Building up resilience in times of crisis by imagining the future

International Project-Week 2015
1. THEORY
“Resilient people don`t walk between the raindrops, they have scars to show for their experience.“
Resilience acts on three levels

1. The individual (knowledge, attitudes, self-esteem)
2. The community (family and social support networks)
3. Society (social class, access to resources and services)
Resilience and the relation to employment

- Unemployment often has consequences for physiological and mental health

- Safe working improves the state of health, if the work is broadly in line with the wishes of the employed person

- Conclusion: work is an important determinant of self-esteem, identity and the main source of income
Resilience and the Future Imagination

- Seeing possibility
- Be Hopeful
- Self-belief
- Gives certainty
- Flexibility
Research questions

1. What is the relationship between resilience and imagining a future with and without employment

2. What are commonalities and differences between an imagined future with and without employment
2. METHOD
Instrument

• Letters from the Future:
  - imagine travelling with a time-machine
  - to particular moment in the future
  - desired situation
  - message to the present
  - un/employed
Instrument

- **Questionnaire**
  - there are 3 parts in the questionnaire:
    - experience to write the letter
    - resilience
    - demographics
3. RESULTS
Level of Resilience in the 2 conditions
Mean employed: 3.2
Mean unemployed: 3.3
General differences and commonalities

• Same average length

• Employed write more often to a defined person, unemployed to an unspecified

• For unemployed there are more important things than a paid job:
  – 6 of 12 time for recreation, family and children
  – 2 of 12 assume there is no need for human work in the future

• Employed attach importance to work in their job
Task: Imagine a desired unemployed future situation

In 8 of 12 analysed letters we found:

- Identify good aspects of unemployment and use them for well-being
- Use leisure for family, recreation or doing something good for others
- Well-being is more important than earn much money
- See potential for a new kind of society, where unemployment is good
  - seeing possibilities to see unemployment in a positive way
- More creativity because its an unconservative thought
  - Train mental flexibility
Task: Imagine a desired unemployed future situation

• either be satisfied or convinced that the situation will improve in time
  - Be hopeful and own self-belief

• Knowing there are possibilities to handle with unemployment
  - Gives certainty
  - Strengthen capabilities that are important for resilience
  - Strengthen the drive for self-actualisation as motivation to better their lifes
CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION
Employment and resilience

良好复原力

稳固基础

确定性
日常生活
生活平衡
社会覆盖
包容性
• Unemployment:
  - dependency on other persons/ institutions
  - Social life → exclusion, stereotypes, stigmatized
Unemployment and resilience by future imagination

• Paradox: good resilience despite unemployment, equal to employment
  • Positive attitude
  • Positive future imagination (hope)
  ➔ no representative results
  (sample size of the study is too small)
(How) Can future imagination build resilience in times of unemployment?

Yes,

• Motivation

• Creativity

• To pursue your aims
• No,

2 of 10 desire an forced unemployed situation and therefore are unhappy, anxious and less hopeful

➢ Possible reasons:
  ➢ Missed the task
  ➢ See no positive aspects of unemployment
  ➢ Lack of creativity
  ➢ Lack of self-efficacy

➢ Probably no strengthened resilience
Thank you for your attention