

# Happiness in a Just World: The hidden Link between life Satisfaction and Social Justice.

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Is happiness an internal state of mind - an attitude to life that determines our way to interact with the world - which is unaffected by environmental factors? According to some Positive Psychology scholars, happiness comes more from within than from without. Some of them, for instance, attach an extremely low weight to external circumstances in determining life satisfaction (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Their argument lies on the assumption that individuals are personally responsible for their own happiness and the power of mind can overcome even the most dysfunctional circumstances. However, this perspective ignores that the environment can have a strong bearing on one's pursuit of happiness. In particular, conditions of social injustice can significantly affect the way people rate their life satisfaction (Prilleltensky, 2012).

In this oral presentation I will argue that Social Justice can have a direct as well as significant effect on how people enjoy their life. To this end, I will draw on some quantitative data provided by the Index of Social Justice developed by the Bertelsmann Stiftung institute. By means of a series of simple regression analysis I will show the hidden link between a fair and equitable administration of a Country and the level of satisfaction with the life of its citizens.

The innovation of this work lies in its ability to inform national policies on how to advance social justice in their own country and, as a consequence, which kind of interventions aimed at improving people's quality of life to put in action.

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