Happiness Correlates of Personality among College Students

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Abstract:
The present study aims at finding out the relation between happiness and Personality (HEXACO personality factors) among college going students. The sample comprised of 954 (356 males and 598 females) respondents from various colleges in Pune city. Tools administered were happiness scale developed by Uichol Kim and HEXACO PI R (2000) by Ashton and Lee. Data were analyzed using Pearson's product moment correlation; t test was used to find out gender differences on happiness and personality. Regression was calculated to find out the relative contribution of personality on happiness. Obtained results showed that happiness was positively correlated with extraversion while honesty was negatively correlated. Results of the t-test showed males scored higher than females on honesty, conscientiousness and openness to experience, while females score higher than males on emotionality and happiness. Commerce students scored more on happiness compared to arts students. Results were discussed with the help of review of literature and theoretical foundations. Implications in terms of designing the intervention program for the students to increase the happiness in relation with personality have been discussed.

Key words: Happiness, Hexaco, personality

1. Introduction

"What is the secret of his/her happiness?!!" all of us face this question. As social beings, we are always interested in personality of those whom we meet and curious to know the secret of happiness in this stressful and fast moving world. Every individual is interested in leading a happy and meaningful life.

Twenty-five years ago, Easterlin (1974) posed an important question, "Will raising the Incomes of all increase the happiness of all?" Most of the citizens and economists will say that 'Yes' it is money that makes people feel happy. But according to the theories of relative preference, money does not bring happiness (Duesenburry 1949). On the contrary, it makes it difficult or impossible to increase the happiness of all through economic growth.

According to absolute theories greater income can fill more needs (Veenhoven 1991) so that increasing the income of all will raise the happiness of all. But studies have shown that micro-level correlations between personal income and individual happiness appear to be greatest in poor nations and almost negligible in several rich nations (Veenhoven 1991). Recently, data became available about more nations and longer periods. The initial analyses of this data have yielded mixed results. Oswald (1997) and Hagerty (2000) found small effects of national income on happiness. In contrast, Easterlin (1995), Diener and Oishi (2000) could not detect any effect. Easterlin (1995) concluded again, "Raising the incomes of all will NOT increase the happiness of all". According to Diener and Oishi (2000) and Galbraith (1984) increased public expenditures (parks, roads, and hospitals) will most efficiently increase average happiness. Veenhoven (2000) did not observe any positive relation between investment in some social security and happiness. Alternatively, Scitovsky (1992) and Lane (2000) propose that education and leisure time with friends and family will most efficiently increase individual happiness. Review of literature has shown that there are very few studies available to measure happiness among college going youth particularly in the Indian context using Easterlin's model.

Therefore the present research is trying to throw light in the widely spread area of personality and happiness and elaborate if the findings can help educational field to develop personality development program enhancing happiness.

Personality is widely researched topic even in the Indian context. But there are no studies that have studied personality among college going students using Hexaco-PI-R and also it is not extensively studied in relation to happiness. As a result of which the present study tries to find out happiness correlates of personality. There are almost as many definitions of personality as there are authors (Pervin, 1990). In the present research the HEXACO model of personality is used to analyze personality.

In a study conducted on the Muslim population, to find out the relationship between religiousness, subjective well being (SWB) and personality using HEXACO model of personality it was found that extraversion and honesty-humility were strongly correlated with SWEB followed by religiosity (Naser Agjababaei, 2014). .

In a study conducted by Noftle, et al., (2007) on relation between Big Five personality traits and academic outcomes (in terms of SAT and Grade Point Average) it was found that openness was the strongest predictor of SAT verbal scores, and Conscientiousness was the strongest predictor of both high school and college GPA.

Oerlemans and Arnold Bakker (2014) conducted a day reconstruction study to find why extraverts are happier. The momentary happiness on the part of extravert is explained with the help of affective-reactivity hypothesis and person by situation model

One of the most applicable tools to describe personality is HEXACO model, which has its roots in the lexical approach focusing on 12 languages. After a lot of research Ashton and Lee (2004) designed the tool for measurement of personality which included a major dimension of Honesty-humility that was omitted by previous models of personality. Paramount studies tried to find that how personality impacts on happiness. Hexaco model of personality which is based on lexical investigation is composed of six dimensions. Five of which are conceptually similar to those of the Big Five (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotionality, and Openness to Experience). The sixth factor is labeled Honesty-Humility, and is defined by characteristics such as modesty, fairness, sincerity, and lack of greed (Lee & Ashton, 2004). Studies conducted in German (Angleitner & Ostendorf, 1989), Dutch (De Raad, 1992), Korean (Hahn, Lee, & Ashton, 1999), and French (Boies, Lee, Ashton, Pascal, & Nicol, 2001) have all noted the existence of a sixth factor of personality in addition to the conventional five—one that touches upon sincerity and modesty. Whereas, studies carried out in Hungarian and Italian have confirmed a five-factor solution of human personality structure, but have defined the fifth factor as reflecting integrity and trustworthiness rather than the conventional intellect/imagination (e.g., De Raad & Szirmak, 1994; Di Blas & Forzi, 1998). Therefore, considering the importance of Honesty -Humility at work place, including in the college setting, an attempt was made in the present study to measure students' personality using Hexaco scale.

2. Happiness

The meaning of happiness has changed over time and its translation to other languages is a complicated problem. Since 16 centuries ago, in previous registered samples in the Oxford English dictionary, happiness is meant chance and success and desired feelings. In Webster encyclopedia, happiness is defined as: "happiness is a good chance tool fortunate, enjoy, satisfaction, compatibility, suitability and cheerfulness and well-being. The source of English term is "hap" which mean prosperity rooted in the Middle English term "happ". Happiness is the possibility to feel, express and perceive feelings fully (Barak, 2006). Howard Mumford says: "happiness belongs to a group of terms which anyone knows their meaning but no one can define them; although happiness has different meanings for different people, there is concurrence that it is a broad term" (Lymbomirsky et al., 2006). Mental well-being is defined as a set of positive internal experiences and as the highest satisfaction and "utmost motivator" for all human behaviors which is fascinated by many psychologists during the past decades (Lu and Kao, 2001). Layard defines happiness as "having a good feeling, enjoying the life and demanding the sustainability of such feeling" (Duncan, 2010). Hohler (1996) believes that happiness is the plausibility and compatibility with self existential conditions. This points out fully to the inner aspect of happiness (Hornang, 2006). However, a definition which is accepted more than other ones is provided by Diner et al. (1991). They preferred to use subjective well-being label for their definition. According to them, happiness is a combination of life satisfaction and a balance between positive and negative feelings (Lyubomirsky et al., 2006).

3. Happiness Psychology

Central nervous system is not a closed system and relates to both spatial and biological variables. Its correlation with well-being to determine two methods of favorable feelings is important: these two types of well-being are Eudemonic and Hedonic (Barak, 2006). Eudemonic is in principle a concept of psychological and personal growth while Hedonic relates to such positive feelings as triumph and satisfaction. One can say that Eudemonic relates directly to happiness genetic determinants while hedonic shows objective social conditions further (Demir and Ozdemir, 2010). In the present study, the focus is on eudemonic since the study has considered personality as a strong predictor for happiness.

Many researches (Cheng and Furham, 2003; Argyle, 1997; Lu Shih, 1997; Berbner, 2001, Vitterso, 2001; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005, 2008) show that extraversion and neuroticism are two personality traits which can create a significant variance on happiness. After revising evidences, Argyle and Martin Lu (1995) concluded that extraverts are happier than other (Lu, 1997, 250). Extraverts control their social relations further and quicker and expand their positive feelings more than negative ones (Berbner, 2001).

Naser Aghababaei, Akram Arji (2014) in their research on personality and well being showed that Extraversion was the single strongest correlate of well-being. While Honesty– Humility was unrelated to SWB, it was related to higher levels of psychological well-being, with the Honesty sub-factor driving this relationship.

4. Happiness Models

Three conceptual models are proposed as the determinants of happiness: 1. Personality model, 2. a model based on assessing the impacts of life events, 3. Environment adaptive model. Personality model considers happiness as a sustainable trait based on individual's personality and, on this basis, introduces various traits as happiness predictors. Life events model states that the extent of individuals' happiness can be changed for some people overtime. Therefore, both negative and positive events play a vital role in

changing the happiness. Adaptive model claims that people adopt with circumstances rapidly even with disastrous events which effect on happiness (Lu, 1997).

When the comparative study was conducted between USA and Japan to find out whether maximizers are unhappier than satisfiers using Schwartz et al.'s (2002) scale it was found that maximizers reported being more depressed, less happy, and less satisfied with their lives. Whereas, when assessed by Diab et al.'s (2008) scale, American maximizers actually reported being happier than satisfiers. Among Japanese, however, maximizers reported being more depressed, less happy, and less satisfied with their lives regardless of the scale used.

5. Objectives
- To understand relationship between happiness and personality by employing fairly large sample.
- To find out the gender differences on personality and happiness.
- To find out faculty wise differences on happiness and personality.

6. Hypotheses
- There will be positive correlation between happiness and personality.
- Boys and girls will not differ on happiness but not on personality. .
- There will be no significant difference between commerce and arts students regarding personality and happiness.

7. Methodology

7.1. Sample
This being an applied research in terms of its goal descriptive and survey method was used for data analyses the sample includes 954 respondents (356 males and 598 females) using incidental sampling method. The distribution is as follows:

Sample Distribution			
Gender	**Educational stream**		
	Arts	**Commerce**	**Total**
Male	184	172	356
Female	293	305	598
Total	477	477	954

Table 1: Sample Distribution

8. Research Tools

8.1. HEXACO PI
Based on lexical approach HEXACO PI-R is developed by Ashton and Lee (2001) comprised of 100 statements majoring six dimensions of personality viz. Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Consciousness and Openness to Experience. It also has one interstitial Scale, measuring Altruism. The psychometric properties of the scale were found to be sound.

8.2. Happiness Scale
Happiness was measured with the help of scale prepared by Uchol Kim. It is a seven point Likert scale consisting of 16 statements. It measures how happy one is with certain aspects of one's life such as family, friends etc. The scale has sufficient degree of reliability and validity. The scale has been found to be useful on Indian students as well.

9. Results
Based on the initial aim of present study, "to explore happiness correlates of Personality" was conducted by Pearson's correlation test and SPSS20 software. Table 2 indicates that all the personality dimensions are correlated with each other confirming internal consistency of the test. It is observed that Happiness is negatively correlated with honesty-humility (-0. 06*) whereas, Happiness is positively correlated with Extraversion (0.08). Obtained results go along with the hypotheses formulated and earlier studies. For example, In a study conducted on the Muslim population, to find out the relationship between religiousness, subjective well being (SWB) and personality using HEXACO model of personality it was found that extraversion and honesty-humility were strongly correlated with SWEB followed by religiosity (Naser Agjababaei, 2014).

Correlations								
Variables	**H**	**E**	**X**	**A**	**C**	**O**	**Altruism**	**Happiness**
Honesty (H)	1							
Emotionality (E)	0.472	1						
Extraversion(X)	0.384	0.525	1					
Agreeableness (A)	0.358	0.448	0.441	1				
Conscientiousness (C)	0.514	0.465	0.482	0.462	1			
Openness to Experience (O)	0.495	0.448	0.388	0.353	0.562	1		
Altruism	0.394	0.332	0.285	0.247	0.353	0.386	1	
Happiness	**-0.064**	0.030	**0.077**	-0.020	0.014	-0.007	-0.018	1
	0.049	0.348	**0.018**	0.542	0.660	0.830	0.575	

Table 2: Showing correlations between variables under study
*Note - * correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed,*
*** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). **p< 0.01, *p<0.05*

The results of t test showed that commerce students (87.76) differ significantly from arts students (83.75) on Happiness (p< 3.63; p<0.00). Obtained results may be because of the course structure of the commerce students. There is no pressure regarding completing practicals, journals and deadlines of submission which the arts students have. As a result of which the arts students were found to be scoring less on happiness than commerce students.

Regarding gender differences on emotionality girls were found to be scoring high on emotionality (Refer Table- 3). The results of the table -3 show that girls were found to be scoring high on emotionality (51.27) whereas, boys scored (50.33) (p< 2.08.63; p<0.04). Obtained results go along with the earlier studies conducted regarding emotionality. In general, girls are found to be more emotional than boys. Gender differences in emotion have generally been accounted for in terms of the social and cultural context especially as a result of gender-stereotypic socialization (cf. Brody & Hall, 1993; Jansz, 2000; Shields, 2002). . Emotions can be considered part of the socialization into roles that men and women commonly occupy (cf. Alexander & Wood, 2000; Brody & Hall, 1993; Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 1991; Grossman & Wood, 1993).

Regarding gender differences on happiness it can be said that due to more pressure of getting good marks and also of securing job boys were found to be under more stress than girls as a result of which girls were found to be morehappier than boys. In addition, studies have shown that girls receive more social support from friends, family and teachers than boys thereby, more happiness on the part of girls. While t calculated to identify gender differences generated following findings:

summary of t tests				
Variable	**Mean**		**t**	**significance**
	Male	**female**		
Honesty	**49.21**	47.51	3.838	0.00
Emotionality	50.33	**51.27**	-2.082	0.04
Extraversion	50.72	50.73	-0.033	0.97
Agreeableness	49.06	49.06	-0.003	0.99
Conscientiousness	**50.63**	49.39	2.927	0.00
Openness to Experience	**49.39**	48.35	2.165	0.03
Altruism	**12.97**	12.5	2.77	0.01
Happiness	82.13	**87.92**	-4.998	0.00

Table 3: Showing Summary of t tests
**p< 0.01, *p<0.05

Table 3 shows that males scored higher than females on honesty, conscientiousness and openness to experience, while females score higher than males on emotionality and happiness. Therefore it can be said that there is a relationship between happiness and gender.
A linear regression test was use to study the impact of personality aspects on students' happiness. According to Table 4, almost 12% of happiness changes are predicted by Extraversion and Honesty and 81% is affected by factors such as health, age, social support, personal growth and other factors in the literature which are out of our regression equation.

R	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
.140(a)	.019	.012	17.083

Table 4: Showing results of Regression analyses

ANOVA table was drawn to examine the certainty of a linear relationship between personality and happiness. The assumption of the linear relationship between extraversion, honesty and happiness is confirmed. It shows that regression model has been able to renounce the changes in happiness dependant variable.

	Sum of Squares	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Regression	5482.751	7	783.250	2.684	.009(a)
Residual	276085.476	946	291.845		
Total	281568.228	953			

Table 5: Table showing summary of ANOVA
**p< 0.01, *p<0.05

Results of coefficient table showed that (based on t test significance level), emotionality, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience do not have a significant relationship with dependent variable and are eliminated from the equation. As seen in table 6, honesty-humility has the highest but negative impact on students' happiness followed by positive impact of extraversion.

10. Conclusion
- A significant positive correlation was obtained between extraversion and happiness. Whereas, a significant negative correlation between honesty and happiness.
- Boys scored more on honesty, conscientiousness and openness to experience. Females scored more on emotionality and happiness.
- Results of t- test showed that commerce students are happier than arts students.
- In regression model, the most significant happiness predictor is honesty (negatively related) immediately followed by extraversion. Emotionality, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to experience to Altruism are no so significant happiness predictors.

11. Suggestions
- Comparative study may be conducted to find out cross cultural differences on personality and happiness.
- Faculty wise comparison can also be done to find out faculty wise differences on happiness and personality.

12. Implications

- The findings of the present study will be useful in recruitment. Particularly, an understanding of personality will be useful in recruitment.
- The study will also help one to understand the personality predictors of happiness accordingly measures can be taken to increase the level of happiness.

13. Limitations

- Survey method was used for data collection. Therefore, the limitations of survey method are applicable for the present study.
- The sample size could not be equal.
- The co relational nature of the study could not help to find out cause and effect relationship.

14. References

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