Happiness in relation to culture

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Happiness is considered one of the most important values people seek throughout life. Studies have reported that happiness is significantly related to cultural factors such as collectivism and individualism (I/C) and can vary between I/C countries. Not only can country affect the levels of happiness, but also personal preference for a particular cultural orientation. People from individualistic societies and personal individualistic orientation tend to produce higher levels of life satisfaction because individualistic people create life styles that fit with their preferences. However, other researches show that individuals from collectivistic societies are more encouraged and successful in pursuing of happiness than individuals from individualistic societies. Optimism has been known to significantly influence personal happiness across cultures. Therefore, the current study examined if an individual would more likely to experience happiness when individual's I/C orientation matched with society without the effect of optimism by comparing an individualistic country (the U.S.) and collectivistic country (India). In the present study, 120 (28 males and 92 females) American samples and 132 (84 males and 48 females) Indian samples were collected through Amazon Mechanical Turk. Both personal tendencies predicted personal happiness with the U.S. sample, yet personal tendency of individualism predicted persona happiness significant higher. On the other hand, only personal tendency of collectivism predicted personal happiness with the Indian sample. Optimism did not influence happiness with the Indian sample. The results showed there was significant relation between culture, cultural personal tendencies and personal happiness with the U.S. sample and the Indian sample.

Biography

Yurie Igarashi is completing a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology from California Lutheran University and earned a Bachelor's degree from San Diego State University. Her research interests are cultural differences and well being of individuals.

http://dx.doi.org/10.4172/2161-0487.C1.003