



ISER-N

Happiness and its Associations with Individual Attitudes, Practices, and Importance in Life

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Background

This study investigates the association between an individuals' socioeconomic background, religious beliefs and attitude and their sense of happiness. Happiness is a multidimensional concept shaped by various factors including personal perceptions, connections, levels of religiosity and affiliation and societal faith and beliefs. Religious ideology, affiliation, and levels of religiosity significantly influence individuals' perspectives on the social world, their life course, outcomes, and overall wellbeing. Moreover, religious ideologies, affiliations and religiosity have also been rapidly changing. In order to both document the rapid changes and understand the consequences across societies, this study investigates the association between an individuals' happiness and satisfaction with religious attitudes, by geographical region, age, gender, education, family size, living arrangement with spouse and ethnicity.

Data

Data had been collected in 2018 using Computer Assisted face-to-face interview by professional interviewers who have been specially trained in both general (standardized) interviewing techniques and the study specific protocols. The study design involves a mixed method research design. We conducted a cross-sectional Individual Religion Survey, measuring key dimensions of religion with a nationally representative sample of Nepal. We collected survey data at three levels:

- Adult interview,
- Household roster and
- Community survey.

Outcome Variables

Happiness in general day, Relationships with family members (1= Not happy, 2= Fairly happy, 3= Very happy),

Explanatory Factors

Trust in Science, Life after death, Attendance of religious services

Other factors affecting happiness

Legal partnership status, Ethnic group, Region, Household Size, Age, Education

Study Site and Sample

We conducted a cross-sectional survey on individual religion in Nepal, using a nationally representative sample from the 2011 census. The survey included 50 communities, 1469 households, and 1534 individuals across 44 districts, covering all five development regions and three eco-zones. Multi-cluster sampling with at least 200 households per cluster was used.

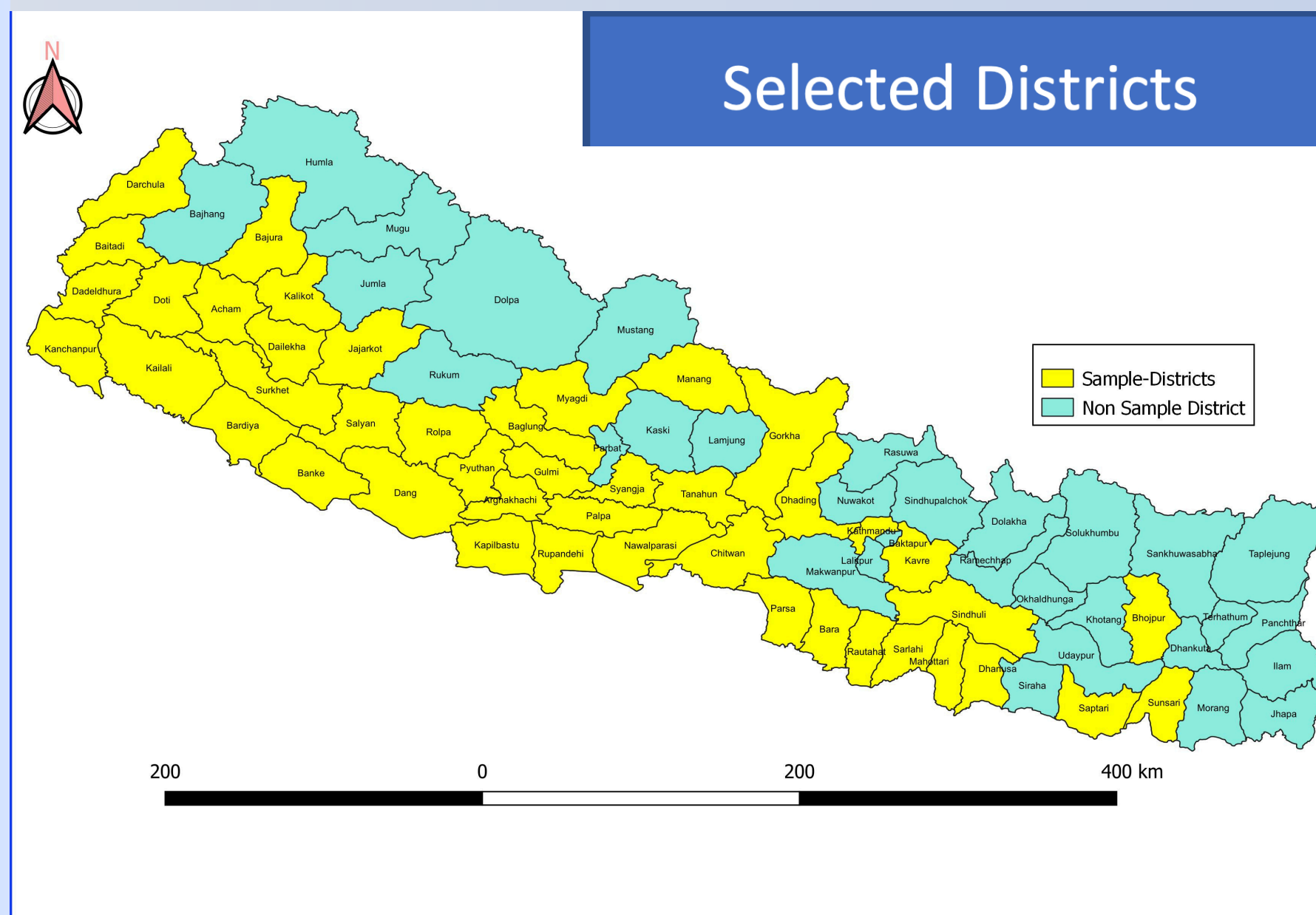


Table 1: Descriptive statistics of measures used in the analyses of happiness and its associations with individual attitudes, practices, and importance in life. (N=1534)

Outcomes	Label	Mean
Happiness in general days	(1= Not happy, 2= Fairly happy, 3= Very happy)	2.09
Relationships with family members	(1=Not satisfy, 2=Satisfy, 3=Very satisfy)	2.25
Explanatory factors		
Trust in science	(1=Strongly disagree, 2=Agree, 3= Strongly agree)	1.77
Life after death	(1=No Definitely, 2=No Probably Not, 3=Yes Probably)	2.28
Control		
Education	(1=No education, 2=1 to ten class, 3=Above 11 class)	1.75
Age	(1= 18 to 24 years, 2=25 to 34 years, 3=35 to 44 years, 4=45 to 54 years, 5=55 to 91 years)	2.96
Household size	1 to 9 and more	5.43
Legal partnership status		Label
Married	1	82.53
Seperated from spouse	2	7.63
Unmarried	3	9.84
Ethnic group		Percent
Brahman/Chhetri	1	38.46
Hil janajati	2	18.71
Dalit	3	15.71
Newar	4	3.26
Terai Janajati	5	17.6
Other	6	6.26
Region		
Mountain	1	8.21
Hill	2	46.74
Terai	3	45.05

Table 2: Descriptive ordered logistic regression of measures used in the analyses of happiness and its associations with individual attitudes, practices, and importance in life. (N=1534)

Ordered logistic regression	Happiness in general days	Satisfied with relationship
Trust in science	1.35***	1.06
Life after death	1.06	1
Education	1.33***	1.76***
Attendance of religious survices	1.08	1.06
Age	0.92*	1.07
Household Size	0.96	1.02
Region : base mountain		
Hill	0.76	0.84
Terai	0.71	0.82
Legal partnership status: base married		
Seperated from spouse	0.51***	0.4***
Unmarried	1.27	1.09
Ethnic group : base Brahmin		
Hill Janajati	0.74*	0.64***
Dalit	0.81	0.75*
Newar	1.13	0.75
Terai Janajati	1.04	0.93
Others	1.06	1.02



Results

The ordered logistic regression shows that trust in science and education level are positively associated with both happiness and relationship satisfaction, with significant effects. Age has a small negative association with happiness but no significant effect on relationship satisfaction. Being separated from a spouse significantly decreases both happiness (0.51) and relationship satisfaction (0.4). Hill Janajati individuals are less happy (0.74) and less satisfied in relationships (0.64) compared to Brahmins, with similar trends for Dalits in relationship satisfaction (0.75). Regional differences show slightly lower happiness and relationship satisfaction for those in the Hill and Terai regions compared to the mountain base group. Attendance at religious services, household size, and most ethnic groups show minimal or no significant effects.

Findings

Education: Higher educational attainment is consistently associated with higher odds of happiness and relationship satisfaction, and it is highly significant in both cases.

Partnership status: Being separated has a significant negative impact on both happiness and relationship satisfaction.

Ethnicity: Hill Janajati individuals report significantly lower odds of happiness and relationship satisfaction compared to Brahmins.

Region: No region shows a statistically significant impact on either outcome.

Age: Older individuals are slightly more satisfied with relationships but report lower happiness odds.

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