

Proactive Coping as a Mediator in the Effect of Big Five Personality Traits on the Goal Restriction Reaction



Veronika Gživnová, Veronika Kohútová 

Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, University of Trnava, Trnava, Slovak Republic

Goals, which were settled earlier in life might become unattainable. Whether the reaction will be goal disengagement or reengagement of different goals might depend on the personality. The study aims to confirm the prediction power of personality traits in goal disengagement and goal reengagement and determine the possible mediation effect of proactive coping in these relationships. To confirm this, the Goal Adjustment Scale, The Proactive Coping Inventory, and Big Five Inventory-2 were completed by 318 participants (mean age 23.09; $SD = 3.58$; 76.7% of women). Results revealed a significant effect of extraversion and openness on both goal disengagement and goal reengagement and the effect of conscientiousness on goal disengagement. All of them were fully or partially mediated by proactive coping. The reaction to goal achievement obstacles partially depends on personality, due to its effect on the usage of proactive coping.

Key words: personality traits, goal disengagement, goal reengagement, proactive coping

Introduction

Proactive coping is still a current concept coming from positive psychology, first used and defined by Aspinwall and Taylor (1997) as coping consisting of 'efforts undertaken in advance of the potentially stressful event to prevent it or to modify its forms before it occurs' (p. 417). For this, different skills are needed compared to the skills used in stress

coping. Preparing for a potentially stressful situation can lower the negative effect of stressors. Proactive coping is specified by five stages: 1) Resource accumulation; 2) Attention-recognition; 3) Initial appraisal; 4) Preliminary coping; 5) Eliciting and use of feedback (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997). According to a newer definition proposed by Greenglass et al. (1999), proactive coping occurs in various areas of one's thinking, emotions, and behavioral systems. The important aspect is the

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Veronika Kohútová, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, University of Trnava, Hornopotočná 23, 918 43 Trnava, Slovak Republic. E-mail: veronika.kohutova@truni.sk

Received October 3, 2023



source's management, in which individuals gain and use their environment's information, advice, help, or support. It includes reflection on which individuals anticipate success; how they deal with future problems or what they can do to prevent them; and if they accept responsibility for possible consequences. This proactive coping might therefore be important in maintaining set goals, and delaying giving up on the goals when faced with obstacles (Ouweland et al., 2007).

To fulfill a goal, defined as a cognitive representation of the desired final condition, which affects evaluation, emotions, and behavior (Fischbach & Ferguson, 2007), it is necessary to establish it as soon as possible. To fulfill it, a certain level of (indeed fluctuating) interest is needed, which consequently influences the effort, perseverance to overcome the obstacles, and goal-oriented behavior as well (Stuchlíková & Mazehóová, 2014). To successfully achieve a goal, it must be in line with the personality of the individual, as well as his/her needs, social relationships, or cultural expectations, which might be called self-concordance (Sheldon, 2014). In line with this, it would be effective to focus not only on subjective but also on objective evaluation by others. Achieving one's goal might lead to lowering effort and performance, as the feelings of relief or satisfaction might lower the motivation to achieve other goals (Carver, 2015).

The relationship between goal achievement and proactive coping is studied rather indirectly, while goal achievement is a byproduct of proactive coping and another construct, for example with optimistic expectancies (Grieva & Anagnostopoulos, 2010) or satisfaction with life (Van Bost et al., 2022). Proactive coping might be focused on goal management, where the requirements and situations are considered more like challenges than stressors. This behavior consists of skills like planning, goal setting, organization, and mental

situation (Greenglass et al., 2006). Ouweland et al. (2006) found out, that proactive coping strategies might differ in one individual in various situations more than among different individuals. To achieve a goal, individuals tend to seek instrumental support, try to suppress competitive activities, and plan or use active planning.

However, goals in a person's life can change or become difficult or completely unattainable. In such situations, it is adaptive to give up the goal (Heckhausen & Wrosch, 2022) or to exchange it for another one (Verschuren & Douilliez, 2022). Goal reengagement and goal disengagement are considered as coping strategies by some authors (e.g., Wrosch et al., 2011).

To understand coping, the study of personality is necessary (Hambrick & McCord, 2010). Proactive coping is positively predicted by all Big Five traits but negative emotionality, from which conscientiousness is the strongest one (Straud et al., 2015). Planning, organizing, and self-discipline are the key features of conscientious people. This can be useful in identifying future stressors and creating methods to manage burdens (Straud et al., 2015).

The Big Five personality traits might also affect the success of goal achievement through the effect on motivation (Milyavskaya et al., 2014). The achievement of goals is higher in more conscientious people (McCabe et al., 2013; Moore et al., 2019) or those with more autonomous motivation (Holding et al., 2019; Moore et al., 2019). Negative emotionality, on the other hand, slows motivation and performance in achieving goals (Marušić et al., 2017; Roľková, 2018).

Current Study

During life, goals that were set earlier in life might become unreachable. If someone is not able to fulfill set goals, giving up a goal (Heckhausen & Wrosch, 2022), as well as re-engag-

ing in different goals may be considered adaptive (Verschuren & Douilliez, 2022). The way people react to obstacles in attaining goals relates to their personality (e.g., Moore et al., 2019; Marušić et al., 2017), which may also predict the way of coping with a difficult situation. Specifically, a proactive coping strategy is positively related to all Big Five factors except negative emotionality, where a negative relation has been detected (Straud et al., 2015; Hambrick & McCord, 2010). However, a protective coping strategy may help maintain a set goal and delay the disengagement of it (Ouwehand et al., 2007). On the other hand, when a person's resignation to a goal is proactive, it may promote the establishment of an alternative goal (Asano et al., 2014). Proactive coping views difficulties more as challenges (Schwartz & Luszczynska, 2008) and enables individuals to have a greater capacity to change the situation, create a more desirable environment, and be motivated (Parker et al., 2010). It can be considered as building up on resources facilitating promotion toward challenging goals (Ersen & Bilgiç, 2018), which can help find a new goal after the original goal was restricted or no longer desired.

Therefore, personality traits may promote goal reengagement or goal disengagement precisely through an effect on proactive coping, which may influence an individual's response when a goal is unattainable. The aim of our study is therefore 1) to confirm the prediction power of the effect of personality traits on goal disengagement and goal reengagement. Moreover, we aim 2) to determine, whether proactive coping might mediate the effect of personality traits on goal disengagement and goal reengagement.

Measures

For data collection, a set of questionnaires were used. At the beginning, the respondents

were asked to answer some sociodemographic questions, like gender, age, relationship status, the highest level of education, and current working-studying status. Amid the items, one attention check item was used, placed among BFI-2 items – *Please answer this question "I very much agree"*. Respondents who answered this question incorrectly were excluded from the final sample.

To measure the reaction after the goal is restricted, we used The Goal Adjustment Scale (GAS, Wrosch et al., 2003) in the Slovak version (Ráčová et al., 2021). This 10-item scale rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale (from completely disagree to completely agree), captures 2 subscales – Goal disengagement and Goal reengagement. Both scales have sufficient Cronbach's alphas.

The Slovak version (Sollár et al., 2016) of the Proactive Coping Inventory (PCI, Green-glass et al., 1999) was used to capture the coping strategies from the cognitive and behavioral perspectives. For our research, only one (Proactive coping) of seven subscales was used – Proactive coping, consisting of 14 items rated on a 4-point Likert-type scale (from definitely not true to definitely true). Even though using all seven subscales could bring interesting findings, we were primarily focused on the proactive coping strategy. Moreover, using all the scales might be too overwhelming for the respondents, as the whole inventory consists of 55 items, possibly causing incomplete or inattentive completion of data sets.

To identify the personality of the respondents, the Slovak version (Kohút et al., 2020) of the BFI-2 (Soto & John, 2017) was used. The inventory consists of 30 items rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale, capturing the Big Five traits – Extraversion, Openness, Conscientiousness, Negative Emotionality, and Agreeableness. The inner consistency of the scales is sufficient.

Sample

To collect the data, people above 18 years old from Slovakia were approached. The questionnaires were distributed online through online social networks. Participants had to fulfill the requirements of being Slovak, between 20 and 35 years old, and correctly answer the attention questions. All participants signed an informal consent before filling out the questionnaires. Ethical approval was not required. The study was carried out in line with the APA Ethical Guidelines. The minimum sample size for the study analyses was not calculated before the data collection.

A total of 318 people aged 20-35 participated in the study, 76.7% women and 23.3% men, with a mean age of 23.09 years ($SD = 3.58$). Almost half of the respondents (48.4%) were single, 39.6% of respondents were in a relationship, 5% of them were engaged, 6.3% were married and 0.6% were divorced. In the field of highest educational attainment, 0.6% had elementary education, 69.8% had achieved secondary education, and 29.5% had achieved higher (university) education. In our sample, 21.6% of respondents were employed, 44.7% were studying, 32.1% were employed while studying and 1.6% were on maternity leave. Data are available at https://osf.io/7m4gc/?view_only=7c794da964e-04445b8146e6e57a8ac51.

Analysis

Data were analyzed using jamovi software (The jamovi project, 2022). Firstly, Cronbach's alpha values were calculated for all measures. Together with descriptive statistics of the scales, Cronbach's alpha values are listed in Table 1. Next, we analyzed the associations between the predictors and outcome variables, using Pearson's correlations. Then,

we conducted two hierarchical linear regressions, with goal disengagement and goal reengagement as outcome variables. In both regression analyses, the outcome variables were predicted by demographic variables – used as a control variable. In the second step, we added Big Five personality domains. We reported the standardized Beta values and their 95% confidence intervals of all the models, as well as the explained variance at both steps of the model and the difference in the explained variance after the second step. The final models were checked, and they passed the assumptions of linear regression (e.g., non-significant Durbin-Watson statistics, variance inflation factor lower than 4, and tolerance values higher than 0.25).

The mediation analyses in jamovi (The jamovi project, 2022) GLM mediation analysis from Advanced Mediations Model package (Gallucci, 2020) was used to test the indirect effects of Proactive coping strategy in association with Big Five factors (significantly predicting goal disengagement and goal reengagement in previous regression analyses) and goal disengagement and goal reengagement separately in two models. In the analyses, the confidence intervals were computed using the percentile Bootstrap method with 1000 replications.

For regression and mediation analysis, some respondents ($N = 15$; categories unemployed, on maternity leave) were excluded due to insufficient numbers of respondents in these groups.

Results

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alphas for all used predictors and outcome variables.

Firstly, we focused on the correlation between the Big Five factors, proactive coping strategy, and two outcome variables – goal

disengagement and goal reengagement (Table 2). The results showed a strong negative correlation between proactive coping and goal disengagement and a medium positive correlation with goal reengagement. Goal disengagement significantly correlated with all Big Five factors, with the strongest effect of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness.

The results of the hierarchical linear regression analysis used for the identification of significant predictors of goal disengagement are presented in Table 3. The regression model with goal disengagement as the outcome variable explained an insignificant 1.3% of the variance in goal disengagement with no significant predictors. The Big Five factors explained an additional 30% of the variance in

goal disengagement. Extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness were the only variables that significantly negatively predicted goal disengagement. In this model, the employed/study status began to be a significant predictor. Considering that this significant result was not found in the first model, we assume that this is a statistical artifact.

The results of hierarchical regression analysis with goal reengagement as an outcome variable are also presented in Table 3. The first model with controlled variables as predictors insignificantly explained 2.1% of variables in goal reengagement, with gender as a significant predictor, however only with negligible effect on change in goal disengagement. The Big Five traits explained an additional 12% of the variance in goal reengagement, with

Table 1 *Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alphas for examined scales*

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Cronbach's alpha
Active coping	2.98	0.58	1.5	4	0.90
Goal disengagement	2.48	0.81	1	4.75	0.70
Goal reengagement	3.50	0.76	1	5	0.86
Extraversion	3.16	0.92	1	4.83	0.83
Agreeableness	3.68	0.73	1.5	5	0.72
Conscientiousness	3.59	0.82	1.33	5	0.79
Negative emotionality	3.13	0.92	1	5	0.80
Openness	3.54	0.75	1	5	0.68

Table 2 *Pearson correlations between predictors and outcome variables*

	Proactive coping	Goal disengagement	Goal reengagement
Goal disengagement	-0.62***		
Goal reengagement	0.38***	-0.06	
Extraversion	0.65***	-0.38***	0.22***
Agreeableness	0.24***	-0.23***	0.07
Conscientiousness	0.65***	-0.50***	0.14*
Negative emotionality	-0.58***	0.30***	-0.12*
Openness	0.39***	-0.31***	0.27***

Note. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 3 Results of hierarchical linear regression analysis predicting Goal disengagement and Goal reengagement

Predictors	Goal disengagement			Goal reengagement		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
	β	95%CI [LL; UL]	β	95%CI [LL; UL]	β	95%CI [LL; UL]
Block 1 - control variables						
Gender (women - men)	-0.04	[-0.32; 0.25]	-0.07	[-0.32; 0.17]	0.33	[0.05; 0.61]
Age	-0.13	[-0.31; 0.06]	-0.16	[-0.32; 0.17]	-0.03	[-0.21; 0.16]
Romantic relationship	-0.11	[-0.34; 0.13]	-0.02	[-0.22; 0.18]	0.001	[-0.23; 0.23]
Employment/study status						
studying-employed	-0.40	[-0.87; 0.07]	-0.48	[-0.88; -0.08]	-0.20	[-0.67; 0.27]
study/employed - employed	-0.41	[-0.88; 0.07]	-0.55	[-0.96; -0.15]	-0.17	[-0.64; 0.30]
Block 2 - Big Five						
Extraversion			-0.16	[-0.28; -0.04]	0.17	[0.03; 0.30]
Agreeableness			-0.03	[-0.13; 0.08]	0.01	[-0.11; 0.13]
Conscientiousness			-0.35	[-0.47; -0.23]	-0.01	[-0.14; 0.13]
Negative emotionality			0.06	[-0.07; 0.18]	-0.06	[-0.19; 0.08]
Openness			-0.15	[-0.25; -0.05]	0.23	[0.12; 0.34]
Final models						
	$R^2 = 0.013$		$\Delta R^2 = 0.30$		$R^2 = 0.021$	$\Delta R^2 = 0.12$
	$F_{(5, 299)} = 0.79$		$\Delta F_{(5, 294)} = 25,96$		$F_{(5, 299)} = 1.28$	$\Delta F_{(5, 294)} = 7,81$
		$R^2 = 0.32$		$R^2 = 0.14$		
		$F_{(10, 294)} = 13,54$		$F_{(10, 294)} = 4,62$		

Note. $N = 305$. The values in Model 1 represents results from the first block (control variables). The values after adding BFI-2 domains are presented in Model 2 (final results). $\Delta R^2 =$ change of R^2 ; $\Delta F =$ change of F . The values significant at $p < 0.05$ are italicized, and $p < 0.01$ are bolded. CI = Confidence interval; LL = Lower limit; UL = Upper limit.

extraversion and openness as the significant positive predictors. Gender remained a significant predictor even after adding the Big Five factors.

Next, the mediation analyses were conducted separately for goal disengagement and goal reengagement, with all Big Five predictors that were significant in previous regression analyses as predictors and proactive coping strategy as mediator.

Table 4 and Figure 1 summarize results from the mediation model testing the hypothesis

that proactive coping strategy mediates the associations of extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness with goal disengagement. The coefficients for the indirect effects were all significant, with the indirect effects being strongest for extraversion and conscientiousness. The direct effect of conscientiousness remains significant considering this mediation path was only partial. The direct effects for extraversion and openness were at insignificant levels considering these as fully mediated. While the effect of conscientiousness

Table 4 The effect of extraversion, conscientiousness and openness on goal disengagement mediated by pro-active coping strategy

Independent variable	Total effect		Direct effect		Indirect effect	
	β 95% CI	<i>p</i>	β 95% CI	<i>p</i>	β 95% CI	<i>p</i>
Extraversion	-.17 [-.30, -.06]	.003	.04 [-.08, .16]	.514	-.21 [-.31, -.13]	< .001
Conscientiousness	-.37 [-.49, -.25]	< .001	-.17 [-.30, -.03]	.024	-.21 [-.29, -.13]	< .001
Openness	-.16 [-.26, -.05]	.003	-.07 [-.18, .01]	.137	-.09 [-.14, -.05]	< .001

Note. *N* = 305; CI - Confidence interval. Confidence intervals were computed using the percentile Bootstrap method with 1000 replications.

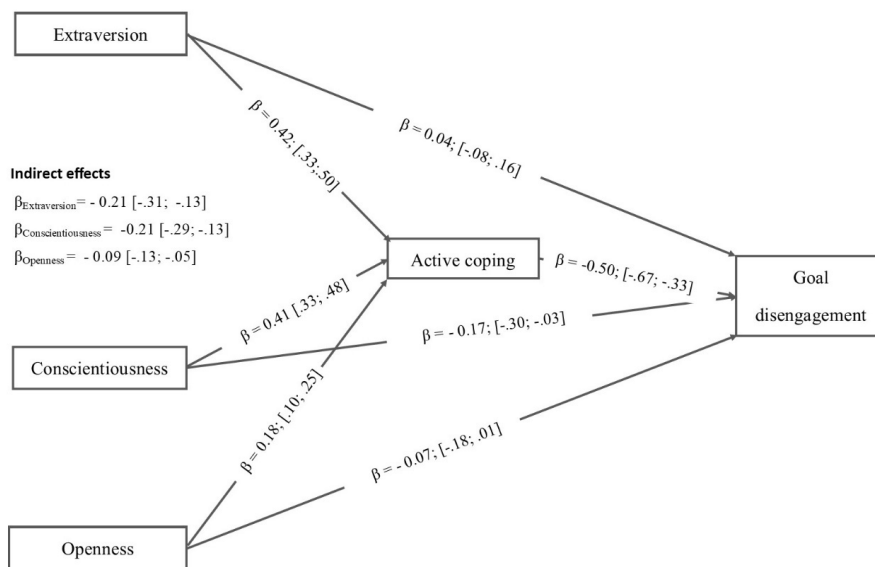


Figure 1 Mediation analyses – The role of proactive coping strategy in the relationship between personality traits (extraversion, conscientiousness, openness) and goal disengagement.

was only partially mediated, we assume the indirect effect of proactive coping strategy to be strongest in the association between extraversion and goal disengagement.

Table 5 and Figure 2 summarize results from the mediation model, testing the hypothesis that proactive coping strategy mediates the associations of extraversion and openness with goal reengagement. The coefficients for the indirect effects were all significant, with the stronger effect for extraversion. The direct effect of openness remained significant, considering this mediation path was only partial. The direct effects of extraversion dropped to insignificant levels considering this as a full

mediation. Based on these results, we assume the mediation effect of proactive coping strategy to be strongest in the association between extraversion and goal reengagement.

Discussion

Our study aims to elucidate the effect of proactive coping and personality in the reaction to obstacles in achieving set goals. Firstly, we wanted to shed light on the role of proactive coping in goal disengagement and goal reengagement. The results show that the more proactive coping is used, the less likely one disengages from the goal; but the more

Table 5 The effect of extraversion and openness on goal reengagement mediated by pro-active coping strategy

Independent variable	Total effect		Direct effect		Indirect effect				
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI			
Extraversion	.19	[.07, .30]	.001	-.03	[-.17, .09]	.617	.22	[.13, .31]	< .001
Openness	.24	[.11, .37]	< .001	.15	[.02, .27]	.019	.09	[.05, .13]	< .001

Note. N = 305; CI - Confidence interval. Confidence intervals were computed using the percentile Bootstrap method with 1000 replications.

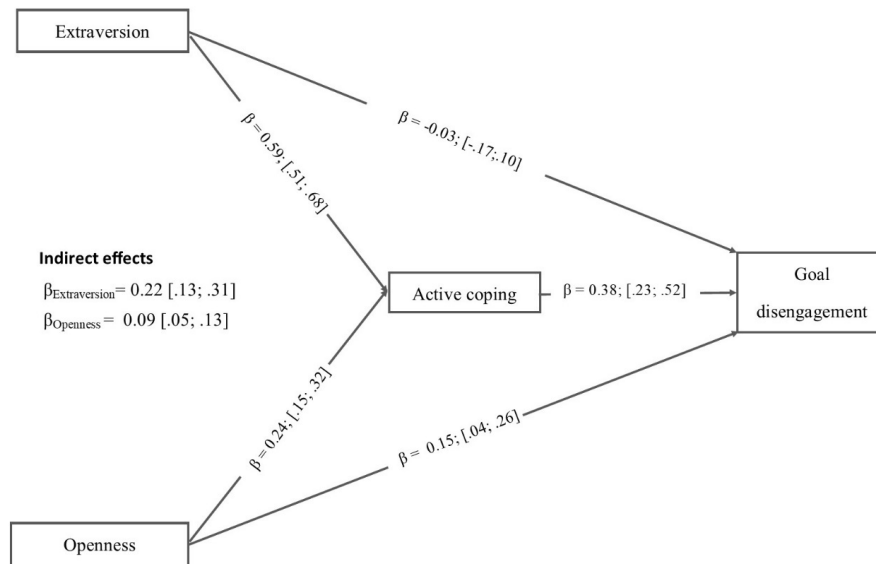


Figure 2 Mediation analyses – The role of proactive coping strategy in the relationship between personality traits (extraversion, openness) and goal reengagement.

probably one reengages in a different goal if the achievement of the previous goal is unattainable. Proactive coping can improve the perception of life perspective, part of which is the attitude toward the future, which can manifest in more optimistic expectations and greater self-worth (Griva & Anagnostopoulou, 2010). The effect of optimistic expectations of achieving goals was confirmed by Ramírez-Maestre et al. (2019). Moreover, proactive coping partially mediates the relationship between positive emotional states and psychological well-being. Consequently, people with optimal emotional states are more motivated to set and achieve given goals (Griva & Anagnostopoulou, 2010).

The main aim of our study was to explore the prediction effect of Big Five personality traits on goal disengagement and reengagement and to determine whether the relationships with the significant predictors are mediated by proactive coping. The results show that both goal disengagement and goal reengagement are predicted by extraversion and openness. Moreover, goal disengagement was predicted by conscientiousness. While higher levels of extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness lead to a lower probability of disengaging from the goal, the same levels of extraversion and openness might result in a higher probability of engaging in a different goal. While the Big Five personality traits predicted 30% of the variance in goal disengagement, it was only 12% for goal reengagement. The ability to engage in a new goal again might be related more to life satisfaction than to Big Five personality traits. Even though personality traits have an effect on the quality of life and well-being, reengagement in goals might have a significant effect regardless of the personality traits (Van Bost et al., 2022).

Subsequently, we explore the mediating effect of proactive coping for significant predictors. Our results revealed that a higher level

of extraversion predicted a lower probability of disengagement from the goal and a higher probability of reengagement in different goals. Both relationships were fully mediated by proactive coping. Based on our results, we assume the effects of extraversion indirectly through proactive coping to be the most considerable. Our findings are in line with Straud et al. (2015), who found a positive relationship between proactive coping and extraversion. For the proactive personality, extraversion is the most important correlate, as the meta-analysis of Thomas et al. (2010) revealed. In addition, extraversion is the strongest predictor of life satisfaction (Schimmack et al., 2004), which is related to reengaging in goals.

Similarly, openness predicts both goal disengagement and goal reengagement, however less than extraversion. A person with a higher level of openness would be less likely to disengage from the goal and more likely to engage in a new goal. Our results show that these relationships are mediated by proactive coping. More open people used proactive coping more, which resulted in a lower probability of disengagement and a higher probability of reengagement of goals. However, for reengagement, the effect of openness remains important even if we consider proactive coping. Several authors (e.g., Straud, et al., 2015; Thomas et al., 2010) confirm the positive relationship between openness and proactive coping. People with higher openness have the prerequisite to think about solutions to future possible stressors more creatively and flexibly and perceive them more as a challenge than a threat (Straud et al., 2015), to evaluate the environment more comprehensively and to plan for needed changes (e.g., Rode et al., 2008).

Conscientiousness was a significant predictor only for goal disengagement, which was fully mediated by proactive coping. Conscientiousness, as a personality trait, is linked to proactive coping (Serrano et al., 2021),

characterized by active planning and deliberating problem-solving (Van Bost et al., 2022), organization, endurance, and reliability (Soto, 2018). Proactive coping requires foresight and preparation for stressful situations, planning, and subsequent implementation of the needed action (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997). Our findings suggest that people with higher levels of conscientiousness are less likely to give up their goal, which can relate directly to conscientiousness (e.g., Van Bost et al., 2022; Soto, 2018). Conscientiousness is linked to performance motivation and success (Roľková, 2018), possibly leading to achieving goals. Moreover, conscientiousness is the strongest predictor of progress towards a goal (Moore et al., 2019) and of achieving academic success (McCabe et al., 2013). Conscientious individuals might achieve personal agentic goals, emphasizing self-assertion and mastery (Moore et al., 2019) or the goals of mastery approach (Marušić et al., 2017). However, newer findings of Van Bost et al. (2022) revealed unclear results. According to these results, conscientiousness may lead to greater disengagement from the goals that are unachievable. At the same time, it can lead to greater reengagement of newer more achievable goals. We can assume, that proactive coping might bring the important sources and motivation for finding an alternative way to achieve a goal.

Even though the regression analyses revealed a relation of goal re/disengagement only with extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness (for goal disengagement), goal reengagement was also related to conscientiousness and negative emotionality, but only negligibly. On the other hand, goal disengagement was related to all personality traits. The relationship between agreeableness and goal disengagement is not clear and rather small as revealed in previous research (e.g., Moore et al., 2019; Holding et al., 2019; Marušić et al., 2017; Roľková, 2018). Even our results revealed the relation with

agreeableness as the weakest one among the other personality traits. The reason for weak and unstable relations might be that agreeableness depends on the type and the context of the goal to be achieved. For example, Moore et al. (2019) found that agreeableness is significantly related to progress in social goals. Agreeable people may have the tendency to devote more attention and energy to the needs and expectations of others (Soto, 2018). Therefore, they may give preference to socially prominent goals and suppress their own goals.

It is understandable, that a person, who is driven to success (conscientiousness), who is cheerful (extraversion), amenable to change (agreeableness), and not depressive (negative emotionality), might be more motivated to set a difficult goal and he/she would be effective in reducing an emotional effect (Ong et al., 2006; Hambrick & McCord, 2010). Characteristics like positivity, high level of self-esteem, assertiveness, reward orientation, and effective coping strategies, which are the characteristics of a high level of extraversion and low levels of negative emotionality, support the person to be active, future-orientated, and positive in coping with stressful events. This description may predict proactive coping since it is described as a positive reconsideration of stressors to challenges (Straud et al., 2015). As confirmed by our results as well, personality might be important in whether a person will give up the goal or try to find a new one, if he/she faces an obstacle, however, the important factor in this is proactive coping. We assume, that there might be something like a proactive personality that indicates the behavior after one goal is restricted, however, more research is needed to confirm this.

Limitation and Future Direction

Despite the non-negligible contribution to the research field, we are aware of the

shortcomings. Firstly, our sample had a prevalence of women over men, which makes it difficult to compare our findings by gender. Secondly, we focused on factors of personality traits. Focusing on facets of the Big Five personality would bring a more detailed view of the effect of personality traits on dis/re-engagement of goals. Despite these weaknesses, our results contribute to a better understanding of proactive personality and its possible effect on the reaction following an obstacle during the fulfillment of a goal. Moreover, our findings might help to identify people, who have a predisposition to disengage from goals, which can negatively affect well-being; and our paper presents an opportunity to help them deal with this negative event.

Conclusion

Our study aimed to explore the effect of personality traits on disengagement from a set goal or reengagement of a different goal, and to find a possible mediation effect of proactive coping. Our assumptions were partially validated. Extraversion and openness predicted the level of goal disengagement and goal reengagement. Moreover, goal disengagement was predicted even by conscientiousness. However, the personality traits explain a markedly higher percentage of variance in goal disengagement. In the case of all significant predictors, this relationship was mediated by proactive coping, with extraversion having the most considerable effect. The reaction to goal achievement obstacles partially depends on personality, due to its effect on the usage of proactive coping.

Acknowledgement

This study was supported by the VEGA Grant Agency under contract No. 1/0223/22.

Author's ORCID

Veronika Kohútová

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9888-4275>

References

- Asano, K., Ishimura, I., & Kodama, M. (2014). The functional role of resignation orientation on goal engagement, self-esteem, life satisfaction, and depression. *Health Psychology Research*, 2(3), 1882. <https://doi.org/10.4081/hpr.2014.1882>
- Aspinwall, L. G., & Taylor, S. E. (1997). A stitch in time: Self-regulation and proactive coping. *Psychological Bulletin*, 121(3), 417-436. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.121.3.417>
- Carver, C. S. (2015). Control processes, priority management, and affective dynamics. *Emotion Review*, 7(4), 301-307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073915590616>
- Ersen, Ö., & Bilgiç, R. (2018). The effect of proactive and preventive coping styles on personal and organizational outcomes: Be proactive if you want good outcomes. *Cogent Psychology*, 5(1), Article 1492865. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2018.1492865>
- Fischbach, A., & Ferguson, M. J. (2007). The goal construct in social psychology. In A. W. Kruglanski & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Social Psychology: Handbook of Basic Principles* (pp. 334-352). New York: Guilford Press. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02333407>
- Gallucci, M. (2020). *jaMM: jamovi Advanced Meditation Models*. [jamovi module]. Retrieved from <https://jamovi-amm.github.io/>
- Greenglass, E., Fiksenbaum, L., & Eaton, J. (2006). The relationship between coping, social support, functional disability and depression in the elderly. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 19(1), 15-31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14659890500436430>
- Greenglass, E., Schwarzer, R., Jakubiec, D., Fiksenbaum, L., & Taubert, S. (1999). The Proactive Coping Inventory (PCI): A multidimensional research instrument. In *20th International Conference of the Stress and Anxiety Research Society (STAR)* (pp. 1-18). Krakow: Poland. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t07292-000>
- Griva, F., & Anagnostopoulos, F. (2010). Positive psychological states and anxiety: The mediating

- effect of proactive coping. *Psychological Reports*, 107(3), 795–804. <https://doi.org/10.2466/02.20.PR0.107.6.795-804>
- Hambrick, E. P., & Mccord, D. M. (2010). Proactive coping and its relation to the Five-Factor Model of Personality. *Individual Differences Research*, 8(2), 67–77.
- Heckhausen, J., & Wrosch, C. (2022). Commentary: Goal disengagement – past, processes, and future. *Motivation and Emotion*, 46, 884–888. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-022-09981-y>
- Holding, A., Hope, N., Verner-Filion, J., & Koestner, R. (2019). In good time: A longitudinal investigation of trait self-control in determining changes in motivation quality. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 139(1), 132–137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2018.11.001>
- Kohút, M., Halama, P., Soto, C. J., & John, O. P. (2020). Psychometric properties of Slovak short and extra-short forms of Big Five Inventory-2 (BFI-2). *Československá Psychologie*, 64(5), 550–563.
- Marušić, I., Jugović, I., & Pavin Ivanec, T. (2017). How personality dimensions and motivation to teach shape the learning achievement goals of Croatian future teachers. In H. M. G. Watt, P. W. Richardson, & K. Smith (Eds.), *Global Perspectives on Teacher Motivation* (pp. 220–247). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316225202.008>
- McCabe, K. O., Van Yperen, N. W., Elliot, A. J., & Verbraak, M. (2013). Big Five personality profiles of context-specific achievement goals. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 47(6), 698–707. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2013.06.003>
- Milyavskaya, M., Nadolny, D., & Koestner, R. (2014). Where do self-concordant goals come from? The role of domain-specific psychological need satisfaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 40(6), 700–711. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167214524445>
- Moore, A., Holding, A., Verner-Filion, J., Harvey, B., & Koestner, R. (2019). A longitudinal investigation of trait-goal concordance on goal progress: The mediating role of autonomous goal motivation. *Journal of Personality*, 88(3), 530–543. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12508>
- Ong, A. D., Bergeman, C. S., Bisconti, T. L., & Wallace, K. A. (2006). Psychological resilience, positive emotions, and successful adaptation to stress in later life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 91(4), 730–749. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.91.4.730>
- Ouweland, C., De Ridder, D. T. D., & Bensing, J. M. (2006). Situational aspects are more important in shaping proactive coping behaviour than individual characteristics: A vignette study among adults preparing for ageing. *Psychology and Health*, 21(6), 809–825. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14768320500537639>
- Ouweland, C., de Ridder, D. T., & Bensing, J. M. (2007). A review of successful aging models: Proposing proactive coping as an important additional strategy. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 27(8), 873–884. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2006.11.003>
- Parker, S. K., Williams, H. M., & Turner, N. (2006). Modeling the antecedents of proactive behavior at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91, 636–652. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.91.3.636>
- Ráčzová, B., Kačmár, P., & Hricová, M. (2021). Psychometric evaluation and initial validation of the Slovak version of the Goal Adjustment Scale. *Studia Psychologica*, 63(1), 94–109. <https://doi.org/10.31577/sp.2021.01.816>
- Ramírez-Maestre, C., Esteve, R., López-Martínez, A. E., Serrano-Ibáñez, E. R., Ruiz-Párraga, G. T., & Peters, M. (2018). Goal adjustment and well-being: The role of optimism in patients with chronic pain. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 53(7), 597–607. <https://doi.org/10.1093/abm/kay070>
- Rode, J. C., Arthaud-Day, M. L., Mooney, C. H., Near, J. P., & Baldwin, T. T. (2008). Ability and personality predictors of salary, perceived job success, and perceived career success in the initial career stage. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 16(3), 292–299. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2389.2008.00435.x>
- Ročková, H. (2018). Vzťah výkonovej motivácie a dimenzií osobnosti u vysokoškolských študentov. *Školský Psychológ/Školní Psycholog*, 19, 85–100. ISSN 2695-0154
- Serrano, C., Andreu, Y., Greenglass, E., & Murgui, S. (2021). Future-oriented coping: Dispositional influence and relevance for adolescent subjective wellbeing, depression, and anxiety. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 180, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2021.110981>
- Schimmack, U., Oishi, S., Fur, R. M., & Funder, D. C. (2004). Personality and life satisfaction: A

- facet level analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(8), 1062–1075. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167204264292>
- Schwarzer, R., & Luszczynska, A. (2008). Reactive, anticipatory, preventive, and proactive coping: A theoretical distinction. *Prevention Researcher*, 15(4), 22–24.
- Sheldon, K. M. (2014). Becoming oneself: The central role of self-concordant goal selection. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 18(4), 349–365. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868314538549>
- Sollár, T., Romanová, M., & Greenglass, E. (2022, January 4th). The proactive coping inventory (PCI) – Slovak version. https://estherg.info.yorku.ca/files/2014/09/PCI-Slovak-version_Adults.pdf?x53209
- Soto, C. J., & John, O. P. (2017). Short and extra-short forms of the Big Five Inventory-2: The BFI-2-S and BFI-2-XS. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 68(1), 69–81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2017.02.004>
- Soto, C. J. (2018). Big Five personality traits. In M. H. Bornstein, M. E. Arterberry, K. L. Fingerma, & J. E. Lansford (Eds.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of lifespan human development* (pp. 240–241). California: Sage Publications. ISBN 1-78684-805-8
- Straud, C., Mcnaughton-Cassill, M., & Fuhrman, R. (2015). The role of the Five Factor Model of personality with proactive coping and preventative coping among college students. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 83(1), 60–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.03.055>
- Stuchlíková, I., & Mazehóová, Y. (2014). Osobní cíle jako motivační fenomén. *Československá Psychologie*, 58(5), 1–14. ISSN 0009-062X
- The jamovi project. (2022). *jamovi*. (computer software). Available at: <https://www.jamovi.org/>
- Thomas, J. P., Whitman, D. S., & Viswesvaran, CH. (2010). Employee proactivity in organizations: A comparative meta-analysis of emergent proactive constructs. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83(1), 275–300. <https://doi.org/10.1348/096317910X502359>
- Van Bost, G., Van Damme, S., & Crombez, G. (2022). Goal adjustment and well-being after an acquired brain injury: The role of cognitive flexibility and personality traits. *PeerJ*, 10(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.13531>
- Verschuren, A., & Douilliez, C. (2022). Goal disengagement and goal reengagement: Associations with depression, anxiety, and satisfaction with life. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*. Advanced online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cbs0000360>
- Wrosch, C., Scheier, M. F., Miller, G. E., Schulz, R., & Carver, Ch. S. (2003). Adaptive self-regulation of unattainable goals: Goal disengagement, goal reengagement, and subjective well-being. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29(12), 1494–1508. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167203256921>
- Wrosch, C., Amir, E., & Miller, G. E. (2011). Goal adjustment capacities, coping, and subjective well-being: The sample case of caregiving for a family member with mental illness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100(5), 934–946. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022873>