

Cultural engagement can bring you psychological wellbeing

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This research was conducted by **Enzo Grossi, Giorgio Tavano Blessi, Pier Luigi Sacco, Massimo Buscema** at the **Bracco Medical Department, IULM University, Free University, Bozen and the Semeion Research Centre, Italy**

Summary

The data for this study came from a survey of a representative sample of 1,500 Italian adults that measured the wellbeing of respondents, along with how much cultural activity (including sports participation and attendance) they had undertaken in the last year. A range of additional demographic information was also collected about each respondent. The paper showed that high levels of cultural engagement are significantly associated with high levels of wellbeing.

Health and cultural engagement were the top two factors to affect wellbeing

A well-validated instrument was used to measure psychological wellbeing, which included how energised, cheerful, or nervous each respondent had been feeling. The authors found that physical health was a key determinant of wellbeing. The only other statistically significant factor to affect wellbeing was cultural engagement. Wellbeing increased as a person engaged in more cultural activity but the effect tailed off with very high levels of engagement. The researchers used a variety of statistical techniques to tease out how various factors like health, cultural engagement and other demographic variables interact. They found that physical health and culture themselves are closely associated (and both then jointly affect wellbeing).

The social aspects of cultural engagement were probably important

Overall, the type or variety of cultural activity a person engages in did not make a difference to how much of a wellbeing increase they experienced. The authors suspect that the wellbeing benefits of cultural engagement may come from the social aspects of that engagement and the fact it involved physical activity, nonetheless the authors are confident that cultural engagement had a 'definite [positive] impact on individual psychological wellbeing'.

Keywords

health wellbeing Italy survey population social

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