**Subjective Well-being and Social Capital: Their Link and Comparison Between Czech, Indian, South African and New Zealand University Students**

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**Abstract**

According to the World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2013) New Zealand is one of the happiest countries in the world, whereas Czech Republic, South Africa and India belong among middle ranking countries. Also the Social Capital Index (Legatum Institute, 2013) shows that New Zealand has one of the highest level of social capital in the world, while Czech Republic and South Africa belong among upper middle ranking countries and India ranks at the bottom.

In our cross-cultural study we compare subjective well-being and social capital among Czech, Indian, South African and New Zealand university students and explore the link between the variables of interest. Our sample consists of 165 Czech, 168 Indian, 110 South African and 131 New Zealand university students. Quantitative results from the *SWLS* (Diener et al., 1985*)*, *The Happiness Measure* (Fordyce, 1988) and the *Social Capital Integrated Questionnaire* (Grootaert et al., 2004), were complemented by a qualitative methodology.

Our research reveals interesting results: The level of life satisfaction of Czech, Indian, and New Zealand students does not differ across the countries. Life satisfaction is significantly higher among South African students. South African students also experience happiness most frequently, while Indian students experience happiness most intensively. Qualitative analysis revealed both universal factors and cross-cultural differences in students´ well-being. Social capital reflects cultural characteristics respecting our specific sample and it tends to be intertwined with respondents´ life satisfaction. The link between social capital and life satisfaction was however found only to those social capital aspects associated with social support.

**Key words:** subjective well-being, social capital, cross-culture study