THE MOST WRETCHED AND THE MOST BLISSFUL INDIVIDUALS IN BRAZIL[1]

André Braz Golgher[2]
Raquel Zanatta Coutinho[3]

This paper addresses the most wretched and most blissful individuals in Brazil using the World Values Survey of 2014. These groups were defined based on self-evaluations concerning general happiness and life satisfaction. We compared these groups and the rest of the Brazilian population using cluster analysis and responses to questions regarding importance given to family, self-evaluated health status, religiosity, self-determination, thick trust and financial situation. Besides, we described particular profiles of the most wretched and the most blissful individuals. Using Multinomial Logit Regression Models we investigated which socio-demographic groups have higher chances of being in each profile. Although highly heterogeneous, wretched individuals do enjoy some common features, and the same happens to blissful individuals. While wretched individuals presented a fragile self-evaluated financial situation and low levels of thick trust, blissful individuals had high levels of self-determination and religiosity.

Keywords: happiness; life satisfaction; Brazil; cluster analysis; World Values Survey.

OS INDIVÍDUOS MAIS DESAFORTUNADOS E MAIS FELIZES NO BRASIL

Este artigo aborda os indivíduos mais desafortunados e mais felizes do Brasil por meio da World Values Survey de 2014. Esses grupos foram definidos com base em autoavaliações relativas à felicidade geral e satisfação com a vida. Compararam-se esses grupos com o restante da população brasileira por meio de análise de aglomerados e respostas a questões relacionadas a importância dada à família, a autoavaliação do estado de saúde, a religiosidade, a autodeterminação, a confiança e a situação financeira. Além disso, descreveram-se perfis particulares de indivíduos mais desafortunados e de pessoas mais bem-aventuradas. Por meio de modelos de regressão *logit* multinomial, investigou-se quais grupos sociodemográficos tinham maior chance de estar em cada perfil. Embora altamente heterogêneos, os indivíduos mais desarfortunados desfrutam de algumas características comuns, e o mesmo acontece com os indivíduos bem-aventurados. Enquanto os primeiros apresentavam uma situação financeira autoavaliada frágil e tinham baixos níveis de confiança, indivíduos bem-aventurados tinham altos níveis de autodeterminação e de religiosidade.

Palavras-chave: felicidade; satisfação com a vida; Brasil; análise de aglomerados; WVS.

1. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.38116/ppp58art10

2. Associate professor at the Economics Department and at the Center for Regional Development and Planning (Cedeplar) at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG). E-mail: <agolgher@gmail.com>.

3. Associate professor at the Demography Departament at Cedeplar/UFMG. E-mail: <quelzanatta@cedeplar.ufmg.br>.

LAS PERSONAS MÁS DESAFORTUNADAS Y MÁS FELICES DE BRASIL

Este artículo trata de las personas más desafortunadas y felices de Brasil a través de la World Values Survey de 2014. Estos grupos fueron definidos con base en autoevaluaciones relacionadas con la felicidad general y la satisfacción con la vida. Comparamos estos grupos con el resto de la población brasileña mediante análisis de conglomerados y respuestas a preguntas relacionadas con la importancia que se le da a la familia, la autoevaluación del estado de salud, la religiosidad, la autodeterminación, la confianza y la situación económica. Además, describimos perfiles particulares de personas más desafortunadas y de personas más bendecidas. Utilizando modelos de regresión Logit Multinomiale, investigamos qué grupos sociodemográficos tenían más probabilidades de estar en cada perfil. Aunque son muy heterogéneos, los individuos más desfavorecidos disfrutan de algunas características comunes, al igual que los individuos bendecidos. Mientras que los primeros tenían una frágil situación financiera autoevaluada y tenían bajos niveles de confianza, las personas bendecidas tenían altos niveles de autodeterminación y de religiosidad.

Palabras clave: felicidad; satisfacción con la vida; Brasil; análisis de conglomerados; WVS.

JEL: I31; J17.

1 INTRODUCTION

The determinants of happiness and satisfaction have been subjected of much scrutinization during the past decades. Many studies in the field of economics of happiness address the relationship between a myriad of factors and well-being. Among the personal traits and social characteristics that are commonly found associated are income, relationships, attitudes and beliefs towards self/others/life, how time is spent and the wider economic, social and political environment.[4]

Studies for Brazil are still scarce (Corbi and Menezes-Filho, 2006; Golgher, 2014a; Ribeiro, 2015). Among the determinants of well-being in Brazil discussed by these authors, eight were particularly significant: marital status, employment status, health levels, importance given to the family, self-determination, religiosity, thick trust and self-evaluated financial situation. Although remarkably insightful, this type of analyses commonly does not address the heterogeneity of wretched and blissful individuals. Individuals that might face negative influences of some factors might overcome potential low levels of well-being by positive impacts of others. Conversely, some persons may possess good endowments in some aspects and still fell wretched due to other features.

We build on these studies using the World Value Survey (WVS) of 2014 to explore two extreme groups based on their levels of happiness and life satisfaction. Those with low levels of both were named "the most wretched" and those with high levels in both were classified as "the most blissful". We believe that wretched individuals might pursue or be pushed to common unsuccessful strategies, while blissful persons may follow different and successful paths to well-being.

4. For an extensive review, see Dolan, Peasgood and White (2008).

The main objective of this paper is to compare these two groups, investigating whether they differ regarding the known sources of happiness and satisfaction. We use cluster analysis and multinomial logistic models to draw profiles among the WVS respondents.

Thus, although the paper is based on studies that discussed the determinants of well-being, a topic extensively addressed by other authors, it uses a different approach and methodology, focusing in specific groups of the population, and analyzing unsuccessful and successful individuals' paths to well-being. By doing so, we truly believe that this paper will fill part of the gap regarding well-being studies. We did not follow most studies that select a well-being indicator and determine variables that are correlated with it. We used two indicators representing different dimensions, the one for happiness and the one for satisfaction of life, and hence could define those most wretched, who failed pursuing both dimensions, and those most blissful, who succeed in both dimensions. In this vein, Ng (2015) argues that different concepts of subjective well-being may be useful for different purposes and it is not necessary to stick to only one. The use of happiness and life satisfaction conjointly, as they differ in substance and meaning, might be insightful.

The paper was structured in five sections. The second section presents a brief literature review with emphasis on the eight determinants of happiness and satisfaction. Section 3 presents the methodology applied in the paper. The fourth section compares descriptively the most wretched, the most blissful, and the rest of the population in Brazil. This section also describes the empirical results of the cluster analysis for the population as a whole and for the most wretched and the most blissful individuals in Brazil, and examine the factors associated with the different paths to well-being using multinomial logistic models. Last section concludes the paper.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Defining and measuring happiness and life satisfaction

In order to define the most wretched and the most blissful individuals in Brazil, we used three concepts: happiness, life satisfaction, and subjective well-being. They resemble each other in many aspects, but present differences that should be emphasized.

Variables related to happiness, life satisfaction and well-being tend to be strongly and positively correlated (Haller and Hadler, 2006; Medvedev and Landhuis, 2018). Besides, the applied definitions for these variables indicate conceptual overlap between them (Medvedev and Landhuis, 2018). However, these measures differ in essence and significance (Haller and Hadler, 2006; Medvedev and Landhuis, 2018; Ng, 2015), and should not be used interchangeably.

Following Ng (2015), the meaning of happiness tends to be clearer and more precise than life satisfaction. Happiness can be defined as a global evaluation of the individual's life quality according to cognitive or emotional aspects (Medvedev and Landhuis, 2018; Nemati and Maralani, 2016). Hence, it is greatly determined by positive and close social relationships (Haller and Hadler, 2006) and by experimenting a purpose in life, personal growth, environmental mastery, autonomy, and positive self-esteem (Medvedev and Landhuis, 2018; Nemati and Maralani, 2016). Thus, it is considered the ultimate goal in life.

Life satisfaction is a measure resulting from the comparison between one' wishes and the present state of the individual's life. Hence, it is likely to be more affected by the objective-material conditions of life and by the perceived discrepancy between aspirations and expectations with actual achievements. Thus, shifts in aspiration level influence this indicator more than it affects happiness. Moreover, life satisfaction is also more impacted by a positive valuation on the contribution to the happiness of others. That is, a higher degree of altruism may affect more life satisfaction than happiness (Medvedev and Landhuis, 2018; Nemati and Maralani, 2016; Ng, 2015).

Ng (2015) evaluates that happiness is superior to life satisfaction in many aspects. However, the author argues that different concepts of subjective well-being may be useful for different purposes, and it is not necessary to stick only to happiness. Hence, the use of happiness and life satisfaction conjointly, as they differ in substance and meaning, might be insightful, which is the vein followed by this paper.

2.2 Factors associated with happiness and life satisfaction in Brazil

After learning the particularities of measuring happiness and life satisfaction, we move to the determinants. This section briefly presents some national and international studies that addressed this relation for the eight selected variables mentioned in the introduction and that are important in the Brazilian context. Although several variables are subjected to possible reverse causality, only longitudinal studies would be able to shed light on the order of causality.

Family relationships, marital status and the importance given to family are among the most important features that affect the individual's happiness. In general, married people tend to be happier than their non-married counterparts (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2004; Dolan, Peasgood and White, 2008; Graham, 2008; Haller and Hadler, 2006; Helliwell, 2006), including in Brazil (Corbi and Menezes-Filho, 2006; Ribeiro, 2015). Married people are wealthier and healthier, and have a "natural" protective net for adverse events in life. Another explanation is due to the reverse causality: married people are happier because happier people have a greater propensity of getting married or not divorcing (Stutzer and Frey, 2006).

Financial constraints are also important for life satisfaction. Studies consistently show large negative effects of unemployment on well-being (Dolan, Peasgood and White, 2008). Blanchflower and Oswald (2004), Corbi and Menezes-Filho (2006), Graham (2008), Haller and Hadler (2006), Helliwell and Putnam (2004), and Shields and Price (2005) described unemployed individuals as unhappier than other groups in the population. Unemployed individuals suffer from loss of income, but this is only part of the impact, as unemployment may cause depression, anxiety, social isolation, loss of self-esteem, and of personal control (Layard, 2005). Nevertheless, notice that there is also the possibility of reverse causality for this variable: unhappy individuals tend to be less productive and might show a greater propensity to become unemployed.

A good health status is also an important condition for being happy (Dolan, Peasgood and White, 2008; Graham, 2008; Graham, Higuera and Lora, 2011; Haller and Hadler, 2006; Helliwell, 2006; Ribeiro, 2015; Shields and Price, 2005). Notice, however, that circular causality may also occur here: healthier people tend to be happier and happier people tend to be healthier (Dolan, Peasgood and White, 2008).

Helliwell (2006) and Helliwell and Putnam (2004) emphasized that individuals who give more importance to God and attend more often religious service tend to be happier. Higher levels of religiosity might positively affect happiness for different reasons and might counterbalance the negative effect of the covariates (Dolan, Peasgood and White, 2008; Graham and Crown, 2014; Haller and Hadler, 2006; Ribeiro, 2015). For instance, religious individuals tend to be more resilient against a loss of employment, separation or divorce (Clark and Lelkes, 2005).

The sense that one is able to control their own life and make decisions seem to be important for happiness and life satisfaction according to Haller and Hadler (2006) and Johnson and Krueger (2006). The authors found a positive correlation between perceived control over life and well-being.

Associations of income with well-being are in general positive (Dolan, Peasgood and White, 2008); however, in many settings income tends to be only weakly correlated or even non-significantly correlated with well-being (Shields and Price, 2005). Nonetheless, income might not indicate precisely how individuals judge their financial situation or wealth. Therefore, perceptions of financial status (or how one is fairing financially) might have a stronger predictive power than actual income (Dolan, Peasgood and White, 2008; Haller and Hadler, 2006; Johnson and Krueger, 2006; Ribeiro, 2015).

Perceived community cohesion is also important. Dolan, Peasgood and White (2008) stated that features associated with the community, such as trust, are among the most important in determining happiness levels. Helliwell (2006), and Helli-

well and Putnam (2004) have found that general trust and trust in neighbors were associated with higher levels of happiness. These relationships were also observed empirically with the Brazilian data (Golgher, 2014a).

3 DATA AND METHODS

3.1 The World Value Survey

The WVS is a series of representative national surveys that have been carried out in at least 97 countries since 1981. These surveys inquire the population about their values, beliefs and attitudes regarding a myriad of topics, such as stereotypes, religiosity, migration, culture, political interest, among many others. It also collects information on respondents' demographics.[5] Four waves of data have been collected in Brazil (years 1991, 1997, 2006 and 2014, with a sample size of 1782, 1149, 1500 and 1486 observations respectively).

In order to exclude confounding factors due to temporal variations, since well-being varied between 1991 and 2014 in this country, we chose to use only the most recent WVS available at the time of this research (Inglehart et al., 2014). New waves of WVS are constantly being released. The next wave with Brazilin data is due to be available mid-2020.

There are other databases, which have also been conducted internationally in a big scale that include Brazil, such as the Gallup World Poll (Graham, Higuera and Lora, 2011) and the Latino-Barometer (Easterlin et al., 2010). Both present similar questions and could also be applied in comparable analysis as the one presented in this paper. However, most of the studies that addressed the determinants of well-being in Brazil (Corbi and Menezes-Filho, 2006; Golgher, 2014a; Ribeiro, 2015) used the WVS and for the sake of comparability we used the same database.

The WVS has one variable that intends to measure happiness and another variable that intends to measure life satisfaction. Self-evaluated happiness is measured with the answer to the following question: "In general, you consider yourself a person who is: i) very happy; ii) quite happy; iii) not very happy; or iv) not at all happy". Given that very few people considered themselves "Not at all happy", we grouped the last two categories. Life satisfaction is measured by the answer to the following question: "In general, are you satisfied or unsatisfied with your life?" Possible answers ranged from 1 (for totally unsatisfied) to 10 (for totally satisfied).

Table 1 shows the distribution of individuals according to the two measures in the year 2014 in Brazil. As shown in bold, only 271 people considered themselves to very happy and fully satisfied with their life at the same time, forming

5. For further details, see: <https://bit.ly/3rxzzUA>.

the group. We labeled them as the most blissful individuals in Brazil. We intended to conduct the same procedure to define the most wretched, those who were not happy and very dissatisfied of life, but this group would sum only six individuals. In order to obtain a reasonable sample size for this category, we followed another method (Inglehart et al., 2008) built a composite subjective well-being index using variables for happiness and life satisfaction. Based on a similar procedure, we used the following equation to define subjective well-being:

$$Well-being = life\ satisfaction\ + \frac{10}{3}\ Happiness.$$

Anyone who had a value under 10 in this indicator was included in the most wretched individuals in Brazil. They represent the sum of individuals who classified themselves as "not happy" and classified themselves in one of the six lowest categories for life satisfaction; with individuals who classified themselves as "quite happy" and in one of the three lowest categories for life satisfaction, as shown in bold. Using this definition for the most wretched, we assembled 113 individuals, a small sample, but that enabled further analysis.

TABLE 1
Distributions of individuals according to their level of happiness and life satisfaction

Life satisfaction	Level of happiness			
	Not happy	Quite happy	Very happy	**Total**
1 (totally dissatisfied)	*6*	12	9	**27**
2	*8*	9	2	**19**
3	*9*	13	1	**23**
4	*9*	19	4	**32**
5	*32*	107	17	**156**
6	*15*	71	16	**102**
7	*10*	113	46	**169**
8	*15*	184	85	**284**
9	6	100	68	**174**
10 (totally satisfied)	12	213	271	**496**
Total	**122**	**841**	**519**	**1,482**

Source: WVS, 2014. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.

3.2 Covariables

The WVS collects data on different life domains that potentially can affect the level of well-being. As already mentioned, we previous selected eight variables as the main determinants of happiness and life satisfaction in Brazil. Six of them were used to define the profiles using Cluster Analysis (CA). The other two, which are

sociodemographic by nature, civil status and unemployment status, were used as explanatory variables in the multinomial logistic models. We first introduce the variables used in CA.

To evaluate the importance of family for happiness and life satisfaction, we used answers to the question "How important is family for your life?" Answers were recategorized as a dummy (0 – Not important or important; 1 – Very important).

As for self-rated health status, the WVS contains the following question: "In general, how is your health?" Categories of responses varied from 0 to 4, being 4 very good. We recoded the categories to become dummies (0 – Poor and fair; 1 – Good and very good).

To assess religion and religiosity, we used three variables available at the WVS to create an index on religiosity. The first is similar to the one assessing importance of family, "How important is religion for your life?" The variable was transformed into a dummy: 0 – Not important or important; 1 – Very important. A second question asked how the individual classified oneself in terms of religiosity and we grouped the categories of response to obtain another dummy variable: 0 – Not a religious person; 1 – A religious person. A third question asked how important God is to the individual's life, which was also transformed into a dummy: 0 – Not very important; 1 – Very important. Given that these three variables are highly correlated, we created a unique variable for religiosity by grouping them into a single variable with the following categories of answer: 0 – Not religious; 1 – Less religious; 2 – Somewhat religious; 3 – Very religious.

Regarding self-determination, probed by the question "How much freedom of choice and control do you have over your life". We regrouped answers to form a three category (1 – A little; 2 – Some; 3 – A great deal).

There are quite some variables associated with trust in the WVS, such as general trust and trust on particular groups of the population. We selected the one most correlated with well-being, which was "People you know personally can be trusted?" Answers were grouped into three categories (1 – Not very much or not at all; 2 – A little; and 3 – Completely).

Finally, we included in the analysis how satisfied the individual was with his/her household's financial situation (1 – Very dissatisfied; 2 – Dissatisfied; 3 – Satisfied; and 4 – Very satisfied).

We also included two demographic variables in the model that are important for happiness and satisfaction. Marital status was transformed into a dummy (1 – Married; 0 – Non-married) as well as employment status (1 – Unemployed; 0 – Non-unemployed).

Studies that address the determinants of happiness and life satisfaction commonly use other sociodemographic variables that we include in our models (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2004; Dolan, Peasgood and White, 2008; Graham, 2008; Haller and Hadler, 2006; Helliwell, 2006). They are: sex (1 – Male; 0 – Female), race/ethnicity (1 – White/Asian; 0 – Black/Pardo/Indigenous), age (six age groups) and income (eight categories). Table 3 brings descriptive statistics of these variables.

3.3 Cluster analysis

We first build happiness and life satisfaction profiles using responses to the six variables above mentioned and cluster analysis (CA). All variables were normalized. We used Stata 12 to perform the CA to create subgroups. CA is commonly used in the social sciences to group respondents based on their patterns of answers, creating sub-groups (Hair Junior et al., 2009). For instance, previous studies have used this technique to determine patterns of homicides in Brazil (Sousa, Del-Fiaco and Berton, 2019).

Here, we apply this procedure to analyze pathways of well-being. Our basic hypothesis is that different responses about levels of importance given to family, self-rated health, self-determination, religiosity, trust and self-evaluated financial situation will yield different subtypes of wretched and blissful people.

There are different measures of goodness-of-fit that can be used in order to choose the number of mutually exclusive groups. We used the Calinsky/Harabasz pseudo-F statistics that is commonly used in the Stata package. The number of clusters in each analysis was defined by these statistics and two other features, which were the distribution of observations in each cluster, in order to avoid clusters with few observations, and the insightfulness of the interpretation of the empirical results.

CA were performed three times separately: first for the whole sample, then for the group of most wretched individuals, and finally for the group of most blissful. For the whole sample, we chose the study with six profiles. For the most wretched, three profiles. Finally, for the most blissful, we studied four clusters.

3.4 Multinomial logistic models

After classifying the individuals in different groups, the paper investigates which socio-demographic aspects were associated with the distribution of individuals among the different profiles. In order to do so, the dependent variable in the model was the profile in which the individual belonged. Given that the dependent variable was clearly an unordered categorical one, we chose to use multinomial logistic model.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive statistics of the most wretched and most blissful individuals in Brazil

The main objective of this subsection is to describe the most wretched and the most blissful individuals in Brazil, comparing them with the rest of the population. We divided the presentation in two tables. Table 2 presents the results for the variables used as inputs for the CA, while table 3 presents the results for the explanatory variables used in the multinomial logistic model. We chose to separate the presentation in order to facilitate further discussions with the different groups of variables.

The statistical significance of the results in table 2 was assessed with a one way ANOVA with a Bonferroni ad-hoc test. *M* stands for the larger value and *m* for the smaller when differences were statistically significant. As multiple comparisons are shown, numbers were included in each comparison.

We begin the discussion with the variables regarding importance given to family. The proportion of individuals who considered that the family was very important varied from 78.7% for the most wretched to 92.3% for the most blissful. Trends are clear and differences were statistically significant between the wretched and the other groups. The difference between the rest of the population and the most blissful was not significant.

Health is one of the most crucial among the determinants of well-being. Here, the trends were extremely clear and differences were all significant: healthier individuals were underrepresented among the wretched and overrepresented in the blissful group. M1/m1 indicates that the value for the blissful was significantly greater than for the other groups. M2/m2 indicates that the result for the rest of the population is greater than for the wretched.

For self-determination, all values differed significantly among the groups: individuals with more self-determination had greater levels of well-being. For financial situation, all values differed significantly among the groups: individuals who had a better self-evaluated financial situation had greater level of well-being. Individuals with lower levels of trust on friends and acquaintances were overrepresented in the wretched group and underrepresented in the blissful one, and differences between the wretched and other groups were statistically significant. For religiosity, the values for the blissful group differed significantly from the other groups. That is, individuals in the blissful group tended to be more religious.

TABLE 2
Proportion of respondents who were wretched, in between, or blissful according to variables used to build the profiles

	Groups		
	Wretched	In between	Blissful
Dummy (%)			
Importance given to the family	78.7 [m]	87.8 [M]	92.3 [M]
Good or very good health level	42.0 [m1,m2]	71.4 [m1,M2]	79.0 [M1]
Categorical: ordinal (means)			
Self-determination	1.88 [m1,m2]	2.13 [m1,M2]	2.46 [M1]
Financial situation	1.73 [m1,m2]	2.47 [m1,M2]	2.89 [M1]
Trust-friends/acquaintances	1.44 [m]	1.67 [M]	1.75 [M]
Religiosity	2.10 [m]	2.22 [m]	2.43 [M]

Source: WVS, 2014. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.

Table 3 shows the variables that were selected as explanatory in the multinomial logistic model. Similar to table 2, the significance test utilized was ANOVA with Bonferoni ad hoc test. The table also shows the result for nominal categorical variables age and education level. Although they are nominal, they present an ordinal nature. Therefore, the results for the tests of significance presented in the table are based on Pearson chi-squared test, and on gamma and Kendall's tau-b tests that take into account the ordinal nature of the data.

The married were underrepresented among the wretched (25.0%), overrepresented amongst the blissful (47.8%), while the results for the rest of the population was between these extremes (41.1%). However, notice that the differences between these last two groups were not statistically significant, and both were statistically greater that the observed for wretched. For employment status, differences were not significant, although the proportion of unemployed was greater for the wretched. The proportion of males did not vary significantly between the most wretched group, the other individuals in Brazil and the most blissful. For race, the proportion of White/Asians was smaller in the Blissful group and similar in the first two. Differences for age groups and for education level were small and not significant according to the Pearson chi-squared test. However, the results were significant in the gamma and Kendall's tau-b tests. Nevertheless, tends are not very clear. For income, differences were significant only for the most wretched, while results were similar for the other two groups.

TABLE 3
Proportion of respondents who were wretched, in between or blissful according to selected characteristics

	Groups		
	Wretched	In between	Blissful
Dummy (%)			
Married	25.0[m]	41.1[M]	47.8[M]
Unemployed	18.6	12.1	12.2
Male	36.3	37.6	38.0
White/Asian	48.7	48.9[M]	40.6[m]
Categorical: nominal			
Age groups (%)*			
18-24	12	16	13
25-34	16	22	19
35-44	26	19	21
45-54	26	19	18
55-64	12	13	13
65 + years	10	11	15
Schooling level (%)*			
Less than elementary school	37	31	38
Elementary school	18	13	9
Less than high school	8	10	10
High school	30	29	28
Some university level	3	8	3
University degree	4	10	11
Categorical: ordinal (means)			
Income	3.73[m]	4.50[M]	4.28[M]

Source: WVS, 2006. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.
Obs.: * $p < 0.05$ (statistically significant differences).

4.2 Population profiles obtained with cluster analysis

We divided this subsection in two parts. Initially, we describe the results for the whole sample. The objective is to characterize general profiles in the Brazilian population regarding well-being level. In the next subsection, we portray the most wretched and most blissful in more detail.

4.2.1 Profiles of the Brazilian population

Box 1 shows the results for the six profiles obtained from the whole sample. The upper panel of the box details the results for each profile and the lower panel summarizes the main findings for each of them. The profiles were obtained with

the six preselected variables, as mentioned in the methodological section, and with two dummy variables, one for blissful (1 – Yes; 0 – No) and another one for wretched (1 – Yes; 0 – No).

Initially, notice the number of observations in each cluster. Cluster 5 is the least numerous with only 50 observations. Cluster 4 is the most numerous with 409 observations.

Each cluster has its centroid. To aide interpretation, we grouped the values for each variable into five categories: Low, Low to Average, Average, Average to High, and High. If the value for a specific variable in a particular profile was much lower than the average found for the WVS sample, the parameter was classified as "Low". If the value was slightly below the sample mean, the classification was "Low to Average (L/A)". If it was around the sample mean, the parameter was classified as "Average". If it was slightly above the mean or well above the mean, the categories are respectively "Average to high (A/H)", and "High". For instance, the blissful dummy had as mean value for the whole sample of $250/1304 \approx 0.191$. In four out of six profiles, the value for this variable was zero or close to zero. Thus, they received the label "Low" for this variable. One profile grouped most blissful individuals of the sample, with a proportion much higher than the mean value. Thus, the profile was labeled as "High" We followed a similar procedure for all variables.

Initially, notice the values for the centroid parameters for the variables blissful and wretched. Profile 3 characterized most blissful individuals since the parameter for blissful was high and for wretched was low. Following a similar procedure, profiles 4 and 5 categorized the wretched. These three profiles classified most blissful and most wretched individuals in the Brazilian population. The other three profiles, the three with the highest number of observations, mostly featured the remaining of the population.

All the other variables used in the CA to determine the profiles are positively correlated with well-being. Hence, we expect that most variables will be classified as Low, L/A or Average for the wretched profiles and the contrary for the blissful profile.

We continue the discussion with profile 3, the profile that characterized most blissful individuals with 235 observations (close to the initial 250 we found when describing the sample). As expected, most variables tended to have centroid values above the sample mean with values classified as A/H and High. The most distinguished features of the profile are the high values for self-determination and for financial situation. In addition, the values for importance given to family, health levels and religiosity were slightly above sample mean. The other variable, thick trust, showed values around the sample mean. Given these characteristics, this profile was summarized in the lower panel of the box as the *blissful individuals in Brazil*.

Conversely, two profiles, 4 and 5, characterize the *wretched individuals in Brazil*, but the characteristics of each differ. Profile 4 had as main characteristics low values for importance given to family and for health levels. Only 61 observations had these characteristic. This profile was named as *wretched individuals: unhealthy and no importance given to family.*

Profile 5 had low levels for self-determination, financial situation and religiosity, although they had high values for self-rated health. These were comprised of 50 observations. The profile was named as *wretched individuals: financially poor, with lack of self-determination, low levels of religiosity but healthy individuals.*

Analyzing these three profiles conjointly, some variables were associated with being wretched and with being blissful, such as importance given to family, self-determination, financial situation and religiosity. Other variables, such as self-rated health and thick trust do not vary remarkably between blissful and wretched individuals.

The other three profiles mostly characterize those who were neither wretched nor blissful, however also classified a few wretched individuals. That is, patterns mostly associated with the rest of the population.

Profile 1 had as its main features the high levels for health levels and thick trust. No variable had low values. Self-determination, financial situation and religiosity had average values, and importance given to family received a A/H value. Given this characteristics, we named this group the *healthy and trustful individuals*. Notice that 409 respondents had these characteristics, the most numerous group.

Profile 2 had as its main features the high value for importance given to family and the low value for self-rated health. Profile 6 showed high values for health and low for thick trust. Summarizing these last two profiles, profile 2 characterizes the *unhealthy but importance is given to family.* The sixth profile is named the *healthy, but distrustful individuals*.

BOX 1
General profiles for the Brazilian population

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Number of observations	409	272	235	61	50	277
Variables	Parameters					
Blissful	Low	Low	High	L/A	Low	Low
Wretched	L/A	Average	Low	High	High	L/A
Importance given to family	A/H	High	A/H	Low	L/A	Average
Health levels	High	Low	A/H	Low	High	High
Self-determination	Average	Average	High	Average	Low	Average

(Continues)

(Continued)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Financial situation	Average	L/A	High	Average	Low	Average
Thick trust	High	Average	Average	Average	Average	Low
Religiosity	Average	Average	A/H	Average	Low	Average
Main characteristics						
Profile 1	*Healthy and trustful individuals*					
Profile 2	*Unhealthy but importance given to family*					
Profile 3	*Blissful individuals*					
Profile 4	*Wretched individuals: unhealthy and no importance given to family*					
Profile 5	*Wretched individuals: financially poor, with lack of self-determination, low levels of religiosity but healthy individuals*					
Profile 6	*Healthy, but distrustful individuals*					

Source: WVS, 2014. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.
Obs.: L/A = Low to average and A/H = Average to high.

4.2.2 Results for the subtypes of wretched and blissful individuals

The results presented in box 1 showed a general characterization of the Brazilian population using CA. Besides this analysis, and as the focus of the paper, we also created sub-types, first restricting the sample to the wretched (box 2), and then to the blissful (box 3). To avoid redundancy, we excluded the variables "blissful" and "wretched" for the composition of the clusters, as all observations have equal values. The main objective of this analysis is to investigate if there are noticeable unsuccessful and successful personal strategies for the achievement of well-being.

Box 2 shows the results for the three subtypes for the wretched. These three profiles indicate different pathways to wretchedness. Initially, notice that the number of observations is roughly similar in all three profiles.

We analyze each profile for the wretched using the same five categories as in box 1. Notice that the six variables are positively correlated with well-being, hence it is expected that most variables will be classified as low, L/A or average. As expected, only importance given to family and health levels in profile 3 and self-determination in profile 1 showed an A/H or high values.

Profile 1 had as its main characteristics the low levels for importance given to family and high values for self-determination. Three variables were L/A: health levels, financial situation and thick trust, suggesting that they are also influencing negatively on well-being levels. Hence, apparently, the high levels of self-determination are not enough to overcome the negative effect of these four cited variables. The profile was named the *individualistic self-determined* wretched individuals.

The second profile has as its main aspect the low levels of self-rated health. Besides, the profile has somewhat lower levels than overall population for self-determination, financial situation and thick-trust. No variable had above average values. We named this profile the *unhealthy* wretched individuals.

Profile 3 has as its main characteristic the high levels for self-rated health and the low values for financial situation. Besides, it had A/H values for importance given to family, and L/A values for self-determination, thick trust and religiosity. That is, the potential positive effect of importance given to family and health levels apparently is not enough to overcome the wretchedness caused by other losses. Given the features of this profile, it was entitled *Health but financially poor* wretched individuals.

BOX 2
Profiles for the wretched

Variables	Profile 1	Profile 2	Profile 3
Number of observations	31	37	26
Variables	Parameters		
Importance given to family	Low	Average	A/H
Health levels	L/A	Low	High
Self-determination	High	L/A	L/A
Financial situation	L/A	L/A	Low
Thick trust	L/A	L/A	L/A
Religiosity	Average	Average	L/A
Main characteristics			
Profile 1	*Individualistic self-determined wretched individuals*		
Profile 2	*Unhealthy wretched individuals*		
Profile 3	*Healthy but financially poor wretched individuals*		

Source: WVS, 2014. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.
Obs.: L/A = Low to average and A/H = Average to high.

Box 3 shows the results of the subtypes for the blissful group. Notice that, contrary to the observed for the wretched, the blissful showed a higher or more A/H value when compared to overall population. However, low and L/A values were also observed.

Profile 2 had three variables with high levels: self-rated health, self-determination and religiosity. Moreover, importance given to family, financial situation and thick trust had A/H values. Given that 6 out of 6 variables had at least A/H values, this profile was labeled the *generalized* blissful individuals. Notice that this profile is the most numerous with 107 observations, indicating that this path is the general path to blissfulness.

The third profile was also numerous, with 90 observations. All variables showed average, A/H or high values. That is, no dimension seems to significantly influence well-being levels in a negative form. Two variables showed high values: importance given to family and self-rated health, and two presented A/H values: self-determination and financial situation. This profile was entitled the *healthy family-oriented* blissful individuals. The main differences between these two profiles are the higher values for financial situation and for religiosity in profile 2.

The other blissful profiles are less numerous. Thus, they can be considered specific paths to blissfulness. Profile 1 characterized only 20 observations, less than 10% of the blissful. This group is blissful despite their low level for self-rated health and financial situation. Three variables seem to contribute to this: importance given to family, self-determination and religiosity (which showed higher values than overall population). These features suggest that resiliency is in fact an important aspect to achieve higher levels of well-being (as found in Nemati and Maralani, 2016). Given these characteristics, this profile was named the *blissful resilient* individuals.

The last profile for blissful individuals showed high levels for financial situation and religiosity, and A/H values for self-determination. On the other hand, values for health levels were low and for importance given to family were L/A. Therefore, this profile was entitled the *religious financial rich unhealthy blissful* individuals.

BOX 3
Profiles for the most blissful

Variables	Profile 1	Profile 2	Profile 3	Profile 4
Number of observations	20	107	90	33
Variables	Parameters			
Importance given to family	High	A/H	High	L/A
Health levels	Low	High	High	Low
Self-determination	A/H	High	L/A	A/H
Financial situation	Low	A/H	L/A	High
Thick trust	L/A	A/H	Average	A/H
Religiosity	High	High	Average	High
Main characteristics				
Profile 1	*Blissful resilient individuals*			
Profile 2	*Generalized blissful individuals*			
Profile 3	*Self-determined unhealthy and financially poor blissful individuals*			
Profile 4	*Religious financial rich unhealthy blissful individuals*			

Source: WVS, 2014. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.
Obs.: L/A = Low to average and A/H = Average to high.

In conclusion, profiles showed in box 2 presented below average values for financial situation and for thick trust. That is, these two factors may be sufficient to determine wretchedness. Healthy and family oriented individuals, which tend to show higher values of well-being, actually had low levels of well-being if they also had low values for self-determination, financial situation, thick trust and religiosity. Notice in profile 1 that self-determination seems not to be a very decisive determinant of well-being for the wretched individuals if they are negatively impacted by other sources of distress.

Box 3 characterized the four profiles for blissful individuals. While comparing them, one variable showed an outstanding position: religiosity. It is high in three profiles and average in the forth. Low levels of importance given to family, self-rated health and/or financial situation could be overcome by high values for religiosity and above average values for self-determination. These findings suggest that these two variables together are sufficient condition to determine blissfulness if other variables are negatively influencing well-being. L/A values for self-determination and financial situation could be overcome by high levels of importance given to family and a better self-rated health, as shown in profile 3.

4.3 Factors associated with the distribution of profiles

Using a multinomial logistic model, this subsection investigates which sociodemographic aspects are associated with the distribution of individuals among the different profiles described above. Tables 4 and 5 explored the profiles found on box 1. Table 6 explored the profiles found on boxes 2 and 3.

Table 4 presents the coefficients of model that analyzed the profiles of box 1 with the blissful group as reference. The objective is to observe the variables that were associated with different propensities of being in other profiles when compared to the blissful group.

Initially, notice that the variable *unemployed* had only non-significant coefficients. That is, employment seems not to affect the distribution between the non-blissful profiles and the blissful profile, although it is among the most important determinants of well-being.

Comparisons between profiles with high levels of self-rated health show negative and significant coefficients for the older population. That is, there is a smaller propensity of older individuals to belong to these profiles when compared to the blissful group. The contrary occurred with the unhealthy profiles *unhealthy but importance given to family* and *wretched: unhealthy and no importance given to family*.

Income seems to have a similar, but weaker effect. In time, money seems to buy health.

Sex and race were significant in only one model each. Being a male decrease the propensity of being placed in the group *Unhealthy but importance given to family.* Being a White/Asian increase the propensity of being placed in *Healthy and trustful individuals.* Being a male and White/Asian are associated with having higher levels of self-rated health.

Finally, all coefficients for married were negative. Three were significant. Married individuals show a greater propensity of being blissful, and the also seem to have higher self-rated health (but with a weaker effect).

TABLE 4
Multinomial logistic models for general comparisons

	Profile of comparison				
Variables	*Healthy and trustful individuals*	Unhealthy but importance given to family	Wretched: unhealthy and no importance given to family	Wretched: financially poor, low self-determination and religiosity but healthy	Healthy, but distrustful individuals
	Base: blissful individuals				
Sex	-0.0547	-0.732***	0.0175	0.107	0.118
	(0.173)	(0.201)	(0.311)	(0.323)	(0.185)
Race	0.389**	0.0159	-0.288	0.470	0.0931
	(0.172)	(0.190)	(0.315)	(0.322)	(0.186)
Married	-0.290	-0.491**	-0.669**	-0.999***	-0.201
	(0.180)	(0.196)	(0.322)	(0.366)	(0.195)
Income	0.110***	-0.0743	-0.214***	-0.104	0.0346
	(0.0416)	(0.0454)	(0.0763)	(0.0784)	(0.0447)
Unemployed	0.0366	-0.306	0.480	-0.0129	0.0237
	(0.259)	(0.315)	(0.440)	(0.464)	(0.275)
Age group					
18-24	Reference	Reference	Reference	Reference	Reference
25-34	-0.165	0.247	0.230	0.820	-0.0116
	(0.290)	(0.383)	(0.773)	(0.537)	(0.301)
35-44	-0.176	0.440	0.874	0.256	-0.382
	(0.292)	(0.376)	(0.708)	(0.578)	(0.312)
45-54	-0.206	1.141***	1.015	0.522	-0.321
	(0.312)	(0.376)	(0.726)	(0.594)	(0.331)
55-64	-0.427	1.236***	2.057***	0.221	-0.848**
	(0.345)	(0.398)	(0.705)	(0.679)	(0.388)
65 and more	-1.033***	1.208***	1.884***	-1.031	-1.363***
	(0.351)	(0.387)	(0.700)	(0.870)	(0.402)
Constant	0.277	0.150	-1.389**	-1.305**	0.377
	(0.310)	(0.371)	(0.691)	(0.582)	(0.325)
Observations	1,280	1,280	1,280	1,280	1,280

Source: WVS, 2014. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.
Obs.: 1. Standard errors in parentheses.
2. *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; * p < 0.1.

Table 5 shows the same model, but first having the w*retched: unhealthy and no importance given to family* as the basis for comparison and them having the w*retched: financially poor, low self-determination and religiosity but healthy* as a basis.

Notice that the effect of age on self-rated health is clear in this table, as the coefficients for age were negative and significant for older categories in the four comparisons. In only three models, the one comparing two unhealthy profiles and those comparing two healthy profiles, the coefficients were non-significant.

Income matters. The comparisons between non-wretched and w*retched* profiles showed significant and positive coefficients. The only comparisons that showed a non-significant coefficient was the one between two wretched profiles.

One comparison showed a significant and negative coefficient for sex and another significant and positive coefficient for married. Both results were also observed and explained on table 4. White/Asian have higher odds of, being healthy.

Most coefficients for unemployed were negative, but just one was significant. The main difference between the profiles in this specific comparison is the higher value given to the family in *unhealthy but importance given to family.* The unemployed showed greater propensity to be in the profile *wretched: unhealthy and no importance given to family* than in this first. This result suggests the negative effects of unemployment on social and family interactions and on levels of well-being.

Table 6 also shows the same model, but with w*retched: financially poor, low self-determination and religiosity but healthy* as the basis. To avoid redundancy, we only show healthy profiles. Those who are married showed a lower propensity of being in the wretched group. The only coefficient for the age groups 25-34 that was significant in all models was in the comparison between the first and the last of the above profiles, suggesting that young individuals in Brazil have lower levels of trust.

TABLE 5
Multinomial logistic models for general comparisons

	Profile of comparison						
	Healthy and trustful	Unhealthy but importance given to family	Blissful	Wretched: financially poor, low self-determination and religiosity but healthy	Healthy, but distrustful	Healthy and trustful	Healthy, but distrustful
Variables	Wretched: unhealthy and no importance given to family					Wretched: financially poor, low self-determination and religiosity but healthy	
Sex	-0.0722	-0.749**	-0.0175	0.0891	0.100	-0.161	0.0112
	(0.302)	(0.311)	(0.311)	(0.405)	(0.309)	(0.310)	(0.317)
Race	0.677**	0.304	0.288	0.757*	0.381	-0.0807	-0.377
	(0.306)	(0.309)	(0.315)	(0.408)	(0.314)	(0.308)	(0.315)

(Continues)

(Continued)

	Profile of comparison						
	Healthy and trustful	Unhealthy but importance given to family	Blissful	Wretched: financially poor, low self-determination and religiosity but healthy	Healthy, but distrustful	Healthy and trustful	Healthy, but distrustful
Variables	Wretched: unhealthy and no importance given to family					Wretched: financially poor, low self-determination and religiosity but healthy	
Married	0.380	0.179	0.669**	-0.330	0.469	0.709**	0.798**
	(0.313)	(0.316)	(0.322)	(0.446)	(0.323)	(0.355)	(0.363)
Income	0.324***	0.140*	0.214***	0.110	0.249***	0.214***	0.138*
	(0.0744)	(0.0748)	(0.0763)	(0.0993)	(0.0761)	(0.0754)	(0.0770)
Unemployed	-0.444	-0.786*	-0.480	-0.493	-0.457	0.0494	0.0366
	(0.421)	(0.447)	(0.440)	(0.566)	(0.431)	(0.442)	(0.450)
Age group							
18-24	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
25-34	-0.395	0.0170	-0.230	0.591	-0.241	-0.986*	-0.832
	(0.754)	(0.792)	(0.773)	(0.877)	(0.758)	(0.507)	(0.513)
35-44	-1.050	-0.434	-0.874	-0.618	-1.256*	-0.432	-0.638
	(0.688)	(0.724)	(0.708)	(0.846)	(0.695)	(0.550)	(0.561)
45-54	-1.221*	0.125	-1.015	-0.493	-1.337*	-0.728	-0.844
	(0.705)	(0.732)	(0.726)	(0.864)	(0.712)	(0.565)	(0.576)
55-64	-2.484***	-0.821	-2.057***	-1.836**	-2.905***	-0.648	-1.069
	(0.682)	(0.706)	(0.705)	(0.895)	(0.704)	(0.653)	(0.677)
65 and more	-2.917***	-0.676	-1.884***	-2.915***	-3.247***	-0.00211	-0.332
	(0.691)	(0.704)	(0.700)	(1.051)	(0.716)	(0.860)	(0.882)
Constant	1.666**	1.539**	1.389**	0.0835	1.766***	1.583***	1.682***
	(0.673)	(0.699)	(0.691)	(0.832)	(0.679)	(0.557)	(0.565)

Source: WVS, 2014. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.
Obs.: 1. Standard errors in parentheses.
2. *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; * p < 0.1.

Table 6 shows the multinomial logistic models for the wretched and for the blissful. As the numbers of observations are much smaller, most coefficients were non-significant. For the wretched, the profiles *individualistic self-determined* and h*ealthy but financially poor* differ mostly regarding the levels of importance given to family, their self-rated health and their level of self-determination. However, all coefficients were non-significant. The profiles *unhealthy wretched* and *healthy but financially poor wretched* mostly differ on health levels. Here, two of the coefficients for age were significant, showing the greater propensity of older individuals to be *unhealthy wretched.*

For the blissful, the models count with more observations, but again most coefficients were non-significant. The profile g*eneralized blissful* was the basis for comparisons. The comparison between the profiles *blissful resilient* and *generalized blissful* showed that older and poorer individuals had a greater propensity of

being resilient. The profiles s*elf-determined unhealthy and financially poor blissful* and g*eneralized blissful* differ mostly in self-determination, financial situation and religiosity, all in favor of the second group. None of the coefficients were significant. The profiles *religious financial rich unhealthy blissful* and *generalized blissful* differ mostly in health levels in favor of the second group. White/Asian showed lower propensity of being *religious financial rich unhealthy blissful*.

TABLE 6
Multinomial logistic models for general comparisons

Variables	Profile of comparison				
	Individualistic self-determined wretched individuals	Unhealthy wretched individuals	Blissful resilient individuals	Self-determined unhealthy and financially poor blissful individuals	Religious financial rich unhealthy blissful individuals
	Healthy but financially poor wretched individuals		Generalized blissful individuals		
Sex	0.375	-0.416	-0.747	0.207	-0.610
	(0.616)	(0.669)	(0.611)	(0.315)	(0.483)
Race	-0.113	-0.223	-0.0584	-0.0140	-1.227**
	(0.587)	(0.598)	(0.562)	(0.306)	(0.504)
Married	-0.162	0.0472	0.443	-0.133	0.136
	(0.731)	(0.717)	(0.586)	(0.316)	(0.457)
Income	0.00117	0.115	-0.533***	-0.0824	-0.144
	(0.152)	(0.155)	(0.145)	(0.0713)	(0.105)
Unemployed	-0.537	-0.759	0.986	0.572	-0.107
	(0.746)	(0.807)	(0.926)	(0.473)	(0.872)
Age group					
18-24	Reference	Reference	Reference	Reference	Reference
25-34	-0.430	-0.491	0.213	-0.0281	-1.131
	(1.014)	(1.211)	(1.324)	(0.517)	(0.998)
35-44	0.868	1.305	0.258	0.601	0.0372
	(0.978)	(1.082)	(1.330)	(0.527)	(0.839)
45-54	0.575	1.315	0.927	-0.480	0.340
	(0.975)	(1.055)	(1.267)	(0.582)	(0.824)
55-64	1.109	2.796**	1.803	0.427	0.382
	(1.476)	(1.413)	(1.338)	(0.617)	(0.975)
65 and more	1.511	2.714*	2.340*	-0.230	1.068
	(1.397)	(1.438)	(1.246)	(0.634)	(0.852)
Constant	-0.240	-0.956	-0.858	0.0552	-0.209
	(1.038)	(1.161)	(1.209)	(0.569)	(0.829)
Observations	93	93	245	245	245

Source: WVS, 2014. Disponível em <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.
Obs.: 1. Standard errors in parentheses.
2. *** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$.

5 CONCLUSION

This paper discusses factors associated with well-being in Brazil using the World Values Survey of 2014. Using this database, we defined the most wretched and most blissful individuals in Brazil using the individual's response concerning happiness and life satisfaction. Then, we categorize the Brazilian population in particular profiles using Cluster Analysis, detailing possible pathways to wretchedness and to blissfulness. Finally, we investigated which socio-demographic aspects were associated with the distribution of individuals among the different profiles using a multinomial logistic model.

What really matters for wretchedness or blissfulness in Brazil? Although highly heterogeneous, wretched individuals do enjoy some common features, and the same happens to blissful individuals. All wretched individuals had low levels of self-evaluated financial situation and of trust. On the contrary, without exceptions, blissful individuals had high levels of religiosity.

What do these results matter?

The paper shows clear implications about the individual's well-being, however, a final critical discussion is still necessary to better address this point. Which are the implications of measuring well-being? Why is this point so important and ubiquitous nowadays?

Froehlich and Sopena (2018) discuss this point and argue that a general recent perspective regarding government planning is that policies should pursue the population's happiness. However, conventional economic indicators, such as GDP, are incapable to apprehend effectively this point. Others more recent created, such as Gross Happiness Product (GHP), try to overcome this limitation. Thus, in this perspective, governments should actively increase the access of the population to dimensions directly linked to well-being levels, such as health, environment, education, liberty, etc.

This process begins by measuring the citizen's well-being, however, happiness and life satisfaction measurements are far from being without criticisms and limitations. Nonetheless, this more holistic development perspective necessarily includes the use of definitions of the subjective well-being field, as those described in this paper.

Nevertheless, this theoretical framework as normally addressed may not be enough. Froehlich and Sopena (2018) propose the incorporation of aspects of the Freudian approach to enrich the conceptual perspective of the framework. In particular, they propose the use of the concept of helplessness, which is linked to drive renunciation as a condition of living in society. Therefore, in this perspective, the modern human being lost part of its possibility of achieving well-being due to the continuous search to security. That is, it is imposed to individuals a trade-off between living in civilization and freeing instincts.

This same recent turn towards the perspective of promoting an increase of the citizen's well-being was also observed by Cabanas (2016). As argued by this author, in neoliberal societies, this turn occurred in all social realms and happiness became the concept that defines what is good, desirable or successful. In the core of this turn, emerges the discourse that legitimizes selfhood, which permeates the neoliberal ideology of individualism. Thus, individualism became the Holy Grail to achieving subjective well-being, in contrast to less individualist or more collectivist approaches. The result was the general collapse of the social in favor of the psychological. In this vein, the author proposed the term psytizens, what stands for "self-governed individuals whose identity is only constrained by and linked to their psychological self-development, a goal which is achieved through self-reflexive acts of choice and consumption" (Cabanas, 2016, p. 3). Three main features related to enhancing the individual's well-being shape the psytizens: emotional rationality, authenticity and flourishing. In this context, a happiness industry develops to fulfill the demands of the psytizens, promising the attainment of higher levels of well-being. By doing so, modernity linked to neoliberal capitalism promotes the idea of unlimited self-improvement, which is connected to insatiable consumption and productivity. All of this claimed by positive psychologists and happiness economist to be scientifically proven. However, the incessant struggling for higher levels of happiness produces the paradoxical effect of feeling overwhelmed and maladjusted (Cabanas, 2016).

What can we expect for Brazilian society? In order to answer that, we would have to perform longitudinal analysis to reveal the true tendencies of the profiles we observe. Are we becoming more distrustful, more religious and more financially constrained? Further studies are necessary.

Brazil is known as one of the most unequal societies in the world (Islam, Wills-Herrera and Hamilton, 2009). Unequal societies tend to depress feelings of self-evaluated financial situation (Gori-Maia, 2013), one of the most decisive among the determinants of wretchedness in Brazil. Besides, there was a sharp increase in GNI per capita (PPP) in Brazil between 2000 and 2013. In fact, the highest value was observed in 2014, the year the WVS was collected. This trend may be further depressing well-being level in Brazil in more recently. Regarding trust, we are performing extremely poor in this aspect, as trust levels in Brazil are extremely low, influencing lower levels of well-being (Golgher, 2014b).

In the past years, Brazilian society have witnessed several attempts to weaken their democratic institutions, which could also contribute for further feelings of hopelessness. The next wave of WVS will show.

The only characteristics of Brazilian society that seem to contribute largely for their happiness in religion as all blissful profiles showed average or higher level of religiosity. Among the 57 countries analyzed by Gallup-International, Brazil

ranked tenth in religiosity, a quite high mark (WIN/GIA, 2012). While public policies could come at hand to improve financial outcomes, self-rated health and several of the variables that matter for happiness, increasing one's religiosity should not become a political goal, as this may handicap individual freedom. In the face of these criticisms, to address the heterogeneity of wretched and blissful individuals in their different dimensions may sound even more insightful. Persons that are touched negatively by some factors might overcome potential low levels of well-being by positive influence of others.

REFERENCES

BLANCHFLOWER, D. G.; OSWALD, A. J. Well-being over time in Britain and the USA. **Journal of Public Economics**, v. 88, n. 7-8, p. 1359-1386, 2004.

CABANAS, E. Rekindling individualism, consuming emotions: constructing "psytizens" in the age of happiness. **Culture and Psychology**, v. 22, n. 3, p. 467-480, 2016.

CLARK, A.; LELKES, O. **Deliver us from evil**: religion as insurance. Paris: PSE, 2005. (Working Paper, n. 2005-43).

CORBI, R. B.; MENEZES-FILHO, N. A. Os determinantes empíricos da felicidade no Brasil. **Revista de Economia Política**, v. 26, n. 4, p. 518-536, 2006.

DOLAN, P.; PEASGOOD, T.; WHITE, M. Do we really know what makes us happy? A review of the economic literature on the factors associated with subjective well-being. **Journal of Economic Psychology**, v. 29, n. 1, p. 94-122, 2008.

EASTERLIN, R. A. et al. The happiness-income paradox revisited. **PNAS**, v. 107, n. 52, p. 22463-22468, 2010.

FROEHLICH, J. M.; SOPENA, M. B. Sobre a noção de desenvolvimento baseada na felicidade: considerações críticas. **Sociologias**, v. 20, n. 48, p. 272-299, 2018.

GOLGHER, A. B. **An overview of the determinants of happiness in Brazil in 2006**. Belo Horizonte: Cedeplar/UFMG, 2014a. (Working Paper, n. 510). Retrieved June 17, 2015, from: <https://bit.ly/3kLVlTt>.

_____. **The influence of attitudes and beliefs on the determinants of happiness in Brazil**. Belo Horizonte: Cedeplar/UFMG, 2014b. (Working Paper, n. 509). Retrieved June 17, 2015, from: <https://bit.ly/36XW8Za>.

GORI-MAIA, A. Relative income, inequality and subjective wellbeing: evidence for Brazil. **Social Indicators Research**, v. 113, p. 1193-1204, 2013.

GRAHAM, C. Happiness and health: lessons and questions for public policy. **Health Affairs**, v. 27, n. 1, p. 72-87, 2008.

GRAHAM, C.; CROWN, S. Religion and well-being around the world: social purpose, social time, or social insurance? **International Journal of Well-Being**, v. 4, n. 1, p. 1-27, 2014.

GRAHAM, C.; HIGUERA, L.; LORA, E. Which health conditions cause the most unhappiness? **Health Economics**, v. 20, n. 12, p. 1431-1447, 2011.

HAIR JUNIOR, J. et al. **Análise multivariada de dados**. 6th. ed. Porto Alegre: Bookman, 2009.

HALLER, M.; HADLER, M. How social relations and structures can produce happiness and unhappiness: an international comparative analysis. **Social Indicators Research**, v. 75, n. 2, p. 169-216, 2006.

HELLIWELL, J. F. Well-being, social capital and public policy: what's new? **Economic Journal**, v. 116, n. 510, p. C34-C45, 2006.

HELLIWELL, J. F.; PUTNAM, R. D. The social context of well-being. **Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society London**, v. 359, n. 1449, p. 1435-1446, 2004.

INGLEHART, R. et al. Development, freedom, and rising happiness: a global perspective (1981-2007). **Perspective on Psychological Science**, v. 3, n. 4, p. 264-285, 2008.

INGLEHART, R. et al. (Ed.). **World Values Survey**: round six – country-pooled datafile 2010-2014. Madrid: JD Systems Institute, 2014. Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/3BYjCet>.

ISLAM, G.; WILLS-HERRERA, E.; HAMILTON, M. Objective and subjective indicators of happiness in Brazil: the mediating role of social class. **The Journal of Social Psychology**, v. 149, n. 2, p. 267-272, 2009.

JOHNSON, W.; KRUEGER, R. F. How money buys happiness: genetic and environmental processes linking finances and life satisfaction. **Journal of Personality and Social Psychology**, v. 90, n. 4, p. 680-691, 2006.

LAYARD, R. **Happiness**: lessons from a new science. New York: Penguin Books, 2005.

MEDVEDEV, O.; LANDHUIS, C. E. Exploring constructs of well-being, happiness and quality of life. **PeerJ**, v. 6, n. 2, e4903, 2018.

NEMATI, S.; MARALANI, F. M. The relationship between life satisfaction and happiness: the mediating role of resiliency. **International Journal of Psychological Studies**, v. 8, n. 3, p. 194-201, 2016.

NG, Y.-K. **Happiness, life satisfaction, or subjective well-being?** A measurement and moral philosophical perspective. Singapore: NTU, 2015.

RIBEIRO, C. A. C. Renda, relações sociais e felicidade no Brasil. **DADOS – Revista de Ciências Sociais**, v. 58, n. 1, p. 37-78, 2015.

SHIELDS, M. A.; PRICE, S. W. Exploring the economic and social determinants of psychological wellbeing and perceived social support in England. **Journal of the Royal Statistical Society**, v. 168, n. 3, p. 513-537, 2005.

SOUSA, S. B. da S.; DEL-FIACO, R. de C.; BERTON, L. Cluster analysis of homicide rates in the Brazilian state of Goias from 2002 to 2014. **ArXiv.org**, Jan 2, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/3wYsEVB>.

STUTZER, A.; FREY, B. S. Does marriage make happy, or do happy people get married? **Journal of Socio-Economics**, v. 35, n. 2, p. 326-347, 2006.

WIN/GIA – WORLDWIDE INDEPENDENT NETWORK/GALLUP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION. **Global index of religiosity and atheism**. [n.l.]: WIN/GIA, 2012. Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/3yVzyMg>.

Data da submissão em: 17 ago. 2018.

Primeira decisão editorial em: 25 jun. 2019.

Última versão recebida em: 13 ago. 2019.

Aprovação final em: 9 set. 2019.