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## **Meaning Making Under Stress: The Mediating Role of Resilience on Affect and Memory**

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### **Abstract**

This research investigated the interplay among stress, meaning in life, and resilience, and examined their combined effects on affective and memory functioning. Two independent, post-test–only experiments (N = 140; 70 per experiment) employed between-group designs with equal allocation to experimental and control conditions. In Experiment 1, negative affect was experimentally induced using positive-negative affect valence task, while Experiment 2 employed a standardized stress induction through singing a song stress test. In both experiments, participants assigned to the experimental condition completed a structured meaning-making task involving writing about life goals, positives from past negative experiences, and value affirmation task. Experiment 1 assessed resilience and affective responses; Experiment 2 assessed resilience and memory functions (delayed and immediate recall, retention of similar and dissimilar pairs, and recognition). Independent samples t tests and simple mediation analyses were conducted. Across both experiments, meaning in life showed a robust positive association with resilience. Resilience partially mediated the relationship between meaning and affect, with meaning-making linked to higher positive affect and reduced negative affect following induction. Effects on memory were modest, though positive impact was observed on immediate recall and retention of dissimilar pairs. These findings underscore meaning-making as a significant psychological resource that strengthens resilience and supports affective well-being under stress, with selective benefits for memory functions.

**Keywords:** Meaning in Life; Memory Functions; Positive and Negative Affect; Resilience; Stress