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## ECONOMICS OF HAPPINESS: A STUDY ON HAPPINESS INDICATORS IN UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

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**Abstract:** *The pursuit of happiness is a desire that everyone has in life. The behavioral economics can help to identify constraints to achieve the true happiness. This study made an attempt to identify some possible determinants to explain the happiness of university professors in higher education institutions in the city of Passo Fundo/RS. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using multiple regression models in seven different groups, classified into happiness by sex; happiness by marital status; happiness by age; happiness and money; happiness, sports and health; happiness, friendship, love relationships and sex life; and happiness, creativity and organization. The results show that money is not one of the major constraints to achieve happiness in this analysis group, that love relationships significantly increase the happiness of this study group, once sexual relationships don't represent happiness increasing. It was also found that emotional / mental health of the participants has significance to turn them happier as creative tasks and planning actions to the future to reach the dreams and goals demonstrate to increase the happiness of this sample of university teachers.*

**Key words:** *Happiness; Subjectivity; Professors; Money; Economic.*

**JEL Classification:** *I12, I31*

### I. INTRODUCTION

This paper intends to enter in the study of people living behavior doing a research on happiness. Happiness can be considered as one of the most desires things for everyone in life, and the greater good that everyone seeks to achieve (Aristotle, 1991). It is a very broad topic, which is difficult to reach a concrete conclusion on the subject, since it is known that depends a lot on which point of view that will analyze it, or even what factors are implicit behind it.

Aristotle (1991) depicts that happiness can be characterized by the act of living well and act well to be happy. Describes all the people idealizes the feeling of pleasure and can be seen in different ways, which gives a very high value on health when it is sick, and also to the money when it is poor, for example.

Currently, live up days collections increasing on what to do in life. Bauman (2001) notes that the struggle for success is inevitable, that the weight of the standard plot and the responsibility for failure, fall mainly on the shoulders of individuals. The author cites Castoriadis, saying that somehow the company is "crucified" because of the chores of everyday life and charge for always give more of them, not being satisfied with what has already conquered. It is being unable to stop and even less able to stand still, the consummation is always in the future, and objectives lose their attraction and potential of satisfaction at the time of its completion, if not before.

Thus, knowing the subjectivity that the issue covers, the work wants to understand the implications of socio-economic factors on the feeling of happiness that can be experienced by people in their daily routine. Especially, the question is how the economic condition, scholarship and studies may contribute to experiment a sense of happy life?

Therefore, the overall objective investigates the socio-economic factors and their association with the feeling of happiness on professors of higher education institutions in the city of Passo Fundo/RS, in order to examine whether this lifestyle contributes to feeling happy life.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 HAPPINESS

Happiness is correlated with the actions of individuals in their daily routine. Thus, term to be wise make reflections in order to get better clarification on everyday issues that life imposes.

The restlessness of the mind is clear. It is important to try to discover and define these concerns, as asking yourself what could be worth to choose: put more life in the years, or perhaps, more years in life? How project the values and purposes of the existence beyond the finitude? (GIANNETTI, 2005).

Giannetti (2002) also says that:

O desejo incita à ação; a percepção do tempo incita o conflito entre desejos. O animal humano adquiriu a arte de fazer planos e refrear impulsos. Ele aprendeu a antecipar ou retardar o fluxo das coisas de modo a cooptar o tempo como aliado dos seus desígnios e valores. *Isto agora ou aquilo depois?* Desfrutar o momento ou cuidar do amanhã? Ousar ou guardar-se? São perguntas das quais não se escapa. Mesmo que deixemos de fazê-las, agindo sob a hipnose do hábito ou em estado de “venturosa inconsciência”, elas serão respondidas por meio de nossas ações. Das decisões cotidianas ligadas a dieta, saúde e finanças às escolhas profissionais, afetivas e religiosas de longo alcance, as trocas no tempo pontuam a nossa trajetória pelo mundo (GIANNETTI, 2005, p. 9) <sup>6</sup>.

Jobs (2005) depicts that the lifetime is limited, which all share the same purpose, that is death. One should not waste time trying to live the lives of others or even be discouraged by pessimists who say that the ideas and dreams are not possible to be realized. One must believe in your intuition, to your inner being to have willpower and motivation to go after what you want to be, and as the author says, citing Brand: "Stay hungry. Stay foolish" (JOBS, 2005). Be silly to admit that do not know everything, and have an insatiable hunger to seek to learn more and more, "because everything else is secondary," he concludes .

Identify happiness is not easy. Can be seen as finding a final result of an action by checking the satisfaction of their desires for a moment of joy for the pleasure (ARISTOTLE, 1991).

Happiness it is a well given to man by nature, to the point that, since the beginning of thinking the human animal is distressed at how to see which is the end of human nature to determine the happiness (AMORIM; SILVA; CARDOSO, 2012).

Happiness on Aristotle's is seen as an end in itself, being conceptualized “[...] como um bem supremo, algo absoluto que converge na ação” (AMARAL; SILVA; GOMES, 2012, p.15)<sup>7</sup>. Aristotle characterizes pursue happiness as "eudaimonia". Eudaimonia is “[...] a finalidade última. Aquilo que não é meio para nada porque já é o máximo que se pode pretender. É vida que vale por ela mesma. Que esgota nela mesma sua razão de ser” (BARROS FILHO; MEUCCI, 2013, p. 52)<sup>8</sup>. Aristotle According to Chauí (2002),

[...] a felicidade é a vida plenamente realizada em sua excelência máxima. Por isso não é alcançável imediata nem definitivamente, mas é um exercício cotidiano que a alma realiza durante toda a vida. A felicidade é, pois, a atualização das potências da

<sup>6</sup> The desire incites the action; the perception of time encourages the conflict between desires. The human animals have acquired the art of making plans and restrain impulses. He learned to advance or delay the flow of things in order to co-opt the time as an ally of its purposes and values. This now or that after? Enjoy the time or care for tomorrow? Dare or be stored? These are questions which cannot be escaped. Even if we fail to do them, acting under hypnosis of habit or in a state of "blissful unconsciousness" will be answered by our actions. The daily decisions related to diet, health and finance professional choices, emotional and religious far-reaching trade in time punctuate our history the world (GIANNETTI, 2005, p. 9).

<sup>7</sup> “[...] as a supreme good, something absolute that converges in action” (AMARAL; SILVA; GOMES, 2012, p.15).

<sup>8</sup> “[...] the ultimate goal. That which is not a means to anything because it is already the most you can claim. It is life worth by itself. Exhausting in itself a reason for being ”(BARROS FILHO; MEUCCI, 2013, p. 52).

alma humana de acordo com sua excelência mais completa, a racionalidade (CHAUI, 2002. p. 442) <sup>9</sup>.

Giannetti (2002) addresses the happiness determinants, where the measurement of happiness for each person differs greatly. It shows that happiness discusses the subjective and objective dimensions. This last one is “[...] passível de ser publicamente apurada, observada e medida de fora, e que se reflete nas condições de vida registradas por indicadores numéricos de nutrição, saúde, moradia, uso do tempo, renda per capita, desigualdade e criminalidade [...]” (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 61, grifo nosso) <sup>10</sup>, for example. The subjective dimension is the inner experience of the subject, is everything that goes in the mind spontaneously while the person is living and acting in the course of the day that hold the conscious attention at the moments that it figure out what is feeling and thinking, or reflect on your own life (GIANNETTI, 2002).

In relations on the study of science, Giannetti (2002) compares both dimensions, saying it is more complicated when assessing the human mental states. Thus shows that:

[...] A realidade objetiva é apenas parte da realidade; mas a ciência só é capaz de lidar com essa parte. A felicidade, não importa como seja concebida, é uma preocupação universal da humanidade. Será que nós devemos então abandonar a pretensão de entendê-la e discuti-la racionalmente só porque ela, na medida em que pertence ao universo da subjetividade e ao mundo interior de cada pessoa, não se presta a um tratamento rigorosamente científico? (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 33-34) <sup>11</sup>.

Following, Giannetti (2002) says that happiness can be identified by a personal or professional achievement, something you've done in your life that brought you the feeling that you're happy. And brings out the fact that someone is happy in the global sense, and that this must be due to a number of factors which naturally gave him happy moments. You can also note that any person may be experiencing a magical moment of great happiness, but even so it is not considered happy. Sometimes someone is going through a very difficult and depressing period in his life, however, still can see the bright side of things and see that deep down is happy. Can be seen that perhaps “[...] o sentido de felicidade que mais nos interessa, suponho, é o do grau de satisfação global com a vida que se tem – o *ser feliz* mais que o *estar feliz*” (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 37) <sup>12</sup>.

Shikida (2008) estimates that happiness is obtained by maximizing the wishes of the people, where they have their wishes granted and stay happy. He questioned what comes to happiness, showing that being happy and happiness “[...] é um dos temas mais importantes de toda a história da humanidade” (SHIKIDA, 2008, p. 49) <sup>13</sup>. “ninguém ousou dizer ser o dono da verdade sobre esta definição, pois mesmos os grandes gênios sabiam da dificuldade de se definir a natureza do termo felicidade” (SHIKIDA, 2008, p. 49) <sup>14</sup>.

Shikida (2008) uses the music “Comida” that means food, launched by the Brazilian group Titas, authored by Arnaldo Antunes, Marcelo Fromer and Sergio Britto to say “we do not just want money, we want money and happiness”

[...] parafraseando a música “Comida” (“*Você tem sede de que? Você tem fome de que? A gente não quer só comida, a gente quer comida, diversão e arte*”), a nossa “sede” e a nossa “fome” é por uma Economia com mais “diversão” e “arte”; que também dê atenção aos fenômenos que, embora façam parte do nosso dia-a-dia,

<sup>9</sup> “[...] Happiness is life fully realized at its maximum excellence. So it is not reachable or definitely ready, but is a daily exercise that the soul performs during the life. Happiness is therefore to update the powers of the human soul according to its fullest excellence, rationality” (CHAUI, 2002. p. 442).

<sup>10</sup> “[...] likely to be publicly established, observed and measured out, and that is reflected in living conditions recorded by numerical indicators of nutrition, health, housing, use of time, per capita income, inequality and crime [...]” (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 61)

<sup>11</sup> “[...] the objective reality is only part of reality; but science is only able to handle that part. Happiness, no matter how it is conceived, is a universal concern of mankind. Do we then must abandon the claim to understand it and discuss it rationally only because she, in that it belongs to the universe of subjectivity and the inner world of each person, does not lend itself to a strictly scientific treatment? (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 33-34).

<sup>12</sup> “[...] the sense of happiness that interests us, I suppose, is the degree of overall satisfaction with life that has - to be happy more than happy” (GIANNETTI 2002, p. 37). Each person defines what is most important for himself and seeks the best way to carry out your wishes (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 37).

<sup>13</sup> “[...] is one of the most important issues in the whole history of mankind” (SHIKIDA, 2008, p. 49).

<sup>14</sup> And, for that reason “no one dared to say the truth owner about this definition because they knew the great geniuses of the difficulty in defining the nature of the term happiness” (SHIKIDA, 2008 p. 49).

como é o caso da relação dinheiro-felicidade, raramente são objetos do debate econômico (SHIKIDA, 2008, p.49, grifo nosso) <sup>15</sup>.

It is listening a lot to say that the money will bring happiness; it is observed that perhaps one does not depend on another, but that money can be a mean to help achieve it, thus not being directly interconnected.

“qualquer que seja o propósito último da existência humana de um ponto de vista cósmico, uma coisa é certa: o propósito terreno das pessoas de carne e osso em qualquer lugar do planeta é alcançar a felicidade e fazer o melhor de que são capazes de suas vidas” (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 59). Sendo assim, “a questão do segredo da felicidade e do lugar do prazer na melhor vida ao nosso alcance tem ocupado alguns dos melhores (e piores) cérebros da humanidade há milênios” (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 59) <sup>16</sup>.

## 2.2 Theoretical Model

Happiness was the central element in this study, a questionnaire was created to give a happiness index and variables that could explain it. It was claimed that happiness involves subjective well-being, thereby, consumer behavior theory in the economics science could try to explain it, because concern to study how consumers allocate income between different good and services seeking to maximize their well-being (PINDYCK; RUBINFELD, 2010).

In this relationship between income and well-being it was tried to investigate the popular assumption that more money equals more happiness. It is important to describe this fits in the microeconomics area of study, area of economics among other factors, also studies the decision-making process of companies, governments and people. “Na linguagem da microeconomia, o conceito de utilidade se refere ao valor numérico que representa a satisfação que o consumidor obtém de uma cesta de mercado” (PINDYCK; RUBINFELD, 2010, p. 72) <sup>17</sup>. This market- basket can be understood in the research, as the group of factors that contribute to the accomplishment the desires of people to achieve happiness.

To search for a formula that can make this relation of happiness with other factors, it was used a multiple regression formula. The following topics were exposed as built this multiple regression with the variables to seek to explain happiness.

## III. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research was characterized as descriptive, since the study was to analyze the results, describing the relations of the variables, where “[...]. Involves the use of standard techniques of data collection: questionnaire and systematic observation. It generally takes the form of Survey ”(PRODANOV; FREITAS, 2013, p.52).

A field survey was made with a specific sample of people evaluating the results obtained with the software EvIEWS 7. Thus, the study identifies as quantitative, since they need to use statistical techniques, which seeks to “[...] the cause-effect relationship between phenomena and also the ease of being able to describe the complexity of a particular event or condition [...] ”(PRODANOV; FREITAS, 2013, p.70).

In this way, also can analyze the relation of variables, it is possible to understand “[...] dynamic processes experienced by social groups, to provide input in the change process, creation or formation of opinions given group and allow a greater degree of depth the interpretation of particular behaviors or attitudes of individuals ”(PRODANOV; FREITAS, 2013, p. 70).

It is evident that the research presents the deductive method, defining as “[...] the method of the general and, below, down to the individual. From principles, laws or theories considered true and indisputable, predicts the occurrence of particular cases based on logic” (PRODANOV; FREITAS, 2013, p. 27).

<sup>15</sup> The author shows that paraphrasing the song "Comida - Food" ("Do you thirst of what? Do you have hunger of what? We not only want food, we want food, fun and art"), our "thirsty" and our "hunger" is for an Economy with more "fun" and "art"; that also observe the phenomena's that despite the fact being part of our daily routine, as is the case in relation money-happiness, are rarely a economic debate objects ( SHIKIDA, 2008, p.49).

<sup>16</sup> Giannetti (2002) comments that "whatever the ultimate purpose of human existence of a cosmic point of view, one thing is certain: the purpose ground of persons of flesh and blood anywhere on the planet is to achieve happiness and make the best that are capable of their lives "(GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 59). Thus, "the question of the secret of happiness and place of pleasure in life better in our power has occupied some of the best (and worst) brains of humanity for millennia". (GIANNETTI, 2002, p. 59).

<sup>17</sup> “In microeconomics language, the concept of utility refers to the numeric value that represents the satisfaction that the consumer obtains with a market-basket” (PINDYCK, RUBINFELD, 2010, p. 72).

The project was submitted to Brazil Platform, which is the body responsible for scientific research involving human subjects, and after evaluated, and having received authorization for the study, was started to the telephone contact with some higher education institutions in the city of Passo Fundo - RS, when was explained the research objectives and requested a commitment to the research being carried out at the primary school. Entered in touch with all higher education institutions of Passo Fundo/RS.

After the approval, the survey was sent directly to the institutions through a digitalized questionnaire "Google docs". These questionnaires were sent by e-mail to university professors, through their own institutions of higher education. Only answered professors who agreed to voluntarily participate. To finish answering the questionnaire, they read the consent form and if were in accordance with the rules, when finalizing the questionnaire would be automatically forwarding the responses to the researcher in charge.

To obtain the data was carried out this survey of September 25 of 2014 until October 31 of 2014, where was obtained a total of 217 university professors who completed the questionnaire.

It is important to say that before reaching an econometric model which evaluates the variables, it was need to create some dummy variables. These are variables created in order to numerically measure some of the survey responses. For example, for the "dummy sex of respondents" was randomly chosen as one (1) the female sex and zero (0) the male sex.

A "dummy phase of life that people felt happier" is also interesting to note, showing that in this case dummies were created for the age groups that presented more answers.

With the creation of dummy variables yielded a total of forty six variables in a matrix of forty-six for forty-six. In this matrix, were highlighted all variables that shown a degree of correlation greater than 0.70 and less than -0.70 to not be considered together, in order to not experience this problem of multicollinearity between variables, which is where the variables have a high level of correlation between them and cannot be interpreted correctly (GUJARATI; PORTER, 2011).

After a series of attempts, came to the econometric model of multiple regression that adjusted the data consistently to estimate the relationship of the dependent variable "Y (happiness)" in relation to the explanatory variables "X1 (sex), X2 (married) , X3 (phase happy life), X4 (financial income), X5 (financial stability), X6 (financial problems), X7 (university professor salary), X8 (half the salary), X9 (salary increase), X10 (family income per month), X11 (sports), X12 (physical health), X13 (emotional/mental health), X14 (friendship), X15 (love relationships), X16 (sexual life), X17 (creative tasks) and X18 (dreams and goals). "

Y: Happiness - is how the person is considered a happy person (scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

- X1:** Dummy sex  $\begin{cases} 1 = \text{female} \\ 0 = \text{male} \end{cases}$
- X2:** Dummy married  $\begin{cases} 1 = \text{married} \\ 0 = \text{other marital status} \end{cases}$
- X3:** Dummy stage of life that people felt happier  $\begin{cases} 1 = 31- 60 \text{ years} \\ 0 = \text{other ages} \end{cases}$
- X4:** Dummy family income per month in minimum wages  $\begin{cases} 1 = \text{until 8 minimum wage} \\ 0 = \text{over 8 minimum wage} \end{cases}$
- X5:** Dummy practice sport or physical exercise  $\begin{cases} 1 = \text{Yes} \\ 0 = \text{No} \end{cases}$

**X6:** Do you believe that your financial income contribute to your happiness? (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10).

**X7:** Financial stability contributes to your happiness? (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10).

**X8:** Financial problems leave you more unhappy or dissatisfied in your life? (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10).

**X9:** Do you consider yourself satisfied with the salary you receives as a university professor? (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10).

**X10:** Do you believe that would be a happy person if you received the half money that you receive today? (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

**X11:** If you receive a higher salary do you believe it would be a happier person? (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

**X12:** Satisfaction with physical health (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

**X13:** Satisfaction with emotional/mental health (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

**X14:** Satisfaction with friendships (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

**X15:** Satisfaction with love relationships (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

**X16:** Satisfaction with sex life (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

**X17:** The tasks you perform at work are most repeated or creative? (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

**X18:** Do you go forward to reach your dreams and goals? (Scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum value and the maximum value is 10)

## IV. DISCUSSIONS OF RESULTS

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

It is important to describe the average, the maximum value, the minimum value and the standard deviation of variables used in this study. With this information you can find out which is the average of all survey responses for each variable. Thus, one can also see the lowest and highest values that appeared in the studied sample. The maximum value and the minimum value for the variables range is 10 and 1 respectively, while for the dummy variables are 1 and 0. With the standard deviation can be noted the dispersion of the values due to the arithmetic mean, repairing if you have one low value, is that the values are close to the average, and is high case, these values are shown to be well spread (GUJARATI; PORTER, 2011). Thus, Table 1 shows these respective values for each variable.

In table 1 can be analyzed that all these variables created by the questionnaire responses, show, in general, have the standard deviation set by the arithmetic mean. Note that the variables had different responses among the participants, ranging in almost all of them the maximum value to the minimum value, both dummy variables as in scheduling by variables.

It should be noted that the mean values of the variables for this scale descriptive statistics show the note that participants have a scale of 1 to 10 for the answer to each question. This doesn't present the relation between these different factors for each question in order to explain happiness.

**Table 1 - Average, maximum, minimum and standard deviation**

| Variable                | Average | Maximum | Minimum | Standard |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Happiness               | 8,18    | 10      | 2       | 1,46     |
| Sex                     | 0,58    | 1       | 0       | 0,50     |
| Married                 | 0,52    | 1       | 0       | 0,50     |
| Phase of happier life   | 0,49    | 1       | 0       | 0,50     |
| Financial income        | 7,94    | 10      | 2       | 1,67     |
| Financial stability     | 8,29    | 10      | 2       | 1,59     |
| Financial problems      | 6,11    | 10      | 1       | 2,75     |
| Professor salary        | 6,62    | 10      | 1       | 2,47     |
| Half of salary          | 5,26    | 10      | 1       | 2,77     |
| Salary increase         | 6,40    | 10      | 1       | 2,82     |
| Family income per month | 0,19    | 1       | 0       | 0,39     |
| Sports                  | 0,69    | 1       | 0       | 0,46     |
| Physical health         | 7,39    | 10      | 1       | 2,16     |
| Emotional/mental health | 7,62    | 10      | 1       | 2,18     |
| Friendship              | 7,59    | 10      | 1       | 1,97     |
| Love relationships      | 7,94    | 10      | 1       | 2,30     |
| Sex life                | 7,53    | 10      | 1       | 2,09     |
| Creative tasks          | 6,83    | 10      | 1       | 2,27     |
| Dreams and goals        | 8,75    | 10      | 3       | 1,35     |

Source: Research data

So you can see, for example, that the happiness levels of the participants have an average of 8,18. The prices can go from 10 (maximum value) and (1 minimum value), it appears that this average indicates a high score given to the variable happiness by the professors participating in the research.

### 4.2 VARIABLES ANALYSIS

The variable happiness was obtained through the question - at what level the person consider her a happy person? In this part of the analysis of the variables it is possible to understand how that happiness variable is related to the other variables, called explanatory's, that were created through other questions that could be decisive for obtaining happiness.

The results of the chosen econometric model as Gujarati and Porter (2011) described, can be obtained estimating the parameters ( $\beta$ ) of the explanatory variables in function of the dependent variable ( $\gamma$ ) by a multiple regression. Crossing these data, it can verify the impacts that the explanatory variables have with the happiness of the dependent variable, which seeks to explain (Table 2).

It is important to describe what represent some of these values of the table before starting the explanation of the relation between variables. The  $R^2$  is the coefficient of determination and represents how much the dependent variable is related to the independent variables. If the  $R^2$  is 1 can be seen that the variables are fully related, and if is zero it is evident that do not have any relation. Note that the  $R^2$  of 0.4655, obtained by this model is a good result, showing that the variables have an important relation between each other (GUJARATI; PORTER, 2011; BUSCARIOLLI; EDWARDS, 2011).

**Table 2 - Estimated coefficients for happiness analysis**

| Variable                | Coefficients            |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| C                       | 2.403722*               |
| Sex                     | 0.378343**              |
| Married                 | 0.173044 <sup>ns</sup>  |
| Phase of happier life   | 0.285653***             |
| Financial income        | 0.046752 <sup>ns</sup>  |
| Financial stability     | 0.034557 <sup>ns</sup>  |
| Financial problems      | -0.078466**             |
| Professor salary        | 0.075796**              |
| Half of salary          | 0.025596 <sup>ns</sup>  |
| Salary increase         | -0.003274 <sup>ns</sup> |
| Family income per month | 0.497208**              |
| Sports                  | 0.296709***             |
| Physical health         | 0.041935 <sup>ns</sup>  |
| Emotional/mental health | 0.195590*               |
| Friendship              | 0.017541 <sup>ns</sup>  |
| Love relationships      | 0.156821*               |
| Sex life                | -0.115433**             |
| Creative tasks          | 0.071697***             |
| Dreams and goals        | 0.164169**              |
| $R^2$                   | 0.465579                |

Source: Research data

\*: Significant variable 1%

\*\*\*: Significant variable 5%

\*\*\*: Significant variable 10%

<sup>ns</sup>: Not significant variable

For the analysis of how significant are the results of the model variables, is carried out hypothesis testing. In statistics is called the null hypothesis tested against the alternative hypothesis, in order to investigate whether the null hypothesis should be rejected or not. The aim is to prove the confidence of the variables, which is found on the significance of Table 3, where confidence levels begin to be evaluated from 99%, then 95% and finally accepted to 90%. If they do not reach 90%, the variables are considered not significant (GUJARATI; PORTER, 2011).

It was divided up the explanatory variables in seven different groups, which are: Happiness by Sex; Happiness by Marital Status; Happiness by Age; Happiness and Money; Happiness, Sports and Health; Happiness, Friendship, Love Relationships and Sex Life; and Happiness, Creativity and Organization.



**Happiness by Sex.** It is noticed that women indicate to be happier than men, with a significance level of 5% (Table 3). This significant difference in favor of female sex to the feeling of happiness denotes a difference in gender issues that is interesting. Something that might be explained by women's emancipation, where women become increasingly independent in the modern world. Rial, Pedro and Arend (2010) say that exist representative association between higher levels of education and women's empowerment. "[...] a better educational level enables the increasing potential to generate income, autonomy, control their fertility and participation in public life essential aspects to change the women lives" (RIAL; PEDRO; AREND, 2010, p.142).

Thus, "[...] opens up the real possibility of building more democratic gender relations, in which the right to equality and respect for difference are the cornerstones" (ARAÚJO, 2005, p. 51). The women gains arising today can be understood as reasons why they present to be happier in this research. Interesting that this positive result for the group of women is different from one found in other studies, as exposes Ferraz, Tavares and Zilberman (2007), who observed that men and women do not differ as to the happiness index. However, the data obtained in this study with this specific sample, open perspectives for deployment of future studies of gender.

**Happiness by Marital Status.** Note that while some married people shown to be happier than people in other marital statuses, this variable was not appear level significance compatible with the analysis, 1%, 5% and even 10% of significance. Anyway it is interesting to consider that data do not indicate to be definitive marriage to the feeling of happiness in the sample, even identifying themselves as married individuals represent more than half the people in the sample.

**Happiness by Age.** This variable was to examine in what period of life that people were happier in their lives. The data showed that individuals claimed to be happier during 31 to 60 years old than in other age groups, with significance at 10%. It is important to know that 41.69 years is the average age of people in the sample, noting that maybe people believe is in this period where they get the greatest achievements in their lives. Erikson (1998) calls this phase, as conflict between "generatively and stagnation." Rebelo and Borges (2009) supported by Erikson say that this generatively "[...] has implications for understanding the proactive development of adulthood. Referring to the interest and involvement in care and guidance of the younger generation, to the role of other care as a development task [...]" (REBELO; BORGES, 2009, p 98.). At this stage the man becomes more active and held several positions to build a more just society, and think about the survival of the species. The man thinks more in the future and worries wanting to let good fruit for generations to come. These could be some explanatory hypotheses to be this a phase of more happiness and fulfillment in life.

These age groups were organized based on Erikson (1998) that divides man in eight different ages. In the survey were created six different age groups, as follows: up to five years old; six to twelve years, thirteen to eighteen; nineteen to thirty years; thirty-one to sixty years; and after sixty years old. It should be also noted that the participants to identify this period as the best of their lives, corresponding from 31 to 60 years, places the period of age that most respondents to the study is living. This fact makes us think that there is an identification of satisfaction with the time of life that are going through, and that the factors raised by Erikson (1998) on this period of development, "generatively X stagnation" was being experienced in the daily lives of participants study, and contributes to the feeling of happiness that are shown.

**Happiness and Money.** People were asked in the survey if their financial incomes contribute to their happiness, which was obtained positive sign for the answer. As this variable did not show significance level in the model, it is understood that money is not a factor for obtaining happiness and may contribute to the happiness of some and to others do not.

Financial stability is another variable that has a positive sign and is not significant. Being observed that is not one of the most important things to be happy with this group of university professors.

It can check for this group of people, with 5% significance level, the financial problems alone will not be very important factors to cause unhappiness or dissatisfaction with their lives.

It was found that the group that participated in the survey receive an average salary only as a university professor of R\$ 7.602,00 per month, is not evaluated in this value if they have any other way of obtaining income. When asked if they were satisfied with the salary they received as university professors, positive signal was found with 5% significance in the result, evaluating that professors who participated in the survey demonstrate not be dissatisfied with the wages they receive as academics.

The group interviewed tended to answer that would be happy if received half the salary they receive today. The result showed no significant degree, but either way, there is again that for many people of this sample, the money does not appear as a major determinant of happiness exclusively.

Analyzing the results of the question, in which it asked, in case they received a higher salary, if university professors believe that would be happier people, it was obtained other interesting information about the relation between money and happiness. It is another not significant variable in statistical point of view, but in any case, can be understand that much of this respondent group does not believe that would be happy just because of receiving a higher salary.

Another relevant data found in this research, is that people who have a family income between one and up to eight times the minimum wage, have proven to be happier than people with a family income of more than eight minimum wages, with 5% significance level.

With these interpretations of the variables between money and happiness is worth mentioning that "[...] in general, we can say that money contributes to some extent and in some levels to the perception of happiness in life, but above all also depend on its relationship with other factors "(FERREIRA, 2008, p. 27).

Sachs, Helliwell, Layard (2013) depicts that some sages of humanity have said the material gains do not satisfied the greatest human needs. The material life should be used to solve the major problems of humanity seeking to attain happiness in every corner of the world. Mentioning that the United States, the largest world power, has for year's major technological innovation and economic growth, but this does not represent increase the happiness of its people. Satisfaction with people's lives remains constant even in periods of growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

**Happiness, Sports and Health.** It can be seen that the performance of physical activities and sports increase the degree of happiness of this group of university professors, with significance level of 10%.

Satisfaction with physical health of respondents representing an increase of happiness for some of the respondents, but this variable has not present significance, not being one of the main determinants of happiness for the study group.

In relation with the emotional/mental health of respondents, this variable shows significance by 1%. This shows that for this group, happiness increases because they are satisfied with their mental/emotional health.

Ferraz, Tavares, Zilberman (2007) speak of Csikszentmihalyi, author who studies happiness for a long time, and created the name "flow", that can be understable as "[...] an operational state of mind in which the individual is completely immersed and focused on what you're doing, being successful in the activity and deriving it a great pleasure "(FERRAZ; TAVARES; ZILBERMAN, 2007, p 238.). Thus, the subject having a great mental and psychological functioning, through their livingness and experiences reports to be a happy person.

It should be also noted, that individuals with good emotional state, has greater resilience, and have better ability to face the problems of daily routine, leaving strengthened overcoming these adversities. It is considered very important this data therefore denotes, on the one hand, the subjective well-being expressed in the respondents, on the other hand, it is identified that in subjects who work in various areas of knowledge: humanities, exact, social among others, there is a relationship between emotional health and happiness.

**Happiness, Friendship, Love Relationships and Sex Life.** Note that satisfaction with the friendship has a positive signal in the model, and thereby demonstrating that friendships contribute to people in this group to be happier. The variable is not significant in the model, and it can say that is not relevant to obtaining happiness for all people in the sample.

It is important to check that satisfaction with romantic relationships makes people the happiest study. You referred satisfaction with sex life of the people, it is seen that even having an active sex life, and that person is satisfied with him sex live, this do not demonstrates let the person happier. These two variables have 5% significance. It is noteworthy that the majority of respondents have to be currently living continued love relationships. It is evident that 71% of the total samples are living in a relationship, since 52% said to be married and 19% being in a stable relationship. It is clear, therefore, that, for this group, together with the other participants, romantic relationships are more important for achieving happiness than a satisfying sex life.

**Happiness, Creativity and Organization.** It appears that the people of research that showed perform more creative tasks in their work have increased your level of happiness with 5% significance in the result. In the interviewed group, being significant at the 5% who said they will search to reach your dreams and goals also proved to be happier, seeing that the planning of their actions upon the future is an important condition for reaching happiness. Sternberg (2000, apud ANDRADE, 2004) had stated that creative individuals believe in themselves, and the ability manifested in order to find what they love to do and actually do what they love are pointed to the pursuit of growth without locking struggles with new ideas. If you have to take risks and tolerate a certain level of anxiety to the point of making concrete ideas, making them efficient. These general characteristics make these people overcome their obstacles, putting on several levels when compared to others.

You can still get this relationship between creative work and mental health through studies of Wechsler (1999) that discusses the relevance of the relationship between creativity and mental health. For her, the approaches between both result from a harmonious integration between the cognitive, affective and social. Therefore, the existence of efforts to seek to develop enabling environments for creative expression, both at home, at school, at work or in society, could favor the mental health (apud SANTEIRO; SANTEIRO; ANDRADE, 2004).

So, it is possible to see that creativity can help in the development of people and to overcome the adversities imposed by life. The organization may be linked to creativity, but in any case, with the planning of ideas and actions in life, it becomes easier to achieve the results desired. These factors identify some elements that can contribute to the fulfillment of desires of this group of university professors, making them happier.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

With this worked we sought to identify some factors that could be related to contribute to the happiness of human beings. In this study chose to check if university professors of higher education institutions of Passo Fundo-RS, because they average salary, cultural learning and education levels above the average of the population, could be happy people.

Something quite challenging to study happiness, because as was discussed in the course of work, it is difficult to say exactly what it is or what should be done to get it. One thing is certain, that is believed to be clear: there is no recipe for being happy, or some perfect model to follow. Each individual has different experiences and livingness, enabling distinct ways of looking and living life, depending therefore very subjectivity of each subject the feeling of happiness that can be experienced.

The purpose of this study was able to bring benefits in the economics and its related fields to study the dilemmas impose for life with the behavior of human beings. Aristotle once said that happiness is the highest good, which all seek to achieve, it is the end of it. So, this research wanted to give its contribution to this field of study, analyzing some conditions that could influence the happiness of people.

In the presentation and discussion of results was observed that for this sample of university teachers in higher education institutions in Passo Fundo-RS, women proved to be happier than men, where the marital status did not represent a significant importance in determining happiness, and that the phase of life that is considered or consider themselves happier, is between 31 to 60 years old.

Money shows not to be one of the most important factors for obtaining happiness in this group. It was evident that the financial income and financial stability are not the main means to be a happy person. As also, noted that financial problems would not be the cause of unhappiness or dissatisfaction with life in this group of participants. To strengthen this idea, it is worth to say that the survey participants said they were not unsatisfied with the wages they receive as university professors. Some of them believe that would be happy even getting half the wages they receive today, and that for some subjects, they did not believe that would be happy just by receiving a higher salary. Also in this analysis of the relation between money and happiness, there is this study that people with family income up to eight times the minimum wage presents to be happier than those receiving more than eight times the minimum wage.

It is noticed that the sports or physical exercise contributes to happiness, while that physical health is not the greatest determinant of happiness for the study sample, but the mental/emotional health has significance level, contributing to let people happier.

It's interesting to consider that love relationships contribute to the happiness of study participants, while satisfaction with sex life does not identifies to bring greater happiness, which are very curious data.

The links of friendship contribute to the happiness of some, but this factor is not as decisive to be happy because it has no significance.

Finally, it was observed that in this group of university professors, creativity at work and the planning of actions to the future in order to achieve the dreams and goals provide a significant increase in happiness.

Upon completing this study, one can consider that being happy is a subjective construction. However, in the economy it is understood that the factors of daily life, the condition of a dignified life, the constancy of certain standards of living can contribute rather to the mental health of individuals, and strengthen the feeling of well-being with lifetime. It is believed that the sample studied, to have this condition of dignified life, work with good pay, possible studies that help to reflect on life that lead would have few breaths for the general public and contribute to the contents of happiness found here. Another important issue, observed in this work is that cannot determine the equation - "more money, would be equal more happiness."

Happiness is one of the most precious things in the world, hard to imagine human beings who do not wish to be happy. The present study was designed knowing the greatness and also having idea of multiple factors that stands in the explanation of happiness. It is believed that have brought some understanding of this reality. Fact is that is necessary to make contact with the different realities to try to explain and understand phenomena like this. The science is renewed, and new studies could expand the findings described so far.

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