

A Survey of Satisfaction with Life in a Cross-Section of Nepalese Society

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Acknowledgements

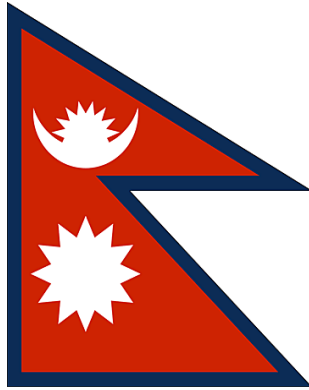
Data collection/analysis

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Nepal: A profile



147,182km², borders China & India



Nepal: A profile



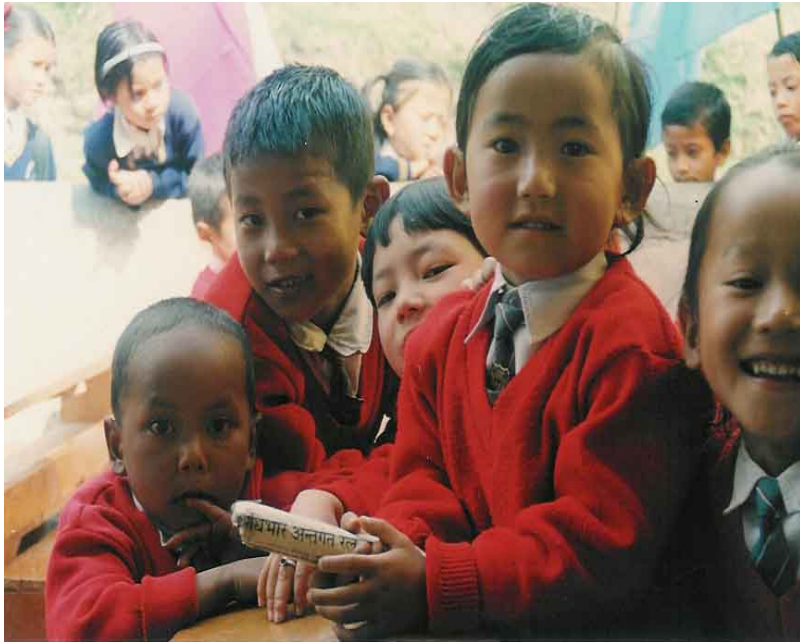
- 60ft - 29.028ft above sea level
- GDP per capita = 1,500 US dollars (05)
- Hindu, Buddhist & others
- Federal Democratic Republic (May 08)

Nepal: A profile



- Population - 28million (07)
- Approx 90% live in rural areas
- Agriculture, tourism revenue
- Transport/health infrastructure poor
 - disaster management difficult

Nepal: A profile



- Literacy levels low
- Access to education difficult
 - rural areas not well served
- Education valued but can conflict with means of living/cultural priorities
- Universities, IT training courses

Nepal: A profile



- Under-nutrition, malnutrition
- Health goals
 - lower infant mortality/fertility rate, increase life expectancy
- Rise in non-communicable diseases
- Medical insurance almost negligible

Nepal: A profile



- Only 2% GDP goes to mental health
- NGO's back-up Govt' & private services
- Various forms meditation, worship practiced daily
- Mental ill-health stigmatized
- *Dhami, Jhankri* use prevalent

Life-satisfaction construct/scale

- Global cognitive judgment about one's life according to own criteria
- Temporal stability, sensitive to life changes
- Life-satisfaction has direct translation in Nepali
 - ***Ji-van san-tus-tha*** (most often expressed as san-tus-tha)
- Distinct from this is the term Happiness expressed as ***Khu-si***

Previous Surveys of Life-satisfaction

- **Simpson et al.** (1996) compared Australian (311) & Nepalese students (250) on depression & life-satisfaction
- Nepalese life-satisfaction *m22.10*
(f = 23.08; m = 21.11)
 - urban higher than rural
- Australian life-satisfaction *m23.28*
(f = 23.59; m = 22.15)

Previous Surveys of Life-satisfaction

- **Diener, et al. (2000)**
 - 41 countries rated global satisfaction with life & specific domains (students)
- 98 Nepalese students rated their satisfaction with life as 20.93 (5-35)
- 25th of 41 countries (lowest 14.4, highest 26.40)
- Neutral point considered to be 20 (clinical samples often on or below this)

Present Study Details

- **400 Nepalese** (even gender split)
- Surveyed using
 - *Satisfaction With Life Scale* (Diener, et al., 85)
 - Translated by bi-lingual co-researcher
 - *Demographics (correlates)*
 - age, gender, years of education, number of languages, geographical location (not for females), income, siblings, marital status, religion, occupation
- Non-random, snowball/convenience sampling

Results: sample demographics

- Age range 18-48
- Caste distribution
 - Brahmin 28.8%
 - Newar 26.2%
 - Ethnic 12.2%
 - Chhetri 11.5%
 - Yadav 9.2%
 - Dalit 6.0%
 - Teli 4.5%

Results: sample demographics

- 14% no formal education
- 5.2% achieved graduate level
- 59% had reached secondary &/or further qualification
- Only 29.5% were students
- Others = professional, housewife, farming, business, skilled work

Results: sample demographics

- **Religion**
 - 85.5% Hindu
 - 10% Buddhist
 - 2.2% Islam
 - 1.5% ethnic religion
 - 0.8% Christian
- **Marital status**
 - 51.8% married
 - 47.2% unmarried
 - 1% widowed

Results - overall S.W.L

- Mean = 21.6, SD 6.02
 - Mode = 19
 - Median = 21
 - Range = 30
- **For scale categories:-**
 - 32% satisfied
 - dissatisfied 12.5%

Results: gender differences in S.W.L

- **Female** = $m22.8$; SD 6.4; \pm SE .45
- **Male** = $m20.4$; SD 5.4; \pm SE .38
- **Significant gender difference**
 - (t = 4.053; df 398, p = .000)

Results: monthly income

- **Mean = 12,176 rupees** (£92)
 - Mode = 10,000
 - Median = 9,500
 - Range = 180,000 (£1,355 - outliers removed)
 - **70.6% between 0-10,000 rupees** (up to £75)

Results: gender differences in monthly income

- Female mean = 9,955 rupees (£74)
- Male mean = 14,395 rupees (£107)
- Significant gender difference in income
 - ($t = -2.98$, $df = 398$, $p = .003$)

Results: correlations

- S.W.L & income **positively** correlated
($r = .157$, $p = .002$)
- However estimated **curve fit departs significantly** from linear at very high income levels ($R_2 .030$, $p = .003$) (after 50,000 rupees)

Results: partial correlations/regressions

- *Gender, marital status, religion, caste* each have impact on relationship between S.W.L & income but these factors do not explain enough of variance in sample
- In regressions with gender, religion & **caste** entered **caste** was best predictor of S.W.L (however again variance explained low)

Interpretations...

- Scale accessible
- Overall S.W.L outside 23-28 norm
(Diener, et al. 93)
- Not the lowest despite economy & poor developmental status
- Despite Nepalese women reporting sig' less income than Nepalese males they report being sig' more satisfied with life

Interpretations...

- In terms of correlates of S.W.L
 - caste was best predictor (though weak)
 - perhaps the most interesting finding is even in this less well developed country there is still no ***additive value of rising income on S.W.L***

Further investigations...

- Item analysis of responses
 - especially final question
- Domain specific S.W.L
- Additional well-being/negative affect measures
- Longitudinal evaluation of S.W.L as political landscape changes & infrastructure develops

Further investigations...

- Compare global rating with experience sampling of positive affect
- Cross-cultural research
- However, *first*, I think it's important to know more about *folk theory* of well-being in Nepalese society

Thank you for listening
Your questions, reflections welcomed

