same behavior watching their peers. It’s a cycle of control and pressure that becomes very effective to team managers. It is understood that resilience is part of a set of practices with organizations. This can be said because, according to Wood (2000, p. 20), “in the turn of the century, organizations are transforming into ‘magical kingdoms’, in which the ‘symbolic space’ is filled by rhetoric, the use of metaphors and manipulation of meanings”.



Organizations are not only places where work is executed. They are also places where dreams and nightmares co-exist, where desires and aspirations can find a place of achievement, where excitement and the pleasure of achievement live together with the anguish of failure. Organizations, in particular companies, are not empires of rationality by nature. They are fed by emotion, by fantasy, by the ghosts that each human being carries within himself. (FREITAS, 2000, p. 65).

Based on psychodynamics of work and its premises, it can be noticed that the current support beams of the organization of work, in highlighting management practices, passion, creativity and independence at work, tend to subvert the relationship individual-worker. With this pseudo-discourse of freedom, independence, search for leadership, participation and resilience, the organization of work inflicts a subtle control structure, in which the worker little by little surrenders his wishes, aspirations and needs, founding his relationship with work on the achievement of goals and ideals proposed by the organization (FERREIRA, 2009).

Euphemistic denominations and, sometimes, metaphorical, such as “collaborator”, “associate”, “people manager”, “management and people director”, as opposed to employee or worker, give a false sense of proximity and familiarity to the individual. This makes it easier for the organization to break a possible collective mobilization, creating a workplace with competitiveness between peers, in which will be reinforced the idea that the subject who demonstrates resilience and absolute commitment to work will be the chosen one, the recognized one, the worthy one and the winner. This way, a true competition starts, veiled or not, between individuals that will do anything to showcase themselves more and more committed and dedicated to the work and the organizational goals. Not all individuals can experience this competitive environment without succumbing to psychic illnesses (VIEIRA and NOGUEIRA, 2013; MOURA, 2012).

With the appropriation of the subjectivity of individuals who are focused on giving their all, doing and being their best for organizations, the capitalist system stays alive. The more individuals are concerned about the performance of their own work and achieving success and recognition in the organization at any cost, the less time they will have to questions the injustices or causes of suffering in the workplace. There’s no more time for them to voice their feelings such as: fear, anguish, doubt, uncertainty, guilt for becoming distant from family (personal life) and suffering. The focus now is in productivity (DEJOURS, 2004; GAULEJAC, 2007).

[...] instruments are built to subjugate subjects to the logic of the organization, through fully asymmetric relationships, in which private interests prevail, using a collective discourse that conceals the real interest and goal promoted by the practices of the organization. (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2011, p. 46)

This way, the concept of resilience is applied to the organizational concept with the objective of having everything be tolerated and supported by individuals, making it harder to be conscious about relationships of exploitation and injustice; stimulating alienation, insensitivity and breaking the spirit of collectivity. The conflicting relationship between the prescribed, the real work present in the day-to-day routine of the subject and the suffering generated by this are less important to the organization when the focus is only in increased productivity, profits and industry leadership (FERREIRA, 2009; DEJOURS, 2006).

## METHODOLOGY

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The research that originated this article was of qualitative, exploratory and descriptive nature, having as goal to interpret the concept of resilience with focus on the subjectivity of the worker. In regards to the means, it’s characterized as bibliographic, having as material the academic publications from the past 15 years (1999-2014).

The research universe had as base academic work presented in the form of doctorate dissertations or thesis that are part of the periodical database of Capes, works in Enanpad and EnGPR, as well as articles published in RAE, RAC and RAUSP magazines. A set of 59 papers was considered for the more detailed analysis after examining the summaries of each of the materials that are a part of the research universe.

In this process, the selected articles were organized in the following manner:

Chart 3

## Empirical division by publication

Publication	Number of Articles	Institution and Publication Year	Themes
RAE	12	USC/Spain, 2011; UNIFAL, 2014; UAC/ Mexico, 2013; UA/Colombia, 2007; UNINOVE, 2012; UFP, 2010; UNICHRISTUS, 2013; AEMS, 2013; UNISALESIANO/SP, 2012.	Resilience at work; corporate resilience; failure and/or success of organization; willpower; corporate social responsibility and resilience; organizational studies; magnification of abilities to face adversity; new concept of change; work versus worker subjectivity.
RAC	19	UNIFAL/MG; UFMG, UNCT/Norway, 2011; UC/Portugal, 2013; UNINCOR, 2013; UEM/PR, 2011; UFPR, 2004; UFU, 2012; UFSC, 2010; UFPR, UERJ, 2010; UFP/PR, 2010; UFRN, 2012; UNESC, 2013; UFTPR/PG, 2007; UA/Portugal, 2001; UMESP, 2011.	Trust of worker in organization; conflict in managing teams; subjective well being and commitment with career; insecurity, uncertainty and competition in organizations; moral/organizational harassment; sequestering of subjectivity versus capitalism and increase of productivity; resilience as competency.
RAUSP	10	UFB/BA, 2013; UFMG, 2015; USP, FGV/SP, 2015; USP, 1998; USP/PROGEP, 1998; FGV/SP, 2013; UNIMONTES, 2003; UNINOVE, 2010; USP, 2006, 2010.	Intercultural management versus people management; employee satisfaction versus client satisfaction; competition; quality of life at work; stress; total quality programs; commitment; privatization; reduction of headcount; lay-offs; innovation, quality of life at work; psychological contract, people management, violation of psychological contract.
EnANPAD/ EnGPR	12	UFPR, 2008, 2011, 2014; UFRS, 2011, 2014; EAESP/FGV, 2008; UFSC, 2005, 2006, 2007; UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA/USA, 2001; PUC/MG, 2007; UFRJ, 2014; UFRJ, 2007, 2014.	Human suffering in organizations; analysis of psychodynamics of work; analysis of the contribution of Dejours to the understanding of the pleasure/suffering relationship at work.
DISSERTATIONS AND THESIS	6	UnB, 2009, 2014; USP, 1998, 2008; UFSC, 2011, 2014.	Alienation or denial of workplace suffering; having a strong personality and being resistant to change; resilience and socialization in the workplace; unemployment; physical and mental distress; joviality; assertiveness; subject's capacity to resist.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

After reading the publications, in a first selection a total of 331 articles with the themes of resilience and psychodynamics of work were collected.

In a second selection, more focused and directed to the concept of resilience in the business administration field, 59 articles were selected for a more detailed analysis. The key factor for the selection of the final 59 articles was the fact that they approached the concept of resilience exclusively in a workplace context.

Based on the lens of the psychodynamics of work, a filtering process was conducted, consisting in analyzing the ones that describe the concept of resilience in a functionalist way, generally valuing it as an individual competency of workers, as if it were an advantage over his peers, increasing the competitiveness in the workplace and possibly contributing to the creative and pathogenic suffering.

The content analysis was chosen due to being a bibliographical and exploratory research, with a critical lens of the psychodynamics of work over the concept of resilience in articles and thesis published and discussed in academic events relevant in the business administration field.

According to Bardin (2006), the stages of content analysis consist in:

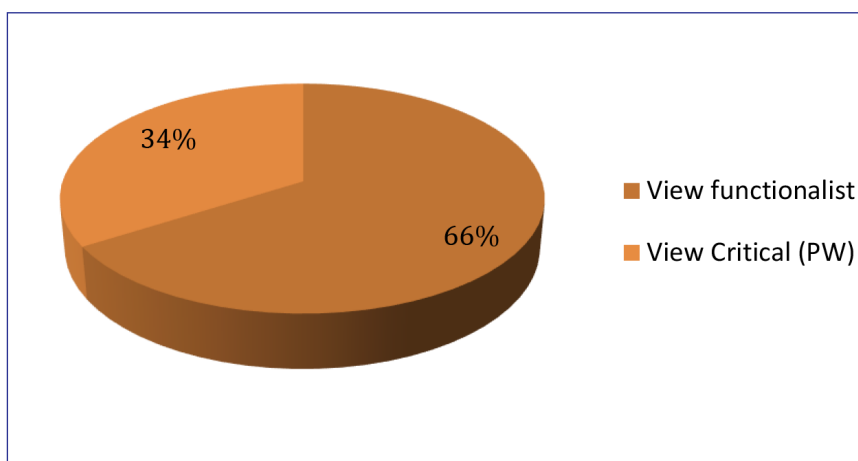
- Pre-analysis: reading the functionalist concept of resilience in an organizational context and psychodynamics of work perspective. From a total of 331 collected articles, after reading with a focusing on resilience and psychodynamics of work in the organizational universe, 59 were selected for a deeper analysis. The rules used for selecting the materials were: 1) completeness, reading the collected texts always with focus on the themes of resilience and psychodynamics of work; 2) representativeness, adequacy of the researched papers in relation to these themes; 3) homogeneity, data collection done through the same techniques; 4) relevance, focusing on the objectives of the research; and 5) exclusivity, formulation of categories and indicators for treatment and analysis of the data with the objective of generating results.
- Exploration of the material: before the detailed reading of the 59 selected articles, it was fundamental to establish the characteristics of the concept of resilience and the functionalism and psychodynamics focus so that the analysis process was conducted with the contraposition of ideas defended by each of the lines of thought (functionalism point of view versus critical point of view).
- Interpretation: After analyzing the origin and context in which the concept of resilience was interpreted in the selected papers, it was confirmed that the functionalist point of view, included in most of the academic literature, propagates the idea that the individual can only achieve success through an increase in the work load, focusing on productivity, not caring, or even ignoring, his individual suffering or of his peers in conflicting situations.

## RESULTS

Based on the premises of psychodynamics of work and the functionalist focus, the articles were classified according to the predominant point of view, or the one defended by the authors.

Graph 1

General results of analyzed publications



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

After detailed analysis of the 59 academic papers about the concept of resilience in an organizational context, it was observed that the predominant point of view is still the functionalist one, both radical and moderate.

The concept of resilience is highlighted in organizational discourse always in a positive manner, as a “new profile” of professional success to be followed.

It is important to organizations that the subject understands this message, taking it to his subjective field, so that he believes that, by facing all the adversities and crisis, he will be compensated, recognized and promoted, becoming a true “winner”.

This discourse, veiled and euphemistic, used in organizations for the concept of resilience is gaining strength in the job market. Furthermore, it is used to substitute other terms, such as “employees” to “associates and collaborators”; from “sales people” to “commercial representative or sales consultant”.

This doesn’t happen by chance, because the real purpose is to make the worker feel like part of the organization and commit to his work, body and soul, not sparing physical and mental efforts, many times sacrificing personal life in detriment of professional fulfillment.

In this first phase, the starting point was to classify the selected papers in functionalist and critical (psychodynamics of work perspective), having as criteria the concepts of functionalism and the ideas of psychodynamics of work.

In this preliminary division, the predominance of the functionalist concept of resilience was noticed in the analyzed papers. This concept is associated to terms as “assertiveness”, “persistence”, “resistance”, “courage” and “tolerance”. However, when, through the psychodynamics of work perspective, we look at the organizational context in which the subject is a part of, the interpretation of resilience with these other terms is used to reinforce behavioral messages so that the order, discipline, competitiveness and rationality between peers in the workplace is kept.

Based on these terms that are associated to the concept of resilience and the frequency that they were described in the analyzed papers, it was relevant to develop subcategories within each author of the functionalist and the psychodynamics of work point of views.

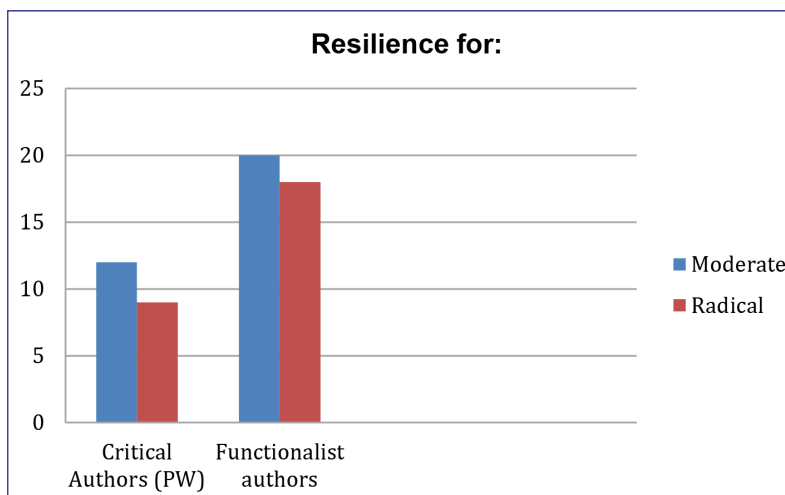
In this second phase of the data analysis, the subcategories were classified as moderate and radical. These subcategories were developed so that it would be possible to classify the authors in a fair and impartial way. Some authors that are known for defending functionalism or psychodynamics of work, in some of the papers, were flexible when it comes to some of the terms associates to resilience in the workplace.

With the influence of psychodynamics of work in academic literature in fields such as business administration, social sciences and psychology, themes as the concept of resilience in the workplace and the terms connected to it, directly or indirectly, are addressed in a clearer manner.

Graph 2 showcases the total number of papers analyzed in both the functionalist an psychodynamics of work point of view, with the subcategories of moderate and radical.

**Graph 2**

**Subcategories functionalist and critical (psychodynamics of work)**



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

After dividing the papers in subcategories, something interesting was observed in the sense that in both the group of functionalist authors and the group of critical authors, the ones considered “moderate” prevailed. This demonstrates that something is making these authors question the current organizational practices, leaving the radicalism and entering a little more in the subjective side of human relations in an organizational context.

Chart 4 presents the interpretative analysis of the terms found in the research, for both the functionalist and the critical point of views.

Chart 4

## Interpretative analysis of the terms encountered

TERMS	MEANING FROM THE FUNCTIONALIST POINT OF VIEW/AUTHORS	MEANING FROM THE CRITICAL (PSYCHODYNAMICS OF WORK) POINT OF VIEW/AUTHORS
Assertiveness	Be confident and able to convey ideas and decisions without being rude and aggressive (ROCHA and MAGALHÃES, 2013).	Not demonstrate insecurity to others, because this can be seen as weakness or fragility, that is, seen in a pejorative way (TAMAYO and MENDES, 1999).
Joviality	Being young in the job market is a symbol of renewal, of competitive advantage between individuals (ROCHA and MAGALHÃES, 2013).	Eternal youth does not exist; even though individuals can specialize and acquire knowledge, it will never be enough so that everyone can reach what they desire at the same time, such as a leadership and management roles (SOBOLL, 2008).
Innovation	The pinnacle of development to organizations. Individuals that present innovative ideas are extremely valuable, only if they contribute to the goals of the organization (CARMELLO, 2008).	An innovative individual generally presents an incessant search for leadership and power in the organization, often minimizing, and even ignoring, the interests of his peers. (TAMAYO and MENDES, 1999).
Survival	Reinforces for individuals that one that survives organizational crisis is a winner, a strong subject, capable of successfully leading teams. (QUEIROZ, ALBUQUERQUE and MALIK, 2013).	The price that the organizational crisis survivors have to pay is considered high when the psychological aspect is affected in a negative way (SIQUEIRA, 2009).
Creative suffering	Was not mentioned in the universe of articles selected for analysis.	Was understood as the suffering that mobilizes the subject to exercise his capacity to create, his ingenuity to create quick and efficient solutions to the demands that arise in the workplace (DEJOURS, 1998, 2007; SIQUEIRA, 2009; TAMAYO and MENDES, 1999; MORAES, 2013).
Pathogenic suffering	Was not mentioned in the universe of articles selected for analysis.	When the subjects cannot find means to overcome the daily obstacles and challenges in the workplace (DEJOURS, 1998, 2007; SIQUEIRA, 2009; TAMAYO and MENDES, 1999; MORAES, 2013).
Ethical suffering	Was not mentioned in the universe of articles selected for analysis.	This expression can be the starting point to transformation and a motivational factor so that individuals mobilize themselves, acting against situations involving violence and moral harassment in the workplace (DEJOURS, 1998, 2007; SIQUEIRA, 2009; TAMAYO and MENDES, 1999; VASCONCELOS, 2013).
Alienation	The individual considered alienated is heavily criticized in his workplace, however the causes of this alienation or escape from these adversities are not investigated. (TARGA, 2006; SILVA and ROSSETO, 2010).	Alienation is the consequence of a situation of suffering or crisis that the individual might be going through in the work and social environment (CANIATO, 2008; SIQUEIRA, 2009).
Denial	Was not mentioned in the universe of articles selected for analysis.	It's one of the defense strategies of an individual to bear the suffering and crisis in the workplace (DEJOURS, 1998, 2007; SIQUEIRA, 2009; TAMAYO and MENDES, 1999).

Continue

TERMS	MEANING FROM THE FUNCTIONALIST POINT OF VIEW/AUTHORS	MEANING FROM THE CRITICAL (PSYCHODYNAMICS OF WORK) POINT OF VIEW/AUTHORS
Submission	Was not mentioned in the universe of articles selected for analysis.	Is connected to the fear of being unemployed. It's a consequence of this fear of being out of the job market (RAMOS, 2013; DEJOURS, 1998, 2007; SIQUEIRA, 2009; TAMAYO and MENDES, 1999; SOBOLL, 2008).
Trivialization of suffering	Was not mentioned in the universe of articles selected for analysis.	Questions the fact that being strong all the time and hiding the suffering can negatively affect the physical and psychological aspect of a subject (DEJOURS, 1998, 2007).
Full dedication	It's encouraged as prerequisite to individuals that intend to rise in the organizational context (CARVALHO and TEODORO; BORGES, 2014; PROINELLI, 2013; VALOREL and SELIGLL, 2010).	Organizations realized that, for the individual to feel like an important part of the achievements of the organization, dedicating as much as possible of his time and energy, it is required that he feels like a "collaborator", "an associate" (VIEIRA and NOGUEIRA, 2013; VIEIRA, 2013).
Willpower	Characteristic of individuals dedicated and with total focus on professional success (ROCHA and MAGALHÃES, 2013; BRASIL, CAMARGO and RAFACHINHO, 2013).	The ones who don't have willpower can be seen as lazy or incapable to work. However, often the lack of willpower can be a much bigger problem, as depression, for example (CUNHA and MAZZILLI, 2005; SOBOLL, 2008).
Courage	Characteristic of an individual that desires to win in his career (CONNER, 1995).	The individual that does not have courage is considered weak and not fit to lead (DEJOURS, 1998, 2007; SIQUEIRA, 2009; TAMAYO and MENDES, 1999).
Socialization	Is characterized by the attempt of organizations to create an environment in which individuals can interact with each other (FERREIRA and MENDES, 2001).	The real intention of organizations is to make individuals fully absorb its culture (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2007; GAULEJAC, 2007).
Persistence	Explained when the opposite is observed, that is, the term quitting, which means, in an organizational context, lack of perseverance and defeatism (TARGA, 2006; SILVA and ROSSETO, 2010).	Persisting beyond what can be tolerated can be prejudicial to an individual's health (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2011; FERREIRA, 2009; SOBOLL, 2008).
Tolerance	It's highlighted as a differentiator so that an individual can reach his goals (DIMAS, PEREIRA and CANAVARRO, 2013).	Being tolerant is good, but without losing common sense and ethics when it comes to his peers at work (DEJOURS, 1998, 2007).
Discipline	Hard work (ROCHA and MAGALHÃES, 2013; BRASIL, CAMARGO and RAFACHINHO, 2013).	It's important to have discipline, but without neglecting ethical and moral values (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2007; GAULEJAC, 2007; FERREIRA, 2009).
Quality of life	A practical example of quality of life from the functionalist point of view would be exercises in the workplace offered by organizations, among other benefits offered to individuals (HELOANI and CAPITÃO, 2003).	Consists in the precariousness of work, with overtime, in which the individual starts to dedicate all his time to his professional life (AMAZARRAY and KOLLER, 2014; FERREIRA, 2012; GAULEJAC, 2007).
Uncertainty	It is indispensable that individuals know how to overcome uncertainty and do not put themselves as victims in the workplace (FONSECA e CARVALHO, 2009).	Can affect individuals in a deep way, because it also involves factors internal and external to the workplace (DEJOURS, 1998, 2007; GAULEJAC, 2007; FERREIRA, 2009; FERREIRA and MENDES, 2001).
Stress	Arises with focus in ergonomics (HELOANI and CAPITÃO, 2003).	Comes with a focus in the precariousness of work (FERREIRA, 2009; FERREIRA and MENDES, 2001).

Continue

TERMS	MEANING FROM THE FUNCTIONALIST POINT OF VIEW/AUTHORS	MEANING FROM THE CRITICAL (PSYCHODYNAMICS OF WORK) POINT OF VIEW/AUTHORS
Adaptability	It is understood that the individual has to be capable to adapt to every situation to reach professional success (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2011; FERREIRA, 2009; SOBOLL, 2008; GAULEJAC, 2007).	The individual only has two options: adapt or get laid off (FERREIRA, 2009; FERREIRA and MENDES, 2001).
Winner	Appealing to the term winner serves as motivation for the individuals to feel like athletes, competing for victory in the workplace (GAULEJAC, 2007; FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2011; VIEIRA and NOGUEIRA, 2013).	Individuals feel pressured to compete with each other in the day-to-day work (VIEIRA and NOGUEIRA, 2013; SOBOLL, 2008).
Responsibility	Connected to the commitment of the individual with the goals of the organization (QUEIROZ, ALBUQUERQUE and MALIK, 2013; RIBEIRO et al., 2011).	Makes the individual feel responsible for the successes, but also for the failures of the organization (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2007; GAULEJAC, 2007).
Fear	To be a winner, the individual has to overcome fear (FERREIRA, 2009; FERREIRA and MENDES, 2001).	Most times, fear is connected to moral harassment and the precariousness of work (SOBOLL, 2008; FERREIRA, 2009; SIQUEIRA, 2009).
Individualism	Highly encouraged in an organizational setting through competitiveness for positions (FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2011).	It's one of the strategies used by organizations to weaken the spirit of collectiveness between individuals (FERREIRA, 2009, GAULEJAC, 2007).
Competence	It's already a prerequisite in many job postings in the job market (WEBER and IOCHINS GRISCI, 2011; TARGA, 2006).	It's represented by the performance reviews that, as any other process, can be not so effective and pre-judge the subject in a wrong and negative way, creating prejudiced stereotype (SOBOLL, 2008; FARIA and MENEGUETTI, 2011).
Flexibility and resistance	Synonym to knowing how to adapt to any type of situation and any type or order or rule imposed by the organization. Resistance is the capacity to resist anything to reach the goals defined by the organization (FERREIRA, 2009, GAULEJAC, 2007).	It is understood as flexibility and resistance to the "endure culture" that needs to be followed by the individual (SOBOLL, 2008).
Insecurity	Fragility or weakness of individuals towards work in organizations (QUEIROZ, ALBUQUERQUE and MALIK, 2013; RIBEIRO et al., 2011).	Is the consequence of the fear of unemployment and non-acceptance in the organization (FERREIRA, 2009; FERREIRA and MENDES, 2001; GAULEJAC, 2007).
Competitiveness	It is mandatory in organizations to all individuals (CARVALHO and TEODORO; BORGES, 2014; PROINELLI, 2013; VALOREL and SELIGLL, 2010).	This enhanced competitiveness between individuals creates suffering (FERREIRA, 2009; FERREIRA and MENDES, 2001; GAULEJAC, 2007; DEJOURS, 1998, 2007; SOBOLL, 2008; FERREIRA and MENDES, 2001; VIEIRA and NOGUEIRA, 2013; VIEIRA, 2013).

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

## CONCLUSION

The present study analyzed the perceptions related to the concept of resilience in the academic literature in the past 15 years. Through exploratory bibliographical research, the investigated theme was looked at from a deeper perspective, revealing that the functionalist point of view about the concept of resilience is still predominant in this literature.



Based on the psychodynamics of work, the author was able to develop this study by contrasting the concept of resilience from the critical point of view and the functionalist point of view. It was noticed, in these articles, that resilience has been intimately connected to values and competencies that are encouraged in an organizational setting, becoming even a prerequisite for individuals to stay in the job market.

In the academic papers, the term “resilience” was found associated to: “being flexible”, “being strong”, “being balanced”, “not being affected with the anguish of others” even in a landscape of organizational chaos, “being, above all, resistant” to physical and psychological pain and “quickly overcoming any adversity”.

The concept of resilience is described through the functionalist point of view, that is, focused on organizational interests and increase in productivity.

It was found in this research that, in some studies, the functionalist concept of resilience emerged in a veiled or euphemistic way, being connected to the idea of success in one’s career, courage and resistance. This indicates how much power the capitalist system has internally and externally, directly affecting the life of the subject, indoctrinating him to be resilient and, this way, keep being employed, meaning, accepted in organizations.

The psychodynamic of work point of view, in this study, had the intention to confront the functionalist point of view. When the suffering of the individual when facing adversities and pressures at work becomes stronger than the pleasure, when he does not feel recognized by others, he develops defense strategies that affect him physically and psychologically.

The results of the research allow for consideration that, although the concept of resilience in the workplace is transmitted as a value or employee competency, it will always depend on the subjectivity of the subject. Therefore, organizations noticed that, to get the most results from the worker, they had to appropriate this subjectivity. For this to happen in the best way, they have to make the worker feel as part of the success or failure of the organization. The logic understood by the individual becomes the following: dedicate himself more and more to work, which makes him be recognized and valued, even if this compromises or hurts his personal life.

The individual seeking success and recognition and wanting to maintain his job, aside from enduring daily pressures, starts to live in a competitive environment with his peers, one that weakens collective mobilization.

From Dejours’ (2006) point of view, being recognized by his work is what allows the subject to experience pleasure in what he does, and not only suffering. When this does not happen, it opens the door to frustration, satisfaction and conflict in work relationships.

At the same time that organizations are obtaining increased productivity from the subject, keeping him busy in being a “winner”, they encourage individualism, rationality, alienation and denial between individuals at work.

Resilience enters this universe also as a defensive reaction of the subject so that he can withstand the pressures and suffering at work.

The effort required from the individual to maintain himself strong when facing all the adversities in work relationships is enormous, considering that both internal and external issues directly affect his daily life.

However, it was proved, in more recent publications, that critical and functionalist authors have been agreeing in some aspects of work relations, targeting the subjective universe of the worker. From the moment that matters such as ethics and cooperation are emphasized in organizations, the spirit of collectivity, partnership and recognition between individuals will be incentivized.

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Adriana Azevedo Vieira

MSc. in Business Administration from Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Niterói – RJ, Brazil. Email: drikinha\_vieira32@hotmail.com

Carlyle Tadeu Falcão de Oliveira

PhD. in Business Administration from Escola Brasileira de Administração Pública e de Empresas / Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV EBAPE); Adjunct professor at Faculdade de Administração e Finanças da Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ); Visiting professor in the Postgraduate Program in Business Administration at Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), Brazil. Email: carlyle.falcao@gmail.com