

“Are migrants better off through migration? The what,  
why, and how of considering immigrant happiness”  
by Hendriks and Bartram

Comments by Hai-Anh Dang

World Bank

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# Overview

- Interesting paper that reviews happiness studies related to migrants
  - summarizes and digests the vast literatures in widely different fields incl. economics, sociology, psychology
  - identifies gaps & areas for further research
  - provides fresh & stimulating food for thoughts

# Comments/ Questions (1)

- The various sections can perhaps be re-organized and numbered

## **Introduction**

### **\*Blind spots in research on the consequences of migration**

#### **Towards a happiness angle in evaluation migration consequences**

Concept and measurement

Initial insights from the literature on migration happiness

How important is happiness for migrants?

\*\*Is happiness relevant when migration isn't 'voluntary'?

### **\*Challenges, applications in other contexts, and future directions**

\*\*To what extent does happiness work differently for migrants?

Extending the happiness angle to natives and stayers

Extending the happiness angle to migration behavior

The instrumental role of happiness for improving domain outcomes

## **Conclusion**

## Comments/ Questions (2)

- A streamlined framework can help?
  - a flow diagram?
  - some tables summarizing/ comparing studies can be interesting
    - the happy peasants (Graham, 2009) vs. the hopeless beggar (Sen and Nussbaum, 1993)
    - migrants in more livable countries happier than those in less livable countries?
    - migrants with higher incomes happier than those with lower incomes?
- Are these “stylized” facts? Can some patterns be made “stylized”?
- some graphs, i.e., “a picture is worth many words”?

## Comments/ Questions (3)

### - Some other technical concerns...

- a table can be provided to better compare studies that offer a causal relationship vs. a correlational relationship
- review the techniques that identify causation
- cross sectional data vs. panel data

→ these issues should be discussed in the text, rather than be mentioned for the first time in the conclusion

### - Other minor issues

- satisfaction scale of 1-5 vs. 0-10
- review quantitative studies vs. qualitative studies