

# 16 Personality Factors and Career Maturity in Prospect Security Personnel

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## ABSTRACT

**Aim of the Study:** This study aims to investigate the correlation between the 16 Personality Factors (16PF) and the development of career maturity among individuals who are intent on pursuing a career in the security forces. This research aims to elucidate the impact of specific personality traits on preparedness for informed professional decision-making, thereby enhancing comprehension of the psychological characteristics linked to the distinctive requirements of security forces.

**Methodology:** It was a survey research based on a quantitative research approach. Data was collected from 500 prospective security personnel by utilizing standardized instruments such as the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI), Form C, and the 16 Personality Factors (16PF) scale (5th Version).

**Results/Findings:** The findings revealed that personality factors like flexibility, confidence, interpersonal warmth, and organizational skills positively influence career maturity with openness to change being the most important predictor. Conversely, neuroticism adversely affects professional maturity, while qualities such as conscientiousness and agreeableness have negligible effects.

**Conclusion:** The research underscores that career maturity in challenging roles, such as those in security forces, is significantly influenced by particular personality traits. Social confidence, self-trust, adaptability, emotional regulation, attention to detail, and adherence to rules facilitate job preparation by enabling individuals to explore new opportunities while aligning their skills with work objectives. Effective decision-making in career development relies on resilience and confidence, rather than anxiety and emotional discomfort.

**Keywords:** Personality Factors, Career Maturity, Decision Making, Psychological Characteristics.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Each individual has specific personality traits that show up in their thoughts feelings and actions making them distinct from everyone else (Wen et al., 2021). People show different actions because their personality affects their interests and beliefs (Navidinia et al., 2017). Individual behavior in diverse contexts is influenced by personality factors, including job choices, professional performance, and overall pleasure (Crant, 2013). The 16 Personality Factors (16PF) indicate that traits like mental stability, social ease, perfectionism, and adaptability can predict workplace success; individuals who are socially secure and composed are more adept at managing the stressors associated with high-demand professions like security forces.

Being physically fit has always been crucial when selecting people for security forces, especially for active-duty positions. Nonetheless, there is currently a growing interest in tracking both cognitive and non-cognitive traits. The "16 Personality Factors" model is a clear method for understanding a person's mindset. It focuses on qualities such as self-discipline, attitude, originality, and dependability, which are essential for career advancement. Collins (1987) believed that being sensible, calm, and smart are important psychological traits. He thought that knowledge, physical strength, and training alone were not enough for the security forces to succeed (Collins & Gleaves, 1998).

Strength or physical abilities hold some value though they do not completely predict workplace success or career advancement. Advancement in career demands physical readiness along with excellent mental capability and an upbeat outlook (Rawoot et al., 2017). Workers who excel in physical duties but lack proper mental strength often struggle with task pressure that can drive them either out of the job or into mental health challenges (Lovering et al., 2015). Studies indicate you should evaluate a person based on their motivation levels and capacity to bounce back from challenges while considering their decision-making abilities. These personal qualities make you more effective in work settings by managing stress better and supporting smart choices as you handle workplace challenges (Cacioppo et al., 2015). We need to tackle these problems because poor stress management in training can lead to more people leaving and being unprepared for the job (Bartone & Bowles, 2020).

International studies show that there is now more attention on a person's general well-being, not just their physical health. The United States Army implements an exhaustive approach that emphasizes the significance of cognitive, emotional, physical, and social attributes (Rawoot et al., 2017). The demographic of 18 to 25 years in Pakistan is actively involved in career decision-making, which is influenced by societal expectations, cultural norms, and the limitations of available employment opportunities (Ali et al., 2017). Enlisting in the security forces reflects a commitment to discipline, altruism, and national pride. External factors may affect employment decisions, leading to a misalignment between individual competencies and professional goals, which can hinder career progression. Occupations in security forces require patience, flexibility, and the capacity for rapid decision-making. It's important to align your skills with the requirements of the job.

In Pakistan, there is a persistent focus on the impact of academic achievement, gender, and social status on employment chances (Arif et al., 2019; Kayani et al., 2022). The influence of psychological characteristics on other attributes, however, has not been well examined. Job performance can be influenced by attributes such as being inflexible, feeling secure in social settings, and remaining composed. Maintaining concentration, fostering collaboration, and controlling stress are crucial for job completion (Rawoot et al., 2017). The 16PF personality assessment indicates the influence of personality on career decisions and professional growth. This research could enable the creation of programs that leverage mental skills to improve training and support, thus enhancing the preparation process for positions in security forces.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The 16PF personality assessment employs five fundamental personality traits that are derived from the Five-Factor Model (FFM). The assessment methodology distinguishes itself from comparable instruments by integrating first-order and second-order traits, thereby elucidating personality characteristics with remarkable precision. Cattell posits that the 16PF system intricately links essential components of human personality, encompassing personal abilities, fluctuations in mood, both typical and atypical traits, as well as patterns of motivation (Panda & Arumugam, 2023). The 16PF assesses a wide range of characteristics, including Warmth, Reasoning, Emotional Stability, Dominance, Liveliness, Rule Consciousness, Social Boldness, Sensitivity, Vigilance, Abstractedness, Privateness, Apprehension, Openness to Change, Self-Reliance, Perfectionism, and Tension. The characteristics are classified into five primary dimensions: Introversion/Extraversion, Low Anxiety/ High Anxiety, Receptivity/ Tough-Mindedness, Accommodation/ Independence, and Lack of Restraint/ Self-Control (Gavrilescu & Vizireanu, 2017).

Studies demonstrate that personality characteristics, as outlined by the 16PF framework, significantly influence various aspects of career advancement, encompassing career maturity, decisiveness, success, and satisfaction (Liu et al., 2016). A career constitutes a fundamental aspect of human existence. A career consists of a series of continuous endeavors that involve choosing from a range of alternatives (Marciniak et al., 2020). The evaluation of professional growth can be conducted through various indicators, notably the assessment of an individual's advancement in career maturity (Lestari & Tentama, 2020).

Young individuals need to develop the necessary maturation in their professional journeys to make informed and appropriate career decisions, which are essential for success. Career maturity involves the ability to explore various career paths and leverage personal strengths to select the most suitable career path (Hamzah et al., 2020). Watkins and Campbell (2002) define career maturity as the ability of individuals to identify their aspirations and subsequently achieve their career objectives. Career maturity comprises six elements: An individual who strategically plans their career through research examines various options before making employment decisions while acquiring knowledge about the job market and specific fields to achieve their objectives (Pratiwi et al., 2023). According to Gati and Kulcsár (2021), individuals lacking advanced career maturity frequently choose inappropriate employment, leading to professional challenges and job dissatisfaction. Individuals with work-related expertise demonstrate improved decision-making regarding their profession and experience reduced uncertainty about their career trajectories (Kvasková et al., 2022). Lent and Brown (2020) found that individuals who attain career maturity tend to select careers that align with their authentic selves and desired life outcomes.

Research indicates an association between the 16PF personality traits and career maturity, suggesting that these characteristics influence job preparation and decision-making processes. Low Anxiety/High Anxiety highlights the importance of emotional regulation and decision-making confidence, while Receptivity/Tough-Mindedness promotes adaptability and a readiness to learn, both critical for managing career transitions (Wout & Dyk, 2016). Conscientiousness fosters meticulous planning and steadfast determination, while openness to experience nurtures inquisitiveness and a willingness to embrace a multitude of opportunities. Neuroticism obstructs proactive engagement as it is accompanied by anxiety and negative emotions, whereas extraversion fosters sociability and encourages the pursuit of career opportunities (Lent & Brown, 2013). These characteristics underscore the critical impact of personality on the formulation of informed and assured professional choices.

Hypotheses were developed based on the existing literature.

1. There is a significant correlation between the 16 Personality Factors (16PF) and the career maturity of the prospects of security forces.

2. To what extent do the 16 Personality Factors predict the career maturity of the prospects of security forces?

### 3. Method

It was a survey research based on a quantitative research approach. Data was collected from 500 prospects of security forces using The Career Maturity Inventory (CMI), Form C developed by Savickas and Porfeli (2011), which consists of 24 items intended to assess the career choice attitudes and competencies, thereby evaluating readiness and adaptability in career decision-making processes. To measure Personality Factors, the fifth edition of the 16PF, which has 185 items was used.

By using the above-mentioned research tools, the data were collected from 500 applicants under the supervision of trained clinical psychologists. All of the participants were male and between the ages of 18 years to 22 years. All of them were unmarried. 67% of the participants had 12 years of education and the remaining 33% had 14 years of education.

### 4. Data Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was performed to evaluate the predictive power of each independent variable on career maturity after a correlation analysis was performed to look at correlations between variables. The dataset satisfied the multivariate normality and random sample presumptions needed for regression analysis. The appropriateness of the data was validated by pre-analysis tests; correlation coefficients between variables were less than 0.70, suggesting no problems with multicollinearity.

**Table 1:** *Correlation among Study Variables*

<b>Cattell's 16 PF Personality Factor</b>	<b>Career Maturity</b>
Warm-hearted, Caring, Attentive (Agreeableness)	.47*
Emotionally Stable, Adaptive (Neuroticism)	.33*
Enthusiastic, Animated, Spontaneous (Extraversion)	.36*
Socially Bond, Venturesome (Extraversion)	.46*
Apprehensive, Warrior (Neuroticism)	.32*
Open to change, Experimenting (Openness)	.48*
Perfectionist, Organized (Conscientiousness)	.34*

*Note.*  $p < .05$  \*

The correlation table demonstrates significant positive relationships between specific personality traits from Cattell's 16 Personality Factors (16PF) and career maturity among the prospects of security forces. Traits such as Warm-heartedness ( $r=.47$ ), Emotional Stability ( $r=.33$ ), Enthusiasm ( $r=.36$ ), and Social Boldness ( $r=.46$ ) exhibit moderate correlations, suggesting that interpersonal warmth, adaptability, spontaneity, and confidence contribute to higher career maturity. Interestingly, Apprehensiveness ( $r=.32$ ) also correlates positively, indicating that cautious and reflective individuals may approach career decisions more thoughtfully. The strongest correlation is observed with Openness to Change ( $r=.48$ ), highlighting that flexibility and a willingness to experiment are key contributors to career readiness in a dynamic field like the security forces. Additionally, Perfectionism ( $r=.34$ ) underscores the importance of organization and goal-setting in career maturity.

To further confirm the relationship between 16 personality traits and career maturity, multilinear regression was used after composing the 16 personality traits into factors based on the FFM model.

**Table 2: Personality Factors as Predictors of Career Maturity**

Predictors	B	SE	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	102.45	9.75	-	10.50	.000
Enthusiastic, Animated, Spontaneous, Socially Bonded, Venturesome (Extraversion)	4.12	1.05	.14	3.92	.001
Perfectionist, Organized (Conscientiousness)	2.43	1.85	.07	1.31	.189
Open to Change, Experimenting (Openness)	3.15	1.45	.06	2.17	.032
Warm-hearted, Caring, Attentive (Agreeableness)	2.98	1.72	.08	1.73	.089
Emotionally Stable, Adaptive, Apprehensive, Worrier (Neuroticism)	-3.97	1.21	-.14	-3.28	.001

The regression analysis explores how personality traits predict career maturity. The constant ( $B = 102.45$ ,  $t = 10.50$ ,  $p = .000$ ) represents the baseline level of career maturity when all personality traits are at zero. Among the predictors, Extraversion ( $B = 4.12$ ,  $\beta = .14$ ,  $t = 3.92$ ,  $p = .001$ ) shows a significant positive effect. Similarly, Openness ( $B = 3.15$ ,  $\beta = .06$ ,  $t = 2.17$ ,  $p = .032$ ) has a small but significant positive impact on career maturity. In contrast, Conscientiousness ( $B = 2.43$ ,  $\beta = .07$ ,  $t = 1.31$ ,  $p = .189$ ) and Agreeableness ( $B = 2.98$ ,  $\beta = .08$ ,  $t = 1.73$ ,  $p = .089$ ) demonstrate positive but non-significant relationships with career maturity. Interestingly, Neuroticism ( $B = -3.97$ ,  $\beta = -.14$ ,  $t = -3.28$ ,  $p = .001$ ) significantly negatively impacts career maturity, indicating that higher levels of neuroticism are associated with a 3.97-unit decrease in career maturity. These findings suggest that traits like extraversion and openness enhance career maturity, while neuroticism hinders it.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings indicate a favorable correlation between extraversion-related characteristics (including Warm-heartedness, Enthusiasm, and Social Boldness) and professional maturity. Applicants of the security forces that have these characteristics often interact with people, pursue knowledge, and communicate proficiently, thus improving their readiness for career choices. These results correspond with previous research indicating that persons with elevated sociability and confidence are more adept at managing the intricacies of job exploration and decision-making (Atli, 2017). These behaviors function as instruments of personal agency, facilitating individuals' engagement in their professional development, adaptation, and renewal (Lent et al., 2016). Leadership, teamwork, and flexibility are all skills connected with employment, emphasizing the necessity of extraverted characteristics in career maturity.

Openness to change is considered the most significant positive predictor of career maturity, emphasizing the need for flexibility and a readiness to accept new chances for those in the security forces. Openness, characterized by a spirit of inquiry, adaptability, and a readiness to confront obstacles (McCrae, 1994), is crucial for people to evaluate employment prospects and align them with their aspirations. The aforementioned abilities are essential for job advancement, especially in positions in security forces that need continuous education and rapid adaptation, making these traits advantageous for potential applicants (Jiang et al., 2023).

Apprehensiveness correlates positively with professional maturity. Fear, typically regarded as a negative trait, encompasses a purposeful and contemplative aspect of decision-making. Individuals considering employment in high-stakes environments, such as the security forces, may possess traits that reflect a comprehensive assessment of all aspects of a profession, including an analysis of associated risks and benefits. This reflective analysis improves preparedness for employment in security forces by enabling

individuals to assess their interests, values, and objectives before dedicating themselves to this professional path. Individuals often eschew impulsive employment choices by doing comprehensive preparation and contemplation, thus fostering professional maturity (Torres, 2020).

The commitment to high standards of perfectionism, through meticulous attention to detail, enhances our development as more competent professionals (Stoeber, 2020). A systematic approach in security operations enables the planning of precise steps and the attainment of specific objectives for individuals who value accuracy and thoroughness. This behavior facilitates the structuring of career development plans and compliance with specific objectives, supported by a high level of commitment (Spurk et al., 2018). Perfectionists exhibit superior performance in security roles as a result of their stringent self-imposed standards, motivating them to develop appropriate training programs. Excellence in security forces depends on careful attention to detail, as any oversight can result in serious consequences. The pursuit of perfection can facilitate personal development; however, an overemphasis on it may result in stress and potential burnout. Achieving a suitable balance between excellence and flexibility is crucial for optimal growth (Martincin & Stead, 2014). Increased neuroticism leads to emotional instability, which negatively impacts workplace performance. High neuroticism results in emotional over-reactivity, which impedes individuals' ability to obtain employment or make decisions affecting their future career goals. Personal traits that cause apprehension and discomfort reduce an individual's ability to succeed in high-risk areas (Dursun & Argan, 2017).

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This research demonstrates that personality traits are instrumental in preparing security forces for high-demand careers. Career maturity is enhanced through the development of social, adaptable, curious, and driven abilities, facilitating the alignment of job opportunities with personal strengths and needs. Intellectual curiosity and goal orientation enhance job preparedness, allowing individuals to identify, evaluate, and align career paths with their skills and interests. The absence of emotional stability and rapid stress responses complicates career selection; thus, cultivating robust mental resilience facilitates professional growth. Personal growth relies on the identification and promotion of particular personality traits that contribute to professional development and excellence.

### **6.1 *Limitations & Suggestions***

The self-report instruments utilized in this study may introduce measurement biases that impact the results. A longitudinal approach to research elucidates the professional development of individuals and identifies which character traits exhibit evolution or stability over time. The findings of this study will enlighten the security forces on appropriate recruiting practices and worker training as personality tests like the 16PF help to find applicants with traits that advance professionalism utilizing maturity. Interventions for neurotic tendencies may focus on increasing openness and extraversion. Personality-based testing in career planning and development can help organizations prepare individuals for dynamic and demanding careers.

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## Conflict of Interest

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