

Happiness Index; Current Status, Global Ranking and its Importance in the Government's Agenda 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'

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Abstract

This review is done to understand status and global ranking of Nepal on Global Happiness index as well as to identify the importance of happiness index in the government's agenda 'Prosperous Nepal Happy Nepali'. For this numbers of journal articles and reports were consulted as secondary source of data and conclusion were drawn and summarized. No primary data were collected. Happiness index of Nepal, at present, is 4.913 and ranked at 100th position among the 156 countries of the world. The happiness index status has risen from data (4.156)2013 to (4.962)2017 but it decreased in 2018(4.88) and in 2019(4.913) it is slightly increased but not more than that of 2017. Similarly, ranking of Nepal also increased from 2013 to 2017 but it decreased in 2018 and in 2019 it moved by one and reached to 100th. As long as people want more wealth, they will tend to be somewhat dissatisfied if they don't get in self-growth, leisure time and intimate relationships. Happiness index could be the basic idea of measurement for the government's agenda 'Prosperous Nepal Happy Nepali'.

Keywords: Happiness Index; Nepal; Prosperous; Rank; Status; GNH; SWB

Introduction

The mental state of well-being defined by pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy is Happiness. The Global Happiness report states the Global data on national happiness and evidence from the emerging science of happiness shows that the quality of people's lives can be assessed by a variety of subjective well-being measures, collectively through as happiness [1]. The happiness movement represents a new paradigm where social, economic, and environmental systems are structured to encourage human well-being in a sustainable environment and to measure happiness; happiness index was identified [2].

The World Happiness Report is being releasing every year since 2012. Bhutanese Gross National Happiness Index was the main origin of definition of the Happiness Index. Bhutan started prioritizing happiness over other factors such as wealth, comfort and economic growth since 1972 [3]. Indexation of happiness is based on multiple measurable factors which have kept track of this index till now. Happiness Index, was coined in the 2012 by World Happiness Report. The Happiness Index is defined as the weighted rate of respondents reporting "Very happy" or "Quite happy" less the weighted rate of respondents reporting "Not very happy" or "Not at all happy," plus 100. The index thus ranges from 0 to 200 [4]. The report presented the available global data on national happiness and reviewed related evidence from the emerging science of happiness, showing that the quality of people's lives can be assessed by a variety of subjective well-being measures, collectively

referred to then and in subsequent reports as happiness [5]. The Gallup World Poll is the source of data for World Happiness Report. Gallup, the organization behind this enormous poll it interviews approximately 1,000 residents per country each year. It interviews these people in over 150 countries around the world. For this people are randomly selected, as long as they are registered civilians of the country and aged 15 and older. Their own language in this happiness survey to asked the same questions to produce statistically comparable results.

This data is used by the Global Happiness Council in combination with other data sources to construct the World Happiness Report [6]. The Gross National Happiness (GNH) is an aggregate measure of a country's national production, in the vein of the gross national product or gross domestic product. Gross national happiness (GNH) measures the sum total of economic output and also of net environmental impacts, the spiritual and cultural growth of citizens, mental and physical health and the strength of the corporate and political systems [3].

This Happiness Index quite interesting as we know, a single number can't explain the underlying principles that determine happiness so the World Happiness Report goes further. Researchers found some of key factors that could likely explain the variance in happiness [4]. This is important since these key factors allow us to learn from this happiness data, instead of just observing it. Seven key factors are correlated most to the Happiness Index and determined by world happiness report. These Variables are:

- GDP per capita
- Social support
- Healthy life expectancy
- Freedom to make life choices
- Generosity
- Perceptions of corruption
- Unexplained happiness

This review is done to understand about status, global ranking of Nepal on Global Happiness index and to identify the importance of happiness index in the government's agenda 'Prosperous Nepal Happy Nepali'.

Objectives

- To know about happiness index status of Nepal.
- Identify the global ranking of Nepal on happiness index status.
- To know how the money and happiness are related.
- To know the importance of importance of happiness index in the government's agenda 'Prosperous Nepal Happy Nepali'.

Methodology

For this review numbers of journal articles and reports were consulted as secondary source of data and conclusion were drawn and summarized. No primary data were collected and collected secondary data were analyzed by Excel 2010, similarly the results of the different articles were summarized in this review paper.

Result and Discussion

Current status

The current status of happiness index of Nepal is 4.913 [7]. It is slightly more than that of last year but it is less than that of 2017.

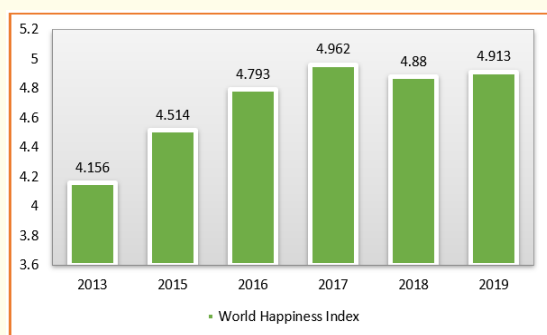


Figure 1: Status of happiness index of Nepal in different years.

This chart shows the happiness index of Nepal is significantly increased from 4.156 in 2013 to 4.962 in 2017 then it slightly decreased in 2018 and reached to 4.88. In 2019 it is increased and reached to 4.913. This shows Nepal has highest happiness index in 2017.

Global ranking

Nepal Uplifted one places from last year ranking 100st among 156 countries in the World Happiness Report-2019 released by the New York-based United Nations sustainable development network.

Nations Sustainable Development Solution Network [7].

Figure 2: Trend of Happiness index ranking of Nepal.

The trend diagram shows the Rank of Nepal in happiness index is uplifting in every year except in 2018. In 2013 Nepal's rank was 135th and in the duration of 4 year up to 2017 it uplifted to 99th rank. Nepal slipped two places from last year ranking 101st among 156 countries in the World Happiness Report-2018. Finally at report of 2019 it reached to 100th position by uplifting one place. It indicates Nepal has reached up to 99th rank in 2017.

Similarly, Finland was on top happiness rank with 7.7 score in 2019 report followed by Denmark, Norway, Iceland and Netherlands, while South Sudan appears at the bottom with a score of 2.8 [7]. In South Asia, Nepal ranks third after Pakistan (67th globally) and Bhutan (95th). Bangladesh (125th), Sri Lanka (130th), India (140rd) and Afghanistan (154th) are fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh in SAARC region accordingly. Maldives was not included in the survey.

Relation between money and happiness

The correlation of mean income in 28 nations and the average Social wellbeing (SWB) in them was 0.62 [8]. For the liberals Found that poor people are less happy on average than rich people [9]. There was the finding that wealthy nations. For those who believe that materialism is not the road to happiness and the wealthy societies have not grown in SWB as they achieved even higher level of wealth, and also the finding that believing money is very important is related to less life satisfaction [10].

People in wealthy nation feel an increasing time shortage, and yet many are working even longer hours than others. People seek a level of material wealth undreamed of by earlier generations, and they make sacrifices in time and personal relationships to attain it. However, despite the picture of the "good life" presented in the media and in advertising, people may want to reassess their priorities. To the extent that individuals or societies must sacrifices other values to obtain more wealth, the pursuit of income is not likely to be worth the costs. Earlier people had no sophisticated technologies like computer, television, even though, people were as happy as they are now. Thus we must question whether we need a trip to Antarctica, a larger home with more bathroom, and a high status automobile are truly happy. Some of items require us to make sacrifices in self-growth, leisure time and intimate relationships; they may interfere with happiness rather than enhance it. As long

as people want more goods and services, they will tend to be somewhat dissatisfied if they don't get them. Thus we have challenge to convince people that pursuit of more money is not everything, other pursuits may sometimes lead to greater fulfillment than it does.

Importance in the government's agenda 'prosperous Nepal happy Nepali'

The government is now conducting an integrated happiness survey in line with its slogan of "Prosperous Nepal and Happy Nepali". A steering committee and another technical committee are to be formed and on the work.

Fifteenth development plan has prosperity and happiness as the founding pillar of the planning process. Four and six goals for prosperity and happiness are respectively mentioned in the document, and further 33 indicators are set to quantify the results on prosperity and happiness. Well-being and decent life; safe, civilized and just society; healthy and balanced environment; good governance; comprehensive democracy; and national unity, security and dignity are six long term goals for happiness. This task is familiar to Bhutan, which is considered the birthplace of Gross National Happiness (GNH), a term that attempts to record the holistic approach of development philosophy, beyond the notion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Nine key domains and 33 indicators to measure GNH are developed by Bhutan which includes psychological well-being; good governance; living standard; community vitality; ecological diversity; resilient health and education; time use; cultural diversity; and resilience. Bhutan developed three category of happiness: extremely, deeply and narrowly happy with separate thresholds, according to the Center for Bhutanese Study and GNH [11].

Same in Nepal the idea lining behind Global Happiness Index could be helpful for measurement of happiness in Nepal. The government is working but speed is slow due to the lack of homework and planning.

Conclusion

Current status of happiness index of Nepal is 4.913 and is on the 100th rank among the 156th countries of world. The happiness index status has risen from 2013 to 2017 but it decreased in 2018 and in 2019 it is slightly increased but not more than that of 2017. Similarly, ranking of Nepal is also increased from 2013 to 2017 but it decreased in 2018 and in 2019 it is uplifted by one and reached to 100th. It can be concluded that in 2017 Nepal has highest index (4.962) and Rank (99th) in global happiness index.

As people want more goods and services, they will tend to be somewhat dissatisfied or unhappy if they don't get in self-growth, leisure time and intimate relationships. So we can say money and happiness are not always positively related. Thus our challenges is to convince people that other pursuits may sometimes lead to greater fulfillment than does the pursuit of more money.

Happiness index could be a basic idea behind it as the in the Bhutan, but the government's desire to measure happiness is moving at a slow pace due to the lack of homework and planning.

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