

Research Paper :

## Impact of positive thinking on people's happiness

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### ABSTRACT

Positive thinking is believed to be one of the most potent factor in keeping people in happy mood. In order to ascertain the validity of this statement a study was conducted in the state capital of Orissa *i.e.*, in the Bhubaneswar city covering representative sample from corporate sector, state administration, general academia, professionals like doctors, engineers, lawyers and people working in NGO sector. A total no of 150 respondents were selected for the sample. Initially the respondents were categorized on the basis of their level of satisfaction with regard to their fulfillment of variety of needs keeping in view the need hierarchy as suggested by Maslow. It is found that those who are at higher level of need satisfaction found to be more happy than these who are at lower level. After identifying the most happy group of respondents, attempts were made to know the reasons of their happiness by way of administering a structured schedule with few open ended questions. About 70% of the respondents were in favour of acknowledging positive thinking in the first position apart from other factors which are contributing to keep them in happy state of mind.

**Key words :** Happiness, Positive thinking, Needs

Happiness is a relative term and perceived differently by different individuals. However, there is a common denominator to all these perception about happiness. The so called denominator in many situation found to be no other than positive thinking which is ahead of other factors contributing to individual happiness. In the complex society and materialistic world in particular we should try to remain happy irrespective of our economic situation and social standing. This will keep us both mentally and physically healthy. But it is easier to said than done. Happiness cannot be purchased or borrowed rather than to be generated within. It is to be triggered with the help of positive thinking in addition to other factor. Thus, with this background the present study was conceptualized and conducted in state capital of Orissa with the following objectives to study the level of happiness of the people in the study area, to identify the elements of happiness as expressed by the happiest group of respondents and to study the relationship between positive thinking and people's happiness.

### METHODOLOGY

The study was purposively conducted in the State capital of Orissa which represent a cosmopolite character in all possible dimensions and accommodate varieties of people coming from different socio-cultural and economic back ground cutting across different professions. Altogether 150No. of respondents were selected by following disproportionate stratified random sampling

method from 10 different professions *viz.* such administrator academicians, engineers, doctors, bank officials, ministerial staff, Class IV employee, vendors, wage earners, and business with 15nos of respondent from each category of profession. Both parametric and non parametric statistics like frequency, percentage, rank order, mean, standard deviation, correlation test were applied for making appropriate statistical analysis of the collected data, for appropriate inference.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Happiness for the purpose of present study is operationally defined as the feeling of a person is having when his needs are satisfied at different level of need hierarchy like Physiological need, need for safety and security need for love and affection, need for belongingness, esteem need, and finally need for self actualization in ascending order.

The level of happiness of the sample respondents as revealed through the present study is presented in the Table 1.

It is inferred from the above table that majority of the respondents *i.e.* 53.3% are at medium level of happiness followed by 30% at low level and high level to the extent of 16.67%.

Urban city like Bhubaneswar is place, where people from different economic strain live. Apart from this majority of the city population are from the service sector. It is easy for them to satisfy lower order need, and

**Table 1 : Level of happiness**

Sr. No.	Level of happiness	Frequency (N=150)	Percentage %
1.	High level (mean + 1 standard deviation)	25	16.67
2.	Medium level (between mean + 1 standard deviation and mean - 1 standard deviation)	80	53.33
3.	Low level (less than mean-1 standard deviation)	45	30

gradually difficult to satisfy middle order need and higher order need in ascending order. As is level happiness is linked with satisfying the needs at a specific level in need hierarchy, majority of the respondents are at medium level of happiness and only few as higher level of happiness leaving 30% at lower level.

The elements of happiness as expressed by the people of study area and recorded during pilot study were used to ascertain the rank order of those elements by administering them to the sample respondent during data collection. The responses, so obtained with regard to different elements of happiness is presented in the Table 2 and ranked on the basis of the responses of the respondents.

**Table 2 : Elements of happiness**

Sr. No.	Elements of happiness	Rank
1.	Good income	III
2.	Good health and hygiene	II
3.	Achievements possession	IV
4.	Possession of assets and discipline	VIII
5.	Complete family believe in God	IX
6.	Happy conjugal life	X
7.	Good education of children	V
8.	Good social relation	VII
9.	Free from debt	VI
10.	Positive thinking	I

From the Table 2 it is inferred that positive thinking ranked first as the most important contributing factor for individual happiness. The reason may be attributed to the situation where respondents are constantly put into a state of ups and down, fortune and misfortune, success and failure condition in quick succession in their lives. But those who have the ability and capacity to think positively without being frustrated in odd situation can cope better in comparison to those unable to think positively. In the course of data collection, the researcher being reminded

by the respondents about the positive thinking as a contributing factor for their happiness, in variety of situation further attempt was made to know what actually constitutes positive thinking in view of the respondents. What is revealed through such processing can be considered as the indicators of happiness. These indicators are:

- Having faith in ones ability
- A reasonable confidence in own power.
- Getting up in the morning and deciding to be happy.
- Restraint from negative feeling.
- Making it a habit to be happy.
- Deliberate dropping happy thought into conscious mind.
- Praising others.
- Sensitising others about their own strength and asset.
- Getting others mind off his/her trouble.
- Expecting the best and trying to get it.
- Not believing in defeat.
- Having faith and guts in removing obstacles followed by casting aside worry from mind.
- Developing power to solve personal problem and
- Be in calm mind, going to temple, church, mosque etc.

Since positive thinking always contributes for individual happiness, it does have certain relationship with the happy mood of the individual. By correlating the positive thinking scores of the respondents with that of their respective happiness score, r value so obtained after the appropriate statistical analysis *i.e.*, Co-efficient of Correlation is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3 : Co-efficient of correlation**

Sr. No.	Level of happiness	Positive thinking
1.	High	0.87**
2.	Medium	0.76*
3.	Low	0.40

\* and \*\* indicate significant of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively

It is inferred from the Table 3 that happiness is significantly correlated with positive thinking. Further it is also concluded that the positive thinking temperament of the respondents is positively correlated with their respective happy state of mind which is significant at 1% level of probability. Those who are at lower happiness level the relationship with positive thinking is not very much significant.

**Conclusion:**

Many a time, we are psychologically upset due to prejudice, not trusting people, becoming skeptical about others and start thinking negatively without any positive approach to the problem at our hand. This is definitely not desirable at any cost, if we want to excel both in our domestic as well as in our professional front. Positive thinking is the pre-requisite in finding out solutions to many of our problems and ultimately helps us in leading a happy life. Let us try to be happy and also make others happy and then only the world will be a happy place to live in.

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