

Abstract

By using the Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) approach and adopting the two data sets from the World Value Survey—1981-84 and 1990-93 (World Values Study Group, 1994), a cross-cultural model of subjective well-being (SWB) was established in this study. Several cultural characteristics, including GNP growth, human rights, hygienic environment, and individualism-collectivism (I-C), were found to moderate significantly the relations between different domains of life satisfaction and SWB at the individual level. Most of these moderating effects could be explained by Maslow's need theory. The direction of the moderating effect of I-C on the relation between family satisfaction and SWB at the individual level was unexpected. Cross-time stability of the model was also examined. The individual level SWB was significantly predicted by different domains of life satisfaction, including family satisfaction, job satisfaction, financial satisfaction, perceived health, and perceived controllability across time, whereas the relations between the individual level SWB and different life satisfaction domains were not consistently moderated by the cultural characteristics at different time periods. Theoretical implications of these findings are discussed.