

## QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE CONCEPT AND EMPIRICAL INDICATORS

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**Abstract.** In this paper we examine the concept of quality of working life (QWL), focusing on the systematic connection with the employee's personality and happiness. The evolution of the approaches to QWL is analysed in the context of policy and management, showing the links between research findings and government reform ideas. The paper presents evidence through research perspectives on positive psychology and health sciences that productivity and employee happiness have a positive mutual interface. The author's position is that happiness is a key element in the concept of QWL. QWL is a level of well-being at work that depends on the relation between the whole of the factual working conditions and personality. QWL shows the state of subjective satisfaction – happiness at work. In this regard, we see four main dimensions of QWL – quality of working environment, job satisfaction, personality and personal happiness. Six of the most important work environment factors (pay, safety, balance of the working and non-working life, relationships, growth and self-realisation) have been set as the indicators for empirical studies.

**The purpose of this paper** is to develop the concept of quality of working life, and design a systematic set of empirical indicators.

**JEL classification:** I31, I38, J24, O47.

**Keywords:** quality of working life, QWL, happiness, welfare, subjective well-being, job satisfaction, productivity, working environment, growth, self-realisation, values, GDP.

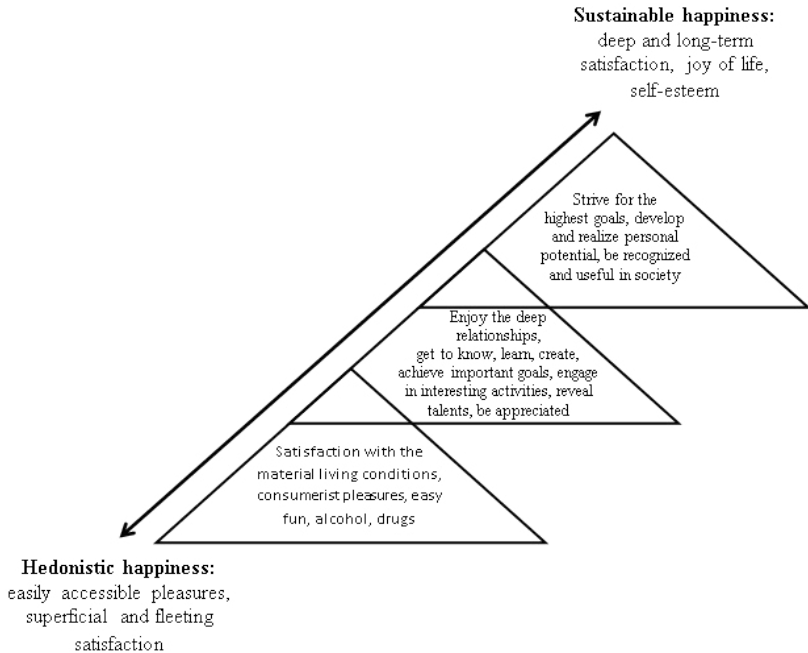
**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** gyvenimo darbe kokybė, gerovė, subjektyvi gerovė, laimė, patenkinimas darbu, darbo našumas, darbo sąlygos, augimas, savirealizacija, vertybės, BVP.

### Introduction

Well-being has been popularly perceived as the material quality of life and amount of money since ancient times. However, already the ancient thinkers saw the dualism of welfare and the role of values. For instance, Aristotle defined happiness (*Eudaimonia*) as the way of life based on the potential of personality, much more important than the pleasures of everyday life (*Euphoria*). Wealth, health and relationship are important, though, according to Aristotle, they must be combined with responsibility and permanent training of the mind and deep thinking.

Nowadays, in the most general way, happiness is defined as an emotional good – joy of life and the desire to maintain this feeling (Layard, 2006). As well as in the days of Aristotle, the distinction between short-term hedonist pleasures and essential happiness factors, which lies in cultural advances, social interaction and meaningful self-realisation of personality, is currently emphasised as well (e.g. Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Happiness directions (designed by the author)



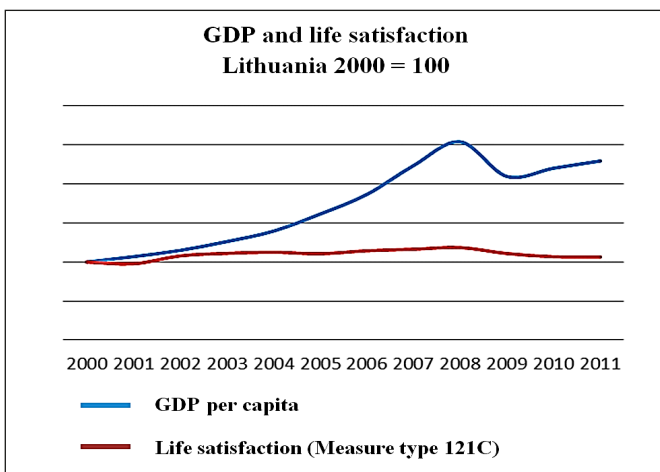
The new circumstances of economic growth require revision of the monetary economic model, where the economics is identified with the market and focused entirely on the increase of GDP. It is important to recognise that economic policy cannot switch priorities – human happiness must not be a declarative, but the real purpose of economics. Supporters of a holistic approach to economics, as one of the alternatives to the previous economic policy, offer the “national happiness” concept, which emphasises equitable and sustainable socio-economic development, preservation of the cultural values and natural environment, fostering of good and effective governance (Rakauskienė, 2011). The purpose of economics is to develop the human potential and help the person to realise its usefulness for themselves and the society. In the process of creating goods and services, we create not the GDP, but our own and national happiness. This approach makes sense for all areas of life, including work, in which a person should be seen not only as an economic value-added manufacturer, but much more importantly – as a personality searching for self-fulfillment and happiness.

Hence, it is important to understand the relationship between the quality of working life and happiness better, identify the key dimensions of this relationship, evaluate the effect of employee happiness on labour productivity, and develop more reliable indicators of subjective QWL dimensions.

## 1. The concept of quality of working life and happiness

The concept of quality of life in scientific research has spread 30 to 40 years ago, when public welfare was explored more thoroughly while trying to understand the interface between the new public needs and economic development. Western welfare ideals of the second half of the twentieth century stimulated rapid economic growth. However, an increasing number of material goods was accompanied by contradictory consequences. U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson seems to have been the first person to refer to the concept of quality of life, in 1964 (McGall, 1980). In 1972 Johnson detailed the concept, saying that more important than the number of goods available to Americans is their impact on their quality of life. The trends of the society development clearly testified that the mere capital growth is not enough for public prosperity. This feature of economic progress is noted as Easterlin paradox: (1) richer people are happier than those living in poverty, (2) citizens of the richest countries in the world are not happier than they were a few decades ago, although they are significantly enriched by economic growth over the period (Easterlin, 2001). The changes in Lithuania's gross domestic product (GDP) and citizen satisfaction with life (Figure 2) may be an illustration of the second part of Easterlin findings.

**Figure 2.** Changes in Lithuania's GDP and life satisfaction  
(designed by the author on the basis of the following sources: Statistics Lithuania, 2014, World Database of Happiness, 2014)



Although subsequent studies using more happiness indicators showed that in developed countries income growth has expanded the “happy life years” (Hagerty; Veenhoven, 2006), at the same time, it has been noticed that there is a certain threshold when personal income become much higher than the national average income. If this threshold is crossed, life satisfaction is less dependent on further income growth. When the income is sufficient for normal daily life, and other factors that promote personal development and change of values growing favourably, new horizons of human needs (or levels of the so-called “Maslow” hierarchy of needs) begin to widen. This is related to the needs of communication, recognition and self-realisation, the fulfilment of which is the most important factor for a full-fledged human well-being and happiness.

Quality of life and happiness is the subject of humanities, social sciences and biomedicine. Researchers choose the methods for measuring the quality of life depending not only on the research area but also on the number of dimensions, on their objective or subjective nature, on the influence of culture and values. Sociologists and political scientists are more interested in the quality of life on a society-wide level, while psychologists and biomedical representatives delve into individual, subjectively perceived quality of life and happiness (Servetkienė, 2013). For example, the World Health Organisation defines Quality of Life as individuals’ perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. In this regard, it is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person’s physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships, personal beliefs and their relationship to salient features of their environment (WHO, 1997). Suojanen has presented a table to sum up the findings of happiness from different research fields (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Findings of happiness from different research fields (Suojanen, 2012)

	<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>Psychology</b>	<b>Sociology</b>	<b>Economics</b>
Construct of happiness	- authentic happiness - hedonism - flourishing	- subjective well-being - flow	- quality of life - subjective well-being	- quality of life
Scientists	Aristotle Bentham Griffin Feldman	Diener Seligman Csikszentmihaly Ojanen	Veenhoven	Layard Kahneman Frey Bok
Measures of happiness	- experience sampling methods - happiness questionnaires - methodological questions	- World Value Surveys - Gallup World Poll	- life-review questionnaires - self-reportsurveys - clinical interviews - content analyses -World Value Surveys	- Human Development index - self-report surveys - new technologies

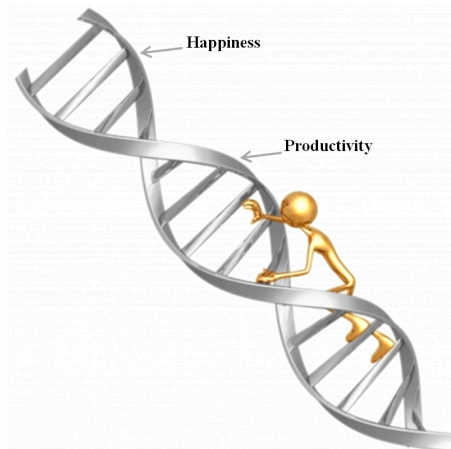
Research subject	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- defining happiness</li> <li>- measuring happiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- finding ways to improve people's lives</li> <li>- want to understand the feeling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- defining how happiness is valued in different societies</li> <li>- what characteristics of society correlate with happiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- seeks for instruments to improve happiness of the citizens</li> <li>- focuses on income, inflation and employment</li> <li>- wants to know what people value</li> </ul>
What causes happiness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- knowledge</li> <li>- friendship</li> <li>- accomplishments</li> <li>- "we flourish by fully exercising our human capacities" (Haybron 2008, 25)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- relationships</li> <li>- relative income</li> <li>- employment</li> <li>- education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- wealth of thention</li> <li>- social participation</li> <li>- freedom</li> <li>- cultural pluriformity and modernity</li> <li>- social inequality adds unhappiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- employment</li> <li>- self-employment</li> <li>- education</li> <li>- increasing income</li> <li>- health</li> </ul>
Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Happiness is extremely important in people's lives.</li> <li>- Happiness leads to many good outcomes in life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Happiness is about being satisfied with life, while feeling good.</li> <li>Happy people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are more sociable and creative</li> <li>- live longer</li> <li>- have stronger immune systems</li> <li>- make more money</li> <li>- are better leaders</li> <li>- are better citizens (also at the workplace)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Happiness is not only a mental state but also a condition of society.</li> <li>- Happiness is the overoll enjoyment of one's life as a whole.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Democracy and federalism enhance happiness.</li> <li>- Economic development is one solution for boosting happiness.</li> </ul>

Happiness is rarely a direct human purpose. But implementation of important goals is a contribution to happiness and happiness helps to achieve the objectives. Human values and long-term life goals are very important, as in pursuit of them a person gets involved in interesting work, learns, reveals and improves their strongest skills, receives recognition. People spend a large part of their life at work, and salary is not the main benefit – work provides social and professional identity, satisfaction, which is an important element of happiness. In particular, significant working life factors are organisational culture, ethos, interpersonal relationships, self-expression and career opportunities, personal sense of recognition, work and personal (family) life balance. Work gives us the meaning of life, while unemployment is considered to be the main source of unhappiness and depression (Frey & Stutzer, 2000). Although happiness at work is an individual human experience, positive psychology, economics and management sciences disclose a strong correlation between happiness and society – work helps people realise the crucial need to feel important or indispensable to the relatives and the community

or in the eyes of society (Layard, 2006). In recent years, there is an increasing number of scientific evidence (including experimental studies (Oswald, 2013)), that organisation success and results may be strictly dependent on the happiness of employees (Happiness Works, 2012). It was found that happier people tend to be more innovative, reveal their creative potential better and have higher work productivity. They tend to constantly improve their qualifications, and spare neither time nor energy at work and outside the organisation to act as its ambassadors, spreading the positive message and reinforcing the good image. Happier employees help to create and maintain an optimistic mood and efficient work-friendly climate (Fisher, 2010). Compared to unhappy employees, they do less absenteeism; have fewer bad habits and have better health (IOD, 2006).

From the management perspective, the relationship between happiness and creative productivity is considered an important aspect of a successful business reasons. It is recognised that investing in the quality of life at work can bring great benefits to both individuals and the organisation as a whole. This approach is increasingly gaining ground in practice – more and more organisations implement employee motivation measures to promote healthy working relationships and commitment to the mission, which is in line with ideals of a society, the perception of their role and responsibility in the organisation, the need to improve professional competence and the desire to realise personal potential. The results of such policies can be seen as an arising double (employee happiness, and the organisation's efficiency) spiral (Fig. 2).

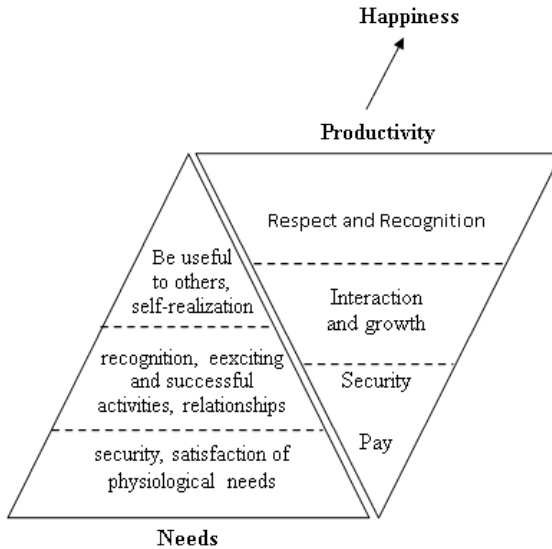
**Figure 3.** Productivity and happiness connection (used source: [www.esparama.lt](http://www.esparama.lt))



The relationship between job satisfaction and happiness at work can be defined as follows: happiness at work leads to job satisfaction, positive motivation, and other valuable attitudes, while in general –employee's prosperity assumptions. Happiness in this case is seen as a long-term phenomenon, a certain satisfaction basis, and satisfaction is a specific expression of happiness. At work, happiness as well as personal aspiration goes beyond the limits of individuality and becomes a key objective of sustainable

management, it also works as a tool to stimulate and motivate an employee. Satisfaction of material needs is important for happiness, but the other levels to the highest degree of self-realisation should be “built” on this ground (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4.** Satisfaction and productivity (designed by the author)



### **Job factors that help meeting higher demands of employees more significantly contribute to raising work productivity**

In the systemic design of quality of life at work, we see happiness as an essential element of the concept. Quality of life at work covers the whole of the actual working conditions that promote full satisfaction of physical, social, economic and psychological needs of the employees, in harmony with the success of the organisation. At the same time, quality of life at work is the degree of subjective human prosperity caused by the relationship between the work environment and personality, and reflecting the status of personal satisfaction – happiness at work. **The more the working conditions promote positive values, optimism with willingness to reveal personal potential and use it to the benefit of both themselves and the organisation, the more a person is flourishing as a personality and feels happy.** Researchers note (Seligman, 2011), that pessimistic behaviour contagiously disseminates helplessness, whereas optimistic style stops helplessness. In addition, despite their innate character, a person can become an optimist if one will have important goals and motivation to achieve them. At the same time, even in the same environment, when doing equal tasks, people can feel and work differently due to different values, which are rooted in their personality. Although people’s activities in working life, such as looking for a job, participation in training, performing organisational

functions, combining work and family time, likely depend more on work values than on general values, the role of general values should not be neglected (Roe; Ester, 1999).

It would be wrong to assume that only work can make a person happy. Not only a job, but also other aspects of life, such as family, friends, leisure, hobbies, etc. are important. Perhaps you may not like your job, but you can feel happy because you are enjoying family relationships and having an interesting hobby? And vice versa – can successful professional activity help you feel fine despite difficulties in personal life? Theoretically, three types of such relationships are considered (Sirgy; Efraty; Siegel, 2001):

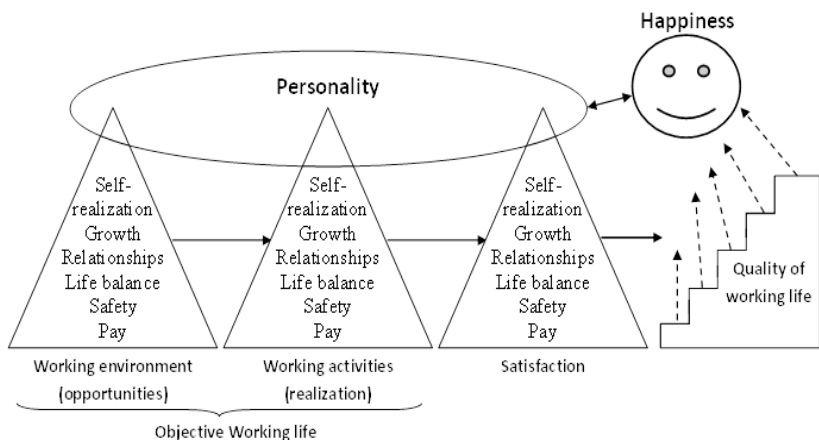
- Spillover, when work satisfaction moves into private life;
- Segmentation, when QWL and personal life quality have no connection;
- Compensation, when personal life happiness offsets dissatisfaction in the work.

Hardly anyone disagrees with a view that a person cannot achieve true happiness, if one is unhappy at work. The importance of personal life cannot be underestimated. Studies suggest (Sirgy&Wu, 2009), that the happiness of working life should not depend on one, but on a set of sources, which would ensure a work-life balance. By taking into consideration this fact, we can divide working environment and the quality of performance factors into the following relative categories:

- wage;
- security;
- balance (work and personal life);
- relations;
- growth;
- self-realisation.

Thus, in order to approach the quality of life at work systematically, it is important to connect into a coherent whole the objective characteristics of work environment and performance, subjective satisfaction of employees, their personality traits and happiness – a derivative of quality of working life (Fig. 5).

**Figure 5.** Concept of quality of life at work (designed by the author)





Thus, in our view, **quality of life at work is part of the functional system, linking objective working conditions, satisfaction, personality and happiness.** Personality factor is an extremely complex phenomenon. It is difficult to single out one key aspect. In the simplest case, if the effects of personality associate only with a subjective attitude to the importance of the work, QWL can be expressed in the following form:

$$QWL = H \times (O \times S - I), \text{ where}$$

$H$  – happiness,  $O$  – objective quality of work,  $S$  – subjective satisfaction,  $I$  – importance of the work.

As our article deals with the societal well-being actualisation both from science and public government perspective, we briefly revise the political context of the well-being concept. In most countries, the subjective quality of life is still an episodic matter on a public policy agenda. For instance, labour and employment policy focuses on traditional unemployment, reducing informal economy, labour and security strategies. But lately it can be seen that quality of life is increasingly becoming the subject of discussion at the political level. Several international initiatives led to this process. One of the first was the Organisation's for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) initiative and declaration "Measuring the progress of societies", which called for "statistical offices, public and private organisations, and academic experts to work alongside representatives of their communities to produce high-quality, facts-based information that can be used by all of society to form a shared view of societal well-being and its evolution over time" (OECD, 2007). In 2009, the conclusions of authoritative experts in various scientific fields, known as Stiglitz report (Stiglitz; Sen; Fitoussi, 2009), have given a major boost. The conclusions justified the need to begin measuring progress by using the indicators of societal welfare rather than economic output. The report contains recommendations for policy, some of them are:

- Draw attention to household income in assessing the well-being, because in some countries, household income and GDP per capita is significantly different.
- Income and consumption indicators should be associated with the welfare holistically, because expenses can be used for survival, but not for good life.
- When reforming the policy, it is important to replace the production-oriented measurement to measurement system focused on welfare.
- Steps should be taken to improve measures of people's health, education, personal activities, political voice, social connections, environmental conditions and insecurity.
- Statistical offices should provide the information needed to aggregate across quality-of-life dimensions, allowing the construction of different indexes.

At the same time, the European Commission announced a Communication on "GDP and beyond: Measuring progress in a changing world", by urging the European Union Member State governments and social science researchers to set down not only economic priorities and change the strategies of development (European Commission, 2009).

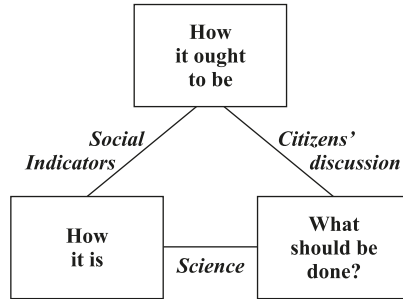
It is no coincidence that in recent years many countries are initiating the measures of well-being systematically, and involve the public in open debates and the search

for solutions. For example, Italian National Statistical Institute jointly with Statistics Netherlands have started the e-Frame project which aims at taking into account all the significant aspects of the debate on measuring economic performance, development, well-being and more generally the progress of societies in order to coordinate the activities of relevant stakeholders (statistical institutes, European institutions and policy makers, researchers and civil society) and propose the way forward (E-frame, 2011). The French National Institute of statistics and economic studies is involved in the development of new indicators to better measure the well-being and sustainable development (INSEE, 2011). Treasury Board of Canada prepares and presents to the parliament an annual report 'Canada's Performance' (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2014). Considerable advances have been seen in the United Kingdom. In 2010, the Prime Minister Cameron has developed a special programme for measuring national and personal well-being, which is implemented by the Office of the National Statistics (ONS, 2013). The purpose of this programme is to establish a more complete and systematic picture of social and economic progress and prosperity, which would help the government make better decisions. The population is asked to periodically assess their degree of happiness according to several features, such as good social relationships, health, spiritual or religious sense, satisfaction at work, good friendships and family relationships, involvement in interesting activities, volunteering, etc.

Certainly, the changes in public policy are also driven by pragmatic considerations, such as the objective of reducing sizeable economic losses felt by all sectors of the economy due to poor occupational health. For the UK (that can be a typical illustration of the inherent tendencies in many countries), in 2006, the average sickness absence rate was 8 days per year, concluding a financial loss of 600 pounds per post in the private sector and 680 pounds in the public sector (CIPD, 2007). The number of sick-benefit seekers in the UK has increased from 0.7 million in 1970 to 2.7 million in 2006. Furthermore, another concern for the Government was a huge increase in the prevalence of mental health conditions during the last ten years from 1996. The proportion of the number of sick-benefit claimants suffering from a mental health condition has increased significantly to nearly 40% in 2006, compared with 25% in 1996. Stress and other working conditions harmful for mental health, which are now considered to be one of the major causes of employee absence, bring £3.8 billion loss each year only in the private sector.

Consideration of all of these factors in scientific and public debates matures understanding that **sustainable progress is determined by the relationship between the economy and citizen happiness**. Therefore, the main policy challenge is to create the country's main assets – an equitable, healthy and vibrant society in which people enjoy their activities both at work and outside, rather than develop financial capital. It should be noted that the role of science is very important in the democratic process of development of well-being, because **research can help clarify the essential indicators of well-being, without which public policy formation and implementation today is not possible** (e.g. Fig. 6).

**Figure 6.** Epistemology of the democratic process (Johansson, 2002)



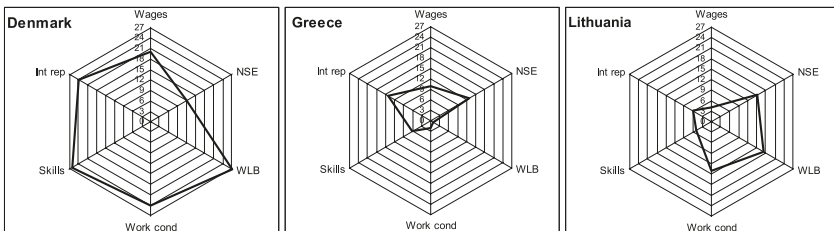
**2. Empirical indicators of quality of working life**

Quality of life at work investigations are prevalent nowadays both in the private and public sector organisations. The results are used on various policy levels. For example, the European Parliament (European Parliament, 2009) and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound, 2007) systematically summarise the quality of life research, analyse its validity and make suggestions for policy and measures. Some studies attempt to rely on statistical data on the actual status of the working conditions. For example, the European Trade Union Institute (Leschke&Watt, 2008) has developed the so-called job quality index (JQI), which consists of six dimensions (sub-indices) with different relative weights:

- wages (Wages),
- non-standard forms of employment (NSE),
- work-life balance and working time (WLB),
- working conditions and job security (Work cond.),
- access to training and career advancement (Skills),
- collective interest representation and voice/participation (Int Rep).

The quality of work in the European countries is compared by using a complex job quality index (Figure 7).

**Figure 7.** Country- specific radar charts for ranking job quality sub-indices (from *Job Quality in Europe*, 2008)



However, it is recognised (European Parliament, 2009), that the multifaceted nature of the quality of working life does not allow identifying and weighing all the factors accurately, and this leads to different methodological approaches. Depending on how the researchers see the opportunities of QWL factors analysis, three strategies are used. The first strategy recognises that it is too difficult to identify all the factors affecting the quality of working life reliably, and offers simplification of the task by examining only the level of job satisfaction. The second strategy is based on employee surveys, where the elements of the quality of working life are associated with the way they are assessed by the employees themselves. The third strategy maintains that we can reliably judge on the characteristics of complex subject from the scientists' works and theoretical estimations.

Therefore, if we try to define the quality of working life in a simpler way, just as a derivative of objective job characteristics, attention should be focused on the study of the working conditions. But if we realise the quality of working life as interaction between the actual working environment, subjective satisfaction, personality traits and happiness, there is no other way – we necessarily have to ask people themselves how they define and assess their working life in terms of what is important to them, what helps them feel satisfaction and what does not. The purpose of the empirical research in this case is to increase the knowledge about the object, its structure and functioning by assessing not only the actual, but also the subjectively perceived image, depending on the respondents' attitudes, feelings, character, personal experience and socio-demographic characteristics. The investigation should help clarify the meaning in people's minds of job and quality of working life, its importance, and the relative weight of its individual components. Quality of working life theoretical model is the basis for the empirical study of this phenomenon. It helps minimising the amount of discrete states in a multidimensional space of elements, and exclude the essential features that can be operationalised and used to create an empirical research instrument. Typically, the list of indicators corresponds to the structural composition of the theoretical model of the object and the investigatory tasks. For example, Clark (Clark, 1998), by measuring employee satisfaction with job quality, uses six groups of indicators relating to:

- pay;
- hours of work;
- future prospects (promotion and job security);
- how hard or difficult is the job;
- job content: interest, prestige and independence;
- interpersonal relationships (with co-workers and management).

To measure employee satisfaction, researchers of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2007) have used the following key indicators:

- employee engagement;
- teamworking;
- commitment to the organisation;
- job satisfaction;
- intention to stay in company;
- positive working relationships.

In the study of relationship between happiness at work and productivity, Suojanen (Suojanen, 2012) has identified the following groups of indicators:

- How happy people are and what aspects have an influence on their happiness?
- How important is work to people and does the importance of work have effect on their happiness?
- How highly is work appreciated and is there a connection between the appreciation of work and happiness?
- What is important to people when in search for a work and does this have effect on happiness?
- Are there connections between the quality of work and happiness?

As shown in the previous section of this article, the QWL model developed by us links the four major components:

1. Actual working conditions;
2. Subjective assessment of importance of work and its main aspects (remuneration, security, balance, relationships, growth and self-realisation), and the level of satisfaction with them;
3. Employee values and personality traits;
4. Personal happiness at work and in life overall.

Since the purpose of our empirical survey was to determine the state of QWL, the relationship with happiness and influence of other factors, we have created four groups of QWL indicators:

**1) The quality of actual working conditions:**

- Pay;
- Length of service in the workplace;
- Working hours;
- Paid/unpaid overtime;
- Paid/unpaid leave time;
- Number of days of absence on sick leave/childcare;
- Training days/hours;
- At what time and in what way the career changes occurred.

**2) Assessment of importance of factors and identification of the level of satisfaction:**

- How important is work in general;
- When people look for a new job, what importance they attach to the following aspects:
  - Pay;
  - Health and social security;
  - Working and family life balance;
  - Working relationships;
  - Growth and career opportunities;
  - Self-realisation opportunities.
- What is the level of a person's satisfaction with a current job;
- What is the level of a person's satisfaction concerning the following work aspects:
  - Pay;

- Health and social security;
  - Working and family life balance;
  - Working relationships;
  - Growth and career opportunities;
  - Self-realisation opportunities.
- 3) **Employee values and personality traits (analysed by using special techniques):**
- How important are personal values (from the list of work, spiritual, family, social, economic and political values);
  - Personality traits, such as the so-called “big five”: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Žukauskienė, 2006).
- 4) **Personal happiness at work and in life:**
- How a person feels happy at work,
  - How a person feels happy in life overall.

## Conclusions

1. Quality of working life of employees is important for happiness, not only because people spend a large part of their life at work, but also to acquire a social professional identity. Particularly important factors of happiness at work are organisational culture, ethos, interpersonal relationships, self-fulfilment and career opportunities, sense of recognition, working and personal (family) life balance.
2. Employee happiness should be considered as an essential element in the concept of quality of working life, which allows to link systematically the objective characteristics of the working environment, employee subjective satisfaction, employee personality characteristics and values, employee happiness state. QWL consists of the factual working conditions that promote full satisfaction of the needs in the physical, social, economic and psychological areas in harmony with the success of the organisation. At the same time, the quality of working life is the degree of subjective human well-being caused by the working environment and reflecting the level of personal satisfaction – happiness at work. The more working conditions promote positive values with willingness to disclose personal potential at work and use it to the benefit of the organisation, the more employee is flourishing as a personality and feels happy.
3. Employee happiness promotion is considered an important aspect of successful business conditions. It is recognised that investing in the quality of working life can bring great benefits to both individuals and the organisation as a whole. It was found that happier people at work are more inclined to innovations, better reveal their creative potential and have higher labour productivity. Happier staff helps create and maintain an optimistic mood and efficient work-friendly climate. Compared to unhappy employees, they do less absenteeism, have less bad habits and they are in better health.
4. The quality of life at work and happiness gradually become the object of public debates and public policy agenda in many countries. The report “The Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress Revisited” in 2009 by Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, gave a major boost to justify the need to begin measuring progress by using

indicators of societal welfare rather than economic output. Changes in public policy are also determined by pragmatic motives, such as the desire to reduce the sizeable economic losses faced by all economic sectors due to occupational health problems.

5. The theoretical QWL model is the basis of empirical studies of this phenomenon. It allows us to minimise the amount of discrete states in multidimensional space, excluding the main features. The purpose of the empirical study is to contribute to a better understanding of QWL, its structure and functioning, by assessing not only the factual, but also the subjectively perceived image by a single person, depending on the respondent's attitudes, feelings, character, personal experience and socio-demographic characteristics.
6. The theoretical QWL concept enables us to form a four-dimensional system of indicators:
  - 1) The quality of actual working conditions (pay; length of service at the workplace; working hours; paid/unpaid overtime; paid/unpaid leave time; number of days of absence due to sickness/child care; training days/hours; at what time and in what way the career changes occurred;
  - 2) Importance of QWL factors and level of satisfaction (importance of the work generally; importance of the selected work aspects while looking for a new job; satisfaction with a current job; satisfaction with the selected work aspects)
  - 3) Employee values (importance of the work, spiritual, family, social, economic and political values) and personality traits (analysed by using special techniques);
  - 4) Personal happiness (sense of happiness at work and in life overall).

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## GYVENIMO DARBE KOKYBĖS KONCEPCIJA IR EMPIRINIAI RODIKLIAI

**Santrauka.** Straipsnio tikslas – išanalizuoti gyvenimo darbe kokybės (GDK) sisteminę sandarą ir nustatyti svarbiausius matmenis bei jų empirinius rodiklius. GDK sampratos raida apžvelgiama viešosios politikos ir vadybos kontekste, atskleidžiamos mokslinių įžvalgų ir tyrimų sąsajos su naujomis viešojo valdymo reformų idėjomis. Autorius, remdamasis pozityviosios psichologijos ir sveikatos mokslų duomenimis, pabrėžia išvadą, kad darbo našumas ir darbuotojų laimė gali turėti stiprų sąveikos ryšį. GDK teorinėje sampratoje laimė yra esminis elementas. Gyvenimo darbe kokybė apima visumą faktinių darbo sąlygų, kurios skatina visavertį darbuotų fizinių, socialinių, ekonominių ir psichologinių poreikių tenkinimą dermėje su sėkminga organizacijos veikla. O kartu GDK yra darbo aplinkos sąlygojamas žmogaus subjektyvios gerovės laipsnis, atspindintis asmeninę pasitenkinimo būseną – laimę darbe. GDK veiksmų struktūroje išskiriami keturi pagrindiniai veiksniai – objektyvių darbo sąlygų kokybė, subjektyvus darbuotojų pasitenkinimas, asmenybės bruožai (charakteris bei vertybinės nuostatos) ir laimė. Darbo aplinkos kokybei ir pasitenkinimui matuoti autorius siūlo šešias rodiklių grupes – atlyginimo, saugumo, darbo ir asmeninio gyvenimo dermės, santykių, profesinio augimo ir savirealizacijos.

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