

Survey study shows workers with more flexibility and job security have better mental health

March 26 2024, by Bob Yirka



Credit: Andrea Piacquadio from Pexels

A team of community health specialists at the Boston University School of Public Health, working with a psychiatrist from Brown University,

has found evidence that suggests workers who have more job flexibility and security tend to have better mental health overall.

In their study, [published](#) in *JAMA Network Open*, the group surveyed more than 18,000 employed people across the U.S. to learn more about their jobs and their [mental health](#).

Over the past several years, as white-collar workers and employers have negotiated return-to-office policies after the pandemic, mental health specialists have used the opportunity to learn more about [job satisfaction](#). In this new study, the research team wanted to know what sort of impact job flexibility and security had on worker's well-being, most specifically, their mental health. To learn more, they sent out thousands of standard mental health surveys to employed people in the U.S. that also included questions regarding their level of [job security](#) and degree of flexibility.

For their study, the researchers defined flexibility as having the ability to adjust their own work schedule to meet personal demands, such as taking time off when sick or scheduling a vacation. It also included scheduling changes made by employers. Job security, on the other hand, was a measure of how confident an employee was that they would not lose their job in the near future.

The researchers found that people who reported greater job flexibility also reported 26% lower odds of experiencing psychological stress. They also were 13% less likely to experience daily anxiety, 11% less likely to experience weekly anxiety and 9% less likely to experience anxiety several times a year.

The research team also found that people with high job security were 25% less likely to experience [psychological stress](#) and were also less likely to experience [anxiety](#) regularly or over the course of many weeks

or years. The researchers also found that more flexibility and job security led to reduced absenteeism, while also allowing [workers](#) to feel comfortable taking time off when they were sick.

More information: Monica L. Wang et al, Job Flexibility, Job Security, and Mental Health Among US Working Adults, *JAMA Network Open* (2024). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.3439](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.3439)

© 2024 Science X Network

Citation: Survey study shows workers with more flexibility and job security have better mental health (2024, March 26) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-03-survey-workers-flexibility-job-mental.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.