

# Very Quick Introduction, Quick Look at Data, Discussion of Your Happiness Research

this version: Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2025 10:51

[adam.okulicz.kozaryn@gmail.com](mailto:adam.okulicz.kozaryn@gmail.com)

# outline

intro

quick data

discussion

- first go over syllabus
- then these slides here
- and then, once we have basic idea about the class
  - we'll do lengthy introduction of ourselves
  - and discussion for the reminder of tonight
- don't freak out! we'll get first into philosophy and psychology, and only then, in couple classes, go back to public policy and administration, and community stuff

# outline

intro

quick data

discussion

## setup

- no pre-requisites, but we will go as fast as possible
- want this to be more conversation than lecture
- do interrupt me and ask questions

# today

- we'll do proper intro to the topic next week
- today just very quick intro
- and quick overview of data,
  - so that you can get going with research from day 1
- we'll try to figure out what you want to research
- but first some super basic things

## happiness, what is it?

- super-interdisciplinary; in this class:
  - social psychology, geography, and sociology
- it's a cognitive evaluation of one's life as a whole
  - not domain (say neighb, financial satisfactions)
  - not affective (happy at a moment)
- so technically properly called "life satisfaction"
  - but typically used interchangeably with
  - "happiness", and there is also a scientific term
  - SWB: Subjective Wellbeing

## how do we study it?

- typically in this class and in my world: if you can't measure it with numbers, you can't study it
- and there's little use for collecting data, because it already has been collected!
- a typical survey question reads:
  - “are you satisfied with your life as a whole”
  - and is answered on a Likert scale say from 1 to 5 or 1 to 10
  - it's reasonably valid/reliable
- and then we regress it on what we're interested in say age, education, income, inequality, poverty, etc



# outline

intro

quick data

discussion

# if you can't measure it (put as number), it doesn't exist

- depending on your research interests and skills, get familiar with at least one dataset from the next slide
- (i use them and can also share with you my Stata code)
- ie download it and play with it, read literature using it, eg google scholar “happiness, general social survey”

# outline

intro

quick data

discussion

## let's publish, not perish

- i want to spend much time on this, and already today have a discussion like 30min
- so that we can start figuring out topics and collaborations asap
- first, lets check out my research [theaok.github.io](https://theaok.github.io)
- and then 2 questions about you:
- what do you study or want to study?  
(we'll be able to link just about anything to SWB)
- what data are you using or want to use?

## if time: my research in pictures

- finish up with quick intro to my research in pictures
- [https://theaok.github.io/docs/extracted\\_figures.pdf](https://theaok.github.io/docs/extracted_figures.pdf)