

What situations make people feel happy? As a Preliminary Investigation into Happiness Research Using Text Mining

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Abstract

This paper aims to exploratively analyze how people perceive happiness in various situations using text-mining techniques. While there is a wealth of research on well-being, studies employing text mining, specifically on open-ended responses, are still relatively scarce. Therefore, data collected through a mail survey based on random sampling was gathered and analyzed. The survey question was phrased as follows: “When do you feel ‘happy’? Please provide specific situations or actions; anything is fine (e.g., when working, spending time with family, etc.).” The obtained responses were subjected to text mining, focusing on the associations with gender, age, education, employment status, household income, religious beliefs, and more. The results revealed several insights, including 1) a common mention of “family” as a source of happiness, 2) a significant gender difference where women cited a variety of situations for happiness, while men tended to mention a limited set such as “family” or “work,” highlighting substantial gender disparities.