What makes people happy?

Insights from 2018-19 World Happiness Report 😊

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The source: World Happiness Report

The World Happiness Report (WHR) is a publication of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

It is a landmark survey about global happiness that ranks **156 countries** by how happy their citizens perceive themselves to be.

The source: World Happiness Report

The country ranking is based on answers to the main life evaluation question asked in the poll.

The raking used is the **Cantril ladder**: it asks respondents to think of a ladder with the best possible life being a 10 and the worst possible life being a 0. They are asked to rate their own lives on that scale.

Thriving 10

Suffering 0

The process: Know our data

The dataset includes data of two years, from both **2018** and **2019** surveys.

The **happiness indicators** (columns) of each country are:

- Overall rank
- Score from 0-10 based on the Cantril ladder
- GDP per capita
- Healthy Life Expectancy
- Social support
- Freedom to make life choices
- Generosity
- Perceptions of corruption

The process: Know our data

Some modifications and **data cleaning** have been necessary.

No duplicates are present.

Some redundant columns have been dropped.

Some columns have been renamed in order to make cleaning and analysis easier.

All columns contain data except for the **healthy life expectancy** where most of data is null. As we'll see, we first analysed the current data and later on we integrated the missing (null) data by merging our dataset with another one.

The analysis: Intermediate results

In an initial phase, the data from 2018 and 2019 have been **analysed separately** to understand if there were differences between the years in terms of overall happiness score and key indicators.

We discovered that **no substantial changes** have occurred, for this reason in the last phase the data has been analysed in its entirety (both years).

The analysis: Intermediate results
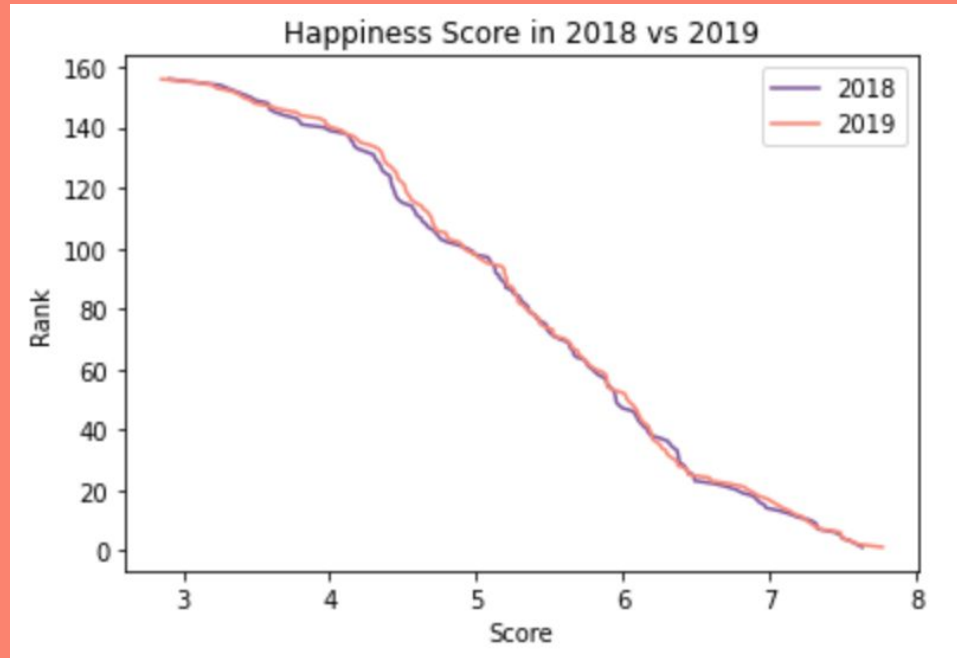
The analysis: Intermediate results

The first intermediate results come from the original dataset with missing data regarding healthy life expectancy.

After this first analysis, we discovered that **GDP per capita** has the highest correlation with the overall happiness score (even if it is not the only variable to consider - a rich country doesn't necessarily mean happy people). **Social support** comes right after, at the second place.

Partial Ranking

#1 GDP per capita

#2 Social support

#3 Freedom

#4 Corruption

#5 Generosity

The analysis: Intermediate results

Pearson's correlation coefficient:

- Score   1.000000
- GDP per capita   0.797977
- Social support   0.761080
- Freedom   0.539897
- Corruption   0.395319
- Generosity   0.106645

The conclusion: Highlights

After integrating the missing data, we found out that the healthy life expectancy indicator plays a **pivotal role** in what makes people happy.

In fact, it changed the ranking of happiness' key factors.

The final conclusion is that **per-capita income** and **healthy life expectancy** have the two **most significant effects** on citizens' life evaluations.

Final Ranking

#1 GDP per capita

#2 Healthy life

#3 Social support
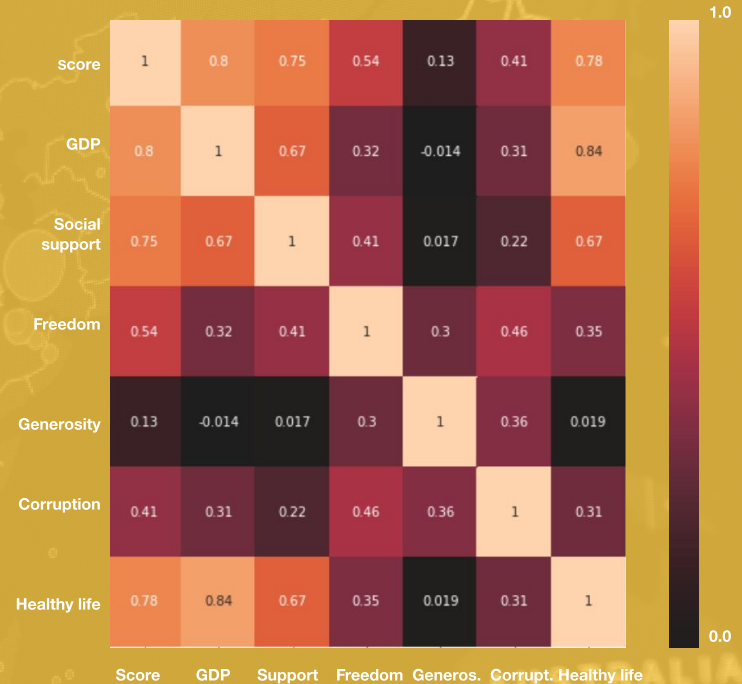
#4 Freedom

#5 Corruption

#6 Generosity

The conclusion: Highlights

Pearson's correlation coefficient:

- Score   1.000000
- GDP per capita   0.800976
- Healthy life exp   0.775122
- Social support   0.745760
- Freedom   0.544280
- Corruption   0.405292
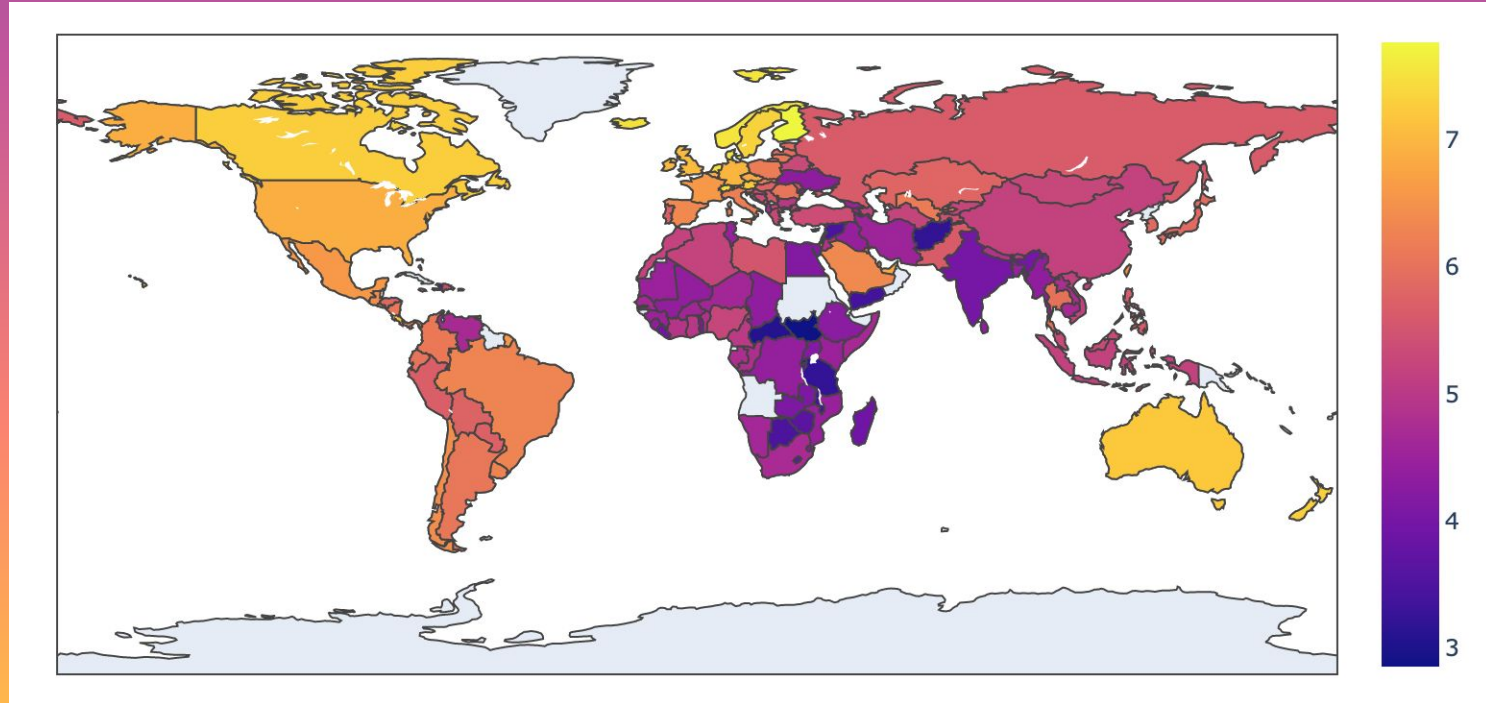- Generosity   0.134519

The conclusion: Highlights

People in **North-Western Europe countries** such as Finland, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, have the **highest happiness levels**. These regions are some of the most developed parts of the world and this can confirm our findings.

People in **Sub-Saharan Africa** (South Sudan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Tanzania) have registered very **low levels** of happiness. These regions are among the least developed parts of the world, in fact this data is sadly not surprising.

World global score based on the Cantril ladder

Thank you!

Giulia Brambilla