

論文要約

Thesis summary

**The Adaptive and Maladaptive Duality of Conscientiousness: A
Facet-level Examination of Associations with Obsessive-Compulsive
Symptoms and Subjective Well-being**

(勤勉性の適応的・不適応的両面性：強迫傾向および主観的ウェ
ルビーイングとの関連に関するファセットレベルの検討)

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Conscientiousness has long been regarded as one of the most robust predictors for academic achievement, job performance, and health outcomes (Pletzer et al., 2023; Zell & Lesick, 2022). However, accumulating evidence indicates that it may also involve maladaptive tendencies, particularly when expressed rigidly or in excess (Boyce et al., 2010; Carter et al., 2016). This potential duality—reflecting both adaptive self-regulatory strengths and maladaptive forms of overcontrol—has become a critical yet insufficiently understood issue in contemporary personality psychology.

Chapter 1 provided the conceptual and theoretical foundation for the dissertation by examining conscientiousness as a multifaceted, hierarchically organized personality trait. This chapter outlined the structure of conscientiousness and emphasized the distinct motivational and self-regulatory processes captured by its lower-order facets, highlighting the limitations of relying solely on domain-level scores. It further reviewed evidence suggesting that conscientiousness may encompass both adaptive and maladaptive processes, depending on how its facets are expressed. Building on these considerations, the dissertation aimed to clarify longstanding inconsistencies in the literature by systematically examining the heterogeneous roles of conscientiousness facets across obsessive-compulsive (OC) symptoms and subjective well-being (SWB). Across five studies—spanning meta-analysis, bifactor modelling, curvilinear analyses, mediation models, and longitudinal designs—this dissertation sought to develop a more comprehensive and differentiated understanding of when and how conscientiousness functions as a psychological resource or liability.

Given prior studies suggesting substantial shared variance between conscientiousness and OC tendencies (Le et al., 2011; McCord et al., 2014), Chapter 2 introduced Study 1, which examined whether conscientiousness is reliably associated with OC symptoms. A

meta-analysis of 23 studies (29 datasets; $N = 30,138$) investigated correlations between OC symptoms and the Big Five personality traits. Due to limited availability of facet-level data, analyses were necessarily conducted at the domain level. Results indicated that conscientiousness ($r = -.03$) showed no meaningful association with OC symptoms. Subgroup analyses further revealed that personality–OC associations varied across sample types and measurement instruments, particularly in college student samples. Study 1 thus provided an empirical rationale for examining facet-level heterogeneity and methodological moderators in subsequent studies.

Despite the null domain-level association identified in Study 1, prior research has demonstrated that conscientiousness facets can exert qualitatively distinct and sometimes opposing effects on work engagement and health-related behaviours (Bogg & Roberts, 2013; Roberts et al., 2014). For example, dutifulness has been linked to greater knowledge-sharing behaviour, whereas achievement-striving has shown negative associations with the same outcome (Chae et al., 2019). Such findings suggest that different facets may operate in qualitatively distinct—and sometimes opposing—ways. Moreover, facet-level predictors have often demonstrated stronger and more precise associations with health outcomes than domain-level composites (Albuquerque et al., 2012; Watson et al., 2019). Consequently, Studies 2–5 focused on conscientiousness at the facet level rather than at the domain level.

Chapter 3 introduced Study 2, which examined facet-level associations between conscientiousness and OC symptoms across two samples (388 college students and 381 community adults) using bifactor modelling and multiple measurement instruments. Across samples, competence and dutifulness were negatively associated with OC symptoms ($r_s = -.61$ to $-.19$), whereas achievement-striving and orderliness were positively associated with OC symptoms ($r_s = .18$ to $.30$). Notably, domain-level conscientiousness exhibited opposite

associations across samples. These findings revealed systematic but opposing facet-level patterns, underscoring the necessity of moving beyond domain-level analyses.

Building on these findings, Chapter 4 presented Study 3, which investigated whether the associations between conscientiousness facets and OC symptoms followed curvilinear rather than strictly linear patterns, drawing on the “Too Much of a Good Thing” (TMGT) framework (Pierce & Aguinis, 2013). Given the misattribution hypothesis (Nickel et al., 2019), Study 3 also considered the influence of the facets of neuroticism and perfectionism (Fineberg et al., 2022; Widiger & Oltmanns, 2017). Analyses of data from 781 Japanese adults revealed both linear and nonlinear relationships. In particular, orderliness showed robust positive associations with several OC symptom dimensions. Neuroticism demonstrated a nuanced pattern suggesting that moderate, rather than chronically overcontrolled, emotional expressiveness may be adaptive. These results refine the potential duality framework by showing that not only which facet is expressed, but also how the degree to which it is expressed. These findings extend TMGT theory beyond occupational performance to mental health contexts, illustrating that conscientiousness is not uniformly protective and that excessive orderliness may heighten vulnerability to compulsive tendencies.

Chapters 5 and 6 introduced Study 4, which examined conscientiousness facets in relation to SWB and associated cognitive-emotional pathways. Using data from 459 Japanese employees and two personality instruments (International Personality Item Pool [IPIP]-300 and IPIP-Abridged Big Five-Dimensional Circumplex), the study found that competence, self-discipline, and achievement-striving were positively associated with SWB, whereas orderliness, dutifulness, and cautiousness were negatively associated with well-being indicators. These findings indicate that conscientiousness can simultaneously

enhance and hinder well-being depending on whether the underlying regulatory tendencies reflect proactive self-regulation or rigid overcontrol. Importantly, these patterns were consistent across instruments, reinforcing the robustness of the dual-framework interpretation.

Moreover, Chapter 6 further incorporated two key constructs—cognitive flexibility (CF) and emotional intelligence (EI)—previously identified as significant predictors of both the cognitive (life satisfaction) and affective (positive and negative affect) components of SWB (Odaci & Cikrikci, 2019; Sánchez-Álvarez et al., 2016; Smith & Konik, 2022). Path analyses revealed that higher CF and EI amplified the positive effects of industriousness subdomain on SWB, whereas lower EI intensified the negative effects of cautiousness on SWB. Study 4 thus (1) clarified measurement-specific effects by demonstrating that conscientiousness facets exhibit opposing associations with SWB across instruments; (2) replicated these facet-level associations across all three components of SWB, underscoring the outcome-dependent heterogeneity of conscientiousness; and (3) highlighted CF and EI represent plausible regulatory pathways through which conscientiousness facets are differentially associated with SWB.

Chapter 7 presented Study 5, a two-wave longitudinal investigation using latent change score modelling over an eight-month interval among 450 working adults (with 331 retained at Time 2). Results revealed divergent patterns of malleability: while adaptive facets like achievement-striving exhibited significant growth variance, orderliness showed structural inertia with minimal change, consistent with notion of “hard plaster” (Costa & McCrae, 1994). Regarding predictive effects, initial levels of competence, achievement-striving, and self-discipline predicted higher SWB, whereas initial cautiousness predicted increases in negative affect. Crucially, within-person increases in competence and

achievement-striving predicted improvements in life satisfaction and positive affect, whereas increases in dutifulness and cautiousness predicted declines in well-being domains. These findings provide longitudinal evidence that conscientiousness contains both adaptive, dynamic resources and stable, maladaptive risks.

Chapter 8 synthesized the findings, implications, limitations, and future directions of the dissertation. Collectively, the dissertation elucidates the dual nature of conscientiousness across two distinct dimensions: adaptiveness and malleability. Results support a tripartite structural framework: (1) homeostatic regulators (e.g., dutifulness) that maintain stability; (2) engines of unbounded growth (e.g., achievement-striving) that foster continuous development; and (3) rigid constraints (e.g., orderliness) that resist change. This framework explains why conscientiousness is neither uniformly adaptive nor uniformly plastic. Furthermore, maladaptive outcomes were linked to rigid, overcontrolled expressions of conscientiousness, while cognitive flexibility and emotional intelligence were identified as key pathways shaping these associations. Finally, this dissertation has proposed future research directions, emphasizing the need for clinical validation, cross-cultural investigation, and the development of interventions focused on enhancing flexibility rather than trait reduction. In conclusion, by incorporating facet-level analyses, curvilinear models, mediating pathways, and longitudinal perspectives, this dissertation has advanced personality theory and clarified the distinct roles of specific conscientiousness facets as either psychological strengths or liabilities.