

## **Abstract**

The thesis consists of three studies. The first study examines whether sustainable development indicators predict happiness globally. Secondary data from 156 countries on 12 sustainable development indicators over 15 years (2006-2020) are analyzed. Results show that social indicators of an increase in the number of doctors, female employment, and females in parliament and the economic indicator of gross domestic product furthered the happiness levels across nations. The second study examines the contents, meanings, and mediators of happiness in the Indian state of Assam. A thematic analysis explores the meanings of happiness in Assamese culture, revealing a blend of ancient Indian, Eastern, and Western ideologies based on intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Subsequently, a culture-sensitive 14-item, one-factor happiness scale is affirmed to assess happiness. It has high reliability, validity, and measurement invariance across high vs. low economic status and male and female genders. Further conceptualization affirms that character strengths do not further happiness directly but promote happiness through life skills. The third study compares the effectiveness of an Indian yoga intervention and a gratitude intervention in boosting happiness. The findings imply that, compared to the gratitude group, the yoga intervention group's happiness scores increased during and after the intervention. Implications of findings are discussed.

*Keywords:* happiness, sustainable development, character strengths, life skills, yoga, gratitude

Palakshi Sarmah