

Subjective well-being in primary school and its relation to students' academic achievement

Tatjana Kanonire

National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russia

In modern education school is considered as environment for child cognitive, personal and socio-emotional development. This approach is reflected in educational standards of many countries. The same is true for Russian education standards that emphasize the importance of students' well-being. However, students' achievement is usually the only criterion used by parents, teachers and policy makers for education quality evaluation. Academic achievement is regularly evaluated and a lot of different decisions with low and high-stakes are taken. Students' subjective well-being is rarely evaluated in systematic and reliable way in representative samples. But subjective well-being could be an important index of how school environment is comfortable and friendly for a child and whether it could contribute to child's individual development.

From previous studies we know that subjective well-being in adolescence and early adulthood could predict such life outcomes as health, performance, income and close relationships (Diener, & Ryan, 2009; Luhmann, Lucas, Eid, & Diener, 2013; Kansky, Allen, & Diener, 2016). But there are few studies about primary school children' well-being and its relation with achievement, and their results are controversial (Huebner, 1991; Cheng, & Furnham, 2002; Lv, Zhou, Guo, et al., 2016; Lyons, & Huebner, 2016).

This motivated us to add subjective well-being as one more variable into the study of students' achievement progress in primary school. Measuring subjective well-being in primary school raised the range of questions. First of all, should we measure well-being in general or in school context? In our study we take school context into account as it helps to understand both context and resources that is helpful for practical purposes. Subjective well-being in our study is considered as multicomponent construct and includes satisfaction with school (cognitive component), school positive and negative affect (affect component) (according to Diener, 1984; Tian, Wang, Huebner, 2015), and relationships with classmates. Another challenge was to find appropriate instruments for measuring well-being in primary school. We adapted several questionnaires according to the age of children and actual Russian context.

Research question in this study is: could achievement in reading predict subjective well-being in primary school?

The sample consists of 3rd grade students balanced by gender with age range from 9 to 10. The Delta standardized test was used for measuring achievement in Reading. School satisfaction and school affect were measured by Russian version of Brief Adolescents' Subjective Well-Being in School Scale (Tian, Wang, Huebner, 2015). Collaboration with classmates and hostility were

measured by Russian version of Classmates' Friendship Relationships Questionnaire (Turilova-Miščenko, Raščevska, 2008).

A single linear regression was calculated to predict school satisfaction, school affect, collaboration with classmates and hostility based on reading achievement. Reading achievement significantly predicts: school satisfaction ($F(1, 1516) = 15.850, p = .000, \text{ with } R^2 = .01$); school affect ($F(1, 1558) = 4.373, p = .037, \text{ with } R^2 = .003$); collaboration with classmates ($F(1, 1482) = 6.104, p = .014, \text{ with } R^2 = .004$); hostility ($F(1, 1422) = 26.393, p = .000, \text{ with } R^2 = .018$). The results and further research will be discussed.