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School-related satisfaction of children in 15 countries: Is school one world or two worlds, from the perspective of children?

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What contributes to school satisfaction? (I)

Tomyn & Cummins (2010) using a sample of N=351 Australian adolescents, 12 to 20 y.o. found that:

- Only four of the nine items in Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers & Harris, 1969) were shown to contribute significant unique variance to *school satisfaction*.

  ➤ *Satisfaction with your teachers at school*

  ➤ *Satisfaction with your abilities at school*

  ➤ *Satisfaction with your safety at school*

  ➤ *Satisfaction with you behaviour at school*

- *Satisfaction with your friends at school* did not make a significant contribution to *satisfaction with school*.

- *Satisfaction with classmates* displayed a negative beta.

What contributes to school satisfaction? (II)

The failure of these two items to contribute to school satisfaction can be considered highly unexpected, as there is cumulative research evidence to show how important friends and classmates are during this age period and how they influence children's school outcomes (Sun-Keung, 1999; Baker et al., 2003; Proctor, Linley and Maltby, 2009; Stiglbauer et al., 2013).

Does school satisfaction contributes to overall life satisfaction? (I)

Casas et al (2013) using two samples of adolescents aged 13-16 from Romania and Spain (N = 930 + 1,945 = 2,875) found that when regressing 6 school-related satisfaction items together with the PWI items on a single-item scale of Overall Life Satisfaction (OLS):

- *Satisfaction with your life as a student* [highest β (.149) and unique explained variance (1%)] and *satisfaction with your relationship with school peers* made significant contributions (p<.001).

- *Satisfaction with the school you attend* made a modest contribution (p=.004).

- *Satisfaction with achievements in your studies* and *with things you have learned* did not reach significance, and *Satisfaction with your relationships with teachers* displayed a negative beta.

Does school satisfaction contributes to overall life satisfaction? (II)

- Apparently, according Casas et al. (2013), in children's eyes and in the two countries, "life as a student" captures what happens inside and outside the school space in relation to "attending school", including *satisfaction with schoolmates* and *satisfaction with school learning*, while for many children *satisfaction with school* only refers to what happens inside the physical school space.

- That may explain why *Satisfaction with school* often displays a much lower contribution to OLS than expected. While at times it may be highly correlated with *satisfaction with schoolmates*, depending on contextual circumstances, they may also function as "two different worlds".

Does school satisfaction contributes to overall life satisfaction? (III)

Casas et al (2014) using three samples of adolescents aged 12-16 from Brazil, Chile and Spain (N= 1588; N= 843; and N= 2900) and the same 6 school-related satisfaction items, found that:

- *Satisfaction with your life as a student,* and *satisfaction with your relationship with school peers* made significant contributions to OLS (p<.001) .

- *Satisfaction with achievements in your studies* (p=.003) and *satisfaction with the school you attend* (p.=.023) made very modest contributions.

- *Satisfaction with your relationships with teachers* did not reach significance and satisfaction *with things you have learned* displayed a negative beta.

School: A life domain? (I)

- From an adults' perspective it seems there is no doubt that school is an important domain in children's lives. In fact it is included as a life domain in several domain-based psychometric scales to assess subjective well-being, such as MSLSS and BMSLSS.

- However, in some other scales it is not included, such as the PWI-SC.

- In Tomyn & Cummins (2011) using an Australian sample it is demonstrated that school satisfaction contributes with 1% unique explained variance to overall life satisfaction between 12 and 20 years of age, proposing to add such a new item to the PWI-SC.

School: A life domain? (II)

- Casas et al. (2013) using the said sample from two countries proposed to add to the PWI the item *Satisfaction with my life as student*, instead of *Satisfaction with school*, because its contribution is higher, but particularly because of its capacity to conciliate the "two school worlds".

- Casas et al. (2014) reached the same conclusion with a sample of 4 different countries.

- We adults usually conceiving school as only ONE world. However, from children's perspective school may be thought of as **TWO separated worlds**: the world of relationships with peers and the world of relationships to learn – particularly when one of the two worlds is clearly less satisfactory then the other.

Children's Worlds 12yo group database

	11 years old	12 years old	13 years old	14 years old	Total
Algeria	612	251	151	67	1081
Nepal	0	970	0	0	970
Estonia	29	870	115	2	1016
Spain	87	1329	240	32	1688
Colombia	0	927	0	0	927
Turkey	106	805	52	0	963
Ethiopia	68	491	321	74	954
South Korea	0	2534	0	0	2534
Germany	49	373	393	17	832
England	0	620	619	5	1244
Israel	380	193	8	0	581
Romania	166	1064	181	20	1431
Norway	2	644	284	1	931
Poland	23	513	433	0	969
South Africa	0	1095	0	0	1095
Total	**1522**	**12679**	**2797**	**218**	**17216**

CFA School satisfaction items
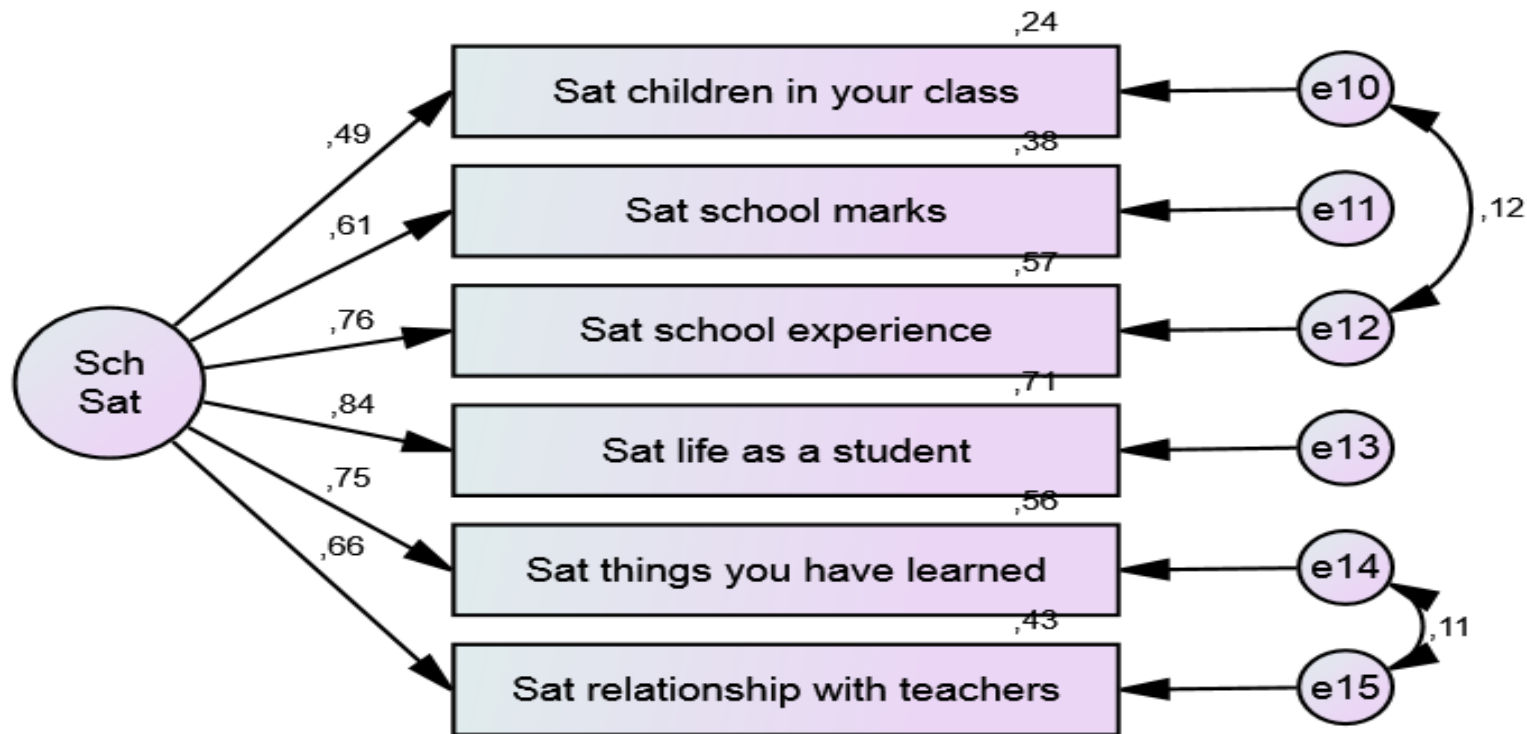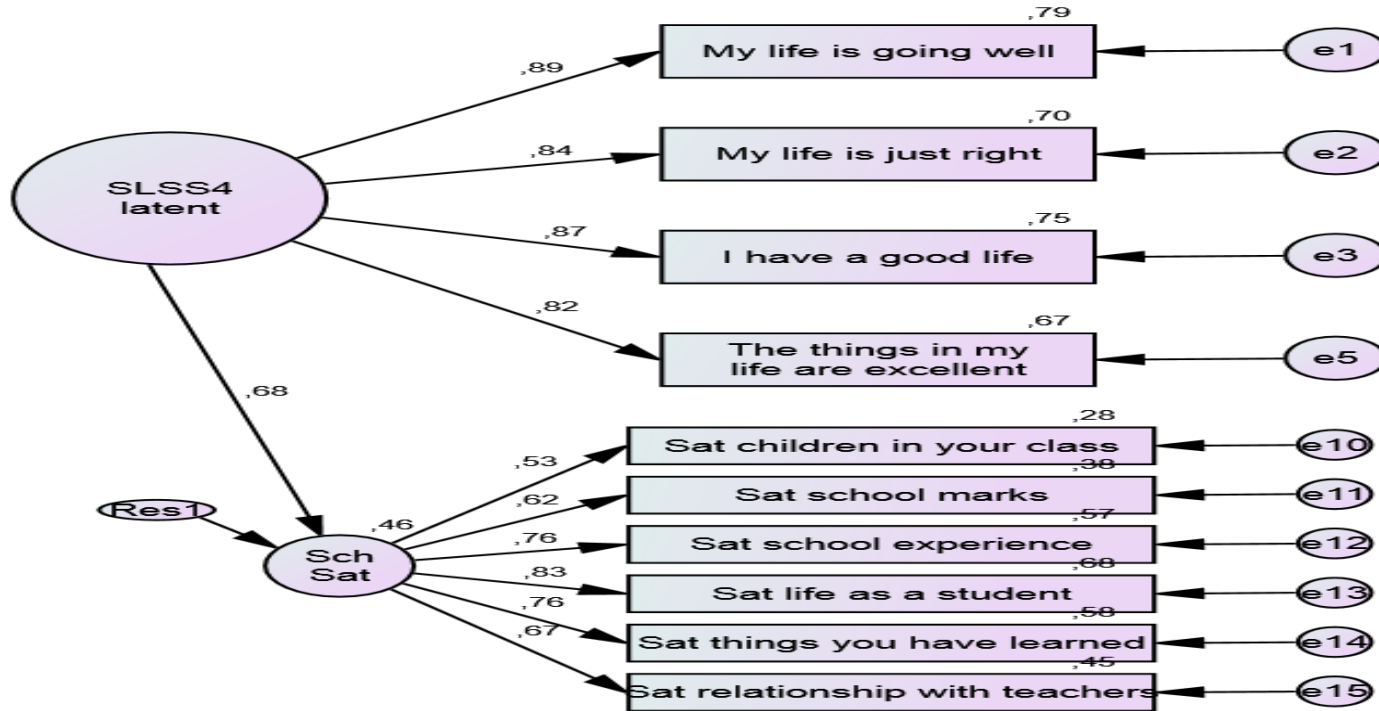

CHI=94,786;CFI=,998;RMSEA=,027; SRMR=.009

Contribution of school-related satisfaction items to SWB (using OLS) in 15 countries. Regression weights.
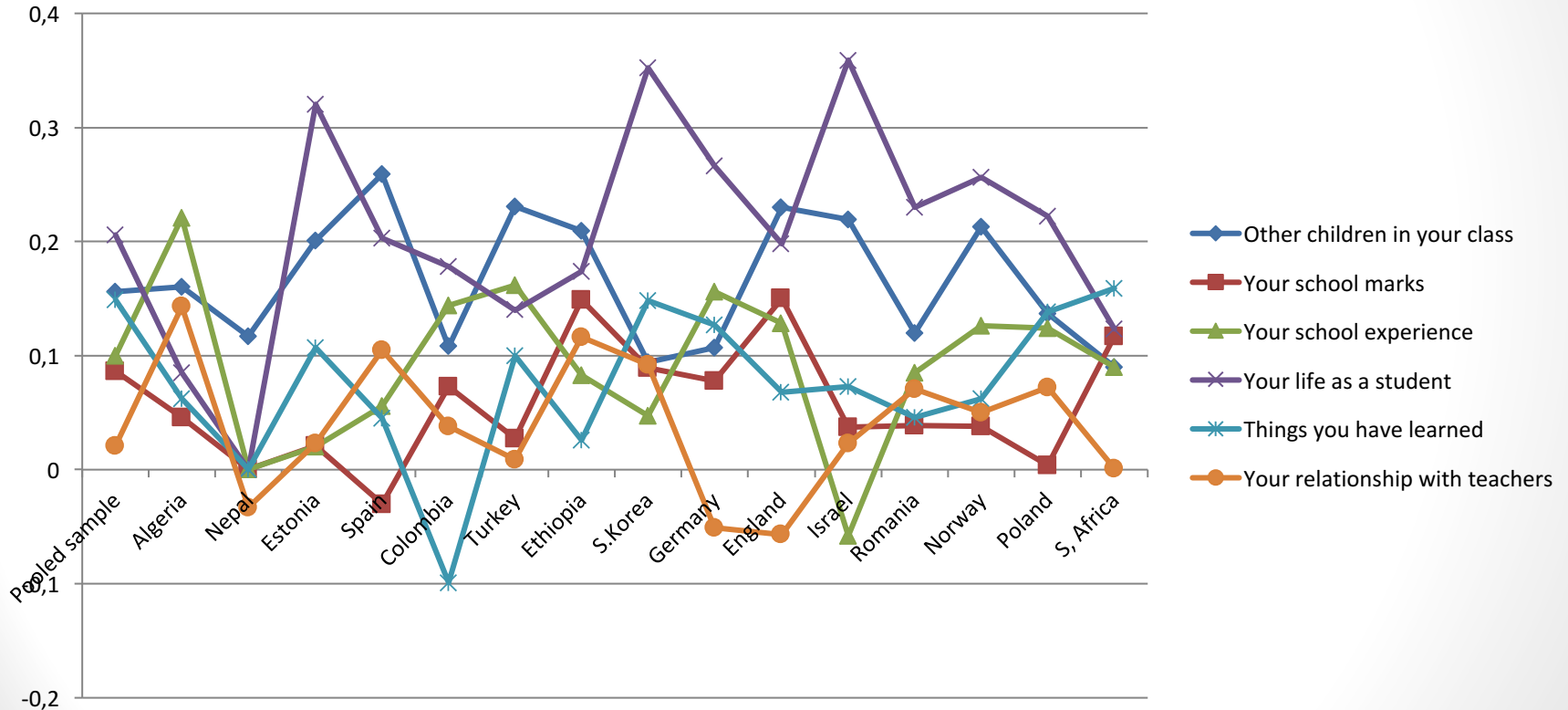
Contribution of school-related satisfaction items to SWB (using OLS) in 15 countries
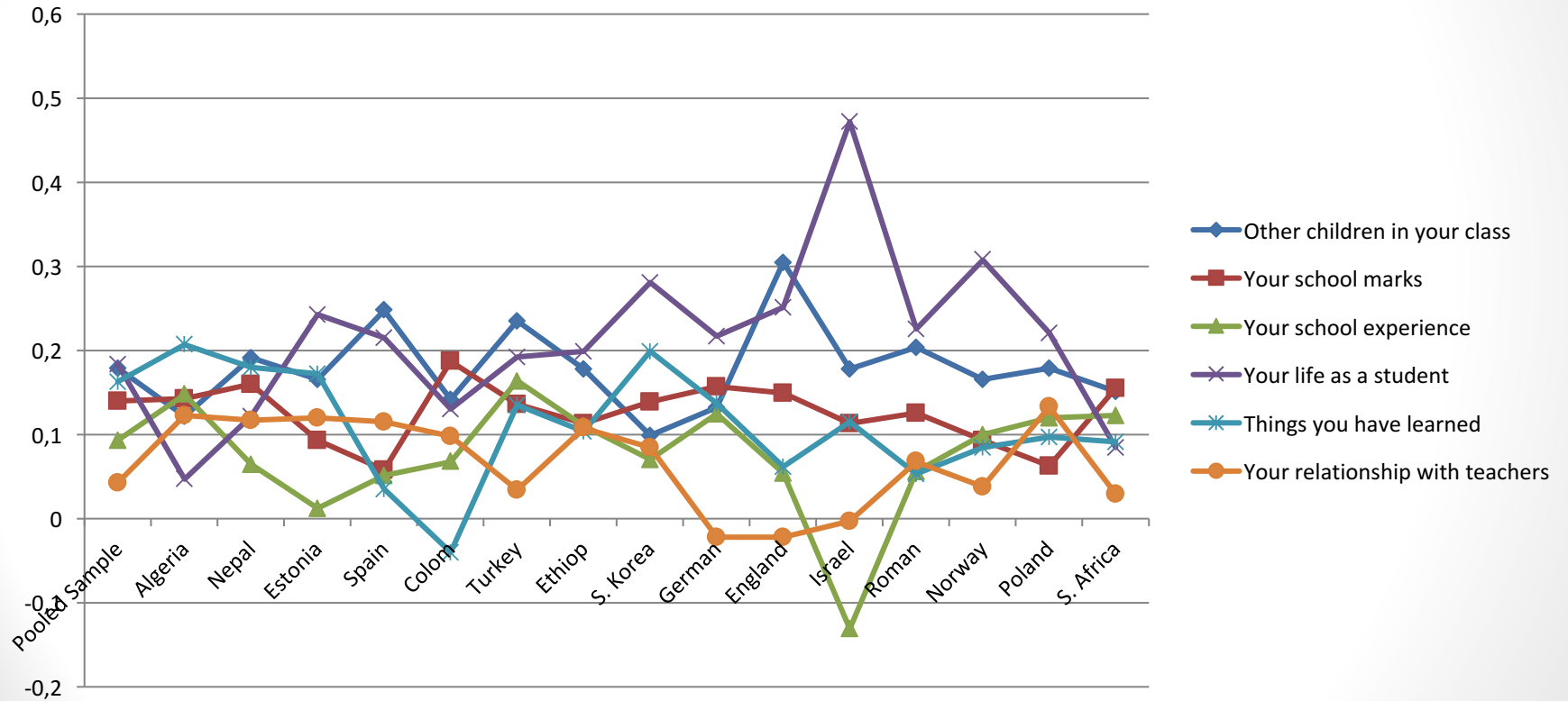
Satisfaction with….	Significant p>.001	Significant p> .05	Non-significant	Negative
Other children in your class	All other 12 countries	Colombia Germany South Africa		
Your relationships with teachers	Algeria Spain Ethiopia South Korea	Romania Poland	Estonia Colombia Turkey Israel Norway South Africa	Nepal Germany England
Things you have learned	Nepal South Korea South Africa	Estonia Turkey Germany Poland	Algeria Spain Ethiopia England Israel Romania Norway	Colombia
Your school marks	Nepal Ethiopia South Korea England South Africa	Germany	Algeria Estonia Colombia Turkey Israel Romania Norway Poland	Spain
Your school experience	Algeria Turkey	Nepal Colombia & other 7 c.	Estonia Spain South Korea	Israel
Your life as student	All other 13 countries	Algeria Nepal		

School Satisfaction (1 latent variable) related to SWB (Indicator=SLSS)
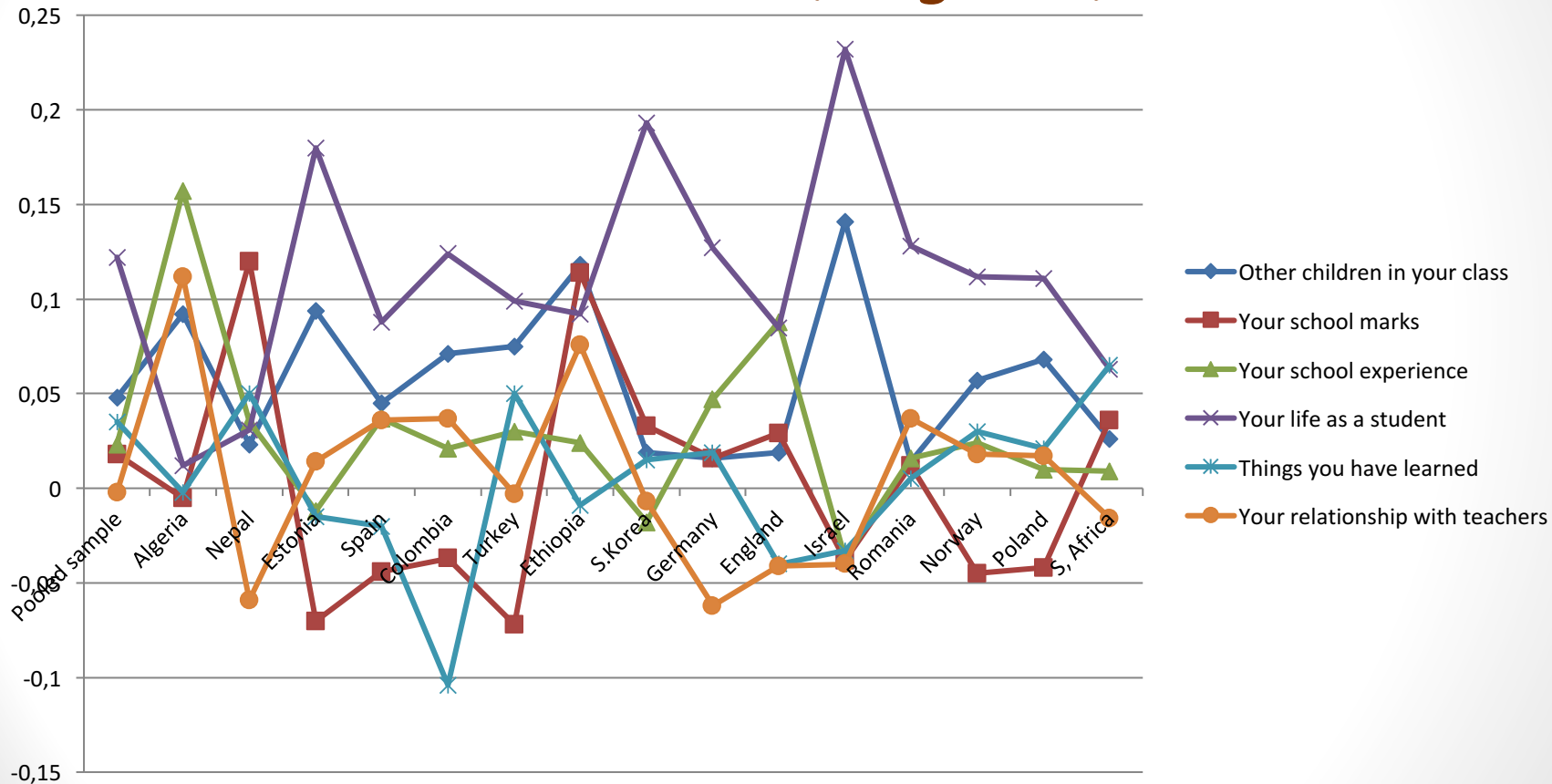

CHI=1065,843;CFI=,989;RMSEA=,042; SRMR=.025

Contribution of school-related satisfaction items to SWB (using SLSS) in 15 countries. Regression weights

Legend:
- Other children in your class
- Your school marks
- Your school experience
- Your life as a student
- Things you have learned
- Your relationship with teachers

X-axis categories: Pooled Sample, Algeria, Nepal, Estonia, Spain, Colom..., Turkey, Ethiop, S. Korea, German, England, Israel, Roman, Norway, Poland, S. Africa

Y-axis: -0,2 to 0,6

Contribution of school-related satisfaction items to SWB (using SLSS) in 15 countries

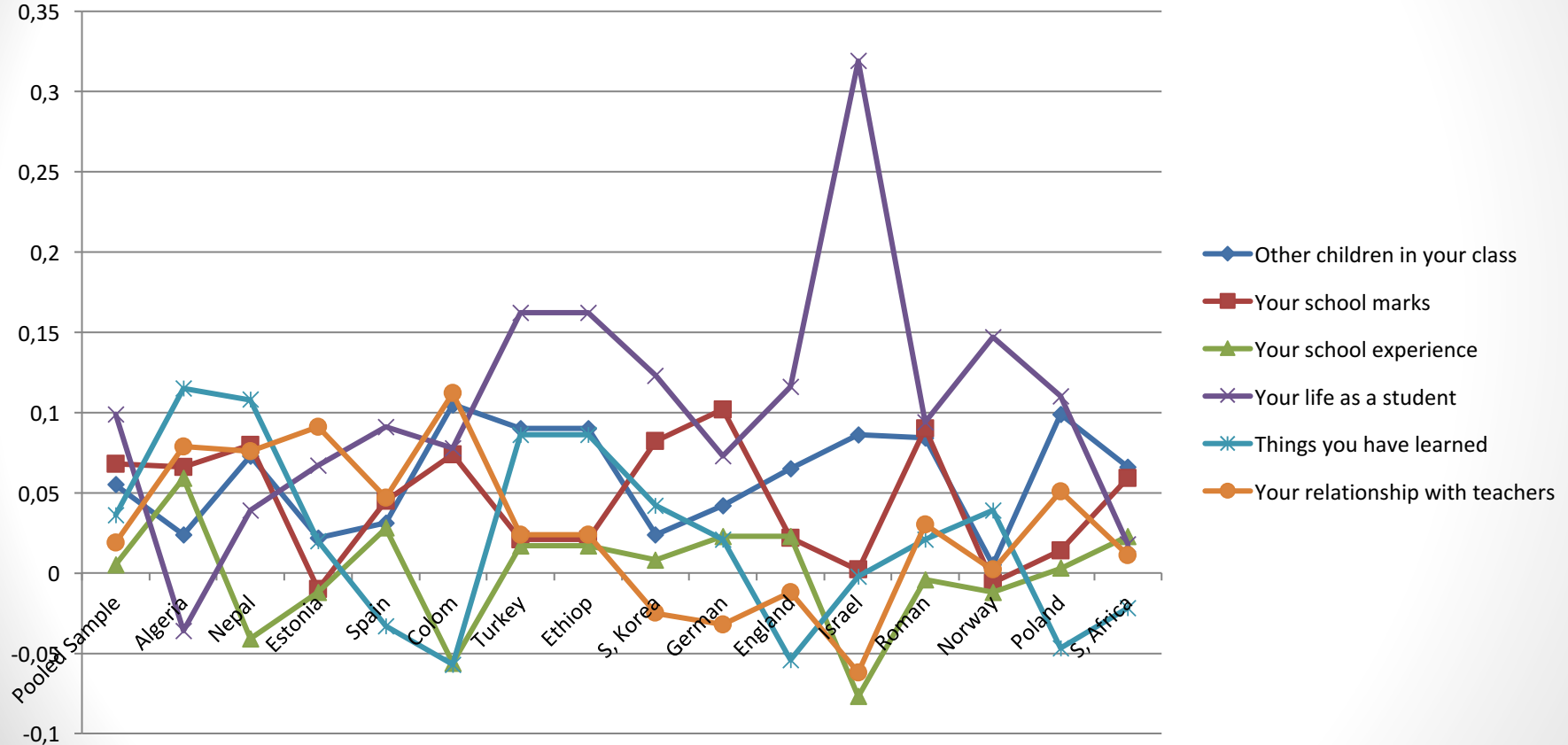| Satisfaction with….	Significant p>.001	Significant p> .05	Non-significant	Negative
Other children in your class	All 15 countries			
Your relationships with teachers	Algeria Nepal Estonia Spain	Colombia Ethiopia South Korea Romania Poland	Turkey Norway South Africa	Germany England Israel
Things you have learned	Algeria Nepal Estonia Turkey South Korea	Spain Ethiopia Germany Israel Norway Poland South Africa	England Romania	Colombia
Your school marks	Algeria Nepal Colombia Turkey & 6 more c	Estonia Spain Israel Norway Poland		
Your school experience	Algeria Turkey Ethiopia South Africa	Nepal South Korea Germany Norway Poland	Estonia Spain Colombia England Romania	Israel
Your life as student	All other 12 countries	Colombia South Africa	Algeria	

Contribution of school-related satisfaction items together with PWI-SC items to SWB (using OLS) in 15 countries

Contribution of school-related satisfaction items together with PWI-SC items to SWB (using OLS) in 15 countries

| Satisfaction with….	Significant p>.001	Significant p> .05	Non-significant	Negative
Other children in your class	Estonia Ethiopia Israel	Algeria Spain Colombia Turkey Norway Poland	Nepal South Korea Germany England Romania South Africa	
Your relationships with teachers	Algeria	Ethiopia	Estonia Spain Colombia Romania Norway Poland	Nepal Turkey South Korea Germany England Israel South Africa
Things you have learned		Nepal	Turkey South Korea Germany Romania Norway Poland	Algeria Estonia Spain Colombia Ethiopia & 3 more c.
Your school marks	Nepal Ethiopia	South Korea	Germany England Romania South Africa	Algeria Estonia Spain & 5 more c
Your school experience	Algeria	England	Nepal Spain & 7 more c.	Estonia South Korea Israel
Your life as student	Estonia, S.K., Germany Israel, Roman, Norway	Spain, Colomb, Turkey, Ethiop, England Poland	Algeria Nepal South Africa	

Contribution of school-related satisfaction items together with PWI-SC items to SWB (using SLSS) in 15 countries

Contribution of school-related satisfaction items together with PWI-SC items to SWB (using SLSS) in 15 countries

Satisfaction with….	Significant p>.001	Significant p> .05	Non-significant	Negative
Other children in your class	Colombia Turkey Ethiopia Romania Poland	Nepal England Israel South Africa	Algeria Estonia Spain South Korea Germany Norway	
Your relationships with teachers	Estonia	Algeria Nepal Spain Colombia Poland	Turkey Ethiopia Romania Norway South Africa	South Korea Germany England Israel
Things you have learned	Algeria Nepal	Turkey Ethiopia South Korea	Estonia Germany Romania Norway	Spain Colombia England & 3 more c
Your school marks	Algeria Nepal Germany Romania	Spain Colombia South Korea South Africa	Turkey Ethiopia England Israel Poland	Estonia Norway
Your school experience		Algeria	Spain, Turkey Ethiopia, SKor Germany & 3	Nepal, Estonia Colomb, Israel Roman, Norw
Your life as student	Spain Turkey Ethiopia South Korea England Israel Norway	Estonia Colombia Germany Romania Poland	Nepal South Africa	Algeria

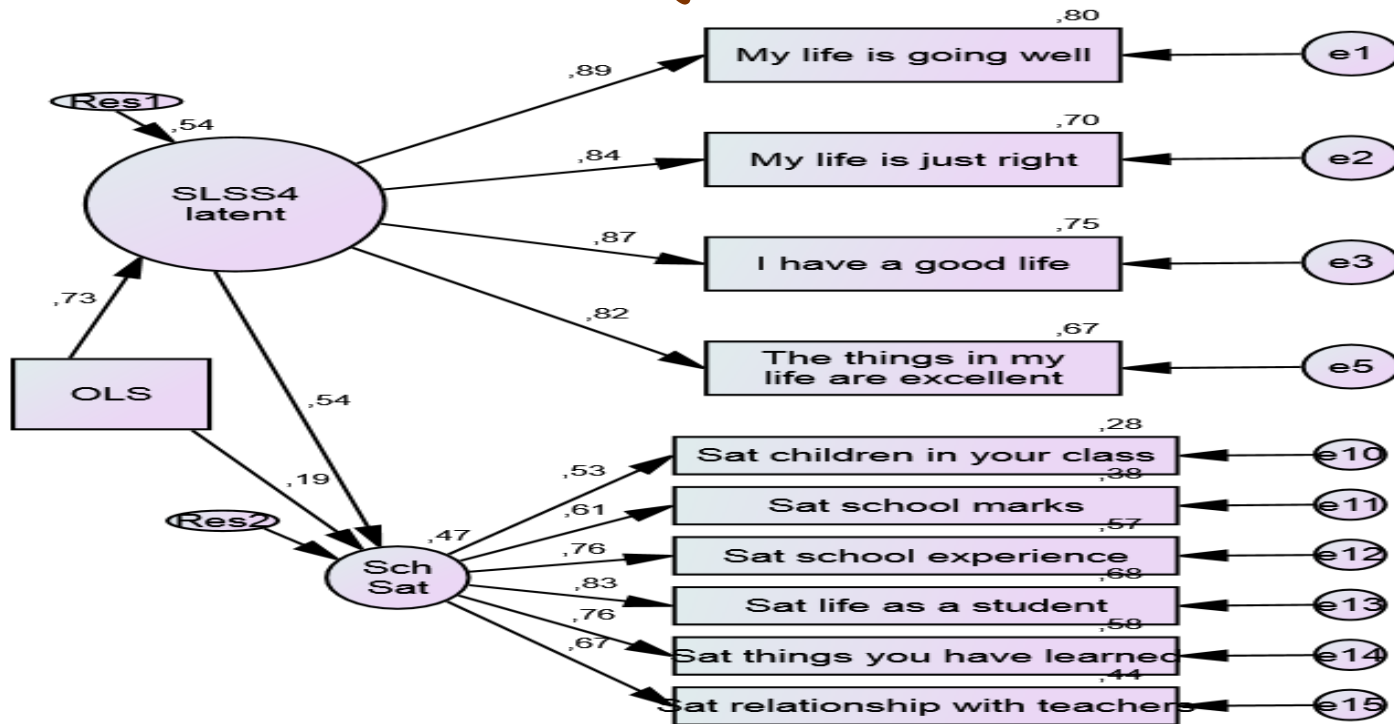# School Satisfaction (2 latent variables) related to SWB (Indicator=SLSS)
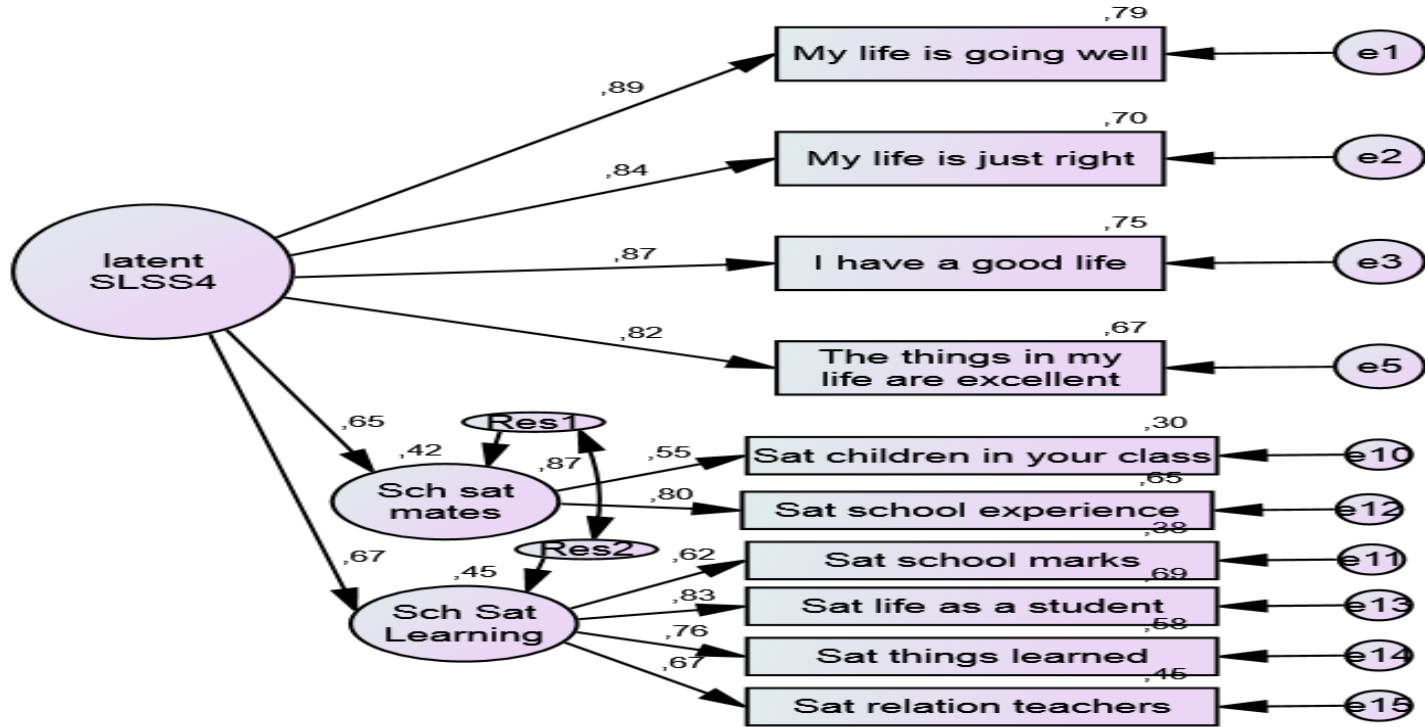
CHI=897,279;CFI=,991;RMSEA=,040; SRMR=.024

Fit statistics improvement from 1 to 2 latent variables on School Satisfaction

| Fit statistics improvement	SEM	ΔCFI	ΔRMSEA	ΔSRMR
when School-satisfaction items are related to two latent variables instead of one, and the latent is related to OLS	pooled	.004	-.004	-.004
	mg Unconstrained	.007	-.001	-.004
	mg Constr. loadings	**.010**	**.000**	**-.014**
when School-satisfaction items are related to two latent variables instead of one, and the latent is related to SLSS	pooled	.002	-.002	-.001
	mg Unconstrained	.003	.000	.000
	mg Constr. loadings	**.004**	**-.001**	**-.006**
when School-satisfaction items are related to two latent variables instead of one, and the latent is related to SLSS and to OLS	pooled	.002	-.001	-.001
	mg Unconstrained	.003	-.001	-.002
	mg Constr. loadings	**.004**	**.000**	**-.008**

mg= Multi-group Model

School Satisfaction (1 latent variable) related to SWB (Indicators=SLSS+OLS)

CHI=1171,608;CFI=,989;RMSEA=,039; SRMR=.024

School Satisfaction (2 latent variables) related to SWB (Indicators=SLSS+OLS)
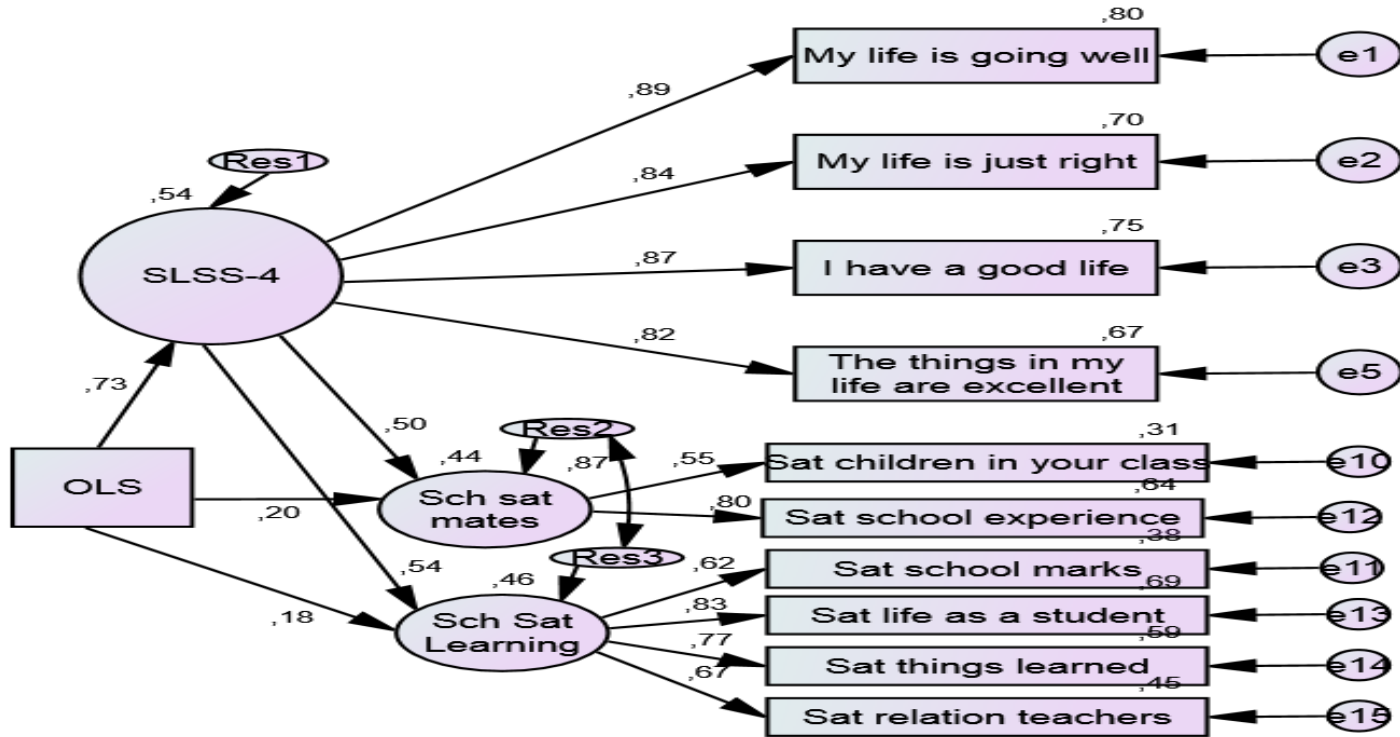
CHI=994,704;CFI=,991;RMSEA=,038; SRMR=.023

Unequal support to the hypothesis depending on the country (I)

- However, a detailed analysis of the country by country fit statistics changes suggests that support to the two worlds hypothesis is unequal depending on the country.

- Apparently the two worlds hypothesis is consistently supported for Spain, Turkey and Poland.

- It also gets weaker support for Algeria, South Korea and Colombia, and modest support for Nepal, Israel and Norway.

Unequal support to the hypothesis depending on the country (II)

- Only for Germany and Romania the fit statistics clearly worsen when using two latent variables and OLS+SLSS, but paradoxically Romania displays improvement for the three fit statistics when only using the SLSS. The cases of Algeria, South Korea and Colombia are also paradoxical, but the other way round, because fit statistics worsened when only using SLSS, in comparison to when using OLS+SLSS in the model.

- The hypothesis does not get support with the data from UK, Estonia, Ethiopia or South Africa, although changes of the fit statistics do not display definitive evidence against it either.

- Summarizing, only data from Germany seems to contribute evidence against the two worlds hypothesis.

Final considerations (I)

- One conclusion should be that the contribution of school-related satisfaction to overall life satisfaction differs in intensity and profile in diverse socio-cultural contexts, and seems to be mainly indirect, mediated by evaluations of context-free SWB, such as those measured by the SLSS4.

- The different contributions of each school-related satisfaction item to subjective well-being (measured with both the OLS and the SLSS4) depending on the country - and particularly the fact that some items present widely varying results in some countries (for satisfaction with *your relationship with teachers*, for example) - suggests either outstanding socio-cultural differences, different children's cultures in relation to school, or differences due to the translations used and children's understanding of the wordings.

Final considerations (II)

- The two worlds hypothesis in relation to children's evaluations of their student life should be considered seriously because in this study it receives greater statistical support for most countries using SEM than the consideration of school as only one world, as usually represented in adults' minds.

- When using the pooled sample, the SEM models with two latent variables display better fit statistics than the models with only one latent variable.

- However, support for this hypothesis is not obvious at country level in some of the participating countries, and gender and cognitive issues should still be considered carefully, like for example children's understanding and answering styles to the OLS in some countries.

Final considerations (III)

- Teachers and other school professionals should take into account the fact that in children's minds their life as a student and their school experiences extend far beyond the physical boundaries of the school, and that both aspects have a relevant relationship with and influence on all school aspects and overall school satisfaction.

- We suspect that when satisfaction with both teachers and peers is high, children may consider school as only one world; however, when one of the two dimensions (learning-related or classmates-related) does not provide high satisfaction, children tend to represent school as two worlds.

- This is another hypothesis that still needs further testing in future research and in different socio-cultural contexts.

CHILDREN'S WORLDS

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