

<https://doi.org/10.34142/23129387.2020.62.11>

UDC 159.923.2:[17.023.34:364.658]

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## **SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF HAPPINESS**

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*Relevance of a problem. The sources of happiness have not been fully understood in scientific psychological research. Therefore, it seems appropriate to find out the factors that contribute to the feeling of happiness and those that block it. The obtained data will make it possible to make recommendations, corrective programs, and trainings on enhancing the psychological well-being of a person. This problem is relevant because the way person experiences happiness depends on a way of overcoming obstacles and solving problems.*

*Aim of the article is to carry out theoretical analysis and empirical study of the problem of social-psychological factors of happiness of personality. The purpose is to determine the level of happiness associated with age, gender and belonging to a particular professional group.*

*Methodology of Research. The following methods have been used for the study: The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) by E. Diener, T. Ellers's Personality Diagnosis for Motivation to Success, Method of Paired Comparisons by V. V. Skvortsov, Projective Methodology «Draw how you imagine happiness» and the associative methodology of «Association to the concept of happiness».*

*Results. Theoretical analysis of the problem of social and psychological factors of happiness of personality has been presented.*

*Various scientific approaches to the interpretation of the concept of «happiness» have been highlighted. The social and psychological factors of happiness of personality have been determined. The results of empirical study of social and psychological factors of happiness of personality have been presented.*

*Results. The study found that the most significant and positively accepted criterion of happiness was health. Family and love have a special place in ideas of happiness. Among the various professional groups - psychologists, doctors and teachers, it has been found that the highest rates of life satisfaction had psychologists and teachers the smallest one.*

**Keywords:** *happiness, factors of happiness, gender aspect of experiencing happiness, age aspect of experiencing happiness, needs, social groups.*

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**Анотація.** Наразі в наукових психологічних дослідженнях ще не повною мірою вивчені джерела відчуття щастя. Відтак видається доцільним з'ясувати чинники, що сприяють відчуттю щастя та блокують його. Отримані дані дозволять скласти рекомендації, коригувальні програми та тренінги щодо покращення психологічного самопочуття людини. Зазначена проблема є актуальною, оскільки від того, як людина переживає щастя, залежить, як вона буде долати перешкоди і вирішувати проблеми.

**Метою статті** є проведення теоретичного аналізу та емпіричного вивчення проблеми соціально-психологічних чинників щастя особистості. Мета роботи полягає у визначенні рівня щастя,

пов'язаного з віком, статтю та належністю до певної професійної групи.

**Методи дослідження.** Для проведення дослідження були використані такі методики: «Шкала задоволеності життям» Е.Дінера; методика «Діагностика особистості на мотивацію до успіху» Т.Елерса; методика діагностики ступеня задоволеності основних потреб (метод парних порівнянь) В.В.Скворцова; проективна методика «Намалюй, як ти уявляєш щастя» та асоціативна методика «Асоціації до поняття щастя».

**Результати.** Представлено теоретичний аналіз проблеми соціальних та психологічних факторів щастя особистості. Висвітлено різні наукові підходи до тлумачення поняття «щастя». Визначено соціальні та психологічні чинники щастя особистості. Представлено результати емпіричного вивчення соціальних та психологічних факторів щастя особистості.

Дослідження виявило, що найбільш вагомим і позитивно прийнятим критерієм щастя було здоров'я. Сім'я і любов займають особливе місце в уявленні про щастя. Було встановлено, що серед різних професійних груп – психологів, лікарів та вчителів, найвищі показники задоволеності життям мали психологи, найнижчі – вчителі.

**Ключові слова:** щастя, чинники щастя, гендерний аспект переживання щастя, віковий аспект переживання щастя, потреби, соціальні групи.

**Introduction.** The problem of happiness has been considered in many psychological works. At the same time, it is difficult to imagine happiness as the subject of strictly scientific and even more experimental research. It is considered that the very concept of happiness is very vague and unclear. Of course, the phenomenon of happiness is difficult to define and measure.

The problem of «happiness» has been reached by representatives of foreign psychology – M. Argyle, A. Maslow, M. Seligman, E. Diener, C. Lewis, M. McCollum, S. Joseph and others. Representatives of national psychology did not stay away of this problem – N. Vinichuk, V. Tatarkevich, V. A. Rozanova and others.

In psychology, there are several definitions of the concept of happiness, which can be divided into three groups: happiness as satisfaction with life (hedonistic approach), as value (eudemonistic approach) and as a positive affective state (Vinichuk N. V., 2010). Analyzing approaches to understanding happiness and its

determinants, we have identified a definition of «happiness» that integrates different views of its nature. Happiness is a psychological phenomenon, characterized by satisfaction and awareness of human life, dominance of a positive emotional state, holistic perception of time, positive attitude to oneself and the world around us.

As a result of the analysis of numerous researches on this topic, it has been found that today the psychological and psychological achievements of happiness experience, especially the feeling of happiness at different ages, in different social groups, depending on gender, are not fully presented in scientific psychological works.

The **aim** of the article is to study social and psychological factors of happiness experience at different ages and in different social groups, as well as to find out the difference in the experience of happiness between men and women, based on the research of domestic and foreign psychologists on the problem of happiness, analysis of relevant empirical material.

The respondents in our study were 60 people of three ages (early adulthood – 20-40 years; middle adulthood – 40-60 years; late adulthood – 60-89 years) and three social (professional) groups (psychologists, doctors, teachers) male and female.

**Methodology of Research.** The following methods have been used for the study: The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) by E. Diener to measure the emotional experience of an individual in a personal life that reflects the overall level of well-being, T. Ellers's Personality Diagnosis for Motivation to Success, Method of Paired Comparisons by V. V. Skvortsova to identify basic human needs, Projective Methodology «Draw how you imagine happiness» and the associative methodology of «Association to the concept of happiness» to determine the factors that contribute to happiness.

**Results and Discussion.** Summarizing the results by The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) of E. Diener aimed at detecting a general level of happiness has revealed the fact that with age the indicator of life satisfaction becomes lower (Diener E., 2000). Thus, in early adulthood, people with average life satisfaction rates are more common (40%). «Medium Life Satisfaction» indicates that a person is overall satisfied with his or her life but would like to improve his or her position in most areas of life (such as work, study, or personal life and

finance). It may be the case that a person has considerable satisfaction in all areas of their lives, but there is a certain area that needs significant improvement.

There are also 20% of people with «extraordinary satisfaction» of life. People with an «extremely satisfactory» level love life and are confident that everything is going well. It is impossible to say that their life is beautiful and easy, but overall they enjoy life and feel that in the main areas of their life (study, work, family, finances, development and health) they are more or less well.

There are individuals who are «satisfied enough» with their lives (5%). But there were those who have «below average» level (25%) or «dissatisfied» (10%). There were no subjects in early adulthood with «expressed dissatisfaction» with their lives.

Middle-aged adults are more likely to have lower-than-average life satisfaction (40%). People with lower than average levels usually have small but significant problems in different areas of their lives. Or, in general, they are all good, but there is one big problem – for example, in their studies, work, health, financial situation or personal life. After a while, the situation may improve. However, if a person is constantly slightly dissatisfied with life, then it's time to do something.

At this age stage, there were slightly less respondents with «average satisfaction» with life (30%). There are also persons with «extraordinary satisfaction» (15%) and «sufficient satisfaction» (15%) who were also found in early adulthood, but in a larger percentage. Respondents in the middle-aged with «dissatisfaction» and «expressed dissatisfaction» with their lives have not been found.

Concerning late adulthood (60-89 years), there are more frequent individuals who rate satisfaction with their lives as «below average» (40%). There are also respondents who have «average life satisfaction» (20%) and those who are «dissatisfied with life» (20%). «Dissatisfaction» with one's life indicates that a person who is dissatisfied in all spheres of life (education, work, health, personal life, etc.). Either generally things are not going well, or there are one or two areas where everything is bad.

Unfortunately, among the respondents of late adulthood there were also those who have «expressed dissatisfaction» with life (10%). These people usually respond to some difficult event in their

lives – such as the loss of a loved one or unemployment. This level may be due to alcohol abuse or other addiction. Such dissatisfaction means that a person is dissatisfied with the state of affairs in most of his or her life spheres: work, personal life, health, finances, etc. These individuals should talk to loved ones, relatives, a psychologist, and a friend, perhaps in such a way that they will find a positive way to improve the situation. Among respondents of this age we have found persons (though not a large percentage) who were «sufficiently satisfied» (5%) or «extremely satisfied» (5%) with their own lives.

The data obtained is different from the data we have found in the foreign psychological literature. In the West, life satisfaction with age is rising, and in our study, the opposite trend of decreasing has been found. This can be explained by the fact that in Western countries, people actually live better than ours. First, the citizens of these countries are well-off financially. They receive a sufficient salary and pension, have good social benefits. Secondly, most retirees start living for themselves: doing their favorite business, traveling the countries, enjoying a carefree life. Moreover, they release their children into the «free life» quite early. In our country, on the contrary, pensions are sufficient only for food and utilities, but not always. Also, perhaps because of the mentality, it is difficult for our people to release their children, so that they are constantly taking care not only of their own problems, but also of the problems of their children and grandchildren, even if they are old enough.

When examining life satisfaction levels in different professional groups (psychologists, doctors, teachers), it has been found that psychologists, doctors, and teachers' life satisfaction rates differ. Psychologists had the highest rates. Most had average life satisfaction (47%). There were also persons who are fairly satisfied with their lives (26.5%). The same percentage was recorded in people who rated their life satisfaction as «below average» (26.5%). There were no respondents with «expressed satisfaction» with psychologists' lives. However, there were also no people with «dissatisfaction» or «expressed dissatisfaction».

Doctors were slightly lower indicators. The «average level» of life satisfaction (50%) prevails among them. «Lower than average»

rates have been found in 25% of doctors. 19% of respondents were «satisfied with their lives», 6% were «dissatisfied». There was no «extreme satisfaction» and «expressed dissatisfaction» with doctors' lives.

Doctors' indicators were slightly lower. Among them, the «average» level of life satisfaction prevailed (50%). «Lower than average» rates have been found in 25% of doctors. 19% of respondents were «satisfied with their lives», 6% were «dissatisfied». There was no «extreme satisfaction» and «expressed dissatisfaction» with doctors' lives.

Teachers have an even lower level. Most of the respondents in this professional group had the «below average» level of life satisfaction (51%). Persons with «sufficient» (14%) and «medium» (21%) levels of life satisfaction were also identified. There was no «extraordinary satisfaction» and «expressed dissatisfaction» with the lives of teachers, such as psychologists and doctors.

In our opinion, these results are due to the fact that psychologists, using the existing psychological knowledge, easier to understand their life problems and find ways to solve them, easier to establish and maintain contact with other people, etc. That is why they are more satisfied with their lives, unlike doctors and teachers.

As for doctors, they are constantly in a state, perhaps not significant, but still stress, because they realize their importance and great responsibility. They understand that health and lives of many people depend on their diagnoses and treatment. It is because of this doctor and has somewhat lower life satisfaction rates than psychologists.

As for the profession of teacher, it is stressful and requires excessive spending of mental and moral forces. Almost all teachers have to work all day (lessons, classroom instruction, after-school hours and other activities). In addition, at home, you need to prepare for lessons and check your notebook. The students and parents are different. It is easy and enjoyable to work with intelligent and capable children, and with others it is very difficult. In this case, the teacher has a modest salary when overloaded. In addition to the lessons, you need to write plans, reports, work with a large amount of documentation. Therefore, it is not surprising that among studied professional groups, it is teachers

who have the lowest life satisfaction rates.

Comparing life satisfaction levels of men and women, we have found that men feel happier than women. The average level of life satisfaction prevailed among men (32%). «Extreme satisfaction» (12%), «sufficient satisfaction» (25%), «below-average satisfaction» (16%), «dissatisfaction» (8%) and «expressed dissatisfaction» with life (7%) have been found.

Women have a lower than average life satisfaction rate (39%). Persons with «extreme satisfaction» (14%), «sufficient satisfaction» (11%), «average satisfaction» (25%) and «dissatisfaction» with their own lives (11%) have been identified. Women with «expressed dissatisfaction» have not been identified.

It should be noted that earlier women felt happier. It can be explained by the fact that women previously had less ambition. They compared themselves to other members of their gender, but never equaled to men. Today's women have more opportunities to realize themselves; they have new goals in life. In addition to family and children, they want to make a career, but many do not. A woman spends a lot of time in her daily routine, but men do not enough. Therefore, modern women simply do not have time to do everything planned, so they often feel unhappy.

Today's men have more rest and less work, while modern women work far more than they used to. In addition, representatives of the «strong sex» are trying less to do what they do not like. And women are forced to make money besides housekeeping (Tatarkevich V., 1981).

For more detailed research, we have created and suggested to the respondents an associative methodology – «Associations to the word – the stimulus of happiness».

Analysis of the obtained data have showed that the most significant and positive perception of the subjects is the criterion of «health». This includes their own health as well as that of children and loved ones. Of course, health is one of the most important factors of happiness at any age. When you ask people what matters most to their happiness, most will call it «health» or something related to it. According to the majority, health is the source of happiness.

A special place in respondents' ideas about happiness belongs to «family». In the family, the person receives comfort, love, physical



and mental strength, without which normal functioning is impossible. The data received also associated with the fact that in early adulthood (especially up to 30 years), there is a real desire to start a family, to have a child, and after 40 years, almost everyone has a family, and therefore a family is one of the main sources of happiness.

Another important factor in the idea of happiness is «love». This is because, at the age of 20-40, there is a genuine desire to a different gender, a positive emotional attachment. It is confirmed by a study by the scientist at Harvard Medical School S. Joseph, who has been able to prove that the main source of happiness for any person, regardless of financial status, career and well-being, is a harmonious relationship with people (Lewis C. A., McCollum M. A., & Joseph S., 1999).

In addition to the aforementioned sources (mental representations) of happiness, others were identified using content analysis, namely: success, dreaming, joy from every day, creativity, freedom, well-being, music, money, harmony (with oneself and outside), self-fulfillment, self-realization, meaning of life, interest in life, career, hobby, understanding, peace, satisfaction, wisdom, work, respect, children, kindness, life energy, positive emotions, inspiration, rest, fun, spiritual development, support, confidence, confidence, warmth, sincerity, child birth, demand, your home.

To obtain information about the respondents' ideas of happiness we were also offered an authoritative projective technique – «Draw how you imagine happiness». Unlike the method of associations, where a large number of factors of happiness have been identified, the drawings are mostly repeated. It was by this method that we were able to find out the leading factors of happiness. After all, associations can be written a lot, but they draw mostly one thing: and probably what they considered to be the most important factor in happiness. Almost all respondents drew family and home. Only a few respondents drew another factor (rest, nature, their own microcosm, etc.).

An analysis of the results of the «Diagnosis of Basic Needs Satisfaction» methodology has revealed that the basic needs satisfaction in early adulthood and late adulthood was almost the same. At both ages, there was a partial satisfaction with basic needs: 71% – early adulthood, 70% – middle adulthood. There was practically no difference in the percentage of unmet needs (13% –

early adulthood, 12.5% – middle adulthood) and needs that were met (16% – early adulthood, 17.5% – middle adulthood).

The relationship between happiness and satisfaction of human needs can be viewed from two sides, because the very need can mean for the person at the same time the dependence on something and the desire for something. On the one hand, satisfying the elementary need can bring happiness, and on the other hand, the need itself can be felt as a feeling of happiness, that is, a sense of need for something (if it is something wonderful, thoughts of achieving it can give rise to a state of happiness). Therefore, it can be said that happiness is not only in satisfying the need, but in the pursuit of that, in the process of meeting the need.

A. Maslow saw the happiness of a person in self-actualization, the path to which lies through the satisfaction of all needs: from the simplest (in food, drink and safety) – to the need for recognition. The self-actualized person is calm, confident, talented, indulgent, not prone to depression and hysterical, while having a healthy self-esteem and harmonious appearance (Maslow A., 2002).

Using the method of diagnostics of the degree of satisfaction of basic needs (method of paired comparisons) by V. V. Skvortsov gave us an opportunity to find out the hierarchy of basic needs of men and women. It was determined that the most important thing for women was to meet their security and interpersonal needs.

There is no better feeling than full security. This feeling is experienced by the woman while in the family, with her children and loved one. After all, no matters how strong, confident, independent, she wants to have a place where she can completely relax, take a break from the outside world, the bustle, work and problems. Also, women need emotional support as well as opportunities to help loved ones (girlfriends, lovers, parents). This, of course, is one of the major differences between the psychology of a man and a woman: it is much easier for women to survive a negative situation by speaking it out, thinking out loud about their emotions and experiences, but men prefer to think over everything in their mind.

The most important thing for men was meeting the need for recognition, the need for self-expression and material needs. In our opinion, the data obtained are related to the fact that satisfaction of the

need for respect gives rise to a person, according to A. Maslow, «a sense of self-confidence, a sense of self-importance, strength, adequacy, a sense that it is useful and necessary in this world» (Maslow A., 2002).

And it is important for every man to assert himself in his own and others' eyes, to prove that he is better, stronger, and more talented than others. Their well-being is determined by how well they are able to achieve high results. Only success gives them a sense of self and realization of themselves. They value strength, love to compete. It is important for every man to have a favorite affair and to be recognized in a favorite affair among colleagues and friends, in society.

The needs mentioned above are also related to material needs, which are one of the most important for men. Not only financial well-being but also psychological well-being, self-esteem and life satisfaction depend on meeting these needs. This helps the man to show his personality and find a certain status that shows others who he is and what he is. Therefore, the greater satisfaction of these needs will affect the level of happiness.

Summarizing the data obtained due to methods «Personality Diagnosis for Motivation to Success», we have found that most early adulthood and middle adulthood individuals had an average level of motivation for success (20-40 (44%), 40-60 (75%)). There was also a moderately high level (20-40 (21%), 40-60 (12.5%)) and a low level (20-40 (14%), 40-60 (12.5%)). But in early adulthood, there was still a high level of motivation for success (21%), which was not revealed in later adulthood.

In our view, people who are moderately and strongly focused on success are more likely to feel happier than those who are poorly motivated to succeed. Success is the result of purposeful action, the achievement of positive results in any activity; success is the achievement of a goal, and this makes a person happy if he or she chooses it independently and goes to it in the appropriate way.

Considering the relationship of success and happiness from another point of view, one can say that to some extent there is a relationship, but it is not an absolute dependency. Succeeding in a particular cause, one gets the same pleasure that makes one feel happy and for some time

feels happy. But in order to feel full of happiness one must feel pleasure in all areas of one's life. All the same, a person needs to formulate and concentrate on a particular life purpose. They help spiritually develop and perfect «self» in all senses (Rozanova V. A., 1999).

We have suggested that the level of motivation for success and satisfaction of basic needs of a person may act as a factor of his emotional well-being and, accordingly, affect his level of satisfaction with life. To confirm this assumption, we have conducted a correlation analysis between motivation for success, basic needs, and happiness in early adulthood (20-40 years) and late adulthood (40-60 years).

A direct high correlation (0.765) has been found at the level of 0.01 between the scale of «Method of Paired Comparisons» by V. V. Skvortsov and the methodology «The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)» by E. Diener. Thus, we can conclude that the higher the level of satisfaction of basic needs of a person, the higher the level of his satisfaction with life. Thus, respondents who were sufficiently satisfied with basic needs had a higher level of happiness than those who had lower levels of satisfaction with basic needs.

We also have made a correlation between the scales of T. Ellers's Personality Diagnosis for Motivation to Success and the E. Diener Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). A direct correlation (0.725) has been found at a statistical significance level of 0.01. This correlation indicates that the higher a person's level of motivation for success, the higher his level of happiness. Therefore, people with high and medium levels of motivation for success and with a moderate degree of satisfaction with basic needs had higher satisfaction rates than those who had low levels of motivation for success.

**Conclusions.** The analysis of different approaches of scientists to the concept of happiness made it possible to determine its essence: happiness is a psychological phenomenon, characterized by satisfaction and awareness of human life, dominance of a positive emotional state, holistic perception of time, positive attitude to oneself and the world around.

The study has found that the most significant and positively accepted criterion of happiness was health. Family and love also had a special place in ideas of happiness. Differences have been found

between data from foreign studies and data obtained during our study. Abroad the level of happiness increases with age, and in our country, on the contrary it decreases. The difference is also evident in the gender aspect. In foreign studies it has been found that women feel happier than men, and our study found the opposite: men are happier than women.

Analysis of level of satisfaction with the lives of individuals from different professional groups, namely psychologists, doctors and teachers, has found that psychologists had the highest rates. Doctors had a lower level of life satisfaction, and teachers had taken the last place.

It has also been found that the most important thing for women is security and interpersonal needs. For men, more important is meeting the need for recognition as well as the need for self-expression and material needs.

The results of correlation analysis have revealed the following dependencies: the higher the level of motivation of the individual to success, the higher the degree of satisfaction of basic needs, the higher the level of happiness.

Thus, the study of the problem of happiness is necessary for the development of ways of personality realization, capacity building of modern man, to form a constructive attitude to reality, a positive approach to solving the tasks.

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*Original manuscript received December, 2, 2019*

*Revised manuscript accepted December, 22, 2019*