

Happiness of Thai People: An Analysis by Socioeconomic Factors

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Abstract : This research investigates Thai people's happiness based on socioeconomic factors, i.e. region, municipality, gender, age, and occupation. The research data were collected from survey data using interviewed questionnaires. The primary data were from stratified multi-stage sampling in each region, province, district, and enumeration area; and simple random sampling in each enumeration area. These data were collected in 13 provinces: Bangkok and three provinces in each of all four regions. The data were collected over two consecutive years. There were 3,217 usable responses from the 2017 sampling, and 3,280 usable responses from the 2018 sampling. The Senasu's Thai Happiness Index (THaI) was used to calculate the happiness level of Thai people in 2017 and 2018. This Thai Happiness Index comprises five dimensions: subjective well-being, quality of life, philosophy of living, governance, and standard of living. The result reveals that the 2017 happiness value is 0.506, while Thai people are happier in 2018 (THaI = 0.556). For 2017 happiness, people in the Central region have the highest happiness (THaI = 0.532), which is followed closely by people in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area (THaI = 0.530). People in the North have the lowest happiness (THaI = 0.476) which is close to the level for people in the Northeast (THaI = 0.479). Comparing age groups, it is found that people in the age range 25-29 years old are the happiest (THaI = 0.529), followed by people in the age range 55-59 and 35-39 years old (THaI = 0.526 and 0.523, respectively). Additionally, people who live in municipal areas are happier than those who live in non-municipal areas (THaI = 0.533 vs. 0.475). Males are happier than females (THaI = 0.530 vs. 0.482), and retired people, entrepreneurs, and government employees are all in the high happiness groups (THaI = 0.614, 0.608, and 0.593, respectively). For 2018 happiness, people in the Northern region have the highest happiness (THaI = 0.590), which is followed closely by people in the South and Bangkok Metropolitan Area (THaI = 0.578 and 0.577, respectively). People in the Central have the lowest happiness (THaI = 0.530), which is close to the level for people in the Northeast (THaI = 0.533). Comparing age groups, it is found that people in the age range 35-39 years old are the happiest (THaI = 0.572), followed by people in the age range 40-44 and 60-64 years old (THaI = 0.569 and 0.568, respectively). Similar to 2017 happiness, people who live in municipal areas are happier than those who live in non-municipal areas (THaI = 0.567 vs. 0.552). However, males and females are happy at about the same levels (THaI = 0.561 vs. 0.560), and government employees, retired people, and state enterprise employees are all in the high happiness groups (THaI = 0.667, 0.639, and 0.661, respectively).

Keywords : happiness, quality of life, Thai happiness index, socio-economic factors

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