

Influence of Different Factors on Economic Happiness

Kausar Yasmeen*¹, Shamsudheen Arumathadathil², Kashifa Yasmin³ and
Naif Mutlaq J Alruways⁴

^{1&2} Department of Economics and Finance, College Economics, Management, and
Information Systems, University of Nizwa, P.O.Box: 33, PC: 616 Birkat Al-Mouz,
Sultanate of Oman

³The Department of Applied Psychology, University of Sahiwal, Sahiwal, Pakistan

⁴Department of Business Management, Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia

*Corresponding author: yasmeen@unizwa.edu.om

Abstract

Happiness is a subject of ongoing interest in behavioural economics. Most of the research on happiness have concentrated on cross-country comparison or the direct effects of economic empowerment on happiness, and the results are ambiguous. The present research is a novel perspective on community-level happiness by considering gossip as an endogenous variable with the indirect effect of economic empowerment. Furthermore, we examine the impact of physical activity and meditation on happiness, and we test our key hypothesizes, the effect of gossip on women's happiness depends on their economic empowerment. A cross-sectional primary data comprising 3,580 samples were collected by using simple random sampling techniques, encompassing four desert areas of Pakistan. The multinomial logit and regression were applied to analyse the data and theoretically contributing to the influence of meditation and gossip on happiness. The study shows positively significant results of women's physical activity, meditation, and economic empowerment on their level of happiness whereas gossip has the opposite effect on their happiness. The study helps for a fine-grained understanding of how gossip affects women's happiness, which in turn depends on their economic empowerment.

Keywords: Physical Activity, Meditation, Economic Empowerment, Gossip, Happiness

Introduction

Over the past 25 years, the issue of happiness has become less investigated, although it remains an area of interest for economists and psychologists. Nowadays, many countries, like the UK, France, and Canada, include the national happiness index as an indicator of national development (Lee, Chen, & Peng, 2020). According to the UN's 2022 World Happiness Report, the global rank of Pakistan is 121 while its regional rank is 25 in South Asia (Pekalee & Gray, 2022). Several studies found that social, political, psychological, demographic, and health factors, etc., have influence on happiness (Yang & Ma, 2020; Mehrdadi et al., 2016). However, the present study includes variables that are reported as problem creators of happiness in Pakistan. Physical activity influences happiness. The World Health Organization conducted a study in recent years, and reported that in Pakistan, among women, physical inactivity is 27.3 percent. Physical inactivity

among women from fifty-one poor, low and middle-income countries is reported, 19.8 per cent (Minaz, 2017).

Most of the previous studies have concentrated on cross-country comparisons and the direct effects of economic empowerment on happiness but have mainly found inconsistent results. The present study adds a fresh perspective by conducting research on community-level happiness and examining the indirect impact of economic empowerment and the direct impact of gossip. Women are discriminated against by the male-dominated society, which decreases their satisfaction with their lives and they do not have equal opportunity for physical activity like men (Umer et al., 2017). Zhang and Chen (2018) conducted a systematic review on happiness in 2018 and concluded that meditation and happiness are conceptually positively correlated. This significant relationship has been similarly discussed by many newspapers, social websites, and books. However, there is a lack of empirical studies on meditation and happiness. The present study empirically examining this issue in a different cultural perspective to add on the literature.

Economists believe that higher income leads to greater happiness (Hossain, Asadullah, & Kambhampati, 2019; Kelley & Evans, 2017). Fanning and O'Neill (2019) pointed out that in the long run, the happiness income-paradox will not grow once a certain level of income increases in many developed countries. Umer et al. (2017) stated that women want to be economically empowered but the culture does not allow them. Is the Government of Pakistan spending more on women's economic empowerment programs and is this spending a zero sum game on women's economic empowerment? Many scholars believe that the chances of failure are more for women when they are involved in economic activities due to less experience (Tuffour, Oppong, Nyanyofio, Abukari, Addo, & Brako, 2022). Studies have proven that investing in women to make them economically empowered will boost their satisfaction with their life (Shaheen, Hussain, & Mujtaba, 2018). Several studies (Iftikhar, Khadim, Munir, & Amir, 2018; Haider & Asher, 2017; Rehman, Moazzam, & Ansari, 2015) have evaluated the impact of microfinance on women's empowerment and the lack of studies on the influence of women's economic empowerment and their happiness (Yasmeen, Alruways, & Mondal, 2019). Yasmeen and Karim (2014) demanded future studies on happiness and women's economic empowerment.

Gossip is a type of idle talk that can have a positive or a negative impact. The women in Pakistan, particularly in rural areas, are fearful of being implicated in negative gossip by members of society. Gossip makes women dissatisfied with their life. Umer et al. (2017) advocates studies on gossip and women's economic empowerment as it lacks in literature. In Pakistan, the culture of Cholistan tribes, especially among women are different from surrounding areas of the same region, as well as urban areas of Pakistan. Most of the women are unable to make economic decisions independently and owing to the fear of being implicated in gossip in their society, men control the women. In tribal areas, seeking justice via government agencies is discouraged, and they prefer to approach the justice through the "Sardars" (head of the area). The situation really demands descriptive research, particularly on the women of Cholistan (desert) who have a different culture (Yasmeen & Karim, 2014). The present study is unique as it attempts and hypothesises that the effect of gossip on women's happiness is dependent on economic empowerment.

Literature Review

Physical Activity and Happiness

Theoretically happiness is principally results of the positive evaluations of living circumstances and its examinations with others and in the past (Lee, Lu, Gill, Chiu, Kuo, & Ho, 2022). Various factors affect happiness mainly the consequences of two psychological processes: comparison and assessment. Studies on physical activity and happiness initially planning assessment method for mental health and while interpreting happiness is omitted at the end. Physical activity refers to exercise (Lee et al., 2022; Watkins, McLaughlin, & Parker, 2019). Hence, we evaluated a minimum of one indicator for physical activity, such as frequency or usage of programs as an intervention, in the literature review and methodology. On the health benefit of the happiness literature is growing in recent years (Watkins et al., 2019; Nicholls, et. al., 2017). In fifteen year peruse study reveals that the morality rate falls when happiness increases (Koopmans et al., 2010). Nowadays, countries are considering national happiness index as an indicator of national development (Volkovitckaia, Konev, Popov, & Dobrovolskaya, 2020). There are also cross-sectional studies that shows the link between physical activities like exercise and happiness, but most of them are conceptual (Richards et al., 2015). Studies conducted by Costa, Bianco, Polizzi, and Alesi (2020) and Ross, Cloutier, and Searle (2019) provide systematic reviews on the link between exercise and happiness and concluded that there is no systematic review on the relationship between exercise and happiness. In this regard, the present study empirically approaching the influence of physical activity (exercise) on happiness and is based on theoretical models hypothesizes as given below.

H1: There is a positive influence of physical activity on women's happiness in the emerging economy of Pakistan.

Meditation and Women's Happiness

Meditation and mindfulness are ancient and spiritual practices, beginning in religion. Meditation originated even in ancient times, having its starting points in ancient religions that included zikar, rhythmic chants, or mantras. The earliest records of meditation can be found in the Vedas, the most seasoned writings of Hinduism, dating from 1700-1100 BCE. Meditation started in Buddhism, Sufi Muslims, and Taoism in India and China. One of the sub-sects of the Muslim community, Sufi, can be found meditating by breathing and taking a lecture from their mentor. The concept of having a mentor is common among Sofis and Sardar communities (Lecia, 2016).

Roberts (2015) found a positive relationship between meditation and happiness. Also, he concluded in his book the mediation has an influence on happiness. Those who do meditation like Chinese, chakra by Hindus, maraqba by Sufis etc., create positive thoughts that influence happiness. In contrast to mediation, it is hard to find a study that examines the influence of spiritual practice (spirituality creates positive thoughts and actions) on happiness. There are a few studies that examine the influence of different dimensions of meditation of mindfulness on happiness. Even though the current research examines the overall influence of meditation on happiness, we focus on breathing exercises that are done in silence and with full concentration. Based on the above discussion, this study purpose the second hypothesis:

H2: There is a positive influence of meditation practice on women's happiness in the emerging economy of Pakistan.

Economic Empowerment and Women's Happiness

According to the existing empirical research and theories on happiness, there is a happiness-income paradox (Easterlin paradox). Clark, Senik, and Yamada (2017) found that in the long run, generally ten years or more, the level of happiness will not rise as the income increases, proved by several developed countries cases. Hence, the finding in case of developed countries were limited. Happiness-income paradox needs to be verified in the case of developing countries. However, most of the studies found positive association between money and happiness. Aknin et al. (2013) evaluated Pearson correlation between money and happiness and found positive correlation but it cannot be concluded that a high level of income always indicates a high level of happiness (Gere & Schimmack, 2017). This happiness paradox can be explained by various theories. According to the adoption theory, a high level of income can increase happiness on a temporary basis, but with the passage of time, the level of happiness would revert to its original level. The theory of social comparison argues human's live in communities and have a social network, so they compare their achievements with others living in their surroundings known as peer group (reference group). It is depressing that increase in the level of income of peer group leads to decrease in the level of satisfaction of others. If a woman involved in income generating activities, she is economically empowered, will it impact on her happiness factor? (Yasmeen & Karim, 2014). Yasmeen, Yasmeen, and Malik (2019) found that Pakistani females are less economic empowered. Moreover, the authors theoretically states that empowerment and finance are related to happiness, but their study do not have empirical evidence. According to Ali and Haq (2006) and Yasmeen and Karim (2014), further research should examine the impact of empowerment on Pakistani women's happiness. The present study is an attempt to the recommendation by examining the influence of women's economic empowerment on their happiness postulates the following hypothesis.

H3: There is an impact of economic empowerment on women's happiness in the emerging economy of Pakistan.

Gossip and Women's Happiness

Umer et al (2017) conducted qualitative research in Balochistan province of Pakistan and they found that the gossip is a strong social control variable. The fear of negative gossip not only discourages the women to be empowered, but also decrease their level of satisfaction. In backward communities, especially in tribal areas gossip has been found to be an influencing factor ensuring that the limitations of the social norms are not invaded (Augustin, Assad, & Jaziri, 2012). Gossip negatively affects women's freedom of movement, might be very tactful the impact of gossip. It is feared that unfavorable opinion attributed to a women can lead to the bad reputation of the other members of family, village, or tribes. Conversely, positive comments can lead to the social capital of the household (Ganesh et al., 2013). Feminists focus on the experiences of women within their social setup such as gossip. They are concerned about the male-dominated society, which women are inferior and this belief is implanted in man's consciousness, affecting women's satisfaction. They further believe that they can easily stop or control the male dominance against gossip. Even though we search on databases to find a study on women's happiness and gossips, we were not

able to find a single paper. However, there are studies which found impact of gossip on empowerment, which in turn influences satisfaction. In this regard, the present paper examines the influence of gossip on happiness and deriving the following related hypotheses:

H4a: There is an impact of gossip on Pakistani women's happiness in the emerging economy of Pakistan.

H4b: There is an effect of gossip on women's happiness based on their empowerment in the emerging economy of Pakistan.

Based on the literature review following conceptual framework is drawn:

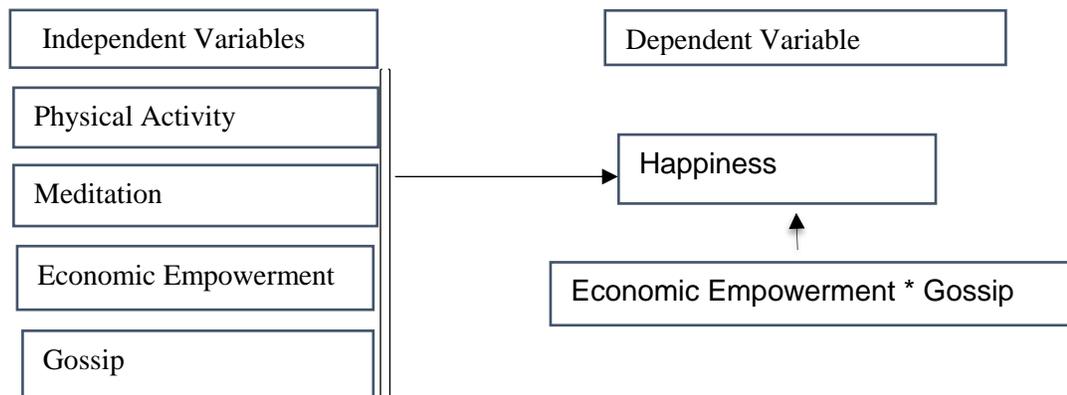


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author

Methodology

This section explains the methodology of research by focusing to the measurement of variables, data collection, and model estimation. Appropriate justification has been given in each part wherever required. The present study mainly depends on the primary level data, collected from the four deserts areas of Pakistan and the descriptions are given below.

Construction and Implications of Variables

To measure the level of happiness, various previous studies were reviewed. For example, Min et al. (2017); Richards et al. (2015); and Wang et al. (2012) used questions like “Over the past four weeks, have you been a happy person?” and “In general, how would you describe your happiness?”. Stevinson et al. (2009) applied the Fordyce happiness scale; Nani et al. (2017) employed the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire; and Lathia et al. (2017) used multiple items to measure the mood. The last three studies mentioned above used the happiness scale (Piqueras et al., 2011).

The present study used questionnaires and the respondents were required to answer, keeping in view of three indicators (Item no. 1, Over the past four weeks, how do you rate your overall satisfaction?; item no. 2, Over the past four weeks, how do you rate your overall well-being?; and item no. 3, Over the past four weeks, how do you rate your overall quality of life?). Zhang and Chen (2018) explain various dimensions for the item, over the past four weeks how do

you rate your overall happiness”? The women were required to answer questions about their happiness level with regards to their satisfaction, well-being, and quality of life. The measurement scales applied for the same are “zero” for the not happy, “one” for sometimes happy, and “two” for fully happy responses. Researcher included three items as a measure of each dimensions of happiness (satisfaction, well-being, and quality of life). Besides, we included a single general question on the level of women’s overall happiness.

This study found that the result of the happiness level is similar among these items, and in our case, we have chosen a single question for analysis. By following Piqueras (2011), this study used a single question for physical activity (Over the past four weeks, how do you rate your overall physical activities?). To measure economic empowerment, the present study applied Yasmeen’s (2014) method by asking the question, “Do you have economic empowerment?”. Finally, gossip was also measured by a single question, i.e., do you have a fear of being gossiped about by society? For all the variables such as happiness, physical activity, meditation, economic empowerment, and gossip, the measurement scale was “zero” for giving negative responses, “one” for sometimes, and “two” for giving positive responses.

Data Descriptions

A longitudinal study by Wang et al. (2012) and three other previous studies (Min et al., 2017; Richards et al. 2015; Stevinson, 2009) have used cross-sectional data to evaluate the relationship between physical activity and happiness. Among them, the first study was conducted on a sample size of 346, and other studies’ samples ranged from 70 to 568. In this research, we have followed an appropriate method for selecting the sample size as it is playing an important role for the generalization of the findings.

The selected country, Pakistan has four provinces Punjab, Baluchistan, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), and the samples were collected from four major desert areas of Pakistan, namely the Cholistan desert, the Indus desert, the Thai desert, and the Kharen desert. This study has used random sampling techniques for selecting the sample size since the population of women living in the desert areas of Pakistan is difficult to identify as it is not calculated separately in the census. Therefore, finding the exact number of women is difficult. Farooq *et al.* (2008) also reported that there is a need to improve the census for deserts in Pakistan. Roscoe's rule of thumb (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016) is that a sample should be more than 30 and less than 500 to get appropriate findings. The survey consists of a 3,580-sample size and the respondents are women. Most of the women were reluctant to fill out the questionnaire, and so, only those who were willing to volunteer were included. A total of 9,000 questionnaires were distributed, 5,651 questionnaires have been returned. Among these, after excluding the missing data and outliers, 3,580 samples were usable.

Model Estimation.

The econometric model, multinomial logit regression has used to analyze the influence of different independent variables on happiness and multinomial probit model (MPM) also applied to obtain for robustness. Hence, the model and conceptual framework are as follows:

$$H_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PA_i + \beta_2 MED_i + \beta_3 EE_i + \beta_4 GOS_i + \beta_5 GOS (GOS * EE) i + e_i \dots (1)$$

Where, PA is indicating Physical Activity, MED is Meditation, EE is Economic Empowerment and the GOS is Gossip. β_1 , β_2 , β_3 , β_4 and β_5 are the respective coefficients and our a priori assumption is that β_1 , β_2 , and β_3 are greater than zero β_4 and β_5 is less than zero.

The multinomial logit model is popular for multinomial choice models. McFadden and Train (2000) explained that a multinomial logit (MLM) regression is for discrete responses. Hedeker (2003) stated that the MLM regression is used to analyse the response and ordinal response data. However, the MPM can be applied only when there is a small number, usually three (Hausman, Leonard, & McFadden, 1984). Ali and Haq (2006) applied the MLM regression to evaluate the influence of education on happiness. Based on previous studies, this study measured women's happiness using a subjective measurement; the ordinal responses were divided into three categories in discrete values. We applied the MMLM model to achieve the objectives of the study.

Results

The descriptive analysis of the respondents is as follows. Age was categorised into four categories. In this study, the percentage of women between 15 and 30 years is 40 per cent; from 31-45 years, it is 23 per cent; from 46-60 years, it is 24 per cent; and from 60 years and above, it is 13 percent. In terms of region, all the four deserts have 25 per cent of the women each, i.e., Cholestan, Thur, Indus, and Karan Deserts. Approximate 60 percent of the women are not formally educated, while 40 per cent are educated. As for marital status, 49 percent of the women are not married, while 51 percent are married. A total of 9,000 questionnaires were distributed, with 5,651 questionnaires being returned. Of 5,651 questionnaires, after excluding the missing data and outliers, 3,580 samples were usable.

In econometric analysis, before the multinomial logit model (MLM) could be estimated, researcher checked the IIA assumptions that were satisfied. Statistically, the model is significant as Prob > chi2 = 0.0000 as shown in Table 1. For full happiness relative to no happiness and sometimes happy relative to not happy, the coefficient of the meditation variable is significant at 1 per cent in both models (multinomial logit model (MLM) and multinomial probit model (MPM)). In full happiness relative to no happiness and sometimes happy relative to not happy, the coefficient of the physical activity variable is significant at 5 percent.

Table 1: Finding of MLM Estimation (N= 3580)

Model 1	Sometimes Happy relative to Not Happy		Fully Happy relative to Not Happy	
Variables	Coef.	Std. Err.	Coef.	Std. Err.
Cons	-1.451272	.4037959***	-.5710074	.4062696
PA	.364744	.1400552**	.380092	.1402453 **
MED	.4664372	.1332398***	.5411803	.1334588 ***
EE	2.519882	.1715315***	2.852556	.1725496***
GOS	-.6278944	.2702639*	-.8012218	.2774364**
GOS * EE	-.1283581*	.1458209	.241653	.146663*
Probe > chi2 = 0.0000 Log likelihood = -2620.0914 Pseudo R2 =0.1283				

Note: *, ** and*** shows the coefficient of the variable is significant at the ten percent, five percent and one percent, respectively. Not happy is the base outcome.

The coefficient of the women's economic empowerment variable is positive and significant for sometimes happy compared to not happy at 1 percent for both models (MLM regression and MPM regression), indicating that if the women are economically empowered, the level of their happiness will increase. The coefficient of the gossip variable is negatively significant in sometimes happy compared to not happy, and fully happy compared to not happy at 10 percent and 5 percent, respectively, in both models (MLM regression and MPM regression). To provide a valid result, MPM was applied, and the findings are the same as shown in Table 3. The findings also show that the effect of gossip on women's happiness depends on their economic empowerment.

Impact of Change in the Explanatory Variable on Happiness

The marginal effect of the given factors on the probability of having happiness (not happy, sometimes happy and fully happy) is a function of all the estimated coefficients. Therefore, the present study proceeded by calculating the marginal effect of all independent variables on the probability of being happy. As reported in Table 2, the findings are as follows:

Table 2: Marginal Effect of the MLMM (N= 3580)

Variables	Not Happy	Sometimes Happy	Fully Happy
PA	-.004208 ** (.00134)	-.0473889 *** (.01233)	.0515969 *** (.01238)
MED	-.0052086 *** (.00147)	-.0188582 (.01328)	.0240668*** (.01333)
EE	-.0278053 *** (.0038)	.0704923*** (.01414)	.0982976*** (.01421)
GOS	.0018156 (.00279)	-.3469044*** (.0226)	-.34872*** (.02289)

Note: *, ** and*** shows the coefficient of the variable is significant at the ten percent, five percent and one percent, respectively.

Firstly, the marginal effect of PA on the probability of being sometimes happy and fully happy, is positively significant. If a woman is involved in PA, the probability of not being happy is expected to fall by .00134 percent, while the probability of being sometimes happy is expected to rise by .0123 percent. The probability of being full happy is expected to rise by .0123 percent. These results suggest that by being involved with microfinance, women can increase their satisfaction.

Secondly, the marginal effect of meditation (MED) on the probability of not being happy and fully happy is significant. If a woman meditates, the probability of not being happy is expected to fall by -.0052 percent, while the probability of being full happy is expected to rise by .0133 percent.

Thirdly, the marginal effect of economic activities (EE) on the probability of not being happy, sometimes happy, and fully happy is significant. If a woman is involved in EE, the probability of not being happy is expected to fall by -.027 percent, while the probability of being sometimes happy is expected to rise by .0704 percent. he probability of being full happy is expected to rise by .098 percent.

Fourthly, the marginal effect of gossip (GOS) on the probability of being sometimes happy and fully happy is significant. If a woman is involved in EE, the probability of being sometimes happy is expected to fall by -.346 percent, while the probability of being fully happy is expected to fall by -.348 percent.

Table 3: Finding of MPM Estimation (N= 3580)

Model 2	Sometimes Happy relative to Not Happy		Fully Happy relative to Not Happy	
Variables	Coef	Std.Err	Coef	Std.Err
Cons	-.9660811	.2641488***	-.1973494	.2660578
PA	.3259664	.0903396 **	.341875	.090466 **
MED	.3422101	.086492***	.4089955	.0867014 ***
EE	1.497477	.1063917***	1.790318	.1076537***
GOS	-.4830631	.1690923 *	-.7639038	.173831**
GOS * EE	-.1857818	.0958362*	.1283947	.0965604*
Probe > chi2	= 0.0000	Log likelihood = -332.32747	Pseudo R2	= 0.1411

Note: *, ** and*** shows the coefficient of the variable is significant at the ten percent, five percent and one percent, respectively. Not happy is the base outcome.

Discussion

For fully happy relative to no happiness and sometimes happy relative to not happy, the coefficient of the physical activity variable is positively significant in both models (MLM and MPM), indicating that physical activity (PA) has a positive effect on women's happiness. It is important to explain that most of the women living in the deserts do not do aerobics or yoga exercises, but walk and move physically for their survival; they walk long distances to collect water from the tobba (well), to collect wood to make fire for cooking purposes, to wash clothes at the canal or tobba, etc. Women work hard for the whole day, looking after their livestock, like buffalo and other animals. Women milk the animals on their own. So, walking about the whole day is like exercising. Women of the deserts remain physically active. If physical activities are increased, the level of happiness among the women living in the deserts will increase. The finding of the present study is in line with Min et al. (2017) and Nani et al. (2017) and Kim et al. (2020).

For full happiness relative to no happiness and sometimes happy relative to not happy, the coefficient of the meditation variable is also significant in both models (MLM regression and MPM regression). If meditation is done, it will create positive thinking, which then leads to action that will result in women's happiness. The law of attraction is well-known, i.e., if you think positively, you will find the positive. In the practice of meditation, murakba and chakra are those berating exercises that generate positive thoughts and satisfaction with life. In terms of religion, most of the women in the Cholistan desert are Sufi or Dervish, or believe in peers (mentor); they follow the mentor who teaches them all the time to think about God and be humane. Those individuals who have negative intentions will be punished. They also have an "Ors" system (an event when all followers gather together, and they do Dhamal (a kind of dance). They practice breathing in silence (like chine meditation-breathing exercise). Approximate 84 percent of women reported that this breathing practice in silence to remember God keeps them away from social evil and gives them satisfaction that God is happy with them. They also commented that when they do well, they are loved by their community, and it nurtures brotherhood or sisterhood

(Muslim concept) among them, which makes them happy. The finding on meditation and its influence is like the study of Roberts (2015).

The coefficient of the women's economic empowerment variable is positive and significant for sometimes happy compared to not happy in both models (MLM regression and MPM regression). In Pakistani society, if a woman is economically contributing to the household, the family will respect her more and appreciate her economic contribution. Besides, women are busy in economic activities like saving, grading, sowing seeds, harvesting agricultural products, straw saving, weeding, and feeding livestock. The women of the deserts are also busy doing embroidery and making traditional goods for sale. They supply their goods to the city and earn money. The finding of the present study is consistent with the study of Yasmeen (2014).

This study also hypothesised that the effect of gossip on women's happiness depends on their empowerment. Hence, this study included the interaction term between gossip and empowerment as one of the independent variables. The coefficient of this interaction term is negatively significant in the case of fully happy compared to not happy. Interestingly, women are always afraid of becoming a part of the gossip as they don't want to expose themselves because of cultural issues. Umer et al. (2015) found that in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan, gossiping is an important and powerful factor that socially controls individuals. It negatively influences women's empowerment. Men avoid the risk of being the subject of gossip by not empowering the women of the household. The findings indicated that gossip prevents them from being involved in economic activities that result in their dissatisfaction and decreases their well-being (happiness). The fear of being part of the gossip prevents them from playing a role in society, as they fear not getting suitors for marriage and the male members of their household will also be criticised in society. The findings are supported by Umer et al. (2015).

Limitation/Implications/Conclusion

Many scholars believe that investing in women's economic empowerment can zero sum game that might come with the worst effect on happiness. This study examined the impact of physical activity, meditation, and economic empowerment on happiness and tested and hypothesized that the effect of gossip on women's happiness depends on their economic empowerment. The MLM and MPM regressions were applied to make the results more robust. The finding reveals that if a woman does physical activity, meditates, and is economically empowered, her level of happiness will rise, while negative gossip will decrease her happiness and affect her economic empowerment. That will also negatively influence the happiness. The government can promote their economic and physical activities through the print and social media and can decrease gossip by having legislation against gossip. The present study contributes by examining the influence of meditation and gossip on happiness. This study concludes that after a systematic review of available studies, it appears that meditation and gossip have rarely been investigated. This study also contributes methodologically by determining a 3,580-sample size that is more than satisfactory to have robust findings. This study is original as it focuses on the impact of social and psychological factors on economic happiness, which is ignored in the literature. Furthermore, this study has added a new discussion to the body of knowledge, i.e., exploring the factors of meditation and gossip and their link with a woman's happiness; hence an approach that has not been widely discussed in the previous studies. The results from this study provide valuable

policy implications for policymakers and scholars who are concerned about the impacts of social, physical, psychological, and economic on happiness. Visualising the social reality of women's happiness through research generates verifiable evidence that will help to formulate policies to control gossip to improve the happiness of women living in remote areas of Pakistan. Future researchers can apply the same model in developing countries, as different cultures can have a different probability of different findings.

Acknowledgement

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency. However, the National Rural Support Program (Bahawalpur Division, Pakistan) helped on a personal level to collect the data.

References

- Aknin, L.B., Barrington-Leigh, C.P., Dunn, E.W., Helliwell, J.F., Burns, J., Biswas-Diener, & Norton, M.I. (2013). Prosocial spending and well-being: Cross-cultural evidence for a psychological universal. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *104*(4), 635.
- Ali, S.M. & ul Haq, R. (2006). Women's autonomy and happiness: the case of Pakistan. *The Pakistan Development Review*, 121-136.
- Augustin, E., Assad, R., & Jaziri, D. (2012). Women empowerment for improved research in agricultural development, innovation and knowledge transfer in the West Asia/North Africa region. United Nation.
- Clark, A. E., Senik, C., & Yamada, K. (2017). When experienced and decision utility concur: The case of income comparisons. *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics*, *70*, 1-9.
- Costa, S., Bianco, A., Polizzi, V., & Alesi, M. (2020). Happiness in Physical Activity: A Longitudinal Examination of Children Motivation and Negative Affect in Physical Activity. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 1-13.
- Fanning, A.L. & O'Neill, D.W. (2019). The Wellbeing–Consumption paradox: Happiness, health, income, and carbon emissions in growing versus non-growing economies. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *212*, 810-821.
- Farooq, Z., Iqbal, Z., Mushtaq, S., Muhammad, G., Iqbal, M.Z., & Arshad, M. (2008). Ethnoveterinary practices for the treatment of parasitic diseases in livestock in Cholistan desert (Pakistan). *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, *118*(2), 213-219.
- Ganesh, A.J., Kermarrec, A.M., & Massoulié, L. (2003). Peer-to-peer membership management for gossip based protocols. *IEEE transactions on computers*, *52*(2), 139-149.
- Gere, J. & Schimmack, U. (2017). Benefits of income: Associations with life satisfaction among earners and homemakers. *Journal of Personality and Individual Differences*, *119*, 92-95.
- Haider, S.K.F. & Asher, S.N. (2017). Role of micro-credit to empower women regarding health and family issues in Pakistan. *International Journal of Rehabilitation Sciences*, *4*(01), 11-14.
- Hausman, J.A., Leonard, G.K., & McFadden, D. (1995). A utility-consistent, combined discrete choice and count data model assessing recreational use losses due to natural resource damage. *Journal of Public Economics*, *56*(1), 1-30.
- Hedeker, D. (2003). A mixed-effects multinomial logistic regression model. *Statistics in medicine*, *22*(9), 1433-1446.

- Hossain, M., Asadullah, M.N., & Kambhampati, U. (2019). Empowerment and life satisfaction: Evidence from Bangladesh. *World Development*, 122, 170-183.
- Iftikhar, S., Khadim, Z., Munir, S., & Amir, H. (2018). Role of Microfinance in Women Empowerment and Alleviating Poverty: An Overview. *Journal of Social Economics*, 4(2), 48-53.
- Kelley, J. & Evans, M.D.R. (2017). The new income inequality and well-being paradigm: Inequality has no effect on happiness in rich nations and normal times, varied effects in extraordinary circumstances, increases happiness in poor nations, and interacts with individuals' perceptions, attitudes, politics, and expectations for the future. *Social Science Research*, 62, 39-74.
- Kim, J., Kim, J., Kim, Y., Han, A., & Minh, N.C. (2020). The contribution of physical and social activity participation to social support and happiness among people with physical disabilities". *Disability and Health Journal*, 100974.
- Koopmans, T.A., Geleijnse, J.M., Zitman, F.G., & Giltay, E.J. (2010). Effects of happiness on all-cause mortality during 15 years of follow-up: The Arnhem Elderly Study. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 11(1), 113–124.
- Lathia, N., Sandstrom, G.M., Mascolo, C., & Rentfrow, P.J. (2017). Happier people live more active lives: Using smartphones to link happiness and physical activity. *PLoS ONE*, 12(1).
- Lecia, B. (2016). *Mindfulness Vs Meditation: The Difference Between These Two Pathways To Well-Being and Peace of Mind*. Retrieved from <https://www.medicaldaily.com/mindfulness-meditation-differences-377346>
- Lee, C.C., Chen, M.P., & Peng, Y.T. (2020). Tourism development and happiness: International evidence. *Tourism Economics*, 1354816620921574.
- Lee, P.F., Lu, F.J.H., Gill, D.L., Chiu, Y.H., Kuo, Y.H., & Ho, C.C. (2022). The relationship between sufficient leisure time physical activity and happiness: An age stratification perspective. *Curr Psychol*, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-02946-x>
- McFadden, D.L. (1984). Econometric analysis of qualitative response models. *Handbook of econometrics*, 2, 1395-1457.
- McFadden, D. & Train, K. (2000). Mixed MLM models for discrete response. *Journal of applied Econometrics*, 15(5), 447-470.
- Mehrdadi, A., Sadeghian, S., Direkvand-Moghadam, A., & Hashemian, A. (2016). Factors affecting happiness: a cross-sectional study in the Iranian youth. *Journal of clinical and diagnostic research*, 10(5).
- Min, J. H., Lee, E.Y., Spence, J. C., & Jeon, J. Y. (2017). Physical activity, weight status and psychological well-being among a large national sample of South Korean adolescents. *Mental Health and Physical Activity*, 12, 44–49.
- Minaz, M. (2017). Importance of Physical Activity in Women. *Prim Health Care*, 7, 253.
- Nani, S., Matsouka, O., Tsitskari, E., & Avgerinos, A. (2017). The role of physical activity in life happiness of Greek drug abusers participating in a treatment program. *Sport Sciences for Health*, 13(1), 25–32.
- Nicholls, L.H., Rodríguez-Fortuño, F.J., Nasir, M.E., Córdova-Castro, R.M., Olivier, N., Wurtz, G.A., & Zayats, A.V. (2017). Ultrafast synthesis and switching of light polarization in nonlinear anisotropic metamaterials. *Nature Photonics*, 11(10), 628-633.

- Pekalee, A. & Gray, R.S. (2022). In-home environment for happy ageing in Thailand, a middle-income country in Asia. <https://www.gfmag.com/global-data/non-economic-data/happiest-countries-asia>
- Piqueras, J.A., Kuhne, W., Vera-Villaruel, P., Van Straten, A., & Cuijpers, P. (2011). "Happiness and health behaviours in Chilean college students: A cross-sectional survey". *BMC Public Health*, 11(1), 443.
- Rehman, H., Moazzam, A., & Ansari, N. (2015). Role of microfinance institutions in women empowerment: A case study of Akhuwat, Pakistan. *South Asian Studies*, 30(1), 107.
- Richards, J., Jiang, X., Kelly, P., Chau, J., Bauman, A., & Ding, D. (2015). Don't worry, be happy: Cross-sectional associations between physical activity and happiness in 15 European countries. *BMC Public Health*, 15, 53.
- Roberts, R. (2015). *How Adam Smith can change your life: An unexpected guide to human nature and happiness*. Portfolio Trade.
- Ross, A., Cloutier, S., & Searle, M. (2019). The association between leisure time physical activity and happiness: Testing the indirect role of health perception. *Journal of community psychology*, 47(5), 1169-1183.
- Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Shaheen, I., Hussain, I., & Mujtaba, G. (2018). Role of Microfinance in Economic Empowerment of Women in Lahore, Pakistan: A Study of Akhuwat Supported Women Clients. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, 8(2), 337-343.
- Stevinson, C., Steed, H., Faught, W., Tonkin, K., Vallance, J. K., & Ladha, A. B (2009). Physical activity in ovarian cancer survivors: associations with fatigue, sleep, and psychosocial functioning. *Inter-national Journal of Gynecological Cancer*, 19(1), 73-78.
- Tuffour, J.K., Oppong, M., Nyanyofio, J.G.T., Abukari, M.F., Addo, M.N., & Brako, D. (2022). Micro-Entrepreneurship: Examining the Factors Affecting the Success of Women Street Food Vendors. *Global Business Review*, 09721509211072380.
- Umer, S., Othman, Z., Hassan, K B.H., Umer, R., & Rehman, H.U. (2017). Consequences of Gossiping on Women Empowerment". *European Review of Applied Sociology*, 10(15), 6-12.
- Volkovitchkaia, G.A., Konev, P.A., Popov, M.V., & Dobrovolskaya, O.P. (2020). Problematic points of methodologies for measuring quality of life: Human Development Index, World Happiness Index, Well-being Index. *Revista ESPACIOS*, 41(10).
- Wang, F., Orpana, H.M., Morrison, H., de Groh, M., Dai, S., & Luo, W. (2012). Long-term association between leisure-time physical activity and changes in happiness: Analysis of the prospective national population health survey". *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 176(12), 1095-1100.
- Watkins, P.C., McLaughlin, T., & Parker, J.P. (2019). Gratitude and Subjective Well-Being: Cultivating Gratitude for a Harvest of Happiness. In *Scientific Concepts Behind Happiness, Kindness, and Empathy in Contemporary Society* (pp. 20-42).
- Yang, H. & Ma, J. (2020). How an Epidemic Outbreak Impacts Happiness: Factors that Worsen (vs. Protect) Emotional Well-being during the Coronavirus Pandemic. *Psychiatry Research*, 113045.

- Yasmeen, K. & Karim, M.Z.A. (2014). Impact of demographic and loan size on the probabilities of women freedom of movement empowerment. *International Journal of Accounting and Financial Reporting*, 4(2), 361.
- Yasmeen, K., Alruways, N.M.J., & Mondal, S. (2019). Influence of Microfinance and Empowerment on Satisfaction: Case Study of Pakistan. *Studies in Business and Economics*, 22(1), 65-77.
- Yasmeen, K., Yasmeen, K., & Malik, M. (2019). Myths and realities of microfinance as a panacea for empowerment. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences Research*, 2(1) 66-81.
- Zhang, Z. & Chen, W. (2018). A systematic review of the relationship between physical activity and happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 1-18.