

MARINE NEWS



"Failure is a lesson learned; success is a lesson applied."

Happiness In A Digital World

(by Nipun Chatrath, CEO & Farshad Allauddin, COO

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“According to the World Happiness Report 2021, the top 3 happiest countries are Finland, Iceland, and Denmark. Besides, these are countries with high digital maturity. Even if it is difficult to demonstrate a causal relationship, a link between happiness, technology, and social welfare is a fact.” - **ICT & Health, April 2021, the official platform for healthcare innovations.**

Digital technologies can have a significant impact

on people's happiness. Digitalization connects people and changes the way that they interact with each other. As previous studies found, people, especially older individuals, are more satisfied with their lives when using digital networks due to the opportunity for communication and sharing messages, images, videos, etc., with other people. Studies have identified both negative and positive effects of digitalization on happiness and the fact

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that the obtained results do not have a generalizable impact. Although empirical research on digitalization has grown enormously during the last decade, studies on the relationship between digitalization and happiness remain limited. As such, the objective of the present study was to analyze the relationship between digitalization and the level of happiness in European Union countries during the period 2019–2021. In this context, the link between the Digital Economy and society index (DESI) and World Happiness Index (WHI) globally for all EU countries, at the level of each WHI variable and at the level of geographical groups in the EU was analyzed using correlations. The results show that there was a significant and positive relationship between the DESI and WHI at the level of EU countries in each year of the analysis and between the DESI index and WHI components. Overall, the relationship between DESI and WHI appears to have been stronger in 2020 compared to 2019 but weaker in 2021 compared to 2020 and 2019. In these periods, countries made efforts related to digitalization and allocated increasing budgets for this activity. The effect of digitalization on countries' happiness will become more pronounced if people and policymakers learn to harmonize these two aspects. Therefore,

this study is a signal that everyone must understand digitalization and act so that this factor has a discernible impact on the happiness of nations.

The Impact of Digitalization on Happiness: A European Perspective, 2022

Technology is like air, we don't recognize its existence and influence:

Technological progress is the driver of social welfare. Major economic powers such as China, the USA, Japan, and Finland, have based their advantage on innovations. In this case, the correlation is beyond doubt: **countries with the highest GDP per capita are the leaders in the happiness ranking. Welfare gives freedom and security, such important factors of well-being, while technology is accelerating them.** However, in The Progress Paradox, the economist Gregg Easterbrook claims that even though we owe a significant improvement in almost all aspects of life in the last century to technological progress, people feel less happy than in previous generations. Many scientific papers present a simple antithesis: we get used to new technologies so quickly that we overlook their impact on our everyday life. Is owning a smartphone a measure of our life satisfaction? Not really, but ten years ago, things were different.

Technology is like a double-edged sword. **Using social media is a risk factor for mental health. However, during the pandemic, social media enable us to stay in touch with family and friends, get mental support, and feel that we belong to a larger community.**

If we look at the top countries in terms of a high level of happiness, they all have efficient education systems. Economic prosperity guarantees that the majority of residents have a fast Internet connection and access to new technologies. There is a vicious circle of factors that affect happiness, and technology is just one of many links in this chain. Much depends not only on health literacy but also on how new technologies are used to achieve individual goals. Thanks to computers, we gained more possibilities. Settling many matters that used to be complicated has become simpler, which means that we have more control over our lives and a weaker sense of being dependent on external factors. Thanks to computerization, we have discovered new ways of spending free time cherished during successive lockdowns. When direct contact is impossible, smartphones enable us to see and talk to our family members and friends, and even the doctor. Many patients have found support

Turn to page -4 >>



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Happiness In A Digital From Page - 3

in online communities. Millions of people have tried virtual trainers and mobile health apps. Let's imagine the pandemic in the analog era – we would have been closed in our homes, in uncertainty, and without at least partial control over our own fate and the fate of our loved ones. **Without digitization, there would be no "home office" or "telemedicine".**

Due to the adaptation effect, we no longer notice the influence that technology has on our lives. However, it hugely affects objective indicators, such as economic development, prosperity, education, and the sense of freedom, which are doubtlessly some of the components of happiness and health. We need to develop a new approach to the healthy use of technological innovations. **Happiness is a very individual state and cannot be studied using empirical indicators only. It's not computers, smartphones, new apps, or gadgets that make us happy. It's our ability to use them to achieve individual goals, also regarding health and well-being.** The pursuit of happiness can be elusive, but still remains an aspiration for many. Since 2012, the world has been celebrating happiness during the month of March, with the United Nations proclaiming March 20th as the International Day of Happiness. Happiness is a profoundly human and subjective experience; and

yet, the scientific study of happiness has exploded. Psychologists are interested in understanding how people feel; economists want to know what people value; and neuroscientists seek to understand how the brain responds to positive rewards. Needless to say, happiness can be measured in a variety of ways as a result. But if there's one thing that scientific studies agree on it's the importance of social networks. We are a highly social species. The recently released 2021 World Happiness Report, highlights how one major element in Covid-19 policy has been physical distancing, which poses a significant challenge for people's social connections. According to this report, people whose feelings of connectedness fell had decreased happiness.

The Power of Connection, one factor that was identified to predict well-being during the pandemic is the use of digital media to connect. At the outset of the pandemic, companies scrambled to look for IT equipment such as laptops and IT services like Zoom to get a grip on the new digital reality that came overnight. At the individual level, some studies show the increased use of digital communications to connect. Young people, in particular, increased their digital communications usage compared to other age groups. Similarly, 2020 data from a Gallup/

Knight Foundation survey demonstrated that a majority of respondents found social media to be important to remain connected during the pandemic. At the same time, the lack of access to and skills using the internet ie. households not having access to Wi-Fi, or older adults not used to navigating technology, may have been exacerbated during the pandemic which puts these individuals at risk. Digital inequality may pose risks to well-being and happiness during the pandemic. The world is now emerging into connecting people from remote areas through 3D mixed reality interactive spaces, not only subject to socializing but also training, education, safety training, etc. These findings, in the context of the pandemic, underscore the ongoing discussion on digital technologies and happiness. For some people, the internet can offer a safe, non-threatening place to nurture and maintain social connections. At the same time, increasing evidence about user surveillance and addictive technologies underlies the harmful effects of digital technologies on happiness. **Do digital technologies make us happier or not? It is evident that technology can have both positive and negative impacts on the subjective well-being of individuals. On the other hand, digital technologies provide us with tools. And it is up to us to decide how to use them appropriately. Indeed, we have a responsibility to leverage digital technologies**

to mitigate potential negative impacts to well-being.

Technology-Free Sources of Happiness. In the case of Action for Happiness-a movement committed to building a happier and more caring society, the move online from in-person live events and local groups brought some larger-than-expected benefits. "We were able to reach people who are more remote, isolated, or socially anxious; and bring people from different backgrounds/countries together in the same digital space," explains Dr. Mark Williamson, CEO of Action for Happiness. And yet, Williamson reminds us that many of our sources of happiness are technology-free. In his article, he points to three simple non-digital actions that have been proven to make us happier: Get active outdoors - walk through the park, get off the bus at a stop early, or go for a "walking meeting" with a colleague. Take a breathing space - regularly stop and take 5 minutes to just breathe and be in the moment - notice how you're feeling and what's going on around you. - **Pursuing Happiness In A Digital World, Tomoko Yokoi, Forbes 2021**

Summary:

Digitalization has great advantages in learning, particularly in simulation training, safety training, and remote learning. These technologies are expected to play a larger role in shaping the future of education and training.

The safety education sector is an important component of any industry, aimed at educating individuals who work in or around water bodies on how to ensure safe operations.

Digitalization is also improving the quality of education by providing access to new and innovative teaching methods. For example, virtual and augmented reality technologies are being used to create immersive learning experiences that simulate real-life scenarios. This allows students to develop practical skills in a safe and controlled environment, without the risks associated with real-life training scenarios. The use of digital technologies is also improving the efficiency of the education sector. For example, online learning management systems are being used to streamline administrative tasks, such as student enrollment and tracking progress. This reduces administrative overhead and allows educators to focus on delivering high-quality training programs.

Overall, digitalization is transforming education on the whole, making it more accessible, efficient, and effective. As global industrial development continues to evolve and embrace new technologies, it is essential that the education sector keeps pace to ensure that students are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in this dynamic industry. A Happiness in a Digital World.

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