SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND PSYCHOLOGY

Department of Developmental and Social Psychology

Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, and Educational Research
XXXVI Cycle

Ph.D. Dissertation

Happiness and Socio-Emotional Well-Being of Children and Adolescents: A Multi-method and Multi-informant Perspective

Ph.D. Candidate: Flavia Izzo

Tutor:
Prof. Roberto Baiocco

Co-tutor:
Prof.ssa Jessica Pistella

A/A 2023/2024

Summary

Introduction

Happiness represents one of the central themes explored within the theoretical framework of Positive Psychology (Seligman et al., 2005). This perspective emerged as a reaction to the previous overemphasis, in the fields of psychology and psychiatry, on "negative" issues, such as mental disorders, destructive tendencies, and egocentric motivation (Martin, 2007). In contrast to theoretical models and empirical contributions that focus on pathology, deficits, and dysfunction in mental and psychological functioning, Positive Psychology has emphasized the relevance of recognizing and promoting individual potential and resources (Csikszentmihalyi & Seligman, 2000; Martin, 2007).

Although much of the research has been conducted on adult populations (Diener & Seligman, 2002; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005a), there has been a growing interest in the scientific community over the last two decades in research on happiness within the context of developmental processes (Holder, 2012; Park & Huebner, 2005). The scientific literature on the analysis of happiness in developmental stages has predominantly focused on investigating different variables related to this construct (Holder & Callaway, 2010; McKnight et al., 2002; Proctor et al., 2009). However, research has dedicated less attention to studying the sources of children's and adolescents' happiness within the family context (Chaplin, 2009; Freire et al., 2013).

In the field of psychology, happiness has primarily been explored through two distinct approaches. The first approach regards happiness as synonymous with subjective well-being and aligns more closely with a hedonic conception of happiness, which emphasizes the maximization of pleasure in the present moment (Venhoeven et al., 2013). Within this theoretical framework, happiness has been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct characterized by frequent positive affect, high life satisfaction, and the relative absence of

negative affect (Diener et al., 2009; 2018; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005b). On the other hand, happiness has also been considered in relation to psychological well-being. According to this perspective, the origins of happiness can be traced back to Aristotle's concept of eudaimonia, which defines happiness as self-realization and personal growth (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryff, 1989).

The need to study children's and adolescents' happiness within the family context arises from the recognition that the family continues to be a fundamental source of support during adolescence and plays a significant role in promoting the health and well-being of children and adolescents (Bennefield, 2018; Wagner et al., 1999). Previous studies have shown that having good family relationships and healthy family functioning significantly predicted happiness and life satisfaction among students of all ages, from elementary to high school (Park, 2005; Shek, 1997a; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013). Family dynamics influenced the happiness of children and adolescents, who could benefit from living in a more harmonious and satisfying home environment (Cacioppo et al., 2013; Rask et al., 2003).

When children and adolescents were interrogated about the definition of happiness, they reported that important factors included having good relationships with family members (in terms of increased physical closeness and open communication), receiving help to address difficulties, and not experiencing family problems or conflicts (Bennefield, 2018; Navarro et al., 2017). Numerous studies have found that positive relationships with significant others, both within the family and among friends, play a prominent role in the conception of happiness across development (Chaplin, 2009; Eloff, 2008; Holder & Coleman, 2009; Navarro et al., 2017). Conversely, elevated levels of loneliness, characterized as an undesirable emotional state stemming from unmet social needs and a deficiency in emotional connections (Asher & Paquette, 2003), represent an obstacle to happiness (Baiocco et al., 2019; Ercegovac et al., 2021).

Scientific literature has highlighted that the definitions, sources and levels of happiness vary with age. Previous studies have demonstrated that children's conceptualization of happiness was consistently linked to play, recreational activities, spending time with family, and material aspects (Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020; Moore & Lynch, 2018; Thoilliez, 2011). In contrast, preadolescents and adolescents defined happiness in a more sophisticated manner, referring to "positive feelings" related to tranquility and serenity and more frequently mentioning friendships and achieving goals as sources of happiness (Chaplin, 2009; Giacomoni et al., 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016). It has been observed that the happiness of children in middle childhood (aged 5 to 11) has a predominantly hedonic nature, with references to very simple and concrete events (e.g., playing or interacting with others), while adolescents exhibit a more eudemonic character, with references to abstract aspects such as personal growth, freedom from parental authority, self-realization, and the pursuit of a life purpose (Freire et al, 2013; Giacomoni et al., 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016; Pivarc, 2023).

Regarding age differences in happiness levels, scientific studies have shown that happiness and life satisfaction tended to decrease from childhood to adolescence, both in general and in various life contexts (e.g., family satisfaction, satisfaction with friends, school-related happiness) (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Park, 2005; Thoilliez, 2011). Preadolescents and adolescents attributed the decline in happiness to bullying, peer problems, school-related stress, and, to a lesser extent, problems with family (Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2014). Given the age differences highlighted in the literature, the current doctoral project aims to investigate happiness in childhood and adolescence.

Another limitation in the scientific literature is the lack of consideration for indirect assessors, such as parents, regarding the happiness of children and adolescents. Most studies that investigated the definitions of happiness in childhood and adolescence exclusively considered the perspective of children, with only a few studies also considering the viewpoint

of parents (Shek, 2001; Verrastro et al., 2020). Although the study by Diener and Lucas (2004) reported that parents across all 48 tested countries strongly desired happiness for their children, they encountered some difficulties when questioned about what made their children happy (Chaplin, 2009).

According to the family process theory, the family environment leads to shared emotions, values, attitudes, and cognitions among family members (Ben-Zur, 2003; Larson & Richards, 1994). However, when comparing the responses of parents and children regarding the components of happiness, numerous significant differences emerge between the generations (Casas et al., 2007). Although studies have shown positive correlations between parents' and adolescents' subjective well-being (Ben-Zur, 2003), the concordance between parental responses and those of their children has been found to be very low (Casas et al., 2007; Verrastro et al., 2020).

The emotional experiences of adolescents and their parents appeared to diverge substantially. It cannot be claimed that they share emotions, even though the similarity in affective states between parents and adolescents was partly attributable to the transmission of emotions (Larson & Richards, 1994). The study by Casas and colleagues (2007) showed a weak correlation between parental responses and those of their children aged 12 to 16 in various domains of life satisfaction, including family, friends, school, use of time, and enjoyment of daily life. These findings reinforce the notion that generational differences may exist in the perspectives of parents and children, emphasizing the need for further research to identify the sources of happiness for children and adolescents using multi-informant perspectives.

Despite the difficulties parents face in assessing the components and levels of their children's happiness, parents remain an important and reliable source of information in evaluating the happiness of their children (Holder & Coleman, 2009). Parents may

misinterpret or overlook what makes their children happy, and thus, relying solely on parental reports may provide an incomplete or inaccurate view of their children's happiness (Chaplin, 2009). Therefore, further studies are needed that utilize multiple sources of information to increase the reliability of measurements through the cross-comparison of children's and parents' perspectives (Schneider & Schimmack, 2009). The present dissertation aims to address the main gaps in the scientific literature.

This dissertation is divided into *three chapters*, containing *three studies* closely related to each other. In more detail, we explored the theme of happiness and socio-emotional well-being in childhood and adolescence within various life contexts of young individuals (age range: 6-19 years old). In particular, the studies have investigated children's happiness within the family environment and adolescents' conceptions of happiness. The innovative aspects of these studies that address gaps in the literature include: (1) investigating happiness within the family environment, considering parent-child relationships as relevant sources of children's happiness; (2) integrating the use of quantitative measures with the development of a semi-structured interview to assess the happiness of children and adolescents; (3) examining differences in parents' and children's point of view regarding individual and family happiness of the children.

Specifically, *Chapter 1* provides an overview of the theoretical frameworks used in the present doctoral thesis. The *first study* represents the first systematic literature review to examine the relationship between happiness (comprehensively defined to encompass subjective well-being, life satisfaction, and positive affect) and family functioning during the developmental stage. This study focuses mainly on families with children and adolescents ages 6 and 18.

Chapter 2 encompasses the *second study* of this doctoral thesis, which aims to explore the happiness of children and preadolescents within the family context, utilizing a multi-

method and multi-informant approach. Specifically, the narratives of happy moments spent with mothers and fathers were qualitatively examined within a sample of 154 families, each with at least one child aged between 6 and 13 years. Furthermore, this study seeks to underscore potential differences in perspective among children, mothers, and fathers.

Chapter 3 contains the *third study*, with the primary aim of deepening the concept of happiness among preadolescents and adolescents and identifying potential sources of happiness. This investigation employs a comprehensive methodology, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches and a multi-informant perspective that considers the perspectives of children, mothers, and fathers. Furthermore, the study explores potential age and gender disparities in happiness between parents' and children's points of view. The sample for this study comprises 77 pre-adolescents and adolescents, ranging in age from 11 to 19 years, along with their respective mothers and fathers.

The Institutional Review Board approvals were obtained from the Ethics Commission of the Department of Developmental and Social Psychology of Sapienza University of Rome. The three studies have been published or submitted in scientific Journals (according to the doctoral regulations of the Department of Developmental and Social Psychology of Sapienza University of Rome). The first study was published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, the second was accepted for publication in the *Journal of Happiness Studies*, and the third was submitted to *Child Indicators Research*. References to manuscripts published or submitted to Journals have been given at the beginning of each chapter.

Chapter 1. Happiness in Childhood and Adolescence in the Family Context: Theoretical Framework and Systematic Review

1.1 Study 1: The Relation between Happiness and Family Functioning

The paper summarizing study 1 was published in:

Izzo, F., Baiocco, R., & Pistella, J. (2022). Children's and adolescents' happiness and family functioning: a systematic literature review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(24), 16593. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192416593

Study 1 aimed to describe the theoretical framework within which this dissertation's two subsequent studies (Study 2 and Study 3) were placed. This study represented a systematic literature review to explore individual and relational happiness in families with children and adolescents aged 6 to 18, specifically investigating the relationship between happiness and family functioning. Examining the happiness of children and adolescents within the family context is essential since it can positively influence family dynamics and overall family well-being. Previous studies have shown that the establishment of a harmonious family environment was associated with better levels of family satisfaction (Gomez, 2011). In this regard, it is important to understand how family variables, such as family functioning, influence the well-being and happiness of children and adolescents.

Although the literature on the topic of happiness has focused mainly on adult samples, research on children's and adolescents' happiness has received more scientific attention in recent years (Gómez et al., 2019) because of the association between happiness and improved physical and mental health (Baiocco et al., 2019; Park & Huebner, 2005). In this study, happiness was conceptualized as a relatively stable, positive, and affective trait (Holder & Klassen, 2010; Kamp Dush et al., 2008) that underlines subjective well-being and satisfaction

with life in general (Baiocco et al., 2019; Diener et al., 2018; Leto et al., 2019). Furthermore, happiness was conceptualized as a multidimensional construct composed of two interconnected and distinct components (Diener et al., 2009; 2018): (a) the affective component involves high levels of pleasant emotions (such as joy, interest, excitement, confidence, and readiness) and low levels of negative emotions (such as anger, fear, sadness, guilt, contempt, and disgust) (Ben-Zur, 2003); (b) the cognitive component represents a global assessment of the quality of life, indicating the degree to which one's most essential needs, goals, and desires have been satisfied (Frisch et al., 1992). These judgments are usually understood to describe overall life satisfaction or satisfaction within a specific domain (e.g., work, family life, social life, school).

The scientific literature highlighted that positive family relationships and emotional bonds among family members were the primary sources of happiness in childhood (Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020). In addition, previous studies showed that dimensions of family functioning were important predictors of children's happiness levels, beyond the influence of peer and school settings (Vera et al., 2008). Given the great importance of studying children's and adolescents' happiness within their life contexts, a systematic review of the literature could help to understand more comprehensively the associations between children's and adolescents' happiness and dimensions of family functioning (i.e., family cohesion, adaptability, communication, satisfaction, and conflict).

1.1.1 Family Functioning and Happiness

The theory of family systems (Minuchin, 1974) conceptualizes the vision of the family as a system, that is, as a group of people interconnected with each other, underlining how the individual's behavior and emotions, such as happiness, can only be understood about the family context. The systemic view of the family is described in several models of family functioning that, since the 1980s, have offered a new vision of the family as an open system in interaction with the environment, such as the *McMaster Model of Family Functioning* (MMFF; Epstein et

al., 1978) and the *Circumflex Model* (Olson, 2000). Previous studies have shown that various factors might influence family functioning, such as family structure, socioeconomic status, life events, family relationships, and the evolutive stages of the family (Morris & Blanton, 1998; Schnettler et al., 2020; Shek & Liu, 2014). Furthermore, although family functioning is a complex phenomenon that can be assessed in various ways (Epstein et al., 1983), the literature has no unique definition.

Family functioning is a multidimensional construct that refers to how family members interact and work together to achieve common goals and outcomes in managing external events (Morris & Blanton, 1998; Yuan et al., 2019). This construct generally refers to the quality of family life at the systemic level, emphasizing well-being, competence, strengths, and weaknesses (Shek, 2005). Furthermore, regardless of the differing compositions of families, family functioning refers to the effectiveness of emotional bonding between family members, family rules, family communication, and the management of external events (Fang et al., 2004). According to this definition, family functioning is considered a dynamic interaction within family units or how a family fulfills its functions (Chui & Wong, 2017).

Scientific studies reported that healthy family functioning is associated with children's and adolescents' happiness (Bennefield, 2018; Holder & Coleman, 2009; Leung et al., 2016; Verrastro et al., 2020). In particular, Raboteg-Šarić and colleagues (2009) found that family relationships and connections among family members are a protective factor for children's and adolescents' well-being. In addition, parental support contributes directly to children's happiness (Raboteg-Šarićе et al., 2009). Further research highlighted that the quality of family relationships had greater importance to students' happiness than the peer group, school, or community level ratings (Huebner, 1991a).

Previous research found associations between happiness and different dimensions of family functioning. According to Olson's (2000) *Circumflex Model*, cohesion and adaptability were two key fundamental dimensions that correlate linearly with family functioning, while

communication and family satisfaction were facilitating dimensions for expressing family needs and facilitating family dynamics (Olson, 2000). Thus, an excellently functioning family's central characteristic is effective communication (Jackson et al., 1998). Barnes and Olson (1985) showed that when parent-adolescent communication was good, the family was closer, more loving, and more flexible in solving family problems. Indeed, having a good relationship with family members and spending pleasant moments together was one of the aspects that adolescents refer to when defining their perceptions of well-being and happiness (Navarro et al., 2017).

In addition, family satisfaction, defined as the extent to which individuals feel satisfied with the perceived level of support from family members (Huebner, 1991b), was also associated with increased happiness and overall life satisfaction of children and adolescents (Alcantara et al., 2017; Bernal et al., 2011; Vera et al., 2012; Veronese et al., 2012). In contrast, family conflict tended to generate negative emotions. Therefore, Bradley & Corwyn's (2004) study found that living in families with a higher level of family conflict reduced family members' happiness and life satisfaction. Moreover, other studies confirmed that dysfunctional family relationships (e.g., low-income family status, family conflict) represented a risk factor for children's and adolescents' happiness (Navarro et al., 2017; Sabolova et al., 2020).

1.1.2 The Present Study

Based on ecological theory, decades of research have highlighted the importance of studying children's development within their immediate contexts, such as home, school, and community (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). During childhood and adolescence, these contexts represent microsystems where young people spend large parts of their daily lives and are therefore very important for their social and emotional development (Baiocco et al., 2019; López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018). However, few studies have comprehensively examined the personal and familial factors associated with happiness in developmental age as

a primary focus.

The scientific literature reported that the family plays an essential role in modeling the positive development of children and adolescents (Shek, 1997a). In that sense, previous studies found that family functioning, quality of parent-child relationship, and satisfaction were significant predictors of happiness in children's and adolescents (Rees, 2017; Shek & Liang, 2018; Song et al., 2018). Longitudinal studies demonstrated that adolescents' family experiences predict multiple aspects of functioning in adulthood, including physical and mental health, well-being, and academic achievement (Paradis et al., 2009). This widespread well-being also has long-term effects on social relationships: studies have shown that happy people tend to have stronger social relationships than less happy people (Diener & Seligman, 2002).

To our knowledge, the present study represents the first systematic review summarizing the literature on the relation between happiness (in terms of subjective well-being, life satisfaction, and positive affect) and family functioning during the developmental age (6-18 years old). The importance of exploring this specific phase of development derives from the scientific evidence that demonstrated differences in happiness levels concerning different age groups with a decline in happiness with increasing age (Baiocco et al., 2019; Goldbeck et al., 2007; Verrastro et al., 2020). Again, studies have highlighted the importance of addressing multi-contextual influences in evaluating and intervening in happiness, with the relevant literature strongly supporting the ecological theory (Gilman & Huebner, 2003). In this sense, a systematic literature review could improve our understanding of the associations between children's and adolescents' happiness and dimensions of family functioning.

1.2 Method

1.2.1 Search Strategy

The current systematic review follows the procedure outlined by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Moher et al., 2015). The search for relevant articles was performed in three scientific databases (PsycInfo, Pubmed, and Web of Science). Further studies were identified through by-hand searches of the reference lists of the included articles. The investigation was conducted in June 2022, and the search included all original research articles published post-1968.

For database searching, the exact search term combinations were: [("happi*" OR "happy" OR "positive affect*" OR "positive emotions" OR "subjective well-being" OR "subjective wellbeing" OR "well-being" OR "wellbeing" OR "life satisfaction" OR "satisfaction with life") AND ("family funct*" OR "family conflict" OR "family cohesion" OR "family communication" OR "family flexibility" OR "family problem-solving" OR "family problem solving" OR "family satisfaction" OR "family relation*") AND ("child*" OR "toddler*" OR "pupil*" OR "infant*" OR "pre-schooler*" OR "preschooler*" OR "pre-adoles*" OR "preadoles*" OR "student*" OR "adolesc*")].

1.2.2 Study screening selection

The first selection was performed by two independent reviewers who selected abstracts to exclude articles that did not meet the selection criteria. Age and language filters were applied to the various databases to limit the search to studies reported in only English, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and German. Again, since the review focuses on childhood and adolescence, studies involving samples of participants over 18 years old were excluded. Specifically, only original research articles published in scientific journals were included in the review. The review included only scientific studies with mixed or quantitative methodology,

while pure qualitative studies, books, and book chapters were excluded. No reviews (critical, systematic, meta-analysis) examining the association between children's and adolescents' happiness and family functioning were found. Studies with clinical samples were excluded to limit the impact of variation due to external variables.

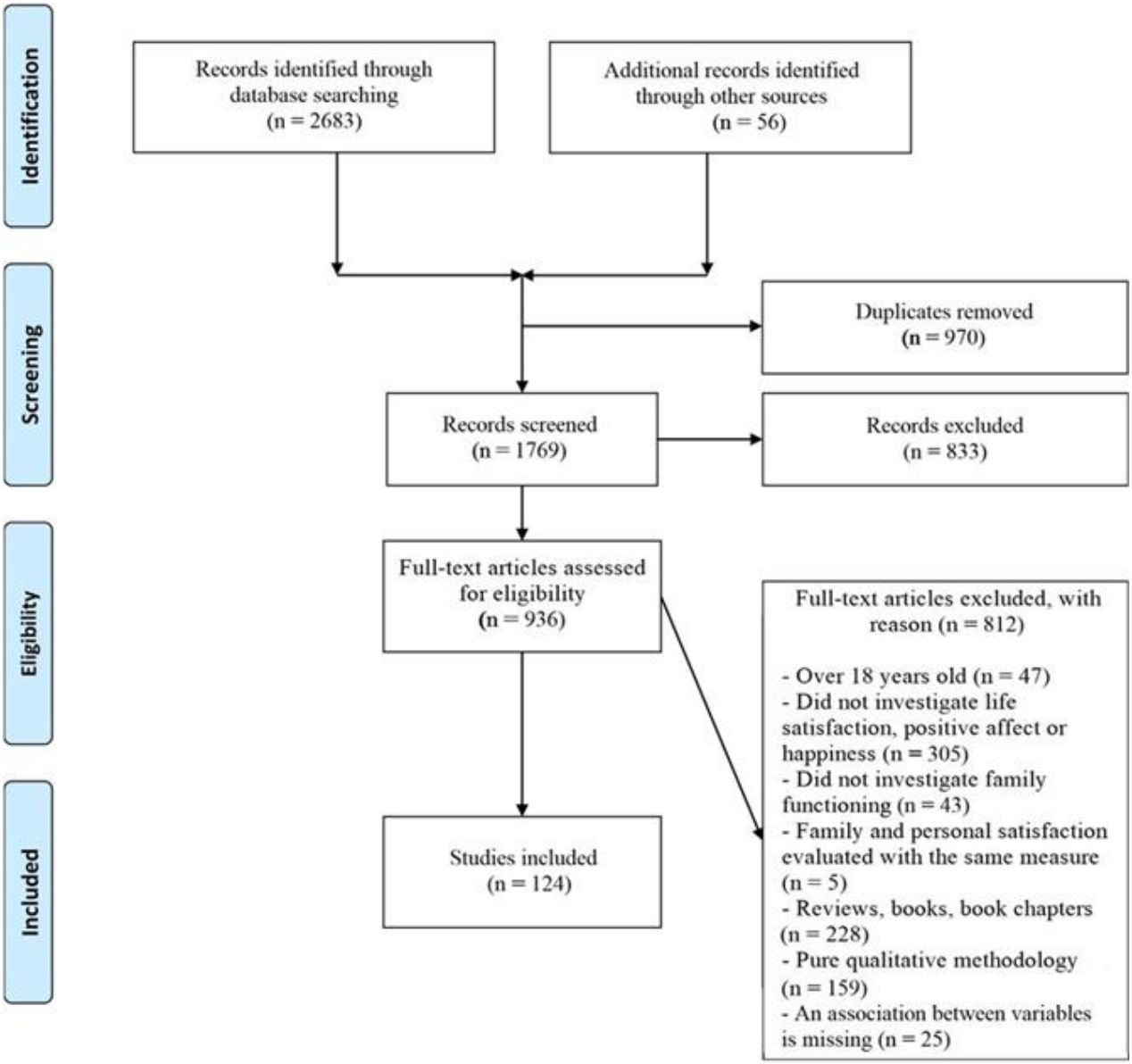
Moreover, studies considered for inclusion required a specific assessment of happiness and family functioning. Studies with a single measure evaluating the two variables as sub-dimensions (i.e., general life satisfaction and family satisfaction) were excluded. All studies should clearly report associations between happiness and family functioning or the effects of family functioning on children's happiness. When the results appeared vague, the researchers contacted the authors (n = 50) to clarify their research methodology and results (n = 8 responded). In the absence of a response, the relevant studies were excluded. The PRISMA flowchart of the systematic review process is shown in Figure 1.

1.2.3 Data Extraction

The following information was independently extracted using a structured template by two reviewers: author(s), year of publication, country, study design, participant age and gender, sample size, measures of happiness and family functioning, and main findings. Coding disagreements were resolved through discussion between the first two reviewers. Cohen's kappa coefficient was calculated to assess inter-rater reliability, reflecting very high agreement with a value of 0.94. In case of persistent doubt about possible exclusion or inclusion, the third author resolved any discrepancies.

Figure 1.

PRISMA Flowchart of study selection



1.3 Results

1.3.1 Study Characteristics

The preliminary search for relevant articles in scientific databases identified a total of 2683 scientific articles (777 from PsycInfo, 662 from Pubmed, and 1244 from Web of Science). 56 other records were added through other sources. After 970 duplicates were removed, a further 833 articles were excluded based on a review of their titles and abstracts. The remaining 936 studies were considered potentially eligible for inclusion. The full-text articles were obtained and assessed for eligibility, resulting in a final selection of 124 studies. Although the search included works published between 1968 and 2022, the present review was restricted to 1991–2022 because no articles published before 1991 met the inclusion criteria.

The selected studies have very disparate characteristics. Regarding the breadth of samples analyzed, sample sizes ranged from 74–25,906. Participant ages were also heterogeneous, though predominantly falling within the pre-adolescent and adolescent age range. With respect to school level, 18 studies examined elementary school students (i.e., aged 6–11 years), and 111 studies explored middle and high school students (i.e., aged 12–18 years). The studies were conducted in different continents: 30% in Asia (i.e., 27 in China, 1 in India, 2 in Indonesia, 3 in Israel, 3 in Korea, and 1 in Palestine), 22% in Europe (i.e., 4 in Croatia, 3 in Finland, 1 in France, 1 in Germany, 1 in Holland, 1 in Ireland, 3 in Italy, 1 in The Netherlands, 2 in Portugal, 8 in Spain, and 3 in the United Kingdom), 18% in the United States, 13% in South America (i.e., 3 in Brazil, 11 in Chile, 1 in Mexico, and 1 in Peru), and 2% in Australia. In addition, 13 articles (i.e., 11%) were cross-cultural, while 5 (i.e., 4%) were conducted in transcontinental states (i.e., 1 in Russia, 4 in Turkey). Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4 present detailed characteristics of each reviewed article, including the study design, participants, and measures.

Given the large number of articles selected and the heterogeneity of the results, the

authors attempted to extract common themes. The articles were categorized according to four emergent themes (and subthemes): (1) family dimensions and happiness; (2) global family functioning (i.e., family functioning and family relationships), environmental variables, and happiness; (3) parental differences; (4) longitudinal studies. The studies are presented in Table 1–4 (according to theme), and the significant findings within these four themes are synthesized in Section 1.3.2–1.3.5.

1.3.1.1 Happiness Measures

The studies selected in this review used different measures to assess children's and adolescents' happiness. Specifically, the included studies used measures to evaluate specific components of happiness: (a) affective, (b) cognitive, or (c) global. The (a) affective happiness was evaluated using the *Happiness Faces Scale* (Holder & Coleman, 2009), *Piers-Harris Children's Concept Scale 2* (PHS; Piers & Herzberg, 2002), *Subjective Happiness Scale* (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005b), *Chinese Happiness Inventory* (CHI; Lu, 2006), *Oxford Happiness Inventory* (OHI; Argyle, 2001), *Happiness Overall Life* (HOL; Fordyce, 1988), *Happiness Taking into Account Overall Life* (HTOL; Abdel-Khalek, 2006; Campbell et al., 1976), *Russell's Core Affect* (Russell, 2003), *Positive and Negative Affect Schedule* (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988), *Positive and Negative Affect Scale for Children* (Heuchert & McNair, 2012), *Scale of Positive and Negative Affects for Adolescents* (PNAA; Segabinazi et al., 2012), *Affect Balance Scale* (ABS; Bradburn, 1969), *Profile of Mood States-Adolescent version* (POMS-A; Curran et al., 1995), positive affect subscales of the *Profile of Mood States* (POMS; Lorr & McNair, 1971), *Personal Wellbeing Index—School Children* (PWI-SC; Cummins & Lau, 2005), *Patients' Well-Being a Questionnaire for adolescents* (PWBQ, Grob et al., 1991).

The cognitive happiness component (b) was assessed through the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985), *Students' Life Satisfaction Scale* (SLSS, Huebner, 1991b), *Cantril Ladder* (Cantril, 1965), a modified version of the *Quality of Life Questionnaire* (Olson

& Barnes, 1982), *Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale* (MSLSS; Huebner, 1994), *Brief Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale* (BMSLSS; Seligson et al. 2003), *Overall Life Satisfaction* (OLS; Campbell et al., 1976), *Life 3 Scale* (Andrews & Robinson, 1991), *General Questionnaire for Adolescents* (Ljubetić & Reić Ercegovac, 2020), *Rating of Global Life Satisfaction* (RGLS; Seligson et al., 2003).

Finally, the global measure of happiness (c) was investigated by the *World Health Organisation-Five Well-Being Index* (WHO-5 WBI; Topp et al., 2015), *Berne Questionnaire of Subjective Well-Being/Youth form* (BSW/Y; Grob, 1995), *Multidimensional Scale for the Measurement of Subjective Well-being of Anguas-Plata and Reyes-Lagunes* (EMMBSAR; Anguas Plata, 2001), and *Emotional Well-being Scale* (EWS; Yun & Choi, 2018).

1.3.1.2 Family Functioning Measures

Like the happiness measures, the selected studies had used several measures to assess family functioning from the parents' and children's perspectives. Family functioning and relationships were evaluated by thirteen measures, including self-report questionnaires (n = 12) and interview assessments (n = 1). Of the self-report measures of family functioning, the most frequently used were the *Family Assessment Instrument* (FAI; Shek, 2002a) (n = 7), *Family Assessment Device* (FAD; Epstein et al., 1983) (n = 6), *Self-Report Family Instrument* (SFI; Beavers & Hampson, 1990) (n = 6), *Behaviour Assessment System for Children* (BASC; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992) (n = 2), *Family Relationships Scale* (Ellonen et al., 2008) (n = 2), and Family Relationship subscale of the *International Survey of Children's Well-Being* (ISCWeB; Dinisman & Rees, 2014) (n = 2).

Less frequently used measures (n = 1) included *Brief Family Function Questionnaire* (BFFQ; Ren et al., 2018), *Family APGAR Index* (Smilkstein, 1978), *Family Dynamics Measure* (FDM II; Barnhill, 1979), *Family-of-Origin Scale* (FOS; Hovestadt et al., 1985), *Father/Mother*

Involvement Scale (Flouri & Buchanan, 2002), *Relationship with Father/Mother Questionnaire* (RFMQ; Mayseless et al., 1998). The only qualitative measure of family functioning was the *Adolescent Interview Schedule* (Shek, 1998c), which measures the perceived family environment and the parent-adolescent relationship. Finally, some studies have adopted specially designed measures to investigate the quality of family relationships (for example, Lawler et al., 2018; Newland et al., 2019).

In addition to measures to assess global family functioning and family relationships, studies included in this review assessed specific family dimensions: (a) family cohesion and adaptability, (b) family conflict, or (b) family communication and satisfaction. The (a) family cohesion and adaptability were evaluated using the *Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales* (FACES II, Olson et al., 1985; FACES III, Olson, 1986; FACES IV; Baiocco et al., 2013; Olson, 2011), *Colorado Self-Report of Family Functioning Inventory* (CSRFFI; Bloom, 1985), *Family Environment Scale* (FES; Bloom, 1985), and *Brief Family Relationship Scale* (Fok et al., 2014). Only one study to measure family cohesion used a graphical method applying the *Pictorial representation index* (Cooper et al., 1983).

The (b) family conflict was investigated using the *Father-Adolescent Conflict Scale* (FACS) and *Mother-Adolescent Conflict Scale* (MACS) (Robin & Foster, 1989), *Family Conflicts Scale* (Lee et al., 2000), Aversive Parent-Child Interactions subscale of the *Youth Everyday Social Interactions and Mood measure* (Reynolds et al., 2016), *Network of Relationships Inventory* (NRI; Furman & Buhrmester, 2009), Family Conflict subscale of *Brief Family Relationship Scale* (Fok et al., 2014). Only one study measured daily family conflict by adjusting items from the *Family Environment Scale* (Bloom, 1985).

The (c) family communication and satisfaction were assessed using the *Parent–Adolescent Communication Scale* (Barnes & Olson, 1985), *Attitudes and Behaviors Survey* (A&B; Search Institute, 2016), Family Satisfaction subscale of *Multidimensional Life Satisfaction Scale for Adolescents* (MLSSA; Segabinazi et al., 2010), Family Satisfaction

subscale of *Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale* (MSLSS; Huebner, 1994), Family Satisfaction subscale of *Brief Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale* (BMSLSS; Seligson et al., 2003), *Satisfaction with Family Life Scale* (SWFLS; Based on SWLS; Diener et al., 1985), *Satisfaction with Family Relationships* (adaptation of a scale proposed by Cantril Ladder; Cantril, 1965), Satisfaction with Family subscale of the *General Domain Satisfaction Index* (Casas et al. 2013), *Satisfaction with Family Life* (SWFaL; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003), *Family Life Satisfaction Scale* (FLSS; Barraca et al., 2000), *Satisfaction with Different Life Domains* (Cummins et al., 2003), General Family Satisfaction subscale of the *Quality of Family Interaction Scale* (Vulić Prtorić, 2004). The only qualitative measure of family communication was the *Adolescent Interview Schedule* (Shek, 1998c).

1.3.2 Family Dimensions Predicting Happiness

The first theme that emerged, and the most frequent of all (n = 91), concerned associations between happiness and family dimensions (i.e., cohesion and communication). In particular, family dimensions were found to strongly predict children's and adolescents' levels of happiness. Three interconnected subdimensions characterized this theme: family satisfaction and communication, family cohesion and adaptability, and family conflict (Table 1).

1.3.2.1 Family Satisfaction and Communication

The first subtheme that emerged was concerning the dimensions that have been shown to be facilitators of family functioning, which were family satisfaction (n =47) and family communication (n = 13). Regarding family satisfaction, multiple studies selected for systematic review found positive correlations between family satisfaction and happiness (Caycho-Rodríguez et al., 2018; Kim & Main, 2017; Sastre & Ferrière, 2000), identifying satisfaction with family life as the strongest predictor of the overall life satisfaction from childhood to

adolescence (Alcantara et al., 2017; Huebner, 1991a; Ingelmo & Litago, 2018; Park, 2005; Park & Huebner, 2005; Rees, 2017). In particular, family satisfaction correlated positively with both the affective (i.e., positive affect and positive emotions) and cognitive components (i.e., life satisfaction) of happiness (Bedin & Sarriera, 2015; Bernal et al., 2011; Froh et al., 2009; Gomez, 2011; Seligson et al., 2003; 2005; Vera et al., 2012).

Family life satisfaction correlated positively with children's positive affects (Bakalım & Taşdelen-Karçkay, 2015; Froh et al., 2009; Galarce Muñoz et al., 2020; Gil da Silva & Dell'Aglio, 2018) and happiness (Khurana, 2011; Veronese et al., 2012) from the perspective of both children (Casas et al., 2015; da Costa & Neto, 2019; Ercegovac et al., 2021; Gómez et al., 2019; Irmak & Kuruüzüm, 2009; Migliorini et al., 2019; Moreno-Maldonado et al., 2020; Schnettler et al., 2018a; 2018b; 2018c; 2021a; 2021b; Tian et al., 2015; Weber & Huebner, 2015) and parents (Casas et al., 2007; Ljubetić & Reić Ercegovac, 2020; Schnettler et al., 2017; Verrastro et al., 2020). However, only the study conducted by Veronese and colleagues (2012) did not show significant positive correlations between happiness and family satisfaction.

In addition, interesting to point out that according to the selected studies, the association between family satisfaction and life satisfaction may be bidirectional. Indeed, one study showed that positive affects predicted high school students' satisfaction with family life (Bakalım & Taşdelen-Karçkay, 2015). On the other hand, other studies identified family satisfaction as a significant predictor of satisfaction with life (Gross-Manos et al., 2015; Kaye-Tzadok et al., 2017; Orejudo et al., 2021; Taşdelen-Karçkay, 2016). For instance, some authors (Bernal et al., 2011; Gomez, 2011) found that high satisfaction with family life is related to higher frequency and intensity of affective experiences of love, affection, affection, joy, and happiness (González-Carrasco et al., 2017b).

Regarding parent-child communication, the selected studies included in this systematic review found that mother-adolescent and father-adolescent communication were positively associated with both the affective component (i.e., positive affect) and the cognitive component

(i.e., life satisfaction) of adolescents' happiness (Jackson et al., 1998; Moore et al., 2018). Concerning the more strictly emotional component, studies had highlighted that children's happiness and positive affect positively correlated with family communication (Bennefield, 2018) from both children's and parents' perspectives (Verrastro et al., 2020). Therefore, having family members who expressed their opinions and talked about their feelings was associated with positive affect (Bennefield, 2018).

Overall, several studies found that children's and adolescents' life satisfaction (Cacioppo et al., 2013; Park et al., 2005; Yuan et al., 2019) and emotional well-being (happiness, positive affects, and life satisfaction; Jackson et al., 1998) correlated positively with family communication. Specifically, adolescents' life satisfaction correlated positively with open communication with both father and mother (Jiménez et al., 2009) and negatively with offensive and avoidant communication with their parents (Carrascosa et al., 2018; Cava et al., 2014; Estévez López et al., 2018). Therefore, some research reported that positive (i.e., accessible, comprehensive, and satisfying) family communication emerged as a significant predictor of life satisfaction (Jiménez et al., 2009; Soares et al., 2019). Finally, the study by Verrastro et colleagues (2020) found an interaction between children's gender and family communication, suggesting that, for female participants, living in a family with good communication was associated with higher happiness levels.

Table 1

Sample Characteristics and Methods of Assessment of Reviewed Studies Investigating Family Dimensions and Happiness (n = 91)

		Child Characteristics		Happiness Measure		Family Measures			
Author (year), country	***N***	**Age**	**% male**	**Method**	**Measure**	**Method**	**Measure**	**Res. Design**	**Pub**
Alcantara et al. (2017), Brazil	910	Range 10-13 (M = 11.90)	47,9	S	OLS SLSS	S	SDDC	C	Pub
Bahrassa et al. (2011), United States	82	Range 17-19 (M = 18.5)	43,9	S	SWLS	S	FCS	C	Pub
Bakalım & Taşdelen-Karçkay (2015), Turkey	456	Range 14-18	47,1	S	PANAS	S	FLSS	C	Pub
Bedin & Sarriera (2015), Brazil	543	Range 12-16 (M = 14.1)	31,7	S	HOL OLS SWLS	S	BMSLSS	C	Pub*
Bennefield (2018), United States	10,148	Range 13-17 (M = 15.2)	48,9	S	PAS	S	FCQ FCLQ	C	Pub
Bernal et al. (2011), Mexico	580	Range 15-19 (M = 16.45)	49.0	S	EMMBSAR SWLS	S	SWFLS	C	Pub
Bradley & Corwyn (2004), United States	310	Range 15-19 (M = 12.24)	46,5	S	QLQ	S	FCC	C	Pub
Braithwaite & Devine (1993), Australia	112	Range 14-21 (M = 16.62)	53,0	S	L3S	G S	PRI PCI	C	Pub
Cacioppo et al., (2013), Italy	255	Range 15-17 (M = 15.98)	40,8	S	MSLSS	S	FAD	C	Pub
Carrascosa et al. (2018), Spain	672	Range 12-19 (M = 14.45)	51,2	S	SWLS	S	PACS	C	Pub
Casas et al. (2007), Spain (1999 sample)	1,634	Range 12-16 (M = 14.12)	48,5	S	OLS	S	LDS	C	Pub
Casas et al. (2007), Spain (2003 sample)	1,618	Range 12-16 (M = 13.97)	46,9	S	OLS	S	LDS	C	Pub
Casas et al. (2013), Spain	5,937	Range 11-14	ns	S	OLS SLSS	S	GDSI	C	Pub
Casas et al. (2015), Spain, Brazil and Chile	5,316	Range 12-16 (M = 13,59)	44,2	S	OLS	S	BMSLSS	N	Pub
Cava et al. (2014), Spain	1,795	Range 11-18 (M = 14.2)	52,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS	C	Pub
Caycho-Rodríguez et al. (2018), Peru	804	Range 11-18 (M = 13.5)	53,0	S	WHO-5 WBI	S	SWFLS	V	Pub
Cruz, A., & Piña-Watson, B. (2017), United States	524	Range 14-20 (M = 16.23)	46,9	S	BMSLSS	S	FCS	C	Pub
da Costa & Neto (2019), Portugal	252	Range 15-19 (M = 16.87)	52,0	S	SWLS	S	SWFLS	V	Pub
Dost-Gözkan (2021), Turkey	1,097	Range 14-16 (M = 15.12)	38,4	S	MLSS	S	FES	C	Pub
Ercegovac et al. (2021), Croatia	481	Range 10-17 (M = 12.45)	37,4	S	OLS	S	FSS	C	Pub
Estévez López et al. (2018), Spain	1,510	Range 12-17 (M = 13.4)	52,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS FES	C	Pub*
Fosco & Lydon-Staley (2020), United States	151	Range 13-16 (M = 14.60)	38,4	S	POMS SWLS	S	FES	C	Pub
Froh et al. (2009), United States	154	Range 11-13 (M = 12.14)	ns	S	OLS PNA	S	BMSLSS	C	Pub
Gao & Potwarka (2021), China	675	Range 12–15	47,3	S	SLSS PANAS	S	FACES II	L	Pub
Galarce Muñoz et al. (2020), Chile (Students without disabilities)	70	Range 14-19 (M = 16.6)	54,3	S	PANAS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub*
Galarce Muñoz et al. (2020), Chile (Students with motor disabilities)	18	Range 14-19 (M = 15.7)	44,4	S	PANAS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub*
Galarce Muñoz et al. (2020), Chile (Hearing-impaired students)	17	Range 14-19 (M = 15.5)	76,5	S	PANAS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub*
Galarce Muñoz et al. (2020), Chile (Visually impaired students)	15	Range 14-19 (M = 16.1)	46,7	S	PANAS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub*
Gil da Silva & Dell'Aglio (2018), Brazil	426	Range 12-18 (M = 14.9)	38,0	S	PNAA	S	MLSSA	C	Pub*
Gomez (2011), United States	158	Range 11-15 (M = 13.49)	55,0	S	PANAS SWLS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub
Gómez et al. (2019), Chile	1,392	Range 10-13 (M = 11.5)	54,2	S	SLSS	S	GDSI	C	Pub
González-Carrasco et al. (2017b), Spain	970	Range 9-16 (M = 12.02)	44,1	S	HTOL OLS	S	SDLD	F	Pub

Gross-Manos et al. (2015), Israel	1,081	Range 11-13 (*M* = 11.49)	51,5	S	RCA HLTW OLS SLSS	S	BMSLSS	C	Pub
Hamama & Arazi (2012), Israel	111	Range 9-13 (*M* = 11.8)	50,5	S	PANAS SLSS	S	FACES III	C	Pub
Huebner (1991a), United States	79	Range 10-13 (*M* = 11.45)	63,0	S	SLSS	S	FSD	C	Pub
Ingelmo & Litago (2018), Spain	1,409	Range 11-18 (*M* = 14.4)	49,6	S	CL	S	SWFR	C	Pub
Irmak & Kuruüzüm (2009), Turkey	959	Range 11-16 (*M* = 14.35)	50,0	S	SWLS	S	MSLSS	V	Pub
Jackson et al. (1998), Holland	660	Range 13-15 (*M* = 13.5)	46,4	S	ABS CL	S	PACS	C	Pub
Jhang (2021), China (Time 1)	1,273	Range 12–15 (*M* = 13.55)	49,0	S	SWLS	S	FACES III	L	Pub
Jhang (2021), China (Time 2)	1,028	Range 14-17	ns	S	SWLS	S	FACES III	L	Pub
Jiménez et al. (2009), Spain	565	Range 11-18 (*M* = 13.6)	51,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS	C	Pub
Jiménez et al. (2014), Spain (Time 1)	1,319	Range 12–16 (*M* = 13.5)	46,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS	L	Pub
Jiménez et al. (2014), Spain (Time 2)	554	Range 12–16 (*M* = 13.7)	46,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS	L	Pub
Kaye-Tzadok et al. (2017), 16 countries	5,000	12-year-old children	46,2	S	SLSS	S	SWF	C	Pub
Khurana (2011), India	400	Range 16-18	50,0	S	PHAS	S	MSLSS PCS	C	Pub
Kim & Main (2017), South Korea and United Kingdom	3,743	Range 11–12 (*M* = 12.0)	42,0	S	SLSS	S	SWF	N	Pub
Koster et al. (2018), Netherlands	255	Range 15–19 (*M* = 16.27)	57,0	S	SWLS	S	NRI	C	Pub
Leto et al. (2019), Russia	424	Range 7–10 (*M* = 9.1)	49,0	S	SLSS	S	FAD	C	Pub
Lietz et al. (2020), Australia	5,440	Range 8–15	48,1	S	SLSS	S	ISCWeB	C	Pub
Lin & Yi (2019), China	2,690	Range 13–17 (*M* = 13.3)	51,2	S	LS	S	FACES III	L	Pub
Ljubetić & Reić Ercegovac (2020), Croatia	101	Range 10-17 (*M* = 15.4)	31,7	S	GQA	S	QFIS	C	Pub
Mallette et al. (2021), United States	207	Range 11-18	ns	S	PWI-SC	S	FACES IV	C	Pub
Manzi et al. (2006), Italy and United Kingdom	223	Range 17-21 (*M* = 18.9)	49,3	S	SWLS	S	CSRFFI	N	Pub
Merkaš & Brajša-Žganec (2011), Croatia	298	Range 10-15 (*M* = 12.7)	43,0	S	BMSLSS	S	CSRFFI	C	Pub
Migliorini et al. (2019), Italy	1,145	Range 7-10 (*M* = 8.21)	49.9	S	OLS SLSS	S	BMSLSS	C	Pub
Moore et al. (2018), United Kingdom	9,055	Range 11-16 (*M* = 13.7)	50,6	S	SWB	S	FCSFR	C	Pub
Moreno-Maldonado et al. (2020), Portugal and Spain	21,081	Range 11-16	50,2	S	CL	S	SWFR	N	Pub
Orejudo et al. (2021), Mexico, Peru, and Spain (Mexico sample)	645	Range 12-18 (*M* = 14.69)	72,6	S	LSD	S	QFR	N	Pub
Orejudo et al. (2021), Mexico, Peru, and Spain (Peru sample)	1331	Range 12-18 (*M* = 14.35)	37,6	S	LSD	S	QFR	N	Pub
Orejudo et al. (2021), Mexico, Peru, and Spain (Spain sample)	791	Range 12-18 (*M* = 14.45)	41,0	S	LSD	S	QFR	N	Pub
Park & Huebner (2005), Korea and United States (Korea sample)	472	Range 12-17 (*M* = 15.22)	51,0	S	SLSS	S	MSLSS	N	Pub
Park & Huebner (2005), Korea and United States (United States sample)	543	Range 12-17 (*M* = 14.89)	46,0	S	SLSS	S	MSLSS	N	Pub
Park (2005), Korea (Elementary students sample)	247	Range 9-11 (*M* = 10.7)	47,0	S	SLSS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub
Park (2005), Korea (Middle-schools students sample)	231	Range 12-14 (*M* = 13.8)	48,0	S	SLSS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub
Park (2005), Korea (High-schools students sample)	258	Range 15-17 (*M* = 16.5)	49,0	S	SLSS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub
Park et al., (2005), South Korea	501	Range 14-16	54,1	S	SWLS	S	PACS	C	Pub
Raboteg-Šarić et al. (2009), Croatia	2,823	Range 14-18 (*M* = 16.86)	45,5	S	GLS	S	FES	C	Pub
Rees (2017), eight European countries	9,156	Aged around 12 years old	ns	S	SLSS	S	BMSLSS	N	Pub
Rhatigan (2002), United States	189	Range 11-14	ns	S	SWLS	S	FACES II	C	Pub
Rodríguez-Rivas et al. (2021), Chile	287	Range 15-18 (*M* = 15.95)	60,3	S	SLSS	S	FC	C	Pub
Salewski (2003), Germany	30	Range 14-19 (*M* = 17.2)	56,6	S	PWBQ	S	FACES II	C	Pub

Sastre & Ferrière (2000), France	100	Range 12-19	50,0	S	SWLS	S	SWFR	C	Pub
Schnettler et al. (2017), Chile	300	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.2)	51,0	S	SWLS	P/S	SWFaL	C	Pub
Schnettler et al. (2018a), Chile	300	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.2)	51,3	S	SWLS	P/S	SWFaL	C	Pub*
Schnettler et al. (2018b), Chile	340	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.2)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	SWFaL	C	Pub*
Schnettler et al. (2018c), Chile	470	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.3)	52,3	S	SWLS	S	SWFaL	C	Pub
Schnettler et al. (2018d), Chile	303	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.3)	48,5	S	SWLS	S	SWFaL	C	Pub
Schnettler et al. (2020), Chile	473	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.3)	48,2	S	SWLS	S	SWFaL	C	Pub
Schnettler et al. (2021a), Chile	470	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.3)	47,7	S	SWLS	S	SWFaL	C	Pub
Schnettler et al. (2021b), Chile	303	Range 10-17 (M = 13.3)	48.5	S	SWLS	S	SWFaL	C	Pub*
Seligson et al. (2003), United States	221	Range 11-14 (*M* = 12.33)	58,0	S	BMSLSS PANAS RGLS SLSS	S	MSLSS	V	Pub
Seligson et al. (2005), United States	518	Range 8-11 (*M* = 9.34)	46,7	S	PANAS RGLS SLSS	S	BMSLSS	C	Pub
Shek (1997a), China	365	Range 12-16	80,5	S	SWLS	S	F/MACS	C	Pub
Shek (1997c), China	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	P/S	F/MACS	D	Pub
Shek (1998b), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	P/S	F/MACS	L	Pub
Shek (1998b), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (*M* = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	F/MACS	L	Pub
Shek (1998c), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	S I	F/MACS AIS	L	Pub
Shek (1998c), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (*M* = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	S I	F/MACS AIS	L	Pub
Shek (2002d), China	229	Range 12-16	53.3	S	SWLS	S	F/MACS	D	Pub
Shek et al. (2001), China	1,519	Range 11-18 (*M* = 13.5)	49,9	S	SWLS	S	F/MACS	C	Pub
Silva et al. (2020), United States	120	Range 13-15 (*M* = 14.36)	39,0	S	POMS	S	YESIMM	C	Pub
Soares et al. (2019), Portugal	503	Range 13-19 (*M* = 15.92)	37,0	S	SWLS	S	A&B	C	Pub
Song et al. (2018), China	428	Range 11-16 (*M* = 13.16)	65,0	S	SLSS	S	FACES II	C	Pub
Sun et al. (2015), China	1,708	Range 14-18 (*M* = 15.03)	45,2	S	SLSS	S	FACES II	C	Pub
Taşdelen-Karçkay (2016), Turkey	436	Range 14-19 (*M* = 16.35)	44,0	S	SWLS	S	FLSS	V	Pub
Tian et al. (2015), China	1,904	Range 9-14 (*M* = 11.25)	52,0	S	SLSS	S	BMSLSS	V	Pub
Vera et al. (2012), United States	168	Range 12-15 (*M* = 13.5)	55,0	S	PANAS SWLS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub
Veronese et al. (2012), Palestine	74	Range 7-15 (*M* = 10.80)	58,0	G S	HFS PANAS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub
Verrastro et al. (2020), Italy	1,549	Range 7-14 (*M* = 11.1)	47,0	G S	HFS PHS	S	FACES IV	C	Pub
Wang et al. (2021), United States	447	Range 12-18 (*M* = 15.09)	39,1	S	PANAS	S	NRI	C	Pub
Weber & Huebner (2015), United States	344	Range 11-14 (*M* = 12.23)	45,1	S	SLSS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub
Yuan et al. (2019), China	703	Range 10-13 (*M* = 12.5)	54,9	S	SLSS	S	PACS FACES II	C	Pub
Yun & Choi (2018), Korea	527	Range 10-12 (*M* = 11.42)	54,3	S	EWBS	S	BFRS	C	Pub
Zhao et al. (2015), China (Father migrating group)	145	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.9)	60,0	S	SWLS	S	FACES II	C	Pub
Zhao et al. (2015), China (Two-parent-migrating group)	96	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.9)	55,2	S	SWLS	S	FACES II	C	Pub

Note. For Happiness method. G = Graphical assessment; S = Self-report questionnaire. For Happiness measures. ABS = *Affect Balance Scale*; PWBQ = *Patients' Well-being a Questionnaire for adolescents*; BMSLSS = *Brief Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale*; CL = *Cantril Ladder*; EMMBSAR = *Multidimensional Scale*

for the Measurement of Subjective Well-being of Anguas-Plata and Reyes-Lagune; EWBS = *Emotional Well-being Scale*; GSL = *Global Satisfaction with Life*; GQA = *General Questionnaire for Adolescents*; HFS = *Happiness Face Scale*; HLTW = *Happiness in the Last Two Weeks*; HOL = *Happiness Overall Life*; HTOL = *Happiness Taking into Account Overall Life*; LS = *Life Satisfaction;* LSD = *Life Satisfaction Domain*; L3S = *Life 3 Scale*; OLS = *Overall Life Satisfaction*; MLSS = *Multidimensional Life Satisfaction Scale*; PANAS = *Positive and Negative Affect Scale*; PAS = *Positive Affect Scale*; PHS = *Piers-Harris Children's Concept Scale 2*; PHAS = *Perceived Happiness Status*; PNA = *Positive and Negative Affect*; PNAA = *Scale of Positive and Negative Affects for Adolescents*; POMS = *Profile of Mood States*; QLQ = *Quality of Life Questionnaire*; RCA = *Russell's Core Affect*; RGLS = *Rating of Global Life Satisfaction*; SLSS = *Students' Life Satisfaction Scale*; SWB = *Subjective Well-Being*; SWLS = *Satisfaction with Life Scale*; WHO-5 WBI = *The World Health Organization-Five Well-Being Index*;

For Family Method. I = Interview assessments; P/S = Parent and Self-report; S = Self report. For Family measures. A&B = *Attitudes and Behaviors survey*; AIS = *Adolescent Interview Schedule*; BFRS = *Brief Family Relationship Scale*; BMSLSS = *Brief Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale*; CSRFFI = *Colorado Self-Report of Family Functioning Inventory*; FACES = *Family adaptability and cohesion evaluation scales*; FC = *Family Conflict*; FCC = Family Conflict Climate; FCS = *Family Conflict Scale*; FCLQ = *Family Closeness Questions*; FCQ = *Family Communication Questions*; FCSFR = *Family Communication Subscale of Family Relationships*; FES = *Family Environment Scale*; FLSS = *Family Life Satisfaction Scale*; F/MACS = *Father/Mother–Adolescent Conflict Scale*; FSD = *Family Satisfaction Domain*; FSS = *Family Satisfaction Scale*; GDSI = *General Domain Satisfaction Index*; ISCWeB = *International Survey of Children's Well-Being*; LDS = *Life Domains Satisfaction*; *MLSSA* = Family satisfaction subscale of *Multidimensional Life Satisfaction Scale for Adolescents*; MSLSS = *Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale*; NRI = *Network of Relationship Inventory*; PACS = *Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale*; PCI = *Parent-Child intimacy*; PRI = *Pictorial Representation Index*; QFIS = *Quality of Family Interaction Scale*; QFR = *Quality of Family Relationships*; SDDC = S*atisfaction with Different Developmental Contexts*; SDLD = *Satisfaction with Different Life Domains*; SWF = *Satisfaction With Family*; SWFaL = *Satisfaction with Family Life*; SWFLS = *Satisfaction with Family Life Scale*; SWFR = *Satisfaction with family relationships*; YESIMM = *Aversive Parent–Child Interactions scale of the Youth Everyday Social Interactions and Mood Measure*.

For Research design. C = Cross-sectional; D = Derived from longitudinal study (one wave of a longitudinal study); F = 1-year Follow-up study; L = Longitudinal study; V = Validation study of measure.

For publication status. P = Published; *= Additional data retrieved from the authors. ns = not specified

1.3.2.2 Family Cohesion and Adaptability

The second theme that emerged was family cohesion and adaptability. In the selected studies (n = 21), family cohesion—reflecting the strength of the family bond— was positively correlated with both the affective (i.e., positive affect and emotions) and the cognitive components (i.e., life satisfaction) of children's and adolescents' happiness (Gao & Potwarka, 2021; Hamama & Arazi, 2012; Lietz et al., 2020; Yun & Choi, 2018). Adolescents living in families with a higher level of cohesion reported a more positive mood and a higher level of happiness (Fosco & Lydon-Staley, 2020; Hamama & Arazi, 2012). The affective component of happiness was positively correlated with family cohesion and closeness (Bennefield, 2018; Estévez López et al., 2018). Furthermore, feeling close to family members, doing things together, and sharing interests and hobbies with family members were also associated with happiness, especially in boys (Bennefield, 2018).

Family cohesion and intimacy were positively related to children's and adolescents' happiness (Braithwaite & Devine, 1993; Dost-Gözkan, 2021; Leto et al., 2019; Lin & Yi, 2019; Manzi et al., 2006; Merkaš & Brajša-Žganec, 2011; Raboteg-Šarić et al., 2009; Song et al., 2018; Sun et al., 2015). Therefore, children who believe the atmosphere at home to be less cohesive reported lower life satisfaction and higher negative affect (Salewski, 2003). Since negative affect increased the likelihood of developing negative thoughts toward people and events in their lives, higher life satisfaction and a low level of negative affect represented precious resources to help children cope with events and situations (Hamama & Arazi, 2012). In addition, Song and colleagues (2018) found that self-esteem mediates the relationship between family cohesion and life satisfaction.

Happiness had a significantly positive correlation with family adaptability (Yuan et al., 2019)—defined as the quality and expression of leadership and organization, role relationship, relationship rules and negotiations (Olson, 2011)—from the perspective of both children and parents (Verrastro et al., 2020). Again, adolescents' perceptions of family flexibility were

positively associated with their happiness (Mallette et al., 2021; Rhatigan, 2002). Although most studies reported that cohesion and flexibility were correlated with higher happiness levels in children, Verrastro et al. (2020) found that family variables had no direct influence on children's happiness.

1.3.2.3 Family Conflict

The third and last subtheme that emerged found that happiness negatively correlated with negative aspects of family functioning regarding family conflicts (n = 17). In particular, the examined studies highlighted that parent-child conflict strongly negatively predicted the children's and adolescents' positive affect (Silva et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021; Yun & Choi, 2018) and perceived happiness (Khurana, 2011). Adolescents felt less happy and satisfied with life on days of intense conflict with their parents (Fosco & Lydon-Staley, 2020), and adequate parental warmth moderated and decreased the negative effect on children's happiness and well-being (Silva et al., 2020). Furthermore, parent-adolescent conflicts were associated with low children's and adolescents' life satisfaction (Bradley & Corwyn, 2004; Cruz & Piña-Watson, 2017; Estévez López et al., 2018; Rodríguez-Rivas et al., 2021; Shek, 1997a; 1998b; 1998c; Shek et al., 2001), from the perspective of both parents and children (Shek, 1997c).

The study by Bahrassa and colleagues (2011) found that the negative effect of family conflicts also extends to late adolescence since happiness was negatively correlated with family conflicts before college. Family conflict directly affects emotional happiness (life satisfaction and positive emotions; Cruz & Piña-Watson, 2017; Koster et al., 2018; Yun & Choi, 2018) during late adolescence. Indeed, one study found that happiness was a protective factor against the negative impact of family conflict on academic performance: Satisfaction with life buffered the harmful effects of family conflict on undergraduate students (Bahrassa et al., 2011). Interestingly, only two studies had not revealed a statistically significant correlation between

children's happiness and parent-child conflict (Bradley & Corwyn, 2004; Shek, 2002c).

The selected studies highlighted interesting variations based on gender. In particular, adolescent gender moderated the between-family and within-family (day's cohesion and conflict) effects on mood. The interaction between the day's conflict and adolescent gender was significantly correlated with positive mood. One study reported that when the family conflict was higher, boys reported decreased happiness than girls (Fosco & Lydon-Staley, 2020). However, another study found no gender differences among adolescents in the strength of associations between parent-adolescent conflict and adolescent psychological well-being (Shek, 1998b).

1.3.3 Global Family Functioning, Environmental Variables, and Happiness

The impact of global family functioning and family environmental variables (i.e., family relationships and family dynamics) on happiness was supported by many studies (n = 39). Most articles (Table 2) specifically discussed the impact of dysfunctional family functioning on happiness from both the parents' and children's perspectives. Most studies showed that adequate and adaptive family functioning correlated positively with higher levels of happiness (Cacioppo et al., 2013; Chui & Wong, 2017; Shek, 1997b; 1999; 2002c; 2005; Tang et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2018), considering both affective and cognitive components (Sari & Dahlia, 2018; Shek & Liang, 2018; Shek & Liu, 2014). Only Syanti and Rahmania's (2019) study found no significant relationship between family functioning and adolescents' happiness.

Several studies found that children's and adolescents' global happiness correlated positively with family relationships (Ben-Zur, 2003; Gilman & Huebner, 2006; Lawler et al., 2015; 2017; 2018; Newland et al., 2005; 2014; 2015; 2019; Sarriera et al., 2018; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012; 2013; Willroth et al., 2021). Furthermore, positive relationships within the family strongly predicted increased happiness (Goswami, 2012; Huebner et al., 2000; Orejudo

et al., 2021). Children who reported daily activities with their family reported higher levels of happiness, regardless of the type of activity (e.g., talking, playing, learning together). Studies also indicated that adolescents' perception of high mutuality and stability and lack of severe problems in the family predicted their global satisfaction (Gómez et al., 2019; Rask et al., 2003). Studies further suggested that perceiving good relationships in the family was relevant in helping adolescents develop feelings of freedom, love, and happiness (Goswami, 2012; Huebner et al., 2000; Orejudo et al., 2021; Sarriera et al., 2018).

1.3.3.1 Socio-demographic Variables: Age, Gender, Socioeconomic Status

Socio-demographic variables (such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status) represent a sub-theme of environmental factors associated with happiness (n = 21). Regarding age differences, the well-being of children and adolescents primarily depends on the closeness of their relationships with family members and, particularly, their parents. Children reported being happier in their family relationships (Goswami, 2012) than adolescents (Park, 2005; Shek & Liang, 2018). However, one study found no age or gender differences in the interaction between life satisfaction and family functioning (Nevin et al., 2005). Young people who perceived a higher quality parent-child relationship had greater and more stable life satisfaction from the middle (i.e., aged 14–16 years) to late adolescence (i.e., aged 17–18) (Willroth et al., 2021).

The negative correlation between family functioning and life satisfaction was affected by gender differences. Girls perceived less familial dysfunction relative to boys (Shek, 1997a). In only one study, family satisfaction was the only significant predictor of girls' life satisfaction (Vera et al., 2012). Another study showed that boys with high levels of overall satisfaction reported high stability and reciprocity and fewer problems in the family (Rask et al., 2003). However, other studies found no gender differences in the association between these variables (Cacioppo et al., 2013; Flouri & Buchanan, 2003; Shek, 1997b). Only one study found no

correlation between family functioning and the life satisfaction of adolescent boys from low-income families (Shek, 2004).

The study by Shek (1998c) showed that adolescents' life satisfaction correlated with the perceived family atmosphere (i.e., family happiness and family interactions), parent-adolescent relationship, and adolescent-parent communication concurrently at Time 1 and Time 2 one year apart, regardless of gender. Thus, for both boys and girls, greater life satisfaction was associated with higher perceived happiness in the family and more frequent positive conversations. Some studies revealed that those with a more positive family environment displayed higher happiness and life satisfaction (Shek, 1998c; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013). Other studies revealed that the link between family functioning and life satisfaction was significantly stronger for adolescent girls than adolescent boys (Shek, 1998a; 2005).

Concerning socioeconomic status, the study conducted by Shek (2002b) showed that family functioning was generally more closely related to adolescent adaptation measures for economically disadvantaged adolescents than for non-economically disadvantaged adolescents. This suggests that family functioning may be associated with better adaptation in high-risk adolescents (Schnettler et al., 2018b; Shek & Liu, 2014). One study found that satisfaction with family functioning predicted the happiness of rural-urban migrant children—a subgroup with worse self-rated family financial situations (Wang et al., 2019).

Table 2

Sample Characteristics and Methods of Assessment of Reviewed Studies Investigating Global Family Functioning, Environment Variables, and Happiness (n = 39)

		Child characteristics		Happiness Measure		Family Measures			
Author (year), country	***N***	**Age**	**% male**	**Method**	**Measure**	**Method**	**Measure**	**Res. Design**	**Pub**
Ben-Zur (2003), Israel	112	Range 15-19 (M = 17.06)	48	S	LSS PANAS	P/S	RFMQ	C	Pub
Cacioppo et al., (2013), Italy	255	Range 15-17 (M = 15.98)	40,8	S	MSLSS	S	FAD	C	Pub
Chui & Wong (2017), China	1,830	Range 10-19 (M = 14.2)	47,9	S	SWLS	S	FAI	C	Pub
Flouri & Buchanan (2003), United Kingdom	2,722	Range 14-18 (M = 14.2)	41,3	S	HS	S	F/MIS	C	Pub
Gilman & Huebner (2006), United States	485	Range 11-18 (M = 14.45)	54,0	S	SLSS	S	BASC	C	Pub
Gómez et al. (2019), Chile	1,392	Range 10-13 (M = 11.5)	54,2	S	SLSS	S	ISCWeB	C	Pub
Goswami (2012), United Kingdom	4,673	Two age groups (8 and 10 year)	47,0	S	SLSS	S	MSLSS	C	Pub
Heaven et al. (1996), Australia	183	Range 13-17 (M = 13.3)	36,1	S	SWLS	S	FOS	C	Pub
Huebner et al. (2000), United States (Time 1)	321	Range 14-18 (M = 16.14)	35,0	S	SLSS	S	BASC	L	Pub
Huebner et al. (2000), United States (Time 2)	99	Range 14-18	34,5	S	SLSS	S	BASC	L	Pub
Lawler et al. (2015), 11 countries (United States sample)	784	Range 11-14 (M = 12.63)	ns	S	LSI	S	FRQ PIS	C	Pub
Lawler et al. (2015), 11 countries (International sample)	781	Range 10-14 (M = 12.06)	ns	S	LSI	S	FRQ PIS	N	Pub
Lawler et al. (2017), 11 countries (United States sample)	502	Range 10-12 (M = 10.66)	ns	S	LSI	S	FRQ PIS	C	Pub
Lawler et al. (2017), 11 countries (International sample)	502	Range 9-12 (M = 10.12))	ns	S	LSI	S	FRQ PIS	N	Pub
Lawler et al. (2018), South Korea and United States (SK sample)	489	Range 10-12	Ns	S	SLSS	S	FRQ PIS	C	Pub
Lawler et al. (2018), South Korea and United States (US sample)	1286	Range 10-12 (M = 11.21)	ns	S	SLSS	S	FRQ PIS	C	Pub
Nevin et al. (2005), Ireland	294	Range 15-18 (M = 16.4)	40,0	S	OHI SWLS	S	FAD	C	Pub
Newland et al. (2014), United States	149	Range 12-14 (M = 13.0)	52,3	S	LSI	S	FRQ PIS	C	Pub
Newland et al. (2015), United States (5th Grade)	502	Range 10-12 (M = 10.66)	54,8	S	LSI	S	FRQ PIS	C	Pub
Newland et al. (2015), United States (7th Grade)	784	Range 12-14 (M = 12.63)	49,1	S	LSI	S	FRQ PIS	C	Pub
Newland et al. (2019), 14 countries	25,906	Range 9-14 (M = 11.4)	47,8	S	SLSS+OLS	S	FRQ	N	Pub
Rask et al. (2003), Finland	239	Range 12-17 (M = 14.0)	49,0	S	BSW/Y	P/S	FDM II	C	Pub
Sari & Dahlia (2018), Indonesia	193	Range 12-15 (M = 12.97)	50,3	S	SWLS PANAS	S	FAD	C	Pub
Sarriera et al. (2018), Brazil and Spain	6,747	Range 11-14 (M = 12.07)	49,3	S	SLSS	S	ISCWeB	N	Pub
Shek (1997a), China	365	Range 12-16	80,5	S	SWLS	S	SFI	C	Pub
Shek (1997b), China	429	Range 12-16 (M = 13.0)	50	S	SWLS	S	SFI	D	Pub
Shek (1998a), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (M = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (1998a), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (M = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (1998c), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (M = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	S I	SFI AIS	L	Pub
Shek (1998c), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (M = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	S I	SFI AIS	L	Pub
Shek (1999), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (M = 13.0)	51,0	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (1999), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (M = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (2002b), China	1,519	Range 11-18	ns	S	SWLS	S	FAI	C	Pub

Shek (2002c), China	361	Range 12-16 (M = 14,0)	66.4	S	SWLS	S	SFI FAD FAI	C	Pub
Shek (2002d), China	229	Range 12-16	53.3	S	SWLS	S	PPAR	D	Pub
Shek (2004), China	228	Range 12-16	46,5	S	SWLS	S	FAI	D	Pub
Shek (2005), China (Time 1)	229	Range 12-16	46,7	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek (2005), China (Time 2)	199	Range 13-17	ns	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek & Liang (2018), China	3,328	Range 12-18 (*M* = 12.59)	51,7	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek & Liu (2014), China (Time 1)	4,106	Range 14-15 (*M* = 14.65)	53,2	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek & Liu (2014), China (Time 2)	2,667	Range 17-18	ns	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek et al. (2001), China	1,519	Range 11-18 (*M* = 13.5)	49,9	S	SWLS	S	PPAR	C	Pub
Syanti & Rahmania (2019), Indonesia	118	Range 12-19	44,0	S	SWBS	S	FAD	C	Un
Tang et al. (2021), China	1,060	Range 13-16 (*M* = 14.6)	ns	S	CHI	S	BFFQ	C	Pub*
Uusitalo-Malmivaara (2012), Finland	737	Range 11-12 (*M* = 12.10)	49,2	S	SHS	S	FRS	C	Pub
Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto (2013), Finland	737	Range 11-12 (*M* = 12.10)	49,2	S	SHS	S	FRS	C	Pub
Wang et al. (2019), China	2,229	Range 9-17 (*M* = 11.46)	52,0	S	PANAS PWI-SC SWLS	S	FAPGARI	C	Pub
Willroth et al. (2021), United States (Time 1)	674	Range 14-16 (*M* = 14.75)	ns	S	OLS	S	PCRQ	L	Pub
Zhou et al. (2018), China	1,656	Range 16-19 (*M* = 15.8)	44,39	S	HS+MSLS S	S	FAD	C	Pub

Note. For Happiness method. S = Self-report questionnaire. For Happiness measures. BSW/Y = *Berne questionnaire of Subjective Well-being/Youth form*; CHI = *Chinese Happiness Inventory*; HS= *Happiness Scale*; LSI = *Life Satisfaction Indicator*; LSS = *Life Satisfaction Scale*; MSLSS = *Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale*; OHI = *Oxford Happiness Inventory*; OLS = *Overall Life Satisfaction*; PANAS = *Positive and Negative Affect Scale*; SHS = *Subjective Happiness scale*; SLSS = *Students' Life Satisfaction Scale*; SWBS = *Subjective Well-Being Scale*; SWLS = *Satisfaction with Life Scale*;

For Family Method. I = Interview assessments; P/S = Parent and Self-report; S = Self report. For Family measures. AIS = *Adolescent Interview Schedule*; BASC = *Behavior Assessment System for Children-Self-Report-Adolescent Form*; BFFQ = *Brief Family Function Questionnaire*; FAD = *Family Assessment Device*; FAI = *Family Assessment Instrument*; FAPGARI = *Family APGAR Index*; FDM II = *Family Dynamics Measure*; F/MIS = *Father/Mother Involvement Scale*; FOS = *Family-of-Origin Scale*; FRS = *Family Relationship Scale*; FRQ = *Family Relationship Quality*; ISCWeB = *International Survey of Children's Well-Being*; MSLSS = *Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale*; PCRQ = *Parent-Child Relationship Quality*; PIS = *Parent Involvement Scale*; PPAR = *Perceived Parent–Adolescent Relationship*; RFMQ = *Relationship with Father/Mother Questionnaire*; SFI = *Self-Report Family Instrument*;

For Research design. C = Cross-sectional; D = Derived from a longitudinal study (one wave of a longitudinal study); L = Longitudinal; N = Cross-national.

For publication status. P = Published; Un = Not published; *= Additional data retrieved from the authors. ns = not specified

1.3.4 Parental Differences

The third theme that emerged in the studies investigating the association between children's and adolescents' happiness and family functioning was inherent discrepancies in parent-child perspectives and parental gender differences (n = 17) (Table 3). The data revealed that the perception of family competence was related to family members' perception of parental dyadic qualities and individual functioning (Shek, 1997c). In particular, regardless of the source of information (i.e., father, mother, and child), child satisfaction correlated negatively with family dysfunction (Shek, 1999). No differences emerged between parents and children regarding family conflict (Shek, 1998b) and family satisfaction (Schnettler et al., 2017). Finally, only the study by Verrastro and collaborators (2020) did not identify significant differences between parents and children in the association between children's happiness and family functioning (i.e., cohesion, adaptability, communication, and family satisfaction) (Verrastro et al., 2020).

While the investigated studies highlighted differences between mothers and fathers, the results were contradictory and heterogeneous. Some studies reported that only maternal understanding, and not fatherly understanding, was closely related to adolescent life satisfaction (Ingelmo & Litago, 2018) and overall adolescent satisfaction (Rask et al., 2003). Adolescents with a positive mother relationship showed greater happiness than those with a poor mother-child relationship; however, this association was not significant for the relationship with the father (Shek & Liang, 2018).

Other research found that the father-children relationship was more closely correlated with indicators of adolescents' happiness than the mother-children relationship (Ben-Zur, 2003; Ljubetić & Reić Ercegovac, 2020; Shek, 1998b). Furthermore, the perceived father-adolescent relationship, but not the mother-adolescent relationship, correlated positively with children's happiness (Shek, 2002d). For instance, the study by Zhao and collaborators (2015) showed that children's life satisfaction correlated positively with father-child cohesion but not with mother-

child cohesion (Zhao et al., 2015). The selected studies would seem to highlight that although paternal and maternal involvement contributed significantly and independently to children's happiness, father involvement had a more substantial effect than mother involvement (Flouri & Buchanan, 2003).

Children's and adolescents' happiness (both in the affective and cognitive components) was positively correlated with parent-child relationship qualities (Newland et al., 2019) differently according to the parent's gender. The father-adolescent relationship correlated with positive affect and life satisfaction, while the mother-adolescent relationship correlated positively with life satisfaction and weakly with positive affect (Ben-Zur, 2003). However, Shek (2002d) showed that only the perceived father-adolescent relationship, and not the mother-adolescent relationship, correlated positively with the children's life satisfaction.

Concerning the dimensions of family functioning, age, and gender differences emerged in mother-children and father-children communication. Adolescents were significantly more satisfied with communication with their mothers than their fathers (Jackson et al., 1998). The study by Cava and collaborators (2014) showed that girls reported greater openness in communication with their mothers and boys with their fathers. Boys reported fewer problems and more open communication with fathers than girls (Jiménez et al., 2009), while no gender differences emerged in communication with mothers (Jackson et al., 1998).

Regarding age differences, early adolescents (i.e., aged 12–13 years) reported more positive open communication with their mother and their father relative to mid-adolescents (i.e., aged 14–16 years). In addition, communication problems with both parents increased with age. Overall, adolescents were generally satisfied with their communication with their parents (particularly their mother), and early adolescents were more positive about their communication with their parents than mid-adolescents (Jackson et al., 1998).

Table 3

Sample Characteristics and Methods of Assessment of Reviewed Studies Investigating the Parental Differences (*n* = 17)

		Child Characteristics		Happiness Measure		Family Measures			
Author (year), country	***N***	**Age**	**% male**	**Method**	**Measure**	**Method**	**Measure**	**Res. Design**	**Pub**
Ben-Zur (2003), Israel	112	Range 15-19 (*M* = 17.06)	48,0	S	LSS PANAS	P/S	RFMQ	C	Pub
Cava et al. (2014), Spain	1,795	Range 11-18 (*M* = 14.2)	52,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS	C	Pub
Flouri & Buchanan (2003), United Kingdom	2,722	Range 14-18 (*M* = 14.2)	41,3	S	HS	S	F/MIS	C	Pub
Ingelmo & Litago (2018), Spain	1,409	Range 11-18 (*M* = 14.4)	49,6	S	CL	S	SWFR	C	Pub
Jackson et al. (1998), Holland	660	Range 13-15 (*M* = 13.5)	46,4	S	ABS CL	S	PACS	C	Pub
Jiménez et al. (2009), Spain	565	Range 11-18 (*M* = 13.6)	51,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS	C	Pub
Ljubetić & Reić Ercegovac (2020), Croatia	101	Range 10-17 (*M* = 15.4)	31,7	S	GQA	S	QFIS	C	Pub
Newland et al. (2019), 14 countries	25,906	Range 9-14 (*M* = 11.4)	47,8	S	SLSS+OLS	S	FRQ	N	Pub
Rask et al. (2003), Finland	239	Range 12-17 (*M* = 14.0)	49,0	S	BSW/Y	P/S	FDM II	C	Pub
Schnettler et al. (2017), Chile	300	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.2)	51,0	S	SWLS	P/S	SWFaL	C	Pub
Shek (1997c), China	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	P/S	F/MACS	D	Pub
Shek (1998b), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	P/S	F/MACS	L	Pub
Shek (1998b), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (*M* = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	F/MACS	L	Pub
Shek (1999), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	51,0	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (1999), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (*M* = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (2002d), China	229	Range 12-16	53.3	S	SWLS	S	F/MACS PPAR	D	Pub
Shek & Liang (2018), China	3,328	Range 12-18 (*M* = 12.6)	51,7	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Verrastro et al. (2020), Italy	1,549	Range 7-14 (*M* = 11.1)	47,0	G S	HFS PHS	S	FACES IV	C	Pub
Zhao et al. (2015), China (Father migrating group)	145	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.9)	60,0	S	SWLS	S	FACES II	C	Pub
Zhao et al. (2015), China (Two-parent-migrating group)	96	Range 10-17 (*M* = 13.9)	55,2	S	SWLS	S	FACES II	C	Pub

Note. For Happiness method. G = Graphical assessment; S = Self-report questionnaire. For Happiness measures. ABS = *Affect Balance Scale*; BSW/Y = *Berne questionnaire of Subjective Well-being/Youth form*; CL = *Cantril Ladder*; GQA = *General Questionnaire for Adolescents*; HFS = *Happiness Face Scale*; HS = *Happiness Scale*; LSS = *Life Satisfaction Scale*; OLS = Overall Life Satisfaction; PANAS= *Positive and Negative Affect Scale*; PHS = *Piers-Harris Children's Concept Scale 2*; SLSS = *Students' Life Satisfaction Scale*; SWLS = *Satisfaction with Life Scale*; For Family Method. P/S = Parent and Self-report; S = Self report. For Family measures. F/MACS = *Father/Mother–Adolescent Conflict Scale*; FAI = *Family Assessment Instrument*; FDM II = *Family Dynamics Measure*; F/MIS = *Father/Mother Involvement Scale*; FRQ = *Family Relationship Quality*; PACS = *Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale*; PPAR = *Perceived Parent–Adolescent Relationship*; QFIS = *Quality of Family Interaction Scale*; RFMQ = *Relationship with Father/Mother Questionnaire*; SFI = *Self-Report Family Instrument*; SWFaL = *Satisfaction with Family Life*; SWFR = *Satisfaction with family relationships*. For Research design. C = Cross-sectional; D = Derived from a longitudinal study (one wave of a longitudinal study); L = Longitudinal; N = Cross-national. For publication status. P = Published. ns = not specified

Table 4

Sample Characteristics and Methods of Assessment of the Longitudinal Studies (*n* = 13)

		Child Characteristics		Happiness Measure		Family Measures			
Author (year), country	***N***	**Age**	**% male**	**Method**	**Measure**	**Method**	**Measure**	**Res. Design**	**Pub**
Gao & Potwarka (2021), China	675	Range 12–15	47,3	S	SLSS PANAS	S	FACES II	L	Pub
Huebner et al. (2000), United States (Time 1)	321	Range 14-18 (*M* = 16.14)	35,0	S	SLSS	S	BASC	L	Pub
Huebner et al. (2000), United States (Time 2)	99	Range 14-18	34,5	S	SLSS	S	BASC	L	Pub
Jhang (2021), China (Time 1)	1,273	Range 12–15 (*M* = 13.55)	49,0	S	SWLS	S	FACES III	L	Pub
Jhang (2021), China (Time 2)	1,028	Range 14-17	ns	S	SWLS	S	FACES III	L	Pub
Jiménez et al. (2014), Spain (Time 1)	1,319	Range 12–16 (*M* = 13.5)	46,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS	L	Pub
Jiménez et al. (2014), Spain (Time 2)	554	Range 12–16 (*M* = 13.7)	46,0	S	SWLS	S	PACS	L	Pub
Lin & Yi (2019), China	2,690	Range 13–17 (*M* = 13.3)	51,2	S	LS	S	FACES III	L	Pub
Shek (1998a), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (1998a), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (*M* = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (1998b), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	P/S	F/MACS	L	Pub
Shek (1998b), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (*M* = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	F/MACS	L	Pub
Shek (1998c), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	50,6	S	SWLS	S I	F/MACS SFI AIS	L	Pub
Shek (1998c), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (*M* = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	S I	F/MACS SFI AIS	L	Pub
Shek (1999), China (Time 1)	429	Range 12-16 (*M* = 13.0)	51,0	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (1999), China (Time 2)	378	Range 13-17 (*M* = 14.0)	ns	S	SWLS	P/S	SFI	L	Pub
Shek (2005), China (Time 1)	229	Range 12-16	46,7	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek (2005), China (Time 2)	199	Range 13-17	ns	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek & Liang (2018), China	3,328	Range 12-18 (*M* = 12.59)	51,7	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek & Liu (2014), China (Time 1)	4,106	Range 14-15 (*M* = 14.65)	53,2	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Shek & Liu (2014), China (Time 2)	2,667	Range 17-18	ns	S	SWLS	S	FAI	L	Pub
Willroth et al. (2021), United States (Time 1)	674	Range 14-16 (*M* = 14.75)	ns	S	OLS	S	PCRQ	L	Pub

Note. For Happiness Method. S = Self-report questionnaire. For Happiness Measures. LS = *Life Satisfaction;* OLS = *Overall Life Satisfaction*; PANAS = *Positive and Negative Affect Scale*; SLSS = *Students' Life Satisfaction Scale*; SWLS = *Satisfaction with Life Scale*.

For Family Method. I = Interview assessments; P/S = Parent and Self-report; S = Self report. For Family Measures. AIS = *Adolescent Interview Schedule*; BASC = *Behavior Assessment System for Children-Self-Report-Adolescent Form*; FACES = *Family adaptability and cohesion evaluation scales*; F/MACS = *Father/Mother–Adolescent Conflict Scale*; FAI = *Family Assessment Instrument*; PACS = *Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale*; PCRQ = Parent-Child Relationship Quality; SFI = *Self-Report Family Instrument*.

For Research design. L = Longitudinal. For publication status. P = Published. ns = not specified.

1.3.5 Longitudinal Studies and Prediction of Happiness Over Time

Finally, the last theme (n = 13) highlighted the relevance of assessing the relationship between happiness and family functioning over time (Table 4). Indeed, longitudinal studies showed that children's and adolescents' life satisfaction correlated with family functioning and parental relationships over time (Huebner et al., 2000; Shek, 1998a; 1998c; 1999; 2005; Shek & Liang, 2018; Shek & Liu, 2014). In particular, one longitudinal study suggested that the relationship between perceived family functioning and adolescent psychological happiness was bidirectional in nature (Shek, 2005).

Generally, the results showed that children's and adolescents' happiness at Time 1 was related to perceived family functioning at Time 2. Therefore, children's life satisfaction predicts children's family functioning over time (Shek, 1999). At the same time, some studies revealed that adolescents with more poorly perceived family functioning at Time 1 (i.e., negative family environment) had poorer life satisfaction at Time 2 (Shek, 1998a; 1998c; Shek & Liu, 2014). A negative family atmosphere, more significant family dysfunction, and parent-adolescent conflicts predicted negative changes in adolescents' happiness over time (Shek, 1998c). Overall, youth with a more positive family environment in middle adolescence (i.e., aged 14–16 years) reported higher levels of happiness during late adolescence (i.e., aged 17–18 years) (Willroth et al., 2021). Moreover, in addition to age differences, Shek's study (2005) showed that the longitudinal linkage between family functioning and adolescent adjustment was stronger for adolescent girls than adolescent boys.

Regarding the different dimensions of family functioning, studies found that family cohesion, but not perceived family adaptability, was a significant predictor of changes in adolescents' happiness over time (Gao & Potwarka, 2021). In particular, increased family cohesion was associated with increased life satisfaction and positive affection (Gao & Potwarka, 2021), which may have promoted happiness over time (Jhang, 2021). Furthermore, family cohesion and open communication with parents at Time 1 positively correlate with

happiness at Time 2 (Jhang, 2021; Jiménez et al., 2014).

Studies also showed that parent–adolescent conflict predicted changes in adolescents' happiness over time. Thus, more significant parent–adolescent conflict at Time 1 was associated with lower adolescent life satisfaction at Time 2 (Shek, 1998b; 1998c; 1999). Finally, the study conducted by Lin and Yi (2019) longitudinally analyzed the association between life satisfaction and family cohesion. In particular, the authors showed that children's life satisfaction and family cohesion remained significantly related despite gradually deteriorating during early and middle adolescence (i.e., aged 13–15 years). Youth from more cohesive families often had higher life satisfaction when they entered middle school. In comparison, pre-adolescents who reported higher life satisfaction at the beginning of middle school (i.e., aged 11 years) tended to experience a slower decline in family cohesion during adolescence (Lin & Yi, 2019).

1.4 Discussion

Study 1 aimed to conduct a systematic review to examine the existing literature regarding the association between children's and adolescents' happiness and family functioning. A total of 124 studies were systematically reviewed to identify the more relevant dimensions of family functioning associated with children's and adolescents' happiness. Four themes emerged from a review of these studies: (1) family dimensions and happiness; (2) global family functioning (i.e., family functioning and family relationships), environmental variables, and happiness; (3) parental differences; (4) longitudinal studies.

Regarding the first theme, 91 studies examined the relationship between family dimensions and children's and adolescents' happiness. Given the heterogeneity of the results, the first theme was divided into three sub-themes that analyzed specific dimensions of family functioning: (a) family satisfaction and communication, (b) family cohesion and adaptability,

and (c) family conflict. The results of the studies reviewed highlighted that family cohesion significantly predicted changes in happiness, life satisfaction, and positive affect over time (Fosco & Lydon-Staley, 2020; Jhang, 2021; Lin & Yi, 2019; Yun & Choi, 2018). In other words, increased family cohesion and adaptability were associated with higher levels of children's and adolescents' happiness (Gao & Potwarka, 2021; Mallette et al., 2021; Yuan et al., 2019). Thus, positive family dimensions would contribute directly to the children's and adolescents' sense of happiness, contentment, and general life satisfaction (Hamama & Arazi, 2012; Salewski, 2003).

Family satisfaction and family communication were additional dimensions of family functioning that had been shown to be extremely important for promoting children's and adolescents' happiness. Specifically, selected studies found that, regardless of children's gender, positive communication with the mother and the father and high family satisfaction was directly associated with increased happiness (Bennefield, 2018; González-Carrasco et al., 2017b; Gross-Manos et al., 2015; Jiménez et al., 2009). Furthermore, the possibility to express oneself freely at home (i.e., to speak openly about any subject) was associated with higher life satisfaction for adolescents (Estévez López et al., 2018). Therefore, these variables would seem to play a role as facilitators of relationships among family members.

In this sense, adolescents who communicated effectively with their families probably felt that they could share their points of view and feelings openly and sincerely with their parents, and they may have interpreted this communication as a sign of parental support, trust, and closeness (Cava et al., 2014; Jackson et al., 1998). This may be especially true for girls, for whom the influence of family communication on happiness was slightly greater (Kaye-Tzadok et al., 2017; Verrastro et al., 2020), possibly due to gender differences in cultural norms and socialization. Different parental socialization styles based on child gender (Garaigordobil & Aliri, 2012) may also explain why communication tends to be more open between mothers and daughters and between fathers and sons (Cava et al., 2014).

On the other hand, communication problems and higher family conflicts were associated with lower happiness for children and adolescents (Carrascosa et al., 2018; Khurana, 2011; Rodríguez-Rivas et al., 2021). When communication was open and trouble-free, children and adolescents were likelier to report satisfaction with their families, positive affect, and low conflict levels than children and adolescents who reported less communication with parents (Jackson et al., 1998). This finding suggests that family relationships that are perceived to be good may help children and adolescents develop feelings of freedom, love, and happiness (Orejudo et al., 2021), underlining that family dimensions play an essential role in influencing children's and adolescents' happiness (Shek, 1997a).

As regards the second theme, 39 studies examined the association between global family functioning (i.e., family functioning and family relationships), family environment variables, and children's and adolescents' happiness. Specifically, a more positive perception of family functioning was related to better emotional well-being in children and adolescents (Nevin et al., 2005; Sari & Dahlia, 2018; Wang et al., 2019; Zhou et al., 2018). Furthermore, regardless of the cultural background, relationships with family members showed an influence on children's happiness (Gómez et al., 2019; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013), representing the most significant variable in predicting well-being (Lee & Yoo, 2015). Indeed, a bad parent-child relationship is usually accompanied by negative family satisfaction and low happiness (Ingelmo & Litago, 2018). Thus, feeling happy at home may contribute to both boys' and girls' happiness (González-Carrasco et al., 2017b).

The reported studies supported the association between global family functioning and happiness during adolescence, even though adolescents consolidate new social relationships with friends and partners during this developmental period (Bernal et al., 2011). The family is the context in which the first emotional relationships develop, and where children learn to respect and establish positive relationships of love and respect for others (Sarriera et al., 2018). Parents in a well-functioning family can provide emotional support to children, allowing them

to express their emotions. A warm and open family communicates happiness to children (Sari & Dahlia, 2018), giving them a sense of security, emotional connection, or trust (Zhao et al., 2015).

One sub-theme of environmental factors associated with happiness concerned differences in sociodemographic variables. More specifically, selected studies showed that personal and family factors (such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status) predicted individual differences in happiness and life satisfaction during adolescence. Indeed, more positive family environments were associated with greater happiness (Nevin et al., 2005; Willroth et al., 2021). Furthermore, the findings supported stability, change in perceived levels, and the relevance of certain life satisfaction domains among children and adolescents. Young people who perceived a higher quality parent–child relationship had elevated and stable life satisfaction from middle adolescence (i.e., aged 14–16 years) to late adolescence (i.e., aged 17–18 years) (Willroth et al., 2021).

In contrast, other studies found differences depending on age, showing that young people's life satisfaction was negatively correlated with age in all global and life domains (e.g., family satisfaction) (Goldbeck et al., 2007; Park, 2005). The decrease in happiness levels during the transition from childhood to adolescence suggests that pre-adolescence may be a stressful phase of development, during which cognitive, physical, and emotional changes strongly influence young people's overall sense of happiness (Verrastro et al., 2020). During this transition phase, family members, particularly parents, may play an essential role in accompanying their children through these multiple personal and social changes.

Adolescence involves internal changes on an emotional and social level, resulting in decreased levels of happiness over time (Goldbeck et al., 2007), and externally, resulting in changes in family relationships. In particular, the decline in both family cohesion and happiness during early and middle adolescence (i.e., aged 12–16 years) may be explained by both the multiple challenges that adolescents face and the more significant conflict that they tend to

experience with parents, which tend to result in less participation in family activities. This may reduce adolescents' perceived family cohesion and life satisfaction (Lin & Yi, 2019).

Regarding the third theme identified, 17 studies explored parental gender differences in the association between happiness and family functioning. The selected studies produced contradictory results: a single study reported that a positive mother–child relationship, but not a father–child relationship, was associated with greater happiness in children (Shek & Liang, 2018). However, six studies found significant correlations between the father–child relationship and not the mother–child relationship (Ben-Zur, 2003; Flouri & Buchanan, 2003; Ljubetić & Reić Ercegovac, 2020; Shek, 1998b; Shek, 2002d; Zhao et al., 2015). These results suggest that relationships with mothers and fathers are relevant to happiness for children and adolescents.

However, these studies, which suggest that fathers have the most significant impact on children's and adolescents' well-being, contradict the literature showing that mothers tend to be more significant in determining child developmental outcomes. Although fathers tend to spend less time with children relative to mothers (Altenburger et al., 2018), they may be more engaged and dedicated to children when they do spend time together, focusing on the specific situation at hand. Children may perceive their father's behavior as an essential aspect of their relationship that increases their happiness over the long term (Ljubetić & Reić Ercegovac, 2020). Future studies should investigate the differences between mothers and fathers and the perspectives between parents and children to better understand these aspects.

Finally, the last theme that emerged, analyzed by 13 studies, highlighted the importance of evaluating the relationship between happiness and family functioning over time from a predictive point of view. Several studies showed that regardless of the source of information (i.e., father, mother, or child) and the sequence of data collection (i.e., simultaneously vs. longitudinally), children's and adolescent's happiness was correlated with family functioning (Shek, 1998c; 1999). The results of both the simultaneous and longitudinal studies consistently showed that the cognitive component of happiness (i.e., life satisfaction) was significantly

associated with family functioning and family relationships (Huebner et al., 2000; Shek & Liang, 2018; Shek & Liu, 2014). In addition, the longitudinal studies suggested that the relation between perceived family functioning and adolescents' happiness may be bidirectional (Shek, 2005); therefore, it is no possible to confirm a univocal causal link between these factors.

Regarding the different dimensions of family functioning, studies found that family cohesion (Gao & Potwarka, 2021; Jhang, 2021), family communication (Jiménez et al., 2014), and parent-adolescent conflict (Shek, 1998b; 1998c) were significant predictors of changes in adolescent happiness over time. Thus, more significant parent-adolescent conflict at Time 1 tended to be associated with a decline in adolescent life satisfaction at Time 2 (Shek 1998c), while greater family cohesion and open communication with parents tended to be associated with increased life satisfaction over time (Jiménez et al., 2014; Lin & Yi, 2019). Also, concerning family conflict, the study conducted by Shek (1998c) showed that the relation between parent-adolescent conflict and adolescent emotional well-being could be bidirectional. Future studies should investigate the causal links between individual and family variables.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that family dimensions may influence the affective and cognitive components of children's and adolescents' happiness (Gao & Potwarka, 2021; Hamama & Arazi, 2012; Jackson et al., 1998; Lietz et al., 2020; Moore et al., 2018; Shek, 1997a; Silva et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021; Yun & Choi, 2018). In particular, the reviewed findings demonstrate the significance of family bonds and support for adolescents, indicating that the help and affection received, understanding of their problems and concerns, and support in times of sadness provide multiple benefits that will undoubtedly affect their development of positive psychological experiences (Ingelmo & Litago, 2018; Rask et al., 2003).

1.5 Limitations and Strengths of the Studies and Future Research Directions

Although there may be an increasing trend in examining the relationship between

happiness and family functioning, indicated by the growing number of publications in recent years, the selected studies have some methodological limitations. First, self-report measures may have exposed studies' results to the potential social desirability bias. Future studies should prefer a multi-informant and multi-method methodology that combines qualitative measures (i.e., structured or semi-structured interviews) or multi-informant questionnaires (i.e., parents- and teachers-reports) with self-reports. Second, the use of cross-sectional designs did not enable causal links to be drawn between variables. Thus, future studies should implement longitudinal procedures to understand better the factors contributing to children's and adolescents' happiness. Furthermore, the heterogeneity of the samples (e.g., geographical scope, size, and age range) limits the generalizability of the results.

The current systematic review has several strengths and limitations. Regarding the limitations, the lack of a coherent theoretical model to define the construct of happiness represents a significant gap in the literature. This lack of an empirical framework may explain the variety of measurement tools and the operationalization of the construct in the investigated studies. This problem is compounded by the fact that some analyzed studies did not clearly define happiness, positive affect, or life satisfaction. Therefore, future research should explicitly make the psychological construct operational.

Additionally, future research should explore the association between attachment styles and children's and adolescents' happiness during development. A further limitation of the present research is the possibility that methodological biases may have affected the study selection due to the constructs' arbitrariness and the reviewers' interpretation. However, two independent evaluators excluded all articles that deviated from a precise definition of happiness or analyzed family factors other than family functioning. Thus, attempts were made to target the constructs of interest.

A future research direction might be to examine overall effect sizes, which were not addressed in the present study. As for possible future directions, the current literature review

has not been deepened in a meta-analysis work, but it could be a helpful starting point for future investigations through this methodology. Moreover, it is essential to note that the present work focused on the relationships between happiness and family functioning in non-clinical samples: Analyzing the association between happiness and family functioning in clinical samples could be an exciting starting point for scientific contributions in the field and an equivalent analysis in clinical samples may provide important new insights. Finally, the present review suggests the relevance of the father–child relationship, father–child cohesion, and father–child conflict in predicting children's and adolescents' happiness. Future research should further investigate the differences between fathers and mothers, using multi-informant and mixed-methods procedures and a longitudinal approach.

Despite the limitations inherent in the methodology of the studies analyzed and in implementing the systematic review, the present study also has significant strengths. The most important strength is the adherence to a rigorous systematic review protocol with clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Indeed, a careful research strategy carried out by two independent evaluators was employed to acquire all relevant articles. Another strength is the high reviewer reliability during the screening process, which reflects a transparent selection methodology. The innovative aspect of the current review is that it represents the first study to synthesize the literature on happiness in the family context at developmental age, filling a significant gap in the literature about the possible impact of family functioning on children's and adolescents' happiness. Finally, the review identified heterogeneous measurements of happiness and family functioning during development, suggesting that future studies should develop a more standardized approach to obtain consistent results.

This systematic literature review has significant theoretical and practical implications. Regarding theoretical implications, the investigation into the association between happiness and family functioning contributes to the psychological understanding of factors influencing the emotional well-being of children and adolescents. This can enrich developmental psychological

theories and enhance understanding of emotional identity formation. Furthermore, studies in this domain can lead to the development of conceptual models illustrating the internal dynamics of the family and their impact on the happiness of young people. This may fuel new theoretical approaches in the field of family psychology and human development.

Furthermore, research in this domain has important practical implications for guiding clinical and educational practices. Understanding how family functioning influences children's and adolescents' happiness can guide the development of targeted clinical interventions. Clinical psychologists can use this information to design family therapies aimed at improving the emotional well-being of young patients. In particular, family counselors can use this information to help families improve their dynamics and promote a more positive family environment for children and adolescents. This may include facilitating family communication and developing strategies to address challenges. On the educational front, awareness of how family dynamics influence happiness can inform educational programs aimed at supporting students in complex family contexts. For example, teachers could adopt strategies to create a school environment that compensates for any challenges related to family functioning.

Chapter 2. Happy Family Moments from the Perspective of Parents and Children: A Thematic Analysis

2.1 Study 2: A Qualitative Analysis of the Happy Moments between Parents and Children

The paper summarizing study 2 was submitted in:

Izzo, F., Saija, E., Pallini, S., Ioverno, S., Baiocco, R., & Pistella, J. (Submitted). Happy Moments between Children and their Parents: A Multi-method and Multi-informant Perspective. *Journal of Happiness Studies.*

Study 1 underscored the universal significance of family relationships and overall family life satisfaction in shaping the happiness of children and adolescents, transcending cultural backgrounds (Gómez et al., 2019; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013). The relationships with family members consistently emerged as potent predictors of overall life satisfaction throughout the developmental journey from childhood to adolescence (Alcantara et al., 2017; Huebner, 1991a; Ingelmo & Litago, 2018; Park, 2005). The comprehensive review of existing literature illuminated the pivotal role of family-related factors, including family functioning and the quality of family relationships, in either increasing or decreasing children's level of happiness.

As a result, considering the fundamental importance of the family environment in shaping the emotional development of children and its role as the primary source of happiness during developmental stages (Chaplin, 2009; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020), Study 2 was conceived to delve into the realm of children's happiness within the familial context. The study's primary goal was to undertake a qualitative exploration of shared parent-child activities, seeking to identify moments that may represent moments of happiness for children.

Although the field of children's happiness has received increased research attention in recent years (Gómez et al., 2019; Holder, 2012), it is noteworthy that relatively few studies have approached this construct from a systemic perspective that considers the entire family unit. Some studies have identified distinct categories of sources of happiness for children, including: (a) Family relationships, highlighting the significance of positive familial bonds (Greco & Ison, 2014); (b) Friendship relationships, emphasizing the importance of friendships in contributing to children's happiness (Baiocco et al., 2019); (c) Material possessions and gifts, noting the role of material possessions and receiving gifts in children's happiness (Maftei et al., 2020); (d) Leisure, hobbies, sports, recognizing the impact of engagement in leisure activities, hobbies, sports, or holiday time on children's happiness (Ayriza et al., 2022; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Eloff, 2008). When children and pre-adolescents were asked to articulate what made them happy, several crucial factors emerged, including promoting positive relationships with family members characterized by physical closeness and open communication, receiving assistance in resolving difficulties, and experiencing minimal family problems or conflicts (Bennefield, 2018; Navarro et al., 2017).

Therefore, fostering feelings of optimism and happiness in childhood hinged not solely on the quantity of time spent within the family circle but significantly revolved around the quality of these shared moments. Crucial to children's well-being were aspects such as receiving love and attention from their parents, establishing emotional bonds within the family unit, and the absence of familial disputes (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Gray et al., 2013; Wagner et al., 1999). Numerous authors have emphasized that spending time with family members emerges as the primary source of children's happiness (Waters, 2020), surpassing even the positive experiences encountered at school or with peers (Chaplin, 2009; Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020). Consequently, this study set out to explore children's and parents' points of view regarding their perceptions of happy moments experienced together, with a specific aim to delineate potential disparities among children, mothers, and fathers.

Specifically, children frequently identify moments spent with their family as one of the most prevalent sources of happiness (Shek, 2001). Furthermore, a consistent body of research underscored the significance of family relationships and the closeness among family members as the most critical interpersonal factors contributing to the well-being and happiness of children and adolescents (Gómez et al., 2019; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013). Collectively, this body of research underscored the essential role that family dynamics play in shaping children's happiness (Sargeant, 2010). Conversely, experiencing happiness within the familial context can, in turn, help children and adolescents develop a sense of freedom, love, affection, and joy (González-Carrasco et al., 2017b; Orejudo et al., 2021).

Research in behavioral genetics has elucidated that happiness and overall well-being were significantly influenced by genetic factors and non-shared environments, with shared environments exerting a comparatively lesser impact, suggesting that happiness level was influenced mainly by parent-child genetic transmission (Nes, 2010; Nes & Røysamb, 2017). Within this context, it is conceivable that happy parents might have happy children, not solely due to the genetic underpinnings and the hereditary aspects of happiness but also because of their capacity to cultivate a nurturing and affectionate familial environment. This supportive and loving environment can contribute to happiness, resulting from both the parents' intrinsic disposition and responsiveness to their children's emotional needs (Nes, 2010).

Furthermore, empirical investigations highlighted that family relationships might not only represent the basis of children's happiness (Sargeant, 2010; Thoilliez, 2011) but might also represent a significant predictor of children's overall life satisfaction, transcending the influence of various other life contexts, such as school, friendships, and community (Holder & Coleman, 2009; Maftei et al., 2020). However, it remains uncertain to what extent and how frequently these moments of family happiness are shared and perceived by both children and their parents. To the best of our knowledge, no previous study has delved explicitly into examining happy family moments from the points of view of both children and their parents (Izzo et al., 2022).

2.1.1 Age and Gender Differences in Children's Happiness

Concerning the definitions provided by children, previous investigations highlighted noteworthy disparities in the origins and intensity of happiness based on age and gender. Numerous studies have identified diverse factors contributing to children's happiness in distinct age cohorts. For instance, Greco and Ison (2014) discerned sources of happiness among children aged 7 to 9 years, encompassing familial relationships, leisure activities (defined as activities carried out during free time and hobbies), and material possessions (such as receiving gifts or possessing objects). Conversely, Maftei et al. (2020) explored the sources of happiness among children aged 5 to 8 years and uncovered analogous contributors, including familial relationships, leisure activities, and material possessions.

Additionally, Chaplin (2009) researched various age groups and found variations in the sources of happiness. Specifically, children aged 8 to 9 predominantly mentioned hobbies, while preadolescents aged 12 to 13 emphasized material possessions, interpersonal relationships, and achievements as key contributors to their happiness (Chaplin, 2009). Other studies found more refined and elaborated definitions of happiness for preadolescents aged 11 to 12 years (Giacomoni et al., 2014) and those aged 12 to 13 years (López-Pérez et al., 2016). In these investigations, preadolescents were inclined to reference positive emotions with greater frequency, emphasizing achievements and friendships as significant sources of their happiness.

Beyond disparities in the conceptualizations of happiness, scientific literature has also shown discrepancies in happiness levels across age groups. In the broader context, general happiness and life satisfaction tended to show a linear decline with advancing age, encompassing life satisfaction in general and in various life domains such as family satisfaction (Goldbeck et al., 2007; Park, 2005). For instance, children frequently reported a pronounced decrement in personal and familial happiness levels (Ercegovac et al., 2021; Goldbeck et al., 2007; Park, 2005).

Regarding gender differences, the extant literature does not offer a consistent narrative.

Some studies have shown that boys exhibit a propensity toward greater happiness compared to girls (Bennefield, 2018; Kaye-Tzadok et al., 2017), while others have documented the converse trend and, therefore, that girls were happier than boys (Casas et al., 2013; Gross-Manos et al., 2015; Leto et al., 2019). Concurrently, some research has produced results that indicate an absence of gender disparities in happiness levels (López-Pérez et al., 2016; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013). These divergent findings may be ascribed to variations in the sources of happiness that pertain to gender differences.

According to some studies (Businaro et al., 2015; Giacomoni et al., 2014), girls exhibited a proclivity toward sources of well-being rooted in relationships and emotional dimensions that generate positive feelings of happiness. This inclination was reflected in girls' greater tendency to spend solitary time with their mothers and fathers than boys. In contrast, boys were more prone to identify leisure and recreational activities as sources of well-being (Businaro et al., 2015; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Hallers-Haalboom et al., 2016). One plausible explanation for this gender divergence could be that girls may have a stronger need for a robust social network, leading them to prioritize social relationships and empathetic connections. At the same time, boys may place greater emphasis on material possessions and physical aspects when defining happiness. This divergence was evident in the greater frequency of boys reporting playfulness and leisure time as sources of happiness (Argyle, 1987; Furnham & Cheng, 2000; Maccoby, 1990).

2.1.2 Parents' and Children's Perspectives in Assessing Family and Children's Happiness

In accordance with systemic theories, family happiness is characterized by the collective experience of joy, contentment, and well-being that permeates a family unit, where individuals experience happiness and contentment, strengthened by the perceived support from family members (Waters, 2020). Previous research has underscored that, notably in Western societies, families prioritize communication and sharing among family members as fundamental familial

values, distinguishing them from non-Western cultural contexts (Shek, 2001). Furthermore, it has been observed that a strained parent-child relationship within a family is frequently linked to diminished levels of both family satisfaction and child happiness.

These studies might suggest that having a shared definition of happiness is important to family functioning. Although some research found no differences in parents' and children's perspectives on family happiness (Schnettler et al., 2017), several other studies showed that parents and children often have different perceptions of happiness, showing many notable differences between generations and very low concordance between responses (Casas et al., 2007). When assessing their children's happiness, parents were often influenced by two biases (Lagattuta et al., 2012; López-Pérez & Wilson, 2015): (1) a positivity bias, which is the tendency of parents to overestimate their children's happiness and underestimate negative emotions; (2) an egocentric bias which is the tendency of parents to use their own happiness levels to estimate their children's happiness. However, as the availability of multiple sources of information increases the reliability of children's measurements by comparing sources (Schneider & Schimmack, 2009), parents' assessment of children's happiness is still considered an important source (Holder & Coleman, 2009).

Additional research indicated that parents and children might employ distinct sets of criteria when assessing families' happiness and the family unit's functioning. For instance, Shek (2001) conducted a study within a Chinese adolescent sample and discovered that parents and children tended to prioritize different factors when evaluating the happiness of families and family functioning. His findings revealed that children placed greater significance on emotional bonds, including love, support, understanding, acceptance, conflict resolution, and shared quality time. In contrast, parents emphasized the significance of problem-solving abilities and economic and material conditions when assessing these aspects (Shek, 2001). Therefore, parents and children might use different criteria for evaluating family satisfaction, although other studies found no differences in parents' and children's perspectives on family happiness

(Schnettler et al., 2017).

Additional research has identified gender-related disparities that may contribute to this divergence in perspective between parents and children. Previous studies have proposed that fathers tend to emphasize material aspects of the family environment, such as economic conditions. Conversely, mothers often emphasize emotional characteristics, including understanding and acceptance, and family relationships like parent-child and marital bonds (Shek, 2001). Furthermore, a systematic review conducted by Yaffe et al. (2020) demonstrated that fathers tend to exhibit a relatively lower degree of acceptance, responsiveness, and supportiveness than mothers, reflecting differences in parenting styles and behaviors directed toward their children. These findings appear consistent with conventional gender role stereotypes, which often portray women as more relationship-oriented than men (Eisenchlas, 2013), especially in the Italian context (Baiocco et al., 2019; Baiocco & Pistella, 2019).

In accordance with prevailing gender stereotypes, women were often stereotypically characterized as communal individuals—displaying attributes such as friendliness, warmth, altruism, sociability, interdependence, emotional expressiveness, and a focus on relationships—while men were perceived as less proficient in these communal qualities (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989). These variations in parental gender roles may potentially yield implications for family dynamics and the emotional well-being of children and preadolescents, consequently impacting their levels of happiness within the familial context, as underscored by Maftei et al. (2020). Overall, these findings highlight the possibility of generational disparities in the perspectives of parents and children and emphasize the necessity for further research to elucidate the children's sources of individual and family happiness more comprehensively.

2.1.3 The Present Study

The literature on happiness has mainly focused on adults and adolescents (Al Nima et al., 2012; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005a), whereas a limited number of studies have investigated the concept of happiness from the perspective of children in combination with the perspective of the parents (Baiocco et al., 2019; Businaro et al., 2015; Migliorini et al., 2019; Verrastro et al., 2020). The present study aimed to fill this gap in the literature using a multi-method and multi-informant perspective. Specifically, this study: (a) considered the family environment and parent-child relationships as relevant sources of children's happiness; (b) used qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate children's happiness; (c) considered the perception of happiness using different perspectives from children and their parents.

The present study was conducted in Italy, so it is worth noting some aspects of Italian culture to understand our results better. In recent years, the family environment in Italy has changed very profoundly and is constantly evolving (Istat, 2015). Italian culture combines individualistic (e.g., the primacy of individual objectives; independence) with collectivistic ideals (e.g., the centrality of Italian families of origin; the relatively stable social and community networks; de Silva et al., 2021). The significance of connectivity and autonomy in Italian families may set them apart from parent-child interactions in other cultures or nations.

Moreover, mothers are the relational fulcrum in the Italian family, whereas fathers are more peripheral. In fact, the mother's influence has been found to be particularly substantial in Italy, where it extends to all the children's activities, whereas the father's impact has frequently been less impactful (Cardoso et al., 2010; Lansford et al., 2021). Several studies on Italian families suggested that parents have a crucial role in developing children's well-being (Bernini & Tampieri, 2019) and happiness (Businaro et al., 2015; Migliorini et al., 2019). Although these aspects characterize the general culture of Italian families, it is crucial to emphasize that such specific features may not represent all the families under investigation in this study. For this reason, the focus of this research was to explore the elements that make children happy within

family relationships.

The main objective of the present study was to explore happy moments spent together from the perspective of parents and children, examining potential discrepancies in different points of view (Shek, 2001). The importance of studying developmental stages derives from the need to assess how children and preadolescents describe the concept of happiness within the family context and how these changes with age (Baiocco et al., 2019; Goldbeck et al., 2007; Verrastro et al., 2020). Therefore, integrating parents' perspectives and using qualitative and quantitative methodologies could be an essential resource for a better understanding of family happiness.

Based on the cited literature and using quantitative and qualitative methodology, we hypothesized that: (1) due to the positivity or egocentric bias in parents' reporting of children emotions, parents and children identify different happy moments spent together (Holder & Coleman, 2009; Lagattuta et al., 2012; López-Pérez & Wilson, 2015; Shek, 2001); (2) younger children (age range: 6–10) are significantly happier than preadolescents (age range: 11–13) (Baiocco et al., 2019); (3) there are no significant gender differences in the categories of happy moments (López-Pérez et al., 2016; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013); (4) even though the qualitative part of this study is exploratory in nature, when asked to identify shared happy moments, parents and children will likely report episodes of affective interactions (Maftei et al., 2020; Thoilliez, 2011), play times (Giacomoni et al., 2014; Greco & Ison, 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016), moments of free times spent together (Chaplin, 2009; Eloff, 2008), and moments related to material aspects (Chaplin, 2009; Eloff, 2008; Sargeant, 2010); (5) the nature and frequency of children's happy moments with their fathers will be significantly different from those with their mothers. For example, children frequently report calm and affective interactions with their mothers and more playful and fun situations with their fathers.

2.2 Method

2.2.1 Procedures and Participants

For the present doctoral project, a semi-structured interview was constructed ad hoc to explore children's happiness. Study 2 focused specifically on the analysis of happiness in family contexts. Before data collection involved individual administration of questionnaires and interviews to participants, parents signed informed consent, and children orally consented to participate in the research. The process of obtaining informed consent primarily involved explaining the study's objectives, emphasizing the significance of providing truthful answers, ensuring participant' freedom to discontinue the interview at any point, and assuring anonymity. All the interviews were conducted in person or through virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom by trained researchers of the Department of Developmental and Social Psychology at Sapienza University of Rome. The family members were interviewed separately to prevent mutual influence on their responses.

Before conducting the interview, an information and introduction section was incorporated to establish a comfortable atmosphere for the participants. It was clearly communicated that the responses would be treated with the utmost confidentiality and that there were no right or wrong answers. During the interview, researchers ensured that participants had sufficient time to articulate their thoughts and answers throughout the interview process. In situations where responses were not immediately forthcoming, researchers facilitated the participants in reformulating their answers, for example, by restating the question. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for comprehensive analysis upon receiving participants' consent. The interviews were recorded and transcribed entirely. Participants' anonymity was guaranteed using an identification code to organize the transcripts and eliminate any identifiable information (e.g., names of people or places).

Interviews' participation was voluntary (30 minutes), and the study was conducted

according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Developmental and Social Psychology of Sapienza University of Rome. Data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy between October 2020 and November 2021. Participants were enlisted through snowball sampling techniques, where individuals were recommended to participate in the study by students from the Faculty of Medicine and Psychology at Sapienza University of Rome and students from the Department of Education Sciences at Roma Tre University.

In particular, the recruitment of participants involved establishing direct connections with families or posting advertisements within parent groups. These families were subsequently requested to suggest other potential families that fit the specified inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria were established to minimize variations in sociodemographic and cultural backgrounds among the families under investigation. This was done to mitigate the potential impact of certain variables that could affect the recollection of happy moments. The inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) Italian nationality, (2) families consisting of cohabiting biological parents, (3) at least one child between the ages of 6 and 13 years, and (4) the absence of disabilities or serious illnesses in both children and parents.

The sample consisted of 154 children (age range 6–9; n = 97) and preadolescents (age range 10–13; n = 57) between the ages of 6 and 13 years (M = 8.72, SD = 2.00; 57% female), their mothers (age range 20–52; M = 42.30, SD = 4.50) and fathers (age range 32–59; M = 45.47, SD = 5.42), residing in central (71%), southern (26%), and northern Italy (3%). Regarding education levels, mothers reported a higher average level of education than fathers. Specifically, many fathers attained at least a high school diploma, while mothers were more likely to have reported reaching bachelor's degrees and higher degrees. Most participants described their socioeconomic status as middle-low to middle-high (97%), except for three families with low socioeconomic status and two who reported living in high economic status. Table 5 presents detailed sociodemographic characteristics of children and their parents.

Table 5

Sociodemographic characteristics of children and their parents

		n	%
Child gender			
	Male	66	42.9
	Female	88	57.1
Geographic area			
	Northern Italy	109	70.8
	Central Italy	4	2.6
	Southern Italy	41	26.6
Education Level Mother			
	Primary School	1	0.6
	Middle School	11	7.1
	High School	53	34.4
	Bachelor's Degree	17	11.0
	Master's Degree	49	31.8
	Post-graduate	23	14.9
Education Level Father			
	Primary School	2	1.3
	Middle School	26	16.9
	High School	69	44.8
	Bachelor's Degree	20	13.0
	Master's Degree	21	13.6
	Post-graduate	16	10.4
Socio-economic status			
	Low	3	1.9
	Middle-low	85	55.2
	Middle-high	64	41.6
	High	2	1.3

2.2.2 Instruments for Data Gathering

Data collection and analysis were carried out separately for children, mothers, and fathers. The study employed a mixed-method approach, encompassing quantitative measures (utilizing the *Faces Scale*) and qualitative methods (using the *Happiness Interview*).

Faces Scale (Holder & Coleman, 2009). The single-item *Faces Scale* evaluates children's self-perception of happiness ("*Overall, how do you usually feel?*") using a seven-point Likert scale. These options are represented by real faces or pictures combining different expressive patterns to reflect particular emotional states. The mouths of the faces varied from very low, indicating very unhappy status (depicted by a very down-turned mouth), to very high, indicating a high level of happiness (defined by a very up-turned mouth). Participants were instructed to select the facial expression that most accurately represented their current emotional condition. The *Faces Scale* was also administered to both parents to measure their children's happiness levels. Several studies have demonstrated that employing a single-item measure is reliable in assessing overall perceived happiness, encompassing subjective well-being, life satisfaction, and positive affect, particularly in children and adolescents (Abdel-Khalek, 2006; Holder & Coleman, 2009; Otsuka et al., 2020; Swinyard et al., 2001; Verrastro et al., 2020).

Happiness Interview. The research team developed an interview for the present research to investigate children's happiness and recollection of happy moments that children and parents shared. The interview drew on the systematic review of Izzo and colleagues (2022) and from the qualitative protocol of the *Friends and Family Interview* (FFI; Psouni et al., 2020; Steele & Steele, 2005). All questions have been phrased in a manner that is comprehensible, even to younger children. According to the ethics committee, whose approval was sought, the potential impact of the protocol's duration on the participants was assessed, and unanimously concluded that the protocol was manageable for all participants. In addition, before starting the data collection, a pilot test was conducted. Specifically, four families with similar characteristics to those of the selection were recruited to assess the comprehensibility and feasibility of the

questions (i.e., lengthy or rushed) and to ensure the interview guide elicited pertaining responses. The general interview questions did not change from the pilot test.

The interview was composed of five sections (see Table S1 in the appendix for explanatory questions of the *Self* section in the child and parent versions. It is possible to contact the author to request the full version of the interview protocol): (1) *Self*, (2) *Family*, (3) *Peer group*, (4) *School context*, (5) *Future*. For the present study, we analyzed the contents from the *Self* section: Children were asked to talk about the happiest moment they spent alone with their mother and father. An example question is "*Can you tell me what was the happiest moment you experienced with your father, that is, with him alone?*". Similarly, parents were asked to identify what they thought was the happiest moment their children had experienced with them. An example question is "*Thinking about your child, what do you think was the happiest moment your child had with you? What would your child answer to this question?*".

2.2.3 Data Analysis

The interviews were subjected to transcription and analysis utilizing the *Thematic Analysis* methodology (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which systematically identifies and examines emerging themes within qualitative interviews. This method comprises several key steps. Initially, three independent coders extracted topics from the interview transcripts and engaged in three separate sessions to deliberate on the emerging themes. Subsequently, the research team members collaborated to define the thematic structures associated with the research topic. Finally, a final thematic framework was established by constructing a table that outlined the themes, sub-themes, and corresponding quotations extracted from the interview transcripts.

The kappa coefficient (κ; Cohen, 1960) was employed to assess the level of agreement among evaluators regarding the coding of happy moments involving both mothers and fathers and the agreement between parents and children concerning these happy moments. To examine whether each category of happy moment exhibited significant variations based on whether it

took place with the mother or father, a series of McNemar tests for paired nominal data were conducted. Initially, these tests were applied to the reports provided by children, followed by the reports submitted by parents. In cases where the McNemar tests yielded significant differences and resulted in 2X2 Tables for each category of happy moment, odds ratios were reported.

2.3 Results

Utilizing quantitative measures, the children self-reported high happiness (M = 6.31, SD = 0.84). Moreover, mothers (M = 5.86, SD = 0.76) and fathers (M = 6.10, SD = 0.78) expressed similar perceptions regarding their children's happiness. Despite the overall resemblance in average scores, a comparison of parent-child responses revealed a tendency for parents to either overestimate or underestimate their children's happiness: the agreement rate between mothers and children stood at 38%; the agreement rate between fathers and children reached 44%. Additionally, correlational analyses unveiled a statistically significant negative relationship between children's age and their self-reported happiness levels (r = -.24, p < .01). This correlation was not statistically significant in the assessments of mothers and fathers regarding their child's happiness. Furthermore, no significant variations in happiness levels emerged based on the child's gender when examining both the child's and the parent's perspectives.

Through *Thematic Analysis* (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the research team discerned six primary themes (along with their respective sub-themes) that contain crucial aspects of happy moments within the family context: (1) *Activities outside the home.* This category encompasses events conducted outside the home, such as excursions, trips, and outings to restaurants or cinemas; (2) *Shared activity*. Within this theme, we find instances where children engage in activities alongside their parents, including cooking, doing household chores, or party planning; (3) *Play*. Playtime includes all structured and unstructured leisure and play activities children participate in with their parents; (4) *Affection*. This theme incorporates moments marked by

emotional closeness, comprising both *emotional affectivity* (related to feelings and emotional support, sharing, and closeness) and *physical affectivity* (involving physical gestures like cuddling or hugging) shared between parents and children; (5) *Gifts*. This theme includes episodes where material elements, particularly gifts, played a central role in the happiest moments children experienced with their parents; (6) *Non-specified*. This category comprises responses in which participants either declined to respond (due to unwillingness or inability to recall a specific happy moment; *unwilling to answer*) or were unable to identify a specific moment of happiness (*don't remember*), or described happy moments in which the child and each parent were alone because other family members (e.g., the other parent, siblings) were present (*lack of happy moments or lack of happy mother-child/father-child times*). A comprehensive summary of the thematic structure, representative quotations, and frequencies can be found in Table 6.

The level of concordance among the coders was assessed across all responses, demonstrating nearly impeccable agreement for both instances of happy moments involving mothers (child's perspective: $\kappa = .91$, $p < .001$; mother's perspective: $\kappa = .93$, $p < .001$) and happy moments involving fathers (child's perspective: $\kappa = .92$, $p < .001$; father's perspective: $\kappa = .97$, $p < .001$). No variations related to gender or age were observed concerning happy moments spent with mothers and fathers from the points of view of both children and parents.

Table 6

Thematic structure, representative quotations, and frequencies

Theme	Sub-Theme	Frequencies	Examples
Activities outside the home		Children with mother (*n* = 55) Children with father (*n* = 46) Mother (*n* = 60) Father (*n* = 55)	Child with father: "My first plane trip, like I was 6 years old, and I was looking at a cockpit". Mother: "When I took her to see the first concert, we went to see a Disney concert; I bought her a ticket and took her to Rome". Father: "With my son, I attended an international meeting… It was with the Pope! I saw him happier. He felt he was part of something".
Shared activity		Children with mother (*n* = 26) Children with father (*n* = 29) Mother (*n* = 35) Father (*n* = 29)	Child with mother: "One day, we did not know what to do, we started kneading cakes". Mother: "The happiest moments [...] we spend time together, I give her make-up, and paint her nails. I think it is one of the cutest moments we have together". Father: "Maybe a birthday party when we threw him a Harry Potter-themed party. So, she was very happy because I attended the parties with animations, I always sneak between them".
Play		Children with mother (*n* = 9) Children with father (*n* = 43) Mother (*n* = 14) Father (*n* = 37)	Child with father: "I think with dad there is always a joy, we laugh, we joke [...], and we always play. I think every time we wrestle". Mother: "Maybe when we play the tickle game, or when she would get under a very big T-shirt that I had, she would say: *mom let is pretend that I am still in your belly* and laugh". Father: "The happiest moment was when the snow came to Naples and we made a snowman in the garden".
Affection	Emotional affectivity	Children with mother (*n* = 17) Children with father (*n* = 4) Mother (*n* = 13) Father (*n* = 4)	Child with mother: "So on Valentine's Day, we were sleeping when he woke us up with the barrels shooting confetti and behind the wall it said, "I love you". Mother: "I believe in those situations where we have simply been close, it is an intrinsic feeling between mother and daughter". Father: "It was when I returned from a mission […]. When I returned, my daughter attached to me like… mussel on at cliff".
	Physical affectivity	Children with mother (*n* = 17)	Child with father: "Once we were hugging in Beaumont in a wood and we had to get some blackberries, raspberries, and so we hugged exchanging blackberries and raspberries".

		Children with father (*n* = 7) Mother (*n* = 15) Father (*n* = 6)	Mother: "He is cuddly… He really needs physical contact, so a hug, a caress... Makes him happy". Father: "I work a lot, so in those few moments that we are together, we also cuddle in bed… So, I think those are the moments".
Gifts		Children with mother (*n* = 8) Children with father (*n* = 5) Mother (*n* = 13) Father (*n* = 9)	Child with mother: "When she bought me a bike!". Mother: "[...] when we go together to buy something he really likes, but it is very material". Father: "[…] the arrival of Stella, of the little dog, that she had been asking for years and years. It was particularly touching".
Non-specified	Not remember	Children with mother (*n* = 10) Children with father (*n* = 8) Mother (*n* = 2) Father (*n* = 3)	Child with mother: "There are many moments that I enjoy when I am with mom… There are so many that I cannot think of any". Mother: "One particular moment does not come to mind". Father: "I have difficulty identifying the particular moment".
	Lack of good moments or lack of moments spent only with parents/children	Children with mother (*n* = 4) Children with father (*n* = 9) Mother (*n* = 1) Father (*n* = 7)	Child with father: "But exactly there has not been, there has not been any at all... Because anyway, dad and I fight a lot". Mother: "Being a pair of brothers who are very close in age, they are very jealous, so there is definitely not a time when my attention was devoted exclusively to him". Father: "There is no particular moment".
	Unwilling to answer	Children with mother (*n* = 8) Children with father (*n* = 3) Mother (*n* = 1) Father (*n* = 4)	Child with mother: "Skip". Mother: "Boh, but come on, I do not get them. Exonerate me!". Father: "That I do not know. I do not know; it makes me happy every moment I look at her. I cannot tell when she has been happy".

2.3.1 Thematic Analysis of Happy Moments with Family

2.3.1.1 Activities Outside the Home

Children devote much of their time indoors, primarily at home and in school. Consequently, the moments spent outdoors often constitute a source of happiness for them. This sentiment was frequently reported by mothers (n = 60) and fathers (n = 55), who indicated that engaging in activities outside the confines of their home represented the most pleasant moments. These occasions are opportunities to create intimate moments where parents can offer their undivided time and attention to their children, free from external distractions. Parents frequently organize specific days for one-on-one outings with their children to facilitate such interactions. These outings may encompass a variety of activities, including going to the cinema, visits to parks or playgrounds, and lunching/dining in restaurants. On certain occasions, parents may even take a day off from work to spend quality time alone with their children, as illustrated by the narratives of a father and a mother during interviews.

> On a Saturday morning, I picked him up from school, accompanied him to the swimming pool, and proceeded to McDonald's for lunch. (Father, 47 years old)

> I unexpectedly retrieved her from school one afternoon, resulting in her experiencing a delightful and pleasantly surprised reaction upon seeing me. We spent the remainder of the afternoon together, engaging in activities such as purchasing snacks, perusing a shop, utilizing an automatic camera to capture photographs, and obtaining photo cards. Her joy and contentment were evident throughout that particular afternoon. (Mother, 46 years old)

For many children, the happiest experiences with their mothers (n = 55) or fathers (n = 46) involve spending entire days outside of their usual domestic environment. During these instances, children frequently perceive that they have their parent's undivided attention. Such moments hold particular significance, as they provide children with exclusivity in their

interactions with their parents. An 8-year-old girl, for example, views these occasions as an opportunity to enjoy uninterrupted quality time alone with her mother, free from the presence of her two siblings and father:

> When I woke up early and went to wake up mother. Mother woke up; but all the other males in the house were still asleep. Mother said: "Shall we go to the café for breakfast alone secretly?". We went, and when we came back, mother bought me watercolors and multicolored pens. (Girl child, 8 years old)

In addition to individual days spent together outside their house, parents and children recognized that trips represented some of the happiest moments. During these outings, parents felt they could dedicate more quality time to their children, giving them undivided attention. Additionally, vacations allowed for extended periods of togetherness, exploring new locations, and the experience of novel situations. For instance, one father shared a camping trip with his daughter:

> In my opinion, when we went camping together. […] She was happy because she liked to experience new situations. After all, the campsite forces everyone to stay close together; there are not so many separate rooms, but it is all one shared space. (Father, 47 years old)

Outdoor excursions into natural settings are moments that children and parents frequently mention. Indeed, many parents preferred to select outdoor, natural locations for spending quality time with their children. They observed that children appeared to be more relaxed and freer during outdoor activities. Being outdoors and in contact with nature allows children to break free from the confines of their homes and daily routines.

Furthermore, the interviews indicated that certain moments of happiness shared between children and their fathers and mothers appeared to align with gender stereotypes. Shopping, for instance, emerged as a common source of happiness exclusively shared between mothers and

their daughters. On the other hand, attending sporting events, such as soccer games or motorcycle races, was a happy moment typically spent with fathers. However, watching sports competitions at the stadium was identified as a happy father-child moment, regardless of the child's gender. For instance, one father described a soccer match at the stadium as the most joyful experience with his daughter.

> It will seem strange. [the happiest moment was] at the Napoli-Chievo soccer game, at the stadium… the famous one-nil by Napoli in the 91st minute. My daughter went from crying to joy because we were in a crucial point for her favorite team… and in the end they won. (Father, 48 years old)

2.3.1.2 Shared Activity

The second theme concerned moments of happiness resulting from activities that children engage in with their parents, such as cooking, watching movies, organizing parties, performing small domestic work, and doing homework together. This theme encompassed a wide range of activities, and no specific sub-themes were discerned within it. It was frequently cited by both children (with mothers: $n = 26$; with fathers: $n = 29$) and their respective mothers ($n = 35$) and fathers ($n = 29$). Nevertheless, parents reported more instances of shared activities than their children did, with mothers doing so more frequently than fathers. *Shared activities* constitute the second most prevalent theme, following *activities outside the home*.

For example, cooking was a collaborative activity frequently mentioned as a source of happiness among children and their mothers. This activity was exclusively reported by girls, who identified cooking with one of their parents, typically their mother, as their happiest moment:

> [The happiest moment with my mother was] when we cooked pastries [...] a year ago, [we cooked] the gingerbread. [...] Because I could stay with my mother and do beautiful things. (Girl child, 6 years old)

Another theme emerging from the transcribed interviews concerns jointly organized activities, such as surprises, days filled with enjoyable activities, or, quite frequently, parties. For instance, a father recounted a day spent with his daughter:

> Her mother and brother were not there and we stayed all day and all night alone. We were busy the whole time doing different activities from morning to night. [...] There was a moment of disconnection between routine and something that eventually was just complete dedication [...] we organized a fun-packed day. (Father, 38 years old)

Another prevalent happy moment with parents involved situations in which children assist their parents in various activities, or conversely, when parents lend a helping hand to their children. Numerous participants shared how these interactions fostered a sense of closeness between children and their parents. Several instances were drawn from the transcripts of both children and fathers:

> […] The bicycle moment (i.e., the moment she learned to ride a bicycle) was two years ago. I remember there, on the road in front of the house, she was demoralized because she could not balance. When I managed to find the system to "push" her, I saw on her face the expression of the greatest happiness. (Father, 51 years old)

> [...] When we did the letter to Santa. Father helped me write, and then Christmas came. (Boy child, 6 years old)

2.3.1.3 Play

The third theme that most frequently emerged from parents' and children's transcripts as the happiest moment was coded as *play* theme, encompassing leisure and playtime that children shared with their parents. Specifically, these moments of parent-child play, reported by both children (with mother: $n = 9$; with father: $n = 43$) and parents (mother: $n = 14$; father: $n = 37$), involved physical play, playful interactions, or various gross motor activities (e.g., tickling, running, cycling, skiing, and playing with a ball). Many of these play scenarios allowed parents to impart specific skills to their children, such as teaching them how to ride a bicycle, skate, or ski.

For parents, engaging in playtime often served as a respite from their work commitments, allowing them to fully dedicate themselves to their children. Sporting activities like soccer, basketball, and skiing were frequently cited as particularly joyful moments, particularly by fathers. These play sessions between parents and children not only provide adults with insights into their children's thoughts and emotions but also offer parents a chance to relive their own childhood, as exemplified by one 41-year-old father's account:

> When I am calm, and therefore I get to play with them, not like a parent, but kind of like a child messing around with them. I see that those are the moments that remain most impressive. (Father, 41 years old)

Alongside unstructured play, both parents and children described more organized or object-focused play scenarios, including activities like building, puzzles, or board games. For example, one mother shared a memorable moment spent with her daughter at the beach, underscoring the significance of dedicating quality time to her daughter without any distractions:

> This summer, we were at the beach, alone with no other distractions, building sandcastles. It was nice because no distractions prevented me from giving her my full attention. (Mother, 39 years old)

Lastly, although less commonly mentioned by both children and parents, other instances of parent-child play denoted as their happiest moments included symbolic play. During these occurrences, children and parents engaged in make-believe scenarios using play objects to represent other items and assuming playful roles, sometimes involving verbal re-labeling of objects or altering their functions. A notable example comes from a girl child who described participating in a role-playing game with her father:

> When he has to take me to school, he pretends to be a robot called "X21" while washing and dressing me. And he pretends he does not know anything because he pretends to be a robot living on Saturn. He says funny things about this planet, and then when he dresses me, he says, "These are the turbo clothes. Wait, I did not say the "r" right, turbo clothes. (Girl child, 6 years old)

2.3.1.4 Affection: Emotional and Physical Affectivity

The fourth thematic category derived from the interview transcripts pertained to the affective dimensions within the parent-child relationship. Participants frequently identified affection, characterized by caring, assistance, and kindness, as the central components of their happiest parent-child moments. This theme encompassed two sub-themes: (1) *emotional affectivity* and (2) *physical affectivity*. *Emotional affectivity* (children with mother: n = 17; children with father: n = 4; mothers: n = 13; fathers: n = 4) involved affective aspects within relationships, including emotional support, sharing, intimacy, and closeness. For example, a 12-year-old boy illustrated emotional affectivity during his happiest moment spent with his father:

> My father makes me feel good because when [...] I feel bad; maybe I also vent on my own, but when something bothers me mother may take it a bit superficially. Perhaps she says: 'oh well, it does not matter' or 'do not worry'. Father is more profound […] he says… [...] he does not say 'oh well, it doesn't matter' or 'everything will be fine': he stays a little closer and comforts me when I am sad. (Female child, 12 years old)

Fathers less frequently alluded to *emotional affective* dynamics when recounting their happiest moments with their children. Only four fathers mentioned that their happiest moments involved instances of caring, intimacy, or closeness. Two of these fathers contextualized this closeness within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The quarantine period led to increased time spent together between parents and children, thereby influencing their relationships:

> [the happiest time with my child was] being together during the lockdown days… these things... spending more time together. (Father, 38 years old)

The second sub-theme pertains to *physical affectivity* (children with mother: $n = 17$; children with father: $n = 7$; mothers: $n = 15$; fathers: $n = 6$), encompassing the affective aspects of physical interactions, such as cuddling or hugging. For instance, a 6-year-old girl shared the following instance of physical affectivity during the happiest moment she experienced with her mother:

> When N.N. was once sleeping on vacation in Praialonga, and while my sister was still sleeping, I went to mother's bed, and father was snoring, so we had many cuddles. (Girl child, 6 years old)

In general, children recounted episodes of emotional affection more frequently than their parents, and mothers tended to mention physical displays of affection more often than fathers. An illustration of this can be seen in a mother's description of a joyful moment with her son:

> When we took a bath together in the tub. When I gave them "massacres" (figurative, means an impetuous form of cuddling), as I call them, with kisses. (Mother, 49 years old)

2.3.1.5 Gifts

The fifth theme, focusing on moments of happiness associated with material possessions like receiving gifts, clothing, and animals, was the least frequently mentioned theme. In general, it is noteworthy that mothers (n = 13) and fathers (n = 9) mentioned moments related to receiving gifts more frequently than children (with mothers: n = 8; with fathers: n = 5), with mothers reporting these episodes more frequently than fathers. For example, a 9-year-old girl reports:

> When my parents bought me [shoe brand] shoes, I wanted them for a long time. (Girl child, 9 years)

A couple of parents a couple of parents agreed that the happiest moment their daughter experienced was when she received a particular gift, one horse:

> That was when we bought her a horse. My daughter was 6 years old, and my husband showed up at home with Biscottino. This is the horse's name. She was out of her mind. (Mother, 34 years old)

> My happiest moment was when I gave her the horse she wanted so much. At those time, she was 6, and I was really happy because I made her happy. (Father, 36 years old)

2.3.1.6 Non-specified

Lastly, the sixth theme encompasses interview transcripts in which both children and parents encountered difficulties in recollecting a happy moment they had spent together. This

lack of being able to point to a precise parent-child moment spent together can be categorized into three sub-themes: (1) *not remember*, (2) *lack of good moments or lack of moments spent only with parents/children*; (3) *unwilling to answer*. The sub-theme *not remember* pertains to the difficulty in recollecting a specific moment of happiness. Such difficulties often stemmed from memory difficulties, making it hard to pinpoint a particular moment. Additionally, some children refrained from responding because they found it arduous to select a specific moment from among the many they had experienced with their parents:

> I know the moments; I was alone with mom when Andrea was not there yet, I don't remember. I just don't remember a particular moment. (Boy child, 11 years old)

The second sub-theme, denoted as *lack of good moments or lack of moments spent only with parents/children*, highlights the scarcity of occasions characterized by solitary interaction between the child and each parent. In this sub-theme, participants struggled to identify happy moments due to a perceived absence of noteworthy or exclusive moments shared with their parents or children. Some children reported that they experienced a deficiency of contented moments exclusively with one parent because of the constant presence of other individuals, such as another parent or siblings. For instance, a 46-year-old mother with two children shared that she encountered difficulties in dedicating one-on-one time to one of her children because the other sibling would exhibit jealousy or distress, perceiving it as the sibling receiving undue attention:

> So, being a pair of brothers very close in age, they are very jealous, so there has not been a moment when my attention has been devoted exclusively to him. (Mother, 46-year-old)

The third sub-theme, labeled as *unwilling to answer*, indicates the incapacity or reluctance to provide an answer. In these interview excerpts, both children and parents

encountered difficulty in recounting a happy moment shared together and consequently opted to abstain from answering the question. Frequently, children and parents expressed uncertainty in formulating a response and opted to skip this specific question. Some parents have struggled to understand their children's perspective, finding it challenging to imagine the moments that their children might consider as the happiest:

> I honestly do not know, I cannot think of a particular moment, but I do not believe there is […] I do not know how my daughter might answer that question. (Father, 49-year-old)

2.3.2 Parent-Child Agreement on Happy Moments

The descriptive statistics pertaining to happy moments shared with mothers and fathers, as reported by both children and parents, are outlined in Table 7. As indicated by the responses from both children and parents, the most prevalent happy moments with mother and father were connected to *activities outside the home*. Additionally, *shared activities* emerged as one of the most frequently mentioned happy moments with both mothers and fathers. Nonetheless, discernible distinctions can be observed between happy moments spent together with mothers and those shared with fathers. Instances of affectionate interactions were more commonly associated with moments of happiness involving mothers, whereas playful activities were more frequently cited in the context of joyful moments with fathers.

Table 7

Frequency of happy moments with mother and father reported by children and parents.

	Happy moments with mother		*Happy moments with father*	
	Child's perspective	*Mother's perspective*	*Child's perspective*	*Father's perspective*
	N (%)	*N (%)*	*N (%)*	*N (%)*
Activities outside the home	55 (35.70%)	60 (39.00%)	46 (29.90%)	55 (35.70%)
Shared activities	26 (16.90%)	35 (22.70%)	29 (18.80%)	29 (18.80%)
Play	9 (5.80%)	14 (9.10%)	43 (27.90%)	37 (24.00%)
Affection	34 (22.10%)	28 (18.20%)	11 (7.10%)	10 (6.50%)
Gifts	8 (5.20%)	13 (8.40%)	5 (3.20%)	9 (5.80%)
Non-specified	22 (14.30%)	4 (2.60%)	20 (13.00%)	14 (9.10%)

Note. N = 154.

Notably, approximately 14% of the children struggled to recall moments of happiness with their mothers, whereas only around 3% of the mothers encountered difficulty in recalling such moments with their children. The discrepancy was slightly smaller when it came to remembering happy moments with fathers, with 13% of the children experiencing difficulties compared to about 9% of the fathers who encountered difficulties recalling happy moments with their children. The examination of parent-child concordance regarding shared happy moments utilized Kappa coefficients. The resulting κ values indicated a limited level of agreement, both in the context of happy moments with mothers ($\kappa = .17$, $p < 0.001$) and happy moments with fathers ($\kappa = .09$, $p = 0.026$).

A McNemar Chi-Square test was employed to assess the variations in frequency between the instances of happy moments shared with mothers and those shared with fathers, as reported by children (Table 8). The findings reveal that children were nearly six times more inclined (*OR* = 5.6) to recount moments of affection with their mothers than their fathers. Conversely, they were nearly eight times more predisposed (*OR* = 7.8) to narrate playful moments experienced with their fathers than those with their mothers.

Comparable distinctions were observed when considering the parents' viewpoint (Table 9). Mothers exhibited a fourfold higher likelihood than fathers in reporting affectionate moments (*OR* = 4.00), whereas fathers were almost four times more inclined than mothers to narrate playful moments (*OR* = 3.88). Intriguingly, fathers were three times less prone than mothers to evoke joyful moments spent with their children (*OR* = 3.5).

Table 8

Chi-square differences between happy moments with mother and happy moments with father reported by children.

	Child's perspective			
	Happy moments with mother	Happy moments with father	Total happy moments	
	N (%)	*N (%)*	*N (%)*	*McNemar* χ^2
Activities outside the home	55 (54.50%)	46 (45.50%)	101 (100.00%)	1.72
Shared activities	26 (47.30%)	29 (52.70%)	55 (100.00%)	0.26
Play	9 (17.30%)	43 (82.70%)	52 (100.00%)	26.27***
Affection	34 (75.60%)	11 (24.40%)	45 (100.00%)	16.03***
Gifts	8 (61.50%)	5 (38.50%)	13 (100.00%)	0.82
Non-specified	22 (52.40%)	20 (47.60%)	42 (100.00%)	0.13

Note. N = 154.
***$p < 0.001$.

Table 9

Chi-square differences between happy moments with mother and happy moments with father reported by parents

	Parents' perspective			
	Happy moments with mother	*Happy moments with father*	Total happy moments	
	N (%)	*N (%)*	*N (%)*	*McNemar* χ^2
Activities outside the home	60 (52.20%)	55 (47.80%)	115 (100.00%)	0.40
Shared activities	35 (54.70%)	29 (45.30%)	64 (100.00%)	0.69
Play	14 (27.50%)	37 (72.50%)	51 (100.00%)	13.56***
Affection	28 (73.70%)	10 (26.30%)	38 (100.00%)	10.80**
Gifts	13 (59.10%)	9 (40.90%)	22 (100.00%)	1.00
Non-specified	4 (22.20%)	14 (77.80%)	18 (100.00%)	5.56*

Note. N = 154.
*$p < 0.05$. **$p < 0.01$. ***$p < 0.001$.

2.4 Discussion

Study 2 employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the activities carried out together with parents that could represent happy parent-child moments from both children's and parents' perspectives. Regarding quantitative assessments, the employment of the *Faces Scale* (Holder & Coleman, 2009) revealed that children's overall happiness levels, as perceived by both parents and the children themselves, were notably high, although characterized by a skewed distribution, as usually observed for families composed of cohabiting parents without some negative experiences, such as conflicting divorces. Indeed, children and parents primarily selected the higher rating options, specifically 6 and 7.

It is essential to acknowledge that this outcome was exploratory in nature, aiming to provide insights into the happiness levels among children. Additionally, it's important to emphasize that there was a low level of concordance between the children's and their parents' responses. Consistent with existing literature indicating disparities in parental and child assessments of children's happiness (Lagattuta et al., 2012; López-Pérez & Wilson, 2015), and confirming the first research hypothesis, the findings suggested that the parents involved in this study may not accurately discern their children's emotional states. This discrepancy could be attributed to the presence of negative or egocentric biases.

The study's findings confirmed the second research hypothesis, which hypothesized age-related variations in happiness levels. The research results indicated that younger children expressed greater happiness compared to preadolescents. This outcome was consistent with previous research demonstrating that children frequently exhibit elevated levels of self-esteem and more favorable self-perceptions relative to other age cohorts (Baiocco et al., 2019). Notably, the preadolescent phase, characterized by substantial physical transformations, profound psychological shifts, and notable changes in interpersonal dynamics, often constitutes a period of emotional stress that can impact the experience of happiness (Verrastro et al., 2020).

In addition to age differences, gender differences were also investigated. In line with the third research hypothesis, the findings of this study revealed no significant disparities in happiness levels based on gender. This outcome was consistent with prior research studies that also found no gender-related variations in children's happiness (Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013). It is also noteworthy that the study conducted by Verrastro and colleagues (2020), which utilized the *Faces Scale* to measure happiness, found no significant gender differences in children's and preadolescents' happiness levels from both children's and parents' perspectives. Hence, the controversial results found in the existing literature regarding gender disparities in happiness levels (detecting gender differences, for example, see Bennefield, 2018; Gross-Manos et al., 2015; Kaye-Tzadok et al., 2017; Leto et al., 2019) could potentially be attributed to variances in the source of information (children or indirect evaluator) as well as the assessment measures employed to evaluate children's happiness.

Regarding the qualitative results of the study, happy moments between parents and children had been investigated in an exploratory way with partial confirmation of the fourth research hypothesis. When asked which shared family activities were happiness sources for children, parents and children reported episodes that were in line with five prevalent themes previously documented in the literature. These themes included outdoor activities (Eloff, 2008), shared activity (Greco & Ison, 2014), recreational interactions (Giacomoni et al., 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016), affectively charged interactions (Maftei et al., 2020; Thoilliez, 2011), and material aspects related to receiving gifts (Chaplin, 2009; Eloff, 2008). Furthermore, beyond these themes identified in previous research (referred to using other labels and with other connotations), an emergent theme, denoted as *Non-specified*, was found in the current investigation. This theme, not hitherto explored in extant literature, contained responses that did not identify a specific pleasurable moment parent-child for various reasons. Due to their notable frequency, these unspoken responses warrant in-depth analysis and further exploration.

The first theme identified and the most frequently reported from the point of view of parents and children was *Activities outside the home*. It is noteworthy that various studies have underscored the positive association between outdoor activities in natural settings (Coventry et al., 2021), vacation periods (Eloff, 2008), and leisure time spent outdoors (Eloff, 2008; Fakhri et al., 2022; Giacomoni et al., 2014) with the enhancement of children's well-being. These episodes symbolize a divergence from the daily routine, and children tend to experience heightened contentment when they engage in activities outside the home setting. This increased happiness derives from the knowledge that parents can allocate undivided care and attention to their children, devoid of distractions during such episodes.

The second theme, labeled as *Shared activities*, had similarities with themes identified in previous research, such as leisure time or hobbies (Eloff, 2008; Gomez-Baya et al., 2023), shared moments with other family members (Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020), engaging in artistic activities like drawing or painting together (Greco & Ison, 2014), or participation in celebratory events and parties (Thoilliez, 2011). In the present study, this theme was operationalized to encompass a spectrum of activities, ranging from loosely structured to more formal, conducted jointly by children and their parents, either within or outside the house, in the presence of others, or in solitude. Regardless of the specific nature of these parent-child activities, they play a critical role in fostering intergenerational relationships, serving as a platform for subtle intergenerational dynamics (Crosnoe & Trinitapoli, 2008).

Firstly, shared family activities represent valuable educational opportunities through role modeling or explicit instruction, facilitating the transmission of values, teaching children specific tasks, nurturing their skills, and imparting life lessons. Moreover, engagement in these shared activities strengthens the parent-child bond, leading to greater psychosocial well-being and happiness in children (Cheng & Furnham, 2004). Consequently, shared activities serve as a context wherein children acquire competencies and explore and cultivate relationships (McAuley et al., 2012). In particular, a research investigation by Gray et al. (2013)

demonstrated that adolescents who indicated spending much time interacting with family members and feeling a profound affection and attachment with their parents experienced greater levels of happiness.

The third thematic category from the transcribed interviews was *Play*, encompassing various degrees of structured playtime shared between parents and children. The recognition of play as a source of happiness was consistent with the findings of numerous other authors who have emphasized the significance of children's play together with their parents and leisure involvement for parents' and children's well-being (Coyl-Shepherd & Hanlon, 2013; Ginsburg, 2007). In addition to its well-documented positive implications for psychological development, play assumes an essential role in promoting happiness within the family dynamic (Eloff, 2008; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020). Children often utilize play to express their sentiments about themselves and their surroundings, release pent-up tension and anxiety, and channel their aggression constructively.

Furthermore, play serves as a conduit through which they can express a range of positive emotions, ranging from joy and happiness to surprise and contentment (Landreth & Homeyer, 2021). Beyond these individual dimensions, playing together generates a sense of familial closeness, bolsters parent-child bonds, and contributes to the emotional well-being of children (Gardner & Ward, 2000; Gleave & Cole-Hamilton, 2012). Within these shared playful interactions, families often find themselves growing closer, transcending the boundaries of mere recreation to create lasting emotional connections that resonate positively within the family unit.

The fourth identifiable thematic category that emerged was *Affection*, encompassing episodes of emotional and physical affective interactions between parents and their children. Although this theme exhibited similarities with those identified in previous research, which often revolved around constructs like attachment security (Greco & Ison, 2014), responsible parental caregiving (Eloff, 2008), or general positive affect (Giacomoni et al., 2014; Greco &

Ison, 2014), it delves into the heart of the affective exchanges between parents and children. Cumulatively, previous research revealed that feelings of security, protection, and love received from parents play a fundamental role in promoting children's well-being and happiness (Fattore et al., 2009; Greco & Ison, 2014).

Furthermore, within parent-child relationships, the exchange of affection has been associated with reduced stress and improved overall well-being for children (Hesse et al., 2018). Scientific research examining affection within family contexts has consistently shown that mothers tend to express affection to their children more frequently than fathers (Floyd, 2002; Hesse et al., 2018). In consonance with these findings, the present study revealed that mothers more frequently reported experiencing physical or emotional affective moments as their happiest times spent with their children, compared to fathers. Similarly, children reported affective exchanges with their mothers occurring more frequently than with their fathers (Bornstein & Venuti, 2013).

The theme displaying the least frequency, as indicated from both parents' and children's point of view, concerned *Gifts*. This thematic category encompassed the episodes when children experienced their happiest moments by receiving material gifts, such as toys or clothing. Previous research studies have also recognized the significance of this theme in relation to children's happiness (Chaplin, 2009; Eloff, 2008; Maftei et al., 2020). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that previous studies have demonstrated a fluctuating trend in materialism, with an increase from middle childhood to preadolescence, followed by a decline during adolescence (Chaplin & John, 2007).

Lastly, another noteworthy theme emerged during this study, referred to as *Non-specified*. Given this theme's substantial frequency of responses, it has been designated as an informative and distinctive theme rather than being regarded as a non-theme. The systematic comprehension of remembering happy moments remains incomplete (Sotgiu, 2016) despite its inherent significance in forming individual identity (Berntsen & Rubin, 2004; Berntsen et al.,

2011). Numerous children in this study encountered two distinct difficulties when recollecting happy moments. These challenges were related to: (1) effectively articulating their inner emotional states and (2) a conscious choice to abstain from sharing memories associated with their emotional states, potentially due to shyness or discomfort with the interviewers. Consequently, it is plausible that young children may encounter challenges in encoding, organizing, memorizing, or retrieving memories of happy moments shared with their parents until they have developed the cognitive capacity to process abstract concepts (Chaplin et al., 2020).

Overall, although the frequencies of the emerging themes may appear quite similar, comparing the responses of parents and children revealed relatively low concordances (Casas et al., 2007), thus demonstrating a certain difficulty for parents in identifying a happy moment from the perspective of their children. Interestingly, a comparative analysis of responses from children and parents revealed that mothers and fathers referred more frequently to material possessions as a source of happiness than children, who showed greater difficulty in responding. In a few instances, parents who regarded the receipt of gifts as a source of happiness had children who reported greater happiness during moments of affection, play, or shared activities with their parents. A recent study conducted by Chaplin and colleagues (2020) found that, from the perspectives of both children and parents, younger children were more inclined to identify material goods as sources of happiness, whereas as adolescence approached, happiness derived from experiences gradually outweighed the importance of material possessions. This may suggest that parents tended to underestimate their children's cognitive abilities and ascribed more significance to material aspects than their children did.

On the other hand, children may face greater difficulty in recounting a happy moment compared to parents for various reasons: (a) Children might struggle to express their emotions in a detailed and articulate manner as their ability to reflect on and describe experiences may still be developing (Chaplin et al., 2020); (b) Children may not be fully aware of their emotions

or may have difficulty accurately identifying a happy moment compared to a moment equally characterized in a positive manner (Spackman et al., 2005); (c) Children may fear adult judgment or worry about not being understood, making them reluctant to share their happy moments. Additionally, the perception and evaluation of a happy moment could vary between adults and children, as children might assign greater importance to different details or may not fully grasp the context. In general, understanding and respecting the unique perspective of children, encouraging them to express their emotions in a safe and non-judgmental environment, can foster more open and profound communication about happy moments.

Confirming the fifth and final research hypothesis, gender-typical behaviors were identified from both parental and children's perspectives within the context of the *Play* and *Affection* themes. Fathers' interactions with their children predominantly fell within the playful sphere, conforming with existing literature (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2013). The interviews conducted with children and their parents revealed that children's happy moments with parents related to play occurred more frequently with their fathers than with their mothers. Furthermore, gender-specific distinctions emerged in the types of play evident in reported happy moments of parent-child play: mothers engaged in more structured activities, such as role-playing or organized play, often involving the use of objects (e.g., toys or tools), while fathers were inclined toward more physical forms of play, such as rough-and-tumble play (Coyl-Shepherd & Hanlon, 2013; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2013). These findings aligned with previous research, which found that boys typically emphasize play or fun activities in general (Businaro et al., 2015; Giacomoni et al., 2014).

Conversely, when examining the experiences reported by both children and parents, it was evident that the happiest moments spent with mothers revolved around emotional connection, sentiment, and intimacy. This observation was in line with existing literature indicating that girls were more inclined to prioritize aspects related to their emotional and relational well-being (Businaro et al., 2015; Giacomoni et al., 2014). The emphasis on

stereotypical gender roles by children may be attributed to the perception that during childhood, gender stereotypes are often regarded as unwavering moral imperatives that must be strictly adhered to. It is only during the preadolescent stage that children begin to recognize that these stereotypes are, in fact, adaptable social conventions that can be interpreted more flexibly. Moreover, even from the parents' perspective, previous studies have highlighted the distinctions in gender roles exhibited by mothers and fathers. Cultural studies have shown that both mothers and fathers were equally available and responsive to certain signals emitted by their children; however, mothers were frequently associated with the role of nurturing and caregiving, while fathers tend to be linked to a more dynamic, stimulating, and vigorous mode of interaction (Parke, 2002).

Furthermore, within the context of *Activities outside the home* theme, it became evident that some of the happiest moments children shared with their parents conformed to established gender norms. For instance, shopping emerged as a joyful experience predominantly shared by mothers and their daughters, while sporting events such as soccer matches or motorcycle races appeared to be primarily associated with fathers and their sons. Although there were instances where daughters also partook in these activities with their fathers, such occurrences were less frequent. This observation implies that certain gender schemas employed by children in shaping their perception of the world (Bem, 1981; Martin & Dinella, 2002; Perry et al., 2019) may extend to identifying moments of happiness. Moreover, studies indicated that girls were inclined to choose activities typically associated with the opposite sex, thus exhibiting greater social freedom in participating in sports and physical activities (Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006). This trend differs from that of boys, who may experience more pronounced societal pressures from early childhood, forcing them to adhere to prevailing cultural gender stereotypes.

2.5 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings elucidated by this study underscore the imperative for more scientific attention to the constituents contributing to children's happiness, with the goal of fostering heightened social and emotional well-being during their formative years. Delving into the realm of children's happiness through research activities holds the potential to identify and advance interventions and initiatives aimed at increasing children's happiness. Such interventions can be fortified by understanding the factors that serve as predictors for improving children's happiness, with family relationships playing a critical role in this context (Izzo et al., 2022; Orejudo et al., 2021). Identifying these multifaceted individual and environmental factors facilitates a comprehensive assessment of elements that either improve or diminish children's overall well-being.

Utilizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the present research explored the episodes of happiness that children share with their parents. This endeavor involved a comprehensive examination of the perspectives of both children and parents. Although there was a semblance of common themes between the accounts provided by parents and children, it became apparent that both mothers and fathers encountered certain difficulties in fully comprehending their children's perspectives and identifying the moments that elicited the most profound happiness during their shared experiences. The decision to explore these aspects from the points of view of both children and parents derived from a desire to analyze the pivotal constituents of the happiest moments within families, with the potential to serve as indicative markers of family well-being. It is pertinent to underscore that families occupy a fundamental role as educational institutions and continue to serve as crucial environments for the psychological maturation of individuals (Izzo et al., 2022).

Following a meticulous examination of these dual viewpoints, the divergence between parents' and children's perspectives was assessed. The low degree of agreement between these viewpoints implies that parents may not invariably possess a lucid understanding or the ability

to discern their children's moments of happiness. Such disparities in different points of view could prevent parents from adeptly promoting positive activities in their children, leading them to overlook opportunities for meaningful and constructive developmental experiences. These experiences can potentially exert a profoundly positive influence on their children's well-being and overall satisfaction levels.

Greater scientific attention to the topic of children's happiness is warranted to promote increased levels of social and relational well-being throughout childhood, with a cascade of favorable repercussions extending into adulthood (Diener et al., 2009). Indeed, children's happiness emerges as a veritable protective factor (Baiocco et al., 2019; Holder & Klassen, 2010). Children and adolescents who encounter heightened levels of happiness exhibit a notably reduced propensity to manifest negative psychological symptoms, including but not limited to depression, anxiety, and behavioral disturbances. Consequently, predicated upon the insights derived from this study, exploring children's happiness is fundamental in providing healthcare professionals with valuable information. Furthermore, these insights can be instrumental in formulating effective strategies designed to cultivate happiness in children, thus contributing to the overall well-being of children and the happiness of the family unit as a whole.

In conclusion, the exploration of happy moments spent together between parents and children not only enriches the theoretical understanding of family dynamics but also provides valuable practical insights for clinical and educational interventions aimed at improving the emotional well-being of children. Specifically, in clinical practice, understanding the activities parents and children engage in together can guide clinical psychologists and healthcare professionals to design family therapies focused on promoting positive experiences within the family. Educational professionals and family counselors can use this understanding to support families in developing positive dynamics, involving the promotion of family activities that foster happiness and the adoption of strategies to manage daily challenges. In the educational context, awareness of the importance of family happiness can inform educational programs

aimed at promoting family connection. Teachers may adopt approaches that involve families in creating a positive learning environment.

Chapter 3. Happiness in Preadolescence and Adolescence: A Qualitative Research in a Group of Italian Families

3.1 Study 3: What Makes Preadolescents and Adolescents Happy from Parents' and Children's Perspectives

The paper summarizing study 3 was submitted in:

Izzo, F., Saija, E., Pallini, S., Ioverno, S., Baiocco, R., & Pistella, J. (Submitted). The Sources of Happiness in Preadolescence and Adolescence: A Multi-method and Multi-informant Perspective. *Child Indicators Research.*

Studies 1 and 2 have underscored the importance of investigating happiness within the family context from a systemic perspective, based on the idea that behaviors and emotional expressions are influenced by contextual factors related to family relationships and the social systems in which children and adolescents are immersed. Several studies have identified the family as the primary source of happiness (Chaplin, 2009; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020) and an essential predictor of happiness during the developmental stages (Flouri & Buchanan, 2003; Holder & Coleman, 2009), playing a pivotal role in shaping adolescent development (Shek, 1997a). Furthermore, when examining the definitions of happiness and well-being in childhood and adolescence, children and adolescents consistently report that having a positive relationship with family members and enjoying pleasant moments together with parents constitute significant sources of happiness (Eloff, 2008; Maftei et al., 2020; Navarro et al., 2017).

In addition to positive family relationships (Freire et al., 2013; Navarro et al., 2017; Thoilliez, 2011), studies have highlighted that when asked about what makes boys and girls happy, other sources of happiness in pre-adolescence and adolescence include positive

friendships (Giacomoni et al., 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016; Thoilliez, 2011), feeling safe and protected at school (López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018; Sargeant, 2010), achieving goals (Chaplin, 2009; López-Pérez et al., 2016; Navarro et al., 2017), engage in hobbies and sports (Chaplin, 2009; Eloff, 2008; Giacomoni et al., 2014). The scientific literature on happiness in preadolescence and adolescence has primarily focused on various variables associated with this construct (McKnight et al., 2002; Proctor et al., 2009), giving less attention to the definitions of happiness, sources of happiness and differences between parents and children. Study 3 aims to address these gaps in the literature and explore the conceptions of happiness among preadolescents and adolescents, as well as potential sources of happiness, using a multi-method approach (utilizing qualitative and quantitative measures) and a multi-informant perspective (considering the viewpoints of children, mothers, and fathers).

3.1.1 Definition of Happiness in Different Life Contexts: Age and Gender Differences

Previous research has indicated that preadolescents and adolescents described their emotional well-being and happiness as positive when they engaged in social interactions with family and friends, experienced romantic connections, had more leisure time, achieved success in their hobbies and academic pursuits, and had the freedom to participate in activities that engendered a sense of vitality and pride, enhancing their skills and self-assurance (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2014). Conversely, family-related difficulties, problematic friendships, school-related factors such as mandatory tasks like homework, and feelings of loneliness were associated with decreased happiness levels (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Navarro et al., 2017). Scientific literature demonstrates that the natural habitat of happiness resides within human relationships (Holder & Coleman, 2009), and the three perceived key domains in adolescents' lives are family, school, and friends (Navarro et al., 2017).

The family represents the primary socialization context for children, supporting their

socio-emotional learning, and is often experienced as a secure, supportive, permissive, and unconditionally loving environment (Dworkin & Serido, 2017). In prior research, it has been demonstrated that favorable familial relationships constitute a significant predictor of happiness and life satisfaction among students from elementary through high school levels (Park, 2005; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013). In contrast to the consistency observed in the significance of friendships over time (Goldbeck et al., 2007), the importance attributed to familial relationships varies with age, exhibiting a diminishing trend as individuals grow older (Navarro et al., 2017; Sargeant, 2010). In comparison to children and preadolescents, who primarily define happiness in terms of their relationships with parents, adolescents increasingly emphasize the significance of peer relationships and conceptualize happiness in the context of close friendships and associations with peers (López-Pérez et al., 2016; Thoilliez, 2011).

The school, after the family, plays a crucial role in the socialization of young individuals and constitutes a substantial portion of their daily lives (López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018; Simons-Morton et al., 1999). Previous research has demonstrated a strong association between students' perceptions of their academic achievements (Thoilliez, 2011), teacher support, and overall satisfaction with school and their levels of happiness (Gilman & Huebner, 2006; Park, 2005; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012). Furthermore, positive teacher-student relationships and increased engagement in school-related activities (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003) are strong predictors of students' happiness (Bennefield, 2018; López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018). Conversely, problems within the school environment contribute to a decline in happiness and well-being across all age groups, illustrating the connection between students' perceptions of the educational system and feelings of discontentment, pressure, and stress (Casas et al., 2012; Navarro et al., 2017). Once again, the quality of relationships and satisfaction within family and school contexts decreased between the ages of 11 and 16 (Casas et al., 2007; Goldbeck et al., 2007; Park, 2005).

The relationship with friends is a protective element against challenges that may arise

within the family or school environment and is regarded as one of the fundamental components of happiness from childhood through adolescence (Thoilliez, 2011). Previous research has demonstrated that secure social relationships are central to fostering happiness among preadolescents and adolescents (Chaplin, 2009; Freire et al., 2017; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012). Noteworthy aspects associated with adolescent friendships include the experience of affection, assistance, support, and shared enjoyment with friends, encompassing playful and recreational activities (Izzo et al., 2022; Navarro et al., 2017).

Regarding age differences in levels of happiness, scientific studies indicated that happiness and life satisfaction tend to decrease from childhood to adolescence, both overall and across various life domains (e.g., family satisfaction, satisfaction with friends, school-related happiness) (Casas et al., 2007; Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Park, 2005). The decline in happiness observed during adolescence should be viewed as a typical developmental process resulting from the multiple challenges adolescents encounter while transitioning from childhood to adulthood (Bisegger et al., 2005; Goldbeck et al., 2007; Steinberg, 2005). Notably, the only area where a modest increase with age was observed concerns satisfaction with the relationship/sexuality, although this increase does not fully offset the overall decline in satisfaction experienced by adolescents across nearly all life domains (Goldbeck et al., 2007). It is worth noting, however, that during preadolescence, there was a shift from valuing hobbies to placing greater emphasis on material aspects, whereas, in adolescence, there was a transition away from material possessions as adolescents found greater happiness in experiences and achievements (Chaplin, 2009; Chaplin et al., 2020).

In addition to the age-related decline in happiness, the scientific literature has underscored the noteworthy influence of gender. Some researchers have observed that the decrease in levels of subjective well-being seems to be more pronounced and prolonged for girls (Bennefield, 2018; Goldbeck et al., 2007; González-Carrasco et al., 2017a). One plausible explanation may be that girls in Western society encounter more profound physical

transformations during puberty and contend with heightened cultural beauty norms (Bisegger et al., 2005; Goldbeck et al., 2007). Conversely, other studies employing quantitative methods have found no significant gender disparities in happiness levels (Ercegovac et al., 2021; López-Pérez et al., 2016; López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012).

Research has also shown gender differences in the different life domains of adolescents, where girls scored higher on family satisfaction and satisfaction related to learning than boys, who scored higher on satisfaction with friends and physical activities (Casas et al., 2007). When asked about aspects that would make them happier, more often than boys, girls wanted more friends, better appearance, and success in school. On the other hand, boys preferred to have more free time, success in a hobby, and money (Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2014).

Regarding gender differences in definitions of happiness, precedent research indicated that females appear to place a greater emphasis on relational and emotional sources of well-being, emphasizing positive emotional states when defining happiness, whereas males tend to mention a higher frequency of leisure activities, sports, and recreational activities (Businaro et al., 2015; Chaplin, 2009; Giacomoni et al., 2014). Furthermore, males tend to perceive improved socioeconomic conditions and personal advantages such as a high level of education, greater intelligence and enhanced physical appearance as the most significant contributors to happiness. In contrast, females tend to place greater faith in social support and a heightened self-esteem (Furnham & Cheng, 2000).

3.1.2 Differences Between Parents and Children in the Assessment of Happiness

The scientific literature has focused on the perceptions of happiness among parents and children, revealing generational differences. Studies have shown that sharing a common definition of happiness is important for family dynamics and functioning. However, research has demonstrated that parents encounter difficulties when asked about what makes their

children happy (Chaplin, 2009) and have different conceptions of happiness within the family context (Shek, 2001).

Despite this evidence, parents continue to represent as a crucial and reliable source of information when assessing the happiness of their children (Holder & Coleman, 2009). While research has demonstrated positive associations between parents' and adolescents' subjective well-being (Ben-Zur, 2003), the agreement between parents' and children's responses is notably low (Verrastro et al., 2020). For instance, the study conducted by Casas and colleagues (2007) revealed minimal correlations between parents' responses and those of their children aged 12 to 16 across various life domains. These results underscore the notion that generational disparities may indeed exist in the perspectives of parents and children, emphasizing the need for further research to better comprehend the sources of happiness for adolescents (Shek, 2001).

Furthermore, scientific literature has highlighted two types of errors that parents commonly make when evaluating their children's happiness: (1) they tend to use their own happiness levels as a reference point to evaluate their children's happiness, known as egocentric bias (López-Pérez & Wilson, 2015), and (2) they often overestimate their children's happiness while underestimating the presence of negative emotions, a phenomenon referred to as positivity bias (Lagattuta et al., 2012). Thereby, parents may misinterpret or overlook the factors that contribute to their children's happiness. Consequently, relying solely on parents' reports may produce an incomplete or inaccurate interpretation of their children's happiness (Chaplin, 2009). For this reason, further studies incorporating multiple sources of information are imperative to enhance measurement reliability through cross-examining children's and parents' perspectives (Schneider & Schimmack, 2009).

3.1.3 The Present Study

Ecological theory has highlighted the importance of studying child and adolescent development within different life contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Studies in Positive Psychology have emphasized the importance of multi-contextual influences on happiness, considering the effects of salient life contexts such as home and school, which represent the main microsystems in which preadolescents and adolescents spend most of their time (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018). In literature, adolescents' own subjective perceptions of this developmental stage have rarely been examined by researchers and clinicians, and little is known about adolescents' conceptions of happiness (Goldbeck et al., 2007), especially in the Italian context.

The aspects that adolescents consider most significant in their lives mostly concern domains/contexts of life, highlighting the importance of friendships, family, and school (Freire et al., 2013). Regardless of age and level of happiness, interpersonal relationships, both with family and friends, are a key factor in defining happiness in terms of love and care (Navarro et al., 2017; Sargeant, 2010). Differently from the importance of relationships with friends, which would seem to remain constant over time (Goldbeck et al., 2007), the importance of relationships within the family changes depending on age, with a decrease in importance with increasing age (Navarro et al., 2017).

These findings highlight the relevance of studying age and gender differences in conceptions of happiness because investigating lay theories of happiness can provide additional information not only about emotions but also about adolescents' judgments and behaviors and can help explain how preadolescents and adolescents struggle to achieve their own happiness (López-Pérez et al., 2016). Adolescents provide very different and complex definitions of well-being and happiness, not only ascribed to the relational sphere with family and friends. Not achieving desired goals and not being respected or listened to impact adolescents' well-being (Navarro et al., 2017), so further studies are required to attain a more comprehensive

understanding of this complexity.

The primary objective of study 3 was to address the existing gaps in the literature by employing a comprehensive research approach that encompasses both qualitative and quantitative methods to explore how preadolescents and adolescents conceptualize happiness. Moreover, this study aimed to highlight potential variations related to age and gender in their definitions of happiness. Additionally, we seek to investigate potential disparities between the viewpoints of parents and their children. To the best of our knowledge, no prior research has examined conceptions and sources of happiness while considering the perspectives of preadolescents and adolescents and their parents. Including parents' perspectives is expected to be a valuable resource for a deeper understanding of how young individuals perceive happiness.

Drawing upon the previously reviewed literature, we formulated the following hypotheses: (1) Preadolescents (age range: 11–13 years) are expected to exhibit significantly higher levels of happiness, both in a general and across various life contexts, compared to adolescents (age range: 14–19 years) (Goldbeck et al., 2007; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2014); (2) no gender differences in the levels of happiness among preadolescents and adolescents are observed (Ercegovac et al., 2021; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012); (3) qualitative data analysis is expected to reveal that the reported sources of happiness predominantly revolve around family interactions (Freire et al., 2013; Thoilliez, 2011), peer relationships (Giacomoni et al., 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016), moments of leisure and enjoyment (Giacomoni et al., 2014; Navarro et al., 2017), and positive school-related experiences (Navarro et al., 2017; López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018); (4) the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data is likely to indicate a low level of agreement between parents' responses and their children's responses regarding happiness (Casas et al., 2007).

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Procedures and Participants

A semi-structured ad hoc interview, called the "*Happiness Interview*" was developed by the research team to explore the happiness of preadolescents and adolescents across various life domains, including family, school, and friendships. Participant recruitment was facilitated through the utilization of the snowball sampling technique. More specifically, families were recruited via online advertisements relating to the research project and through direct contact, with the latter group subsequently asked to identify additional potential participants. In terms of inclusion criteria, the following conditions were applied: (1) cohabitation of biological family members; (2) children ranging from 11 to 19 years of age; (3) Italian nationality for all family members; (4) the absence of disabilities or severe illnesses in both parents and adolescents.

Before starting data collection, parental informed consent was obtained, and adolescents provided verbal consent to participate in the research. Both parents and adolescents independently completed questionnaires and underwent individual interviews. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and stringent measures were implemented to uphold confidentiality and anonymity. This included removing sensitive information, such as names and place of residence, with identification codes employed for data collection purposes. Interviews were recorded, with consent (either audio or video), and subsequently transcribed for analysis. The research protocols received approval from the Ethics Committee of Developmental and Social Psychology at the Sapienza University of Rome, with strict adherence to the principles outlined in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its subsequent amendments or equivalent ethical standards.

Table 10

Sample characteristics

		Preadolescents		Adolescents		Total	
		n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Gender	Male	14	18.2	16	20.8	30	39.0
	Female	23	29.9	24	31.1	47	61.0
Residence	Central Italy	24	31.1	31	40.3	55	71.4
	Southern Italy	10	13.0	7	9.1	17	22.1
	Islands	3	3.9	2	2.6	5	6.5
Socio-economic status	Low	1	1.3	1	1.3	2	2.6
	Middle-low	16	20.7	23	29.9	39	50.6
	Middle-high	18	23.4	15	19.5	33	42.9
	High	2	2.6	1	1.3	3	3.9
Education Level Mother	Middle School	3	3.9	9	11.7	12	15.6
	High School	14	18.2	18	23.4	32	41.6
	Bachelor's Degree	2	2.6	1	1.3	3	3.9
	Master's Degree	15	19.5	7	9.1	22	28.6
	Post-graduate	3	3.9	5	6.5	8	10.4
Education Level Father	Middle School	6	7.8	11	14.3	17	22.1
	High School	16	20.7	17	22.2	33	42.9
	Bachelor's Degree	4	5.2	1	1.3	5	6.5
	Master's Degree	7	9.1	10	13.0	17	22.1
	Post-graduate	4	5.2	1	1.3	5	6.5

The sample encompassed 77 participants, comprising preadolescents (11–13 years; *n* = 37) and adolescents (14–19 years; *n* = 40), with ages ranging from 11 to 19 years (*M* = 13.90, *SD* = 2.70). Among this group, 61% were female. Additionally, the sample included 77 mothers (age range 36–59; *M* = 47.50, *SD* = 4.35) and 77 fathers (age range 36–64; *M* = 50.53, *SD* = 5.30). Most participants were residents of central Italy (71.4%), followed by southern Italy (22.1%) and the Islands (6.5%). Regarding socioeconomic status, the responses indicated that most participants fell within the middle-low category (50.6%), while a substantial portion reported a middle-high level (42.9%). A smaller number of families identified their economic status as low or high. In terms of educational background, 44 mothers and 50 fathers held middle school or high school diplomas, while 25 mothers and 22 fathers possessed at least a bachelor's or master's degree. Furthermore, 8 mothers and 5 fathers indicated having a Ph.D. or post-graduate degree. On average, mothers reported a higher level of education compared to fathers. See Table 10 for a more comprehensive overview of the sociodemographic characteristics of adolescents and their parents.

3.2.2 Measure

The research adopted a comprehensive approach that incorporated diverse methods and information sources. It encompassed both qualitative techniques, such as the "*Happiness Interview*" and the "*Contextual Happiness Perception Scale*", as well as quantitative measures, including the "*Faces Scale*" and the "*UCLA Loneliness Scale*". Data collection was conducted independently for adolescents, fathers, and mothers, and subsequent analysis was carried out separately for each family member.

Happiness Interview. Given the intricate nature of the subject matter, the research incorporated a semi-structured interview to explore the happiness of preadolescents and adolescents across various life domains. The interview was developed by drawing upon the

qualitative framework of the *Friends and Family Interview* (FFI; Psouni et al., 2020; Steele & Steele, 2005), as well as insights from the systematic review conducted by Izzo and colleagues (2022) (For a more in-depth description of the interview protocol, please refer to the method section of the previous chapter in the part that details the instruments).

The *Self* area was meticulously examined within the scope of this study, with a specific focus on the sources that evoke happiness in preadolescents and adolescents (see Table S1 in the appendix for explanatory questions of the Self section. Upon request, it is possible to contact the author to receive the complete version of the interview protocol). To explore this aspect, preadolescents and adolescents were presented with inquiries like, "*What is happiness for you? What makes you happy?*". Parents were encouraged to articulate their understanding of happiness and identify the cardinal elements that truly make their children happy. For instance, parents were prompted with questions such as, "*In your opinion, what is happiness for your daughter/son? What makes your daughter/son happy?*". In addition, the study probed the measure to which parents can empathize with their child's point of view by inquiring, "*What might your son/daughter answer to this question*?"

Contextual Happiness Perception Scale (CHPS; Baiocco et al., 2019). To measure adolescents' happiness in various contexts, we employed a set of three questions. Participants were tasked with evaluating their level of happiness concerning their family ("*How happy are you with your family?*"), their school-related happiness ("*How happy do you think you are at school?*") and their happiness within their friendships ("*How happy do you think you are with your friends?*"). Responses were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Very much), where higher scores denoted a heightened level of happiness. The internal consistency of these three questions, measured by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.69.

Faces Scale (FS; Holder & Coleman, 2009). The happiness levels of preadolescents and adolescents were measured using a single item *Faces Scale* (For a more in-depth description of the scale, please refer to the method section of the previous chapter in the part that details the

instruments). This scale was administered not only to young people, but also to parents to assess their point of view on their children's happiness. Using this scale with parents is a reliable method, given the significance of collecting information from different sources to improve reliability through comparative analysis across sources (Schneider & Schimmack, 2009).

UCLA Loneliness Scale (ULS; Russell, 1996). The *UCLA Loneliness Scale*, consisting of 20 items, was employed to evaluate individuals' overall degree of loneliness. For the current study, a shorter version comprising five items (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007) was utilized. Participants were required to rate the frequency of their experiences of loneliness using a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Never) to 4 (Always). Example items included, "*How often did you feel that there was no one to turn to?*" The internal consistency of this scale, measured by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.81.

2.2.3 Data Analysis

Paired-sample *t*-tests were employed to examine potential disparities between the assessments of children and their parents regarding children's happiness. Additionally, age and gender differences in happiness levels across various life contexts were examined using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The interviews were carried out through qualitative analysis, which involved systematic reading, reflection, and interpretation of the collected data to extract thematic patterns.

The interview transcripts underwent *Thematic Analysis* (TA; Braun & Clarke, 2006), a qualitative research method employed to discern, analyze, and present recurrent patterns (themes) within the dataset. TA encompasses open and axial coding and comprises several stages: Initially, three independent coders (first author, second author, and third author) derived a set of themes from the transcripts, which were subsequently deliberated upon during a collaborative session. Subsequently, labels for the various thematic structures were formulated, drawing from existing literature and discussions with other research team members. Finally, the

ultimate thematic framework was structured into a table, encompassing the identified themes and subthemes. Kappa coefficients (κ; Cohen, 1960) were calculated to assess inter-rater agreement concerning the coding of sources of happiness in preadolescents and adolescents, as perceived by parents and adolescents. Chi-square analyses were executed to explore potential variations in the frequency of emerging themes based on adolescents' age and gender.

3.3 Results

3.3.1 Quantitative Analysis

An examination of the correlations between the main study variables was conducted. Notably, significant negative correlations were found between age and all dimensions of happiness, while positive correlations emerged between age and loneliness. The data indicate that as young individuals advance in age, they tend to report decreased levels of happiness and higher levels of loneliness. As expected, a noteworthy positive correlation was observed between the overall happiness of preadolescents/adolescents and their happiness levels in diverse life domains. Overall, the findings indicate that preadolescents/adolescents who exhibit more pronounced levels of general happiness and happiness across various contexts tend to report diminished levels of loneliness. A summary of these correlations can be found in Table 11.

Table 11

Correlation matrix

	Children Age	FS_C	FS_M	FS_F	CHPS	ULS
Children Age	–					
FS_C	-0.35**	–				
FS_M	-0.24*	0.22	–			
FS_F	-0.33**	0.19	0.63***	–		
CHPS	-0.45***	0.54***	0.23*	0.18	–	
ULS	0.45***	-0.50***	-0.21	-0.21	-0.39***	–

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; FS_C = Faces Scale – Children version; FS_M = Faces Scale – Mother version; FS_F = Faces Scale – Father version; CHPS = Contextual Happiness Perception Scale; ULS = UCLA Loneliness Scale

Table 12

ANOVAs

		Group	*n*	Mean (SD)	SE	*F*	*p*
FS	FS_C	1	37	5.95(0.97)	0.16	7.87	0.006
		2	40	5.33(0.97)	0.15		
	FS_M	1	37	5.68(0.88)	0.15	6.64	0.012
		2	40	5.13(0.99)	0.16		
	FS_F	1	37	5.95(0.74)	0.12	12.4	<0.001
		2	40	5.25(0.98)	0.16		
CHPS	Children	1	37	11.8(1.91)	0.31	12.6	<0.001
		2	40	10.3(1.83)	0.29		
ULS	Children	1	37	9.57(3.01)	0.49	18.8	<0.001
		2	40	12.68(3.28)	0.52		

Note. Preadolescents represented Group 1; Adolescents represented Group 2; FS_c = Faces Scale – Children version; FS_M = Faces Scale – Mother version; FS_F = Faces Scale – Father version; CHPS = Contextual Happiness Perception Scale; ULS = UCLA Loneliness Scale

Subsequently, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to examine discrepancies in individual happiness levels between preadolescents and adolescents. This analysis encompassed self-reported data gathered directly from the participants and assessments provided by their mothers and fathers. Two additional ANOVAs were conducted to explore variations between preadolescents and adolescents in self-reported assessments of contextual happiness perception and perceived loneliness (as detailed in Table 12). The results indicated that preadolescents exhibited higher levels of individual happiness, as measured by the *Faces Scale*, than adolescents. This distinction was apparent when examining self-reported data from the children themselves, F (1, 75) = 7.87, p = .006, as assessments from their mothers, F (1, 75) = 6.58, p = .012, and fathers, F (1, 75) = 12.2, p < .001. Furthermore, preadolescents reported higher overall happiness levels, as assessed by the Contextual Happiness Perception Scale, across the domains of school, family, and social settings, compared to adolescents, F (1, 75) = 12.6, p < .001. Conversely, adolescents tended to report greater levels of loneliness than preadolescents, F (1, 75) = 18.7, p < .001.

Lastly, a series of ANOVAs were conducted to explore potential gender disparities in individual happiness, as reported by the children themselves, F (1, 75) = 1.50, p = .224, assessments provided by mothers, F (1, 75) = 0.304, p = .583, and evaluations made by fathers, F (1, 75) = 0.376, p = .542. Additionally, ANOVAs were applied to the *Contextual Happiness Perception Scale*, F (1, 75) = 0.749, p = .390, and *Loneliness Scale*, F (1, 75) = 0.087, p = .768. However, the results indicated no significant differences between boys and girls across these measures.

3.3.2 Thematic Analysis

Utilizing the *Thematic Analysis* method (Braun & Clarke, 2006), five distinct themes encapsulated the various aspects of happiness expressed by study participants (see Table 13). The primary theme, denoted as *Social relationships,* encompasses the sentiments of pleasure, well-being, and serenity associated with interpersonal interactions beyond the familial sphere. This overarching theme further comprises four subsidiary sub-themes: (1a) *Interpersonal engagement.* This sub-theme characterizes the happiness derived from engaging with individuals external to one's immediate family circle, encompassing interactions with other people in general, friends, and romantic partners; (1b) *Friendship.* Within this sub-theme, we delineate the happiness experienced through the companionship of friends, highlighting the significance of such relationships in contributing to overall well-being, indicating the happiness derived from spending time with friends; (1c) *School-based relationship.* This subtheme emphasizes the positive emotions resulting from involvement in interactions within an educational setting, emphasizing the role of school-related connections in promoting happiness; (1d) *Romantic relationship.* This subtheme concerns the happiness generated by the presence and quality time spent with one's romantic partner, accentuating the distinctive attributes of romantic relationships in promoting emotional well-being.

The second theme was designated as *Family relationships,* which include feelings of well-being, serenity, or general contentment linked to the quality time spent with one's familial connections. The third theme was *Personal interests* and related to happiness derived from active engagement in one's personal passions and hobbies. This overarching theme comprised two distinct sub-themes: (3a) *Sports.* This sub-theme included the happiness experienced when participating in sports or physical activities, underlining the positive emotions associated with athletic efforts; (3b) *Recreational activities.* Within this sub-theme, we delineate the happiness derived from less-structured recreational activities, such as dancing or playing a musical instrument, emphasizing the broad spectrum of sources of personal satisfaction.

The fourth thematic category, denoted as *Achievements*, was dedicated to the happiness connected with the attainment of personal goals and the realization of desired outcomes. This category further encompassed two sub-themes: (4a) *Academic achievements.* This sub-theme underscored the significance of educational outcomes in eliciting positive emotions, highlighting the happiness derived from academic success, including achieving high grades and other scholastic milestones; (4b) *Personal achievements.* This sub-theme pertained to the happiness resulting from personal accomplishments beyond the academic realm, such as winning a sports trophy, accentuating the diversity of sources contributing to personal satisfaction.

The ultimate thematic category, labeled as *Entertainment*, encompassed dimensions of happiness associated with lightheartedness, enjoyment, and playfulness. Table 13 presents a comprehensive exposition of the primary themes and their respective frequencies. To assess the concordance among the coders, kappa coefficients were computed for each emergent theme, drawing upon the participants' responses. The level of agreement ranged from excellent (κ = .86) to perfect (κ = 1.00). These agreement indices can be summarized in Table 14.

Table 13

Thematic structure, representative quotations, and frequencies

Theme	Sub-themes	Frequencies	Examples
Social relationships (*n* = 203) Females > Males	Friendship (*n* = 110)	Children (*n* = 42) F=25, A=21 Mothers (*n* = 35) F=25, A=17 Fathers (*n* = 33) F=24, A=17	Preadolescent: "When we talk to friends… Not about school, of course! This can be nice". Mother: "Happiness is when she is free to be alone with her friends".
	Interpersonal engagement (*n* = 48)	Children (*n* = 25) F=17, A=11 Mothers (*n* = 11) F=8, A=3 Fathers (*n* = 12) F=8, A=8	Adolescent: "I am happy when even those I love are happy first of all". Father: "He is happy when he sees others happy".
	School-based relationship (*n* = 25)	Children (*n* = 6) F=4, A=3 Mothers (*n* = 10) F=6, A=6 Fathers (*n* = 9) F=7, A=4	Adolescent: "It makes me feel good to go to class and be with my classmates". Father: "Do not have problems and worries at school".
	Romantic relationship (*n* = 20)	Children (*n* = 6) F=4, A=6 Mothers (*n* = 9) F=7, A=9 Fathers (*n* = 5) F=4, A=5	Adolescent: "Cuddling with my boyfriend". Mother: "Manage time with your boyfriend with as much serenity as possible".
Family relationships (*n* = 110) Females > Males Preadolescents > Adolescents		Children (*n* = 28) F=21, A=10 Mothers (*n* = 44) F=25, A=20 Fathers (*n* = 38) F=22, A=18	Preadolescent: "Love the people who live with you". Father: "To see that the rest of the family, me, mom, and little brother are happy".
Personal interests (*n* = 92) (No gender or group age differences)	Recreational activities (*n* = 64)	Children (*n* = 23) F=12, A=8 Mothers (*n* = 21) F=17, A=8 Fathers (*n* = 20) F=11, A=10	Preadolescent: "Many things make me happy, like drawing, reading a book…Then I like discussing the films I have seen". Father: "It makes him happy to be able to express his creativity in drawings".
	Sports (*n* = 28)	Children (*n* = 17) F=9, A=10 Mothers (*n* = 5) F=1, A=2 Fathers (*n* = 6) F=3, A=1	Adolescent: "Sport, as it is my passion that I have been cultivating for seventeen years". Mother: "He loves sports and playing football".
Achievements (*n* = 88) Adolescents > Preadolescents	Personal achievements (*n* = 58)	Children (*n* = 10) F=3, A=8 Mothers (*n* = 23) F=17, A=14 Fathers (*n* = 25) F=17, A=12	Preadolescent: "It makes me happy when I can achieve some important goal". Father: "Succeeding in what it aims to do".

	Academic achievements (*n* = 30)	Children (*n* = 6) F=4, A=4 Mothers (*n* = 14) F=9, A=11 Fathers (*n* = 10) F=8, A=8	Adolescent: "Understanding a school topic". Mother: "Realize his plans and matriculate at the university".
Entertainment (*n* = 49) Males > Females Preadolescents > Adolescents		Children (*n* = 21) F=8, A=5 Mothers (*n* = 13) F=9, A=5 Fathers (*n* = 15) F=8, A=3	Adolescent: "It makes me happy to have fun more than anything else". Mother: "For him to play the PlayStation. He is focused on playing the games".

Note. F = Females; A = Adolescents

Table 14
Themes degree of agreement

Theme	Reporter	κ	*p*
	Preadolescents/Adolescents	0.95	< .001
Achievements	Mothers	0.96	< .001
	Fathers	1.00	< .001
	Preadolescents/Adolescents	0.94	< .001
Entertainment	Mothers	0.86	< .001
	Fathers	0.96	< .001
	Preadolescents/Adolescents	1.00	< .001
Family relationships	Mothers	0.94	< .001
	Fathers	0.97	< .001
	Preadolescents/Adolescents	0.92	< .001
Social relationships	Mothers	0.90	< .001
	Fathers	0.97	< .001
	Preadolescents/Adolescents	0.94	< .001
Personal interests	Mothers	0.88	< .001
	Fathers	0.92	< .001

3.3.2.1 Social Relationships

The primary theme arising from the analysis of interview transcripts involving preadolescents/adolescents and their parents is the *Social relationships* theme, which pertains to interpersonal interactions with individuals external to the immediate family unit. In general, this theme emerges as the most frequently cited one from both the parental and preadolescent/adolescent viewpoints, without distinction of age or gender of preadolescents/adolescents. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that, in the perspective of both fathers and mothers, social relationships appear to hold greater significance for their daughters (mothers: $n = 29$; fathers: $n = 28$) when compared to their sons (mothers: $n = 15$; fathers: $n = 13$) as a source of happiness. Furthermore, even from the children's perspective, social interactions carry more weight for females (females: $n = 40$) than for males (males: $n = 22$).

The thematic category of *Social relationships* comprises four subsidiary components, namely: (1) *Interpersonal engagement*, (2) *Friendship*, (3) *School-based relationship*, (4) *Romantic relationship*. Within the *Interpersonal engagement* sub-theme, we encounter facets of relational dynamics intrinsic to interactions outside the family unit, encompassing friendships and romantic partnerships. This sub-theme encompasses the sharing of enjoyable experiences, the cultivation of a state of concord and alignment with another individual, as well as the provision of support and assistance to others. According to the perspectives articulated by parents and children, who evoke this thematic area, happiness experienced by preadolescents/adolescents is intricately linked to interpersonal connections. This happiness is entwined with feelings of acceptance within relationships, cultivating positive social experiences, the establishment of harmonious relationships, engagement in prosocial behaviors, and the amelioration of sentiments of loneliness.

> I think [happiness] can rarely be something that is not shared. Even if it is an act that pertains to me alone, it feels as though I am compelled to share happiness with others

> or the world [...]. It's about believing in relationships despite the ups and downs and occasional doubts you may have in relationships. Feeling empathy and sharing deep emotions with others brings me immense happiness. (Adolescent female, 18 years old)

> I see that it is essential for her to spend time with peers, to be accepted by peers, and to have a group of people who seek her out. Beyond the love we, as parents, can give her, the relationship with peers is crucial for me in adolescence. She enjoys being helpful to others and being the center of attention, feeling loved and accepted primarily by her peers. I think having someone to support you gives you tranquility if not happiness. (Mother, 53 years old)

> I believe she is still experiencing some confusion at this stage, which I believe is typical of adolescence. She currently associates happiness with getting along well with others experiencing love and reciprocation. It's not about materialistic concerns for her but rather about emotional and sentimental aspects. So, I imagine she finds happiness in the small everyday moments when she feels a sense of fulfillment and moral satisfaction. (Father, 54 years old)

The second sub-theme, denominated as *Friendship*, centers on the contentment derived from socializing with friends, partaking in informal outings, experiencing enjoyment, and engaging in recreational and playful activities together. Friendship assumes a pivotal emotional and affective role for participants who evoke this sub-theme. Preadolescents/adolescents discover happiness in feeling esteemed, accepted, integrated, valued, consoled, and cherished by their friends and knowing they can rely on them for support. As reported by a 14-year-old female adolescent, the friend group attains a significance like a secondary family. Furthermore, a 61-year-old father underscores the emotional dimensions that friendships evoke:

> I am very close to my friends because they are like family. My group of friends [brings me happiness], especially my best friend. (Female adolescent, 14 years old)

> [For her, happiness lies in] having friends, being connected with others [...], being accepted by them, being in the company of friends, and feeling well, I believe. [...] [What makes her happy is] to feel accepted… this is very important for her… to not feel guilty for something terrible she may have done towards others. (Father, 61 years old)

The third sub-theme, designated as *School-based Relationship*, directs its attention to diverse interpersonal interactions occurring within the scholastic context, involving interactions with other students. Participants alluding to this sub-theme underscore the significance of school attendance in affording preadolescents'/adolescents' opportunities to connect with their peers and cultivate feelings of inclusion and membership.

> I feel very good at school. I am convinced that this is something that makes me happy. (Female adolescent, 14 years old)

> Although she may not be head over heels for school, I think that school has something to do with her happiness. She still likes to attend school. Without school, I don't think she would be happy. It is an essential thing for her. I do not know, and I think that friendship and school [contribute to her overall happiness. (Mother, 43 years old)

> [Happiness for my daughter is] engaging in fellowship with schoolmates and not having problems at school. In short, in my opinion, [it entails] being eventually accepted and loved by everyone. (Father, 45 years old)

Lastly, the fourth and concluding sub-theme, labeled as *Romantic relationship*, centers on the romantic affiliations of adolescents with their respective partners. It is noteworthy that although the information collected from parents and adolescents concerning this subject is somewhat limited, the available data substantiates the notion that adolescence denotes a pivotal developmental phase characterized by the exploration and nurturing of romantic bonds. Significantly, there were no occurrences of this sub-theme in the transcripts featuring preadolescents, as indicated by the conspicuous absence of references. In contrast, the

manifestation of this sub-theme was solely apparent in discussions expressly focused on female adolescents (adolescents: 4 females out of 6; mothers: 7 daughters out of 9; fathers: 4 daughters out of 5). The instances below illustrate two scenarios where a 15-year-old male adolescent reports that his happiness is inextricably and intimately linked to his romantic relationship with his girlfriend, and a 54-year-old father underscores that his son's happiness derives from the genuine and authentic bond he shares with his girlfriend:

> [Happiness] could be a person who makes you happy, [...] that is, in my case, it's truly a person, my girlfriend. It may sound obvious or overly sweet, but I swear it's true. She is the person who makes me completely happy, and if I am happy today, it's solely because of her. Happiness allows you to see the world from a different perspective, helping you better deal with life's challenges and difficulties. (Male adolescent, 15 years old)

> In my opinion, currently, [happiness] is the relationship he has with his girlfriend, which appears to be a relationship that, although typically adolescent and therefore somewhat conflicted, is still authentic…in short, [a relationship] lived with much passion and a strong sense of self-identity. (Father, 54 years old)

3.3.2.2 Family Relationship

The second thematic category, denominated as *Family relationship*, encompasses the experience of happiness that arises from sharing moments with family members and residing within a harmonious, secure, and authentic familial context. It emerged as the second most frequently cited theme according to maternal (n = 44) and paternal (n = 38) narratives. However, when viewed from the perspective of preadolescents (n = 18) and adolescents (n = 10), *Family relationships* were identified as the third most commonly recurrent theme. Furthermore, females (n = 21) reported family interactions as a source of happiness more frequently than males (n = 7). As illustrative examples, the following excerpts show how a 17-year-old female

adolescent describes her happiness as derived from family connections, while a 55-year-old father emphasizes the importance of family interactions in contributing to his son's happiness.

> Happiness consists of living in a peaceful environment, having a sincere relationship with loved ones, and being free from hidden secrets. (Female adolescent, 17 years old)

> For him, happiness is a state of tranquility. He needs stability in his surroundings and harmony and affection among family members … I have seen that he feels comforted when there is this kind of atmosphere, and you can see it in his eyes. (Father, 55 years old)

The topic of balance and consensus among family members emerged as a recurrent theme during the interviews. Participants who highlighted this theme perceived that, for preadolescents/adolescents, happiness is intricately tied to harmony, familial cohesion, and a prevailing sense of peace within the domestic environment. Conversely, instances of conflict and a lack of unity among family members can give rise to discomfort, undermining the serenity and harmonious atmosphere within the familial sphere. While some interviewees acknowledge the inevitability of sporadic disagreements within the family context, it is noteworthy that a 12-year-old male preadolescent and a 55-year-old father both specifically emphasize the significance of addressing and resolving conflicts within the family to enhance the overall well-being of the family unit:

> When, for example, my mother and father, or my brother and I, argue and then resolve everything: this is happiness. (Male preadolescent, 12 years old)

> [Happiness for my son is] living in a, let's say, normal family with certain principles… even [a family] with problems that can be resolved within the day… and so, for him, happiness is harmonious living and being happy within the family. (Father, 55 years old)

Within *Family relationship* theme, parents and preadolescents/adolescents articulate physical displays of affection, such as embracing and cuddling, alongside emotional components encompassing intimacy, mutual sharing, and emotional sustenance, all of which serve as sources of happiness. Consequently, a pivotal determinant fostering the happiness of preadolescents and adolescents resides in establishing a stable and secure familial environment that imparts sentiments of love, acceptance, appreciation, understanding, solace, and support. From this perspective, this familial context should not impede the personal growth of the youth but should, instead, serve as a valuable resource to confront and overcome the challenges they encounter. For instance, a 50-year-old mother underscores the significance of physical displays of affection in enhancing her child's overall well-being, while a 48-year-old father concentrates on the emotional dimensions involved in nurturing a sense of being heard and supported within his child:

> I think consistent affection within the family sphere and fulfilling some of his desires can lead to spoiling. However, consistent affection and physical affection are crucial for his stability. (Mother, 50 years old)

> [For him, happiness lies in] feeling that he is peacefully growing up and is effectively addressing the challenges that come with his age … Sure, the problems may be there, but the overall experience of happiness derives from a sense of serenity, as he feels heard, understood, assisted, and supported. (Father, 48 years old)

Lastly, recreational and leisure activities conducted by family members emerge as a source of happiness for preadolescents and adolescents. Examination of the interview transcripts shows many shared activities between parents and their children that elicit happiness in preadolescents and adolescents. These activities include evenings devoted to watching movies, engaging in playful games, and enjoying family vacations. These moments of familial togetherness furnish preadolescents/adolescents with avenues for amusement and reprieve,

allowing them to momentarily disengage from the rigors of daily life and immerse themselves in carefree experiences.

> Being with the important people, the family, or having fun and then also maybe in the little things, like in the evening watching movies altogether (Preadolescent female, 12 years old)

> In my opinion, [my son] is very attached to the family, particularly in terms of seeking physical contact even with just the members of his family… for example, he is always very happy during our vacation periods when he has the opportunity to spend the entire day with us. [...] In my opinion, his happiness is greatly influenced by the close bond he shares with family members, spending time together, doing things together, going to the beach, swimming, playing computer games or board games together. In short, consciously dedicating ourselves to him [contributes to his overall sense of happiness]. (Mother, 46 years old)

> Indeed, during moments when we are all happy as a family, play together, and embark on trips. It is during these times that I think he is very happy. (Father, 46 years old)

3.3.2.3 Personal Interests

The third thematic category is *Personal interests*, signifying the happiness derived from engaging in structured and regular activities. It emerged as the second most prevalent theme following *Social relationships* from preadolescents'/adolescents' perspective. However, upon a closer examination of the viewpoints articulated by mothers and fathers, *Personal interests* assume the position of the fourth most frequently mentioned theme. Notably, mothers tend to invoke this theme more frequently when discussing their daughters (n = 18) than their sons

(*n* = 8). Two distinct sub-themes have emerged within this thematic category: *Sport* and *Recreational activities*. The first of these sub-themes, denominated as *Sports*, relates to the happiness experienced through active participation in sporting activities:

> I do rhythmic gymnastics…When I do sports, I have so much fun and enjoy the sport I play. (Female preadolescent, 11 eleven years old)

> I play volleyball and, after training. I finish at 11 pm and I go home and go for a jog, even though I'm l tired. That, for me, is happiness. (Male adolescent, 18 years old)

> Perhaps for him, happiness could be... [...] He loves sports and plays football. He enjoys watching the game and being able attend training sessions. (Mother, 48 years old)

> What makes my daughter very happy, in my opinion, is the fact that she enjoys attending rhythmic gymnastics sessions. (Father, 48 years old)

The second sub-theme, labeled *Recreational activities*, pertains to the happiness emanating from other organized and structured activities, including dancing, singing, playing musical instruments, reading, and drawing. It is worth noting that when taking the viewpoint of the younger cohort, preadolescents (*n* = 15) more frequently cite their involvement in recreational activities in comparison to adolescents (*n* = 8):

> Many things make me happy, such as drawing, and reading books. They make me very happy and sometimes I find myself talking and laughing to myself about books and things like that… and I really enjoy discussing the movies I've watched, even though I have seen very few of them. (Female preadolescent, 11 years old).

> Listening to music... Drawing. (Male adolescent, 14 years old)

> I think [my daughter's happiness] lies in traveling... she is always wandering around! (Mother, 46 years old)

> [What makes him very happy is] being able to express his creativity in the drawings… he always tries to make things, even a little bit, to please us, meaning that he draws and then immediately comes to us to ask for feedback (Father, 42 years old)

3.3.2.4 Achievements

The fourth thematic category, designated as *Achievements*, pertains to the happiness that comes from the realization of objectives, the attainment of outcomes, or the receipt of rewards. It is noteworthy that while preadolescents/adolescents do not frequently associate happiness with facets of *Achievements* (n = 16), this theme emerges prominently in the narratives of parents (n = 58). Parents more frequently ascribe this theme to their daughters (fathers/daughters: n = 22; mothers/daughters: n = 19) than to their sons (fathers/sons: n = 9; mothers/sons: n = 8).

Within the *Achievements* thematic category, two distinct sub-themes have emerged*:* *Academic* and *Personal achievements*. The first sub-theme, called *Academic achievements*, concerns happiness from attaining commendable grades, a deep understanding of classroom content, selecting a university, and analogous scholastic accomplishments. It is noteworthy that, from the parents' viewpoint, the connection between happiness and academic success was more frequently evident among adolescents (mothers: n = 11; fathers: n = 8) than preadolescents (mothers: n = 3; fathers: n = 2).

> It makes me happy to receive a good grade. (Male preadolescent, 11 years old)

> That's a challenging question [...] Understanding a subject at school [brings me happiness]. (Female adolescent, 17 years old)

> She is an inquisitive and exceptionally gifted child, […] reasoning and learning, knowing, reading, and acquiring new knowledge are all a part of her happiness. (Mother, 48 years old)

> Perhaps for him, given his age, [happiness lies in] achieving his goals as he gets closer to the university world. (Father, 52 years old)

The second sub-theme, *Personal achievements*, relates to the happiness emanating from achievements in sports, music, and individual pursuits. It is noteworthy that *Personal achievements* (preadolescents: $n = 2$; adolescents: $n = 8$; mothers: $n = 23$; fathers: $n = 25$) are reported with greater frequency in comparison to *Academic achievements* (preadolescents: $n = 2$; adolescents: $n = 4$; mothers: $n = 14$; fathers: $n = 10$).

> [Happiness lies in] the satisfaction of accomplishing something important, leaving a lasting mark. This is what would bring me a sense of self-satisfaction. (Male adolescent, 14 years old)

> [...] Surely, I often set goals for myself and manage to achieve them, which is something I struggle with due to my limited sense of discipline ... Being able to say, "I truly made it", and seeing a clear path ahead. It's one of the things that would make me feel happier at the individual level. (Female teenager, 18 years old)

> She is an enthusiastic person, so let's say that many things make her happy. However, [happiness for her relies on] accomplishing things… succeeding in what she does. (Mother, 48 years old)

> Indeed, happiness is primarily [derived from] achieving small dreams, the ideas he has. (Father, 51 years old)

3.3.2.5 Entertainment

The ultimate theme that emerged from the analysis of the transcripts was designated as *Entertainment* and is characterized by the experience of happiness within the realm of recreational and playful engagement. This encompasses activities such as play, amusement, and jesting, whether undertaken in the company of others, such as engaging in recreational activities

with friends or in solitary settings, such as playing video games. It is noteworthy that no specific sub-themes within this overarching theme were identified. The instances of references to enjoyment were relatively limited for preadolescents/adolescents (n = 21), mothers (n = 13), and fathers (n = 15). Generally, preadolescents (n = 16) more frequently cited an association between happiness and enjoyment than adolescents (n = 5). Similarly, fathers of preadolescents were more prone to regard play and enjoyment as sources of happiness for their children (n = 12), in contrast to fathers of adolescents (n = 3). The following excerpts extracted from the interviews exemplify instances in line with the *Entertainment* theme:

> [Happiness is] having fun with my friends. (Male preadolescent, 11 years old)
>
> For me, happiness is, for example, going out with my friends, laughing, and joking. (Female adolescent, 16 years old)
>
> My daughter might say happiness is being with friends, spending time with them, playing together, and maybe not doing homework! (Mother, 43 years old)
>
> For her, as a teenager, happiness currently means carefreeness, playing, and thinking about having fun. (Father, 40 years old)

3.3.3 Age and Gender Differences and Family Agreement Indices

As illustrated in Table 13, the predominant recurring theme within the narratives of both preadolescents/adolescents and parents was *Social relationships*. To be more precise, the sub-theme of *Friendships* emerged as the most salient aspect within this comprehensive thematic category. Subsequently, for preadolescents/adolescents, the second most frequently recurrent theme was *Personal interests*, while for parents, it was *Family relationships*. Notably, the theme of *Achievements* received notably more frequent mentions from parents than their children. From both parents' and children's perspectives, the least reported theme was *Entertainment*.

Chi-square analyses were deployed to investigate potential gender disparities in the incidence of various themes. The findings, χ^2 (4, n = 162) = 9.40, p = .05, elucidated that male preadolescents and adolescents demonstrated a greater inclination to report the *Entertainment* theme in comparison to their female counterparts, whereas females exhibited a proclivity for reporting the *Family relationships* and *Social relationships* themes more frequently. In contrast, no statistically significant gender variations in theme frequencies were observed when examining the perspectives of mothers, χ^2 (4, n = 154) = 1.96, p = .744, and fathers, χ^2 (4, n = 151) = 3.24, p = .519.

Significant differences related to age were observed, as evidenced by the results of Chi-square analyses analysis (χ^2 (4, n = 162) = 13.4, p = .009): Adolescents displayed a propensity to more frequently articulate the *Achievements* theme, whereas preadolescents demonstrated a heightened prevalence of the *Entertainment* and *Family relationships* themes in comparison to their adolescent counterparts. In contrast to preadolescents, who more frequently emphasized the aspects of play and familial relationships as sources of happiness, adolescents more frequently reported deriving happiness from the attainment of academic and broader life goals. No noteworthy disparities in theme frequencies based on age were discerned when considering the perspectives of mothers, χ^2 (4, n = 154) = 4.25, p = .374, and fathers, χ^2 (4, n = 151) = 6.40, p = .171.

The presence or absence of various themes within triadic responses was evaluated to gauge the degree of consensus within families concerning their conceptualizations of happiness. Agreement percentages were computed for comparisons involving mother-child, father-child, mother-father, and the overall agreement within the mother-father-child triad. For instance, in cases where the child's response refers to *Social relationships* while the mother's response refers to *Achievements*, it was categorized as a disagreement. In general, the agreement percentage between children and mothers was 32.7%, whereas between children and fathers, it amounted to 36.9%. Meanwhile, the agreement between mothers and fathers reached 38.4%,

and the overall agreement within the triad constituted 34.8%. A Chi-square analysis was subsequently performed to scrutinize any disparities in agreement based on the age or gender of the children. However, no statistically significant differences in agreement were discernible.

Using quantitative data, three paired-sample *t*-tests were employed to compare the happiness assessments of children with those of their respective mothers and fathers (as measured by the *Faces Scale*). The results revealed no statistically significant differences in scores between children (M = 5.56, SD = 0.98) and their mothers (M = 5.39, SD = 0.97; $t(76)$ = -1.13, p = 0.26), as well as between children and their fathers (M = 5.58, SD = 0.94; $t(76)$ = 0.18, p = 0.86). However, it is noteworthy that fathers reported higher levels of children's happiness in comparison to the evaluations provided by the mothers ($t(76)$ = -2.07, p = 0.04). These findings suggest that mothers tend to underestimate the happiness levels of their children relative to the assessments made by fathers. Lastly, the analyses did not reveal any significant differences based on children's age (preadolescents vs. adolescents) and biological sex (girls vs. boys) in the evaluations of happiness provided by children, mothers and fathers.

3.4 Discussion

Study 3 employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to delve into the conceptions of happiness among preadolescents and adolescents. More specifically, the study sought to elucidate the factors that generate happiness in preadolescents and adolescents, as perceived from both the point of view of parents and the youth themselves. Regarding the quantitative aspects of the study, several noteworthy results emerged. Firstly, when assessing the average levels of happiness in preadolescents and adolescents, a discernible pattern was highlighted: Preadolescents reported significantly higher levels of happiness and concomitantly lower levels of loneliness compared to their adolescent counterparts. This result supports the first research hypothesis. Importantly, this finding aligned with existing literature that assumes higher age groups experience diminished levels of happiness, reduced self-esteem,

and a higher prevalence of negative self-perceptions relative to their younger counterparts (Baiocco et al., 2019; Verrastro et al., 2020).

The transitional phase of adolescence represents a critical period marked by substantial psychological transformations within individuals. Consequently, these transformations can influence their happiness and well-being, frequently accompanied by an augmented perception of loneliness. Establishing and cultivating peer relationships constitute a fundamental developmental task during these life stages, as delineated by Steinberg and Morris (2001). Lower levels of happiness may potentially impede the social engagement of preadolescents and adolescents, consequently resulting in heightened perceptions of loneliness. Moreover, as individuals progress in age, there appears to be a concurrent rise in the experience of loneliness.

Regarding gender differences in happiness levels among preadolescents and adolescents, no discernible disparities based on gender were detected. This outcome aligns with the initially posited hypothesis and finds support in a substantial body of literature (Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013; Verrastro et al., 2020). However, it is worth noting that the literature on this matter does not present a uniform consensus, as some studies report significant gender discrepancies in happiness levels (as exemplified by Bennefield, 2018; Kaye-Tzadok et al., 2017; Leto et al., 2019). This variability may be attributed to the use of divergent instruments for measuring happiness or the contextual diversity arising from distinct cultural backgrounds.

In an exploratory manner, the qualitative segment of the current study embarked on an investigation into the conceptualizations of happiness within the domains of preadolescence and adolescence. Confirming the veracity of the third research hypothesis, parents and children delineated various sources of happiness when questioned about the factors that engender happiness in preadolescents and adolescents. These sources encompassed *Social relationships* (Eloff, 2008), *Family relationships* (Freire et al., 2013), *Personal interests* (Chaplin, 2009), *Achievements* (López-Pérez et al., 2016; López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018) and

Entertainment (Giacomoni et al., 2014; Navarro et al., 2017). These findings were consistent with the existing literature, illustrating that preadolescents and adolescents tend to conceptualize their happiness within interpersonal and personal contexts (Sargeant, 2010).

The findings of the study demonstrated that the primary source of happiness, as perceived from both the points of view of parents and preadolescents/adolescents, was *Social relationships*. A substantial body of research has previously underscored that spending time with individuals outside of the familial sphere, be it friends (Thoilliez, 2011), schoolmates (López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018), or romantic partners (Navarro et al., 2017), correlates with elevated levels of happiness in preadolescents and adolescents (Holder & Coleman, 2009). It is widely acknowledged that peer relationships are pivotal in adolescence, affording a source of social support and opportunities for shared interests and collective activities (Cheng & Furnham, 2002). Furthermore, the significance of friendships appears to be notably accentuated during the phases of preadolescence and adolescence in comparison to childhood (Bagwell et al., 2015; Pallini et al., 2014).

Despite the relatively diminished importance of family in terms of adolescents' overall well-being compared to peer relationships, it is worth noting that *Family relationships* emerged as the second thematic category within the parents' perspective and the third thematic category within the viewpoints of preadolescents and adolescents. In line with existing literature, studies underlined the fundamental importance of nurturing positive familial bonds as a crucial source of happiness during the preadolescent and adolescent phases (Freire et al., 2014; Giacomoni et al., 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016; Navarro et al., 2017). Previous research has substantiated these findings by demonstrating that spending more time with family and the perception of heightened levels of parental care, affection, and emotional connection were concomitantly associated with elevated happiness levels among adolescents (Cheng & Furnham, 2004; Gray et al., 2013).

They are residing within a secure and nurturing family environment, where children perceive both care and the assurance of parental protection and security, emerged as an indispensable aspect of well-being and happiness spanning from early childhood to adolescence (Fattore et al., 2009; Greco & Ison, 2014). Conversely, familial discord and a lack of cohesion among family members have diminished adolescents' happiness (Izzo et al., 2022; Navarro et al., 2017). Within this context, the family sphere is a refuge for emotional bonds, serving as a sanctuary where both physical and emotional needs can find satisfaction within a secure framework (Fattore et al., 2009; Thoilliez, 2011). The present results underscore the enduring significance of the family as a pivotal source of support during adolescence, underscoring the critical importance of emotional closeness among family members during the transitional phase from childhood to adolescence (Bennefield, 2018).

The theme of *Personal interests* emerged as the second most prevalent theme among preadolescents and adolescents, although in fourth place in terms of importance from the vantage points of mothers and fathers. This thematic construct has also been observed in prior research studies under various designations, such as hobbies (Chaplin, 2009), engagement in sports (Maftei et al., 2020; Sargeant, 2010), and participation in recreational activities (Eloff, 2008; Greco & Ison, 2014). In the current investigation, the concept of *Personal interests* encompasses the happiness derived from participating in both structured and less structured activities. These activities include involvement in sports, including activities such as playing sports, swimming, biking, and running, as well as engagement in recreational activities, such as singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, drawing, and reading.

Numerous studies have underscored the positive associations between engagement in recreational activities, such as painting and drawing (Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020), listening to music and playing musical instruments (Sargeant, 2010), attending parties (Thoilliez, 2011), and embarking on holidays (Eloff, 2008), with heightened levels of happiness in children and adolescents. Furthermore, it is worth noting that increased physical activity and

involvement in sports have demonstrated beneficial effects on mental health and happiness across various age cohorts (Zhang & Chen, 2019).

Another recurring theme discerned within the interview transcripts concerned *Achievements*. This theme incorporates the sense of happiness derived from academic achievements, such as high school grades, and personal successes and non-academic achievements, such as realizing personal dreams and aspirations. In contrast to the perspectives articulated by preadolescents/adolescents and parents, it is noteworthy that *Achievements* emerged as a more substantial source of happiness among adolescents, as reported by parents. The findings from this study are in line with prior research that underscores the significance of achievement as a source of happiness (López-Pérez et al., 2016; Navarro et al., 2017), with particular resonance in late adolescence (Chaplin, 2009; Freire et al., 2013). Adolescents tend to conceive of happiness more sophisticatedly, employing abstract concepts and recognizing happiness as attainable through personal achievements (Thoilliez, 2011).

The final theme, less frequently emphasized in the perspectives of parents and preadolescents/adolescents, revolves around *Entertainment*. This theme encompasses joyful experiences associated with playfulness, humor, and enjoyment. It is worth noting that this theme was also found in previous studies (Eloff, 2008; Freire et al., 2013; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Navarro et al., 2017; Sargeant, 2010). However, it is essential to recognize that some research has indicated a decline in satisfaction related to leisure-time activities and the diminishing importance of play as individuals transition from childhood to adolescence (Chaplin, 2009; Goldbeck et al., 2007). Adolescents, in particular, reported an increased sense of intrinsic motivation, freedom, and happiness when engaged in enjoyable leisure activities (Kleiber et al., 1986). Such activities have demonstrated lasting effects on adolescents' psychological well-being, including reduced stress levels and increased overall life satisfaction (Shin & You, 2013). Additionally, the maturation process leads to a shift in the perception of play. While children often associate play with material objects like toys (Giacomoni et al.,

2014), adolescents tend to relate it more to social interactions with friends or solitary engagements through technology (Eloff, 2008; Navarro et al., 2017).

While gender differences in overall happiness levels were not observed, noteworthy distinctions emerged concerning the sources of happiness. Chi-square analyses were conducted to investigate variances between males and females concerning key happiness themes. The results indicate that, for males, an essential determinant of happiness revolves around enjoyment and leisure activities (Giacomoni et al., 2014). Conversely, females' focal point of happiness resides in interpersonal relationships, encompassing general, romantic, and family relationships (Businaro et al., 2015; Giacomoni et al., 2014).

This divergence can be ascribed to the tendency of female preadolescents/adolescents, in comparison to their male counterparts, to cultivate more profound and interdependent relationships with peers and partners (Galambos, 2013; Shulman & Scharf, 2000). In essence, female preadolescents/adolescents appear to attribute greater significance to relationships when contrasted with their male counterparts, while male preadolescents/adolescents tend to regard leisure activities and play as fundamental components of their happiness (Furnham & Cheng, 2000; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Maccoby, 1990). Consequently, societal expectations may favor recreational and playful activities for males, often associated with competition or leisure, while interpersonal and family relationships may assume a more prominent role in the happiness equation for females.

In addition to gender disparities, the results revealed age-related differences in the sources of happiness of preadolescents and adolescents. In particular, adolescents exhibit a higher propensity to reference the theme of *Achievements* when describing their sources of happiness than preadolescents. Conversely, preadolescents tend to emphasize relational aspects, particularly *Family relationships*, and *Entertainment* more frequently in their descriptions. This contrast can be attributed to the natural progression of individuals as they mature. With increasing age, individuals tend to adopt a more structured approach to constructing their

identity, focusing on specific aspirations and the pathways to attain them. This includes decisions such as choosing a particular academic trajectory or dedicating significant effort to excel in a specific sport.

Adolescents tend to prioritize personal achievements because they find themselves in a developmental stage characterized by substantial psychophysical changes, which drive them to seek individual fulfillment while concurrently shaping their "career identity" (Maree, 2021; Meijers, 1998). On the other hand, preadolescents often place more emphasis on relational aspects. This inclination is consistent with their developmental phase, where social identity formation and the cultivation of interpersonal skills hold central significance. However, the nature of these relational aspects in preadolescents may be less structured compared to the more goal-oriented focus of adolescents. Preadolescents primarily engage in tasks that involve establishing peer groups and forging identities outside the familial context.

Finally, concerning the agreement of themes between preadolescents/adolescents and their parents, it is noteworthy that the levels of concordance of responses were notably low, consistently falling below the 40% threshold. Intriguingly, the highest levels of consensus were discerned within the parental dyad, between mothers and fathers, rather than between parents and their children. This observation suggests that parents may engage in more open and honest communication when discussing their children compared to when they are asked what makes their children happy. Furthermore, the absence of significant disparities based on gender or age is notable. It indicates that the lack of agreement among participants is a pervasive pattern that transcends different demographic subgroups.

In other words, the challenges in aligning perspectives on happiness themes between parents and their children persist consistently, regardless of gender or the child's developmental stage. Nonetheless, it is crucial to underscore that the inherent nature of the happiness experience itself may contribute to the observed low agreement in themes between preadolescents/adolescents and their parents. Happiness is an inherently intricate and subjective

emotion, and its manifestations can markedly differ from one individual to another. However, despite this inherent complexity, the identified divergence in sources of happiness between parents and their children remains of considerable significance. Recognizing and acknowledging this disparity can be a foundation for promoting transparent communication and meaningful interactions between both parties. It fosters an environment conducive to mutual understanding of the diverse perspectives on happiness, ultimately nurturing stronger parent-child relationships.

The outcomes of the *t*-tests revealed distinctions in the mean happiness levels solely between mothers and fathers. Fathers consistently reported significantly higher happiness levels in their children than mothers. This pattern suggests a trend of fathers overestimating their children's happiness relative to mothers, and this tendency was consistent regardless of the age or gender of the children. One plausible interpretation of these findings may be rooted in the notion that, in certain instances, fathers might be comparatively less attuned to the subtle emotional nuances of their children. They may also demonstrate a reduced inclination to recognize signs of sadness or distress when contrasted with mothers. Mothers, conversely, tend to engage more intimately in emotional expressions and nurturing relationships with their children. This heightened involvement potentially contributes to a greater awareness of their children's emotional states, regardless of children's gender and age (Shek, 2001).

3.5 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The study of preadolescents' and adolescents' definitions of happiness carries significant theoretical and practical implications, particularly in clinical and educational dimensions. This study enriches the theoretical understanding of subjective happiness experiences in young individuals, contributing to the development and evolution of psychological theories related to happiness and emotional well-being during developmental stages. This may involve adapting and enhancing existing models to better reflect the specific

experiences of preadolescents and adolescents.

The findings delineated within this research hold promise for exploring pivotal variables that contribute to the optimal psychological development of preadolescents and adolescents. This endeavor entails identifying factors that promote greater individual and societal well-being. The discerned age-related distinctions in the identified themes offer valuable perspectives into the shifting priorities and interests across distinct age cohorts. Consequently, these insights contribute to distinguishing psychological developmental dynamics during the critical transition from preadolescence to adolescence and have the potential to inform and shape interventions and strategies geared toward promoting socio-emotional development in youth.

Overall, this study not only enriches psychological theory but also provides a practical framework for enhancing targeted educational programs and clinical care, offering actionable insights for educational and clinical intervention. Specifically, in the educational domain, understanding the sources of happiness for preadolescents and adolescents can inform school programs aimed at promoting emotional well-being. Teachers can adopt approaches that encourage positive experiences and contribute to the emotional support of students. On the other hand, in the clinical realm, it allows clinical psychologists to tailor therapeutic interventions to better reflect the happiness conceptions of young patients, promoting a deeper understanding of their emotional needs.

Furthermore, in the field of family therapies, prospective research efforts have the potential to delve deeper into the determinants that underlie the alignment of happiness themes between parents and children and, therefore, influence the agreement of their responses. These determinants may include family culture, received education, and the broader social context. The results of such investigations promise to increase our comprehension of the intricate dynamics within families concerning the concept of happiness. Furthermore, the insights obtained from these studies can serve as valuable foundations for designing interventions to

foster improved understanding and mutual support between parents and their children in navigating discussions about happiness. Such interventions can, in turn, contribute to creating a familial environment where parents are experts at supporting the emotional well-being of their children and facilitating their socio-emotional development.

Conclusions

Happiness is a subjective state of overall well-being and emotional balance in which an individual experiences not only positive emotions such as joy, satisfaction, and gratitude but also relies on the ability to face challenges, maintain a sense of purpose in life, and enjoy positive relationships with others (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Diener et al., 2018; Froh et al., 2009). Furthermore, it is essential to note that happiness is not a static concept but rather dynamic and can vary over time depending on factors such as life events, personal circumstances, personality, and individual perspectives (Holder & Coleman, 2009; Holder & Klassen, 2010). Positive Psychology research analyzes the determinants of happiness and develops strategies to increase well-being and life satisfaction (Csikszentmihalyi & Seligman, 2000; Seligman et al., 2005).

Although there has been a growing trend in examining happiness in children and adolescents, as indicated by the increasing number of publications in recent years, the scientific literature still has several gaps, including: (a) the lack of a coherent theoretical model to define the happiness construct; (b) a limited exploration of happiness conceptions in the developmental stages of childhood and adolescence; (c) a predominant focus on the children's perspective, with rare consideration of parents' viewpoints in happiness research. The current research project aims to fill some of these gaps in the literature through the implementation of three studies, which include a systematic literature review (Study 1) and two studies focusing on samples of children (Study 2) and adolescents (Study 3).

The dissertation presented explores individual and family happiness and socio-emotional well-being in children and adolescents, identifying both risk and protective factors that influence happiness during childhood and adolescence. The study of happiness during this developmental phase holds a dual significance in terms of well-being promotion and illness

prevention (Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998). Identifying risk and protective factors for children's happiness can assist parents, educators, and researchers in identifying strategies to promote children's happiness and social and relational well-being. Furthermore, since several studies have reported that happiness and life satisfaction encompass more than the absence of psychopathological disorders (Diener et al., 2009), assessing the determinants of children's happiness can help to understand and prevent the onset of various diseases in late childhood/adolescence, such as anxiety, depression, behavioral disorders, or other problems inherent to the emotional and relational sphere (Baiocco et al., 2019).

Decades of research have underscored the importance of studying multi-contextual influences in assessing and intervening in happiness, strongly supporting the ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and emphasizing the effects of significant life contexts (Gilman & Huebner, 2003). Within this perspective, the choice to adopt a systemic approach, thus considering the family system, is derived from studies highlighting the family and parental involvement as essential predictors of children's happiness (Flouri & Buchanan, 2003; Holder & Coleman, 2009) and their crucial role in shaping their development (Shek, 1997a). Having a good relationship with family members and enjoying pleasant moments together is one of the aspects referred to by children and adolescents when defining their perceptions of happiness and well-being (Eloff, 2008; Maftei et al., 2020; Navarro et al., 2017). Furthermore, several studies suggest that family relationships represent the primary source of happiness during developmental stages (Chaplin, 2009; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020).

The systematic literature review results (Study 1) have indicated that, regardless of the source of information and the timing of assessment, the happiness of children and adolescents is positively correlated with family functioning (Shek, 1998b; 1999). Thus, healthy family functioning and greater family happiness influence the happiness of children and adolescents across different cultures and age groups (González-Carrasco et al., 2017; Holder & Coleman,

2009; Leung et al., 2016). In particular, studies have revealed that family dimensions seem to directly contribute to children's and adolescents' sense of happiness, contentment, and overall life satisfaction (Hamama & Arazi, 2012; Mallette et al., 2021; Yuan et al., 2019).

Hence, the perception of strong family relationships is significant in helping children and adolescents develop positive feelings, not only of happiness but also love, affection, freedom, and joy (González-Carrasco et al., 2017; Orejudo et al., 2021), underscoring that family functioning and family dimensions play a crucial role in influencing their happiness (Shek, 1997a; Uusitalo-Malmivaara & Lehto, 2013). Therefore, living in a well-functioning and responsive family environment that allows children to express their emotions freely and appropriately appears to be significantly associated with children's perceived happiness (Sari & Dahlia, 2018).

The systematic review of the literature on the association between happiness and family functioning (Study 1) was instrumental in establishing a theoretical framework for the subsequent two studies (Study 2 and Study 3), emphasizing the importance of investigating happiness in developmental stages within the family context. Given that relationships between family members and family satisfaction are stronger predictors of life satisfaction from childhood to adolescence (Alcantara et al., 2017; Ingelmo & Litago, 2018; Park, 2005) and the primary source of happiness in developmental stages (Chaplin, 2009; Giacomoni et al., 2014; Greco & Ison, 2014; Maftei et al., 2020), study 2 aimed to investigate the happiness of children aged 6 to 13 within the family environment, specifically inquiring into what parents and children do when they spend enjoyable time together.

This study, therefore, aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of how parents can influence the happiness of their children. In particular, the objective of study 2 was to qualitatively analyze shared parent-child activities that may represent moments of happiness for children, highlighting potential differences between children's, mothers', and fathers' perspectives. From both the parents' and children's perspectives, the moments of happiness

they describe include activities outside the home (Eloff, 2008), shared activities (Greco & Ison, 2014), playful activities (Giacomoni et al., 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016), emotional exchanges (Maftei et al., 2020; Thoilliez, 2011), and receiving gifts (Chaplin, 2009; Eloff, 2008).

Additionally, children more frequently report calm and affectionate interactions with their mothers and situations that are more playful and enjoyable with their fathers (Bornstein & Venuti, 2013). Parents have demonstrated difficulties taking their children's perspective (Lagattuta et al., 2012; López-Pérez & Wilson, 2015) both in indicating children's happiness level and recounting a happy parent-child moment. Furthermore, as age increases, there is a decline in happiness levels (Baiocco et al., 2019; Verrastro et al., 2020). These findings underscore the need for increased scientific attention to the components of children's happiness, including identifying the definitions given to the construct and the predictors that can enhance happiness, such as family relationships.

Since the scientific literature has highlighted differences in happiness perceptions and levels from childhood to adolescence (Chaplin, 2009; Park, 2005), the current research project included both a study on a sample of children (Study 2) and a study on a sample of adolescents (Study 3) from a cross-sectional perspective. This approach aimed to establish a natural connection between the two studies, elucidating any continuity or changes in perceptions and sources of happiness over the course of development. While study 2 focused on investigating the happiness of children in interactions with parents, study 3 sought to extend the study of happiness in adolescence, as it represents a crucial period of development marked by a decrease in happiness, which should be considered a normal developmental phenomenon due to the multiple challenges adolescents experience during their transition from childhood to adulthood (Bisegger et al., 2005; Goldbeck et al., 2007; Steinberg, 2005).

In addition to positive family relationships (Freire et al., 2013; Navarro et al., 2017; Thoilliez, 2011), scientific studies have highlighted that when asked about what makes young

people happy, other sources of happiness in pre-adolescence and adolescence include positive friendships (Giacomoni et al., 2014; López-Pérez et al., 2016; Thoilliez, 2011), feeling safe and secure at school (López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018; Sargeant, 2010), achieving goals (Chaplin, 2009; López-Pérez et al., 2016; Navarro et al., 2017), hobbies, and sports (Chaplin, 2009; Eloff, 2008; Giacomoni et al., 2014). The scientific literature on happiness in preadolescence and adolescence has primarily focused on various variables associated with this construct (McKnight et al., 2002; Proctor et al., 2009), giving less prominence to the definitions of happiness, sources of happiness, and differences between parents and children. Study 3 aims to fill these gaps in the literature and explore the conceptions of happiness among preadolescents and adolescents aged 11 to 19 and potential sources of happiness through a multi-method and multi-informant approach, highlighting age and gender differences.

The results of study 3 revealed that preadolescents report higher levels of happiness compared to adolescents and lower levels of loneliness (Baiocco et al., 2019). Additionally, employing qualitative measures, interviews with parents and children highlighted the definition of five primary sources of happiness: social relationships (Eloff, 2008), family relationships (Freire et al., 2013), personal interests (Chaplin, 2009), achievement (López-Pérez et al., 2016; López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018), and entertainment (Giacomoni et al., 2014; Navarro et al., 2017).

Gender and age differences in the sources of happiness have emerged. Specifically, girls predominantly report interpersonal relationships with family and friends as their primary sources of happiness, while boys more frequently indicate moments of leisure and play (Chaplin, 2009; Giacomoni et al., 2014). Regarding age differences, adolescents define happiness in terms of achievements, whereas preadolescents more frequently reference relational aspects with family and playful aspects as sources of happiness (Chaplin, 2009; López-Pérez et al., 2016). Regarding the agreement on themes between children and parents, low overall levels of agreement were observed, all below 40%. Therefore, parents encounter

difficulties when asked what makes their children happy (Casas et al., 2007).

Despite some commonalities in the themes that emerged from the qualitative analyses of interview transcriptions of parents and children, comparing the results of study 2 and study 3 reveals that some sources of happiness change depending on the age group under consideration. Both studies demonstrate that relational aspects with family and friends remain central to happiness throughout development (Goldbeck et al., 2007; Holder & Coleman, 2009). The most intriguing aspect is the shift from material aspects in favor of happiness deriving from experiences and accomplishments as individuals transition from childhood to adolescence (Chaplin, 2009; Chaplin et al., 2020). While children often perceive happiness as something bestowed upon them by others and closely tied to material possessions, adolescents perceive happiness as a significant goal to be achieved, primarily associated with attaining personal success and desired results (Thoilliez, 2011).

In summary, the described findings are highly encouraging because they underscore the importance of identifying sources of happiness in youth and potential variables that promote greater individual and social well-being in children and adolescents. In this sense, within the field of psychology, the study of happiness in developmental stages is significant for several reasons: (1) *Health and Well-being*. Happiness is associated with numerous mental and physical health benefits. Happy children tend to develop better self-esteem, manage stress more effectively, and experience fewer mental health issues such as anxiety and depression (Verrastro et al., 2020). (2) *Prevention of Behavioral Problems*. Happiness can protect against problematic behaviors such as substance abuse and juvenile delinquency (Shek, 1997a; 1998c).

(3) *Enhancement of Family Quality of Life*. Children's happiness can positively influence the well-being of families, fostering a more harmonious and satisfying family environment (Cacioppo & Zappulla, 2013; Raboteg-Šarić et al., 2009). (4) *Interpersonal Relationships*. Happiness is correlated with more positive interpersonal relationships. Happy children often develop stronger friendships and more satisfying family relationships (Baiocco

et al., 2019; Holder & Coleman, 2009). (5) *Learning and Academic Success*. Happy children are more motivated and engaged in learning. They are also better suited to develop social skills essential for academic success (López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018).

(6) *Future Adaptation*. Children who learn to be happy from a youthful age tend to have better adaptability in adulthood. They can better manage challenges and face tricky situations with greater resilience (Diener et al., 2009). (7) *Contribution to Society*. Happy individuals are more likely to become engaged and active citizens in society. They are more inclined to make positive contributions to their community and benefit others (Veenhoven, 2009). In summary, understanding happiness in children and adolescents is essential for promoting healthy development and creating happier and more resilient individuals and societies. This involves promoting strengths and virtues to overcome life's challenges.

Limitations, Strengths and Directions for Future Research of Ph.D. Project

The studies comprising the current doctoral project are not without limitations. In particular, several limitations deserve to be considered when interpreting the findings of study 2 and study 3. Firstly, it is imperative to acknowledge that these investigations employed a non-probabilistic convenience sample from Italy, thereby potentially constraining the applicability of the results to families situated within distinct cultural contexts. Secondly, the sample composition exclusively comprised families consisting of a mother, a father, and at least one child, potentially constraining the applicability of the results to other family structures, such as single-parent families or families with same-sex parents. Thirdly, the data utilized were cross-sectional and limited to families with children aged between 6 and 13 years (Study 2) or with preadolescents/adolescents aged between 11 and 19 years (Study 3). Adopting a longitudinal research design in future studies may offer valuable insights into the developmental trajectories of happiness and its underlying components regarding the psychological maturation at various stages of development from childhood to adolescence.

Fourthly, despite the integration of interviews and self-report measures in this study, it is possible that both parents and children provided responses that align with social desirability, presenting an idealized and conventionalized representation of their family life. Fifthly, it is essential to underscore that the research focused on children's descriptions of happy moments shared with their parents (Study 2) and on preadolescents' and adolescents' conceptions of happiness from the perspective of parents and children (Study 3), employing a single-item approach and interviews. In future investigations, a more comprehensive assessment of children's happiness could be undertaken, incorporating additional viewpoints from proximal sources, such as reports from other family members, teachers or peers and employing more robust quantitative scales (Holder & Coleman, 2009). Additionally, this research did not systematically consider the socio-ecological contexts that extend beyond the family domain (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), such as the school environment and the network of friendships. These omissions present directions for potential future research efforts that may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of happiness in children's and adolescents' lives.

Despite the limitations inherent in the methodology of the studies comprising the doctoral project and the implementation of the systematic review (explained entirely in specific sections in chapter 1), the following research also exhibits significant strengths. The innovative aspect of the systematic review is that it represents the first study to synthesize the literature on happiness in the family context during developmental stages, filling a significant gap in the literature regarding the potential impact of family functioning on the happiness of children and adolescents. Regarding the strengths of studies 2 and 3, several innovative aspects of the research can be highlighted: (a) considering the family environment and parent-child relationships as relevant sources of children's happiness; (b) employing a mixed methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative measures to assess the happiness of children and adolescents; (c) considering the perception of individual and family happiness, incorporating

the perspectives of both children and their parents.

Furthermore, regarding study 2 and study 3, the outlined results are promising for exploring crucial variables contributing to the optimal psychological development of preadolescents and adolescents. This effort involves identifying factors that contribute to children's happiness to promote greater social and emotional well-being during development. The age-related distinctions evident in the identified themes offer valuable insights into the changing priorities and interests among different age cohorts. Consequently, these insights can potentially inform and shape interventions and strategies aimed at promoting socio-emotional development in children and adolescents.

Since the scientific literature on the topic and the results of the present doctoral project have shown age differences in levels and conceptions of happiness, future longitudinal studies may offer information on how individual and familial happiness levels and sources of happiness evolve over time across the various developmental stages. Adopting a longitudinal research design in future studies could provide valuable insights into the developmental trajectories of happiness and its underlying components concerning psychological maturation from childhood to adolescence for a better understanding of the factors contributing to the happiness of children and adolescents.

Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the present research explored the topic of happiness, considering the perspectives of both children/adolescents and their parents. Although there were common themes in the narratives provided by parents and children, it became evident that both mothers and fathers encountered some difficulties in fully comprehending their children's perspectives. Given the significance attributed to the family in the realm of happiness during developmental stages, future research may further delve into the factors influencing family relationships and family happiness and the concordance of responses between parents and children. These factors may encompass aspects related to family culture, educational levels, family socioeconomic status, and the broader social context.

Considering additional variables would improve understanding of the intricate dynamics within families concerning the concept of happiness. Furthermore, the insights gained from these studies can serve as valuable foundations for designing interventions to promote better understanding and communication between parents and children when addressing the topic of happiness. These interventions, in turn, can contribute to creating a family environment where parents can effectively support their children's emotional well-being and facilitate their children's socio-emotional development. The study of children's and adolescents' happiness not only enriches the theoretical understanding of emotional dynamics in developmental stages but also provides practical insights for shaping interventions and strategies aimed at supporting the overall well-being of youth. Specifically, the practical implications are varied: (a) *Personalized clinical interventions*. In-depth studies can guide clinical psychologists in tailoring therapeutic interventions to better reflect the specific emotional needs of children and adolescents. (b) *Family support*. Understanding how family functioning influences happiness can guide family counselors in providing support to families to improve their dynamics and promote a positive environment for children and adolescents.

(c) *Family therapies*. Understanding family dynamics can shape family therapies, contributing to improving communication and effectively managing family challenges. (d) *Well-being promotion in schools*. Informing educational programs aimed at promoting emotional well-being in schools. Teachers can adopt strategies to create a positive school environment that supports the emotional well-being of students. (e) *Emotional education*. Integrating emotional education into school programs can foster awareness and emotion management, contributing to the emotional well-being of children and adolescents.

In conclusion, this doctoral project strongly emphasizes the need for increased scientific attention to the theme of happiness during childhood and adolescence. Such attention is essential for promoting higher social and relational well-being levels throughout childhood, with a cascade of favorable outcomes that extend into adulthood (Diener et al., 2009). In fact,

children's happiness emerges as a genuine protective factor (Baiocco et al., 2019; Holder & Klassen, 2010). Children and adolescents who experience high levels of happiness exhibit a significantly reduced propensity to manifest negative psychological symptoms, including, but not limited to, depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders. Consequently, based on the insights derived from this research, exploring children's happiness is pivotal in providing parents and educators with valuable information on how to assist children and adolescents in promoting their happiness. Furthermore, these insights can be instrumental in formulating effective strategies designed to cultivate happiness in children, thereby contributing to the overall well-being of children and the happiness of the family unit.

References

*References marked with an asterisk indicate studies included in the systematic review.

Abdel-Khalek, A. M. (2006). Measuring happiness with a single-item scale. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal, 34*(2), 139–150. https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2006.34.2.139

*Alcantara, S. C., González-Carrasco, M., Montserrat, C., Viñas, F., Casas, F., & Abreu, D. P. (2017). Peer violence in the school environment and its relationship with subjective well-being and perceived social support among children and adolescents in Northeastern Brazil. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 18*(5), 1507–1532. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-016-9786-1

Al Nima, A., Archer, T., & Garcia, D. (2012). Adolescents' happiness-increasing strategies, temperament, and character: Mediation models on subjective well-being. *Health, 4*(10), 802–810. https://doi.org/10.4236/health.2012.410124

Altenburger, L. E., Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., & Kamp Dush, C. M. (2018). Associations between maternal gatekeeping and fathers' parenting quality. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 27*(8), 2678–2689. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-018-1146-9

Andrews, F. M. & Robinson, J. P. (1991). Measures of subjective well-being. In J. P. Robinson, P. R. Shaver & L. S. Wrightsman (Eds.), *Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Attitudes* (pp. 61–114). Academic Press.

Anguas Plata, A. (2001). Identificación y validación del significado del bienestar subjetivo en México: fundamentos para el desarrollo de un instrumento de medición. *Interamerican Journal of Psychology, 35*(1), 163–183.

Argyle, M. (2001). *The Psychology of Happiness* (Second Edition). Routledge.

Asher, S. R., & Paquette, J. A. (2003). Loneliness and peer relations in childhood. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12*(3), 75–78. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.01233

Ayriza, Y., Izzaty, R. E., Romadhani, R. K., Oktaviani, F., & Wicaksono, B. (2022). Exploring the meaning of happiness of middle childhood children. *Children and Youth Services Review, 143*, 106659. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106659

Bagwell, C., Kochel, K., Schmidt, M. (2015). Friendship and Happiness in Adolescence. In M. Demir (Eds.), *Friendship and Happiness* (pp. 99–116). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9603-3_6

*Bahrassa, N. F., Syed, M., Su, J., & Lee, R. M. (2011). Family conflict and academic performance of first-year Asian American undergraduates. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 17*(4), 415–426. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024731

Baiocco, R., Cacioppo, M., Laghi, F., & Tafà, M. (2013). Factorial and construct validity of FACES IV among Italian adolescents. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 22*(7), 962–970. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-012-9658-1

Baiocco, R., & Pistella, J. (2019). "Be as you are" clinical research center at the Sapienza University of Rome. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health, 23*(4), 376–379. https://doi.org/10.1080/19359705.2019.1644572

Baiocco, R., Verrastro, V., Fontanesi, L., Ferrara, M. P., & Pistella, J. (2019). The contributions of self-esteem, loneliness, and friendship to children's happiness: The roles of gender and age. *Child Indicators Research, 12*(4), 1413–1433. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-018-9595-7

*Bakalım, O., & Taşdelen-Karçkay, A. (2015). Positive and negative affect as predictors of family life satisfaction. *Journal of Human Sciences, 12*(1), 1330–1337.

Barnes, H. L., & Olson, D. H. (1985). Parent-adolescent communication and the circumplex model. *Child Development, 56*(2), 438–447. https://doi.org/10.2307/1129732

Barnhill, L. R. (1979). Healthy family systems. *Family Coordinator, 28*(1), 94–100. https://doi.org/10.2307/583274

Barraca, J., Yarto, L. L., & Olea, J. (2000). Psychometric properties of a new family life satisfaction scale. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 16*(2), 98–106. https://doi.org/10.1027/1015-5759.16.2.98

Beavers, W. R., & Hampson, R. B. (1990). *Successful families: Assessment and intervention*. Norton.

*Bedin, L. M., & Sarriera, J. C. (2015). A comparative study of the subjective well-being of parents and adolescents considering gender, age and social class. *Social Indicators Research, 120*(1), 79–95. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-014-0589-7

Bem, S. L. (1981). Gender schema theory: A cognitive account of sex typing. *Psychological Review, 88*(4), 354–364. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.88.4.354

*Bennefield, Z. (2018). School and family correlates of positive affect in a nationally representative sample of US adolescents. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 35*(5), 541–548. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-018-0539-3

*Ben-Zur, H. (2003). Happy adolescents: The link between subjective well-being, internal resources, and parental factors. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 32*(2), 67–79. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021864432505

*Bernal, A. C. A. L., Arocena, F. A. L., & Ceballos, J. C. M. (2011). Bienestar subjetivo y satisfacción con la vida de familia en adolescentes mexicanos de bachillerato. *Psicología Iberoamericana, 19*(2), 17–26. https://doi.org/10.22235/cp.v12i2.1689

Bernini, C., & Tampieri, A. (2019). Happiness in Italian cities. *Regional Studies, 53*(11), 1614–1624. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2019.1597266

Berntsen, D., & Rubin, D. C. (2004). Cultural life scripts structure recall from autobiographical memory. *Memory & Cognition, 32*(3), 427–442. https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03195836

Berntsen, D., Rubin, D. C., & Siegler, I. C. (2011). Two versions of life: Emotionally negative and positive life events have different roles in the organization of life story and identity. *Emotion, 11*(5), 1190–1201. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024940

Bisegger, C., Cloetta, B., Von Bisegger, U., Abel, T., Ravens-Sieberer, U., & European KIDSCREEN Group. (2005). Health-related quality of life: gender differences in childhood and adolescence. *Sozial-und Präventivmedizin, 50*, 281–291. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00038-005-4094-2

Bloom, B. L. (1985). A factor analysis of self-report measures of family functioning. *Family Process, 24*(2), 225–239. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.1985.00225.x

Bornstein, M. H., & Venuti, P. (2013). *Genitorialità: fattori biologici e culturali dell'essere genitori*. Il Mulino.

Bradburn, N. M. (1969). *The Structure of Psychological Well-being*. Aldine.

*Bradley, R., & Corwyn, R. (2004). Life satisfaction among European American, African American, Chinese American, Mexican American, and Dominican American adolescents. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 28*(5), 385–400. https://doi.org/10.1080/01650250444000072

*Braithwaite, V., & Devine, C. (1993). Life satisfaction and adjustment of children of alcoholics: The effects of parental drinking, family disorganization and survival roles. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 32*(4), 417–429. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8260.1993.tb01076.x

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development. Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.

Businaro, N., Pons, F., & Albanese, O. (2015). Do intelligence, intensity of felt emotions and emotional regulation have an impact on life satisfaction? A Quali-quantitative study on

subjective well-being with Italian children aged 8–11. *Child Indicators Research, 8*(2), 439–458. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9250-x

*Cacioppo, M., Pace, U., & Zappulla, C. (2013). Parental psychological control, quality of family context and life satisfaction among Italian adolescents. *Child Indicators Research, 6*(1), 179–191. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-012-9164-4

Campbell, A., Converse, P. E., & Rogers, W. L. (1976). *The quality of American life: perceptions, evaluations, and satisfactions*. Russell Sage.

Cantril, H. (1965). *The Pattern of Human Concerns*. Rutgers University Press.

Cardoso, A. R., Fontainha, E., & Monfardini, C. (2010). Children's and parents' time use: empirical evidence on investment in human capital in France, Germany and Italy. *Review of Economics of the Household*, *8*(4), 479–504. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11150-010-9090-5

*Carrascosa, L., Cava, M. J., & Buelga, S. (2018). Perfil psicosocial de adolescentes españoles agresores y víctimas de violencia de pareja. Universitas Psychologica, 17(3), 1–10.

Casas, F., Baltatescu, S., Bertran, I., Gonzalez, M. & Hatos, A. (2012). School satisfaction among adolescents: testing different indicators for its measurement and its relationship with overall life satisfaction and subjective well-being in Romania and Spain. *Social Indicators Research, 111*, 665–681. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-012-0025-9

*Casas, F., Bello, A., González, M., & Aligué, M. (2013). Children's subjective well-being measured using a composite index: What impacts Spanish first-year secondary education students' subjective well-being?. *Child Indicators Research, 6*(3), 433–460. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-013-9182-x

*Casas, F., Figuer, C., González, M., Malo, S., Alsinet, C., & Subarroca, S. (2007). The well-being of 12- to 16-year-old adolescents and their parents: results from 1999 to 2003 Spanish samples. *Social Indicators Research, 83*, 87–115. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-006-9059-1

*Casas, F., Sarriera, J. C., Alfaro, J., González, M., Bedin, L., Abs, D., ... & Valdenegro, B. (2015). Reconsidering life domains that contribute to subjective well-being among adolescents with data from three countries. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 16*(2), 491–513. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-014-9520-9

*Cava, M. J., Buelga, S., & Musitu, G. (2014). Parental communication and life satisfaction in adolescence. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology, 17*(e98), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1017/sjp.2014.107

*Caycho-Rodríguez, T., Ventura-León, J., Barboza-Palomino, M., Reyes-Bossio, M., Gallegos, W. L. A., Cadena, C. H. G., ... & Cahua, J. C. H. (2018). Validez e invarianza factorial de una medida breve de Satisfacción con la Vida Familiar. *Universitas Psychologica, 17*(5), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.upsy17-5.vifm

Chaplin, L. N. (2009). Please may I have a bike? Better yet, may I have a hug? An examination of children's and adolescents' happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 10*(5), 541–562. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-008-9108-3

Chaplin, L. N., & John, D. R. (2007). Growing up in a material world: Age differences in materialism in children and adolescents. *Journal of Consumer Research, 34*(4), 480–493. https://doi.org/10.1086/518546

Chaplin, L. N., Lowrey, T. M., Ruvio, A. A., Shrum, L. J., & Vohs, K. D. (2020). Age differences in children's happiness from material goods and experiences: The role of memory and theory of mind. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 37*(3), 572–586. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2020.01.004

Cheng, H., & Furnham, A. (2002). Personality, peer relations, and self-confidence as predictors of happiness and loneliness. *Journal of Adolescence, 25*(3), 327–339. https://doi.org/10.1006/jado.2002.0475

Cheng, H., & Furnham, A. (2004). Perceived parental rearing style, self-esteem and self-criticism as predictors of happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 5*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:JOHS.0000021704.35267.05

*Chui, W. H., & Wong, M. Y. (2017). Avoiding disappointment or fulfilling expectation: A study of gender, academic achievement, and family functioning among Hong Kong adolescents. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 26*(1), 48–56. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-016-0550-2

Cohen, J. (1960). A coefficient of agreement for nominal scales. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 20*(1), 37–46. https://doi.org/10.1177/001316446002000104

Cooper, J. E., Holman, J., & Braithwaite, V. A. (1983). Self-esteem and family cohesion: The child's perspective and adjustment. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 45*(1), 153–159. https://doi.org/10.2307/351303

Coventry, P. A., Brown, J. E., Pervin, J., Brabyn, S., Pateman, R., Breedvelt, J., ... & White, P. L. (2021). Nature-based outdoor activities for mental and physical health: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *SSM-Population Health, 16*, 100934. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2021.100934

Coyl-Shepherd, D. D., & Hanlon, C. (2013). Family play and leisure activities: Correlates of parents' and children's socio-emotional well-being. *International Journal of Play, 2*(3), 254–272. https://doi.org/10.1080/21594937.2013.855376

Crosnoe, R., & Trinitapoli, J. (2008). Shared family activities and the transition from childhood into adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 18*(1), 23–48. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2008.00549.x

*Cruz, A., & Piña-Watson, B. (2017). *Family Conflict & Latina/o Youth Depressive Symptoms, Hopelessness, Suicidality, & Life Satisfaction: An Examination of Gender Role Values*. Texas Tech University.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Hunter, J. (2003). Happiness in everyday life: The uses of experience sampling. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 4*(2), 185–199. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024409732742

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Seligman, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 5–14. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.5

Cummins, R. A., Eckersley, R., Pallant, J., Van Vugt, J., & Misajon, R. (2003). Developing a national index of subjective well-being: The Australian Unity Wellbeing Index. *Social Indicators Research, 64*(2), 159–190. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024704320683

Cummins, R. A., & Lau, A. L. D. (2005*). Personal well-being index—school children (PWI-SC) (English) Manual*. Deakin University, School of Psychology.

Curran, S. L., Andrykowski, M. A., & Studts, J. L. (1995). Short form of the profile of mood states (POMS-SF): psychometric information. *Psychological Assessment, 7*(1), 80–83. https://doi.org/10.1037/1040-3590.7.1.80

*da Costa, M. P., & Neto, F. (2019). Psychometric evaluation of the Portuguese satisfaction with family life scale. *Measurement Instruments for the Social Sciences, 1*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1186/s42409-019-0009-5

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Hedonia, eudaimonia, and well-being: An introduction. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 9*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9018-1

De Silva, A. D., Gao, M. M., Barni, D., Donato, S., Miller-Graff, L. E., & Cummings, E. M. (2021). Interparental conflict on Italian adolescent adjustment: The role of insecurity within the family. *Journal of Family Issues*, *42*(3), 671–692. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X20927749

Diener, E. D., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 49*(1), 71–75. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4901_13

Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Oishi, S. (2018). Advances and open questions in the science of

subjective well-being. *Collabra: Psychology, 4*(1), 15. https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.115

Diener, E., Scollon, C. N., & Lucas, R. E. (2009). The evolving concept of subjective well-being: The multifaceted nature of happiness. In E. Diener (Ed.), *Assessing well-being: The collected works of Ed Diener* (pp. 67–100). Springer Science & Business Media. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-2354-4_4

Diener, E., & Seligman, M. E. (2002). Very happy people. *Psychological Science, 13*(1), 81–84. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9280.00415

Diener, M. L., & Lucas, R. E. (2004). Adults desires for childrens emotions across 48 countries: Associations with individual and national characteristics. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 35*(5), 525–547. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022104268387

Dinisman, T., & Rees, G. (2014). *Findings from the first wave of data collection*. *Children's Worlds: International Survey of Children's Well-Being (ISCWeB)*. Jacobs Foundation. Available online: http://www.isciweb.org (accessed on 23 September 2022).

*Dost-Gözkan, A. (2021). The gratification of psychological needs and well-being among turkish adolescents: an examination of direct and indirect links. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 31*(1), 52–70. https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12582

Dworkin J., & Serido J. (2017). *The role of families in supporting social and emotional learning*. University of Minnesota Extension Center for Youth Development. http://hdl.handle.net/11299/195183

Eagly, A. H., & Mladinic, A. (1989). Gender stereotypes and attitudes toward women and men. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 15*(4), 543–558. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167289154008

Eisenchlas, S. A. (2013). Gender roles and expectations: Any changes online?. *Sage Open, 3*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013506446

Ellonen, N., Kääriäinen, J., Salmi, V., & Sariola, H. (2008). *Lasten ja nuorten*

väkivaltakokemukset [The experiences of violence among children and young people]. Police College of Finland.

Eloff, I. (2008). In pursuit of happiness: How some young South African children construct happiness. *Journal of Psychology in Africa, 18*(1), 81–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/14330237.2008.10820174

Epstein, N., Baldwin, L., & Bishop, D. (1983). The McMaster Family Assessment Device. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 9*(2), 171–180. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.1983.tb01497.x

Epstein, N. B., Bishop, D. S., & Levin, S. (1978). The McMaster model of family functioning. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 4*(4), 19–31. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.1978.tb00537.x

*Ercegovac, I. R., Maglica, T., & Ljubetić, M. (2021). The relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, family and life satisfaction, loneliness and academic achievement during adolescence. *Croatian Journal of Education, 23*(1), 65–83. https://doi.org/10.15516/cje.v23i0.4049

*Estévez López, E., Jiménez Gutiérrez, T. I., & Moreno Ruiz, D. (2018). Aggressive behavior in adolescence as a predictor of personal, family, and school adjustment problems. *Psicothema, 30*(1), 66–73.

Fakhri, N., Muchlis, N. S., Mansyur, A. Y., & Buchori, S. (2022). The Concept of Happiness in Elementary School Children. In *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Psychological Studies (ICPsyche 2021)* (pp. 263–273). SCITEPRESS–Science and Technology Publications.

Fang, X., Xu, J., Sun, L., & Zhang, J. (2004). Family functioning: Theory, influencing factors, and its relationship with adolescent social adjustment. Advances in Psychological Science, 12(4), 544–553.

Fattore, T., Mason, J., & Watson, E. (2009). When children are asked about their well-being: Towards a framework for guiding policy. *Child Indicators Research, 2*, 57–77. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-008-9025-3

Flouri, E., & Buchanan, A. (2002). Life satisfaction in teenage boys: The moderating role of father involvement and bullying. *Aggressive Behavior, 28*(2), 126–133. https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.90014

*Flouri, E., & Buchanan, A. (2003). The role of father involvement and mother involvement in adolescents' psychological well-being. *British Journal of Social Work, 33*(3), 399–406. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/33.3.399

Floyd, K. (2002). Human affection exchange: V. Attributes of the highly affectionate. *Communication Quarterly, 50*(2), 135–152. https://doi.org/10.1080/01463370209385653

Fok, C. C. T., Allen, J., Henry, D., & Team, P. A. (2014). The Brief Family Relationship Scale: A brief measure of the relationship dimension in family functioning. *Assessment, 21*(1), 67–72. https://doi.org/10.1177/1073191111425856

Fordyce, M. W. (1988). A review of research on the happiness measures: A sixty second index of happiness and mental health. *Social Indicators Research, 20*(4), 355–381. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00302333

*Fosco, G. M., & Lydon-Staley, D. M. (2020). Implications of family cohesion and conflict for adolescent mood and well-being: Examining within-and between-family processes on a daily timescale. *Family Process, 59*(4), 1672–1689. https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12515

Freire, T., Zenhas, F., Tavares, D., & Iglésias, C. (2013). Felicidade hedónica e eudaimónica: Um estudo com adolescentes portugueses. *Análise Psicológica, 31*(4), 329–342. http://hdl.handle.net/10400.12/3333

Frisch, M. B., Cornell, J., Villanueva, M., & Retzlaff, P. J. (1992). Clinical validation of the Quality of Life Inventory. A measure of life satisfaction for use in treatment planning

and outcome assessment. *Psychological Assessment, 4*(1), 92–101. https://doi.org/10.1037/1040-3590.4.1.92

*Froh, J. J., Yurkewicz, C., & Kashdan, T. B. (2009). Gratitude and subjective well-being in early adolescence: Examining gender differences. *Journal of Adolescence, 32*(3), 633–650. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.06.006

Furman, W., & Buhrmester, D. (2009). Methods and measures: The network of relationships inventory: Behavioral systems version. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 33*(5), 470–478. https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025409342634

Furnham, A., & Cheng, H. (2000). Lay theories of happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 1*, 227–246. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010027611587

*Gao, M., & Potwarka, L. (2021). Investigating the role of family travel and family functioning in promoting Chinese adolescents' subjective well-being. *Journal of Leisure Research, 52*(4), 487–507. https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2021.1927264

Galambos, N. L. (2004). Gender and gender role development in adolescence. In R. M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (2nd Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (pp. 233–262). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

*Galarce Muñoz, M. I., Pérez-Salas, C. P., & Sirlopú, D. (2020). Análisis comparativo de la participación escolar y bienestar subjetivo en estudiantes con y sin discapacidad en Chile. *Psykhe (Santiago), 29*(2), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.7764/psykhe.29.2.1444

Garaigordobil, M., & Aliri, J. (2012). Parental socialization styles, parents' educational level, and sexist attitudes in adolescence. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology, 15*(2), 592–603. https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_SJOP.2012.v15.n2.38870

Gardner, F., & Ward, S. (2000). Parent child interaction and children's well-being: Reducing conduct problems and promoting conscience development, in A. Buchanan and B. Hudson (Ed.), *Promoting Children's Emotional Well-being* (pp. 95–127). Oxford University Press

Giacomoni, C. H., Souza, L. K. D., & Hutz, C. S. (2014). The concept of happiness in children. *Psico-USF, 19*(1), 143–153. https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-82712014000100014

*Gil da Silva, D., & Dell'Aglio, D. (2018). Avaliação do bem-estar subjetivo em adolescentes: Relações com sexo e faixa etária. *Análise Psicológica, 36*(2),133–143.

Gilman, R., & Huebner, S. (2003). A review of life satisfaction research with children and adolescents. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *18*(2), 192–205. https://doi.org/10.1521/scpq.18.2.192.21858

*Gilman, R., & Huebner, E. S. (2006). Characteristics of adolescents who report very high life satisfaction. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 35*(3), 293–301. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-006-9036-7

Ginsburg, K. R., & Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health (2007). The importance of play in promoting healthy child development and maintaining strong parent-child bonds. *Pediatrics, 119*(1), 182–191. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2006-2697

Gleave, J., & Cole-Hamilton, I. (2012). *A literature review on the effects of a lack of play on children's lives*. Play England.

Goldbeck, L., Schmitz, T. G., Besier, T., Herschbach, P., & Henrich, G. (2007). Life satisfaction decreases during adolescence. *Quality of Life Research, 16*(6), 969–979. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-007-9205-5

*Gomez, K. L. (2011). *Family satisfaction, ethnic identity, and subjective well-being among urban youth* (Doctoral dissertation). Loyola University Chicago.

*Gómez, D. O., Aznar, F. C., & Inzunza, J. A. (2019). Family, school, and Neighbourhood microsystems influence on children's life satisfaction in Chile. *Child Indicators Research, 12*(6), 1915–1933. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-018-9617-5

Gomez-Baya, D., Gaspar, T., Corrêa, R., Nicoletti, J. A., & Garcia-Moro, F. J. (2023). Leisure Time Activities and Subjective Happiness in Early Adolescents from Three Ibero-

American Countries: The Cases of Brazil, Chile and Spain. *Children*, *10*(6), 1058. https://doi.org/10.3390/children10061058

González-Carrasco, M., Casas, F., Malo, S., Viñas, F., & Dinisman, T. (2017a). Changes with age in subjective well-being through the adolescent years: Differences by gender. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 18*, 63–88. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-016-9717-1

*González-Carrasco, M., Casas, F., Viñas, F., Malo, S., Gras, M. E., & Bedin, L. (2017b). What leads subjective well-being to change throughout adolescence? An exploration of potential factors. *Child Indicators Research, 10*(1), 33–56. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-015-9359-6

*Goswami, H. (2012). Social relationships and children's subjective well-being. *Social Indicators Research, 107*(3), 575–588. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-011-9864-z

Gray, R. S., Chamratrithirong, A., Pattaravanich, U., & Prasartkul, P. (2013). Happiness among adolescent students in Thailand: Family and non-family factors. *Social Indicators Research, 110*, 703–719. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-011-9954-y

Greco, C., & Ison, M. (2014). What makes you happy? Appreciating the reasons that bring happiness to Argentine children living in vulnerable social contexts. *Journal of Latino/Latin American Studies, 6*(1), 4–18. https://doi.org/10.18085/llas.6.1.q8158245p8267638

Grob, A. (1995). Subjective well-being and significant life-events across the life span. *Swiss Journal of Psychology, 54*(1), 3–18.

Grob, A., Lüthi, R., Kaiser, F. G., & Flammer, A. (1991). Berner Fragebogen zum Wohlbefinden Jugendlicher (BFW) [The Bern Subjective Well-Being Questionnaire for Adolescents (BFW)]. *Diagnostica, 37*(1), 66–75.

*Gross-Manos, D., Shimoni, E., & Ben-Arieh, A. (2015). Subjective well-being measures tested with 12-year-olds in Israel. *Child Indicators Research, 8*(1), 71–92. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9282-2

Hallers-Haalboom, E. T., Groeneveld, M. G., van Berkel, S. R., Endendijk, J. J., van der Pol, L. D., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M. J., & Mesman, J. (2016). Wait until your mother gets home! Mothers' and fathers' discipline strategies. *Social Development, 25*(1), 82–98. https://doi.org/10.1111/sode.12130

*Hamama, L., & Arazi, Y. (2012). Aggressive behaviour in at-risk children: contribution of subjective well-being and family cohesion. *Child & Family Social Work, 17*(3), 284–295. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2011.00779.x

*Heaven, P., Searight, H. R., Chastain, J., & Skitka, L. J. (1996). The relationship between perceived family health and personality functioning among Australian adolescents. *American Journal of Family Therapy, 24*(4), 358–366. https://doi.org/10.1080/01926189608251047

Hesse, C., Mikkelson, A. C., & Saracco, S. (2018). Parent–child affection and helicopter parenting: Exploring the concept of excessive affection. *Western Journal of Communication, 82*(4), 457–474. https://doi.org/10.1080/10570314.2017.1362705

Heuchert, J. P., & McNair, D. M. (2012). *Profile of mood states – 2nd edition* (POMS-2). North Tonawanda Multi-health systems.

Holder, M. D. (2012). *Happiness in children: measurement, correlates, and enhancement of positive subjective well-being.* Springer Science & Business Media.

Holder M. D., Callaway R. J. (2010). Happiness in children: A review of the scientific literature. In Mäkinen A., Hájek P. (Eds.), *Psychology of happiness* (pp. 51–70). Nova Science Publishers.

Holder, M. D., & Coleman, B. (2009). The contribution of social relationships to children's happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 10*(3), 329–349. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-007-9083-0

Holder, M. D., & Klassen, A. (2010). Temperament and happiness in children. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 11*(4), 419–439. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-009-9149-2

Hovestadt, A J., Anderson, W T., Piercy, F P., Cochran, S W., & Fine, M. (1985). A family of-origin scale. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 11*(3), 287–297. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.1985.tb00621.x

*Huebner, E. S. (1991a). Correlates of life satisfaction in children. *School Psychology Quarterly, 6*(2), 103–111. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0088805

Huebner, E. S. (1991b). Further validation of the Students' Life Satisfaction Scale: The independence of satisfaction and affect ratings. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment, 9*(4), 363–368. https://doi.org/10.1177/073428299100900408

Huebner, E. S. (1994). Preliminary development and validation of a multidimensional life satisfaction scale for children. *Psychological Assessment, 6*(2), 149–158. https://doi.org/10.1037/1040-3590.6.2.149

*Huebner, E. S., Funk III, B. A., & Gilman, R. (2000). Cross-sectional and longitudinal psychosocial correlates of adolescent life satisfaction reports. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology, 16*(1), 53–64. https://doi.org/10.1177/082957350001600104

*Ingelmo, R. M. G., & Litago, J. D. U. (2018). Satisfacción vital y relaciones familiares y con iguales en la adolescencia/Life satisfaction and family relationships and with peers in adolescence. Cauriensia. *Revista anual de Ciencias Eclesiásticas, 13*, 243–258. https://doi.org/10.17398/2340-4256.13.243

*Irmak, S., & Kuruüzüm, A. (2009). Turkish validity examination of the multidimensional students' life satisfaction scale. *Social Indicators Research, 92*(1), 13–23. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-008-9284-x

Istituto Italiano di Statistica (ISTAT) [Italian Institute of Statistics]. (2015). *Matrimoni, separazioni e divorzi (statistiche report)* [Marriages, separations and divorces (statistic report)]. Istituto nazionale di statistica. https://www.istat.it/it/files//2016/11/matrimoni-separazioni-divorzi-2015.pdf

Izzo, F., Baiocco, R., & Pistella, J. (2022). Children's and adolescents' happiness and family functioning: A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(24), 16593. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192416593

*Jackson, S., Bijstra, J., Oostra, L., & Bosma, H. (1998). Adolescents' perceptions of communication with parents relative to specific aspects of relationships with parents and personal development. *Journal of Adolescence, 21*(3), 305–322. https://doi.org/10.1006/jado.1998.0155

*Jhang, F. H. (2021). Negative life events and life satisfaction: exploring the role of family cohesion and self-efficacy among economically disadvantaged adolescents. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 22*(5), 2177–2195. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00315-8

*Jiménez, T. I., Estévez, E., & Murgui, S. (2014). Ambiente comunitario y actitud hacia la autoridad: relaciones con la calidad de las relaciones familiares y con la agresión hacia los iguales en adolescentes. *Anales de Psicología/Annals of Psychology, 30*(3), 1086–1095. https://doi.org/10.6018/analesps.30.3.160041

*Jiménez, T. I., Musitu, G., Ramos, M. J., & Murgui, S. (2009). Community involvement and victimization at school: An analysis through family, personal and social adjustment. *Journal of Community Psychology, 37*(8), 959–974. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20342

Kamp Dush, C. M., Taylor, M. G., & Kroeger, R. A. (2008). Marital happiness and psychological well-being across the life course. *Family Relations, 57*(2), 211–226. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2008.00495.x

*Kaye-Tzadok, A., Kim, S. S., & Main, G. (2017). Children's subjective well-being in relation to gender—What can we learn from dissatisfied children?. *Children and Youth Services Review, 80,* 96–104. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.06.058

*Khurana, N. (2011). *Adolescent life satisfaction in relation to stress coping parental bonding and family conflict* (Doctoral dissertations). Panjab University.

*Kim, S., & Main, G. (2017). Comparing child subjective well-being in South Korea and the UK: Testing an ecological systems approach. *Child Indicators Research, 10*(1), 19–32. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-016-9373-3

Kleiber, D., Larson, R., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1986). The experience of leisure in adolescence. *Journal of Leisure Research, 18*(3), 169–176. https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1986.11969655

*Koster, N., de Maat, D. A., Schreur, M., & van Aken, M. A. (2018). How borderline personality characteristics affect adolescents' life satisfaction: The role of rejection sensitivity and social relations. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology, 15*(5), 594–607. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2017.1321983

Lagattuta, K. H., Sayfan, L., & Bamford, C. (2012). Do you know how I feel? Parents underestimate worry and overestimate optimism compared to child self-report. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 113*(2), 211–232. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2012.04.001

Landreth, G., & Homeyer, L. (2021). Play as the language of children's feelings. In D. P. Fromberg & D. Bergen (Ed.), *Play from birth to twelve and beyond: Contexts, perspectives, and meanings* (pp. 193–198). Routledge.

Lansford, J., Zietz, S., Al-Hassan, S., Bacchini, D., Bornstein, M., Chang, L., Deater-Deckard, K., Giunta, L., Dodge, K., Gurdal, S., Liu, Q., Long, Q., Oburu, P., Pastorelli, C., Skinner, A., Sorbring, E., Tapanya, S., Steinberg, L., Tirado, L., Yotanyamaneewong, S., & Alampay, L. (2021). Culture and Social Change in Mothers' and Fathers' Individualism, Collectivism and Parenting Attitudes. *Social Sciences, 10*(12), 459. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10120459.

Larson, R. W., & Richards, M. H. (1994). Family emotions: Do young adolescents and their parents experience the same states?. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 4*(4), 567–583. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327795jra0404_8

*Lawler, M. J., Choi, C., Yoo, J., Lee, J., Roh, S., Newland, L. A., ... & Lee, B. J. (2018). Children's subjective well-being in rural communities of South Korea and the United States. *Children and Youth Services Review, 85,* 158–164. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.12.023

*Lawler, M. J., Newland, L. A., Giger, J. T., & Roh, S. (2015). Ecological, relationship-based model of 12-year-old children's subjective well-being in the United States and ten other countries. *Journal of Social Research & Policy, 6*(2), 57–70.

*Lawler, M. J., Newland, L. A., Giger, J. T., Roh, S., & Brockevelt, B. L. (2017). Ecological, relationship-based model of children's subjective well-being: Perspectives of 10-year-old children in the United States and 10 other countries. *Child Indicators Research, 10*(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-016-9376-0

*Leto, I. V., Petrenko, E. N., & Slobodskaya, H. R. (2019). Life satisfaction in Russian primary schoolchildren: Links with personality and family environment. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 20*(6), 1893–1912. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-018-0036-6

Lee, R. M., Choe, J., Kim, G., & Ngo, V. (2000). Construction of the Asian American Family Conflicts Scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 47*(2), 211–222. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.47.2.211

Lee, B. J., & Yoo, M. S. (2015). Family, school, and community correlates of children's subjective well-being: An international comparative study. *Child Indicators Research, 8,* 151–175. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9285-z

Leung, J. T., Shek, D. T., & Li, L. (2016). Mother–child discrepancy in perceived family functioning and adolescent developmental outcomes in families experiencing economic disadvantage in Hong Kong. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 45*(10), 2036–2048. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-016-0469-3

*Lietz, P., Dix, K. L., Tarabashkina, L., O'Grady, E., & Ahmed, S. K. (2020). Family fun: a vital ingredient of early adolescents having a good life. *Journal of Family Studies, 26*(3),

459–476. https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2017.1418410

*Lin, W. H., & Yi, C. C. (2019). The effect of family cohesion and life satisfaction during adolescence on later adolescent outcomes: A prospective study. *Youth & Society, 51*(5), 680–706. https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X17704865

*Ljubetić, M., & Reić Ercegovac, I. (2020). The relationship between mindful parenting, cognitive parental awareness, and the subjective well-being of adolescents. *Metodički Ogledi, 27*(1), 103–126. https://doi.org/10.21464/mo.27.1.10

López-Pérez, B., & Fernández-Castilla, B. (2018). Children's and adolescents' conceptions of happiness at school and its relation with their own happiness and their academic performance. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 19*, 1811–1830. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-017-9895-5

López-Pérez, B., Sánchez, J., & Gummerum, M. (2016). Children's and adolescents' conceptions of happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 17*(6), 2431–2455. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-015-9701-1

López-Pérez, B., & Wilson, E. L. (2015). Parent–child discrepancies in the assessment of children's and adolescents' happiness. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 139*, 249–255. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2015.06.006

Lorr, M., & McNair, D. M. (1971). *The Profile of Mood States manual*. Educational and Industrial Testing Service.

Lu, L. (2006). "Cultural fit": individual and societal discrepancies in values, beliefs, and subjective well-being. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 146*(2), 203–221. https://doi.org/10.3200/SOCP.146.2.203-221

Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005a). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin, 131*(6), 803–855. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.6.803

Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K. M., & Schkade, D. (2005b). Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology, 9*(2), 111–131. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.9.2.111

Maccoby, E. E. (1990). Gender and relationships: A developmental account. *American Psychologist, 45*(4), 513–520. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.45.4.513

Maftei, A., Holman, A. C., & Cârlig, E. R. (2020). Does your child think you're happy? Exploring the associations between children's happiness and parenting styles. *Children and Youth Services Review, 115*, 105074. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105074

*Mallette, J. K., O'Neal, C. W., Winkelman Richardson, E., & Mancini, J. A. (2021). When fathers are involved: examining relational and psychosocial health among military families. *Family Process, 60*(2), 602–622. https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12566

*Manzi, C., Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., & Scabini, E. (2006). Cohesion and enmeshment revisited: differentiation, identity, and well-being in two European cultures. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 68*(3), 673–689. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2006.00282.x

Maree, J. G. (2022). The psychosocial development theory of Erik Erikson: critical overview. *The Influence of Theorists and Pioneers on Early Childhood Education*, 119–133. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2020.1845163

Martin, C. L., & Dinella, L. M. (2002). Children's gender cognitions, the social environment, and sex differences in cognitive domains. In A McGillicuddy-De Lisi e R. De Lisi (Eds.), *Biology, society, and behavior: The development of sex differences in cognition* (pp. 207–239). Ablex.

Martin, M. W. (2007). Happiness and virtue in positive psychology. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 37*(1), 89–103. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.2007.00322.x

Masten, A. S., & Tellegen, A. (2012). Resilience in developmental psychopathology: Contributions of the project competence longitudinal study. *Development and Psychopathology, 24*(2), 345–361. https://doi.org/10.1017/S095457941200003X

Mayseless, O., Wiseman, H., & Hai, I. (1998). Adolescents' relationships with father, mother, and same-gender friend. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 13*(1), 101–123. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743554898131006

McAuley, C., McKeown, C., & Merriman, B. (2012). Spending time with family and friends: Children's views on relationships and shared activities. *Child Indicators Research, 5*, 449–467. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-012-9158-2

McKnight, C. G., Huebner, E. S., & Suldo, S. (2002). Relationships among Stressful Life Events, Temperament, Problem Behavior, and Global Life Satisfaction in Adolescents. *Psychology in the Schools, 39*(6), 677–687. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/pits.10062

Meijers, F. (1998). The development of a career identity. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling, 20*, 191–207. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005399417256

*Merkaš, M., & Brajša-Žganec, A. (2011). Children with different levels of hope: are there differences in their self-esteem, life satisfaction, social support, and family cohesion?. *Child Indicators Research, 4*(3), 499–514. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-011-9105-7

*Migliorini, L., Tassara, T., & Rania, N. (2019). A study of subjective well-being and life satisfaction in Italy: how are children doing at 8 years of age?. *Child Indicators Research, 12*(1), 49–69. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-017-9514-3

Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy*. Harvard University Press.

Moher, D., Shamseer, L., Clarke, M., Ghersi, D., Liberati, A., Petticrew, M., ... & Stewart, L. A. (2015). Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis protocols (PRISMA-P) 2015 statement. *Systematic Reviews, 4*(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1186/2046-4053-4-1

Moore, A., & Lynch, H. (2018). Understanding a child's conceptualisation of well-being

through an exploration of happiness: The centrality of play, people and place. *Journal of Occupational Science, 25*, 124–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2017.1377105.

*Moore, G. F., Cox, R., Evans, R. E., Hallingberg, B., Hawkins, J., Littlecott, H. J., ... & Murphy, S. (2018). School, peer and family relationships and adolescent substance use, subjective well-being and mental health symptoms in Wales: A cross sectional study. *Child Indicators Research, 11*(6), 1951–1965. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-017-9524-1

*Moreno-Maldonado, C., Jiménez-Iglesias, A., Camacho, I., Rivera, F., Moreno, C., & Matos, M. G. (2020). Factors associated with life satisfaction of adolescents living with employed and unemployed parents in Spain and Portugal: A person focused approach. *Children and Youth Services Review, 110,* 104740. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.104740

Morris, M. L., & Blanton, P. (1998). Predictors of family functioning among clergy and spouses: Influences of social context and perceptions of work-related stressors. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 7*(1), 27–41. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022955912433

Navarro, D., Montserrat, C., Malo, S., Gonzàlez, M., Casas, F., & Crous, G. (2017). Subjective well-being: what do adolescents say?. *Child & Family Social Work, 22*(1), 175–184. https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12215

*Nevin, S., Carr, A., Shevlin, M., Dooley, B., & Breaden, C. (2005). Factors related to well-being in Irish adolescents. *The Irish Journal of Psychology, 26*(3–4), 123–136. https://doi.org/10.1080/03033910.2005.10446215

Nes, R. B. (2010). Happiness in behaviour genetics: Findings and implications. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 11*, 369–381. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-009-9145-6

Nes, R. B., Røysamb, E. (2017). Happiness in Behaviour Genetics: An Update on Heritability and Changeability. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 18*, 1533–1552.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-016-9781-6

*Newland, L. A., Giger, J. T., Lawler, M. J., Carr, E. R., Dykstra, E. A., & Roh, S. (2014). Subjective well-being for children in a rural community. *Journal of Social Service Research, 40*(5), 642–661. https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2014.917450

*Newland, L. A., Giger, J. T., Lawler, M. J., Roh, S., Brockevelt, B. L., & Schweinle, A. (2019). Multilevel analysis of child and adolescent subjective well-being across 14 countries: Child-and country-level predictors. *Child Development, 90*(2), 395–413. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13134

*Newland, L. A., Lawler, M. J., Giger, J. T., Roh, S., & Carr, E. R. (2015). Predictors of children's subjective well-being in rural communities of the United States. *Child Indicators Research, 8*(1), 177–198. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9287-x

Olson, D. H. (1986). Circumplex model VII: Validation studies and FACES III. *Family Process, 25*(3), 337–351. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1545-5300.1986.00337.x

Olson, D. H. (2000). Circumplex Model of Marital and Family System. *Journal of Family Therapy*, *22*(2), 144–167. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6427.00144

Olson, D. H. (2011). FACES IV and the circumplex model: Validation study. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 37*(1), 64–80. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.2009.00175.x

Olson, D.H., & Barnes, H.L. (1982*). Quality of Life, Adolescent form.* Family Social Science, University of Minnesota.

Olson, D. H., Portner, J., & Lavee, Y. (1985). *FACES II manual*. University of Minnesota at St Paul, Department of Family Social Science.

*Orejudo, S., Balaguer, Á., Osorio, A., de la Rosa, P. A., & Lopez-del Burgo, C. (2021). Activities and relationships with parents as key ecological assets that encourage personal positive youth development. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *50*(2), 896–915. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22689

Otsuka, Y., Kaneita, Y., Itani, O., Jike, M., Osaki, Y., Higuchi, S., Kanda, H., Kinjo, A., Kuwabara, Y., & Yoshimoto, H. (2020). The relationship between subjective happiness and sleep problems in Japanese adolescents. *Sleep Medicine, 69*, 120–126. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sleep.2020.01.008

Pallini, S., Baiocco, R., Schneider, B. H., Madigan, S., & Atkinson, L. (2014). Early child–parent attachment and peer relations: A meta-analysis of recent research. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *28*(1), 118–123. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035736.

Paradis, A. D., Reinherz, H. Z., Giaconia, R. M., Beardslee, W. R., Ward, K., & Fitzmaurice, G. M. (2009). Long-term impact of family arguments and physical violence on adult functioning at age 30 years: Findings from the Simmons Longitudinal Study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 48*(3), 290–298. https://doi.org/10.1097/CHI.0b013e3181948fdd

*Park, N. (2005). Life satisfaction among Korean children and youth: A developmental perspective. *School Psychology International, 26*(2), 209–223. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034305052914

*Park, N., & Huebner, E. S. (2005). A cross-cultural study of the levels and correlates of life satisfaction among adolescents. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 36*(4), 444–456. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022105275961

*Park, H. S., Koo, H. Y., & Schepp, K. G. (2005). Predictors of suicidal ideation for adolescents by gender. *Journal of Korean Academy of Nursing, 35*(8), 1433–1442. https://doi.org/10.4040/jkan.2005.35.8.1433

Parke, R. D. (2002). Fathers and families. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting: Being and becoming a parent* (pp. 27–73). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Perry, D. G., Pauletti, R. E., & Cooper, P. J. (2019). Gender identity in childhood: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 43*(4), 289–304. https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025418811129

Piers, E. V., & Herzberg, D. S. (2002). *Piers-Harris 2. Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale* (2nd ed.). Western Psychological Services (WPS).

Pivarc, J. (2023). Preconceptions of Happiness and Satisfaction: The Perspective of Children from Czech Primary Schools. *Journal on Efficiency and Responsibility in Education and Science, 16*(2), 128–139. http://dx.doi.org/10.7160/eriesj.2023.160204

Proctor, C., Linley, P., & Maltby, J. (2009). Youth Life Satisfaction: A Review of the Literature. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 10,* 583–630. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10902-008-9110-9

Psouni, E., Breinholst, S., Hoff Esbjørn, B., & Steele, H. (2020). Factor structure of the Friends and Family interview. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 61*(3), 460–469. https://doi.org/10.1111/sjop.12604

*Raboteg-Šarić, Z., Brajša-Žganec, A., & Šakić, M. (2009). Life satisfaction in adolescents: The effects of perceived family economic status, self-esteem and quality of family and peer relationships. *Društvena Istraživanja: Časopis Za Opća Društvena Pitanja, 18*(3), 547–564.

*Rask, K., Åstedt-Kurki, P., Paavilainen, E., & Laippala, P. (2003). Adolescent subjective well-being and family dynamics. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences, 17*(2), 129–138. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.0283-9318.2002.00118.x

*Rees, G. (2017). Family structure and children's subjective well-being: A comparative analysis in eight European countries. *Enfance, 1*(1), 13–35. https://doi.org/10.4074/S0013754517001033

Ren, Y., Lin, M. P., Liu, Y. H., Zhang, X., Wu, J. Y. W., Hu, W. H., ... & You, J. (2018). The mediating role of coping strategy in the association between family functioning and nonsuicidal self-injury among Taiwanese adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 74*(7), 1246–1257. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22587

Reynolds, B. M., Robles, T. F., & Repetti, R. L. (2016). Measurement reactivity and fatigue

effects in daily diary research with families. *Developmental Psychology, 52*(3), 442–456. https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000081

Reynolds, C. R., & Kamphaus, R. W. (1992). *Manual for the Behavioral Assessment System for Children*. American Guidance Service.

*Rhatigan, K. J. (2001). *The relationships between family functioning, adolescent delinquent behavior, and life satisfaction in single-and dual-career families* (Doctoral dissertation). Hofstra University.

Robin, A. L., & Foster, S. L. (1989). *Negotiating parent-adolescent conflict*. Guilford.

*Rodríguez-Rivas, M., Varela, J. J., González, C., & Chuecas, M. J. (2021). The Role of Family Support and Conflict as Predictors of Cyberbullying and Subjective Well-Being During the Covid-19 Period for Chilean Adolescents. *Heliyon, 8*(4), e09243. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e09243

Russell, D. W. (1996). UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3): Reliability, validity, and factor structure. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 66*(1), 20–40. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa6601_2

Russell, J. A. (2003). Core affect and the psychological construction of emotion. *Psychological Review, 110*(1), 145–172. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.110.1.145

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*(6), 1069–1081. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069

Sabolova, K., Birdsey, N., Stuart-Hamilton, I., & Cousins, A. L. (2020). A cross-cultural exploration of children's perceptions of well-being: Understanding protective and risk factors. *Children and Youth Services Review, 110*, 104771. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.104771

*Salewski, C. (2003). Illness representations in families with a chronically ill adolescent: Differences between family members and impact on patients' outcome variables.

Journal of Health Psychology, 8(5), 587–598. https://doi.org/10.1177/13591053030085009

Sargeant, J. (2010). The altruism of preadolescent children's perspectives on 'worry' and 'happiness' in Australia and England. *Childhood, 17*(3), 411–425. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568209341087

*Sari, E. P., & Dahlia, W. (2018). Family functioning and subjective well-being among adolescents. *Malaysia Online Journal of Psychology & Counselling, 5*(1), 43–51.

*Sarriera, J. C., Casas, F., dos Santos, B. R., Bedin, L. M., & Gonzàlez, M. (2018). Subjective well-being and personal relationships in childhood: Comparison of Brazilian and Spanish children. *Interpersona: An International Journal on Personal Relationships, 12*(1), 91–106. https://doi.org/10.5964/ijpr.v12i1.284

*Sastre, M. T. M., & Ferrière, G. (2000). Family decline and the subjective well-being of adolescents. *Social Indicators Research, 49*(1), 69–82. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006935129243

Schneider, L., & Schimmack, U. (2009). Self-informant agreement in well-being ratings: A meta-analysis. *Social Indicators Research, 94*(3), 363–376. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-009-9440-y

*Schnettler, B., Grunert, K. G., Lobos, G., Miranda-Zapata, E., Denegri, M., & Hueche, C. (2018a). Maternal food-related practices, quality of diet, and well-being: profiles of Chilean mother-adolescent dyads. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, 50*(8), 776–787. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2018.03.003

*Schnettler, B., Grunert, K. G., Lobos, G., Miranda-Zapata, E., Denegri, M., & Hueche, C. (2021a). Exploring relationships between family food behaviour and well-being in single-headed and dual-headed households with adolescent children. *Current Psychology, 40*(2), 585–600. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-9974-8

*Schnettler, B., Grunert, K. G., Orellana, L., Miranda, H., Lobos, G., Miranda-Zapata, E., ... &

Hueche, C. (2021b). The diverging patterns of life satisfaction between families: A latent profile analysis in dual-earner parents with adolescents. *Current Psychology*, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-01316-9

*Schnettler, B., Lobos, G., Miranda-Zapata, E., Denegri, M., Ares, G., & Hueche, C. (2017). Diet quality and satisfaction with life, family life, and food-related life across families: a cross-sectional pilot study with mother-father-adolescent triads. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 14*(11), 1313–1337. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14111313

*Schnettler, B., Miranda, H., Miranda-Zapata, E., Lobos, G., Denegri, M., Lapo, M., ... & Hueche, C. (2018b). Diet quality and satisfaction with different domains of life in single- and dual-headed households: Comparing mother-adolescent dyads. *Children and Youth Services Review, 89*, 124–131. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.04.027

*Schnettler, B., Miranda-Zapata, E., Grunert, K. G., Grønhøj, A., Jiménez, P., Lobos, G., ... & Hueche, C. (2020). Satisfaction with life, family and food in adolescents: exploring moderating roles of family-related factors. *Current Psychology, 41*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-00618-2

*Schnettler, B., Miranda-Zapata, E., Grunert, K. G., Lobos, G., Denegri, M., & Hueche, C. (2018c). Weight fluctuation and diet concern negatively affect food-related life satisfaction in Chilean male and female adolescents. *Frontiers in Psychology, 9*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01013

*Schnettler, B., Miranda-Zapata, E., Lobos, G., Saracostti, M., Denegri, M., Lapo, M., & Hueche, C. (2018d). The mediating role of family and food-related life satisfaction in the relationships between family support, parent work-life balance, and adolescent life satisfaction in dual-earner families. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 15*(11), 2549. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15112549

Schmalz, D. L., & Kerstetter, D. L. (2006). Girlie girls and manly men: chidren's stigma consciousness of gender in sports and physical activities. *Journal of Leisure Research, 38*(4), 536–557. https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2006.11950091

Schnettler, B., Lobos, G., Miranda-Zapata, E., Denegri, M., Ares, G., & Hueche, C. (2017). Diet quality and satisfaction with life, family life, and food-related life across families: a cross-sectional pilot study with mother-father-adolescent triads. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 14*(11), 1313–1337. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14111313

Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J., Kotila, L. E., Jia, R., Lang, S. N., & Bower, D. J. (2013). Comparisons of levels and predictors of mothers' and fathers' engagement with their preschool-aged children. *Early Child Development and Care, 183*(3-4), 498–514.

Search Institute (2016). *User Guide for The Attitudes & Behaviors Survey*. Available at: http://www.search-institute.org/sites/default/files/a/A&B-SurveyUser-Guide.pdf.

Segabinazi, J. D., Giacomoni, C. H., Dias, A. C. G., Teixeira, M. A. P., & Moraes, D. A. D. O. (2010). Desenvolvimento e validação preliminar de uma escala multidimensional de satisfação de vida para adolescentes. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa, 26*(4), 653–659. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0102-37722010000400009

Segabinazi, J. D., Zortea, M., Zanon, C., Bandeira, D. R., Giacomoni, C. H., & Hutz, C. S. (2012). Escala de afetos positivos e negativos para adolescentes: adaptação, normatização e evidências de validade. *Avaliação Psicológica, 11*(1), 1–12.

Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive Psychology Progress: Empirical Validation of Interventions. *American Psychologist, 60*(5), 410–421. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.5.410

*Seligson, J. L., Huebner, E. S., & Valois, R. F. (2003). Preliminary validation of the brief multidimensional students' life satisfaction scale (BMSLSS). *Social Indicators Research, 61*(2), 121–145. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021326822957

*Seligson, J. L., Huebner, E. S., & Valois, R. F. (2005). An investigation of a brief life satisfaction scale with elementary school children. *Social Indicators Research, 73*(3), 355–374. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-004-2011-3

*Shek, D. T. (1997a). Family environment and adolescent psychological well-being, school adjustment, and problem behavior: A pioneer study in a Chinese context. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 158*(1), 113–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221329709596656

*Shek, D. T. (1997b). The relation of family functioning to adolescent psychological well-being, school adjustment, and problem behavior. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 158*(4), 467–479. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221329709596683

*Shek, D. T. (1997c). The relation of parent-adolescent conflict to adolescent psychological well-being, school adjustment, and problem behavior. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal, 25*(3), 277–290. https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.1997.25.3.277

*Shek, D. T. (1998a). A longitudinal study of Hong Kong adolescents' and parents' perceptions of family functioning and well-being. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 159*(4), 389–403. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221329809596160

*Shek, D. T. (1998b). A longitudinal study of the relations between parent-adolescent conflict and adolescent psychological well-being. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 159*(1), 53–67. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221329809596134

*Shek, D. T. (1998c). A longitudinal study of the relations of family factors to adolescent psychological symptoms, coping resources, school behavior, and substance abuse. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health, 10*(3), 155–184. https://doi.org/10.1515/IJAMH.1998.10.3.155

*Shek, D. T. (1999). Individual and dyadic predictors of family functioning in a Chinese context. *American Journal of Family Therapy, 27*(1), 49–61. https://doi.org/10.1080/019261899262096

Shek, D. T. L. (2001). Chinese adolescents and their parents' views on a happy family: Implications for family therapy. *Family Therapy, 28*(2), 73–104.

Shek, D. T. (2002a). Assessment of family functioning in Chinese adolescents: The Chinese Family Assessment Instrument. In N. N. Singh, T. H. Ollendick, & A. N. Singh (Eds.), *International perspectives on child and adolescent mental health* (pp. 297–316). Elsevier.

*Shek, D. T. (2002b). Family functioning and psychological well-being, school adjustment, and problem behavior in Chinese adolescents with and without economic disadvantage. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 163*(4), 497–502. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221320209598698

*Shek, D. T. (2002c). Psychometric properties of the Chinese version of the Family Awareness Scale. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 142*(1), 61–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224540209603885

*Shek, D. T. (2002d). The relation of parental qualities to psychological well-being, school adjustment, and problem behavior in Chinese adolescents with economic disadvantage. *American Journal of Family Therapy, 30*(3), 215–230. https://doi.org/10.1080/019261802753577548

*Shek, D. T. (2004). Psychological well-being, school adjustment, and problem behavior among Chinese adolescent boys from poor families: does family functioning matter. In N. Way, & J. Y. Chu (Eds.), *Adolescent Boys: Exploring Diverse Cultures of Boyhood* (pp. 129–143). New York: New York University Press.

*Shek, D. T. (2005). A longitudinal study of perceived family functioning and adolescent adjustment in Chinese adolescents with economic disadvantage. *Journal of Family Issues, 26*(4), 518–543. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X04272618

*Shek, D. T., & Liang, L. Y. (2018). Psychosocial factors influencing individual well-being in Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong: A six-year longitudinal study. *Applied Research in*

Quality of Life, 13(3), 561–584. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-017-9545-4

*Shek, D. T., & Liu, T. T. (2014). Life satisfaction in junior secondary school students in Hong Kong: A 3-year longitudinal study. *Social Indicators Research, 117*(3), 777–794. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-013-0398-4

*Shek, D. T., Tsoi, K. W., Lau, P. S., Tsang, S. K., Lam, M. C., & Lam, C. M. (2001). Psychological well-being, school adjustment and problem behavior in Chinese adolescents: Do parental qualities matter?. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health, 13*(3), 231–244. https://doi.org/10.1515/IJAMH.2001.13.3.231

Shin, K., & You, S. (2013). Leisure type, leisure satisfaction and adolescents' psychological wellbeing. *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology, 7*(2), 53–62. https://doi.org/10.1017/prp.2013.6

Shulman, S., & Scharf, M. (2000). Adolescent romantic behaviors and perceptions: Age-and gender-related differences, and links with family and peer relationships. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 10*(1), 99–118.

*Silva, K., Ford, C. A., & Miller, V. A. (2020). Daily parent–teen conflict and parent and adolescent well-being: The moderating role of daily and person-level warmth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 49*(8), 1601–1616. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-020-01251-9

Simons-Morton, B. G., Crump, A. D., Haynie, D. L., & Saylor, K. E. (1999). Student–school bonding and adolescent problem behavior. *Health Education Research, 14*(1), 99–107. https://doi.org/10.1093/her/14.1.99

Smilkstein, G. (1978). The family APGAR: a proposal for a family function test and its use by physicians. *Journal of Family Practice, 6*(6), 1231–1239.

*Soares, A. S., Pais-Ribeiro, J. L., & Silva, I. (2019). Developmental assets predictors of life satisfaction in adolescents. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*(236), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00236

*Song, J., Ma, C., Gu, C., & Zuo, B. (2018). What matters most to the left-behind children's life satisfaction and school engagement: Parent or grandparent?. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *27*(8), 2481–2490. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-018-1086-4

Sotgiu, I. (2016). How do we remember happy life events? A comparison between eudaimonic and hedonic autobiographical memories. *The Journal of Psychology*, *150*(6), 685–703. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2016.1162764

Spackman, M., Fujiki, M., Brinton, B., Nelson, D., & Allen, J. (2005). The Ability of Children With Language Impairment to Recognize Emotion Conveyed by Facial Expression and Music. *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, *26*(3), 131–143. https://doi.org/10.1177/15257401050260030201.

Steele, H. & Steele, M. (2005). The construct of coherence as an indicator of attachment security in middle childhood: The Friends and Family Interview. In K. Kerns & R. Richardson (Eds.), *Attachment in middle childhood* (pp. 137–160). Guilford Press.

Steinberg, L. (2005). Cognitive and affective development in adolescence. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, *9*(2), 69–74. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2004.12.005

Steinberg, L., & Morris, A. S. (2001). Adolescent development. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*(1), 83–110. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.83

*Sun, X., Tian, Y., Zhang, Y., Xie, X., Heath, M. A., & Zhou, Z. (2015). Psychological development and educational problems of left-behind children in rural China. *School Psychology International*, *36*(3), 227–252. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034314566669

Swinyard, W., Kau, A., & Phua, H. (2001). Happiness, materialism, and religious experience in the US and Singapore. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 2*, 13–32. https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1011596515474

*Syanti, W. R., & Rahmania, A. M. *Does family functioning has correlation with Subjective Well-being? A study among Adolescent in Coastal Surabaya*. In Proceedings of the International Conference of Psychology, Malang City, East Java, 6th-7th September

2019.

*Tang, W. C., Lin, M. P., You, J., Wu, J. Y. W., & Chen, K. C. (2021). Prevalence and psychosocial risk factors of no suicidal self-injury among adolescents during the COVID-19 outbreak. *Current Psychology, 42*, 17270–17279. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-01931-0

*Taşdelen-Karçkay, A. (2016). Family Life Satisfaction Scale—Turkish version: Psychometric evaluation. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal, 44*(4), 631–639. https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2016.44.4.631

Thoilliez, B. (2011). How to grow up happy: An exploratory study on the meaning of happiness from children's voices. *Child Indicators Research, 4*(2), 323–351. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-011-9107-5

*Tian, L., Zhang, J., & Huebner, E. S. (2015). Preliminary validation of the brief multidimensional students' life satisfaction scale (BMSLSS) among Chinese elementary school students. *Child Indicators Research, 8*(4), 907–923. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9295-x

Topp, C. W., Østergaard, S. D., Søndergaard, S., & Bech, P. (2015). The WHO-5 Well-Being Index: A systematic review of the literature. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics, 84*(3), 167–176. https://doi.org/10.1159/000376585

*Uusitalo-Malmivaara, L. (2012). Global and school-related happiness in Finnish children. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 13*, 601–619. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-011-9282-6

Uusitalo-Malmivaara, L. (2014). Happiness decreases during early adolescence—a study on 12-and 15-year-old Finnish students. *Psychology, 5*(6), 541–555. http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/psych.2014.56064

*Uusitalo-Malmivaara, L., & Lehto, J. E. (2013). Social factors explaining children's subjective

happiness and depressive symptoms. *Social Indicators Research, 111*(2), 603–615. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-012-0022-z

Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2007). Preadolescents' and adolescents' online communication and their closeness to friends. *Developmental Psychology, 43*(2), 267–277. https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.43.2.267

Veenhoven, R. (2009). Well-Being in Nations and Well-Being of Nations. *Social Indicators Research, 91*, 5–21. https://doi.org/10.1007/S11205-008-9323-7.

Venhoeven, L. A., Bolderdijk, J. W., & Steg, L. (2013). Explaining the paradox: how pro-environmental behaviour can both thwart and foster well-being. *Sustainability, 5*(4), 1372–1386. https://doi.org/10.3390/su5041372

*Vera, E. M., Moallem, B. I., Vacek, K. R., Blackmon, S. K., Coyle, L. D., Gomez, K. L., ... & Steele, J. C. (2012). Gender differences in contextual predictors of urban, early adolescents' subjective well-being. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 40*(3), 174–183. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1912.2012.00016.x

Vera, E., Thakral, C., Gonzales, R., Morgan, M., Conner, W., Caskey, E., ... & Dick, L. (2008). Subjective well-being in urban adolescents of color. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 14*(3), 224–233. https://doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.14.3.224

*Veronese, G., Castiglioni, M., Barola, G., & Said, M. (2012). Living in the shadow of occupation: Life satisfaction and positive emotion as protective factors in a group of Palestinian school children. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*(1), 225–233. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2011.10.002

*Verrastro, V., Ritella, G., Saladino, V., Pistella, J., Baiocco, R., & Fontanesi, L. (2020). Personal and family correlates to happiness amongst Italian children and preadolescents. *International Journal of Emotional Education, 12*(1), 48–64.

Vulić-Prtorić, A. (2004). Skala kvalitete obiteljskih interakcija-KOBI. U: A. Proroković i sur.(Ur.). *Zbirka Psihologijskih Skala I Upitnika, 2*, 24–33.

Wagner, A., Ribeiro, L. D. S., Arteche, A. X., & Bornholdt, E. A. (1999). Configuração familiar e o bem-estar psicológico dos adolescentes. *Psicologia: reflexão e crítica*, *12*(1), 147–156. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0102-79721999000100010

*Wang, J., Gu, S., Ye, B., Gao, J., Wang, F., Dai, J., & Fu, H. (2019). The effect of migration and the hukou registration system on psychosocial domains and family functioning of children in Shanghai, China. *International Health, 11*(Supplement_1), S24–S32. https://doi.org/10.1093/inthealth/ihz076

*Wang, M. T., Henry, D. A., Del Toro, J., Scanlon, C. L., & Schall, J. D. (2021). COVID-19 employment status, dyadic family relationships, and child psychological well-being. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 69*(5), 705–712. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.07.016

Waters, L. (2020). Using positive psychology interventions to strengthen family happiness: A family systems approach. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 15*(5), 645–652. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2020.1789704

Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: the PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54*(6), 1063–1070. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.6.1063

*Weber, M., & Huebner, E. S. (2015). Early adolescents' personality and life satisfaction: A closer look at global vs. domain-specific satisfaction. *Personality and Individual Differences, 83*, 31–36. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.03.042

Weissberg, R. P., & Greenberg, M. T. (1998). Prevention science and collaborative community action research: Combining the best from both perspectives. *Journal of Mental Health, 7*(5), 477–490. https://doi.org/10.1080/09638239817860

*Willroth, E. C., Atherton, O. E., & Robins, R. W. (2021). Life satisfaction trajectories during adolescence and the transition to young adulthood: Findings from a longitudinal study of Mexican-origin youth. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 120*(1), 192–

205. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000294

Yaffe, Y. (2023). Systematic review of the differences between mothers and fathers in parenting styles and practices. *Current Psychology, 42*(19), 16011–16024. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-01014-6

*Yuan, X., Zhuo, R., & Li, G. (2019). Migration patterns, family functioning, and life satisfaction among migrant children in China: A mediation model. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 22*(1), 113–120. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajsp.12345

*Yun, Y., & Choi, J. (2018). A child's family relationship and emotional well-being through self-regulated learning in South Korea. *Canadian Journal of Family and Youth, 10*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.29173/cjfy29340

Zabriskie, R. B., & McCormick, B. P. (2003). Parent and child perspectives of family leisure involvement and satisfaction with family life. *Journal of Leisure Research, 35*(2), 163–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2003.11949989

Zhang, Z., & Chen, W. (2019). A systematic review of the relationship between physical activity and happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 20*(4), 1305–1322. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-018-9976-0

*Zhao, J., Liu, X., & Wang, M. (2015). Parent–child cohesion, friend companionship and left-behind children's emotional adaptation in rural China. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 48*, 190–199. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2015.07.005

*Zhou, J., Fang, H. U., Jing, W. U., Zou, Z. Y., Wang, Y. X., Peng, H. C., ... & Hua, Y. (2018). Subjective well-being and family functioning among adolescents left behind by migrating parents in Jiangxi Province, China. *Biomedical and Environmental Sciences, 31*(5), 382–388. https://doi.org/10.3967/bes2018.049

Appendix

Table S1. Interview Study 2 and Study 3

Happiness interview – Children version

Introduction	I would like to get a sense of what makes you happy, what you like to do, and your relationships with your family. So, with the questions I'm going to ask you, we could talk a little bit about these things.
Explication of the right to non-response and confidentiality	Remember, it's okay if you don't want to respond to any of these questions; if you don't feel up to it, just tell me and we'll skip it. And remember, we are not going to tell anybody what you tell me. So, feel free to tell me anything you want.
Do you have any questions for me before we start?	
Section 1. SELF	
Happiness 1.1: Happiness SELF	**What is happiness for you?** What makes you happy? Can you give me some examples? How happy do you think you are? [If you do not give any indication of the level of your happiness] Ask: 1 Not at all 2 A little bit 3 Quite 4 Much 5 Very much What would make you even more happy?
Happiness 1.2: Happiest moment mother/father (parent 1/parent 2)	Can you tell me what was the happiest time with your mother/father (or parent 1/parent 2)? I mean you and her/his, you and your mother/father alone? [Ask only if not told] How old were you? What were you doing? Why were you so happy, do you remember?
Happiness 1.4: Happiest moment brother/sister	Can you tell what was the happiest time you had with your sister/brother? I mean, you and her/him, you and your sister/brother alone? [Ask only if not told] How old were you? What were you doing? Why were you so happy, do you remember?

Happiness interview - Parent version

Introduction	This short interview focuses on the topic of happiness. We will talk about the happiness of your daughter/son and the happiness of your family. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.
Explication of the right to non-response and confidentiality	If you do not want to answer some questions during the interview, just tell me and we will skip them. Anything you tell me will remain confidential within our research group and no one will know about it. So, feel free to tell me anything you want.
Do you have any questions for me before we start?	
Section 1. SELF	
Happiness 1.1: **Happiness DAUGHTER/SON**	**In your opinion, what is happiness for your daughter/son? What might your daughter/son answer to this question?** In your opinion, what really makes your daughter/son happy? [Can you give me some examples?] How happy do you think your daughter/son is? [If no indication of happiness level is given] Ask: 1 Not at all 2 A little bit 3 Quite 4 Much 5 Very much What could make your daughter/son even happier?
Happiness 1.2: Happiest moment mother/father (parent 1/2) in the girl/boy perspective)	Thinking about your daughter/son, what do you think was the happiest moment your daughter/son had with you? What would your daughter/son answer to this question? [Ask only if not told] How old was your daughter/son? What were you doing? Why was your daughter/son so happy? Do you remember? You were also very happy at that time, do you remember?
Happiness 1.3: **What makes happy**	Thinking IN GENERAL about girls and boys your daughter/son's age, what do you think makes a girl or boy happy? In your opinion, what things make a girl/boy happy? Are there different things that you think make a girl happy than a boy? [if the answer is YES then asked...] Can you explain more about this difference? Can you give me some examples?