

# Resilience of Single Working Mother: A Systematic Literature Review

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**Abstract.** Resilience is the process and outcome of successfully adapting to challenging life experiences through mental, emotional, and behavioral adjustment. Prior studies focusing resilience on single working mother by using qualitative and quantitative correlational studies, but still lack studies focusing these phenomena by using systematic literature review. This study aims to explain the dynamics of resilience of single working mothers by systematic literature review approach. This study use Systematic Literature Review method by reviewing articles from 2014-2024 which published in Google Scholar, PubMed, and Semantic Scholar. This study uses Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Literature Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) guidelines. After screening process with Rayyan, we found two relevant articles stated that protective internal and external factors (such as grateful, religious, independent, self-acceptance, and support system) have a great contribution in the process of resilience of single working mother. It can conclude that single working mothers are more able to be resilient by the contribution of protective factors.

**Keywords:** Resilience; Single Working Mother; Systematic Literature Review

## 1 Introduction

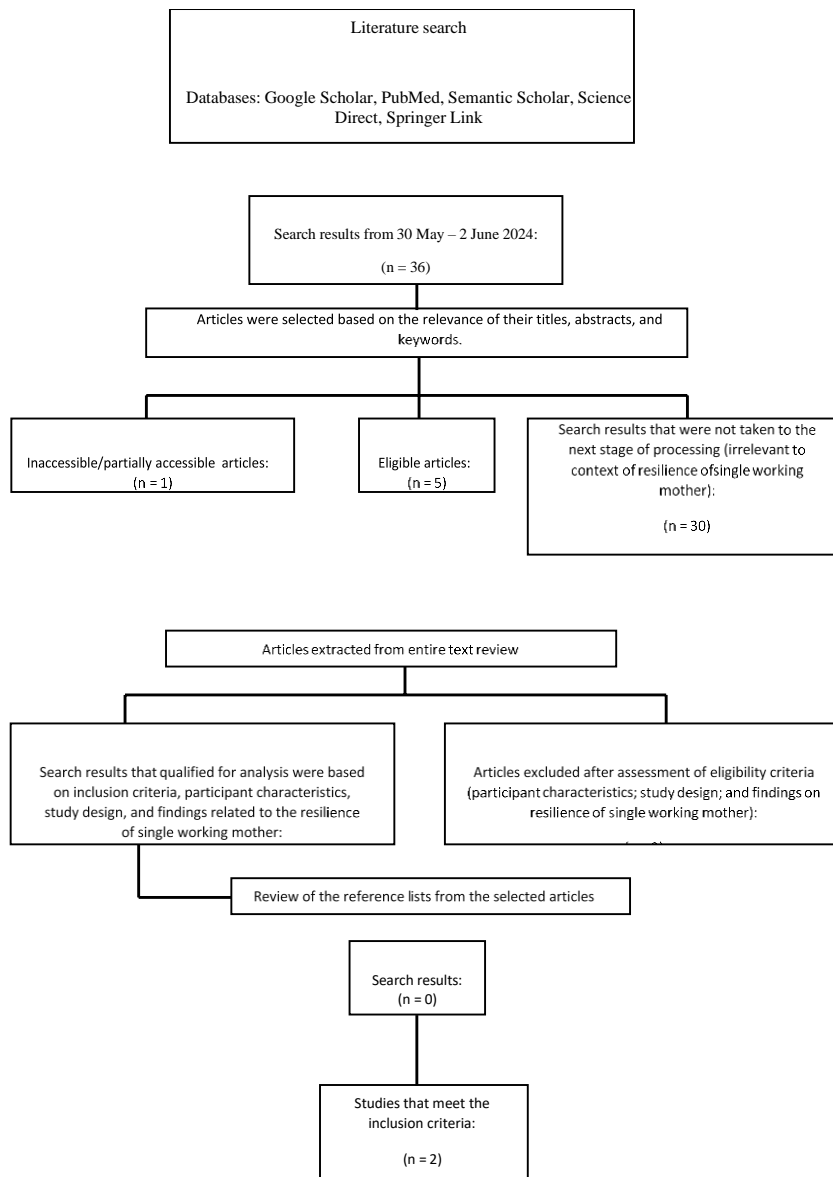
Most people expect to have a long lasting marriage. Nevertheless, in some cases married couples will face challenges that will lead into divorce<sup>1</sup>. Divorce is the final decision when couples don't meet the problem solving to maintain their marriage and there is no other way to reconciliation unless divorce [1]. Divorce, or also known as contested divorce, is a divorce that filled out by the wife side to the Court Religion with permanent legal force [2]. Data shows that there are high number cases of divorce among Muslim couples in Indonesia and it will be increased in every single year, especially the number cases of contested divorce. From the data available in 2014, there were 382.231 divorce cases in all Religious Courts/Sharia Courts consisting of 268.381 cases of contested divorce[3].

Divorce will have a greater impact among the member of family, especially woman as an ex-wife who takes a role as a single mother. A single mother with children will take new responsibilities after separation. For instance, take a multiple roles as father and mother for children, and also being a breadwinner for gain money to maintain life with children. Apart from the increasing responsibilities, single mothers are often exposure from negative stigma from society that will harm their mental health status. Beside that, some of single mothers are experiencing difficulties in social adjustment with people after divorce. These difficulties will generate some negative impacts to single mother. A study carried out by Cairney et al. (2003) reveals that single mothers are more prone to experience episodes of depression and high chronic stress than married woman. Many “after-divorced challenges” that experienced by single working mothers make them more vulnerable from psychological disorders. Therefore, single working mothers need an ability to survive and adapting from the challenging life. It is called resilience [4].

Resilience play a great role in terms of increasing positive emotions and life satisfaction (Cohn, et al., in Ladiba & Utami, 2020). It means that individual that successfully adapting with challenging life and able to manage resources will experience positive emotions and become more fully satisfied with life. Being a single working mother, besides from recover from post-divorce sadness, a single working mother have to do new responsibilities as a parent of children and also as a breadwinner of family<sup>4</sup>. Based on the explanation above, resilience offers support for single working mothers. Some studies have examined resilience and single working mothers, mainly through qualitative research. However, there is still a shortage of studies that explore both variables using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. Therefore, this research aims to delve deeper using the SLR approach to gain a broader understanding of the impact of resilience on single working mothers. This has sparked interest among researchers to investigate various resilience factors that may affect single working mothers through the SLR method.

## **2 Method**

The method employed in this study is a systematic literature review. This approach synthesizes research findings to identify relevant areas of study and plays a crucial role in developing a theoretical framework (Snyder, 2019). This study follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to enhance the quality of reporting in systematic literature reviews. During the review process, we utilize PoP 8 (Publish or Perish) to identify relevant articles and Rayyan software to conduct the systematic review. In the PoP 8, we use Google Scholar, PubMed, and Semantic Scholar as the search sources. To extract the records, we use: “Resilience of Single Working Mother” and “Resiliensi pada Ibu Tunggal yang Bekerja” as the keywords. Criterion of the selected articles were qualitative articles in English and Indonesian version which published between 2014-2024. To retrieve articles, selections were made by reviewing titles, keywords, full-text availability, and accessibility. The process of article retrieval is illustrated in Figure 1.



**Fig. 1.** Process of Selecting Articles

### 3 Result

The article retrieval process took place from May 30th to June 2nd, 2024. Utilizing PoP 8, we identified 36 articles across three databases: Google Scholar, PubMed, and Semantic Scholar. All 36 articles were filtered through the Rayyan application, resulting in the extraction of two relevant articles for further examination.

**Table 1.** Summary of Article Reviews

No.	Authors	Variables	Participants	Methods	Findings	Country
1.	Ladiba dan Utami (2020)	Resiliensi single working mother pasca suami meninggal	2 single working mother with childrens	Qualitative	The result shows that the meaning of resilience of single working mother is a condition in which mothers are able to rise from grief by experiencing growth, have an ability to accept themselves, being independent, being more religious, and also being grateful of current conditions.	Indonesia
2.	Giriskan (2021)	Understanding work-life balance, resilience, and emotional endurance of single working mother in the workplace: A qualitative study	32 single working childrens with	Qualitative	The result shows that single working mother feel heavy and exhausted of their work and children. Instead, they have a greater support from social circles and organization in terms of dealing with works and parenting.	Turkey

The first article was conducted by Ladiba and Utami (2020). As we know, mothers who become single parents due to death of husband encountered various problems. They run multiple roles

as a worker, as a mother, and as a father for life and children beside their loss of husband. Nevertheless, single working mothers should return quickly and being adaptive to difficult conditions. The aim of the study is to explore the meaning and the process of resilience towards single working mother. Design of the study was qualitative phenomenological study. Participants of the study are two single working mothers with childrens. Result shows that the meaning of resilience of single working mothers is a condition in which they are able to rise from their loss of husband by experiencing personal growth, their ability to accept the loss of husband and also their current life situation, their ability to become more independent as a single mother, being more religious, and also being grateful of their current conditions.

The second article was conducted by Giriskan (2021). The aim of the study is to highlight specific problems of single working mothers and describe the process of resilience. Result shows that single working mother in Turkey feel heavy and exhausted of their work and children. Woman who are older than 40 years old feel havier working in life. Beside that, they also have great pressure in preparing higher education for their children and also preparing their saving for retirement. To cope the problems, they have a greater support from social circles and organization.

#### **4 Discussion**

This study aims to explain the dynamics of resilience of single working mothers by systematic literature review approach. This study use PoP 8 (Publish or Perish) to identify articles and Rayyan applications to conduct systematic reviews. After the selection process, we have found two articles that relevant to the research theme. The synthesis of the two research articles indicates that resilience positively affects single working mothers. There are several resilience factors that help support single working mothers, including family support, assistance from work partners, and maintaining communication with their children. Single working mother who have children have their own difficulties after experiencing separation from their partner. The research results of Hashim et al. (2015), show that single mothers have broad roles and responsibilities. The subjects in the study stated that they are more responsible for various aspects of life. Apart from being responsible for one's own welfare and health, a single working mother must also think about their own well-being and health status [5]. Apart from increasing responsibilities as the breadwinner of the family, single mothers often receive a negative stigma from society. Single mothers find it difficult to socialize and establish friendly relationships with other people after leaving their partner [6]. The status as the head of the family requires single mothers to work, which makes it difficult for them to communicate frequently with other people, especially with fellow mothers in their neighborhood. This makes single mothers feel lonely. The findings of this study are anticipated to contribute to the advancement of psychology research, specifically regarding the resilience of single working mothers. This research certainly has limitations. This study is only limited to the resilience of a single working mother with children. Future research is recommend to conduct study comparison among resilience of single working mother in in Asia and in Europe to get a broader view.

## 5 Conclusions

The conclusion of this study is that single working mother become more resilience by the contribution of protective factor. For instance, from internal factors that contributing to their resilience are grateful, religious, independent, self-acceptance, and from external factors that contributing to resilience are supports from family, collagues, and organization.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors hereby declare that there are no conflicts of interest

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