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Resilience and social support as moderators between financial stressors and strain

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Abstract

This study tested the hypotheses that social support and resilience would each buffer individuals against the potential negative effects of severe financial stressors by moderating the relationship between perceived financial stressor severity and three forms of strain: stress, depression, and anxiety. Correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted on a sample (N = 580) of clients from a large South African organisation in order to test these hypotheses. Financial stressor severity was assessed using The Stressor Scale. Resilience was measured using The Resilience Scale. Social support was measured using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, and the DASS-21 was used to assess respondents' levels of stress, depression and anxiety. The buffering hypotheses were not supported. Resilience and social support were still significantly negatively associated with perceived stressor severity, as well as subjective reports of stress, anxiety and depression. This indicates that resilience and social support still played a protective role in the stress process, but that they function as antecedent variables as opposed to moderator variables; thereby altering the appraisal of financial stressors and, indirectly, the amount of strain respondents reported feeling as well.