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## CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE MEANINGFUL LIFE AMONG RURAL AND URBAN YOUNG PEOPLE

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In a rapidly changing global environment young people find it more difficult to understand and take a position in life. Therefore, the insights into the meaning of life as well as youth values, which need to be updated at times, presuppose a scientific problem of this work. The article aims to elaborate the differences between the rural and urban youth concerning their perception of the meaningful life and their values. Three hundred and seventy undergraduate students in the study programmes of agriculture, technology and social science at Aleksandras Stulginskis University were surveyed. The results of the survey revealed the prevailing individualistic values of the youth. Although the statistical differences in the socio-economic variables were not found, some trends in the context of gender and place of origin were observed. Students associate the meaning of life with diligence and honest work, self-confidence and goal-seeking. The essential differences in basic life principles manifested themselves within the perception of the meaningful life between the urban and rural youth. Although young people from rural areas perceive life as tedious, they tend to live longer, abandoning everything that is unhealthy, and do not think that a suicide could be a way out of a difficult position. Whereas, the youngsters from big cities, evaluating their life in a fairly optimistic way, would rather live shorter life, than give up the pleasures of life; they are also more likely to think that a suicide could be a way out of a difficult situation.

*Keywords: meaningful life, youth, values, urban, rural.*

### INTRODUCTION

At the junction of today's modern and post-modern existence, young people, who grew up in the times of society's political, social, economic, and especially technological change, who is now seeking self-realization, is called generation Z, which is characterized by the fact that communication, learning, information, search for ideas, and values are moving into a virtual environment. It is easy for a young person to take well-known and indisputable social roles and values when the majority of members of society follow identical moral, religious, political and social attitudes and cultural and economic changes are not big. But today, in a context of globalization, and during rapid development of knowledge and society, young people find it more difficult to understand their opportunities and to choose a right position. "A prosperous society, a state of social welfare, is able to satisfy virtually all human needs; furthermore, it is the consumer society that creates certain needs. The only need which is forgotten is the need for human purpose (...) - i.e. the deepest human need to discover the meaning of one's life, more precisely, every time to realize that meaning in specific circumstances of life" (Frankl, 2010).

The need for meaning in philosophical and psychological literature is considered as the content and basis of human life (Aramavičiūtė, 2005); as a perception of the importance of life and having a goal (Norvilaitė, 2012). A. Schinkel, D. de Ruyter, A. Aviram (2016) highlight the connection between meaning of life, fundamental values and the educational system. A number of scientific empirical studies have been carried out that examine the factors of the meaning of life amongst students (Nell, 2014); the meaning of life perceived by bachelor students, personal development and professional self-improvement, relating them with professional vocation (Duffy et al., 2014); there is a search for a connection between the meaning of life of young people, life satisfaction and suicidal actions (Kress et al. 2015); A qualitative survey of homeless young people in the United States demonstrates the impact of popular culture, the arts, the media on the assessment of the meaning of life and health (Mutere et al., 2014).

The aforementioned authors base the meaning of life on value attitudes that are given considerable attention in our country's scientific literature. The cognitive strategy of values as a mental phenomenon, that cannot be directly monitored and therefore they can only be investigated as latent constructs; is based on two major and international

comparative studies of values – the Study of World Values and the Study of European Values that began in 1981, whereas Lithuania began to participate in this project in 1990. In their monographs R. Žiliukaitė, A. Poviliūnas, A. Savickas (2016) analyze the dynamics of Lithuanian people's values during the twenty years of independence. Youth values and value attitudes were studied in various aspects: their change in post-modern societies were also researched (Savicka, 2015); the values, needs and opportunities to meet them of young people in the province were also analyzed (Atkočiūnienė, Navasaitienė, Aleksandravičius, 2012); V. Aramavičiūtė attempted to base the connection between the meaning of life and the values that constitute the content of meaning, and to reveal it through the attitudes of older students for the search for meaning (Aramavičiūtė, 2005). It is worthwhile to update studies of similar nature at times because they provide the basis for new insights on changes in the values of youth in a postmodern condition. Thus, the insights of the meaning and values of youth life imply a scientific problem of this article, which we clarify by asking: what values form the meaning of life of modern youth? Do rural and urban youth values and perceptions of life differ?

**The object** of the research is the conceptualisation of the meaning of life of young people.

**The aim** of the research is to elaborate the differences between the rural and urban youth concerning their perception of the meaningful life and their values.

The tasks set for the research aim are: 1) to discover the perception of the meaning of life and value attitudes; 2) to measure the impact of socio-demographic variables on the significance of youth values; 3) to assess differences in the perception of the meaningful life of rural and urban youth.

### **Perception of the meaning of life and its value attitudes**

Values is the ability of the consciousness to regulate activity and behavior according to beliefs, moral norms and life prospects. An adult is affected by the value schemes generated by the educational process, which considers the implementation of these values as an object of desire, even if it is not achieved. In keeping with the values scheme, a person selects his perceptions, talks with conscience, rejects or forms habitual subsystems, depending on whether they are compatible or incompatible with his obligations. Personal values are the meanings of human life, more or less conscious and interiorized. The surrounding world which is valued by value systems becomes something more than ordinary physical world – individual things; phenomena acquire certain meanings and are hierarchized accordingly. At individual level, the priorities of values determine the decisions about professional goals and interests.

Human values and his relationship with them is one of the essential factors determining individual satisfaction with life, the realization of the perfection and meaning of his life, relations with others and himself. Professor V. Frankl (2008, 2010), the founder of logotherapy (greek *logo* – meaning) one of the branches of humanistic psychology in the field of humanistic psychology, who paid much attention to the values as a motor of human life, linking them to the realization of the meaning of life. Searching for meaning is the main goal of a person and the main motivation of life. The meaning is revealed in each particular situation that a person encounters. Searching for meaning, like life itself, is a constantly changing, dynamic and always personal process. According to Frankl, the three paths lead a person to meaningful life - the values of creativity, realization and attitudes. Creative values are what person gives to life. The values of creativity are realized when person works. The work can be described as an area in which the person's individuality is revealed in its relation to society, therefore, work becomes a value and gives meaning to human life. However, the realization of purpose and the meaning and the values realized at work do not depend on what position in the society is ensured by certain work for the person, but depends on the contribution made by the person performing the work to the life of the society and its well-being. No work makes a person necessary and indispensable, but only gives him the opportunity to become such a person. The meaning of the work lies in what the individual gives it as a person. According to Frankl, the experience can also give meaning to life - the realization of values, happening through the person's relationship with nature, enjoying the work of art, and most importantly, by loving, because love is a spiritual communication, the realization of another person's uniqueness, and the knowledge of its essence.

Recognizing the concept of meaning of life as a goal, L. Jovaiša (2011) states that the problem of meaning is solved by a person according to his perception, self-evaluation, self-image. First of all, the person looks for the activity and the significance of communication for himself, for existence and aspirations. Life goes through three main forms: cognition, activity and communication. According to L. Jovaiša (2011), the meaning of human life is to know and feel the progress of knowledge, activity and communication. The meaning of life is the realization of success of person's interaction and the relationship with the environment. The search for the meaning of life is related to the reflection and evaluation of its goals. The purpose can be meaningful, and the realization of meaning can be perceived as a goal. "The more attractive is the goal, the more it gives sense to the activity or communication and motivates to give in to its realization. The real life is felt when the goals give meaning to everyday human existence, which occurs when the direct purpose of everyday activity is related with a long-term or eternal, global goal" (Jovaiša, 2011).

In the meaning lies the "action program", consisting of separate, very specific tasks adapted to the reality of the present moment. The meaning is the guide of life for a certain period of time. In keeping with its direction, a person chooses the most important way of life's values, which means a path towards oneself. Valuable attitudes are a specific expression of values, they are manifested through the behavior of an individual. The experience accumulates as a result of various social effects and personality interiorize the socially acceptable standards of conduct, while individual values are integrated into a hierarchically organized system.

Modern – day youth seeking self-realization experience the effects of new commercial cultural technologies, media culture, things, consumption, understanding of prestige, and the influence of not only public but also the closest people's relationships. D. Šiaulienė (2010), summarizing the statements of various Lithuanian and foreign scholars, presents such a "portrait" conditioned by certain socialization "defects": contemporary youth is defined by

disorientation, apathy, wandering between acceptable and other values imposed on them; consumption becomes one of the most important basis of individual life style; they, like the whole society, are characterized by alienation, unwillingness to communicate, the loss of sense of responsibility, and the lack of communication. Mobility characteristic to society, value change and pluralism make young people to adapt to constant change, while finding themselves something stable - the purpose and meaning of life. The ambiguous attitude of young people towards the meaning of life and its values is revealed by the study of ASU students.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The survey was completed in October – November of 2016. Three hundred and seventy (N = 370) undergraduate students in the study programmes of agriculture (63 %), technology (25 %) and social science (12 %) at Aleksandras Stulginskis University were surveyed. The sample comprised 56.5 % men and 43.5 % women. Most of the participants come from Lithuania’s small towns (38.5 %) and rural areas (36.3 %), about one quarter (25.1 %) come from cities.

A questionnaire prepared by D. Šiaulienė (2010) was adapted for the study. The questionnaire was designed to identify the values that are important to respondents and factors that describe their success in life. There were various statements about the meaning of life, the position in life, the general attitudes and the need for meaning, the difficulties of life, and the hierarchy of values. Respondents were also asked to evaluate the satisfaction of life and to assess themselves as a successful person. One question was left open on how respondents understand the meaning of life.

Nominal and 4-point range scales were used. In the nominal scales, respondents had to choose three of the most important values, subjects, or to identify the factors of the success of life. The significance of life difficulties was evaluated on a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*). The average rank was used to compare respondents’ answers. The 3-point ranking scale (*yes / no / I do not know*) was used to evaluate life satisfaction and to assess their success, and the dichotomous scale was used for evaluation of living attitudes and the need for meaning – the respondents had to choose one of two statements.

Data analysis. The study data were processed using SPSS (*Statistical Package for Social Sciences*) software. The usual descriptive (frequencies, averages, standard deviation) and inferential statistics were used. Statistically significant differences between groups (gender, field of study, place of residence) were checked by Kruskal Wallis or Mann-Whitney U statistics. Tests results and significance level are presented in the tables. Correlation between the two nominal scale variables was measured by the contingency coefficient (C).

## RESULTS

### The impact of socio-demographic variables on the significance of youth values

The individualistic values are dominating in the hierarchy of values of undergraduate students of Aleksandras Stulginskis University (see Figure 1). Health is important for the largest part or 81.6% of ASU students, a harmonious family – for 63.8 % and love – for 50.8%. Only for 2.4 % of students – active participation in society is important. Thus, a strong orientation towards personal life is significant.

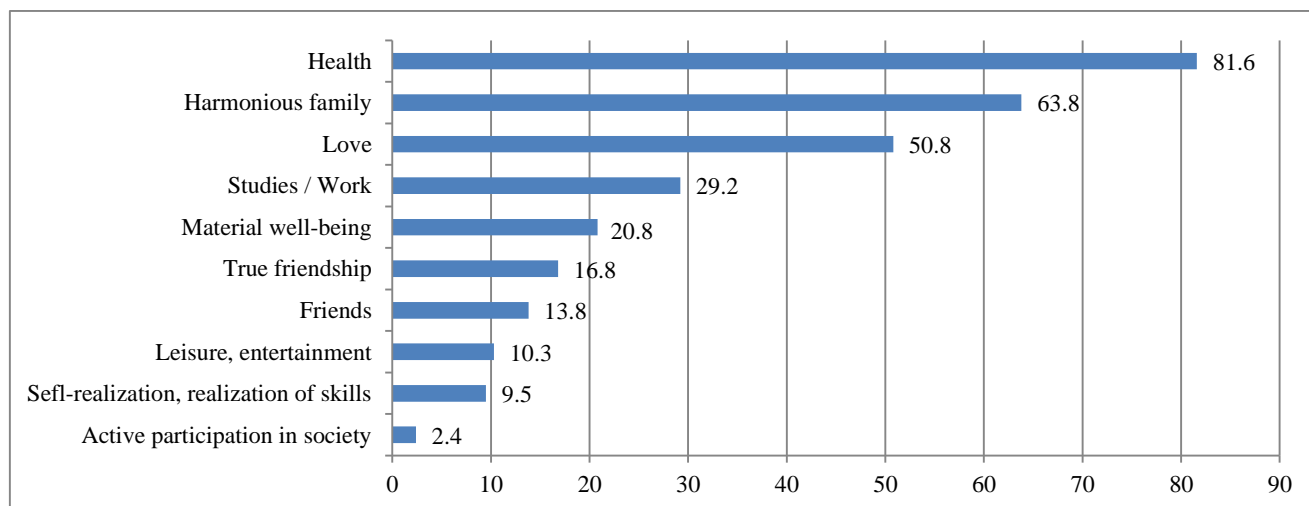


Figure 1. Hierarchy of Student Values, in %

The most important values of ASU students were analyzed in terms of gender, field of study and place of origin (tables 1, 2, 3). The values of boys and girls are not significantly different, although there are some trends. For boys, leisure and entertainment (86.5%), friends (80.4%), material well-being (60.5%) are more important. Meanwhile girls are more likely to appreciate a harmonious family (49.2 %), self-realization opportunities (48.6 %) and love (46.2 %).

The values of students living in big cities, towns, rural areas are also not significantly different. It can be seen that it is more important for cities’ representatives to express themselves and their talents (37.1%), they are more likely to appreciate true friendship (31.1%) and love (26.9%). The values of students from small towns and rural areas are more similar: in the hierarchy of values, studies and work (42.6% and 39.8 %), leisure and entertainment (40.6% and

37.8 %) are equally well suited. By the way, respondents from the countryside (66.7%), more than from other areas, declare active public activities to be important.

Table 1. The most important values of students in terms of gender \*

Value	n	Answers of boys, %	Answers of girls, %
Health	300	55.3	44.7
Harmonious family	236	50.8	49.2
Love	186	53.8	46.2
Studies, work	108	54.6	45.4
Material well-being	76	60.5	39.5
True friendship	62	54.8	45.2
Friends	62	80.4	19.6
Leisure, entertainment	37	86.5	13.5
Self-realization, realization of skills	35	51.4	48.6
Active participation in society	9	55.6	44.4

\* checked by Mann-Whitney U test;  $p > 0.05$

Table 2. The most important student values according to the field of study \*

Value	n	Agriculture %	Social sciences %	Technological sciences %
Health	302	61.9	13.2	24.8
Harmonious family	236	61.4	12.3	26.3
Love	188	60.1	10.6	29.3
Studies, work	108	62	13.9	24.1
Material well-being	77	59.7	16.9	23.4
True friendship	62	67.7	11.3	21
Friends	51	70.6	3.9	25.5
Leisure, entertainment	38	81.6	2.6	15.8
Self-realization, realization of skills	35	54.3	11.4	34.3
Active participation in society	9	77.8	11.1	11.1

\* checked by Kruskal Wallis test;  $p > 0.05$

Table 3. The most important student values by place of origin\*

Value	n	Cities, %	Towns, %	Rural areas, %
Health	298	24.5	38.3	37.2
Harmonious family	234	24.4	39.3	36.3
Love	186	26.9	37.1	36
Studies, work	108	17.6	42.6	39.8
Material well-being	76	25	38.2	36.8
True friendship	61	31.1	41	27.9
Friends	50	34	36	30
Leisure, entertainment	37	21.6	40.6	37.8
Self-realization, realization of skills	35	37.1	25.8	37.1
Active participation in society	9	11.1	22.2	66.7

\* checked by Kruskal Wallis test;  $p > 0.05$

### Differences in the perception of the meaning of life of rural and urban youth

*The need for meaning of life.* The first-year students presented their understanding of how they perceive the meaning of life, what in life is most important to them. Student's answers to the open question are classified in Table 4 according to the highlighted topics.

Table 4. Understanding the meaning of life

Subcategories (recurrence frequency)	Dominant concepts (recurrence frequency)
<i>The most important thing in life is me, family, friends (310)</i>	the most important in life is: family (105), self / self-discovery, improvement (77), relatives, loved ones (52), friends (34), love (23), children, prolongation of the family-line(10), health (9)
<i>The meaning of life is the pursuit of goals, work, career (64)</i>	the most important thing in life is the pursuit of goals, dreams (32), career, work, achievements, business (16), graduation, education (7), money, material well-being (7), foundation, stable standing (2).
<i>The meaning of life is seen in the public good (49)</i>	the most important thing in life is, to leave something behind you (19), be useful to the public (19), help others, live for others (8), live for people who are worthy of meeting (3).
<i>The meaning of life as pleasure, experience, happiness, funny moments and adventures (41)</i>	the most important thing in life is: do what you like, realize yourself (12), feel the most, try, experience (12), fun, entertainment, joy (7), happiness (6), adventure, fun moments (4).
<i>Philosophical perception of life (37)</i>	the most important thing in life is: a full-fledged, rich life (15), pursuit of perfection, beauty (5), living for a better future (4), so that you do not need to regret (4), the knowledge of the world, nature (4), life itself is meaningful (3), the love of life (2).
<i>Do not see or have not found the meaning of life (13)</i>	the most important thing in life, is, to exist (3), there is no meaning (4), I do not know (4), it's too early to think (1), I'm still trying to perceive (1).

In response to this question, 4 respondents expressed a valuable life position: “To be a person with values”. Others emphasize freedom (1), temporality of life, fragility (1), challenges to overcome (1), remind to oneself and others “momento moris” (1).

Respondents were asked to evaluate the most general attitudes and the need for meaning of life (Table 5). Naturally, the optimistic attitude to life and the overlapping of opinions is dominating, that life is interesting, and much more interesting will happen in the future. Most respondents did not agree on how to live better: to live shorter life, but not refusing any pleasures, or longer life, refusing everything that is unhealthy. Even 73.4% of girls and 59.7% of boys agree with the statement that it is better to live shorter, without refusing any pleasures of life (tested by Mann-Whitney test,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 5. The assessment of the most common attitudes of life and the need for the meaning

Statement under assessment	n	%	p
			place of origin
If I could choose, I would still like to live despite many difficulties	370	94.9	0.394
There are a lot of interesting things in my future Life	368	91.3	0.335
The human life is fun, full, diverse	369	88.9	0.015*
With regard to suicide, I never think this is a way out of a difficult situation	366	87.2	0.039*
Every person has full freedom of choice	367	73.3	0.124
I am sick of people who do not care about their health at all	367	73	0.783
I usually think why I live	370	69.7	0.220
When I think about the world around me, it gives me strength and energy	365	69	0.141
If I die today, I would be convinced that I did not live in vain	367	68.7	0.184
It's better to live a longer life, refusing all that is unhealthy	365	34.5	0.009*

\*  $p < 0.05$  (checked by Kruskal-Wallis test)

Students from different locations assess life attitudes and the need for meaning differently. 16.7% of respondents from rural areas evaluated life as boring and monotonous. 10.9% of the respondents from cities and 5.7% from the towns agree with this statement. Despite the pessimistic attitude to life, most respondents from the rural areas (89.4%) and towns (89.9%) do not believe that suicide could be a way out of a difficult situation. However, even one fifth (20.7%) of young people from cities sometimes think that this could be a way out of confused situation.

More respondents from cities (73.6%) think that it is better to live shorter, but not to refuse any pleasures. Meanwhile, 44.4% from rural areas and 30.4% respondents from towns areas agree that it is better to live a longer life, but refusing everything that is not healthy.

*The meaning of life as the realization of interactions and relationships with the environment.* Living conditions and the environment in which a person lives, learns, and spends his leisure time are important in human life. It can give him joy, satisfaction or vice versa – a person may be dissatisfied with his or her living conditions, with relationships with friends. Respondents' living environment assessments are presented in Table 6: the lower the average grade (1 point means “very satisfactory”), the higher the satisfaction.

Table 6. Student living conditions and environmental assessments

Living conditions and environment	n	M	SD	p
				place of origin
Relationships in the family (with people living together)	368	1,19	0,46	0,109
Relationships with friends	367	1,20	0,47	0,075
Living conditions	368	1,21	0,49	0,05*
Satisfaction of Life in general	365	1,27	0,53	0,449
Free time	368	1,37	0,67	0,608
Studies	367	1,50	0,62	0,798
Cultural environment	367	1,53	0,61	0,859

\* checked by Kruskal-Wallis test,  $p < 0.05$

Overall satisfaction with life (M 1.27) symbolically distinguishes between areas where students are more satisfied (family relationships with friends, living conditions) from areas where they are less satisfied (leisure time, studies, cultural environment). There were statistically reliable differences found between groups of respondents according to their place of origin. Students from small towns (90%) and rural areas (82%) are more satisfied with living conditions than students from cities (72.8%).

*Experiences, realization of values.* Respondents, when asked to indicate who encouraged them to reflect on the meaning of life, distinguished the accidents in the family or among friends (see Figure 2). According to the answers of respondents, the misfortunes in family or among friends (33.1%) makes the person think most about the meaning of life. However, essentially positive circumstances of life – the realization of goals, the fulfillment of wishes – would make young people to think about the meaning of life no less than unhappy love or friendship.

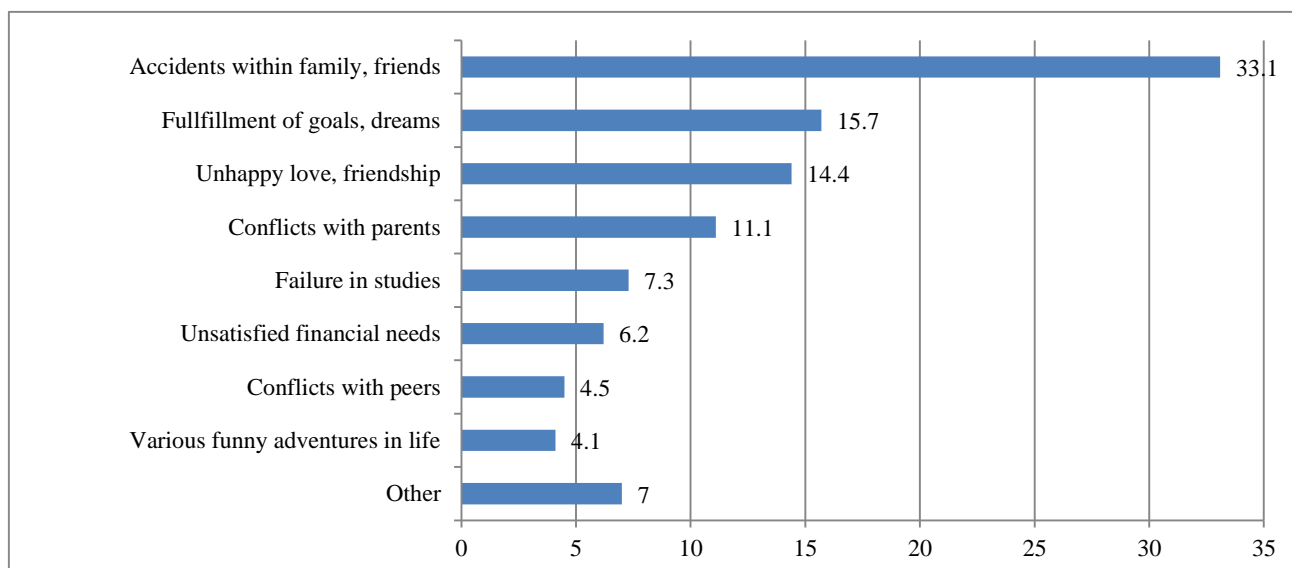


Figure 2. The Reasons for Thinking about the Meaning of Life, in %

In order to find out whether young people value the meaning of life in the face of certain difficulties, the average grades for the responses to the statements were compared (M): a lower average indicates a greater acceptance of this statement. Table 7 shows that respondents mostly agree with the statement that life is worth the effort and the difficulty that needs to be experienced in overcoming the life problems. The least acceptance had the claim that in certain situations a person has the right to deprive himself of life.

Table 7. An assessment of the meaning of life in the event of a difficulty

Statement under assessment	n	M	SD	p
				place of origin
Life is worth the effort and difficulty that needs to be met in overcoming the life problems	364	1.98	0.80	0.23
Life in any, even the most difficult conditions is meaningful	364	2.15	0.85	0.77
Suffering can be meaningful	363	2.28	0.94	0.82
In certain situations, a person has the right to deprive himself of life	364	4.2	1.18	0.031*

\* p < 0.05 (checked by Kruskal-Wallis test)

The attitude of young people towards human life is significantly different. More respondents from small towns (85%) than from rural areas (77.4%) or cities (69.2%) disagree with this statement. Regarding other statements, the respondents opinions were not statistically and significantly different.

*Satisfaction with life and success factors.* What mostly fascinate respondents in life are interesting, meaningful leisure, love, sex, and a little less – communicating with family members (Fig. 3). However, about one fifth (20.7%) of respondents could not distinguish one thing from the provided ones.

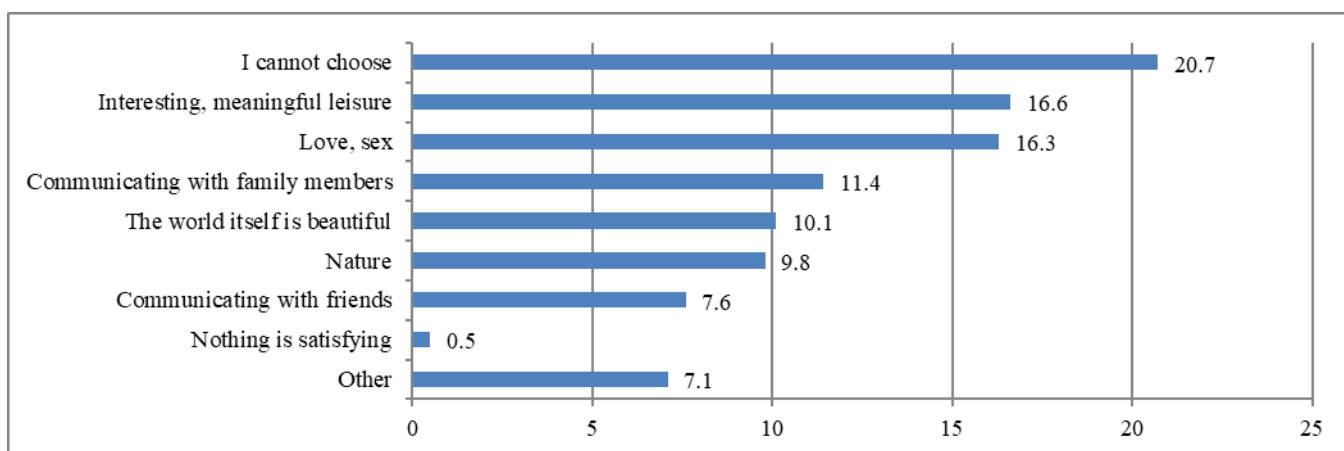


Figure 3. Enchanting, Satisfying Things in Respondents' Life, in %.

No statistically significant differences were found between the groups originating from different locations. However, it can be noted that besides the pleasures of life already mentioned, the wonderful world (9.8%) and nature (8.7%) fascinate the urban youth; whereas the communication with family members (12.8%) and nature (9.3% and 11.3%) provide pleasure to the representatives of small towns and rural areas.

Respondents were asked to identify three key issues that determine the success of human life (Figure 4). Students referred to diligence and honest work (54.9 %), self-confidence (44.9 %), and reaching for the goal (29.7 %) as the most important factors of life's success. We see that the internal factors associated with personal self-expression are dominating. There are no statistically significant differences between urban and rural youth.

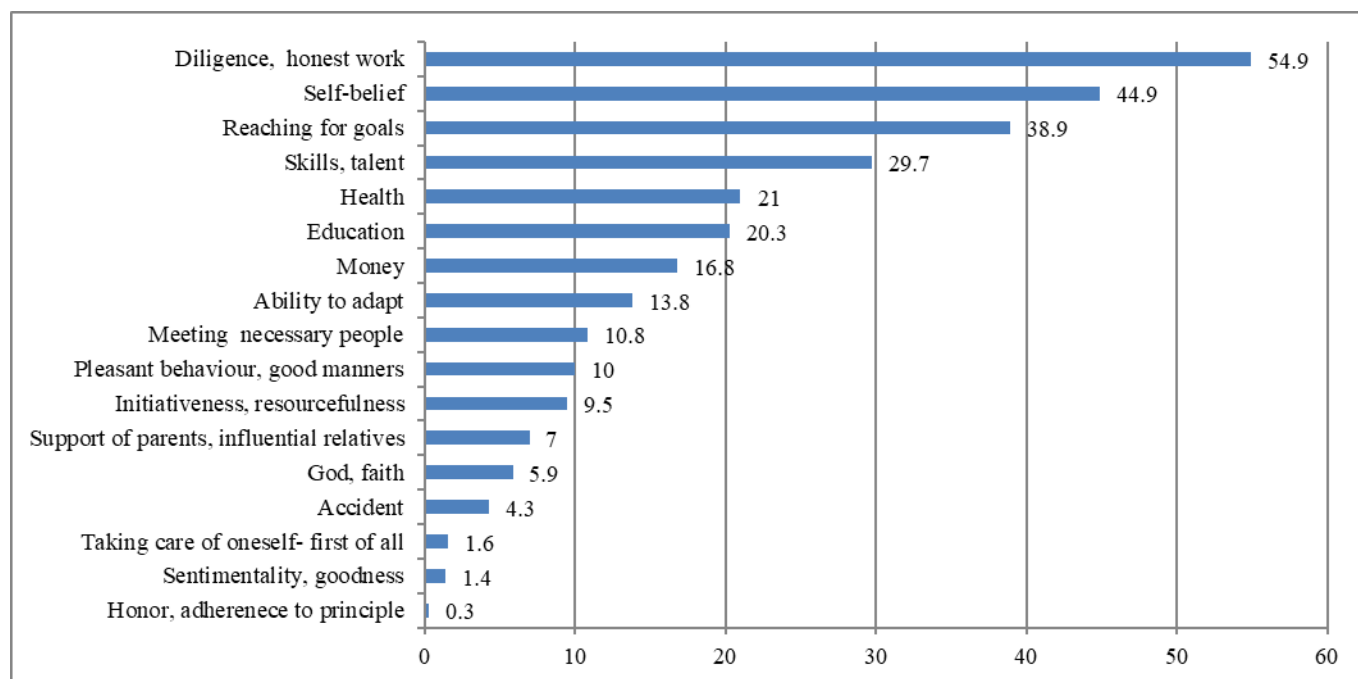


Figure 4. Factors Determining the Success of Life, in %

Almost half (49.5%) of all respondents consider themselves to be a successful person, unsuccessful - 13.1%, and more than one third (37.4%) cannot evaluate themselves. This assessment does not depend on the place of origin of the respondents but some trends can be observed. Those who came to study in the small towns consider themselves the most successful (52.5%), and least successful (8.5%). Less than half (48.9%) of those arriving from rural areas consider themselves successful people, and 14.5% – unsuccessful. Only 45.7 % of urban youths consider themselves to be successful, and their highest proportion (18.5%) is unsuccessful.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the current study further develop our knowledge about how the contradictions are inherent in the values of young people. The individualistic values that emphasize health, family, and love are dominating. Young people identify the sense of life with their personality and with their nearest surroundings (in the family, among friends). The materialistic (career, work, goal seeking) and hedonistic (pleasures, funny moments, adventures) concepts of life prevail, although some of the students see the meaning of life in the public interest, in spiritual, moral, and aesthetic affairs. Moreover, our attention should be directed to the fact that girls are more likely to be attracted to life's pleasures. The same attitude towards personal well-being, hedonism, pragmatic and utilitarian orientation is documented in the study of student values by V. Aramavičiūtė (2005) as well. A study of youth attitudes towards purpose of life and success has revealed that both: pupils and students tend to link personal values (family, spouses, and children) with the meaningful life (Šiaulienė, 2010). According to the theory of meaning of life by Frankl (2008, 2010), the emerging materialism and hedonism of the younger generation start to be a motivating trend, a driving force that determines the development of a young person's personality. An active, meaningful life also depends on the individual's trust in the meaningfulness of his/her actions.

The following aspect of the study argues that a young person's success in life means honest work, self-belief and reaching for goals. The analysis of data shows that roughly half of young people consider themselves as successful. Failure to self-assess or a negative assessment of their own success reveals distrust of self and own actions. Thus, the dynamics of controversial values – the stimulus of active personal well-being and modest self-confidence – characterize the modern young generation. Nell (2014) noticed that life meaning is not just of theoretical interest. It also has the potential to inform practical strategies and interventions that can assist students in dealing with the obstacles they encounter along the way. Kress et al. (2012) revealed that the factors, especially those related to life satisfaction, life meaning, may be potentially positive influences that may insulate people from self-injuring. This research also revealed some differences between the urban and rural youth values. The most relevant tendency is that urban young people highlight such values as communication (love, friendship) and self-realization as most important, while youth from small towns and rural areas provide preferences to studies and work as well as leisure and entertainment. Young people from the countryside, more than from other areas, declare active public activities to be important. Although youngsters from rural areas evaluated life as boring and monotonous, but, in general, they would like to live longer, refusing everything that is not healthy. Their

attitude towards suicide, as a way out of a certain situations, is negative. Furthermore, youth from small towns and rural areas consider themselves to be successful. A similar "picture" of rural youth was obtained by examining the values of the youth of Šakiai district (Atkočiūnienė et al., 2012). Meanwhile, young people from cities tend to keep up with the pleasures of life; most of them support suicide, as a mean of „solving" difficult problems; highest proportion of them consider themselves as unsuccessful people. Thus, it can be noted that urban youth are more likely to experience a change in value terms than young people from small towns and rural areas. These findings should be important for the university personnel responsible for student well-being.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The search for the meaning of life is related to the reflection of its goals: the goal can be meaningful, and the realization of meaning can be perceived as a goal. A person following the meaning as a guide for life for a certain period of time, forms a hierarchy of values – the system of the most important values of life, because personal values are more or less realized and interiorized human life's meanings. At individual level, the priorities of values determine youth's decisions about professional goals, interests and meaning of life.
2. In the hierarchy of youth values, individualistic values prevail: health, family, love. Although the values of boys and girls are not significantly different, it is evident that for the boys, compared with girls – leisure time and entertainment, friends, material well-being and love are more important. The trends of value differences became more visible between agriculture, technology and social sciences students: for agriculture students – leisure activities and entertainment are more important, for technologies students – self-expression and skills, for social science students – material well-being. The tendencies of differences in the values among the students from cities, towns, rural areas are as follows: urban youth give preferences to self-expression and skills development, whereas students from small towns and rural areas give preference to science and work.
3. Students associate the meaning of life with diligence and honest work, self-confidence and goal-seeking. The essential differences of the content of the meaning of life between the urban and rural youth are manifested in assessment the most general attitudes of life: although young people from rural areas value life as boring, however they tend to have longer life refusing everything that is unhealthy, and they do not think suicide could be a way out of the difficult situation. Meanwhile, youth from cities, while evaluating their life in a rather optimistic way, believe that it is better to live shorter life, but not to refuse any pleasures; they are also more likely to think that suicide could be a way out of a difficult situation.

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