

Why do Universities Need either Happiness Education or Religion Education?

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<Abstract>

This article examines why universities need either happiness education or religion education. To discuss this study systematically, four research questions are stated. First, what are the concepts of religion and happiness? Second, what is the relation between religion and happiness? Third, why do universities need happiness education or religion education? Last, what are the implications for Korean universities? In order to defend the research questions, a descriptive content analysis method will be utilized with a cross cultural approach. As for the limitations of this study, the subject of happiness is adjusted the focus of two lenses of religion and education. The field of religion is limited to three major religions, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity, which greatly influencing Korean religion and culture. This paper is especially focused on *The Analects* in Confucian Classics, *Dahmmapada* in Buddhist Sutras, and *The Gospels* in the Christian Bible. Additionally, education is directed the lens to South Korean higher education. One of research results is that educational administrators and policy makers in Korean higher education should design “Teaching & Research Happiness Frameworks,” providing useful “happiness curricula” and “religious programs” for their students to boost their life satisfaction and well-being.

*Completion Date: Sep. 16, 2019.

*This academic article is a descriptive position paper.

*Key Words: higher education, Korean education, happiness education, religion education, happiness, religion, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity

I. Introduction

The purpose of this article is to examine why universities need either happiness education or religion education. To discuss this study systematically, four research questions are stated. First, what are the concepts of religion and happiness? Second, what is the relation between religion and happiness? Third, why do universities need happiness education or religion education? Last, what are the implications for Korean universities?

In order to defend the research questions, a descriptive content analysis method will be utilized with a cross cultural approach. As for the limitations of this study, the subject of happiness is adjusted the focus of two lenses of religion and education. The field of religion is limited to three major religions, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity, which greatly influencing Korean religion and culture. This paper is mainly focused on *The Analects* in Confucian Classics, *Dahmmapada* in Buddhist Sutras, and *The Gospels* in the Christian Bible. Additionally, education is directed the lens to South Korean higher education. The significance of the study is to offer higher education theorists and practitioners not only basic theories, but useful resources regarding happiness education and religion education.

In terms of academia, the theme of happiness has a long tradition in theology and philosophy. Moreover, it has more widely spread in religious study and pedagogy as well as in medical science and psychology since the late 20th century. Especially, in the field of education, recently numerous studies concerned with higher education and happiness have been researched by quite a number of theorists (Blanchflower & Oswald, 2004; Bothwell, 2017; Chen, 2011; Crawford, 2017; Elwick & Cannizzaro, 2017; Fabra & Camisón, 2009; Florida et al., 2013; Flynn & MacLeod, 2015; Giambona et al., 2014; Gibbs, 2014; 2017; Jongbloed, 2018; Lee, 2009a, 2009b, 2011, 2012, 2016, 2017a-d, 2018a, 2018b; Michalos, 2008; Oreopoulos & Salvanes, 2011; Seligman & Adler, 2019; Shin & Inoguchi, 2008; Vila, 2005; Wolff, 2019). Most of these researchers have suggested that higher education has more or less association with happiness or well-being.

On the other hand, a number of studies (Clark, 2003; Cuñado & Gracia, 2012;

Hartog & Oosterbeek, 1998; Ireland, 2010; McSpadden, 2015; Stewart-Brown et al., 2015; Striessnig & Lutz, 2016; Stutzer, 2004; Veenhoven, 1996) have found that higher education does not have a significant correlation with happiness. In other words, higher education is no guarantee of happiness, and does not make you happy.

Furthermore, a good few studies related to happiness and religion have been researched by numerous theorists and organizations (Argyle & Hills, 2000; Dhir, 2016; Diener & Myers, 2011; Francis & Robbins, 2000; Golmakani, Rexael, & Mazloun, 2018; Headey et al., 2010; Hills & Argyle, 2002; Inglehart, 2010; Kashdan, 2015; Lee, 2017a, 2017b, 2018a, 2018b, 2019; Lim & Putnam, 2010; Marshall; 2019; Mayrl & Oeur, 2009; Ngamaba, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2019; Ritschel, 2019; Sander, 2017; Stark & Maier, 2008; Tekke et al., 2018; United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, 2019; World Economic Forum, 2018). Most of these studies show that religion or religiosity is positively related to happiness and life satisfaction, and suggest that religious people are typically happier than people who either do not practice a religious life or do not have any religion. On the other side, not a few studies (Francis et al., 2003; Francis et al., 2014; Sillick et al., 2016; The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2018) have shown that religion or religiosity is not a significant determinant and that does not have a positive correlation with happiness.

In brief, nonetheless several studies have appeared in the negative side, the majority of happiness studies have found that both variables, religion and education, are positively related to happiness. These studies have suggested that religion and education have generally strong or weak impact on happiness.

II. The Concepts of Religion and Happiness

The definition of religion has been a controversial terminology or subject from ancient times. The author of this study first of all reviews the etymology and history of religion.

In the early Roman era, Cicero (106 B.C.-43 B.C.), a Roman statesman and philosopher, in his “*De Natura Deorum*” (*On the Nature of the Gods*), II, xxviii derives *religio* from *relegere* (go through or over again in reading, speech, and thought), following the expression, “*religio(num)*,” of Lucretius (c.96-55B.C., Roman philosophical poet) who considered *ligare* (to bind) as to be the root of *religio* (Bowker et al., 1997; Hoyt, 1912, pp. 126-7). St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.), a Roman Christian theologian and philosopher, in his “*De Civitate Dei Contra Paganos*” (*The City of God*) X.3 derives *religio* from *religere* in the sense of recovering: “having lost God through neglect [*negligentes*], we recover Him [*religentes*] and are drawn to Him” (Catholic Encyclopedia, 1914; <https://www.catholicity.com/encyclopedia/r/religion.html>). The concepts and definitions of religion are various. The origin and meaning of religion generally derived from Middle English (the 13th century) *religioun* (originally in the sense ‘life under monastic vows’), from Anglo-French *religion* (piety, devotion; religious community), and from Latin *religio(n)* (<https://www.etymonline.com/word/religion>). *The Latin “religionum”* means respect for what is sacred, reverence for the gods; conscientiousness, sense of right, moral obligation; fear of the gods; divine service, religious observance; a religion, a faith, a mode of worship, cult; sanctity, holiness; and religious practice, monastic life, supernatural constraint, perhaps from ‘*religare*’ to restrain, to bind fast, via notion of ‘place an obligation on,’ or ‘bond between humans and gods’(<https://www.etymonline.com/word/religion>; Hoyt, 1912; <https://www.catholicity.com/encyclopedia/r/religion.html>; Catholic Encyclopedia, 1914).

Numerous theorists and scholars have had different thoughts and definitions about religion, according to their backgrounds historic, cultural, ethnic, religious, social, and so forth. The term, “religion,” is a modern Western concept (Fitzgerald, 2007), especially the dominated Judeo-Christian climate. In a lexical meaning, Oxford Dictionary of English defines “religion as the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods” (<https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/religion>). Additionally, Merriam-Webster dictionary states “religion” as the following:

(1a) the state of a religious, (1b1) the service and worship of God or the supernatural, (1b2) commitment or devotion to religious faith or observance, (2) a personal set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices, (3) archaic: scrupulous conformity, conscientiousness, (4) a cause, principle, or system of beliefs held to with ardor and faith (https://www.merriam_webster.com/dictionary/religion).

Moreover, numerous theorists and thinkers have defined religion as follows: St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.) in his *“The City of God”* depicts that “religion binds us [*religat*] to the one Almighty God.”; Jalalu'l-Din M. Rumi (1207-1273 AD), a Persian poet, Islamic scholar, and theologian, in his poetic collection sings that “I belong to no religion. My religion is love. Every heart is my temple.”; St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AD) who was an Italian Catholic priest, theologian, and philosopher in his *“Summa Theologica”* describes that “the virtue which prompts man to render to God the worship and reverence that is His by right.”; Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), a German philosopher, in his *“Critique of Practical Reason”* defines that “religion is the recognition of all our duties as divine commands.”; Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), a German theologian and philosopher, in his *“Addresses on Religion”* mentions that “religion is the outcome neither of the fear of death, nor of the fear of God. It answers a deep need in man.”; G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831), a German philosopher, in his *“Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion”* insists that “religion is spirit that realizes itself in consciousness.”; Ludwig A. von Feuerbach (1804-1872), a German philosopher and anthropologist, in his *“The Essence of Christianity”* says, “Religion is the dream of the human mind. But even in dreams we do not find ourselves in emptiness or in heaven, but on earth, in the realm of reality.”; Karl Marx (1818-1883), a German philosopher, economist, and political theorist, in his *“Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right”* describes that “religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.”; Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), an Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst, in his *“Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices”* explains that “religion

and neurosis are similar products of the human mind: neurosis, with its compulsive behavior, is an individual religiosity, and religion, with its repetitive rituals, is a universal obsessional neurosis.”; Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), a Jewish sociologist in France, in his “*Elementary Forms*” writes that “religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden.”; Paul Tillich (1886-1965), a German-American Christian theologian and philosopher, in his “*Dynamics of Faith*” asserts that “religion is the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, a concern which qualifies all other concerns as preliminary and which itself contains the answer to the question of the meaning of life.”; Clifford Geertz (1926-2006), an American anthropologist, in his essay “*Religion as a Cultural System*” argues that “religion is (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, persuasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in [people] by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic” (Bowker et al. (eds.), 1997; Taliaferro & Marty (eds.), 2018; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/religion>; <https://www.jstor.org/>; web.pdx.edu/~tothm/religion/Definitions.htm).

Referring to the above definitions, the author (Jeong-Kyu Lee, 1950-present) of this study defines religion as “a formalized or systematized faith to make up for the weakness and imperfection of human beings as well as to pursue the divine perfection.”

As briefly reviewed in the above, the concept of religion has a great number of different definitions mostly focused on the Judeo-Christian standpoints. However, the concept of religion can be somewhat changed from the different religious viewpoints. In the Buddhist Scriptures, the Sanskrit word *dharma* frequently translated as religion, which means "cosmic law and order" as well as “the teachings of Buddha” (Bowker et al. (eds.), 1997). In addition, Confucianism and Taoism based on the Chinese Classics and Scriptures have no term that corresponded to “religion,” which is translated as *zongchiao*. The word *zongchiao* is combined of two words, *zong* and *chiao*. The *zong* (ancestral, clans, kindred, a class, a kind, a school, as of art, teaching) implies that “the understanding of the ultimate derives from the transformed figure of great ancestors or progenitors, who continue to

support their descendants, in a mutual exchange of benefit”(Yao, 2010, p. 40). The *chi ào* (to teach, to instruct) is connected to filial piety (*xiao*), “as it implies the transmission of knowledge from the elders to the youth and of support from the youth to the elders”(ibid.). In Confucianism and Taoism, the Chinese concept of "religion" as an ancestral tradition draws the divine near to the human world (op. cit., p. 39).

Like the concept of religion, happiness also has been the subject of debate on meaning and usage in academia for a long time. Numerous theorists and sages have tried to define the concept of happiness as well as to find the reality of happiness across centuries and countries, according to epoch, culture, religion, thought, and ethnic (Lee, 2012). The term, “happiness,” is a Western concept. As Peter Kreeft points out, there is a significant difference between the ancient and the modern meaning of happiness: ancient words for happiness, like *eudaimonia*, *makariotes*, *arete*, and *eutukhia* in Greek, mean happiness, blessedness, prosperity, virtue, and good luck; or *beatitudo*, *felicitas*, and *gaudium* in Latin, mean happiness, blessedness, good fortune, beatitude, and delight, while the modern English word happiness, which derives from the old Norse and English “hap” (luck or chance), usually means merely subjective satisfaction, or contentment (<https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/religion-and-philosophy/>; <https://www.etymonline.com/word/happy>).

In a lexical meaning, *Oxford Dictionary of English* defines happiness as “the state of being happy”(https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/happiness). In addition, Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes “happiness” as follows:

1a : a state of well-being and contentment : joy, b : a pleasurable or satisfying experience, 2 : felicity, aptness a striking happiness of expression, 3 obsolete : good fortune : prosperity (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/happiness).

From the standpoint of lexical and etymological origin of happiness, *eudaimonia* in the ancient Greek was particularly emphasized as ‘happiness’ by the classical Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle. Plato (428/427 or 424/423

– 348/347 BC), an ancient Greek philosopher, in his *Politics* viewed *eudaimonia* as ‘the actualization and complete practice of virtue,’ and Aristotle (384-322 BC), an ancient Greek philosopher, in his *Nicomachean Ethics* considered *eudaimonia* as ‘the highest end of virtuous life’ or ‘ultimate goodness’. Etymologically, *eudaimonia* is composed: first of all, the prefix *eu* (good) implying morally good, and to be happy; next, *daimon* (spirit) implying a matter of the soul; last, *ia* (a lasting state) implying something permanent, that is, blessedness for a lifetime (Kreeft, 2012). Peter Kreeft suggests that “the state of *eudaimonia* is objective, whereas contentment is subjective” (accessed on August 26, 2019, Catholic Education Resource Center, <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/religionandphilosophy/apologetics/happiness-ancient-and-modern-concepts-of-happiness.html> ; <https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/eudaemonia>; Liddell & Scott, 1995).

The ancient Greek word, *makarios* meaning ‘blessed,’ ‘happy,’ or ‘beatitude’ was written in the Greek Classics. In the ancient Greek age, *makarios* (*noun/makariotes*) referred to the gods. The word, *makarios*, has several meanings: the first meaning is “blessed” which refers to the gods; the second meaning is “dead” which refers to the ones who had reached the other world of the gods through death; the third meaning is “the rich and better educated” which refers to the elite, the wealthy people, and the upper crust of society; the fourth meaning is “righteous” which refers to the results of right living or righteousness in the Christian Bible (Kittel & Friedrich, 1985; Liddell & Scott, 1995; Stoffregen, 2019).

Furthermore, the Latin noun *beatitudo* was described by Cicero (106 BC–43BC), a Roman statesman, orator, lawyer and philosopher, as “a state of blessedness,” and was later quoted in the chapter 5 of the Gospel of Matthew in various versions of the Vulgate Bible (Savage, 1910, p. 274). Saint Augustine (354–430 AD), a Roman African, early Christian theologian, and philosopher, in his *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount* suggests that “Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount”(Matthew, 5: 3-12) as the “perfect standard of the Christian life.” The “*beatitudo*” is elucidated not merely eight blessings in the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew (5: 3-12), but four blessings in the Sermon on the Plain in the Gospel of Luke (6: 20-22) (Majernik et al., 2005, pp. 63-68).

In addition, St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274), an Italian philosopher, Catholic priest, and theologian, in his *Summa Theologica*, in the second part of this great work, as well as Book 3 of his shorter volume *Summa contra Gentiles*, proclaims an ultimate answer to the question of what human happiness: “*beatitudo*” (perfect happiness) is not possible in this lifetime, but “*felicitas*” (imperfect happiness) is possible in the earthly life. In other words, “*beatitudo*” (perfect happiness) is impossible on the earth, but only in the afterlife for those who achieve a direct perception of God, while there can be “*felicitas*” (imperfect happiness) attainable in this lifetime, in proportion to the exercise of virtue as well as the exercise of the contemplation of truth (Clark, 2000; Harag, 2012).

Moreover, numerous theorists and sages have defined happiness as the following: Lucius Annaeus Seneca (c. 4 B.C.– A.D. 65), a Roman Stoic philosopher, statesman, and dramatist, in his *Moral Letters to Lucilius* argues, “What is the happy life? It is peace of mind, and lasting tranquility.”; St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.) in his *Confessions* finds happiness in God, and he defines that “happiness is achieved through the faith in God.” Additionally, St. Augustine in his *On the Trinity XIII* asserts that “all human beings agree in desiring the ultimate end, which is happiness.”; Shantideva (c. 685-c. 763), an Indian Buddhist Monk Philosopher, in his *Bodhicaryavatara (A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life)* says, “All the happiness there is in this world comes from thinking about others, and all the suffering comes from preoccupation with yourself.”; Jalalu'l-Din M. Rumi (1207-1273 AD), a Persian poet, Islamic scholar, and theologian, in his poetic collection sings, “Happy the moment when we are seated in the palace, you and I, with two forms and with two figures but with one soul, you and I... In one form upon this earth, and in another form in eternal paradise and the land of sugar, you and I.”; Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) in his *Summa Theologiae I-II*, Questions 1-5 insists that “happiness is a perfect good.”; Rene Descartes (1596–1650), a French philosopher, mathematician, and scientist, in his *Discourse* illustrates that “happiness is mental flourishing, contentment, and tranquility: to love life without fearing death.”; Baruch Spinoza (1632 –1677), a Jewish-Dutch philosopher of Portuguese Sephardi origin, in his *Ethics, Book IV* argues that “happiness is not the reward of virtue, but is virtue itself.”; Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), a German

philosopher, in his *The Metaphysical Principles of Virtue* describes happiness as “continuous well-being, enjoyment of life, complete satisfaction with one’s condition.”; Jeremy Bentham (1748 or 1747-1832), an English philosopher, jurist, and social reformer, in his *The Principles of Morals and Legislation* regards happiness as a predominance of "pleasure" over "pain," and he suggests that “the greatest happiness principle”: "it is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong."; Thich Nhat Hanh (1926-present), a Vietnamese Buddhist monk and peace activist, in his “*No Mud, No Lotus: The Art of Transforming Suffering*” offers five practices to nourish our happiness daily, and mentions that “the essence of our practice can be described as transforming suffering into happiness,... but it requires us to cultivate mindfulness, concentration, and insight” (accessed on August 28, 2019, Catholic Education Resource Center, <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/religionandphilosophy/>; Dictionary of Philosophy, www.ditext.com/runes; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/religion>; <https://www.jstor.org/>).

Referring to the above definitions, the researcher (Jeong-Kyu Lee, 1950-present) of this article regards happiness as “a ‘Happiness Tree’ having been planted and growing consciously or unconsciously in one’s heart garden (Lee, 2012, p. 172).” That is, everyone can pursue or obtain happiness, with sincerely planting, watering, fertilizing, and nursing a happiness tree in one’s heart garden.

III. The Relation between Religion and Happiness

The relation between religion and happiness is inseparable. Considering the purposes of religion, happiness, as a type or state of salvation, is one of purposes. Each religion has a different terminology and principle or dogma regarding salvation and happiness.

First of all, the ultimate purpose of Christianity is to obtain salvation through God. The salvation of the world is the goal of Christian God’s earthly ministry. The Gospel John 3: 16 in the New Testament describes: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish,

but have everlasting life”(KJV). In addition, the adjective “happy” in the Gospels of the New Testament is written “blessed” in the English Bible or “*beatitudo*” in the Latin Vulgate Bible. The amplified meaning of “blessed” is that “happy, to be envied, and spiritually prosperous—with life-joy and satisfaction in God’s favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions.” (https://www.preceptaustin.org/matthew_5.3). The word, “beatitudo” is derived from the Latin *beatitudo* or *beatus*, which translates Hellenic word *makarios* (blessed or happy). The ‘beatitudes’ as certain qualities or experiences for salvation appear in the Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:3–12 and in the Jesus’ Sermon on the Plain in Luke 6:20–23.

Second, “*nirvana*” is the ultimate goal in Buddhism as well as a core theme of Buddhist teaching (Buswell & Lopez, 2013). In Sanskrit, *nirvana* is pronounced as “*nibbana*” in Pali. *Nirvana* literally means “*blowing out*” or “*quenching*” (Collins, 1998). *Nirvana* in Buddhism means that the desires and suffering of an individual will go away. The word “*nirvana*” holds various meanings in different religions. *Nirvana* is also known as “Enlightenment” or “a state of everlasting peace” (accessed on Sep. 1, 2019, <http://www.urbandharma.org/udharma6/enlightnirvana.html>). In Buddhism, “*nirvana*” is not only a place of happiness and peace such as heaven, but the highest state someone can attain (Buswell & Lopez, 2013; Collins, 1998). In addition, “*nirvana*” is in a state of freedom or emancipation from suffering and rebirth in *samsara* as well as the extinction of greed, hatred, and delusion (Buswell & Lopez, 2013; Keown, 2004). *Nirvana* is part of the Third Truth on “cessation of *dukkha* (suffering, pain)” in the Four Noble Truths, and is only achieved by conquering *tanha* (desire in all forms) (Buswell & Lopez, 2013; Lee, 2012). The teaching of Buddha (c.563/480-c.483/400 BC) stresses on three major aims: human welfare in this earthly life, a favorable rebirth in the next life, and the attainment of the ultimate good (*nirvana*) (Bodhi, 2003). In the Canto XV (197-208: *sukhavagga/* happiness) of the *Dhammapada*, Buddha describes happiness as a peaceful state of *nirvana*, and how to follow the Noble One.

Third, in Confucianism, the ultimate goal is human beings’ happiness, with cultivating oneself, harmonizing a family and a society, and building a righteous state. The ultimate goal is to be achieved through virtue, harmony, and peace.

Confucian ethics is particularly characterized by the promotion of virtues. Confucianism transcends the dichotomy between religion and humanism (Adler, 2014). Confucianism has been characterized as not only a system of socio-political and ethical philosophy but also a traditional secular or civil religion (Adler, 2014; Fingarett, 1972; Ivanhoe & Kim, 2017). Confucian ethical codes are illustrated as humanistic (Juergensmeyer, 2005). Confucius (551-479 BC), an ancient Chinese philosopher, explains 'humanity's moral nature' (*x ñg*), which is ordered by Heaven (*Tian*) and appears an appropriate respect or rite for the spirits or gods (*shen*) (Littlejohn, 2010). Confucius in his *Analects* (7.23) suggests that *Tian* (Heaven) gave him life, and from it he had developed *De* (right virtue). Confucius asserts that the lives of the sages are interwoven with *Tian* (8.19), and that the *Tian* watched and judged (6.28; 9.12). In his *Analects* (9.5), Confucius insists that a person may know the movements of the *Tian*, and this provides with the sense of having a special place in the universe. The *Analects* (9.6) describes that *Tian* had set the master on the path to become a wise man. Confucius in his *Analects* suggests the science of happy life through individual and socio-political moral codes, with cultivating our humanity.

As reviewed in this paper, religion and happiness are closely associated. Although each religion has a different term and principle, it has own religious philosophy and dogma about salvation and happiness. All three religions highlight happiness as an important factor or state for achieving its ultimate goal or purpose.

IV. Why do Universities Need either Happiness Education or Religion Education?

University education plays important roles in the life of human being. A university is defined as a place of teaching universal knowledge (Newman, 1959). In the Western world, the traditional objectives of university education are the preservation, transmission, and advancement of knowledge (Millet, 1962). In addition, the main functions of the university have been instruction, research, and community service. As the rapid change of the age and the world, the purpose of the university has been changed original ones into the following functions: the up-bringing human power or human resources having highly professional knowledge

and scientific skill for the enhancement of the life quality of an individual, the establishment of welfare society, and the highly demanded national economy and politics (Lee, 2012).

Today, college or university credentials are regarded as mostly certified checks for the better life, and they can provide college or university graduates with a good many opportunities and benefits: to get better jobs and higher earnings, to upgrade social status, to do obligatory or professional affairs, to improve health, and to live a good life. Of course, without college or university degrees or certificates, a great number of people in this world have had a good life. However, the majority of college or university graduates can easily catch opportunities to get a better job or life.

In the Western world, the modern university has emphasized pragmatic, utilitarian, and scientific oriented education. On the other hand, the Eastern world, especially, Korean Confucian elite education stressed on ethical, intuitive, and bureaucratic centered education. However, the modern East Asian universities have also highlighted pragmatic and scientific education. In particular, contemporary Korean higher education has generally emphasized competitive, pragmatic, utilitarian, and scientific education. Although the nation and the people of South Korea have become affluent economically, democratic politically, and powerful nationally, its society has become mammonish, materialistic, and unequal as well as its higher education has become highly competitive, unfair, pragmatic, and scientific. The more pragmatic and competitive South Korean higher education aims, the more unfair and unequal South Korean society is deepened. It is no exaggeration to say that the characteristic of current universities in South Korea has been changed from an academically ivory tower to an employment agency or institution to achieve individuals' egoistic goals or one's social success.

In contemporary South Korea, scholastic tradition, moral virtue, and Common Good have been gradually diminished, whereas university entrepreneurship, egoistic materialism, and mammonism have been rapidly increased in its university and society. Now, most Korean colleges and universities do not or rarely teach moral or religion education as well as happiness education. Only several religious denomination universities have practiced a part of religion education and

participation based on their institutional missions and curricula, but public universities have not practiced either religion education or happiness education. Coping with the highly capitalistic society and scientific era, universities need religion or happiness education to promote healthy ethical value and moral virtue. As the assertion of Jonathan Wolff (2019), “universities should focus less on competition and more on happiness.” In addition, the author of this study argues that universities should focus less on egoism and social success and more on altruism and Common Good. Therefore, what universities need is religion or happiness education on the basis of healthy ethics or morals.

V. The Implications for Korean Higher Education

South Korea has become a developed country in the early 21st century from a poor country. How did South Korea become an advanced nation? What on earth are significant factors? A number of educational experts and political leaders in several countries have been interested in the rapid development of South Korea economically and politically.

Traditionally, the Korean people have had a respect for learning on the basis of Confucian principles and values. Confucianism highlighted a proper way of training gentlemen and stressed on virtuous self-cultivation through education (Lee, 2002). This cultural influence made it difficult for Korea to industrialize a modern western system which enhanced utilitarian philosophy and scientific inquiry, while educational zeal or education fever based on Confucian value became an important factor to develop its society and nation (Lee, 2002, p. 173). Although there were various factors, two major factors were the Koreans’ education fever and the successful execution of the Korean government’s national economic development plans (Lee, 2002, p. 174; Lee, 2006).

Max Weber (1864 –1920), a German sociologist, philosopher, jurist, and political economist, viewed Confucian principles and values as obstacles to Eastern Asian countries’ industrialization (Gerth (trans.), 1962). However, Confucianism, especially positive social values such as the adoration of learning and sincerity, has been viewed as powerful motivating force for the development of Korean economy

and higher education (de Bary, 1996; Hart, 1993; Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Janelli, 1993; Tu Wei-ming, 1996). The Korean people have regarded higher education as a valuable means for achieving their social success and for upgrading their social status. In addition, the Korean government has viewed higher education as a prime motivator for the promotion of national industrialization as well as for the reinforcement of national power (Lee, 2002, p. 174). It is no doubt that both factors were two main pillars to build an advanced South Korea. Educational zeal in South Korea had a great impact on both higher education expansion and national economy development.

Nevertheless, behind the development of South Korea economically and socio-politically, contemporary Korea has a number of educational and social issues and challenges: instrumental education value for social success, examination hell for college/university entrants, highly competitive education system, excessive education fever, excessive private educational expenditure, over-education, inequality of educational access, university ranking hierarchy, educational capitalism, egoistic familism, academic attainment-oriented society, elitism on the basis of academic factionalism, mass-production of unemployed graduates, social disharmony between the rich and the poor, and so forth (Lee, 2002, pp. 183-86).

In spite of these issues and challenges, the education fever of the Korean people does not leave in South Korea. With the strong trend of the 4th Industrial Revolution Era, Korean higher education is getting more strengthened toward scientific and pragmatic ways. However, with a newly epochal current of the emerging advanced technologies and skills, Korean universities need to enhance happiness or religion education on the basis of healthy ethics or morals suitable for the 4th Industrial Revolution Age (Lee, 2017d). The new era will be able to provide great benefits and serious challenges for human beings.

In this vein, Korean higher education should highlight moral norms and ethical values such as humanity, happiness, philanthropy, charity, Common Good, gratitude, integrity, human rights, and social justice to balance between current higher education and emerging industrial technology as well as to cope with various socio-ethical issues facing in the new era (Lee, 2017d, p. 13). In order to maintain harmonious peace between human beings and artificial intelligence or new technology, the new curricula of Korean universities should be designed and

practiced beneficially, ethically, and righteously for a happy life through religious or ethical education (ibid.). Therefore, happiness or religion education is essential to cope with the newly emerging scientific age as well as the currently facing egoistic capitalism-oriented society.

Then, what are the implications for South Korean higher education? With opening the 4th Industrial Revolution Age accompanied by emerging megatrends technology and new intelligence, Korean higher education needs new plans and strategies to reinforce happiness education or religion education (Lee, 2017d). As Wolff argues, religious activity can be accompanied with higher happiness and educational achievement, while happiness teaching and research can revitalize the higher education sector clear to be happier (Wolff, 2019). From this viewpoint, Korean higher education should emphasize happiness or religion education to cope with various socio-ethical issues or risks happening in the new era as well as to manage currently facing socio-ethical problems, such as the deepening of socio-economic inequality, egoistically individual capitalism, a dearth of noblesse oblige, the absence of Common Good, digital imperialism, and socio-ethically biased human rights and dignity (Lee, 2017d). Therefore, educational administrators and policy makers in Korean higher education should design “Teaching & Research Happiness Frameworks,” providing useful “happiness curricula” and “religious programs” for their students to boost their life satisfaction and well-being (Lee, 2019; Wolff, 2019).

VI. Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to examine why universities need either happiness education or religion education. To discuss this study logically, four research questions were stated as follows. First, what are the concepts of religion and happiness? Second, what is the relation between religion and happiness? Third, why do universities need happiness education or religion education? Last, what are the implications for Korean universities?

In order to defend the research questions, the author used a descriptive content analysis method with a cross cultural approach. As for the limitations of the study,

the subject of happiness was adjusted the focus of two lenses of religion and education. The field of religion was limited to three major religions, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity, which greatly influencing Korean religion and culture. This article was particularly focused on *The Analects* in Confucian Classics, *Dahmmapada* in Buddhist Sutras, and *The Gospels* in the Christian Bible. In addition, education was directed the lens to South Korean higher education. The significance of the study is to offer higher education theorists and practitioners not only basic theories but also useful resources regarding happiness education and religion education.

The research results of this article are as the following:

First, as the author reviewed in this article, the concept and definition of religion has been a controversial subject from ancient times. The researcher of this study first of all reviewed the etymology and history of religion, and then he discussed numerous theorists and scholars who had different thoughts and definitions about religion, In addition, the researcher reviewed the concept of happiness, which had been the subject of debate on meaning and usage in academia for a long time, and then examined numerous theorists and sages who had tried to define the concept of happiness as well as to find the reality of happiness across centuries and countries.

Second, the relation between religion and happiness was examined by three major religions, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity, which greatly influencing Korean religion and culture. The researcher focused on *Dahmmapada* in Buddhist Sutras, *The Analects* in Confucian Classics, and *The Gospels* in the Christian Bible. In the Bible, “beatitudes” as certain qualities or experiences for salvation appear in the Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:3–12 and in the Jesus’ Sermon on the Plain in Luke 6:20–23. In Buddhism, “*nirvana*” is the ultimate goal as well as a core theme of Buddhist teaching (Buswell & Lopez, 2013). In the Canto XV (197-208) of the *Dhammapada*, Buddha describes *sukhavagga* (happiness) as a peaceful state of nirvana, and how to follow the Noble One. In Confucianism, the ultimate goal is human beings’ happiness, with cultivating oneself, harmonizing a family and a society, and building a righteous state. Confucius in his *Analects* (7.23) suggests that “*Tian*” (Heaven) gave him life, and

from it he had developed right “virtue” (*de*). In sum, all three religions highlight happiness as an important factor or state for achieving its ultimate goal or purpose.

Third, coping with a highly scientific era and an egoistic mammonish society, universities need religion or happiness education, with promoting healthy ethical value and moral virtue. Universities should not only focus less on competition and more on happiness, but focus less on egoism and social success and more on altruism and Common Good (Wolff, 2019; Lee, 2019). Thus, what universities need is religion education or happiness education on the basis of healthy ethics or morals.

Last, Korean higher education should stress on happiness or religion education to cope with various socio-ethical issues or challenges happening in the highly scientific new era as well as to manage currently numerous socio-ethical issues, such as digital imperialism, individual capitalism, a dearth of noblesse oblige, the absence of Common Good, and socio-ethically biased human rights and dignity. Therefore, educational administrators and policy makers in Korean higher education should design “Teaching & Research Happiness Frameworks,” providing useful “happiness curricula” and “religious programs” for their students to boost their life satisfaction and well-being (Lee, 2019; Wolff, 2019).

In conclusion, based on the results of this article, the author of this study suggests that the policy makers of Korean colleges and universities should plan and practice the “Teaching & Research Happiness Framework” under the name of “religion education” or “happiness education” to cope with the 4th Industrial Revolution Age as well as the currently egoistic mammonish society.

This study has been used a descriptive content analysis method with a cross cultural approach. In order to make up for the weak points in the study, future research should be undertaken to analyze either religion education or happiness education in the sector of higher education from the various aspects, with quantitative and qualitative research methodology. Finally, the author suggests that currently egoistic mammonish society and newly emerging high technology may be seriously threatened human beings, without building a righteous society and nation as well as enhancing an individual happiness and an ethically good life.

Acknowledgements

The author, Jeong-Kyu Lee, would like to express his special thanks to the great sages and scholars who produced the spiritual fruit of the historical footprints. Especially, I am grateful to my beloved wife (Okhee) who has devoted herself to my education, my daughter (Kirym) who has given me the meaning of life, and my grandson (Theodore) who has given me happiness. I dedicate this article to my family with my heartfelt love and deep gratitude. Additionally, I gladly congratulate my precious grandson on **his third happy birth day** (October 15, 2019), with God's grace and his grandparents' everlasting love.

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