

CS06-01 - COMPETENCE, RISK AND RESILIENCE IN DEVELOPMENT

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The talk will focus on the interplay between stress and resilience, risk and vulnerability, and competence and positive adaptation. These concepts are to a large extent intertwined and not to be blended or missed in a proper longitudinal design/study of positive human development. However, the literature on resilience reflects considerable confusion regarding issues related to measurement of the resilience construct. One misconception may be that a successful process of resilience is mainly a responsibility of the individual (e.g., genetics, temperament, or intelligence), thus omitting the significance of the surroundings. Another is the exaggerated focus on measuring outcome states in preference of resilience factors or processes that may lead to a favorable outcome, despite high risks of an unfavorable outcome. I will not provide clear-cut solutions to these methodological challenges in research on resilience and competence, but delineate how measurement of protective factors, rather than outcomes per se, may be a more fruitful approach in order to answer substantive questions involving resilience processes and development of competence.