The role of life values in subjective well-being among Czech and Maltese university students

Alena Slezackova[1*], Carmel Cefai[2], Eliska Cejkova[1] and Stepanka Gassmann[3]
[1]Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Czech Republic
[2]Department of Psychology, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta, Malta
[3]Medizinisches Zentrum Geissberg, Switzerland

Abstract: In our cross-cultural comparative study, we aimed to explore the level of subjective well-being and hierarchy of life values among Czech and Maltese university students. The links between life values and cognitive and affective components of subjective well-being were also investigated. The research sample (N = 280, aged 18 to 30 years, M = 21.9 years, SD = 2.5) consisted of 165 Czech and 115 Maltese university students, who completed the Satisfaction with Life Scale, the Happiness Measure, and the Valued Living Questionnaire. The results showed that Czech and Maltese samples did not significantly differ in the levels of life satisfaction and happiness. Differences were revealed in the hierarchy of life values and in their relationship to subjective well-being in the two samples. Our study has shown that cultures might differ in the amount of importance they assign to various life values, and that cognitive and affective components of subjective well-being might be predicted by unique variables in different national samples.

Keywords: values, subjective well-being, life satisfaction, happiness, university students

Pomen vrednot za subjektivno blagostanje študentov iz Češke in Malte

Alena Slezackova[1*], Carmel Cefai[2], Eliska Cejkova[1] in Stepanka Gassmann[3]
[1]Oddelek za psihologijo, Filozofska fakulteta, Masarykova Univerza, Češka
[2]Oddelek za psihologijo, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, Univerza na Malti, Malta
[3]Medicinski center Geissberg, Švica

Povzetek: Z medkulturno raziskavo smo želeli raziskati stopnjo subjektivnega blagostanja in hierarhijo vrednot pri študentih iz Češke in Malte. Zanimala nas je tudi povezanost med vrednotami ter kognitivno in čustveno komponento subjektivnega blagostanja. V vzorec (N = 280, starost 18 do 30 let, M = 21,9 let, SD = 2,5) smo vključili 165 čeških in 115 malteških študentov, ki so izpolnili Lestvico zadovoljstva z življenjem, Lestvico srečnosti in Vprašalnik ovrednotenja področij življenja. Rezultati so pokazali, da se češki in malteški vzorec nista pomembno razlikovala v stopnji izraženosti zadovoljstva z življenjem in sreči. Pokazale pa so se pomembne razlike med vzorcema v hierarhiji vrednot in njihovi povezanosti s subjektivnim blagostanjem. Raziskava je pokazala, da se kulture lahko razlikujejo v pomembnosti, ki jo pripisujejo posameznim vrednotam, ter da lahko kognitivno in čustveno komponento subjektivnega blagostanja napovedujemo z različnimi spremenljivkami glede na posamezno kulturo.

Ključne besede: vrednote, subjektivno blagostanje, zadovoljstvo z življenjem, študenti

*Naslov/Address: Alena Slezackova, PhD, Department of Psychology, Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Arne Novaka 1, 602 00 Brno, Czech Republic, e-mail: alena.slezackova@phil.muni.cz

Subjective well-being across cultures

In the past two decades, researchers in positive psychology as well as professionals from other fields have been trying to figure out what contributes to the well-being and flourishing of individuals. There are two general perspectives on well-being: the hedonic perspective, which focuses on pleasure, enjoyment, happiness and satisfaction (i.e. "feeling good"), and the eudaimonic perspective, focusing on meaning, purpose and personal growth (i.e. "functioning well"). These two perspectives together contribute to a better understanding of flourishing of an individual (Huta & Ryan, 2010; Delle Fave, Brdar, Freire, Vella-Brodrick, & Wissing, 2011; Seligman, 2011).

The present study is based on Diener's concept of subjective well-being, which comprises two components: an affective component (the presence of positive emotions and lack of negative emotions), which is linked to happiness, and a cognitive component, which relates to life satisfaction (an individual's cognitive evaluation of life) (Diener, 1994; Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). Numerous studies have already demonstrated positive correlations between subjective well-being and personality characteristics, quality of social relations, spirituality and religion, and values orientations (Biswas-Diener & Diener, 2001; Diener & Seligman, 2002; Eid & Larsen, 2008; Oishi, Diener, Suh, & Lucas, 1999). Major surveys of happiness and life satisfaction found only small differences between men and women (Inglehart, 1990; Myers & Diener, 1995).

The level of subjective well-being is determined by multiple factors, with culture and society playing substantial roles (Mathews, 2012; Pavot & Diener, 2013). Recently, there is a significant growth of interdisciplinary and comparative studies related to social and cultural determinants of subjective well-being and happiness (Cheng, Cheung, Montasem et al., 2016; Diener, Helliwell, & Kahneman, 2010; Diener & Tov, 2009; Knoop & Delle Fave, 2013; Tov & Diener, 2007).

Culture in general can be defined as „the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 3). Based on extensive research, Hofstede (2001) proposed six dimensions by which a national culture can be described: Power Distance (PD), Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS), Uncertainty Avoidance (UA), Long Term Orientation vs. Short Term Normative Orientation (LTO), and Indulgence vs. Restraint (IND). These culture dimensions represent independent preferences (indicated by a score of 0 to 100) for one attribute over another and distinguish countries rather than individuals from each other.

Cultural dimensions shape the way people in different countries define and pursue happiness, and therefore impact whether the pursuit of happiness is linked with higher or lower levels of well-being (Delle Fave et al., 2016; Ford et al., 2015; Uchida, Norasakkunkit, & Kitayama, 2004). While individualistic cultures tend to emphasise individual achievement orientation (e.g. autonomy, agency, personal independence, self-esteem), collectivistic cultures emphasise relationship orientation, i.e. interdependence, relational harmony, relational goals, and social support (Uchida & Ogihara, 2012).

The significance of cultural factors as predictors of difference in happiness between countries was also examined by Ye, Ng, & Lian (2015). In their study, power distance and gender egalitarianism played the most important and stable roles in determining subjective well-being. According to Chen et al. (2011), people from more individualistic countries generally show higher subjective well-being than people from collectivistic cultures.

The increasing number of comparative studies indicates that well-being can be compared across cultures and nations and can be used as an indicator of how people thrive in a particular society (Veenhoven, 2012).

Life values and subjective well-being

Values can be conceptualized as beliefs concerning desirable modes of conduct or a desirable end state of existence (Rokeach, 1973). Life values can be also defined as "ongoing patterns of activity that are actively constructed, dynamic, and evolving" (Wilson, Sandoz, Kitchens, & Roberts, 2010, p. 252).

Schwartz (2012) views values as central constituents of the self and personality, which play a fundamental role in motivation of behaviour and attitudes and can be used for describing individuals as well as cultural groups and societies. Pursuing "healthy" values (e.g. achievement, benevolence, self-direction, and universalism) may contribute to subjective well-being, whereas pursuing "unhealthy" values (e.g., tradition, conformity, power, and security) can reduce it (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000).

Joshanloo and Ghaedi (2009) examined these basic value priorities in relation to hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of subjective well-being in a sample of Iranian university students. It was found that achievement and tradition values were significantly associated with both eudaimonic and hedonic aspects of well-being. Power, universalism, self-direction, benevolence and conformity values were significantly related to eudaimonic aspects of well-being only. Urzúa, Miranda-Castillo, Caqueo-Urízar, and Mascayano (2013), who analysed the relationship between cultural values and the global evaluation of quality of life in Spain and Chile, found that only hedonism correlated with quality of life. This finding indicates that in some countries, pleasurable activities are important for a better quality of life.

Values are closely related to motivation and goals (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Kasser, 2000). Individuals' values affect the attractiveness of different goal objects and the motivation to attain these goals (Feather, 1988, 1992).

Deci and Ryan (2000) examined the association of needs and goal contents to well-being within the Self-determination theory. They identified three needs (i.e., needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy) that are essential for psychological well-being. The pursuit and attainment of certain life goals provides greater satisfaction of the basic psychological needs and subsequently greater subjective well-being (Ryan, Sheldon, Kasser, & Deci, 1996). Specifically, intrinsic aspirations (i.e., goals such as interpersonal connection, social contribution, and personal growth) are closely associated with basic need satisfaction, and extrinsic aspirations (i.e., goals such as attaining popularity, physical attractiveness, and

financial success) are expected to be less likely to yield direct need satisfaction (Kasser & Ryan, 1993). Stronger association of orientation towards intrinsic aspirations and meaningful goals with subjective well-being was supported by number of others studies (Diener & Lucas, 2000; Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Kasser & Ryan, 2001; Ryan et al., 1996; Schmuck, Kasser, & Ryan, 2000; Sheldon, 2005; Sheldon & Kasser, 1998).

Cultural differences between Czech Republic and Malta

The current study is an exploration of the relationship between subjective well-being and life values in two different countries: Czech Republic (CZ) and Malta (M). Although both countries are amongst the developed European countries, they differ in terms of history, language, socio-economic background, and culture.

The Czech Republic is one of the Eastern European countries that have undergone several major macro-social changes in the past decades related to political, economic or cultural transitions (Klingemann, Fuchs, & Zielonka, 2006). The Czechoslovak Republic was established in 1918 and in the next twenty years became one of the ten most developed countries of the world. This period was ended by the World War II, after which democracy was ended by the communist takeover in 1948. The private property was expropriated and human and political rights were suppressed. An attempt to change the totalitarian regime failed when the Soviet Army invaded the country in 1968. The gradual decay of the communist regime, and the mass protests of the Czechoslovak people, resulted in the so called Velvet Revolution and the overthrow of the Communist government in 1989. In 1993 two independent states were peacefully created out of the former Czechoslovakia: the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.

The transition in 1989 influenced the functioning of the whole society and brought a number of both positive changes (e.g. freedom of faith and religion, free travel abroad, higher level of education) and negative changes such as higher unemployment, increased divorce rates, and loss of social security, especially in the early 1990s (Klicperova, Feierabend, & Hofstetter, 1997). In the early years of transition, the country went through deep recession and life satisfaction dropped and recovered somewhat a few years later (Easterlin, 2009). Sanfey and Teksoz (2007) who explored changes in life satisfaction in Eastern European transition countries reported the highest level of satisfaction in Slovenia, Czech Republic, and Croatia, which made more progress in transition and showed higher overall GDP per capita when compared to other transition countries. However, their standard of living is still significantly lower as compared to Western European countries.

Malta is a small island state situated in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea which has always been at the crossroads of the trading and warring routes. At an early stage of its history Malta was exposed to Semitic, Arabic, Latin European and British influences. Malta became an independent constitutional monarchy in 1964, and a republic in 1974. De-spite the various challenges it faced, the country continued to grow and became a stable country with steady economic growth. The Latin European element is the main source of Maltese culture due to the continuous cultural impact from Europe over the past centuries. To this day, Malta shares the traditions, religious beliefs, and ceremonies of its Southern European and Italian neighbours (Cassar-Pullicino, 1992).

Some of the major differences between the Czech Republic and Malta can be explained in terms of cultural dimensions defined by Hofstede (2001). The Czech Republic and Malta show similar relatively high scores on Individualism (CZ: 58, M: 59) and Power Distance (CZ: 57, M: 56). The scores suggest that both countries belong to individualist societies, in which individuals are expected to take care primarily of themselves and their immediate families. The PD score means they are hierarchical societies, in which people accept a hierarchical order where everybody has a place.

The Czech Republic shows higher scores than Malta in the dimensions of Masculinity (CZ: 57, M: 47) and Long Term Orientation (CZ: 70, M: 47), indicating that Czech society is more driven by competition, achievement and success, and Czech culture is more pragmatic (i.e. people believe that truth depends very much on situation, context and time). On the other hand, Malta scores very high on the dimension Uncertainty Avoidance (CZ: 74, M: 96) which suggests that society tends to maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and people are not very tolerant of unorthodox ideas and behaviour. The Czech Republic also shows a high preference for UA which shows that people feel threatened by unknown or ambiguous situations and have created institutions and beliefs that try to avoid these situations.

The biggest difference between Czech and Maltese cultures is captured in the scores on Indulgence dimension (CZ: 26, M: 66) which is defined as the extent to which people try to control children's impulses and desires, based on the way they were raised. Malta's higher score reflects a willingness to realise their impulses with regard to enjoying life, possessing a positive attitude and having a tendency towards optimism. The Czech low score on IND suggests that Czechs are generally not indulgent and have a tendency towards pessimism and cynicism.

Until today, various surveys have been designed to compare the components of subjective well-being (SWB) across cultures, including the Czech Republic and Malta. The World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2016a) provides a report on the average happiness of 159 nations based on data collected between 2005 and 2014. It used a single item asking how much people enjoyed their life-as-a-whole, answered on scale from 0 to 10. Veenhoven (2012) believes that, rather than cultural differences or measurement bias, differences in average happiness across nations are determined by how well the societies are able to meet basic human needs. The World Database of Happiness report indicates moderate happiness levels in Czech Republic (6.6), and an above-average level in Malta (7.2) (Veenhoven, 2016b, 2016c).

The World Happiness Report compared 150 nations based on their levels of global SWB using the Cantrill ladder/scale 0 to 10 (Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2017). A comparison of the top-ranking and the bottom-ranking countries revealed that the differences in SWB could be explained by average

income, life expectancy, the knowledge that the respondents had someone to turn to if they ever went through hard times, and the feeling of freedom. According to the latest World Happiness Report, the Czech Republic scores 6.61 and Malta 6.53 in overall happiness (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2017).

The leading global measure of sustainable well-being, which measures the extent to which countries secure long, happy, sustainable lives for their inhabitants, is the Happy Planet Index (HPI; New Economics Foundation, 2012). Both Czech Republic's (27.3) and Malta's HPI scores (29.0) indicate a moderate level of sustainable well-being (Jeffrey, Wheatley, & Abdallah, 2016).

As no research has yet explored the differences in subjective well-being between culturally different Czech and Maltese populations in relation to their life values, we consider it useful to fill this empirical gap.

Although the large surveys on happiness and life satisfaction did not find a great difference between the levels of subjective well-being in the general population in the Czech Republic and Malta, given the above-mentioned cultural and historical differences, we assume that young people from both countries would prefer different life values and that these values might have different effect on their subjective well-being.

Study objectives

Our comparative study responds to the growing interest in a better understanding of different cultures, their values and the extent to which these serve as determinants of subjective well-being.

Although both the Czech Republic and Malta are amongst developed European countries, they differ in terms of culture, history, socio-economic background, and language. Until now, no research study has focused on the exploration of the differences in subjective well-being between Czech and Maltese young adults and the role of life values in the level of their happiness and life satisfaction.

The main objective of the study was to fill the above mentioned gap by exploring the relationship between subjective well-being (both the 'cognitive' life-satisfaction and the 'affective' happiness components) and life values among Czech and Maltese university students and possible cultural differences in these relationships.

First, we aimed to compare the level of subjective well-being in student samples from the two countries. Based on previous research, we did not expect to find any significant differences between the mean scores in the two samples (Veenhoven, 2016b, 2016c).

We also tested for gender differences in life satisfaction and happiness in the two samples. Based on the literature review we did not expect any significant differences between males and females (Fordyce, 1988; Myers & Diener, 1995; Solcova & Kebza, 2013).

Next, we aimed to investigate the hierarchy of individual life values (in terms of subjective importance and satisfaction with them) in each of the two national samples. As national values can play an essential role in the formation of cross-

cultural differences (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995), we expected to find culture-related differences in the hierarchy of life values.

Finally, we focused on the exploration of the role of life values in predicting the affective and cognitive component of subjective well-being among the Czech and Maltese samples.

Method

Participants

The whole sample consisted of 280 respondents (76.8% female, 23.2% male, aged between 18 to 30 years, $M = 21.9$, $SD = 2.5$). The sample comprised two groups: 165 Czech (75% female and 25% male) and 115 (79% female and 21% male) Maltese university students. All of the students were enrolled either for a Bachelor or a Master's degree programme. Research participation was voluntary, anonymous, and limited by the following criteria: Participants had to be university students and hold the nationality of the country the survey was conducted in.

Instruments

Subjective well-being was measured by two scales: The Satisfaction with Life Scale to measure the cognitive component (i.e. global life satisfaction) and The Happiness Measure to measure the affective component (i.e. happiness). Life values were measured by The Valued Living Questionnaire. English versions of the scales were used for data collection in Malta; for the Czech sample, all the scales were translated into Czech. A pilot study was conducted to test the adequacy of the translation, including backward and forward translations. The final version was then checked by an English native speaker living in the Czech Republic for more than twenty years and having professional Czech language skills.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The SWLS (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) is a self-report instrument consisting of five statements on life satisfaction, for which respondents express their agreement or disagreement on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). Possible overall scores thus range from 5 points minimum to 35 points maximum. The original version of the SWLS has demonstrated good psychometric properties (Pavot & Diener, 2008). Lewis, Shevlin, Smekal & Dorahy (1999) have tested the psychometric properties of the Czech version of the SWLS among Czech university students using exploratory factor analyses. The scale was found to be a reliable tool and was recommended for use among Czech language samples. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .79 (Lewis et al., 1999). In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was .84.

The Happiness Measure (HM). The HM (Fordyce, 1988) measures the affective component of SWB and provides an indication of perceived happiness. The scale consists of two parts. The first part includes only one item measuring the perceived quality of general happiness on a "happiness/un-

happiness scale". Respondents choose one from 11 descriptive phrases on a 0 to 10 scale (0 = I am extremely unhappy – utterly depressed, completely down; 10 = I am extremely happy – feeling ecstatic, joyous, fantastic!). The second part consists of an item on which respondents estimate the proportion (%) of time they feel happy, unhappy, and neutral. The Happiness Measure demonstrates remarkable stability, as the scores do not show age, gender, and race bias. A wide background of evidence supports its convergent, concurrent, construct, and discriminative validity (Fordyce, 1988). In our study, we only used the first part of the measure, assessing the level of general happiness. As the HM method consisted of just one item, it wasn't possible to test the reliability of the single item scale. However, one-item methods measuring happiness have been successfully used in other research studies (Meisenberg & Woodley, 2015; Veenhoven, 2016a). The advantage of the HM scale is that, unlike other happiness measures, it contains both a positive and a negative pole. Fordyce's HM scale has also shown high correlations with much longer happiness measures (Argyle, 2009).

The Valued Living Questionnaire (VLQ). The VLQ (Wilson et al., 2010) is a two-part instrument originally designed to assess valued living. In the first part, participants rate their own perceived level of importance of each of ten life domains on a 10-point scale (1 = not at all important, 10 = extremely important). The second part of the VLQ requires the respondents to rate how consistently they have lived in accord with the valued behavioural pattern within each domain. To adjust the scale to our research goals, we replaced "consistency" with "subjective satisfaction" with the life domain represented by each value (1 = not at all satisfied, 10 = extremely satisfied). The life domains include: Family Relations (other than marriage or parenting); Marriage or Intimate Relationship; Friends and Social Life; Education and Training; Recreation and Fun; Parenting; Health and Physical Self-Care; Employment (career and work); Citizenship and Community Life; and Spirituality/Religion. In the present study, we added an eleventh domain which is important for youth: Finances. Brdar, Rijavec, and Miljković (2009) pointed out that the role of extrinsic goals and values in non-Western cultures should not be overlooked. Especially in young people in transitional European countries, financial success is closely related to opportunity of self-growth and self-expression (Frost & Frost, 2000). As the analyses of the VLQ were done on the item-level only (with no composite scores) we did not test the reliability of the VLQ on Czech and Maltese samples.

Procedure

Non-random convenience sampling was used for participant recruitment. Data was obtained separately from university students from the Czech Republic and Malta. Students were invited by means of emails and social networks like Facebook to access the project website (http://socawe.phil.muni.cz/) and to fill in the online anonymous questionnaire.

The principles of research ethics were strictly observed throughout data collection and processing in each of two countries. Participation in the research was strictly anonymous and voluntary. All participants were informed about the research goals of the study and the estimated amount of time needed to complete the questionnaires. It was also made clear to the respondents that they could withdraw from the research at any time.

The data were analysed using the IBM SPSS 18. Histograms were used for the evaluation of the normality of distribution of the data. Based on bootstrapping with 1000 samples, we also estimated statistical significances and confidence intervals. Z-scores for skewness and kurtosis for all methods were in acceptable limits of ± 2 standard errors. The lowest common value for skewness was −0.59 (SE = 0.19) and kurtosis of −0.28 (SEM = 0.39). Due to the relatively normal data distribution, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationships between the importance and satisfaction with individual life values and components of the SWB. Descriptive analyses were conducted for the two national samples separately to allow comparisons, and statistical significance of the differences was computed. Comparison of the life satisfaction and happiness levels in the two samples as well as gender comparison were performed using the factorial ANOVA. To test the difference between importance and satisfaction with life values in the Czech and Maltese samples, the independent samples t-test was conducted. The predictors of subjective well-being were tested by multiple linear regression analysis.

Results and Discussion

Subjective well-being across Czech and Maltese samples

Our first aim was to reveal the average scores of subjective well-being – both its cognitive, "life-satisfaction" component, and affective, "happiness" component – and to explore any cultural differences between the two samples. The descriptive analysis showed that the mean score of the SWLS in the Czech sample was 23.64 (SD = 5.84), whilst that in the Maltese sample was 22.84 (SD = 5.95). The average life satisfaction scores in the present study were comparable to the ones previously obtained in British (M = 24.1; SD = 6.9) and Australian samples (M = 24.9; SD = 6.0) (Gannon & Ranzijn, 2005; Hayes & Joseph, 2003). Similar results at the level of Czech university students' life satisfaction were obtained also by Slezackova and Gregussova (2012).

The mean score of the Happiness Measure in the Czech sample was 6.98 (SD = 1.64), and in the Maltese sample it was 6.80 (SD = 2.00). According to Jarden's (2011) HM norms for community college students (average age of 26 years) the average score was 6.92 (SD = 1.75). Our results are thus in accordance with the HM norms and to some extent also with the outcomes of the World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2016b, 2016c), where the Czech Republic scored 6.6 and Malta 7.2 in average happiness respectively.

A 2-way between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to examine the effects of gender and nationality on satisfaction with life and happiness. No statistically significant interaction was found between the effects of gender and nationality on satisfaction with life $F(1, 276) = 0.019$, $p = 0.889$, or on happiness, $F(1, 276) = 0.705$, $p = 0.40$.

Table 1. *Descriptive statistics of perceived importance of life values and satisfaction with those values in the Czech and Maltese samples*

Life values	Czech Republic				Malta			
	Importance		Satisfaction		Importance		Satisfaction	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Family relations	**8.97**	1.50	**7.00**	2.77	**8.53**	1.88	6.78	2.91
Marriage	**8.77**	1.61	6.33	3.20	8.20	2.06	6.41	3.07
Friends and Social life	**8.57**	1.16	6.86	2.52	8.03	1.64	**7.02**	2.18
Education and Training	8.10	1.41	**6.91**	2.51	**8.50**	1.35	**6.87**	2.57
Recreation and Fun	8.07	1.49	6.64	2.41	**8.53**	1.55	6.67	2.36
Parenting	7.94	2.31	6.44	2.68	8.00	2.52	6.52	2.89
Health and Physical Self-care	7.62	1.69	6.18	2.36	8.14	1.99	**6.83**	2.20
Career and Work	7.61	1.44	5.88	2.44	8.10	1.68	6.37	2.30
Finances	7.08	1.66	5.59	2.29	8.11	1.72	5.49	2.45
Citizenship / Community life	6.40	1.99	6.57	2.29	6.24	2.31	6.26	2.04
Spirituality and Religion	4.75	2.69	**7.03**	2.46	6.35	2.68	6.36	2.43

Note. The three highest scores for each national sample are presented in bold typeface.

Independent samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the mean scores in life satisfaction and happiness in the Czech and Maltese samples. The scores for each sample were normally distributed. Levene's test for equality of variances showed that the SWLS showed homogeneity of variances ($p = 0.89$), but in Happiness Measure the homogeneity of the variances was violated ($p = 0.03$). The results of the independent samples *t*-test showed that life satisfaction did not differ significantly between Czech and Maltese students ($t(278) = 1.126$; $p = 0.261$; Cohen's $d = 0.14$), with both samples scoring around the average according to the norms (i.e. 20 to 24; Diener, 2006). No significant difference was found between the two samples in happiness ($t(211) = .760$; $p = 0.448$; Cohen's $d = 0.09$).

Gender differences in life satisfaction and happiness

The independent samples *t*-test did not reveal any statistically significant gender-related differences in satisfaction with life in the aggregated sample, $t(278) = 1.875$; $p = 0.062$; $d = 0.02$, or in the two separate national samples, Czech: $t(57.7) = 1.284$; $p = 0.204$; $d = 0.03$; Maltese: $t(113) = 1.286$; $p = 0.201$; $d = 0.04$. The lack of gender difference in life satisfaction corresponds to previous findings by Myers and Diener (1995) and Solcova and Kebza (2013).

Likewise, no significant gender differences were found in the level of happiness in the aggregated sample, $t(278) = 1.035$; $p = 0.302$; $d = 0.02$, or in the two groups, Czech: $t(163) = 0.357$; $p = 0.722$; $d = 0.006$; Maltese: $t(113) = 1.184$; $p = 0.239$; $d = 0.03$. These results have confirmed our expectation that there will be no difference between male and female participants in the level of happiness (Fordyce, 1988).

Hierarchy of life values

We also examined for any potential difference between the two samples in life value preferences. Based on the collected data, we established a hierarchy of life values for each sample showing average perceived importance of each value and average satisfaction with this value (Table 1). The three highest scores for each national sample are highlighted in bold type.

The hierarchy of life values according to perceived importance indicates that the most important value in both countries was Family Relations. In the Czech sample, the other two values were Marriage/Intimate Relationships and Friends/Social life, while Recreation and Fun, and Education and Training ranked among the three most important values in the Maltese sample.

The three most important values by level of satisfaction were Friends/Social Life, Education and Training, and Health and Physical Self-Care domain in the Maltese sample, and Spirituality/Religion, Family Relations, and Education and Training in the Czech sample. The high satisfaction score in Spirituality/Religion ($M = 7.03$) in the Czech sample was rather surprising considering the fact that the country is predominantly atheistic. However, judging by the low average importance score of the same domain ($M = 4.75$), the high satisfaction might simply indicate that this domain is not perceived as a source of conflict, restriction or discomfort.

We used the independent samples *t*-test to examine the differences between the Czech and Maltese samples in the perceived importance of life values and satisfaction with them. Significant differences were found only in Finances and Spirituality/Religion, with Maltese respondents attributing greater importance to these life values (see Table 2). The higher importance of Spirituality and Religion might reflect

Table 2. *Differences (independent samples t-tests) between importance and satisfaction with values between Czech and Maltese participants*

Life values	Importance t(254)	Satisfaction t(278)
Family relations	1.67	0.64
Marriage	2.29*	−0.19
Friends and Social life	2.98**	−0.54
Education and Trainig	−2.22*	0.41
Recreation and Fun	−2.82**	−0.12
Parenting	0.74	−0.17
Health and Physical Self-care	−2.78**	−2.30*
Career and Work	−2.67**	−1.63
Finances	−4.93**	0.31
Citizenship and Community life	−2.78**	1.13
Spirituality and Religion	−5.45**	2.14*

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

the cultural background of Maltese university students who, unlike Czech students, may come from a more religious background. Although both Czech and Maltese university students do not have to pay tuition fees at university, and the Maltese have also a regular scholarship during their studies, the relative higher affluence in the Czech Republic may explain the difference in Finances.

On the other hand, both groups share high perceived importance in Family Relations and high satisfaction with Education and Training. Participants from both countries were least satisfied with the Finances domain, which may be connected to the students' persisting economic dependence on parents.

Overall, it can be noted that the levels of life value importance and satisfaction in both samples correspond to the expected value orientations of university students. The priority lists include social and educational values, which is in line with findings by Salbot and Flešková (2008).

Relationships between subjective well-being and life values

To address the main research objective, we tested for potential correlations between life satisfaction, happiness, perceived importance of different life values, and satisfaction with them, and whether one or more of the values could serve as predictors of well-being. Correlational analysis revealed many significant correlations between the variables according to the traditional $p < .05$ criterion. However, because testing multiple relationships on a single data set increases the probability of Type I error, we used the Bonferroni correction before establishing which of the effects were actually statistically significant. Since the number of effects tested was 22, we used $p = .05/22 = .0022$ as the threshold for statistical significance.

Correlations between perceived importance of the individual life values and the two components of SWB are shown in Table 3. Significant relationships (after applying the Bonferroni correction) were found in both national samples.

In the Czech sample, life satisfaction was significantly associated with the importance of Family Relations only, which was also rated as the most important life domain and the one which Czech respondents were highly satisfied with. The results are in line with recent findings which revealed that happy family relationships were ranked among the most important personal wishes of Czech respondents. Those who were satisfied with the quality of their relationships reported higher life satisfaction (Slezackova & Krafft, 2016).

In the Maltese sample, the strongest relationships were found between life satisfaction and the importance of Family Relations and Parenting, which together reflect the strong emphasis on these values in Maltese culture. Further significant, albeit weaker correlations in the Maltese sample were found between life satisfaction and the importance of Friends and Social life, Recreation and Fun, Friends, Marriage or Partnership, and Career. Additionally, happiness was significantly associated with the importance of Friends and Citizenship.

The mentioned findings above are typical of Maltese southern Mediterranean culture balancing individualism with collectivism. The emphasis on value Friends and Social life, which is the only value showing significant correlations with both cognitive and emotional component of subjective well-being, could point at the important role of social support and underline the developmental needs of young adult students. The importance of these life domains was reported also by Maltese researchers who recently explored the determinants of well-being and mental health among Maltese children and youth (Cefai & Camilleri, 2015; Cefai & Galea, 2016). In their study with about 2,500 8- to 12-year-old children, Cefai and Galea (2016) reported that Maltese children in general are satisfied and happy with their overall life, putting Malta with the top countries in the study on children's overall satisfac-

Table 3. *Pearson's correlations between perceived importance of life values, life satisfaction (SWLS), and happiness*

Importance of values	Czech Republic		Malta	
	SWLS	Happiness	SWLS	Happiness
Family	.30*	.19	.41*	.17
Marriage	.09	.02	.30*	.17
Friends	.00	.01	.36*	.40*
Education	−.03	−.03	.17	.03
Recreation	.08	.10	.36*	.24
Parenting	.02	.09	.40*	.24
Health	.15	.11	.18	.17
Career	−.06	−.06	.28*	.21
Finances	.01	.00	.19	.06
Citizenship	.11	.05	.26	.32*
Spirituality	.14	.09	.19	.12

*$p < .0022$ (a p-value after applying the Bonferroni correction)

Table 4. Pearson's correlations between subjective satisfaction with the life values, life satisfaction (SWLS), and happiness

Satisfaction with values	Czech Republic		Malta	
	SWLS	Happiness	SWLS	Happiness
Family	.24*	.16	.18	−.01
Marriage	.20	.12	.11	.01
Friends	.28*	.30*	.11	−.12
Education	.29*	.27*	.16	−.01
Recreation	.23	.24*	.21	.20
Parenting	−.02	.06	.11	−.12
Health	.24*	.22	.17	.05
Career	.32*	.31*	.20	.01
Finances	.30*	.21	.21	.03
Citizenship	.31*	.34*	.12	.04
Spirituality	.08	.04	.11	−.04

*$p < .0022$ (a p-value after applying the Bonferroni correction)

tion about different aspects of their lives including satisfaction with friends. Cefai and Camilleri (2009) who studied the health of Maltese university students reported that 65% of the participants said they are happy; male students in a long term relationship and their final years of education are more likely to experience this positive affect.

In our study, the correlation analysis was also used to explore the relationships between subjective satisfaction with the life value domains, overall life satisfaction, and happiness (Table 4).

Interestingly, data analyses did not reveal any significant correlations in Maltese sample. The absent correlations between subjective well-being and satisfaction with life may suggest that there might be another factors contributing to

subjective well-being of Maltese university students, which have not been taken into account in the present study, like personality characteristics and traits, coping strategies and other personal qualities.

In the Czech sample, significant positive correlations were found between overall life satisfaction and satisfaction with the values Career, Citizenship, Finances, Education, Friends, Health, and Family Relations. Happiness correlated significantly with satisfaction with Citizenship, Career, Friends, Education, and Recreation. This may reflect the importance of external resources of well-being, arising from social relationships (family, friends, and citizenship), achievement (education, career) and leisure (recreation and fun).

Regarding the cultural differences in value preferences and their relationship with subjective well-being, the importance of Parenting was related to life satisfaction only in the Maltese sample, while satisfaction with Finances was significantly correlated to life satisfaction only in Czech sample. These differences might reflect the uniqueness of two cultures: a traditional strong emphasis on family and parenting in Maltese culture, and greater importance attributed to material security and independence in the Czech Republic as a transitional country (Frost & Frost, 2000).

In order to construct a more holistic model, subsequent multiple regression analyses were conducted. We used the multicollinearity diagnostics for both Czech and Maltese samples before doing a regression analysis. The results did not indicate any problems with multicollinearity as the variance inflation factors (VIF) were below 5 (the highest was 3.056) and no variable reached critical tolerance value below 0.2 (the lowest was 0.330).

Regression results for the Czech sample (see Table 5) revealed a significant relationship between the importance of life value Family Relations and overall life satisfaction, $F(11,153) = 2.281$; $p < 0.05$. Life satisfaction of Czech university students was also positively predicted by satisfaction with

Table 5. Linear regression model predicting life satisfaction and happiness in the Czech sample

Life values	SWLS						Happiness					
	Importance			Satisfaction			Importance			Satisfaction		
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β
Family relations	1.29	.34	.33*	.25	.23	.12	.21	.10	.19*	−.01	.06	−.03
Marriage	.15	.34	.04	.23	.15	.13	−.06	.01	−.06	.02	.04	.34
Friends	−.27	.46	−.06	.05	.26	.14	−.07	.14	−.05	.06	.07	.09
Education	.08	.46	.02	.14	.26	.06	.02	.14	.02	.01	.07	.01
Recreation	.20	.40	.05	−.11	.29	−.05	.13	.12	.12	.05	.08	.08
Parenting	−.30	.23	−.11	−.46	.25	−.15	.04	.07	.06	−.04	.07	−.05
Health	.41	.32	.12	−.06	.25	−.03	.07	.09	.07	−.04	.07	−.06
Career	−.38	.48	−.09	.33	.23	.13	−.12	.14	−.10	.14	.07	.19*
Finances	−.41	.35	−.12	.45	.21	.18*	−.05	.10	−.05	.06	.06	.08
Citizenship	.11	.26	.04	.91	.27	.35*	−.01	.07	−.01	.03	.08	.41*
Spirituality	.17	.19	.08	−.60	.24	−.23*	.04	.05	.06	−.22	.07	−.31*
R^2		.14*			.25*			.07			.24*	
R		.38			.50			.26			.49	

*$p < .05$

Table 6. *Linear regression model for predicting life satisfaction and happiness in the Maltese sample*

	SWLS						Happiness					
	Importance			Satisfaction			Importance			Satisfaction		
Life values	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β
Family relations	.93	.37	.29*	.31	.29	.15	.06	.13	.06	.06	.10	.08
Marriage	−.23	.36	−.08	.13	.24	.06	−.10	.13	−.09	.05	.08	.07
Friends	.57	.44	.15	−.52	.45	−.19	.46	.15	.40*	−.15	.15	−.16
Education	.03	.44	.01	.06	.35	−.02	−.02	.16	.02	−.09	.12	−.11
Recreation	.72	.48	.18	.58	.42	.23	.03	.17	−.02	.41	.14	.48*
Parenting	.46	.31	.19	−.22	.32	−.10	.05	.11	.10	−.18	.11	−.23
Health	−.45	.34	−.15	−.14	.44	−.05	.06	.12	.05	−.02	.15	−.02
Career	−.06	.47	−.02	.20	.08	.45	.07	.17	.06	−.06	.13	−.06
Finances	−.02	.41	−.01	.32	.27	.13	−.23	.14	−.19	.02	.09	.02
Citizenship	.07	.30	.03	−.14	.40	−.05	.18	.11	.20	−.01	.13	−.01
Spirituality	−.01	.25	−.01	.13	.31	.05	−.11	.09	−.14	−.03	.10	−.03
R^2	.27*			.09			.22*			.12		
R	.52			.29			.47			.34		

*$p < .05$

life values Citizenship and Finances. Negative albeit weak predictive power was found in satisfaction with Spirituality/Religiosity, $F_{(11,153)} = 4.579$; $p < 0.05$. The regression model for the importance of life values explained 14% of variance in life satisfaction and the regression model for satisfaction with values explained 25% of variance in life satisfaction scores.

The regression model for the importance of life values predicting happiness among Czech university students was not significant, $F_{(11,153)} = 1.035$; $p > 0.05$. Only Family Relations was a significant but a weak predictor of happiness. Another two stronger positive predictors of happiness were satisfaction with Citizenship/Community Life and Career. Satisfaction with Spirituality/Religiosity again showed to be a significant negative predictor of happiness, $F_{(11,153)} = 4.333$; $p < 0.05$. This regression model explained 24% of variance in happiness scores.

Regression results for the Maltese sample (see Table 6) also underlined the perceived importance of Family Relations which was an independent significant predictor of life satisfaction, $F_{(11,103)} = 3.423$; $p < 0.05$. The regression model explained 27% of variance in life satisfaction. The other regression model predicting global life sastifaction of Maltese students based on their satisfaction with values was not significant, $F_{(11,103)} = 0.880$; $p > 0.05$.

Happiness of Maltese students was predicted by satisfaction with Recreation and Fun, however, the whole model was not significant, $F_{(11,103)} = 1.219$; $p > 0.05$. Happiness of Maltese respondents was also predicted by perceived importance of value Friends and Social life ($F_{(11,103)} = 2.608$, $p < 0.05$). This regression model explained 22% of variance in happiness scores.

To sum up, the results showed that Family relations is a highly important value, significantly contributing to higher life satisfaction of both Czech and Maltese university students. The perceived importance of social relations (Family in Czech sample, Friends in Maltese sample) also significantly contributes to higher happiness. This result is in line with previous findings of Cefai and Camilleri (2009) who reported

that more than 75% of Maltese university students were satisfied with their personal relationships, 90% had at least two close friends, and 61% find it very easy to make new friends. Positive relationships were among the significant predictors of subjective well-being in studies with the Czech population (Slezackova & Krafft, 2016).

The greatest differences between the two samples are in the effect of satisfaction with individual values on overall life satisfaction and happiness. In the Czech sample, those students who were more satisfied with their Citizenship/Community Life and Financial situation, and less satisfied with value Spirituality/Religion, were more satisfied with their life as a whole. No such relationships were found in the Maltese sample.

Satisfaction with Recreation and Fun significantly contributed to higher happiness amongst Maltese students. This is most probably related to the fact that most of the recreational and fun activities are held together with friends. Pavot, Diener, and Fujita (1990) also found that people experience more positive emotions when they are with others (friends, communities, family members,) than when alone. The findings of Urzúa et al. (2013) also indicated that pleasurable activities can be important for higher satisfaction and better quality of life.

The greatest sources of happiness of Czech students were satisfaction with Citizenship/Community Life and Career. Similar findings were reported by Ryan et al. (1999) who examined the relationship between life goals and well-being in Russian college students. Those who were more focused on relationships, community, and growth, showed greater well-being. Diener, Ng, Harter, and Arora (2010) also found that psychosocial prosperity (e.g. citizenship and community life) predicted positive feelings.

An interesting role in the happiness of the Czech students was again played by Spirituality and Religion. Those who were less satisfied with this value showed higher happiness. The negative relationship between Spirituality/Religiosity and subjective well-being in Czech students seems strik-

ing, especially in the light of research findings showing that spirituality is usually related to higher well-being (Sawatzky, Ratner, & Chiu, 2005; Visser, Garssen, & Vingerhoets, 2010). However, some studies did not support the conclusion that religious and spiritual life enhance psychological well-being (e.g., Baetz, Bowen, & Jones, 2006; Leurent et al., 2013). Our results may be interpreted in the context of the fact that Czech Republic is the most atheistic country in Europe (Hamplova, 2013) and one might suppose that more secular outlook on life would be related to higher well-being. Another, more likely interpretation could be that the negative relationship between satisfaction with spiritual and religious issues and subjective well-being among young Czech people, may reflect their actual seeking for spiritual and transcendental dimensions which can be either related to their identity formation or be a sign of spiritual intelligence (King & DeCicco, 2009). In the study with Czech participants, Slezackova and Janstova (2016) reported that while certain dimensions of spiritual intelligence (e.g. Personal meaning production and Conscious state expansion) showed a significant positive relationship with positive mental health (i.e. flourishing), Critical existential thinking was negatively related with flourishing. This finding, therefore, may suggest that unless the ability to think critically about spiritual and existential themes is not accompanied and enriched by finding a meaning, it can serve as a risk factor of positive mental health.

Conclusions

Our research suggests that the average self-reported subjective well-being of university students might be similar across European countries. Czech and Maltese samples did not significantly differ in life satisfaction and happiness.

However, cultural differences might be reflected in the amount of importance people assign to various life values which can affect subjective well-being. Our results revealed several similarities as well as differences among the two national samples. Both groups shared high perceived importance of Family Relations and high satisfaction with Education and Training. They both indicate the lowest satisfaction with Finances. These three values obviously reflect the main areas of interest and efforts of university students who are mostly still dependent on parents, are busy with study obligations, and strive for economic independence.

Significant differences between the samples were found in perceived importance of values Finances and Spirituality which were rated as more important by Maltese respondents. However, the satisfaction with these life values did not contribute to their happiness and life satisfaction. On the contrary, Finances showed to be an independent albeit weak predictor of life satisfaction amongst Czech students. This finding can be explained by the conclusion of Brdar et al. (2009) who noted that in transitional countries extrinsic goals like financial success also contribute to well-being.

The significant impact of interpersonal values (Family Relations, Friends) on subjective well-being in both national samples is in agreement with previous findings suggesting that quality of close relationships plays an important role in well-being (Delle Fave et al., 2016; Diener & Seligman, 2002;

Meyers, 2000). High social support from relatives and friends was found to be related to enhanced subjective well-being even in the face of poor economic conditions (Biswas-Diener & Diener, 2001).

Some of the findings in the present study can be explained with respect to the cultural differences identified by Hofstede (2001). The result concerning Finances and Career predicting SWB in Czech students might to some extent reflect higher scores of the Czech Republic in Masculinity and Long Term Orientation, which indicate that Czech society is more pragmatic and more driven by achievement, success, and competition than Maltese society. The values Recreation/Fun and Friends/Social Life predicting higher happiness amongst Maltese students might reflect the higher score on Indulgence dimension, which suggests a willingness to realise their desire to enjoy life.

Study limitations and future research directions

Apart from the usual limitations connected with the use of self-reported measures, our study has several other limitations. Some of these are related to the measures used, especially the VLQ: Since respondents provided importance and satisfaction ratings in relation to a brief list of value domains without further specification of what the domains might include, different respondents might have assigned slightly different meaning to the individual values. Also, the participants were all university students in early adulthood. As Arnett (2004) has argued, emerging adults tend to think rather positively about their future. Moreover, particularly with regards to Maltese University students, families have no problems with providing their children with basic material security, with students usually living with their parents (besides receiving a study allowance from the government).

Another limitation of the study is the uneven representation of males and females in the research samples, which is a common problem with anonymous online data collection and thus could not be eliminated in the present design. These limitations obviously restrict the possibility of making generalized statements about the general population based on the results.

We are also aware of the specific issues connected with cross-cultural comparisons (Brislin, 1983) that need to be addressed. Matthews (2012) stresses the problem of language (different expressions and concepts of happiness) and culture, which might considerably influence the content of various concepts. We agree that cultural influences should not be neglected in research on subjective well-being. Further research is needed to investigate these issues in greater depth.

Our study has shown that cultures might differ in the amount of importance they assign to various life values, and that cognitive and affective components of SWB might be predicted by unique variables in different national samples. In future research, these findings need to be examined further on different samples (e.g. adults, elderly, participants with lower level of education etc.). The idea that the link between subjective well-being and life values might be mediated by personality or interpersonal variables is also worthy of attention.

We believe that findings in this area of research could serve as a basis for designing programmes aimed at helping young people to increase their life satisfaction and happiness through healthy and prosocial values. Moreover, better understanding of cross-country similarities and differences in life values and subjective well-being might be useful in promoting respect for diversity in today's multicultural society.

References

Argyle, M. (2009). *The psychology of happiness*. New York, NY, USA: Routledge.

Arnett, J. J. (2004). *Emerging adulthood: The winding road from the late teens through the twenties*. New York, NY, USA: Oxford University Press.

Baetz M., Bowen R., & Jones G. (2006). How spiritual values and worship attendance relate to psychiatric disorders in the Canadian population. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 51*, 654–661.

Biswas-Diener, R., & Diener, E. (2001). Making the best of a bad situation: Satisfaction in the slums of Calcutta. *Social Indicators Research, 55*, 329–352.

Brdar, I., Rijavec, M., & Miljković, D. (2009). Life goals and well-being: Are extrinsic aspirations always detrimental to well-being? *Psychological Topics, 18*(2), 317–334.

Brislin, R. W. (1983). Cross-cultural research in psychology. *Annual Review of Psychology, 34*, 363–400.

Cassar-Pullicino, J. (1992). *Studies in Maltese folklore*. Msida, Malta: Malta University Press.

Cefai, C., & Camilleri, L. (2009). *Healthy students, healthy lives*: *The health of Maltese university students*. Msida, Malta: European Centre for Educational Resilience and Socio-Emotional Health, University of Malta.

Cefai, C., & Camilleri, L. (2015). A healthy start: Promoting mental health and wellbeing in the early primary school years. *Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties, 20*(2), 133–152.

Cefai, C., & Galea, N. (2016*) Children's worlds: The subjective wellbeing of Maltese children*. Msida, Malta: European Centre for Educational Resilience and Socio-Emotional Health, University of Malta.

Chen, C., Jose, P. E., Sheldon, K. M., Singelis, T. M., Cheung, W.L., Tiliouine, H. … Sims, C. (2011). Sociocultural differences in self-construal and subjective well-being: A test of four cultural models. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 42*(5), 832–855.

Cheng, C., Cheung, M. W. L., Montasem, A., and 44 members of the International Network of Well-Being Studies (2016). Explaining differences in subjective well-being across 33 nations using multilevel models: Universal personality, cultural relativity, and national income. *Journal of Personality, 84*(1), 46–58.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, M. R. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behaviour. *Psychological Inquiry, 11*, 227–268.

Delle Fave, A., Brdar, I., Freire, T., Vella-Brodrick, D., & Wissing, M. P. (2011). The eudaimonic and hedonic components of happiness: Qualitative and quantitative findings. *Social Indicators Research, 100*(2), 185–207.

Delle Fave, A., Brdar, I., Wissing, M. P., Araujo, U., Castro Solano, A., Freire, T., Hernández-Pozo, M. d. R., Jose, P., Martos, T., Nafstad, H. E., Nakamura, J., Singh, K., Soosai-Nathan, L. (2016). Lay definitions of happiness across nations: The primacy of inner harmony and relational connectedness. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7* (30).

Diener, E. (1994). Assessing subjective well-being: Progress and opportunities. *Social Indicators Research, 31*(2), 103–157.

Diener, E. (2006). *Understanding scores on the satisfaction with life scale*. Retrieved from http://internal.psychology.illinois.edu/~ediener/Documents/Understanding%20SWLS%20Scores.pdf.

Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larson, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 49*, 71–75.

Diener, E., Helliwell, J. F., & Kahneman, D. (Eds.) (2010*). International differences in well-being*. New York, NY, USA: Oxford University Press.

Diener, E., & Lucas, R. E. (2000). Subjective emotional well-being. In M. Levis & J. M. Haviland, *Handbook of Emotions* (pp. 325–337). New York, NY, USA: Guilford.

Diener, E., Ng, W., Harter, J., & Arora, R. (2010). Wealth and happiness across the world: Material prosperity predicts life evaluation, whereas psychosocial prosperity predicts positive feeling. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 99*, 52–61.

Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Lucas, R. E. (2003). Personality, culture, and subjective well-being: Emotional and cognitive evaluations of life. *Annual Review of Psychology, 54*, 403–425.

Diener, E., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). Very happy people. *Psychological Science, 13,* 81–84.

Diener, E., & Tov, W. (2009). Well-being on planet Earth. *Psychological Topics, 18*(2), 213–219.

Easterlin, R. A. (2009). Lost in transition: Life satisfaction on the road to capitalism. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, 71*(2), 130–145.

Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53*, 109–132.

Eid, M., & Larsen, R. (Eds.) (2008). *The science of subjective well-being*. New York, NY, USA: Guilford.

Feather, N. T. (1988). Values, valences, and course enrolment: Testing the role of personal values within an expectancy-value framework. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 80*(3), 381–391.

Feather, N. T. (2010). Values, valences, expectations, and actions. *Journal of Social Issues, 48*(2), 109–124.

Ford, B. Q., Dmitrieva, J. O., Heller, D., Chentsova-Dutton, Y., Grossmann, I., Tamir, M., … Mauss, I. B. (2015). Culture shapes whether the pursuit of happiness predicts higher or lower well-being. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 144*(6), 1053–1062.

Fordyce, M. W. (1988). A review of research on the happiness measures: A sixty second index of happiness and mental health. *Social Indicators Research, 20*, 63–89.

Frost, K. M., & Frost, C. (2000). Romanian and American life aspirations in relation to psychological well-being. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 31,* 726–751.

Gannon, N., & Ranzijn, R. (2005). Does emotional intelligence predict unique variance in life satisfaction beyond IQ and personality? *Personality and Individual Differences, 38*(6), 1353–1364.

Hamplová, D. (2013). *Náboženství v České společnosti na prahu 3. tisíciletí [Religion in the Czech society at the threshold of the 3rd millennium].* Praha, Czech Republic: Karolinum.

Hayes, N., & Joseph, S. (2003). Big 5 correlates of three measures of subjective well-being. *Personality and Individual Differences, 34,* 723–727.

Helliwell, J., Layard, R., & Sachs, J. (2017). *World Happiness Report 2017.* New York, NY, USA: Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations.* Second Edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Huta, V., & Ryan, R. M. (2010). Pursuing pleasure or virtue: The differential and overlapping well-being benefits of hedonic and eudaimonic motives. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 11*(6), 735–762.

Inglehart, R. (1990). *Culture shift in advanced industrial society.* Princeton, NJ, USA: Princeton University Press.

Jarden, A. (2011). *Positive psychological assessment: A practical introduction to empirically validated research tools for measuring wellbeing.* Retrieved from http://www.positivepsychology.org.nz/uploads/3/8/0/4/3804146/workshop_4_-_dr_aaron_jarden_-_positive_psychological_assessment_workbook.pdf

Jeffrey, K., Wheatley, H., & Abdallah, S. (2016). *The Happy Planet Index 2016: A global index of sustainable wellbeing.* London, United Kingdom: New Economics Foundation.

Joshanloo, M., & Ghaedi, G. (2009). Value priorities as predictors of hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of well-being. *Personality and Individual Differences, 47*(4), 294–298.

Kasser, T. (2000). Two versions of the American dream: Which goals and values make for a high quality of life? In E. Diener & D. R. Rahtz. (Eds). *Advances in Quality of Life Theory and Research: Social Indicators Research Series, Vol 4.* (3–12). Dordrecht: Springer.

Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (1993). A dark side of the American dream: Correlates of financial success as a central life aspiration. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 65,* 410–422.

Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (1996). Further examining the American dream: Well-being correlates of intrinsic and extrinsic goals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 22,* 281–288.

Kasser, T. & Ryan, R. M. (2001). Be careful what you wish for: Optimal functioning and the relative attainment of intrinsic and extrinsic goals. In P. Schmuck & K. Sheldon (Eds.), *Life Goals and Well-Being* (pp.116–131). Göttingen, Germany: Hogrefe.

King, D. B., & DeCicco, T. L. (2009). A viable model and self-report measure of spiritual intelligence. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies, 28*, 68–85.

Klicperova, M., Feierabend, I. K., & Hofstetter, C. R. (1997). In the search for a post-communist syndrome: A theoretical framework and empirical assessment. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, 7,* 39–52.

Klingemann, H. D., Fuchs, D., & Zielonka, J. (Eds.) (2006). *Democracy and political culture in Eastern Europe.* New York, NY, USA: Routledge.

Knoop, H. H., & Delle Fave, A. (Eds.) (2013). *Well-being and cultures: Perspectives from positive psychology.* Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

Leurent, B., Nazareth, I., Bellón-Saameño, J., Geerlings, M. I., Maaroos, H., Saldivia, S., Švab, I., Torres González, F., Xavier, M., & King, M. (2013). Spiritual and religious beliefs as risk factors for the onset of major depression: An international cohort study. *Psychological Medicine, 43*(10), 2109–2120.

Lewis, A., Shevlin, M., Smékal, V. & Dorahy, V. (1999). Factor structure and reliability of a Czech translation of the Satisfaction with Life Scale among Czech university students. *Studia Psychologica*, 41, 239–244.

Mathews, G. (2012). Happiness, culture, and context. *International Journal of Wellbeing, 2*(4), 299–312.

Meisenberg, G., & Woodley, M. A. (2015). Gender differences in subjective well-being and their relationships with gender equality. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 16,* 1539–1555.

Myers, D. G. (2000). The funds, friends and faith of happy people. *American Psychologist, 55,* 55–56.

Myers, D. G., & Diener, E. (1995). Who is happy? *Psychological Science, 6*(1), 10.

New Economics Foundation (2012). *Happy Planet Index: 2012 Report: A global index of sustainable well-being.* London, United Kingdom: Author. Retrieved from http://www.happyplanetindex.org/

Oishi, S., Diener, E., Suh, E., & Lucas, R. E. (1999). Value as a moderator in subjective well-being. *Journal of Personality, 67*(1), 157–184.

Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (2008). The Satisfaction with Life Scale and the emerging construct of life satisfaction. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 3,* 137–152.

Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (2013). Happiness experienced: The science of subjective well-being. In S. David, I. Boniwell, & A. C. Ayers (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of happiness* (pp. 134–151). Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

Pavot, W., Diener, E., & Fujita, F. (1990). Extraversion and happiness. *Personality and Individual Differences, 11,* 1299–1306.

Rokeach, M. (1973). *The nature of human values.* New York, NY, USA: Free Press.

Ryan, R. M., Chirkov, V. I., Little, T. D., Sheldon, K. M., Timoshina, E., & Deci, E. L. (1999). The American dream in Russia: Extrinsic aspirations and well-being in two cultures. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 25*(12), 1509–1524.

Ryan, R. M., Sheldon, K. M., Kasser, T., & Deci, E. L. (1996). All goals were not created equal: The relation of goal content and regulatory styles to mental health. In J. A. Bargh & P. M. Gollwitzer (Eds.), *The psychology of action: Linking cognition and motivation to behavior* (pp. 7–26). New York, NY, USA: Guilford Press.

Sagiv, L., & Schwartz, S. H. (2000). Value priorities and subjective well-being: Direct relations and congruity effects. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 30,* 177–198.

Salbot, V., & Flešková, M. (2008). Value orientation of university students and personal values related to the domain of education value. *The New Educational Review, 16*(3), 227–241.

Sanfey, P., & Teksoz, U. (2007). Does transition make you happy*? Economic of Transition, 15*(4), 707–731.

Sawatzky, R., Ratner, P. A., & Chiu, L. (2005). A meta-analysis of the relationship between spirituality and quality of life. *Social Indicators Research, 72,* 153–188.

Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1).

Schwartz, S. H., & Sagiv, L. (1995). Identifying culture-specifics in the content and structure of values. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 26*(1), 92–116.

Schmuck, P., Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The relationship of well-being to intrinsic and extrinsic goals in Germany and the U.S. *Social Indicators Research*, *50*, 225–241.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being.* New York, NY, USA: Free Press.

Sheldon, K. M. (2005). Positive value change during college: Normative trends and individual differences. *Journal of Research in Personality, 39,* 209–233.

Sheldon, K. M., & Kasser, T. (1998). Pursuing personal goals: Skills enable progress, but not all progress is beneficial. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *24*(12), 1319–1331.

Slezackova, A., & Gregussova, D. (2012). *Hope, gratitude, meaningfulness and well-being in Czech students.* The 6th European Conference on Positive Psychology, Moscow, Russia, May 2012.

Slezackova, A., & Janstova, E. (2016). Vztah spirituální inteligence a duševního zdraví: Význam nalézání osobního smyslu a duchovní praxe [Spiritual intelligence and positive mental helath: The value of personal meaning production and spiritual practice]. *E-psychologie, 10*(2), 18–33.

Slezackova, A., & Krafft, A. (2016). Hope: A driving force of optimal human development. In J. Mohan & M. Sehgal (Eds.), *Idea of Excellence: Multiple Perspectives* (pp. 1–12). Chandigarh, India: Panjab University.

Solcova, I., & Kebza, V. (2013). Circumstances of well-being among Czech college students. In H. H. Knoop & A. Delle Fave (Eds.), *Well-being and cultures: Perspectives from positive psychology* (pp. 161–170). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

Tov, W., & Diener, E. (2007). Culture and subjective well-being. In S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds.), *Handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 691–713). New York, NY, USA: Guilford.

Uchida, Y., Norasakkunkit, V., & Kitayama, S. (2004). Cultural constructions of happiness: Theory and empirical evidence. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 5,* 223–239.

Uchida, Y., & Ogihara, Y. (2012). Personal or interpersonal construal of happiness: A cultural psychological perspective. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, *2,* 354–369.

Urzúa, A., Miranda-Castillo, C., Caqueo-Urízar, A., & Mascayano, F. (2013). Do cultural values affect quality of life evaluation? *Social Indicators Research*, *114,* 1295–1313.

Veenhoven, R. (2012). Cross-national differences in happiness: Cultural measurement bias or effect of culture? *International Journal of Wellbeing, 2*(4), 333–353.

Veenhoven, R. (2016a). *World Database of Happiness,* Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Retrieved from http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl

Veenhoven, R. (2016b). *Happiness in Czech Republic (CZ).* World Database of Happiness, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Retrieved from http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl

Veenhoven, R. (2016c). *Happiness in Malta (MT).* World Database of Happiness, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Retrieved from http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl

Visser, A., Garssen, B., & Vingerhoets, A. (2010). Spirituality and well-being in cancer patients: A review. *Psycho-Oncology, 19,* 565–572.

Wilson, K., Sandoz, E. K., Kitchens, J., & Roberts, M. (2010). The Valued Living Questionnaire: Defining and measuring valued action within a behavioral framework. *The Psychological Record*, *60,* 249–272.

Ye, D., Ng, Y. K., & Lian, Y. (2015). Culture and happiness. *Social Indicators Research, 123,* 519–547.