



SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING IN COLLEGE STUDENTS: DETERMINING FACTORS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

BEM-ESTAR SUBJETIVO EM ESTUDANTES UNIVERSITÁRIOS: FATORES DETERMINANTES E IMPLICAÇÕES PARA GESTÃO ACADÊMICA

BIENESTAR SUBJETIVO EN ESTUDIANTES UNIVERSITARIOS: FACTORES DETERMINANTES E IMPLICACIONES PARA LA GESTIÓN ACADÉMICA

ABSTRACT

Objective: To analyze the complexity of subjective well-being in college students, identifying the primary factors that influence it.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Drawing upon Diener's theoretical-methodological model as a foundation, this research explores multiple dimensions of well-being, such as life satisfaction and academic engagement.

Results: The results indicate that most students are satisfied with their current lives but have reservations about past decisions and trajectories. These findings can assist academic administrators in shaping their actions and plans related to the student's subjective well-being.

Limitations/Implications: The study suggests that understanding these elements can assist academic institutions in creating more favorable environments for both academic success and the emotional well-being of students.


Originality/Value: Emphasis on specific dimensions of subjective well-being. By examining specific dimensions of subjective well-being, such as satisfaction with living conditions and the willingness to relive one's life, the research provides a detailed and nuanced approach.


Keywords: Subjective Well-Being. College Students. Academic Management.


RESUMO


Objetivo: Analisar a complexidade do bem-estar subjetivo em estudantes universitários, identificando os principais fatores que o influenciam.

Design/Metodologia/Abordagem: Utilizando o modelo teórico-metodológico de Diener como base, a pesquisa explora múltiplas dimensões do bem-estar, como satisfação com a vida e engajamento

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acadêmico.

Resultados: Os resultados mostram que a maioria dos alunos está satisfeita com suas vidas atuais, mas possuem ressalvas quanto a decisões e trajetórias passadas. Estes resultados podem ajudar os gestores acadêmicos com relação a suas ações e planejamentos relacionados ao bem-estar subjetivo de seus acadêmicos.

Limitações/implicações: O estudo sugere que a compreensão desses elementos pode ajudar as instituições acadêmicas a criarem ambientes mais favoráveis tanto ao sucesso acadêmico quanto ao bem-estar emocional dos alunos.

Originalidade/valor: Ênfase nas Dimensões Específicas do Bem-Estar Subjetivo. Ao analisar dimensões específicas do bem-estar subjetivo, como a satisfação com as condições de vida e a disposição de reviver a vida, a pesquisa oferece uma abordagem detalhada e pormenorizada.

Palavras-chave: Bem-estar Subjetivo. Estudantes Universitários. Gestão Acadêmica.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Analizar la complejidad del bienestar subjetivo en estudiantes universitarios, identificando los principales factores que lo influyen.

Diseño/Metodología/Aproximación: Basándose en el modelo teórico-metodológico de Diener como fundamento, esta investigación explora múltiples dimensiones del bienestar, como la satisfacción con la vida y la participación académica.

Resultados: Los resultados muestran que la mayoría de los estudiantes están satisfechos con sus vidas actuales, pero tienen reservas con respecto a decisiones y trayectorias pasadas. Estos hallazgos pueden ayudar a los administradores académicos en sus acciones y planificaciones relacionadas con el bienestar subjetivo de sus estudiantes.

Limitaciones/Implicaciones: El estudio sugiere que comprender estos elementos puede ayudar a las instituciones académicas a crear entornos más propicios tanto para el éxito académico como para el bienestar emocional de los estudiantes.

Originalidad/Valor: Énfasis en Dimensiones Específicas del Bienestar Subjetivo. Al analizar dimensiones específicas del bienestar subjetivo, como la satisfacción con las condiciones de vida y la disposición a revivir la vida, la investigación ofrece un enfoque detallado y pormenorizado.

Palabras clave: Bienestar Subjetivo. Estudiantes Universitarios. Gestión Académica.

INTRODUCTION

Subjective well-being, the subjective assessment of quality of life and personal satisfaction, has been the subject of growing interest in recent years. Subjective well-being is fundamental to the creation and maintenance of healthy and productive societies. In this regard, Diener (2009) highlights the importance of distinguishing between the term "happiness" - which can refer to momentary emotional states - and the term "subjective well-being" - which encompasses the general assessment of life and subjective experiences of well-being.

Studying subjective well-being in different segments of society is crucial to understanding their specific needs and developing targeted intervention strategies, and this is particularly relevant for college students in an essential phase of transition and personal growth. In addition to its intrinsic importance, this study has significant implications for university management: understanding the factors that affect student well-being allows academic administrations to implement more effective policies and programs to create a healthier and more productive academic environment, benefiting not only the students but also the institution.

College students often face multiple demands and pressures that influence their subjective well-being. The transition to higher academic life involves significant changes, including adapting to a new social environment, balancing studies and personal life, and financial independence, among other aspects. These transitions and challenges can significantly affect how students perceive and evaluate their happiness and overall satisfaction.

Okoro et al. (2022) state that subjective well-being is intrinsically linked to students' quality of life. By understanding the factors that influence their well-being, it is possible to develop policies and programs that improve their quality of life and promote a healthier and more positive academic environment.

Several studies have contributed to the scientific understanding of the subject, providing relevant evidence, and reinforcing the need for multidimensional and personalized approaches to deepen the context of college students' subjective well-being. In this regard, Malkoç (2011) investigated the relationship between quality of life and subjective well-being, revealing that quality of life was a student's subjective well-being positive predictor, especially in the psychological health field, social relationships, and environment. Schoeps et al. (2020) conducted an experiment based on emotional intelligence, finding that improved emotional intelligence, empathy, and positive mood resulted in greater subjective well-being among academics. Yildirim and Tanriverdi (2021) high-



lighted the mediating role of resilience in the relationship between social support and life satisfaction.

In addition, Dost (2006) identified that factors such as economic perception, parental attitudes, satisfaction with physical appearance, and religious beliefs are associated with the subjective well-being of academics. Finally, Denovan and Macaskill (2017) highlighted the importance of optimism in students' adjustment to college, suggesting psychoeducational interventions to promote stress management and the development of strengths to improve students' subjective well-being. These studies provide a comprehensive overview of the subjective well-being subject among college students, revealing different factors that influence this dimension.

Validating previous studies, Cotton et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between college students' activities, psychosocial factors, subjective well-being, satisfaction, and academic performance. The results highlighted that satisfaction with daily activities plays a fundamental role in the link between the academic environment and student performance. When students are satisfied with the activities implemented, they tend to perform better academically. However, high levels of distress and low satisfaction with activities can negatively affect their performance, possibly due to high demands and lack of control over academic tasks, damaging their well-being and motivation to study.

Indeed, college students' subjective well-being is associated with their academic performance and professional success. Individuals with greater psychological well-being are healthier and more productive, benefiting society. It is crucial to create a college experience that promotes academic performance and students' psychological well-being by understanding the factors influencing them. Expectations, such as hope and optimism, play a significant role in predicting students' academic performance and psychological well-being (Rand et al., 2020).

This study aims to analyze subjective well-being in college students, identifying the primary factors that influence it. This research serves as a basis for more efficient policies and strategies that enhance campus life and offers perspectives for educational administration. A detailed understanding of academic well-being surrounding issues allows managers to implement institutional measures beyond merely promoting academic performance and addressing fundamental emotional and psychological aspects. Such an integrated approach is vital since the health and productivity of the academic community are crucial elements in shaping a more balanced society (Atici et al., 2021; Ebrahim, Dhahi, Husain & Jahrami, 2022; Reinert et al., 2023).

There is an ongoing debate about which aspects are best suited to investigating and understanding subjective well-being. In this study, we adopted the theoretical-methodological model of Diener (1985), a renowned researcher and one of the main contributors to the subjective well-being field. Diener developed several multimodal assessment methods widely used in science. His innovative ideas on measurement issues have impacted the development and application of advanced statistical techniques to analyze subjective well-being data worldwide. Descriptive statistical analysis, correlational analysis with the dimensions of subjective well-being and the student's t-test were used to evaluate the differences between the results for men and women.

This study presents an approach focused on the subjective well-being dimensions in the academic public. In this context, a considerable sample of students from all the university's centers was considered to get a global view of academics and their perception of subjective well-being. The results can help academic managers, as they can evaluate and use the tools proposed here to have a systemic view of subjective well-being in their teaching unit.

The results of the survey highlight the subjective well-being of college students. The diverse sample, covering different courses and academic periods, revealed a varied sociodemographic profile, with a female predominance (58.8%) and those aged between 18 and 25 (87.2%). The analysis of subjective well-being dimensions indicated that, in general, the participants expressed satisfaction with their lives, proximity to desired ideals, and fulfillment of what was important. However, the possibility of living life again generated significant reflections. The correlation between the dimensions showed consistent patterns of agreement. In addition, the research identified significant differences in subjective well-being between male and female students in some dimensions, such as satisfaction with life and perception of living conditions, highlighting the importance of individualized approaches to promoting academic well-being.

This article is structured into five sections: this introduction, the theoretical background, which will look at subjective well-being, and its relationship with academic life. The third section introduces the methodological procedures, and the fourth reveals the presentation and analysis of the results. The last section offers the final considerations.

SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Beyond traditional disciplinary barriers, subjective well-being is the subject of study by scientists from various fields of knowledge. The different dimensions broaden the debates about well-being,



investigating the influence of emotional and cognitive processes shaping the individuals' life evaluation. In addition, cross-sectional and longitudinal research executed in different fields has provided important information on the quality of life in different contexts and for diverse populations (Soutter et al., 2011).

Subjective well-being is a field of study that seeks to understand the assessments people make about their lives, considering terms that address satisfaction and happiness (Siqueira & Padovam, 2008; Voukelatou et al., 2020; Reinert et al., 2023). Diener and Ryan (2009) point out that subjective well-being is an essential component of quality of life, and its measurement is crucial to understanding how to improve individuals' lives. In addition, evidence shows that high levels of subjective well-being benefit individuals and the effective functioning of societies.

The change in focus of modern industrialized societies, which have come to seek a satisfying life beyond basic economic needs, has led to a new series of desires and goals that are not directly measurable by economic and social indicators. It is important to emphasize that subjective well-being is not just limited to momentary emotional states but also considers the overall assessment of the spheres that make up life. Therefore, it involves a broader and more lasting perspective on well-being (Diener & Ryan, 2009).

Hypothesis 1: *The desire to relive life in the same way may be associated with life's general satisfaction.*

Haring, Stock, and Okun (1984) found evidence that women tend to report lower levels of subjective well-being than men. However, these authors suggest that gender differences in subjective well-being can be explained by cultural and social factors, such as gender expectations and experiences of discrimination.

In a more current context, Taheri, Naderibeni, and Mirzamani (2023) contribute to the discussion on the issue of exacerbated commitment to work in different genders. The results of their study show that workaholic men are more likely to experience greater incivility in the workplace, while workaholic women experience lower subjective well-being. The study highlights the importance of considering the role of gender in understanding the factors that influence incivility in the workplace and suggests that managers should focus on reducing workaholicism and developing subjective well-being to decrease uncivilized behavior.

Factors such as gender expectations, discrimination, and structural inequalities can influence the

perception and reporting of subjective well-being by different genders (Kokkinos & Koutsospyros, 2023). In addition, the intersectionality of identities, such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status, can deepen this relationship, generating unique experiences of subjective well-being for different groups (Bianchi, Tontini, & Gomes, 2021).

Therefore, it is relevant to consider the broader social and cultural context when examining the relationship between gender and subjective well-being (Kokkinos & Koutsospyros, 2023). Understanding these complexities is crucial to developing inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches in the field of mental health and well-being (Bastida, Neira & Lacalle-Caldero, 2022).

Hypothesis 2: *The influence of gender on subjective well-being perception varies significantly among college students.*

SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Fostering student well-being has gained global prominence in education, and it is associated with significant advantages such as improved academic performance and subsequent professional success. In addition, this attention to well-being contributes positively to the institutional image of universities.

However, it is crucial to recognize the diversity of realities and cultures when conducting student well-being research. Results obtained in one specific context may not be generalizable to others. Therefore, understanding the particularities of each culture and context is fundamental to promoting effective interventions. It is necessary to implement studies that explore the relationship between student well-being and their culture to obtain more precise guidelines adapted to different educational realities (Hossain et al., 2023).

In the context of higher education, subjective well-being has also been associated with important outcomes, such as educational aspirations (Lynnebakke & Pastoor, 2020; Widlund, 2021), academic engagement (Paloş, Maricuţoiu, & Costea, 2019), class attendance (Gundogan, 2023), educational path/choice of field of study (Dela Coleta & Dela Coleta, 2006), academic performance (Rudolf & Lee, 2023), dropping out (Brown, Waters & Shelton, 2019), burn-out (Grass, Dörendahl, Losereit, Greiff & Strobel, 2023) and interpersonal relationships (Wang et al., 2023).

Baker (2004) highlights the importance of intrinsic motivation for psychological well-being and positive adaptation to college life. Low intrinsic motivation is related to perceived stress and adjustment



difficulties. Support for autonomy and the promotion of self-direction by professors are fundamental to educational success and to maintaining students' intrinsic motivation. It is crucial to create a college environment that values autonomy and stimulates intrinsic motivation, avoiding the excessive use of extrinsic rewards. In this sense, it is possible to promote students' well-being and academic performance during their college careers (Shamionov, Grigoryeva, Grinina & Sozonnik, 2020).

A study of 733 college students between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five analyzed the relationship between subjective well-being and academic procrastination, which showed a significant correlation (Berber, Çelik & Odaci, 2022). Academic procrastination harms students' subjective well-being, as do other attachment styles, affecting college students' mental health and subjective well-being. Regarding personality profiles, perfectionism can also affect the subjective well-being of academics (Stoeber & Lumley, 2020).

From a perspective based on the relationships between motivation, college adaptation, mental health indicators, subjective well-being, and academic performance, Bailey and Phillips (2016) state that subjective well-being can be studied from two distinct but overlapping philosophies: hedonism and eudemonism. Hedonism refers to the pursuit of happiness and pleasure of both mind and body. Eudemonism involves the well-being derived from engaging in activities aligned with deep personal values and leading to feelings of fulfillment. Both concepts are considered components of subjective well-being.

The state of subjective well-being shows better indices as age (Siqueira & Padovam, 2008; Botelho, 2022), the educational level of individuals, and individual personality traits gradually increase. Furthermore, young people with elevated levels of education and greater openness to experiences have a high state of subjective well-being (Siqueira & Padovam, 2008). In addition, the presence of positive emotions and the absence of negative ones contribute to the cognitive evaluation of people with high subjective well-being (Yildirim & Tanriverdi, 2021).

Subjective well-being can also affect the difference between male and female academics. A study implemented in Poland and Ukraine shows that female college students have higher life satisfaction levels than male college students (Çelik & Odaci, 2022). However, college men stand out when assessing the relationship between self-acceptance, personal growth, life purpose, and subjective well-being (Bahri, 2023). Because they are encouraged to have greater autonomy than women, they may contribute to their better subjective well-being in these dimensions (Bahri, 2023).

It is worth noting that, considering their role in professional training and social engagement, higher education institutions must establish a connection with the student body. This situation involves recognizing student's diversity and particular challenges in their different realities (Rand, Shanahan, Fischer & Fortney, 2020; Lynnebakke & Pastoor, 2020).

In this context, the research by Shamionov et al. (2020) points to the complex interaction between academic adaptation and subjective well-being in students with chronic illnesses. According to the study, these students' academic adaptation and subjective well-being are influenced by their general adaptive capacity and the social support they receive.

Indeed, external variables can significantly impact the perception of student well-being. An example of this is the role of teaching staff in improving this well-being, as pointed out by Rand et al. (2020). In a study that assessed the mental health of students in Finland during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sarasjarvi et al. (2022) observed that students' subjective well-being declined. This phenomenon was directly related to how the institution and its teachers approached the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Based on the theoretical perspectives, the following research hypotheses are presented:

Hypothesis 3: *The more students believe that their lives are approaching their ideals, the more satisfied they will be with their lives.*

Hypothesis 4: *Students who feel they have achieved what is meaningful are more likely to be satisfied with their lives.*

Hypothesis 5: *The better a student's perceived living conditions, the greater their overall satisfaction with life.*

METHODOLOGY

This research is characterized as quantitative and was carried out at the Regional University of Blumenau using a quota sampling method. The sample was stratified based on the characteristics of the student population, ensuring that the proportions of the sample reflected those of the university population in general.

The target population for this study includes the 6,137 students enrolled at the Regional University of Blumenau in the first semester of 2023. To obtain a reliable representation, our sample consisted of 461 respondents. These were distributed proportionally by quotas among the different academic units, which include the Center for Educational Sciences, Arts and Letters (CCEAL), the Center for Exact and Natural Sci-



ences (CCEN), the Center for Human Sciences and Communication (CCHC), the Center for Legal Sciences (CCJ), the Center for Health Sciences (CCS), the Center for Applied Social Sciences (CCSA), and the Center for Technological Sciences (CCT).

The primary instrument used to collect data was a structured questionnaire divided into two main parts. The first part dealt with subjective well-being. This section was constructed based on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS, Diener et al., 1985), a widely recognized instrument for measuring subjective well-being. In contrast to single-question measures, it consists of an average of five related items, each of which is rated on a 5-point scale, from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). The analysis variables are: "In many ways, my life is close to my ideal"; "The conditions of my life are excellent"; "I am satisfied with my life"; "So far, I have achieved the important things I want in life"; and "If I could live my life over again, I would change almost nothing".

Figure 1

Diener's Subjective Well-Being (1985)



Source: Authors' own elaboration (2023).

The second part sought to understand the profile of the respondents, collecting demographic information and other personal characteristics. Before its general application, the questionnaire was pre-tested with 81 randomly selected students. This crucial stage helped to identify areas of ambiguity or distraction, allowing for improvements to the instrument.

On average, participants took between 5 and 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire, which was administered in person in various classrooms at the university. This face-to-face approach was adopted

to ensure the sample adequately reflected the quotas established for the various university units.

To analyze the data collected, we employed various statistical techniques that provide a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the sample. Initially, we used descriptive statistics, such as frequency, mean, and mode, to summarize and concisely present the main aspects of the data set. Next, we applied Pearson's correlation to assess the linear relationships between different variables, allowing us to identify possible associations between the factors analyzed. In addition, to examine significant differences between the male and female groups, we used Student's t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This survey was conducted at the Regional University of Blumenau - FURB, located in the city of Blumenau, SC (Brazil), which currently has 363,000 inhabitants (IBGE, 2022), to analyze the complexity of subjective well-being in college students, identifying the main factors that influence it. The sample covered a variety of courses and academic periods, encompassing both incoming and outgoing students. By collecting crucial information on age, gender, and average family income, the survey aims to provide insights into the profile of the institution's students, contributing to a deeper understanding of well-being in the academic environment.

To assess this study's consistency, in other words, whether the participants answered the questions logically, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used. This method is used to determine reliability since developing quality research requires an acceptable reliability level (HAIR et al., 2009). According to Hair (2009), for the data to be relevant in terms of validation, obtaining an index higher than 0.600 is fundamental since reliability ranges from 0 to 1. For this study, the result obtained was 0.794.

Table 1 shows the sociodemographic profile of the study participants. This information is essential for contextualizing the results and providing a more complete overview of the aspects that can influence the subjective well-being of the students analyzed.



Table 1
Sociodemographic data

Sociodemographic characteristics		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	183	39,7%
	Female	271	58,8%
	Other	7	1,5%
	Total	461	
Age group	Under 18 years old	3	0,7%
	18 to 25 years old	402	87,2%
	26 to 35 years old	36	7,8%
	36 to 45 years old	11	2,4%
	46 to 55 years old	7	1,5%
	56 to 65 years old	2	0,4%
	Total	461	
Family Income	Don't know / Prefer not to declare	94	20,4%
	No income	8	1,7%
	Up to R\$ 954,00	4	0,9%
	R\$ 954,01 to R\$ 1.431,00	22	4,8%
	R\$ 1.431,01 to R\$ 2.862,00	41	8,9%
	R\$ 2.862,01 to R\$ 4.700,00	58	12,6%
	R\$ 4.700,01 to R\$ 9.540,00	106	23,0%
	R\$ 9.540,01 to R\$ 14.310,00	59	12,8%
	R\$ 14.310,01 to R\$ 19.080,00	26	5,6%
	Over R\$ 19.08,01	43	9,3%
Total	461		
University unit	CCEAL	65	14,1%
	CCEN	75	16,3%
	CCHC	66	14,3%
	CCJ	75	16,3%
	CCS	58	12,6%
	CCSA	60	13,0%
	CCT	62	13,4%
	Total	461	

Source: Authors' own elaboration (2023).

In terms of gender, most students are female, accounting for 58.8% of the total sample, while males make up 39.7%. Other genders make up a smaller portion, with 1.5%. As for the age group, most students are between 18 and 25 years old, corresponding to 87.2% of the sample. The other age groups are less representative, ranging from 0.4% to 7.8%. The average student's family income is also varied, with the highlight being the "I don't know / I prefer not to declare" category, representing 20.4% of the participants. However, it is essential to note that there is a significant proportion of students with incomes between R\$4,700.01 and R\$14,310.00, with the majority being in the R\$9,540.01 to R\$14,310.00 brackets. As for the distribution of students by academic center, the data shows a relatively even distribution, ranging from 12.6% to 16.3% for each center. The following table highlights information on the subjective well-being of these students.

Table 2
Dimensions of Subjective Well-Being

	Strongly disagree	Partly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Partly agree	Strongly agree
In many ways, my life is close to my ideal	4,34%	8,24%	18,44%	49,02%	19,96%
I am satisfied with my life	4,12%	9,98%	16,49%	43,60%	25,81%
So far, I have achieved the important things I want in life	6,51%	13,45%	19,09%	40,13%	20,82%
If I could live my life over again, I would change almost nothing	13,45%	24,08%	17,35%	23,64%	21,48%
The conditions of my life are excellent	3,04%	9,33%	18,44%	38,61%	30,59%

Source: Authors' own elaboration (2023).



The analysis of Table 2, referring to the dimensions of subjective well-being, gives us a clear view of the students' satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The dimension where students were most satisfied with life was "The conditions of my life are excellent", with a total of 69.20% of respondents agreeing, either partially (38.61%) or totally (30.59%). On the other hand, the statement "If I could live my life over again, I would change almost nothing" shows the highest level of dissatisfaction, with 37.53% of students disagreeing, either partially (24.08%) or totally (13.45%). This contrast suggests that although many are satisfied with their current conditions, there are significant reflections on past decisions and trajectories.

Subjective well-being encompasses general satisfaction with life, proximity to desired ideals, the perception of having achieved what is significant, and the evaluation of living conditions (Diener and Ryan, 2009). Notably, most participants partly or totally agree that their lives are close to the desired ideals and that they are satisfied with their lives. These aspects are fundamental in academic life, as students who feel closer to their ideals and satisfied tend to have greater motivation, engagement, and academic performance (Lynnebakke & Pastoor, 2020; Widlund,

2021).

In addition, the perception of having achieved what is significant in life is also related to subjective well-being (Diener & Ryan, 2009, Añaña et al., 2020). In the academic context, this can translate into achieving educational goals, such as good grades, completing a course, or carrying out relevant research (Dela Coleta & Dela Coleta, 2006, Zucco et al., 2020). Students who feel fulfilled and perceive that they are advancing toward their goals tend to experience greater well-being in their academic trajectories (Añaña et al., 2020, Widlund, 2021).

Another relevant aspect is the possibility of living life again unchanged. Students who agree or disagree in part with this statement may be reflecting on their academic choices and experiences. Those more satisfied with their experiences probably have a higher subjective well-being level about academic life (Siqueira & Padovam, 2008). Focusing on the correlation of responses, Table 3 shows the main correlation numbers between the questions in the subjective well-being dimension.

Table 3
Mode, Mean and Pearson's Correlation

	Mode	Mean	1	2	3	4	5
1. In many ways, my life is close to my ideal	4	3,72	1				
2 . I am satisfied with my life	4	3,77	0,651	1			
3. So far, I have achieved the important things I want in life	4	3,55	0,511	0,563	1		
4. If I could live my life over again, I would change almost nothing	2	3,16	0,366	0,41	0,373	1	
5 . The conditions of my life are excellent	4	3,84	0,442	0,454	0,391	0,345	1

Source: Authors' own elaboration (2023).

Based on Table 3, we can make considerable observations about the participant's subjective well-being. The "Mean" column represents the average of the participant's responses to each statement, with values ranging from 1 to 5 (where 1 represents "totally disagree" and 5 represents "totally agree"). Generally, participants tend to agree with the statements of subjective well-being since all the means are above the central value (3.0). This result indicates that, on average, individuals feel satisfied and close to their ideals.

Pearson's correlation matrix shows the correlation values between the different statements

about subjective well-being. The correlation values range from -1 to 1, where 1 represents a perfect positive correlation and -1 a perfect negative correlation. Notably, all the correlation results were significant at $p > 0.001$. The statements "I am satisfied with my life" and "So far, I have achieved the important things I want in life" have a strong positive correlation of 0.651. This result suggests that those more satisfied with their lives also tend to feel they have achieved what is meaningful to them so far (Zucco et al., 2020).

Another relevant observation, the statement "If I could live my life over again, I would change almost nothing" has a moderate correlation with the



other statements, ranging from 0.366 to 0.41. This finding may indicate that students would like to change something about their past choices (Añaña et al., 2020). This variable had a low correlation with the other questions in the dimension, reflecting on their subjective well-being in future decisions.

The findings also presented positive correlations between the statement "The conditions of my life are excellent" and the others but with lower values, ranging from 0.345 to 0.454. This outcome suggests that the perception of excellent living conditions is more distantly related to the other dimensions of subjective well-being (Zucco et al., 2020).

These results are relevant to understanding

the interactions between different aspects of subjective well-being and highlight the importance of approaching individuals' well-being in a comprehensive and multidimensional way (Añaña et al., 2020). The tendency towards agreement and the correlations between the dimensions of subjective well-being can provide indications for future research and for the formulation of interventions aimed at improving the well-being of individuals in various areas of life, including in the academic context (Zucco et al., 2020).

A Student's t-test for independent samples was implemented to investigate the extent to which levels of perceived subjective well-being differ depending on the gender of the college student.

Table 4
Student's t-test for Well-Being

Mean		Scores		T-test statistics						
		Standard Deviation	t	Gl	-p Value	Mean Difference	Cohen's D	Mean Difference CI (95%)		
								Lower limit	Upper limit	
Well1	Male	3,688	1,03575	-,585	452	0,559	-0,057	NS	-0,248	0,134
	Female	3,745	1,00265							
Well2	Male	3,644	1,16711	-2,270	452	0,024	-0,230	0,22	0,101	-0,031
	Female	3,874	0,97702							
Well3	Male	3,453	1,19375	-1,651	452	0,099	-0,181	NS	-0,397	0,034
	Female	3,634	1,11361							
Well4	Male	3,163	1,36092	-,102	452	0,919	-0,013	NS	-0,268	0,242
	Female	3,177	1,35469							
Well5	Male	3,994	0,99171	2,480	452	0,014	0,249	0,23	0,052	0,447
	Female	3,745	1,0877							

Source: Authors' own elaboration (2023).

The results of the T-test corroborate the findings of various studies carried out in other contexts. Significant differences have been identified in some subjective well-being dimensions between males and females (Çelik & Odaci, 2022; Bahri, 2023).

About the dimension "I am satisfied with my life" (Bem2), the results revealed a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.024$), with female students ($M = 3.8745$) showing greater satisfaction compared to male students ($M = 3.6448$). These findings contradict the studies by Haring, Stock, & Okun (1984) and Taheri, Naderibeni, & Mirzamani (2023); however, they are in line with research that emphasizes the influence of subjective well-being on students' academic trajectories (Palos, Maricuțoiu, & Costea, 2019) and the rel-

evance of educational institutions' focus on student well-being to improve academic performance (Rand, Shanahan, Fischer, & Fortney, 2020).

About the dimension "The conditions of my life are excellent" (Well5), we also observed a significant difference ($p = 0.014$) with male students ($M = 3.9945$) perceiving their living conditions as exceptional compared to female students ($M = 3.7454$). These results also contradict the studies by Haring, Stock, & Okun (1984) and Kokkinos & Koutsospyros (2023), even though they reinforce the importance of considering college students' perceptions of subjective well-being about their living conditions, especially when it comes to institutional policies and support for students during their academic journey (Sarasjarvi



et al., 2022).

However, about the dimensions “In many ways, my life is close to my ideal”, “So far, I have achieved the important things I want in life”, and “If I could live my life over again, I would change almost nothing” we found no significant differences between male and female students. This finding suggests that perceptions of these dimensions of subjective well-being do not vary significantly between the sexes, aligning with the idea that subjective well-being is a personal and subjective evaluation of one’s life (Siqueira & Padovam, 2008).

Our findings point to the differences in subjective well-being between male and female college students in some dimensions, such as satisfaction with life and perception of living conditions. However, in other dimensions, the differences were not statistically significant, emphasizing the complexity of this variable and the need to consider the diversity of realities and cultures when addressing the well-being of college students (Hossain et al., 2023). These results also highlight the importance of higher education institutions in recognizing and supporting students’ individual needs, especially regarding subjective well-being, which plays a crucial role in their academic success and overall well-being (Bailey & Phillips, 2016; Grass, Dörendahl, Losereit, Greiff & Strobel, 2023).

The results of the Student’s t-test indicate that gender influences the subjective well-being of college students’ hypothesis was partially confirmed. Although the dimensions “Well2” and “Well5” showed statistically significant differences between male and female students, other dimensions such as “Well1,” “Well3”, and “Well4” showed no significant differences based on gender. This outcome suggests that the relationship between gender and subjective well-being is complex and varies depending on the specific dimension of well-being considered.

Table 5
Results of the Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Results
Hypothesis 1: The desire to relive life in the same way may be associated with life’s general satisfaction.	Partially supported
Hypothesis 2: The influence of gender on subjective well-being perception varies significantly among college students.	Partially supported

Hypothesis 3: The more students believe that their lives are approaching their ideals, the more satisfied they will be with their lives.	Supported
Hypothesis 4: Students who feel they have achieved what is meaningful are more likely to be satisfied with their lives.	Supported
Hypothesis 5: The better a student’s perceived living conditions, the greater their overall satisfaction with life.	Supported

Source: Authors’ own elaboration (2023).

Considering Table 5, subjective well-being in the academic context is not only a function of individual perceptions but is also shaped by the academic environment. For example, support for autonomy and the promotion of self-direction by teachers is essential (Shamionov, Grigoryeva, Grinina & Sozonnik, 2020). Educational institutions that recognize and address this need are potentially improving the subjective well-being of their students.

In hindsight, while the data in Table 3 provides insight into respondents’ perceptions, it is imperative to consider contextual and cultural factors when interpreting these results (Hossain et al., 2023). Subjective well-being is multifaceted and influenced by several variables, from intrinsic motivation to the learning environment and cultural and individual experiences (Siqueira & Padovam, 2008; Botelho, 2022; Yildirim & Tanriverdi, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

This research explored the complex dynamics of subjective well-being among college students, identifying the factors influencing their academic experiences. By analyzing the dimensions of subjective well-being, we were able to get a clear picture of student satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Notably, “The conditions of my life are excellent” emerged as the dimension in which most students (69.20%) expressed satisfaction, either partially (38.61%) or totally agreeing (30.59%). In contrast, “If I could live my life over again, I would change almost nothing” showed the highest level of dissatisfaction, with 37.53% of students expressing partial (24.08%) or total (13.45%) disagreement. This disparity indicates that, even though many are satisfied with the present, there are substantial reservations about previous choices and paths.



Regarding the proposed hypotheses, the results were widely consistent with our initial expectations. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported, linking the perception of the alignment of life and ideals and the feeling of achieving significant goals to life satisfaction. Hypothesis 3, associating the desire to relive life similarly to general satisfaction, was only partially supported, evidencing the level of dissatisfaction observed in the corresponding statement. Finally, Hypothesis 4 was also confirmed, linking the perception of better living conditions to overall satisfaction.

The results obtained have implications for the academic world. By understanding the determinants of students' subjective well-being, universities can develop more effective strategies to cultivate an environment that optimizes academic engagement and emotional well-being. The link between life satisfaction, goal attainment, and academic engagement suggests the need for institutional practices and policies that foster a university ecosystem conducive to the integral development of students.

However, it is imperative to consider the limitations of this study. By focusing on the Regional University of Blumenau - FURB, the findings may not be generalizable to other institutions. Nevertheless, the evidence can serve as a reference and inspiration for similar institutions for improvements in the student's well-being and academic experience.

In addition, the survey methodology, although convenient, may not capture all the nuances of students' experiences. Similarly, other scales can be adopted to ascertain students' levels of subjective well-being, such as the well-established Subjective Well-Being Scale (SWBS) and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale. Future research covering different universities and adopting qualitative approaches may also offer additional insights into students' subjective well-being.

In conclusion, this work aimed to significantly contribute to understanding the subjective well-being of college students. Besides enriching the existing body of academic research, we hope that the findings and analysis presented here will influence institutional strategies and practices, ensuring that students thrive academically and feel psychologically supported during their college studies.

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