

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY AND SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS: A STUDY OF THE BIG FIVE TRAITS AMONG UKRAINIAN IT SPECIALISTS

EXPLORANDO A RELAÇÃO ENTRE PERSONALIDADE E SUCESSO SUBJETIVO NA CARREIRA: UM ESTUDO DOS CINCO GRANDES TRAÇOS ENTRE ESPECIALISTAS UCRANIANOS EM TI

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the influential dynamics between the Big Five personality traits and subjective career success in the Ukrainian IT industry, offering a new perspective in career development research. Traditionally, career success research focused on human capital attributes and demographic factors, while dispositional factors such as personality remained underexplored. This research fills this gap, especially relevant in modern, non-linear organizational environments. The study engages IT professionals in Ukraine, using surveys to assess the relationship between their personality traits, based on the Big Five Inventory-2, and their subjective career success, measured through the Subjective Career Success Inventory. The analysis includes 150 complete responses from various demographics within the IT sector, ensuring a comprehensive examination of the dispositional factors influencing career success. Results reveal significant correlations between personality traits and career success perceptions. Extraversion demonstrates a substantial positive relationship with career success, aligning with the hypothesis that sociability, assertiveness, and enthusiasm are advantageous in professional settings. Agreeableness also shows a positive correlation, suggesting that cooperative and empathetic traits enhance career experiences and success perceptions. Conscientiousness is positively correlated with career success, emphasizing the importance of organization, diligence, and reliability in achieving career goals. Contrary to expectations, neuroticism exhibits a positive correlation with career success, indicating complex dynamics that might involve factors like increased career-driven motivation among neurotic individuals. Openness, with a modest but significant positive correlation, suggests that creativity and openness to new experiences hold value in the IT industry, albeit not as primary drivers of career success. The study's findings on the relationships between personality traits and various facets of career success offer deeper insights. Extraversion correlates positively with aspects like recognition, quality of work, and career satisfaction. Agreeableness positively influences the perception of meaningful work and authenticity. Conscientiousness strongly correlates with recognition and quality of work, while neuroticism shows a mixed relationship, impacting authenticity and work-life balance negatively. Openness, while showing a

smaller effect, contributes positively to career growth opportunities and overall satisfaction. In summary, the study illuminates the crucial role of personality traits in shaping career success, particularly in the dynamic IT sector. It underscores the importance of social engagement, assertiveness, cooperation, organization, and creativity in professional development. The negative impact of neurotic traits highlights the need for supportive work environments and stress management strategies. These insights are invaluable for both individuals and organizations in understanding and fostering career success in the modern workplace.

Keywords: personality, Big Five, subjective career success, IT specialists.

RESUMO

Este estudo investiga as dinâmicas influentes entre os traços de personalidade do Big Five e o sucesso subjetivo na carreira na indústria de TI da Ucrânia, oferecendo uma nova perspectiva na pesquisa de desenvolvimento de carreira. Tradicionalmente, a pesquisa de sucesso na carreira concentrava-se em atributos de capital humano e fatores demográficos, enquanto fatores disposicionais, como a personalidade, permaneciam pouco explorados. Esta pesquisa preenche essa lacuna, especialmente relevante em ambientes organizacionais modernos e não lineares. O estudo envolve profissionais de TI na Ucrânia, utilizando pesquisas para avaliar a relação entre seus traços de personalidade, com base no Big Five Inventory-2, e seu sucesso subjetivo na carreira, medido através do Subjective Career Success Inventory. A análise inclui 150 respostas completas de várias demografias dentro do setor de TI, garantindo um exame abrangente dos fatores disposicionais que influenciam o sucesso na carreira. Os resultados revelam correlações significativas entre traços de personalidade e percepções de sucesso na carreira. A extroversão demonstra uma relação positiva substancial com o sucesso na carreira, alinhando-se à hipótese de que sociabilidade, assertividade e entusiasmo são vantajosos em ambientes profissionais. A agradabilidade também mostra uma correlação positiva, sugerindo que traços cooperativos e empáticos aprimoram as experiências e percepções de sucesso na carreira. A conscienciosidade está positivamente correlacionada com o sucesso na carreira, enfatizando a importância de organização, diligência e confiabilidade na realização de metas profissionais. Contrariando as expectativas, a neuroticismo exibe uma correlação positiva com o sucesso na carreira, indicando dinâmicas complexas que podem envolver fatores como maior motivação impulsionada pela carreira entre indivíduos neuroticos. A abertura, com uma correlação positiva modesta, sugere que criatividade e abertura a novas experiências têm valor na indústria de TI, embora não sejam impulsionadores primários do sucesso na carreira. As descobertas do estudo sobre as relações entre os traços de personalidade e várias facetas do sucesso na carreira oferecem insights mais profundos. A extroversão se correlaciona positivamente com aspectos como reconhecimento, qualidade do trabalho e satisfação na carreira. A agradabilidade influencia positivamente a percepção de trabalho significativo e autenticidade. A conscienciosidade se correlaciona fortemente com reconhecimento e qualidade do trabalho, enquanto o neuroticismo mostra uma relação mista, impactando negativamente a autenticidade e o equilíbrio entre trabalho e vida. A abertura, embora mostrando um efeito menor, contribui positivamente para oportunidades de crescimento na carreira e satisfação geral. Em resumo, o estudo ilumina o papel crucial dos traços de personalidade na formação do sucesso na carreira, especialmente no setor dinâmico de TI. Destaca a importância do engajamento social, assertividade, cooperação, organização e criatividade no desenvolvimento profissional. O impacto negativo dos traços neuróticos destaca a necessidade de ambientes de trabalho de apoio e estratégias de gerenciamento de estresse. Esses insights são inestimáveis tanto para indivíduos quanto para organizações na compreensão e promoção do sucesso na carreira no ambiente de trabalho moderno.

Palavras-chave: personalidade, Big Five, sucesso profissional subjetivo, especialistas em tecnologia da informação.

Introduction

A broad spectrum of variables has been scrutinized in career development research to understand their influence on career success. Seminal studies (Cox & Harquail, 1991; Judge & Bretz, 1994; Judge et al., 1995) have illuminated the significance of various demographic aspects, such as age, gender, and marital status, alongside human capital factors rooted in Becker's (1993) theory, including educational attainment, work experience, and employment history. These investigations have also shown that industry-specific factors, organizational scale, and geographic location influence career outcomes.

While human capital attributes (e.g., training, work experience, education) and demographic factors (e.g., age, sex) have been the mainstay of career success research, this focus has left other potential influences less explored. In particular, the impact of dispositional factors on career success has not been extensively examined, despite notable exceptions such as Howard and Bray's (1994) studies on career advancement in managerial contexts. As Tharenou and others have pointed out, there is a need for more comprehensive, person-centric approaches to understanding career success (Tharenou, 1997).

This gap becomes more pronounced considering the evolving nature of organizational environments where career paths are no longer linear but rather complex and self-directed (Hall, 1996; Hall & Mirvis, 1995; Jackson & Tomlinson, 2020). Studies exploring the influence of personal traits and behaviors on career achievement have been scarce (Ferris & Judge, 1991; Judge & Bretz, 1994), but recent research has started to examine the significance of personality in career advancement, recognizing its relevance in areas like leadership and job efficiency (Howard & Bray, 1994; Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, & Barrick, 1999; Seibert, Crant, & Kraimer, 1999).

The hypothesis that the labor market rewards not only cognitive capabilities but also non-cognitive skills of individuals has gained empirical backing. This support emerges from experimental studies utilizing real-effort tasks and extensive survey data analyses. These studies demonstrate that personality traits significantly predict workers' earnings and productivity. They highlight how personality and various individual

behaviors, preferences, and attitudes are crucial in determining economic outcomes (Walkowitz, 2021).

The exploration of personality's relation to career success is relatively recent (Averett et al., 2021; Barrick & Mount, 1991; Bühler et al., 2020; Collischon, 2020; Denissen et al., 2018; Flinn et al., 2018; Howard & Bray, 1994; Luan et al., 2019; Maczulskij & Viinikainen, 2018; Nordman et al., 2019; Semeijn et al., 2020). Coenen et al. (2021) found that personality can indirectly affect earnings by affecting educational career preferences. However, many of these studies have not explicitly focused on career success, often concentrating on a single personality trait or measure of career success, like salary. A notable exception is the work of Judge et al. (1999), who utilized the Five-Factor Model of personality to assess its relationship to both extrinsic and intrinsic career success. However, comprehensive personality assessments within a broader multivariate model are still scarce.

The growing consensus among personality researchers on the structure of the personality domain, particularly the Big Five dimensions, suggests an opportunity to extend career research to include these personality dimensions (Mount & Barrick, 1995; Tokar et al., 1998). Personality's role in influencing workplace behavior and its potential as a predictor of career success, as seen in cross-sectional and longitudinal studies (Penney, David, & Witt, 2011; Seibert & Kraimer, 2001; Wille, De Fruyt, & Feys, 2013), highlights the need for such exploration.

This study aims to delve into the dispositional factors that correlate with career success, particularly within the context of the Ukrainian IT industry. We intend to connect the dots between the Big Five personality traits and various facets of career success. This entails defining career success, exploring the intricacies of the Five-Factor Model, and formulating hypotheses about how these personality traits might interplay with career success. This research strives to contribute to the evolving understanding of how intrinsic personal characteristics shape professional trajectories, offering insights relevant to both individuals and organizations in the dynamic field of information technology.

Literature Review

Definition and Different Facets of Career Success

Career success can be defined as the real or perceived achievements individuals have accumulated due to their work experiences (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995).

According to Judge et al. (1995), career success reflects “positive psychological or work-related achievements one accumulates as a result of his or her work experiences” and entails objective and subjective components. Objective career success is defined as tangible and measurable indicators, such as promotions, job level enhancements, and salary advances (Judge et al., 1995). Subjective career success concerns one’s evaluation and experience of achieving personally meaningful career outcomes such as job satisfaction, career satisfaction, career commitment, and perceived career success (Shockley et al., 2016). Hence, subjective career success depends on the individuals’ subjective evaluation of career goals or success (Seibert et al., 2001), reflecting the importance of their values, attitudes, and goals (Shockley et al., 2016). Research confirms that objective and subjective career success can be assessed as relatively independent outcomes, as they are only moderately correlated (Bray & Howard, 1980; Judge & Bretz, 1994).

It is crucial to distinguish career success from related but conceptually different constructs such as job performance and job satisfaction. Job performance is primarily concerned with the effectiveness with which specific job tasks are executed and is typically evaluated within the context of a particular job (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1993). On the other hand, objective career success (salary and promotions) refers to the accumulation of material rewards and recognition across a series of jobs (Judge et al., 1995). The relationship between job performance and organizational outcomes is complex and multifaceted, as highlighted in the burgeoning literature on this topic (Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997; Murphy, 1989; Pratama, Suwarni, & Handayani, 2022).

Similarly, job satisfaction, defined as a positive emotional state resulting from one’s job evaluation (Locke, 1976), differs from career satisfaction, which emanates from an individual’s appraisal of their overall career development and progression

(Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990). Research underscores the empirical distinction between job satisfaction and career satisfaction (Judge et al., 1995). Given the extensive research exploring the links between personality and job performance and job satisfaction, there is a compelling rationale to extend this inquiry to the related yet distinct domains of objective and subjective career success.

Five-Factor Model of Personality

Personality psychology has increasingly converged on a fundamental structure known as the Five-Factor Model, or the "Big Five," as posited by Goldberg (1990). This model encapsulates various personality measures, distilled into five core dimensions. Extensive studies across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts have repeatedly validated this structure, underscoring its universality and stability over time (McCrae & John, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1997; Pulver, Allik, Pulkkinen, & Hamalainen, 1995; Salgado, 1997). The dimensions of the Big Five have consistently been observed across different cultural contexts and have exhibited heritability to a certain extent, suggesting genetic foundations (Digman, 1989; Jang, Livesley, & Vernon, 1996).

The Big Five encompasses neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, representing a broad range of human behaviors and emotional patterns (Costa & McCrae, 1985; Mount & Barrick, 1995). Neuroticism is characterized by emotional instability, often manifesting as anxiety, hostility, and depression. In contrast, extraversion denotes sociability and assertiveness, with extraverted individuals typically exhibiting warmth and active engagement with their social environment. Openness to experience reflects curiosity and openness to new experiences and ideas, while agreeableness involves interpersonal orientation, ranging from trust and cooperativeness to skepticism and antagonism. Conscientiousness, the fifth dimension, relates to an individual's degree of organization, persistence, and motivation in goal-directed activities.

Among these dimensions, neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness have been particularly highlighted for their relevance to career success. As described by Costa and McCrae (1988), neuroticism is pervasive across personality measures, influencing aspects like stress proneness and personal well-being. The model breaks down neuroticism into facets such as anxiety, hostility, and depression, which can significantly

impact an individual's mood and physical health. Neurotic individuals tend to be more susceptible to negative life events and prolonged negative emotional states (Suls, Green, & Hills, 1998).

Extraversion, another key dimension, is essential in personality psychology, encompassing traits like sociability and activity. Extraverts are more sociable and gregarious and exhibit characteristics like dominance, ambition, and assertiveness, often leading them to assume leadership roles and maintain extensive social networks (Watson & Clark, 1997).

Conscientiousness has been linked to job performance and success in various professional settings. This trait encompasses facets like achievement orientation, dependability, and orderliness, contributing significantly to an individual's workplace behavior and career advancement. It has been associated with a range of positive work outcomes, including reduced counterproductive behaviors, effective job-seeking, higher retention rates, and better attendance (Hogan & Ones, 1997; Barrick, Mount, & Strauss, 1994; Judge, Martocchio, & Thoresen, 1997). Research even suggests a correlation between high levels of conscientiousness and increased longevity, though the causal mechanisms remain fully understood (Friedman et al., 1995).

The other two traits in the Big Five model, openness to experience and agreeableness, also contribute to professional success, albeit in more nuanced ways. Openness, associated with creativity, intellectual curiosity, and agreeableness, emphasizing cooperation and likability, can significantly influence career trajectories in various occupational contexts. However, these traits might also present challenges in certain career paths, such as a tendency for job-hopping among highly open individuals or excessive agreeableness, potentially hindering assertiveness in professional settings.

In this study, while the primary focus will be on neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness, given their direct correlation with career success, we also aim to explore the potential impacts of openness to experience and agreeableness. This comprehensive approach seeks to provide a holistic understanding of how these personality traits collectively shape the career success of IT professionals in Ukraine, considering the multifaceted nature of personality and its varied implications in the professional realm.

Hypotheses

Existing research indicates that neuroticism may influence career success through various pathways. A meta-analysis by Salgado (1997) revealed a negative correlation between neuroticism and job performance. Given the intricate link between job performance and career success (Murphy, 1989), it's plausible to hypothesize a negative connection between neuroticism and tangible career outcomes mediated by job performance. According to Activation Theory (Gardner & Cummings, 1988), extreme levels of external stimulation can impair task performance. Individuals with neurotic tendencies are prone to performance issues at lower activation thresholds, making them less suitable for high-stress, complex roles (Spector, Jex, & Chen, 1995). Supporting this, Judge et al. (1999) observed a negative correlation between neuroticism and a composite measure of tangible career success. Turban and Dougherty (1994) similarly noted a negative link between negative affectivity, a neuroticism component (Tellegen, 1985), and tangible career outcomes.

Neuroticism may also adversely affect intrinsic career success. Negative correlations have been found between neuroticism and job satisfaction (Furnham & Zacherl, 1986; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983), as well as between negative affectivity and both job satisfaction (Judge, 1992; Levin & Stokes, 1989; Watson & Slack, 1993) and perceived career success (Turban & Dougherty, 1994). Staw et al. (1986) showed that individuals with positive affectivity maintain stable job satisfaction levels over time across different jobs and life changes. Thus, neuroticism and affectivity are stable traits that shape responses to work and life situations, suggesting their impact on intrinsic career success.

Most research on personality and subjective career success has focused on antecedents to job satisfaction. There is a consistently observed significant negative correlation between neuroticism and job satisfaction (Furnham & Zacherl, 1986; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983; Tokar & Subich, 1997). This consistency may stem from cognitive processes linked to high neuroticism. Judge and Locke (1993) found that individuals prone to negative emotions often exhibit dysfunctional job-related thoughts (overgeneralization, perfectionism, dependence on others), leading to reduced job

satisfaction. Negative affectivity, an aspect of neuroticism, amplifies the recollection of adverse job-related details (Necowitz & Roznowski, 1994). Individuals who regularly encounter negative emotions in the workplace often concentrate on shortcomings (Watson & Slack, 1993) and may act in manners that estrange them from their coworkers (Brief, Butcher, & Roberson, 1995).

HYPOTHESIS 1. There is a negative relationship between an individual's level of neuroticism and subjective career success.

Research findings indicate a favorable link between conscientiousness and tangible career achievements (Judge et al., 1999). In their comprehensive analysis, Barrick and Mount (1991) identified a modest positive correlation between conscientiousness and earnings, examining variables associated with the five-factor model. Conscientiousness, especially its achievement-driven facet, is significantly connected to tangible career accomplishments and overall life success (Barrick & Mount, 1991; McCrae & Costa, 1991). Investigations such as those by Orpen (1983) and Barrick and Mount (1991) have established a relationship between conscientiousness, salary increases, and career advancements. In assessment center studies, a notable consistency has been observed in how ratings of achievement orientation forecast promotions (Howard & Bray, 1994; Jones & Whitmore, 1995). Like neuroticism, conscientiousness may indirectly shape measurable career achievements through its influence on job performance, as studies by Barrick & Mount (1991) and Salgado (1997) indicated. Achievement motivation, a crucial aspect of conscientiousness, is a reliable predictor of career advancement, particularly highlighted in the AT&T research series (Howard & Bray, 1994; Hogan & Ones, 1997). Numerous meta-analyses have consistently shown a positive relationship between conscientiousness and job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Salgado, 1997). Research by Barrick, Mount, and Strauss (1993) illustrated that salespeople with high levels of conscientiousness were more inclined to establish and meet sales goals, suggesting that goal-setting acts as a critical intermediary in linking conscientiousness to job performance. This goal-setting dynamic is expected to be applicable across various career situations and outcomes.

HYPOTHESIS 2. There is a positive relationship between an individual's level of conscientiousness and subjective career success.

Various studies suggest that extraversion and related personality dimensions significantly contribute to objective career achievements. For example, Melamed (1995) identified a positive correlation between extraversion and managerial progression in a group of male British workers. Longitudinal studies by Caspi, Elder, and Bem (1988) have shown that childhood shyness, which is inversely related to extraversion, negatively impacts later occupational status. Similarly, in AT&T's longitudinal research, Howard & Bray (1994) noted that assessment center evaluations of social skills, positively linked to extraversion, were associated with an increased likelihood of managerial promotions. Judge et al. (1999) noted a positive association between early ratings of extraversion and subsequent adult career success, as measured by salary and job status. Individuals high in extraversion, characterized by their significant activity and assertiveness, are frequently sought after in professional settings, especially for leadership and senior roles (Dunn, Mount, Barrick, & Ones, 1995).

Additionally, extraversion shows a positive relationship with both job and overall life satisfaction (Furnam & Zacherl, 1986; McCrae & Costa, 1991; Watson & Slack, 1993), reflecting its impact on subjective perceptions of career success. Additionally, positive affect, an aspect of extraversion (Watson & Clark, 1997), signifies a generally optimistic response to various situations. Individuals with extraverted personalities, often distinguished by their dynamic, assertive, and adventurous dispositions, are typically more proactive in rectifying unsatisfactory aspects of their careers. This proactive approach enables them to better align their career aspirations and values with the demands and culture of their organizations, a correlation emphasized in various career development theories (Crant, 1995; Seibert et al., 1999). Scholars like Dawis & Lofquist (1984) and Holland (1985) have consistently highlighted the critical role of this alignment in achieving career satisfaction. Given the natural inclination of extroverts to approach events with a positive attitude and their tendency to take initiative in resolving less-than-ideal career situations, there is expected to be a positive link between extraversion and intrinsic measures of career success.

HYPOTHESIS 3. There is a positive relationship between an individual's level of extraversion and subjective career success.

The connection between agreeableness and career success is multifaceted. Agreeableness, characterized by cooperativeness and friendliness, might be advantageous in work environments emphasizing teamwork and interpersonal interactions. Yet, the impact of being perceived as friendly or a "team player" on career progression remains somewhat ambiguous. The notion is that exceptionally agreeable individuals might not always come out on top. The literature on impression management underscores the significance of being able to take credit or deflect blame effectively (Crant & Bateman, 1993; Mitchell, Green, & Wood, 1981). Additionally, studies have indicated that highly adaptable individuals (high self-monitors) and those with a manipulative, Machiavellian approach often advance in their careers (Christie & Geis, 1970; Kilduff & Day, 1994). People with high agreeableness, often described as trusting, non-manipulative, and soft-hearted, may align with the less advantageous end of these personality spectrums.

Although Barrick and Mount (1991) and Salgado (1997) initially hypothesized a positive link between agreeableness and job performance, especially in roles with substantial interpersonal interactions, their findings did not strongly support this assumption. Barrick and Mount (1991) found limited evidence of any significant correlation between agreeableness and job performance. Intriguingly, Salgado (1997) noted that agreeableness was positively associated with job performance in non-people-oriented roles (such as professionals and skilled laborers) but negatively related to performance in people-oriented positions (like managers). Given the nature of IT work, which requires teamwork yet is not predominantly people-oriented, these findings suggest a nuanced view of agreeableness in the workplace. Based on these insights, agreeableness may positively correlate with subjective career success.

HYPOTHESIS 4. There is a positive relationship between an individual's level of agreeableness and subjective career success.

Methods

Procedure and Sample

This study's participants were IT professionals from Ukraine engaged in a comprehensive examination of the interplay between personality traits and career outcomes. As part of a larger study, surveys were sent to 5,782 alumni of a prominent project managers' conference, incorporating a comprehensive set of questions relevant to the study. Additional surveys were distributed among 10081 alumni from project management and software development events through Telegram channels, ensuring a wider reach within the IT community. The questionnaire was divided into sections that assessed career-related control variables, the alumnus' personality, and the alumnus' career outcomes. Participants were requested to complete the surveys online, emphasizing confidentiality to ensure candid responses. To encourage participation, respondents who completed the study were offered complimentary access to one of three online conferences (Data Science, Project Management, IT Outsourcing Company Sales and Business) or a free training session to enhance career decision-making skills. A total of 150 surveys were completed, all containing complete data.

The demographic breakdown of the respondents is as follows: average age was 35 years; 49.3% were male; 56% were married, 17.3% were in a relationship and lived with a partner, 6.7% were divorced, 2.7% were in a relationship but lived separately from a partner, and 17.3% were single; 89.3% had a Bachelor's degree as their highest degree attained, 9.3% had a Ph.D., and 1.3% had some other type of degree beyond the Bachelor's level; average work experience was 9.5 years; 36% were working in IT product companies, 49.3% were working in IT service companies, 2.7% were working in their startup, and 12% were working in IT departments of local companies; 88% were working full-time, 4% were working part-time, 1.3% were freelancers and 6.7% were unemployed at the time of the research.

Measures

Subjective Career Success

This study's multidimensional subjective career success measurement used the Subjective Career Success Inventory (SCSI) developed by Shockley et al. (2016). This tool was adapted to the Ukrainian context through a meticulous process of double-blind translation, followed by a comprehensive reconciliation meeting to finalize the version. Participants in this study responded to the inventory, which prompted them to reflect on their entire career trajectory.

The SCSI comprises 24 distinct items evenly distributed across eight key subscales, each including three items. These subscales encompass various facets of career success: Satisfaction (e.g., feelings of enthusiasm towards one's career), Growth and Development (e.g., continual skill enhancement), Authenticity (e.g., having control over one's career path), Influence (e.g., the extent to which others consider one's advice in critical decisions), Personal Life (e.g., achieving desired work-life balance), Meaningful Work (e.g., the significance and impact of one's work), Quality of Work (e.g., being recognized for the high quality of work output), and Recognition (e.g., receiving acknowledgment from supervisors for good performance).

Regarding the validity of this tool, Shockley et al. (2016) have provided robust evidence supporting its construct validity, which includes criterion-related, convergent, and discriminant validity for each subscale and the overall inventory. Additionally, the reliability of the SCSI, as indicated by Cronbach's alpha, ranged from 0.74 to 0.92 for the individual dimensions and was 0.94 for the overall scale, demonstrating its reliability in various sample groups. This comprehensive approach to measuring subjective career success allows for a nuanced understanding of the multiple dimensions contributing to an individual's perception of career achievements.

Personality

This study utilized the 15-item Big Five Inventory-2 (BFI-2-XS), as conceptualized by Soto and John (2017), in its Ukrainian version to evaluate personality traits. This instrument measures five broad dimensions of personality, along with three specific sub-facets within each of these dimensions. Participants responded to statements that began with "I am someone who..." and rated them on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The five dimensions and their associated items in the inventory included Neuroticism, indicated by tendencies such as moodiness and emotional variability; Extraversion, highlighted by qualities like sociability and outgoing nature; Openness, characterized by a curiosity about various subjects; Agreeableness, encompassing attributes such as compassion and kindness; and Conscientiousness, exemplified by reliability and consistency. The scoring of items was reversed where necessary, and an average score for each trait was calculated, with higher averages denoting a stronger presence of the respective trait. The reliability of these scales varied, with scores ranging from 0.60 for facets like intellectual curiosity to 0.89 for neuroticism and from 0.44 in assertiveness to 0.72 in depression-related items, illustrating the robustness and validity of the inventory in capturing diverse personality aspects.

Results

Descriptives and Correlations for all Study Variables First, demographic variables, personality traits, and subjective career success scores are presented in Table 1. The (significant) correlations in Table 1 align with previous and meta-analytic findings on traits. All control variables (age, gender, educational qualification, and work experience) were found to have substantial associations with one another and at least some of the outcome variables.

Extraversion and Subjective Career Success:

The correlation coefficient between extraversion and subjective career success was 0.479, indicating a substantial positive relationship. This significant correlation ($p <$

0.01) suggests that IT specialists who score higher in extraversion tend to perceive greater career success. This finding aligns with the literature suggesting that extraverted individuals, often characterized by sociability, assertiveness, and enthusiasm, may experience more positive career outcomes, possibly due to better networking capabilities and more assertive career management behaviors.

The data strongly supports Hypothesis 3, with extraversion positively correlating with subjective career success. This result reflects the advantageous role of extraverted traits like assertiveness and sociability in professional settings, potentially facilitating networking and collaboration.

Agreeableness and Subjective Career Success:

The correlation coefficient for agreeableness and subjective career success stood at 0.355. This statistically significant correlation ($p < 0.01$) implies a moderate positive relationship, suggesting that IT specialists with higher agreeableness, often associated with traits like cooperativeness, trust, and altruism, are likely to report higher levels of career success. These traits may facilitate better teamwork and interpersonal relations, which are crucial in modern collaborative work environments.

The positive correlation found between agreeableness and subjective career success confirms Hypothesis 4. This suggests that being cooperative, altruistic, and considerate can enhance one's career experience and perception of success in the IT field.

Conscientiousness and Subjective Career Success:

A strong positive correlation of 0.434 was observed between conscientiousness and subjective career success, significant at the 0.01 level. This correlation underscores the importance of organization, diligence, and reliability in contributing to an individual's perception of career success. Conscientious individuals often exhibit strong work ethic and persistence, which are valuable in achieving long-term career goals.

The positive correlation between conscientiousness and subjective career success confirms Hypothesis 2. This supports the view that qualities such as organization, discipline, and achievement orientation are highly valued in the workplace and contribute to a sense of career success.

Table 1 – Intercorrelation among personality traits and subjective career success

	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Company Type	Work experience	Education Level	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness	SCSI
Age	–											
Sex	,408**	–										
Marital Status	,364**	,225**	–									
Company Type	,071	,062	,108	–								
Work experience	,672**	,401**	,235**	,118	–							
Education Level	,126	,038	,071	-,018	-,033	–						
Extraversion	,168*	,319**	,087	,053	-,067	-,002	–					
Agreeableness	-,002	-,099	,018	-,105	-,109	,028	,023	–				
Conscientiousness	-,178*	-,337**	-,033	,253**	-,081	,087	,283**	,168*	–			
Neuroticism	-,130	-,123	,069	-,048	-,233**	-,077	,482**	-,053	,257**	–		
Openness	-,100	-,148	-,018	-,017	-,006	,041	,307**	-,029	,150	,081	–	
SCSI	,012	-,243**	,198*	,192*	-,022	,040	,479**	,355**	,434**	-,308**	,185*	–
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level												
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level												

Neuroticism and Subjective Career Success:

The study found a significant positive correlation of 0.308 between neuroticism and subjective career success ($p < 0.01$). Contrary to expectations, this suggests that higher levels of neuroticism, typically characterized by anxiety and emotional instability, are associated with greater perceived career success among the participants. This unexpected result may indicate complex underlying dynamics, potentially involving factors like increased career-driven motivation or self-perception biases in some neurotic individuals.

The negative correlation between neuroticism and subjective career success confirms Hypothesis 1. This finding underscores the potential adverse impact of neuroticism on career perceptions, perhaps due to its association with negative emotional states and reactions to stress.

Openness and Subjective Career Success:

A weaker yet significant correlation was observed between openness and subjective career success, with a coefficient of 0.185 ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that traits associated with openness, such as creativity, intellectual curiosity, and openness to new experiences, have a modest but positive impact on perceived career success in the IT field.

Relation between Personality and Subjective Career Success facets

The correlations provide insights into how personality influences different aspects of perceived career achievement (authenticity, growth and development, influence, meaning of career, personal life, quality of work, recognition, career satisfaction sense). Result correlations between personality traits and subjective career success facets are presented in Table 2.

Extraversion and Career Success Facets:

Extraversion showed a positive correlation with recognition (0.376, $p < 0.01$), quality of work (0.368, $p < 0.01$), meaning of career (0.326, $p < 0.01$), influence (0.396, $p < 0.01$), authenticity (0.354, $p < 0.01$), personal life (0.316, $p < 0.01$), growth and development (0.347, $p < 0.01$), and career satisfaction (0.276, $p < 0.01$). These findings suggest that extroverted individuals, characterized by sociability and assertiveness, tend to perceive higher recognition, find more meaning in their careers, exert greater influence, and achieve a better balance between work and personal life, contributing to overall career satisfaction.

Agreeableness and Career Success Facets:

Agreeableness correlated positively with recognition (0.228, $p < 0.01$), quality of work (0.187, $p < 0.05$), meaning of career (0.382, $p < 0.01$), authenticity (0.280, $p < 0.01$), personal life (0.319, $p < 0.01$), growth and development (0.166, $p < 0.05$), and career satisfaction (0.288, $p < 0.01$). These results indicate that agreeable individuals, known for their cooperative and empathetic nature, are likelier to find their work meaningful, maintain authenticity, and enjoy higher career satisfaction.

Conscientiousness and Career Success Facets:

Conscientiousness exhibited strong correlations with recognition (0.487, $p < 0.01$), quality of work (0.570, $p < 0.01$), influence (0.221, $p < 0.01$), authenticity (0.339, $p < 0.01$), personal life (0.233, $p < 0.01$), growth and development (0.377, $p < 0.01$), and career satisfaction (0.281, $p < 0.01$). This suggests conscientiousness, characterized by diligence and reliability, significantly contributes to achieving recognition, high-quality work, and overall career satisfaction.

Neuroticism and Career Success Facets:

Neuroticism showed a positive correlation with the quality of work (0.206, $p < 0.05$), influence (0.238, $p < 0.01$), and a negative correlation with authenticity (-0.251, $p < 0.01$) and personal life (-0.303, $p < 0.01$), along with career satisfaction sense (-0.236, $p < 0.01$). These mixed findings indicate a complex relationship where higher neuroticism may relate to perceived influence and quality of work but negatively affects authenticity, work-life balance, and overall career satisfaction.

Openness and Career Success Facets:

Openness correlated positively with quality of work (0.215, $p < 0.01$), growth and development (0.209, $p < 0.05$), and career satisfaction sense (0.177, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that individuals high in openness, known for their creativity and openness to new experiences, tend to perceive greater career growth opportunities and overall satisfaction.

Table 2 – Intercorrelation among personality traits and subjective career success facets

	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness	Recognition	Quality	Meaningful Work	Influence	Authenticity	Personal Life	Growth	Satisfaction
Extraversion	–												
Agreeableness	,023	–											
Conscientiousness	,283**	,168*	–										
Neuroticism	-,482**	-,053	-,257**	–									
Openness	,307**	-,029	,150	,081	–								
Recognition	,376**	,228**	,487**	-,110	,094	–							
Quality	,368**	,187*	,570**	-,206*	,215**	,645**	–						
Meaningful Work	,326**	,382**	,094	-,255**	,024	,316**	,337**	–					
Influence	,396**	,125	,221**	-,238**	0,129	,434**	,462**	,466**	–				
Authenticity	,354**	,280**	,339**	-,251**	,128	,442**	,454**	,412**	,521**	–			
Personal Life	,316**	,319**	,233**	-,303**	,092	,401**	,280**	,363**	,154	,484**	–		
Growth	,347**	,166*	,377**	-,083	,209*	,450**	,401**	,234**	,470**	,596**	,350**	–	
Satisfaction	,276**	,288**	,281**	-,236**	,177*	,289**	,345**	,365**	,397**	,802**	,601**	,668**	–

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Discussion

The findings from this study offer valuable insights into how personality traits, as defined by the Big Five model, relate to subjective career success among Ukrainian IT specialists. The positive correlations of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness with subjective career success align with previous research in organizational psychology, reinforcing the importance of these personality traits in a professional setting. In contrast, the negative correlation between neuroticism and subjective career success echoes the challenges associated with this trait in workplace settings. Interestingly, openness showed a modest but significant positive correlation, indicating its nuanced role in career success. Openness, while showing a smaller effect, still contributes positively, indicating its relevance in the rapidly evolving and innovative field of IT.

The strong positive correlation between extraversion and career success emphasizes the benefit of social engagement, assertiveness, and enthusiasm in the IT sector. This might be particularly relevant in roles requiring teamwork and client interaction, suggesting that extroverted individuals might find more fulfillment and recognition.

The positive correlation of agreeableness points to the advantages of being cooperative and amiable in a collaborative work environment. This finding is crucial for team dynamics and interpersonal relationships within IT organizations.

The significant positive relationship between conscientiousness and career success highlights this trait's role in goal-oriented and organized behavior, which is crucial for managing complex IT projects and meeting deadlines.

The negative correlation with neuroticism suggests that individuals with high levels of this trait may perceive their career success less favorably, potentially due to increased stress and anxiety levels. This underscores the need for supportive workplace environments and stress management strategies.

The positive but less strong correlation with openness suggests a nuanced role for this trait, indicating that creativity and openness to new experiences are appreciated but are not the primary drivers of career success in the IT field.

Future research agenda

Future research in this area holds the potential to further enhance our understanding of the complex dynamics between personality, work environment, and career development in the rapidly evolving field of information technology.

Longitudinal research could provide deeper insights into how these personality traits influence career success, particularly in response to evolving technology and workplace dynamics. Comparing these findings with other cultural contexts could reveal how cultural differences impact the relationship between personality traits and career success. Future studies could explore how different IT work environments (e.g., start-ups vs. established corporations) modulate the impact of these personality traits on career success. Research into interventions aimed at helping individuals with high neuroticism could provide valuable strategies for improving their career success perceptions and overall well-being. Investigating how openness influences career success in various IT specializations (e.g., development vs. management) could offer more targeted insights. Examining the interplay between the Big Five traits and other psychological constructs like emotional intelligence, resilience, and motivation could offer a more comprehensive understanding of career success determinants. Another promising area is understanding how rapid technological changes and the increasing reliance on remote work impact the relationship between personality and career success in the IT sector.

Conclusions

The comprehensive analysis of the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and subjective career success among Ukrainian IT professionals has yielded insightful conclusions crucial for understanding career progression dynamics in modern organizational environments. This study reaffirms the significant role of personality traits in shaping an individual's career trajectory, extending beyond the traditional focus on human capital and demographic factors.

This research underscores the multifaceted nature of career success and the integral role of personality in shaping professional outcomes. The positive correlations between certain personality traits and career success emphasize the importance of personal characteristics in career development and highlight the need for individualized approaches in career planning and organizational support. The study's insights are relevant not only to individuals seeking to navigate their career paths but also to organizations aiming to foster a conducive environment for career growth and satisfaction. As the IT industry evolves, understanding these personality dynamics will become increasingly important in shaping successful career trajectories.

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