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Scitovsky Was Right... and There is More: Comfort Goods, Stimulus Goods, Education and Subjective Wellbeing

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Scitovsky was right...and there is more: comfort goods, stimulus goods, education and subjective wellbeing

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Abstract

A main legacy of Scitovsky's thought is the identification of the conflict between comfort and stimulus goods. Comfort goods are material goods that relieve pain or stress and produce temporary pleasure but can create dependence and addiction. They thereby weaken the development of skills needed to access stimulus goods that produce in turn a longer run positive and significant effect on subjective wellbeing, by satisfying our taste for variety, complexity and curiosity. The effects of stimulus goods tend to be permanent and are less subject to satiation and hedonic adaptation, differently from comfort goods. We identify proxies of comfort and stimulus goods and test the Scitovsky hypothesis. Our findings do not reject the hypothesis of the opposite effect of comfort and stimulus goods on subjective wellbeing, and, consistently with Scitovsky's view, identify the transmission channel in the capacity of stimulus goods of contributing to learn new things, relieving us from boredom and making us interested and absorbed most of time in everyday life.

Keywords: comfort goods, stimulus goods, life satisfaction.

1. Introduction

The impact of Scitovsky's partition between comfort and stimulus goods in the literature of subjective wellbeing has not been properly investigated in its wide theoretical and empirical consequences.

According to Scitovsky comfort goods are in general easily accessible material goods producing immediate relief that we use to alleviate pain and distress and generate temporary pleasure. They are however subject to diminishing marginal utility, hedonic adaptation and therefore their effect on subjective wellbeing tends to be transient and vanish. In addition to it, excessive consumption of comfort goods can ultimately create dependence, thereby leading to the violation of the principle of rationality and producing unhappiness due to the incapacity to reconcile choices with preferences and goals.

Differently from comfort goods, stimulus goods cannot be immediately consumed if we do not develop proper skills enabling us to do so. Our training and investment in education, sport activities, voluntary work and spiritual life (to make four examples of them) requires habit persistence and give us those skills needed to access stimulus goods related to fruition of cultural goods, satisfaction from sport practice, quality and generativity from our relational life, thereby enhancing variety, novelty and creative intellectual and relational activities.

By considering that individuals have three constitutive dimensions (mind and rationality, purpose, emotions) the spectrum of these four stimulus good examples cover all of them and generates those skills required to produce novelty, curiosity, and stimulus on both the

intellectual and the relational side. The additional benefits of the variables we choose to measure stimulus goods (education, sport activity, religious attendance and voluntary work) is that they reveal virtue (Aristotelean aretè) in the sense of habit persistence that reduces the risk of dependence from comfort goods and weakened disposition to enjoy stimulus goods.

Our paper aims to test empirically the predicted effects of Scitovsky partition into comfort and stimulus goods by choosing the above mentioned proxies and verifying their effects on subjective wellbeing on a large sample of individuals using the European Social Survey. In this sense our contribution fills a gap in the literature by providing (for the first time to our knowledge) an original empirical test of the Scitovsky research hypothesis and, at the same time, proposing an original interpretation of comfort and stimulus goods in the choice of our proxies. A third original point of our research is in the identification and testing of the specific transmission channel indicated by Scitovsky according to whom stimulus goods significantly affect subjective wellbeing by increasing variety, novelty, intellectual curiosity, thereby relieving us from boredom.

Our main empirical findings do not reject our research hypotheses and provide evidence not only of the expected direct effect of comfort and stimulus goods on life satisfaction (cognitive subjective wellbeing) and life sense (eudaimonic subjective wellbeing), but also of the indirect effect of them on learning new things and being interested and absorbed by what we are doing in everyday life and, through it, on life sense and satisfaction, thereby validating the transition channel prospected by Scitovsky. An indirect result of our econometric analysis is that the identification of the Scitovsky transmission channel helps to shed light on the ambiguous effect of education on subjective wellbeing found in the literature. When we decompose the impact of education in an indirect effect, via learning new things and being interested and absorbed in daily life, and a direct effect on subjective wellbeing, we clearly find that the first is positive, while the second is negative and is likely to capture the effect of increased expectations.

A main policy implication of our paper is that our societies must foster and promote all those training channels which build skills that enable individuals to consume stimulus goods and that this policy goal is all the more urgent and important in an era where economic and digital wealth risk to create comfort traps of dependence, addiction and unhappiness. Obvious implications stemming from this general policy suggestion are not only strengthening access to education when young, and lifelong learning when adult, but also promoting forms of “life large learning” (Soylu and Yelken, 2014) where volunteering and relational experiences are part of the education curricula. Another straightforward implication is that healthy life style policies are important not only for their effects on health, but also on subjective wellbeing through consumption of stimulus goods and enhanced variety and interest in life.

Our paper is divided into seven sections (including introduction and conclusions). In the second section we provide a literature review of Scitovsky’s thought and interpretation about comfort and stimulus goods. In the third section we formulate our research hypothesis. In the fourth section we describe our dataset and descriptive findings. In the fifth and sixth sections we comment and discuss our econometric findings. The seventh section concludes.

2. Literature Review

Our research aims to provide a contribution to the body of research focusing on the determinants of individual subjective well-being by analysing and testing Scitovsky’s considerations on the distinction between stimulus and comfort goods, and their differential effect on individual wellbeing. Within the more general field of literature on individual happiness, and following the publication of Scitovsky’s masterpiece, *The Joyless Economy*

(1976; 1992), many authors have analysed and extended the determinants of well-being and its underlying processes. In recent decades Western countries have primarily focused their economic progress on enhancing comfort through mass production, while not always being able to translate this growth into increased opportunities for personal intellectual growth. According to the literature following Scitovsky's direction, Collewet (2014) observes that mass-produced goods often lack the diversity and uniqueness needed to offer genuine pleasure and to stimulate intellectual curiosity. Layard (2005) and Nettle (2005) underline that subjective well-being is harmed by two forces: habituation and comparison with others. People tend to get used to what they have and strive to always tackle new challenges, and habituation is more easily and quickly achieved through comfort goods, which provide little stimulation and novelty. In addition to his influence within the field of economics, Scitovsky has also obtained recognition from psychologists (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Diener et al., 1999; Sheldon and Lyubomirsky, 2006; Khan and Burton, 2021; Verduyn et al. 2022), anticipating important results such as the benefit of curiosity, as implied by creative activities, and the harm of boredom, as implied by the lack of them (Pugno, 2012).

Along with this growing literature in the recent years, several researchers have cited and illustrated Scitovsky's theories investigating more in depth the concept of comfort and stimulus goods. Among them, Bariletti and Sanfilippo (2017) examine the origin of Scitovsky's thought analyzing the contributions of forerunners such as Marshall, Keynes and Hawtrey. Marshall's contribution (1920) is represented by the distinction between 'wants', defined as generally 'countless in number and very various in kind' but limited and satiable, and 'activities', which are goods pursued for 'their own sake'. Keynes (1930) further explores Marshall's concept by emphasizing the insatiable nature of creative goods, suggesting their unlimited potential due to the boundless realms of curiosity, novelty, and experience. Additionally, Hawtrey (1926) distinguishes between goods that simply alleviate pain, injuries, and distress, and goods aimed at providing positive gratification or satisfaction. Building from these sources and from recent neuropsychology studies of motivation and individual welfare, Scitovsky derives his theory. He distinguishes between defensive and creative consumption, or better between two forms of satisfaction, one aiming at comfort - all those activities that alleviate fatigue, bother or physical pain whose satisfaction one derives from it is extremely evanescent and fleeting (Scitovsky, 1976, 1992) - and the other aiming at stimulation and pleasure - all those creative activities that require effort but that exercise and enrich individual faculties and skills with long-lasting effects over time, allowing users to create increasing value with use (Bianchi, 2003, 2018).

As Gilead (2013) underlines, creative consumption is different from defensive consumption for two reasons. First, enjoying creative consumption requires skills that can be developed through effort, training, and time. Second, creative consumption (consumption of stimulus goods) is intentionally designed to provide satisfaction and is marked by novelty, variety, and stimulation, and, for this reason, it might defeat satiation and become the source of renewed pleasure, never generating boredom. However, Gilead (2013) explains that people tend to seek naturally comfort, both because it is hard to fully appreciate ex-ante benefits of creative activities since their positive effects reveal later in time, and because the latter require a previous acquisition of skills and knowledge, that could be unpleasant in terms of effort and time. In addition, the way the current productive system operates has contributed to this bias. In recent history, the focus of efficiency gains and economies of scale has been primarily on making life more convenient and comfortable.

What Scitovsky observes, and believes as being one of the causes of the "Joyless society" in which he lives, is that the increase in wealth in Western societies has been mainly directed toward increasing comfort. We add that this seems to be the straightforward consequence of the drive for profit maximisation. When choosing whether to sell a comfort or stimulus good companies are aware that comfort goods can create dependence and therefore, when producing

and selling them, they face consumers with more inelastic demands. As a consequence, if they have some monopolistic power they can impose higher mark-ups on inelastic demands, and therefore gain higher profits. In addition to it, mass production of comfort goods (that are in general standardized commodities) has progressively reduced their costs due to economies of scale. On the contrary, training skills that enable to consume stimulus goods requires a level of time and effort that remains constant over time. Hence, exactly as in the well-known comparison of production of watches and performing arts, a Baumol's disease phenomenon has dramatically increased over time the relative cost of stimulus versus comfort goods, thereby progressively increasing the competitive disadvantage of the former (Baumol, 2012). Unfortunately, all what considered above creates a competitive disadvantage for creative activities, which are however considered by Scitovsky the true source of happiness.

Given that the existing economic literature on these topics primarily focuses on a theoretical analysis of Scitovsky's thought, our research aims to provide an original contribution by wondering whether these theories are supported by empirical evidence with an empirical research testing the contribution of stimulus and comfort goods to subjective wellbeing and whether the transmission channel envisaged by Scitovsky for the effects of stimulus goods on life satisfaction is at work.

3. Research hypothesis

An implication of Scitovsky's thought presented in the previous literature review section is that tension between comfort and pleasure can create a conflict between choice and preferences, thereby leading to a violation of the rationality paradigm at the basis of consumer constrained maximisation (attaining the maximum utility given the budget constraint).

Borrowing ideas from Ralph Hawtrey, Scitovsky identifies comfort goods as those goods preventing pain or distress. On the opposite, stimulus goods come from creative activities that require previous skill development to be enjoyed. The transmission channel that makes stimulus goods pleasurable is their complexity and variety that is source of novelty and change. Due to this transmission channel they are a permanent source of satisfaction.

Scitovsky considerations are grounded on evidence from neuropsychological research showing that human beings do not only search for decreasing pain, distress and effort with comfort, but also have satisfaction by relieving discomfort and increasing effort in order to invest in those skills need to consume stimulus goods.

Another consideration we add to Scitovsky's reflection is the strong role of virtue in the conflicts between comfort and stimulus goods. For virtue we mean habit persistence that reinforces through constant exercise the capacity of performing a given task. Comfort goods create dependence, addiction and weaken energies that can be devoted to the development of virtues that are the necessary premise for intellectual and relational skill development needed to enable consumption of stimulus goods. On the contrary, consumption of stimulus goods coincides with an investment on those skills and habit persistence, enabling to consume higher quality stimulus goods in the future (ie. sport practice enables us to overcome our limits and consume higher quality stimulus goods in the sport domain challenge or race).

We as well argue that what Scitovsky calls pleasure is something deeper related to the cognitive and eudaimonic measures of subjective wellbeing such as life satisfaction and life sense. This is embedded in the same Scitovsky definition of the comfort/stimulus good paradox, where the first provide short term relief from pain, while the second a more permanent sense of satisfaction that has however to be fuelled in the short run by the effort needed to invest in one's own intellectual and relational skills that requires in the very short run arousal and unrelief.

From an empirical point of view we need to find proper proxies to test Scitovsky ideas adjusted with our considerations for the role of virtue. We therefore identify in the European Social Survey education years, attendance of religious practices, voluntary work and sport attendance as proper and measurable proxies of stimulus goods (and, at the same time, proxies of the investment in skills needed to enjoy them). We as well classify as proxies of consumption of comfort goods smoking habits, TV watching and obesity.

The first stimulus good proxy measures the stock of education that the individual has accumulated over time through the effort (and virtue or habit persistence) necessary to achieve its educational outcomes. It is therefore both an indicator of attitudes to provide effort to create skills for consuming stimulus goods with a virtuous habit (the well-known signalling effect of education), and also a measure of the availability of skills and knowledge that can help to learn progressively new things, creatively interpret life events and be open to novelty, variety and complexity of human life. On this point of view, we consider that education, knowledge and culture offer richer instruments to interpret and read the reality, thereby increasing the capacity to grasp variety, complexity and novelty (the three main transmission channels from stimulus goods to pleasure for Scitovsky) and to consume creative goods (ie. appreciating more the value of going to a theatre, a museum, of understanding history and having a richer interpretation of events, etc).

The second and third stimulus good proxies (religious attendance and voluntary work) also measure disposition not to be overwhelmed with comfort, and attitude to provide effort needed to develop skills that can enable to consume relational stimulus goods. This can be easily understood given that the “get out from your comfort zone and go” religious thought is in general based on the pursuit of stimulus goods and the neglect and disapproval of comfort goods.

The third stimulus good proxy (sport practice) is the contemporary example of how limits to comfort and the infinite expansion of “freedom-of” can increase “freedom-from” (dependence) and “freedom-for” (pursuit of an ambitious goal) that typically characterise life inclination versus stimulus more than comfort goods. Individuals practicing sport demonstrate to be able to dedicate time to effort and training, sacrificing comfort during their lifetime. More training also leads to a superior enjoyment of a sport practice, thereby confirming the characteristics of non diminishing marginal utility of comfort goods.

On the opposite side we identify in cigarette smoking, TV watching and obesity a proxy of the limited capacity to resist to comfort goods. Even though we obviously acknowledge that the third variable can in part be influenced by physiological dysfunctional factors.

Based on these considerations we formulate the following research hypotheses

H01: Obesity, hours of TV watching and smoking negatively and significantly affect life satisfaction

H02: Education years, religious attendance, voluntary work and sport practice positively and significantly affect life satisfaction

A main point of Scitovsky theory about comfort and stimulus goods concerns the transmission channel of variety and novelty and creative life that connects stimulus goods with life satisfaction. To this purpose we use ESS variables where respondents are asked about how much they learn new things in life, and how much they are interested, absorbed and enthusiastic during their day life. In this respect we assume that education, voluntary work, religious attendance and sport activities save individuals from dependence on comfort goods and create skills that produce variety and novelty in the two fundamental dimensions of intellectual and

relational life. This transmission channel is enhanced by the original characteristics of stimulus goods where consumption coincides with investment in those skills that can enable in the future consumption of higher quality stimulus goods characterized by novelty and variety. This creates a virtuous circle making people more likely to be learning new things, being interested, absorbed and enthusiastic of what they are doing in their everyday life.

We therefore formulate the following additional research hypothesis related to the comfort/stimulus good transition channel.

H03: Education years, religious attendance, voluntary work and sport practice, being stimulus goods, positively and significantly affect learning new things in life and the likelihood of being interested, absorbed and enthusiastic during daytime and, through, it life satisfaction

4. Data and descriptive empirical findings

We test our research hypothesis using data from the European Social Survey (ESS). The ESS is an international academic research program conducted every two years in Europe since 2002 which was acknowledged as a research infrastructure of the European Union. The ESS aims to capture socio-demographic data, as well as individuals' social and political preferences, beliefs, and attitudes. It covers citizens aged 15 and above from over 30 nations. The objective of the ESS is twofold: first, to develop a set of European social indicators, including attitudinal indicators; and second, to investigate the dynamic interplay among public attitudes, values, and the evolving institutions within Europe. By providing valuable insights into the complex relationship between society and institutions, the ESS serves as a resource for understanding the changing social and public landscape of Europe.

The legend of variables used in the empirical analysis is in Table 1, while descriptive statistics in Table 2. We decide to show only descriptive statistics from waves 3, 6 and 7 as we do not use the other ESS waves where our crucial variables of interest are missing. The sample is almost gender balanced (46 percent of respondents are males), with average respondent age being around 48 years. 26 percent of respondents are retired while 10 percent are in education. In Table 3.1 we report distributions of the dependent variables of the analysis that follows. Life satisfaction has the usual right skewed distribution, with modal point at 8 and more than one fourth of respondents selecting this value, but only around 10 percent of them declaring the highest level of satisfaction (10). Less than 20 percent of respondents declare a level of satisfaction of 5 and below. The distribution of the other variables of interest (life sense and being interested/ absorbed/enthusiastic about one's own life) have similar characteristics with only 11 percent of respondents declaring a sense of direction in their life of 5 and below. In Table 3.2 we show the distribution of our stimulus good proxies and find that around 60 percent of respondents have never volunteered in the last year, while only around 7 percent of them have done it on average at least once a week. Around one third of the sample never attend religious services (with the exception of special occasions), while around 40 percent only on particular holidays. Almost 40 percent of the sample has no more than lower secondary education title (middle school) and around 22 percent at least a university degree. Around one fourth of respondents did not practice any sport activity last week, while around 21 percent every week. Around 44 percent of respondents never smoked, while around 20 percent smokes every day.

We provide some descriptive findings on our research hypothesis. We create two subgroups of high and low stimulus individuals being respectively the top and the bottom 25% in each of

the three following variables: education years, religious attendance and voluntary work.¹ The high stimulus individuals have a significantly higher mean life satisfaction than low stimulus individuals (7.82 versus 7.27) and the two 95 percent confidence intervals of the two values do not overlap. We compare also life satisfaction distributions of the two groups to have a richer representation of the correlation between stimulus goods and subjective wellbeing. We find that most of the effect lies in a remarkable difference of individuals declaring the highest level of life satisfaction (around 10 percent more of the probability density function (pdf) from the high stimulus group). The Epps-Singleton function test obviously rejects the null that the two pdfs are not significantly different from each other.

We repeat the distribution test by investigating whether the Scitovsky transmission channels works and find that high stimulus individuals are more likely to learn new things in life² (4.64 versus 4.23). Again the distributions of the two groups show a significant difference in the share of those declaring the highest level of learning in favor of the high stimulus group.

We then compare the two groups looking at the three questions asking “How much of the time would you generally say you absorbed/enthusiastic/interested in what you are doing”. The value of these questions is that they aim to capture average time in which the respondent is in the given mood (absorbed/ enthusiastic, interested in what he/she is doing). This is a more reliable measure in case of subjective evaluation than asking the same evaluation at a given point in time given the well-known influence of time contingencies (Schwarz and Strack, 2007). The three variables are therefore good proxies of the Scitovsky’s transmission channel where stimulus goods foster learning, variety of life and therefore produce interest, absorption (ie. capture in terms of engagement/involvement/being intrigued) and enthusiasm for what done.

Consistently with our research hypothesis absorption is 7.80 against 7.35 for high stimulus versus low stimulus individuals. The differences in terms of interest and enthusiasm for what done are 7.91 against 7.47 and 7.66 against 7.10, respectively. These differences translate into a sharper gap in terms of life sense (7.72 against 7), with non overlapping 95 percent confidence intervals of variable means between the two groups. To examine better what is behind average values of qualitative discrete variables we look again at the distributions for the two groups. Most of the effect is in a higher share of respondents (almost 10 percent of the overall distribution) declaring the highest value of the observed variable vis-à-vis low stimulus individuals. Again the Epps-Singleton function tests reject the null that the two pdfs are not significantly different from each other in all of the four cases.

4.1 Econometric findings

In the descriptive evidence on comfort, stimulus and subjective wellbeing discussed above we do not control for the effects of concurring factors. In order to do so we test our first two research hypotheses using the following specification

¹ Note that we cannot unfortunately use simultaneously the four comfort group proxies since sport activity is measured only in wave 7, while the other three in waves 3 and 6, This is why we have to rule out sport activity from the definition of high/low stimulus good individuals.

² The ESS question is “To what extent you learn new things in life” and the answer is given on a 1-6 range.

$$\begin{aligned}
SW_i = & \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Education_i + \alpha_2 Volunteer_i + \alpha_3 Rel_Attendance_i + \alpha_4 Do_Sport_i \\
& + \alpha_5 Smoking_i + \alpha_6 Obese_i + \alpha_7 TV_Watch_i + \alpha_8 Female_i + \alpha_9 Age_i \\
& + \alpha_{10} Agesq + \sum_c \gamma_c D_Income_Decile_{c,i} + \alpha_{11} NHMembers_i \\
& + \sum_d \delta_d D_Employment_status_{d,i} + \sum_f \eta_f D_Marital_status_{f,i} \\
& + \sum_p \xi_p D_Country_{p,i} + \sum_q \zeta_q D_Wave_{q,i} + u_i
\end{aligned}$$

where our dependent variable (SW) is the standard cognitive subjective wellbeing measure (life satisfaction), or alternatively the eudaimonic subjective wellbeing measure (life sense). The four proxies of stimulus goods are years of education (or alternatively dummies for highest educational degree), intensity of voluntary work and religious attendance (used as continuous variables or, alternatively, with dummies for each intensity level) and sport activity. The proxies of comfort goods are smoking habits, TV watch time and obesity.

Control variables include a 0/1 dummy variable with unit value for female gender, while age is introduced in the estimation in a non-linear way (in levels and squared) to account for the U-shaped effect of age on life satisfaction (Blanchflower, 2021). Other controls are dummies for income deciles, the number of household members (NHMembers) and a set of dummy variables measuring employment and marital status. The set of regressors is completed by dummies capturing country and wave effects. Standard errors are clustered at country level. Note that, unfortunately, we do not have the entire set of our variables of interest in all ESS waves. The interest, absorbed, enthusiastic and life sense variables that we will use to test the transmission channel are only in wave 6, the voluntary work variable only in waves 3 and 6, health related variables (sport activity and cigarette smoke) only in wave 7, while life satisfaction, education and religious attendance in all waves.

We therefore adopt the following strategy: i) a first focus on the effect of stimulus goods on life satisfaction and life sense using education, religious attendance and volunteer work (using waves 3 and 6); ii) an estimate jointly considering the effect of comfort and stimulus goods on life satisfaction using education, religious attendance, sport practice and cigarette smoke (using wave 7); iii) estimates looking at the significance of the transmission channel with dependent variable measuring learning new thing or being interested/absorbed or enthusiastic about one's own life regressed on three stimulus good variables (education, volunteer work and religious attendance) (using wave 6).

In our first base estimates we therefore check how the three stimulus variables (education, voluntary activities, religious practice) affect life satisfaction when controlling for standard socio-demographic variables. The effect of the three variables is strongly positive and significant. In terms of magnitude one additional education year rises life satisfaction by 0.1 (Table 3). Note however that when we decompose education in terms of education levels the effect disappears. When we do the same for religious attendance and voluntary work we find that the effect of the first variable is concentrated in the highest attendance level, while the effect of voluntary work is gradually more significant as frequency grows. Results on controls are standard with the negative and significant effect of unemployment and the U-shaped effect of age. In our second step we use wave 7 where we have more health related proxies allowing us to look at a richer set of comfort and stimulus goods. What we find here is that, consistently with our research hypothesis, comfort goods are negative and significant (cigarette smoking, obesity and hours spent watching TV), while among stimulus goods sport practice and religious attendance are positive and significant (Table 4).

In order to test whether the Scitovsky transmission channel works we use the four variables measuring learning, interest, absorption, enthusiasm using ESS wave 6. Our stimulus good

proxies are positive and significant on all the dependent variables do not rejecting the hypothesis that stimulus goods are significantly correlated with learning new things and being interested, absorbed and enthusiastic during one's own lifetime (Table 5).

Our findings are consistent with the idea that stimulus goods produce novelty and variety and therefore are less prone to satiation and hedonic adaptation than material goods. In this sense we can interpret our findings by arguing that education levels gained in distant time have generated a permanent increase in skills that still produce their positive effects today in terms of learning new things and having most of the time in life where respondents feel interested, absorbed and enthusiastic about what they are doing.

In the econometric analysis that follows we propose a two equation model where we test simultaneously the overall pattern. The dependent variable of the first equation is life satisfaction (or alternatively life sense) regressed on the usual controls plus our measure of learning new things or, alternatively being interested, absorbed or enthusiastic about ones' own life. The dependent variable of the second equation is one of these variables and is regressed on the usual set of controls plus stimulus good proxies. Findings from the two equation estimates show that the learning/interest variable is significant and positive in the first equation and the stimulus good proxies are significant and positive in the second equation (Tables 6.1 and 6.2) confirming the correlation pattern assumed in our research hypotheses.

The investigation of the Scitovsky transmission channel in the two equation system that reconstructs the pattern of correlations assumed in our research hypothesis has the additional advantage of decomposing the effect of education that is also used as control in the first equation. Our results show that education is negative on life satisfaction in the first equation, while positive and significant in the second equation dependent variable. This finding sheds light on the often observed ambiguous effect of education on subjective wellbeing (Ferrante, 2009; Becchetti et al. 2014).³ Our results suggest that such ambiguous effect is the result of a direct and indirect effect: the indirect positive effect of education on learning new things and interest in life, and a direct negative effect that is likely to isolate the effect of education on expectations (ie. a given career step can be considered satisfactory for low education levels, while being unsatisfactory for higher education level leading to overqualification).

5. Robustness checks, discussion and policy implications

The obvious caveat in our empirical analysis relates to the connection between Scitovsky's theories about comfort, stimulus goods and the transmission channel that links them to life sense and satisfaction, on the one side, and the empirical proxies we use to test the research hypotheses formulated in this paper and based on these theories, on the other side.

Education, voluntary work, religious attendance and sport practice are the four available proxies of activities that require skills to be pursued and indicate an inclination toward stimulus. There are obviously many other reasons why these activities can positively contribute to life satisfaction as shown in the literature. Actually the role of education is controversial as education also rises expectations and therefore its positive effect on life sense is in general stronger than that on life satisfaction. Voluntary work and religious attendance have also been shown to affect significantly life satisfaction in several empirical contributions (see Magnani and Zhu, 2018 and Clark and Lelkes, 2009, among others).

³ About the ambiguous effect of education on subjective wellbeing Frey and Stutzer (2002, p. 59) say in their survey that "the level of education, as such, bears little relationship to happiness. Education is highly correlated with income [...]. Education may indirectly contribute to happiness by allowing a better adaptation to changing environments. But it also tends to raise aspiration levels. Further, it has been found that the highly educated are more distressed than the less educated when they are hit by unemployment (Clark and Oswald, 1994)"

This is why we believe that the most interesting and original part of the work related to the transmission channel and the effect of the four stimulus proxies on learning new things and being absorbed, interested and enthusiastic most of time during one's own life.

Our estimates obviously do not rule out endogeneity concerns as there can be omitted variables that jointly cause our stimulus proxies and the dependent variable, thereby creating a spurious relationship. We therefore provide as a robustness check an IV estimate by selecting a relevant and valid instrument. Our choice is on the highest education level of the father under the assumption that it affects education level and, in general, stimulus proxies of the ESS respondent, while not affecting directly our dependent variables (the respondent declaration of being interested, absorbed enthusiastic about her/his life at the time of the interview). In order to use our instrument we resume our stimulus variables into a single synthetic factor capturing the top 25 percent of respondents in educational degree, voluntary work and religious practice using the same variable as in the descriptive analysis of probability density functions reported in Figure 2. We find that the instrument is highly relevant and not weak in first stage (the Kleibergen-Paap weak identification Wald test is around 74), with the instrumented variable being significant in the second stage (Table 7.1, columns 1-3).

In a robustness check we limit our estimate to the subsample of respondents aged above 49 in order to increase the distance between the mood reported at the time of the interview and the influence of the highest education degree of the father on it. We reasonably assume that, given the respondent age, the instrument cannot directly cause our dependent variable. Findings about the relevance of the instruments in first stage and significant of the instrumented variable in second stage are confirmed (Table 7.2, columns 1-3).

We as well provide a falsification test focusing only on individuals with the lowest educational degree, no religious attendance or voluntary work and testing whether in this subsample the instrument is significant when added as regressors. We have the advantage that the passage to the falsification test subsample does not restrict too much the number of observations since we have in the overall sample around 10 percent of respondents with less than lower secondary education, 28 percent of respondents with at least lower secondary education, 62 percent not doing voluntary work at all, and around 34 percent not attending religious services at all. We perform the falsification test under two different assumptions including/not including those with lower secondary education (together with those with less than lower secondary education). In both cases the hypothesis is that the instrument is valid if not significant in this estimate since, in that case, it affects the dependent variable only through the instrumented variable while not when values of the instrumented variable are nil (Tables 7.1-7.3, columns 4-9). Our empirical findings do not reject this hypothesis since the highest education degree of the father is not significant in these subsample estimates.

We finally use the predicted dependent variable from our first stage IV estimate as a regressor in the second stage in the life satisfaction or life sense estimate to bring our IV approach in the two equation system estimated in tables 6.1 and 6.2. The predicted dependent variable is significant supporting the hypothesis that the nexus among stimulus goods, interest/learning/absorption and life satisfaction/life sense is significant and likely to hide a causality nexus (Table 8).

6. Conclusions

Scitovsky partition between comfort and stimulus goods and their effects on subjective wellbeing identifies an important source of drivers of happiness that has been only partially explored in the literature. The goal of our paper is to show that this partition matters and that the transmission channel identified by Scitovsky, with stimulus goods positively affecting

learning new things and therefore variety, intellectual curiosity, interest and absorption in our everyday life, has relevant effects on cognitive (life satisfaction) and eudaimonic wellbeing (life sense).

The originality of our research is in the attempt of testing empirically the main research hypothesis of Scitovsky on the partition between comfort and stimulus goods and their effects on subjective wellbeing. To our knowledge our paper is also the first in testing specifically the transmission channel identified by Scitovsky. Comfort goods are material goods that can create addiction and weaken skills which enable us to consume stimulus goods, and are as well more subject to hedonic adaptation and decreasing marginal utility. On the contrary, consumption of stimulus goods is generally made by experiences and coincides with investment in those skills allowing us to consume higher quality of stimulus goods in the future. This is why we assume in our research hypothesis that individuals with high consumption of stimulus goods are more likely to declare they learn new things and to be interested, absorbed and enthusiastic about what they are doing in their everyday life.

The main findings of our paper do not reject our research hypotheses showing that stimulus goods significantly affect novelty and variety of learning, interest and absorption in what we do in everyday life and, through it, subjective wellbeing. The investigation of the Scitovsky's transmission channel has the additional advantage of allowing us to shed light on the ambiguous effect of education on life satisfaction observed in the literature. From our findings education has two effects on subjective wellbeing. A positive one driven by the fact that education enables skills allowing us to learn new things in life (more than what occurs to low educated individuals), thereby increasing access and consumption of cultural stimulus goods. A negative one, remaining when we control for the first effect, that we interpret as depending on the fact that education raises expectations and aspirations (ie. a given career step can be considered satisfactory for low education levels, while being unsatisfactory for higher education level leading to overqualification). A proper test of this related hypothesis is left to future research.

A limit of our research is in the impossibility of having a richer set of proxies of comfort and stimulus goods that are scattered through different waves of the ESS survey. Beyond improving the quality of proxies and testing rigorously causality, a first interesting direction for future research is to check whether the era of internet and the ongoing digital revolution is affecting the dynamics of comparative advantage between comfort and stimulus goods. Scitovsky formulates his ideas in the pre-digital era warning about an increase in competitive advantage of comfort versus stimulus goods. It is therefore interesting to test whether the increasing time spent on the web, and the reduction of costs of access to comfort goods on internet, are affecting this comparative advantage. In order to do so it is however necessary to have higher quality information on how the time on internet is divided across comfort and stimulus.

A second important direction of research concerns policy implications on how channels for training and making stimulus goods attractive can change in the digital era. This is because the main policy implication of our work is about strengthening paths and experiences where skills enabling us to consume stimulus goods can be pursued. An interesting synthetic idea on this point is that of life large (wide) learning intended as a concept where education is meant in a wider perspective, including not just frontal lectures in classes and learning on textbooks but also living experiences related to investment in stimulus goods (Barnet, 2011 and Soylu and Yelken, 2014).

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Table 1. Variable legend

Life Satisfaction	Answer to the question “how satisfied with life as a whole” on a 0-10 scale, where 0= extremely dissatisfied and 10= extremely satisfied.
Have a sense of direction in life	Answer to the question “have a sense of direction in your life” on a 0-10 scale, where 0=not at all and 10= completely.
Interested in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing, how much of the time on a scale 0-10 where 0=none of the time and 10=all of the time.
Absorbed in what you are doing	Absorbed (in the sense of focused/involved) in what you are doing, how much of the time on a scale 0-10, where 0=none of the time and 10= all of the time.
Enthusiastic about what you are doing	Enthusiastic in what you are doing, how much of the time on a 0-10 scale, where 0=none of the time and 10= all of the time.
Learning new things	Learn new things in life on a 0-6 scale where 0=not at all and 6=a great deal.
ISCED education dummies	ES-ISCED I, less than lower secondary, ES-ISCED II, lower secondary, ES-ISCED IIIb, lower tier upper, ES-ISCED IIIa, upper tier upper secondary; ES-ISCED IV, advanced vocational, ES-ISCED V1, lower tertiary education, ES-ISCED V2, higher tertiary education.
Sport activity	“Do sports or other physical activity, how many of last 7 days” on a scale 0-7.
Volunteering	Involved in work for voluntary or charitable organisations, how often past 12 months.
Religious attendance	How often attend religious services apart from special occasions.
Smoking	Cigarettes smoking behaviour (I smoke daily, I smoke but not every day, I don't smoke now but I used to, I have only smoked a few times, I have never smoked).
Obesity	Individuals with a BMI (body mass index) above the obesity threshold (30 or higher)
Female	(0/1) dummy taking value one if the respondent is female.
Age	Respondent age
Newspapers reading	Newspapers reading, total time on average weekday.
Years of Education	Years of full-time education completed.
N. of children	Number of children ever given birth to/fathered.

Father's education	Father's highest level of education (less than lower secondary, lower secondary, upper secondary vocational, upper secondary general, advanced vocational, lower tertiary education, higher tertiary education).
Income class	Placement of respondent household total net income in one of the income deciles of the country (1=lowest, 10=highest)
Total time watching TV	Total time the respondent watches television on average weekday.
Household members	Number of household members
Marital status dummies	(0/1) dummies picking up the following marital status conditions: married, civil union, separated, divorced, widowed, never married
Employment status	(0/1) dummies picking up the following employment status conditions: student, unemployed, inactive, paid worker, houseworker, disabled.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics (waves 3, 6 and 7)

Variable	Obs	Mean	St. dev.	Min	Max
Life satisfaction	129465	7.273	1.98	0	10
Interested in what you are doing	47043	7.456	1.901	0	10
Absorbed in what you are doing	46949	7.364	1.95	0	10
Enthusiastic about what you are doing	46961	7.169	2.014	0	10
Have a sense of direction in life	46694	7.024	2.151	0	10
Voluntary work					
At least once a week	89496	0.069	0.254	0	1
At least once a month	89496	0.072	0.259	0	1
At least once every three months	89496	0.048	0.214	0	1
At least once every six months	89496	0.058	0.233	0	1
Less often	89496	0.13	0.336	0	1
Never	89496	0.623	0.485	0	1
Religious attendance					
Every day	129539	0.01	0.102	0	1
More than once a week	129539	0.028	0.164	0	1
Once a week	129539	0.112	0.316	0	1
At least once a month	129539	0.1	0.3	0	1
Only on special holidays	129539	0.205	0.404	0	1
Less often	129539	0.204	0.403	0	1
Never	129539	0.341	0.474	0	1
ES-ISCED categories					
Less than lower secondary	114561	0.103	0.304	0	1
Lower secondary	114561	0.184	0.387	0	1
Lower tier upper secondary	114561	0.185	0.389	0	1
Upper tier upper secondary	114561	0.198	0.399	0	1
Advanced vocational	114561	0.118	0.322	0	1
Lower tertiary education	114561	0.103	0.304	0	1
Highest tertiary level	114561	0.108	0.311	0	1
Days of sport per week	39457	3.12	2.60	0	7
Newspapers reading	42453	1.421	1.296	0	7
Cigarettes smoking behavior	40114	3.549	1.561	1	5

Employment status

Unemployed active	130357	0.046	0.208	0	1
Unemployed inactive	130357	0.021	0.143	0	1
Retired	130357	0.257	0.437	0	1
Male	130405	0.464	0.499	0	1
Age	129827	48.377	18.656	14	114
In education	130357	0.101	0.301	0	1

Income

1st decile	98957	0.082	0.275	0	1
2nd decile	98957	0.094	0.292	0	1
3rd decile	98957	0.099	0.298	0	1
4th decile	98957	0.116	0.32	0	1
5th decile	98957	0.111	0.315	0	1
6th decile	98957	0.106	0.308	0	1
7th decile	98957	0.101	0.302	0	1
8th decile	98957	0	0	0	1
9th decile	98957	0.104	0.305	0	1
10th decile	98957	0.09	0.287	0	1

N. of household members	130165	2.713	1.42	1	22
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Marital Status

Civil union	130405	0.032	0.177	0	1
Separated	130405	0.004	0.061	0	1
Divorced	130405	0.063	0.244	0	1
Widowed	130405	0.092	0.289	0	1
Never married	130405	0.285	0.452	0	1

N. of children	29156	2.242	1.254	0	31
Years of education	129005	12.543	4.084	0	56

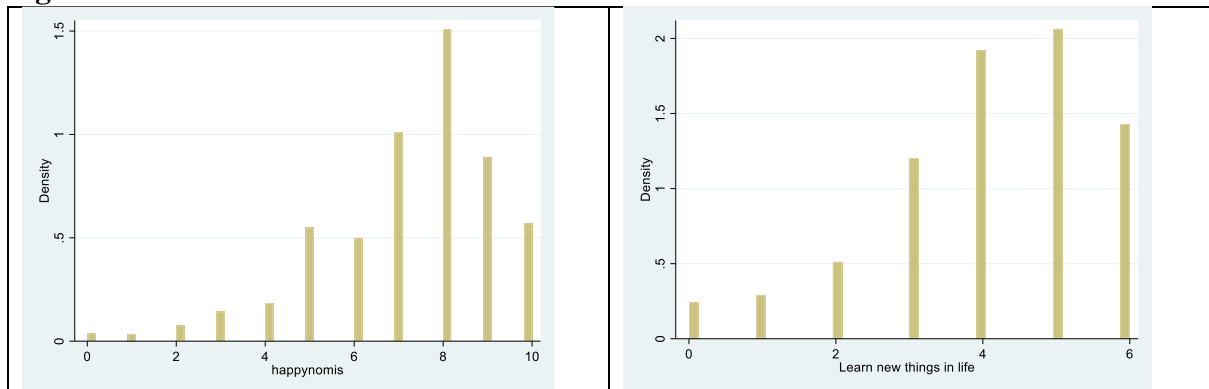
Father's education

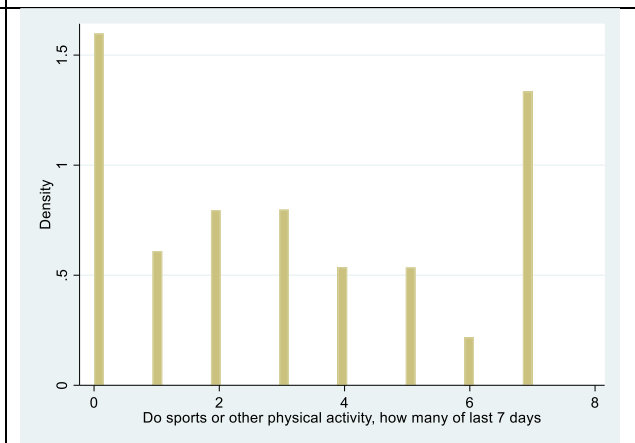
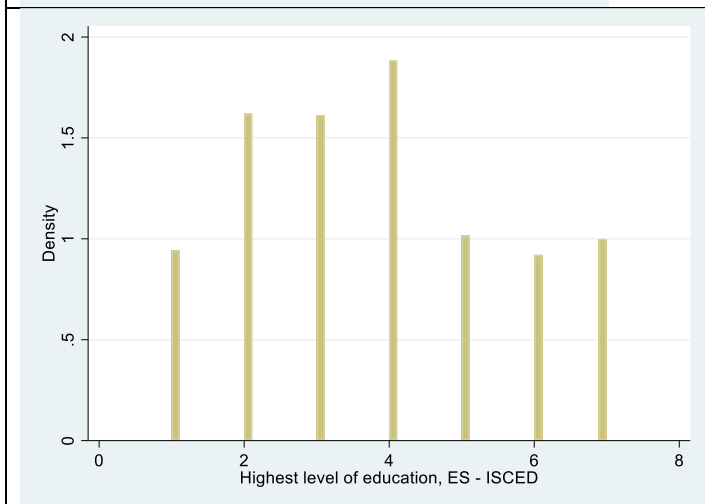
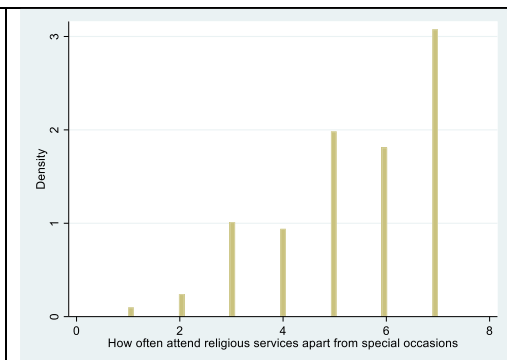
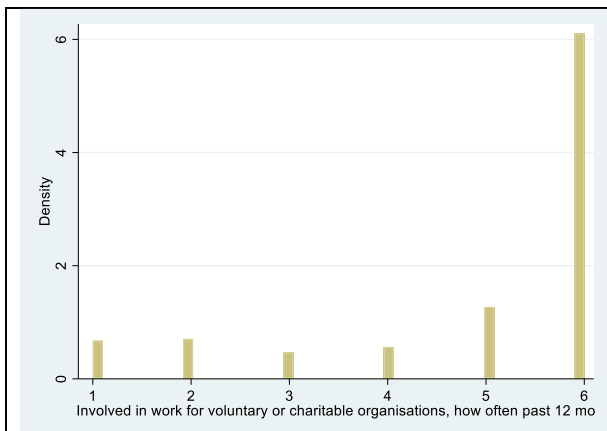
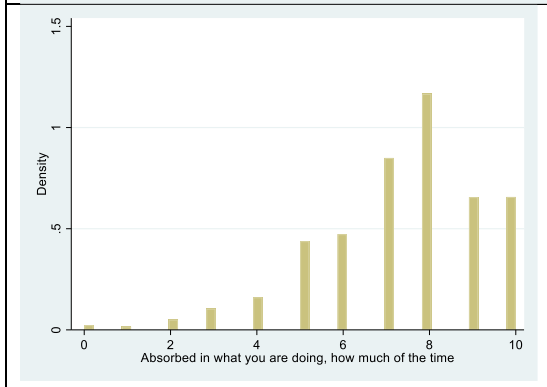
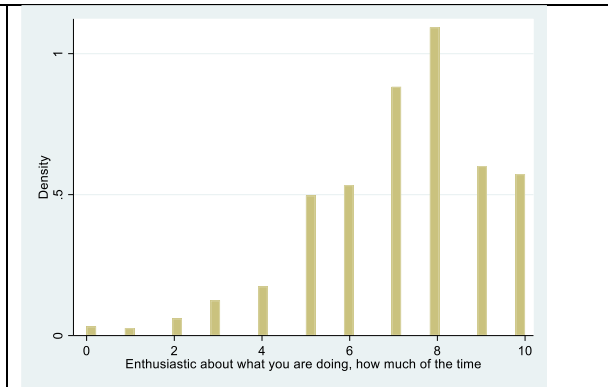
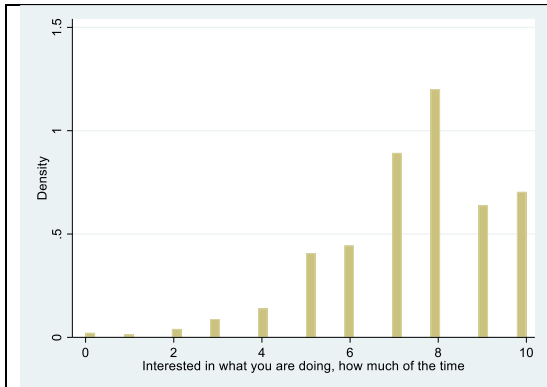
Less than lower secondary	260,799	0.309	0.462	0	1
Lower secondary	260,799	0.193	0.395	0	1
Upper secondary, vocational	260,799	0.180	0.384	0	1
Upper secondary, general	260,799	0.124	0.330	0	1
Advanced vocational	260,799	0.071	0.256	0	1
Lower tertiary education	260,799	0.046	0.210	0	1
Higher tertiary education	260,799	0.073	0.261	0	1
Other	260,799	0.0003	0.019	0	1

Country

Austria	130357	0.032	0.177	0	1
Belgium	130357	0.042	0.2	0	1
Bulgaria	130357	0.028	0.165	0	1
Switzerland	130357	0.037	0.189	0	1
Cyprus	130357	0.016	0.126	0	1
Czech Republic	130357	0.032	0.176	0	1
Germany	130357	0.068	0.252	0	1
Denmark	130357	0.036	0.186	0	1
Estonia	130357	0.046	0.209	0	1
Spain	130357	0.044	0.204	0	1
Finland	130357	0.047	0.213	0	1
France	130357	0.045	0.207	0	1
Great Britain	130357	0.053	0.225	0	1
Hungary	130357	0.04	0.196	0	1
Ireland	130357	0.052	0.223	0	1
Israel	130357	0.039	0.193	0	1
Iceland	130357	0.006	0.076	0	1
Italy	130357	0.007	0.085	0	1
Lithuania	130357	0.033	0.18	0	1
Latvia	130357	0.015	0.122	0	1
Netherlands	130357	0.043	0.204	0	1
Norway	130357	0.037	0.189	0	1
Poland	130357	0.04	0.196	0	1
Portugal	130357	0.043	0.203	0	1
Romania	130357	0.016	0.127	0	1
Sweden	130357	0.043	0.202	0	1
Slovenia	130357	0.03	0.172	0	1
Slovakia	130357	0.028	0.164	0	1

Figure 1.1 Distribution of the main variables of interest





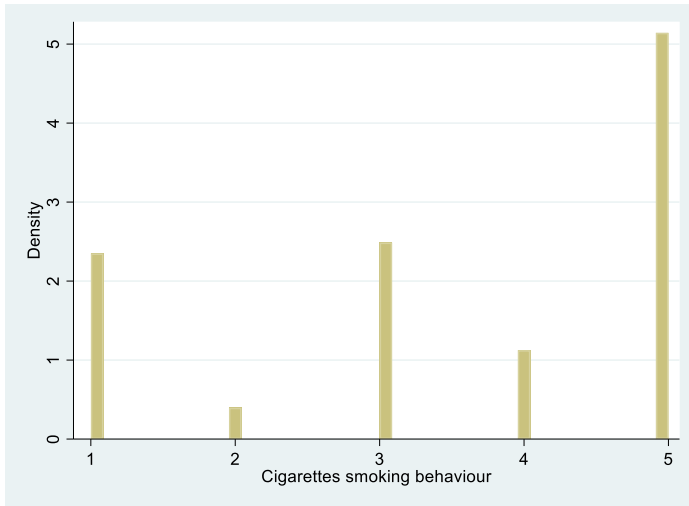


Figure 2 Life satisfaction, life sense, interest, variety, absorption and enthusiasm for high and low stimulus individuals

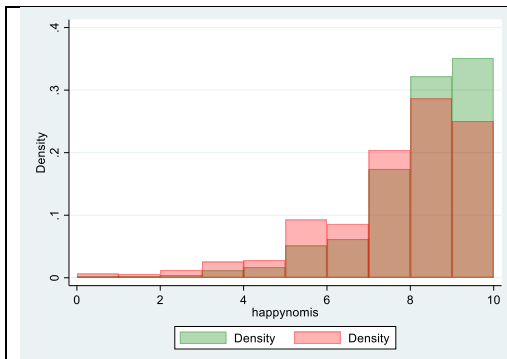


Figure legend: High stimulus goods: individuals above the 75th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Low stimulus goods: individuals below the 25th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Green areas: distribution of life satisfaction for high stimulus, while not for low stimulus individuals. Brown areas: distribution of life satisfaction for both high and low stimulus individuals. Pink areas: distribution of life satisfaction for low stimulus, while not for high stimulus individuals

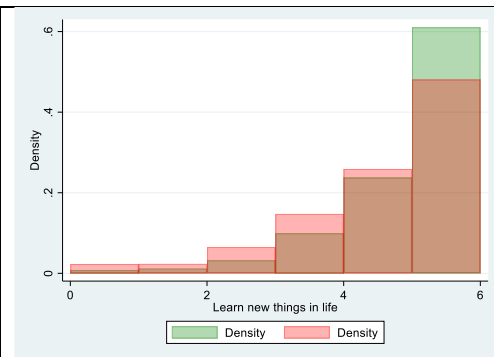


Figure legend: High stimulus goods: individuals above the 75th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Low stimulus goods: individuals below the 25th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Green areas: distribution of learning new things in life for high stimulus, while not for low stimulus individuals. Brown areas: distribution of learning new things in life for both high and low stimulus individuals. Pink areas: distribution of learning new things in life for low stimulus, while not for high stimulus individuals

Epps-Singleton Two-Sample Empirical
Characteristic Function test 291.347 (0.000)

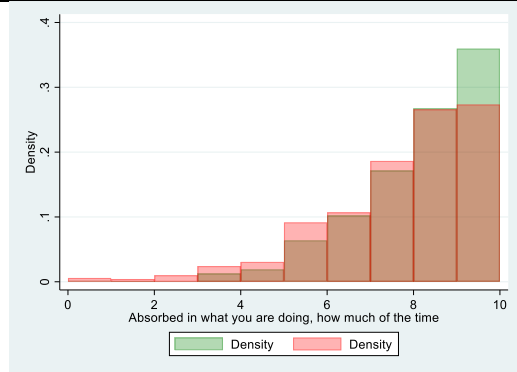


Figure legend: High stimulus goods: individuals above the 75th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Low stimulus goods: individuals below the 25th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Green areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for high stimulus, while not for low stimulus individuals. Brown areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for both high and low stimulus individuals. Pink areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for low stimulus, while not for high stimulus individuals

Epps-Singleton Two-Sample Empirical
Characteristic Function test 111.165 (0.00)

Epps-Singleton Two-Sample Empirical
Characteristic Function test 164.052 (0.000)

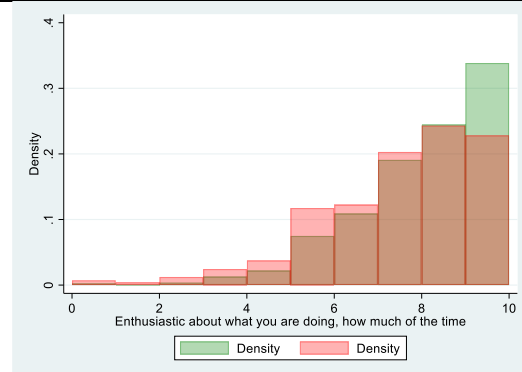


Figure legend: High stimulus goods: individuals above the 75th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Low stimulus goods: individuals below the 25th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Green areas: distribution of enthusiastic about what you are doing, how much of the time for high stimulus, while not for low stimulus individuals. Brown areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for both high and low stimulus individuals. Pink areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for low stimulus, while not for high stimulus individuals

Epps-Singleton Two-Sample Empirical
Characteristic Function test 144.051 (0.00)

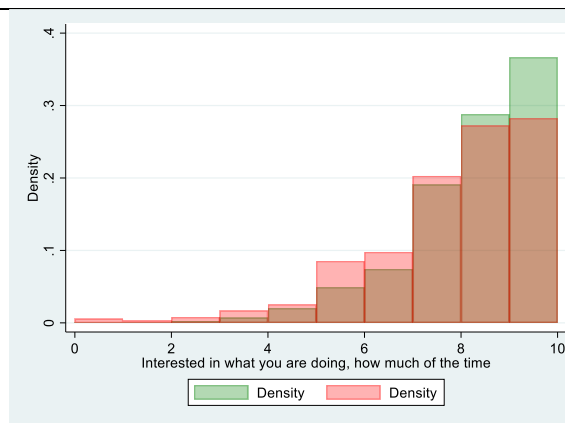


Figure legend: High stimulus goods: individuals above the 75th centile of

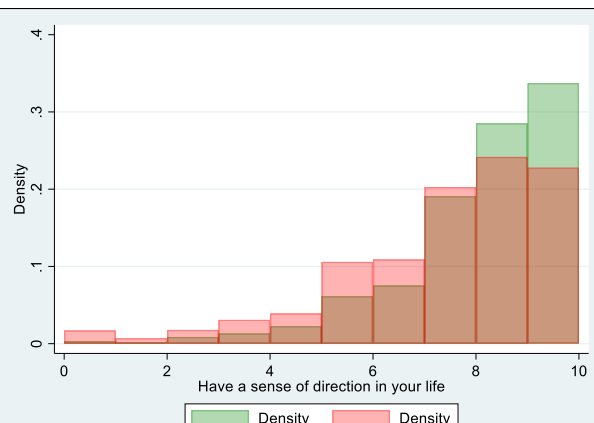


Figure legend: High stimulus goods: individuals above the 75th centile of education

education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Low stimulus goods: individuals below the 25 th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Green areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for high stimulus, while not for low stimulus individuals. Brown areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for both high and low stimulus individuals. Pink areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for low stimulus, while not for high stimulus individuals	years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Low stimulus goods: individuals below the 25 th centile of education years, religious attendance and voluntary work. Green areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for high stimulus, while not for low stimulus individuals. Brown areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for both high and low stimulus individuals. Pink areas: distribution of absorbed in what you are doing, how much of the time for low stimulus, while not for high stimulus individuals
Epps-Singleton Characteristic Function test 122.039 (0.00)	Epps-Singleton Two-Sample Empirical Characteristic Function test 239.616 (0.00)

Table 3 Life satisfaction and stimulus goods (waves 3 ad 6)

VARIABLES	(1) How happy are you	(2) How happy are you	(3) How happy are you	(4) Have a sense of direction in life	(5) Have a sense of direction in life	(6) Have a sense of direction in life
ES-ISCED categories						
Lower secondary		-0.0532 (0.0338)	-0.0526 (0.0337)		0.00430 (0.0560)	0.00444 (0.0560)
Lower tier upper secondary		0.00565 (0.0412)	0.00651 (0.0410)		0.145** (0.0614)	0.145** (0.0611)
Upper tier upper secondary		0.0134 (0.0442)	0.0142 (0.0440)		0.161*** (0.0563)	0.161*** (0.0560)
Advanced vocational		0.0434 (0.0439)	0.0438 (0.0436)		0.205*** (0.0500)	0.204*** (0.0498)
Lower tertiary education		0.0615 (0.0475)	0.0627 (0.0470)		0.245*** (0.0593)	0.244*** (0.0589)
Highest tertiary level		0.0600 (0.0506)	0.0612 (0.0500)		0.249*** (0.0656)	0.248*** (0.0649)

Voluntary work

At least once a month	-0.0833*** (0.0208)					-0.0226 (0.0332)
At least once every three months	-0.101*** (0.0225)					-0.0478 (0.0406)
At least once every six months	-0.114*** (0.0213)					-0.0540 (0.0405)
Less often	-0.155*** (0.0273)					-0.141*** (0.0417)
Never	-0.208*** (0.0196)					-0.207*** (0.0362)

Religious Attendance

More than once a week	-0.163** (0.0715)					-0.0498 (0.0733)
Once a week	-0.195*** (0.0621)					-0.179*** (0.0552)
At least once a month	-0.276*** (0.0645)					-0.277*** (0.0604)
Only on special holidays	-0.272*** (0.0653)					-0.295*** (0.0510)
Less often	-0.300*** (0.0674)					-0.351*** (0.0482)
Never	-0.335*** (0.0731)					-0.403*** (0.0475)

Voluntary work	-0.0372*** (0.00293)	-0.0377*** (0.00307)		-0.0466*** (0.00599)	-0.0456*** (0.00610)	
Religious attendance	-0.0352*** (0.00764)	-0.0341*** (0.00767)		-0.0583*** (0.00691)	-0.0582*** (0.00682)	
Years of Education	0.00628* (0.00329)			0.0172*** (0.00484)		
Male	-0.0831***	-0.0817***	-0.0831***	0.0219	0.0238	0.0225

	(0.0151)	(0.0159)	(0.0160)	(0.0180)	(0.0179)	(0.0179)
Age	-0.0402***	-0.0427***	-0.0426***	-0.0066***	-0.0073***	-0.0072***
	(0.00286)	(0.00281)	(0.00282)	(0.00243)	(0.00258)	(0.00257)
[Age] ²	0.000373***	0.000396***	0.000395***	4.63e-05*	5.51e-05*	5.41e-05*
	(2.87e-05)	(2.77e-05)	(2.79e-05)	(2.66e-05)	(2.81e-05)	(2.79e-05)
Education	0.0644***	0.0709***	0.0702**	0.130***	0.160***	0.158***
	(0.0247)	(0.0275)	(0.0275)	(0.0436)	(0.0467)	(0.0468)
Unemployed active	-0.259***	-0.257***	-0.258***	-0.250***	-0.248***	-0.247***
	(0.0278)	(0.0296)	(0.0294)	(0.0337)	(0.0336)	(0.0335)
Unemployed inactive	-0.273***	-0.270***	-0.270***	-0.368***	-0.360***	-0.360***
	(0.0393)	(0.0431)	(0.0427)	(0.0365)	(0.0369)	(0.0365)
Retired	0.00129	-0.0101	-0.0101	-0.0254	-0.0248	-0.0236
	(0.0319)	(0.0338)	(0.0341)	(0.0254)	(0.0254)	(0.0255)
Income						
2nd decile	0.0911**	0.0850**	0.0860**	0.101*	0.0970*	0.0983*
	(0.0406)	(0.0375)	(0.0375)	(0.0518)	(0.0520)	(0.0518)
3rd decile	0.243***	0.227***	0.229***	0.194***	0.191***	0.193***
	(0.0381)	(0.0292)	(0.0292)	(0.0496)	(0.0491)	(0.0487)
4th decile	0.256***	0.252***	0.254***	0.224***	0.216***	0.217***
	(0.0419)	(0.0368)	(0.0368)	(0.0499)	(0.0497)	(0.0495)
5th decile	0.316***	0.313***	0.314***	0.251***	0.242***	0.243***
	(0.0374)	(0.0306)	(0.0306)	(0.0520)	(0.0520)	(0.0519)
6th decile	0.394***	0.378***	0.379***	0.284***	0.270***	0.271***
	(0.0347)	(0.0344)	(0.0344)	(0.0541)	(0.0539)	(0.0536)
7th decile	0.437***	0.420***	0.422***	0.359***	0.342***	0.343***
	(0.0405)	(0.0387)	(0.0387)	(0.0678)	(0.0680)	(0.0678)
8th decile	0.457***	0.439***	0.440***	0.402***	0.383***	0.384***
	(0.0396)	(0.0391)	(0.0389)	(0.0626)	(0.0631)	(0.0631)
9th decile	0.491***	0.491***	0.492***	0.439***	0.420***	0.419***
	(0.0456)	(0.0440)	(0.0438)	(0.0672)	(0.0683)	(0.0679)
10th decile	0.580***	0.591***	0.592***	0.530***	0.511***	0.511***
	(0.0547)	(0.0569)	(0.0569)	(0.0663)	(0.0659)	(0.0657)
N. household members	0.00937	0.00716	0.00723	-0.0217**	-0.0178*	-0.0176*
	(0.00671)	(0.00702)	(0.00706)	(0.00956)	(0.00959)	(0.00958)
Marital Status						
Civil union	-0.375***	-0.423***	-0.425***	-0.217***	-0.215***	-0.214***
	(0.0341)	(0.0382)	(0.0381)	(0.0700)	(0.0685)	(0.0686)
Separated	-0.387***	-0.388***	-0.386***	-0.126	-0.115	-0.111

	(0.0582)	(0.0675)	(0.0672)	(0.0909)	(0.0885)	(0.0872)
Divorced	-0.248***	-0.260***	-0.261***	-0.0898***	-0.0884***	-0.0892***
	(0.0187)	(0.0179)	(0.0180)	(0.0257)	(0.0238)	(0.0237)
Widowed	-0.434***	-0.450***	-0.450***	-0.212***	-0.212***	-0.213***
	(0.0291)	(0.0330)	(0.0328)	(0.0318)	(0.0318)	(0.0313)
Never married	-0.273***	-0.273***	-0.275***	-0.148***	-0.143***	-0.144***
	(0.0176)	(0.0180)	(0.0183)	(0.0236)	(0.0247)	(0.0245)
Country						
Belgium	0.215***					
	(0.00775)					
Bulgaria	-0.759***	-1.016***	-1.012***	0.00153	-0.0248	-0.0156
	(0.0306)	(0.0224)	(0.0237)	(0.0270)	(0.0204)	(0.0175)
Switzerland	0.418***	0.203***	0.206***	0.0924***	0.0638***	0.0722***
	(0.0108)	(0.0127)	(0.0132)	(0.0104)	(0.0113)	(0.0120)
Cyprus	0.143***	-0.142***	-0.135***	0.658***	0.638***	0.646***
	(0.0140)	(0.0165)	(0.0161)	(0.0251)	(0.0238)	(0.0251)
Czech Republic	-0.357***	-0.584***	-0.585***	0.143***	0.120***	0.120***
	(0.0158)	(0.0162)	(0.0162)	(0.00504)	(0.0124)	(0.0125)
Germany	0.0558***	-0.155***	-0.153***	0.304***	0.301***	0.307***
	(0.00694)	(0.00866)	(0.00908)	(0.0138)	(0.0158)	(0.0161)
Denmark	0.688***	0.473***	0.474***	0.545***	0.536***	0.540***
	(0.0156)	(0.0167)	(0.0170)	(0.0189)	(0.0207)	(0.0206)
Estonia	-0.187***	-0.412***	-0.412***	0.264***	0.238***	0.243***
	(0.0135)	(0.0114)	(0.0126)	(0.00793)	(0.00946)	(0.00981)
Spain	0.279***	0.0698***	0.0707***	0.155***	0.201***	0.198***
	(0.0111)	(0.0119)	(0.0111)	(0.0136)	(0.0188)	(0.0180)
Finland	0.468***	0.308***	0.307***	0.262***	0.257***	0.255***
	(0.00977)	(0.0111)	(0.0117)	(0.00854)	(0.00968)	(0.0121)
France	-0.00631	-0.221***	-0.221***	0.132***	0.129***	0.133***
	(0.0127)	(0.0105)	(0.0110)	(0.0108)	(0.0119)	(0.0120)
Great Britain	0.186***	0.0515***	0.0508***	0.0575***	0.0706***	0.0717***
	(0.00681)	(0.00863)	(0.00833)	(0.00869)	(0.0115)	(0.0118)
Hungary	-0.565***	-0.779***	-0.778***	0.0758***	0.0710***	0.0750***
	(0.0194)	(0.0179)	(0.0181)	(0.00807)	(0.0104)	(0.00999)
Ireland	0.0597***	-0.221***	-0.222***	0.0283*	0.0504***	0.0511***
	(0.0102)	(0.0155)	(0.0148)	(0.0163)	(0.0187)	(0.0192)
Israel	0.301***	0.0721***	0.0647***	0.283***	0.255***	0.256***
	(0.0131)	(0.0123)	(0.0132)	(0.0193)	(0.0188)	(0.0182)
Iceland	0.683***	0.483***	0.484***	0.168***	0.189***	0.188***
	(0.0185)	(0.0139)	(0.0141)	(0.0168)	(0.0175)	(0.0170)

Italy	-0.00355 (0.0144)	-0.226*** (0.0129)	-0.228*** (0.0128)	-0.270*** (0.0152)	-0.258*** (0.0147)	-0.257*** (0.0143)
Lithuania	-0.474*** (0.0138)	-0.696*** (0.0140)	-0.689*** (0.0145)	0.0644*** (0.00898)	0.0431*** (0.00858)	0.0541*** (0.00999)
Latvia	-0.430*** (0.0192)	-0.622*** (0.0202)	-0.621*** (0.0209)			
Netherlands	0.228*** (0.00766)	0.0280*** (0.00501)	0.0276*** (0.00526)	-0.185*** (0.00987)	-0.150*** (0.00954)	-0.147*** (0.00951)
Norway	0.416*** (0.0119)	0.194*** (0.0153)	0.194*** (0.0164)	0.419*** (0.0164)	0.399*** (0.0187)	0.397*** (0.0193)
Poland	-0.0161 (0.0169)	-0.220*** (0.0203)	-0.216*** (0.0201)	0.289*** (0.0188)	0.305*** (0.0202)	0.313*** (0.0224)
Portugal	-0.395*** (0.0341)	-0.539*** (0.0291)	-0.536*** (0.0282)	-0.148*** (0.0409)	-0.152*** (0.0371)	-0.149*** (0.0371)
Romania	0.361*** (0.00722)	0.139*** (0.00739)	0.140*** (0.00854)	0.436*** (0.0134)	0.419*** (0.0140)	0.422*** (0.0146)
Sweden	0.0453*** (0.0133)	-0.167*** (0.0127)	-0.164*** (0.0129)	0.0312** (0.0135)	0.0114 (0.0106)	0.0150 (0.00960)
Slovenia	-0.277*** (0.0175)	-0.488*** (0.0208)	-0.492*** (0.0208)	0.0895*** (0.00967)	0.0816*** (0.0107)	0.0760*** (0.0114)
/cut1	-3.803*** (0.0920)	-4.170*** (0.0988)	-4.247*** (0.101)	-2.594*** (0.129)	-2.684*** (0.133)	-2.605*** (0.131)
/cut2	-3.505*** (0.0958)	-3.888*** (0.0974)	-3.965*** (0.103)	-2.392*** (0.126)	-2.480*** (0.126)	-2.402*** (0.125)
/cut3	-3.205*** (0.0897)	-3.583*** (0.0908)	-3.660*** (0.0959)	-2.107*** (0.124)	-2.194*** (0.123)	-2.116*** (0.118)
/cut4	-2.859*** (0.0870)	-3.226*** (0.0871)	-3.303*** (0.0944)	-1.810*** (0.122)	-1.896*** (0.120)	-1.818*** (0.115)
/cut5	-2.583*** (0.0856)	-2.948*** (0.0831)	-3.026*** (0.0936)	-1.548*** (0.119)	-1.633*** (0.117)	-1.555*** (0.112)
/cut6	-2.045*** (0.0807)	-2.399*** (0.0731)	-2.476*** (0.0911)	-1.071*** (0.115)	-1.157*** (0.114)	-1.079*** (0.109)
/cut7	-1.697*** (0.0848)	-2.053*** (0.0768)	-2.130*** (0.0935)	-0.710*** (0.113)	-0.795*** (0.113)	-0.716*** (0.108)
/cut8	-1.134*** (0.0856)	-1.488*** (0.0830)	-1.565*** (0.0947)	-0.174 (0.115)	-0.257** (0.117)	-0.179 (0.111)
/cut9	-0.312*** (0.0888)	-0.661*** (0.0993)	-0.738*** (0.105)	0.534*** (0.120)	0.452*** (0.123)	0.531*** (0.116)
/cut10	0.396*** (0.103)	0.0453 (0.123)	-0.0314 (0.126)	1.034*** (0.130)	0.951*** (0.134)	1.030*** (0.125)

Observations	65,598	54,698	54,698	36,813	36,776	36,776
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Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Omitted benchmark: less than lower secondary education, first income decile, married, female, employed, no religious attendance, no voluntary work.

Table 4 Life sense stimulus and comfort goods (wave 7)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
VARIABLES	How happy are you	How happy are you	How happy are you
ES-ISCED categories			
Lower secondary			-0.0605 (0.0378)
Lower tier upper secondary			-0.0256 (0.0360)
Upper tier upper secondary			-0.0257 (0.0393)
Advanced vocational			0.0386 (0.0392)
Lower tertiary education			0.0478 (0.0362)
Highest tertiary level			0.00147 (0.0368)
Religious Attendance			
More than once a week			-0.00870 (0.0812)
Once a week			-0.127** (0.0634)
At least once a month			-0.159** (0.0664)
Only on special holidays			-0.186** (0.0765)
Less often			-0.219*** (0.0672)
Never			-0.228*** (0.0630)

Smoking behavior

I smoke, but not every day	0.000725 (0.0514)
I don't smoke now but I used to	0.125*** (0.0195)
I have only smoked a few times	0.0546** (0.0234)
I have never smoked	0.116*** (0.0232)

Do Sport in how many of the last seven days

1	0.105*** (0.0246)	
2	0.0956*** (0.0295)	
3	0.153*** (0.0292)	
4	0.218*** (0.0421)	
5	0.205*** (0.0389)	
6	0.147*** (0.0348)	
7	0.219*** (0.0250)	
Obese	-0.0345* (0.0195)	-0.0383** (0.0186)
Total time watching TV	-0.0158*** (0.00393)	-0.0154*** (0.00381)
Years of education	0.00583** (0.00288)	
Religious attendance	-0.0306*** (0.00604)	
Smoking behaviour	0.0278*** (0.00501)	
Doing sport	0.0292*** (0.00351)	
Socio-dem controls	YES	YES
Country dummies	YES	YES

Observations	31,689	30,276	30,261
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Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Omitted benchmark: less than lower secondary education, first income decile, married, female, employed, no religious attendance, smoke daily, never doing sport.

Table 5.1 The impact of comfort goods on learning, interest, absorption and enthusiasm (continuous voluntary work and religion variables)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
VARIABLE	Learn new things in life	Interested in what you are doing	Absorbed in what you are doing	Enthusiastic about what you are doing
Years of education	0.0407*** (0.00521)	0.0181*** (0.00396)	0.0156*** (0.00354)	0.00939** (0.00447)
Voluntary work	-0.066*** (0.00745)	-0.053*** (0.00566)	-0.050*** (0.00541)	-0.060*** (0.00548)
Religious attendance	-0.018*** (0.00562)	-0.021** (0.00856)	-0.019** (0.00819)	-0.028*** (0.00710)
Total time watching TV	-0.026*** (0.00528)	-0.0057 (0.00651)	-0.0057 (0.00611)	0.0011 (0.00529)
Socio-dem controls	YES	YES	YES	YES
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	37,035	36,976	36,922	36,922

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

*

Omitted benchmark: less than lower secondary education, first income decile, married, female, employed, no religious attendance, no voluntary work.

Table 5.2 The impact of comfort goods on learning, interest, absorption and enthusiasm (discrete voluntary work and religion variables)

VARIABLES	(1) Learn new things in life	(2) Interested in what you are doing	(3) Absorbed in what you are doing	(4) Enthusiastic about what you are doing
ES-ISCED categories				
Lower secondary	0.0325 (0.0470)	0.0261 (0.0471)	0.0382 (0.0443)	-0.00318 (0.0504)
Lower tier upper secondary	0.0998* (0.0529)	0.108** (0.0485)	0.143*** (0.0472)	0.0974* (0.0523)
Upper tier upper secondary	0.225*** (0.0543)	0.141*** (0.0478)	0.157*** (0.0450)	0.0900* (0.0529)
Advanced vocational	0.275*** (0.0490)	0.192*** (0.0418)	0.202*** (0.0365)	0.115** (0.0470)
Lower tertiary education	0.415*** (0.0529)	0.233*** (0.0486)	0.230*** (0.0479)	0.139** (0.0543)
Highest tertiary level	0.469*** (0.0641)	0.218*** (0.0512)	0.206*** (0.0469)	0.0905 (0.0605)
Voluntary work				
At least once a month	-0.0548* (0.0301)	-0.135*** (0.0291)	-0.116*** (0.0341)	-0.124*** (0.0351)
At least once every three months	-0.103*** (0.0393)	-0.150*** (0.0401)	-0.131*** (0.0335)	-0.170*** (0.0355)
At least once every six months	-0.121*** (0.0387)	-0.184*** (0.0368)	-0.156*** (0.0362)	-0.186*** (0.0396)
Less often	-0.174*** (0.0402)	-0.252*** (0.0436)	-0.216*** (0.0433)	-0.241*** (0.0474)
Never	-0.326***	-0.305***	-0.280***	-0.334***

	(0.0442)	(0.0373)	(0.0364)	(0.0387)
Religious attendance				
More than once a week	-0.0660 (0.0976)	-0.00616 (0.0776)	-0.0591 (0.0746)	-0.0922 (0.0569)
Once a week	-0.129 (0.0850)	0.00622 (0.0663)	-0.0537 (0.0727)	-0.0695 (0.0614)
At least once a month	-0.143* (0.0748)	-0.0928* (0.0527)	-0.166** (0.0710)	-0.158*** (0.0549)
Only on special holidays	-0.139 (0.0853)	-0.0436 (0.0566)	-0.105 (0.0754)	-0.129** (0.0502)
Less often	-0.168* (0.0885)	-0.0890 (0.0572)	-0.154* (0.0791)	-0.184*** (0.0514)
Never	-0.175** (0.0775)	-0.106** (0.0535)	-0.154** (0.0758)	-0.202*** (0.0524)
Total time watching TV	-0.0247*** (0.00507)	-0.00627 (0.00638)	-0.00619 (0.00597)	0.000284 (0.00513)
Socio-dem controls	YES	YES	YES	YES
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	36,996	36,943	36,887	36,886

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Omitted benchmark: less than lower secondary education, first income decile, married, female, employed, no religious attendance, no voluntary work.

Table 6.1 Comfort goods, variety and life satisfaction: the two equation model (OLS estimates)

	(Eq 1)	(Eq 2)	(Eq 1)	(Eq 2)	(Eq 1)
VARIABLES	How happy are you	Learn new things in life	How happy are you	Interested in what you are doing	How happy are you

Male	-0.196*** (0.0200)	0.0557*** (0.0142)	-0.208*** (0.0206)	0.0771*** (0.0193)	-0.187*** (0.0213)
Age	-0.0595*** (0.00360)	-0.0155*** (0.00249)	-0.0699*** (0.00357)	-0.00271 (0.00339)	-0.0723*** (0.00374)
Age	0.000703*** (3.53e-05)	-4.90e-05* (2.52e-05)	0.000643*** (3.63e-05)	2.07e-05 (3.45e-05)	0.000667*** (3.80e-05)
ES-ISCED categories					
Lower secondary	-0.192*** (0.0407)	0.0531* (0.0290)	-0.187*** (0.0418)	0.0621 (0.0395)	-0.213*** (0.0441)
Lower tier upper	-0.117*** (0.0449)	0.167*** (0.0312)	-0.168*** (0.0468)	0.228*** (0.0425)	-0.214*** (0.0501)
Upper tier upper	-0.235*** (0.0463)	0.325*** (0.0297)	-0.206*** (0.0461)	0.294*** (0.0404)	-0.239*** (0.0492)
Advanced vocational	-0.292*** (0.0514)	0.389*** (0.0320)	-0.289*** (0.0514)	0.377*** (0.0435)	-0.310*** (0.0546)
Lower tertiary education	-0.343*** (0.0599)	0.560*** (0.0341)	-0.258*** (0.0566)	0.461*** (0.0463)	-0.255*** (0.0590)
Highest tertiary level	-0.427*** (0.0617)	0.614*** (0.0336)	-0.278*** (0.0554)	0.435*** (0.0457)	-0.263*** (0.0574)
Unemployed active	-0.351*** (0.0445)	-0.139*** (0.0311)	-0.268*** (0.0468)	-0.234*** (0.0424)	-0.291*** (0.0486)
Unemployed inactive	-0.263*** (0.0687)	-0.323*** (0.0469)	-0.111 (0.0734)	-0.506*** (0.0636)	-0.164** (0.0756)
Retired	0.0539 (0.0362)	-0.101*** (0.0256)	0.00386 (0.0367)	-0.0343 (0.0349)	0.0114 (0.0385)
Income					
2nd decile	0.183*** (0.0415)	0.105*** (0.0295)	0.135*** (0.0431)	0.152*** (0.0401)	0.144*** (0.0450)
3rd decile	0.417*** (0.0439)	0.198*** (0.0303)	0.275*** (0.0480)	0.361*** (0.0413)	0.310*** (0.0491)
4th decile	0.433*** (0.0453)	0.222*** (0.0311)	0.335*** (0.0482)	0.325*** (0.0424)	0.340*** (0.0504)
5th decile	0.516*** (0.0467)	0.244*** (0.0319)	0.427*** (0.0496)	0.344*** (0.0434)	0.407*** (0.0525)
6th decile	0.637*** (0.0483)	0.285*** (0.0326)	0.569*** (0.0507)	0.361*** (0.0443)	0.565*** (0.0532)
7th decile	0.662*** (0.0504)	0.328*** (0.0334)	0.566*** (0.0536)	0.431*** (0.0455)	0.584*** (0.0555)

8th decile	0.683*** (0.0524)	0.356*** (0.0344)	0.554*** (0.0567)	0.497*** (0.0468)	0.577*** (0.0585)
9th decile	0.788*** (0.0546)	0.358*** (0.0361)	0.646*** (0.0594)	0.524*** (0.0491)	0.662*** (0.0616)
10th decile	0.843*** (0.0604)	0.543*** (0.0365)	0.695*** (0.0662)	0.717*** (0.0497)	0.730*** (0.0678)
N. of household members	0.0124 (0.00895)	-0.0324*** (0.00637)	0.0175* (0.00921)	-0.0380*** (0.00866)	0.0249** (0.00975)
Civil union	-0.00295 (0.197)	-0.195 (0.141)	0.111 (0.203)	-0.317* (0.191)	0.142 (0.213)
Separated	-0.770*** (0.123)	0.119 (0.0882)	-0.512*** (0.127)	-0.191 (0.120)	-0.632*** (0.133)
Divorced	-0.562*** (0.0358)	0.0494* (0.0256)	-0.468*** (0.0369)	-0.0534 (0.0348)	-0.462*** (0.0387)
Widowed	-0.526*** (0.0428)	-0.253*** (0.0288)	-0.456*** (0.0451)	-0.322*** (0.0392)	-0.464*** (0.0473)
Never married	-0.400*** (0.0305)	-0.0258 (0.0219)	-0.358*** (0.0316)	-0.0691** (0.0297)	-0.321*** (0.0336)
Religious attendance					
More than once a week		-0.133* (0.0771)		-0.120 (0.0994)	
Once a week		-0.192*** (0.0693)		-0.0950 (0.0894)	
At least once a month		-0.235*** (0.0696)		-0.272*** (0.0898)	
Only on special holidays		-0.230*** (0.0682)		-0.216** (0.0880)	
Less often		-0.290*** (0.0685)		-0.311*** (0.0884)	
Never		-0.338*** (0.0680)		-0.392*** (0.0877)	
Voluntary work					
At least once a month		-0.0761** (0.0333)		-0.175*** (0.0430)	
At least once every three months		-0.121*** (0.0374)		-0.190*** (0.0483)	
At least once every six months		-0.142*** (0.0359)		-0.246*** (0.0467)	
Less often		-0.203*** (0.0307)		-0.334*** (0.0405)	
Never		-0.397***		-0.456***	

Total time watching TV		(0.0268)		(0.0360)	
		-0.0238***		-0.00840*	
		(0.00349)		(0.00446)	
Learn new things in life	0.802***				
	(0.0584)				
Interested in what you are doing			0.820***		
			(0.0564)		
Absorbed in what you are doing					0.825***
					(0.0598)
Enthusiastic about what you are doing					
Have a sense of direction in life					
Socio-dem controls	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	5.302***	5.302***	3.069***	7.965***	3.070***
	(0.290)	(0.108)	(0.422)	(0.144)	(0.444)
Observations	36,822	36,822	36,769	36,769	36,713
R-squared	0.154	0.220	0.107	0.083	0.022

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Omitted benchmark: less than lower secondary education, first income decile, married, female, employed, no religious attendance, no voluntary work.

Table 6.2 Comfort goods, variety and life sense: the two equation model (OLS estimates)

VARIABLES	(Eq 1)	(Eq 2)	(Eq 1)	(Eq 2)	(Eq 1)
	Have a sense of direction in life	Learn new things in life	Have a sense of direction in life	Interested in what you are doing	Have a sense of direction in life
Male	-0.0456*	0.0583***	-0.0578**	0.0811***	-0.0254
	(0.0238)	(0.0142)	(0.0244)	(0.0193)	(0.0255)
Age	-0.000520	-0.0164***	-0.0188***	-0.00286	-0.0221***

	(0.00434)	(0.00250)	(0.00425)	(0.00340)	(0.00449)
Agesq	0.000215*** (4.25e-05)	-3.98e-05 (2.54e-05)	0.000134*** (4.33e-05)	2.55e-05 (3.46e-05)	0.000164*** (4.57e-05)
ES-ISCED categories					
Lower secondary	-0.0263 (0.0490)	0.0501* (0.0292)	-0.0413 (0.0500)	0.0678* (0.0397)	-0.0677 (0.0530)
Lower tier upper	0.113** (0.0538)	0.160*** (0.0313)	0.0193 (0.0559)	0.238*** (0.0426)	-0.0475 (0.0604)
Upper tier upper	-0.0549 (0.0557)	0.318*** (0.0298)	0.00321 (0.0550)	0.295*** (0.0405)	-0.0502 (0.0592)
Advanced vocational	-0.0790 (0.0618)	0.384*** (0.0321)	-0.0407 (0.0612)	0.376*** (0.0436)	-0.0711 (0.0655)
Lower tertiary education	-0.239*** (0.0720)	0.548*** (0.0342)	-0.0715 (0.0673)	0.456*** (0.0464)	-0.0685 (0.0709)
Highest tertiary level	-0.319*** (0.0749)	0.613*** (0.0337)	-0.0454 (0.0663)	0.443*** (0.0458)	-0.0248 (0.0694)
Unemployed active	-0.362*** (0.0533)	-0.141*** (0.0311)	-0.247*** (0.0558)	-0.238*** (0.0423)	-0.289*** (0.0583)
Unemployed inactive	-0.380*** (0.0824)	-0.322*** (0.0470)	-0.163* (0.0878)	-0.515*** (0.0638)	-0.233** (0.0914)
Retired	0.107** (0.0435)	-0.108*** (0.0257)	0.00805 (0.0437)	-0.0376 (0.0350)	0.0253 (0.0462)
Income					
2nd decile	0.111** (0.0499)	0.0975*** (0.0296)	0.0368 (0.0514)	0.153*** (0.0403)	0.0602 (0.0541)
3rd decile	0.215*** (0.0527)	0.193*** (0.0304)	0.00109 (0.0572)	0.364*** (0.0414)	0.0689 (0.0590)
4th decile	0.239*** (0.0543)	0.216*** (0.0312)	0.101* (0.0574)	0.326*** (0.0425)	0.111* (0.0605)
5th decile	0.251*** (0.0560)	0.241*** (0.0320)	0.122** (0.0591)	0.350*** (0.0435)	0.101 (0.0632)
6th decile	0.263*** (0.0579)	0.282*** (0.0326)	0.174*** (0.0604)	0.363*** (0.0444)	0.184*** (0.0638)
7th decile	0.340*** (0.0605)	0.322*** (0.0335)	0.221*** (0.0637)	0.432*** (0.0455)	0.255*** (0.0666)
8th decile	0.376*** (0.0629)	0.352*** (0.0345)	0.205*** (0.0675)	0.501*** (0.0468)	0.251*** (0.0703)
9th decile	0.422***	0.359***	0.233***	0.527***	0.264***

	(0.0656)	(0.0362)	(0.0707)	(0.0491)	(0.0741)
10th decile	0.341***	0.538***	0.166**	0.711***	0.221***
	(0.0727)	(0.0365)	(0.0785)	(0.0497)	(0.0812)
N. of household members	0.00952	-0.0329***	0.0114	-0.0374***	0.0224*
	(0.0107)	(0.00636)	(0.0109)	(0.00864)	(0.0116)
Civil union	-0.168	-0.189	-0.0250	-0.311	0.0249
	(0.235)	(0.140)	(0.240)	(0.191)	(0.253)
Separated	-0.425***	0.107	-0.0309	-0.191	-0.211
	(0.147)	(0.0881)	(0.150)	(0.120)	(0.158)
Divocerd	-0.264***	0.0495*	-0.137***	-0.0482	-0.129***
	(0.0427)	(0.0256)	(0.0437)	(0.0348)	(0.0462)
Widowed	-0.117**	-0.252***	-0.0639	-0.318***	-0.0619
	(0.0516)	(0.0290)	(0.0536)	(0.0394)	(0.0567)
Never married	-0.256***	-0.0211	-0.197***	-0.0657**	-0.144***
	(0.0364)	(0.0218)	(0.0375)	(0.0297)	(0.0401)
Religious attendance					
More than once a week				-0.0101	
				(0.0918)	
Once a week				-0.102	
				(0.0826)	
At least once a month				-0.252***	
				(0.0829)	
Only on special holidays				-0.235***	
				(0.0813)	
Less often				-0.326***	
				(0.0816)	
Never				-0.410***	
				(0.0811)	
Voluntary work					
At least once a month				-0.108***	
				(0.0398)	
At least once every three months				-0.136***	
				(0.0447)	
At least once every six months				-0.163***	
				(0.0435)	
Less often				-0.274***	
				(0.0382)	
Never				-0.401***	
				(0.0349)	
Total time watching TV		-0.0237***		-0.0127***	

Religious attendance		(0.00330)		(0.00411)	
		-0.0523***			
		(0.00457)			
Voluntary work		-0.0769***			
		(0.00432)			
Learn new things in life	1.310***				
	(0.0731)				
Interested in what you are doing			1.222***		
			(0.0677)		
Absorbed in what you are doing					1.238***
					(0.0725)
Enthusiastic about what you are doing					
Socio-dem controls	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	0.699*	5.435***	-2.036***	7.926***	-2.116***
	(0.362)	(0.0889)	(0.505)	(0.140)	(0.538)
Observations	36,55	36,55	36,536	36,536	36,485
R-squared	-0.060	0.214	-0.106	0.081	-0.231

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Omitted benchmark: less than lower secondary education, first income decile, married, female, employed, no religious attendance, no voluntary work.

Table 7.1 Single equation IV estimates

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Learn new things in life	Learn new things in life
Instrument relevance*	74.39 (0.000)	74.00 (0.000)	74.22 (0.000)				
				0.117	0.110	0.0928	0.0928

Father's highest level of education				(0.106)	(0.117)	(0.123)	(0.0
High stimulus	5.751*** -1.140	2.482*** (0.902)	3.041*** (0.942)				
Observations	31,321	31,236	31,269	747	743	745	1,
R-squared	0.327	0.026	0.014	0.281	0.210	0.225	0.

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

In the first three columns we find the second stage significance of the instrumented variable.

Instrument relevance*: Kleibergen-Paap weak identification test (Wald statistic)

In the other columns results for the instrument in the falsification test where the model is estimated in the subsample of individuals with lowest level of education, no voluntary activity and no religious attendance

Table 7.2 Single equation IV estimates – only individuals aged above 50

VARIABLES	(1) Learn new things in life	(2) Absorbed in what you are doing	(3) Interested in what you are doing	(4) Learn new things in life	(5) Absorbed in what you are doing	(6) Learn new things in life	(7) Learn things in life
Instrument relevance*	27.23 (0.000)	27.38 (0.000)	27.41 (0.000)				
Father's highest level of education				0.134 (0.134)	0.183 (0.146)	0.128 (0.147)	0.1 (0.0
High stimulus	6.774*** (-1.721)	2.960*** (-1036)	3.487*** (-1250)				
Observations	16,219	16,146	16,169	617	614	615	1,
R-squared	0.338	0.029	0.006	0.282	0.250	0.271	0.

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Instrument relevance*: Kleibergen-Paap weak identification test (Wald statistic)

Table 8 IV Two-equation two-stage IV approach

VARIABLES	(1) How happy are you	(2) How happy are you	(3) How happy are you	(4) Have a sense of direction in life	(5) Have a sense of direction in life	(6) Have a sense of direction in life
Instrument relevance*	74.40 (0.00)	74.00 (0.00)	74.222 (0.00)	74.39 (0.00)	74.00 (0.00)	74.21 (0.00)
Y_hat	0.0422*** (0.00863)	0.126*** (0.0197)	0.101*** (0.0161)	0.0898*** (0.00990)	0.231*** (0.0226)	0.187*** (0.0184)
Observations	31,185	31,101	31,133	30,994	30,943	30,973
R-squared	0.239	0.239	0.238	0.104	0.104	0.103

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Second stage coefficient and t-statistic of the predicted first stage dependent variable where the high stimulus dummy is instrumented with the highest education level of the father

Instrument relevance*: Kleibergen-Paap weak identification test (Wald statistic)

Appendix

Table 4 Life sense stimulus and comfort goods (wave 7)

VARIABLES	(1) How happy are you	(2) How happy are you	(3) How happy are you
Male	-0.0707*** (0.0130)	-0.0542*** (0.0126)	-0.0568*** (0.0133)
Age	-0.0364*** (0.00308)	-0.0363*** (0.00315)	-0.0372*** (0.00307)
Agesq	0.000319*** (2.88e-05)	0.000327*** (3.12e-05)	0.000333*** (3.04e-05)
Unemployed active	-0.287*** (0.0368)	-0.274*** (0.0402)	-0.278*** (0.0401)
Unemployed inactive	-0.286*** (0.0461)	-0.253*** (0.0458)	-0.244*** (0.0452)
Retired	0.0464 (0.0301)	0.0481* (0.0284)	0.0449 (0.0279)
Income			
2nd decile	0.100*** (0.0333)	0.0887** (0.0379)	0.0793** (0.0355)
3rd decile	0.186*** (0.0364)	0.172*** (0.0402)	0.165*** (0.0365)
4th decile	0.248*** (0.0255)	0.235*** (0.0282)	0.230*** (0.0267)
5th decile	0.348*** (0.0397)	0.324*** (0.0416)	0.313*** (0.0399)
6th decile	0.353*** (0.0309)	0.324*** (0.0349)	0.317*** (0.0324)
7th decile	0.414*** (0.0373)	0.383*** (0.0402)	0.372*** (0.0378)
8th decile	0.465*** (0.0371)	0.430*** (0.0398)	0.419*** (0.0375)
9th decile	0.543*** (0.0392)	0.501*** (0.0417)	0.489*** (0.0383)
10th decile	0.624*** (0.0448)	0.573*** (0.0449)	0.564*** (0.0397)
N. household members	0.0172** (0.00704)	0.0179*** (0.00603)	0.0191*** (0.00593)
Marital Status			
Civil union	-0.247*** (0.0811)	-0.226*** (0.0762)	-0.212*** (0.0766)

Separated	-0.498*** (0.0962)	-0.477*** (0.101)	-0.457*** (0.102)
Divorced	-0.251*** (0.0278)	-0.236*** (0.0279)	-0.232*** (0.0273)
Widowed	-0.346*** (0.0231)	-0.346*** (0.0260)	-0.338*** (0.0245)
Never married	-0.255*** (0.0268)	-0.249*** (0.0254)	-0.246*** (0.0255)

ES-ISCED categories

Lower secondary			-0.0605 (0.0378)
Lower tier upper secondary			-0.0256 (0.0360)
Upper tier upper secondary			-0.0257 (0.0393)
Advanced vocational			0.0386 (0.0392)
Lower tertiary education			0.0478 (0.0362)
Highest tertiary level			0.00147 (0.0368)

Religious Attendance

More than once a week			-0.00870 (0.0812)
Once a week			-0.127** (0.0634)
At least once a month			-0.159** (0.0664)
Only on special holidays			-0.186** (0.0765)
Less often			-0.219*** (0.0672)
Never			-0.228*** (0.0630)

Smoking behavior

I smoke, but not every day			0.000725 (0.0514)
I don't smoke now but I used to			0.125*** (0.0195)
I have only smoked a few times			0.0546** (0.0234)
I have never smoked			0.116*** (0.0232)

Do Sport in how many of the last seven days

1			0.105*** (0.0246)
2			0.0956*** (0.0295)
3			0.153*** (0.0292)
4			0.218*** (0.0421)
5			0.205*** (0.0389)
6			0.147*** (0.0348)
7			0.219*** (0.0250)
Obese		-0.0345* (0.0195)	-0.0383** (0.0186)
Total time watching TV		-0.0158*** (0.00393)	-0.0154*** (0.00381)
/cut1	-3.567*** (0.156)	-3.561*** (0.155)	-3.690*** (0.201)
/cut2	-3.344*** (0.145)	-3.339*** (0.148)	-3.468*** (0.190)
/cut3	-3.003*** (0.132)	-2.996*** (0.133)	-3.127*** (0.179)
/cut4	-2.636*** (0.117)	-2.621*** (0.121)	-2.754*** (0.167)
/cut5	-2.360*** (0.106)	-2.343*** (0.109)	-2.475*** (0.155)
/cut6	-1.851*** (0.0929)	-1.824*** (0.104)	-1.954*** (0.142)
/cut7	-1.524*** (0.0962)	-1.493*** (0.107)	-1.622*** (0.143)
/cut8	-0.965*** (0.0990)	-0.924*** (0.108)	-1.053*** (0.144)
/cut9	-0.133 (0.107)	-0.0769 (0.111)	-0.206 (0.149)
/cut10	0.581*** (0.127)	0.645*** (0.130)	0.517*** (0.170)
Years of education		0.00583** (0.00288)	
Religious attendance		-0.0306***	

		(0.00604)		
Smoking behaviour		0.0278***		
		(0.00501)		
Doing sport		0.0292***		
		(0.00351)		
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	
Observations	31,689	30,276	30,261	

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5.1 The impact of comfort goods on learning, interest, absorption and enthusiasm (continuous voluntary work and religion variables)

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Learn new things in life	Interested in what you are doing	Absorbed in what you are doing	Enthusiastic about what you are doing
Male	0.0337*** (0.0127)	0.0415*** (0.0144)	0.0267 (0.0164)	0.0180 (0.0136)
Age	-0.0170*** (0.00335)	-0.00151 (0.00362)	0.000898 (0.00332)	-0.000390 (0.00299)
Agesq	2.65e-05 (3.51e-05)	2.32e-05 (3.81e-05)	-1.21e-06 (3.43e-05)	-1.43e-05 (3.09e-05)
Unemployed active	-0.108*** (0.0250)	-0.125*** (0.0386)	-0.104*** (0.0311)	-0.0990*** (0.0358)
Unemployed inactive	-0.247*** (0.0671)	-0.268*** (0.0478)	-0.223*** (0.0585)	-0.259*** (0.0468)
Retired	-0.0742** (0.0318)	-0.0248 (0.0337)	-0.0315 (0.0310)	0.0381 (0.0306)
Income				
2nd decile	0.0583** (0.0293)	0.0674 (0.0509)	0.0574 (0.0362)	0.109** (0.0429)
3rd decile	0.118*** (0.0338)	0.169*** (0.0450)	0.142*** (0.0354)	0.204*** (0.0403)
4th decile	0.127*** (0.0391)	0.155*** (0.0458)	0.148*** (0.0355)	0.183*** (0.0424)
5th decile	0.147*** (0.0352)	0.156*** (0.0396)	0.169*** (0.0274)	0.198*** (0.0333)
6th decile	0.179*** (0.0397)	0.165*** (0.0447)	0.165*** (0.0389)	0.184*** (0.0365)
7th decile	0.213*** (0.0364)	0.208*** (0.0475)	0.192*** (0.0405)	0.217*** (0.0483)

8th decile	0.240*** (0.0441)	0.246*** (0.0439)	0.226*** (0.0457)	0.266*** (0.0485)
9th decile	0.242*** (0.0476)	0.260*** (0.0521)	0.236*** (0.0495)	0.256*** (0.0504)
10th decile	0.410*** (0.0483)	0.367*** (0.0609)	0.331*** (0.0587)	0.324*** (0.0576)
N. household members	-0.0247*** (0.00673)	-0.0209*** (0.00721)	-0.0237*** (0.00659)	-0.0247*** (0.00672)
Marital Status				
Civil union	-0.147* (0.0803)	-0.182 (0.121)	-0.173 (0.125)	-0.101 (0.110)
Separated	0.109** (0.0443)	-0.0860 (0.0561)	-0.0129 (0.0459)	-0.0798 (0.0506)
Divorced	0.0395 (0.0258)	-0.0217 (0.0300)	-0.0262 (0.0270)	-0.0242 (0.0266)
Widowed	-0.170*** (0.0172)	-0.178*** (0.0364)	-0.178*** (0.0326)	-0.193*** (0.0249)
Never married	-0.0238 (0.0252)	-0.0465** (0.0185)	-0.0606*** (0.0194)	-0.0505*** (0.0185)
Years of education		0.0181*** (0.00396)	0.0156*** (0.00354)	0.00939** (0.00447)
Voluntary work	-0.0666*** (0.00745)	-0.0535*** (0.00566)	-0.0502*** (0.00541)	-0.0603*** (0.00548)
Religious attendance	-0.0188*** (0.00562)	-0.0211** (0.00856)	-0.0195** (0.00819)	-0.0282*** (0.00710)
Total time watching TV	-0.0267*** (0.00528)	-0.00574 (0.00651)	-0.00574 (0.00611)	0.00119 (0.00529)
/cut1	-2.876*** (0.100)	-2.862*** (0.158)	-2.874*** (0.151)	-2.987*** (0.149)
/cut2	-2.429*** (0.0929)	-2.678*** (0.147)	-2.691*** (0.139)	-2.760*** (0.135)
/cut3	-1.973*** (0.0879)	-2.393*** (0.141)	-2.359*** (0.113)	-2.451*** (0.123)
/cut4	-1.323*** (0.0853)	-2.065*** (0.132)	-2.009*** (0.100)	-2.114*** (0.113)
/cut5	-0.559*** (0.0782)	-1.753*** (0.127)	-1.689*** (0.0942)	-1.817*** (0.101)
/cut6	0.323*** (0.0851)	-1.252*** (0.125)	-1.193*** (0.0918)	-1.313*** (0.0971)
/cut7		-0.881*** (0.118)	-0.823*** (0.0865)	-0.929*** (0.0899)

/cut8		-0.306***	-0.296***	-0.400***
		(0.112)	(0.0882)	(0.0842)
/cut9		0.426***	0.423***	0.274***
		(0.112)	(0.103)	(0.0899)
/cut10		0.924***	0.949***	0.784***
		(0.115)	(0.113)	(0.0952)
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	37,035	36,976	36,922	36,922

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5.2 The impact of comfort goods on learning, interest, absorption and enthusiasm (discrete voluntary work and religion variables)

VARIABLES	(1) Learn new things in life	(2) Interested in what you are doing	(3) Absorbed in what you are doing	(4) Enthusiastic about what you are doing
Male	0.0377*** (0.0124)	0.0429*** (0.0138)	0.0259* (0.0153)	0.0171 (0.0131)
Age	-0.0161*** (0.00308)	-0.00180 (0.00377)	0.000300 (0.00334)	-0.000800 (0.00303)
Agesq	9.89e-06 (3.21e-05)	2.45e-05 (3.94e-05)	4.42e-06 (3.44e-05)	-9.47e-06 (3.09e-05)
Unemployed active	-0.110*** (0.0250)	-0.125*** (0.0391)	-0.103*** (0.0317)	-0.0978*** (0.0366)
Unemployed inactive	-0.234*** (0.0704)	-0.265*** (0.0472)	-0.219*** (0.0596)	-0.253*** (0.0476)
Retired	-0.0662** (0.0318)	-0.0243 (0.0333)	-0.0297 (0.0303)	0.0383 (0.0299)
Income				
2nd decile	0.0649** (0.0280)	0.0672 (0.0507)	0.0575 (0.0356)	0.110*** (0.0426)
3rd decile	0.128*** (0.0329)	0.173*** (0.0445)	0.144*** (0.0345)	0.209*** (0.0396)
4th decile	0.133*** (0.0393)	0.150*** (0.0438)	0.140*** (0.0337)	0.180*** (0.0414)
5th decile	0.152*** (0.0343)	0.153*** (0.0383)	0.163*** (0.0262)	0.195*** (0.0323)
6th decile	0.177*** (0.0383)	0.156*** (0.0438)	0.155*** (0.0370)	0.178*** (0.0353)
7th decile	0.209*** (0.0368)	0.198*** (0.0476)	0.180*** (0.0397)	0.212*** (0.0471)
8th decile	0.234*** (0.0439)	0.237*** (0.0433)	0.216*** (0.0440)	0.264*** (0.0470)
9th decile	0.231*** (0.0476)	0.251*** (0.0522)	0.230*** (0.0471)	0.256*** (0.0489)
10th decile	0.391*** (0.0500)	0.359*** (0.0597)	0.325*** (0.0545)	0.330*** (0.0527)
N. household members	-0.0233*** (0.00701)	-0.0193*** (0.00705)	-0.0221*** (0.00675)	-0.0237*** (0.00682)
Marital Status				
Civil union	-0.151*	-0.179	-0.171	-0.0988

	(0.0892)	(0.122)	(0.123)	(0.111)
Separated	0.120***	-0.0982*	-0.0246	-0.0862
	(0.0455)	(0.0589)	(0.0510)	(0.0559)
Divorced	0.0428*	-0.0237	-0.0288	-0.0256
	(0.0251)	(0.0284)	(0.0265)	(0.0256)
Widowed	-0.172***	-0.175***	-0.173***	-0.189***
	(0.0181)	(0.0364)	(0.0318)	(0.0252)
Never married	-0.0186	-0.0408**	-0.0567***	-0.0458**
	(0.0249)	(0.0189)	(0.0200)	(0.0184)
ES-ISCED categories				
Lower secondary	0.0325	0.0261	0.0382	-0.00318
	(0.0470)	(0.0471)	(0.0443)	(0.0504)
Lower tier upper secondary	0.0998*	0.108**	0.143***	0.0974*
	(0.0529)	(0.0485)	(0.0472)	(0.0523)
Upper tier upper secondary	0.225***	0.141***	0.157***	0.0900*
	(0.0543)	(0.0478)	(0.0450)	(0.0529)
Advanced vocational	0.275***	0.192***	0.202***	0.115**
	(0.0490)	(0.0418)	(0.0365)	(0.0470)
Lower tertiary education	0.415***	0.233***	0.230***	0.139**
	(0.0529)	(0.0486)	(0.0479)	(0.0543)
Highest tertiary level	0.469***	0.218***	0.206***	0.0905
	(0.0641)	(0.0512)	(0.0469)	(0.0605)
Voluntary work				
At least once a month	-0.0548*	-0.135***	-0.116***	-0.124***
	(0.0301)	(0.0291)	(0.0341)	(0.0351)
At least once every three months	-0.103***	-0.150***	-0.131***	-0.170***
	(0.0393)	(0.0401)	(0.0335)	(0.0355)
At least once every six months	-0.121***	-0.184***	-0.156***	-0.186***
	(0.0387)	(0.0368)	(0.0362)	(0.0396)
Less often	-0.174***	-0.252***	-0.216***	-0.241***
	(0.0402)	(0.0436)	(0.0433)	(0.0474)
Never	-0.326***	-0.305***	-0.280***	-0.334***
	(0.0442)	(0.0373)	(0.0364)	(0.0387)
Religious attendance				
More than once a week	-0.0660	-0.00616	-0.0591	-0.0922
	(0.0976)	(0.0776)	(0.0746)	(0.0569)
Once a week	-0.129	0.00622	-0.0537	-0.0695
	(0.0850)	(0.0663)	(0.0727)	(0.0614)

At least once a month	-0.143*	-0.0928*	-0.166**	-0.158***
	(0.0748)	(0.0527)	(0.0710)	(0.0549)
Only on special holidays	-0.139	-0.0436	-0.105	-0.129**
	(0.0853)	(0.0566)	(0.0754)	(0.0502)
Less often	-0.168*	-0.0890	-0.154*	-0.184***
	(0.0885)	(0.0572)	(0.0791)	(0.0514)
Never	-0.175**	-0.106**	-0.154**	-0.202***
	(0.0775)	(0.0535)	(0.0758)	(0.0524)
Total time watching TV	-0.0247***	-0.00627	-0.00619	0.000284
	(0.00507)	(0.00638)	(0.00597)	(0.00513)
/cut1	-3.139***	-2.929***	-2.958***	-3.018***
	(0.113)	(0.181)	(0.171)	(0.175)
/cut2	-2.690***	-2.742***	-2.774***	-2.789***
	(0.112)	(0.171)	(0.159)	(0.159)
/cut3	-2.236***	-2.455***	-2.440***	-2.481***
	(0.111)	(0.162)	(0.135)	(0.144)
/cut4	-1.584***	-2.126***	-2.091***	-2.145***
	(0.109)	(0.152)	(0.122)	(0.134)
/cut5	-0.820***	-1.814***	-1.772***	-1.848***
	(0.103)	(0.147)	(0.115)	(0.124)
/cut6	0.0636	-1.313***	-1.274***	-1.344***
	(0.108)	(0.144)	(0.115)	(0.121)
/cut7		-0.942***	-0.905***	-0.959***
		(0.139)	(0.111)	(0.116)
/cut8		-0.367***	-0.377***	-0.431***
		(0.131)	(0.113)	(0.114)
/cut9		0.366***	0.342***	0.245**
		(0.128)	(0.127)	(0.121)
/cut10		0.864***	0.868***	0.755***
		(0.129)	(0.135)	(0.126)
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	36,996	36,943	36,887	36,886

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

6.2 Comfort goods, variety and life sense: the two equation model (OLS estimates)

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Have a sense of direction in life	Learn new things in life	Have a sense of direction in life	Interested in what you are doing	Have a sense of direction in life	Absorbed in what you are doing

Male	-0.0456*	0.0583***	-0.0578**	0.0811***	-0.0254	0.0523***
	(0.0238)	(0.0142)	(0.0244)	(0.0193)	(0.0255)	(0.0199)
Age	-0.000520	-0.0164***	-0.0188***	-0.00286	-0.0221***	-0.000187
	(0.00434)	(0.00250)	(0.00425)	(0.00340)	(0.00449)	(0.00351)
Agesq	0.000215***	-3.98e-05	0.000134***	2.55e-05	0.000164***	2.26e-06
	(4.25e-05)	(2.54e-05)	(4.33e-05)	(3.46e-05)	(4.57e-05)	(3.57e-05)
ES-ISCED categories						
Lower secondary	-0.0263	0.0501*	-0.0413	0.0678*	-0.0677	0.0878**
	(0.0490)	(0.0292)	(0.0500)	(0.0397)	(0.0530)	(0.0410)
Lower tier upper secondary	0.113**	0.160***	0.0193	0.238***	-0.0475	0.288***
	(0.0538)	(0.0313)	(0.0559)	(0.0426)	(0.0604)	(0.0439)
	-0.0549	0.318***	0.00321	0.295***	-0.0502	0.327***
	(0.0557)	(0.0298)	(0.0550)	(0.0405)	(0.0592)	(0.0418)
Upper tier upper secondary	-0.0790	0.384***	-0.0407	0.376***	-0.0711	0.396***
	(0.0618)	(0.0321)	(0.0612)	(0.0436)	(0.0655)	(0.0450)
Advanced vocational	-0.239***	0.548***	-0.0715	0.456***	-0.0685	0.443***
	(0.0720)	(0.0342)	(0.0673)	(0.0464)	(0.0709)	(0.0478)
Lower tertiary education	-0.319***	0.613***	-0.0454	0.443***	-0.0248	0.417***
	(0.0749)	(0.0337)	(0.0663)	(0.0458)	(0.0694)	(0.0472)
Highest tertiary level	-0.362***	-0.141***	-0.247***	-0.238***	-0.289***	-0.206***
	(0.0533)	(0.0311)	(0.0558)	(0.0423)	(0.0583)	(0.0436)
Unemployed inactive	-0.380***	-0.322***	-0.163*	-0.515***	-0.233**	-0.452***
	(0.0824)	(0.0470)	(0.0878)	(0.0638)	(0.0914)	(0.0659)
Retired	0.107**	-0.108***	0.00805	-0.0376	0.0253	-0.0541
	(0.0435)	(0.0257)	(0.0437)	(0.0350)	(0.0462)	(0.0361)
Income						
2nd decile	0.111**	0.0975***	0.0368	0.153***	0.0602	0.140***
	(0.0499)	(0.0296)	(0.0514)	(0.0403)	(0.0541)	(0.0416)
3rd decile	0.215***	0.193***	0.00109	0.364***	0.0689	0.311***
	(0.0527)	(0.0304)	(0.0572)	(0.0414)	(0.0590)	(0.0426)
4th decile	0.239***	0.216***	0.101*	0.326***	0.111*	0.321***
	(0.0543)	(0.0312)	(0.0574)	(0.0425)	(0.0605)	(0.0437)
5th decile	0.251***	0.241***	0.122**	0.350***	0.101	0.374***
	(0.0560)	(0.0320)	(0.0591)	(0.0435)	(0.0632)	(0.0448)
6th decile	0.263***	0.282***	0.174***	0.363***	0.184***	0.359***
	(0.0579)	(0.0326)	(0.0604)	(0.0444)	(0.0638)	(0.0457)
7th decile	0.340***	0.322***	0.221***	0.432***	0.255***	0.407***
	(0.0605)	(0.0335)	(0.0637)	(0.0455)	(0.0666)	(0.0468)
8th decile	0.376***	0.352***	0.205***	0.501***	0.251***	0.469***
	(0.0629)	(0.0345)	(0.0675)	(0.0468)	(0.0703)	(0.0482)

9th decile	0.422*** (0.0656)	0.359*** (0.0362)	0.233*** (0.0707)	0.527*** (0.0491)	0.264*** (0.0741)	0.504*** (0.0506)
10th decile	0.341*** (0.0727)	0.538*** (0.0365)	0.166** (0.0785)	0.711*** (0.0497)	0.221*** (0.0812)	0.662*** (0.0512)
N. household members	0.00952 (0.0107)	-0.0329*** (0.00636)	0.0114 (0.0109)	-0.0374*** (0.00864)	0.0224* (0.0116)	-0.0452*** (0.00890)
Marital Status						
Civil union	-0.168 (0.235)	-0.189 (0.140)	-0.0250 (0.240)	-0.311 (0.191)	0.0249 (0.253)	-0.346* (0.196)
Separated	-0.425*** (0.147)	0.107 (0.0881)	-0.0309 (0.150)	-0.191 (0.120)	-0.211 (0.158)	-0.0529 (0.123)
Divorced	-0.264*** (0.0427)	0.0495* (0.0256)	-0.137*** (0.0437)	-0.0482 (0.0348)	-0.129*** (0.0462)	-0.0555 (0.0358)
Widowed	-0.117** (0.0516)	-0.252*** (0.0290)	-0.0639 (0.0536)	-0.318*** (0.0394)	-0.0619 (0.0567)	-0.319*** (0.0406)
Never married	-0.256*** (0.0364)	-0.0211 (0.0218)	-0.197*** (0.0375)	-0.0657** (0.0297)	-0.144*** (0.0401)	-0.103*** (0.0306)
Religious attendance						
More than once a week				-0.0101 (0.0918)		-0.0415 (0.0913)
Once a week				-0.102 (0.0826)		-0.149* (0.0821)
At least once a month				-0.252*** (0.0829)		-0.309*** (0.0829)
Only on special holidays				-0.235*** (0.0813)		-0.282*** (0.0810)
Less often				-0.326*** (0.0816)		-0.375*** (0.0815)
Never				-0.410*** (0.0811)		-0.453*** (0.0810)
Voluntary work						
At least once a month				-0.108*** (0.0398)		-0.0942** (0.0395)
At least once every three months				-0.136*** (0.0447)		-0.123*** (0.0445)
At least onve every six months				-0.163*** (0.0435)		-0.140*** (0.0431)
Less often				-0.274*** (0.0382)		-0.249*** (0.0380)
Never				-0.401*** (0.0349)		-0.383*** (0.0353)
Total time watching TV		-0.0237***		-0.0127***		-0.0131***

		(0.00330)		(0.00411)		(0.00408)
Religious attendance		-0.0523***				
		(0.00457)				
Voluntary work		-0.0769***				
		(0.00432)				
Learn new things in life	1.310***					
	(0.0731)					
Interested in what you are doing			1.222***			
			(0.0677)			
Absorbed in what you are doing					1.238***	
					(0.0725)	
Enthusiastic about what you are doing						
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	0.699*	5.435***	-2.036***	7.926***	-2.116***	7.915***
	(0.362)	(0.0889)	(0.505)	(0.140)	(0.538)	(0.143)
Observations	36,55	36,55	36,536	36,536	36,485	36,485
R-squared	-0.060	0.214	-0.106	0.081	-0.231	0.088
Standard errors in parentheses						
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Table 6.1 Comfort goods, variety and life satisfaction: the two equation model (OLS estimates)

VARIABLES	(Eq. 1)	(Eq. 2)	(Eq. 1)	(Eq. 2)	(Eq. 1)	(Eq. 2)
	How happy are you	Learn new things in life	How happy are you	Interested in what you are doing	How happy are you	Absorbed in what you are doing
Male	-0.111*** (0.0110)	0.0391*** (0.0113)	-0.117*** (0.0111)	0.0439*** (0.0111)	-0.109*** (0.0110)	0.0263** (0.0111)
Age	-0.0392*** (0.00199)	-0.0164*** (0.00197)	-0.0436*** (0.00197)	-0.00178 (0.00194)	-0.0441*** (0.00196)	0.000263 (0.00194)
Agesq	0.000409*** (1.97e-05)	1.24e-05 (1.99e-05)	0.000403*** (2.00e-05)	2.43e-05 (1.98e-05)	0.000407*** (1.99e-05)	4.97e-06 (1.98e-05)
ES-ISCED categories						
Lower secondary	-0.109*** (0.0226)	0.0310 (0.0229)	-0.110*** (0.0227)	0.0254 (0.0226)	-0.112*** (0.0228)	0.0356 (0.0226)
Lower tier upper secondary	-0.0495** (0.0246)	0.0998*** (0.0246)	-0.0723*** (0.0247)	0.106*** (0.0243)	-0.0674*** (0.0250)	0.141*** (0.0243)

Upper tier upper secondary	-0.0938*** (0.0242)	0.223*** (0.0234)	-0.0920*** (0.0237)	0.140*** (0.0231)	-0.0795*** (0.0240)	0.156*** (0.0231)
Advanced vocational	-0.109*** (0.0264)	0.274*** (0.0253)	-0.120*** (0.0259)	0.192*** (0.0249)	-0.0965*** (0.0262)	0.201*** (0.0250)
Lower tertiary education	-0.109*** (0.0295)	0.418*** (0.0270)	-0.0931*** (0.0280)	0.234*** (0.0266)	-0.0590** (0.0281)	0.229*** (0.0266)
Highest tertiary level	-0.154*** (0.0297)	0.466*** (0.0267)	-0.119*** (0.0274)	0.214*** (0.0262)	-0.0824*** (0.0274)	0.201*** (0.0263)
Unemployed active	-0.221*** (0.0244)	-0.113*** (0.0246)	-0.197*** (0.0248)	-0.124*** (0.0242)	-0.217*** (0.0246)	-0.104*** (0.0242)
Unemployed inactive	-0.185*** (0.0372)	-0.236*** (0.0369)	-0.134*** (0.0378)	-0.263*** (0.0362)	-0.180*** (0.0376)	-0.217*** (0.0364)
Retired	0.0272 (0.0200)	-0.0704*** (0.0201)	0.0133 (0.0200)	-0.0261 (0.0200)	0.0130 (0.0200)	-0.0327 (0.0200)
Income						
2nd decile	0.0823*** (0.0229)	0.0639*** (0.0232)	0.0661*** (0.0231)	0.0672*** (0.0230)	0.0754*** (0.0231)	0.0575** (0.0230)
3rd decile	0.225*** (0.0240)	0.124*** (0.0239)	0.179*** (0.0248)	0.168*** (0.0236)	0.208*** (0.0245)	0.140*** (0.0236)
4th decile	0.234*** (0.0248)	0.136*** (0.0246)	0.203*** (0.0252)	0.149*** (0.0243)	0.223*** (0.0251)	0.139*** (0.0243)
5th decile	0.284*** (0.0255)	0.151*** (0.0252)	0.258*** (0.0260)	0.151*** (0.0249)	0.271*** (0.0260)	0.159*** (0.0249)
6th decile	0.358*** (0.0263)	0.179*** (0.0258)	0.340*** (0.0267)	0.157*** (0.0254)	0.358*** (0.0266)	0.155*** (0.0254)
7th decile	0.387*** (0.0273)	0.208*** (0.0265)	0.360*** (0.0278)	0.195*** (0.0261)	0.388*** (0.0275)	0.176*** (0.0260)
8th decile	0.404*** (0.0282)	0.235*** (0.0273)	0.364*** (0.0290)	0.234*** (0.0269)	0.399*** (0.0286)	0.214*** (0.0268)
9th decile	0.475*** (0.0296)	0.231*** (0.0286)	0.433*** (0.0306)	0.249*** (0.0282)	0.468*** (0.0302)	0.228*** (0.0281)
10th decile	0.563*** (0.0315)	0.393*** (0.0291)	0.518*** (0.0328)	0.360*** (0.0286)	0.572*** (0.0321)	0.325*** (0.0285)
N. household members	0.00734 (0.00496)	-0.0237*** (0.00506)	0.00981** (0.00497)	-0.0202*** (0.00497)	0.0100** (0.00499)	-0.0228*** (0.00497)
Marital Status						
Civil union	-0.0372 (0.110)	-0.149 (0.111)	0.00710 (0.110)	-0.177 (0.109)	-0.0104 (0.110)	-0.170 (0.109)
Separated	-0.458*** (0.0681)	0.122* (0.0704)	-0.382*** (0.0684)	-0.0998 (0.0684)	-0.433*** (0.0683)	-0.0261 (0.0686)
Divorced	-0.321***	0.0441**	-0.299***	-0.0224	-0.301***	-0.0288

	(0.0199)	(0.0202)	(0.0201)	(0.0200)	(0.0201)	(0.0199)
Widowed	-0.364***	-0.169***	-0.344***	-0.176***	-0.369***	-0.174***
	(0.0232)	(0.0226)	(0.0237)	(0.0225)	(0.0236)	(0.0224)
Never married	-0.268***	-0.0183	-0.260***	-0.0403**	-0.256***	-0.0570***
	(0.0170)	(0.0173)	(0.0173)	(0.0170)	(0.0173)	(0.0170)
Religious attendance						
More than once a week		-0.0920		-0.0492		-0.0821
		(0.0662)		(0.0652)		(0.0657)
Once a week		-0.158***		-0.0417		-0.0781
		(0.0596)		(0.0588)		(0.0593)
At least once a month		-0.181***		-0.149**		-0.196***
		(0.0602)		(0.0593)		(0.0598)
Only on special holidays		-0.175***		-0.101*		-0.134**
		(0.0590)		(0.0583)		(0.0588)
Less often		-0.208***		-0.149**		-0.187***
		(0.0593)		(0.0585)		(0.0591)
Never		-0.220***		-0.172***		-0.190***
		(0.0591)		(0.0583)		(0.0590)
Voluntary work						
At least once a month		-0.0602**		-0.139***		-0.120***
		(0.0285)		(0.0277)		(0.0279)
At least once every three months		-0.107***		-0.151***		-0.133***
		(0.0320)		(0.0311)		(0.0313)
At least onve every six months		-0.126***		-0.188***		-0.160***
		(0.0307)		(0.0299)		(0.0300)
Less often		-0.186***		-0.261***		-0.224***
		(0.0262)		(0.0255)		(0.0257)
Never		-0.336***		-0.315***		-0.288***
		(0.0224)		(0.0218)		(0.0220)
Total time watching TV		-0.0244***		-0.00663**		-0.00636**
		(0.00295)		(0.00288)		(0.00290)
Interested in what you are doing			0.279***			
			(0.0173)			
Absorbed in what you are doing					0.209***	
					(0.0184)	
Enthuasiastic about what you are doing						
Constant						
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	36,822	36,822	36,769	36,769	36,713	36,713

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 6.2 Comfort goods, variety and life sense: the two equation model (OLS estimates)

VARIABLES	(Eq. 1)	(Eq. 2)	(Eq. 1)	(Eq. 2)	(Eq. 1)	(Eq. 2)
	Have a sense of direction in life	Learn new things in life	Have a sense of direction in life	Interested in what you are doing	Have a sense of direction in life	Absorbed in what you are doing
Male	-0.0456* (0.0238)	0.0583*** (0.0142)	-0.0615** (0.0252)	0.0812*** (0.0193)	-0.0277 (0.0264)	0.0530*** (0.0199)
Age	-0.000520 (0.00434)	-0.0164*** (0.00250)	-0.0187*** (0.00438)	-0.00322 (0.00340)	-0.0221*** (0.00464)	-0.000613 (0.00351)
Agesq	0.000215*** (4.25e-05)	-3.98e-05 (2.54e-05)	0.000132*** (4.46e-05)	2.78e-05 (3.46e-05)	0.000164*** (4.72e-05)	5.07e-06 (3.57e-05)
ES-ISCED categories						
Lower secondary	-0.0263 (0.0490)	0.0501* (0.0292)	-0.0459 (0.0514)	0.0683* (0.0398)	-0.0740 (0.0548)	0.0882** (0.0410)
Lower tier upper secondary	0.113** (0.0538)	0.160*** (0.0313)	0.00430 (0.0577)	0.240*** (0.0426)	-0.0673 (0.0627)	0.289*** (0.0439)
Upper tier upper secondary	-0.0549 (0.0557)	0.318*** (0.0298)	-0.0159 (0.0569)	0.297*** (0.0405)	-0.0733 (0.0617)	0.328*** (0.0418)
Advanced vocational	-0.0790 (0.0618)	0.384*** (0.0321)	-0.0654 (0.0635)	0.380*** (0.0436)	-0.0996 (0.0684)	0.399*** (0.0450)
Lower tertiary education	-0.239*** (0.0720)	0.548*** (0.0342)	-0.102 (0.0699)	0.460*** (0.0464)	-0.101 (0.0741)	0.447*** (0.0478)
Highest tertiary level	-0.319*** (0.0749)	0.613*** (0.0337)	-0.0754 (0.0689)	0.447*** (0.0458)	-0.0562 (0.0725)	0.421*** (0.0472)
Unemployed active	-0.362*** (0.0533)	-0.141*** (0.0311)	-0.232*** (0.0576)	-0.241*** (0.0423)	-0.274*** (0.0605)	-0.208*** (0.0436)
Unemployed inactive	-0.380*** (0.0824)	-0.322*** (0.0470)	-0.131 (0.0909)	-0.517*** (0.0638)	-0.202** (0.0950)	-0.455*** (0.0659)
Retired	0.107** (0.0435)	-0.108*** (0.0257)	0.00978 (0.0450)	-0.0389 (0.0350)	0.0283 (0.0478)	-0.0556 (0.0361)
Income						
2nd decile	0.111** (0.0499)	0.0975*** (0.0296)	0.0280 (0.0530)	0.152*** (0.0403)	0.0514 (0.0560)	0.139*** (0.0416)

3rd decile	0.215*** (0.0527)	0.193*** (0.0304)	-0.0204 (0.0593)	0.364*** (0.0414)	0.0486 (0.0614)	0.311*** (0.0426)
4th decile	0.239*** (0.0543)	0.216*** (0.0312)	0.0822 (0.0594)	0.326*** (0.0425)	0.0906 (0.0630)	0.320*** (0.0437)
5th decile	0.251*** (0.0560)	0.241*** (0.0320)	0.102* (0.0611)	0.351*** (0.0435)	0.0767 (0.0659)	0.375*** (0.0448)
6th decile	0.263*** (0.0579)	0.282*** (0.0326)	0.153** (0.0624)	0.364*** (0.0444)	0.161** (0.0663)	0.360*** (0.0457)
7th decile	0.340*** (0.0605)	0.322*** (0.0335)	0.195*** (0.0661)	0.433*** (0.0455)	0.229*** (0.0694)	0.408*** (0.0468)
8th decile	0.376*** (0.0629)	0.352*** (0.0345)	0.175** (0.0701)	0.503*** (0.0468)	0.220*** (0.0734)	0.471*** (0.0482)
9th decile	0.422*** (0.0656)	0.359*** (0.0362)	0.202*** (0.0734)	0.531*** (0.0491)	0.231*** (0.0774)	0.507*** (0.0506)
10th decile	0.341*** (0.0727)	0.538*** (0.0365)	0.123 (0.0819)	0.715*** (0.0497)	0.178** (0.0852)	0.666*** (0.0512)
N. household members	0.00952 (0.0107)	-0.0329*** (0.00636)	0.0129 (0.0112)	-0.0375*** (0.00864)	0.0245** (0.0120)	-0.0453*** (0.00890)
Marital Status						
Civil union	-0.168 (0.235)	-0.189 (0.140)	-0.00370 (0.247)	-0.313 (0.191)	0.0507 (0.262)	-0.348* (0.197)
Separated	-0.425*** (0.147)	0.107 (0.0881)	-0.0191 (0.155)	-0.197* (0.120)	-0.207 (0.164)	-0.0607 (0.124)
Divorced	-0.264*** (0.0427)	0.0495* (0.0256)	-0.133*** (0.0450)	-0.0477 (0.0348)	-0.125*** (0.0477)	-0.0548 (0.0358)
Widowed	-0.117** (0.0516)	-0.252*** (0.0290)	-0.0454 (0.0555)	-0.319*** (0.0394)	-0.0415 (0.0590)	-0.320*** (0.0406)
Never married	-0.256*** (0.0364)	-0.0211 (0.0218)	-0.192*** (0.0386)	-0.0658** (0.0297)	-0.136*** (0.0416)	-0.103*** (0.0306)
Religious attendance		-0.0523*** (0.00457)		-0.0730*** (0.00577)		-0.0730*** (0.00574)
Voluntary work		-0.0769*** (0.00432)		-0.0769*** (0.00579)		-0.0743*** (0.00592)
Total time watching TV		-0.0237*** (0.00330)		-0.0128*** (0.00399)		-0.0132*** (0.00395)
Learn new things in life	1.310*** (0.0731)					
Interested in what you are doing			1.282*** (0.0722)			
Absorbed in what you are doing					1.304*** (0.0784)	
Enthusiastic about what you are doing						

Constant	0.699*	5.435***	-2.463***	8.112***	-2.584***	8.063***
	(0.362)	(0.0889)	(0.537)	(0.121)	(0.580)	(0.124)
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	36,55	36,55	36,536	36,536	36,485	36,485
R-squared	-0.060	0.214	-0.170	0.081	-0.314	0.087

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 6.3 Comfort goods, variety and life satisfaction: the two equation model (OLS estimates) – aged above 49

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing
Male	0.0812*** (0.0218)	0.0494 (0.0332)	0.0857*** (0.0249)	-0.0509 (0.189)	0.226 (0.254)	0.101 (0.244)
Age	-0.00894 (0.00549)	-0.000304 (0.00596)	-0.00156 (0.00719)	-0.0688*** (0.0244)	-0.0864** (0.0335)	-0.0636** (0.0283)
Agesq	- 0.000123** (5.25e-05)	-2.52e-05 (5.89e-05)	-1.57e-05 (7.42e-05)	0.000282 (0.000189)	0.000641** (0.000292)	0.000504* (0.000265)
Unemployed active	-0.0899* (0.0495)	-0.226*** (0.0599)	-0.227*** (0.0717)	0.0160 (0.208)	-0.0974 (0.244)	0.145 (0.348)
Unemployed inactive	-0.300*** (0.105)	-0.422*** (0.129)	-0.429*** (0.101)	0.164 (0.289)	0.425 (0.294)	0.335 (0.341)
Retired	-0.117** (0.0485)	-0.0486 (0.0563)	-0.0325 (0.0585)	0.128 (0.186)	0.132 (0.182)	-0.190 (0.139)
Income						
2nd decile	0.135*** (0.0502)	0.155** (0.0715)	0.209** (0.103)	0.235 (0.186)	0.660** (0.246)	0.481* (0.244)
3rd decile	0.179*** (0.0482)	0.296*** (0.0697)	0.349*** (0.0904)	0.515** (0.248)	1.291*** (0.361)	1.330*** (0.377)
4th decile	0.146** (0.0660)	0.305*** (0.0685)	0.318*** (0.0931)	0.121 (0.159)	0.473* (0.254)	0.566 (0.334)
5th decile	0.224*** (0.0604)	0.392*** (0.0583)	0.373*** (0.0847)	0.309 (0.210)	0.599 (0.352)	0.698* (0.374)
6th decile	0.216*** (0.0645)	0.365*** (0.0763)	0.351*** (0.0883)	0.412* (0.225)	0.458 (0.379)	0.0599 (0.441)
7th decile	0.285***	0.409***	0.423***	0.291	0.628	0.738

	(0.0651)	(0.0801)	(0.0958)	(0.311)	(0.457)	(0.508)
8th decile	0.268***	0.461***	0.489***	0.739**	1.361**	1.573***
	(0.0566)	(0.0746)	(0.0828)	(0.279)	(0.523)	(0.522)
9th decile	0.326***	0.512***	0.540***	0.445	0.147	-0.0229
	(0.0647)	(0.0927)	(0.104)	(0.346)	(0.387)	(0.649)
10th decile	0.533***	0.684***	0.740***	0.534	0.193	-0.121
	(0.0666)	(0.112)	(0.117)	(0.570)	(0.455)	(0.461)
N. household members	-0.0556***	-0.0562***	-0.0531***	-0.144**	-0.0599	-0.0725
	(0.0117)	(0.0135)	(0.0150)	(0.0654)	(0.132)	(0.105)
Marital Status						
Civil union	0.0146	-0.296	-0.151	1.405***	2.549***	2.574***
	(0.107)	(0.262)	(0.174)	(0.312)	(0.411)	(0.549)
Separated	0.254***	0.0643	-0.0977	0.429	-1.688*	-2.178**
	(0.0952)	(0.0939)	(0.0978)	(0.404)	(0.922)	(0.865)
Divorced	0.0627*	-0.0239	-0.0308	0.266	0.0439	-0.172
	(0.0363)	(0.0461)	(0.0475)	(0.235)	(0.259)	(0.231)
Widowed	-0.255***	-0.301***	-0.311***	-0.302	-0.545**	-0.710**
	(0.0400)	(0.0682)	(0.0766)	(0.201)	(0.228)	(0.270)
Never married	0.0557*	-0.0895***	-0.0467	-0.114	-0.609	-0.376
	(0.0332)	(0.0340)	(0.0326)	(0.232)	(0.365)	(0.274)
Vote	0.0814**	0.170***	0.195***	0.322***	0.553**	0.861***
	(0.0394)	(0.0451)	(0.0404)	(0.0942)	(0.266)	(0.207)
Father's highest level of education				0.117	0.110	0.0928
				(0.106)	(0.117)	(0.123)
High stimulus	5.751***	2.482***	3.041***			
	-1.140	(0.902)	(0.942)			
Education						
o._lcountry2_4						
Constant	4.195***	6.553***	6.524***	4.094***	5.446***	2.589***
	(0.174)	(0.171)	(0.201)	-1.103	-1.165	(0.831)
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	31,321	31,236	31,269	747	743	745
R-squared	-0.327	0.026	-0.014	0.281	0.210	0.225

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 6.4 Comfort goods, variety and life sense: the two equation model (OLS estimates) – aged above 49

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6)

VARIABLES	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing
Male	0.0510 (0.0355)	0.0635* (0.0332)	0.0970*** (0.0295)	-0.0451 (0.201)	0.271 (0.204)	0.147 (0.224)
Age	0.0110 (0.0190)	0.108*** (0.0249)	0.0793*** (0.0220)	-0.295** (0.108)	-0.162 (0.191)	-0.190 (0.128)
Agesq	- 0.000323** (0.000138)	- 0.000838*** (0.000182)	- 0.000635*** (0.000160)	0.00177** (0.000728)	0.00113 (0.00130)	0.00132 (0.000886)
Education				-	-	-
Unemployed active	-0.00963 (0.0704)	-0.0634 (0.0740)	-0.150* (0.0853)	0.173 (0.251)	0.312 (0.458)	0.552 (0.392)
Unemployed inactive	-0.231 (0.147)	-0.220 (0.191)	-0.336** (0.152)	0.373 (0.487)	0.231 (0.656)	-0.174 (0.507)
Retired	-0.0600 (0.0464)	-0.0855 (0.0526)	-0.0573 (0.0520)	0.419** (0.172)	0.287 (0.277)	0.0513 (0.193)
Income						
2nd decile	0.206*** (0.0624)	0.212** (0.0897)	0.268** (0.136)	0.370* (0.195)	0.799*** (0.214)	0.603** (0.220)
3rd decile	0.205** (0.0814)	0.373*** (0.0864)	0.431*** (0.116)	0.584* (0.294)	1.520*** (0.344)	1.545*** (0.319)
4th decile	0.171** (0.0765)	0.354*** (0.0949)	0.340*** (0.129)	0.204 (0.209)	0.390 (0.247)	0.489 (0.326)
5th decile	0.270*** (0.0833)	0.480*** (0.0838)	0.429*** (0.107)	0.112 (0.251)	0.581* (0.284)	0.669** (0.323)
6th decile	0.289*** (0.0999)	0.390*** (0.111)	0.432*** (0.126)	0.492 (0.315)	0.483 (0.430)	0.138 (0.416)
7th decile	0.303*** (0.0994)	0.404*** (0.122)	0.434*** (0.131)	0.398 (0.439)	0.729 (0.500)	0.974** (0.423)
8th decile	0.236** (0.0954)	0.485*** (0.100)	0.462*** (0.106)	0.610 (0.372)	1.120*** (0.244)	1.261*** (0.294)
9th decile	0.287*** (0.101)	0.528*** (0.115)	0.504*** (0.143)	0.249 (0.409)	0.0532 (0.498)	-0.308 (0.861)
10th decile	0.513*** (0.114)	0.701*** (0.116)	0.743*** (0.126)	2.091*** (0.277)	0.846** (0.346)	1.261*** (0.361)
N. household members	-0.0365** (0.0171)	-0.0564*** (0.0209)	-0.0721*** (0.0257)	-0.322*** (0.0698)	-0.210 (0.142)	-0.176 (0.116)
Marital Status						
Civil union	0.286*	-0.308	0.0301	1.588***	2.662***	2.873***

	(0.171)	(0.360)	(0.289)	(0.418)	(0.459)	(0.724)
Separated	0.168	-0.0422	-0.202*	0.611	-1.965*	-2.634***
	(0.136)	(0.113)	(0.111)	(0.461)	-1.021	(0.931)
Divorced	0.0396	-0.0139	-0.0432	0.000888	-0.220	-0.409
	(0.0570)	(0.0428)	(0.0478)	(0.248)	(0.313)	(0.289)
Widowed	-0.193***	-0.226***	-0.261***	-0.502**	-0.752***	-0.844***
	(0.0491)	(0.0730)	(0.0748)	(0.199)	(0.256)	(0.271)
Never married	-0.143**	-0.220***	-0.220***	-0.269	-0.697	-0.377
	(0.0591)	(0.0661)	(0.0685)	(0.241)	(0.455)	(0.367)
Vote	0.174***	0.260***	0.296***	0.277**	0.337	0.684***
	(0.0431)	(0.0593)	(0.0589)	(0.127)	(0.239)	(0.203)
Father's highest level of education				0.134	0.183	0.128
				(0.134)	(0.146)	(0.147)
High stimulus	6.774***	2.960***	3.487***			
	-1.721	-1.036	-1.250			
Education	0.679***	0.220	0.255			
	(0.178)	(0.177)	(0.194)			
Low stimulus	0.347***	0.0399	0.0336			
	(0.0928)	(0.0672)	(0.0693)			
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	3.460***	2.777***	3.856***	12.11***	8.267	11.77**
	(0.632)	(0.852)	(0.770)	-3.915	-6.816	-4.728
Observations	16,219	16,146	16,169	617	614	615
R-squared	-0.338	0.029	0.006	0.282	0.250	0.271

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 7.1 Single equation IV estimates

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
VARIABLES	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing
Male	0.0812***	0.0494	0.0857***	-0.0509	0.226	0.101
	(0.0218)	(0.0332)	(0.0249)	(0.189)	(0.254)	(0.244)
Age	-0.00894	-0.000304	-0.00156	-0.0688***	-0.0864**	-0.0636**
	(0.00549)	(0.00596)	(0.00719)	(0.0244)	(0.0335)	(0.0283)
Agesq	-	-2.52e-05	-1.57e-05	0.000282	0.000641**	0.000504*
	(5.25e-05)	(5.89e-05)	(7.42e-05)	(0.000189)	(0.000292)	(0.000265)
Unemployed active	-0.0899*	-0.226***	-0.227***	0.0160	-0.0974	0.145

	(0.0495)	(0.0599)	(0.0717)	(0.208)	(0.244)	(0.348)
Unemployed inactive	-0.300***	-0.422***	-0.429***	0.164	0.425	0.335
	(0.105)	(0.129)	(0.101)	(0.289)	(0.294)	(0.341)
Retired	-0.117**	-0.0486	-0.0325	0.128	0.132	-0.190
	(0.0485)	(0.0563)	(0.0585)	(0.186)	(0.182)	(0.139)
Income						
2nd decile	0.135***	0.155**	0.209**	0.235	0.660**	0.481*
	(0.0502)	(0.0715)	(0.103)	(0.186)	(0.246)	(0.244)
3rd decile	0.179***	0.296***	0.349***	0.515**	1.291***	1.330***
	(0.0482)	(0.0697)	(0.0904)	(0.248)	(0.361)	(0.377)
4th decile	0.146**	0.305***	0.318***	0.121	0.473*	0.566
	(0.0660)	(0.0685)	(0.0931)	(0.159)	(0.254)	(0.334)
5th decile	0.224***	0.392***	0.373***	0.309	0.599	0.698*
	(0.0604)	(0.0583)	(0.0847)	(0.210)	(0.352)	(0.374)
6th decile	0.216***	0.365***	0.351***	0.412*	0.458	0.0599
	(0.0645)	(0.0763)	(0.0883)	(0.225)	(0.379)	(0.441)
7th decile	0.285***	0.409***	0.423***	0.291	0.628	0.738
	(0.0651)	(0.0801)	(0.0958)	(0.311)	(0.457)	(0.508)
8th decile	0.268***	0.461***	0.489***	0.739**	1.361**	1.573***
	(0.0566)	(0.0746)	(0.0828)	(0.279)	(0.523)	(0.522)
9th decile	0.326***	0.512***	0.540***	0.445	0.147	-0.0229
	(0.0647)	(0.0927)	(0.104)	(0.346)	(0.387)	(0.649)
10th decile	0.533***	0.684***	0.740***	0.534	0.193	-0.121
	(0.0666)	(0.112)	(0.117)	(0.570)	(0.455)	(0.461)
N. household members	-0.0556***	-0.0562***	-0.0531***	-0.144**	-0.0599	-0.0725
	(0.0117)	(0.0135)	(0.0150)	(0.0654)	(0.132)	(0.105)
Marital Status						
Civil union	0.0146	-0.296	-0.151	1.405***	2.549***	2.574***
	(0.107)	(0.262)	(0.174)	(0.312)	(0.411)	(0.549)
Separated	0.254***	0.0643	-0.0977	0.429	-1.688*	-2.178**
	(0.0952)	(0.0939)	(0.0978)	(0.404)	(0.922)	(0.865)
Divorced	0.0627*	-0.0239	-0.0308	0.266	0.0439	-0.172
	(0.0363)	(0.0461)	(0.0475)	(0.235)	(0.259)	(0.231)
Widowed	-0.255***	-0.301***	-0.311***	-0.302	-0.545**	-0.710**
	(0.0400)	(0.0682)	(0.0766)	(0.201)	(0.228)	(0.270)
Never married	0.0557*	-0.0895***	-0.0467	-0.114	-0.609	-0.376
	(0.0332)	(0.0340)	(0.0326)	(0.232)	(0.365)	(0.274)
Vote	0.0814**	0.170***	0.195***	0.322***	0.553**	0.861***
	(0.0394)	(0.0451)	(0.0404)	(0.0942)	(0.266)	(0.207)
Father's highest level of education				0.117	0.110	0.0928

				(0.106)	(0.117)	(0.123)
High stimulus	5.751***	2.482***	3.041***			
	-1.140	(0.902)	(0.942)			
Education						
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	4.195***	6.553***	6.524***	4.094***	5.446***	2.589***
	(0.174)	(0.171)	(0.201)	-1.103	-1.165	(0.831)
Observations	31,321	31,236	31,269	747	743	745
R-squared	-0.327	0.026	-0.014	0.281	0.210	0.225

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 7.2 Single equation IV estimates – only individuals aged above 50

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing	Learn new things in life	Absorbed in what you are doing	Interested in what you are doing
Male	0.0510 (0.0355)	0.0635* (0.0332)	0.0970*** (0.0295)	-0.0451 (0.201)	0.271 (0.204)	0.147 (0.224)
Age	0.0110 (0.0190)	0.108*** (0.0249)	0.0793*** (0.0220)	-0.295** (0.108)	-0.162 (0.191)	-0.190 (0.128)
Agesq	- 0.000323** (0.000138)	- 0.000838*** (0.000182)	- 0.000635*** (0.000160)	0.00177** (0.000728)	0.00113 (0.00130)	0.00132 (0.000886)
Unemployed active	-0.0600 (0.0464)	-0.0855 (0.0526)	-0.0573 (0.0520)	0.419** (0.172)	0.287 (0.277)	0.0513 (0.193)
Unemployed inactive	0.206*** (0.0624)	0.212** (0.0897)	0.268** (0.136)	0.370* (0.195)	0.799*** (0.214)	0.603** (0.220)
Retired	0.205** (0.0814)	0.373*** (0.0864)	0.431*** (0.116)	0.584* (0.294)	1.520*** (0.344)	1.545*** (0.319)
Income						
2nd decile	0.171** (0.0765)	0.354*** (0.0949)	0.340*** (0.129)	0.204 (0.209)	0.390 (0.247)	0.489 (0.326)
3rd decile	0.270*** (0.0833)	0.480*** (0.0838)	0.429*** (0.107)	0.112 (0.251)	0.581* (0.284)	0.669** (0.323)
4th decile	0.289*** (0.0999)	0.390*** (0.111)	0.432*** (0.126)	0.492 (0.315)	0.483 (0.430)	0.138 (0.416)
5th decile	0.303***	0.404***	0.434***	0.398	0.729	0.974**

	(0.0994)	(0.122)	(0.131)	(0.439)	(0.500)	(0.423)
6th decile	0.236**	0.485***	0.462***	0.610	1.120***	1.261***
	(0.0954)	(0.100)	(0.106)	(0.372)	(0.244)	(0.294)
7th decile	0.287***	0.528***	0.504***	0.249	0.0532	-0.308
	(0.101)	(0.115)	(0.143)	(0.409)	(0.498)	(0.861)
8th decile	0.513***	0.701***	0.743***	2.091***	0.846**	1.261***
	(0.114)	(0.116)	(0.126)	(0.277)	(0.346)	(0.361)
9th decile	-0.0365**	-0.0564***	-0.0721***	-0.322***	-0.210	-0.176
	(0.0171)	(0.0209)	(0.0257)	(0.0698)	(0.142)	(0.116)
10th decile	0.286*	-0.308	0.0301	1.588***	2.662***	2.873***
	(0.171)	(0.360)	(0.289)	(0.418)	(0.459)	(0.724)
N. household members	0.168	-0.0422	-0.202*	0.611	-1.965*	-2.634***
	(0.136)	(0.113)	(0.111)	(0.461)	-1.021	(0.931)
Marital Status						
Civil union	0.0396	-0.0139	-0.0432	0.000888	-0.220	-0.409
	(0.0570)	(0.0428)	(0.0478)	(0.248)	(0.313)	(0.289)
Separated	-0.193***	-0.226***	-0.261***	-0.502**	-0.752***	-0.844***
	(0.0491)	(0.0730)	(0.0748)	(0.199)	(0.256)	(0.271)
Divorced	-0.143**	-0.220***	-0.220***	-0.269	-0.697	-0.377
	(0.0591)	(0.0661)	(0.0685)	(0.241)	(0.455)	(0.367)
Widowed	0.502***	0.980***	0.865***	2.368***	3.947***	1.472***
	(0.0142)	(0.0168)	(0.0191)	(0.281)	(0.340)	(0.372)
Never married	0.316***	0.427***	0.0313	1.832***	2.302***	-1.017**
	(0.0669)	(0.0488)	(0.0687)	(0.360)	(0.380)	(0.385)
Vote	0.174***	0.260***	0.296***	0.277**	0.337	0.684***
	(0.0431)	(0.0593)	(0.0589)	(0.127)	(0.239)	(0.203)
Father's highest level of education				0.134	0.183	0.128
				(0.134)	(0.146)	(0.147)
High stimulus	6.774***	2.960***	3.487***			
	-1.721	-1.036	-1.250			
Education	0.679***	0.220	0.255			
	(0.178)	(0.177)	(0.194)			
Low stimulus	0.347***	0.0399	0.0336			
	(0.0928)	(0.0672)	(0.0693)			
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	3.460***	2.777***	3.856***	12.11***	8.267	11.77**
	(0.632)	(0.852)	(0.770)	-3.915	-6.816	-4.728
Observations	16,219	16,146	16,169	617	614	615
R-squared	-0.338	0.029	0.006	0.282	0.250	0.271

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 8 IV Two-equation two-stage IV approach

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	How happy are you	How happy are you	How happy are you	Have a sense of direction in life	Have a sense of direction in life	Have a sense of direction in life
Y_hat	0.0422*** (0.00863)	0.126*** (0.0197)	0.101*** (0.0161)	0.0898*** (0.00990)	0.231*** (0.0226)	0.187*** (0.0184)
Male	-0.173*** (0.0202)	-0.176*** (0.0202)	-0.176*** (0.0202)	-0.00381 (0.0232)	-0.00353 (0.0232)	-0.00704 (0.0232)
Age	-0.0697*** (0.00379)	-0.0702*** (0.00380)	-0.0701*** (0.00379)	-0.0166*** (0.00438)	-0.0179*** (0.00438)	-0.0176*** (0.00437)
Agesq	0.000641*** (3.76e-05)	0.000643*** (3.77e-05)	0.000639*** (3.76e-05)	0.000110** (4.35e-05)	0.000112** (4.35e-05)	0.000106** (4.34e-05)
Unemployed active	-0.448*** (0.0452)	-0.418*** (0.0455)	-0.425*** (0.0453)	-0.585*** (0.0519)	-0.535*** (0.0522)	-0.540*** (0.0521)
Unemployed inactive	-0.563*** (0.0683)	-0.511*** (0.0688)	-0.521*** (0.0685)	-0.824*** (0.0786)	-0.729*** (0.0792)	-0.757*** (0.0788)
Retired	-0.0259 (0.0360)	-0.0239 (0.0360)	-0.0209 (0.0360)	-0.0478 (0.0415)	-0.0483 (0.0415)	-0.0499 (0.0414)
Income						
2nd decile	0.265*** (0.0429)	0.239*** (0.0432)	0.242*** (0.0431)	0.298*** (0.0497)	0.257*** (0.0498)	0.249*** (0.0498)
3rd decile	0.591*** (0.0437)	0.546*** (0.0442)	0.555*** (0.0441)	0.507*** (0.0504)	0.429*** (0.0509)	0.427*** (0.0508)
4th decile	0.617*** (0.0445)	0.572*** (0.0451)	0.580*** (0.0449)	0.606*** (0.0514)	0.523*** (0.0519)	0.529*** (0.0518)
5th decile	0.725*** (0.0454)	0.676*** (0.0462)	0.692*** (0.0459)	0.658*** (0.0524)	0.573*** (0.0532)	0.586*** (0.0529)
6th decile	0.891*** (0.0465)	0.844*** (0.0472)	0.857*** (0.0469)	0.753*** (0.0536)	0.668*** (0.0543)	0.677*** (0.0540)
7th decile	0.977*** (0.0472)	0.921*** (0.0481)	0.934*** (0.0478)	0.891*** (0.0544)	0.797*** (0.0553)	0.808*** (0.0550)
8th decile	1.019*** (0.0485)	0.954*** (0.0496)	0.966*** (0.0493)	0.975*** (0.0559)	0.865*** (0.0571)	0.872*** (0.0568)
9th decile	1.145*** (0.0503)	1.079*** (0.0516)	1.093*** (0.0512)	1.080*** (0.0580)	0.961*** (0.0593)	0.974*** (0.0589)
10th decile	1.375*** (0.0506)	1.297*** (0.0526)	1.315*** (0.0521)	1.257*** (0.0582)	1.118*** (0.0605)	1.137*** (0.0600)

N. household members	-0.0197** (0.00915)	-0.0133 (0.00919)	-0.0159* (0.00916)	-0.0433*** (0.0105)	-0.0343*** (0.0105)	-0.0383*** (0.0105)
Marital Status						
Civil union	-0.159 (0.200)	-0.113 (0.199)	-0.137 (0.199)	-0.449** (0.229)	-0.369 (0.229)	-0.412* (0.229)
Separated	-0.637*** (0.123)	-0.648*** (0.123)	-0.609*** (0.122)	-0.345** (0.141)	-0.346** (0.141)	-0.296** (0.140)
Divorced	-0.516*** (0.0364)	-0.507*** (0.0364)	-0.505*** (0.0364)	-0.222*** (0.0419)	-0.204*** (0.0418)	-0.205*** (0.0418)
Widowed	-0.718*** (0.0410)	-0.684*** (0.0415)	-0.675*** (0.0414)	-0.404*** (0.0475)	-0.368*** (0.0479)	-0.374*** (0.0477)
Never married	-0.433*** (0.0311)	-0.409*** (0.0312)	-0.420*** (0.0311)	-0.322*** (0.0357)	-0.285*** (0.0358)	-0.304*** (0.0357)
Country dummies	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	9.509*** (0.139)	8.766*** (0.198)	8.945*** (0.180)	6.039*** (0.163)	5.719*** (0.228)	6.047*** (0.207)
Observations	31,185	31,101	31,133	30,994	30,943	30,973
R-squared	0.239	0.239	0.238	0.104	0.104	0.103

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

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