

Proactive Orientation and Individual Activism as Causes of Personal Achievement and Subjective Well-Being

Progress Report
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Research Questions

- *Primary research question:*
 - What are the *cause-and-effect connections* among **proactive orientation, individual activism, personal achievement** and **subjective well-being**?
- *Secondary research questions:*
 - Are there *cause-and-effect influences* among the constructs?
 - If the causal influence exists, what are the *directions of cause-and-effect influences* among the constructs?
 - What are the *degrees* of these influences?
 - Are there *differences in degrees of these causal influences* between countries of core, semiperiphery, and periphery?
 - What are the *degrees* of these differences?

Theoretical Framework: Sociology (1)

- Interplay between social structure and personality in the M. Kohn's theory (1999):
 - **Occupational self-direction** – the use of initiative, thought, and independent judgment in work
 - In general, individuals with higher social-stratification and class positions possess a greater occupational self-direction which leads to *lesser distress*
- Proactive work behavior from the perspective of S.K. Parker & C. G. Collins (2010):
 - **Proactive behavior** includes active adjustment, using one's initiative, expressing voice, charge to bring about change, proactively solving problems and implementing ideas etc.
 - Proactive individuals perform their core tasks better so they experience a considerable *career success*

Theoretical Framework: Sociology (2)

- In search of sources of happiness R. Inglehart, R. Foa, C. Peterson, and C. Welzel (2008) found out that:
 - Levels of economic development, religion, tolerance to out-groups, and democracy positively influence the level of *subjective well-being*
 - The key intermediate mechanism is the enabling people to have a wider **free choice**
- C. Welzel and R. Inglehart (2010) have proved that:
 - There is a positive link between **emancipatory values** and **agentic life strategies**, as well as between **agentic life strategies** and **life satisfaction**
 - And the notion that the very **self-actualization** leads to greater **subjective well-being** is even stronger statement compared to ours (that the results of individual activism in a form of personal achievement contributes to higher subjective well-being)

Theoretical Framework: Psychology

- Theory of learned optimism of M. Seligman (2006):
 - **Learned optimism** is about the skill of learning how to think more optimistically during failure; it is an explanatory style so it can be learned
 - Optimists tend to perceive defeat as temporary, local and defined by external circumstances; confronted by a bad situation, they perceive it as a challenge and try harder; thus they succeed more at school, work, and sports, in addition to a better health
- M. Argyle (2001) suggests a theory of happiness:
 - **Happiness** relates to positive emotions and life satisfaction measured as **subjective well-being**
 - Apart from physiological factors, communication with others, arts, relaxation, religions, application of skills, success and social approval bring joy – an apparent indicator of happiness
 - Simultaneously, family life, money, quality of life, social values and norms, social relations, living conditions, health, and work lead to satisfaction

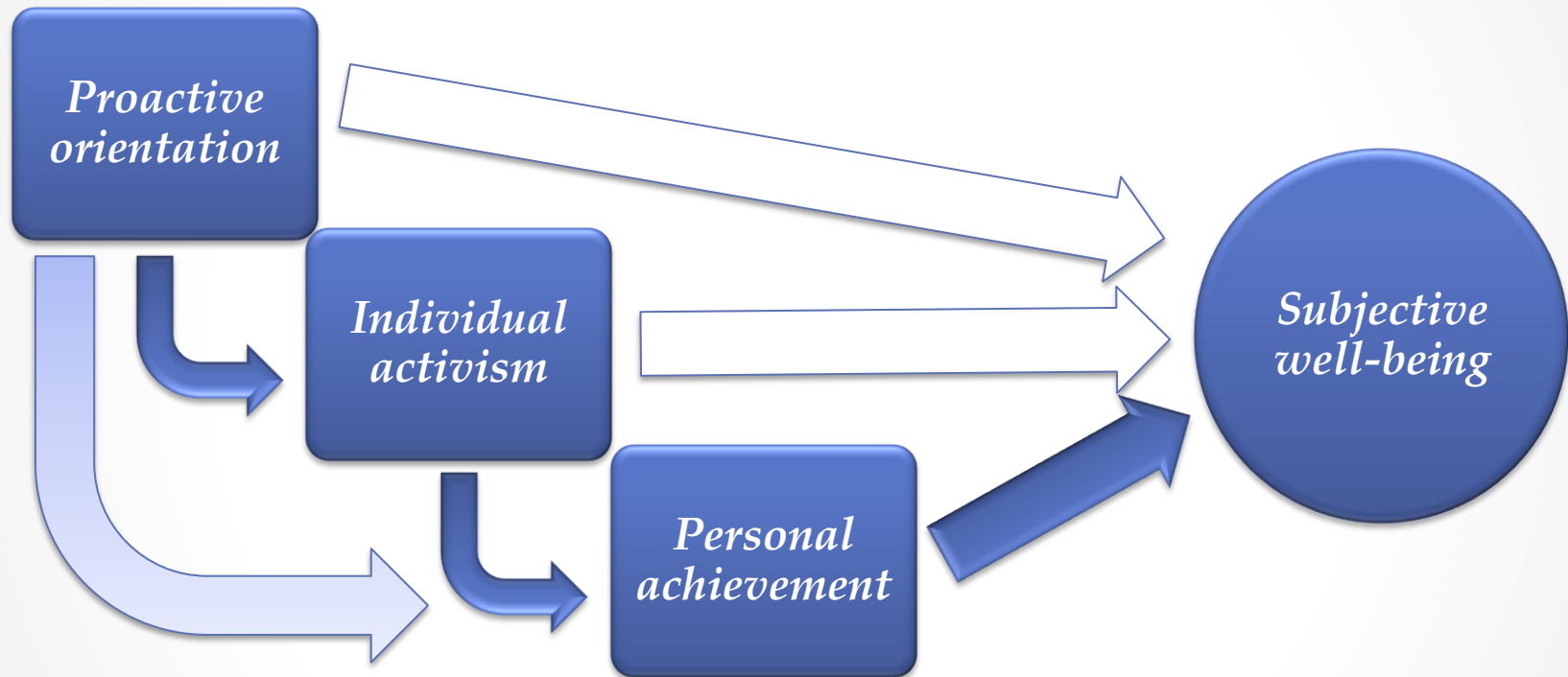
Theoretical Framework: World-Systems (1)

- It is described by J. W. Meyer, J. Boli, G. M. Thomas, and F. O. Ramirez as macrorealist one (1997):
 - The approach tends to view nation-state as a product of global systems of economic and political power
 - The benefit of such perspective lies in understanding of each structural part in the world-system and cultural consequences of that fact
- World-systems approach by I. Wallerstein (2004):
 - Economic agents in **core regions** create quasi-monopolies and oligopolies and effectively protect them with the support from strong core states
 - Therefore economic agents in **semi-periphery** and **periphery** have less opportunities for winning a substantial share of world markets
 - Citizens of core states enjoy a higher **quality of life** also have more opportunities for protection of rights and promotion of interests

Theoretical Framework: World-Systems (2)

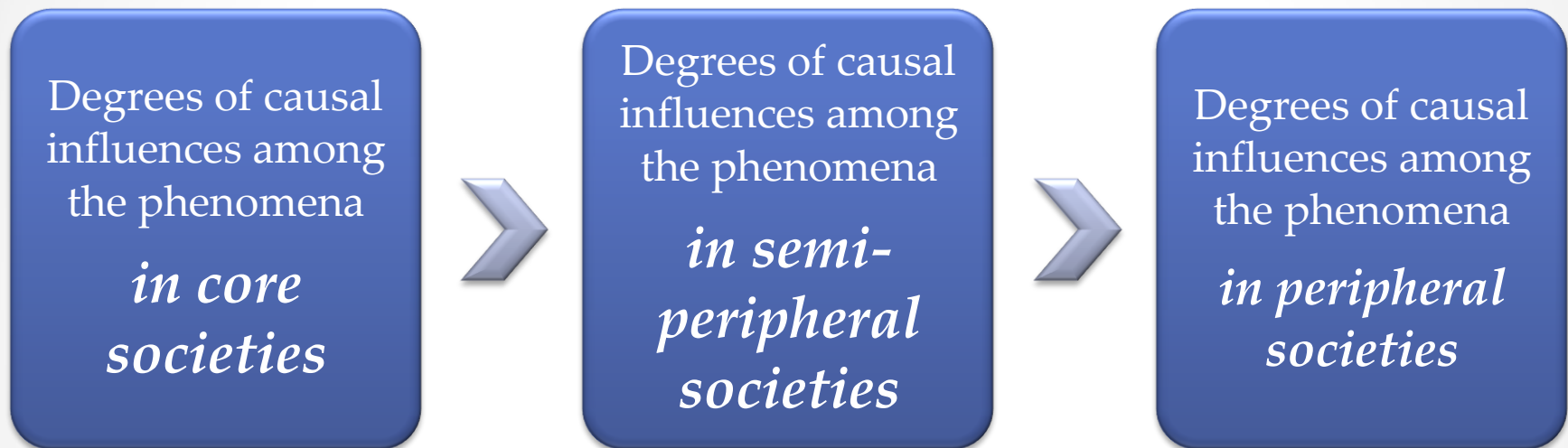
- This implication conforms to the thesis of C. Welzel and R. Inglehart (2010):
 - Economically advanced societies impose *permissive existential conditions with multiple opportunities to thrive*, which require *emancipative values and agentic strategies*, which in turn lead to a feeling of *fulfillment* – a basis for a sense of well-being
- Global inequality findings of L. Beer & T. Boswell (2002):
 - An “expanding universe” model – correlation between international and intranational inequality:
 - Economic inequality is substantial and it has increased in the last quarter of the 20th century *between individuals within nations, between nations and between individuals of the world*

Conceptual Model and Hypothesis 2



- H2: Person's **proactive orientation** has a direct influence on **personal achievement**; while **proactive orientation** and **individual activism** have a direct influence on **subjective well-being**

Conceptual Model and Hypothesis 3



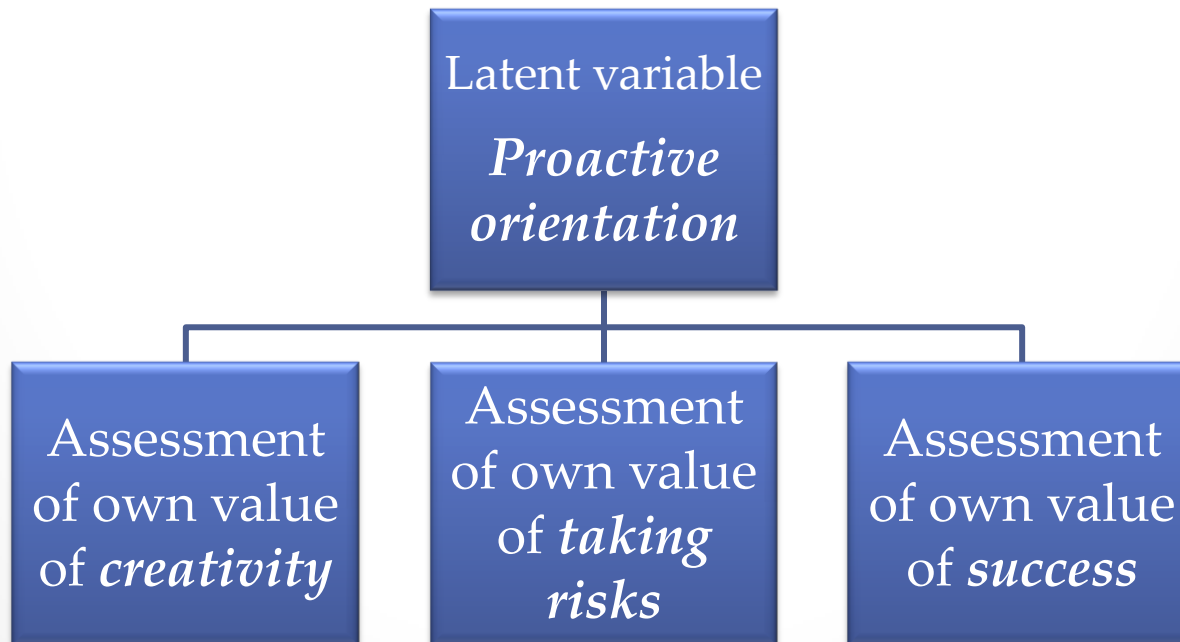
- H3: Degrees of causal influences among proactive orientation, individual activism, personal achievement and subjective well-being are higher in **core societies** than in **semi-peripheral societies**, and in semi-peripheral societies are higher than in **peripheral societies**

Methodology, Data, and Sample

- *Data collection methodology* is the use of secondary population **survey data**
- *Data collection methods* include standardized **face-to-face interviews** or standardized face-to-face **CAPI** interviews
- The *data sets* of **World Values Survey** 5th wave (2005-2009) were used for the inquiry
- The *sample* includes **49 countries** with up to **69,381 respondents**
 - All national samples are representative for the adult populations of the respective countries
 - Each national sample is 1000 respondents or more
- In addition to total sample 3 aggregate *subsamples* were analyzed:
 - Countries of core, semiperiphery, and periphery

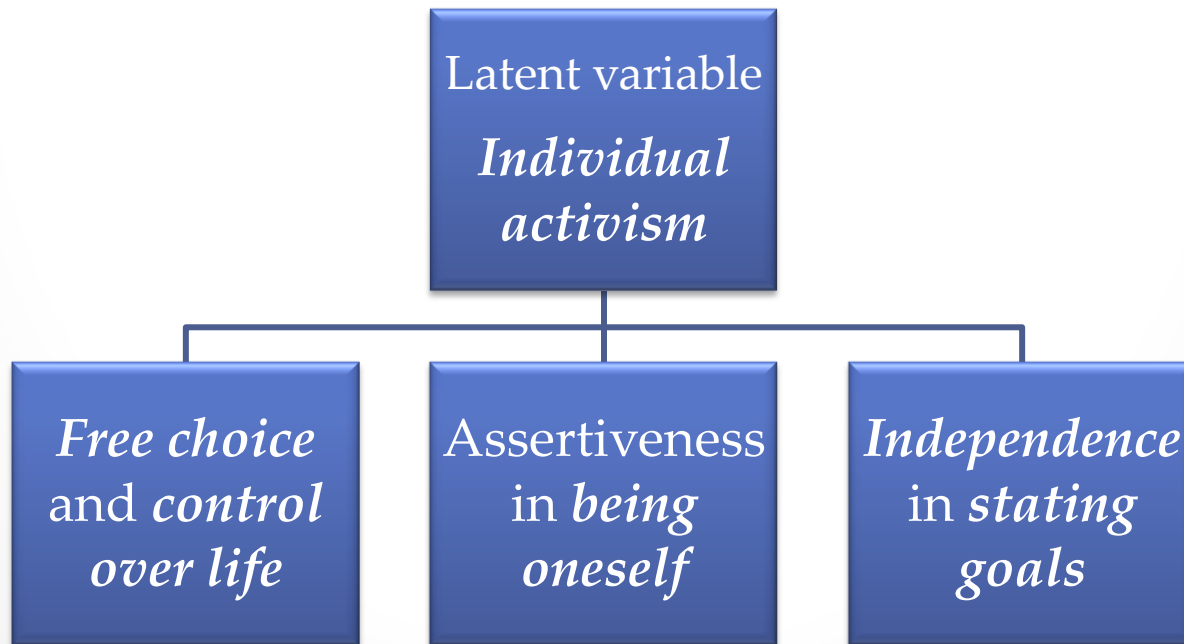
Proactive Orientation Measurement

- The most relevant indicators for the **proactive orientation** construct include:
 - Normative values of creativity, of adventure and taking risks, and of success as indirect indicators of person's own proactive orientation:



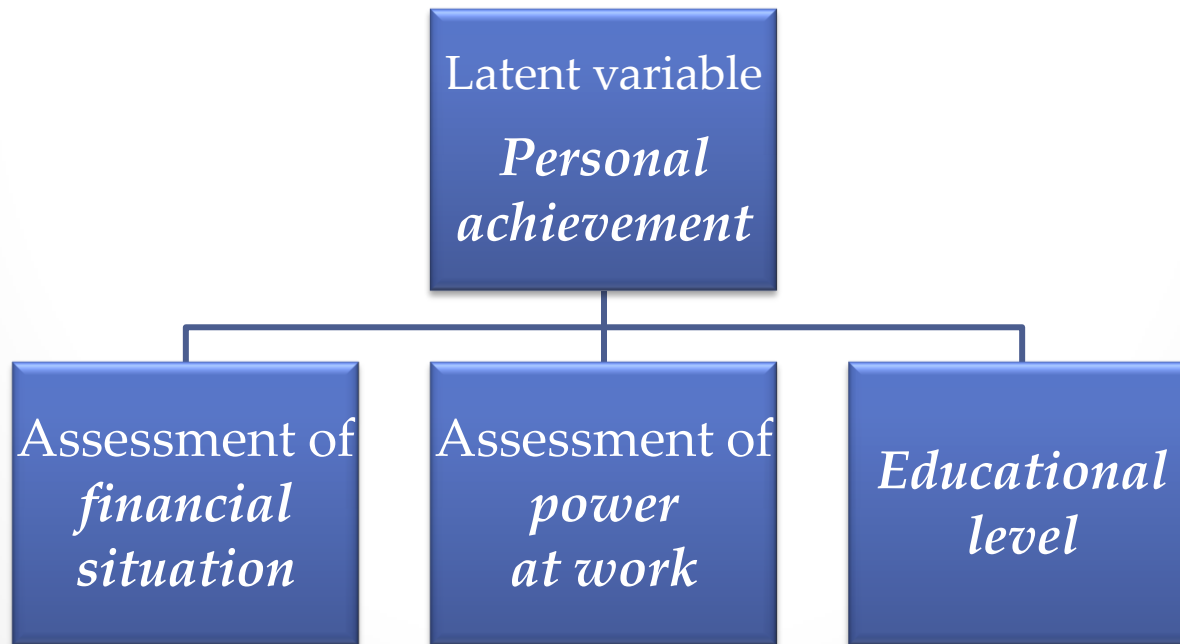
Individual Activism Measurement

- The indicators selected to measure **individual activism** construct comprise:
 - Evaluation of own *free choice and control over life*, *assertiveness in being oneself*, and *independence in stating goals*



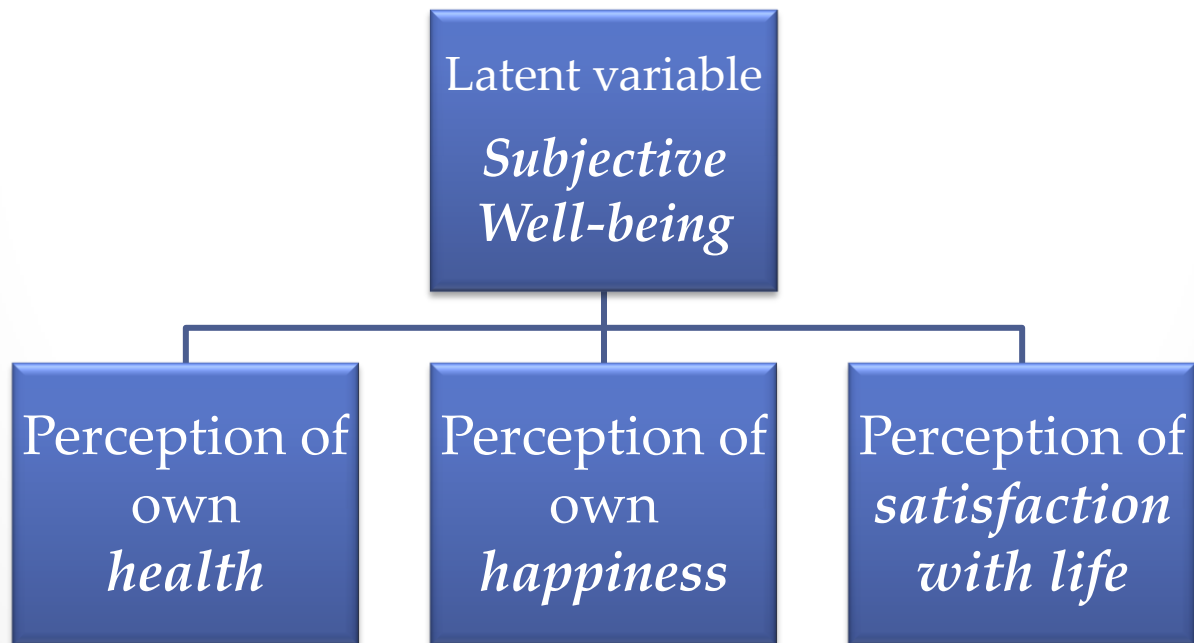
Personal Achievement Measurement

- In order to have a kind of all-embracing measurement, **personal achievement** construct includes:
 - Assessment of *financial situation*, *power at work*, and *educational level*



Subjective Well-being Measurement

- The measurement of **subjective well-being** construct includes
 - perception of own *health*, *happiness*, and *satisfaction with life*



Societies of the Three World-System Zones

- Sorting of societies for the structural zones according to their PPP GNI per capita values (WB and IMF data):

Core	Semiperiphery	Periphery
(over \$29,500 PPP GNI pc)	(over \$8,500 PPP GNI pc)	(lower \$8,500 PPP GNI pc)
Andorra, Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States	Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Cyprus, Malaysia, Mexico, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey	Burkina Faso, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Mali, Moldova, Morocco, Peru, Rwanda, Thailand, Ukraine, Vietnam, Zambia

Data Analysis Methodology

- To estimate causal influences among proactive orientation, individual activism, personal achievement and subjective well-being, reflected in the first and in the second hypotheses, **a structural equation modeling in MPlus 6.12** with continuous and categorical indicators using WLSMV estimator was done
 - *STDXY standardized coefficients were used for analysis*
- To evaluate the model fit the following tests were used:
 - *Chi-Square model of fit test, R^2 , RMSEA, WRMR, SRMR, AIC, BIC, CFI, TLI*
- To examine the third hypothesis the **multiple group analysis in MPlus 6.12** with continuous and categorical indicators using WLSMV estimator was performed
- As it was discovered in the analysis, there is a non-linear statistical relationship between PPP GNI per capita and the degrees of causal influences between the constructs. Therefore, in contrast to the regular two-level analysis utilizing PPP GNI per capita as an independent variable, the multigroup analysis turned out to be a more accurate and fruitful method of analysis, slightly reducing statistical power, but gaining explanatory power

SEM for the Entire Sample: Alternatives

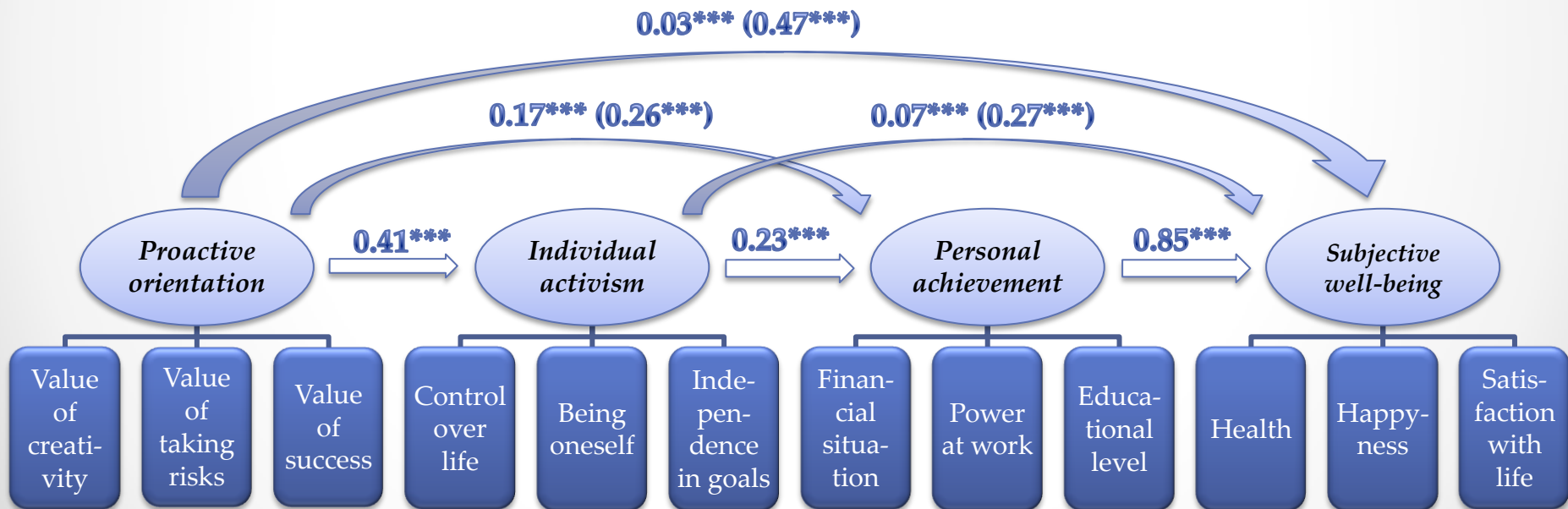
- Some alternative models:
 - **Statistical control** of independent socio-demographic variables on subjective well-being:
 - Standardized regression coefficient for biological sex $b_1 = -0.04$, and for age $b_2 = -0.01$, so there is some influence, but such model has smaller CFI (0.80 vs. 0.84) and TLI (0.75 vs. 0.78)) than the principal one; a model considering type of settlement produced no convergence
 - **Comparison** of country-specific models:
 - In search for more detailed differences we planned to compare country-specific models, but the convergence levels were low
 - **Two-level SEMs** with 0-1 links fixed:
 - Probably due to small direct influence of proactive orientation and individual activism on subjective well-being models including them on both levels demonstrate low convergence levels
 - **Two-level SEMs** including the between-level PPP GNI variable:
 - Hypothetically due to nonlinear influence of PPP GNI the model with this independent variable has been unidentified

Two-level SEM with 2 Links Fixed

- The two-level SEM modeling results:
 - *This model fit is ambivalent:*
 - Chi-Square model of fit test P-Value<.001, RMSEA = 0.14, WRMR = 33.32, subjective well-being R^2 within = 0.78, R^2 between is unidentified, SRMR within = 0.05, but SRMR between = 0.20, CFI = 0.83, TLI = 0.78
 - *The model produced somewhat **contradictory results**:*
 - At first glance, it looks like some effects are better explained with this model: some within-level links are stronger than one-level model shows
 - However, according to some tests the *two-level model* is worse than one-level model: RMSEA is higher (0.14 vs. 0.08) and between-level WRMR is higher (0.20 vs. 0.06)
 - This model makes it impossible to consider direct effects of proactive orientation and individual activism, has too high RMSEA and thus should be declined

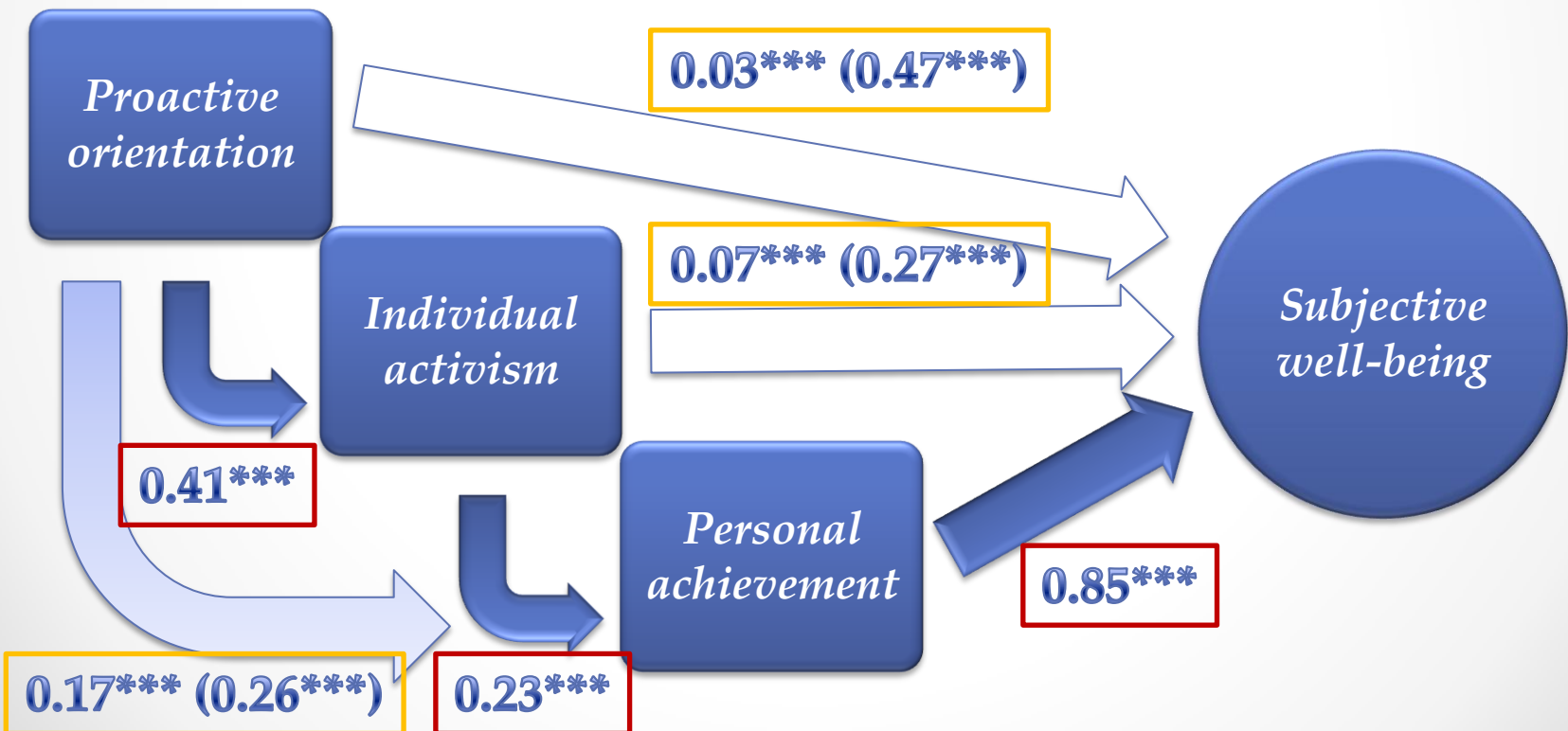
Model Graph for SEM for the Entire Sample

- The SEM modeling results:
 - Entries are standardized regression coefficients
 - Direct effects are given first and total effects second (in parentheses)
 - Significance levels: * $p < .10$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$



Model Graph for SEM for the Entire Sample

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SEM for the Entire Sample: Results

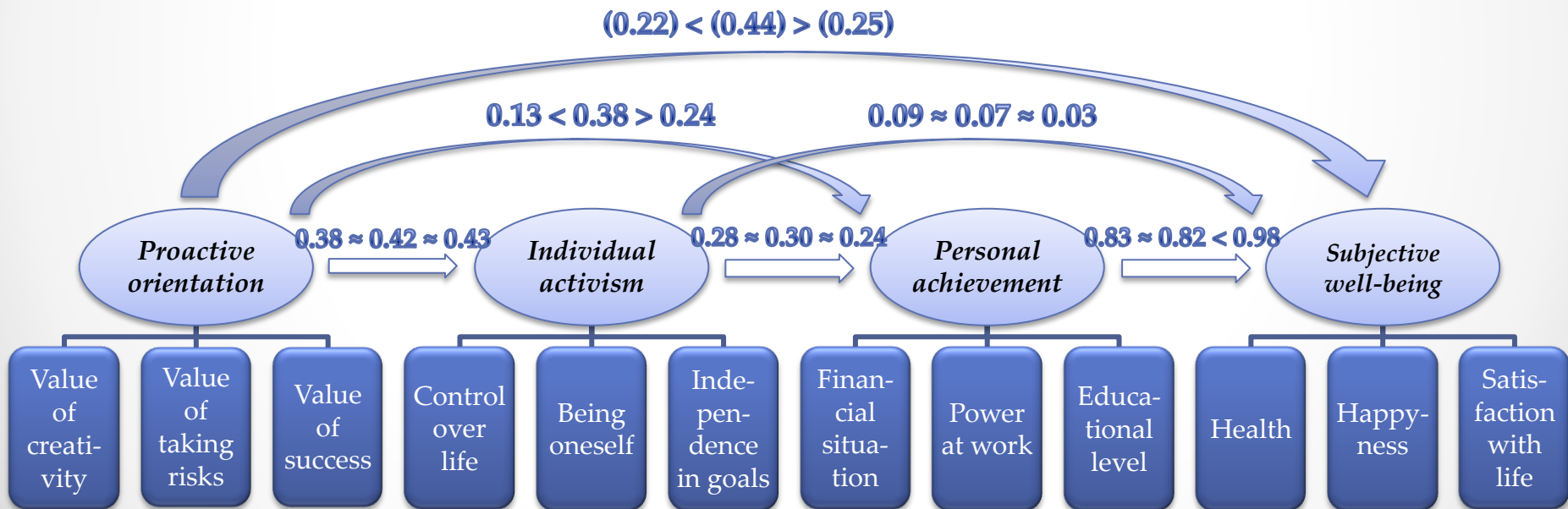
- The SEM modeling results:
 - *There is a reasonable model fit:*
 - Chi-Square model of fit test P-Value<.001, RMSEA = 0.08, SRMR = 0.06, CFI = 0.84, TLI = 0.78, Subjective well-being $R^2 = 0.77$
 - **Hypothesis 1 has been fully confirmed:**
 - person's high proactive orientation leads to intense individual activism, which promotes high level of personal achievement and thus contributes to higher subjective well-being
 - **Hypothesis 2 has been partially confirmed:**
 - person's proactive orientation does have a direct influence on personal achievement
 - proactive orientation and individual activism have a direct though tiny influence on subjective well-being

Explanations of the General Results

- The obtained results give answers to the questions raised, so our explanations are the following:
 - Proactive orientation does lead to individual activism, individual activism does lead to personal achievements, and personal achievements do contribute a lot for subjective well-being – so the conception in general is confirmed
 - Influence of proactive orientation and individual activism on subjective well-being seems to operate contrary to some statements of the theories of emancipative values and agentic strategies (Welzel and Inglehart, 2010) – it is not that much their influence by themselves, but the influence mediated by activities and their results

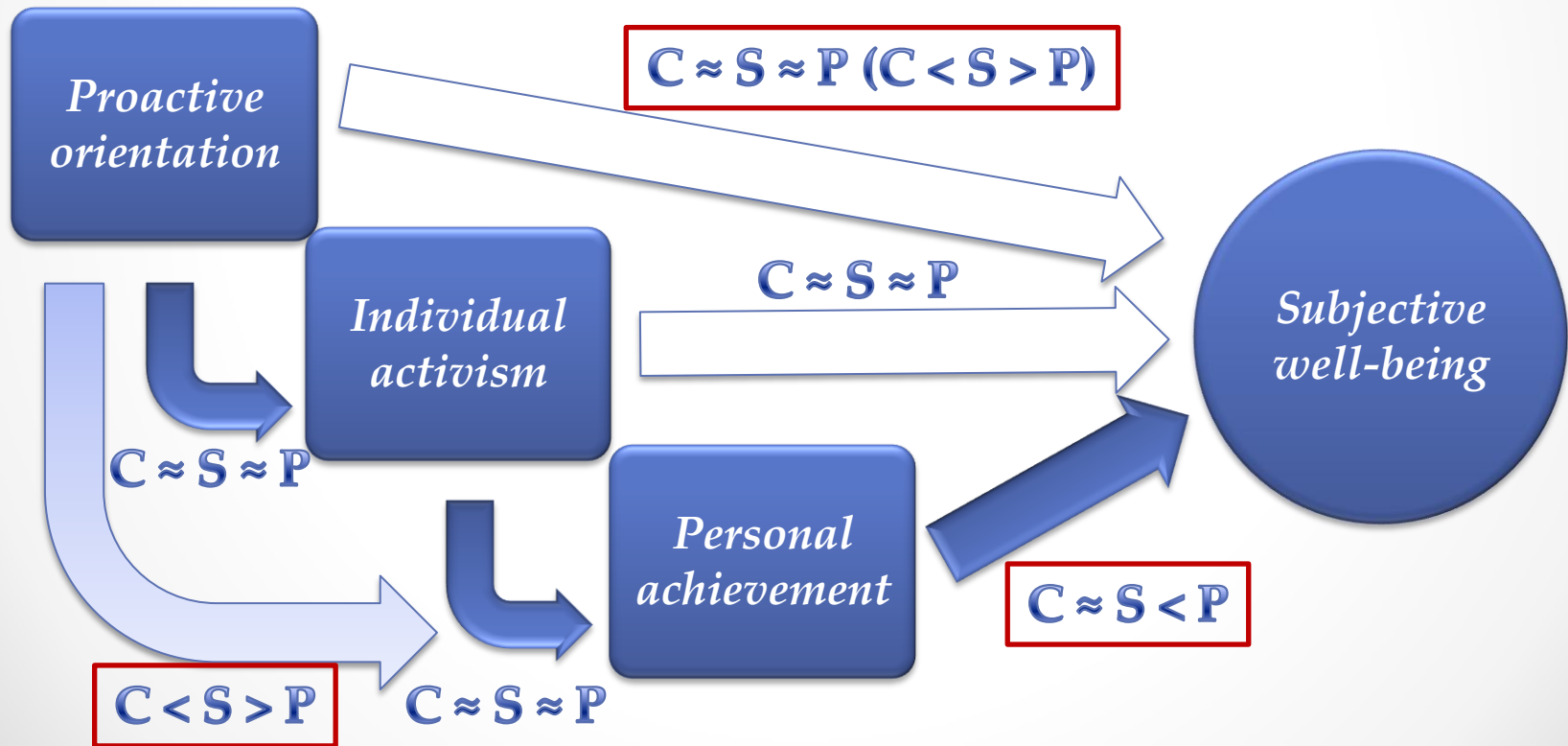
Model Graph of SEM for the 3 Zones (1)

- The SEM modeling results:
 - Entries are standardized regression coefficients
 - Direct effects are given first and total effects second (in parentheses)



Model Graph of SEM for the 3 Zones (2)

- The SEM modeling results:
 - C – Core, S – Semiperiphery, P – Periphery
 - Direct effects are given first and total effects second (in parentheses)



SEM for the Three World-System Zones

- The SEM modeling results:
 - *There is a reasonable model fit:*
 - Chi-Square model of fit test $P\text{-Value} < .001$, RMSEA = 0.085, SRMR = 0.08, subjective well-being R^2 periphery = 0.99, R^2 semiperiphery = 0.72, R^2 core = 0.73, CFI = 0.74, TLI = 0.70
 - **Hypothesis 3 has been rejected:**
 - There are *relatively small differences* between degrees of influences of proactive orientation on individual activism and of individual activism on personal achievement in the 3 world-system zones
 - Positive influence of person's *personal achievement* on *subjective well-being* is the strongest in the periphery and is weaker in the semiperiphery and in the core
 - Moreover, the degree of positive direct influence of person's *proactive orientation* on *personal achievement* and total influence on *subjective well-being* is the strongest in the semiperiphery and is weaker in the periphery and in the core

Explanations of the Zones Results

- The obtained results illuminate several important regularities:
 - Degrees of influence of proactive orientation on individual activism, of individual activism on personal achievement, and of individual activism on subjective well-being are strikingly similar across all zones, so probably this is a kind of *psychological and structural universal*
 - Higher degrees of influence of personal achievement on subjective well-being might mean *the higher importance of socially accepted external attributes connected with status* in the periphery, compared to *self-expression values* in other zones
 - Higher degrees of direct influence of *proactive orientation* on *personal achievement* and of total influence on *subjective well-being* in the semiperiphery compared to other zones probably signifies that in that zone social structure is more open to change and person's proactive orientation does matter more there

Thank you for your attention!