

Satisfaction with Life in the “Third Age” and Its Measurement: Adaptation of the Russian Version of the LSITA-SF

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The aim of this study was to adapt the Russian version of the Life Satisfaction Index for the Third Age-Short Form (LSITA-SF) by E. Barrett [6]. The study involved 203 respondents aged 50 to 83 years. All participants completed a set of socio-demographic questions, LSITA-SF, and instruments assessing apathy, depression, subjective vitality, overall satisfaction with life, and subjective happiness. The results showed that the Russian version of the LSITA-SF has a one-factor structure and demonstrates high internal reliability and convergent validity. An analysis of the socio-demographic differences in the LSITA-SF scores indicated that females and younger respondents had higher scores of satisfaction with life in the “third age” than males and older respondents. It was concluded that the Russian version of the LSITA-SF is a reliable and valid instrument that can be recommended as a scale for screening and monitoring satisfaction with life in the Russian-speaking respondents who are in the “third age”.

Keywords: LSITA-SF, life satisfaction, “third age”, factor structure, internal reliability, convergent validity.

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Удовлетворенность жизнью в «третьем возрасте» и ее диагностика: адаптация русскоязычной версии LSITA-SF

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Целью исследования была адаптация русскоязычной версии краткой формы индекса удовлетворенности жизнью для «третьего возраста» (Life Satisfaction Index for the Third Age-Short Form; LSITA-SF) Э. Барретта [6]. В исследовании приняли участие 203 респондента в возрасте от 50 до 83 лет. Все участники заполнили LSITA-SF и шкалы, оценивающие апатию, депрессию, субъективную витальность, общую удовлетворенность жизнью и субъективное переживание счастья. Обработка результатов показала, что русскоязычная версия LSITA-SF имеет однофакторную структуру, а также демонстрирует высокие показатели внутренней надежности и конвергентной валидности. Анализ социально-демографических различий в показателях по LSITA-SF указал на то, что женщины и респонденты более младшего возраста имели более высокие показатели удовлетворенности жизнью в «третьем возрасте», чем мужчины и респонденты более старшего возраста. На основании обнаруженных закономерностей делается вывод о том, что русскоязычная версия LSITA-SF является надежным и валидным инструментом, который можно рекомендовать в качестве шкалы для скрининга и мониторинга удовлетворенности жизнью у русскоязычных респондентов, находящихся в «третьем возрасте».

Ключевые слова: LSITA-SF, удовлетворенность жизнью, «третий возраст», факторная структура, внутренняя надежность, конвергентная валидность.

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Introduction

Life satisfaction as an integral characteristic of subjective well-being has always been a subject of intense attention of researchers. It is not surprising that during the COVID-19 pandemic a rather large number of empirical studies shedding light on life satisfaction as a specific outcome in life crisis circumstances appeared. Population-based studies showed that greater life satisfaction was associated with higher rates of hope and meaningful living [21], lower rates of pandemic stress and fear, and higher rates of connectedness [12], fewer days of social isolation, sufficient information, occupational employment, and partial access to the outside world [17].

The COVID-19 pandemic had a particularly acute impact on the elderly, who were at risk and had to take enhanced precautions. Specialists found contradictory patterns related to life satisfaction in old age, which can probably be explained by cross-cultural differences and the specifics of the pandemic spread and control in different countries. Thus, Belgian older adults reported a significant decrease in life satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic [9], whereas in Sweden life satisfaction scores remained stable relative to pre-pandemic estimates even though 44,9% of respondents worried about their health, 69,5% about the social consequences of the pandemic, 25,1% about the financial consequences of the pandemic, and 42,3% about the high risk of infection [22]. Finally, Polish and German elderly rated their life satisfaction, quality of life, and overall psychological well-being during the pandemic higher than did younger adults, and also exhibited greater risk tolerance, better sleep quality, higher optimism scores and less difficulty relaxing than middle-aged respondents [7].

These patterns illustrate the need for cross-cultural studies of life satisfaction in adulthood, which, in turn, implies psychometrically sound instruments.

Currently, the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), developed in 1985 by the American psychologist E. Diener, is widely used [10]. It is used for respondents in adolescence and adulthood, including those in late adulthood [13]. Later, Multidimensional Life Satisfaction Scale for Children (MLSS-C) [19] and Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) [20] were developed and validated. Finally, in 2009 Andrew Barrett and Peter Murk developed the Life Satisfaction Index for the Third Age-Short Form (LSITA-SF) measuring life satisfaction in persons over 50 years [6]. Unlike the SWLS, the LSITA-SF contains not only general but also specific questions that measure current life satisfaction with retrospective evaluations at a younger age ("I am just as happy as when I was younger", "As I look back on my life, I am well satisfied", "As I grow older, things seem better than I thought they would be", etc.).

Russian scientists use the Russian SWLS [3] and the Multidimensional Life Satisfaction Scale for Schoolchildren developed on the basis of the MSLSS [5]. There are still no specific scales in the arsenal of Russian-language instruments for assessing respondents' life satisfaction in late adulthood. Due to the scientific and practical value of the LSITA-SF, the aim of this study was to adapt the Russian LSITA-SF.

Method

Participants. A total of 203 respondents (57 males and 146 females) aged 50 to 83 years ($M = 61,65$, $SD = 7,89$) participated in this study. The link to the electronic questionnaire was distributed by the second and third authors through advertisements in social networks and polyclinics in Moscow. All respondents gave written informed voluntary consent to participate in this study.

Measures. Participants completed a questionnaire consisting of socio-demographic questions, the Russian LSITA-SF, and the following instruments:

The *Apathy Scale (AS)* was developed by A. Zolotareva. The AS is a measure assessing apathy as a mental state characterized by indifference towards oneself, others and the world [2].

The *Geriatric Depression Scale-Short Form (GDS-SF)* was developed by J. Sheikh and J. Yesavage and adapted into Russian by V. Ostapenko. The GDS-SF is a measure assessing clinically significant depression in persons over 50 years [4].

The *Subjective Vitality Scale (SVS)* was developed by R. Ryan and C. Frederick and adapted into Russian by L. Alexandrova. The SVS is a measure assessing subjective vitality as a state of fullness of vital forces [1].

The *Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)* was developed by E. Diener and adapted into Russian by E. Osin and D. Leontiev. The SWLS is a measure assessing the correspondence of life circumstances to the respondent's expectations [3].

The *Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS)* was developed by S. Lyubomirsky and adapted into Russian by E. Osin and D. Leontiev. The SHS is a measure assessing

the general level of psychological well-being [3].

Results

Translation. The first author obtained permission to adapt the Russian LSITA-SF from Andrew Barrett, the author of the original version of the scale. The translation of the LSITA-SF into Russian was performed by the first author; the reverse translation was performed by a bilingual expert who was not previously familiar with the scale and was unaware of the aim of this study. The final Russian LSITA-SF is presented in the Appendix.

Descriptive statistics. The values of the mean, standard deviations, and α -Cronbach's coefficients for excluding individual items from the Russian LSITA-SF are presented in Table 1. The α -Cronbach's coefficient for the total score was 0,88. When item #7 ("I expect interesting and pleasant things to happen to me in the future") was excluded, the α -Cronbach's coefficient increased to the value of 0,89. However, taking into account the high α -Cronbach coefficient for the total score, this was not an indication for its removal from the Russian LSITA-SF.

Table 1

LSITA-SF Items' Descriptive Statistics

Items	M	SD	α
Item 1	3.16	1.27	0.87
Item 2	4.10	1.31	0.86
Item 3	2.97	1.26	0.87
Item 4	3.67	1.50	0.87
Item 5	2.99	1.23	0.87
Item 6	4.05	1.26	0.87
Item 7	4.33	1.06	0.89
Item 8	3.75	1.12	0.88
Item 9	3.55	1.24	0.86
Item 10	3.70	1.08	0.88
Item 11	3.28	1.24	0.87
Item 12	3.65	1.14	0.87

Note. The items were transliterated from Russian, translation is not allowed. M = mean; SD = standard deviation; α = α -Cronbach's coefficient when excluding.

Factor structure. The LSITA-SF indirect items were inverted before factorizing the data. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using the principal component method followed by orthogonal varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization was performed to preliminarily examination of the LSITA-SF factor structure. A single factor solution explained 44,4% of the variance (the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sample adequacy test value was 0,905 with a significant Bartlett sphericity score of 957,013 (df = 66), $p < 0,001$).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to examine the original factor structure of the LSITA-SF. The validated model showed questionable fit to the data (Satorra-Bentler χ^2 (54) = 137,020, $p < 0,001$, CFI = 0,902, TLI = 0,889, RMSEA = 0,087 (90% CI 0,069 to 0,106)). Based on the results of the Lagrange modification index analysis, we introduced covariances between the errors of the item #9 (“My life is great”) and item #10 (“Everything is just great”). The modified model showed acceptable fit to the data (Satorra-Bentler χ^2 (53) = 120,420, $p < 0,001$, CFI = 0,926, TLI = 0,908, RMSEA = 0,079 (90% CI 0,061

to 0,098)). Table 2 presents the factor structure of the Russian LSITA-SF.

Convergent validity. Life satisfaction in the “third age” was statistically significantly negatively related to apathy and depression, and positively correlated with subjective vitality, life satisfaction, and subjective happiness. Table 3 shows the correlation matrix. All correlation coefficients were $\geq 0,4$, suggesting the convergent validity of the Russian LSITA-SF.

Sex and age differences. The values of the mean and standard deviations for the LSITA-SF scores are presented in Table 4. Using t-Student’s test with Bonferroni correction, it was found that females demonstrated higher life satisfaction in the “third age” than males ($t = 2,19$, $p = 0,029$, $d = 0,34$). There was also a statistically significant tendency for life satisfaction in the “third age” to decrease with respondents’ age ($F(2, 200) = 15,743$, $p < 0,001$, $\eta^2 = 0,14$).

Discussion

There are two key conclusions of this study. Firstly, the Russian LSITA-SF is a psychometrically sound instrument assess-

Table 2

LSITA-SF Factor Structure

Items	EFA	CFA
Item 1	0.67	0.62
Item 2	0.78	0.78
Item 3	0.76	0.73
Item 4	0.67	0.66
Item 5	0.67	0.63
Item 6	0.74	0.73
Item 7	0.30	0.25
Item 8	0.60	0.54
Item 9	0.82	0.78
Item 10	0.46	0.36
Item 11	0.65	0.60
Item 12	0.71	0.65

Note. The items were transliterated from Russian, translation is not allowed. EFA = exploratory factor analysis; CFA = confirmatory factor analysis.

Table 3

LSITA-SF Convergent Validity

Variables	Life satisfaction in the “third age”
Apathy	- 0.57***
Depression	- 0.80***
Subjective vitality	0.68***
Life satisfaction	0.62***
Subjective happiness	0.72***

Note. *** p < 0,001.

Table 4

Sex and Age Differences in LSITA-SF Scores

Sample	M	SD
Total sample (n = 203)	43.20	9.72
Males (n = 57)	40.82	9.19
Females (n = 146)	44.12	9.79
Persons aged 50—59 (n = 95)	46.11	9.42
Personas aged 60—69 (n = 66)	43.17	9.92
Persons aged 70—83 (n = 42)	36.67	6.50

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

ing life satisfaction in the “third age”. The factor structure of the adapted scale reproduced the structure of the original LSITA-SF, demonstrating that the one-factor solution has an acceptable fit to the data [18]. The α -Cronbach’s coefficient for the total score was 0,88, suggesting internal reliability of the instrument [25]. The convergent validity of the Russian LSITA-SF was confirmed by correlations between life satisfaction in the “third age” and psychological constructs, which in previous studies showed similar relations with life satisfaction. Thus, the life satisfaction was negatively correlated with apathy and depression, and was positively correlated with subjective vitality and subjective happiness [8; 16; 24].

Secondly, life satisfaction in the “third age” is sex- and age-specific. Females reported higher LSITA-SF scores than males, and respondents aged 50-59 showed higher life satisfaction scores than older respondents. Sex trends appear to be culturally

specific, because in Eastern countries males are the most satisfied with life, while in Western countries females are [11; 23]. On the contrary, the age specificity of life satisfaction in adulthood is universal. In a 12-year longitudinal Berlin Aging Study it was shown that in old age there is a sharp decrease in life satisfaction related to impending death and death prediction mechanisms [15].

In conclusion, there are several limitations of this study. The first limitation is the small sample size. This limits the development of test norms for the Russian LSITA-SF and the verification of factor invariance by sex and age. The second limitation is the modest set of procedures for assessing the reliability and validity of the adapted scale. This only confirms the internal reliability and convergent validity of the Russian LSITA-SF. The prospects for this study are to examine the psychometric properties of the scale on a representative sample of persons over the age of 50, and to extend

the psychometric procedures to assess the retest reliability, criterion validity, and predictive validity. Finally, a third limitation of this study is that it was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, but we cannot rule out a natural decline in life satisfaction

scores related to reactions to extreme life circumstances [14].

Nevertheless, the Russian LSITA-SF is a reliable and valid instrument that can be recommended as a scale for screening and monitoring life satisfaction in the "third age".

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