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Seung Jong Lee

Public Happiness

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To my parents

Preface

Why happiness? In order to answer this question, one needs to first ask why human beings live. Why do we live? Putting religion aside, life is not a choice, but rather given to us. Thus, why we live is not a fair question. Instead, we should be asking *how* we should live. The answer to this question depends on how an individual wishes to live. Often, humans wish to live happily. There is no need for an explanation. This is obvious and what anybody wants. To live happily while alive, this is a fundamental human demand. We often speak of natural rights as basic rights, but the basic part of basic rights has to do with the right to live happily, and thus, we can interpret happiness as a natural right.

Despite happiness being a basic right, it is impossible for every human being to experience the same level of happiness. This is due to the differences in individual characteristics and living conditions (or social conditions). On the one hand, two individuals with the same living conditions may experience different levels of happiness due to differences in individual personalities. On the other hand, even if two individuals had identical personalities, they may have different living conditions, creating differences in happiness levels. Be that as it may, we cannot accept these differences as normative. An ideal situation is one in which we all live happily without extreme differences in happiness levels.

How shall we accomplish this? Individual personalities are given to us and near impossible to change, but there is hope in improving living conditions to increase happiness levels. These efforts are not wasted. As long as humans are clothed in material goods and live among social relationships, living conditions will have a significant effect on happiness levels. Of course, how much material goods affect happiness levels will differ from one person to another. Some individuals can live happily, despite their living conditions. However, this is merely a difference in the strength of correlation between living conditions and happiness. There is no doubt that living conditions have a certain causal effect on individual happiness. There is no human being whose level of happiness has no correlation with external conditions, and thus, it is reasonable to focus on conditions to create a society in which everybody has a happy life.

The point is society must acknowledge a responsibility to fix conditions that are so deplorable that people are unable to achieve a minimum level of happiness or inequality in conditions that are so extreme that there are extreme levels of inequality in happiness levels. Of course, if these conditions are the result of an individual's choice or due to reasons attributable to others then society is free of responsibility. However, if these differences are not wholly attributable to personal choice or if these conditions are difficult to change or surmount at the individual level, then society has a responsibility to pay attention to these as a social issue. This is where the publicness of happiness or public happiness becomes necessary.

This is the problem this book addresses—the publicness of happiness. That is, rather than treating the problem of happiness as a purely individual one separate from the collective, this book approaches happiness as a collective problem as individuals are the building blocks of communities. In doing so, the book will pay particular attention to policy efforts to increase the happiness of citizens as members of a nation-state. I approach this from a policy perspective because governments arguably have the greatest resources and power to realistically affect citizens' lives. Some argue that the spread of capitalism and globalization has made the meaning of national boundaries weaker, but the nation-state remains a critical unit and agent of groups of people. Nation-states are important actors in the happiness problem from a normative perspective as well. Everyone lives within national boundaries, as a member of nation-states. Regardless of the strength of nation-states, nobody is free from the boundaries of nation-states. Nation-states and citizens are bonded to each other as nation-state citizens. Why does the state exist? A common belief that has endured over centuries is that the state exists to make its citizens happy. From Locke's weak state theory to Hobbes or Hegel's strong state theory, the existence of a state must be based on its citizens to be justified. In other words, a nation-state does not exist for itself, but for its citizens. Especially today, when most countries claim to be a democracy, a democratic state should exist for its citizens and should make an active effort to increase the happiness of its citizens. If a nation-state that purportedly exists for its citizens makes little effort for its citizens' happiness, then this is a denial of its own *raison d'être* and gross negligence of its minimum responsibility.

A state's efforts to increase citizen happiness is expressed in its public policies. Public policy is the action that a government adopts to achieve a public goal, and thus, we can understand happiness policy as the policies that a government adopts to increase citizen happiness. What do happiness policies aim for? I have already mentioned the importance of living conditions for happiness and happiness policies should focus on improving the living conditions and thereby increasing happiness, rather than focusing on increasing the perceived happiness of each individual. The reason for this is the relationship between external factors and happiness (which is a personal emotional state) is unclear, and thus, it is nearly impossible for a state to promise happiness through public policies (there is also the question of whether this is desirable). While it is impossible to guarantee a final level of happiness for all individuals however, it would be possible to set the guarantee of an average level of happiness from a collective point of view as a policy goal. Furthermore, happiness policies should include the goal of achieving a certain level of equitable and just

distribution of happiness levels among its citizens. The issue of distribution only arises as a collective problem. If individuals simply existed apart from the collective, the issue of distribution would be moot. Thus, public happiness has two faces—level and distribution—and happiness policies should pay attention to both. High levels with highly unequal distribution or low levels with low inequality cannot be an appropriate goal for happiness policies. Happiness policies should thus focus on identifying the conditions that have significant effects on the level and distribution of happiness and try to create conditions for high and equal distributions of happiness.

Meanwhile, the responsibilities of public happiness do not solely belong to the state. As members of a community called nation-state, its citizens must participate in these efforts of public happiness. I mean this in two ways. First, citizens should not simply be consumers of happiness policies, but also be an active participant in policymaking processes. Second, citizens should not only be concerned with their personal level of happiness, but also with the happiness of others. Without these efforts, happiness policies that are dominated by the government are at the risk of creating a mismatch between policies adopted and the policies desired by its citizens, exhaustion of public resources due to extreme demands, and the deterioration of civic culture.

There has been increased attention to happiness since the twenty-first century. Bhutan already introduced the new concept of a happy nation in the early 1970s by discussing Gross National Happiness. However, this small country's efforts did not garner much attention. For the next 30 years, there was a period of challenges and then the leading economies of the western hemisphere began to actively pay attention to happiness in the 2000s. These efforts reflect a national interest in public happiness rather than an individual's happiness and was driven by practitioner demands to address the limitations of the development state and welfare state, rather than scholarly demands. New interests in happiness also appeared in academia. The Easterlin Paradox, referring to the nonlinear relationship between wealth and happiness, inspired the happiness studies and still continues to motivate a growing body of research. Many of these studies focused on measuring happiness, identifying the influencing factors of happiness, and have contributed to making happiness studies more rigorous and scientific. Despite this large body of research, there remains the question of whether there is adequate research to support the practical interests in happiness. Notwithstanding the large body of existing research, happiness studies have (1) focused on individual happiness rather than public happiness, (2) focused on measuring and identifying influencing factors of happiness with scant attention to happiness policies, (3) focused on narrow policy recommendations, failing to address a more comprehensive happiness policy, and (4) paid little attention to the governance problem of happiness policies.

Based on these limitations of previous studies, this book adopts the publicness of happiness as its key assumption and discusses happiness policies (and the governance models for these happiness policies). This approach assumes that happiness studies should ultimately contribute to the practical goal of increasing happiness. In doing so, this book aims to contribute to the previous blind zone and to connect the interest in public happiness to happiness policies and governance. There is another important

reason for this book focusing on happiness policies. This is the belief that happiness policies can be a useful tool for policy development. Historically, public policies have claimed to be “for the people” but has been criticized for its government-centric goals and processes. The calls to transform patriarchic policymaking processes to a citizen-centric one to produce citizen-serving policies are the evidence. Despite the many suggestions, changes to the policy process seem difficult. The main agent of public policy remains policy decision-makers, and in reality, citizens are ignored in the policy process and remain its passive recipients. These realities can change with the pursuit of happiness policies. Happiness is what citizens feel, and in the pursuit of happiness as a policy goal, it is inevitable that public policy will become “for the people” and “by the people.” Moreover, happiness policies can be a useful tool for making policies more efficient and equitable. Under the common goal of happiness, the various bureaucracies within the government will work together to create better coordinated policies, and the focus on a more equitable distribution of happiness levels within society will make policies more equitable. The challenges of democracy, efficiency, and equity in policy development have existed for a long time, and the active pursuit of happiness policies can bring us closer to achieving these. Nevertheless, the discussion and research on happiness so far has been limited to viewing increases in happiness as a simple tool without recognizing these potential policy development outcomes. In other words, happiness policies can go beyond the basic goal of increasing happiness and act as an important tool in solving the basic problems of public policy. This role should not be treated simply as a secondary effect of happiness policies, but rather as a key impact.

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Chapter 1

Introduction



A democratic government should respond to what their citizens want. It is natural that the owner of a country is its people. What do citizens want? Citizens want progress—that is, they want life today to be better than yesterday and tomorrow to be better than today. Knight et al. (2002)'s study based on a survey of 10,000 UK citizens showed that respondents wanted progress and provide strong empirical support for this. Citizens from various backgrounds and environments are mentioning progress.

What is progress? Development (progress) is not a new concept created in the present, but has been pursued from ancient times, and encompasses material, moral, and psychological development (Nisbet, 2009: xiii). The definition of development varies, but is generally understood to refer to an upward change in a desired or desirable direction (Choi, 2006: 64) or a change from inferior to superior (Nisbet, 2009:5). History shows that civilization has not always progressed to a better state. Thus, progress is not natural but requires a certain level of effort. This is why a certain level of artificial effort for life progress is necessary. In making these efforts, an important question is how we understand progress. In modern society, progress has often been understood as economic output, and thus, economic growth (measured by GDP) has been understood as progress. Specifically, after World War II, it was agreed upon at the Bretton Woods conference that GNP would be used as the measure of progress. Afterward, the GNP was replaced by GDP, and both developed and developing countries have competed for the common goal of economic growth. Not only nation-states, but also individuals and corporations set economic growth as an ultimate goal.

However, since the 2000s, with developed western countries at its forefront, there has been a movement to shift the goals of national development through a reinterpretation of progress. There is growing recognition that economic growth as measured by GDP does not guarantee citizen happiness or wellbeing and worldwide efforts to adopt happiness or wellbeing as national goals. In other words, there is more interest in the qualitative aspects (i.e., happiness, wellbeing, QOL) beyond GDP.

These efforts have been called the “beyond GDP” initiative or movement.¹ The beyond GDP movement has many actors, such as central governments, local governments, non-government organizations, and international organizations. Nation-states have competed as developmental states, then as welfare states, and now it seems as happiness states. One could say the twenty-first century is the happiness century.

Characteristics of this movement can be summarized as follows. The national development goal has shifted from economic progress to holistic progress. There is increasing attention to qualitative progress, above and beyond quantitative progress and economic growth. This is a shift from welfare states (quantitative welfare) toward national happiness (qualitative welfare). There is an emphasis on QOL, better life, happiness, wellbeing, community, etc. There is a trend that stresses community wellbeing through local government services. There are pros and cons to these shifts, but these shifts are meaningful in that they are emphasizing goal-oriented government goals, compared to the previous discussion that was more process oriented. This shift is valid because (1) understanding progress in terms of happiness is natural because humans aspire to be happy and (2) human desires are more diverse than just economics. If citizens want progress—not only economic progress but also progress in happiness—nation-states must pay attention to these desires. This shift in national progress goals is efforts to push back against market-centrism and think about a new role for the government and sociopolitical institutions based on human-centrism. These efforts are goal-oriented and value-laden (Woo 2014a, b).

Why these shifts? In terms of the limits of the welfare state, shifts in demography and growth stagnation have created roadblocks to economic growth. On the other hand, despite the economic growth heretofore, there has been increased social inequality and little increase in wellbeing. In other words, growth itself has reached a limit and growth does not guarantee happiness. There are many studies that show economic growth is not linked to increases in overall wellbeing, happiness, quality of life, and/or life satisfaction. There are studies that also support the opposite, but overall, it is difficult to find unequivocal evidence for the guaranteed outcomes of growth. In sum, there is increasing suspicion toward the effects of economic growth from both developing and developed countries (Woo, 2014a, b) and developed countries are leading efforts to reset their national goals that go beyond GDP. Of course, these efforts are still in its early stages and are not at a full-fledged state. Moreover, this new paradigm does not deny the economy, but rather tries to complement the old paradigm (qualitative revision of progress). Thus, the current state is not described as “no GDP” but “beyond GDP.”

Happiness is a generic desire that does not require additional explanation. Of course, there is still debate about whether happiness is the ultimate goal of life, and some may consider other goals such as liberty, responsibility, and self-realization to be more important (Frey & Stutzer, 2002: 3). An individual may even opt for the

¹ The Beyond GDP initiative is about developing indicators that are as clear and appealing as GDP, but more inclusive of environmental and social aspects of progress. Economic indicators such as GDP were never designed to be comprehensive measures of prosperity and wellbeing. We need adequate indicators to address global challenges of the twenty-first century such as climate change, poverty, resource depletion, health, and quality of life (European Commission 2020).

freedom to choose unhappiness. For most people, however, happiness is an important and fundamental life goal. The following statement, “How to gain, how to keep, how to recover happiness is in fact for most men at all times the secret motive for all they do” (James 1902: 76, recited from Frey & Stutzer, 2002: 3) does not seem so objectionable.

If happiness is so important to an individual, the state (whose constituents are individuals) should have an active interest for the happiness of these individuals. In this regard, Musikanski et al., (2019: 25) argued that the primary purpose of government is to secure equal opportunities for people to pursue happiness and governments are to create the circumstances that allow each person to pursue happiness per their unique definition. Jeong Yak-yong, an old prominent scholar and magistrate of the Josun Dynasty, an ancient Korean regime, argued that the state should actively provide for the needs of those who are vulnerable in society, such as the poor, elderly, orphans, and those with illnesses, for the happiness of the public. Moreover, he argued there has to be promotion of technology to support the material abundance and increase in comfort and tools to protect human rights (Jang, 2017: 77–84).

In fact, happiness has been regarded as an ideal goal for governments and a value that governments have a responsibility for. Modern examples include the United States’ Declaration of Independence, French Declaration of Revolution, and the UN resolution for the Day of International Happiness that codify the public right to happiness. Many national constitutions also recognize the right to pursue happiness. For example, Article 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea states, “All citizens have dignity and value as human beings and have the right to pursue happiness. The State has a responsibility to guarantee these inviolable basic human rights of individuals.” Happiness is also mentioned in Japan’s Constitution and the idea of “buen vivir” is mentioned in the constitutions of Bolivia and Ecuador. As such, several important statements have explained that happiness goes beyond individual responsibility to public responsibility. Happiness has been a normative demand of humanity, apart from its survival. Despite this, it has been difficult to find the practice of this national responsibility toward public happiness. Finally, with the changes in context, happiness has become today’s most urgent task.

Efforts to increase citizen happiness, however, is a more difficult and ambitious goal than the previous efforts toward economic growth. The economic growth state of the past only had to focus on the economy, and the welfare state only had to focus on the welfare levels that were a result of the economy. However, the happiness state has to focus on other elements in addition to the economy. Furthermore, the happiness state now has to pay attention to how economic elements are connected to happiness. This is even more difficult because the causal relationship between economy and happiness is unclear. Despite this difficulty, as long as citizens want happiness, the state has a responsibility to work toward citizen happiness, even if that is not their national goal. This is because the state has a responsibility to work toward what citizens want. A government that does not pay attention to what its citizens want lacks its *raison d’être* and citizen trust. The decline in trust in government in the twenty-first century can be seen as evidence that governments are failing to meet citizens’ demands (Nye et al., 1997).

Overall, the interest that the state is showing in citizen happiness is premised on the realization of public responsibility for happiness, and thus, we should start from a discussion of public happiness. In other words, the increased interest of the state and public institutions in happiness is a recognition that happiness is no longer a private issue but a public issue. This increased attention to happiness can contribute to the happiness of marginalized populations that lack private resources and capabilities to achieve happiness.

Along with the interest of practitioners, there has been renewed interest in happiness research. For example, the research of Easterlin and others have increased the quantity of happiness research. This academic research is not completely separate from practice. The research outputs of happiness studies motivate national interest in happiness, and the practical interest in happiness also motivates research. Notwithstanding these outputs and meanings, the happiness research so far has some limitations from the perspective of public happiness. The background of recent happiness research tends to focus on public happiness beyond private happiness and is related to the theory of public happiness. Still, existing research tends to focus on private/individual happiness while discussing individual, community, and nations and thus has made limited contributions to the needs of public happiness.

Based on this observation, this book offers a discussion of public happiness above and beyond private happiness. Specifically, the book has the following goals. First, this book purports to deal with theory and practice of public happiness to which adequate attention has not been paid since the upsurge of happiness research in the early twenty-first century. In doing so, it emphasizes that happiness is the ideal goal to be pursued as a public responsibility and national goal on the one hand. On the other hand, it suggests how policy for happiness should be redirected and governance systems for enacting happiness policy should be renovated. This book also emphasizes that the primary goal of happiness policy should have as its final goal not promising individual happiness as an outcome, but rather the construction of the basic social conditions that support individuals pursue their happiness according to their own preferences and values. This approach signifies that actors in happiness policies include not only the state but also citizens as members of that state. This is an effort to redress the shortcomings of existing literature that has never adequately dealt with the relationship among public policy, governance, and public happiness.

Second, it introduces the recent efforts to change national development goals among developed countries based on reinterpretation of progress and explicates that this is a shift from welfare states (quantitative welfare) toward national happiness states (qualitative welfare) where social wellbeing (happiness, quality of life) rather than social welfare is considered important. This shift away from the traditional indicator for progress, GDP, can be called the “beyond GDP” movement. This book will introduce in detail the beyond GDP movements of various countries, local governments, and international organizations.

Thirdly, this book will suggest basic orientations for happiness-driven public policy and governance restructuring for happiness policy. Given the recent movements to adopt public happiness as national goals, if the movement wants to contribute to the change in national development goals, there must be a change in policy

implementation and the governance that is pursuing these policies. In other words, governance innovation (structure and role) is necessary and related studies should support this innovation. While previous happiness studies focused on measuring happiness levels and extracting influencing factors, they lacked equivalent attention to reorienting policy paradigms and restructuring governance which are necessary for promoting happiness. As of yet, “Beyond GDP” movement is in its early stages and there has not been a serious recognition that happiness should be a national development goal that should be connected to policy. With this in mind, this study will go beyond the discussion of happiness measurement and influencing factors to include the reorienting of policy (government innovation) and restructuring governance to address the limitations of previous studies. In doing so, this study will critically review the previous process-oriented governance (government) paradigms (e.g., traditional government, New Public Management, and New Public Service) and present a new goal-oriented paradigm for national development. Unlike the process-oriented governance paradigm, in goal-oriented governance paradigm, there is no pre-determined distribution of roles for policy actors and there is the acknowledgement that this can change fluidly depending on the potential for achieving the intended outcome. With this flexibility, the goal-oriented paradigm resolves the incompatibility with the previous paradigm, motivates theoretical studies, and can give comprehensive directions for the new policies and governance systems that focus on a new developmental goal. This has never been dealt with in the previous literature of happiness or wellbeing.

This book starts from the decision model of public happiness. Figure 1 summarizes how public happiness is determined by private activities stemming from individual and social conditions.

As shown in Fig. 1, government activity following public responsibility (happiness policy and governance) affects individual and social conditions. Here, individual conditions refer to the resources, capabilities, and values of individuals and social conditions (living conditions for individuals) include physical (e.g., SOC and welfare) and non-physical (e.g., culture, social capital, social values). Individual and social conditions affect each other (Chaps. 6 and 7).

Individual and social conditions affect an individual’s actions in the pursuit of happiness, both separately and/or together (Chap. 5). The achievement of happiness will differ by the contents and intensity of an individual’s pursuit of happiness. This achievement can be evaluated by its level and distribution (Chap. 4). The final evaluation for happiness achievement will depend on the components of happiness such as feelings, evaluations, and life meaning (Chaps. 2 and 3).

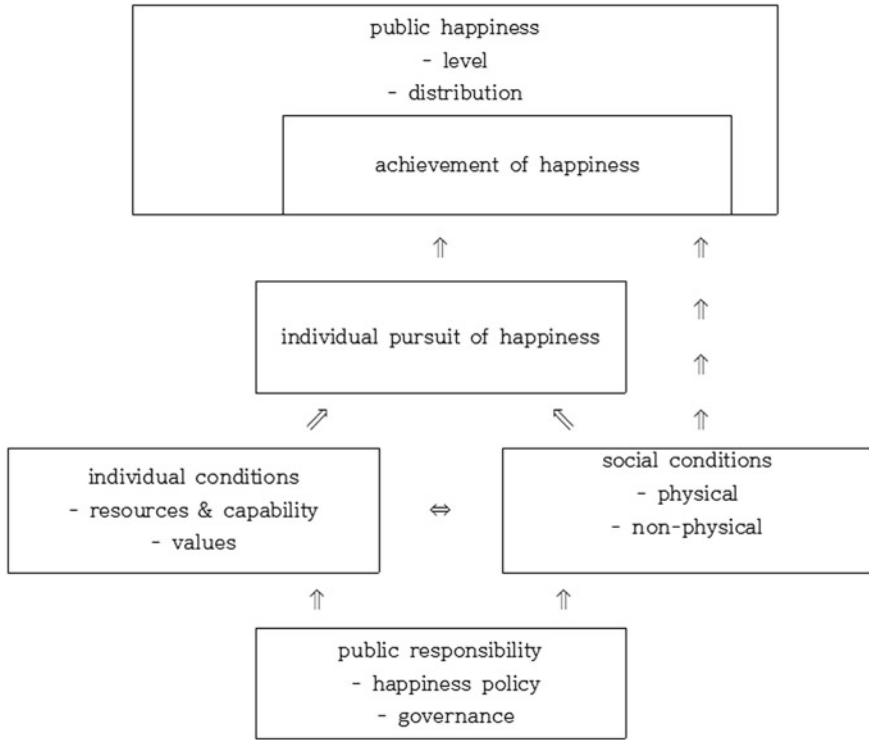


Fig. 1 Determining public happiness

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Chapter 2

Theoretical Backgrounds of Public Happiness



1 Conceptualization of Happiness

Any human being wants to be happy and thus makes efforts to be happy while living. They earn money, love, and/or hold on to a religion. They even choose death when they are unhappy. The problem of happiness follows us like a shadow during our life. There is no need to question why happiness and why humans pursue happiness. Happiness is an absolute good in life that does not require any explanation (Layard, 2005). It is the ultimate goal of life and the resolution of other values. The following lyrics from a Korean pop song describes how much humans want happiness:

If I could only live one day, but be happy, I would choose that path (from Jong Hwan Kim “For Love”).

What is happiness? The question of what is happiness or what is a good life has been asked for a long time in western philosophy.¹ In ancient Greece, Aristotle said happiness, the *raison d’être* of life and life’s most important goal, can be achieved with the correct desires (cited in Ludwigs, 2018). For Aristotle, happiness or a good life is *eudaimonia* (Prior 1991: 148). Epicurians defined the goal of life as pleasure and defined the pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain as an ethical principle. In general, the pleasures that Epicurians valued are mental pleasures, but some (e.g., Cyreneans) pursued physical pleasures. While Aristotle emphasized fulfillment of the correct desire, Epicurians discussed fulfillment of general desires and the ancient Stoics argued for the suppression of desire (Bok 2010: 50). In the ancient times, happiness was seen as something given by a god or other external agent, akin to luck or blessing. For example, Aristotle used *eudaimonia* (good spirit) interchangeably with “*makario* (blessed)” in Greek (Miao et al., 2013).

This perspective became more widespread in the middle ages and the belief that happiness is given to a select few through faith in god. This traditional perspective on

¹ In general, Western happiness studies were actively dealt with in three periods: ancient Greek philosophy, post-enlightenment philosophy in Europe, and current Quality of Life research (Veenhoven 1991a, b).

happiness changed in the thirteenth century through the ideas of Tomas Aquinas that individuals can become happy with their efforts (Koo et al., 2015). This emphasis on an individual's efforts for happiness became stronger in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Enlightenment era and led to ideas that personal pleasure is a key factor of happiness and that happiness is internal and thus something that an individual can achieve with effort. This was the beginning of a shift from a happiness of fortune to a happiness of pleasure (Miao et al., 2013). This perspective is well represented in the eighteenth century philosophy of utilitarianism that equated happiness with pleasure. In contrast, there is deontologism that is best represented by Kant. Understanding of happiness based on Kant's ethical philosophy assumes that there is an absolute ethical standard that all humans ascribe to. Thus, pleasure that ignores ethics was not recognized as happiness (Koo et al., 2015).

As much as happiness is an interest of western civilization, it was also discussed in Eastern philosophy from the early ages. Confucius, in West Scripture (西經), defines five blessings for happiness, which are physical and mental wellbeing (康寧); long life (壽); wealth (富); taking pleasure in following ethical norms and sharing with one's neighbors (攸好德); and to accomplish one's responsibility and mission with diligence (考終命). This happiness perspective highlights the important components of a happy life and not only shows an individual perspective but also includes the community that one belongs to for a comprehensive perspective on happiness. It is said that the word "happiness" cannot be found in the traditional Confucian text, but it can be said that the Confucian perspective approaches happiness through the word "blessing". Happiness can be defined as freedom, comfort, or a condition where all deficiencies are fulfilled. Confucians emphasize that to be happy we should get rid of selfishness or the ego. Doing so leads to the highest sense of joy from the inside, motivating love and life. Wealth and honor are something everybody desires, but if it comes without morals, then this is not genuine happiness. Similarly, Jeong Yak-yong (1762–1836), an ancient Korean scholar, defined a happy life as a moral and meaningful life. He believed that the subjective attitude of accepting with joy is more important for happiness than the objective blessing itself (Jang, 2017: 53). In general, the Eastern view of happiness can be traced from a Confucian approach that pursues a virtuous equilibrium that is neither excessive nor insufficient (Xi, 1999) and Lao-tzu's Taoism that emphasizes conforming to the non-artificial form in nature is the basis of a happy life (Lao-tzu 2007: 174; Jiwook 2018: 104).

Overall, in eastern culture, the concepts of fortune (福), pleasure (樂), and flourishing (吉) have been used in discussions of a good life, and these can be seen as representing happiness. There are some clear differences in eastern and western perspectives on happiness. While the western perspective can be broadly divided into hedonistic and eudaimonic views, in the eastern perspective the emphasis on virtue is more widely accepted than pleasure. Eastern philosophy views happiness as an enduring trait that arises from a mind in a state of equilibrium and entails a conceptually unstructured and unfiltered awareness of the true nature of reality, rather than a momentary emotion aroused by sensory or conceptual stimuli (Crum & Salovey, 2013). In other words, the perspective of happiness in eastern culture usually means the achievement of human nature through practice.

These days, happiness has a strong hedonistic bend as it is not seen as something given externally but something that can be pursued with one's own efforts internally and is seen as a subjective emotion and evaluation (Koo et al., 2015). However, the question of whether happiness should be viewed as a momentary pleasure or whether the satisfaction or evaluation stemming from a mistaken perception can be viewed as genuine happiness remains. The notion that life without morality and virtue cannot be a good life is also strong (e.g., Kesebir & Diener, 2008). Increasingly, the perspective of balancing this with eudaimonism—a meaningful life—and focusing on an individual's capacity to pursue this type of life is becoming more important. The inclusion of both hedonistic and eudaimonic components in many surveys and indicators is one evidence (Koo et al., 2017: 17).

How is the concept of happiness defined? Across eastern and western philosophy, happiness has been understood in various ways, and as a result, there is no unified definition of happiness in modern day. In fact, the confusion of the concept of happiness is common, and some even say this is an important roadblock to understanding happiness (Cummins, 2013). Some exemplary definitions are as follows. Veenhoven (1991a, b, a leading happiness scholar, equates satisfaction to happiness. For him, life satisfaction, i.e., happiness is conceived as “the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his life-as-a-whole-favorably”. In other words, “how well he likes the life he leads”. This is basically subjective satisfaction and aligns with the hedonic aspect of happiness.² Likewise, some scholars like Tatarkiewicz (1966: 1) and Michalos (1985) equate happiness as satisfaction with one's life.

Other scholars prefer satisfaction to happiness. Campbell et al. (1976) say life satisfaction is a more reliable concept than happiness because it is a cognitive judgment, whereas happiness refers to a feeling or affect. Lane and Terry (2000) say happiness is a mood, while satisfaction with life is a more cognitive evaluation. Helliwell and Putnam (2004) say the life satisfaction measure seems marginally better than the happiness measure in terms of social context.

As such, while the two concepts are recognized as related (Yeh et al., 2015), there are criticisms to it. Feldman (2010: 5) is specific at this point. He gives an example of the Eurobarometer which asks two questions about life satisfaction. One is “On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the life that you lead?”, and the other is “If you had the opportunity to live your life over, would you want to change many things in your life, or some things, or nothing at all?”. Regarding this, Feldman indicates that one is satisfied but may not be happy and that one may not want to change her life again but may not be happy. In other words, life satisfaction and happiness are not the same. Relatedly, Haybron (2016) found that the judgment of respondents' satisfaction in the survey is arbitrary, and the relationship between life satisfaction and happiness is weak because satisfaction actually represents the good-enoughness of a life rather than the goodness of a life. However, it is not possible to entirely deny the relationship

² The reason Veenhoven (1991a, b) pays attention to satisfaction is that life satisfaction is ① quite precisely defined, ② fairly well measured, ③ empirical data is accumulated, and ④ various difficulties exist in employing an objective conception.

between satisfaction and happiness. Although one may be satisfied but not happy, or dissatisfied but happy, it is more common that one is satisfied and happy, and dissatisfied and unhappy. Therefore, it is reasonable to understand that both are related. The general view on this is to see satisfaction as a sub-concept of happiness, as explicated later.

Wellbeing is often used interchangeably with happiness (Musikanski et al., 2019: 19). In psychology texts, happiness is the common sensical, wellbeing is a representative name for human wellness (David et al., 2013). According to Diener et al. (2009: 9), wellbeing is an individual's global evaluation of his or her life across a variety of different aspects of life. Thus, wellbeing refers to being well in general rather than within any specific area of life. That is wellbeing is an overall evaluation of an individual's life in all its aspects. From this perspective, it is difficult to distinguish happiness from wellbeing.

However, there are some limitations to treating wellbeing and happiness as synonyms. In this regard, Thin (2012: 34) argues that feeling well is not the same as feeling happy. He explains, "Happiness is in practice a much more expansive, complex, and motivating term, including numerous linked concepts that together combine to form much more holistic, narrative evaluations of lives. He indicates that without the 'subjective' prefix, 'wellbeing' is too easily understood in expert-led, paternalist ways that disregard people's own preferences and feelings." He also indicates that wellbeing contains the concept of subjective wellbeing, which is often used interchangeably with happiness, but in practice, the word emphasizes the body, basic provisioning, and illbeing, and thus, some say it is a narrower concept than happiness. Graham (2011: 25) also defines happiness as a comprehensive concept. According to her, happiness is a catch-all term including wellbeing as an overall evaluation of one's life, wellbeing as experienced in day-to-day living, wellbeing as influenced by innate character traits, and wellbeing as quality of life broadly defined. In addition, she argues that happiness is more useful than wellbeing in daily conversations because the latter is often understood in expert-led, paternalist ways that disregard peoples' own preferences and feelings.

What then is the concept of happiness here? I prefer a holistic definition of happiness that helps to capture its complexity: how positively people feel about their lives (Pfeiffer & Cloutier, 2016). That is, happiness equals the goodness of one's life. The level of good life is defined by the individual's comprehensive evaluation. If we use the term wellbeing, happiness is the same as subjective wellbeing. While wellbeing is an umbrella term for a number of concepts related to human wellness and includes subjective wellbeing (David et al., 2013), subjective wellbeing is how people evaluate their own lives in terms of both affective and cognitive components (Diener et al., 1999). However, happiness is not the same as satisfaction. As I will explain later, if subjective wellbeing includes feeling, satisfaction, and meaning, then subjective wellbeing becomes a broader concept than satisfaction. In sum, as long as we see happiness and subjective wellbeing as synonymous, we cannot treat happiness and satisfaction as synonyms.

Which term (between happiness and subjective wellbeing) shall we use then? As Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) noted, subjective wellbeing is the more

scientific-sounding term that generally means happiness. Nevertheless, this book prefers to use the term “happiness” for the following reasons. First, happiness more effectively calls the attention of people and the media (Musikanski et al., 2019: 20), making it easier to gather support for happiness policies. Second, given that the purpose of happiness studies is not limited to scholarly discussion but also includes practical contributions, it is better to use the term that is often used in casual discussions of the good life. Third, the scope of happiness is broader, allowing for more flexibility in its implementation.

On the one hand, despite the diverse meanings of happiness, the insistence on a single, unified conceptualization of happiness may be unnecessary. In fact, Alexandrova (2012) is wary of the over-generalization or attempts to arrive at a single definition of happiness. Such a focus requires a general evaluation, considering all the relevant aspects, adding and weighing them appropriately. According to Alexandrova (2012), previous conceptualizations have the limit of invariantism. A single concept of wellbeing applies to all, irrespective of moral or other considerations, where the construct of wellbeing does not vary with circumstances. Thus, Alexandrova calls for a more variant definition than the current fixed, generalized conceptualization. Of the variantist view, there are many concepts of wellbeing, some general and some very contextual. These new definitions of wellbeing are less universal but actually usable.

While we should remain wary of a simplistic, singular conceptualization, the happiness dialogue would benefit from a certain level of shared understanding of the concept. As Alexandrova (2012) also acknowledges, there exists already an overlap with the previous conceptualizations, and context is a realistic issue to be considered when applying the concept. Therefore, we maintain the aforementioned definition of happiness as “a positive evaluation of life.” This definition sees happiness as a subjective feeling that includes positive feelings, evaluations, and life meaning. It excludes the objective conditions that motivate happiness. If we see happiness as a resultant of the individual’s position on two independent dimensions of positive affect and negative affect as Bradburn (1969: 9), then we can include negative feelings as a component of happiness.

2 Perspectives of Happiness

It is difficult to find a unified definition of happiness because happiness is understood as being synonymous to a good life (Vittersø 2013a, b) and the understanding of what is a good life is not neutral but connected to philosophical views (Veenhoven 1991a, b). As aforementioned, the philosophical views of happiness or a good life include the hedonistic view that focuses on feeling (pleasure) or satisfaction and the eudaimonic view that focuses on virtue and morals (Ryan & Deci, 2001).