

The Quality of Subjective Experience in Daily Lives of College Students: The Effect of Perceived Challenges and Skills

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This study conducted two major examinations. First, the present study examined whether varying ratios of perceived challenge and skill can explain the range of negative to positive variations in daily experience. Second, the article investigated the effects that perceived challenges and skills in activities have on the quality of everyday life experience. The design of the study involved an experience sampling methodology; 101 college students completed experience surveys at eight times during the day for a period of one week, resulting in a total 5,640 observations. The experience surveys measure daily variations in five dimensions of experience (concentration, control, interest, enjoyment, and involvement) in four contexts. Findings showed that the quality of experience in high-challenge/high-skill conditions was characterized by high concentration, control, interest, and involvement of the situation. Results from hierarchical linear modeling analyses showed that prediction of flow theory that the interaction of challenges and skills has a positive effect on the quality of experience. Yet some differences of parameter estimates were found between dimensions of experience and between social contexts of activity. The perceived challenges, skills, and their interaction explained 11%-39% of the with-individual variance in dimensions of experience. These findings suggest implications for improving the quality of Taiwanese college students' life and call for a further improvement of the flow model.

Keywords: *college students, flow, perceived challenge, perceived skill, the quality of experience*