

Abstract 1782

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## **KARASEK'S DEMAND / CONTROL MODEL, EMOTIONS AND HEALTH**

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Purpose: to measure the relation between Karasek's demand/control model, the frequency of emotional experiences at work, self-reported psychological well-being and health. Subjects: 1204 civil servants of the Swiss canton Vaud (48.9 % women).

Method: The subjects answered Karasek's demand/control questionnaire, 12 questions regarding the frequency of emotional experiences at work (6 positively valenced and 6 negatively valenced emotions). Respondents rated the frequency of each emotion on a 4-point scale. Internal consistency measured by Cronbach's alpha was 0.82 for positive states and was 0.76 for negative states.

A new variable was created by subtracting the sum-score of negatively valenced emotional states from the sum-score of positively valenced emotional states. The resulting distribution ranged from -18 to 18. This variable, called "emotional balance", was normally distributed (Skew = -.217, Kurt. = -.122, Mean = 1.02, SD = 5.05).

Participants estimated their psychological well-being at work and their general health on a 5-point scale. Gender, and education level were not related to psychological well-being and physical health. Age had no effect on the psychological well-being but a small negative correlation was found between this variable and health (Spearman's rho = -0.075,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Results: Every emotion was significantly correlated with both psychological well-being and physical health. The psychological well-being showed the strongest link with the "emotional balance" ( $F = 179.3$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Physical health was also significantly correlated with "emotional-balance" ( $F = 53.97$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The emotional balance indicator was negatively correlated with the psychological demands variable ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and it was positively correlated with the decision latitude ( $r = .377$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Anovas between the decision latitude score, psychological well-being and physical health were significant ( $F = 21.13$  and  $F = 21.47$ , both  $p < 0.01$  respectively). The Anovas between psychological demands and the same variables were also significant ( $F = 11.60$  and  $F = 11.39$ , both  $p < 0.01$ ). The emotional balance explained .366 of the psychological well-being variance (adjusted R-square,  $r = .605$ ).