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**SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS ACROSS COUNTRIES:  
AN EMPIRICAL STUDY THROUGH ARCHETYPES**

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# Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to provide an innovative approach in the field of career studies, which emerges as the latest and the most successful attempt to capture and describe cultural patterns within and across countries. In the 2015, archetypal configurations established as an alternative approach to study the cultural distance construct; in this work they will be utilized for the study of subjective career success perceptions.

In the last decades, career success has been the main focus of career scholars and organizational stakeholders. The technology innovation and the globalization on one side and the change in people's preferences and attitudes towards career on the other have flared up again the attention on the topic.

Career success, generally defined as “the individually-perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviours associated with work-related experiences and activities over the span of a person's life” (Hall, 1976, p.4), has historically being measured in an objective manner, mainly as salary, hierarchical position and the number of promotions received. However, the changing nature of work, requiring constant updates of skills and competition from all over the world, has also implied a change in the way many individuals view success, thus adding a subjective component.

Subjective career success is the latest and more prominent trend in the career literature. Researchers have grasped that the objective manners of success alone do not represent what individuals look for in their career path. Therefore, an increasing number of studies has started taking into account subjective factors and the multidimensionality of career success through new and robust scales measuring it (i.e. Shockley & al., 2016; Pan & Zhou, 2015; Briscoe, Kase, Dries, Dysvik & Unite, 2017). Moreover, studies have advocated the need to go beyond the “one country = one culture” axiom and have investigated the heterogeneity in national cultures.

The present work addresses the subjective career topic in various ways. Firstly, an analysis of the current broad work environment is presented in order to describe the landscape in which the quantitative research takes place.

Secondly, both the major objective and subjective career success studies are analysed, with a particular focus on most recent research suggesting the need to consider multiple dimensions

of career success, ranging from individuals' perceptions affected by personal life, to the context and the country's culture.

The research utilizes the 5C's group questionnaire involving 19000 respondents from 31 countries and its scale of subjective career success as the base for the quantitative work. Specifically, the scale created by the group includes seven dimensions of career success, namely Learning & Development, Work-life balance, Positive relationships, Entrepreneurship, Positive impact, Financial security and Financial achievement.

The approach allowed us to distinguish people associated with archetypes from those resembling the sample average in order to answer three research proposals.

The first research proposal concerns the existence of within country archetypes for the perceptions of subjective career success.

The second one regards whether or not exist transnational archetypes for subjective career success while the third one investigates the possibility of career success meanings that are constant notwithstanding the different contexts.

Selecting questionnaire's responses from four heterogeneous countries, namely Germany, Italy, Mexico and Nigeria, and with the seven dimensional scale of career success, archetypal analysis has been performed finding both archetypes for each country in isolation and for the pooled data.

The results are an enrichment of the career literature suggesting that subjective perceptions of career success matter and that it is possible to find configurations of individuals placing more importance to one or more dimensions of success.

Findings from the quantitative research suggest managerial implications that, particularly in the current environment, can be a valuable addition for HR practitioners wanting to attract and retain talent.





# Chapter 1

## CONTEMPORARY CAREERS AND LABOUR MARKET TRENDS

### 1.1 Introduction

What does it mean to have a career today? In the last decades, firms have changed their personnel policies and their business models to keep up with innovations and modifications in the workforce. Organizations increasingly outsourcing goods and skills, together with macroeconomic changes and technology innovations have shifted individuals' expectations of careers.

The classic definition of career is an evolving sequence of work experiences over time (Arthur, Hall & Lawrence, 1989) or a sequence of positions occupied by a person during the course of a lifetime (Super, 1980). These two definitions show the dualities between the two perspectives of careers success that are prominent today, a subjective and an objective one. Nowadays, individuals are not only looking for objective compensations such as remuneration and bonuses, but also for subjective ones, which for instance can be represented by work-life balance or helping others.

As technological breakthroughs rapidly shift the frontier between the work tasks performed by humans and those performed by machines, global labour markets are undergoing major transformations. These variations if managed wisely could lead to a new age of good work, good jobs and improved quality of life for all; instead, if managed poorly pose the risk of widening the skills gaps, of a broader polarization and greater inequalities.

On one side companies, in order to fully harness the potential of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, are called to formulate comprehensive workforce strategies ready to meet the challenges of this new era of accelerating innovation. On the other side, individuals are reshaping their expectations regarding their careers, changing employers and positions more

often, and they also need to be equipped with the right new skills and knowledge to be competitive in the evolving labour market.

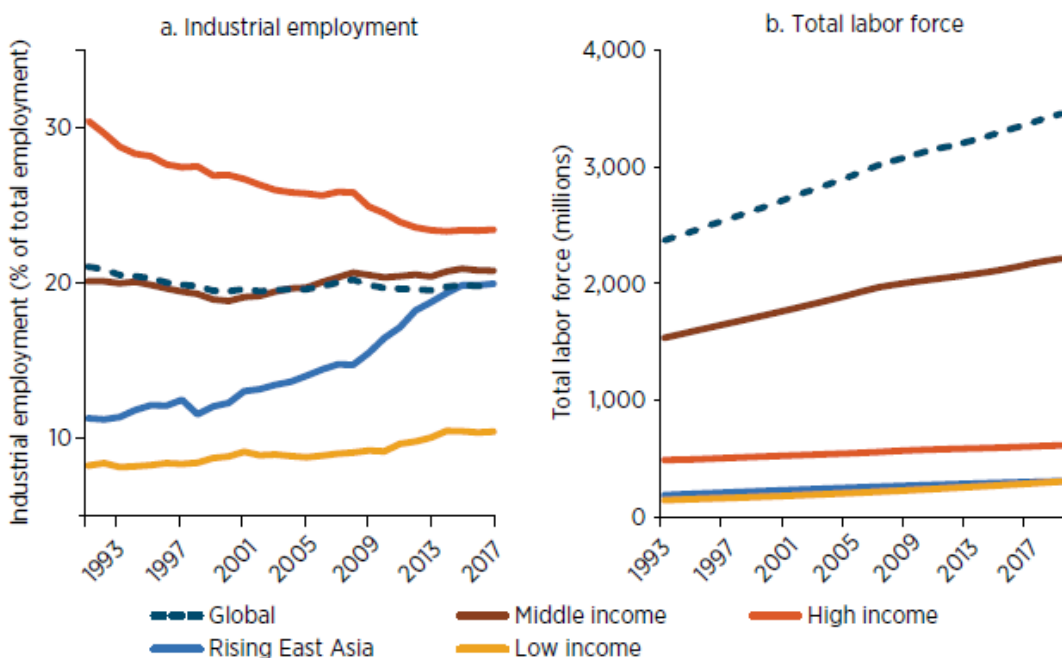
## 1.2 Careers in the changing world

In the present time, the way people work and their relationships with organizations are becoming more fluid and flexible. People change jobs at a definitely higher rate than before following opportunities coming from all over the world. Moreover, also the kind of job contract is changing. There is a clearly higher number of contractors, freelancers, portfolio workers and partnerships among organizations to have access to innovation and talent on demand.

In the next few years, human resource management (hereafter HRM) techniques will be the key to have a successful business, understanding where the talent lies and how to engage flexible talent; yet few organizations are prepared for this shift. Companies need to do more to take advantage of skills and good ideas coming from a wider job market, which does not comprehend only their employee base (PwC’s Workforce of the Future Report, 2018).

It is undeniable that the world is changing, probably at a faster pace than ever before. Macro level changes, together with technological advancements, modifications in the workforce demographics, globalization and the increased competition have transformed approaches and attitudes towards work.

Figure 1.1 Data on the industrial labour jobs across the globe



[Source: WRD 2019 team, based on World Bank’s World Development Indicators database]



The technological advancement in particular, has shaped the needs and the expectations of people, promoting human/cyber teamwork and different ways in which people's job roles are supported by technology. For this reason, HRM practitioners are now facing the difficult task of recognising and addressing changing values and expectations of people as well as utilising effectively the technology available to maximize employees' performance and their engagement.

People's attitudes towards career, career path and career success, has deeply changed. Working in the same company for the entire work life is not desired anymore. A growing number of people prefer to change job quickly, within or across nations, following a good occasion to improve their skills, to face themselves with challenging tasks and to achieve success, which could mean both a high income and a personal satisfaction.

The majority of companies recognise which are the pivotal capabilities to guarantee success in the future; anyway, many of them are failing to take the actions needed to introduce them in their organizations. The aforementioned actions include the use of data analytics to make workforce decisions and creating a work experience that is compelling for employees (PwC's Future of Work report, 2018). This gap put organizations at risk; they must be able to attract, develop and retain talented workers if they want to succeed in the future. Creating the right people experience is vital and organizations could do much more, for example managing workloads. In fact, many people work in extremely demanding job cultures and the corporate response in the last years has been simply the introduction of company's wellness activities, while a real change will occur only redesigning the work itself and creating an inspiring environment that maintains productive energy levels.

## **1.3 Overview of global changes in action**

### **1.3.1 Globalization:**

Globalization is the word used to describe the growing interdependence of world's economies, populations and cultures as a result of cross-border trade of goods, services, people and capitals. Globalization is not a new concept, it has started centuries ago and it is mainly driven by technological developments and policies, which particularly in the last decades have opened economies.

World trade has passed from \$89 billion in 1953 to \$17.43 trillion in 2017 and is projected to reach \$27 trillion by 2030; Foreign direct investment (FDI) increased from \$59 billion in 1982 to \$1.43 trillion in 2017; the formal labour market has expanded from 2 billion workers in 1990 to \$3.5 billion in 2018.

Competition has never been as intense and multifaceted as it is today. Firms are forced to adapt, respond rapidly and compete with companies worldwide to gain and sustain global competitive advantages (Engardio and Weintraub, 2008). The aforementioned competition pushes multinational companies to look for economies of scale and scope, optimal locations, adapt to local differences, learn and transfer knowledge more effectively than their rivals.

Customers in mostly all industries and nations are demanding more, often for less; indeed, for organizations it is critical to think and act globally, finding locations with the lowest cost of work, providing high quality products at a lower costs and shipping them to many different countries. An increased number of individuals is entering the global labour market; the development of inexpensive economies has flattened the work, facilitating the entry of workers from underdeveloped countries. The major consequence arising is that companies need to develop the ability to find the right workers in developing countries, which work at much lower wages.

### 1.3.2 Demographics:

In North America, Western Europe, Japan and Australia the age of retirement is guided by the Baby Boomer generation: they are extending their retirement dates due to depletions of their savings connected to the 2008 financial crisis, increasing the mean age of workforce.

“Population of much of developed countries is expected to remain stable, get older, and in some cases even shrink; the populations of the developing economies and those just emerging are expanding and getting younger” (Strack, et al. 2008). Following these variation in demographic characteristics there are consequences both for countries’ pension policies and for firms that needs to manage employees with different ages, motivation and expectation from their career.

## **1.4 Learning through the entire career**

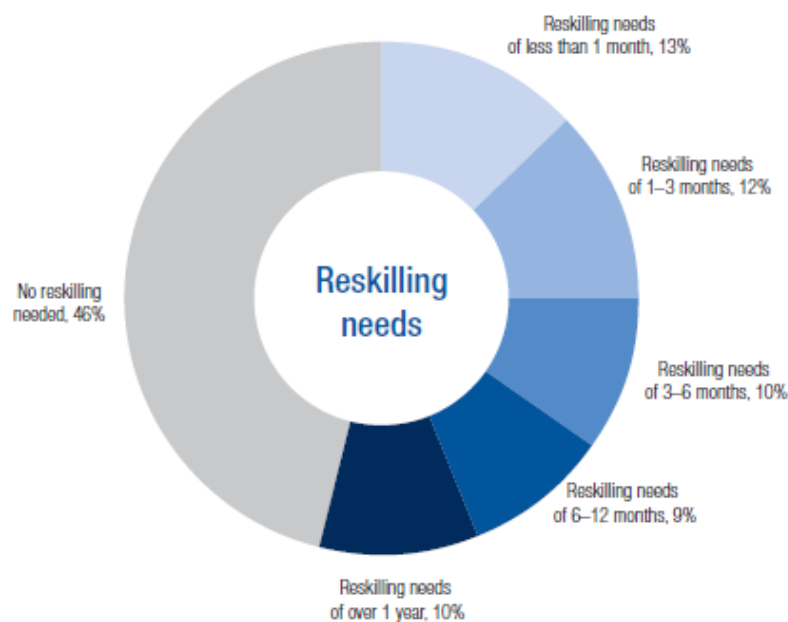
The relationship between careers and learning has changed a lot during the last years and it is still changing now. Old rules where managers told employees what to learn have been replaced by new rules where workers decide what to learn based on their team’s needs and on their

individual career goals. We have passed from career paths where the options were “go up or go out”, to careers that go in every direction.

Continuous learning and updating of skills is crucial to be competitive in the actual landscape; leading companies are embracing a continuous learning approach, helped by the learning technology that allows them to create an always-on, collaborative and curated learning experience to better reach their employees. Learning & Development (L&D hereafter) functions were once restricted to development and learning, while today they are becoming more and more strategic, providing learning all the time, by micro-learning, courses, classrooms and groups where contents are offered by everyone in the organization and curated by employees as well as HR function.

On one side, the new technologies could aid knowledge management, organizational learning and help developing and maintaining the expertise that companies need. On the other side, these advancements bring challenges for managers and HR specialists: communication and working patterns are changing dramatically, meaning that the traditional idea of workplace or working day does not exist anymore. Back in time, employees learned at work the skills needed for an entire career; instead now, in the digitalization era, the career itself is a journey of continuous learning. Constant skills development, updating of employees’ knowledge to the latest techniques available and learning how to work with the inclusion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other technological tools is required to remain competitive in the global market.

*Figure 1.2: Expected average reskilling needs across firms by share of employees, 2018-2022*



[Source: Future of Hobs Survey 2018, World Economic Forum]

In a setting where new roles melding skills from different fields are created and required, the L&D department is critical for the future success of organizations. It is necessary to have learning always available over a range of platforms in order to retain and nurture the workforce. Innovative organizations such as GE and IBM are building internal massive open online courses (MOOCs) and networks of internally developed content to enable employees to shop exactly for the training they need. L&D has become a vital part of companies' employment brand activity and of employees' experience. The aforementioned department is the fastest-growing segment of the HR technology market and companies are expected to invest in it even more in the next few years to replace and upgrade their internal learning systems.

Employees are the first ones pushing for continuous skills development and are more and more adapting to the dynamic career concept. Especially among Millennials, the ability to learn and progress is now the principal driver of a company's employer brand; yet only one third of them believe their organization is using their skills well and 42% say they are likely to leave because they are not learning fast enough (Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends, 2017).

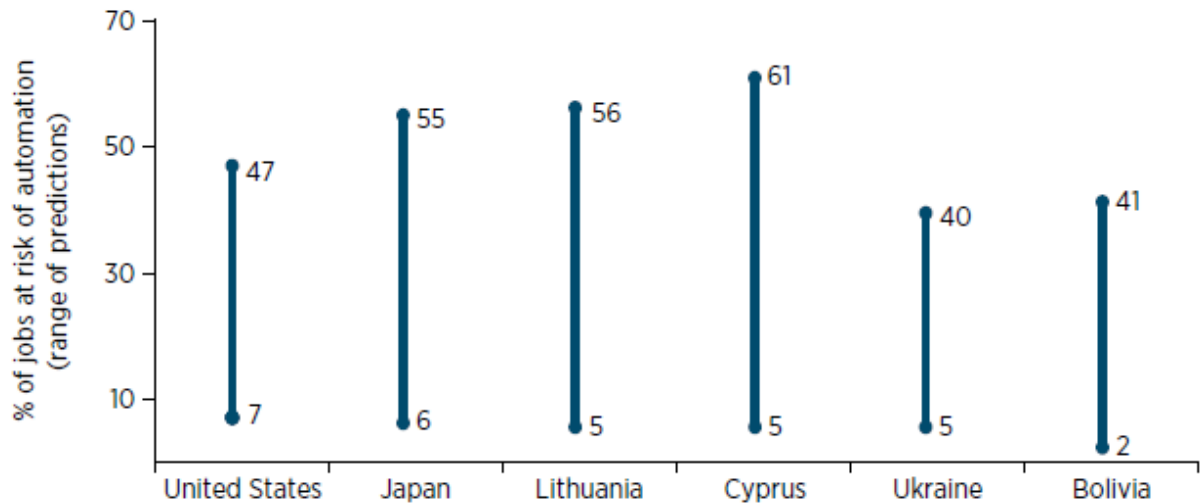
Companies with dynamic career models show outperforming results compared to those of their peers by providing continuous opportunities for learning and an embedded culture of development. Anyway, still few companies have undergone this path and more commitments towards open career models are indispensable.

## **1.5 The workforce of the future**

One of the main questions of the contemporary times is how megatrends will affect and shape the future of work. These forces comprehend: technological breakthroughs, demographic shifts (meaning changing size, distribution and age profile of the world's population), rapid urbanization, shifts in global economic power and resource scarcity, and climate change.

Megatrends provide the context for the future working world, but its shape will depend on how humans respond to these trends and to challenges as well as opportunities they bring. Some people see technology innovation just as a threat that will cancel entire kinds of roles, while others recognize that it will also create completely new kinds of jobs and new fields to work in. the figure 1.3 in the next page shows the percentages of jobs at risk in various countries due to the increased role of automation.

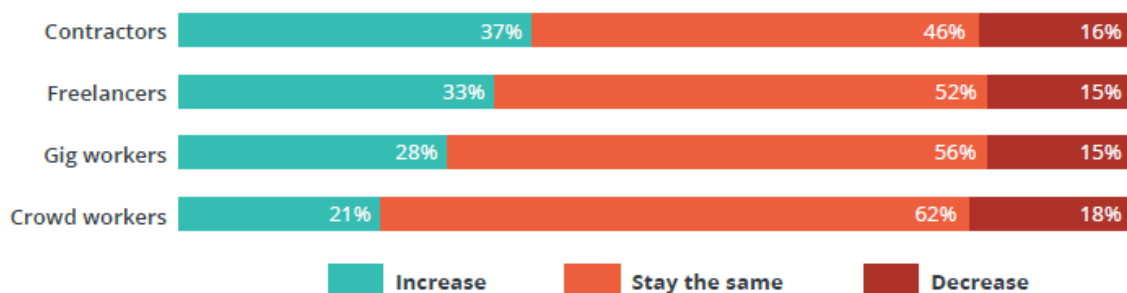
Figure 1.3 Estimates of the percentage of jobs at risk from automation



[Source: Future of Hobs Survey 2018, World Economic Forum]

Global labour markets over the coming five years are set to undergo significant transformations connected to the Fourth Industrial revolution. According to the World Economic Forum Report (WEF) 2018, a cluster of emerging roles will gain significant importance in the coming years (emerging professions are set to increase the share of employment from 16% to 27% of the total employee base), while another cluster of jobs will become redundant, by 2022 a structural decline of 10% is projected. Moreover, in a five years time, the 38% of businesses surveyed by the WEF expects to extend their workforce to new productivity-enhancing roles and the 25% expects automation to guide the creation of new roles inside the organization. In addition, there is an expansion of the recourse of contractors for task-specialized jobs and an increased use of more flexible jobs, such as project-based, temporary and freelancing roles. These new arrangements point to structural labour market transformations in terms of contractual agreements and employment relations, as well as occupational profiles.

Figure 1.4 Anticipated use of each labour type in 2020 relative to 2018



n = 11,070

[Source: Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends sturey,2018]

The abovementioned trends are drawing a future world of innovation where few people will have stable, long-term employments as in the past; where few rules and new business models will boost the speed of innovation and will permit to adapt quickly. Agility and speed are essential today and will be even more in the future; digital platforms will be the right answer to meet employers, skills and demand, allowing entrepreneurs to reach talent well beyond their internal perimeter.

This landscape will have consequences on the workforce: specialism built from an individual's block of skills, experience and network will be highly prized; people will move frequently from one organization to another, staying only as long as a project lasts. In the future, contract negotiations will be the key to allow career success, and the ownership of intellectual property as well as freedom to work will be as important as financial incentives.

As some winning businesses are starting introducing today, rewards will be offered for ideas and skills that best meet what companies and consumers want. Data from the Pwc's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Global CEO Survey shows that the 52% of respondents are already exploring the benefits of having humans and machineries working together and the 39% of them are also considering the impact of AI on their future skills needs. Finding the right capabilities required by a business, particularly talking about problem-solving, adaptability, leadership and creativity, has become central to achieve a positive economic result.

Following these trends, adaptability in organisations, individuals and societies, already is and will be essential in the future for navigating the changes ahead. It is impossible to perfectly predict the skills that will be needed in ten years from now as well as how the automation will develop; for this reason, workers and organizations need to be ready to adapt. Adaptation is not restricted to the organization only, but deeply relies on individuals that must be willing to acquire new skills and experiences during their entire life, trying new tasks and even rethinking their career path. In this setting, organizations and governments should help employees providing training, encouraging and incentivising adaptability and other valued skills as creativity and innovation.

### 1.5.1 Future jobs and technology innovation:

It is undeniable that automation will result in a massive reclassification and rebalancing of employment; some sectors and roles will lose out, but others will be created. The challenge will be embracing and managing digitalization and the technology innovation in the best way

possible by reallocating people among functions, creating workforce with the right skills to face the new world and be fast adapting to innovations.

To prevent undesirable lose-lose scenarios, where the technological change is accompanied by talent shortages, mass unemployment and growing inequality, it is pivotal that businesses take an active role in supporting their existing workforces through reskilling and upskilling. Technological trends indicate the need for a comprehensive “augmentation strategy”<sup>1</sup>; an approach where organizations utilize the automation of some job tasks to complement and enhance their human workforce’s strengths and to enable employees to reach their full potential. Augmentation strategies takes into account the broader horizon of value-creation activities that can be accomplished by humans working in complement with technology, when they are free from the need to perform routine and repetitive tasks and can focus more on the use of their human talent.

### 1.5.2 Millennials misunderstanding:

Usually people and companies see Millennials as a particular subgroup of workforce valuing work/life balance and personal meaning of their work over the financial compensation. However, a 2017 Oxford Economics survey shows that Millennials and their older colleagues are not as different as believed, having many of the same workplace preferences and goals. For both the categories what matters the most is having a competitive compensation, followed by bonuses, merit-based rewards and supplemental training programs to develop new skills.

The ability to attract and retain Millennials workers will determine which companies will be the most successful in the next years, once older employees will retire and a workforce change will be necessary. Consequently, forward-thinking executives are already taking it into account; for example the Lincoln Financial Group has a leadership development program bringing forty of the best college students inside the company for a period of time. The underlying idea is that they will come back once finished studying, applying for a job in the firm and as a result the firm will gain new loyal employees with fresh knowledge, ready to substitute the ones retiring.

Nevertheless, what is different between older employees and Millennials is the fact that they really want a quicker path of improvement. Suzanne Jungjohann, performance management director at “Randstat” says that the principal way in which Millennials are trying to develop themselves is by seeking to work on a variety of projects for different departments and

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<sup>1</sup> The Future of Jobs Report 2018, The World Economic Forum

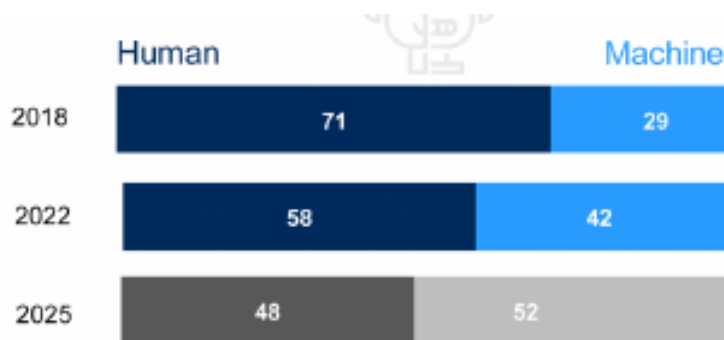
locations. Moreover, these young employees would like to have at least monthly informal feedbacks from managers, while older ones prefer quarterly or annually feedbacks.

Accounting for Millennials in workforce strategies is a priority for businesses today, but some popular generalizations about them are only partially encountered. It is critical that companies take steps back to address and investigate the real needs of this workforce segment.

## 1.6 Impact of technology innovation on organizations and workforce

“Machines are coming to take our jobs” has been the concern since the First Industrial Revolution, which raised productivity levels and the fears of workers to lose their occupations. Innovations have caused disruptions, but have created more prosperity than they have destroyed. Today, people are experiencing a new era of uncertainty as innovation accelerates continuously affecting every part of their lives. Robots are taking over thousands of repetitive tasks, eliminating low-skills roles, but at the same time creating opportunities for new jobs and for increases in productivity.

Figure 1.5 Rate of automation: division of labour as share of hours spent (%)



[Source: Future of Jobs Report 2018, World Economic Forum]

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is drawing new borders between the real world and the technological one and the human capital is the centre of organizational transformations originated by this phenomena. Technology breakthroughs are already affecting how people perceive their job tasks, their positions inside the company. Exactly as the new career models that are emerging, allowing different borderless experiences and the learning of new skills.



### 1.6.1 Skills requirements:

With the automation of routine tasks increasing the specialism of individuals' jobs, workers with the critical skills needed by organizations will become the crucial talent contributing outsized and crucial value to the business. In this situation, the HR function needs to be effective in finding and retaining these pivotal people and companies need to pay attention to employees' value propositions, meaning the reasons why they were attracted to work with them in the first place.

Many jobs today, and more in the future, will require specific skills (a combination of technological know-how, problem solving and critical-thinking) as well as soft skills (perseverance, collaboration, empathy). Investing in the human capital is pivotal to extract the full value of economic opportunities coming from technology innovation.

Three types of skills are increasingly important in the actual labour market:

1. Advanced cognitive skills, such as complex problem solving
2. Socio-behavioural skills, as teamwork
3. Skills combinations that are predictive of adaptability, as reasoning and self-efficacy

In a five years time, the capabilities required to perform most jobs will have shifted significantly, even if in different ways across industries and regions. Indeed, skills stability is expected to be about 58%, meaning an average shift of 42% of skills will be needed (WEF, 2018).

*Table 1.1 Skills Stability 2015-2020, industries overall*

Industry group	Unstable	Stable
<b>Industries Overall</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>65%</b>
Media, Entertainment and Information	27%	73%
Consumer	30%	71%
Healthcare	29%	71%
Energy	30%	70%
Professional Services	33%	67%
Information and Communication Technology	35%	65%
Mobility	39%	61%
Basic and Infrastructure	42%	58%
Financial Services & Investors	43%	57%

[Source: Future of Jobs Survey, World Economic Forum]

Consequently, companies will need to pursue a range of organizational strategies to remain competitive in the face of a rapidly changing workforce. In order to achieve this result, the abilities of executive leadership and the human resource function will also need to evolve to lead the transformation. Prioritizing and focusing the reskilling and upskilling on employees that are currently performing high-value roles is a way of strengthening the company's strategic capacity. Organizations can deal with the skills gap hiring wholly new staff already possessing the required capabilities, or they can create the capacity within their organization, supporting the transition of the workforce during innovation processes and gaining loyalty from employees. Some viable options to develop internally the skills needed involve partnering with educators to reshape school and college curricula, inter and intra-industry collaborations on building talents and partnerships with unions to enhance cross-industry talent mobility.

### 1.6.2 Impact on organizations:

Findings from the World Economic Forum "*Future of Jobs Report 2018*" indicates that by 2022 augmentation of existing jobs through technology may free up workers from the majority of data processing and information research tasks and it may increasingly support them in reasoning and decision making. Changes connected to technology innovation hold the potential to expand the workforce's productivity across industries and to shift the battlefield of competition between companies from automation-based labour costs reduction to the ability to leverage technologies enhancing human labour.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has moved the attention of business leaders to the HR function. Talent management and workplace analytics are integral elements of companies' workforce strategies, developed to harness the transformative potential of the revolution by being ready to embrace the change and keep up with innovations. Key factors include: mapping the scale of occupational change, documenting emerging and declining job types, highlighting opportunities to use new technologies to augment the human work and increase the job quality, tracking the evolution of job-relevant skills and documenting business cases for investment in retraining, upskilling and workforce transformation

Even if technological advancements pose challenges to existing business models and practices, in the future years these dynamics of technological innovations are set to become a primary driver of opportunities for growth and outset competitors achieving a sustainable competitive advantage.

## **1.7 New careers**

The idea of a single, long-lasting career is becoming outdated; organizations have become flatter, making upward progression less common and often replaced by team leadership. Employees feel the constant need to keep up, learning new tools, adapting their skills and becoming more multi-disciplinary; anyway most of training departments are struggling to keep up with the rapid pace of technology making many jobs and skills out of date in few years.

LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman believes that careers are now “tours of duty” prompting companies that assume people will only stay few years. Data confirms this statement: 58% of companies presume their newly hired employees will stay for less than 10 years<sup>2</sup> and on average recent graduates have now twice as many jobs in the first five years of work experience as their predecessors did in the mid-1980s (Berger, 2016).

People think about their career today as a continuous learning; they try to catch a good wave early, learning expertise that is high in demand and receiving from organizations top pays for their contribution. Later, once the wave starts declining and they see new interesting opportunities, they shift for something new, gaining new skills, experiences, retraining and educating themselves along the way.

Technology has begun to reshape the employment landscape for a much larger group of people than ever before. The boundaries between traditional employment and contracted labour have become blurred everywhere. A 2016 study by the McKinsey Global Institute found that 162mln people in Europe and the United States (20.3% of the working age population) engage in some form of independent work.

### **1.7.1 Relevance of soft skills:**

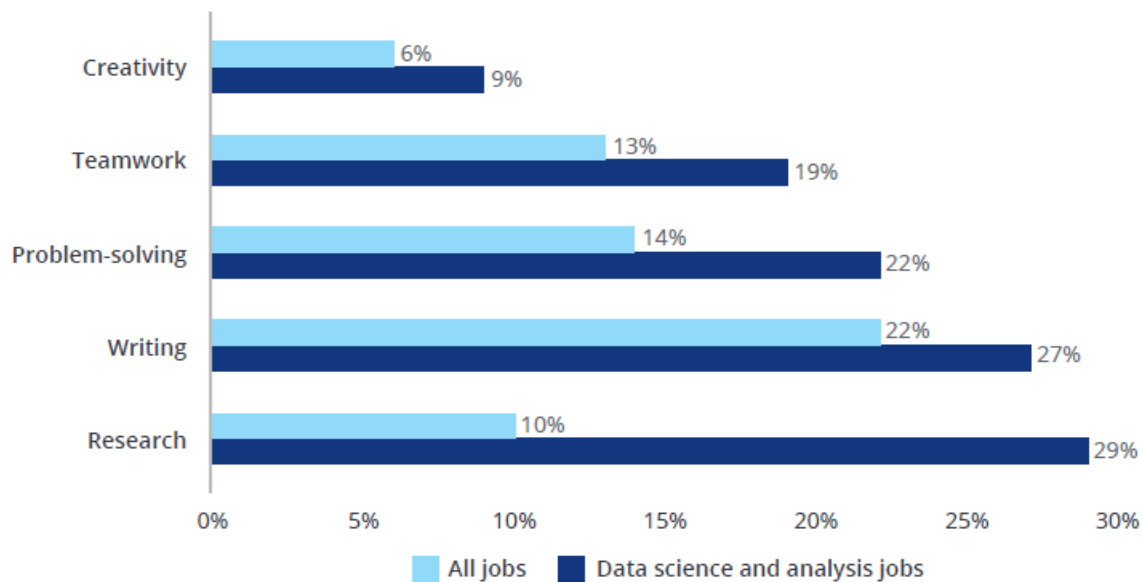
Soft skills are growing in value; over the years companies have outsourced specialized tasks, today instead skills in math, statistics, project management and logical thinking are prerequisites for most of well-compensated positions. People not only need to be able to master math and science, which are vulnerable to automation; if they really want to stand out, they also need to master skills as communication, interpretation, design and synthetic thinking. The jobs of the future, driven by the increasing rate at which technology substitutes role tasks, require social skills complementing abilities that are more technical.

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<sup>2</sup> Global Human Capital Trends 2017 survey research, Deloitte University press

The actual trend pointed out by Deloitte’s 2017 research<sup>3</sup> concerns the emergence of hybrid jobs. These “renaissance jobs” combine technical expertise in one or more domains with skills in design, project management and customer interaction. They involve different kinds of knowledge, usually a technical domain, problem solving capabilities, project management and industry expertise. Indeed, new hybrid jobs are combining skills from previously different roles into a new one with both technical and soft capabilities.

Figure 1.6 Data jobs require more soft skills: percentage of posts requesting soft skills



[Source: Matt Sigelman, “By the numbers: The job market for data science and analytics,” Burning Glass Technologies, February 10, 2017]

### 1.7.2 Implications for organizations:

In the changing work landscape there are some actions that companies should undertake to ensure they have the right mix of talent. First of all, organizations should forecast their workforce and skills need. Having a strategic planning gives them the right picture of where in the future they may have fewer skills needs and where more, adapting their actions accordingly. Second, firms should be creative and flexible searching for talents; investing in recruiting solutions that include the use of algorithms and social media sites to identify promising candidates. A third and crucial action organizations should embrace is the continuous reskilling and developing of the workforce as explained above. Fourth, instead of having people adapting to the company’s culture, the organizational culture itself should fit the workforce’s preferences. Example of useful practices in this area are the modern performance management

<sup>3</sup> 2017 Deloitte review “*Catch the wave; the 21<sup>st</sup>-century career*”

systems including real-time feedback from colleagues, shared targets encouraging collaboration and agile teams as new organizational models.

## **1.8 Emerging career concepts**

Two main reasons explain the transforming employee-employer relationships. First, the workforce is increasingly borderless, assuming the shape of network of people working for a company without a formal employer agreement, as gig workers, contingent workers, partner employees and more. This shift towards a network of people requires a greater need to redefine organization's systems in order to embrace the changing marketplace and get the best of it. Second, there is an increasing human longevity creating new challenges: employees will need to move from the traditional part-time and full-time arrangements to more fluid ones, allowing them the flexibility needed to committing sporadically while also having time for family, reskilling and pursuit of personal passions.

The two reasons explained above reveal that companies have to address the human impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, reshaping the future of workforce by redefining the employees cycle to meet workers personal needs that will allow them to give the best possible contribute to the organization. Without a juxtaposition of individuals' new career trends and companies' business models, a business success over competitors can neither be sustainable nor reachable.

### **1.8.1 Competency-based view of career development:**

The competency-based view of career suggests that people bundle the competencies they developed into "knowing why", "knowing how", "knowing whom", which can provide a guide point in the current uncertain labour market.

The "knowing why" provides individuals the answers about their own career motives, the identification with their role, with the firm they work for and personal meaning to their job. Based on these reasons, people can decide to which particular firm, project or personal enterprise they want to commit. The "knowing how" competences reflect career relevant skills and job-related knowledge, and underline how people contribute to a firm's repertoire of capabilities (Nelson & Winter, 1982). The aforementioned competences can give individuals the confidence to master actual and future jobs. Instead, the "knowing whom" capabilities reflect the career relevant network, and refer to how people contribute to inter-firm communication (Nohria, 1992). Depending on the level of understanding of their competences,

individuals can identify which of their skills can be marketable now and in the future and which one will become obsolete, thus shaping their career mobility plans accordingly.

The competency career view has become a widely accepted framework in the works of career development. Studies on entrepreneurs suggest that the combination of different skills, competences and knowledge learned during the first years of working in corporate settings contributes later to their entrepreneurial career success. Competences as openness to experience, sense of career identity and proactivity, as well as the ability to access to mentors and external networks are associated with perception of career success.

### 1.8.2 Shaping personally meaningful career journeys:

The shift of responsibility of career development from organizations to individuals has increased the attention of scholars on the people's objective and subjective career experiences. In contraposition with the traditional criteria of career success as salary and advancements, the literature is now taking into account a definition of work that allows people to express their potential and proactively transform their careers to develop personally meaningful identities.

From a boundaryless perspective the new definition of work is crucial for several reasons: in the actual increasingly individualized society being adaptive is pivotal to cope with costs, both social and emotional, arising from career changes such as the loss of traditional organizations and local communities. Moreover, since the traditional definition of career success may not be desirable for certain individuals, being adaptive can be crucial to develop a personal meaningful career success. Lastly, in the current context where career development inside one organization is no more a reference point, people need to find other motives to draw their career trajectories.

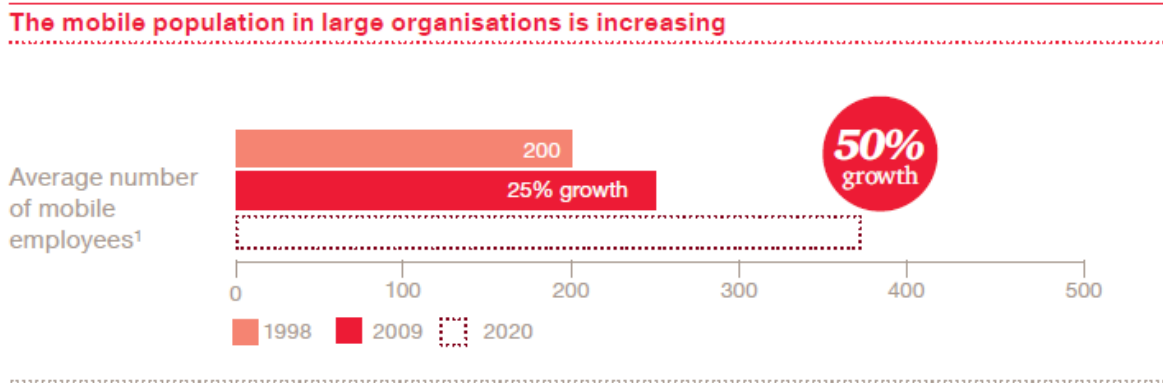
### 1.8.3 Career mobility:

As explained above, the business world is changing at a faster pace than before and it has transformed how the workforce is sourced, organised and managed. During the last years people's preferences for jobs and attitudes toward mobility have deeply changed as well. The explosive growth of emerging markets has created a high number of employees working outside their home location; moreover, the shortage of critical talent, particularly in the IT sector, has pushed the mobility. Understanding the trends undergoing in the workforce is crucial both for organizations and for countries; those who will be able to manage these will gain flexibility and will have a sustained economic growth in the future.

Since the emergence of international trade and since the birth of multinational companies, international assignments have always been present, but their characteristics have changed.

Data from the Pwc’s “Talent mobility: 2020 and beyond” report shows that from 1970 to 1990 trend in mobility of work were driven by multinationals in Europe and in the U.S. These companies sent talents from their Head Quarters to manage their operations in other parts of the world, usually for a two to five-years period and employees were incentivized with attractive expatriates packages. From 1990 to 2010 the demand for global mobility increased together with the increase in international trades. In addition, the category of mobile workers emerged, which enabled by technology was able to met the demand for globalization. Forecasts for the future expect the global mobility to grow in volume, alongside the increase in cross-border acquisitions and a greater cooperation between nations.

Figure 1.7 trends in mobile population



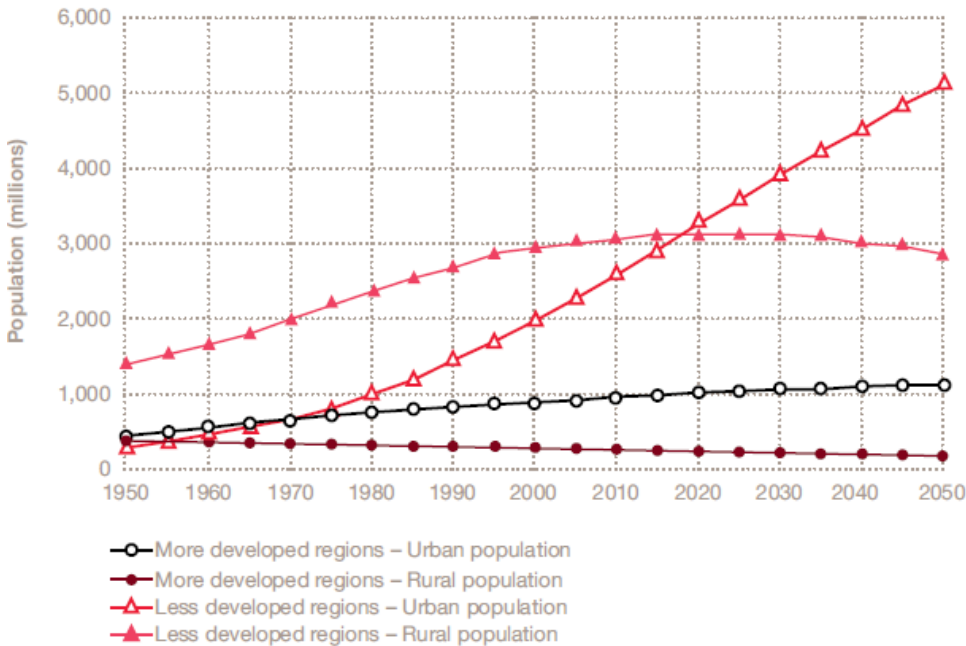
[Source: Pwc International mobility database- sample of 900 companies]

The global marketplace is constantly changing and in the next decades demographic forces together with the economic ones will combine, thus further transforming the landscape. Traditional western multinationals will struggle to compete with dynamic ones from emerging economies; the retirement of ageing workforce will pose serious challenge for most of developed countries; the world urban population is expected to increase by 72% by 2050<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Source: World urbanization prospects: 2011 revision, produced by the UN

Virtually all the population growth is expected to be in urban areas and it will have an impact on where organizations will do businesses.

Figure 1.8 Urban and rural population trends 1950-2050



[Source: World Urbanization prospects 2011 revision, produced by UN department of Economic and social affairs]

The trends mentioned above clearly show that in order to meet them, also the talent mobility needs to change. Mobility from people is needed for several purposes. First, to develop leaders of the future with an international perspective. Second, to offer interesting career opportunities to talents and to retain them. Third, organizations can benefit from the international transfer of knowledge since for them it is critical to re-shore skills and assignments in particular disciplines and regions. Companies' priority is to have the right skills in the right place at the right time, and in order to do so they need fluid mobility solutions driven by a strategic need, as well as by the desire of employees to engage in the mobility program.

Latest successful solutions concerning talent mobility involve: short-term and project-based assignments, extended business travels allowing assignees to work in a specific place without relocating, intra-country mobility and rotational employee programmes used to develop high potential employees in specific industries. In addition, also the reverse transfer, where top performers from emerging markets are transferred to developed ones to gain valuable experience and virtual mobility are used. Many of the new approaches to career mobility, in fact, entail the lack of relocation; examples are virtual meeting and long-distance commuting



that, thanks to the advancements in technology and to faster travels, enables employees to be present and active in a location without changing their workplace.

Anyway, the 2018 Boston Consulting Group's survey shows that the people's overall willingness to emigrate has dipped compared to four years before (7% lower than 2014). This result comes both from the changing attitudes of people and from the fact that work has become more global, making it unnecessary for people to uproot their lives to find satisfying well-paid jobs (BCG, 2018). Of course the willingness for mobility is not lower everywhere, for instance in the most populous nations it is high and constant, as well as in underdeveloped nations.

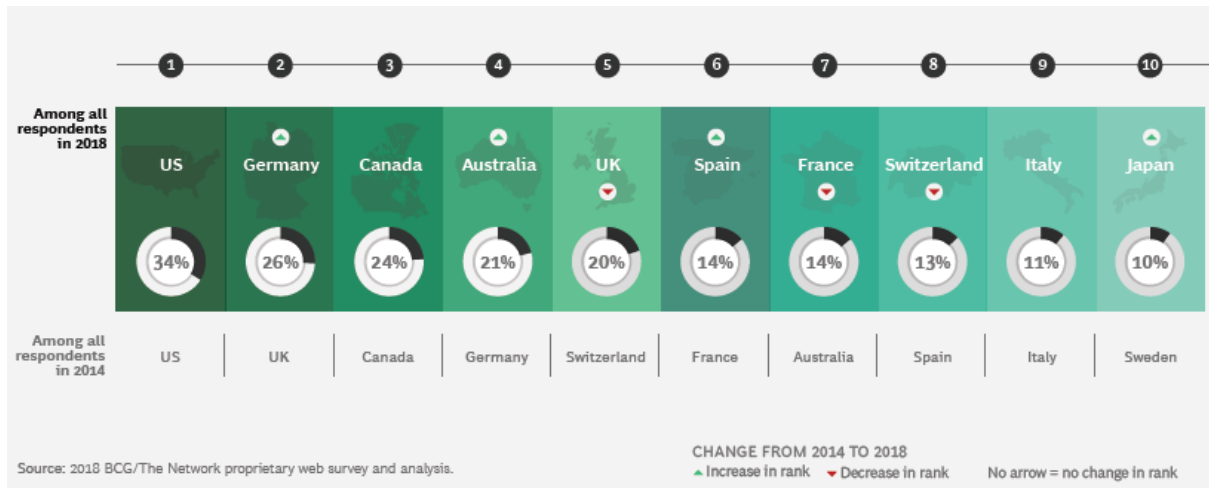
Compared to 2014 results, the reasons that prompted people to move abroad has changed; once the main motive was represented by one's personal experience, today instead two practical motivations are relevant: better career opportunities and better standard of living.

Careers mobility is also affected by personal factors, such as family, gender, marital status and age. Indeed, respondents from the BCG's survey without children are more likely than people who do to consider an opportunity abroad (60% of nonparents versus 52% of parents); single people are more likely to work abroad compared to married ones (65% versus 51%). Moreover, men are more ready than women (61% versus 53%) to work in a different country as well as respondents in their twenties compared to those in their sixties (61% versus 44%).

Even if globally there has been a decrease in the willingness to move for a work opportunity, the technology and digital-development sectors represent an exception. In fact, 67% of respondents working in this areas say they would be willing to move for the right job. By contrast, organization may have difficulties finding foreigners for blue collars positions.

Specific countries are particularly appealing as career mobility destinations. Firstly the U.S., even if after the President Trump's protection policies it isn't viewed as favourably as before; it is still the top destination for people in Latin America and the second most popular for Europe, Middle East and North Africa. Then the U.K. was the top European destination for job mobility, but after the Brexit has been replaced by German. Following there is Canada, benefitting from its immigration policy intended to strengthen the country's economy and that most citizens support.

Figure 1.9 Top ten most attractive countries for global workforce (ranked by percentage of respondents willing to move to each country for work)



[Source: 2018 BCG Network proprietary web survey and analysis]

Individuals deciding to change their lives for a job opportunity abroad look for a good cultural fit. Indeed, they search not only a good monetary compensation, which affects mostly everyone, but also good relationships with peers, work-life balance, gratification and appreciation for their work.

People’s job preferences towards mobility not only change by country, but also evolve over time. Concern about money and compensation is at its peak around thirties and forties, when people may be raising children and have financial obligations, while it is lower around twenties and sixties, when more importance may be given to work-life balance (BCG, 2018).

As talent management becomes strategically important, global mobility functions and HR professionals will play a role even more important than before. Particularly for employees in emerging markets, that will be a strategic resource to face talent constraints and to meet skills demands in different regions.

Mobility is evolving together with the business world; it is gaining complexity and requires new approaches to move talent quickly where it is needed, as well as monitoring employees’ satisfactions and the costs connected to this practice. Organizations need to fully embrace it if they want to compete successfully in the future, attracting and retaining people that more and more often come from an increasing number of countries with different expectations concerning their job.

The modern mobility mentioned above comprehends also some risks. In particular, western employers may lose their appeal as they face domestic multinationals in China, India and other

emerging markets. As a consequence, skilled workers from emerging economies may return home exploiting the new lucrative domestic market. Moreover, compensation levels are beginning to be harmonized in the world and in the future a global compensation system will be used by organizations operating in several countries, thus creating a pressure on pay. Lastly, in a business world moving faster and faster, the increased politicisation of immigrations will be a problem, making it harder for companies to find and move the right talent where needed.

## **1.9 Conclusions**

The first chapter of the dissertation gives an overlook of the actual worldwide situation. Investigating macroeconomic trends, technology innovations and changes in the workforce. The chapter provides the framework and the rationale for a research focused on the meaning that individuals attribute to career success.

The following chapter will provide a literary review of studies focused on objective and subjective career success investigated by several authors, as well as the importance of individuals' different perceptions of career success.

# Chapter 2

## OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS

### 2.1 Introduction

The first chapter presented a general overview of careers, particularly of career trends and the actual work environment with the increasing role played by technology and innovation in shaping both career requirements and preferences. It is easily understandable how the concept of career and career success has changed in the last decades and will change as well in the future with the creation of completely new kinds of jobs, the disappearance of others and the rise of new career paths. Moreover, not only the classical objective career success has gained a new shape, but there has been also the rising of the subjective career success concept.

Indeed, starting mainly from the 80s, some scholars have begun analysing career success not only as a progression in the hierarchy and as salary increases, but taking into account another perspective, the subjective one, comprehending personal factors that shape individuals' perceptions and preferences.

The present chapter will briefly present the concept of career success, followed by a description of actual career models. Following, studies focused on objective career success, on the subjective and works suggesting a possible relationship between them will be presented. Afterwards a paragraph will be presented explaining criteria on which the concept is measured, such as the culture and the country environment. In conclusion, there will be a part focused on latest researches on the concept, the innovative findings and implications that these pioneers studies entail for the future career research.

## 2.2 Definitions of career success

Career success has been the subject of extensive and multidisciplinary studies, including also views from others disciplines such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, history and geography (Bird, Gunz & Arthur, 2002). Particularly nowadays, in the changing job landscape and with the rising globalization, the concept is even more interesting both for the researchers and for organizations that may derive useful suggestions for their HR practices.

Career success is defined as the “positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements one accumulates as a result of work experiences” (Seibert, Crant & Kraimer, 1999, p. 147). The concept just exposed can be both objective and subjective (Hughes, 1958); the objective meaning is represented by pay and hierarchical positions, while the subjective one is the individual’s evaluation of his/her career (Abele & Wiese, 2008). As explained by Arthur, career success is the “accomplishment of desirable work-related outcomes at any point in a person’s work experiences over time” (Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2005, p.179).

Historically, career success has been conceptualized and measured in an objective manner, mainly as salary, rank and number of promotions; allowing an easy and straightforward comparison across people. Anyway, as described in the previous chapter, the changing nature of work also entails a change in how individuals see their success; for this reason, adding the subjective component in the evaluation of career success is critical.

*Figure 2.1: Success metrics*

	CAREER	PERSONAL
<b>Objective</b>	Salary Job title Prestigious firm Awards and accolades	Personal achievements (e.g., running a marathon) Community involvement (e.g., teaching Sunday school) Presence at kids’ events Retirement savings
<b>Subjective</b>	Enjoyment of work Pride in accomplishments Connection with colleagues Meaningful company mission	Happy marriage Well-adjusted children Fulfilling relationships Ability to relax and recharge

[Source: Groysberg B. & Abrahams R., “What does success mean to you?”, Harvard Business Review]

Traditional objective factors studied for measuring career success are less aligned and meaningful for the contemporary organizations and attitudes of employees. Organizational hierarchies are becoming flatter providing less opportunities for upward advancements (Hall & al, 1996) and meanwhile people have adopted a protean (Hall, 2002) and boundaryless (Arthur

& Rousseau, 1996) career mind-set, relying more upon themselves to define and manage career values (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). Together, these two kinds of changes have pushed the attention of a growing body of research towards the subjective career success (Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2005; Sullivan, 1999; Wang, Olson & Schultz, 2013). In the recent years, most researches on career success have included both an objective and a subjective measure of it (e.g., Abele & Spurk, 2009), but an additional priority should be placed on understanding whether the current measures of career success allow a comparison across cultures. The majority of subjective career scales have been developed only on the Western cultures, consequently they are not useful in cross-cultural settings which instead could lead to much more relevant findings. This means that there are still many gaps in the literature that needs to be covered by future studies.

### **2.3 Career success today shaping career attitudes**

The definitions exposed above suggest that there are additional components, beyond objective factors, which require a subjective evaluation and cannot be retrieved from a standardized database. As discussed in the previous chapter, the concept of career has changed a lot recently and it is now changing at a faster pace. The advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, together with globalization removing countries boundaries getting them closer than before and the technology innovation affecting mostly all sectors, has changed individuals' attitudes towards career paths.

Starting from the changing job landscape, where objective factors are not anymore the only ones shaping individuals work preferences, researchers have started studying new career models rising and have defined several modern theories that extend the career success concept to other factors. For example, Hall (1976) introduced the protean career, underlying the relevance of flexibility, freedom and continuous learning for many people; Arthur and Rousseau (1996) proposed the boundaryless career concept, and Mainiero and Sullivan (2006) describe the kaleidoscope career model. In the following paragraphs these three theories of career success will be described to provide a background to the current situation in which the literature is working, trying to develop significant models and findings to better help organizations and human resource practitioners.

### 2.3.1 Protean career:

The Protean career concept, introduced by Hall in 1996, is an individual-focused approach, in which persons and not organizations are the ones responsible for careers, for HR qualities and they drive their success in multi-employer settings (Ballout, 2007). With this perspective, rather than having a contract with the organization, people have a contract with themselves, based on continuous learning, development of knowledge and adaptability. Indeed the concept provides fluid, flexible careers and continuous learning in the pursuit of career goals (Sullivan, 1999).

Individuals adopting protean careers will undertake several careers (Halls & Mirvis, 1995), putting self-fulfilment and psychological success above concerns and norms coming from the outside.

The protean career path is able to reap benefits for its actor only if both values-driven career orientation and self-directed career management are present (Briscoe, Hall & DeMuth, 2005). If an individual is high only in values-driven orientation, she will be rigid, and if she is high only in self-directed career management she will be able to react to career changes, but will not be grounded.

Some organizations see protean career actors suspiciously, believing they are less loyal and committed. On the contrary, studies have suggested that protean employees commit to their organization affectively (meaning they want to remain in the organization) and normatively (they feel they should remain in the organization). In addition, protean actors, focused on knowledge development and bringing experiences from different background, can be a valuable addition to the workforce. Their distinctive adaptability allows them, and as a result the organization they work for, to succeed in a variety of potential contexts.

### 2.3.2 Boundaryless career:

The boundaryless career is a new concept, theorized for the first time by Arthur and Rousseau in the “*Boundaryless career*” book in 1996 and it “characterizes a range of possible forms that defies traditional employment assumptions” (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). The idea differs from the traditional bounded career, which expects people to go through orderly employment arrangements achieved by vertical coordination inside big and stable firms.

Arthur and Rousseau give six meanings to boundaryless career. First, a career across boundaries of a single employer; second, a career path that draws validation and marketability from outside the current employer. Third, a career that is sustained by external networks; fourth, a career that breaks traditional assumptions about hierarchy and career advancements. Fifth, individuals

rejecting career opportunities for personal reasons; sixth, individual perceptions of a boundaryless future.

The use of boundaryless idea describes both careers that involve moves across physical boundaries of separate employers (such as the stereotypical Silicon Valle careers), and careers where individuals are either involuntary forced or voluntary choose to leave a certain organization. The concept refers not only to physical changes of employers, but applies as well to careers that draw marketability from outside the present organization, sustained by external networks or relying on information from the outside. Examples can be represented by cases of highly skilled professionals that give their contribution to different companies seeking a consultant only for the time of a project or for a specific problem. In addition, the boundaryless career concept can be used also referring to situations in which individuals make career choices based on internal standards, such as personal and family reasons, rather than career opportunities.

Firms today cannot promise a lifelong career and people do not expect it anymore; consequently the new idea of career is the opposite of the organizational career conceived in a single employment setting. The traditional long-term employment has been replaced by relationships increasingly transactional and insecure. Even if the full-time contract is still prominent, the psychological contract has deeply changed. As a result, the employment is the consequence of the marketability of one's skills in the labour market more than his/her loyalty to the company. Moreover, the phenomenon of organizations becoming more and more flat to better adapt to the changing world turns people's attention to other opportunities in the marketplace, decreasing the average years spent in one organization.

The boundaryless career perspective suggests that people take responsibility for their own career future through gaining access to other people's knowledge and resources and cultivating networks of people (Hirsch, 1987). The concept is particularly relevant in industries with unpredictable and opportunistic labour markets, where individuals are exposed to greater uncertainty since firms use temporal and project based forms of organizing. In the Information Technology (IT) sector, for example, organizations need to manage the risk resulting from rapid technological changes; indeed, by employing contingent IT stuff they avoid being stuck with obsolete competences.

Boundaryless careers are "sequences of job opportunities that go beyond the boundaries of single employment settings" (DeFilippi & Arthur, 1996, p.116). Given the changing economic context with firms increasingly outsourcing activities, a growing privatization of companies



and higher risks for employment, individuals need to strengthen their personal responsibility for learning and adaptability within this more flexible and uncertain situation.

In reality, boundaryless careers are affected by social networks of people, institutional environments and communities. Contextual factors as a country's institutional framework as well as the macroeconomic environment can constraint the career mobility. Moreover, individuals' career choices are affected and guided by cultural values, preferences of the ethnical group and career communities, which have a strong influence determining aspirations and constraining how people think about their careers.

In particular, women are more likely than men to pursue a boundaryless career, which often represents an adaptation and a response to events happening in their lives more than a chosen career development. For women working in some countries this new concept of career can be the last viable option when intra-organizational opportunities of advancement are restricted as a result of having children.

#### *2.3.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of boundaryless careers:*

Starting from the advantages, people following a boundaryless career can more easily get a higher salary because they are recognized in the labour market for the expertise they possess and not for the employer they work for. Hence, they have a stronger negotiation power when discussing their salary. Moreover, companies gain from the expertise of a person following this career path since changing several jobs and employers increases the knowledge accumulation. Other two advantages for organizations are the diverse experience these people can bring inside the firm, which can be critical in analytical arenas, and the flexibility given by project or temporary contract closed with them.

Of course, boundaryless careers have also some disadvantages. For example the difficulty of finding a regular income when a person is jobless, which in turn can have consequences on her family. Another concern relates to the confidential information that firms may not want to provide to temporary workers fearing information leakage.

Concluding, boundaryless careers are now on the rise, as people feel the need to change to keep up with the dynamic environment. If well managed, this trend can give major opportunities to firms to improve their performance, but also to people to boost their knowledge and their salaries.

### 2.3.3 Kaleidoscope career:

In the last years, as mentioned above, new career models have been created as a consequence of alterations in the job marketplace. Anyway, many of them still lack a full recognition of changes due to the globalization and technological advantages (e.g. Sturman & Carraher, 2007) or fail to capture differences in how men and women enact their careers (Powell & Mainiero, 1992) or lack instruments for an empirical testing.

Maineiro and Sullivan have introduced the Kaleidoscope career model in 2006, which is described as “how men and women alter the patterns of their careers by rotating the varied aspects of their lives in order to arrange their relationships and roles in new ways” (Maineiro & Sullivan, 2007, p.5). As a kaleidoscope, when one part moves, so do the other part changes. The Kaleidoscope career model (KCM hereafter) is based on qualitative and quantitative research and recognizes how societal factors as discrimination and government policies, and environmental influences, as organizational culture, impact career choices of individuals.

Therefore, a Kaleidoscope career is created on the individual’s own necessities; it is not defined by the organization, but by the individual himself/herself, according to his/her values and life choices. For this reason, the theory reflects trends happening now in the global labour market, where people change jobs more frequently and want to enrich their skills through continuous learning and upskilling.

The KCM assumes three underlying reasons (parameters) that lead individuals to take career decisions and to make changes in their lives to meet job, family and personal needs. The first reason is the individual’s personal quest for authenticity, meaning the need to be genuine and to align behaviours with personal values. The second parameter is a person’s need for balance, defined as the necessity to create an equilibrium among work, relationships and non-work aspects of life, so that they form a coherent whole. The last reason is the individual’s need for challenge, which is described as “engaging in activities that permit the individual to demonstrate responsibility, control and autonomy while learning and growing” (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2016, p.35). These three parameters are active throughout people’s career life, one usually predominating in different points of the life span; they interact and combine in different ways for each individual, producing his/her unique career pattern. All the three are always present and always interacting, but taking different levels of importance based on what is occurring in the individual’s life at that point. The strength of one reason depends on what is undergoing in the individual’s life in that particular moment. For example if money is needed career issues may take the priority; instead if non-work balance needs to be adjusted, changes

will be done to serve this need. The model reflects the rationalism of people when they need to make decisions about their careers because as a kaleidoscope, as one part moves, the other parts change. Each individual's action is seen as having profound effects on people around him/her; therefore, each career activity is evaluated in the light of the impact that it may have on relationships with others, rather than as insulated actions. In particular, the KMC is one of the few models not focused on traditional careers and Western countries; it offers a measure (the Kaleidoscope career self-assessment Inventory) to test an individual's level of authenticity, balance and challenge.

The KCM has been further extended by Sullivan and Mainiero in the 2008 to develop a new framework for examining women's careers and decision making process. The research found that the concept of career for women cannot be divided by an understanding of the context, defined as the set of individuals considered important by a woman.

The model stands out from all the previous studies focused on objective career success and, supported by empirical research (Cabrera, 2007), proves itself as a valuable addition to better understand and manage careers. KMC offers an innovative way of studying non-traditional career frameworks and it may be useful, now and in the future, to analyse gender differences in the use of HRD systems, given the fact that women face traditional and male-dominated work environments. The model could be used to enhance organizations' HRM polices and to improve attraction and retention of talents providing to the employees the right balance of the three parameters that they need.

## **2.4 Objective career success**

The principal meaning of career success that deeply studied and the one that gained the most respect in the last century is the objective career success.

Everett Hughes in his book "*Men and their work*" in the 1958 defined objective career success as something that can be directly visible, measurable and verified by an impartial third party. The description is useful because it permits an easy comparison across people and occupations; the objective career attainments considered to calculate objective career success are: salary, rate of salary, growth, number and rate of promotions, the hierarchical level and the proximity to CEO (Arnold & Cohen, 2008). These extrinsic measures have long been considered the hallmarks of career success across a wide range of societies (Nicholson, 2000); indeed Arthur

and Rousseau (1996) have found that 75% of career-related articles published between 1980 and 1994 focused on these objective factors.

Despite the advantages of using objective measures to calculate career success, there are also issues given by the fact that scholars based their studies on four assumptions. Firstly, people have similar definitions of success. Secondly, the meaning of success is static through the individual's life. Third, opportunity costs of career outcomes do not play a role in a person's career success. Fourth, career decisions are always made to maximize extrinsic rewards and success is the most desirable outcome of one's career (Las Heras, 2009). Given these four assumptions, it is clear that both objective and subjective factors of careers success should be taken into account. As exposed by Arthur & al in the 2005 paper "*Career success in a boundaryless career world*", only through conceiving both sides the researcher could grasp the social processes that lie behind careers and career success.

Organizational and behavioural changes happened in the last two decades have reduced the relevance of some objective criteria. In fact, trends as organizational downsizing and outsourcing have reduced the desirability of hierarchical progression achieved through promotions. Moreover, objective criteria of career success can be both contaminated and deficient (Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler & Weick, 1970). The contamination means they are affected by factors outside the individual's control. For instance, people living in countries that differ in power structures, taxation systems and social stratifications. Instead, deficient means that criteria do not capture issues that are relevant for the person, implying that individuals do not only seek for objective outcomes during their careers; for example, they may look for a work-life balance (Finegold & Mohrman, 2001) and a sense of meaning (Wrzesniewski, 2002). Receiving an high pay and promotions does not necessarily make people proud and successful (Hall,2002); in fact Bandura (2007) describes that newly appointed managers that do not delegate their work, may soon find themselves overwhelmed, which can lead to a career failure even if they just got a promotion.

In order to gain a better understanding of ways in which people define their own career success, also perceptual factors influencing it need to be taken into account. Mayerhofer, Meyer & Steyrer in their empirical work "*Contextual issues in the study of careers*", and other studies as well, identified as crucial factors of career success: human capital, demographic characteristics, personality and socio-demographic status, and the organizational, industrial and regional development. Moreover, also organizational sponsorship and work-life balance influence career success (Ng & al., 2005).

Concluding, objective career success is an important part in the evaluation of people's success, but taken on its own it can be a poor and misleading indicator. Indeed, it needs to be completed by an analysis of people's subjective perceptions of their career success in order to reach a good understanding of what career success truly signifies.

## **2.5 Subjective career success**

Subjective career success is “the moving perspective in which the person sees his life as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various attributes, actions, and the things which happen to him” (Hughes, 1937, p.409). Even if it has been defined decades ago, until the latest years only a small group of scholars has focused on understanding its meaning and the factors affecting it.

For several years, the literature has been mostly exclusively focused on measuring the career success in terms of pay, promotions and job satisfaction. These metrics are for sure important indicators, but alone they do not capture the full picture of what people really consider their own career success. The attention given to objective criteria is highlighted by the Arthur & al.'s 2005 review of publications on career success. Their work<sup>5</sup> shows that mostly half of studies have been conducted in a unidimensional manner, usually utilizing career satisfaction (e.g. Greenhaus, Parasuraman & Wormley, 1990) or overall success perceptions, while only a very small part of the literature has taken into account the subjective success, for example looking at social support (Harris, Moritzen, Robitschen, Imhoff & Lynch, 2001).

Starting from Schein (1978) arguing that it is relevant to understand if people considered having both hierarchical and financial success are also satisfied with their career. Anyway a growing branch of present studies focuses the attention on subjective career success, which may detect important career outcomes not readily assessable from personnel record (Gattiker & Larwood, 1988).

Subjective career success can be described as “individuals' feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction with their careers” (Judge et al. 1995, p.4). It is commonly operationalized as job or career satisfaction, given that individual who are dissatisfied with many aspects of their jobs are unlikely to consider their career to be successful (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen & Barrick, 1999); anyway, there is a difference between job and career satisfaction. Indeed, job satisfaction is “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one's job or job

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<sup>5</sup> Arthur, M. B., Khapova, S. N., Wilderom, C. P. M., “*Career success in a boundaryless career world*”

experiences” (Locke, 1976, p.1300), while career satisfaction is “the satisfaction of individuals deriving from extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of their career, including pay, advancements and development opportunities” (Greenhaus, Parasuraman & Wormley, 1990, p.81).

Other scholars instead see career success as “the success that comes from fulfilling one’s needs by engaging in the work” (Betz, Fitzgerald & Hill, 1989, p.32). From this point of view, people need to learn during their career pathway, develop new skills and enhance their personality to achieve success. Definitions of subjective success tend to be more vague than objective ones; they include “self-evaluation of career progress” (Arthur & al., 2005, p. 178) and “individuals’ subjective apprehension and evaluation of his/her career” (Van Maanen, 1977, p.36). Lastly, in the recent years another relevant interpretation of subjective career success has been given by Nicholson & De Waal-Andrews (2005, p.137) stating that “individuals continually interpret and reinterpret the work experience and career success they have had. They experience objective reality, create understanding about what constitutes career success, and individually act on those understandings”.

The research on subjective career success is particularly important in the current work environment, where career models have changed under the influence of globalization and technological innovation. As discussed in the previous chapter, the traditional career development model, where individuals spend most of their working years inside one organization growing vertically through promotions, is slowly becoming uncommon. People understand that they need to be mobile and flexible in their career path adapting to always new situations, projects and challenges. For this reason, there has been the rise and the establishment of boundaryless and protean career models that will probably be prominent in the future. At the same time, workers need to be updated with the latest innovations through continuous learning and upskilling, both on the job and through classes, to achieve promotions and career success (intended as objective and subjective). The aforementioned facts explain why the learning and development function inside organizations has never been so important and widespread as they are now.

Clearly, new subjective criteria must be taken into account to reach the true meaning of career success. An individual may have a top role in a big company, but not being able to spend time with his/her family or not having the possibility to present and apply his/her own ideas to projects may lead to a perceived career failure. Humans are complex and live in environments that influence their behaviour and their beliefs, consequently the meanings they attribute to career success cannot be narrowed down to objective measures alone, also subjective ones

connected to perceptions people have need to be evaluated. Later in this chapter will be presented studies taking into account criteria of subjective career success needed to achieve the complete meaning of it, for example the country in which individuals live and in particular the culture that affects their behaviour.

## **2.6 Relationship among objective and subjective career success**

Over the past decade, increasing consideration has been given to both objective and subjective career success as well as their interrelatedness (Arthur & al., 2005), particularly in relation to the new types of careers that are emerging, namely boundaryless career, the protean career and the higher mobility.

Literature's studies have found a presumed causality between objective and subjective career success, as supported by the work of Ng & al. (2005, p. 369): "those who are able to move up the societal or organizational hierarchy are typically regarded as successful and are more likely to view themselves as successful". Whereas it is easily thinkable that objective success influences how individuals subjectively experience career success, also the opposite is conceivable. Thus the subjective experience of success has an influence on how a person's objective success will develop. For example, researchers found that optimistic expectations have positive effects on diverse outcome measures (Taylor & Armor, 1996).

The career literature has not reached a consensus on the relationship between objective and subjective career success yet, nor the direction of this relationship has been established (Quigley and Tymon, 2006). The attribution theory, developed by Stumpf and Tymon in the 2012 states that people receiving concrete rewards are more likely to attribute them to internal causes, which in turn lead to a positive subjective perception of success and to a higher perception of career success. In addition, Ng & al.'s study (2005), as well as the Abele & Spurk's (2009) one presented below, support the existence of a presumed causality between objective and subjective career success.

### **2.6.1 Objective and subjective career success over time:**

The Abele and Spurk's 2009 study "*How do objective and subjective career success interrelate over time?*" for the first time investigated the existence and the nature of the relationship between objective and subjective attainments of career success. Indeed, the research states that the analysis of interrelations between the two definitions of career success should consider two additional components: time or career phase and the specific assessment of subjective success.

For example, in the career entry phase, when individuals have only few criteria for evaluating their subjective success, the influence of objective success over the subjective one is stronger (Hall, 2002). Conversely, the influence of subjective over objective success should be more evident in the career growth phase (Hall, 2002).

The study gathered data from five waves of questionnaires given to professionals who had graduated from a German university, covering a time interval from career entry to ten years later. Major findings demonstrate that the initial objective success has a positive effect on initial other-referent success (meaning an individual that compares her career relative to an external standard, as a reference group), but no influence over the initial job satisfaction. Instead, over time, subjective success largely influences changes in the objective one, demonstrating that subjective success is not just a by-product of the objective success. Moreover, the results can be linked to the fact that subjective success can make a person self-confident and enhance his/her motivation and effort expenditure, thus conducting her to greater achievements and satisfaction. Findings show that objective career success influences the subjective assessment of one's career, but only if the last one is based on a comparative judgement.

To summarize, the major message coming from the study is that the influence of objective success on subjective experience of success should not be overestimated and that subjective success should not be regarded as a by-product of objective attainments.

### 2.6.2 Career success's role between career mobility criteria, career anchors and satisfaction:

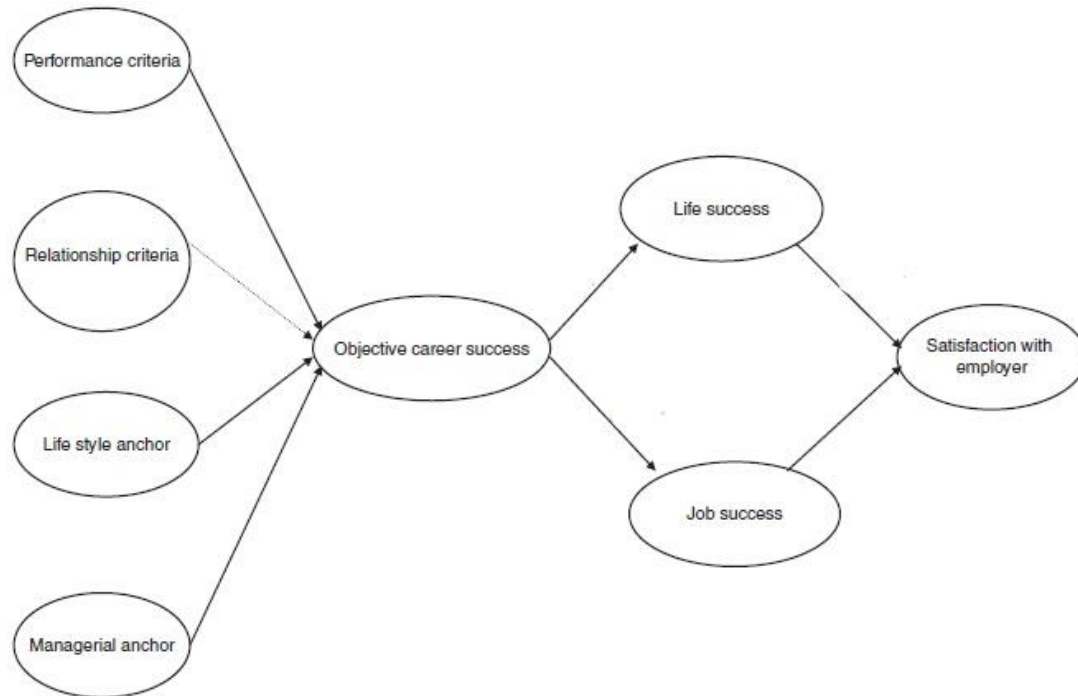
In the 2014, Tremblay, Dahan and Gianecchini conducted the pioneering study "*The mediating influence of career success in relationship between career mobility criteria, career anchors and satisfaction with organization*" that evaluates the perceived importance of performance and relationships with promotion decisions, along with the role of career anchors, seen as managerial and life style, in objective career success.

Career anchors are considered as an individual's dispositions; indeed, they correspond to the individual's career aspirations that are grounded in one's self-concept (Schein, 1971) and they are represented by managerial, technical or functional competence, autonomy or independence, security or stability, service and lifestyle. There has been a small attention on anchors in the literature, which is quite surprising given the fact that they influence disposition, behaviours, career intentions and orientations.



The Tremblay's research was conducted firstly to understand the role of objective success in the relationship between these predictor and job success. And secondly, the study wanted to evaluate the mediating role of subjective career success in the relationship between objective career success and satisfaction with the organization.

*Figure 2.2: representation of the theoretical model*



[Source: Tremblay, M., Dahan, J., & Gianecchini, M., (2014). “*The mediating influence of career success in relationship between career mobility criteria, career anchors and satisfaction with organization*”]

The model examines the relationship between objective and subjective success dividing the subjective one into perceived success and job and life success. The results show that perceived promotion criteria have a strong influence on the objective career success and on the subjective one, since respondents experience greater person-job fit. In addition, managerial career anchors are positively related to the objective career success, but they are not related with the subjective success. This can be explained by the fact that people with stronger career anchors are those whose aspirations and motivations still converge with the traditional vision of objective success; while results exhibit that people with a more prominent anchor for the life style give lower relevance to the objective career success.

The study is a relevant extension of the career literature because it reveals that objective career success has a positive and significant influence on job success, while it has a negative one on perceived life success. Results are supported by the literature and highlight the conflict nature

between workplace career success and the success in personal life (Burk & al, 2007). The time required to be successful in a certain job subtracts time that people spend with their families and friends since one comes at the expense of another. Moreover, speaking about the relationship between objective success and subjective career one, the research, in accordance with previous studies, indicates that objective career success plays a determinant role influencing the job accomplishment. The pursuit of objective success as promotions, may lead to a poor life success, but this visible success may result in higher job success thanks to a gradually improvement of personal-job fit over time. Indeed, the relationship between the two kinds of success changes throughout the career. The research provides a base for HRM policies that should be focused on increasing the work-family balance in order to have more satisfied and more successful employees in the organization.

## **2.7 Criteria of subjective career success, culture and context:**

As foretold at the beginning of the chapter, the literature on subjective career success has started considering additional criteria, other than simply objective attainments, to achieve the true significance of career success around the world. First, many researchers have understood that the context in which people live, intended as the country, the institutions and the social context, needs to be taken into account. Moreover, traditionally the majority of studies have focused their attention on a single organization or country or at maximum on a group of similar countries (such as WIERD countries), anyway in recent times also cross-countries studies comprehending different cultures has been developed. Only comparing diverse countries and values it is possible to achieve relevant results that can be applied not just on one region, but potentially in the entire world. The next paragraphs will present criteria that have proved to be relevant in the career success research

### **2.7.1 The Culture:**

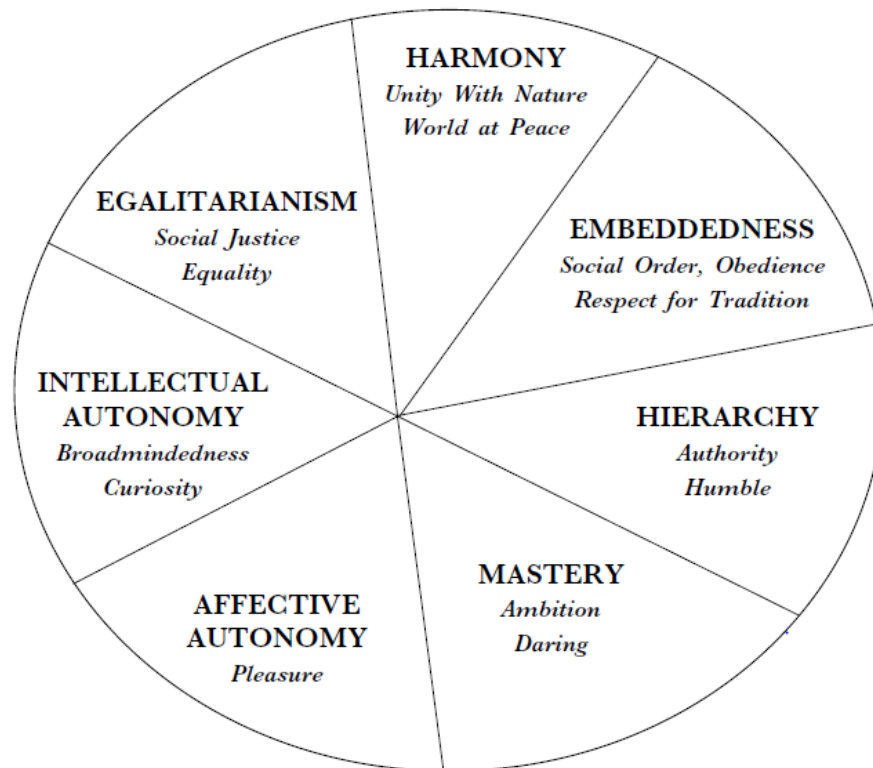
For years, career researchers have taken into account only the single organizational setting as the social space of careers (Van Maanen & Schein, 1977), nevertheless in practice there are influences from the environment in which individuals work and live. Contextual influences, separated in macro-level (national cultures) and micro-level (context affecting everyday activities) have a role on careers.

Culture, consisting in language, ideas, beliefs, customs, taboos, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, rituals, ceremonies and symbols (Briscoe, Hall & Meyrhofer, 2012) plays a crucial

role in humans' lives, allowing them to adapt the environment to their own purpose, and every society has its own particular culture. Focusing only on a single cultural dimension, most of the studies are limited because they address only a part of a more comprehensive construct (Earley, 2006); they ignore the possibility of more complex interrelationships between different cultural dimensions and their effects on career success.

According to Schwartz (2006, p. 138) culture is “a rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices, symbols, norms and values prevalent among people in a society and the prevailing values in a society may be the most central feature of culture”. For the scholar, cultural value emphases shape and justify individual and group beliefs, actions and goals. In the 2006, thanks to a study with data from 73 countries and 44000 respondents, the Schwartz's theory of cultural values was created. The model, one of the most reputable and robust, has developed six cultural value orientations that forms three cultural value dimensions: autonomy versus embeddedness, hierarchy versus egalitarianism, mastery versus harmony.

*Figure 2.3: Schwartz's cultural dimensions*



[Source: Schwartz S.H., (2006) “A theory of cultural value orientations: explications and applications”]

Contemporary studies suggest that culture affects careers through different sets of influences embedded in individuals' values towards work and career. Moreover, also the organizational

values contained in the organizational culture and in the HR practices play a role in people's careers.

In addition, the World Values Survey, a massive research conducted by a large international team, studies the differences in individual values toward work across cultures, focusing on cross-national and cross-time comparisons. Findings from the study, among the others, show that workers in historically protestant countries most often make positive evaluations of intrinsic job features, while the opposite is true for people from historically communist countries. Results exhibit that individuals' work values result from a country's religious, political, economic and social backgrounds, which are part of the country's culture. These backgrounds shape organizational culture and HRM practices which are facilitators of career development since they can enable a person's objective career success or disable some career opportunities.

### 2.7.2 The Country:

Nowadays people undergo career paths that are different from the traditional ones. They move more frequently following not only objective characteristics of career success, but also other factors that affect their behaviours. For sure, the country where they were born, raised and where they live, together with the institutions and the social context shapes career success perceptions and career decisions.

#### *2.7.2.1 Country context and proactive career behaviour*

During the last years, more and more individuals have planned and managed their careers autonomously from organizations; consequently studying what pushes people to have a proactive career behaviour has become a salient topic. Proactive career behaviours refer to actions that are self-initiated, future-oriented and change introducing (Grant & Ashford, 2008); they can take various forms: voice and personal initiative, feedback seeking and issue selling (Parker & Collins, 2010). The literature describes them as involving three main components: taking control, anticipation and information retrieval (Parker & Collins, 2010). These three mechanisms suggest that proactive people using them will derive greater satisfaction from actions they take, including career success (Parker & Liao, 2016).

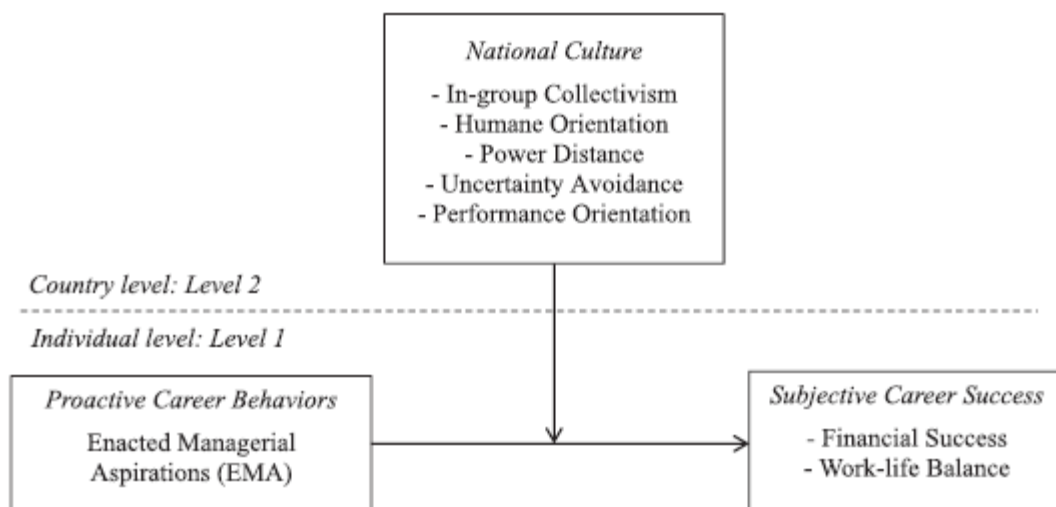
In particular, a study conducted by Smale & al. in the 2016 called "*Proactive career behaviours and subjective career success: the moderating role of national culture*" analyses the relationship between proactive behaviours and two aspects of subjective career success: financial success and work life balance. Differently from all the previous studies, the research

was conducted over 22 countries covering the GLOBE's ten cultural clusters, comprehending both Western and non-Western countries. As stated above, subjective career success may vary among countries as people from different cultures use different values and norms to evaluate their own success. Based on a multi-country dataset, researchers tested their hypothesis that proactive career behaviours are positively linked to higher levels of the two measures of subjective career success, and to what extent this relationship is connected to the national culture.

The model is depicted in the Figure 2.5 below. Researchers focused on Enacted Managerial Aspirations (EMA) as a form of proactive career behaviours, comprehending for example skills development and career planning. In addition, given evidences from previous studies according to which work-life balance and financial success are meanings of career success that can be found among people from all countries in the world (Briscoe & al., 2012), they have been picked as good indicators for a possible relationship with proactive career behaviours.

The study takes into account the role of national culture as individual behaviours and attitudes depend on the context in which they are undertaken. Thus, as part of the social context in which people act, the national culture may affect career behaviours. From the GLOBE study, five cultural dimensions has been taken into account in the research: in-group collectivism, human orientation, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and performance orientation.

*Figure 2.4: Smale & al. 's model*



[Source: Smale A., & al., (2016). Proactive career behaviors and subjective career success: the moderating role of national culture]

Results from the research show a positive and significant relationship between proactive career behaviours and financial success. Instead, contrary to expectations, proactive behaviours are not associated with greater perceptions of work life balance. Moreover, the research found that

the cultural context matters in the relationship between proactivity behaviours and individual's perception of career success; in particular, it is more relevant for financial success than for work life balance in cultures with high power distance and low uncertainty avoidance. Conversely, proactive behaviours have a stronger effect on work life balance in cultures characterized by high in-group collectivism, high humane orientation and high power distance.

The study contributes to the careers literature demonstrating that subjective career success varies depending on the national culture to which individuals belong. For sure, future researches taking into account the social context will be needed in order to reach a non-biased understanding of subjective career success.

#### 2.7.2.2 *Country context and career development:*

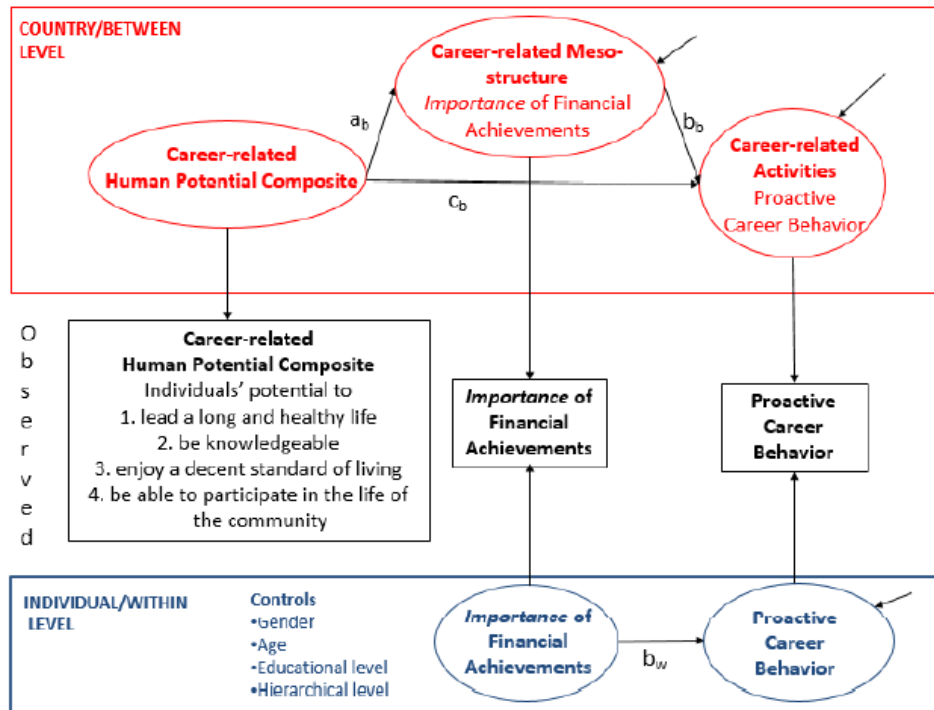
Careers always exist in a certain social context by which people are influenced, given the constraints and opportunities it provides to them. Most of the researches addressing the context have taken into account only the work environment, so the proximal social context as the factor shaping individuals' behaviours and perceptions, neglecting the role played by national culture and how it differs across different countries. Moreover, another issue concern the typical use in most studies of country as a proxy of culture. Many authors believe that "cultures develop within countries as an artefact of national patterns of formative experiences" (Derr & Laurent, 1989). However, comparative researches (Easterby-Smith & al., 1995; Fischer & Schwartz, 2011) have found that cultural differences does not necessarily equate with national ones; for this reason it is important to distinguish between cross-cultural and cross-national conceptualizations.

Anyway, a 2019 study by Andersen et al., called "*Careers in context: An international study of career goals and mesostructure between societies' career-related human potential and proactive career behaviour*", takes into account the societal context and cultural perspectives to understand how they influence careers. As macrostructural view of the societal context the researchers used the countries' career-related human potential composite (CHPC), which measures resources provided by a society that allow its citizens to grow, develop and make achievements in terms of their careers. Instead, they decided to use financial achievements as a career mesostructure, which is defined as individual and organizational actors' stock of practical knowledge (Duberley & al., 2005) about contextually possible, sensible and appropriate career behaviour.

Starting from the Maci & Ryan's (2012) theory of macro societal context and from the Barley's model of career structuration (1990), which uses career scripts (i.e. mediating mechanisms

comprehending norms, resources and interpretive schemes coming from the broad institutional context in which individual live) researchers propose a mediation model shown in the figure below. The study tests if career mesostructures mediate the relationship between societal macrostructure and individual actions, analysing cross-country data collected from 17,986 employees in 27 countries, and focusing on financial achievements as a career goal.

*Figure 2.5: Conceptual model of multilevel mediation*



[Source: Andreser, M., Apospori, E., & Gunz, H., (2019). Careers in context: An international study of career goal as mesoconstruct between societies’ career-related human potential ad proactive career behaviour]

The researchers come up with some interesting conclusions. Firstly, the lower the CHPC (comprehending education and income level, gender equality, political and civil liberties, public health expenditure and life expectancy) of a country, the more importance individuals in the country attribute to financial achievements as career goals. This also shows that the career mesostructure is associated with CHPC, so it differs between societies, demonstrating that the societal context plays a role. In addition, the research underlines that the higher the importance assigned to financial achievements, the more proactive employees are in terms of managing their careers; which reveals that career behaviour differs between societies and it doesn’t solely depends upon psychological mechanisms embedded in the personality of an individual. The last conclusion of the study is that the financial achievement mediates the effect between the societal context and people’s proactive behaviour, suggesting that careers are associated by the macrostructural conditions represented by the CHPC.

This recent study provides useful practical implications for organizations, in fact it shows that an effective HR practice in one societal context might be ineffective in another one due to differences in the macrostructure. Indeed, multinational companies should carefully study their practices and adapt them to each country in which they are present. Moreover, the research is an addition to the growing interest of literature towards the role of national context in career success and career behaviours, but many facets still need to be further studied.

Concluding, it is worth mentioning another study conducted in the 2009 by Chudzikowski & al., which analyses the causes of career transitioning in five countries, namely Austria, Serbia, Spain, USA and China, covering four Schwartz's cultural regions. With semi-structured interviews, researchers were able to assess the impact of the institutional context and of the country's economic development status on the career transition choices of people in the sample. The results show that taking one's own initiative due to internal causes is important in all five countries and that generational differences play a role; this points to a highly individualized career path, which is coherent with the current literature (e.g. Hall, 2004). Internal attribution of causes of career transition has been found in European countries and in the USA, opposed to the external attribution of causes found in China, which is in line with Schwartz's study on cultural dimensions. Moreover, not only the cultural values but also the institutional context of each country plays a role in career transitioning; less dynamic economies emphasize causes of transition that are closer to the person. While more dynamic economies show a stronger emphasis on organizational and macro factors.

The two last researches presented provide empirical evidences and support for further studies that should take into account the context and evaluate differences across countries in the evaluation of subjective career success. There is the need to cover a gap in the literature that until now, with few exceptions, has neglected the role of culture shaping behaviours and perceptions of people. This issue will be addressed in the next two chapters.

### 2.7.3 The context:

Among the latest studies considering the context in which individuals live as a factor affecting career success, the one conducted by Meyrhofer & al. is one of the most relevant in the literature both in terms of methodology and conclusions achieved.

Mayrhofer, Meyer and Steyrer, in the 2007 research "*Contextual issues in the study of careers*" states that the "macrosocial context in which careers are made and its influence on the nature of career across different cultures and countries do have their place" (p.216).

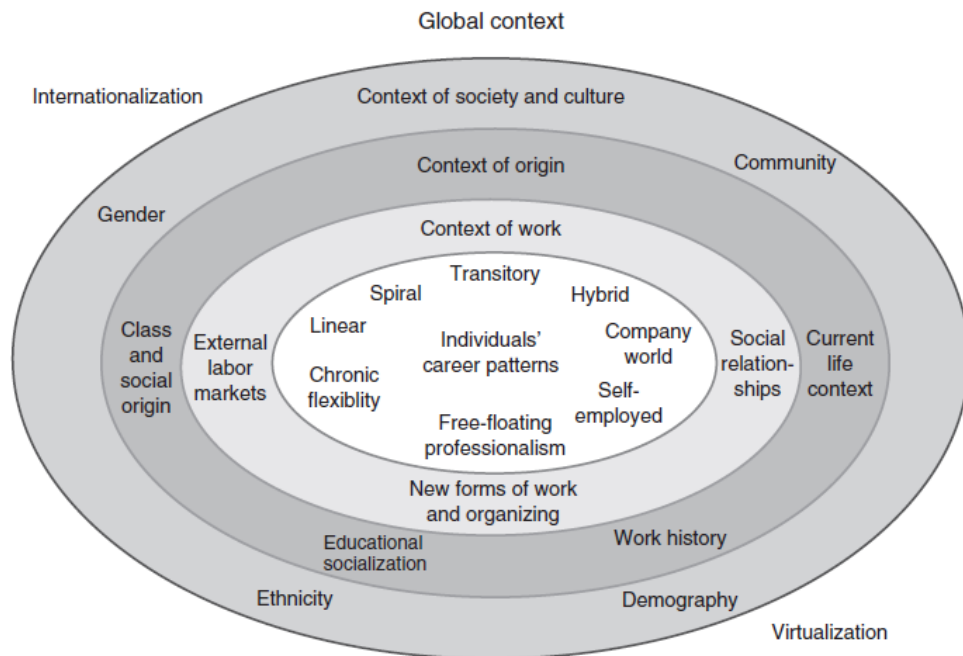


Contextual issues comprehending both exogenous factors and fields in which careers take place, play a major role shaping people's perceptions and preferences concerning their career path.

The following chart is a representation of contextual predictors of career success; beyond individual elements there are external factors as:

- The context of work comprehending the role of external labour markets, new forms of working and organizing and social relationships
- The context of origin, including class and social origin, the current status, educational socialization and individual work history.
- The context of society and culture with four major aspects: gender, ethnicity, the overall population demography and communal and societal ties.
- The broader global context which entails internationalization, connected to enhanced career opportunities and virtualization, creating new career patterns and opportunities.

*Figure 2.6: Major contextual factors in career research*



[Source: Mayrhofer, W., Meyer, M., & Steyrer, J., (2007). Contextual issues in the study of careers]

The work arrives to the conclusion that the context is not easy to decipher and that depending on the theoretical view it is open to many interpretations. For this reason, the researchers took a literature-grounded approach, which permits them to link the existing context-related studies in order to provide a more integrated view leading to the identification of major findings and developments in the literature. The study is the forerunner of a series of others that should follow to further analyse the topic and arrive to major findings that could affect organizational practices as well as countries' policies.

The studies exposed above in this section are a representation of part of the contemporary literature growingly taking into account the importance of the context in determining and shaping career success. Individuals are inextricably linked to the place where they live and careers always are career in a certain context. For this reason, both individuals' characteristics and the interaction with the environment should be taken into account defining career success.

## **2.8 Multidimensional measures of career success:**

After describing objective, subjective career success and the relationship between them, the chapter has then analysed the major criteria taken into account by researchers when investigating the concept of subjective career success. Anyway, all these studies utilize only unidimensional scales of career success and focus only on one country or on a group of similar ones. Clearly, it creates a gap in the literature that needs to be further expanded to reach a better understanding of the matter. In particular after having seen that there are interrelations among the two meanings of career success and that the context, as well as the culture, plays a role on careers.

For this reason, some researchers have started studying also additional options in order to arrive to a full and unbiased meaning of career success. The next two paragraphs will examine and compare innovative works proposing the use of multidimensional scales of career success: the Shockley's multidimensional scale and the Pan & Zhou's three dimensions scale.

There are some commonalities between the two studies; for instance, they both focus on a single country sample, namely the U.S. for Shockley and China for Pan & Zhou. Moreover, the two works distinguish from other studies because they achieved a valid and unbiased measure of subjective career success that proves to be superior compared to the previous present in the literature. In fact, the two researches wanted and managed to create mathematical and statistical measures that can be a valid base also for other future studies

The two studies present also some differences. For instance concerning the methodology used, the Pan and Zhou's approach is focused on individual's criteria of career success, so on what people really value as successful concerning their careers instead that emphasise the general career satisfaction criteria. Instead, Shockley's research addresses how people evaluate their career success in terms of recognition, quality of work, career satisfaction, perceived success, meaningful of work etc.

These works are pioneers and show the way to future studies that should stop focusing only on objective career success, on one dimension and on a single country, by proving that considering multiple variables and the individuals' criteria the literature can achieve better understanding of what subjective career success really is and consequently provide useful practical implications.

### 2.8.1 The Shockley's model:

The study "*Development of a new scale to measure subjective career success: A mixed-methods study*" conducted in the 2016 by Shockley, Ureksoy, Rodopman, Potet and Dullaghan is a notable exception to the vast literature focused on objective career success, aimed to create and validate a multi-dimensional measure of subjective career success to better capture and analyse it. Starting from the examination of the researches that in the last years have been conducted on interpretations of subjective career success (SCS hereafter), the academics found a list of items frequently used to present SCS, which are illustrated in the following table 2.1.

*Table 2.1: commonly used existing measures of subjective career success*

Study	Measures
Gattiker & Larwood (1986)	<p>Job success</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am receiving positive feedback about my performance from all quarters.</li> <li>2. I am offered opportunities for further education by my employer.</li> <li>3. I have enough responsibility on my job.</li> <li>4. I am fully backed my managers in my work.</li> <li>5. I am in a job which offers me the chance to learn new skills.</li> <li>6. I am most happy when I am at work.</li> <li>7. I am dedicated to my work.</li> <li>8. I am in a position to do mostly work which I really like.</li> </ol> <p>Interpersonal success</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. I am respected by my peers.</li> <li>10. I am getting good performance evaluations.</li> <li>11. I am accepted by my peers.</li> <li>12. I have my superior's confidence</li> </ol> <p>Financial success</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. I am receiving fair compensation compared to my peers.</li> <li>14. I am drawing a high income compared to my peers.</li> <li>15. I am earning as much as I think my work is worth.</li> </ol> <p>Hierarchical success</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. I am pleased with the promotions I have received so far.</li> <li>17. I am reaching my career goals within the time frame I set for myself.</li> <li>18. I am in a job which offers promotional opportunities.</li> </ol> <p>Life success</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19. I am happy with my private life.</li> <li>20. I am enjoying my non-work activities.</li> <li>21. I am satisfied with my life overall.</li> <li>22. I am dedicated to my work.</li> </ol>
Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley (1990)	<p>I am satisfied with...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1...the success I have achieved in my career.</li> <li>2...the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.</li> <li>3...the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.</li> <li>4... the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement</li> <li>5... the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.</li> </ol>
Turban and Dougherty (1994)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How successful has your career been?</li> <li>2. Compared to your coworkers, how successful is your career?</li> <li>3. How successful do your significant others feel your career has been?</li> <li>4. Given your age, do you think that your career is on schedule, or ahead or behind schedule?</li> </ol>

[Source: Shockley, K. M., Ureksoy, H., Rodopman, O., B., Poteat, L., F., & Dullaghan T., R., (2016). Development of a new scale to measure subjective career success; A mixed-methods study]

From the Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley's (1990) research the most common representation of SCS is exemplified by career satisfaction. The scale has three dimensions: individual satisfaction for achievements, individual satisfaction for progression and income, and development of new skills.

Turban and Dougherty (1994) provide a scale for the overall success perceptions asking people how successful they feel, both on their own and compared to co-workers, giving an overall assessment of their careers based on their own subjective interpretations. This last scale lacks of information about subjective factors that drive individuals' overall assessment of success and, consequently, may not provide a comprehensive evaluation of SCS.

The study conducted by Gattiker & Larwood (1986) contributes with a scale of career success that has five dimensions: job success, interpersonal success, financial success, hierarchical success and life success.

Numerous studies have proposed a multidimensional model of SCS, but they were always grounded on qualitative research. The study of Shockley et al. instead has the goal “to create a multidimensional measure of SCS that extends beyond satisfaction and represents meaningful dimensions of success in the modern career landscape” (Shockley, Ureksoy, Rodopman, Poteat & Dullaghan, p.134).

Starting from a qualitative research and a scale development for qualitative findings, the academics then conducted quantitative studies in the U.S. to validate, cross validate and develop the measure of Subjective Career Success Inventory (SCSI). Their results confirm previous studies’ statements (e.g. Arthur & al., 2005) that career success is a multidimensional construct and that people evaluate their career success in terms of recognition, quality of work, career satisfaction, perceived success, meaningful of work, influence, authenticity, personal life satisfaction, growth and development.

The research well distinguishes itself from all the previous in the literature; it is innovative and has several significant implications, but it has some limitations too. The main problem is represented by the fact that the work is focused only on WEIRD countries (western, educated, industrialized, rich and democratic countries) and consequently may miss some richness in the meanings of career success in other contexts around the globe; it should then be extended to other countries to fully assess the generalizability of findings.

### 2.8.2 Pan & Zhou’s scale:

Starting from the understanding that the literature about subjective career success (SCS hereafter) suffers from the lack of proper measurements, Pan and Zhou in their 2015 study “*How do employees construe their career success: an improved measure of subjective career success*” develop a three dimensional scale of SCS to cover this gap.

In order to accurately measure the subjective career success, the researchers began analysing previous works from different scholars discovering that they had adopted scales of other constructs to measure subjective career success, as job satisfaction, career satisfaction, marketability and career commitment. Anyway, according to Pan and Zhou, they do not adequately represent the full scope of SCS at the individual level and only a small number of studies have developed a global measure of it. In contrast, it is necessary to find a way to correctly measure the concept, not only for researchers but also for managerial practitioners who need to select the best employees.

For the reasons stated above the study extends the previous literature providing a new instrument to assess subjective career success. Initially, they found some weak points in the existing scales of SCS: first, their single-dimensionality; second, the use of indicators of other constructs of SCS; and third, the lack of individual criteria to assess career success.

Facing this situation, the two researchers pay attention to the perceptions of career success rather than on the satisfaction on career. Additionally, based on Zhou & al.'s 2013 study "*Criterion of career success (CCS) model*", they develop a multidimensional measure of career success. The three measurements considered are:

1. Intrinsic fulfilment: fully utilize personal capacity, being passionate about the job done as well as learning and accumulating skills while working.
2. External compensation: hierarchical status, compensation, power and other economic benefits.
3. Work life balance: having time for family, maintaining social relationships and a good health as well as a good balance between work and family.

The research conducted three independent studies among employees working in China to test the validity of the scale. Having understood that "individual value is a crucial facet and cannot be neglected when measuring SCS" (Pan & Zhou, 2015, p. 49), the work incorporates career success both measuring its criteria and evaluating the career status. Specifically, respondents were firstly invited to rate the extent to which they agree with the criteria of career success developed by Zhou & al. in 2013; and then to indicate their perceived subjective degree of career success based on these criteria.

After conducting the three studies, the researchers adjusted each of them to reach consistency and validity of the scale. Particularly, in the final study respondents were asked to indicate their gender, age, education, tenure, happiness, career success, career commitment, new measure of SCS and positive emotion happiness.

Results indicate that the new scale is valid and that the intrinsic fulfilment is significantly correlated with external compensation and work-life balance, while external compensation is marginally significant for work-life balance. Moreover, findings show that the new three-dimensional scale is positively associated with career satisfaction, career commitment, happiness and positive emotions. Therefore, they provide additional validity to the measure. In addition, running a hierarchic regression, the researches proved that their measure of SCS is incrementally valid compared to the Greenhaus et al.'s (1990) scale which is the most widely

used, indicating that the multidimensional measure is appropriate for employments in future research.

Concluding, the work, opposed to the majority of the literature, suggests that a multidimensional measure of SCS is needed and proves its superior validity to other scales with empirical support. In particular the new scale focuses on targets' satisfaction and not on career success as previous ones. Hence, it is an advancement because it assesses what really matters to employees during their career development process. Furthermore, the study argues that SCS should comprehend individual's criteria of career success and not only scores gained on the three dimensions. Paying attention to how individuals conceptualize career success is critical but still neglected by most of researchers.

There are some practical implications coming from the work. For instance, human resource practitioners selecting candidates need to assess their perceptions of career success as well as their criteria since knowing them can facilitate the selection of the right person for the right position. Finally, if supervisors understand employees' perceptions of career success it would be beneficial to correctly motivate and to better advise them about their careers.

## **2.9 Conclusions:**

The present chapter began presenting how career success literature is developing and which career models are becoming more and more popular. Starting from the objective career success, moving to the subjective one, which better describes the current labour market, and arriving to the description of works suggesting the existence of a relationship between the two kinds of success. The chapter has then introduced the explanation of major criteria considered in the present literature of SCS in order to provide a background for the research that will be described in the last chapter.

Studies included in the last section of the chapter suggest the need to extend the present literature to many aspects that have not been properly approached yet. First, the SCS topic should be further examined and expanded to comprehend also multidimensional measures that proved to be better able to capture the concept. Second, effects coming from the social context and from the national culture should be considered in order to achieve a complete meaning of career success. Third, cross-country analysis of data is a powerful addition to research in order to capture different perceptions of SCS, but still few studies have taken it into account.

The latest research developments in particular have started introducing new scales and different samples, comprehending many dimensions and cultures, that are only the beginning of what could be an entire new branch of the career study. Expanding the investigation is particularly crucial in the current work environment that is rapidly changing and to which individuals need to adapt and to consequently redefine what means for them career success.

The next chapter will describe the innovative statistical concept of cultural archetypes and it will compare the two major studies on career success that have utilized the methodology. The chapter will then finish presenting the research proposal of the current dissertation.







# Chapter 3

## CULTURAL ARCHETYPES

### 3.1 Introduction

Many studies in the career literature have addressed only a single cultural dimension and others have used country as a proxy of culture, thus assuming that cultures develop inside countries as a result of national patterns of formative experience (Schneider, 1989). Traditionally cultures have been associated with countries, indeed exemplifications of this are the two famous researches of Hofstede and the GLOBE project choosing countries as unit of cross-cultural studies to assign national scores that should represent the culture of a nation. However, comparative researches have shown that cultural differences do not necessarily correspond to national differences (Easterby-Smith & al., 1995; Elenkov & Kirova, 2008; Fischer & Schwartz, 2011); for this reason, it is crucial to distinguish between cross-national and cross-cultural conceptualizations when studying the effects on individuals and consequences on their careers.

In order to overcome the two issues introduced, the present chapter will illustrate the use of cultural archetypes, which are specific configurations of multiple cultural dimensions. Some studies, as the one from Richter et al. (2016) and Venaik and Mindgley (2015), have suggested that “describing individuals and predicting their intentions according to cultural archetypes is qualitatively superior to drawing on single cultural dimensions or using countries as proxies” (Richter, 2016, p.64).

The next paragraphs will introduce the concept of cultural archetypes, its origin and its mathematical working and will then go through the major applications of the construct in the literature. It will be clarified why the archetypal model is the most suitable to capture heterogeneity between countries and consequently achieve better results for career studies. The discussion will then compare the cluster methodology and the archetypal one underlying their positive and negative sides. Lastly, the chapter will present the research proposal of the current dissertation.

## **3.2 Cultural boundaries**

### 3.2.1 Homogeneity or heterogeneity of national culture?

The majority of career studies have adopted the cultural dimensions of Hofstede (namely power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation vs. short term orientation and indulgence vs. restraint) or Schwartz's ones (1999) to assign national scores that are considered to represent the culture of a certain country. Notwithstanding the popularity of these measures, some criticisms against the approach have been moved and the most important is represented by the presumption of the relative homogeneity of a national culture. As Alion states in his 2008 work, "using a single national score in order to represent an individual, organization or other subgroups in a nation ignores the variance we often observe within a country" (p. 893). Moreover, proponents of the national culture perspective such as Ronen and Shenkar (2013) recognize that there is some individual variation in values within a nation, but as long as the cross-national variation is greater than the within-nation one, aggregating individual values into one score best represent "the central thrust of their shared enculturation" (Schwartz, 1999, p. 26).

The aforementioned assumption of relative cultural homogeneity inside a country has not been taken as a starting point by all researchers. For instance, Au found that "ICV (inter cultural variation) is as large as the variation of culture means across cultures" (1999, p. 799). More recently, Fisher and Schwartz discovered that "within-country agreement on item ratings was low for most items, indicating little within-country value consensus" (2011, p. 1136).

The national cultural homogeneity approach has consequently started being depicted as an oversimplified concept. Researchers are increasingly understanding that it is more appropriate to measure culture at the individual level rather than using proxies since factors as education and social relationship influence values (Straube & al., 2002). Indeed, the latest researches are making clear that there is the need to abandon the assumption of homogeneity of national culture to embrace the idea of having heterogeneity among citizens.

### 3.2.2 Exogenous and endogenous cultural definition:

Starting from the 1990s, the literature has begun studying the cross-country heterogeneity and has delineated cultural boundaries exogenously, which means using external criteria as geography, demography and nationality.

The Au's 1997 study is an exemplification of the need of taking "ICV" into account in cultural studies. The work, utilizing geography and demography as exogenous criteria, has been

conducted in fast-growing markets, where gaps created by globalization concerning wealth distribution, technology diffusion and urbanization were supposed to show a relevant cultural differentiation. In fact choosing China, Brazil and India, thus mostly covering the BRIC countries, researchers could hypothesize cultural boundaries based on geographical divisions. The results shown that globalization has deeply impacted China concerning capitalism and western life style, in fact China Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong sharply differ in terms of mentality (Au, 1997).

Demographic characteristics are another exogenous approach to define sub-cultures locations by looking at the sample studied through micro, and not macro lenses as geography does. The focus is on individuals and their characteristics, indeed the emerging groups cannot be visualized on a map. This approach is considered to be an advancement to gain a more precise cultural partition. For instance, Taras, Steel and Kirkman in 2016 conducted a cross-cultural analysis<sup>6</sup> finding that occupational and socio-economic status are reliable determinants for cultural patterns. Other scholars, as Matsumoto, Kudoh and Takeuchi (1996) concentrated their attention on individuals' age founding that people belonging to the same generation or life stage show commonality of values.

Anyway, the study of cultural variations through exogenous delineations presents some limitations. Firstly, certain works took into considerations only one dimension of cultural patterns, for example individualism vs. collectivisms. Instead both using Hofstede or Schwartz's values, all the dimensions should be taken into account to better define sub-cultures. Secondly, the majority of researches analysed only one country at time, clearly erasing the possibility to capture transnational variations or similarities. The third, but not less important, limitation is given by the method used to define boundaries of cultural groups. The approach is considered defective because cultural groups are defined *a priori* based on external criteria as geographic location or demography and only after differences in values among subgroups are examined. Instead, culture is inextricably linked to the sharing of values among individuals and subgroups should be defined through their shared values rather than other characteristics.

The last limitation exposed opens the way to an endogenous approach of defining cultural boundaries, taking commonalities of values of individuals as the base to group them rather than geography or demography. The configurational and endogenous perspective is perfectly represented by cultural archetypes, which are configurations of values shared by groups of

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<sup>6</sup> "Does country equate with culture? Beyond geography in the research of cultural boundaries"

individuals allowing to distinguish people associated to a certain archetype and those belonging to the national average. The endogenous approach may reconcile the two point of views in the literature, national culture and cultural heterogeneity, inside one single schema that will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

### **3.3 Cultural archetypes**

The model of cultural archetypes entails a shift of focus to the individual and his/her values and can be seen as a solutions for the issues related to the exogenous cross-cultural research. Indeed “by moving away from considering single cultural dimensions, or nationality as a proxy for understanding how cross-cultural differences affect individuals’ intentions, the cultural archetypes approach may be considered a better predictor of variations in such intentions” (Richter & al., 2016, p.65).

The word “archetype” derives from the ancient Greek *arkhe* and *tupos*, roughly translated as “original model” and its modern definition is “a very typical example of a certain person or thing” (Oxford dictionary).

Starting from the origin of the construct, the idea of an archetype can be retrieved in the work of Plato that in his theory distinguished between abstract “universals” and concrete “particulars”. Universals are ideal types of things, so their perfect representations, while particulars are the concrete representations of these perfect images, thus their real and imperfect translation. Indeed to illustrate this difference it is possible to think about drawing a circle on a blackboard. This circle will only resemble a perfect circle, but everyone looking at it will identify it as a circle because all individuals understand its universal form and recognize it in the particular case on the blackboard. Each person holds an abstract concept of the “universal circle” in mind that permits him/her to recognize circles in many objects seen every day. Archetypes are a development of Plato’s ideas that defines classes of universals for specific applications with a “pure form that embodies the fundamental characteristics of an object”.

The focus of the present work is on “archetypes of cultural values that are shared by groups of individuals within and across nations” (Venaik & Midgley, 2015, p.1055). In particular, these shared values are seen through a configurational lens since people can hold many different sorts of values (Tsui & al., 2007). Using the platonic origin of the concept archetype and its etymology, Venaik and Midgley in 2015 defined a cultural archetype as “a configuration of the

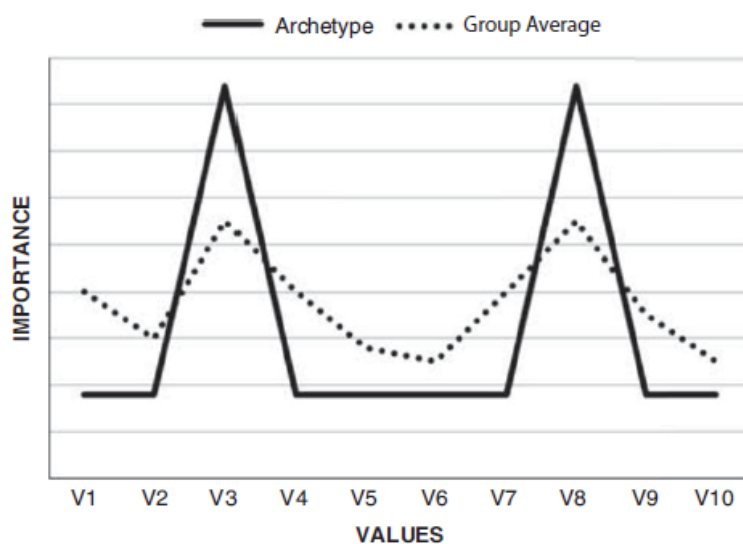
fundamental values shared by a group of people and represented by a hypothetical individual who perfectly embodies these values” (Venaik & Midgley, 2015, p.1055).

In addition, the study conducted in 2016 by Richter & al. states that “cultural archetypes are certain configurations of multiple cultural dimensions and are thus defined by the magnitude of as well as the interrelationships between cultural dimensions” (p. 66). In accordance to this definition, cultural archetypes provide a gestalt perspective of culture (Early 2006), meaning a “degree of internal coherence among a set of theoretical attributes” (Venkatraman, 1989, p.432). Consequently adopting the construct there is no assumption of linear association between attributes, but patterns are created in a holistic form that reflects in an archetype (Mille & Friensen, 1977).

Cultural archetypes are a latent construct since each group member’s will have a different degree of resemblance to the archetypes configuration, exactly as the particular case of a circle exposed above relates to the universal concept of it.

It is important to distinguish between a “group average” and an archetype. In the figure 3.1 below there is a representation of group average and archetype for the ten cultural values on the horizontal axis. The archetype underlines the two values (V3 and V8) that are most relevant to the group and the other eight that are less important, while the average simply smooths the differences in importance among values, thus erasing the two values that are fundamental for the group.

*Figure 3.1: Styled illustration of an archetype compared with the group average*



[Source: Venaik, S., & Midgley D.F., (2015) “Mindscapes across landscapes: Archetypes of transnational and subnational culture”]

The figure above suggests that archetypal configurations may have advantages over the “average method” used in the literature. In fact they may allow to discover diverse configurations of values in a heterogeneous population, which would remain hidden if only averages were considered.

Moreover, the methodology, that groups people into clusters according to their resemblance to the hypothetical individual closer to them does not overlook heterogeneity in a population and becomes a source of differentiation.

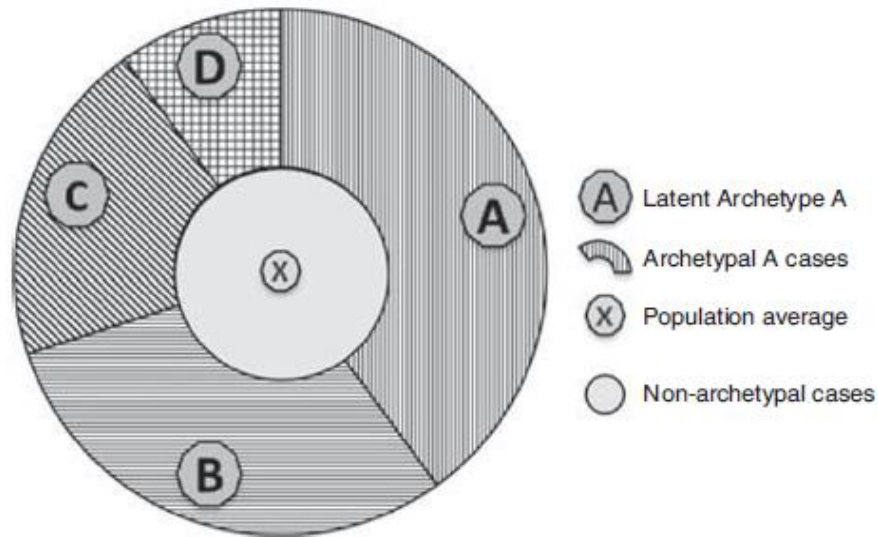
In an heterogeneous population it is implicit to think about the existence of multiple cultural archetypes, each one representing a different configuration of values and each one diverse from the others. This is why among a number of countries it is likely to expect several cultural archetypes, each one associated with a subgroup of the population.

In this case, if a certain individual  $x_i$  has characteristics resembling archetype A, he/she will belong to this particular archetype; but if the configuration is different, the  $x_i$  individual may belong to the archetypes B or to another one. This logic will reiterate until a set of archetypes is found, comprehending all the subgroups and representing all the distinct configurations in the population studied. Those people that are left out will be the subgroup representing the average configuration of the population, described as “a weighted composite of the values of all the subgroups within the population” (Venaik & Midlgey, 2015, p. 1057) and ascribed as “non-archetypal cases”.

The figure 3.2 shows four hypothetical archetypes (A, B, C and D) with their distributions in the population and the whole in the centre represents the population average, i.e. the non-archetypal cases. From this stylized image, we can derive two strengths of the archetypal methodology: it separates archetypal cases from non-archetypal ones and it describes archetypal cases in a number of perfect samples, i.e. archetypes.



Figure 3.2: Multiple archetypes and non-archetypal cases in a population



[Source: Venaik, S., & Midgley D.F., 2015, “Mindscapes across landscapes: Archetypes of transnational and subnational culture”]

The number of archetypes and the dimension of subgroups depend on the characteristics of the population studied, exactly as boundaries among groups will be defined by the methodology adopted.

In general, “Archetypal Analysis” (AA hereafter) is the procedure increasingly used for endogenously identify archetypes from multi-variate data. The procedure has been firstly introduced by Cutler and Breiman in 1994 as a formal statistical technique with a data set containing head measurements of a sample of 200 Swiss soldiers, thus representing multivariate data. The aim of the two researchers was to demonstrate that it was possible to identify archetypes that represent a sort of “pure individual types”, i.e. “a few points lying on the boundary of the data scatter that are intended as a synthesis of the observed points” (Porzio, Ragozini & Vistocco, 2008, p. 422). Each observed point will be a mix of pure types and archetypes are selected by minimizing the square error in representing each individual as a mixture of archetypes.

The application of cultural archetypes in cross-cultural studies provides several advantages. First, the approach explicitly copes with the possible interrelationships between different cultural dimensions. Indeed, analysing the influence of a single dimension without taking into account the effects among them may yield to misleading conclusions. For this reason, archetypes could not only provide a more comprehensive representation of a certain culture but also account for reinforcing or countervailing effects of various cultural dimensions.

Second, a cultural archetypes-based measurement seems “more appropriate for cross-cultural studies that seek to assess the impact of an independent variable on a dependent variable conditional on a certain context such as culture” (Richter & al., 2016, p.67). In fact, multi-group analysis clarifies the strength of relationships between independent variables and the dependent one contingently with cultural archetypes (Boyd & al., 2013). Third, the archetypal approach is more precise in the study of culture beyond countries boundaries. The construct, allowing within-nation variation may be a better way of assessing culture starting from the individuals as unit of analysis and not from cultural dimensions.

Archetypes approach has proved to be a suitable methodology also to analyse the cultural evolution over space and time. Indeed adopting the perspective that individuals are “not only the carriers and creatures of culture, but they are also creators and manipulators of culture” (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952, p. 49), culture is seen as evolving over time as an effect of travel and communication. In this context, cultural archetypes changing configuration of values and increasing or decreasing the size of associated subgroups can effectively track this evolution.

### **3.4 Applications of cultural archetypes**

Recently two major studies have investigated the cultural archetypes construct and have utilized it as methodology for their research: “Mindscapes across landscapes” from Venaik and Midgley conducted in 2015 and the Richter & al.’s 2016 study “Using cultural archetypes in cross-cultural management study”. The two researches have some commonalities as well as points of difference that will be exposed below.

Starting from the Venaik and Midgley’s study (V&M hereafter), the two researchers decided to focus their work on configurations of values, which are “group’s values expressed across multiple dimensions” (V&M, 2015, p.1059). They identify cultural archetypes within and across nations through common configurations of cultural values shared by groups of people. Moreover, they utilized the Schwartz values presented in the table 3.1 to identify archetypes and the World Value Survey’s wave 2005 to gather the data needed.

*Table 3.1: Schwartz's motivational values types and their representative items in WVS 2005*

<b>Motivational Value Type</b>	<b>Representative Item in WVS 2005</b>
<b>1. Universalism</b>	Looking after environment
<b>2. Benevolence</b>	To help the people
<b>3. Tradition</b>	Tradition
<b>4. Conformity</b>	To always behave properly
<b>5. Security</b>	Living in secure surroundings
<b>6. Power</b>	To be rich
<b>7. Achievement</b>	Being very successful
<b>8. Hedonism</b>	To have a good time
<b>9. Stimulation</b>	Adventure and taking risks
<b>10. Self-Direction</b>	To think up new ideas

[Source: adaptation of Schwartz (1994: 22) and World Values Survey 2005]

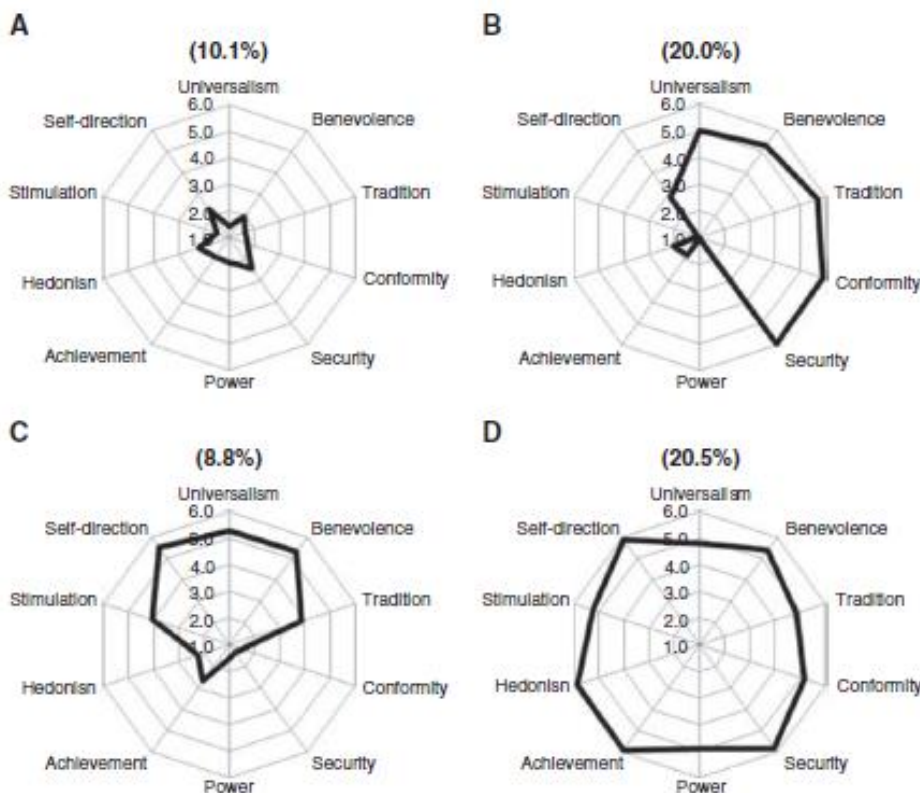
The choice of Schwartz's values is related to the fact that it is the prominent model for individual level values, to the availability of data from the WVS (World Values Survey) and to the equivalence of the construct across countries in all continents. The sample chosen comprehends four countries: Japan, USA, China and India. The reason behind this selection is the willingness to comprehend countries capturing the global cultural diversity and to focus on those significant for the global economy. Moreover, four cultural criteria has been utilized to select the sample: Secular/self expression values (from the Schwartz model), religion, language and ethnicity.

After having found the sample, the two researchers used the AA algorithm from Cutler and Breiman (1994) to create cultural groups. To illustrate the statistical technique it is possible to think about data as a cloud of points in a multi-dimensional space that is described by the interest variables, which in this case are values. Each data occupies a point inside the cloud and has its own coordinates representing the magnitude of variables observed for that particular case. Starting from this, "archetypes are defined as the coordinates of a small number of points on the frontier of this cloud and each case is described as a simple weighted composite of these archetypes. Using iterative optimization techniques, AA chooses coordinates of archetypes and individual cases' weights to best fit the totality of data" (p. 1061).

One of the main advantage of AA technique is the fact that it imposes no strong model on the data ( Li, Wang, Louviere & Carson, 2003) and that it is robust to noise in the data (Chan, Mitchel & Cram, 2003). All cases in the dataset have weights ranging from 0 to 1 which represent the degree of association with each archetypes; if the weigh it 0.5 or higher the individual’s configuration of values is more strongly associated to one archetype and thus is an archetypal case. On the contrary, if the weight is below 0.5 it means that the individual configuration is located close to the centre of the space and to the average, hence it is a non-archetypal case.

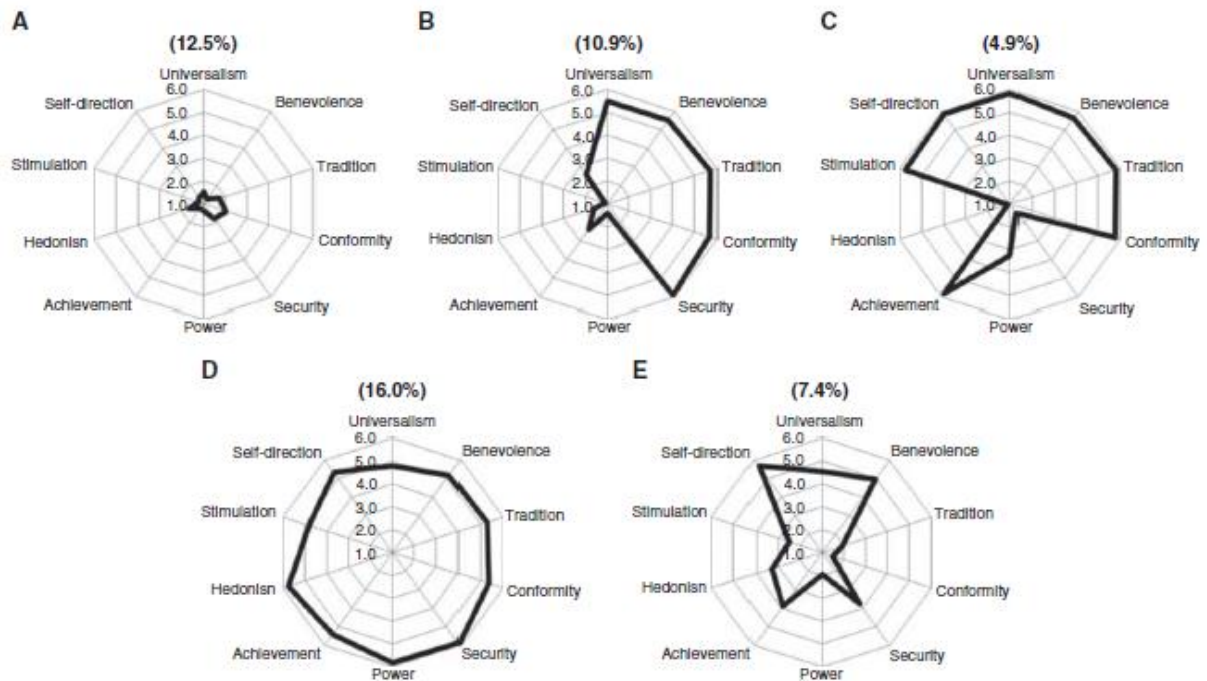
After having tested the data for heterogeneity, researches obtained five archetypes for the pooled data, while four archetypes are the best solutions for Japan, USA and China and six for India. Findings are represented in the figure 3.3 below in a radar graph from which it is possible to get at the first glance an impression of the values system behind and compare the various archetypes. In the three figures below the four archetypes for the USA are represented as well as the five for the pooled data and the diverse archetypal and non-archetypal case for each country using the pooled data.

Figure 3.3: Culture archetypes in USA



[Source: Venaik, S., & Midgley D.F., (2007) “Mindscapes across landscapes: Archetypes of transnational and subnational culture”]

Figure 3.4: Culture archetypes with pooled data from Japan, USA, China and India

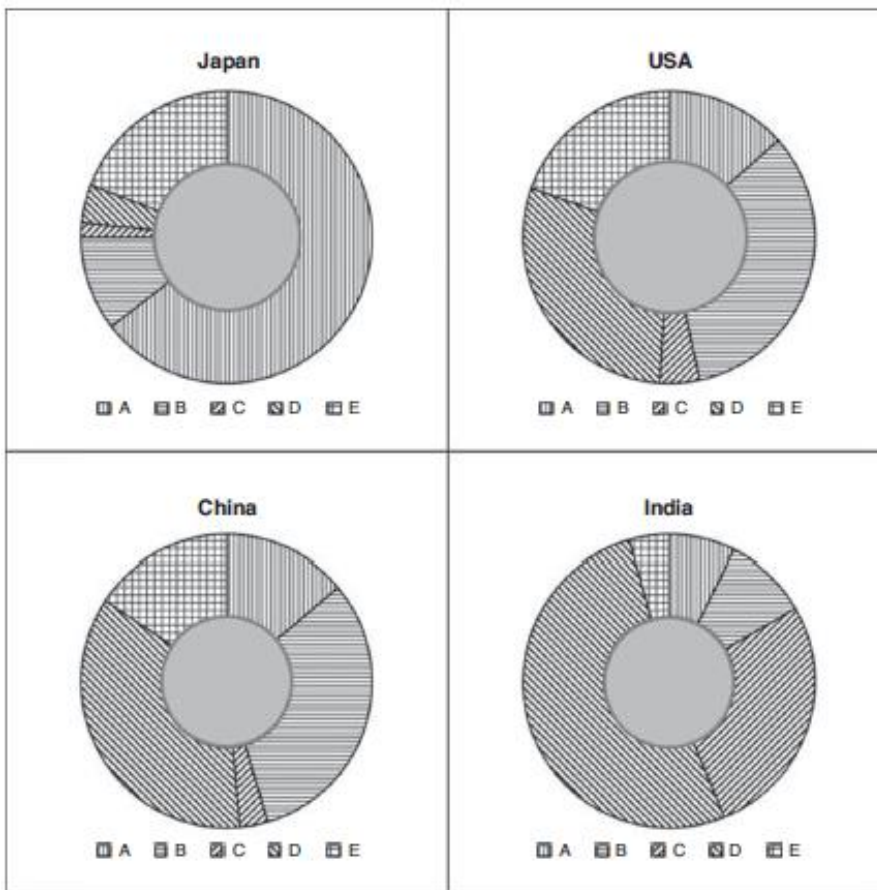


[Source: Venaik, S., & Midgley D.F., (2007) "Mindscapes across landscapes: Archetypes of transnational and subnational culture"]

Supporting their assumptions, researchers found heterogeneity in individual values within each country, which can be well captured by a small number of archetypes. Moreover, some cultural archetypes found are transnational, meaning they are detected in all four countries studied, while others are subnational.

In addition, concerning the pooled data findings, each of the four countries is associated with at least two archetypes that link across countries, supporting the existence of transnational archetypes spanning more than one country.

Figure 3.5: different archetypal and non-archetypal cases by country using pooled data



[Source: Venaik, S., & Midgley D.F., (2007) “Mindscapes across landscapes: Archetypes of transnational and subnational culture”]

The study conducted by Richter & al. (2016) advocates the use of cultural archetypes for cultural studies with the idea that various archetypes could be revealed within a single country as well as across countries, thus suggesting that the methodology is superior to others in the literature.

However, some differences can be found between the two studies. First, the Richter & al.’s research, rather than using Schwartz values, identifies cultural groups considering five out of six Hofstede dimensions, namely power distance, collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity and long-term orientation. The choice is based on the fact that, according to the scholars, it would create a better comparison with the existing cross-cultural literature, principally employing Hofstede’s dimensions.

The second point of distance is given by the fact that Richter utilizes clustering procedures to identify the cultural archetypes present in all the ten countries analysed, while V&M use the AA technique to fit the data and other criteria to find the right number of archetypes<sup>7</sup>.

The third difference is represented by the samples analysed. Richter decided to focus the attention on a sample of business students from ten countries, motivating the choice with two reasons. Firstly, students represent a homogeneous group minimizing the effects of external variables; secondly they are the subject of the later analysis performed by researchers concerning entrepreneurial intentions. Following Ronen and Shenkar (2013) the countries selected by Richter & al. are: China, Colombia, Germany, India, Italy, Russia, Spain, Turkey, the U.K. and the U.S. which belong to eight out of eleven clusters identified in the 2013 research; moreover respondents are mostly equally split in gender and they all have 21 years.

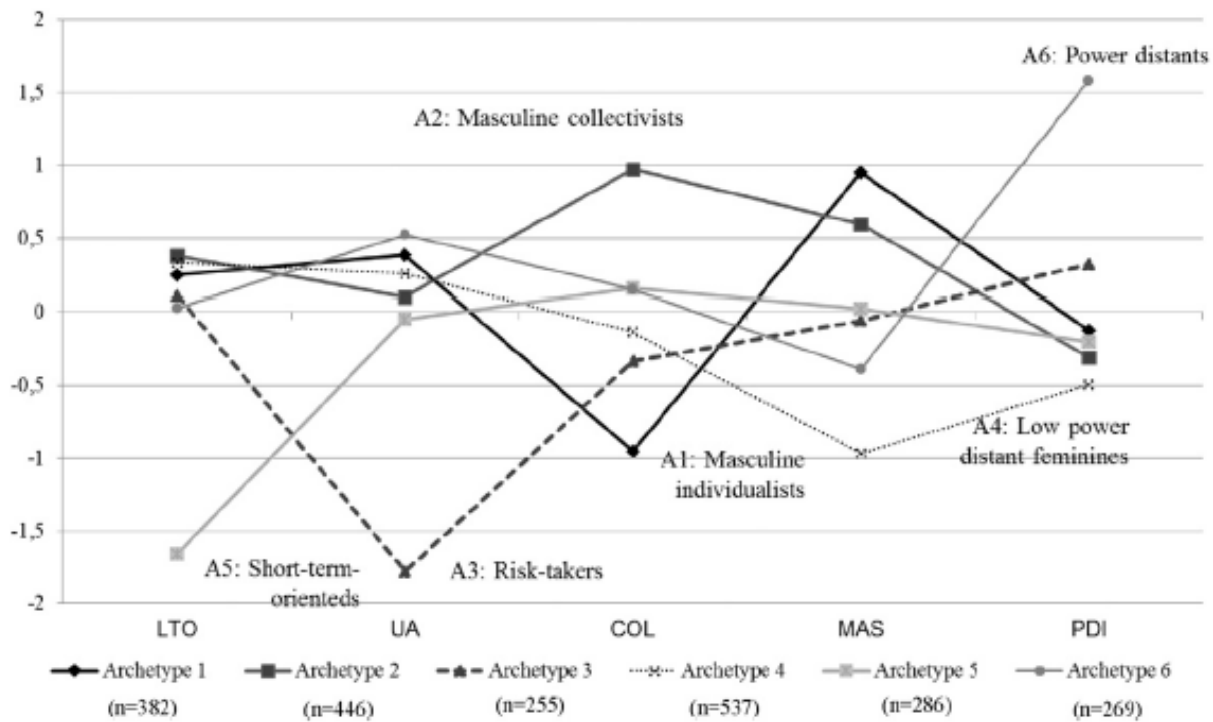
The methodology adopted by Richter & al. consists in sequentially performing two clusters analysis to classify individuals in cultural archetypes independently from the context and national boundaries. First the Ward's method (1963) of hierarchical clustering is employed to determine the appropriate number of clusters. In a second step, a k-means cluster procedure from Sarstedt & Mooi (2014) is applied to find "the best configuration of similar cultural patterns forming a cultural archetype of a six-cluster and an eight-cluster solution" (p. 69).

Each of the six archetypes determined is represented by "constellations" that are shown in the figure 3.6 below. On the horizontal axis there are the five Hofstede dimensions taken into account and on the vertical axis the score given to each dimensions. For example cluster A6 is high on power distance and uncertainty avoidance while it is low on masculine orientation, thus it defines a group of "power distant".

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<sup>7</sup> From Venaik and Midgley "*Technical Appendix for Mindscapes across Landscapes*" criteria for choosing archetypes: (1) the fit index, (2) whether the fir is better than the 1% confidence level found for random data, (3) Each archetype is well supported by data, (4) Parsimony, i.e. representing the data with few well differentiated archetypes.

Figure 3.6: cultural constellation of different archetypes



[Source: Richter, N.F., Hauff, S., Schlaegel, C., Gudergan, S., Ringle, C.M., Gunkel, M., (2016), *Using cultural archetypes in cross-cultural management studies*]

Moreover, the two studies have also partially different research proposals. Both have the common aim of demonstrating the existence of cultural archetypes spanning over the country's border thus showing that heterogeneity in cultures can be defined by archetypes. However, V&M, with their richer description of heterogeneity in cultures, want to “develop a better understanding of the dynamics and evolution of culture over time and space” (V&M, 2015, p. 1056). On the other hand, Richter & al. used cultural archetypes to create a model of entrepreneurial intention taking into account the culture's (i.e. cultural archetypes) moderating role on “the relationships between attitudes that capture entrepreneurial tendencies” (p. 71).

Moreover, the two researches have similar findings concerning cultural archetypes. The one and the other identified the presence of cultural archetypes that do not correspond to national cultures and the existence of “transnational similarities” given by archetypes that crosscut countries.

Both studies found no predominance of a single archetype inside a country. For instance Richter & al., detected that the “highest percentage of concentration of any archetype within a country is around 40% to 45%” (p. 69). With V&M the most numerous archetype is found in Japan covering only 21.9% of the country population and the same stands for non-archetypal cases



covering 46.5% in Japan, 40.7% in USA, 38.5% in China, with exception of India where they slightly dominate representing 53.3% of the sample.

The last similarity concerns the number of archetypes defined. V&M found four archetypal groups for Japan, China and USA and six for India (explained by the fact that the country has a greater diversity). Then pooling data from the four countries, the analysis identified five archetypes as the best solution, which together with the non-archetypal group result in six configurations. Richter & al. applying cluster methodology considered all respondents as belonging to a single sample and found six sub-groups as the best solution.

The two works presented in this section are the major literature contributions using archetypes in cultural studies. They proved that the methodology is well-grounded and that it can be a significant addition to cross-country research thus abandoning the idea that culture corresponds to country boundaries.

### **3.5 Research proposal**

The previous paragraph elucidated cultural archetypes and how they have proved to be an innovative approach in cultural studies. For this reason the current work will try to replicate the methodology.

The research aims at demonstrating:

- Proposition 1: there are different archetypes of subjective career success in different countries, i.e. archetypes change when the country changes
- Proposition 2: there are transnational archetypes of subjective career success perceptions
- Proposition 3: there are perceptions of subjective career success that remain constant or similar notwithstanding the different context

The literature has never studied how the multidimensionality of SCS changes in different countries. We want to cover this gap analysing if SCS perceptions are cross-national, if they change in each countries or if there are trends they follow.

The study needs to find a reliable mathematical method, for this reason the next paragraph will describe the two methods employed in the literature with cultural archetypes, comparing them and selecting the most appropriate. After the choice, the method will be used to extend the

career study to a sample of countries not studied yet, thanks to the 5C group's database containing questionnaire responses from 31 countries.

### 3.5.1 Which is the best model for the research and why:

The choice of the methodology to utilize is critical for the mathematical part of the research as well as for its findings. As briefly exposed in the previous paragraphs, V&M decided to apply an innovative method, the archetypal analysis (AA hereafter) introduced by Cutler and Breiman in 1994. On the contrary, Richter & al., followed a more popular two steps cluster analysis with both hierarchical and k-means clustering application.

The technical appendix of the V&M study describes both advantages and limitations of AA methodology and compares it with other method as clustering and latent class analysis.

Eugster & Leisch (2009) explain the essential problem that AA seeks to solve as the following. Assume having a matrix  $X$  of multivariate data with  $n$  observations and  $m$  variables and you know  $k$ , the number of archetypes you want to create. The algorithm seeks to find a matrix  $Z$  of  $k$   $m$ -dimensional archetypes which satisfy two conditions: data are best approximated by the convex combination of archetypes that minimize the residual sum of squares ( $RSS = |X - \alpha Z|$ ) and the archetypes themselves are convex combinations of data points.

Comparing AA methodology with cluster analysis and latent class analysis, the authors clarify that "we are not arguing here that one method is superior to the others; it clearly depends on researcher's objectives and data" (V&M Technical appendix, 2015, p. 10). Furthermore, cluster analysis derives from 1930s, latent class analysis from 1960s, thus there is an extensive literature review and applications to draw on for finding advantages and limitation. AA method instead has been developed in the 1990s and consequently it has a smaller literature to tap into.

There are several similarities among these three methods. Firstly, they all use iterative optimization techniques to fit the model to the data and produce multiple profiles across the variables of interest. Secondly, the three methods require running from multiple starting points in order to ensure the best fit. Thirdly, they demand comparisons of fit using different numbers of archetypes, classes and clusters to select the best overall solution. Lastly, although archetypal analysis is not a cluster analysis method, their outputs have some commonalities, namely a small number of discrete patterns that summarize the data.

The three techniques show also some straightforward differences. The big difference of AA compared to other techniques is the fact that archetypes have a clear definition (V&M, 2012, p. 16), i.e. data points that best describe the exterior surface of a cloud of data. In addition, cluster

analysis is most often used with interval-level data, while latent class analysis employs categorical data and AA presumes interval-level data. Moreover, objective cluster and latent class analysis divide the sample of data into subgroups, i.e. clusters or classes, on the contrary AA “seeks to describe each sample’s case as a weighted combination of small numbers of archetypes, with each archetype being a perfect example of a subgroup of configurations within the overall data” (V&M technical appendix, 2015, p.9). Lastly, with regard to the philosophy concerning the information content of a sample case, AA treats cases on the frontier of a multidimensional data clouds as more informative than those in the middle of the cloud, thus archetypes come from cases on the frontier. In contrast, both cluster and latent class analysis treat each case equally, regardless the position in the cloud of points.

### 3.5.2 Advantages and limitation of Archetypal Analysis:

After the comparison among the three methods the AA technique, producing simple, easily interpretable and robust solutions, seems the most appropriate for the analysis of multivariate data of the 5C dataset. There will now be presented the major advantages and limitations of AA.

The main advantage given by AA compared to cluster analysis is the fact that it effectively considers the topology of the whole sample, while the others focus only on a restricted sample around clusters or classes found. Some authors in the literature argue that the AA procedure produces sharper and more differentiated solutions than cluster analysis (Elder & Pinner, 2003) as well as other works show that the technique is robust to Gaussian, Poisson and systematic error noise in the data (e.g. Chant, Mitchell & Cram, 2003).

Furthermore, researches (i.e. Li, Wang, Louviere & Carson, 2003) underline the fact that AA does not impose a strong model to the data, consequently it may better capture meaningful results without applying restrictions. In addition, archetypes are easier to interpret in view of the fact that they are associated with real data. Eventually, all cases in the data “have scores representing the degree they are associated with each archetype” (V&M, 2015, p. 16), thus allowing “single cases” (associated with one archetype only) and “mixed cases” (associated with two or more archetypes) to be separated.

Focusing the attention on limitations instead, Cutler and Breiman (1994) state that using the AA “the chance of finding local fits to the data augments as the number of archetypes increase”.

Moreover, the literature noted as well some disadvantages of this technique. First, “the exterior data points defining archetypes are not outliers or extreme cases” (V&M, 2015, p. 51), meaning

that AA is vulnerable to the influence of outliers as any other statistical technique (Eugster & Leisch, 2010). For this reason, researchers should either exclude these extreme data points or utilize robust archetypal methods. Second, as many other statistical techniques, the AA methodology does not guarantee to find a global minimum and the chances decrease as the number of archetypes increases (Cutler & Breiman, 1994; Elder & Pinnell, 2003).

Third, AA technique is still a new approach and has not find a widespread implementation yet; indeed only few studies in the literature have utilized it and investigated its properties, thus more research is needed to turn it into a standard technique.

Despite of limitations just exposed, we will utilize this methodology as we consider it superior to others for the purpose of this research. The characteristic of AA, identifying heterogeneity among individuals and grouping them according to their most important traits, is well suited to come up with neat cultural configurations and to represent people's characteristics in the clearest way possible. The research will follow the approach of Venaik and Midgley, but using a different dataset and selecting different countries for the analysis.

## **3.6 Criteria for the countries choice**

### 3.6.1 The choice of Venaik and Midgley:

In their research, V&M extracted data from the World Value Survey 2005 (a global network of scientists collecting worldwide data on human beliefs and values) and selected the countries to be analysed following two reasoning: the countries' diversity and their relevance in the global economy. Following this rationale, the researchers utilized four cultural criteria to select the sample of countries, namely (1) secular/self-expression values, (2) religion, (3) language, (4) ethnicity.

Concerning the countries' diversity, the scientists followed Inglehart and Welzel's 2010 work which underlines the fact that economic development is accompanied by national value evolution, thus the more progressed is the economic development of a certain country, the more advanced the country will be in self-expression values. V&M looked for countries covering the four quadrants in the Inglehart and Welzel framework in order to choose nations as different as possible in fundamental value drivers. In addition to secular/self-expression values, V&M considered also religion, language and ethnicity as requirements choosing the sample in order to ensure heterogeneity in the countries selected.

The second reasoning in sample's selection concerns the economic relevance of countries in the world context; as a matter of fact the choice laid on Japan, USA, China and India as "these four countries are among the top five in the world on gross domestic profit" (V&M, 2015, p. 1062).

### 3.6.2 Our database:

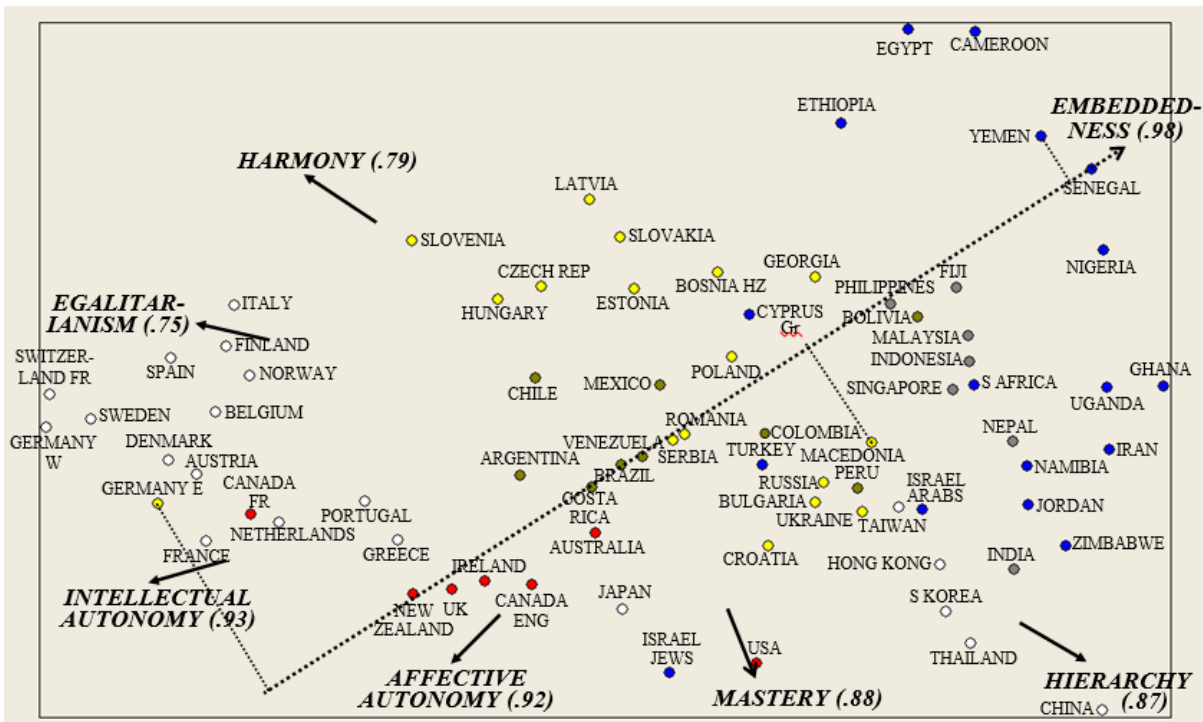
Our work wants to take the V&M's study as a starting point to apply archetypal analysis to the career research. The 5C group's database will be the numerical base of the study.

The 5C group (corresponding to the Cross-Cultural Collaboration on Contemporary Careers) is a non-profit consortium of faculty researchers founded in 2004 that explores career success and career management around the world and how they vary. The scientists began understanding how people in different countries and in different global clusters view career success, examining also other factors such as age, gender, ethnicity and family background in order to assess their influence on individuals' career choices. The group's ultimate purpose is to improve the understanding of modern careers, to appreciate differences among individual choices and to identify solutions to successfully manage career issues on behalf of individuals as well as organizations and societies.

5C's studies take an exploratory approach without imposing pre-specified hypothesis. Indeed the group adopts an *emic* view, i.e. "a perspective and methodology whereby individuals from all major cultural regions of the world express their views regarding their careers in their own words without preformed categorizations" (Mayrhofer, Briscoe & al., 2016, p. 1).

The country-level sampling is based on Schwartz's theory of cultural groups and it follows three main reasons: the perceived methodological superiority of the theory; the more recent data available and the fact that Schwartz organizes his value polarities in a dimensional arrangements allowing to group nations according to different world regions.

Figure 3.7: Schwartz country clusters



[Source: Schwartz, 2006]

The team conducted a first qualitative stage of the process, consisting in semi-structured interviews to managers, nurses and blue collars to gain a better understanding of how individuals in early and late career phases view their career success and transition. The second and ongoing stage instead is quantitative, with a survey of individuals from thirty-one countries.

The database contains interviews from 19470 individuals covering various occupations, with the idea that both their gender and their age will have an impact on career success and career management. The data was gathered from 31 countries (Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malawi, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, UK and US). The intention was to obtain heterogeneous within-country samples (Cook & Campbell, 1979) with regard to relevant respondents' demographic characteristics (i.e., cumulative work experience, occupation, gender).

Moreover, the 31 countries cover all Schwartz's country clusters of cultural value orientations. Namely, 9 countries are in West Europe, 5 in East Europe, 4 in Latin America, 5 in English Speaking, 3 in Confucian, 1 in South-East Asia and 4 in the Africa & Middle-East.

Interviews were semi-structured and conducted in person in order to give researchers the required flexibility while still focusing upon questions of interest (Patton, 1990).

The questionnaire's main sections are: working experience, respondents' career success perspectives, respondents' perspectives on their work and on their companies, demographic questions. The study identified the major categories of the meanings of career success arriving to three main places where career success "lives" in the mind of workers: person, job and interaction with the environment.

The questionnaire led the researchers develop a scale of subjective career success on seven dimensions that are globally relevant, namely Financial security, Financial achievement, Learning & Development, Work-life balance, Positive relationships, Positive impact and Entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, the scale covers two aspects of career success: the importance aspect (i.e. thinking about my career success, I consider this career aspect...) and the achievement aspect (i.e. regarding this career aspect, I have achieved a level I am happy with...). Both these aspects "should always be used together in questionnaires while gathering data" (Briscoe, Kase, Dries, Dysvik, Unite & al, 2017, p.47).

In the survey each respondent's answer can range from 1 to 5 where 1 corresponds to "not at all important" for importance aspect and "strongly disagree" for achievement aspect", while 5 corresponds respectively to "very important" and "strongly agree".

The seven dimensions of the subjective career success scale are represented by three or more questions in the questionnaire (see table 3.3 in the next page) and the scores corresponding to each dimension are given by the mean responses (always going from 1 to 5) given for each question.

Table 3.2: Subjective career success scale dimensions

<b>Dimension / item</b>	<b>Item description</b>
<b>Learning &amp; Development</b>	
LD1	Having the opportunity to be innovative in one's work activities.
LD2	Experiencing challenges in one's work.
LD3	Continuously learning throughout one's career.
LD4	Doing work that gives one the opportunity to learn.
<b>Work-Life Balance</b>	
WLB1	Achieving a satisfying balance between work and family life.
WLB2	Having time for non-work interests.
WLB3	Achieving balance between work and non-work activities.
<b>Positive Impact</b>	
PI1	Contributing to the development of others.
PI2	Helping others.
PI3	Leaving people and places better as a result of one's career.
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>	
ENT1	Being self-employed.
ENT2	Owning one's own company.
ENT3	Running my own business.
<b>Positive Work Relationships</b>	
PWR1	Experiencing positive relationships with peers and colleagues.
PWR2	Experiencing positive relationships with superiors.
PWR3	Getting positive feedback from supervisors.
PWR4	Getting positive feedback from colleagues.
<b>Financial Security</b>	
FES1	Being able to provide the basic necessities.
FES2	Being able to provide for one's family financially.
FES3	Having financial security.
<b>Financial Success</b>	
FSUC1	Achieving wealth.
FSUC2	Receiving incentives, perks or bonuses.
FSUC3	Steadily making more money.

[Source: "Minding the gap(s): development and validation of a cross-culturally representative measure of subjective career success", Briscoe, Kase, Dries, Dysvik & Unite]

The seven dimension of the SCS scale developed by the 5C group are built around four overarching themes: material concerns, learning, social relations and pursuing one's own projects, which are presented in table 3.4.



*Table 3.3: Themes of career success*

<b>Overarching themes</b>	<b>Meanings of career success</b>
<b>1. Material concerns</b>	Financial security
	Financial achievement
<b>2. Learning</b>	Learning and development
<b>3. Social relations</b>	Work-life balance
	Positive relationships
	Positive impact
<b>4. Pursuing one's own projects</b>	Entrepreneurship

[Source: "Career success across the globe: Insights from the 5C project" by Mayrhofer, Briscoe, Hall & al., 2016]

Material concerns comprehend financial achievement and financial security. The first refers to the reliable supply of material necessities for the survival; it is a basic aspiration but highly relevant to many people around the world. The second instead is the most commonly valued meaning of career success and it is characterized by three robust characteristics: people experience it when they steadily make more money; it is more salient for individuals working in industries focused on cash and most people still consider the level of money they earn an important sign of their success.

The research suggests that learning and development is often an important meaning of career success. Usually there are two types of learning: one that is continuous, informal and attained on the job as well as from failures and from life experiences; the other one is a formal learning that involves the acquisition of professional skills via training or by formal education. National cultures play a role in the positioning of learning and in the development of this measure as an element of career success; for example in collectivist countries (with exception to the U.S.) it is perceived important. Additionally, learning as a component of career success is considered as a "plus" and appreciated more by those people whose basic economic needs are already met.

The social relations theme is composed by three meanings: work-life balance, positive relationships and positive impact. The work-life balance regarding career success has three main aspects: a balance between work and family life, between work and non-work activities and having time for non-work interests. The variable implies that people judge career success also by the impact that work has on their private life.

Positive relationships: for many people interviewed, career success is based upon the quality of relationships with co-workers and it is seen as an ongoing quest that needs to be nurtured during

time. Positive impact is the last meaning of social relations; it can manifest in a “proximal” way, helping others in the immediate social environment, like co-workers; or in a “distant” way, leaving a legacy to a community or a society.

The last meaning of career success is entrepreneurship consisting in two elements: founding one’s own enterprise and being able to pursue one’s own projects. The former is high demanding in terms of working time, but it is an important component of career success. The latter emphasizes the relevance of developing individual projects in the work context and being identified responsible for them.

In comparison with other existing scales, such as the one by Shockley & al. and by Zhou, the present scale has two powerful additions. Firstly, it comprehends subjective assessments of financial security and financial success, which proved to be a salient topic in most countries, and an entrepreneurship dimension, that is becoming more and more important due to the changing global labor market. Secondly, the scale thanks to questionnaires given around the world, permits cross-cultural comparisons of results coming from different part of the world, while both Shockley & al.’s and the Pan & Zhou’s scales are focused on one country only. Moreover, the 5C group’s approach differentiates itself adding the importance aspect of the scale, which supplements additional explanatory power and stands for a more in-depth understanding of career success achievement in the various dimensions. Lastly, the importance aspect permits to explore the various joint effects of achievement and importance aspects of career success on items such as life satisfaction.

### **3.7 Conclusions**

In this chapter we have presented cultural archetypes, their application and how they outperform previous approaches for cultural patterns description and identification. We have also outlined the premises and the statistical base on which we will implement the method of archetypal analysis. In the following chapter we will go through the application of the technique to our sample of countries.





# Chapter 4

## THE METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we presented cultural archetypes, what they are and how they have been utilized in the literature for career studies. In particular, an explanation of AA algorithm with the advantages and disadvantages of the methodology has been provided, together with the presentation of the database that the current dissertation utilizes. The present chapter will address the pre-analysis of data and the countries choice. Then will be introduce the methodology employed to process data together with the archetypes found in the sample. Concluding, an analysis of results, corroborated by their statistical significance and the conceptual implications will be discussed.

### 4.2 The sample

#### 4.2.1 Our countries choice:

Starting from the 31 countries and the 19420 interviews in the 5C's database, we decided to select only some of them looking for a heterogeneous sample on which we could apply the archetypal analysis.

First of all, we started doing some preliminary analysis on the dataset in order to better understand the data. We calculated the number of interviews done in each country and checked if they matched the requirements of 5C, which indicates a minimum of 400 respondents from each nation, finding that Estonia reported only 49 interviews. Then, looking for additional information, we calculated the total sample average age, corresponding to 39.7 years. Moreover, we computed the gender distribution of the entire sample of 31 countries (46.7% male, 46.6% female, 8.6% not available) and the religion of people interviewed (56.2% Christian, 19% atheist, 5.9% Muslim, 18.9% others).

Following the V&M example, we looked for some variables that could permit us to select a heterogeneous sample of countries. We decided to concentrate on criteria covering three main topics: social aspects, institutions and religion. From these three criteria, we selected four variables that led us define a group of four diverse countries to compute archetypes. The aim of the countries choice is to understand if differences among selected nations affect differently people inside them and their perceptions towards SCS or if there are cross-national archetypes.

The four variables selected are:

1) Human Development Index (HDI):

For the social criteria we selected the HDI 2017 covering 189 countries. The index has been developed by The United Nations to measure and rank countries' level of social and economic development. In particular, it is the geometric mean of a country's average achievements on three key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living. The health dimension is given by the life expectancy at birth, the educational dimension by the mean age of schooling for adults aged 25 and more and the expecting years of schooling for children at school entering age. While the standard living dimension is given by the gross national income per capita. The index, recorded since 1900, makes it possible to follow changes in development levels over time and to compare the development levels of different countries. Moreover, only taking into account a range of socio-economic indicators as for example life expectancy, the human development can be meaningfully evaluated (Sagan and Afifi, 1978). For instance, the country context represented by the HDI has been found a better predictor of female entrepreneurship rates than the national income alone (Maniyalath & Narendran, 2016). While other works show that the economic growth of a nation helps to "cultivate an environment conducive to further entrepreneurial activities" (Wennekers & al., 2010). The HDI is a powerful representation of the influence that the context has on individuals and consequently on their perceptions of career success because it takes into account a variety of factors that have proved to be relevant, such as the level of education that is positive correlated to career professional success (University of Birmingham, 2016).

2) The Global Competitive Index (GCI):

Created by the World Economic Forum, the GCI assesses the ability of countries to provide high levels of prosperity to their citizens by measuring the set of institutions, policies and other factors setting the current and medium-term levels of economic prosperity of a nation.

The GCI score goes from 0 to 100, where 100 is the policy target, and it is composed by 98 indicators divided into 12 pillars (Institutions, Infrastructure, ICT adoption, Macroeconomic stability, Health, Skills, Product market, Labour market, Financial system, Market size, Business dynamism, Innovation capability).

For the purpose of our work, we utilize only the pillar 8 of the GCI 2018 corresponding to the labour market, which represents our first institutional variable. The labour market score goes from 0 to 100 and is composed by the following indicators: redundancy costs, hiring and firing practices, cooperation in labour-employer relations, flexibility of wage determination, active labour policies, workers' rights, ease of hiring foreign labour, internal labour mobility, reliance on professional management, pay and productivity, female participation in labour force and the labour tax rate.

Comprehended in the major topic of the influence that the context exercises on individuals and their career success perceptions, several studies have shown the relevance of the labour market variable. Indeed, a well-functioning labour market fosters the productivity of individuals by matching them with the most suitable jobs for their skills and their requirements, thus developing talents to reach their full potential. Moreover, good labour markets allow countries to be more resilient to shocks and reallocate workers to new emerging segments, motivating and incentivizing them to reach career success. Labour market policies are crucial in determining several factors that people evaluate as meaning of subjective career success, as work life balance, relationships, recognition and material success (Dyke & Murphy, 2006). Furthermore, living in a country that assures a broad range of workers' rights, labour mobility and a certain minimum level of wages, automatically influences the priority that individuals have in mind when determining their meaning of career success. Indeed, once the basic financial needs for survival are met, people will start looking for other factors to satisfy their hunger for success, as for example the possibility of undertake career transitions and mobility (Fouad & Bynner, 2008; Mayrhofer & al., 2007).

### 3) The Freedom rating and status:

We decide to utilize the House of Freedom's report "Freedom in the World" as our second institutional variable. Covering 195 countries, Freedom in the World is an annual report assessing the condition of political rights and civil liberties around the world. For each country it analyses the electoral process, the political pluralism and participation, the functioning of the government, freedom of expression and of belief, associational and organizational rights, the rule of law, personal autonomy and individual rights.

For our work we use both the Freedom Status of a country (free/partially free/not free) designated by the average of political rights and civil liberties ratings, and the Freedom Rating (scoring from 0 to 100 where 100 represents the highest freedom).

A country's freedom status inevitably influences individuals' options for work and career development, intended as the possibility to have career mobility and transitions, for example from the public to the private sector. Moreover, the freedom status constrains the access to entire categories of jobs. For instance thinking about countries with military regimes that have taken the control over entire industries, thus prohibiting the access to work to externals. In addition, the freedom of a country is very often related to the possibility of having a female participation to the labour market and, in case they are allowed to work, to the restricted and basic jobs they can perform. All of this for sure affects the perception that people have towards career success and their career goals. Particularly the economic freedom, intended as the size of interventions of the government in the market, reduces the entrepreneurial activity (Demsetz, 1982) and the connected career success. Studies have shown how well defined and enforced property rights assured by the State stress the importance of entrepreneurial activity for people (North & al., 2000), so the opposite hinders individuals' aspirations of achieving career success undertaking self-employed activities connected to innovation. In addition, a nation's freedom is also connected to trade freedom, to the freedom to invest and to the ease of access to capital markets, which affects both the number of possibility of doing business and the achievement of career success.

#### 4) The Religious Diversity Index:

The index, covering our religious variable, looks at the percentage of each country's population that belongs to eight major religious groups in the world using 2010 data. The closer a nation is to equal shares of the eight religious groups, the higher will be its score on a 0-10 scale. To have better comparable results, the index focuses on the five major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism) accounting for three quarters of the world populations and the remaining groups are consolidated into "religious unaffiliated". The decision to consider the religion of the countries in the dataset is connected to researches showing its influence on people's perceptions, motives and their consequent actions. For example, Audretsch & al. (2007) found that Christians and Muslims tend to have a greater propensity for entrepreneurship, compared to Hindus and Buddhists. Moreover, Pines & al. in a 2010 study recognized how different religious groups can achieve different levels of career success operating in the same country. In addition, there is evidence that religion plays



a pivotal role in many individuals' career decision-making processes (Bogart, 1994; Seaward, 1995; Fox, 2003) and that spirituality influences people's beliefs about meaningful work experiences (Lips-Wiersma, 2002). Moreover, Ashar & Lane-Maher (2004) examined the link between spirituality and career success finding that respondents' perceptions of success are related to work experiences and the ability to have "meaning" and "purpose" in life.

Given these four variables, we attributed them an order of importance to be able to group nations in the dataset. The most relevant measure is the Human Development Index (comprehending both its value and ranking), followed by the Religion Diversity Index, then the Labour Market pillar of the Global Competitive Index, and the Freedom rating and status.

With these indexes and their levels of priority we then have been able to group the thirty-one countries in the sample and to find four groups, each one different from the others. We have attributed a colour to each group to better distinguish them.

The Yellow Group: composed by 12 countries (Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Ireland, Germany, Canada, US, UK, Finland, Belgium, Japan and Austria) shows an HDI value higher than 0.9 and HDI rankings among the first 17 positions. All countries are Christian with the exception of Japan. The Labour market score is greater than 64 and the lower ranking is the 37<sup>o</sup> position and the entire group of countries is free, with a freedom score higher than 86.

The Red Group: comprehending 9 countries (Korea, Slovenia, Italy, Estonia, Greece, Slovakia, Portugal, Argentina and Russia) the group presents HDI values between 0.8 and 0.9 and HDI rankings between 22<sup>o</sup> and 49<sup>o</sup> position. The majority of countries are Christian, with the exception of Korea and Estonia. The Labour market score goes from 50 to 69 and all the countries except Russia are free.

The Green Group: composed by 6 countries (Turkey, Serbia, Mexico, Brazil, China and Colombia) has an HDI value between 0.74 and 0.79 with rankings from 64<sup>o</sup> to 90<sup>o</sup> position. Four countries are Christian while the remaining are unaffiliated or Muslim. The labour market score goes from 51 to 61 and the freedom status is a mix of free, partially free and not free.

The Blue Group: comprehending 4 countries (India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Malawi), it has HDI values lower than 0.64 and rankings after the 130<sup>o</sup> position. Two countries are Christian, one is Muslim and the other Hindu; the labour market scores are very similar, going from 49 to 58 while the rankings go from the 75<sup>o</sup> to the 121<sup>o</sup> position. Three countries are partially free and one is free.

In addition, it is interesting to notice the geographical distribution of the 31 countries composing the sample. In the Yellow group, nine countries out of twelve are located in Europe. Moreover, these twelve countries cover three Schwartz's country clusters: Western Europe, English speaking and Confucian, and they all belong to WEIRD countries with the exception of Japan. The Red group presents seven nations out of nine located in Europe, while in the Green one four countries are in Europe, one in the Middle East and one in Asia. Lastly, the Blue group has two countries in Africa and two in South Asia.

The representation of the four groups and the connected segmentation variables' values are shown in the table 4.1 in the next page.

The methodology

Countries	HDI ranking	HDI value	Health dimension: Life expectancy at birth (years)	Educational dimension: Expected years of schooling	Standard living dimension: GNI per capita (2011 PPP\$)	Religious Diversity Index	Country's major religion	Pillar 8: labour market 2018: score	Pillar 8: labour market: rank	Freedom rating-aggregate score	Freedom status
Norway	1	0,953	82,3	17,9	68.012,00	3,1	Christian	73,5	14	100	Free
Switzerland	2	0,944	83,5	16,2	57.625,00	3,7	Christian	80,4	2	96	Free
Australia	3	0,939	83,1	22,9	43.560,00	5,6	Christian	68,5	22	98	Free
Ireland	4	0,938	81,6	19,6	53.754,00	1,7	Christian	76,8	7	96	Free
Germany	5	0,936	81,2	17	46.136,00	5,3	Christian	74,1	12	94	Free
Canada	12	0,926	82,5	16,4	43.433,00	5,3	Christian	77	6	99	Free
US	13	0,924	79,5	16,5	54.941,00	4,1	Christian	81,9	1	86	Free
UK	14	0,922	81,7	17,4	39.100,00	5,1	Christian	76,5	8	94	Free
Finland	15	0,92	81,5	17,6	41.002,00	3,5	Christian	70,9	19	100	Free
Belgium	17	0,916	81,3	19,8	42.156,00	5,7	Christian	64,4	37	95	Free
Japan	19	0,909	83,9	15,2	38.986,00	6,2	Unaffiliated	71,1	18	96	Free
Austria	20	0,908	81,8	16,1	45.415,00	3,8	Christian	67,3	26	94	Free
Korea	22	0,903	82,4	16,5	35.945,00	7,4	Unaffiliated	62,4	48	84	Free
Slovenia	25	0,896	81,1	17,2	30.594,00	4	Christian	63,4	43	93	Free
Italy	28	0,88	83,2	16,3	35.299,00	3,3	Christian	58,1	79	89	Free
Estonia	30	0,871	77,7	16,1	28.993,00	5,5	Unaffiliated	69,3	21	94	Free
Greece	31	0,87	81,4	17,3	24.648,00	2,5	Christian	51,8	107	85	Free
Slovakia	38	0,855	77	15	29.467,00	2,9	Christian	60,2	58	89	Free
Portugal	41	0,847	81,4	16,3	27.315,00	1,4	Christian	64,7	35	97	Free
Argentina	47	0,825	76,7	17,4	18.461,00	3	Christian	50,7	116	83	Free
Russia	49	0,816	71,2	15,5	24.233,00	4,9	Christian	59,5	67	20	Not free
Turkey	64	0,791	76	15,2	24.804,00	0,4	Muslim	51,2	111	32	Not free
Serbia	67	0,787	75,3	14,6	13.019,00	1,6	Christian	61,5	52	73	Free
Mexico	74	0,774	77,3	14,1	16.944,00	1,1	Christian	54,4	100	62	Partly free
Brazil	79	0,759	75,7	15,4	13.755,00	2,3	Christian	51	114	78	Free
China	86	0,752	76,4	13,8	15.270,00	7,3	Unaffiliated	59,3	69	14	Not free
Colombia	90	0,747	74,6	14,4	12.938,00	1,3	Christian	57,9	80	65	Partly free
India	130	0,64	68,8	12,3	6.353,00	4	Hindu	58,3	75	77	Free
Pakistan	150	0,562	66,3	8,6	5.311,00	0,8	Muslim	49,7	121	45	Partly free
Nigeria	157	0,532	53,9	10	5.231,00	5,9	Christian and Muslim	58,5	73	50	Partly free
Malawi	171	0,477	63,7	10,8	1.064,00	3,4	Christian	58,2	76	63	Partly free

The identification of these four groups permitted us to pick one country from each one in order to find a heterogeneous sample on which we will perform the archetypal analysis. We chose countries that, according to our view, seemed the most representative of each group and the most different from other groups.

The four countries selected are:

1. Germany
2. Italy
3. Mexico
4. Nigeria

These four nations show dissimilar levels of the chosen indexes and they are differently developed/undeveloped concerning economic wealth as well as human rights. Furthermore, three out of four are relevant economies in the world. The four countries are located in three different continents and belong to three different Schwartz's clusters, namely West Europe, Latin America and Africa & Middle East.

#### 4.2.2 Description of the sample:

From the dataset we could gain important information concerning the sample of respondents in the four countries that are useful to better understand individuals and their perceptions. First, the average age of the pooled data is equal to 37.9 years (40.5 in Germany, 40.7 in Italy, 34.7 in Mexico and 35.5 in Nigeria), while the gender distribution is presented in the table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Gender distribution

	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Mexico</b>	<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>Tot sample</b>
<b>Male</b>	47%	58%	58%	67%	56%
<b>Female</b>	52%	42%	42%	31%	43%

[Source: elaboration from the data]

Moreover, the average work experience in years accumulated by individuals interviewed is equal to 16 years in Germany, 18 years in Italy, 11 years in Mexico and 10 in Nigeria, resulting in a total sample mean of 14 years of experience.

In the literature, the variable education has often been found influencing the career success perceptions; for this reason we point out the sample's composition in terms of educational levels. The 5C's questionnaire rates the variable education asking people to indicate their

highest level of education completed in a scale ranging from one to seven (where one represents the primary education, and seven the doctorate); results are shown in the following table.

*Table 4.3: Educational level of respondents (%)*

	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Mexico</b>	<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>Tot sample</b>
<b>Primary</b>	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Lower secondary</b>	25%	7%	6%	2%	12%
<b>Upper secondary</b>	9%	42%	6%	18%	20%
<b>Post-secondary</b>	9%	2%	15%	20%	10%
<b>Bachelor</b>	11%	8%	56%	31%	22%
<b>Master</b>	37%	34%	14%	19%	28%
<b>Doctorate</b>	7%	6%	1%	6%	5%
<b>N.A.</b>	1%	1%	0%	3%	1%

[Source: elaboration from the data]

The questionnaire contains also information concerning the marital status of respondents. Highlights from this dimension show that on average the four countries are composed by: 24% of singles, 49% of married people, 13% of individuals cohabiting, 11% of people in a relationship without being married or cohabiting, 4% by divorced or separated, 1% by widowed and the 14% of individuals preferred not to answer.

Moreover, it is interesting to notice the occupational group to which respondents belong, to better understand later on if this variable influences the subjective meanings of career success in the different archetypal configurations. Thus, for instance if belonging to the managerial group entails a greater attention to the work-life balance variable or to entrepreneurship, while being part of the manual group implies a greater focus on financial security. Data from the sample are depicted by the table 4.4.

*Table 4.4: Occupational group of respondents (%)*

	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Mexico</b>	<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>Tot sample</b>
<b>Managers</b>	24%	31%	20%	24%	25%
<b>Professionals</b>	36%	28%	36%	24%	32%
<b>Clerical/service</b>	24%	21%	16%	23%	21%
<b>Skilled labour</b>	13%	20%	14%	24%	17%
<b>Other/manual</b>	3%	-	15%	5%	5%

[Source: elaboration from the data]

Furthermore, the next table 4.5 presents the answers of the questionnaire indicating if respondents are employed by someone or self-employed, together with their employment status (full-time, part-time, unemployed). We decided to outline these variables because we consider them as possible influencers of one or more dimensions of subjective career success. For example, it is easy to think about a likely connection between being self-employed and giving a greater importance to the entrepreneurship variable compared to employed people that may focus more on financial achievement or reaching a work-life balance, particularly in they have a part-time contract.

Table 4.5: Type of employment of respondents (%)

	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Mexico</b>	<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>Tot sample</b>
<b>Employed</b>	76%	74%	92%	89%	81%
<b>Self-employed</b>	8%	26%	8%	8%	13%
<b>Other</b>	7%	-	1%	3%	3%
<b>N.A.</b>	9%	-	-	-	4%

[Source: elaboration from the data]

Table 4.6: Employment status of respondents (%)

	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Mexico</b>	<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>Tot sample</b>
<b>Full-time</b>	80%	90%	89%	93%	87%
<b>Part-time</b>	20%	10%	8%	5%	12%
<b>Unemployed</b>	-	-	2%	2%	1%

[Source: elaboration from the data]

Concluding with the information regarding the sample, two more attributes will be pointed out. The first one concerns the sector in which the organizations are active; results for the four countries sample show that 70% of people work in the private sector, 21% in the public one, 2% for non-profit organizations, 6% for a mixed combination of sectors and the 2% of the sample works in other sectors. The second attributes instead concerns the number of employees of the organizations in which individuals work and the findings are shown in the table below.

Table 4.7: number of employees in respondents' organizations

N. employees	Germany	Italy	Mexico	Nigeria	Tot sample
<10	12%	33%	9%	19%	19%
10-49	16%	20%	9%	23%	17%
50-249	16%	14%	13%	15%	14%
250-999	16%	9%	21%	18%	15%
1000-4999	15%	9%	26%	17%	16%
5000+	25%	15%	22%	6%	18%

[Source: elaboration from the data]

### 4.3 Pre-process of data

Once a sample of four heterogeneous countries has been found, we needed to clean the dataset before applying the archetypal analysis. We started looking for missing values, in this case corresponding to missing answers for the 23 questions in the questionnaire building the seven dimensional scale of subjective career success (*see supra*). Thus, after isolating the four countries in the dataset, we analysed them detecting the number of interviews where respondents did not answer to at least one of the variables of interest. Results reveal that in Germany 105 individuals out of 1100, corresponding to 9.4% of the sample, show missing values; in Italy instead all the 823 interviews are complete. Furthermore, in Mexico 13 observations out of 568, corresponding to 2.2% of the sample, are incomplete; and in Nigeria 54 interviews out of 503, equal to 10.7% of the sample, are incomplete as well. Consequently, we decide to remove from the sample interviews with missing values and our total sample passed from 2993 to 2822 observation.

Table 4.8: Summary of sample sizes and missing data

Country	Original Sample	Missing data	Missing data as % of total	Final sample	% of original sample
Germany	1100	104	9%	996	91%
Italy	823	0	0%	823	100%
Mexico	568	13	2.2%	555	97.8%
Nigeria	503	54	10.4%	449	89.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2994</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>2822</b>	<b>94.3%</b>

[Source: elaboration from the data]

Following the 5C's approach, we decided to calculate archetypes using the mean of each of the seven dimensions for each individual. Thus, since each dimension of career success is given by

three or four questions in the questionnaire, for every individual we calculated the average of the three/four responses and attributed this value to the dimension. For example, the dimension “positive impact” is given by three questions, “own a company”, “running your own business” and “being self-employed”, consequently we have calculated the mean of the answers for these three variables and we have attributed it to the “entrepreneurship” variable for each individual.

In order to be sure of the validity and in particular of the reliability of this method, we used the program SPSS to calculate the “Cronbach’s Alpha”. The test is a measure of internal consistency of variables; it signals how closely related a set of items are as a group and it is considered a measure of scale reliability. The “Cronbach alpha” represents the inter-item covariance among items, thus if the average inter-item correlation increases, the alpha will increase as well. The value of the alpha ranges from 0 to 1 and a reliability coefficient of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable in most research situations while an alpha lower than 0.5 is considered unacceptable. Applying the Cronbach’s Alpha to our dataset for the seven dimensions of career success, we have found the coefficients shown in the table below.

Table 4.9: Cronbach’s Alpha

	<b>Cronbach’s Alpha</b>	<b>Number of elements</b>
Learning & Development	0.750	4
Work-Life Balance	0.643	3
Positive Impact	0.719	3
Entrepreneurship	0.840	3
Positive Working Relationships	0.758	4
Financial Security	0.582	3
Financial Achievement	0.732	3

[Source: elaboration from the data]

The coefficients of the Cronbach’s Alpha resulting from the analysis are well satisfying for five dimensions, showing values higher than 0.7, and are acceptable for the remaining two variables since their coefficients are higher than 0.5. Given these findings, we decided to use the means of the seven dimensions to find cultural archetypes using Rstudio.

## 4.4 The analysis

The analysis we conducted is divided into three main parts. In the first one, archetypal analysis is carried out for each of the four countries in isolation. The study of each country separately



aims at answering the first research proposal (1) concerning the existence of within country archetypes for subjective perceptions of career success. Moreover, each nation's archetypes are analysed through the study of demographic variables of individuals in order to find differences or similarities among the diverse configurations.

The second part of the analysis, which will be presented in section 4.5, utilizes the pooled data from the four countries to detect whether or not cross-countries archetypes exist, thus if career perceptions are or not dependent and affected by the country's culture. This portion of the work is focused on the second research proposal (2) investigating whether or not exist transnational archetypes for subjective career success perceptions. Also with the pooled data, we compared the composition of the archetypes considering the demographic characteristics of individuals as well as their nationality and other features related to their careers.

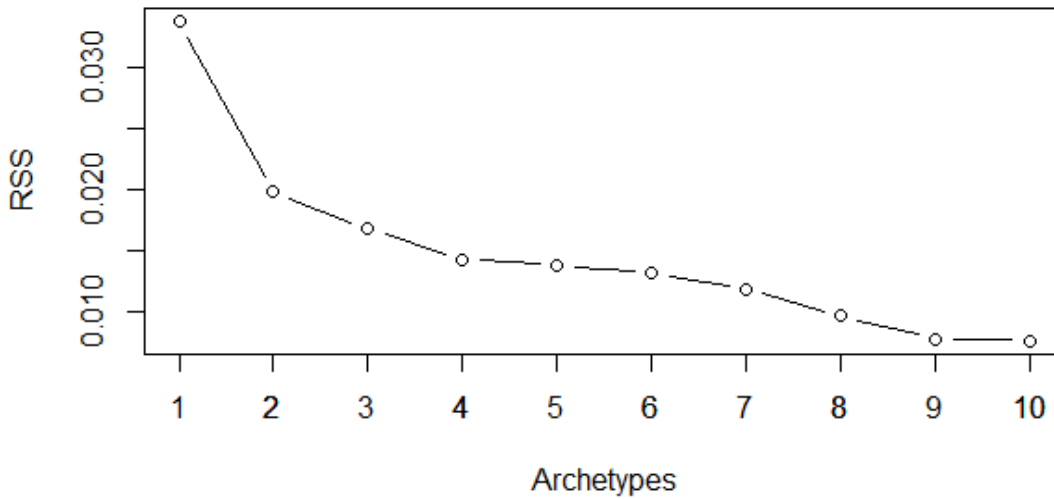
Lastly, the third phase of our research, presented in section 4.6, comprehends the ANOVA test conducted on archetypes from the pooled data and on respondents' demographics to understand and prove whether or not the archetypal groups are statistically different concerning the factors taken into account.

For the sake of clarity and to ease the understanding of the archetypal analysis, we will present now a technical explanation of how the construct works with Rstudio.

#### 4.4.1 AA technical explanation:

For our research we used the statistic software Rstudio, and in particular its package "archetypes" explained by Eugster and Leisch (2009), to our sample of data. Given a matrix  $X$  of multivariate data with  $n$  observations and  $m$  dimensions, the first thing to do is understand which is the most suitable number " $k$ " of archetypes for our data. The algorithm provides an analysis of residuals sum of squares (rss hereafter) and through a graph called "scree-plot" (see below), showing the relationship between the rss and the number of archetypes, it is possible to choose the best  $k$ . The "elbow-shape" graph, presented in figure 4.1, examines how the rss diminish as the number  $k$  of archetypes increases and determines where the improvement shows an elbow signalling the need to stop increasing the number of archetypes.

Figure 4.1: Scree-plot from the AA



[Source: Scree-plot resulting from the analysis of the pooled data]

Of course, the more archetypes are used the less will be the rss, so the more precise will be the description of the population. Anyway, beyond a certain level, it has been proved that increasing the number  $k$  of archetypes does not add an explanatory power that can be depicted as significant (Cutler and Breiman, 1994). For this reason, to choose the number of archetypes for our analysis we looked both at the gaining in the rss and at the curve of the scree-plot graph. The most appropriate  $k$  is found just before the curve starts flattening. For instance, in the case of pooled data the rss for  $k=2$  are 0.198, for  $k=3$  are 0.0168 and for  $k=4$  are 0.144 and from the graph above it can be noticed that after  $k=4$  the curve starts flattening. For these reasons we selected  $k=4$  as the most appropriate number of archetypes for the pooled data.

Once Rstudio knows the best number of archetypal configurations, we can obtain two results from the software. Firstly, for each archetype we can find “parameters” depicting the weights, so the values of the seven dimensions comprehended in the archetype. For the sake of clarity, we present now the parameters that the software returned for the archetypes of the Italian sample. The results are a matrix like the one shown in the table 4.10, where the variables are the seven dimensions of the SCS scales. For synthesis, in the table we put X1= Learning and development, X2= Work-life balance, X3= Positive impact, X4= Entrepreneurship, X5= Positive working relationships, X6= Financial security and X7= Financial achievement.

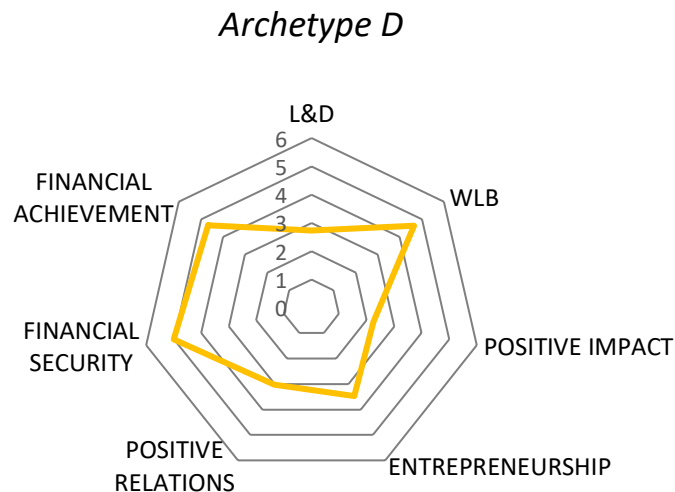
Table 4.10 Archetypal configurations parameters

	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7
<b>ARCH 1</b>	4.7310	4.90723	4.39259	4.34455	3.6261	4.27268	2.82206
<b>ARCH 2</b>	4.75482	4.81778	4.51841	1.01588	4.96056	4.72281	4.48082
<b>ARCH 3</b>	2.75304	1.71474	2.37801	2.47106	2.79098	2.45003	3.1280
<b>ARCH 4</b>	2.72726	4.64285	2.26013	3.4730	3.0340	5.00009	4.67387
<b>ARCH 5</b>	5.00009	4.81669	5.00013	5.00013	5.00011	5.00006	5.0001

[Source: elaboration from the Italian data]

The parameters that the software returns have been deeply helpful to create the radar graphs showing which shape each archetype has. It is worth mentioning that the closer is the line belonging to a dimension to the center of the graph, the lower is the weight that dimension has in the particular archetype. For instance, individuals belonging to the Archetype 4 shown in figure 4.2 below place the greatest emphasis on work-life balance and financial security dimensions, a moderate relevance to financial achievement and entrepreneurship, while learning and development and positive impact will play a marginal role.

Figure 4.2: Radar configuration of an archetype



[Source: elaboration from the Italian data]

Secondly, with the number  $k$  of archetypes set, the algorithm returns a value between 0 and 1 for each respondent. These values, called “coefficients”, are used to determine the proximity of each individual to an archetypal configuration and thus whether or not the observation can be attributed to a certain archetype. In particular, a value equal or greater and 0.5 for a particular archetype indicates the proximity of the individual to the configuration and the consequent

attribution to it. On the contrary, a value below the 0.5 threshold for a certain archetype excludes the belonging to it. The values for each individual have a sum equal to 1, so if for a respondent a value greater than 0.5 is registered for a certain archetype, this will automatically exclude his/her attribution to other configurations. Furthermore, if an individual presents only values below 0.5 for all the archetypes, it means that his/her values configuration does not resemble any of the archetypes, hence it will be labelled as a “non-archetypal” case.

In the table 4.11 below are shown coefficients for two individuals. The individual 1 has a coefficient higher than 0.5 for the archetype 2, hence it will be attributed to this configuration. The individual 2 instead presents coefficients below the threshold of 0.5 for all the five archetypes, therefore it will be depicted as a non-archetypal case because it does not have a sufficient proximity to any of the configurations found.

Table 4.11: Archetypal profiles of two respondents

	<b>Archetype 1</b>	<b>Archetype 2</b>	<b>Archetype 3</b>	<b>Archetype 4</b>	<b>Archetype 5</b>
<b>Ind. 1</b>	0.09259367386	0.536256298	0.0376447871	0.076639375	0.256745013
<b>Ind. 2</b>	0.3138428295	0.093089098	0.303206893	0.271891658	0.0178854249

[Source: elaboration of Italian data]

The complete results for each country in isolation and for the pooled data will be presented in the next sections. Five archetypes have been found as the most suitable solution for each of the four countries in isolation; the following section will analyze them and the technique used.

#### 4.4.2 Germany’s results of the archetypal analysis

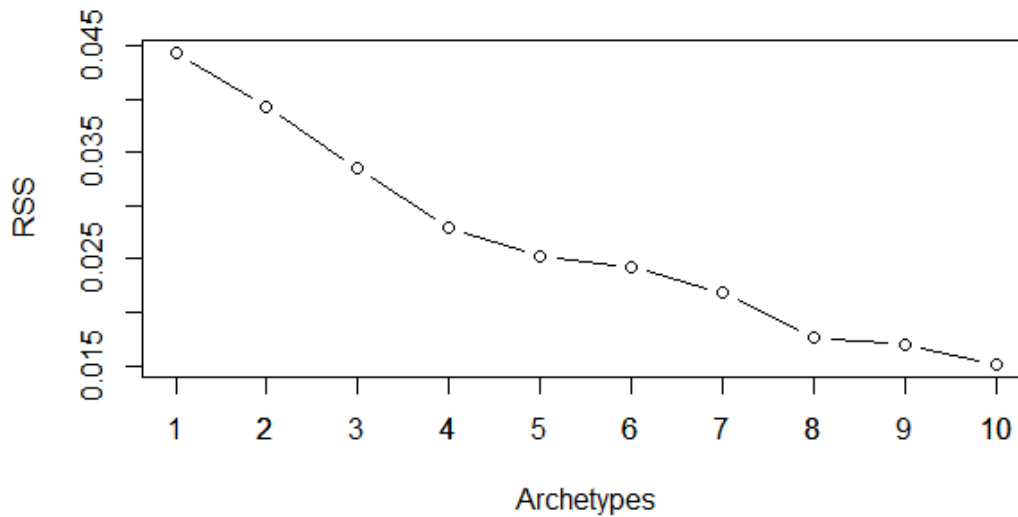
We started the archetypal analysis for Germany looking at the scree-plot (see figure 4.3 below) and at the gain in the rss with different numbers of archetypes in order to choose the best one for our population.

Table 4.12: rss for Germany data

	<b>K=3</b>	<b>K=4</b>	<b>K=5</b>
<b>RSS</b>	0.03352826	0.02806372	0.02555176

[Source: elaboration of Germany data]

Figure 4.3: Screeplot for Germany data



[Source: elaboration from the Germany data]

From these two tests we have been able to select  $k=5$  as the best archetypal configuration; the following table presents the number of observations contained by each archetype as well as their percentage over the total German sample.

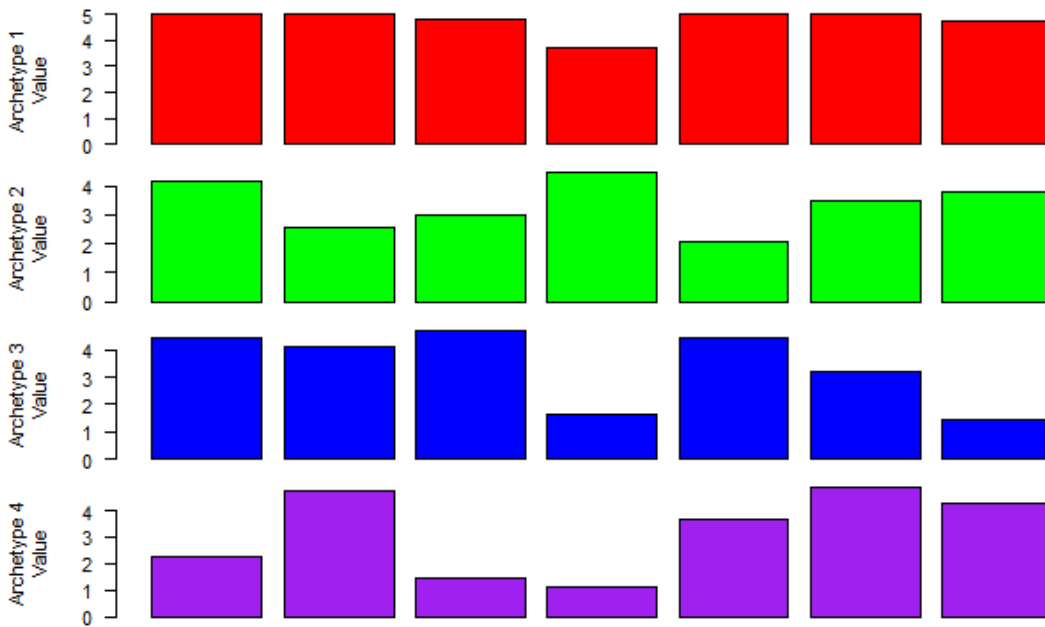
Table 4.13: distribution of archetypes for Germany data

	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>	<b>A4</b>	<b>A5</b>	<b>NON ARCH</b>
<b>Number</b>	247	17	66	33	97	546
<b>% data</b>	25%	2%	7%	2%	10%	55%

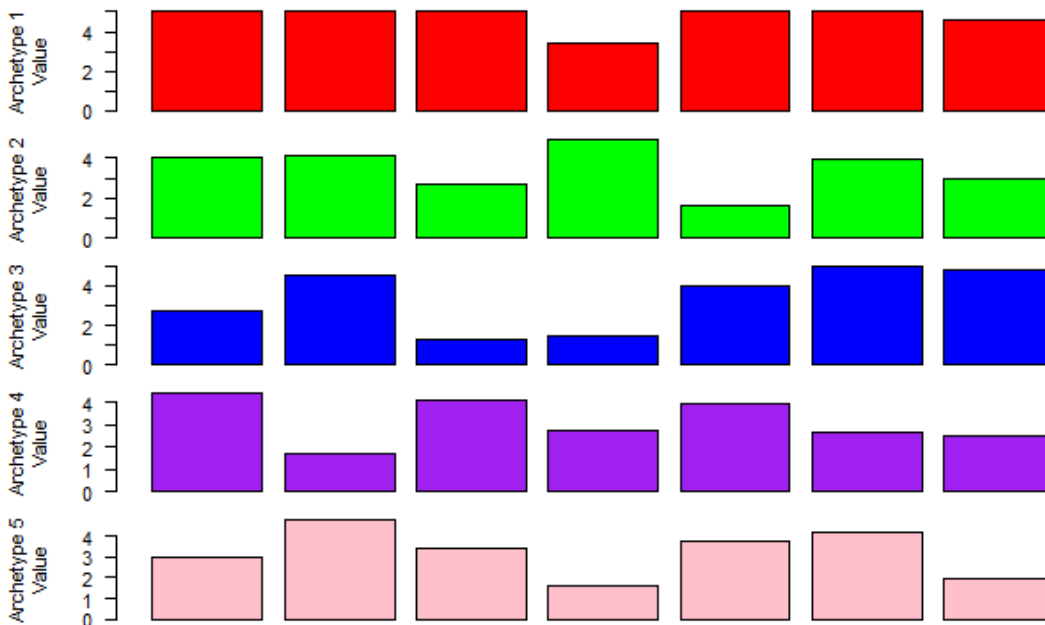
[Source: elaboration from the Germany data]

The coherence of our decision to choose five archetypes is underlined by the differences in the barplots returned by the software for solutions with four and five archetypes that are shown in the figure 4.4 below. The heights of the bars report the parameters of each archetypes, thus the higher is a bar associated to a certain dimension of career success, the more importance the people in that archetype place on that dimension. Each bar represents a dimension of subjective career success, starting from the left and proceeding in order there are: learning and development, work-life balance, positive impact, entrepreneurship, positive relationships, financial security and financial achievement. The fact that these barplots exhibit differences demonstrate that the configuration with five archetypes can better capture the variance and the differences in our observations.

Figure 4.4: Barplots for Germany data with  $K=4$  archetypes



Barplots for  $K=5$  archetypes

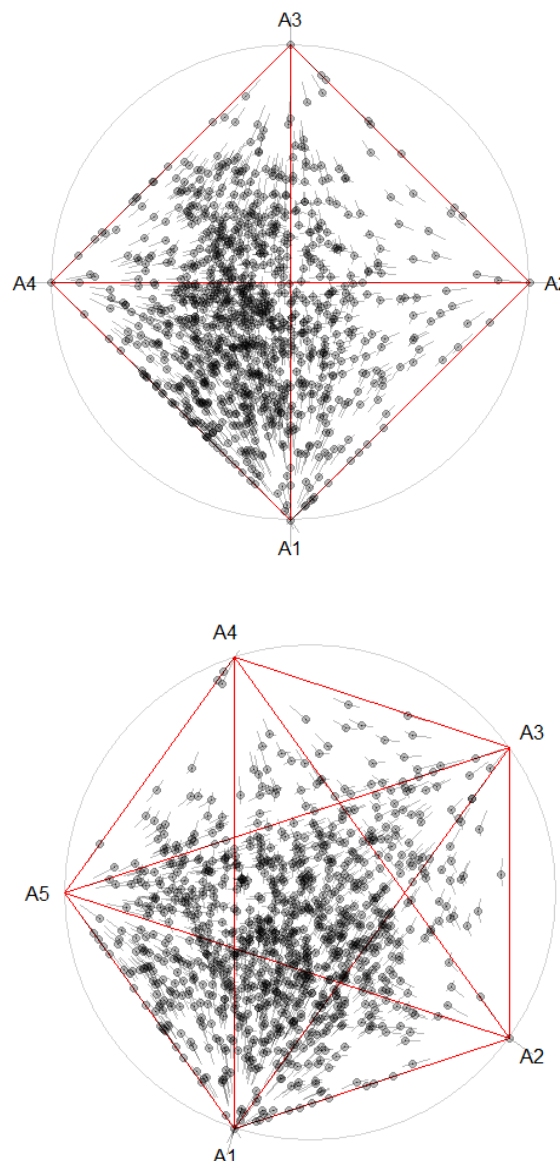


[Source: elaboration from the Germany data]

Moreover, in order to better support our selection of five archetypes, we used the program Rstudio to find the simplexplots with four and five archetypes. The simplexplot is an R's function showing orthogonal projections of the data with the different archetypal configurations. In particular, the vertices of the figure represent the archetypes and the closer are the points (i.e. our observations) to a certain vertex, the more individuals will be attributed to that particular archetype. The graphs of the simplexplots presented in the figure 4.5 also show the directions of the points, which help understanding which is the distribution of observations

in our sample. Comparing the two simplexplots presented in the next table we could clearly notice how the distribution of observation changed going from  $k=4$  to  $k=5$ . In the first solution, the majority of points is concentrated between archetype 1 and 4, with some others between 3 and 4. On the contrary, the second solution better capture the richness of information in the data since points are well distributed between archetypes one, two, three and five, with an higher concentration in proximity of archetype one.

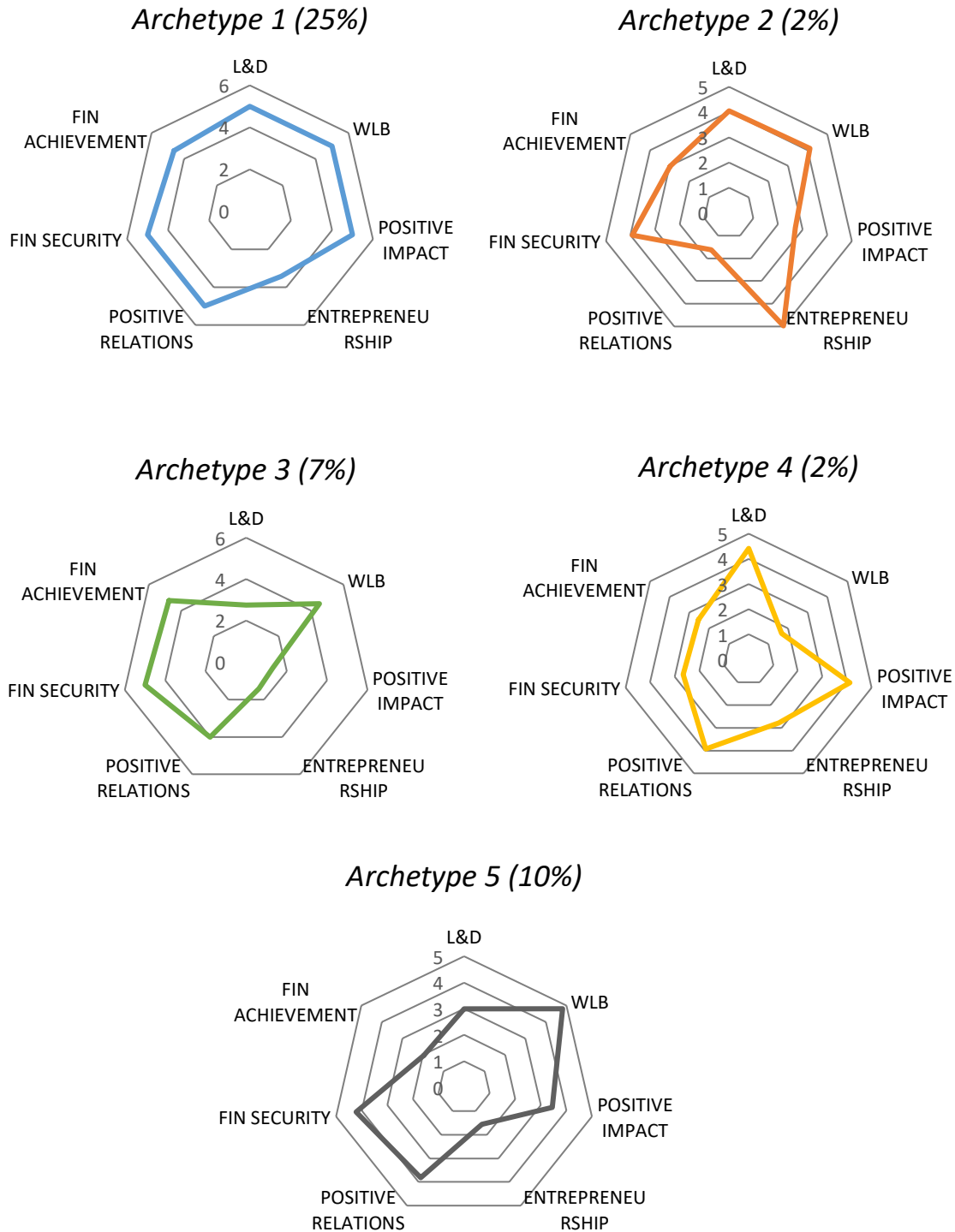
*Figure 4.5: Simplex plot for the Germany:*



[Source: elaboration from the Germany data]

In the next page, the radar graphs for Germany data are presented. We decided to present them as we consider radar graphs extremely useful to understand our results and to compare the different archetypes.

*Figure 4.6: Radar graphs of Germany archetypes*



[Source: elaboration from the Germany data]

From the radar graphs, we can easily notice how respondents belonging to archetype 2, differently from the other groups, attribute great importance to the entrepreneurship dimension and little importance to positive relations and positive impact of their work. Diversely archetype 1, which is the most numerous covering 25% of the sample, considers as important six



dimensions out of seven, leaving out only the entrepreneurial one, that in fact is well represented by the archetype 2. Moreover, similarities can be found between archetypes 3 and 5 since both take into account work-life balance, financial security and positive relationship as determinants of subjective career success. Anyway, archetypes 3 and 5 differ concerning the financial achievement dimension, which is relevant for individuals belonging to 3, but not for those belonging to 5.

Here following we present a table with some demographic characteristics of individuals belonging to the different archetypes, which allows a better understanding of the groups and open the path for a comparison that will be carried later on.

*Table 4.14: demographic characteristic of individuals belonging to Germany archetypes*

	<b>Archetype 1</b>	<b>Archetype 2</b>	<b>Archetype 3</b>	<b>Archetype 4</b>	<b>Archetype 5</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male 41% Female 59%	Male 81% Female 19%	Male 58% Female 41%	Male 74% Female 26%	Male 38% Female 62%
<b>Avg. age</b>	37.6 years	44.2 years	36.7 years	44 years	40.4 years
<b>Avg. work experience</b>	14 years	18 years	14 years	17 years	16.4 years
<b>Education</b>	Primary 2% Secondary 42% Tertiary 23% Master 29% Doctorate 4%	Primary 6% Secondary 37% Tertiary 13% Master 19% Doctorate 25%	Primary 12% Secondary 39% Tertiary 20% Master 24% Doctorate 3%	Primary 0% Secondary 4% Tertiary 18% Master 57% Doctorate 22%	Primary 1% Secondary 25% Tertiary 18% Master 43% Doctorate 9%
<b>Marital status</b>	Single 15% Married 41% In a relation 39%	Single 6% Married 75% In a relation 19%	Single 18% Married 39% In a relation 40%	Single 22% Married 61% In a relation 18%	Single 23% Married 37% In a relation 32%
<b>Employment</b>	Employed 78% Self-employ 9%	Employed 44% Self-employ 56%	Employed 91% Self-employ 9%	Employed 74% Self-employ 26%	Employed 69% Self-employ 2%
<b>Religion</b>	N.A/None 33% Christian 64% Muslim 2%	N.A/None 0% Christian 82% Muslim Other 12%	N.A/None 37% Christian 61% Muslim 2%	N.A/None 39% Christian 57% Muslim 0%	N.A/None 45% Christian 51% Muslim 0%
<b>Children</b>	Yes 54% No 46%	Yes 69% No 31%	Yes 52% No 48%	Yes 52% No 48%	Yes 49% No 51%

[Source: elaboration from the Germany data]

From the table 4.14 we can observe some differences among the configurations. For example concerning the education variable, in archetype 4 the 57% of individuals achieved a master degree, while in the other groups this percentage is definitely lower, particularly in archetype

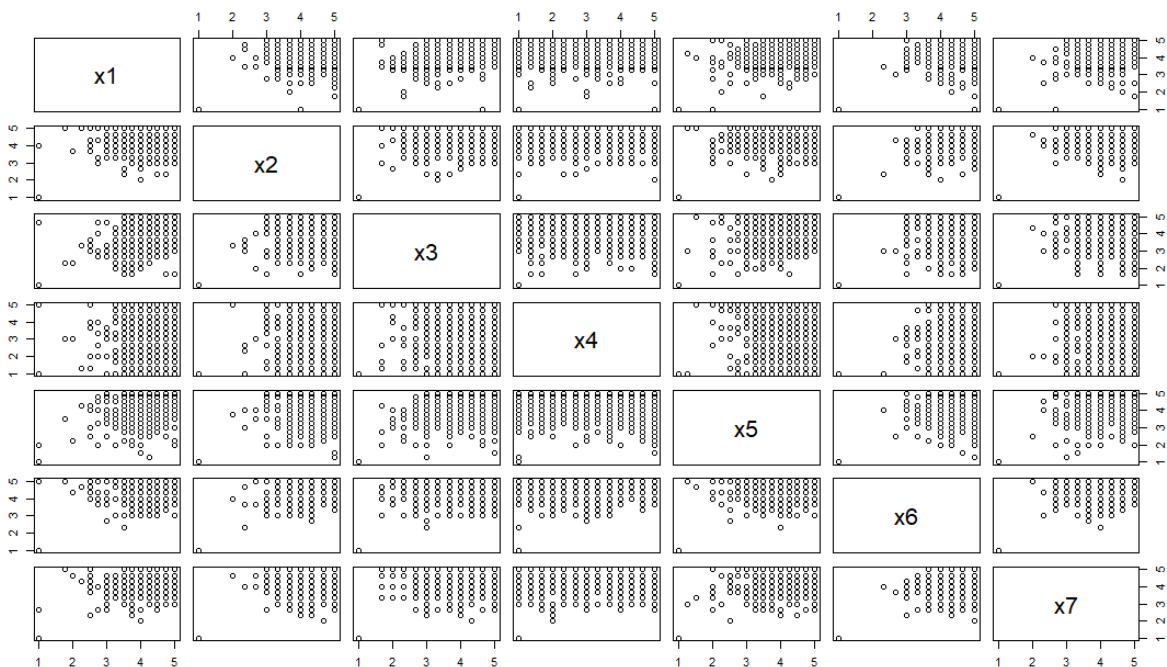
2. We can suppose that this difference between configurations 2 and 4, together with the diverse distribution of people employed by someone and self-employed, may play an influence on the importance attributed to different dimensions of career success. In fact, archetype 4 places emphasis on having positive impact and positive relationships on the work as well as learning and development, while for members of archetype 2 the entrepreneurship variable is extremely important, followed by financial security and work-life balance. Moreover, archetypes 1 and 5 are composed for the majority by women and exhibit a lower proportion of individuals with children, while the opposite is true for the other three groups.

#### 4.4.3 Italy's results of the archetypal analysis:

We present now the data elaboration with the software Rstudio for the Italian dataset.

The sample of Italian data contains 823 observations after cleaning for missing data; the plot of the dataset with the seven dimension of success (namely, learning and development, work-life balance, positive impact, entrepreneurship, positive relations, financial security and financial achievement) is presented in the next figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7: plot of the Italian data



[Source: elaboration of Italy data]

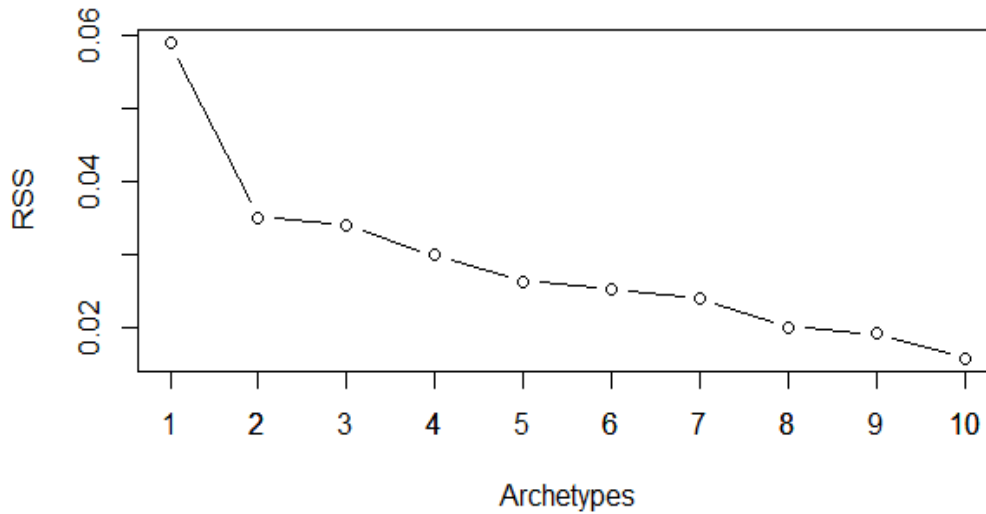
As for the other data, we started our analysis with Rstudio looking at the residual sum of squares and at the scree-plot (respectively shown in table 4.15 and figure 4.8), which contains the relation between rss and the number of archetypes in order to select the most appropriate k.

Table 4.15: rss for Italy

	<b>K=2</b>	<b>K=3</b>	<b>K=4</b>	<b>K=5</b>
<b>RSS</b>	0.03525513	0.03425042	0.03282248	0.02701138

[Source: elaboration of Italy data]

Figure 4.8: Scree plot for Italy



[Source: elaboration of Italy data]

After having analyzed the rss and particularly the reduction, equal to 0.05, that it is possible to get passing from four to five archetypes, we chose k=5 archetypes for the Italian dataset.

For each individual in the sample the software returns coefficients ranging from 0 to 1 through which we have been able to allocate respondents to archetypal or non-archetypal groups. We recall here that if an observation's coefficient for an archetypes is higher than 0.5, it will be attributed to that configuration, otherwise if it has all coefficients below 0.5, it will be classified as a non-archetypal observation.

In the next table (4.16) it is possible to see the number of observations contained in each archetype we found as well as the number of non-archetypal ones and their percentage over the total sample.

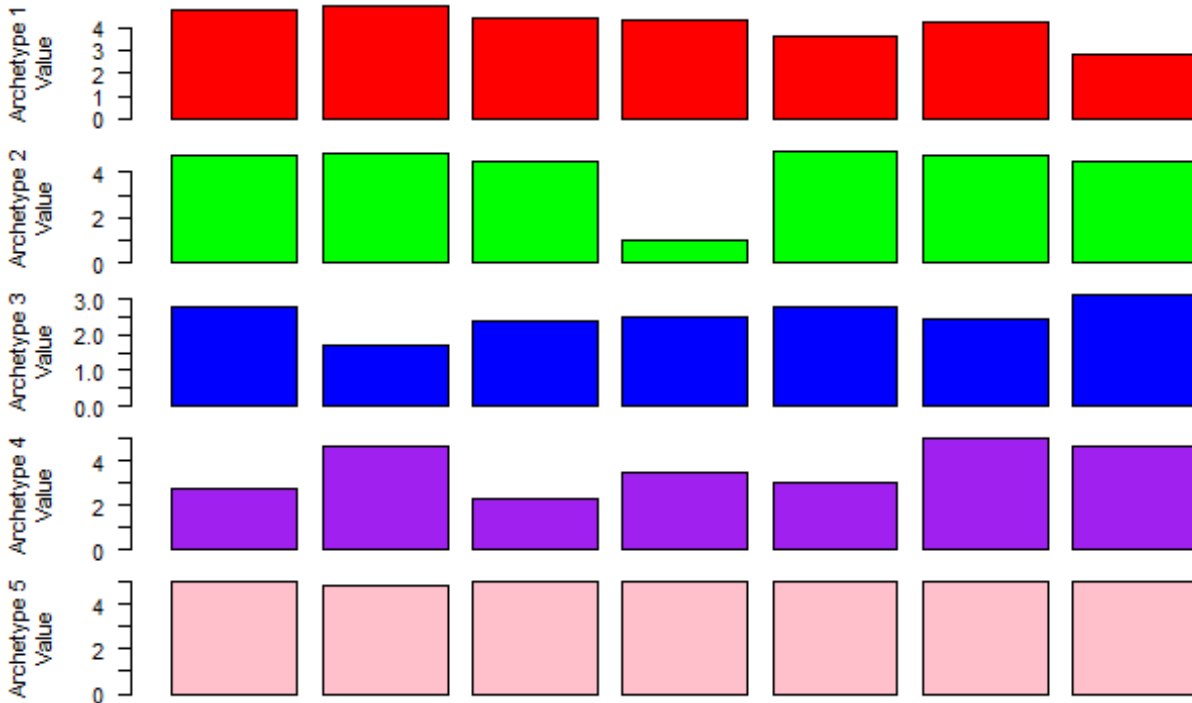
Table 4.16: distribution of archetypes for Italy

	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>	<b>A4</b>	<b>A5</b>	<b>NON ARCH</b>
<b>Number</b>	44	163	10	35	239	571
<b>% data</b>	5%	20%	1%	4%	29%	69%

[Source: elaboration from the Italian data]

The software, when correctly set, gives us the barplots of the five archetypes, which are useful because they underline the weights each archetype attributes to the seven dimensions of subjective career success. The next figure presents the barplots for the Italian data's archetypes.

Figure 4.9: Barplots for Italy

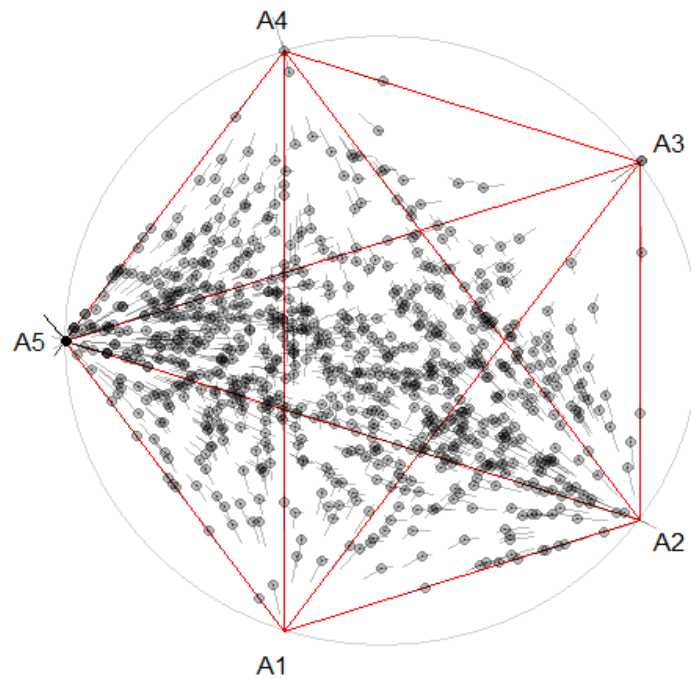


[Source: elaboration from the Italian data]

The barplots clearly show that respondents belonging to archetype 5 give mostly the same weight to all the seven dimension of career success, while those individuals included in archetype 2 display a very little consideration for the entrepreneurship dimension and quite high and similar weights for all the others. Instead, the other three archetypes (1, 3 and 4) present different levels of importance attributed to the various dimensions.

We introduce now the simplex plot for the solution with five archetypes, which graphically shows the distribution of observations among the five configurations as well as their directions. In accordance with the table of distribution of the sample just exposed, the simplex plot underlines the fact that the majority of points are closer to the archetype five as well as to archetype two, which respectively cover the 29% and the 20% of the observations. It can be noticed that some points are in the middle of the pentagonal shape, representing the non-archetypal cases.

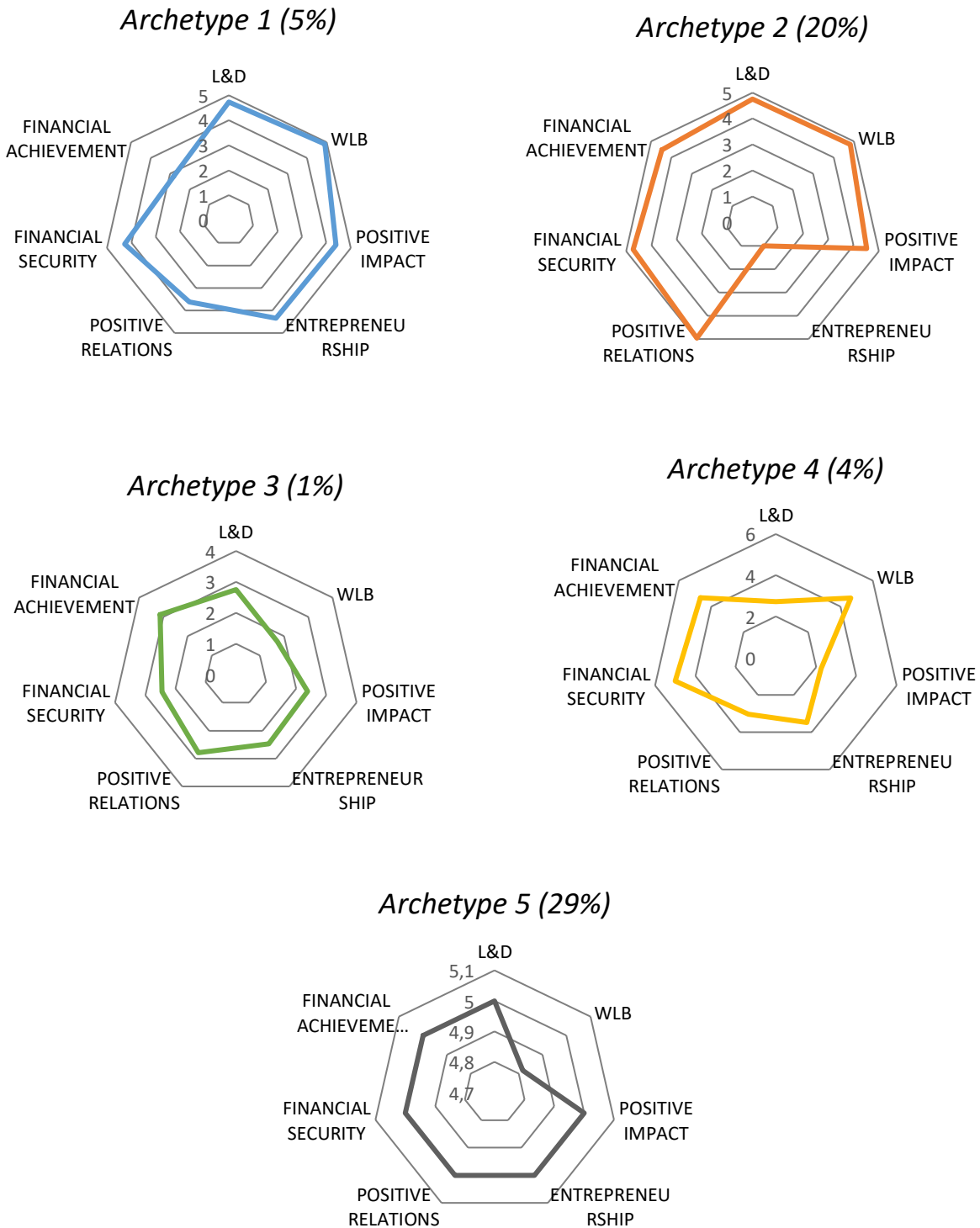
*Figure 4.10: Simplex-plot for Italy*



[Source: elaboration from the Italian data]

In the next page, the radar graphs for the Italian archetypes are presented. The archetype 4 clearly stands out being different from all the other configurations; it gives great consideration to work-life balance, entrepreneurship and financial dimensions, while it mostly disregards the others. Instead, the two most numerous archetypes, namely the number 2 and 5, attribute both high weights to learning and development, positive relations, positive impact and to the financial dimensions. Anyway, they differentiate one from the other for the consideration given to entrepreneurship and work-life balance. The archetype 2 nearly does not consider at all the entrepreneurship variable, while the configuration 5 does the same with the work-life balance. Concluding, even if archetype 3 comprehends only ten respondents, it is worth mentioning it because it is dissimilar from the others configurations since it attributes medium weights to financial achievements and positive relations, but no dimension of subjective career success plays a major role among the members of this group.

Figure 4.11: radar graphs for Italy archetypes



[Source: elaboration from the Italian data]

In order to conclude with results for the Italian dataset, we present now a table containing the demographic characteristics of respondents belonging to the five archetypes, in order to outline the differences existing among them.

*Table 4.17: Demographic characteristics of individuals belonging to Italy archetypes*

	<b>Archetype 1</b>	<b>Archetype 2</b>	<b>Archetype 3</b>	<b>Archetype 4</b>	<b>Archetype 5</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male 69% Female 31%	Male 40% Female 60%	Male 70% Female 30%	Male 69% Female 31%	Male 63% Female 37%
<b>Avg. age</b>	41.6 years	41 years	43 years	41 years	40.8 years
<b>Avg. work experience</b>	19 years	18 years	20 years	18 years	17.7 years
<b>Education</b>	Primary 0% Secondary 42% Tertiary 9% Master 38% Doctorate 4%	Primary 0% Secondary 64% Tertiary 7% Master 48% Doctorate 9%	Primary 0% Secondary 60% Tertiary 10% Master 30% Doctorate 0%	Primary 0% Secondary 62% Tertiary 12% Master 17% Doctorate 6%	Primary 2% Secondary 54% Tertiary 10% Master 28% Doctorate 7%
<b>Marital status</b>	Single 18% Married 60% In a relation 14%	Single 16% Married 49% In a relation 27%	Single 20% Married 40% In a relation 40%	Single 26% Married 43% In a relation 23%	Single 23% Married 48% In a relation 19%
<b>Employment</b>	Employed 47% Self-employ 53%	Employed 97% Self-employ 3%	Employed 80% Self-employ 20%	Employed 74% Self-employ 26%	Employed 59% Self-employ 41%
<b>Religion</b>	N.A/None 65% Christian 31% Buddhist 2%	N.A/None 65% Christian 34% Muslim 1%	N.A/None 80% Christian 20% Muslim 0%	N.A/None 60% Christian 37% Buddhist 3%	N.A/None 77% Christian 23% Muslim 0%
<b>Children</b>	Yes 38% No 60%	Yes 60% No 40%	Yes 52% No 48%	Yes 52% No 48%	Yes 49% No 51%

[Source: elaboration from the Italian data]

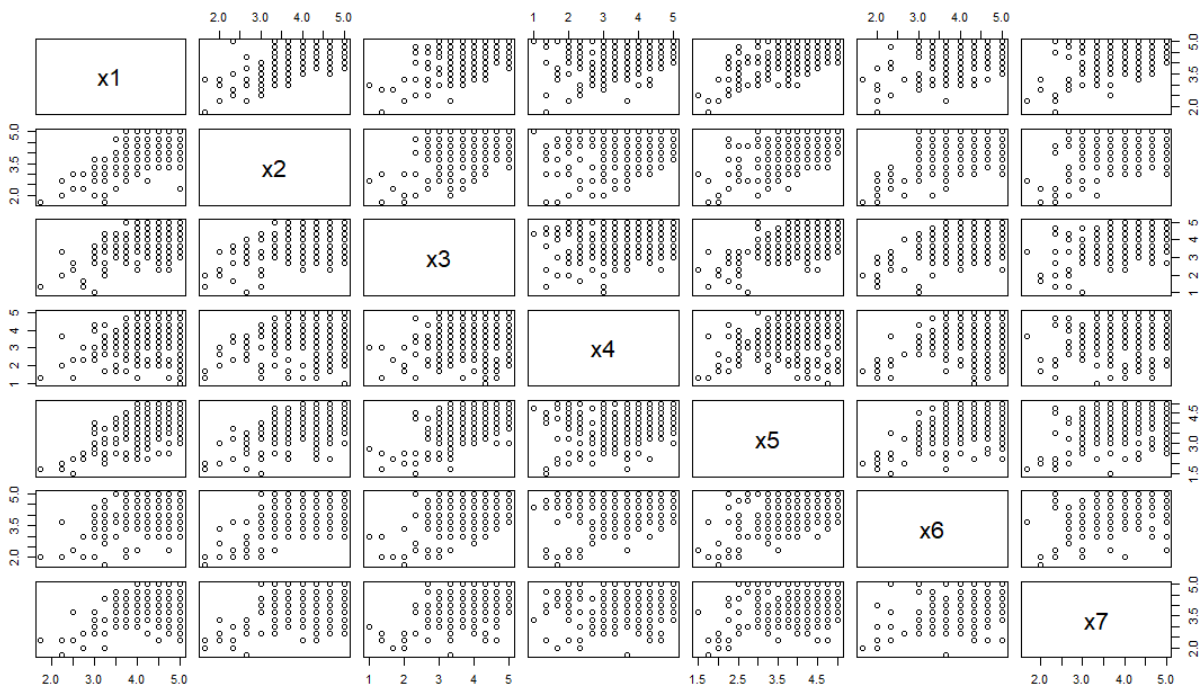
Some demographic differences among the respondents belonging to the various archetypes clearly stand out. For instance, looking at the employment status archetype 2 is for the 97% composed by people working for an employer, while approximately half of individuals belonging to archetype 1 and 5 are self-employed. These differences matches the dissimilar configurations of radar graphs, where archetypes 1 and 5 place great importance to the entrepreneurship dimension, while archetype 2 mostly does not consider the dimension at all. Moreover, the average age of archetypes are very similar, but dissimilarities can be found in the education characteristics. In fact, comparing archetypes 4 and 5 with the other three, they show lower levels of education, particularly concerning master and doctorate. On the contrary, four out of five archetypes (excluding only archetype 1) comprehend a percentage of people that achieved the secondary education as their maximum level of education in nearly 60% of the cases. Again archetype 1 differentiates itself also concerning the percentage of respondents with children; only 38% of people belonging to this archetype have children, even if the 60%

of them is married and the 14% is in a relationship. This diversity may be explained by the fact that more than half of the sample achieved a tertiary or higher education and consequently they may have postponed the birth of a child to their mid-40s, which perfectly matches the demographic trend occurring now in Italy.

#### 4.4.4 Mexico's results of the archetypal analysis:

We present now the results of the data elaboration for the Mexican sample, comprehending 554 observation after cleaning the dataset from the missing data. The distribution of observations among the seven dimensions of career success is presented in the figure below.

Figure 4.12: Plot of Mexico data



[Source: elaboration of Mexican data]

First of all, we started looking at the rss of the various possible configuration of k archetypes (table 4.18 below) noticing how they decrease moving from 2 to 5 archetypes, which is corroborated by the scree-plot (figure 4.13)

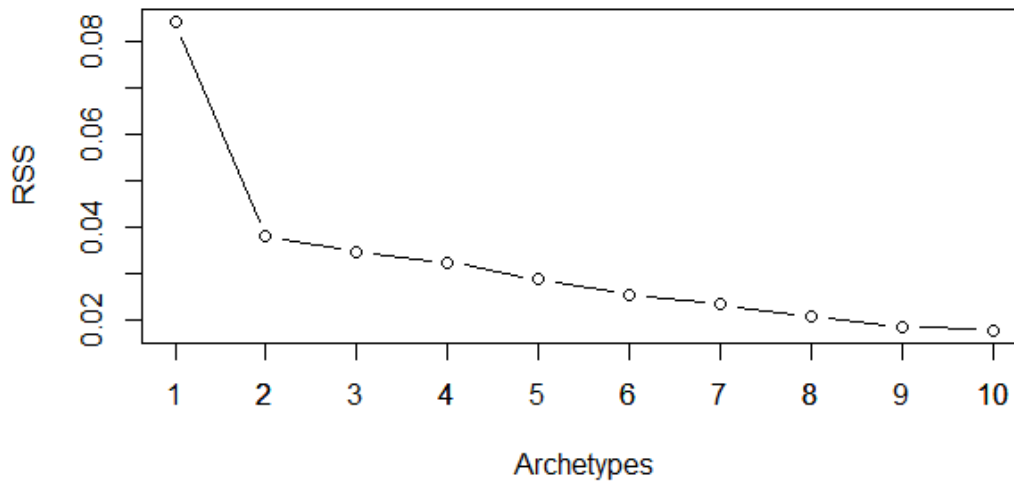
Table 4.18: Rss for Mexico

	<b>K=2</b>	<b>K=3</b>	<b>K=4</b>	<b>K=5</b>
<b>RSS</b>	0.0379706	0.03479067	0.03234269	0.02919051

[Source: elaboration of Mexican data]



Figure 4.13: Scree-plot for Mexico



[Source: elaboration of Mexican data]

After looking at both the rss and their relationship with k archetypes, we selected five archetypes as we thought it would be the best solution for our data since they present residual sum of squares equal 0.029. The next table shows the numerosness of each archetype, together with their percentage of coverage of the total Mexican data.

Table 4.19: Distribution of archetypes for Mexico

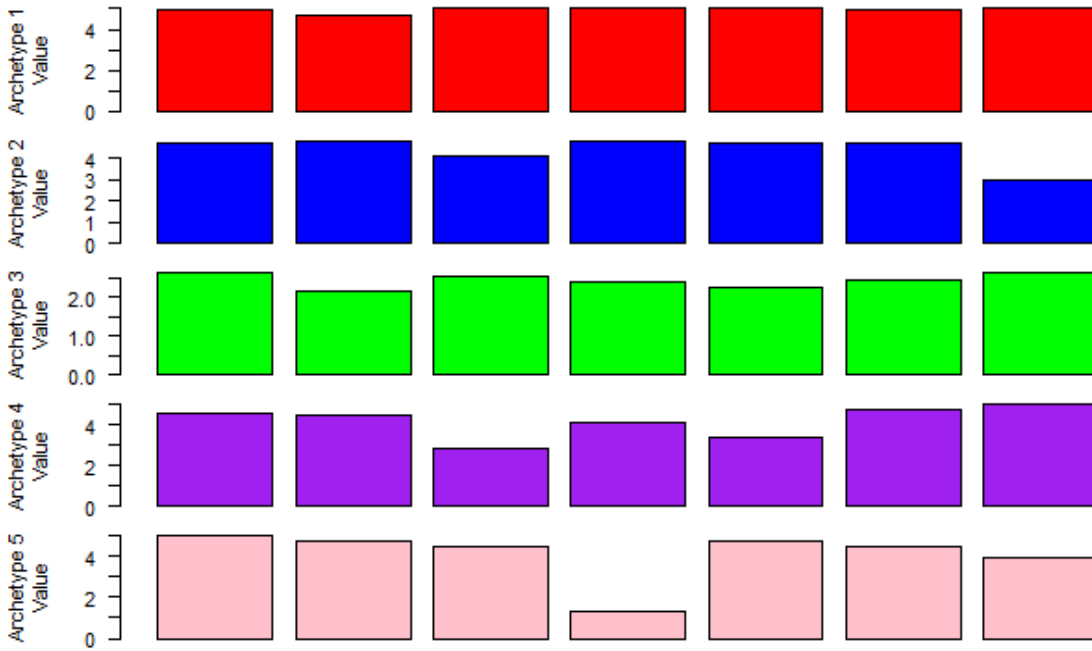
	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>	<b>A4</b>	<b>A5</b>	<b>NON ARCH</b>
<b>Number</b>	219	33	34	39	40	189
<b>% data</b>	40%	6%	6%	7%	7%	34%

[Source: elaboration from the Mexican data]

The software Rstudio was run to calculate the barplots of our five archetypes in order to have a graphic image of their differences and similarities.

The barplots are presented in the figure 4.14 below. Also in the Mexican dataset, the addition of the fifth archetype demonstrates to be meaningful since it is different from all the others, placing almost no importance to the entrepreneurial dimension and moderate importance to positive impact and financial achievement ones. Instead, archetypes 1 and 3 seem similar for the priority attributed to dimensions of career success, but looking better to the scale on the left it can be noticed that they differ in terms of the weights attributed. In particular, archetype 1 has coefficients ranging from 4 to 5 for all the dimensions, while the coefficients of archetype 3 arrive maximum at three points.

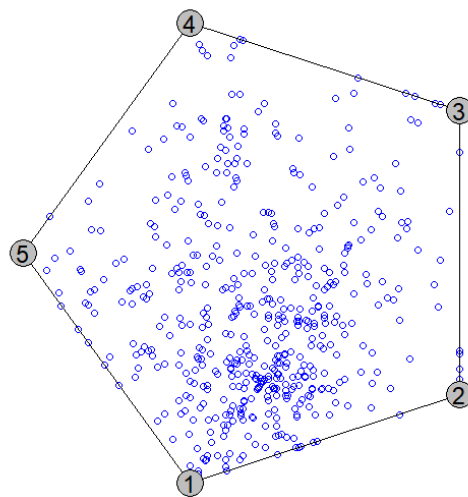
Figure 4.14: Barplots for Mexico



[Source: elaboration of Mexican data]

Following barplots, we introduce the archmap, a two dimensional projection of observations based on their coefficients into a space created by the five archetypes selected. The blue points in the archmap, representing the distribution of respondents show that the majority of individuals in the dataset are close to the archetype 1 and consequently they are attributed to it; in fact, it contains 219 observations.

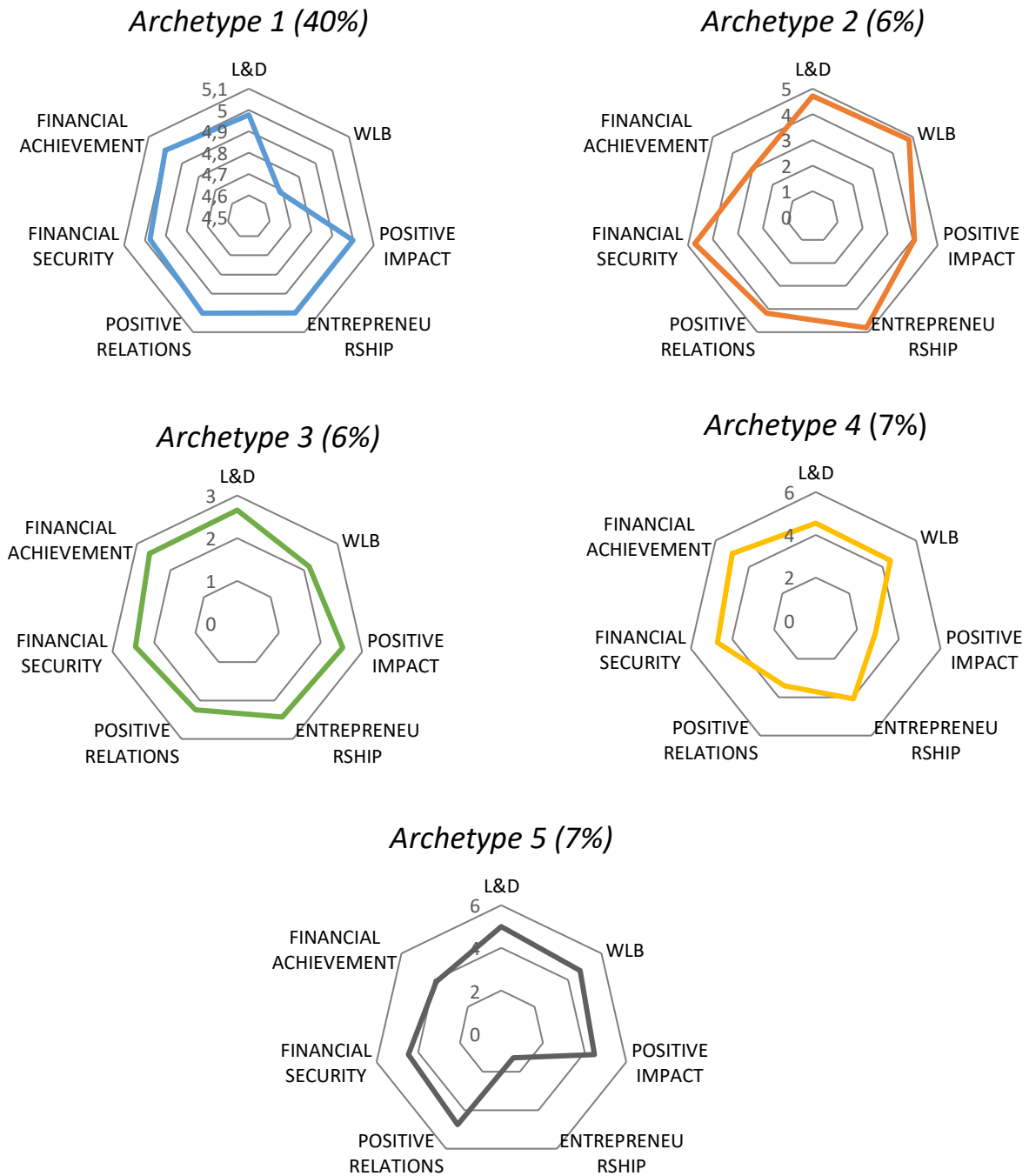
Figure 4.15: Archmap for Mexico



[Source: elaboration of Mexican data]

Arch graphs calculated for the five archetypes of the Mexican data are presented below, followed by comments on their differences and similarities.

Figure 4.16: Arch graphs for Mexico



[Source: elaboration of Mexican data]

Archetype 1, the largest, places importance to all the dimensions with the exception of the work-life balance one, which in fact is extremely relevant for archetypes 2, together with learning and development, entrepreneurship and financial security. Moreover, the entrepreneurial dimension appears as the most important also for archetypes 3 and 4 that, in complete opposition to archetype 5, place the highest weight to it. Furthermore, archetype 5 covering

only the 7% of the sample differentiates itself from the others pointing positive relations and positive impact as the two most relevant dimensions for career success.

The analysis of Mexican results proceeds now with a table representing the demographic characteristics of people belonging to their various archetypes. We decided to further study the demographics of respondents since we suppose there could be a relation between them and the differences in the importance attributed to career success dimensions.

Table 4.20: Demographic characteristics of individuals belonging to Mexican archetypes

	<b>Archetype 1</b>	<b>Archetype 2</b>	<b>Archetype 3</b>	<b>Archetype 4</b>	<b>Archetype 5</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male 60% Female 40%	Male 70% Female 30%	Male 56% Female 44%	Male 69% Female 31%	Male 20% Female 80%
<b>Avg. age</b>	34 years	33.5 years	36 years	33 years	33 years
<b>Avg. work experience</b>	11 years	11 years	8 years	7 years	7 years
<b>Education</b>	Primary 1% Secondary 12% Tertiary 68% Master 17% Doctorate 2%	Primary 3% Secondary 12% Tertiary 76% Master 9% Doctorate 0%	Primary 9% Secondary 15% Tertiary 65% Master 12% Doctorate 0%	Primary 3% Secondary 18% Tertiary 69% Master 10% Doctorate 0%	Primary 0% Secondary 3% Tertiary 86% Master 13% Doctorate 0%
<b>Marital status</b>	Single 37% Married 46% In a relation 12%	Single 24% Married 42% In a relation 24%	Single 29% Married 68% In a relation 0%	Single 31% Married 44% In a relation 23%	Single 23% Married 65% In a relation 10%
<b>Employment</b>	Employed 89% Self-employ 10%	Employed 91% Self-employ 9%	Employed 94% Self-employ 6%	Employed 95% Self-employ 5%	Employed 100% Self-employ 0%
<b>Religion</b>	N.A/None 35% Christian 61% Buddhist 2%	N.A/None 45% Christian 45% Buddhist 15%	N.A/None 15% Christian 74% Muslim 6%	N.A/None 15% Christian 67% Muslim 13% Buddhist 5%	N.A/None 38% Christian 58% Buddhist 3%
<b>Children</b>	Yes 45% No 55%	Yes 39% No 61%	Yes 26% No 74%	Yes 46% No 54%	Yes 38% No 62%

[Source: elaboration from the Mexican data]

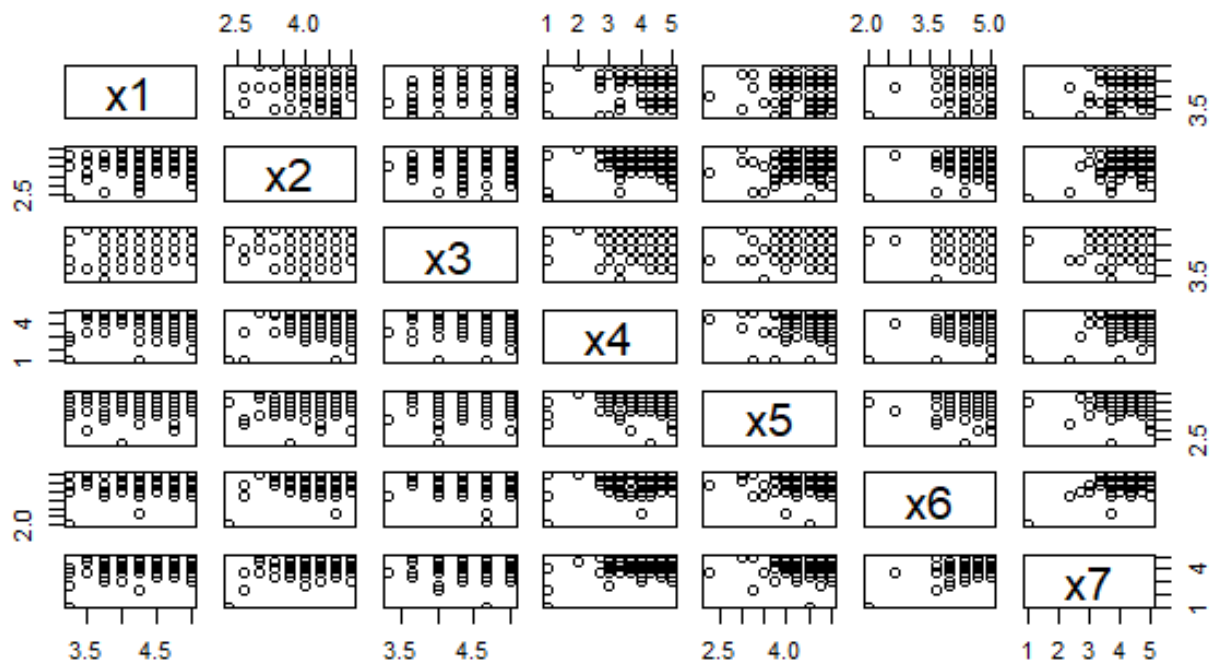
The analysis of the demographics points out some dissimilarities among the components of the various archetypes. Archetype 5 distinguishes itself from the other concerning the gender composition of the group; indeed, it is the only one with a majority of women, which in this case represent the 80% of the sample. Moreover, individuals comprehended in archetype 5 have a higher level of education compared to the other groups, followed by archetype 1 with 89% of

components that achieved tertiary education. Archetype 5 shows almost no consideration to the entrepreneurship variable and its strong presence of women with high education may play a role in their career success perceptions. Another characteristic worth mentioning is that all the five archetypes are composed by a high proportion of individuals working for an employer. The group with the lowest percentage of employed people is archetype 1 with 89%. In conclusion, archetypes 1 and 2 have quite high percentages of individuals with no religion or that preferred not to answer to the question. The religion, as well as other cultural factors, may play a role on habits and on the perception of individuals also concerning career success.

#### 4.4.5 Nigeria's results of the archetypal analysis:

We introduce now the results for Nigeria, the last country we analyzed in isolation from the others. The Nigerian sample, after having deleted the missing values arrived to 449 observations. Below the plot of the Nigerian observation is presented, particularly underlying the distribution of the data among the seven dimensions of career success.

*Figure 4.17: Plot of Nigerian data*



[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]

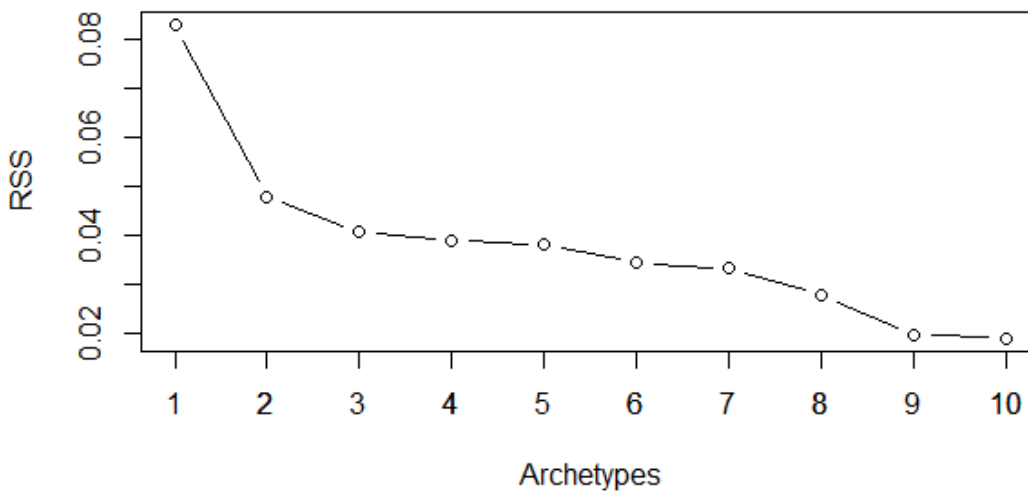
Once seen the distribution of the data, as for the other nations' datasets, we started choosing the number of archetypes that could best cover the variability among our respondents' preferences. The software returned the rss and at the scree plot that are shown below.

Table 4.21: Rss for Nigeria

	<b>K=3</b>	<b>K=4</b>	<b>K=5</b>
<b>RSS</b>	0.04486452	0.03930077	0.03608112

[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]

Figure 4.18: Scree plot for Nigeria



[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]

From the rss table we could notice how the residual sum of squares not only significantly decreases moving from three to four archetypes, but also from four to five, reaching a rss equal to 0.0361. The scree plot as well evidences the gain in the data coverage with k=5, thus for these two reasons we selected five archetypes as the best solution also for the Nigerian data.

The software, utilizing the “coefficients” function, let us attribute each individual in the sample to an archetype or to the non-archetypal cases if it resembled the population average. The following table 4.22 shows the number of individuals belonging to each configuration and the percentage of the total dataset coverage. Clearly, archetypes 3 is the most numerous, followed by archetype 2. In this case, only the 20% of the population is not captured by archetypes.

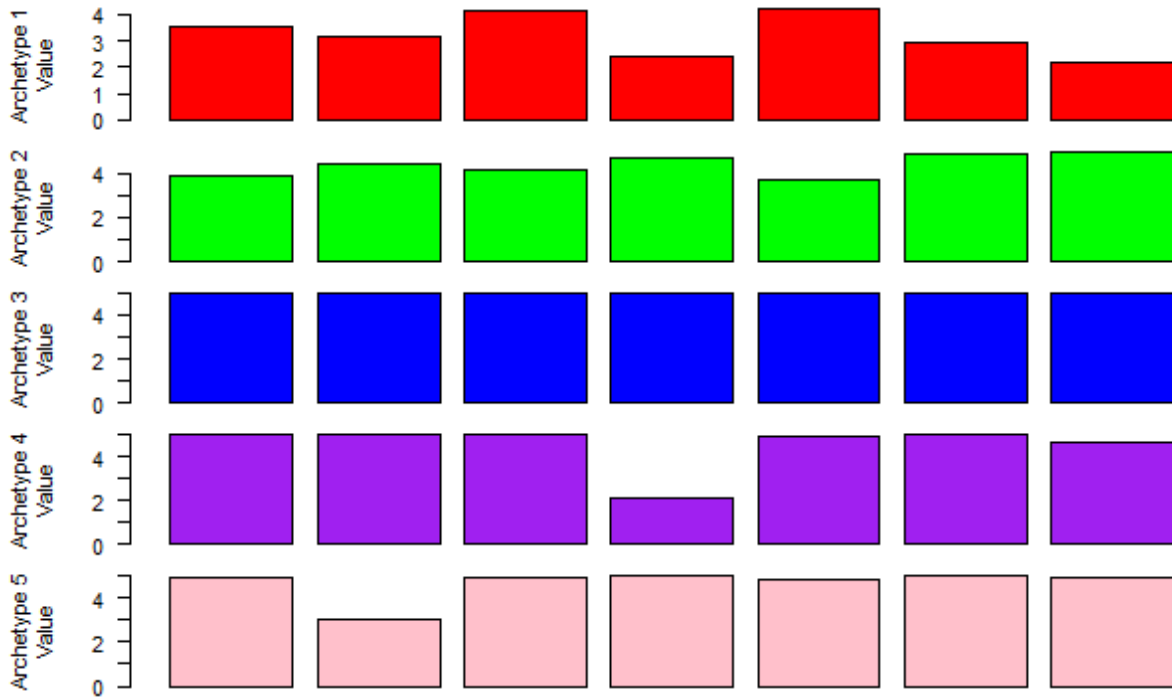
Table 4.22: Distribution of archetypes for Nigeria

	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>	<b>A4</b>	<b>A5</b>	<b>NON ARCH</b>
<b>Number</b>	7	51	262	22	19	88
<b>% data</b>	2%	11%	58%	5%	4%	20%

[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]

Rstudio was then utilized to gain further information about the characteristics of the five archetypes and the importance each one gives to the dimensions of career success. The figure 4.19 shows barplots for the five archetypes.

Figure 4.19: Barplots for Nigeria

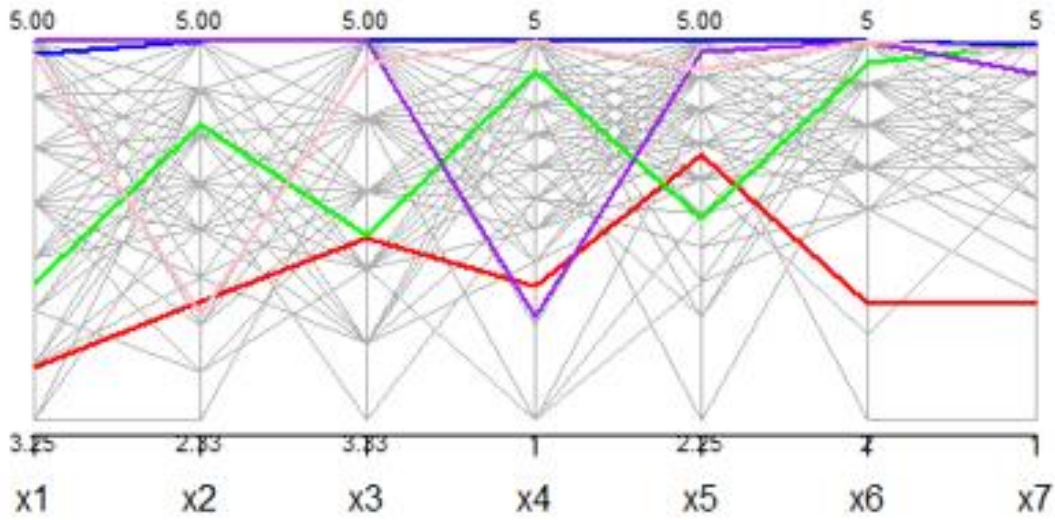


[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]

Individuals belonging to archetype 3 clearly differ from the others because they place mostly the same high level of importance to all the dimensions of career success. On the contrary, archetype 1 shows different weights for all the seven variables, but we can detect that dimensions three and five, namely positive relations and positive impact, are the most relevant. In the barplots for archetype 4 it can be noticed that six dimensions are regarded as important, with the exception of entrepreneurship; the same happens with archetype 5, but here the least relevant variable is work-life balance. These considerations will be further examined with the demographic characteristic of individuals belonging to the groups.

The following figure 4.20 instead contains the “pcplot” of our configurations where colored lines represents the five archetypes, while each gray line reports the considerations of each respondent towards the seven dimensions of career success. On the horizontal axis there are the seven dimensions, while on the vertical one there is a scale, going from zero to five, representing the importance given to each aspect. It can be noticed that, in harmony with the barplots shown above, the blue line representing archetype 3 is high in all dimensions, while the red one corresponding to archetype 1 gives different weights to the seven variables. Moreover, the purple line, standing for archetype 4, attributes a tiny consideration to the variable four (i.e. entrepreneurship).

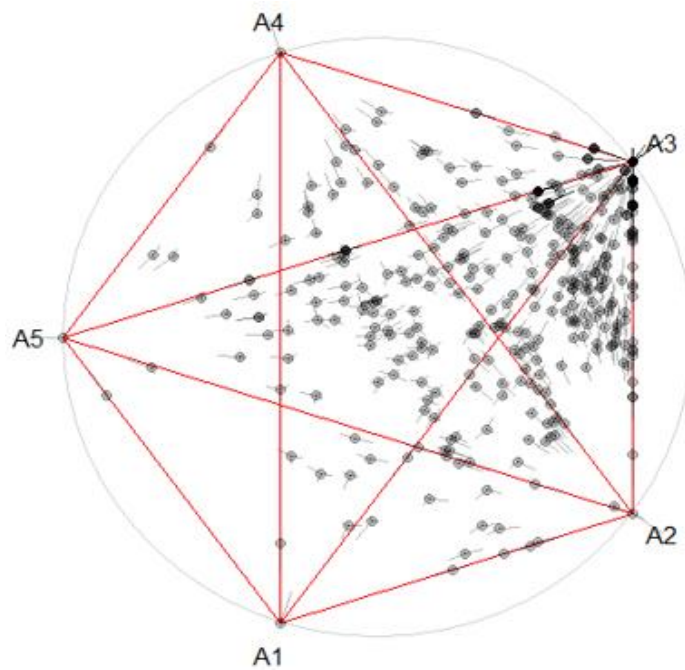
Figure 4.20: Pcplot for Nigeria



[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]

We exhibit now the simplex plot for the five archetypes calculated. From the graph 4.21 it is possible to notice that, in accordance with what aforementioned, the distribution of points (i.e. individuals) is more concentrated close to archetype 3, which contains the highest number of observations. Moreover, also the directions of the points head towards archetype 3 and some towards archetype 2.

Figure 4.21: Simplex plot for Nigeria

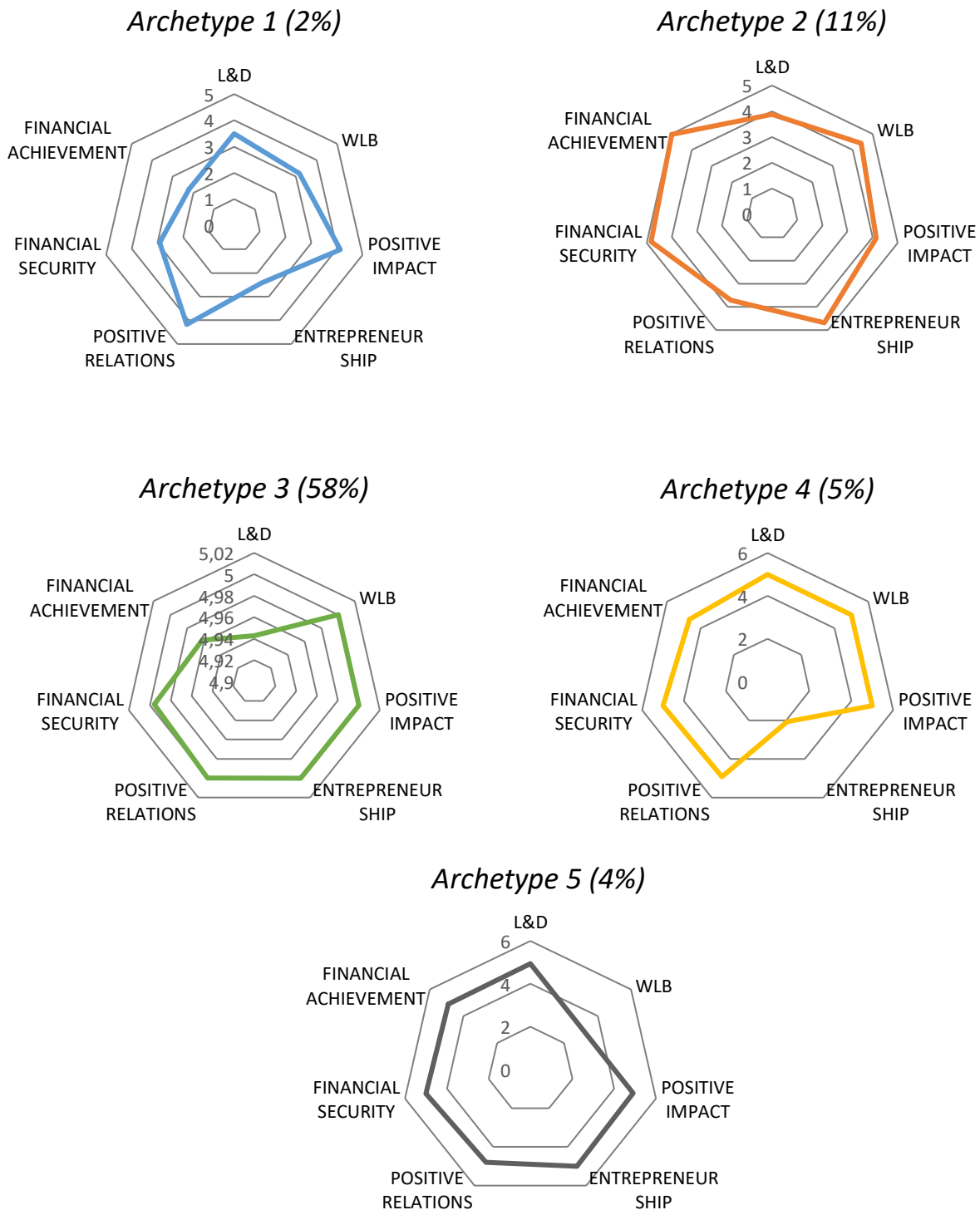


[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]



The radar graphs, obtained through the parameters given by Rstudio for the five archetypes are now presented to graphically clarify which are the main dimensions of career success taken into account by each archetype.

*Figure 4.22: Radar graphs for Nigeria*



[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]

As aforementioned, archetype 3 is the most numerous and its members give high importance to mostly all the dimensions, but particularly to financial security, entrepreneurship, work-life balance, positive impact and relations. A similar configuration can be found in archetype 4, but here the dimension not considered as that relevant is entrepreneurship and not learning and development as in archetype 3. Instead, configuration 1 clearly appears as different from all the others; people belonging to this group focus on positive impact and positive relations as dimensions of career success, followed by the possibility to learn and develop through their work. Lastly, it is interesting to underline the configuration of archetype 2, the second most numerous, whose members consider as important all dimensions of career success and where financial achievement and financial security are the most prominent.

In order to conclude the exhibition of the results for the Nigerian sample, we propose now a table with the demographic characteristics of people belonging to the various archetypes found.

Table 4.23: Demographic characteristics of individuals belonging to Nigerian archetypes

	<b>Archetype 1</b>	<b>Archetype 2</b>	<b>Archetype 3</b>	<b>Archetype 4</b>	<b>Archetype 5</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male 57% Female 43%	Male 76% Female 24%	Male 69% Female 29%	Male 23% Female 68%	Male 68% Female 18%
<b>Avg. age</b>	35.3 years	33 years	35.8 years	34.8 years	34 years
<b>Avg. work experience</b>	10 years	9.2 years	10.3 years	9.7 years	9.6 years
<b>Education</b>	Primary 0% Secondary 14% Tertiary 57% Master 29% Doctorate 0%	Primary 8% Secondary 26% Tertiary 53% Master 10% Doctorate 4%	Primary 2% Secondary 19% Tertiary 54% Master 19% Doctorate 4%	Primary 0% Secondary 0% Tertiary 27% Master 23% Doctorate 36%	Primary 0% Secondary 21% Tertiary 53% Master 16% Doctorate 5%
<b>Marital status</b>	Single 27% Married 50% In a relation 18%	Single 53% Married 45% In a relation 0%	Single 34% Married 57% In a relation 5%	Single 36% Married 41% In a relation 10%	Single 42% Married 58% In a relation 0%
<b>Employment</b>	Employed 100% Self-employ 0%	Employed 86% Self-employ 8%	Employed 89% Self-employ 8%	Employed 100% Self-employ 0%	Employed 89% Self-employ 11%
<b>Religion</b>	N.A/None 0% Christian 86% Buddhist 0%	N.A/None 0% Christian 86% Buddhist 0%	N.A/None 1% Christian 85% Muslim 612%	N.A/None 5% Christian 86% Muslim 5%	N.A/None 5% Christian 84% Muslim 11%
<b>Children</b>	Yes 71% No 29%	Yes 76% No 24%	Yes 85% No 15%	Yes 73% No 27%	Yes 95% No 5%

[Source: elaboration from the Nigerian data]

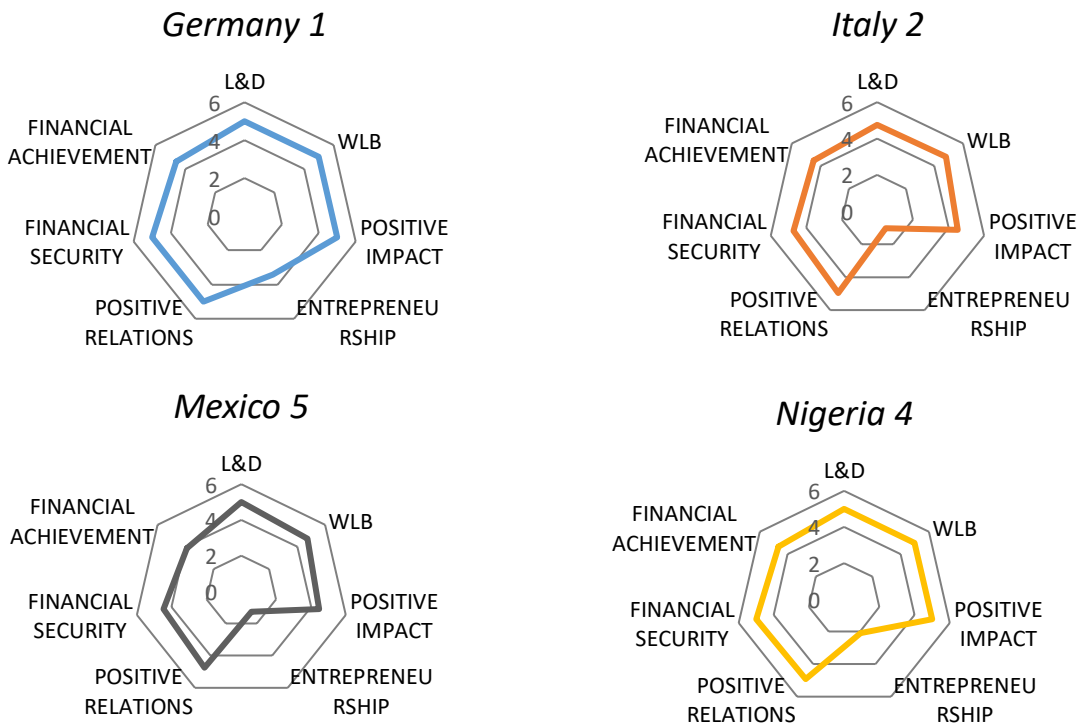
Looking at the table with demographic characteristics of respondents, some interesting findings can be detected. Firstly, archetype 4 well differs from the others because it is the only one with a majority of women (68%) and at the same time its members are also those with the highest education (23% has a master and 36% a doctorate). All the groups are composed for a strong majority by Christian, which in turn could affect the importance that all archetypes attribute to positive relationships and positive impact dimensions. In coherence with the affiliation to the Christian religion and with the country culture, all the groups are composed for a half by married people, even if their average age is only around 34 years. Moreover, the high percentage of individuals married or in a relationship could also explain the significant weight that four archetypes out of five attribute to work-life balance.

#### 4.4.6 Comparisons of single countries' results

After the presentation of results for the four countries in isolation, for the aim of this research it is interesting to compare them to detect if there similarities or differences in archetypes found in the different nations. Radar graphs will be used because we consider them a clear and easy way to compare the configurations found.

There are some commonalities that stand out looking at archetypal configurations. In the figure 4.23 we compare Archetype 1 for Germany, Archetype 2 for Italy, archetype 4 for Nigeria and archetype 5 for Mexico. The four archetypes clearly attribute high relevance to six out of seven dimensions, namely L&D, work-life balance, positive impact and positive relations, financial security and financial achievement. On the other hand, they all allocate little consideration to the entrepreneurship dimension. Looking at the demographic characteristics of members of the four archetypes, it can be noticed that, differently from the other configurations, they are all composed by a strong majority of women. Moreover, they have an educational level higher than the dataset average and at least the 95% of members are employed by someone, that perfectly fits the little relevance given to the entrepreneurship dimension. These findings can be considered interesting since they suggest the existence of career success perceptions and priorities that overcome the countries' border and that may depend on the personal characteristics of individuals.

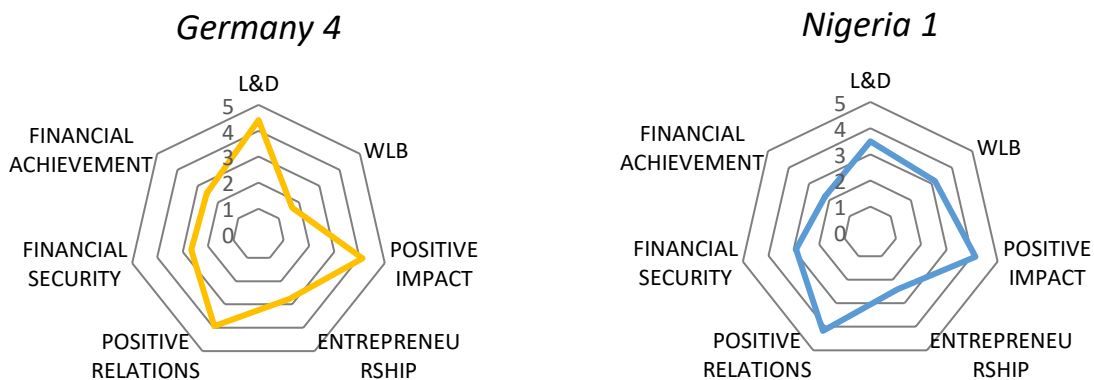
Figure 4.23: Similar archetypes part 1



[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

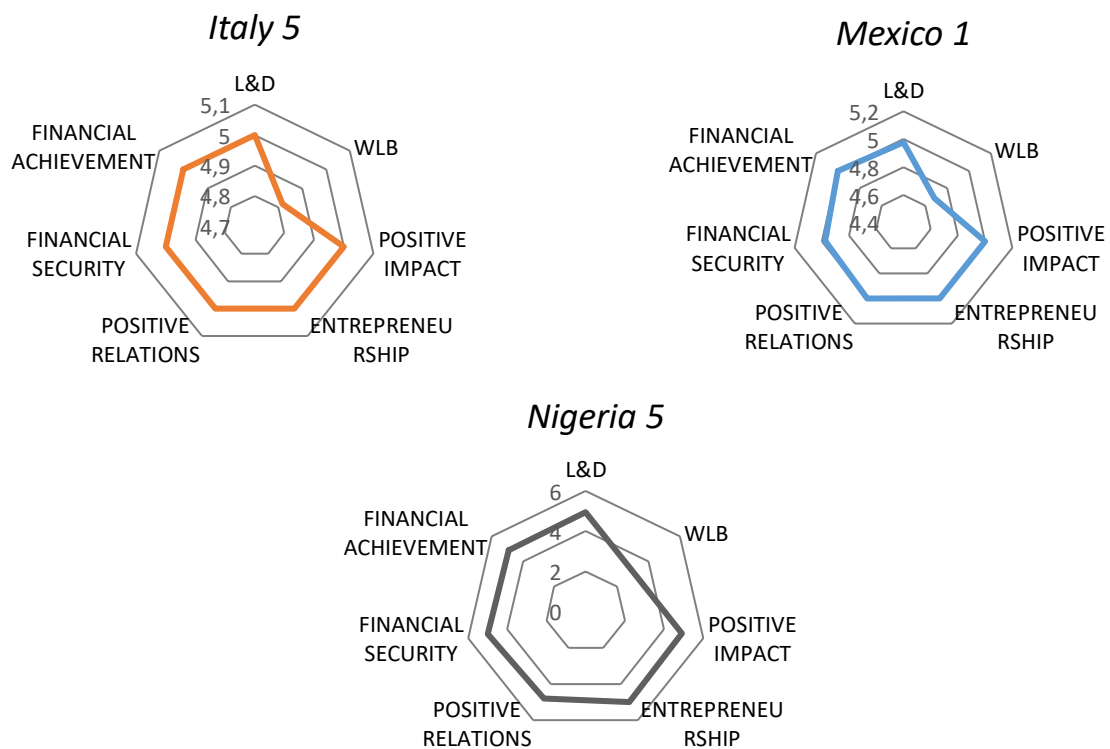
Analysing the radar graphs of the four countries we have been able to detect other two groups of similar configurations. The first one, shown in the figure 4.24, comprehends archetype 4 for Germany and archetype 1 for Nigeria. These two configurations put emphasis on learning and development, positive impact and positive relationships as dimensions that let members achieve subjective meanings of career success, while the other dimensions play a definitely minor role. Scrutinizing the demographic characteristics of members of the two archetypes we observed that, compared to the other groups, they have an higher average age and they are both composed by a majority of male respondents. In addition, both the configurations present a bulk of members that have at least one child and that are employed by someone.

Figure 4.24: Similar archetypes part 2



The second and the last group of similar configurations found concerns archetype 5 in Italy, archetype 1 in Mexico and archetype 5 for Nigeria. The three configurations (shown in figure 4.25) share an emphasis on six out of seven dimensions of career success, excluding only the work-life balance one. To better understand the similarity we looked at demographic characteristics of their members discovering that the three groups are composed by men for a majority ranging from 60% to 70%, while for the other demographic traits we have not found a trend pointing out.

*Figure 4.25: Similar archetypes part 3*



[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

## 4.5 Results for the pooled data

After the presentation of results of archetypal analysis separately for the four countries in our dataset, the current section will introduce the analysis and findings for the pooled data. The purpose of this second part of the analysis is answering the second research proposal (2) wondering if exist transnational archetypes for subjective career success perceptions.

The dataset composed by Germany, Italy, Mexico and Nigeria contains 1822 observations after the elimination of missing values. Firstly, we started working with Rstudio to identify the number of archetypes that could better capture the richness of information in the data. With this purpose, we analysed the residual sum of squares of the possible solutions with two, three, four

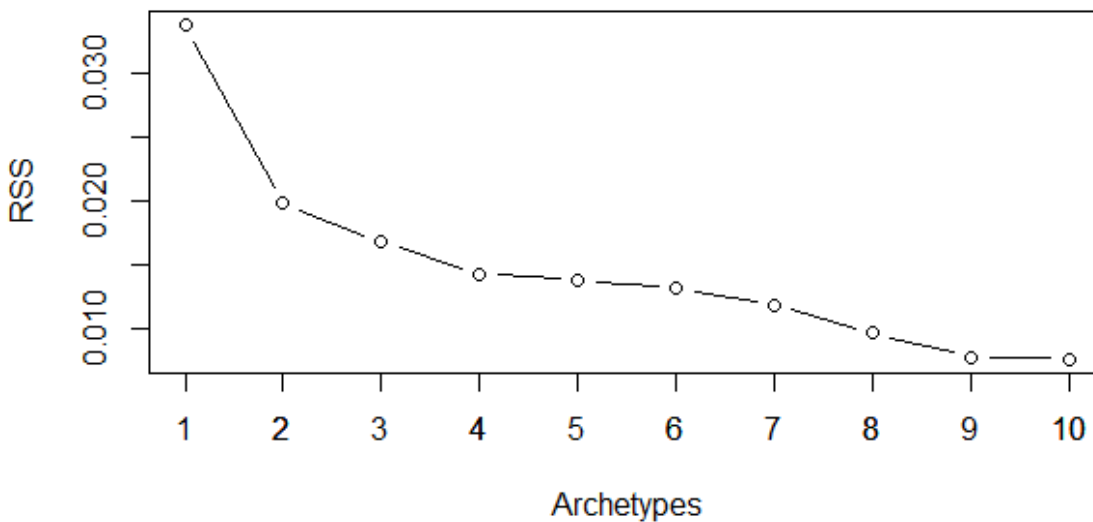
and five archetypes, that are exposed in the table 4.24 below. At the same time, we obtained the scree plot of our data showing how the rss diminish as the k number of archetypes increases. The rule of thumb with the scree plot consists in selecting the number k where the line in the graphs shows an elbow, thus just before it starts flattening (figure 4.26).

Table 4.24: Rss for the pooled data

	<b>K=2</b>	<b>K=3</b>	<b>K=4</b>	<b>K=5</b>
<b>RSS</b>	0.01983356	0.01681234	0.01443533	0.01438743

[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

Figure 4.26: Scree plot for the pooled data



[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

Considering both this criteria and in particular the minimal gain in rss passing from four to five archetypes, we selected four archetypes to capture the diversity into respondents' answers in the dataset. The table 4.25 exhibits the individuals' distribution among the four archetypes as well as their proportion over the dataset.

Table 4.25: Distribution of archetypes for the pooled data

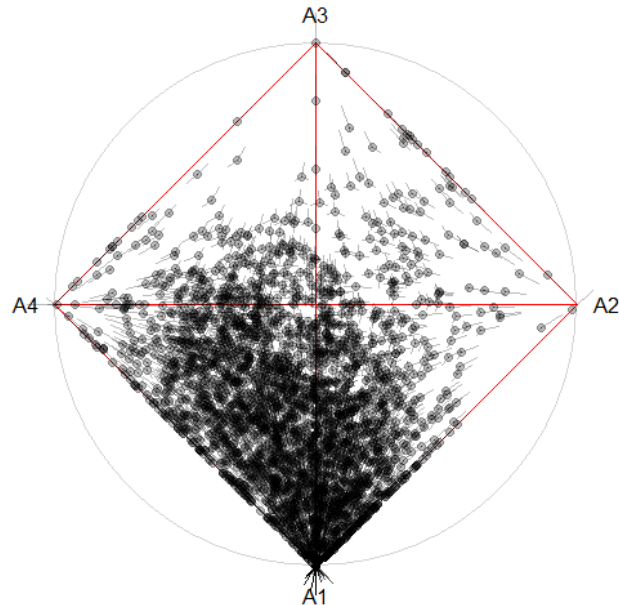
	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>A3</b>	<b>A4</b>	<b>NON ARCH</b>
<b>Number</b>	1585	71	41	288	838
<b>% data</b>	56%	3%	1%	10%	30%

[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

It is quite evident that archetype one is the most prominent compared to the others since it covers the 56% of the total sample. This consideration is graphically confirmed by the simplex plot presented below. The graph shows how the observations in the dataset are distributed

among the archetypes, the closer are points to an angle corresponding to a certain archetype, the more individuals will be attributed to that configuration.

*Figure 4.27: Simplex plot for the pooled data*



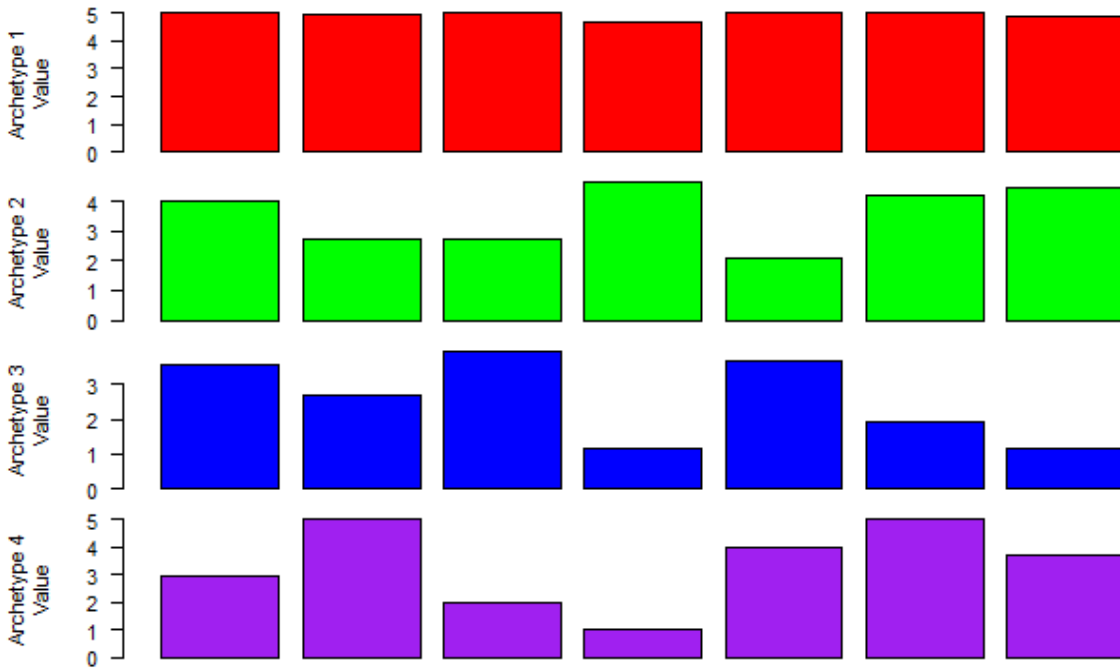
[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

After having seen the distribution of observation, it is interesting to understand which level of importance each archetype attributes to the dimensions of career success. For this reason, the barplots of the four archetypes are presented in figure 4.28 in the next page.

Each bar corresponds to a dimension, in order L&D, work-life balance, positive impact, entrepreneurship, positive relationships, financial security and financial achievement, while the vertical axis shows the importance attributed to each one.

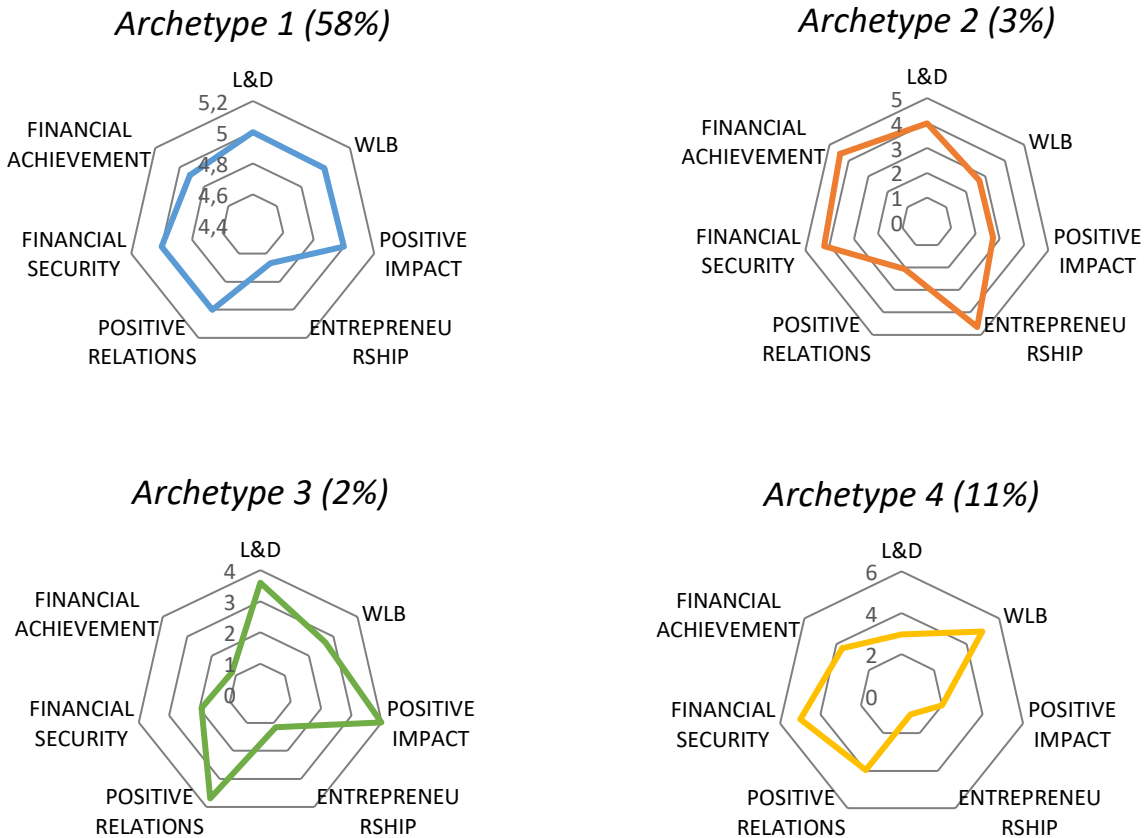
Moreover, the figure 4.29 presents the radar graphs of archetypes.

Figure 4.28: Barplots for the pooled data



[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

Figure 4.29: Radar graphs for the pooled data



[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]



Both barplots and radar graphs outline the different characteristics of archetypal groups. In particular archetype 1, the prevalent one, attributes a quite high level of importance to all the dimensions, with the partial exception of entrepreneurship as underlined by the radar graph. Moreover, archetype 1 perfectly matches the similarities among the single countries' archetypes we outline in the previous section (see figure 4.23).

In opposition to the first one, members belonging to archetype 2 focus on entrepreneurship and financial achievement as the most important meanings of career success, closely followed by financial security and learning and development, while the other three dimensions, in particular positive relationships, are minimally considered.

Furthermore, archetype 3 is even more polarized than the second one; individuals belonging to it consider highly relevant learning and development, positive impact and relationship, while they are indifferent concerning the other dimensions.

The addition of this third archetype can be considered relevant for better capturing the variance in the data because compared to the more numerous archetype 1, it is almost the opposite. The same stands true also for archetype 4 whose members, differently from the other configurations, place great meaning to work-life balance and financial security, followed by positive relationships. Analysing archetype 4 for the pooled data, it can be seen a similarity with archetype 5 for Germany (see figure 4.6), consequently we can suppose that the configuration comprehends an high percentage of German individuals.

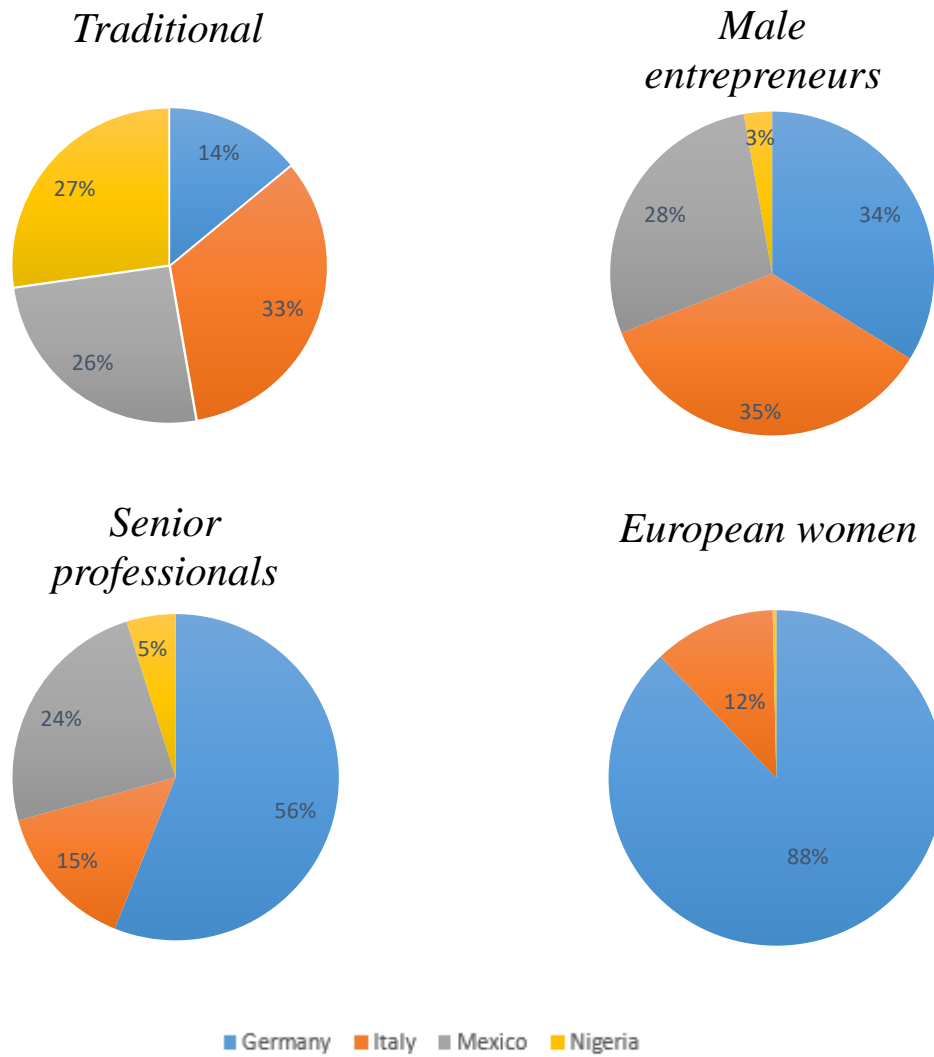
After having presented the configurations found for the pooled data, we decided to further analyse the data available from the 5C's questionnaire in order to comprehend also demographic characteristics and the career specificities of respondents in the dataset.

The purpose of this deep analysis is to detect the possibility that personal characteristics affect individuals' perceptions of career success.

Moreover, in order to facilitate the comprehension of the four configurations, we decided to attribute a name to each one, recalling their prominent trait. Archetype 1 corresponds to "Traditional", archetype 2 to "Male entrepreneurs", archetype 3 to "Senior professionals" and archetype 4 to "European women".

Here following there are charts representing the nationality of members composing the four archetypes.

Figure 4.30: National composition of archetypes



[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

The traits of respondents, regarding both their demographic characteristics and their career paths are presented in the next page.

Table 4.26: Archetypal configurations through demographics

	<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Male entrepreneurs</b>	<b>Senior professionals</b>	<b>European women</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male 58% Female 42%	Male 76% Female 24%	Male 54% Female 46%	Male 45% Female 53%
<b>Avg. age</b>	37.2 years	37.6 years	46 years	38.2 years
<b>Education</b>	Primary 1% Secondary 29% Tertiary 38% Master 25% Doctorate 5%	Primary 1% Secondary 49% Tertiary 29% Master 14% Doctorate 6%	Primary 5% Secondary 12% Tertiary 34% Master 34% Doctorate 12%	Primary 3% Secondary 43% Tertiary 24% Master 24% Doctorate 4%
<b>Marital status</b>	Single 27% Married 50% In a relation 18% Divorced 4%	Single 30% Married 55% In a relation 11% Divorced 1%	Single 20% Married 71% In a relation 9% Divorced 0%	Single 20% Married 39% In a relation 35% Divorced 5%
<b>Religion</b>	N.A. 4% None 13% Christian 77% Buddhist 1% Muslim 4%	N.A. 3% None 11% Christian 76% Buddhist 1% Muslim 4%	N.A. 7% None 17% Christian 66% Buddhist 2% Muslim 5%	N.A. 7% None 32% Christian 57% Buddhist 2% Muslim 1%
<b>Children</b>	Yes 55% No 45%	Yes 55% No 45%	Yes 54% No 46%	Yes 47% No 53%
<b>Avg. work experience</b>	13.5 years	14.6 years	16.4 years	14.5 years
<b>Avg. occupations changed</b>	2.5	2	2	2
<b>Avg. employers changed</b>	3	2.5	3	3
<b>Avg. promotions</b>	2	2.5	2	2
<b>Employed/Self-employ</b>	Employed 82% Self-employ 15%	Employed 68% Self-employ 30%	Employed 83% Self-employ 7%	Employed 86% Self-employ 3%
<b>Occupational Group</b>	Manager 26% Professional 30% Clerical 20% Skilled lab 19% Manual lab 5%	Manager 32% Professional 27% Clerical 8% Skilled lab 21% Manual lab 13%	Manager 37% Professional 34% Clerical 15% Skilled lab 12% Manual lab 2%	Manager 14% Professional 30% Clerical 35% Skilled lab 17% Manual lab 5%
<b>Organization Sector</b>	Private 72% Public 19% Other 8%	Private 75% Public 17% Other 3%	Private 59% Public 24% Other 17%	Private 66% Public 22% Other 9%
<b>Organization size (n° employees)</b>	<10: 20% 10-49: 18% 50-250: 14% 250-999: 15% 1000-4999: 16% >4999: 16%	<10: 35% 10-49: 11% 50-250: 7% 250-999: 21% 1000-4999: 20% >4999: 6%	<10: 12% 10-49: 7% 50-250: 22% 250-999: 22% 1000-4999: 17% >4999: 20%	<10: 12% 10-49: 15% 50-250: 14% 250-999: 17% 1000-4999: 16% >4999: 26%
<b>Work overseas</b>	Yes 20% No 80%	Yes 17% No 83%	Yes 26% No 74%	Yes 19% No 81%

Looking at the data contained in the table we can detect some differences. Starting from the gender distribution, the first three archetypes are composed by a majority of men, while the opposite is true for the fourth, called “European women”. Instead, concerning the average age of respondents, “Senior professionals” differentiates itself from the others presenting an higher age, equal to 46 years.

For the educational level of the four configurations it can be said that they all exhibit mixed levels of education among their members. “Male entrepreneurs” and “European women” have a more prominent proportion of individuals with secondary education, precisely the 49% and the 43%, while “Senior professionals” presents more members with a master degree (34%) or even with a doctorate (12%).

Moreover, all the four archetypes are composed by a majority of Christians but with different percentages, exactly as different are the numbers of atheists in the various groups. The four configurations show a similarity concerning the variable children, in fact in all the four cases, the proportion of individuals with at least a child is nearly half of the group.

Focusing now on information connected to the careers of respondents, it can be said that their average work experience is similar among the groups (ranging from 14 to 16 years) exactly as there are similar numbers of occupations changed, employers had and promotions received. Instead, the employment variable, investigating whether a respondent works for someone or is self-employed, shows different numbers for the different configurations. In particular, “Male entrepreneurs” stands out being the one with the highest percentage of people working for themselves and not for an employer. Moreover, “Male entrepreneurs” is also the group where the fraction of skilled labour and manual workers is more prominent than in the others, which perfectly fits the higher proportion of members that achieved the secondary level as the maximum education. On the contrary, archetype ”Traditional”, presenting more educated members, has a higher percentage of managers and professionals compared to the other configurations.

In all the four archetypes, the majority of individuals work in the private sector, even if “Senior professionals” and “European women” have greater proportions of the public one. Furthermore, the size of organizations in which respondents work varies a lot. Anyway, we can notice that “Male entrepreneurs” has more people working in firms with less than fifty employees, while “European women” presents a 26% of individuals working for companies with more than 5000 employees.

Concerning now the nationalities of respondents in the various configurations, “European women” clearly stands out being composed by German people for the 88% and by Italian for the remaining part. Instead, the “Traditional” archetype well represents the four countries. “Male entrepreneurs” nearly leaves out the Nigeria and “Senior professionals” exhibits a majority of German. Of course the fact that the German sample is almost the double of the Nigerian and Mexican ones affects these considerations, anyway the peculiar composition of “European women” suggests the idea that Germany and Italy may share similar cultural values that affect their citizens’ perceptions of career success.

#### **4.6 ANOVA test on pooled data**

To support the interpretation of similarities and differences among the four archetypes for the pooled data we introduce now the ANOVA test. The aim of the aforementioned test is to verify if our four configurations are statistically different; in fact, it analyses the factors affecting a given dataset and tells whether there is a significant difference between the means of two or more levels of a variable.

Moreover, since the SPSS allows for a comparison of more than two groups at the same time we decided to calculate also the Post-hoc test comparing some characteristics of individuals from different archetypes to determine where the dissimilarities arise.

The results of the ANOVA test follow the Fisher’s F distribution and permit to determine both the between and within variability of multiple groups of variables. In case no statistic difference arises between the selected groups, thus satisfying the null hypothesis of the test, the result of the ANOVA’s F-ratio will be close to 1. The significance level chosen is equal to 0.05, and the degrees of freedom for the F statistic given by the SPSS output are equal to 3. If results for the significance are lower than the 0.05 threshold, it means that the groups’ means are statistically different.

Utilizing SPSS we have first selected the variables we wanted to analyse, deciding to include both demographics and career characteristics. The chosen variables are: gender, age, marital status, religion, education, work experience, occupations changed, employments changed, promotions received, occupational group, organization size, organization sector, if individuals are employed or self-employed, if they work overseas and if they have children.

For the sake of clarity, we decided to transform some variables into dummies to have simpler and more interpretable results from the ANOVA test. Indeed the variables transformed are: marital status (0 if single, 1 otherwise), organization sector (1 if private, 0 otherwise), work overseas (1 if yes, 0 otherwise), organization size (1 if less than 250 employees, 0 otherwise), gender (1 if male, 2 if female).

Secondly, we calculated the descriptive statistics of the selected variables for each of the four archetypes gaining information concerning their mean, their standard deviation, standard error and the confidence interval for their mean.

The table 4.26 reports the mean and the standard deviation of each variable for the four archetypes, as well as the F-ratio of the ANOVA test and the pairs of differences identified. The F ratio helps describing the differences among the four archetypes by showing whether the variable analysed is significant in distinguishing the groups

However, the ANOVA test does not tell us where are these differences, so between which groups we can find them. Consequently, we used the Post-hoc Test with the Bonferroni method, which performs pairwise comparisons between group means, but also controls the overall error rate by setting the error rate for each test equal to the experiment wise error rate divided by the total number of tests. Hence, the observed significance level is adjusted for the fact that multiple comparisons are being made.

The post-hoc analysis permits to display some interesting elements that are not immediately visible otherwise, underlying where the differences occur signalling them with an “\*” in the SPSS output. The last column of table 4.27 contains the pair of archetypes found different for the variables investigated. Indeed the square brackets include two by two distinct archetypes. For instance, considering the variable “gender”, it is visible that archetype “Male entrepreneurs” and “Senior professionals” are different because their respective means are equal to 1.22 and 1.53, thus the pair is put in the last column.

Table 4.27: Statistical characteristics of the four archetypes

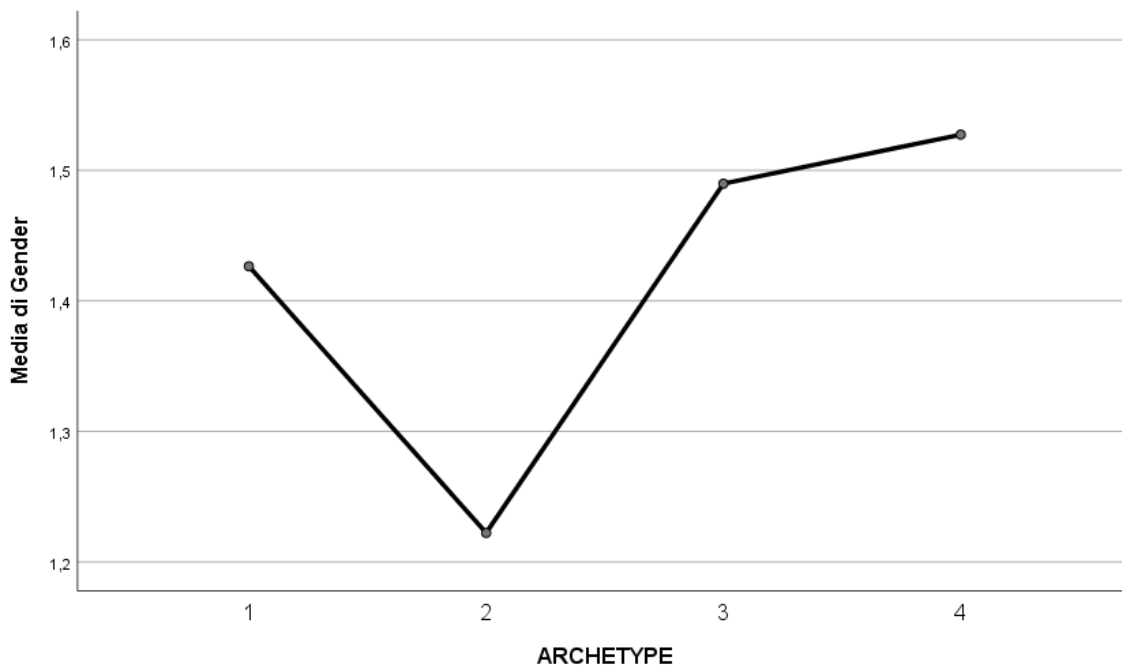
	<b>Traditional</b>		<b>Male entrepreneurs</b>		<b>Senior professionals</b>		<b>European women</b>		<i>ANOVA</i>	<i>Archetypes Significantly different at level 0.05</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>		
<b>Gender</b>	1.43	0.495	1.22	0.418	1.49	0.505	1.53	0.500	F=9.598	[1,2] [1,4] [2,4] [2,3]
<b>Age</b>	37.45	10.723	37.9	12.043	44.94	10.033	38.12	11.061	F=7.455	[1,3] [2,3] [3,4]
<b>Marital status</b>	0.74	0.411	0.73	0.449	0.84	0.373	0.81	0.393	F=3.324	[1,4]
<b>Education</b>	4.5	1.476	4.19	1.646	4.92	1.582	3.96	1.754	F=13.29	[1,4] [2,3][3,4]
<b>Religion</b>	2.95	0.989	3.04	1.205	2.81	1.104	2.61	0.816	F=11.58	[1,4] [2,4]
<b>Work experience</b>	13.624	10.4131	13.912	13.1129	15.714	10.8128	14.443	10.8389	F=1.067	
<b>Occupations changed</b>	2.41	1.682	1.96	1.137	2.16	1.419	1.92	1.326	F=4.394	[1,4]
<b>Employers changed</b>	3.13	2.312	2.47	1.537	3.18	2.659	2.79	2.209	F=3.998	[1,2]
<b>Promotions received</b>	2.24	2.279	1.58	1.933	2.02	1.550	1.77	1.769	F=6.106	[1,2] [1,4]
<b>Occupational group</b>	2.46	1.189	2.49	1.433	2.16	1.196	2.68	1.046	F=4.394	[1,4] [3,4]
<b>Organization size</b>	0.53	0.499	0.47	0.502	0.39	0.492	0.43	0.495	F=4.773	[1,4]
<b>Organization sector</b>	0.72	0.451	0.76	0.431	0.57	0.500	0.65	0.477	F=3.517	
<b>Employed/self-employ</b>	0.82	0.385	0.69	0.464	0.8	0.407	0.85	0.353	F=4.230	[1,2] [2,4]
<b>Work overseas</b>	0.13	0.332	0.11	0.314	0.22	0.422	0.19	0.390	F=4.031	[1,4]
<b>Children</b>	0.55	0.497	0.4	0.492	0.55	0.503	0.52	0.500	F=3.142	[1,2]

From the previous table it is visible that there are some variables deeply differentiating the four archetypes.

Starting from the variable gender, “European women” has the highest mean, thus the highest percentage of women compared to the others and it is statistically different from the first and the second one, while “Senior professionals” is different from “Male entrepreneurs”.

The results are graphically shown by the figure below.

Figure 4.31: gender means representation



[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

Also the variable “age” shows a lot of variance; archetype “Senior professionals” and “European women” are those with the oldest members, respectively with a mean of 44.9 and 38.1 years. Moreover, it seems interesting to note that considering the age, “Senior professionals” is different from all the others, as shown by the homogeneous samples chart below returned by SPSS.



Table 4.28: Homogeneous samples for the variable age

Age				
	ARCHETYPE	N	Subset for alfa = 0.05	
			1	2
Tukey's HSD	Traditional	1620	37.45	
	Male entrepreneurs	90	37.90	
	Senior professionals	311	38.12	
	European women	47		44.94
	Sign.		.968	1.000
Tukey's B	Traditional	1620	37.45	
	Male entrepreneurs	90	37.90	
	Senior professionals	311	38.12	
	European women	47		44.94

[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

Proceeding with the analysis of demographic characteristics, the religion variable plays a role statistically differentiating archetype "European women" from "Traditional" and "Male entrepreneurs". Looking at table 4.25 it can be understood that this dissimilarity is connected to the minor percentage of Christian in the last configuration.

Furthermore, the number of promotions received during the career present the highest average for archetype "Traditional", distinguishing its members from those belonging to archetypes "Male entrepreneurs" and "European women", while the other archetypes are part of the same homogeneous sample.

Going on with the analysis of data, the variable Education clearly plays a role discerning the groups. As shown by the table 4.29 in the next page, "European women" is different from archetype "Traditional" and "Senior professionals". In particular, archetype "Senior professionals", presenting the highest mean equal to 4.92 is also different from archetype "Male entrepreneurs".

Table 4.29: Homogeneous samples for the variable education

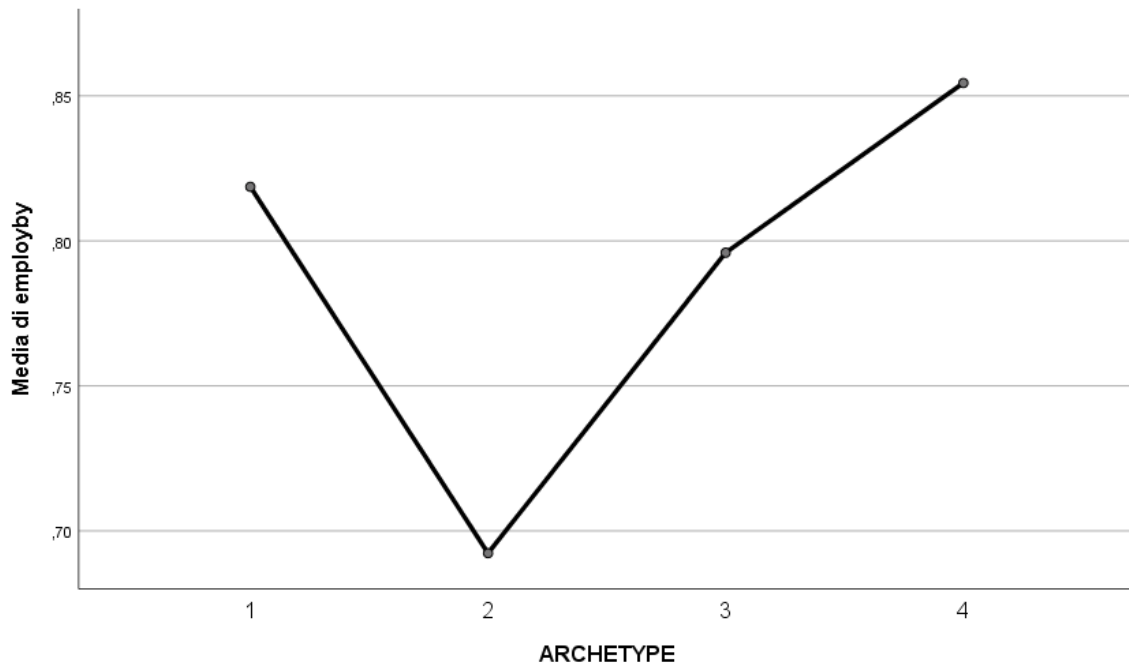
Education					
	ARCHETYPE	N	Subset for alfa = 0.05		
			1	2	3
Tukey's HSD	European women	312	3,96		
	Male entrepreneurs	90	4,18	4,18	
	Traditional	1621		4,50	4,50
	Senior professionals	48			4,92
	Sign.		,707	,398	,173
Tukey's B	European women	312	3,96		
	Male entrepreneurs	90	4,18	4,18	
	Traditional	1621		4,50	4,50
	Senior professionals	48			4,92

[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

Concerning the occupational group, again archetype “European women” is diverse from the others, but statistically different only from “Senior professionals” and “Traditional”. The fourth configuration presents the highest mean for the occupational group, corresponding to a higher percentage of low-level workers in the sample.

The archetypal configuration “Male entrepreneurs” is composed by a majority of individuals that are self-employed and, as shown in figure 4.31, this well distinguish the group from archetype “Traditional” and “European women” where respectively the 82% and the 86% works for someone.

Figure 4.32: employment means representation



[Source: elaboration of 5C's data]

The last variable, the one concerning children, does not play a major role in differentiating the groups since the four means are quite similar, only the two more distant, namely archetype “Traditional” and “Male entrepreneurs”, are statistically different.

Concluding, two variables have results not significantly differentiating the four archetypes, work experience and the organization sector. For the first one, it can be said that the main sample's work experience was not varying a lot, thus its effect is not relevant.

## **4.7 Implications from the research**

### 4.7.1 Theoretical implications:

The current research provides some theoretical implications for the literature.

In the first place, it has brought together a robust scale of career success capturing differences in individuals' perceptions with the innovative archetypal approach. This conjunction allowed to fully capture the multidimensionality connected to career success. As previously demonstrated by latest studies in the literature (i.e. Shockley & al., 2016; Pan & Zhou, 2015) to achieve a full and unbiased meaning of career success both the multiple dimensions considered by individuals as well as factors affecting them (both exogenous and endogenous) need to be taken into account.

In addition, another enrichment to the career literature arises from the quantitative nature of this research, which goes against the popular trend of conducting qualitative studies (i.e. Arthur & al., 2005; Greenhaus, 2003). Nevertheless, supporting the study with quantitative data can only lead to more consistent results.

The research's results extend the previous ones on the topic. For instance, both the Shockley's and Pan & Zhou's works with multidimensional scales of career success mentioned in chapter two considered only one country as a sample of study. Our study instead provides results for four heterogeneous countries studied first in isolation and then collectively. The technique permitted to enhance the significance and the generalizability of results achieved, furthermore the differences found in transnational archetypes underline the need to study a multi-country sample.

Moreover, looking at our findings, it clearly stands out a variability among individuals' considerations and perceptions of career success that is well captured by the archetypes found. For instance, if as previous studies we had looked only at one dimension of subjective career success, let us say financial security, we would have lost a huge amount of information contained in individuals' responses. The idea is easily understandable thinking about the archetypes found, both within and across countries, where members definitely focus more on having positive relationships, positive impact and work-life balance than on financial concerns. Considering only the monetary remuneration, these individuals would have appeared dissatisfied while it may be the opposite.

The multidimensionality detected among archetypal configurations on one side further rejects the idea that considering only objective meanings of career success is enough to achieve a full understanding of it. On the other side, archetypes found underline differences among individuals in the same country and in different ones, suggesting that other factors rather than the simple context affect them. Thus, the research not only has partially covered a gap in the literature, but has also reinforced the idea that career success studies should consider subjective variables together with the context's influences.

In addition, the archetypal analysis employed has a number of advantages for studying configurations and underlying the differences among them. The methodology allowed us to separate archetypal cases from the non-archetypal ones, thus reconciling the country's average and the heterogeneous preferences of individuals within a single theoretical framework that appeared superior to others in the literature. Consequently, we have added further support and validation to the archetypal analysis, which is an innovative approach not well spread yet.

Furthermore, the most relevant finding of the research is represented by the multi-country archetypes either spanning all the four countries or found in two of them. This is a novel result and a significant extension to the literature often focusing on a single country (i.e. Smale & al., 2016, Shockley & al., 2016, Pan & Zhou, 2015) or even on one dimension of career success for a single country sample.

Concluding, the four transnational archetypes detected have a strong relationship with personal characteristics concerning demographics and career paths. We have shown statistically differences among the transnational archetypes connected to the aforementioned variables, which prove the need for the future research to consider also these characteristics. Lastly, we have answered to the research questions posed discovering not only the existence of transnational configurations, but also that some meanings of career success can be considered universal and not changing with the culture.

#### 4.7.2 Managerial implications:

Our results, as well as the scale introduced by the 5C group can be used by HR practitioners in order to get a more in-depth understanding of what individuals consider relevant and look for in the workplace. The information emerging from the questionnaire can be useful for companies to comprehend where possible discrepancies among their employees come from and consequently how to solve them, for example placing in the same team people with coherent work values or looking for similar aspects of success could be useful.

Moreover, our findings can provide a powerful instrument during the selection process, concerning both the talent acquisition and the talent retention. If companies are able to understand what people really search and what they want to achieve through a job, they will have an advantage over competitors both concerning the initial phase of attraction and recruitment of the best resources available and the performance they will have later on. Indeed, if organizations are able to provide people what they value the most, which often is not only a high salary, but also a work-life balance or a continuous learning and advancement of their capabilities, employees will perform at their best.

In the current situation, with globalization and technology innovation constantly changing the work environment and with the new trends of careers, companies need to concentrate on HRM practices as the key to achieve and maintain successful results. For this purpose, archetypal configurations of career success perceptions could be a meaningful instrument.

Our archetypes have segmented the population studied based on the different dimensions of career success they perceived as most important. Human resources departments should then take these results into account to ease their work. Of course, segmenting the population, studying what each group cares the most and assign the right remuneration to each one implies high costs in terms of time, resources and money needed. For this reason, our suggestion is to know the general result of the latest career literature, of which our archetypes are part, but to do a further research and segmentation only for managerial positions which are the most relevant and expensive.

Concluding, archetypal results have shown a statistically significant influence of demographics variables over the studied dimensions of career success, so they could be the base to develop HR practices for the recruitment and for the management of the workforce that are based on these.

## **4.8 Research limitations**

Our study, like any, presents some limitations that need to be addressed by future research. Firstly, we decided to utilize the 5C's dataset that, although created in a very systematic and robust way, cannot be said as composed by random samples representative for respondents' countries (Gelfand, Raver, Nishii, Leslie, Lun, Lim & al., 2011). Anyway, since the construction of the dataset aimed at ensuring high within country heterogeneity and a gender balanced participation of respondents, the level of variability in the sample utilized is considered sufficient.

Secondly, concerning the four indices we used to select an heterogenous sample of countries, they are all well validated and approved indexes. Nevertheless, our strategy to create four groups of countries based on rankings in the selected indicators has not followed a well validated and statistically meaningful approach as clustering method. It is worth mentioning that the researcher, to confirm the validity of the four groups found, has calculated clusters with the k-means method through SPSS software, finding almost identical results, with exception of Norvegia.

Thirdly, the work concerning cultural archetypes provides a picture of four countries only, future research could enlarge the sample. Indeed, the study could be meaningfully repeated in the future years, both on the same sample and on a larger one, in order to understand if and how the perceptions of subjective career success have changed given that culture is not static.

Moreover, extending the AA to other cultures and countries could test whether the four transnational archetypes we found are generalizable across a large number of countries, thus if some archetypes and the connected dimensions' weights are global in nature.

Furthermore, in future research the archetypal analysis, and in particular the ex-post examine of the relative impact of demographic characteristics and career variables, could use the hierarchical linear modeling (Reudenbush & Bryk, 2002) to provide further statistical validation to the method.

Finally, we should remember that subjective perceptions of career success are influenced by a panacea of variables concerning both culture and individuals' lives. Archetypal analysis helped shading light on these roles, but it has not captured every factors affecting individuals. Nonetheless, the research contributed describing the heterogeneity in people's perceptions within and across nations with a meaningful set of archetypes encompassing the fundamental values of respondents.

## **4.9 Conclusions**

The chapter went through the archetypal analysis conducted on the dataset both for the countries in isolation and for the pooled data. The first sections focused on the selection of the most appropriate sample of heterogeneous countries on which the research could be conducted. The main part of the chapter instead addressed and responded to the three research proposals suggesting the existence of SCS archetypes that are contained in national borders as well as others that are transnationals. The findings confirmed the research proposals providing different archetypes for the samples of data that well cover the variety of perceptions of subjective career success. Archetypal configurations resulted from each country in isolation and for the pooled data have been further investigated taking into account the demographics of individuals belonging to the different archetypes. Lastly, the ANOVA test was conducted for the pooled data, confirming the fact that archetypal groups found are statistically different for the majority of variables selected.





# Conclusions

The thesis has deeply addressed the career success topic, with a focus on the subjective career success and on the latest study from the literature.

Trends in technology innovation and the globalization are shaping the labour market. Individuals no longer want a stable position in a traditional firm with a good salary, they have understood that the world is changing and they need to adapt to it. Consequently, as underlined by the latest career research, they put emphasis on other dimensions of career success, which are subjective and depend on individuals' characteristics as well as on the context in which they are created. Moreover, organizations, even the small and national ones, are facing competition coming from all over the world concerning both their final products and the human capital they need.

For the reasons aforementioned, the research decided to focus on subjective career perceptions utilizing the innovative approach of cultural archetypes grouping a population of observations based on the value they regard as most important.

The dataset used contained information from people coming from four heterogeneous countries: Germany, Italy, Mexico and Nigeria. The data has been elaborated together with a scale of career success including seven dimensions: learning and development, work-life balance, positive impact, entrepreneurship, positive relations, financial security and financial achievement.

The results from the elaboration of data reached five archetypes for each country analysed in isolation and four archetypes for the pooled data. Indeed, the work has demonstrated that inside a single country there are different consideration of what career success is, consequently also small and national firms should take them into account dealing with HR management.

Moreover, the most relevant finding from the research are the four transnational archetypes, proving that some perceptions of career success cross the countries' borders and remain constant. The outcome can be useful for multinational companies dealing with employees coming from different countries since they suggest that some human resource practices can be applied in multiple contexts. Particularly in the current labour market, where attracting and retaining talent has become even more crucial, having the right information and utilizing the best tolls is essential to achieve sustainable good results

In the future research it would be interesting to further enlarge the dataset including more countries in order to understand if there are global archetypes for the subjective career success dimensions.

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