SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS INSIDE A CITY REGION – URBAN VILLAGES AND GATED COMMUNITIES

MIKKO WECKROTH[1]

ABSTRACT

Empirical happiness study has become an acknowledged part of welfare studies but its connections to geographical analysis are rare. This study is trying to contribute to this void by embedding empirical happiness study into analysis operating within a certain city region. Aim of the study was to acquire knowledge about personal values and preconditions happiness is based on. Furthermore, moving into certain community and the desired characteristics of a neighbourhood contributing happiness, were defined to represent these values as well

Instrumentalization of the concepts "happiness" and "subjective wellbeing" was constructed as a synthesis composing from Erik Allardts "loving", "having" and "being", Ed Dieners subjective wellbeing SWB and Aristotelian virtue of ethics. These components were transformed into an internet based questionnaire which was delivered to the residents of the neighbourhoods to be studied. As a research framework for comparative case study, juxtapositioning was constructed between a secluded post-suburban "gated community" located among the orbital roads of the metropolitan area, and more heterogeneous "urban village" better attached to existing urban structure

Results indicate that there can be found some differences concerning both self-reported levels and perceived preconditions for happiness effecting in neighborhoods studied. All of this variance cannot be explained through socio-economical variables. Results thereby suggest that cultural orientation can be seen as determinant for evaluating the components of happiness as well as locating choices. The approach described in this study could thereby be further developed and focused in order to reveal aspects of happiness and subjective wellbeing which are not detectable from analyses operating with larger scales.

[1] M.Sc.; PhD candidate at University of Helsinki, Finland

Faculty of Science, Department of Geosciences and Geography, Division of Geography

P.O.Box 64, Gustaf Hällströmin katu 2a. FI-0014 University of Helsinki, Finland

1. Introduction

During the 21th century empirical study of happiness has developed rapidly regarding both methodology and method. As a result it has managed to attach the study of happiness and subjective wellbeing (SWB) as an essential component when defining wellbeing in a cultures and societies defined by "post scarcity economy"(Giddens 2007). Along with the rising interest for measuring happiness, there have been attempts to connect this study into geography through new welfare indicators such as "gross national happiness". However these spatial analyses of SWB and happiness have been mostly operating with formal regions and comparisons between countries or in some cases between certain city regions (Leyden, Goldberg & Michelbach 2011). However the connections to "space" and "location" as a geographer understands them have remained scarce. This research is trying fill this void by establishing an approach linking together empirical happiness study, theories of wellbeing and social attributes of urban life. This objective is pursued by developing an interdisciplinary approach for examining the spatial appearance of happiness inside a city region. Thereby it would be adding on to the small but growing literature of "geography of happiness"(Florida 2008).

In this study, as an addition to perceptions of personal happiness, the aim was to acquire knowledge about personal values and preconditions happiness is based on. Furthermore, moving into certain community and the desired characteristics of a neighbourhood contributing happiness, were defined to represent these values as well. Thus the approach suggested in this study is aiming for increased understanding why certain population segments behave – and locate – as they do. The research would try to reach this understanding by recognising the shared values among different population segments in different living environments. And essentially, whether living in certain environment representing these values, could be defined as an attribute generating subjective wellbeing for them.

The interdisciplinary approach described in this paper is also emphasizing that multidimensional concept of happiness cannot be studied without somehow defining values and theories shaping the concept of "good life". This calls for approach which aims for understanding happiness as a social, psychological and cultural phenomenon. Hence it is always connected to the society and context is being examined in. This approach does not however propose that defining "good life" should be made arbitrary, but rather that subjective role of researcher, perspective and context should be at some level admitted and acknowledged. If these presumptions regarding "good life" and happiness are based on commonly approved theories about wellbeing, they are thus easy to defend.

Therefore the main objective of the approach suggested here would be to test the dominant theories regarding both subjective wellbeing and social environment in urban context through methods of empirical happiness study.

2. Theoretical and operational context of the study

With population reaching nearly 2 millions, Greater Helsinki Region (GHR) is by far the biggest concentration of housing and labour markets in Finland. The development of Helsinki metropolitan area has been closely connected to the simultaneous development shaping the whole nation during last decades. After the Second World War the development of Finland has been characterised by continual development in overall standard of living, enduring change of occupational structure and rapid urbanization interconnected to both of these socially reforming changes. As the most visible physical result of this change can be seen the appearance of high-rise suburban neighbourhood units built across the country mostly during 1960´s and 1970´s. While these suburban apartment blocks exist in the outskirts of most of the biggest cites in Finland, during last decade in Greater Helsinki Region there has indentified also a concept of "post-suburban" living (Ratvio 2012). These new post-suburban residential areas which have appeared to the outskirts of the invasive metropolitan area, are considered to be representing an emerging car-dependent urban structure. This physical transformation of urban structure is seen to connect also to lifestyle choices and orientation seeking for safe and peaceful neighbourhood close to natural

environment. Therefore the appearance of post-suburban structure is inevitably connected to the concept of urban sprawl.

The concept of "urban sprawl" in general refers to the diffusion of urban structure as a contrast to – at least from institutional and public point of view - more desirable compact, better accessible and dense urban form. The development described by urban sprawl is also connected to single-use and low-density zoning which is leading towards more car-dependent communities. Most criticism targeted to the outcomes of urban sprawl is based on the impact it has on ecological sustainability while the widespread urban infrastructure adds operational expenses in both household and communal scale. Since urban sprawl also reshapes the scene and setting for daily activities and mobility, some studies have been concentrating to impacts affecting social environment as well. For example while the time spent for daily commuting has been found to have strongly negative effect for subjective wellbeing (Stutzer 2008), some happiness studies have been trying to analyze the connection between neighbourhood walkability and social capital (Leyden 2003). Consequently since neighbourhoods are the physical setting for our daily activities that can facilitate social connections and connection with place itself, social capital can be further linked to the subjective wellbeing of individuals(Putnam 2000).

One of the first remarks about interconnections of geography and happiness was made by geographer Richard Florida. With his book "Who is your city"(Florida 2008) he introduced an idea about individuals and households behaving -and especially locating - as maximizers of their personal happiness. Florida suggests that in search for happiness people make three big decisions during their lifespan: *what* to do, *with* whom to do it and *where* to do it. According to Florida, happiness study has been constrained only to the first two questions and thus the question regarding *where* has been neglected.

When Florida suggest that "*place is the missing link in happiness studies*" he is building his argument based on his earlier books analysing the movement of creative class. Analysis which Florida is promoting is however based on a rather simplified assumption that individuals have, as an addition to sufficient economical resources, also a willingness to migrate and roam freely in the network of city regions in order to seek location contributing best to their personal happiness. Following studies have shown however that at least in European context creative class is much more rooted than Florida suggests. The softer elements of urban culture (for example tolerance towards minorities) do have an impact on contentment for living environment but they seldom work as an alluring factor for city region in whole (Kepsu 2010).

This kind of theoretical background gives an opportunity to suggest that it might be instructive to examine the geography and migration of happiness inside a city region instead of between cities. In that way the operational context for the study would be more familiar and therefore the interfering factors could be more easily controllable. For example in a context such as Greater Helsinki Region this kind of approach can be built on an observation that in Finland exists a largely shared culture regarding the hopes and preferences focusing on housing, influencing through all socio-economical classes (Kortteinen, Tuominen & Vaattovaara 2005). Expectations in Finnish housing culture can be summarized into a detached housing in a green and safe environment with good connections to the services and the centre. Simultaneously the continuous growth of national wealth has allowed an increasing part of households to actualise these expectations.

However, due to the short history of urbanization, the urban culture can be still considered very young in Finnish context. One could argue that typical "urban" landscape in Finland is still a shopping mall next to a highway intersection. During last few years there have been detected some signals for increased valuation for central living. Some urban movements (such as "restaurant day" and urban guerrilla farming[2]) in Helsinki during past few years can also be seen as an evolution of diverse and active urban culture. These can also be interpreted as a soft signal of breaking up the monoculture regarding housing. However at the same time intense and continuous increase in overall housing cost in Helsinki region, along with the absence of reasonably prized family-size apartments continue to

---

[2] Both of these can be seen as local manifestations of citizen originated urban movements influenced by overall development in international urbanism.

steer to migration patter towards the outskirts of city region.

These descriptive patterns of regional development set up the operational layout and context this geographical analysis is embedded in. In this analysis special attention is given to highly educated families with children. These households are usually at sensitive stage on their housing career due to their increased need for living space. They are also considered to be most likely to change their living environment while the undesirable attributes in area increase. As a contrast to Floridas "creative class", in this study the segment of "highly educated class families with children" is considered to form a better indicator for analyzing the geography, spatial distribution and migration patterns of happiness inside a city region.

Consequently, the chosen cases to be examined in this study were selected due to their emphasized "village" images and thus the juxtapositioning was constructed between a secluded post-suburban "gated community" located among the orbital roads of the metropolitan area, and more heterogeneous "urban village" better attached to existing urban structure. Hence, the aim was to obtain knowledge about subjective wellbeing of individuals from two different residential areas inside Helsinki metropolitan area through comparative case study. The research sought to answer the following questions:

- Are there any differences between the areas regarding the components personal happiness is based on?

- Are there any differences between the areas regarding the level of residents´ subjective wellbeing?

- Based on the assessments of the residents, what are the most important characteristics of neighbourhood contributing to personal happiness?

At present day both of the areas to be examined share a reputation of desirable neighbourhoods with child-friendly and natural environment. Urban village of Kumpula is a green and ample neighbourhood consisting from a mix of wooden owner-occupied single houses with large yards and some semi-attached housing with rental flats. It has a history of disreputable working class area which gentrificated during 80´s and 90´s into a neighbourhood promoting itself as an urban village. Development village identity in Kumpula has been strongly influenced by strong tenant society, which has been rising to oppose several planning and zoning schemes experienced to endanger its existence. Thereby the development and history of Kumpula seem to fit fluently to the theories addressing the development of urban villages as a manifestation of local identity (Jacobs 1961)(Zukin 1995).

Sundsberg however has raised an interest for several studies in Finnish urban geography because it has been seen to represent a solid example of "urban sprawl" and post-suburban lifestyle (Ratvio 2012)(Laakso et al. 2005, Vaattovaara, Vuolteenaho 2005). Sundberg is intimately-scaled residential area consisting about 2600 residents, built by a private construction agency to the outskirts of metropolitan area during 2005 and 2012. Construction company EKE-Construction Ltd, responsible of zoning and constructing of Sundsberg, is focusing primarily on developing entire residential areas of single-family homes. Area of Sunderg is marketed to the consumers as a "happy village". Based on a previous studies (Laakso et al. 2005) residents of Sundsberg form a highly homogenous group consisting of well educated families with children's. Common reasons for moving into the area has been as a desire to provide safe and secure environment for the children, as well as issues rising from situation in the housing markets in GHR mentioned earlier. As an attracting factor for moving into Sunsdberg, has been some attributes in social environment of the previous neighbourhood connected to the concept of suburban living in a high-rise housing.

While Sundsberg does not compare to the walled and guard-gated communities catering for foreigners and expats prominent in many Asian cities, it has features justifying its classification into an example of gated community in European context. Idea of these communities could be generalized into some sort of lifestyle-enclave promoting ideal of safe and secure upper middle class living close to the nature at the same time being capable of eliminating negative aspects associated with urban life. Some criticism towards gated communities is based on an argument that while they, without a doubt, cater the need for housing markets operating in free market economy, they could have a negative effect on the overall social capital of the broader community outside the gated community(Low 2003).

As an *a priori* hypothesis was that regarding overall life orientation and values affecting as preconditions for personal happiness, there can be seen difference between neighbourhoods being studied. Assumption thereby by is that migration pattern leading households to a different areas, operates more or less selectively according to these variables. With this assumption we should however acknowledge that the different history of these neighbourhoods raises some questions regarding the framework of the study. The fact that residents of Sundsberg have moved to the area during last decade while Kumpula has much longer history including changes in housing- and occupant structure weakens the explanatory value of the analysis based on a selective migration. However, on a basis of their similar image of urban and "happy" village offering green, safe and secure environment suitable for families with children, the analysis based on a comparative case study can be attempted.

3. Method of the study

The data used in order to answer the research questions presented was obtained from an internet-based survey questionnaire. While building up the questionnaire, the concepts of "subjective wellbeing" and "happiness" were defined as synonyms and the instrumentalization was thereby constructed as a synthesis from Erik Allardts "loving", "having" and "being"(Allardt 1974), Ed Dieners SWB(Diener 2009) and Aristotelian virtue of ethics(Aristoteles 2011).

At the first section respondents were asked to rate 14 different suggested factors as preconditions for personal happiness (coded as 1= "not at all important // 5= extremely important). The suggested factors for possible components of happiness were attained from a national scale survey of values and attitudes implemented in 2005 (Torvi, Kiljunen 2005).

In the second part, happiness was first measured with a single question: "over all things considered how happy do you feel your personal life (coded as 1=not at all happy // 5 extremely happy)". As an addition to this, the concept of "Subjective wellbeing" as presented by Ed Diener(Diener 2009) was instrumetalized into eight separate questions displaying different aspect of personal wellbeing. These questions included following claims: *"I see my work as a meaningful and interesting" ; "In general, I´m in a good physical condition" ; " Until present, I have archieved important goals in my life" ; "I feel I can participate sufficiently in communal decisions" ; " I rarely feel myself frustrated and insufficient" ; " I rarely feel myself lonely" ; " I regard to my personal future positively and with a trust" ; " I often feel enthusiastic and full of energy".* These questions were included to the survey in order to form a more comprehensive picture of the multidimensional concept of happiness and therefore improve the validity of the study[3]. These theories of wellbeing presented earlier were seen as influential theories affecting at background of these questions. Hence the form of the second part of the questionnaire was seen to be representing an instrumentalization of the theories of wellbeing presented earlier.

Third part of the survey introduced 15 attributes of living environment which respondents were asked to rate as contributors into their personal happiness. At first the respondents were asked to value the importance of these elements and after this they were asked to rate these same elements regarding how well they were experienced to actualize in their present neighbourhood. The mix of questions trying to capture wide range of possible attributes ranging from physical attributes of built environment (connections to various services and experienced aesthetics of living environment) as well as some social dimensions (tolerance to other occupants of the area, active neighbourhood culture, diversity in residential structure). The form of many questions was obtained from previous studies addressing connections between built environment and happiness (Leyden, Goldberg & Michelbach 2011)(Morrison 2011) and more general theories behind social environment in urban setting (Putnam 2000, Jacobs 1961, Zukin 1995, Castells 1997). In the last part of questionnaire respondents were also given a chance to write at their own words about the most important attributes of the

---

[3] The debate whether wellbeing can -or should be measured with a single question, remains to be one of prevailing questions within happiness study. While some studies treat happiness, life satisfaction and subjective wellbeing interchangeable others combine them into an index and some argue for their separation (Morrison 2011). When combining the results of eight elements subjective wellbeing used in this data into sum variable, they results an correlation of 0,49** (Spearman´s rho) with single dimension variable of happiness. This compares very close to the correlations observed from similar international studies.

neighbourhood contributing best to their personal happiness.

The survey was conducted during July and August 2010. Letters including the internet address of the survey were delivered to the households in two rounds and this resulted as a total of 172 replies.

4. Results

The results of the study are being presented in the picture 1. First off all, we can see that the values follow rather close to the national mean from 2005. Biggest deviation from national mean can be found from variable *"Spirituality, relationship to God"* where this component is experienced less important than in average. Overall as a comparative analysis between the cases we can say that the residents of post-suburban village Sundsberg seem to share a highly family oriented set of values and actualizing these values is ensured with high income, wealth and secure work situation. In the gentrificated "urban village" Kumpula, however, the components of happiness seem to lean more towards learning and personal development, interesting leisure time activities and hobbies and having an influence regarding communal decisions.
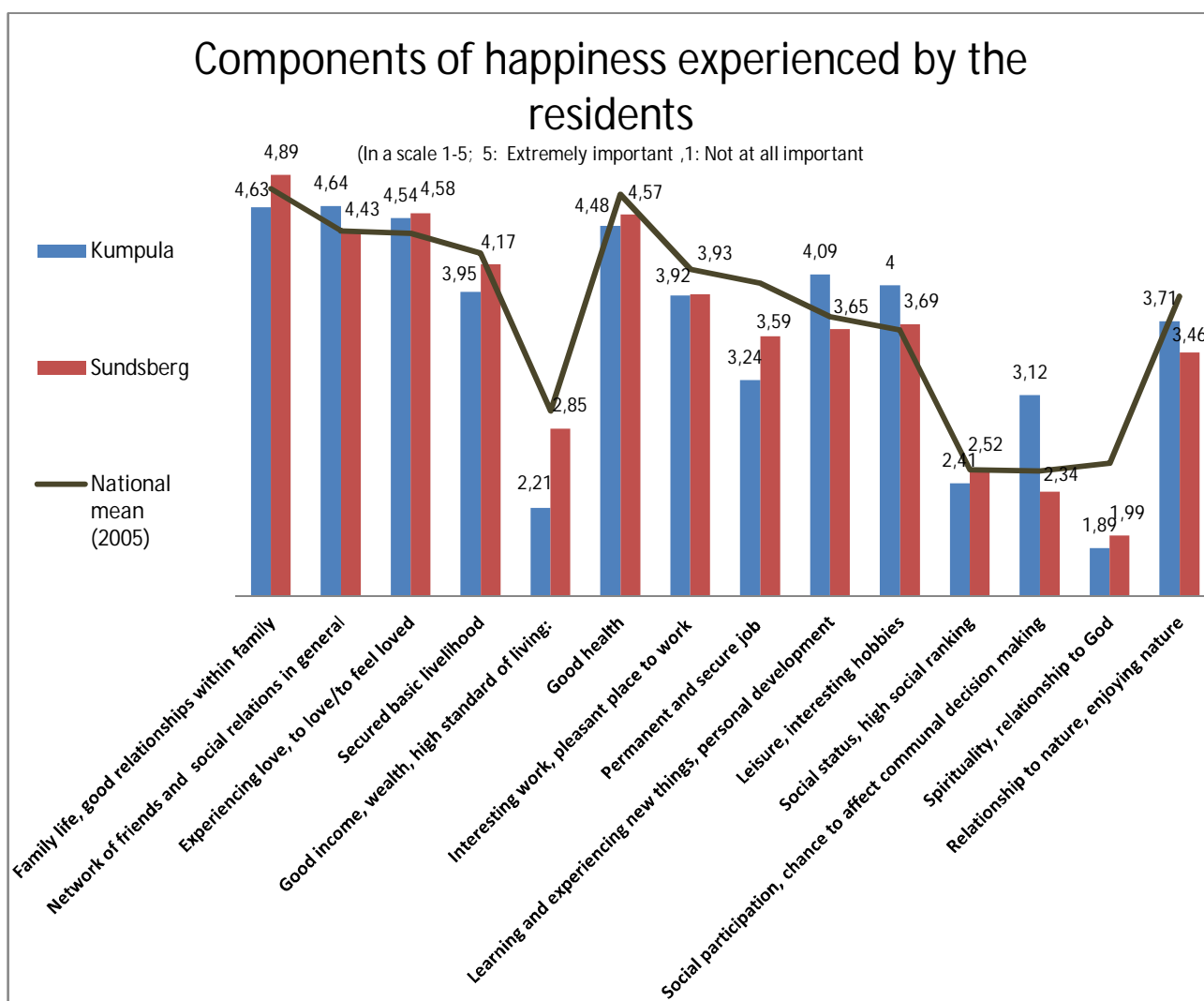
Picture 1. Preconditions of personal happiness as experienced by the residents of Kumpula and Sundsberg

Biggest different between the areas exist in components of *"good income, wealth, high standard of living"* and *"social participation, chance to affect communal decision making"* where the latter is

experienced more important component of personal happiness in Kumpula. Since one could argue that most of these differences could be explained with the difference of socio-demographical structure between the areas, it is necessary to examine the part of "well educated households with children" which was given special attention as indicator for migration of happiness. When examining only this segment the data shows that between these two variables the difference remains evident. In the variable *"good income, wealth, high standard of living"* difference even increases while Kumpula scores a mean of 2,05 and Sundsberg gives an average of 2,78. In the variable of *"social participation, chance to affect communal decision making"* corresponding values are Kumpula 3,05 and Sundberg 2,47. However, due to fact that the data was rather small to begin with, number of valid cases in this examination in too small for results to have any statistical significance.

The second part of questionnaire was adressing the personal happiness and subjective wellbeing of respondents. Results seem to validate that in both cases it is justified to be referring them as a "happy villages" since they both score (Sundsberg 4,34 and Kumpula 4,11) above national average of 3,8(Torvi, Kiljunen 2005). Thereby results also indicate that people rate their personal life slightly happier in Sundsberg than in Kumpula. In Sundberg people who rate their life "extremely happy" was as high as 38 % (compared to 21 % in Kumpula). Regarding the eight claims instrumentalized from a concept of subjective wellbeing (SWB) seem to back up these results and thereby overall validity of the study. Sundsberg scores slightly higher averages of seven out of eights components: respondents of Sundsberg agree more the to these following claims : *"I see my work as a meaningful and interesting"* ; *"In general, I´m in a good physical condition"* ; *" Until present, I have achieved important goals in my life"* ; *" I rarely feel myself frustrated and insufficient"* ; *" I rarely feel myself lonely"* ; *" I regard to my personal future positively and with a trust"* ; *" I often feel enthusiastic and full of energy"*. Only variable in which Kumpula receives a higher score is *""I feel I can participate sufficiently in communal decisions"*. This result could be seen consequencing from a fact that residents of Kumpula rate this element more important precondition for happiness than people in Sunsberg. Hence the actualizing of this element has been a higher priority.

Regarding the third part of the survey addressing the characteristics of a neighbourhood that increases happiness, the data suggests that the key characteristics are peacefulness and safety, central location, good connections, and the proximity of parks and recreat. These charecteristics were considered highly significant in both areas but they were thought to actualize better in Kumpula. In addition to these components, the residents in Kumpula were overall more satisfied with various characteristics that contribute to happiness in their residential area. Beside the above-mentioned attributes, the residents of Kumpula also emphasize some softer elements connected to the social, functional and communal side of the area. In part of where respondents could tell with their own words about the favoured attributes of neighbourhood, people in Kumpula emphasized the significance of good connections, green and natural environment, sense of communality and regional history and identity. From Sundsberg residents' point of view however, a residential area that contributes best to their happiness is a child friendly and safe community made of like-minded people, who share the same socioeconomic situation.

Regarding the characteristics of neighbourhood results are in no contrast to the previous studies addressing connections between happiness and environment. Florida suggests (Florida 2008) , based on survey with 27 000 respondents, that key attributes of communities connecting to happiness are 1: *physical and economical security* (perceptions of crime and safety) 2: *basic services* (schools, health-care affordable housing, roads and public transportation) 3: *leadership* (quality of business and civil leadership, opportunity for public and local engagement) 4: *openness* (tolerance and acceptance to diverse demographic groups, mixed socio-demographic structure) and 5: *aesthetics* (physical beauty, architecture, amenities, cultural offerings). Significance of all of these elements rise from the results, but there could also be interpreted different emphasis between areas. While in residents of both areas are pleased with issues of security, the lack of some basic services (good connections and public transport) can be seen to diminish the feeling of happiness in Sundsberg. Issues addressing leadership are somehow lacking from both areas but the opportunity for public and local engagement is regarded more significant component of happiness in community of Kumpula. Thereby it is experienced to

actualize better as well. Also both the significance and realization of clusters *"openness"* and *"aesthetics"* as an attributes of residential community contributing to personal happiness are at higher level in Kumpula than in Sundsberg.

These results presented above fall mostly to the category of descriptive analysis. This is usually the cases when the phenomenon being examined is rather new and preliminary study is scarcely available. While happiness can´t be in any sense described as a new phenomenon, empirical happiness study and specially implementing it into a geographical analysis fills these requirements. As well the research framework includes using a statistical analysis as a method in comparative case study sets some limitations to the analysis. In comparative case studies the intention usually is that the examined units represent specific "cases" from something broader and therefore the results can somehow be generalized into a wider scale. Despite the small size of the data being used, a deeper and to some extent more explanatory analysis based on the survey data could be attempted. In this anaysisi target was to gain better understanding about the components happiness is based and as well about the possible difference regarding the cases to the examined. Based on this situation the results of logistic regression analysis are presented in the table below (table 1).

Table 1. Influence of socio-demographic and subjective variables into experiencing "extremely happy" .

Odds ratios (OR) and distribution of variables from a logistic regression models.

Neigbourhood		N	Model 1		Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	
	Kumpula	72	1,00		1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	
	Sundsberg	100	2,33	*	1,63	1,52	1,43	1,61	1,65	
Socio-demographic variables										
Sex	Female	99	1,00		1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	
	Male	45	1,05		1,14	1,11	1,08	1,18	1,38	
Age group	18-35	61	1,00		1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	
	36-42	53	1,35		0,99	0,99	0,97	0,88	0,86	
	43 +	57	0,55		0,58	0,66	0,69	0,62	0,73	
Childrens in household	No	70	1,00		1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	
	Yes	100	2,93	*	2,20	2,11	2,14	2,15	2,40	
Educational level	Max. comprehensive or vocational school	29	1,00			1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	
	Upper scondary school	12	2,08			1,72	1,78	1,51	1,42	
	Lower University degree	30	3,62	*		3,22	3,34	2,97	2,57	
	Upper University degree or higher	98	3,32	*		2,49	2,54	2,10	1,69	
Subjective wellbeing variables										
Significance of good income, wealth, high standard of living	Not at all // somehow important	150	1,00				1,00	1,00	1,00	
	Important // Extremely important	22	1,67				1,59	1,59	1,57	
I feel I can participate sufficiently in communal decicionmaking:	Strongly// slightly disagree	87	1,00					1,00	1	
	Mostly //fully agree	85	1,9					2,03	1,911	
I often feel myself enthusiastic and full of energy:	Strogly disagree// mostly agree	96	1,00						1	
	Fully agree	70	2,58	**					2,91	**
Nagelkerke R²			0,048		0,117	0,138	0,14	0,17	0,226	
2 log likelihood			206,503		195,47	189,26	188,53	184,893	177,321	
d.f.			1		6	9	10	11	12	
X²			5,95		14,75	17,14	17,87	21,43	29,076	
p			0,02		0,022	0,047	0,06	0,03	0,004	

Model 1. All variables in the model separately (explanatary value R² and testing of model from neighbourhood variable)

Model 2. Sociodemographic variables included in the model (sex, age group, chidrens)
Model 3. Sociodemographic variables included in the model (sex, age group, chidrens, educational level)
Model 4. All sociodemographic variables and significance of good income, wealth and high standard of living included in the model

Model 5. All sociodemographic variables,significance of good income, wealth and high standard of living and experienced possibility to participate in communal decisions included in the model
Model 6. All variables included in the model

*: p<0.05; **: p<0.01; ***: p<0.001

Regression analysis is used for predicting the outcome of a binary dependent variable (a variable which can take only two possible outcomes). In this study the variance of self-reported happiness was transformed into a binary dependent variable in a way that feeling "extremely happy" was codes as one possible outcome

and all other levels of happiness counted as the other group. After this the variable "neighbourhood" was defined as a primary explanatory predictor. Thus from the table 1 we can see that living in Sundsberg gives 2,33 odds ratio compared to Kumpula. In other words, living in Sundbergs gives a 2,33 times bigger likelihood to be reporting level of "extremely happy". This connection between location (neighbourhood) and happiness was the observation which was then to be elaborated and specified by adding other predictors to the analysis. As a layout for geographical and spatial analysis there was also an interest to find out how much explanatory value remains in the neighbourhood variable while other variables are controlled.

Column "model 1" indicates the affects (odds ratio, OR) each single variable has for feeling "extremely happy" without any other variables controlled. This examination shows that, sex seems to have no significant connection to feelings of happiness. Neither does belonging into a certain age group have notable effect in this data. However education and having children in the family can be seen to have a positive effect on feeling happiness. Without any other variables controlled the difference has as well statistical significance. According to data other variable which has significant connection to happiness is feeling oneself enthusiastic and energetic.

Second model included includes some socio-demographical variables as controlled in the model. from the "model 2" we can see that while the OR of "having children in household" loses its statistical significance it is still the strongest predictor of feeling "extremely happy". Most important observation here is however that when these socio-demographical variables are controlled, OR of neighbourhood variable declines to 1,63. Adding "educational level" to the model declines this diffence ecen further but much less than adding the variable of "having children in household". Thereby we can assume that most of the difference in feeling "extremely happy" between the areas can be explained with these socio-demographcial variable while "having children in household" being the most important predictor.

Models 4,5,6 introduce some variables labelled as "subjective wellbeing variables" into the model. Since the biggest difference between the areas regarding the preconditions for personal happiness were *"good income, wealth, high standard of living"* and *"social participation, chance to affect communal decision making"* this elements were added in order to see how they affect the difference between the neighbourhood variables OR. When adding the appreciation of *"good income, wealth, high standard of living"* to the model the difference decreases further into 1,43. However after adding the actualisation of "participation to communal decicions" diffenrence increases to 1,61. And adding "feeling enthusiastic and full of energy" difference increases however the affect is only minimal.

Results seem to however suggest that strongest explanatory value for feeling "extremely happy" was socio-demographic variables used and especially having children in family and to some extent educational level. However after these variables were controlled, the difference between the areas increase which could suggest that meaning of these elements has stronger effect on happiness in Kumpula. This kind of interpretations based on this small data is however on a rather tenuous basis. Results of logistical regression analysis should thereby interpreted together with descriptive statistics, instead of a valid statistical indicator. Nevertheless, one thing which can have some reliability is the variable "feeling enthusiastic and full of energy" which holds the statistical significance while other variables are controlled. Another remark rising the results is that having children in household predicts a much stronger happiness than have been found from previous happiness studies with bigger data(Frey, Stutzer 2002). This is probably due to the case study method where the areas to be studied were selected based to their characteristics as a favourable locations for families with children. Thereby we could say that results validate that both of these areas seem to suitable locations for maximizers of happiness on families with children.

5. Discussion

Sociologist Manuel Castells started his book "The Urban Ideology(Castells 1977)" with asking: *"Is the city a source of creation or decline? Is the urban lifestyle an expression of civilization? Is the environmental context a determining factor in social relations?"* And furthermore, if these urban questions can be deduced into formulations such as:*"high-rise housing estates alienate, the city centre animates, the green spaces relax, the large city is the domain of anonymity, the neighbourhood gives identity, slums*

produce crime, the new towns create social peace, etc".

Although these questions formulate the perpetual core of urban sociology, the results of this study can be seen deliver two alternative routes to answer these questions. The data presented here suggests that there exists a difference between the experienced preconditions for happiness between certain residential areas inside city. These differences remain even while controlling the socio-economical factors and it is affecting also in evaluations regarding living environment experienced to contribute to the personal happiness.

Thereby it is fair to suggest that cultural orientation can be seen as determinant for evaluating the components of happiness as well as locating choices. The results can thereby be seen as an example of differentiation of conditions for personal happiness between certain population segments. It is possible to detect a spatial dimension to this process as well. Results thereby suggest that regional segmentation affected by broader life-orientation and set of values exists between high-ranking residential areas, too.

As an addition to this, the results from the logistic regression model seem to support the overall validity of empirical happiness study. Therefore, all of the variance regarding feeling extremely happy is not based on a socio-demographic situation, but also subjective wellbeing such as participation for communal decisions and optimistic and positive attitude have explanatory value.

The framework of the research, as well as small size of the data used in this study creates some difficulties for the generalization of the results. Thereby the results and interpretations presented in this paper are hoped to open up new directions empirical happiness study could be issuing in the future when operating in urban and regional context. The remaining difference between areas which variables used in this model could not explain sets up a demand for both methodological and data triangulation.

The approach described in this study could thereby be further developed and focused in order to reveal aspects of happiness and subjective wellbeing with are not visible in the analysis operating with larger scales. When connecting subjective wellbeing and personal values into social setting inside urban space it has a chance to test some classical theories regarding urban life as well as help to understand the migration and distribution of happiness inside a city region.

References:

Allardt, E. 1974, *About dimensions of welfare : an exploratory analysis of a comparative Scandinavian survey,* 2. ed. edn, , Helsinki.

Aristoteles, 2011, *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics,* Chicago University Press, Chicago.

Castells, M. 1997, *The power of identity,* Blackwell, Oxford.

Castells, M. 1977, *The urban question,* Arnold, London.

Diener, E. 2009, *Assessing well-being : the collected works of Ed Diener,* Springer, Dordrecht.

Florida, R. 2008, *Who is your city?* Basic books, New York.

Frey, B. & Stutzer, A. 2002, *Happiness and economics : how the economy and institutions affect well-being,* Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Giddens, A. 2007, *Europe in the global age,* Polity Press, Cambridge.

Jacobs, J. 1961, *The death and life of great American cities,* Random House, New York.

Kepsu, K. 2010, *Vetävä Helsinki : luovien ja tietointensiivisten alojen osaajien näkemyksiä seudusta : kotimainen ja kansainvälinen näkökulma,* Helsingin kaupungin tietokeskus, Helsinki.

Kortteinen, M., Tuominen, M. & Vaattovaara, M. 2005, "Asumistoiveet, sosiaalinen epäjärjestys ja kaupunkisuunnittelu pääkaupunkiseudulla", *Yhteiskuntapolitiikka,* vol. 70, no. 2, pp. 121.

Laakso, M., Halme, T., Kilpeläinen, P., Loikkanen, H.A. & Vaattovaara, M. 2005, *Kirkkonummen kunnan muuttoliiketutkimus,* Helsingin yliopisto, maantieteen laitos, Helsinki.

Leyden, K.M. 2003, "Social Capital and the Built Environment: The Importance of Walkable Neighborhoods", *American Journal of Public Health,* vol. 93, no. 9, pp. 1546-1551.

Leyden, K.M., Goldberg, A. & Michelbach, P. 2011, "Understanding the Pursuit of Happiness in Ten Major Cities", *Urban Affairs Review,* vol. 47, no. 6, pp. 861-888.

Low, S.M. 2003, *Behind the gates : life, security, and the pursuit of happiness in fortress America,* Routledge, New York.

Morrison, P.S. 2011, "Local Expressions of Subjective Well-being: The New Zealand Experience", *Regional Studies,* vol. 45, no. 8, pp. 1039.

Putnam, R.D. 2000, *Bowling alone : the collapse and revival of American community,* Simon & Schuster, New York.

Ratvio, R. 2012, *Elämää keskustassa ja kaupunkiseudun reunoilla : urbaani ja jälkiesikaupungillinen elämäntyyli asumisen valinnoissa ja arkiliikkumisessa Helsingin seudulla,* Helsingin yliopisto, Helsinki.

Stutzer, A. 2008, "Stress that Doesn't Pay: The Commuting Paradox", *Scandinavian Journal of Economics,* vol. 110, no. 2, pp. 339-366.

Torvi, K. & Kiljunen, P. 2005, *Onnellisuuden vaikea yhtälö : Evan kansallinen arvo- ja asennetutkimus 2005,* Taloustieto, Helsinki.

Vaattovaara, M.(.) & Vuolteenaho, J.(.). 2005, *Asumisen uudet onnelat? : Tapaustutkimuksia asumusmieltymyksistä Espoossa ja sen lähikunnissa,* Espoon kaupunki, Espoo.

Zukin, S. 1995, *The cultures of cities,* Blackwell, Cambridge, Mass.