

HAPPINESS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN: A CRITIQUE OF MEASUREMENT AND COMPARISON NEGLECTING AGE-SPECIFIC DEFINITIONS

Nasipat CHANCHAIPITIPHAT¹, Parinya SIRIATTAKUL¹ and Roy MARZO²

1 Faculty of Political Science, North Bangkok University, Thailand;

681500089@northbkk.ac.th (N. C.); siriattakul@hotmail.com (P. S.)

2 Faculty of Humanities and Health Sciences, Curtin University Malaysia, Malaysia;

roy.marzo@curtin.edu.my

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 7 November 2025 Revised: 21 November 2025 Published: 9 December 2025

ABSTRACT

This paper synthesizes 21st-century empirical literature to examine the definitions, components, and characteristics of happiness as it evolves across the lifespan, critically analyzing measurement practices that neglect these fundamental age-specific nuances. Findings reveal that happiness is not a monolithic concept, but a dynamic construct that evolves with age: in childhood, happiness is predominantly linked to immediate positive affect, such as play and excitement. In adulthood, happiness becomes more complex, integrating affect, behavior, and cognition, often tied to the attainment of goals, the pursuit of meaning in life, and the formation of valuable relationships. For the elderly, happiness usually centers on acceptance, maintaining meaningful connections, and inner peace. A key critique highlights that universal happiness measurement tools, unadapted to these age-specific definitions, yield misleading conclusions and ineffective policies. Researchers have widely acknowledged the limitations of happiness metrics, including complexities such as the income-happiness paradox and the profound influence of cultural context on perceptions of well-being. This paper thus advocates for nuanced, age-specific research methodologies to foster a deeper, more accurate understanding of happiness, thereby enabling the development of truly effective and sustainable well-being policies.

Keywords: Happiness, Age Stages, Happiness Measurement, Social Context, Public Policy

CITATION INFORMATION: Chanchaipitiphat, N., Siriattakul, P., & Marzo, R. (2025). Happiness across the Lifespan: A Critique of Measurement and Comparison Neglecting Age-Specific Definitions. *Procedia of Multidisciplinary Research*, 3(12), 36

Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim that may be made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. This is a fully open-access article distributed under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).