

Life Values and Subjective Well-being among Indian University Students: Scrutinizing the Omnipresent North-South Divide

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The objective of this study is to assess the level of subjective well-being among Indian students from North and South and explore the links between their life values and subjective well-being. The current attempt investigated the contrasting effects in a student sample of 168 North-Indian and 187 South-Indian university students. Standardized assessment tools namely, the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985); The Happiness Measure (Fordyce, 1988); and Value Living Questionnaire (Wilson, Sandoz, Kitchens, & Roberts, 2010) were used for data collection in the present context. The results suggest that levels of life satisfaction differ across the samples and, peculiarly, North Indian students experience happiness more intensively as compared to their Southern counterparts. The correlations between life values and well-being point out the North-South divide in the manifestation of life values and well-being. In the end, the probable reasoning behind this stark contrast was provided to justify the omnipresent differences.

Keywords: Happiness, Life Values, Life Satisfaction, Subjective well-being.

Researchers and professionals from positive psychology (PP) and other scientific areas have been trying their level best to understand and convey what contributes to human well-being. This has been manifested by an enormous proliferation of interdisciplinary studies related to subjective well-being, happiness, and similar PP constructs. Of the many approaches to well-being, Self Determination Theory (SDT) expects that well-being is closely connected with the congenial needs such as autonomy or competency (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In fact, proponents of this approach assume meaning in one's life, relationships of a certain quality and self-regard or a sense of mastery are all important factors influencing well-being (Ryff & Singer, 1998). Some authors view well-being as an element completely independent of the culture and in their opinion, the causal factors are in fact homogenous for all individuals (Tov & Diener, 2007). Despite this observed cultural homogeneity, little is known about the manifestations of well-being and the variations of well-being across a culturally diverse population and often within a particular geographical region

to all cultures, people and groups attribute it to different degrees of importance (Schwartz, 2012).

Further, research on values suggests that activities which reflect intrinsic values are more satisfying than activities reflecting extrinsic needs such as physical attractiveness or social recognition (Oishi, Diener, Suh, & Lucas, 1999; Ryan, Sheldon, Kasser, & Deci, 1996; Sheldon & Kasser, 1998). As a matter of fact, Deci & Ryan (2000), the authors of the Self-determination theory, propounded and distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic values. More recent research has analyzed the relationship between deeply held cultural values and the global evaluation of subjective well-being and quality of life (cf. McMahan & Estes, 2011; Urzua, Miranda-Castillo, Caqueo-Urizar, & Mascayano, 2013). The results that have been obtained through measures based on various orientations discovered that independent value surveys have the same results that eventually complement the validity of Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions (Smith & Bond, 1998; Ye, Ng, & Lian, 2015).

Life Values and Subjective Well-being: An Indian Perspective

From an empirical standpoint, the construct of subjective well-being (SWB, aka, Happiness) and life satisfaction have been explored in a rather sporadic manner with the Indian population. For instance, life satisfaction of the Indians in the slums of Calcutta and a comparative assessment of homeless people from Calcutta, California and Portland manifested mild differences in expression of subjective well-being (Biswas-Diener & Diener, 2001, 2006). Biswas-Diener, Tay, and Diener (2012) attributed the possible explanation of such outcomes to cultural factors and emphasized the importance of cultural context when examining subjective well-being.

Other notable attempts have examined the level of well-being as indigenously developed constructs such as sat-chit-ananda, which is developed through spirituality and is marked by achievement of shirpragya where the dualities of sukha and dukha cease to exist (Singh, Raina, & Sahni, 2017). Irrespective of the approaches, the fundamental cultural values in India have

been found to be hierarchy, holism, continuity, and transcendentalism (Kakar & Kakar, 2007; Venkatesh, 1995) that distinctly correlates with life satisfaction and well-being (e.g. Coenders, Casas, Figuer, & Gonzalez, 2005). In addition, many stalwarts have highlighted specific factors of Indian culture such as collectivism, connectedness and life philosophy that tend to strongly correlate with subjective well-being of Indians, despite sociologically derived geographical distinctions.

Moreover, a more recent attempt has examined the differences between North Indian and South Indian samples within the broader study on lay definitions of happiness across nations. Two research samples, one from New Delhi and Haryana (modern metropolitan area) and the other from Tamil Nadu (smaller urban area), showed several cultural differences: a) different languages, scripts, dialects (Indo-Aryan language, popularly known as Hindi in New Delhi and Haryana and Dravidian language, known as Tamil in Tamil Nadu; and b) different cultural and historical background: ranging from varied religious faiths and diverse traditions to different practices, cuisines, dress, art forms and the like. While North India is more influenced by Asian and European culture, South India tends to be more conservative and traditional. The results showed that life satisfaction of North Indian sample was tightly associated with family, health, and standard of living, whereas in South India, the prime role was played by family, interpersonal relationships, and community. For both areas, harmony, satisfaction and positive emotions were important categories used in psychological definition of life satisfaction (Delle Fave et al., 2016).

A few Indian authors have also contributed their bit towards furthering one's understanding in this domain. For instance, the Indian point of view on well-being and quality of life shows three main perspectives on the objectives of human existence and well-being, namely hedonistic, collective and transcendental, whereby the transcendental is favored the most (Kumar, 2004). An Indian perspective on well-being is often indigenously derived from personality theory and distinguishes between three fundamental gunas: sattva (generosity),

rajas (passion) and tamas (hostility or ignorance) (Singh, Jain, Kaur, Jumar, & Slezackova, 2016). This concept of personality from the perspective of trigunas admits that personality is not fixed, and it can change during the life. People can be sattvic, rajasic or tamasic depending on the prevalence of one component over the other (Kumar, 2004). Personal well-being is then seen as a process of avoiding pain, achieving joy and fulfilling true personality (Singh et al., 2016).

One of the empirical studies tried to measure the influence of urbanization on personal well-being in North India and found that in more urbanized areas of North India, the level of spiritual well-being was statistically lower than in the areas which were less urbanized (Singh & Jha, 2014). Also, it was further suggested that the greater the degree of urbanization, the less collectivist the culture becomes (Singh & Jha, 2014). Whereas, other scholars have pointed out the importance and value given to spirituality, finances and well-being. Another chunk of research suggests that religious beliefs, practices, spirituality, grit and positive affect correlates significantly with SWB among Indian participants (Agarwal, 2003; Rangaswami, 1994; Singh & Jha, 2008; Sree Kumar, 2008). In addition to these investigations, other informative repository of positive psychology research is the published meta-analysis on its progression (Ghosh & Deb, 2016; Mehtrotra, 2013). Overall, there are studies above and beyond the ones described here and the description is not at all an inclusive one. This dearth indeed hints that there seems to be a gap with reference to studies that have dealt with the demographic differences in North and South India.

Objectives

The main objective of the study was to fill the above-mentioned gap by exploring the relationships between subjective well-being and life values among university students in two different samples from North India (states New Delhi and Rajasthan) and South India (state Tamil Nadu). The two regions differ in terms of climate, history, language, customs, and values characterizing the region (Kulke & Rothermund, 1990).

To achieve the main objective, it was hypothesized that the level of a person's subjective well-being would depend on the importance they place on certain life values and on the level of satisfaction with these values. Also, it was hypothesized that there would be no difference between the value orientation and SWB of North and South Indian students.

Methods

Sample Characteristics

The research sample consisted of 168 North Indian and 187 South Indian university students of various fields of study (Effective N = 355; 24.5 % female, 75.5 % male; Mean age = 21.08, SD = 2.42). The participants belonged to either a bachelor's or a master's degree program. Participation in the research was voluntary, anonymous and it required the following criteria: to be a university student and to be a citizen of the country or have the nationality of the country or domiciled continuously for at least five years. No incentive was provided for taking part in the research.

Tools

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) was used for measuring the cognitive component of SWB (i.e. global life satisfaction). It captures life satisfaction through a 7-point Likert scale where respondents express their agreement (7 for "strongly agree") or disagreement (1 for "strongly disagree") to statements purportedly measuring life satisfaction. The scale has demonstrated good psychometric properties (Pavot & Diener, 2008) and its Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the present study was found to be 0.84.

The Happiness Measure (HM; Fordyce, 1988) was used for assessing the affective component of SWB (i.e. happiness). The scale consists of two parts, but only the first one was used. Respondents have to choose from 11 descriptive phrases with 0 for "extremely unhappy" and 10 for "extremely happy". The Happiness Measure is remarkably stable, reliable, construct valid and relatively free from sex, age and race bias (Fordyce, 1988). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the measure could not be computed as it involves only one item.

The Valued Living Questionnaire (VLQ; Wilson et al., 2010) was used for determining valued living. It is a two-part instrument where participants rate their own perceived level of importance and satisfaction of each of ten life domains on a 10-point Likert scale. The instrument has shown good test-retest reliability (Wilson & Groom, 2002). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the VLQ in the present study were 0.79 for the Importance subscale and 0.92 for the Satisfaction subscale.

Procedure

A convenience sampling method was used for selection of participants for the study. University students from North and South India were invited by means of emails/social networks and even in person to visit the project website (<http://socawe.phil.muni.cz>) and fill in the online anonymous questionnaire. The average time for filling up the entire survey questionnaire was between 10-20 minutes. The principles of research ethics were strictly observed throughout data collection and processing. The data were then analyzed using the IBM SPSS 18 software program.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to provide an indication of the respondents' self-reported levels of subjective well-being. These analyses were conducted for two groups separately to allow comparison, and the statistical significance of differences was determined. Independent t-tests were used to explore differences between males and females among the South Indian and North Indian samples. Pearson correlation coefficients were used for measuring the relationships between life values and SWB. Finally, the relationship between subjective well-being and life values was determined through correlation analyses and regression analyses.

Results

General Demographics

As far as comparative scenario is concerned, mean score of SWLS in the North Indian sample was $M = 23.28$; $SD = 5.12$ and for the South Indian sample it was $M = 21.71$; $SD = 6.29$. The mean score of HM in the North Indian sample

was $M = 7.48$; $SD = 1.51$ and $M = 6.58$; $SD = 2.13$ in the South Indian sample.

Gender differences

In order to determine differences between male and female life satisfaction in the entire sample, the Independent Samples t-test was used. Firstly, to check the quality of variances, the Levene's test was conducted. For SWLS the variances proved to be homogeneous ($p = 0.555$). Females ($M = 23.67$, $SD = 5.57$) in the entire sample showed significantly higher level of SWLS: $t(353) = 2.26$, than males ($M = 22.05$; $SD = 5.57$).

For the second construct on happiness, the variances were not homogeneous ($p = .032$). The females ($M = 7.45$, $SD = 1.53$) in the sample proved to be significantly happier ($t(353) = 2.85$ than males ($M = 6.86$, $SD = 2.00$). The independent sample t-test indicated the difference in life satisfaction and happiness between males and females in the entire sample. Within two individual samples, no statistically significant differences were found between males and females. In North Indian sample, the t-test values for SWLS was ($t(166) = 1.17$; $p = .627$ and for happiness $t(166) = 1.14$; $p = .090$. In case of South India, it was $t(185) = 1.291$, $p = .627$ for SWLS and $t(185) = 1.112$, $p = .160$ for happiness. The values for SWLS in North India was $M = 22.9$, $SD = 5.1$ for males and $M = 23.9$, $SD = 5.21$ for females. In South Indian sample, it was $M = 21.46$, $SD = 6.26$ for males and $M = 23.14$, $SD = 6.38$ for females. As with the manifestation of happiness variable in the North Indian sample the value was $M = 7.39$, $SD = 1.62$ for males and $M = 7.65$, $SD = 1.28$ for females. Whereas, in the case of South Indian sample the descriptive values were $M = 6.50$, $SD = 2.16$ for males as compared to the $M = 7.00$, $SD = 1.94$ for females.

Differences in Subjective Well-being between North and South Indian Samples

The next research question was whether mean scores of subjective well-being (both, its cognitive component, i.e. 'life-satisfaction', and affective component, i.e. 'happiness'), differed significantly between the two Indian samples. An independent sample t-test was conducted

Table 1: Independent sample t-test comparing the North Indian and South Indian sample in life satisfaction and happiness measures:

Variables	Group				95% CI for Mean Difference	t	df
	North India		South India				
	M	SD	M	SD			
Satisfaction with life	23.28	5.12	21.71	6.29	0.381, 2.779	2.596*	353
Happiness	7.48	1.51	6.58	2.13	0.522, 1.288	4.646*	353

* p < 0.05.

Table 2: Ranking of mean aggregate scores of components of Valued Living Questionnaire:

Prominent Life values	North India				South India			
	Importance	Rank	Satisfaction	Rank	Importance	Rank	Satisfaction	Rank
Family relations	9.31	1	7.95	1	8.52	3	6.89	2
Marriage	8.49	8	6.37	11	8.6	7	4.92	11
Friends and Social life	8.40	9	7.12	5	8.6	8	6.59	6
Education and Training	9.00	3	7.23	4	8.81	1	6.54	7
Recreation and Fun	8.60	7	7.12	6	8.58	2	6.46	8
Parenting	8.94	4	7.43	2	8.29	6	6.66	5
Health and Physical Self-care	8.87	5	6.88	8	8.47	4	6.40	10
Career and Work	9.4	2	6.79	9	8.45	5	6.8	3
Finances	8.64	6	6.56	10	8.6	9	6.9	1
Citizenship and Community life	7.58	10	6.90	7	7.24	10	6.44	9
Spirituality and Religion	7.39	11	7.35	3	6.44	11	6.67	4

to compare the mean scores in SWLS and HM in the two samples (see Table 1).

Independent sample t-test showed significant differences in the scores of respondents for the North Indian and South Indian samples. The significant differences were found between these two groups [$t(353) = 2.568, p = 0.010$] with reference to the life satisfaction variable. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = 0.001$). The level of life satisfaction of North Indian sample was significantly higher ($M = 23.27; SD = 5.12$) than the South Indian sample ($M = 21.70; SD = 6.28$). Regarding the affective component of

SWB measured by the Happiness Measure (HM), Independent sample t-test found a significant difference between these two groups [$t(353) = 4.563, p = 0.000$]. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = 0.000$). This suggests that the level of intensity of happiness among the North Indian ($M = 7.48; SD = 1.51$) respondents was significantly higher than among the South Indian sample ($M = 6.58; SD = 2.13$).

Ranking of individual life values

With respect to the measured individual life values in terms of subjective importance and satisfaction for North and South Indian samples,

the ranking of the life-values highlights the most significant agenda of Indian society with respect to the omnipresent geographical divide (see Table 2). The Rank columns in Table-2 show the order of the values according to the perceived importance and satisfaction as reported by the respondents. Prominent life values were rank-ordered subsequently on composite mean scores with respect to their manifestation in North and South Indian respondents.

We used the independent sample t-test to reveal significant differences between North Indian and South Indian samples in the perceived importance of life values and satisfaction with them. Significant differences

(Bonferroni corrected $p < 0.0022$) were found in the level of importance of values: Family Relations [$t(352) = 3.337$], Career and Work [$t(351) = 4.088$], Spirituality and Religion [$t(352) = 3.348$] and Finances [$t(352) = 3.255$] and at the level of satisfaction with values: Family [$t(353) = 3.337$] and Marriage [$t(351) = 4.147$].

Life satisfaction, Happiness and Life Values: Correlations and Connections

The potential connections between the variables were calculated as correlations between life satisfaction, happiness, including importance and satisfaction domains of different life values. Correlational analysis revealed many significant correlations between the

Table 3: Pearson correlations between the perceived importance of valued living with satisfaction with life (SWLS) and happiness (HM):

Importance	North India		South India		North India		South India		
	SWLS	Happiness	SWLS	Happiness	Satisfaction	SWLS	Happiness	SWLS	Happiness
Family	.06	-.00	.07	.10	Family	-.05	-.04	.18	.04
p	(.479)	.991	(.345)	(.157)	p	(.563)	(.637)	(.013)	(.559)
Marriage	.37*	.09	-.01	.01	Marriage	.24	.17	.29*	.26*
p	(.000)	(.264)	(.905)	(.930)	p	(.008)	(.059)	(.000)	(.001)
Friends	.35*	.17	.27*	.29*	Friends	.16	.25*	.23*	.21
p	(.000)	(.033)	(.000)	(.000)	p	(.041)	(.002)	(.002)	(.004)
Education	.11	.13	.19	.16	Education	.20	.20	.31*	.16
p	(.166)	(.090)	(.008)	(.030)	p	(.010)	(.010)	(.000)	(.031)
Recreation	.21	.19	.08	.10	Recreation	.14	.21	.24*	.19
p	(.005)	(.014)	(.259)	(.198)	p	(.085)	(.007)	(.001)	(.010)
Parenting	.22	.08	.18	.21	Parenting	.04	.07	.21	.22
p	(.004)	(.337)	(.019)	(.004)	p	(.638)	(.426)	(.016)	(.012)
Health	.15	.06	.14	.04	Health	.15	.16	.20	.13
p	(.053)	(.437)	(.061)	(.638)	p	(.035)	(.047)	(.008)	(.084)
Career	.05	.23	.19	.11	Career	.20	.20	.28*	.19
p	(.491)	(.003)	(.011)	(.135)	p	(.012)	(.014)	(.000)	(.013)
Finances	.10	.10	.04	-.01	Finances	.06	.18	.24*	.10
p	(.226)	(.203)	(.576)	(.887)	p	(.425)	(.020)	(.001)	(.172)
Citizenship	.34*	.30*	.29*	.21	Citizenship	.26*	.20	.20	.13
p	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.004)	p	(.001)	(.013)	(.008)	(.084)
Spirituality	.27*	.13	.12	.13	Spirituality	.03	.01	.14	.07
p	(.000)	(.094)	(.118)	(.073)	p	(.689)	(.920)	(.068)	(.388)

Note. Correlation (Bonferroni Corrected) is significant at the 0.0022 level (2-tailed). *Significant Correlations are boldfaced.

variables (see Table 3). To reduce Type-I error, the Bonferroni correction was used before establishing which of the effects were statistically significant, for 22 effects: $p = 0.05/22 = 0.0022$.

Results showed that the life satisfaction in case of North Indian sample was related to the perceived importance people place on the institution of Marriage ($r = .37$); Friends ($r = .35$); Citizenship ($r = .34$) and Spirituality/Religiosity ($r = .27$). Whereas, the South Indian respondents are more satisfied with only two values, i.e. Friends ($r = .27$) and Citizenship ($r = .29$) vis-a-vis the importance they place on such values. The correlations suggest a somewhat reverse trend in case of satisfaction derived from having these life values in case of South Indian sample. The South Indian respondents are more satisfied with the actual satisfaction they possess from prioritized life values such as Marriage ($r = .29$), Friends ($r = .23$), Education ($r = .31$), Recreation ($r = .24$), Career ($r = .28$) and Finances ($r = .24$). As far as the domain of happiness is concerned, the level of happiness in North Indian sample showed significant correlation with the importance they give to the value of Citizenship ($r = .30$) and Friends ($r = .25$). Whereas, the

South Indian respondents are happy with respect to the importance they give to Friends ($r = .29$) and the relative satisfaction they derive from a feasible institution termed Marriage ($r = .26$).

Life Values as predictors of Subjective Well-being

Next, multiple regressions were conducted to explore potential life value predictors of SWB for the two samples. Regression results (see Table 4) showed that the model explained a total of 51.3% of variance in case of life satisfaction ($F = 4.675$; $p < 0.001$) and 42.5% of variance in case of happiness ($F = 2.890$; $p < 0.002$) in the North Indian sample. F test was highly significant and suggested a linear relationship between the importance of values and life satisfaction and happiness in the model.

As with the South Indian sample, there existed a linear relationship between the importance of values, life satisfaction and happiness. The regression model explained 41.2% of variance in case of life satisfaction ($F = 2.894$; $p < 0.002$) and 46.7% of variance of happiness ($F = 3.965$; $p < 0.002$).

Table 4: Regression models predicting Life Satisfaction and Happiness in the North Indian and South Indian samples:

Life Values	North India			South India			
	SWLS		Happiness	SWLS		Happiness	
	I	S	I	S	I	S	
R ²	.51*	.48	.43*	.50	.41*	.47*	.43
	β		β	β		β	β
Family	-.79	-.76	-.243	-.18	-.48	-.54	-.34
Marriage	.85	.25	.16	.05	-.52	.51	-.20
Friends	1.00	.59	-.05	.21	.91	-.27	.56*
Education	.16	.18	-.103	.03	.56	.56	.12
Recreation	-.04	-.01	-.00	-.19	.05	-.02	-.00
Parenting	-.19	-.18	-.07	-.11	.59	.40	.33*
Health	-.11	.05	-.20	.03	-.18	-.65	-.13
Career	-.51	-.34	.39	-.08	-.23	.57	-.17
Finances	-.20	-.29	-.01	.18	-.39	.06	-.20
Citizenship	.71	.69	.32	-.00	.57	.22	.07
Spirituality	.21	-.22	.01	-.09	.18	-.20	.10

Note. Indicators: I = Importance; S = Satisfaction; SWLS = Life Satisfaction, * $p = 0.0022$ (Bonferroni Corrected)

Discussion

Comparison of levels of subjective well-being among North Indian and South Indian university students revealed significant differences in life satisfaction and happiness. North Indian students scored significantly higher than the South Indian sample. However, the World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2017a; 2017b) using twenty-seven-year-old data showed that happiness in the samples from Delhi ($M = 6.86$; $SD = 2.56$) and Tamil Nadu ($M = 6.88$, $SD = 2.15$) did not significantly differ.

The different results in the present study can be explained with regard to the fact that we focused on young generation, while the World Database of Happiness included samples of a general population, i.e. included respondents of different ages, education level and positions. It also pointed out the significant socio-economic changes that might have had differential impact on diverse parts (viz. Indian states) over the past 25 years.

Biswas-Diener, Tay, and Diener (2012) described a so-called negotiable fate phenomenon with respect to manifestation of happiness among Indians. The negotiable fate is, in fact, the way people interpret the outside world and it seems to serve as a protective factor of their subjective well-being despite life adversities.

Chaturvedi, Chiu, & Viswanathan (2009) have further verified the presence of negotiable fate in India, especially among people with lower literacy levels from one of the South-Indian states (viz. Tamil Nadu). Negotiable fate allows individuals to employ a sense of personal agency with the knowledge that they lack complete control over their life circumstances. In a country with severe restraints, this can serve as a protective factor for individuals' life satisfaction and well-being. Importance of the family value and satisfaction with this value was placed on the top places in both the samples. Biswas-Diener, Tay and Diener (2012) also refer to the importance of close family and friends' relationships in India whereby the satisfaction within the family and high social support from friends seems to be equally important as economic conditions.

In North Indian sample, the second most important value was career and work and its perceived importance was found significantly higher in comparison to the South Indian group. Possible explanation is derived from the fact that India being a collectivistic nation vouches on relationships between employers and employees, which are much closer as compared to western countries. In India, this relationship is defined by the commitment and loyalty of the employee and also by the guarantee of job safety and security from the position of an employer (Hofstede, 1980). Furthermore, it was discovered that the subjective well-being (both cognitive and emotional components) in North India relates to the importance of the value of citizenship and the resultant satisfaction with this value in a manner as it is connected to the cognitive component of SWB.

With reference to comparing the states of India in Hofstede survey to values, it was revealed that India is situated somewhere between the individualistic and collectivistic attitude. From the collectivistic point of view, the preference of belonging to a bigger social group, in which the individual cares about other members, is typical of India.

As far as South India is concerned, SWB was related to the satisfaction and importance of the value of friends and satisfaction derived from the value of marriage. These results correspond with the Delle Fave et al. (2016) findings of the importance of family life and interpersonal relationships in South India. Female university students from the whole sample showed higher satisfaction with their lives and were happier in comparison to the male students. Considering both the individual samples, the independent sample t-tests showed no statistically significant differences between males and females. This is in line with the results of the study by Dorahy, Schumaker, Simpson, and Deshpande (1996) who conducted the study among Indian students, especially females.

Shukla and Shukla (1986) focused on the role of education and marriage as factors of well-being in a female sample. They found that highly educated women have reported having more positive feelings especially when single and

when they had paid employment. The traditional role of women has evolved more in South than North India, with South Indian women acquiring more education and thereby higher income (De Mooij, 2004).

Overall, in Smith, Dugan, and Trompenaars's (1996) framework, both North and South Indians exhibit a tendency to be part of larger social groups; however, whether the belongingness stems from loyalty or it serves a functional purpose among North and South Indians need to be examined. Whether there exist possible differences between North and South Indians in terms of obligations to the social relationships (either conservative or egalitarian) can also warrant further inquiry.

Conclusion

The results of the present study indicate that there are statistically significant differences between North and South Indian samples. We found that North Indian students are happier and more satisfied with their lives than their South Indian counterparts. These findings suggest that happiness and life satisfaction can be compared even in the two samples of one country and used as an indicator of how well students thrive in a society. Another important finding of the present study is reflected by the results concerning the correlations between life values and well-being, which eventually chalks out the omnipresent North-South divide in the manifestation of life values and well-being.

We are also aware of the limits and weaknesses of our study. The principal limitation of our study consists in the use of convenience sampling, which resulted in the predominance of women in the sample and could affect the representativeness of the samples. The unbalanced ratio of men and women was beyond our control for the reason that data was collected online. Partly limiting factor has also been the research focus on university students, which prevents us from generalizing our results. Moreover, the obtained responses could have been biased by factors such as self-presentation and social desirability, which is a common disadvantage of survey methods.

Despite these limitations, this study has yielded valuable results from a positive

psychology perspective and it will help create new insights with respect to the relationship between subjective well-being and life values. This study could be considered as a first step to practical implications which can help improve student's subjective well-being with special reference to cultural and geographical variations.

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