

R O M A N I A N A C A D E M Y
SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDIES OF THE ROMANIAN ACADEMY
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF SOCIOLOGY AND LEGAL SCIENCES



DOCTORAL THESIS

SUMMARY

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BUCHAREST
2024

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QUALITY OF LIFE OF ACTORS IN ROMANIA POST-DECEMBER.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
LIST OF TABLES	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
LIST OF FIGURES	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
INTRODUCTION.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
1. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH AND USED SOURCES	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
2. QUALITY OF LIFE OF ACTORS.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
2.1. Questionnaire applied to actors.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.1. Sociological Data - Respondent Description	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.2. Overview of Incomes and Expenses of Respondent Actors	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Bookmark not defined.	
2.1.3. Absolute Data Evaluation Scheme (SEDA) - Explanations and Clarifications for Understanding Comparisons	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.4. Perceived Quality of Life of Actors. Subjective Well-being.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Bookmark not defined.	
2.1.5. Sources of Satisfaction in Actors' Lives	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.6. Appreciation of Actors' Satisfaction Sources	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.7. Frequency of Activities in Shaping Actors' Lifestyles	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Bookmark not defined.	
2.1.8. Lifestyle / Way of Life.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.9. Frequency of Moments of Satisfaction/Unhappiness among Actors.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Bookmark not defined.	
2.1.10. The Importance of Aspects in Actors' Lives.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.11. Estimation of the Quality of Conditions in Actors' Personal Lives	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Bookmark not defined.	
2.1.12. Global Perception of Actors' Lives in a Social Context	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Bookmark not defined.	
2.1.13. On what do actors believe social organization is based?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Bookmark not defined.	
2.1.14. What is the actors' trust in the future?.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.15. Variations and Differentiations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.16. Time allocated to the profession	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.17. The product/work	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.18. Economic conditions.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.19. Life orientation - value system.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

- 2.1.20. Comparison of data obtained from questionnaires with SEDA**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.1.21. Analysis results **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.1.22. Comparison of questionnaire data with OECD data**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.2. Questionnaire Applied to the Public **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.2.1. Motivation for Applying the Questionnaire.. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.2.2. Obtained Data and Their Interpretation. Public Perception of the Quality of Life of Actors and of the Creative Act **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.3. What is Happiness? Can It Be Measured? **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.3.1. What is the key to universal welfare? **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.3.2. Gross Domestic Happiness Indicator **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.3.3. The mathematical formula of happiness discovered by the British**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 2.3.4. The rocking chair technique in measuring happiness**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

3. SOCIAL PROTECTION AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF ACTORS IN ROMANIA**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

- 3.1. Socio-Professional Status of Actors..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.2. Aspects of the social protection concept in actors' lives**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.3. Brief description of the pension system in Romania applicable to elderly actors.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.4. Tier 1 - mandatory pension **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.5. Tier two - privately administered social insurance**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.6. Tier three - private / optional pension..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.7. Merit allowance..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.8. Theatrical Union of Romania..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.9. Allowance for freelance activity **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.10. Social assistance and other forms of social aid for elderly actors.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 3.11. Two relevant interviews regarding the perception of social welfare by two elderly actors..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4. EVOLUTION OF ROMANIAN THEATER IN THE CONTEXT OF CRISES **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

- 4.1. The historic debut of Romanian-language theater and its impact on actors' lives.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.2. Manifestation of crises in Romanian theater. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.3. The advantage of art to adapt..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

- 4.4. From ritual to tradition, from tradition to cultured manifestation.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.5. The theater and ideological crises **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.6. The cultural dimension of public institutions in transition**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.7. Cultural occupation between poverty and weak ministerial investment**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.8. Romanian theater during the pandemic..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.9. Public theater in Romania is subsidized..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.10. What is the alternative to the crisis? **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ACTORS

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ROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.

BIBLIOGRAPHYERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.

ANNEXES.....ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.

**THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ACTORS
 IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA
 ABSTRACT**

Performing arts serves as a means of human relief, of searching for individual purposes through the representation and postulation of lives referred through distinct human issue. Through theater related activities, answers are sought, questions are framed, contemplations on truth are attained and escapes into imaginary world has the double capacity of relieving the mind or burdening it even further with positive or negative impulses. It is a process of manifesting emotional states and a way of making sense of a dense life of actors, assuming an imaginative and imaginary world (see Mills' sociological imagination, (1970)) through representation and continuous reflection on human issues. Therefore, the issue of the quality of life of actors in theater requires, alongside objective social analysis (economic factors, politics, etc.), also a personal, subjective analysis (happiness, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, etc.), and a projection of the actors' own image of real life and how this is perceived in society, through mechanisms of integration or rejection. The forms of expression or experiences of actors projected in scenic imagery

often betray the inner forum produced by each artist's individual lifestyle. And this projected image of the actor, in turn, influences society/the audience. A relationship of permanent interdependence and mutual conditioning emerges between the actor and society/community through the messages conveyed by their roles on stage and their perception. From this perspective, it must be noted that the audience must also be prepared to receive and decipher these messages at the appropriate magnitude conveyed by the actor.

The quality of life of actors is a multidimensional concept that can be defined as the totality of external (social, political, economic, biological) or individual internal variables (mental health, emotional state, biological health, etc.) related to the life of the socio-professional group under analysis (actors) at a certain provided time and space. Additionally, it can also be influenced by the perceived state of the subjects, by the environment in which they live and create, and/or by society's perception of the state of the subjects. The quality of life can also be the synthesis of elements and phenomena that fit in the artist into his social reality, of which he is a part of and by which he is influenced in a multifaceted way. Mutually, the artist, in turn, also constantly influences his living environment. The profession of acting involves more subjectivity compared to other domains, his own satisfaction with life being important and playing its part as an intrinsic component of quality of life. Thus, the opportunity arises here to use social indicators of life satisfaction proposed by quality of life indicators that can accurately assess and measure the presence of happiness. This is particularly challenging given that perhaps the most difficult thing is to measure happiness through subjective indicators of quality of life (Zamfir, E., 2013, p. 3). Understanding happiness as a dynamic process rather than a predetermined structure, a finite state (Zamfir, E., 2013, p. 4), it appears as the difference between desires envisioned and desires satisfied.

"The field of quality of life covers a set of fundamentals related to the physical, economic, social, cultural, political, health, etc., situation in which people live, the content and nature of the activities they engage in, the characteristics of the relationships and social processes they participate in, the goods and services they have access to, the consumption patterns adopted, the way and style of life, the evaluation of the circumstances and results of activities that correspond to the expectations of the population, as well as the subjective states of satisfaction/dissatisfaction, happiness, frustration, etc." (Mărginean and Bălașa, 2002, p. 33)

The quality of life of actors is the image generated globally by society's values at a certain point, the actors' capacity for integration into social reality, and the degree of necessity of cultural values wished-for or offered by them. Their interdependence is the main influencing factor of the actor's quality of life integrated into society, because 'the only thing all types of theater have in common is the need for an audience.' (Artaud, 1997, p. 116). Therefore, the actor's need for belonging, its acceptance by the audience, for the audience's participation in their creation (in the society they belong to or in which they launch their creation), and for the free promotion of the artistic act, perhaps towards a global universe, is a major indicator of life satisfaction for actors."

Starting from this theoretical framework with many conceptual ramifications, in the proposed research, I attempt to construct a material and descriptive-objective image of theaters, the quality of life of actors, and their own lifestyle. At the same time, this thesis aims to provide understanding on happiness among actors in the context of a market economy where wealth is in continuous velocity (Toffler, 2006) and "not only does need produce the means of satisfaction, but the supply of products also generates corresponding needs in fighting for every dollar/consuming more" (Zamfir, C., 2002). The juxtaposition of terms happiness and subjective quality of life practically appears as inseparable in relation to the real context of the social environment. Additionally, I wanted to detach myself in this thesis from the perception that in the agony of a world where any person who appears on television for more than three minutes and spends their life doing live streams on the Facebook social network is granted the status of a star entitled to shout at the power outage: "Qualis Artifex Pereo," like Nero said.

The theoretical and methodological framework of this work was based on:

- Secondary data analysis from the field of quality of life.
- Official data from national and international statistics regarding the condition of Romanian theater and actors.
- Studies, books, and scientific documents analyzing subjective quality of life.
- National and international reports relevant to subjective well-being.
- Own empirical research based on questionnaires applied to actors and audience.
- Additionally, two interviews with two famous actors were conducted to further reinforce the data gathered from the questionnaires.

The research questions and hypotheses of the thesis are as following:

- How do actors perceive the quality of their own lives?
- How do spectators perceive the quality of actors' lives and what it is expected from them and from the artistic act?
- Where does the quality of actors' lives fit in in the landscape of the general quality of life of Romanians?
- Can happiness be measured? And if it can be measured, how is measurement possible? What are the social protections and the legislation that protects them?
- What is the profile and socio-professional status of an actor?

There are many such questions that I attempted to answer throughout the thesis by analyzing the responses given by actors or by the public, analyzing the legislation in force at the time of the research, and, last but not least, comparing and analyzing various theories and studies encountered during this research. Additionally, at the end of the thesis, I provided clarifications about the beginning of Romanian theater and a concise historical evolution and the major events that influenced it. However, perhaps also driven by the belief that "Science, admittedly, can only descend to facts through the mediation of art, but art is nothing but the extension of science" (Durkheim, 1895) - as a pretext for integrating the artistic into the scientific form approached by methods. I mention this because I am still active in theater, and thus, at the beginning of the research, I was tempted to present the facts from the practitioner's point of view. Over time, I managed to detach myself and present things as objectively as possible from the researcher's point of view, non-biased.

The work was structured into four distinct chapters with subchapters differentiated by the issues raised by my research.

Chapter 1 describes the theoretical and methodological framework in which the theme of my work was framed: the quality of life of actors. It also outlines the research sources utilized, based on the collection of primary data (through surveys and interviews) and the interpretation/comparison of secondary data gathered from books and studies.

Chapter 2 encompasses my own research, which carries an enhanced focus. This research was conducted using questionnaires for both actors and audience members. The research took place online from January 2022 to July 2022, beginning under the conditions of the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The sampling was at random type and necessary for an observational analysis by selecting a group of professional actors as the basis for an analysis of their well-being/life satisfaction within a proprietary model of quality of life. This research model helped me identify the conditions, causes, and specific socio-economic-political context in which actors' professional activities take place.

The research aimed to capture the multiple connections between objective factors expressed through objective well-being indicators and the subjective factors related to actors' life satisfaction. Happiness, although not the sole purpose of my research, was an issue of interest in this broader context of actors' quality of life. I wanted to emphasize that the multiple interdependencies and conditions between the general socio-economic framework expressed through objective indicators of quality of life and the subjective, individual framework shape a specific lifestyle and distinct aspirations towards happiness among actors. My research was conducted of observation and analysis that allows for future associations with new research and new arguments regarding the quality of life of actors.

I formulated two types of questionnaires for two distinct groups. The first type, intended for professional actors, comprised 197 questions focused on the evaluation of their own lives and was administered to a total of 112 respondents during the period from January 2022 to July 2022. The second type of questionnaire consists of 28 questions and was administered to the audience members, totaling 69 respondents. These questions aimed to highlight how spectators perceive their expectations in relation to the creative act provided by the play's content, as well as the image presented by actors on stage through their interpretation. In addition to collecting data on age and income levels to understand the audience's access to culture, and education levels to gauge whether the audience has a high level of education or if education level doesn't matter when it comes to attending the theater, we also sought to learn from the audience how they understand and perceive the quality of actors' lives (whether they believe actors live better lives, if they are perceived to be happier, if they require greater societal involvement, etc.), and what they demand

and desire from actors or from the final artistic act. This questionnaire aims to step out of the actor's internal pattern and consider the perception and desires of the ultimate consumer, the spectator for whom the actor creates. This is because the actor and their quality of life also depend on how the audience directly responds to the creative act, how they perceive it, and how they want it to be. Without an audience, theater would become non-existent, and actors would become irrelevant. Therefore, this step of analysis is a very important point in evaluating the quality of actors' lives because the impact that the artist has on the audience directly shapes their future success. This success influences their level of satisfaction with their work, the level of remuneration they can have based on audience demand, their level of social appreciation, social satisfaction, etc.

Thus, I utilized a primary analysis of the data obtained from surveys administered to both actors and audience members. I also conducted interviews with notable figures in the acting community. Additionally, I relied on secondary analysis of data obtained from official documents or statistical data from public institutions. The data used in the research are primary data that I personally collected and processed, presenting them in various forms such as graphs, diagrams, figures, and tables. I also compared them with various official data sets.

The questionnaire proposed to a number of 112 professional actors took into consideration the arguments of Saunders et al. (2007) and Stutely (2003). According to them, a minimum number of 50 questionnaires applied to the population (actors from Romania) would be sufficient to create accurate, relevant, and valid picture that certainly surpasses the level of exploratory research. Furthermore, as an example of magnitude, if we relate the number of 112 respondents to the number of members of UNITER (approximately 1200 members in the year 2020 - the year when the data was provided to me - which actually means the number of recognized, established professional actors, practically the core of the theatrical artistic community in Romania), the number of respondents would represent a percentage of approximately 10%. Of course, UNITER members do not represent the vast majority of actors in Romania, which should also include all independent artists. And neither do they include those who are part of other professional organizations such as the Union of Cinematographers, UPFAR, etc., or those who are not part of any organization at all. However, I made this comparison to highlight that the size of the respondents is considerable.

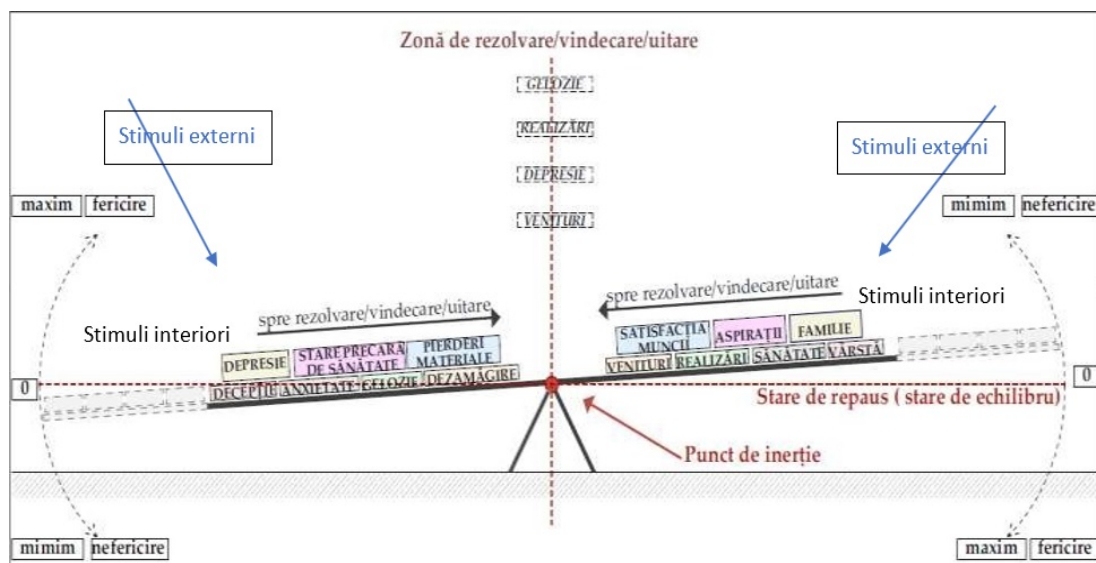
The choice of this method was not random. It was mainly due to the data found in the study "Indicators and Sources of Variation in Quality of Life" (Zamfir, C. 1984), as well as in research conducted by the Quality of Life Research Institute, which I considered the basis of my comparison using Professor Cătălin Zamfir's SEDA method. Additionally, I adopted a large part of the questionnaire structure from these studies and research, adapting the questions for the actors' guild in order to facilitate the application of the method in an already validated form and to compare the data. All these data from Professor Zamfir's book not only represents a verified and certified source, but they also represented the first measurement of quality of life in Romania on a sample of 1800 individuals, as well as a compilation of 1000 indicators collected from around the world that gave birth to a pattern of "social normality." Later, after 1989, these indicators were further developed by the Quality of Life Research Institute. I also took into account comparisons with new data obtained up to the year 2010, as well as other more recent data from national institutions such as UNITER or the National Institute of Statistics (INS), as well as European institutions. Therefore, the obtained data were compared with other data from public institutions or national organizations (such as INS, UNITER, CULTURADATA), as well as international institutions (such as OECD, Eurostat, etc.), constituting a secondary data analysis. Additionally, I conducted a secondary analysis of data found in books, studies, and existing research both nationally and internationally, focusing on subjective indicators of life satisfaction.

Starting from the difficulty and complexity of creating meaningful indicators for well-being/happiness, life satisfaction as specified by quality of life theories, I have attempted here to adapt the SEDA methodology for measuring life satisfaction used by ICCV (Professor Zamfir, C.) to the artistic domain represented by actors. Therefore, the main secondary sources were these evaluations of the quality of life of Romanians and the database that gave birth to the SEDA pattern, let's call it: the normality of social life.

The questionnaire comprises several sections, including a section with socio-demographic data of the actors, from which not only age or personal data emerge, but also the level of education of the family environment they come from, the quality of the respondents, their position as actors (employed actors, self-employed, employed in other fields, whether they hold managerial positions, etc.). Another important part is that of income sources and its value, both personal and per family, as well as leisure time or vacation spending to relate to the incomes earned and the lifestyle they build based on resources. Another stage of the

questionnaire was the self-assessment part of one's own happiness or well-being in relation to oneself, as well as aspects related to major dimensions of personal life (family, friends, work, public, community relations, etc.). Here, an evaluation of the environment in which the actors live was added (the quality of society, confidence in the future, collective well-being, forms of social support, the frequency of meaningful activities oriented towards life satisfaction, etc.).

In researching these subjective aspects of actors' lives, I started from the methodology used since 1984 by quality of life researchers, as well as from Zamfir, C. (1984), Zamfir, E. (1989), and Mărginean (2004), who highlighted the role of subjective indicators as relevant to life satisfaction, taking into account theoretical aspects developed over time regarding methodology such as those of Professor Chelcea (2001), as well as the development and analysis of indicators related to life satisfaction by Professor Mărginean (2000, 2002, 2004, 2010, 2011, 2016). In this context, I introduced, as a distinct and significant problem, the perception of happiness among actors. In this sense, I proposed a hypothetical concept / a possible instrument for measuring happiness, or as I called it - the "seesaw technique." Why did I use this term? Perhaps because it allows and suggests that we record in the measurement of happiness those "peaks" of life satisfaction, of exceptional emotional experiences, but also shifts of stimuli towards a neutral zone of emotional balance. This hypothetical concept was suggested to me by the term "feric" proposed as a unit of measurement in the book "Incursion into the Human Universe" (Zamfir, E., 1989). The scheme of this "seesaw technique" is found in the following figure:



Source: author's diagram

To reach the life issues of actors as realistically outlined and closely related to reality, to understand their place in the broad social spectrum of changes in Romania, I also drew on several significant examples suggested by life stories of actors resulting from two interviews conducted with established actors. They highlighted moments of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with life for actors and the way they formulate aspirations/desires towards achieving happiness. Last but not least, the transposition of the 'seesaw technique' proposed by me as a virtual concept in measuring happiness among actors, starting from happiness measurement techniques from studies proposed by ICCV, has assisted me in this hypothetical endeavor with potential opportunities for future development. For subjective quality of life indicators, comparing the data from my research with the SEDA pattern and with other data from studies of the 'Quality of Life Research Institute' within the Romanian Academy synthesized by me in the results obtained from the questionnaire applied to actors, I consider them as references for future research. Results are reproduced in the following table:

The results of the analysis
**ACTORS 2022 ACCORDING TO THE SEDA SCHEME
 COMPARISON WITH RO 79, WORLD 70, AND EU 2015**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Situatie gravă			Puncte critice	Situatie normală atenție probleme bine		Situatie foarte bună
ACTORS 2022	9.51%	9.23%	11.92%	15.97%	18.81%	17.95%	16.66%
ACTORS 2022 SEDA	30.66%			52.73%			16.66%
Life satisfaction at actors	16%			76%			8%
SEDA	17%			66%			17%
WORLD 70	17,1%			66,9%			15%
ROMÂNIA 79	22,5%			65%			12,5%
ICCV 91	59%			41%			

EUROBAROMETRU 2015

UE 15	17%	83%
UE 8	24%	76%
ROMÂNIA	41%	59%

Source: Author's calculations and Zamfir, C., 1980, 2012, 2021, 2023

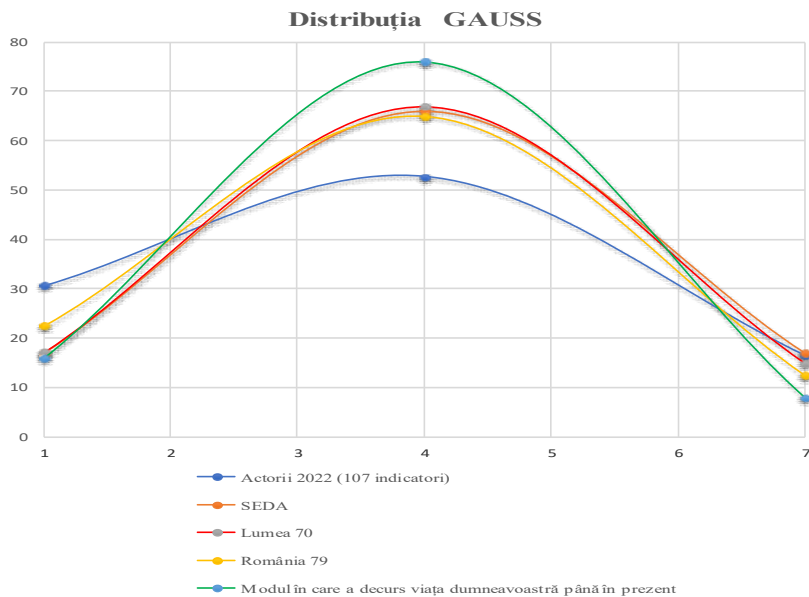
From the analysis of this table, it is evident that the severe situation far exceeds the "normality" identified by SEDA. In other words, the actors' guild is facing a critical situation that requires immediate measures to stabilize their needs and fill the gaps accumulated in this field. Of course, these critical points are also fueled by the pandemic situation the entire world is facing. However, the questionnaire used did not include evaluative or estimative questions about pandemic phenomena. Nevertheless, the influence of this aspect on the responses must be taken into account. The data obtained for actors resemble the data from another period of social crisis in 2012 when the distribution pattern was 29.3 / 53.1 / 17.6. At that time, similarly, "a shift towards the positive slope, but with a high proportion of negative evaluations and a lower proportion of moderately positive ones" (Zamfir, C. 2012, p.21).

Continuing with the observation, the artistic world finds itself below the state of Romania in 1979 and above that indicated by the Eurobarometer in 2015. Thus, the apparently serious situation from the obtained data actually indicates a better state compared to the general state of Romanian society. This shows how a state of real imbalance can, in general terms, represent a note of optimism and hope for "better things." It depends on the perspective from which we view things. Compared to 1979, actors only seem to be slightly better off due to the slight shift of the positive slope, when compared to 2015, they are worse off, associating the pattern with that of 2012, which represented a pattern of social crisis. We would be curious to compare with data from the same period of the COVID-19 crisis regarding the general state of Romanians, but such data is unavailable.

The data that drag down, ironically, are not the data related to the actor's happiness, job satisfaction, or satisfaction with personal life, but rather the data concerning the environment, income, lack of confidence in the future, and so on.

If we delve further into data interpretation and observe the Gaussian Distribution Graph, we notice the curve to be completely atypical compared to what SEDA expresses as "social normality," indicating a rather serious deviation. The shift towards the negative

slope is worrisome, and the median distribution is dangerously low, as depicted in the following figure:



Source: Author's graphs

Chapter three complements my research through an analysis of the efficiency of the main forms of social protection for actors, especially the elderly (types of incomes, pension system, special aids, allowances, and bonuses). I started from the idea that in the context of socio-economic changes generating multiple crises and austerity, visible modifications occur in the profile of the quality of life of actors. I aimed to compare these changes in the cultural dimension of Romania with a direct impact on the quality of life of actors by relating them to the standards and requirements of European Institutions. Here, the analysis of attempts to adopt the socio-professional status of the actor is viewed in the context of the dynamics of Romanian theater. This analysis complements the necessity of more applied and responsible social protection policies and shows the need to adopt such a status meant to defend the interests of artists through fair and reality-adapted legislative regulation.

Chapter four of the work reviews the significant crises that Romanian theater has experienced throughout history. The chapter emphasizes the social condition of actors in the context of multiple crises and restrictions brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. This chapter seeks a necessary complement to my study by explicitly highlighting that

certain risks and difficulties that the theater has faced along with Romanian society in its rapid changes have visibly altered the lifestyle of actors.

The most conclusive example here refers to the fact that the numerous severe restrictions of the pandemic have hit the theater hard precisely due to its presentation peculiarities in social life. It is known that theater entails, above all, direct interaction with the audience, an exchange of emotions and feelings through continuous dialogue with them, and active participation in the community. And this particularity of meeting people, of being together in a hall with an audience eager for artistic values, brought perhaps the greatest difficulties for the lifestyle of actors during the harsh restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Often, these difficulties manifested as profound dissatisfaction with life, feelings of unease, and even depression.

The main motivation for choosing to conduct research on the quality of life of actors was primarily the lack of studies in this regard, as well as the intention to discover new elements beyond the reality experienced directly by me as a practitioner in the world of art. The social reality in which actors live, their well-being, desires, how they are perceived by the public, society's appreciation, the environment in which they live, their standard of living relative to their work, income earned, confidence in the future, choosing a personal lifestyle, legislative regulations in the field, and so on, are just a few of the points of interest in this endeavor of my doctoral thesis. Starting from an identification of the specific problems actors face in the Romanian reality, I have identified different level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with life in accordance with a lifestyle specific to a "vocational guild."

The work of an actor is not an ordinary, repetitive job that one can learn like a standard formula. There is a major risk for actors to stagnate in their careers. Moreover, the profession of an actor is not standardized labor. The highly complex work of an actor is primarily one of vocational excellence. They learn in college how to think beyond the deceptive appearance of a text and continuously discover new dimensions to add to their interpretation. No one knows "how" to do a role. There is no perfect recipe. This "how" is unique to each actor, depending on their talent, accumulated experience, and knowledge gained throughout their lives. All these peculiarities make this profession exceptional, and within the spectrum of professions, quite atypical.

An actor feels intensely, identifies with the role played, and may sacrifice for the portrayal on stage some of the most important values of their personal life. This specificity of the actor's profession motivated me to seek the main characteristics of a lifestyle specific to a social category that is too little analyzed in the depths of emotional experiences and the direct correlation with life satisfaction.

The intention of this analysis is to highlight and evaluate aspects of the quality of life and lifestyle of actors, as well as their integration into society. We are talking about a special profession, lacking a standardized socio-professional status, often unfairly categorized among disadvantaged and even precarious occupations. A simple observation tells us that the profession of an actor, once considered "elitist" in the past, is losing its value and importance nowadays. Before 1989, actors had the ability to educate the masses, to shape the taste for cultural and artistic values, and to experience emotional experiences in line with subjective life aspirations. Simplifying the situation, being an actor today seems to be increasingly associated with a profession whose main purpose appears to be entertainment, mere amusement.

These issues have arisen due to the lack of regulation of the socio-professional status of artists in general, and actors in particular. Clear legislation that concretely protects the professional actor and enshrines certain rights and obligations does not exist. Therefore, the freedom of any individual to consider themselves an artist regardless of whether they have training in this field creates not only confusion but also diminishes the importance and appreciation of the specificity of the profession itself. And this analysis aims to highlight, evaluate, and seek possible solutions, including in the legal regulation of the actors' situation.

The theater, as analyzed here, is not an administrative institution devoid of life but rather a human institution generating a profoundly cultural function. This function arises from human sensitivity that inspires social models and even comes to determine them (Jeffrey, 2001, p.16). Precepts and concepts intended to propagate through theater deeply into the masses. Certainly, this will appear within the limits of one's own horizon, but with the claim of validity like any other science that has a value judgment based on real structural links.

However, theater seen as a representation of human and social realities has as its general object the study of life in its depths, as it appears in scenic representation, in the final

product expressed by the actor. From here derives the subjectivization of life. Let us explain this aspect. Any humanities have as its general object the "objectification" of life (Jeffrey, 2001). It studies life as it is and exposes it as clearly and objectively as possible for everyone's understanding. However, theater studies life in its depth, with facts, with the subjective typologies of people, with their feelings and individual experiences, and so on. However, the representation, the materialization of the artistic act, the mirror of the world created by actors, appears to the audience as an independent world that does not represent just the strict thoughts of the author or of the world in which they live, but the accumulation of experiences, facts, experiences, intertwined links between author, director, actor, scenographer, living space, experience, thoughts, influences of social environment, moral values, etc. From all this accumulation emerges on stage what we can call the subjectivization of life and not its objectivization. Why not objectivization? Because the actor's feelings can never be the same in each representation. We can speak of objectivization only in the case of maintaining the narrative thread of events, of the social facts represented, in the case of reconstructing the framework (sets) to reproduce as faithfully as possible the place or places where everything happens. Sounds and lights can be added to create the atmosphere as accurately as possible. The interactions on stage should be an exact replica of the social facts presented. However, the emotion, the thought of the actor, their experience and that of those they work with will never be able to represent exactly what only an omnipresent camera can capture and reproduce from a social event. Certainly, it is needless to mention that these aspects are not at all valid in the case of improvisations, absurd theater, commedia dell'arte, and all imaginary, phantasmagoric scenes. We refer in this context only to the social facts that are represented in theater just to give a simple example of why I consider that theater tends more towards the subjectivization of life, leaving far behind the objective aspects of life. Theater is like a camera, solitary, which manages to capture life only from the angle in which it is situated. It can never represent another perspective of the social fact that occurred, but only from the angle in which it was at that moment. Likewise, the actor. They can only convey what they understand, what they can, what their experience offers them at that moment, and what is demanded of them. And above all these, there is what the viewer understands. All these aspects highlighted here will be found in the analyses and representations of actors' lives in my research work.

I have emphasized these aspects with the idea that in this study, we are trying to outline the complex-tumultuous life of the actor. A life that struggles in this global human crisis and its sensitive, internal, subjective crisis, between what they want to be, what they can be, what is offered to them to be, and how they are perceived to be. The cameras we will use here will be two-fold. One is represented by the subjective angle of the actor who self-evaluates. And the second is also represented by a subjective angle, that of the audience, which evaluates the artist's life and artistic act detachedly, actually specifying their personal desire and subjective perception of this guild.

The personal contributions through this thesis have been manifold. Firstly, the approach to the theme of the quality of life of actors in Romania and the collection of data regarding this aspect, which I have calculated and interpreted. Then, the development of indicators based on the responses from questionnaires administered to professional actors. Another contribution is the proposal of a new instrument for measuring quality of life/happiness, starting from the hypothesis of SEDA, which expresses the state of social normality, and using it in the evaluation of actors' quality of life as a basis for comparison. Another part of the study involved administering questionnaires to the audience regarding how they perceive the quality of life of actors, as well as the quality of the artistic performance over time and the audience's desire to receive what they actually want from actors and the act of creation.

Additionally, I analyzed the types of social protection applicable to actors according to the legislation in force at the time of the study and the professional organizations aimed at uniting the guild (such as UNITER). I demonstrated the importance of adopting the socio-professional status, the unsuccessful attempts over time, and the reasons why these proposals have failed. Another component of the thesis was a concise analysis of the impact of various crises that Romanian theater has undergone over time, alongside society, up to the crisis of the pandemic that influenced life worldwide.

Finally, beyond the conclusions drawn from the data collected and interpreted, I put forth a series of social policy proposals aimed at improving the quality of life of actors in particular and artists in general.

CONCLUSIONS

Romanian theater, as a space for actors, is a young type that is constantly evolving. It still operates according to some socialist patterns from an economic and organizational standpoint, but capitalist orientation and Western themes create slight difficulties, which are amplified by generational differences. Additionally, the low investment in comparison to what theater art returns to society and the State Budget further exacerbates this long-standing transition wound. To balance these aspects, the state must be more involved not only in adopting urgent measures under the pressure of the moment but also in providing directions for sustainable development in the artistic field in line with its social mission.

Currently, Romanian theater and cinema lack the necessary means for functionality at European standards and thus fail to penetrate the deeper layers of society due to lack of resources. The danger of these deficiencies is that art tends to address an increasingly limited social stratum, catering only to those with financial means.

Cultural employment is still low, relative to the population, and the figures will be even more tragic in the future without long-term investments. These numbers have been further amplified by the Covid-19 crisis, discouraging young people from choosing art as a profession in favor of other fields that offer real opportunities for livelihood.

The alternative offered by art and its ability to adapt to the threats of repeated crises is a complex one, born from the strength of vocation that lies beyond financial barriers. However, over time, without effective measures to support the profession of acting and universal cultural values, these motivational capacities can dissipate.

In conclusion,

- Romanian theater is still hindered by fiscal and legislative regulations regarding adaptation to the social reality we live in.
- There is no regulated socio-professional status to ensure stability and adequate protection for actors.
- There is still no code of ethics centered on the specificity of artistic activity to establish clear professional relationship requirements and to sanction deviations from norms.
- There is no union-like organization to protect their work.

- There are no specific tax measures to protect and boost the actor (especially the independent actor) out of precarious employment.
- There are no legal specifications within this vocational profession between a professional actor and an amateur one, except in the case of employment in a state institution (minimum education criteria, minimum bachelor's degree). In the private sector, however, anyone can be considered an actor.

It is interesting that, following the administration of questionnaires, actors prove to be much happier compared to other professional categories even in the absence of material or financial resources. This finding is somewhat evocative of the values obtained in 1984 by Academy Member Cătălin Zamfir, which showed that intellectuals/highly educated individuals place less value on material resources compared to the working class, which recorded much higher values in this regard - perhaps due to the fact that educated individuals have a broader perspective on work. This research highlighted that actors are the most satisfied with their own family and the way their own lives have unfolded. They place more value on personal job satisfaction compared to other professional categories.

From the administration of questionnaires, it is evident that the audience is satisfied with what actors offer but reserved in assessing their happiness. However, they are dissatisfied with the insufficiently controlled artistic space, expressing concerns about the promiscuity/vulgarity of some themes addressed in theater and the gratuitous and unjustified use of licentious language. This is perceived as more of a desire to attract attention at any cost. Moreover, the audience, through questionnaire responses, believes that theaters should also seek income from the private sector, such as sponsorships, advertisements, and focusing on revenue generation. These aspects actually guide management towards self-sustainability through performance, as practiced in developed countries, rather than solely relying on socialist-style support through funding exclusively from the state budget. Additionally, the audience believes that state theaters should maintain a minimum level of professionalism and decency in addressing themes and selecting actors, demanding the elimination of aggressive vulgarity in this regard.

Through this research, my personal contribution aimed to conduct an assessment of the quality of life of actors, a domain practically non-existent in Romania (and to my knowledge, not encountered elsewhere in Europe). I conducted a comparison between the data obtained from questionnaires and the information provided by national and European

institutions. I have highlighted the lack of interest from decision-makers regarding the socio-professional status, starting from the premise that the work of actors is unstandardized. This has also led to an inefficiency in social protection policies.

Drawing from existing studies, I endeavored to introduce a tool for measuring happiness that could provide nuanced insights into life satisfaction among actors. The specific indicators used in assessing the questionnaire data may serve as a future reference point for quality of life among professional actors in Romania.

The limitations of this research are rooted in the challenges of data collection during the pandemic-imposed restrictions and the limited number of respondents. The pandemic period hindered interactions with individuals, thus restricting the distribution of questionnaires among the theater audience and shifting them online, similarly for actors. Additionally, only two interviews were conducted due to the difficulty of interaction during the restriction period. The absence of studies in the field of actors' quality of life further complicated the research as there were no comparative models available. However, this study leaves room for additions and advances in assessing the socio-professional situation of actors in Romania, which I intend to pursue. The data obtained in this research and their interpretation can serve as a guide for regulating the legal status of actors' socio-professional status.

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