

Research to the Influential Factors of Happiness under the Background of Multicultural Culture

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Abstract. For a long time, “the higher the income level is, the higher the happiness index is”, this discourse cognition has been long dominating our thinking mode in the discourse of local governance. This perception, which economists call as "paradox of happiness", is challenged by the diversity of happiness studies. From the conclusion of the study, the influential factors of happiness come from many aspects. In some situations, the influence of some factors on happiness is closely related to the mainstream discourse and the focus of the society. In order to determine the influential factors of happiness, especially in the context of cross-culture, it is necessary to test and revise the scientific nature and applicability of happiness.

Introduction

Happiness is the eternal topic of human life, but the upsurge of the study on happiness began in the 1950s. The research on the sense of happiness has gone through several stages: the clarification of the concept and the judgment of the influential factors, the construction of the theory, the demonstration of the measurement and the development of the intervention. Throughout the study of happiness at home and abroad literature in the past five years, happiness is still a topic of interest to scholars. The current research on happiness is mainly manifested in: over half of the literature studied the influential factors of the happiness; the majority of the positive analyses; research has been extended to many fields; research on the influential factors of happiness is always the focus of the scholars. Positive analysis is in the majority. Much importance is attached to the constructing and examining the research model. Based on the relevant literature, the paper summarizes the related factors during the period of happiness research. Also, the paper estimates the involved cultural background and the commonly used rhetoric orientation judging from the analysis of the influential factors. The impact of public policy on individual happiness is a new direction in recent years. The study has been extended to a wide range of disciplines from the adopted factors.

The Multidimensional Exploration for the Influential Factors

Research on the Relationship between Income and Happiness

The terms including absolute income, relative income, economic fairness, freedom, human rights, social capital and population density, all can explain the subjective well-being in developing countries and the difference of subjective well-being between developing countries and developed countries. [1] Effect of the income on happiness has always been a unable and inescapable topic for scholars. The judgment that the income level will affect happiness has become an indisputable fact of happiness: the absence of basic needs supported by the income will lead to lower well-being; monetary income has an effect on enhancing subjective well-being. At the same time, the increasing of individual income does not increase the sense of happiness, which economists call the "paradox of happiness". Compared with absolute income, relative income and relative deprivation play a decisive role in subjective well-being[2]. What kind of income level will bring the increment of happiness level? How should we judge the relationship between income and happiness? The answers to these two questions expand the visual field of the relationship between income and happiness. The satisfaction of basic needs can substantially increase the individual's sense of happiness, as compared with the needs of the subsequent level. This further shows that there is a

positive correlation between income and happiness at a certain income level[3]. However, some scholars are still skeptical, even thinking that the relationship between income and happiness is weaker than people's imagination, and the actual field and inducing factors will influence the judgment of the relationship between income and happiness. Only by having a reasonable understanding of the background factors of the research can correctly analyze the relationship between income and happiness.

Scholars have found that the relationship between income and happiness is very complicated. The income's increasing indeed can bring much happiness, but the effect of income on happiness keeps the law of diminishing marginal utility[4]; moreover, the main factors of economic income is not from happiness. Life satisfaction, the spirit of optimism, interpersonal relationship between family members also have a positive impact on the happiness. The degree of influence of income on happiness is variable because of the different economic conditions: the correlation between economic status and subjective well-being in the developing countries is higher than that in developed countries; the low-income samples show that in developing countries there is the strongest correlation between economic status and subjective well-being, while the high-income sample shows the weakest correlation. The higher the education level is, the lower the correlation between economic status and subjective well-being is, and vice versa. At the present stage of China, there is a positive correlation between income and the well-being of urban residents, and the degree of regional affluence will have an impact on the relationship between the two. Happiness level of the high income groups is significantly higher than which of the low income groups; in a certain period of time, the happiness index does not grow with the growth of national income; area affluence and happiness level are not related. [5]

The Influence of Occupational Factors on Happiness

As for occupation factors, including such as the complexity of the work, work flexibility, organizational identity, matching degree between individual and environment, job satisfaction, psychological capital. Studies on occupation happiness of domestic scholars mainly focus on the happiness analysis of occupational staff, whose are closely related with the public interests including teachers, doctors and police officers, civil servants. For the happiness of teachers' occupation, two aspects should concretely analyzed : one is to study those who have different education levels, which focuses on the study of primary and middle school teachers' and college teachers' happiness; the two is to study the relationship between the related factors and teachers' occupation happiness. They mainly discuss the relationship between teachers' happiness and social support, job burnout, evaluation system and teaching business development. Some scholars reflect on teachers' occupational happiness, and put forward the countermeasures of cultivating competency and reflective force, enhancing self-efficacy, strengthening the research force "[6].

The Influence of Education on Happiness

Because education often plays an important role in people's social mobility from low to high, it has a direct effect on people's sense of achievement. Domestic research on education and happiness can be described as diverse and luxuriant. In terms of the impact of education on happiness, a large number of scholars focus on the effectiveness of education from the perspective of happiness. There exists a relationship between learning and happiness of the excellent students, the happiness of teaching is mainly influenced by the effectiveness and learning together[7]. The study on the relationship between academic achievements and happiness can provide basis for improving students' learning motivation and potential. The effectiveness of teaching and encouraging students to participate in learning can promote the improvement of teaching effect. At the same time, it is the best strategy to build up the sense of happiness of college students by accepting the negative emotions of students and trying to guide positive emotions. The degree of participation in the school will affect the performance of learning, self evaluation of health, life satisfaction and subjective well-being[8]. The researchers also studied the relation between education and the happiness of the different levels including primary school, middle school and college, research content mainly involves: (1) happiness education; (2) the influential factors such as personality

traits, social support, social behavior, self-state including self-worth and self-construct, interpersonal relationship; some scholars in China have the study on the happiness of the special groups of students, such as the deaf students, only-child college students, college students, Uyghur students and those who have left-behind experience.

No matter what kind of perspective is, it is necessary to clarify the relationship between educational equity and happiness. This relationship may need to be bonded from the theoretical point, but also need to focus on the practice of the two educational activities in terms of empirical study. In the process of education, it is necessary for the students to experience all levels of happiness and promote the formation of happiness.

The Study of Happiness in Other Specific Areas of Life

In addition to the above, there are a number of studies related to consumption, literature, religion, marriage and family and medical aspects. Some scholars have pointed out that consumption can enhance happiness, and women's consumption is not for happy but the relationship between consumption and others[9]. Through the analysis of the influence of American Protestants on the life and religious belief, we can see that happiness can be enhanced by frequent participation in religious activities[10]. One study in China has also verified that religious beliefs play a positive role in the mental health and subjective well-being of college Students in ethnic minority.[11] The study about marriage and family found that married couples show the happiness of marriage is closely related to communication, education level, sex, living conditions, health, family size and religious belief and the happiness of marriage. The factors that influence the happiness of marriage include personal characteristics, family factors, social development factors and so on. The research on the difference between the average happiness of migrant workers and ordinary family, suggests that compared with rural families, the average happiness level of the family of migrant workers is relatively low (except high-income families)[12]. In terms of the relationship between health and happiness, happiness can help prolong the life span of healthy people, although happiness does not cure the disease, it can help them to fight disease. Therefore, we can improve people's happiness, enhance the quality of life and improve the quality of livable through public health policy. Therefore, there is a certain relationship between happiness and consumer activities, religious activities, marriage and family life, medical health.

Multivariate Analysis of Influential Factors of Happiness

There are many factors affecting happiness, and it is a trend to analyze the correlation of happiness from multiple factors. The foreign studies mainly concerns the internal factors of happiness. A study has built the five-structure factor (control and self-realization, life satisfaction, energy, social interests and social happiness) judged from the sample analysis of the questionnaires of Oxford on 782 Italy teenagers by structural equation model to measure the dimension of the positive psychological function. These dimensions constitute the potential structure of the overall psychological happiness, and verify the applicability of the Oxford happiness questionnaire applied in Italy study[13]. In order to study the relationship between life satisfaction and subjective well-being, emotional well-being was be measured as intermediary variables. Through multiple regression analysis, it showed that the occupational achievement, social contact, self-esteem are closely related with the physical and mental health[14]. The research on the influential factors of happiness is not only concerned with the internal effects of individual, but also with the external social influence. The internal factors mainly involve individual self-efficacy, personality, psychological capital, health status, age; social impact of external factors on the scholars mainly focus on the network, social cohesion, social status, marriage, housing, social policy and so on. Among them, work, life, income distribution and social security are the four main factors affecting the well-being. Economic income, housing property rights, interpersonal communication, the differentiation between rich and poor, democratic participation, government services, social security, conflicts and disputes have an important impact on happiness of the residents. Multivariate analysis further proves that the factors affecting happiness are diverse and happiness is formed by the effect of multiple factors.

The Comparative Study of Happiness under the Cross- Cultural Background

Because people's happiness is often influenced by many cultural factors, the comparative study of happiness in cross-cultural context is a new research perspective in this field in recent years. The controversy focus of the cultural interpretation of happiness lies in the universality and particularity of culture. A cross-cultural study of happiness illustrates the difference between Chinese and western happiness. According to the existing literature, the researches on the cross-cultural happiness of foreign scholars are relatively large and the research results are very rich. The researches of domestic scholars mainly focus on the comparative study over different regions in China.

According to the studies of foreign scholars, the model analysis regarding the economic and culture as variably based on data in 1990 from 63 countries, shows that the happiness level in the former socialist countries is low, while the happiness level in Latin American countries is much higher than expected, which indicates that the happiness level significantly is influenced by the cultural factors and the dummy variable in the two geographical different countries[15]. Another self-reported research studied 100 thousand samples in the 82 countries, which shows that developing the interpersonal relationship has a positive influence on happiness[16]. According to the German economic and social statistical data, statistical data of American family, the data analysis of Australian family, income and labor force status, a study concluded that obesity has a negative effect on subjective well-being[17]. An online survey from 24836 adults of 27 countries measured happiness and life satisfaction in terms of expectations, practices, and intentions in three ways. The results showed that three orientations could predict life satisfaction[18]. A research studied 666 samples from Australia, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and South Africa analyzed the different aspects of happiness and realization. Why do some personality traits affect life satisfaction more than others? An online survey of 12439 adults in the United States and 445 adults in Switzerland analyzed the relationship between personality advantages, the orientation of happiness (participation, happiness and meaningfulness) together with life satisfaction. All the samples show that the personality is closely related to the life satisfaction and the sense of happiness, and it is possible to create a complete life under the personality advantages[19]. Life satisfaction showed different characteristics in different aspects of life and the various historical period. Individual factors such as economic and the success rate of marriage, are closely related to the subjective well-being. From the above literature, the western scholars still tend to study the happiness under the different background, of course, which produce the problem: can the happiness research in different countries be used to replace the cross-cultural research? The cross-cultural study of subjective well-being involves the comparison between different countries, but the state is not equal to culture.

For the study of domestic scholars, the study of cross-cultural happiness is focused on the comparison among different ethnic groups and between urban and rural areas. The main reason is that China is a multi-ethnic country with the typical urban-rural dual social structure. Ethnic differences, the institutional and non-institutional differences between urban and rural areas may reflect variety in the level of happiness in a certain extent. Junhua Zhang uses the three index: cognitive (life satisfaction), emotion (emotional experience) and integrated (SWB) to analyze 60 articles about the comparison of happiness between urban and rural areas in domestic. There are significant differences between urban and rural areas in the cognitive index and comprehensive index, and the index of urban is higher than rural areas, which excluded the publication bias with stability; groups also have significant difference and the maximum difference lies in the elderly group, the minimum is in other groups. But there is no significant difference of emotional index between urban and rural areas.[20] In the survey of money attitudes and happiness project, it has studied 377 college students from China and Japan and verified that in the eastern culture, those who owns money is happier than those who spends money.[21] As for the national differences in happiness, it has also been proved in many studies. In the view of different cultures, individual cultural orientation is an important factor of subjective well-being. Based on these findings, the culture is an important factor affecting the well-being. The following cross-cultural research will

need to break through the problems: how to effectively measure the relationship between cultural differences and well-being and to ensure the coincidence the conclusion of the study with practical experience.

To conclude, different scholars adopts the different discourse system in the analysis of the influential factors of happiness. Of course, no matter what discourse system it is, the scholars are not still separating the fact—linking theory with practice, emphasizes the adaptability of different social development theory in the various field. To explore the relationship of multiple factors is the essential choice of the scholars' research on a sense of happiness; the researches about the influential factors are beyond the framework of key elements such as the internal structure of income, happiness. They began to shift towards a more important concept in the various field. It can be seen that the sense of happiness has become a fashionable discourse system. In the process of future research, it will promote the further development of the field of happiness research. The different characteristics of the influential factors under different cultural backgrounds will be the problem to have an adaptive development. How to combine the abstract happiness with the specific experience of happiness is an undoubtedly significant issue need clarifying to judge the influential factors of happiness.

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