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PER CAPITA INCOME, SOCIAL SAFETY NETWORK AND HUMAN HAPPINESS

Muhammad Tufail Anwar [1], Prof. Dr. Abdul Ghafoor Awan[2] ⬤

1. M.Phil. Economics, Department of Economics, Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan.
   tufail2526@gmail.com
2. Dean, Faculty of Management Sciences, Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan.
   drabdulghafoorawan@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigates the intricate nexus between per capita income, social safety networks, and human happiness, using primary data, collected from 250 participants working in both public and private universities of Southern Punjab, Pakistan through a questionnaire. 5-Points Likert Scale was used to record the views of participants on various items of questionnaire. The findings reveal that Per capita income, social networks, education, good health, environmental, social relationships, and democracy exhibit a positive association with human happiness. Conversely, income inequality, political instability, advancing age, and inflation demonstrate a negative relationship with human happiness. In the light of these findings, this study suggests (i) to focus on mitigating political instability (ii) reducing income inequality, (iii) and controlling inflation to improve overall happiness levels of people.

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1. Introduction

Happiness is one of the foremost problems and everyone wants to enjoy happy life if anyone wants to enjoy happy life then he has to increase his per capita income and need improvement in social safety networks and happiness in his life will start to increase but at some extent when per capita income is so much high then he could not control this income and it causes problems for him and happiness in his life starts decreasing, (Stevenson, 2021). Economic growth had negative effect on happiness Economic growth is necessary for development of society that causes human happiness to increase while economic growth also had bad effect on society that causes problems for humans. Environmental problems also increase due to increase in economic growth while if there is installation of industrial zone that is helpful for economic growth but it will also cause air pollution and people will become sick due to air pollution. The social factors cause economic development. They sort out that there is good relationship between social factors and economic development. (Esmail et al, 2018). The relationship between happiness and income inequality in China was inverted U shaped that was based on theory of "Tunnel effect". Their results matched with "tunnel effect" theory that when income inequality is low then happiness will be high- and when-income inequality is high then happiness will be low (Wang et al, 2014). Social Capital gives a source for personal and social support that causes to increase in happiness of an individual (Putan, et al, 2010). Women have higher level of aspiration so, they have lower level of life satisfaction and happiness, (Frey and Stutzer, 2010) Government provides good public services to its public are linked with happiness of its citizens, (Pose et al 2012). Happiness and life Satisfaction are the main goals of human life (Layar. et al 2011).

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Notwithstanding research on the human happiness is scare. In order to further investigate this relationship between per capita income, social safety networks and happiness. The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between per capita income, social networks and human happiness in order to understand how much money and social networks play a role in human happiness. The study also intends to determine whether per capita income or social networks are more important for human happiness.

The scope of this study is high because it delves into the impact of economic growth on happiness, income inequality, environmental factors, social capital, gender differences, and government services as they pertain to individuals' well-being and life satisfaction. It aims to investigate these relationships and their dynamics in order to contribute nto our understanding of what drives human happiness. In this way, the impact of this study will likely to be large.

This study contributes into the body of literature in many ways. First, it sheds light on the intricate relationship between per capita income and happiness, emphasizing that while increased income generally leads to greater happiness, there exists a threshold beyond which excessive income may lead to decreased happiness. Second, it also highlights the significance of social safety networks in enhancing overall well-being. Third, this study captures the dual effect of economic growth on happiness. It acknowledges the positive influence of economic growth on happiness but also recognizes the negative consequences, such as environmental problems and health issues resulting from industrial expansion. Fourth, the study expands on the understanding of how social factors play a pivotal role in economic development as there is

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evidence of a positive relationship between social factors and economic development, drawing insights from research conducted in the Jazan region. Fifth, this study highlights relationship between income inequality and happiness by confirming "Tunnel effect" theory, demonstrating that income inequality follows an inverted U-shaped relationship with happiness. It underscores the importance of addressing income inequality to improve overall well-being. Sixth, the study underscores the impact of social capital on happiness by highlighting the role of social capital as a source of personal and social support, thereby contributing positively to individual happiness. This insight provides a nuanced understanding of the factors that influence happiness. Seventh, the study acknowledges gender differences in aspirations and their implications for life satisfaction and happiness. This insight underscores the need for tailored policies and interventions to address gender-specific well-being concerns. Eighth, the study highlights happiness and life satisfaction as human goals by reinforces the idea that happiness and life satisfaction are fundamental human goals, underscoring the importance of research in this area. It recognizes the scarcity of research in this domain

2. Literature Review

Stevenson (2021) utilized a two-stage regression approach to explore the effect of excess happiness on growth. It was found that after a country attains a specific level of happiness, any surplus happiness beyond this point tends to suppress growth. Naghdi et al. (2021) undertook a significant study examining the impact of economic growth on happiness. Contrary to the Easterline paradox, their findings did not depict a clear relationship between happiness and economic growth, despite utilizing data from 153 countries spanning 18 years. Easterlin (2013) analyzed the relationship between happiness and

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economic growth and found a positive correlation in the short term. However, in the long term, no significant relationship between happiness and economic growth was evident. Delsignore et al. (2021) delved deep into well-being and happiness measuring instruments rooted in psychology, economics, and sociology. Analyzing data from 1934 to 2019, they distinguished between hedonic and eudemonic happiness, emphasizing the latter's connection with intricate human values, relationships, and emotions. Greyling et al. (2020) researched the effects of lockdown on happiness in countries like New Zealand, South Africa, and Australia. It was observed that non-implementation of lockdown policies by these governments had prolonged detrimental effects on happiness. Esmail et al. (2018) studied the connection between social factors and happiness. Their research revealed a strong relationship between social factors and economic development, particularly in the Jazan region. Wang et al. (2014) focused on happiness and income inequality in China. They posited an inverted U-shaped relationship based on the "Tunnel effect" theory, confirming that low-income inequality corresponded with high happiness levels and vice versa. Ali et al. (2019) blended two different literature avenues to assess the effect of the unequal distribution of oil rents on human happiness. Their results indicated a negative long-term link between happiness and oil rents, with policy implications for oil-rich countries. Verma (2017) used data of 32 countries to determine the relationship between economic development, happiness, and household income. He observed that an increase in household income led to a minor reduction in negative emotions for affluent families. Tavor et al. (2017), echoing sentiments of classical economists, posited that individual happiness was influenced by a higher standard of living along with other well-being

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factors. They discovered no noticeable impact of democracy on happiness when Gini coefficients were excessively high. Oishi et al. (2016) explored the dichotomy between individual and collective happiness. They asserted that the pursuit of individual happiness often compromises the collective happiness of a community. Guriev (2009) explored the sentiments of individuals transitioning from communism to market-oriented economies. Their findings illuminated that the happiness levels in these transition economies closely mirrored those of other nations, erasing any significant distinction in life satisfaction between the two. Marktanner. et al. (2021) investigated the effects of policy performance in domains like public health, social safety, and human capital on economic freedom. Their study emphasized the state's crucial role in ensuring robust health care, social safety nets, and human capital enhancement.

The research gap in the literature exists because most of studies tend to focus on short-term relationships between economic growth and happiness, with limited attention to how these factors evolve over extended periods. There is a need for research that tracks these relationships over decades to discern potential shifts or patterns that emerge as societies develop. Moreover, existing studies often examine economic growth, income distribution, and happiness in isolation. A gap exists in research that integrates these factors into a holistic framework to capture their complex and dynamic interactions. To address the identified research gap, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

H_0: Per capita income and happiness have no relationship with each other.

H_1: Per capita income and happiness have a strong relationship with each other.

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H_0: Social Safety Network has no link with human happiness.

H_1: Social Safety Network has a strong link with human happiness.

These hypotheses form the basis for further research that can help bridge the existing gap in the literature and provide valuable insights for policymakers and researchers interested in the complex dynamics of happiness, economic growth, and income distribution.

3. Material and methods

The study aimed to analyze the impact of per capita income and social safety networks on human happiness. A questionnaire was employed as the primary research instrument. The design and development of the questionnaire were rooted in the objectives of the study. The questionnaire underwent several stages of refinement to ensure its accuracy and relevance. Prior to initiating formal study, pilot testing was conducted to check the instrument's appropriateness, effectiveness, and authenticity. It helped refine the instrument by identifying potential issues related to questions, terminologies, dimensions, instructions, or techniques. Post the pilot test, only highly reliable statements were retained. Necessary modifications were made in consultation with the research supervisor to make the questionnaire more comprehensive and reliable. The sample consisted of respondents from diverse fields working in government offices, business sectors, and the education sector. Primary data was collected from 250 respondents who had jobs and a per capita income using the designed questionnaire. Data collection spanned over six months, from April 2022 to September 2022. Respondents were approached personally, with an emphasis on voluntary participation. Hard copies of the questionnaire was distributed for completion, and a Google form link was also shared on social media platforms for the same purpose. Data was analyzed

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using specific statistical methods like frequency percentages and mean score methods. A 5-point Likert scale, having following five options, was utilized:

● Strongly agree (5)

● Agree (4)

● Neutral (3)

● Disagree (2)

● Strongly Disagree (1)

The mean score was computed using the provided formula.

The mean score of each item calculated by using this formula:

Mean score**:** $\dfrac{F_{SA}X_5 + F_AX_4 + F_NX_3 + F_{DA}X_2 + F_{SDA}X_1}{N}$

4. Results

4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The demographic characteristics of participants like their gender, qualification, their working institutions and their per capita income are presented in the following tables. These characteristics were calculated through statistical techniques such as frequency and percentage.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	190	76%
Female	60	24%
Total =	250	100%

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor	101	40%
Master	94	38%
M. Phil	55	22%

| Total = | 250 | 100% |

Type of Universities	Frequency	Percentage
Public Sector University	163	65%
Private Sector University	87	35%
Total	250	100%

Per month income	Frequency	Percentage
Rs.10000 to Rs.20000	24	9.6%
Rs. 20000 to Rs.30000	64	25.6%
Rs. 30000 to Rs.40000	76	30.4%
Rs. 40000 to Rs.50000	48	19.2%
Rs. 50000 to Rs. 60000	24	9.6%
Rs. 60000 to Rs.70000	7	2.8%
Rs. 70000 to Rs.80000	3	1.2%
Rs. 80000 to Rs.90000	3	1.2%
Rs.90000 to Rs.100000	1	0.4%
Total =	250	**100%**

The results in the table 1 show that among 250 participants, 190 were male and 60 were female. Among them 101 had Batchelor degree, 94 master degree and 55 M.Phil. degree. The range of qualification of all respondents was between Batchelor and M.Phil. Out of 250, 163 participants belonged to public sector universities while 87 belonged to private sector universities. 36.10% participants whose monthly income is between Rs. 10,000/- and Rs. 30,000/- fall in low-income category while 49.6%. whose monthly income ranges

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between Rs. Rs. 31000 and Rs. 50,000/- falls in middle income category and 14% participants whose income ranges between Rs. 51,000 and Rs.100,000/- falls high income category because under Pakistan's Income Tax Ordinance, 2021 they are liable to pay tax. In short, all participants have sufficient education and moderate level of income.

4.2 Analysis of statement

Now the statements relating to the topic of research study are analyzed in the light of data collected from 250 participants through a structured questionnaire in order to understand the nature of relationship between per capita income, safety networks and human happiness in real context. The responses of the participants are measured on 5-points Likert scale and it is calculated through statistical tool such as frequency, percentage and mean score.

Table 2 Relationship between Per capita income and happiness

Statement 1	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
People Feel Happiness when their per capita income increases.	Strongly disagree	21	8.4	4.036
	Disagree	2	0.8	
	Neutral	21	8.4	
	Agree	109	43.6	
	Strongly Agree	97	38.8	

The results of above table are shown in Fig. 1

**Fig. 1** *Relationship between Per capita income and happiness*
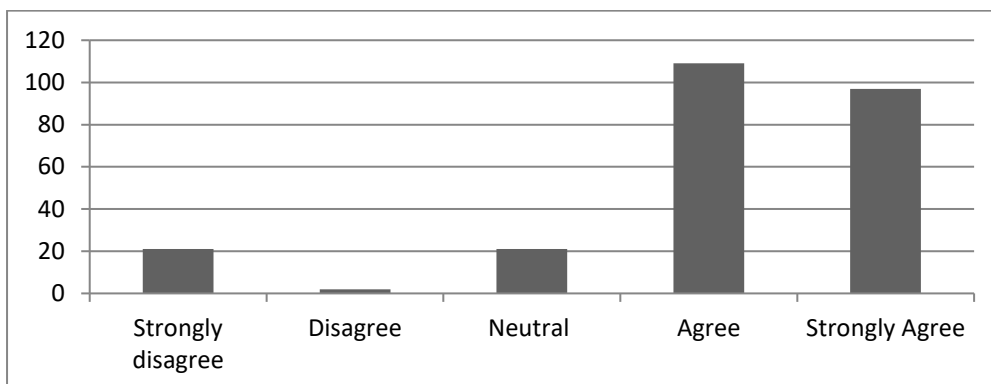
The results in the above Table and Figure show that out of 250, 206 participants (82.4%) were agree and strongly agree with the statement that "People feel happiness when their per capita income is increased". Only about 9% opposed it while 8.4% did not give their opinion about it. The mean score of this statement is 4.036, which indicates that there is strong relationship between per capita income and human happiness.

Table 3 Relationship between Social Safety network and human happiness

Statement 2	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Social Safety Network has strong relationship with human happiness.	Strongly disagree	11	4.4	3.98
	Disagree	10	4	
	Neutral	20	8	
	Agree	141	56.4	
	Strongly Agree	68	27.2	

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The above results are highlighted in Fig. 2

**Fig. 2** Relationship between Social Safety network and human happiness
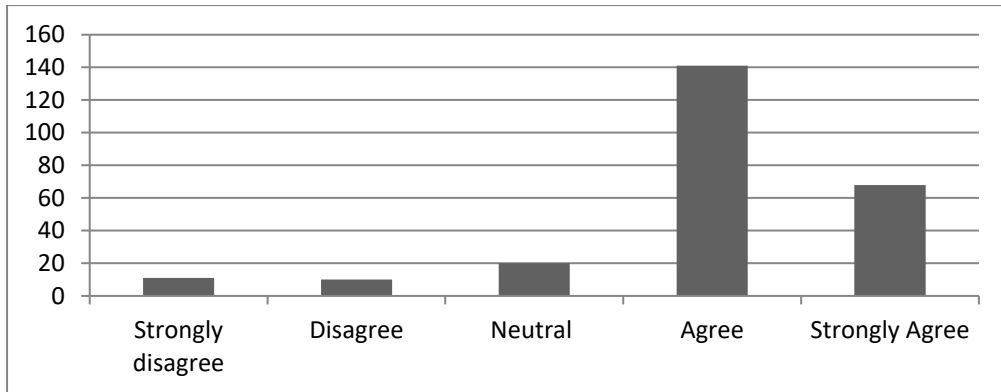
As many as 207 (83.6%) respondents supported the statement that "Social Safety Network has strong relationship with human happiness" while 8.4% opposed and around 8% did not give their views on this issue. The mean score is 3.98, showing that there is strong relationship between social safety network and human happiness. It means that social network plays a vital role in increasing human happiness.

Table 4 Relationship between Happiness and income

Statement 3	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Relationship between Happiness and income.	Strongly disagree	9	3.6	3.764
	Disagree	20	8	
	Neutral	41	16.4	
	Agree	131	52.4	
	Strongly Agree	49	19.6	

The above results are shown in Fig. 3

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**Fig. 3** Relationship between Happiness and income
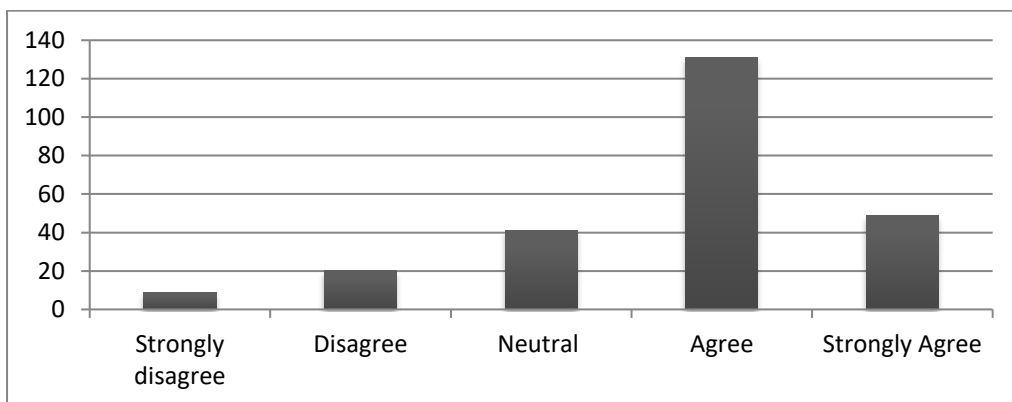
About 180 (72%) participants supported the statement that there is strong relationship between income and happiness and only 29 opposed it while 42 participants show neutrality. The mean score of this statement is 3.764. It means that there is strong positive relationship between income and happiness as unemployed person cannot be happy because he could not enjoy their life and feel depressing situation.

Table 5 Relationship between Money and happiness

Statement 4	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
If you have more money, you are happier.	Strongly disagree	4	1.6	3.496
	Disagree	58	23.2	
	Neutral	43	17.2	
	Agree	100	40	
	Strongly Agree	45	18	

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The same results are presented in Fig. 4

**Fig. 4** Relationship between Money and happiness
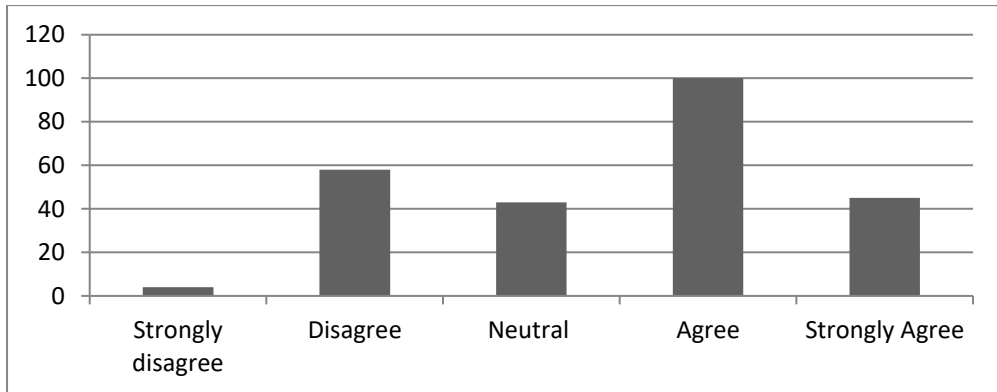
As many as 145 (58%) participants were supported the statement that more money brings more happiness but 58 (23.2) % opposed it and 43 (17.2%) gave no opinion about it. The mean score of this statement is 2.548, indicating that the results are mixed and not clear although majority of reconsents supported the statement that more money brings more happiness.

Table 6 Relationship between Poverty and crime

Statement 5	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
It is true that Poverty Increases Crime.	Strongly disagree	2	0.8	4.424
	Disagree	4	1.6	
	Neutral	13	5.2	
	Agree	98	39.2	
	Strongly Agree	133	53.2	

The same results are shown in Fig. 5

**Fig. 5.** Relationship between Poverty and crime
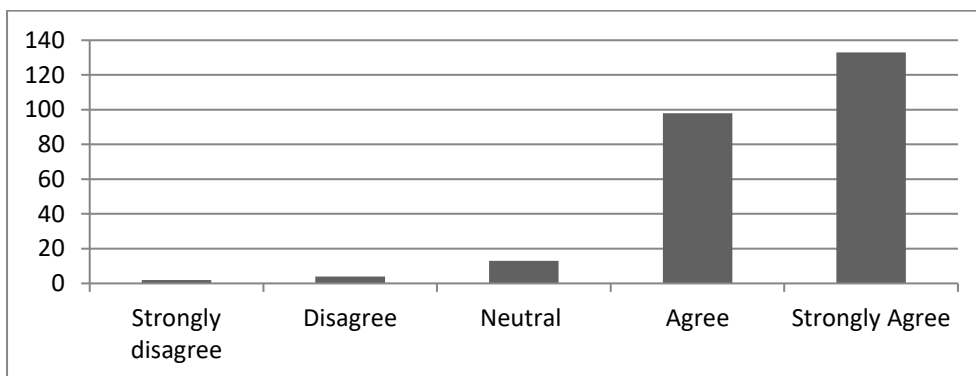
The results in the above table and figure show that out of 250, 231 (92.4%) participants supported the statement that poverty causes to increase crime rate. It means poverty has strong relationship with crime rate as only 2.4 % participants opposed this statement. The mean score of this statement is 4. 424. This is the main area which immediate attention of policy makers to take effectives measures to reduce poverty so that crime rate may be decreased.

Table 7   Social relationship enhances happiness

Statement 6	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Social relationship enhances human happiness.	Strongly disagree	8	3.2	3.884
	Disagree	10	4	
	Neutral	38	15.2	
	Agree	141	56.4	
	Strongly Agree	53	21.2	

The above results are highlighted in Fig. 6

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**Fig. 6.** Social relationship enhances happiness
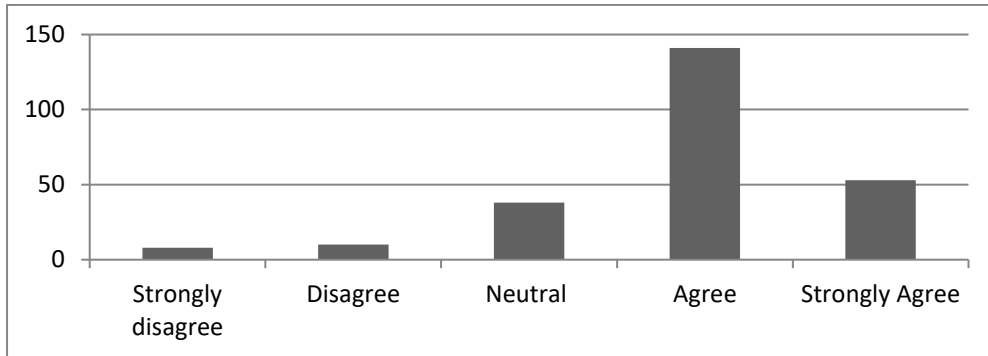
The results indicate that there is strong link between social relationship and level of happiness as 194 (77.6) supported this statement while 18 (7.2%) opposed it and 38 (15.2%) gave no views about it. The mean score of this statement is 3.884 which indicates social relationship is vital for human happiness.

Table 8 Life expectancy, income distribution & employment affect Happiness

Statement 7	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Life expectancy, income distribution, education, social freedom, employment affect the happiness in a society.	Strongly disagree	3	1.2	3.808
	Disagree	11	4.4	
	Neutral	48	19.2	
	Agree	157	62.8	
	Strongly Agree	31	12.4	

The same results are shown in Fig. 7

Fig. 7 Life expectancy, income distribution & employment affect Happiness
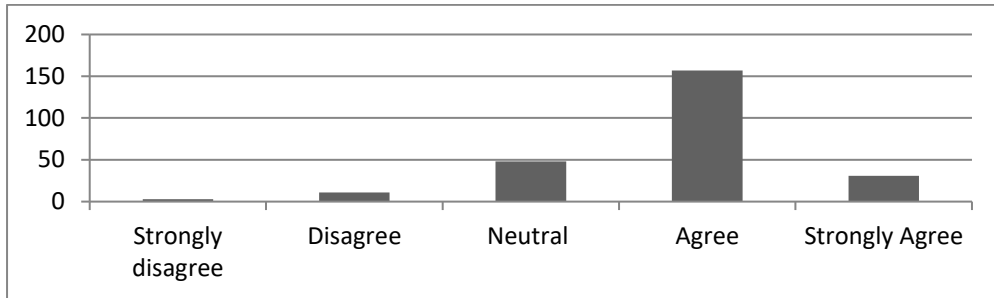

188 (75%) participants supported the statement that Life expectancy, income distribution, education, social freedom, employment affect the happiness as only 5.6% respondents opposed it and 48 (19.2%) showed their neutrality for not commenting on it. The mean score of this statement is 3.808, showing moderate relationship.

Table 8. Relationship between Happiness and material gain

Statement 8	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Happiness is a natural thing and material gain has no effect on it.	Strongly disagree	3	1.2	3.056
	Disagree	93	37.2	
	Neutral	62	24.8	
	Agree	71	28.4	
	Strongly Agree	21	8.4	

The same results are shown in Fig 8

**Fig. 8** Relationship between Happiness and material gain
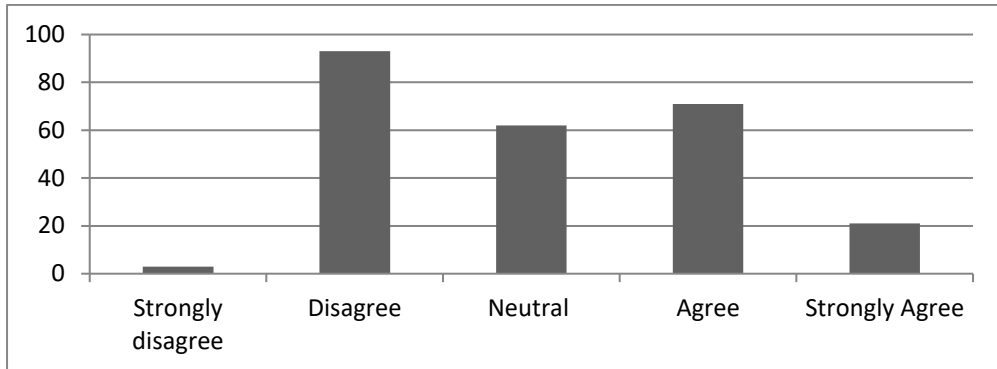
It is clear from above table that majority of respondents disagree with the statement that Happiness is a natural thing and material gain has no effect on it. Mean score of above statement is 3.056. The result reveal that 38.4 % respondents disagree and 36.8% respondents agree with this statement while 24.8 % respondents did not give their opinion. In this way, the results are mixed and we cannot draw any conclusion about the effect of material gain on human happiness.

Table 9 Inflation and Happiness

Statement 9	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Inflation has negative effect on happiness.	Strongly disagree	2	0.8	3.8
	Disagree	16	6.4	
	Neutral	32	12.8	
	Agree	180	72	
	Strongly Agree	20	8	

The same results are shown in Fig.9

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Fig. 9 Inflation and Happiness
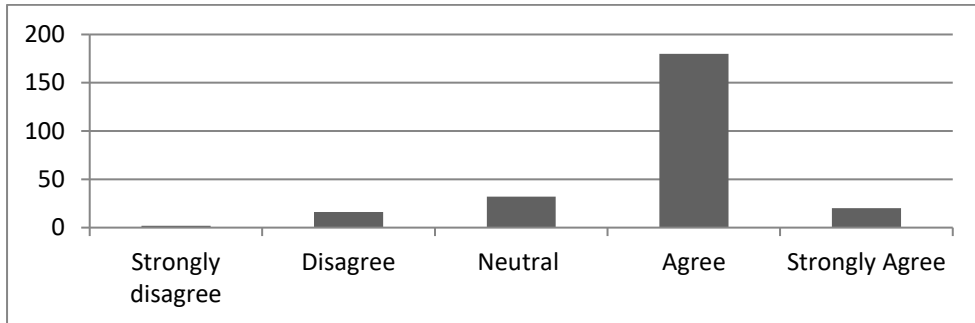
Around 200 (80%) out of 250 participants supported the statement that inflation has negative effect on human happiness. Only 18 (7.2%) respondents opposed it while 38 participants did not give their views about it. The mean score of this statement is 3.8 which reveals that inflation is the main variable that negatively affect happiness and there is valuable insight for policy makers to take appropriate steps to control it. Now inflation is rising all over the world and the whole mankind is suffering due to it because their purchasing power and value of money are decreasing.

Table 10 Relationship between Economic Growth and Happiness

Statement 10	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
There is no relationship between economic growth and people's happiness.	Strongly disagree	27	10.8	2.36
	Disagree	152	60.8	
	Neutral	33	13.2	
	Agree	30	12	
	Strongly Agree	8	3.2	

The same results are shown in Fig. 10

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**Fig. 10** Relationship between Economic Growth and Happiness
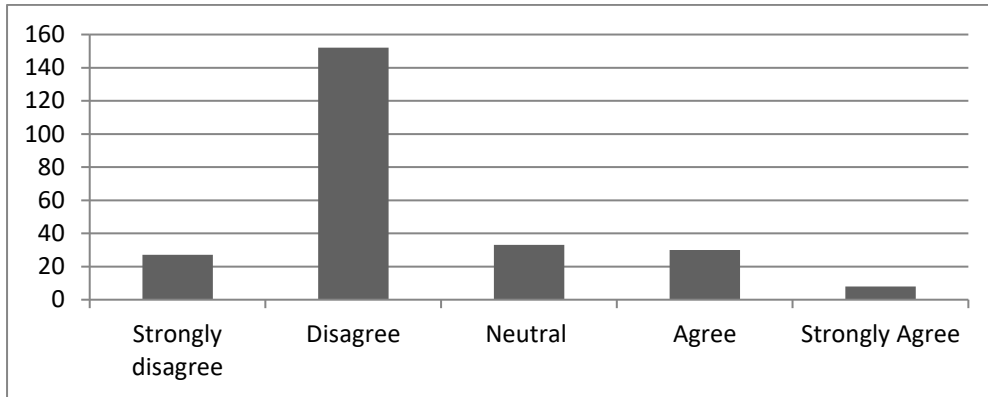
The results are interesting because 179 (71.6%) participants opposed it and only 38 (15.2%) supported this statement. 33 (13.2%) were neutral. The mean score of this statement is 2.36 that reveals there is no relationship between economic growth and human happiness. Most of the wealth generated as a result of economic growth is gone to the capitalists, leaving majority of population to live at substance level.

Table 11 Relationship between unemployment and happiness

Statement 11	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Unemployment has negative effect on happiness.	Strongly disagree	5	2	3.984
	Disagree	17	6.8	
	Neutral	15	6	
	Agree	153	61.2	
	Strongly Agree	60	24	

The same results are shown in Fig. 11

**Fig. 11** Relationships between Unemployment and Happiness
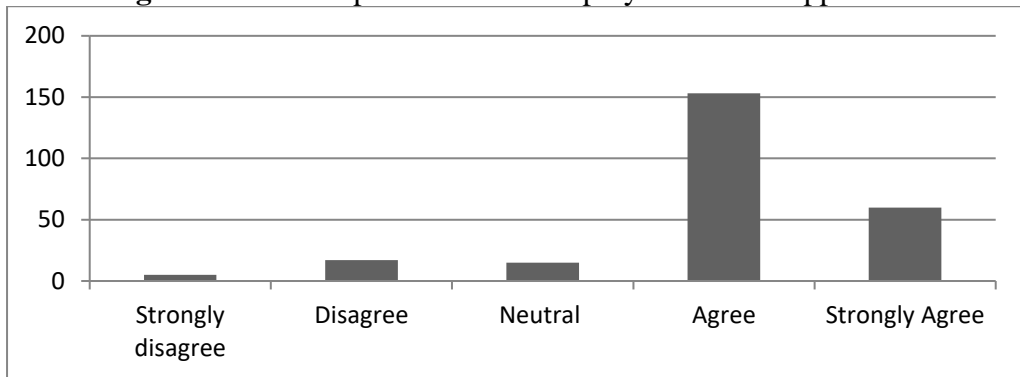
The above results show that unemployment destroys the happiness of human being as 213 (85%) respondents supported this statement while 19 (8.8%) opposed it and 15 (6%) showed neutrality. The mean score of this statement is 3.984 which indicates that unemployment is fatal for human happiness. The policy makers focus on this critical issue and create job for unemployed persons in order to bring pleasure in their lives.

Table 12 Relationship between good governance and happiness

Statement 12	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Good Governance Increase happiness.	Strongly disagree	3	1.2	4.116
	Disagree	2	0.8	
	Neutral	27	10.8	
	Agree	149	59.6	
	Strongly Agree	69	27.6	

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The same results are shown in Fig. 12

Fig. 12 Relationship between Good Governance and Happiness
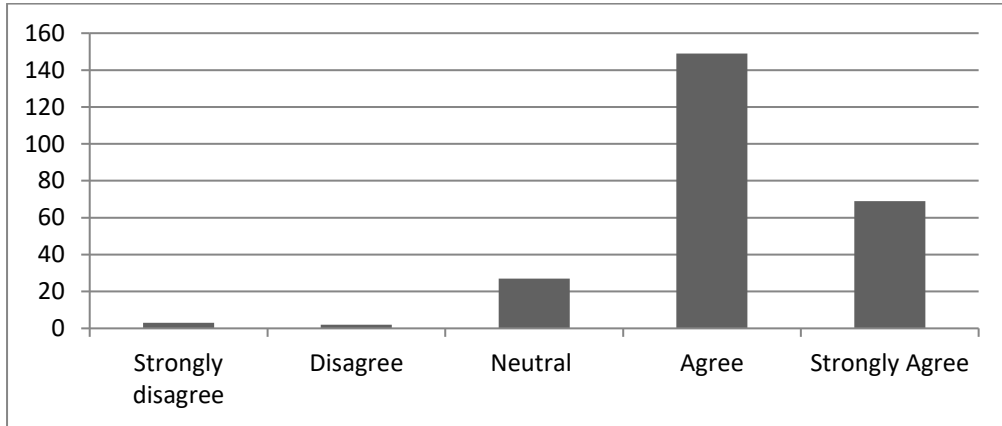

It is surprising that governance has strong association with human happiness as 87.2% respondents support this statement and only 2% opposed it. The mean score of this statement is 4.116. The cause of this strong relationship is that governance is one of the main issues of developing countries including Pakistan and the people are suffering due to bad governance. These findings are valuable insight for the policy makers to focus on this issue.

Table 13 Democracy and Happiness

Statement 13	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
There is positive relationship between democracy and happiness.	Strongly disagree	4	1.6	3.572
	Disagree	37	14.8	
	Neutral	49	19.6	
	Agree	132	52.8	
	Strongly Agree	28	11.2	

The same results are shown in **Fig. 13**

Fig. 13 *Democracy and Happiness*
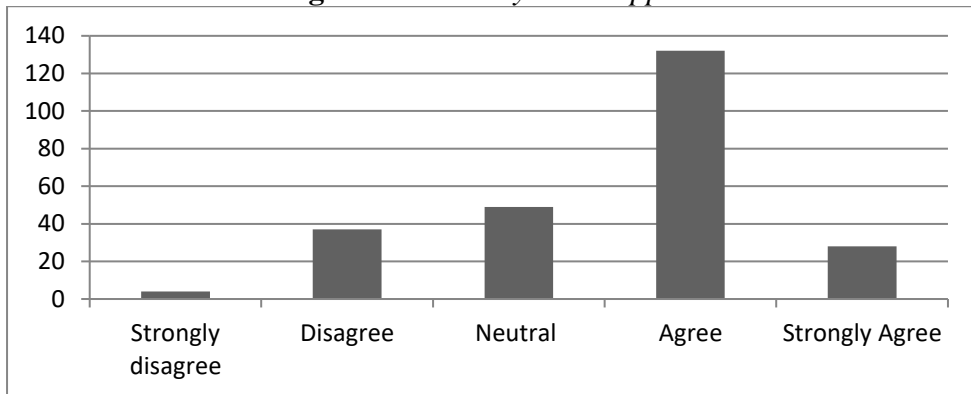
People feel happiness when there is democratic government in a country because policies in democratic government. are framed according to the wishes of people and they feel more freedom. As many as 160 (64%) participants supported this statement and 41 (16.45%) opposed it and 49 (19.6%) did not give their opinion about it. The mean score of this statement is 3.572), showing strong relationship between democracy and happiness. The study emphasizes that democratic norms must be promoted to improve people's happiness.

Table 14 Relationship between Education and Happiness

Statement 14	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
There is positive relationship between happiness and education.	Strongly disagree	0	0	3.98
	Disagree	15	6	
	Neutral	29	11.6	
	Agree	152	60.8	
	Strongly Agree	54	21.6	

The same results are shown in Fig 14.

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Fig 14 Relationships between Education and Happiness
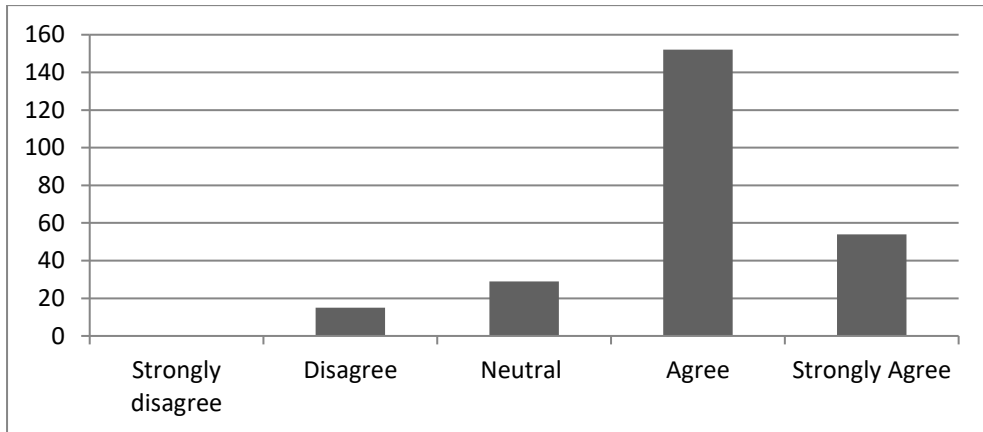
More than 82.4% of respondents support the statement that education increases happiness in life because education and happiness have positive relationship. Only six percent participants opposed it.

Table 15 Relationship between Protection of environment and Happiness

Statement 15	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Protection of environment can increase happiness in societies**.**	Strongly disagree	2	0.8	3.924
	Disagree	11	4.4	
	Neutral	31	12.4	
	Agree	166	66.4	
	Strongly Agree	40	16	

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The same results are shown in Fig 15

Fig 15 Relationship between Protection of environment and Happiness
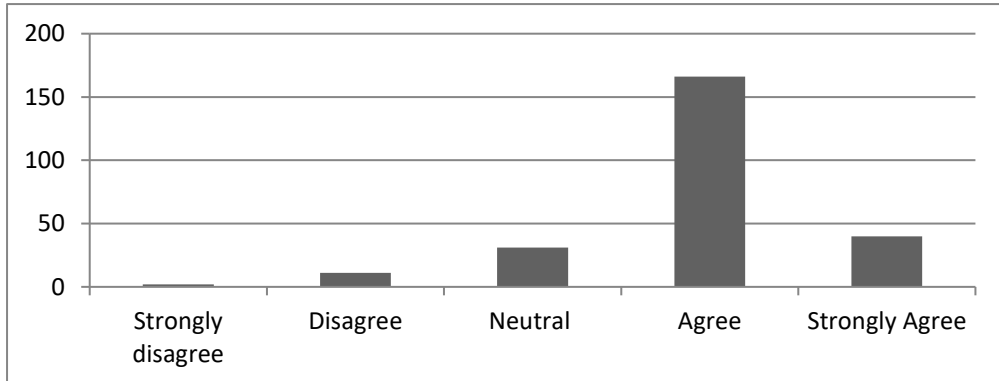
206 (82.4%) participants supported the statement that protection of environment enhances happiness. Only 13 (5.3% participants opposed it and 11 (4.4%) participants did not express their views. The mean score of this statement is 3.924 which indicates that quality of environment enhances human happiness. These results are very important from environmental quality improvement.

Table 16 Relationship between Health issues and Happiness

Statement 16	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Happiness decreases due to health issues.	Strongly disagree	3	1.2	4.108
	Disagree	8	3.2	
	Neutral	16	6.4	
	Agree	155	62	
	Strongly Agree	68	27.2	

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The same results are shown in Fig 16

Fig 16 Relationship between Health and Happiness
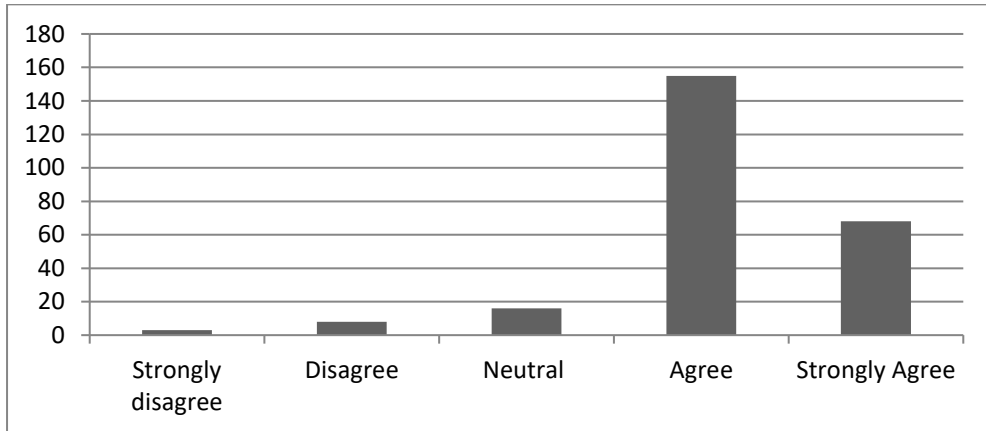
The relationship between health and happiness is strong because human being could not enjoy life without good health. This is the reason that 223 (89.2%) out of 250 participants support this statement while only 11 (4.4%) opposed it. The mean score of this statement is 4.108 which indicates that health has close association with human happiness. These results suggest that better health facilities may be provided to improve the health of people and their happiness.

Table 17 Happiness decreases with age

Statement 17	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Happiness decreases with age.	Strongly disagree	22	8.8	2.76
	Disagree	101	40.4	
	Neutral	51	20.4	
	Agree	67	26.8	
	Strongly Agree	9	3.6	

The same results are shown in **Fig 17**
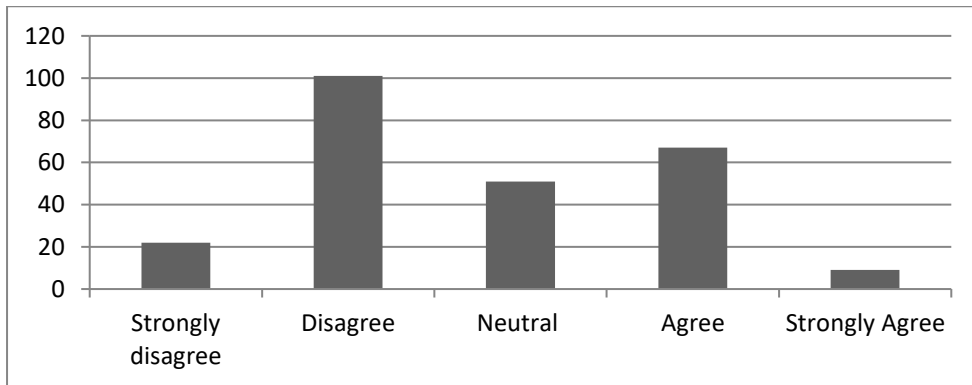
Fig 17 Relationship between age and happiness

Happiness and age are interlinked with each other as it is shown in above table and graph in which 123 (49.2%) participants opposed the statement that happiness declines with age while 76 (30.4%) supported it and 51 (20.4%) did not give their opinion about it. The mean score of this statement is 2.76 that show moderate relationship between age and happiness. However, majority of the responded contended that happiness decline with age. This is the fact that as human being moves to old age, he goes close to the reality of life "everyone has to die sooner or later".

Table 18 Happiness decreases due to income inequality in the society

Statement 18	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	**Mean Score**
Happiness decreases due to rising income inequality in the society.	Strongly disagree	6	2.4	3.68
	Disagree	34	13.6	
	Neutral	32	12.8	
	Agree	140	56	
	Strongly Agree	38	15.2	

The same results are shown in Fig 18

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Fig 18 Happiness decreases due to income inequality
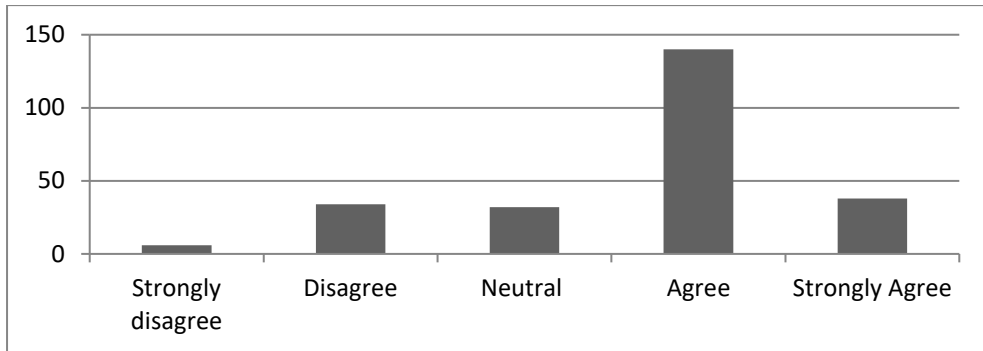
If there is income inequality in the society then it widens gap between rich and poor and divides them into upper and lower classes. The results in the above table and graph reveal this fact because 178 (71.2%) participants supported the statement that income inequality decreases human happiness. Only 40 (16%) oppose it while 32 (12.8%) did not give their views. The mean score of this statement is 3.68 which indicates that income inequality has negative effect on human happiness.

Table 19 Relationship between Political instability and Happiness

Statement 18	Levels	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Political instability decreases happiness.	Strongly disagree	5	2	3.948
	Disagree	18	7.2	
	Neutral	26	10.4	
	Agree	137	54.8	
	Strongly Agree	64	25.6	

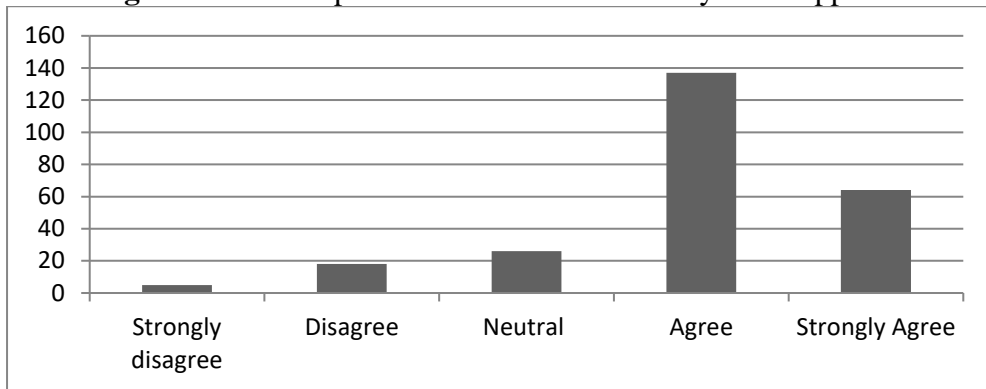The same results are shown in Fig 19

Fig 19 Relationship between Political instability and Happiness

When there is political instability in a country then people feel themselves insecure and their happiness level decreases. The results in the above table and graphs highlight this fact. 202 (80.4%) participants agree with the statement that political instability decreases level of happiness. Only 23 (9.2%) participants opposed the statement while 26 (10.4%) did not give their view about this issue. The mean score of this statement is 3.948 which indicates that political instability has negative relationship with human happiness.

4. Discussion

The objective of this study was to examine the relationship between per capita income, social safety network and human happiness. For this purpose, primary data was collected from 250 participants belonging to public and private universities of Southern Punjab through a structured questionnaire, using convenience sampling method. The questionnaire was undergone through pilot testing to check the reliability of its items. 5-Points Likert Scale was used to check the measure the tendency of participants about the issues raised in the questionnaire. The dependent variable was human happiness while independent variables include: Per capita income, social network, political instability, old age, income inequality, money, health, environment, inflation,

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education and democracy. The findings of study reveal that per capita income, social network, education, good health, environment, social relationship and democracy have positive association with human happiness while income inequality, political instability, old age and inflation have negative relationship with human happiness. The findings suggest that policy makers should focus on reducing political instability, income inequality, inflation rate and health facilities in order to increase the happiness of citizens. These findings support the results of Ali et al. (2019), Verma (2017) and Tavor et al. (2017) who also found negative relationship between income inequality and human happiness. Greyling et al. (2020), (Stevenson, 2021) and (Layar et al 2011) found positive association between social network, per capita income and human happiness.

5. Conclusion and policy implications

In light of the findings of this study, it is evident that several factors play a crucial role in shaping human happiness. Per capita income, social networks, education, good health, a clean environment, strong social relationships, and a democratic system exhibit positive associations with human happiness. On the other hand, income inequality, political instability, the challenges of old age, and inflation are found to have negative impact on happiness.

These results underscore the complexity of human well-being and highlight the multifaceted nature of the factors that contribute to it. It is clear that material prosperity, as represented by per capita income, is not the sole determinant of happiness; rather, it is a combination of various socioeconomic, political, and personal factors that collectively shape an individual's sense of well-being.

The policy implications involve in this study are stated as under: -

● Policy makers should prioritize efforts to reduce political instability. A stable political environment is essential for creating a sense of security and

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trust among citizens, which in turn contributes to their happiness. This can be achieved through effective governance, conflict resolution mechanisms, and political reforms.

● Efforts should be made to reduce income inequality. Policies aimed at wealth redistribution, progressive taxation, and equitable access to economic opportunities can help bridge the income gap and promote a more inclusive society, thereby enhancing overall happiness.

● Controlling inflation rates is vital for maintaining the purchasing power of citizens. High inflation can erode the real value of income and savings, leading to financial stress and reduced happiness. Central banks and fiscal authorities should adopt measures to stabilize prices.

● Investment in healthcare infrastructure and services is crucial for ensuring good health among the population. Accessible and affordable healthcare can alleviate health-related concerns and contribute to greater happiness.

● Education plays a pivotal role in personal development and economic empowerment. Expanding access to quality education can empower individuals, enhance their skills, and improve their life satisfaction.

● Environmental conservation and sustainability efforts should be a priority. A clean and healthy environment not only has direct benefits for well-being but also reflects a society's commitment to future generations.

● Encouraging strong social networks and relationships within communities can foster a sense of belonging and support. Initiatives that promote social cohesion can positively impact happiness levels.

● A democratic system that ensures citizens' participation and protection of their rights is essential. Democracy can create an environment where people have a voice in decision-making, fostering a sense of agency and satisfaction.

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This study has some limitations. For example, the study used a convenience sampling method, which may not fully represent the diversity of the population. The findings might not be generalized to broader demographics. Moreover, this   study relies on self-reported data through questionnaires, which are subject to social desirability bias and may not always accurately reflect participants' true feelings. Similarly, the associations between variables were identified, establishing causality is challenging in observational studies. Further research, including longitudinal or experimental designs, could provide stronger causal insights. Additionally, the study focused on Southern Punjab, which may limit the generalizability of findings to other regions or countries with different socioeconomic and cultural contexts. This study excluded cultural factors due to time constraints. Future research could explore these aspects for a more comprehensive understanding.

Data Statement

The data that used in this paper for analysis will be made available by corresponding author on strong request. supports the findings of this study will be made available on strong request.

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Declaration of Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper or conflict of interest with any person or organization relating to this research study

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