

# Study suggests college grads who value time over money happier a year later

September 19 2019, by Bob Yirka

---



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

A trio of researchers from Harvard Business School, the University of London and the University of British Columbia has found that college graduates who value time over money report being happier a year later

than those who report the reverse. In their paper published in the journal *Science Advances*, Ashley Whillans, Lucía Macchia and Elizabeth Dunn, describe their study and what they learned from it.

Most people who have lived for a long time know that there is very often a trade-off between doing things that make you happy and doing things to make it possible—like earning more money. For those who are still young and in the process of making major life decisions, the trade-off might not be so obvious. In this new effort, the researchers sought to learn more about the decision-making processes of people about to graduate college, and how those decisions affected their level of happiness just a year later.

The researchers administered a two-part survey to the volunteers. The first part asked questions regarding whether they valued time over money or vice versa. They also asked them to rate how happy they were. The first part of the survey was given to 1,000 volunteer students while they were still in college. The second part, which was identical to the first, was given to the same people one year later.

The researchers report that in the first survey, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported valuing time over money—a year later, they found that the ratio had changed somewhat. Fourteen percent of those who had reported valuing money over time switched their answer, while 13 percent of those who had first reported valuing time over money switched. The researchers also report that those students who had reported valuing money over time while still in school tended to accept jobs that were more income-focused, while those who chose time over money were more focused on working in an environment that they liked. The researchers also found that those who reported valuing time over money on either survey rated themselves as happier than those who valued [money](#) over time.

**More information:** Ashley Whillans et al. Valuing time over money predicts happiness after a major life transition: A preregistered longitudinal study of graduating students, *Science Advances* (2019). [DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.aax2615](https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aax2615)

© 2019 Science X Network

Citation: Study suggests college grads who value time over money happier a year later (2019, September 19) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-09-college-grads-money-happier-year.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.