

INTERNATIONAL HOPE RESEARCH TEAM: RESEARCH LINES

On the basis of participants interests, seven research groups have been identified.

1. Multidisciplinary studies on hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience (Ref.: Salvatore Soresi and E. Camussi).
2. Life design, hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience (Ref.: Laura Nota and Salvatore Soresi).
3. Work, workers, Life Design and new technology (Ref.: Lea Ferrari)
4. Hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience in disability (Ref. Teresa M. Sgaramella)
5. Resilience and diversity management (Ref.: Paola Magnano);
6. Resilience: theoretical models and assessment tools (Ref.: Giovanna Giancesini);
7. Development of hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience (Ref.: Laura Nota)

1. Multidisciplinary studies on hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience (Ref.: Salvatore Soresi and E. Camussi)

The group included a physicist, a geographer, a philosopher, some psychologists and an economist. First of all meanings and critical points about hope, optimism and happiness in a time perspective were analyzed from the different perspectives. For instance, resilience was analyzed in terms of how citizens may become active agents in order to prevent future problems in their living context. Crucial is the difficulty in imaging future scenarios. Categories which guided our experience, in fact, cannot simply be transferred to new scenarios. There is the need to find new instruments useful for controlling complexity and taking into account the failure of models for which everyone is author of its personal destiny independently from social, historical and material conditions. An interdisciplinary workshop will be the next step for the research group.

2. Life design, hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience (Ref.: Laura Nota and Salvatore Soresi)

Hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience have been examined from the perspective of socio-economic conditions which characterize our society and from the perspective of persons who are more directly involved in the crisis and experience uncertainty and difficulties; for instance, unemployed, young adults searching for job, disabled persons, immigrants or parents. Psychologically negative consequences for these persons need attention. There is a general agreement on the fact that individuals are not responsible for the situation they are experiencing. Complex, contextual variables underlie the relationship between specific environments and levels of hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience. As suggested by Life Design approach it is helpful to take into account the role of a collectivistic vision of hope, optimism and resilience, emphasizing the role of context and dynamic relations on career planning. New instruments are, however, required in order to fully analyze the role of this component. For the group this is a possible goal for the next international conference.

3. Work, workers, Life Design and new technology (Ref.: Lea Ferrari)

Several different experts participate to the activity of this group. They everyday deal with persons showing different problems: unemployed, persons at risk for finding or maintaining job because of a disability or of economic crisis, immigrants, adolescents.

From the analysis of some research studies describing on line interventions on hope, optimism, resilience and time prospective a series of relevant steps for implementing intervention programs on these dimensions have been found. Several problems need to be addressed before constructing computerized programs.

The first step undertaken by the group will be, then, start using paper and pencil instruments.

A detailed, psychometrically adequate research protocol is needed which will serve as baseline and for efficacy assessment of the interventions.

4.Hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience in disability (Ref. Teresa M. Sgaramella)

There are several basic questions waiting for an answer in this area; for instance, it is not clear from the literature whether and to what extent disability affects hope, optimism, resilience and future time perspective.

First of all there is the need to construct and validate instruments capable of measuring these constructs in persons with disability, especially in persons showing cognitive/intellectual disability. A second aim for the group is to analyze the role of hope, optimism, resilience and future time perspective on dimensions of psychosocial wellbeing, such as quality of life and self-determination, in young and adults with disabilities.

A central interest for this research group is also on the relationship between mentioned dimensions and core career counseling constructs (see interests, work goals, adaptability) in persons with disability, with a particular attention to those who for the first time face the world of work.

Results from these studies will provided the basis for implementing intervention programs.

5.Resilience and diversity management (Ref.: Paola Magnano);

Diversity Management is a theoretical and practice approach aiming at analyzing processes responsible for conflicts in the work context, based on perception of reciprocal diversity; planning interventions aimed at modifying negative effects of these processes on productivity, on group climate and on wellbeing; fostering creative behaviours within the different groups.

Theoretical models in this research program are Gollan (2005), Allenby and Finck (2005) Hollnagel and Woods (2006).

Basic questions for this research groups are: To what extent an organization is able to value diversity? How diversity management can be integrated within the global politics of the organization? To what extent workers' characteristics may contribute to perception of Diversity Management? How actions effective in valuing diversity make their organization more resilient, i.e. able to maintain its structure and functions in front of internal and external changes ?

6.Resilience: theoretical models and assessment tools (Ref.: Giovanna Giancesini);

Several researches have investigated interpersonal, emotional and cognitive processes facilitating or interfering with resilience, as well as outcome to potentially traumatic events. Different assessment measures and methodologies have been used to investigate the influence of emotional and relational resources on parenting quality; resilience shielding effect on relationship quality on life satisfaction; relational Resilience and Pro-social behaviors in adults; effects of Resilience on substance abuse and treatment or resilience and Social Network dynamics.

Our research program is to provide an integrated view of resilience from both theoretical and empirical point of view. This is expected to help developing preventive programs in different contexts. Viewing resilience as a relational construct requires specific assessment and intervention strategies, supporting both individuals and families in dealing with difficulties due to transitions across life phases and unexpected, potentially traumatic, events.

7.Hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience during development (Ref.: Laura Nota)

The aims of the research group are: to analyze the development of hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience; to describe the role of social development and of learning ability; to evaluate the role of gender, socioeconomic status and family context. In more details variables of interests will be academic achievement, social skills, values, perceived supports and perceived difficulties in future choices.

With respect to parents levels of hope, optimism, time perspective and resilience will be investigated as well as supports provided and parental style.

Parental levels in the investigated variables are expected to predict levels of hope, optimism and time perspective in their sons .

A particular attention will be devoted to the choice and use of appropriate instruments able to collect reliable data on mentioned variables.