

# A study of Happiness

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## Abstract

This study aims to discuss the various studies belonging to happiness and to find out the definitions, its types and its relationships with other factors. The study would benefit an individual to understand how which and why different factors at different stages or aspects affect our happiness.

## Introduction

Happiness is defined as the state of being happy. Or a kind of excitement that can be short duration and felt internally or externally.

According to Aristotle, the great philosopher of Nicomachean ethics (350 BC), happiness is the only way people want themselves and make their name, fame, and money happy. Happiness is a concept related to positive psychology and was created by Martin Seligman in 1988. Positive psychology is the study of the positive aspects of life and helps people see, feel and accept them from the bottom of their hearts. It focuses primarily on promoting individual self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-image, and social relationships. According to Seligman, a positive perspective adopts a completely different idea than a negative perspective. Therefore, the negative and cold mood activates and eliminates bad thoughts, while the positive mood moves one to an original, tolerant, constructive, generous, and relaxed sideways way of thinking. (Seligman, 2008)

Happiness depends heavily on the satisfaction of one's innate bio psychological needs that do not adapt to the situation. These needs represent the limits of human adaptability. The better these needs are met, the better we feel and the happier our lives will be. (Veenhoven et al. 1991)

According to Positive Psychology, happiness can be divided into two categories:-

- **Hedonic happiness-** It is associated with many joy and slight pain experiences/emotions and is part of the emotional and cognitive elements. It is based on subjective well-being. E.g.- Marriage, Work Satisfaction, etc.
- **Eudaimonic Happiness-**It is the type of happiness that a person experiences in achieving his or her personal goals. E.g.- Autonomy, Self-Acceptance, etc.
- **Evaluative Happiness-** It depends on how people evaluate their life. E.g.- Income, Age, Education, etc.

In Subjective well-being questions can fluctuate, and answers to simple questions like "How happy are you?" are open to very different interpretations. (Liu,2016) E.g. Satisfaction with Life Scale(Diener,1984) and Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky,1999). Scales to measure Eudaimonic Happiness are Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale(Ryff,1996) and Mental Health Continuum(Keyes,2009). And Evaluative Happiness is generally measured through surveys. Other methods include Ecological momentary assessment(EMA) which has improved

the accuracy to a great extent as it asks people to report a recent short period and examines their emotional state directly without any retrospective assessment (Krueger,2014)

However, the Oxford Happiness questionnaire is a popular scale to measure Happiness which consists of items based on a six-point Likert Scale. It contains equal no. of positive and negative items and has good reliability and validity. (Hills,2002)

### Literature review

**Kawalya et al. (2021)** Their study identified the impact of the intervening effect of psychological capital on the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness. Samples of 900 participants were collected from various hospitals in Uganda, especially nurses. The results show that a self-driven personality is a positive and important predictor of happiness in the workplace.

**Stankeviciute et al. (2021)** This paper unearths the employee's fear of job insecurity due to the increased use of robotization in their corporations in Lithuania. The statistics have been gathered in a survey of robotized furniture industries running in Lithuania. The survey discovered that job insecurity brought about impaired work satisfaction; consequently, personnel had low positive emotions related to their activities. Next, due to job insecurity, decrease ranges of emotional bonding, involvement in, and identity with their employers have been observed.

**Kollamparambil (2020)** explores the trends and determinants in happiness and happiness differences in an African country at the individual and total district municipality level using the four waves of national income dynamics data. The findings showed that despite the increase in financial gain difference, the African country has been registering diminished happiness difference and finds that income determines happiness level moreover as happiness difference. Overall, income difference has an important negative and positive impacts on happiness levels and happiness difference respectively.

**Mousa et al. (2021)** The purpose of this study is to find gender and management perspectives related to happiness. To this end, a survey was conducted on 260 participants from various hospitals. And it turns out that female physicians are more positively aware of diversity management policies/protocols than male physicians. In addition, gender has little or no effect on a doctor's perception of job satisfaction.

**Bataineh (2019)** In a study Relation of work-life balance, happiness, and employee performance, a survey was designed to test the aforementioned model based on the dataset of 289 employees which was chosen from Pharma firms in Jordan. Multiple regression method was used to examine the research hypotheses. The results showed that work-life balance and happiness both play a positive and significant affect role in employee performance.

**Ghadi et al. (2019)** examined the effect of enabling administration on happiness at work through the interceding job of occupation making. An interpreted pre-decided survey was conducted on Jordanian scholastics was done (n=325). The outcomes showed no direct significant impact on enabling authority on happiness at work. And showed that there was a significant impact for enabling authority on job making. The findings imply the direct effect of strengthening leadership on workplace well-being through the mediating role of job design.

**Isa et al. (2019)** This study describes work satisfaction and leadership qualities that affect employee satisfaction. They surveyed 500 employees of public institutions and asked open-ended questions using a questionnaire. Research has shown that employees are aware of the well-being of their workers and expect their bosses to be good listeners. It's even better if he/she is open to their thoughts and thoughts and supports them in the workplace.

**Oerlemans et al. (2018)** researched Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) by using a step-by-step approach to find out how motivational changes in work characteristics relate to employee satisfaction during daily work activities. A sample of sixty-eight workers participated in a general survey on their job characteristics and happiness throughout 741 work activities, employing a day reconstruction technique across 5 operating days. Keeping with adaptation level theory, organization results confirmed that the perceived convenience of motivating job characteristics through work activities relates completely to happiness throughout that same work activity, however only if similar motivating job characteristics at the job level are low. Additionally, a positive attitude affects this cross-level interaction. In line with the affective-reactivity hypothesis, the 3-way interaction impact showed that workers who are high in positive attitude affect, similar task-level motivation perceived convenience of motivating work characteristics that are completely related to satisfaction during a particular work activity, whether high or low.

**Walsh et al. (2018)** In a review study that is based on Longitudinal, cross-sectional, and experimental literature-based review studies. Cross-sectional literature supports that happiness is positively associated with work autonomy and satisfaction. Longitudinal studies show that people who are happy at the beginning are more likely to get a job, are happy with their work, get higher status, perform better, and are more productive at a later time. It has been. Experimental literature shows that people who are randomly exposed to positive emotions negotiate more cooperatively, aim higher, and continue to do difficult tasks longer than those who are exposed to neutral or negative emotions.

**Zaninotto(2016)** In his review paper concluded that health and happiness are positively associated, as found that people with high levels of subjective well-being at baseline showed happiness compared to those with low levels of happiness. Maybe a protective force is associated with mortality from all causes. Also, individuals who report better well-being on repeated measurements over 4 years have lower levels of Mortality than those that report greater happiness only once

**Fidrmuc et al.(2015)** In their research on the relationship between happiness and religion analyzed the data of the European Social Survey found that the more religious the person(in the aspect of belief) is happier it will be irrespective of religious membership and their is negligible difference between the two genders.

**Oerlemans et al. (2014)** Some of the studies related happiness with personality too reveal that highly extroverts were more sensitive to positive mood induction than introverts. Similarly, recent studies of emotional responsiveness show that individuals with high extraversion traits respond more positively to difficult work situations and situations such as sports activities.

**Cheung et al.(2011)** In their study based on the relationship between happiness and education used data from 32 countries in which variables such as happiness score, public health, and education expenditure of previous years were analyzed through which it was revealed that countries with a low budget on public education have low levels in happiness too.

**Graham(2008)** In his analysis-based review study on Happiness and Health from Economic Perspective collected data from various countries and found that Education, health, and happiness are positively interrelated with each other.

**Kaufman et al.(2006)** The study was on marital happiness in late ages. The sample consisted of 678 married individuals of their ages lying between 51 and 92 years old. The dependent variable was marital happiness. The results revealed that couples who retired early are happier as they have more time to indulge in their favorite and

leisure activities and non-retirement couples have a greater bad effect on the marital happiness of males than females.

**Lu(2000)** In his research on Gender and Conjugal Difference in Happiness on Subjective Well-being. It was conducted on 222 community adults, data was collected from them through questionnaires. It was found that wives are happier than their husbands or reported greater Subjective Well-being but there was no difference in mental health.

### **Objective**

This study aims to summarise the findings of the published research on the happiness

### **Methodology**

The studies selected for review are taken from databases of Scopus, Research Gate, Google Scholar, Science Direct, etc. The study taken into consideration varies from 2021 to 2000. However, most of the papers were searched through the Google Scholar database as it comprises many different popular research papers websites. In the above timeline frame, the website showed about 13,30,000 results on this topic as it has conference papers, books, reports, concept papers including research papers. So in the next step, it was filtered again considering the latest papers as much as possible of the last 10 years and second preference is given to papers from 2000-2010 and in the same manner different aspects of happiness were considered like personality, gender differences, religion, etc. So, through this methodology around 100 papers were considered.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The findings of this study tell about the associations of the happiness with different factors related to work like work satisfaction, work-life balance, etc. There are 8 studies out of 16 which are reviewed in this context. All the eight studies show relationships between various factors related to work with happiness like Personality(Kawalya et al. 2021) and Work-life balance (Bataineh 2019) are positively associated with happiness. Also, a study revealed that there is no role of gender in work satisfaction (Mousa et al. 2021).

The second part of this study reviews the relationships of happiness with other factors like education, religion, etc. Similarly, the different variables also show relationships with happiness. A study revealed that countries with low budget expenditure on happiness report low happiness too. (Cheung 2011) Also, another study revealed that happiness and health are positively associated with each other. (Graham 2008)

### **Conclusion**

In this study, I aimed to shed light on happiness and different mediating factors which are commonly associated with it to find out how they influence it.

Happiness is a popular research topic among researchers from the very beginning. Happiness plays a significant role in every part of our life whether at work or home. In work, factors like relationship with employer or co-employees, work environment, and work satisfaction all play an important part in the level of happiness of an individual. Studies confirm that an individual's happiness is very much decided by the work he/she does because most of the time a day is spent at work. Whereas happiness and other related factors have a crucial role in happiness also. Studies confirm that factors like education, religion, and health are all positively associated with happiness.

From the above review, it can be said that Happiness plays a big role in the part of an individual's life which directly or indirectly affects by many variable conditions. Also, Happiness is a universal must need of every human. So, in this context, this study becomes important too.

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