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Life Satisfaction and Risk-taking Behavior in Secondary Schools Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Life satisfaction involves cognitive component that allows evaluation of the life and accomplishments of life, and emotional component that includes an evaluation of emotions and mood that followed these accomplishments. **Goal:** To examine the life satisfaction of young people who attend secondary school, examine the level of satisfaction with life according to sex, to academic achievement, the presence of siblings and to examine the relationship between levels of life satisfaction and risk-taking behaviors. **Results and Discussion:** The results showed that there was no relationship between life satisfaction and preferences of delinquency, as well as life satisfaction and achieved academic success. The results confirmed the relationship between life satisfaction and sex as well as the relationship between life satisfaction and the presence of siblings in the family.

Keywords: life satisfaction, risk behaviors, adolescence.

1. INTRODUCTION

Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction relating to the global evaluation of life and cognitive component is considered to be subjective well-being, which makes it even more emotional component, or moods or emotions (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). In this article we will list some of the most theoretical interpretations of life satisfaction, as well as three standard models in explaining the assessment of life satisfaction (1). The aforementioned models explaining how people perceive subjective sense of wellbeing and life satisfaction (7, 8, 9, 10). The theory of end points based on the assumption that satisfaction is achieved basic needs, and vice versa, that unfulfilled needs leads to feelings of dissatisfaction and unhappiness. Theory of pleasure and pain are also associated with a feeling of satisfaction when fulfilling of needs, before which there was a deprivation. According to this theory, in order to attain a sense of satisfaction requires the prior existence of deprivation, and after the deprivation ends person reaches a sense of satisfaction. Associoanistic theory presupposes the existence of positive network that serves as the disposition of happiness, or the existence of positive network of associations and learned the ability to constantly reacting posi-

tively to the developments in the environment. In an attempt to scientifically explain what makes a person happy, many studies were conducted that have attempted to connect life satisfaction with features such as: age, gender, race, income, education level, or marital status (11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16). When talking about life satisfaction in function of gender, many studies show that there are differences in the quality of life in different gender groups. It seems that male respondents are more satisfied with life than women (16). Satisfied with life are high school students, students and people younger than 39 years, and it seems that with age life satisfaction decreases, so that in those older than 60 years of life satisfaction is lowest (1). However, despite the differences found it showed that these factors explain only 10-15% of individual differences in the assessment of subjective well-being (6). If we have in mind, it follows that nevertheless rewarding life to the fullest extent provided by external events and personality traits of the individual.

Risk behavior and juvenile delinquency

In the broadest sense, now the term delinquent behavior includes atypical behavior in a community. Or delinquency includes serious forms of anti-social behavior such as theft, robbery, beating, etc.

Behavioral disorders are often first noticed in school through non-compliance with school work and behavior. The most common forms of risky behavior in school are: hyperactivity, lack of concentration, intrusiveness, verbal aggression, physical aggression, lying, stealing, abandoning the family circle, smoking, alcohol consumption and drug abuse, negligence, lack of interest and emotional coldness.

When speaking about the causes of risky behavior, one of the most tested relationships is one that concerns the quality of family relationships and the development of risk-taking behavior. The most significant predictors associated with the occurrence of risk behaviors are related to disturbed family relationships, poor or lack of parent-child communication, poor parental involvement in the education of the child, parental antisocial behavior, etc. Also, the father's alcoholism was a highly significant predictor of occurrence of delinquent behavior, followed by an absence of parents and judgment of family members and promiscuous behavior of parents. Patterson (2002) developed a theory of coercion that advocates that early delinquent behavior is taught in the family through interactive patterns. The key reason for the early development of risk models is the model of coercion related to the conditioned responses to aversive behavior of others, usually parents. In this case it is possible to distinguish four steps that can later lead to delinquent behavior: a) imposing parent demands, b) a child at the request of parents replied by aversive behavior or arguing, yelling or demand c) a parent of the child to such behavior reacts by attempting to calm the situation or refuse it request and d) the child ceases to behave aversive or calm down. Families in which this form of communication often occurs can be a risk for child antisocial behavior in social relations (16). On the other hand, a key mechanism for the development of late delinquency is those taken by peers in situations with reduced parental supervision.

2. RESEARCH GOAL

- The main goal of this study is to examine the life satisfaction of young people who attend secondary school.
- Examine the level of satisfaction with life according to gender.
- Examine the level of life satisfaction with regard to academic achievement.
- Examine the level of satisfaction with life according to the presence of siblings
- To examine the association between levels of life satisfaction and risk-taking behaviors

2.1. Patients and methods

Sample

Participants in this study were young people who are students of the third year of high school Rizah Odzeckic in Zavidovici. The study included a total of 60 respondents of which 43 were female and 17 male.

2.2. Methods

The survey was conducted during March 2012 in high school Rizah Odzeckic in Zavidovici. Data were collected by the author. Individual time for survey was not pre-arranged but the test is conducted before, after or during classes.

To each participant was first explained the purpose of the trial, and then was distributed psychological measuring instru-

ments. Survey was anonymous and participants were asked for honesty in answering.

If necessary, participants were given an additional explanation or assistance answering question in the instruments. Participation in the survey was voluntary.

2.3. Instruments

For the survey the following instruments were used:

- General Information Questionnaire
- Assessment Scale for tendency to risky behavior
- Satisfaction with Life Scale

3. RESULTS

Testing differences in the level of satisfaction with life according to gender

Table 1 presents the main statistical indicators of the results from the test of life satisfaction with respect to gender.

Gender	N	M	SD
Female	43	3.66	.30
Male	17	3.94	.34
TOTAL	60	3.81	.32

Table 1. Means and standard deviations for the criterion variable life satisfaction in relation to gender (N = 60)

	Total
Mann-Whitney U	162.500
Wilcoxon W	1108.500
Z	-3.337
P	.001

Table 2 Results of Mann-Whitney test

Based on Table 2 it can be seen that the Z value is -3337 with the level of significance of .001, based on which we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents in assessing the level of life satisfaction.

Gender	N	Median
1- female	43	3.7647
2- male	17	4.0000
Total	60	3.8235

Table 3. The difference in median values for male and female respondents.

On the basis of table 3, we conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the assessment of general life satisfaction so that men (MD 4.00, N = 17) showed higher satisfaction with life than the female respondents (MD 3.76, N = 43).

Testing differences in the level of life satisfaction with respect to academic achievement

Table 4 outlines the mid-ranks of test results regarding life satisfaction in relation to academic achievement.

Academic achievement	N	Mean rank
Insufficient	6	25.67
Good	8	25.81
Very good	33	33.52
Excellent	13	27.96
Total	60	

Table 4. Mean ranks in the study of life satisfaction in relation to school performance

	Total
Chi-square	2.304
DF	3
P	.512

Table 5. Results of Kruskal-Wallis test

After examining the Table 5 it is clear that there is no statistically significant difference in the level of life satisfaction in relation to the predictor variable success in school. It follows that the young regardless of the success achieved in the school show the same life satisfaction. Although it was originally planned that the success significantly affect the experience of life satisfaction, such results in this study have not been confirmed.

Testing the level of life satisfaction according to the presence of siblings

In Table 6 outlines the mid-ranks test results of life satisfaction in relation to the presence of siblings.

Siblings	N	Mean rank
Only child	5	36.60
One brother or sister	46	32.28
More siblings	9	18.00
Total	60	

Table 6 Mean ranks in the study of life satisfaction in relation to the presence of siblings in the family

	Total
Chi-square	5.725
DF	2
P	.05

Table 7. Results of Kruskal-Wallis test

Based on Table 7 it can be seen that there is a statistically significant difference in the assessment of life satisfaction in relation to the presence of siblings in the family. To discover where the mean of dependent variable is higher, we will take a look at the following table.

Siblings	N	Median
Only child	5	4.1176
One brother or sister	46	3.8824
More siblings	9	3.6471
Total	60	3.8235

Table 8. The difference in the median value according to the presence of siblings

Based on Table 8, we conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the assessment of general life satisfaction so that only child in the family (MD 4.11) showed higher satisfaction with life than young people living with a brother or sister (MD 3.88), while the lowest life satisfaction showed young people living with more siblings (MD 3.64).

Testing the relationship between levels of life satisfaction and risk-taking behaviors

In order to obtain distribution on the scale of the risk-taking behavior, in examining this relationship was used Spearman's correlation coefficient.

	Tendency to risk-taking behavior
ρ	-.072
p	.584

	Tendency to risk-taking behavior
N	60

Table 9. Results of correlation between perceptions of life satisfaction and risk-taking behavior

By the analysis of the results shown in Table 9 it is clear that the relationship between the level of life satisfaction and risk-taking behavior is weak, negative and statistically non-significant ($r = -.0072$, $p = .585$).

4. DISCUSSION

Testing differences in the level of satisfaction with life according to gender

Based on the results, we conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the assessment of general life satisfaction so that men (MD 4.00, $N = 17$) showed higher satisfaction with life than the female respondents (MD 3.76, $N = 43$).

Our findings are consistent with many previously conducted studies. Group of authors Diener (1994), Diener and Diener (1995) and Argyle (1999) perceive gender differences in the experience of life satisfaction, according to which women have lower levels of life satisfaction, attributed to the traditional education of women. Traditional education of women involves a number of prohibitions, control and monitoring in the education of girls as compared to men. Often it is the traditional notions of dissatisfaction with life in men sign that they are not fitted into the previously prescribed gender roles. Similarly, the results of research conducted by the Michalson (1985) found that dissatisfaction with life estimates are often influenced by certain sociocultural conditions, rather than cognitive and emotional structure (14). It is important to stress once again that this study was done on a sample of adolescents at first and second year of high school in which period of life the physical appearance is very important, especially when it comes to girls. For boys are often tolerated some gaps in learning and behavior, while the parents of the girls often do not expect breaking the rules. It is possible that the same requirements exist when it comes to respect for the rules of behavior and learning, set by teachers which are different for boys and girls. If at the same time bearing in mind that the key predictors in determining life satisfaction, self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, and the absence of anxiety (Diener, 1984), we can conclude that they were significantly lower in girls than boys at this age.

Testing differences in the level of life satisfaction with respect to academic achievement

After examining the results obtained, it is clear that there is no statistically significant difference in the level of life satisfaction in relation to the predictor variable success in school. It follows that the young regardless of the success achieved in the school show just the same life satisfaction. Although it was originally planned that the success achieved significantly affects the experience of life satisfaction, such results in this study have not been confirmed.

The quality of school life, defined as a set of positive and negative experiences in school and other emotions associated with specific areas and the effects of school life (Leonard, 2002). This definition comes from the general model of quality of life, which assumes that the quality of life based on the general satisfaction, positive and negative feelings and satisfaction with specific aspects of life (Linnakylä and Brunell, 1996, Williams and Roey, 1996.). The quality of school life can be taken as an indicator

of students 'well-being is determined by factors related to the school environment, the educational experiences of students and students' involvement in school life (Karatzias et al., 2002, according to Roboteg-Saric et al., 2009). However no studies involving the quality of school life as an indicator of life satisfaction and self-image are not always consistent. For example, Byrne (1990) and Hamachek (1995) found a positive correlation between self-concept and academic success only if school performance and training young people consider important.

Testing the level of life satisfaction according to the presence of siblings

Based on the results, we conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the assessment of general life satisfaction so that only child in the family (MD 4.11) showed higher satisfaction with life of young people living with a brother or sister (MD 3.88), while the lowest life satisfaction showed young people living with more siblings (MD 3.64). Studies of life satisfaction and birth sequence are quite scarce and are mostly inspired by the now classic settings by Adler theory of personality. Written by Adler (1931) noted a certain tendency to differentiate into specific characteristics between the oldest, middle child and youngest child in the family. Firstborn child until the birth of another child is the only object of love and attention of parents until the birth of their second child. Second child, according to him, is more ambitious, more prone to rebellion, jealousy, but all in all better suited. The youngest child is spoiled and immediately after the eldest child has the best chance to become mismatched. The better results of firstborn child witnesses also the research by Zajonc-Marcus (1976) according to which the intellectual property, the development of each family member in the function of the intellectual development of all other members. Intellectual development of the oldest child is at an advantage because their environment is mainly composed of adult members of the family and its intellectual environment is superior to the intellectual environment of younger children. And a number of other research evidence that they are better for the firstborn children describing them as: independent, self-sufficient, as children, on average, with greater achievements, children which are prone to leadership and more informed by adults (13).

As well as in the studies mentioned above, the results of our research show a better position of single children compared to children who have a brother or a sister, and to the children who have more than one sister or a brother when we estimate life satisfaction.

Testing the relationship between levels of life satisfaction and risk-taking behaviors

By analyzing the results it is clear that the relationship between the level of life satisfaction and risk-taking behavior is weak, negative and statistically non-significant ($r = -0.072$, $p = 585$). It follows that there is no statistically significant relationship between life satisfaction and risky behavior. The connection by which the youth who perceived greater satisfaction in life are more prone to risky behavior, or vice versa is not determined. In the literature, it is possible to find a lot of studies that shows that young people who are prone to delinquent and risky behaviors are basically dissatisfied and unhappy, and that the tendency to delinquency is a sign of inability to cope with the new situation

due to lack of necessary life skills. Also, some other authors argue that the delinquency is basically hidden inferiority and outliers. We conclude that the results of our study confirm the original hypothesis, that there is no statistically significant correlation between life satisfaction and risk-taking behavior.

5. CONCLUSION

On the basis of this study and the results obtained, while bearing in mind earlier said hypothesis, we can conclude the following:

There was a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents in assessing the level of satisfaction with life so that males show greater life satisfaction than the female respondents.

There was no significant difference in the level of life satisfaction in relation to the predictor variable success in school. It follows that the young regardless of the success achieved in the school show just the same life satisfaction.

There was a statistically significant difference in the assessment of general life satisfaction so that only child in the family showed greater satisfaction with life than young people living with a brother or sister, while the lowest life satisfaction had young people living with multiple siblings.

It was not found statistically significant relationship between life satisfaction and tendency towards risky behavior.

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