

INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING: THE RELATIONAL GOODS.

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Abstract.

In this paper we analyze the non-instrumental dimension of social capital and its effects on subjective well-being. In the first part, we define the characteristics of production and consumption of relational goods. The second section analyses the influence of the different expressions of relational goods and social capital on individual subjective well-being. In the third, we test the explanatory power of this variable on the Easterlin's paradox using the results of a survey on individual social capital in Spain. The main findings from the empirical analysis for Spanish society allow us to strengthen the hypothesis. We found a weak explanatory capacity of income or educational level or instrumental dimensions of social capital (expert mobilization) while a strong link between expressions of relational goods (domestic mobilization, household stability, partnership, trust and security in the environment) was found.

Keywords: individual social capital, social capital, relational goods, Easterlin's paradox.

JEL codes: Z10, Z13

1. Introduction: social capital and relational goods.

Research on the social capital provides a complex¹ conceptual framework that allows us to integrate different lines of research from sociology, political science and Economics (Adler and Kwon, 2002). In this confluence, we will focus on the wide range of works that have dealt with the interrelationship between social capital and the subjective well-being (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 2001; Dasgupta, 2005; Warren,

¹ On this complexity and the conceptual problems (Pena and Sanchez, 2005)

2008; Bartolini, 2007; Castiglione et al., 2008...). These works highlights that: (a) social capital improves the objective socio-economic conditions of the subjects, affecting thus their well-being, and (b) a large part of the reward of social interaction is intrinsic. As Arrow (1999) points out, interpersonal ties can be used for instrumental purposes but this instrumental character does not eliminate the fact that the relationship is (or could be) a good in itself, and not simply a means to achieving other objectives (Gui, 2005). It is within this second aspect where we place the concept of "relational good".

Our general objective is to study the link between this intrinsic dimension of the relational networks and subjective well-being. Two further specific subdivisions can be made therein. On the one hand, we study the peculiarities of this non-instrumental dimension of social capital, the relational goods. On the other hand, we analyze the influence of the different expressions of individual social capital on individual subjective well-being and thus, test the explanatory capacity of this variable on the Easterlin's paradox. From previous works (Becchetti et al., 2008; Bartolini and Billancini, 2010) our contribution focuses on an extensive survey conducted at national level that allows us to distinguish the different expressions of individual social capital to calibrate their impact.

In order to achieve the objectives set out before, this work is structured as follows. In section 2, a review is carried out of the literature that delimits the concept of relational good and clarifies its use in the broader context of social capital. In section 3, an empirical estimation is conducted to assess the explanatory capacity of relational goods on Spaniards' functions of welfare. In the final section, the major findings are summarized.

2-The concept of "relational good" and the characteristics of its production.

The social nature of the human being requires distinguishing between two types of needs: acquisitive and expressive. Acquisitive needs have to do with a purely material aspect and are met by the consumption of market goods and, therefore, linked to income. On the contrary, the expressive needs refer to the recognition of our identity, in such a way that the important thing for their fulfilment/satisfaction is communication or a relationship with a third party (Zamagni, 2004; Iglesias et al., 2013). In this sense, it is necessary to rectify the traditional economic goods classification. Indeed, based on the possibility of exclusion between private, public and preferential goods, relational goods

must be incorporated within this classification. The latter are a product of personal interaction, i.e. they are produced through linkages/bonds between people for satisfying social needs, expressive in character (belonging, recognition and personal development) and compared to other kind of goods, their valuation implies the existence of interdependent utility functions.

A first approach requires a revision of the definitions of this concept posed by major authors. Because of its distinctive character, for M. Nussbaum (1995 [1986]) a relational good is defined by a non-instrumental nature. They are those human experiences in which the relationship is a good in itself, such as friendship, mutual love and civil commitment. Donati (1986) and Gui (1987), on the other hand, focus on the peculiarities of its production. These assets are a byproduct of non-randomized concrete social relationships in which identity is determinant (Uhlener, 1989) in such a way that the agents are at the same time producing and consuming. Finally, Becchetti (2008) chooses to define these goods taking into account the need to meet up. From this point of view, it will be the set of assets that generates emotional support, social approval and accomplishes the sense of belonging and the desire to be loved or accepted by others, etc. (on a micro scale: family relationships or friendships, and on a macro scale: clubs or association meetings, events sports etc.).

These differences in their definition illustrates the lack of homogeneity in terms of categorization. Thus, it is debatable whether we should consider friendship and also dinner with friends" as a relational good. "Dinner with friends" implies action that recreates and feeds friendship; but friendship itself does not mean continued relationships. You have friends in the distance and having their "social approval" (another relational good frequently cited) does not imply *per se* the production and consumption of relational goods, as a "dinner with friends". For these reasons, Bruni (2008) points out that friendship cannot be defined as a relational good, but as repeated interaction, as a series of encounters and affective states.

From these considerations, we should characterize relational goods as a component implicit in all social relations, concretely, "the affective, expressive, non-instrumental side of interpersonal relationships" (Becchetti et al., 2008). However, the vague delimitation of this definition requires studying the productive function of such goods.

2.1. The production of "relational goods".

The study of the production and consumption of relational goods requires their main features being outlined more precisely. Systematizing, these characteristics can be summarized as follows.

a.- These *goods* respond to a need of belonging or identity approval and show an absence of instrumentality (Zamagni, 2001 and Bruni 2001, 2008). The relationship is a good in itself so these goods may not be bought or imposed upon and are essentially "non-contractual"; consequently they do not have an a priori market price (Gui, 2000; Pugno, 2007).

b.- Although they take place through relationships, they do not coincide with the relationship itself. They are an emerging result of the relationship (Gui, 1987, 2000, 2005; Uhlener, 1989; Colozzi, 2005; Pugno, 2007). A social meeting or a dinner are not "relational goods" in themselves because they do not necessarily involve intangible experiences which are communicative and affective in nature. However, statistically relational goods are more common in close relations (Gui, 2000).

c.- These goods are characterized by reciprocity and simultaneity. That is, they can never be consumed or produced by a single individual but can be shared with others (Uhlener, 1989 y 1995; Sacco et al., 2004). Thus, the identity of each one of the parties becomes relevant in such a way that they are more typical of strong ties (Gui, 2005; Bruni, 2008; Bruni and Stanca, 2008) (e.g.: friends or mother-child relationship). Similarly, the production and consumption coincide temporarily (Gui, 2000; Antoci et al., 2002; Sacco et al., 2004).

d.- They are a case of local public good (Corneo, 2002). They are public goods because there is no rivalry or exclusion. They could even be considered antirivals (Pugno, 2007). These goods enter the utility of two or more individual functions (Uhlener, 1989) and the increase of consumption seldom causes congestion, whilst the opposite effect is more common (Gui, 2000; taken from Sacco et al., 2004). Like public goods, they are fragile or vulnerable because they need reciprocity (Bruni and Porta, 2007) and, therefore, do not depend on the individual but on the choices that others make and on other environmental factors that facilitate or hinder their emergence (Bruni, 2008; Iglesias, Pena and Sanchez, 2013).

In short, relational goods are (potentially) produced through interaction in any field of social life, such as family, friends, the *peer groups*, associations, sports

activities, the workplace and other various events, but they imply a non-instrumental recognition of individuals, which place them between the so-called strong ties (Gui, 2001; Sacco, Will and Zamagni, 2004; Becchetti et al., 2008).

3. The relational goods and revealed subjective well-being

Economic science takes as a starting point that material wealth is a precondition of subjective satisfaction or "happiness"; thus changes in "happiness" are directly related to the changes in purchasing power. However, a comprehensive set of studies developed under the generic designation of "paradox of happiness" call into question the universal validity of this assumption (Easterlin, 2001). A priori, accepting the assumption of non-satiety, an individual with a higher income and access to a superior set of goods and services should be more satisfied with his or her own life and reveal a greater subjective well-being. However, studies undertaken for a wide range of countries reveal paradoxical results. Stagnation and even setbacks in happiness levels are found linked to increases in income; the latter having a surprisingly low statistical significance as a variable (Kahneman, Diener, and Schwarz 1999; Frey and Stutzer, 2002). Populations of the richest societies reveal higher levels of subjective well-being but from a specific threshold of income the effect of this variable seems to be non-significative (Layard, 2005). Thus, additional revenues have an effect when they serve to push people over the physical poverty threshold but their effect will become more minimal or even close to zero.

The so-called "Easterlin paradox" (Easterlin, 1973) refers to the measurement of happiness at the aggregate level and focuses on the finding that, in developed societies, elevations of income do not generate an increase in collective levels of well-being. However, at the same time, a direct relationship between levels of individual well-being and personal income persists, so it seems that what is true for the individual is not for society as a whole.

This apparent contradiction could be explained in two ways. On the one hand, it is possible that satisfaction and happiness depend upon who the comparison is made with (the relative income hypothesis). On the other hand, people experience a process of accommodation, in such a way that once assimilated the improvement in the level of income, the individual returns to the starting point in his or her levels of subjective well-being (hedonic treadmill hypothesis).

Thus, as we illustrate in the expression (1) the utility of an individual would depend on his or her income and, at the same time, on the relationship between his or her income and an income adopted as a reference (Y^*), be it of other individuals or his or her own income in a previous period.

$$U_t = (u_1(Y_t) + u_2(Y_t / Y_t^*)) \quad (1)$$

However, it is possible to introduce another alternative hypothesis. The above-mentioned paradox may also be a consequence of evaluative or axiological aspects, given that human beings also need other kinds of goods whose relationship with income is not evident. In fact, the data confirms that the greater importance an individual places on material or financial objectives, the slighter his or her subjective well-being is. Thus, the achievements which are more intrinsic by nature can have an important effect on happiness (Clark et al., 2008; Iglesias et al., 2013).

The previous three explanations are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary. Because of the hedonic adaptation and social struggle for increasing one's relative income, subjects dedicate a disproportionate amount of time to monetary targets at the expense of other goods which are non-material by nature (family life, health, etc.). An apparently optimizer behavior produces a non-optimizing result. This is a consequence of the fact that 'other goods' not strictly linked to material wealth may have more relative importance than was initially expected. A change in the allocation of time that favors family life and health would improve subjective well-being. We can correct the previous expression to introduce this interrelation (2) where l is the time devoted to work and Z would be a vector containing socio-economic and demographic variables.

$$U_t = (u_1(Y_t) + u_2(Y_t / Y_t^*) + u_3(T - l_t, Z_t)) \quad (2)$$

Among the possible explanations of this welfare trade off relationship between material and relational goods are those related to the nature of the latter which we referred to in the previous section. Insofar as they are public goods, these will be underfunded and individuals will tend to underestimate them. It is a characteristic market failure that can be modelled using a prisoner's dilemma, and that can be overcome by social institutions (Frey and Stutzer, 2005).

At the same time, we have to add that, the decision-making process systematically tends to overestimate the satisfaction of extrinsic desires associated with

income and to underestimate the effect of intrinsic satisfaction (family, hobbies...) through a series of distorting elements. The first are subject to adjustment processes that are not predictable in the decision making moment and that do not exist in the second. At the same time, decisions tend to be conditioned by recent "peaks" and these tend to be associated with extrinsic goals, given that intrinsic goals are long-term (Kahneman, 2003). Finally, the decision can also be influenced by cultural and context factors (conspicuous consumption, social trends...). In Western culture, for example, decisions based on extrinsic factors are more justifiable than intrinsic factors. It is inevitable to incorporate the distortions generated by the consumption environment to this explanation. (Becchetti et al., 2013)

In sum, it is predictable that the consumption of relational goods will be inefficiently low, so we can predict that individuals who consume more relational goods in a context of medium-high and high income have a higher level of subjective well-being.

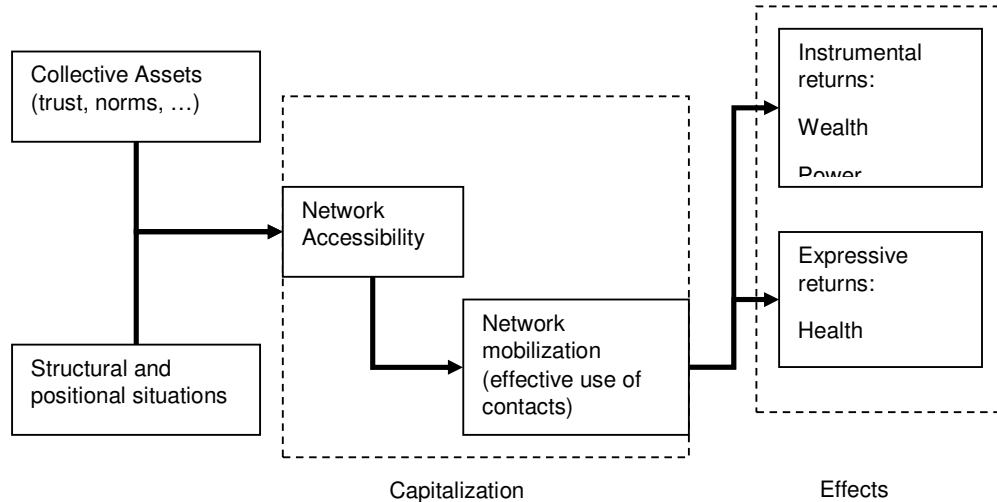
The aim of our empirical analysis is to compare the influence of relational goods on subjective well-being, both in weight and structure, i.e. what type of relational goods are particularly relevant and, simultaneously, to analyze their relationship to income levels. Most studies in this regard are limited to considering the links between the *proxies* of general social capital, in particular general trust and subjective well-being. General social capital shows a positive effect on happiness insofar as it facilitates social interactions and places the individual in a safer and more predictable environment (Bjornskov, 2008). In this sense, institutional confidence indicators have also been significant (Frey and Stutzer, 2002). The informal interactions with family and friends create a strong sense of belonging and social integration, what Pichler (2006) called "find your place in society". The increase in these interactions has a direct relation with satisfaction. On the contrary, interactions with formal pressure groups (lobbies) have shown a negative relationship (Pose and von Berlepsch, 2012).

3.1.- Individual social capital: strong and weak ties.

The concept of individual social capital refers to the set of personal relationships that a specific individual has. This personal network provides access to a wide range of goods and services not only material but also social, relational, expressive ... For the study of the structure and functionality of these social networks, we have taken Lin's

general model as a starting point (Lin, 1999a, 1999b, 2008). As can be seen in Scheme 1, this approach proposes an explanation based on the existence of three main blocks linked by causal relations (precursors, capitalization and effects).

Scheme 1.- Lin's model of individual social capital structure.



Source: Lin (1999)

The precursors are the factors which conditioned the development of social networks made available to individuals. The inequality of individual social capital is explained by structural (rules, culture and generalized trust) and positional factors (socioeconomic status). In the capitalization block, two variables are crucial in order to understand the functioning of individual social capital: accessibility and mobilization. With this distinction, Lin points out that there are two ways to assess personal networks: extension/accessibility and depth/mobilization of the network. That is, on the one hand, we need to consider the extension or accessibility, the number of agents that an individual can access and, on the other hand, mobilization refers to the resources that can effectively be extracted from the network that the individual has access to. Both dimensions are essential in practice because, a priori, greater accessibility facilitates mobilization, albeit not automatically. For example, when assessing the mobilization of the resources embedded in a network, we should take into account that the investment in the extension of networks is not always parallel to the one made in the acquisition of social skills. Obviously, this fact conditions mobilization. This approach refers back to

the social aspect of human capital (Bowles & Gintis, 2002) given that we are considering the role played by the personal qualities in the returns generated by these networks (Lin, 1999a)

These networks are functionally specialized in the attainment of specific resources that can be classified according to their effects such as instrumental and expressive. Instrumental goals generate three fundamental types of effects: economic (income), social (status) and political (reputation) (Lin, 2001). In this case, if we accept the classical proposal of Granovetter (1973), weak ties are decisive, since they provide information and access to non-redundant resources. These ties effectively extend the scope of resources which an individual can have access to beyond those already possessed by his/her group. On the contrary, expressive goals are aimed at the conservation of resources already possessed - in particular to the conservation of personal identity, understood as self-realization-, in which the existence of (strong) redundant, dense and cohesive relationships can be important (Lin, Ensel & Vaughn, 1981, 1990). This is the case of a community, a family etc. and their influence on the physical and mental health and life satisfaction.

4. Data and methodology.

Our empirical strategy is developed in two stages. First, we have analysed the structure of individual social networks. In order to test Lin's model, we have applied the Principal Component Analysis to the data about accessibility and mobilization of individual networks provided for by a survey conducted in Spain. Second, in order to investigate whether and how different elements of the structure of the networks previously defined are associated with subjective satisfaction (happiness), we have estimated an ordered logistic regression. Additionally, we have tested this influence on the life satisfaction variable. This methodological approach allows us to test the explanatory weight of strong and weak ties, and more specifically relational goods on subjective wellbeing and life satisfaction.

4.1 Variables, sample and measurement.

We have made measurements of the explanatory variables – which include both strong and weak ties-, and associations' membership. In this case, the different types of

existing networks and their extension would be exogenous variables and the revealed subjective well-being the endogenous variable.

The data used for the empirical study are taken from a survey on social capital and inequality conducted between November and December 2011 on a universe of residents over 18 years old in Spain. This survey allows us to analyze the determinants of individual social capital endowments and their effects. The sample size was 3,400 personal interviews².

Dependent variable: revealed subjective well-being and life satisfaction.

Apart from the psychological judgments of momentary pleasure, subjective well-being refers to how the individual evaluates the overall quality of his or her life. Thus, according to Easterlin (2001) an identity is established between happiness and subjective well-being. Under this perspective, happiness is an individual perception that relates to the quality of life but which also includes affective and cognitive dimensions.

Our survey includes two ordinal categorical questions that conform to the standard in the world values survey. Specifically, one of them asked the individual "*in General: would you say that....?*" The interviewee had to choose one of the following answers: *very happy, quite happy, not very happy or not happy*.

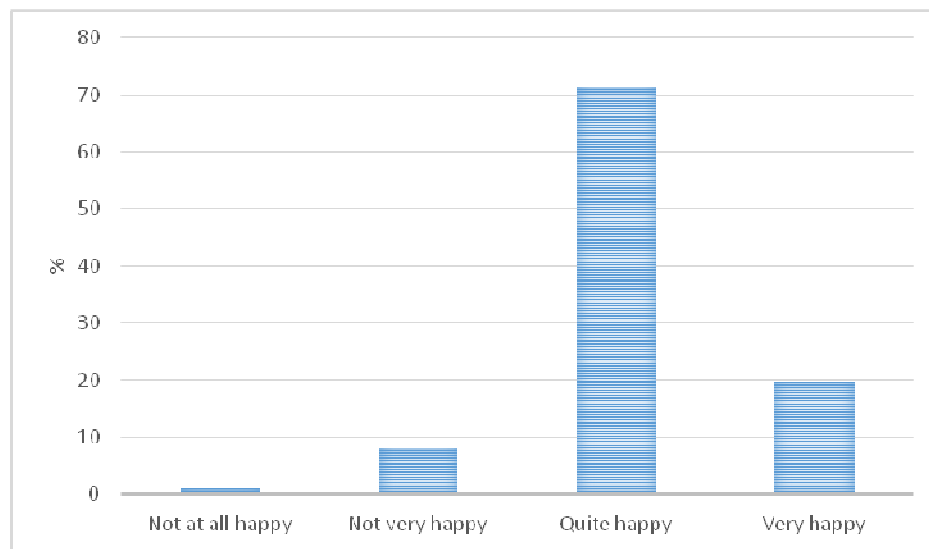
In another question, the respondent is asked, "*Could you rate how satisfied you are with your life in general?*" The response is quantified on an ordinal scale ranging from 1 to 10. Life satisfaction has a stronger cognitive component. It is the positive assessment that the person makes of life in general, or particular aspects of it (family, school, work, health, friends, leisure) (Diener, 1994; Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith, 1999). Thus, people evaluate their current status with expectations they have for themselves and satisfaction is the perceived discrepancy between their aspirations and achievements (Veenhoven, 1994). The satisfaction would be a psychological state resulting from the transaction between the individual, and microsocial (marital status,

² The survey was conducted by a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI system). The households were selected randomly from telephone listings with a selection of interviewees from random tables between members of each household. We opted for stratified sampling with mixed affixation: 1,700 interviews by simple affixation to ensure a minimum of 100 interviews by region and 1700 interviews by proportional affixation to the size of each region. In each Community, there was a proportional distribution of the interviews according to the size of municipality. A weighting of the questionnaires was also made according to sex, age and the size of region².

family, social involvement, job satisfaction, social support) and macrosocial (income, culture).

The answers to the above questions are summarized in Figure 1 and 2. First of all, it is remarkable that the strength of the results is completely consistent with the last wave of the world values survey (Figures 1 and 2).

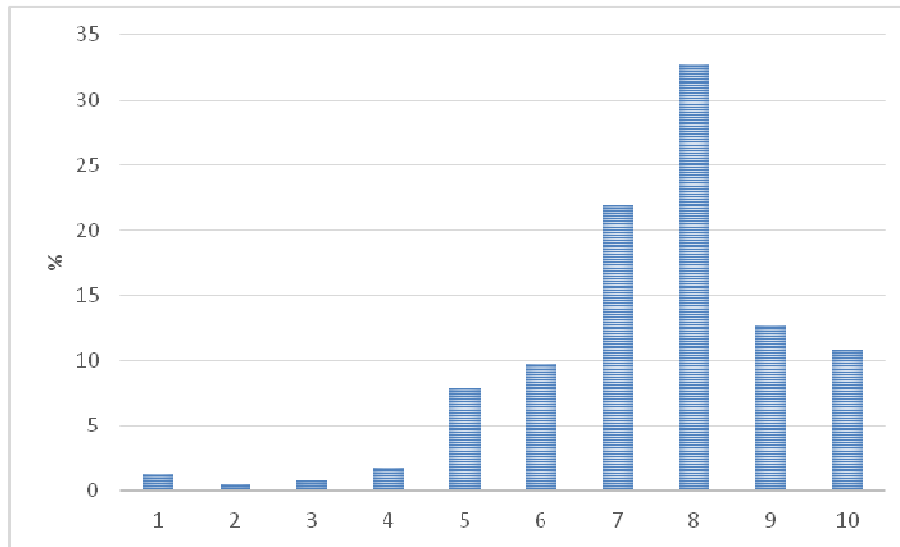
Figure 1.-answer to the question about happiness.



Source: OSIM. Survey on the use of social networks in Spain, 2011. Own elaboration

A large part of the sample answered happy (about 21%) or quite happy (more than 70%) and could be regarded as satisfied (more than one 50% presents a level 8 or higher).

Figure 2.- Satisfaction with life



Source: OSIM. Survey on the use of social networks in Spain, 2011. Own elaboration

Explanatory variables:

- Personal networks: accessibility and mobilization

The study of the accessibility and the mobilization of a network requires the adoption of a specific measuring methodology, different from the generalized methods in the study of general social capital.

Any resource embedded in a network of relationships that allows the achievement of an objective for the "owner" of this network is a constituent of the individual social capital. For example, access to someone who works within the local administration can be an advantage or privileged access to a range of resources (information, procedures, etc). The range of resources that can be embedded in a network is very large and covers from the functioning of the family to those strictly material or linked to professional activity (the loaning of money or of a particular good) or even to the intangible (information, influence, love, etc.) (Van der Gaag & Snijders, 2004, 2005).

To evaluate the extension of a network and the ability to obtain resources it is necessary to conduct a survey in which focal subjects are asked about their personal contacts in various areas. These surveys allow us to distinguish, on the one hand, the access capacity and, on the other hand, the mobilization capacity that a subject has on individuals which resources are associated with. When creating the survey, it is very important to make a proper selection of the questions in order to encompass all the resources but to avoid including redundant resources.

In this regard, previous studies have proposed several methods of measuring: *the name generator, the generator of positions and generator of resources* (Van der Gagg & Snijders, 2005, 2008).

The name generator asks questions about certain domains of the personal network such as 'Who would you ask if you needed to borrow a large amount of money?' Then the name of this person is collected. In this way, the name generator creates a contact list proposed by the focal subject for each of the resources. The problem with this method is that the data obtained from the responses of those interviewed tend to reflect especially strong ties and relationships in more narrow geographical limits, so these are oversized.

The generator of positions is limited to making a sample of positions socially useful for the purposes of the focal subject. This method asks the focal subject about the first individual that he could have access to in order to obtain a particular resource, considering additionally the type of relationship between them (family, friend or acquaintance) (Erickson, 1996). The position generator uses a person's occupation as an indicator of his/her social roles and resources, and hence of the kinds of help that he or she might be able to provide. This instrument considers these positions as good indicators of the network resources. In our research, we chose this method because it computes the effective access and mobilization and eliminates redundancies and the excessive weight that the names generator method gives to strong ties.

Recently, measures of individual social capital based on the above mentioned methods have been used in works developed in several research areas. For instance, in economics (Agarwal, Chomsisengphet & Liu, 2011; Dinh, Dufhues & Buchenrieder, 2012), sociology (Gelissen, van Oorschot & Finsveen, 2012; Muñoz-Goy, 2013); politics (Back, M. & Kestila, E., 2009) or health studies (Moore et al., 2011; Verhaeghe, & Tampubolon, 2012; Kobayasi et al., 2013)

In our case, following Lin (2001), the accessibility dimension was measured on the sample through a battery of 14 questions that allow the assessment of the subject's ability to access a particular stock of individual relationships. In this study, respondents were asked whether they know friends, relatives or acquaintances who have any of the jobs and social positions from a list of 14. In this way, the generator of positions would be computing the possibility of access to specific structural positions (see Appendix A, Table A1).

In order to measure resources that a subject would be able to mobilize effectively, that is, his or her capacity of network mobilization, we use the Resource Generator. This procedure adopts a checklist approach to inquire about the specific resources that respondents have access to through their networks. It inquires about specific domains of domestic resources such as advice on legal problems or assistance in moving. With this objective, the survey included 14 issues so as to rate the dimension of social resource mobilization (see Appendix A, Table A2).

Both the position generator and the resource generator have some limitations. They are culturally contingent, that is, the list of occupations with embedded value and the resources or favors one commonly asks friends for, tend to vary across cultures. In our case, we have chosen occupations and resources that we consider more salient in the Spanish context.

Furthermore, it is important to note that we do not seek to determine whether an individual has strong or weak ties but to quantify the capacity to mobilize resources associated with both strong and weak ties.

- Associationism

Given the link between social capital and associationism proposed by Putnam, we also explore the influence of membership in associations. Taking into account the diversity of associations and their different nature, the survey includes a question asking the respondent if he/she is a member or is involved in voluntary organizations (religious organizations, sports organizations, trade unions, political parties etc). This information is useful to subsequently analyze the interrelationships between the various types of associations.

These three sets of variables (accessibility, mobilization and association membership) constitute the fundamental basis for the construction of the empirical model whose estimate will allow us to analyze the weight of networks of strong and weak ties on the generalized trust.

- Study covariates

Given previous findings from social capital literature, along with the above mentioned proxies of individual social capital, in the empirical model we include a number of socio-demographic control variables. Specifically, covariates include gender, income, educational attainment, employment status, age, marital status, birthplace, self-reported health, satisfaction of life and length of residence at a current address

4.2.-Personal networks and subjective well-being.

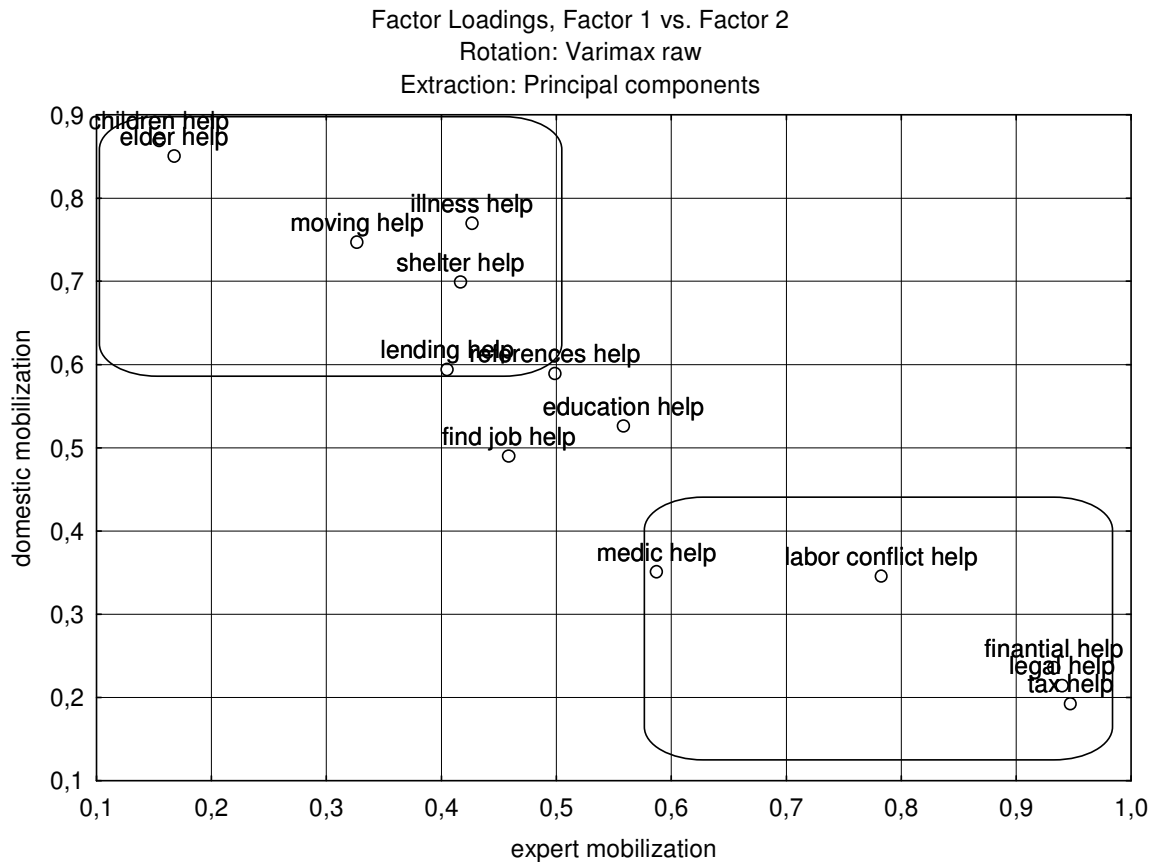
Making use of the principal component analysis (PCA) applied to accessibility and mobilization indicators defined in the previous section, it is possible to study the structure of relationships networks that make up the individual social capital. Given that these indicators are binominalized non-continuous variables, the implementation of the PCA takes as its starting point the tetrachoric correlations existing between the variables generated from the respective batteries of questions included in the survey about access to people and mobilization of resources.

The results deriving from the application of this methodology, partially confirm Lin's explanatory model, in particular the division between accessibility and mobilization. At the same time, they allow us to introduce some advances in Lin's proposals, concretely, the internal structure of each of these two dimensions of the individual social capital (graphics 1 and 2 and appendices).

Firstly, the ACP highlights the existence of a single component that reflects accessibility. Access networks constitute an individual unique endowment and are expanded in such a way that there are no *trade-offs* between them, all factorial charges have the same sign.

On the contrary, mobilization operates differently depending on the nature of the resources involved. In this regard, it is necessary to consider at least the existence of two dimensions: domestic resource mobilization and expert resource mobilization (see Figure 3).

Figure 3, Factor loadings on mobilization.



Source: Own elaboration. Survey on the use of social networks in Spain, 2011.

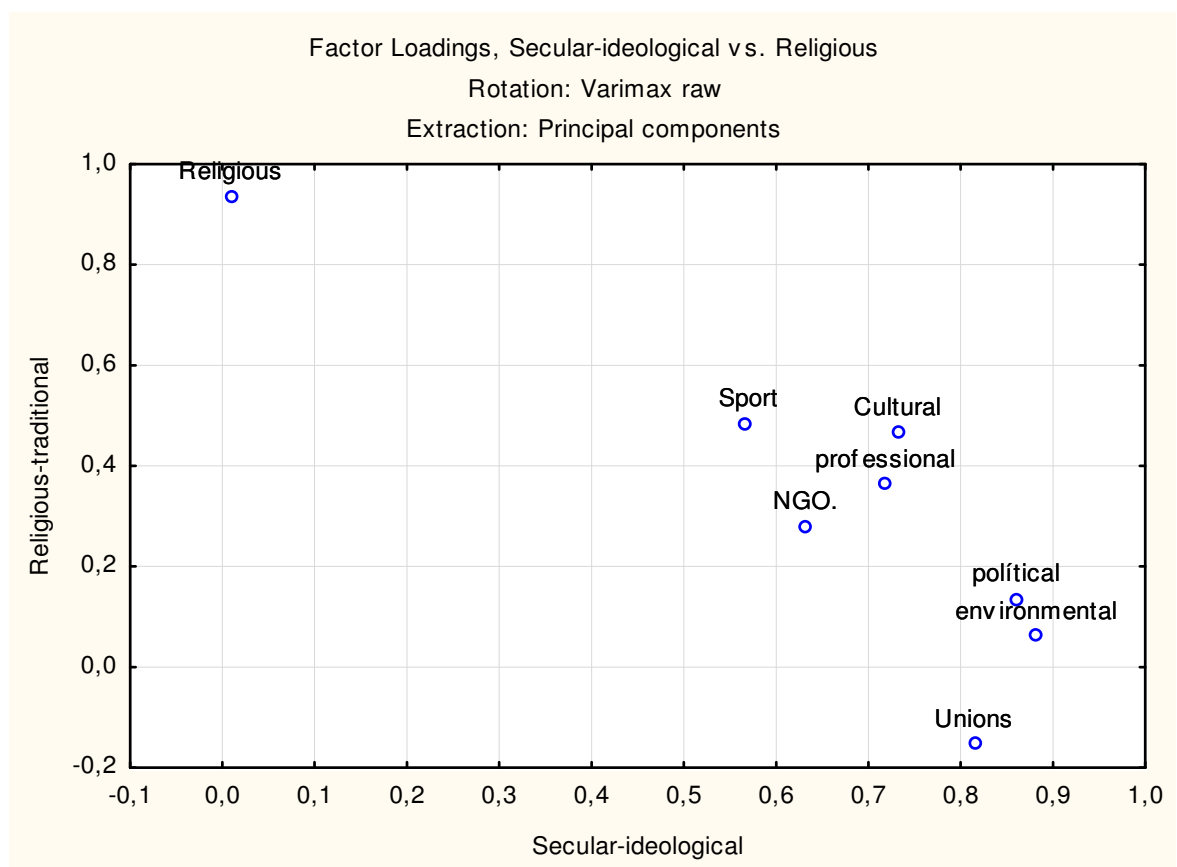
Mobilization of domestic resources refers to the possibility of obtaining resources through a network linked to the household welfare production function (help with children or the elderly, moving...). Moreover, mobilization of expert resources relates to goods and services whose attainment entails a high level of human capital and the control of complex procedures (support in fiscal, financial matters...). In addition, the resources of this second type have instrumental derivations in terms of income and status. In an intermediate position between the domestic and the expert, i.e. with equivalent loads on both factors, we find resources such as finding a job or help in educational topics. This means that obtaining this type of resources, despite having an expert character, tend to be linked to the mobilization of the networks formed by strong ties.

In sum, the variables in the two components respond to diverse needs: identity and expressive in domestic mobilization and instrumental in expert mobilization networks. These results suggest the existence of two expressions of individual social capital that can be associated (not identified) with *bonding* and *bridging* social capital

and, more specifically, with the binomial strong - weak ties. Both expressions are defined by the different nature of the resources deployed and the objectives provided by these resources (income, prestige, leisure, identity).

In addition to the above variables, social capital theory also emphasizes the importance of weak ties in the form of associations' membership (Putnam, 2000) whose impact on subjective wellbeing must be proven. In this sense, the implementation of the PCA method to the responses of the survey relating to the integration in the diverse forms of associations and the relation between the diverse memberships is collected in two associative dimensions in the Spanish context: secular-ideological associations against religious-expressive associations (see figure 4 chart 2).

Figure 4, Associations membership dimensions.



Source: Own elaboration. Survey on the use of social networks in Spain, 2011.

In the secular- ideological dimension, belonging to trade unions, environmental associations and political parties and policies in general, i.e., associations focused on the

defence of a particular interest is strongly rated. As opposed to these, integration in religious associations is expressive and is the most traditional way of associations in Spain. Sports, cultural, professional associations and NGOs would be located in an intermediate position. If we compare these results with the evidence offered in previous studies (Rodríguez et al., 2003), it is noted that this structure represents a significant change in the configuration of the associations in Spain. In the traditional model, the relevance of religious associations conditioned other associative forms. Currently, there is a predominance of cultural, sport associations, NGOs with a shift to other associative expressions which are both secular and expressive.

The results of the ACP will allow us to make an initial descriptive approximation to the linkages between the micro and macro social capital indicators. To do this we rely on Pearson correlations between individual social capital previously identified scores factors and subjective wellbeing (happiness) (table 1).

Table 1.- Correlations of individual social capital indicators.

	Accessibility	Mobilization		Associationism	
		Expert	Domestic	Secular associat.	Religious associat.
<i>Socioeconomic variables</i>					
Municipality size	0,03	,097**	-,079**	0,021	0,022
Length of residency	-,177**	-,139**	-,192**	-,131**	0,033
Work activity	,241**	,137**	,207**	,215**	-,058**
Age	-,165**	-,153**	-,304**	-,085**	,084**
Sex	,064**	,045**	,035*	,106**	-0,013
Marital status	,075**	-0,009	,057**	,079**	0,003
Number of household members	,135**	,087**	,197**	,068**	-0,024
Level studies	,368**	,296**	,148**	,247**	,050**
Income	,263**	,175**	,200**	,250**	,050*
<i>Wellbeing Indicators</i>					
Life satisfaction	,071**	,120**	,083**	,050**	,064**
Physical health	,095**	,120**	,060**	,056**	0,023
Mental health	,041*	,094**	,117**	,046**	,067**
Happiness	,071**	,088**	,157**	,058**	,049**
<i>General social capital indicators</i>					
Generalized trust	,152**	,126**	,053**	,136**	,029
Opportunistic behavior	-,104**	-,93**	-,003	-,070**	-,023
Safety in residency	,058**	,046**	,067**	0,015	0,022

Security at night	,130**	,107**	,082**	,072**	-0,002
<i>Individual social capital indicators</i>					
Expert mobilization	,484**	1	-,279**	,187**	,113**
Domestic mobilizat.	,164**	-,279**	1	,071**	,004
Secular association	,283**	,187**	,071**	1	-,155**
Religious	,168**	,113**	,004	-,155**	1
Accessibility	1	,484**	,164**	,283**	,168**

*Significant at 0.1, **Significant at the 0.05

Source: Own elaboration based on data from the survey on inequality and social capital in Spain 2012

Subjective well-being shows all the expected correlations, in particular with those variables where there is a strong endogenous relationship: perceived health, safety and trust. Focusing on indicators of relational networks, the relations are significant and positive with all of them. However, domestic networks seem to show a greater capacity to influence. Furthermore, concerning relational goods variables, greater accessibility is linked with more generalized trust and perception of security (both residential and at night). On the other hand, greater accessibility has a direct relation with two forms of associationism considered and is the basis of a greater capacity for mobilizing both domestic and expert.

The two mobilization dimensions (domestic and expert), manifest different behaviors. Expert mobilization manifests a clear relationship with the size of the municipality, i.e., it is more typical of urban environments. In addition, this variable appears completely detached from the stability of family structures (marital status), which indicates that it is a purely individual investment.

On the other hand, the expert dimension appears more closely linked to general trust than the domestic dimension. That is, confidence is associated more with bridging social capital and weak links, personal networks where individuals have extracted or could extract predominantly instrumental resources. These have no expressive character or identity but have a purely utilitarian purpose and are focused on the achievement of objectives of income or status. On the contrary, domestic networks show a stronger relation with happiness but not with life satisfaction.

With regards to the role of associations and its link with social capital indicators, the analysis of the correlations of table 1 reveals that not all forms of associations have identical effects on the generation of social capital. In particular, the relationship between religious-expressive associations with much of the socio-demographic

variables considered differs substantially from the other form of associationism. In addition, the secular-ideological associations show a very significant relationship with the macro social capital indicators. On the contrary, there is a poor relationship with generalized trust or the perception of safety and the religious-expressive. This fact can be explained in the Spanish case due to progressive reconfiguration of the associative system. These formerly predominant associative forms have gradually aged and become linked to social groups that have little geographical mobility.

4.3.-strong ties, relational goods and subjective well-being.

The previous descriptive analysis does not establish a definite causal link. A regression analysis will allow us to define the factors and determine the subjective well-being based on the components of the individual social capital structure and the remaining socio-demographic and socio-environmental variables. Thus, the subjective well-being will be carried out by strong-domestic and weak-instrumental ties networks available, as well as his or her membership to the two forms of associationism, and the influential sociodemographic variables.

Our interest lies in verifying the explanatory capacity of relational goods, more specifically, to verify the hypothesis: those individuals who consume more relational goods or who are able to solve the problems associated with their production, manifest higher levels of subjective satisfaction. Similarly, contrasting the explanatory capacity of variables linked to income, we can provide evidence about the limited substitutability between material goods linked to income and relational goods.

Empirically, the revealed subjective well-being is usually modelled as an additive mathematical expression where one is determined by socio-economic factors (X_{1it}), availability of relational goods (X_{2it}), while individual differences would be captured by the error term ε (Iglesias et al., 2013):

$$SW_i = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{1it} + \beta_2 X_{2it} + \dots + \varepsilon_{it}$$

We estimate this explanatory function through an Ordinal Logit Regression. The results of the estimation are shown in table 2. In the first model (model I, table 2) enter the total of potentially significant variables are included. The results are predictable with respect to variables such as perception of physical and mental health. In fact, it could be argued that there is endogeneity relation between them. The quadratic

character of age is also logical. However, it seems counter-intuitive that economic variables are non-significative. Individuals do not show a relation between income and subjective well-being but a very strong link with human capital (level of studies): and yet in relation to individual social capital, the variables that we could collect under the name of expressions of social capital and, in particular, relational goods are particularly relevant. Thus, income, educational level, or incorporation into the labor market are not significant and relational stability (relational goods of strong ties or *bonding*) or the perception of security (Group relational goods or *linking*) are strongly significant.

In this sense, general trust, which is interpreted as a sense of safety in the environment, or the perception that those around do not try to exploit him or her, has shown a remarkably significant influence in previous studies (Pose and von Berlepsch, 2012).

Domestic mobilization, which is expressive non-instrumental dimensions of social capital, has a relevant causal link with subjective well-being. At the same time, instrumental relations integrated mainly by weak ties or *bridging* social capital also presents significative influence. If we focus on associations only the expressive ones are significant (sports, cultural organizations and NGOs). Political, Trade Union and professional organizations are irrelevant. This result is fully consistent with the work by Pose and von Berlepsch (2012) on the negative nature of the interactions in the olsonian groups.

The first model points out the influence of variables which there is an obvious link with (health and safety perception). The limited influence of the variables of income or status and the weight of those that could be linked to the production and consumption of relational goods such as the stability of the family structure (marital status) or networks of strong ties (domestic) and expressive associations is also evident. Simultaneously, expert mobilization shows a link. In sum, the results can be interpreted in terms of capabilities. Variables that show a clear link are those that imply more personal autonomy and control of the social environment.

Table II.-Explanatory variables of happiness and life satisfaction

	Dependent: Happiness (ordered logit)			Dependent: Life satisfaction (MCO)		
	<i>Model I</i>	<i>Model II</i>	Model III	Model Ib	Model IIb	Model IIIb
Const				3.62446***	3.60231***	6.95187***
Municipality size	-0.00006			-0.0190779		
General trust	0.232114**	0.269801***		0.245386***	0.250546****	
Physical health	0.178301***	0.187052***		0.197026***	0.203217***	
Mental health	0.299108***	0.304294***		0.266366***	0.26782***	
Percived security at night	0.334924***	0.362053***	0.477258***	0.0447503		0.188918***
Labour activity	0.107416			-0.116061**	-0.100636*	
sex	-0.0771607			-0.141006**	-0.128942**	
age	-1.13932***	-0.940086***	-1.06399***	-0.4425***	-0.48916***	-0.757015***
age2	0.144314***	0.114331***	0.126044***	0.0607795***	0.0678362***	0.0973047***
nationality	0.0407132			-0.0500404		
Marital status	0.9204***	0.831188***	0.853656***	0.503333***	0.502518***	0.597807***
Number of house members	0.0404559			0.00661416		
Income	0.026307			0.0603145***	0.0531192***	0.0519482***
Level of studies	0.0384752***	0.0764019***	0.107092***	0.00121761		
Accesibility	-0.284615			-0.113526		
Domestic mobilization	0.346257**	0.227234**	0.398099***	0.319703***	0.324901***	0.476634***
Expert mobilizations	0.308533**	0.0991911	0.250258***	0.326196***	0.285681***	0.487838***
Instrumental assotiationism	0.156282	0.0812961	0.127753	0.0198827	0.0168973	-0.0162936
Expresive assotiationism	0.236345**	0.124579	0.215897**	0.0784388	0.0696798	0.150876*
cut1	-1.12747***	-0.915081***	-4.02973***			
cut2	1.58185***	1.71415***	-1.58903***			
cut3	6.05332***	6.20349***	2.4734***			
Pseud. R2 Macfadden	0.386422	0.256422	0.1525443	R2 adjust. 0.249236	0.254167	0.067803

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Log-veros.	-1672.104	-2285.031	-2473.851	F. Prob	0.00000	0.000000	0.00000
Schwarz Crit.	3515.107	4691.311	5044.782	Schwarz Crit.	8662.436	8940.250	9152.678
% predicted	72.6%	72.4%	71.7%				

*** significant at 0.1

** significant at the 0.05

*significant at the 0.01

Source: Own elaboration from OSIM. Survey networks of social capital in Spain, 2012

In the second model (model II, table 1) we have eliminated those variables that had very low significance in model I. The results of the estimation of model II reinforce the conclusions of the previous model. Again, along with variables that have a strong endogeneity, variables that could be included under the heading of relational goods linked to the strong bonds (domestic) are significant.

Finally, in the third model (model III, table 1) those variables that have an endogenous relationship with subjective well-being were eliminated (self-assessment of health, general trust and perceived security) and only the significant variables in the previous models along with those that collect the different expressions of social capital were included. In this case, these variables are highly significant. Along with age and level of studies, those variables that are especially related to the networks of strong and weak ties have a significant effect on subjective wellbeing. Thus, home networks and expressive associations, present high significance against the irrelevance of expert networks and instrumental associations. Similarly, the stability of family relations and the perception of safety of environment are significant.

Following the same process, we have also analyzed the explanatory variables of life satisfaction. In this case, we can find some differences with happiness explanatory variables. The level of studies variable is replaced by income, and variables like sex or labour activity are significant. Individual social capital variables are even more explicative but only in terms of networks, not membership. These results are consistent with the theory. Satisfaction with life implies a cognitive evaluation. Satisfaction is the perceived discrepancy between their aspirations (socially and culturally determined) and achievements (Veenhoven, 1994). In this sense, it is the psychological state resulting from the transaction between the individual, and microsocial (marital status, family, social involvement, job satisfaction, social support) and macrosocial (income, culture). Thus, both mobilizations are key points of evaluation but membership association is irrelevant.

5. Conclusions

In the present work, we have analyzed the role played by the strong and weak social ties in subjective well-being revealed by individuals. In particular, we have focused on the role carried out by relational goods. These are a dimension or components that may be implicit in all social relations, that is "the affective and expressive, non-instrumental, interpersonal relationships". Given that the main character of the human nature is social or relational, it is logical to think that happiness or unhappiness will largely depend on the quantity and quality of the relationships established with others.

The characteristics of relational goods influence individual choices: vulnerability, reciprocity, gratuity, simultaneity or the character of the local public good. Individuals tend to undervalue such goods. This, along with the tendency to undervalue the adaptation effect in material goods and the influence of cultural and social factors, provokes a systematic error of choice that could be an explanatory factor of the so-called "Easterlin's paradox".

The main conclusions that emerge from the empirical analysis carried out for the Spanish society allows us to reinforce our hypothesis. The income has a poor explanatory capacity. In this sense, the educational level is more relevant as determinant of subjective well-being. In fact, what we have described as relational goods (stability of the family, associations, safety and confidence in the environment) are strongly significant. This is the case for the domestic dimension but not so for the instrumental expressions of social capital that we have integrated into the accessibility and expert mobilization. Therefore, it is only social capital's mobilization capacity that is relevant and, in particular, the domestic-expressive dimensions. Thus, it corroborates the hypothesis that individuals who consume more relational goods or who are able to solve the problems associated with their production, show higher levels of revealed subjective satisfaction, the latter being notably unrelated to levels of income in the Spanish case.

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