
Benessere edonico ed eudaimonico

Tratti di personalità e career decision-making self-efficacy

Andrea Svicher¹ e Annamaria Di Fabio²

Sommario

L'obiettivo di questo studio è di esaminare le associazioni tra *career decision-making self-efficacy* e benessere sia edonico sia eudaimonico, controllando per i tratti di personalità. Quattrocento e due studenti universitari hanno compilato il *Big Five Questionnaire*, la *Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale Short Form* e misure di benessere sia edonico (*positive affect* e *negative affect*, soddisfazione di vita) sia eudaimonico (*meaning in life*, *flourishing*). I risultati indicano che la *career decision-making self-efficacy* offre un contributo nel benessere sia edonico che eudaimonico, ma in particolare in quest'ultimo tipo di benessere. Sono delineate future prospettive di ricerca e di intervento in *strength-based prevention perspectives* e anche in prospettiva di prevenzione primaria.

Parole chiave

Career decision making self-efficacy, Benessere edonico, Benessere eudaimonico, Tratti di personalità, *Strength-based prevention perspectives*, Prospettiva di prevenzione primaria.

¹ International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Work and Organizational Psychology for Vocational Guidance, Career Counseling, Talents and Healthy Organizations» and of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Cross-Cultural Positive Psychology, Prevention, and Sustainability», Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literatures and Psychology (Psychology Section), University of Florence, <https://www.forlilpsi.unifi.it/vp-30-laboratori.html>.

² Director of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Work and Organizational Psychology for Vocational Guidance, Career Counseling, Talents and Healthy Organizations» and of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Cross-Cultural Positive Psychology, Prevention, and Sustainability», Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literatures and Psychology (Psychology Section), University of Florence, <https://www.forlilpsi.unifi.it/vp-30-laboratori.html>.

Hedonic and eudaimonic well-being

Personality traits and career decision-making self-efficacy

Andrea Svicher¹ and Annamaria Di Fabio²

Abstract

The objective of this study was to examine the associations between career decision-making self-efficacy and both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, controlling for personality traits. Four hundred and two university students filled out the *Big Five Questionnaire*, the *Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale Short Form* and measures of both hedonic (*positive affect* and *negative affect*, *life satisfaction*) and eudaimonic well-being (*meaning in life*, *flourishing*). The results showed that career decision-making self-efficacy contributed to both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, with a higher contribution in eudaimonic well-being. Future perspectives of research and intervention were delineated in both strength-based prevention and primary prevention perspectives.

Keywords

Career decision-making self-efficacy, Hedonic well-being, Eudaimonic well-being, Personality traits, Strength-based prevention perspectives, Primary prevention perspective.

¹ International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Work and Organizational Psychology for Vocational Guidance, Career Counseling, Talents and Healthy Organizations» and of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Cross-Cultural Positive Psychology, Prevention, and Sustainability», Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literatures and Psychology (Psychology Section), University of Florence, <https://www.forilpsi.unifi.it/vp-30-laboratori.html>.

² Director of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Work and Organizational Psychology for Vocational Guidance, Career Counseling, Talents and Healthy Organizations» and of the International Research and Intervention Laboratory «Cross-Cultural Positive Psychology, Prevention, and Sustainability», Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literatures and Psychology (Psychology Section), University of Florence, <https://www.forilpsi.unifi.it/vp-30-laboratori.html>.

Introduction

The contemporary scenario of the 21st century shows rapid economic and technological changes, globalization, variability in the world of work and structural changes in organizations, determining insecurity and instability for individuals (Blustein, Kenny, Di Fabio, & Guichard, 2019; Peiró, Sora, & Caballer, 2012). This situation leads to consequent risks for well-being (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019), which are being aggravated by the current Covid pandemic (Gori, Topino, & Di Fabio, 2020).

In this context, individuals are considered responsible for the direction of their personal and professional lives (Guichard, 2013) and it is thus necessary to develop resources that could help individuals to foster their adaptability and employability for constructing their life and career paths, maintaining also an optimal level of well-being to ensure higher psychological resources to deal with challenges (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2015, 2016). The strength-based prevention perspectives (Di Fabio & Saklofske, 2021) require the enhancement of individual strengths, and a primary prevention perspective (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2015, 2016; Hage et al., 2007) appears fundamental for young people in order to promote resources useful in facing the complex changes and transitions of the current world of work early on.

Career decision-making self-efficacy could be considered an essential factor to be promoted in relation to career processes (Di Fabio, Palazzeschi, Asulin-Peretz, & Gati, 2013) and well-being (Betz, Hammond, & Multon, 2005; Wright et al., 2017).

Career decision-making self-efficacy represents one of the main factors involved in career decision-making processes (Di Fabio et al., 2013) and this construct is traditionally linked to career behaviour (Betz & Hackett, 1981). In this framework, career decision-making self-efficacy was defined as the degree of confidence that individuals have in relation to their own ability to successfully complete the tasks necessary for career decisions (Paulsen & Betz, 2004). This construct refers to the five career choice competencies included in Crites's (1978) career maturity model: accurate self-appraisal, gathering occupational information, goal selection, making plans for the future and problem solving (Paulsen & Betz, 2004; Betz & Luzzo, 1996). Previous findings showed that career decision-making self-efficacy was associated to indices of adaptive decision making (Paulsen & Betz, 2004), including greater vocational identity (Robbins, 1985) and greater presence of adaptive career belief (Luzzo & Day, 1999) and career exploratory behaviour (Blustein, 1989). Furthermore, career decision-making self-efficacy was inversely related to career indecision (Di Fabio et al., 2013).

In literature it is possible to distinguish between hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Hedonic well-being includes a component of affective evaluation (positive affect and negative affect; Watson et al., 1988) and a component of cognitive evaluation as life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985),

whereas eudaimonic well-being refers to aspects such as meaning and flourishing (Diener et al., 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Regarding the relationships between career decision-making self-efficacy and hedonic well-being, previous research has examined this variable in relation to hedonic well-being (i.e., positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction). Literature has reported that career decision-making self-efficacy is positively linked to positive affect and inversely linked to negative affect (Betz, Hammond, & Multon, 2005; Hammond, Lockman, & Boling, 2010; Işık, 2012). Moreover, studies showed a positive association between career decision-making self-efficacy and life satisfaction (Jiang et al., 2017; Wright et al., 2017; Wright & Perrone, 2010). However, these latter studies did not control the relationship between career decision-making self-efficacy and hedonic well-being for personality traits. Hence, it is difficult to generalize these findings to the general population since personality is a stable trait across individuals (Caprara et al., 1993).

Regarding eudaimonic well-being, the value of positive career experience for the well-being of individuals was underlined, emphasizing flourishing in life, working and careers (Burke, Page, & Cooper, 2015). Nevertheless, previous research has not specifically studied the possible contribution of career decision-making self-efficacy in relation to life meaning and well-being nor controlled for personality traits.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between career decision-making self-efficacy and both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, controlling for personality traits. In particular the hypotheses of the present study are as follows:

- H1. Career decision-making self-efficacy will add a percentage of incremental variance beyond personality traits with respect to positive affect.
- H2. Career decision-making self-efficacy will add a percentage of incremental variance beyond personality traits with respect to negative affect.
- H3. Career decision-making self-efficacy will add a percentage of incremental variance beyond personality traits with respect to life satisfaction.
- H4. Career decision-making self-efficacy will add a percentage of incremental variance beyond personality traits with respect to life meaning.
- H5. Career decision-making self-efficacy will add a percentage of incremental variance beyond personality traits with respect to flourishing.

Method

Participants

Four hundred and two university students of the University of Florence (Italy) were enrolled in the current study.

The participants were 30.09% male and 10.01% female (mean age = 23.94; $DS = 1.82$).

Procedure

The administration of the instruments was carried out in groups, respecting Italian laws of privacy and informed consent. Attention was given to counterbalance the order of administration to reduce relative potential effects.

Measures

The *Big Five Questionnaire* (BFQ; Caprara et al., 1993) consists of 132 items on a Likert scale (from 1 = «Absolutely false» to 5 = «Absolutely true») detecting the Big Five personality traits: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional stability and Openness. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were .81 (Extraversion); .73 (Agreeableness); .81 (Conscientiousness); .90 (Emotional stability); .75 (Openness).

The *Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale Short Form* (CDSES-SF; Betz et al. 1996; Italian version Nota et al., 2008) comprises 20 items on a Likert scale (from 1 = «I have no confidence» to 5 = «I have complete confidence»). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the Italian version was .74.

The *Positive and Negative Affect Schedule* (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988; Italian version Terraciano, McCrae, & Costa, 2003) includes 20 adjectives, of which 10 refer to Positive Affect and 10 to Negative Affect. Response format is on a Likert scale (from 1 = «Very slightly or not at all» to 5 = «Extremely»). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the Italian version were .72 (Positive Affect) and .83 (Negative Affect).

The *Satisfaction With Life Scale* (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985; Italian version Di Fabio & Gori, 2016) comprises 5 items on a Likert scale (from 1 = «Strongly disagree» to 7 «Strongly agree»). Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the Italian version was .85.

The *Meaning in Life Measure* (MLM; Morgan & Farsides, 2009; Italian version Di Fabio, 2014) includes 23 items on a Likert scale (from 1 = «Strongly disagree» to 7 = «Strongly agree») and five dimensions: Exciting life, Accomplished life, Principled life, Purposeful life and Valued life. In this study we used the total score: Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the Italian version was .85.

The *Flourishing Scale* (FS, Diener et al., 2010; Italian version by Di Fabio 2016) is composed of 8 items on a Likert scale (from 1 = «Strongly disagree» to 7 = «Strongly agree»). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the Italian version was .88.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, Pearson's r correlations and hierarchical regressions were conducted through the use of SPSS version 25.

Results

In table 1 correlations among the BFQ, the CDESES-SF and other measures of hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being are presented. The CDESES-SF showed positive and statistically significant correlations with all variables, except for BFQ agreeableness, which did not show a statistically significant association, and the PANAS NA that showed a negative and statistically significant correlation (table 1).

Table 1

Correlations among the BFQ, CDESES-SF, PANAS PA, PANAS NA, SWLS, MLM, and FS.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. BFQ E	-										
2. BFQ A	.21**	-									
3. BFQ C	.17*	.16*	-								
4. BFQ ES	.21**	.42**	.20*	-							
5. BFQ O	.29**	.48**	.16*	.26**	-						
6. CDESES-SF	.39**	.10	.24**	.17*	.35**	-					
7. PANAS PA	.53**	.18*	.27**	.19*	.37**	.50**	-				
8. PANAS NA	-.18*	-.37**	-.19*	-.46**	-.25**	-.21**	-.21**	-			
9. SWLS	.41**	.34**	.08	.30**	.18*	.32**	.51**	-.40**	-		
10. MLM	.52**	.34**	.24**	.33**	.49**	.49**	.59**	-.41**	.55**	-	
11. FS	.49**	.37**	.20*	.32**	.43**	.43**	.57**	-.35**	.52**	.59**	-

Note. $N = 402$. * $< .05$, ** $< .01$.

BFQ = Big Five Questionnaire; CDESES-SF = Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale Short Form; PANAS PA = PANAS Positive Affect; PANAS NA = PANAS Negative Affects; SWLS = Satisfaction With Life Scale; MLM = Meaning in Life Measure; FS = Flourishing Scale.

Table 2 shows the results of hierarchical regressions with measures of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being as dependent variables, and as independent variables, in the first step, personality traits (BFQ) and in the second step career decision-

making self-efficacy. Regarding positive affect, personality traits explained 43% of the variance (first step) and the CDESES-SF added 5% incremental variance (second step). The total R^2 was .48. Concerning the negative affect, personality traits explained 27% of the variance (first step) and the CDESES-SF added 3% incremental variance (second step). The total R^2 was .30. With regard to life satisfaction, personality traits explained 25% of the variance (first step) and the CDESES-SF added 4% incremental variance (second step). The total R^2 was .29. With respect to life meaning, personality traits explained 41% of the variance (first step) and the CDESES-SF added 8% incremental variance (second step). The total R^2 was .49. For flourishing, personality traits explained 37% of the variance (first step) and the CDESES-SF added 10% incremental variance (second step). The total R^2 was .47.

Table 2

Hierarchical regression: contribution of personality traits (BFQ) and career decision-making self-efficacy in relation to measures of both hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being.

	PANAS PA	PANAS NA	SWLS	MLM	FS
	β	β	β	β	β
<i>Step 1</i>					
BFQ Extraversion	.48***	-.01	.28**	.29**	.29**
BFQ Agreeableness	.06	-.23**	.28**	.04	.12
BFQ Conscientiousness	.12	-.17	.03	.11	.08
BFQ Emotional Stability	.06	-.28**	.11	.17	.14
BFQ Openness	.14	-.01	.16	.24**	.17
<i>Step 2</i>					
Career Decision-making self-efficacy	.23**	-.19*	.21**	.29**	.31**
R^2 step 1	.43***	.27***	.25***	.41***	.37***
ΔR^2 step 2	.05***	.03***	.04***	.08***	.10***
R^2 total	.48***	.30***	.29***	.49***	.47***

Note. $N = 402$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

BFQ = Big Five Questionnaire; CDESES-SF = Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale Short Form; PANAS PA = PANAS Positive Affect; PANAS NA = PANAS Negative Affects; SWLS = Satisfaction With Life Scale; MLM = Meaning in Life Measure; FS = Flourishing Scale.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to analyse the relationships between career decision-making self-efficacy and different measures of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, controlling for personality traits. All five hypotheses of the present study were confirmed. Career decision-making self-efficacy added significant incremental variance beyond personality traits in relation to positive affect (H1), showing that, beyond the contribution of personality traits, individuals with high career decision-making self-efficacy seem to have more positive emotional activation (Watson et al., 1988). Furthermore, career decision-making self-efficacy added significant incremental variance beyond personality traits also in relation to negative affect (H2), highlighting that, beyond personality traits, individuals with high career decision-making self-efficacy seem to feel minor negative emotions (Watson et al., 1988). The third hypothesis was confirmed too, since career decision-making self-efficacy added significant incremental variance beyond personality traits in relation to life satisfaction (H3). The observed stability beyond personality traits suggests that career decision-making self-efficacy may represent a resource that individuals could use to deal with 21st-century challenges, therefore also the challenges of everyday existence, thus contributing to global satisfaction with their own lives (Diener et al., 1995). Regarding aspects of eudaimonic well-being, the last two hypotheses were both confirmed. Career decision-making self-efficacy added significant incremental variance beyond personality traits in relation to life meaning (H4). Beyond personality traits, these results showed that a high career decision-making self-efficacy seems to enable better identification and realization of authentic and meaningful goals for individuals (Morgan & Farsides, 2009). Furthermore, career decision-making self-efficacy added significant incremental variance beyond personality traits in relation to flourishing. These results supported also the positive contribution of career decision-making self-efficacy with respect to flourishing as «social and psychological prosperity and well-being in important areas such as relationships, self-esteem, presence of purpose, and optimism» (Diener et al., 2010, p. 143).

Comparing hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, it is possible to note that career decision-making self-efficacy showed a greater contribution in relation to eudaimonic well-being, underlining the connections between career confidence and aspects of well-being connected to meaningfulness (Morgan & Farsides, 2009) and flourishing of individuals (Diener et al., 2010). It seems that aspects of confidence in constructing one's own career are related to aspects of meaning, relationships, self-esteem and purposefulness (Morgan & Farsides, 2009; Diener et al., 2010).

In spite of the fact that the results of this study seem promising, a limitation emerges concerning participants who are university students of the University

of Florence, thus meaning the findings are not generalizable. Future studies have to include students from different Italian universities and also other targets, for example, secondary school pupils or adults in transitional periods. Furthermore, the study utilized a cross-sectional design and thus future studies should be longitudinal. Moreover, it would also be worth replicating the research in different international contexts.

From a strength-based prevention perspective (Di Fabio & Saklofske, 2021) and particularly from a primary prevention perspective (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2015, 2016; Hage et al., 2007), if the findings of this research are replicated in future studies, it may be possible to introduce the value of career decision-making self-efficacy as a personal strength for facing the challenges of the 21st century. This resource could be especially useful in allowing individuals to overcome obstacles and seize opportunities in the complex and instable current scenario (Bluestin et al., 2019).

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