



Examining the relationship between Hardiness and Future anxiety among Working Professionals

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ABSTRACT

The study delves into the interplay between hardiness and future anxiety among professionals, examining their influence across different sectors and age groups. Through snowball sampling, data from 210 participants aged 23-30 in IT, Corporate, and Government sectors were collected using the Future Anxiety Scale (FAS) and Short Hardiness Scale. Results unveil significant correlations between hardiness and future anxiety levels, indicating that higher hardiness corresponds to lower future anxiety. Regression analysis underscores hardiness as a pivotal predictor of future anxiety, suggesting that psychological resilience serves as a buffer against future-oriented apprehension. Sector-specific variations in mean hardiness and future anxiety levels highlight disparities in psychological well-being, while distinctions between young adults

and adult professionals offer insights into age-related resilience dynamics. These findings have vital implications for both individuals and organizations, guiding the development of targeted interventions and strategies to enhance psychological resilience and well-being amidst career uncertainties. By deepening our understanding of how hardiness impacts future anxiety in the workplace, this research aims to foster a more resilient and effective workforce capable of navigating the complexities of modern work environments with confidence and adaptability.

Keywords: *Hardiness, Future Anxiety, Working Professionals, Workplace, Psychological Resilience, Uncertainty, Snowball Sampling, Mixed-Method Approach*

INTRODUCTION

Psychological well-being, particularly concerning future anxiety, is of paramount importance in navigating the complexities of professional life, especially among young adults transitioning into the workforce. Understanding how psychological traits like hardiness interact with future anxiety among working professionals is crucial for promoting mental resilience and career success.

Future Anxiety

Future anxiety, characterized by apprehension about upcoming events or uncertainties, has garnered significant attention in psychological research due to its profound impact on individuals' decision-making, goal-setting, and overall well-being. Studies by Hammad (2016) and Hassan et al. (2019) have delved into the correlation between future anxiety and attitudes toward specialization among students, revealing gender and specialization-based differences in anxiety

levels. These findings underscore the importance of understanding how future anxiety influences career-related decisions and aspirations, particularly among young adults entering the workforce.

Additionally, research by Meisner and Sobol (2022) explored the complex interplay between psychological distress, affective temperaments, and future anxiety, particularly in the context of economic and political crises. Their findings shed light on the nuanced associations between depression, anxiety, stress, specific temperaments, and future anxiety, highlighting the multifaceted nature of psychological distress and its implications for individuals' perceptions of the future.

Hardiness

Psychological hardiness, a construct comprising components such as commitment, control, and resilience, plays a pivotal role in individuals' ability to cope with stressors and adversities in various life domains. For instance, Bartone et al. (2013) demonstrated that commitment and control within psychological hardiness traits predict adaptability among military cadets, emphasizing their importance in navigating challenges throughout one's career. Similarly, studies by Cheng et al. (2019) and Puri et al. (2019) explored the relationship between hardiness and academic performance among graduate students and adults, respectively, highlighting the significance of hardiness in different domains. However, while these studies provide valuable insights into the individual components of psychological well-being and future anxiety, there remains a dearth of research focusing specifically on the interaction between hardiness and future anxiety among young working professionals. This demographic represents a unique cohort undergoing significant career transitions and facing various stressors in the workplace.

Research Gap

The literature review highlights the importance of psychological hardiness in predicting adaptability and resilience in military leaders and the correlation between future anxiety and attitudes toward academic specialization among university students. However, there is a lack of studies examining how hardiness traits relate to future anxiety specifically among young working professionals in their early career stages.

Understanding the interplay between hardiness, which encompasses factors like commitment, control, and resilience, and future anxiety among this demographic could provide valuable insights for employers, career counselors, and mental health professionals. This research could shed light on the psychological factors influencing career development, job satisfaction, and overall well-being during a critical period of professional growth and transition.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

This study aims to examine the interaction between hardiness and future anxiety among working individuals, analyzing differences across sectors and forecasting patterns for improved comprehension and potential impacts on mental well-being.

Research Objectives

- To explore the relationship between hardiness and future anxiety among working professionals.

- To assess the predictive relationship between Hardiness and Future Anxiety levels among working professionals.
- To examine whether there are significant differences in the mean levels of Hardiness and Future Anxiety between working professionals in various sectors.
- To examine the level of difference between younger adults and adults based on hardiness and future anxiety.

Hypothesis

- **H1-** There is a significant correlation between Hardiness and Future Anxiety levels.
- **H2-** Hardiness predicts Future Anxiety levels significantly in the regression model.
- **H3-** There are significant differences in the mean levels of Hardiness and Future anxiety across professional sectors.
- **H4-** There is a significant difference in the levels of hardiness and future anxiety among young adults and adult professionals.

Sample

Snowball sampling gathered data from 210 participants aged 23-30 in IT, Corporate, and Government sectors. The study aimed to explore hardiness and future anxiety's interplay across sectors and age groups, informing targeted interventions for psychological resilience in the workplace.

Tools

The Future Anxiety Scale (FAS) and Short Hardiness Scale were utilized for their reliability and validity. The FAS assesses future-oriented apprehension, while the Short Hardiness Scale measures hardiness components: control, commitment, and challenge.

Statistical Analysis

A mixed-method approach encompassing correlational analysis, regression modeling, MANOVA, and t-tests was employed to examine relationships between variables. Hardiness served as the independent variable, and Future Anxiety as the dependent variable.

Procedure

Snowball sampling ensured sector representation, with participants providing informed consent before completing surveys online or in-person. Data was securely managed and analyzed using SPSS, with correlational analysis, linear regression, MANOVA, and t-tests applied to explore relationships and variations.

This approach allowed for a comprehensive investigation into the relationship between hardiness and future anxiety among working professionals.

RESULT AND INTERPRETATION

Our investigation of the complex relationship between future fear and hardiness in working professionals reveals important findings that are essential to comprehending resilience in the contemporary workplace. Through an analysis of the predictive dynamics and sector-specific differences in psychological well-being, we find important insights for people and businesses. These findings add to the continuing conversation on mental health in the workplace and provide practical advice for helping professionals who may be facing uncertain futures develop psychological resilience and well-being.

Table 1*Descriptive of the Variables*

	Future Anxiety	Hardiness
N	210	210
Mean	52.9	30.8
Median	50.0	31.0
Standard deviation	30.2	5.93
Government sector	70	70
Corporate sector	70	70
IT sector	70	70
Younger Adults	105	105
Adults	105	105

Table 1 displays descriptive statistics for future anxiety and hardiness scores among 210 professionals. Future anxiety exhibits a mean score of 52.9 with high variability ($SD = 30.2$), while hardiness scores average 30.8 with moderate variability ($SD = 5.93$). The sample comprises 70 individuals from Government, Corporate, and IT sectors each, with 105 classified as Younger Adults and 105 as adults, enabling analysis of sectoral and age-related differences in psychological well-being.

This study aims to explore the relationship between hardiness and future anxiety among employed individuals. Hypothesis H1 posits a significant correlation between Hardiness and Future Anxiety. Results from the correlation analysis (Table 2) reveal a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -0.368$, $p < .001$) between the two variables. The moderate negative correlation suggests that as hardiness increases, future anxiety tends to decrease, supporting H1. The sample size of 210 provides adequate statistical power, affirming the observed correlation's reliability.

Table 2

Correlation table showing the Relationship between hardiness and future anxiety

				Hardiness		Future Anxiety	
Hardiness		Pearson's r		—			
		df		—			
		p-value		—			
		95% CI Upper		—			

		95% CI Lower		—			
		N		—			
Future Anxiety		Pearson's r		-0.368	***	—	
		df		208		—	
		p-value		< .001		—	
		95% CI Upper		-0.245		—	
		95% CI Lower		-0.479		—	
		N		210		—	
Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001							

This investigation examines the predictive link between Hardiness and Future Anxiety levels among employed individuals. Hypothesis 2 posits that Hardiness significantly predicts Future Anxiety in the regression model. Table 3 displays model coefficients, indicating a significant negative association between Hardiness and Future Anxiety (estimate = -1.87, $p < .001$). As Hardiness increases by one-unit, Future Anxiety decreases by 1.87 units, on average. The results confirm Hypothesis 2, highlighting Hardiness as a significant predictor of lower Future Anxiety among professionals.

Table 3

The table for Regression shows Hardiness predicting future anxiety levels.

<i>Model Coefficients - Future Anxiety</i>									
				95% Confidence Interval					
Predictor	Estimate	SE		Lower	Upper	t	p	Stand. Estimate	
Intercept	110.65	10.304		90.33	130.96	10.74	< .001		
Hardiness	-1.87	0.328		-2.52	-1.23	-5.70	< .001	-0.368	

Objective 3 examines variations in mean levels of Hardiness and Future Anxiety across professional sectors, with the hypothesis expecting significant disparities. Univariate tests for Future Anxiety reveal no significant differences among sectors ($F(3, 206) = 0.943, p = 0.421$). However, for Hardiness, there are notable differences ($F(3, 206) = 10.420, p < .001$). Multivariate tests confirm substantial differences in mean vectors of Future Anxiety and Hardiness across sectors ($p < .001$). In summary, while Future Anxiety shows no sectoral differences, significant variations exist in Hardiness levels.

Table 4

The mean difference across the professional sectors is shown by the MANOVA

<i>Multivariate Tests</i>									
			value	F	df1	df2	p		
Occupation		Pillai's Trace	0.166	6.22	6	412	< .001		
		Wilks' Lambda	0.836	6.41	6	410	< .001		
		Hotelling's Trace	0.194	6.59	6	408	< .001		
		Roy's Largest Root	0.180	12.4	3	206	< .001		

<i>Univariate Tests</i>								
	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p		
Occupation	Future anxiety	2579	3	859.6	0.943	0.421		
	Hardiness	968	3	322.7	10.420	< .001		

Residuals	Future anxiety	187776	206	911.5					
	Hardiness	6380	206	31.0					

Objective 4 investigates variations in hardiness and future anxiety levels between younger adults and adults. Contrary to the hypothesis, t-test results reveal no significant differences in hardiness ($t = -0.441$, $p = 0.659$) or future anxiety ($t = -1.080$, $p = 0.282$) between the two age groups. The Levene's test indicates unequal variances, warranting cautious interpretation. These findings contradict the hypothesis, suggesting no distinct psychological profiles between younger adults (aged 23-26) and adult professionals (aged 27-30) in terms of hardiness and future anxiety levels.

Table 5

Mean difference among the age group

Independent Samples T-Test										
								95% Confidence Interval		
		Statistic	df	p	Mean difference	SE difference		Lower	Upper	
Hardiness	Student's t	-0.441	208	0.659	-0.362	0.820		-1.98	1.25	
Future Anxiety	Student's t	-1.080	208 ^a	0.282	-4.495	4.163		-12.70	3.71	
Note. $H_a \mu_{23-26} \neq \mu_{27-30}$										
^a Levene's test is significant ($p < .05$), suggesting a violation of the assumption of equal variances										

DISCUSSION

The study explored the complex relationship between hardiness and future anxiety among working professionals, offering insights into psychological resilience in the workplace. Findings revealed a significant negative correlation between hardiness and future anxiety, indicating that individuals with higher hardiness levels tend to experience lower levels of future anxiety. Regression analysis supported this, suggesting hardiness predicts future anxiety levels among

professionals. Sector-based variations showed significant differences in hardiness but not in future anxiety levels, highlighting potential differences in resilience promotion across sectors.

Contrary to expectations, age-based variations between younger adults and adults showed no significant differences in hardiness or future anxiety. While the study provides valuable insights, limitations include reliance on self-report measures and the cross-sectional design. Future research should employ longitudinal approaches and qualitative methods to deepen understanding and explore intervention effectiveness in promoting psychological resilience and mitigating future anxiety in the workplace. Such interventions could include hardiness training programs and mindfulness-based interventions to foster a supportive work environment and enhance employee well-being.

Limitations of the study

While offering valuable insights, this study has limitations that warrant attention for future research. Reliance on self-report measures may introduce biases, suggesting the inclusion of objective measures or observational data. The cross-sectional design inhibits causal inference; longitudinal or experimental approaches would offer deeper insights. Limited generalizability due to sample specificity suggests replication across diverse populations.

Lack of qualitative insights hampers contextual understanding; qualitative methods should complement quantitative data. Neglecting potential mediators or moderators underscores the need for further exploration. Conceptual and measurement limitations call for alternative frameworks and tools. Cultural and contextual influences should be considered to enrich

understanding. Addressing these limitations will enhance future research, advancing our comprehension of hardiness and future anxiety in varied contexts.

Suggestions for future research

Future research should consider incorporating objective measures or observational data to enhance reliability and mitigate biases. Longitudinal or experimental designs could deepen the exploration of causal relationships over time. Diversifying samples across industries, cultures, and regions would bolster generalizability.

Integrating qualitative methods alongside quantitative data could provide richer insights into contextual factors. Exploring potential mediators or moderators and considering alternative frameworks or tools would enrich analysis. Accounting for cultural and occupational contexts would offer a more comprehensive understanding. Addressing these suggestions can advance our knowledge of hardiness and future anxiety in diverse settings.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between hardiness and future anxiety among working professionals, highlighting the protective role of hardiness in mitigating future anxiety. Despite limitations such as reliance on self-report measures and sample characteristics, the findings emphasize the need for future research to employ longitudinal designs and explore contextual factors. Practically, organizations could benefit from interventions aimed at fostering hardiness and managing future anxiety to enhance employee well-

being and productivity. Overall, this study contributes to understanding and addressing psychological constructs in the workplace, benefiting both individuals and organizations.

Future Implications

Based on the findings and discussions, future research should prioritize longitudinal designs to establish causal relationships between hardiness and future anxiety among professionals. Incorporating objective measures and exploring mediators or moderators could deepen understanding. Qualitative approaches could provide richer insights into experiences and coping strategies, informing tailored interventions. Practically, organizations could implement initiatives like hardiness training or resilience workshops to foster a supportive work environment, enhancing productivity and well-being.

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