

**How Is the UAE's Happiness and Wellbeing Policy enacted within the Higher Education sector and Workplace? A Policy Implementation Study.**

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*“The brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out. The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something. Because the brick walls are there to stop the people who don’t want it badly enough. They’re there to stop the other people.”*

*Randy Pausch, The Last Lecture*

## Declaration

This thesis results entirely from my own work and has not been offered previously for any other degree or diploma.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amel Guedj", is enclosed within a faint, light-colored oval border.

## **Abstract**

This thesis reports the findings of a multi-methods policy implementation study into the intentions, enactment, and implementation of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) National Program of Happiness and Wellbeing. The study explores the Declaration of Happiness and Positivity as both policy and discourse, and its findings contribute to the existing literature by presenting a holistic view of happiness policy and the impact its discourses have had on UAE society.

This study's outcomes are derived from a multi-method approach of Critical Discourse Analysis, Qualitative Media Analysis, and Content Analysis. The results of these methods represent the influences, intentions, and enactment of the UAE happiness policy. Examining the role of policy in happiness initiatives from multiple perspectives is essential as it offers insight into the problems associated with large scale initiatives and highlights the vital role that policy can have in their successful implementation.

Furthermore, this research's findings indicate that using a phenomenological approach to policy creation and enactment can lead to a significant implementation gap between policy intentions and outcomes. The study points to the need for explicit foundational knowledge into the meaning of happiness and steps to achieve it to avoid creative non-implementation. The multi-perspective nature of this policy research is significant as it lays a foundation for understanding policy at a nuanced level. This work explicitly provides a view of how policy is implemented

and enacted within the Arab state, offering an idea into an area of the world that is thus far, vastly underrepresented in policy research.

## **Acknowledgements**

This journey has been quite a long one, and for many times I have been haunted by negative thoughts and challenges that could have terminated this journey in its earlier stages. But the support and love I had from my surroundings were tremendous to keep me going, and for this, I express my sincere gratitude and appreciation.

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Omar, O. (2018). "*Signing up for Happiness: An Exploratory Study of Workforce Changes in the UAE Market in Response to the National Program for Happiness and Wellbeing.*" Middle East Journal of Positive Psychology 4(1): 80-101.

## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>CA</b>	Content Analysis
<b>CDA</b>	Critical Discourse Analysis
<b>DHP</b>	Declaration of Happiness and Positivity
<b>GCC</b>	Gulf Cooperation Council
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GNH</b>	Gross National Happiness
<b>HE</b>	Higher Education
<b>H.H.</b>	His Highness
<b>KHDA</b>	Knowledge and Human Development Authority
<b>NPHP</b>	National Program for Happiness and Positivity
<b>NPHW</b>	National Program of Happiness and Wellbeing
<b>PMO</b>	Prime Minister Office
<b>PPI</b>	Positive Psychology Intervention
<b>QMA</b>	Qualitative Media Analysis
<b>SWB</b>	Subjective Wellbeing
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates

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# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Government plays a strategic role in shaping societal actions and wellbeing (Ott, 2010). Quite often, this is done through social programs and policies that directly affect its citizens. In recent years, discussions around what makes a society prosperous have shifted toward conversations around overall happiness and wellbeing as indicators of success.

Happiness has become more than just a personal feeling, and the use of happiness policy is now being studied concerning economic development and societal wellbeing indicators (Austin, 2016; Hirschauer et al., 2015; Stewart, 2014; Veenhoven, 2002). As this has taken root, so too have happiness policies in areas worldwide, including Bhutan, the United Kingdom, Canada, and South Korea. Furthermore, happiness is now widely recognised as having a value in both the business sector (Cooper, 2018; SHRM, 2016) and the education sector (Guilherme and de Freitas, 2016). As a result, increased questions have also arisen concerning when and how happiness initiatives should be introduced, enacted, and with what intentions. In relation to happiness policy, there is also the question of how policy effectiveness can be measured.

These issues discuss how policy is constructed, viewed, and acted upon by social actors. Hill and Varone (2017); Ball (2006); Trowler (2003) and Ozga (1999) all point to policy representing not just a document, but the active process surrounding

it, from creation through implementation. When presented with policy, social actors maintain the autonomy to act upon it in a manner which resonates with their own understanding, values, experience, attitudes, and knowledge (Saarinen, 2008; Fanghanel, 2007). As a result, a policy is in some ways subject to the whim of the actors it is meant to guide, leaving room for it to be implemented, strongly addressed, or disregarded. Even Ball (1994) definition of policy as discourse whereby this process represents who is allowed to speak, when, where, and with what authority, encompasses only some aspects of the policy trajectory, as once policy reaches the hands of actors, it has the potential to go off course. Clearly, the possibility of policy as discourse causing variations in interpretation and action leaves open the possibility that policy intentions will not be fulfilled.

In general, when faced with the question of how successful happiness policy has been in achieving goals, governments and researchers have looked to multiple barometers of happiness such as Allard's Index of Welfare, the Human Development Index (Veenhoven, 2009), the World Values Survey, the General Survey, and the Eurobarometer (Huang, 2010). Surveys such as these are often used to create and implement policy, and they offer a subjective view of the state of happiness within a given society, even while their efficacy is debated in the realm of happiness policy research (Austin, 2016; Stewart, 2014). What these surveys do not shed light on is the underlying government goals of the policy or the actual actions that society has taken to fulfil them, with or without specific instruction to do so.

The UAE is a country which has recently joined the happiness policy movement. Their efforts include the creation of The UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity, subsequent development of nationwide happiness programs, and participation in happiness building forums. The UAE views its policy and programs as a contributor to the achievement of its long-term goal, Vision 2021, a national agenda to improve living conditions for UAE society. Vision 2021 is also a critical factor in the path toward a happier society. Considering that happiness policy has the potential to influence behaviours, there is a need to study how actions unfold as a result of the policy being implemented. To understand how policy affects actions and outcomes; there is also a need to acknowledge that different sectors of society will engage with the policy in varied ways, resulting in various outcomes. Existing within this variance in engagement are issues such as creative non-implementation (Ball, 1994) and implementation capacity (Caena, 2014), both of which can occur when society engages with a policy in a manner which is contrary to or misaligned with its intentions. As previously noted, less attention has historically been given to researching how actors implement policy.

In addition, despite recommendations that policy presented a statement of intention and required action (Cawley, 2012), a clear vision which guides the policy (Trowler, 2003), and specific goals (Honig, 2006), this is not always witnessed and leads one to question how the inclusion of specific details can help or hinder policy success. This means that happiness initiatives such as that of the UAE have no defined way of knowing how their initiative will manifest in society or whether or not its intentions will be met. Therefore, as the initiative is still being manifested in UAE

society, there is a need for research into how this is occurring, whether or not it is on the right path to achievement of the country's goals, and how the policy itself has helped or hindered its success. As these questions have as yet not been fully answered, I find the need to investigate them through this policy study. The understanding gained from this research can help to guide further policy and implementation efforts.

## **1.2 The Motivation for the study**

My interest in exploring the UAE Happiness policy stems from my previous job post as 'Director of Positive Education' at a UAE school. In this position, I came across multiple events and initiatives aimed at growing the happiness movement across UAE schools. My school found it essential to participate in this initiative in order to improve its results on the annual school audit conducted by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority.

This fascination and keenness of senior leadership across schools to highlight their participation in happiness events drove my interest to study on a larger scope where this happiness motivation comes from, how scientifically it is being implemented across the country, and who's favour it serves.

On my way to bringing this thesis to completion, I did a smaller piece of research highlighting the happiness fascination into the UAE workplace (Omar, 2018). This paper's findings are broadly discussed in this thesis as one scope of enactment across the UAE workplace.

### **1.3 Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to explore a range of data to examine variation in the manner and extent to which the UAE's happiness policy is being enacted in the country. By doing so, the study also aims to explore how different sectors of society consume, interpret, and act upon policy. This exploration is done with the intention of viewing policy enactment as more than a declaration and specifically, from a holistic perspective which encompasses policymakers and societal actors, with the understanding that it holds the potential for far-reaching consequences and outcomes for social change.

The study tracks the process of public policy within a multiphase framework, which places focus on the subjective nature of both happiness and policy as discourse. Structuring policy analysis in this way contributes to current literature because as the joining of happiness research and policy gain in popularity, it encourages us to look at both of these elements from a holistic point of view. It also creates the opportunity for government actors to gain awareness of the intended and unintended consequences of the policy, and for additional guidance and direction to be offered in order to achieve intended policy results through consideration of language, delivery, timing, and structure of the policy and implementation process.

As this study looks specifically at a UAE policy, it serves as a resource for understanding policy and its enactment from the perspective of Arab society. It also provides a foundation and encouragement for further research into how globally,

policy creation and enactment can influence behaviours at different levels of society.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

This study follows a multi-method approach to examine the happiness policy development in the UAE and enactment in both Higher Education and workplace sectors. The research approach acknowledges the variation in perspectives, meaning and understanding of policy formation and implementation and aims to address the overarching research question:

What does the ‘UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity’ policy discourse tell us about the policy with respect to its influences, intentions and the enactment examples displayed within the Higher Education sector and workplace?

To answer this question; it was necessary to extend into five main research questions below.

1. What does the publication of the ‘UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity’ policy text tell us about the influential factors directing the happiness’ stream in the country?
2. What are the inferential intentions of introducing a ‘Happiness and Positivity’ policy to the UAE government agenda?
3. What are the examples of displayed changes across the UAE universities that reflect the embedding the Happiness Policy?

4. What are the examples of displayed changes across the UAE workforce, that reflect the embedding of the Happiness Policy?
5. What are the intended and unintended outcomes of the policy implementation?

### **1.5 Research approach**

As the aim of this study is to explore how the implementation of UAE happiness policy is manifesting in the country through enactment in higher education and the workplace, a conceptual framework that utilises the policy sociology and implementation studies model was chosen for this study (Ball, 1997). With an interpretivism lens and inductive form for theory generation; this study aims to explore the influential factors and intentions for setting a National Program for Happiness and Wellbeing in the UAE and how the implementation process went across the higher education and workplace.

By analysing data which includes media sources, policy, and social media content, this study employs a constructivist approach. This means that taking into account the phenomenological nature of the policy enactment; the study addresses a gap in the current literature which most often addresses components of happiness emergence through the use of singular data sources to draw conclusions (Hyman, 2011; Frawley, 2012). This research's use of a mixed-method approach provides a rounded view of happiness policy enactment, and in its representation of the UAE and the factors which contributed to the development of its happiness policy, this

study expands the current demographic sample predominately studied in both happiness and policy research.

## **1.6 Thesis outline**

**Chapter 1** serves as an introduction to the research topic and the problem which is to be addressed. It outlines the aims of the study, motivation for conducting it, the research questions and approach which was taken to the research.

**Chapter 2** provides context to the research by introducing the UAE as the subject of the study. It begins with a brief history of the country and goes on to describe the ideological views of UAE leadership and Vision 2021, the country's mapped plan for economic and social development. The latter half of the chapter provides a thorough account of how happiness is being addressed through policies and programmes, summits and research, education, government and private sector

**Chapter 3** reviews the literature on happiness. It begins by making a case for increased study into happiness and goes on to offer definition to the concept of happiness itself. Following is an accounting of the progression of happiness science with the intention of providing a clear understanding of how we have come to see happiness as a topic of such import. The chapter then focuses on the value of happiness science to society, including industry and education, and a discussion of how policymakers and happiness agendas interplay with economics and politics. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of happiness initiatives and critiques

seen worldwide and theses on happiness studies and a final critique of the happiness agenda across UAE and worldwide.

**Chapter 4** reviews the literature on the policy. It begins by defining policy and making distinctions between policy as discourse and policy as governance. These distinctions are made with the intent to distinguish the focus of this thesis primarily as policy as discourse. The chapter reviews policy literature in relation to the critical discourse analysis portion of this study by explaining policy through a presentation of its core components presented as phases: creation, enactment and intentions. Next it explores the debate of policy success versus failure from an international perspective and the UAE lens as well. The final section of the chapter, the policy implementation, highlights the current theories in literature, which have informed this study's aims and approaches to research.

**Chapter 5** describes and justifies the methodological approach used in this study. It begins by introducing the multi-methods approach and defending the use of multiple sources of evidence, structured, and unstructured processes. This is followed by a description of the researcher's role and ontological views. Next, the chapter presents the research design and data collection methods: content analysis, qualitative media analysis, and critical discourse analysis. The chapter concludes with a description of the ethical considerations.

**Chapter 6** represents the findings of this study. The chapter illustrates the full analysis process used to complete the CDA, QMA, and CA, and the information

gleaned from these processes. In this chapter, the multiple qualitative data is presented to support the findings of the analysis. It includes the coding techniques and themes, which were explored through the research process.

**Chapter 7** discusses the findings of this study. It connects the multi-methods processes and the policy influences, intentions and enactment to each stage's research questions. Next, it overviews the implementation process with the resulting intended and unintended outcomes; suggesting the level of success through which the policy is at the moment. This chapter also explores the problems and questions that arose through the review of the findings and serves to synthesise the inferences made based on the analysis of the data sources.

**Chapter 8** concludes this study by providing a summary of the research outcomes. It describes how this research contributes to current knowledge around happiness policy and the implications for further research based on this study's findings and the study's limitations.

## **2 Contextual Background: The UAE's Happiness and Positivity National Program**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter provided an introduction to the challenges surrounding happiness policy implementation and measurement of happiness outcomes. It discussed the study's aim related to answering the research questions and the chosen research approach.

This chapter aims to provide context to the research by introducing this study's focus, the UAE, its foundation, and its current vision. This chapter also presents the happiness programmes and policies implemented in UAE society and a full depiction of ways how community has begun to interact with the country's happiness policy, with particular attention to the initiatives across UAE Higher Education and the workplace.

### **2.2 Background on the United Arab Emirates (UAE)**

The UAE is a small Middle Eastern country situated between Oman and Saudi Arabia. Relatively young, following the discovery of oil, the UAE was officially formed on December 2nd 1971 and covered an area of 83,600 square kilometres. The country consists of seven emirates, or states. The most well-known of the emirates include Abu Dhabi, the largest and most oil-rich emirate, followed by Dubai, which has positioned itself as a leader in innovation and tourism within the

Middle East. In 2017, the UN estimated the UAE population to be over 9.4 million with migrants making up more than 88% of the total population and representing nationalities worldwide. Almost 59% of the population consists of South Asians, who make up most of the manual labour force, working primarily in construction, maintenance and sanitation (Export.gov, 2018).

The unique makeup of the UAE is due in large part to its oil wealth, which the UAE's founders saw as an opportunity to invest heavily in infrastructure, education and public services, requiring a workforce much larger than its citizens could support. The UAE has also invested heavily in the diversification of its economy and job creation, making it one of the most diverse economies in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and rapidly expanding within the business sector. By 2017, the country positioned itself as a global hub for tourism and trade, with top branded resorts, shopping malls, and skyscrapers (CIA, 2018).

### **2.3 Uncovering the UAE National Program of Happiness and Wellbeing (NPHW)**

As Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, His Highness (H. H.) Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum has continued the country's founding father's vision and work by pioneering many innovative programs, policies, and initiatives. These include the Dubai Smart Government and Mohamed bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation (Cabinet, 2018a). In 2010, he launched UAE Vision 2021, which highlighted six governmental priorities aimed at propelling the UAE to become one of the world's best countries. The six national priorities include a; 1) Cohesive

Society and Preserved Identity, 2) Safe Public and Fair Judiciary, 3) Competitive Knowledge Economy, 4) First-Rate Education System, 5) World-Class Healthcare, and 6) Sustainable Environment and Infrastructure (Vision-2021, 2010). H. H. Sheikh Mohammed advised federal employees as such: “The government’s role is to make the nation and the people happy. When you interact with people in your department or institution, you have to bear in mind that you are serving people [not controlling them]” (Schwartzstein et al., 2018: p.6). Fostering this vision, he incorporated happiness into the National Agenda and created the first position of Minister of State for Happiness and Wellbeing in 2016 (Schwartzstein et al., 2018).

Under the country’s National Agenda and Vision 2021, the UAE government has also set a goal to be among the world’s top five happiest countries. To achieve this, the UAE has been raising awareness about the importance of positivity and wellbeing, putting it in an official form on February 8th 2016, where H. H. Sheikh Mohammed conducted the most radical reshuffling of positions in the cabinet’s history by appointing a Minister of Happiness (Al Maktoum, 2016). H. H. Sheikh Mohammed explained his rationale behind the cabinet reshuffle publicly.

He also highlighted:

“Ours is no empty promise. We will seek to create a society where our people’s happiness is paramount, by sustaining an environment in which they can truly flourish. And we hope our formula benefits others in the region. The formula is straightforward: national development based on core values, led by youth and focused on a future in which everyone achieves happiness” (Al Maktoum, 2016).

The Minister of Happiness started her work across government, education, and the private business sector. The responsibilities of the Minister's position, held by Her Excellency (H. E.), Ohood bint Khalfan Al Roumi, includes the task to: "harmonise all government plans, programs and policies to achieve a happier society" (Government, 2018). With the aim of a happier society as a whole, the Minister's title was changed in 2017 to the Minister of State for Happiness and Wellbeing. By March 2018, the UAE was ranked the happiest country in the Arab world and the 20th happiest country globally in the World Happiness Report (Zakaria, 2018; Helliwell et al., 2018), indicating that the implementation of national programs holds a unique position in shaping the future of UAE society.

### **2.3.1 The UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity**

The UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity (DHP) was introduced in December 2016. The declaration served to outline the government's commitment to ensuring happiness and wellbeing for all UAE society members. As the UAE had previously measured happiness only of its citizens, before the declaration's introduction, the government included all UAE residents in its surveys, indicating that the Declaration of Happiness and Positivity applied to all UAE society (Aljneibi, 2018). The declaration served as one of the first lines of communication concerning the government's plans. Besides, it served to bolster the second pillar of Vision 2020. It was immediately adopted by schools who displayed the declaration in lobbies and announced participation in happiness challenges in line with the

declaration's spirit (The Uae Declaration of Happiness and Positivity at Gcs, 2016). Figure (2.1) presents the Declaration text that was introduced across schools and universities. This text is utilised as the policy text analysed in future chapters of the thesis.

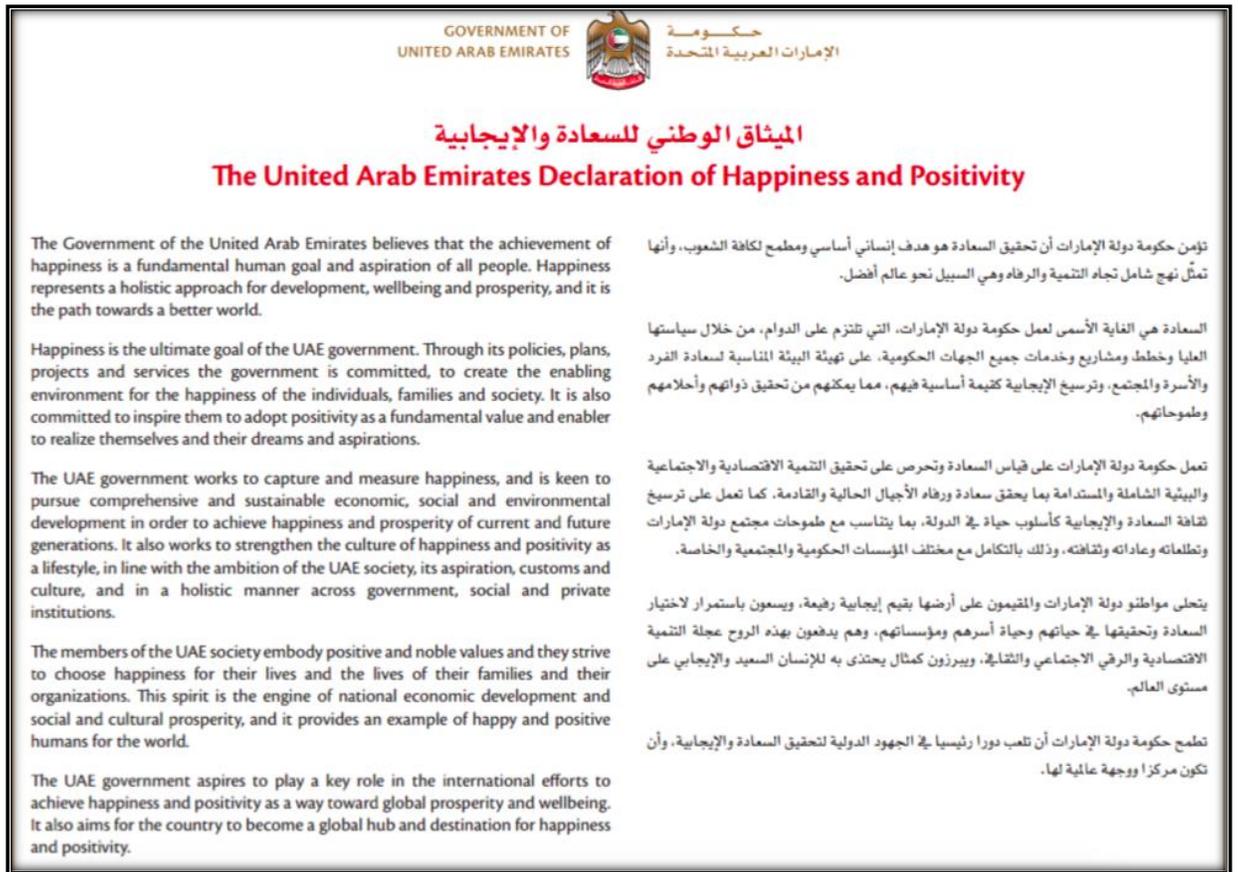


Figure 2.1 The UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity text

### 2.3.2 Happiness Policies and Programs across the UAE

One of the first UAE initiatives concerning happiness came in October of 2014 when H. H. Sheikh Mohammed introduced the Happiness Index to measure citizens' and residents' satisfaction with government services using smart devices (Anderson, 2017; Cabinet, 2018b). Before this measure, the Dubai Electric and

Water Authority (DEWA) had already begun gathering happiness data to identify areas within the entity which needed improvement. In 2016; the survey results showed improved overall customer happiness, increasing from 87.12 percent in 2015 to 89.01 percent in 2016 (Anderson, 2017). This preliminary data aids the initial groundwork for a comprehensive happiness program in the UAE.

Soon after, under the direction of the Minister of Happiness, the National Program for Happiness and Positivity (NPHP) was presented to H. H. Sheikh Mohammed on March 7th, 2016 and approved on March 20th, 2016 (Government, 2018). The goals of the program consisted of three pillars: 1) incorporating happiness and positivity at work; 2) developing tools for measuring happiness and its progress; 3) fostering a national environment to make happiness and positivity a lifestyle in the UAE (Schwartzstein et al., 2018).

In his book, *Reflections on Happiness and Positivity*, H. H. Sheikh Mohammed emphasises why happiness has become an essential part of the nation's discourse and government's initiatives. He puts forward the notion that it is a government's responsibility to create an environment for people to achieve their dreams and empower them, rather than merely having power over them (Al Maktoum, 2017). H. H. Sheikh Mohammed's opinion echoes current ideas around how governments are deemed successful (Bok, 2010; Duncan, 2010; Ott, 2010; Diener and Seligman, 2004). One element of the NPHP is the National Happiness and Positivity Charter which outlines the country's commitment to instilling a culture of

positivity in society through the use of research-based policies, planning and implementation of services and projects (Anderson, 2017).

In October 2017, the UAE government also developed a Happiness Policy Manual. It merged the science of happiness with government policy creation. Through the manual's model, happiness should be a component at every level of policy decision-making, including formulation, assessment and implementation. The policy manual addresses six criteria: economy, health, education, society and culture, government services and governance, and infrastructure. Moreover, it outlines how happiness can be incorporated into these areas and how societal happiness can benefit productivity.

As part of the UAE's Guide to Happiness and Wellbeing in the workplace, the government outlines the meaning of both happiness and wellbeing. This serves as a foundation for our understanding of the initiative. Happiness is described as having two aspects: 1- experiential, or one's emotional state and experience of positive emotions, wherein one feels more positive emotions than negative. 2- evaluative, a state in which people reflect on their past emotions and contribute to their overall feelings of life satisfaction. Wellbeing is described as a related, but a separate concept, which refers to overall life evaluation, degree of feelings of control, purpose, and functioning personally and socially (NPHW, 2018)

The manual's additional goal is to simplify and improve understanding of how happiness is measured on a grand scale. It explains aspects of happiness which

are measurable and quantifiable, such as evaluative and effective happiness, and happiness related to public policy domains (Sutton, 2017). The Minister’s team also developed a Happiness Impact Assessment tool, a guideline for scoring proposed policy based on how it affects different domains of happiness in society, as well as several surveys to measure happiness and productivity in the community Figure (2.2); provided by Schwartzstein et al. (2018).

<i>Surveys to Measure Happiness &amp; Productivity in the Community</i>	
Customer Happiness Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PMO conducted an annual Customer Happiness Survey starting in 2012</li> <li>• The PMO conducted a pilot survey with 1,000 respondents which identified 16 drivers of customer happiness</li> <li>• The sample for the pilot survey was selected from the population of customers who had used a government service three times in the past few months</li> <li>• The main survey incorporated the 16 drivers identified from the pilot and lasted 15-30 minutes with a random sample of 35,880 respondents</li> <li>• Finally, survey responses were translated into KPIs, which factored into the entities’ evaluations</li> </ul>
Employee Happiness Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UAE surveyed all 90,000 of its federal government employees</li> <li>• They intended to use this data to gain insights on worker happiness and positivity within the government</li> <li>• They could also uncover associations between happiness and various factors such as position in the hierarchy, work tenure, etc...</li> </ul>
National Happiness Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UAE created its own “National Survey for Happiness and Positivity” that went above and beyond the single Cantril ladder question</li> <li>• The Government’s statistics centers went door-to-door to survey a representative sample of 16,000 individuals including 10,000 household adults, 3,000 children (aged 10-14), 1,000 visitors, 1,000 tourist, and 1,000 laborers.</li> <li>• They hoped to use this data to establish a baseline measurement of happiness in the UAE, while identifying specific drivers of and barriers to happiness</li> </ul>

Source: Created by casewriters based on interviews of employees from the Prime Minister’s Office.

Figure 2.2 Measuring happiness and productivity in the UAE

The guide is an explained resource to be utilised primarily by Chief Happiness and Positivity Officers, human resources professionals, and other leaders to help employees understand the necessary conditions for them to flourish in the

workplace. The guide should help leaders understand the multitude of factors which combine to produce a culture of happiness and wellbeing and includes a summary of concepts, rationale, for their importance, a research-based framework for happiness and wellbeing in the workplace, fundamental pillars of positive workplace culture, and actionable items to develop this culture and which guide employees' and leaders' behaviours. In describing why happiness and wellbeing are critical in the workplace, it specifically states that "when leaders invest in promoting happiness and wellbeing at work, productivity levels increase by up to 12%" (NPHW, 2018: p. 16).

Also, it outlines other benefits of a happy workplace, including increased retention, improved work quality, reduction in absenteeism and tardiness, and improved morale, engagement, trust, and loyalty between employees and the institution. Taking information garnered from happiness science research, the guide presents happiness officers and other leaders with a framework for action. Described as "Two Sides of a Happiness Coin," it highlights the Happy and Positive Institution which raises awareness and provides tools to help employees and customers to increase their happiness, and the Happy and Positive Individual, who takes personal responsibility for acting on happy and positive traits, internal positive emotions, and using tools to improve their happiness at work and home (NPHW, 2018).

Outcomes, enablers and improvement goals are also outlined. Outcomes represent the goal of creating happy and positive workplaces with "engaged, loyal,

and productive employees” (NPHW, 2018: p. 23). These outcomes will be objective and quantifiable by using multiple assessment tools, including surveys and focus groups. Enablers refer to the tools provided for success, including policies, programs, and practices that align with the four pillars, the foundation of positive workplace culture. The improvement goals of continuous feedback and improvement require receiving feedback and regularly renewing plan effectiveness while staying abreast of new research and trends so that policies and culture represent the most current scholarly consensus, the organisation’s needs, employees, and society whole.

#### *2.3.2.1.1 Happiness programs within the Emirate of Dubai*

While the UAE’s happiness agenda represents a national goal, the emirate of Dubai, in particular, has gone to great lengths to spearhead and communicate the initiative, framework and plan. For many years, Dubai has been considered the hub of commerce and tourism in the Arab world and has steadily made its place in the international community. With Sheikh Mohammed being the ruler of Dubai and at the helm of the nation’s happiness agenda, there is little surprise that Dubai has not only supported the initiative but, created a website to highlight and communicate to the community its implementation plans.

Dubai’s Happiness Agenda website ([www.happinessagenda.ae](http://www.happinessagenda.ae)) describes the need for an objective, scientific approach to understanding and increasing happiness, and outlines measures to educate the public, stating that: “To achieve a deep organisational and personal understanding of happiness factors across the

city; the happiness agenda will put forward a collection of events, content and training programs to build awareness, teach self-reflection and influence the city.” It further communicates the country’s agenda by identifying the components of needs fulfilment and positive psychology, alongside ongoing programs, such as Smart Dubai and the Happiness Experience Strategy. It also highlights the role of leadership in influencing societal happiness. As such, Dubai has positioned itself as a leader in the quest to influence the success of the UAE’s happiness vision.

## **2.4 The Manifestation of the UAE National Program of Happiness and Wellbeing (NPHW) across the country**

### **2.4.1 Happiness Summits and Research across the UAE**

In February 2017, the UAE hosted a World Happiness Meeting, a one-day event alongside the World Government Summit to address happiness as a socio-political goal. Here, the UAE’s happiness agenda was given more prominence than in previous years. It was mentioned in the introductory page of the summit’s report; underscoring its growing significance (Helliwell et al., 2017). The World Happiness Dialogue, which took place at the summit, presented a discussion of the genetic and neurological basis for happiness (Wam, 2017).

The session, entitled “The Science of Happiness,” joined by professors in behaviour, quantitative genetics and neuroscience discussed bias and negative emotions, and how they relate to seeking happiness (Wam, 2017). The dialogue

offered opportunities for personal experiences and success stories to be shared and emphasised technology's role in gauging and measuring happiness on a large scale, with multiple sessions devoted to artificial intelligence and innovative applications that can provide new insight into societal happiness and ways in which it can be influenced.

Approaching the agenda from many angles, the NPHW partnered with United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) in March 2017 to establish the Emirates Center for Happiness Research. Its goal is to conduct research on the science of happiness and how it can be measured and documented within society (Government, 2018). Following the World Government Summit's success, the government sought to encourage community involvement in the initiative by launching the "Friends of Happiness" platform in April 2017. The electronic portal's purpose is to spread awareness concerning happiness and positivity and its significance in society. Also, it establishes participation between the government, individuals and organisations who seek to promote happiness as a practice (Government, 2018).

The World Government Summit reconvened in Dubai on February 10th, 2018, discussing happiness through the "Global Dialogue for Happiness: Towards a Happier Life". International experts participated in a full-day event to share discourse concerning happiness measurements and scientific research (Summit, 2018). The Global Happiness Policy Report was presented at this summit. Produced by the Global Happiness Council, a group of leaders and specialists whose members are notable professionals in psychology, economics, and civil

society, the policy report provides information and advice to governments and entities that seek to promote happiness and wellbeing (Council, 2018). The summit hosted over 4000 participants from 140 countries, 130 speakers and 120 interactive sessions provided an opportunity for global leaders to explore options and challenges facing the globe (Herald, 2018).

#### **2.4.2 Happiness across the Higher Education sector**

As part of the national agenda, the UAE is implementing happiness and positivity throughout schools and universities. The Ministry of Happiness has conducted several activities for schools and Higher Education institutions, such as a National Agenda for Happiness (Wam, 2016), the Happy Plant, 100 Days of Positivity, which prompted over one million hashtags on Twitter (#100dayspositivity), and 100 Days of Giving following the UAE's year 2017 theme: The Year of Giving. The UAE's Ministry of Education, Abu Dhabi Education Council, and the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) all partnered in its implementation and included parents, students, schools and colleges.

Educational events open to the public are a significant part of the happiness initiative. In conjunction with the National Programme for Happiness & Wellbeing, Wellness for Life created an event called the Happiness Journey. While initially begun in 2017, the concept became an annual event in March 2018. It consists of workshops and experiential learning and offers citizens an opportunity to enhance

knowledge related to physical and emotional wellbeing, nutrition and entertainment. The educational event culminates with a Happiness Carnival, and the event “objectively impacts societies with happiness” and is endorsed by the United Nations Foundation (Journey, 2018).

Other education institutes are also developing programs to serve workplace happiness needs. In 2017, the Smart Dubai initiative and the Corporate Happiness Program partnered with The Rochester Institute of Technology Dubai to create senior professionals’ program. Offering master’s degrees and professional certificates, the programs’ goals involve educating participants on core happiness concepts while incorporating Smart Dubai’s plans to leverage technological advancement throughout the city to create and prioritise its residents' happiness. The school currently has 700 students enrolled and upon completion of the program’s coursework, projects and workshops, professionals will be prepared to bring their learning concerning happiness back to the workplace (Turnbull, 2017).

In April of 2018, Gulf news Education reported that Abu Dhabi University became the first UAE education body to offer a happiness course. Titled, ‘Introduction to Happiness and Positive Psychology’ the course provides students with an in-depth understanding of the psychology of happiness and how they can develop positive relationships for future success (Zaatari, 2018). The class includes traditional learning architectural activities and homework and incorporates practical life skills regarding emotions, relationships and social engagement.

Another example of communicating happiness initiatives to students came in 2017 in a book by His Highness Sheikh Mohammad. The book, 'Reflections on Happiness and Positivity', recognises the younger generation of citizens as UAE society's future. It is meant to attract young readers and relates the personal knowledge and experiences of the ruler. It focuses on creating hope, happiness, positivity, and how, along with proper government and a positive mindset, a happy society is possible for the UAE (News, 2017).

Another book, 'Happiness is a way of life in the UAE', was released in March of 2018 to align with the International Day of Happiness. Launched by the Watani Al Emarat Foundation, it defines happiness, its philosophies and pillars and outlines how happiness is embedded in the constitution and structure of the UAE (Haziq, 2018).

### **2.4.3 Happiness across the Government and Private Sector**

With the initial call for increased happiness in the UAE's private sector came a wave of surface-level happiness expectations. With little understanding of the role of positive psychology or happiness education, businesses and employees took it upon themselves to follow the government's announcement, hosting parades, ceremonies, and pizza parties with happy face emojis, and much glitter; none of which affect wellbeing or happiness over time (HCT, 2017; Haziq, 2017; Zakaria, 2017). The UAE government had announced its goal to increase happiness, but

little had been communicated about how this would come to fruition within the private sector. However, the government later provided toolkits for workplace happiness in Arabic and English, giving scientific strategies for implementing positive practice across the workplace (Handouts, 2018; Wellbeing, 2018).

On May 2016, the Minister of Happiness and Wellbeing presented the Customer Happiness Formula. It aims to deliver necessary measures to achieve happiness goals across the country. Its primary components revolve around employee pride, quality government services, customer feedback, and participation (Government, 2018).

As outlined in the initiative's charter, the government continued its efforts in July 2016 by training 60 Chief Happiness and Positivity Officers nominated by federal and local government entities. After training in mindfulness, science and leadership, the officers were charged with designing and implementing projects and programs towards the country's happiness goals (Government, 2018). In announcing the training program, H. E. Al Roumi emphasised the need for forward-thinking to address social changes and how the government can create a better society (UAE-Minister-launches, 2016).

Positivity councils were also created within each federal government entity. Their purpose was to align each entity's policies and services with the happiness agenda and streamline its development within the division's office setting (Positivity, 2016). Under the program's direction, job titles within many entities were changed to

reflect the happiness agenda, with customer service agents renamed Customer Happiness Employees. A Happiness and Positivity Hero medal is now awarded periodically to those who drive exceptional results in their efforts to increase customer happiness (Positivity, 2016).

In January of 2017, the UAE implemented the *Happiness and Positivity Program for the Private Sector*, aimed at mid and senior-level executives. The leadership program was designed and taught to explain the government's happiness direction, the importance of happiness within organisations, personal happiness, and managing happy people (Positivity, 2017). The program was developed with the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton Institute of Executive Education and the Positive Psychology Center. Its goal is "to equip private-sector employees with intuitive, practical skills necessary to become the drivers of happiness and positivity in their respective organisations and beyond" (Positivity, 2017). In January 2017, the Dubai Statistics Center launched a project encouraging motivational cards to enhance employee happiness (DSC, 2017). The goal of the card scheme is to encourage written thanks rather than merely verbalising gratitude. The cards have seen positive results within and outside the Center as employees have utilised them even in their personal lives. Many private companies are now implementing happiness policies. In August 2017, one of the UAE's largest healthcare providers, NMC Healthcare, appointed happiness officers in all locations around the country. According to the company's CEO, Prasanth Manghal, officers tasked with promoting happiness, will be available for both employees and patients (CIPD, 2017).

## **2.5 Chapter summary**

This chapter provided a history of the UAE, its foundations, and current government focus. It highlights the current ruler's ideology, which reflects a belief that happiness is central to a healthy, thriving society and introduces the efforts made toward increased happiness. The chapter also outlined the policies and programmes the government has taken to measure and build happiness within UAE society, and how government, the private sector, and higher education, have contributed to the happiness initiative through the development of events, activities, happiness research, and participation in summits and professional development. The following chapter presents indicative literature concerning happiness research and policies, and worldwide happiness initiatives.

### **3 Indicative Literature: The Happiness Science**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature on happiness science. It provides background and definition to happiness and happiness as a research topic by exploring the origins of the word and its progress through science. The chapter provides context to how happiness relates to business, education, economics, and politics, and highlights how happiness policy is being used in different countries. The chapter concludes with a review of recent studies on happiness.

#### **3.2 Why Happiness Science Research?**

The importance of optimising psychological well-being and cultivating the mind has been increasingly recognised in recent years (Donaldson et al. (2014). Donaldson points to Seligman's 1998 speech, which encouraged researchers to emphasise positive elements of human behaviours. In the *American Psychologist* publication, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) further amplified this call, as the authors urged leading psychologists to explore positive psychology through happiness indicators. Since the article's publication, an ever-growing body of research concerning 'Happiness, Excellence, and Optimal Human Functioning' has emerged as peer-reviewed studies and research have now been conducted in over 46 countries (Donaldson et al., 2014).

The call for happiness and well-being as a socio-political goal is also not new across history, and several scholars discuss the debate of its merits. The debate has been constructed in five main subjects: (1) progression of happiness research (2) value of promoting happiness (3) possibility of promoting happiness (4) level of government intervention to promote happiness and (5) equitable distribution of happiness (De Prycker, 2010). Several authors support governments' direct intervention to foster citizens' happiness, explaining that people often do not know what affects their happiness (Layard, 2005; Veenhoven, 2002).

Other authors oppose this paternalistic approach, viewing it as conflicting with the citizens' freedom and autonomy. De Prycker (2010) questions the approach above by calling for more research into the ideological and ethical issues surrounding the use of happiness indicators and the need to better analyse the value of happiness and the political desire to promote happiness to policy.

### **3.3 Defining Happiness and the Progression of Happiness research**

#### **3.3.1 Operationalising' Happiness' term:**

Kant (1724–1804) noted how happiness is considered a vague concept that everyone wishes to attain yet cannot consistently define. With multiple definitions of happiness in circulation today, happiness and its effects on society are a thriving industry (Satterfield, 2001; O'Brien, 2010; Michalos, 2008). It now concerns individuals, education systems, and the bodies that govern them. With the growth of happiness research in mind, I begin by questioning what happiness is and how it can be operationalised within the research.

The topic of happiness holds a place in multiple disciplines, including philosophy, psychology, and sociology. To define happiness, one can begin by assessing the etymology of the word, happy. In Old English, the word hap, which serves as the happy, is related to luck, rather than good (Duncan, 2014). Duncan purports that the use of happy in the English language has gradually moved toward a representation of a subjective feeling, rather than its original grounding in luck. Besides, the work points to the range of emotions that the word can describe as it is used for large scale emotions, but even things that are of little importance can be described as making one happy (Duncan, 2014).

Layard (2005) identifies happiness in a much narrower sense, choosing to connect the term simply with the concept of “feeling good” and a desire to maintain this feeling. As put forth by (Argyle 2001) cited in (Duncan, 2014) also serves as a simple definition of happiness utilised at times in debating the meaning. Ott (2010, p. 632) follows Veenhoven’s (1984) definition of happiness, attributing it to “the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his or her life as-a-whole favourably” and goes on to compare this to the work of Bentham (1780) who described happiness as “the sum of pleasures and pains”. Others have chosen to rely on the term, ‘subjective well-being,’ representing “a composite of satisfaction with life as a whole” (Duncan, 2014; Frey and Stutzer, 2010). Ed Diener, the first to use the term in 1987, coined it as a term that represented the field of psychology associated with how people identify, assess, and evaluate life quality (Proctor, 2014).

To avoid disagreement about the connotation of the words well-being and happiness, several psychology studies use the term 'subjective well-being' (SWB) as a working definition for happiness, defined as evaluating individuals concerning their lives satisfaction and affective reactions. The use of these terms serves as a way "to distinguish between happiness as a fluctuating mood and the longer-term evaluation of one's happiness or satisfaction with life as a whole" (Duncan, 2014: p.82). Uchida et al. (2004) notes that subjective well-being is typically defined as an overall cognitive appraisal of one's life quality in contemporary literature.

The United Nations (2013) urges the need to distinguish between 'subjective happiness' concerned with day-to-day activities and 'evaluative happiness' linked to society's overall satisfaction and well-being; policymakers ought to focus on both. Other researchers define happiness simply as a mental state, yet this is considered too narrow a perspective by some researchers who prefer defining it within notions of psychological well-being, eudemonic well-being, and flourishing (Diener, 2000).

Considering the many prevalent definitions of happiness, Varelius (2004) states that any research concerning happiness is largely based on how the researcher defines happiness and the nature of well-being. Furthermore, the value and acceptability of the research are largely determined by these definitions and conceptions. Therefore, researchers must clearly define happiness regardless of which new or popular term they may use to describe the concept.

### **3.3.2 Development of the discipline**

In 1967, the first broad review of happiness research was conducted by Wilson and concluded that “the happy person emerges as a young, healthy, well educated, well-paid, extroverted, optimistic, worry-free, religious, married person” (Proctor, 2014: p.6437). From this highly problematic definition of the necessary components for happiness, research into SWB grew to encompass multiple facets of the topic including how different factors concern each other, causal factors, and how SWB is influenced by circumstances, interactions and personal perceptions (Proctor, 2014). Andrews & Whitney (1976) identified three components of SWB: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect (Proctor, 2014). A more recent study highlights the importance and impact of social capital, including trust, belonging, obligations, information channels and norms and sanctions, and the adjustability of social capital in attaining a sense of happiness (Leung et al., 2011).

Donald B. Ardell linked happiness directly to a sense of purpose in life (Ardell, 1998). Veenhoven, a Dutch sociologist and one of the first pioneers in happiness science, recognised this and labelled this happiness factor, utility. Veenhoven published a 1999 study entitled “The Four Qualities of Life: Ordering Concepts and Measures of the Good Life.” He explored the meaning behind the different terms used to identify happiness: quality of life, well-being, and happiness and put forth a matrix to connect related ideas of happiness, explore meanings, and determine the measurability of quality of life (Veenhoven, 2000). The results of Veenhoven’s

qualitative content analysis indicated a need to distinguish components related to the quality of life rather than using the term comprehensively. The study concluded that “the most comprehensive measure of the quality of life is how long and happy a person lives” and that four factors must be taken into consideration when measuring happiness: live-ability of the environment, life-ability of the person, the utility of life, and appreciation of life (Veenhoven, 2000: p.35).

The analysis of the paradox of happiness served as another focus of happiness science development. Martin asserts that the paradoxes of choice, hope, freedom, and status, all help explain why the pursuit of happiness can be difficult, yet all of the paradoxes point to a common element which is that happiness is best achieved as an unintended result of meaningful relationships and activities (Martin, 2008). Other studies, including Diener and Seligman (2002), have also found relationships to indicate increased subjective well-being. Proctor (2014) furthers this, emphasising that while no one factor is alone responsible for happiness, positive relationships and mental health are requirements to have high SWB.

Considering paradoxes, positive relationships, and by-products or unintended results, Martin quotes the happiness paradox, “To get happy, forget about it...” (Martin, 2008). In line with this, more recent studies point to the validity of this paradox by emphasising other foci as a means of finding happiness. For instance, Catalino et al. (2014) conducted a study to determine if prioritising positivity over happiness or other foci, would promote greater happiness. Utilising data from a combination of people from different backgrounds, ages, and races, along with

regression analysis, they found the happiness paradox to be true: focusing on happiness has a negative effect on actually feeling happy, and prioritising positivity predicted higher levels of overall SWB, which included higher self-compassion and positive relations with others (Catalino et al., 2014).

As presented here, there have been many studies and perspectives on the field of happiness science over the last quarter-century; however, Frawley (2015) outlines three of the major happiness science critiques that have been put forward among scholars. Frawley identifies these as the 'culture-bound and normative character of happiness,' 'bad science and scientism,' and 'diminished subjectivity and individualism' (Frawley, 2015).

Quite possibly, the strongest indicator of the steady progression of happiness science comes from the World Happiness Report. Following early research around societal happiness, the first official World Happiness Report was gathered and published in 2012, becoming one of the early intensive data packages for Happiness research statistics. The report included insights into the necessity of research revolving around happiness and contentment, giving more attention to the statistical indicators for well-being, such as the Cantril Ladder, which measures life satisfaction (Helliwell and Wang, 2012). The 2012 World Happiness Report, sought to "survey the scientific underpinnings of measuring and understanding subjective well-being" (Layard, 2016).

(World Happiness Report, 2013; World Happiness Report, 2015) continued in this pursuit, while the 2016 edition places great focus on the inequality and distribution of happiness across nations and populations. Also, the report points out the multidisciplinary routes, which happiness research has taken over the years. For example, in the study of happiness, economists emphasise that sociologists focus on social capital, while political scientists call attention to government and corruption (Layard, 2016).

Correspondingly, Diener and Seligman (2004) outline the need for a mixed bag of knowledge and expertise to properly collect, define, analyse and use happiness data, identifying the possibility of a necessary role of psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, neuroscientists, and economists in the field of happiness science.

As happiness science has grown, the focus has changed from determining individual well-being and uncovering ways to increase individual happiness, focusing on ways in which societies as a whole can become happier. A majority of happiness theories place value on one or more of the following areas: mindfulness, consumerism, economic freedom, the dignity of work, good governance, and social trust (Layard, 2016).

Finally, in wrapping up the happiness science progress, I revisit Martin Seligman's work, where he explains that authentic happiness is built upon the study of three main pillars: positive emotion, positive character, the strengths and virtues whose exercise regularly produces positive emotion, and the third pillar, positive

institutions. He did not explain the latter in his book; however, he believes that sociology, political science, anthropology, and economics are the proper home of such investigations (Seligman, 2003).

### **3.4 The Value of Promoting Happiness Science for Public Policy**

In general, there is much value to be had in the promotion of happiness science across public policies. Happiness research plays a significant role in understanding what makes one happy, and therefore, what policy decisions can impact happiness. For example, happiness research has shown that income does not necessarily increase happiness, but social factors such as friends and family can be important to happiness (Binder and Broekel, 2012)

Helliwell and Wang (2012) note the importance of happiness research, describing it as the most democratic of methods used to measure well-being, and emphasising that when people are allowed to report on their feelings, histories, and preferences, it is empowering, as they become an integral part of the process of improving their well-being.

(Diener, 2006) identifies several domains in which indicators of subjective well-being and ill-being can be used to evaluate policy, such as healthcare, public health, and social services, and views these indicators as sources of information through which government can garner information about its citizens. Diener and Tov in (Diener, 2006: p.152) argue that utilising national accounts of well-being systematically collected at timed intervals can increase the focus placed on societal

well-being while complementing the economic analyses and allowing for modifications to policy and policy alternatives.

### **3.4.1 Value in Higher Education**

Happiness science research has influenced multiple sectors, including education, about the term 'happiness education'. Recent research supports extensive value in utilising happiness research, programs, and classes in the modern curriculum and pedagogy. Guilherme and de Freitas (2016) note the increasing number of happiness education classes implemented worldwide as a response to the "self-esteem" movement, a movement primarily spanning the United States, which supports the idea that children can suffer psychological harm in response to damaged self-worth.

There is reported value in utilising education to bolster happiness. In (Lyubomirsky and Layous, 2013) study, participants engaged in happiness in increasing activities. The methods employed here and in (Layous et al., 2012) positive activity model study consistently produced improved well-being in individuals. Using theoretical and empirical evidence as a base, Lyubomirsky and Layous (2013) sought to identify personal and activity attributes which would make positive activities most effective, the mechanisms involved in activities which improve well-being, and the extent to which features of a positive activity must suit the individual characteristics of the participant. A positive activity model determined that happiness could be influenced through small intentional actions and changes in thoughts and behaviours.

A 2013 study on psycho-educative intervention and its effect on happiness supports the notion that happiness education is a useful tool to increase students' overall well-being. The term psycho-educative intervention is used to define the process researchers used to integrate happiness and well-being education with professional learning. Administering a set of five different questionnaires, including the Health and Wellbeing Questionnaire (Travis and Ryan, 1999) and the Meaning in Suffering Test (Stark, 1985) among others, to a group of thirty students, researchers attempted to measure happiness. Upon completing the classes, most of the students showed academic improvement alongside increases in overall well-being based on comparing the questionnaires before and after (Romo-Gonzalez et al., 2013).

The authors' findings purported that health and wellness are inner attitudes, but that while attitudes may be innate, they are subject to and influenced by education to improve "ways of thinking, feeling, and acting" (Romo-Gonzalez et al., 2013: p.88). This psycho-educative intervention is one example of positive psychology interventions (PPI), which support that well-being is malleable when a concerted effort is taken to influence it (Lambert et al., 2018a). Results of PPIs have shown that acts of kindness can serve as a distraction and increase self-efficacy and happiness and that PPI can be used to decrease stress and support students in asserting individual values (Lambert et al., 2018a).

Lambert et al. (2018a) also studied PPI's effects on higher education students by assessing students' well-being after a semester-long happiness program. Conducted in the UAE using a group of university students of multiple nationalities, the study enrolled 237 students into a Happiness 101 program. Researchers measured well-being using eight indicators; which addressed hedonic and eudemonic well-being, overall mental health, happiness beliefs, and religiosity, at the beginning, end, and three months post-program markers (Lambert et al., 2018a). Participants were introduced to 18 PPIs over the semester and encouraged to practice what they learned. The program was structured around Seligman's 2011 PERMA model, which addresses positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishments (Lambert et al., 2018a).

In support of the relative malleability of happiness and well-being, three months post participation results showed improvements in overall well-being in each area measured except religion. Based on their findings, increased well-being through PPI can support college-age students in the development of social engagement and interaction. Additionally, Caprara et al. (2017) found that positivity in terms of life satisfaction, optimism, and perceived experiences, promotes long-term well-being. Therefore, it serves to reason that the results of Lambert et al. (2018a) PPI study could lead to improved well-being as students learn about how to manifest happiness in their lives.

Elwick quotes Ryff (2016) work, who asserts that eudemonic well-being is not a birth-right but must be sought through experiences and growth in self-awareness.

Education can play a vital role in its development enrichment (Elwick and Cannizzaro, 2017). It is argued that economic outcomes are a much more tangible method of measuring satisfaction. In contrast, the measure of fulfilling experiences which lead to lifelong eudemonic happiness is much more difficult to grasp (Elwick and Cannizzaro, 2017). Elwick concludes that eudemonic happiness and the implications of growing it are largely absent from happiness education policy and practices, but that they should possibly be the focus going forward (Elwick and Cannizzaro, 2017).

A recent study highlights work being done in the nation of Kuwait. Particularly relevant to this thesis, this study provides insight into positive psychology intervention within an Arab state. The Alnowair Initiative, a non-profit organisation, aimed at increasing positivity in Kuwait, implemented a positive psychology intervention program. Implemented across ten Kuwaiti national schools and a university program, the PPI was provided in the form of fifteen-minute weekly instructions to a total sample of 977 students. Results showed increased eudemonic well-being among university participants and increased hedonic well-being among secondary school participants, in line with results of PPIs conducted elsewhere (Lambert et al., 2018b). The research emphasised a host of possibilities for the usefulness of conducting PPIs with youth, including creating positive relationships, increased optimism, and caring for others' well-being.

An obvious step in promoting happiness science across Higher Education would be to offer courses based on what researchers have discovered about subjective

well-being. Although such courses vary in content and approach, most of them follow one of two models. One approach is simply to study what is known about happiness. At Harvard, for example, a recent course attracted over 800 undergraduates, exposing half the student body to happiness research over four years. The second model is similar to the first, but also includes practical exercises of the sort employed by Professor Seligman — expressing gratitude, analysing unpleasant events to cast them in a better light, or performing acts of kindness, among others (Bok, 2010).

### **3.4.2 Value in Productivity/Business**

Within the business sector, there has been a marked change in how employers view employee happiness and its effect on performance and profits. The increased value placed on workplace happiness can be attributed to the results of advancements in happiness science. As employers become aware of the benefits associated with happier employees, they are also encountering questions that remain in implementing happiness initiatives in the workplace. In the last thirty years, steady increases have been seen in workers' employment whose primary function is to promote happiness. Well-known companies utilising happiness officers of some sort include Google, French fashion brand, Kiabi, and McDonald's (Cooper, 2018).

The idea behind this is that if employees are happy, they will be more productive and less likely to change jobs, increase productivity and profits, decrease turnover, and subsequently, recruitment and outlay costs. One notable test of this comes

from Manchester University, where researchers found that happiness can improve productivity by up to 12% (Conversation, 2014).

These findings are further supported by Cooper, who notes that multiple studies using longitudinal data sets have also identified this correlation. As a result, companies are seeing the value in keeping employees happy. Studies of company compensation and prerequisite packages show that companies are offering greater prerequisites, increased or unlimited vacation time, free food, and even office toys to keep employees happy. These enhancements affect the company culture, implying that it is not the perks, but the environment of better well-being, which is increasing happiness (Cooper, 2018).

According to the Society for Human Resources Management's 2015 survey of job satisfaction, 88% of US employees reported being satisfied with their job, with the top contributor to job satisfaction being "respectful treatment of employees at all levels" (SHRM, 2016), once again pointing to company culture affecting happiness. With reported satisfaction levels being the highest since the organisation began its survey in 2002, increased efforts to support happiness in the workplace are evidenced through this survey.

Schulte et al. (2015) discuss the possibility of using well-being policy as a unifying concept in relation to work and non-work variables which affect the workforce. Well-being as a unifier would serve to maximise the benefits of work for employees. Non-work variables refer to the non-work elements that may cause hazards or

contribute to work issues, including age, chronic disease, smoking, or alcohol use. For example, the authors cite the largest cause of reduced productivity in the workplace as presenteeism, described as reduced performance due to disease or lack of engagement. It is also noted that chronic disease plays a significant role in reduced productivity across sectors, with direct and indirect costs in the US exceeding 1 trillion US dollars each year (Schulte et al., 2015).

In the United States, workforce demographics are rapidly changing with more women, immigrants, and older workers joining the workforce. There is increased crossover in previously gender-segregated jobs and workers who would like to work but lack the needed skills for available jobs (AJPH, p. e32). Each of these factors points to the need for changes in how well-being is addressed in the workforce. With changing demographics in the global workforce comes a need for, at minimum, a review of policy and how it affects the well-being of employees (Schulte et al., 2015).

Well-being presents as a concept that can unify factors that affect workers' health, with the knowledge that well-being affects multiple outcomes, including productivity, health, and healthcare costs. Schulte et al. (2015) argue that using well-being policy may allow leaders to place under one umbrella, the range of issues that have shifted over the past few decades regarding healthcare, demographics, disease, and well-being in general.

### **3.5 Policymakers and the Implementation of Happiness Policy**

#### **3.5.1 The Economics of Happiness**

In 2005, John Layard called for government revolution; stating that:

The strength of economics is that it starts from the idea of people as self-determining agents. We need a revolution in academia, with every social science attempting to understand the causes of happiness. We also need a revolution in government. Happiness should become the goal of policy, and the progress of national happiness should be measured and analysed as closely as the growth of GNP (Layard, 2005: p.146).

For many countries, it is thought that the happiness policy will bring increased economic development through better production, higher life expectancy and welfare. This assertion stems from the relationship between happiness and productivity within individual sectors instead of society as a whole. Studies show that improved happiness can significantly increase productivity (SgROI, 2015).

Research by Cohn et al. (2009) finds that happy people have better life satisfaction which can be attributed to frequently experiencing positive moments that increase ego-resilience and better equip people to deal with life's stressors. Suppose increased happiness and productivity are possible in business and education, and increased positive feelings can increase life satisfaction. In that case, it stands to reason that measures to improve happiness may be replicated or adapted and become useful in society through the implementation of government programs and initiatives.

Thus, with happiness holding historical significance and a place in social theory and philosophy; researchers have thought to measure societal happiness concerning wealth, gross national product or gross domestic product, measures by which societies are often judged. However, studies have consistently shown little correlation between wealth and happiness; As people become wealthier, they do not necessarily become happier.

Diener (2000) and Easterlin et al. (2010) propose that life events are greater predictors of happiness than wealth. Easterlin et al. (2010) research self identifies as the broadest range of research to date on the effects of income on SWB and happiness. A broad range of countries were used to compile data, including Latin American countries, developed countries, and countries transitioning from socialism to capitalism. The results hold significant weight in concluding that income only affects SWB in the short term, after which, governments must look to other social measures to increase happiness, which may include a focus on family or health over material desires (Easterlin et al., 2010).

Oishi et al. (2011) researched the relationship between income inequality and happiness in the United States. Gathering data over 37 years, the study found that Americans were less happy during years in greater income inequality. Fairness and trust were the reasons found for the negative association. They determined that Americans perceive greater happiness when they feel a sense of even wealth distribution, equality, fairness and trust. Based on these results, they hypothesise

that “income growth without income disparity is likely to increase the mean happiness of a general population” (Oishi et al., 2011: p. 1099). Moreover, the feelings of trust and fairness, which align more strategically with SWB indicators were the primary reasons for happiness or lack thereof, not one’s income itself.

Diener and Seligman (2004) propose creating a national well-being index to better utilise well-being outcomes in social policy. They identify inconsistencies in well-being assessment methods as a roadblock to the successful use of well-being indicators as a policy contributor. The assertion is also made that media attention should turn from money to well-being, with politicians placing less focus on economics and more on reducing stress, improving social and familial interactions, and increasing overall life satisfaction. They propose a system which would allow social indicators currently used, to be viewed from the realm of increasing overall well-being (Diener and Seligman, 2004).

Diener in (Bakshi, 2019) argues that individual happiness can be increased through interventions, programs, and skills teaching. Social happiness can also be improved, in this case, through the use of policies and changes in the community and societal characteristics.

The literature review related to well-being covers multiple areas including mental health, employment, physical health and income. It is recommended that governments use an index which covers several areas including asking questions relevant to policy planning, including measures of broad and narrow well-being

aspects, and sampling a range of stakeholders from different groups within the country (Diener and Seligman, 2004). Diener & Seligman recognise the need for a national index and point to how, over time, well-being has come to be measured based on the economy. They recommend that the same take place with happiness indicators so that methods evolve and improve as longitudinal subsamples are, tracked and large-scale research programs are implemented to refine the well-being indicators used.

While there are numerous scholarly papers which support the use of happiness and measurements of SWB as an area of interest for governmental initiatives and improvements in quality of life, other research seeks to negate this idea. For example, Austin (2016) points to multiple methods of conceptualising well-being in diminishing the efficacy of the use of measures of SWB in policy creation and implementation.

Stewart (2014) also questions the subjectivity of happiness as a measurement tool. He argues that while GDP may be a poor measure of progress, such objective measurement tools should not be replaced with the subjectivity of happiness. Cited objections to happiness as a measure by which to create policy include adapting to conditions and a minimal connection between happiness and development; the former, representing how individual satisfaction is dependent upon current circumstances, and the latter referring to the inability of policy to directly affect happiness as a policy has an indirect effect on behaviours in social and political contexts (Stewart, 2014).

While Austin and Stewart question the validity of subjective questioning and its ability to positively influence policy, Veenhoven (2002) commentary on public policy indicators argues that subjective indicators are a necessary public policy component. Unlike GDP, happiness and SWB cannot be easily quantified free from the influence of individual thought, the media, or critical thinking ability. However, the study maintains that “despite these weaknesses, subjective indicators are indispensable in social policy, both for selecting policy goals and assessing policy success” (Veenhoven, 2002).

Veenhoven argues for using subjective indicators in determining policy goals and identifying what people truly want and need. Also, subjective data can measure improvements in areas that objective data may fall short, such as measuring the increase in trust in one’s government (Veenhoven, 2002). In short, the argument holds that both subjective and objective measurements are needed for policymakers to have a full picture of happiness in society.

Hirschauer et al. (2015) point to a structured process that governments must undertake if they are to use happiness as an indicator of policy change. The research notes three measures, 1-determine what is in the true best interest of society, 2-identify the true wants of a society in which people have multiple goals, and 3- determine the likely reactions to any policy changes which may be implemented.

Any policy changes derived from happiness research should be used to create a better society and increase SWB. It is not enough to simply observe happiness data and make superficial changes based on previously used models or societal behaviours. Policymakers must decide how and the extent to which they will exercise control over SWB through policy use. Besides, the use of happiness indicators to determine policy, allows lawmakers to become less amenable to popular special interest groups and instead rely on relevant data concerning what will increase happiness (Hirschauer et al., 2015).

In analysing the possibilities and limitations of happiness policy, Frey and Stutzer (2012) identify the primary role of publicly funded well-being research in understanding how institutions contribute to people's subjective well-being. Also, they note that the opportunity for citizens to participate in a democratic process has a positive impact on citizen's well-being, and attribute this to the fact that when democratic processes are used, politicians are held more accountable for their decision making as they know they must seek re-election and are, therefore, more likely to follow voters' wishes (Frey and Stutzer, 2012).

Decentralised decision making is another area of policymaking which improves life satisfaction. Specifically, citizens feel more comfortable and at ease when they know that decisions which affect them are made at a local level, rather than by a centralised government disconnected from their specific need and experiences (Frey and Stutzer, 2012).

Happiness research is also responsible for new methods of gathering data on society's utility and welfare. Frey and Stutzer (2012) point to increased use of representative surveys, the experience sampling method, the day reconstruction method, and the U-Index, each uniquely addressing individual well-being. With this increase in avenues through which to gather information on well-being, comes increased political competition as politicians site well-being research to support election bids or to garner support for policy (Frey and Stutzer, 2012).

Aggregate happiness indicators have shown value in that they are complements to traditional indicators such as GNP. Adopted in countries such as the UK, Canada, and Australia, they have qualities which cannot be tracked through traditional means such as non-material aspects which affect well-being, including social relations, "judgements about outcome aspects of components," and finally, subjective aspects of overall well-being (Frey and Stutzer, 2012: p.666). The importance of models such as these found through the promotion of and research into happiness science emphasises the profound value of happiness science.

### **3.5.2 The Politics of Happiness: Government interventions**

The general level of happiness is, without any doubt, seriously affected by major political events. Happiness levels vary based on economic changes and the ideological orientation of the government. A government leaning to the ideological right raises the happiness of right-wing individuals. Happiness is crucially dependent on how the economy and society are organised. The political processes

consider the more individual's preferences, the happier they are (Frey and Stutzer, 2002).

According to Veenhoven, a nation can be judged by making inferences based on societal behaviours, more commonly used in the past, or directly asking pointed questions to determine how people feel, which Veenhoven asserts is the more viable method used today (Veenhoven, 2005). Commonly utilised well-being measures that ask the questions referenced by Veenhoven include Allard's Index of Welfare and the Human Development Index (Veenhoven, 2009).

While many indicators of a well-functioning society have been proposed over the past decades, happiness as a metric to inform policy often has not received the same merit as its counterparts. As such, studies have been conducted into its usefulness as a metric. Numerous researchers contend that governments already control to some degree the happiness of their society and efforts to make citizens happy is seen through initiatives not specifically labelled as happiness policy (De Prycker, 2010). However, these efforts are not defined or created based upon data provided by the citizens themselves.

A recent study questions whether happiness measures through such surveys and questionnaires can truly be seen as a legitimate government goal, even as research in the areas of sociology and psychology lends itself to the idea (Duncan, 2007). The work reaches into the history of happiness philosophy and utilisation to outline its broad use over time. For example, it cites Robert Owen's work which

“agreed that the greatest happiness should be the test of social progress and he objected to the competitive individualism and the perpetual demand for increased productivity” (Duncan, 2007: p.88).

Furthermore, it mentions the groundwork for Britain and New Zealand’s welfare states that explicitly mention happiness as elements of their ultimate objectives, lending to the idea that happiness is important to individual quality of life and is also important societal level (Duncan, 2007). Even the United States Declaration of Independence, as referenced in Huang (2010) asserts that happiness is an inalienable right.

To better understand how government contributes to happiness, we look at a 2009 study entitled, ‘Happiness the World Over’, in which countries were ranked based on how their populations reported their SWB (Simon and Bennett, 2009). This study collected responses from 178 countries, ranked them by life satisfaction, and then compared societal characteristics of 23 chosen countries to determine what brings about happiness.

Some of the characteristics compared included individual and economic freedom, marriage and divorce rates, data related to fertility and mortality, literacy, suicide, penal incarceration, and wealth. This particular data set is significant as it provides a view of many factors heavily influenced by governmental behaviours. Overall, the study found positive correlations between happiness and freedoms and positive

correlations between happiness and life expectancy, noting that people who live in happier societies live longer (Simon and Bennett, 2009).

As many of these societal factors are directly affected by governance, other studies help determine the relative effectiveness of general governmental behaviours on societal happiness. Ott (2010) uses statistical analysis to understand correlations and causality between happiness and governmental factors, such as government size and quality, happiness inequality, and government's span of control over intentionally increasing happiness. The research identifies six aspects of the government but categorises four of them as Technical Quality, an element through which government can assert influence over societal happiness. Identified as governmental effectiveness, regulatory quality, the rule of law, and control of corruption; a technical quality improvement is offered as a minimally controversial means of improving happiness. They have little effect on the distribution of power within the government (Ott, 2010).

The research recommends that governments improve their practices in the collection of happiness related data to better address their society's needs. Furthermore, it asserts that data collected indicates that as technical quality within government improves, happiness levels increase, but equality in happiness is negatively affected. However, as governments continually improve technical quality, more attention can be paid to closing the happiness inequality gap, further contributing to increases in societal happiness (Ott, 2010).

Just as happiness research presents with challenges, so does happiness policy in its implementation. As noted in “Political economy of happiness,” (Frey and Gallus, 2013), happiness research and government action based on happiness data, have the potential to be manipulated and changed, similar to any other factors related to politics. The authors argue that the pursuit of happiness becomes a single, clear measure for citizens as the happiness index covers multiple areas of life satisfaction, such as healthcare, education and social services, all of which were previously categorised individually.

As a result, politicians and government parties can become aware of this and are faced with multiple options for raising happiness, few of which maintain the measurement process’s integrity. These can include improving economic conditions, manipulating statistics, propaganda, and changes in construction and implementation of surveys and happiness indicators (Frey and Gallus, 2013).

With the possibility of these manipulations, individual governments must move toward happiness indicators as influencers of policy to maintain particular standards, beginning with a constitution whose sole purpose is to induce policymakers to act in the community’s best interest which they serve. The article also outlines other necessities of utilising happiness index to develop social policy, including maintaining a democratic and open society and media and utilising independent organisations to gather national data related to happiness (Frey and Gallus, 2013).

There are powerful arguments for making happiness a focal point for government policy. Its overriding importance to human beings has been affirmed by influential thinkers from Socrates to John Locke to Sigmund Freud. Opinion surveys show happiness usually ranks at the top of the goals people hope to achieve, the high regard that should surely count for something in a democratic state where acts of civic engagement, kindness, and other behaviours are far more beneficial to society than an endless pursuit of momentary pleasures and trivial pursuits. In turn, people with high levels of subjective well-being are more likely to be healthy, happily married, civic-minded, generous, and tolerant citizens who are effective in their jobs (Bok, 2010).

As policy within the realm of happiness, science has taken on increased importance in recent years, questions concerning whether or not happiness should be a policy goal have arisen. Furthermore, when happiness does become a policy goal, how should it be measured, how should the information gained be used, and how should the policy be evaluated? Woll (1974) in (Oishi and Diener, 2014) describes the public policy as a means by which government actions are guided, and public interests are addressed. DeLeon and Vogenbeck (2007) from (Lambert et al., 2019) link the development of the policy with the need for “practical resolution of problems and determination of solutions to public policy challenges.”

The work of Ed Diener represents a significant contribution to the literature of publicising subjective well-being policy. Diener (2006) proposes a set of guidelines and recommendations that should guide well-being indicators as it pertains to

policy creation and outcomes. Diener recommends 1-the use of global measures of SWB for policy debates, when possible, evaluating multiple areas of SWB among large population samples so that trends and changes can be identified, measured and tracked. 2- Measures used to create policy should be sensitive to changes to detect policy effects. Furthermore, policymakers should work alongside creators of SWB indicators, so that broad measures of change can be measured alongside “longitudinal designs, time-sampling and diary-recording of experiences and the collection of data from targeted populations.”

Next, 3- Instruments used to measure SWB should have proven validity and new instruments considered for use should be analysed for validity, reliability, and scaling, compared to previously validated measures. 4-Those who use measures of SWB should take steps to understand and adjust for biases and artefacts present within them while respecting the limitations of the measures. 5. Measures of SWB and ill-being should be used as part of a democratic process, and only as one of many sources of data through which policy can be created (Diener, 2006: p. 155).

Bentham (1789/2008) in (Oishi and Diener, 2014) argued that it is the responsibility of government to ensure that society is happy and that this is done through a system of punishment and rewards. Furthermore, he insisted that policy should be guided by the extent to which it increases public happiness. Oishi and Diener (2014) argue that a return to a policy with societal happiness is the direction that government and policy should take in this era of policy and happiness policy

creation. They posit that self-reported well-being can positively influence policy in several ways, specifically stating that it is a reliable means of objectively tracking economic conditions. It supports the evaluation of public policies; therefore, it should be regularly measured and utilised to inform public policies.

(Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2019) describes well-being interventions and the mechanisms through which they are successful. These types of interventions to raise happiness may be directed at individuals or society as a whole. Interventions can provide opportunities to learn new life skills or change habits. They may have different foci and practices to achieve improvements, including Thinking Interventions (ex. cognitive-behavioural Psychotherapy or Mindfulness Training), Social Interventions (ex. Social Recreation or Altruism), Biological Intervention (ex. Learning relaxation techniques or adopting exercise), and Listing, Labelling, and Describing Interventions( ex. Strength Identification, narrative Writing, or Counting Kindness and Blessings).

Diener and Biswas-Diener note that “currently there are no well-established ‘best practices’ for well-being interventions”, but there is evidence to support those individual models of well-being initiatives have proven successful and can be used as models for policy and intervention, accounting for differences in culture and geographic location (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2019: p. 104).

Diener and Biswas-Diener also provide practical guidance for the implementation of well-being interventions and discusses the importance of “measurement,

attention to cultural norms, the inclusion of didactic education and opportunities to learn specific behavioural skills.” (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2019: p. 96).

Outlined, are a range of tasks and benefits of well-being initiatives. First, when creating a well-being policy, policymakers must ‘identify a compelling reason’ for the intervention. For instance, policymakers can point to the multitude of studies which show that happier people are more productive, have better health functions, and engage in healthier activities. Next, proper ‘measurement’ of well-being is proposed. Diener (2000) proposed that governments utilise national accounts of well-being to provide information to policymakers that is unlikely to be garnered through traditional means of GDP and economic measurement. These SWB measurements allow governments to predict behaviours and potential problems which may arise from overall discontent. Measurement allows for prediction and identifies changes, tracks progress, determines success, and itself increases SWB, as it causes increased attention to be placed on the quality of life and the attempt to improve upon it. (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2019).

The authors also promote ‘education and skills’ as imperative to well-being initiative and policy, and recommend that as part of the implementation process, citizens be educated on “the definition, nature, and research regarding the causes of sustainable happiness.” With this instruction, they will be better able to understand and utilise the intervention strategies presented to them. An example of an easily scalable education option would be to construct an educational website to teach these concepts. In reference to skills, a successful initiative should teach learnable

skills, such as emotional intelligence and mindfulness (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2019: p. 106).

Finally, 'reflection' is a task which is identified as necessary to the policy and intervention. Citizens must be taught skills and then given the opportunity to employ them across a range of life circumstances. This, followed by reflecting on when and how the skills are used can help the user to identify ways in which to use and modify skills to make them more successful (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2019)

Helliwell (2018) in (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2019) is of the belief that viewing happiness within the context of policy concerns can lead to a vital improvement in policy creation and decision making. He argues that utilising happiness to evaluate policies allows the government to shift from economic indicators to an indicator that promotes overall flourishing. Helliwell also argues that well-being presents an overarching goal that all sectors of government are striving for, thereby increasing cooperation, while simultaneously improving policymaking, as policymakers can consider policy outcomes alongside the effects of the outcomes on overall societal well-being.

### **3.6 Happiness Worldwide Initiatives**

### **3.6.1 The Kingdom of Bhutan**

Bhutan's kingdom first had the idea to measure happiness as a societal indicator in 1972; however, it was not until the early 2000's that SWB grew into a place of relative prominence amongst economists, scientists, and policymakers (Murphy, 2016). Under the leadership of Prime Minister Jigli Thinley until 2013, Bhutan included well-being as an "integral part of its constitution, values, and education system and recognises Buddhism and mindfulness's basic tenets as a foundation of the Bhutanese system" (Murphy, 2016).

No longer measuring success solely on gross national product, Bhutan uses Gross National Happiness (GNH) as a primary indicator of success and views it as central to its education system. The goal of GNH is to preserve Bhutanese culture and values while creating sustainable models for the environment, social equity, and economic prosperity (Ezechieli, 2003). GNH "proposes that responsible development is characterised by the right balance between equitable and sustainable livelihood, ecological conservation good governance and a dynamic and thriving culture" (Sinha, 2014: p. 9885). To date, Bhutan is the only country in the world to formally adopt happiness as its primary goal and measurement of social progress Bok (2010) in (Hirschauer et al., 2015).

Early results show that Bhutan's efforts may be a useful tool in increasing SWB (Murphy, 2016). Diener reports findings that happiness factors vary from culture to culture, such that individualistic and collectivist societies view happiness very differently (Diener, 2000). This may account for Bhutan's relative success in the

use of happiness indicators in social policy, as the culture is one which has not been greatly penetrated by immigration and a blending of cultures, as is the case with other countries attempting to measure happiness for social policy use. To date, the Bhutanese happiness model appears to be working. Living standards in the country have improved drastically.

Average life expectancy has almost doubled from 1961 to 2002, and school enrolment jumped from 2 percent to 72 percent in that same time (Ezechieli, 2003). However, the Bhutanese GNH model is not without its challenges, especially in regard to its education goals—these present in the form of infrastructure, human resources, budget and geographic location, among others. The country has formed multiple solutions to address these issues, including increased budgets, foreign donors, and implementation of technology programs in schools (Gyem et al., 2013).

### **3.6.2 The United Kingdom**

Since the increase in attention given to happiness research in the twentieth century, Great Britain has also made efforts to include societal happiness as a measure of success. Using well-being to measure societal success, “the Labour Government employed it to evaluate the progress of their aim of ending child poverty by 2010, and the Coalition prime minister, David Cameron, introduced a happiness indicator in 2012” (Murphy, 2016), with Cameron becoming the first leader of a developed nation to commit to the use of happiness as an integral part of well-being indicators and policy development (CSLS, 2011).

The data from these indicators provided much-debated well-being information in 2012 and 2014, receiving criticism for the use of subjective indicators as if they were objective, as well as maintenance of the “status quo” as data was perceived to have been used “inappropriately to fit a political agenda” (Murphy, 2016). The ONS Wellbeing Survey was launched in 2010, and four new questions were added to the Annual Population Survey. The questions covered life satisfaction, how worthwhile one’s daily activities are happiness, and anxiety (Knight, 2016). In response to the well-being agenda, in 2014, Britain implemented a requirement that English schools teach students core values. However, in a country of extensively mixed cultures, ethnicities and religions, this government initiative is unlikely to go far enough to address the need for shared values within society (Murphy, 2016).

While Bhutan’s focus is on mindfulness, Britain takes a more historical viewpoint to happiness, calling on the work of Greek and Roman philosophers and eudaemonia, and placing greater focus on the character development of its citizens (Murphy, 2016). In addition, the UK model has been greatly influenced by the work of Layard, considered a happiness expert, who has pushed for reprioritising the manner in which society is evaluated, in favour of positive mental health and well-being assessments (Knight, 2016). Consequently, while the UK model may not currently be doing enough to see a marked improvement in overall well-being, their formal acknowledgement of a need to address societal happiness bodes well for the future of happiness and well-being progress in the country.

### **3.6.3 Summary of Worldwide initiatives**

On 28 June 2012, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 20 March as a National Day of Happiness. This resolution stated that “happiness is a fundamental goal” and recognised “the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world” (United Nations, 2012). The resolution document set a tone for happiness and SWB research and recognised changing trends in how governments measure happiness. This is evidenced in the increased research revolving around happiness and life satisfaction.

For instance, the UN General Assembly, in its resolution document 65/309 entitled: *“Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development”* invited members of states to pursue measures that better capture the importance of the pursuit of happiness and well-being on national, international and global levels. Special attention was required regarding the integration of social and economic policies and sustainable development issues. This brought a massive amount of research directed through the Division for Social Policy & Development (United Nations, 2013). The required research prompted psychologists’ inquiries concerning character strengths and well-being (Seligman, 2003; Cohn et al., 2009), economists writing about a happiness index and its impact on levels of productivity (Frey, 2008), and politicians shifting from building wealthy nations to building happier nations such as in the USA, UK, Bhutan and UAE.

As happiness research has grown, many countries have increased the amount of data collected on well-being and economics. Additional examples of happiness research as a growing industry include Cooper (2010), who stresses the growth of happiness research over the past three decades especially in connection to economic performance and political figures and draws an example from President Sarkozy of France counting the benefits of well-being and happiness at work. Moreover, multiple countries continue to add measures of societal well-being to their national agendas, including European Union countries which now use the Eurobarometer to monitor psychological well-being and the German Socioeconomic Panel Survey which allows policymakers access to vital information concerning life satisfaction, income, and other factors which represent society's sense of well-being. Furthermore, The Pew Foundation now assesses well-being in countries worldwide (Diener and Seligman, 2004).

Other countries have begun to implement happiness policy, resulting in improvements in overall SWB among citizens. For example, South Korea's policies which followed the 2008 economic crisis to counterbalance its effects, focused on solidarity and social sharing. The policy results showed improvements in societal happiness that are unlikely to be attributed to economic increase alone (Fave, 2014). Besides, "the political transition occurring in Eastern Europe during the last decade fostered higher levels of social trust, that directly contributed to a global increase of happiness levels" (Fave, 2014).

Besides, conversations around the use of happiness research in developing public policy are growing in Canada as public servants have pointed to the need for continued research and long term use of happiness data before it can be deemed reliable (CSLS, 2011). Furthermore, Drummond proposed that while Canada has yet to set a happiness agenda, happiness is implicit in its policies. They are embedded in efforts to provide universal healthcare, which has the unintended consequence of increasing societal happiness (CSLS, 2011).

### **3.7 Is Happiness the ultimate solution?**

#### **3.7.1 Critique of the UAE Happiness Policy**

While I found no specific criticism of the UAE's happiness policy, my research presented concerns with the way policy in the UAE, and Middle Eastern countries are developed. Lambert et al. note that in these countries, policy processes are heavily influenced by "federal and emirate levels of governments as well as by tribal, sectoral, and family political influences" (Lambert et al., 2019). These processes often do not include public engagement and are less transparent than best practices recommend. While bodies such as the Federal National Council in the UAE are being introduced to increase public engagement (Lambert et al., 2019), concern with a policy created in this manner is that policymakers may not fully understand the needs of their constituencies, making it difficult to develop a well-being policy that will truly serve the needs of the population (Lambert et al., 2019).

Another issue concerns policy implementation and measurement. Lambert et al. note that happiness should not be a competition. As previously noted, the UAE has set a goal to be among the world's top five happiest countries. A challenge for the country in measuring its progress toward this goal will be to ensure that measurements are accurate. Note that once nations adopt happiness as a goal, the need to maintain political power can lead to manipulation of policy outcomes. Even the general population can contribute to the manipulation of well-being scores to help or hinder the achievement of the country's goals. According to Lambert et al., these issues most often occur with countries who use only one measure of well-being rather than multiple established and empirically validated measures over time (Lambert et al., 2019).

### **3.7.2 Critique of Worldwide Happiness & Positivity Movements**

As happiness and positivity movements have taken off around the world, they have also drawn significant critique. Many psychologists view recent movements as an attempt to force happiness on individuals. For example, Harvard professor and psychologist, Susan David, views recent happiness focus as “the tyranny of positivity,” whereby in an attempt to avoid emotions, people are encouraged to overvalue the extent to which thoughts affect real-life (Semnani, 2016). Both Susan David and Barbara Ehrenreich, point to negative aspects of excessive focus on positivity, specifically, personal responsibility and culpability (npr, 2009; Semnani, 2016). They note that if positivity is all-powerful in determining success, then when individuals fail, they must carry the blame because they weren't positive enough, leading to decreased feelings of well-being.

Other authors question why we are attempting to “force” happiness, even asserting that we are “programmed to be dissatisfied” (McAndrew, 2016). Philosopher, Jennifer Hecht, posits that there are multiple types of happiness and we cannot experience all of them at the same time. This leads to dissatisfaction in certain areas of life, which she poses as a good thing, as dissatisfaction is motivating and pushes us toward greater achievements (McAndrew, 2016; Beard, 2015). Another critique of positivity movements is that it has developed into an industry where books, DVDs, life coaches, and motivational speakers are sold to the public (npr, 2009), creating what consultant, Rafael Euba regards as “a fantasy that happiness is a realistic goal” (Euba, 2019). Euba also asserts that fluctuations in happiness are normal and are actually what make us human.

There is also criticism of teaching positive psychology courses in higher education. Carl Cederström, associate professor of organisation studies at Stockholm University, questions the recent labelling of Buckingham University as a ‘positive’ institution. As the university moves to train all students and professors in positive psychology theory, Cederström worries that happiness will become a requirement, leading to a population that is overly agreeable and avoids negative aspects of life (Cederström, 2017). He cites Brinkmann, who recommends that instead of focusing on positive emotions, we use the negative aspects of life to “speak and think more freely, without feeling obligated to appear optimistic” (Cederström, 2017).

Recent studies also indicate that seeking happiness can backfire and actually reduce happiness (K. Lutz and Passmore, 2019). They also note that when happiness is highly valued, people experience more feelings of loneliness, and it can even lead to the diagnosis of major depressive disorder (K. Lutz and Passmore, 2019). There appears to be a paradoxical effect at play as significant efforts to pursue happiness appear to lead to fewer feelings of happiness; however, studies which have shown this have primarily come from the United States, leading researchers to question if this effect is true across cultures (K. Lutz and Passmore, 2019). Eid and Diener (2001) point to the differences in how people value and seek happiness from one culture to another and emphasise the need for studies such as these to be conducted across cultures.

In response to these criticisms, this study into the UAE's happiness initiative will provide a measure of data on how the movement is unfolding in the UAE and may provide insight into its ability to improve levels of happiness within an Eastern society, as the government steers the society toward holding happiness in high regard.

### **3.8 Theses written about Happiness Studies**

Over the past decade, a number of doctoral studies have been conducted regarding happiness and its connection to societal and cultural surroundings, such as Burnett (2008) investigating the manifestation of happiness agendas in Anglo-America on a macro (happiness policies), meso (organisational support of happiness through human capital) and micro (positive drive of individual) levels.

Chen-Yuan Teng (2010) argued empirically against Layard's policy of collectively reducing hours at work in the promotion of happiness while agreeing with economist Bruno Frey's argument that fairness and justice implementation can cultivate happiness without negatively affecting families' marginal propensity of consumption.

This research was conducted through the creation of theoretical models of each researcher's concept. In addition, the author utilised philosophical, psychological and political discussion, along with regression models to come to conclusions. Placing focus on Layard's policy of status seekers and Frey's policy of reducing society's desire for social ranks, Chen-Yuan Teng asserts that the goal of government should be to create fair and just institutions in order to effectively improve happiness (Chen-Yuan Teng, 2010).

Frawley (2012) addresses the growing popularity of happiness discussions across UK mass media, specifically newspapers, critically examining the claims about desperateness for happiness in a way that requires the intervention of professional and political powers. Frawley's assessment is one of critique, as the thesis examines how proponents of happiness as a policy indicator are using the topic to reshape society's conception of happiness. Frawley defines this research as an assessment of the problematisation of happiness and the vocabulary, rhetoric, and idioms being utilised around the term (Frawley, 2012). To better understand UK society's culture and shared reality, qualitative media analysis is used to study media documents and their focus on happiness over a span of time (Frawley,

2012). This aligns with De Prycker (2010) suggestions who emphasises that a negative aspect of using happiness in policy is the likelihood of misuse, with selective use of data being a strong possibility in the complex world of conservative versus liberal political parties.

Finally, a study by Knight (2016) draws critical attention to the problematisation of 'happiness' and 'positivity' across the UK and the way both terms are being embedded as powerful idioms in the society. In the UK, the terms have been introduced as rescue solutions to increase citizens' well-being and have been undertaken as a national movement to increase subjective well-being. Knight's work seeks to understand the emergence of the happiness agenda (Knight, 2016). Knight uses the discussion of ontological beliefs about happiness to determine what has made happiness, social, and political practices possible in today's society, and how and why they have garnered so much attention and popularity that they have become a dominant theme in social policy construction. She goes on questioning the idea that if governments and societies increase individual happiness, social progression will be the outcome (Knight, 2016).

While the mentioned above all contribute to creating a picture of the role of happiness in social and political policy, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive view of one country's governmental approach to building happiness and positivity within its society. Like Burnett, this thesis looks at the happiness agenda at a macro and meso level. However, in choosing to focus solely upon the UAE, I seek to provide insight into how a growing country, with limited

data on the happiness of the people within its region, but a wealth of resources at its disposal, chooses to identify and implement a policy aimed at increasing well-being.

As education is an area of focus in happiness research and policy worldwide, I place focus on the discourse used in happiness policy and how government initiatives are being organised in support of them across multiple sectors, but particularly the education sector, such that an informed understanding of these processes and implementation can be garnered from an Arab state's perspective.

While economy and consumption are major themes throughout the work of Teng (2010), Frawley (2012) and Knight (2016), this research lends these topics much less attention, recognising that while economics is related to happiness, the theories associated with the correlation of income and improvement in well-being have been largely disproven. Simultaneously, I acknowledge that the UAE through its promotion of education and Emiratization of its workforce, recognises the need for economic success, viewing the creation of happiness as a supplementary focus for its citizens' well-being.

### **3.9 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the indicative literature on happiness and happiness science. It described how happiness has become a topic of import across society

sectors and how it is being addressed in current research. The chapter also offers a critique of the promotion of happiness through policy and movements. The following chapter provides a theoretical framework of policy studies and how policy can present as both discourse and governance.

## **4 Theoretical Framework: Policy Implementation Studies**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Having discussed the foundations and progression of happiness science; this chapter turns to a discussion of policy as the foundation of this study. The chapter defines policy as discourse and its function in governance and explains how actors contribute to the policy's enactment and implementation. It provides theories and concepts on policy trajectory studies which informed the framework of my analysis of the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity and outlines standards for measuring policy success.

The chapter makes connections between theory surrounding policy and governance, and the questions which arise from these theories when applied to the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity.

### **4.2 Defining Policy**

Vogt (2002) discusses foundational links between policy processes, negotiation and enactment, and how power relationships serve to exert control and influence over them. Ball (1997; 2006) describes the theory as an opportunity to test multiple possibilities and criticisms, proving and disproving ideological practices. Theory serves as a vehicle for questioning and discovering. The policy is an area which merits this type of questioning due to its recent growth in popularity and as numerous theories revolving around the life cycle of policy have emerged.

Leshem and Trafford (2007) identify the purpose of a theoretical framework as two-fold; its first purpose is to clarify what researchers aim to investigate and determine what researchers hope to achieve through their work and how it will be achieved. Foregrounding my research, Ball (1993, 2006, 2008), Trowler (2003), and Ozga (2000) emphasise the potential for a policy as a discourse to have a significant impact on policy enactment and results, and it is this ability to impact enactment which directly relates to my research intentions. This thesis examines policy to societal welfare, introduced in the form of a happiness and positivity declaration statement.

Ball (1993) argues that researchers take for granted policy's conceptual meaning most often in policy research and fail to present a firm definition related to their work. In this chapter, I attempt to give voice to my understanding and usage of the term, 'policy' as rooted in the definitions presented by relevant literature. Ozga (2000) posits that policy has no uncontested definition and that researchers' perspective plays a central role in how they view policy. The works of (Ozga, 2000; Trowler, 2003; Ball, 2006; Hill and Varone, 2017) all assert that policy is not merely a document, but it is an active process beginning with its conception through delivery enactment. Ozga (2000) describes this process as consisting of 'negotiation' and 'contestation' between groups who may not be immediately considered a formal part of the policymaking process.

Cawley (2012) thesis addresses defining policy; identifying three critical themes concerning policy's definition. Firstly, a policy is an active, long term process or

'course of action', created through a multi-tiered interrelated decision-making process (Hill and Varone, 2017). Initial policy intentions are not necessarily realised through the enactment and policy is in a constant state of flux as it evolves through the implementation process. Heimans (2012b) asserts that policy "is subject to contestation and the different logics pertaining to the various fields through which it passes." I propose that this is the cause of this fluctuating state of policy. Secondly, a policy is a complex political process. Ball (2008) asserts that a policy is created, written, rewritten and reworked through multiple delivery modes. The policy process is political, influenced and determined by governmental factors and bits of policy pulled from other policies, almost in a piecemeal fashion. Ball (1993) also attests to this process's political aspect, mentioning that compromise, negotiation, and ad-hocery all play a role in policy formation.

This position is further supported by Heimans (2012b) work which notes what is deemed a 'spillover' effect, which occurs when policy changes directly impact other policies' development. And thirdly, power and leadership in policy creation and enactment is addressed along with the recent trend toward 'governance' over 'government' (Ball, 2008; Hill and Varone, 2017).

Cawley (2012) notes that actors play an integral role in defining and shaping policy. Because policy serves in a change agent role, it is easily resisted; therefore, increased actor participation and ownership will increase change through the enactment process. With these assertions concerning policy, I wholly agree; however, Cawley (2012) went on to label policy as a social and personal process,

particularly relevant to my research. The UAE happiness policy is quite broad, leaving it in actors' hands to implement and enact their understanding.

Furthermore, it has the potential to bring about profound social change throughout UAE society. Its enactment is brought forth and carried through can be seen as a social process from its countrywide introduction through government implementation, wider society. How it is perceived on personal and social levels will determine its outcomes and the extent to which it achieves its initial purpose.

There is also a range of thoughts concerning how policy comes to be. Trowler (2002) theorises that policy is articulated in multiple practices through a matrix of contributors, and these contributors do not line up in a hierarchical power structure. Bleiklie et al. (2000) identify contributors as networks of actors whose motivations, intentions and relationships are subject to change based upon broad factors. Bates et al. (2011) later view policymaking as a process that allows government entities to bring their political vision to life through actions followed by outcomes. While Owen (2013) contests this view overall; viewing it as limited and lacking a focus on the multitude of volatile components in the process. It correlates with what is being witnessed in the UAE as the happiness and wellbeing policy has come when the country is actively pursuing a vision of improvement at multiple levels. The policy may serve as a means of translating that vision for society.

Trowler (2003) identifies sources of dynamism that contribute to policy: 1- conflicts present between policymakers and practitioners concerning desired goals, 2-

multiple interpretations of policy based upon understanding and 3- the complex nature of practising policy. I too follow the mindset of Trowler, whose descriptions are comprehensive, describing policymaking as dynamic and muddled, particularly in the acknowledgements of conflict between the policymakers, competing interests, and enactment complexities. Ball (1994) holds a similar view, viewing a policy as a *mélange*, asserting that it is not only words on paper, but the actions that result and what is intended through the policy's formation.

I hold that while Ball's assessment of policy may be valid for the UAE, a policy cannot only be a simple text with outlined intentions and goals. It is the product of many actors involved in its creation coupled with actors introduced into its enactment. The mere extent of exposure policy must have from conception to implementation and results, lends itself to a complicated and intricate process which cannot be summed up simplistically. Also, policy intentions can be shaped through the enactment process as feedback is received and used to alter implementation (Trowler, 2003). In short, a policy is the outcome of a 'micropolitical process' which has gone through multiple stages of compromise and adjustment so that it meets to some extent the desires of all of its creators and influencers (Trowler, 2003).

#### **4.3 Policy as Discourse**

Moving from policymaking to its connections with discourse, Ball (1994) asserts that discourse refers not only to what is said, but to who is allowed to speak, when and where their thoughts can be presented, and the level of authority held by the

speakers. Ozga (2000) maintains two theories concerning the policy's characteristics, identifying them as 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse'. Here, the policy as the text refers to what is produced from a mixture of influences and agendas, combined and repeatedly reformed. In contrast, the policy as discourse refers to a theory that truth and power share a connection with policy. That policy is derived from the reworking and restructuring of existing or recently created policy. Ozga also relates policy as a discourse to a 'bigger picture' comprised of what policymakers include and exclude in the policy.

Gale (1999) asserts that policy discourse produces text and determines interpretation as it informs what is written and how it is read, thereby limiting or expanding the policy's discursive nature. With this comes the possibility of contestation by different actors. Ball (2015) brings contestation to light, observing that this is seen in how policy is constructed, received, mediated, and approached differently by actors based upon their context. And if this is the case as Ball asserts, then the contested nature of policy may appear as text or discourse, as both policy elements lend themselves to reworking and influence.

My research is about this amalgamated creation and enactment of policy, its purpose, and the societal outcomes associated with implementation related to the UAE's happiness and wellbeing initiative. Thus, my approach considers the assertion of (Heimans, 2012a), who views policy as a 'meshwork' of practices influenced by discourses and competing materials. I also explore Trowler and Owen's theory of policymaking and how the dynamism mentioned above and

possible gap or overlap between the policy created as a government mandate, and its enactment can be seen in the UAE. In doing so, I inherently consider the UAE context, contested nature of the policy, and how it is made evident through its discourse and enactment.

Utilising Foucault & Fairclough's work, both of whom addressed the intermingling of discourse and its societal effects as a means of assessing policy; Owen (2013) views policy from a problematic standpoint. Asserting that policy is not a single event or document created and disseminated, it is a dynamic process of movements, actions, and outcomes. This view aligns with Trowler (2003) who proposes 'sources of dynamism' and that social actors play an integral and influential role in policy development and implementation. Owen's work explores three aspects of the policy: notions of power, notions of policy and discourse, and policy enactment.

Trowler (2003), Ozga (2000) and Ball (1994) also explore policy processes, their implementation, and possible outcomes. These theories revolving around discourse and policy enactment are most foundationally relevant to my thesis. Also of interest is the work of Saarinen (2008), who suggests that the way society and actors view the world, coupled with policy texts, causes events within implementation which make policy texts themselves a component in the discourse that influences the world. Besides, Olssen (2006) cites Foucault's theory that while discourse is often held to rules related to language and social practices, it can also

become an unconscious blueprint by which people navigate and understand real life.

This is where these researchers' work with my own, which seeks to uncover through discourse analysis, what messages are being relayed to UAE society and how those messages have been received and acted upon. I use the term "echo effect" in describing this phenomenon, surmising that as actions occur around us, we cannot help but be affected by them. In the UAE, with a formal declaration of happiness came a core of energy and a societal response around the topic. The echo effect deduces that this is a contagion and that people unwillingly begin to follow this energy causing unconscious implementation across society. As a result, while the policy itself has prescribed rules and language which formulate official plans, it has no control over the echo effect as the responses are duplicated within society.

Bacchi (2000) asserts that in using the term, discourse, researchers reveal a belief that bringing about change on a societal level does not come without challenges. It may well be that my view of policy both as discourse and text is in line with this assumption, as when the discourse is viewed in this light, it brings about many possibilities and influences to the policy. The desired social change may become difficult to create and control. I posit that how the UAE was presented with the Declaration of Happiness and happiness policy texts and programs caused multiple reactions within society and the workforce and these events, in turn,

caused other reactions. This brings forth questions regarding the alignment of the initial policy intentions and the current outcomes.

#### **4.4 Policy and Governance**

Calling upon Foucault's theory of power, I question in what ways has UAE society conformed to social norms, causing an alignment in the way policy is addressed socially, in the workforce, and through education systems? In the discussion section of this thesis, I address these issues, their complexities, and how aligning policy intentions with its results may prove a difficult feat as it pertains to societal change. I also look briefly at notions of power and how they present within policy.

Foucault (2002) discusses how policy as discourse serves to conceal its true intentions and are joined by both desire and power. Ball recognises through the construction of discourses, those who speak them are controlled by the power held in the discourse, which allows for the subjectivities and knowledge brought by actors. Furthermore, Ball connects the power effect of discourse with its ability to control responses and limit the extent to which readers can form alternative, independent thoughts (Ball, 1994). In this manner, the policy is productive, allowing for a redistribution of power and determining who can act and when.

In contrast to Foucault's theory of power, there is the theory of soft power, which lies in opposition to Taylorism and top-down management's ideas. Muntigl (2000) notes that policy discourse is hortatory; its primary purpose is to encourage actions. To achieve this goal, there must be an element of control. He refers to this power

dynamic as the government's choice to allow citizens and consumers autonomy to make choices that serve their interests within the real socially acceptable. Soft power presents as more likely than firm mandates or coercion to offer autonomy in making choices and creating possibilities and minimising of opposition to the policy itself (Mulderrig, 2011).

Mulderrig offers that in promoting less hands-on, intrusive governance, soft power serves as a discursive resource for governance and that 'managing actions' through 'enabling' individuals has become an important aspect of governance. Through textual elements, the government can create an environment which allows freedom of choice while steering that autonomy, seemingly unbeknownst to individual actors (Mulderrig, 2011).

#### **4.5 Policy Creation**

Policymakers are often the first drivers of policy creation as they have chosen the problem which will be addressed. Consequently, it is necessary to note the ideological views of policymakers. Trowler (2003) cites (Hartley 1983), defining ideologies as "The values, ideas and beliefs about the way society is and should be organised how resources should be allocated to achieve what is desired." As such, ideology plays an integral role in pursuing policy and determining what that policy will consist of.

Discourse Analysis in my research, serves to identify the meaning within policy and what may be driving the policy's creation and implementation. Caena (2014)

explores this question concerning recent higher education policy, proposing several drivers as underlying reasons for policy creation. Caena (2014) outlines multiple possibilities, including 'political pressures', 'international competitive pressures', 'commitments to education reform', and stakeholder pressure'. Such components can also be applied as possibilities in the UAE. For example, with the steady growth the country has seen over the past two decades, they may be seeking ways to maintain or accelerate this growth in a push toward further globalisation. Ball (2006) even mentions the large capacity of globalisation, stating that almost anything can be attributed to its desire.

Another driver may be that while the UAE is still attempting to diversify its economy further, it has new competition in other Arab countries seeking to increase tourism and international business. From its inception, the UAE has been committed to increasing the wellbeing of its citizens. The current policy could simply be an effort to ensure that commitment is fulfilled. The discourse analysis conducted through this research hopes to pinpoint some of these underlying reasons behind creating the country's happiness and wellbeing policy.

## **4.6 Policy Enactment**

### **4.6.1 Policy Intentions**

Central to any policy is a statement of intention; where policy intentions should specify actions to be taken to reach stated intentions. Policy intentions should also specify goals (Honig, 2006) and elucidate the vision, guiding the policy (Trowler,

2003). Cawley (2012) also notes that as policy is often a political strategy, intentions written for the public are done in laymen terms; difficult concepts are simplified and presented in a positive light. In most policy, this may impact perception, but the degree to which action comes about is based in large part on other factors.

The UAE's happiness policy has been mandated throughout the country and can be seen in multiple sectors of its society, as discussed in the UAE chapter of this thesis. With specific direction given to particular groups, the policy should hold a great deal of weight within society regardless of its stated intentions. Encouraging policy tends to hold a positive connotation (Trowler, 2003); however, mandates often represent a negative connotation, implying punishment for non-compliance (Cawley, 2012). With the UAE happiness policy, this may not be the case, as culturally, mandates can be seen as acceptable forms of governance in line with the greater good.

Another factor influencing perception and implementation is what (Colebatch, 2002) terms vertical and horizontal elements. Vertical elements represent top-down directives given by policymakers or a Neo-Tayloristic (Ball, 1997) approach in which policymakers instruct with the expectation that actors will fall in line. This approach has not been widely adopted in policy research (Trowler, 2003). Colebatch (2002) horizontal element represents participants and their role in using personal knowledge to determine what they believe will be the best actions to

address policy. This is in line with phenomenological approaches, which represent a more widely recognised bottom-up approach.

Saunders (1986) in Trowler (2003) recognises a need for less attention to central actors' goals, such as governmental bodies, and more attention to the values and perspectives of the actors on the ground as implementers. This sentiment compares with that of employees who argue that upper management has little knowledge of the ground's issues. In change management, policy enactment leaders closest to those they will directly affect, have the greatest span of influence. These actors are given authority to deal with uncertainties that accompany policy implementation. In addressing them, they can maintain an 'enterprising spirit' (Ball, 1997), contributing to distortion and diversion of the policy itself (Trowler, 2003). As a result, they hold an influential role in affecting policy enactment, and policy takes new shape on the ground.

The policy is constantly being created, and its enactment adjusted and affected by actors, making it necessary that the vertical and horizontal elements remain connected within the enactment process (Colebatch, 2002). The UAE appears to be utilising this phenomenological approach, as the government has created and disseminated policy. Still, much of the direction that implementation can take is being created on the ground within individual sectors. Trowler (2003) recognises the growing popularity of the phenomenological approach, viewing enactment as part of creating policy rather than as a second step in the process. The UAE's happiness declaration has an opportunity to put this approach into practice. With

so many sectors contributing to the implementation process, the policy can grow in a multitude of directions, each affecting UAE society at a different level.

#### **4.6.2 Policy Outcomes**

Riseborough (1992) in Braun et al. (2011) discusses 'secondary adjustments' or the extent to which policy can affect real change, asserting that policies can be introduced into a population and become disruptive or they can cause both intended and unintended outcomes. Another possibility for enacting policy is 'creative non-implementation' or 'fabrication' (Ball, 1994). This refers to the possibility that implementers may simply incorporate policy standards and expectations into the documentation. Still, little is done to implement the policy to realise actual change (Ball, 1994).

Heimans (2012b) asserts a similar notion that significant change and no change at all; are likely outcomes when the policy is created. My focus on the enactment of the UAE policy explores these thoughts. Results of an analysis of changes within the workforce and higher education should present a picture of the policy's enactment and shed light upon the extent of the policy's implementation and whether outcomes represent a form of creative non-implementation or true changes in culture and practice.

Policy literature also supports the notion that instruments and capacities are key elements of policy implementation. Honig (2006) describes these instruments as techniques used by the government to ensure its policies and include mandates,

systems, and capacity building. Caena (2014) also discusses applying different strategies and how it can significantly affect policy outcomes. Caena discusses strong versus weak implementation capacities, and how issues such as understanding change management or commitment to building capacity in line with policy goals can have a 'make or break' effect on enactment success. Other factors considered are the level of policy support and the role of leadership. While Caena discusses these components in relation to policy and education, they maintain validity within the realm of overarching government policy and its likelihood of successful enactment.

#### **4.6.3 The Intentions vs. Outcomes**

In this thesis, I view the UAE happiness and wellbeing policy as a discourse, searching for stated and underlying intentions and assessing the actions and actors that come about due to the policy.

Interpretation is an element of policy enactment which makes up a core component of how and when enactment will occur. Ball (1994) views policy enactment as a complicated task consisting of multiple requirements, including commitment and practical resources. He asserts that pivotal to policy enactment is the relationship that actors have with the text. Ball specifically refers to enactment as the knowledge that actors do not merely implement policy and focuses on interpreting and translating policy as key components of outcomes. Ball (1994) highlights the reality of policy, noting that readers have their own experiences and preconceived notions which they bring to their understanding of the text. Besides, the policy itself

has a history, beginning as an idea, and then morphed and shaped into what is eventually presented to the enactors. This is in conjunction with the reader's history, who can influence how the policy is read, understood, and later enacted.

The assertion made by Ball (1994); Trowler (2003) and Fanghanel (2007) is that once policy reaches the hands of the actor, its enactment, and therefore outcomes, become unpredictable due to differing values, beliefs, experiences, and attitudes of actors. Fanghanel (2007); Trowler (1998) and Hudson (1993) affirm the importance of interpretation in enactment of policy and the idea that enactment may not come about predictably or to serve the purpose that the policy initially intended. (Braun et al., 2010) goes further in describing enactment as a creative process through which abstract policy ideas are brought into practice in a manner which suits the context of those responsible for its enactment.

Another concept widely addressed regarding policy interpretation and intention is that of 'space to manoeuvre' as presented by (Bowe et al., 1992), who state that policy intentions may leave concepts unclear, and there may be omissions, or competing intentions within. These elements leave open a great deal of space for actors to interpret policy in a manner of their choosing. Cawley (2012) asserts that when left intentionally, 'interpretation space' remains so that the enactment direction is left in the hands of enactors. Discourse analysis may expose interpretation space in the UAE's policy. As a small piece of policy text, policymakers may have intentionally or unintentionally left open opportunities for

individual units to maintain an element of control over implementation, and further analysis may uncover reasons why this may be.

Fanghanel (2007) introduces three important concepts to the discussion of policy enactment: 'discursive markers of positioning', 'decoding', and 'reconstructing'. Discursive markers of positioning can refer to the aforementioned characteristics, notions and experiences which actors possess. Decoding and reconstructing refer to the process used to make sense of policy from these individual perspectives, applying independent thought and personal views and beliefs in order to begin policy enactment. Trowler (2003) maintains a similar view, labelling these steps in the enactment process, 'encoding' and 'decoding'. This mixture is summed up by (Bleiklie et al., 2000) who refers to them as a 'constellation of forces' which can determine the direction in which enactment is driven and the consequent results. In this research, I view the UAE workforce and higher education community as part of this 'constellation'. I look to their actions to determine the direction which the UAE happiness policy is currently taking.

When discussing policy outcomes, we also address concerns with the extent to which policy is implemented ineffectively. As this is a concern with a policy in general, it may affect outcomes of happiness policy. Hudson et al. (2019) note that as a policy is better understood, there is a growing awareness of the factors which contribute to its failure. Of these, they highlight four contributors: 1- overly optimistic expectations, 2- implementation in dispersed governance, 3-inadequate

collaborative policymaking, 4- vagaries of the political cycle. Policy design can also be a contributor to ineffective implementation.

Gold (2014) in Hudson et al. (2019) mentions that most countries develop policy without adequate practices to measure their design's effectiveness. A 'policy support program' is recommended to ensure an understanding of policy processes and that policy can be supported through preparation, tracking, support, and review (Hudson et al., 2019). Further, they note that within a policy, there can be success and failure. This is important to note when considering new policy topics such as happiness. For example, there may be resilient process success, meaning "government achieves its policy in broad terms notwithstanding small modifications and setbacks" (McConnell, 2010a: p. 355). Analysis of the policy implementation process used in the UAE happiness initiative will likely provide insight into the happiness policy's effectiveness, including highlighting both successes and failures of the implementation process.

Policy enactment is not a straightforward process (Owen, 2013); how it is enacted is determined by an environment sensitive to actor interpretations, social and political context, and how actors unpack the policy in relation to their own histories and ideas. My research explores this particular trend and how it may be witnessed within the UAE's efforts to increase SWB and societal happiness through policy. The words of Ball (1990 p.9) quoted in Bamber (2005) state that "Policy doesn't follow a linear trajectory, but rather it is catapulted through the total social system (political, ideological and economic)" resonate with me in my research as 'catapult'

is a fitting word for the manner in which UAE society has been introduced to happiness policy.

In many ways, the UAE has catapulted onto the global radar with its relatively short history. Comparatively, so have its policies, including the happiness and wellbeing policy. Through discourse analysis and assessment of the reactions to the policy by the workforce and higher education institutions, I hope to show that the intentions of the initial policy may not be playing out as expected, and that its outcomes may catapult, veer significantly, or simply stray from stated intentions, but that it is highly unlikely that in the current UAE social, political and economic environment, a linear trajectory will be witnessed.

## **4.7 Policy Success**

### **4.7.1 International Success Standards**

There are countries which have outlined wellbeing policies and instituted indicators for success. For example, Ireland published its Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice in 2018, providing a definition of wellbeing and a structure to guide the understanding and implementation of wellbeing policy in education. It was followed by the Wellbeing Framework for Practice which outlines key wellbeing focus areas for schools, success indicators, and effective practices alongside resources needed for successful implementation (Ireland, 2019).

The Wellbeing Framework for Practice outlines the vision and ambition of the Department of Education and Skills as it relates to promoting wellbeing in schools

by 2023. By defining the meaning of wellbeing, followed by outlining the role of the school institution and components that promote protective factors and reduce risk factors, the framework provides a guide for successful implementation of the policy and a basis on which the policy success can be measured.

The framework also clearly articulates its goals and indicators of success. In this case, schools are asked to use a Wellbeing Promotion Indicators of Success model to identify their personal strengths and areas for improvement which can then be used to monitor progress over time by gathering feedback from stakeholders throughout the process. The four key areas with corresponding indicators of success are Culture & Environment, Curriculum (Teaching and Learning), Policy & Planning, and Relationships and Partnerships (Ireland, 2019).

Schools are also required to complete a School Self-Evaluation to review development and progress. Success is identified as difficult to measure based upon its fluctuating nature as it pertains to wellbeing; however, the framework offers suggested measures for success such as student attendance and information from inspection reports but advises schools to choose the measures most appropriate to their school's individualised wellbeing vision. In addition, the impact of wellbeing policy and implementation will be assessed through national datasets, and an Outcomes Framework is being developed to provide a basis for objective assessment of policy progress (Ireland, 2019).

In addition to these elements, the framework also outlines a 2018-2023 Implementation plan. This plan not only spells out the support and monitoring process, but also outlines high level actions and sub-actions with begin dates, due dates, and responsible actors. In response to calls for wellbeing research and policy, the UK established the National Wellbeing Measurement program in 2011. The result of this survey are published on a live dashboard and cover 10 dimensions of well-being including natural environment, the economy, and personal wellbeing, among others (Hardoon et al., 2020). This data helps the government to identify areas for policy implementation to impact the lives of its citizens positively.

Hardoon et al. (2020) specifies some elements of wellbeing policy which are essential to improving lives, such as designing interventions so that policy has the greatest possible impact on overall wellbeing and utilising SWB measures so that all interrelated layers of wellbeing can be included when designing policy. The authors also specify that wellbeing policy goals do not only support government initiatives but can be a relevant policy goal across sectors including education and private businesses.

A 2010 survey by the Institute for government sought to identify what makes a successful policy. Completed by members of the UK Political Studies Association, members were asked to offer and rank criteria used to judge policy success, and offer and rank reasons a policy was deemed successful. Responders consistently

ranked Social Impact as a key element for judging policy success (Government, 2010). Additional key elements ranked were Successful Implementation, Economic Impact, and Duration of Impact. When asked the reason for a policy's success, Political Interest and Commitment and Appropriateness of policy to socioeconomic context were identified as key drivers (Government, 2010). Evaluating policy implementation can serve multiple purposes. The purposes most suited to this research are the aim of understanding how policy is implemented, improving the implementation process, and informing future development (Prevention, 2020).

Policy implementation indicators can be useful in measuring the accomplishments of a policy. Some examples of these indicators may be a tally of organisations who have policies related to the overarching policy, measures which determine the effectiveness of training materials, and overall awareness of the policy. There may also be challenges to policy evaluation which can include the pace at which the policy takes root and is disseminated, finding a group by which to compare progress, and a lack of clear responsibility and ownership of policy practices (Prevention, 2020).

Policies typically do not represent a clear success or failure. In describing policy success versus failure, FitzGerald et al. (2019) highlight specific components of good policy, specifying that it is relational, intentional, and it affects change. Donna Kerr, in a 1976 article in the publication, *Policy Sciences*, "argues that policies can fail because they cannot be implemented, do not fulfil their intended purposes or cannot be justified in terms of the norms they promote" (McConnell, 2010b: p. 18).

She also argues that if a policy does not fail, it can be deemed successful, identifying the conditions for success in opposition to the conditions for failure. This minimal attention given to policy success corresponds with that of a great deal of work which primarily focuses on policy failures, possibly because it is easier to identify downfalls than it is to pinpoint successes. She also discusses multiple manners in which policy can be a success: bureaucratic success in that the policy is implemented according to the guidelines set forth, the policy achieves its intended goals or the policy brings about fairness and equity (McConnell, 2010b).

Ingram and Mann (1980) in McConnell (2010b) also allude to the fact that policy success is a "slippery slope" in which there may not always be a clear success or failure. They posit that there may be elements of success and elements of failure within any policy and that these concepts are highly subjective, creating a grey area. One of the clearest indicators of policy success comes from Stuart Nagel (1980, p8), who states that "In terms of intent, a policy is a success if it achieves its goals" and "In terms of reality, a policy is a success if its benefits minus its costs are maximised." (McConnell, 2010b: p.18)

Bovens et al. in an attempt to identify policy success; identifies a programmatic mode of assessment which places focus on 'effectiveness, efficiency, and resilience' of the policy, and political dimension, which refers to how policy and politicians are evaluated in the realm of political functions. They also recognise that policy typically is neither a complete failure nor a complete success. This notion is

supported by the process used by the World Bank to measure policy success globally.

A study of success and failure of policy found that 53% of the time, their system found that projects were neither all success or failure and most often represented more success than failure (Andrews, 2018). McConnell argues the importance of separating policy and politics, positing that while policy may be successful in one sphere, it can be unsuccessful in the other. McConnell also points to (Sanderson 2002; Boyne 2003,2004) in asserting that achieving targets and outcomes is a primary requirement for success (McConnell, 2010a). In assessing the policy implementation of the UAE's happiness policy, I also make this distinction. For this research choose to focus solely on the policy, leaving the judgement of political success for future study.

It is important to note the repetitive nature of literature concerning policy success dimensions where the Dissecting model of Policy success receives significant attention. The model consists of: Process success, which refers to the process of creating and implementing policy, Programme success, which refers to evidence-based policy where whether or not the policy works can be objectively established, and Political success, which refers specifically to the government's reputation and ability to control the policy agenda. Programmatic success represents a way to capture outcomes and capture the impact a policy has on society (McConnell, 2010b).

As previously noted, there are multiple levels of success. These levels can be classified into types of success. First, the concept of Policy Success is ideal in that it encompasses all three of the policy elements, process, programme, and political success. Durable success is found when a policy achieves its intention, but experiences minor setbacks or incomplete achievement in some areas. These can be in the form of time delays, small communication failures, or minimal criticism of the policy. There is also conflicted success. In this case, the policy issue may be controversial or debated, or the success itself is debated. Controversial success may be caused by substantial criticism, communication, or shortfalls in meeting objectives (McConnell, 2010b).

While these issues may be substantial, conflicted success still represents success because the policy remains active, there are no fundamental changes to the policy or policy goals, and the creators and supporters of the policy maintain support of the policy. Finally, there is precarious success, which is just shy of failure. This occurs when there are major problems associated with the policy implementation, for such as progress toward goal achievement, halts in progress, lack of resources, or communication failures which impede progress (McConnell, 2010b).

#### **4.7.2 UAE Policy Success Standards**

As this research applies explicitly to the UAE and their policy vision, it is essential to note the UAE government's beliefs regarding policy. The Dubai Policy Guide outlines some of the attitudes held toward policy within the country. The guide defines public policy as "the translation of the government's priorities and principles

into a consistent and coordinated series of programs to deliver strategic objectives, to address particular social, economic and/or environmental issues, and to effect the desired change." (Sayess, 2018: p.4)

It defines public policymaking as a goal-driven and decision-centric process so that policy presents specific objectives, impacts, outcomes, and outputs. In addition, UAE policies may address issues as Federal-Level, Emirate-Level, Sector-Specific Policies, or Entity-Specific Policies. UAE policy specifically represents a document which provides analysis of how policy instruments will be developed, designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated to achieve strategic objectives and includes an appraisal of multiple options leading to selecting the one which presents the highest value and ideally the least risk (Sayess, 2018).

The policy guide also outlines the features of good policies, which can be considered when gauging the policy's success. These features state that the policy should be Forward-Looking, Outward-Looking, Joined-up and Integrated, Creative and Innovative, People-Centric and Inclusive, Evidence-Based, Measurable, Efficient and Cost-Effective, Monitored, Evaluated and Formally Reviewed, and Consulted and Communicated. While policy guide is a useful resource in developing and implementing policy, it also communicates that failures may occur, whether there is a consensus on the failure or not. The guide defines policy failures and root causes of the failure (Sayess, 2018).

The guide specifies that policy is rarely a complete success or failure, but rather it is a mixture of the two depending upon who a particular aspect of the policy affects, the subjective nature of some modes of evaluation, or the need for a longer-term assessment (Sayess, 2018). Policy Process Failure, Policy Implementation failure, and Policy Political Failure are described. Policy Process Failure is seen as a failure during the policy formulation stages, wherein the justification, set-up, issues and/or sub-issues may have failed to meet specific standards. For example, they may not have designed policy instruments appropriate to the objective or the policy does not sufficiently address the issue.

Policy Implementation Failure refers to whether or not the policy achieves intended outcomes. This may occur if the policy does not benefit the targeted group or resources are not utilised effectively. Finally, Policy Political Failure is defined as the policy's ability to promote the government's reputation and allow the government to move forward with its overall vision. Examples of this occurrence will be if the government is incapable of controlling its agenda or direction (Sayess, 2018).

To reduce the likelihood of failure and promote successful policy, the guide recommends designing adaptive policies, which can function and adjust for dynamic settings. To do this, it suggests that policy creators and policies have particular characteristics including: capacity building, good governance, variation in the proposed policy instruments, integrated and forward-looking analysis, multi-stakeholder deliberation, automatic and timely policy adjustments, effective

monitoring and early warning systems, and formal policy review and continuous learning (Sayess, 2018).

#### **4.8 Policy Implementation**

There exists a range of methods which can be used to study policy. Ball and Maquire (1994) mention three types of studies related to policy: studies of policy formation, implementation studies and trajectory studies. Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) propose that policy begins with conception and creation, but implementation and ongoing evaluation are necessary components of the policy's overall success. This study, conducted in parallel with discourse analysis represents a response to Maguire and Ball's work, which notes that a large portion of policy study has failed to address language and meaning as significant contributors. Discourse analysis serves to rectify this issue and provide a source of literature on language in policy analysis related to non-western policy.

Extensive research studies a single policy rather than multiple policies, connected either visibly or through underlying themes or goals (Braun et al., 2010). Of late, research around education policy has looked at 'policy convergence' in the face of contextual effects (Lingard and Sellar, 2013), as well as 'travelling policy' (Ozga and Jones, 2006), through which multiple levels of government and community contribute to the assumption of particular agendas (Ozga and Jones, 2006). While it may be useful in the future to look at other UAE policies and their implementation in conjunction with the happiness policy, I feel that at this stage of implementation, it is best to consider the happiness policy as an individual component of the UAE

government's plans and strategy. The concept of addressing and measuring happiness in society is still in a growth stage worldwide, making the UAE and this research an early contributor to this type of assessment which gives voice to changes taking place in the Arab world.

One example of an approach to studying single policies comes from Reynolds and Saunders 1986 and 1987 work which is extensively cited in (Trowler, 2003; 2002; Sin and Saunders, 2014; Sin, 2014), who developed what they termed the policy 'implementation staircase'. It asserts that policy has a 'career' and actors involved at each stage of policy contribute to this career from inception to enactment and completion. The staircase presents how researchers can track this lifecycle by studying the multiple layers within a system. The model suggests that the policy can be reconstructed from the perspective of the primary stakeholders involved in its implementation and that analysis can identify the differences in these perspectives.

Furthermore, as individual stakeholders act as both receiver and agent of policy, they will understand the policy differently, and this will affect the manner in which messages are adopted. While this system represents a trajectory study, it is most useful when assessing a microscale policy, for example, at the level of a school or university policy. For the policy I am studying, being evaluated at a macro-level, it is less appropriate as the staircase requires a deeper focus than what can currently be done with the UAE policy. The use of an implementation staircase model to explore other happiness sub-policies, such as employee happiness manuals, is

one that I may explore later as its micro-level of focus could shine a light on more defined elements of the policy's implementation.

Bardach (1977) takes an interesting approach to analyse policy implementation by viewing it as a game system. Within this system, there are players, stakes, strategies, resources, rules, and outcomes (Bardach, 1977). In addition, Lingard and Garrick insist that it is necessary to look at the policy environment, including the government ideology, time and place, and socioeconomic state (Lingard and Garrick, 1997). Bergen and While (2005) model use four-dimensional interrelated variables, merging implementation theory and street-level bureaucracy and combining the theories of Van Meter & Van Horn (1975) and Lipsky (1980). The four variables outlined are 'national policy standards, 'local organisation and structure practices', 'practices of individuals', and 'professional disciplinary theory'. This model could serve useful in the assessment of UAE happiness and positivity policy. Still, at this stage of the country's policy implementation, it would be premature as individuals' practices are still being formed and have yet to present themselves in a manner that can be fully addressed at this point.

Furthermore, this research aims to look at the UAE policy through a larger lens and with a bigger scope, identifying the steps that have occurred to implement the policy and put it into practice, along with their associated outcomes. Therefore, I turn to the work of Ball as a guide for discussion of my research. Lingard and Sellar, building upon Ball's earlier work; outline two contexts concerning policy implementation: outcomes and political strategy. The context of outcomes

specifically relates to both first-order and second-order effects. First-order effects represent those that immediately come about and can be hypothesised and second-order effects being how policy enactment affects political matters (Lingard and Sellar, 2013).

First-order effects represent those that can be measured against the policy's stated goals. Second-order effects require further evaluation based on the society and the analysts' sense of social justice. As the implementation of the current UAE policy is still in progress, it is impossible to measure the policy's second-order effects fully. Therefore, this research aims to utilise Ball's concept of policy as discourse and text to identify the underlying goals of the policy and gain an understanding of the first-order effects of the UAE's happiness policy implementation thus far.

Policy enactment refers to how actors take policy and put it into action by using programs, marketing, and communication. (Ozga and Jones, 2006) note the difficulties encountered in the transfer of policy intentions to actual action, particularly referencing a call for more research into how policy messages can be communicated straightforwardly to ensure improvement and changes in particular areas of the public sector. (Honig, 2006; Yanow, 1993) recognised that recently, policy development has taken a more central role in ensuring that policy enactment leads to the intended outcomes, by way of anticipating problems that might occur during enactment and making adjustments so that outcomes align more readily with intentions.

If this is the case with the policy I have studied here, narrower implementation gaps should be witnessed in this or future government policy initiatives. (Trowler, 2003) notes that policymakers often do not address the importance of actions when disseminating policy. This does not appear to be the case with the UAE happiness policy as identifiable government action has been present since the policy was announced. However, I will assess the degree to which the policy intentions are communicated, how the policy is put into action across sectors of UAE society, and whether these actions were built into the policy or occurred as additions following enactment.

Policy effects refer to identifying what was the intention and what was the outcome of policy implementation? Hill and Varone (2017) refer to the space between these two components as the 'implementation deficit' or 'implementation gap'. Yanow (1995) and Hill and Varone (2017) identified four categories that cause the creation of implementation gaps. These include 1-interpretations: of language and complex or ambiguous intentions, 2-actors: who may affect due to lack of understanding of policy, commitment to its goals, poor communication, or the inability to receive communication, 3-political constraints: including governmental barriers and politics, and 4- structure: identified as poor design, lack of planning, oversimplification or over-complication of enactment support structures. While it is early in the implementation process, I hope that assessing policy effects garnered through a synthesis of the study's analysis will shed light on how further implementation action can have the greatest value to UAE society.

#### **4.9 Chapter summary**

This literature review represents the theories and concepts that piqued my interest in studying the UAE's wellbeing policy and subsequently formed a theoretical base for my research method. This chapter has presented the definition of policy, drivers behind policy creation, policy enactment, and its intentions versus outcomes. Furthermore, the literature presents approaches to studying policy.

I take from this review of policy literature two things. 1. Policy is an amalgamation of ideas. It is not a creation of one person or one entity but serves as a groundwork for building a structure which includes the ideas, thoughts, histories and motivations of its creators. 2. The creators of the policy do not have the old ultimate power. Once policy reaches the hands of actors, its implementation is only limited by subjective thoughts and objective rules, making its parameters expansive; therefore, policy intentions and policy outcomes rarely align. These ideas are at the core of my research and represent the approach taken to analysing and understanding the happiness and wellbeing policy of the UAE as presented in this thesis

## **5 Methodology**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes and justifies my research approach and the methods used to gather and analyse data. The study follows a multi-method research design to allow needed flexibility in the analysis phase. This methodology was considered appropriate, since the subject matter was, as yet, under-researched, with no known population base. Therefore, a broad initial approach preceded a more focused explanation of the issue once the baseline findings had established the most credible sources of information. Thus, the research moves from the unknown and undefined to the known and defined (Bergen and While, 2005). This chapter will explain the three methods which make up the multi-method approach utilised for this research.

### **5.2 A Multi-Methods Approach**

The multi-method approach taken to this research was chosen because of its ability to adapt to a range of methodological approaches while providing insight into multiple areas of a single study focus. For these reasons, the approach has gained in popularity. While the use of multi-method approaches is widely debated, several scholars recognise it as a legitimate and necessary component of research into social phenomena (Gil-Garcia and Pardo, 2006).

Many benefits resulting from multi-method approaches have also been identified. Benefits such as that offer a more comprehensive approach to understanding a phenomenon, a more profound understanding of what is being explored and the opportunity to uncover paradoxes or new factors that could influence further research (Gil-Garcia and Pardo, 2006). The work of Gil-Garcia and Pardo serves as an indicator of the possibilities for multi-methods research. They show that well-funded government projects and smaller dissertation projects can benefit from multi-method approaches through case studies.

Another recent work which uses multi-method approaches is that of Palakshappa and Gordon. The authors identify a multi-method approach to studying collaborative relationships through the use of narratives, questionnaires, and perceptual mapping; and by capturing detailed dynamics of relationships, promote their approach as an innovative way to study relationships, and yield results unable to be seen through traditional research methods (Palakshappa and Gordon, 2006).

As with my research, they utilise multiple sources of evidence to come to conclusions and findings, including interviews, documents, and archival records. Using structured and unstructured processes and perceptual mapping, the researchers report being able to gather information at a more nuanced level than previously achieved, allowing them to identify solutions to organisational relationship problems and explain in detail why those solutions are needed; would be effective. Besides, the authors identified the use of multiple informants as a useful element of their multi-method approach, reporting that it provided greater

insight into relationships between mutual understanding, respect and the achievement of goals (Palakshappa and Gordon, 2006).

In this study; I follow the multi-methods approach to utilise CDA and CA's qualitative findings to place in context the qualitative data derived from a varied approach to analysing the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity, Higher Education media, and LinkedIn profiles.

### **5.3 Research Questions**

This study follows a multi-method approach to examine the happiness policy implementation and enactment in the UAE in both Higher Education and workplace sectors. The research approach acknowledges the variation in perspectives, meaning and understanding of policy formation and implementation and aims to address the below research question:

1. What does the publication of the 'UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity' policy text tell us about the influential factors directing the happiness' stream in the country?
2. What are the inferential intentions of introducing a 'Happiness and Positivity' policy to the UAE government agenda?
3. What are the examples of displayed changes across the UAE universities that reflect the embedding the Happiness Policy?
4. What are the examples of displayed changes across the UAE workforce, that reflect the embedding of the Happiness Policy?

5. What are the intended and unintended outcomes of the policy implementation?

#### **5.4 My Role as a Researcher**

This section aims to give a brief account of my background so that the reader can gain a better sense of my prior knowledge and motivation for the research issue. I completed my undergraduate degree in Business and Economics. Later, I received my Master of Science in Business Psychology, through which I learnt the positive psychology discipline and its implications on organisations and business models broadly. I worked as a business teaching assistant at my undergraduate university in Egypt; then as a career advisor at American University in Kuwait.

When I began to consider my thesis project, I had moved to the UAE. I was working in one of the private schools as 'Director of Positive Education,' A job title which, three years ago, was a relatively new post in the GCC and remained a pioneering post across the Middle East, with increasing numbers exclusively within UAE schools.

This post's job description entailed applying positive psychology practices across the school at an operational level and integrating it across curriculum activities. Yet, I found most of my workload dedicated to coping with ad hoc initiatives, events, and workshops brought up by the Ministry of Education and KHDA concerning Happiness in support of the government initiative. However, in my position as a

policy implementor; I realised that the time dedicated to school visibility in events such as the 'Happiness Parade' was far greater than the time devoted to actually increasing the well-being of students. Through this contradiction, my primary motivation for this study was magnified, leading me to explore a wider scope of how the government's happiness vision was being articulated across the education and business sectors. Thereby bringing my business background and educational research studies into practical application.

Furthermore, as an Arab expat living in the UAE, I admire the government's direct support of happiness. Particularly, I wanted to learn more about how this initiative could be applied and reproduced to support education reform and development in my home country, Egypt. Even as this study has been in progress, the happiness movement has grown. An attempt is now being made to "export happiness from UAE to Egypt," as Egypt was cited as the third most unhappy Arab country in the 2018 World Happiness Report, prompting a new partnership between UAE and Egyptian organisations aimed at promoting a culture of happiness and positivity within the country (Staff, 2019; El-Behary, 2018). With the spread of the UAE's happiness initiative to Egypt, I am further motivated to understand how the happiness initiative is faring to ensure that it has the greatest possible chances of success as it spreads to other countries.

## **5.5 Ontological View**

An ontology represents how the world is viewed based on unique ideas, values, and beliefs. In contrast, epistemology represents the process used to develop

knowledge and deem it to be true and reliable. "In this sense, ontology is concerned with what there is to know, and epistemology is about how we can come to know it" (Ben Kei and Harland, 2017: p. 3). Ben Kei and Harland (2017) propose that one cannot ignore the philosophical foundation upon which all thoughts are initially formed, and which serve as value constructs that influence the way we interact with the world.

Accepting that ontology and epistemology share an interdependence with data and methods, my ontological and epistemological beliefs centre around interpretivist theory and believe that knowledge gleaned from systematic epistemological processes can provide further insight into ontological research. My views align with Ben Kei and Harland in the belief that together ontology and epistemology serve to balance 'logic and rigour' when conducting research. The epistemological approach to research can offer standardisation to research processes; however, connecting this with an ontological approach serves as a point of validation for research findings while accounting for various meanings, explanations, inputs, and descriptions that exist in any situation when viewed ontologically.

As ontological views represent the way one sees the world, and in this research, underscore the chosen multi-method research approach and its grounding in qualitative interpretivist approach, my goal as a researcher is to construct reality based upon the synthesis of relevant information. I believe that nothing is static. Everything changes based upon known and unknown facts, social constructs, progressive phases, and the passage of time; therefore, I here discuss the

interpretivist approach to research and how it is interconnected with ideas encountered within my study.

Adom et al. (2016) identifies the interpretivist paradigm as an offshoot of the constructivist paradigm and asserts that the constructivist philosophical paradigm is linked with qualitative research approaches. It supports the use of multiple data collection methods in understanding phenomenon from participants' perspectives. Furthermore, elements specific to the constructivist paradigm include the possibility of researchers interpreting and comprehending phenomenon based on participants' experiences, personal experiences, evaluation of information, and engagement in the activity being studied, such that the researcher experiences the activity or can witness and observe it taking place.

Adom et al. (2016: p.5) p.5 also states that "like the qualitative researcher, constructivists assert that reality is subjective because it is from the individual perspectives of participants engaged in the study and are thus multiple varied". As with this research, research from an interpretivist philosophical point of view typically begins with open-ended questions and allows for 'tentative or valid conclusions' to be gleaned from the results.

Furthermore, Ben Kei and Harland (2017) point to the use of value judgements as they are made by the researcher and the overwhelming importance of personal interpretation throughout the research process. Simultaneously, a personal interpretation must play a role in finding this meaning. There cannot be one

standard for that which is represented by a broad range of characteristics and influences.

Schwandt (1994) identifies a goal of interpretivism as a means to understand lived experiences from the point of view of those who have lived it. Thanh and Thanh (2015: p. 24) argue that "it is theoretically understood that interpretive paradigm allows researchers to view the world through the participants' perceptions and experiences." Social actors are the constructors of their reality, which takes place in a specific time, place, and fashion, allowing for the acknowledgement and review of the phenomenon, and the language and action that occurs within it.

To understand this world, the interpretivist believes that it must be interpreted by clarifying how meaning is constructed, and how meaning can be derived from the language and actions of social actors (Schwandt, 1994). Schwandt adds that interpretivism aims to look closely at the details of particular phenomenon or behaviours of social actors by watching, listening, asking, recording, and examining, and the methodological language used to describe and employ these actions is dependent upon the researcher's purpose for inquiry (Schwandt, 1994). An oft-seen problem in the interpretive research approach is the attempt at finding a balance between phenomenological subjectivity and scientific objectivity necessary for modern research expectations.

To address this, my research follows the approaches of LeCompte and Preissle (1993) and Kirk and Miller (1986) from Schwandt (1994) who utilise method

choices to reduce error in understanding or outcomes. Focusing on the processes used to create, negotiate, and sustain meaning from the actions, language, motivations, and behaviours of social actors allows the process and outcome of interpretation of human action to be termed, *Verstehen*, or understanding (Schwandt, 1994).

Willis (2007) in Thanh and Thanh (2015) supports the notion that context is critical to the interpretive paradigm. Since reality is socially constructed, the context in which one understands that reality is paramount to the interpretive approach. This supports my use of this paradigm in understanding the happiness phenomenon in the context of UAE life and governance, rather than from a global perspective. In addition, interpretivism is not rigid in its acceptance of answers, allowing for multiple viewpoints, as viewpoints are often grounded in individual experiences, and perspectives (Thanh and Thanh, 2015).

The interpretivist paradigm utilises multiple understandings of a worldview, taking into account that external reality is variable and that there are multiple perceptions of the world depending on one's experiences and background, accepting a range of perspectives allows for a multi-layered understanding of the reality being interpreted (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). A fundamental element of interpretivism is the ability to work with the subjective meanings present in the social world. Through reconstructing them for understanding, use them as the foundation for theorising (Goldkuhl, 2012).

As part of the interpretivist approach, qualitative research methods are most often used. Vasilachis de Gialdino (2011) argues for two elements of qualitative research: the people including social actors, the researcher and their perceptions, meanings, interpretations, and the study results with which societal groups will interact, and secondly the characteristics, or the setting in which participants interact and its context. Gialdino (2011) also links these elements with the interpretive paradigm, which is primarily concerned with using meanings to make sense of the world from individuals' subjective experiences.

In this manner, qualitative research is appropriate for use in research which utilises the interpretivist approach. Because researchers are seeking to understand relationships fully, interpretivism does not typically employ quantitative methods, which can be rigid and focus solely on objective, precise information (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). I agree with this need for qualitative measures in that they are necessary in order to explore the meaning and understand individual groups.

Gil-Garcia and Pardo emphasise that multi-method research is particularly suited to the study of complex social phenomena (Gil-Garcia and Pardo, 2006). Advantages of multi-methods approaches include the ability to obtain thorough, robust answers concerning different aspects of reality (Mingers, 2011), validation of interpretations (Hammond, 2005; Sammons et al., 2005;), expanded the scope of the study, and the ability to discover and confirm outcomes that may not have been anticipated (Gil-Garcia and Pardo, 2006).

Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) pose that qualitative methods dominate interpretivists approaches to research, but quantitative can also be utilised. They also list data collection tools that align with the interpretivist approach as observations and document reviews. This is in line with the methods which I have chosen for this research making a multi-method research approach from the interpretivist stance appropriate for this research task (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006).

Within my thesis, this interpretivist concept is a guiding force as I explore the different meanings and actions which have come about through the UAE's happiness initiative and how individual understandings have led to particular actions. As a multi-methods study, I approach the construction of reality from an interpretivist stance, approaching each research question with the best available method.

## **5.6 Research Design**

A multi-method approach is followed for the three independent sets of data utilised to answer the four research questions as follows: (1) CDA for UAE Declaration of Happiness, (2) QMA for Higher Education news, (3) CA for LinkedIn profiles. This multi-method approach was chosen as the best way in which to address the policy implementation and enactment. Each method is explained in the following subsections.

### **5.6.1 Critical Discourse Analysis to "UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity"**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) refers to outlining and clarifying the connections between practices and structures. These include 'discourse practices, social practices, and social structures' (Sheyholislami, 2001). It "focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society" (Van Dijk, 2008: p.353). These relations of power often relate to the consumers of information and to the producers of discourse.

Much of linguistic theory revolves around an assertion that there is ideological significance within the details of the language. These can include 'grammar, vocabulary, metaphor and idioms' (Hastings, 1998). In exercising linguistic choice, writers contribute to shaping ideological messages within text through the use of social and historical context, providing a foundation for a connection between language and social practices (Hastings, 1998). The role of CDA is to provide an understanding of these choices and how they serve to influence understanding and action.

Aydın-Düzgit (2013: p.356) describes CDA as providing "both theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains". CDA approaches view discursive practices as part of social activity, which plays a role in creating the social world. CDA provides a window into the "discursive dimensions of a social and cultural phenomenon" (Aydın-Düzgit, 2013: p.357). As a problem-oriented approach to analysis, CDA's primary goal is "to show the complex dialectical

interplay of language and social practice on many different levels," paying attention to the numerous causes and factors which relate to different individuals within a given society (Wodak, 2000: p.188).

Norman Fairclough asserts that the goal of CDA is to investigate the causes of and reasons for particular discursive practices, along with events, texts and social structures; it intends to identify how discursive practices create and maintain the social world (Fairclough, 1995). Essential to understanding Fairclough's approach to CDA is his assertion that there are three levels to be addressed in analysing discursive events: text, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice (Sheyholislami, 2001; Fairclough, 2001). These three elements represent written work, the process used to create it and how it is consumed within society, and the social and cultural structure which caused or influenced the decision to produce a particular text. In this section, I briefly examine each of these elements.

Analysis of text within CDA refers to assessing linguistics in terms of "vocabulary, grammar, semantics, the sound system, and cohesion-organisation above the sentence level" (Fairclough, 1995: p.57). Fairclough also identifies linguistic analysis as being dependent on what is present within the text and what is omitted to include relationships between participants and categories assigned to participants (Fairclough, 2010; 1985). The analysis of discourse practice is composed of two processes: institutional processes or those related to editorial procedures, and discourse processes, which refers to textual changes brought about through production and utilisation (Fairclough, 1995; Hastings, 1998).

In doing so, linguistic analysis of text serves a descriptive role in CDA, where intertextual analysis provides a basis for interpretive analysis (Sheyholislami, 2001). Fairclough identifies a final element of CDA as sociocultural practice and identifies three levels of analysis, economic, political, and/or cultural, at which a researcher may choose to analyse discourse. perspective (Fairclough, 2010; 2003; 2001).

As discussed in Hindnks (2011) as a strong thesis in defence of language and reality, the Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis asserts that the manner in which language is constructed affects and influences how its speakers conceptualise their world and formulate their views. Like Fairclough, Hindnks views language as an important player in social reality and comments that "language itself is an institution" and to understand the intertwined nature of language and society fully, it is necessary to have an awareness of the "dimensions of linguistic phenomena" (Hindnks, 2011: p.149). Language as an institution requires its reliance on written and spoken societal use. As a result, language possesses the ability to be utilised as a tool within social practices.

Van Leeuwn (2000) points out that social action is not 'inherently purposeful.' This is witnessed in that while actions can be constructed so that they accomplish a particular outcome, this is not a necessary component of social action. Within domains of discourse, when and how purpose plays a role in social action, and its importance therein, is largely determined by the reasoning behind the action. Van

Leeuwn (2000) supports this by stating that discursive construction is less important when actions are guided by tradition than in comparison when guided by a desire for reform or an attempt at doing new things. Furthermore, CDA focuses on textual discourse and discursive interaction, recognising that this interaction is where meanings are created and communicated, roles are developed, and power relations come into play (Wodak, 2000).

### **5.6.2 Qualitative Media Analysis to Sample HE Institutions' Web News**

Qualitative media analysis (QMA) represents a form of content analysis that has seen significant growth in recent years as a tool for understanding and documenting social phenomena' actions and effects. There are multiple documented cases of media databases serving as a resource through which to study society, such as (Biscomb and Griggs, 2012; Rooks and Munoz, 2015). "Research using qualitative content analysis focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text" (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005: p.1278).

QMA places focus on discovering themes and seeking out "underlying meanings, patterns, and processes" (Altheide, 2000: p. 288). In an introduction to his approach to studying culture through technology, Altheide cites the growing availability of electronic media and information databases. As mass media is an important aspect of our symbolic environment, popular culture is inescapable in that it "not only defines what we 'know' and 'feel' about certain issues but also, what 'knowing' and 'feeling' and 'being involved' look like" (Altheide, 2000: p.289) . With

this, a great deal of research has shifted focus toward understanding the role of and extent to which mass media shapes daily life, interactions, culture, realities, communication, and policy.

Altheide (2000: p. 291) argues that the goal of QMA "is to query how behaviour and events are placed in context, and what themes, frames, and discourse are being presented". Therefore, the purpose of QMA is not simply to outline the ideas being presented through media sources. QMA encourages the researcher to utilise frames to look at what is being said, how it is communicated, in what format, and for what purpose. Moreover, QMA requires a look into to whom messages are being carried and how they are presented to a broad range of people who often have differing interpretations, and the takeaways from the message (Altheide, 2000). As there are multiple ways in which an issue can be framed, and it is the analyst's responsibility to identify which frames have been used by the media source as the framing will determine future discourse around the subject.

Moreover, a well-structured coding process is central to QMA. Hsieh and Shannon noted this basic coding process requires one to take a great amount of content and place it into a much smaller number of categories. These categories represent "patterns and themes that are directly expressed in the text or derived from them through thorough analysis" (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005: p.1285).

A recent example of QMA comes from Biscomb and Griggs (2012) who utilised the process to examine how print media responded to the success of England's

Women's performance at the 2009 World Cup. Another 2015 QMA assessed journalists' contributions and influence to a debate concerning charter schools by Rooks and Munoz. While the study is self-described as qualitative content analysis, it represents a QMA in its use of media sources and its research design.

QMA provides many strengths to the research process, one being flexibility (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). For example, while the methodology calls for creating a coding system, qualitative content analysis encourages modifications to coding categories throughout the analysis process (Rooks and Munoz, 2015). This allows for the emergence of new codes and prominent themes to be explored throughout the research process. QMA is also useful in understanding cultural trends. It offers an alternative to using statistical summaries and "assessments about what certain enumerative shifts 'mean' and 'why' they're happening". Through QMA, researchers "can more systematically check emergent explanations and hypotheses with mass media materials" (Altheide, 2000: p. 297), expanding the understanding of cultural phenomena as qualitative analysis supports multiple perspectives and subjective validated ideas.

#### *5.6.2.1.1 Sample UAE Higher Education Institutes (HEIs):*

On 31st January 2018, the Universities Ranking website <https://www.4icu.org/ae/> was searched for the top ten UAE universities' ranking in 2018. The ten given Higher Education Institutes were chosen as the final sample to start the web news search within each institution's website. The purpose for using the university rankings website came as a purposive sample choice, that would reflect an elite

view of UAE universities' news across the seven emirates, regardless of its management type, major of study, emirate location, the proportion of local Emirati students versus expatriates, etc.

During February 20-23rd 2018, each one of the ten institutions' websites was under the 'news' tab for the keywords: "Happy, Happiness, Positivity, Positive". The search revealed several results, some of which were not relevant – as of no happiness/positivity related information found in the article title or text- the refined search resulted in a total number of 57 articles as the final data set extracted from the ten HEIs. All result pages were saved, and each article within the result page was saved electronically as pdf. File for later analysis. The final sample profile is introduced in Table (5.1) below:

HEIs Name	HEIs' Location	Management Type	Foundatio n Yr.	Website	# of Happiness news articles
1. Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT)	16 campuses across all the 7 emirates	Federal Institute	1988	<a href="http://www.hct.ac.ae/en/">http://www.hct.ac.ae/en/</a>	23
2. United Arab Emirates University (UAEU)	Al Ain	Federal Institute	1976	<a href="https://www.uaeu.ac.ae/en/">https://www.uaeu.ac.ae/en/</a>	3
3. University of Sharjah (UOS)	Sharjah	Public	1997	<a href="http://www.sharjah.ac.ae/en">http://www.sharjah.ac.ae/en</a>	1
4. American University of Sharjah (AUS)	Sharjah	Private	1997	<a href="https://www.aus.edu">https://www.aus.edu</a>	4
5. Zayed University (ZU)	2 campuses: Abu Dhabi and Dubai	Federal Institute	1998	<a href="https://www.zu.ac.ae/main">https://www.zu.ac.ae/main</a>	11
6. American University in Dubai (AUD)	Dubai	Private	1995	<a href="http://www.aud.edu">http://www.aud.edu</a>	Zero
7. Abu Dhabi University (ADU)	2 campuses: Abu Dhabi and Dubai	Private	2000	<a href="https://www.adu.ac.ae">https://www.adu.ac.ae</a>	2
8. New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD)	Abu Dhabi	Public-Non-Federal	2005	<a href="https://nyuad.nyu.edu/">https://nyuad.nyu.edu/</a>	3
9. Ajman University (AU)	Ajman	Private	1988	<a href="https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/">https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/</a>	7
10. Khalifa University of Science, Technology & Research (KUSTAR)	Abu Dhabi	Public-Non-Federal	2007	<a href="https://www.ku.ac.ae">https://www.ku.ac.ae</a>	3

Table 5.1 UAE Higher Education Sample

#### *5.6.2.1.2 QMA Protocol for UAE Higher Education Institutes E-News*

To form my methodology, I extensively used Altheide's QMA protocol model (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). It supports a large degree of interaction between the researcher and the documents with analysis outcomes relying heavily on this involvement, as when researchers interact with documents, they can understand processes and meanings and then situate discovered concepts within the theoretical issues being addressed (Altheide and Schneider, 2013).

This protocol is beneficial because it provides a foundation for the organisation of information and a structure that binds the researcher to categories and topics to explore. In this manner, the protocol assists in the transition from mere data collection of categories, to a summary and comparison of those categories and variables. In doing so, the researcher can begin to bring together ideas presented in initial statements with the data which has been reviewed.

The protocol also serves as a manner in which to ask the right questions to guide further data collection (Altheide and Schneider, 2013: p.45-50). As outlined, my CA's purpose here is to outline "definitions, meanings, processes and types" using texts and descriptions. As a result, the like most qualitative CA, the protocol is fairly limited and not as precise as often found in quantitative QCA. By using documents referring to various HE institutions in the UAE, my methodology pays particular

attention to following up on ideas that may stray from overarching themes found within different content sources. My final protocol questions were as follows:

Protocol for UAE HEIs' web news about 'Happiness'

1. Publication Title
2. Date of Publication
3. Place of Publication
4. Length of Publication
5. Headline
6. The use of term 'happiness':  A course     A Workshop     An Event     Other
  - In what activity it is used within campus?
7. The focus of the article (briefly summarise the key messages)
8. Descriptive Language:  Positive     Neutral
  - Examples for words capture
9. Themes evolved in the news
10. Frames 'The Super theme' of the news article
11. Research Notes

Figure 5.1 Protocol of UAE HE web news analysis

### 5.6.3 Content Analysis of the LinkedIn profiles sample

Content analysis (CA) is an oft utilised approach to research within social sciences and can be qualitative or quantitative. Krippendorff (2013) identifies problem-driven analysis as a form of content analysis that begins with a research question and texts that can help answer this question. As the method chosen to inform this study lends itself most often to the study of epistemic problems because of perceived value in acquiring information related to the unexplored.

Furthermore, CA of real-world problems allows a view of phenomenon elements that have not been fully recognised such as 'ideological commitments' and 'consequences and uses' of the texts that have yet to be identified by traditional readers unconcerned with the phenomenon. Problem-driven analysis can employ

the use of a number of text types including 'images, sounds, websites, symbolic events, and numerical data', all of which support the further goal of abductive inferencing in order to use available data to come to the most logical conclusions concerning the phenomena being studied (Krippendorff, 2013).

There is also a presupposition that the researcher has previous knowledge of how research questions relate to the chosen texts and that this knowledge covers a range that is not limited to a linguistic perspective. Historically, CA has taken on a persona more similar to public debate, with researchers placing greater emphasis on proving their own opinions to be true rather than fully validating the results of their analysis (Krippendorff, 2013). To avoid this tone of the debate over validated claims, CA should be validated in principle, and this entails an alternative method or independently available evidence. This study is built on three independent sets of data: The Happiness and positivity policy, the LinkedIn profiles data set, and the Higher education institutes' news' sample.

LinkedIn was considered a viable tool; founded in 2003; it has become the world's largest business network. Skeels and Grudin (2009) described LinkedIn as a site focusing on professional information that enables users to create an abbreviated CV and make connections with others; It has also been described as a business-oriented social networking site combines professional networks with relevant taglines (Papacharissi, 2009). LinkedIn further provides a framework that allows for professional identity, conversation, mutual sharing, brand or professional presence, relationships and learning (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

Most importantly, it is considered a means to synthesise changes in workforce demands and job patterns across a country (Robinson et al., 2014). As a result, it was identified as the vehicle of choice to determine ongoing changes within the UAE workplace due to the introduction of the national happiness initiative. In sum, the study's questions are twofold: What workforce changes reflect the implementation of the UAE's National Program of Happiness and Wellbeing; do these changes equally correspond to changes in educational workforce qualifications?

#### *5.6.3.1.1 Sample Profiles*

In February 2018, a search was conducted using LinkedIn. The keyword searched was "Happiness", with the added filter on "People" in the "United Arab Emirates"; 2,200 results were returned. Each search page showed ten profiles. The first 20 pages were taken as the official data sample to make up the 200-profile sample. Before finalising the sample, other keywords relevant to the UAE's NPHW were tried to ensure the inclusiveness of the sample. This included; "Positivity," "Well-being," and "Subjective well-being". The latter results showed fewer results, while the "Positivity" results were accompanied by the "Happiness" keyword resulting in the decision to depend solely on this last term. Each profile was saved as a pdf. Document and given a serial number from 1 to 200 for anonymity. Each profile was searched for the information in Table (5.2). The final sample contained 131 profiles, as a number of profiles were excluded due to a lack of relevance to the 'happiness' keyword.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Previous job title prior to 'happiness' position</b>
<b>Emirate of employment</b>	<b>Nature / Type of the Business</b>
<b>Position(s) of 'happiness' term within profile</b>	<b>The Sector / Industry of the Business</b>
<b>Earliest year associated with 'happiness'</b>	<b>Key functions / Job description of 'happiness' position</b>
<b>Current job title / role</b>	<b>Recent(s) Educational qualification(s)</b>

Table 5.2 Content analysis search criteria

The use of content analysis as a method of analysis and interpretation among researchers using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn is growing (Hamad et al. (2016). A Content Analysis (CA) for the final 131 LinkedIn profiles' sample was conducted. (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) consider CA to be a useful research method for the subjective interpretation of text data through a systematic classification process of coding and identification of themes or patterns. A code sheet was designed to extract the needed content from the profiles.

This method has been used in a number of studies investigating online phenomenon (Hamad et al., 2016; Kacker and Perrigot, 2016; Li et al., 2018) with success. Results were tabulated in a coded Excel sheet for analysis. The 'current job title' and 'education qualification' needed further coding after tabulation since

the raw data resulted in many different types which could not be synthesised for analysis.

## **5.7 Ethical considerations**

One ethical consideration of my research is whether accessing LinkedIn profiles of professionals working in a 'Happiness' related job post within UAE requires me to seek individual consent. A 2018 article addresses this debate around consent, questioning if social media data is 'Fair Game' or 'Covert Research' (Hibbin et al., 2018). The article examines varying opinions of research ethics committees. It highlights complications with social media including terms and conditions agreements serving as a proxy to informed consent, practicality and possibility of obtaining consent, and whether social media text can be considered public domain (Hibbin et al., 2018).

Extensive interviews showed varied opinions on the topic, with those more experienced in social media research showing signs of greater leniency in need of consent. As a whole, members primarily focused on the principle of 'not harm,' often arguing that the research topic's context or sensitivity was central to the ability to adhere to this principle (Hibbin et al., 2018).

Other ethical considerations are brought up by Wolfinger (2016) who notes that social media has become a major communication platform that provides researchers with new opportunities. However, some of the key ethical issues it brings are: (1) the publicity of the information (2) the degree of re-identification of

data, (3) the sensitivity of information. Key issues regarding informed consent in digital trace data are: how it can be obtained, what information is being extracted, and how the information will be used and in what environment. With respect to information-sharing platforms, it could be argued that informed consent is not always required, but participants' anonymity should be preserved (Ackland, 2013). While the debate is ongoing, in this study, I also acknowledge the consensus of 'do no harm' and strive to preserve anonymity (Wolfinger, 2016; Ackland, 2013).

Bernstein (2014) brings up another challenge of social media research by questioning the grey-area of ethical concerns about social media data gathering. She mentions the issue of 'friending' participants on platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn, a practice which her organisation prohibits. Moreno et al. (2013: p.709) focus on the common ethics concern in social media research (SMR) including observational research, under which this study falls. The Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) for reviewing research protocols guidelines assert that the investigator shouldn't participate or interact with the participants. Therefore, data must be obtained through public profiles rather than through connections or 'friends.' For this quality purpose, I ensured to remove any connections I had with 'happiness' profiles, and this ensured that my search criteria only returned profiles authorised for public view.

Filla (2015) maintains that 'scraping' data from LinkedIn for prospect research, has a legality issue. Whether referring to legality or ethics, the discussion around this topic is debatable. For example, it is argued that scraping LinkedIn profiles is illegal

and violates the user agreement since it implies taking a bulk of LinkedIn data and transferring it for another purpose. But what is the operational framework of the word 'bulk' here? In my research, I intend to collect individual data anonymously about specific profile features. Without an operational definition of 'bulk', I view the information gathered through this study as limited and within acceptable ethical limits. Anonymity is an ethical concern.

Also, worth mention, in 2015, LinkedIn opened up a significant amount of its data set to 11 different groups of researchers (Wagner, 2015). It aims to bring together publications to describe the connection of people to economic opportunities. As LinkedIn welcomed PhD students previously, I believe my research - by anonymity criteria set by LinkedIn stakeholders themselves- is not problematic, as it aims to benefit society by understanding the future economic and education market of the UAE.

## **5.8 Chapter summary**

This chapter outlines the questions which the study serves to answer in relation to the enactment of happiness policy in the UAE and offers insight into my role as a researcher. In addition to providing background on the framework of ontological and epistemological foundations, the chapter has provided a detailed account of the study's interpretivist approach. It describes and justifies the study's multi-methods approach by outlining each method, including the use of CDA, CA and QMA.

Finally, the chapter explores the study limitations and ethical considerations of the research and offers justification for adopting the chosen methods and data. The following chapter presents the findings of this study.

## **6 Findings**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter outlined the research design and methodology used in this study, and the research questions I have sought to answer through this process. This chapter presents the findings of the study. These are first introduced by outlining the findings of the CDA process and its use of textual data and linguistic features to produce a textual, process, and social analysis of the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity, followed by a description of the findings of the QMA of UAE Higher Education News and the LinkedIn data CA.

### **6.2 Policy Influential factors and Inferential Intentions**

This section utilises critical discourse analysis to identify influential factors and inferential intentions of the UAE DHP. Specifically, this CDA is used to answer my first two research questions: 1-What does the publication of the 'UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity' policy text tell us about the influential factors directing the happiness' stream in the country? 2- What are the inferential intentions of introducing a 'Happiness and Positivity' policy to the UAE government agenda? The CDA aims to identify the influential factors and intentions of the policy's development and enactment.

### 6.2.1 CDA for UAE Declaration of Happiness

Ball's policy work (1993; 2015) informed this part of the research and by Fairclough's work (1985; 1992; 2001; 2003; 2010) on CDA. Its objective is to utilise discourse analysis to analyse the linguistic properties and their connection to the social context within the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity as a policy text, to uncover the initial policy intentions. This analysis represents only a portion of my mixed-methods approach to this research. It is, therefore, not a complete discourse analysis. Still, it draws on a sample of discourse analysis tools to offer a window into how the use of language can influence meaning action within policy texts.

#### 6.2.1.1.1 *Textual Data*

My textual analysis of The UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity begins with identifying and analysing the visual text, consisting of 18 lines of text and 272 words. A quantitative reflection of language used in the declaration involves a keyword analysis, identifying words which are repeated and their relative density to the text as a whole as illustrated in Table (6.1).

Keyword	Repeats	Density
Happiness	10	3.67%
Government	6	2.20%
Positivity	4	1.47%
Prosperity	4	1.47%
Aspiration	3	1.10%
Development	3	1.10%
Social	3	1.10%
Society	3	1.10%

Table 6.1 Keywords density analysis

Following Keyword identification, I identified linguistic features within the text specified in Fairclough's work (1992; 2001). I present only those that are most relevant to this CDA related to inclusion and exclusion, which I will discuss in more depth in the coming analysis. I here present the linguistic features which were identified in the declaration:

Linguistic Feature	No. of times used	Examples
Action Verbs	9	Believes, Represents, Works (2x), Embody, Strive, Provides, Aspires, Aims
Modal Verbs	0	
Auxiliary Verbs	7	Is (7x)
Adjectives	26	Holistic, Enabling, Fundamental, Comprehensive, Economic, Social, Positive, Global, Current, Future, Government
Comparative Adjectives	2	Better, Ultimate
Intensifiers	0	
Possessives	4	Its(2x), Their(3x)

Table 6.2 Linguistic features in text

I also completed a verbal analysis of the text with a focus on functional grammar work of Halliday (1985) identified in Fairclough (2003) to identify grammar which influences the delivery and understanding of the text. In line with Fairclough (2003), I found that particular themes were prevalent and represented different social life areas. These themes were described individually in each paragraph. Below, I categorise them based on noted themes and verbal nuances.

Paragraph	Theme	Mood	Information Focus	Transitivity	Active or Passive Voice	Representation
1	Why happiness is important	Declarative	Definition	Mental	Active	Abstract / Generalized
2	Happiness as a government goal	Declarative	Explanation	Behavioural		
3	Government actions and aspirations to build a happy society	Declarative	Explanation	Behavioural		
4	Society's role in building happiness	Imperative	Encouraging/Prompting	Verbal		
5	Globalisation	Declarative	Encouraging/Prompting	Behavioural		

Table 6.3 Verbal analysis of the text

This quick extraction of textual data serves as a foundation for the textual, linguistic, and intertextual findings of this CDA.

#### 6.2.1.1.2 Textual Analysis

As noted in Table (6.2), keywords were those which were prominent throughout the text. Happiness had the greatest text density because it was the government's initiative and declaration's primary focus. Happy also appeared once in the text. Likewise, positive appeared twice in addition to the use of the word, positivity. The word, government, held the second-highest text density as the text focused on the government's role in presenting happiness as a goal for society. These results represent the declaration's explicit intention in that happiness is the primary focus, with the government's role in its development also holding a prominent place.

As noted in Table (6.3), there were nine instances of Action Verbs within the text. In this case, the exclusion of modal verbs, most often used to express possibility, probability, and ability is of particular note. The extensive use of action verbs

implies that capability has already been proven and that actions are presently taking place by the actors, i.e. the government and society. In addition, it places the focus on the present. It emphasises an encouraging or inspirational voice to imply that the UAE is already exhibiting the happiness being sought through the declaration. For example, paragraph 4 states:

". . . members of the UAE society embody positive and noble values . . ."

"they strive to choose happiness. . ." and "it provides an example to the world."

The use of action verbs here represents the information focus of this portion of the text, which encourages or prompts actors to behave in a particular manner. Furthermore, there is no use of directives or, modals such as should, must, or should not. This represents an effort by the government to present the information to employ teamwork and trust, rather than explicitly representing itself as an authoritative figure. Another attribute of the text concerning the prevalence of action verbs is that, of the nine occurrences, five of them were presented in sentences with "the government" as the subject of the —thence. The ever-present use of "the government" as subject implies authority without the use of commanding phrasing.

Finally, the word "is", repeated seven times, is the only auxiliary verb found in the text. This auxiliary verb is most often followed by a reference to the foundation of or the commitment cause of creating happiness. For example:

P1- Foundation: ". . . the achievement of happiness is a fundamental human goal."

P2-Commitment: "The government is committed, create the enabling environment.

Commitment: "It is also committed to inspire them to adopt positivity. . ."

Adjectives represent a large portion of the text (9.6%) and speak to the policy objectives, values, ideas, and beliefs it is promoting. Adjectives which were repeated included economical, economic, positive, and global, with social being repeated the most. Combined, these words create an image of the idea being promoted, creating a discourse of social cohesion.

Possessives represent only a small portion of the text; however, their role is pronounced in that it serves to create a feeling of disconnect. It is used twice, each time referring to the government, while there is used three times, each time referring to society. There is use of our, as if government and society are two separate entities, disconnected outside of the power and authority relationship.

#### *6.2.1.1.3 Processing Analysis*

Processing analysis as presented by Fairclough involves assessing how the object, or writing is produced and received by human subjects. This portion of CDA is on the interpretation of the text based upon its linguistic structures. To address processing, I first identify the primary discourses that are illustrated as themes as presented in (Table 6.3). The themes found represent a path laid out for the reader, which moves from defining the goal, explaining the government's role, the inclusion of society, and presenting the goal of globalisation. To further discuss the

interpretation of the discourses and themes, I will address each paragraph individually.

(a) Paragraph 1 Theme: Why happiness is important

This theme represents a declarative mode. Its information focus is to define happiness such that citizens are aware of its meaning and importance to the country's development. The transitivity process within this discourse represents mental transitivity evidenced by the use of "believes" in reference to the government's position on happiness. This represents the mental process of cognition, with the government behaving as the conscious actor and the phenomenon being sought.

(b) Paragraph 2 Theme: Happiness as a government goal

This theme is also declarative in nature but represents behavioural transitivity. The focus here is on the actions to which the government is committed. Collocations are used to indicate action through infinitives—to create, adopt, and realise. The government most often precedes these as subject or subject pronoun. The words, policies, plans, projects, services and individuals, families, and society are also used in a manner which reflects patterns of synonymy and hybridity in lexicalisation in that they each represent an element or small component of the other and are at times mutually substitutable.

(c) Paragraph 3 Theme: Government actions and aspirations to build a happy society

The declaration also serves as an explanatory resource for the general population.

Paragraph 3 focuses on outlining what the country is doing to promote and increase happiness and positivity; therefore, its information focus is one of explanation. Again, this paragraph represents behavioural transitivity by outlining actions being taken by the key participant, the government:

P3: "... works to capture and measure happiness."

"... works to strengthen the culture of happiness..."

The paragraph also demonstrates behavioural transitivity by describing *how* the government is working toward happiness:

P3: "...in line with the ambition of the UAE society..."

"... in a holistic manner across government, social, and private institutions."

Here we also find many words which represent the same focus. For example, happiness is repeated three times. Culture is repeated twice, producing over wording, or the extensive use of a set of words that show an overwhelming focus on an element of social reality.

(d) Paragraph 4 Theme: Society's role in building happiness

In paragraph four, we begin to see this policy as more than declarative and as a form of discourse around societal action. The mood of paragraph four is imperative, while the information focus is one of encouragement and prompting. As noted in the textual data, there is no use of modal verbs, including the exclusion of modals

representing a directive or advice, such as must or should. The order of the discursive themes here is particularly interesting as it states:

P4: "... UAE society... strive to choose happiness for their lives..."

"This spirit is the engine of national economic development..."

The paragraph describes what the government sees as the current actions of society and in doing so, sends a veiled directive that citizens should continue (or begin) to display these actions. The policy discourse utilises an obfuscation of agency and responsibility through its use of the active, present tense voice in describing social actors. Furthermore, referring to the people's spirit as the engine for future development, a lexical metaphor that brings to mind movement and strength, emphasises the important role the actions of the people will have on the success of the country and represents a discourse of social cohesion.

Paragraph four represents verbal transitivity, specifically because the government acts as the sayer and primary actor, while society is the receiver of the statement. This paragraph also highlights the imbalance in agency between the government and society, where the government has, in two-thirds of the text, made declarations about the country's direction and the role of society, while society acts only as a receiver of information which directly affects its actions and social world.

#### (e) Paragraph 5 Theme: Globalisation

Paragraph four and five have an information focus that is encouraging and prompting as paragraph four, in its use of imperatives, serves as a lead to the theme of globalisation. The actions of society identified in paragraph four, coupled with the government aspirations declared in paragraph five, all point to the policy's primary ideology, efforts toward globalisation. In paragraph four, the reader is told that members of UAE society "provide an example of happy and positive humans for the world." This serves as a transition into the topic of globalisation and the citizens' role in achieving this.

Furthermore, the use of positive expressive values through adjective phrases such as "toward global prosperity," and "a global hub and destination" lend themselves to an information focus that is encouraging and serves to outline the policy's primary discourse. The transitivity represented here is behavioural as the document once again refers to the government's actions and goals, using words such as aspires and aims to represent the government's behaviours. The discourse of globalisation is pronounced in the repeated use of words which point to a global presence, i.e. international and global.

#### *6.2.1.1.4 Social Analysis*

At the time of its release, the Declaration of Happiness and Positivity was the central forum of discursive practice around happiness objectives in the UAE. As a

result, representation and positioning issues play a critical role in understanding how it was received.

To begin with representation, we outline the social actors in the policy. In the declaration, the representation of the government and society as social actors makes clear their individual roles and lays a foundation for the positioning of the policy text. To outline the representation of both actors, we look at a number of choices which were made.

**Inclusion/Exclusion:** The government as a social actor is included in the bulk of the text. There is no evidence of suppression; however, while society is briefly given focus, as a social actor, it is backgrounded as each paragraph alludes to the achievement of happiness, which as a human goal is ultimately referencing the affect happiness will have on members of society, who are excluded from much of the text.

**Pronoun/Noun:** Most often, the government is realised as a noun, and at times as the pronoun, it. Society is realised in the use of generic nouns, the country and the society, as well as through the possessive pronoun, they.

**Activated/Passivated:** The UAE government is the actor in the processes with extensive references to the actions it is directly initiates. The UAE society can be loosely described as the affected, as only two sentences are devoted to society's actions and are speculative in nature, rather than rooted in tangibles. While there

are claims to knowledge throughout the policy, society's description is presented as a categorical truth, bringing about the description's ideological significance. Furthermore, the government's actions listed throughout the declaration serve to affect the society in the long term. As the activated, the UAE government holds the agency and capacity for action, while society, the passivated are characterised by their subjection to the policy processes.

Janks (2006) outlines that CDA stems from critical theory of language which views the use of language as a form of social practice whereby multiple questions around text positioning, interests served and negated, and consequences of positioning are addressed. Following Fairclough's (1985; 1995) model for CDA, these questions are answered here in relation to the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity, based upon the text and policy analysis, coupled with an evaluation of the socio-historical conditions which govern the processes. Therefore, in respect to the DHP, I focus particularly on the issues of governance and agency. Fairclough (2003) identifies three elements which can be represented in text, aspects of the physical, mental, and social world. I explore positioning by identifying and discussing issues of the latter, aspects of the social world.

The text is positioned from the point of view of the government as a voice of authority and knowledge concerning the best interests of the country, evidenced by the government serving as the subject of most of the policy. The government acts as an expert, presenting information in an all-knowing fashion. Furthermore, there are multiple references to the actions and aspirations of the government,

while references to society are presented in very generalised terms (ex. Individuals, families, society). While the government as an institution represents a particular role in society, which holds a great deal of authority, it is the semantic relationship caused by the government as the subject and primary social actor which positions the government here as the authority.

The declaration utilises first order, tacit, moral positioning. As first order positioning, the position as an authority is not challenged. The declaration makes its claims, society is obligated to act as listeners, and there is no opportunity presented to question that which is stated. The positioning is tacit in that the position of authority is assumed rather than explicitly stated. At no point does the policy document point to a particular level of agency in order to force its agenda. Furthermore, the declarative and explanatory nature of paragraphs one, two, and three serve to position the government tacitly as an expert by presenting an argument for the adoption of happiness goals and providing background information on the actions which have already been taken by the governmental body.

The moral positioning of the DHP represents the actors' obligation to act in a manner in line with the social expectations surrounding their role. The institutional moral order presented here makes clear the rights and duties of the social actors, with the government's right being to set standards for the behaviours and goals of the country, and its duties being to build a strong, cohesive society, and ensure development and economic success.

The discourse revolves around the government's expectations and their strong influence on society. The interests served by the positioning of the text are those of the government as the document explicitly states the government's goals and aspirations; however, the illocutionary effect of identifying the benefits to society and referencing the benefit to future generations. It points to a promise of prosperity and happiness for members of the society which adopts happiness and globalisation. The declarative style of writing also points to a high level of influence and agency, such that it is clear that the government is pushing society toward a particular mindset and toward behaviours which will help the government reach its stated goals. It structures the world in a manner which implies little choice on the part of society, by making generalised statements, where in fact, much of the way in which the declaration is received and acted upon by society, involves an element of choice.

Society's interests are also served, particularly in that the achievements being sought revolve around economic development. However, excluded from the text is the voice of society itself, with the textual focus falling primarily on the government. As a result, social positioning is represented here, with a perlocutionary effect of positioning society's views and perceptions as secondary to those of the government. It is not clear what society wants, particularly about the final theme of the declaration, globalisation. Globalisation is a much-debated topic as it pertains to possibility for the erosion of culture; therefore, it could be said that it is not the interests of society which are negated in the declaration, but their feelings and desires.

This negating of the desires of UAE society presents as a consequence of the positioning of the declaration. With heavy focus on government as an authority, the will of the people becomes secondary, and while the declaration does not expressly order particular behaviours, it assumes that positive behaviours will ensue. In addition, the expert nature of the positioning provides background information, but does not explicitly state what changes will be expected of society to support achievement of happiness goals. Finally, while one of the discourses of the DHP is social cohesion in the efforts toward globalisation, it is interesting that one of the consequences of the positioning of the policy may be in failing to achieve this. Representing little in the way of society's perspectives, the declaration almost goes to the point of excluding them and has the potential to alienate those who do not see globalisation as the way forward for the country.

#### *6.2.1.1.5 Social Cohesion, Globalisation, and Policy as Discourse*

According to Van Dijk (2001: p.352) "CDA represents a diverse set of approaches to studying language with explicit emphasis on socio-political concerns." It is for this reason that CDA is relevant to the understanding of policy and its effects on social actors at multiple levels. Fairclough (2001) points to 'discourse driven' social change similar to that which is indicated by the government in the DHP. It is the discourse around government goals and society's role in their achievement which is set to steer the UAE toward a more globalised position, making the desire for globalisation a key influential factor in the publication of the UAE DHP... Fairclough (2010) notes a number of positions on globalism which have been identified:

objectivism, rhetoricism, ideologism, and social constructivism. As this study relates to policy text, I look at the CDA of the policy from the position of rhetoricism and social constructivism.

Rhetoricism asserts that different discourses of globalisation can be used to make society more amenable to accepting new policy (Fairclough, 2010). We see rhetoricism as a tool used in the declaration as it acts as a policy on globalisation. It is not necessarily a palatable policy to all of the UAE, a society which maintains a strong, unified cultural identity as they represent a collectivist society where loyalty and firm cultural expectations are predominant. From the positive connotations surrounding globalism within the text, it can be inferred that social cohesion in response to the country's attempts at globalisation is an intention of the DHP.

The discourse of globalisation introduced through policy framed as happiness serves to create a foundation for its acceptance in mainstream society. The policy projects a positive view of globalisation which is then used to lend legitimacy to the actions being taken by the government as a social agent. The other position from which we can view the policy, social constructivism, focuses on how social life and forms of globalisation are socially constructed, and the causal effects discourse can have on these processes (Fairclough, 2010, p.458). Fairclough describes 'imaginary representations' of the world that can be operationalised to become a reality.

Representations and discourses of globalisation do not merely construe globalisation processes and tendencies that are happening independently; they also contribute to creating and shaping actual processes of globalisation. The UAE policy acts as a form of discourse, socially constructing the way in which society engages with the topic of globalisation. It firstly pairs the discourse of social cohesion with that of globalisation. Social cohesion discourse has become a naturalised part of UAE society; it is a common-sense expectation of the social world.

The new discourse of globalisation represents a time of change, therefore bringing hybridity into the policy interpretation as readers engage with pre and post-transformation simultaneously. The DHP discourse narrates past and present processes and makes clear a path for the future. As thoughts and behaviours from around the policy, there is an opportunity for the reality of UAE social life to be transformed into the image of global prosperity and wellbeing as described in the declaration.

This policy represents an ideology which the government seeks to disseminate within society. Presented as a declaration, it represents an institutional practice which has been naturalised. The act of making a declaration in and of itself represents a power relation which is to be maintained, and society draws upon and adheres to such policy, legitimising the authority and causing the discourse of the policy text to function ideologically (Fairclough, 2001).

### **6.3 Policy Enactment**

This section explains the results of Qualitative Media Analysis of higher education news sources and Content Analysis of LinkedIn data in order to provide a picture of the enactment of the happiness and positivity policy in the UAE. It answers two of my research: RQ3- What are the examples of displayed changes across the UAE universities that reflect the embedding the Happiness Policy? RQ4- What are the examples of displayed changes across the UAE workforce, that reflect the embedding of the Happiness Policy?

#### **6.3.1 QMA Higher Education News Findings**

Within this study, frames represent the broad thematic emphasis used to separate the way in which themes are addressed from other possibilities. Through the use of frames, content creators determine how people perceive and label information, and how the information will be discussed (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). Themes represent general meanings and the messages which content creators attempt to convey within a limited amount of space and provide the recurring ideas within the text (Altheide and Schneider, 2013). By analysing each text's individual lines and collecting data points concerning happiness, a total of 21 frames emerged; however, due to the limited articles referenced, a majority of these were sparse in content.

In particular, two frames were found most often: 'Volunteering & Giving', which appeared as a frame in six articles, and 'Celebration & Festivals', which appeared as a frame in seven articles. A total of 78 themes were found over the 43 articles.

These themes were further analysed and coded based upon their similarities and overarching concepts, and some themes were grouped more precisely as subthemes. These were condensed so that the themes fell into 28 codes, of which the four most prevalent were detailed enough on which to report: Happiness as a science, Happiness and civic engagement, Happiness as a government initiative, and Celebrations of happiness. The results section is divided into two categories, the descriptive, which summarises numerically the information present in the news sources and the timeline in which it was presented, and the interpretive, to explain and analyse the themes and frames, including evidence to support the themes, quotes, research notes, and positive descriptive words taken from the sources (Altheide and Schneider, 2013).

#### *6.3.1.1.1 Descriptive Coding*

The descriptive category consists of collated data from the media sources which could be summarised numerically. A review of each article's publication date – as shown in Table (6.4)- that from January 2016 through September 2016, there were no articles that referenced happiness; the first references to happiness were present in two articles published between October and December of 2016. Based upon this sample, the number of references to happiness increased to its highest point, with 13 of the articles mentioning happiness in the timeframe of January 2017 to March 2017. From April 2017 through March 2018, mention of happiness remained moderate, with a low point of only two articles from July 2017 through September 2017. Eight of the articles within the sample did not report a publication date and are listed in Table below as 'unknown publication date.'

Publication Timeframe	No. of Happiness news articles
Jan 2016-Mar 2016	0
Apr 2016-Jun 2016	0
Jul 2016-Sept 2016	0
Oct 2016-Dec 2016	2
Jan 2017-Mar 2017	13
Apr 2017-June 2017	5
Jul 2017- Sept 2017	2
Oct 2017- Dec 2017	6
Jan 2018-Mar 2018	7
Unknown Publication Date	8
Total	43

Table 6.4 Publications timeframe

#### 6.3.1.1.2 Interpretive Coding

The use of Altheide's protocol provided the baseline for my interpretive coding. In order to begin this process, I developed a set of interpretive coding themes based upon the focus of the platform referenced in the article. Through the coding process, more specific codes were presented, some of which were linked with the initial codes relating to government, charity, and research.

These codes were then used to extrapolate frames and themes which provided insight into the ways in which happiness policy is shaping the profiles and community engagement of Higher Education Institutions in UAE. My goal here is to focus on the characteristics of language as communication as well as give attention to contextual meanings and discover themes representative of social reality (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

Platform for use of the term Happiness	No.
University Event	24
Course	0
Workshop	7
Discussion/Talk	2
Interview	1
Announcement	4
Other	5
Total	43

Table 6.5 Platform for using the term 'Happiness.'

Table (6.5) represents the platform reported to have been used to discuss happiness within the higher education environment. These were placed into six categories based on details given in the media sources: university event, course, workshop, discussion/talk, interview, announcement, and other. The 'other' represents platforms which fell outside of traditional university formats. The vast majority of the time that happiness was reported on was in reference to university events of which reference was made in 24 of the 43 sources. From this point, there was a significant drop as only seven articles were in regard to workshops. The only category that was not represented in the media sources was that of a course, as there were no reported courses taught in reference to happiness.

The findings of this analysis, I present here by describing the themes presented and frames found in the news, striving to interact with the document to understand what is being said, how it is being communicated, for what purpose, and in what format (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

#### *6.3.1.1.3 Themes*

##### **(a) Happiness and Research**

"Happiness and research" was an embedded theme within eight of the 43 articles. The theme was referenced through the use of words such as data, science, technology, and social media. The article, "Fujairah Hackathon," for example, discussed an event in which the telecom authority would provide opportunities for you to analyse open data as a tool for innovation and economic growth. The event itself utilised the motto, "Data for Happiness."

The article, "Measuring Happiness across the UAE and in Ramadan" focused on how social media sites have become a tool with which to measure happiness levels within the general population. The discusses the first use of social media, specifically Twitter, in the UAE, to measure happiness on a large scale. Throughout the articles, a clear theme of the importance of data and research in the measurement of happiness is presented through the discussion of measuring happiness, using technology and primary research for this purpose.

##### **(b) Happiness and Civic Engagement**

Civic Engagement is presented in ten separate articles as a way to promote and increase personal and community-wide happiness. Specifically, the words associated with civic engagement in the media sources included social

responsibility, volunteering, charity, giving, and acts of kindness. One article published by the University of Sharjah has the headline, "their happiness is our happiness" and promotes collecting clothing and food and giving to the poor as part of the Holy month of Ramadan and the "Year of Giving." Another article narrates nine Emirati girls' participation in an international Coca-Cola project to empower youth by showing acts of giving to others in the community. The concept of civic engagement through volunteer work and charity is repeatedly presented as a foundation of happiness in society.

#### (c) Happiness is a government initiative

The sample of HE news articles showed that HE institutes were not immune to the actions of the government as it relates to happiness within the UAE. Six of the articles made reference to the UAE government's happiness initiative and efforts to align with it. An article about Masdar Institute and another concerning the Higher College of Technology reference the International Day of Happiness which coincides with the government's initiative.

The articles happiness which was introduced at each institution in response to the government's awareness campaign and to coincide with the International Day of Happiness. Another article out of the University of Sharjah references the 'Year of Giving,' another initiative rolled out by the UAE government in 2017 with a goal of providing support to those in need. The article links the government initiative and

the concept of giving with the idea that happiness is sensed through charity and giving.

It is no secret that the UAE government has prompted its citizens to view happiness as a goal for the country. The HE news articles make this abundantly clear. Many of them reference UAE leaders and government initiatives, such as the UAE's National Happiness & Positivity program, the "Year of Giving" and the Happiness Index. In the same discussion as happiness and positivity, the idea of government initiatives and following government leaders and governmental success.

These concepts, following government leaders and happiness for governmental success, I labelled as subthemes of happiness as a government initiative. They are represented in the talk on happiness given at Abu Dhabi University where attendees were encouraged to uphold the UAE leaders as role models and in another event by Abu Dhabi University where senior leaders have gifted the book by Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid entitled "Reflections on Happiness and Positivity," and instructed on the ways in which happiness and positivity lead to governmental excellence.

#### (d) Celebrations of Happiness

The celebration was a prevalent theme within the articles with many referencing different types of celebrations related to happiness. Nine of the articles presented

a celebration as a theme. The idea that best showcased this theme was that gathering, and socialising were key to happiness. A common similarity was that they included multiple activities, food, and a great deal of social interaction. While most of the articles concerning celebration were reporting on events which took place, one article which this theme encompassed served to promote celebration as a way in which to increase levels of happiness. The article, entitled "UAEU researchers link happiness to social interaction," refers to the happiness initiative as a 'national party' as it encourages more scientific research into how interaction can increase happiness.

A subtheme of celebrations found in the HE media was that of sharing in happiness. A repeated idea was that by engaging with others, happiness could be found. Ajman University referenced an event in which it was stated that "others happiness is your happiness" and a repeated theme is that socialising can lead to happiness, which accounts for the numerous events which included tea time, opportunities for teamwork, and creating a social life.

### **6.3.2 CA LinkedIn Data Results**

This study aims to identify frequencies in job titles, industries endorsing the happiness program, and happiness related educational qualifications. The findings are categorised into three sections: (1) Descriptive findings: which include gender analysis, Emirate of employment, position of the search term in the profile and earliest year associated with the search term; (2) Job analysis findings: including all the job-related analysis, as of the current and previous job titles and its

relationship to the search term, the nature of the business and the sectors with the most frequency of endorsing the 'happiness' policy, and finally; (3) Educational qualifications analysis: addressing the current education qualifications and its relevance to the 'happiness' job patterns across the sample.

### 6.3.2.1.1 Descriptive Findings

The results show 53% of the sample to include female profiles associated with the 'Happiness' keyword, and 45% male (the remaining 2% belonged to companies). The Emirate of employment was determined by searching the addresses of the organisation or business name in the work experience section. Dubai had the highest number of companies found where employees had job titles shifting and/or adding the term 'happiness', followed by Abu Dhabi Figure (6.1). The remaining seven emirates had one or no profiles, while 8% of the profiles belonged to companies with multiple branches across the emirates.

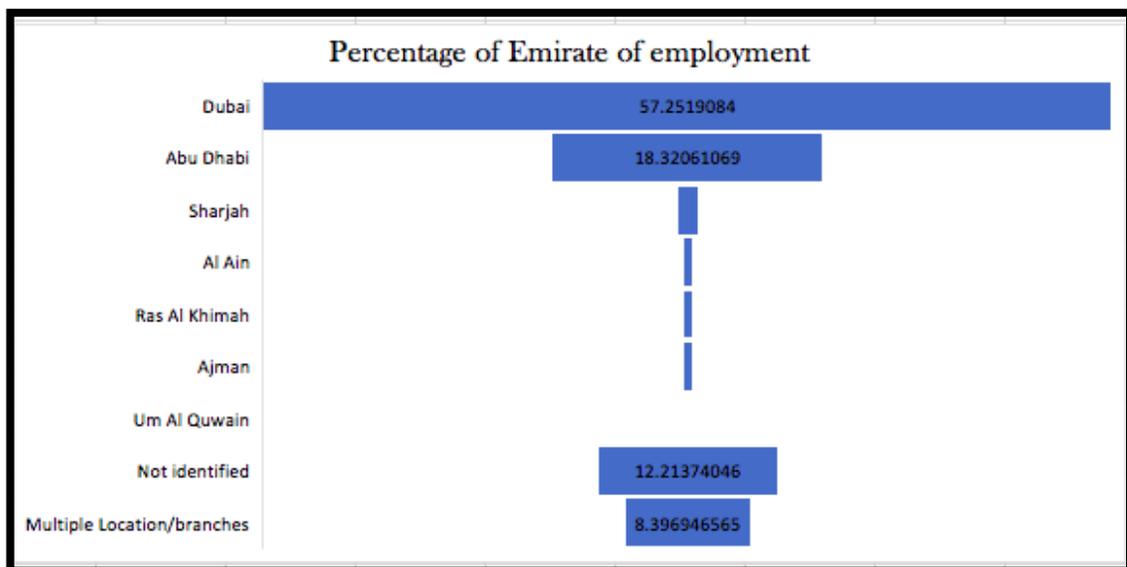


Figure 6.1 Emirate of employment

The search also revealed the position(s) of the term 'happiness' within the profiles, such that a job title with the word "happiness" could have appeared in the experience section, an educational certificate, part of a job description or business name, or profile headline quote. The most frequent use appeared in the job title (64%) and profile headline categories (21%) Figure (6.2). A total of 61 different job titles included 'happiness' across the profile sample, such as happiness and positivity officer, happiness expert, happiness ambassador, customer happiness service, etc.

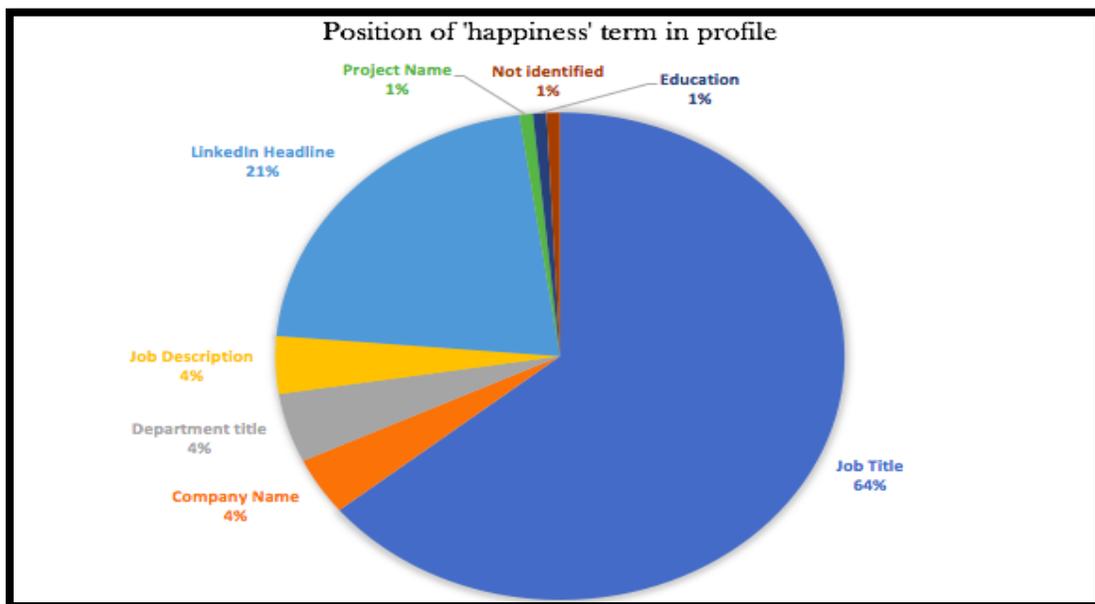


Figure 6.2 Position of 'happiness' term in profiles

The earliest year associated with happiness was 2016 - the year of the Minister's appointment - hence, data frequency was calculated as: *Prior to 2016; 2016; 2017; Early 2018*. In the years 2016 and 2017, 51% of the sample had 'happiness' added to their profiles. In the year 2018, happiness was added to profiles by only 4.5%; that is because the data collection included January and February 2018, only Figure (6.3). Further, 17% of the profile sample had no year identified as joining date, and those profiles had neither 'happiness' in the job title nor job description nor company name; instead, the keyword was merely mentioned in the profile headline, such as Leadership – Innovation – Happiness or, Project Manager – Happiness Specialist.

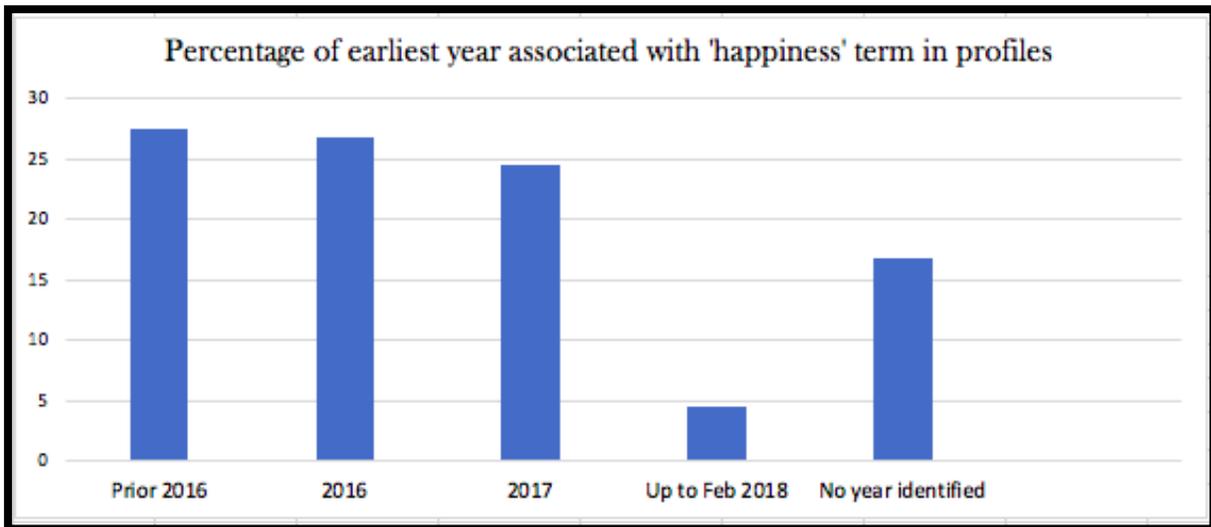


Figure 6.3 Earliest year associated with 'happiness'

#### 6.3.2.1.2 Jobs Analysis Findings

As noted, the sample revealed 61 different job titles associated with happiness across the 131 profiles. For purposes of analysis, titles were grouped into eight different codes: *Ambassador, Chief Officer, Director, Executive, Expert/Specialist, Manager, Head* and *Trainer*. Results showed the top three titles as Manager (28.5%), Chief Officer (21%) and Director (11%). The frequencies are noted in Figure (6.4).

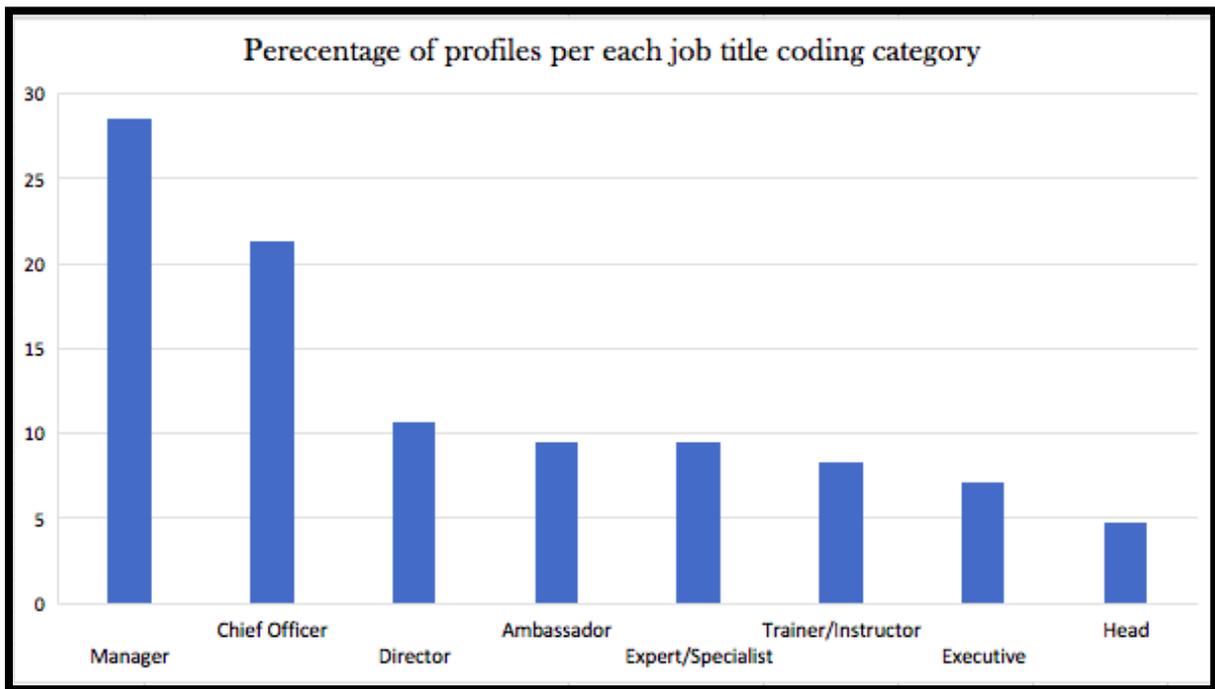


Figure 6.4 Percentage profiles per Job titles Coded group

Eight profiles did not include or mention previous job experience, while the remaining 123 profiles were coded and classified as represented in the chart below, Figure (6.5). The filtration resulted in 80 profiles out of the original 131 including 'happiness' as part of their current job title compared to their previous title. The comparison resulted in three main themes: (1) Got Promoted: two profiles

were promoted into 'happiness' titles from middle to senior/executive position; (2) Shifted away from 'Happiness': 11 profiles identified 'happiness' jobs in the past, but now reflected a different job title, such as moving from "happiness ambassador" to "real estate agent"; (3) Shifted towards 'Happiness': the 67 remaining profiles had a career shift into 'happiness.' These were coded either as a relevant or irrelevant shift.

The relevant shift meant to include all the titles that moved into the same position/field yet added 'happiness', such as moving from "Customer service manager" into "Customer happiness manager". In contrast, an irrelevant shift included jobs from which a connection between a previous position/field did not correspond to a current role, i.e., moving from a "Business manager" to "Happiness" expert.

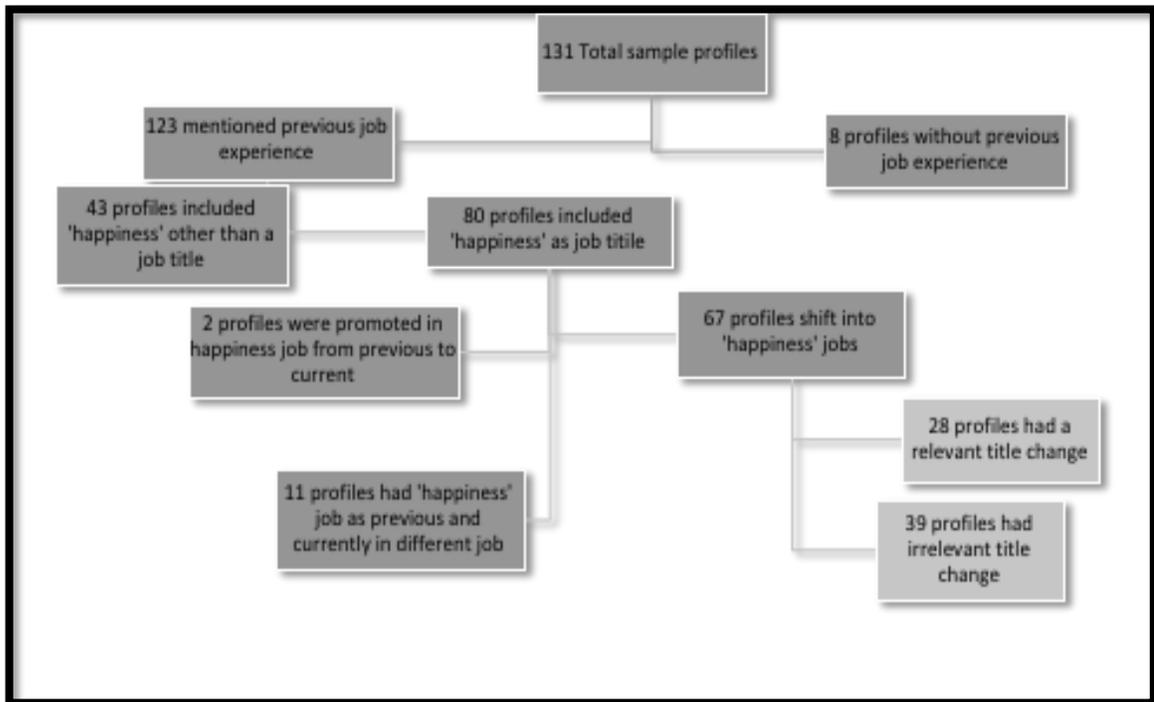


Figure 6.5 Classifying the current versus pre 'happiness' job titles

Regarding the nature of the business, the search identified the type of work in which 'happiness' was used as a descriptive term and whether it was a public or private entity or charity. 58% of the profiles belonged to private sector employees, while 40% belonged to public sector employees. The work industry coding included six main categories: business consultancy, education, financial/banking, government, personal development and 'other' sectors. The 'other' category represented 32% of the sample and included minor job types that occurred only once, such as one profile representing the entertainment business, real estate, and catering. The two main industries represented the government sector (24%) and education (16%).

Job descriptions were also analysed, when found, for all profiles mentioning 'happiness' as a job title resulting in a sample of 84 profiles. Of these, 56 had no job description. The remaining 28 included an 'Employee/corporate' theme such as Happiness and PR manager, Chief Happiness enabler, and Employee happiness officer, as well as a 'Customer theme' such as Customer happiness executive, Customer social responsibility and happiness, or Customer happiness consultant.

All job descriptions that included a 'happiness' key term or descriptions for 'happiness' job titles were screened and coded. Job descriptions were associated with: (1) engagement, (2) voice, and (3) empowerment; while customer job description themes were associated with: (1) complaints, (2) enquiries and (3) satisfaction. Job descriptions which mentioned the development of policies or the UAE vision all belonged to the public government work sector such as: "develop customer happiness policies, communicate customer happiness standards", "develop people's happiness strategy" or "implement a national program of happiness, coordinate between internal happiness councils".

#### **6.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter outlined the findings of this study as they relate to the research questions presented. The findings have been grouped based upon the type of data

collected and its role in CDA, QMA, and CA analysis processes. These findings represent the initial takeaways from the analysis process.

The following chapter presents a discussion and synthesis of these findings and how, together, they present a picture of UAE society's interaction with the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity.

## **7 Discussion and Analysis**

### **7.1 Introduction**

While the previous chapter presented the findings of this study, this chapter brings together those findings with reference to the policy implementation and enactment theories as explored in the theoretical chapter. It utilises the multi-methods research approach's results coupled with knowledge gained from the literature review of happiness research, the UAE, and policy to answer the research questions about the UAE's happiness policy influences, intentions and enactment

### **7.2 Policy Influential factors**

The CDA conducted as part of this research, aims to address influential factors that directed the DHP policy development. The CDA does not attempt to identify influential factors pertaining to the full implementation of the happiness program. Based upon the policy reviewed through the CDA process, I identify the country's efforts toward globalism as a distinguished policy influence of the DHP (Fairclough, 2010). The UAE has made it clear that they intend to be a significant actor on the world stage, and in order to do so, they must have a pronounced international presence. The concept of a globalised economy is emphasised through the language used within the text of the DHP. Globalism represents only a single influential factor that could be garnered from the policy's succinct content at hand.

Considering the sources of data utilised in this research, it is important to note that policy influences can only be partially addressed, as the data primarily provides insight into the policy's implementation. I surmise that a primary influence for the development of the DHP is UAE society and government's western driven nature. The UAE participates in policy borrowing and is highly informed by the UK; therefore, I feel that the UK played a significant role in influencing the UAE's happiness policy development (Hardoon et al., 2020).

The UK began a significant discussion around happiness and well-being before 2010 with the use of a Happiness Indicator and the Labour Government's use well-being measures to eradicate poverty (Murphy, 2016). In addition, the UK saw the introduction of the ONS Wellbeing Survey in 2010 (Knight, 2016) and increases in happiness discussions presented in the media during this same time frame (Frawley, 2012). A short time later, we witnessed the introduction of happiness elements into UAE government and society: The Happiness Index in the 2014 and appointment of a Minister of Happiness and the NPHP in 2016.

It is highly possible that this shift in the UK, a country on which the UAE models much of its practices and policies, influenced the attention given to happiness by policymakers and ultimately influenced the final development of the UAE happiness policy. Other factors likely influenced the theme of globalisation in the policy as well. These include the country's rapid growth, competition, and the need to increase tourism and industry. However, these influences are merely a conclusion based on the synthesis of knowledge of the country's Vision 2021 and

plans to improve multiple areas, including societal cohesion, education, healthcare, the environment, and infrastructure (Vision-2021, 2010).

### **7.3 Policy Inferential Intentions**

I primarily used the CDA process to identify the UAE policy's inferred intentions around happiness and positivity. The intentions of the DHP represented more than just a desire for a happy country. However, these intentions become more or less apparent depending upon the reader and the extent to which one seeks to analyse the text.

#### **7.3.1 What does the declaration say from the general reader point of view?**

Ball (1994) and Ozga (2000) assert that policy as text represents the final product of multiple influences and agendas and that text is contested and understood based upon how it is received by different actors (Ball, 2015), who are in this case, the general reader. To discuss how the DHP is seen as text and understood by general readers it is useful to look at societal actions which were in play when the DHP was presented. Before introduction of the DHP, there was extensive government and media discussion from around the topic of happiness. This ranged from the 2010 introduction of Vision 2020 with its focus on societal well-being, to statements made by the ruler about improving happiness, the incorporation of happiness into the National Agenda and appointment of a Minister of Happiness in 2016, and Happiness Summits in 2017.

Each of these contributes to the context through which the general reader would consume the DHP. Coupled with the overarching happiness theme of the declaration like; the DHP reads as an explanation of what the government is doing to improve the lives of its citizens. This would support information inferred by citizens as they navigate the government actions around happiness. The tone of the declaration is formal, but positive and highlights actions the government is taking, and even goes to the point of complimenting the reader as a member of society. It introduces the country's ultimate, which to the general reader appears simply as a life of prosperity and well-being. In addition, in using words such as custom and culture, the declaration speaks to the readers' connection with the traditions the society holds dear and implies that this is something the government is striving to maintain.

### **7.3.2 What does the declaration say from the discourse analyst's point of view?**

When sought through discourse analysis, the interpretation of policy intention is complex and multi-layered (Yanow, 1995; Bowe et al., 1992) and policy as discourse often serves to conceal intentions and assert power and authority (Foucault, 2002). Therefore, the DHP policy as discourse is much more complex to the discourse analyst than it may appear to the general reader. Firstly, it is a discourse that does not mask its power and authority in being a declarative statement about how society will function. Secondly, the discourse comes from

extensive, unchallenged, knowledge concerning where the country is, what is best for the country, and how goals will be achieved. This correlates with Ball's (1994) assertion that discourse is primarily focused around who is allowed to speak, when, and with what authority.

As the speaker is making a declaration, society has little voice at this stage to contest the message. The language within the discourse, specifically the heavy use of action verbs and no use of modal verbs, is used with the intention of telling the reader that the actions are already taking place and presents the concepts as a firm decision by the government. As the government holds power here, society is limited in its ability to speak out or act without the government's direction itself.

The most obvious difference between the policy's reading by an analyst vs. the lay person presents in the final two paragraphs of the document. Here, what appears to the general reader as complimentary language, appears to the analyst as a directive for current and future social behaviours. As described by (Muntigl, 2000), it places the discourse within a hortatory role as it encourages particular actions. Here we also see the "bigger picture" (Ozga, 2000), as the policymakers have chosen to exclude the use of language which points explicitly to globalisation. However, when analysed thematically, this is the primary focus of this part of the discourse. Ball (2006) points to globalisation as having an extensive capacity to relate to many objectives. The final paragraph's globalisation discourse represents what the government has identified as a solution to social and economic challenges. The declaration clarifies that while the customs and traditions of the

past still hold importance, change is the way forward through global connections, increased industry, and economic development.

In this manner, the DHP serves to reiterate the country's Vision 2021 plans' ideas. Rather than using economic development as a means to increase happiness, which has been shown to have only a limited effect on sustainable well-being (Easterlin, 2013; Clark and Senik, 2010), the DHP points to the use of happiness to increase development. This leads to questions concerning whether this can create a cyclical effect as people become happier, globalisation occurs, causing more basic needs to be met, and therefore more increases in happiness to be seen (Duncan, 2007: p. 97). Besides, globalisation and its synergy with Vision 2021 can provide two things that Easterlin (2013b, p. 8) proposes can increase long-term happiness: sufficient employment and policies safety net policies, again emphasising what could create a cycle of happiness maintenance.

The decision to avoid language which expressly mandates a move toward globalisation also represents the use of 'soft power' (Mulderrig, 2011), a means of minimising opposition. The choice of prompting and creating possibilities through soft power coincides with the encouraging and positive tone of the declaration as a whole. Ultimately the UAE is keen to create a particular image through which the world will see it. Through this policy text, UAE society is being persuaded to act to fulfil the government's wishes. In short, the government is attempting to act as a guardian to facilitate certain lifestyle behaviours; however, it is important to also note that no specific instruction is given to society concerning the government's

intentions, how to become happier, or how to contribute to the happiness or globalisation goals, possibly creating a gap between policy and practice, a notion supported in the QMA and CA portions of this study.

## **7.4 Policy Enactment**

The use of QMA confirmed that the Happiness and Positivity policy is being enacted within Higher Education and presented ways in which the policy's principles have filtered into public discourses in UAE universities. These discourses and enactment are represented by two prominent frames found in the QMA of HE News.

### **7.4.1 Enactment Examples Across the UAE universities**

Volunteering and Charitable giving was a prominent way to frame the concept of happiness in the HE media. The news sources referenced collective giving, charity, volunteer work, and community work with positive correlations to happiness in society. Within this frame, volunteering and charitable giving are treated as actions that promise benefits related to increased happiness and long-term positive effects for the general community. The frame places the responsibility on individuals to take express action to develop and share in happiness. Within this frame, there is a clear emphasis on the importance of spreading happiness through giving of either small gifts or of one's time.

Celebrations and Festivals, places focus on happiness as it is often viewed at its most basic and fleeting level. Rather than focusing on happiness as it relates well-being, this frame presents happiness as something that can be created through the planning of parties and events, or the socialisation that comes about during these events. This frame focuses on positive elements of building happiness through superficial means. Besides, the frame outlines ways in which celebration can create happy moments by including holidays, games, socialisation, food and drink. The media news sources reference multiple opportunities to participate in events labelled as happiness focused but upon further investigation are rooted in fun and immediate improvements in mood rather than building upon happiness as a state well-being.

This research's media sources represented a range of information related to happiness as the topic is taking root in HE in the UAE. Most significantly, the articles make clear that the HE community has attached itself to the happiness initiative introduced by the government and this primarily has been done through the hosting of events and workshops framed as celebrations and aimed at increasing awareness about the need to build personal happiness in every area of life.

Both of these frames draw upon elements which have been shown to increase happiness, particularly, happiness increasing activities through socialising, intentional actions and changes in behaviours through volunteering, acts of charity (Lyubomirsky and Layous, 2013), and acts of kindness (Dillard et al. 2008). In this

regard, the HE News does represent a small element of enactment which may benefit overall increases in happiness as Lambert et al. (2018b) notes concerted efforts toward changes can influence well-being.

While the HE news referenced a great deal of action surrounding happiness in the UAE, there were considerable missing components considering the government's happiness initiative's large scale. One glaring omission from the HE news is the absence of a course which addresses happiness. There also were no reference to courses being offered in the future at any university within the department of psychology, school of life science, or otherwise across ten of the country's top universities. As happiness has become such a focus for the government and the country's community, it is surprising that no specific courses on the topic of happiness have presented themselves, despite research which points to the efficacy of such courses on overall well-being (Guilherme and de Freitas, 2016; Lyubomirsky and Layous, 2013; Layous et al., 2012; Romo-Gonzalez et al., 2013).

What is possibly the most jarring omission in the news sources is anything that points to a thorough understanding of the UAE's happiness initiative, its ultimate goal, and how society can achieve happiness, in lieu of immediate feelings of happiness. It lacks the ongoing programs or courses which address happiness at a deeper level, leave one to consider if the happiness mentioned here is being understood on a grand scale. The HE news sources also lack any expert commentary on the subject of happiness. None of the talks or events appears are

ongoing programs that could lead to a better understanding of happiness and happiness science.

Many of the events and discussions held promoted the use of happiness research and data analysis as a way to build a happier society; however, there was little evidence in those or other articles, that research is at the forefront of the actions of those engaged in attempts to build happiness in the community. To the contrary, much of the reporting appears to be based on events which are more marketing ploys than actual happiness promotion. This coincides with the conversation around the business of happiness and the fact that it has become a multimillion-dollar industry (Gunnell, 2004).

Many of the articles which held headlines related to happiness were very loosely connected to the topic. For example, one article reported on a ceremony to honour Dr Salama, Dean of College of Mass Communication for his active role in the civilisations' happiness campaign; however, this awareness campaign disseminated safety tips and cultural & social norms to tourists, bearing little relevance to happiness and well-being.

This leads one to question how personal ideas around what happiness means, are shaping the enactment and overall views of the initiative in the UAE, an oft noted problem which presents in research (Olssen, 2006; Ball, 1994; Trowler, 2003; Fanghenel, 2007; Ozga, 2000; Saarinen, 2008) as social actors play an influential role in policy enactment. Furthermore, the content of the articles shows little

correlation between happiness research findings and the actions being taken within the HE community to promote happiness. While this is addressed through some of the articles which mentioned relaxation, meditation, and exercise, there is little evidence from the HE media that any of these events or recommendations are grounded in research or expert opinion.

#### **7.4.2 Enactment Examples across the UAE workforce**

From the LinkedIn data results used to determine the visible impact of the NPHP and subsequent NPHW on the UAE job market and corresponding educational qualifications, a number of insights were gained. The descriptive data revealed an equal gender exposure among the UAE workforce in implementing the NPHW; while the location data confirms the earlier discussion about Dubai taking the nation's lead in the program's implementation, followed by the capital of Abu Dhabi. In light of these findings, a number of questions arise. In reference to the job market as a whole, what is the motivation behind formal job title changes? If companies change titles to include happiness or positivity, is it in an effort to align with government mandates for the public sector, to actually boost happiness, or simply to increase profits?

It can be argued that happiness has been co-opted and is being used as an instrument by capitalism solely in the pursuit of profit (Davies, 2015) as businesses are looking to happiness as a way to increase profits as consulting, books, movies and classes on self-improvement has become a multimillion dollar industry (Gunnell, 2004). This may be why some companies are turning to happiness and

so heavily marketing and advertising it. This move also begs whether true organisational happiness can come about as a result of these motivations.

Another question that can be asked is to what extent these employees have been influenced, perhaps by direct instruction from employers or government bodies, contributing to the happiness agenda, or by the steady promotion of happiness and positivity throughout the UAE? The UAE's strategies to increase happiness have not been single tiered, and there has been the widespread public promotion of its initiatives and plans. For example, with the goal of becoming one of the top five happiest countries in the world and announcement of the Minister of Happiness and Wellbeing (Baldwin, 2017), coupled with the numerous initiatives previously discussed, a possibility exists that the personal understanding of the meaning and effect of happiness as well as increases in workplace happiness discussions as part of formal company and/or government initiatives have had an influence in such job description shifts. It is possible that these account for the increased use of happiness in job titles even when employees are not officially employed in a happiness role.

The year associated with the 'happiness' search term revealed that 57% of the users added 'happiness' into their profiles, either as a job title, business name, or job description post-February 2016. This conveys a high probability that the increasing shift reflected the ministerial appointment. Given the Minister's advocacy for the incorporation of happiness and positivity into the workplace as a primary pillar of the program (Schwartzstein et al., 2018), a number of additional

insights can be drawn. Nine profiles had the word 'positivity' accompanied with 'happiness' in the title, seven of which belonged to the public sector. While the Ministerial mandate encompasses both happiness as well as beginning, its early work admittedly lent itself much more towards a focus on happiness alone. This may be due in part to the common use of the word 'happy' as one the general public can readily understand in today's vernacular (Duncan, 2014).

However, positivity is also an element of the initiative. The nine profiles may have been informed by the published book 'Reflections on Happiness and Positivity' written by H.H. Sheikh Mohamed Bin Rashid, which quickly sold 20,000 copies and prompted a subsequent order for 20,000 more to be printed. There were also clear directives to allocate a "Chief Happiness and Positivity Officer" and positivity councils throughout all government entities. The word positivity, as part of the government's overall implementation process and initiative, has frequently been noted in government programs and websites available to the public and business entities, which might account for its increased use.

The work sector analysis further showed an even distribution in title changes between the public and private sector. These results support an increase in the number of UAE companies, including happiness in job roles or descriptions in line with the January 2017 Happiness and Positivity Program for the Private Sector (Positivity, 2017). Further, among the 52 profiles of employees working in the public sector, 32 of them are for government positions, such as ministries. This

corresponds with the directive given through the NPHP that changes in job titles be made within the public sector to reflect the country's happiness objectives.

From the 84 profiles having 'happiness' related job titles, only one explicitly mentioned 'happiness' education, quoting "The national happiness & positivity program certificate," which is a certified program offered by the NPHW to all government-appointed Chief Happiness and Positivity officers. Also noteworthy is that this profile did not mention happiness in its job title or profile headline.

With respect to the educational qualifications of the remaining 83 profiles, 28 profiles that included 'happiness' as a profile headline did not, in fact, point to any work or education supporting the term. Only four had a semblance of happiness education conferrals in their qualifications background with life science degrees including, Master of Educational Psychology, Master of Occupational Health, Certified Life Coach and Bachelor of Counselling and Psychology. While it is possible that these conferrals required an element of education in positive psychology, it is important to note that much of psychology education has historically centred on the negative or solving mental health problems and these programs do not explicitly represent training in positive psychology. These results indicate that HE has had a minimal role in shaping happiness qualifications needed for roles currently available in the UAE workforce.

## **7.5 Policy Implementation**

The CDA garnered that there were specific policy intentions within the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity: Increased Happiness, Social Cohesion, and Globalisation. Comparing these intentions to the overall enactment of the policy in the UAE's HE and workforce provides insight into how policy intentions and policy outcomes can often vary greatly. The next paragraphs answer to my fifth research question elucidating the intended and unintended outcomes; giving an overall sense of the implementation process that the UAE NPHP went through till the moment. It also tries to carefully position the policy implementation onto the success scale with respect to the data findings.

#### **7.5.1 The policy implementation's intended and unintended outcomes**

The Declaration of Happiness and Positivity presents as a mandate; however, an assessment of the language used within represents an explanation of the country's plans and a prompting for citizens to act in accordance with the declaration. At no point does the DHP outline that social cohesion and globalisation are its intended goals, nor does it specify clear understandings and actions which must be had and taken in order to reach these goals. As a result, the declaration has given authority to the actors, society, to address uncertainties in the implementation of the policy (Ball, 1997) and have created a window for diversion, misalignment, and misunderstanding of the direction the policy will take (Trowler, 2003).

Based upon the many elements put in place to support the happiness initiative, it is clear that the UAE government views the happiness initiative as integral in shaping the future of UAE society; however, it appears that the phenomenological

approach taken to implementation, whereby the policy enactment process is being left in large part in the hands of social actors, has caused both intended and unintended consequences and may not have the level of meaningful impact on society as intended.

The results of this study show that there is an implementation gap (Trowler, 2003; Hill and Varone, 2017) between the happiness policy's intentions and its outcomes. The media analysis shows that the happiness policy is unlikely to be shaping the profiles and community engagement of HE institutions in the UAE in a meaningful way. In the HE news, this is evidenced by the lack of happiness experts leading events and workshops, as well as the lack of substance-related to happiness goals.

This lack of focus on expert knowledge and courses which focus on building and understanding happiness is further supported by the lack of reference in the LinkedIn data to official degrees or certifications in happiness, supporting the inference that these are not being offered in UAE HE. In this respect, an intended outcome of the happiness policy which has been achieved is that there are a regular conversation and a countrywide focus on happiness and happiness events which attempt to address the policy mandates; however, the unintended outcome is that these events represent action with minimal understanding of what well-being is and how to achieve it.

Furthermore, it appears that the happiness policy is being communicated; however, there is little understanding of what kind of happiness the government is

encouraging or how to achieve it. Varelius (2004) points to the multiple perspectives on what happiness means to individuals, eudemonic as in Stewart (2014), sustainable happiness as in O'Brien (2010) well-being explained in Seligman (2003) or simply feeling good as of Layard (2005). Ball (1994), Trowler (2003), and Fanghanel (2007) note that values, beliefs, experiences, and attitudes contribute to how policy is approached by actors and to the unpredictable nature of the policy's enactment.

The DHP represents the manner in which the government is supporting the happiness initiative; but does not expressly state any actions which citizens should take to understand the kind of happiness being sought. As currently reported, the happiness events and workshops in HE represent happiness on a superficial level, and with the repetition of happiness in titles, even when there is no link to the concept in the event, as well as the overuse of celebrations, games, and activities, the discourse around happiness indicates that it is being linked more with marketing attempts than an attempt to increase societal well-being. This coincides with LinkedIn profiles which utilise happiness titles with no true connection to role descriptions which increase overall well-being of employees. Therefore, an unintended outcome of the policy is seen through the HE enactment and LinkedIn data, which point to a lack of common understanding around what happiness is and what it means to build happiness. Once again, we see that there is action without a thorough understanding of the concept being promoted.

The omissions found within the HE enactment of the happiness policy and the LinkedIn content analysis represent at some level, a form of creative non-implementation (Ball, 1994), as implementers incorporate the concept of happiness in HE and the workforce with little understanding of how the policy can be implemented in order to affect real change. While the government has created programs to develop happiness across the country, it appears that the policy itself, which offers little guidance on how it should be enacted, has had a greater impact on behaviours than the programs which need time to be cultivated and grown in order for them to have a broad, significant impact. Despite this, we see here an example of an intended outcome. The significant impact on behaviours shows that the society is coming together behind the goal to increase happiness, and in effect, the policy has promoted social cohesion as people work together and participate in activities in order to reach a common goal.

It is also likely that the DHP policy intentions of increased happiness and societal cohesion are being achieved through the enactment of the happiness policy, as there is evidence in the HE news of significant social interaction around charity and giving. These particular activities directly support a more cohesive society as they focus on kindness and mutual support, ideals which are greatly valued within UAE society. In addition, while there may not be a thorough understanding of the deeper elements of happiness and well-being, the mere existence of events around the concept brings attention to happiness as a goal and the actions being taken do have the potential to increase happiness at some level, even if minute.

In regard to the workforce, it appears that businesses are aligning with government directives and the overall happiness initiative, by appointing employees to happiness positions even while their understanding of what the roles entail is still minimally developed, and supporting the creative non-implementation. Therefore, it appears that the happiness policy has had a little meaningful effect on the educational or business sector and an unintended outcome of the policy and its supporting resources may be that roles are being created and filled by employees who lack the necessary education and training to properly promote happiness within the workplace.

From the results of this study's CDA, QMA, and CA, it is difficult to surmise how the intention of globalisation is being acted upon as the study does not encounter data directly related to the country's gains in prosperity or global influence. As globalisation was not anticipated as an intention of the DHP, none of the data sources chosen for analysis directly correlate to this concept;

Not specifically identified to society as a goal, steps toward globalisation are being witnessed through government actions and programs that support community participation around a common goal and social cohesion. While this takes place, there is a simultaneously indicated gap between the policy and its implementation. There is no acknowledgement of globalisation in the analysis of HE news or LinkedIn content, meaning that there could be an increased focus on this policy intention, speeding the likelihood of its successful achievement.

### **7.5.2 The policy implementation's success**

The UAE's DHP policy produced both intended and unintended outcomes. Intended outcomes include social cohesion, witnessed in the concerted actions of multiple sectors to address the happiness policy mandates and increased attention to creating a happier society, witnessed through workforce changes and extensive examples of events and education directed at increasing happiness and ways to increase happiness. Unintended outcomes include a lack of understanding of what happiness means in the policy's context and misguided actions due to that lack of understanding. As a result, it is difficult to judge whether the policy's implementation was a success.

Following the dissecting model of policy success, I feel that the policy best represents conflicted success at this policy implementation point. It is important to note that this is only a preliminary suggestion based upon the limited data in hand. As the policy implementation progresses, a more definite assessment may be made; however, the policy meets the criteria of conflicted success in multiple ways.

In line with the interpretivist approach taken to this research, I follow the anti-foundationalism view of policy success which views success as a matter of judgement and interpretation. As multiple actors are involved in policy implementation, there will be multiple views of what success is and is not. Therefore, the anti-foundationalism approach recognises interpretations of success (McConnell, 2010b).

Besides, in evaluating success, we must ask to whom the success is attributed. In this case and from an objective point of view, it is clear that the UAE government has succeeded in implementing its happiness policy and maintaining buy-in from its citizens. This represents a degree of success for the government. Citizens concerned with increasing their overall being have been introduced to more data well-being, and have been given opportunities to participate in happiness promoting activities. This interpretation of a success factor implies success for the general population.

Looking at the three dimensions of policy success, process, programme, and political, I find that the UAE's policy implementation represents conflicted success for each of these. Particular features of conflicted success include continuity of the policy with little to no rethink of norms, general support from proponents, and viewing conflicted success as a position on a continuum from durable success, they generally do what they aim to do. They are capable of outlasting criticism (McConnell, 2010b). The UAE's DHP currently meets all of these criteria as to date, and the policy is still in effect, it is supported by UAE society and government, and has not been reworked in any fundamental way. Furthermore, it meets the objective criteria of meeting, at least to some extent, its inferential intentions of social cohesion and to some extent, increased happiness as UAE society has rallied around its cause.

Again, as the policy is a living document and implementation is still in progress, the policy implementation may present more features which legitimise it as a more

concrete form of success. However, as is the case with multiple policy researchers (McConnell, 2010b: p. 18), I do not feel that there is a clear delineation between policy success and failure; policy can have degrees of success and failure and may be deemed successful in some areas and a failure in others, particularly depending upon the subjective view of the researcher.

As noted in the literature, the UAE government produced a guide for policy development and implementation. To determine the success of the DHP from the UAE perspective, I look specifically to the features of the good policy outlined in the guide. These features state that the policy should be Forward-Looking, Outward-Looking, Joined-up and Integrated, Creative and Innovative, People-Centric and Inclusive, Evidence-Based, Measurable, Efficient and Cost-Effective, Monitored, Evaluated and Formally Reviewed, and Consulted and Communicated (Sayess, 2018).

The primary areas in which the policy succeeds are in that it is forward-looking and integrated. By including goals that affect the general well-being of UAE society and the country's economic advancement and global standing, the policy intention represents a desire to improve the lives of the country's citizens. The policy presents a more muddled level of success in its simplicity and succinctness, which does not allow for clear, measurable results or transparency in the evaluation and formal review, particularly because the policy does not expressly outline these as elements of the policy.

## **7.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter discusses the findings of each phase of this trajectory study, synthesising the results by reflecting on the policy's influences, intentions, enactment, and effects as inferred from the enactment stage of the trajectory. The policy effects portion of this chapter outlines what was abstracted from the previous stages, particularly that there is a significant policy implementation gap between the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity's intentions and effects and evidence of creative non-implementation.

The next chapter summarises the outcomes of this study, offering conclusions and implications for happiness policy research.

## **8 Conclusion**

### **8.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, I discussed my research findings concerning my research questions around the UAE's happiness policy. This chapter concludes this study by offering a summary of the issues raised by these findings. Besides, this chapter identifies the implications of this study for further research and policy creation and implementation, while also considering the study's contributions to knowledge.

### **8.2 Summary of research outcomes**

This study's outcomes suggest a significant implementation gap between the intentions of the UAE Declaration of Happiness and Positivity policy and how it is manifesting in UAE society. The policy appears to have succumbed to the causes of implementation gaps noted by Yanow (1995) and Hill & Varone (2017), specifically oversimplification and lack of understanding. The term, happiness, as noted in (Lambert and Pasha-Zaidi, 2019), is too narrow and gives individuals the perception that they must be in a perpetual state of positivity and optimism, which is nearly impossible in today's fast-paced societies. By bringing to light the causes of this implementation gap, this research brings new understanding to how happiness policy can be utilized and even misunderstood based upon how it is communicated and implemented.

This claim is made because while the UAE's intentions toward increased happiness, social cohesion, and globalization were well-intended, the policy's delivery caused a form of creative non-implementation (Ball, 1994) to develop within the education sector and the workforce. As individuals acted upon their understanding of the policy's goals and expectations, an echo effect likely occurred, evidenced by the multitude of similarities in how the policy is enacted. As in the secondary adjustment concept, the policymakers here had little control over this implementation process, or its intended and unintended outcomes (Braun et al., 2011).

This echo of creative non-implementation is problematic as significant resources have been devoted to developing the happiness agenda. However, a lack of understanding of eudemonic happiness and overall well-being has led to actions that are unlikely to increase the country's overall state of happiness. Furthermore, the unclear description of the policy's intention has left UAE society with only a partial understanding of how the happiness policy aligns with the country's Vision 2021 and quietly voiced intention of globalization, leaving them unable to fully participate in this element of the discourse.

By incorporating an understanding of happiness into happiness policy, we potentially move the phenomenological approach to policy implementation from one with a multitude of unexpected outcomes, to one with a more defined path by which the likelihood of achieving policy intention is greatly increased. This is argued

because as awareness builds around the meaning of happiness, so can the actions that develop around the policy (Bok, 2010b; Lambert et al., 2018b). The focus then shifts from merely meeting the policymakers' demands to understanding the reasons why action should be taken and how success can be achieved, thereby creating more meaningful and useful implementation processes.

Importantly, this research also brings to bear the need for strategically utilizing instrumentation (Honig, 2006) and capacity (Caena, 2014) in the policy implementation process. While the UAE's happiness policy and programs present as instruments to ensure implementation, it is also important to note the need for a layered approach to offering an in-depth understanding of policy topics. That timing and manner be considered in the use of these instruments.

The commitment of the UAE's highest-ranking government officials to committing resources to the development of the happiness initiative points to a large capacity for success and moving forward, could have a significant positive impact on the achievement of its goals; however, there is little evidence of a cultural contextualization having been applied in the development of the happiness initiative, and this must be addressed to ensure that Western replications of positive psychology are not put forth in a manner which is misaligned with the UAE's culture and perception of happiness (Lambert and Pasha-Zaidi, 2019). A bottom-up approach to further policy development, whereby a more participatory process beginning with a consultation followed by identification, and then the creation of policy, would represent a more progressive approach to happiness

policy enactment (Lambert et al., 2019), and help bridge the divide between the UAE's government's intentions, and the outcomes witnessed in society.

Furthermore, based upon the government actions taken in the implementation of this happiness policy, specifically the program's change in name from the Declaration of Happiness and Positivity to the Declaration of Happiness and Wellbeing, coupled with the many government initiatives to support the policy, and the increasingly robust format of the happiness website, it is clear that the implementation of this policy has come with its challenges and has presented as a learning process. Additions and changes to the initiative have come forth, signalling that the government is revisiting the policy as it is put into practice. As a result, despite the implementation gap found through this research, the UAE government's approach to constant development and improvement has the potential to steer the happiness initiative back toward its original intentions.

### **8.3 Contribution to knowledge**

As highlighted in Chapter 3 of this study, happiness science related to policy is a growing field of study, much of which is confined to understanding how happiness can be increased. To date, one of the few sources of large-scale research on happiness policy comes from the Bhutan initiative (Murphy, 2016), leaving an unexplored space as it pertains to countrywide happiness initiatives. Previously, exploring happiness policy outcomes has focused primarily on the use of wellbeing surveys (Veenhoven, 2019; Huang, 2010). This manner of exploring happiness

policy and phenomena tends to be associated with measuring society's happiness levels, providing little insight into how societal actors understand and contribute to the enactment of the policy itself. Using this approach, policy success tends to be attributed to the subjective answers reported by actors.

This study's outcomes provide an alternative view and measurement of the impact and success of happiness policy on society. As this study looks at the policy alongside its visible enactment and outcomes as viewed through education and workforce changes, it provides a wider view of changes by tracking their beginnings and specific actions which have taken place following the policy's introduction. This new, more holistic framework for assessing policy implementation is useful because it encourages policymakers to look at each element of policy as it is created, considering what knowledge will be brought to bear in its reception and implementation, and how these can be addressed early on in the policy creation policy so that policy intentions are likely to be met and implementation gaps are decreased.

This study also contributes to the literature by reporting on phenomenon and policy creation and enactment from an Arab country's perspective. Viewing these elements from this perspective is important as increased globalization and the Arab world's economic development requires the inclusion of multiple perspectives on policy and societal action. In addition, it offers a window into how varying cultural elements can influence understandings of policy and subsequent behaviours. As the perspective of Arab countries is currently underexplored, it is hoped that this

study will prompt increased research into happiness and development initiatives throughout the region.

#### **8.4 Study limitations**

A possible limitation of this study is its use of English language texts as its primary data source. All data collection is from English language text, including the UAE declaration policy and the Higher Education institutions' media texts. While Arabic is the UAE's official and native language, English is prominently used in media, education, and business. According to a linguistics professor at the American University of Sharjah, it falls within the top five languages used throughout the UAE (Constantine and Al Lawati, 2007).

The prevalence of English language use in the UAE, I believe, validates its use within the realm of discourse and social science studies related to the UAE. Schneider (2013) reflects on the challenge of conducting discourse analysis to translated text and calls for the use of original language materials to properly uncover how politics work through language. Correspondingly, my current data is not translated; although the authors may not be native speakers, it is originally published in the English language.

The English language is heavily used across the UAE due to the massive number of expatriates. It is treated as an international language and is taught with a standardized framework across all UAE schools K-12 and Higher Education instead of merely being taught as a second language in many other countries.

Another limitation of the study is in its use of LinkedIn profiles as a data source. In particular, while the profiles provided information on individual job titles and work sectors, the amount of information provided from one profile to the next was inconsistent. As a result, this analysis can only give summarised findings and development of questions based upon the information that is missing. While these questions could be useful in developing further research, in order for an analysis to offer more than a summative result, in-depth interviews would need to be conducted with the profile owners and others who hold the job titles found therein.

Finally, a limitation of CDA is the perception that there is significant space within the research for critical bias. This can be witnessed when researchers politicize CDA rather than reporting on thorough analysis. As a result, Wodak (2000) proposes triangulation as a method which can be used to reduce this risk; this involves the use of interdisciplinary and mixed-methods approaches and the use of multiple sources of empirical data.

## **8.5 Implications for policy and practice**

The primary implication for policy and practice which this research brings to light is the need for policymakers to acknowledge the attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and experiences which are brought to the implementation process by the enactors of policy Ball (1994); Trowler (2003); Fanghanel (2007). This is important because as policy presents as discourse, it serves as a living document, leaving its enactment subject to understanding those whom it affects. How actors understand the policy

and its subject matter determines how the policy is approached and the extent to which the implementation is successful.

A limited understanding of the foundation of happiness and wellbeing means that actors cannot implement the policy in a manner that brings about meaningful change. This particular issue can be addressed by integrating policy and education by integrating courses that teach these foundations at all levels of education. Furthermore, creating these courses alongside the creation of policy would provide a balanced approach to identifying intentions and preferred outcomes, thereby improving the likelihood of its success.

Another area where this study impacts the attention it gives to guiding the implementation process. When actors are given little direction, the potential of policy to stray from its intended course is heightened. While the phenomenological approach to implementation has seen some positive results, this research points to the need for a more structured approach, whereby actors have a greater knowledge of the policy's intentions and methods that can be utilized to meet these intentions.

Furthermore, this increase in shared information would create buy-in from the public. Creative non-implementation holds less of a place in the enactment process as actors know what is expected of them and the long-term benefits of strong participation. To avoid significant veers away from policy intention, this study also points to the need for remedial practices which can be added on to the

implementation process when needed. As best practices have already been established and likely used in the policy creation process, remedial practices, possibly in the form of a policy support program (Hudson et al., 2019), and maybe a useful tool in redirecting policy enactment when it appears to have gone off course.

To incorporate citizens in the policy implementation process in a productive manner, we must also consider how policy can be introduced in a citizen-centric manner, such that less focus is placed on the government and the achievement of pre-defined goals, and more emphasis is on citizens voice in measuring the outcomes of the measures in place. The goal of this would be to broaden the scope of consideration so that change is measured on the ground, adjustments to policy implementation action can be made, and the government can be held accountable to the goals which they have set forth for their constituents. Furthermore, increased participation from social actors can cause increased change as a result of policy interaction (Cawley, 2012).

## **8.6 Further research**

This study lays a foundation for a number of inquiries into policy as a whole. To build on the conclusions of this study, further research could explore the impact of poor implementation over time, specifically asking questions concerning the social impact, whereby citizens may disregard policy or the financial impact, wherein governments may essentially waste large sums of money on policy

implementation, manpower, and infrastructure, which does not lead to the achievement of goals.

This study also identifies creative non-implementation as a contributor to the lack of meaningful enactment of the UAE's policy; however, more research is necessary for identifying contributors and predictors of non-implementation and poor implementation. Studying additional countries with successes and challenges with social policy implementation can yield significant insight into each area mentioned above. Furthermore, as no examples of happiness policy failure specifically were found throughout my research, additional studies are needed to address why happiness policies fail and what can be done differently in the planning and implementation process to avoid this outcome.

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