

Free pursuit of happiness essay example

[Parts of the World](#), [Asia](#)



Happiness is a term that denotes different things to different individuals.

Such would be attributed to aspects that include but not limited to the cultural background and influences, as well as the values and beliefs that are held valuable. Happiness equally becomes influenced by the individual's ways of thinking something that have a direct relation to the education background and level. However, it would be convincing to settle that happiness symbolizes the act of an individual being loyal to his/her religion, cultural views and beliefs, as well as faithfulness to country.

The American perception on the pursuit of happiness would be deduced back to the Declaration of Independence. By illustration, the Declaration was transcribed with an aim of declaring a union among all the American colonies resulting to the present-day union. There were various aspects that were mentioned in it and amongst them were that the American citizens were to have indubitable rights not forgetting to mention the Pursuit of Happiness. From that, every citizen had the right to individual choices in life since they play a role in bringing about happiness desired (Birney, 2011). Initially, that was not the case since their colonial masters had laid out how they would live. That resulted to the American Revolution that has turned out to be the major play in setting the cultural beliefs of individual happiness for the Americans.

The American perception on happiness has always been criticized in books and movies. They showcase the perception as being rooted on the wrong basis of what was happiness in life. Such sentiments have been embroidered in theories such as the American dream. A person living the American dream is considered as happy. The most influential factor for happiness is individual

success. Success in that case meant having lots of money to spend in an otherwise strained economy. The American happiness was coupled with affluence, good health and outstanding education. The country was founded upon a system that was utterly dedicated upon becoming an economic giant (Kluger, 2013). It, therefore, resulted in a culture of making money to live comfortably. The economy was rewarding, but the citizens had to work to maintain good living standards, all in an effort to become happy. The absence of wealth was often followed by individual depression and misery, even when it was not necessary. Most Americans work under a rigorous system where they have to take two jobs. The situation has led to adoption of phrases such as, get rich quickly or die trying. Because the culture of pursuing wealth has been in existence since the 1950s, it still lives. The hunger for money had left little room for values that brought true psychological happiness (Birney, 2011).

Traditional American perspective v/s the traditional Asian perspective on happiness

Different societies adopt different perspectives on happiness incorporating them into their cultures, and most importantly, their views on how it would be achieved differ. As mentioned exceeding, happiness was influenced by cultural values among others aspects and as a result, the American and Asian perspective of happiness were not comparable.

Contrary to the American perspective given precedence exceeding, the Asian perspectives on happiness are mainly based on the concepts of Confucianism since it was where the ideologies of shared social responsibility and morality are inscribed. Confucianism denotes the ethical and

philosophical system that was formulated from the teachings that necessitated people have better morals, as well as applying them on his/her day-to-day life. In terms of the pursuit of happiness, it was viewed as natural since it was endeavoring at giving others the virtue felt by self. The Asian perception of happiness was a sharp contrast from the American one. The Asian perception was based on the value and emotional history. For a long time, Asians have stayed true to their values. They practice their traditions even in the modern age. Their societal commitment has shaped their view on happiness. Asians are not centered on wealth like Americans. To Asians, whoever advances the values that exist in their society was considered as happy (Selin & Davey, 2012). Through honoring values such as honesty, goodness and holistic achievements, a person had appeased the gods and earned themselves happiness. In addition, their perception of happiness is not centered on individualism. Happiness was a communal emotion that was shared in the society. One has to achieve their purpose in the society to become happy. According to them, the differentiation between good and evil was what appeased the gods and sets someone's spirit to become happy. To them, happiness was a gift that was earned through a value system, unlike Americans who believe in hard work as a source of happiness. Asians, therefore, pursue happiness through the values depicted in their society, by doing good.

One distinctive feature among their principles on happiness would be deduced from the fact that the Americans are, beyond doubt individualistic in nature. That originates from their culture that forces them to focus more on themselves and their immediate family members only (Kluger, 2013). On

the contrary, the Asian's culture would be termed as collective in nature thanks to their culture as well. Such an aspect obliges and induces them to think collectively thinking of other's well-being as they would theirs.

References

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