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PASTORAL PSZCHOLOGY

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPLES OF HAPPINES IN THE BIBLE AND LIFE
SATISFACION, SUBJECTIVE HAPPINESS, MEANING AND CRISIS AMONG YOUNG
ADULTS**

DOCTORAL THESIS

- Abstract -

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Introduction and explanation of topic choice

The subject of happiness is of particular importance to all of us, thus, it is present in our individual questioning, as well as in art, religious literature and, of course, in science too. Its historical imprint also reflects on its importance; it was a central topic not only in early philosophy - despite the fact that the ancient man was much less happiness-centred than a man of modern society - but in medieval and modern literature too. Whenever we talk about happiness, the individual never just appears as a passive bystander in this context, but rather as an active, engaging, or - one might even say - aspiring party, for happiness is normally not provided for no reason and without any effort. The process, in which people are either consciously driven or unconsciously incited to find the end result, and which they subjectively perceive as good and felicitous, is called "the pursuit of happiness". Although happiness might at times appear in such context, which only some people strive for; the feeling of joy, utter relief, freedom and transcendent relaxation is essential for all of us – whether we admit to it or not. The terms listed are only a few of the numerous possibilities with which folk and specialized literature try to capture happiness, therefore, to define it scientifically is not a simple task either. There may not be many words in the dictionary of the 21st century man - regardless of age, gender or nationality - that are used in such a wide variety of meaning and context such as 'happiness'. This is true for both the idiomatic and scientific context, as well as religious literature. In this paper we aim to list those philosophical approaches in a chronological order, which strive to determine happiness. Following that, those concepts are presented, which intend to do the same with the help of scientific means. All of these are preceded by an analysis, which aspires to illustrate happiness according to the Bible and to place it into exact categories, which ultimately results in measurable concepts. In the meantime, we tried to avoid treating the Bible as a kind of self-help literature source, but to rather grasp its essential message and draw our conclusions of its idea of happiness in light of this. We called the resulting set *Biblical Benchmark For Happiness*. Namely, the aspects, which we believe appear in the Holy Scripture as relevant features to happiness.

The next objective of our paper is to examine the connection between happiness and the variable called Biblical benchmark, and the crises of young adulthood relevant to contentment. As a result of mentioned analysis, we outlined the path model which emerges from the results of the measured variables.

The choice of our topic was fuelled by the theory that the question of happiness fits well with theology, as it - in its broader interpretation - falls in line with the word of God and the key question of Man; since our fruitful life on Earth serving the glory of God and our glorified eternity can be considered as God's greatest will for Man. In addition, the important ambitions and main motivations of one's life can also be regarded as the pursuit of happiness, and, therefore, any related outcome may be viewed as the pastoral care relevant to the state of being.

It is therefore natural that the topic is not irrelevant in terms of psychology either, which - in line with those positive psychological tendencies that strengthened in recent years - dares to ask happiness-related or correlating questions, stepping out of the previously characteristic, deficit-orientated paradigms. In this respect, positive psychology is an opportunity for theology and vice versa, since many concepts are available on these subjects within the field of theology, which may frame all the research and can serve as work hypothesis or concept model. With these, the surface of mutual contribution may increase further.

This type of - in a good sense - interdependence is on the scientific level of thinking and it, of course, appears on the level of practice too. In our view, practice proves that the pastoral care of both fields can easily become discredited if it does not recognize and utilize the competencies of the other area. By adopting this, we must also admit that 21st century theology - but at this point, maybe we can even say religion - also requires credible psychology, and psychology needs authentic theology or religion for it to be a powerful tool in aiding and be effective in other fields of application too.

The chosen topic has been mapped out in 6 main chapters, the synthesis of which is presented below.

1. Historical background

In this chapter different, historically developed philosophical approaches are presented according to the chronological order of ages. Philosophical tendencies aiming to define and capture the essence of happiness are present in the literature of philosophy regardless of geographical locations. It was a central theme for famous thinkers, such as Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Confucius or Buddha, in numerous parts of the world (China, India, Greece), irrespectively from each other. During our historical review we were able to discover the universal relevance of happiness, to trace the questioning, as well as its effects from the ancient times all the way to the birth of pragmatic science. From the beginning, people have always been concerned about the idea of a good life and fulfillment. The most prominent early approach of this can be found in the Aristotelian philosophy, in which, the subjective nature of happiness and its ambiguity (immediate pleasures vs. supreme completion) appear; together with the sense of contentment that can be found in human virtues.

Christianity had a significant impact on happiness appearing in literature throughout the middle ages. In the writings of St. Augustine, he mentions God as the source of happiness, and he even deduces the definition of happiness and our desire for it from God. In contrast to the medieval religious approaches, the concept of Renaissance places the question of happiness into worldly, materialistic context only. With this, the focus shifts to hedonic, humanistic approaches, which emphasize one's basic right to happiness, destroying the previous - often misinterpreted and filled with abuse - religious morals, but at the same time they underrate and neglect the importance of the transcendental nature of happiness. All this was placed on Biblical footing again during reformation and was penned by Luther and Calvin.

The 17th and 18th centuries were characterized by the growing strata of the bourgeoisie and the parallel development of science and enlightenment, which provided more and more room for the principle of happiness in Renaissance. As a consequence, the focus on moral and ethical issues increased, which we examined throughout the work of Kant, Spinoza and Locke. In the 19th century, every philosopher and every idea was characterized by the need for empiricism. John Stuart Mill wrote about happiness and ethics in this spirit, and in the wake of this, scientific psychology was drawn up by William James - a student of Mill - and it remains the central theme of happiness for both James and later thinkers.

2. Happiness according to the Bible

This chapter guides you through the essential points of happiness within the Bible. The starting point of this theory is the conviction that the Bible contains the most important aspects of a happy man. It is also our view that the current level of social interpretation of happiness and the Bible's message about it are largely incompatible, and there is a need for restoring certain absolutes about the representation of humans, in order to understand the essential message of the Bible regarding human happiness. These absolutes are derived mainly from the Psalms and the New Testament, not aiming to analyze the full theological message of the Bible. In our opinion, the identified absolutes establish a profile, which is meaningful for the modern man and this is what we named the Biblical benchmark for happiness. One such item is the existence of the human being as a creature and it has got several aspects. One of these is the determination by the Creator (the Man's assigned lifetime, his mission and responsibilities). It also refers to the indisputable hierarchy between the Creator and creature, and lastly, it is also the direction coming from the Creator's will, pointing out which way one has to walk in order to be under the blessing of God - which is of major importance for happiness. According to the Bible, all of these points must be accepted by Man, in order to step on the path of happiness, without them, we can only speak about pursuit of happiness on an individual level or purely on a scientific basis. It is also a type of reality that total completeness on Earth cannot be achieved following the fall of Man, for happiness this means that it can never be complete. Besides, Man also has Edenic lust. As a consequence of the resulting paradox and the Biblical struggle between good and evil in our world, Man finds himself in a combat situation, in which, at best he - theologically speaking - has his relationship with God restored during salvation, but is not yet free of the good fighting against the evil within himself and in the world. The correct perception regarding the pursuit of happiness in such situation emerges from the Bible clearly: to take on the fight and tolerate the deficits. This is equal to the trust and faith Man has in God, which is - in a good sense - risk-taking. One possible understanding of the beatitudes of Jesus covers this approach completely, in which the correct attitude towards God (having a broken heart, as in admitting our human nature and fallen state), the trust rooted in God Almighty as a rightful king (being kind-hearted, craving justice), and the action which is the image of Man's commitment to the fight (making peace, pursuit of truth). The action - besides coming from love and not from attempting justification - is happening in the present, which means that it is free from the burden of the past and the worries of the future, therefore, can only stay positive and achieve

the right results. To do this, Man needs to possess the restoring power of forgiveness and have faith in God. Finally, the action is also characterized by love and loyalty, which is the manifestation of faith in deeds, and includes the right attitude towards God and his law. By this, the action becomes the tool to make Man the target of blessing. The blessing which our loving Father prepared for us according to the law of creation and the principles of his Kingdom is not of earthly happiness only but also contains the full, heavenly perspective of restored happiness. Elements of the Biblical benchmark are, therefore, as follows:

Etalon	Dimensions
Creation nature	Recognition of transcendence
	Recognition of the relationship between creator and creation
	Recognition of regularity vs. own power
"Combat Status"	The need for security vs. risk-taking
	Trust put in providence
Living in the now	Letting go of the past
	Experiencing the present
	Letting go of the fear of the future
Loyalty	Persistence
	Responsibility
	Engaging in action for others

Table 1: Identified dimensions within the Biblical benchmark (page 180)

These aspects are conceptualized and suitable measurement tools are assigned within our research.

3. Modern scientific results

We continue our analysis with the relevant part of scientific literature. The science of psychology was initially largely deficit oriented, the main objective of its applied fields were to reduce human suffering and repair the broken features. One can understand all this by recalling the effects of the World Wars and the economic crises on humanity. Although, this environmental background does not offer an adequate basis for useful results of happiness. During this time the leading paradigm is psychoanalysis, which focuses on the neuroses and its starting point is a generally negative notion on the human being. Only after the 1950s can we talk about paradigm-like literature on happiness, which is the finalized result of humanistic psychology created by Rogers. In this context, we mention the work and accomplishments of Maslow and Rogers, which is generally based on the positive image of humans and serves as the foundation of a future trend, called positive psychology. Renowned researchers in this field such as Seligman, Diener or Csíkszentmihályi not only developed the scientific definition of happiness but also worked out those basic concepts by which one's happy experience can be measured and examined for the purpose of psychology too. This is how certain definitions, such as subjective well-being, flow, general satisfaction with life, or quality of life emerged, which became increasingly measured and referred-to concepts, not only within psychology, but in specialized areas of medicine and economics too. Parallel with the pragmatic theories and test results, we mention those approaches based on life experience and practice, which have similar effects. Here we talk about the work of Frankl, who discusses the topics of transcendent dimension and reason, in connection with happiness, and this is where we also listed the Salutogenesis theory of Antonovsky, which still has an outstanding role in the area of health psychology. Subsequently, the relevant subjective concepts of happiness are covered in detail, which crystallized from the aforementioned theories, notions and investigations throughout recent years, and today hold a definite significance in the research direction. Among these we named the intake-satisfaction paradox, life goals, sense, and those areas identified from correlating researches, where the effects are relevant to the pursuit of happiness. These were social support, religion, health, age and personality factors.

4. The process model of the pursuit of happiness

In the previous chapters we approached the topic of happiness from a point of view that it is nothing more than one of the fundamental purposes of one's life. Thus, in a sense, everything he does is in order to get closer to his personal happiness concept, which he defined subjectively. All this can be perceived as an endeavor that involves both conscious and unconscious elements and can be treated as a process, which we named 'the pursuit of happiness'. In this chapter we turn towards this process. The factors that affect this endeavor and influence its outcome, emerge from this functional viewpoint. We have seen, on one hand, that the longing, the desire, is neuro-biological in the first place, which system rewards the satisfaction of the subject's needs. Beyond the basic biological need, however, higher basic human requirements also influence this process. Our moral and ethical thinking, as well as our values, participate in this process in a similar manner, influencing our behavioural motivations, the directions of our goals and the means chosen to meet them. Then, for the most part, we discussed the largely paradoxical effects that can be linked to one's intellectual and emotional functioning on the level of the central nervous system. As a result, overall, it can be concluded that one tends to overestimate the happiness achieved as the result of his own actions, not counting on his inclination for getting used to things, which is a natural emotional rearrangement following both positive and negative fluctuations. A similar paradox can occur at the level of beliefs too, on which it was found that, they are - by their very nature - resistant to rational refutations. Its effect is amplified by the social level of tolerance of the growing personal and subjective truths and by individualization which is increasingly true for modern society. We identified and grouped the patterns of beliefs according to the specific logical schemes behind them, out of which the misconceptions of the happiness of today's man emerged, as claimed by the cited literature. The general definition of happiness described in terms of hedonic-eudaimonic views was completed by - so-called - alternative forms of happiness, which although ensure pleasure in the short term, but fail within the criteria of reason, utility and transcendence, and their outcome is dubious in the long run. Correlated to this, there are environmental impacts - such as certain societal level influence and media effects - which are all the more paradoxical, the more they reject the existence of certain absolute truths, and, which include both the scientific results and the traditional moral aspects. Finally, we outlined the flow chart, which is one possible model of the pursuit of happiness, along with the aforementioned influencing factors. The step towards happiness (action,

decision, behavior), may result in an increased level of happiness, or in the said alternatives or crisis too.

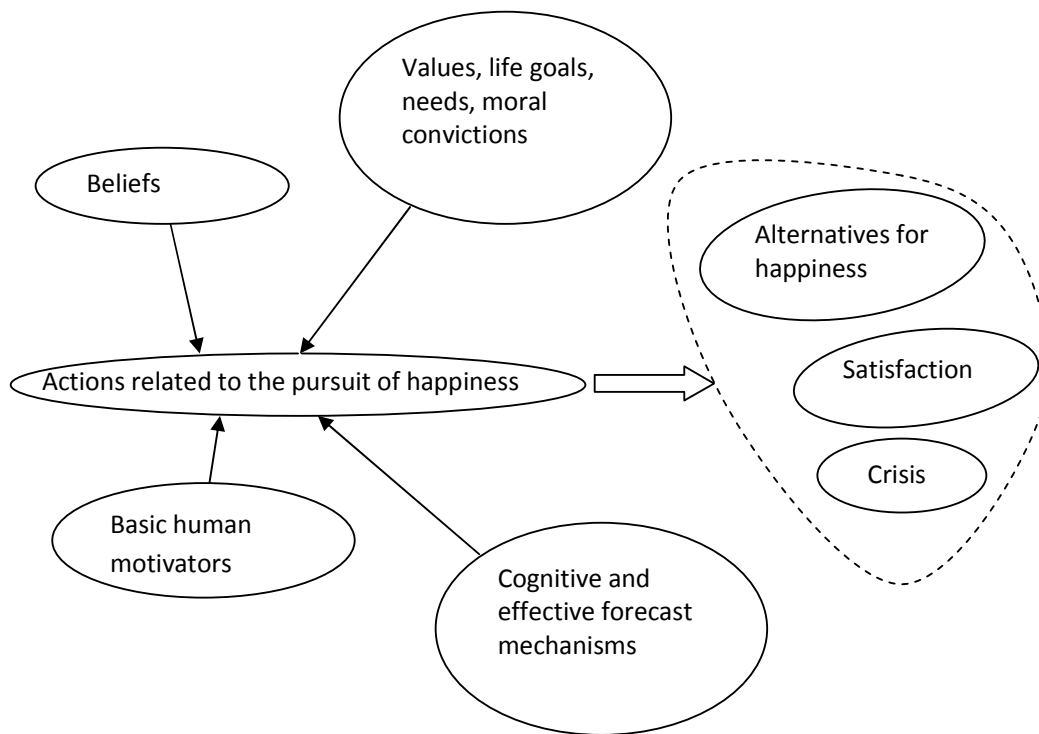


Fig. 1. Functional process model of the pursuit of happiness *Source: on the basis of specialized literature presented in chapter 6. (page 148)*

5. Life crises in young adulthood in conjunction with the pursuit of happiness

In our chapter of crises, the concept is examined from different directions. Beyond having a paramount importance in terms of helping, crises can also be considered milestones of the human life where substantial changes are made, as well as re-defined beliefs and value system are born. In addition, crises are also regarded to be natural and mandatory concomitants of happiness, and are relevant to the search of happiness from mainly two aspects. One of these is that crises are considered to be the negative outcome of the attempt to achieve happiness, in this sense, crises are assumed to be consequences. The other is, that the changes triggered by crises - beyond the negative outcome - also have the potential for a better psychological functioning, which one can achieve through post-traumatic growth. Thus,

the key from the subsequent development itself can be defined as a condition more closely to happiness. Moreover, during the crises and the following growth, the individual experiences a number of changes in several areas, which directly or indirectly affect the future of happiness. On the one hand, this happens in the context of recent efforts following the crisis, on the other hand, it is in relation to certain factors, such as personality changes, beliefs or possible transformations of values or beliefs.

Furthermore, we examined those forms of crisis, which are quoted as developmental or normative in the cited literature, and those that do not relate to development, but to life events, respectively. We also presented different classification models that apply to the types of crisis. Along the therefrom derived criteria, we outlined the classification categories according to relevant aspects of the subsequently studied age group. With the help of these categories, we were able to distinguish the crises applicable to our study, that is, all those which appear in early adulthood concerning the search for happiness.

6. Examining the relationship of factors discussed - clarification of definitions

During the clarification of the terms used in this research, the first and central concept is, of course, happiness, the theoretical background of which is presented in detail in Chapters 2 and 3. The measurement of happiness was carried out by using three main concepts: *overall satisfaction with life*,¹ *subjective happiness*,² and *meaningfulness*,³ similarly to research previously listed in the relevant literature, some of which measure happiness with overall satisfaction with life, the next group measures it with subjective happiness - also by Diener, and a third with the presence of sense, as it was originally defined by Frankl and Antonovsky. In regards to our first hypothesis, the level and the pursuit of happiness - according to our Biblical benchmark - show a positive correlation.

The following definition was the Biblical benchmark, which was laid out in Chapter 1.3. The notion comes from the preconception that the laws of life within the Bible provide a kind of guideline for happiness, and along these, one can live his life according to its intended

¹ Diener, E., Emmons, E.R., Larsen, R.J., és Griffin, S. - The Satisfaction With Life Scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, No. 49, pp. 71-75. 1985.

² Lyubomirsky S. IM., 2013

³ Pl. Frankl. V. E- IM., 1996; Antonovsky, A. IM. 1979

purpose as defined by his creation status. The concept appears within the research in two ways. One is an associated hypothesis, that the continuous and sincere pursuit of a life that respects such laws also leads to greater happiness. The other appears in connection with the next measured definition, the pursuit of happiness. In this – for which we argued in Chapter 4 – we discuss the efforts made in order to achieve happiness. The Biblical benchmark and the pursuit of happiness thus relate to each other so that the efforts made to achieve happiness may contain the appropriate Biblical benchmark elements and directions, but can also go counter-clockwise. Therefore, the pursuit of happiness itself may be done in a way that meets or is close to the Biblical benchmark and can also be done independently from it, or completely to the contrary as well.

The next definition we examined in our assessment was the concept of crises, which we linked to happiness⁴, and which is related to the assumption that the pursuit of happiness is more appropriate for the Biblical benchmark, and that it influences the number of crisis and their impact on life. Any time we mention crises, we talk about the ones that are non-accidental and non-normative - though are often related to the latter - in young adulthood.

The last measured concept in this study is the post-traumatic growth, which indicates a better outcome with significant life changes post crises than the state of mental health prior to it⁵. A positive correlation to the Biblical benchmark is assumed for post-traumatic growth.

6.1. Hypotheses

In our research we are essentially searching for the answers to the connection among the Biblical benchmark, the search for happiness and the crises through the example of young adults. In this connection, the main hypotheses are as follows:

1. *The pursuit of happiness that was carried out in accordance to the Biblical benchmark had a significantly higher level of happiness (life satisfaction, subjective happiness, existence of sense).*
2. *There is a negative relationship between the pursuit of happiness carried out in accordance to the Biblical benchmark and crises experienced in life, that is, the*

⁴ See Chapter 5

⁵ See Chapter 5.3.

pursuit of happiness according to the Biblical benchmark has less crises associated with it (the Biblical benchmark stands as a factor of protection for the crises relevant to the search of happiness).

3. *Throughout the pursuit of happiness a higher degree of compliance with the Biblical benchmark results in a significantly higher post-traumatic growth.*

6.2. Composition of the sample and the sampling methods

Our research population consisted of young adults. Erikson's theory of development⁶, the typical frequency of appearance of those crises types that were relevant to our measurement, furthermore, the most active period during a lifetime - in terms of decision making - for the pursuit of happiness were all taken into consideration when setting the relevant age limits. For this reason, the study population was of 18-45 year olds.

A total of 134 people filled out the questionnaire compiled. After applying the established age for young adults we were able to retain the results of 116 people in total. In the questionnaire, we asked about main variables known to us, which affect the values of happiness measured on the basis of literature presented in the previous chapters. These effects were controlled within the subsequent statistical measurements where the number of items allowed it. Said variables and the other socio-demographic characteristics of the samples are summarized in the following table:

⁶ Erikson E. H.- Identität und Lebenszyklus (1966) IN: Isidor Baumgartner – Pasztorálpszichológia, Új Ember Kiadó, pp. 32. 2006. (Lásd. 5.1. fejezet)

Gender	N	%
Female	68	58,6%
Male	48	41,4%
Age	N	%
Younger than 18	0	0,0%
19 to 25	34	29,3%
26 to 32	41	35,3%
33 to 45	41	35,3%
Over 46	0	0,0%
Qualification	N	%
High School	12	10,3%
College/University	95	81,9%
Postgraduate	9	7,8%
Marital status	N	%
Married	36	31,0%
Divorced	5	4,3%
Single	38	32,8%
In a relationship, but not married	37	31,9%
Social situation	N	%
Employed	86	74,1%
Entrepreneur	5	4,3%
Unemployed	6	5,2%
Retired	0	0,0%
Claiming disability pension	0	0,0%
Student	19	16,4%
Religious beliefs	N	%
Christian, actively practicing faith	41	35,3%
Christian, less actively practicing faith	26	22,4%
Christian, not practicing faith	22	19,0%
Non-Christian, practicing faith	4	3,4%
Other, transcendent, personal beliefs, actively practicing	7	6,0%
Other, transcendent, personal beliefs, not actively practicing	5	4,3%
No transcendental beliefs	11	9,5%
Income	N	%
Average compared to own environment	70	60,3%
Above average compared to own environment	32	27,6%
Below average compared to own environment	14	12,1%

Table 2: General characteristics of the research sample (page 175)

6.3. The means used in the research and their confidence indicators

Questionnaires were used for collecting the empirical data, which took about 30 minutes to fill, time was not limited. The online questionnaire consisted of six parts, with instructions corresponding to the different parts. In the first part we asked about the general and the controlled data from the subsequent measurements (see Table 1.). When completing, the participants were able to input the details by using a drop-down menu.

Apart from the general section of the questionnaire, the following dimensions were measured:

- a.) Biblical benchmark – survey consisting of 32 questions
- b.) Directions of the pursuit of happiness – list containing 40 elements, of which the 10 personally most important ones had to be selected by the candidate
- c.) Frequency of crises – list containing 32 crises types, of which those had to be marked that are characteristic for the past and/or for the present.
- d.) Happiness - Scale of satisfaction with life (SWLS) (Diener and colleagues, 1985.)
 - Scale of subjective happiness (SHS) (Lyubomirsky, S., and Lepper, H. S., 1999.)
 - Scale of meaning of life (MLQ) (Steger, M. F., Frazier, P., Oishi, S., & Kaler, M. 2006.)
- e.) Post-traumatic growth – retrospective evaluation (Tedeschi R.G., és Calhoun L.G., 1996.)

The set of questions of the Biblical benchmark were compiled on the basis of the criteria mentioned in Chapter 1, by selecting those ones, which we were able to put in the form of measurable variables. The method of questionnaire preparation was multiple grouping, in which we identified the essentially related topics and subsequently determined and classified their components behind them. Then we drew questions - items - behind the components, which the respondents were able to rate on a five-point Osgood scale. We used the Chronbach alpha index to detect the reliability of the tool, and the values obtained by the items ranged between 0.7-0.8. To examine its validity we carried out a 90 degrees Varimax rotated, principal-component factor analysis, which revealed six distinct elements that explained 65.7% of the variance.

The next scale was used to determine the search directions of happiness. The list - not qualifying as measuring instrument - contains 40 items, of which the participants had to select the ten most important to them when filling out the survey. The list was intended to align the maximum number of possible beliefs, the completion of which people would hope to find happiness from, thus pointing out beliefs related to the pursuit of happiness, including those that meet the criteria of the Biblical benchmark. Therefore, while we asked about the Biblical benchmark on the level of values with the first device, this second device measured the same on the level of beliefs. The theoretical background consists of the results lined up in Chapter 4. The values of the two devices were correlated in order to examine the validation of the criteria, the value obtained is significant at the 0.01 level ($r = 5.96$).

The third measured factor was the frequency of crises relevant to the pursuit of happiness. We did not find a solution suitable for assessing crises retrospectively in the specialized literature to use in our study. According to Lewis S. and Roberts, the number of standardized tools developed to assess crises is low and the majority of them mainly focus on identifying suicidal tendencies only, in order to help crises intervention⁷. In most cases, the assessment of crisis and the associated risk estimates take place during the therapy sessions using structured anamnesis lists (e.g. CTRS⁸ or CAT⁹). Based on this, we lined up all the identified crisis types that were relevant for us in our list and defined them in 32 items. The obtained results follow a normal distribution well: Shapiro-Wilk = 0.23 i.e. > 0.05) "Z" value = kurtosis: 1.14; flattening: -0.75).

The following factor we measured was happiness, which was covered by the three indicators mentioned above. All three devices were adapted for Hungarian population, and had excellent reliability and validity indicators, which Chapter 6.1.3. described in detail.

⁷ Lewis S. and Roberts A. R. - Crisis Assessment Tools: The Good, the Bad, and the Available, *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention* No.1, pp. 17–28, 2001.

⁸ Crisis Triage Rating Scale (CTRS): Turner P.M. and Turner T.J. – Validation of the crisis triage rating scale for psychiatric emergencies. *Social Work Department, University*, (submitted for publication)

⁹ Crisis Assessment Tool (CAT): Lyons J.S and colleagues: The Crisis Assessment Tool, *Buddin Praed Foundation*, 2002.

The last variable to assess was post-traumatic growth, of which a retrospective estimation was done according to the PTGI (Post Traumatic Growth Inventory) questionnaire¹⁰ (Chronbach alpha = 0.726).

6.4. The results of the research

For testing our first hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between the Biblical benchmark and the three measured indicators of happiness. Based on this, the agreement with the Biblical benchmark and the corresponding pursuit of happiness are both associated with the eudaimonic component of happiness, sense (r = 0,328) and do not involve the use of hedonic and cognitive components (subjective happiness, life satisfaction).

In our second hypothesis, in which we examined the relationship between the Biblical benchmark and the crises, we found no correlation between the amount of crises experienced, nor the severity of the crises in terms of the Biblical benchmark. Thus, the Biblical benchmark does not function as a protective factor in relation to crises.

Our third hypothesis - that we set regarding the relationship between the Biblical benchmark and post-traumatic growth - was studied by using a similar correlation coefficient. The correlation was positive and significant at the 0.01 level (r = 0.374).

A further investigation examined the incidence rates of the search for happiness according to the Biblical benchmark compared to other elements. The results obtained are summarized in the following table:

¹⁰ Tedeschi R. G., and Calhoun L.G. - The posttraumatic growth inventory: measuring the positive legacy of trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress* Vol 9, pp. 455-471, 1996.

#	Item	Number of answers	Response rate in the sample
1	<i>Identity (doing what I believe in, living the way I am sure to be right)</i>	77	66%
2	<i>Excellent health throughout life</i>	77	66%
3	<i>A lovely family and beautiful, healthy children</i>	60	52%
4	<i>The ability of contentment</i>	57	49%
5	<i>Adequate income, finite, but certain financial background</i>	54	47%
6	<i>A partner who really suits me</i>	52	45%
7	<i>Knowing that death is not the end of my existence</i>	46	40%
8	<i>Sufficient number of true, good friends</i>	45	39%
9	<i>Knowing that I am never alone</i>	45	39%
10	<i>A relationship I dreamed of</i>	41	35%
11	<i>The perfect safety of myself and my family throughout life</i>	40	34%
12	<i>The feeling that I am really free</i>	40	34%

Table 3. The most frequently chosen elements within the sample, to which the study participants attributed the greatest happiness factor. (Page 207.)

The top 12 items to which the study participants attributed the greatest happiness factor can be aligned with the following search directions of happiness: Biblical benchmark: 1, 4, 7, 9; Social background: 3, 8; Finance: 5; Relationship: 6, 10; Security: 2, 11; Independence, Choices: 12.

On the basis of literature analysis presented in Chapter 6.3.4., a total of 52% of the top 12 items (the most frequently chosen beliefs for happiness) are positive for the pursuit of happiness, that is, the person following these is characterized by higher happiness indicators

according to the literature (including the Biblical benchmark). The remaining 48% is the proportion of neutral or dysfunctional elements of happiness.

6.5. Interpretation

In order to have a deeper understanding of the correlations detected using the correlation coefficients during the hypothesis testing in Chapter 6.4, and to better comprehend the effects between the variables, a linear regression analysis was performed on those variables we identified a significant connection between.

On the basis of the above, the possible path between the variables is the following:

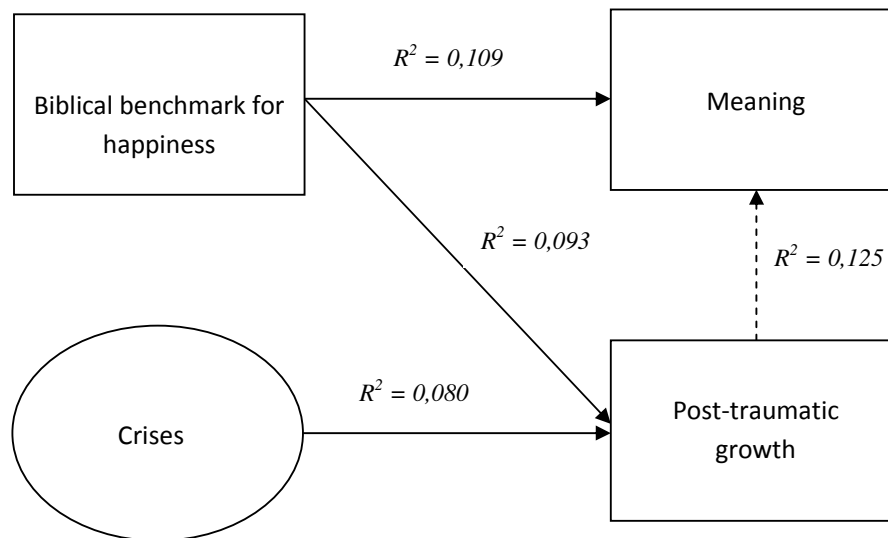


Figure 2: The Biblical benchmark is the hypothetical model of the crises, the post-traumatic growth and meaning (page 216.)

Accordingly, the Biblical benchmark contributes to the existence of meaning, similarly, crises participate in the development of post-traumatic growth, in this sense, indirectly affecting the development of the intellect. The Biblical benchmark - otherwise

independent from crises - has a mediator impact on the development of post-traumatic growth during crises.

While further interpreting our results we mentioned helping one's positioning within the realities of life as one of the possible mechanisms of the Biblical benchmark, thus promoting the positive contribution to finding one's identity, as well as operating as an explanatory model, by which one can effectively interpret and structure the events happening to him. Moreover, the pursuit of happiness according to the Biblical benchmark also supports exploring the different developmental stages, the start of life-related efforts, the active actions and positive risk taking as opposed to the more joy related search for happiness, which is short term and assists the operation of self-defense.

Regarding the relationship between the Biblical benchmark and the hedonic happiness, it was suggested that the joy is an essential element of contentment, however, is likely to be mainly a hygiene factor of it. That is, it no longer adds to the level of happiness after its existence, and even more pleasure does not trigger the need for meaning, but the lack of joy blocks the process of fulfillment and is likely to move the person in the direction of actions lacking motivation. No clear connection was established between the Biblical benchmark and the hedonic happiness, however, we do not believe that the factor of joy is not part of the Biblical benchmark, only that the benchmark is not limited to just pleasure and that it does not over idealize it either.

We mentioned the application of our findings on happiness and the search for it as a possibility, which can help with Christian, religious efforts and with integrating the needs with today's help. In addition to highlighting the possibilities and areas in which the message of the Holy Writ can be primarily used to benefit today's man, the Biblical benchmark also provides opportunity for re-labelling the efforts made in order to find happiness, i.e. shifting beliefs about happiness from destructive towards constructive. Beyond the application of principles included within the pursuit of happiness, the approach based on the Biblical principles does not only contain many other possibilities for use as listed in the interpretation and conclusion, but also more research options. All of this is covered in detail in Chapters 6.7 and 6.8.

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Introduction

Motives for choosing the subject

1. Happiness in the Bible

1.1. How the Bible sees man from the aspect of happiness

1.2. Happiness concepts in the Psalms, the beatitudes of Jesus and in the torah 15

1.2.1. Happiness of the Psalms

1.2.2. Happiness in the beatitudes of Jesus

1.3. The Biblical etalon of happiness

Happiness in the Bible – synthesis

2. Historical review of the happiness literature

2.1. Main philosophical approaches in the antique world

2.2. Medieval approaches

2.2.1. The happiness interpretation of the reformation

2.3. Main concept from XVII. to XVIII. centuries

2.4. Most important results of the XIX. century

Historical review of the happiness literature – synthesis

3. Determinative scientific concepts and theories regarding

3.1. Preliminary, interpretative thoughts

3.2. Maslow, Rogers and the humanist movement

3.3. Meaning and “saying yes” with Frankl

3.4. The flow experience as described by Csikszentmihályi

3.5. Anotonovsky’s Salutogenesis model

3.6. Seligman and the learned optimism

3.7. Diener’s contribution to the modern literature of happiness

3.8. Positive psychology as independent discipline

3.8.1. The concept of subjective wellbeing within the notions of life satisfaction and quality of life

3.8.2. Optimism and pessimism

3.8.3. Hope and learned helpfulness

3.9. Variables having an effect on subjective satisfaction

3.9.1. Income and social status

3.9.2. Meaning and life goals

3.9.3. The relation of religion and happiness

3.9.4. Age and health as variables affecting satisfaction

3.9.5. Personality factors

Determinative scientific concepts and theories regarding - synthesis

4. The process model of the pursuit of happiness

4.1. Basic human drives and their neuro-biological background

4.2. Basic human needs related to happiness

4.3. Moral convictions and life goals as mediators of happiness pursuits

4.4. Values as further mediators

4.5. The paradoxes of completion pursuits and the cognitive and affective factors behind

4.5.1. Errors on the level of cognition

4.5.2. Errors of the affective forecasting system

4.6. The beliefs about happiness

4.7. Happiness alternatives as possible outcomes of happiness pursuits from individual and societal aspect

4.8. The process model of happiness pursuit and the relation between its factors

The process model of the pursuit of happiness - synthesis

Life crisis among young adults as they relate to the pursuit of happiness

5.1. The concept of crisis and its types

5.2. Happiness relevant crises of young adults

5.3. The crisis as a chance – posttraumatic growth and its relation to pursuit of happiness

Life crisis among young adults as they relate to the pursuit of happiness – synthesis

The study of the Biblical etalon, pursuit of happiness and crises

6.1. Methodology

6.1.1. Clarification of the notions used

6.1.2. The sample and the related methodology

6.1.3. Presentation of the used instruments and the study of their internal validity and reliability

6.2. Hypotheses

6.3. Results and initial interpretation of hypothesis investigation and of the further measuring

6.3.1. First hypothesis

6.3.2. Second hypothesis

6.3.3. Third hypothesis

6.3.4. Study of further connections

6.4. The hypothetical model of the discussed factors

6.5. Further conclusions

6.6. Limitations

6.7. Application possibilities within the practice of counseling

6.8. Further research options

The study of the Biblical etalon, pursuit of happiness and crises – synthesis

Closing and personal thoughts about happiness

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

Attachments

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