

A Correlational Study of Happiness Based on the Hamburger Model and Resilience Skills during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

During the global pandemic of COVID-19, people from all walks of life are facing with its negative consequences, especially economic conditions, which can potentially lower their level of happiness and well-being. It is believed that those who are resilient are more likely to cope with uncertainty in life more effectively. However, a statistical link between happiness and resilience has not been largely explored. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine the correlation between the four types of people based on hamburger models: Hedonists, Rat racers, Nihilists and Happiness and their resilience skills to cope with their finances. The data collection was carried out through an online survey with 151 respondents in Thailand whose 5-Likert scale responses were analysed using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The results revealed that there were positive correlations between Happiness and their resilience skills ($r = 0.32$) as well as between Rat racers and their resilience skills ($r = 0.45$). However, negligible correlations were in Nihilists and Hedonists. It is evident from the findings that those who are more likely to have a well-planned future like those belonging to Rat race and Happiness are prone to possess a great deal of resilience skill to face with difficulties in life.

Keywords: Happiness, Hedonism, Nihilism, Rat Race, Resilience

1. Introduction

Coronavirus pandemic, also known as COVID-19 pandemic is a dangerous communicable disease, where WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreaks as pandemic citing the alarming levels of spread around the world. Prior to the epidemic, we had the 1918 pandemic Spanish flu which was an unusually deadly influenza pandemic caused by the H1N1 influenza A virus followed by the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2002-2003. After a decade of SARs outbreak, we have the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) which started in 2012, and then the Ebola epidemics (Prompetchara et al., 2020). The COVID-19 coronavirus disease was first identified in Wuhan, China in early January 2020 (Guo et al., 2020). The virus that causes the COVID-19 disease rapidly spread to other countries outside of China and resulted in the implementation of stringent policy measures by most of the countries, i.e lockdown and etc. As a matter of fact, it has critically impacted the overall economy as well as the livelihoods of people. Significant work is underway globally to develop vaccines and treatments, however,

there currently remains no readily available vaccines to prevent the virus nor antivirals to treat it. At this stage, containment remains the top priority for governments around the world, even as some lockdowns are easing. Measures to mitigate the public health impacts of the pandemic have necessarily required governments to put economies on hold and put in place mechanisms to ensure that people, households, and businesses are supported through this period. But having said that, there is a various transformation in businesses especially changes towards digitalization for some of the sectors for ensuring business continuity. The education sector particularly has proven that classes can be conducted remotely via online for most of the schools. (Bogdandy et al., 2020).

The implication of the COVID-19 pandemic went from a direct health emergency to a systemic crisis affecting people's lives in multiple ways. COVID-19 impacts have been unprecedented because of its evolution from a health shock to a global economic and social crisis. The majority of the Thai people struggle to find the balance or adjustment towards this new normal. Besides the direct health impact, public health emergencies may also affect individuals and communities through isolation, stigma, job insecurity, inadequate resources for medical response, or loss of income. The fear or financial anxiety about the current financial matters and financial security about their future financial situation would affect their emotions and directly cause unhappiness and insecurity. Given the extraordinary event, we are currently dealing with financial security and coping with stress. There has been a correlation between the types of individuals and the effectiveness of recovering their personal finances. To be elaborate, Thai people have struggled with finding the balance between financial stability and being happy at the same time. Most people do not realize that resilience skills are an indispensable factor to cope with those aforementioned problems in any way. Resilience is the method of being able to adjust well and to manage stress. Developing resilience can help you cope with disappointments and failures. Research has shown that the outbreak of COVID-19 causes a major challenge to the normal functioning of societies and human health (Lu et al., 2020). This study aims for differences in happiness during COVID-19 pandemic effects by financial problems. COVID-19 has an enormous psychosocial impact (SouvikDubey et al., 2020).

2. The hamburger model of happiness

Happiness is the feeling of being pleased or delighted, which is a positive feeling. The Hamburger model defines 'happiness' as the general feeling of satisfaction (Ben-Shahar, 2009). Happy people can enjoy positive emotions if they experience life as something meaningful. Certain behaviours and certain consequences reinforce happiness to ensure it is sustained. For example, the factors that influence people's awareness of pleasure are income, age, and happiness (Chang-Ming Hsieh, 2011). According to the Hamburger Model, four models in the happiness model are Hedonism, Rat Race, Nihilism, and Happiness.

The first type in the happiness model is symbolized by a Hedonist who is someone who attempts to seek pleasure and avoid pain. They are all focused on the present moment. They do not think about the future when they make their decisions and choose their choices. They concentrate on the present and ignore all possible negative consequences of their behaviours and their actions. They live their life without a long-term goal or a challenge. According to the

hedonist, a key of this model is that positive emotions are necessary to maintain a human's aim towards more positive conditions as much as possible (Sheldon et al., 2013).

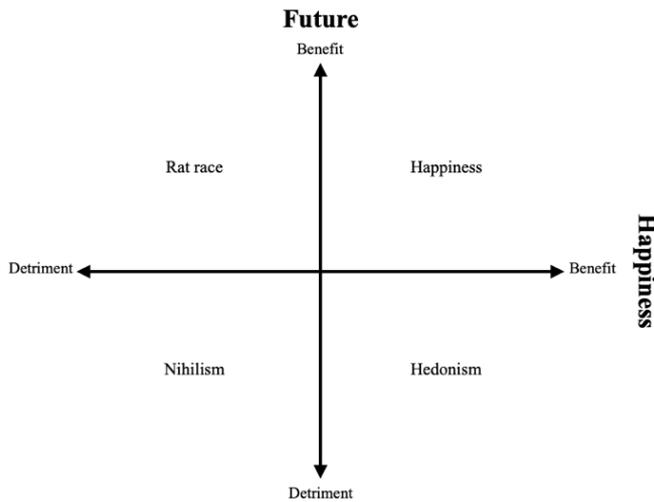


Figure 1: The four types of people according to the Happiness model

A Rat Racer symbolizes the second type in the Happiness model. These people are the particular opposites of hedonists. The rat racer people are 'work now, play later'. They would like to suffer now to earn benefits in the future as a reward. They sacrifice present happiness completely in order to gain some future benefits. Their life has become a Rat Racer because they believe that happiness is something they can accomplish in the future. When they finally reach their goal, they still keep searching for happiness because they only feel relief with happiness, but not lasting happiness.

A Nihilist symbolizes the third type in the Happiness model. Some people give up on the present and the future and spend their time deliberating on the wrong way as they have had a bad experience at present due to the fact that the poor quality of their life. This model describes someone who has lost their desire for life and does not enjoy the present, and does not have a future purpose. They believe that happiness cannot be reached. Moreover, they have the misleading belief that happiness cannot be felt at all, and they do not have faith in the present and future advantages.

The last type in the Happiness model is symbolized by Happiness. This model represents the balance between the present moment and the future where these people can appreciate a good balance of happiness and aim in their life. It comes from merging components from both the Rat Racer and the Hedonist. Present actions provide satisfaction while they remain the basis for a meaningful future. People can pursue present enjoyable activities that may be necessary to overcome such problems in any way (Ben-Shahar, 2007).

3. Resilience

Over and over a generation, medical fields associated with neuroscience, mental health, and psychology have always been concerned about the repercussions of stress and depression in both the short-term and long-term (Southwick et al., 2014). Therefore, because of the problems mentioned earlier, resilience has taken an interest. To be described, the word “resilience” can be described in various terms. In physical terms, resilience is the potential of a material to resist shocks elastically as well as release its energy back when it returns to its initial state. However, in psychology, resilience is conventionally defined as using positive adaptation to cope and overcome existential adversity (Coutu, 2002).

To be explained in deeper detail, resilience can categorize by using scales. In the beginning, resilience started with the individual by studying adolescents who used this theory in hardship conditions. Secondly, they expanded the idea of resilience on a large level as a family. Family resilience started with the essence problem associated with stress which had been discovered in the 1930s. The latest, the field of community resilience, this field pays attention to the balance between work and personal life policies which include social support systems. (Van Breda & Adrian, 2001).

According to the research, it is convinced that the alteration in resilience mediated the association between positive emotions and life satisfaction. This had been proved through the experiment by recruiting a group of students and collecting their daily emotions for one month and checking their resilience performance on the first day and last day of the month. As a result, there is no doubt that the effectiveness of resilience has a positive correlation with individual happiness (Cohn et al., 2009).

4. Methodology

In a quantitative study, the purpose of this study is to find the correlation between four types of happiness and their resilience skill to cope with their finances, and we use the primary data collected through our survey. By the procedure to collect the data, we use the online survey to recruit participants. The survey consisted of 2 multiple-choice questions that were asked about demographic information and 15 questions measured by a 5-point Likert scale (12 of which measure types of happiness and the rest resilience skills). The survey started to collect the data from March 2021, finally receiving 151 responses. Participants took no longer than 5 minutes to fill in the questions anonymously, and all questions required answers. Lastly, results from all of the participants in this survey were brought to use in the analysis process. Before analyzing the data, the complete data was prepared by checking for the missing data and outliers. Pearson’s correlation coefficients are the statistical method that was used to analyze the data.

The interpretation of correlation coefficients was based on Mukaka (2012) in which values between 0.3 and 0.5, 0.5 and 0.7, 0.7 and 0.9, and those values above 0.9 represent weak, moderate, strong, and very strong correlations, respectively; whereas, those below 0.3 are considered negligible correlation. However, where appropriate, this study points out a possible tendency of related variables, even though the values are lower than 0.3 for the purpose of discussion, without having intention to generalise the findings.

5. Results and discussion

According to table 1, the study used a Pearson’s scale assessing the correlation between four types of people based on hamburger models and their resilience. As a result, Rat race and happiness types have a positive correlation, the other two types: Hedonism and Nihilism, present a weak correlation. The data analysis illustrated that the correlation with resilience skills was the highest among Rat racers ($r = 0.45$), followed by those with Happiness ($r = 0.32$). However, there were negligible correlations between Nihilism and resilience, as well as between Hedonism and resilience.

	Rat race	Hedonism	Happiness	Nihilism
Resilience	0.45	0.05	0.32	0.19

Table 1: Correlation coefficients

There is a positive relationship between resilience and the four types of people in which both variables move in tandem. This includes Rat race and Happiness. To elaborate, Rat racer in a greater depth is a way of life in which people passionately struggle for wealth and happiness, completely ignoring the journey. The assumption underlying this is that Rat racers have a well-planned future and focus only on their objective. Researchers suggest that having a more organized future, the more effective it is to recover from their financial crisis. According to the research, it does not seem uncommon that people with discipline and morals tend to have a successful future (Vorderer & Peter, 2016; John Dewey, 1996). If the person can achieve their desired life goals, it will gradually improve their quality of life and boost their self-esteem. In addition, the characteristics of resilient people include stress resistance (Glicken & Morley D., 2006); therefore, it claims that Rat Racers who ignore the journey and focus only on the final destination must have a high tolerance to stress and depression.

Secondly, Happiness also expresses a positive correlation. People with this type of personality need to have better time management than Rat racers since they can deal with stress and still maintain their happiness during their process of dealing with their finances. Furthermore, one of the most significant characteristics of these types of people is a positive mindset; a personality where a person is able to let go of insignificant events and does not feel attached to them (Hiew & Chok C., 2004), having a vision that foresees yourself where you are most satisfied. Our point of view on this matter is that Happiness is the hardest to achieve. People with this type of personality will have the highest quality of life, highest self-esteem and much happiness (Dogan et al., 2013). With those aforementioned factors, they will be able to complete their duties at their best potentials. However, people with this type of personality will likely lose focus more than the Rat race, which will affect the accuracy of their work. This would be a result of weighing happiness over accomplishments that would lead to a successful future.

Lastly, the other two types of Hamburger models: Nihilism and Hedonism, show the negligible correlation associated with adaptability in this crisis. To be explained, there are similarities in some features; when they have to make decisions, they completely ignore the repercussions in the future, whether having a good or bad present situation. As a result of this detrimental action, they are not able to cope with their finances in this pandemic due to the fact that they did not prepare anything for the consequences and did not have self-regulation.

Furthermore, having self-regulation is a necessary skill to living in modern societies (Forgas et al., 2009); that means less self-regulation would lead to the detriment in terms of coping finances. Therefore, the correlation between the ability in resilience and those two types mentioned earlier can not be presented.

6. Conclusion

To summarize the above, this study is the investigation of statistical relationships between four different types of people (based on the Hamburger model) and resilience skills to cope with their financial problems during this viral spread crisis of Covid-19. It gives experiential evidence to strengthen the statistic by using 150 participants in various ranges of age. After the data analysing, there were two positive correlations between Rat Race and resilience as well as Happiness and resilience. The rationale behind this is that both of them are more likely to have an effective organizing future that correlate well with the increase in the ability to cope with financial crisis and recover mental stability. Furthermore, stress resistance, which appeared in Rat racer is the other essential factor to support resilience skill. Turning to the rest of the information, there were two weak positive correlations of Nihilism and Hedonism people types. In addition, this study offers new evidence to point out weak correlations of them. To be more precise, self-regulation comes into play the significant roles that point out why both Nihilist and Hedonist expressed the weak correlation associated with the ability to cope with their finances during these detrimental economic situations.

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