

# HAPPY LIFE: DIMENSIONS OF SATISFACTION

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This study was conducted incorporating twenty-one items of the concept of a "happy life", covering the five needs for life satisfaction. A questionnaire, having all these items was administered on a sample of two hundred and fifty industrial workers. Only one hundred and fifty responded, giving a response rate of 60 per cent. Furthermore, the contribution of each of the five needs satisfaction to overall satisfaction and their interrelatedness were also revealing. Factor analysis consolidated the formation of clusters based on need hierarchy. The moderating effects of the background, with respect to being rural, semi-rural and urban, had a significant bearing on the results. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were also tested.

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## *Introduction*

The rapid strides of technological development have attracted considerable attention from social scientists towards the study of the quality of working life. Multidirectional efforts in this area have, if not bypassed, at least undermined the importance of the industrial workers satisfaction apart from work. The quality of life is dependent on the quality of work life, as contended by De (1975), but emperical studies are far from sufficient in revealing the other dimensions of life satisfaction.

Social scientists recently began to devise measures which would reflect life conditions in a wider sense and permit non-economic factors to be taken into account when evaluating the social consequences of technological innovations (Bauer, 1966). Andrews and Whitley (1973) developed measures of perceived life quality. Their research was based on results from several national surveys. Later on, Andrews (1974) gave some social indicators of perceived life satisfaction. According to him, there are two types of indicators, viz., subjective, based on reports of individuals about their own perceptions, feelings, responses and the like; and objective, such as crime rates, popula-

tion densities, law and order, educational opportunities, etc.

Sinha (1966) gives a vivid description of the concept of happiness and life satisfaction of a village sample. Sinha (1977) studied the concept of happiness and resultant life satisfaction as indicators of quality of life in a sample of industrial workers.

Recent studies, both in the United States (Campbell, 1976) and in Scandinavia (Allardt, 1975) show consistently low correlations between objective level of indices and measures of subjective satisfaction and happiness. This discrepancy between objective welfare and subjective well being has upset the old notion that life satisfaction would continue to improve only with increasing material assets, (Boyden, 1973; Frankenhaeuser, 1977).

Kavanagh and Halpern (1970) studied the impact of job level and sex differences on the relationship between life satisfaction and job satisfaction. The results indicated that job satisfaction was a contributing factor for life satisfaction but they may not always correlate. This proved that though it was a factor it was not the only one, and there are other dimensions of life satisfaction apart from job and work. Mehta (1978) found that it is money which

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is an important factor in general life satisfaction, though not the only one.

Iris and Barrett (1972) measured life satisfaction on four dimensions, i.e., life (life in general), family, leisure and job. Positive correlations between life and job satisfaction were found, similar to the results found by Kornhauser (1965).

The present paper is an attempt to peep into the lives of industrial workers and study the dimensions of their life satisfaction, apart from work.

### *Objectives*

The broad objectives of this study were as follows:

- (a) Construction of a questionnaire and a measure of life satisfaction of the industrial workers.
- (b) Dimensions of satisfaction as based on Maslow's need hierarchy, contribution of each to life satisfaction, direct and indirect. Factor analysis of the elements for formation of distinct categories.
- (c) Moderating effects of the Socio-cultural background on life satisfaction; and
- (d) Test for validity and reliability of the measure.

### *Method and Sampling*

The twenty-one categories, based on the concept of the industrial worker's happiness, developed by Sinha (1977) served as guideline for the formation of the questionnaire. The twenty-one categories constituted the twenty-one items of the final questionnaire. Help from five independent judges was taken to give the questionnaire its final shape, each item being measured on a seven

point scale, ranging from one to seven, with "least" and "most" or "complete" as the two extremes, (Appendix 1). These twenty-one items were again given to five other independent judges to group them into five classes in terms of Maslow's need hierarchy.

This questionnaire of twenty-one items was administered to a sample of 250 industrial workers in a modern industry of Allahabad (U.P.). The retest of this measure was administered on a sample of 132. For validation through peer rating, only 60 workers were taken into account. These 60 workers were selected in groups of 10 under one supervisor. The supervisors were asked to rank order the workers under them taking into consideration "how satisfied and happy the particular worker is". It was a sort of relative grading of the workers by the supervisors. Since the purpose of the study was to see life satisfaction apart from work, these 60 workers and their 6 supervisors were selected from the residential colony of the industrial complex to make sure that the supervisor and workers knew of each other outside the work also. The validity of the supervisors rating was cross-checked with the obtained scores of the worker on the questionnaire.

The present study being exploratory in nature, cannot enjoy use of rigorous scientific sampling design, because, at this stage, determinants of life satisfaction of industrial workers—and not to say of their distributions—are untapped to the best of advantage. A review of literature available in the relevant area gives an idea of the differences in satisfaction of life by the background of the workers. Industrial workers, who form a very heterogeneous category with respect to the Socio-cultural background, may carry its effect with them and create differences for aspiration, efficacy, needs for achievement, values and attitudes, and expectations, etc. Therefore in this study, an attempt was made to stratify the whole population of industrial

workers by their background (rural, semi-rural and urban) rendering the design a stratified, purposive, incidental random sampling. The term "purposive" connotes standardization of workers with respect to demographic variables (age, sex, religion, occupation and income).

*Rurals* were those who commuted daily from their village homes to place of work. Except for the training period, all their education was also in the village.

*Semi-rurals* went to their villages on week-ends only, otherwise stayed near the workplace, that is, having rural as well as urban connections. Their education was accomplished in village as well as city.

*Urban* had no connection with villages or rural life. They were born, brought up and lived always in cities.

The questionnaire of twenty-one items was given to 250 workers, with proper instructions and directions. The breakup was: 75 rurals, 75 semi-rurals and 100 urbans. They were asked to return the forms in two days time. One hundred and ninety forms

were collected i.e., a response rate of 76 per cent (60 rurals, 80 per cent; 64 semi-rurals, 85 per cent; and 66 urbans, 66 per cent). After scrutinizing, only 150 forms (50 in each of the three background groups) were found to be complete in all respects. For validation, 60 workers (in groups of 10) and 6 supervisors were taken. At the time of re-testing (at an interval of nearly 5 months) only 132 of the 150 workers, whose forms were complete in the first instance, were available.

### *Analysis and Results*

The twenty-one categories, classifying the elements included in the concept of a "happy life" were given in the form of a questionnaire. Their means, standard derivations and reliability coefficients with those of the five groups based on Maslow's need hierarchy are given in Appendix 2.

The industrial workers seem to be most satisfied with respect to the needs of subsistence (food, house, and clothes) and least with respect to values and ideals and concern for national cause. The five groups (need based) reflect some significant results. Table 1 presents these in a systematic way.

TABLE 1  
LIFE SATISFACTION IN TERMS OF MASLOW'S NEED HIERARCHY

Needs/ Dimensions	Elements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Basic	Food, Cloth and House	3.70	0:38
Safety and Security	Money, children's welfare, health, land and property, and government help	2.98	0.30
Socio- logical	Education, desire for family, travel, family relations, social relations, social service, entertainment and national cause	2.89	0.26
Self Esteem or Ego	Prestige and status, service and job	3.10	0:43
Self-Actuali- zation	Mental peace, Values and ideals and need for achievement	2.38	0.38
Overall		2.97	0.20

The basic needs are the most satisfied followed by self-esteem and ego. Next to these, safety and security needs are also scored above the overall mean. Least satisfaction seems to be in terms of self-actualization. Though the differences between the means apparently does not seem to be very high, but taking into consideration that the scale had a range of 1 to 7 only, and in fact the responses ranged from 1 to 5 only, these differences are significant enough, as evident from their contribution to overall life satisfaction. The correlation matrix of the five groups (Table 2) exhibits that each of the needs has a remarkably high correlation with the overall satisfaction, but the correlations between needs are not that high, though significant. It leads to the finding that the score on one dimension can lead to better prediction of overall satisfaction but is not as good a predictor of satisfaction of other dimensions.

It is evident from table 2 that all the

correlations are significant. *Prima facie*, though sociological needs had a mean score of 2.89 and fell below the overall mean in terms of satisfaction, are found to be the most significant contributor to overall life satisfaction. Surprisingly, the basic needs, which had the highest mean score of 3.70 explained least the variation in overall life satisfaction. However, the interrelatedness of the five satisfier groups cannot be ignored. The five dimensions affect directly as well as indirectly, through other needs, the overall satisfaction. Though all the five dimensions, representing the five needs, are separate in identity (having different elements) the fact that they are complimentary cannot be ignored.

The workers life satisfaction is not a unidirectional but a multidirectional concept and the different facets have their own identity and significance. Figure 1 shows the path diagram of the interrelatedness of the five dimensions or satisfier groups.

TABLE 2

CORRELATION MATRIX SHOWING THE CONTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENT NEEDS/DIMENSIONS TO OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION AND THEIR INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

	Basic	Safety and Security	Sociological	Self-esteem or ego	Self-Actualization	Overall
Basic	—					
Safety and Security	.22†	—				
Sociological	.20†	.21†	—			
Self-Esteem or Ego	.34†	.30†	.20†	—		
Self-Actualization	.18§	.17§	.35†	.25†	—	
Overall	.55†	.62†	.75†	.56†	.59†	—

§ Significant at 5 percent level.

† Significant at 1 percent level.

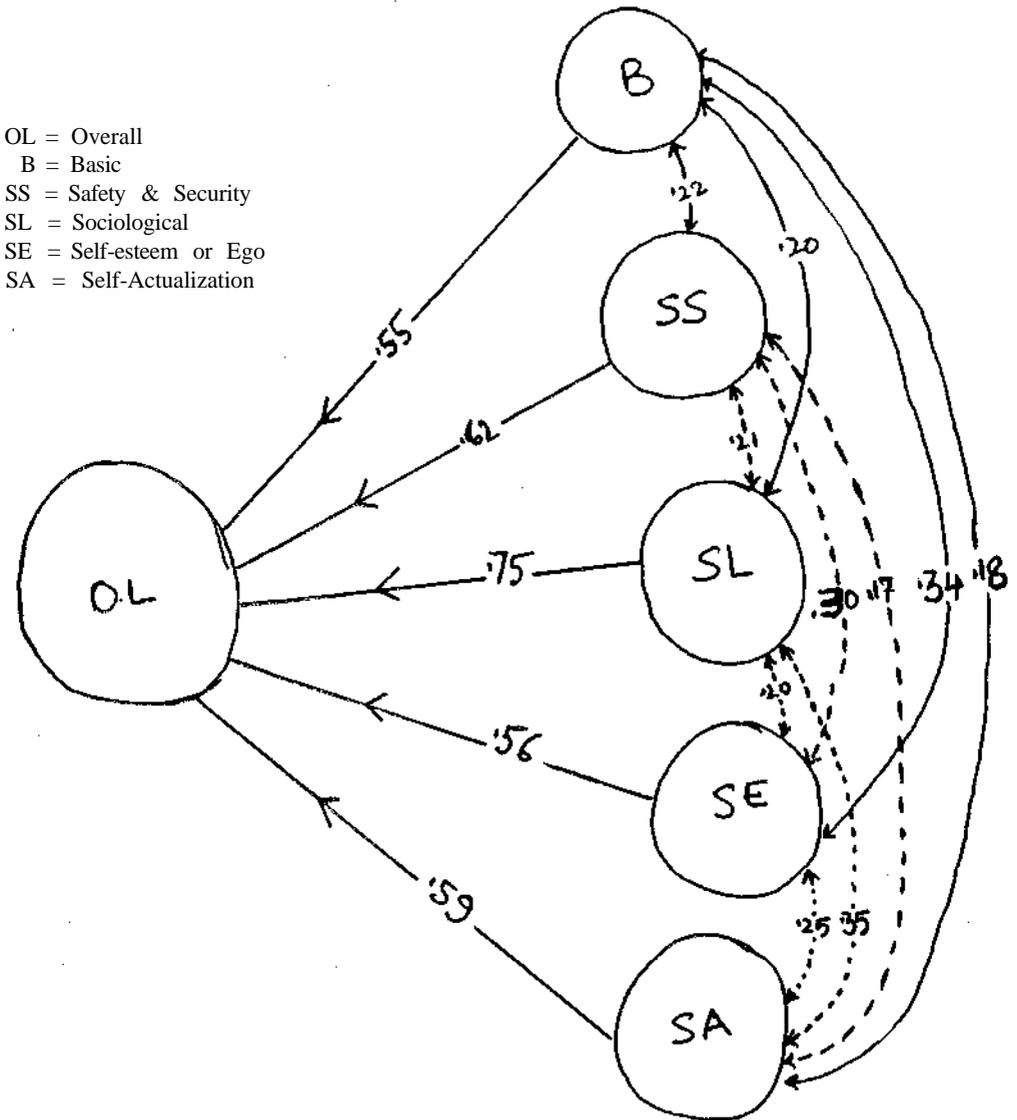


Figure 1: Path diagram showing the contribution of each need/dimension to overall life satisfaction.

Although the results in terms of Maslow's need hierarchy were revealing enough, the twenty-one elements of the overall life satisfaction were subjected to factor analysis. For this purpose, varimax orthogonal method of rotation was applied. The advantage of using orthogonal factor analysis lies in the independence of the factors. This procedure was used to see how the twenty-one elements form distinct categories, as were the categories formed on the basis of Maslow's hierarchy. The results of the varimax rotated factor analysis are given in Appendix 3. The coefficients in the table represent the regression coefficients of different factors on each element. The elements to be included in a factor were selected on the basis of the magnitude of these coefficients. Table 3 presents the factors with the elements to be included, eigenvalue and percentage of variance explained. Two independent judges helped in the nomenclature of these factors on the basis of the elements which constituted them. The resultant eight factors or dimensions were not very different from the five obtained on the basis of Maslow's hierarchy.

Table 3 shows that factor 1, consisting of elements clothes, family, children's welfare, job and land, explains the maximum variation as one single factor and factor 8, consisting of prestige and peace, the least. Infrastructure and social are the two other important factors which further explain the total variation. The workers do not seem to differ much on factor 7, consisting of children's education and need for achievement, and factor 8, comprising of prestige and mental peace. Food, that makes a factor in itself, is not as important as security, infrastructure and social values, but not as unimportant as social-interaction, aspirations and peace, in explaining the total variation. However, food is one of the few variables with high communality (.79) next to the values and ideals whose communality is the maximum (.88) as shown in Appendix 3. In other words, next to values and ideals, food is the element with minimum unique factor.

To attain the final objective of this study i.e. to see the moderating effects of background on the dimensions of satisfaction, the data was subjected to one way analysis

TABLE 3  
FACTORS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS

S. Name of No. factor	Elements	Eigenvalue	Percentage of variance	Cumulative percentage
1. Security	Clothes, family desire, children's welfare, job, land and property.	2.66	<b>27.8</b>	<b>27.8</b>
2. Infrastructure	Health, transport and entertainment.	1.56	<b>16.3</b>	<b>44.1</b>
3. Social	House, family relations, social service, and national cause.	1.39	<b>14.5</b>	<b>58.6</b>
4. Values	Government help and values.	<b>1.07</b>	<b>11.2</b>	69.9
5. Food	Food.	0.99	10.3	<b>80.2</b>
6. Social-Interaction	Money and social relations.	<b>0.73</b>	7.6	87.8
7. Aspirations	Education and need for achievement.	0.61	<b>6.3</b>	<b>94.1</b>
8. Peace	Prestige and Status and mental peace.	0.57	5.9	<b>100</b>

of variance. At this exploratory stage it was not in the fitness of context to go for inter-  
interactional analysis, although this does not  
mean total rejection of the possibilities  
therein. The results obtained are given in  
Table 4.

not an essentiality. It requires an in-depth  
research to gain insight into the basis of  
this factor.

Finally, the validity and reliability of the  
measure was found to be highly significant.  
The validation through peer rating in six

TABLE 4

MODERATING EFFECTS OF BACKGROUND ON THE DIMENSIONS OF SATISFACTION

Dimension/Need	Rural		Semi-Rural		Urban		F ratio	Level of signifi- cance
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation		
1. Basic	3.60	0.30	3.71	0.40	3.78	0.39	3.19	.04
2. Safety and Security	2.91	0.30	2.90	0.22	3.12	0.32	9.46	.00
3. Sociological	2.99	0.23	2.79	0.14	2.88	0.32	7.79	.00
4. Self-Esteem or Ego	3.08	0.44	3.02	0.26	3.21	0.51	2.65	.07
5. Self-actuali- zation	2.40	0.40	2.26	0.30	2.46	0.37	3.62	.03
Overall	2.98	0.14	2.89	0.13	3.04	0.27	6.66	.00

Evident from the table is the fact that the urbans constitute the most satisfied group with an overall mean of 3.04 and the semi-rurals the least with a mean of 2.89. The rurals — the intermediates — have a mean of 2.98. The urbans prove this highest satisfaction with regard to all needs except for sociological ones in which they are a close second to the rurals. The rurals are more satisfied than the semi-rurals in all but the basic needs. The F ratios show that the happiness of industrial workers differ significantly with respect to their background, overall as well as in different dimensions, the only exception being in the self esteem or ego needs. Even on this dimension the between variation is significantly higher than the within variation leading to a difference at 7 percent level. At this juncture, probing into the causes of this difference on account of background is

groups of ten individuals gave a rank order correlation ranging from 0.55 to 0.75. The results of the test-retest reliability on a sample of 132 (which are presented in Appendix 2) show that the instrument has a high degree of reliability (overall reliability of 0.51).

#### *Summary and Conclusions*

The results indicate that the study has been successful in achieving its objectives to a large extent. The instrument can go a long way for assessment of life satisfaction of at least industrial workers as evidenced by its reliability and validity. It also goes into depth to analyse the fact that life satisfaction is not a unitary concept. Scales and instruments which measure life satisfaction for only a few elements or dimensions would seem to be falling short of the pur-

pose in the light of revelations of the multi-dimensionality of the life satisfaction.

On the face value job satisfaction seems to be related with the life satisfaction as in this study a correlation of .47 (significant at 1 percent level) between two was observed, which is in agreement with the findings of Kavanagh and Halpern (1970) and Iris and Barrett (1972). But relationship is not that simple. When the nexus of satisfaction of different spheres of life was factor-analysed, job formed a part of factor 1, consisting of 5 elements, which together explained only 27.8 percent of the total variation, the communality of the item job being .65. However, the fact cannot be denied that Factor 1 (which was termed security) of

which job was a constituent explained the maximum variation as one single factor.

With the ever increasing industrialization there is a growing influx of migrants from different places of origin and Socio-cultural milieu who are joining the working force. Though this heterogeneous population (subject to emancipation from economic, demographic and ethnic controls) does not differ in conceptualization of happiness and life satisfactions, their attainments leave much to be desired. More rigorous scientific attempts are needed to unearth the intricacies of this gigantic socio-psychological problem — the multidimensional, dynamic and multi-determinant nature of life satisfaction and happiness.

#### APPENDIX 1

##### THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEASURING HAPPINESS THROUGH SATISFACTION

S. No.	Item	Scale†						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	How much are you satisfied with your food (with respect to your family also)?							
2.	To what extent the present national scene (political, economic and so on) satisfies you?							
3.	To what extent does your prestige and status satisfy you?							
4.	How much are you satisfied with clothes and dresses?							
5.	To what extent are entertainments present for your satisfaction?							
6.	How far are you satisfied with your children's welfare?							
7.	How much facility do you have regarding travel and transport?							
8.	How much are you satisfied with respect to your values and ideals?							
9.	How satisfactory your family relations are?							
10.	How much are you satisfied with your place of residence/housing facilities?							
11.	To what extent are you satisfied in fulfilling your aspirations to achieve better and higher (need for achievement)?							
12.	How much are you satisfied in terms of assistance from state or any agency of the state?							
13.	To what extent do your social relations satisfy you?							
14.	How satisfactory is your financial condition (money)?							
15.	Sometime back (i.e. before getting married) you must have had a desire for family with certain characteristics. To what extent are you satisfied with them now?							
16.	How satisfied are you with your service and job?							
17.	To what extent are you free from worries and thoughts which are mentally disturbing?							
18.	How far are you content with your land and property?							
19.	How far are you satisfied with the general health conditions of yourself and your family members?							
20.	It is a man's natural desire to be of some help/utility to the society in which he lives. How far are you satisfied with this aspect in your connection?							
21.	To what extent are you satisfied with the education of and educational facilities available to you and your family?							

† The scale ranges from least i.e. 1 to complete/most satisfied i.e. 7.

## APPENDIX 2

RELEVANT STATISTICS OF THE TWENTY-ONE ELEMENTS OF THE LIFE SATISFACTION AND THE FIVE DIMENSIONS / NEEDS

S. No.	Need/Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Reliability	S. No.	Need/Item	Mean	Standard deviation	Reliability
1.	<i>Basic</i>	3.70	0.38	.58††	13.	Social relations	2.97	0.54	.25††
1.	Food	3.93	0.46	.44††	14.	Social service	2.97	0.60	.45††
2.	Cloth	3.59	0.59	.38††	15.	Entertainment	2.73	0.46	.24†
3.	House	3.57	0.58	.28††	16.	National cause	2.06	0.59	.41††
II.	<i>Safety and Security</i>	2.98	0.30	.36††	IV.	<i>Self-Esteem &amp; Ego</i>	3.10	0.43	.33††
4.	Money	3.43	0.57	.55††	17.	Prestige and Status	3.23	0.56	.41††
5.	Children's welfare	3.07	0.51	.22†	18.	Service and job	2.96	0.55	.27††
6.	Health	3.11	0.50	.22†	V.	<i>Self Actualization</i>	2.38	0.38	.24††
7.	Land and Property	2.53	0.71	.29††	19.	Mental peace	2.91	0.58	.50††
8.	Govt. help	2.32	0.63	.21†	20.	Values and Ideals	2.05	0.66	.28††
III.	<i>Sociological</i>	2.89	0.26	.44††	21.	Need for achievement	2.12	0.52	.18
9.	Education	3.51	0.59	.48††	Overall	2.97	0.20	.51††	
10.	Family desire	3.31	0.58	.57††					
11.	Travel and transport facilities	3.03	0.43	.43††					
12.	Family relations	3.02	0.46	.28††					

† Significant at 5 percent level.

†† Significant at 1 percent level.

## APPENDIX 3

## RESULTS OF VARIMAX ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX AND COMMUNALITY\*

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor 8	Communa- lity
1. Food	.09	.13	.03	-.11	.87	.02	-.04	-.02	.79
2. House	.29	-.02	-.04	-.19	.10	.30	.17	.30	.35
3. Cloth	.49	-.26	-.01	.04	.38	-.04	.30	.13	.57
4. Money	.03	-.14	-.10	.03	-.07	.77	.06	-.10	.65
5. Education	.15	.26	-.00	-.10	.06	.11	.50	-.07	.38
6. Family desire	.40	-.14	.02	.12	.34	.02	.29	.22	.44
7. Prestige and status	.22	.04	-.04	-.03	-.04	.12	.39	.04	.23
8. Children's welfare	.28	.10	-.13	-.02	.00	.10	.15	.05	.15
9. Health	.13	.66	-.09	.18	.17	-.11	.04	-.05	.54
10. Transport & Travel	-.08	.54	.08	.08	-.01	.12	.15	.08	.36
11. Social relations	.05	.14	.17	.08	.08	.32	.12	.08	.19
12. Job & service	.76	-.07	.05	.20	-.01	-.10	.08	-.02	.65
13. Mental peace	.01	.01	.16	.02	.00	-.03	.04	.82	.69
14. Entertainment	.12	.39	.18	.26	-.11	-.19	-.11	-.13	.34
15. Land and property	.62	.30	-.08	.01	.12	.18	.00	-.08	.53
16. Family relations	.11	.19	.32	-.07	-.01	.20	.29	.08	.29
17. Social service	-.14	-.06	.82	-.01	.08	.04	.02	.13	.72
18. Govt. help	.06	.19	.01	.43	.04	.06	-.15	-.01	.25
19. Values and ideals	.13	.08	-.10	.88	-.01	.03	.25	.03	.88
20. National cause	-.03	.22	.27	-.04	-.09	-.15	.11	.02	.18
21. Need for achievement	.00	-.05	.21	.14	.02	-.02	.60	.10	.44

\* Both factor loadings and communality rounded to two decimal points and therefore communality may slightly suffer from rounding errors.

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— Happiness (or life satisfaction) related to more dimensions of life than purely consumption. — And the free-time variable in the utility function doesn't help much — Why: Motivation theories give the answer — Implications of theories of motivations: life satisfaction depends on factors that are not related to economic factors directly. — Allow to give structure to needs and wants. Welfare and Happiness - Evidence. — Rafael di Tella and Robert MacCulloch (2005): — We find that the happiness responses of almost 400,000 people in the OECD during 1975-97 are: (Highlighted and separated into Let's discover what the secret of a happy life is and how you can improve yours. — And this is precisely why you need to find some sort of satisfaction in what you do! Whether this takes the form of completing a challenging task, simply doing a good job at your job, solving a problem or issue, or even allowing yourself a quiet lunch-hour to read a book, find something about your work that makes you happy and do it. Now, if you find yourself, tired, exhausted, and dissatisfied every single day, without fail, then you might need to take a moment and readdress the problem. The World Happiness Database has ranked countries in order of how happy their people are — or to be more precise - their 'satisfaction with life'. Do you know which country came top of the list? Was it: a) Finland b) Canada c) Costa Rica. Finn: I think Finland has a high quality of life but let's say the happiest nation is Canada. 6 Minute English. © bbclearningenglish.com 2013 Page 1 of 4. Rob: Canada, ok. We'll find out if you are right at the end of the programme. So, let's talk more about happiness. There's been some good news from Holland — that's where