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**EGO STATES AND LIFE POSITIONS IN THE PROFESSIONAL SELF-REALIZATION**

**ABSTRACT**

The professional self-realization is a process that unfolds throughout the life cycle and encompasses the choice of profession, the specific labor activity that is being realized as a result of this choice and the organizations in which the career takes place.

The aim of the present study is to examine the associations between functional ego states, life positions and professional self-realization of a person. In general, the significant associations between the functional ego states, the life positions and the professional self-realization were allowed and verified through six different hypothesis.

The study is based on the transactional analysis theory for the personality suggesting five functional ego states: Critical Parent, Nurturing Parent, Adult, Adapted Child and Natural Child, as well as four life positions: ‘I am OK and the others are OK’, ‘I am OK, the others are not OK’, ‘I am not OK, the others are OK’ and ‘I am not OK and the others are not OK’.

The professional self-realization has been operationalized as subjective career success including: the career satisfaction, recognition, growth and development, personal life, and authenticity. In addition, the objective career factors as position, salary, project management, prestige of the profession, delegation of rights and obligations and etc.

A research model for the purposes of the work was constructed based on the functional ego states and life positions as the significant predictors of the subjective career success and objective career factors. The model is created to follow the relationships between the different constructs by assuming that ego states and life positions are significantly interrelated and determined by the individual (gender, age, education) and labor (work experience, type of organization) characteristics of the persons surveyed. At the same time, ego states, life positions, individual and labor characteristics are considered to be significantly related and determining the professional self-realization.

The sample of the research includes 882 people from seven different professional areas at age between 20 and 78, from which 59 % are women and 80 % have graduated university.

The results of the study can be summarized in follows:

1. There are significant differences in the functional ego states, as the leading for the researched people in this study are the ego states Adult, Nurturing Parent and Natural Child. Therefore, the employees studied are characterized by objective information processing, analytic thinking, adaptability and sustainability, persistence and dedication to the needs of others, curiosity, spontaneity and the tendency for a risk.

2. Significant differences in the expression of life positions were found with the position "I am OK and the others are OK". The persons surveyed have characteristics such as assertiveness, self-acceptance and acceptance of others, tolerance and empathy.

3. A relatively high estimate of the overall level of the subjective career success by the surveyed persons was found, with slightly more pronounced components of authenticity, growth and development and recognition by others. It can be summarized that the persons surveyed relatively highly appreciate their professional realization and career development according to their own needs.

4. Our study proved that ego states and life positions have significant relation with the subjective career success and insignificant relation with objective career factors. There are strong positive correlations between Adult, Natural Child and Nurturing Parent ego states and the "I am OK and the others are OK" life position with the subjective career success.

5. The results show that, the Adult and the Natural Child ego states and the "I am OK and the others are OK" life position has a significant effect over the subjective career success.

6. It was found that in most of the professions the Adult and the Natural Child ego states combined with the life position "I am OK and the others are OK" have very important impact on the subjective career success.

Finally, it should be noted that the applied methodologies for studying ego states and life positions and the results obtained can be used to analyse the professional self-realization of the employees, for individual and organizational consulting, recruitment, for the purposes of the vocational training and development. The results can also be useful for improving employee's personal competencies and skills to help optimize working processes, organizational efficiency, and create the settings for better career development and career success.