

The Role of the Recipes for Life in Formation of the Sense of Satisfaction with Life

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SUMMARY: *This article presents the result of author's research. Its aim was to give an answer to a question if the attitude of people to the recipes for life they have is related to their sense of happiness, to the sense of satisfaction with various spheres of life and with their anticipation concerning future affairs. Eight hypotheses about relation between dependent and independent variables were formulated but only in one case zero hypothesis was rejected in favour of alternative hypothesis. In author's opinion the reason is that the presented hypotheses and the whole way of thinking about functioning of man by which they were supported were not right. She suggested different forms of dependencies between the analyzed variables.*

Introduction

The aim of the research taken up by us - the results of which are presented in the following article - was to give an answer to a question, if the attitude of people to the recipes for life they have is related to their sense of happiness, to the sense of satisfaction with various spheres of life and with their anticipations concerning future affairs.

The formula of the article demands that we should subordinate ourselves to the editorial limitations. At the same time we should not give up precision and clarity of the expression. Hence the following considerations will proceed according to the strictly defined order. It will be opened by the presentation of the two notions constituting the entire conception: the notion of recipes for life and the notion of happiness. Then we will describe the research procedure. In this description we will include such elements as: chosen variables, hypotheses, a group examined, methods of collecting empirical data, and statistic operations on the data. The article will be

closed by the discussion of the obtained results and by a short reflection on their meaning.

Recipes for life

Recipes for life have been defined as convictions of obligatory character produced or accepted from the social environment which answer to the following questions: a) how should life be lived, b) how one should act in the situation of choice in order to achieve a success in life.

The notion of recipes for life is a new notion in psychology. The idea to create it appeared under the influence of studies on psychological conceptions of human life. It turned out that considerations of the aims of human life and means leading to realization of the recipes were essential elements of such conception. Also the analysis of related categories became an impulse for introduction of this notion. It led to the conclusion that, though recipes for life had many features which are common with norms of behavior (Znaniński, 1992), cognitive schemes (Trzebiński, 1985), Operation Net (Reykowski, Kochańska, 1985), orientation in surrounding (Lewicki, 1960), tasks (Gertsman, 1987), still it could be identified with none of these notions. Finally the ultimate confirmation of usefulness of this notion was the process of the research itself. The examined people have no difficulties in using the category and in referring it to their own life experience.

Sense of happiness

For the needs of the research the sense of happiness was defined according to Wł. Tatarkiewicz's definition of happiness. According to this definition happiness is such an attitude towards life which determines active struggle with adversities and aspiration for the values important for the subject. Its manifestation is subjectively felt as positive balance of experiences finding its expression on the cognitive level (positive evaluation of one's life and prospects) and on emotional level (predominance of positive affects) (Tatarkiewicz, 1979).

The choice of the category of happiness was not accidental. We have to be aware of the fact that on one hand scientists unanimously ascertain that the sense of happiness is a desired state influencing the entire functioning of man and they invest a lot of effort to find out what determines achievement of happiness. On the other hand in colloquial opinion happiness is often the most desired, value which is believed to have the greatest influence on the shape of human life. This entitles us to assume that, because attitudes of individuals to recipes for life differentiate them as far as the sense of happiness is concerned, recipes have an important regulatory function in the life of man.

Independent variables

There is a possibility of concentrating on various aspects of recipes for life in the moment of planning the research - these recipes have a definite contents and form, people have a different attitude to them. In the case of this research the latter factor became the main object of interest. Two dimensions of the attitude of an individual to his/her recipes were taken into account and they were defined as independent variables. These were :

1. the degree of identification with the recipes;
2. the estimation of probability, that the behavior consistent with the recipes leads to success (in short it was named the variable of probability attributed to the recipes).

Dependent variables

Choosing dependent variables we attempted to go beyond the general category of happiness. This gives basis only for drawing conclusions connected with overall man's evaluation of events which concerns the current convictions and dominating emotional state. It does not allow to include multidimensional picture of human life in the formulated conclusions.

In order to widen the area of the accessible considerations including at least the most basic dimensions of human life, indicated by the time perspective and by various areas of commitment we decided to introduce three dependent variables. They were :

- 1) the level of happiness generally felt;
- 2) the level of presently felt satisfaction with various spheres of life;
- 3) the level of expected satisfaction with various spheres of life.

Hypotheses

Eight hypotheses concerning relations between the given variables were formulated. Their function was to explain the problem suggested in the beginning of the article. These were not hypotheses based solely on the scientific intuition. It turned out that certain basic mechanisms of functioning of man suggested what level of happiness and satisfaction might be displayed and predicted by a man possessing various levels of identification with the recipes and a man possessing various estimation of probability that behavior consistent with the recipes will lead to success. Many indications referring to this problem are contained in the theories and results of empirical researches concerning: compulsive behavior (Horney, 1982), coping with difficult situations (Reykowski, Kočańska, 1980), process of alienation (Korzeniowski, 1983), estimation of probability of success (Jarymowicz, 1983), the role of the support sources (Czapiński, 1985), attitudes towards adversities of life (Zaleski, 1991; Koziński, 1988), the sense of control and causality (Kofta, 1991).

Unfortunately the framework of the article allows only to present hypotheses alone, without further discussion of what is the basis for these formulas. For the greater clarity we will present them in a graphic form.

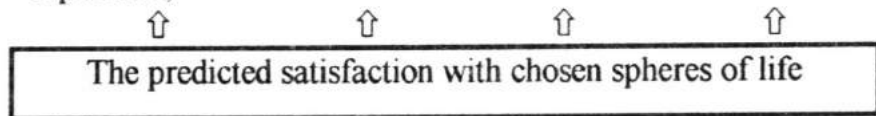
1. 3. The scheme of relations between variables

HYPOTHESES ABOUT RELATION OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLE TO 3RD DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The higher the level of probability of success in case of behavior consistent with recipes is estimated, the higher predicted level of satisfaction with the spheres of life, where they have no experience,

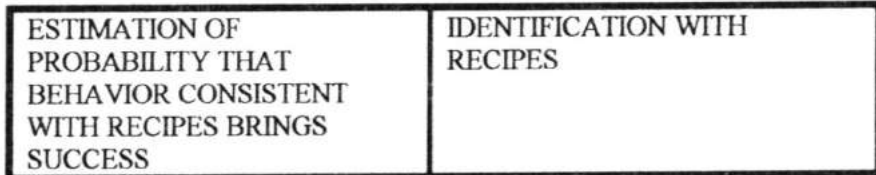
The higher identification with recipes is, the higher the level of predicted satisfaction with the spheres life, where they of have no experience,

3RD DEPENDENT VARIABLE CATEGORIES OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLE



HIGH LOW HIGH LOW
 ↙ ↗ ↙ ↗
 EXTREME EXTREME

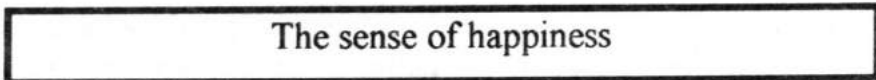
INDEPENDENT VARIABLE



CATEGORIES OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

EXTREME AVERAGE EXTREME AVERAGE

1ST DEPENDENT VARIABLE



HYPOTHESES ABOUT RELATION OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLE WITH 1ST DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Persons estimating the level of probability of success in case of behavior consistent with recipes as average have higher level of the sense of happiness than persons estimating it as extremely high or low.

Persons having average level of identification with recipes have higher level of the sense of happiness than persons having extremely high or low level of identification.

2ND DEPENDENT
VARIABLE

The current sense of satisfaction with chosen spheres of
life



HYPOTHESES
ABOUT RELATION
OF INDEPENDENT
VARIABLE WITH
1ST DEPENDENT
VARIABLE

Persons estimating the level of probability of success in case of behavior consistent with recipes as average have higher level of current sense of satisfaction with various spheres of life than persons estimating it as extremely high or low



Persons having average level of identification with recipes have higher level of current sense of satisfaction than persons having extremely high or low level of identification

3RD DEPENDENT
VARIABLE

The predicted sense of satisfaction with chosen spheres
of life



HYPOTHESES
ABOUT RELATION
OF INDEPENDENT
VARIABLE WITH
3RD DEPENDENT
VARIABLE

Persons estimating the level of probability of success in case of behavior consistent with recipes have higher level of predicted satisfaction with the spheres of life where they have experience than persons estimating it as extremely high or low.



Persons having average level of identification with recipes have higher level of predicted satisfaction with the spheres of life where they have experience than persons with extremely high or low identification level

The presented scheme suggests that one variable - the predicted satisfaction with the chosen spheres of life - was treated in a different way than others. In fact, considering functioning of a man - who is described by the various values of the variable - situations has been divided into those when his anticipation concerns the spheres of life, in which he has certain definite experience and those when his anticipation concerns the spheres, in which he has no experience (e. g. he is talking about his image of marriage and professional work and he is a student and not married yet). The division into these two situations was followed by introduction of different categories of independent variables. It has its justification in the conceptions mentioned before and in psychological laws, which suggested formulation of such set of hypotheses.

Methods

Measurements. In the research, in order to collect the needed empirical data, two tools were used:

- 1) the scale of the quality of life by S. Kowalik

2) the scale of measurement of the chosen recipes for life by the author of the article

Applying the scale of S. Kowalik we can measure three dimensions of the sense of the quality of life, which in the conducted research had the role of dependent variables. These are the following:

1. Measurement of the current sense of satisfaction with 15 spheres of life

The spheres were marked by the letters from A to N. Each of them could be evaluated according to the scale of 7 points. Number 1 on each scale stood for the very low level of current satisfaction with the sphere of life, which was in focus. Number 7 on each scale was the very high sense of the current satisfaction with that sphere of life.

The coefficient of the current satisfaction with the given sphere of life was a number on a corresponding scale chosen by an examined person.

2. Measurement of the predicted satisfaction with 15 spheres of life

In case of this measurement the same 15 scales were used. Number 1 stood for a very low level of the predicted satisfaction with the given sphere of life and number 7 stood for a very high one. The coefficient of the satisfaction with the given sphere of life was constituted by a respective number on a given scale chosen by an person examined.

3. The measurement of the sense of happiness

This measurement was made on a scale of three points. Number 1 stood for a high sense of happiness, number 3 stood for a low and number 2 was used for intermediate states.

The coefficient of the sense of happiness was a number on the discussed scale chosen by an person examined. For the described scale of "the sense of quality of life" the following spheres of life were chosen (persons examined determined the level of current and predicted sense of satisfaction with those spheres):

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A - marriage | I - flat |
| B - family life. | J - standard of life |
| C - health | K - education |
| D - friends | L - earning money |
| E - housework | M - your happiness |
| F - job | N - life in Poland. |
| G - the place you live in | O - satisfaction with yourself |
| H - free time | |

The scale of the measurement of the chosen recipes for life was designed for the aims of the research. In order to design it a group of 30 competent judges was used. Each of the judges was asked to give his own recipes for life. 15 recipes were used in the designed inquiry. 5 of them were indicated most frequently as the most efficient recipes for success in family life, 5 of them were indicated as recipes for success in social life, and 5 of them concerned job.

Using the scale designed in this way two measurements of recipes for life were made, the recipes had the function of independent variables. The scale was designed for the following measurements:

1. The measurement of the level of identification with recipes for life.

Recipes for life were marked by numbers from 1 to 5 within each of the three discussed spheres of life (family life, social life, job). Each of the recipes was evaluated on a continuous scale marked by a letter A. The left limit of the scale with attributed weight 0 stood for a minimal identification with a recipe for life. The right of the scale with attributed weight 10 stood for maximum identification with a recipe for life.

The respective point marked on the scale by person examined together with the weight attributed to it was the coefficient of the level of identification with a given recipe for life.

2. The measurement of the level attributed to recipes of probability that behavior consistent with them leads to success.

Similarly to the previous measurement recipes for life were marked within the framework of each of the three considered spheres of life (family life, social life, job) by numbers from 1 to 5. Each of the recipes was estimated on a continual scale marked by a letter B. The left limit with weight 0 attributed to it stood for the lowest estimation of probability of success in case of behavior consistent with the recipes. The right limit of the scale with weight 10 attributed to it stood for the highest estimation of probability of success in case of behavior consistent with the recipes.

A point on the respective scale with attributed weight marked by a person examined was the coefficient of the level of probability of success attributed to as given recipe.

Sample

100 persons were examined. They were students 26 men and 74 women at the age ranging from 19 to 26.

Students are an isolated social group. Majority of them prepare themselves to take up two important roles in their lives: a professional role, and a role in family (a wife/husband and a parent) being aware of all the demands of these roles at the same time students have usually no experience in fulfilling the demands. The source of their opinion on how they should be fulfilled are their own notions. Specific features of the group were used in the research. They allowed to separate those spheres of life in which they had no experience (married life - A, job - F, money earned - L) from those ones in which they had some experience (all the remaining spheres).

Statistic calculation

Continuous and discrete scales of assessment were used in calculations. Because they have the status of ordinal scales the operations made on the set of data and the test used for verification of hypotheses were of such kind that is acceptable for ordinal scales. After results had been obtained, they were ordered, depending on a hypothesis verified, from the highest to the lowest or from the most extreme to the most average. Using quartiles as positional measures the results were divided into 4 parts. For the further calculation 25 results were taken from all the limits of all series of ordered results. Each 25 results were taken once at a time: the highest, the lowest, the most extreme, the most average. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test with correction for chi-square was chosen as the one fulfilling all the necessary criteria and the most justified in case of checking the considered hypotheses about dependencies. In the course of verification of all the hypotheses zero hypotheses was put forward about the lack of relation between variables - H_0 were tested against working unilateral hypotheses.

Results

After verification of all the hypotheses only in one case a zero hypothesis was rejected in favor of an alternative hypothesis. The basis for such interpretation was given by the results describing relation between estimation of probability of success and the predicted level of satisfaction with the spheres of life, in which they had no experience. According to the scheme on page 4 two hypotheses were connected with the relation. The one which found confirmation was as follows: "The higher the estimated level of probability of success in case of behavior consistent with the recipes is, the higher the level of satisfaction predicted by persons with the sphere of life, in which they have no experience, is". Collected empirical data allowed to accept these hypothesis in relation to the recipes connected with job and the sphere of life, which is constituted by job. They did not allow to accept this hypothesis in retaliation to the recipes connected with family life and sphere of life which is constituted by family. The results are shown in table 1.

In the case of the remaining seven hypotheses (presented on the scheme on page no basis was found for rejecting zero hypotheses in favor of alternative hypotheses.

Obtained results do not allow to conclude that the attitude of people to the recipes for life they have (two dimensions of this attitude were taken into consideration: identification and probability) is related to their sense of happiness and the current sense of satisfaction with chosen spheres of life.

Table 1. The predicted satisfaction with spheres of life where students had no experience in the groups estimating the probability that behaviour consistent with recipes brings success high and low

The spheres of life	No 1* Amount	No 2 Amount	No 3 Amount	No 4 Amount	No 5 Amount	No 6 Amount	No 7 Amount	No 1 Amount	No 2 Amount	No 3 Amount	No 4 Amount	No 5 Amount	No 6 Amount	No 7 Amount	Chi square value	Chi square value for $\alpha=0.05$	Conclusion	
	The group were P in relation to recipes connected with family life was low							The group where P in relation to recipes connected with family life was high										no basis found for rejecting H_0 in favour of alternative hypotheses
Marriage	0	0	0	3	2	14	1	0	0	0	1	1	12	11	2.85	5.991		
	The group where P** in relation to recipes connected with job was low							The group where P in relation to recipes connected with job was high										
Job	0	0	1	5	9	6	4	0	0	2	1	2	13	7	8	5.991	we are rejecting H_0 in favor of alternative hypotheses	
Earning money	1	1	3	2	8	6	4	0	1	2	2	6	10	4	1.28	5.991	no basis found for rejecting H_0 in favor of alternative hypotheses	

* the predicted satisfaction was being evaluated on the seventh number scale (see method)

** P means "the estimation of probability that the behaviour consistent with recipes leads to success"

Conclusion

Obtained results may be interpreted in two ways. I think that they can be regarded as an argument against the presented hypotheses against the whole way of thinking about the functioning of a man by which they were supported. They can be also regarded as an effect of imperfection of the tools used for the research and the formulated hypotheses can be still regarded as true. Personally I would rather choose the first approach. The obtained empirical data justify a supposition that the higher identification with the recipes and the higher probability attributed to them is the higher the sense of happiness and satisfaction in all the spheres of life is as I did not suppose when I was preparing the plan of the research but as I think now that experience or the lack of experience does not modify this dependency. Thus I do not regard it proper to introduce such pair of independent variable categories like extreme and average results. Probably, if all formulated hypotheses (and not only two of them) had began from words "The higher the estimated level of probability is...", or "the higher the identification is..."; and if considerations had been limited to high and low results (as the second pair of independent variable categories), more hypotheses would have been accepted. However, I would like to emphasize that this suggested form of dependencies between the analysed variables has a character of supposition, the confirmation of which would have to be verified by another set of hypotheses.

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