Does Money Buy Happiness?

Using Data to reveal Happiness correlations with relevant factors

Storyteller: Razvan N.
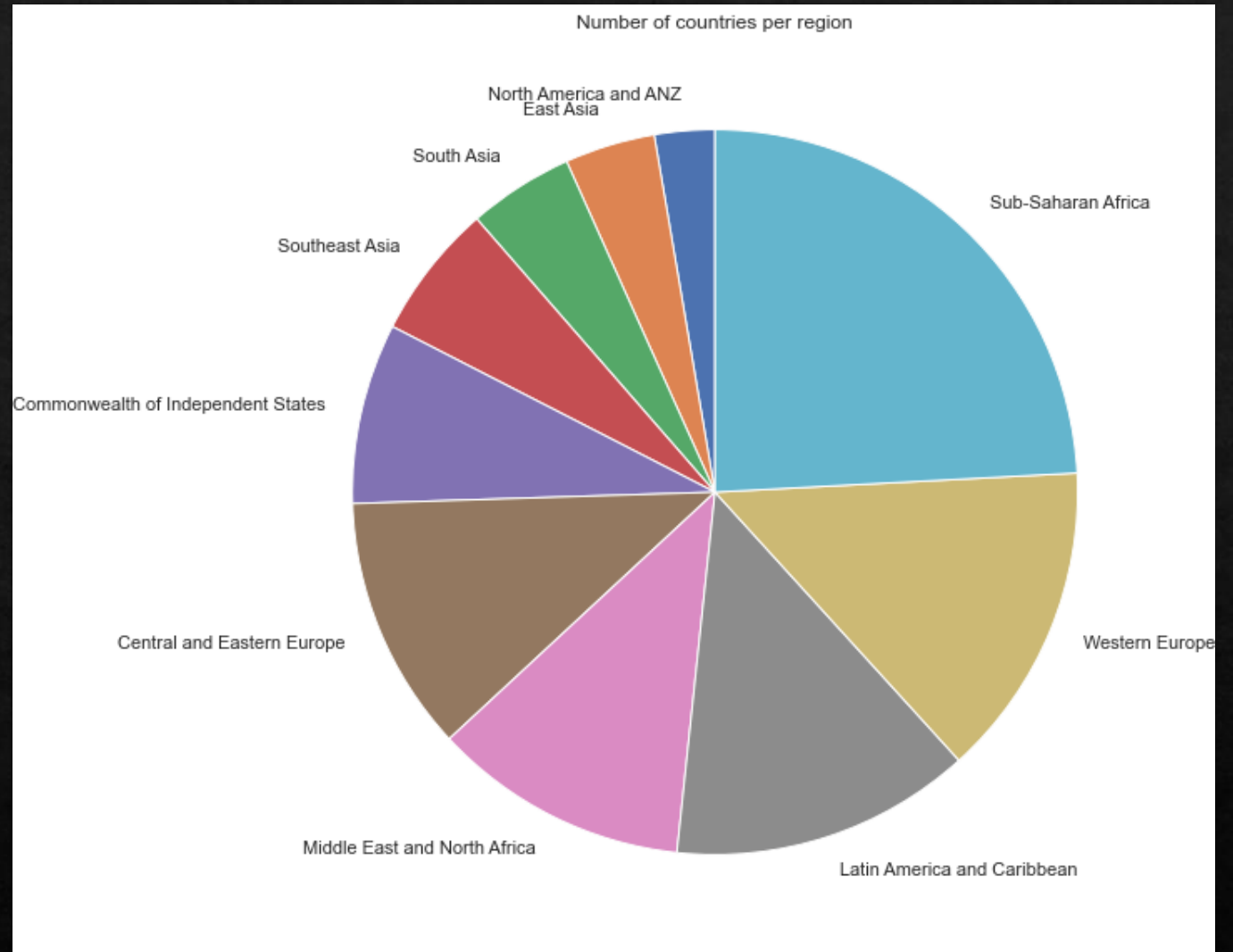
Show me the Data

The collected data originates from The World Happiness Report. This is a landmark survey of the state of global happiness.

It contains 149 countries from 10 regions in 6 different continents.
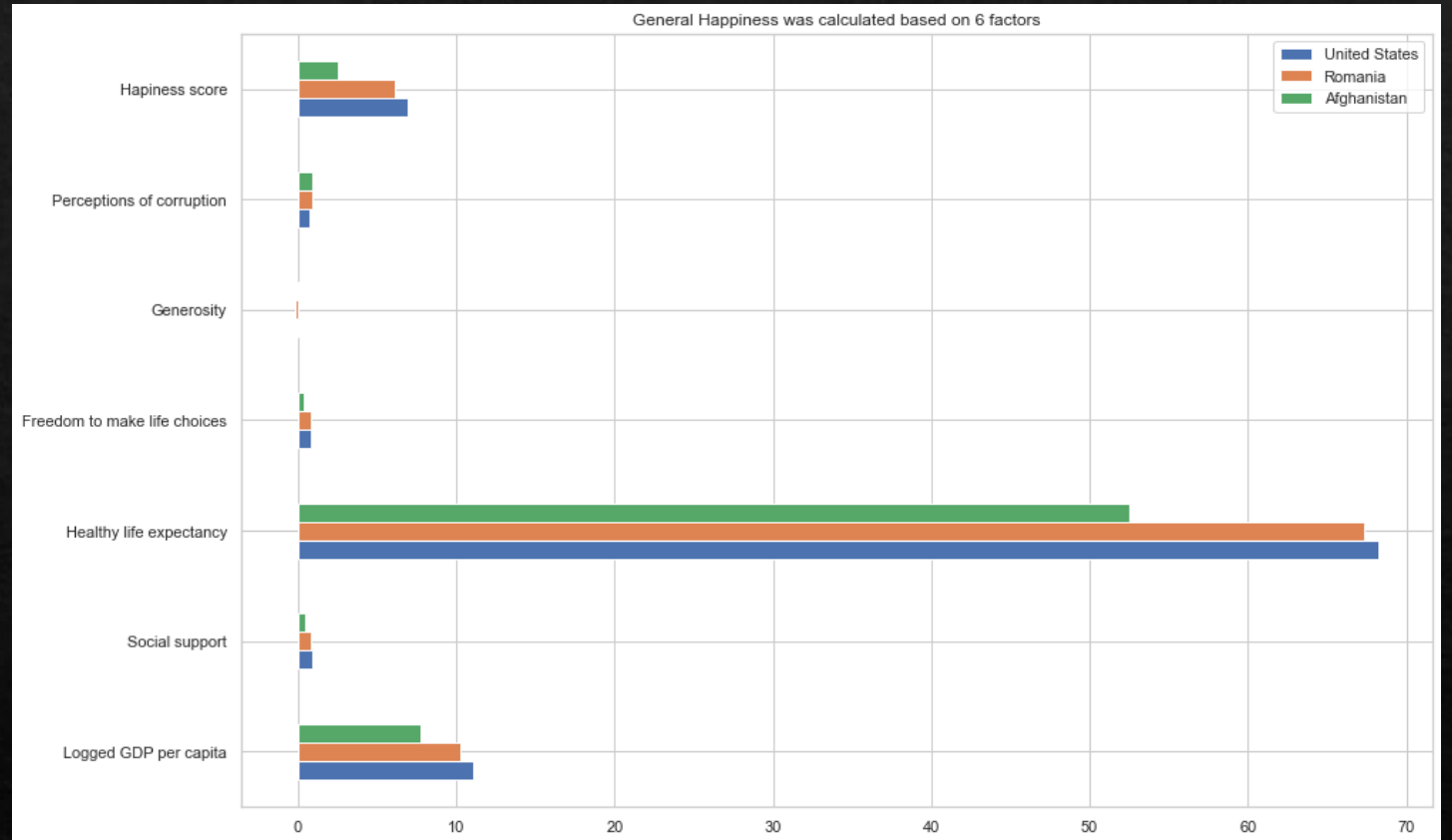
Presented data is gathered for the year of 2021

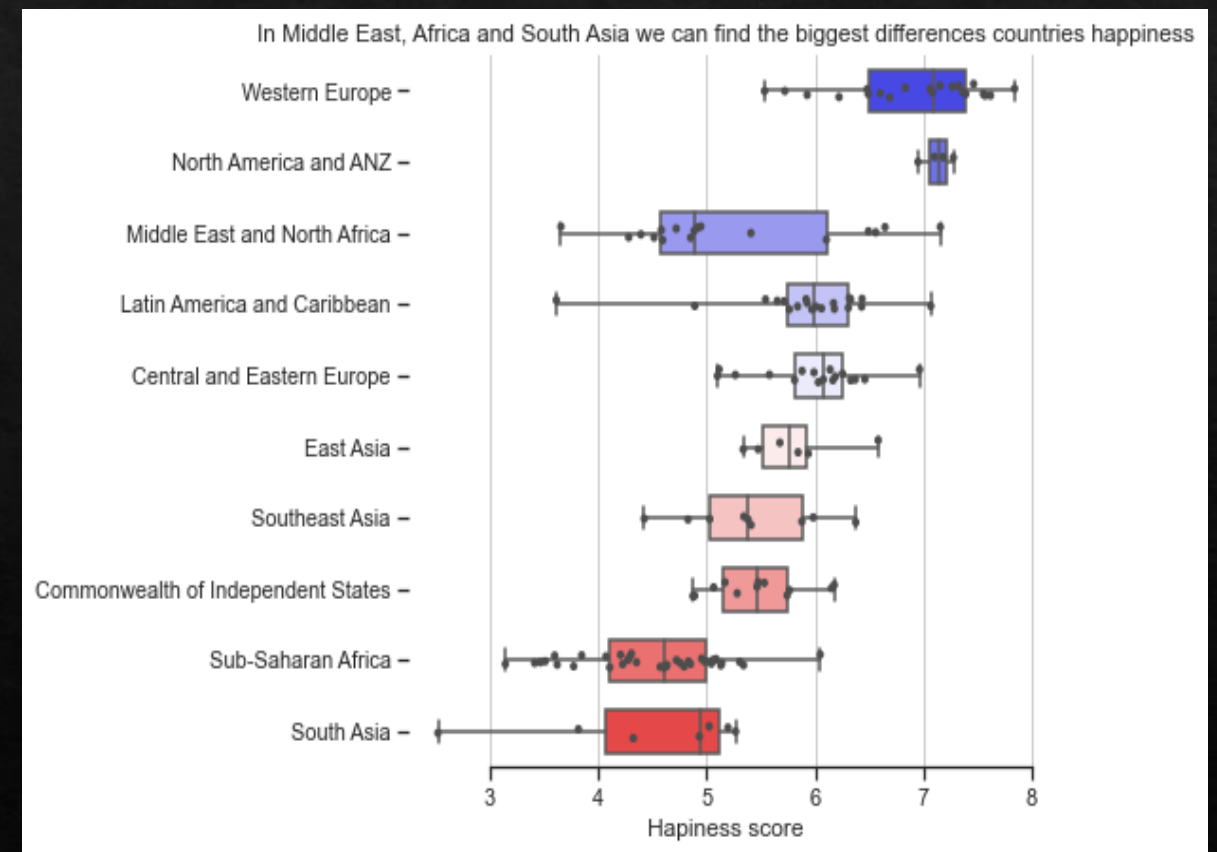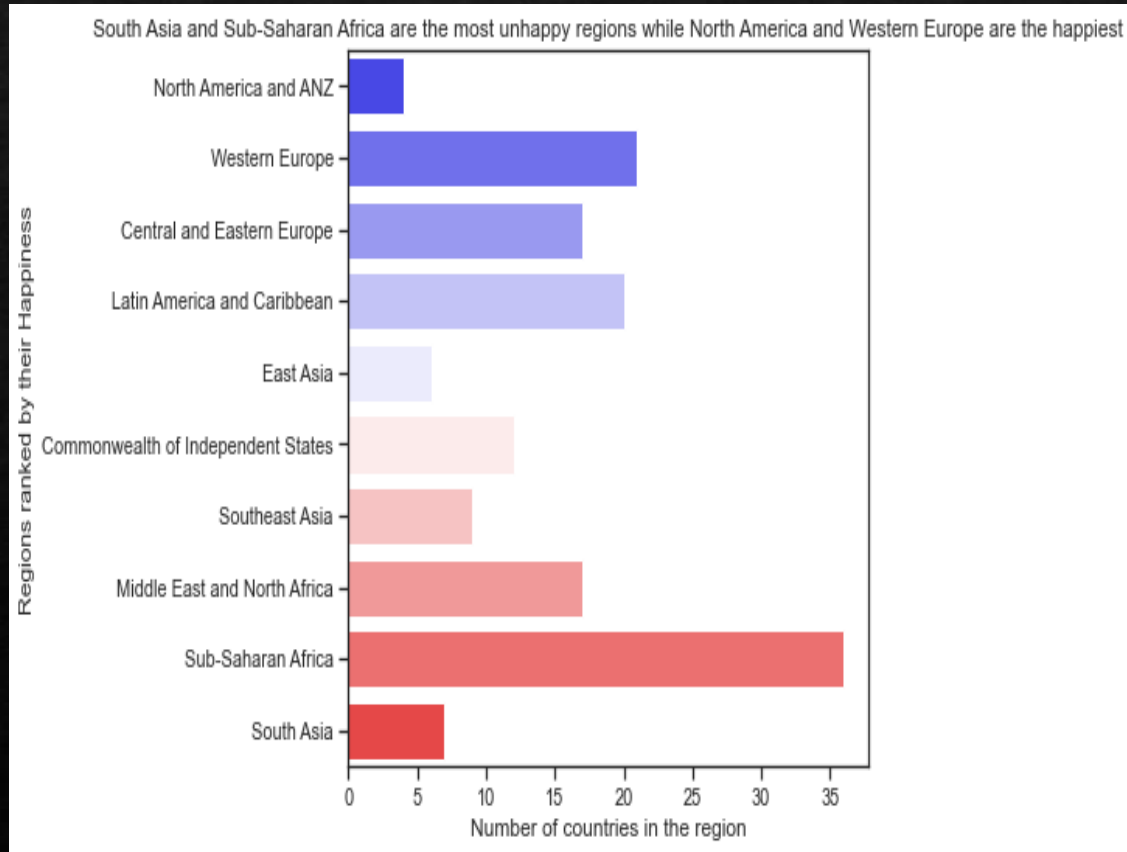The Happiness score was calculated out of six factors:

- ◇ economic production
- ◇ social support
- ◇ life expectancy
- ◇ freedom
- ◇ absence of corruption
- ◇ generosity

What Makes Us Happy?

	United States	Romania	Afghanistan
Logged GDP per capita	11.023	10.284	7.695
Social support	0.92	0.832	0.463
Healthy life expectancy	68.2	67.355	52.493
Freedom to make life choices	0.837	0.845	0.382
Generosity	0.098	-0.219	-0.102
Perceptions of corruption	0.698	0.938	0.924
Hapiness score	6.951	6.14	2.523

General Happiness was calculated based on 6 factors
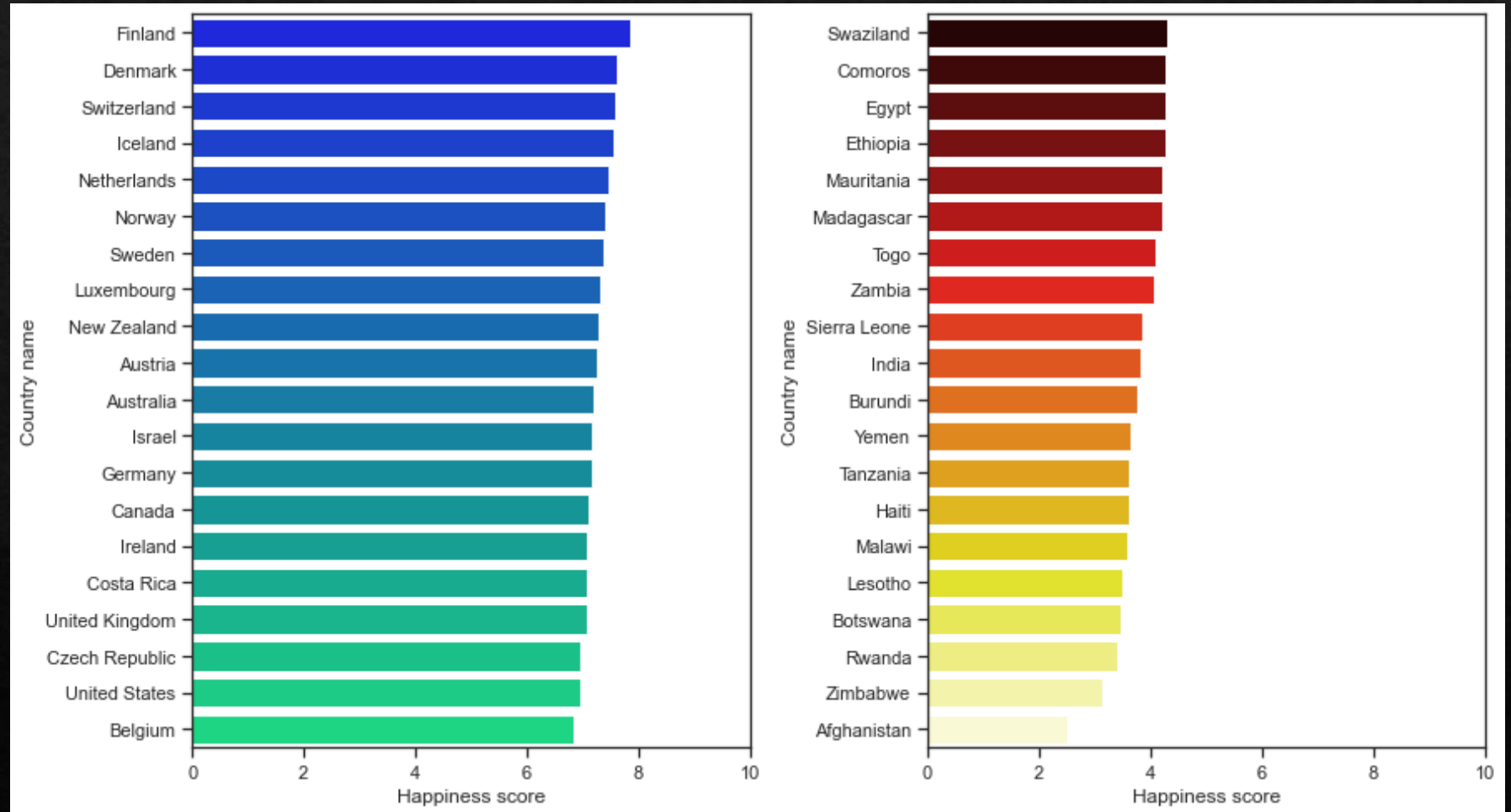
Big Happiness Differences exists not only between different regions, but also among countries from the same region.

South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa are the most unhappy regions while North America and Western Europe are the happiest

In Middle East, Africa and South Asia we can find the biggest differences countries happiness

But when it comes to most happy countries and least happy countries, we can see the big gap between Europe and Africa
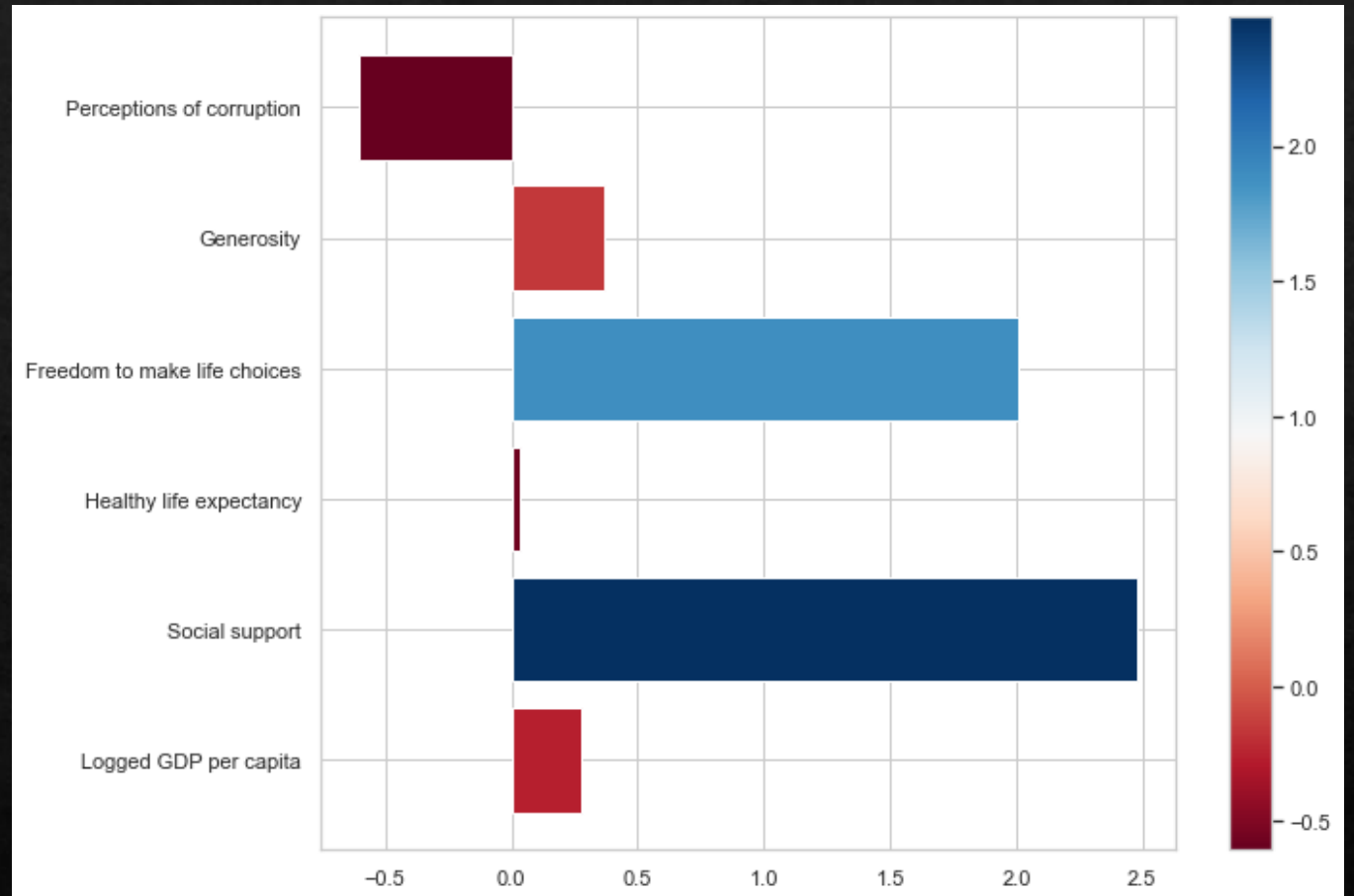

We know there are several causes that can determine the Happiness levels, so let's see which of the factors discussed here have the highest correlation.

ML Linear Regression modeling gave us the importance of each of the 6 factors
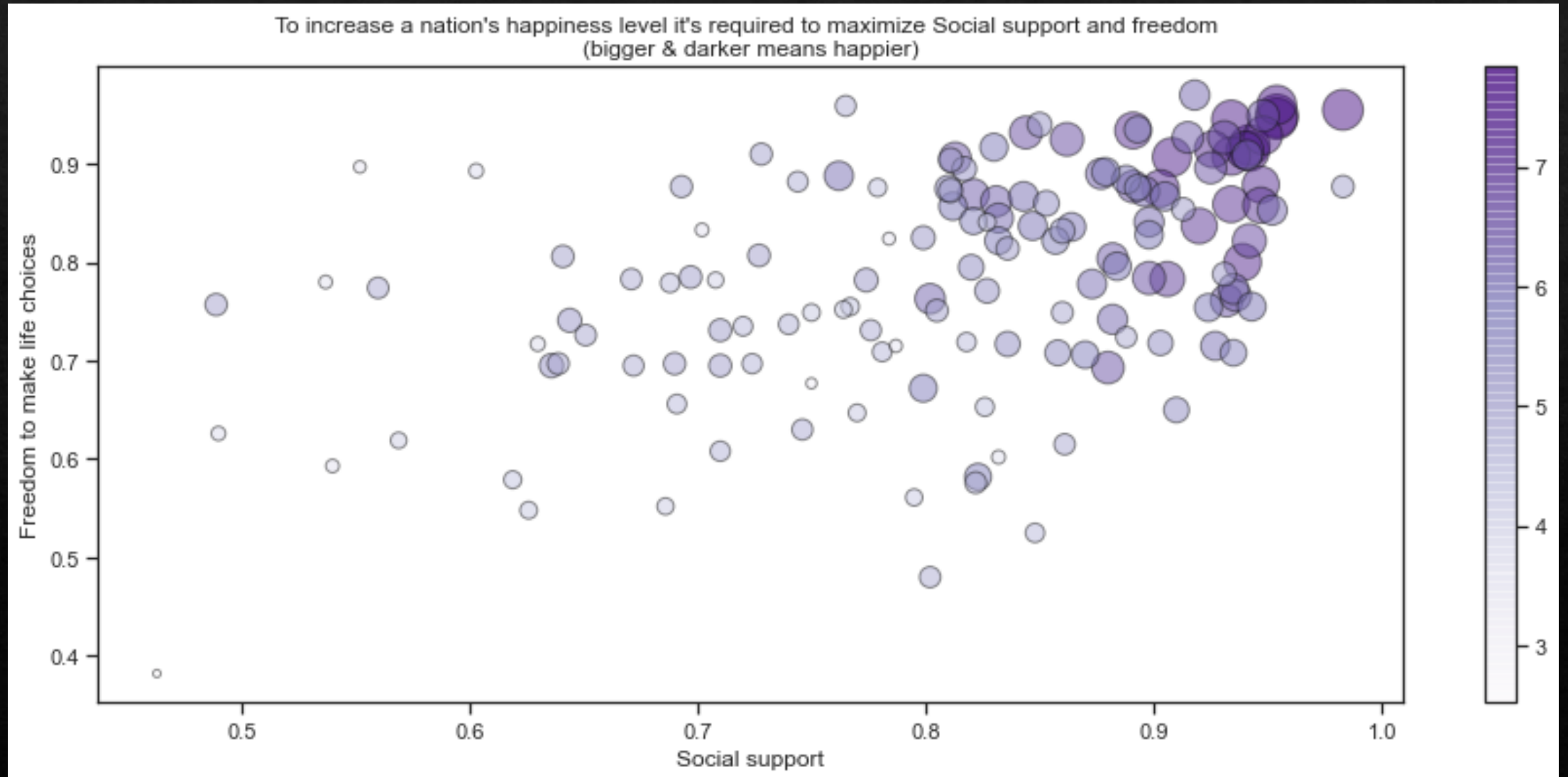
Very surprisingly, we can see that the main two deterministic factors in calculating the Happiness levels are in fact Freedom and Social Support.

The third most important is Corruption, negatively correlated.

GDA per capita has an even lower importance than Generosity, and its absolute importance is only higher than Life Expectancy.

The 2 factors that matter

To increase a nation's happiness level it's required to maximize Social support and freedom
(bigger & darker means happier)

Conclusion - is it us or them who hold the key to happiness?

◈ Money is a factor in overall population happiness. But so are Freedom, Social Support, Corruption, Generosity and Life Expectancy.

◈ And while there are obvious correlations demonstrated here, it's hard to determine the causality, so say with maximum confidence that one of this factors are absolutety causing happiness and not the other way around: an increased level of happiness determines a higher level of Generosity, for example.

◈ So while there's still work to do and exploration to be conducted, we can confidently say based on our short research that the political class and the leadership of a nation through the measures imposed and adopted are having a very high impact on overall national happiness.

◈ More precisely, people are not so much happier when they are accumulating loads of wealth, but rather when they receive Social support and have the Freedom to make life choices.

Thank you!