

Emotional anticipation at the prospect of finding a job: A person-centered approach

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Emotional anticipation at the prospect of finding a job: A person-centered approach

Unemployment and job search are recognized as stressful and emotionally challenging experiences (Stevens & Seo, 2013). On the one hand, unemployment is *per se* a stressor associated with negative consequences for the individual as reduced physical and psychological well-being, life satisfaction, income, social contacts and status, as well as increased stigmatization, alcohol use, or drug abuse (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005; Paul & Moser, 2009). On the other hand, emotional reactions are also related to one's job search process. As job seekers endeavor to find a job, they experience a wide range of emotions, stress, and anxiety related to their job search. In that sense, job search is a volitional self-regulated activity where emotions and their regulation greatly influence the execution and persistence of job search activities (Côté et al., 2006; Kanfer et al., 2001; Wanberg et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2017).

Up to now, however, little attention has been paid to future-oriented emotions: Those job seekers experience when anticipating specific job search outcomes (e.g., finding a job), imagine how these will occur, and visualize how they will personally behave in response to those events (Baumgartner et al., 2008). Research has consistently shown the predictive value of future-oriented emotions on intentions and behaviors (Baumgartner et al., 2008; Xu & Guo, 2019). Furthermore, neuropsychological evidence showed that the proactive anticipation of an emotional stimulus reduces the cognitive effort needed when the emotional stimulus actually occurs (Vanderhasselt et al., 2014). This suggests that emotional anticipation could not only affect job seekers' preparatory behaviors but could also influence their future responses to stress (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997).

Simultaneously, job search research has primarily investigated positive and negative emotions separately, overlooking their potential to interact and co-occur in some type of pattern within individuals (Larsen et al., 2001). For example, job seekers might feel enthusiastic at the prospect of securing a job congruent with their career interests along with fear at the prospect of a negative response after the job interview. Consequently, scholars increasingly advocate for examining within-person combinations of emotions (Fernando et al., 2014). Complementary to variable-centered approaches, person-centered approaches, typological methods which group individuals based on distinct variables (Hofmans et al., 2020), are well suited to uncover the naturally occurring combinations of positive and negative emotions.

In light of these insights, our study adopts a person-centered approach to investigate job seekers' emotional anticipation at the prospect of finding a job in the near future using latent profile analysis (LPA). Additionally, we compare emotional anticipation profiles between men and women, given advocated evidence of gender-specific differences in job search processes and emotional experiences (Kanfer et al., 2001) The current article makes several contributions to the field. First, it complements our current understanding of emotional dynamics during job search by offering a holistic, intraindividual perspective. Investigating the interplay of both positive and negative future-oriented emotions challenges the simplistic belief that positive are mainly beneficial and negative ones detrimental. For instance, distinguishing between individuals experiencing both anxiety and optimism and those experiencing solely anxiety may yield valuable insights into the behavioral outcomes of different emotional anticipation profiles. Second, we highlight the importance of emotions not only during or after but also before career-related emotional events. This emphasis on future-

oriented emotions calls for a preventive approach, guiding the creation and implementation of effective, emotion-centered job search interventions.

Emotional anticipation

There are times we hope that positive events will happen in the future or fear that they may not. At those times, we imagine what we will do and visualize how happy we will feel if our expectations come out true. Job search does not evade such emotional anticipation. Job seekers hope that they will be called for a job interview, fear being not called. They also imagine what they will do in either case and visualize how they will feel if they are actually called (or not) by a potential employer. These emotional reactions have been conceptualized as future-oriented emotions (Baumgartner et al., 2008). On the one hand, *anticipatory* emotions refer to emotions currently experienced at the prospect of an event likely to occur in the future (e.g., hoping for being shortlisted for a job application; Baumgartner et al., 2008). On the other hand, *anticipated* emotions refer to individuals' beliefs about how they think they will feel during imagined future events through a process known as affective forecasting (Gilbert & Wilson, 2007). While job seekers might fear and experience anxiety at the prospect of an upcoming job interview (i.e., anticipatory emotions), they might also visualize how relieved and happy they will feel should the interview go well (i.e., anticipated emotions). Two core distinctions between anticipatory and anticipated emotions can be delineated (Baumgartner et al., 2008). First, anticipatory emotions are affective reactions based on the prospects of a future event that could have either positive or negative consequences. On the contrary, anticipated emotions are cognitive beliefs or forecasts about how one is going to feel in response to failure or success in a simulated future event; in that sense, the likelihood of the event is non-informative with regard to anticipated emotions. Second, anticipatory and

anticipated emotions are different from a phenomenological point of view as anticipatory emotions are always currently experienced whereas anticipated emotions are based on pre-factual thinking about imagined positive and negative consequences (Robinson & Clore, 2001). Overall, the theoretical framework of future-oriented emotions appears critical in shedding light on the emotional complexity of job search and its role in self-regulation: Both anticipatory and anticipated emotions complementarily influence the formation, the enactment, and maintenance of job search intentions and behaviors.

Profiles of emotional anticipation

Although it is contended that individuals experience both anticipatory and anticipated emotions when thinking about their future, most research has relied on variable-centered methods that focus on anticipatory and anticipated—as well as positive and negative—emotions independently. Baumgartner et al. (2008), for instance, suggested that all components of emotional anticipation – positive and negative anticipatory and anticipated emotions – are distinct but synergistic predictors of future behavior. Nonetheless, their research tells nothing about the naturally occurring combinations of anticipatory and anticipated emotions. Are individuals more prone to experiencing high levels of both anticipatory and anticipated emotions concurrently or do most hold a positive outlook about their future with high levels of positive emotions and low levels of negative emotions? These questions are aligned with robust evidence indicating that individuals experience mixed emotions in everyday life—that is, the co-occurrence of multiple emotions at the same time (Larsen et al., 2001, 2017).

The implications of these questions are significant for understanding the role of emotion in job search. While some studies indicate a negative correlation between negative affect and job search outcomes (Crossley & Stanton, 2005), others have failed to replicate these results

(Côté et al., 2006; Turban et al., 2013). In contrast, more recent longitudinal studies have revealed a positive influence of negative emotions on job search outcomes (Kim & Lee, 2021; Song et al., 2009). This inconsistency might well be accounted for by the combinations, or profiles, of future-oriented emotions. Although the behavioral consequences of future-oriented emotions are beyond the scope of this paper, previous research has systematically shown that both positive and negative anticipated emotions facilitated behavioral intentions and behaviors, over and above the influence of anticipatory emotions (Baumgartner et al., 2008; Xu & Guo, 2019). The ability to anticipate future scenarios, both positive and negative, and the contemplation of the possible outcomes could motivate individuals to reorient and develop their resources to deal with the future (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997).

In contrast to variable-centered approaches, the person-centered framework aims to examine the emergence of subpopulations, or profiles, characterized by unique configurations of indicators. While variable-centered approaches seek to investigate the average relations between emotions and job search-related outcomes, person-centered approaches might identify profiles of job seekers that are differentiated upon the level and shape of anticipatory and anticipated emotions. This approach echoes recent calls to adopt a person-centered approach for examining multiple experienced emotions (Fernando et al., 2014), leading us to our first research question:

Research Question 1. How many profiles of emotional anticipation at the prospect of finding a job that vary quantitatively (in level) and qualitatively (in shape) emerge in the data?

A number of empirical studies have shed light on the co-occurrence of multiple emotions using a person-centered approach, thus informing our current study. Sandrin et al. (2020) examined firefighters' positive and negative emotions at work and revealed the emergence of

5 profiles. In a broader population, Fernando et al. (2014) supported the co-occurrence of positive and negative emotions by also revealing the existence of 5 different profiles across two studies. Finally, several studies have investigated profiles of future-oriented emotions at the prospect of educational and career transitions (Parmentier et al., 2021, 2022b; Zampetakis et al., 2016). For example, Zampetakis et al. (2016) found four profiles of anticipated emotions related to venture creation among students, bringing evidence for the co-occurrence of future-oriented emotions. In addition, the first profile, characterized by high levels of positive emotions and low levels of negative emotions, was more likely to consider new venture creation as a desirable and feasible procedure. However, Zampetakis et al. (2016) only investigated anticipated emotions, and, to the best of our knowledge, no empirical evidence investigated the combinations and co-occurrence of both anticipatory and anticipated emotions. Although we left our research questions open to reflect the exploratory nature of person-centered approaches (Hofmans et al., 2020), we expected the emergence of distinct profiles based on the evidence reviewed above: profiles characterized by high levels of positive and low levels of negative future-oriented emotions, by low levels of positive and high levels of negative future-oriented emotions, and moderate levels of both positive and negative future-oriented emotions.

Profile similarity based on gender

Person-centered studies inherently possess an exploratory nature due to the sequential comparison of profile solutions in the selection of an ‘optimal’ model. Consequently, these profile solutions tend to be sample-dependent, thus imposing limitations on the generalizability of the findings (Hofmans et al., 2020). Person-centered evidence thus requires the accumulation of evidence to differentiate profiles that consistently emerge across groups

or samples from transient profiles that only manifest in specific contexts or groups (Hofmans et al., 2020). Given that, to our best knowledge, this is the first study to investigate job seekers' emotional anticipation profiles at the prospect of finding a new job, and given existing controversy regarding gender differences in emotional experiences (Hyde, 2005), carefully examining the generalizability of profiles across men and women appeared critical (Kanfer et al., 2001). Furthermore, prior research already showed gender differences regarding job search processes. For example, women are more likely to engage in proactive job search (Lang & Zapf, 2015) and tend to accept jobs substantially earlier than men (Cortés et al., 2023). These results indicates that societal expectations could impact women's intentions employment more significantly than men, stressing the role of gender norms in career decision. In the present study, we contend that adopting a person-centered approach offers a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of gender similarities and differences, by considering profiles that provide insight into distinct qualitative patterns of future-oriented emotions, that also vary in prevalence and size.

Research Question 2. To what extent profiles of emotional anticipation at the prospect of finding a job are similar in number, means and variances of indicators, and size between men and women?

Method

Participants and procedure

Data were collected among 1,270 unemployed job seekers who were enlisted through a local public employment office. In order to control for the influence of age on the job search process (Kanfer et al., 2001), targeted participants were predominantly job seekers under 25 years old ($M_{age} = 21.82$, $SD = 3.21$). Approximately 70.4% of job seekers already had at least

one professional experience before being unemployed. The sample comprised 859 women and 411 men. While half of the respondents had their high school degree (50.6%), 24.5% had completed a bachelor's degree, 16.1% completed a master's degree, and only 8.8% of respondents did not complete high school. Job seekers were contacted by e-mail and were invited to participate in an online anonymous survey after having given their consent.

Measures

Emotional anticipation

Anticipatory and anticipated emotions were measured using an adapted measure of Baumgartner et al. (2008), that has already been successfully adapted in other contexts and career transitions (Parmentier et al., 2022a, 2022b).

For anticipatory emotions, participants were instructed to think about their job search and the possibility of finding a new job as follows: “In the following weeks or months, you might find a (new) job. Depending on our life course, our goals, interests, and personal projects, we all differ in the extent to which we envision our professional future. Please indicate how you feel here and now at the prospect of finding a (new) job.” Participants rated the extent to which they felt optimistic, confident, and hopeful for positive anticipatory emotions ($\alpha = .82$), and worried, anxious, and nervous for negative anticipatory emotions ($\alpha = .83$).

For positive anticipated emotions, participants were asked to imagine that the next weeks and months— including what they did during that period – have had positive consequences for them and allowed them to find a (new) job. Participants rated how happy, proud, and relieved they thought they would feel in the specific situation ($\alpha = .81$). For negative anticipated emotions, participants were asked to imagine that the following weeks and months – including what they did during that period – have had negative consequences for them and

prevented them to find a (new) job. Participants rated how disappointed, guilty, and sad they thought they would feel in the specific situation ($\alpha = .73$).

Results

Preliminary analyses

Analyses were performed with *Mplus* 8 using Robust Full Information Maximum Likelihood estimation. To compare person-centered with variable-centered results, bivariate Pearson correlation among anticipatory and anticipated emotions for both men and women (see Table 1) and independent difference tests were conducted. Results revealed that, on average, men reported higher levels of positive anticipatory emotions ($M = 4.99, SD = 1.25$) than women ($M = 4.70, SD = 1.30; t_{(1251)} = 3.69, p < .001$, Cohen's $\delta = 1.28$). However, men reported lower levels than women on all other emotions: negative anticipatory emotions ($M_{men} = 3.42; SD_{men} = 1.57; M_{women} = 4.01; SD_{women} = 1.60; t_{(1251)} = -6.13, p < .001$, Cohen's $\delta = 1.59$), positive anticipated emotions ($M_{men} = 5.81; SD_{men} = 0.99; M_{women} = 6.10; SD_{women} = 0.93; t_{(1195)} = -4.88, p < .001$, Cohen's $\delta = 0.95$), and negative anticipated emotions ($M_{men} = 4.26; SD_{men} = 1.45; M_{women} = 4.80; SD_{women} = 1.45; t_{(1188)} = -6.00, p < .001$, Cohen's $\delta = 1.45$).

The discriminant validity of positive, negative, anticipatory and anticipated emotions was tested using confirmatory factor analysis. Our results revealed that a four-factor solution fitted the data satisfactorily ($MLR\chi^2(48) = 289.43, p < .001, SC = 1.13; RMSEA = .06; CFI = .95; TLI = .93; SRMR = .07$) and was superior to all constrained models. Invariance measurement models (i.e., configural, metric, scalar, and strict invariance) were also conducted to ensure that the measurement model was deemed equivalent between men and women (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). Our analyses revealed measurement equivalence between men and women at the strict invariance level ($MLR\chi^2(124) = 396.14, p < .001, SC = 1.16; RMSEA = .06; CFI =$

.94; TLI = .94; SRMR = .08). Following LPA recommendations, factor scores were then extracted from the strict invariance model and used for subsequent analysis (Hofmans et al., 2020).

INSERT TABLE 1

Latent profile analyses

LPAs were conducted following a stepwise procedure from 1 up to 8 profiles. Choosing the optimal number of profiles is a process that is both data- and theory-driven. Alongside statistical fit indices, researchers are invited to ensure that the profiles carry substantive meaning and make sense at the conceptual level. In addition, researchers have to select parsimonious profile solutions in which profiles are not redundant with each other and are composed of a substantial percentage of the total sample (Hofmans et al., 2020). Several fit statistics were used to select the best profile solution: the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), the Consistent AIC (CAIC), the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), the sample-size adjusted BIC (SABIC), the adjusted Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio test (LMR), the Bootstrap Likelihood Ratio test (BLRT), and entropy. The best profile solution should display smaller AIC, CAIC, BIC, and SABIC values compared with other profile solutions, an entropy greater than .70 (ranges from 0 to 1), and significant aLMR and BLRT statistics. aLMR and BLRT provide tests of a k profile model against a $k-1$ profile model with significant p values suggesting that the k profile model should be retained. Recommendations from simulation studies encourage researchers to favor the CAIC, BIC, SABIC, and BLRT as they have been demonstrated to be more effective (Nylund et al., 2007). The other fit indices are reported only for transparency purposes. LPAs were performed using 5,000 random sets of starting values, the 200 best solutions being retained for the optimization process.

Results from profile enumeration are reported in Table 2. Among women, all fit indices kept on decreasing but tended to reach a plateau around 5 profiles. A similar pattern was found among men, except that a plateau appeared around 4 profiles. In order to choose the optimal solution among women and men, we systematically examined the 3-, 4-, and 5-profile solutions with regards to their statistical adequacy and theoretical meaning. A first observation was that profiles among women and men tended to be very similar in shape. Second, profiles were statistically proper (e.g., no out-of-bound parameters) and theoretically meaningful in the 3-profile solution. The addition of a profile resulted in a fourth profile that was qualitatively distinct and meaningful. More specifically, it resulted in the meaningful separation of a profile characterized by positive emotions into two distinct profiles showing positive anticipatory emotions but differentiated anticipated emotions. However, adding a fifth profile resulted in the arbitrary division of one profile into two very similar profiles in both groups. We retained the 4-profile solution as the best description of the data for parsimony reasons for both women and men.

INSERT TABLE 2

Second, we conducted multiple group profile similarity analyses to investigate the degree of similarity between profiles among men and women. The strategy investigates whether the groups are similar in terms of their number of profiles, their shape (i.e., means of the profile indicators), the degree of similarity between members of profiles (i.e., within-profile variances of the indicators), and the size of the profiles (Morin et al., 2016; Olivera-Aguilar & Rikoon, 2018). These levels of similarity are referred to as configural, structural, dispersion, and distributional similarity, respectively. As for LPA, best similarity models should display the lowest values of AIC, BIC, SABIC, and CAIC. Results from profile similarity analyses

are displayed in Table 1. Among women and men, a model of structural similarity which constrained all profile means to be equal across groups failed to provide a better fit to the data compared to a configural model as all fit indices increased between the two solutions. These results suggest that men and women displayed dissimilar profiles of emotional anticipation (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). The average posterior probabilities of profile membership varied from .874 to .914 ($M = .892$) with low cross-probabilities (.010–.062; $M = .036$).

INSERT TABLE 3

Interpretation of profiles

Our interpretation of the profile was conducted while taking into account both between- and within-group differences to ensure the comparability of both men and women, while respecting the interpretation of the patterns of emotions regarding within-group means and their variability.

Among women, the first profile (13.9%) encompassed job seekers with anticipatory positive emotions and low anticipatory negative emotions, compared to other women. Simultaneously, they reported high anticipated emotions. To reflect these features, we tentatively labeled this profile *Positive Anticipatory–High Anticipated*. Among men, two profiles were very similar to this first profile. However, both negative anticipatory emotions and negative anticipated emotions were quantitatively lower than women. Still, the levels of negative anticipated emotions was among the highest among men and thus confirmed profile labeling. The first profile was labeled *Highly Positive Anticipatory–High Anticipated*, while the second was labeled *Moderately Positive Anticipatory–High Anticipated* to reflect that although similar with regard to negative emotions, one of the profiles displayed higher levels on both positive emotions dimensions.

The second profile among women (37.5%) was quite similar to the previous ones, except that the negative anticipated emotions scores were among the lowest among this group and this profile was thus labeled *Positive Anticipatory–Positive Anticipated*. Among men, the same profile was also found (27.7%) and displayed lower negative emotions, a finding consistent with the variable-centered results.

The third profile among women (26.4%) was characterized by an inverted pattern compared to previous profiles with higher negative anticipatory emotions. This profile was also characterized by high and mixed anticipated emotions. Hence, this profile was labeled *Negative Anticipatory–Mixed Anticipated*. A very similar profile was found among men (25.9%) with higher negative anticipatory emotions compared to positive anticipatory emotions and high, mixed anticipated emotions.

Finally, the fourth profile among women (22.2%) was also characterized by high negative anticipatory emotions but were very close to positive anticipatory emotions, reflecting mixed anticipatory emotions. Anticipated emotions scored relatively low compared to other profiles. For these reasons, this profile was labeled *Mixed Anticipatory–Low Anticipated*. When taking the results of these last profiles into perspective, our results make evident that mixed emotions tend to occur (1) more at the anticipated level compared to the anticipatory level and (2) when negative anticipatory emotions were higher—i.e., bipolar patterns are more likely with high positive anticipatory emotions than negative anticipatory emotions.

INSERT FIGURE 1

Discussion

Previous variable-centered research has underscored the importance of positive and negative emotions during the job search process (Côté et al., 2006; Crossley & Stanton, 2005;

da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2014; Kanfer et al., 2001; Kim & Lee, 2021; Song et al., 2009; Turban et al., 2009; Wanberg et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2017). However, little attention has been given to examining the combinations of future-oriented positive and negative emotions at the prospect of finding a new job from a future-oriented perspective. The present study aimed to identify profiles of anticipatory and anticipated emotions at the prospect of finding a job among a sample of young job seekers while addressing the possible similarity and differences between men and women.

INSERT FIGURE 2

Among men and women, LPA revealed several profiles characterized by distinct level and shape differences with regard to anticipatory and anticipated emotions. Among women, four profiles were identified. High positive anticipatory emotions characterized two profiles: (1) *Positive Anticipatory–High Anticipated* and (2) *Positive Anticipatory–Positive Anticipated*. The two last profiles were characterized by high negative and mixed anticipatory emotions: (3) *Negative Anticipatory–Mixed Anticipated* and (4) *Mixed Anticipatory–Low Anticipated*. Among men, while the three first profiles among women were identified in different levels, the *Mixed Anticipatory–Low Anticipated* did not emerge. Profiles among men were: (1) *Highly Positive Anticipatory–High Anticipated*, (2) *Moderately Positive Anticipatory–High Anticipated*, (3) *Positive Anticipatory–Positive Anticipated*, and (4) *Negative Anticipatory–Mixed Anticipated*.

The emergence of these profiles contributes further insights into how positive and negative emotions co-occur (Larsen et al., 2001), including at the prospect of future events. Our findings also complement the literature on future-oriented emotions, as little research has jointly examined both anticipatory and anticipated emotions simultaneously. Overall, our

results echo and replicate previous findings regarding profiles of future-oriented emotions at the prospect of other important educational and career transitions such as the transition to university or the school-to-work transition (Parmentier et al., 2022a, 2022b). These findings bring important implications for the relationship between emotions and job search outcomes (Côté et al., 2006; Crossley & Stanton, 2005; da Motta Veiga & Turban, 2014; Kim & Lee, 2021). Indeed, previous research has suggested that positive and negative anticipated emotions had a higher predictive value than anticipatory emotions (Baumgartner et al., 2008; Xu & Guo, 2019). These results thus call for investigating the impact of anticipated emotions along anticipatory emotions to finely evaluate the influence of emotions on job search outcomes. Of particular importance, future research should test and replicate the contrasting findings found in the literature with regard to negative emotions and job search outcomes, some studies finding a positive relationship, while others concluding a negative one. It might be plausible that negative emotions motivate job search behaviors when accompanied by high positive and negative anticipated emotions, helping job seekers to *prefeel* the future and the associated scenarios (Baumgartner et al., 2008).

To examine the similarities and differences between men and women, we followed Morin et al.'s (2016) recommendations by investigating the similarity of our profiles across gender between men and women. Overall, we found that distinct profiles between men and women (i.e., structural similarity), suggesting that both means and variances of emotions, as well as the sizes of the profiles differed between genders. Albeit different from a quantitative point of view, these profiles proved similar in their overall shape. Differences between men and women were found at two distinct levels. First, differences in intensity were particularly found for negative emotions in some but not all profiles: women displayed higher levels of

both negative anticipatory and anticipated emotions. Second, positive anticipatory profiles were more prevalent among men compared to women. Given the absence of predictors and outcomes of the profiles, and of relevant constructs explaining gender differences, we contend that our findings are uninformative with regard to a difference- or a similarity-hypothesis (Hyde, 2005). However, our approach was critical in determining the construct validity of emotional anticipation profiles (Morin et al., 2016) and bringing nuance and caution in inferring differences in emotions between men and women. Contrary to our variable-centered results that showed that, *on average*, men display more positive and less negative emotions than women, our person-centered results show that some but not all women display more negative and less positive emotions compared to men. Looking at the *Negative Anticipatory–Mixed Anticipated* profile among men is also informative in this respect: a quarter of our sample of men also displayed emotional profile characterized by elevated negative emotions. The emergence of these profiles thus offers new insights regarding the study of gender and conveys essential implications. First, overestimating gender differences can lead to important costs for women and men during unemployment or for finding a job. Second, using a person-centered approach offered an innovative framework to disentangle gender differences and provided a fine-grained representation of differences and similarities between men and women. Future research that adopts a similar approach is warranted to generalize the present findings.

Albeit the importance of the present findings, gender differences in emotion are utterly complex due to the intricated web of motivational, situational, and social factors and contexts (Brody et al., 2016). As such, our study does not avoid these important limitations in the sense that a strict and restrictive conceptualization of gender (i.e., binary categorization into men

and women) has been used. Future research is thus needed to bring a more finegrained understanding of the role of gender in emotional experience during important career transitions.

Limitations

A number of limitations in the present study may have influenced the generalizability of the results. First, we examined the emergence of profiles using a cross-sectional design. It is, therefore, not possible to determine the enactment and stability of these profiles over time. Future research should consequently develop longitudinal designs to address this issue. Second, the present study has not explored key antecedents and outcomes related to the job search processes. This is unfortunate given the importance of covariates in the construct validation process of the profiles (Morin et al., 2016). Investigating antecedents and outcomes also offer the possibility to determine at-risk profiles and to develop appropriate interventions. For example, examining social support as an antecedent would be very relevant given its importance regarding job search behaviors. Moreover, the investigation of job search behaviors such as job search intention and intensity as outcomes could also be particularly relevant (Kanfer et al., 2001). This is especially important to evaluate job search intentions when considering that prior research showed that intention is one of the most important predictors of job search behavior (van Hooft et al., 2004). Another point of consideration for investigating job search behaviors as a consequence is related to the inconsistent results found with regard to the role of negative emotions (Kim & Lee, 2021). Using a person-centered approach could be particularly relevant for disentangle these conflicting results. Finally, we used self-report measures to examine the similarity between profiles across gender. However, investigating gender differences in relation to the concept of emotion could be particularly

difficult given the numerous stereotypes that are socially anchored in our society. More specifically, we do not know precisely whether men and women have reported their objective levels of emotions or whether they responded to correspond to social expectancies (Brody et al., 2016).

Practical implications

The present findings bring important practical implications. The emergence of different profiles that differed quantitatively and qualitatively highlighted the necessity for employment policies, employment offices, and guidance counselors to devote specific consideration to job seekers showing distinct emotional anticipation profiles. This is particularly important given the role employment offices have in helping job seekers manage their emotions during the job search process. For example, job seekers in the *Positive Anticipatory-Positive Anticipated* profile might be vulnerable given their potential tendency to overestimate their probability of finding a job. In the same vein, the *Negative Anticipatory-Mixed Anticipated* profile could develop avoidant coping strategies and withdraw from goal-direct behaviors due to the high levels of experienced negative emotions. Accordingly, recent findings showed that positive and negative emotions are important to engaging in job search behaviors (Kim & Lee, 2021; Pirsoul et al., 2022, 2023). Guidance and career counselors could therefore develop special attention with job seekers who need emotional support and helping them for managing the uncertainty and complexity of job search processes and unemployment. The emergence of different profiles also stresses the importance of following up with the job seekers regularly against the possible negative and emotional consequences of unemployment. To this end, developing tailor-made interventions targeting emotion regulation is needed. The similarity

profiles analyses also highlight minor differences between men and women. Thus, it could be possible to develop interventions that might be effective for both groups.

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Table 1. Bivariate Correlation Matrix for Men and Women.

	1	2	3	4
Positive anticipatory emotions	–	–.63***	.46***	–.04
Negative anticipatory emotions	–.50***	–	–.07*	.41***
Positive anticipated emotions	.59***	–.08	–	.38***
Negative anticipated emotions	–.09	.51***	.15**	–

Note. Bivariate correlations for men and women are respectively reported below and above the diagonal. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 2. Latent profile enumeration fit statistics

# of profiles	LL	fp	SCF	AIC	BIC	SABIC	CAIC	aLMR	BLRT	Entropy	Smallest profile
<i>Women</i>											
1	-5013.03	8	1.14	10042.06	10080.10	10054.70	10088.10	-	-	1	-
2	-4717.33	17	1.24	9468.66	9549.51	9495.52	9566.51	.000	.000	.714	45.63%
3	-4484.57	26	1.38	9021.15	9144.80	9062.23	9170.80	.004	.000	.796	17.46%
4	-4311.36	35	1.23	8692.71	8859.16	8748.01	8894.16	.002	.000	.790	14.55%
5	-4188.62	44	1.28	8465.24	8674.50	8534.76	8718.50	.029	.000	.803	9.90%
6	-4111.13	53	1.21	8328.27	8580.32	8412.01	8633.32	.022	.000	.813	5.59%
7	-4060.59	62	1.23	8245.19	8540.04	8343.15	8602.04	.194	.000	.829	2.21%
8	-4015.87	71	1.17	8173.74	8511.40	8285.92	8582.40	.217	.000	.838	1.40%
<i>Men</i>											
1	-2412.92	8	1.11	4841.84	4873.99	4848.60	4881.99	-	-	1	-
2	-2278.69	17	1.53	4591.37	4659.69	4605.75	4676.69	.125	.000	.674	36.25%
3	-2197.42	26	1.14	4446.84	4551.32	4468.82	4577.32	.001	.000	.767	26.03%
4	-2115.34	35	1.13	4300.68	4441.33	4330.27	4476.33	.001	.000	.819	11.19%
5	-2067.68	44	1.13	4223.36	4400.17	4260.55	4444.17	.080	.000	.808	11.44%
6	-2032.95	53	1.10	4171.89	4384.88	4216.70	4437.88	.100	.000	.812	7.54%
7	-2000.41	62	1.03	4124.82	4373.97	4177.24	4435.97	.061	.000	.828	0.73%
8	-1971.98	71	1.09	4085.97	4371.29	4145.99	4442.29	.300	.030	.838	0.73%

Note. LL = log likelihood ; fp = free parameters ; SCF = scaling correction factor; AIC = Akaike information criteria; BIC = Bayesian information criteria; SABIC = sample-size adjusted BIC; CAIC = consistent AIC; LMR = Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio test; BLRT = Bootstrap Likelihood Ratio test.

Table 1. Multigroup similarity fit statistics across gender

Models of similarity	LL	fp	SCF	AIC	BIC	SABIC	CAIC	Entropy
Configural	-7226.25	71	1.18	14594.50	14959.92	14734.39	15030.92	.799
Structural	-7305.09	55	1.10	14720.19	15003.26	14828.56	15058.26	.797
Dispersion	-7318.78	39	1.20	14715.56	14916.28	14792.40	14955.28	.790
Distributional	-7361.32	36	1.21	14794.64	14979.93	14865.57	15015.93	.790

Note. LL = log likelihood ; fp = free parameters ; SCF = scaling correction factor; AIC = Akaike information criteria; BIC = Bayesian information criteria; SABIC = sample-size adjusted BIC; CAIC = consistent AIC.

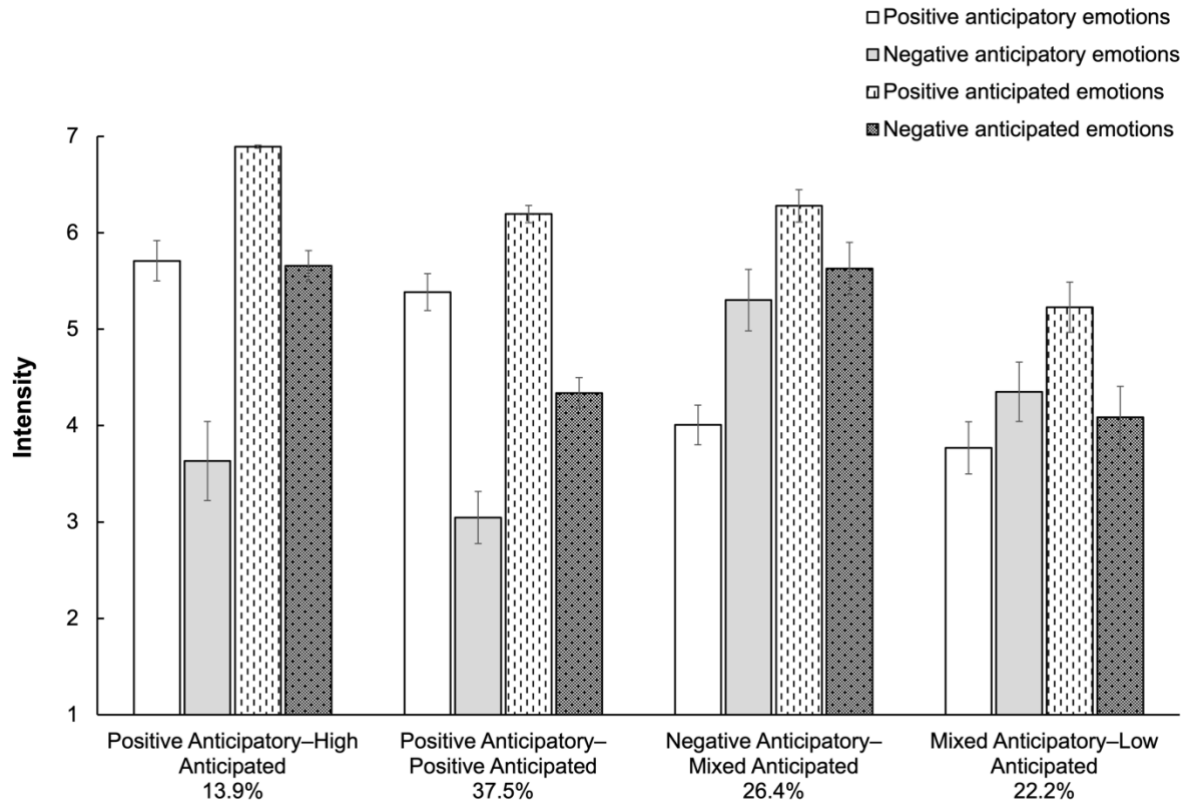


Figure 1. Final 4 profile solution for women

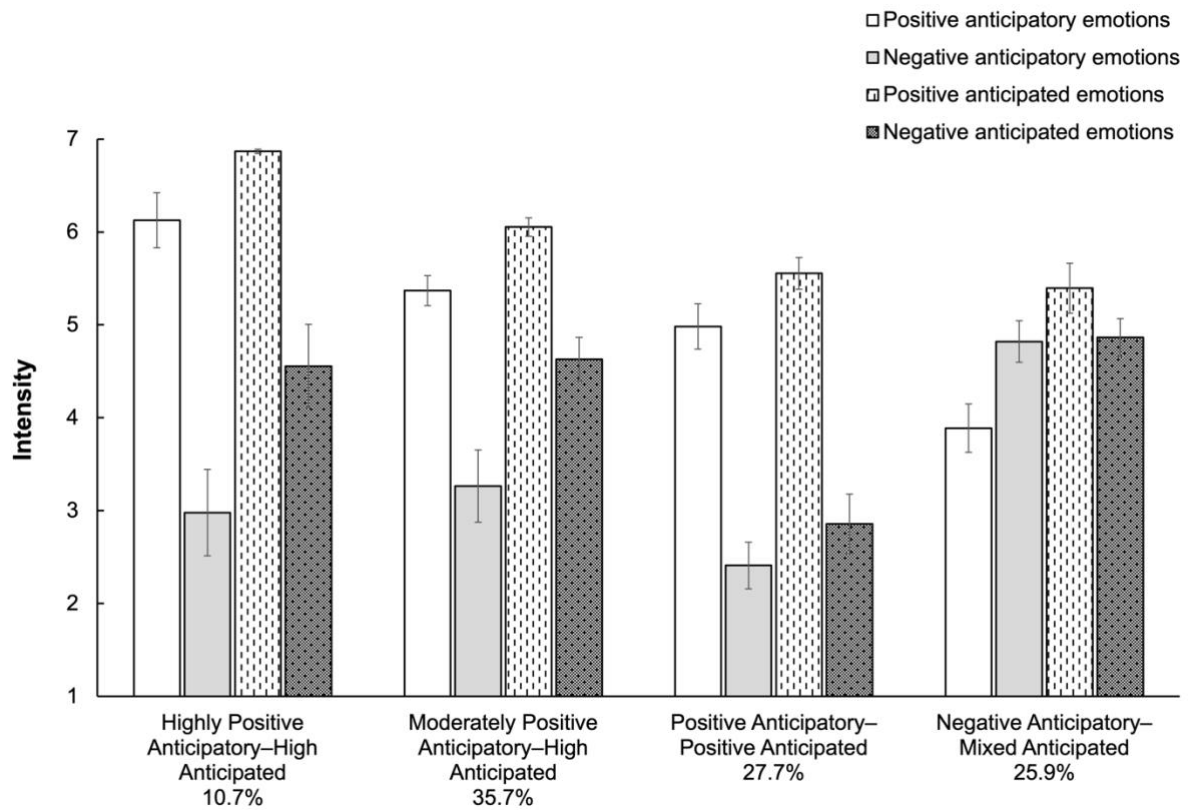


Figure 2. Final 4 profile solution for men