

## The role of big five personality dimensions in Indonesian teachers' subjective career success

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### ABSTRACT

Teachers hold strategic roles in the education system, and their career success is important to make sure they are strongly motivated at work. The big five personality is one of the personality approaches to form one's subjective career success. This study aimed to identify the role of each dimension of the big five personality in affecting teachers' subjective career success in Indonesia. To this end, the subjective career success inventory and personality item pool-big five factor makers were employed. This quantitative correlational study involved 320 teachers as respondents. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression test. The result showed that dimensions of extraversion ( $p < 0.000$ ), agreeableness ( $p < 0.000$ ), and conscientiousness ( $p < 0.001$ ) influence Indonesian teachers' subjective career success. These three dimensions show that teachers in Indonesia tend to have personalities related to other people's acceptance or awareness of their social environment to attain subjective career success. Such personalities help them consider their personality and its aspects in evaluating their career.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers play strategic roles in the Indonesian education system since their duty is basically a service to humanity, intelligence, culture, and character building. Teachers are also the primary sources to support producing high-quality and competent human resources. Following law no. 14 of 2005 on teachers and lecturers, a teacher is a professional educator with primary duties of educating, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating learners at early childhood, elementary, and middle education levels. As of the 2019/2020 academic year, there are 2,698,103 teachers in Indonesia, a large number considering that teachers are the center of the educational process that also demands considerable attention. According to the UNESCO [1], many countries' efforts to improve their education quality face barriers in the form of teacher shortages. The UNESCO condition triggers debates on the occupational condition and career opportunities.

Teacher development is central to ensuring teachers have a strong career determination [2]. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia has made a great move to address this issue through its "Merdeka Belajar" program. This program provides educators in the country to be more innovative. Several policies are issued by the Minister of Education and Culture [3] one of which explains the teachers' freedom in developing a lesson plan. As designing a lesson plan format is considered a time-

consuming and overwhelming task, having the freedom to design it allows teachers more time to prepare and evaluate the learning process. In addition to “*Merdeka Belajar*”, The Ministry of Education and Culture Also raised a discussion on “*Guru Penggerak*,” a program where teachers focus on students and a student-centered learning process to develop students’ initiative to take action without teachers’ direction [4]. Through this program, teachers’ workload could be alleviated to encourage them to further develop and evaluate their teaching careers. Furthermore, teachers also have opportunities to innovate and develop their potential.

Every profession, including teachers, has its own environment where individuals can develop and set personal targets in their careers. This is in line with our understanding of the form of career success. Despite the importance of understanding how teachers see success, it is difficult to find criteria for success in education [5]. Regarding personal career success, an individual needs to understand and evaluate their career path to ensure that institutional targets suit their personal ones.

Salary is no longer the main component in determining success. One’s personal views of their job could also be seen as aspects that determine one’s career success. Career success can be seen in two dimensions: objective and subjective career success. One’s objective career success has long been linked to financial gain and position. Considering that the financial aspect is not enough to measure one’s success, the notion of subjective career success was developed to describe one’s views of success according to their unique perspectives according to their environment and personality. Over time, workers are demanded to achieve both dimensions of career success [6].

In general, career success is viewed as one’s positive achievement in their job to evaluate their work outcome and experience. Subjective career success is one of the strongest predictors of one’s readiness to address dynamics at work [7]. As the teaching profession is close to recency, teachers’ readiness to accept new students and curriculum changes are considered predictable by their subjective career success. Subjective career success can also be linked to other constructs related to one’s personal views on the job.

A recent study on career success reports that every country worldwide has different meanings for career success [8]. Hence, it is important to further examine this phenomenon in the Indonesian context to see the role of other constructs in affecting one’s subjective career success. Subjective career success in the past was measured using the career satisfaction construct, but this norm has shifted over time because subjective career success is viewed as a special construct. Many researchers in this field are interested in developing subjective career success measurements. In China, Zhou *et al.* [9] developed a subjective career success scale involving external compensation and intrinsic fulfillment. Their project was conducted in several stages: i) They conducted interviews with respondents worldwide to see their definition of career success; ii) Respondents’ answers were compiled as items reviewed through a literature review of life satisfaction and quality of life and used to measure subjective career success. Thus, it is not necessary to use career satisfaction measurement to measure subjective career success since these two variables are different [10].

A previous survey reported that 66.6% of teachers face problems related to job satisfaction, which can be seen from teachers’ poor understanding of career development and procrastination [11]. The survey also showed that 83.3% of teachers face salary and other incentives problems, as their wages and incentives are not worth the position and length of service. Other factors related to teachers’ career success include motivation, competency, educational background, resilience, and personality, among other possible factors. Subjective career success is viewed as one of the antecedents of satisfaction. Subjective career success is viewed as higher level needs as it directly influences one’s psychological contract [12]. In addition to serving as emotional evaluation of one’s job, subjective career success is also viewed as an evaluation of personal meaning in one’s career path [13]. Previous studies assert the direct relationship between subjective career success and an individual’s psychological aspects, from emotional to spiritual meaning of their job.

Despite seemingly endless debate on subjective career success and career satisfaction, the former is viewed as more capable of depicting one’s satisfaction in a relatively long time. From a broader perspective, subjective career success is directly associated with the goal and work-life balance, which is in contrast with job satisfaction. Furthermore, job satisfaction includes other aspects like job performance, a variable deemed not to represent the value of career success [14]. Therefore, we argue that subjective career success is more suitable to explain one’s evaluation of their experience and work-life relationship in teaching professions.

Every individual can see and determine their own criteria for career success. Among the criteria commonly used to define their career success are job activity, career satisfaction, and career path, which refers to potential in selecting positions in a job [6]. These criteria also rely upon one’s determination and hard work in delivering professional outcomes respected and acknowledged by their organizations. One’s subjective career success varies depending on a range of factors, including personality, values, family role, education, experience, and organizational support [15].

Personality is reported to significantly affect one’s subjective career success [15]. This variable is viewed to play an important role in predicting one’s career success, in addition to predicting their behaviors in the workplace. Every teacher has their own characteristics that may also account for different teaching

styles. In the learning process, personality significantly influences the teacher-student interaction. Teacher personality may also affect their performance in carrying out their duty, pedagogy, professional, and social life. To conclude, personality has a direct effect on a teachers' job [11].

Recently, the big-five personality model has gained popularity in describing one's personality traits. This model consists of five dimensions: intellect, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability [16]. Wal *et al.* [17] mentioned several studies on stress and job satisfaction. After explored in De Fruyt's study [18], it is reported that the big five personality trait can describe the difference in one's career outcome before and after they are graduated. That study also shows that different personality traits vary in terms of job satisfaction, job stress, and skill improvement.

The big five personality is found to be important in accumulating one's personality development, personality traits laden in each dimension are considered to be properly presented to predict one's job performance. Since the development of this model, the big five personality is often linked to job-related phenomena, including job satisfaction, leadership, achievement, and even career success [19]. The trait taxonomy in the big five personality is the most applied approach among personality psychologists [20]. This personality trait model is believed to be capable of holistically explaining career success, including its role in affecting one's subjective career success, which is the focus of the present study.

Based on previous studies, researchers conducted research that combined the big five personality variables on the subjective career success of teachers in Indonesia. The present study is conducted to extend our knowledge of the role of the big five personality traits in teachers' subjective career success in Indonesia. Considering that career success is mostly measured using salary, position, and power and that teachers' subjective career success is pivotal in improving the country's education quality, this study can help explain the difference in teachers' career success from the big five personality trait perspective.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The present study applied a quantitative approach, in which relationships among variables are presented in numerical. To be more specific, this study was a non-experimental, correlational study, a study to examine a certain population where the collected data are statistically analyzed to test the proposed hypotheses [21]. The study participants were recruited to represent the population using accidental sampling technique [21]. In other words, the researchers recruit any individuals they accidentally meet and fit the criteria to participate in the study [21]. In this study, 320 teachers were recruited as participants.

The study was conducted in three stages. Preparation stage began with making a research title and formulating a research background based on issues in the field of organizational psychology, determining the variable, and conducting a theoretical review to gain more an in-depth understanding of the variable. The researchers also determine the research instrument, population, sample, sampling technique, and data collection technique in this stage. Research stage was done by distributing International Personality Item Pool-Big Five Factor Makers (IPIP-BFM-25) Indonesia and subjective career success inventory (SCSI) to participants who suited the research criteria i.e., teachers in Indonesia. The instruments were distributed using accidental sampling technique. The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics-25 to test the proposed hypotheses and draw conclusions using multiple linear regression test. This technique allows researchers to find out the role of independent variables (X1, X2, X3, X4, and X5) in dependent variable (Y).

The present study employed the IPIP-BFM-25 Indonesia to measure the five dimensions of big five personality. This scale was originally developed by Goldberg [22] and adapted to the Indonesian version by Akhtar [23], which is the short version of IPIP-BFM-50. Several items in the scale were adjusted to the Indonesian value and culture. Since IPI-BFM is virtually an open cross-cultural scale, it could be adjusted to the local culture for more effective usage [23]. This scale consisted of 25 items, and each dimension is represented by five items, namely intellect (X1), conscientiousness (X2), extraversion (X3), agreeableness (X4), and emotional stability (X5).

Subjective Career Success in this study was measured using SCSI developed by Shockley *et al.* [6] and adapted to Bahasa Indonesia by Ingarianti [24]. SCSI consists of eight aspects of subjective career success with a total of 24 items, and every three items measures one aspect of the subjective career success. These aspects are authenticity, growth and development, influence, meaningful work, personal life, quality of work, recognition, and satisfaction.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Results

The statistical test result of 320 teacher participants showed that most participants in this study were female (67%), lived on Java Island (87.5%), and held a bachelor's degree (92%). Regarding employment status, most participants were civil servants (48%). Most participants were subject teachers (70%) and most

served in senior or vocational high school (30%). Most participants have served for more than 15 years (52%). As many as 68% of the participants have had a teacher's certificate, and most have an income of less than 5 million rupiahs 78%. Based on the categorization of the five dimensions of the big five personality, participants in this study were categorized into the medium category 59-75%. Regarding subjective career success, most participants in this study (73%) have a moderate level of subjective career success.

The normality test was conducted by viewing the skewness and kurtosis, and the data were considered normally distributed when the score ranged from -2 to 2. Field [25] states that for more than 300 data, the normality was determined by directly viewing the skewness and kurtosis without dividing it by standard error. The normality test result indicates that the data in this study were distributed normally. After the normality test, a linearity test was performed to see the pattern of relationship between independent and dependent variables and to see the correctness of the model specification of the measurement [26]. The big five personality and subjective career success in this study exhibited a score of <0.05 in linearity or >0.05 in deviation from linearity, except the dimension of emotional stability. This result indicates a relationship between extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, intellect, and subjective career success.

The multiple linear regression analysis was performed to see the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable and to test the proposed hypotheses [27]. Table 1 shows that three hypotheses were supported as extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness exhibited a significant role in teachers' subjective career success. In contrast, intellect did not exhibit a significant role in teachers' subjective career success. Meanwhile, the other three hypotheses were not supported. The analysis result also showed that out of the five dimensions of the big five personality, extraversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness account for teachers' subjective career success by 19%, whereas the rest 81% of subjective career success is accounted for by other factors outside the big five personality dimensions.

Table 1. Multiple linear regression test

Variable relationship	R square	ANOVA sig.	Coefficient		Description
			$\beta$	p	
Extraversion → Recognition	0.112	0.000	0.220	0.331	Not significant
Agreeableness → Recognition	0.112	0.000	-0.031	0.667	Not significant
Conscientiousness → Recognition	0.112	0.000	0.219	0.001	Significant
Emotional stability → Recognition	0.112	0.000	-0.073	0.259	Not significant
Intellect → Recognition	0.112	0.000	0.023	0.732	Not significant
Extraversion → Quality work	0.124	0.000	0.151	0.016	Significant
Agreeableness → Quality work	0.124	0.000	0.086	0.231	Not significant
Conscientiousness → Quality work	0.124	0.000	0.207	0.002	Significant
Emotional stability → Quality work	0.124	0.000	-0.056	0.383	Not significant
Intellect → Quality work	0.124	0.000	0.010	0.881	Not significant
Extraversion → Meaningful work	0.151	0.000	0.163	0.008	Significant
Agreeableness → Meaningful work	0.151	0.000	0.143	0.008	Significant
Conscientiousness → Meaningful work	0.151	0.000	0.195	0.003	Significant
Emotional stability → Meaningful work	0.151	0.000	-0.028	0.653	Not significant
Intellect → Meaningful work	0.151	0.000	-0.051	0.430	Not significant
Extraversion → Influence	0.105	0.000	0.143	0.023	Significant
Agreeableness → Influence	0.105	0.000	0.193	0.008	Significant
Conscientiousness → Influence	0.105	0.000	0.065	0.327	Not significant
Emotional stability → Influence	0.105	0.000	-0.021	0.746	Not significant
Intellect → Influence	0.105	0.000	-0.029	0.668	Not significant
Extraversion → Authenticity	0.096	0.000	0.128	0.042	Significant
Agreeableness → Authenticity	0.096	0.000	0.193	0.023	Significant
Conscientiousness → Authenticity	0.096	0.000	0.087	0.191	Not significant
Emotional stability → Authenticity	0.096	0.000	-0.042	0.520	Not significant
Intellect → Authenticity	0.096	0.000	0.007	0.916	Not significant
Extraversion → Personal life	0.078	0.000	0.186	0.004	Significant
Agreeableness → Personal life	0.078	0.000	0.098	0.184	Significant
Conscientiousness → Personal life	0.078	0.000	0.062	0.354	Not significant
Emotional stability → Personal life	0.078	0.000	-0.061	0.355	Not significant
Intellect → Personal life	0.078	0.000	-0.025	0.710	Not significant
Extraversion → Growth and development	0.146	0.000	0.165	0.007	Significant
Agreeableness → Growth and development	0.146	0.000	0.042	0.550	Not significant
Conscientiousness → Growth and development	0.146	0.000	0.242	0.000	Significant
Emotional stability → Growth and development	0.146	0.000	-0.113	0.074	Not significant
Intellect → Growth and development	0.146	0.000	0.087	0.183	Not significant
Extraversion → Satisfaction	0.099	0.000	0.144	0.023	Significant
Agreeableness → Satisfaction	0.099	0.000	0.004	0.957	Not significant
Conscientiousness → Satisfaction	0.099	0.000	0.205	0.002	Significant
Emotional stability → Satisfaction	0.099	0.000	-0.119	0.068	Not significant
Intellect → Satisfaction	0.099	0.000	0.100	0.137	Not significant

This study also performed the multiple regression test on each dimension of variable X and dimensions of variable Y. The result was similar to the overall test. However, it was found that extraversion does not play a role in recognition. Agreeableness was also found not to play a role in the four dimensions of subjective career success, i.e., recognition, quality work, growth and development, and satisfaction. Meanwhile, conscientiousness was found not to affect influence, authenticity, and personal life. Emotional stability and intellect were also found not to affect any aspect of subjective career success.

### 3.2. Discussion

This study confirms that the big five personality is one of the personality approaches that may explain teachers' subjective career success in Indonesia. This study found a significant effect of three big five personality dimensions (extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness). Meanwhile, the other two dimensions (emotional stability and intellect), exhibited no significant role in teachers' subjective career success in Indonesia. This indicates that personality contribute to individuals' behavior in their life environment, including in their professional life.

Conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion were found to significantly affect subjective career success. These three dimensions are related to acceptance of other's individuals and awareness of one's social environment. This section presents further discussion on the role of conscientiousness in teachers' subjective career success. Conscientiousness represents one's awareness of their surroundings and tendency to exhibit organized behaviors. It allows a teacher to achieve career success through awareness of being more organized. Ranasinghe and Kottawatta [28] reported a significant, positive relationship between conscientiousness and teachers' career path in Sri Lanka. Their study showed that satisfaction is associated with teachers' career success. Conscientiousness personality trait may serve as the predictor of subjective career success [29]. However, individuals with high conscientiousness are at risk of suffering from new stress when they fail to meet the expectation. Supporting previous studies, the present study showed that conscientiousness could serve as the predictor of teachers' subjective career success in Indonesia.

This study found that the agreeableness personality trait significantly affects teachers' subjective career success. Agreeableness refers to the intrapersonal relationship and one's cooperative acceptance of the environment. Accepting behavior of individuals with this personality trait causes them to easily trust others and accept any information they receive, causing their job relationship to be hardly consistent. However, this personality trait turns out to significantly affect teachers' subjective success careers. Agreeableness is reported to affect teachers' mindset and working effectiveness [30]. This personality dimension is known to be better associated with aspects of objective career success, such as salary and promotion, due to its cooperative attitude. In line with the previous statement, Smidt [31] states that individuals with agreeableness can easily accept their environment, causing them to be easily influenced. This finding confirms that agreeableness can affect one's subjective career success, especially among teachers.

As shown by the descriptive data, 67% of the teachers in this study were female. In this regard, Furnham and Cheng [32] showed that agreeableness has recently become a positive predictor for several job-related issues, including education and social status. Their study stated that female individuals are more dominant in this personality trait. Thus, it is unsurprising if agreeableness serves as one of the personality traits that positively predicts subjective career success. Likewise, Templer [33] found a positive relationship between agreeableness and career success among Asian employees, particularly those in public sectors. This study finding is supported by the research stated that teaching profession is one of the jobs that significantly affect community life, and the big five personality can predict teachers' subjective career success.

One of the interesting findings in this study is the effect of extraversion personality traits on teachers' subjective career success in Indonesia. This finding differs from the previous study, which found that extraversion is not related to subjective career success [34]. This difference could be explained using Hofstede's collectivism theory, stating that the primary keys to teachers' organizational culture in Asia (including Indonesia) are the interpersonal relationship and social interaction, which can affect their values and behaviors [35]. This is in line with Indonesia's collective community whose moral values and social views emphasize more on the group in their social environment [36]. Linking collectivism to extraversion, extrovert individuals tend to show active behaviors in interacting with others, and their personality are highly influenced by the environment. Thus, it is understandable that teachers' subjective career success standard in Indonesia results from the group standard in their environment.

This study did not find the effect of openness to experience on subjective career success. This personality trait refers to one's creativity and flexibility, which we link to job hopping phenomena, a phenomenon that can hinder one's subjective career success as it causes difficulties in the career evaluation process. A study conducted by Semeijn, Heijden, and Beuckelaer [37] also found that intellect does not play a role in achieving subjective career success. Their study found a negative relationship between intellect personality trait and career success, which implies that individuals with this personality trait are easily satisfied with the financial aspect of the job, in contrast with subjective career success that is associated with

the evaluation of career development. In this regard, the low score of intellect personality trait among teachers in Indonesia may be accounted for by their limited self-actualization. Non-teaching duties like administrative tasks, among others, are viewed as a barrier to expressing their potential [38]. This condition seems to be the reason why intellect personality does not play a role in teachers' subjective career success.

This study also found that emotional stability does not affect subjective career success among teachers in Indonesia. Emotional stability refers to a personality that represents individual's adjustment to various emotions arising from one's-self. Emotional stability is found not to affect teachers' evaluation of their job. Although teachers should maintain their emotional stability, it does not serve as a predictor of career success. This is because teachers prefer to determine their career success through conscientiousness and agreeableness. The study on factors and values of big five personality proposes some psychological construct to analyze subjective career success and found that low emotional stability is negatively correlated with subjective career success [39], a finding that supports our finding among teachers in Indonesia.

The present study analyzed the role of each dimension of the big five personality in each aspect of subjective career success and found that emotional stability and intellect did not affect teachers' subjective career success. This discussion focuses on three dimensions of the big five personality that affects subjective career success, namely extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. This study found that agreeableness did not specifically affect the recognition and satisfaction of teachers in this study. This is because recognition refers to the formal acknowledgment of one's job, and this study found that teachers do not need such acknowledgment to achieve their career success. This finding is consistent the study on the relationship between the big five personality and recognition in 70 participants in Nigeria [40]. The study found that individuals with agreeableness personality are negatively related to recognition. In other words, individuals with agreeableness personality do not need recognition in their career path.

Agreeableness also did not affect satisfaction, another aspect of subjective career success. This finding shows that overall, teachers do not perceive satisfaction. In other words, they only perceive positive effects on several aspects of their life. This finding is followed by the finding that teachers attain their subjective career success through other aspects that are in line with agreeableness, such as authenticity, meaningful work, personal life, growth and development, and quality of work. This finding shows that teachers accept the positive involvement in their job although it is followed by personal life. Thus, teachers can obtain their career success through quality jobs by providing proper education for the community. In the dimension of conscientiousness, several aspects of subjective career success that affect individuals' conscientiousness include recognition, quality of work, meaningful work, growth and development, and satisfaction. Thus, teachers in Indonesia are oriented more on an organized career path to attain success.

Studies on the role of big five personality in subjective career success were recently conducted in company employees and leaders of institutions. The novelty of this study lies in the regression test that was done to measure the big five personality and multidimensional subjective career success. This study also found the role of extraversion in teachers' subjective career success. Despite its novelty, the result of this study is non-generalizable to represent all teachers in Indonesia.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the big five personality affects teachers' subjective career success by 19%. Extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness were found to exhibit significant roles, while the other two dimensions, i.e., emotional stability and intellect, did not play a role in subjective career success. In other words, teachers exhibiting high scores of extraversion agreeableness, and conscientiousness may have a higher chance of achieving subjective career success.

Despite its contribution, this study only involved respondents in Java and Kalimantan, thus limiting the drawing of conclusion. Regarding the study implication, Indonesian teachers could consider each personality and its aspects in evaluating and judging their career progress. Thus, they could be more confident in exhibiting their subjective career success. For future studies, the result of the present study could be further examined by involving teacher in certain region or specific educational level, given that teaching profession may significantly develop a country's human resource quality. Based on findings presented in previous sections, it is also recommended to include cultural values in the future studies.

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