

# Contemporary society: increasing happiness



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## Increasing Happiness

Happiness, in general terms, refers to the fulfillment, sense of purpose and appreciation of one's existence on earth through a personal self-evaluation of individual lives. Pertaining to variants of aspects that are enhanced by person, happiness may be described best (scientifically), as Subjective well-being (SWB) a desirable aspect for the attainment of a civil/ good society.

Unfortunately statistics had indicated that a limited number of respondents (5-10%) suggested life satisfaction. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to describe the variants of causes, which may lead to happiness through the utility of the research, and to help to establish other positive aspects, which may enhance the achievement of overall human happiness (Diener, 2009).

Accordingly Hsee et al. (2006), the best choice yields the greatest sense or amount of happiness in an individual's pursuit of SWB. As further elucidated by both Kahneman and Bentham, happiness or SWB may be defined as having the best of time-integrated continuous momentary experiences. Psychologists consider that human beings do not maximize the level of happiness because of made choices. Behavioral decision-based research provides findings, which suggest that people are unable to make choices as to what best yields superlative experiences or the greatest sense of happiness in their lives.

The above may be attributable to the fact that people fail to choose the best options among the prevailing set of choices, which will generate best experiences or even will bring happiness. Accordingly, biases exist in the proper utility of accurate predictions as pertaining to the experiential

consequences. These may be based on rapid responses to emotions, association with previous events. The conscious evaluation of previous related experiences, or savoring the future expectations are the factors that create biases.

An example of such a prediction, belief can be considered as bias, because people try to find out theories to forecast their future experiences including theories of certainty, adaptation and contrast effects. An example can be the human expectations that are usually higher than needed and variety of choices which make it harder to choose the best option. In the case of trips, the areas of interest may be highly rated i. e. Hawaii (Honolulu) and the city of Barcelona or Paris; the presence of both choices leads to a sense of dissatisfaction as the aspect of choice between the two would lead to general feelings of overall unhappiness.

On the other hand, the failure of the following predictions can be described taking into account the human aspect of overindulgence/ squandering of economic assets. Immediate pleasure is achieved, but long-term happiness is compromised, as one's future is not founded concretely. People should weigh the difference on the present choices, and aim at long-term satisfaction or fulfillment over immediate or short-term gratification (Hsee, 2006).

Lyubomirsky et al. (2005), on the other hand, are of the opinion that amongst a majority of the global populations, the pursuit of happiness is a major goal in life. Furthermore is the fact that little scientific-based research has been focused on this field which probably has resulted from hedonic

adaptation and genetic determinism, combining to bring about a sense of pessimism in the attainment of true happiness.

Thus, accordingly, to an individual, true and lasting happiness is rooted in three critical factors including happiness-relevant factors based on circumstances; practices and activities relevant towards the attainment of happiness, and genetic determination as pertaining to one's individual set point on what entails happiness. The category of activities and practices, offers the best avenues and opportunities for the achievement of happiness through dynamic processes in addition to human adaptation.

The concept of the Hedonic Treadmill pertains to the suggestion that any human gains achieved vis-a-vis setbacks which are only on a temporary basis supported by the fact that a human is an adaptive creature. Through adjustments, a person is able to live with the effects of the above circumstances (on overall happiness) diminishing with time. Lyubomirsky et al., agree with the Hedonic Treadmill and consider that such compelling ideals are countered by the presence of optimism based on attitudinal and motivational factors, the practice of a virtuous life, the passage of time in relation to the aging factor. For example, with a positive attitude in addition to patience, practice of social norms, hard work, and perseverance, a professional may rise to the top ultimately enhancing lifelong happiness (Lyubomirsky, 2005).

When proposing a study on how to increase happiness, an important issue would be the aspect of positive attitude and motivational factors. For a student, the understanding of such concepts would not only personally

enhance the well-being, but the one of the society in general. As an experiment, I would suggest the continuous practice of enhancing the positive attitude towards life through constant motivation to achieve goals and by extension, wholesome happiness.

The object of the research will be to find out whether the enhancement of positive attitudes in addition to constant motivaation can lead towards the attainment of wholesome happiness. As the above two articles allude to, happiness is a positive interaction between the different aspects of human existence, the experiment of positive attitudes strengthened by proper motivation is related to the definition.

Participants would be young boys and girls from high school, who are on their way towards either a college or university which means a step forward to achieve the goals. Participation will be on a volunteer basis because of privacy issues, which may arise. The independent variable will be the different positive attitudes enhanced by constant motivation, and the student's satisfaction/ fulfillment and hence wholesome happiness.

Participants will be asked to have a positive outlook towards not only their studies, but also social life, while those in the control group will abstain from any motivation and positive attitudes and instead will focus on the negative aspects of school life. Random assignment will be based on socio-cultural and religious factors in addition to one's social standing

The experimental group is expected to be positively focused, motivated individuals, whose attitudes will lead to the improvement of their academic and future lives. Contributions would show that a sense of optimism would

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go a long way in enhancing overall personal happiness; people concentrating more on positive aspects of life oppose to the negative experiences.

Limitations would include aspects of sincerity during experimentation, a lack of concrete information in addition to lack of literature. Ethical issues would include religious or cultural affiliations, as one's socialization models of his/her experiences, future expectations and goals. Consent would allude to the fact that, being an experimental analysis, the participants should perform the abilities, correctness and truthfulness on the high level. The debriefing form would allude to the fact that the experiment would be on a continuous basis and hence vicissitudes are expected through the phases (Diener, 2009).

In conclusion, the pursuit of happiness consists from a number of factors. Moreover, it is the constant strive by man, towards the attainment of wholesome happiness in a dynamic environment. Biases and other pessimistic factors may prevent the fulfillment as expectations often supersede the outcomes. The suggested experiment is based on proper motivation interacting with positive attitudes, would aid in further analyzing the different aspects of happiness. Since the feeling of happiness is a universally shared trait, the further high-quality studies, experiments and research should be conducted on a continuous basis.