

A Hard Day's Night: Persistent Within-Individual Effects of Job Demands and the Role of Recovery Processes

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Abstract : This study aims to examine recovery from work as an important daily activity with implications for workplace behavior. Building on affective events theory and the stressor-detachment model as frameworks, this paper proposes and tests a comprehensive within-individual model that uncovers the role of recovery processes at home in linking workplace demands (e.g., workload) and stressors (e.g., workplace incivility) to next-day organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs). Our sample consisted of 126 full-time employees in a large Midwestern University. For a period of 16 working days, these employees were asked to fill out 3 electronic surveys while at work. The first survey (sent out in the morning) measured self-reported sleep quality, recovery experiences the previous day at home, and momentary effect. The second survey (sent out close to the end of the workday) measured job demands and stressors as well as OCBs, while the third survey in the evening assessed job strain. Data were analyzed using Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM). Results indicated that job demands and stressors at work made it difficult to unwind properly at home and have a good night's sleep, which had repercussions for next day's morning effect, which, in turn, influenced OCBs. It can be concluded that processes of recovery are vital to an individual's daily effective functioning and behavior at work, but recovery may become impaired after a hard day's work. Thus, our study sheds light on the potentially persistent nature of strain experienced as a result of work and points to the importance of recovery processes to enable individuals to avoid such cross-day spillover. Our paper will discuss this implication for theory and practice as well as potential directions for future research.

Keywords : affect, job demands, organizational citizenship behavior, recovery, strain

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