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Father involvement and men's satisfaction of life

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Abstract

Introduction: The benefits of father involvement for children are widely acknowledged; involved fathers enhance academic success and protect children from improper behavior with benefits that extend far beyond the childhood years (Lamb, 2010; Lamb, Lewis, 2004; Pleck, 1997). Research to date has only just begun to consider another key question: How do parenting roles affect fathers?

Purpose of work: The aim of this project is to verify the relationship between men's involvement in paternity and men's satisfaction of life. Specifically, the project aims at answering the following question: whether involvement in paternity is positively related to men's satisfaction of life.

Material and method: 100 people – men who are biological fathers, who have at least one child in school or pre-school age (one child aged at least 4 years old but the oldest is no more than 19 years old), first married. Paternity itself is differentiated that is why it is important to keep the homogeneity of the group. The research had a questionnaire character: SWLS scale and a sheet was used.

Results: The research confirmed the relation between fatherhood satisfaction and satisfaction of life.

Conclusions: Fatherhood is one of the way of men fulfillment understood as a satisfaction of life.

Key words: father involvement, satisfaction of life

Introduction

Parenting is an important factor in stabilizing one's life as a mature, socially acceptable member of a community. The political, social and economic changes that took place in the 20th century have led to the emergence of an egalitarian family model that involves a different division of roles and responsibilities (Tyszkowa, 1990). The position of the father in the family has undergone a fundamental change. The responsibilities of the mother and father were precisely defined in the traditional family, where the father occupied the highest position as a breadwinner and decided on more important matters, while the mother was assigned to the responsibilities of raising children and caring for the household.

Parents in the course of adapting to the role change many times, developing at the same time (Matuszewska, 1990). According to the description of Tyszkowa (2009) the developmental significance for adults has only active parenting experience, not the mere fact of being a mother or father. Compared to maternity, paternity is not considered as a turning point in a man's life. Moreover, the researchers also do not pay special attention to the consequences that arouses in a man's life the fact of being a father. This is surprising because the contemporary image of a man-father has fundamentally changed and even assumes active involvement in bringing up children and family presence to a greater extent than before. This is largely due to the greater professional activity of women and the need to share the tasks of raising children between parents. The decisive factor for the effectiveness of parental roles is the degree of parental involvement in these roles. Taking on the role of a father with full commitment creates the opportunity not only to meet the needs of children, but also their own, such as self-realization, activity, recognition, respect, transfer of one's own values, knowledge, achievements and experiences to the younger generation (Rostowska, 2009). The family can be considered as a living environment, an activity and an individual's development. Acceptance of position and social role in the family system plays a special role from the point of view of functioning and development of the individual (Tyszkowa, 1990). The condition of growth and the source of experience is the realization of developmental tasks that emerge in a certain period of an individual's life, and whose fulfillment leads successfully to his happiness and success in later tasks, while failure to fulfill the individual's lack of happiness, social disapproval and difficulties in implementing further developmental tasks (Erikson, 1997; Havighurst, 1981). Much of the so-called. Important life events as well as developmental tasks of the individual are connected with the family either as an area of activity or as a form of realization of vital life aspirations (Matuszewska, 1990). It is important for the individual growth and mental health of individual members to accept social family roles, as well as changes in their performing related to the stage of the family's life cycle and the developmental changes of family members. Accepting a new role and changing the way it performs, the parent learns new behaviors, reevaluates and changes behaviors, attitudes, which

promotes personal development and life satisfaction (Tyszkowa, 1990). On this basis, the hypothesis (H1) has been formulated, assuming that involvement paternity is positively related to the satisfaction of men's life.

Well-being is a growing area of research, yet the question of how it should be defined remains unanswered (Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., Sanders, L. 2012). Two approaches emerged: the hedonic tradition, which accentuated constructs such as happiness, positive affect, low negative affect, and satisfaction with life (e.g., Diener, 1984; Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999); and the eudaimonic tradition, which highlighted positive psychological functioning and human development (Ryff, 1989; Waterman, 1993). However, despite the differences in approach, most researchers now believe that well-being is a multi-dimensional construct (Diener, 2004; Stiglitz, Sen, Fitoussi 2009). Consequently, the diversity of dimensions has created a "confusing and contradictory research base" (Pollard, Lee, 2003, p. 2).

In this project the psychological well-being will be understood as satisfaction in life (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, Griffin, 1985; Czapiński, 2004; Diener, Lucas, Oishi, 2004; Growiec, 2015). Satisfaction from life as a cognitive perspective is close to the eudaimonism point of view. In eudaimonism, happiness is associated with committed life, accomplishing certain goals (Watermann, 2010) and achieving full potential (Carr, 2009).

Material and methods

1. The following variables are included in the models as controls:

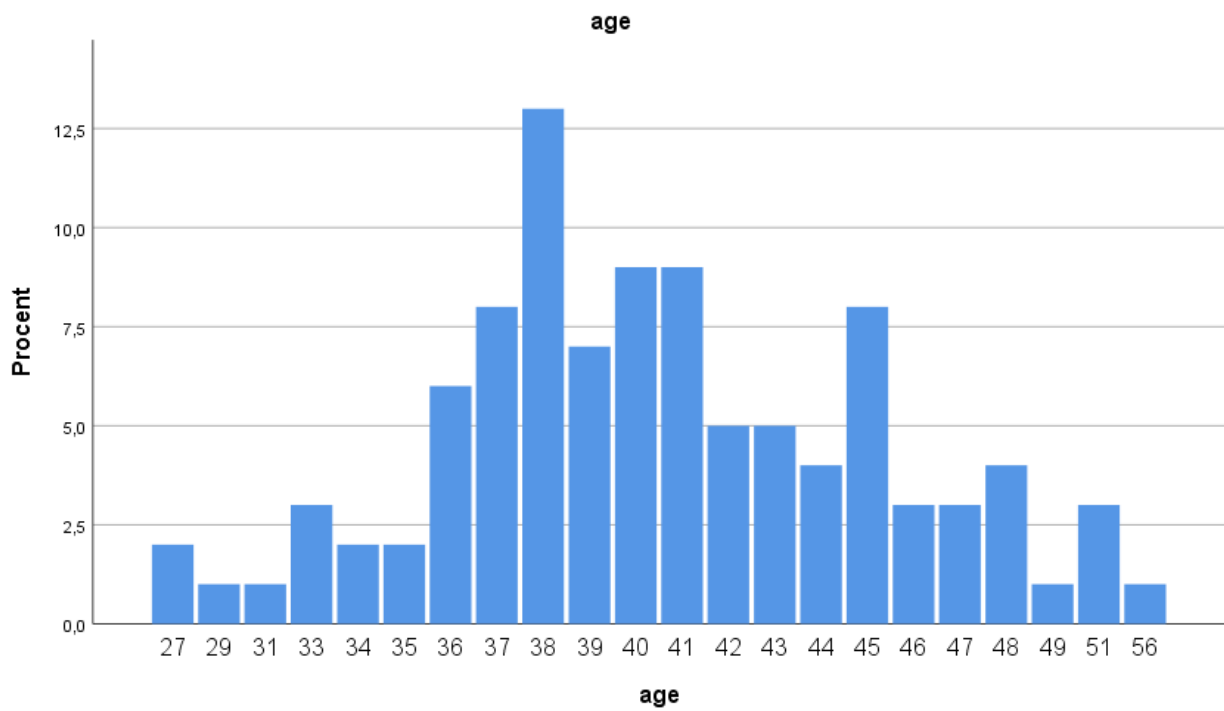
age, education, marital status, age of children, difficulty in raising children, the amount of time that fathers are reported to be spending with their children, marital satisfaction.

2. Specific question about fatherhood – the statement is: The fatherhood is the source of my life satisfaction. The question is rated on a sevenpoint scale, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

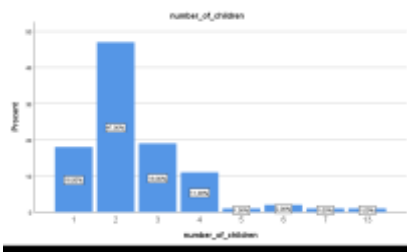
3. Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), Diener et al. (1985) in the Polish adaptation of Juczyński (2001). The scale which measures well-being (eudamonic well-being) is the **Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)** of Diener et al. (1985) in Polish adaptation of Juczyński (2001). The SWLS scale contains five statements. The investigator assesses the extent to which each of them relates to his current life. The result of the measurement is the overall rate of satisfaction with life. The respondent has a choice of seven levels of response, where 1 means that he absolutely disagree, and 7 is completely agree. The α -Cronbach reliability index is .81.

The results:

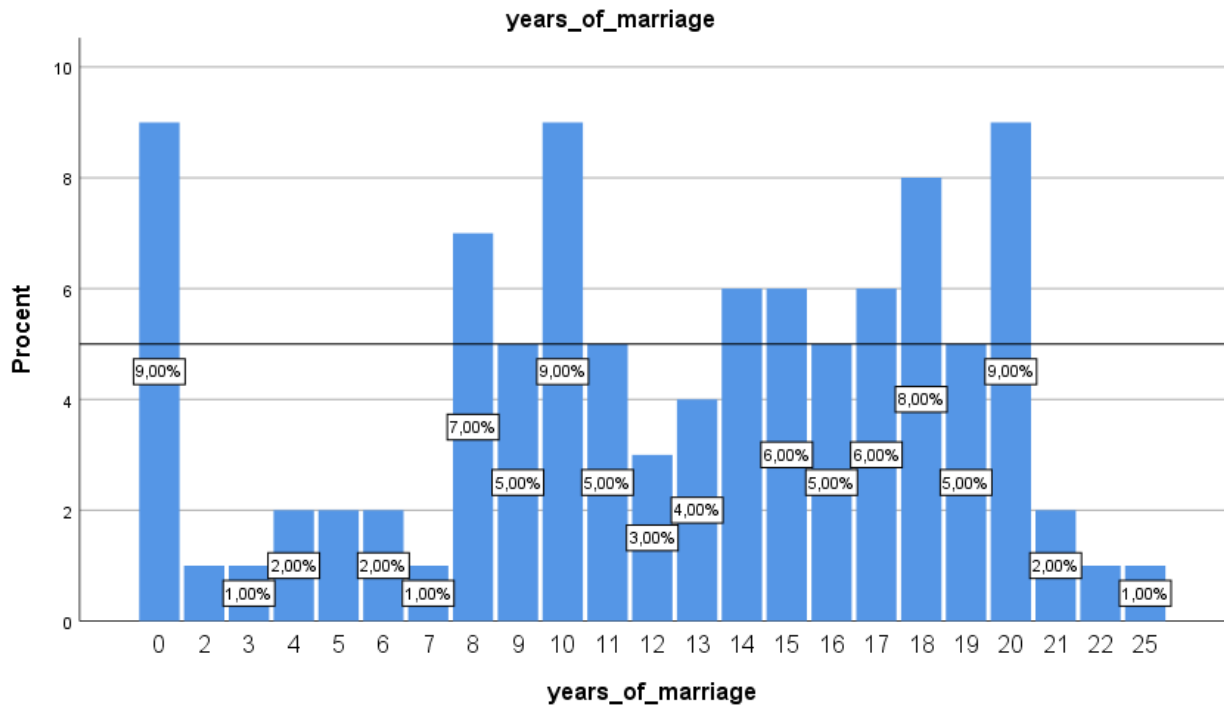
The age of the respondents fluctuates between 27 and 56 years.



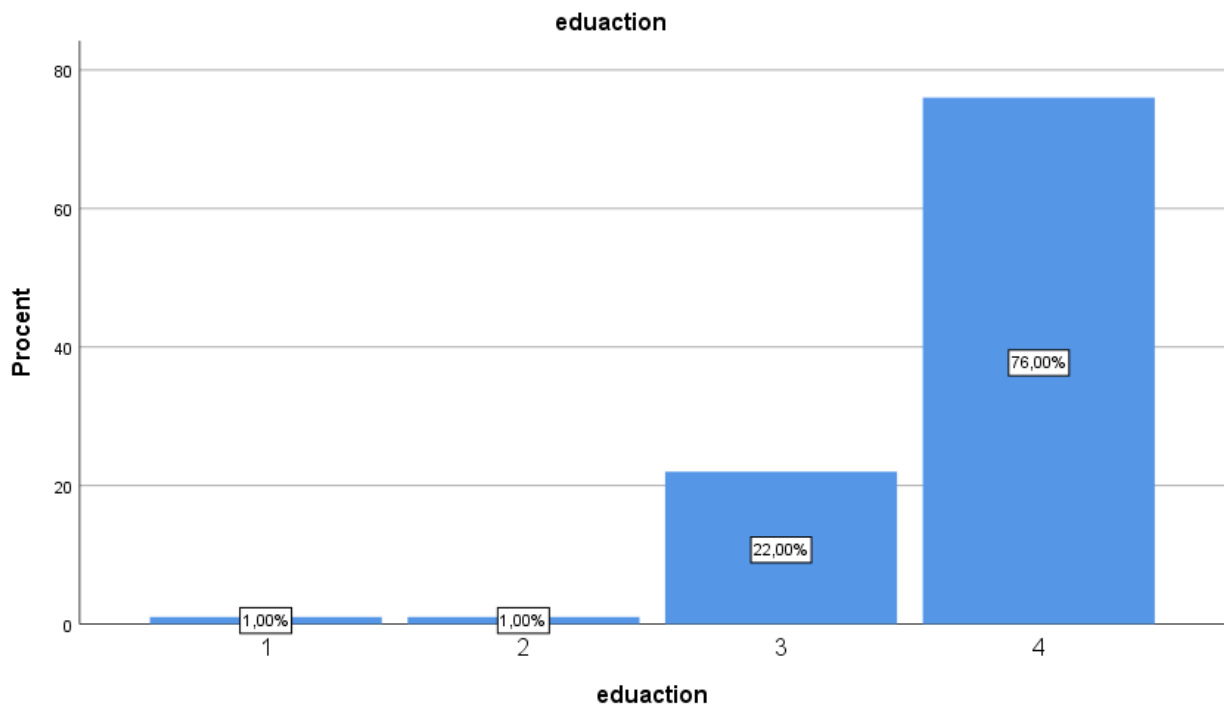
Most of the respondents have two children (47%). 19% of fathers have three children. One child have 18% of respondents. Every tenth father has four children.



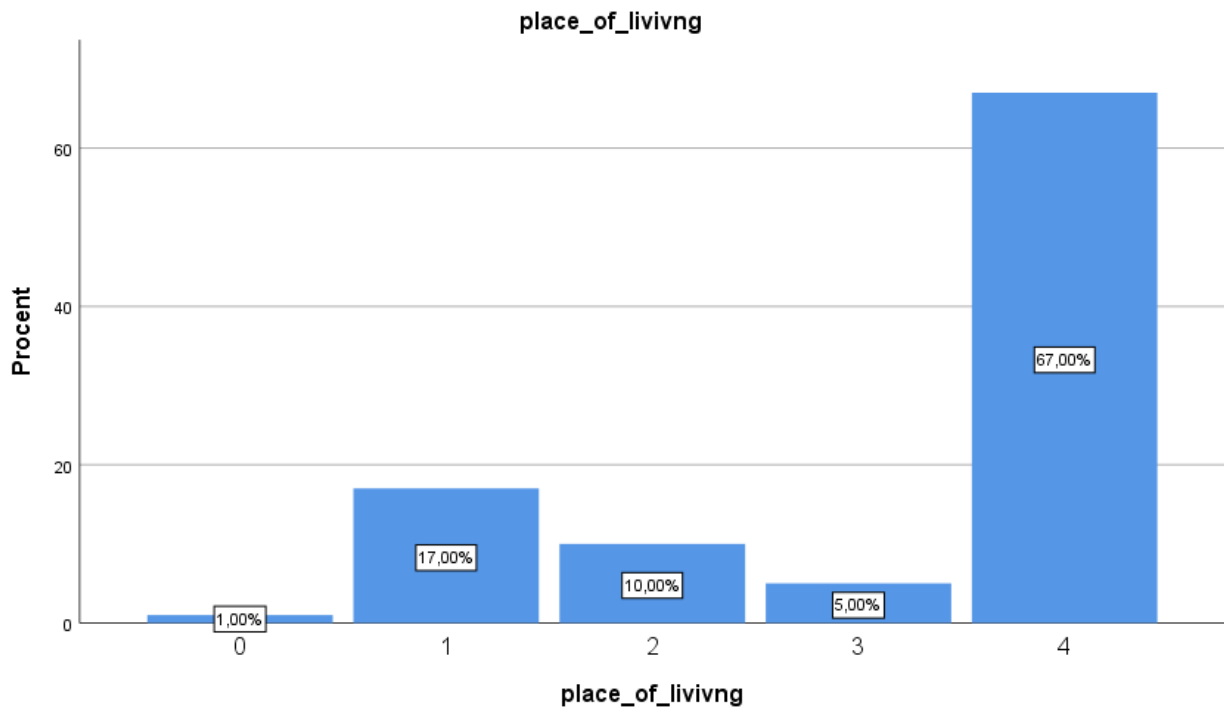
The average of length of marriage is 12 years. 9% of respondents did not answer to this question.



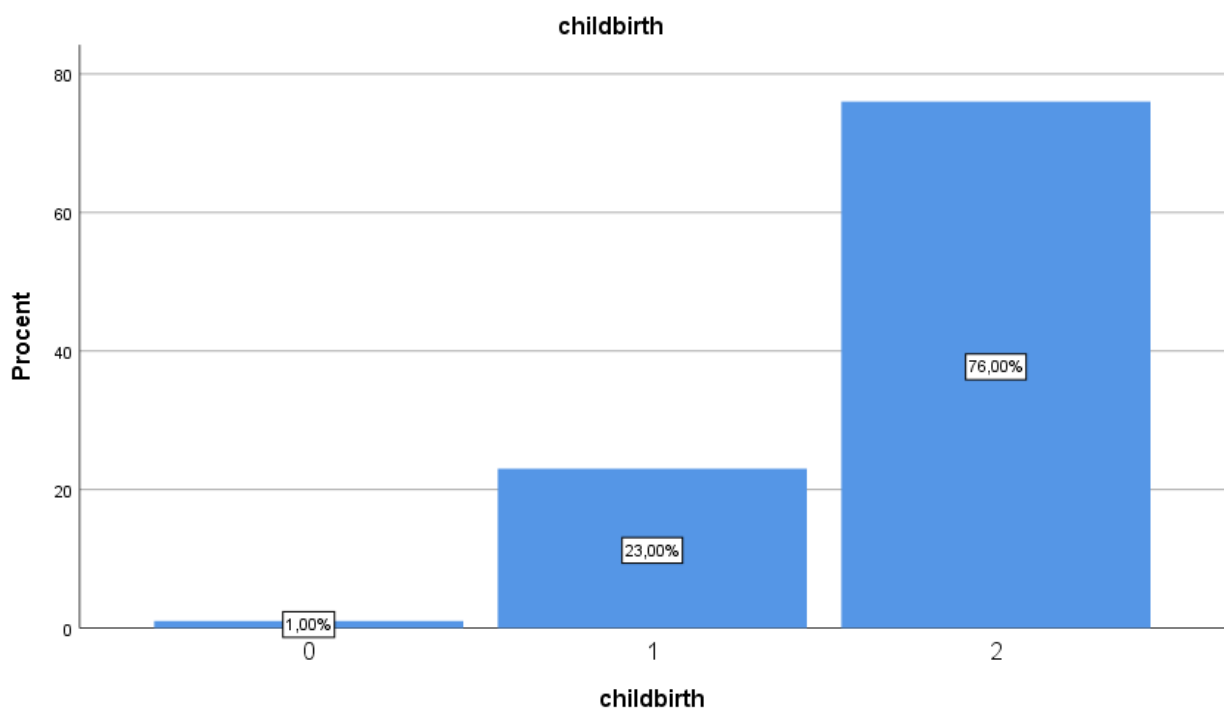
Almost all of the respondents have college (22%) or higher education (76%).



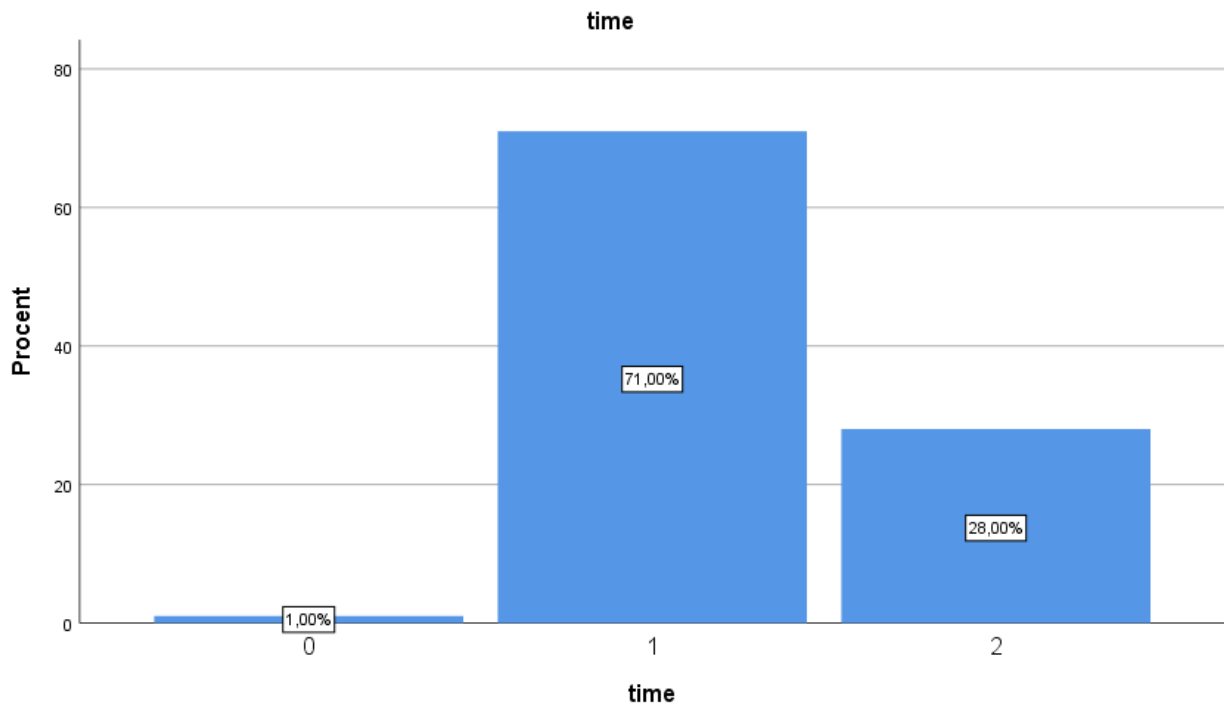
67% of respondents live in big city (more than 100 000 citizens). 17% of them live in a village. 10% live in small cities (up to 20 000 citizens) and 5% in cities up to 100 000 citizens.



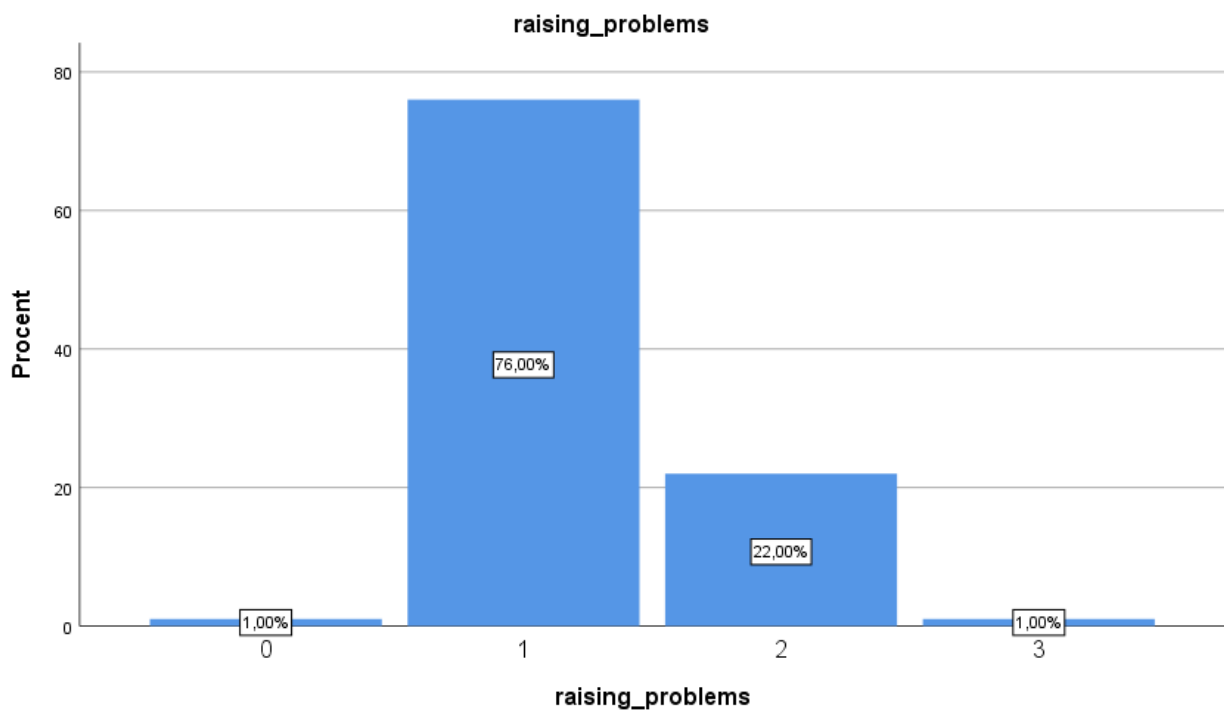
76% of fathers confirm they were during childbirth and 23% of them were not.



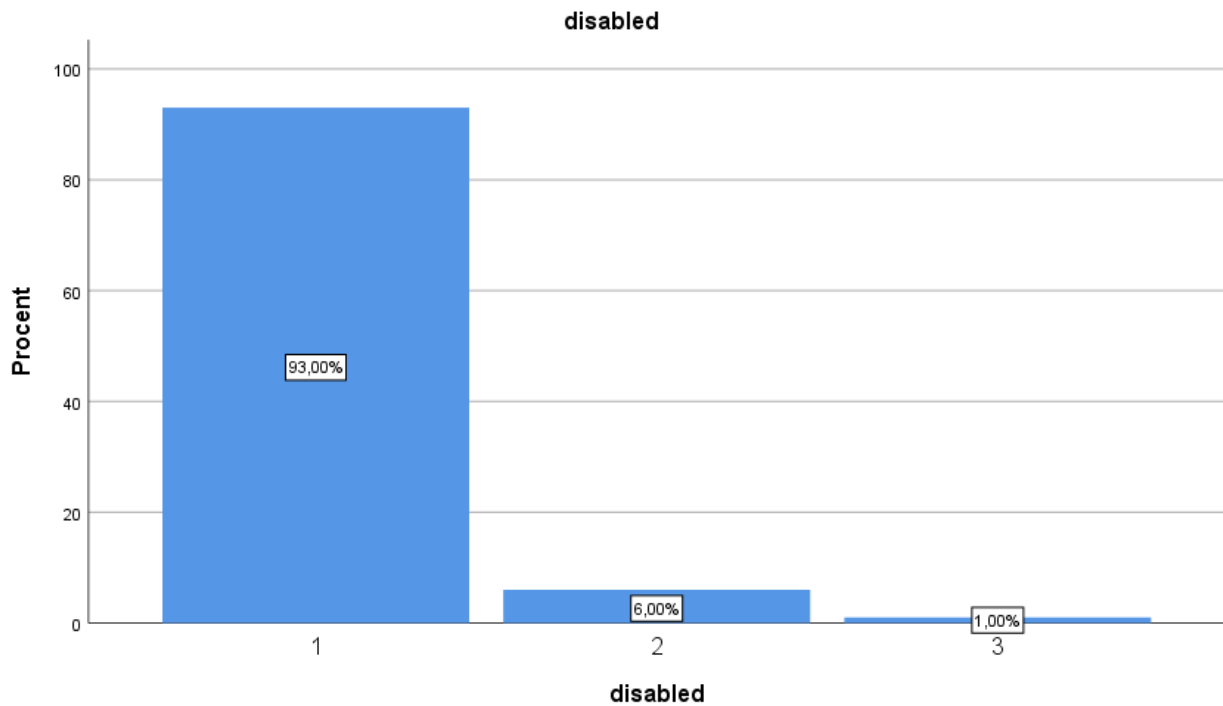
71% of them said they did not wait long time for having baby. 28% fathers admit they were waiting long time for conception.



22% of respondents declare they have some problems with raising, but 76% of them do not see any problems.



93% of fathers have healthy child, only 6% of them have child with some kind of disability.



The most important result of this research is about relation between fathers' involvement measure as a time spending with child and satisfaction of life. Also, the relation between perceiving fatherhood as a satisfaction and satisfaction of life in general. The first statement about correlation between spending time together and satisfaction is not confirmed.

Correlation

		SWLS	spending_time_week
SWLS	Korelacja Pearsona	1	,041
	Istotność (dwustronna)		,688
	N	100	100
spending_time_week	Korelacja Pearsona	,041	1
	Istotność (dwustronna)	,688	
	N	100	100

Correlation

		SWLS	spending_time_weekend
SWLS	Korelacja Pearsona	1	,043
	Istotność (dwustronna)		,671
	N	100	100
spending_time_weekend	Korelacja Pearsona	,043	1
	Istotność (dwustronna)	,671	
	N	100	100

Correlation

		SWLS	Fatherhood_satisf action
SWLS	Korelacja Pearsona	1	,262**
	Istotność (dwustronna)		,009
	N	100	100
Fatherhood_satisfaction	Korelacja Pearsona	,262**	1
	Istotność (dwustronna)	,009	
	N	100	101

** Correlation significant at 0.01 (two-sided)

Correlation

		SWLS	p.15
SWLS	Korelacja Pearsona	1	,419**
	Istotność (dwustronna)		,000
	N	100	100
Marital satisf.	Korelacja Pearsona	,419**	1
	Istotność (dwustronna)	,000	
	N	100	101

** Correlation significant at 0.01 (two-sided)

Conclusion

The research problem is a new problem. Previous studies on parenting focused primarily on maternity and paternity was ignored by researchers. Interest in the topic of paternity began to emerge recently, but still limited to analyzing the role of father and the development and functioning of children. The happiness and satisfaction of men have so far been studied mainly in the context of professional work, recognizing that this is the main source of men's satisfaction. Social change, greater involvement of women in working life, a new division of roles and responsibilities implies a greater involvement of men in family roles. The repertoire of tasks resulting from the fact of being a father has changed. There are few analyzes, however, that could unambiguously show that engagement in paternity is a source of satisfaction for men, a way to develop their full potential. The results of this study verified the stereotypes about the areas of male potential and confirmed the relation between fatherhood satisfaction and men's life satisfaction. Another important conclusion is that marital satisfaction is directly related to satisfaction of life.

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