

Notions of success and its causes among men and women with different expressions of the motive for striving for success

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Abstract. One of the features of the modern world is the idealization of a person's individual success. Therewith, a society's understanding of success does not always correlate with its individual representation. We conducted a study aimed at establishing interpretations of success and its causes in various fields of life among men and women with different expressions of the motive for striving for success. Methods: survey; content analysis; testing (methodology of A. Megrabian); cross section method; statistical data processing methods. Results: It was found that the interpretation of success in the professional, family and hobby fields is identical for men and women, regardless of the level of expression of their motive for striving for success; in other fields, the interpretation of success varies with different expressions of said motive. Conclusion: studying notions of success is important for understanding the life aspirations of young people and ideas about their life guidelines. As has been shown, with high achievement motivation, success is primarily explained by one's personal characteristics, and not by their experience and knowledge, which raises the question of the need to pay attention to personality development.

1 Introduction

In the modern world, which promotes individual success of a person, success is a socially assessed phenomenon for which generally accepted standards are being defined. These standards are measurable at the level of society and act as the basis for the formation of life guidelines of an individual. However, these guidelines are formed by the individual being adjusted for their individual characteristics and life experience, which leads to the formation of the person's individual ideas about success in a particular field of life. Psychology interprets success as the effective achievement of a desired goal and an individual's experience of the result of their own actions [1]. As can be seen, success is associated with achievement motivation, which is interpreted as motivation aimed at the best possible performance of any type of activity performed for achieving a certain result, to which the criterion of success can be applied [2]. Achievement motivation includes not only the motive

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of striving for success, but also ideas about personal responsibility for successes and failures, emotional reactions to them, the choice of tasks with the optimal level of difficulty [2], which in turn are determined by the personal characteristics of the subject. Studies have shown that personality traits constitute the predictors of success [3; 4; 5] and perform a predictive function in assessing the likelihood of its occurrence [6]. Moreover, it has been proven that cognitive abilities, socio-economic status and interest in activities do not lead to success without the presence of certain personal traits [4; 5; 7]. Taking into account the above, we believe that the level of expression of the motive for striving for success will determine students' notions about success and its causes in different fields of life. We conducted a study *aimed at studying interpretations of success* and its causes in different fields of life among men and women with different expressions of the motive for achieving success.

2 Materials and methods

The study involved 100 young men and women aged 20 to 35 years. Following methods were applied: questionnaire (questionnaire to study the content of notions about success and its causes in various fields of life), testing (method for determining the motive for striving for success by A. Megrabian); content analysis method; nonparametric statistics methods (quartilization procedure, binomial distribution (as per D. Owen), Friedman test, Wilcoxon test). The questionnaire was based on two open-ended questions related to each of five fields of life (professional, family, education, social and hobbies) - "Give an example of a situation of success in a specific field" and "What do you think is the cause for success in this field?" Next, the respondents' answers were processed using the content analysis procedure [8]. Using A. Megrabian's method for determining achievement motivation, one of the two generalized stable motives of an individual (striving for success/avoiding failure) was diagnosed - the motive for striving for success. The level of expression of this motive among respondents was established using the quartilization procedure and binomial distribution. The Friedman and Wilcoxon tests were used to establish the dominant categories in the groups, reflecting the interpretations and causes for success in different fields of life.

3 Results and discussion

As a result of content analytical data processing, the following categories reflecting notions about success and its causes in different fields of life for men and women were obtained. Regardless of gender, respondents interpret success in the professional field as career growth, achievement of results, respect from colleagues; in the field of education - as high academic performance, graduation from a university; in the family field - as a strong family, love, good relationships; in the social field - as a large number of friends, a high position; in the field of hobbies - as achieving results. Along with this, men interpret success in the professional field as having a high salary, in the educational field - as an invitation to work and the presence of knowledge; in the family field - as having a good wife; in the social field - as respect of others and the implementation of socially beneficial deeds; in the field of hobbies - as satisfaction and income from hobbies. Women, in addition to the above categories, interpret success as achieving results in education, having children in the family, successfully defending their rights and volunteering in the social field, and winning hobby competitions.

Among the causes for success, respondents indicate as follows: in the professional field, women - personal qualities, good knowledge, experience, support from others and understanding of the assigned tasks, men - determination, good knowledge, luck; in the field of education, women - hard work, ability and luck, men - high motivation, perseverance, knowledge; in the family field, women - compromise, patience, love, mutual understanding,

men - patience, love, mutual understanding and fidelity; in the social field, women - personal qualities, respect from others, leadership skills, luck, men - personal qualities, helping others, the desire to improve, money; in the field of hobbies, women – personal qualities, interest, great desire, external factors, men – interest, desire, external circumstances, personal qualities. Further, in accordance with the purpose of the study, the sample of respondents was divided into groups according to the criterion of the level of expression of the motive for striving for success. As a result, groups of men with low (26) and moderate (27 respondents) level of expression of the motive were formed, as well as groups of women with high (27) and moderate (20) expression. Among the respondents there were no women with a low expression of the motive of striving for success and men with a high expression, which demonstrates a greater orientation of women towards achievements compared to men. The leading interpretations of success and its causes in different fields of life were established in each group (Table 1; Table 2).

Table 1. Leading interpretations of success and its causes in different fields of life for women (Wilcoxon, Friedman; $p \leq 0.05$).

	High expression of the motive for striving for success (interpretation / cause)	Moderate expression of the motive for striving for success (interpretation / cause)
PF	Career growth/personal qualities	Career growth/good knowledge and skills
EF	High performance/hard work	Achieving results/hard work
FF	Strong family/mutual understanding	Strong family/mutual understanding
SF	Volunteering/personal qualities	Volunteering/desire to earn respect
HF	Achieving results/personal qualities	Achieving results/high motivation

Notes: PF – professional field, EF – education field; FF – family field; SF – social field; HF – hobbies field.

Both men and women interpret success in the professional field as career growth, the causes for which vary depending on the level of expression of the motive for striving for success - with greater expression (high for women and moderate for men), personal qualities act as the causes, and with lesser expression (moderate for women and low for men) – good knowledge. In the field of education for women, with average motivation for achievement, success is the achievement of results, and with high motivation, high academic performance, which is based on hard work. With average expression of the motive for striving for success, men interpret success in education as the presence of good knowledge obtained on the basis of high motivation to learn, and with low expression - as the presence of good grades based on knowledge. Regardless of the gender of respondents, success in the family field is defined as the presence of a strong family in which mutual understanding reigns.

Table 2. Leading interpretations of success and its causes in different fields of life for men (Wilcoxon, Friedman; $p \leq 0.05$).

	Moderate expression of the motive for striving for success (interpretation / cause)	Low expression of the motive for striving for success (interpretation / cause)
PF	Career growth/personal qualities	Career growth/good knowledge and skills
EF	Good knowledge/high motivation	High performance/knowledge
FF	Strong family/mutual understanding	Strong family/mutual understanding
SF	Respect from others/personal qualities	Good deeds/desire to help
HF	Achieving results/high motivation	Achieving results/interest

Notes: PF – professional field, EF – education field; FF – family field; SF – social field; HF – hobbies field.

In the social field, success for women is defined as volunteering, which, when the motive for striving for success is high, is based on personal qualities, and when the motive is moderate, it is based on the desire to earn the respect of others. With moderate expression of the motive for striving for success, men interpret success in the social field as gaining the respect of others based on an assessment of personal qualities, and with low expression, as carrying out good deeds based on the desire to help people. In the field of hobbies, for both men and women, success is defined by specific achievements based on high motivation for a specific activity in the case of moderate achievement motivation, on personal qualities in the case of high achievement motivation in women, and on interest in activities in the case of low achievement motivation in men.

4 Discussion

The results of the study show that the interpretation of success in the professional, family and hobby fields is identical among respondents, regardless of their gender and the level of expression of the motive for striving for success. We believe this is due to the fact that a career, a strong family and achievements in hobbies are generally accepted and primarily assessed indicators of a person's success in these fields. However, while the interpretations of success in the above-described fields are identical, we see a differentiated understanding of the reasons for success with different expressions of the motive for striving for success, except for the family field, where the reason for a strong family for all respondents was mutual understanding. With different expressions of the motive for achievement, women interpret success in the field of education differently, but are united in understanding its cause (hard work), and in the social field they interpret success identically (volunteering), but are separated in explaining its reasons. In general, the higher the achievement motivation, the more respondents of both sexes attribute the reason for success to the presence of certain personal qualities, rather than good knowledge or high motivation (which is typical for subjects with lower levels of achievement motivation).

5 Conclusion

Studying notions of success is important for understanding the life aspirations of young people and ideas about their life guidelines. As has been shown, with high level of expression of motive for striving for success, the success itself is primarily explained, by one's personal characteristics, and not by their experience and knowledge, which raises the question of the need to pay attention to personality development. We see the prospect of research in the study of subjects' notions about failure and its causes.

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