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The Successfulness of a Modern Individual: Theoretical and Methodological Aspects of the Study



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Abstract. The article discusses theoretical foundations of understanding success, substantiates methodological approaches to studying the successfulness of the 20th century individual, and discusses findings of an exploratory research conducted by an international team of scientists. We consider it important to study the social phenomenon such as “successfulness of a modern individual” in the context of their satisfaction with important aspects of life and work and from the perspective of a wide range of socio-cultural, socio-psychological and demographic determinants. The study uses methods developed in various fields of social and humanitarian science; the methods describe the phenomenon¹ of success in a meaningful way and identify its prevalence and manifestation features in different countries (in this project – Russia, Poland and Belarus) and in specific groups within countries. An exploratory research performed in this way has an interdisciplinary basis and relies on the synthesis of econometric (modeling, correlation and regression analysis), sociological (questionnaire survey), and psychological (testing) methods. The article presents findings of a pilot sociological survey and psychological testing of the population of different cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk)

¹ A philosophical term, which has a wide range of meanings and acts as a basic, complete and reliable unit of what can be singled out in a consciousness (from the Greek word *phainomenon*, which means *manifesting itself*).

and Poland (Lublin). The pilot stage of the comparative cross-country study involved empirical testing of the selected tools in determining success factors in different linguistic, cultural and political environments, searching for methodological approaches to the essence of the phenomenon under consideration, and the operationalization of the concepts used. Successfulness² has been studied in terms of self-esteem and in relation to life satisfaction. The study covered main spheres and conditions of human life. We tested relevant hypotheses that we had confirmed in the course of regional studies. The scientific significance and novelty of the research lies in the exploratory nature of the project, an attempt to solve a scientific problem by integrating knowledge and methods from various scientific fields. The findings of the study, its conclusions and models can become the basis for the development of a full-fledged concept of “modern successful individual”.

Key words: success, methodology, society, sociological survey, needs, sustainable development.

Introduction

According to D. McClelland’s Need Theory, “the need for achievement is a key factor in economic growth” [1, p. 285]. Those countries where a desire for success is widespread (e.g., in many Western European countries, USA, Japan) have a higher level of GDP and faster economic and social development [2, p. 302]. Almost any jump in “intensive economic development”, according to D. McClelland is “preceded by the spread of the “need for achievement” [2, pp. 302, 303] and a high level of desire for success. This is due to the fact that in such societies “there are always a lot of energetic entrepreneurs who contribute ... to faster economic growth” [1, p. 465]. The ideologists of the theory of the “welfare state”³, whose main task is to ensure the evolutionary progressive development of all strata of society [3], also pointed out that “... the wealth, power and happiness of the state depend on the welfare of its individual citizens” [4].

At the same time, the motivation for success in psychological and sociological consideration is contradictory both for an individual and for building social relations in society. The versatility and multiple effects of success as a social phenomenon predetermine the need to study it from the point of view of various social sciences. However, the phenomenon of success has not yet become the subject of targeted interdisciplinary scientific analysis. Some works on this problem consider certain aspects and elements of “success”⁴. Thus, the category of “success” and the empirical indicators of “successfulness” require further theoretical and methodological analysis in order to create relevant models of modern successful people taking into account socio-cultural, demographic and socio-economic differences within and between countries.

This has become a starting point for the joint study “Modern successful individual” carried out by an international research team that unites scientists (psychologists, economists,

² Successfulness is an empirical indicator (construct), which allows us to carry out measurement procedures for the subjective assessment of success.

³ The German scientist L. von Stein (1815–1890) is considered to be the author of the concept of the social state. This idea was also addressed by Yu. Offner, F. Naumann, A. Wagner, G.W.F. Hegel, W. von Humboldt, N.Ya. Danilevsky, V.I. Lenin, K. Marx, F. Engels, etc.

⁴ Life successfulness, personal life path, subjective resources of successfulness, responsibility as a determinant of successfulness, education and successfulness, social successfulness, professional success, gender aspect of success, educational successfulness, etc.

sociologists) from Russia, the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Belarus. The goal of the project, which is currently being carried out by the research team, is to determine the features of a modern successful person in the context of satisfaction. The study is designed to answer the questions: who is a successful person, what is their psychosocial image; what are their socio-demographic characteristics; what is their satisfaction with various aspects of life; what are the socio-economic effects of success; what is the role of socio-cultural drivers of success.

Given the multidimensionality of the conceptual construct “successful person”, the study was based on the principles of the socio-cultural approach, which due to “the possibility of connecting different aspects of the vision of the object allows us to show it as a bright, multifaceted, living entity in continuous development” [5]. Pitirim Sorokin identified this approach as an inseparable triad – “individual, society, and culture”, highlighting the aspects of their socio-cultural interaction, inseparable from each other: “an individual as a subject of interaction; society as a set of interacting individuals with its socio-cultural relations and processes, and culture as a set of values and norms owned by interacting persons, and a set of carriers that objectify, socialize and disclose these values. None of the members of this inseparable triad (individual, society and culture) can exist without the other two” [6, p. 218]. Modern researchers believe that this approach “integrates the three dimensions of human existence (the individual with their relationship with society, the nature of culture, the type of sociality) as fundamental, each of which is not reduced to others and is not derived from them, but

they are all interconnected and affect each other as the most important components of human communities” [7]. The appeal to the socio-cultural approach⁵ is connected with the emphasis on the spiritual factors in social and economic development and socio-cultural and socio-psychological factors in the well-being of society [8]. The growth of the number of empirical studies focused on the study of life satisfaction, happiness level and subjective well-being also indicates the interest in this direction [9]. We think that among the above-mentioned non-economic factors, there is the phenomenon of “success” and successfulness as its subjective perception. The appeal to this problem is explained by the fact that the practice of studying the state of society through the prism of negative indicators (disease, mortality, poverty, deviations) has taken root, and this is methodologically not quite correct, since the factors in positive states (social order, health, well-being) and negative states (deviations, diseases) differ. Thus, according to RAS Academician M.K. Gorshkov, the success of the modernization of society is increasingly associated with the improvement of the social environment, the spiritual development of society and the moral state of people [8].

Progressive development of any state is largely based on the effective work, success and achievements of each of its citizens in personal, professional and civic activity. How successful are people from different countries? If we consider indicators that indirectly give us an idea about the success of citizens, we will see that, for example, the happiness index

⁵ In the context of our research, the tradition goes back to the works of Max Weber *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Economic Ethics of the World Religion*.

calculated for 156 countries⁶ shows that its value is higher in Finland (happiness index-2019 is 7.8 points). Poland is on the 40th position in this rating (6.2 points), the Russian Federation – on the 68th (5.6 points), Belarus – on the 81st (5.3 points) [10]. Studies show that happy employees are 12% more productive [11]. Accordingly, if a person is successful and happy, then their work performance provides a significant benefit for economic development.

Over the course of history, the understanding of achievement and success has changed, and nowadays these phenomena are manifested in different cultures in different ways [12]. For example, in a research conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation (FOM) in 2017, the answers of Russians to the question “What is success in life to you personally? How would you define it?”⁷ were as follows: at the top of the rating: “happiness in my personal life, well-being of my family, children, grandchildren” (32%), “material well-being, prosperity” (27%), “good, interesting, favorite work, successful career” (20%), “health of my loved ones” (13%). The most important components of the life success of Poles⁸, according to a study

by the Institute of Public Opinion “Homo Homini”, are “family” (58%) and “good job” (56%), and these two components outstrip others such as “my own home” (23%), “love” (22%), “good education” (22%), “money” (10%). For comparison, we should mention that for Americans, “success” is not so much a statement of achievements, as “a social norm ..., a vital imperative ... a way of positioning... “I am an American” already implies superiority and higher starting positions” [13].

The given data show that, despite some similarity of positions in a self-assessment of success, there are essential differences connected both with cultural (in particular, mentality) and institutional conditions in different countries. These features, as well as the range of socio-cultural, socio-psychological and demographic factors that determine the motivation for success, are within the research field of the project described in the present paper.

Theoretical and methodological review

The idea of success is studied in different areas of scientific knowledge (psychology, economics, sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, etc.), each of which considers specific facets of this phenomenon [14].

Philosophical substantiation of the phenomenon of success is mainly connected with the problem of values, as well as with self-identification of an individual and their self-esteem [15]. The analysis of socio-philosophical approaches that study the phenomena of “success” and “successfulness” in different historical periods [16] shows that “success in the modern understanding of this concept is revealed by ontological characteristics of an individual” [16] that determine the effectiveness of social actions (the use of hidden reserves, independence and responsibility in planning activities focused on success, self-realization, self-actualization, self-satisfaction in activities, professional competence, etc.).

⁶ The Happy Planet Index is a combined indicator of the British research center New Economic Foundation. The calculated happiness index takes into account: *GDP per capita*, taking into account domestic prices (PPP); *healthy life expectancy*, *social support* – the answer to the question “If you had a problem, could you count on the help of relatives or friends if necessary?”; *generosity* – the answer to the question “Did you spend money on charity last month?”; *freedom to make life choices* – the answer to the question “Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the freedom to choose what you do with your life?”; *perceptions of corruption* – the answers to the questions “Is corruption widespread in the government?” and “Is corruption widespread in business?”; *subjective feeling of happiness* – the answers to questions about the past day: Did you laugh? Did you feel happiness? Were you worried? Did you feel anger?

⁷ What is success? It is difficult or easy to achieve success for the residents of today’s Russia. Available at: <https://fom.ru/TSennosti/13865> (accessed 05.11.2019).

⁸ A Polish model of success: the data of the survey “Who are we?” conducted among the inhabitants of Poland by the Institute for Public Opinion Research “Homo Homini”. Available at: <http://maxpark.com/community/politic/content/2103799> (accessed 12.08.2019).

In psychology and sociology, this issue is investigated in the framework of the theory of achievement motivation.

At the same time, two complementary views have been formed in the modern scientific literature. The first one focuses on the study of the conditions for achieving success and successfulness in the process of self-realization and self-actualization of an individual (A. Adler [17], A. Maslow [18], K. Rogers, V. Frankl [19], etc.). Self-actualization, according to representatives of this direction, is focused on something that exists outside the person (other people, sphere of activity, meaning). For example, V. Frankl wrote: “Self-actualization is not the final destination of a person. ... If we turn self-actualization into an end in itself, it will conflict with the self-transcendence of human existence. ... Only in so far as man succeeds in realizing the meaning which he finds in the external world does he realize himself. If he intends to actualize himself instead of making sense, the meaning of self-actualization is immediately lost” [19, p. 58-59].

Scientists of the second direction focus on the content and essence of personal success (D. McClelland [1], H. Heckhausen [12], E. Fromm [20], etc.). For example, E. Fromm in his research pays special attention to higher existential needs (establishing connections, overcoming, identity, system of views, etc.). Of course, the ways to meet these needs depend to a great extent on the type of social conditions that surround the individual, they significantly affect the ways to meet the needs [20].

In sociology, the analysis of this phenomenon is aimed at identifying the criteria and drivers of success, their representation in specific social groups and spheres of activity [21, 22, 23, 24].

The renowned Polish sociologist P. Sztompka notes the influence of M. Weber’s idea about the search for spiritual determinants of macro

processes in the sphere of individual motivations and values and identifies two classical vectors of research into the phenomenon of a successful person [25]. The first one, according to P. Sztompka, is associated with the name of E. Hagen [26], who introduced the concept of “innovative personality” as a prerequisite for economic growth and the spread of entrepreneurship. The second one is associated with the theory of D. McClelland [27], according to which the spread of the motivation for achievement precedes a leap forward in economic growth.

Empirical economics, when it studies general principles of behavior of subjects of economic relations, it analyzes the ways of achieving success at the macro- or micro-level of the national economy. And if the classics of economic thought (A. Smith [28], D. Ricardo [29], etc.) considered the growth of social wealth as an indicator of macroeconomic success, then the marginalists (K. Menger [30], W.S. Jevons [31], A. Marshall [32], J.B. Clark [33] et al.) focused on human behavior, the definition of its activity motives and aspirations. At the same time, they considered the maximum satisfaction of an individual’s needs as the ultimate goal, i.e., “the maximization of welfare was understood as the maximization of utility” [34].

In modern economics, there is a new approach to indicators of success and efficiency of the economy of countries, based on the concept of “happiness economics”. The concept of “happiness economics” is based on increasing the satisfaction and happiness of each person and each market subject. P.A. Sorokin believed that it is unacceptable to ignore happiness as a measure of progress, as, indeed, to exaggerate its importance: “All the criteria of progress, no matter how diverse they may be, somehow imply and must include the principle of happiness” [35, p. 511]. This direction focuses on subjective well-being,

defined as “a broad category of phenomena consisting in the emotional response of people” [36]; “happiness economics” uses it to assess the quality of objective living conditions of people [37]. In this issue, economists, sociologists and psychologists are in solidarity, because, according to scientists, society has entered the “economics of life satisfaction” [38, p. 122]. Life satisfaction is thus part of the broader concept of “subjective well-being”, its cognitive side, which is complemented by emotions (positive and negative) experienced by an individual in a given period of time [39]. In this case, the economy is considered as a tool for creating well-being for society as a whole and for each individual [40]. Quality of life indicators are actively used for comparative analysis of countries’ development. It also indicates attention to the subjective assessment of human well-being. N.M. Rimashevskaya notes that “the quality of life is the meaning of life of each individual and the population as a whole” [41, p. 185].

Thus, success (a broad, multifaceted and deep concept) is inextricably linked to the values and norms of an individual and society. Despite all the differences in the understanding of success and successfulness, there is a “common core of meaning” that is “dominated by areas of life such as work, knowledge and an open political system that provides freedom, in which an individual’s initiative can lead to success”. It is argued that “the commitment to family, tradition and interpersonal relationships should retreat and give way to the aforementioned areas” [12]. These statements, as we see, contain contradictory manifestations of the phenomenon of success and successfulness.

In periods of changing historical epochs, the accumulated scientific heritage is re-evaluated, enriched and developed, especially in the field of social science; new scientific paradigms are formed that meet the realities of a changing

society. These include, for example, P. Sorokin’s “integralism” – “a complex, synthetic, unifying approach to the study of society and man” [42]. According to P. Sorokin, man is one of the important creative centers ... of reality”, who is able to “transcend the limits of his unconscious and conscious forces” and “who ... does it in the best periods of his intense creativity” [43]. In the 1930s, P. Sorokin warned that a person “sandwiched between two eras”, when “old values are collapsing, and new ones have not yet strengthened, is lost in the wilds of the disintegrated sensual world and society” [43]. The scientist saw the way out in the spread of altruistic values. Representatives of the school of Russian cyclism (V.I. Vernadsky [45] et al.) developed this idea, justifying the “revival of high ... culture and humanistic-noospheric morality” through the partnership of civilizations [46, 47]. Such a change in the times was the end of the 20th century, which marked “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe” (collapse of the Soviet Union), which “broke the ongoing development of ... society” and caused fundamental “changes in politics, economy, and ideological systems” [49]. The consumer society began to emerge against the background of growing new needs. At the same time, consumption is a “factor in identity construction” [50]. “Goods become spiritualized and animated elements of social reality” [51]. The possession of a branded thing or its latest ultra-modern model is an indicator of success, the realization of the need for “self-expression, status, beauty, power” [51], etc.

The American psychologist T. Shibusani draws attention to the fact that in some cases the struggle for recognition, power and status, and the desire for both very high and very low goals are associated with rejection of oneself, because “to evaluate oneself means to consider oneself within a certain hierarchical system” [52]. Self-esteem is an important regulator of behavior, it depends on the relationship

of a person with other people, criticism and demands toward oneself, attitude toward success and failure.

An individual cannot be considered separately from the society, its traditions, foundations, level of economic and social development, as well as the society depends on how much human potential is developed in it, how much its members are interested in personal success and success of the society.

From the methodological point of view, the study of the phenomenon of a successful person can be considered as an attempt to combine [53, p. 14] cognitive means of various humanities on the basis of an interdisciplinary approach that gives a broader and comprehensive understanding. All the theoretical and methodological provisions given by us served as the basis to substantiate the methods and design of the study.

Research methods and tools

Beginning our research, we considered it important to study the phenomenon of a successful person not only in the context of their satisfaction with various aspects of life, but also their behavior within a wide range of socio-cultural, socio-psychological and demographic determinants, using methods developed in various fields of social and humanitarian science, allowing us to describe this phenomenon as an “ideal type” or model and to identify the features of its manifestation in different countries and in specific groups within countries.

Interpretation of the basic concepts

Before proceeding to the description of the research tools, let us focus on the main terms and concepts that are used in the work. We note that success was studied in terms of self-esteem in the context of satisfaction.

Success is a positive aspect of the subjective “good state” of an individual [54]; achievement

of the goals, positive result of something, public recognition of something or someone⁹.

Satisfaction is an emotional state arising from the implementation of a motive [55].

Satisfaction with life is a multi-valued and multidimensional term that reflects “the overall assessment of satisfaction with one’s achievements and living conditions”, which is determined by comparing one’s position with one’s established standards [56].

Life satisfaction is a general idea of a person about psychological comfort, which includes: a) interest in life; b) determination, commitment, consistency in achieving life goals; c) consistency between the goals set and actually achieved; e) positive assessment of one’s own qualities and actions and e) the overall result of satisfaction with life.

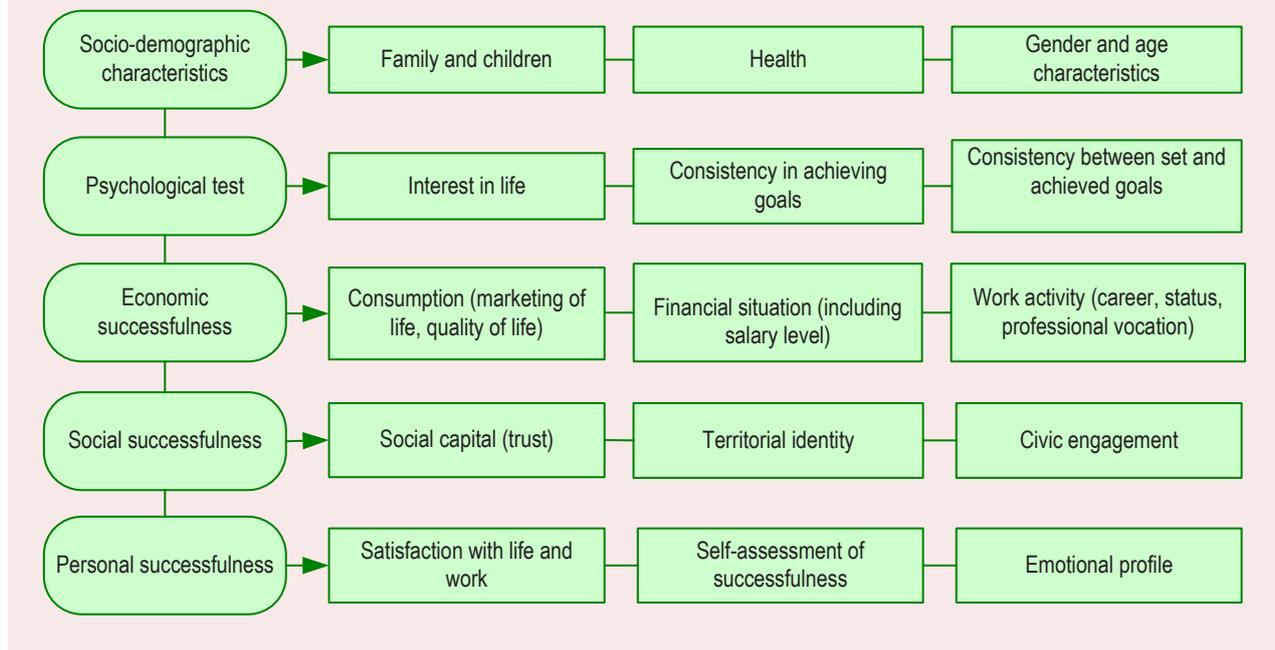
Life stability – a) persistence and determination in actions; b) personal competence in overcoming stress, and tolerance to negative emotions; c) tolerance to failures and understanding of life as a challenge [54; 57].

Economic successfulness is satisfaction due to the possession of material goods, the level of consumption, quality of life and standard of living.

Professional successfulness is a set of positive results accumulated during career (work): “personal satisfaction with professional self-realization based on the effectiveness of personal and professional achievements on the way to professionalism and their recognition in a professionally significant environment for the actor” [58]. It is an integral phenomenon (quantitative and qualitative indicators of activity, psychophysiological costs, job satisfaction, evaluation of one’s work and remuneration, relationships with colleagues and managers, their assessment of the actor’s work, etc.” [59, p. 302].

⁹ Kuznetsov S.A. (Ed.). *Comprehensive Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language. 1st edition.* Saint Petersburg: Norint, 1998.

Figure 1. Structure of the questionnaire



Social successfulness is a set of achievements in a society (reference group), significant for the individual. It is expressed in the socially significant and recognized result of social actions of an individual, that is, the result that ensures high quality of spiritual and social life of an individual within social norms” [60, p. 20].

Life successfulness means personal achievements of an individual in accordance with the requirements that they set for themselves.

Personal successfulness is the criterion (assessment) of self-realization of an individual.

Emotional profile is the degree of distinct manifestation of the set of positive (“joy”, “happiness”, “peace”, “feeling of harmony with the world”, “feeling of luck”) and negative (“feeling of fatigue”, “stress, tension”, “anxiety”, “fear”, “loneliness”, “delight”, “boredom”, “despair”) emotions [61].

At the first stage of our study, in order to test the tools, we conducted a sociological survey on the sample of 100 people (from 18 to 70 years

old) for each territory¹⁰, proportionally representing the population by sex and age.

The questionnaire for the pilot survey consisted of five interrelated blocks of questions (*Fig. 1*):

Successfulness was studied in terms of self-esteem, covering the main areas and conditions of life. We tested relevant hypotheses that we had confirmed in the course of regional studies. The obtained empirical data will be used to substantiate the model of satisfaction of a modern successful individual.

¹⁰ The survey was conducted in various cities. In Russia – in cities of regional significance (Vologda, Kolomna) in the Republican capital – Petrozavodsk and in the industrial city – Cherepovets in the Vologda Oblast, in Belarus (the capital – Minsk), Poland (the administrative center of the Voivodeship with developed mechanical engineering – Lublin). Cities of the sample have different status, different population (from 140 thousand people – Kolomna, from 300 thousand people – Vologda, Cherepovets, Lublin, about 2 million people – Minsk), different socio-economic development (the state of budget security, the level and forms of employment, the level of development of social infrastructure, etc.), which helped achieve representation of the maximum diversity of the urban population in the sample.

In accordance with the research agenda associated with the comparison of heterogeneous social units (three countries, six cities, population with different views and values), the hypothesis of the relationship between successfulness and life satisfaction was formulated. At the same time, the object of the study – the urban population – will be internally differentiated by countries, types of settlements, sex, age and social status of respondents.

According to one of particular hypotheses, there were statistically significant differences in life satisfaction among respondents in the groups under consideration. To test the hypothesis *in the psychological block* of the study, the following methods were used.

For the analysis of life satisfaction the test¹¹ “Life Satisfaction Index” [62], consisting of five scales, was used. The scale of *interest in life* reflects the degree of satisfaction and activity in life. The second scale evaluated people from the position of *consistency in achieving goals*. According to its estimates, the level of achievement of life goals is highest in those who seek to realize their life goals and objectives. The scale of *consistency between set and achieved goals* characterizes people in terms of their awareness of their ability to achieve planned life goals. The fourth scale presents *self-assessment of oneself and one’s own actions by identifying positive qualities and shortcomings*, including one’s own competencies. High scores on this scale reflect such qualities as determination and

perseverance aimed at achieving goals. A low score reflects passive acceptance of life’s failures and submissive acceptance of all that life brings. Realistic self-assessment shows that a person fully and reliably uses their capabilities to overcome any limitations and obstacles in life. The fifth scale shows the degree of optimism of a person and their satisfaction with life.

In order to analyze the situation “Overcoming stress and life difficulties”, the Scale of Life Stability [57] (SPP-25) was applied, or rather its selected aspects a) persistence and determination in actions, b) personal competence in overcoming stress, and tolerance to negative emotions c) tolerance to failures and understanding of life as a challenge. ANOVA¹² statistics were used to assess the level of life satisfaction in the groups under consideration. An additional test “post-hoc Tukey’a”¹³ was used to determine statistically significant differences between the groups under consideration.

The problem of *economic successfulness* in the interdisciplinary study is investigated by a block of questions relating to:

- *consumption* (behavior of people in the consumer market, positioning of an individual in society, motives and incentives of rationality taking into account the received income and expenses, quality and marketing of life of respondents, opportunities for receiving

¹¹ The methodology was translated and adapted by N.V. Panina in 1993. The questionnaire, which diagnoses the index of life satisfaction, reflects the general psychological state of a person, the degree of their psychological comfort and socio-psychological adaptation. The scale consists of 20 questions, the results of the answers of which are reduced to 5 scales that characterize various aspects of the general psychological state of a person and their satisfaction with life. The maximum life satisfaction index is 40 points. The average life satisfaction for 25 to 30 points. Indicators less than 25 points are considered low.

¹² The purpose of ANOVA (analysis of variation) is to test the significance of the difference between averages in different groups by comparing the variances of these groups. Dividing the total variance into multiple sources (associated with different effects in the plan) allows us to compare the variance caused by differences between groups with the variance caused by intra-group variability. The hypothesis being tested is that there is no difference between the groups. If the null hypothesis is true, the estimate of variance associated with intra-group variability should be close to the estimate of inter-group variance, if false – significantly deviate.

¹³ Statistics: post hoc comparisons – the method of a posteriori multiple comparisons assumes the presence of more than two samples. This method is used for testing hypotheses and exploratory analysis.

qualitative, including elite, education, etc.). The inclusion of questions about the level of consumption and its relationship to individual's success is due to the fact that the population of different countries of the world today more often chooses this scenario of behavior, characterized by mass consumption of material goods and forming an appropriate system of values and attitudes. From 1960 to 2000, i.e. for 40 years, personal spending on goods and services worldwide has more than quadrupled (from 4.8 billion USD up to 20 billion USD)¹⁴. In Russia, this type of behavior began to emerge in the post Soviet period¹⁵;

– *financial situation* (self-identification, characteristics of cash income, expenditures on buying expensive goods);

– *labor activity* (forms and methods of employment, degree (level) of realization of qualitative characteristics of the working population in work, intensity and productivity of work, status of the position and ideas about career growth, value of work, self-assessment of usefulness of an individual for society, conformity to a professional calling).

In addition to the above aspects of the economic content of the phenomenon of “successfulness”, the problem of creative and inventive activity becomes relevant for the development of society [63; 64]. The possibility of self-realization in this area is one of the facets of modern success of an individual. In this regard, the project explores such an indicator as the frequency of manifestation of creative abilities at work and in everyday life.

¹⁴ The History Of What Things Cost In America: 1776 to Today. Available at: <https://247wallst.com/investing/2010/09/16/the-history-of-what-things-cost-in-america-1776-to-today/> (accessed 10.03.2019).

¹⁵ Consumer society. Portal “Slovari i entsiklopedii na Akademike”. Available at: <https://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/rwiki/92833> (accessed 10.03.2019).

Social successfulness “means the achievement of social status, the acquisition of social prestige, the acquisition of social and personal reputation. Possession of these parameters with a social sign “plus” already makes a person successful and success – socially tangible and ranked, and transfers a successful person to the rank of a new stratification – successful individuals” [65, p. 16]. Social capital is a key factor in the formation of social success of an individual, because the system of social networks, in which an individual is included, greatly increases their chance to implement successful life strategies [66]. Social capital is formed in various social groups – from the family to the nation; it is created and transmitted through cultural mechanisms such as religion, tradition, custom [67; 68]. One of the directions of functioning of social capital is civic activity, “expressed in ... the ability and desire to show one’s own civic position, to defend personal and group interests and rights, this awareness of personal responsibility for the welfare of countries” [69]. In the present study, a separate block is devoted to the problem of *social successfulness*, presented by indicators relating to certain aspects of *social capital* (trust, virtual networks); *civic activity* (real participation in the life of one’s city, region; the possibility of influencing the state of affairs in the region, etc.) and *territorial identity* (the possibility of self-realization in the region, the attitude toward the region of residence and its problems).

Personal successfulness as one of the aspects of life success implies a subjective level of assessment of the individual’s life and activities. The level is based on personal (subjective) assessments of the success of social practices implemented by the individual and life in general, and these assessments may not always correspond to the standards of success

adopted in society. In other words, internal (subjective, satisfaction-based) recognition of successfulness of the results of one's activities is not always accompanied by the recognition of these achievements by society. This is how it differs from social successfulness. However, in many respects these are interpenetrating and interdependent constructs, which makes them difficult to differentiate, and, in our opinion, their differentiation does not carry a special semantic load. Conventionally, the components of personal success can be grouped as follows: family and children, leisure, health, spiritual and intellectual development, emotional experiences, etc. These questions in the study are considered in a special block, which allows us to assess the demographic behavior of people, life and family relationships, health and healthcare, and to show their importance in the phenomenon of successfulness.

We should say that satisfaction is one of the significant parameters of one's personal successfulness. The motivators that cause satisfaction include one's work [70], career prospects, responsibility and achievements of an individual or group in work [71]. In our study, the criteria of success are considered in the issues related to the analysis of satisfaction with life in general and its individual aspects, the current life situation, work, quality of services, etc.

Emotions are an important tool for understanding the logic of human behavior [52, 72]. Our project investigated the emotional profile of an individual depending on the self-assessment of their success. It was studied using such an indicator as the degree of expression of positive (joy, happiness, peace, a sense of harmony with the world, a sense of luck) and negative emotions (a sense of fatigue, stress, tension, anxiety, fear, loneliness, boredom, a sense of hopelessness). We put forward a private

hypothesis that in the emotional profile of respondents who rated themselves as successful, positive emotions will be expressed stronger, and negative emotions will be weaker compared to other respondents. Looking ahead, we note that this assumption was confirmed.

Thus, when forming the tools and conducting analytical procedures, the scientific group was guided by the above methodological approaches to understanding the phenomenon of successfulness. We believe that the use of cognitive tools of various sciences used in this project will allow the team of scientists to develop an interdisciplinary approach to the study of successfulness of an individual in a modern society and to develop relevant models of satisfaction, taking into account the socio-cultural and socio-demographic context.

Main findings of the research

The results of the pilot survey conducted in three countries (Russia, Belarus and Poland) provide the basis for a preliminary analysis in the summarized form for all the territories under consideration.

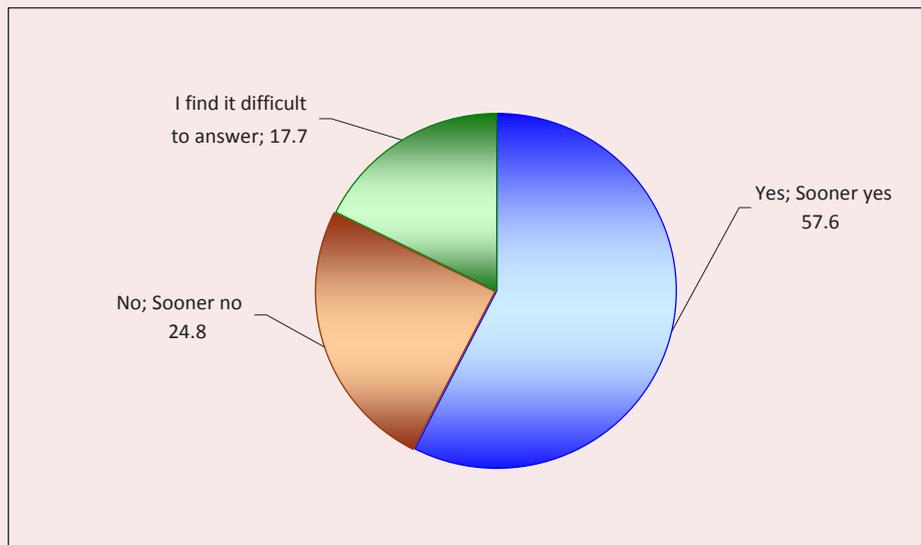
In order to identify features of successfulness and test the hypothesis of the relationship between successfulness and life satisfaction, respondents were grouped as follows: the first group included those who gave an affirmative answer to the question "Do you consider yourself a successful person?"; the second group included those who gave a negative answer; the third group consists of respondents who said they found it difficult to answer.

According to the study, almost two-thirds of respondents from three countries described themselves as successful (58%; Fig. 2).

Results of the "Socio-demographic characteristics" block

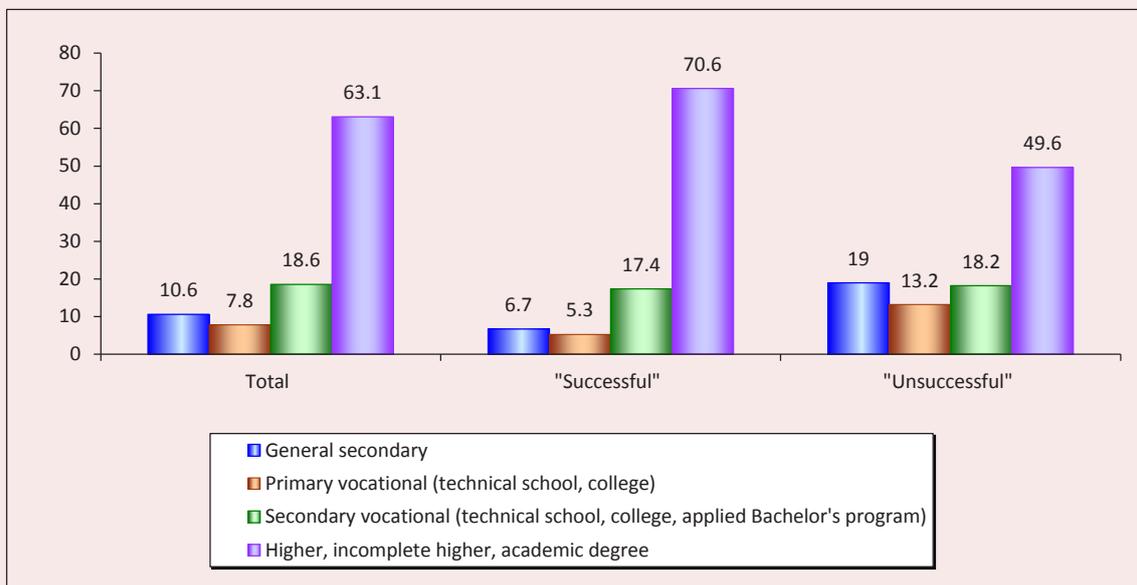
One of the important results of the study is to identify the demographic characteristics of successfulness.

Figure 2. Distribution of answers to the question “Do you consider yourself a successful person”, given by respondents from Russia, Belarus and Poland, %



Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

Figure 3. Distribution of answers to the question “Do you consider yourself a successful person”, given by respondents from Russia, Belarus and Poland and arranged according to their education, %



Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

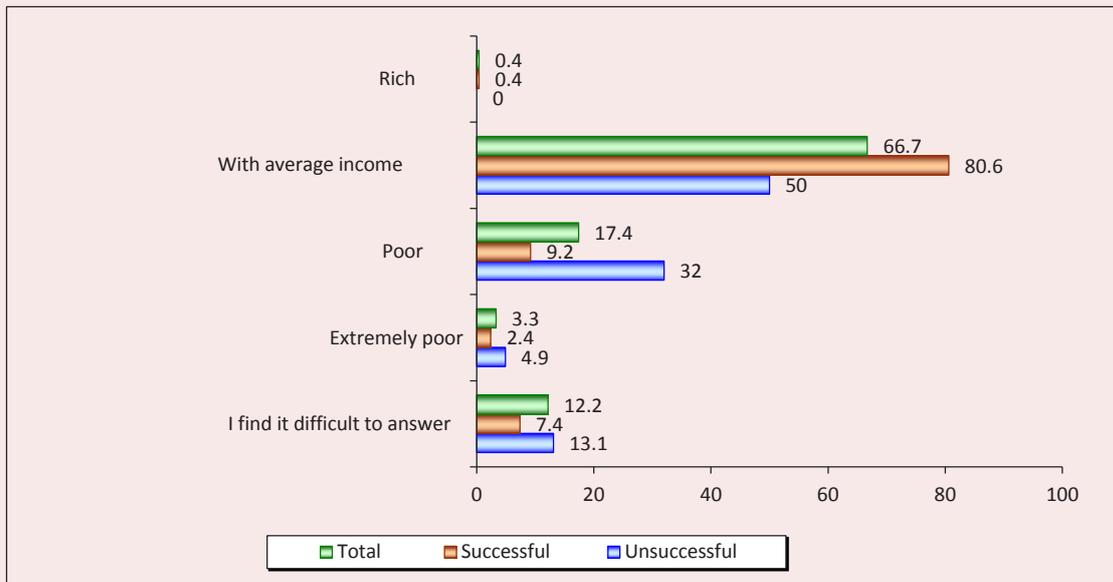
The hallmark of success is the level of education. Among the respondents who considered themselves to be successful, there are mainly people with higher education and highly qualified specialists (Fig. 3). In the group of “successful” respondents there are 1.4 times more those with higher education than among the “unsuccessful” ones.

The vast majority of respondents who consider themselves “successful”, refer themselves to the category of citizens with average material wealth (81%); among the “unsuccessful” such people constitute only a half (50%). At the same time, more than a third of

the “unsuccessful” correlate their situation with poverty (32%), and 13% – with extreme poverty (Fig. 4).

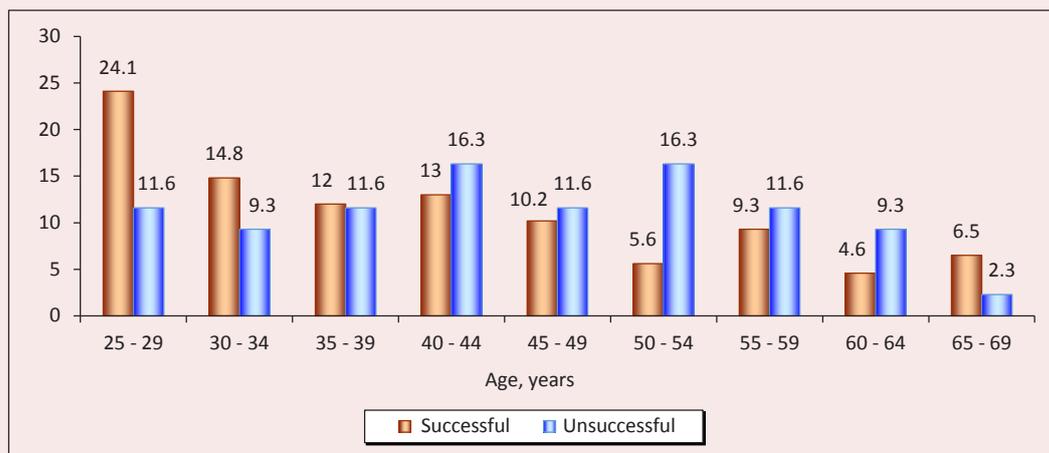
As the study has shown, in general, self-assessment of successfulness is more typical of young people (25–29 years) (Fig. 5, 6).

Figure 4. Self-identification of respondents from Russia, Belarus and Poland who answered the question “Do you consider yourself a successful person?”, %



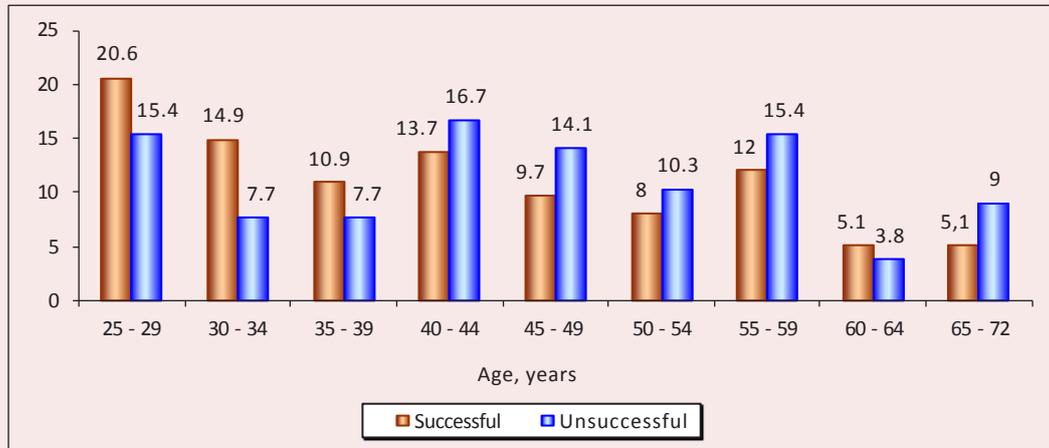
Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

Figure 5. Distribution of men by age and self-assessment of successfulness, %



Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

Figure 6. Distribution of women by age and self-assessment of successfulness, %



Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

At a young age there is enough strength and energy. Perhaps young people who have not experienced the breakdown of the social system and who have been developing in a market economy have a higher level of adaptation to new socio-economic realities. Positive self-assessment of success prevails in the age group 30–34 years, especially among the female population. The formation of this group also took place in new conditions. Among middle-aged people (40–44, 45–49, 50–54 years of age) there are more of those who rated themselves as “unsuccessful”. The obtained results require further deeper understanding and meaningful interpretation.

Human health is the basis of the well-being of society as a whole and of the individual in particular. Achievement of success in realization of vital purposes of each person to a large extent depends both on the state of their health and on attitudes toward a healthy way of life. This assumption is confirmed by the surveys (Fig. 7). The difference between groups of successful and unsuccessful people according to self-assessment of health is statistically

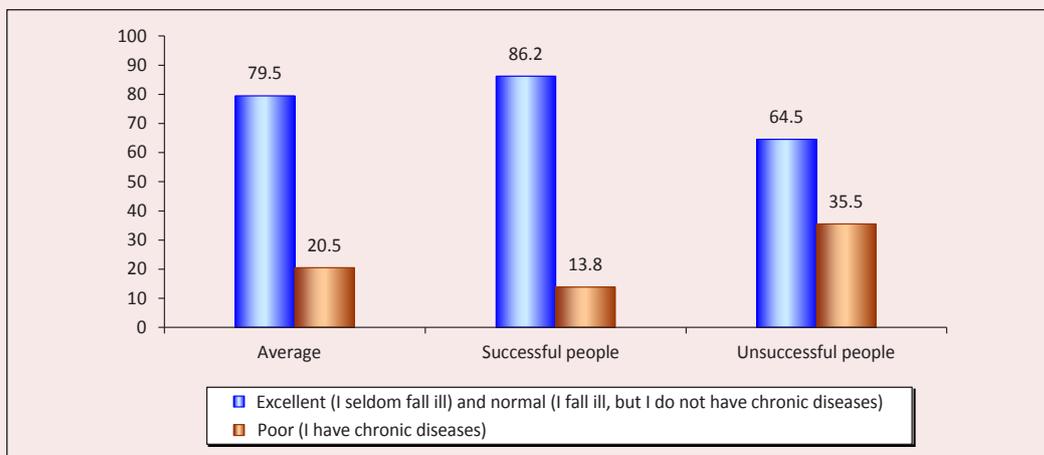
significant. The number of successful respondents who answered that their health was “excellent and normal” is 1.3 times more and the number of successful respondents who answered that their health was “poor” is 2.6 times less than in the opposite group.

The obtained results allowed us to form a hypothetical portrait of a modern successful person. This is a person under the age of 40, with higher education, average material wealth according to their own self-esteem. They have a normal or excellent self-rated health, high level of professional qualifications, monitor their own behavior, are committed to a healthy lifestyle, have a stable family relationship, rely on their own strength and also on the support of their family.

The results of the psychological block

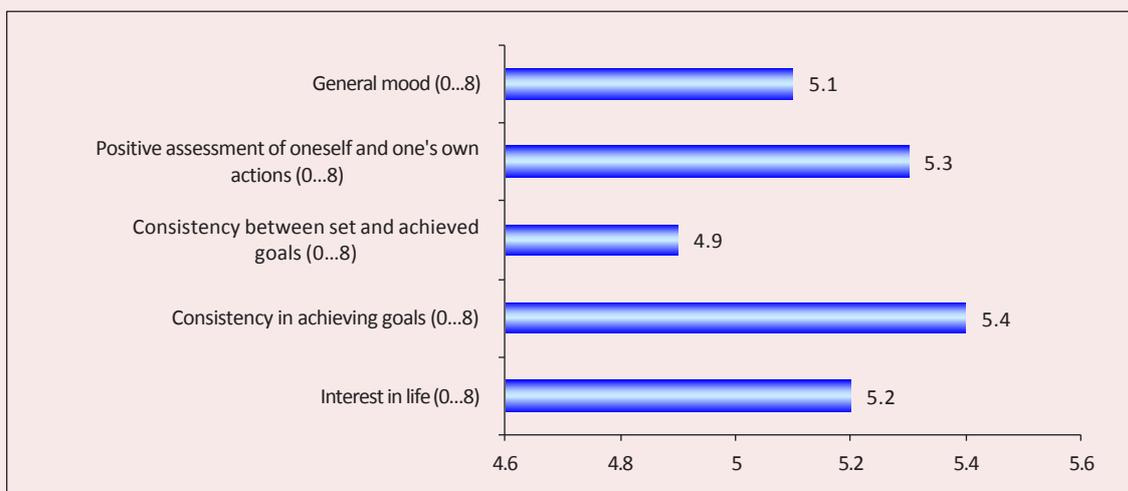
Preliminary results of the analysis of the psychological test of the study on life satisfaction, consisting of five scales, show that the level of interest in life, the achievement of life goals and internal consistency between the goals and their achievement in the countries as a whole is above average (from 4.9 to 5.4 points out of 8; Fig. 8).

Figure 7. Self-assessment of their own health by respondents from Russia, Belarus and Poland, on average and in the context of self-assessment of successfulness, %



Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

Figure 8. Results of psychological test of life satisfaction (Life Satisfaction Index), average score*



* Scale of results: min 0 ... max 8.

Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018, calculations by L. Suchocka.

The lowest score has a scale showing the consistency between the goals set and achieved (4.9 points). The results of the answers on this scale give information about the degree of conviction of a person in achieving or in the ability to achieve those goals that they consider important for themselves. Low scores indicate

either that there is a mismatch in the assessment of respondents' plans, or that the goals have not yet been achieved, as they have a longer lag for their implementation. The latter assumption is more likely, since the score on the scale of "consistency in achieving your goals" has the highest score of all scales – 5.4.

Results of the block on economic successfulness

One of the markers of human success is the structure and volume of consumption. It directly depends on the satisfaction of the individual with their wages. The survey data show that in the assessment of wages in general, the position of the answers “completely and mostly dissatisfied” somewhat prevails – 33%. And in the group of “unsuccessful” respondents, the share of such estimates is more than two-thirds – 61%. In the group of “successful people”, on the contrary, superiority belongs to positive responses (41%; Fig. 9).

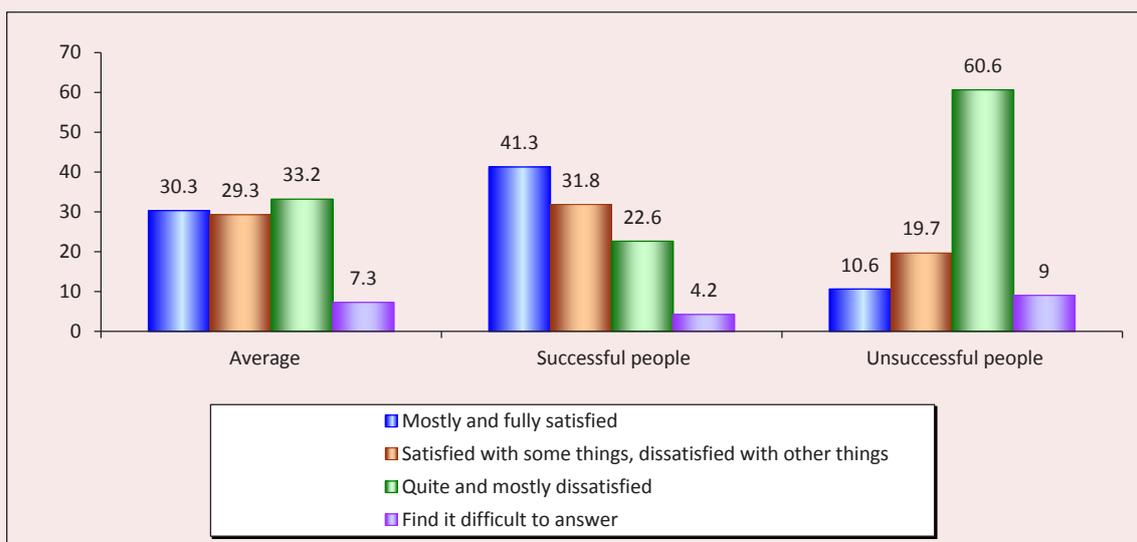
The intensity of work and responsibility in work, as a rule, directly contribute to the success of a person, as evidenced by people’s responses on the degree of use of their qualities in their work. At the same time, the successful part of respondents implements their qualitative properties to the full, and often at the limit of their capabilities (*Tab. 1*). Especially significant is the difference in the answers about the desire for promotion, the manifestation of initiative

and enterprise – in 7 times according to the answer “to the fullest extent”.

It is confirmed by the answers to the question about the professional career of respondents. For all the time periods proposed in the set of tools (over the past five years, one year and six months), “successful” people noted an improvement in their job positions. The difference in the corresponding answers between them and the group of “unsuccessful” persons is from 1.5 times in the position “for the last five years” to three times in the positions “for the last year and six months”.

One of the hypotheses of the study was the assumption about the balance of work and family life in “successful” working parents. We consider this hypothesis is due to the fact that in today’s rapidly changing world, most parents are concerned with solving economic rather than educational problems. The study shows that respondents participating in the survey at all its points are almost equally satisfied with their professional activities and life in general

Figure 9. Satisfaction with wages in the context of self-assessment of successfulness, %



Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

Table 1. Extent of using one's qualities and skills in work and life, %

Qualities	Groups according to self-assessment of successfulness	Degree of use of qualities			
		Very little (at a minimum)	Partly (little)	More or less fully (I can do more)	Fully (at the limit)
Physical capabilities and health	Successful	4.6	17.5	46.4	31.5
	Unsuccessful	7.5	23.3	41.7	27.5
Psychological stability	Successful	0.4	12.2	46.6	40.9
	Unsuccessful	5.1	19.5	43.2	32.2
Knowledge, erudition, qualification	Successful	1.1	8.3	49.5	41.2
	Unsuccessful	17.1	24.8	33.3	24.8
Creative abilities (ingenuity, ability to solve previously unknown tasks, etc.)	Successful	9.3	18.6	43.4	28.7
	Unsuccessful	26.5	26.5	29.9	17.1
Sociability, ability to get along with people	Successful	1.4	7.5	45	46.1
	Unsuccessful	4.2	20	36.7	39.2
General culture (good manners, politeness, restraint, etc.)	Successful	1.8	4.7	45.9	47.7
	Unsuccessful	5.9	7.6	42.4	44.1
Moral qualities (honesty, sense of duty, decency, obligation, etc.)	Successful	1.1	4.3	37.7	56.9
	Unsuccessful	2.5	5.8	43.3	48.3
Striving for promotion, showing initiative and enterprise	Successful	11.8	24.3	40	23.9
	Unsuccessful	28.6	33.6	34.5	3.4

Source: data from a pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

Table 2. Balance of personal life and work, %

Personal life	%	%	Work
Satisfaction with one's life in general		Satisfaction with professional activities	
<i>Average for the survey</i>	57.7	53.7	<i>Average for the survey</i>
<i>Average for a successful group of working parents</i>	73.8	78.5	<i>Average for a successful group of working parents</i>
Assessment of life prospects		Assessment of career prospects <i>(over the past 5 years, the official position has improved)</i>	
<i>Average for the survey</i>	28.0	38.6	<i>Average for the survey</i>
<i>Average for a successful group of working parents</i>	34.9	43.0	<i>Average for a successful group of working parents</i>
Family influence on life satisfaction <i>(increase satisfaction)</i>		Influence of the family on career plans <i>(I had to give up my family plans for a career)</i>	
<i>Average for the survey</i>	62.2	8.1	<i>Average for the survey</i>
<i>Average for a successful group of working parents</i>	76.2	9.9	<i>Average for a successful group of working parents</i>

Source: data from the pilot survey of the population of cities in Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

(Tab. 2). At the same time, “successful” working parents show a significantly higher degree of satisfaction with both aspects.

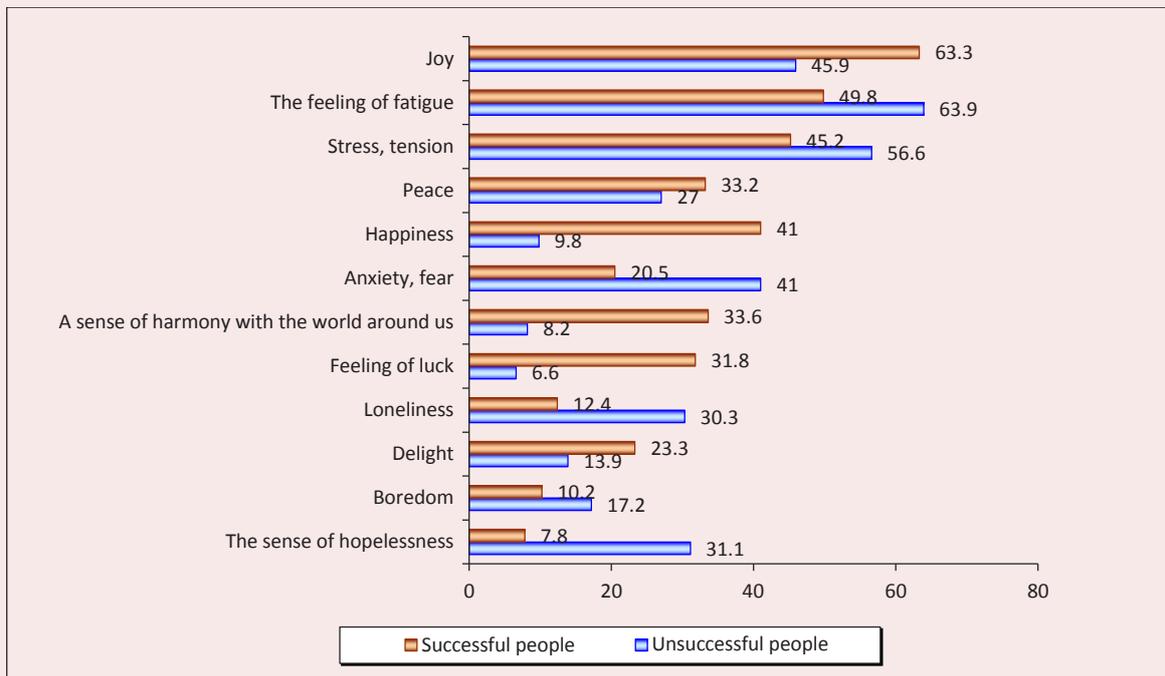
Results of personal successfulness block

The study of the emotional profile of “successful” people (57.6% of respondents) shows that all the studied positive emotions are expressed to a greater degree, compared with “unsuccessful” people. But the emotion “happiness” was the most sensitive: according

to this indicator, the largest differences between the answers of “successful” and “unsuccessful” respondents were recorded (the difference was 31.2 percentage points), which indicates a possible strong correlation between the indicators “successfulness” and “happiness” (Fig. 10).

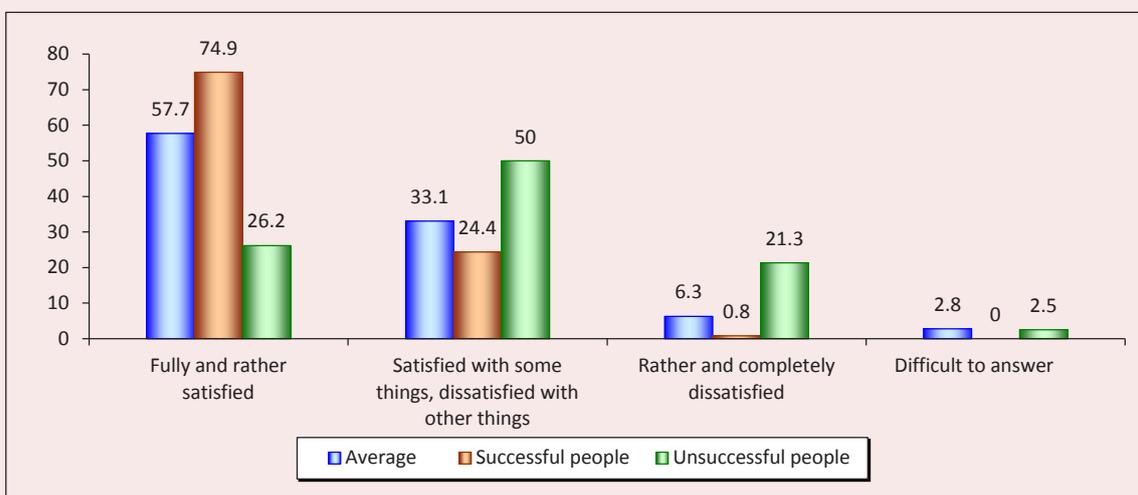
More than half of respondents (57.7%) are “completely” or “rather satisfied” with their life. At the same time, 22% are unequivocally

Figure 10. Emotional profile of successful and unsuccessful people, %



Source: data from the pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

Figure 11. Assessment of life satisfaction, %



Source: data from the pilot survey of the population of the cities of Russia (Vologda, Cherepovets, Petrozavodsk, Kolomna), Belarus (Minsk) and Poland (Lublin), 2018.

sure of this. Among the “successful” people, positive ratings prevailed at all points of the survey (Fig. 11). On average, optimists in the group of “successful” more than three times

compared to the opposite group. Among the “unsuccessful” people there are almost two times more those who expressed their dissatisfaction with life.

We should note that the results presented in the article are analyzed only from the point of view of checking the relevance of the tools on the basis of successfulness and understanding of the survey methodology. Cross-country comparison requires both a larger study and adjustment of methodological and organizational tasks related to the substantiation of the principle of choice of research points (typology of countries, the greatest differences or the greatest similarity [73]). Undoubtedly, the available data require further in-depth analysis.

Conclusion

The results of the pilot study have confirmed the relevance and adequacy of methodological tools. The analysis of the data has shown that the results do not contain contradictions and are consistent with the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study.

Scientific importance of the research consists in the study of latent aspects and contradictions of success, its correlation with the system of values of a particular society and prospects for its development.

We note that these findings are only part of the research project. Achievement motivation and the pursuit of success are only one type of

work and life motivation. The results of its implementation in specific activities can be contradictory and ambiguous. This is confirmed by a number of researchers, which have already been mentioned earlier (“payment for success”, “fear of success”). The task is to investigate these aspects more deeply, and in the future to study the prevalence of achievement motivation in specific social groups, territorial and cross-country context.

In addition, the understanding of success and successfulness at different stages of life is changing. From a managerial point of view, it is important not only to understand success for a certain age and generation, but also to create conditions for successfulness for all ages. This is seen as deepening the study. In the next stages of the project it is planned to analyze the categories of “successfulness” and “life satisfaction” in terms of gender and generational aspects, more detailed individual characteristics of successful people and external drivers of success, focusing on the dominant factors (including age) that affect the overall satisfaction of the individual. Also, with the increase in the research field, a cross-country comparative analysis will be conducted on the most informative indicators.

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