I STARTED A BUSINESS AND NOW I’M STRESSED! GLOBAL LIFE SATISFACTION AS A COPING RESOURCE (SUMMARY)

Rebecca J. Franklin
Oklahoma State University, rebecca.franklin_bryant@okstate.edu

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol33/iss5/7
Principal Topic

The transactional theory of stress suggests that through one’s subjective appraisal, an individual’s perception plays a key role in determining the existence of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Perception of stress leads to the individual’s choice of coping strategy, which in turn leads to behavioral outcomes that influence performance. Because problem-focused coping actively confronts issues, positive coping strategies such as planful coping should help mitigate the negative effects of perceived stress on performance. Therefore, the identification of factors that facilitate an entrepreneur’s ability to engage in planful coping will not only improve entrepreneurs’ ability to effectively cope with stress, it will also provide information on how entrepreneurs may improve performance. Furthermore, Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) provide evidence that life satisfaction contributes to performance and success. Thus, life satisfaction may act as a buffer against stress while facilitating behaviors that lead to increased performance.

Method

Survey data were collected from a national sample of business founders in the United States, resulting in a useable sample size of 167. Perceived stress was measured with Cohen et al.’s (1983) Perceived Stress Scale. Planful coping was measured with Folkman et al.’s (1986) Planful Problem-Solving Scale, and global life satisfaction was measured with the Satisfaction With Life Scale (Deiner et al., 1985). Measures of performance are based on a combination of self report measures and data obtained from Dun and Bradstreet reports.

Results and Implications

Multiple regression analyses indicate that perceived stress is negatively associated with planful coping (p<.01) and life satisfaction is positively associated with planful coping (p<.001). An interaction effect between perceived stress and life satisfaction on planful coping was statistically significant (p<.05). Planful coping is positively associated with firm performance (p<.05). These findings suggest that planful coping can help mitigate the negative effects of perceived stress on performance. Furthermore, these findings provide evidence that global life satisfaction moderates the relationship between perceived stress and planful coping such that higher levels of global life satisfaction decreases levels of perceived stress, thus reducing the negative relationship between perceived stress and planful coping.