

## HAPPINESS OR QUALITY OF LIFE? OR BOTH?

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### ABSTRACT

**Aim.** The aim of the article is to look for an answer to the question of whether it is worthwhile to deal only with happiness and to leave the exploration of quality of life as something which is not viable, or if it makes sense to deal with both phenomena. If so, what is the relationship between them? At the same time, we ask ourselves whe-



ther happiness and quality of life are perceived equally by people and are therefore interchangeable.

**Results.** The answer is also confirmed by measuring the number of published articles monitored in the Web of Science. The quantification of happiness and quality of life implies that their correlation is high but not so high that they can be identified as the same. At the same time, if happiness and quality of life are different phenomena, it makes sense to deal with both.

**Method.** The research was conducted using the face-to-face interview method.

**Conclusion.** Happiness and quality of life, in terms of attention given to them by researchers, are quite different. We think mistakenly that they are the same on account of the preponderance of impression given to happiness in public space.

**Key words:** happiness, quality of life, conceptualisation, measurement, relationship

## INTRODUCTION

Over the recent decades, the quality of life research has been experiencing a boom resulting in new areas of research such as immigrants (Williams et al., 2015), people in socially excluded localities (Murgaš & Drápela, 2020), professionals (Galiana et al., 2020) and others. Scholars monitor the quality of life, well-being and happiness whereby the quality of life is identified according to demographic criteria. These are usually age, education, marital status, health and employment; confidence and a sense of security are also monitored. There is a clear correlation between the quality of life and certain criteria such as education, health and confidence. For age groups nationwide, the quality of life has a U-shaped curve with the lowest values for people aged over 50 years. The lowest values are prone to change, which, in 1975, turned out to be people aged 40 (Blanchflower, 2021).

One of the most significant current demographic processes in developed countries is, on the one hand, a decline in the birth rate below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman, on the other hand, the growth of the population over 65 years of age. This growth is the result of many factors, the most important of which is the improvement of health care and the consequent increase in life expectancy.

New areas of research, including the quality of life of elderly people, can be described as an extensive expansion of the scope of quality of life, in other words "in width." We believe that quality of life research – if it has the ambition to provide valid information for public policy – must focus more on the development of its epistemology, and thus its intensive expansion "in greater depth." Our contribution to the development of quality of life epistemology is its comparison with the phenomenon of happiness, which is currently receiving increased attention.

Interest in researching and measuring the quality of life has grown since the end of the twentieth century and other concepts related to it, such as life satisfaction, well-being or happiness, although there are reservations about

happiness because it is elusive (Oishi et al., 2013). At present, however, increasing attention is paid to the phenomenon of happiness, not only in the public space but also by many authors (Oishi et al., 2013; Seligman, 2002; Veenhoven, 2015). Many handbooks have been released (Bruni & Porta, 2016; David et al., 2014), happiness is included in the *Key Ideas* series by Routledge (Greve, 2012) and also in *A Very Short Introduction* by Oxford University Press (Haybron, 2013). In addition to the *Journal of Happiness Studies*, several other magazines focus on happiness.

Happiness also entered the public debate. Bent Greve (2012) uses the term “policy of happiness.” The right to the “pursuit of happiness” known in the American Declaration of Independence as one of the three “independent rights” was anchored in the constitutions of other countries (Claus & Morilas, 2018). The accompanying phenomenon of these processes is that happiness has become a vague concept without a clear anchor. In the broadest sense happiness as an umbrella term includes everything that is good (Veenhoven, 2015).

With the growth of prosperity in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the interest in quality of life and happiness is growing, as reflected by the number of articles that the authors from these countries dedicate to (Brdar, 2011; Hašková et al., 2021; Ira & Andráško, 2008; Jakubcová et al., 2016; Kobylarek, Alaverdov et al., 2021; Kobylarek, Plavčanet al., 2021; Mandič & Hlebec, 2018; Murgaš, 2019; Petrovič & Murgaš, 2020a; Petrovič & Murgaš, 2020b; Petrovič, Vilinová et al., 2021; Podzimek, 2019; Rossoshanskii, 2018; Slavuj Borčić & Šakaja, 2017; Tkáčová et al., 2021).

So is it now more important to deal with happiness and its scientific study than dealing with quality of life? Is researching the quality of life already a dead-end activity? Does the current obsession with happiness express the hedonism of contemporary society, is it therefore a natural by-product? Or is it just a trend that will inevitably subside sooner or later? The aim of the article is to look for an answer to the question of whether it is worthwhile to deal only with happiness and to postpone examining the quality of life as something outdated, or whether it makes sense to deal with both phenomena. If so, what is the relationship between them? Are they two different phenomena or are they both the same? To answer these questions, we intend to outline the conceptualisation of happiness and quality of life and their quantification. Determining whether happiness is more important than the quality of life, or vice versa, is not an end in itself, the outcome should be reflected in public policy objectives.

In relation to good life, quality of life and related phenomena of happiness, well-being or satisfaction with life are concepts known to involve criteria for their enhancement. One of the first to be published on the subject in 1990 was *Flow* (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008); others are *Psychological Wealth* (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008), and *Art-of-Living* (Schmitz, 2016). Martin Seligman is the author of two books – *Authentic Happiness* (Seligman, 2002), later changed into *Flourish* (Seligman, 2013).

According to Bernhard Schmitz (2016), in the study of quality of life, well-being and happiness, it is important to distinguish between their predictors and the criteria for achieving them. In the article we do not deal with how to achieve a good life or how to be happy nor do we deal with predictors of good life and happiness and the criteria for achieving them. Exploring the sources of quality of life and happiness is a goal for psychologists. We are focusing on the outputs of happiness and quality of life, the measurement of their spatial differentiation and the implications arising from it. In geographical research, the phenomenon of happiness is only rarely given attention (Ballas & Dorling, 2013; Petrovič & Murgaš, 2020a; Petrovič & Murgaš, 2020b).

## OUTLINE OF CONCEPTUALISATION OF HAPPINESS

Just as most people are happy with their lives, it also applies that most people are happy (Diener & Diener, 1996). What is happiness? It is a feeling. It is conceptualised by several authors (Haybron, 2011; Haybron, 2013; Oishi et al., 2013; Seligman, 2002; Veenhoven, 2015). Depending on what aspect the authors conceptualise, their outputs can be divided into two groups – psychological (Haybron, 2011, 2013; Seligman, 2002) and sociological (Veenhoven, 2015). Happiness has two parts and three dimensions. The parts are emotions and mood, on the one hand, and mood propensity, on the other hand. The three dimensions are made of (a) attunement, linked with peace of mind, confidence, and expansiveness, (b) engagement, related to vitality and flow, and (c) endorsement, connected with feeling happy and other classic emotions. The weight of these dimensions varies from one culture to the next, with Americans preferring endorsement or engagement. On the other hand, attunement is more important for Asian cultures. Happiness is defined as “to be happy is to have a favourable emotional condition” (Claus & Morilas, 2018, p. 45).

Ruut Veenhoven(2015) bases his conceptualisation of happiness on the following assumptions: (a) happiness is a judgment on the quality of life in the form of a degree, (b) happiness affects only an individual, a happy nation does not exist, (c) happiness is subjective, something such as “objective happiness” does not exist, (d) happiness concerns life-as-a-whole, not individual aspects of life like family or work.

In evaluating his life, a person uses two sources of information – affects and thoughts, so by considering the result it is possible to discuss three kinds of happiness: encompassing judgment in the form of overall happiness, an affective component in the form of “hedonic level of affect” and a cognitive component in the form of “contentment”. An affective component is the “balance of positive and negative affects,” whereas the cognitive component consists of the “difference between desire and reality.” This conceptualised happiness is a “satisfaction with one’s life as a whole” (Vennhoven, 2015, p. 32).

For centuries, the term “happiness” was at the heart of philosophers’ discussions about a good society and good life (Greve, 2012). Happiness can have two meanings, the first being “state of mind”. In this case, happiness is a psychological matter, as well as pleasure or depression. The second meaning of happiness is “life that goes well for the person leading it” (Oishi et al., 2013, p. 3).

At present, the concept of happiness is booming, not only in social sciences, but also in the public space (Noll & Weick, 2010), but interest in it is archetypal. The origin of interest in happiness has been found as far back as the sixth century BC in the Far East (Ballas & Dorling, 2014). Aristotle dealt with happiness in antiquity; at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, Bentham formulated the idea of securing the greatest happiness of the largest amount of people as the meaning of life (Burns, 2005). Yuval Harari (2014) considers happiness from a historical point of view.

According to Veenhoven (2018) researchers in the 1960s started showing interest in investigating happiness. The problem with contemporary society is in its approach to happiness, everyone wants to be happy.

If people who lived in past centuries could see how we live today, they would say that we live in paradise. But why do hardly any of us think we live in paradise? Because our happiness does not depend on objective conditions in which we live but on our expectations. These have developed with the evolution of our internal biochemical system (Harari, 2014). In science, an increase in the importance and weight of the phenomenon of happiness has been a result of the “science happiness” concept (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008; Haybron, 2011; Ryff & Morozink Boylan, 2016).

Happiness is a short-term emotional state in which one experiences the greatest fulfilment of one’s expectations. In the measurement of life satisfaction using the 0-10 Cantril scale, it represents the number 10 and the happiness took a degree of “very satisfied” on the Likert five or seven-degree scale. The feeling of happiness after it has passed is reflected in life satisfaction (Petrovič, Vilinová et al., 2021). If we accept that happiness is an expression of 10 on a 0-10 scale, it means that happiness is the goal of human life. Is it so?

The question of optimum happiness is dealt with by Shigehiro Oishi et al. (2007) who ask the question: “How much happiness is enough?” In today’s hedonistic society, happiness ceases to be enough, and so the desire to be very happy, extremely happy or ultra happy emerges. However, this is a potentially very dangerous trend because it is associated with risky behaviour and substance misuse. The authors claim that the same level of happiness that would be optimal for every person does not exist. The optimum degree of happiness varies among individuals depending on their value priorities and personality dispositions, which are largely determined genetically. At the same time, the perception of happiness is conditioned culturally.

The complexity of happiness research is evidenced by cultural-geographical differences in the spatial differentiation of its understanding (Petrovič, Vilinová et al. 2021). Extensive research into happiness in different cul-

tures over the centuries has shown that happiness has been associated with good luck and favourable external conditions. In contemporary American English, the understanding of happiness is changed into favourable internal feeling states (Oishi et al., 2013).

Germans, Russians, Japanese and Norwegians associate happiness with being “lucky,” but Americans, Spanish, Argentineans, Ecuadorians, Indians and Kenyans do not. The analysis of the definitions of happiness in dictionaries of thirty countries also shows differences within one language. The American English language dictionaries’ definition of happiness includes luck and fortune while the Australian English dictionary does not. There are also differences within continents. In European languages, Germanic (German), Romance (French), and Slavic (Polish, Russian) the term “happiness” evokes a rare state in comparison with the English which contains a wide range of positive feelings. In the United States, Jews report more happiness than American Buddhists. Descriptive differences are important not only from a linguistic point of view. In countries where the definition of happiness is not based on luck and fortune, people declare a higher degree of happiness compared to countries where happiness includes luck and fortune (Oishi et al., 2013).

Meik Wiking (2016) connects the Danish *hygge* phenomenon with the feeling of being cosy; a feeling that we are well. The Dutch use the word *gezelligheid* to express such feelings, Germans *Gemütlichkeit*, Norwegians *koselig*, and Canadians *hominess*. The difference between the Danes and the Dutch is that the Danes associate *hygge* primarily with home and autumn, but the Dutch *gezelligheid* is away from home and during summer. For Germans *Gemütlichkeit* expresses solidarity and a relaxed atmosphere, its symbol being Oktoberfest. According to Norwegians, *koselig* cannot be confused with cosiness because it expresses a sense of intimacy and belonging, experienced in relation to others. On the contrary, Canadians’ *hominess* is strongly tied to their home, they have this feeling when they come home and close the door. It follows from these simplified examples that in understanding happiness as the feeling that we are well, there are differences not only between civilisations (individualistic and collectivistic) but also within one, individualistic civilisation. It does not mean that measuring happiness at the level of nations makes no sense, it means that one hundred percent certainty that “it is so” can be taken from the measured data.

Much more important than “feeling happy” is “being happy” (Haybron, 2013). Happiness is part of a good life and a good society (Greve, 2012; Haybron, 2013). At present, attention is paid to the paradox of happiness, meaning that we do not gain happiness by striving for it, but it comes as a by-product or added value to living a good life (Martin, 2013). Luigino Bruniani and Pier Porta (2016) deal with an analysis of the happiness paradox and its relationship to the hedonic treadmill and satisfaction treadmill.

Kenneth Land et al. (2017) describe the relationship between happiness and income using the term happiness-income paradox. Seligman (2002) calls the hedonic, usually short-term happiness as momentary happiness. Accord-

ding to Daniel Haybron (2013), hedonic balance expresses the predominance of positive feelings over negative feelings. On the other hand, eudaimonic, usually long-term happiness that cannot be gained by striving for it, comes as a by-product of living a good life. Seligman (2002) denotes it as an enduring level of happiness.

One of the best-known is Veenhoven's definition of happiness: "Overall happiness is the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his/her own life-as-a-whole favourably. In other words: how much one likes the life one leads" (Veenhoven, 2015, p. 389).

A serious statement in relation to happiness was pronounced by Sonja Lyubomirsky (2008). According to her, an individual's behaviour can affect 40% of his happiness, 10% is affected by environmental factors and 50% are genes that a person cannot influence. According to them, 36 to 56% of the quality of our lives is passed on genetically. The internal setting, set point, is based on the psychological set-point theory (Easterlin, 2006; Fujita & Diener, 2005; Lucas, 2007). The set point of each of us manifests itself in the fact that we react differently to the same stimuli. This is related to the process of hedonic adaptation, meaning the psychological adaptation of an individual to a serious event, positive or negative. This finding was generally accepted, so it was called the "iron law of happiness" (Easterlin, 2006). Some researchers (Easterlin, 2006; Lucas, 2007) dispute this finding by saying that during the most serious life changes, such as the death of someone close, loss of job, etc., the process of hedonic adaptation does not work for everyone in the same way. It means that hedonic adaptation is distinctly individual.

In examining happiness, the question arises as to whether happiness increases with income growth, Greve (2012) considers it central questions for policy of happiness. While according to some authors, in richer countries there is a higher level of happiness (Helliwel et al., 2020), other authors suggest that, for example, in Nigeria, there is the same level of happiness as in Japan or Italy, and in Ghana, there is the same level of happiness as in Sweden or the United Kingdom.

The problem with happiness research is that causal relationships are not unambiguous (Greve, 2012), in other words, it is not clear what the causes and the effects are. In the article, we understand happiness as an emotion expressing affection for satisfaction with life. It is not synonymous with quality of life or satisfaction with life. Happiness is connected with a joyful state of well-being and can be measured. Happiness is an emotion formed by the affective component of the quality of life. In the paper, we define happiness as the highest achievable well-being.

Adam Kozma et al. (1990) divide happiness into two categories:

- short-term; accompanied by external manifestations such as shouting, waving hands, or;
- long-term; typical examples may be a reciprocated falling in love, recovering from a serious illness that in many cases might have ended in death, or the birth of a child after several years of waiting, etc.

## OUTLINE OF THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF QUALITY OF LIFE

The concept of quality of life expresses how we evaluate goodness in our lives (Theofilou, 2013). Most people in the developed world are satisfied with the quality of their lives. It is reported that on a scale of 0-10, people in the world's most developed countries score 7.0-7.5 for life satisfaction. According to Ed Diener and Carol Diener (Diener & Diener, 1996), in almost 90% of the 43 countries in the world for which representative data is available, people are more than likely to be satisfied with their lives.

Several authors conceptualise quality of life (Phillips, 2006; Rapley, 2003) including authors that deal with Health Related Quality of Life (Kaplan & Ries 2007; Schalock, 2004). There are fewer articles or books dealing with the conceptualisation of quality of life in comparison with application-oriented studies. The consequence of this is methodological divergence and terminological chaos. Studies focusing on one of the indicators are published as focusing on the quality of life, and the quality of life is commonly associated with well-being, happiness or provision of amenities.

Some authors' conceptualisations are focused on the dimensions of quality of life – psychological well-being (Ryff & Singer, 1996), subjective well-being (Diner & Lucas, 1999), well-being (Estes & Sirgy, 2018; Tov, 2018) or quality of place (Mandič & Hlebec, 2018). According to Martin Veenhoven (2015), “The term ‘quality of life’ suggests that all merits can be integrated in one final scale of worth. This is not the case. The term is merely an umbrella for different notions of what is good” (p. 42).

Several factors are important in relation to the quality of life:

- in the subjective and objective dimensions, the quality of life does not arise, it just is. The ability to evaluate one's own life is created in the process of childhood development and ceases to exist at death;
- another important fact is that it is created by the development of social relations in society and the development of its capital – social, cultural, political, symbolic;
- to evaluate the quality of life of an individual, its axiological anchorage is of great importance; in other words, the problem of quality of life is a problem of values (Kaplan & Ries, 2007; Mandič & Hlebec, 2018; Tsai et al., 2016).

Lyubomirsky (2008) formulated a similar view on the influence of individual genes on one's happiness, in relation to the quality of life. According to them, 36 to 56% of the quality of our lives is passed down genetically. We are sceptical about the possibility of accurately quantifying the influence of genes on happiness or quality of life because we assume significant individual differences on an individual level. For this reason, we are inclined to determine the influence of genes in the form of value ranges.

In this article, we conceptualise the quality of life as a holistic assessment of how good an individual's life is according to him/her. When one expres-



ses himself about the quality of his life, he evaluates it, either verbally or on a prescribed scale. Quality of life assessment is a cognitive activity expressing the degree of satisfaction with it.

Quality of life consists of two dimensions, subjective, also called well-being and objective, also called quality of place (Murgaš, 2019). The subjective dimension expresses satisfaction with life, Tanja Van der Lippedefines it as: "Satisfaction with life as a whole refers to subjective well-being and constitutes a cognitive, overall judgement" (2014, pp. 56-57). The objective dimension expresses the degree of satisfaction with the spatial conditions for living a good life. In developed countries, positive assessment of life in the form of well-being prevails.

For this reason, well-being is identified by some authors with the quality of life, which is a mistake. It can be simply illustrated – if well-being were the same as quality of life, what would ill-being be? We pointed that well-being is an expression of positive satisfaction with life. It is not quality of life. Satisfaction with life is determined by a questionnaire survey.

Several authors (Burton, 2014; Murgaš & Klobučník, 2016; Tripp, 2007) combine the term "quality of life" with the quality of a place. This dimension expresses external material conditions in which people live their lives. The place is of good quality if its parameters allow the experience of living a good life. Both dimensions are unequal; the subjective dimension is more important for the quality of life. At the same time, however, the objective dimension is important as is proven by migration to places with a better quality of life. This takes place in the context of developed countries, while in the context of developing countries this takes the form of migration to big cities.

Even economic migration or the process of moving educated people, especially to the United States, known as "brain drain," confirms the importance of the quality of the place. People voluntarily migrate to places of higher quality, not the other way around. The quality of the place can be ascertained from statistical data, or by a questionnaire survey focussing on satisfaction with the place. A holistic approach to exploring the quality of life, including exploring their two dimensions, is rare.

## IS HAPPINESS MORE IMPORTANT THAN QUALITY OF LIFE?

In search of an answer to this question, we outlined the conceptualisation of both as a first step. For the second step, we used the Web of Science database and compared the number of papers named "quality of life" with the number of works that had "happiness" in their title. In June 2020, there were 107,452 works on "quality of life" and 7,742 with the word "happiness" in the title. Examining the quality of life has a longer tradition as a study of happiness, so we have subsequently limited the number of works to the last 5 years. As of 30th June 2020, searching the Web of Science showed 41,038

works on “quality of life” and 2,898 works about “happiness” in this period. The most cited article on the Web of Science over the past five years with the term “quality of life” called “The development of walkability index: application to the Neighbourhood Quality of Life Study” (Frank et al., 2010) has 468 citations. The most cited article containing “happiness” in the last five years is called “The happiness-income paradox revisited” (Easterlin et al., 2010, Easterlin, 2005) which has 321 citations on the Web of Science. It can be deduced from this that researchers, unlike the general public, pay much more attention to the quality of life as happiness, even in the last five years.

If we want to achieve a valid result in dealing with happiness and the quality of life at the same time, it is necessary to explore their relationship at the beginning. It is unclear and there are contradictory statements included. Happiness is sometimes considered a synonym of quality of life or well-being, respectively as mutually interchangeable. Contrary to that, Adam Okulicz-Kozaryn (2015) has unequivocally rejected the identification of happiness and quality of life with his statement “happiness is not the quality of life”. Greve (2012) adds utility to happiness and quality of life as equivalent concepts, and he considers welfare, which he identifies with economic wealth, as a wider concept. Happiness and life satisfaction similarly are combined with the concept of “psychological wealth” by Diener and Robert Biswas-Diener (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). They define it as “true total net worth, and includes your attitudes towards life, social support, spiritual development, material resources, health, and the activities, in which you engage” (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008, p. 34).

We agree with David Bartram (2012), Seligman (2013,) or Okulicz-Kozaryn (2015) that happiness and quality of life are not equal and not interchangeable. Happiness is part of well-being (Bruni & Prota, 2016; Haybron, 2013; Layard, 2006), which, together with ill-being, creates a subjective dimension of quality of life. At the same time, quality of life is a cognitive construct, unlike happiness, which is an affective construct (Hall, 2014; Minarovičová, 2018; Sirgy, 2012).

The question of whether happiness is more important than the quality of life can be answered from a psychological point of view. Happiness is a matter of “feelings”, and quality of life is a “matter of judgement” (Haybron, 2013). The answer to the question is that happiness is not more important than the quality of life; both are important, although the quality of life is more important because it includes happiness, well-being and ill-being. Therefore, quality of life is holistic but happiness is not. These qualitative statements will be valid when confirmed by measurements.

## METHODS AND RESULTS

We measured happiness, quality of life and quality of the place in the region of Northern and Central Bohemia (N 1255) in 2020. Out of the total

number of respondents 619 were men and 636 were women. We were interested in the over 18 age category. In addition to trying to get as close as possible to the ideal state of 50 percent men and 50 percent women, we strived for a balanced representation according to education and age.

The research was conducted using the face-to-face interview method. Variables of happiness, quality of life, and quality of place were reported by the respondents on the Cantril scale of 0-10, values of happiness, quality of life and quality of the place of men and women are provided in Table 1. The measured range of 7.57 to 7.95 means that happiness, quality of life and quality of place are high in the reviewed region, with happiness slightly higher than quality of life and only slightly higher than the quality of the place. Women report happiness, quality of life and quality of place slightly higher than men.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive statistics*

<i>Whole sample</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
Quality of place	1255	7.61	1.73
Happiness	1253	7.89	1.52
Quality of life	1255	7.82	1.49
<i>Women</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
Quality of place	636	7.66	1.71
Happiness	634	7.95	1.55
Quality of life	635	7.9	1.36
<i>Men</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
Quality of place	619	7.57	1.74
Happiness	619	7.82	1.5
Quality of life	620	7.74	1.6

Source: own research.

Table 1 shows the average variables of the quality of place, happiness and quality of life divided over the whole surveyed group, and specifically men and women. A detailed overview of reported values of variables is provided in Tables 3 and 4.

These statements are in line with the published results of the Czech Republic's happiness survey (Table 2) in European Values Study (Rabušic & Chromková Manea, 2018). At the same time, the measured values are in accordance with the results of life satisfaction measurements in 2018 published by the Centre for Research of Public Opinion at the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic on the sample of 1096 respondents. According to them, in December 2018, 15% were (I) very satisfied, (II) 53% satisfied, (III) neither 21% satisfied nor dissatisfied, (IV) 10% dissatisfied and (V) 1% very dissatisfied (Bartram, 2012).

**Table 2**

*The overall feeling of happiness of the inhabitants of the Czech Republic according to European Values Study 2017*

Experiencing happiness per percentage of the inhabitants				
	Very	Quite	Not really	Not at all
Sum	18	72	10	1
Men	16	73	10	1
Women	20	70	10	1

*Note:* The difference from the sum of 100 is due to rounding.

Source: modified according to Ladislav Rabušicand & Beatrice Elena Chromková Manea (2018).

The trivial statement that people are content with their lives is confirmed by my measurement. The number of respondents, both men and women (Table 3) show above-average satisfaction (7-10 on the Cantril scale) with their happiness, quality of life and quality of place far exceeding the number of respondents, satisfied on average (4-6 on the Cantril scale) and below average (0-3 on the Cantril scale).

**Table 3**

*Below-average, average and above-average variables*

Rating	MEN			WOMEN		
	Happiness	Quality of life	Quality of place	Happiness	Quality of life	Quality of place
Below average	1.1 (7)	1.3 (8)	2.4 (15)	1.3 (9)	0.6 (4)	1.9 (12)
Average	13.6 (84)	14.3 (89)	18.4 (114)	11.5 (73)	11.6 (74)	19.2 (122)
Above average	85.3 (528)	84.4 (523)	79.2 (491)	87.2 (554)	87.8 (558)	78.9 (502)

*Note:* The number of respondents is given in brackets.

Source: own research.

A more detailed view of the structure of variable evaluation is provided in Table 4. We mention the number of respondents who rated each variable on the Cantril scale with the highest value. The number of respondents who, on the contrary, rated the variables with the lowest value of 0, is not mentioned, because their count was negligible.

**Table 4**

*The number of men and women who expressed happiness, quality of life, and quality of place on a 0-10 scale value of 10*

Number of respondents who rated the variable with the highest value of 10				
Variable			Men	Women
Happiness			70	79
Quality of life			64	63
Quality of place			79	97

Source: own research.

Quality of life values according to age groups are in Table 5. Quality of life values increase with age up to the group of 71 years and older when they fall to the lowest measured level. This means a fundamental difference compared to the finding of David G. Blanchflower (2021) on quality of life values according to age groups in the form of the U curve. František Murgaš (2019) explored the differences in measured values of quality of life in the Czech Republic.

**Table 5**

*Quality of life values on a scale of 0-10 according to age groups*

Age groups	Quality of life
18-27	7.3
28-40	7.4
41-54	7.5
55-70	7.8
71 +	6.8

Source: own research.

The correlations of variables are shown in Table 6; we use verbal expressions of correlations from David De Vaus (Layard, 2006). The table shows correlations – high between happiness and quality of life, and there is a medium between happiness and the quality of a place as well as the quality of life and the quality of place.

**Table 6**

*Correlation of variables of happiness, quality of life, quality of place*

Variable	Happiness	Quality of life	Quality of place
Happiness	1	0.63***	0.31***
Quality of life	0.63***	1	0.33***
Quality of place	0.31***	0.33***	1

Note: Significant to: \*\*\*p<0.001.

Source: own research.

The value of the correlation between happiness and quality of life 0.63 is high, but not so high as to be close to the correlation “near perfect” (Layard, 2006); in other words, it is not high enough for us to interchange happiness and quality of life.

If the claim is that happiness and quality of life are the same, i.e. they are interchangeable, then the happiness and quality of life of the respondents would have to be equal or close to 100 percent. Table 7 reveals how our measurement turned out.

**Table 7**

*The number of respondents who rated happiness and quality of life equally on the Cantril scale*

Rating happiness and quality of life equally	Men	Women
Number of respondents total	619	636
Same rating absolutely	274	310
Same rating in %	44,3	48,7
Of which the same rating value 10	40	44

Note: Significant to: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

Source: own research.

The number of respondents who rated their happiness and quality of their lives equally (by any number from the Cantril scale including number 10) is below 50%. This statement, as well as the statement of the correlation of the two variables listed on the previous page, is a quantification of the knowledge that happiness and quality of life are not the same and therefore cannot be identified. The result of measuring happiness and quality of life is knowledge: the qualitative assessment of the phenomena of happiness and quality of life, resulting from their conceptualisation, was confirmed by measurement.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of our paper was to answer the scientific question of whether happiness is more important than the quality of life. It follows whether it only makes sense to deal with happiness and discard the quality of life as obsolete, or whether it makes sense to deal with both phenomena. From the outline of conceptualisation of happiness and quality of life follow a few, in our opinion fundamental findings:

- happiness and quality of life are not the same, these are two different concepts that are not interchangeable;
- happiness is affective, and quality of life is cognitive. While the quality of life is holistic and has a subjective and objective dimension, happiness is only subjective;
- happiness is part of the quality of life, more precisely part of well-being;
- if we use the number of citations in the Web of Science as the level of interest for scientists, researchers are more concerned with the quality of life as happiness; the opposite impression, however, is caused by the frequent use of the term happiness in a public space.

The measurement of the quality of life of happiness on the Cantril scale showed the following results:

- most people do not identify in the same way their happiness and quality of life. The number of men and women who rated their happiness and

quality of life equally was lower than fifty percent. The correlation of measured values of happiness and quality of life - 0.63 - is high, but not so high that we can identify happiness and quality of life;

- the declared values of happiness of men and women differ minimally;
- the correlation between happiness and quality of life with the quality of the place is moderately high.

The answer to the questions at the beginning is: happiness and quality of life are not the same.

Their correlation is naturally high, similarly correlating with the quality of the place, but they cannot be identified. Happiness is part of the quality of life as well as well-being and ill-being. Therefore, the term quality of life is meaningfully “superordinate” to the term happiness. But at the same time, if happiness and quality of life are different phenomena, it follows that it makes sense to deal with both.

Today, we are witnessing major economic, health and social changes and significant restrictions on mobility caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all over the world. The impact of the pandemic on quality of life or happiness is addressed by many researchers, many of them researched the situation at the beginning of the pandemic (i.e. referred to as the first wave) (De Vaus, 2002; Dwidienawati et al., 2021; Murgaš & Petrovič, 2020; Pavlíková et al., 2021; Petrikovičová et al., 2021; Spurný, 2019; Tkáčová et al., 2021). Many researchers were interested also about the continuation of the pandemic (i.e. referred as the second wave) (Kurzahls et al., 2021; Long, 2021; Petrovič, Murgaš et al., 2021; Vojteková et al., 2021). The World Happiness Report 2021 also pays attention to the pandemic.

Published findings have contradictory results. František Murgaš and František Petrovič (2020) report the continuation of the growth of the quality of life in the Czech Republic during the first wave of the pandemic. Petrovič, Murgaš et al. (2021) measured the growth of happiness values in the regions of Central and Northern Czechia. According to Jonas Kurzahls et al. (2021) who focused on a skin cancer patient, the Covid-19 pandemic did not significantly affect the overall quality of life. In contrast, Diena Dwidienawati et al. (2021) state that 58 percent of Jakarta’s Indonesian population reported a deterioration in life satisfaction and happiness. It is a great challenge for researchers focused on quality of life to explore whether this contradiction is the result of knowledge of the culturally conditioned experience of quality of life (Murgaš, 2019; Urzua et al., 2012).

## CONCLUSIONS

In the article, we focused on two phenomena – which are currently being paid a lot of attention by researchers and in the public space – happiness and quality of life. We were also interested in the values of quality of life

according to age groups in Czechia. Their course is significantly different from the course reported by Blanchflower (Blanchflower, 2021). Frequent use of the terms quality of life without adequate development of its epistemology results in it being considered an umbrella term for everything that is good (Veenhover, 2015), or shibboleth. To the term happiness, which contemporary society is obsessed with, there are also reservations, it is called elusive (Oishi et al., 2013). The introduction of new terms such as quality of happiness does not contribute to the validity of the results of research on happiness.

The only effect of methodological divergence is increasing terminological chaos. As a result, happiness and quality of life are considered by some scientists to be the same, while others say that quality of life contains happiness and others say that quality of life is part of happiness. The goal of the article was formulated as a search for an answer to the question of whether it is worthwhile to deal only with happiness, or if it still makes sense to deal with the quality of life as well. Another question is: does it make sense to deal with both and, furthermore, what is the relationship between them? Are they two different phenomena or are they both the same? To answer the questions, we wanted to work out the outline of conceptualisation of happiness and quality of life and their quantification.

The answer to the questions posed in the introduction is: happiness is not given more attention by researchers as the quality of life, the reverse is true. The misleading impression is caused by the attention given to happiness in the public space. Happiness and quality of life are not the same. Their correlation is naturally high, similarly correlating with the quality of the place, but they cannot be identified. Happiness is part of the quality of life, specifically its subjective dimension, which is often identified with well-being.

Therefore, the term quality of life is semantically “superordinate” to the term happiness. But at the same time, if happiness and quality of life are different phenomena, it follows that it makes sense to deal with both. We found that the measured values of quality of life according to age groups in the Czech Republic differ significantly from the values in the form of a U-curve, as explores Blanchflower (2021).

From the point of view of formulating public policy goals, it is important to accept that the quality of life and happiness are determined genetically by approximately one-half. It follows that public policy is supposed to help live a good quality life, including happiness as part of it, but it must not have the ambition to provide it. We do not consider the quality of life to be an umbrella term or shibboleth; on the other hand, we do not consider it to be a scientific term either. This can only happen if there is an adequate development of the epistemology of quality of life, including happiness as part of it.



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