



Migration and well-being in the context of Slovak university students

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Background

- Contextual determinants of well-being and health are well recognized and are known to vary in different countries and different cultures. Moreover, the current intensity of brain drain makes understanding of the factors which contribute to intentions for moving to another country among young population very important for both, developing relevant theories and providing evidence for relevant policies.
- This study narrows its focus on the contest of Eastern Europe and addresses the well-being of Slovak university students with the focus on perceived autonomy and its role with respect to their intentions to emigrate.

Materials and methods

Sample

- The sample used in the analysis consisted of 375 students (Mean age = 22.9; SD = 3.0; 75.5% women) studying in Slovakia.

Measures

- Autonomous functioning** was measured by the Index of Autonomous Functioning scale (Weinstein et al. 2012) which measures three aspects of inter-individual differences in the tendency to function in autonomous way: Self-congruence/Authorship (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.80$) Interest-taking: (Cronbach's $\alpha= 0.81$) and Susceptibility to control (Cronbach's $\alpha= 0.60$).
- Family autonomy support** was measured by three separate sub-scales: promotion of autonomous thought, which consists of six items (Silk et al., 2003), promotion of autonomous decision-making consisting of five items (Grolnick et al., 1997) and a scale assessing pressure to spend time with family consisting of six items ($\alpha=0.70-0.88$) (Manzi et al., 2012)
- Well-being** was assessed by the SWLS (Satisfaction with Life Scale) (Diener et al., 1985) ($\alpha=0.84$).
- Emigration intentions** were measured by a five-item measure capturing different reasons for going to live abroad ($\alpha=0.87$).

Statistical analyses

- The data were analyzed by using regression analyses in SPSS 21.0.

Results

- The findings showed that emigration intentions were positively associated with autonomy support from the family ($\beta=0.194$; $p<0.001$) but negatively associated with well-being ($\beta=-0.237$; $p<0.001$).
- Further exploration failed to find evidence that well-being and autonomy constructs interact suggesting their independent influence.

Table 1 Linear regression of autonomy, autonomy support and life satisfaction against emigration intentions

	B	SE	β	t	p
(Constant)	16.358	3.186		5.134	.000
AUTHORSHIP-SELF-CONGRUENCE	.031	.097	.018	.320	.749
SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CONTROL	-.122	.086	-.079	-1.421	.156
INTEREST-TAKING	.068	.079	.049	.867	.387
FAMILY AUTONOMY SUPPORT	.122	.037	.194	3.317	.001
FAMILY PRESSURE	-.044	.038	-.058	-1.152	.250
LIFE SATISFACTION	-.305	.063	-.237	-4.854	.000

Note $F(8,366)= 5.228$ $p<0.001$; $R^2= 0.103$; analysis controlled for gender and age

Conclusion

- The present findings suggest that while autonomy and well-being are theoretically interrelated their relationship toward emigration intentions seems to be independent and in opposite directions. While this study detects the nature of the pattern in the explored relationship, further research is needed to address this question in more detail.

References

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