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Is reliable sociological measurement of social well-being possible? The case of Ghana*

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Abstract. The desire to improve living conditions and social well-being has always determined efforts of both researchers and reformers, especially since the last quarter of the 20th century, filled with different types of development ideas. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Agenda implies accelerating the pace of basic human development with "leaving no one behind", focusing mainly on improving the standard of living. However, in the contemporary world, well-being has become a multidimensional rather than a purely objective-economic concept, which determines the need for relevant approaches and methods for assessing and ensuring social well-being, especially in the non-western, developing countries. The first part of the article presents an overview of conceptual approaches and empirical methods typically applied in the study of well-being as rather a universal and unambiguous phenomenon, which is not relevant for the contemporary social realities. The second part of the article presents a specific case (Ghana) proving the validity of criticism in relation to the objectively "biased" measurements of social well-being. One of the key social-economic challenges in Ghana is the low standard of living, especially in rural areas and northern regions suffering from the "multidimensional poverty". In Ghana, basic studies of welfare and measurements of poverty (supported or conducted by the state institutions) rely on the monetized consumption and income approaches, following the European Commission's definition of poverty as a state of economic deprivation, thus missing its subjective and social dimensions crucial for ensuring equity and social justice. The authors suggest an interpretation of social well-being as a combination of personal (overall satisfaction with life), relational (quality of social connections) and societal (social integration, acceptance, contribution, actualization and coherence, institutional trust) measurements, i.e., a combination of economic well-being, life satisfaction and societal well-being in the assessment of poverty and inequality at the national level. This interpretation was tested in the sociological survey conducted in 2022 as a basis for such an understanding of social well-being that aims at reducing inequality and improving living standards through better informed policies and programs.

Key words: social well-being; standard of living; objective and subjective indicators; consumption and income; Ghana; poverty; inequality; statistical data; sociological survey

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Despite numerous attempts of the comprehensive interdisciplinary analysis of the concept of well-being (its definitions, interpretations and measurements), it remains quite complex and ambiguous due to being applied in different contexts with diverse meanings [57] (for instance, in psychological and social sciences, well-being and happiness are often considered as intertwined yet distinct constructs). Due to its complex and debated nature, there is no generally recognized conceptual not to mention empirical definition of well-being; however, there is a general consensus that well-being is a valuable and crucial goal for all societies [15; 46], encompassing multiple aspects of life, such as physical and mental health, emotional balance, social connections, economic stability, and so on.

Certainly, decades and even centuries of searching for definitions, indicators and paths to well-being, defined primarily as happiness, could not but lead to the development of clearly different philosophical approaches, among which hedonic and eudaimonic understandings seems to be the most known [31; 51; 55]. The hedonic approach follows utilitarian principles, emphasizing the role of pleasure and satisfaction in achieving well-being and suggesting that a good life is one that maximizes enjoyment and minimizes suffering. Hedonic well-being typically consists of life satisfaction (evaluative aspect) and affective balance (the ratio of positive to negative emotions) [34], i.e., a high level of hedonic well-being is characterized by frequent positive emotions and rare negative emotions, based on the high general life satisfaction. The eudaimonic approach originates from Aristotelian philosophy which emphasizes living in accordance with one's true nature, fulfilling one's potential and focusing on meaning and self-realization rather than the pursuit of pleasure. Therefore, key components of eudaimonic well-being are personal growth (realization of one's potential over time), purpose in life (meaningful goals and a sense of direction), autonomy (ability to make independent choices and to self-regulate one's behaviour), environmental mastery (capacity to manage life's demands effectively), positive relationships (satisfying and supportive social connections), and self-acceptance (a positive attitude toward oneself and one's life experiences).

Such interpretations are acceptable in sociology as conceptual definitions of well-being, but for empirical studies we need a more precise list of indicators which are typically divided into objective and subjective [15]. Thus, objective well-being refers to measurable material, external life conditions or resources that contribute to the quality of life [26] and can be quantified and measured through economic indicators (income, employment status, wealth as material living standards), health indicators (physical health metrics, such as life expectancy, disease prevalence, access to healthcare), educational (levels of education, general access to learning), environmental (air and water quality, noise levels, access to green spaces), and social (crime rates, community infrastructure, civil engagement). Subjective well-being encompasses personal perceptions and internal experiences — how individuals interpret, evaluate and feel about their lives [11], which is measured through such

indicators as life satisfaction (evaluation of one's life as a whole or of its specific domains (e.g., work, relationships)), emotional (balance of positive and negative emotions experienced on a daily basis) and cognitive (personal assessments and perceptions of one's life situation, personal achievements or living conditions).

Both groups of well-being's indicators are important for developing and implementing social policies by helping to identify problem areas, understand relationships between conditions and results, review and evaluate policy choices, improve implementation strategy, and assess outcomes over time. Sociologists certainly favour subjective indicators of well-being and measure it through identifying value orientations, describing common societal fears, and assessing levels of happiness, along with the factors contributing to it and its sustainability [42; 51]. Referring to Durkheim's sociological concept of anomie, one can consider alienation as one such factor; however, the absence of anomie or alienation does not necessarily reflect the presence of social well-being or determines it directly. The contemporary society and human life are too complex to be precisely measured in principle, not to mention such direct interdependencies. Similarly, no single social theory is pervasive in nature, so the chosen components or empirical indicators of social well-being are generally based on consensus. Furthermore, even individual components of social well-being are extremely complex, for instance, as if a clear social construct of the quality of life implies a multifactorial analysis ranging from personal well-being (or the positive collective attitudes towards social life [53]) to a broader social setting [33; 16; 36]. The most general and broad definitions consider personal well-being as deeply embedded in social structures and communities and affected by innumerable social challenges and consequences that go beyond (emotional) happiness and the fulfilment of desires.

The ESS (2016) acknowledges that all methodological approaches to assessing well-being, whether using single measures, objective, subjective indicators or both, have their strengths and weaknesses. Thus, although survey methods for measuring subjective well-being as happiness are regarded as valid, reliable and sufficiently universal for comparative studies (despite the absence of clear conceptual and operational definitions of happiness), there is still the lack of established criteria for choosing methodological approaches, except for the recognition that personal well-being as a rather subjective concept is more influenced by personal factors (e.g., family, health and other factors defined by individuals as constituting a good life) than external conditions. Despite the varying approaches, an increasing body of research advocates for a comprehensive well-being measure that considers the diverse cultural and temporal requirements together with our fundamental needs [17]. Recognizing culturally specific well-being needs is essential for monitoring impacts of social change and evaluating the efficiency of policies on the quality of life. Many studies suggest incorporating social indicators into well-being assessment to encompass aspects like development or poverty reduction [7; 11; 31].

The current methodological consensus seems to be that the facets of well-being should complement each other [13; 41] as interconnected, i.e., while numerous factors influence an individual well-being and quality of life, the research should take into account both the dynamics of social context and individual's social interactions with others and the environment. Thus, a high quality of life for an individual typically implies socially accepted modes of interaction within a community with specific societal characteristics. The sociological measurement of social well-being primarily consists of examining individuals' daily lives (personal), their relationships with others (relational), institutional and normative aspects of society (societal). Therefore, social aspects of well-being are intended to improve the quality of social connections and enhance the overall quality of society. Among the key social dimensions of well-being, some authors highlight a comprehensive concept known as social quality, which assesses the quality of individuals' everyday lives [2], in contrast to traditional methods like Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a prior economic basis of well-being, through such factors such as connectedness and the creation of a functional and supportive community (social cohesion, social-economic security, social inclusion, social trust, social empowerment) [2; 36].

Thus, a valid measurement of social well-being encompasses the domains of social quality influenced by various conditional factors, i.e., combines micro and macro, objective and subjective, material and non-material aspects of society, affecting individuals' perceptions of life. Both types of components are crucial because factors overlooked in either objective or subjective assessments are vital to well-being [11; 13; 35; 36; 41]. These components can be divided into three dimensions — personal, relational and social well-being. Personal well-being denotes personal evaluation of overall life, self-perception and general life satisfaction, representing a personal aspect of quality of life that encompasses wealth, employment, environment, physical and mental health, education, recreation and leisure time, social belonging, religious beliefs, safety, security and freedom (World Health Organisation — WHO), among which education, health and employment seem to be the most crucial, at least now for the Ghanian society. Relational well-being refers to the quality of personal relationships with others and to positive attitudes toward those around them, which usually measured through two dimensions — relationships with family, friends, and neighbours, and stress management (feeling of belonging to a community, feeling socially important, valuing societal norms, sharing one's views and perceiving others as reliable, kind, and honest). Societal well-being reflects the quality of institutions, positive assessments of how a society functions (satisfaction with community decision-making freedom, social status, knowledge acquisition and society as a supportive place to live) and optimistic perception of the future (based on institutional trust — confidence in local government and civil organizations, faith in societal values, and so on).

Let us consider how all the above applies to the contemporary Ghanaian society which is considered as completely divided into two worlds — with no development problems and with unending social-economic problems. Social inequality has become a pressing issue for Ghana in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [43]. The Ghanaian Living Standards Survey (GLSS 7) [21] shows wide gender and regional gaps in terms of access to education, health, and employment. This persisting differentiation is usually explained in the perspective of development theories [38]: in the social-historical perspective, the Ghanaian society has evolved from “pre-modern”/“traditional” to “modern” [1] but emphasized economic wealth and resources at the expense of social variables of development. We will not dwell on the limitations of development theories to focus on the possible measurements of well-being. The most famous are based on indices and international comparisons for making consolidated country rankings: Human Development Index (HDI), World Happiness Report (WHR), OECD Better Life Index, Global Peace Index, Social Progress Index, Gallup Global Emotions Report, Legatum Prosperity Index, Canadian Index of Well-being (CIW) and Bhutan’s Gross National Happiness Index — all assess well-being based on some combination of economic and social measures (cultural identity, inequality, job security, health, community vitality, leisure, environmental concerns, subjective perception, and so on [9]).

Thus, according to the HDI [52], published annually by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and consisting of three dimensions (life expectancy at birth, education level (including mean and expected years of schooling) and standard of living (measured by GNI per capita)) to measure human development, Ghana’s HDI value for 2022 is 0.602, placing the country in the medium category and ranking it 145th out of 193 countries and territories. The most recent years demonstrate a consistent increase in HDI: from 1990 to 2022, Ghana’s HDI increased from 0.445 to 0.602, reflecting a positive change of 35.3 % and indicating advancements in health, education, and living standards. Despite the overall positive trend, there are year-to-year fluctuations in HDI: for instance, in 2014, Ghana’s HDI experienced a slight decrease, dropping to 0.582 from 0.587 in 2013, which was determined by economic challenges or setbacks in education or health services; in 2019, the HDI rose from 0.589 to 0.599, indicating substantial improvements in one or more of the HDI components.

The 2024 WHR is based on a three-year average of each country’s population assessment of quality of life, using such factors as GDP, life expectancy, having someone to count on, a sense of freedom, generosity, and perceptions of corruption [25]: on a scale from 0 to 10, Finland ranks at the top with 7.741, Afghanistan at the bottom with 1.721; in Africa, the WHR identifies 10 happiest countries (Libya with 5.866 is 66th globally, Guinea and Senegal round out the list with 5.023 and 4.969, ranking 97th and 99th, respectively). This ranking underscores the diversity of happiness indicators across African nations, since such factors as community support, culture and governance play significant roles

in shaping individual well-being. Ghana is ranked 120th in the world out of 143 countries. According to the 2023 Social Progress Index [47] which measures the extent to which countries provide for the social needs of their citizens based on 54 indicators, Ghana is 110th out of 169 countries. Although the OECD Better Life Index [44] allows for a more nuanced analysis by 11 dimensions (housing, income, jobs, community, education, environment, governance, health, life satisfaction, safety, and work-life balance, the Global Peace Index [29] measures the relative position of nations' and regions' peacefulness based on 23 indicators, the Gallup Global Emotions Report [19] is based on over 151,000 interviews in more than 140 countries and regions, and the Legatum Prosperity Index [40] measures prosperity in 167 countries based on 104 variables, these international indices seem useful guides for effective policy in the developed western countries but not in many lower middle-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Ghana, due to variations in cultural identities, community vitality, environmental issues and subjective perceptions [9; 32].

Ghana has applied a rigorous methodological approach, focusing on factual data and empirical evidence to comprehensively understand factors influencing social-economic development in the country since 1992 [1]; this information is crucial for improving living standards and overcoming inequality and poverty. Historically, the Central Bureau of Statistics of Ghana conducted National Household Budget Surveys in 1962 and 1974 to evaluate poverty levels and living conditions. Later, the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) became the primary tool for analysing poverty, following the procedures set by the World Bank. This survey collects data on income and expenditures primarily at the household level to explore intrahousehold inequality; to date, there have been seven rounds of the GLSS — 1987/1988, 1988/1989, 1991/1992, 1998/1999, 2005/2006, 2012/2013, and 2016/2017). In addition, Ghana joined several African nations in applying the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to assess and monitor multidimensional poverty based on twelve indicators and three dimensions (living standards, education, and health), which allowed to identify the main contributors to multidimensional poverty in Ghana — deprivations in sanitation and health insurance, whereas school attendance and nutrition rank the lowest [52].

According to the MPI, there are significant disparities, particularly between rural and urban populations, geographical and age-related divides. Ghana's Northern Region has the highest rate of multidimensional poverty (80 % of its population) followed by the Upper East Region (about 70 %). The Upper West, Volta, and Brong-Ahafo regions also show high poverty levels, while Greater Accra and Ashanti regions report the lowest rates. Furthermore, rural areas show the double multidimensional poverty level (65 %) compared to urban areas (27 %). While monetary poverty assessments based on consumption expenditure (household spending on goods and services) have been the traditional measure of poverty in Ghana, the MPI reveals that more than half of those classified

as multidimensionally poor due to simultaneous deprivations in education, health, and living standards were overlooked in the monetary poverty assessment. Nonetheless, both the monetary poverty and MPI assessments do not fully capture the true well-being and living standards of Ghanaians due to missing several essential components of well-being — relational and societal ones.

In 1985, the PNDC Law 135 established the Statistical Service to facilitate the collection, analysis and publication of statistical data on economic and social issues. Since then, Ghana has focused on economic, social, and ecological aspects of well-being in the Living Standard Survey, covering demographic details of households, education, healthcare, employment, migration and remittances, information and communication technology, tourism, housing and public services, agriculture, non-agricultural and financial services, assets, family management, peace and security, data protection awareness [21]. This essential data serves as the basis for policymakers to develop strategies for achieving the SDGs related to eradicating poverty, ensuring food security, and promoting good health and well-being for all Ghanaian households. However, social stratification and disparities complicate understanding, evaluating and attaining the SDGs which aim to eliminate poverty by efficient social safety nets, equitable access to economic resources and basic services, and reducing vulnerability to social-economic and climate-related risks [28].

Ghana's methodology for poverty assessment has evolved over time, following recommendations of international institutions like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) regarding a more comprehensive approach to measuring poverty and living standards in order to identify the root causes of underdevelopment and poverty. For instance, the Cost of Basic Needs (CBN) method assesses poverty levels by calculating the consumption or income required for households to meet their daily nutritional needs. Another significant framework is the Capability Approach proposed by Amartya Sen as a comprehensive multidimensional analysis of poverty and welfare, based on the principles of the HDI and shifting the focus from income levels to broader notions of freedom and opportunities to lead fulfilling lives. Additionally, the MPI aggregates indicators across various dimensions of deprivation, leading to a binary classification of individuals as either poor or non-poor, which allows for a deeper understanding of poverty.

The monetized consumption and income approaches are two common methods used to measure well-being in Ghana. The standard of living of a household is evaluated by total consumption expenditure, which differentiates between the poor and non-poor based on their combined spending on food and non-food [22]. This relative measure of poverty follows the European Commission's definition of poverty as a state of deprivation, wherein individuals are considered to be living in poverty if their income and resources are insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living in their society [1]. However, such objective economic approaches

to measuring poverty have been criticized for exacerbating the risk of falling into poverty due to not accounting for fluctuations in employment status that directly affect income levels, for lacking sensitivity to different levels of deprivation and continuity in multidimensional poverty indices [14], for the heavy reliance on income, monetary and economic indicators (like GDP) at the expense of subjective and social dimensions, which are also crucial for ensuring equity and social justice in development [1; 49].

Therefore, Ghana needs such an analysis of well-being that combines personal (overall satisfaction with life), relational (quality of social connections) and societal (social integration, acceptance, contribution, actualization and coherence, institutional trust) measurements, i.e., integrates economic well-being, life satisfaction and societal well-being into the assessment of poverty and inequality at the national level. Nevertheless, Ghana's government initiatives, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Living Standards Survey, lack considerations for life satisfaction and societal well-being. Social well-being is multidimensional due to being influenced by three internally related components: personal, relational, and societal well-being [12; 36; 57]. For instance, accomplishing personal well-being or life satisfaction implies reinforcing roles from relational activities (with family members, neighbours, etc.) and the role of social institutions. Also, since the nature and characteristics of social well-being are broader, achieving an overall social well-being is inadequate without the supporting roles from its three components, which ensures that an increase in social well-being will reinforce an increase in all other components [4; 5].

In the suggested model of social well-being, personal well-being comprises health, education and work-life activities, relational well-being — communication with friends/relatives and body management/appearance, societal well-being — social contributions, inclusion and integration, actualization and acceptance, social cohesion and institutional trust (Tables 1–3). Based on the survey data collected in 2022, mean deviation and standard deviation were calculated to conduct the sociological analysis of the well-being and satisfaction of Ghanaians. According to the data presented in Table 2, having good interaction with families and friends had a slightly higher mean of 3.9345 with a lower standard deviation of 0.89243 as compared to other variables such as frequent communication, satisfied relations, securing shared information and engagement in social activities with friends and family. This means that having good interaction with family and friends is the highest contributing factor to relational well-being [6; 24]. Relational well-being is understood in collective terms as achieved through relationships with others, fostered by positive relationships with one's work, with others, and with a higher power, and constituted through the interplay of personal, social and environmental processes [27].

Table 1

Personal well-being		
Components	Mean	Std. deviation
Education		
Satisfied with the kinds of educational services	3.5636	1.14727
Educated in a conducive educational environment	3.68	1.07556
Afford the cost of being educated	3.3818	1.21697
No stigmatization when receiving education	3.7636	0.98327
There's utmost care, love, patience and respect from educational professionals when I'm schooling	3.6764	1.03126
No long-distance travels to receive education	3.3927	1.20295
Health		
Satisfied with the kinds of healthcare services	3.7345	0.89813
Access medical care in a conducive environment	3.7455	0.87047
Afford the cost of healthcare	3.4291	1.06455
No stigmatization when seeking healthcare	3.7782	0.82161
There's utmost care, love, patience, and respect from health professionals when I'm seeking healthcare	3.7455	0.92716
No long-distance travels when seeking healthcare	3.3673	1.19432
Work-life activities		
I can work in any sector of the economy	3.7745	1.06908
I'm satisfied with the supports at my workplace	3.2945	1.26713
I'm satisfied with my job, because my monthly pay corresponds to the amount of work I do	3.1527	1.30455
My monthly income is sufficient to meet the basic and subsistence needs of my family	2.9673	1.30332
My job schedules and activities provide me with sufficient time and resources to meet my family's needs	3.2582	1.16151
I consider my life to be highly important, because I have a good career and a supportive family	3.5673	1.0716

Table 2

Relational well-being		
Components	Mean	Std. deviation
Satisfying relations/Communication with families/friends		
I have frequent communication with family and friends	3.8436	0.96202
I have good interaction with family and friends	3.9345	0.89243
I am satisfied with relationships with family and friends	3.8836	0.92341
Information I share with family and friends is kept secure	3.5891	1.07341
I engage in social activities with my family and friends	3.8255	0.99062
Body management, appearance and acceptance		
I am comfortable with my body shape	4.1709	0.90069
I have a positive self-image	4.1491	0.94809
I often have negative feelings such as despair, anxiety, etc.	3.3418	1.2796
I am satisfied with how long I sleep	3.4509	1.17308
I can overcome stress in life	3.7673	0.98967
I find it easy to solve personal problems	3.6073	1.07513
In need much time to overcome life difficulties	3.1709	1.20805

Table 3

Societal well-being

Components	Mean	Std. deviation
1	2	3
Social contribution		
I contribute to the levels of education in the community	3.1936	1.7333
Contribute to the culture and religious beliefs	3.3091	1.7294
Contribute to the health needs	3.1964	1.14372
Contribute to the environmental needs	3.2909	1.10377
Contribute to politics and governance.	3.1273	1.22537
Contribute to daily production and consumption	3.6073	1.03722
Social inclusion and Integration		
I feel my belonging to the community	3.7855	0.94304
I am an important person in my community	3.7127	0.99188
People in my community value me as an important person	3.6709	1.96856
People in my community take me seriously and listen to me	3.5018	1.03926
People in my community are reliable, kind and honest to me	3.4982	1.04276
I see people in my community as important persons	3.8436	0.89132
Social actualization		
My communities offer me freedom to make decision and to do what I want	3.8509	0.85081
I am satisfied with my social position	3.7455	2.02458
My community helps me to learn new things	3.6655	0.99972
Social institutions (family, politics and law) make my life better	3.6727	0.95622
My community has evolved to make me a better person in future	3.68	0.99469
My community is a productive place for me to live in	3.6982	1.00218
Social acceptance		
People in my community are reliable when I need assistance	3.2073	1.00804
They are kind, selfless and considerate to other people	3.3818	1.00754
They care about other people's problems	3.3091	1.01441
They have positive thoughts and manners	3.3818	1.00754
They have their neighbours' social contacts	3.6582	0.93826
They interact with other people	3.7964	0.92787

1	2	3
Social coherence		
My community works to reduce exclusion and marginalization	3.2691	1.05893
My community offers me great protection against hazards/risks	3.4655	0.9547
Ensures equal access to environment	3.2873	0.94297
Ensures equal sense of belonging and opportunity	3.3273	0.94728
Offers equal employment and income opportunities	3.0982	1.03505
Ensures understandable and equally accessed cultural transformations	3.2582	1.04611
Institutional trust		
I can trust the local authorities	3.2691	1.11909
I trust in public welfare organisations and their services	3.2218	1.06473
I trust in the mass media organizations	3.1984	1.04051
I feel secured on the streets near my house	3.04	1.21645
I have trust in societal values and culture	3.5491	1.02042
I trust in governance, politics and civil organisations (media)	3.1818	1.10736

According to the data in Table 3, the contribution to daily production and consumption shows the highest mean of 3.6073 with the lowest standard deviation of 1.03722 as compared to contributions to education, culture and religious beliefs, health needs, environmental needs, governance and politics, i.e., one's contribution to daily production and consumption is regarded as the most significant variable in social contribution. Certainly, the concept of social contribution in its broader sense suggests that a desirable society is one in which its members have a feeling of belonging and engagement, contributing to effective transportation and communication networks, employment opportunities, educational institutions, healthcare and other services, including those provided by the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

Thus, social well-being is a multidimensional approach to reducing poverty and improving standards of living, which can be measured and explained through three interconnected dimensions — personal, relational, and societal well-being. The Government of Ghana should adopt a multidimensional approach to measuring the well-being of Ghanaians that incorporates the relational and societal components of well-being to supplement and support the personal (economic, income, monetary) measurement of well-being. This will allow to eliminate the gap constituted by traditional unidimensional measures of standard of living based only on monetary variables.

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Возможно ли надежное социологическое измерение благополучия (на примере Ганы)?*

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Аннотация. Стремление улучшить условия жизни и повысить уровень социального благополучия неизменно определяло исследовательские поиски и реформаторские усилия с последней четверти XX века, наполненной всевозможными версиями девелопментализ-

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ма. Предложенная ООН программа Целей устойчивого развития ориентирована на борьбу с бедностью («чтобы никого не оставить позади»), фокусируясь на объективных показателях уровня жизни. Однако в современном мире благополучие превратилось из объективно-экономического понятия в многокомпонентное, что обуславливает необходимость разработки более валидных и надежных подходов и методов к оценке и обеспечению социального благополучия, особенно в незападных, развивающихся странах. В первой части статьи представлен обзор концептуальных подходов и эмпирических методик, типичных для изучения благополучия как общепризнанного и однозначного понятия, что не соответствует нынешним социальным реалиям. Во второй части статьи рассмотрен особый кейс (Гана), обосновывающий критическое восприятие объективистских измерений социального благополучия. Одна из наиболее значимых социально-экономических проблем Ганы сегодня — низкий уровень жизни, особенно в сельских районах и северных регионах, страдающих от «многомерной бедности». Как правило, в Гане исследования бедности и благосостояния (поддерживаемые или проводимые государственными структурами) опираются на показатели доходов и расходов (в финансовом выражении), поскольку трактуют бедность согласно принципам Европейской комиссии (экономическая депривация), тем самым недооценивая влияние субъективных и социальных факторов бедности, принципиально важных для обеспечения равенства и социальной справедливости. В статье предложена трактовка социального благополучия как сочетания личностных (общая удовлетворенностью жизнью), групповых (качество социальных связей) и социетальных (социальные интеграция, принятие, участие, реализация и согласие, институциональное доверие) измерений, т.е. показателей экономического благополучия, удовлетворенности жизнью и социетального благополучия. Данная трактовка была апробирована в социологическом опросе, проведенном в 2022 году и подтвердившем ее обоснованность в анализе социального благополучия для разработки и реализации программ, призванных повысить качество жизни и снизить уровень социального неравенства.

Ключевые слова: социальное благополучие; уровень жизни; объективные и субъективные индикаторы; потребление и доход; Гана; бедность; неравенство; статистические данные; социологический опрос

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