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QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE PANDEMIC CONTEXT

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Abstract

The study aims to highlight whether there are statistically significant differences between people with children and those without children in terms of self-esteem and emotional stability. Overall, this research aims to determine whether there are differences between categories of people in terms of the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on their quality of life. The questionnaires on which this study was based are Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI) and Five Factor Personality Inventory (FFPI) and were applied to a sample of 162 adults.

Keywords: *Quality of life, personality factors, self-esteem, emotional stability*

INTRODUCTION

The motivation for choosing this topic is based on the research team's desire to understand whether there is a relationship between self-esteem and quality of life during the pandemic, respectively between self-esteem and emotional stability, as a constitutive factor of personality (FFPI).

I. THEORETICAL PRESENTATION OF CONSTRUCTS

1.1 Emotional stability and self-esteem as factors of quality of life

Under the paradigm of self-organizational theory, emotional stability is defined as a property of labeling whether a complex emotional system can automatically maintain its balance effectively. (Chaturvedi M., Chander R., 2010).

Emotional stability allows the person to develop an integrated and balanced way of perceiving life's problems. Emotional instability or immaturity indicates the failure of the individual to develop the degree of independence or self-confidence that identifies with a normal adult, with consistent use of immature adjustment patterns and the inability to maintain balance under stress. People with emotional or unstable disorders lack the ability to eliminate problems and irritability, needing constant help to perform daily tasks. (Chaturvedi M., Chander R., 2010).

The concept of self-esteem was first described by William James in 1890 as the feeling of self-respect that develops when individuals consistently meet or exceed important goals in their lives. At present, the definition continues to be relevant and self-esteem is considered to be the evaluative aspect of self-knowledge, which reflects the extent to which people like and consider themselves competent. (Zeigler, 2013).

Morris Rosenberg concluded that self-esteem is, in short, the overall assessment that the individual has of himself. The scientist defines self-esteem as a complex cognitive and affective synthesis involved in dictating the individual's attitude towards himself. (Lupu, 2019).

The researchers found that there are a number of correlations between high levels of self-esteem and various positive feelings. Thus, people with high self-esteem have high goals, have a high level of self-confidence and consider that they are able to solve various difficult situations. (Baumeister și Leary, apud Dafinoiu, 2014).

The quality of life paradigm focuses on people, their needs and life expectancy and how they approach the conditions necessary for affirmation in society. The concept refers to what people think about their lives, their perceptions and their satisfaction. The quality of life is given by the perceptions of individuals on their social situations, in the context of the cultural value systems in which they live (WHO, 1998). The theory of quality of life argues that a finite number of areas of personal aspirations and accomplishments can be identified, valid for the entire population. Thus, a list of 16 global factors has been compiled that encompasses general concerns and covers all areas of life that contribute to quality of life. (Andrews și Inglehart, 1979 apud Frisch, 2014).

II. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESE

II.1 Purpose

The purpose of the research is to emphasize the importance of emotional balance on the quality of life during the pandemic. In this regard, we undertook an analysis of basic concepts, such as self-esteem and quality of life and aspects of

personality such as emotional stability, seeking to determine whether there are relationships between them and, if so, what they are.

II.2 Objectives

Regarding the objectives of this paper, on the one hand, we will try to establish whether there is a relationship between self-esteem and quality of life in the pandemic, respectively between self-esteem and emotional stability, as a constitutive factor of personality (FFPI). On the other hand, the second objective will seek to highlight whether there are statistically significant differences between people with and without children, in terms of self-esteem and emotional stability in a pandemic. For an objective analysis, we will refer to some specialized studies.

II.3 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. It is assumed that there are significant differences in the self-esteem of study participants (QOLI) between people with children and those without children.

Hypothesis 2. It is assumed that there are statistically significant differences between people with children and those without children in terms of emotional stability (FFPI).

III. SAMPLE AND INSTRUMENTES

III.1 The sample

The sample included 162 adults from urban and rural areas, classified by several categories of age, marital status, respectively with or without children. 36.4% of the participants are in the age group 18-25 years, 54.9% of them between 26 and 45 years, and the difference of 8.6% over 45 years. From the point of view of domicile, 82.7% reside in urban areas and 17.3% in rural areas, 79.6% being female participants and 20.4% male participants. From the perspective of marital status, 48.8% of the participants in the study are married, 43.8% unmarried and 7.4% divorced. Half of the study participants have children and the other half do not.

III.1 Instruments

The tools on which this study was based are Quality of Life Inventory and Five Factor Personality Inventory.

Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI) assesses an individual's quality of life by self-reporting the importance it attaches to each of the 16 areas of life (on a 3-point rating scale) and their current satisfaction with each area (on a scale). evaluation in 6 points).

According to its manual, **the Five-Factor Personality Inventory (FFPI)** evaluates the five superfactors in the Big Five model: Extraversion (E), Kindness (A), Conscientiousness (C), Emotional Stability (S), and Autonomy (D) (Hendriks, A. A. J., Hofstee, W. K. B., & De Raad, B., 1999).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In testing the hypotheses, the data obtained from the convenience sample were centralized, following the distribution of the electronic format of the tests created

using the Google Forms application and then when entering and processing the data collected using SPSS Statistics 26, the results obtained in applying the related statistical tests the four hypotheses being described and explained in the following lines.

Hypothesis 1. It is assumed that there are significant differences in the self-esteem of study participants (QOLI) between people with children and those without children.

The application of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test highlights a non-normal distribution of the results obtained, for self-esteem, both in respondents with children and in those without, highlighted by the value of Sig. 0.00, less than 0.05 for both cases. To identify the appearance if the differences found are statistically significant we applied a non-parametric test method - the Mann-Whitney U test. The value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) equal to 0.029, less than 0.05 shows that on the two subsamples in the present study there are statistically significant differences in the level reached by self-esteem depending on whether or not the subjects have children, therefore **hypothesis 1 is confirmed** on the studied group.

The study of the profile literature revealed the aspect that, analyzing the data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Young People (NLSY), which used a LISREL model, Oates, G. (1997) found that the number of children does not affect self-esteem; this has proven to be true for both women and men and for different socio-economic groups.

Hypothesis 2. It is assumed that there are significant differences between people with children and those without children in terms of emotional stability (FFPI).

The application of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test highlights a normal distribution of the results obtained, for emotional stability, both in respondents with children and in those without, highlighted by the value of Sig. 0.200, greater than 0.05 in both cases. Comparing the average values of the emotional stability scores for the two subsamples shows an average of their value at the level of emotional stability of 62.09 in people without children and the standard deviation equal to 14,463. In the case of people with children, the average value is 72.27, and the standard deviation is 10.086.

As a result of testing the third hypothesis, the value obtained by Mr. 0.003, less than 0.05 reveals the aspect that the condition of homogeneity of the variants is fulfilled, aspect for which we will take into account the value of Sig. (2-tailed) equal to 0.000, which is lower than the 0.05 threshold, thus resulting in statistically significant differences between the two subsamples in the present study. Basically, **hypothesis number 2 is confirmed** on the study group.

In the academic literature, opinions on these differences between people who have children and those who do not have children are divided. The results of the tests performed by Van Scheppingen et al. (2016) do not support the theories according to which the transition to a life with children triggers positive changes in the personality factors in the Big Five model. Specifically, no significant evidence was identified in the study to support the hypothesis that parents with children

have increased levels of emotional stability, agreeableness or conscientiousness compared to adults without children. (Van Scheppingen, M.A., Jackson, J.J., Specht, J., Hutteman, R., Denissen, J.J.A., & Bleidorn, W., 2016).

The analysis of other researchers suggests that the existence of children can have both positive and negative effects on the psychological well-being of parents.. (Umberson, D., Gove, W. R., 1989).

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the present research aimed to determine whether there are differences between categories of people in terms of the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on their quality of life. With reference to the tested hypotheses, they are confirmed on the analyzed sample.

Regarding the importance of emotional balance on the quality of life during the pandemic, given the severity of the effects of COVID-19 on psychological health and quality of life, the study by Khan, Kamruzzaman, Monowar and Aftab U., (2021) showed that social distancing had significant negative influences on psychological suffering. According to the study, although psychological distress has a significant negative influence on quality of life, emotional recovery did not show a moderating effect on the relationship between psychological distress and quality of life during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results obtained also showed that emotional stability has the potential to predict the increased level of "satisfaction with life" being an important explanatory factor of psychological well-being. (Khan A.G., Kamruzzaman, N.R., Monowar M., Aftab U., 2021).

In conclusion, according to the results of the study undertaken by our research team, we reach a conclusion similar to the study of Miron et. namely, that people with high emotional stability, satisfied with their own life (with high self-esteem) have an increased psychological state of well-being and consequently a better quality of life (Miron M.I., Sulea C., Sârbescu P., 2011).

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