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Monday 3:30 pm

Physikalische Institute Köln

Lecture Hall III

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The Importance of Career Self-management for Academic Career Development

Career self-management is a central demand in academic career paths, since individuals are frequently held responsible for managing their careers by themselves and face high levels of insecurity in the early career phase. In this talk, I will present results of three longitudinal studies that were part of a larger nine-wave research project on the career paths of young STEM scientists. This research is approached from perspectives of inter-individual as well as intra-individual differences. Questionnaire data were analyzed by using the random intercept cross-lagged panel model (RI-CLPM; Hamaker et al., 2015) to separate between-person effects from within-person effects. The first study examined reciprocal relationships between work-related self-management, occupational self-efficacy, and career insecurity (N = 3118 PhD students and PhD holders). Results showed increases in self-management and self-efficacy to predict decreases in career insecurity as well as increases in career insecurity to predict decreases in self-management and self-efficacy. The second study investigated the dynamic relationship between flow experience and career goal clarity (N = 3094 PhD students and PhD holders). Results revealed increases in career goal clarity to be associated with subsequent increases in flow experience, and vice versa. The purpose of the third study was to illuminate the process of disengagement from the goal to obtain a PhD (N = 2,011 PhD students). It was assumed that both the lack of self-directed career management as well as social support fuel the experience of an action crisis with regard to the goal to complete a PhD, which, in turn, mitigates the motivation to engage in career management and seek out social support. Results confirmed these predictions. Practical implications will be discussed.

