

Discrimination and Subjective Well-being: The Moderating Effects of **Agentic** Value Orientations

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Sense of Agency

Evolved mental capacity to “comprehend, predict, and alter the course of events”

Bandura 2008, p. 15.

Self awareness and agency



Unique Human Potential

Sense of Agency¹:

- Intentionality
- Forethought
- Self-reflectivity
- Self-reactivity

¹ Bandura 2005, 2006.

Multi-level Concept of Agency

- Individual
 - Proxy
 - Collective modes of agency
-
- Bandura 2000; 2006

Agentic Value Orientations

- Temporal dimensions and self-reflexivity¹
- Individual and cultural levels²

- “historical cultural, and personal variability of agentic orientations” (Emirbayer and Mische 1998; p. 973).

- ¹Hitlin and Elder 2007; Hitlin and Kirkpatrick Johnson 2015; Sewell 1992
- ²Welzel and Inglehart 2010

Question 1

- So what? Why should we care about agentic orientations?

Agency and Well-being

- “imaginative recomposition and critical judgment” through which individuals can “reframe their relationships to existing constraints” (Emirbayer and Mische 1998; p. 1010).

→ Discrimination

- Help people transform the challenges posed by situational factors such as stigma and discrimination.¹
- Inspire maximizing useful strategies that can help actors take opportunities and meet their needs.²

¹Berger 2008

²Welzel and Inglehart 2010

Individual vs. Cultural

- Forms and levels of agency are formulated within the range of culturally available resources¹
- Cultural value orientations : An external and latent normative system²
- Distinction between individual motivations vs. cultural opportunities or constraints provided by social contexts. ³

¹Sewell 1992

²Schwartz 2009; 2014a; 2014b

³Schwartz 2014a; 2014b

Question 2

- What good is collective agency?

Collective Agency and Well-being

- Help people accomplish goals they cannot on their own through coordinating, cooperating or challenging inter-relationships¹
- Greater levels of national level agency²:
 - a) a wider variation in available useful strategies to choose from
 - b) an increasing empowerment of people over institutions and domination → collectively pressure over social institutions

¹ Bandura 2000

² Welzel 2014; Welzel and Inglehart 2010

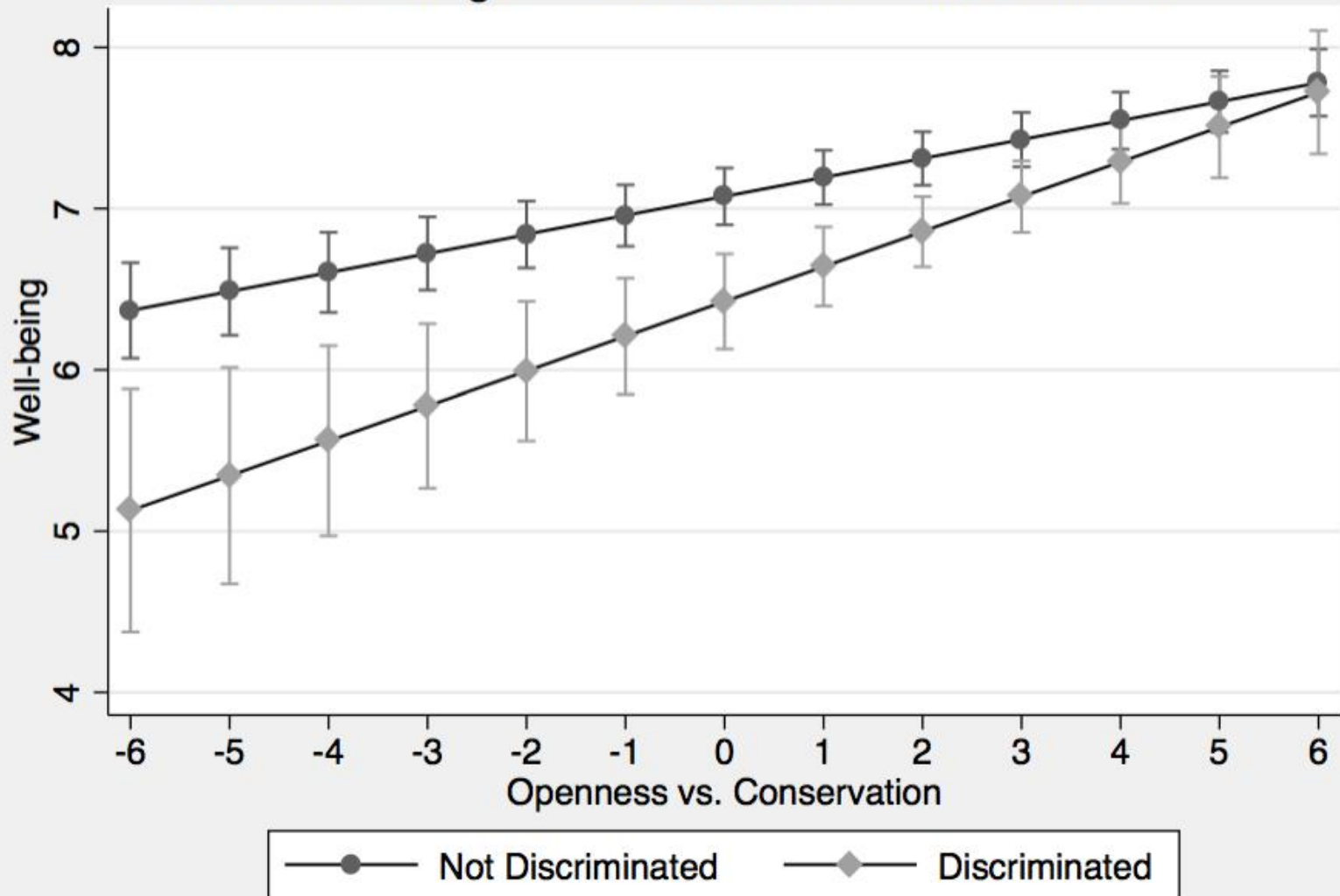
Research Focus

- Do agentic values at the individual and cultural level moderate the relationship between discrimination and well-being?

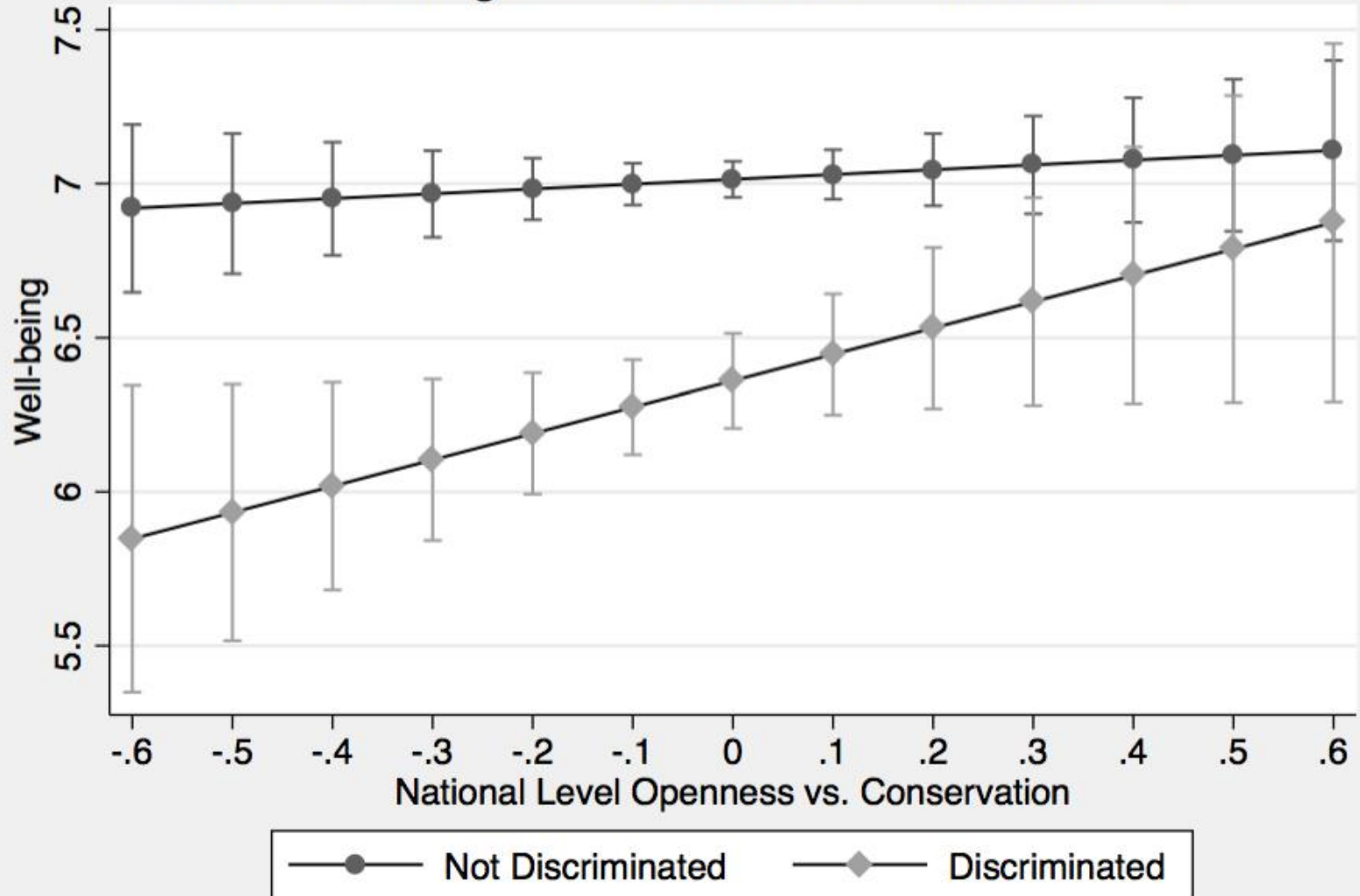
Initial Investigations

- European Social Survey Round 6 (2012):
- 29 countries: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Iceland, Italy, Kosovo, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Kingdom.
- Multi-level regressions: subjective well-being (life satisfaction + happiness)
- Key independent: Discrimination + Schwartz values (openness vs. conservation)
- Control for: feelings about household income, education, employment status, ethnic minority status, religiosity, sociability, gender, age, Gini, GDP

Predictive Margins of Discrimination with 95% CIs



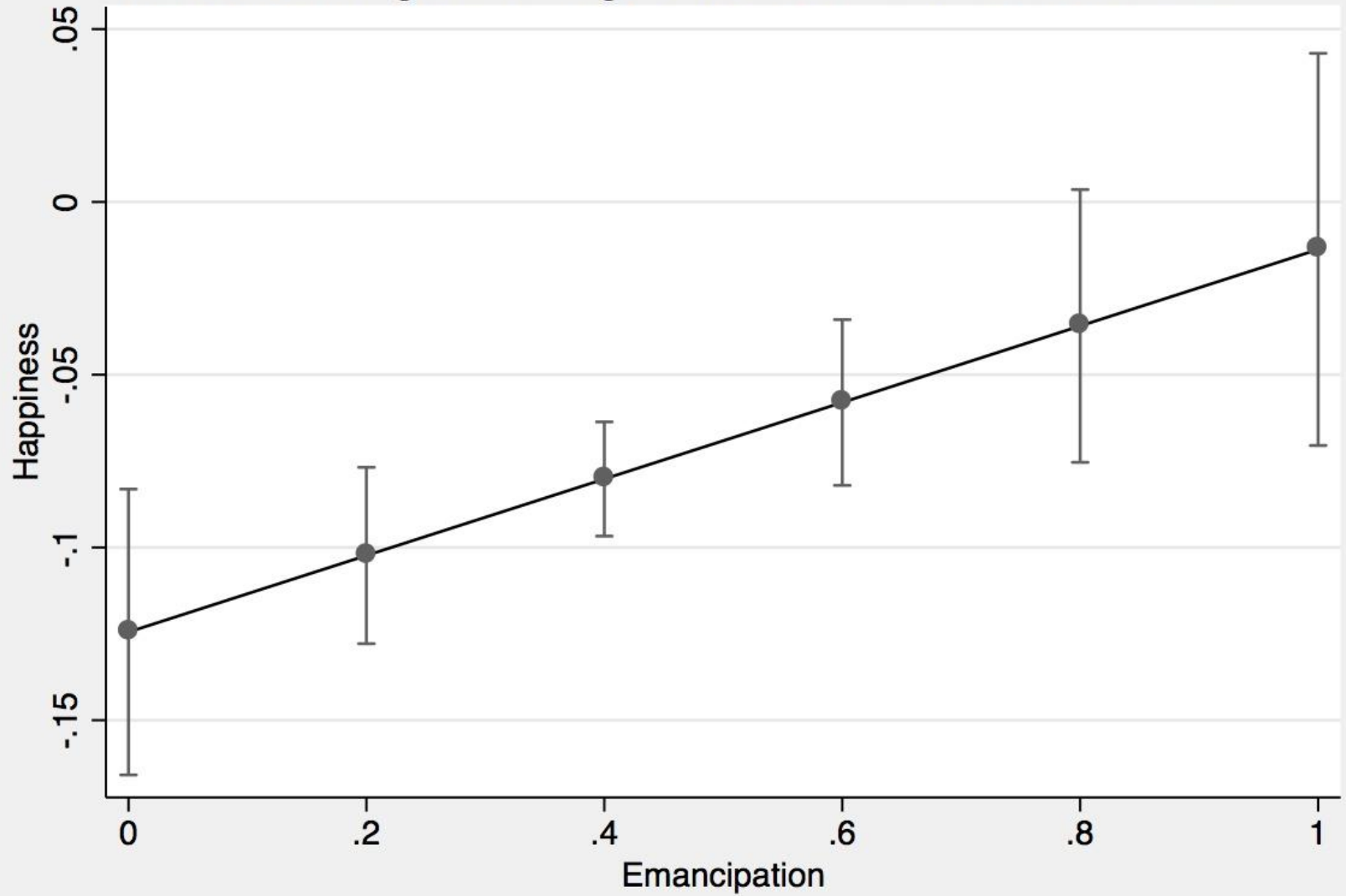
Predictive Margins of Discrimination with 95% CIs



Continued Investigations

- WVS: 2014-2014
- 59 countries: Belarus, China, Azerbaijan, Japan, Armenia, Germany, Uzbekistan, Slovenia, Poland, Taiwan, Thailand, Ukraine, Estonia, Rwanda, Turkey, Colombia, Zimbabwe, Singapore, Spain, Netherlands, Kazakhstan, Uruguay, Australia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Tunisia, Romania, Qatar, South Korea, Chile, United States, Cyprus, New Zealand, Ghana, Trinidad, Russia, Argentina, Peru, Palestine, Kyrgyzstan, Ecuador, Jordan, Sweden, Iraq, Nigeria, Brazil, Mexico, Algeria, Yemen, Kuwait, Libya, Philippines, Morocco, Pakistan, Egypt, Bahrain, India, South Africa, Lebanon
- Multi-level regressions: happiness
- Key independent: Frequency of racism at neighborhood + Emancipation
- Control for: feelings about household income, education, employment status, ethnic minority status, religiosity, sociability, gender, age, Gini, GDP.

Predictive Margins of Neighborhood Racism with 95% CIs



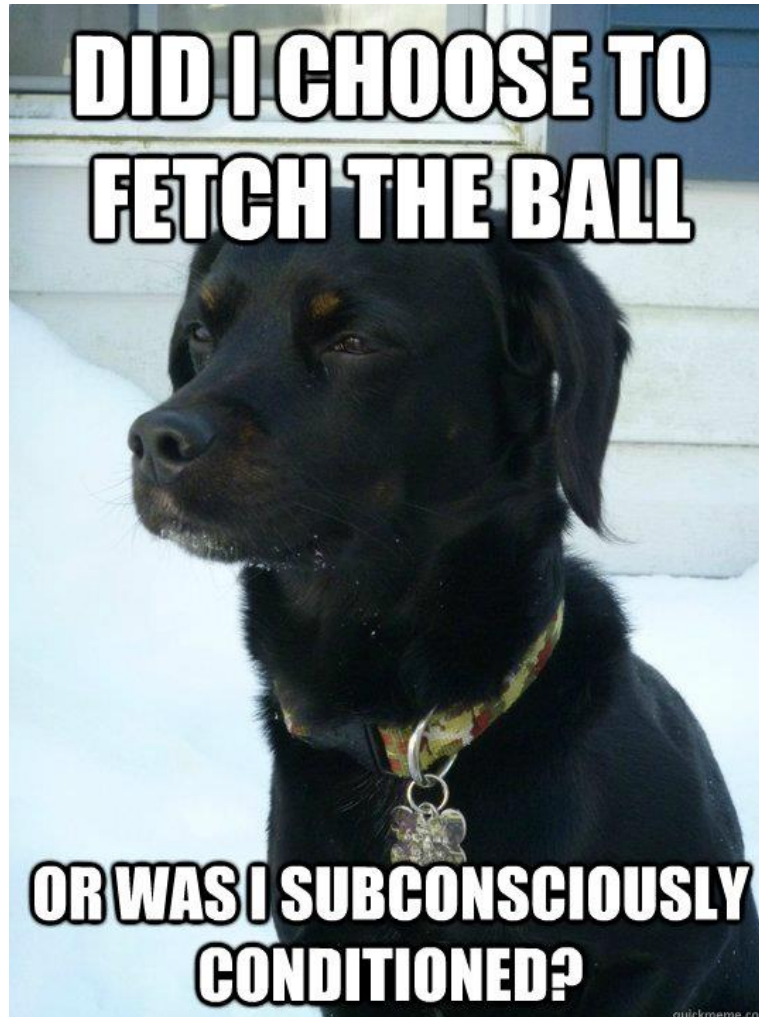
Conclusions/Implications

- An important link between human potential, negative life events and well-being.
- An empirical tool that is generalizable beyond specific groups.
- Promote well-being among socially disadvantaged groups/communities by providing opportunity structures for agentic values.

Concluding Questions:

- How to operationalize agentic orientations?
 - Self-actualization, self-esteem, transformability/adaptability
- How to operationalize discrimination?
- How exactly do agentic orientations help people cope with negative experiences?
- Agency at the individual and cultural levels have different implications?
- Cross-cultural variations in agency?

THANK YOU!



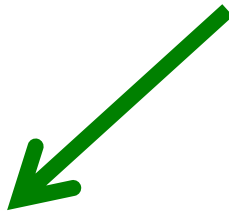
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Agency – Cultural Evolution



???

Environmental complexities/pressures

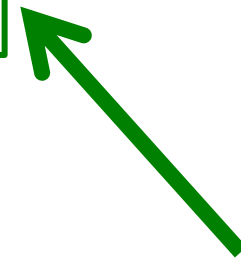


Functionally adaptive capacities for agency:

- use/understand symbols
- abstract thinking
- executive functioning



Human development, adaptation and change



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