PERSONALITY ASPECTS INVOLVED IN PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS

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Abstract: This paper aims to study the relations between some variables involved in professional success. The coverage is one of great concern to not only specialists in different fields (e.g. management, psychology), but also to the individuals themselves. We have chosen as determinants of a successful career: global aspects of personality and proactive personality. This paper is a comparative study between a group of 120 subjects including 18 engineers in the petrochemical industry, 28 chemical engineers, 14 engineers from textiles industry and a group of 60 students from Transilvania University of Brasov.

Keywords: success, personality, proactivity, engineers

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

This paper aims to draw attention to awareness of the importance of psychological factors involved in creating a successful career. Today, more than ever, the individuals are responsible for the way they adapt to the work environment. The concept of career is central in assessing the social position: the definition *"par excellence"* of the individual's progress in an organized society, is the central element of the list of *"social time"* that regulates biography and determines the personal value. The society determines a temporal regulatory map for its members and builds our programs according to that map and plans our time, life.

The concept of career has varied definitions and approaches. Over the time, the meaning in defining the terms *"career"* and *"career success" have evolved.* The term *"career"* has been expanded from *job* to a meaning in which it covers all the major roles in life, just as well as those related to work [1]. Nowadays, career is defined as the evolving sequence of a person's work *experiences* over time [2]. The career choice and its development processes are extremely complicated. Theories give us a simplified representation of these processes. They can be used, as expressed by Krumboltz [3], like road maps that guide us both in the career development and in knowing of its choice. Some theories that enjoy a long recognition are Holland and Super [1], Krumboltz [3].

According to the studied literature, there are two types of evaluation criteria for career success: *objective and subjective criteria. Objective criteria* consist of empirical data collected by an organization, in other words, the data consist of quantifiable information. Objective criteria can be considered data as: the number of goods produced, the amount of sales generated, number of years in service, the number of payment increases, the promotions frequency, which have long been recognized as "the" hallmarks of career in many different societies [4]. Subjective career success is expressed by career satisfaction about all relevant aspects to a specific individual [2]. *Subjective criteria* are based on subjective evaluation data about the performance of the subject. An example of a subjective criterion is the rating given by the supervisor on employee performance. The ultimate reporting framework both for objective criteria as well as for the subjective ones is the social standard

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of success, or how a company, group, or other person defines exceptional performance that deserves a special social recognition.

The factors contributing to professional success are variable as weight and configuration from one field to another, from one profession to another, from one organization to another. However, longitudinal studies of eminent individuals from different career areas highlighted categories of factors that can be used as predictors of success in the early stage of a career. The main categories of predictors are the intellectual factors, the nonintellectual, the complex and situational ones.

The intellectual factors are general and specific skills that contribute to professional success in different proportions. General skills - memory, attention, sense of observation - ensure success in all activities. They have a hereditary basis, but grow through learning and exercise. Intelligence, considered the most general aptitude, has the most consistent hereditary determination, but the environment, stimulating or less incentive, can influence, between some limits , the development the of native potential.

Nonintellectual and complex factors mediate success through modeling the orientation in situation and the management of cognitive and energetic resources. There is considerable evidence that personality influences organization relevant outcomes such as job performance, leadership, motivation, teamwork, and career success [5]. Personality factors condition how intelligence and other skills, as mental tools, are used effectively to complete the work and add an incremental variance to fluid intelligence in explaining scholastic success [6]. Among the personality factors that motivate for performance we can remember the Ego force and the attitudes that significantly correlate with professional success.

An impressive number of studies have revealed a negative correlation between neuroticism, emotional instability and extrinsic success. It has been found that conscientiousness, extroversion, and low neuroticism are the prominent personality traits consistently relating to increased career information-seeking and decidedness [7]. These factors are considered as good predictors of professional success because they are relatively stable and can be easily measured by tests and questionnaires. The situational factors influence both the action of intellect factors and their interaction with the nonintellectual ones. The categories of situational factors are: organization's climate and culture, leadership style, interpersonal relationships.

Proactivity is often defined as tend to change the environment to make things happen. The proactive behavior is, in the last decades, a high interest topic for researchers form a variety of domains. The proactive personality construct has origins in interactionism, which ''argues that situations are as much a function of the person as the person's behavior is a function of the situation" and social cognitive theory which holds that the person, environment and behavior continuously influence each other [8].

The literature in this field proves that proactive personality covariate with subjective career success as well. Proactive people have a greater degree of self-determination in their careers and are more satisfied with their career dimensions, such as: type of work, rewards, advancement and skill development [9]. Bateman and Crant [10] found a positive association between managers' scores at the Proactive Personality Scale and the perception of their charismatic leadership. Therefore, proactive individuals get better results in their careers, taking into account both the objective and subjective dimensions, because they are empowered to select, create and influence the situations in which they work.

In constructing our research model, we choose to study, from Crant's list of potential determinants [11], some aspects of global personality and the proactive one as the determinants of professional success. The reason for choosing these determinants are: first, most obvious in practice that we cannot analyze all found determinants in this study, it would require years of research, and second, we chose these determinants that are most stable and predictable, as we noted, studying the literature in this area.

For this paper's purposes, we use the following definitions: *Career's success* is defined as "positive psychological outcomes related to work or the gained achievements by a person as a result of work experience" [9]. *"Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his characteristic and behavior and thought*" [12]. *Proactive personality* is defined as "one that is relatively unconstrained by situational forces affecting environmental change" [13].

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. The research hypothesis:

1. There is a significant relation between the proactivity level and professional / academic success.
2. There is a significant level some of global personality factors and success.
3. There is significant relation between proactivity level and some of the global personality factors.

We summarized in the Table 1, the concepts, tools and variables on which to test hypotheses based approach mentioned above.

Table 1. The research project.

Concepts	Dimensions	Indicators	Variables	Measure instruments
Aspects of Global personality	Global personality	Scores of results having 10 scale G-Z	Factors: G, R, A, S, E, O, F, T, P, M.	Guilford – Zimmerman Temperament Inventory
Aspects of Global personality	Global personality	Scores of proactive personality scale	Proactivity	Proactive personality (PPS)
Academicals success	Academicals performances	BA degree note	The degree level	Personal declaration
Professional success	Professional performances	Hierarchy position	Level of professional evaluations	Evaluation Inventory

2.2. Group of participants

The research was conducted in two stages, in November 2010 and December 2010, on a group of 120 participants. In November 2010 were evaluated 60 engineers who came from three separate institutions. Their occupational profiles are different, 18 engineers from the petrochemical industry, 28 chemical engineers and 14 engineers from textiles industry. In December 2010 were analyzed 60 students enrolled in technical faculties: Construction, Materials Science and Engineering, Electronic Engineering and Computer Science. This way has been conducted the assessment of the intellectual endowment, some aspects of personality, were assessed the value systems, the proactive aspects of personality and the professional and academic behavior.

Although engineer profession is preponderant masculine, in our subjects' group, we have a higher amount of women (61.7%). This can be explained by the fact that women chemistry and textile field are chosen by women comparing to masculine sex. Regarding the group of students, we had the great surprise to discover that more and more representative of women are opting for technical profiles. Of the 60 students, 60% are girls. When we asked "Why did you choose this profile?", their responses were almost identical, arguing the high skills in technical disciplines, skill in mathematics and future financial gains.

The lowest age of subjects is 24 for women and 25 for men, and maximal one is 53 for women and 56 for men. Distribution parameters for "Age" variable in the group of men, shows that the highest percentage (26.1%) were represented by engineers having 25 years old, at the beginning of their career, followed by a percentage of engineers of age 39 years, representing 13%, the average being 33 years. In terms of distribution parameters for variable "Age" in the group of women, the highest percentage (21.6%) is represented by the engineering of 36 years old, seconded by a 10.8% of the engineering of 38 years old, the mean of age is 37 years. In the group of students, minimum age is 18 years, and the maximum 42 years, average been 20 years. In their case, that maximum age of 42 years is an isolated case, the real maximum being 24 years of age. The girls group of students do not show an abnormal range (min.18 years, max. 22 years), which confirm that in general women are more conformist.

2.3. Personality aspects involved in professional success

Proactive Personality Scale (PPS)

In 1993, Bateman & Crant published a self-assessment scale to measure proactive personality: Proactive Personality Scale (PPS) [10]. Based on a conceptualization of proactive personality prototype, Bateman & Crant initially generated 47 items [10]. Of these, they selected 27 considered to be most representative. This manner of construction ensured a high degree of coverage of the concept. They assumed that this proactive construction reflects a single latent trait of personality and intended to develop a one-dimensional scale to include this feature.

For a study in Puerto Rico, Crant & Bateman (2000) used a Spanish version of the 17 items [14]. It turned out that the scale is independent of specific cultural factors. So for a study in Belgium, the Flemish population, Pringels & Claes (2001) used a Flemish version of the 17 items, proving again that the scale is independent of specific cultural factors [15].

In this study, on the Romanian population, we used the 17 item version of Bateman & Crant (1993) [10], which we translated it from English into Romanian, as one of our original contributions. Translation accuracy was checked by retranslation in English, with the help of two translator specialists. Translation - retranslate method is probably the best method for translating measuring instruments. Each item is rated on a scale of 1-7, representing the values that the subject gives for those claims, considering how close the note is to his personality (1 - totally disagree, 7 - total agreement). As the scores are higher, the subject is more proactive, exception is item 3 which encode the reverse.

Guilford - Zimmerman Temperament Survey was designed in 1948 based on factorial analysis of the results obtained with other personality questionnaires (SEM STDCR, Personnel Inventory and Inventory Factors of Gamin), analysis that revealed the existence of nine personality factors in which was added a factor of two features result from a combination of the inventories referred [12]. The questionnaire contains 300 items. The GZTS inventory is used by organizational psychologists, personnel professionals, clinical psychologists, and counseling professionals in mental health facilities, businesses, and educational settings.

The Inventory dimensions are: General Activism shows the energy degree, activity; Self-control - R factor shows the degree of impulsivity, coercion, perseverance; Ascendancy - A factor - show the general capacity to impose in social interaction: dominance, capacity for persuasion, resistance to influence, the orator skills, assertive behavior; S factor measures the convenience of the relations with others, Emotional Balance - E Factor is the equivalent of a combination of factors "cycloid disposal" and "depressive tendencies"; Objectivity - the O factor highlights the ability to accept opposing views and even adverse; Permeability - F factor – shows the combative tendency to pacifism; Meditation - T factor – shows degree of intent of their actions; Personal Relationships - factor P shows the trend towards cooperation; M Factor indicate the degree of adapting to the role of gender.

Compared with other personality questionnaires and inventories, Guilford - Zimmerman Inventory has the advantage of measuring personality factors involved in adaptation to the social environment in general (Ascendancy, Sociability, Objectivity, Affordability, Conformity, Relations with authority) and dynamic factors - emotional, related to efficiency (General activism, Self-control, Emotional balance, Meditation, Adapting to the role of gender), both categories are important in managing the resources.

After applying the inventory, the following trends were evident at the group:
General Activism - G factor - factor of a temperamental nature, manifest little difference in categories, students were slightly more active, more dynamic than the engineers. The average score obtain by the group of engineers at this factor (18.06) is slightly smaller than that the obtained average by the group of students (18.73), but the class differences are not statistically significant, $t = -.945$, $p > 0.05$.

Self-control - R factor - which measures the ability of self-behavior indicates that the group of engineers has more than one self of the students; they are more impulsive than engineers. The average score obtain by the group of students at this factor (19.37) is higher than that obtained by the group of engineers (17.69), the differences between categories were significant at $t = 1.98$, $p = 0.05$ significance level.

Ascendancy - A factor - showed that students in this group are more assertive and dominant than engineers. The average score obtain by the group of engineers, 14.72, is much smaller than that obtained by the group of students (19.78). Class differences are significant at $p = 0.01$. Sociability - S Factor - shows that students are more sociable than engineers. The average score obtain by the group of engineers to factor S - socialization (17.37) is much smaller than that obtained by the group of students (20.52), the differences between categories were significant at a significance level lower than $t = -4.036$, $p = 0.05$.

Emotional Balance - E Factor - indicates that engineers are more emotionally stable than the students in this group. The average score obtain by the group of students on the factor E is considerably lower than that obtained by the group of engineers (21.00), the differences between categories were significant at a level of significance ($t = -2.947$, $p=0.004$) less than 0.01.

Objectivity - the O factor - indicates that engineers are more subjective and self-centered than students. The average score obtain by the group of students (15.78) is considerably lower than that obtained by the group of engineers (20.17), the differences between categories were significant at a significance level ($t = -3.405$, $p<0.001$) lower than 0.01.

Permeability - F factor - shows that students have a tendency to be slightly more hostile, combative and show less considerate of others. The average score obtain by the group of students (11.08) is lower than that obtained by the group of engineers (13.34), but differences between the two groups aren't statistically significant, $t = -1.877$, $p>0.05$.
Meditation - T factor - shows that engineers have a tendency to be more reflective than the students. The average score obtain by the engineers to factor T - Meditation (19.78) is considerably higher than that obtained by the group of students (17.78), the differences between categories were significant at a significance level of less than $t =2.178$, $p= 0.05$.

Personal Relationships - factor P - indicates that engineers are more conformist and show the tendency to have no difficulty in accepting authority, while the group of students has tended to be more critical than the engineers. The average score obtain by the students (12.94) is lower than that obtained by the group of engineers (14.82), but class differences are not statistically significant $t = -1.503$, $p> 0.05$.

Adapting to the role of gender - M Factor - indicates that men seem to be more integrated into the role of gender. The average score obtain by the group of women in terms of M-factor (9.35) significantly differs from that obtained by the group of men (14.34) at a significance level of $t = -5.418$, $p=0.000$. Women have thus a greater degree of masculinity, probably due to the profession exercised.

Proactivity personality aspects involved in professional success
The group of students has a tendency approximately equal to the engineering group to behave proactively. The average score obtain by the engineers on this factor (80.62) is slightly higher than that obtained by the group of students (80.26). Differences between categories are not statistically significant ($T=-0,307$, $p> 0.05$).
Professional performance and their evaluation in the engineers group

As shown in the Table 2, the average score, obtained by the subgroup of women, at Hierarchy factor (7.72) is lower than that obtained for the subgroup of men (8.69), but gender differences are not statistically significant ($T=-0, 772$, $p> 0.05$).

Table 2. Variable "hierarchy" distribution parameters based on the variable "sex" for the group of engineers academic performance and their evaluation.

		N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Dev. st.	Test t	Significance threshold
Hierarchy	F	37	1	14	7.72	4.28	-.798	.428
	M	23	1	18	8.69	4.96	-.771	.445
	T	60	1	18	8.10	4.54		

As can be seen in Table 3, for the group of engineers, the average score on license exam is a good one (8.43). Although, at the intelligence tests, the group of women has smaller results than men, their marks in graduation examination (8.40) does not differ much from those obtained by the group of men (8.47), differences were not significant ($T=-0.307$, $p> 0.05$).

Table 3. Variable "License grade" distribution parameters based on the variable "sex" for the group of engineers.

		N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Dev. st.	Test t	Significance threshold
License grade	F	37	7	10	8.40	.71	-.307	.760
	M	23	6.9	9.75	8.47	.78	-.298	.767
	T	51	6.9	10	8.43	.73		

In students' group, we encounter a situation similar to the engineers, which confirms the fact that girls tend to be more conscientious in school tasks, but less brilliant than boys. Table 4 details the results that support this claim.

Table 4. Variable "license grade" distribution parameters based on the variable "sex" for the group of students.

		N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Dev. st.	Test t	Significance threshold
Mean	F	36	7.4	9.75	8.87	0.56	-.312	.527
	M	24	6.8	9.60	8.56	0.65	-.307	.527
	T	60	6.8	9.75	8.75	0.61		

What this research has proposed, by the first hypothesis, highlights the existence of some relationships between the "proactivity", "academic performance" and "professional evaluation" variables. The average score obtained at license exam, contrary to expectations, is not significant for the further development career, only in group of engineers. Proactive personality is assessed in the work field, it strongly correlates with the professional assessments ($r = 0.612$, $p = 0.01$). Academic performance is influenced by the level of proactivity ($r = 0.367$, $p = 0.05$).

Regarding the relationship between professional assessments and some aspects of global personality, we have different situations in the group of engineers, by gender. For the entire group of engineers, the professional assessment correlated only with G factor from the Guilford - Zimmerman personality inventory ($r = 0.255$, $p = 0.05$). General activism makes us think that the intense activity has an overall effect, the exaggerated manifestations of other qualities. In many ways, it can be seen as a catalyst.
In the subgroup of women engineers, the professional assessment negatively correlated with the R factor ($r = -0.414$, $p = 0.05$). As the R factor value is lower, there is a tendency that the subject is in a higher position in the hierarchy. That is, the women in this group with the more impulsive are in a much higher hierarchical position.

In the subgroup of men engineers, the professional assessment is positively correlated with two personality factors: E ($r = 0.340$, $p = 0.05$) and P ($r = 0.363$, $p = 0.05$). There is a tendency, in the subgroup of men engineers, as the hierarchical position to be higher since they are more emotionally stable. Also, as they have better relationships with authority, they are, hierarchy, the more advanced.

2.4. Academic performance and overall personality aspects
For the group of engineers, the factor "Grade" correlated with R personality factor ($r = 0.301$, $p = 0.05$). As the degree of impulsivity is lower, it increases the mark graduation exam. The same situation we find in the subgroup of men, the correlation with a value of $r = 0.632$, $p = 0.01$. In the subgroup of women, the academic assessment negatively correlates with the A personality factor ($r = -0.357$, $p = 0.05$). The lack of compliance discourages the academic evaluation. The high degree of dominance affects the obtained exam marks. In the group of students, the academic evaluation correlate only with G personality factor ($r = 0.240$, $p = 0.05$), which makes us think that work is positively valued by teacher in the classroom, encouraging thus a component of personality.

2.5. Global Aspects of personality and proactive personality aspects
For the entire group of subjects, it revealed a highly significant correlation between the "proactive personality" factor and the factor F - Permeability ($r = 0.262$, $p = 0.01$). Such a tendency has been shown that it increase the proactivity level as the F factor scores is higher, meaning the lack of combat trends, the healthy and realistic attitude about the frustrations and injuries is closely linked to an increased level of proactivity.

2.6. Secondary factors in professional evaluation
Inside the subjects lot there can be observed four secondary factors, responsible for 76.15% of variance. The first secondary factor (Fsf 1) is responsible for 28.97% of variance. This secondary factor is a statement for the fact that a higher note of S factor determines higher grades at the others shown factors; these factors have the tendency to group in a personality profile.
The third secondary factor (Fsf 3) is responsible for 9.8 % of variance. The subjects from this lot have the tendency to associate a high general activism with a high level of reflexivity, meaning a high level of dynamism corresponding with a high level of premeditation in the personal actions. The forth secondary factor (Fsf 4) is

responsible of 8.7 % from variance meaning that as people grow old they become more serious, perseverant, and more able for the coordination positions and also for occupying positions with a high grade of responsibility.

Hypothesis 1: "There is a significant relation between the proactivity level and professional / academic success", was confirmed ($r = 0.612$, $p = 0.001$), proving the predictability of this factor. A high level of proactivity provides individuals the opportunity to be known and to be praised for its innovative ideas.

Hypothesis 2: "There is a significant level some of global personality factors and success" was confirmed between global personality factors G (general activism), P (personal relationships), E (emotional balance) and professional success there are correlations significant positive (for G: $r = 0.255$, for P: $r = 0.363$, E: $r = 0.340$, all $p = 0.05$) and between the R factor (constraint) and professional success there significant negative correlation ($r = -0.414$, $p = 0.05$). Successful person's personality profile includes the following features: active, sociable, emotionally balanced, devoid of rigidity.

Hypothesis 3: "There is significant relation between proactivity level and some of the global personality factors" has been confirmed, resulting in significant correlations between factor F - Permeability and the proactivity ($r = 0.358$, $p = 0.01$). Relations between professional success and value system are significant, it is positively correlated significantly with RVS4: "Peace in the World" ($r = 0.330$, $p = 0.05$), RVS5: "A world of beauty" ($r = 0.305$, $p = 0.05$) and significantly negative with RVS8: "Freedom" ($r = -0.414$, $p = 0.05$) in the group of engineers and positive ($r = 0.347$, $p = 0.05$) for the group of students.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The data obtained were confirmed hypotheses. We can say that there is doubt about the accuracy the engineers have decided to recall the license marks; therefore this indicator of academic success was considered the requisite relativity. Since the declaration of general average was perceived as a cumbersome task for most interviewed engineers, we give up this synthetic indicator for this group. Specific behavioral Syndrome for success in the engineering profession grouped second-order factors related on aspects of intellectual endowment, and relational and dynamic aspects of personality, proactivity, which are all important in ensuring success.

The three organizations in which we conducted the research, showed a conservative hierarchical stratification. The fact that in the group of engineers, the average age is 35.7, means a young team, due to renewals predecessors retire, not because they are looking for young person to make changes in the organization. In the studied organizations, the rewards for outstanding professional merits are relatively few: the salary is limited by a series of regulations and, therefore, the technical competence, in itself, cannot be remunerated very differently; substantial salary increase, as an indicator of professional success, can be obtained only by promotion to a managerial position, and such promotions are relatively few.

Although we wanted to use as an indicator of success, the salary, this was not possible due to the refusal of Engineers unveil. The information that we managed to get them, unofficially, shows that, with increasing promotion or seniority in that organization, the salary increases are obtained. Promotion, in these organizations, is obtained, usually with increasing age and enriching experience. Thus, personal merits are not valued by promotion, in most cases.

In the conservative organizations, frequently we meet predominantly horizontal career paths. "The fight" which is going is for maintaining the position rather than to advance. We must consider the fact that the subjects have a group average age of 35.7, in which family roles (parent, husband, wife) occupies a large area in the range of interests and professional concerns are aimed at learning lessons.

The concerns to find the criteria for a successful career and to develop measurement tools for this are not new, nor his failure to ensure a consensus on the results. Achieving a high position in the organizational hierarchy, promotion, advancement at work is often studied as an expression of professional success. They are conditioned by both individual and organizational factors. The individual factors, called by us the "person's resource" include, in the present research, the intellectual endowment, the global aspects of personality, the proactive personality and individuals' value systems.

In the new economy, it makes sense the strong commitment to their career interests to everyone. The career should not be left to the organization. In the new reality, success doesn't mean ever not losing your job or be replaced, it means being able to anticipate problems, to make a jump back in front of any harmful circumstances and maintains the careers advance.

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