

# Career Resilience and Improvement Strategies of Enterprise Employees in the Context of Digital Transformation

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## Abstract

**In the context of digital transformation, the ever-changing new economy has changed the structure and management mode of organizations, and the professional environment has become increasingly complex. The external environment is becoming increasingly unpredictable for employees, which requires them to have stronger career adaptability and better adapt to the dynamic professional environment. Therefore, how to enhance employees' professional resilience and respond to pressure from both internal and external sources within the enterprise has become an urgent issue that requires attention. Based on existing literature, this article sorts out the connotation of occupational resilience and analyzes the important factors that affect the occupational resilience of enterprise employees from three aspects: micro, meso, and macro. Based on this, it proposes strategies for improving the occupational resilience of enterprise employees in terms of individual, organizational, and social support.**

## Keywords

**Enterprise Employees; Career Resilience; Improvement Strategy.**

## 1. Introduction

In the new economic era, digital technology is accelerating innovation and increasingly integrating into various fields and processes of economic and social development. With the rapid development of digital technology, some repetitive and low-tech jobs face the risk of being replaced. At the same time, modern organizations have high job requirements, with employees facing high levels of workload and job insecurity, often accompanied by high cognitive and emotional demands, to cope with continuous organizational change; The global economic environment, population, and immigration patterns have made the pace of work increasingly fast and diverse, making it increasingly difficult for employees to predict. Faced with such a rapidly changing external environment, the career development of employees has become more uncertain, and at the same time, it has increased the possibility of developing their careers in adversity. Therefore, employees must reconsider and plan their career development issues, actively respond to work difficulties and solve problems that arise on their career development path, so that they can better adapt to the dynamic professional environment. In recent years, there has been research on employee career resilience both domestically and internationally, but domestic and foreign scholars' research on career resilience is mainly limited to theoretical aspects. Domestic scholars have not yet formed a systematic research on career resilience, and there are problems such as narrow research scope and insufficient depth. Based on this, this study will further explore the connotation and influencing factors of employee career resilience in enterprises based on previous research literature, in order to further expand and deepen the research system of employee career resilience and provide reference for future research.

## 2. The Connotation of Career Resilience

Most of the existing literature on career resilience comes from London's theory of career motivation. London proposed in 1983 in his article "Theory of Career Motivation" that "career motivation" is a personal characteristic that is influenced by situational variables and reflected in individual decisions and behaviors. This personal characteristic includes career identity, career insight, and career resilience [1]. London defines career resilience as "an individual's resistance to career disruption in an unfavorable environment", which means that an individual can actively respond to problems that arise in their career development. At the same time, "high career resilience does not mean that an individual is not immune to negative environmental conditions, but rather that they can more effectively cope with negative work situations. In order to help understand occupational resilience, London also proposed its opposing concept: occupational vulnerability, which refers to the psychological vulnerability of individuals when facing unfavorable working conditions.

It can be seen that London believes that resilience is one of the important factors driving employees' career motivation, that is, in his theory of career motivation, resilience is one of the important factors driving individual career development. In addition, he also believes that professional resilience is very similar to concepts such as resilience and resilience. It refers to the ability of individuals to resist and adapt to the environment when facing difficulties, as well as the tendency to have confidence and willingness to take risks [2]. In other words, when studying an individual's career development motivation or motivation, London views career resilience as one of the constructs in the same sequence as career identity and insight. That is, the higher an individual's identification with their own career, the clearer their insight into career plans and goals. Moreover, the stronger the flexibility or resilience towards their career, the stronger their career motivation will be. However, London only views career resilience as a simple and narrow construct, without further exploring the connotation of career resilience and the possible diverse influencing factors. In the study of psychological capital theory by Luthans, career resilience is a secondary dimension in the construction of psychological capital. Luthans defined resilience as a positive psychological ability that can rebound or rebound from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or even increased responsibility [3]. Based on the relevant literature mentioned above, it can be found that occupational resilience is currently mainly regarded as a secondary construct under a higher-order construct. London places career resilience in career motivation, while Luthans place it in psychological capital. There are also similarities between the two. London and Luthans simply follow the definition of resilience in the past, believing that resilience is a psychological or adaptive ability to rebound or recover from adversity. Moreover, in order to fit into larger combinatorial constructs, they only consider resilience as a simple element or facet. Therefore, they have lost the possibility of exploring and understanding deeper and more complex connotations of resilience. Unlike the aforementioned researchers, Taiwanese scholar Hong Ruibin (2013) proposed for the first time a comprehensive classification study on the occupational resilience of unemployed individuals. Unlike London's narrow definition of occupational resilience, this study explores specific unemployment phenomena and proposes a concept of occupational resilience with a relatively broad connotation. It divides the factors of occupational resilience in unemployment experience into four categories, including 6 environmental risk factors, 6 personal risk factors, 7 environmental protection factors, and 9 personal protection factors. This article analyzes the influencing factors of career resilience from multiple perspectives based on the conceptual definition of Masten and Reed (2002) [4].

### 3. The Main Factors Affecting Employee Career Resilience

#### 3.1. Micro Influencing Factors of Occupational Resilience

At the micro level, the factors that affect career resilience mainly include demographic variables such as personality traits, age, gender, and educational background. Crust (2009) pointed out in his study that there is no difference in occupational resilience between men and women, and individuals with strong occupational resilience can better control emotions than the general population [5]. In terms of demographic variables, Chang (1995) also believes that there is no significant difference between male and female career resilience, but this research conclusion is based on the same educational level background. What is significantly different from the above research results is that CheSSOR (2017) believes that men may have lower career resilience than women. The research by Cao Keyan (2014) and Jia Xiaocan (2013) also shows that there is a significant difference in occupational resilience between men and women. They believe that male career resilience is higher than female career resilience. Age is also one of the important individual factors affecting career resilience. Many existing research literature shows a positive correlation between age and occupational resilience. In addition, education level also affects career resilience. The study by Jia Xiaocan et al. (2013) shows that employees with high academic qualifications have better career resilience than those with low academic qualifications.

In addition to demographic variables such as gender and age, Patterson and Kelleher (2005) believe that the mechanism of resilience formation includes: explanation, ability, and action, which do not occur in chronological order, but constantly germinate and interact during the process of resilience formation. Only through the dynamic interaction of the three aspects can individuals develop personal advantages and successfully overcome difficulties when facing adversity and setbacks. This indicates that individual intrinsic traits are also the main variables affecting career resilience, with individual self-efficacy, self-esteem, career beliefs, tolerance, control points, self-esteem, and interpersonal relationships being more prominent. Overall, based on existing research results, occupational resilience can be divided into dimensions with personality trait stability and dimensions with plasticity based on whether it has stability.

#### 3.2. The Mesoscopic Factors Influencing Career Resilience

In terms of the mesoscopic influencing factors of career resilience, more research has focused on the organizational environment in which individuals are located. The research by London (1993) and Noe et al. (1990) suggests that effective authorization and organizational support for their career development are beneficial for achieving high career resilience. Similarly, Fisher and Stafford's (2000) empirical study using students as research samples showed a significant positive correlation between career resilience and positive social support. Meanwhile, according to research by NOE (2006), if employees consider their work to be very important and believe that it has strong motivational characteristics, they often exhibit a higher tendency towards career resilience. However, this study did not indicate a significant correlation between employees' management positions and career resilience. In the study of full-time and part-time employees, London (1993) found that part-time workers have higher occupational resilience than full-time workers. However, the research results of Dennis (2016) indicate that full-time nurses have a higher level of professional resilience than part-time nurses [6]. Moreover, factors such as an organization's human resource management system and process, leadership style, group cohesion, work design within the organization, employee compensation and benefits, and individual career planning all have a significant impact on career resilience. In the research on the impact of individual career resilience, Hofstede divides culture into individualistic culture and collectivist culture, and believes that collectivist culture emphasizes belonging to the whole in exchange for their loyalty, protection, and safety. And individualistic

culture encourages individual motivation and achievement. Therefore, a reasonable expectation is that in an individualistic culture, employees will have a higher level of professional resilience than in a collectivistic cultural environment.

### **3.3. Macro Influencing Factors of Career Resilience**

Sociological research on social support refers to the behavior of certain social networks using material and spiritual means to provide free assistance to specific vulnerable groups. Chen, Lin, and Chung (2008) pointed out that both "career stress" and "social support" have a direct impact on physical and mental health and happiness, with the former being a limiting factor and the latter being a contributing factor [7]. However, in addition to the direct impact of social support on stress perception, another group of scholars in social support research believes that the social support effect mainly manifests in buffering the harm of stress on physical and mental states, including physiological health indicators such as sleep quality and blood pressure. Therefore, from a sociological perspective, social capital that accompanies work relationships not only provides social support functions for emotional expression and psychological adjustment, but also provides substantial assistance for sharing experiences, providing suggestions, and providing useful resources for problem-solving when encountering problems in daily work. Furthermore, in the context of Chinese culture, the dominant tradition and culture in society still have an impact on women. Due to physiological differences, society has different expectations of roles for different genders. Burnette and Figley (2017) argue that explicit or implicit discriminatory treatment in organizations includes unconscious preference for young male employees, and offers job guidance or informal career opportunities; On the contrary, stereotypes are given to the roles of female employees [8].

## **4. Strategies for Improving Employee Career Resilience**

### **4.1. Individual Strategies for Improving Employee Career Resilience**

(1) Developing positive psychological capital. Positive psychological capital includes initiative, optimism, hope, achievement motivation, strong career interests, and so on. Reasonable development and utilization of these psychological capital will have a huge driving force on individual thinking and behavior, enabling individuals to overcome difficulties, improve resilience, and move towards career success. Specific measures include: increasing job skills through learning successful individuals to enhance self-efficacy; Train positive thinking and a positive and optimistic outlook on life and values to improve resilience and subjective well-being; Maintain a good mood, enhance psychological resilience, and enhance one's career resilience; Embrace career ideals, establish career goals, develop career interests, and improve career skills; Having good values, cultivating an optimistic and hopeful attitude towards life, and facing challenges and adversity with the best psychological state.

(2) Developing social capital. Social capital is the resource that people's position in the social structure brings to them. People are in various social networks, and only by having membership and connecting with others can they receive corresponding rewards. Generally speaking, there are three main social networks in which employees are located: one is their own professional network, which involves various complex relationships with leaders, colleagues, clients, professional peers, and so on. Only by properly managing relationships with various personnel can one be at ease in the workplace and gain more resources to improve oneself. The second is the family network, where the quality of family relationships directly affects a person's way of thinking and mindset. Only a harmonious family network can become a solid support for individual career success. The third is the friend network, where the support and encouragement of friends are very valuable assets for individuals, as they can effectively overcome work adversity and various difficulties. Therefore, creating and cultivating social

networks and developing social capital are particularly important for the career development of enterprise managers.

(3) Improving self-regulation ability. Self regulation ability refers to a dynamic mechanism in which an individual's cognitive and behavioral development transitions from an imbalanced state to a balanced state. It refers to the ability to continuously adjust one's own psychological processes and improve one's own mental models based on objective needs and subjective desires in order to keep up with the pace of social development and changes in the surrounding environment for the physical and mental growth of individuals. The methods for improving self-regulation ability are mainly divided into two categories: transfer method and control method. Specific measures include attention transfer, consciousness regulation, language regulation, action transfer, release method, and self-control. Through these methods, employees can effectively reduce their negative emotions and dissatisfaction when facing discomfort and difficulties in their work, focus on important matters and overlook trivial matters, and concentrate on maintaining a good state of mind.

(4) Providing assistance programs. The Employee Assistance Program is a systematic approach to enhancing employee career resilience and providing long-term support and benefits to employees. This plan requires professional personnel to operate from diagnosis, assessment, training, professional guidance to consultation. Enterprises provide employee assistance programs, which can provide psychological guidance and personality analysis based on the specific situation of each enterprise's management personnel, conduct psychological self-discipline training, and help them improve their psychological state, thereby creating a good organizational atmosphere and achieving a win-win situation for both individuals and the organization. On the other hand, employee assistance programs can utilize their professional assessment and diagnosis in specific job positions to help employees identify ways to improve their work, thereby improving work quality and efficiency. In addition, enterprises can also implement assistance plans through institutional settings, such as setting up exercise rooms, vent rooms, company clubs and associations, tea chat rooms, etc., to provide employees with a favorable environment for physical and mental relaxation.

#### **4.2. Organizational Strategies for Improving Employee Career Resilience**

Career resilience, as an individual's psychological and behavioral characteristic, can be improved through targeted training. Therefore, enterprises should provide professional training on employees' occupational resilience and actively explore training management models to enhance their occupational resilience. Vocational resilience training in enterprises should start from three aspects, namely professional knowledge training, psychological ability training, and work skills training. Firstly, the training of professional knowledge on occupational resilience can be conducted through expert lectures, case studies, and other methods, so that the knowledge and importance of occupational resilience can be recognized in the individual's mind; Secondly, in terms of psychological ability training, role-playing, scenario simulation, and other methods can be used to experience the emotions and attitudes of each role, thereby targeted improvement of individual psychological resilience, emotional intelligence, and social skills; Finally, job skills training can help individuals solve doubts and quickly master work skills through a mentorship system. And by providing learning materials and training fees, employees can be continuously encouraged to continue learning new skills and management methods.

#### **4.3. Social Support Strategies for Improving Employee Career Resilience**

The driving mechanism for improving employees' career resilience comes not only from the support of individual employees and enterprises, but also from national policies, employee families, and other aspects. Positive or negative social relationships and support in individual career development can have an impact on career resilience. Firstly, family is a crucial part of

an individual's growth process, and good family relationships contribute to various aspects of an individual's career development, as well as enhancing the driving force for positive personal development. Poor family interactions can easily affect an individual's emotions and life. Different family environments create individuals with different personalities, and the education and support of families are a powerful support for the formation of employees' career resilience. Secondly, the government should fully leverage its policy guidance role, improve relevant laws and regulations, and strive to create an institutional environment that protects the rights and interests of enterprise employees. Especially in the context of today's digital transformation, the demand for the labor market is becoming increasingly high. Government departments need to create a good employment environment and competitive order, promote the formation of a systematic talent training system, reduce frustration in competition, and provide institutional guarantees for the comprehensive improvement of their professional resilience.

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