

Who Keeps Going? Predictors of Trait Hope in Filipino Food Delivery Riders

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The rapid growth of platform-based delivery work has exposed food delivery riders to unstable income, physical hazards, and demanding customer-service conditions, yet limited research has examined the psychological resources that may help them persist. This study examined whether age, marital status, Big Five personality traits, and perceived social support explained variance in trait hope among 150 male food delivery riders in Quezon City, Philippines. Using a predictive correlational design, respondents completed the IPIP Personality Scale, Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, and Adult Hope Scale. Hierarchical regression showed that age and marital status did not significantly explain hope, $F(2, 146) = .75, p = .47$. Adding the Big Five traits significantly improved the model, $F(7, 141) = 7.89, p < .001$, explaining 24% of the variance. In the final model, conscientiousness, $\beta = .20, p = .01$, partial $r = .21$, agreeableness, $\beta = .22, p = .011$, partial $r = .21$, and openness to experience, $\beta = .29, p < .001$, partial $r = .30$, remained significant predictors. Perceived social support did not add significant incremental variance, adjusted $r^2 = .007, p > .05$. Findings suggest that selected personality traits showed stronger direct associations with trait hope than global perceived social support in this sample. However, culturally specific and source-specific forms of support may require further examination among Filipino gig workers.

INTRODUCTION

Food delivery riders are responsible for transporting goods across locations, often under strict time demands and rapidly changing environmental conditions (Manila Bulletin, 2026). In the Philippines, delivery work is generally low-paid, yet it serves as a vital source of income for meeting daily needs and supporting families (Soriano et al. 2022). Many riders work extended hours and depend on customer tips to supplement their earnings. Despite modest compensation, they regularly face intense heat (Altermidya, 2023), physical exhaustion, challenging customer interactions (Dizon et al., 2024), traffic-related stress, and serious road hazards. Reports include fatal incidents, such as a rider struck by a fire truck (Canlas, 2024), and data from Malaysia documenting 112 rider deaths and 1,082 minor injuries between 2018 and 2022 (Daniels,

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North American Journal of Psychology, 2026, Vol. 28, No. 3, 1557-1571
© NAJP <https://doi.org/10.65696/001c.165926>

2023; Rusli et al., 2025). These conditions place riders in environments where psychological resilience is essential for sustained performance and daily decision-making.

Within this context, hope emerges as a significant psychological resource. Trait hope reflects a stable cognitive orientation toward the future, enabling individuals to define goals, generate workable plans, and maintain motivation despite obstacles. Snyder's theory (2002) identifies two core elements: *pathways thinking*, or the perceived ability to create routes toward goals, and *agency thinking*, or the determination to pursue them. For delivery riders, hope may influence how setbacks such as canceled bookings, complaints, route changes, accidents, or financial instability are interpreted (Snyder et al., 1991; Kwangsukstith et al., 2025). Yet hope develops through both internal dispositions and external relational resources.

Building on Snyder's hope theory (2002), the present study recognizes hope as a cognitive-motivational resource involving agency and pathways thinking. However, in the Filipino context, hope may not be fully understood through an individual-centered framework alone. From the perspective of Sikolohiyang Pilipino, psychological experiences should be interpreted through Filipino culture, language, and lived realities rather than solely through imported Western concepts (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). The concept of *kapwa*, or shared identity, suggests that the Filipino self is often understood in relation to others, including family, peers, and community. In this sense, hope may not only involve individual agency and pathway thinking but may also be sustained by relational obligation, family responsibility, spiritual meaning, and collective endurance. Relatedly, *Bahala na* has been reinterpreted not merely as fatalism but as a culturally meaningful expression of courage, hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and search for the sacred when individuals face uncertainty (Menguito & Teng-Calleja, 2010). For food delivery riders, hope may therefore involve both personal goal-directed thinking and culturally grounded sources of strength, such as supporting one's family, relying on trusted others, and drawing meaning from faith or shared hardships.

Given this culturally embedded understanding of hope, it is also important to clarify how trait hope differs from broad personality traits. The Big Five traits describe relatively stable patterns of thinking, emotion, and behavior across situations (Anglim & O'Connor, 2019; Radisavljevic et al., 2023), whereas the trait of hope refers to a more specific cognitive-motivational system involving agency and pathways thinking (Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder, 2002). Thus, personality traits may shape how riders regulate behavior, respond to stress, and pursue goals, while hope reflects their perceived capacity to identify goals, generate routes, and sustain motivation toward these goals. Nevertheless, some conceptual overlap is possible. For example, conscientiousness may resemble the agency component of hope because both involve persistence and goal-directed effort, while openness may resemble pathways thinking because both

involve flexibility and alternative planning. For this reason, we interpret personality traits as dispositional correlates and statistical predictors of hope, not as causal determinants.

With this distinction in place, personality traits remain relevant because they may help explain why some riders maintain hope more strongly than others under similar work conditions. Previous studies show that Big Five traits have modest but consistent associations with hope. Higher conscientiousness and openness, and sometimes extraversion, are associated with greater hope, whereas neuroticism tends to predict lower hope (Mishra & Datta, 2019; Moltafet, 2020). Conscientious individuals are typically disciplined and goal-oriented; open individuals display cognitive flexibility; and emotionally stable individuals remain focused under strain. Still, personality effects are often small and may operate indirectly through motivational and regulatory processes (Di Fabio et al., 2018; Moltafet, 2020). Some studies also report limited overall trait influence, with openness uniquely predicting hope after controlling for other variables (Bahadir et al., 2020). These mixed findings highlight the need to examine the links between personality and hope in high-pressure occupations such as delivery riding.

Social support serves as a critical external resource, providing emotional affirmation, tangible assistance, and a sense of belonging in demanding environments. Research consistently links perceived social support with higher hope across populations. Longitudinal studies among Chinese adolescents show stable positive associations (Xiang et al., 2020; Archer et al., 2019), while evidence from Hong Kong indicates that peer support enhances hope through emotional intelligence (Kwok et al., 2024). During crises such as COVID-19, perceived support reduced loneliness and strengthened hope among adults in the UK, US, and Israel (Bareket-Bojmel et al., 2021). Among vulnerable groups, including homeless adults, stronger support is associated with higher dispositional hope, particularly in pathways thinking (Bareket-Bojmel et al., 2021; Duncan et al., 2022). These findings suggest that social support may similarly reinforce hope among delivery riders exposed to chronic stressors.

Hope may also differ according to demographic factors such as age and marital status, which shape life responsibilities and access to resources. Research indicates modest, context-dependent associations between age and hope. Older adults often report lower levels of hope than younger groups (Bailey & Snyder, 2007), although hope may peak in middle adulthood before declining with age-related constraints (Marques & Gallagher, 2017). Marital status shows similarly small but consistent links, with married individuals often reporting higher hope than separated or widowed counterparts (Bailey & Snyder, 2007). In clinical populations, marital status relates to hope, in part, through associated stress and support dynamics (Bjornes et al., 2018). For this reason, age and marital status are treated as control variables to clarify the distinct contributions of personality and perceived social support.

This study focuses on delivery riders in the Philippine setting, a rapidly expanding yet understudied workforce exposed to persistent occupational strain. Unlike prior research centered on students or clinical samples, it conceptualizes trait hope as a work-relevant psychological resource within a high-demand, real-world occupation. The study tests an integrated model combining internal predictors, namely personality traits, and external support in the form of perceived social support, while controlling for age and marital status (Zimet et al., 1988). In doing so, it extends hope theory to gig work contexts, identifies which personality traits remain salient alongside social support, and evaluates whether social support explains additional variance in hope beyond personality factors. The findings provide direction for targeted interventions to strengthen psychological resilience in precarious employment settings.

We aimed to test the following null and alternative hypotheses:

- Ho₁. Age and marital status do not significantly predict trait hope among food delivery riders.
- Ha₁: Age and marital status significantly predict the trait of hope among food delivery riders.
- Ho₂. Big Five personality traits do not significantly explain additional variance in the trait hope after controlling for age and marital status
- Ha₂: Big Five personality traits significantly explain additional variance in the trait hope after controlling for age and marital status.
- Ho₃. Perceived social support does not significantly explain additional variance in trait hope after controlling for age, marital status, and Big Five personality traits.
- Ho₃: Perceived social support significantly explains additional variance in trait hope after controlling for age, marital status, and Big Five personality traits.

METHOD

The respondents were 150 males, aged 18 to 37 ($M = 23.33$; $SD = 3.91$), most of whom were single (66.67%). They were purposively selected based on the following criteria: a) at least one year of experience as a food delivery rider, b) currently operating within the Quezon City area, c) actively using food delivery applications, and d) using a motorcycle as a mode of food transport. This study adhered to the APA's code of ethics regarding the treatment of human participants and was first approved by the university's research ethics committee.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Food Delivery Riders

	Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Gender			
	Male	150	100
Age	18 to 20	50	33.33
	21 to 25	83	55.33
	26 to 30	8	5.33
	31 +	9	6
Marital Status			
	Single	100	66.67
	Married	50	33.33

Note. *N* = 150.

Procedure

Data were gathered using both paper-based and online survey formats. Participants were recruited by visiting locations where riders commonly wait for orders, particularly near restaurants and designated pickup points that frequently utilize delivery platforms. Riders were approached at suitable times, such as during order waiting periods, to ensure their work was not interrupted. Before completing the questionnaires, they received a concise explanation of the study's purpose and instructions. They were also clearly informed about the objectives of the research, that participation was voluntary, their right to decline or withdraw at any stage, that there would be no monetary involvement, and the assurances of confidentiality and anonymity.

Instrumentation

The respondents self-reported their demographic information, such as age, gender, and marital status. The food delivery riders also completed the IPIP personality scales (Goldberg et al., 2006), the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet et al., 1988), and the adult Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991).

IPIP Personality Scales. This personality test consists of 50 items and measures adult personality based on the five-factor model (Goldberg et al., 2006). The scale is rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. For example, "*am always prepared*" (*conscientiousness*), "*have a good word for everyone*" (*agreeableness*), "*have a vivid imagination*" (*openness to experience*), "*feel comfortable around people*" (*extraversion*), and "*often feel blue*" (*neuroticism*). Items with negative statements are reverse-scored. The scores on the personality test indicate preferences for how the individual handles information, stress, and other people. The original scale has demonstrated acceptable

reliability, and in the present study, the subscale reliabilities ranged from $\alpha = .75$ to $\alpha = .81$.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS). The MSPSS is a 12-item scale designed to measure an individual's perception of social support (Zimet et al., 1988). The scale is rated using a 7-point scale, from 1 = very strongly disagree to 7 = very strongly agree. Sample items include, "There is a special person who is around when I am in need." "My family really tries to help me." Higher scores indicate greater levels of social support. The scale has demonstrated strong reliability in previous studies, and in the present study, the overall reliability was Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$, with subscale reliabilities ranging from $\alpha = .76$ to $\alpha = .81$.

Adult Hope Scale (AHS). This scale is a 12-item questionnaire that measures trait hope through two components: agency and pathways thinking (Snyder et al., 1991). The scale is rated on an 8-point scale, from 1 = definitely false to 8 = definitely true. Sample items include, "I can think of many ways to get out of a jam," and "There are a lot of ways around me." Higher scores indicate a high level of the hope trait. Higher scores indicate higher trait hope. In the present study, the overall reliability was $\alpha = .79$, with $\alpha = .80$ for agency and $\alpha = .77$ for pathways.

RESULTS

Table 2 presents summary statistics for personality, perceived social support, and hope. For the personality traits, the respondents showed the highest mean scores were conscientiousness ($M = 38.05$; $SD = 5.82$), openness to experience ($M = 36.78$; $SD = 4.44$), and agreeableness ($M = 36.61$; $SD = 5.49$). Lower mean scores were observed for neuroticism ($M = 30.56$; $SD = 5.98$) and extraversion ($M = 28.39$; $SD = 4.23$).

For perceived social support, food delivery riders reported higher support from friends ($M = 24.08$; $SD = 4.22$) and significant others ($M = 23.11$; $SD = 6.71$), followed by family support ($M = 21.91$; $SD = 5.37$).

The overall perceived social support score was $M = 69.10$; $SD = 13.57$, see Table 2.

For hope, the overall hope score was $M = 51.73$; $SD = 7.54$, with subscale mean scores for agency, $M = 25.52$; $SD = 4.38$, and pathways, $M = 26.21$; $SD = 3.98$.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Age, Marital Status, Personality, Social Support, and Hope ($N = 150$)

Variables		Mean	SD	Cronbach α
Big Five Personality	Openness to experience	36.78	4.44	.75
	Conscientiousness	38.05	5.82	.80
	Extraversion	28.39	4.23	.81
	Agreeableness	36.61	5.49	.80
	Neuroticism	30.56	5.98	.79
Perceived social support	Significant others	23.11	6.71	.76
	Family	21.91	5.37	.81
	Friends	24.08	4.22	.80
	Overall	69.10	13.57	.81
Hope trait	Agency	25.52	4.38	.80
	Pathways	26.21	3.98	.77
	Overall	51.73	7.54	.79

Bivariate Correlation Among Study Variables

Table 3 presents the correlations among the Big Five personality dimensions, perceived social support, and trait hope. Results indicate that hope was significantly and positively associated with extraversion ($r = .17$, $p < .05$), conscientiousness ($r = .33$, $p < .001$), agreeableness ($r = .39$, $p < .001$), and openness to experience ($r = .41$, $p < .001$). In contrast, neuroticism ($r = -.05$, $p > .05$) and perceived social support ($r = .02$, $p = .78$) did not show significant relationships with hope.

Table 3 Bivariate Correlations ($N = 150$)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Extraversion	1.00						
2. Conscientiousness	-.04	1.00					
3. Agreeableness	.17*	.38***	1.00				
4. Neuroticism	.02	-.14	.03	1.00			
5. Openness to Experience	.22**	.18*	.33***	-.15	1.00		
6. Social support	.09	.00	-.18*	-.01	-.09	1.00	
7. Hope	.17*	.33***	.39***	-.05	.41***	.02	1.00

Note. *Correlation is significant at the .05 (2-tailed)

**Correlation is significant at the .01 (2-tailed)

***Correlation is significant at the .001 (2-tailed)

The intercorrelations among personality traits followed anticipated patterns. Conscientiousness was positively correlated with agreeableness ($r = .38, p < .001$), agreeableness with openness ($r = .33, p < .001$), and extraversion with openness ($r = .22, p = .01$). Interestingly, perceived social support demonstrated a small yet significant negative association with agreeableness ($r = -.18, p = .03$), while no significant correlations were observed between social support and the remaining personality traits.

Bivariate Correlation Among Study Variables

Hierarchical regression was conducted to examine whether age and marital status (H1), Big Five personality traits (H2), and perceived social support (H3) predict trait hope among food delivery riders, as presented in Table 3.

Preliminary diagnostics confirmed that regression assumptions were satisfied (Field, 2024). The Durbin–Watson value for the final model was 1.96, indicating that the errors are independent and that there is no evidence of autocorrelation. Multicollinearity was not a concern, with tolerance values ranging from .72 to .95 and VIF values between 1.02 and 1.37 in the final model.

Predictors of the hope trait

Hierarchical regression was conducted to examine whether age and marital status (H1), Big Five personality traits (H2), and perceived social support (H3) predict trait hope among food delivery riders, as presented in Table 4.

Preliminary diagnostics confirmed that regression assumptions were satisfied. The Durbin–Watson value for the final model was 1.96, indicating that the errors are independent and that there is no evidence of autocorrelation. Multicollinearity was not a concern, with tolerance values ranging from .72 to .95 and VIF values between 1.02 and 1.37 in the final model.

Model 1: Demographic Predictors of Hope (H1)

For Model 1, age and marital status did not significantly predict trait hope, $F(2, 146) = 0.75, p = .47$. Therefore, the study failed to reject H_{01} . This indicates that age and marital status did not significantly explain variation in the trait of hope among riders.

Model 2: Personality Traits Predicting Hope Beyond Demographics (H2)

For Model 2, adding the Big Five traits significantly improved the model, $F(7, 141) = 7.89, p < .001$, Adjusted $r^2 = .27, p < .001$. Therefore, the study rejected H_{02} . However, the alternative hypothesis was only partially supported: conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience emerged as significant predictors, whereas extraversion and neuroticism were not.

Model 3: Incremental Effect of Perceived Social Support (H3)

For Model 3, perceived social support did not significantly add to the prediction of trait hope beyond age, marital status, and personality traits, $\Delta R^2 = .007, \Delta F(1, 140) = 1.28, p > .05$. Therefore, the study failed to reject H_{03} . This suggests that global perceived social support did not explain additional direct variance in trait hope in the present model.

Table 4. Predictors of Trait Hope

Model		Adjusted r^2	$F(df)$	Unstandardized		Stand. β	t -value	Collinearity Statistics	
				B	SE			Tolerance	VIF
1	Constant	-.003	.75 (2,146)	55.14	4.10		13.45		
	age			-.07	.16	-.03	-.40	.99	1.01
	marital status			-1.46	1.31	-.09	-1.11	.99	1.01
2	Constant	.24	7.89** (7,141)	12.31	8.37		1.47		
	age			-.09	.15	-.04	-.60	.96	1.04
	marital status			-.57	1.14	-.04	-.50	.98	1.03
	extraversion			.14	.13	.08	1.07	.91	1.10
	conscientiousness			.27	.10	.21	2.66**	.82	1.22
	agreeableness			.27	.11	.20	2.41**	.76	1.32
	neuroticism			.01	.09	.01	.08	.93	1.07
	openness to experience			.48	.13	.28	3.60***	.83	1.21
3	Constant	.25	7.07** (8,140)	8.66	8.96		.97		
	age			-.08	.15	-.04	-.57	.96	1.04
	marital status			-.60	1.14	-.04	-.53	.97	1.03
	extraversion			.12	.13	.07	.89	.89	1.13
	conscientiousness			.26	.10	.20	2.54**	.81	1.24
	agreeableness			.30	.11	.22	2.58**	.73	1.38
	neuroticism			.01	.09	.01	.11	.93	1.07
	openness to experience			.49	.13	.29	3.68**	.82	1.22
	Social support			.05	.04	.08	1.14	.93	1.07

Note. *Correlation is significant at the .05 (2-tailed)

**Correlation is significant at the .01 (2-tailed)

***Correlation is significant at the .001 (2-tailed)

DISCUSSION

This study investigated whether age and marital status, Big Five personality traits, and perceived social support predict hope among food delivery riders. The sample largely consisted of young, single individuals, reflecting the characteristics of gig-based delivery work, which commonly attracts early adults because of its flexible entry requirements and immediate earning opportunities.

In terms of personality, riders reported relatively higher levels of conscientiousness, openness to experience, and agreeableness. This profile aligns with the demands of platform work, where self-direction and customer interaction are central. Conscientious individuals may be more inclined to organize their schedules, maintain consistent working hours, and persist toward income targets. Those high in openness may adapt more easily by identifying alternative routes or strategies when disruptions arise.

Correlation findings supported the regression results. Hope was significantly related to openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and extraversion, but not to neuroticism. Perceived social support was also unrelated to hope.

The first hypothesis was supported, as age and marital status did not significantly predict hope. Prior research suggests that demographic influences on hope are typically modest and context-sensitive, whereas psychological traits account for greater variance (Moraitou et al., 2006; Bailey & Snyder, 2007; McGrath, 2023). In delivery work, shared stressors such as traffic risks, time pressure, and unstable income may minimize demographic differences, making hope more dependent on internal capacities than on background characteristics.

The second hypothesis was partially supported. Conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness significantly predicted trait hope. These findings are consistent with the Big Five framework, which identifies broad, stable traits linked to life outcomes (McCrae & John, 1992; Soto et al., 2013). Conscientiousness reflects discipline and goal focus, strengthening agency through sustained effort (Merz & Roesch, 2011). Openness aligns with pathways thinking by promoting flexible planning (Snyder, 2002). Agreeableness may reduce interpersonal strain in service roles, helping preserve motivation. However, extraversion and neuroticism were not significant predictors, consistent with evidence that trait effects may diminish when examined simultaneously (Bahadir et al., 2020).

The non-significant association between perceived social support and hope should be interpreted cautiously. The findings do not necessarily mean that social support is unimportant for Filipino food delivery riders. Rather, it indicates that the overall MSPSS score did not show a significant direct association with trait hope after accounting for demographic variables and personality traits. This result may partly reflect measurement

limitations. By using a global social support score, the analysis may have obscured meaningful differences across sources of support, such as family, friends, significant others, fellow riders, platform communities, or faith-based groups. In the Filipino context, where hope may be relationally embedded through *kapwa*, family obligation, and shared endurance, source-specific forms of support may be more relevant than aggregate support scores. Social support may also influence hope indirectly by reducing stress (Arani & Ramezani, 2024; Flesia et al., 2023), strengthening a sense of belonging, improving coping, or reinforcing spiritual meaning, rather than directly predicting agency and pathway thinking.

Overall, demographic variables were not significant predictors, personality traits explained meaningful variance, and perceived social support did not contribute additional predictive value beyond personality and demographics.

These findings carry several implications. Hope among delivery riders appears to function as a goal-regulation resource rooted in internal psychological strengths. The study extends hope theory to gig work by demonstrating that specific personality traits underpin agency and pathways thinking. Conscientiousness supports agency through persistence and structure, openness facilitates adaptive planning, and agreeableness sustains interpersonal harmony in service contexts (Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder, 2002). Consistent with prior research, Big Five traits predict positive psychological resources, although the strength of associations varies across settings (McCrae & John, 1992; Mishra & Datta, 2019; Moltafet, 2020). Interventions designed to enhance hope in delivery riders may therefore be most effective when focused on strengthening agency, flexible planning skills, and the psychological capacities associated with conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations should be considered. First, the study used a predictive correlational and cross-sectional design; therefore, causal conclusions cannot be made. Second, all variables were measured using self-report measures, which may be affected by recall bias, social desirability, and common method variance. Third, the sample consisted only of male food delivery riders in Quezon City who used the food delivery app platform and had at least one year of delivery experience. Thus, the findings may not generalize to female riders, riders in other cities, or riders with shorter work experience. Fourth, perceived social support was analyzed using an overall score, which may have masked source-specific effects from family, friends, and significant others. Finally, work-related and contextual variables such as weekly work hours, number

of deliveries, income stability, accident exposure, heat stress, customer incivility, sleep quality, or workload pressure were not included.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies may examine the MSPSS subscales separately to determine whether family, friends, significant others, rider peers, or faith-based support have different associations with hope. Researchers may also include work-specific indicators such as weekly work hours, number of deliveries, peak-hour exposure, income stability, accident history, heat exposure, sleep quality, and customer incivility. Future research should also recruit a larger and more diverse sample of riders, including female food delivery riders, riders from other cities, and riders from multiple delivery platforms. Longitudinal and mixed-method designs may further clarify how hope develops over time and how culturally grounded forms of hope are experienced by Filipino gig workers.

Conclusion

Demographic factors and perceived social support did not significantly predict trait hope among the food delivery riders in this sample. Instead, hope may be associated with selected personality traits, such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience.

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We have no conflicts of interest to disclose.