

Browsing Towards Happiness: Determinants of Happiness of Young Millennial Students

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***Abstract---** Sources of happiness of young millennial women in Northern Philippines was examined using sample of female college students. Descriptive survey design was utilized with Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, a standardized personality test, structured questionnaire and document analysis as data gathering tools. Results showed that majority of the millennial students' concept of happiness is equivalent to Abraham Maslow's third stage of hierarchy of needs, "belongingness and love needs." Chi-square analysis revealed that some family profile variables are correlated with happiness. Further, top five sources of young millennial women's happiness include engagement in social media activities, possession of electronic gadgets, chatting with friends, and listening to music.*

***Keywords---** Happiness, Millennial, Northern Philippines, Students, Well-being.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Are you happy? Do you want to be happy? Humans continue to search for happiness, be it momentary or long term. Researchers have uncovered various factors, from money, style of life, possessions, relationships, and personality type, that concur with happiness.

The World Happiness Report ranks 156 countries on how happy people perceived themselves and in the 2019 report, Philippines ranked 69th [1]. Happiness is not as simple as the lyrics of the children's song, "if you are happy and you know it then your face will surely show it," because youth who value happiness too much are more depressed [2]. Sources of momentary happiness include money [3]. The more moneyed a person is, the happier one becomes, however, the happiness that money gives tend to mellow. Money gives greater happiness when it moves people away from a threatening place; once the condition becomes stably safe, the importance of money mellows. Further, he added that devoting money for vacation produces more happiness than consuming on things. Other source of happiness is doing charity acts, because act of giving is pleasurable. When one provides support or help to others, the giver gains pleasure. Berkely's finding also reveal that people who focus on the quest of happiness are inclined to focus on personal gains, which can harm people's relationship.

In a study of "what makes teens happy," teens has a feeling of skin-deep happiness based on fun, excitement, or pleasure [4]. Borgman further stated that sources of great happiness to teens include, friendships, music, boy or girlfriend, and dating. Their favorite leisure activities are, listening to music, watching television, and daydreaming about the future.

Adolescents belong to the "storm and stress" period for it is a critical stage in their development that is manifested by conflict and moodiness [5]. However, in the study of less than 3,000 middle and high school students, findings reveal that most young people feel good about their progress on the key developmental tasks of establishing

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identity, achieving independence and building meaningful relationships with peers. Further, young people are less self-absorbed than they are given credit for; in fact majority of them expressed that they are happy and friendly [6].

The researcher had been intellectually curious on really, what makes a person happy that makes one so preoccupied for its achievement, hence this study.

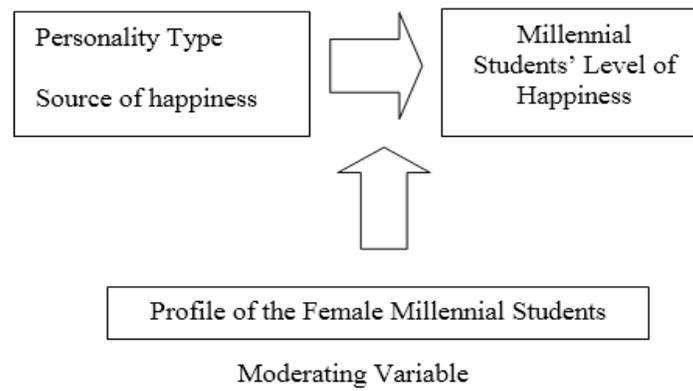


Figure 1: The Relationship between the Independent and the Dependent Variables.

Objectives

The study was conducted in order to browse what makes millennial students happy. Specifically, it tried to shed light to the following questions: (1) Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the millennial students and their level of happiness? (2) Is there a significant relationship between the personality type of the millennial students and their level of happiness?

II. METHOD

Six hundred ninety one female millennial students aged 16 to 19, single, enrolled in collegiate programs, and not cohabiting, participated in the study. All students were from the same government university in Northern Philippines and were enrolled during the school year 2017-2018.

After acquiring informed consent from the participants, they were asked to complete the survey questionnaire which was composed of two parts. Part I items were concentrated on demographic profile whereby the Philippine Standard Occupational Classification was used in categorizing parents' occupation. Part II were items focused on the millennial students' concerns on happiness. The instrument contained questions asking participants to describe their idea of happiness; who and which contributes to their happiness; as well as their current state of happiness. Space for free-form responses were provided with each question. The responses were then analyzed to identify emergent themes. For the participants' concept of happiness, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs was utilized. On the other hand, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a standardized test was used as a determinant for the personality type of the female millennial students. For this study, personality type was focused on whether the participants are introvert or extrovert. In analyzing the data for religion, the categories used were Roman Catholics and Non-Roman Catholics. Permission of the head of the institution to gather pertinent data was sought. In the data analysis, no multiple responses were recorded. Casual interview was performed coupled with document analysis to

validate responses. Profile data and test results were tallied and tabulated for statistical treatment whereby, frequency count, weighted mean, rank and chi square were used in analyzing the data.

III. RESULTS

The profile of the participants showed that majority (64%) of them were 19 nineteen years old. It must be understood that since the Philippine educational system have just embraced the K-12 curriculum few years ago, majority of the students enrolled in the collegiate level during the conduct of the study were in their junior and senior level, hence the majority of the students were nineteen years old. More than three-fourths of the millennial students are Roman Catholics (81%). This finding is a normal reflection of the total population in the Philippines, being known as predominantly Roman Catholic country. As been observed, developing countries maintain a medium to big size families. In this study, 98% have siblings, and almost half (49.21%) belong to medium family size. This corroborates with the average Filipino family size in 2015 [7]. More than half (52%) of male parents were engaged in fishing or farming while (91%) of female parents worked as service workers and market sale workers with housekeepers getting 69% of the pie. More than 50% of both female and male parents have finished at least high school or secondary. More than three-fourths (81%) of the millennial students were extraverts, which means that they are more focused on the outside world, they enjoy interacting with other people and are more interested in variety [8]. This finding corroborates with Wallace' [9] study that adolescents are less self-absorbed and they are other-oriented.

Using the theory of Maslow in classifying the concept of happiness of millennial students, as reflected in table 1, majority (60.35%) of the responses fall under the third ladder which is belongingness and love needs. Responses in this category includes complete family, spending time with family and friends, love of and for family, and having intimate relationship. Consistently, in a survey conducted, Filipinos prosper on interpersonal contact with the family as a driving force to a happy and stress-free lives [10]. Not only Filipinos share this state, but also the young adolescent Dutch for they are happy youngsters and are described as having a supportive environment at home, with their friends and even at school [11]. Similarly, in the study on the secret of happiness, the finding revealed that "happiness is love or good relationships keep us happier and healthier" [12]. Out of the 30 responses classified under self-actualization, only five of the millennial students consider fulfilling God's will, love of God, faith in God, and being spiritually saved as source of happiness. The low percentage of spirituality could be justified in Robert Havighurst's developmental tasks faced by both adolescents and early adult where there was no mention of spiritual development [13]. Interestingly, only less than five percent responded under self-actualization. True enough that people tend to satisfy the higher needs in the later part of development.

Table 1: Concept of Happiness of Female Millennial Students

<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency (n=691)</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Concept of Happiness</i>		
Self-actualization	30	4.34
Esteem Needs	88	12.74
Belongingness and Love Needs	417	60.35
Safety Needs	147	21.27
Biological and Physiological Needs	9	1.3

There were three major sources of happiness accounted in this study: acquisition or possession of material things (*things*), company or presence of significant others (*people*), and enjoyment or excitement in gaining experiences (*activities*). Those three major sources were ranked by the millennial students whereby “people” was ranked first followed by “things” and “activities.” The top five “people” which the participants consider as sources of happiness were their mother, father, siblings, friends and boyfriend/girlfriend. Majority of the young millennial students consider their mother as a foremost source of happiness.

Generally, mothers are the first nurturer of their loved ones, and in this study, majority of the mothers are housekeepers. As housekeepers, they stay at home, do household chores, and take care of the family members.

Included in the first five sources of happiness when it comes to things were food, electronic gadgets, new clothes, books, and new shoes. This result is in harmony with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs whereby, lower needs tend to be satisfied first before moving in the satisfaction of higher ladder needs [14]. Through casual interview, the students further narrated that food is life. When there is food coupled with the company of loved ones, then “what a happy life.” Across colleges, exciting activities or experiences for female millennial students are the following: eating, listening to music, engaging in social media activities, chatting with friends and any activity with their intimate partner. In this study, intimate partner include same sex relationship.

Consistently, food is life as mentioned above. Filipinos are fond of eating. Listening to music truly offer a happy sensation that the millennial students appreciate, especially popular teen music in the locality not to exclude parodies and memes. With the advent of high technology, just like other millennial youngsters, Filipino female millennial are likewise happy engaging in social media endeavors including chatting with their peers and gangs. In fact, early this year, Filipinos topped the world when it comes to internet usage [15] and internet usage were found to predict happiness [16]. Since the participants are in the normal age of having an intimate relationship, hence spending time with their lover, imparts excitement and happiness. The participants perceived themselves as generally happy which coincides with the study among millennial people in thirty two countries, which Filipinos were regarded as one of the happiest and slightest stressed in the world [17].

Among the demographic variables, religion, personality type and mother’s occupation are significantly related with happiness.

Revealed in the finding on the variable religion is the inclination of the millennial students to be happier depending on their religious affiliation. The findings of this study corroborates with other studies that religion is correlated with happiness. [18], [19].

Mother’s occupation when grouped as housekeepers and non-housekeepers become significant indicator of happiness. Children of housekeeper mothers tend to be happier. The findings revealed that children of housekeepers (mothers stay at home and take care of the family members’ needs) are happier compared to children of non-housekeeper’s mothers.

Personality type is correlated with happiness, which is strengthened with Shiraz university students’ experience [20]. The more extravert a person is, the greater the time spent with others and the happier one becomes.

Table 2: Relationship between Profile and Level of Happiness

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Computed X2</i>	<i>Prob.</i>	<i>Statistical Inference</i>
Course	12	11.373	.497	Not significant
Religion	4	13.83	.008	Significant
Family size	6	10.127	.119	Not significant
Sibling Order	6	4.571	.6	Not significant
Age	8	7.808	.452	Not significant
Personality type	2	12.052	.002	Significant
Occupation of Father	22	19.134	.637	Not Significant
Occupation of Mother	2	12.05	.002	Significant

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The level of happiness of millennial students are influenced by the religion they are affiliated with, their personality type and their mother's occupation. Concept of happiness is focused on feeling of belongingness felt from family and other loved ones and sources of happiness are social media related.

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