

Children's relations and their subjective well-being in an ecological perspective

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CHILDREN'S
WORLDS



INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING (ISCWeB)

About the ISCWeB project

- A group of researchers from England, Germany, Spain, Israel, UNICEF, World Vision and OECD collaborated in order to develop and build tools for comparatively studying children's subjective well-being.
- The project aimed to collect solid and representative data on children's subjective well being and daily activities, when children are the source of information to the questionnaire.

The Israeli study - Purpose and Hypotheses

- To examine the associations between children's relations in different circles of life and their subjective well-being in an ecological perspective;
- To identify the importance of these relations to the children's subjective well-being.
- Positive associations are expected between children's relationships and their subjective well-being.

Two theoretical approaches:

- **The Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory** emphasizes the importance of children's relations in various circles of life.
- **The Quality of Life studies** refer to subjective well-being as people's satisfaction with certain life domains, and with life as a whole.

Subjective well-being measures

- OLS – Overall life satisfaction (e.g., Cummins et al., 2003);
- SLSS – students' Life Satisfaction Scale (huebner, 1991);
- Happiness with life (last two weeks);

SLSS – students' Life Satisfaction Scale (huebner, 1991)

How much do you agree or disagree with...

(5 point Likert scale from 0- strongly disagree to 4 - very much agree)

- My life is going well;
- My life is just right;
- I wish I had a different kind of life;
- I have a good life;
- I have what I want in life;

The scale produces a total life satisfaction score in the range from 0 to 20.

OLS – Overall life satisfaction (Cummins et al., 2003)

How satisfied are you with your life as a whole? (11 point Likert scale from 0 - completely dissatisfied to 10 - completely satisfied)

Happiness with life (last two weeks)

Overall, how happy have you been feeling during the last two weeks? (11 point Likert scale from 0 - extremely unhappy to 10 - extremely happy)

Circles of life measures

Family:

How satisfied are you with...(11 point Likert scale from completely dissatisfied to completely satisfied)

- The way you get along with your family?
- The relationships in your family?

How much do you agree or disagree with...(5 point Likert scale from strongly disagree to very much agree)

- My parents listen to me and take what I say into account;
- We have a good time together in my family;

Circles of life measures

Friends:

How satisfied are you with...(11 point Likert scale from completely dissatisfied to completely satisfied)

- Your friends?

How much do you agree or disagree with...(5 point Likert scale from strongly disagree to very much agree)

- My friends are usually nice to me;
- I have enough friends;

Circles of life measures

School:

How satisfied are you with...(11 point Likert scale from completely dissatisfied to completely satisfied)

- Other children in your class?
- Your school experience?

How much do you agree or disagree with...(5 point Likert scale from strongly disagree to very much agree)

- My teachers listen to me and take what I say into account;
- My teachers treat me fairly;

Circles of life measures

Community:

How satisfied are you with...(11 point Likert scale from completely dissatisfied to completely satisfied)

- The people who live in your area?
- Your relationships with people in general?

The Israeli Sample

- 2,238 children aged 10 (mean age 9.87) & 12 (mean age 11.89) ;
- 24 primary schools;
- 49.1% females, 50.9% males;
- 74.1% Jews, 25.9% Arabs;
- 51.7% 4th grade, 48.3% 6th grade;

Reliability for SLSS

	SLSS
Cronbach's alpha	.778
No. of items	5

Reliabilities for circles of life

	Family	Friends	School	Community
Cronbach's alpha	.756	.801	.757	.566
No. of items	4	3	4	2

Mean scores for Subjective well-being measures

Subjective well-being measures	Total	boys	Girls	4 th grade	6 th grade	Jews	Arabs
Student Life Satisfaction Scale (0-20)	16.86	16.65**	17.08**	16.73	16.99	16.96*	16.58*
Satisfied life as a whole (0-100)	91.64	91.17	92.13	91.59	91.80	93.05*	91.14*
Happy last two weeks (0-100)	86.38	86.46	86.28	86.39	86.36	85.91	87.67

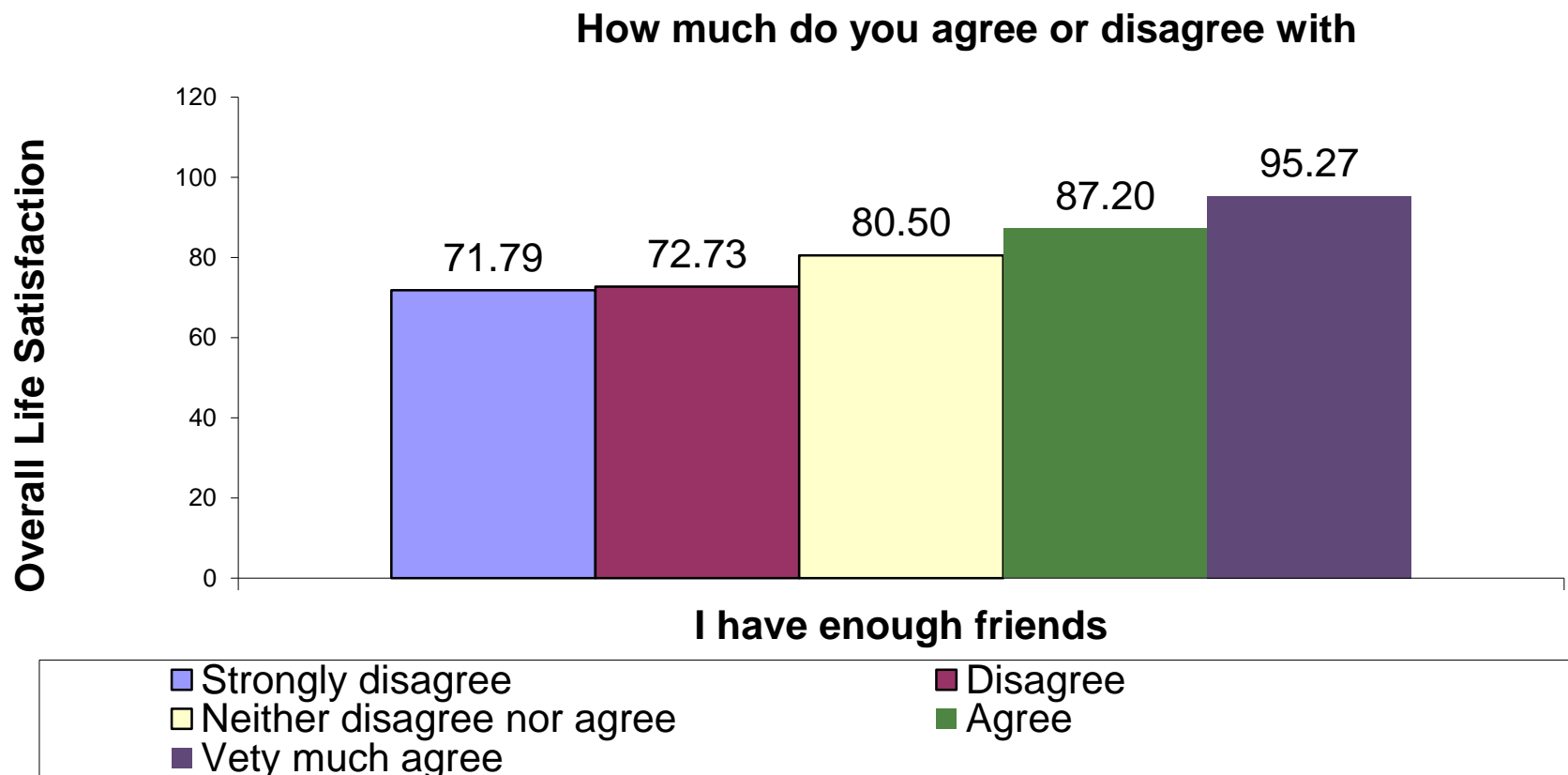
T-Tests: *P<.05, **P<.01

Mean scores for circles of life

Circles of life	Total	boys	Girls	4th grade	6th grade	Jews	Arabs
Family	89.33	88.82	89.87	87.50***	91.00***	88.90**	90.60**
Friends	85.88	85.59	86.19	85.80	85.98	85.10***	88.10***
School	75.67	73.81***	77.61***	76.22	75.09	74.36***	79.53***
Community	83.56	81.66***	85.51***	82.35**	84.87**	83.11	84.87

T-Tests: *P<.05, **P<.01, ***P<.001

Associations between relations with friends and Overall Life Satisfaction



Correlations of circles of life with subjective well-being measures

Circles of life	Student's Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS)	Overall Life Satisfaction (OLS)	Happiness with life (last two weeks)
Family	.507	.448	.421
Friends	.425	.348	.420
School	.435	.372	.441
Community	.434	.370	.423
All correlations are significant with p-values < .001			

Regression analysis: circles of life and SLSS

Circles of life	Beta	Sig
Parents listen	.604	<.001
Friends enough	.380	<.001
Family get along	.346	.005
Family good time together	.238	.003
Satisfied relations in general	.212	<.001
Satisfied family relations	.207	<.001
Satisfied Classmates	.133	<.001
Satisfied school experience	.129	<.001
Satisfied people area	.097	<.001
Friends nice	.139	.176
Teachers listen	.077	.391
Satisfied friends	.007	.152
Teachers fair	.006	.451
Adjusted R ² = .385		

Regression analysis: circles of life and Overall Life Satisfaction (OLS)

Circles of life	Beta	Sig
Friends enough	.228	<.001
Family get along	.210	<.001
Family good time together	.156	.006
Satisfied family relations	.105	<.001
Satisfied relations in general	.079	<.001
Satisfied Classmates	.077	<.001
Satisfied school experience	.077	<.001
Satisfied people area	.036	.002
Parents listen	.050	.386
Friends nice	.005	.921
Teachers listen	.012	.796
Satisfied friends	.002	.947
Teachers fair	-.011	.796
Adjusted R ² = .307		

Regression analysis: circles of life and Happiness (last two weeks)

Circles of life	Beta	Sig
Family good time together	.211	<.001
Friends enough	.196	.003
Family get along	.152	<.001
Satisfied school experience	.116	<.001
Satisfied relations in general	.098	<.001
Satisfied Classmates	.098	<.001
Teachers fair	.080	.005
Satisfied family relations	.057	.032
Satisfied friends	.008	.015
Satisfied people area	.006	.002
Friends nice	.089	.152
Parents listen	.054	.426
Teachers listen	.000	.988
Adjusted R ² = .319		

Conclusions

- Significant mean scores differences by gender and religion;
- Good relations are positively correlated with subjective well-being;
- SLSS is most strongly associated with circles of life;
- Family and friends are the most important circles of life to children;