

QUALITY OF SENIORS LIFE IN SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTEXT

KVALITA ŽIVOTA SENIOROV V SOCIOLOGICKOM A PSYCHOLOGICKOM
KONTEXTE

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Abstract

Quality of human's life in general and application of life quality on chosen group of seniors is study subject of various scientific disciplines. This is a complex system of heterogeneous interactions, which are influencing seniors life quality attributes in varying degrees and at different intensities, which an affected senior can perceive subjectively, which creates space for research of subjective view on life quality or we can research seniors life quality through objective view, which demands measurable tools. Methods of researching life quality may vary depending on scientific discipline, which is researching em. In mentioned post we deal with sociological and psychological ponímaním of life quality. We apply qualitative research, method of studying relevant sources and documents.

Key words: quality of life; senior; lifestyle; sociological viewing; psychological viewing.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the term life quality is hidden all that comes from human perception, and not only as bio-psycho-social being, but also as a being (a creature) with a cultural and spiritual dimension. It is possible to apply basal life quality for the whole nowadays population, which is relevant for the whole population and at the same time, it is the starting point for quality of life. Unlike quantity of human life, which can be expressed exactly by the age with

numbers, or by age category, similar expression can not be applied to expression of life quality. Various factors, various simultaneously and in different intensity of relation to the uniqueness of every human being, influence quality of humans life, including senior one(s). The surrounding in which the one occurs has often essential influence on quality of life. It is important to mention, that even the genetic equipment of an individual has some influence on quality of life, which an individual can not influence. This opens up new possibilities for his personal growth and progress, but at the same time, it can be bothelized, or even eliminated. Genetic equipment of man is important factor influencing not just physical health and the fitness of human, but also his mental health and psychosomatic tendencies. Author duo Dvořáčková and Kohoutek also range to the other factors declared attributes, way of life and one's lifestyle, which are closely involved with quality of life (2010). In our present post we are discussing psychological and sociological pontification of life quality in more detail.

2 MAIN PART

The author Balogová warns us, that the term *life quality* use to be confused with the term, the manner of life, life grade and lifestyle in specialistic and in common terminology. By Tokárová human will understand content of the term the best when his life situation will change significantly (2002). Underlying change for the senior is retiring. It changes his so-far social position and with this change changes of his so-far values are closely connected. Those are the values, which gave meaning to his life so far, such as e.g. employment/career, job relationships; simultaneously in many cases the senior has not created new relationships yet whether they are only part of his visions. Senior's attitude ought to be orienting on creation and application of new norms and on his personal activity, with which (s)he'll fulfill own imaginations about quality life (Tokárová, 2002).

Various scientific disciplines take care of researching life quality, whereby their researchs differ in the focus of their research. Psychology, medicine and demography focus on the awareness of the actual and objective life situation of individuals. Sociology and ethnography focus on learning how these individuals live. Ecology, geography, political science, economics and cultural studies are the subject of an assessment of objective conditions for a living. At the same time, the current disciplines of sociology and social psychology deal with the actual, individual and group perceptions of all the above. In practice, these are studies that are largely devoted to particular living individuals or social groups. When mentioning objective life quality, this term is understood as measurable life conditions and achieved life level of one or occupancy (Heřmanová, 2012).

2.1 Sociological thinking of senior's life quality

Sociological perception of quality of life can follow the attributes of social success, social status, lifestyle, household equipment, education, property, and so on. The importance of sociological understanding of the quality of life of seniors is also indirectly borne out by the words of Bočáková, who writes that most seniors want to preserve mental well-being and good physical fitness up to a high age. It supposes to have interests and keep up with ones own family, have a circle of friends and keep in touch with local company (2016). This means that social contacts and social interactions between the individual and his / her surroundings are very important, in many cases they are key to the standard quality of life of seniors.

Also studies on the impact of certain social and health programs on the quality of life of the population in a particular area are of a sociological nature. (Abbate, Giambalvo, Milito, 2001). The author Balcar draws attention to the meaning of life, about which he writes: „*The notion of the meaning of life is also closely related to the quality of life. He was primarily involved in psychotherapy by Viktor E. Frankl and has become a fundamental starting point in approaching human problems in the direction we call logotherapy and existential analysis.*“ (2005). Frankl thought it was just a sense of life that every man desires, at a conscious and unconscious level. The sense of meaning and value of their own existence is not to be perceived in absolute meaning, this feeling arises in a particular situation in the practical life, for each person it is different and specific - that is true of the particular situation. This feeling Frankl marks as „*to make the best of it*“, which means for a person the choice of the best option in a particular situation.

A lifestyle is an important part of the sociological concept of the quality of life of seniors. This can be characterized by general social conditions. These conditions determine the quality of life and the way people live in society - that is, members of society. Based on a lifestyle, we can evaluate general social processes such as, for example, representation and proportion of individual activities in the life of an individual or social group, representation and proportion of manual and intellectual work. Vojtovič adds that, in this respect, lifestyle is an important indicator of the quality of life of people in society, as well as the quality of life of individual personalities (2002).

The individual's lifestyle influences the individual's economic status, but also the economic status of society as a whole. For seniors, a major economic and then financial change is the departure of old age or early retirement. On how individual management has a significant impact on its value equipment. For example, if the family is the most important for a woman, this affects her way of life and her lifestyle. Raising the standard of living of an

individual or his family, his or her standard of living does not automatically mean that the individual or his family is happier. This is confirmed by the words of author Jandásek, who agrees with our statement (2009). Greffen, author of the University of Oxford, argues that from a macro-sociological point of view it appears that the health of the population in mature peoples is not better than in countries where the smallest difference between the income of the poorest and the richest (2001).

At the same time, values are involved in the way people live, and they are influenced by a number of factors, education, family background, life experience, age, society etc. These values are differentiated into individualistic, success, self-determination, the desire for personal happiness, money and collectivism, justice, tolerance, anti-fascism. The second classification divides the values into liberal - independence, freedom, and conservative - traditions, religion, family. Payne reminds us that life-style determinants like, for example, health, gender, age, political orientation can be seen as a value (2005).

2.2 Psychological understanding of life quality

The quality of life from a psychological perspective can be perceived and understood from several points of view. It can be an attempt to achieve life satisfaction, in which research focuses on what makes people happy. At the same time, it examines what factors contribute to satisfaction and to what extent. By contrast, factors that prevent a person's satisfaction, represent some obstacles, or are necessary to overcome, so that an individual can achieve a sense of life satisfaction. These obstacles and complications can also be explored. Other research is geared towards finding information about experiencing subjective well-being. In such cases, emphasis is placed on a general assessment of the quality of life of a person. Veenhoven refers to the subjective aspect of the quality of life as a happiness (2011). An important part of health is personal well-being, which we also call well-being. Czech author Kebza us, however, in his publication, points out that while this concept has levelled off custom, which combines well-being with a dimension of mental well-being – this designation, but the term is not, and therefore recommends the use of the indication of the „*personal well-being*“ (2005).

Current psychology focuses on two main approaches, namely on happiness, life satisfaction and the experience of positive emotions, and the development of human potential. In the context of well-being therefore well-being in psychology, distinguishes between two different fundamental concepts that are related approaches – SWB and PWB. SWB is the first approach that comes from the hedonistic aspects of life, which are for example happiness, joy,

positive mood or life satisfaction. In the field of research quality of life this has been the approach preferred in particular in the fifties and in the sixties of the 20. century. Later, he was criticized by humanistic psychologists, in whom he could read excessive hedonistic perspective. In particular, there was promoted the view that personal well-being means more than enjoyable experiences of their own social position, of fulfilled desires, the successes and even with a little bit of inborn optimism (Blatný, 2008). As a reaction to the criticism of the concept of SWB emerged the concept of the PWB, which we refer to as eudaimonic well-being, in English referred to as eudemonic well-being. This naming is related to Aristotle's designation of bliss – eudaimonion, in which the emphasis on the selfactualization, personal growth and meaning in life. To this point signed up psychologists as Ryffová, Keyes, Ryan, or DeciLitres -. It is about the current humanist psychologists, who in their researches were based on selfactualization of the previous humanist psychologists such as A. Maslow, stages of development, according to E. Erikson and conceptions of maturity of the G. Allport.

3 CONCLUSION

One of the oldest definitions of the term *quality of life* is considered the definition of health, which was presented and adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948, agreeing that „the health is not just absention of illness or disease, but it is a complex state of physical, mental and social well-being“. Universal definition of life quality has not still been defined yet. Various authors represent their own definitions, possibly editing, spreading or copying other author's definitions. Various scientific disciplines understand and interpret quality of life differently. Quality of life and indicators, which influences it are the subject of various scientific disciplines' research, they represent interdisciplinary problem. There is also a place for also economy, philosophy, demography, politology, ethics, medicine, religionistics and ecology. The interest of several scientific disciplines on the research of the quality of human life, including senioros just confirms the meaning and seriousness of this problematic. In the higher mentioned post we were dealing with the sociological and the psychological notion of life quality based on target seniors group. While sociology characterizes seniors quality of life on the background of social status, social fruitfulness and above all of the style of life, psychology orients on the life satisfaction and factory influencing it.

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