

a person in dealing with difficulties (Pooley, Cohen, Connor, 2010). Many studies show the importance of resilience in choosing constructive coping strategies. Resilience encourages adaptive strategies and reduces the propensity to use non-adaptive strategies. Individuals characterised by resilience cope with stress more effectively, are more likely to experience positive affect (Tugade, Fredrickson, 2004), exhibit greater vitality, curiosity about the world and openness to new experiences, as well as higher levels of optimism and inner peace (Semmer, 2006).

People with a higher degree of resilience are more likely to engage in relationships with other people, including their immediate family (Connor, 2006). Research also indicates that resilience is crucial for the positive creation and maintenance of satisfactory social bonds (Heszen, Sęk, 2007; cf. Ogińska-Bulik, Juczyński, 2008). According to previous studies, resilience is also one of the factors influencing overall life satisfaction (Ogińska-Bulik, 2014). Individuals with a high level of resilience are more positively disposed towards life and are characterised by emotional stability, which undoubtedly helps to build constructive relationships with the surrounding people. Mental resilience is also a factor facilitating mobilisation in crisis situations, which, as mentioned earlier, can accompany young mothers in their parenting role. A high level of resilience also fosters tolerance of negative emotions and failures, which can protect women-mothers from a decline in satisfaction in crisis situations (Semmer, 2006).

In view of the difficulties experienced by contemporary mothers and the importance of the mother-child relationship for early childhood development, an analysis of the functioning of this group of women seems worthwhile.

Purpose of the study

The aim of the study was to analyse whether the level of life optimism is associated with personal resilience and life satisfaction among young mothers, as well as to determine whether it differentiates their levels of life satisfaction. The level of optimism among young mothers was considered as an intermediary factor between their resilience and life satisfaction. Conducting appropriate statistical analyses enabled conclusions to be drawn regarding determinants (predictors) of life satisfaction. Based on the literature, it was assumed that high levels of optimism and resilience contributed positively to life satisfaction.

Group characteristics

The study involved 328 women-mothers in early adulthood (average age 30.56; $SD = 3.60$), i.e. who became mothers for the first time between the ages of 20 and 39 years and had at least one child under 24 months of age (average age 15.39 months; $SD = 9.95$). For 63% of the surveyed mothers, it was their first child, for 31.07% their second, while for the remaining part of the surveyed women, i.e., 5.93%, it was their third child or more. The majority of the surveyed mothers had higher

Table 1. Characteristics of study participants: frequency and percentage distribution of socio-demographic variables in the sample

Variable	Number	Percentage
Education		
Vocational	4	1.22
Secondary	54	16.46
Higher	270	82.32
Place of residence		
Village	45	13.72
Town up to 100,000 inhabitants	61	18.60
City from 100,000 to 500,000 inhabitants	108	32.92
City over 500,000 inhabitants	114	34.76
Marital status		
Single	55	16.77
Married	262	79.88
Divorced	11	3.35
Relationship status		
Dating multiple people	1	.30
In a committed relationship (dating one person)	2	.61
In a committed relationship and cohabiting	37	11.28
Engaged, but not cohabiting	1	.30
Engaged and cohabiting	24	7.32
Married	257	78.37
Separated but cohabiting with spouse	3	.91
Single	3	.91
Housing situation		
Own home, only occupants	219	66.78
Renting private accommodation	65	19.82
Living with my parents	23	7.01
Living with in-laws	10	3.05
Living with one of my parents	3	.91
Living with one of the in-laws	5	1.52
Living with my siblings or my partner's siblings	3	.91

Source: own elaboration.

education (82.32%), 54 had secondary education (16.46%), while 4 women had primary education (1.22%). The vast majority of the surveyed mothers (67.68%) were from large cities (over 100,000 residents), 18.60% of the women lived in smaller towns, and the fewest group of 13.72% of the women resided in rural areas. Nearly 80% of the surveyed mothers were married (79.88%), single women accounted for 16.77% of the total respondents, and there were 11 divorced women (Table 1).

Variables tested and measurement procedure

For the purpose of this study, the following research variables were included.

Dependent variable

The dependent variable in this study was life satisfaction, understood as a subjective assessment of satisfaction with one's own life circumstances by comparing them to self-established standards. When this comparison yields a positive result, satisfaction is experienced. Life satisfaction was measured using the *Satisfaction With Life Scale* developed by Ed Diener and colleagues (1985; SWLS), as adapted into Polish by Zygfryd Juczyński (2009). This scale consists of five statements, which participants respond to by indicating the extent to which each statement applies to their life. Responses are given on a seven-point scale from 1 – “strongly disagree” to 7 – “strongly agree”. Scores range from 5 to 35 points, with higher scores indicating greater life satisfaction. The reliability of the method, determined using Cronbach alpha, is satisfactory and amounts to .81. The test-retest stability (stability over a six-week interval) is also satisfactory, with a coefficient of .86.

Independent variables

The independent variables in this study were life optimism and resilience.

To measure optimism, understood as a dispositional trait reflecting a general expectation of positive events, the *Life Orientation Test-Revised* (LOT-R) by Scheier and Carver (1985), in its Polish adaptation by Poprawa and Juczyński (2009), was used. The method includes 10 statements, of which 6 diagnose the level of dispositional optimism. The test score is the sum of responses to these 6 statements. Statements 1, 4 and 10 are positive, and statements 3, 7 and 9 are negative. Cronbach alpha for this scale is .76. The overall test score ranges from 0 to 24 points. The higher the score, the higher the level of optimism.

Resilience is conceptualised as a construct responsible for: “the potential to exhibit resourcefulness by using available internal and external recourses in response to different contextual and developmental challenges” (Pooley, Cohen, 2010). The *Lifespan Individual Resilience Scale(pl)* (LIRS(pl)) is a self-report tool consisting of 12 statements assigned to three scales, corresponding to the three components of

resilience – personal attributes (PA) ('I achieve what I set out to do'), support from family (F) ('My family gives me strength') and from peers (P) ('I have a strong bond with my friends'). The subject marks the answers to the statements on a 7–point scale (1–strongly disagree, 7–strongly agree). The tool produces an overall resilience result as well as a result for individual subscales. The reliability of the individual tool scales measured by the Cronbach alpha coefficient is satisfactory and for personal attributes was (.85), for family support (.93) and for peer support (.94). The temporal stability, estimated using the Pearson correlation coefficient, based on two measurements obtained at an interval of 4 weeks, was as follows: personal attributes .84, family support .93, peer support .90 (Malina, Pooley, Harms, 2016).

Procedure

The survey was carried out on-line by sending out an access link to the electronic form to Internet users. The participants of the study included individuals who participated in closed groups devoted to parenting and parenthood. The online survey was conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the International Test Commission (ITC, 2005), taking into account familiarising respondents with the purpose, procedure and scope of the study, as well as ethical principles of safety and confidentiality of the collected results.

Study results

To verify the relationships between variables proposed in the research model, Pearson's *r* correlation coefficient, regression analysis, *Student's t-test* of differences and analysis of variance were used. Statistical analysis began with presenting descriptive statistics for the variables studied (Table 2). Calculations were performed using the Statistica 13.0 software.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the variables analysed in the study

Variable	Descriptive statistics of the variables analysed				
	<i>N</i>	Average	Min	Max	<i>SD</i>
personal attributes	328	22.41	8.00	28.00	4.08
family	328	23.98	4.00	28.00	4.89
friends	328	18.61	4.00	28.00	6.69
resilience (overall)	328	64.99	23.00	84.00	12.24
life optimism	328	16.35	3.00	24.00	4.73
life satisfaction	328	23.59	5.00	35.00	6.23

Source: own elaboration.

Relationship between life optimism and personal resilience and life satisfaction in young mothers

Table 3. Relationship between life optimism and personal resilience and life satisfaction in young mothers

Variable	Pearson's r correlation coefficient, $p < .050$, $N = 328$				
	Life satisfaction	Personal attributes	Family	Friends	Total resilience
Life optimism	.44 $p < .001$.59 $p < .001$.30 $p < .001$.29 $p < .001$.48 $p < .001$

Source: own elaboration.

The statistical analysis results indicate a significant relationship between life optimism and life satisfaction in young mothers ($r = .44$, $p < .001$) as well as between life optimism and various dimensions of personal resilience: personal attributes ($r = .59$, $p < .001$), family ($r = .30$, $p < .001$), friends ($r = .29$, $p < .001$) and overall resilience ($r = .48$, $p < .01$). Higher levels of optimism in the surveyed mothers were associated with higher life satisfaction and higher levels of resilience in young mothers.

Relationship between life optimism and life satisfaction in young mothers

Next, the relationship between life optimism and life satisfaction among young mothers was analysed. For this purpose, the Pearson's r correlation coefficient was used (Table 4).

Table 4. Relationship between life optimism and life satisfaction in young mothers

Variable	Pearson's r correlation coefficient $N = 328$
	Life satisfaction
Life optimism	.44 $p < .001$

Source: own elaboration

The results of the statistical analysis indicate a significant relationship between the level of life optimism and life satisfaction in young mothers ($r = .44$; $p < .001$). The higher the level of optimism in the surveyed mothers, the higher was the level of life satisfaction among young mothers.

Relationship between life optimism and personal resilience in young mothers

The next phase of statistical analysis was aimed to identify the relationship between life optimism and dimensions of personal resilience in young mothers. The Pearson's r correlation coefficient was used (Table 5).

Table 5. Relationship between life optimism and dimensions of resilience in young mothers

Variable	Pearson's r correlation coefficient $N = 328$			
	Personal attributes	Family	Friends	Overall resilience
Life optimism	.59 $p < .001$.30 $p < .001$.29 $p < .001$.48 $p < .001$

Source: own elaboration.

The analyses indicate a significant relationship between the level of life optimism and specific dimensions of personal resilience: personal attributes ($r = .59$; $p < .001$), family ($r = .30$; $p < .001$), friends ($r = .29$; $p < .001$) and overall resilience ($r = .48$; $p < .01$). The higher the level of optimism in the surveyed mothers, the greater was the resilience characterising the young mothers.

Relationship between levels of personal resilience and life satisfaction in young mothers

The following step involved examining the relationship between the level of personal resilience in the mothers surveyed and their life satisfaction, using Pearson's r correlation coefficient (Table 6).

Table 6. Relationship between levels of personal resilience in mothers and their life satisfaction

Variable	Pearson's r correlation coefficient $N = 328$	
	Life satisfaction	
Personal attributes	.64 $p < .001$	
Family	.54 $p < .001$	

Variable	Pearson's r correlation coefficient <i>N</i> = 328	
	Life satisfaction	
Friends	.28	<i>p</i> < .001
Total resilience	.58	<i>p</i> < .001

Source: own elaboration.

The results of the statistical analyses indicate positive relationships between the dimensions of personal resilience (personal resources *r* = .64, *p* < .001; family *r* = .54, *p* < .001; friends *r* = .28, *p* < .001; overall resilience *r* = .58, *p* < .001) and life satisfaction. The higher the level of resilience in specific dimensions and overall resilience, the higher was the life satisfaction experienced by young mothers.

Life optimism and personal resilience as predictors of life satisfaction in young mothers

Another statistical analysis – multiple regression – was performed to determine predictors of life satisfaction in young mothers (Table 7, Figure 1).

Table 7. Predictors of life satisfaction in young mothers

<i>N</i> = 328	Summary of the dependent variable regression: Life satisfaction <i>R</i> ² = .38 <i>F</i> (2.325) = 97.637 <i>p</i> < .001 std. error of estimation: 4.94					
	<i>b</i> *	Std. error of <i>b</i> *	<i>b</i>	Std. error of <i>b</i>	<i>t</i> (325)	<i>p</i>
Intercept			3.05	1.50	2.03	.044
resilience	.48	.05	.25	.03	9.72	< .001
optimism	.21	.05	.28	.07	4.20	< .0001

Source: own elaboration.

The variables included in the model significantly explain the explained variable – the life satisfaction in young women (*F*(2.25) = 97.64 *p* < .001). The observed variance in this variable is explained at 38% (adjusted *R*² = .371). Thus, 38% of the variability in life satisfaction among young mothers can be attributed to the independent variables of personal resilience and life optimism. The remaining 62% may be explained

by other factors not accounted for in the model. The analysis indicates that personal resilience ($\beta = .48; p < .001$) has a stronger impact on life satisfaction among young mothers than life optimism ($\beta = .21; p < .001$). It was found that the higher the levels of personal resilience and life optimism, the greater was the level of life satisfaction among the women studied.

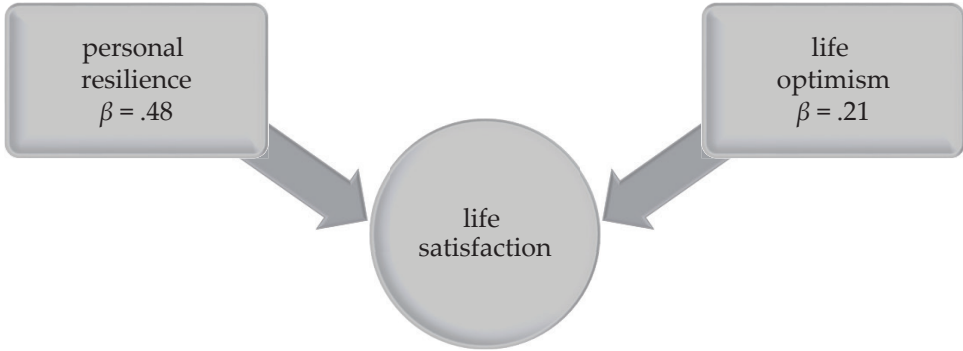


Figure 1. Predictors of life satisfaction in young mothers.

Life optimism as a mediator in the relationship between personal resilience of young women-mothers and their life satisfaction

The next set of analyses presented concerns identifying the role of dispositional optimism as a mediator between the level of personal resilience of the mothers studied and their life satisfaction. To accomplish this, it was first necessary to check the significance of the relationships between:

- A. the level of personal resilience and the level of optimism,
- B. the level of optimism and life satisfaction,
- C. the level of resilience and life satisfaction.
- D. Identifying the significance of these relationships will allow *optimism* to be included in the analysis of the relationship between personal resilience and life satisfaction among young mothers. If in this configuration, the *optimism* variable shows a significant decrease in the beta coefficient for the calculated relationship between the level of resilience and life satisfaction, we can consider it to have a mediating role (C'; Figure 2).

A mediation analysis was conducted according to the approach proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) and supplemented with the Sobel test (1982).

In the first stage of the mediation analysis, the following were established: independent variable – resilience level, mediator – optimism, and dependent variable – life satisfaction. A direct relationship was confirmed between the independent variable – resilience level, and the mediator – optimism (A). As predicted, the higher

the resilience level of young mothers, the higher was their level of optimism ($\beta = .48$; $p < .001$). The regression model tested was well-suited to the data ($F(1.326) = 95.65$; $p < .001$; $R^2 = .23$).

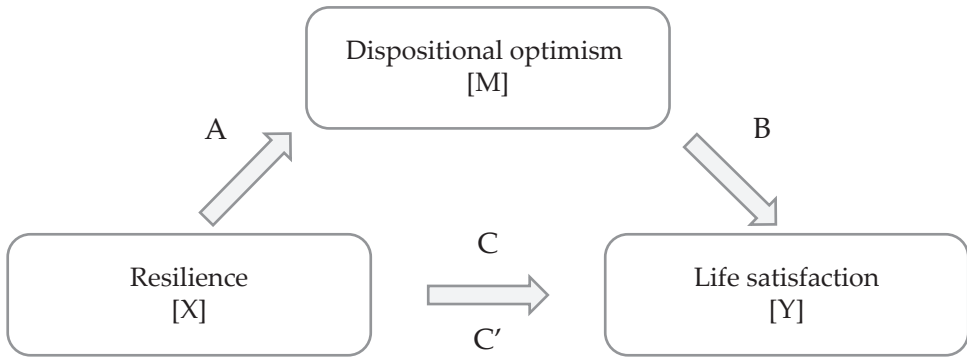


Figure 2. Diagram of the relationship between the independent variable (resilience level) and the dependent variable (life satisfaction) through the mediating variable (optimism) – the sought mediator in the relationship between variable X and variable Y. Baron and Kenny’s approach.

In the second step of the analysis, the significance of the relationship between the mediator (optimism) and the dependent variable (life satisfaction, B) was examined. Again, the relationship proved significant: the higher the level of optimism among the women, the higher was their overall life satisfaction ($\beta = .44$; $p < .001$), and the model was well-suited to the data ($F(1.326) = 78.38$; $p < .001$; $R^2 = .19$).

The third step of the mediation analysis involved determining the relationship between the independent variable (resilience level) and the dependent variable (life satisfaction, C). It was found that the higher the level of resilience characterising the mothers studied, the higher was their life satisfaction ($\beta = .58$; $p < .001$). The regression model tested was well-suited to the data ($F(1.326) = 168.99$; $p < .001$; $R^2 = .34$).

Finally, when both the independent variable and the mediator were included in the tested model, the role of the independent variable in prediction was reduced ($\beta = .48$; $p < .001$), while the mediator remained significantly related to the dependent variable ($\beta = .21$; $p < .001$, $F(2.325) = 97.64$; $p < .001$, $R^2 = .38$). The Sobel test yielded a result of 3.61; $p < .001$. This suggests partial mediation by optimism, as the Sobel test result is statistically significant, and the beta value in the regression of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the presence of the mediator is weakened ($\beta = .58 \rightarrow \beta = .48$). Thus, it can be concluded that optimism is a significant mediator in the relationship between resilience levels in women-mothers and their life satisfaction: the higher the resilience level of the mothers studied, the higher their life satisfaction, with a high level of optimism also present (Figure 3).

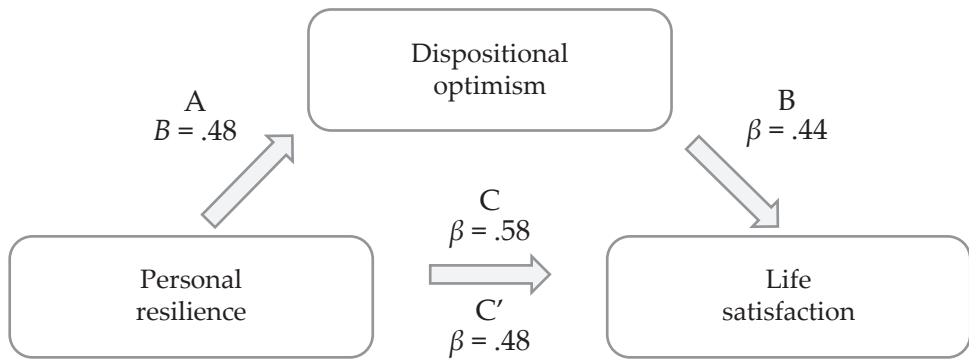


Figure 3. Diagram of the mediating role of optimism between resilience level of young mothers and their life satisfaction (** $p < .001$).

Discussion

The conducted study aimed to determine the relationships between dispositional optimism, resilience and life satisfaction among young mothers. Both dispositional optimism and resilience proved to be significantly important for the life satisfaction of women entering the role of motherhood. In line with assumptions supported by the literature, young women who exhibit high levels of dispositional optimism and high levels of resilience are the most satisfied with their lives. Simultaneously, life optimism was shown to act as a mediator between the level of resilience in young mothers and their experienced life satisfaction. It was observed that the higher the level of personal resilience, the higher was the level of life satisfaction experienced by young mothers when accompanied by a high level of dispositional optimism. This highlights the significant role of optimism as a factor shaping the perception of life quality and interpersonal relationships (Modzelewski, 2016). Consequently, it may be concluded that optimism plays a supportive role in coping with the challenges a mother faces upon the arrival of a child. In light of the changes and demands associated with education, the requirements of the modern labour market and career development, parenting becomes exceptionally challenging and often difficult to reconcile with other life goals (Garncarek, 2017).

The results obtained correspond with the research findings described in the literature, indicating the significant role of resilience as a buffering factor against the negative impacts on an individual's well-being (Semmer, 2006; Ogińska-Bulik, 2014). They also highlight the importance of dispositional optimism for well-being, achieving life successes and resistance to stressful life events (Scheier, Carver, 1994), as well as its association with life success and positive *life* evaluations (Poprawa, 1996; Olbrycht, 2010; Łukasiewicz, Pańnikowska, 2016).

There are, however, some limitations to the presented study. One such limitation concerns the limited possibility of generalising the research results to the whole population. This is evidenced, for example, by the targeted selection of participants in the study group, which included mothers in early adulthood. Conducting research in a more structured group, such as one including a greater number of individuals at different developmental stages, could provide more precise information on the nature of motherhood and life satisfaction, as well as its quality and the complexity of its determinants. Much of the present research was conducted within a correlational framework. This allowed for the identification of significant relationships between the analysed variables but prevented causal inference (Sierau, Herzberg, 2012). In the future, it would be valuable to conduct research that reveals the structure of causal relationships and the influence of specific variables on the quality of functioning in young mothers – their optimism, resilience and life satisfaction. In future research, it would be beneficial to include other variables in the area of exploration, which may prove to be relevant for the quality of motherhood and its importance for the quality of life in general. The literature indicates that good assessment of life satisfaction depends on satisfaction with partner relationships (Doroszewicz, 2008; Fincham, 2008), but also parental role fulfilment (Bakiera, 2013), stress management strategies, control over emotions (Półtorak, 2013), social support (Cutrona, 1996; Cutrona, Sheffer, Wesner, Gardner, 2007; Dehle, Landers, 2005), attachment style (Plopa, 2005; Hazan, Shaver, 1987; Bartholomew, Horowitz, 1991), quality of bonding with the child (Suwalska-Barancewicz, Malina, 2019) and self-esteem (Suwalska-Barancewicz, 2018). In the search for determinants of the functioning of young mothers in the dynamically changing world, it may also be beneficial to consider external conditions that are relevant to the quality of motherhood and perceived satisfaction, such as socioeconomic status, financial support, division of household responsibilities and the way they are performed, since, as indicated in the literature, these may be factors that modify the quality of family functioning (Brannon, 2002).

Conclusions

The aim of the study was to understand the quality life in terms of optimism and resilience of young mothers. Particular attention was paid to the role of optimism as a mediator of the relationship between resilience and the satisfaction of young mothers life. Based on the research results, it should be assumed that:

- both the optimism and the resilience have the status of equivalent independent variables, each of which is important for the quality of mother's satisfaction of life;
- optimism is a mediator in the relationship between the level of resilience and the level of life satisfaction (the higher level of a resilience, the higher his level of optimism, and as a result, the higher the level of satisfaction of young mothers life)

- results may prove useful in understanding the role of optimism for satisfaction of life;
- results indicate the significant role of resilience as a buffering factor against the negative impacts on an individual's well-being;
- they also highlight the importance of optimism for well-being, achieving life successes and resistance to stressful life events.

The presented research does not exhaust the wide spectrum of issues related to motherhood and the satisfaction derived from it, constituting one of many paths to exploring this matter. The phenomenon of motherhood, influenced by the life histories of mothers, support networks and many diverse factors, merits deeper scientific reflection. The presented results could serve as a starting point for posing further questions and continuing exploration in the area of family life quality.

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DYSPOZYCYJNY OPTYMIZM ŻYCIOWY
I JEGO ZNACZENIA DLA PRĘŻNOŚCI OSOBISTEJ
I SATYSFAKCJI Z ŻYCIA MŁODYCH MATEK

Streszczenie. Optimizm to cecha osobowości pozytywnie wpływająca na stan fizyczny, dobre samopoczucie i pozytywne relacje z innymi. Powiązany jest także z oceną satysfakcji z życia, która jest subiektywnym komponentem dobrostanu, opartego na wybranych przez jednostkę kryteriach (Juczynski, 2009). Nie bez znaczenia dla czynionych przez człowieka ocen zadowolenia z życia jest prężność, czyli umiejętność radzenia sobie z trudnościami a także szybkiego odzyskiwania równowagi w sytuacji kryzysu. Prezentowane badania mają na celu wskazanie

relacji między optymizmem życiowym młodych matek a ich prężnością osobistą oraz oceną ich satysfakcji z życia. W badaniu udział wzięło 328 kobiet-matek znajdujących się w okresie wczesnej dorosłości (średnia wieku 30,56; $SD = 3,60$), czyli takich, które po raz pierwszy zostały matkami w przedziale wiekowym 20–39 lat i posiadających co najmniej jedno dziecko, które nie ukończyło 24 miesiąca życia (średnia wieku 15,39 miesiąca; $SD = 9,95$). Zgodnie z założeniami z literatury, młode kobiety, które cechują się wysoką prężnością są bardziej optymistycznie nastawione do życia i bardziej z niego usatysfakcjonowane.

Słowa kluczowe: optymizm, prężność, satysfakcja z życia, młode matki

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