

Life satisfaction: The role of identity orientation, optimism, gender, marital status and age.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore, analyze and report the relation of identity orientation, optimism, gender, marital status and age that may or may not influence the levels of life satisfaction. The study accessed 156 participants, 87 females (55.8%) and 69 males (44.2%). A cross-sectional, between subjects and correlational design was utilized. Participants in this study completed an online survey. It consisted of three demographic questions such as gender, age, marital status and three questionnaires: Life Orientation Test, Aspects of Identity Questionnaire and Life Satisfaction Scale. The results from the analyses of data revealed significant differences on levels of life satisfaction between genders, current marital statuses and age groups. The study also found positive significant relationship between life satisfaction and personal identity orientation. Strong positive association was also found between optimism and life satisfaction. Much previous research was supported by the results from this study.

Introduction

Life satisfaction

What is life satisfaction? It is a complex term which is sometimes mixed with the emotion of happiness. An individual happiness is very subjective experience that depends on person's own particular life experience, personal perspective, beliefs and values (Haybron, 2013). Happiness is an immediate experience, whereas satisfaction with life is happiness that exists when we look at the big picture of our lives (Snyder, Lopez & Pedrotti, 2010, p.59). It is based on our cognitive judgments that we consider to be valuable. Each person has a unique experience of happiness and it is very difficult to define it because one specific experience can make one person happy may not bring happiness for the other (Laengle & Wurm, 2016, p. 23-26).

In today's society life satisfaction is widely considered to be a central aspect of human welfare (Euteneuer, 2011, p.245). It is a degree to which a person positively evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as a whole (Diener, 1984). In other words, how much the person likes the life he/she leads (Diener, 2009, 101-102). This always was the central aspect of human welfare as being satisfied is our own reward (Blair, Dunn, Marcus, Carpenter & Jaret, 2010, p. 37). For instance, happy people appear to have more rewarding and longer lasting marriages, better mental and physical health, more friends, stronger social support and even greater longevity (Lyubomirsky, King & Diener, 2005). Famous twentieth century philosopher Bertrand Russell (1958) claimed to have the recipe for happiness (Russell, 2009). According to his book, '*The*

Conquest of Happiness” individual’s happiness could be achieved through self acceptance, wide ranging interests, goals beyond the self, "mental discipline” or “hygiene of nerves”, that is a process which controls human thoughts in the consciousness (Frisch, 2005, p.13).

Furthermore, unhappiness is caused by the mistaken view of the world and the mistaken habits (Russell, 1930). B. Russell believed that happiness depended on the power of an individual (Carlin & Capps, 2012). The same was said by the famous spiritual leader Dalai Lama (1935-the present). He claims that “Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions” (Matthews, 2014).

A lot of research work has been focused on identifying factors that are related to and influence individual’s life satisfaction. According to William Pavot and Ed Diener, the judgments of life satisfaction are often influenced by personality, situational or life circumstance variables (Diener, 2009, 101-103). However, there is no one determinant for the individual’s well-being as many factors are predicting it, including: personality factors (i.e. optimism, extroversion, and self-esteem), age, genes, income, supportive relationships, the realization of the potential and many others (<https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm>). Consequently, the factors affecting life satisfaction can be divided into two categories: personal and environmental (Berscheid & Regan, 2016). For instance, personal factors include self-esteem or social confidence, positive emotions and resilience (<https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm>). Environmental factors include: safety, security, culture (Ng & Ho, 2006, p. 83-84).

Professor Martin Seligman (1942 – the present) the founder of positive psychology, spent many

years developing a theory of life satisfaction and very recently Seligman (2011) proposed the PERMA model. This model focuses on the positive factors that influence an individual's satisfaction with life (McCallum & Price, 2015, p.9). PERMA model consists of five elements that are thought to be essential to human well-being. It includes: P-positive emotion (the ability to be optimistic), E- engagement (activities that stretch intelligence, skills and emotional capabilities), R-relationships (social connections, emotional and physical interaction), M-meaning (purposeful existence), A- accomplishment (goals and ambitions in life) (Joseph, 2015, p.257). According to Seligman, together these elements build a happy, flourishing life and buffer against depression and other possible disorders (Netzer, Schulenberg & Batthyany, 2016, p.226-227). However, this model has some limitations. Firstly, it focuses only on the positive emotions without considering negative. Secondly, it has an incorrect separation of “engagement” and “meaning”. “Meaningful engagement” could give more rationale and motivation for the individual. Thirdly, there are not enough emphases on the context such as culture, religious beliefs or socioeconomic status. Finally, the concept of accomplishment is somewhat too vague (Barker, & Gałajda, 2016, p. 24-25). Achievements can include personal goal, competence or a self regulated behaviour. Furthermore, how the accomplishment should be assessed, whether it should be subjective or objective measures? Subjective well being includes the cognitive evaluation of one's life as good and the experience of positive emotions. Objective well being includes occupational and educational success (Corey & Corey, 2013). Further to this, it is hard to contain the complexity of human well-being in a simple model like this.

Optimism

A good amount of available literature states that there is a strong correlation between life satisfaction with optimism and pessimism (Sirgy, 2012, p.46-47). Optimism is a system of thinking feeling and behaving that creates conditions for success and promotes a sense of well-being (Lightman, 2004). Optimistic people have one thing in common, it is their ability to step away from the situations or moments that are bringing them down and immediately start focusing on the aspects of their lives that bring them happiness and joy (Rizzo, 2015).

Furthermore, optimism may be beneficial in a number of ways. Firstly, it usually promotes better mood, which helps to avoid anxiety and depression. Secondly, it encourages tenacity in the face of obstacles, which in turn might result in greater success (Christensen, Martin & Smyth, 2004, p. 188). Pessimists are people who doubt their chances of attaining the desirable goals, demotivate others and always expect the negative outcomes (Gruman, Schneider & Coutts, 2016). Furthermore, pessimism adds more stress, holds an individual back from achieving his goals and causes the relationships to fail or suffer. In addition to this, pessimistic individuals usually see the obstacles among the opportunities, while optimistic people see the opportunities among the obstacles (Luke, 2009, p. 211-212). According to Carver, Scheier and Segerstrom (2010), optimistic people perceive social relationships differently from pessimists, they are more satisfied with their relationships and perceiving them as more supportive (Pluess,2015, 132-133). There is no doubt, that optimism is a mental attitude which significantly influences mental and physical health, and helps to cope with everyday life (Conversano, Rotondo, Lensi, Della Vista, Arpone, & Reda, 2010). However, reality always puts limits on what is actually possible in a given context. Moreover, the unconditional optimistic belief can lead to disappointment

(McMartin, 2016). Seegerstrom and Sephton (2010), hypothesized that changes in optimism can predict changes in positive affect. They found that, optimism was uniquely related to positive affect. That is, positive emotional states foster a stronger self-concept and confidence which in turn leads to improved mental and physical health (Bhagat, Segovis & Nelson, 2016). However, too much optimism such as overconfidence can be a problem because it leads to behaviors and decisions that are unwise (Swanson & Fisher, 2008, p. 317).

The latest study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology (Kim et al, 2016), states that optimism plays an important role in health and longevity. Researchers used data from 70,021 women who were enrolled in the ongoing Nurses' Health Study, which began in 1976. The women in the study, every two years completed questionnaires that assessed their levels of optimism and health. Researchers analyzed data from 2004 to 2012. The study found that women who were most optimistic were less likely to die during six years study (from 2006-2012) compare to those who were least optimistic. The reduced risk was seen in heart disease (38%), stroke (39 %), cancer (16%), respiratory disease (37%) and infection (52%) (Kim et al, 2016). This study was significant because of its size. Moreover, it revealed that optimism may directly impact the biological function (reuters.com, 2016) However, the study has limitations. Firstly, only white women participated in the study so the results cannot be generalized as different gender and race can have different levels of optimism. Secondly, the study is observational and it is difficult to predict cause and effect relationship between optimism and longevity. Finally, the lack of optimism could be caused by the underlying health problems.

Life satisfaction and gender

According to the Pew Global Attitudes Survey (Pew Research Centre, 2003), women are happier than men with their lives overall. This survey was conducted in 44 countries and according to 38,000 interviews men and women reflected differing life perspectives. Men were more concerned about issues outside the home and more optimistic about the future. Moreover, the survey also showed that men were more optimistic about the future of their kids whereas women showed bigger concern about the issues that directly affect home life and family. According to Pew survey, the happiest people (both women and men) live in United States and Canada and people that are least satisfied with their lives live in Africa and Eastern Europe (Pew Research Centre, 2003). In addition to this, in more than half the countries surveyed (i.e. 24 of 44) women were found to be less optimistic about their personal futures than men.

Life satisfaction and age

Another survey in San Diego County, California (2016) found that older people are happier than younger. This study looked at more than 1,500 people which included ages from 21 to 99. The results revealed that people in their 20's and 30's had highest levels of stress and lowest levels of happiness (The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, 2016). It is completely new and opposite of the society's stereotypes about old and young people. Old age is often thought of as a period of gloom and doom and a time of decline of happiness and well-being. This study disproved the stereotypes for old age. However, it has few limitations. First, the participants were only the

adults living near San Diego. Second, people who needed daily care and lived in a nursing home or had dementia were excluded from the study. Therefore, it would be interesting to see whether findings would be the same nationwide and whether the same results would apply to all older people with the conditions mentioned above.

The effect of being married on life satisfaction

Research conducted by Freedman & Carr (2009), concluded that the happier the wife the happier the husband. Freedman and Carr (2009) analysed data from 394 couples where at least one spouse in each couple was aged 60 or over (Carr, D., Cornman, C. J., Freedman, V. A., 2015). According to the researchers, marital quality is hugely important for the health, well-being and total satisfaction with life (Medical news Today, 2014). Moreover, they found that momentary happiness and life satisfaction did not differ significantly among men and women. Their findings suggest that, couples being in a better rated marriage can have greater happiness and life satisfaction. However, wife's appraisal of the marriage is hugely important. Their research was among the first ones to examine the influence of wife's and husband's marriage appraisals on the levels of life satisfaction among older couples. The findings suggested that, that men who are unhappy with their marriage still could be happy with their life- if they get positive, high quality appraisals for their marriage from their wife's. That is, life satisfaction heavily depends on how wives describe the marriage. Moreover, researchers stated that it serves as a buffer against stressors and health depleting effects (www.home.isr.umich.edu).

Dush and Amato (2005), discovered that individuals who are in a romantic relationship such as marriage, cohabiting have reported to have higher life satisfaction than single individuals and that they also display fewer mental health problems (Braithwaite, Delevi & Fincham, 2010). According to this research, romantic relationships can be followed by the improvement in the general well being (Dush and Amato, 2005). The study suggests that being in the relationship makes both women and men happier. Researchers claim that, the stronger the relationship the greater the happiness and well being of the partners. Moreover, the study revealed that even the unhappily married people benefited from the marriage's stability, social status and commitment. According to the researchers, marriage can be associated with greater life satisfaction, higher self-esteem, greater happiness and less distress (Lang, 2005). However, the study has several limitations. Firstly, the sample size some groups was too small. For instance, cohabiting group had only 52 individuals. This results in the difficulty to generalize the results and also the difficulty to define group differences in the population. Secondly, there was a sample of quite young people with the median age of 23. This limitation also leads to a difficulty to define and generalise the results for the older adults. Finally, even though the results were consistent with the assumptions that relationship status affects life satisfaction we cannot reject other unmeasured variables that could possibly affect life satisfaction (Dush & Amato, 2005). Furthermore, it is questionable whether people who are in the relationships are the only ones that live happy lives. In addition to this, psychological well being for married couples can be temporary and also can highly depend on the personality traits, culture, background and genetic base (Lee, 2015, p. 37-39).

Married and single people may differ in all sorts of ways. A 2005 study at Ohio State University found that someone who got married and stayed married for 10 years had nearly four times more wealth than their single friends. This wealth came from the combined wealth and income tax deductions (Grabmeier, 2005). However, benefits of marriage can vary based on income, number of children or living situation. Single people have the freedom to choose how to spend their money but they are experiencing the stereotyping and the exclusion (DePaulo, & DePaulo, 2007, p. 231-232). All these reasons can contribute to the levels of life satisfaction and happiness.

A single person is defined as an individual who is not in a close romantic relationship and whether or not have been partnered or married in the past (Conley and Collins, 2002). Society's view of single people is changing. That is, being single is more accepted than ever before. For instance, in the 1950s the unmarried people were seen as people who are selfish, less mature or have some kind of pathology. In the 1950s marriage was strongly emphasized and was seen as the only option for the love, security and happiness. In contrast, in 1960s being single was one of the relationships lifestyle and it was increasingly acceptable (Williams, 2017). In the 1970s and beyond, the unmarried were considered as people who wanted to increase their happiness as being single (Veroff, Douvan, & Kulka, 1981). More people were choosing single lifestyle because of the education, varied career options and the contraceptive technologies. In more recent decades the number of single individuals had raised significantly. According to the Office for National statistics (ONS), 51% of England and Wales people are single. These figures come from the analyses of responses to the 2011 census (Office for National Statistics, 2014).

However, the Census results in Ireland (2011) had reported that single people population decreased from

43.1% (2006) to 41.7% (2011) and that married population increased by 9.2 % between 2006 and 2011 (Central Statistics Office, 2012)

Single people stereotypes

Despite all these findings, there is an underlying view in society that single people are irresponsible, frivolous and irresponsible as well as incomplete and destined to be lonely (Howe, 2011, p. 247-248). Being single has traditionally been associated with poorer life satisfaction. In contrast, married people are seen as more independent, confident and friendlier (Reilly, Sirgy & Gorman, 2012, p. 219). Single people are seen as not fully grown up and searching for the ever elusive Ms. /Mr. Right. Society hold the view that marriage is strictly the norm and that single people will be lonely when they will age and that they will have no family or companion to look after them (Knox & Schacht, 2012, p. 13-16). Oftentimes, we can hear negative connotations about single people. For instance, women can be labeled spinsters and old maids while men could be viewed as playboys (Tran, 2016). In other words, they are not very valuable as married people.

Relationship status and life satisfaction

A large longitudinal study conducted over 15 years and analyzed over 24,000 individuals shed a new light on the association between happiness and marital status (Lucas et al, 2003). The research data indicated that an important event such as marriage changes individual's life

satisfaction. However, the changes are not for long. The study evidence suggests that the initial reaction to marriage boosts the life satisfaction but then after some time it returns to the normal levels of happiness (Lucas, Clark, Georgellis & Diener, 2003). The study results highlight the process of adaptation theory in life satisfaction. Darwin's adaptation theory is known as organism's ability to adapt to changes in the environment and adjust to it over time (Mangal, 2007). Hence, the findings reveal that individuals do not become more satisfied after the marriage than they were prior to marriage. That is, the boost in happiness is temporary and it is only felt over the adaptation process. However, the study has some limitations. First, researchers restricted the analyses to the individuals who experienced only one change in marital status. Due to this restricted selection criterion the results can only be generalized to other similar groups. Furthermore, some people might become divorced in the future. Finally, the entire sample was drawn from a single Western nation, German citizens. It is possible that results could be different in a non-Western nation (Lucas et al, 2003).

Another study published online by the *Journal of Research in Personality* supports the results described above. The survey involved over 10,000 adults in Great Britain from 1991 to 2008. It examined how major events such as marriage, childbirth or widowhood could influence individual's life satisfaction in the short and long term. The study also assessed how people adapt and react to these events. It was found, that married people had increased happiness around the time of their marriage, but in the long run their satisfaction with life returned to the same level as it was beforehand. In addition to this, the researchers compared married and single people with approximately the same age and found that single people had steep drops in the levels of life

satisfaction over time. Hence, the results suggest that marriage protects people against the declines in life satisfaction that came with age. In other words, it does not make people happier but it protects them against decline of happiness as they age (Stacey Kennelly, 2012). However, there were some limitations to this study such as the selective attrition. It is possible that there were important differences between individuals that participated in this survey for long time than those who dropped out. Furthermore, the data was collected from the individuals residing in Great Britain (Yap, Anusic & Lucas, 2012). It is possible that study sample included different cultures, beliefs, practices and values.

Further research in this area suggests that women benefit more from the marriage than men do. Mikucka (2015) study used representative data from the World Values Survey-European Values Study. The study integrated data set from hundred two countries and over 420,000 respondents. The survey covered a period of nearly 30 years (from 1981 to 2009). It examined whether the life satisfaction advantage of married over unmarried individuals decreased over 29 years. The study also investigated whether the changes in the contextual gender specialization explained this tendency. The research was very significant because it had broad coverage. The data set represented nearly 90% of the world's population and the analysis allowed comparing countries with the different time-series (Mikucka, 2015). The findings suggest that life satisfaction do not change among women and men. That is, married people remain more satisfied than single people. The study also found that life satisfaction of the unmarried women and men in the developed countries was increasing. Especially, unmarried men were showing better life

satisfaction. In addition to this, the analysis results suggested that married women in the developed societies benefited more than married men (Mikucka,2016) Furthermore, Mikucka found that developed and developing countries did not show the decline in the levels of life satisfaction among married people (DeRose, 2016). Study is remarkable as it demonstrates the results from the broad comparative perspective and is quite consistent with the *World Family Map Project* (2015) , that reports similar levels of happiness among parents- both men and women in the countries throughout the world. In addition to this, single parents were less happy in all the countries (DeRose, Goldscheider, Salazar, Corcuera, Gas, Rivera, Tarud, 2015). However, there are some limitations. First, the study did not distinguish between first and subsequent marriages. Second, the study also did not have control of the duration of the marriages. Finally, the study did not look at the cohabiting couples.

Recent research conducted by Girme (2015) argues that single people might love their solitude and enjoy handling challenges on their own. The survey was conducted in New Zealand and consisted of more than 4000 people. Research carried out by Girme (2015) revealed that people with high “avoidance social goals”- those who try to avoid disagreement in the relationship- were just as happy being single as those in the relationship. Girme (2015) highlighted that for some people being single is just as satisfying as being in the relationship is for others. Furthermore, study noted that being single may offer benefit that protect against anxiety, potential hurt and rejection in relationships which can be triggered by relationship disagreements. In addition, the study found that individuals with “low avoidance goals”-who not concerned about avoidance of the conflicts - were less happy when they were single (Girme,

2015). The research results demonstrated that being single does not undermine happiness or life satisfaction. That is, single people also can have satisfying lives. However, this does not mean that people cannot be happy in romantic relationships and that there are plenty of reasons why individuals can be happy without the significant other. Furthermore, this is the first evidence that being single does not necessarily undermines life satisfaction or well being and in fact may offer benefits including protection against being hurt or rejected (Grime, 2015). This study is consistent with other research such as Bella DePaulo (2016) who found that single people are doing much better than married. The article reviewed 841 studies and found that single people are more sociable, fulfilled and self-sufficient. This research claims that pervasive view that singles must be “sad and lonely” is nonsense and that those stereotypes for single people are wrong. The study also found that married people are more isolated than single which are more connected to their friends, colleagues, parents and siblings (www.telegraph.co.uk/science, 2016). It has been concluded that single people have a heightened sense of self-determination and that they are more likely to experience a sense of continued growth and development as persons (Live Science, 2016).

Both analyses contradicted many previous studies which stated that couples are healthier and have higher life satisfaction than those who live alone. Researchers concluded that singlehood needs to be acknowledged and understood rather than ignored and stereotyped.

Self-identity

Self-identity is defined as “the understanding that an individual has of himself or herself”. It also

refers to the awareness of an individual's identity, set of traits and characteristics that an individual assigns to himself (Jackson & Hogg, 2010, p.547). Furthermore, identity formation is a lifelong process and it has a huge importance for the future formation (Zastrow, 2013, p. 62). According to Eric Ericson (1950) identity is a constant reproduction of images of self. He declared that identity process starts during adolescent years when an individual has opportunity to experience his/her identity, beliefs and values without any commitments to romantic relationship. However, identity is better identified in adolescence years but it does not mean that it starts in adolescence. Furthermore, his theory was male oriented, narrow culturally and very subjective (Yount, 2010, p.77).

Bowlby's theory (1973) of attachment provides a framework for understanding romantic relationships. The attachment is "the ability for the individual to form an emotional and physical "attachment" to another person which in turn gives a sense of stability and security" (www.psychologistworld.com). In addition to this, Bowlby stated that strong attachment to a caregiver provides a base of security, stability and development in the future relationships (Austrian, 2013, p.370).

According to Erikson's theory of identity (Erikson, 1959), the achievement of identity is necessary to live at peace and to have a satisfactory life. Erikson asserted that identity development is a major task of adolescence (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011, p.382). Hence, clearly determined self identity can help to maintain close, romantic relationships and can help to achieve common goals such as marriage. Erikson believed that if adolescents fail to

navigate their crisis successfully then they can become distant, vulnerable, dependent and self-contained and as a result they will stay isolated, lonely and without social support (Lerner, 2001).

In 1989, Jonathan Cheek proposed a framework for identity orientations and explained that identity is composed of different constructs. According to him, identity orientation refers to the tendency for people to focus more attention and efforts on their internal and external goals when defining their identity (Bernardo, 2001). His model recognized four identities: personal, relational, social and collective. Personal identity orientation reflects more on the internal emphasis, based on self-knowledge and self-evaluation. For instance, individuals can be more focused with their emotions, thoughts, beliefs and personal goals. Relational identity reflects individual's role in relation and the importance of maintaining it. Social identity orientation reflects more of the external emphasis based on the interactions with and reactions of others (Carducci, 2009, p. 478). The last, collective identity orientation is based on the sense of belonging to a larger social group such as race, ethnicity or religion group (Kurosu, 2016, p.294).

Rationale

The current study will seek to explore the five predictors of the total life satisfaction: marital status, age, gender, identity orientation and optimism. This will be assessed using the demographic questions such as age, gender, marital status and on three questionnaires that

evaluate total life satisfaction (The Satisfaction with Life Scale), optimism vs pessimism (Life Orientation test) and self-identity (Aspects of Identity Questionnaire).

This study will help better understand whether stereotypes for married and single people are accurate and whether gender plays a role in happiness. It also will provide a better understanding of life satisfaction with aging. Furthermore, the current study will look at individual's identity orientation and personal traits such as optimism to determine whether it contributes to total life satisfaction. The specific sample of participants "currently single" or "currently married" will be assessed. This study will contribute to the public discussion about life satisfaction and also will dispel some stereotypes and myths that strain life satisfaction and cause unhappiness. The findings will support the importance of the personality types in investigatory model of life satisfaction. In addition to this, the study will contribute to the previous research in the field and will expand upon the existing knowledge of individuals' life satisfaction. The previous researches mainly focused on levels of well being and life satisfaction in accordance with an individual's marital status. Less attention has been given to one's self-identity and personality types such as optimists or pessimists. This study will shed more light on this topic.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1:

It is hypothesized that optimistic people will have higher levels of life satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2:

It is hypothesized that there will be gender differences in life satisfaction: Males will score higher than females.

Hypothesis 3:

It is hypothesized that single people will have higher life satisfaction than married people.

Hypothesis 4:

It is hypothesized that there will be a significant difference in the levels of life satisfaction across different age groups. Older people will report higher life satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5:

It is hypothesized that those with higher levels of personal identity orientation will have higher levels of total life satisfaction.

METHODS

Participants

Snowball sampling was used to access the participants. The online survey link was presented to participants that were either married or single. Participation in the study was completely voluntary and anonymous. Inclusion criteria to participate in the study included being over 18 or older and being single or married. Each participant was asked to pass the survey on to other people that matched the specific inclusion criteria. The participant sample included 156 participants (M=69, F=87). The majority of participants were in the 25-35 age category (46,8%). Participants were assigned to two groups based on whether they were married (N= 70) or single (N=83). No incentives were offered to participants to participate in our survey.

Design

This research study was a quantitative design using questionnaires to obtain the data. The study utilized a cross-sectional, between subjects and correlational design. The independent variables in this study were marital status (single or married), age groups, gender (female or male), identity orientation and optimism. The dependent variable was total satisfaction with life. The correlational aspect of this study examined the relationship between life satisfaction, age and optimism. The predictor variables were optimism and age. The criterion variable was life satisfaction.

Aparatus

The data was collected using *SurveyMonkey.com* website. Data from *Survey Monkey* was downloaded on Excel file and imported in to SPSS version 24. The statistical software SPSS 24 was used to analyze all the data obtained from the research study.

Materials

In this research we focused on the total life satisfaction. The materials used for our study consisted of 63- questions online survey (See Appendix 5). It was comprised of an introduction section informing participants of anonymity, the right to withdraw and the inclusion criteria. The demographic questionnaire (See Appendix 1) which asked the participants to indicate their age group (18-24, 25-35, 36-46, 47-57 or 58 years and over), gender (female or male) and marital status (single or married). Demographic questions were combined together with three questionnaires such as Life Orientation Test (LOT-R), Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (See Appendix 5). Participants could access the questionnaires through online survey website link (www.surveymonkey.com).

The life orientation test (LOT-R) was employed to measure participant's optimism levels (Carver, 2013). It is a 10-item measure of optimism versus pessimism. Three items measured optimism, three pessimism and four are fillers. The 10-item test was rated on a 5-point Likert

scale of (0= I disagree a lot, 1= I disagree a little , 2= I neither agree nor disagree , 3= I agree a little , 4= I agree a lot (See Appendix 2). The higher scores indicated a greater optimism, a tendency to expect more positive than negative outcomes. Cronbach's Alpha was .786 showing high internal reliability for the current sample.

The satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985) consisted of a 5 statements about life satisfaction: three set in the present, one in the past, and one in the future (See Appendix 4). These items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (7= Strongly agree and 1= Strongly disagree). The responses were added up to give a total score of the participant's satisfaction with life. The higher scores indicated the better life satisfaction. Cronbach's alpha for this measure was .878 showing high internal reliability and validity.

Aspects of identity questionnaire (AIQ-IV). Participants self identity was measured using Cheek & Briggs (2013) Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (See Appendix 3). This questionnaire consisted of 45 items which evaluated individual's style of identity orientation. Styles of identity included: personal, relational, social and collective identity orientation. The AIQ-IV consisted of a 5-point Likert scale of sense of self and others. The participants had to choose the item that reflected their sense of self on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= not important to the sense of who I am and 5= extremely important to my sense of who I am). Cronbach's alpha was .956 showing high internal reliability/consistency.

This survey concluded with the contact details of the researcher and organizations, such as

Aware, Accord, Samaritans that provide help for people suffering from mental health, relationship issues or emotional distress just in case any issues were highlighted while completing the survey. The questionnaire as a whole took participants approximately 10-15 minutes but no time limits were imposed.

Procedure

The project was approved by the ethical committee of Dublin Business School. Each questionnaire was created through survey building website (www.surveymonkey.com). The link was then sent via email, Facebook, Viber and Whatsapp to participants that were known to fit the criteria to take part in our study. Participants filled out the questionnaires via *Survey Monkey* website and they were also asked to pass on the survey link to their friends who meet the criteria of the study and who would be willing to participate in the study. Participation was completely voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. Participants were informed that their results will be kept on a password-protected computer for one year. Due to the nature of personal questions about certain aspects of individual's personal life, the cover sheet indicated that if questions cause minor negative feelings or discomfort at any time they could withdraw from the study, skip the question or contact the support services that were provided on the final page. Participants answered 63 questions, which took approximately 10-12 minutes to complete and then submitted the questionnaires to SurveyMonkey.com. Once the results were collected and inputted into SPSS 24, descriptive and inferential statistics were run.

RESULTS SECTION

Descriptive statistics

A total of 156 participants took part in this study, 69 (44.2%) male and 87 (55.8%) female.

Participant's age ranged from 18 to 57 years of age. They were divided into 4 age groups (18-24, 25-35, 36-46, 47-57), most of them (46,8%) belonging in 25-35 age group. (See Figure 1)

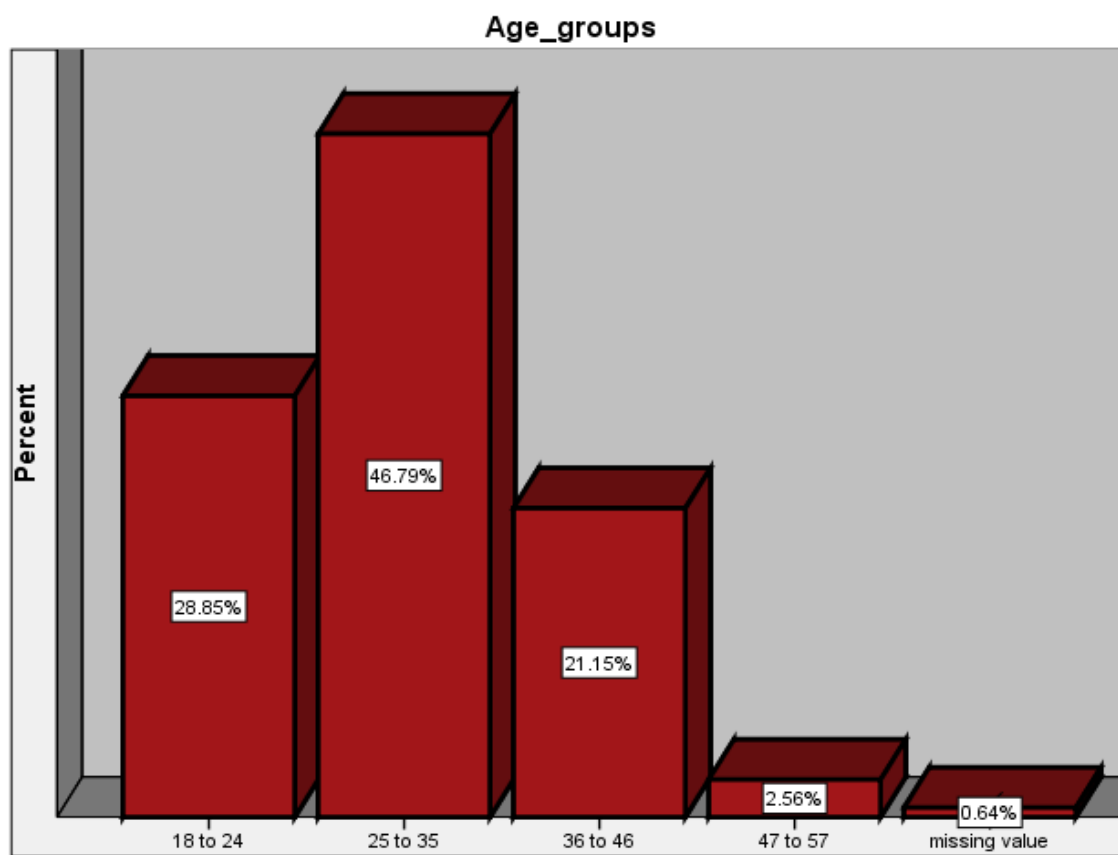


Figure 1: Bar chart shows the percentage of each age group.

83 of the participants (53,2%) were single, and 70 of them (44,9%) were married. (See Figure 2)

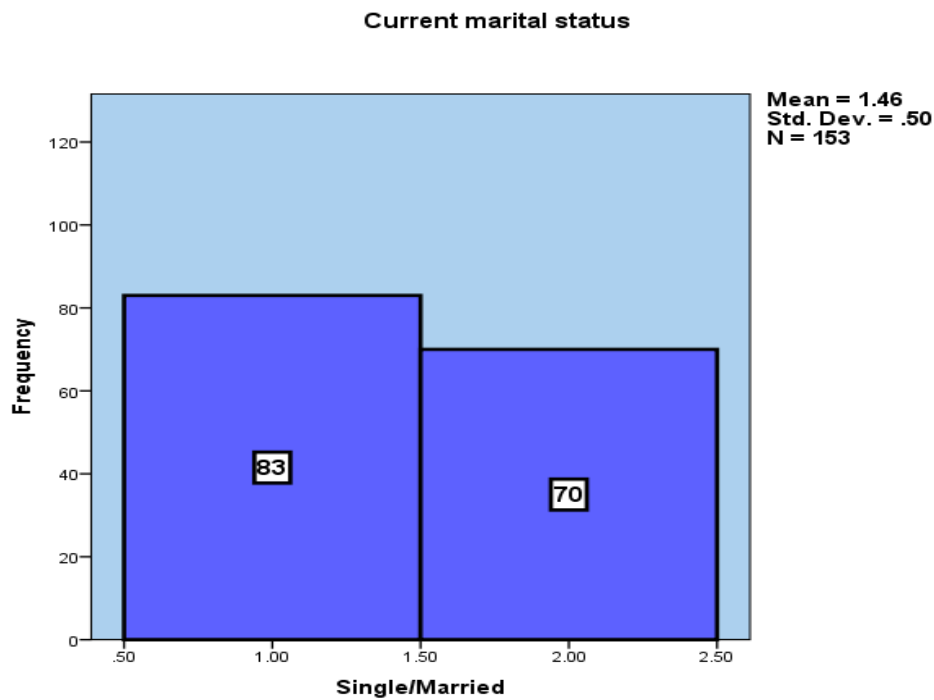


Figure 2: Histogram of participants' marital status (single or married).

Inferential statistics

Hypothesis 1: It is hypothesised that optimistic people will have higher levels of life satisfaction.

Table 1: The results of Spearman's rho for life satisfaction levels and optimism.

	Optimism	
Life satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	,503**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	156

Note: correlation is significant at .01 level.

A Spearman's rho correlation found that there was a strong positive significant association between optimism (M= 15.85; SD= 4.92) and life satisfaction (M= 27.4; SD= 6.18) ($r(156) = .503, p < .01$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: It is hypothesized that there will be gender differences in life satisfaction: Males will score higher than females.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics results on life satisfaction levels between females and males.

Variable	Status	N	M	SD	P
Gender	Female	87	26.27	5.88	0.05
	Male	69	28.01	6.45	

Note: p significant at .05 level.

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed that females (mean rank=70.80) and males (mean rank=88.20) satisfaction with life differed significantly ($z = - 2.397, p < 0.05$). Therefore, the research hypothesis was confirmed.

Hypothesis 3: It is hypothesized that there will be difference in life satisfaction according to marital status. It is assumed that single people will have higher life satisfaction than married people.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics results of levels of life satisfaction among single and married people.

Variable	Status	N	M	SD	P
Marital status	Single	83	25.38	6.24	
	Married	70	28.95	5.62	.01

Note: p significant at .05 level.

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed that single people (mean rank=64.16) and married people (mean rank=92.22) differed significantly on the levels of total life satisfaction ($U = -3.916$, $p < .01$). Therefore, our hypothesis was rejected: Married people score higher on life satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: It is hypothesized that there will be a significant difference in the levels of life satisfaction across different age groups. Older people will report higher life satisfaction.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics results of life satisfaction levels among different age groups.

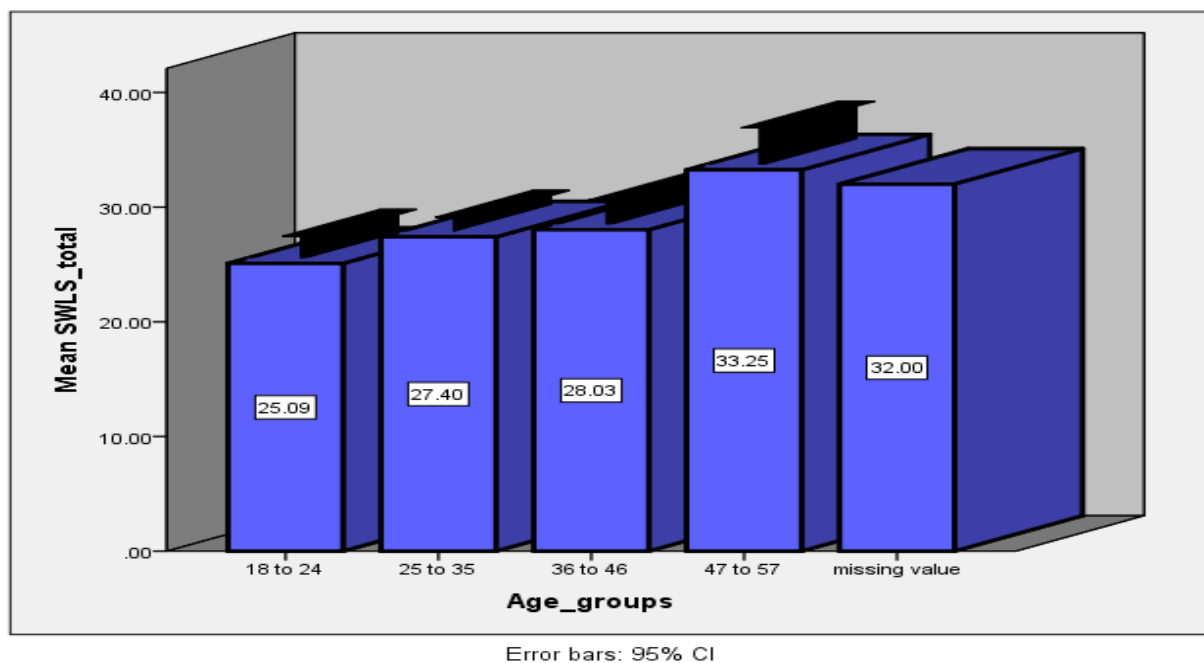
Variable	Status	N	M	SD	P
Age group	18-24	45	25,08	6,61	
	25-35	73	27,39	5,73	
	36-45	33	28,03	6,18	
	47-57	4	33,25	2,06	.05

Note: p significant at .05 level

A Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a statistically significant difference in life satisfaction levels across four different age groups, $\chi^2 = 10.76$, $df=3$, $p < 0.05$. The older age groups recorded higher

median scores. Age group 47 to 57 (Md=33,5) and age group 36 to 46 (Md=30). The lower medians were recorded for age group 25 to 35 (Md=28) and 18 to 24 (Md=27). Therefore, our hypothesis is accepted.(See Figure 3).

Figure 3: Bar chart represents mean score differences for different age groups. It also represents that life satisfaction increases with age.



Hypothesis 5: It is hypothesized that people with higher levels of personal identity orientation will also have higher levels of total life satisfaction.

Table 6: The results of Spearman's rho for personal identity orientation and life satisfaction.

Note: correlation is significant at .01 level.

Personal identity orientation		
Life satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	,462
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	156

A Spearman's rho correlation found that there was moderate positive significant relationship between personal identity orientation and total life satisfaction ($R_s(156)=0.462, p < .01$).

Therefore, the research hypothesis was confirmed.

Discussion

The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of identity orientation, optimism, age, gender and marital status (defined as currently single or married) on the levels of life satisfaction. The results from the statistical analysis provided the evidence in support of four of our five hypotheses. In order to examine the levels of life satisfaction three separate non-parametric tests were carried out.

Hypothesis 1: It is hypothesized that optimistic people will have higher levels of life satisfaction.

From interpretation of the results of this study, hypothesis one was **accepted**.

As discussed in the introduction, this may be due to the fact that optimistic people have the ability to step away from the situations or moments that are bringing them down and immediately start focusing on the aspects of their lives that bring them happiness and joy (Rizzo, 2015). Such behavior promotes better mood, health and better social relationships (Carver, Scheier & Segerstrom, 2010). The findings are consistent with Segerstrom and Sephton (2010) study, who found that optimism, adds greatly to positive effect. They believed that positive emotional states contribute significantly to the mental and physical health (Bhagat, Segovis & Nelson, 2016). Therefore, it can be concluded that optimism impacts the levels of life satisfaction. However, it is not the only factor that influences total life satisfaction. We have also tested the influence of age, gender, marital status and identity orientation as follows.

Hypothesis 2: It is hypothesized that there will be gender differences in life satisfaction: Males will score higher than females.

The results from the current study have **confirmed** this hypothesis.

Building on the previous research, such as Mikucka (2015) and Plagnol et al. (2008), this result can be explained by gender specialization. According to Plagnol et al. (2008), life aspirations of men and women at early age do not differ much: they both want to succeed in life and have a happy family. In the later years, women are more encouraged to stay at home with family, while men are encouraged to fulfill their aspirations. They work more and are more financially satisfied than women, which can further lead to their higher life satisfaction. Also, as one of the aspirations for both men and women is a happy family life, men in their thirties are more likely to be married than women. That gap only becomes bigger with age, leading to further differences in attaining life goals, which has differences in life satisfaction as an outcome.

Hypothesis 3: It is hypothesized that there will be a difference in life satisfaction according to marital status. It is assumed that single people will have higher life satisfaction than married people.

The study results have **not confirmed** this hypothesis, but showed the exact opposite. Mann-Whitney U test revealed that married people scored higher on life satisfaction than single ones.

The current study was trying to examine whether single people have higher levels of life satisfaction. According to recent study by Girme (2015), single people can have satisfying lives and can be happy without “significant” other. This was consistent with DePauo (2016) study, who indicated that single people can do better than married. Both studies claimed that stereotypes for single people are wrong. Our research aimed to contribute to their findings but the data results contradicted their studies. That is, the results from this hypothesis supported Mikucka’s (2015) study which stated that married people live more satisfied lives than single. The fact that there were no significant results for this particular hypothesis is significant in itself. It contributes significantly to the field of psychology as it confirms that society holds the right view about marriage and life satisfaction. Furthermore, it is also consistent with Freedman’s & Carr’s (2009) study. They found that marriage serves as a buffer against stressors and health depleting effects. The same results were indicated from Dush & Amato (2005) study. They claimed that individuals who were in romantic relationships such as marriage or cohabiting had higher life satisfaction than single individuals. However, marital status is not the biggest determinant on individual’s life satisfaction levels. A lot of factors play a role when defining how satisfied an individual is with his life especially in today’s society when there are lots of opportunities and choices.

Hypothesis 4: It is hypothesized that there will be a significant difference in the levels of life satisfaction across different age groups. Older people will report higher life satisfaction.

From the interpretation of the results of a Kruskal-Wallis test, this hypothesis was **accepted**.

The results from this hypothesis indicate that life satisfaction increases with the age. In other words, age is a significant predictor of life satisfaction. This result contributes significantly to the field of psychology as it dispels the myth that old people are gloom and doom (Borg, Hallberg and Blomqvist, 2006) and that they have decreased happiness. In addition to this, it is completely new and opposite to the society's stereotypes. Hence, it significantly contributes to the society's perception of older people and their levels of life satisfaction. The study will also contribute to the new formation of society's view about aging and life satisfaction. Moreover, these results are consistent with the study done in San Diego County, California (2016) which found that older people were happier than younger.

Hypothesis 5: It is hypothesised that people with higher levels of personal identity orientation will also have higher levels of total life satisfaction.

The results from the current study **accepted** this hypothesis. Spearman rho correlation has shown positive relationship between personal identity orientation and life satisfaction level.

As stated before, personal identity orientation reflects on the internal emphasis, based on self-knowledge and self-evaluation - individuals can be more focused with their emotions, thoughts, beliefs and personal goals than on the external world and other people.

According to Marcia's identity theory (1966), the afore-mentioned traits are a sign of stable, achieved identity. A person who has accomplished that has a stable sense of self and can easily

set a goal for himself. Feeling determined, secure and knowing where to head in life can easily explain life satisfaction, as opposed to feeling insecure, confused and pointless.

Strengths and Weaknesses

It is important to note that this study has a lot of strengths which contribute significantly to the field of psychology. The study had a large sample of 156 which lead the study to the trustworthy and reliable results. It also succeeded in achieving a very specific sample, by accessing only currently married or single participants. However, the limitations always exist. The study consisted of online self-report questionnaires. This method of sampling is very quick and efficient at accessing a significant number of participants but it might also leave a room for errors as the participants might not answer honestly and also might perceive themselves differently. Moreover, the data was collected at one time point and it would be interesting to see how the results would differ if the participants would have to fill the survey again.

Future research

The future researches in this field might be longitudinal, following people during time and see how their life satisfaction changes during time - do people get more satisfied with their lives when aging, or we can see life satisfaction as a stable trait. Furthermore, this study explored only the relationship of marital status and life satisfaction. It would be interesting to explore the relation of length of marriage and its perceived quality on life satisfaction. Also, future research

should focus on exploring other correlates of life satisfaction, such as employment status, personality traits, relationships with friends etc. This research could also be repeated in different cultures to examine culture differences in correlates of life satisfactions.

Conclusion

This study showed that gender, identity orientation, age, marital status and optimism all contribute to life satisfaction. Men, older people, married people, more optimistic ones and those oriented towards personal identity will all report higher levels of life satisfaction. These results can be used in clinical practice: they show us which groups of people are more susceptible to experiencing lower life satisfaction and might need more psychological help.

The results of this study were consistent with previous research in this area, but there needs to be a greater exploration into the findings to determine other correlates to life satisfaction.

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Appendix

Appendix 1

Demographic questionnaire

Please tick the most relevant box below

➤ 1. What is your age group?

*18 to 24 years

*25 to 35 years

*36 to 46 years

*47 to 57 years

*58 and over

➤ 2. Gender

Female

Male

➤ 3. Current Marital status

Single

Married

Appendix 2

LOT-R

Please be as honest and accurate as you can throughout. Try not to let your response to one statement influence your responses to other statements. There are no "correct" or "incorrect" answers. Answer according to your own feelings, rather than how you think "most people" would answer.

I Disagree a lot	I Disagree a little	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree a little	I agree a lot
0	1	2	3	4

	In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.	1.
	It's easy for me to relax.	2.
	If something can go wrong for me, it will.	3.
	I'm always optimistic about my future.	4.

	I enjoy my friends a lot.	5.
	It's important for me to keep busy.	6.
	I hardly ever expect things to go my way.	7.
	I don't get upset too easily.	8.
	I rarely count on good things happening to me.	9.
	Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.	10.

Scoring:

1. Reverse code items (3, 7, 9), take the original scores for items 3, 7 & 9 and recode them based on the following :

Original answer	Reversed score
4	0
3	1
2	2
1	3
0	4

2. Add together items 1, 3R, 4, 7R, 9R & 10 ('R' indicates the score has been 'reversed' for

that item). Higher overall score indicates greater levels of optimism.

3. Items 2, 5, 6 & 8 are 'filler' items used to disguise the nature of the test.

They are not included in the final score.

Description of Measure:

A 10-item measure of optimism versus pessimism. Of the 10 items, 3 items measure optimism, 3 items measure pessimism, and 4 items serve as fillers. respondents rate each item on a 4- point scale: 0= strongly disagree, 1=disagree, 2=neutral, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree

Algorithm:

Total = 19-24 High Optimism

Total = 14-18 Moderate Optimism

Total = 0-13 Low Optimism

Appendix 3

AIQ – IV

INSTRUCTIONS: These items describe different aspects of identity. Please read each item carefully and consider how it applies to you. Fill in the blank next to each item by choosing a number from the scale below:

1 = Not important to my sense of who I am

2 = Slightly important to my sense of who I am

3 = Somewhat important to my sense of who I am

4 = Very important to my sense of who I am

5 = Extremely important to my sense of who I am

___ 1. The things I own, my possessions

___ 2. My personal values and moral standards

___ 3. My popularity with other people

___ 4. Being a part of the many generations of my family

___ 5. My dreams and imagination

___ 6. The ways in which other people react to what I say and do

___ 7. My race or ethnic background

___ 8. My personal goals and hopes for the future

___ 9. My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body

___ 10. My religion

- ___ 11. My emotions and feelings
- ___ 12. My reputation, what others think of me
- ___ 13. Places where I live or where I was raised
- ___ 14. My thoughts and ideas
- ___ 15. My attractiveness to other people
- ___ 16. My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation
- ___ 17. My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make on others
- ___ 18. The ways I deal with my fears and anxieties
- ___ 19. My sex, being a male or a female
- ___ 20. My social behaviour, such as the way I act when meeting people
- ___ 21. My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others

Continued - (AIQ-IV, page 2)

- 1 = Not important to my sense of who I am
- 2 = Slightly important to my sense of who I am
- 3 = Somewhat important to my sense of who I am
- 4 = Very important to my sense of who I am
- 5 = Extremely important to my sense of who I am

- ___ 22. My relationships with the people I feel close to
- ___ 23. My social class, the economic group I belong to whether lower, middle, or upper class

- ___ 24. My feeling of belonging to my community
- ___ 25. Knowing that I continue to be essentially the same inside even though life involves many external changes
- ___ 26. Being a good friend to those I really care about
- ___ 27. My self-knowledge, my ideas about what kind of person I really am
- ___ 28. My commitment to being a concerned relationship partner
- ___ 29. My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a citizen
- ___ 30. My physical abilities, being coordinated and good at athletic activities
- ___ 31. Sharing significant experiences with my close friends
- ___ 32. My personal self-evaluation, the private opinion I have of myself
- ___ 33. Being a sports fan, identifying with a sports team
- ___ 34. Having mutually satisfying personal relationships
- ___ 35. Connecting on an intimate level with another person
- ___ 36. My occupational choice and career plans
- ___ 37. Developing caring relationships with others
- ___ 38. My commitments on political issues or my political activities
- ___ 39. My desire to understand the true thoughts and feelings of my best friend or romantic partner
- ___ 40. My academic ability and performance, such as the grades I earn and comments I get from teachers
- ___ 41. Having close bonds with other people
- ___ 42. My language, such as my regional accent or dialect or a second language that I know

- ___ 43. My feeling of connectedness with those I am close to
- ___ 44. My role of being a student in college
- ___ 45. My sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual

SCORING FOR AIQ-IV

[version 4, which adds RI to AIQ-IIIx, thus adding 10 new RI items and changing sequence = item # s of some old items] (Summer 2001 for 2002 SPSP Poster)

For details of AIQ-IIIx and its History and Bibliography, see Identity Orientations.

PI = Personal Identity Orientation

RI = Relational Identity Orientation

SI = Social Identity Orientation

CI = Collective Identity Orientation

(SP = Special items [not scored on scales])

Each of the scale scores is the sum of the answers (1-5) given to those items.

For AIQ-IV 45 items, the scoring numbering is:

PI = 2 5 8 11 14 18 21 25 27 32 [sum of answers to 10 items]

RI = 22 26 28 31 34 35 37 39 41 43 ["" 10 items]

SI = 3 6 9 12 15 17 20 ["" 7 items]

CI = 4 7 10 13 24 29 38 42 ["" 8 items]

[SP = 1 16 19 23 30 33 36 40 44 45 (10 items not scored on scales)]

Appendix 4

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLF)

Directions: Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

7 - Strongly agree

6 - Agree

5 - Slightly agree

4 - Neither agree nor disagree

3 - Slightly disagree

2 - Disagree

1 - Strongly disagree

___ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

___ The conditions of my life are excellent.

___ I am satisfied with my life.

___ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

___ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

The higher the score the more satisfied the participant is:

31 - 35 Extremely satisfied

26 - 30 Satisfied

21 - 25 Slightly satisfied

20 Neutral

15 - 19 Slightly dissatisfied

10 - 14 Dissatisfied

5 - 9 Extremely dissatisfied

Appendix 5

Consent

My name is Silvija Burbaite and I am conducting research on life satisfaction. I will try to determine if there is a difference between single and married individuals on the total life satisfaction and also whether men or women are happier. I will be determining this by looking at optimism vs pessimism, life satisfaction, self-esteem and self-identity questionnaires. This research is being conducted as part of my studies in Dublin Business School and will be submitted for examination.

While survey asks some questions that might cause some minor negative feelings or discomfort you may choose to skip the question, to withdraw from the study, or use the contact information for support services that are provided on the final page.

Participation is anonymous, confidential and completely voluntary and so you are not obliged to take part.

Your responses will be securely stored and the data from the questionnaires will be transferred from the paper record to the electronic format. All data collected will be stored for one year and then it will be destroyed.

By taking part in this questionnaire, you have agreed to give your full consent. The questionnaire will take approximately 10-12 minutes to complete. It will not be possible to withdraw from participation after the questionnaire has been collected. All participants must be over 18 years of age and single or married to complete this survey.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

Many thanks for participating and taking time to complete this questionnaire.

Demographic questionnaire

Please tick the most relevant box below

➤ 1. What is your age group?

- 18 to 24 years
- 25 to 35 years
- 36 to 46 years
- 47 to 57 years
- 58 and over

➤ 2. Gender

Female

Male

➤ 3. Current Marital status

Single

Married

LOT-R

Please be as honest and accurate as you can throughout. Try not to let your response to one statement influence your responses to other statements. There are no "correct" or "incorrect" answers. Answer according to your own feelings, rather than how you think "most people" would answer.

I Disagree a lot	I Disagree a little	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree a little	I agree a lot
0	1	2	3	4

	In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.	1.
	It's easy for me to relax.	2.

	If something can go wrong for me, it will.	3.
	I'm always optimistic about my future.	4.
	I enjoy my friends a lot.	5.
	It's important for me to keep busy.	6.
	I hardly ever expect things to go my way.	7.
	I don't get upset too easily.	8.
	I rarely count on good things happening to me.	9.
	Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.	10.

AIQ – IV

INSTRUCTIONS: These items describe different aspects of identity. Please read each item carefully and consider how it applies to you. Fill in the blank next to each item by choosing a number from the scale below:

1 = Not important to my sense of who I am

2 = Slightly important to my sense of who I am

3 = Somewhat important to my sense of who I am

4 = Very important to my sense of who I am

5 = Extremely important to my sense of who I am

___ 1. The things I own, my possessions

___ 2. My personal values and moral standards

___ 3. My popularity with other people

___ 4. Being a part of the many generations of my family

___ 5. My dreams and imagination

___ 6. The ways in which other people react to what I say and do

___ 7. My race or ethnic background

___ 8. My personal goals and hopes for the future

___ 9. My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body

___ 10. My religion

___ 11. My emotions and feelings

___ 12. My reputation, what others think of me

___ 13. Places where I live or where I was raised

___ 14. My thoughts and ideas

___ 15. My attractiveness to other people

___ 16. My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation

___ 17. My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make on others

- ___ 18. The ways I deal with my fears and anxieties
- ___ 19. My sex, being a male or a female
- ___ 20. My social behavior, such as the way I act when meeting people
- ___ 21. My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others

Continued - (AIQ-IV, page 2)

- 1 = Not important to my sense of who I am
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- ___ 28. My commitment to being a concerned relationship partner
- ___ 29. My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a citizen

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- ___ 45. My sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual

Satisfaction with Life Scale

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6 - Agree

5 - Slightly agree

4 - Neither agree nor disagree

3 - Slightly disagree

2 - Disagree

1 - Strongly disagree

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____ The conditions of my life are excellent.

____ I am satisfied with my life.

____ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Completed !

Thank you for taking part on this research!

If any part of the questionnaire has upset you in any way please don't hesitate to contact the following support groups:

The Samaritans offers a 24:7 text support service. 365 days a year, for anyone in emotional distress. To receive the service, simply send an SMS text message to 087 2 60 90 90

Mental Health Ireland/ Young Mental Health Ireland; Email : info@mentalhealthireland.ie

Aware helpline 016617211; provides face-to-face, phone and online support for individuals who are experiencing mild to moderate depression. Aware operates a help line from 10am to 10pm Monday to Wednesday and 10am to 1am Thursday to Sunday.

Accord is a counselling service that helps with relationship issues such as marriage and relationship counselling. Contact details available here: www.accord.ie

If you have any questions or need any additional information regarding the above services or in relation to the questionnaire, you can email me at: xxxxxx@mydbs.ie

or my supervisor Marianne Breen

Thank you and kind regards,

Silvija Burbaite