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# Stress and Wellbeing at Work: An Update

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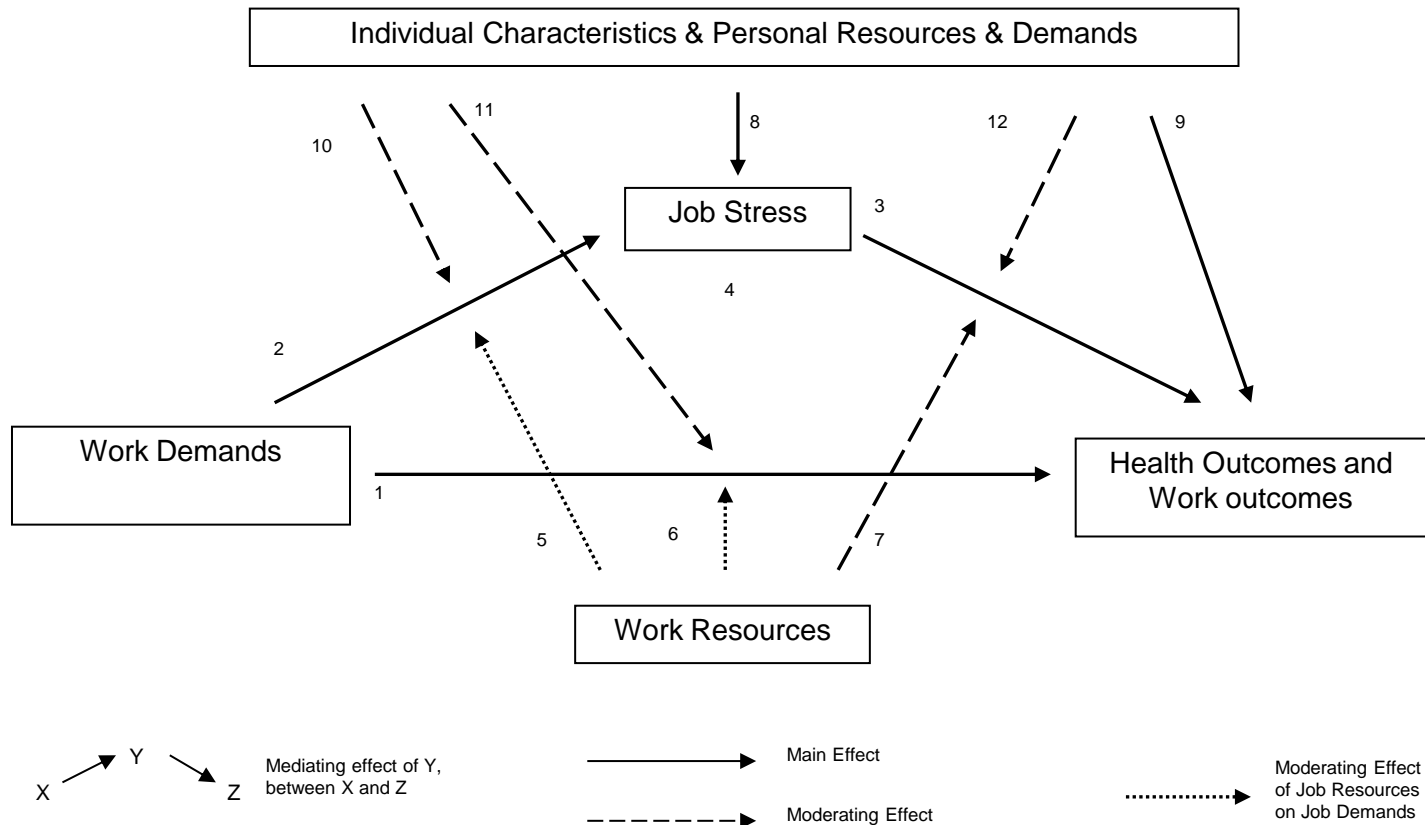


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# **A Case Definition for Work-Related Stress (2009)**

- The person reports high levels of stress
  - Unreasonable job characteristics
  - Mental health problems
  - Work-related problems (e.g. high sick-leave)
  - Not due to confounding factors
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# The DRIVE MODEL OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS



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# Perceived stress at work

- We have a single question, validated in the Bristol Stress and Health at Work study, which can assess whether a person is very or extremely stressed at work.
  - This can be used as the first stage of the case definition.
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# **A single measure of job characteristics**

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# Combined effects and Occupational Stressors: Method

- Calculate a Total Negative Job Characteristics Score:  
e.g. Sum of job demands, lack of control,  
lack of support, poor working environment,  
long or irregular working hours etc
  - Split sample into quartiles and use lowest quartile  
as the comparison group in logistic regressions.
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# Total negative job characteristics score and high stress

	OR	CI
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quartile	1.60	1.32-1.93
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile	2.08	1.72-2.53
4 <sup>th</sup> Quartile	3.84	3.17-4.66

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# Well-being at work: What is a good job?

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- There is a huge amount of research on negative job characteristics, occupational stress and mental health problems.
  - But positive and negative emotions are not just the opposite ends of a continuum, and the absence of negative emotion doesn't mean the presence of positive emotion.
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Work is good for you  
or  
Worklessness is bad for you

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Good work is good for you!

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# What predicts positive outcomes?

- The combined well-being score (the sum of the presence positive job characteristics and appraisals and the absence of negative characteristics and appraisals).
  - “The good job score”
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# Associations between the good job score and positive mental health

	Odds ratio
Low good job	1.00
Second quartile	2.89
Third quartile	5.24
High good job	22.83

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## The Need:

A multi-dimensional model of wellbeing at work that measures a wide range of job characteristics, job attitudes, individual characteristics and outcomes.

Development of the Wellbeing Process Questionnaire (WPQ) and use of short measures – Gary Williams

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# Single Items

(Demands). I feel that I do not have the time I need to get my work done (for example: I am under constant time pressure, interrupted in my work, or overwhelmed by responsibility or work demands)

Disagree strongly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Agree strongly

(Self Efficacy). I am confident in my ability to solve problems that I might face in life (For example: I can usually handle whatever comes my way, If I try hard enough I can overcome difficult problems, I can stick to my aims and accomplish my goals)

Disagree strongly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Agree strongly

# Initial Validation

Single Item	Correlation with multi-item	Multi-item internal Comparison	Single Item	Correlation with multi-item	Multi-item internal comparison
Job Demands	.63	.41	Extraversion	.89	.38
Understanding Role	.60	.53	Neuroticism	.57	.42
Supervisor Relationship	.86	.69	Optimism	.80	.33
Work Characteristics Average	.70		Personality Average	.66	

All correlations significant at .01 (Pearson R)



# Testing an established model

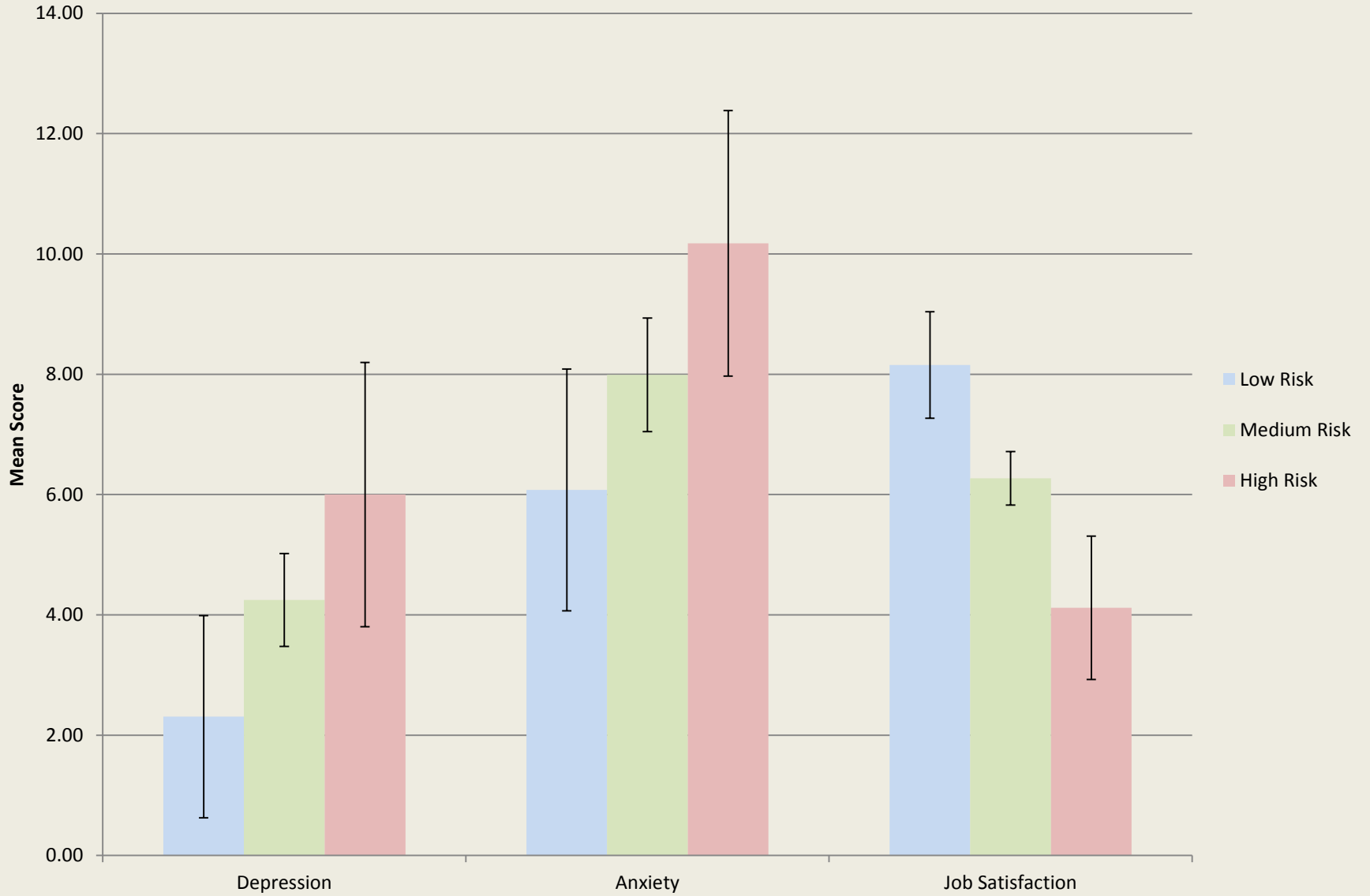
- Job Demands/Control/ Support (JDCS) and Effort/Reward Imbalance (ERI) models: strong evidence for their relationships with outcomes
- Examine associations between different combinations of demands/control/support and effort/reward with depression, anxiety, and job satisfaction
- Compare models using single items or traditional scales

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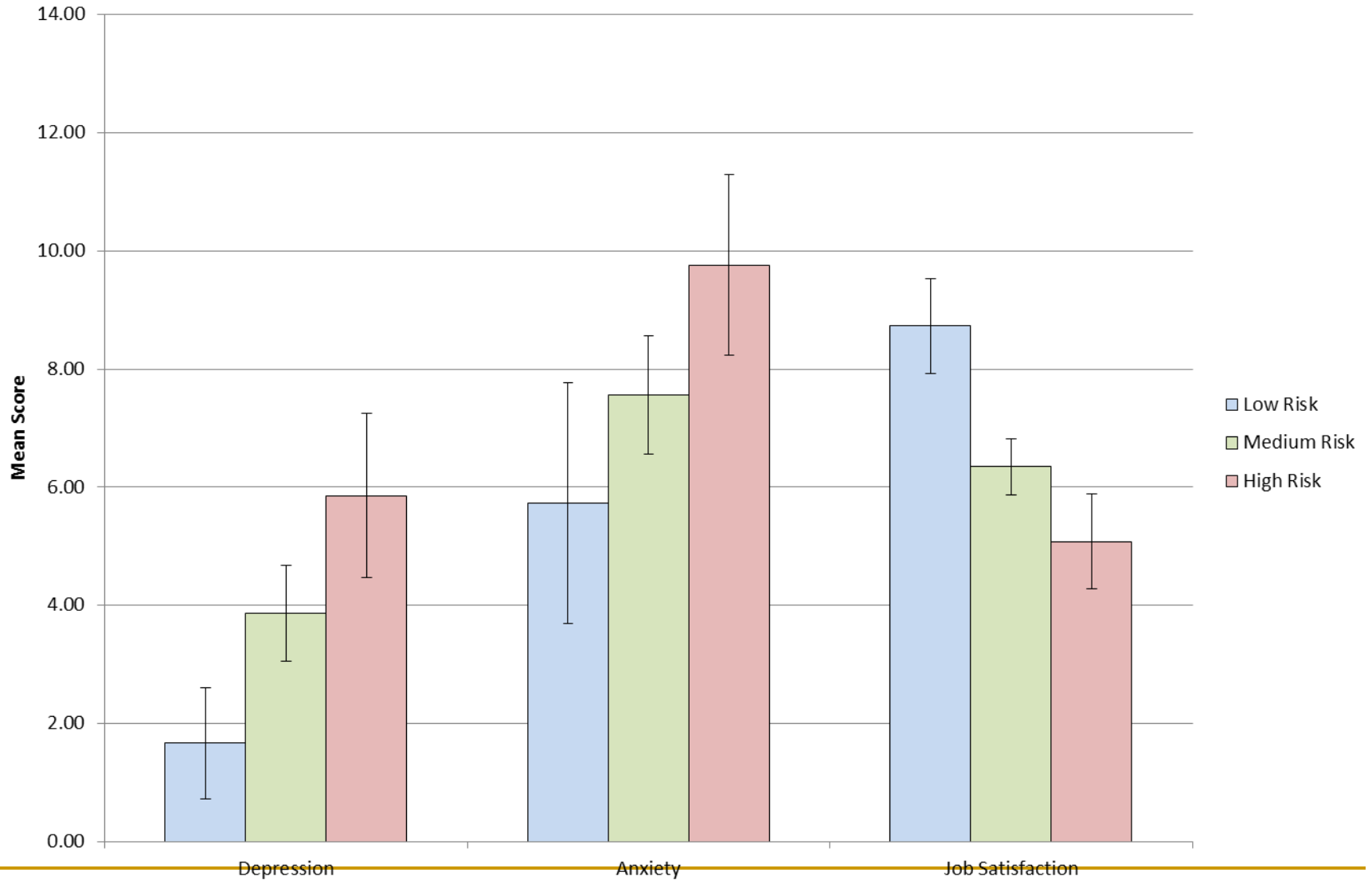
# Results

- Using 3 items does not give very different results to using 16 items (JDACS) or 32 items (ERI)
  - At risk groups based on these models can be identified with single-items
  - Predictive validity of single items is comparable to multi item scales
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# JDCS Long (16 Items)



## JDCS Short (3 Items)



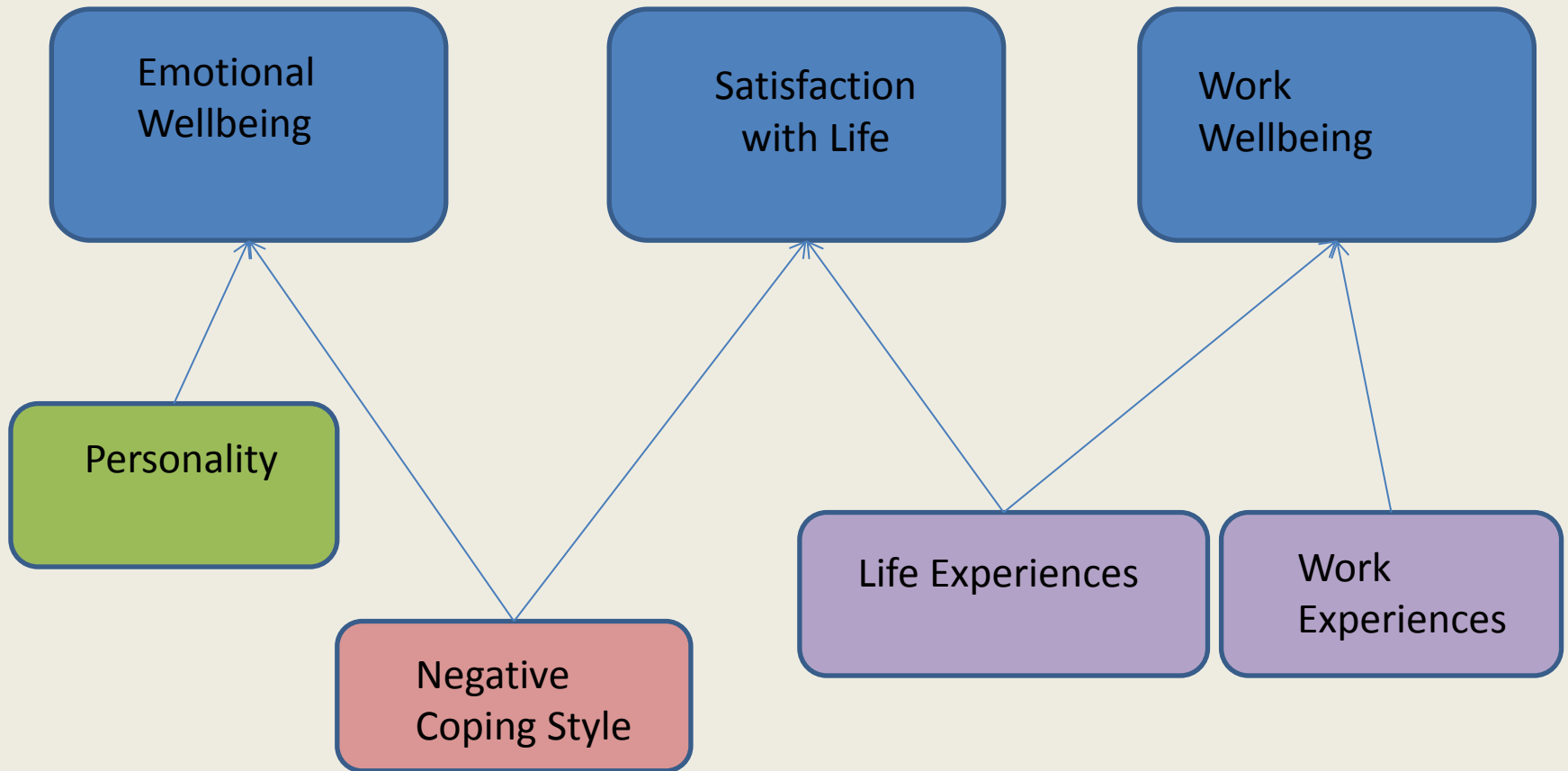
## Other factors:

- Work characteristics and personality both contribute to outcomes
- Work characteristics more important for job satisfaction/stress (appraisals) while personality more important for positive and negative affect (emotional)
- Only certain variables predict outcomes when all variables are included in the regression

# Remaining Variables

- Work Circumstances
  - Positive
    - Reward
    - Control
    - Support
    - Consultation on Change
    - Supervisor relationship
  - Negative
    - Demands
    - Effort
    - Overcommitment
- Life Circumstances
  - Uplifts
  - Hassles
  - Flourishing
- Personality
  - Optimism
  - Self-Esteem
  - Self-Efficacy
  - Emotional Stability
- Coping Style
  - Avoidance
  - Self-Blame
  - Wishful Thinking
- Received Social Support

# Wellbeing Outcomes and their Predictors



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# Where next?

- Refine the method of auditing wellbeing at work (both by surveys and by telephone) and use such audits as an indicator of the efficacy of interventions.

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