

Summary of Paper: [How Controlling Failure Perceptions Affects Performance: Evidence from a Field Experiment](#)

What is this Study About?

The study explores how altering employees' perceptions of failure through formal communications from senior management can improve their performance, particularly in challenging times.

What are the major findings of the study?

Conducted with Brazilian distributorships of a multinational direct sales organization, the researchers revealed that formal communications from senior management, framing failure as a natural part of learning, can positively affect employee performance. By delivering a video message that encouraged viewing negative outcomes constructively, the experiment demonstrated that employees who saw failure as a learning opportunity rather than a sign of incapability were more likely to maintain their effort amidst economic adversity. This effect was attributed to an increase in job-specific confidence and the reinforcement of social norms that promote perseverance after failure. The research suggests that how failure is communicated and perceived within an organization can significantly influence employees' motivation and performance.

Why is the study important?

This study suggests that the way senior management communicates about failure can significantly influence employee performance, especially under adverse conditions. By showing that framing failure as part of the learning process leads to sustained employee effort and better performance, it highlights a practical approach for organizations to bolster resilience and productivity. Overall, the study identifies the role of job-specific confidence and social norms as key to performance outcomes, offering valuable insights for managers to utilize the power of positive communication strategies. This can guide organizations in developing effective management practices that foster a healthy work environment.