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Psychological Capital as a Buffer to Student Stress

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of psychological capital (PsyCap), on the well-being of university undergraduates during an academic semester. PsyCap, a recently developed, higher-order construct, applied to the world of work has been hypothesized to aid employees cope with stressors in the workplace. The current study extends this concept to work in the academic environment. Psychological capital is hypothesized to empower students with the necessary mental strength to cope up with adverse circumstances. Among undergraduate students from a university in the Western US, Psychological Capital (PsyCap) mediated between stress and indices of psychological and physical well-being. In the case of Psychological Symptoms and Health Problems, PsyCap buffered the impact of stress so that the relationship between stress and negative outcomes was reduced. In the case of Satisfaction with Life, PsyCap augmented a positive psychological outcome. We discuss implications for research on resilience to academic stress, the power of the PsyCap construct to effect positive psychological outcomes in a variety of student situations, and implications for educators in developing and promoting positive outcomes based on this valuable personal capital.

KEYWORDS

Psychological Capital; Stress; Coping; Positive Outcomes

Cite this paper

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