SOCIAL NETWORK SIZE, PERSONALITY AND WELL-BEING IN PRERETIREMENT AND RETIREMENT

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Focus on the well-being of retired adults, as well as people approaching retirement, has been growing in the psychological domain. Although well-being is an import aspect of life in any age, adults in preretirement and retirement face unique challenges. The impact of retirement on a person's well-being may vary depending on many factors. The general aim of this study was to investigate the links that well-being has with social network size and personality in preretirement and retirement. Overall, 788 adults participated in this study. Participants were divided into two groups: younger than statutory retirement age (N = 368, M age = 55.56, SD = 3.68) and older than statutory retirement age (N = 420, M age = 72.25, SD = 7.42) individuals. The sample represents the composition of Lithuanian population over 50 years old. Participants completed a questionnaire including questions about their gender, age, education, retirement, social network size (Social network size questionnaire), personality (NEO five-factor inventory (NEO-FFI)) and well-being (The Lithuanian Well-Being Scale for adults (LPGS-S)). Results show that being fully retired and with neuroticism negatively relates to well-being. On the other hand, higher level of education, not being fully retired from work, extraversion, openness to experiences, agreeableness, conscientiousness and social network size positively relates to well-being. Personality traits that were most predictive of well-being were those that compared to demographic factors and social network size. Furthermore, for preretired individuals, the relationship between social network size and well-being was nonsignificant. In contrast, although small but significant differences were observed in the fully-retired, older adults group. Overall, the findings of this study show the importance of personality traits, social network size and retirement from work in older age.

Keywords: *Social network size, personality traits, well-being, retirement.*

The evident ageing of Europe's population (Creighton, 2014) not only unveiled the forthcoming economical or health care issues, but also raised concerns about well-being in later life. Due to the increased life expectancy (Kinsella & Phillips, 2005; Richardson, Pearce, Mitchell, Shortt, & Tunstall, 2013) and lower birth rates (Grant et al., 2004; Heino et al., 2016), the proportion of retired and preretired adults is rapidly increasing. In Lithuania, this problem became even more pressing due to the extreme rates of emigration, which is more prevalent among younger adults (Thaut, 2009). Thus, focus on the well-being of retired adults, as well as people approaching retirement, has been growing in epidemiological research, social sciences and, most importantly, in the psychological domain (Huppert, 2009; Wang & Shi, 2014).

Numerous theories are devoted to explain the phenomenon of well-being and most theoretical perspectives come with a variety of tailored assessment tools (Linton, Dieppe, & Medina-Lara, 2016). Despite conceptual differences, there are a few things that most theories of well-being agree upon and incorporate into measurement: 1) Well-being is something that concerns a person and not an observer; 2) Well-being encompasses both subjective (hedonic) and psychological (eudaimonic) elements; 3) Well-being is a multidimensional construct consisting of a person's outlook on himself, various aspects of life, evaluations and reactions (Kairys, Bagdonas, Liniauskaitė ir Pakalniškienė 2013). Unfortunately, this broad general understanding of well-being does not provide a clear structure of the well-being construct.

Most research today seems to clearly separate subjective and psychological aspects of well-being. Even though, there is a conceptual difference between two constructs, they are closely related empirically (Linley, Maltby, Wood, Osborne, & Hurling, 2009). Moreover, it has been suggested that there is sufficient evidence that subjective and psychological aspects of well-being operate in tandem and making a rigorous distinction can be misleading (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, & King, 2008). Therefore, it is safe to conclude that both subjective and psychological aspects of well-being play a key role in a person's happiness.

Although well-being is an import aspect of life in any age, adults in preretirement and retirement face unique challenges. From a purely psychological perspective, one of the most notable descriptions of second stage of adulthood (35 to 64 year) and late adulthood (65 years and more) was provided by Erikson (1959). These stages of psychosocial development are related to the crisis of generativity versus the stagnation and the crisis of integrity versus despair, respectively. Erikson pointed out that in order to resolve the crisis of the second stage of adulthood, it is important to nurture, guide and ensure the well-being of future generations and, ultimately, to leave a lasting legacy; for the late adulthood crisis, it is important to review one's life to find meaning and feel that it has been worth living (Villar, 2011). Erikson (1959) associated the resolution of these crises with many factors, such as career, family, friends, etc.

Undoubtedly, in today's society, the transition to late adulthood is often marked by retirement from work. Due to societal, economical and medical reasons, until the middle of the twentieth century in Europe, retirement was only an option for a few,

but since then has become a stage of life that awaits many (Broadbridge & Moulettes, 2015). Nowadays, only about 1 out of 10 Europeans over 65 report themselves as maintaining employment (Brugiavini, Croda, & Mariuzzo, 2005). Even though retirement is far from just being an economical or career transition, but also often requires tremendous sociopsychological and developmental adjustments (Moen, Kim, & Hofmeister, 2001), the impact of retirement on a person's well-being may vary.

Work is surely a fundamental aspect in the life of each individual and retirement can be seen as a shift that has a positive impact on the well-being due to reduced stress, workload and new leisure opportunities. Then again, retirement can also lead to decreased well-being because of changes in the major parts of a person's identity, social and economic changes (Kim & Moen, 2002). Moreover, the notion of inevitable loss of work due to retirement or being retired may provoke the crisis of generativity (Slater, 2003). Based on longitudinal data from a SHARE study, labor market inactivity at the end of the career (Ponomarenko, 2016) is negatively related to well-being and although there is a little increase in well-being right after retirement, it steadily decreases later on (Horner, 2012). One may also attempt to explain these different outcomes based on individual differences, since demographic factors, such as age (Horner, 2012), gender (Zuckerman & Diener, 2017), education (Mahne & Huxhold, 2014) were also found to be very important and help predict well-being during preretirement and retirement age.

Along with changes in employment status, other notable psychosocial changes in later life are the transformations in a person's social network; to some extent, a reduction of a social network can be attributed to retirement from work. It is needless to say that humans have evolved to live in social environments and to process complex social information efficiently (Johnson & Dunbar, 2016). Social networks often play a fundamental role in various aspects of life, even the most unexpected ones. Studies have shown that having larger social networks usually has positive effects on work efficiency (Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 2001) or even reduces the chances of catching a common cold (Cohen, 1997). A perception of diminished social status and a depletion of social network may once again raise the issue of generativity (Slater, 2003) and possibly provoke despair. Studies show that the different aspects of a social network are linked with well-being in an older age (Baxter et al., 1998; Bjorn, Aparna, & Andrew, 2015; Cooper et al., 2011; Litwin, 2009). Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the overall well-being of a person, at least in part, depends on the social network size.

There are various insights from several theoretical perspectives on the relationship between social network and well-being in older age. Generally, models of social networks can be divided into main effect models and stress-buffering models (Cohen, 1988). Some findings support the idea that social networks directly influence well-being through social engagement and life satisfaction (Huxhold, Fiori, & Windsor, 2013), physical (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2010) and cognitive (Shankar, Hamer, McMunn, & Steptoe, 2013) health. Other studies show that social networks are

especially important in order to reduce the effect of stress through social support when it's needed (Baek, Tanenbaum, & Gonzalez, 2014). In general, the comparison of the relationship between social network and well-being in preretired and retired older adults might partially answer the question if social networks have a stress-buffering or direct effect.

Despite the fact that the relationship between social networks and well-being was numerously replicated, studies show that this relationship should not be overestimated and remains small in most studies (Pinquart & Sörensen, 2000). Besides, occasionally social interactions may have an adverse effect on the well-being of the elderly because of a possible conflict or interpersonal difficulties (Kraus & Rook, 2003). It has also been noted that relationship between social networks and well-being may differ in different cultures and regions. For example, Litwin's (2009) study showed that there is an evident disparity between the predictive value of various social network factors and depressive symptoms as well as perceived economic inadequacy in late life when comparing Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean regions. These differences could be explained by differences in social network patterns and different expectations for social interactions in various cultures (Kalmijn & Saraceno, 2008; Litwin, 2009). Established cultural differences suggest that the relationship between social networks and well-being among older adults should be analyzed within their unique regional milieu (Litwin, 2009). Furthermore, this leads to a search for other more universal factors that may account for greater variance in well-being, such as personality traits.

Personality traits, especially neuroticism, extraversion and conscientiousness, have been shown to predict a substantial proportion of well-being (Anglim & Grant, 2014; Bagdonas, Kairys, Liniauskaitė ir Pakalniškienė, 2013; Schimmack, Oishi, Furr, & Funder, 2004; Steel, Schmidt, & Shultz, 2008). The relationship of neuroticism and extraversion with well-being may be determined by the experiencing of negative and positive emotions (Costa & McCrae, 1980) or the positive-negative emotional balance (Schimmack et al., 2004). McCrae and Costa (1991) stated the association of neuroticism and extraversion with well-being is predominantly temperamental, i.e., they constitute the foundation of well-being. Whereas other traits, like agreeableness and conscientiousness, have an instrumental relationship to well-being – these traits enable the person to shape the surrounding conditions that, as a result, lead to experiencing happiness or unhappiness (McCrae & Costa, 1991; Soto, 2014). In addition, openness to experience might have an impact on well-being through experience of more intense emotions (McCrae & Costa, 1991) or through greater curiosity and aesthetic sensibility (McCrae, 2005) that are related to the eudaimonic aspects of well-being. Consequently, it can be suggested that personality traits are noteworthy predictors of well-being not only during the process of their development, but that they possibly retain a reciprocal bond over the lifespan (Soto, 2014).

Although personality is an import predictor of well-being, other psychological variables can be important in prognostic models. Based on the assumption that personality is mostly stable throughout

a lifespan (McCrae, 2005), it usually becomes a predictor that is entered first into the models of well-being, thus predictive power of other factors is compared against personality traits. What is more, as it has been pointed out that in numerous cases, factors like one's social network or even demographic variables can be related to personality.

The general aim of this study was to analyze the relationship of well-being with social network size and personality in pre-retirement and retirement. To achieve this goal, we created a prognostic model for well-being, based on cross-sectional data. In this model, the demographic, personality and social network factors were theorized to be independent. The secondary aim of this study was to perform a multi-group analysis of this model and to compare relationships between demographic, personality and social network factors and well-being in preretirement and retirement groups.

Method

Participants

The selection was based on a multistage, stratified probability sampling procedure in which 105 location points were selected to represent Lithuanian territory. In the first stage of selection, three strata were derived based on location type – a) City; b) District center or district town; c) Small town or village. Location selection was performed in each stratum. In this stage, geographic location and location size were evaluated. For example, the city category was composed of the cities of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Panevėžys. Also, other locations were selected from the district center or district town strata and small town or village strata. Location point count was calculated based on sample size and population size. The proportional selection strategy was applied – the respondent count in a stratum represents population proportions. The second stage of selection was performed in selected location points. Simple probability sampling was used to determine streets or villages. The first household in the street was selected at random, and later a random walk procedure was used. If a respondent in the household could not participate at the time of first contact, two additional visits were made.

Overall, 4495 households were visited, 807 interviews were conducted. 19 interviews were not included in this study because of missing data. The final dataset was composed of 788 adults aged 50 and older. The age-50 restriction was applied to limit the sample to retired individuals or individuals approaching retirement decisions. This cut-off age is commonly used in studies analyzing preretirement and retirement (for example, Allen, Clark, Maki, & Morrill, 2016; Yeung, 2013; Stockdale & MacLeod, 2013) due to economic, social and health changes in this age.

In the present article, we report on the adults of one of two cohorts, consisting of participants younger than maximum statutory retirement age (65 for both men and women) (N = 368, M age = 55.56, SD = 3.68) and older than maximum statutory retirement age (N = 420, M age = 72.25, SD = 7.42). Most participants were from small towns or villages (46.3%), also a large proportion were from cities (37.4%), district centers or district towns (16.0%). In this sample mean, the age of retired individuals

(non-working adults over the age of 50 (N = 471)) was M = 69.10, SD = 9.93 and for preretired (working adults over the age of 50 (N = 317)) M = 57.55, SD = 5.92. More than half of all participants were women (59.9%), 38.2% had secondary education, 53.6% married and 92.8% had children.

Instruments

Participants filled out several questionnaires that included a demographic questionnaire, the NEO-FFI personality traits measure, The Lithuanian Well-Being Scale for adults, and Social Network Size Questionnaire. Before the main data collection, focus groups (N = 16) and cognitive interviews (N = 10) were used in order to ensure usability of questionnaires in both cohorts. The research design was cross-sectional and all participants completed same questionnaires.

The Lithuanian Well-Being Scale for Adults (LPGS-S) – this scale consists of 59 items and was designed to assess the following dimensions: 1) Optimism/control; 2) Satisfaction with living standards; 3) Negative emotionality; 4) Satisfaction with family and relatives; 5) Satisfaction with interpersonal relationships; 6) Satisfaction with physical health; 7) Satisfaction with one's job. Although this scale was initially constructed as a psychological well-being scale, it encompasses both eudaimonic/psychological and hedonic/subjective elements of well-being (Kairys ir kt., 2013). Items of this scale are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. A detailed description of scale construction can be found in the study by Kairys et al. (2013). The separate scales had Cronbach's alphas from 0.70 to 0.89. Only a composite measure of overall well-being was used in this study, which is calculated by averaging scores on all seven dimensions. The Cronbach's alpha for composite score was 0.79. The internal consistency of The Lithuanian Well-Being Scale for adults composite score reported in the manual was also high (Cronbach's alpha = 0.86).

NEO Five-factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) – Lithuanian version of NEO-FFI (Costa ir McCare 2012) was used to evaluate the personalities of study participants. The questionnaire consists of 60 items rated on 5-point Likert scales. The NEO-FFI measures five major factors: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. The internal consistency of the NEO-FFI based on the Lithuanian sample used for adaptation was average to high (Neuroticism = 0.77, Extraversion = 0.78, Openness = 0.56, Agreeableness = 0.65, Conscientiousness = 0.82). Additional evidence of the reliability and factor structure of the NEO-FFI can also be found in the manual (Costa ir McCrae, 2012). In this study, the internal consistency of NEO-FFI ranged from 0.52 to 0.76.

Social Network Size Questionnaire – social network size was measured as the number of people a person meets at least once a week over the period of the last year in six categories: 1) Close relatives; 2) Other relatives; 3) Friends; 4) Neighbors; 5) Colleagues or ex-colleagues; 6) People from communities, associations, art classes or other. Response categories for social network size were "none," "1–2," "3–5," "6–10," "11–20," "20 or more." The Cronbach internal consistency was average (Cronbach α = 0.70). Confirmatory factor analysis was used in order to determine

the one factor structure. Factor loadings ranged from 0.40 to 0.68. The established model fits the data (χ^2 = 45.989; df = 9; p < 0.001; RMSEA = 0.072; CFI = 0.948; TLI = 0.914) based on commonly used criteria (CFI > 0.90; TLI > 0.90; RMSEA < 0.10) (Pakalniškienė, 2013).

Statistical Analyses

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS 22 and AMOS 22. Data analysis included Pearson's correlation, hierarchical linear regression, confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis.

Results

The aim of this study was to examine the predictive role of social network size and personality traits for well-being in pre-retirement and retirement. Pearson correlations of each of study's measures are presented in Table No. 1. These results suggest that age and neuroticism are negatively related to well-being. The level of education, not being fully retired from work, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness and social network size positively relate to well-being.

Table No. 2 shows the results from hierarchical multiple regression analyses. In Step No. 1, retirement status were entered to examine any influence on well-being. In order to account for personality traits, the categories of Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness were entered in Step No. 2 and social network size was entered in Step No. 3. Out of demographic variables, the level of education and retirement status were found to predict well-being. The change in R^2 was 9% for Step No. 1. Personality block added 38% to variance explained. Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Conscientiousness were predictors of well-being. Finally, social network size was also a significant predictor of well-being, adding 1% to explained variance.

In addition to determining the factors of well-being in preretirement and retire-

Table No. 1. **Correlations of measures used in this study**

Measures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. AGE										
2. EDUC	−0.28**									
3. GEND	0.00	0.11**								
4.RETI	−0.55**	0.25**	0.05							
5. NEUR	0.09*	−0.13**	0.11**	−0.09**						
6. EXTR	−0.19**	0.19**	0.07	0.20**	−0.41**					
7. OPEN	−0.10**	0.26**	0.13**	0.14**	−0.04	0.24**				
8. AGRE	0.05	0.10**	0.11**	0.04	−0.38**	0.26**	0.02			
9. CONS	−0.14**	0.21**	0.07*	0.16**	−0.44**	0.56**	0.17**	0.42**		
10. WELL	−0.14**	0.26**	−0.03	0.20**	−0.56**	0.52**	0.17**	0.30**	0.51**	
11. SOCI	−0.16**	0.12**	0.02	0.19**	−0.11**	0.29**	0.14**	0.05	0.14**	0.24**

*Note: * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01. EDUC: level of education; GEND: gender; RETI: retirement status; NEUR: Neuroticism; EXTR: Extraversion; OPEN: Openness; AGRE: Agreeableness; CONS: Conscientiousness; WELL: well-being; SOCI: social network size.*

Table No. 2. **Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Prediction of Overall Well-being**

Measures	R^2	ΔR^2	At entry into model			Final model		
			B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Step No. 1	0.09**	0.09**						
Age			0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.05
Education			0.12	0.02	0.12**	0.06	0.02	0.12**
Gender			−0.07	0.04	−0.06	−0.05	0.03	−0.04
Pre-retirement/ retirement			0.18	0.05	0.16**	0.09	0.04	0.08**
Step No. 2	0.47**	0.38**						
Neuroticism			−0.03	0.00	−0.35**	−0.03	0.00	−0.35**
Extraversion			0.02	0.00	0.23**	0.02	0.00	0.20**
Openness			0.00	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.03
Agreeableness			0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
Conscientiousness			0.02	0.00	0.19**	0.02	0.00	0.20**
Step No. 3	0.47**	0.01**						
Social network size			0.01	0.00	0.09**	0.01	0.00	0.09**

*Note: F (10 777) = 69.90, p < .001, for the full model; F (4 783) = 19.79, p < 0.01, for Step 1; F (5 778) = 109.26, p < 0.01, for Step 2; F (1 777) = 10.53, p < 0.01, for Step 3. **p < .01.*

ment age, we also hypothesized that being retired in an older age could influence the predictive value of factors of well-being. To analyze the hypothesized model, path analysis was conducted with the maximum likelihood method of estimation. A prognostic model was tested for the overall sample, where the sizes of the categories of Education, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Conscientiousness and Social Network prognosticate Well-being. All prognostic variables were allowed to covariate freely, the model was fully saturated. This model (Figure No. 1) was then analyzed using multigroup analysis. Results of a chi-square difference test show that the groups are not different at
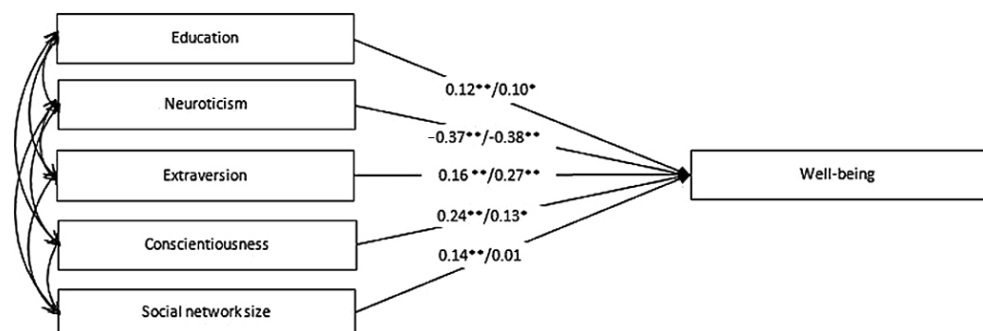

Figure No. 1. **Multi-group path analysis model depicting the relation between predictive variables and well-being in preretired and retired groupings.**

Note: *Coefficients shown are standardized path coefficients for retired (left) and preretired (right). **p < 0.01. *p < 0.05.*

the model level in an unconstrained model based on structural weights ($\Delta\chi^2 = 7.03$, df = 5, p = 0.22) and different based on structural covariances ($\Delta\chi^2 = 57.91$, df = 19, p < 0.01) and structural residuals ($\Delta\chi^2 = 58.12$, df = 20, p < 0.01); thus, differences of path coefficients among the preretired and retired were analyzed separately. The only difference between the preretired and retired was found in a path between Social Network Size and Well-being ($\Delta\chi^2 = 4.80$, df = 1, p = 0.03). The relationship between the size of one's social network and one's well-being was nonsignificant in the preretired group. In contrast, although a small but significant relationship was observed in the fully-retired older adults group.

Discussion

A comprehensive understanding of factors determining well-being in older adults can provide guidelines for solving problems associated with preretirement and retirement, such as depression and anxiety. The aim of this study was to analyze the predictive role of social network size and personality traits for well-being among preretirees and retirees. The main novelty of this study was the analysis of the social network, personality traits and well-being associations performed separately in groups of preretired and retired adults. By using this approach, we were able to examine the contribution of each factor of well-being across two groupings. In accordance with other research, results show that personality traits, social network size and the level of education are related to well-being. To be more precise, well-being was predicted by the level of education, neuroticism, extraversion and

conscientiousness in both groups, whereas social network size was significant only among retired adults.

Relationships between personality traits and well-being have received substantial attention, with neuroticism, extraversion and conscientiousness emerging as the strongest correlates of psychological well-being (Anglim & Grant, 2014; Schimmack et al., 2004). The results of current research go in line with previous studies. In the present study, the link between neuroticism and well-being was found to be the strongest. According to the theoretical assumption (Costa & McCrae, 1980; Schimmack et al., 2004), neuroticism plays a crucial role in the regulation of emotions and therefore is related to well-being. What is more, it has been suggested that, in later life, neuroticism could be related to serious mental and neurological issues (Wilson, Begeny, Boyle, Schneider, & Bennett, 2011), which in turn might manifest in stronger correlations between neuroticism and well-being in preretirement and retirement. The relationship between extraversion and well-being can also be explained in terms of emotional regulation or balance (Costa & McCrae, 1980; Schimmack et al., 2004). The association between well-being and conscientiousness is also well documented in other studies (Schimmack et al., 2004; Schmutte & Ryff, 1997; Steel et al., 2008) and probably reflects an instrumental relationship (McCrae & Costa, 1991; Soto, 2014), i.e., helps creating circumstances that promote well-being.

Other two personality traits – openness and agreeableness – were also found to be related to well-being. However, these links were not as strong and stable (Schimmack et

al., 2004; Steel et al., 2008). Links between agreeableness and well-being are often found to be week or insignificant (Bagdonas ir kt., 2013; Gutiérrez, Jiménez, Hernández, & Puente, 2005; McCrae & Costa, 1991); thus, results obtained in the present study confirm this tendency. It is worth mentioning that links between some eudaimonic aspects of well-being (especially the establishment of quality ties to other) and agreeableness are much stronger (Schmutte & Ryff, 1997). In part, this result might be explained by the fact that the Lithuanian well-being scale is a heterogeneous measure encompassing both subjective and psychological facets of well-being. Moreover, the result that an openness to experience was an insignificant predictor of well-being could be determined by the nature of openness itself, sample composition or the psychometric properties of used assessment tool. First, openness to experiences is related to an intensified experience of both positive and negative emotions (McCrae & Costa, 1991). Thus, these emotions can counterbalance each other. Secondly, the role of personality traits as a predictor of well-being is well documented only amongst younger adults (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998), whilst, in this research, the sample consisted exclusively of older adults. Finally, an openness scale had relatively low internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.52$) and was found to be less reliable in other samples (e.g., Egan, Deary, & Austin, 2000) as well.

Even after controlling for demographic characteristics and personality traits, larger social network size was positively associated with well-being in the overall sample. This suggested that social interaction in later life might be particularly important. Other recent studies also suggest that various social network characteristics are important for human well-being in an older age (Baxter et al., 1998; Bjorn, Aparna, & Andrew, 2015; Cooper et al., 2011; Litwin, 2009). These ties might not only be direct but also indirectly work through physical health (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010). In older age, people are more prone to serious health issues, which may have a negative impact on well-being, and, as a result, raise a greater need for social support. In addition, it has been suggested that having support from others may help older people gain greater perceived control over their lives, which is likely to increase satisfaction with life and well-being (Higgs, Hyde, Wiggins, & Blane, 2003). Thus, the results of this study correspond to previous studies and suggest that retaining a larger social network size is beneficial in retirement.

Even though social network size is an important variable in predicting well-being in an older age, results multi-group analysis show that social network size remains to be a significant predictor only for the retired. It might be that retirees spend more time at home, go out less and, in turn, social network size has a greater impact for their well-being. Social relationships may be beneficial for retired in several ways. Social network size can be favorable in material ways, which are mainly associated with close family, and emotional ways that are usually associated with friends or relatives (Seeman & Berkman, 1988). Furthermore, multiple social ties can provide instrumental assistance with various tasks or problems. The fact that in this study well-being was not related to social network size among

the preretired seems to suggest that work might have a small buffering effect against a smaller social network.

Although social network size has multiple links to personality traits, this study shows that it has an independent predictive value for well-being. Personality traits have biological underpinnings and are mostly stable throughout one's lifespan (McCrae, 2005), whereas social network size might be regarded as a less stable construct that can change over time. Despite the fact that social network size was a significant predictor, this study shows that by far the main determinants of a person's well-being are personality traits. This leads to suggest that researching intervention tools tailored for individuals with different personality traits can be beneficial for well-being in an older age.

Regression analysis indicated that participants' age and gender were not predictive of well-being; to the contrary, the level of education and retirement were important predictors. In general, previous studies seem to suggest that demographic characteristics might predict psychological well-being, for example, gender and age were extensively researched as factors of well-being (e.g., Momtaz, Ibrahim, Hamid, & Yahaya, 2011). Nonetheless, there were also mixed results in literature about the significance of gender as a correlate of well-being (e.g., Chang, 2011; Bulotaitė, Pociūtė, Bliumas ir Dovydaitienė, 2012). It might be the case that lower salaries, gender-specific health issues, the greater probability of losing a spouse and other factors could influence the lower overall well-being in women, but the use of multidimensional measurement of well-being may have reduced this effect in

this study by including aspects of well-being that might be disadvantageous for men.

This study shows that age is not a predictor of psychological well-being among older adults. This could be related to the restricted age range of the sample of this study. On the other hand, being not fully retired from work and having a higher education predict better psychological well-being. Both these variables could be related to other factors that are positively associated with well-being, i.e., a higher level of education and maintaining employment throughout older age could be related to higher income, better health, more social contacts as well as more interests and hobbies that provide greater opportunities for leisure activities (Easterlin, 2005). Results also show that these variables are interrelated, thus it is suggested that a higher level of education is often associated with having a better job and a greater possibility of maintaining career even in an older age, which in turn promotes well-being. These considerations should be investigated in further detail.

The present study has some limitations that should be mentioned. First of all, this study is cross-sectional in design so it doesn't allow inferences about causality. Longitudinal data could provide not only the opportunity to examine the possible impact of social network size on well-being, but also could help yield deeper insight into changes of social networks that occur during the retirement process. Secondly, in this study, the comparison between preretired and retired can be questioned in regard to the possible qualitative and quantitative inequality of social networks in these groups. A broader spectrum of social network characteristics should be included in further

studies of well-being in older age. Thirdly, relationship quality might be more important than the size of a social network itself; also, other types of social interactions, from using the internet to visiting social events, should be examined. Fourth, one's health conditions could be the factor determining retirement age, well-being, personality and social network size; therefore, health variables should be investigated as potential mediators and moderators in predicting well-being in older age. Fifth, screening tools for cognitive dysfunction were not used and some respondents could have had mild cognitive impairment. Further research should include such measures. Finally, the relationship between social network and personality traits has clear theoretical premises; therefore, any possible reciprocal relationships should be investigated.

A notable strength of this study is the population-based sample and considerable number of subjects, which allowed us to evaluate the relationship of psychological well-being with social network size and personality in preretirement and retirement age. Participants of this study were selected from different regions of Lithuania, selection was based on a multistage, stratified probability sampling procedure, which allows the generalization of obtained results.

Overall, it may be concluded that the findings of this study emphasize the role of personality traits, social network size and retirement from work in later life. Although there were significant relationships between social network size, education and well-being, personality traits, especially neuroticism, explained the largest part of variance in well-being scores. These results apply both for the retired and preretired. Furthermore, study suggests that social network size is a significant predictor of well-being only for retired individuals. In closing, the investigation of factors of well-being in later life is exceptionally important due to the demographic changes occuring in Europe and Lithuania.

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SOCIALINIO TINKLO DYDIS, ASMENYBĖ IR GEROVĖ PRIEŠ PENSIJĄ IR PENSIJOJE

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S a n t r a u k a

Psichologiniai išeinančių ir išėjusių į pensiją asmenų gerovės tyrimai tampa vis dažnesni. Nors gerovė yra svarbi visais asmens raidos etapais, išeinantieji ir išėjusieji į pensiją susiduria su išskirtinėmis problemomis. Išėjimas į pensiją yra lūžis asmens gyvenime, tačiau jo poveikis asmens gerovei gali būti susijęs su įvairiais veiksniais. Šiuo tyrimu siekta išsiaiškinti socialinio tinklo dydžio, asmenybės ir gerovės sąsajas prieš išeinant į pensiją ir pensijoje. Tyrimo imtį sudarė 788 dalyviai. Jie buvo priešpensinio (N = 368, vidutinis amžius M = 55,56, SD = 3,68) ir pensinio (N = 420, vidutinis amžius M = 72,25, SD = 7,42) amžiaus. Tyrimo imtis savo struktūra atitinka 50 metų ir vyresnių Lietuvos gyventojų populiacijos struktūrą. Visi tyrimo dalyviai atsakė į demografinius klausimus ir užpildė socialinio tinklo dydžio klausimyną, NEO-FFI klausimyną ir Lietuviškąją psichologinės gerovės skalę (LPGS-S).

Nustatyta, kad amžius ir neurotiškumas neigiamai siejasi su gerove, o išsilavinimas, darbas pensiniu ar priešpensiniu laikotarpiu, ekstraversija, atvirumas patyrimui, sutarumas, sąmoningumas ir socialinio tinklo dydis šiame tyrime su gerove siejosi teigiamai. Asmenybės bruožai paaiškino didžiausią dalį gerovės sklaidos, palyginti su demografiniais kintamaisiais ir socialinio tinklo dydžiu. Ryšys tarp gerovės ir socialinio tinklo dydžio buvo nereikšmingas, kai jis tirtas tik dirbančiųjų imtyje. Vis dėlto maža, tačiau reikšminga sąsaja siejo socialinio tinklo dydį su gerove nedirbančiųjų imtyje. Apibendrinant – šis tyrimas leidžia geriau suprasti socialinio tinklo dydžio ir darbinio statuso sąsajas su gerove prieš išeinant į pensiją ir išėjus į ją, net atsižvelgiant į asmenybės bruožų svarbą.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: socialinio tinklo dydis, asmenybės bruožai, gerovė, pensija.