

# The Shades of Success

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## Abstract

Since many decades, the question what leads to success has generated enormous interest among scholars. Most of the studies focus on how to be successful. Issues such as can success be replicated by following the footsteps of successful people, what are the determinants of success, can one become successful by making use of the identified factors, are successful people born or developed, and the like have also been addressed by researchers. Mostly success is evaluated in terms of money, status, recognition, rewards and awards. To measure executive success, some of the criteria that have been used are number of promotions, salary relative to age, recognition, awards, rewards, and superior's ratings.

Unless one understands what does success mean, examining what leads to success perhaps is not going to help much. To get what you want, you need to first understand what you want. It is argued that there could be many meanings and shades of success in people's mind. Efforts have been made by researchers to explore the notion of subjective success. That is, the personalized definition of success which may or may not match with the societal definition of success. Previous research of the author had confirmed the concept of idealized success to reflect the subjective or personalized definition of success.

The present study made an attempt to further examine the generalizability of the idealized success concept. The data were collected from 275 first year Masters in Business Administration students pursuing a two year full time post-graduate management programme at a management institute. The 23 items idealized success questionnaire was presented to the respondents and their responses were obtained on a five-point scale. The Pearson product moment correlations among the idealized success dimensions were calculated. The pattern of relationship among the idealized success dimensions was found to be quite interesting. An effort was also made to decipher the most and the least preferred definition of success using a one-way analysis of variance.

The study aimed at the validation of the construct of idealized success. It explored the possibility of getting people who would have their very own perspective of looking at things in order to decide what should it mean to be successful in their own eyes, and the results of the study indicated that people were found to be defining their success in various ways. The findings of the study provided support for the construct of idealized success. The study also identified what people wanted to attain the most. The implications of the findings were discussed.