

DOES CAREER RESILIENCE PROMOTE WELL-BEING??

RESEARCH
THAT HAS
IMPACT
SERIES

It does as long as people like their job, are paid well or aren't stressed about work!

Today's workplace is constantly changing. We are now living in a globalized economy facing new economic pressures, rapidly growing markets, and changing technology. This new workplace is placing an increasing strain on employees as they cope with shifting work demands, role ambiguity, and increasing levels of job insecurity.

Successful employees are thought to have an ability to cope with new challenges, changing events and work disruptions. Yet, little research has actually studied if such career resiliency is a component of career success or well-being.

Dr. Yu (Jade) Han, an Assistant Professor at the Hill and Levene Schools of Business, in collaboration with Tasnuva Chaudhury and Dr. Greg Sears from Carleton University, conducted a study to explore whether employees who are more resilient in their careers report higher levels of career success (e.g., job satisfaction, salary), well-being at work, and overall well-being (i.e., life satisfaction). They analyzed data from 527 working professionals in multiple organizations across the central United States.

Their research revealed that career

resilience does result in reports of greater life satisfaction. This relationship between career resilience and life satisfaction can be explained by other career success indicators such as job satisfaction and salary, and work stress. For example, when a person has the ability to cope with new challenges at work (career resilience), they will experience better job satisfaction, and then a higher level of life satisfaction. Similarly, the ability to cope with new challenges at work will lead to better pay, which then enhances overall life satisfaction. Furthermore, the ability to cope with new challenges at work also enhances life satisfaction through reduced work stress. Overall, these results suggest that employees who experience career success and lower work stress feel higher satisfaction with their lives.

Employees who are more career resilient also tend to obtain higher salaries. The researchers suggest that while career resilient employees may advance further in their careers by receiving more internal promotions, it is also possible that they obtain outside employment opportunities, which can lead to higher salaries. Job level was not, however, considered as a factor which leads career resilience to

life satisfaction. This may be because promotion can cause increased conflict between work and personal lives due to increased hours and responsibilities.

One of the unique aspects of this research was to test whether career resilience was associated with perceptions of work stress. Previous studies demonstrated that work stress can influence life satisfaction by impacting one's psychological and physical health. Interestingly, Han's research, however, concluded that career resilient employees may be less likely to suffer the negative consequences of work stress, such as lower life satisfaction. Han suggests that this may be due to their stronger capacity to adapt to the demands of their job and to cope with stress.

The researchers indicate that moving forward more research is needed to track employee advancement over time to better understand career resilience in relation to additional measures of career success and well-being, such as career commitment, frequency of promotion, purpose in life, and personal growth.

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