



СОЦИАЛЬНЫЙ ОПТИМИЗМ КАК ЭПИФЕНОМЕН СУБЪЕКТИВНОЙ ОЦЕНКИ КАЧЕСТВА ЖИЗНИ БЕЛОРУССКОГО СТУДЕНЧЕСТВА

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Изучается субъективная оценка качества жизни белорусского студенчества, рассматриваемая в контексте реализации государственной молодежной политики. Качество жизни концептуализируется в рамках субъективного подхода, который атрибутирует индивиду фундаментальную роль в социальной жизни. Измерение качества жизни осуществляется с помощью индексного метода, сущность которого состоит в редукции социальной информации и сведении ее к единому показателю безотносительно к общему количеству признаков-индикаторов объекта. В рамках разработанной методики измерения качества жизни рассчитывались индивидуальные индексы, описывающие характеристики общественного сознания студенческой молодежи в отношении тех или иных сторон качества жизни, а также интегральный индекс качества жизни и совокупный индекс уровня жизни. В качестве индикаторов качества жизни выступают такие показатели, как субъективная оценка материального уровня жизни, субъективная оценка здоровья, доступности и качества медицинской помощи, субъективная оценка доступности и качества образования, субъективная оценка доступности и качества социальной инфраструктуры, субъективная оценка состояния окружающей среды, субъективная оценка качества социальной среды и удовлетворенность качеством жизни. Данная методика позволяет рассмотреть различные аспекты жизни студентов и выявить слабые места в реализации отдельных направлений государственной молодежной политики. Методика использовалась для изучения качества жизни студентов Белорусского государственного экономического университета, выступивших объектом исследования, которое проводилось в два этапа в 2019 и 2020 гг. Сравнительный анализ данных показал, что респонденты продемонстрировали высокую степень удовлетворенности как объективными условиями жизни, так и субъективным восприятием степени удовлетворенности своих потребностей. Анализ общих индексов субъективной оценки качества жизни в ретроспективном, актуальном и перспективном аспектах свидетельствует о социальном оптимизме опрошенных, так как значения данных индексов не снижаются, а в ряде случаев повышаются. Исключение составляет значение индекса субъективной оценки качества социальной среды, снижение которого в 2020 г. свидетельствует о фиксации респондентами негативного влияния как на их жизнь, так и на жизнь всего общества социально-экономических последствий пандемии COVID-19 и политического кризиса в стране. Хотя социальный оптимизм слабо выражен, данный эпифеномен можно объяснить тем, что молодые люди считают все показатели качества жизни фактически равнозначными, что обусловлено результатами их социализации и в значительной степени детерминировано логикой развития современного общества.

Ключевые слова: субъективное качество жизни; студенческая молодежь; индексный метод; оценка; социальный оптимизм; эпифеномен.

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SOCIAL OPTIMISM AS EPIPHENOMENON OF SUBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF BELARUSIAN STUDENTS' LIFE QUALITY

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The article is devoted to the subjective assessment of the Belarusian student youth's life quality, considered in the context of the implementation of the state youth policy. The concept of life quality is considered within the framework of the subjective approach that attributes to the individual a fundamental role in social life. Measuring of the subjective quality means making use of the index method, designed to reduce social information to a single indicator, regardless of the total number of the object's indicators. Within the framework of the developed technique for measuring life quality, calculated were individual (particular) indices that describe the characteristics of the student youth's public consciousness to certain aspects of life quality, as well as the integral index of life quality and aggregate index of the standard of living. The indicators of life quality are as follows: subjective assessment of the material standard of living, subjective assessment of health, accessibility and quality of medical care, subjective assessment of accessibility and quality of education, subjective assessment of accessibility and quality of social infrastructure, subjective assessment of the state of ecological environment, subjective assessment of quality of social environment and satisfaction with quality of life. The given technique enables to diagnose various aspects of the students' life and identify weaknesses in implementing particular areas of the state youth policy. It was used to measure the quality of life of the Belarus State Economic University students who were the object of the study carried out in two stages – in 2019 and 2020. A comparative analysis of the data showed that the respondents demonstrated a high degree of satisfaction with both objective living conditions and subjective perception of the degree of satisfaction with their needs. The analysis of the general indices of subjective quality of life in retrospective, current and prospective aspects testifies to the respondents' social optimism since their values do not decrease and in some cases increase. The only exception is the value of the index of subjective assessment of social environment quality: its decrease in 2020 indicates that the respondents fixed a negative impact on their lives and life of the whole society, which was caused by the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the political crisis in the country. Although social optimism is weakly expressed, the given epiphenomenon can be explained by the fact that the young people consider all indicators of life quality as virtually equal that is both conditioned by the results of socialisation and logic of a modern society's development.

Keywords: subjective quality of life; student youth; index method; assessment; social optimism; epiphenomenon.

Introduction

The student youth is a unique socio-demographic group in the structure of the Belarusian society. It is implicitly characterised by a high level of social dynamism, a significant degree of socio-cultural innovation, a pronounced focus on more intensive acquiring of relevant competencies. Young people associate their success in life with such qualities as dedication, hard work, readiness to take risks, education and intelligence [1, p. 174]. One of their most important characteristics is the attitude towards achieving a high quality of life viewed as a universal standard for an individual's personal success in society. In fact, life quality acts as a behavioural regulator that determines the parameters of the young people's social activity. That is why a sociological dimension of the subjective quality of students' life in the context of implementing the state youth policy in the Republic of Belarus acquires theoretical and applied significance.

Young people in general are characterised by a specific age, social and psychological properties, values and attitudes, special subculture, patterns of behaviour

etc. As for the student youth, its typological feature is constant mobility and changeability in structural and sociocultural aspects that determine instability of the criteria used by an individual to assess his own social status and quality of life. It traditionally actualises measuring of the subjective quality of students' life as life quality «gives grounds for both man's perception of the surrounding world as a whole and its objects, and his assessment of the life situation and decision-making»¹ [2, p. 56]. In general, the subjective quality of students' life can be considered as a result of the mutual impact of objective and subjective factors and parameters (state and dynamics of macrosocial processes, resource capabilities of individuals and groups, value orientations, quality and content of secondary socialisation, normative requirements for youth etc.) expressed in the individual's assessment of conditions and results of life activity.

Since the Belarusian students are *a priori* a most important social resource in ensuring the country's

¹Hereinafter translated by us. – V. S.



socio-economic and scientific-technical development, the issue of measuring the subjective quality of their life is of particular significance. Subjective quality of life

is the phenomenon used to comprehensively consider and evaluate implementation of the state youth policy, with the student youth being both its subject and object.

Methodology and methods of research

Conceptualisation of the subjective quality of the student youth's life requires considering of the approaches to the phenomenon of life quality that have developed in socio-humanitarian discourse. The issue of life quality viewed as a complex and multilevel construct is traditionally one of the topical issues in theoretical and applied research, being an integral part of various scientific disciplines, schools and areas [3–5].

In modern socio-humanitarian discourse the category of life quality is considered in an interdisciplinary aspect that brings together the theoretical and practical achievements of the humanities and social sciences. It is reflected both in development of integral conceptu-

al models of life quality and in combination of various theoretical approaches when methods to assess the population's life quality are developed. As S. A. Ayvazyan underlines, «there are a lot of theoretical conceptions of life quality highlighting various aspects of life (happiness, health, ability to lead a decent lifestyle etc.), but there is no single universal definition of this synthetic latent category» [6, p. 10].

At present, there are the following theoretical interpretations of the concept of life quality [7; 8] that explicate the essence and content of the given phenomenon within the framework of the general classification scheme of its measurement (table 1).

Table 1

Theoretical interpretations of life quality in the social sciences and humanities

Theoretical approach	Essence and content	Epistemological limitations of approach
Subjectivistic	Life quality is interpreted as a degree of comfort of an individual's life activity in the micro- and macro-social framework, designed to meet personal needs of various levels	Cultural relativism that ignores socio-cultural specificity of a particular community
Objectivistic-consuming	It emphasises the objective relationship of an individual's life quality with the possibilities of practical implementation of his needs in a specific social context. In this case, life quality acts as a certain set of resources necessary to meet man's individual needs and personal development	Achieving an individual's certain quality of life is considered in the light of material needs; the role of spiritual needs is minimised
Quantitative-consuming	Life quality is seen as a complex characteristic of the degree of satisfaction of people's material and cultural needs, prevailing conditions of individual and group life, basic parameters of the individual and society's development. That's why consumed goods and services, real income etc. are considered objective markers of achieving a standard level of life quality	It focuses on undeniable significance of material resources to determine the parameters for achieving a certain quality of life
Axiological	Life quality is defined as a set of life-meaningful guidelines and value orientations. They characterise the structure of an individual's needs and living conditions, as well as the degree of people's satisfaction with life, social relations and environment. Accordingly, life quality emphasises the parameters and completeness of realisation of certain social ideals in the individual and group life	It ignores social conditioning of ideals and values and considers them as isolated from the material basis of society
Complex	Life quality is seen as a complex of optimal characteristics of an individual's life activities within the framework of a particular social space and time. Together, they ensure adequacy of the parameters of the individual life to the types of a person's needs and social activities. Here quality of life is considered from the viewpoint of a mutual correspondence of methods and results of an individual's activity	The opportunistic principle of constituting a system of optimal characteristics of an individual's life activity used as a normative parameter for achieving quality of life
Synthetic	Life quality is understood as a degree of comfort of social and natural environment an individual lives in. The approach ties the parameters of man's harmonious life, level of his individual well-being, mental and physical health. Feeling of happiness, pleasure of different natures, fulfilment of desires are viewed as the basic indicators of a high degree of life quality achieved by the individual	Voluntarist and subjectivist character of measuring an individual's quality of life takes place



Ending table 1

Subjective-sociodynamic	Life quality is viewed in the light of the population's satisfaction with the favourable dynamics of socio-economic changes in society in a particular period of time. It highlights four levels of measuring quality of life – individual, group, societal and world	Parameters of society's macroeconomic development are identified with criteria to measure life quality
Relationalistic	Social potential of life quality and its practical implementation at the individual level are related. So, life quality is seen in the context of an individual correlation of a person's status and resource provision with his normative-target attitudes and life plans in a particular time and social framework	Social status acts as a single universal parameter of an individual's life quality

Note. Own development based on [6–8].

It seems hard to talk about universality of manifestation and measurement of life quality as far as various socio-demographic groups and, above all, subjective personal assessments and positions are concerned. It can be fully applied to the young people with a variety of meanings especially noticeable due to a deep social differentiation caused by the economic conditions of life, differences in the structure of production and labour market, dramatic gaps in the level of remuneration [9, p. 247].

The given aspect entails the task of developing and testing the technique for index measurement of the subjective quality of the Belarusian students' life chosen as the object of research. The subjective quality of life interpreted as a set of unique personally significant characteristics which determine the individual's attitude to the retrospective, actual and projective parameters of his own life, is highlighted by the following. The category of subjective quality of life is an epistemological tool that in a sociological survey ensures taking the impact of quality of living conditions and life process on the individual's position to various aspects of social reality into account.

In our research designed to study quality of the Belarusian students' life, quality of life is understood as «its complex characteristic that reflects the objectively existing parameters of the standard of living and satisfaction of needs for directly unpaid benefits as well as a subjective perception of the degree of satisfaction of the entire totality of needs in a specific period of time in society» [10, p. 658]. Sociological analysis of level and quality of the students' life involves its subjective assessment based on the appropriate system of indices and indicators, since the given assessment represents the typological features of the Belarusian youth most optimally.

The following points serve the indicators of life quality:

- subjective assessment of the material standard of living that combines the indicators of satisfaction with material provision and satisfaction with housing conditions;
- subjective assessment of health, accessibility and quality of medical care that combines the indicators related to assessing one's own health, quality and accessibility of medical care;
- subjective assessment of accessibility and quality of education that combines the indicators characterising quality and accessibility of services education;

- subjective assessment of accessibility and quality of social infrastructure by which an individual assessment of satisfaction with availability and function of social infrastructure facilities at the place of residence (cultural institutions, sports facilities etc.) is made;

- subjective assessment of the state of ecological environment that is determined by assessing of the environmental situation at the place of residence, level of pollution of the place of residence (water quality, air purity), satisfaction with the greening of the region of residence;

- subjective assessment of quality of social environment that is determined by assessing of the level of security provided to an individual at the place of residence, study, work and in the country as a whole;

- satisfaction with quality of life that takes people's assessment of their life as a whole, their emotional state at a certain point in time into account.

It should be noted that assessing of quality of the students' life is impossible without assessing of the standard of their living that is determined with the parameter of individual consumption of goods and services used to meet the young people's basic needs.

In the research a number of indices were calculated: individual and general indices, integral index of life quality and aggregate index of the standard of living. Individual (particular) indices describe the characteristics of the young people's public consciousness in particular aspects of life quality. Their choice and methods of coordination entailed some difficulty. To eliminate it, the questions in the questionnaire were directed to highlight positive or negative assessments of aspects of an individual's life. «Neutral position» or «find it difficult to answer» options were excluded. Each particular index was calculated on linear distributions of responses as a difference between shares of positive and negative responses; to avoid negative values of the index, 100 was added to the obtained data. The arithmetic mean of individual indices was used to develop general indices of life quality (table 2). The integral index of quality of the students' life was calculated as the arithmetic mean of the general indices. A similar way was used to construct the aggregate index of the standard of living of the student youth which is considered as an integral indicator of effectiveness of the state youth policy implementation both in higher professional education and in society as a whole [10].



Table 2

System of subjective indicators of life quality

General indices of subjective quality of life	Particular indices of subjective quality of life	Questions to calculate particular indices of subjective quality of life
Index of subjective assessment of material standard of living	Assessment of financial standing	How do you assess the financial standing of your family?
	Retrospective assessment of the family's financial standing	How has your family's financial standing changed over the past year?
	Prospective assessment of the family's financial standing	How do you think your family's financial standing will change in a year?
	Satisfaction with living conditions	To what extent are you satisfied with your living conditions?
Index of subjective assessment of health, accessibility and quality of medical care	State of health	How do you assess your state of health?
	Accessibility of medical care	Are you satisfied with the possibility of receiving medical care if necessary?
	Quality of medical care	Please, assess quality of free medical care provided by health institutions.
Index of subjective assessment of accessibility and quality of education	Accessibility of education	Are you satisfied with the possibility of getting education?
	Quality of education	How do you assess quality of education (by level of education)?
Index of subjective assessment of accessibility of social infrastructure	Satisfaction with availability of institutions of social sphere	How satisfied are you with availability of institutions of social sphere at your place of residence (by type and kind)?
Index of subjective assessment of the state of ecological environment	Assessments of the state of ecological environment	How do you assess your place of residence (by aspects of the environmental situation)?
Index of subjective assessment of quality of social environment	Assessment of the level of security	Do you feel safe (by territorial localisation)?
Index of subjective assessment of satisfaction with life	Assessment of life at the present moment of time	To what extent are you satisfied with the life you lead now?
	Retrospective assessment of family life	How has the life of your family changed over the past year?
	Prospective assessment of family life	How do you think the life of your family will change in a year?

Thus, the given technique for measuring quality of the student youth's life, based on the index method, enables solving two tasks: diagnose various aspects of the students' life and identify specific problem areas in higher professional education when the state youth policy is implemented. Its universality was not questioned due to heterogeneity of the student youth throughout the world, not to

mention it in the post-Soviet countries. The reason is quite obvious – it is unique and original nature of the youth of each country, despite the general algorithm for changing value ideas among the generations of the young people from different countries entailed by the key events in the world (emergence of the Internet, spread of mobile communications, informational technologies etc.) [11, p. 235].

Results and their discussion

An applied sociological research to study the subjective quality of the Belarusian students' life was carried out in two stages (in November 2019 and September 2020). The target population is full-time students of all faculties of Belarus State Economic University (BSEU). The size of the random samples was $n = 325$ in 2019 and $n = 394$ in 2020 (with a confidence interval of $95 \pm 5\%$) that is sufficient enough to generate the obtained results to the entire population. A method for collect-

ing information in the study is an online questionnaire survey. The questionnaire contained the questions for the respondents to assess both their own life quality and standard of living and those of their family. The processing and analysis of the empiric data was carried out with the SPSS Statistics.

The results of the questionnaire survey show that the BSEU respondents demonstrated a consistently high degree of satisfaction with both objective living



conditions and subjective perception of the degree of satisfaction with their needs. Thus, the aggregate index of living standards was 1.3 in 2019 and 1.3 in 2020; the aggregate index of the life quality was 1.3 and 1.3, respectively. If in 2019 the Belarusian society did not face serious crisis phenomena in the economic and political spheres, in 2020 the country, like the whole world, was hit by the tough economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, in the given case social optimism of the respondents actualises the question of its source which can be considered either in the light of their typological characteristics as the young people, or in social infantilism of the given age cohort.

In general, the analysis of the general indices of the subjective quality of life due to its retrospective, current and prospective aspects indicates the respondents' increased social optimism (table 3). The only exception is the value of the index of subjective assessment of quality of the social environment: its decrease in 2020 indicates that the respondents fixed a negative impact on their lives and life of the whole society, which was caused by the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the political crisis in the country.

The analysis of particular indices of the subjective quality of life in the light of retrospective, actual and prospective aspects also indicates the same increase in the respondents' social optimism (table 4).

Table 3

Dynamics of general indices of subjective quality of life in 2019 and 2020

General indices of subjective quality of life	2019	2020
Index of subjective assessment of material standard of living	1.3	1.3
Index of subjective assessment of health, accessibility and quality of medical care	1.1	1.2
Index of subjective assessment of accessibility and quality of education	1.3	1.3
Index of subjective assessment of the accessibility of social infrastructure	1.5	1.5
Index of subjective assessment of the state of ecological environment	1.2	1.4
Index of subjective assessment of quality of social environment	1.6	1.2
Index of subjective assessment of satisfaction with life	1.2	1.2

Note. Compiled on results of researches conducted in 2019 and 2020.

Table 4

Dynamics of particular indices of subjective quality of life in 2019 and 2020

General indices of subjective quality of life	Particular indices of subjective quality of life	2019	2020
Index of subjective assessment of material standard of living	Assessment of financial standing	1.3	1.4
	Retrospective assessment of the family's financial standing	1.0	1.0
	Prospective assessment of the family's financial standing	1.4	1.3
	Satisfaction with living conditions	1.4	1.7
Index of subjective assessment of health, accessibility and quality of medical care	State of health	1.3	1.3
	Accessibility of medical care	1.1	1.2
	Quality of medical care	0.9	0.9
Index of subjective assessment of accessibility and quality of education	Accessibility of education	1.6	1.6
	Quality of education	1.0	0.9
Index of subjective assessment of the accessibility of social infrastructure	Satisfaction with availability of institutions of social sphere	1.5	1.5
Index of subjective assessment of the state of ecological environment	Assessments of the state of ecological environment	1.2	1.4
Index of subjective assessment of quality of social environment	Assessment of the level of security	1.6	1.2
Index of subjective assessment of satisfaction with life	Assessment of family life at present	1.2	1.3
	Retrospective assessment of family life	1.0	1.0
	Prospective assessment of family life	1.4	1.3

Note. Compiled on results of researches conducted in 2019 and 2020.



The respondents highly assessed the quality and efficiency of the institutional infrastructure that ensures maintenance of the standard of living in the country within the framework of the normatively established social standards. The only exception in the given case is the respondents' low assessment of the quality of social environment perceived as a decreased level of public security in the Belarusian society. The low assessment is obviously resulted from the sharp deterioration in the socio-political situation in the country during the election campaign and in the post-election period.

It should be noted that the respondents' social optimism correlates with the general subjective assessment of their quality of life in 2020 which is consistently positive. So, to the question «To what extent are you satisfied with the life you lead now?», the following responses were received: totally satisfied – 14 % (5 % in 2019); rather satisfied – 50 % (53 % in 2019); rather not satisfied – 30 % (34 % in 2019); totally dissatisfied – 5 %

(6 % in 2019); only 1 % of respondents found it difficult to answer (3 % in 2019).

The validity of the students' social optimism should be considered in the context of the subjective assessment of their families' material standard of living in actual and prospective aspects because the young people are financially supported mainly by their parents and they are not fully employed in the labour market during their study at university. In general, the BSEU students are quite optimistic and highly assess the level of their families' financial standing. To the question «How do you assess your family's financial standing?» the following responses were received: 41.6 % of the respondents note that the life of their family in this respect has not changed over the past year, 28.7 % of the respondents note a change in life for the better and 25.9 % – a change for the worse (43.1 %, 25.7 % and 25.5 % corresponding in 2019).

Of particular interest are data on the subjective assessment of life satisfaction in future (table 5).

Table 5

**Distribution of responses to the question:
«How do you think your family's financial standing will change in a year?», %**

Responses	Year	
	2019	2020
Improve significantly	12.7	15.2
Improve slightly	35.8	29.4
Will not change	28.1	18.8
Deteriorate slightly	7.0	11.7
Deteriorate significantly	2.1	4.3
Difficult to answer	14.3	20.6

The obtained data show that the share of the respondents expecting an improved standing in their family's life decreased by 3.9 %, and of those predicting that they will live the same way they do at the moment decreased by 9.3 %, and of those expecting deterioration or significant deterioration in their life increased by 6.3 %. It should be noted that in the 2020 survey almost every fifth respondent found it difficult to answer, and it may indicate both the respondents' immature position and unwillingness to predict the situation. In

this regard, it seems worth talking about pluralism of the opinions on the issue under study, its significant differentiation which might have been caused by the difficult economic and political situation.

As far as the general index of the subjective assessment of life quality is concerned, it did not change in retrospective, actual and prospective aspects as compared to the previous 2019 year, its value also amounted to 1.2, and its structure showed minor changes over the year (table 6).

Table 6

Structure of the general index of subjective assessment of satisfaction with life in 2019 and 2020

Particular indices of subjective assessment of satisfaction with life	2019	2020
Particular index of subjective assessment of satisfaction with life at present	1.2	1.3
Particular index of subjective assessment of satisfaction with life over the past year	1.0	1.0
Particular indices of subjective assessment of satisfaction with life in future	1.4	1.3

Note. Compiled on results of researches conducted in 2019 and 2020.



In retrospect, the BSEU respondents demonstrated a fairly balanced assessment of their families' financial standing that corresponds to its projective assessment. Of great importance for assessing the quality of life is the person's subjective satisfaction with his financial standing and its change over time rather than the real level of his income. The results of the 2020 empirical measurement indicate that 91.7 % of respondents are satisfied with their financial standing, of them 44.7 % consider it good in one way or another (44.4 % in 2019), 47.0 % assess it as average (45.2 % in 2019). At the same time, 42.6 % of the respondents believe that their families' financial standing did not change over the past year, almost a third (31.7 %) noted its deterioration, every fifth respondent noted its improvement. The comparison to the results of the 2019 survey show that the share of the respondents who noted an improved level of their financial standing decreased by 7.7 %, while the share of those who noted its deterio-

ration increased by 8.6 %. The obtained results can be interpreted in the light of the negative impact of the economic and political crisis in the country, with the COVID-19 pandemic being one of its drivers, on the individual and society.

It should be noted that the respondents are rather restrained in their assumptions about their future financial standing. However, the general trend of their opinions in 2020 is less positive than in 2019: the share of those who are pessimistic has almost doubled (see figure).

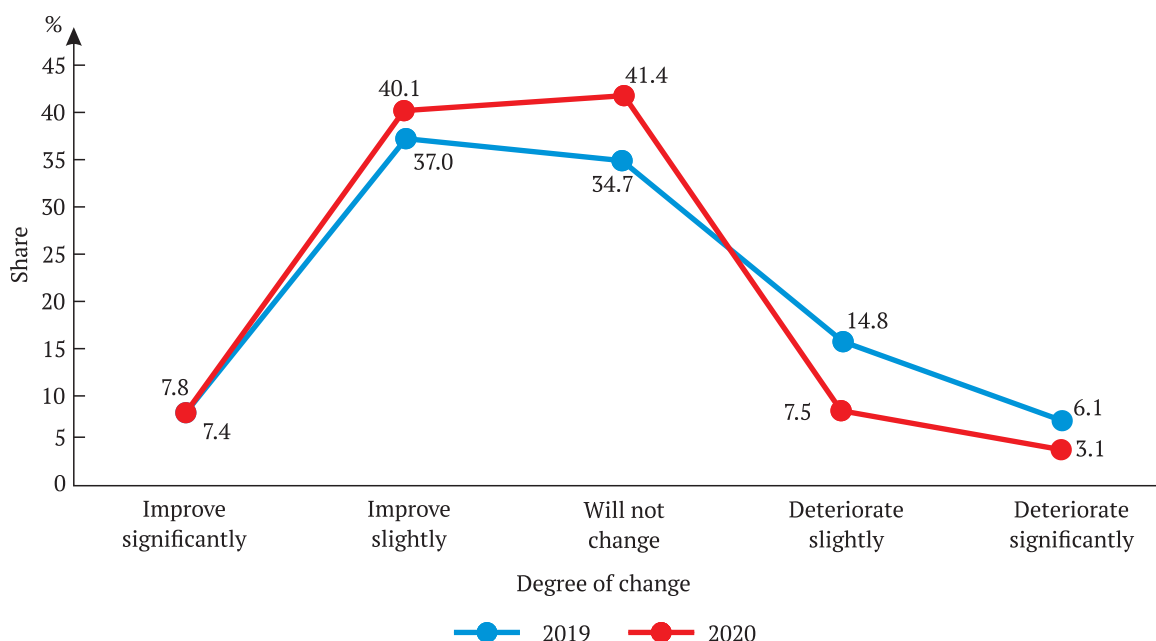
Despite the observed changes in the respondents' assessments of satisfaction with various aspects of the financial standing, the values of particular indices indicate that positive judgments are dominating. The most significant differences were recorded in relation to satisfaction with housing conditions (table 7), while the general self-assessment index of material standing was 1.3, as in December 2019.

Table 7

Dynamics of particular indices of subjective assessment of the material standing in 2019 and 2020

Particular indices of subjective assessment of material standing	2019	2020
Particular index of subjective assessment of material standing at present	1.3	1.4
Particular index of subjective assessment of material standing over the past year	1.0	1.0
Particular index of subjective assessment of material standing in future	1.4	1.3
Particular index of subjective assessment of satisfaction with housing	1.4	1.7

Note. Compiled on results of researches conducted in 2019 and 2020.



Distribution of responses to the question: «How do you think your family's financial standing will change in a year?» (in 2019 and 2020)



The results of the 2020 study show that almost seven out of ten respondents (65.7 %) were satisfied with their health, almost a third (32 %), on the contrary, were not satisfied. There were no significant differences compared to the 2019 study. The indicator of availability of medical care remained at the level of the previous year (table 8). Most respondents note that they have free access to health services. Every second survey participant (56.1 % in 2020 and 52.5 % in 2019) is satisfied with the opportunity to receive medical care if necessary, 36.8 % are not satisfied (39.7% in 2019).

In 2020 the value of the particular index of the medical care quality is 0.9 (same as in 2019) and responses show a slightly greater (but not rather significant) domination of the negative values. The analysis of the data presented in table 4 shows that the bias towards negative assessments is associated with lower satisfaction with quality of medical services provided by clinics and hospitals.

At the same time, the general index of subjective assessment of health, accessibility and quality of me-

dical care has a positive value for the second year in a row – it is 1.1 in 2019 and 1.2 in 2020. The changed value of the index is caused by an insignificant increase (+0.1 per year) in the particular index of medical care availability.

Of particular interest is the subjective assessment of accessibility and quality of education, since it is specialised secondary and higher professional education that determines competitiveness of the young people in the labour market and their social prospects in society. To the question «Are you satisfied with the opportunity to get education?» the respondents suggested the following responses: totally satisfied – 24 % (21 % in 2019), rather satisfied – 52 % (59 % in 2019), rather not satisfied – 15 % (12 % in 2019), totally dissatisfied – 3 % (4 % in 2019) and 5 % of them found it difficult to answer (4 % in 2019).

A retrospective subjective assessment of the quality of education turned out to be more differentiated: the levels of education were assessed by the respondents in the following way (table 9).

Table 8

Dynamics of particular index of quality of medical care according to the type of healthcare institution in 2019 and 2020

Healthcare institution	2019	2020
Clinic for adults	0.7	0.7
Hospital (inpatient treatment)	0.8	0.8
Ambulance	1.1	1.0
Dental clinic	1.0	1.1
Antenatal clinic	1.0	1.0

Note. Compiled on results of researches conducted in 2019 and 2020.

Table 9

Subjective assessment of education quality, %

Level of education obtained	High quality		Average quality		Low quality		Did not obtain		Difficult to answer	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Secondary general	18	15	65	62	14	17	2	3	1	3
Vocational	5	5	30	33	10	10	50	46	6	6
Secondary specialised	6	7	35	36	6	10	46	42	6	6
Higher	14	16	61	59	20	21	0	0	5	4

Note. Compiled on results of researches conducted in 2019 and 2020.

A comprehensive assessment of the general index of subjective assessment of education accessibility and quality was made based on the analysis of the particular indices of the same name. The obtained values did not change; the value of the general index is 1.3. The students' subjective assessments of education quality

were obviously influenced by their personal experience associated with the choice and implementation of educational trajectories of personal development, level of achieved academic engagement, nature of relationships in the academic community, degree of integration into the social networks of the educational institution.



Conclusion

Thus, the issue of sociological measurement of the subjective quality of the Belarusian students' life in the context of implementation of the state youth policy in the country has an undeniable theoretical and applied significance. First of all, the focus should be made on the heuristic potential of the subjective approach to conceptualising the phenomenon of life quality that enables to bring to the fore the individual to whom the fundamental role in social life is attributed. Quality of life is a wide range of conditions for human life that includes not only the standard of living, but also such components that relate to social well-being, ecological environment, political climate, psychological comfort. That is why measurement of subjective assessments of life quality requires making use of an index method, which is designed to reduce social information to a single indicator, regardless of the total number of the object's attributes-indicators. Within the framework of the developed technique for measuring quality of the

Belarusian students' life, particular indices describing the characteristics of public consciousness about certain aspects of life quality are calculated. In addition, suggested is the calculation of the integral index of life quality and aggregate index of the standard of living of the student youth considered as an integral indicator of effectiveness of the state youth policy implementation. The technique for measuring the subjective quality of life enables to diagnose various aspects of the students' life and identify particular problem areas in the state youth policy implementation. In general, the students' assessment of subjective satisfaction with life is characterised by a weakly expressed optimism in retrospective, current and prospective aspects. The given epiphenomenon can be explained by the fact that the young people consider all indicators of life quality as virtually equal that is both conditioned by the results of their socialisation and largely determined by the logic of a modern society's development.

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