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### Reply to Nielsen et al.: Social mindfulness associated with countries' environmental performance and individual environmental concern

N. J. van Doesum

R. O. Murphy

M. Gallucci

Norman P. LI

*Singapore Management University*, [normanli@smu.edu.sg](mailto:normanli@smu.edu.sg)

U. Athenstaedt

*See next page for additional authors*

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**Author**

N. J. van Doesum, R. O. Murphy, M. Gallucci, Norman P. LI, U. Athenstaedt, W. T. Au, L. Bai, R. Böhm, I. Bovina, N. R. Buchan, X. P. Chen, K. B. Dumont, J. B. Engelmann, K. Eriksson, H. Euh, S. Fiedler, J. Friesen, S. Gächter, C. Garcia, and R. González

## REPLY TO NIELSEN ET AL.: Social mindfulness is associated with countries' environmental performance and individual environmental concern

van Doesum, N. J.; Murphy, R. O.; Gallucci, M.; Aharonov-Majar, E.; Athenstaedt, U.; Au, W. T.; Bai, L.; Böhm, R.; Bovina, I.; Buchan, N. R.; Chen, X. P.; Dumont, K. B.; Engelmann, J. B.; Eriksson, K.; Euh, H.; Fiedler, S.; Friesen, J.; Gächter, S.; Garcia, C.; González, R.; Graf, S.; Growiec, K.; Guimond, S.; Hřebíčková, M.; Immer-Bernold, E.; Joireman, J.; Karagonlar, G.; Kawakami, K.; Kiyonari, T.; Kou, Y.; Kuhlman, D. M.; Kyrtis, A. A.; Lay, S.; Leonardelli, G. J.; Li, N. P.; Li, Y.; Maciejovsky, B.; Manesi, Z.; Mashuri, A.; Mok, A.; Moser, K. S.; Moták, L.; Netedu, A.; Pammi, C.; Platow, M. J.; Raczka-Winkler, K.; Reinders Folmer, C. P.; Reyna, C.; Romano, A.; Shalvi, S.; Simão, C.; Stivers, A. W.; Strimling, P.; Tzirbas, Y.; Utz, S.; van der Meij, L.; Waldzus, S.; Wang, Y.; Weber, B.; Weisel, O.; Wildschut, T.; Winter, F.; Wu, J.; Yong, J. C.; van Lange, P. A. M.

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Nielsen et al. (1) argue that Van Doesum et al. (2) need to consider three points for their interpretation of a positive association between individual-level social mindfulness (SoMi) and environmental performance (EPI) at the country level (3). The association is weaker when 1) it is controlled for GDP and 2) when the data of three countries are removed; also, 3) the data do not address the association between SoMi and individual-level environmental concern. We discuss these points in turn. First, as we noted in a previous reply (4), there is a strong association between GDP and EPI (the Pearson correlation is 0.64 for raw GDP and 0.78 for log-transformed GDP). This should not be surprising, because, as the name reflects, EPI addresses “performance” which is linked to both motivation and the ability to do so. Ability is clearly associated with a country's resources to have an impact. Thus, the observed correlation is a valid result, on average across countries, and it should not be a surprise that GDP accounts for some of the shared variance between SoMi and EPI. Furthermore, we should note that EPI also accounts for shared variance between SoMi and GDP, and we see no strong reason to suggest that GDP should be considered a more proximal predictor of SoMi than EPI. Second, our cross-national study included 31 countries (2). We agree that the sample is not very large. But leaving out the data of three countries for no special reason, other than that they are influential, is not convincing. In our view, it is good scientific practice to consider each data point as valuable and informative. Moreover, one could also arbitrarily remove three other countries and, in doing so, strengthen the association in the remaining data. Third, Nielsen et al. (1) conducted a study to complement our data by examining the association between SoMi and four indicators of environmental concern. This study yielded associations that were small in magnitude, yet three of four correlations were statistically significant. Recall that SoMi is focused on dyads and uses a choice-related methodology with less reliance on language. Methodological differences may attenuate associations. We regard Nielsen et al.'s (1) finding that an inherently dyadic measure predicts broader environmental concerns relevant to society's future as promising—and consistent with the broader idea that SoMi, as a case of kindness to another person, is connected to the presence and development of social capital. They also found associations between another dyadic measure of prosociality (social value orientation) and environmental concerns. These findings complement a recent finding that SoMi is associated with global sustainability, especially ecological footprint of consumption (5). It is important to recognize that there are myriad ingredients to building sustainable societies. Being socially mindful is likely to be one of them.

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1 To whom correspondence may be addressed. Email: n.j.van.doosum@fsw.leidenuniv.nl.

2 N.J.V.D., R.O.M., M.G., and P.A.M.V.L. contributed equally to this work.

a Social, Economic and Organisational Psychology, Institute of Psychology, Leiden University 2300 RB Leiden, The Netherlands; b Knowledge Centre for Psychology and Economic Behaviour, Leiden University 2312 HS Leiden, The Netherlands; c Department of Economics, University of Zurich 8006 Zurich, Switzerland; d Morningstar Investment Management, Chicago, IL 60602; e Faculty of Psychology, University of Milano-Bicocca 20126 Milan, Italy; f Department of Psychology, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva 8410501, Israel; g Department of Social Psychology, Institute of Psychology, University of Graz 8010 Graz, Austria; h Department of Psychology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, NT, Hong Kong, China; i Department of Applied Psychology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Fuzhou University, Fuzhou 350108, China; j Department of Psychology, University of Copenhagen 1353 Copenhagen K, Denmark; k Department of Economics, University of Copenhagen 1353 Copenhagen K, Denmark; l Copenhagen Center for Social Data Science, University of Copenhagen 1353 Copenhagen K, Denmark; mDepartment of Clinical and Legal Psychology, Moscow State University of Psychology and Education, Moscow 127051, Russia; n Sonoco International Business Department, Darla Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208; o Department of Management and Organization, Michael G. Foster School of Business, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195; p School of Social Sciences, Department of Psychology, University of South Africa 0003 Pretoria, South Africa; q Center for Research in Experimental Economics and Political Decision Making, Amsterdam School of Economics, University of Amsterdam 1001 NJ Amsterdam, The Netherlands; r Behavioral and Experimental Economics, The Tinbergen Institute 1082 MS Amsterdam, The Netherlands; s Center for Cultural Evolution, Stockholm University 114 18 Stockholm, Sweden; t Department of Psychology, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455; u Department of Strategy & Innovation, Institute of Cognition & Behavior, Vienna University of Economics and Business 1020 Vienna, Austria; v Department of Psychology, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, MB R3N 0G1, Canada; wCentre for Decision Research and Experimental Economics, School of Economics, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD, United Kingdom; x Laboratory of Social Interaction, Psychology Department, Universidad Veracruzana, Veracruz 91095, Mexico; y Escuela de Psicología, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago 7820436, Chile; z Department of Personality and Social Psychology, Institute of Psychology, Czech Academy of Sciences 602 00 Brno, The Czech Republic; aaDepartment of Social and Personality Psychology, Institute of Psychology, SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities 03-815 Warsaw, Poland; bbLaboratoire de Psychologie Sociale et Cognitive, Université Clermont Auvergne (CNRS, LAPSCO), Clermont-Ferrand F-63000, France; ccSherpany Product Department, Agilentia AG 8001 Zurich, Switzerland; € ddDepartment of Marketing and International Business, Carson College of Business, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-4730; eeDepartment of Business, School of Business, Dokuz Eylül University 35390 Izmir, Turkey; € ffDepartment of Psychology, York University, Toronto, ON M3J 1P3, Canada; ggSchool of Social Informatics, Aoyama Gakuin University, Kanagawa 252-5258, Japan; hhhInstitute of Developmental Psychology, Beijing Normal University 100875 Beijing, China; iiDepartment of Political Science and Public Administration, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens 10678 Athens, Greece; jjCentro de Medicina Mide UC, Escuela de Psicología, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile 7820436 Santiago, Chile; kkRotman School of Management, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON M5S 3E6, Canada; llDepartment of Psychology, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON M5S 3E6, Canada; mmSchool of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University, Singapore 178903; nnGraduate School of Informatics, Nagoya University, Nagoya 4648610, Japan; ooSchool of Business, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521; ppDepartment of Experimental and Applied Psychology, Institute for Brain and Behavior Amsterdam, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam 1018 HV Amsterdam, The Netherlands; qqDepartment of Psychology, University of Brawijaya, Malang 65145, Indonesia; rrDepartment of Social Sciences, University of Brawijaya, Malang 65145, Indonesia; ssDepartment of Management, City University of Hong Kong, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China; ttBusiness School, London South Bank University, London SE1 0AA, United Kingdom; uuSchool of Psychology, University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD 4072, Australia; vvCentre de Recherche en Psychologie de la Cognition, du Langage et de l'Emotion, Maison de la Recherche, Aix Marseille Université 13100 Aix-en-Provence, France; wwDepartment of Sociology and Social Work, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi 700460 Iasi, Romania; xxResearch School of Psychology, The Australian National University, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia; yyInstitute of Experimental Epileptology and Cognition Research, University of Bonn 53127 Bonn, Germany; zzDepartment of Developmental, Personality and Social Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Ghent University 9000 Ghent, Belgium; aaaCenter for Law and Behavior, Department of Jurisprudence, Amsterdam Law School, University of Amsterdam, 1001 NA Amsterdam, The Netherlands; bbbInstituto de Investigaciones Psicológicas, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba 5000 Córdoba, Argentina; cccCatólica-Lisbon School of Business and Economics, Universidade Católica Portuguesa 1649-023 Lisbon, Portugal; dddPsychology Department, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258; eeeThe Institute for Futures Studies, Stockholm 111 36, Sweden; fffSocial Media Lab, Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien 72076 Tübingen, Germany; gggDepartment of Psychology, University of Tübingen 72074 Tübingen, Germany; € hhhDepartment of Industrial Engineering, Eindhoven University of Technology, 5600 MB Eindhoven, The Netherlands; iiiCentro de Investigação e Intervenção Social, Instituto Universitário de Lisboa 1649-026, Portugal; jjjInstitute of Psychological and Cognitive Sciences, Fuzhou University, Fuzhou 350108, China; kkkColler School of Management, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel 6997801; llCenter for Research on Self and Identity, School of Psychology, University of Southampton, Southampton SO17 1BJ, United Kingdom; mmmMechanisms of Normative Change, Max Planck Institute for Research on Collective Goods 53115 Bonn, Germany; nnnKey Laboratory of Behavioral Science, Institute of Psychology, Chinese Academy of Sciences 100101 Beijing, China; oooDepartment of Psychology, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences 100049 Beijing, China; and pppSchool of Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore 639798