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FEELING OF HAPPINESS IN SELF-ASSESSMENTS OF UKRAINIANS

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Happiness shows as an important sociological category. Starting from Aristotle, happiness has traditionally been conceptualized in European reflection as the main goal of human life, as a result of human development (eudaimonic interpretation). At the same time, a simplified understanding of happiness as a subjective complex of sensations (hedonistic interpretation) has formed in the history of sociology. The article focuses on the relevance of the issue of happiness as a subject of sociological research. The concept of happiness has been interpreted as a particularly significant, key indicator that combines the subjective and objective characteristics of the human's life-world as an integral part of society. Modern empirical techniques that allow us to reach a new level of understanding the role of happiness in human life are evaluated by us. The article contains the results of a secondary analysis of the sociological dimensions of happiness carried out in Ukraine in recent years, including in the context of the study of values and value orientations. According to research results, the negative events taking place in Ukraine in recent years did not directly affect on self-assessments of a feeling of happiness. This can be explained by the lack of formation of the "concept of happiness" among Ukrainians (Y. Golovakha), as well as the prevalence of family values in the general hierarchy of values. The results of a questionnaire conducted at the Department of Sociology of the Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University in May 2018 have been published and analyzed. According to our data, the vast majority of residents of the three centers of the Black Sea region (Mykolaiv, Odessa, Kherson) consider themselves happy people. At the same time, the feeling of happiness among the residents of the region is due to a greater extent to personal factors and is not directly related to the well-being of society. This can be regarded as a dangerous trend, one of the symptoms of the growing atomization of society.

Keywords: happiness, well-being, feeling of happiness, values, self-assessments of Ukrainians, Black Sea region of Ukraine.

Щастя розглядається як важлива соціологічна категорія. Починаючи з Аристотеля, щастя традиційно концептувалось в європейській рефлексії як головна мета людського життя, як результат розвитку людини (евдемонічне трактування). Разом із тим, в історії соціології сформувався спрощене розуміння щастя як суб'єктивного комплексу відчуттів (гедоністичне трактування). У статті акцентовано увагу на актуальності проблематики щастя як предмета соціологічних досліджень. Концепт щастя осмислюється як особливо значущий, ключовий показник, що поєднує в собі суб'єктивні та об'єктивні характеристики життєвого світу людини як невід'ємної складової соціуму. Оцінюються сучасні емпіричні методиками, які дозволяють вийти на новий рівень розуміння ролі щастя в житті людини. Стаття містить результати вторинного аналізу соціологічних вимірювань щастя, проведених в Україні в останні роки, в тому числі в контексті вивчення цінностей і ціннісних орієнтацій. Згідно з результатами досліджень, негативні події, що відбуваються в Україні протягом останнього періоду, не мали прямого впливу на самооцінки відчуття щастя, що може пояснюватися несформованістю «концепту щастя» в українців (С. Головаха), а також превалюванням сімейних цінностей в загальній ієрархії цінностей. Публікуються та аналізуються результати анкетного опитування, проведеного на кафедрі соціології Чорноморського національного університету імені Петра Могили в травні 2018 року. Згідно з отриманими даними, переважна більшість жителів трьох центрів Причорноморського регіону (Миколаїв, Одеса, Херсон) вважає себе щасливими людьми. Разом з тим, відчуття щастя у жителів регіону обумовлюється більшою мірою особистими факторами і не пов'язане безпосередньо з благополуччям суспільства, що можна розцінювати як досить небезпечну тенденцію, один із симптомів наростаючої атомізації суспільства.

Ключові слова: щастя, благополуччя, відчуття щастя, цінності, самооцінки українців, Причорноморський регіон України.

Our focus is on *happiness* as a sociological category. In our opinion, this is one of the most interesting and controversial concepts in sociology and other socio-humanitarian disciplines. This concept is already present

in antiquity. For example, in Aristotle's philosophy (primarily in his ethics) the category "happiness" (εὐδαιμονία) is revealed in the broadest possible ontological and philosophical-anthropological context. According to Aristotle, happiness is primarily the *result of the development of man* as a multi-level being, the development of his physicality, sociality and spirituality as a whole. This property is deeply human: "We say 'human' because happiness may perhaps exist also for some other being superior to us – a god, for example. None of the other animals that are naturally inferior to human beings have any claim to this description..." (E.N. 1095a15-25) [1].

The comprehensive scientific analysis of the happiness is of great interest. In the works of many contemporary sociologists (Z. Bauman, F. Dallmayr, M. DiMatteo, M. Hagerty, R. Inglehart, S. Lyubomirsky, R. Veenhoven, P. Verne, and others) the concept of happiness is viewed from different angles, with an emphasis on various aspects of this phenomenon. Among Ukrainian scientists who have devoted their research to this issue, we can name, in particular, O. Balakireva, Y. Golovakha, V. Kryachko, V. Paniotto.

The concept of happiness reflects both psychological and socio-cultural aspects of human development. That is why the consideration of human happiness in the context of the problems of the life-world is perhaps one of the most promising ways in this direction. The fact is that the human's life-world is not just a combination of connections and relationships, fragments of human life. This is an organic combination of *objective* and *subjective* (aspirations and hopes, mental images and disappointments). The theory of the human's life-world is based on the understanding that a person exists and manifests itself simultaneously in several areas: in the sphere of everyday life, the sphere of spirituality, in the world of dreams and fantasies, in a socio-cultural environment, and so on. The intersection of these spheres in relation to an individual forms the life-world as a special continuum with spatiality and temporal characteristics¹.

The relevance of our research is due to the insufficient development of the concept of happiness as a social phenomenon. This problem takes on special significance in the context of the analysis of crisis phenomena in this or that society, including in Ukraine.

The object of our research is the concept of happiness as a sociological category. The *subject of the research* is the relationship of self-assessment of happiness among residents of Ukraine with Ukrainians' assessment of the economic and financial situation at different levels (both at the level of their households and at the level of the state as a whole).

The purpose of our study: to reveal the peculiarities of the feeling of happiness among Ukrainians (both at the national and regional levels) based on the respondents' self-assessments. *The main objectives of our study*: a) to trace some important empirical dimensions of happiness in contemporary sociology (primarily in Ukraine), while focusing on the question of the extent to which a person's ideas about his own happiness and well-being are related to the well-being of the society in which he lives; b) to analyze the results of the omnibus survey conducted by the Department of Sociology of the Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University in May 2018 in three regional centers of the Black Sea region of Ukraine (Mykolaiv, Odessa, Kherson) in the framework of the project of the Department, to test the hypothesis that the feeling of happiness among the residents of the regional centers of the Black Sea region is directly determined by both the level of personal economic and financial situation and the economic state of society. To achieve our goals, we used the secondary analysis method, as well as the questionnaire survey methodology.

But what is *happiness*? Thinkers of all times responded to it in different ways. For example, in the opinion of Victor Hugo, happiness is the belief that we are loved, moreover, such as we are. And according to Benjamin Franklin, the path to happiness lies in the fulfillment of our desires: "for happiness, one must either reduce desires or increase funds." Michael Argyle, one of the pioneers of the study of happiness in psychology, confirms that the concept of happiness is very subjective and depends on every person on many factors. At the same time, it is precisely established that happiness is a *socially determined category*: "Happiness, as well as mental and physical health, increases with the presence of certain social connections with the individual; with their loss and under the influence of other stressful situations, a state of depression occurs" [3, p. 6].

Already in classical and non-classical sociology of the 19th and early 20th centuries, "happiness" has been analyzed as the most important sociological category. At the same time, there were two main approaches to the understanding of happiness: positivist and relativistic. The first of these has been developed in the sociology of Herbert Spencer as the key to understanding the essence of social progress and its content. Spencer considered the happiness and well-being the merit of the individual himself. He argued this thesis in the best traditions of English classical liberalism [4, p. 33]. At the same time, Spencer recognized that the happiness and well-being of every person is an important indicator of the well-being and level of development of society as a whole. Spencer understood that a person's feeling of happiness or distress, as well as an individual's standard of living, are the

¹ According to the wording of the famous contemporary sociologist Zh. Toshchenko, "the life-world is the human's world, the world of people, the world of the human dimension, the existence and functioning of the human potential, the world of people's capabilities and their perceptions and reactions to changes in society, consequently, the readiness to understand, accept / not accept, facilitate / be passive / resist to the transformations carried out by society and the state" [2, p. 115].

most important aspects of the relationship and interaction between a person and the society in which he lives [4, p. 33]. In the sociology of Emile Durkheim, one of the most important indicators of happiness is a person's desire to live. So, in his work *The Division of Labor in Society* (Book 2, Ch. 1 entitled "The Progress of the Division of Labor and Happiness") the French philosopher criticizes the feeling of pessimism as opposed to optimism in the context of a person's attachment to life in an anomie. At the same time, Durkheim analyzes the connection between memory, hope, expectation, suicide and happiness [5, p. 237-241]. A new approach to the understanding of happiness (as opposed to the positivist approach), which can be called relativistic, has been emerged in the sociology of Pitirim Sorokin. According to Sorokin, happiness is connected with the problem of social progress, but is not directly determined by the latter. The principle of happiness is *basically subjective*, but also depends on objective factors [6, p. 507-512]. Sorokin was one of the first sociologists who considered happiness as a *socio-cultural phenomenon*, which depends on the dynamics of a socio-cultural nature, changes in the value system of individuals and the socio-cultural sphere in general.

So, already at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century the discourse of happiness took shape and was firmly entrenched in sociology. Both Spencer, Durkheim, and Sorokin, as well as many other prominent sociologists, understood very well how important this issue was in the context of analyzing the key problems of society. At the same time, already at the dawn of sociology, the study of happiness began to be considered something problematic, and happiness began to be traditionally perceived as a subjective concept, an expression of the complex of mental states of an individual. Many scientists began to be very skeptical about the possibility of an objective, comprehensive sociological analysis of happiness. So the "*problem of happiness*" arose in sociology. As modern British sociologist M. Cieslik notes, "it is not just the theoretical legacy of early sociologists that account for current scepticism about happiness research but also the way that happiness is often used as a vehicle for other arguments about the dark side of modernity. Hence to promote a greater sociological understanding of happiness we do need to disentangle the complex ways happiness is experienced in everyday life from the ways that happiness is deployed and often (mis)represented by many sociologists". [7, p. 434]. Cieslik, rightly urging the use of more diverse qualitative methods to study the life experiences of various people, at the same time calls into question the use of a *feeling of happiness* as the basis for constructing any kind of sociological conclusions². We cannot agree with this opinion. We are inclined to believe that the study of "feelings of happiness" is quite legitimate and promising from a sociological point of view. Our main argument is that the concept of "feeling" must be considered precisely in a sociological, and not in a psychological way. In contrast to the psychological approach, the sociological analysis of feeling as one of the most important emotions involves first of all taking into account empirical data, including statistics, as well as analyzing the wide social context in which the individual acts³.

In our time, sociology is not satisfied solely with the theoretical development of the problem of happiness. For a long time in different countries empirical studies have been conducted on this issue. R. Veenhoven, one of the most authoritative experts in this field, rightly noting the insufficiency of philosophical and cultural studies on this issue, draws attention to the fact that "in the 20th century, <...> new empirical research methods opened the possibility to identify conditions for happiness inductively and to test theories. This instigated a lot of research, most of which is embedded in the then newly established specializations of 'social indicators research', 'health related quality of life research' and more recently in 'positive psychology' and 'happiness economics'" [10]. Currently, measurements of the so-called "happiness indexes" are being carried out as objective indicators of the level of well-being of individuals and social communities, even entire nations. The most famous are the Happy Planet Index, which has been defined by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) since July 2006, and the Global Happiness Index of the authoritative sociological organization Gallup International. There are also other studies, for example: OECD Better life index, Legatum prosperity index. Note also that a special scientific *Journal of Happiness Studies* (founded in 2000) covering the study of well-being and happiness is currently being published⁴.

² M. Cieslik refers in his work to numerous 'thin' accounts of happiness, as, for example, in Frank Furedi (2004) and Sara Ahmed (2010). In the works of these authors, happiness is presented as a hedonistic feeling, as a 'good feeling'. In contrast to this approach, the author puts forward the need to consider happiness as "more enduring processes of flourishing (Eudaimonia)" [7, p. 423]. A. Sayer in his work (2011) also draws attention to the inability of hedonistic descriptions of "feelings of happiness" to convey the entire depth of the experiences, aspirations, hopes and value orientations of any individual [8].

³ We can refer to an article in an authoritative *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, which explains well why the analysis of emotions is so important for sociology: "Emotions arise in individual experience, frequently with noticeable physiological signs, such as a racing heart, flushed or pallid face, tense gut, cold hands, and so forth, and thus may seem an unsuitable topic for sociological examination. This attitude, however, reckons without the incontrovertible facts that most human emotions result from real, imagined, recollected, or anticipated outcomes of social interaction and that interaction is the fundamental stuff of sociological analysis. Thus emotions are empirically linked to the social by virtue of their being a consequence of involvement in interaction". [9, p. 772]

⁴ However, as noted by Veenhoven, "all this empirical research on happiness has not yet crystallized into a sound body of knowledge; <...> our understanding of determinants and consequences of happiness is still tentative and very incomplete" [10]. According to the author, the main cause of the problems lies in the insufficient development of methods for studying happiness: "To

Studies of happiness are carried out in Ukraine too.

So, Centre “Social monitoring” and the O. Yaremenko Ukrainian Institute for Social Research performed analysis of the transformation of value orientations of the population for the decade (from 1996 till 2006) in the frame of international studies World Values Survey (1996, 2006) and European Values Survey (1999). The results give us food for thought. Thus, “rating on a 10-point scale (where “1” is “completely dissatisfied” and “10” is “completely satisfied”), 64% of respondents chose a positive satisfaction with their life (from “6” to “10”). According to the 1999 survey, there were twice as many people (only 32%), and in 1996 – 20%. That is, despite all the complexities of the transformation period, the proportion of those who are satisfied with their lives is increasing. An important result is that 2/3 of the population consider themselves to be happy, which is far more than in previous polls” [12, p. 17].

In our opinion, in order to understand these results, it is necessary to take into account both objective factors (the economic situation of the state, the welfare of the region and the locality in which the respondents live, the situation on the labor markets, and so on) and a whole group of subjective factors. So, one of the most important subjective factors that positively influenced the “feeling of happiness” in 2006 compared with 1996, in our opinion, could be an increase in the birth rate in Ukraine. So, in 2005-2006, Ukraine got out of the “demographic hole” in which it had been for several years, and there was a positive dynamics in the birth rate both in the country as a whole and in individual regions⁵. According to the research of values in 1996-2006, which was mentioned above, it is *family values* that are central to Ukrainians in the hierarchy of values (for example, in 1996, 97% of respondents said that the family is a “very important” or “rather important” component of their life; in 1999 – 96%; in 2006 – 99%) [12, p. 12]. If we compare the demographic data of this period with the results of a study of values, we can conclude that the positive changes in the assessments of “feeling of happiness” among Ukrainians to a large extent could be associated with an improvement in the demographic situation in the country.

Interesting and in many ways unexpected results were obtained from the polls of 2017-2018. According to a survey conducted by Kiev International Institute of Sociology in 2017, “Crimea's annexation and Russia's actual aggression did not lead to a significant drop in happiness. It is estimated that by mid-2015, about 8,000 people were killed and about 18,000 were injured in the conflict. In addition, about 1.4 million people have become ‘internally displaced persons’. The level of welfare of the population has fallen significantly. Meanwhile, the share of happy people is 57% (excluding Crimea, but with the occupied territories of Donbass) and 59% without Crimea and without the occupied territories” [17, p. 90]. Leading Ukrainian sociologists have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that “Ukrainian society is ‘torn apart’ in several dimensions at the same time: the traditional conflict of generations intensified by the processes of transformation of the value system, property stratification has come into conflict with the stratification of the wealth of educational and cultural capital, cultural and historical territorial differences and territorial and economic inequality are fueled by political speculation” [12, p. 8]. In our opinion, it is precisely the *gap* based on territorial features and differences, as well as the lack of formation of national identity among residents of Ukraine who live in different regions, explain the fact that many people did not perceive the negative events of recent years in Ukraine as a personal misfortune.

The results of other surveys confirm our assumption that there are territorial gaps and imbalances in the perception of negative events in Ukraine in 2014-2018. For example, All-Ukrainian sociological research was conducted by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) on May 18-30, 2018 as a personal interview using a computer (CAPI-survey). Interviewed 2025 people over 18 years old in 108 localities in all regions of Ukraine (in areas not currently controlled by the Ukrainian government, the survey was not conducted). According to the data received, 63% of Ukrainians consider themselves happy or “rather happy”; 16% “partially happy, partially not”; only 17% are “unhappy or rather unhappy.” Compared to 2017, the number of happy people increased by 10%. According to sociologists, this is due to “some improvement in the material situation of the population: during the year, according to self-assessment, the proportion of non-poor people increased from 30% to 37%”. According to the authors of the survey, the main causes of happiness: age (the younger a person is, the happier he is), well-being and health status. According to the results, the level of happiness depends on the region of residence (for example, residents of the western regions feel “somewhat happier than the others”) [18].

Here we have the right to ask the question: “Are social processes really affect the feeling of happiness?” In our opinion, we should look for the causes of this feeling in the human’s life-world, in the human’s subjectivity. One of the main indicators is the extent to which the concept of happiness for an individual is

date, attention has been focused on statistical methods for meta-analysis, with little attention paid to the preliminary step of bringing the available research findings together” [10]. Veenhoven himself, as one of the most authoritative researchers of this subject, made a great contribution not only to the theoretical development of happiness, but also to the formation of a database for more efficient empirical research in this area [11].

⁵ We provide some statistics to confirm our thoughts. So, according to data from various sources, the number of births in Ukraine: 2000 – 385.1 thousand; 2002 – 390.7 thousand; 2006 – 460.4 thousand [13]. Birth rate (per 1,000 people): 2000 – 7.8; 2005 – 9.0; 2009 – 11.1 [14]. Fertility rate by age group of mothers (per 1 thousand women aged 15-49): 2000 – 30.6; 2006 – 37.5; 2009 – 43.1 [15]. The number of abortions in Ukraine (per 100 births): 2000 – 113; 2004 – 48; 2006 – 38 [16].

formed. According to the famous Ukrainian sociologist Yevhen Golovakha, “Ukrainians lack the right concept of happiness. < ... > The Ukrainian concept is very limited. It does not include what follows from most of the statements about happiness. < ... > Ukrainians, like everyone else, want happiness, but they first of all want happiness for themselves and their families. < ... > There is a very interesting phenomenon that follows from the research: Ukrainians have always been more satisfied with their personal lives and their welfare than the state of affairs in Ukraine and the state of its economy” [19].

According to the study, which was held from May 19 to May 25, 2018 by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, in conjunction with the Razumkov Centre Sociological Service, 86.6% of the polled are not members of any of the public associations, 5.2% are their members, 3.6 – members of trade unions, 2.8% – members of a religious association or community. In addition, only 35.5% of citizens know about public organizations operating in their cities or villages, 65.5% do not know about these organizations. Compared to 2013, awareness of local communities has increased slightly, only by 4%. Iryna Bekeshkina explains these results by forming a new type of paternalism in society, with regard to public organizations: “We do not trust the authorities, and we trust you, so take and do your job” [20]. The results of this survey confirm the fact that many Ukrainians do not associate their lives and their well-being with changes in the state. Many people simply seek to isolate themselves from the problems of the society in which they live. Therefore, they do not consider it necessary to take part in social events and various associations. Here we see widespread social apathy and symptoms of the growing atomization of Ukrainian society.

Most Ukrainians are still primarily concerned with their own problems and the problems of their family. Each resident of Ukraine creates his own concept of happiness and well-being. In our opinion, one of the main reasons for this situation is that the government, in fact, has long left a person and every family alone with their problems, isolating themselves from the needs of ordinary people. This is the main problem of the Ukrainian society, and for more than a quarter of a century it has only been aggravated. Evidence of this was the mass protests in 2004 and in 2013-2014.

This state of affairs is undoubtedly dangerous for the security of society, especially in conditions of external aggression. And to what extent is the feeling of happiness connected with the level of economic and financial well-being of the family and society as a whole among residents of a particular region? In May 2018, Department of Sociology (Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University) conducted a questionnaire survey in the 3 regional centers of the Black Sea region of Ukraine (Mykolaiv, Odessa, Kherson). The purpose of the study is to determine the socio-cultural aspects of the city’s security environment. This survey was carried out in the framework of the departmental research project “The effective functioning and development of the regional socio-cultural environment in the context of decentralization as a guarantee of the national security of Ukraine” (project manager – Professor I. Meyzhis). Sampling is multistage, zoning, probability-proportional-to-size, quota, representative by age, sex and place of residence of the respondents. We used the omnibus questionnaire method. 801 people aged 18 years and older (213 ones in Mykolaiv, 431 – in Odessa, 157 – in Kherson) participated in the poll. The permissible error is not more than 3.5%.

The questionnaire included 72 questions. We will analyze only those of them that are directly related to our topic. As a *working hypothesis*, we take the following: “The feeling of happiness among the residents of the regional centers of the Black Sea region is directly determined by both the level of personal economic and financial situation and the economic state of society.”

The survey gave these results:

Table 1

Self-assessment of the level of happiness

Do you consider yourself a happy person?	N	% of questioned
Yes	342	42.7
Rather yes than not	278	34.6
Rather no than yes	64	8.2
No	19	2.3
Hard to say	98	12.2
Total	801	100

Source: compiled by the author.

It can be seen from this table that most of the respondents consider themselves happy or “rather happy than not” (77.3%) and very few (about 2-3%) admit that they are frankly unhappy. At the same time, a significant part of the respondents (12.2%) could not assess how happy (or unhappy) they were. Perhaps this is due to the complexity and ambiguity of the concept of happiness. We see that the indicators of happiness in the Black Sea region as a whole coincide with the results of nationwide polls.

Table 2

Assessment of the feeling of happiness among residents of the three centers of the Black Sea region of Ukraine (% of the total)

Do you consider yourself a happy person?	Mykolaiv	Odessa	Kherson
Yes	31.9	47.1	45.2
Rather yes than not	38.5	30.6	40.8
Rather no than yes	10.8	8.1	3.8
No	3.3	2.3	1.3
Hard to say	15.5	11.8	8.9

Source: compiled by the author.

As can be seen from table 2, the data for the three regional centers differ slightly. The overwhelming majority of respondents in all regional centers consider themselves happy or rather happy than unhappy (in Mykolaiv 70.4%; in Odessa 77.7%; in Kherson 86.0%). In our opinion, these data can be explained both by psychological factors (optimism, a positive attitude towards the world, a life-affirming outlook) and by social factors (hope for improvements in society, a sense of positive changes, etc.).

Let us compare the respondents' assessment of their own happiness level with their assessment of the level of the economic status of their family (household):

Table 3

Self-assessment of the economic situation

Do you consider yourself a happy person?	How would you rate the economic situation of your family (household)? (% for each group)				
	Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
Yes	2.9	13.7	58.2	22.8	0.9
Rather yes than not	3.6	31.7	53.2	11.2	0.4
Rather no than yes	7.8	50.0	39.1	3.1	0.0
No	26.3	47.4	21.1	0.0	5.3
Hard to say	4.1	43.9	50.0	1.0	1.0

Source: compiled by the author.

As can be seen from table 3, the majority of respondents who consider themselves happy are satisfied with the level of economic status of their family or household (58.2%). At the same time, this level is considered "good" by significantly fewer happy people (22.8%), and a very small number (less than 1%) considers "very good". Approximately the same data was obtained by us in terms of the ratio in the group of respondents who consider themselves "more happy than not." Most of them (53.2%) are convinced that their economic level is satisfactory. However, in the group of respondents who do not consider themselves happy, the indicators are clearly different. Here, more than a quarter of respondents (26.3%) feel obvious dissatisfaction with their economic situation, and about half of them (47.4%) rate this situation as "bad".

It can be concluded that the residents of the region directly connect their feeling of happiness with the economic situation of their family. It is economic status that can be one of the main criteria that form a feeling of happiness.

Table 4

Subjective self-characterization of the financial position

Do you consider yourself a happy person?	Which confirmation is the most exactly corresponding to the financial position of your family? (% for each group)				
	We can afford to buy whatever we want	We can afford to buy some very expensive items	We have enough money for food and clothes and we can postpone something	We have enough money for food, but it is already difficult to buy clothes	We have enough money for food
Yes	2.0	12.6	39.5	34.8	11.1
Rather yes than not	0.7	6.8	34.5	45.3	12.6
Rather no than yes	1.6	3.1	17.2	54.7	23.4
No	0.0	5.3	0.0	47.4	47.4
Hard to say	2.0	9.2	27.6	49.0	12.2

Source: compiled by the author.

Based on the data in Table 4, we can say that the majority of respondents do not associate the feeling of happiness with personal enrichment or significant financial savings. So, only 2.0% of respondents who are convinced of their own happiness and only 0.7% of those who are “rather happy than not” are completely free financially and can afford to buy anything they want. Along with this, almost all respondents who do not consider themselves happy are noticeably constrained in financial matters (94.8%).

The last figure indicates a direct dependence of the feeling of happiness on the financial situation of the family, on the financial capabilities of a person. At the same time, the majority of the region's residents do not feel a special need for luxury and can be satisfied that they are not poor and do not feel acute financial problems.

Table 5

Assessment of the current economic condition of Ukraine

Do you consider yourself a happy person?	How would you define the economic situation of Ukraine? (% for each group)			
	Very bad	Bad	Satisfactory	Good or very good
Yes	33.6	43.3	18.1	5.0
Rather yes than not	39.6	46.0	11.9	2.5
Rather no than yes	45.3	39.1	14.1	1.6
No	73.7	21.1	5.3	0.0
Hard to say	43.9	42.9	10.2	3.0

Source: compiled by the author.

Table 5 shows that a negative assessment of the economic situation of a country does not directly affect a person's feeling of happiness. Thus, among the respondents who consider themselves happy, only 5.0% rate the level of the country's economic situation as “good” and the overwhelming number of “happy people” (76.9%) are dissatisfied with the economic development of Ukraine. And among the respondents who are “rather happy than not”, only 2.5% are satisfied with the economic level of Ukraine, and also the vast majority (85.6%) believe that this level is low.

Based on the data obtained in the course of empirical research, we can state that our hypothesis was only partially confirmed. Indeed, the feeling of happiness among residents of the regional centers of the Black Sea region largely depends on their personal economic and financial situation. At the same time, the economic level of the country does not affect or almost does not affect the feeling of personal happiness.

Conclusions

1. A comprehensive theoretical and empirical study of the phenomenon of happiness has long been conducted in sociology. The classics of sociology H. Spencer, E. Durkheim, P. Sorokin and others considered the analysis of happiness a very important and at the same time problematic task. In our opinion, the study of the “feeling of happiness” is quite acceptable and relevant in sociology. The question is, first of all, what methods should be used for this. As part of our study, we applied the secondary analysis technique in combination with the questionnaire method in the study of self-assessments of the “feeling of happiness” by Ukrainians. The complexity of the phenomenon of happiness consists in a high degree of subjectivity and multidimensionality. In our opinion, overcoming these difficulties may consist in further improving the methods of sociological analysis of happiness, in a skillful combination of quantitative and qualitative methods.

2. The data of some empirical studies of happiness conducted in Ukraine recently have been analyzed by us. According to the results, most people in our country feel happy. Some of the questionnaires recorded even a comparative increase in the number of happy people in comparison with the past. According to some surveys, three indicators are most influencing the feeling of happiness: age, personal well-being, and health. The number of “happy people” also varies by region. We can agree with the opinion of Y. Golovakha that the personal success and well-being of the family, rather than the general situation in the country, have a greater influence on the feeling of happiness among Ukrainians. This indicates the limited or unformed concept of happiness in Ukraine. Unlike our country, in Western societies, both personal and societal factors directly affect the feeling of happiness.

3. The results of the omnibus survey conducted by the Department of Sociology of the Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University in May 2018 in three regional centers of the Black Sea region of Ukraine (Mykolaiv, Odessa, Kherson) in the framework of the project of the Department “The effective functioning and development of the regional socio-cultural environment in the context of decentralization as a guarantee of the national security of Ukraine” confirmed the considerations outlined above. The majority of respondents answered yes to the question “Do you consider yourself happy?” The hypothesis of our study, which was based on the assumption that the feeling of happiness among residents of the regional centers of the Black Sea region is directly determined by both the level of personal economic and financial situation and the economic condition of society, was only partially confirmed. Between a third and a half of respondents consider themselves happy and only 2-3% admit that they are unhappy. At the same time, a significant part of respondents (12.2%) could not determine their level of happiness. The feeling of happiness is mainly influenced by the level of personal and family well-being. The level of economic development of the country does not have a decisive influence on this indicator. These results may indicate both a high degree of atomization of society and the distancing of people from the problems of the

state and society, as well as the unformedness of the concept of happiness among residents of Ukraine at present. Such a situation, in our opinion, creates threats and risks to preserve the security and stability of the socio-cultural sphere of the region and the country as a whole.

4. Theoretical and empirical development of the happiness problem is important and relevant in the situation of instability in the socio-cultural sphere of Ukraine. The concept of happiness, in our opinion, is one of the central categories, the content of which allows a deeper understanding of the human's life-world, as well as the specifics of the relationship between a person and society. The complexity and importance of the concept of happiness consists in the complex symbiosis of the personal and the social. The most important role in shaping the concept of happiness is played by the values and value orientations, as well as the psychological attitudes of the individual. At the same time, this concept reflects the depth and specifics of the world of modern personality as a space within which deeply personal and socio-cultural aspirations are intricately connected and intertwined, and the tendency to "inward movement" often fights against the tendency to "outward movement". In this context, we consider promising an in-depth analysis of socio-psychological and cultural factors influencing the feeling of happiness by a person, as well as conducting interdisciplinary research aimed at forming the concept of a "person of a transitional society."

For us, citizens of Ukraine, it is very important, in particular, to trace the interrelation of the formation of the life-world of an individual and the security problems of a regional society. It is important to understand the extent to which a person's happiness and well-being depend on the absence or minimization of threats and risks, primarily of a socio-cultural nature. This problem is especially relevant in transitional societies, in the context of transformations of the socio-cultural environment. Since the concept of "happiness" is directly related to the problem of meaning formation and the formation of values (and meanings, values and norms, as is known, constitute the core of culture), the results of our research contribute to the definition of the essence of happiness as a special cultural-creating phenomenon, as well as the role of happiness and vital well-being in the process of sense-formation and the formation of a socio-cultural continuum.

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Ощущение счастья в самооценках украинцев

Счастье рассматривается как важная социологическая категория. Начиная с Аристотеля, счастье традиционно концептуализировалось в европейской рефлексии как главная цель человеческой жизни, как результат развития человека (эвдемоническая трактовка). Вместе с тем, в истории социологии сформировалось упрощённое понимание счастья как субъективного комплекса ощущений (гедонистическая трактовка). В статье акцентировано внимание на актуальности проблематики счастья как предмета социологических исследований. Концепт счастья осмысливается как особо значимый, ключевой показатель, соединяющий в себе субъективные и объективные характеристики жизненного мира человека как неотъемлемой составляющей социума. Оцениваются современные эмпирические методики, которые позволяют выйти на новый уровень понимания роли счастья в жизни человека. Статья содержит результаты вторичного анализа социологических измерений счастья, проведённых в Украине в последние годы, в том числе в контексте изучения ценностей и ценностных ориентаций. Согласно результатам исследований, негативные события, происходящие в Украине в последние годы, не оказали прямого влияния на самооценки ощущения счастья, что может объясняться несформированностью «концепта счастья» у украинцев (Е. Головаха), а также превалированием семейных ценностей в общей иерархии ценностей. Публикуются и анализируются результаты анкетного опроса, проведённого на кафедре социологии Черноморского национального университета имени Петра Могилы в мае 2018 года. Согласно полученным нами данным, подавляющее большинство жителей трёх центров Причерноморского региона (Николаев, Одесса, Херсон) считает себя счастливыми людьми. Вместе с тем, ощущение счастья у жителей региона обуславливается в большей мере личными факторами и не связано непосредственно с благополучием общества, что можно расценивать как довольно опасную тенденцию, один из симптомов нарастающей атомизации общества.

Ключевые слова: счастье, благополучие, ощущение счастья, ценности, самооценки украинцев, Причерноморский регион Украины.

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