

*Commentaries*

# International Comparative Survey on Lifestyle and Values: A Report on the Taiwan Survey

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## Abstract

This paper provides a brief report by the Taiwan survey team of the project of International Comparative Survey on Lifestyle and Values. There are two main folds in this report. First, the details of research design and field operation are specified, including sampling design, quota sampling frame, implementation of online survey conducted in 2017. Second, the findings of a number of key variables are presented to show the level and patterns of well-being, social trust, neighborhood relationship, perceived fairness and equality in Taiwan society. While the level of happiness is high in Taiwan, social interactions with people living in the neighborhood appear to be infrequent. Social trust is diffuse among family members, friends and coworkers (except toward strangers), but the respondents also perceive a wide social inequality. This dataset offers rich materials for understanding social values, life styles and well-being of the Taiwan.

## Keywords

well-being, equality, trust, gender

Well-being research has been a most appealing field of social science during the past decades. As many developing societies have advanced in economic modernization and achieved higher levels of income, a critical question of whether people also feel satisfied with their lives as well as their society as a whole has also emerged (Diener, Helliwell, and Kahneman 2010; Gough and McGregor 2007). This question is raised because there appears to be an inherent tension in which economic growth may benefit people unequally. Inequality generated along with rapidly increased wealth is not necessarily distributed evenly among the members of a society (Bjørnskov and Tsai 2015; Kalmijn and Veenhoven 2005). In addition, there is a concern that rapid economic growth and widening inequality have had grave impacts on the structure of human society

such that trust, reciprocity, and solidarity are substantially threatened (Bjørnskov 2006; Delhey and Newton 2005). Opportunities to engage in meaningful human interactions have decreased as well. Society, rather than being a nourishing and refreshing context within which we develop feelings of satisfaction and happiness by way of living with others in peace and solidarity, becomes

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a lifeworld in which intimacy, exchanges, and mutual support are in short supply. Again there is a disparity: low happiness and well-being are more real for some than others (Helliwell, Layard and Sachs 2018). As social scientists we have a deep interest in finding out what happens to happiness in human society, why some people are deprived of it, and why some others can enjoy it.

Because of this interest we gathered information by way of modern social survey techniques. In collecting relevant data, we understand that well-being is a multifaceted phenomenon and, accordingly, we solicited responses from the mass public. Well-being relates to an individual's perception of the extent to which he or she enjoys a good life and how many "downsides," such as stress, uneasiness, or even depression, are experienced at the moment. It also concerns how they view social life and social structures and how they evaluate these conditions as desirable or as unwanted. They may see social institutions as fair, and may feel that justice prevails. Or they may predict a high likelihood of being discriminated against, and how they are disadvantaged, perhaps to a severe degree, because of their gender, origins, or other background factors. Happier people may be more willing to offer more to others, while unhappier people may retreat from society and be unable to manage their interpersonal relationships well, leading to a downward trend in happiness. These complicated interfaces between structural contexts, social life, and individual subjective evaluations of one's own living conditions indeed constitute fascinating research questions.

This report concentrates on well-being issues in Taiwanese society. It is part of an extensive project on the Asian region. In the spirit of collaboration, we endeavor to accomplish a field survey of Taiwan, provide a report of what we have obtained from a national survey, and show preliminary findings from the collected data. The main purpose of this work is to make available data about the current reporting on well-being in Taiwan. Researchers can also conduct a

cross-country comparison, as this is part of a collective project in which major Asian countries are involved.

### *International Comparative Survey on Lifestyle, Values and the Taiwan Survey*

To better understand the current status of social well-being among East and Southeast Asian countries, Professor Hiroo Harada, Masayuki Kanai, and colleagues at Senshu University initiated and organized the International Consortium for Social Well-being Studies (SWB Consortium). The consortium aims to bring together experts in East and Southeast Asia to address the important issue of well-being in the region. The SWB consortium consists of four main activities: symposia, academic publications, annual conferences, and surveys. The international comparative survey on lifestyle and values provides an empirical base for the consortium by collecting survey data in each member country.

Scholars in the consortium use results of the surveys to inform the public of social well-being issues in their countries via academic and non-academic publications. In addition to determinants of well-being at the individual level (e.g., socioeconomic status), the survey also emphasizes the influence of broader contexts, such as social relationships (i.e., families and neighborhoods) and social institutions (i.e., political systems and religions). This is especially important because in the past decade East and Southeast Asian countries have experienced rapid economic and social changes, such as economic downturns or upswings, labor immigration and emigration, low fertility rates, and increased social inequality. The within-country and between-country comparisons of the survey data provide insights for studying well-being in the region.

The SWB consortium includes Taiwan as a consortium member as of 2017. As a country in East Asia, Taiwan has also experienced different changes in the global era that have implications for the social well-being of the Taiwanese. The research team in

Taiwan conducted the Taiwanese survey in 2017. The survey adopts the common theme and the standard module of the SWB survey to identify the determinants of Taiwanese social well-being. In the following sections, the research team presents the methodology and key findings of the survey.

## METHOD

### *Sampling Design*

The Taiwan survey used proportional quota sampling based on Taiwan household registration data of the year 2015 with four weighting variables: age, sex, administrative unit, and region. The strata for each variable were as follows

Age (five categories): 20–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, and 60–69

Sex (two categories): male and female

Administrative Unit (four categories): special metropolitan cities (New Taipei City, Taipei City, Taoyuan City, Taichung City, Tainan City, Kaohsiung City, Keelung City, Hsinchu City, and Chiayi City), provincial cities, townships, and villages

Region (six categories): Taipei-Keelung-Yilan; Taoyuan-Hsinchu-Miaoli; Taichung-Changhua-Nantou; Yunlin-Chiayi-Tainan; Kaohsiung-Pingtung-Penghu; and Hualien-Taitung

### *Sampling Scheme*

All administrative units in Taiwan, excluding Kinmen and Lianjiang (Matsu) counties, made up the study areas. The sample size of each sampling unit was weighted by the proportion of population by age group and sex ratio of each unit. The eligible respondents were 20–69 years old.

### *Procedures*

Proportional quota sampling was conducted based on household administration data provided by each standard administrative unit

in Taiwan (six metropolitan special cities, three provincial level special cities, and 11 counties). The allocation of each sampling unit was as follows.

Step 1: All administrative units in the study area, from special cities to villages, were included with actual size of the population stratified by age group and sex.

Step 2: Weights for each sample unit were calculated based on the ratio of population size to the total population in Taiwan.

Step 3: The actual sample size was calculated by applying the weighting scale to the proposed sample size of 2,530 with a precision of  $\pm 2\%$  with the confidence level set at 95%.

Step 4: The actual interviewees were contacted for interview by the provider through an online survey according to the sampling frame specified above. If the number of actual interviewees did not reach the quota in each sampling unit, the vacancy was not filled.

### *Questionnaire and Instruments*

The International Comparative Survey in Taiwan consisted of two modules in the questionnaire: the common module and the Taiwan-specific module. The common module was included in the questionnaires of all the surveys in the consortium. Instruments or scales in the common module included basic demographic information (i.e., sex, gender, education, socioeconomic status, and marital status), self-rated well-being (i.e., happiness and satisfaction), negative family events, social integration and social capital, religiosity and religious activities, and social trust and sense of fairness. All the items and scales have been shown to have good psychometrics in past literature regarding their cross-cultural validity. The Taiwan research team translated these

measures into the local language. The validity of the translation has been evaluated and verified by experts in the field of social well-being. In the Taiwan-specific module, self-rated health and a measure of depressive symptoms (Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale, CESD) were included. The two measures provide additional assessments of individual well-being. Both measures have good psychometric properties among the Taiwanese population according to past literature (Fu et al. 2013).

### *Web Survey and Survey Implementation*

Web survey techniques were used to collect the data. Nikkei Research, Inc. in Japan partnered with a local Taiwanese survey company to collect the data. With the high coverage of internet service in Taiwan, web surveying is regarded as an efficient way to collect data. However, past research has shown that sample selection bias could threaten the representativeness of findings from web surveys. To address this weakness, the research team cooperated with Nikkei Research to set up a screening process in which qualified respondents were selected under the guidance of the sampling quota outlined in the previous section. In addition, throughout the online survey, each cell in the quota sample frame was carefully monitored to avoid empty cells. The implementation

of the web survey adopted the following procedures.

- The research team provided the questionnaire and sampling quota with the expected sample size (N = 2,530) to Nikkei Research.
- Nikkei Research programmed the questionnaire and the screening protocol.
- The research team reviewed and approved the online version of the questionnaire and the screening protocol.
- Nikkei Research started the recruitment of respondents for the web survey.
- The online survey was conducted during July 2017.
- The final sample size was 2,303. Nikkei Research provided raw data and the codebook to the research team.

## RESULTS

### *Key Attributes of the Sample Data in Comparison to the Targeted Population*

Table 1 displays the gender, age, and regional distribution of our sampled respondents in comparison to the original sampling frame. Among the three, gender distributions are the most compatible, with male adults slightly overrepresented in the sample. The regional distribution of sampled respondents is tilted toward the northern, more urbanized region

**Table 1.** Comparison of Gender, Age, and Region between the Sample and Population

		Characteristics of the Sampled Respondents		Characteristics of the Population (end of 2015)	
		Case	%	Population	%
Gender	Male	1,170	50.8	8,319,783	49.7
	Female	1,133	49.2	8,412,465	50.3
Age	20s	476	20.7	3,166,482	18.9
	30s	645	28.0	3,904,201	23.3
	40s	583	25.3	3,597,509	21.5
	50s	443	19.2	3,582,258	21.4
	60s	156	6.8	2,481,798	14.8
Region	Taipei-Keelung-Yilan	813	35.3	5,458,162	32.6
	Taoyuan-Hsinchu-Miaoli	361	15.7	2,554,106	15.3
	Taichung-Changhua-Nantou	424	18.4	3,217,818	19.2
	Yunlin-Chiayi-Tainan	314	13.6	2,397,052	14.3
	Kaohsiung-Pingtung-Penghu	350	15.2	2,711,173	16.2
	Hualien-Taitung	41	1.8	393,937	2.4
Total		2,303	100.0	16,732,248	100.0

of Taipei-Keelung-Yilan, while the Hualien-Taitung region is slightly underrepresented. Compared to the targeted populations' age distribution, the sampled respondents are relatively young, with people in their 60s being undersampled.

Tables 2 and 3 compare the sampled respondents' socio-economic characteristics with information drawn from other national survey data sets. In terms of education (Table 2), the sampled subjects are more highly educated than the general population in Taiwan. According to data adapted from *The 2016 Yearbook of Manpower Survey Statistics* (Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics 2016), close to half (49.2%) of Taiwan's civilian population aged 20–64 have at least some college education, while in our sample the figure is over four-fifths (84%). Compared to a national survey on work history conducted in 2015 (Fu 2016), our sample respondents are more economically active (only 10% are currently not working and not looking for a job, compared to 23% in a national social survey), and more likely to be in regular employment (67.8 vs. 49.2%) (Fu 2016).

Table 3 presents data on personal and household income distributions of the sample

and that of the general population (based on data adapted from the Report on the Survey of Family Income and Expenditure, 2016). On the surface, it appears that our sampled respondents are better off than the rest of the population economically. As indicated in the table, the median annual income of sample subjects who had a job and received income (sample size 2,087) is in the category NT\$500,000–549,999, about NT\$50,000–100,000 higher than the median annual income of NT\$437,172 for all income recipients; the gaps widen as one moves up the income deciles. A similar pattern is also found in the household monthly income distribution. However, the difference is negligible considering one is gross and the other is net or disposable income. The criteria of higher education, and higher involvement in the labor market but younger in age, may have canceled each other out in terms of income attainment.

Overall, when compared to our targeted population and other comparable data sources, our sample's representativeness is less than perfect. In terms of gender, regional, and income distributions, our sample is relatively representative. When considering education level and work status, the sample

**Table 2.** Comparison of Education and Work Status between Sample and Population

		Characteristics of the Sampled Respondents		Characteristics of Compatible Population / Sample (2016)	
		Case	%	Population (thousands)	%
Education	Junior high school and below	24	1.0	2,994	19.3
	Senior high school	92	4.0	1,335	8.6
	Vocational high school	240	10.4	3,551	22.9
	Junior college	465	20.2	2,268	14.6
	Four-year university/technological college	1,057	45.9	4,154	26.8
	Post-graduate	413	17.9	1,199	7.7
	Other	8	0.4		
	Don't know	4	0.2		
	Total	2,303	99.9	15,502	100.0
Work Status	Regular employee	1,561	67.8	843	49.2
	Temporary/part-time worker	122	5.3	103	6.0
	Dispatched/contracted employee	25	1.1	38	2.2
	Self-employed, freelance, side work, and family worker	244	10.6	250	14.6
	Not working but currently looking for a job	119	5.2	85	5.0
	Not working and not looking for a job	231	10.1	394	23.0
		Total	2,303	100.0	1,713 (2015)

**Table 3.** Comparison of Income Distribution between Sample and Population

Percentiles	Income decile of income recipients in NTS (annual)		Income decile of households in NTS (monthly)	
	Sample (net income)	Population (net income 2016)	Sample (net income)	Population (net income 2016)
10	150,000–199,999	199,390	25,000–29,999	28,408
20	250,000–299,999	274,081	40,000–44,999	40,998
30	350,000–399,999	329,387	50,000–54,999	51,368
40	400,000–449,999	380,215	60,000–64,999	61,496
50 (median)	500,000–549,999	437,172	75,000–79,999	71,508
60	600,000–649,999	506,822	95,000–99,999	82,360
70	700,000–799,999	594,053	100,000–109,999	95,558
80	900,000–999,999	714,460	130,000–139,999	114,535
90	1,000,000–1,499,999	936,986	200,000–299,999	149,428
Total Cases	2,087	14,766,214	2,252	8,458,223

Source: Data adapted from the Report on the Survey of Family Income and Expenditure, 2016

is skewed toward the highly educated and more economically active part of Taiwan's population. Among these discrepancies, a very small group (24) of persons with less than senior high school education should be noted especially.

#### *Key Findings from the Taiwan Survey*

In this section, key findings regarding Taiwanese well-being are presented. Table 4 shows the frequencies of Taiwanese well-being in terms of happiness, health, and life satisfaction. On an 11-point scale, over 63% of the respondents in the sample scored 6 or more, indicating that most Taiwanese in the sample report that they are happy. Similar patterns are shown in health and life satisfaction, with 62.8% and 66.1% of the respondents scoring 6 or higher.

In addition to these three questions, respondents also answered the Cantril's ladder-of-life question. As shown in Table 5, over half (52%) of the respondents in the sample score 6 or more on an 11-point scale. Considering all of the data, the Taiwanese generally score highly on well-being. The finding is also supported by the response on depressive symptoms. The mean of the CESD scale is 1.77, with a standard deviation of 0.54, indicating a low level of depressive symptoms. Only 4% of the respondents scored 3 or more on the CESD scale. However, the 10% difference between responses on life satisfaction and Cantril's

ladder-of-life requires further investigation.

In addition to person-level well-being, well-being at the social level is another important topic. The research team explored several aspects of social well-being. Table 6 presents selected results of perceived social fairness in Taiwanese society. On an 11-point scale, 45.6% of the respondents believed there is gender unfairness in Taiwanese society (scores of 6 or more), while only 30% of respondents believed there is not (scores of 4 or less). Similar patterns were observed in age and racial/ethnic unfairness (48.1% and 51.8% scored 6 or more, respectively). The respondents tended to believe that the Taiwanese treat people differently in terms of their gender, age, and race/ethnicity. The perception of unfairness was also found in their perception of fairness of opportunity. Table 7 shows the findings. Of the respondents, 51.76% (who scored 4 or less on an 11-point scale) believed opportunities in occupation and social status pursuit were distributed unequally. However, only 30.5% of the respondents believed this was the case for educational opportunities.

Finally, social capital is considered an aspect of social well-being. Table 8 presents the source of social trust among the respondents. Family, relatives, friends, and acquaintances are the main sources of social trust. Strangers and the local government are the least trustworthy. Table 9 presents the scores for social interaction with neighbors in daily life. The majority of the respondents

**Table 4.** Self-rated Well-being (N = 2,303)

Happiness		Frequency	%	Health		Frequency	%
Very Unhappy	<b>0</b>	47	2.04	Very Unhealthy	<b>0</b>	15	0.65
	<b>1</b>	22	0.96		<b>1</b>	10	0.43
	<b>2</b>	50	2.17		<b>2</b>	32	1.39
	<b>3</b>	130	5.64		<b>3</b>	113	4.91
	<b>4</b>	142	6.17		<b>4</b>	173	7.51
	<b>5</b>	450	19.54		<b>5</b>	425	18.45
	<b>6</b>	385	16.72		<b>6</b>	345	14.98
	<b>7</b>	462	20.06		<b>7</b>	481	20.89
	<b>8</b>	372	16.15		<b>8</b>	452	19.63
	<b>9</b>	142	6.17		<b>9</b>	170	7.38
Very Happy	<b>10</b>	101	4.39	Very Healthy	<b>10</b>	87	3.78

  

Current life satisfaction		Frequency	%
Very Unsatisfied	<b>0</b>	36	1.56
	<b>1</b>	17	0.74
	<b>2</b>	50	2.17
	<b>3</b>	106	4.60
	<b>4</b>	133	5.78
	<b>5</b>	439	19.06
	<b>6</b>	329	14.29
	<b>7</b>	482	20.93
	<b>8</b>	469	20.36
	<b>9</b>	157	6.82
Very Satisfied	<b>10</b>	85	3.69

**Table 5.** Cantril's Ladder-of-Life Question (N = 2,303)

Cantril's ladder-of-life question		Frequency	%
Worst life	<b>0</b>	32	1.39
	<b>1</b>	31	1.35
	<b>2</b>	57	2.48
	<b>3</b>	164	7.12
	<b>4</b>	257	11.16
	<b>5</b>	546	23.71
	<b>6</b>	530	23.01
	<b>7</b>	418	18.15
	<b>8</b>	194	8.42
	<b>9</b>	44	1.91
Best life	<b>10</b>	30	1.30

**Table 6.** Perceptions of Social Unfairness (N = 2,303)

Unfairness: Gender			Unfairness: Age				
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%		
Not at all Unfair	<b>0</b>	111	4.82	Not at all Unfair	<b>0</b>	91	3.95
	<b>1</b>	85	3.69		<b>1</b>	65	2.82
	<b>2</b>	139	6.04		<b>2</b>	116	5.04
	<b>3</b>	164	7.12		<b>3</b>	177	7.69
	<b>4</b>	192	8.34		<b>4</b>	194	8.42
	<b>5</b>	527	22.88		<b>5</b>	513	22.28
	<b>6</b>	328	14.24		<b>6</b>	357	15.50
	<b>7</b>	317	13.76		<b>7</b>	327	14.20
	<b>8</b>	258	11.20		<b>8</b>	260	11.29
	<b>9</b>	62	2.69		<b>9</b>	85	3.69
Extremely Unfair	<b>10</b>	85	3.69	Extremely Unfair	<b>10</b>	86	3.73
Don't Know		35	1.52	Don't Know		32	1.39

  

Unfairness: Race, Ethnicity, or Nationality			
	Frequency	%	
Not at all Unfair	<b>0</b>	109	4.73
	<b>1</b>	82	3.56
	<b>2</b>	133	5.78
	<b>3</b>	157	6.82
	<b>4</b>	172	7.47
	<b>5</b>	501	21.75
	<b>6</b>	281	12.20
	<b>7</b>	302	13.11
	<b>8</b>	266	11.55
	<b>9</b>	128	5.56
Extremely Unfair	<b>10</b>	129	5.60
Don't Know		43	1.87

**Table 7.** Perceived Equality of Opportunities (N = 2,303)

Competition for achieving high status and income is fair			Opportunities for university education are equally available to all				
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%		
Strongly Disagree	<b>0</b>	273	11.85	Strongly Disagree	<b>0</b>	139	6.04
	<b>1</b>	97	4.21		<b>1</b>	61	2.65
	<b>2</b>	198	8.60		<b>2</b>	107	4.65
	<b>3</b>	330	14.33		<b>3</b>	171	7.43
	<b>4</b>	294	12.77		<b>4</b>	223	9.68
	<b>5</b>	431	18.71		<b>5</b>	486	21.10
	<b>6</b>	204	8.86		<b>6</b>	253	10.99
	<b>7</b>	203	8.81		<b>7</b>	271	11.77
	<b>8</b>	136	5.91		<b>8</b>	277	12.03
	<b>9</b>	58	2.52		<b>9</b>	131	5.69
Strongly Agree	<b>10</b>	62	2.69	Strongly Agree	<b>10</b>	171	7.43
Don't Know		17	0.74	Don't Know		13	0.56

report low levels of interaction with their neighbors. Table 10 shows the frequency of respondents' participation in various activities in their neighborhood, which is

generally low in most of the activities listed. On the basis of the findings from Tables 9 and 10, it appears that Taiwanese have low levels of social participation in their neighborhoods.



**Table 8.** Source of Social Trust (N = 2,303)

		Frequency	%
Most people	cannot trust at all	42	1.82
	can hardly trust	327	14.20
	can trust somewhat	1,342	58.27
	can trust	567	24.62
	can trust a lot	25	1.09
Family and relatives	cannot trust at all	18	0.78
	can hardly trust	96	4.17
	can trust somewhat	741	32.18
	can trust	1,055	45.81
	can trust a lot	393	17.06
Neighbors	cannot trust at all	82	3.56
	can hardly trust	453	19.67
	can trust somewhat	1,350	58.62
	can trust	393	17.06
	can trust a lot	25	1.09
Friends and acquaintances	cannot trust at all	14	0.61
	can hardly trust	122	5.30
	can trust somewhat	1,126	48.89
	can trust	935	40.60
	can trust a lot	106	4.60
Co-workers	cannot trust at all	67	2.91
	can hardly trust	393	17.06
	can trust somewhat	1,276	55.41
	can trust	443	19.24
	can trust a lot	31	1.35
	no co-worker, not applicable	93	4.04
Strangers	cannot trust at all	357	15.50
	can hardly trust	998	43.33
	can trust somewhat	883	38.34
	can trust	57	2.48
	can trust a lot	8	0.35
Local government office staff, police, and other civil servants	cannot trust at all	248	10.77
	can hardly trust	635	27.57
	can trust somewhat	1,160	50.37
	can trust	239	10.38
	can trust a lot	21	0.91

**Table 9.** Social Interaction with Neighbors in Daily Life (N = 2,303)

Degree of social interaction with neighbors	Frequency	%
Don't interact with neighbors at all	159	6.90
Have minimal interaction with neighbors, only greeting each other	985	42.77
Have daily interactions and conversations with neighbors	873	37.91
Consult with and share everyday items with some	180	7.82
Feel the same as family with many	106	4.60
Ratio of interaction with neighbors	Frequency	%
Don't know the names of my neighbors	452	19.63
Only know and interact with my immediate neighbors	898	38.99
Know and interact with about half of my neighbors	539	23.40
Know and interact with many of my neighbors	317	13.76
Know and interact with most of my neighbors	97	4.21

**Table 10.** Participation in Various Activities in Neighborhood (N = 2,303)

		Frequency	%
1. Sports, hobbies, leisure activities (excl. neighborhood association activities)	Have never done	731	31.74
	Have not done this year	270	11.72
	Few times a year	391	16.98
	Once a month	185	8.03
	Once a week	271	11.77
	Not available in my area	455	19.76
2. Community development (excl. neighborhood association activities)	Have never done	992	43.07
	Have not done this year	366	15.89
	Few times a year	283	12.29
	Once a month	119	5.17
	Once a week	45	1.95
	Not available in my area	498	21.62
3. Elderly support (excl. neighborhood association activities)	Have never done	1,067	46.33
	Have not done this year	363	15.76
	Few times a year	194	8.42
	Once a month	79	3.43
	Once a week	39	1.69
	Not available in my area	561	24.36
4. Childcare support (excl. neighborhood association activities)	Have never done	1,010	43.86
	Have not done this year	356	15.46
	Few times a year	201	8.73
	Once a month	101	4.39
	Once a week	41	1.78
	Not available in my area	594	25.79
5. Crime prevention (excl. neighborhood association activities)	Have never done	1,041	45.20
	Have not done this year	375	16.28
	Few times a year	177	7.69
	Once a month	66	2.87
	Once a week	27	1.17
	Not available in my area	617	26.79
6. Disaster prevention (excl. neighborhood association activities)	Have never done	1,005	43.64
	Have not done this year	393	17.06
	Few times a year	243	10.55
	Once a month	67	2.91
	Once a week	29	1.26
	Not available in my area	566	24.58
7. Neighborhood association's activities (incl. meetings)	Have never done	1,029	44.68
	Have not done this year	421	18.28
	Few times a year	385	16.72
	Once a month	76	3.30
	Once a week	25	1.09
	Not available in my area	367	15.94

## CONCLUSIONS

This report offers several observations drawn from analyzing the Taiwan survey data, which is produced through a collaborative project initiated by Shenshu University. First, the Taiwanese on average reported a high level of subjective well-being in terms of life satisfaction and happiness. This result might be expected given the country's economic growth, low unemployment rate, and social stability over the decades. It should be noted that the respondents were very likely reporting a psychological outcome of certain successful adjustments when they gave responses to the survey questions. Even with this adjustment effect, the level of subjective well-being still indicates a good life among the general public. The low incidence of depression reported among respondents is further evidence of favorable well-being conditions.

Second, there is a "decline of community" in Taiwan, because most respondents appeared to have little involvement or few relationships with their neighbors. Taiwan has become highly urbanized in the course of its economic modernization, with the Taipei Metropolitan Region accounting for approximately one-third of the whole population. Geographic mobility and concentration in this island society generate a typical *Gesellschaft*, in which trust is constricted to a narrow circle of kin and friends. A large number of respondents feel socially detached and less interested in community activities despite their physical proximity.

Third, perceived inequality is also prevalent in Taiwan. The respondents are sensitive to various aspects of inequality and unfairness, particularly regarding gender and ethnicity. However, most respondents believe that education is functioning to generate equal opportunities, while many do not consider competition a means to enhance fairness. These intriguing attitudes require further detailed analysis to disentangle their complex relationships and better understand the social structure, social relations, and subjective well-being.

To conclude, the Taiwan team endeavors to provide valuable data for researchers to explore the situations, sources, and outcomes of well-being in this society as well as being a source for comparative investigation across societies involved in the SWB consortium. The team is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate internationally and hopes this collective project will stimulate more academic cooperation among well-being researchers in Asia in years to come.

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