

Leading Dominants of the Subjective Well-Being: A Case Study of the Tyumen Region

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Abstract This paper analyses the subjective well-being of the population of the Tyumen region using its leading dominants. The analysis is based on the results of an own questionnaire. The research goal was to define dominants of subjective well-being of the Russians based upon a dataset for the Tyumen region.

This research distinguished some factors which influence satisfaction of one's life and, visa-versa, cause dissatisfaction with one's life. Moreover, the paper defines the components of happiness of the Russian people and assesses the life satisfaction level. Based on the determined factors some statistically meaningful models of life satisfaction were built. These models reflect dominant features of subjective well-being, including separate features for men and women. The outcomes show that the subjective well-being is related to good health, satisfaction with one's income, positive emotional state, determined by the respondents as an existence of reason to live.

Keywords: *well-being, leadership, life satisfaction, happiness*

1 Introduction

A notion of well-being is extremely complicated, multi-layered, and controversial. For example, Pollard and Lee (2003) note fairly that well-being is "a complicated multilateral structure, which continues to evade from attempts of researchers to define and measure it" (Pollard and Lee 2003). Currently, well-being, according to many scholars (see e.g. Voropaev 2013; Dodge et al. 2012; Gorshkov et al. 2018, and others), lays claim to a role of an integrated factor of reforms, performed in the society, a place of a country in the world community, sustainability of this or that region, development potential of its infrastructures, economy, culture, and life sustenance.

The principles of popularity of the "well-being" concept are related to the fact that it reflects a place of an individual in the social system and enables to combine different slices of sociality: individual and collective. There are many well-being research fields formed in the contemporary social knowledge. Each field presents its own perception of the nature, essence, determinants, methods of providing well-being, which causes absence of the overall picture of it in the contemporary science. Lepper and McAndrew (2008) introduce two definitions of economic well-being in their work: the subjective and objective well-being. The subjective well-being is associated with the fact how people assess their satisfaction with life. The objective well-being is associated with the life quality assessment with the factors, developed on the scientific bases: level of education, level of life, expected lifespan, etc. The objective-subjective characteristics of human existence conditions are stated with various notions, which include "life satisfaction", "happiness", "life quality", "social general state", "subjective life quality", "level of life".

The basic conceptions of a structure of subjective well-being were developed by Diener (2004) and Diener (2007) who define it as a three-component structure, comprising life satisfaction, positive and negative effects. Following this logic, some researchers (Galiakhmetova 2015) distinguish a cognitive (assessment, conception of various aspects of one's own being) and emotional (happiness/misery) component of subjective well-being. Other researchers study well-being as a part of job satisfaction (see e.g. Cabelkova et al. 2015).

At present, monitoring and measurement of people's subjective well-being became quite natural process which is implemented at either international, interregional, or internal domestic level and successfully complement to the research of the official statistical organizations (Gallup-Healthways Global Well-being Index, Happy Planet Index, Better Life Index, Prosperity Index, etc.). In Russia, since 1990, the Russian Public Opinion Research Centre has been measuring the Happiness Index, the News Effector Analytical Agency has been compiling the Happiest Russian Cities Rating since 2012, the Numeo and Domofond.ru Agencies have presented the Rating of Russian Cities according to Level of Life in 2019. In 2018 the Financial University at the Government of the Russian Federation drew up the research results of the population's life quality in the Russian cities with the population above 250 thousand people. Practically in all the Russian ratings, assessing well-being

of the population, the leading positions are occupied by the city of Tyumen – a regional centre of the West-Siberian oil-and-gas province of Russia. Tyumen is steadily included into the top “three” happiest cities of Russia, being a leader in the rating of the cities in terms of life quality, takes the second position in the rating of cities in terms of the public transport operation, the fifth place in the rating “Quality and Accessibility of the Children’s Infrastructure”, etc.

The aim of this article is to determine dominants of subjective well-being of the Russian people with an example of studying life satisfaction and happiness of the population of the Tyumen region.

The article has the following structure. The first section contains a brief overview of the literature with an aim to highlight the contents and structure of subjective well-being from the viewpoint of various approaches. The second section describes the database and methods. The third section presents the results of the empirical model and final comments. The fourth section presents brief conclusions.

2. Structure of subjective well-being: theoretical review

The conception of well-being and happiness was topical in a different degree at all times, but at the contemporary stage of the social development it obtains some new meaning, which is related to more frequent economic crises and a need of the society to find a new convergent social-economic model of existence, which would contribute to the development and improvement of stability with a decrease of social inequalities in the society. The well-known psychologists and economists: a Nobel prize winner Kahneman (see Kahneman et al. 1999; or Kahneman and Sugden 2005), Seligman (2002), or Stone et al. (2010) made a considerable contribution to the development of the subjective well-being notion. The literature about subjective well-being may be very relatively divided into the three following categories: 1) in what way to determine and measure the subjective well-being; 2) what contributes to the subjective well-being; 3) how the subjective well-being is related to the objective well-being. Each of these three fields deserves a separate review. The opportunities of this section do not attempt for a comprehensive character of review of the literature about the subjective well-being, but more likely point out the essential milestones of research development in this field and a place of this article within the available dataset.

In the 1970s-1990s, many studies appeared which focused on the subjective well-being. Mainly, they are based upon studying the public opinion, having the empirical and application character, and are implemented by means of studying the fields of conjunction to a degree of human potential implementation. Initially, in the early foreign works the notions of “happiness”, “satisfaction with life” are met as synonyms. Since the 2000s, within the “economy of happiness” conception, there emerged the attempts to investigate and measure happiness (or subjective well-being) with scientific methods (see e.g. Veenhoven 2003; Kahneman et al. 1999; Lyubomirsky and King 2005; Ryan and Deci 2001). The studies have showed that the main factors of subjective well-being are:

- life in a stable democratic society, independent materially
- loving friends and family;
- interesting job, providing income;
- health and accessible treatment;
- presence of life goals, important from the viewpoint one’s personal system of values;
- philosophy or religion, giving one a direction, aim, and essence of one’s personal life (Demchenko 2011).

Ryff (1989) offered a model of psychological well-being, which consists of six components: life aims and activities; positive attitude towards oneself; positive attitude towards others; wish and capability to fulfil the requirements of everyday life; feeling of a need of continuous development and self-improvement; ability to maintain one’s own world view.

Rath and Harter (2011) offer to distinguish five elements of well-being. Well-being is a combination of love towards what we do every day, positive relationships with others, sustained material condition, strong health, and pride of one’s personal contribution to the life of the society. The first constituent is professional well-being – how an individual spends his, or her time, or simply love towards the activity, which he, or she performs every day. The second constituent is social well-being – strong relationships with other people and love towards the individual’s life. The third constituent is financial well-being – effective management of the material side of one’s life. The fourth constituent is physical well-being – strong health and enough strength in order to cope with everyday challenges. The fifth constituent is well-being in the living environment – a feeling of affiliation to the life of the society around. 66% of people succeed in at least one of these fields, and only 7% are successful in all of the fields.

Efremova (2014) states that subjective well-being has independent cognitive and emotional constituents. A spiritual factor is one of the most important factors of human well-being. Without one’s self-perception as a

part of the universe, nor thinking about one's mission, nor feeling responsible for other people's well-being, a person is hardly to be able to be well him- or herself. In her viewpoint, the spiritual well-being is promotion in understanding one's nature and mission, realization and feeling a meaning of one's life. Spirituality is a complex of one's needs, drivers, and values of spiritual character, which determine the activity of an individual, a social group, or the whole society (cognitive, moral, needs in harmony, self-fulfilment, beauty). The social well-being is shown in one's satisfaction with an enough developed dynamic system of social relations, with presence of positive interpersonal relationships, which are expressed in a form of friendship, love, and support. A level of social well-being may be high, when a person has guarantees of good living conditions, worthy education and medical support. Career development may also have a positive impact on personal well-being. One's job, which brings satisfaction, enables one to fulfil him- or herself, provides social guarantees and stable income. Physical (body) well-being means absence of unfavourable, painful conditions in the organism, a feeling of freshness, vivacity, efficiency. An interrelation of one's health and inheritance is undeniable, but it does not mean that a person is entitled to assume no responsibility for one's own health. Psychological (emotional) well-being is related to such personal traits, as self-confidence, reasonable self-esteem, positive view to one's life, benevolence, sociability, emotional stability.

3. Data and methods

In order to achieve the aims of our analysis we have used the data of a sociological survey, performed in the city of Tyumen, the Tyumen Region in September-December 2015 with a questionnaire method. The data are representative for the population from the age 18 and older. The representative feature is controlled in accordance with sex, age, and education. The total number of respondents in the selection is 275 people. The type of the selection used is non-probabilistic, the kind of selection is quota. The subjects of the survey were the following age groups: 18-25 years, 26-35 years, 36-54 years, over 55 years.

In order to collect the empirical data a questionnaire was used, which was developed by the author. The questionnaire includes assessment of satisfaction with life from 1 to 10 points; assessment of the felt happiness; ranking of factors, influencing life satisfaction; assessment of one's state of health and general condition for the current moment; aspects of life, which the respondent is not satisfied with, etc. During the factor analysis there were 65 factors distinguished, which were transformed into 27 components with the Principle Component analysis. These components are linear combinations of the initial factors. The Principle Component Analysis enabled us to eliminate the duplicate information and decrease the dimension of the initial environment.

In order to verify the correlation of life satisfaction with the distinguished factors we used the linear regression models, calculated on the basis of the least squares' method (Tables 1, 3, 4). The first model was built for the whole selection (275 surveys) and may be transferred to the population in general; the second model is valid for men (97 surveys); the third model was built for women (184 surveys). The processing of the results was carried out with the correlation analysis methods and mean comparison according to the Student's t-test.

The factors, which, according to the respondents, influence satisfaction with life, and which may be subject to ranking, were calculated based on a contingency table. The reliability of the obtained results was controlled in accordance with M. Kendall tau rank correlation coefficient and concordance coefficient.

4. Results and discussion

We calculated the ranked regressions in order to analyse determinants of life satisfaction of the population of the Tyumen region and on the basis of the obtained data to distinguish dominating features of subjective well-being, which are statistically meaningful for any selection.

The analysis of the obtained results enables us to draw up interesting conclusions. Satisfaction with life is positively influenced by good health of the individual, absence of any problems with it and readiness to invest into one's own health. Also, higher self-assessment of one's health (we have used a scale from 1 – "perfect health" to 5 – "poor health") is negatively related to satisfaction with one's life. We have also found out that the younger the person is and the less qualification is needed for his or her activity, the higher is his or her life satisfaction. The more the person is dissatisfied with the relation work/rest, his or her own health, environmental condition, civil rights, the less he or she is satisfied with his or her life. The respondents, claiming about their dissatisfaction with their income, thinking that health of a person in Russia is the most negatively influenced by non-stability of economic life, are less satisfied with their lives.

Concerning an emotional constituent of subjective well-being we specified, whether the respondent could say that he or she is happy now and explain, what for him or her the notion "happiness" means. It is worth noting that 67% of the respondents stated that "yes, they are happy". As characteristics of what happiness means for the respondents, the following options were offered: "it is feelings, emotions, which are difficult to describe"; "unexpected luck"; "presence of a reason to live"; "material wealth"; "favourable destiny, given from above"; "good health", "well-being in the family" or the own option. We have found out that the respondents, defining

happiness as “presence of a reason to live”, are more satisfied with their lives, as well as the respondents, who are happy, are also more satisfied with their lives (see Table 1).

Table 1. Life Satisfaction of Population of the Tyumen Region

Factor	Life Satisfaction (1 – completely unsatisfied, 10 – completely satisfied)			
	Coefficient	Statistical Error	t-statistics	P-value
Const.	6.95636	0.0916503	75.90	< 0.0001***
Age	-0.176940	0.0918174	-1.927	0.0550*
Health assessment	-0.442758	0.0918174	-4.822	< 0.0001***
Dissatisfaction with relation work/rest	-0.302983	0.0918174	-3.300	0.0011***
Visits to church	0.218538	0.0918174	2.380	0.0180**
Happiness as presence of reason to live	-0.173603	0.0918174	-1.891	0.0598*
Good health	0.252726	0.0918174	2.752	0.0063***
Readiness to invest into one’s own health	0.177060	0.0918174	1.928	0.0549*
Happiness	-0.283889	0.0918174	-3.092	0.0022***
Dissatisfaction with one’s income	0.220492	0.0918174	2.401	0.0170**
Friendly relations, freedom	-0.202792	0.0918174	-2.209	0.0281**
Absence of problems with one’s health	0.170192	0.0918174	1.854	0.0649*
Non-stability of economic life	0.198398	0.0918174	2.161	0.0316**
R-square	0.248638		Corr. R-square	0.214224
N=275				

Source: Own results

Analysing positioning of the factors, which, according to the respondents, influence satisfaction with life, we have managed to find out a noticeable degree of agreement of the respondents in ranking the factors (Table 2).

Table 2. Ranking of Factors, Influencing Life Satisfaction (1 – the most meaningful, 7 – the least meaningful)

Factor	Rank
Family relations	1
Health	2
Money, material wealth	3
Stable job and good relations with the colleagues	4
Friendly relations	5
Freedom (political, religious, personal)	6
Law and order, protection by law	7

Source: Own results

Understanding the logic of ranking, we, therefore, may explain, why the friendly relations and freedom are negatively related to life satisfaction. The respondents, who give a high rank to these factors, displacing to the last places, for example, the family relations, health, will be less satisfied with their lives. The rating, presented in the table 2, is logically complemented with the results of an answer to the question, what the happiness is (it was possible to pick several options for answer): 73% of the respondents think that happiness is “well-being in the family”; 48% - “good health”; 41% - “presence of a reason to live”; 33% - “feelings, emotions, which are difficult to describe”; 30% - “material wealth”; 14% - “favourable destiny, given from above”; 9.4% - “unexpected luck, success”.

The dominants of life satisfaction, statistically meaningful at the level of 90%, are good health; satisfaction with one’s income, relation work/rest, environmental situation, civil rights; a state of happiness, defined through “well-being in the family” and “presence of a reason to live”. Configuration of life satisfaction factors for the male respondents is slightly different (Table 3).

The dominants of life satisfaction for men, as well as for the whole selection, are income and health. The more frequently a man picks dissatisfaction with his income among the factors, which he is not satisfied with at the present moment, the higher will be his factor of dissatisfaction with his life. Dissatisfaction with life is positively related for men to dissatisfaction with the living conditions. Friendly relations and presence of freedoms (political, religious, personal) are meaningful factors in life satisfaction.

Table 3. Life Satisfaction for Men in the Tyumen Region

Factor	Life Satisfaction (1 – completely dissatisfied, 10 – completely satisfied)			
	Coefficient	Statistical error	t-statistics	P-value
Const.	6.75258	0.0902018	74.86	< 0.0001***
Dissatisfaction with one’s income	0.342890	0.0906704	3.782	0.0003***
Presence of overloading, tired state	-0.250074	0.0906704	-2.758	0.0072***
Dissatisfaction with relation work/rest	-0.214482	0.0906704	-2.366	0.0204**
Presence of chronic illnesses	-0.470546	0.0906705	-5.190	< 0.0001***
Friendly relations, freedom	0.263759	0.0906704	2.909	0.0047***
Healthy way of living	0.160644	0.0906704	1.772	0.0802*
Environmental impact on health	-0.253418	0.0906704	-2.795	0.0065***
Employer’s investments into one’s health	-0.798531	0.0906704	-8.807	< 0.0001***
Low level of material wealth	-0.259128	0.0906704	-2.858	0.0054***
Visits to church	-0.424947	0.0906704	-4.687	< 0.0001***
Happiness as presence of a reason to live	0.192759	0.0906704	2.126	0.0365**
The state as a guilty side of one’s poor health	-0.375108	0.0906704	-4.137	< 0.0001***
Happiness as one’s material wealth	0.286343	0.0906704	3.158	0.0022***
Dissatisfaction with one’s living conditions	0.180250	0.0906703	1.988	0.0502*
R-square	0.725849		Corr. R-square	0.679042
N=97				

Source: Own results

Analysing a correlation between attitude towards one’s own health as a factor of one’s satisfaction with life, it is worth noting that men, thinking that they live a healthy life, are more pleased with their lives. In general, men acknowledge a presence of chronic illnesses; acknowledge a presence of overloading and tired state, decreasing their satisfaction with life. We have also noticed that the men, who are inclined to blame the external circumstances in a decrease of the level of their health (bad doctors, the state is to be blamed, the medicine is to be blamed), are less satisfied with their lives (Table 4).

Table 4. Life Satisfaction for Women in the Tyumen Region

Factor	Life satisfaction (1 – completely dissatisfied, 10 – completely satisfied)			
	Coefficient	Statistical error	t-statistics	P-value
Const.	7.04348	0.117038	60.18	< 0.0001***
Age	-0.594730	0.117357	-5.068	< 0.0001***
Happiness as good health and well-being in the family	0.332057	0.117357	2.829	0.0052***
Readiness to invest into one’s own health	0.216228	0.117357	1.842	0.0671*
Dissatisfaction with one’s living conditions	-0.199956	0.117357	-1.704	0.0902*
Dissatisfaction with one’s income	-0.513446	0.117357	-4.375	< 0.0001***
R-square	0.249346		Corr. R-square	0.228260
N=184				

Source: Own results

The male respondents, thinking that happiness is, first, the “material wealth”, “presence of a reason to live”, would be more satisfied with their lives. Unlike the whole selection, men show a negative relation between visits to church and life satisfaction. In other words, men, satisfied with their lives, do not strive to frequent visits to church.

Life satisfaction for women, compared to men, is determined with much smaller number of factors, but the model at that does not become less valuable. We may draw a conclusion that an extremely important constituent of subjective well-being is emotional assessment of their lives – happiness, which is defined by women through “good health” and “well-being in the family”. Life satisfaction will be higher for women of a younger age, married, who do not occupy managerial positions, taking care about their health and ready to invest into their own health. A material constituent of life (income, living conditions) are meaningful factors for satisfaction with life.

Studying the dynamics of life satisfaction of the population of the Tyumen Region, we have compared the data of 2014 and 2015 (Fig. 1). If in 2014 we stated abnormal dynamics of life satisfaction (Kiseleva and Strielkowski 2016), which was different from the dynamics, typical for the American and European societies, described in the work by Oswald (1997) or Blanchflower and Oswald (2008). Unlike the U-shaped curve of happiness, where the lowest values of happiness correspond to the age of 44-46 years, in our graph of 2014 the lowest values of happiness were typical for the age group of 26-35 years, which was different from the practice of earlier studied countries. The data of 2015 completely correlate with the dynamics, stated in the studies of the foreign scholars.

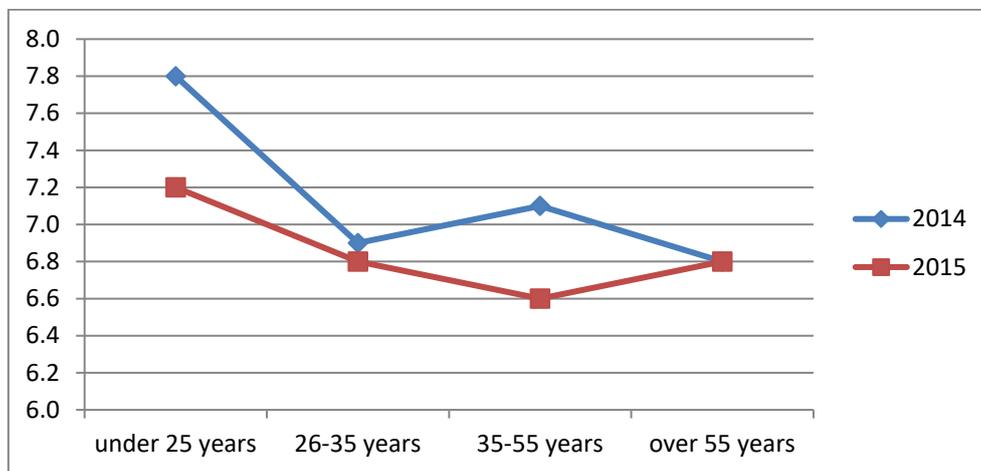


Fig. 1. Life Satisfaction in Relation to Age in the Tyumen Region (1 – completely dissatisfied, 10 – completely satisfied)

Source: Own results

According to a 10-point scale of life satisfaction, the average value for the age groups is as follows: under 25 years – 7.2; 26-35 years – 6.8; 36-55 – 6.6; over 55 years – 6.8. Women are more satisfied with their lives (7.1 points), than men (6.8 points). Analysing the answers to the question “Are you happy at the present moment?” 67% of the respondents’ answer “Yes, we are”. It is interesting that the data of the survey of the Russian Public Opinion Research Centre [Happiness Index] for November 2015 demonstrate a higher number of happy people in Russia (81% Russian people, who have answered “definitely happy” and “more yes, happy”). We may draw up a conclusion that the people in the Tyumen Region, most likely, are stricter in terms of their attitude towards characterizing the emotional side of subjective well-being, than the people, living in other Russian regions.

The resented research enabled us to distinguish dominating features of the subjective well-being, which make a considerable impact on life satisfaction. First, this is good health, which people are ready to maintain by means of living healthy lives and investments into its maintenance. An important factor, related to health, is keeping the balance in the relation “work/rest”. The next dominant is material wealth and satisfaction with material side of life (satisfactory living conditions, income). An emotional constituent of life is a feeling of happiness is another dominant. From several characteristics of what the happiness means for a person, the respondents have picked a characteristic of happiness as “presence of a reason to live”, as “material wealth”.

We notice some differences between male and female perception of subjective well-being. Women, satisfied with their lives, characterize happiness the most frequently as “good health” and “well-being in the family”. For men an important factor for life satisfaction is friendly relations. We have found interesting studies by Madsen et al. (2010), who presented an investigation of correlation of friendship and happiness. People, who

had less than 5 friends, only in 40% of cases said that they were happy. Presence of from 5 to 10 friends increased this proportion up to 50%. On the other hand, after 10 friends several additional friends did not have more impact on happiness. Besides, it appeared that the friendly relations are not only an issue of quantity: the quality of relations is also meaningful. It was found out that it is better to maintain the old relations, than create new ones: for the survey participants, old close friends were worthier in the balance of happiness, than the new relations.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, the subjective well-being of the population of one of the Russian Federation constituents – the Tyumen Region was investigated, as well as what features may be considered as dominants in assessment of life satisfaction. The results show that in the 2000s, the issues, related to assessment of subjective well-being, development of the “Happiness economy” conception, took a serious place in the foreign literature and gained topicality. Besides, we have to admit low research activity of the Russian scholars in this field, moreover with a focus on the regional particular features. There are unstoppable discussions among the scholars regarding a relation between well-being, happiness, and freedom, regarding ranking benefits, ethnic and individual preferences, etc. The social well-being is firmly associated in the mass consciousness with success, health, satisfaction with one’s job, and social environment, feeling of one’s full value, fulfilment of one’s life plans.

Overall, it can be stated that in the contemporary social knowledge there are many well-being research fields, each of which offers its view of a nature, character, determinants, methods of providing well-being, focusses the main effort on studying only one of its aspects, which causes absence of comprehensive concept of it in the contemporary science. In this respect, there is a critical need in integration of theoretical-methodological approaches to well-being studies.

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