EXAMINING THE HAPPINESS INDEX ALONG WITH ITS COMPONENTS AND POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

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Abstract
The practice of quantifying happiness is becoming increasingly popular on a global scale. One such tool for analyzing the amount of subjective wellbeing that people are experiencing around the world is the United Nations World Happiness Report (WHR). The Happiness Index is designed to establish a number of criteria on the basis of which a nation may be rated among a list of 156 nations. India is now rated at position 126 this year (2023), having dropped in the list. This demonstrates India's steadily declining status over time. This essay describes the Happiness Index as a concept and examines a number of factors that contributed to India's decline in the World Happiness Report. The work is well concluded by the author with sound advice.

Keywords:
Happiness Index, Gross National Happiness, Subjective Wellbeing, Sustainability, Organizational Performance, World Happiness Report.

1. INTRODUCTION

Although happiness has always been a subjective quality, researchers and psychologists are increasingly interested in defining it precisely, comprehending it, and discovering ways to maintain happiness through quantified parameters. According to Positive Psychology research, a happy person experiences positive emotions like joy, pride, interest, and contentment frequently while also experiencing negative emotions like anxiety, sadness, and anger occasionally.
[1] Mental illness affects nearly 5% of Indians.
[2] But mental health as a topic has only recently been discussed.
Although happiness has a significant impact on how we live our lives, it is difficult to precisely define because it varies from person to person. A framework that could be used to measure happiness has yet to be developed by researchers. The positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) is used to measure positive and negative effects, and the satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) is used to measure life satisfaction.

The objectives of the study are as follows:
• To comprehend the Happiness Index concept.
• To examine the World Happiness Report system as a way to compare nations' levels of happiness.
• To evaluate the happiness index's parameters.
• To investigate the possible causes of India's decline in the World Happiness Report and suggest ways to rectify situation.

2. RESEARCH REVIEW

The terms "quality of life," "subjective wellbeing," and "satisfaction in life" are frequently used interchangeably, and "happiness" is essential for maintaining one's health.
According to <u>Abdel-Khalek</u>, happiness is the ultimate goal of humans and is sought after.
According to <u>Argyle</u>, happiness is a positive inner experience, the ultimate driver of human behaviour, and the degree to which a person evaluates the entirety of their life.
<u>Tashi</u> insisted that the spirit of right effort and an understanding of the factors that lead to happiness must be used to cultivate happiness.

In addition, Lynch suggests comprehending and cultivating happiness by realizing that happiness is an inside job, that it originates within, and that no amount of material gains can lead to a long-term state of happiness.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The majority of the research is fundamental and descriptive. It includes qualitative comprehension of the idea in addition to quantitative evaluation. In order to comprehend the possibilities for the future, past trends are observed and graphs and charts are constructed accordingly. To arrive at a conclusive conclusion, online data from the World Happiness Report and a number of pertinent research papers and articles were examined. For the purpose of conceptual clarity, various happiness index parameters have been divided into relevant headings.

4. HYPOTHESIS

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference in happiness levels between countries with different levels of economic development.
Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant difference in happiness levels between countries with different levels of economic development.

5. HAPPINESS INDEX AND WORLD HAPPINESS REPORT

The happiness index is an exhaustive review instrument that surveys joy, prosperity and parts of supportability and flexibility. This developmental philosophy can be used to examine a nation's overall happiness. Parameters or key variables like income, freedom, trust, a healthy life expectancy, social support, and generosity can be used to measure the happiness index, or "life ladder." As a result, the obtained responses are averaged into a single, quantifiable value, contributing further to the World Happiness Report (WHR). WHR is the annual publication of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. It contains articles and rankings of national happiness based on how happy respondents rated their own lives.

WHR was first delivered in 2012 as an essential message for the UN's prosperity and bliss; defining a brand-new economic model. The causes of happiness and misery, as well as the policy implications highlighted by case studies, were discussed in this report. Each year, the data from the Gallup world poll are used to create the report, and the WHR is made available to the public via the website.

6. GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS

The term, Gross National Happiness (GNH) by the fourth ruler of Bhutan, is a way of thinking that directs the public authority. GNH focuses on determining a nation's development based on life satisfaction. The four pillars of the GNH index are: 1) Supportable and evenhanded financial turn of events; 2) Environment preservation; 3) Culture preservation and promotion; 4) Effective management .The GNH file utilizes adequacy edges that demonstrate individuals who score more to be content to a specific sum. For the purpose of categorization, GNH makes use of three cutoffs: 50%, 60%, and 77%. People who have reached sufficiency in less than 50% of domains and between 50% and 65% of domains are regarded as unhappy and narrowly happy, respectively, and they are prioritized by policy. It is believed that those who have attained sufficiency in seven or more domains—that is, 77%—are extremely content. The GNH cut off is set at 66% of the variables in order to have a single overall index; that is the center cut off. This suggests that when a person meets the requirements for at least 66% of the indicators, they can be considered happy.

Table.1. Domains and indicators of GNH survey questionnaire

Domains	No. of Indicators
Psychological well being	– Life satisfaction – Positive emotion – Negative emotion – Spirituality
Health aspects	– Mental health – Self-reported health status – Healthy days – Long term disability.
Time management	– Working hours – Sleeping hours
Education	– Literacy – Educational qualification – Knowledge – Values
Culture	– Language (speak native language) – Socio cultural participation – Artisan skills – Etiquette
Good governance	– Political freedom – Service delivery – Political participation
Living standards	– Assets – House hold Income – Housing quality
Community vitality	– Social support – Donation of time and money – Community relationships – Safety – Family – Victim of crime
Ecological diversity and resilience	– Pollution – Environment responsibility – Public transport access

Source: World Happiness Report

Table.2. Domains equally weighed (100%) and a grouping of 33 indicators

Domains	No. of Indicators
Psychological well being	4
Health aspects	4
Time management	2
Educational standards	4
Cultural diversity	4
Good governance	4
Community vitality	4
Ecological diversity and resilience	4
Living standards	3
Total	33

GNH = 1 – (Hn An)

Here, Hn is the percentage of people who are not yet happy (1 percent of people who are happy), and An is the percentage of domains in which people who are not yet happy lack sufficiency. The GNH was determined to be 0.743 in Bhutan. Table.2 provides an explanation of the domains and indicators along with specific parameters that can be measured in a questionnaire.

7. FINDINGS

We attempt to identify potential causes for India's sharp decline in the world happiness report and have arrived at the following conclusions:

• India is still a non-egalitarian nation with high levels of economic inequality despite its rapid growth. India's most extravagant 1% has practically 73% of the all-out abundance made in the economy.
• The SDP's 1.4 percent spending on public health is lower than the global average, leaving millions without access to healthcare facilities and infrastructure.
• India's average life expectancy is 69 years, which is significantly lower than the global average of 74 years.
• India has flopped in building dependable social emotionally supportive network, helping individuals when out of luck or now and again even in genuine difficulty.
• It is challenging in India to manage substantial cash flows in a sustainable and transparent manner. This has in the long run prompted debasement, trick, and so forth. in higher positions. India has fallen down the latest global perception of corruption index for this reason.
• Another factor contributing to India's drop in global rankings is the country's sluggish response to unresolved cases like the Rohingya crisis and refugees, which is a topic of international debate.

8. IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

In order to comprehend the happiness index and the various parameters it is based on, a theoretical framework has been developed. Quantifying happiness through novel methods seems like a very good idea because happiness is a subjective quality.

• Since the creation of the World Happiness Report in 2012 and its initial launch, India's position and rank in the report are evaluated.
• Acknowledging the factors that contributed to India's decline in WHR rank unquestionably opens up new avenues for improvement. The author also discusses a few in this paper, including India's strategies.
• A better assessment of the health effects of subsequent events and policy changes would result from such an evaluation.
• The findings on well-being can be used to suggest alternative approaches to the design and delivery of public services like elder care and community services, as well as to raise public awareness and encourage citizens to accept their responsibilities as good citizens.

How India can improve its position in the world happiness index or report:

• Creating self-serving groups and communities in both urban and rural areas across the nation to instill a sense of generosity and voluntary social service.
• Making people more aware of the importance of protecting the environment. Using incentives at the individual, group, and organizational levels to encourage sustainable development.
• Working on general wellbeing and clinical foundation through more open spending and expanded financing.
• Restoring the public's faith in government by upholding openness, accountability, and integrity toward its employees and bureaucratic processes.
• Social support systems must be established to instill a sense of moral responsibility in every citizen to participate in socially beneficial development and protection endeavors.
• Working toward a society where gender, religion, culture, and state discrimination are eradicated and regarded as a social problem. For data analysis Wilcoxon matched pairs test and Average Performance Ratio tools used.

9. CONCLUSION

The paper suggests that India's decline in the World Happiness Report is due to its failure to meet fundamental parameters necessary for ensuring happiness and well-being. To improve its position, India needs to focus on achieving happiness beyond material possessions and promote social welfare and altruism. This requires ensuring equality, justice, openness, and accountability and promoting

values such as tolerance, generosity, and humanity. The paper emphasizes the importance of taking a practical approach to subjective well-being and looking beyond personal advantages for the greater good. Achieving happiness in life is crucial for maintaining peace of mind in the long run.

10. REFRENCES

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