

Study of Happiness among Teacher Trainees in Kerala

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Abstract: *The present study analyses the level of happiness among teacher trainees in Kerala. A online survey was conducted among 214 student teachers. This analysis is conducted through the framework of five dimensions encompassing their state of being, attitude, response, interactions and ethical principles. The result shows that the happiness level of teacher trainees is estimated satisfactory. Study is relevant in curriculum planning, policy making, student welfare and academic achievement of the student teachers.*

Keywords: Happiness, Teacher Trainees

1. Introduction

Happiness stands as a fundamental concept within the realm of mental well-being and personal principles, interconnected with positive behaviours in one's life. This intricate notion can be interpreted through various lenses. Broadly, happiness encompasses contentment, a favourable outlook on life, and a relatively diminished experience of negativity. Individuals who embody happiness typically exhibit four consistent traits: a healthy self-esteem, optimism, self-discipline, and extroversion.

In the contemporary world, happiness assumes a role in safeguarding against ailments. It bolsters the immune system and extends the lifespan of those in good health. Consequently, fostering happiness can be adopted as a strategy for advancing public health across diverse societies. Research underscores that myriad elements—ranging from familial and social connections, leisure pursuits, socio-economic circumstances, and professional status to marital situation, body mass index, educational attainment, religious inclination, age, and engagement in sports—exert influence on happiness.

A comprehensive grasp of these determinants empowers governments to enact requisite reforms for enhancing the wellspring of happiness within their communities.

Need and Significance of the Study

The recent scientific advancements in the study of happiness carry immense significance for humanity, particularly within academic circles. Delving into the scientific exploration of happiness represents a major milestone in our comprehension of human welfare. Prior to the scientific investigation of happiness, our understanding of this concept largely relied on introspection and conventional wisdom.

Placing human happiness at the forefront occupies a prominent position in the hierarchical structure of human existence. Happiness research holds a distinctive status as it seeks to uncover insights into what holds the greatest

importance for the majority of individuals in life. The pursuit of happiness is inherent, ingrained in us to ensure our survival. Acquiring knowledge about happiness takes a lofty place in the realm of knowledge, aiding us in comprehending our identity, origins, motivations, actions, and methodologies.

The field of happiness studies employs quantitative methods to analyze various facets including happiness levels, positive and negative emotions, well-being, quality of life, and life satisfaction within individuals. It sheds light on an individual's perspective on life and mental wellness. The primary objective of this study is to analyse the level of happiness among teacher trainees in Kerala.

Statement of the problem

The present study is entitled as 'Study of Happiness among Teacher Trainees in Kerala'.

Definition of Key Terms

Happiness study: This refers to a quantitative examination of happiness, encompassing the analysis of positive and negative emotions, overall well-being, quality of life, and life satisfaction.

Teacher Trainee: A teacher trainee is a student who is in the process of preparing to become an educator. As part of their training, they may engage in activities such as observing classroom teaching or participating in closely supervised teaching experiences within a secondary school setting.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are:

- 1) To determine the happiness level of teacher trainees.
- 2) To determine the trainees happiness level in accordance with their attitude towards life.
- 3) To identify the levels of happiness among trainees across five distinct dimensions: –
 - way of being
 - way of interaction
 - way of response

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- way of attitude and
- ethical principles.

Scope of the study

The current study aims to study the level of happiness among teacher trainees in Kerala. This analysis is conducted through the framework of five phases encompassing their state of being, attitude, response, interactions and ethical principles. Additionally, the study endeavours to explore the connection between happiness and mental well - being.

2. Theoretical Overview

Happiness has been a subject of contemplation and discourse dating back to ancient Greek times. Science has scrutinized happiness from a 'hedonic' perspective, meaning it is the result of seeking pleasure over avoiding pain. Tracing its roots to Aristotle's era, happiness has been conceptualized as encompassing two essential facets: hedonia, associated with pleasure, and eudaimonia, linked to a sense of well - lived life.

According to a study by Kesebir and Diener, their research indicates that in surveys assessing happiness, over 80% of participants categorized their overall 'eudaimonic' life satisfaction as ranging from 'fairly happy' to 'very happy.' Remarkably, within the same context, around 80% of respondents also rated their present hedonic 'mood' as positive.

Sigmund Freud posited that individuals actively pursue happiness, aspiring to attain and sustain it. This pursuit manifests with a dual purpose: one is constructive, aiming for the absence of pain and discomfort, while the other is favourable, seeking intense sensations of pleasure. Certain individuals contend that perhaps happiness should not be subjected to scientific elucidation due to the inherent challenge of objectively quantifying it.

Dr. Carol Diane Ryff, an esteemed American scholar and psychologist, has dedicated many years to exploring psychological well - being and resilience. Her extensive research led her to devise the six - factor model of Psychological Well - being, a theory that delineates the fundamental components contributing to happiness. These factors encompass Self - Acceptance, Personal Growth, Purpose in Life, Positive Relationships, Autonomy, and Environmental Mastery.

According to the theory of happiness, one's overall emotional state underpins their sense of happiness. Bradburn introduced the notion that happiness comprises two distinct components, each operating independently and without correlation.

These analytical methodologies have been employed to provide valuable insights into the realm of happiness study.

3. Review of Related Literature

Joseph, Justin and Joseph M I (2013), conducted a study titled 'Emotional Competency and Happiness among Teacher Trainees.' This research aimed to explore the

emotional competency and happiness levels of students enrolled in physical education and teacher education programs. The findings from the study revealed that there was no notable distinction between students studying physical education and those pursuing teacher education, both in terms of emotional competency and happiness. However, the study did identify a meaningful connection between emotional competency and happiness within these groups of students.

Munevver, Mertoglu (2018), conducted a study titled 'Happiness Level of Teachers and Analysing its Relation with Some Variables.' The objective of this research was to identify the variables that contribute to differences in the happiness levels of teachers across primary, secondary, and high school levels. Additionally, the study aimed to offer recommendations for fostering greater happiness among individuals. The outcomes of the study indicated that, on the whole, teachers exhibited higher - than - average happiness scores. Moreover, the research concluded that teachers' happiness scores did not display significant variation based on factors such as age, years of experience, income, marital status and number of children.

Paula, Benevene (2019), conducted a study titled 'Effect of Teachers' Happiness on Teachers' Health: The Mediating Role of Happiness at Work.' This research aimed to enhance comprehension regarding the impact of teachers' inherent happiness and self - esteem, as dispositional characteristics, on their overall health. The study also sought to investigate the contribution of the work environment in cultivating positive emotions. The findings of the study substantiated the significance of self - esteem in fostering health - related behaviours, thereby bolstering both physical and mental well - being. Additionally, the research highlighted the positive influence of perceiving the workplace as a conducive context for experiencing happiness.

4. Methodology

The research titled 'Study of Happiness among Teacher Trainees in Kerala' adopts a descriptive cum analytical approach. Its primary objective is to comprehend the level of happiness among teacher trainees by examining five distinct phases: their way of being, way of interaction, way of response, way of attitude, and ethical principles. The study encompasses the timeframe from 01 June 2023 to 26 June 2023, with relevant observations collected during this period.

The study involved a sample group of 214 teacher trainees enrolled in the B. Ed program across 22 Institutes of Teacher Education in Kerala. The samples were collected from the following teacher education institutions:

- 1) St. Joseph College of Teacher Education For Women, Ernakulam
- 2) KUCTE, Aryad
- 3) Hill Valley College of Education, Thrikkakara
- 4) Avila College of Teacher Education, Edakochi
- 5) NSS Training College, Changanacherry
- 6) Millath College, Sooranad
- 7) MMTC, Vilakudy
- 8) PMTC, Mavelikkara

- 9) Buddha College of Teacher Education For Women, Muthukulam
- 10) Sabarigiri College of Education, Anchal
- 11) SNGK College of Education, Pothencode
- 12) SAM, Poothotta
- 13) KUCTE, Karyavattom
- 14) Mount Tabor Training College, Pathanapuram
- 15) Iqbal Training College, Peringammala
- 16) Sree Narayana College of Education
- 17) HKM College of Education, Kollam
- 18) Fathima Memorial Training College, Kollam
- 19) SNM Training College, Moothakunnam
- 20) MITC, Puduponnani
- 21) CPAS CTE, Elanthoor, Pathanamthitta
- 22) Sree Vivekananda Teacher Education Centre, Palemad

Tool

For this study, a questionnaire was devised, centering on essential aspects, and was administered to the chosen sample group. The responses gathered were promptly collected and analysed.

5. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Analysis of the questionnaire data indicates that:

I. Way of Being

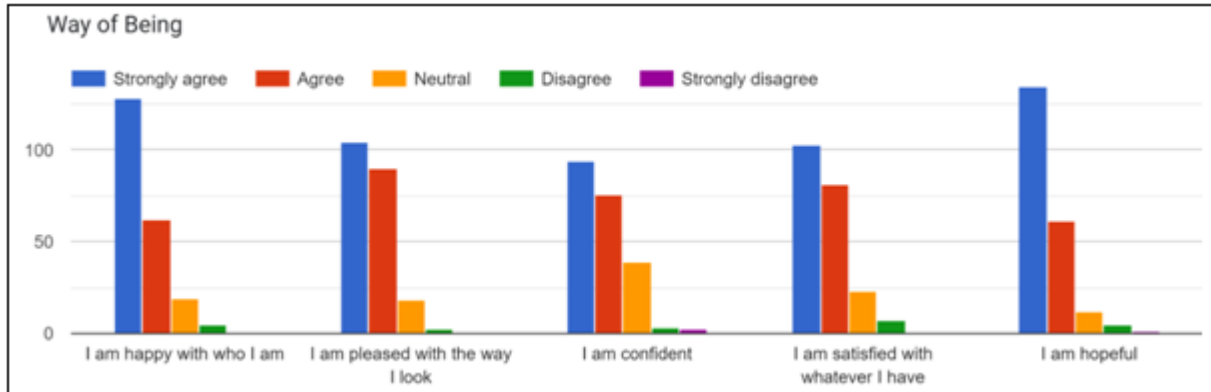


Table 1

In the Way of being phase it is observed that:

- 1) 59.81% of the trainees strongly agree that they are content with their own identity. 28.98% agree with this perspective, while 8.88% maintain a neutral stance, and 2.33% express disagreement.
- 2) Regarding satisfaction with their appearance, 48.60% of the trainees strongly agree that they are content with their physical appearance. Additionally, 42.06% agree with this sentiment. There are 8.41% who hold a neutral stance, and 0.93% disagree.
- 3) In terms of confidence, 43.93% of the trainees strongly agree that they possess confidence, while 35.52% agree with this notion. On the other hand, 18.22% maintain a neutral perspective, 1.40% disagrees and a mere 0.93% strongly disagrees.
- 4) Concerning contentment with their possessions, 48.13% of the trainees strongly agree that they are content with what they have. Furthermore, 37.85% agree with this standpoint. However, 10.74% hold a neutral viewpoint, and 3.28% of the trainees disagree.
- 5) Reflecting on their sense of hope, 63.08% of the trainees strongly agree that they maintain a hopeful outlook. In addition, 28.50% agree with this perspective. Meanwhile, 5.61% assume a neutral stance, 2.34% disagree and 0.47% strongly disagrees.

II. Way of Interaction

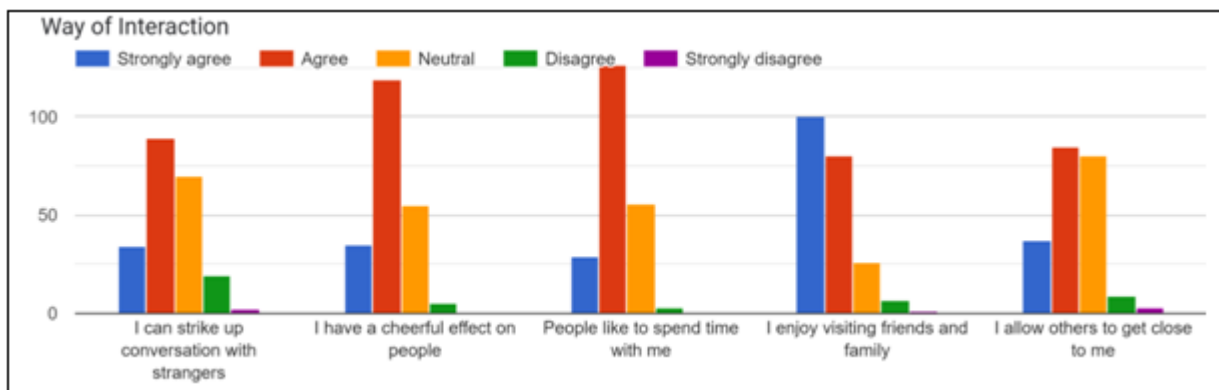


Table 2

In the "Way of Interaction" phase, the following observations are made:

- 1) When it comes to initiating conversations with strangers, 15.89% of the trainees strongly agree that they can comfortably engage. Furthermore, 41.59% agree with this ability. However, 32.71% respond neutrally, 8.88% disagree, and 0.93% strongly disagree.

- In terms of the cheerful effect they have on others, 16.36% of the trainees strongly agree that they possess a positive influence on people, with 55.60% in agreement. Conversely, 25.70% maintain a neutral stance, and 2.34% disagree.
- Regarding likability and spending time with others, 13.55% of the trainees strongly agree that people enjoy being around them, while 58.88% agree. Meanwhile, 26.17% provide a neutral response, and 1.40% disagree.
- In the context of enjoying social visits, 46.73% of the trainees strongly agree that they derive pleasure from visiting friends and family. Additionally, 37.38% agree

with this sentiment. There is a neutral response from 12.15%, whereas 3.27% disagree and 0.47% strongly disagree.

- Considering the willingness to allow emotional closeness, 17.29% of the trainees strongly agree that they are open to others getting close to them. Moreover, 39.72% agree with this perspective. However, 37.38% remain neutral, 4.21% disagree, and 1.40% strongly disagree.

III. Way of Response

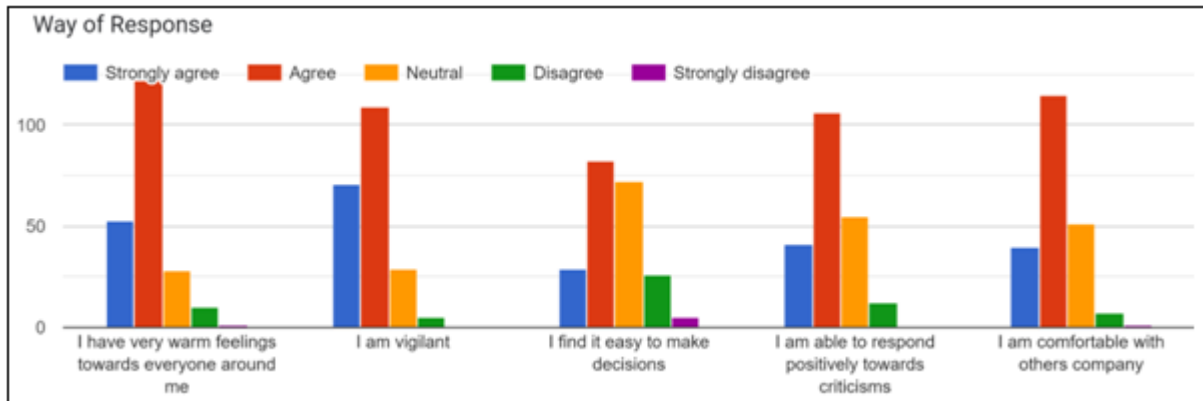


Table 3

In the "Way of Response" phase, the subsequent insights are observed:

- In terms of feelings towards those around them, 24.77% of the trainees strongly agree that they hold warm emotions for everyone around them. Additionally, 57.01% are in agreement, while 13.08% offer a neutral response, 4.67% disagree and a mere 0.47% strongly disagrees.
- Regarding their level of vigilance, 33.18% of the trainees strongly agree that they are vigilant individuals. 50.93% agree with this notion, 13.55% remain neutral, and 2.34% disagree.
- In the context of decision - making, 13.55% of the trainees strongly agree that they find it easy to make

choices. Furthermore, 38.32% agree, while 33.64% express a neutral standpoint. Conversely, 12.15% disagree and 2.34% strongly disagree.

- When it comes to responding positively to criticism, 19.16% of the trainees strongly agree that they possess this ability. Meanwhile, 49.53% agree, and 25.70% remain neutral. Conversely, 5.61% disagree.
- Reflecting comfort in the company of others, 18.69% of the trainees strongly agree that they feel at ease when surrounded by others. Additionally, 53.74% agree, 23.83% provide a neutral attitude, 3.27% disagree, and 0.47% strongly disagree.

IV. Values and Morals

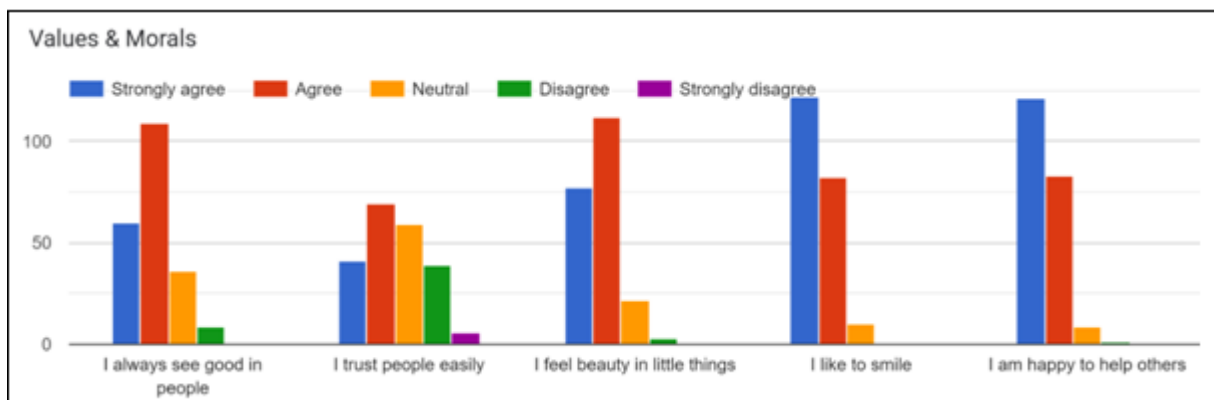


Table 4

In the "Values and Morals" phase, the following observations are noted:

- When considering their perception of others, 28.04% of trainees strongly agree that they tend to see goodness in people. Additionally, 50.93% agree with this viewpoint,

while 16.82% hold a neutral opinion, and 4.21% disagree.

- Regarding their propensity to trust, 19.17% of trainees strongly agree that they readily place trust in others. Furthermore, 32.24% agree, while 27.57% adopt a

neutral stance. Conversely, 18.22% disagree, and 2.80% strongly disagree.

- 3) In terms of appreciating small things, 35.98% of trainees strongly agree that they find beauty in littlethings. 52.33% are in agreement, and 10.29% maintain a neutral viewpoint. Conversely, 1.40% disagree.
- 4) Regarding their inclination to smile, 57.01% of trainees strongly agree that they enjoy smiling. Additionally,

38.32% agree, and 4.67% of trainees hold a neutral opinion.

- 5) In relation to helping others, 56.54% of trainees agree that they derive happiness from helping others. Furthermore, 38.78% are in agreement, 4.21% hold a neutral attitude, and 0.47% disagree.

V) Way of Attitude

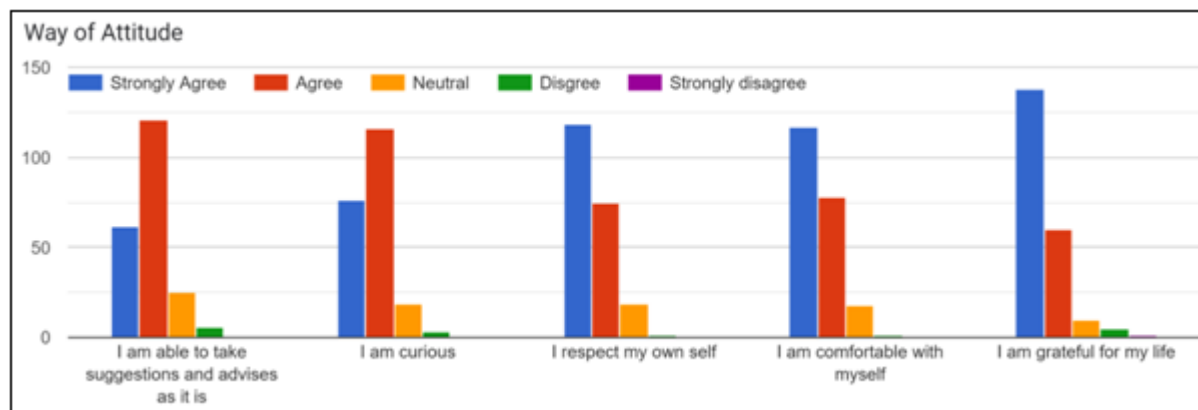


Table 5

In the "Way of Attitude" phase, the following observations are made:

- 1) Regarding their openness to taking suggestions and advice as given, 28.98% of the trainees strongly agree that they can accept them as is. Additionally, 56.54% agree with this notion, 11.68% maintain a neutral attitude, and 2.80% disagree.
- 2) In terms of curiosity, 35.51% of trainees strongly agree that they possess curiosity, while 54.21% agree. A total of 8.88% hold a neutral attitude, and 1.40% disagrees.
- 3) Regarding self - respect, 55.60% of the trainees strongly agree that they respect themselves, and 35.05% agree. Meanwhile, 8.88% maintain a neutral stance and 0.47% disagrees.
- 4) In relation to comfort with oneself, 54.67% of trainees strongly agree that they feel comfortable with who they are. Moreover, 36.45% agree, 8.41% maintain a neutral attitude, and 0.47% disagree.
- 5) Reflecting on gratitude towards life, 64.49% of trainees strongly agree that they are grateful for their life. Furthermore, 28.03% agree, 4.68% hold a neutral attitude, 2.33% disagree, and 0.47% strongly disagree.

6. Major Findings

- 1) Generally, the happiness level of teacher trainees is deemed satisfactory.
- 2) Specific aspects reveal a relatively lower level of happiness among the trainees.
- 3) A majority of the trainees strongly agree that they are content with their identity.
- 4) Only 15.89% of trainees strongly agree that they are adept at initiating conversations with strangers, indicating a low level of interaction indicator.
- 5) Merely 16.36% of trainees strongly agree that they bring about a cheerful impact on others, highlighting a low indicator in this aspect.

- 6) Only 28.04% of the trainees strongly concur that they have a tendency to perceive kindness in individuals.
- 7) Most trainees express happiness in helping others.
- 8) A significant portion of the trainees struggle to accept suggestions and advice as it is.
- 9) A majority of the trainees hold self - respect.
- 10) Most trainees strongly agree that they are appreciative of their own life.
- 11) When comparing indicators, the levels of Way of Being and Way of Attitude indicators are higher than those of Way of Interaction, Values and Morals, and Way of Response.

Educational Implications

Based on the analysis and findings of the study, the following implications can be drawn:

- 1) Happiness is closely tied to improved health, heightened emotional understanding, and positive behaviour.
- 2) As future educators, the mental, social, and emotional well - being of teachers should be given considerable attention. The individual's happiness level plays a pivotal role in this regard.
- 3) Positive emotions contribute to enhanced brain productivity and functioning.
- 4) Research indicates that when teachers experience high levels of stress, their students' academic performance tends to suffer. Conversely, teachers with high levels of well - being tend to have more engaged and academically successful students.
- 5) Notably, the well - being of a teacher directly impacts the well - being and learning outcomes of students. This underscores the critical importance of focusing on teachers' well - being.

The study's implications emphasize the intertwined relationship between teachers' happiness, their overall well - being, and the educational experiences and outcomes of their students.

7. Conclusion

The objective of the study was to assess the happiness levels of teacher trainees in Kerala. This assessment was carried out by analysing data across five distinct parameters: Way of Being, Way of Interaction, Way of Response, Values and Morals, and Way of Attitude. After conducting a thorough analysis and interpretation of the data gathered through the distributed questionnaire, it can be inferred that the happiness level of teacher trainees is notably positive. This is significant as the well - being of teachers has a direct impact on the students they educate. Recognizing the importance of managing emotions and maintaining mental well - being, it becomes evident that cultivating these aspects will contribute to the productivity and effectiveness of trainees in their future roles.

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