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Conceptualising consumer resilience in an age of governmental responsibilisation

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to reconsider the concept of consumer resilience within a context of increasing governmental responsibilisation. We problematise current framings promoting resilience as an idealised response to disruptive events, allocating the burden of responsibility onto individuals. Current theorisations of resilience originating from a range of disciplinary perspectives are largely individualistic. Drawing upon critical social theory and Global South perspectives informed by a broad scoping review of the literature, we offer a nuanced conceptual framework of consumer resilience that is relational, communitarian, perpetual, reconstitutional, and accounts for politics. We consider the implications of rethinking resilience through these perspectives for policy, research, and practice. We conclude by guarding against an over reliance on facilitating consumer resilience without collectively tackling the causes and effects created by disruption.

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Consumer resilience; resilience; conceptual framework; literature review; disruption

Introduction

This conceptual paper reconsiders consumer resilience within a context of increasing governmental responsibilisation and predominant psychological coping framings. We introduce a more holistic and critically informed conceptual framework that accounts for coping and adaptability, communitarian and relational dynamics, Global South perspectives, as well as the political dimensions of consumer resilience. Consumer resilience has emerged in a contemporary global context in which governments, institutions, and corporations are increasingly developing policies and strategies in response to disruptive events and adversity such as those caused by climate change and natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic, relationship breakdown, job loss and personal loss (Baker, 2009; Guthrie et al., 2021; Maddi, 2012; O'Loughlin et al., 2023; Ozanne & Ozanne, 2016; Szmigin et al., 2020). In policy discourse, resilience is often framed through individual responsibility, positioning consumers as self-reliant agents expected to 'bounce back' from adversity through personal adaptation and psychological strength (European

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Commission, 2021; HM Government, 2022; NSW Government, 2021; United Nations, 2020). This framing reflects a broader context of neoliberal governmentality predominant in Western nations that shifts responsibility from the state and institutions onto individuals (Giesler & Veresiu, 2014).

Yet, despite its growing prominence in policy, marketing, and consumer research, consumer resilience remains conceptually fragmented and under-theorised, and its meanings and implications vary widely (Guthrie et al., 2021; Maddi, 2012; O'Loughlin et al., 2023). Existing ideas on consumer resilience in marketing and consumer research have largely drawn upon psychological, consumer cultural, and sociological perspectives. Consumer psychology conceptualisations of consumer resilience predominantly focus on personal resilience and understanding individuals' internal processes, attitudes, emotions, and cognitive and emotional coping responses to adversity (Ball & Lamberton, 2015; Bermes, 2021; Hutton, 2016; Kursan Milaković, 2021). Work in this area draws upon psychology theory (see Benard, 2004; Rutter, 1987; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004) – to understand consumer resilience as a personality trait – in which there is an ability to cope mentally or emotionally with a crisis and to rebound, bounce back, or return to a pre-crisis status quickly (Huang et al., 2020; Kubacki et al., 2020; Lteif et al., 2023). However, work in this area has paid less attention to communitarian or relational dynamics relating to consumer resilience.

Consumer culture theory (CCT) research has generated insights about how consumers respond to events that disrupt their everyday practices and how these become realigned through the integration of existing and new cultural resources (Yang et al., 2024), reactive reflexivity (Thompson et al., 2018), and adaptation of consumer skills to navigate uncertainty (e.g. Campbell et al., 2020; Phipps et al., 2017). These studies contribute towards a more contextualised cultural understanding of consumer resilience by enriching our understanding of responses to disruption beyond individual cognitive processes to practices and culture. CCT scholarship considers how individual consumers deal with disruptions and crises in their own terms but are still connected by common practices and cultural resources. However, much of this work focuses more on how consumers harness resources and social connections in response to disruption, rather than on defining and conceptualising consumer resilience itself. Meanwhile, the work of Coskuner-Balli (2020) has hinted at a political dimension, by observing how embedding resilience into public, organisational, and governmental discourse serves as a neoliberal political tool that expands and intensifies the responsibilisation of the consumer citizen to successfully navigate challenging times. Yet, the politics of consumer resilience remain underexplored in extant literature.

Meanwhile, a more relational and sociological strand of scholarship on consumer resilience has foregrounded how individuals cope with adversity in the context of their communities and the social dimension of resilience (Bruce & Banister, 2019; McEachern et al., 2021; Szmigin et al., 2020). As interest in the concept of consumer resilience has grown, including in literature that explores vulnerability and precarity (Baker, 2009; Mende et al., 2024), research has increasingly highlighted the complexity of resilience especially when consumers navigate liminal states and constant stress (Mimoun et al., 2022; O'Loughlin et al., 2024). Indeed, while they predominantly focus on individual consumer experiences, Szmigin et al. (2020) point to the relational and political aspects of consumer resilience in their study of European consumers' responses to austerity. Yet

notably, current work which engages in ideas on relationality and consumer resilience does not engage with Global South knowledge systems in which a relational ontology is at the forefront.

An emergent body of social marketing (Kubacki et al., 2020; Wood, 2019) and service marketing research (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2023) has drawn attention to the value of integrating socio-ecological perspectives and systems thinking in studying resilience to understand and address multi-layered influences on individual behaviour and well-being. While service marketing moves the focus on service systems resilience as essential for consumer well-being, social marketing research calls for exploring the application of integrative resilience approaches that recognise the influence of different structural triggers and the power of relationships at micro, meso, and macro levels in shaping individual responses.

We identify that there are opportunities to develop a more holistic conceptual framework of consumer resilience to address gaps in our current understanding (see also Wood, 2019). First, while existing scholarship foregrounds (1) psychological factors relating to coping and adaptability, (2) the cultural practices of consumers in response to disruption, (3) community and relational and system dynamics, and (4) hints at political dimensions – this is not integrative. Second, existing marketing and consumer research scholarship largely does not address the politics of resilience. Third, existing marketing and consumer research scholarship overemphasises Western perspectives and understandings of resilience, despite beginning to now engage with ideas on relationality – an idea that is heavily embedded in Global South knowledge systems. We argue that a more holistic and critically informed conceptual approach is needed to encompass individual- and group-level psychological coping and bouncing back, communitarian and relational dynamics, temporal dimension, and more fully account for the politics of resilience.

We theorise consumer resilience as a dynamic, socially situated process shaped by power, politics, relations, and practices. Our framework comprises five interrelated dimensions: (1) politics, (2) relationality, (3) perpetuity, (4) communitarianism, and (5) reconstitution. By attending to politics, bringing these dimensions together, and integrating Global South perspectives – especially on relationality, we aim to offer a more integrated, systemic and holistic conceptualisation of consumer resilience. The remainder of our paper is structured as follows: We begin by charting the extant literature on consumer resilience. We then map out our conceptualisation approach and introduce our conceptual framework for consumer resilience that enriches existing marketing and consumer research scholarship by incorporating philosophy, social sciences, and Global South perspectives. We then consider the theoretical, practical, and policy contributions and implications of our work.

A conceptual overview of consumer resilience

Resilience is a complex multilevel (individual, community, national/societal) and multidimensional concept that has a multiplicity of meanings and conceptualisations across disciplines in both social and natural sciences (Anderson, 2015; Kipnis et al., 2025; Matarrita-Cascante et al., 2017). Resilience was first formally defined within the ecology literature as 'a measure of the persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change

and disturbance and still maintain the same relationships between populations or state variables' (Holling, 1973, p. 14). Resilience is also well established within engineering and psychology (Martin, 2012), which have shaped resilience thinking in other disciplines including urban and economic geography (e.g. Andres & Round, 2015), politics (e.g. Joseph, 2013), sociology (e.g. Shtob, 2022), anthropology (e.g. Barrios, 2016), business/management (e.g. Sheffi & Rice, 2005), and marketing/consumption studies (Szmigin et al., 2020; Wood, 2019).

However, resilience remains a relatively under-researched concept in marketing and consumer research (O'Loughlin et al., 2023). Explorations of the concept began in the context of consumer coping with disruption and uncertainty and gained interest in the context of sustainability research, in relation to individuals, community (Berkes & Ross, 2013), and systems (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2023) as responses to adversity and crisis brought by climate change, unethical corporate behaviour, resource scarcity, disaster, and other extreme events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Resilience is explored within the consumer vulnerability, social marketing, and well-being literature (Baker, 2009; Huang et al., 2020; Hutton, 2016; Ingram et al., 2024; Kubacki et al., 2020). For example, studies have related consumer resilience to coping and adaptation as part of a 'fresh start' mindset when facing personal difficulties (Price et al., 2018); the coping responses of families who navigate risk and liminal transitions (Pettigrew et al., 2014); consumers' psychological resilience as exercising consumer agency to anticipate, prepare, prevent, adapt, and transform to adversity (Mende et al., 2024); and persistent resilience to macro adversity (Szmigin et al., 2020). We next chart the main bodies of literature on consumer resilience to consider existing definitions and conceptualisations of the phenomenon (see Appendix).

Psychological and transformative consumer research perspectives on consumer resilience

The psychology literature conceptualises resilience as a personal trait or a dynamic process of positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress (Luthar et al., 2000). The focus here is on how individuals' reactions to potentially traumatic events (Bonanno et al., 2004) may lead to reduced vulnerability to environmental risks and positive outcomes despite exposure to stress (Rutter, 2012). Both ecology and psychology conceptualisations of resilience focus on increasing the capacity of the individual, community, system, to resist and cope, with less consideration of predicting or preventing the disruption, damage or crisis (Bowles, 2022).

Consumer psychology scholarship which draws heavily on these psychological perspectives on resilience tends to focus on individuals' cognitive and emotional responses to disruption, adversity and crises (Ball & Lamberton, 2015; Bermes, 2021; Liu et al., 2023; Maddi, 2012; Rajesh, 2024; Rew & Minor, 2018). Framing consumer resilience from a psychological perspective brings to attention the importance of self-efficacy, personal control, agency, and coping resources and strategies (Huang et al., 2020; Hutton, 2016). However, work in this area pays less attention to the factors that call for resilient responses.

More recently, studies from transformative consumer research, which engage with community and socio-psychological perspectives, have called for the integration of alternative perspectives and theories to broaden the concept of consumer resilience. For example, some authors proposed adopting a community of practice lens to enrich understanding of consumer resilience which brings attention to collective responses to consumer vulnerability (Baker & Baker, 2016; Baker et al., 2007; Ozanne & Ozanne, 2016). These studies also highlight the limitations of conceptualisations of resilience in the disaster literature which focused on adapting individuals and communities to their disrupted contexts without considering the role and responsibility of markets and marketing in the recovery process (Baker, 2009).

Cultural and sociological perspectives on consumer resilience

Sociological scholarship has drawn attention to the question of social structural change and the effects of resilience. We note here sociological definitions of resilience as social and which move the focus towards a process of 'reconfiguration of mechanisms of adaptation' of individual resources and their consumption needs in the context of a reconfiguring social structure which entails not only mobilising resources but also changing risks over time and space (Estêvão et al., 2017, p. 17). These varying disciplinary perspectives are evident when considering conceptualisations of consumer resilience in the marketing and consumer research literature.

Studies in this area have explored consumer resilience from a relational perspective, shaped by intersubjective meanings, connections, and interactions that individuals draw upon when confronted with adversity (Canavan, 2023; Ingram et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). Ingram et al. (2024) highlight how resilience is both related to the self and the context for consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here, consumer resilience is conceptualised as relational in terms of how consumers adopt an *object – others – self* perspective as a coping mechanism to deal with anxiety. Consumer resilience is viewed as material, social-relational, and symbolic while also recognising the centrality of personal agency and the impacts of temporality.

Szmigin et al. (2020) build upon geographical scholarship to highlight the phenomenon of perpetual consumer resilience among European consumers in response to austerity. They illustrate how persistent stressors over long periods of time shape the capacities and cultural practices of consumers to cope, to adjust, to become pragmatic, develop repertoires of resistance, and to transform. While they identify that many consumers can successfully become perpetually resilient, they point out that some consumers may be unable to do so. Similarly, Boost and Meier (2017) study German consumers during times of economic crisis and identify practices of social resilience, bricolage, saving, and home production as responses but point to the significant personal costs associated with doing so. These ideas on persistent resilience recognise that consumers, communities, and their networks often develop responses not only to crises, isolated adverse events, or sudden shocks, but also as continuous reactions to everyday adversity and long-term challenges – such as an austere economy, policy shifts, and the changing nature of employment (Andres and Round 2015; Golubchikov 2011; Szmigin et al. 2020). A key concern here is that this ends up normalising consumer resilience as an exacting

response to seemingly unavoidable 'permacrisis' and disruptions in a world that is constantly changing, more complex, dangerous, and outside the individual's control.

Other consumer culture studies informed by cultural repertoire theory (Yang et al., 2024), practice theory (Phipps et al., 2017), and the philosophy of everyday life (Canavan, 2023) show how consumers draw on their cultural repertoires to cope with everyday life, adapt, transform, and to create a sense of 'normality' and 'ontological security' in the context of uncertainty and disruption brought by pandemics, climate change, and economic crises. Consumer culture theory research has also theorised the resilient citizen -consumer subject as a form of governmentality framed by empowerment and agency to address social problems, but which ultimately serves to responsibilise consumers (Coskuner-Balli, 2020; Giesler & Veresiu, 2014). Research has also illustrated that when dealing with disability, resilience of family caregivers of autistic children is interplayed with liminality emphasising the perpetual dimension of the crisis that some consumers need to navigate on a daily basis and which speaks more to survival than human flourishing (O'Loughlin et al., 2024). These studies stress human connections, and social and cultural capital as crucial resources for resilience both at the individual and community level (Huang et al., 2020; Wulandhari et al., 2022). Others called to expand theoretical horizons and explore dynamics of consumer resilience by examining how different types of agency can develop at the household or community level (Mende et al., 2024).

Community resilience and consumers

Another body of work recognises the significance of social capital and community networks in fostering resilience (Almedom, 2005). Community psychology, public health, development studies, and sociology have made important contributions in bringing the communitarian dimension of resilience to the fore. The concept of community resilience draws on both psychological and socio-ecological knowledge areas, emphasising the collective capacity to thrive amidst change and uncertainty (Berkes & Ross, 2013). Definitions of community resilience articulate that it is a process connecting material, economic and socio-cultural resources by community members to adapt and flourish in dynamically changing and adverse environments (Magis, 2010; Norris et al., 2008). This acknowledges not only different levels of resilience but also reflects a different way of understanding how resilience is shaped by the connections between places, resources, people and systems. This integrated approach underscores the relationship between individual, community, and ecological resilience, enriching our understanding of resilience within socio-ecological systems (Masten & Obradovic, 2008).

These perspectives are reflected in a nascent body of literature exploring community and collective aspects of consumer resilience. Hutton's (2016) study with low-income women highlights how relational coping is a key dimension of resilience, which further emphasises the need to look beyond individualistic agency-centred notions. Similarly, Bruce and Banister (2019) demonstrated how army wives respond to vulnerability by integrating individual and collective strategies to create communities of coping. Ozanne and Ozanne (2016) show how when facing disasters and experiencing distrust in companies and government, consumers turn to alternative collaborative forms of consumption. Krasnikov et al. (2022) examined consumer responses to COVID-19 policy interventions including the closure of stores, transport,

offices, and schools to identify the emergence of adaptive capacities of economic development, communication and information, and transformative potential that fostered community resilience. Meanwhile, studies on marketing and war reveal how marketing activism, manifested through visual symbolism, becomes a psycho-social and cultural resource that facilitates collective consumer and community resilience (Kipnis et al., 2025). Adopting a community resilience lens is proposed in this context to support the notion of citizen-consumers and advance research into citizen-consumer responsibilisation (Coskuner-Balli, 2020; Giesler & Veresiu, 2014; Kipnis et al., 2025).

Service and social marketing systems perspectives on consumer resilience

Finally, research in services and social marketing has incorporated systems perspectives on resilience (Kubacki et al., 2020; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2023; Wood, 2019). Definitions here consider resilience as *persistence* – the ability of systems, communities, and individuals to react to and cope with change in order to rebound to previous conditions and protect the status quo, but also *adaptability* as the ability of the system to integrate change, and finally, *transformability* to become flexible in order to deal with the uncertain evolution of complex systems and disruption (Frow et al., 2019; Kubacki et al., 2020; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2023; Wood, 2019). A few marketing scholars (e.g. Huang et al., 2020; Kubacki et al., 2020) note that resilience may have positive and negative effects. Kubacki et al. (2020) stress that system-positive resilience can lead to change as an opportunity for innovation and development, while resilience can also have negative consequences when structural conditions frame it in terms of reactive responses to constant disruption. Wood (2019) argues for the value of a socio-ecological conceptualisation of resilience as an alternative to individualist approaches, and which can account for the structural influences on consumer behaviour and well-being.

Towards an integrative conceptual framework for consumer resilience

Charting the extant literature reveals that consumer resilience is a contested concept (O'Loughlin et al., 2023). Work has tended to focus on specific levels or manifestations of consumer resilience, for example, individual (Rew & Minor, 2018), community (Ozanne & Ozanne, 2016), social (Boost & Meier, 2017), systems (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2023), and perpetual (Szmigin et al., 2020) – or position resilience within the context of other related concerns such as disruption (Phipps et al., 2017), or vulnerability (Baker, 2009). There is a dearth of more critical multi-disciplinary perspectives on resilience that look to its political dimensions and rationale (Joseph, 2013), negative effects (Szmigin et al., 2020), or Global South relational and communitarian perspectives which can provide alternative viewpoints and expand our understanding of the conceptual utility of resilience (Amo-Agyemang, 2021; Wandji, 2019).

Our aim in this paper is to develop a more integrative conceptual framework of resilience to enrich existing marketing and consumer research scholarship on consumer resilience, and to prompt further reflection on its theoretical and practical implications. We adopt an explicating approach for conceptual contributions (MacInnis, 2011), in which we aim to define and then explicate the key dimensions of consumer resilience. As explained by MacInnis (2011, p. 144) explicating involves delineation – and serves the

objective of 'detailing, articulating, charting, describing, or depicting an entity'. Specifically, our approach involves the 'creation of new constructs and creative overlay of a network of constructs from existing literature' (MacInnis et al., 2020, p. 8). In adopting this approach, our goal is to stimulate debate and encourage researchers to consider how they might study consumer resilience and enrich our understanding of how this relates to broader political and socio-economic structures.

To inform the development of our conceptual framework, we engaged with broader interdisciplinary knowledge searching across three databases – Scopus, Web of Science, and EBSCOhost. Thus, our scoping review of the extant literature on consumer resilience, resilience, and disruption drew on knowledge from across the business, social science, engineering, and ecology disciplines, which incorporates learning from both Western and Global South scholarship. Our review of this literature included the analysis of key definitions, explanations, and conceptualisations of resilience and consumer resilience and disruption. This helped inform our conceptual framework, which features five dimensions: (1) politics, (2) relationality, (3) perpetuity, (4) communitarianism, and (5) reconstitution. We found that while many of these dimensions have been explored individually in conceptualisations of consumer resilience and are more prominent in the Global South and non-marketing resilience literatures, there is a significant gap that overlooks the political and relational dynamics between neoliberal capitalism and individuals and communities. We point to the tension between individual and community capacities for resilience and structural forces which overlooks the need for a more coherent, integrative, and responsible approach which must include decision makers in positions of power, and which addresses the underlying causes that perpetuate the perceived need for consumer resilience.

Therefore, we propose a holistic framework for understanding consumer resilience in response to politics, a neglected dimension in consumer resilience, as well as the fragmented conceptualisations from the consumer and marketing literature. An integrative framework allows us to understand how these dimensions are connected and to explain what shapes the need for resilience, what type of resilience is needed, and how that can be enacted at different levels, as well as the way resilience emerges and how it is practiced by consumers, citizens, communities, and systems. We point to how individual and community resilience are different forms of the same ideological paradigm that shifts responsibility from institutions, such as corporations and governments, onto consumers and communities.

Politics

'Politics' is an overarching dimension that governs ideas about resilience, and we argue that politics presents a frame within which all other dimensions exist. Politics relates to the set of power relations and activities associated with making decisions, distributing power, and assigning status and resources among groups and individuals in society (Gamble, 2019). Politics frames everything we do in the social world, including what drives disruptions and crises, and who, when, where, how and whether consumers can become resilient in response (Vuori, 2021). The politics of resilience is often indirectly referred to in marketing and consumer research, for example, when problematising the individual responsibilisation of consumers to

respond to climate change (Giesler & Veresiu, 2014), or economic recessions (Coskuner-Balli, 2020), or in foregrounding the role of austerity policies in fostering a climate in which the requirement for resilience becomes perpetual (Szmigin et al., 2020).

However, in other social science disciplines such as human geography and cultural studies, the politics of resilience are more overtly a topic of concern (Golubchikov, 2011; Humbert & Joseph, 2019). Acknowledging these perspectives, we identify that the politics of consumer resilience is an important conceptual dimension to recognise in our framework, and which manifests in several ways concerning: the larger systemic and structural forces – such as government policies, corporate interests, and global crises – that shape the conditions under which resilience is needed, its use as a political tool, the level of resilience (individual, community, systems, etc.), the type (coping, resistance, adaptation and transformation), the duration, questions about who can and cannot become resilient, and its impacts and effects through how it is practiced, manifested and supported.

The first way in which we may consider the politics of consumer resilience relates to the causes of disruptions and crises that necessitate the very need to become resilient. Certain life events such as childhood trauma, abuse and violence, relationship breakdown, job loss, or homelessness may create conditions in which consumers may need to become resilient. However, beyond these more personal challenges, disruptions and crises such as climate change, economic recessions, and war are often driven by the politics and actions of governments and corporations (Cockburn, 2021; Cuomo, 2011; Harvey, 2010; Newell, 2008; Wright & Nyberg, 2015). A range of political factors including deregulation, globalisation, expediency, profit motives, desires to control resources and expand markets, the co-option of the state by corporate interests, the reduction of the welfare state are all political factors that have contributed to the magnitude and frequency of major crises and disruptions in recent decades (Klein, 2007).

As an example, the relentless pursuit of fossil fuel consumption has accelerated climate change (Pirani, 2018), while financial deregulation and unchecked corporate practices have fuelled economic instability (Harvey, 2010). In response to these crises, however, both state and corporate entities have increasingly shifted the burden of adaptation and recovery onto citizens, advocating for persistent individual and community resilience. This expectation, while seemingly pragmatic, often overlooks the political structures and forces that create and perpetuate these crises, effectively placing the onus on vulnerable populations, neglecting system resilience while failing to hold powerful institutions accountable for their role in causing widespread harm. Thus, the discourse surrounding resilience has become a convenient way to deflect attention away from the politics that causes or exacerbates disruption and crises.

Promoting and facilitating consumer resilience has emerged as a key political tool for governments, supranational organisations, and market stakeholders over the past two decades (European Commission, 2021; HM Government, 2022; NSW Government, 2021, United Nations, 2020). Critical social science scholars argue that the use of resilience as a political tool is influenced by its intuitive ideological alignment with neoliberal ideals of individual responsibility, adaptation and agility and resignation to disruptive events (Walker & Cooper, 2011). From this perspective, consumer resilience is a natural apparatus for contemporary neoliberal governance in which the state is smaller, the logic of the market is followed, and under which responsibility for dealing with disruption and crises

shifts onto individual consumers and communities through awareness raising and promoting risk management, adaptability, and reflexive self-governance (Joseph, 2013).

Indeed, the UK Government's (2022) resilience framework demonstrates this political orientation when describing a need to 'empower everyone to make a contribution' (p. 2) and in setting out 'what we expect of . . . the local tier, voluntary organisations, community groups and the public' (p. 5). This use of consumer resilience as a political tool is illustrated by Coskuner-Balli (2020, p. 340) who points to how the political discourse of President Barack Obama following the 2007–2008 Global Financial Crisis spoke to the importance of responsible and resilient citizen-consumer subjects in successfully steering the USA through the crisis. In effect, consumer resilience becomes a political tool of neoliberal governmentality (Coskuner-Balli, 2020), facilitating the act of governing from a distance and embedding ideas of responsibilised self-governance (Foucault, 2008). The growing political discourse on promoting resilience demonstrates how according to Foucault (2008, p. 132), 'neo-liberalism should not therefore be identified with laissez-faire, but rather with permanent vigilance, activity and intervention'. However, this is not to say that consumer resilience as a political tool always works to successfully create neoliberal subjects, and indeed research has pointed to how consumers attempt to evade and resist such subjectification through deploying repertoires of resistance (Szmigin et al., 2020).

There is also a politics concerning who can and cannot become resilient as a consumer in response to disruption and crises. The neoliberal agenda that promotes resilience does so based on tacit assumptions that most or all consumers will be able to become resilient. Yet, at the personal level, the ability to become psychologically resilient is dependent on loving, emotionally responsive, consistent, and reliable caregiving; as well as a social environment that provides opportunities to master challenges and stresses that are 'steeling' and 'inoculating', during childhood (Southwick et al., 2016). The absence of these conditions in the formative years of consumers, as well as overexposure to severe trauma, may mean consumers are less able to become resilient in response to challenges. Scholars also point out that personal socio-economic characteristics and macro-environmental factors such as lack of supportive networks or good government welfare inhibit resilience (Kubacki et al., 2020; Wood, 2019). Furthermore, considerable cultural and social capital, time, and mobility are often required for consumers to become resilient, incurring significant personal costs on those who become resilient, and inhibiting those less able to access these resources from resiliency (Boost & Meier, 2017). Therefore, fostering systems resilience across the micro, meso, and macro levels rather than simply focusing on resilient individuals becomes important.

However, marketing and consumer research has so far paid limited attention to the politics of who can and cannot become resilient. Much existing research on resilience has tended to focus on consumers and communities who are usually able to successfully become resilient and achieve positive transformation and outcomes (Ingram et al., 2024; Ozanne & Ozanne, 2016). Yet, as Szmigin et al. (2020) articulate, the requirement to become perpetually resilient does not always lead to positive transformation, and often leaves some consumers sad, worried, and anxious and struggling to develop resilience. Or as illustrated by Bhattacharyya and Belk (2019), even becoming resilient may lead to the oppression of certain consumer groups. These political considerations of who can and cannot become resilient reinforces criticism on relying on facilitating consumer resilience as the primary response to disruption and crises.

The politics of consumer resilience is also apparent in the impact and effects it creates to responsibilise individuals and imposing personal costs. Arguably, the very idea of consumer resilience is responsibilising, and infers a requirement for people to be resilient to successfully navigate disruptions in market contexts (Giesler & Veresiu, 2014). Under the politics of resilience, consumers become held as responsible for being resilient in the face of major disruption – for example, to help mitigate the effects of climate change through their practices of responsible consumption (Jones et al., 2013). Embedded within the neoliberal myth of shared responsibility (Shamir, 2008), this framing arguably shifts responsibility from the state and corporations to individual agents (Sheth et al., 2011). This responsibilises consumers to be active managers of their own resilience and reconstitution in response to disruptive events (Giesler & Veresiu, 2014). Under the guise of empowerment, this proactive framing of consumer resilience operates as a means to sustain the political and social order for elites abrogating their responsibilities to change policies and business practices to mitigate disruptions and crises, despite increasing chaos in the world around us (Morales & Harris, 2014).

The personal costs of becoming resilient as a consumer are also potentially high, especially for those who are from lower socio-economic status, or reside in countries with weak welfare, health and public services, or fragmented social support systems. Becoming and being resilient can be tiring and stressful, create anxiety, and cause health and family problems (Boost & Meier, 2017; Szmigin et al., 2020). Furthermore, it often requires significant economic, social and cultural resources, knowledge and know-how, free time, and may only become possible over extended periods (Boost & Meier, 2017; Phipps et al., 2017). Furthermore, and especially for consumers experiencing vulnerability, the changes associated with becoming resilient often create stress and involve abandoning more familiar and comfortable practices even if these are harmful (Kubacki et al., 2020). Bhattacharyya and Belk (2019) also articulate how consumer resilience among poor people in India can lead to subservience to exploitation, oppression, and class-based domination. These more undesirable impacts and effects of consumer resilience raise political questions over whether pursuing this agenda is morally and ethically sound or is inclusive. Furthermore, in aligning with and reinforcing the destructive neoliberal capitalist system, the effects of consumer resilience seem to keep us trapped by oppression (Joseph, 2013). As such, we articulate that politics is an overarching dimension framing consumer resilience.

Relationality

Within the political context that frames consumer resilience, we identify that relationality, and the interconnectedness of all things (e.g. people, communities, organisations, ideas, country and nature, events, materials, spaces and places) that exist in contexts of disruption and resilience act as a distributive force. We posit that relationality shapes social structures and relationships, and how access to resources, opportunities, and power unfolds in ways that can foster or inhibit consumer resilience. Relationality emphasises the interconnectedness of individuals, communities, and systems, including how relationships across time and space contribute to the stability and adaptation of systems and so, the need for resilience. Relationality helps us understand how individuals, communities and systems interact, and how that may lead to calls for resilience but also it guides us to

view resilience as a process shaped by these interactions over time and what types of resilience are required.

Although relationality has been explored in consumer resilience, in particular in relation to social capital and networks, and material, social-relational and symbolic manifestations (Ingram et al., 2024), our framework positions relationality as an ontological force shaping how resilience occurs and is performed. Scholarship from the Global South and Indigenous knowledge makes a valuable contribution here by challenging individualist ontologies and providing an alternative, relational view of an interconnected, interdependent way of being in the world and resisting the hegemony of neoliberal, political and economic social inequality (Armstrong et al., 2024; Raciti, 2023).

As a key concept in the social science literature, relationality points to how human and non-human bodies, ideas, objects, words, gestures, places, and spaces are held together in systems, assemblages or working arrangements that are mutually affecting (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Mandalaki & Fotaki, 2020; Raciti, 2023). It is through the ongoing relations between bodies (human and non-human, material and immaterial) that people achieve a sense of belonging in the world and through which individual subjectivity arises (Braidotti, 2010). Relationality emphasises how changing contexts can disrupt ideas of the rational, self-reflexive individual, and points to the ongoing processes of 'becoming' - with other bodies, things, ideas and places – that help to establish physical, psychological, and emotional stability and safety (Ahmed, 2004; Braidotti, 2002; Probyn, 2005).

Resilience as a relational achievement is examined by O'Loughlin et al. (2023) in the context of disability. They acknowledge how social relations between individual actors and service provision systems require an ongoing persistence to navigate towards successful outcomes. This work stresses the changing nature of relations between bodies, ideas and things and points to how relations may endure across generations with fluctuating levels of success and endurance. This work aligns with conceptualisations of resilience as 'persistent' and requiring the ongoing working and reworking of relations to achieve a sense of coping with multiple changes (Golubchikov, 2011). Szmigin et al. (2020, p. 1) highlight the relational elements of resilience, arguing that it is grounded in how people are enabled to move to a 'new reality'. This adds to understandings of persistent stressors which may extend across time (e.g. racism, bullying, or disease) and acknowledges the importance of personal, social, and cultural capacities – rather than a reliance on service/economic capital alone – in how people are able to build resilience and maintain their identities within social and relational networks. Szmigin et al. (2020) illustrate how resilience is an ongoing negotiation between actors, things, ideas, services, communities, and markets rather than a normative form of coping with adversity.

Through relationality, we can think about consumers and their resilience in terms of how relations may be formed or disrupted through changes to markets, supply chains, or marketplace offerings, and people who are situated in unstable, ever-changing contexts which may include war or conflict, personal or political upheaval, or environmental crises, and who are ultimately enmeshed within social and cultural networks. Pellandini-Simányi et al. (2024) in the context of financial products, point to how collective inattention that is driven and maintained by attention-averting social, situational, and cultural factors can lead to 'collective ignorance' where market dynamics encourage greater uptake of risky and disruptive products. Hence, consumers are influenced by distal relations with other consumers and markets. Or alternatively, consumers may enrol coping strategies

including 'resilient optimism' when they adopt alternative lifestyles and consumption practices which come about through unstable work, housing, financial, and social relations (Mimoun et al., 2022).

Thus, relationality points to the interconnected nature of consumption, markets, contexts, and consumers – consumers do not navigate disruption as lone rational thinking agents making considered and ethical choices. Consumers act and react in a multitude of ways to the unfolding of everyday life – whether that be through navigating personal crises, national emergencies, or global catastrophes. For example, consumers when stressed and anxious may seek out particular brands, products, and services to compensate for the feelings of loss of control (Beck et al., 2020), or use consumption servicescapes for 'therapeutic' renewal (Higgins et al., 2019). This brings to light not only the arbitrary behaviours of consumers but also the differential capacities to respond to structural and other disruptions in terms of available resources, markets, and social and cultural capital.

Yet, we propose that resilience or the ability to cope with these disruptions does not reside in an individual mind or body, but rather is an outcome of the totality of networks and relations, and how at some junctures support or coping strategies may arise, while at other junctures there may be obstruction. For example, some consumers in the Global North may enact resilience through collective actions that reject corporate marketplace offerings and deploy repertoires of resistance (Szmigin et al., 2020), while for certain groups in the Global South there may be no choice but to become subservient to what the market may offer (Bhattacharyya & Belk, 2019). Products may offer an ethical consumer choice in one context, while in another they may constitute livelihood and subsistence.

Relationality is a productive tool for thinking about how to build resilient communities that incorporate multiple ecologies of belonging within constantly changing and highly unstable contexts. Expanding our view of resilience through consideration of relationality provides opportunities for thinking about connections with the 'marginalized, excluded, exploited. . .the others – women or sexual minorities, natives and non-Europeans and earth or animal others' (Braidotti, 2010, p. 409). By understanding the fundamental importance of relations between humans, non-humans, (im)materiality, times, and spaces, we can begin to move away from defining and categorising resilience to look more towards what resilience *does*. Our framework brings together thinking that considers networks of relations to shed light on the outcomes for individuals, communities, institutions, governments, and society.

Perpetuity

Building on the politics governing consumer resilience, and how relationality acts as a distributive force within this context, we next identify the third dimension of our conceptual framework as perpetuity – which represents a characteristic of disruption and resilience itself. As highlighted in the politics section, expanding our understanding of resilience requires analysing not only what resilience is and does but also what causes a need for resilience in the first place, moving the focus to disruption, uncertainty, and the 'chronic' crisis that have become features of the 'everyday' life in our society. Indeed, critical studies from the Global South have called for expanding and politicising the resilience paradigm by analysing disruption across time and space (Wandji, 2019). This

has informed understandings of persistent resilience (Andres & Round, 2015), and resilience as resistance (Ryan, 2015).

Emergent consumer resilience scholarship has identified the importance of a temporal dimension in shaping the types and manifestations of resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, caregiving, disability, and the cost-of-living crisis (O'Loughlin et al., 2023, 2024; Szmigin et al., 2020). This is reinforced by work from non-Western contexts revealing how continuous stressors and crises led by conflict and discrimination may lead to collective forms of resilience such as resistance, activism, and change. In particular, research from non-Western contexts including Africa, the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem evidences how resilience emerges through everyday practices of adaptability and identity and culture reinforcement as resistance to those with power (Ryan, 2015; Wandji, 2019). Perpetuity here prompts us to interrogate the stressors and side effects of the ongoing need for resilience and calls into question current individual-centric perspectives of resilience.

As disruption, uncertainty, and complexity become constants of our world, individuals are increasingly challenged to be in a continuous state of resilience in response to the pressures of everyday life (Andres & Round, 2015; Szmigin et al., 2020). A 'permacrisis' driven by economic austerity, post-pandemic changes, conflicts, and climate change coupled with changes to the role of state and the welfare regimes means that people are in a permanent state of alert that calls for resilience. The need for resilience thus becomes perpetual, a natural response to a new 'unnatural'. It is not only a matter of 'bouncing back' from a major shock but rather resilience operates as a low-level force that demands a level of adaptability and the use of mechanisms to cope with the pressures of everyday life (Andres & Round, 2015; O'Loughlin et al., 2023, 2024; Szmigin et al., 2020). As shown by O'Loughlin et al. (2023) persistent resilience may manifest through practices of coping and pragmatism, but also relating to places and people, drawing upon social capital and communications to adjust, develop new competences, and cultural repertoires of resistance that may lead to 'evolutionary resilience' and social transformation. As part of the move away from individual responsibilisation, it has been suggested that there is a need for alternatives to resilience that focus on healing from structural wounds rather than adapting to them (Suslovic & Lett, 2024).

From this perspective, resilience is to be found in the mundane, micro-level practices, in the relationships and networks that are forged because of chronic adversity or which are strengthened by it (Anderson, 2019; Andres & Round, 2015). Recognising the perpetuation of resilience means moving the focus from what resilience is to the normalisation of instability and adversity (Anderson, 2015). This is evident in the consumption context where consumers are expected to respond to adverse corporate behaviour (Wang et al., 2020), to act as citizen-consumers (Kipnis et al., 2025), and even resist the market to create social change (Ozanne & Ozanne, 2016). Critical studies have called for rethinking resilience to recognise how processes of resilience may be leading to increased risk on individuals when they are expected to continuously adapt and change internally to unchanged external adverse conditions (Anderson, 2019). Others called for research examining the long-term effects of resilience on vulnerability and well-being through a capability approach (Huang et al., 2020). A post-humanist critique of the concept argues for framing resilience as a practice of recovery, of being 'fully reflexively engaged in the present moment' (Sloan, 2021, p. 10). Yet, studies of consumer resilience signal that this

reflexive, and engaged mode can be tiring, draining, and not always possible due to people's capabilities and the limitations of the socio-ecological system within which we operate (O'Loughlin et al., 2024; Szmigin et al., 2020).

Understanding consumer resilience as everyday practices of coping and resistance rather than a response to an exceptional event assumes questioning the structural conditions of the market and policy context which demands such responses. Recognising the perpetuity of consumer resilience does not mean resignation in the face of adversity, but assuming collective responsibility at all levels of the system (citizen, market, corporations and governments) to challenge and remove persistent resilience stressors. This presents an opportunity for thinking about new perspectives for, and mechanisms of, resilience which are more distributive, equitable, and morally sound.

Communitarianism

The fourth dimension of our conceptual framework is communitarianism, which is a component and mechanism of resilience. Communitarianism relates to the collective (or individualistic) manifestation of resilience and as a source of transformative social change (or not). It also underscores relationality and the importance of social networks and community support in building resilience, as individual capabilities are shaped by, and in turn shape, social norms, shared resources, and human connections. Communitarianism shows what is possible to achieve through relational approaches that enrich collective and individual forms of resilience within the constraints of political economies that necessitate constant resilience.

Community psychology and health, development studies, and sociology reinforce the importance of a communitarian dimension of resilience. Communitarianism is a philosophy emphasising the importance of social values and community bonds, arguing that individual behaviour is shaped by the social and cultural norms and institutions that surround them (Etzioni,1995). In the resilience literature, communitarianism is typically reflected in the community resilience perspective. As we previously highlighted, the concept of community resilience relates to how resilience is shaped by the connections between places, resources, people, and systems – in addition to resilience across the different levels of the ecosystem (micro, meso, and macro levels) and is described as 'a process linking a network of adaptive capacities(resources with dynamic attributes)to adaptation after a disturbance of adversity' (Norris et al., 2008, p.127). There is a focus within the community resilience literature on mobilising community capabilities in times of crises (Ozanne & Ozanne, 2016), and identifying features of community resilience (O'Loughlin et al., 2024). O'Loughlin et al. (2024) identify that individual and community resilience share the resilient capacities of coping and pragmatism, while community resilience also possesses spatial and relational, and social capital and communications resilient capacities. These ideas suggest that conceptualisations of consumer (individual) resilience should be guided by the notion that an individual's capabilities to be resilient are not developed independently, rather, these are drawn from, shaped by, and in turn also shape social and cultural norms that surround them. These ideas underscore the importance of a communitarian dimension of consumer resilience.

Scholarship from the Global South can provide ideas for how a communitarian element can be embedded within our conceptualisations of consumer resilience. Global South

scholars argue that there is a need for more collectivist interpretations of phenomena, given that individual action occurs within the boundaries of social and cultural norms governed by the collective (Ikuenobe, 2018; Kagitcibasi, 2005). For example, Afrocentric studies in resilience have argued that the resilience phenomena should not be uniformly conceptualised across contexts and cultures and that deeper exploration of collectivist philosophies underpinning individual resilience is needed (Theron et al., 2013). Indeed, given that disruptions are often faced by communities as a whole (e.g. pandemics, economic crises and natural disasters), communitarianism underpins not only the collective response to such events (Baker & Baker, 2016) but also the individual's response to such crises as part of the collective. This is described by African Ubuntu philosophy as a collective way of being (Mokwena, 2007; Prozesky, 2009). For instance, a study on immigrant resilience identifies how African immigrants attach meanings, processes, and values that differ from current conceptualisations of resilience in the scholarly literature, demonstrating how Global North-dominated conceptualisations of resilience are insufficient in capturing the experiences of collectivist cultures, like African cultures (Okekelhejirika et al., 2020).

Indeed, engagement with communitarian perspectives, such as those guided by the Global South scholarship, can challenge the predominant normative individualistic conceptualisations of consumer resilience. The communitarian dimension of consumer resilience acknowledges that resilience is always collectively oriented, shaped by sociocultural values and norms and is polyrhythmic and pluriversal (Amo-Agyemang, 2021; Marin, 2021). This can help enrich existing marketing and consumer knowledge of resilience, enabling more equitable and holistic conceptualisations of the resilience concept (Pitidis et al., 2024).

Reconstitution

Our fifth and final dimension is reconstitution, which is also a component and mechanism of resilience and relates to the bouncing back, reformation, and transformation inherent in becoming resilient. We argue that reconstitution should not simply be about the responsibilisation of the person, as it is currently promoted in neoliberal political agendas, but rather about empowered individuals, drawing from social and cultural capital, that work together to transform themselves and their communities, not only responding to but proactively mitigating future challenges. Our understanding of resilience should not ignore people's agency to act and shape resilient communities and systems through time as agency is a consumer right (Barnhart et al., 2024). According to Graham et al. (2016), resilience research and practice often focuses on structural change or stability rather than the behaviour of agentic actors within a changing system. O'Loughlin et al. (2023, p. 40) highlight the importance of individual resilience when people 'develop a sustainable set of capacities to help creatively navigate the market and flexibly adapt to the long-term effects of intense and long-standing crises'. So, the idea of reconstitution moves beyond responsibilisation to shaping the responsible consumer (Bajde et al., 2021; Giesler & Veresiu, 2014), who can manage their own resilience, through coping, pragmatism, adjustments, social and cultural capital, or repertoires of resistance, and eventually transform themselves, their practices, and

systems (Boost & Meier, 2017; Maddi, 2012; Rew & Minor, 2018; Szmigin et al., 2020; Wood, 2019)

When it comes to managing one's resilience, examples of resource-constrained consumers, such as immigrants and the poor, show how people create resilience pathways to enhance their well-being thereby fulfilling a sense of control over their life (Bhattacharyya & Belk, 2019; Huang et al., 2020), and enhancing their autonomy (Wertenbroch et al., 2020) through day-to-day coping practices or pragmatism (Szmigin et al., 2020). Building individual resilience and agency can lead to social resilience (O'Loughlin et al., 2023) as people support each other to deal with adversity.

The sharing of responsibility between consumers and providers as part of a co-creation approach (Aboelenien et al., 2021; Tikkanen et al., 2023) can reduce inequalities and empower consumers (Blocker et al., 2022). As Mende et al. (2024) argue, organisations can and should support consumers to mitigate vulnerability by supporting them to build 'resilience-fuelling' consumer agency. This includes the agency to anticipate, prevent, and prepare for potential crises (proactive crisis management), as well as adaptive agency to absorb and overcome current crisis and transformative agency to prevent future crises. Moral values and behaviours determine the type of agency and consequently the resilience outcomes (O'Loughlin et al., 2023). Transformative agency is particularly important as it helps consumers 'bounce forward' by learning from and pursuing new opportunities related to crisis, and by addressing the root causes of consumer vulnerability post-crisis. Through reconstitution, consumers have the potential to transform current systems by disrupting established power dynamics and authority (Jones & Hietanen, 2023; Ulver & Laurell, 2020).

Reconstitution can be about empowering consumers from the ground up, and particularly resource-constrained consumers, through providing opportunities for self-realisation and positioning them as creative decision-makers rather than passive recipients of support (Bajde et al., 2021; Cherrier et al., 2023; Giesler & Veresiu, 2014). Moreover, consumer empowerment enables citizens to enact a form of social power which can lead to community resilience (Milani Marin & Russo, 2016). Empowered individuals are more capable of reconstituting their consumption (O'Loughlin et al., 2023; Szmigin et al., 2020) in response to challenges because they possess the tools to assess options, prioritise needs, and seek resources. So, empowerment supports resilience because it allows individuals to act not only reactively but also proactively, anticipating potential risks and building strategies to mitigate them before they become overwhelming. When resilience-building efforts focus on empowering individuals, they enable a greater capacity for resilience at a community and systemic level (Kubacki et al., 2020). It is noteworthy that underlying politico-economic frameworks and institutional alliances can support or hinder this transformation (Bhattacharyya & Belk, 2019; Giesler & Veresiu, 2014) and so a holistic approach, as reflected in our framework, is necessary to understanding consumer resilience.

Discussion

Theoretical implications

In this paper, we build upon existing scholarship that has accounted for psychological factors related to coping and adaptability (e.g. Ball & Lamberton, 2015; Bermes, 2021; Huang et al., 2020; Hutton, 2016; Liu et al., 2023), cultural practices of consumers in response to disruptive events (Campbell et al., 2020), and community, relational and system dynamics that shape consumer resilience (Ingram et al., 2024; Kubacki et al., 2020; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2023). Our conceptual framework draws these threads together and seeks to address a lack of conceptual clarity and development of integrative perspectives in this domain (O'Loughlin et al., 2023). Furthermore, our conceptual framework also seeks to address the lack of focus on the political dimensions of consumer resilience in the extant literature (see Coskuner-Balli, 2020 for an exception). We also foreground a relational perspective drawing upon Global South knowledge in which relationality is a core tenet.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the five dimensions of our holistic conceptual framework for consumer resilience are interconnected and interrelated as (1) politics governs and frames whether and how resilience occurs, (2) relationality acts as a distributive force connecting socio-material entities within resilience contexts, (3) perpetuity represents the temporal characteristics of disruptions and resilience, and (4) communitarianism and (5) reconstitution function as components and mechanisms of resilience itself. We also should clarify that Figure 1 is not intended to be a process or causal relationship model showing all the different triggers, factors impacting, moderators and mediators of, and outcomes of consumer resilience. Instead, we develop a conceptual framework for how we should conceptualise, think about, and what can be understood as key dimensions of consumer resilience that account for relevant mechanisms and manifestations.

By introducing the politics of resilience as a dimension of our framework, we highlight the need to focus on the political aspects of consumer resilience – such as what drives disruption, its role as a political and neocolonial tool, who can become resilient, its impacts, and fair collective responses to permacrisis. Critics of discourses of resilience as a form of neoliberal governmentality and responsibilisation (Joseph, 2013) give warning to marketing scholars of the dangers from solely focusing on how consumers become resilient and how to facilitate this (see Rew & Minor, 2018; Wood, 2019). We must also critically consider the outcomes consumer resilience produces. Indeed, prior research has illustrated how an ongoing requirement to become resilient causes stress and anxiety (Szmigin et al., 2020), personal costs on time, energy, and health (Boost & Meier, 2017), and often involves giving up preferred practices and facing uncertainty (Kubacki et al., 2020). Yet despite these concerns being acknowledged, existing theorisations of consumer resilience tend to primarily focus on individual and communitarian consumer practices and processes for being and becoming resilient (Boost & Meier, 2017; Szmigin et al., 2020). This represents different manifestations of the same ideological shift abrogating governments, corporations and other societal institutions of responsibility and placing this onto consumers and communities. What is currently lacking is critical questioning of the political ideology and discourses promoting resilience as the logical response to disruption and crises, or more critical inquiry on the harms that can be created.

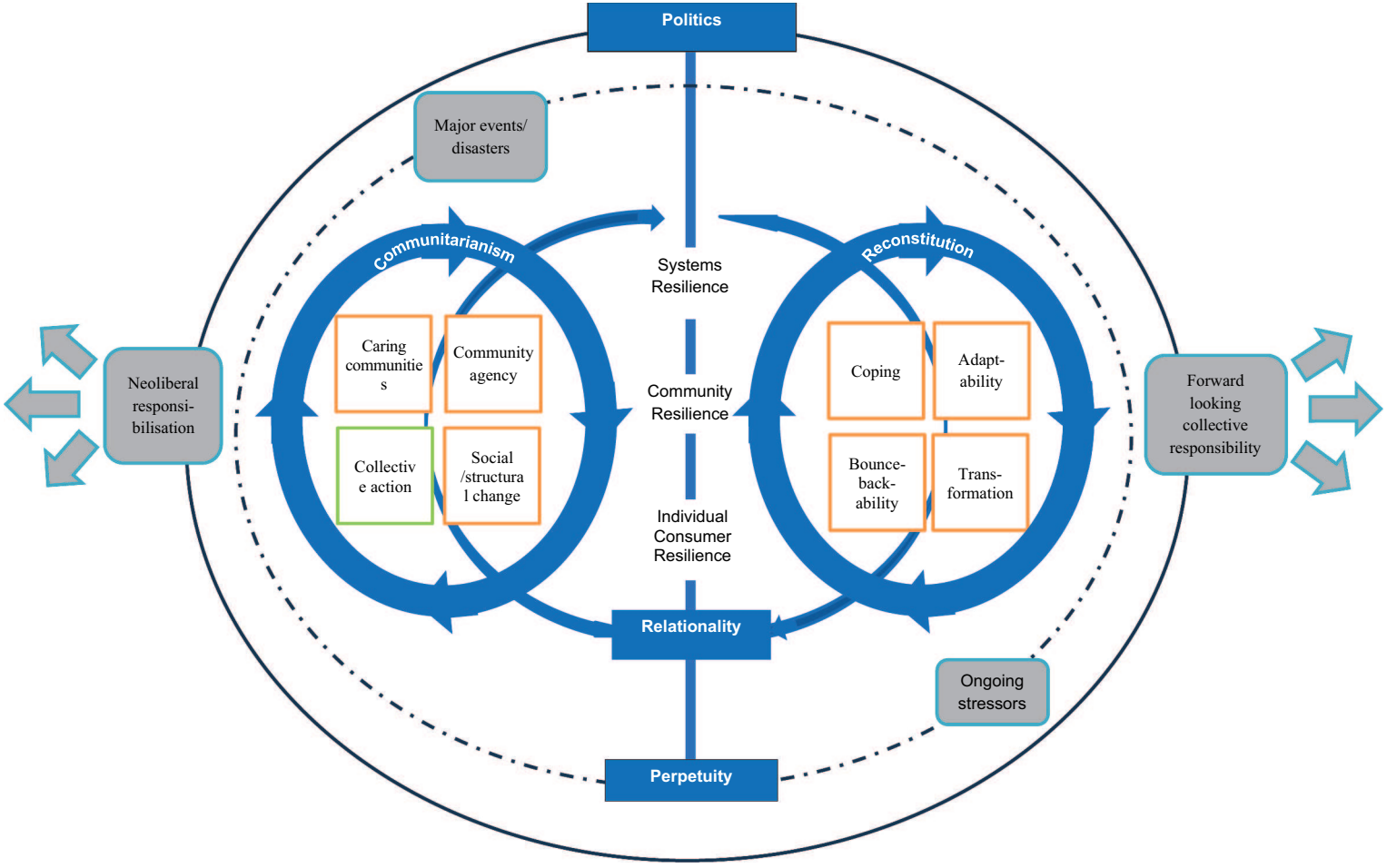

Figure 1. An integrative conceptual framework for consumer resilience.

We argue that the growing political discourse on promoting resilience represents another example of neoliberal consumer responsibilisation (see Barnhart et al., 2024; Giesler & Veresiu, 2014). This discourse helps to embed institutional logics that require consumers to become perpetually resilient in the face of intensifying disruptions and crises. Yet, the emergence of consumer resilience as a form of neoliberal governmentality and consideration of the potentially harmful implications this creates is not well captured in existing theorisations (O'Loughlin et al., 2023; Szmigin et al., 2020; Wood, 2019). Responsibilising consumers, whether at the individual level or within and across communities, to be resilient omits states and corporations from their duties to protect people and the environment. Current discourses on consumer resilience often uphold neoliberal capitalism logics and distract from challenging systemic issues (French & Wettstein, 2014; Joseph, 2013) while embedding neocolonial power structures and ideas (Amo-Agyemang, 2021).

Thus, conceptualisations of consumer resilience must address these questions of politics. Incorporating politics as a dimension in our conceptual framework and illustrating the tensions inherent between neoliberal responsibilisation and forward-looking collective responsibility in which governments and corporations take a more active role in preventing and mitigating disruption can help focus future scholarship in this area. For example, this opens up political questions about what more can be done to prevent or better mitigate disruptions and crises, why is consumer resilience even necessary in specific domains, is it morally right to promote it as the best response to disruptions and crises, who benefits from promoting it, which consumers can and cannot become resilient and what happens to those who are unable to do so, and what are the unintended consequences of promoting resilience?

We also enrich existing relational scholarship on consumer resilience (e.g. O'Loughlin et al., 2023) through the inclusion of relationality as a dimension in our conceptual framework. We argue that given how relationality is central to Global South knowledge (see Bhattacharyya & Belk, 2019; Raciti, 2023), there is benefit from engaging in such scholarship to develop our conceptual understanding of consumer resilience. A relational perspective challenges the predominant normative individualistic conceptualisations of consumer resilience. Such scholarship enriches current marketing and consumer research knowledge on resilience by accentuating how it is always relational and collectively oriented, is culturally contingent and embedded in cultural values and practices, is polyrhythmic and pluriversal, and is spatially and territorially contingent (Amo-Agyemang, 2021; Marin, 2021). Our framework acknowledges the temporal dynamics of consumer resilience through the dimension of perpetuity. This joins existing research that identifies its perpetual nature not only related to major disruptions (Jones et al., 2013) but also ongoing stressors and a burgeoning sense of permacrisis (Szmigin et al., 2020). Perpetuity implies that resilience must become embedded in everyday practices of copying and resistance, but also leads us to question the political economy under which such ongoing responses seem necessary. This means exploring opportunities to lighten the load on consumers and pushing governments, institutions and corporations to tackle and remove persistent resilience stressors.

Communitarianism as a dimension in our framework builds upon relationality and foregrounds how caring communities (O'Loughlin et al., 2023), community agency (Baker & Baker, 2016), collective action (Baker et al., 2007; Ozanne & Ozanne, 2016), and

consequential social and structural changes are important mechanisms for developing consumer resilience as well as responding to and mitigating disruptions, crises, and stressors. In this way, communitarianism becomes a tool for acknowledging the need for more holistic and collective efforts to support resilience – ideas which are central in Global South knowledge systems, which may extend previous understandings of social connectedness. Finally, our framework incorporates a reconstitutional dimension that acknowledges capacities, capabilities and practices of coping, adaptability, bounceback-ability and transformation (Baker & Baker, 2016; Huang et al., 2020; Kubacki et al., 2020) but where resilience does more than merely aid adoption or adaptation to new challenges, yet enables thinking about new ways that may spawn greater individual, social and system renewal, and thriving.

As such, we build on existing literature calling for more conceptual clarity around resilience (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2023), bridging individual and community/social perspectives on consumer resilience (O'Loughlin et al., 2023), acknowledging the relational and political dimensions (Coskuner-Balli, 2020; Joseph, 2013; Szmigin et al., 2020), and emphasising the importance of Global South perspectives (Armstrong et al., 2024; Marin, 2021). In doing so, we seek to offer a more holistic and synthesised conceptualisation of consumer resilience to inform future research as well as further theoretical advancements in this nascent area of scholarship. Our aim is to help enhance the explanatory power of consumer resilience as a conceptual tool, as well as amplify the relevance and applicability of the concept in a rapidly changing marketplace characterised by disruptions, and increasingly liquid and liminal consumption contexts in which consumers and communities face a myriad of challenges to navigating disruptions and crises.

Practical implications

From both a theoretical and practical perspective, we point to emerging philosophical ideas regarding the concept of 'forward-looking collective responsibility' as a fruitful pathway forward for rethinking how to build consumer resilience. Forward-looking collective responsibility refers to the responsibility of collective entities (e.g. states, firms and social movements) to address ongoing crises like climate change, the housing crisis, inflation, or food poverty (French & Wettstein, 2014). This recognises such entities may be the only social actors capable of mitigating major disruptions and crises. It does not simply focus on who causes problems (e.g. the fossil fuel industry driving climate change). Rather, it ascribes moral obligations to help create a better future – for instance, governments and companies actively reducing carbon emissions and improving planetary health. Assigning this responsibility to a collective actor means defining what they ought to do to contribute to a better world. Furthermore, while institutions and organisations should bear primary responsibility, consumer citizens are also expected to engage – by participating in democracy, protesting injustice, and expressing expectations of social entities (Crawford, 2014). Forward-looking collective responsibility emphasises building and sustaining the social, political, and economic institutions that enable citizens to assign responsibility and drive positive change.

This approach supports a collective response where individual consumer and community resilience play a role – but not the central one – in addressing disruption (Bruce & Banister, 2019; Hutton, 2016; Ozanne & Ozanne, 2016). The main focus is on building

societies and institutions that enable collective action and responsibility. Consumer resilience is seen as one tool among many within a pluralistic value-driven framework for assigning responsibility (Smiley, 2010). Forward-looking collective responsibility also recognises that some actors carry more obligation than others to prevent and mitigate disruptions and harm. As Isaacs (2014, p. 41) articulates, 'agents who are causally implicated and who benefit do indeed bear a heavier burden of obligation'. Distributive justice is key: all actors must do their fair share (Neuhäuser, 2014). While consumers should act responsibly and cultivate resilience, governments and firms have greater responsibilities to drive structural change. This reflects a relational view of fairness, where duties are shaped by each actor's role and capacity, and fairness itself motivates action (Neuhäuser, 2014, p. 246).

In practice, this would mean governments, supra-national organisations and corporations must bear a greater share of responsibility for building resilience by focusing on preventing disruptions and addressing systemic failures, rather than placing the primary burden on people and communities. Here, critical systems-thinking could help map actors, roles, and leverage points to both enable consumer resilience and tackle root causes of disruption, reducing overreliance on resilience alone (Jackson, 2019). While proposals like wealth taxes show promise, recent political developments – such as Trump's re-election and Elon Musk's actions with the Department of Government Efficiency – have further reduced the state in the USA, raising concerns. Consumer social movements will also be crucial to promote citizen activism for collective responsibility and distributive justice to mitigate crises and lessen the constant need for consumer resilience (Crawford, 2014). A relational, perpetual, communitarian approach recognises that consumers vary in capacity to respond to crises, with resource-poor groups facing greater limits. Strengthening relational ties and community resource sharing requires increased funding and support, focusing on vulnerable populations through genuine participatory methods – such as dialogical mapping, forums, and action research – that empower citizens and foster bottom-up solutions beyond tokenistic consultation.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

We acknowledge that our conceptual framework is not universal and may not fully capture the diverse aspects of consumer resilience. While our review of extant literature to inform the development of our framework was broad and inclusive, future research could benefit from large-scale systematic reviews, including those that incorporate non-English language sources, to further enrich our current understanding. It is also important to recognise that literature reviews can inadvertently reinforce normative theoretical assumptions. Advancing conceptual work in this area will require not only critical dialogue but also expanded empirical engagement. In particular, integrating knowledge from the Global South could offer valuable alternatives to dominant Eurocentric, individualistic, and psychological interpretations of resilience. Further research – particularly that informed by critical marketing scholarship – could illuminate both the positive and negative impacts of consumer resilience on individuals, communities, and broader society. Similarly, critically oriented inquiry into the politics of resilience, including its intersections with power, neoliberalism, and neo-colonialism, across diverse empirical contexts, would enhance the current knowledge base. Finally, as our study is conceptual in nature, we encourage empirical research that builds on the ideas presented

here and the work of O'Loughlin et al. (2023), particularly efforts that integrate individual, community, and systemic perspectives on consumer resilience. Such research would benefit from engaging with philosophies and methodologies rooted in collective participation – such as feminist epistemologies (e.g. Crenshaw, 1991), Indigenous Knowledge Systems (e.g. Smith, 2021), community action research (Ozanne & Anderson, 2010), and yarning circles (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). These approaches align closely with a relational view of resilience and offer valuable pathways for deepening scholarship in this area.

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Appendix: Key definitions and conceptualisations of resilience in extant marketing and consumption research

Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Resilience perspective: Psychological – focus on the individual, resilience as a trait						
Resilience is defined as the 'characteristics, dimensions, and properties of families which help families to be impervious to disruption in the face of change and adaptive in the face of crisis situations' citing McCubbin & McCubbin (1988, p. 247).	Focuses on the resiliency required for families to identify and adopt effective coping strategies to manage liminal transitions that occur within families. There are different degrees of resilience.	Family (still at an individual/ household level).	Psychological – focuses on family members' coping strategies.	Protective factors: Internal to the family (family time, communication and problem-solving, organisational patterns, belief system) and external to the family (social networks, marketplace).	'Risk society' - risks during liminal stages experienced by families (e.g. having a child, retirement, income fluctuation due to economic crises).	Pettigrew et al. (2014)
Consumer resilience is the ability to rebound from failure, is critical in individual well-being and can lead to an enhanced sense of life purpose. It is a key factor in successful consumption experiences.	Focuses on coping strategies of more or less resilient consumers. Resilient individuals use plans to maintain progress and have higher degree of optimism.	Individual (resilience as a personality trait).	Psychological – focuses on people's coping strategies.	Persistence, positive attitude, show feelings.	Resilience in everyday experiences (frustrating service experiences).	Ball and Lamberton (2015)
Resilience is the ability to bounce back from stress and adversity, maintain a stable equilibrium, positive adaptation, achievement of growth and positive change.	Focus on how low-income women strive to reframe their relationship to the market via resilient pathways to maximise care of self and care of others. Multidimensional coping resources for positive adaptation.	Individual (but introduces the idea of relationality).	Psychological – focuses on people's coping strategies.	Access to resources, skills, active agency, self-care, relational coping (sensitivity to the vulnerability of others and acknowledgement of stress).	Economic adversity (low-income and limited economic means).	Hutton (2016)

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Resilience is understood as a social concept that relates to active social entities' attempt to overcome subjectively perceived critical situations. Furthermore, resilience is a process- and resource-related concept, as resilient practices emerge during crises by activating and mobilising latent social, cultural, or economic resources.	Two main types of resilient consumption practices and strategies of those who experience economic hardship are identified. Combination of social resilience and bricolage to perform resilient practices in response to vulnerability due to economic hardship.	Individual (but also introduces a social dimension, viewing consumption as form of social participation in society).	Psychological – focuses on people's adoption of resilient consumption practices.	Resilience stems from the adoption of different everyday consumer practices (i.e. saving and home production).	Economic hardship (income fluctuations). Changes in income might be due to various critical circumstances, including illness, precarious working conditions, or unemployment aggravated by cutbacks in the welfare system or resulting from socioeconomic transformations and economic crises.	Boost and Meier (2017)
The ability of an individual to bounce back from stress and traumatic memory. The physical ability of people to deal with and recover from traumatic situations, but also their attitudes towards events that happened in their lives.	Consumer resilience helps consumers improve their attitudes, and consumer attitudes are affected differently by the level of resilience. Resilience enables consumers to overcome bad experiences from their past choices and actions, and to change their attitudes towards life from negative to positive.	Individual (resilience as a personality trait).	Psychological.	Key facets of consumer resilience include: facing fear, adaptive response, moral compass, spirituality, social support, role models, training, brain fitness, cognitive and emotional flexibility, purpose of life.	Exposure to traumatic events (e.g. terrorist attack or gun violence).	Rew and Minor (2018)

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Resilience as a response to domination. The adoption of consumer resilience practices, through which the poor try to maintain an internal homoeostasis that enables them to survive under constant domination.	Focus shifts from personality traits to methods of resilience such as acceptance (instead of resistance). Strategies people use to help them live a life of relative peace under adversity.	Individual (resilience as a personality trait).	Psychological – focuses on people's adoption of resilient consumption practices/ methods.	Adoption of practices that go beyond non-compliance and subterfuge to subservience. Consumer resilience is based on acceptance, choosing less efficient goods, perseverance, flexibility, adapting, sacrificing, using what little is available.	Consumption practices that affect low socio-economic status people's dignity and well-being (e.g. consumption of technology by poor in India).	Bhattacharyya and Belk (2019)
Resilience is a strength-related resource and capacity to bounce back and forge lasting strengths in the struggle.	Focus on those encountering systematic constraints. Reconfiguration of resources as coping strategies to gain resilience and achieve well-being. The resilience pathways are influenced by systematic constraints and vulnerable experiences. Resilience as a context-sensitive, dynamic concept.	Individual.	Psychological.	Resilience pathways to cope: attitudinal coping, behavioural coping, psychological need (sense of control over life). Migrant workers shape resilient pathways through interpreting and adapting to the life situation, changing preferences, and shifting activities, out of which they satisfy the psychological need for sense of control over the uncertainty-filled migration life, which, ultimately, produces higher life satisfaction.	Systematic constraints (e.g. marketplace exclusion, workplace inequality, social segregation).	Huang et al. (2020)

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Resilience is 'humans' ability to bounce back and positively adapt in the face of adversity or significant sources of stress', citing Windle (2011).	Conceptualising consumers' resilience as a shield against sharing misinformation. Resilience has the power to mitigate the drastic effects of this negative chain of influence (information overload leads to likelihood of fake news sharing which leads to increasing consumers' psychological strain) by inhibiting each of the processual components.	Individual (resilience as something that can be learnt).	Psychological (transactional stress).	High levels of energy and can detach and conceptualise problems, successful engagement with a stressor, engage in problem-focused acts to minimise negative stressor-strain effects, take the time to deal with the stressor, critically question circulated information.	Technology-induced stressors (e.g. misinformation).	Bermes (2021)
Resilience as a process of three distinct phases that include reacting, coping and adapting to an external threat.	Focus on coping mechanisms, reactions and adaptations.	Individual.	Psychological.	Ability to change purchasing habits (switch to other products or increase their inventory), social connectedness, skills, exerting control.	Adverse events (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic).	Guthrie et al. (2021)
Consumer resilience can be understood as the process and outcome of successfully adapting to challenging situations, particularly through mental, emotional, and behavioural flexibilities and coping with internal and external changes.	Focus on the psychological and personal consumer resilience aspects.	Individual (resilience as a personality trait).	Psychological.	Consumer resilience is driven by individual psychological factors, individual attitudes, individual socio-demographic factors, micro and macro environmental factors.	Vulnerable, emerging markets (e.g. electronic supply chains).	Rajesh (2024)

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Persistent consumer resilience in response to austerity as adapting to ongoing economic challenges that continue over time.	Persistent resilience can result in behaviour changes when it comes to consumption. It is more about moving to a different reality than bouncing back.	Individual.	Psycho-social (social resilience and coping).	Temporal orientation, day-to-day coping, relating, pragmatism, consumer adjustment, repertoires of resistance – negotiating the marketplace, transformation.	Austerity (e.g. global financial crisis) – persistent stressors.	Szmigin et al. (2020)
Resilience perspective: Socio-psychological; community aspects are important, focus on the individual but recognises the social dimension						
The ability of individuals, communities, and institutions to mitigate and/ or recover from natural hazards.	Considers the relationships between vulnerability, adaptation and resilience of consumers, communities and institutions. Recognises the systemic elements	Individual and community/ organisation level.	Socio-psychological.	Availability of resources, characteristics of the environments where affected individuals live and adaptive capacities of those affected. The role of institutions and markets is important.	Natural disasters.	Baker (2009)
Community resiliency as 'a process linking a set of adaptive capacities to a positive trajectory of functioning and adaptation after a disturbance', citing Norris et al. (2008), p. 130).	Looks at resilience through a combination of individual capacities and community characteristics. Focus on the role of alternative consumer markets.	Community.	Socio-psychological.	Resilience in the community fostered through grassroots community markets/ alternative consumer markets, communication and social networks fostering reciprocity, egalitarian values and adaptive capacities (i.e. economic, communication, social, community and cultural competencies).	Natural disasters (earthquake).	Ozanne and Ozanne (2016)

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Community resilience is a process relating to a set of community adaptive capacities including economic development, communication and information, and transformative potential that provides a pathway for adaptation and change in response to adversity.	Conceptualise resilience as a facilitator to restoring community well-being as it moderates measures/ policies effectiveness. From a systems perspective is understood as people, physical resources, organisations, structures, and systems located in geographic proximity to one another.	Community and systems.	Socio-psychological.	A set of adaptive capacities that possess dynamic attributes of robustness, substitutability and accessibility: 1.Economic development includes: availability of/ access to resources and ability to deploy them, preparedness for unforeseen circumstances, socio-economic status/economic disadvantage. 2.Communication and information include: appropriate information that members of the community possess. 3.Transformative potential include: social capital, skills, collaboration with organisations.	Pandemics/natural disasters/ adverse events (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic).	Krasnikov et al., 2022

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Resilience is about exercising consumer agency to anticipate, prepare, prevent, adapt and transform. Resilience refers to a person's 'reduced vulnerability to environmental risk experiences, the overcoming of stress or adversity, or a relatively good outcome despite risk experiences', citing Rutter (2012), p. 336).	The focus is on resilience-fuelling consumer agency to mitigate vulnerability. Resilience is seen as a dynamic process to derive a systematic approach that can guide organisations in co-creating distinct types of consumer agency that fuel resilience. Service thinking approach, such that organisations intentionally engage with and support consumers in developing resilience capacity.	Individual and community.	Socio-psychological.	Organisations/marketing role to support consumers build resilience (e.g. via distinct types of resilience-fuelling consumer agency). Marketers can support consumers by developing more inclusive, equitable environments and by proactively helping to reduce consumers' vulnerability. People can develop resilience with the help of organisations through factors such as social support, problem-solving, sense of belonging, self-regulation, hope, motivation to adapt, purpose, positive views of self, and positive habits. and through promoting consumers' agency to anticipate, prevent, prepare, adapt, and transform.	Social vulnerability.	Mende et al. (2024)

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Community resilience as a form of social resilience specific to human or social systems. Community resilience 'is a process linking sets of dynamic resources with trajectories of positive adaptation and functioning of a given community in the context of significant adversity', citing Norris et al. (2008).	Conceptualisation of the role of war-related marketing activism actions in community resilience during war. The authors illuminate how people in war-affected societies deploy, perceive, and respond to war-related marketing activism actions as a community resilience resource. The authors identify three resilience trajectories during war (survival, creativity and growth, recovery).	Community.	Socio-psychological.	War-related marketing activism actions as a community resilience resource. Community resilience interconnected with the ability of lay community members to actively harness resources/mobilisation of marketplace resources. Material and psychological/ cultural resources important for community resilience.	War.	Kipnis et al. (2025)
Resilience perspective: Sociological & systems						
Resilience as the 'capacity of people to navigate their way to obtain psychological, social, cultural and physical resources that sustain well-being, as well as their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways', citing Ungar (2008, p.255).	Collective and systems perspective on consumer resilience in social marketing as both an individual characteristic and a product of the environment in which people learn to cope with adversity. Social marketing can help targeted groups build resilience. Building resilience as a key to social marketing interventions.	Individual, community & systems.	Socio-ecological.	Fostering resilience in social marketing through: relationship building, identity, power and control, social justice, access to meaningful resources, cohesion, cultural adherence, creating a supportive environment at the micro, meso and macro level.	Health risks (e.g. obesity).	Wood (2019)

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
1st approach: Resilience is the ability of a system to restore its original balance following a disruption, such as a natural disaster or human intervention (negative form of resilience) 2nd approach: Resilience is a buffer capacity of a system to absorb changes without causing harm to the system's stakeholders (positive form of resilience) 3rd approach: resilience becomes a metaphor for understanding complex social systems: a conceptual nexus linking the various complex dimensions of vulnerability with the power asymmetry resulting from the inequalities in the distribution of power in social marketing systems.	Integrative framework for vulnerability analysis in social marketing systems that incorporates building positive resilience Resilience as exposure to change and adaptive responses that can impede or facilitate social transformation Resilience may occur at different levels, including an individual stakeholder, social marketing system or at or between other systems adjacent to the focal social marketing system.	System (micro, meso, macro, exo levels).	Sociological/ systems approach.	Power asymmetries, availability of resources, ability to use resources to change and adapt.	Social transformation.	Kubacki et al. (2020)
Consumer resilience involves dynamic processes and capacities to respond constructively and creatively to perpetual disruption and precarity.	Conceptualises persistent resilience in response to long-term stressors. Resilient outcomes include adjustments, repertoires of resistance, community competences and sustainable transformation.	Individual, community/ organisation.	Psychological, sociological and spatial.	Resilient capacities include coping, pragmatism, spatial and relational, social capital and communication aspects.	Prolonged crisis (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic).	O'Loughlin et al. (2023)

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Definition	Conceptual Focus	Resilience level (individual, community/ organisation, systemic)	Resilience perspective (psychological vs sociological)	Drivers/characteristics of resilience	Triggers of the need for resilience	Citation Sources
Consumer resilience as a reflexive, emotive and transformative coping response of social subjects to situations of heightened anxieties due to material, socio-relational and symbolic restrictions.	Conceptualises positionalities of resilience. Presents a sociological theorisation of consumer resilience as material, social-relational and symbolic. Identifies coping response strategies of consumer purification, policing and sociality.	Individual, community/ organisations, society.	Sociological.	Reflexive, emotive and transformative narratives.	Times of heightened uncertainty and restriction e.g. health crisis (COVID-19 pandemic).	Ingram et al. (2024)