

What Makes Us Happy?

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Intro

Data: World Happiness Report 2019, World Bank Gender Statistics 2019

Summary: Looking at different predictors to see how they relate to a country's happiness score and to each other

Questions asked:

- Of the predictors that contribute to happiness scores, which best predict a country's happiness score?
 - GDP per Capita
 - Alternate Hypothesis: As GDP per capita increases, a country's happiness score will increase
 - Null Hypothesis: GDP per capita has no effect on a country's happiness score
- How does the Workforce Gender Ratio correlate with a country's GDP per Capita?
- How does freedom to make life choices correlate to perceived government corruption?



Predictors

Happiness Score - national average of responses evaluating life on a scale from 0-10 (10 being the best life possible for you)

GDP Per Capita - A higher number means a higher GDP per capita

Healthy Life Expectancy - A higher number means a higher life expectancy compared to other countries

Social Support - national average of the binary responses (either 0 or 1) to the Gallup World Poll (GWP) question “If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?”

Freedom To Make Life Choices - national average of binary responses to the GWP question “Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your freedom to choose what you do with your life?”

Generosity - the higher the number, the more people who have donated money to charity in the past month

Perceptions of Corruption - average of binary answers to two GWP questions: “Is corruption widespread throughout the government or not?” and “Is corruption widespread within businesses or not?”

Workforce Gender Ratio (from world bank) - Ratio of female to male workforce participation (per 100 males)



Limitations/ challenges

- Not all countries were included: only 135 countries overlapped with both the World Happiness Report dataset and the World Bank dataset
- The definitions of the predictors were specific, and somewhat narrow in their scope
 - I.e. Generosity
- The data are suggestive and could be interpreted in different ways



What we would do differently

- Explore different predictors that could contribute to happiness
 - School enrollment
 - Demographic data
- Know your data! Where does it come from, what exactly is being measured
- Explore and compare other datasets measuring similar data (i.e. other happiness data, etc.)
- Compare happiness scores before and after the pandemic