

# Happiness Matters: Role of Religion in Shaping the Positive Psychology for Better Living Socio-Psycho Study in Jaipur: A Survey Report

Anita Rathi<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

This article focuses on the question, how religion plays vital role within society confronting with psychological problems like stress, increasing rates of suicide, anxiety, depression, and mental illness? How helpful it has been proved in reducing them? Studies in USA and UK have proved that religion through its slow process of infusing virtues and morals brings positive psychology in individuals and makes them happier to go ahead towards better-life. This small initiation has been taken to understand the role of religion in bringing the happiness in context of India which is by its constitutional provisions is a secular country and is known as the “Sugar Bowl of World” where the people lives in are from the various religious walks of life.

**Keywords:** Happiness, Artificial smiles, Ambitious, Depression, Hinduism, Arrogance

## Preamble

“Happiness matters” Happiness being one of the most appreciable values, in human life. Dr. Shiv Gautam, former Head of Department - Psychology, SMS Hospital, Jaipur, Rajasthan, said most of the psychotherapeutic techniques taught in India are developed by the West. But the reality is something different, from the emergence of the civilization religion is playing vital role in relaxing the human sole from inevitable dangers, and letting them feel good and lead a happy life. Religion was the only institution through which our ancestors were seeking guidance, counseling for their day to day adversities and complex behavioral problems. Today we find poignant faces and artificial smiles, because smile is closely associated with the inner happiness. Conceptually happiness is a state of mind or feeling which shows the presence of love, satisfaction, pleasure or joy in our lives. To live better life happiness is indispensable. It was among age old practices, that whenever our ancestors confronted adversities, depression, and stress, they used to walk out, and sat themselves in “Kop Bhawan”, “Pooja Ghar”, or they went on long pilgrimage. Pui San Whittaker, senior consultant with Mental Health Commission in Western Australia said “Now a days man is measured by its persona wrapped in glittering wrappers, painted faces, coined smiles and on top of everything the material-motor to draw the lives. Today we see the increased number of suicides in youngsters, teen age students and of course in aged too. Almost everybody is so stressed. If we closely observe around us we will find that today’s youth is not satisfied. They are highly ambitious, partly, their parents are over ambitious too they impose their ambiguities for more materialistic needs on their children. Osho “Bhagwan Rajneesh” The man of the century, great philosopher, said on ambition, happiness, and art of living. Now it is the time when the humanity must freed itself from the passion of ambition, because it is the root cause of all evils in today’s society. There are many valuable things in this life like values, art, culture, religion, literature, poetry, love and natural beauty. He quotes it is same like as if the sole – spirit is less important and only the outer organs hands and legs are very necessary to be a human.

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<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Agrawal P.G. College, Jaipur.

**E-mail Id:** directorsperanzaenglish@gmail.com

**Orcid Id:** <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3825-7920>

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## Understanding Happiness

Positive psychology that ultimately brings happiness has its benefits and limitations definitely. Here we would like to go through some theoretical interpretations to plunk on understanding 'Happiness'.

### The Scientific Premise

According to Freudian principals - the, "Pleasure Principal", that if you allow your base desires to rule your life you can always be happy. Martin E.P. Seligman in his concept of "learned helplessness" (1975) he advocated that people defeat their own ambitions through depression, that they in fact talk themselves into failure through believing they cannot help themselves to cope.

### The Sociological Premise

Sociology of Social psychology is keenly interested in psychological aspects of human behavior and psychological study of man in sociology is a bit different then the biological aspects. Positive psychology affects our lives very much. It concerns with Positive Emotions means the contentment with the past, happiness in the present, and hope for the future. Positive Individual Traits means the strengths and virtues, such as the capacity for love and work, courage, compassion, resilience, creativity, curiosity, integrity, self- knowledge, moderation, self control, and wisdom. Positive Institutions means the strengths that foster better communities, such as justice, responsibility, civility, parenting, nurturance, work ethic, leadership teamwork, purpose, and tolerance.

### The Religious Premise

Whenever there are scientific advancements and technological rapid developments there grows the psychological problems famous Victorian era is the example when the existence of God has been challenged. Due to which a social conflict aroused between aged/older and young people in the society. The same situation we may notice around us now days again. The older/aged people believe in god and spirituality. Urbanization, Computerization, Industrialization, Modernization, Westernization are some of the globalized causes which are responsible for so called recent psychological problems in youth. If we consider the five basic religious ethics it will be helpful in achieving the actual aim in this survey report.

## Benefits of Religion

Emile Durkheim ("The Elementary forms of Religious Life") on the functional aspects of religion says that "Religion inspires and diverts the society towards disciplined and collective behavior. Max Weber discusses the importance and impact of religion on three bases:

1. The impact of religious thoughts on economic behavior on an average disciple.
2. The impact of religion on social structure.
3. Deciding the facts about the impact and reasons of religious civilizations in various civilizations after comprising them.

According to Dr. M. N. Shrinivas "Secularization plays a vital role in bringing social change in India" The basic ethic in every religion develops spirituality, benevolence, cheerfulness, contentment, courage, gentleness, lightness in the mood, mercy on the heart, obedience, patience in behavior, purity in thoughts, serenity, respect, self-confidence, simplicity in living, stability in mood, sweetness in personality, truthfulness and wisdom. All these are the sweet baby-corn juices of religion, then grow and bloom in the form of virtue. Virtue is the beauty of a person. To excel the main idea towards the actual findings here we give an eye to the ethics of religion in contexts of 5 religions as:

### The Theosophy of

#### Hinduism

According to Hindu mythology the ultimate of a human being is Moksha, the real joy. It has been said in Geeta by Lord Krishna, that the ultimate joy is the joy for ever, and to attain it one has to do its karma and let that supreme power to estimate it right or wrong. Thus a believer of Hinduism offers all his belongings to god, and set relaxed.

#### Islamism

Al-Ghazali (1058-1111) Islam's ethical science is studied in three categories, which can be understood only after learning preliminary sub-sciences. The knowledge of ethics, ('ilm al-akhlāq), deals with invariable personal behavior, which is good or bad, depending not on whether a person is alone or with others, but on his character. The second category of ethics deals with a person's behavior towards his family members in his home. This is called manners of family management (tadbir al-manzil). The third

category of knowledge of ethics teaches a person's social responsibilities, codifies behavioral principles, and instructs on how to be useful to others. It is called social manners. The main ethics in Islam as abstracted from Waqf Ikhlāq Publications No: 17 Ethics of Islam Al\_ bin Emrullah Muhammed Himm Third Edition are: 1 - Disbelief (Kufr), 2 - Ignorance, 3 - Greed For Wealth, Power, Ranks Or Positions, 4 - The Fear Of Being Accused Of Having Faults, 5 - Fondness For Being Praised, 6 - Heretical Beliefs (Bid'ats, 7 - Following The Desires Of The Nafs, 8 - Imitative Belief (Taqlid), 9 - Ostentation (Riy), 10 - Worldly Ambitions, 12 - Conceit (Kibr), 13 - Excessive Humility (Tazallul), 14 - Self Love ('Ujb), 15 - Jealousy (Hasad), 16 - Hatred (Hiqd), 17 - Rejoicing At Another's Misfortune (Shamatat), 18 - Separation (H I J R), 19 - Tahawwur Excessive Anger Or Harshness Which Reaches Dangerous, 20 - Breach Of Promise (Ghadr), 21 - Perfidy (Hiy'nat), 22 - Breach Of Promise, 23 - To Have A Bad Opinion About Others, 24 - Love Of Property Is Forbidden, 25 - Procrastination In Performing Pious Deeds (Taswāf), 26 - Sympathy For Fāsīqs, 27 - Animosity Toward Scholars, 28 - Instigation (Fitna), 29 - Compromising (Mud'hana) And Dissimulation (Mud'hā), 30 - Obstinacy (In'd) And Arrogance, 31- Hypocrisy (Nifaq), 32 - Not Thinking Profoundly Not Pondering, 33 - Malediction Over Muslims, 34 - Giving Improper Names To Muslims, 35 - Rejection Of An Excuse, 36 - Erroneous Explanation of the Qur'an Al-Kerām, 37 - Insistence In Committing Forbidden (Har'm) Actions, 38 - Backbiting (Ghiybat).

### Sikhism

Guru Nanak has stressed the code of conduct for a God-oriented man in stanza 28 and 29 of his scripture Japuji. He has also stressed the code of conduct for the men in the position of rulers and religious leaders responsible for the moral set-up of society. First, we will mention the ethical code for the individual comprising the elements as follows : Contentment (Santokh), Reflection (Saram), Right orientation (Dhian), Self discipline (Jugat), Absolute faith in God (Partit), Catholicity, i.e., showing respect to all other religious (Ai panthi sagal jamati) Service to humanity (man jite jag jit)

### Buddhism

Happiness forms a central theme of Buddhist teachings. For ultimate freedom from suffering, the Noble Eightfold Path leads its practitioner to Nirvana a state of everlasting peace. Ultimate happiness is only achieved by overcoming craving in all forms. More

mundane forms of happiness, such as acquiring wealth and maintaining good friendships, are also recognized as worthy goals for lay people (sukha). In Buddhism, the third of the Four Noble Truths states "to eliminate suffering, eliminate craving".

### Christian

In Catholicism, the ultimate end of human existence consists in felicity (Latin equivalent to the Greek eudaimonia) or "blessed happiness", as a youth; he sinned for its own sake, and later, in the pursuit of a perceived good. When he lost a dear friend to death, it troubled him greatly, and he turned to God for answers. He turned to God to find true happiness and was converted to Christianity.

### Happiness and Religion Correlations

The above mentioned ethics of every religion, it advocates the basic human ethics and values, following which will certainly bring happiness in our lives.

### Youth, Aging and Happiness

From previous researches in USA and UK it has been noticed that older/aged people are generally happier than younger adults. While older individuals reported more health problems, they reported fewer problems overall. Young adults reported more anger, anxiety, depression, financial problems, troubled relationships and career stress.

### Objective

1. Understanding the significance of religion in an age of satellite communication and digitalization, causing great changes in the life style among society.
2. Understanding differences of the status of happiness, in youth and aged persons of Jaipur city.
3. Understanding the role of Religion in positive psychology and happiness.

### Methodology, Universe and Sampling

This survey is based on purposive sampling. A sample of 60 people was carefully chosen for specific purpose and interviewed with semi-structured questionnaire, carrying both open-close ended questions at all. In lieu of the establishing a close understanding between the interviewee and respondents, efforts has been made by frequently visiting these religious places and meeting people and talking to them. The universe for

the study is comprises of persons who visited their respective religious places in Jaipur. The Govind Deo Temple (Hindu), Chandpole-gate Church (Christian), Gurudwara Pital factory (Sikh), Digambar Jain Temple Jaipur, ledgah Mosqaue (Islam) located in Jaipur. A sample of 60 persons at five religious places has been chosen purposely.

### **Interpretations**

The study shows that out of 60 persons from all major 5 walks of religions. The variables are categorized as Old Persons and Young Persons. Further divided under the male and female categories. 50% i.e. (30 nos.) Respondents were chosen from the old aged persons and 50% (30 nos.) were from young persons. The outcome of the study shows that out of the 30 old age persons, 15 male when asked whether they are fully satisfied with the value of happiness in their life, 60% showed their complete satisfaction and they gives the whole credit to their belief in god for their happy and contended life. They have a set disciplined life in which they keep some space for worship, pooja, visiting the holy place (every day, once in a week or twice in a month) they strongly believes in Almighty. 13.3% old male respondents accepts that they do believe in god, and religion this reduces their stress level, keeps them in touch with their colloques, friends and also helps in developing new relations while on visit to holy place. But they also believe that one should be practical as well too, and should not pressurize their dependants for the same. Although they found it very bad that now a days the ratio of suicidal tendency is increasing on a very high rate, which is an outcome of the modern living. The remaining 26.6% respondents believes that they believe in spirituality and religion equally, but due to their busy schedule they performs they every day prayers at home and seldom come to visit the religious place, they do so because it gives them deep insight into the everyday matters of life, helps them to overcome the tensions and stress of work and family, ultimately they are happy, joyous and enthusiastic. Females are more likely to be religious as well strongly believes in spirituality. Out of 15 older females 73.3% strongly believes in religion and spirituality both in same one sense i.e. worshipping god and following the path of religion. They are happy and somewhere hurt by the present young generation. They are happier, satisfied with their achievements and gives whole credit to their religious activities as they keep them engage even in their leisure time and the time when they are alone. 26.6 Respondents answered that though they do perform everyday prayer, sadhna,

dhyan, Mantra Chanting, and Mala this supplies them deep satisfaction but they are not regular visitors of holy place. They believes god is everywhere, where ever we remembers god helps us in every situation, gives us wit and wisdom to understand the things, faith in god gives them a kind of support of belongingness. Thus they always keeps smiling and find themselves happy. To understand the importance of religion when asked to the youngsters who belongs between the age group 20-30. Responses were varied. Out of 15 male respondents 80% which is a large part of the young respondents reported that they believe in god, but do not believe in everyday routine pooja-path, they don't have time, habit to get-up early in morning, they are busy studies, friends, gossip, internet chatting, surfing. Respondents replied that they don't get time to sit for a while. They have to achieve their goals, they are worried for examinations. They are over tensed for future. They could not share themselves with any of their friend as everybody is their competitors, they feel suffocated when they are alone, or fix in any opposite situation, failure for them might cause them to commit suicide. 20% male respondents replied that when there is any examination, they do perform pooja-path, but to please god, this gives them a kind of mental security. But after exams they take it as an activity to be performed or meant for older people not for them. Where out of 15 young female respondents 66.6% females agreed that they are regular with their pooja, prayere and believes in god, they respond that they are happy with whatever are their achievements and their views on happiness matters female respondents respond positively it has been observed they are more happy, that is the majority then the male respondents. 13.3% respondents do not believe in god, pooja, going to holy place, worship etc. 20% female respondents replied that whenever they visit any holy place with their parents they found that there is a kind of joy and they believes in God because when they are worried or scared in any situation god is the only help, religion for them is similar to the spirituality they believes that their grand parents and parents are always satisfied and happy rather then them, and they gives the credit to religion, pooja, path, dyan.

### **The Qualitative Task**

The findings of the above interpretations show that the older or aged persons are more happy and satisfied with their life and achievements. They do not have any negative thoughts. They found their ultimate happiness in god and worshipping god. They are not

worried for future or any worries. They are smiling, happier and self contented. Contrary Young man are modernized, they are frustrated, not satisfy with their achievements and want to win the world in a day, don't have space for personal relations. Happiness for them is nothing more than a false smile. Young females are happier than young males. It is true as said by Prajapita Bramakumari "Happiness is a butterfly which when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but which if you will sit down quietly may alight upon you."

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