

3.2 Social and Emotional Health

3.2.1 Emotional wellbeing

65% of the participants are happy, satisfied, confident and in control of their lives, while 35% share this positive affect only occasionally; about 5% said that they never experience these positive feelings (Figure 3.68). In a further task a positive well-being score was generated for each student by averaging the rating score elicited by the respondents for the four statements. The mean scores ranged from 0 to 4 where 0 corresponds to a very negative affect score and 4 to a very positive affect score. The mean score for males is significantly higher than for females, suggesting more positive affect amongst male students. First year and single students tend to have slightly lower well-being scores compared to their counterparts; however these differences are not significant (Figure 3.69).

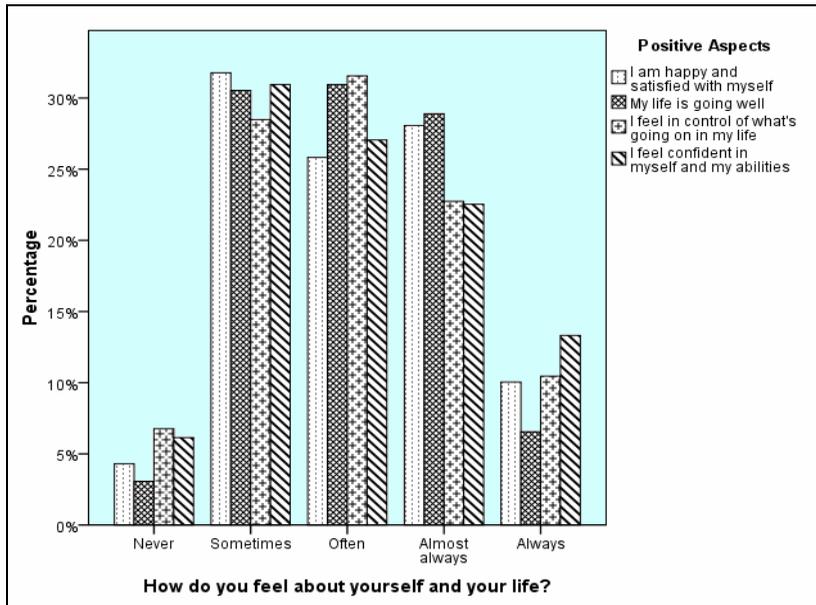


Figure 3.68: Perceived positive well-being amongst university students

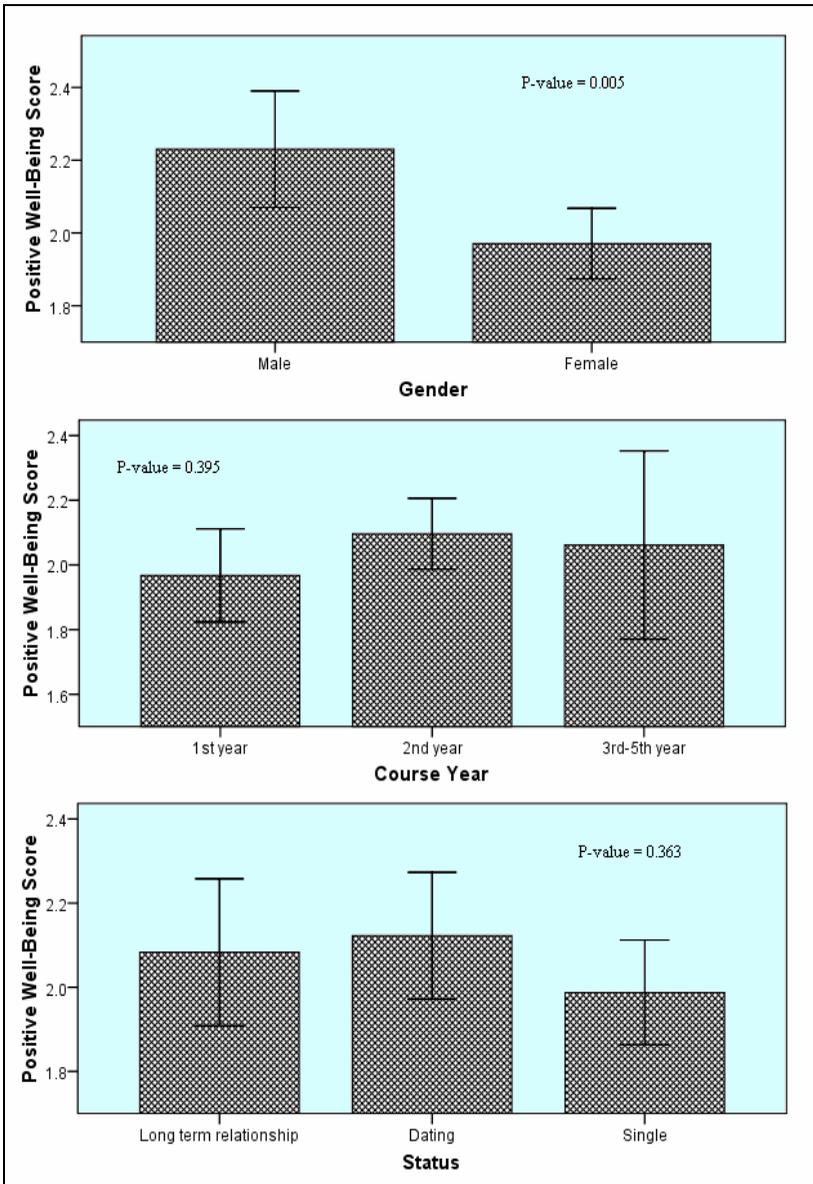


Figure 3.69: 95% confidence intervals for positive emotional well being score by gender, course year and relationship status

Table 3.4 presents a rather grim picture of more than half the students feeling frequently overwhelmed, exhausted and stressed out. Almost 20% of the students feel often left out of things, 24% often feel helpless or hopeless or so depressed that it was difficult to function. About 65% stated that they are frequently tense, stressed out or overwhelmed, and approximately 60% are often exhausted. About 3% seriously consider committing suicide and 1% attempted suicide.

Table 3.4: Perceived negative well-being amongst university students

How often do you feel this way?	Never	Sometimes	Often
Left out of things	27.9%	52.2%	19.9%
Helpless	25.5%	50.1%	24.4%
Hopeless	32.4%	43.5%	24.1%
Tense and stressed out	3.1%	31.4%	65.5%
Overwhelmed by all you had to do	6.2%	27.7%	66.1%
Exhausted (not from physical activity)	7.2%	34.3%	58.5%
Depressed and difficult to function	38.2%	37.6%	24.2%
Seriously considered suicide	85.6%	11.3%	3.1%
Attempted suicide	97.1%	1.9%	1.0%

Another mean score ranging from 0 to 4 was generated to measure the severity of the problem for negative affect. The mean scores, which are displayed in Figure 3.70, were generated by averaging the rating scores of all respondents. A mean score close to 0 indicates that the problem is trivial and a mean score close to 4 indicates that the problem is severe.

Females appear to experience more negative affect than males. Civil science students tend to feel more exhausted, stressed out and overwhelmed than other students, particularly humanities students. 3rd -5th year students and students in a long term relationship tend to feel more tense and exhausted than 1st year or single student (Figure 3.71). These negative emotional well-being scores differ significantly between males and females but were not found to differ significantly by faculty, relationship status or course year.

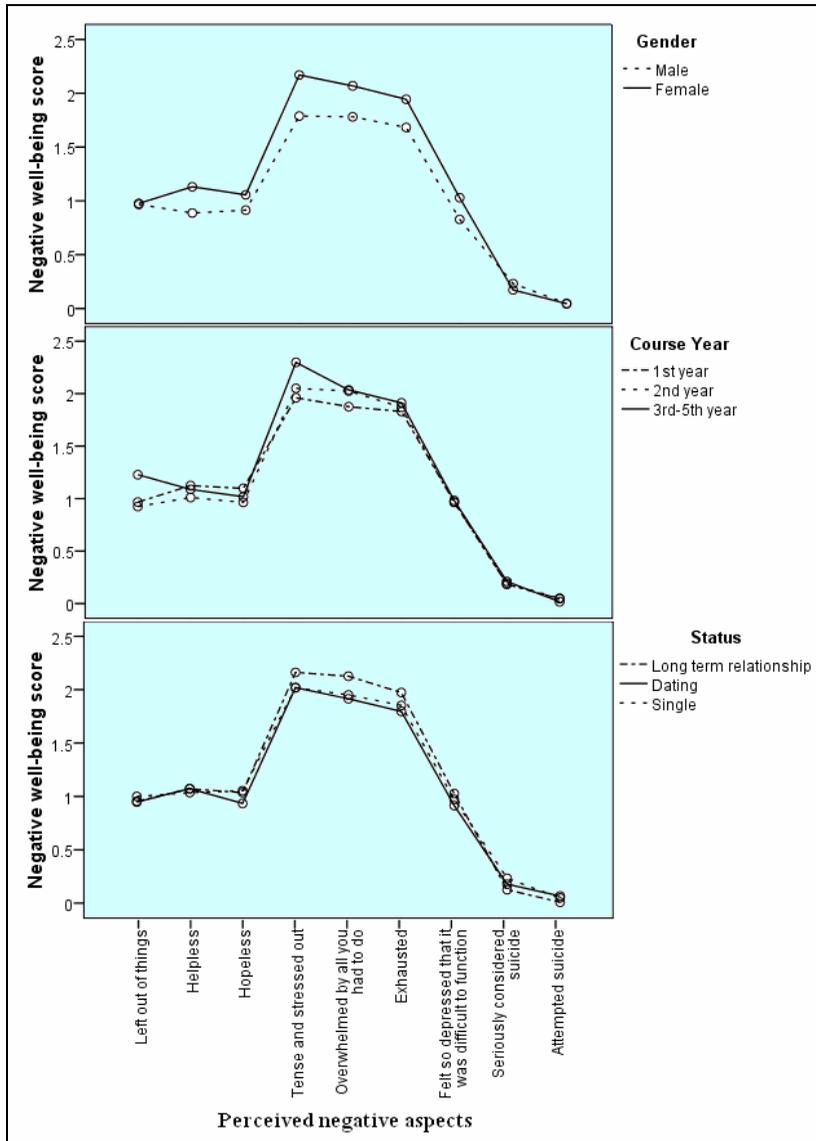


Figure 3.70: Emotional well-being mean scores by gender, course year and relationship status