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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS IN THE UKRAINIAN IT SECTOR

Chayka, Rostyslav. Relationship between Objective and Subjective Career Success and Their Characteristics: A Comprehensive Analysis in the Ukrainian IT Sector.

Introduction. This study empirically examines the relationship between objective and subjective career success in the Ukrainian IT sector. The study employs various objective success indicators, including salary, promotions, certifications, peer recommendations, portfolio projects, and job offers. Subjective success is measured using self-assessments of career recognition, authenticity, growth, influence, meaningfulness, personal life integration, work quality, and overall career satisfaction. The sample was made up of 150 Ukrainian IT software developers, comprising 74 males and 76 females.

Aim: to explore the relationship between objective and subjective career success and their aspects among Ukrainian IT-software developers.

Methods. Analysis and synthesis of scientific literature. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

Results. Although there are no general correlations between Ukrainian IT-software developers' objective and subjective career success, the number of certifications strongly correlates with authenticity and satisfaction and moderately correlates with personal life and growth and development. Portfolio project count significantly correlates with influence and moderately correlates with meaningful work, authenticity, and satisfaction. Peer recommendations correlate with authenticity, while job offers have a strong negative correlation with growth and development and a moderate negative correlation with satisfaction.

Conclusion. The Ukrainian IT industry has the complex and multifaceted nature of career success. It is important to consider both objective achievements and subjective fulfillment in understanding career trajectories in this rapidly evolving sector.

Keywords: career success, objective career success, subjective career success, Ukrainian IT specialists.

Чайка Ростислав. Взаємозв'язок об'єктивного та суб'єктивного кар'єрного успіху та їх характеристик: комплексний аналіз в українському ІТ-секторі.

Вступ. Це дослідження емпірично досліджує взаємозв'язок між об'єктивним і суб'єктивним успіхом у кар'єрі в українському ІТ-секторі, відомому своїм динамічним зростанням і глобальною інтеграцією. Дослідження використовує комплексні об'єктивні показники успіху, включаючи зарплату, підвищення по службі, сертифікати, рекомендації колег, портфоліо проєктів і пропозиції роботи. Суб'єктивний успіх вимірюється за допомогою самооцінки визнання кар'єри, автентичності, зростання, впливу, значущості, інтеграції в особисте життя, якості роботи та загального задоволення від кар'єри. Для вивчення цих аспектів було опитано збалансовану вибірку зі 150 українських ІТ-спеціалістів, що складалася з 74 чоловіків і 76 жінок.

Метою дослідження є з'ясувати складний зв'язок між об'єктивним і суб'єктивним успіхом у кар'єрі, наголошуючи на різноманітних аспектах та їх взаємодії в контексті українських розробників ІТ-програмного забезпечення.

Методи. Аналіз та синтез наукової літератури. Методи описової статистики та кореляційний аналіз.

Результати. Отримані результати показують відсутність загальної кореляції між об'єктивним і суб'єктивним успіхом у кар'єрі в цій групі. Проте детальний аналіз виявляє конкретні зв'язки: кількість сертифікатів тісно корелює з автентичністю та задоволенням і помірним зв'язком із особистим життям, зростанням і розвитком. Кількість проєктів у портфоліо значною мірою пов'язана з впливом і помірно корелює зі змістовною роботою, автентичністю та задоволенням. Рекомендації колег пов'язані з автентичністю, тоді як пропозиції роботи мають сильну негативну кореляцію з ростом і розвитком і помірну негативну кореляцію із задоволенням.

Висновки. Ці результати висвітлюють складний і багатогранний характер кар'єрного успіху в українській ІТ-індустрії, підкреслюючи важливість розгляду як об'єктивних досягнень, так і суб'єктивної самореалізації для розуміння кар'єрних траєкторій українських ІТ-спеціалістів.

Ключові слова: career success, objective career success, subjective career success, Ukrainian IT specialists.

Introduction. Since the 1970s, the topic of career success has garnered extensive attention in management and applied psychology, with researchers striving to decode what constitutes, predicts, and results from successful careers (Feldman & Ng, 2007; Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). The relevance of this inquiry extends beyond individual benefits. Understanding career success is also imperative for organizations, as the personal success of employees can significantly contribute to overall organizational success (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen & Barrick, 1999).

Employment and career progression have undergone significant transformations in recent decades. Long-term, full-time employment within single organizations, once a standard career model, is increasingly becoming an exception rather than the norm (Biemann et al., 2012). Concurrently, there has been a dramatic rise in alternative work arrangements, such as part-time roles and fixed-term contracts (Spreitzer et al., 2017). These structural changes in the labor market are paralleled by shifts in employee attitudes, with a growing number of professionals actively seeking to take greater control over their career trajectories (Direnzo & Greenhaus, 2011). This new breed of employees prioritizes personal standards and satisfaction, often placing their career progression and fulfillment over traditional, organization-defined success metrics (Weng & McElroy, 2012).

In this evolving context, the concept of career success has emerged as a focal point in scholarly research, particularly in the fields of career development and management psychology (Gunz & Heslin, 2005; Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005; Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001). Career success serves as a multifaceted construct that not only reflects an individual's internal standards and aspirations but also plays a crucial role in influencing their motivation, satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment (Abele & Spurk, 2009; Dries, Pepermans & Carlier, 2008; Heslin, 2003). This construct, therefore, provides a valuable lens through which the meaning and measurement of career trajectories can be assessed and understood (Dries, 2011; Heslin, 2003).

These global trends and shifts have unique characteristics and implications in the Ukrainian context, particularly within the burgeoning IT software development sector. Ukrainian IT professionals are part of a rapidly expanding, globally integrated industry where traditional career success metrics might intertwine or clash with evolving personal aspirations and market realities. This article aims to empirically investigate the correlation between objective and subjective career success among Ukrainian IT software developers, exploring how these professionals navigate and interpret their career achievements within this dynamic landscape.

Operationalization of Career Success

Career success is 'the positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements one accumulates as a result of work experiences' (Seibert, Crant & Kraimer, 1999).

The concept of career success has been a focal point of research in occupational and organizational psychology, with various attempts to define and operationalize it. Despite lacking a unanimous definition, the literature commonly adopts a dual perspective, distinguishing between objective and subjective career success. This bifurcation provides a comprehensive framework for understanding career achievements.

Historically, career success was predominantly operationalized using objective measures. However, there has been a notable shift in research interest towards subjective measures, signifying a more holistic understanding of what constitutes career success in the modern era (Spurk, Hirschi & Dries, 2019). This shift acknowledges that career success is not solely about external achievements but also personal satisfaction and fulfillment.

The contemporary understanding of career success embraces both objective and subjective elements, recognizing the importance of external achievements as well as the individual's internal evaluation of these achievements (Abele & Spurk, 2009; Arthur et al., 2005; Dries, Pepermans, Hofmans & Rypens, 2009). This dual perspective is particularly relevant in the context of boundaryless careers, where individuals strive for success in professional terms and their personal lives and well-being.

In summary, career success is a multifaceted construct comprising both objective and subjective dimensions.

Objective Career Success

Objective Career Success (OCS) is widely recognized as encompassing the concrete and quantifiable aspects of a career that is observable and can be evaluated objectively by others. Common indicators of OCS include salary, frequency of promotions, job titles, and overall professional development, as Judge et al. (1995) and Gunz & Heslin (2005) noted. OCS is typically gauged against societal benchmarks, offering a measurable and unbiased means of assessing career accomplishments. It symbolizes the visible external achievements in an individual's career path.

Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008) describe objective career success as being primarily concerned with verifiable and observable achievements such as income, career advancement, and occupational status. In contrast to subjective measures like personal perceptions and evaluations, these indicators are empirically neutral and unbiased (Dette, Abele and Renner, 2004). Commonly cited measures in research include pre-tax monthly income, positional status within an organization (Abele & Spurk, 2009b), and the trajectory of salary growth (Wayne et al., 1999).

The relationship between salary and promotion is nuanced, with research often suggesting a weaker correlation than might be expected. This observation is significant as these two elements are frequently considered closely intertwined within the framework of OCS, with the assumption being that promotions lead to higher salaries and vice versa. When exploring OCS, researchers often propose similar hypotheses for both salary and promotion, treating them as facets of a broader concept of objective success (Judge et al., 1995; Seibert & Kraimer, 2001).

Furthermore, OCS metrics typically involve external signs of career progression or the accrual of tangible rewards (Feldman & Ng, 2007). Key indicators here include salary (Thorndike et al., 1934), salary progression (Hilton & Dill, 1962), and promotional achievements (Thorndike, 1963), as these are among the most accessible and commonly used measures of career success (Heslin, 2005; Hall, 2002). Additional components of OCS encompass the highest educational or hierarchical level reached, peak salary attained, pace of ascension within an organization, and symbols of achievement, such as professional awards (Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001; Feldman & Ng, 2007). Nicholson and Waal-Andrews (2005) expand this list to include six recurring outcomes: hierarchical status and rank, material success (wealth, property, earning potential), social reputation and esteem, professional and technical expertise, network connections and friendships, and personal health and well-being.

Subjective Career Success

In the realm of empirical research, subjective career success has often been measured as a unidimensional construct, primarily in the form of career satisfaction (Greenhaus, Parasuraman & Wormley, 1990; Seibert, Kraimer, Holtom & Pierotti, 2013) or as perceived career success (Heslin, 2003; Turban & Dougherty, 1994). Traditionally, these 'objectivist' measures of subjective career success, where respondents rate their satisfaction based on criteria assumed to be universally applicable, have been prevalent (Gunz & Heslin, 2005). However, recent years have seen a shift towards more nuanced, multidimensional measures that accommodate diverse, personal definitions of success. This shift is exemplified by studies like Zhou et al. (2013) in China and Shockley et al. (2016) in the United States, which developed scales incorporating external compensation and intrinsic fulfillment.

Subjective career success (SCS) is typically gauged through attitudes, emotions, and perceptions regarding an individual's sense of achievement rather than quantifiable accomplishments. The career satisfaction scale developed by Greenhaus et al. (1990) has been widely adopted for this purpose. Researchers have explored variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and professional identification to measure SCS (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995; Feldman & Ng, 2007). Additionally, SCS encompasses broader outcomes like identity, purpose, and work-life balance (Law, Meijers & Wijers, 2002; Cochran, 1990; Finegold & Mohrman, 2001).

As per Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990), SCS is a broader concept than OCS, encompassing all aspects relevant to an individual's career satisfaction. Heslin (2003) introduced a common distinction between self-referent and other-referent assessments of subjective success. Self-referent SCS is often measured as career or job satisfaction, while other-referent SCS involves comparisons to external standards or reference groups (Abele & Wiese, 2008; Dette, Abele & Renner, 2004; Heslin, 2003, 2005).

People typically exhibit varying degrees of satisfaction with different career aspects. Thus, studying relationships between distinct SCS facets and other variables offers more theoretical interest. This approach clarifies the distinction between OCS and SCS, addressing the limitation that many studies test identical hypotheses for both constructs despite their conceptual distinctness and moderate correlation (Dette, Abele & Renner, 2004; Ng et al., 2005). Multidimensional scales in subjective career success research allow for analysis of how different facets contribute to an individual's overall subjective career success, aligning with the subjectivist approach long advocated in the field (Gunz & Heslin, 2005).

Recent years have seen the development of more refined SCS measures examining multiple dimensions. For example, Shockley et al. (2016) validated a scale in the United States encompassing dimensions such as recognition, quality work, meaningful work, influence, authenticity, personal life, growth & development, and general satisfaction. These evolving measures reflect the growing recognition of the complexity and multidimensionality inherent in SCS.

Correlation between objective and subjective career success

Many studies have delved into the relationship between OCS and SCS (e.g., Dette, Abele & Renner, 2004; Judge & Hurst, 2007; Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005). Concrete career markers like salary or promotions don't solely determine SCS. Instead, for many individuals, the perception of being "career successful" hinges more on their job satisfaction (Judge et al., 1995) or overall career contentment (Greenhaus et al., 1990). There are various reasons, beyond career satisfaction, why individuals may continue to climb the corporate ladder, such as opportunity costs associated with leaving, accumulated benefits and pensions, or a scarcity of alternative opportunities.

Meta-analytical reviews have generally found a small to moderate correlation between OCS and SCS, with figures ranging from .22 to .30 (Ng et al., 2005). However, the correlation between specific facets of OCS and SCS can be smaller or even insignificant (Shockley et al., 2016). While some individuals may derive considerable personal satisfaction from achieving objective success markers, this is only sometimes the case. Factors like personal values, career goals, and work-life balance priorities can influence the strength of this correlation. The influence between OCS and SCS can flow in both directions. OCS could form the foundation for subjective evaluations of success, with some researchers positing that subjective perceptions of success result from objective success (Nicholson & De Waal Andrews, 2005). There's evidence supporting the notion that 'objective influences subjective,' as income and promotions have been linked to job and career attitudes (Gattiker & Larwood, 1989) and career satisfaction (Judge et al., 1995; Martins, Eddleston & Veiga, 2002; Richardsen, Mikkelsen & Burke, 1997; Schneer & Reitman, 1993; Wayne, Liden, Kraimer & Graf, 1999). However, the impact of objective success on job satisfaction is not always consistent, with some studies finding no influence (Judge et al., 1995; Richardsen et al., 1997), while others report positive effects (Judge, Thoresen, Pucik & Welbourne, 1999; Cable & DeRue, 2002).

Conversely, the subjective experience of success potentially leading to more objective success is also plausible (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008; Hall, 2002). SCS could bolster self-confidence and enhance motivation and goal-striving, potentially leading to increased OCS over time. However, empirical evidence for this direction is scarce. For example, Marks and Fleming (1999) demonstrated that subjective well-being, which includes work and money satisfaction, predicted income, and controlling for prior income.

The correlation between OCS and SCS can vary throughout an individual's career. Age or career stage might moderate the effect of objective success on job satisfaction (Altimus &

Tersine, 1973; Lee & Wilbur, 1985). In the early stages, objective markers like securing a job or earning the first promotion might align more closely with subjective perceptions of success. As one's career advances, subjective measures such as personal fulfillment and impact may become more pivotal.

Cultural factors significantly influence this relationship. In some cultures, objective success is highly valued and thus closely linked to subjective perceptions of success, whereas in others, personal fulfillment and work-life balance are emphasized. The extent to which the concept of career success in one country reflects the meanings in other countries remains unclear (Henrich, Heine & Norenzayan, 2010).

Furthermore, societal norms and values, which are constantly evolving, can also affect the correlation between OCS and SCS. For instance, there's an increasing focus on subjective aspects of career success in many contemporary workplaces, indicating a shift in attitudes toward work and life satisfaction.

Research aim. The primary aim of this scientific paper is to delve into the nuanced relationship between objective and subjective career success, specifically focusing on different facets of each and their interplay among Ukrainian IT software developers. This study is designed to not only explore the correlations between general objective (such as salary growth, certifications, number of portfolio projects, recommendations, and job offerings) and subjective (including recognition, quality of work, meaningful work, influence, authenticity, personal life, growth & development, and general satisfaction) career success but also to provide new insights into how these specific facets interrelate. By examining these multifaceted relationships within the context of the Ukrainian IT sector, the paper aims to contribute novel knowledge to the scientific literature regarding the complex dynamics between various aspects of objective and subjective career success. This research intends to offer a deeper understanding of these correlations, address a gap in the existing literature, and provide valuable implications for IT professionals, organizational leaders, and policymakers in Ukraine. The findings of this study are poised to enhance strategies that effectively balance both tangible career achievements and personal fulfillment in the fast-paced, evolving field of technology.

Methods and research design

Sample and procedures. This study involved Ukrainian IT professionals to examine the relationship between personality traits and career outcomes. As a segment of a larger research project, surveys were distributed to 5,782 alumni of a notable project managers' conference. These surveys included a comprehensive set of questions pertinent to the study's focus. Participants were recruited through multiple methods to ensure a diverse representation in terms of occupations and career stages. Firstly, an invitation to participate and a link to the online survey were posted in various IT networking chats, specifically on Telegram. Secondly, the study was promoted via email to attendees of a leading Ukrainian IT project managers' conference.

Further extending the reach, additional surveys were disseminated among 10,081 alumni associated with project management and software development events through Telegram channels. The questionnaire comprised sections assessing career-related control variables, participants' personality traits, and career outcomes. The survey was conducted online, emphasizing confidentiality to elicit honest responses. Anonymity was assured to all respondents who participated voluntarily.

To incentivize participation, those completing the survey 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. The study completed 150 surveys, all of which provided complete data sets.

The demographic composition of the respondents was as follows: the average age was 35 years; 49.3% identified as male; regarding relationship status, 56% were married, 17.3% were in a cohabiting relationship, 6.7% were divorced, 2.7% were in a non-cohabiting relationship, and 17.3% were single; concerning educational attainment, 89.3% held a Bachelor's degree as their highest qualification, 9.3% had a Ph.D., and 1.3% had other advanced degrees; the average work

experience among participants was 9.5 years; in terms of employment, 36% worked in IT product companies, 49.3% in IT service companies, 2.7% were engaged in their startups, and 12% worked in IT departments of local companies; employment status revealed that 88% were full-time employees, 4% part-time, 1.3% freelanced, and 6.7% were unemployed at the time of the study.

Measures.

Objective Career Success

In this study, we assessed objective career success using several key metrics: current salary (monthly income), annual salary growth within the IT sector, and the number of promotions over the past three years.

While many studies utilize income as the sole measure of objective success, its validity as an indicator of career success can vary across different occupational fields. For example, in state employment, income increases are often tied to age rather than merit, making it a less reliable indicator of career success compared to fields like self-employment or private business. Similarly, the relevance of status indicators, such as the ability to delegate the number of promotions, may differ between individuals employed by startups and those employed by service companies.

For missing salary data, we used figures from the DOU salary research based on the number of years in the IT sector and the specific position held. Salaries reported in Ukrainian hryvnia and other currencies were converted to US dollars using the current exchange rate.

Given the typical context of the Ukrainian IT sector, where prior non-IT experience is often deemed less relevant, and employees usually start from entry-level positions, we calculated Salary Growth as the current salary minus 500 (the average starting salary in IT for most positions), divided by the number of years in the IT sector.

The number of promotions was determined based on the difference between the current and the position held three years prior, according to a typical grade scale.

Additionally, we collected self-reported data on internationally recognized certifications obtained during the entire work period, the number of portfolio projects, the number of colleagues who could recommend the employee's work, and the number of job offers received in the last six months. These factors served as additional indicators of objective career success. Any missing data for these indicators were replaced with zero.

Subjective Career Success

For this study, we assessed multidimensional subjective career success using the Subjective Career Success Inventory (SCSI; Shockley et al., 2016). The scale was translated into Ukrainian through a rigorous process involving double-blind translation, followed by a consolidation meeting and finalization based on mutual agreement, in line with the methodology suggested by Van de Vijver & Leung (1997). Participants responded to the SCSI items under the prompt "Considering my career as a whole...". The inventory comprises 24 items, evenly distributed across eight subscales with three items each. These subscales include:

- Satisfaction: Assessing general career contentment with items like, "I have found my career quite interesting."
- Growth and Development: Evaluating career progression through learning, exemplified by items such as, "I have continuously improved by developing my skill set."
- Authenticity: Focusing on autonomy in career choices, for instance, "I have been able to pursue work that meets my personal needs and preferences."
- Influence: Gauging the impact of decisions on the organization with items like, "The organizations I have worked for have considered my opinion regarding important issues."
- Personal Life: Reflecting the interplay between career and personal life satisfaction, e.g., "I have been able to be a good employee while maintaining quality non-work relationships."
- Meaningful Work: Measuring the perceived value and impact with statements such as, "The work I have done has contributed to society."
- Quality Work: Focusing on pride in the quality of work produced, exemplified by, "I have been known for the high quality of my work."

- Recognition: Assessing acknowledgment received for work contributions, e.g., “the organizations I worked for have recognized me as a good performer.”

Regarding construct validity, Shockley et al. (2016) provided satisfactory evidence supporting criterion-related, convergent, and discriminant validity for each of the eight dimensions and the overall scale. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each dimension (ranging from $\alpha = 0.74$ to 0.92) and the overall scale ($\alpha = 0.94$) demonstrated satisfactory reliability in various samples, as reported by Shockley et al. (2016).

Each of these dimensions captures a unique aspect of subjective career success, ranging from the personal alignment and satisfaction with one's career path (Authenticity and Satisfaction) to the external recognition and impact of one's work (Recognition and Influence), thus providing a comprehensive understanding of subjective career success in the IT sector.

This study used descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to scrutinize the collected data. These analyses were pivotal in summarizing our dataset's key features and exploring the relationships between various indicators of objective and subjective career success among Ukrainian IT professionals. All statistical computations, including estimated values, were meticulously performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Results and discussion.

For better understanding, we display all means and standard deviations of the career success measures analyzed here (Table 1).

Table 1

Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Age	34.97	7.09	150
Work Experience	9.54	7.11	150
Salary	4420.73	5994.33	150
Salary Growth	440.47	284.31	150
Promotions	.81	.99	150
Certifications	1.68	2.36	150
Projects	8.91	8.34	150
Recommendations	15.73	20.49	150
Offers	5.24	11.62	150
SCSI	3.85	.98	150
Recognition	4.45	.58	150
Quality	4.21	.65	150
Meaningful Work	3.92	.80	150
Influence	4.05	.82	150
Authenticity	4.15	.76	150
Personal Life	3.65	1.04	150
Growth	4.07	.75	150
Satisfaction	3.83	.93	150

We conducted a comprehensive correlation analysis to examine the relationship between objective career success indicators and subjective career success, as measured by the Subjective Career Success Inventory (SCSI). The following Table 2 encapsulates the correlation coefficients, providing insights into how objective indicators such as Salary, Salary Growth, Number of Promotions, Number of Certifications, Number of Portfolio projects, Number of Recommendations, and Number of Job Offers are associated with the SCSI index.

Next, we conducted an in-depth analysis to explore the correlations between a comprehensive set of objective career success indicators and the facets of subjective career success. The objective indicators included Salary, Salary Growth, Number of Promotions,

Number of Certifications, Number of Portfolio Projects, Number of Recommendations, and Number of Job Offers. Subjective career success was assessed through Recognition, Authenticity, Growth and Development, Influence, Meaningful Work, Personal Life, Work Quality, and Career Satisfaction. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 2

**Correlations between objective career success indicators
and subjective career success**

	SCSI
Salary	.062
Salary Growth	.103
Promotions	.058
Certifications	.157
Projects	.081
Recommendations	.051
Offers	-.067
**. Correlations is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)	

Our analysis of the correlations between objective and subjective career success facets provides a nuanced understanding of how various aspects of professional life interact in the Ukrainian IT sector.

Growth and Development:

The negative correlation with Job Offers (-.286) is counterintuitive to expectations. Contrary to the notion that professional development leads to more job offers, our findings suggest that increased professional development might be associated with fewer job offers. This could be because highly developed professionals are more selective about job opportunities or less active in job-seeking. The positive correlation with Certification (.185) indicates that more professional development is associated with obtaining more certifications, reflecting a commitment to continuous learning and skill enhancement. The negative correlation with Promotion (-.169) suggests that promotions, while indicative of career advancement, might limit opportunities for further professional growth and development, possibly due to increased responsibilities.

Authenticity:

The positive correlation with Certification (.234) suggests that employees are more likely to pursue and attain certifications in those areas when they align their career paths with their interests and specializations. The positive correlation with Portfolio Projects (.178) implies that employees with autonomy in their career choices engage in more projects that interest them, enhancing their sense of authenticity. Similarly, the positive correlation with Recommendations (.171) indicates that employees passionate about their chosen career paths are more likely to receive endorsements for their work.

Satisfaction:

The strong positive correlation with Certification (.281) shows that employees who find satisfaction in their careers are more inclined to validate their expertise through additional certifications. The positive correlation with Portfolio Projects (.192) suggests that involvement in engaging projects enhances career satisfaction. The negative correlation with Job Offers (-.180) highlights that employees who are content in their careers may engage less in job-seeking activities, leading to fewer job offers.

Personal Life:

The positive correlation with Certification (.162) might reflect a balance between professional development and personal life, where effective time management enables engagement in certification programs.

Table 3

Correlation between objective success and subjective success indicators

	Salary	Salary Growth	Promotions	Certifications	Projects	Recommendations	Offers
Recognition	.010	.061	.030	.123	-.042	.134	-.076
Quality Work	.103	.095	.027	.126	.148	.139	-.084
Meaningful Work	.049	-.038	-.037	.045	.177*	.041	-.128
Influence	.002	-.129	.022	.160	.285**	.148	-.081
Authenticity	-.049	-.003	.025	.234**	.178*	.171*	-.145
Personal Life	.046	-.051	.028	.162*	.091	.127	-.043
Growth	.041	.094	-.169*	.185*	.111	.016	-.286**
Satisfaction	.003	.069	-.034	.281**	.192*	.053	-.180*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Influence:

The positive correlation with Portfolio Projects (.285) could be twofold: employees who have significant influence in their projects are more likely to take pride in them and include them in their portfolios, or those with more significant influence may have more opportunities to participate in noteworthy projects.

Meaningful Work:

The positive correlation with Portfolio Projects (.177) underscores that involvement in interesting and diverse projects contributes to a sense of meaningfulness in one's work.

These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of career success. While traditional measures like promotions and job offers have their place, factors such as personal development, autonomy in career choices, and engagement in fulfilling projects play a crucial role in shaping an IT professional's career satisfaction and sense of accomplishment. The study highlights the importance of considering both objective and subjective elements when evaluating career success in the Ukrainian IT sector.

While offering valuable insights, this study is subject to several **limitations**. *Firstly*, the sample size, though adequate, may not fully capture the diversity of the Ukrainian IT sector. A larger and more varied sample could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the correlations between objective and subjective career success.

Secondly, the reliance on self-reported measures, particularly for subjective career success, might introduce bias. Current mood, recent experiences, or social desirability could influence respondents' perceptions and personal evaluations.

Thirdly, the study's cross-sectional nature limits the ability to infer causality. Longitudinal studies would better understand the dynamic interplay between objective and subjective career success over time.

Lastly, while this study focuses on the Ukrainian IT sector, the findings may not be generalizable to other industries or geographical regions. Ukraine's unique cultural and economic context and being at war at the moment of the study play a significant role in shaping career dynamics.

Conclusion. This study has contributed to understanding the complex relationship between objective and subjective career success in the Ukrainian IT sector. Our findings suggest that traditional indicators of career success, such as salary growth and promotions, are not the sole determinants of subjective career satisfaction. Factors like professional development, autonomy in career choices, and involvement in meaningful projects are equally crucial in shaping an individual's perception of career success.

The correlations observed indicate a nuanced interplay between various aspects of professional life. For instance, increased professional development and certifications are positively associated with subjective feelings of authenticity and satisfaction, while the relationship between promotions and subjective career growth appears inversely related.

These insights emphasize the need for a more holistic approach to career development in the IT sector, balancing objective achievements with personal fulfillment and professional growth. For practitioners and policymakers, the study highlights the importance of creating environments that foster professional advancement, personal development, and job satisfaction.

Understanding these dynamics as the IT sector evolves becomes increasingly vital for sustaining a motivated and fulfilled workforce.

Future research agenda. Future research should expand on these findings, incorporating more extensive and diverse samples and employing longitudinal designs to unravel the complexities of career success in an ever-changing professional landscape. Considering the geopolitical context, it is essential to explore how the ongoing Ukraine-Russia war may influence the interplay between objective career indicators, such as salary growth and job opportunities, and subjective career facets, including job satisfaction and meaningful work. Comparative studies across different cultural contexts would be valuable. Exploring how cultural factors influence perceptions and realities of career success in various IT environments can offer a global perspective and highlight cultural specificities. Qualitative research, including in-depth

interviews and case studies, could provide richer, more nuanced insights into the subjective experiences of IT professionals. This approach would complement the quantitative data, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to career satisfaction and success. Investigating how various organizational structures, cultures, and policies influence career success could guide companies looking to foster employee growth and satisfaction.

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