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# **Social well-being: Investigating the relation of social aspects to optimal functioning in society**

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## **Abstract**

The perspective on human mental health has changed lately. For a long time, mental health was defined as the absence of mental disorders, investigating psychopathology of humans. Today, the focus on mental health as a positive state gained more attention. Mental health is fostered by the presence of psychological, emotional and social well-being, where emotional and psychological well-being have mostly been the center of attention. However, as optimal functioning in society (social well-being) is of great importance for mental health as well, the aim of the present study was to gain more insights in the association of social aspects with social well-being. In a representative Dutch sample (N=1,662) the relation of marital status, social contacts, social participation and social attitude to social, emotional and psychological well-being was investigated. Results showed positive correlations of social contacts, social participation and social attitude with social, emotional and psychological well-being, suggesting that these aspects of social life are important for a person's optimal functioning in society as well as for someone's optimal personal functioning and general life satisfaction and positive feelings. Marital status, however, showed no significant connection to social well-being, but a low positive correlation to psychological well-being and a low negative correlation to emotional well-being, indicating that marital status plays a more important role for a person's personal functioning and general life satisfaction than for optimal functioning in society.

## **Samenvatting**

Het perspectief op geestelijke gezondheid is veranderd in de laatste jaren. Voor lange tijd was geestelijke gezondheid gedefinieerd als de afwezigheid van geestelijke ziektes, met exploratie van psychopathologie als hoofddoel. Tegenwoordig krijgt geestelijke gezondheid als een positieve staat toenemend meer aandacht. Mentale gezondheid bestaat uit de aanwezigheid van emotioneel, psychologisch en sociaal welbevinden, waar emotioneel en psychologisch welbevinden meestal het centrum van aandacht waren. Aangezien ook het optimale functioneren in de maatschappij (sociaal welbevinden) van groot belang is voor geestelijke gezondheid, was het doel in deze studie meer inzicht te krijgen in de associatie van sociale aspecten met sociaal welbevinden. In een representatieve Nederlandse steekproef (N=1,662) worden de relatie van burgerlijke staat, sociale contacten, sociale participatie en sociale attitude op social, psychologisch en emotioneel welbevinden onderzocht. Resultaten van deze studie laten positieve correlaties van sociale contacten, sociale participatie en sociale attitude met sociaal, psychologisch en emotioneel welbevinden zien. Dit laat vermoeden dat deze

aspecten van het sociale leven een rol spelen voor het optimaal functioneren in de maatschappij van een persoon, als ook voor het optimale persoonlijke functioneren en de algemene levens tevredenheid. Burgerlijke staat toonde echter geen significante relatie met social welbevinden aan, maar een lichte positieve correlatie met psychologisch welbevinden en een lichte negatieve correlatie met emotioneel welbevinden. Dit laat vermoeden dat de burgerlijke staat belangrijker is voor het persoonlijke functioneren en de algemene levens tevredenheid van een persoon dan voor het optimaal functioneren in de maatschappij.

## Index of contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	2
<b>Index of contents</b> .....	4
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	5
1.1 The positive approach of mental health.....	5
1.2 Social aspects to psychological and emotional well-being .....	7
1.3 Aspects associated with social well-being .....	8
1.4 Aims and Hypotheses of the present study .....	11
<b>2 Method</b> .....	13
2.1 Participants .....	13
2.2 Procedure .....	13
2.3 Measures .....	13
2.4 Statistical analyses .....	15
<b>3 Results</b> .....	16
3.1 Marital status .....	16
3.2 Social contacts .....	17
3.3 Social participation .....	18
3.4 Social attitude .....	19
3.5 Society/community relatedness .....	20
3.6 Comparison of results to emotional and psychological well-being.....	21
<b>4 Discussion</b> .....	26
4.1 Marital status .....	27
4.2 Social contacts .....	28
4.3 Social participation .....	28
4.4 Social attitude .....	29
4.5 Society/community relatedness .....	29
4.6 Comparison of results to emotional and psychological well-being.....	30
<b>5 Strengths, Limitations and Conclusion</b> .....	31
<b>Appendix</b> .....	32
<b>References</b> .....	38

## 1. Introduction

The following study surveys social well-being, which is one aspect of the positive approach of mental health. Since most of the research in the domain of human mental health has been done discovering aspects associated with psychological and emotional well-being, the main purpose of this study is the revelation of the association of social aspects with social well-being, as marital status, social contacts, social participation and social attitude. I begin this introduction by examining the progress of emphasis of human well-being, identifying aspects that may be associated with social well-being and concluding by presenting original evidence, highlighting the connection between the aspects marital status, social contacts, social participation, and social attitude and social well-being. Finally, to gain more insight, these connections are compared to emotional and psychological well-being.

### *1.1 The positive approach of mental health*

Since mental health is not only seen as the absence of mental illness, the World Health Organization (WHO) has a greater focus on it as a positive state. This positive state is defined as “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (WHO, 2004, p 12). This positive approach (mental health seen from a positive perspective) indicates mental health to consist of three core components: emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being. This perspective on well-being is built on two traditions: the hedonic tradition and the eudaimonic tradition (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The hedonic tradition views well-being as the presence of positive feelings and life satisfaction. This tradition has a long history, going back to the fourth century when a Greek philosopher, named Aristippus, taught that experiencing the greatest amount of pleasure should be the goal of one’s life, with happiness being the totality of one’s hedonic moments. Since many psychologists adopted this hedonic tradition, a new psychological field arose: hedonic psychology, defined as the study of “what makes experience and life pleasant and unpleasant” (Kahneman et al, 1999 p. ix). The assessment of emotional well-being (EWB) became the most prominent feature of hedonic psychological research. *Emotional well-being* refers to general life satisfaction and positive feelings such as happiness, interest and pleasure in life (Diener & Lucas, 1999).

Despite the prevalence of the hedonic tradition, many philosophers indicated that happiness per se should not be the only criterion when considering well-being. As Aristotle

pointed out, true happiness would be found in the expression of virtue, in doing what is worth doing. This view of well-being, that it consists of more than happiness per se, is referred to as the eudaimonic tradition (Deci & Ryan, 2006). The eudaimonic tradition focuses on the actualization of human potentials in individual and social life. Psychological well-being (PWB) falls within this tradition and became the main aspect of it. *Psychological well-being* indicates optimal personal functioning including six aspects: 1. *self-acceptance* which refers to a positive attitude toward oneself, 2. *personal growth* as the feeling of sustained development and possibilities, 3. *life purpose* referring to having a purpose and orientation in one's life, 4. *mastery* representing a feeling of being able to handle a complex environment, 5. *positive relatedness* as having satisfying and intimate relationships (including abilities as empathy, affection and intimacy) and being interested in the well-being of others, and 6. *autonomy* comprising being self-determined and independent (Ryff, 1989). Since then, most research in the field of well-being has either been focused on personal functioning (psychological well-being), or on using global measures of life satisfaction and happiness (emotional well-being).

But as Keyes (1998) pointed out, life remains divided into private and public sides with each having its own requests and challenges. And since individuals are integrated in social structures and are thus facing numerous social challenges, the study of human well-being should also include social dimensions. This *social well-being* is defined as the optimal functioning in society and became, as well as psychological well-being, a component of the eudaimonic tradition. It is characterized by five dimensions: 1. *Social acceptance* which refers to a positive view on other people and the ability to accept others as who they are, 2. *Social contribution* as the belief of being able to fulfill and achieve activities and goals which are valuable for the society, 3. *Social integration* representing a good relation to the community and society as being an appendant part of it, 4. *Social actualization* implying the belief that society has the potential for positive changes, and 5. *Social coherence* referring to a logical and apprehensible view of the social world with interest in the social environment and social interaction (Keyes, 1998).

Taking this development of well-being into account, the positive approach of human mental health indicates mental health as consisting of these three aspects of well-being (emotional, psychological and social). Since the WHO (1948) sees social well-being as having a great impact on the overall health of an individual, social well-being, in addition to emotional and psychological well-being, should be investigated to reveal the optimal

functioning and mental health of human beings. As emotional and psychological well-being has mostly been the center of attention, little is known about social well-being. However, in order to understand the importance of the social context in general, it is of interest to appraise social aspects to psychological and emotional well-being as well. The term ‘social context’ refers to any interaction within the society, ranging from aspects close to the person such as social contacts (interaction with family, friends and neighbors for instance) to aspects more associated with the community indicating participation in and attitude toward institutions and environments that affect the person.

### *1.2 Social aspects to psychological and emotional well-being*

Keeping in mind that most research in the field of well-being has been done discovering the relation of aspects of life to psychological and emotional well-being, some of these explored social aspects related to emotional and psychological well-being.

For instance, Helliwell and Putnam (2004) found that interactions with family, friends and neighbors are associated with higher levels of emotional well-being, with friends being more important than family and neighbors. Moreover they found that trustworthiness of others, not only friends and family but also government and those in authority, also plays a critical role in emotional well-being. That is, people who report to believe to live in a trustworthy environment tend to show higher emotional well-being. Additionally, they found that marital status plays a role in perceived emotional well-being as well. The status of marriage was significantly associated with emotional well-being and being divorced or widowed showed negative connections to life satisfaction. Another study examined the connection of engagement in political activism and levels of well-being, finding that engaging in activism is in fact associated with higher levels of emotional as well as psychological well-being (Klar & Kasser, 2009). Furthermore, since Branscombe and Wann (1991) found a positive correlation of identification with a sport team to psychological well-being, further investigations expanded on their study. Wann (1994) discovered a positive correlation of identification with a team to collective self-esteem, which refers to psychological well-being and Wann and Pierce (2005) demonstrated an association of higher levels of identification with greater levels of satisfaction with one’s social life.

This selection of literature and research results gives an insight into the importance of the social context in terms of associations it seems to have with the well-being of humans. It seems that interaction in different domains of social life (interaction with family and friends,

engagement in political activism and sport teams identification) and marital status (in terms of being married) are associated with more general life satisfaction (emotional well-being) and/or better personal functioning (psychological well-being), indicating that social aspects have an impact on at least two components of human mental health. But as human mental health consists of three components (emotional, psychological and social well-being), what are the social aspects associated with social well-being?

### *1.3 Social aspects associated with social well-being*

As researchers explored the role and the meaningfulness of social aspects to emotional and psychological well-being and since Keyes (1998) pointed out that the study of human well-being should also include social dimensions, investigating the factors that might play a role in fostering social well-being gained more interest in the study of human mental health.

#### *Marital status*

As Waite and Gallagher (2000) noted, marriage denotes a social contract, offering the married persons a sense of belonging, purpose and permanence, indicating that they are more socially involved in supportive networks than non-married persons. In fact, there has been supportive research discovering greater social support and larger social networks for married persons than non-married persons (Hurlbert & Acock, 1990; Kessler & McLeod, 1985; Pearlin & Johnson, 1977). Taking this into account, Shapiro and Keyes (2008) examined whether there are marital status differences in perceived social well-being. They found a marriage advantage for social integration among individual social well-being items. Additionally, their results show that never married women show higher social well-being than never married men. All in all, main marital status differences were found between cohabitators and first married persons, where being a cohabitor is associated with lower total social well-being (in relation to first married persons). An explanation for that could be social stigmatization, due to an “incomplete institution” with lack of formalized norms that cohabitation may represent (Nock, 1995; Wait & Gallagher, 2000).

#### *Place attachment*

Rollero and De Piccoli (2010) investigated the connection of city and neighborhood attachment to the five dimensions of social well-being. The main purpose of their study was to explore whether place attachment directly affected social well-being. They found a positive



correlation of city attachment to all dimensions of social well-being. This connection of place attachment with social well-being shows that a place is not only a physical area, but people also ascribe meaning to it and become attached to the meaning. Thus, place attachment plays a role in fostering not only self-esteem, self-worth and self-pride but also social well-being. Furthermore they found a direct association of neighborhood attachment to social integration, actualization and coherence, with a positive relation to social integration and social actualization and a negative connection to social coherence. Indicating that neighborhood attachment may enhance a positive estimation of the society's future development (social actualization), but it does not consequently indicate a full comprehension of the world around (social coherence). Rather, Rollero and De Piccoli supposed that individuals with a high neighborhood attachment could be too dependent on it and therefore have difficulties to understand society as a whole. The positive relation of neighborhood attachment to social integration implies that the more an individual is attached toward a place, the higher his or her feeling of being a member of the community (social integration). Since Rollero and De Piccoli only investigated the correlation of city and neighborhood attachment with social well-being and not with emotional and psychological well-being, the question whether there is a greater correlation for place attachment with social well-being than for any other well-being remains unanswered.

### *Social participation*

Even more interesting are the results of a study conducted by Albanesi, Cicognani and Zani (2006). They found positive correlations among sense of community, civic engagement and social well-being. The Scale for testing sense of community included five subscales: 'sense of belonging', 'support and emotional connection in the community', 'satisfaction of needs and opportunities for involvement', 'support and emotional connection with peers' and 'opportunities for influence', whereas civic engagement included questions about: 'involvement in charity purchasing', 'involvement in occupation of schools', 'self-management of school activities', 'involvement in strikes', and 'involvement in cultural events and/or local folk festivals'. Regarding the relation between sense of community, civic engagement (pro-social oriented and protest-oriented) and social well-being, sense of community and pro-social oriented civic engagement were both positive associated with social well-being, while protest-oriented civic engagement was unrelated with social well-being. The last finding is quite interesting since Klar and Kasser (2009) found that

engagement in political activism is associated with higher levels of social well-being. Furthermore, Albanesi et al (2006) found sports group members, volunteers and religious group members to report higher levels of social well-being than non-members. The results of this study show the importance of sense of community and involvement in group activities, enhancing levels of connectedness to the community and prosocial behaviors.

Similar to the study of Albanesi et al (2006), Cicognani, Pirini, Keyes, Joshanloo, Rostami and Nosratabadi (2008) examined the relationship between social participation and sense of community and their connection to social well-being across different countries (Italy, USA and Iran). They found that only in the Italian sample social participation directly affected social well-being, whereas social participation positively affected social well-being through the mediation of sense of community in the American sample and through identification with community in the Iranian sample. While sense of community refers to an emotional process of attachment, community identification is a more cognitively-oriented construct, indicating a difference in processes (emotional attachment vs. cognitive identification) as mediator on social well-being among different countries. These findings give further support for the positive association between social participation, sense of community and social well-being.

### *Team Identification*

As noted earlier, Branscombe and Wann (1991) found a positive correlation of identification with a sport team to psychological well-being, Wann (1994) discovered a positive correlation of identification with a team to psychological well-being and Wann and Pierce (2005) demonstrated an association of higher levels of identification with greater levels of satisfaction with one's social life. Taking these findings into account, Wann and Weaver (2009) expand their results by examining the effects of identification with a sport team on social well-being. They found that identification with a local team correlated positively with the overall level of social well-being. Specifically, they found team identification to be related to social integration and social coherence, two dimensions of social well-being. Meaning that highly identified fans tend to feel more connected to their community and regard their social lives as meaningful.

In sum, only a few studies have explored the social facets that are or might be associated with social well-being. Keeping in mind the results of research investigating social aspects to psychological and emotional well-being, the literature about social well-being reported similar

aspects. Interaction with social contacts (by means of neighborhood attachment which implies a good relationship with neighbors), social engagement (as being active in community institutions) and marital status seem to be of interest in discovering aspects associated with social well-being. Comparatively, domains of social life such as interaction with family and friends, engagement in political activism and sport teams identification are associated with emotional and psychological well-being. Most of the studies reviewed here only investigated the association of social aspects to one or two concepts of well-being. Since the social aspects associated with social well-being, emotional well-being and psychological well-being seem to be similar, integrating all three concepts of well-being for comparison is of great interest to gain more insights in the correlations.

#### *1.4 Aims and Hypotheses of the present study*

Aim of the present study was to gain more insights into the relation of social aspects of social well-being. Based on the literature, four factors were selected to be relevant concerning social well-being: 1. marital status (married, not married, never married), 2. social contacts (satisfaction with social contacts and amount of time spent with family, friends and neighbors), 3. social participation (frequencies of engagement, membership, and volunteering in e.g. a sport club, a religious, cultural, political organization), and 4. social attitude (satisfaction with and faith in institutions such as government, police, media, economy).

As noted earlier, the social context ranges from aspects close to the person, such as social contacts (interaction with family, friends and neighbors for instance) to aspects more associated with the community indicating participation in and attitude toward institutions and environments that affect the person. Taking this into account, the following hypotheses will be arranged by means of community relatedness.

##### *1. Marital status:*

Consistent with the findings of Shapiro & Keyes (2008), it was predicted that scores on social well-being will be higher for married persons than for non-married (previously-married and never-married) (H1). Furthermore, never-married women were expected to score higher on social well-being than never-married men (H2).

## *2. Social contacts*

Based on the findings of Helliwell and Putnam (2004), it was hypothesized that higher satisfaction with social contacts and greater amount of time spent with social contacts is related to higher social well-being (H3).

## *3. Social participation*

Taking the findings of Albanesi, Cicognani and Zani (2006) into account, it was hypothesized that higher social participation (higher frequencies of ‘engagement’, ‘membership’ and ‘volunteering’ in e.g. a sport club) is related to higher social well-being (H4).

## *4. Social attitude*

Concerning social attitude, it was expected that a higher/more positive social attitude is related to higher social well-being (H5).

## *5. Society/community relatedness*

Among social well-being, aspects mostly related to society/community (‘social participation’, ‘social attitude’) were expected to be stronger connected to social well-being than aspects less related to society/community (‘marital status’, ‘social contacts’) (H6).

## *6. Comparison of all results to emotional and psychological well-being*

In order to gain more insight in the results of the analysis, relations to social well-being will be compared to relations with emotional and psychological well-being. It was expected that aspects mostly related to society/community (‘social participation’, ‘social attitude’) will be stronger connected to social well-being than to emotional and psychological well-being, and aspects less related to society/community (‘marital status’, ‘social contacts’), as they become more person related, will be less related to social well-being than to emotional and psychological well-being (H7).

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Participants

Participants in the present study were 1,662 Dutch citizen between the age 18 and 87, with a mean age of 47.6 (standard deviation [SD] = 17.7). The 49.8% (N=828) of the participants were male. Of the respondents, 83.1% (N= 1381) were Dutch and 16.9% (N=281) were born abroad or had at least one parent born abroad. Respective marital status, 53.1% (N=882) of the respondents were married, 16.3% (N=271) were previously married and 34.6 % (N=509) were never married. Of the never married persons 53.6% (N=273) were men.

### 2.2 Procedure

The data for the present study was used from the LISS panel of CentERdata, a Dutch Institute specialized in online survey research. The LISS panel (Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social science) is based on a representative sample of 5,000 Dutch households. The panel members are invited to fill in online questionnaires every month. In December 2007, March 2008, June 2008 and in September 2008 in one third of the households one member was randomly selected to complete a module on mental health. For this study, the data from December 2007 (N=1,662) was used. Furthermore, data from the core modules social integration and leisure (N=1,565; in February 2008 and May 2008) and politics and values (N=1,661; in December 2007 and March 2008) developed by the LISS panel were used.

### 2.3 Measures

For measuring social well-being, as well as emotional and psychological well-being, the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) (Keyes et al., 2008) was used. The MHC-SF includes 14 items for assessing positive mental health (3 items for emotional well-being, 6 items for psychological well-being and 5 items for social well-being), with each item representing one dimension of the three components of well-being (See Appendix A). The respondent is asked to rate the frequency of every feeling on a 6-point Likert scale (0=never, 1=once or twice a month, 2=about once a week, 3=two or three times a week, 4=almost every day, 5=every day). The MHC-SF has a reliability value (Cronbach's alpha) of .89 (.74 for the social well-being scale, .83 for the emotional as well as the psychological well-being scale). For this study, the mean score on each component (social, emotional and psychological well-being) was used. Correlations among the mean scores of social, emotional and psychological

well-being are moderate (Appendix B). The Mental Health Continuum-Short Form was part of the mental health module of December 2007.

For hypothesis 1 and 2, marital status was assessed by 1 item, using five response alternatives (1=married, 2=separated from bed and table, 3=divorced, 4= widowed, 5=never married). A new variable was computed in which response alternatives 'separated from bed and table', 'divorced' and 'widowed' were recoded as previously-married. Furthermore, primarily for hypothesis 1, a second variable was computed in which 'previously-married' and 'never-married' were recoded as non-married. For hypothesis 2, cases if 'marital status=never married' were selected.

For Hypothesis 3, satisfaction and amount of time spend with social contacts was assessed by a list of four items (cs08a283, cs08a290, cs08a291, cs08a292) from the social integration and leisure core module. For item cs08a283 respondents were ask to rate their satisfaction with their social contacts on a scale from 0 to 10 (0= absolutely unsatisfied through 10= totally satisfied), for items cs08a290, cs08a291 and cs08a292 seven response alternatives were used to rate the amount of time spent with family, neighbors and friends (1=almost every day, 2= once or twice a week, 3= several times a month, 4= about once a month, 5= several times a year, 6= about once a year, 7= never). Response alternatives were reversed to provide a positive order of increase in time. Correlation analysis of all four items showed a low, positive correlation among these (Appendix C).

For Hypothesis 4, social participation was assessed by a list of 36 items from the social integration and leisure core module, measuring the frequency of involvement (engagement, member or volunteer) in different forms of social organizations (e.g. sport club, cultural association, organization for preservation of the environment, religious organization or political organization) using two response alternatives (1= yes, 2=no). For every manner of involvement (engagement, member or volunteer) 'yes-responses' among the different organizations were summed up to compute three new variables: 'frequency of engagement', 'frequency of membership' and 'frequency of volunteering'. Among all three, correlations between 'membership' and 'engagement' were highest and between 'volunteering' and 'membership' lowest. Overall, correlations among 'membership', 'volunteering' and 'engagement' were moderate (Appendix D). It is noteworthy that 'engagement' is, at any rate, related to 'volunteering' and 'membership': If a person is a member or a volunteer in an organization, he/she is consequently engaged in it.

For Hypothesis 5, social attitude was assessed by a list of 17 items about the personal satisfaction with each institution (e.g. government, police, media, economy) (cv08a013-cv08a29) and a list of 17 items about the personal faith in each institution (cv08a030 - cv08a046) from the politics and values core module. For all items respondents were asked to rate their personal satisfaction with or faith in each institution on a scale from 0 to 10 (0= not any faith/very unsatisfied and 10= absolute faith/very satisfied). Two principal component analysis with varimax rotation were conducted to test whether the items cv08a013 – cv08a029 and items cv08a030 – cv08a046 would make up a scale. Results confirmed two scales: satisfaction with institutions (cv08a030 through cv08a046) and faith in institutions (cv08a013 through cv08a029) (Appendix E/F). Tests of internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha) showed a reliability value of 0.94 for the ‘faith in institutions scale’ and a reliability value of 0.95 for the ‘satisfaction with institutions scale’. Reliability values above 0.70 are referred to as acceptable and above 0.80 as high. Taking this into account, two new variables (faith in institutions and satisfaction with institutions) were computed by calculating the mean of the items cv08a013 through cv08a029 and cv08a030 through cv08a046.

#### *2.4 Statistical analyses*

SPSS 16.0 was used for statistical analyses. Generally, Independent-Sample T-Tests were used for testing mean-level differences; correlation analysis was performed to examine relations; and multiple regression analyses were performed to explain the variance of the dependent variable (social, emotional or psychological well-being) by the variance of the aspects, wherein the variance of aspects are statistically controlled.

For hypothesis 1 and 2, two Independent-Sample T-Tests were used to test whether there is a mean level difference in perceived social well-being between married and non-married persons (H1) / between never-married women and never-married men (H2). For Hypothesis 3, correlation analysis was performed to test for any connections between social contacts and social well-being. Secondly, multiple regression analysis was performed to test whether a greater amount of satisfaction and time spent with social contacts is related to higher social well-being. For Hypothesis 4, correlation analysis was performed to test for any connections between social well-being and frequencies of ‘engagement’, ‘membership’ and ‘volunteering’. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis was performed to test whether a higher amount of social participation is related to higher social well-being. For Hypothesis 5, correlation analysis was performed to test whether there is a connection between social

attitude and social well-being. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis was performed to test Hypothesis 5: a greater/more positive social attitude is related to higher social well-being. For Hypothesis 6, multiple regression analysis was used to test whether aspects mostly related to society are more connected to social well-being than aspects less related to society (correlation between aspect and dependent variable wherein the variance of the other aspects are statistically controlled). Finally, for Hypothesis 7, correlation analysis was performed to test for connections between all aspects and social, emotional and psychological well-being. Furthermore four Independent-Sample T-Tests were used to test whether there is a mean-level difference in perceived emotional/psychological well-being between married and non-married persons / between never-married women and never-married men. Two sets of multiple regression analyses were used to explain the variance of emotional and psychological well-being by the variance of all aspects.

Overall, correlations around 0.20 were considered as low and around 0.50 as moderate.

### 3. Results

#### *3.1 Marital status*

As marital status was selected to be an aspect associated with social well-being, Independent-Samples T-Test was used to test whether there is a mean-level difference in perceived social well-being between married and non-married persons. No significant differences in social well-being were found between married and non-married persons ( $T(1660)=-1.56, p=0.12$ ). These results showed no social well-being advantages for married persons over non-married. Thus, the first hypothesis that married persons score higher on social well-being than non-married, could not be affirmed.

Secondly, Independent-Sample T-Test was used to test whether there is a mean-level difference in social well-being between never-married women and never-married men. No significant differences were found in perceived social well-being ( $T(507)=-.10, p=0.92$ ) between never-married men and never-married women. Hypothesis 2, never-married women score higher on social well-being than never-married men could not be affirmed. These results imply no female-advantage in social well-being for never-married persons.



### 3.2 Social contacts

First, correlation analysis was performed to test for any connections between social contacts (satisfaction with and amount of time spent with social contacts) and social well-being. This analysis showed low, positive correlations of satisfaction with and amount of time spend with social contacts to social well-being (Table 1).

Furthermore, as social contacts were associated with social well-being, multiple regression analysis was performed to test whether a greater amount of satisfaction and time spent with social contacts is related to higher social well-being, when the variance of the aspects are statistically controlled (Hypothesis 3). Results showed that greater satisfaction with social contacts and higher amount of time spent with friends and neighbors are significantly associated with higher social well-being. Although time spent with family correlated positively with social well-being, in combination with the other three variables a greater amount of time spent with family was not significantly associated with higher social well-being (Table 2). Among the combination of these aspects, satisfaction with one's social contacts was of greatest importance for social well-being (Table 2). Overall, social contacts accounted 7% of variance of social well-being (*Adjusted R Square*=0.07). With the exception of 'time spent with family', these results showed that hypothesis 3 could be affirmed. Thus a greater amount of satisfaction with social contacts and a greater amount of time spent with neighbors and friends, is related to higher social well-being.

Table 1  
*Correlation coefficients among social well-being and satisfaction and amount of time spent with social contacts (family, neighbors and friends) (N=1532, 1535, 1504, 1522)*

	Satisfaction with social contacts	Time spent with family	Time spent with neighbors	Time spent with friends
Social well-being	.21*	.08*	.18*	.17*

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2  
*Regression coefficients of satisfaction with and time spent with social contacts\* (N=1440)*

	B	Beta	Sig.
Time spent with family	.01	.02	.54
Time spent with neighbors	.06	.10	.00
Time spent with friends	.06	.10	.00
Satisfaction with social contacts	.09	.16	.00

Adjusted R Square=.07

\*Dependent variable: social well-being

### 3.3 Social participation

First, correlation analysis was performed to test for any connections between social well-being and frequencies of ‘engagement’, ‘membership’ and ‘volunteering’. This analysis showed low, positive correlations between social well-being and frequencies of ‘engagement’, ‘membership’ and ‘volunteering’ (Table 3).

Second, as social participation was associated with social well-being, multiple regression analysis was performed to test whether a higher amount of social participation is related to higher social well-being, when the variance of the aspects are statistically controlled (hypothesis 4). Results showed that a higher frequency of ‘engagement’ as well as of ‘volunteering’ was associated with higher social well-being. Although frequency of ‘membership’ showed a positive correlation with social well-being, in combination with ‘engagement’ and ‘volunteering’, a higher frequency of ‘membership’ was not significantly associated with higher social well-being (Table 4). Among the combination of these aspects, frequencies of ‘engagement’ and ‘volunteering’ were of similar importance for social well-being (Table 4). Overall, social participation (frequencies of ‘engagement’, ‘membership’ and ‘volunteering’) accounted 5.0 % of variance of social well-being (*Adjusted R Square=0.05*). With the exception of ‘frequency of membership’, these results showed that hypothesis 4 could be affirmed. Thus, higher frequencies of ‘engagement’ and ‘volunteering’ are associated with higher social well-being.

Table 3

*Correlation coefficients among social well-being and social participation ('engagement', 'membership', 'volunteering') (N= 1559)*

	'engagement'	'membership'	'volunteering'
Social well-being	.20*	.15*	.16*

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4

*Regression coefficients of 'engagement', 'membership' and 'volunteering'\* (N=1559)*

	B	Beta	Sig.
'engagement'	.06	.12	.00
'membership'	.04	.06	.07
'volunteering'	.13	.11	.00

Adjusted R Square=.05

\*Dependent variable: social well-being

### 3.4 Social attitude

Correlation analysis was performed to test whether there is a connection between social attitude and social well-being. Results showed a low positive correlation of social attitude (faith in as well as satisfaction with institutions) with social well-being (Table 5).

Furthermore, multiple regression analysis was performed to test Hypothesis 5: a higher/more positive social attitude is related to higher social well-being. Results showed that more faith in institutions was significantly associated with higher social well-being ( $\beta=0.13$ ). Although 'satisfaction with institutions' correlated with social well-being, in combination with 'faith in institutions' more satisfaction with institutions was not significantly associated with higher social well-being (Table 6). Overall, social attitude accounted 4% of variance of social well-being (*Adjusted R Square=0.04*). With the exception of 'satisfaction with institutions', these results showed that hypothesis 5 can be affirmed. Thus, more faith in institutions is associated with higher social well-being.

Table 5

*Correlation coefficients among social well-being and social attitude (faith in and satisfaction with institutions) (N=1655, 1648)*

	Faith in institutions	Satisfaction with institutions
Social well-being	.20*	.19*

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6

*Regression coefficients of social attitude\* (N=1646)*

	B	Beta	Sig.
Satisfaction with institutions	.04	.04	.51
Faith in institutions	.13	.16	.02

Adjusted R Square=.04

\*Dependent variable: social well-being

### 3.5 Society/community relatedness

As the social context ranges from aspects close to the person such as social contacts (interaction with family, friends and neighbors for instance) to aspects more associated with the community (participation in and attitude towards institutions), aspects mostly related to society/community ('social participation (frequencies of 'engagement'/'volunteering'/'membership'), 'social attitude') were expected to be more connected to social well-being than aspects less related to society/community ('marital status', 'social contacts') (H6). Multiple regression analysis was performed to test this hypothesis. Results showed that social participation (with the exception of 'membership'), was more connected to social well-being than 'time spent with neighbors/friends' (Table 7). However, contrary to the expectations, in this combination, social attitude was not significantly connected to social well-being. Additionally, among all aspects, 'satisfaction with social contacts' showed the highest relation to social well-being (Table 7). Since all correlations were rather low and differences between the correlations were exiguous, it is difficult to draw the line whether hypothesis 6 could be affirmed. The affirmation that some of the aspects considered mostly related to society showed higher correlations than aspects less related to society on the one hand and the fact that there are some contradictions ('satisfaction with social contacts' showed highest

correlation coefficients, whereas social attitude and ‘membership’ showed no significant connection) on the other hand, rather leads to the conclusion that hypothesis 6 can only be partially confirmed.

Table 7

*Regression coefficients of social attitude, social participation, social contacts and marital status \* (N=1425)*

		B	Beta	Sig
Social attitude	Faith in institutions	.10	.12	.08
	Satisfaction with institutions	.03	.04	.60
Social participation	Frequency of membership	.02	.03	.41
	Frequency of volunteering	.11	.10	.00
	Frequency of engagement	.06	.12	.00
Social contacts	Satisfaction with social contacts	.08	.14	.00
	Time spent with neighbors	.05	.09	.00
	Time spent with friends	.06	.08	.01
	Time spent with family	.02	.02	.38
Marital status	Marital status	.00	.00	.98

Adjusted R Square=.14

\*Dependent variable: social well-being

### 3.6 Comparison of results to emotional and psychological well-being

As noted earlier, to gain more insights into the results, correlations of all aspects to social well-being were compared to correlations with emotional and psychological well-being. Correlation analysis was performed to test for connections between all aspects and social,

emotional and psychological well-being. Although overall correlations were low, differences between social, psychological and emotional well-being were found among all aspects. Aspects mostly related to society/community (social attitude, social participation) correlated higher with social well-being than with emotional and psychological well-being. Whereas aspects less related to society/community (social contacts (with exception of ‘time spent with neighbors’) and marital status) correlated higher with emotional and/or psychological well-being than with social well-being (Table 8). This implies that as aspects become more society related, the linkage to social well-being becomes more important.

Table 8

*Correlation coefficients among social, psychological and emotional well-being and social attitude, social participation, social contacts and marital status (N=1655, 1648, 1559, 1532, 1504, 1522, 1535, 1662)*

		Social well-being	Psychological well-being	Emotional well-being
	Faith in institutions	.20*	.11*	.17*
Social attitude	Satisfaction with institutions	.19*	.08*	.14*
	Frequency of membership	.15*	.05	.08*
Social participation	Frequency of volunteering	.16*	.06**	.06**
	Frequency of engagement	.20*	.06**	.05**
	Satisfaction with social contacts	.21*	.25*	.35*
Social contacts	Time spent with neighbors	.18*	.15*	.10*
	Time spent with friends	.17*	.19*	.09*
	Time spent with family	.08*	.11*	.11*
Marital status	Marital status	.02	.08*	-.09*

p>0.05 (2-tailed)  
 \* p<0.01 (2-tailed)  
 \*\* p<0.05 (2-tailed)

Furthermore, two Independent-Samples T-Tests were performed to test whether there is a mean-level difference in perceived emotional and psychological well-being between married and non-married persons. Note that, as tested earlier, no significant differences were found in perceived social well-being between married and non-married persons. Results of this analysis showed that for emotional as well as for psychological well-being significant differences between married and non-married persons were found ( $T(1660)=5.01, p=0.00$ ;  $T(1660)=-2.70, p=0.01$ ). Married persons scored higher on emotional well-being ( $M=4.78, SD=0.91$ ) than non-married persons ( $M=4.55, SD=0.96$ ). However, non-married persons scored higher on psychological well-being ( $M=4.26, SD=0.96$ ) than married persons ( $M=4.12, SD=1.01$ ). These results suggest that married persons denote advantages concerning more general life satisfaction and positive feelings such as happiness, interest and pleasure in life (emotional well-being) over non-married persons. However, non-married persons seem to show better personal functioning (psychological well-being) than married persons. Secondly, two Independent-Sample T-Tests were used to test whether there is a mean-level difference in emotional and psychological well-being between never-married men and never-married women. Note that as tested earlier, no significant differences were found for social well-being between never-married men and never-married women. Results of this analysis showed no significant differences between never-married men and never-married women for emotional nor for psychological well-being ( $T(507)=-.13, p=.90$ ;  $T(507)=.31, p=.75$ ). These results imply no female-advantage in emotional nor in psychological well-being for never-married persons.

Finally, two multiple regression analyses were performed to explain the variance of emotional and psychological well-being by the variance of all aspects. In combination with all aspects, a greater satisfaction with social contacts, more faith in and satisfaction with institutions, greater amount of time spent with family and marital status were significantly associated with higher emotional well-being. Among the combination of all aspects, 'faith in institutions' had the greatest importance for emotional well-being ( $Beta=.38$ ) (Table 9). Overall, the combination of all aspects accounted 16% of variance of emotional well-being ( $Adjusted R Square=.16$ ). Concerning psychological well-being, in combination with all aspects, more faith in institutions and greater satisfaction with institutions, greater satisfaction with social contacts, greater amount of time spent with friends and a greater amount of time spent with family were significantly associated with higher psychological well-being. Among the combination of all aspects, 'faith in institutions' and 'satisfaction with social contacts'

were most important for psychological well-being (Table 10). Overall, the combination of all aspects accounted 9% of variance of psychological well-being (Adjusted R Square=.09).

Aspects mostly related to society/community (social attitude and social participation) were expected to be more connected to social well-being than to emotional or psychological well-being, whereas aspects less related to society/community (social contacts and marital status) were expected to be stronger related to emotional and/or psychological well-being than to social well-being (H7). Correlations of multiple regression analyses of social, emotional and psychological well-being with all aspects were used to test hypothesis 7. Results showed that, in combination with all aspects, social participation (with the exception of 'frequency of membership') correlated in fact higher with social well-being than with emotional or psychological well-being (Table 7, 9 and 10). However, contrary to the expectations, 'social attitude' correlated higher with emotional or psychological well-being than with social well-being. Furthermore, as expected, 'marital status' and social contacts (with the exception of 'time spent with neighbors) were stronger related to emotional and/or psychological well-being than to social well-being. Although overall correlations were low, most of the correlation differences between social, emotional and psychological well-being were comparatively distinct. Thus, Hypothesis 7 can be, at least partly, affirmed. Some of the aspects mostly related to society/community were stronger connected to social well-being than to emotional or psychological well-being, and most of the aspects less related to society/community were stronger related to emotional and/or psychological well-being than to social well-being.



Table 9

*Regression coefficients of social attitude, social participation, social contacts and marital status\* (N=1425)*

		B	Beta	Sig.
	Faith in institutions	.21	.38	.00
Social attitude	Satisfaction with institutions	-.11	-.14	.03
	Frequency of membership	.03	.06	.10
Social participation	Frequency of volunteering	.04	.04	.17
	Frequency of engagement	-.02	-.04	.25
	Satisfaction with social contacts	.17	.32	.00
Social contacts	Time spent with neighbors	.01	.02	.45
	Time spent with friends	.00	.00	.97
	Time spent with family	.06	.08	.00
Marital status	Marital status	-.06	-.11	.00

Adjusted R Square=.16

\*Dependent variable: emotional well-being

Table 10

*Regression coefficients of social attitude, social participation, social contacts and marital status\* (N=1425)*

		B	Beta	Sig.
	Faith in institutions	.17	.20	.00
Social attitude	Satisfaction with institutions	-.10	-.14	.05
	Frequency of membership	-.01	-.01	.77
Social participation	Frequency of volunteering	.04	.04	.16
	Frequency of engagement	.01	.02	.56
	Satisfaction with social contacts	.11	.20	.00
Social contacts	Time spent with neighbors	.03	.05	.09
	Time spent with friends	.05	.08	.01
	Time spent with family	.05	.07	.01
Marital status	Marital status	.02	.04	.16

Adjusted R Square=.09

\*Dependent variable: psychological well-being

#### 4. Discussion

To date, little is known about the contribution of aspects to social well-being. However, since the World Health Organization considered social well-being as having a great impact on the overall health of individuals (WHO,1948), investigating the aspects that might play a role in fostering social well-being gained more interest in the study of human mental health. The present study purposed to gain more insight in the effects of aspects associated with social well-being. Nationally representative data was utilized to investigate the linkage of marital status, social contacts, social participation and social attitude to social well-being. Moreover,

as most studies abstracted away from comparisons with all components of well-being, this study included emotional and psychological well-being as well to gain more insights into the relations.

#### *4.1 Marital status*

Contrary to the expectations, the analyses showed neither marriage advantages nor female advantages in never-married persons concerning social well-being. Although marriage has long been considered as social contract with many social advantages such as greater sense of permanence, belonging and purpose and larger social networks (Waite & Gallagher, 2000), it seems that today marriage no longer provides these advantages over non-married persons. Marital status seems to have no association with a person's optimal functioning in social life. One explanation could be a change in society's beliefs. As emancipation gained more acceptance, women became more interested in independence and in advancing in their jobs. Hence marriage became less important or at least has taken a back seat. Other explanations could be cultural and geographical differences. People from the United States may have different views on the importance of marriage than people from the Netherlands. As research differs in culture and geography, outcomes might result in contradictions. Moreover, as DePaulo and Morris (2005) pointed out, married as well as non-married persons benefit from having broad social networks, indicating that differences in marital status do not consequently result in differences in social well-being.

However, married persons scored higher on emotional well-being than non-married persons. These findings give further support for the notion that being married is related to more life satisfaction and happiness (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004). Marriage seems to be more important for general life satisfaction than for optimal functioning in society. Marriage is often seen as an important goal in life. As people achieve what they perceive as an important goal in life, they will consequently be happier and more satisfied with their lives. On the other hand, another possible explanation could be that people who are happier and more satisfied with their lives appear more attractive and thus are more likely to get married. However, non-married persons scored higher on psychological well-being than married persons, indicating that non-married persons show better personal functioning. One explanation could be that non-married persons are more independent than married persons, which enhances better personal functioning more than being dependent.

#### *4.2 Social contacts*

As expected, greater satisfaction with social contacts and a higher amount of time spent with friends and neighbors were related to higher social well-being. Among all aspects, one's satisfaction with one's social contacts was most important for social well-being. A positive view on other people, the ability to accept people as who they are and a good relation to the community are fundamental concepts of social well-being (Keyes, 1998). Thus, it is reasonable that satisfaction with one's social contacts and a good relationship with neighbors (by means of time spent with them) who are part of the community, is stronger associated with social well-being than relationship with family or friends (who are more associated with one's private life). As people have a good relationship to their neighbors, which are part of the community, it will logically lead to better functioning in society, because they will feel more appendant.

The fact that time spent with family correlated higher with emotional well-being than with social well-being, indicated that interaction with one's family is associated with general life satisfaction and feelings of happiness. This is in line with previous findings of Helliwell & Putnam (2004). Additionally, time spent with family correlated higher with psychological well-being than with social well-being, demonstrating that interaction with family is associated with optimal personal functioning as well. As Helliwell & Putnam (2004) noted, interaction with friends is more important for emotional well-being than interaction with family. Contrary to their findings, results of the present study showed that time spent with family was more associated with emotional well-being than time spent with friends. In fact, time spent with friends was found to be stronger associated with psychological well-being than with emotional well-being.

#### *4.3 Social participation*

In line with the expectations, higher social participation (by means of frequencies of engagement and volunteering) was related to higher social well-being. As interest in environment and social interaction and the achievement of activities and goals that are valuable for society, are important concepts of social well-being (Keyes, 1998), it is plausible that social participation is associated with social well-being. Volunteering, as a gratuitous activity with focus on advancement of common welfare, seems to represent the greatest interest in environment and can be seen as an activity that is mostly valuable for society. This might be an explanation for the fact that higher frequencies of volunteering are associated

with higher social well-being. The linkage between social participation and social well-being and the association of volunteering and engagement with social well-being gives further support for the notion of Albanesi, Cicognani & Zani (2006) who indicated the importance of sense of community and involvement in group activities for enhancing levels of connectedness to the community.

#### *4.4 Social attitude*

Social attitude, by means of faith in as well as satisfaction with institutions such as government, police, media, and economy, was positively connected to social well-being as well as to emotional and psychological well-being. Previous reports indicated that faith in others (friends, neighbors, family as well as the ones in authority e.g. police) was strongly associated with general life satisfaction (emotional well-being) (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004) which is in line with results of the present study. Additionally to that, the present results show that social attitude is even more associated with social well-being than with emotional or psychological well-being. Thus, social attitude is not only associated with general life satisfaction (emotional well-being) but with optimal personal functioning (psychological well-being) as well and even more with optimal functioning in society (social well-being). Additionally, a more positive social attitude (more faith in institutions) is associated with higher social well-being. As Keyes (1998) pointed out, the contribution and the belief that society has the potential for positive changes (implying a positive attitude towards society) are important concepts of social well-being, thus the positive correlations of social attitude to social well-being seems reasonable.

#### *4.5 Society/community relatedness*

The social context has a variety of facets, expanding from aspects very closely related to the person such as interaction with social contacts (family, friends and neighbors) to aspects more related to the society, including participation in community activities and the attitude towards society. Even the aspects in themselves expand from personally related to more society related, such as the interaction with social contacts. Interaction with family and friends is more personally related as they are part of ones private life. Neighbors on the other hand are part of ones community, indicating that interaction with neighbors is more society related. One would thus assume that as aspects get more society related, they will be more associated with social well-being. In combination with all aspects, social participation (with the

exception of ‘membership’) was in fact more connected to social well-being than social contacts. However, there were some contradictions: among the combination of all aspects, Social attitude was not significantly associated with social well-being and satisfaction with social contacts showed the greatest association with social well-being, although social contacts were seen as less society related. Although there are some contradictions concerning the most society related aspects and their relation to social well-being, the assumption that as aspects get more society related they will be stronger related to social well-being than aspects less related to society still remains plausible. The contradictions may be due to lacking representative questions.

#### *4.6 Comparison of results to emotional and psychological well-being*

Aspects mostly related to society/community (social attitude, social participation) were expected to be more connected to social well-being than to emotional or psychological well-being, whereas aspects less related to society/community (social contacts, marital status) were expected to be stronger related to emotional and/or psychological well-being than to social well-being. The present study shows that social participation (with exception of membership), which is an aspect more related to society/community, was stronger connected to social well-being than to emotional or psychological well-being. Furthermore, marital status and social contacts (with exception of time spent with neighbors), which are aspects less related to society/community and more related to the person, were stronger related to emotional and/or psychological well-being than to social well-being. Thus, as aspects of life get more society related they will be more important for social well-being than for emotional and psychological well-being and vice versa. It seems that there is in fact a considerable distinction between aspects related to social well-being and aspects related to emotional or psychological well-being. As Keyes (1998) noted, life remains divided into private and public sides, this is reflected in the distinction between aspects more related to social well-being and aspects more related to emotional or psychological well-being. However, there might be some overlap between aspects, making it more important to integrate all components of well-being when investigating aspects associated with social, emotional or psychological well-being.

## 5. Strengths, Limitations and Conclusion

The present study provides evidence for different associations of the aspects 'social attitude', 'social participation', 'social contacts' and 'marital status' with social, emotional and psychological well-being. However, there are a number of limitations to this study. Questions from the LISS panel, which were chosen for this study and considered as most closely to the aspect to investigate, may have been facile and consequently not fully representative for the aspects associated with social well-being. Social participation for example was assessed by asking whether the person was a member, a volunteer or engaged in a number of organizations. Future research may want to elaborate this aspect by distinguishing the degree of involvement (e.g. amount of hours someone volunteers in an organization). Furthermore, correlations of these aspects to social well-being were low and the combination of all of them accounts only 14% of variance of social well-being. One reason for that might be a poor measurement of the aspects or of social well-being. Moreover, this implies that there must be additional aspects in life associated with social well-being. For example, one interesting aspect may be societal ideals and someone's identification with them and their opinion about it. Another aspect may be the different forms of engagement in social organizations, e.g.: is involvement in political organizations more important for someone's social well-being than being involved in a sport club? It should be interesting for future research to add these facets to the list of aspects. Additionally, the present study examined correlations rather than predictions, future research may want to use longitudinal data to investigate whether the aspects are cause for or consequence of someone's perceived social well-being. Nonetheless, the present study was the first to compare associations between social aspects and social well-being with the connection of those aspects to emotional and psychological well-being. The present study not only shows that there is a connection between social attitude, social participation, social contacts, and social well-being but also that there are differences in relatedness of the aspects to the three components of well-being. This provides support for the importance to integrate all three components of well-being in future research, to better understand the relations between social aspects and a component of well-being.

## Appendix A

### Mental Health Continuum-Short Form

In the past month, how often did you have the feeling...

	Never	Once or twice	About once per week	Two or three times per week	Almost every day	Every day
...that you rejoiced? ( <i>EWB</i> )	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you were interested in life? ( <i>EWB</i> )	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you were satisfied? ( <i>EWB</i> )	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you added something important to the society? ( <i>SWB</i> )	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you were a part of a community? ( <i>SWB</i> )	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that our society gets better for people? ( <i>SWB</i> )	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that humans are in basically good? ( <i>SWB</i> )	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you understand how our society works? ( <i>SWB</i> )	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you liked most aspects of your personality?	0	1	2	3	4	5



<i>(PWB)</i>						
...that you could handle your common responsibilities? <i>(PWB)</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you had intimate relationships with other people? <i>(PWB)</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you get stimulated to grow or become a better person? <i>(PWB)</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that you confidently thought and expressed your own ideas? <i>(PWB)</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5
...that your life has a direction or purpose? <i>(PWB)</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix B

*Correlation coefficients among mean scores of social, emotional and psychological well-being*

	Social well-being	Emotional well-being
Social well-being		
Emotional well-being	.47*	
Psychological well-being	.64*	.60*

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Descriptive Statistics of social, emotional and psychological well-being*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Social well-being	3.33	1.01	1662
Emotional well-being	4.67	.94	1662
Psychological well-being	4.19	.99	1662

## Appendix C

*Correlation coefficients among satisfaction with and amount of time spent with social contacts (family, neighbors and friends)*

	Satisfaction with social contacts	Time spent with family	Time spent with neighbors
Satisfaction with social contacts			
Time spent with family	.09*		
Time spent with neighbors	.21*	.23*	
Time spent with friends	.25*	.28*	.40*

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Descriptive Statistics of satisfaction with and amount of time spent with social contacts (family, neighbors and friends)*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Satisfaction with social contacts	7.40	1.76	1532
Time spent with family	4.78	1.34	1535
Time spent with neighbors	3.65	1.78	1504
Time spent with friends	3.99	1.51	1522

**Appendix D**

*Correlation coefficients among 'membership', 'volunteering' and 'engagement'*

	'membership'	'volunteering'
'membership'		
'volunteering'	.13*	
'engagement'	.64*	.37*

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Descriptive Statistics of 'membership', 'volunteering' and 'engagement'*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
'membership'	1.53	1.50	1559
'volunteering'	.45	.86	1559
'engagement'	3.15	2.24	1559

## Appendix E

### *Component Matrix: Faith in institutions\**

	Component
	1
Faith in Dutch government	.80
Faith in Dutch parliament	.83
Faith in legal system	.76
Faith in police	.71
Faith in politicians	.84
Faith in political parties	.83
Faith in European parliament	.77
Faith in United Nations	.74
Faith in media	.55
Faith in army	.61
Faith in education system	.65
Faith in health care	.66
Faith in science	.62
Faith in economy	.73
Faith in democracy	.75
Faith in stores	.59
Faith in online stores	.50

\*50.11% of variance explained by the factor

## Appendix F

### *Component Matrix: Satisfaction with institutions\**

	Component 1
Satisfaction with Dutch government	.84
Satisfaction with Dutch parliament	.86
Satisfaction with legal system	.80
Satisfaction with police	.72
Satisfaction with politicians	.86
Satisfaction with political parties	.85
Satisfaction with European parliament	.79
Satisfaction with United Nations	.75
Satisfaction with media	.61
Satisfaction with army	.67
Satisfaction with education system	.68
Satisfaction with health care	.69
Satisfaction with science	.65
Satisfaction with economy	.75
Satisfaction with democracy	.79
Satisfaction with stores	.64
Satisfaction with online stores	.53

\*54.72% of variance explained by the factor

### *Correlation coefficients among faith in institutions and satisfaction with institutions*

	Satisfaction with institutions
Faith in institutions	.93*

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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