
Mental Resilience and Satisfaction with Life - Organizational Perspective

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Abstract:

Purpose: The aim of the paper is to investigate the relationship between mental resilience and satisfaction with life on the empirical level. Whereas, on the theoretical level we aim to investigate the organisational factors, organisational stress in particular, that can influence the relationship in question.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Tools: Satisfaction with Life Scale, Polish adaptation of Ego Resiliency Scale. Sample 360 subjects (211 females and 149 males). Average age: 24.78.

Findings: We hypothesised that: H1: There is a positive relationship between mental resilience and SWL, H2: Males exhibit a greater level of mental resilience than woman. Hypothesis number 1 was confirmed. However, it turned out that there are no gender differences in resilience.

Practical implications: Resilience trainings should be implemented in the organisations, because this trait fosters employees well-being also through the assumed mitigating the effects of the organisational stress.

Originality/value: Embedding resilience – SWL relationship in a specific context of industrial organisations.

Keywords: Mental resilience, satisfaction with life, employees well-being, organisational stress.

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1. Introduction

The contemporary work environment is marked by rapid change, increasing task complexity, and ever-growing demands placed on employees. Faced with time pressure, job insecurity, information overload, and frequent organizational transformations, the importance of individual psychological resources that enable effective functioning under challenging conditions has significantly increased.

One of the most crucial of these resources is mental resilience – the individual's ability to adapt, regain balance after experiencing stress, and maintain effectiveness despite adversity. At the same time, the impact of organizational stress – particularly when chronic and poorly managed – cannot be overlooked, as it may lead to a decline in well-being and overall life satisfaction.

From an organizational perspective, the relationship between employees' mental resilience and their general life satisfaction is becoming an area of growing interest. An increasing number of studies suggest that high levels of mental resilience not only buffer the negative effects of workplace stressors but also foster long-term well-being, greater engagement, and improved quality of life – both professionally and personally. Thus, cultivating and strengthening mental resilience can be seen as a key component of human resource strategies aimed at promoting sustainable organizational development and employee well-being.

The aim of this article is to explore the interrelations between mental resilience and life satisfaction within the organizational context. The authors analyse existing theoretical models and empirical findings, identifying psychological and organizational factors that influence this relationship.

The article also seeks to address how organizations can support the development of mental resilience among their employees as a form of stress prevention and a foundation for enhancing the quality of both professional and personal life.

1.1 Psychological Resilience – Definition and Key Aspects

Psychological resilience is the ability of an individual to effectively cope with adversity, stress, and traumatic experiences while maintaining or quickly regaining psychological balance. In psychological literature, resilience is considered a dynamic adaptive process, influenced by both individual characteristics and social context. Key aspects of psychological resilience include emotional regulation, a positive perception of difficulties, and access to social support.

Psychological resilience (resilience) is a concept that has gained particular importance in positive, clinical, and occupational psychology. It is defined as the ability of an individual to respond adaptively to difficulties, stressors, and to quickly return to balance after experiencing them (Ogińska-Bulik and Juczyński, 2011).

From a dynamic perspective, resilience is viewed as a process rather than a fixed trait – individuals can develop their resilience throughout life in response to various challenges and experiences (Borucka and Pisarska, 2012).

1.2 Key Characteristics of Psychologically Resilient Individuals

Individuals with a high level of psychological resilience exhibit a specific set of traits that enable them to cope effectively with adversity. The most commonly mentioned include:

- Cognitive and emotional flexibility – the ability to shift perspective, adapt to new situations, and effectively manage emotions (Grzegorzewska, 2013).
- Perseverance and determination – striving toward goals despite obstacles and setbacks (Ogińska-Bulik and Juczyński, 2011).
- Adaptability – the ability to quickly adjust to change and a readiness to modify behavior in response to new environmental demands (Borucka and Pisarska, 2012).
- Sense of self-efficacy – belief in one's abilities and competencies, which increases motivation and willingness to take on challenges (Sęk and Cieślak, 2006).

These traits serve a protective function – they help mitigate the negative impact of stress and increase the likelihood of positive adaptation in crisis situations.

1.3 Factors Shaping Psychological Resilience

The development of psychological resilience is the result of an interaction between multiple factors, both biological and environmental. The most important include:

- **Genetic and neurobiological factors** – individual temperamental differences, functioning of the nervous system, and neurotransmitter levels (Szwajca, 2014).
- **Environmental factors** – the quality of interpersonal relationships, social support, and family and educational climate significantly influence the development of resilience, especially during childhood and adolescence (Borucka and Pisarska, 2012).
- **Life experiences** – both negative (e.g., trauma, loss) and positive (e.g., achievements, emotional support) shape coping mechanisms and may influence the development of adaptive strategies (Grzegorzewska, 2013).

It is important to note that psychological resilience does not mean the absence of negative emotions – resilient individuals also experience anxiety, sadness, or anger, but they are able to regulate these emotions effectively and prevent them from having a destructive impact on functioning (Ogińska-Bulik and Juczyński, 2011).

2. The Psychology of Life Satisfaction: Traits, Domains, and Cultural Influences

Life satisfaction is widely recognized in psychology as a core aspect of subjective well-being, encompassing individuals' reflective evaluations of their life as a whole (Diener, 1984; Diener *et al.*, 1985). Unlike fleeting emotions or momentary happiness, life satisfaction is a cognitive judgment based on a person's comparison of their actual life circumstances with their ideal standards (Diener, 1984). This evaluation is inherently subjective and varies across individuals, depending on personal goals, values, and cultural norms (Diener *et al.*, 2003).

Research has shown that personality traits play a crucial role in shaping life satisfaction. In particular, individuals high in extraversion and low in neuroticism tend to report higher levels of satisfaction (Diener and Lucas, 1999; Steel *et al.*, 2008). These traits influence how people experience events and interpret challenges, affecting their overall outlook on life.

Additionally, domain-specific satisfaction—such as satisfaction with one's job, health, relationships, and financial situation—contributes to overall life satisfaction, suggesting that well-being is influenced both from the “bottom up” (accumulation of domain satisfaction) and “top down” (general dispositions and personality) (Cummins, 1996).

Life satisfaction also tends to exhibit a degree of stability over time, especially in adulthood, although it can be affected by major life events such as unemployment, illness, or divorce (Diener and Lucas, 1999).

Importantly, cultural context shapes how people define and pursue a satisfying life. For example, in individualistic cultures, life satisfaction is often tied to personal achievements and autonomy, whereas in collectivistic cultures, it may be more closely linked to family harmony and social connectedness (Diener *et al.*, 2003). As such, understanding life satisfaction requires a multidimensional approach that considers psychological traits, life circumstances, and sociocultural background.

2.1 Life Satisfaction and Work Organization

Life satisfaction, understood as an overall assessment of one's life in terms of fulfillment, balance, and well-being, is significantly shaped by the conditions of the work environment. Work organization—including the structure of responsibilities, the form of employment, and organizational culture—is one of the key factors influencing an individual's subjective sense of quality of life (Czapiński and Panek, 2015).

Research by Lubrańska (2014) indicates that flexible forms of employment, allowing employees to adjust the time and place of their work to individual needs,

contribute to an increased sense of autonomy and control over one's own life. This kind of autonomy translates into better management of both professional and private roles, resulting in higher satisfaction from both work and personal life.

At the same time, as Rogozińska-Pawelczyk and Kołodziejczyk-Olczak (2008) point out, lack of control over tasks, excessive workload, or poorly defined job roles can lead to chronic organizational stress, which negatively affects psychological well-being and overall life satisfaction.

Equally important is the aspect of the psychological climate within the organization, which plays a significant role in shaping employees' daily experiences and their subjective well-being. As Wołowska (2013) emphasizes, a positive work climate—characterized by social support, recognition from supervisors, and a sense of organizational justice—fosters a sense of belonging and self-worth, which directly translates into higher life satisfaction.

Conversely, environments marked by conflict, unclear promotion criteria, or low financial rewards lead to reduced intrinsic motivation and an increased risk of burnout (Michoń, 2008). Job security also plays a critical role—in conditions of instability and unpredictability, employees are more likely to experience anxiety and tension, which adversely affects not only their performance but also their life satisfaction outside of work (Czernecka and Czerw, 2010).

In light of these findings, organizations that prioritize employee well-being through thoughtful job design and a trust-based organizational culture not only gain more engaged employees but also contribute to their broader, existential well-being.

Keeping in mind all the introductory remarks we made above, it should be stated that the relationship between resilience and SWL, especially from organisational psychology perspective, does not happen in the vacuum. Resilience is a trait that (presumably) helps the individuals cope with the adversities in harsh, stressful or unfriendly environment. These adversities and challenges can be gathered under the umbrella named “(organisational) stress”.

2.2 Organisational Stress – Roots, Coping and Consequences

Stress is a multidimensional phenomenon that attracts interest across various scientific disciplines, including psychology, medicine, and sociology. The concept of stress can be understood both as an external stimulus that disrupts the body's homeostasis and as an emotional or physiological response to environmental demands.

The understanding of stress has evolved from biological perspectives—such as Selye's theory, which introduced the concept of the General Adaptation Syndrome

(GAS)—to psychosocial approaches that consider the influence of social and cognitive factors (Hobfoll, 2006; Konieczny, 2014).

Organizational stress, also known as occupational stress, is defined as an employee's response to unfavorable working conditions that exceed their adaptive capabilities, leading to disruptions in psychological and physical functioning (Gólczyk, 2012). It results from the interaction between workplace demands and the individual's ability to meet them.

The main sources of organizational stress include:

- **High job demands:** Excessive quantitative workload (e.g., a large number of tasks, time pressure) and qualitative overload (e.g., complex tasks, responsibility for decisions) can lead to employee burnout and strain (Żołnierczyk-Zreda, 2015).
- **Low task control:** A lack of autonomy over how work is performed, scheduling, or organizational decision-making increases feelings of helplessness and stress (Karasek and Theorell, 1990).
- **Interpersonal conflicts:** Tensions in relationships with supervisors, colleagues, or clients, as well as mobbing and lack of social support, are significant stressors (Sęk and Cieślak, 2006).
- **Job insecurity:** Fears related to job loss, organizational restructuring, or changes in employment structure negatively affect employees' sense of security (Molek-Winiarska, 2015).

Long-term organizational stress has serious consequences for both individuals and the organization as a whole. The most commonly observed outcomes include:

- **Burnout** – characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. It results from chronic stress and work overload (Maslach and Leiter, 2011).
- **Decline in motivation and performance** – stress reduces employee engagement, leads to decreased productivity, and worsens the quality of work performed (Ogińska-Bulik, 2006).
- **Health problems** – stress can lead to psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches, digestive issues, and insomnia, as well as more serious conditions, including heart disease and depression (Selye, 1977).
- **Increased employee turnover** – job dissatisfaction and chronic stress increase the risk of absenteeism and voluntary resignation, which in turn generates additional costs related to recruiting and training new employees (Cox and Griffiths, 2005).

From an organizational perspective, effective time and task management plays a key role in reducing stress. This includes planning, prioritizing tasks, and delegating responsibilities. Implementing these strategies not only improves work comfort but

also helps prevent occupational burnout, thereby supporting employees' long-term functioning in the workplace.

2.3 Aim and Hypotheses

The aim of the paper is to investigate the relationship between mental resilience and satisfaction with life on the empirical level. Whereas, on the theoretical level we aim to investigate the organisational factors, organisational stress in particular, that can influence the relationship in question.

Based on the analysis of the literature in the field of management, organisational psychology and positive psychology we put forward the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a positive relationship between mental resilience and SWL.

As presented above, mental resiliency is a trait that plays a crucial role in coping with life difficulties (Kaczmarek, 2011). Thus, a resilient individual – through better coping mechanisms – should gain a greater command over the environment, which should directly translate into their greater SWL.

H2: Males exhibit a greater level of mental resilience than woman.

There is a long history of the stereotype of men being mentally stronger than women. This stereotype is, of course, totally outdated in the modern era, where females successfully simultaneously fulfill a great many of social roles getting by not an inch worse than males.

They successfully perform duties in many professions including the uniformed services. Nonetheless – based on the meta-analysis of research – we expect a higher level of resiliency in men (Gök *et al.*, 2021).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Tools

We used two psychological questionnaires:

1. Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS):

To measure subjective life satisfaction, we used the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Diener *et al.* (1985), in the Polish adaptation by K.S. Jankowski (2015). The SWLS is a widely recognized tool that evaluates the cognitive component of subjective well-being. It consists of 5 items, each rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (I strongly disagree) to 7 (I strongly agree). Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with life. A sample item is: "In most ways

my life is close to my ideal.” The scale demonstrates high internal consistency and has been validated in various cultural contexts, including the Polish population.

2. KSP Questionnaire – Measure of Psychological Resilience:

To assess psychological resilience, we used the KSP Questionnaire – a Polish adaptation of the Ego Resiliency Scale by Łukasz Kaczmarek (2011). This instrument comprises 14 statements rated on a 4-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The KSP Questionnaire captures the individual’s ability to adapt flexibly to changing and potentially stressful life circumstances. The tool has demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties, with reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) $\alpha = .78$ in the current version. This makes it suitable for research involving young adult populations.

3.2 Sample

The sample consisted of 360 participants, including 211 women and 149 men. The average age of the participants was 24.78 years ($SD = 6.82$), indicating that the majority of the sample comprised young adults, university students most likely early-career individuals.

The demographic structure of the sample was sufficient to enable basic group comparisons (e.g., gender differences in resilience), although it should be noted that the sample was not stratified or randomized, and thus does not necessarily represent the general population. Nonetheless, the sample size was adequate for correlational and variance analyses, including the gender effects.

3.3 Procedure

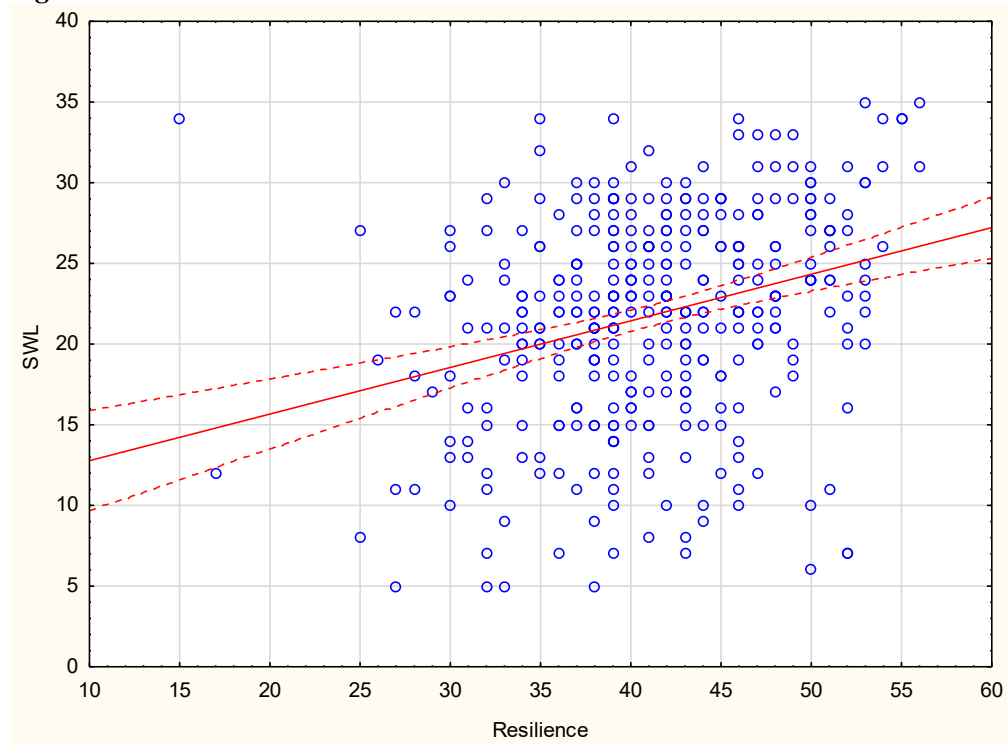
Participation in a study was voluntary, anonymous and unpaid. The subjects were informed about the purpose and course of the study, and their participation was obtained before further procedure.

Both instruments were administered online, and participants completed them in a self-report format, which allowed for efficient data collection and ensured participant anonymity.

The participants were advised to fill out the forms in the conditions of privacy to avoid distraction in order to obtain the reliability of the gathered data.

4. Research Results

We obtained the mean for resilience $M = 41.27$ ($SD = 6.66$) and for SWL – $M = 21.81$ ($SD = 6.52$). Correlation between resilience and SWL turned out to be statistically significant ($r = .29, p < .05$).

Figure 1. Correlation between resilience and SWL

Source: Own work.

The mean value of resilience for men was 41,48 ($SD = 6,34$) and for women – $M = 41,10$ ($SD = 6,89$). The comparison of the groups was insignificant - $F(358) = 1,17$, $p = 0,28$. The mean values for the variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Resilience by Gender

Gender	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Men	41.48	6.34		
Women	41.10	6.89	1.17	0.28

Source: Own work.

We received the following reliability results for the tools we used: Satisfaction with Life Scale – Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$, KSP Questionnaire - Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability of Measures

Instrument	Cronbach's α
Satisfaction with Life Scale	.87
KSP Questionnaire	.80

Source: Own work.

5. Discussion

Our study aimed to investigate the relationship between psychological resilience and satisfaction with life (SWL), as well as potential gender differences in resilience.

5.1 Positive Relationship between Mental Resilience and SWL

Hypothesis number 1 was confirmed. Our study shows a positive correlation between mental resilience and SWL. The obtained correlation coefficient indicates a small but existent relationship. This result suggests that people who are more mentally resilient tend to rate their lives as more satisfying. Mental resilience is widely recognized as a key factor in psychological well-being, particularly in the context of coping with adversity.

Defined as the ability to adapt positively in the face of stress or trauma, resilience enables individuals to maintain relatively stable mental health despite encountering significant challenges (Kaczmarek, 2011; Masten, 2001 – developmental analysis). Resilient individuals tend to approach life's difficulties with a sense of perseverance and adaptability, employing constructive coping mechanisms that mitigate the negative emotional and cognitive impact of stressors (Fletcher and Sarkar, 2013).

Effective coping strategies associated with resilience—such as cognitive reappraisal, problem-solving, and seeking social support—can significantly enhance an individual's sense of agency and control over their environment (Taylor and Stanton, 2007). This perceived control is a central component of psychological functioning and is positively correlated with life satisfaction (Diener *et al.*, 1985).

Individuals who feel competent in managing their circumstances are more likely to set and achieve personal goals, sustain meaningful relationships, and experience greater fulfilment in daily life. As such, resilience contributes not only to the reduction of distress but also to the cultivation of positive psychological outcomes.

Empirical research suggests that resilience plays a mediating role between adverse experiences and subjective well-being. For example, individuals with higher levels of resilience often report greater life satisfaction even when faced with chronic stress or trauma (Hu *et al.*, 2015). This is likely due to their ability to reframe negative events, maintain a sense of purpose, and engage in proactive coping behaviors that preserve mental health. Thus, a resilient individual—through more effective coping mechanisms—gains a greater sense of mastery over their environment, which in turn supports greater satisfaction with life.

In sum, resilience is not merely a buffer against psychological distress; it is also a dynamic resource that enhances one's capacity for well-being. By fostering a mindset geared toward growth and adaptability, resilience plays a foundational role in achieving and sustaining life satisfaction, even in the face of adversity.

5.2 The Mediating Role of Stress

We expect that the relationship between resilience and SWL is significantly influenced by the mediating role of stress. Individuals with higher resilience tend to experience lower levels of stress or cope with it more effectively due to psychological resources such as optimism, self-efficacy, and problem-solving skills, which buffer the negative impact of stressors (Smith *et al.*, 2019; Tugade *et al.*, 2004).

In turn, elevated perceived stress is strongly associated with reduced life satisfaction, as chronic stress diminishes well-being, interferes with goal attainment, and harms interpersonal relationships (Cohen *et al.*, 1983; Diener *et al.*, 1985). Although resilience is positively related to life satisfaction, this connection may be indirect, with resilience enhancing well-being primarily through its ability to reduce perceived stress (Connor and Davidson, 2003; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

5.3 Resilience – No Gender Differences

Hypothesis number 2 was not confirmed. Our study suggest that there are no gender differences with regard to mental resilience. While some studies have noted variations in coping mechanisms or expressions of emotional strength (see: Hu *et al.*, 2015 – meta-analysis), the overall capacity for resilience—defined as the ability to adapt positively to adversity—appears to be comparable across genders (Campbell-Sills *et al.*, 2009; Liu *et al.*, 2020). These findings highlight the importance of considering individual and contextual factors over biological sex when assessing resilience.

5.4 Practical Implications

These findings have both theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical standpoint, they support the conceptualization of resilience as a relevant predictor of subjective well-being. Practically, they highlight the potential value of resilience-enhancing interventions both among the individuals and within the organisations, as a part of programs aimed at improving life satisfaction.

Interventions such as cognitive-behavioral training, mindfulness, or strengths-based coaching have shown the promising results in increasing individuals' resilience and could therefore indirectly contribute to the increased life satisfaction (Robertson *et al.*, 2015).

Interventions aimed at boosting resilience can also be considered not only in the organisational context but also in the clinical settings, resulting – hopefully – in increasing patients' SWL. For instance, 12-week intervention study, that involved nurses from the intensive care unit, showed a significant decrease in PTSD symptom score after the intervention (2-day educational workshop) (Mealer *et al.*, 2014).

5.5 Limitations and Future Directions

Nevertheless, some limitations should be acknowledged. The cross-sectional nature of the study prevents causal inferences, and the use of self-report measures may be susceptible to social desirability bias. Future research could benefit from longitudinal designs to explore how changes in resilience over time may influence SWL, and whether other factors — such as age, socioeconomic status, or personality traits — moderate this relationship. Particularly – while studying the relationship between mental resilience and SWL - the mediating role of stress, coping styles etc., should be investigating.

What would also be extremely interesting is studying resilience – SWL relationship in a broader biological / evolutionary perspective. Although the concept of resilience is being studied in the field of positive psychology, it seems totally in line with the basic assumptions of Charles Darwin's theory (1964, original work 1859).

In uncertain or threatening environments, those who could withstand stress, maintain functionality, and seek new opportunities had a survival advantage (Ellis et al., 2011). Not only pinning down theoretically resilience in the evolutionary perspective is ahead of us, but some exciting experiments aimed at studying this adaptation are needed to be designed and carried out.

6. Conclusions

The study provides empirical support for the positive association between mental resilience and satisfaction with life (SWL). Individuals who demonstrate higher resilience—characterized by adaptive coping strategies and a strong sense of personal control—tend to report greater life satisfaction, reinforcing resilience as a key component of psychological well-being.

Contrary to our second hypothesis, no significant gender differences in resilience were found. This suggests that resilience is not inherently tied to biological sex, and highlights the importance of considering individual and contextual factors over gender-based assumptions.

Future research should adopt longitudinal and experimental designs to explore causal pathways, potential mediators such as stress or coping styles, and broader biological or evolutionary dimensions of resilience. Such work could deepen our understanding of resilience as not only a protective trait but also a fundamental resource for thriving in the face of adversity.

Our findings carry some theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, they reaffirm resilience as a meaningful correlate of subjective well-being. Practically, they highlight the value of resilience-enhancing interventions in both individual and organizational contexts.

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