

THE LEVEL AND INDICATORS OF HAPPINESS OF WOMEN SCIENTISTS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF BELARUS

SALAVEI Alesia

In Happiness And Contemporary Society : Conference Proceedings Volume (Lviv, March, 20-21, 2020). Lviv: SPOLOM, 2020. P. 222-224.

ISBN 978-966-919-593-7

SALAVEI Alesia

Master of Sociology

State Scientific Institution “Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus” (Minsk, Belarus)

THE LEVEL AND INDICATORS OF HAPPINESS OF WOMEN SCIENTISTS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF BELARUS

The category of happiness is a highly subjective concept that reflects satisfaction with life in general. Frequently feeling of happiness reduced to how much a person is satisfied with his life. In turn, life satisfaction should be considered as a complex subjective assessment by a person of various aspects of his life and life in general.

Based on the results of the sociological research “Social well-being of women scientists of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus”, conducted in 2017, we will consider the level and indicators of happiness for women scientists. The sample of the research is 450 women. The maximum sampling error at a significance level of 0.05 was $\pm 4.2\%$, which allows extrapolating the data from a sample research to the general population of women scientists from the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NAS of Belarus). According to the controlled attribute “scientific degree” 13 doctors of sciences (2.9%), 120 candidates of sciences (26.8%) and 317 researchers without a scientific degree (70.3%) were interviewed.

Most women (67.3%) feel happy. Every eighth woman (12.1%) does not feel like that. Almost every fifth (19.1%) found it difficult to assess her own happiness. Happiness index of women scientists working in academic science is quite high – 0.68, based on the grouping of indices by quartile intervals. One indicator of the International Happiness Index is subjective satisfaction of people with life. The overwhelming majority of women scientists (81.0%) are more or less satisfied with their life in general, only one in ten women (10.0%) is not satisfied with it, and 9.0% found it difficult to assess. It should be noted that there are 20.5% more women scientists satisfied with their lives than in 2016 (60.5%). While those who were not satisfied with their lives decreased by 15.3%, in 2016 there were 25.3%.

The level of material well-being, one of the main components of which is the size of salary, can affect state of happiness. The feeling of happiness does not depend on satisfaction of women scientists with the size of their salaries ($p > 0.05$). Among those who are completely satisfied with their salaries, 69.3% of women are happy. While among those who are completely not satisfied with their salaries, 59.2% of women feel happy.

Social optimism, reflecting a person’s state, which is characterized by a positive perception of reality and confidence in improving life in the future, is one of important indicators of social well-being. In order to assess the level of social optimism of women researchers, it was ascertained with what mood they look to the future. Every third woman (33.7%) looks to the future with hope and optimism, almost every second woman (49.4%) – calmly, but without much hope and illusion. 8.3% of women look to the future with anxiety and uncertainty. Only 1.0% of women feel pessimistic, and looks to the future with fear and despair. 7.6% of women were not sure with a prospective

assessment of their mood. In assessing the level of social optimism, differences are observed depending on the age of the women. Thus, proportion of those who look to the future with hope and optimism is higher among women under the age of 29 years (50.0%) than 30-49 years old (31.0%) and over 50 years old (17.3%). The differences are 50.0% and 31.0%, 17.3% are statistically significant: $\phi * emp = 3.394$, $\phi * emp = 5.371$, $\rho < 0.001$.

Assessing the perception of the prospects for quality of life is an important indicator of the level of happiness. For this purpose, the respondents were asked the question “In your opinion, how will your life and the life of your family change in the coming year?” (figure 1).

22.4% of women hope to improve their lives to one degree or another. According to 12.6% of women, their lives will become worse. Nothing will change in life for 27.6% of women. Most women (37.4%) expressed difficulty regarding their life prospects. Moreover, the assessment of life at the moment compared with last year is not so optimistic. 34.6% of women felt the worsening of life to one degree or another (including 27.6% began to live slightly worse, 7.0% began to live much worse). According to 38.6% of women, nothing has changed in their life, everything remains as before. Improvement in their lives was noted by 17% of women (including 14.2% began to live a little better, 2.8% began to live much better). Every tenth woman (9.9%) found it difficult to evaluate her life.

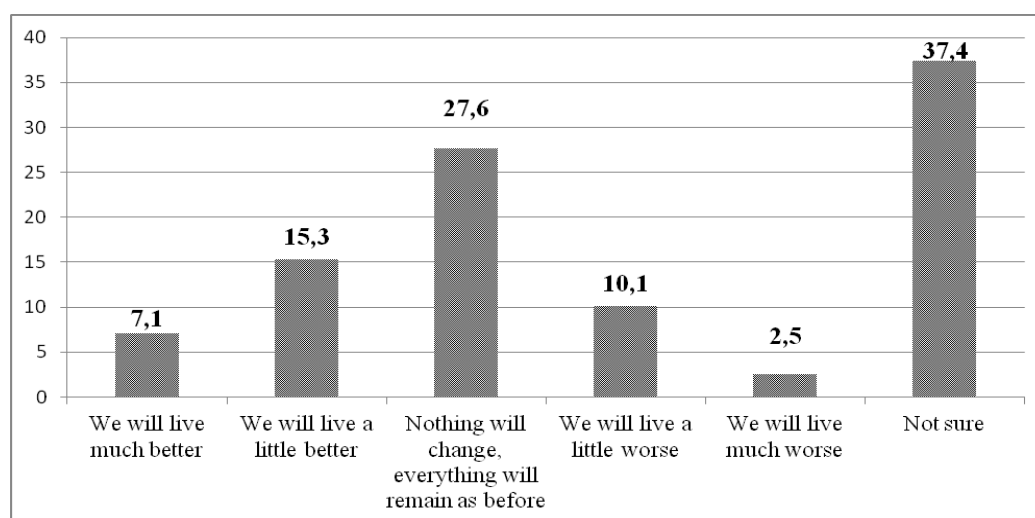


Figure 1. – Assessment by women researchers of quality of life and life of their families in the coming year (in%, in the whole sample)

One of the components of happiness is an emotional state as a generalizing characteristic of feelings experienced by a woman. Assessment of the emotional state reflects the overall emotional mood of the woman, which affects the level of social well-being. For this purpose, the respondents were asked the question in which they suggested choosing one of the positions: “Which of the following feelings do you usually feel at present?” (see figure 2).

Calmness	45,9	54,1	Anxiety
Interest in life	90,6	9,4	Indifference to life
Joy	75,1	24,9	Sadness
Optimism	74,8	25,2	Pessimism
Self-confidence	73,4	26,6	Lack of self-confidence
Confidence in the future	35,1	64,9	Uncertainty about the future
Readiness for change	74,7	25,3	Fear of change
Stability	42,2	57,8	Instability

Figure 2 – Feelings experienced by women most often at the time of the survey (in %, in the whole sample)

Thus, women scientists feel happy, are self-confident and ready for change, but look to the future calmly, without much hope and illusion. They are optimistic about life and have an interest in it. Moreover, women lack confidence in the future and the greatest concern is their level of salaries. At the same time, financial situation and salary levels are not key indicators affecting the level of happiness for women scientists.