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A Critical Review of Cultural Self-Construal and Resilience: Individual and Environmental Resource Perspectives

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Abstract

This narrative review examines research on resilience and cultural self-construal to clarify how culturally shaped views of the self influence adaptive processes. Traditional psychology has focused primarily on maladjustment, whereas positive psychology emphasizes strengths such as resilience, defined as a dynamic process of positive adaptation despite adversity. Prior research conceptualizes resilience as a multidimensional construct emerging from interactions between intrapersonal resources (e.g., temperament, cognitive ability) and environmental resources (e.g., family relationships, social support). At the same time, cultural psychology highlights culture as a fundamental force shaping cognition, emotion, and motivation. Within this framework, cultural self-construal—categorized as independent or interdependent—provides a useful lens for understanding cultural variation in psychological processes. Self-construal is not fixed but is dynamically influenced by situational cues. This study conducted a narrative review of theoretical and empirical literature on resilience, cultural self-construal, and psychological adaptation, organizing resilience into individual and environmental dimensions and examining the relationships between resilience and self-construal. The findings suggest that resilience is inherently embedded in cultural contexts and cannot be fully understood as a universal trait. Moreover, cultural self-construal appears to influence resilience differently: independent self-construal may enhance adaptation through internal resources, whereas interdependent self-construal may promote adaptation through relational and environmental resources. This study contributes to the literature by theoretically integrating these constructs and highlights the need for future empirical research, particularly experimental studies using cultural priming, to validate these proposed relationships.

Keywords: adaptation; cultural priming; environmental resources; intrapersonal resources; positive psychology

1. Introduction

Psychology has traditionally developed with a primary focus on abnormal psychological approaches that emphasize mental disorders and maladjustment. As a result, relatively little attention has been paid to how individuals adapt and grow in healthy ways. Against this background, since the late 1990s, positive psychology has been proposed as an approach focused on human strengths and adaptive functioning (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Within this framework, resilience has attracted increasing attention as a concept explaining adaptation in the face of adversity and stress.

Resilience has been defined as a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation despite significant adversity (Luthar et al., 2000) and as the capacity to maintain adaptive functioning despite serious threats to development (Masten, 2001). Furthermore, resilience is understood to arise from the interaction between individual internal factors and environmental factors. In addition to personal characteristics such as temperament and cognitive ability, environmental factors, including family relationships and social support, have been identified as important (Rutter, 1987). In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on viewing resilience not as a single trait but as a combination of multiple factors, and frameworks that conceptualize resilience in terms of both dispositional and acquired components have been proposed (Hirano, 2010).

In cultural psychology, culture is not merely a background factor but a crucial force shaping psychological processes such as cognition, emotion, and motivation (Nakamaru, 2001). Moreover, higher-order psychological processes, including thinking and emotion, are shaped through adaptation to cultural environments (Kitayama & Karasawa, 1995). From this perspective, cultural differences are thought to influence the very nature of psychological phenomena.

To explain cultural differences, Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed the concept of cultural self-construal (independent vs. interdependent). An independent self-construal emphasizes the uniqueness of the individual as distinct from others, whereas an interdependent self-construal emphasizes understanding the self in relation to others. Furthermore, these self-construals are not fixed within a culture but can be temporarily activated by situational cues (Hong, 2009).

Thus, both resilience and culture are important concepts for understanding individual adaptation. Although Dowd and Artistico (2016) examined the relationship between cultural self-construal and psychological constructs such as self-efficacy, systematic investigations of the relationship between cultural self-construal and resilience remain limited. Therefore, integrating and organizing existing findings is necessary to clarify the relationship between these constructs. Although previous research has examined cultural differences in psychological processes, these differences have often been treated as relatively stable or descriptive phenomena. However, recent advances in cultural psychology suggest that situational cues can dynamically activate cultural self-construal.

Building on this perspective, the present study proposes that cultural differences in psychological processes can be experimentally manipulated by activating cultural self-construal, thereby influencing resilience-related resources.

The present review proposes a testable framework in which cultural self-construal influences resilience through two distinct pathways: intrapersonal and environmental resources, which may function as mediators.

2. Purpose

This study reviews previous research on resilience and cultural self-construal and provides an integrative examination of how cultural self-construal influences resilience.

3. Methods

This study conducted a narrative review of theoretical and empirical research on resilience, cultural self-construal, cultural priming, and psychological adaptation. The review aimed to

integrate findings on the individual and environmental resources associated with resilience and to examine how cultural self-construal may relate to these resources.

A narrative review design was considered appropriate because the primary aim of the present study was to integrate heterogeneous theoretical perspectives and empirical findings across several related but distinct literatures, rather than to estimate a single pooled effect or evaluate a narrowly defined intervention. The literature concerning resilience, cultural self-construal, cultural priming, and psychological adaptation includes conceptual papers, empirical studies, measurement research, and cross-cultural research that differ substantially in constructs, methods, and outcomes. Accordingly, a narrative approach allowed these different forms of evidence to be examined in relation to the present study's conceptual framework. At the same time, we recognized the limitations of this approach, including potential selection bias and the absence of a formal systematic risk-of-bias assessment.

A literature search was conducted in March 2026 using PsycINFO, Google Scholar, and CiNii Research. The same core search terms were used across the three sources: “resilience,” “cultural self-construal,” “adaptation,” and “cultural priming.” These terms were searched individually and in the following two-term combinations: “resilience” AND “cultural self-construal,” “resilience” AND “adaptation,” “resilience” AND “cultural priming,” “cultural self-construal” AND “adaptation,” and “cultural self-construal” AND “cultural priming.” Additional searches used combinations of “resilience” with “culture,” “cultural priming,” and “self-construal” to identify literature addressing cultural and psychological factors related to resilience. The review imposed no restrictions on publication year. The review focused on publications available in English or Japanese, reflecting the languages accessible to the authors for screening and interpretation. The search strategy was designed to identify literature spanning the multiple conceptual domains required to address the objectives of the present review. Because the relationship between resilience and cultural self-construal has not been extensively studied as a single research topic, a search restricted to studies directly examining both constructs would have risked overlooking relevant theoretical and empirical evidence. Therefore, the search strategy included separate terms for resilience, cultural self-construal, adaptation, and cultural priming, as well as combinations of these terms. This approach aimed to capture both direct evidence on the relationship between resilience and self-construal and indirect evidence on the theoretical and psychological processes linking these constructs.

The databases and search engines were selected to provide complementary coverage of the literature relevant to the present review. PsycINFO was selected as a major database for psychological and behavioral science research, whereas CiNii Research was included to identify Japanese-language literature and research conducted in Japan that may not be adequately represented in international databases. Google Scholar was additionally used to broaden the search and identify relevant academic publications that might not be indexed consistently across the two databases. Because the present study aimed to integrate theoretical and empirical literature, these sources were considered appropriate for identifying a broad range of literature relevant to the research question, rather than restricting the review to a single database.

The inclusion criteria reflected the present study's theoretical framework. Studies concerning the conceptualization, components, measurement, or related resources of resilience were included because the present review conceptualizes resilience as a multidimensional process involving multiple resources. Research examining the relationship between resilience and culture was included to establish the cultural context in which resilience is defined and expressed. Studies on cultural self-construal were included because independent and interdependent self-construals constitute the central theoretical framework of the review.

Research on cultural priming and the malleability of self-construal was included because the present study treats cultural self-construal as dynamically influenced by situational cues and proposes a basis for future experimental testing. Finally, studies concerning culture, self-construal, and psychological adaptation were included to connect these domains and identify potential pathways through which cultural orientations may influence resilience-related processes.

Based on these considerations, studies were considered eligible for inclusion when they addressed at least one of the following topics: (1) the conceptualization, components, measurement, or related resources of resilience; (2) the relationship between resilience and culture or cultural factors; (3) theoretical or empirical research on cultural self-construal; (4) cultural priming and the malleability of self-construal; or (5) the relationship between culture, self-construal, and psychological adaptation. Studies were excluded when, after content review, they were judged insufficiently relevant to the objectives of the present review.

The screening process involved identifying potentially relevant publications through database and search engine searches, then evaluating their relevance to the objectives of the present review. Publications were retained when they addressed at least one of the predefined topics described in the inclusion criteria, including resilience, cultural self-construal, cultural priming, psychological adaptation, or related resource processes. Publications that did not provide sufficient conceptual or empirical relevance to these topics were excluded from the review. Because the original search records were not retained, the exact number of records retrieved from each database, the number of duplicate records, and the number of publications excluded at each screening stage could not be retrospectively reconstructed. The final reference set for the narrative review comprised 44 publications. Two additional references were included solely to support the proposed experimental design and a priori power analysis (Dalsky, 2010; Faul et al., 2009). Backward and forward citation searches were not systematically incorporated into the original search strategy because this review was designed as a focused narrative synthesis based on predefined database and search-engine searches rather than an exhaustive systematic review. Nevertheless, the review recognized the potential for relevant publications to be missed through the predefined searches as a limitation. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as a theoretically focused synthesis of the literature identified through the specified search strategy rather than as an exhaustive representation of all relevant publications.

Although a formal risk-of-bias assessment was not conducted, the interpretation of the literature considered the methodological characteristics of individual publications, including study design, empirical versus conceptual evidence, use of preregistration or replication, cross-cultural sampling, and the validity of measurement procedures. Greater interpretive weight was given to findings supported by empirical evidence, psychometrically evaluated measures, preregistered or replicated studies, and research involving multiple cultural contexts. In contrast, theoretical propositions and findings from studies with limited cultural or methodological generalizability were interpreted more cautiously.

In the analysis, resilience was organized into two dimensions—individual (intrapersonal) resources and environmental resources—and the literature was integrated based on its relationship to cultural self-construal, particularly independent and interdependent self-construals. The review also examined research on cultural priming to consider the malleability of self-construal and whether situational activation of cultural orientations may influence resilience-related processes. Based on this integrative approach, the reviewed literature was organized to examine whether independent and interdependent self-construals may be associated with distinct resource pathways underlying psychological adaptation.

4. Results

4.1 Concept and Components of Resilience

Previous research has conceptualized resilience as a capacity for adaptation in the face of adversity and stress. Luthar et al. (2000) defined resilience as "a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation despite exposure to significant adversity," while Masten (2001) conceptualized it as the capacity to maintain adaptive functioning despite serious threats. These definitions indicate that resilience is not a fixed trait but a process that emerges through interaction with situational contexts.

Furthermore, Rutter (1987) emphasized that resilience is shaped not only by individual internal factors, such as temperament and cognitive ability, but also by environmental factors, including family relationships and social support. Thus, resilience is a multidimensional construct shaped by the interaction between individual (intrapersonal) and environmental resources.

Connor and Davidson (2003) developed the Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), a 25-item self-report measure designed to quantify resilience. The scale includes characteristics such as personal competence, tolerance of negative affect, acceptance of change, secure relationships, and perceived control, and higher total scores indicate greater resilience. Their factor analysis identified five dimensions broadly reflecting personal competence and tenacity, tolerance of negative affect and stress-related strengthening, positive acceptance of change and secure relationships, control, and spiritual influences.

Wagnild and Young (1993) developed the Resilience Scale (RS), a 25-item self-report measure designed to assess individual resilience. The scale was developed from qualitative research on individuals who had successfully adapted to major life stressors and was based on five theoretical characteristics of resilience: equanimity, perseverance, self-reliance, meaningfulness, and existential aloneness. Factor analysis identified two dimensions, Personal Competence and Acceptance of Self and Life, and the RS showed positive associations with physical health, morale, and life satisfaction, as well as a negative association with depression.

In addition, research in Japan has proposed a framework that conceptualizes resilience from two perspectives: dispositional and acquired factors (Hirano, 2010). This perspective highlights the importance of understanding resilience as a combination of multiple factors rather than a single trait. Moreover, various environmental factors—such as social support (Sugimoto et al., 2018), family environment (Yamakado, 2023), school and educational context (Ikeda, 2019), and cultural factors (Gunnestad, 2006)—have been identified as contributing to resilience.

Southwick and Charney (2012) further emphasized that resilience is supported by multiple psychological, behavioral, and social processes rather than by a single personal characteristic. Their synthesis of resilience research identified several factors associated with adaptation to stress and trauma, including realistic optimism, social support, cognitive flexibility, behavioral activation, and using role models. These findings reinforce the view that resilience involves interactions among intrapersonal and interpersonal resources and that adaptive responses may depend on the availability and activation of multiple resources.

Importantly, resilience has been regarded from its early conceptualization as inseparable from cultural context. This is because the criteria used to evaluate "positive adaptation" are inherently embedded within specific cultural and historical contexts. This perspective suggests that resilience is not merely a universal individual trait but a concept defined within cultural and social frameworks (Masten, 2020).

Similarly, Ungar (2011) emphasized that resilience should be understood within social and ecological contexts, highlighting the importance of cultural relativity and environmental conditions in defining positive adaptation.

Recent methodological critiques have noted that operationalizations of resilience vary across research contexts and often rely on domain-specific indicators of positive adaptation. In applied settings such as sport, for instance, positive adaptation has often been defined in terms of maintaining or recovering performance outcomes (Kegelaers, 2023). Similarly, in educational contexts, academic resilience is operationalized in relation to educational and psychological "outcomes" such as class participation, enjoyment of school, and general self-esteem, suggesting that it is typically examined within school-based criteria (Martin & Marsh, 2006). However, such a narrow focus may overlook broader adaptive processes, including the reconstruction of goals, identities, and social roles beyond the original evaluative domain. From this perspective, "positive adaptation" should be understood as embedded within specific social, cultural, and contextual frameworks, rather than as a fixed or universally defined outcome. This variability also raises an important issue for cross-cultural research: measures of resilience may not necessarily assess equivalent forms of adaptation across cultural contexts. Consequently, cross-cultural comparisons require careful consideration of whether the indicators used to operationalize positive adaptation have comparable meanings and functions across groups. Terrana and Al-Delaimy (2023) further highlighted the challenges involved in applying standardized resilience measures across cultural contexts, identifying substantial variation in the constructs and promotive and protective factors represented across existing measures. Their review suggests paying greater attention to cultural context when selecting or adapting resilience measures for cross-cultural research.

An additional issue in cross-cultural resilience research is measurement invariance. Even when the same resilience scale is administered across cultural groups, the factor structure, factor loadings, and item intercepts may not be equivalent. Consequently, observed differences in resilience scores may reflect differences in how the construct is measured rather than genuine differences in resilience. Empirical findings illustrate this issue. Dai et al. (2024), for example, examined the cross-cultural generalizability of the Resilience Evaluation Scale in U.S. and Chinese college students and found that configural invariance was not established across the two samples, suggesting that the underlying factor structure may differ between cultural contexts. This finding indicates that measurement equivalence cannot be assumed across resilience measures or cultural contexts. Cross-cultural comparisons therefore require empirical examination of measurement invariance before comparing scores or latent means across groups. In particular, consider configural, metric, and scalar invariance when evaluating whether a resilience measure assesses comparable constructs across cultural contexts. Thus, using the same translated instrument across cultures should not, by itself, be taken as evidence of measurement equivalence.

Measurement invariance is closely related to the broader issue of cultural adaptation. Translating an existing resilience measure does not necessarily ensure that the items have equivalent conceptual, semantic, and functional meanings in the target cultural context. Cultural adaptation may therefore require not only linguistic translation but also an examination of whether the measure's content reflects locally meaningful forms of adaptation and resilience-related resources. For example, Cui et al. (2023) adapted and validated academic resilience measures for use in a collectivistic cultural context in China, illustrating the importance of evaluating construct validity when applying resilience measures across cultural settings. Similarly, Terrana and Al-Delaimy (2023) noted substantial variation in the constructs and promotive and protective factors represented across resilience measures used in different cultural contexts. Accordingly, cross-cultural resilience research should distinguish between

linguistic and conceptual equivalence and consider whether a measure's indicators adequately represent culturally meaningful forms of positive adaptation.

Another concern is whether resilience should be conceptualized the same way across cultural contexts. An etic approach facilitates comparison by applying common theoretical and measurement frameworks across populations, whereas an emic approach emphasizes culturally specific meanings and forms of adaptation. Ungar (2011) argued that resilience should be understood in relation to cultural and social ecologies, suggesting that what constitutes positive adaptation may vary across contexts. From this perspective, culturally specific or indigenous understandings of resilience may include forms of adaptation that are not fully captured by standardized individual-level measures. The potential lack of commensurability between culturally specific and standardized conceptualizations of resilience should therefore be considered when interpreting cross-cultural findings.

4.2 The Influence of Culture on Psychological Processes

In cultural psychology, culture is not merely a background factor but a dynamic structure that plays a fundamental role in shaping psychological processes. Nakamaru (2001) conceptualized culture as a set of conditions that organize patterns of behavior, while Kitayama and Karasawa (1995) argued that higher-order psychological processes, such as cognition and emotion, are formed through adaptation to cultural environments.

Classical cultural scholarship has provided influential descriptions of culturally patterned communication and value systems. Hall (1976), for example, distinguished between high-context and low-context communication, while Benedict (1967/1994) described Japanese cultural norms by distinguishing between *shame* and *guilt*. These works played an important role in the historical development of cross-cultural perspectives. However, their broad cultural characterizations should not be treated as direct evidence of uniform psychological characteristics within contemporary national populations.

Subsequent research has raised concerns about the empirical basis of applying Hall's high- and low-context framework as a fixed classification of national cultures. For example, Kittler et al. (2011), in a systematic review of research employing Hall's high-/low-context concept, found that many studies relied on insufficient empirical evidence and that conventional country classifications yielded mixed and contradictory findings. These findings suggest that national cultures should not be assumed to possess uniformly high- or low-context characteristics, and that Hall's framework should therefore be interpreted cautiously when describing contemporary populations.

Similar concerns have also been raised regarding Benedict's characterization of Japanese culture. Yoshida (2012) noted that Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* treats hierarchical stratification and social reciprocity as essential characteristics of Japanese culture, despite historical and social variation within Japan. Yoshida further situated Benedict's comparison of a shame-based Japanese culture and a guilt-based Western culture within a broader East–West binary that critics have described as essentialist. These criticisms suggest that Benedict's account should not be interpreted as a comprehensive or fixed description of Japanese culture. Pinnington (2001) further examined the historical development of the idea of Japan as a "shame culture," arguing that this influential characterization was shaped not only by Benedict's original work but also by its reception in postwar Japanese cultural discourse. This perspective indicates that the distinction between *shame* and *guilt* should be understood as a historically situated interpretation rather than as a fixed psychological characteristic of Japanese people.

As discussed above, contemporary cross-cultural research has emphasized substantial within-culture variation and multidimensionality in cultural models of selfhood (Vignoles et al., 2016). Accordingly, the present review treats these classical accounts as historically influential theoretical perspectives rather than deterministic descriptions of individuals or contemporary societies.

Another problem with the influence of culture on psychological processes is that psychological research has often relied disproportionately on participants from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies, raising concerns about the generalizability of psychological findings across cultural contexts (Henrich et al., 2010). This issue matters for examining cultural self-construal and resilience, because both may be shaped by culturally specific norms, social relationships, and environmental demands. Therefore, findings derived from a single cultural context should not necessarily be assumed to represent universal psychological processes. Cross-cultural research has demonstrated substantial variation in cultural models of selfhood across societies, as well as meaningful variation within societies (Vignoles et al., 2016). Accordingly, cultural self-construal should be understood as a multidimensional, context-sensitive construct rather than a simple correspondence between national culture and psychological orientation.

Recent meta-analytic evidence further indicates that cultural differences in individualism and collectivism are not entirely static or uniform across Asian contexts. Kim (2024) examined 35 years of research comparing the United States and Asian countries and found that the magnitude of collectivism differences varied according to broader national conditions, including economic development, urbanization, and political context. These findings further support the view that cultural orientations should be interpreted in relation to changing social and contextual conditions rather than treated as fixed characteristics of national groups.

4.3 Cultural Self-Construal and Its Malleability

As a framework for explaining cultural differences, Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed the concept of cultural self-construal, distinguishing between an independent self-construal, which views the self as separate from others, and an interdependent self-construal, which understands the self in relation to others.

Self-construal has also been examined as an individual-difference construct that can be assessed using psychometric measures. Singelis (1994), for example, developed a scale assessing independent and interdependent self-construals, providing an empirical framework for examining individual differences in these orientations. Subsequent cross-cultural research has further challenged the assumption that independent and interdependent self-construals map straightforwardly onto national cultures. Vignoles et al. (2016), using data from multiple cultural groups, demonstrated substantial cross-cultural variation in the ways people define and experience the self, suggesting that self-construal is multidimensional and cannot be reduced to a simple East–West distinction. These findings are important for understanding resilience because the psychological resources associated with independent or interdependent orientations may vary both between and within cultural contexts.

The cross-cultural measurement of self-construal likewise requires attention to measurement invariance. Although the Self-Construal Scale has been widely used to assess independent and interdependent self-construals (Singelis, 1994), identical scores may not necessarily represent equivalent psychological meanings across cultural groups. Recent research has demonstrated that measurement equivalence of self-construal dimensions may be only partial across cultures. For example, Suzuki (2024) examined the measurement invariance of revised measures of independence and interdependence in Japanese and U.S. samples and found evidence of partial

configural, metric, and scalar invariance. These findings suggest that comparisons of self-construal across cultural contexts should not assume complete equivalence and should consider how comparable the measurement structure is across groups. Accordingly, cross-cultural studies of self-construal should empirically evaluate measurement invariance and carefully interpret cultural differences in scale scores.

Furthermore, Hong (2009) argued that these self-construals are not fixed within a particular culture but can be temporarily activated by situational cues. This line of research has provided empirical support for the malleability of self-construal through cultural priming paradigms.

However, the replicability of cultural priming effects remains an important methodological concern. Kobayashi and Madrid-Morales (2025) conducted six preregistered replication experiments in Hong Kong and found that the cultural priming effect was not consistently reproduced across any of the six experiments or their internal mini-meta-analyses. Their findings suggest that cultural priming effects may depend on contextual and methodological conditions, including the salience of individual versus group identities and characteristics of the population being studied. Therefore, although cultural priming provides a useful experimental approach for examining the malleability of self-construal, its effects should not be assumed to be uniform across populations and contexts.

More broadly, concerns about the replicability of social priming effects have been raised across the broader priming literature. Mac Giolla et al. (2024) reviewed 70 close replications of 49 social priming findings and found that 94% of the replications produced smaller effect sizes than the original studies, while only 17% yielded statistically significant effects in the original direction. Their meta-analytic results also indicated substantial heterogeneity in priming effects, with replication-team independence accounting for more than 98% of the observed heterogeneity. These findings further suggest that priming effects may be sensitive to methodological and contextual conditions and should therefore be interpreted cautiously.

More recent research has further demonstrated the utility of cultural priming for examining the relationship between cultural contexts and self-construal. Li et al. (2024), for example, used cultural icon priming to experimentally activate different cultural orientations and subsequently examined their associations with multiple dimensions of self-construal. Their findings suggest that culturally relevant cues can influence specific aspects of self-construal, while also indicating that self-construal cannot be fully understood as a simple correspondence between a single cultural orientation and a single self-construal dimension.

Brewer and Gardner (1996) further distinguished among three forms of self-representation: the individual self, the relational self, and the collective self. This framework suggests that different aspects of the self may become salient depending on social and situational contexts, providing a theoretical basis for understanding how self-related orientations can shift across situations. Similarly, Oyserman (2017) emphasized that culture can influence cognition and behavior through contextually activated cultural mindsets rather than solely through stable internalized values. From this perspective, cultural priming can be understood as a way to temporarily increase the accessibility of culturally relevant self-construals or mindsets. Such an approach is particularly relevant to the present framework because it allows researchers to examine whether experimentally activated self-construals influence the resources involved in resilience.

The distinction between relatively stable individual differences and temporarily activated self-construals is important for interpreting cultural priming studies. Trait measures of self-construal assess individuals' relatively enduring tendencies, whereas priming paradigms experimentally manipulate the accessibility of particular cultural orientations in a given

situation. Accordingly, the two approaches address related but distinct levels of cultural influence. Integrating these perspectives may help clarify whether the proposed relationship between self-construal and resilience reflects relatively stable individual differences, temporary situational activation, or an interaction between the two.

In addition, Nishida's (1999) PSI schema theory conceptualizes culture as comprising multiple social schemas that dynamically change with context and facilitate intercultural adaptation. This perspective further emphasizes the dynamic nature of cultural frameworks.

4.4 Cultural Self-Construal and Psychological Adaptation

Cultural self-construal has been suggested to influence individuals' psychological adaptation. For example, Dowd and Artistico (2016) demonstrated that individuals with an independent self-construal tend to report higher levels of self-efficacy than those with an interdependent self-construal.

However, direct investigations of the relationship between cultural self-construal and resilience remain limited, and few studies systematically integrate these two constructs. This gap highlights an important issue for future research.

Conservation of Resources (COR) theory provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding resilience from a resource-based perspective (Hobfoll, 2002). Hobfoll conceptualizes resources as a broad and inclusive category encompassing personal characteristics, conditions, and energies, emphasizing that these resources operate dynamically within the stress process. To avoid conceptual overextension, Hobfoll also defines resources as entities regarded as resources within a shared cultural tradition, highlighting that the value and meaning of resources are not fixed but shaped within cultural contexts (Hobfoll, 2002).

Consequently, resources relevant to resilience can also be interpreted as part of this broader resource framework, suggesting that resilience-related factors are embedded within the dynamic configuration of resource systems shaped by cultural and contextual influences. A network perspective provides another alternative to treating resilience-related resources as separate or independent components. Modafferi et al. (2023) applied network analysis to examine the nomological network of resilience, illustrating how multiple psychological and contextual variables can be conceptualized as interconnected components of a broader system. From this perspective, resilience may emerge from the dynamic interactions among resources rather than from the additive contribution of independent factors.

A multilevel perspective offers another alternative by conceptualizing resilience-related factors as operating across individual, social, and societal levels. Schäfer et al. (2024), in a preregistered systematic review of 50 studies, examined resilience factors at individual, social, and societal levels and found that higher income, socioeconomic status, and perceived social support were associated with more resilient responses, although associations were often smaller after accounting for sociodemographic variables and other resilience factors. These findings support the view that resilience is shaped by processes operating across multiple levels, not by individual resources alone.

However, the effects of interdependent self-construal on resilience may depend on the social and contextual conditions in which interpersonal resources are available. From a social-ecological perspective, resilience depends not only on the presence of resources but also on whether individuals can access and use resources in ways that are meaningful within their social and cultural environments (Ungar, 2011). Interdependence may promote adaptation when relationships provide accessible, supportive resources, but it may not be beneficial when social relationships involve strong normative pressures, stigma, or expectations of conformity. Importantly, interdependence should not be equated with the availability of social support,

because a strong orientation toward maintaining relationships may also increase sensitivity to social obligations and interpersonal expectations. In such contexts, concern for maintaining relationships or fulfilling social expectations may increase psychological burden and constrain help-seeking or coping flexibility. Thus, contextual factors such as the type of adversity encountered, prevailing social norms, and the availability and acceptability of social support may moderate the relationship between interdependent self-construal and resilience. These boundary conditions suggest that interdependent self-construal should not be regarded as uniformly protective; rather, its effects may depend on whether the surrounding social environment enables or constrains the use of relational resources.

5. Discussion

The findings reviewed above suggest a theoretical framework in which cultural self-construal may influence resilience through two distinct resource pathways. An independent self-construal may facilitate resilience by strengthening intrapersonal resources such as self-efficacy and personal competence, whereas an interdependent self-construal may enhance resilience through environmental resources such as social support and relational networks. These resources are proposed to mediate the relationship between self-construal and resilience. Furthermore, given the malleability of self-construal, culturally primed activation of independent or interdependent orientations may lead to systematic differences in resilience-related processes. This also implies that cultural self-construal may shape not only the resources underlying resilience, but also the criteria by which "positive adaptation" itself is defined and evaluated across contexts.

Based on the theoretical framework developed above, the proposed relationship between cultural self-construal and resilience can be translated into several empirically testable hypotheses. First, an independent self-construal is expected to be positively associated with intrapersonal resources, such as self-efficacy and personal competence, which in turn are expected to be positively associated with resilience. Thus, intrapersonal resources are hypothesized to mediate the relationship between independent self-construal and resilience (H1).

Second, an interdependent self-construal is expected to be positively associated with environmental resources, particularly perceived social support and access to relational resources, which are expected to contribute to resilience. Accordingly, environmental resources are hypothesized to mediate the relationship between interdependent self-construal and resilience (H2).

Third, the relationship between interdependent self-construal and resilience is expected to vary depending on contextual conditions. Specifically, the positive association between interdependent self-construal and resilience may be stronger when social relationships provide accessible and supportive resources, whereas it may be weaker or even negative when individuals face strong social pressure, stigma, or restrictive norms. Thus, contextual factors such as socioeconomic status, threat type, social norms, stigma, and the availability of supportive relationships may moderate the relationship between interdependent self-construal and resilience (H3). Socioeconomic status may be particularly relevant because higher income and socioeconomic status have been associated with more resilient responses, although such associations may be attenuated when other sociodemographic and resilience-related factors are taken into account (Schäfer et al., 2024). Role obligations may also influence whether interdependent self-construal is associated with adaptive or maladaptive outcomes. Cross-cultural evidence suggests that the effects of perceived obligations on health-related outcomes can differ across cultural contexts, indicating that obligations may function as either supportive

relational commitments or sources of psychological burden depending on culturally valued modes of functioning (Hartanto et al., 2020).

Fourth, cultural priming is expected to temporarily activate independent or interdependent self-construals and, in turn, influence the corresponding resource pathways. Specifically, an independent self-construal prime is expected to increase the accessibility of intrapersonal resources, whereas an interdependent self-construal prime is expected to increase the accessibility or use of environmental and relational resources. These effects are expected to be reflected in subsequent resilience-related outcomes (H4).

These hypotheses can be examined using experimental cultural priming paradigms. For example, participants could be randomly assigned to independent, interdependent, or neutral priming conditions. Following the priming manipulation, participants could complete measures of self-construal as a manipulation check, followed by measures of intrapersonal resources such as self-efficacy and personal competence, and environmental resources such as perceived social support. Resilience-related outcomes could then be assessed using an appropriate measure of adaptive functioning or resilience. Mediation analyses could examine whether intrapersonal and environmental resources account for the effects of the priming conditions on resilience-related outcomes.

Given concerns regarding the replicability of cultural priming effects, future studies should preregister their hypotheses, sample-size plans, exclusion criteria, and primary analyses before data collection. Manipulation checks should also be included to determine whether the priming procedure successfully changes the intended self-construal. In addition, combining self-report manipulation checks with behavioral or other convergent measures may provide stronger evidence that the intended self-construal has been activated. These safeguards may help reduce researcher degrees of freedom and improve the reproducibility of cultural priming effects (Kobayashi & Madrid-Morales, 2025). For the proposed cross-cultural experimental design, an a priori power analysis was conducted using G*Power (Faul et al., 2009). The effect size was derived from Dalsky's (2010) cross-cultural priming experiment, which examined Japanese and U.S. participants across uniqueness, similarity, and control conditions and reported a significant Culture × Prime interaction, $F(2, 340) = 6.55$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Because Dalsky's (2010) study used a different outcome measure and priming procedure, the effect size was treated as a reference estimate for planning purposes rather than as an assumed replication effect. Based on this effect size, the corresponding effect size was calculated as $f = .204$. Assuming an alpha level of .05, statistical power of .80, two numerator degrees of freedom, and six experimental groups, the a priori power analysis indicated a required total sample size of 235 participants. To achieve approximately equal allocation across the six experimental cells, the planned sample size was rounded up to 240 participants, with 40 participants in each group. This design comprises Japanese participants in independent, neutral, and interdependent priming conditions and U.S. participants in the corresponding three conditions.

To examine the proposed boundary conditions, the experimental design could additionally manipulate or measure contextual factors such as the type of adversity, perceived social norms, stigma, or the availability of social support. Interaction analyses could then test whether the effects of interdependent self-construal on resilience-related outcomes differ depending on these contextual conditions. A cross-cultural design comparing participants from different cultural contexts could further examine whether the strength or direction of these pathways varies across cultural settings.

To operationalize the constructs, independent and interdependent self-construals may be assessed using established measures such as the Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994), while cultural priming can be implemented using established priming procedures designed to

temporarily increase the accessibility of independent or interdependent orientations (Oyserman, 2017). Intrapersonal resources may be operationalized using measures of self-efficacy or personal competence, whereas environmental resources may be assessed using measures of perceived social support and relational resources. Although established measures such as the Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003) and the Resilience Scale developed by Wagnild and Young (1993) can assess resilience, this framework defines resilience-related outcomes as observable indicators of positive adaptation following exposure to a specified adversity. These outcomes may include maintaining or recovering domain-specific functioning, psychological adjustment, or restoring functioning relative to the demands of the adversity (Luthar et al., 2000; Martin & Marsh, 2006; Kegelaers, 2023). Thus, select resilience-related outcomes based on the specific adversity and adaptive process under examination rather than treating resilience as a context-free measure. Together, these hypotheses and methodological propositions provide a testable framework for examining whether cultural self-construal influences resilience through distinct resource pathways and under what contextual conditions these pathways are strengthened or constrained.

The proposed framework may have practical implications for education and clinical practice. Rather than assuming a single resilience-building strategy works equally well for everyone, interventions may benefit from considering which psychological and environmental resources are most accessible or meaningful to individuals in a given cultural and social context.

In educational settings, practitioners may consider whether students are more likely to benefit from interventions emphasizing personal competence, self-efficacy, and autonomous goal setting or from approaches that strengthen peer relationships, social support, and a sense of belonging. Importantly, these approaches should not be rigidly assigned according to national or cultural background. Because self-construal is context-sensitive and varies within cultures, interventions may instead be tailored according to individuals' currently salient self-construals and resource needs.

In clinical and psychological support settings, the framework suggests that assessment of resilience may benefit from considering both intrapersonal and environmental resources. For individuals who readily mobilize personal resources, interventions may emphasize self-efficacy, cognitive flexibility, and personal coping strategies. For individuals whose adaptation depends heavily on relational resources, strengthening supportive relationships and improving access to appropriate social resources may be particularly relevant. At the same time, practitioners should consider whether interpersonal expectations, stigma, or social pressure may make reliance on relational resources burdensome rather than protective. Thus, an interdependent orientation should not automatically be interpreted as protective.

The framework also suggests a potential role for cultural priming as an experimental or intervention-based tool. If future research demonstrates that temporarily activating different self-construals reliably changes the accessibility or use of specific resilience-related resources, brief priming procedures could potentially be incorporated into interventions designed to prepare individuals for particular demands. For example, an independent orientation might be experimentally examined when tasks require autonomous decision-making, whereas an interdependent orientation might be examined when cooperation and social coordination are central. However, such applications should remain contingent on empirical evidence, particularly because priming effects may depend on contextual factors and may not be uniformly beneficial across individuals or situations.

Overall, the practical implication of the present framework is not that independent or interdependent self-construal is universally superior, but that resilience-building approaches may be more effective when they consider the fit between individuals' salient self-construals,

available resources, and social environments. This resource–context fit may provide a basis for developing culturally responsive approaches to resilience promotion.

6. Conclusion

This study reviewed prior research on resilience and cultural self-construal and provided an integrated examination of their relationship. The literature review suggests that resilience is understood as a dynamic process arising from the interaction between internal and environmental resources. Furthermore, culture plays a fundamental role in shaping psychological processes, and cultural self-construal was identified as a flexible framework that can vary across situational contexts.

Based on these findings, cultural self-construal may differentially affect the multidimensional structure of resilience. Specifically, an independent self-construal may facilitate adaptation through internal resources, whereas an interdependent self-construal may promote adaptation through environmental resources.

This study's significance lies in its theoretical integration of the relationship between cultural self-construal and resilience, which prior research has not sufficiently examined. Future studies should empirically test the relationships proposed in this study, particularly through experimental approaches such as cultural priming.

This framework provides a testable model for examining the mechanisms linking cultural self-construal and resilience.

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