

# GOOD GOVERNANCE AND CITIZEN HAPPINESS: A STUDY IN NCT OF DELHI

*by* Ranjana Deswal

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NCT OF DELHI**

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By

**RANJANA DESWAL**  
2K21/PhDDSM/502

Under the Guidance of

**Prof. SURESH KUMAR GARG**  
Professor  
Delhi Technological University



**Delhi School of Management**  
**Delhi Technological University**  
Shahbad Daultpur, Main Bawana Road, Delhi-110042 India  
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**DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**  
(Formerly Delhi College of Engineering)



### **DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I hereby declare that the research work presented in this thesis titled “**Good Governance and Citizen Happiness: A Study in NCT of Delhi**” is an original and authentic work carried out by me under the supervision of **Prof. Suresh Kumar Garg**, Professor, Delhi Technological University, Delhi for the award of the **Doctor of Philosophy** degree in **Delhi School of Management**. The work presented in this thesis has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or Diploma.

**RANJANA DESWAL**  
Research Scholar  
2K21/PhDDSM/502  
Delhi School of Management  
Delhi Technological University



दिल्ली प्रौद्योगिकी विश्वविद्यालय  
**DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**  
(Formerly Delhi College of Engineering)



### **SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the PhD thesis entitled “**Good Governance and Citizen Happiness: A Study in NCT of Delhi**” being submitted by Mrs Ranjana Deswal, 2K21/PhDDSM/502 for the award of the degree, Doctor of Philosophy in Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Delhi, India is a Bonafide record of original research work carried out by her under my supervision. The work presented in this thesis has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

Prof. SURESH KUMAR GARG  
Delhi Technological University

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## ABSTRACT

“Good Governance and Citizen Happiness: a study in NCT of Delhi” explores <sup>341</sup> the role of government policies in enhancing citizen happiness and their broader socio-economic impacts. The study aims to find out the government <sup>1</sup> policies that are highly relevant for citizens in enhancing their happiness.

<sup>33</sup> Happiness has now been accepted as a goal of public policy. This has interconnected happiness and governance intricately. Trust in public institutions is crucial for human well-being. Inequality lowers the happiness. In devising policy, citizen happiness should be considered as one of the objectives. Though <sup>33</sup> higher GDP and higher per capita income are important but <sup>33</sup> there exists a link between the state of happiness and rule of law. In measuring progress, now researchers are including happiness as one of the measures. How to handle inequality and achieve long-term sustainability appears to be the key challenge of governance and happiness.

In the Indian context, very few studies are available to find the role and impact of government policies on citizen happiness. The major gap is the absence of considering the relevance and quality of implementation of multiple policies together in one study.

This analysis draws on diverse contexts including India’s Government policies of social welfare, the governance models of Nordic countries, <sup>17</sup> the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in public policy, and the urban development strategies under India’s Smart Cities Mission.

In this study methodology has been designed to take perspectives of various stakeholders. The respondents included beneficiaries, policy makers and implementation executives. <sup>62</sup> Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire with comprehensive scale of 40 items covering different policy dimensions. Tools of Excel and SPSS were used for analysis.

Techniques of Descriptive analysis to identify patterns, advanced technique of TISM was applied to map relationships while case study provided deeper contextual insights.

Government policies of social welfare, law and order, pollution health, education and creating opportunities have been studied and found to improve citizen happiness by ensuring effective resource allocation, efficient implementation mechanisms, and relevance to citizen needs. These policies contribute to a productive and innovative workforce, which in turn promotes a cooperative and sustainable business environment, reinforcing economic growth.

Nordic countries have consistently ranked higher in the United Nations World Happiness Report mainly due to four factors: comprehensive social welfare and public services, adherence to rule of law and justice, protection of freedom and human rights, and sustained economic stability. The Total Interpretative Structural Model (TISM) derived from these insights offers a strategic framework for policymakers aiming to replicate such success, enhancing transparency and trust in public institutions.

The integration of AI in public policy constitutes an innovative step for efficient policy design and deployment. AI's capacity to analyse complex demographic and socio-economic data enables simulation of policy scenarios and optimization of resources. Digital governance and data-driven monitoring further ensure effective implementation, bridging gaps between policy intent and impact to enhance citizen happiness.

India's Smart Cities Mission illustrates the application of technology innovation with the aim of improving the quality of life in cities. By implementing, smart economy, smart mobility, smart environment, smart people and smart living, this initiative demonstrates how targeted policies can improve citizen happiness and promote sustainable development.

Collectively, these insights affirm that Governments which prioritize citizen wellbeing in their policymaking can stimulate economic growth, enhance social cohesion, and ensure sustainable

development. However, in this study only select policies have been examined in the setting of Delhi, with respondents drawn from the same region and it is based on descriptive methods, interviews, and case studies. Further work will use factor analysis to identify key drivers & Structural Equation Modelling to establish relationships among them. Future empirical studies can help to confirm relationships between impact of citizen happiness and the business & economic environment and measure their strength more precisely.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Introduction

Happiness refers to the overall experience of well-being, life satisfaction, and fulfilment, shaped by a range of internal and external factors. Psychologically, happiness is characterized by frequent positive emotions such as joy, interest, and pride, along with a high level of life satisfaction. Simultaneously, it is marked by infrequent negative emotions like sadness, anxiety, and anger, which contribute to a more stable sense of well-being (Diener, 2000). Beyond individual and familial influences, societal structures and government policies have a profound impact on shaping the collective happiness of citizens.

#### 1.1 Citizen Happiness: An Overview

After Moksha, happiness is the most sought-after requirement of the human being. According to the World Happiness Report (2024), India's ranking is quite low despite several efforts being made by the state and central governments (Table 1.1). The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Solutions Network has developed the World Happiness Index to measure and rank countries about the happiness of their citizens. It has six indices, namely GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom to make life choices, generosity, and perceptions of corruption. India, being a developing country, has a GDP per capita of USD 2000, whereas the country at number one in the ranking, i.e., Finland, has a per capita GDP of USD 25000. Though India is the fifth largest economy in the world but due to being number one in population, the per capita GDP is quite low. Further, in India, the disparity between the rich and the poor is increasing. Oxfam India's report on inequality, released in May 2023, finds that more than 60 per cent of the Indian wealth is owned by just 5 per cent of Indians, and only

3 per cent is owned by the bottom 50 per cent of the population. As per the World Happiness Index 2023, India's rank of 126 is one of the bottom-most countries in the ranking. The major reasons for the low ranking, as per the score of various parameters of the index, are low per capita income, low human development index, high corruption perception, etc.

Table 1.1: Ranking of India on Global Index

Global Index	Rank of India
World Happiness Index 2023	126
Human Development Index 2023	132
Ease of doing business 2022	62
World Competitiveness Index 2023	40
Corruption perceptions rank	85
Index of Economic Freedom	131
Knowledge economy index	91
Global entrepreneurship index	Score 6.1
Global gender gap index	127
Global innovation index	40

#Compiled by Authors

The performance of India is not very impressive on these global indicators, though it has improved on certain factors. The Ease of Doing Business (EODB) index has improved by 3 rungs due to widespread governance reforms, including Aadhaar-enabled services for company registration, tax filings, and utility connections, and online dispute resolution and digitized land records. A nation has to keep in mind the above indices to provide good governance. It also

shows that India needs to do much more to improve its ranking on all the indices. This scenario only indicates that social welfare is highly important in framing the government policies to provide good education, health services, reduce stress, and improve mental health by developing parks, arranging tours. The lower strata of people must trust the government for its support in need, just like the free vaccine during COVID-19.

Citizen happiness, often measured through subjective well-being indicators, has emerged as a critical component of socio-economic development. A growing body of literature indicates that happiness is not merely a byproduct of economic prosperity but an essential driver of productivity, innovation, and social stability.

Since 2013, the World Happiness Reports have consistently ranked the five Nordic countries—Finland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland—among the top ten happiest nations globally. Notably, in 2017, 2018, and 2019, these countries occupied the top three positions. Helliwell et al (2020) state that the Nordic countries' model of governance has adopted all-inclusive welfare practices that provide better economic freedom and very strong social security and equality, building an environment that supports well-being and life satisfaction among the citizens. Though the welfare policies adopted by the Nordic countries are supported by high levels of taxation, citizens accept the same due to the high quality of public services they get in return (Martela et al., 2020).

The World Happiness Reports reflect a positive correlation between good governance and happiness. Helliwell et al. (2020) state that countries such as Finland, Norway, and Denmark—which rank highly in terms of transparency, low corruption, citizen participation, and efficient service delivery—also top the happiness rankings of their citizens.

## 1.2 Role of Government Policies in Citizens' Happiness

Government policies directly affect the social, economic, and environmental <sup>260</sup> conditions in which people live, and these conditions are crucial determinants of happiness. For instance, <sup>208</sup> access to quality healthcare, education, social security, and employment opportunities is fundamental to the well-being of individuals. When governance is effective, transparent, and accountable, it nurtures a positive environment where citizens feel secure, supported, and able to pursue their goals and aspirations (Helliwell & Huang, 2008) <sup>35</sup> and have equal access to resources and services. The purpose of good governance is not only to maintain law and order but also to ensure fairness, <sup>30</sup> equity, and inclusivity in all aspects of public life. Jain and Singla (2024) studied how entrepreneurial ventures are helping to enhance employability. Government policies of encouraging entrepreneurs are leading to the creation of job givers in place of job seekers.

To support the rights and well-being of all citizens, through good governance, efficient, accountable, and transparent institutions are created. For maintaining social trust and cohesion, good governance ensures that systems are fair, accessible, and equitable. (Kaufmann, et al 2011). Since citizens of the countries where good governance practices are followed trust that their governments act in their best interests, it enhances satisfaction among them, and a happy, flourishing society emerges. So, it can be said that citizens' happiness and well-being are one of the parameters to measure the effectiveness of good governance.

Good governance focuses on the equal distribution of resources. It helps citizens experience less financial pressure and disparities, thus contributing to their sense of well-being. (Bjornskov <sup>95</sup> et al., 2010). This relationship between good governance and happiness is evident in regions with strong welfare systems, like those in the Nordic countries. Inclusive policies of these countries ensure citizens' social safety, which further ensures <sup>192</sup> higher levels of satisfaction and happiness among citizens. (OECD, 2021). Hence, government policies play an important role <sup>255</sup>

in providing necessary operational and environmental support to the citizens for leading fulfilling and happy lives.

As per international organizations like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2021) and the World Bank, good governance is defined as a system of authority characterized by transparency, accountability, participation, and efficiency. These principles ensure that governments are responsive to the needs and rights of their citizens, creating an environment where trust in public institutions is high and the quality of life is enhanced. The link between good governance and happiness is well-established, as a well-governed society develops conditions where individuals feel secure, valued, and capable of thriving (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2011).

### 1.3 Need and Motivation

Happiness of the citizens is an important parameter for the well being of the society and the government policies play an important role in influencing the citizen happiness. The World Happiness Reports have indicated that the happiness index of India is low, where as some countries like Finland, Sweden and Norway always found a place in top 10 countries. The scholar visited Finland and observed various factors contributing the happiness of their citizen. Based on the rankings of world happiness report and the visit to Finland, a need was felt to study the role of government policies in India and to understand their relevance in enhancing citizen happiness. The motivation of the research is as follows:

- Happiness has now been accepted as a goal of public policy. This has interconnected happiness and governance intricately.
- Trust in public institutions is crucial for human well-being. Inequality lowers the happiness

- In devising public policy, citizen happiness should be considered as one of the objectives
- Though <sup>33</sup> higher GDP and higher per capita income are important but there exists a link between the state of happiness and rule of law
- In measuring progress, now researchers are including happiness as one of the measures
- How to handle inequality and achieve long-run sustainability appears to be the key issue of governance and happiness

#### <sup>253</sup> **1.4 Research Questions**

The primary research question is to find out the how far the government policies in India are relevant in enhancing the happiness of the citizens and how far they have been effectively implemented. The secondary questions include:

- How the policies of Nordic countries can be implemented in India?
- How Artificial Intelligence can be leveraged at the conceptual, design and deployment stage of the government policy implementation?

#### <sup>204</sup> **1.5 Research Objectives**

The objectives of the research are:

- To identify the different aspects of individual and citizen happiness.
- To study the various happiness index and identifying the factors contributing to the happiness of high ranking countries.
- To identify the government policies having an impact on citizen happiness
- To study the impact of Government Policies of Law and order/ pollution; health/ education and creating opportunities with the mediating role of implementation efficiency on the citizen happiness.

- To develop a framework of good governance and validate.

## 1.6 Organization of the Thesis <sup>129</sup>

The thesis has been organized in eight chapters. A brief overview of each chapter is presented below:

**Chapter 1: Introduction:** The research topic is the main emphasis of this chapter. Background information explaining the concept of happiness and the role of government policies in enhancing citizen happiness is discussed in this chapter. The research gaps identified in Chapter 2, along with the motivation for the research and the research objectives, are presented. The layout of the thesis is presented to provide a basic understanding of the discussions in each chapter.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review:** The section includes a review of literature, which consists of the basic concepts of happiness, factors contributing to citizen happiness, and the contribution of citizen happiness to business excellence. The study led to the identification of the research gaps.

**Chapter 3: Research Methodology:** This chapter describes the philosophical premises that guide any research. The methodology adopted in the research is discussed along with the strategy and approach. This chapter introduces the selected research study and then discusses the investigation's tools and techniques. The creation of the hypothesis and the specifics of the questionnaire are discussed, and the specifics of the procedures for data collection and analysis have also been covered.

**Chapter 4: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Government Policies in Enhancing Citizen Happiness, Economic Stability, and Business Ecosystems:** In this chapter, the responses to the select social welfare policies are analysed to test the hypothesis of the significance of their relevance. The relation between relevance and the quality and intensity of implementation. At

a second level, the implications of happy citizens, who are the workforce for the business, are studied towards creating a business ecosystem of high productivity, creativity, and innovations, along with a Positive and cooperative environment with quality, safety, and environmental consciousness.

*Chapter 5: Qualitative validation of factors contribution to citizen happiness:* In this chapter, a detailed analysis has been carried out to ascertain the factors contributing to the happiness of the citizens of the Nordic countries. After the analysis, the Total Interpretative Structural Model (TISM) has been developed for the effective planning and implementation of Government policies. The MICMAC analysis helps to identify the factors/ policies that can be independently pursued. This study has identified reduced corruption and trust in the institutions as independent policies, meaning that to build a good society, it is essential that society is corruption-free and that they have trust in the institutions. The role and implications of governance factors for business and economy are also discussed in this chapter.

*Chapter 6: Role of AI in design and deployment of public policies:* The integration of Public Policy and Artificial Intelligence has the potential to improve the design and deployment of public policies. The chapter examines the capabilities of the Artificial Intelligence tools to analyse large-scale, diverse data of demographic, social, and economic parameters and also to simulate the policy decision variables to arrive at the best policy. The capabilities of digital integration, data capturing, and monitoring can be used for an effective deployment and control.

*Chapter 7: Impact of smart cities policies in Delhi, a case study:* In this chapter, the relationship between government policies linked to the Smart Cities Mission and their perceived impact on citizen happiness in Delhi has been presented. The policies related to social welfare, environmental sustainability, digital governance, public healthcare systems and urban infrastructure are the key areas that have been included in the study.

*Chapter 8: Synthesis of Learnings, Conclusions, Recommendations and scope for Future* <sup>298</sup>

**Research:** The research is summarised in the last chapter, with a particular focus on the contribution that this thesis has made to the <sup>249</sup>body of knowledge about the role of good governance on citizen happiness. The chapter also identified the study's weaknesses and some recommendations for an additional investigation.

**1.7 Conclusions**

<sup>113</sup>Ancient philosopher Aristotle suggested that happiness is the one human desire, and all other human desires exist as a way to obtain happiness. <sup>156</sup>The main objective of all public policies is to help citizens to fulfil their desires, lessen their hardships by providing better civic amenities and creating opportunities for overall development. A brief introduction to concept of happiness, role of government policies along with objectives of the <sup>268</sup>research are presented. In the next chapter, literature review related to the research is presented.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

Happiness of its citizens is a goal of every state and central government (Firmansyah et al., 2023), and thus, they design their policies that enhance the socio-economic status of their citizens. To improve the life of its people, along with economic prosperity, it is important to provide growth opportunities, social safety, and trust in institutional structures. Different factors, such as income, employment, inflation, education, health, and the environment, play an important role in shaping happiness (Kahneman & Deaton, 2010; Diener et al., 2018). Citizen happiness and the role of government policies have been an area of research for quite some time (Stutzer & Frey, 2002).

#### 2.1 Concept of Happiness

Several studies have been carried out to understand the concept of happiness. Table 2.1 summarize the work of some of the researchers in this regard. Fisch (1928) refers happiness as flourishing of human beings in social, economic and behavioural domains (Fisch, 1928). Mogilner et al. (2011) also explained happiness as the feeling of warmth, relax, calm and a peaceful mind with a body full of energy and excitement (Mogilner, Kamvar, & Aaker, 2011). Singh et al. (2022) considers happiness as a state of harmony where physiological and psychological needs are fulfilled earlier and being fulfilled in present with some kind of assurance of the future. This condition provides a meaningful and contented life (Singh, Kumar, & Tiwari, 2022).

Many authors consider happiness as subjective well-being (Arvin & Lew, 2014). Trinh and Khanh (2019) and Black and Kern (2020) provided the enablers of happiness. As per their

studies, <sup>12</sup> living a meaningful life, spending time with friends and family, maintaining physical and mental health, achieving professional and academic success, financial stability, pro-sociality, pursuing hobbies, being spiritual and religious, being an extravert, listening to music and being surrounded by nature; spirituality etc are some of the traits of happy persons (Trinh & Khanh, 2019; Black & Kem, 2020).

Thus, we may say that <sup>344</sup> researchers have examined the link between governance and citizens' happiness from various angles—economics, political science, psychology, etc. Traditional welfare economics equated well-being with income or utility; however, this narrow approach seems to be very limited now. More recent theories about well-being focus on how people actually feel about their lives, looking at things like emotions, life satisfaction, and whether life feels meaningful (Diener et al., 2018).

Table 2.1 – Conceptual Studies on Happiness

Sr. No.	Key Research Area	Key Outcome / Contribution	Reference(s)
1	Conceptualization of happiness	Defined happiness as human flourishing across social, economic, and behavioural domains.	Fisch (1928)
2	Emotional and experiential aspects of happiness	Viewed happiness as feelings of warmth, calmness, relaxation, and peacefulness, combined with energy and excitement.	Mogilner, Kamvar, & Aaker (2011)

3	Holistic and temporal view of happiness	Conceptualized happiness as harmony in fulfilling physiological and psychological needs in past, present, and with assurance for the future, leading to a meaningful and contented life.	Singh, Kumar, & Tiwari (2022)
4	Happiness as subjective well-being (SWB)	Considered happiness equivalent to subjective well-being.	Arvin & Lew (2014)
5	Enablers/determinants of happiness	Identified meaningful life, relationships, health, success, financial stability, spirituality, hobbies, and social engagement as key traits of happy individuals.	Trinh & Khanh (2019)
6	Psychological and social predictors of happiness	Highlighted pro-sociality, extraversion, spirituality, music, and connection with nature as important enablers of happiness.	Black & Kern (2020)
7	Modern well-being theory	Shifted focus from income/utility to emotions, life satisfaction, and meaning	Diener et al. (2018)

		in life as core components of well-being.	
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## 2.2 Governance Factors Contributing to Happiness

The concept of good governance emerged strongly in the discourse of many international organisations, such as the World Bank, UNDP, and OECD, during the 1990s. Good governance refers to the level of transparency, accountability, participation of citizens and public favouring orientation of governments towards management of public resources while carrying over public affairs (UNDP, 1997; OECD, 2011).

(Kraay et al., 2010) state that Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) of the World Bank identify six key dimensions of good governance: voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption. OECD frameworks (2011, 2020) stress participation, consensus orientation, responsiveness, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, transparency, rule of law, and strategic vision. It has been recognised that these attributes of governance are associated with higher levels of subjective well-being across countries (Helliwell & Huang, 2008).

The discourse gradually moved to a broader view of governance, and so good governance is now closely linked with the capability approach and rights-based approaches, expanding the role of the state to substantive freedoms and opportunities of citizens instead of just providing services (Sen, 1999).

Digital governance has changed how people interact with the state. It's made things more transparent, accessible, and responsive. With online platforms, people can access services, file complaints, and participate in government way more easily (Bertot et al., 2010).

The United Nations (2022) points out that good e-governance builds trust and satisfaction—when the digital tools actually work for everyone. But if some people can't access or use these tools, the digital divide just makes things worse for them. For Delhi, expanding digital participation and making sure everyone's included is key. That's how e-governance reforms actually boost happiness for real people.

<sup>152</sup> In the Indian context, the second Administrative Reforms Commission report, the Digital India program, as well as the Good Governance Index, emphasise citizen-centric administration, simplification of processes, reduction of corruption and improvements in service delivery with <sup>366</sup> a focus on grievance redressal and transparent information systems in government organisations (ARC, 2009; Ministry of Electronics and IT, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> At the aggregate level, several studies have compared the happiness (well-being) links between two major sets of government characteristics and average life evaluations. The first set of characteristics relates to the reliability and responsiveness of governments in their design and delivery of services, referred to here as the quality of delivery or Technical Quality. The second set of characteristics relates to the presence and pervasiveness of key features of democratic electoral elections and representation. This we refer to as democratic quality (Helliwell et al., 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Happiness-inspired urban design or redesign in cities as different as Bogotá, Copenhagen, Portland, Paris and New York has been intended to facilitate the kinds of social interactions that research (Montgomery, 2013) has shown to support happiness, to build trust, and to create shared social identities. These characteristics, in turn, lead to communities with greater physical and psychological well-being, whatever may be the formal structures of their governance. One of the reasons why, in general, life is happier in smaller towns than in larger cities is that these fundamental principles of social interaction have not yet led to design and governance at the urban level that can compensate adequately for the bustle and irritations of fast-paced lives in

crowds of strangers. Applying these principles to modern cities requires changes not just in urban design, but also in the management of public and private spaces.

Participatory governance sits at the heart of what makes good governance work — and it really matters for how people feel about their own lives. When people get involved, they feel like they have a real say, as their voices count. That sense of agency and belonging? It's closely tied to being happier (Frey & Stutzer, 2000).

Look at the research: places with strong democratic institutions and ways for people to participate tend to have happier citizens, especially if public services actually work well (Hudson, 2006). Frey and Stutzer (2000) even showed that direct democracy — things like referenda or letting people take part locally — boosts happiness, no matter how much money folks have.

Youssef and Diab (2021) studied the impact of good governance on the heterogeneity of happiness in MENA countries. They applied panel random-effects regression analysis using data from 20 MENA countries over the 2007–2017 period and observed that the quality of governance increases happiness. Political stability and the absence of violence are important roles of governance in improving happiness in rich countries. In poor countries, control of corruption has a positive impact on happiness, whereas voice and accountability have no impact on happiness (Youssef & Diab, 2021). A limited number of researches have studied the effects of all governance determinants on happiness (Helliwell & Huang, 2008; Fereidouni et al., 2013).

Kaufmann et al. (2008) listed the six aspects of Good Governance, namely, (i) Voice and Accountability, (ii) Political Stability and Absence of Violence, (iii) Government Effectiveness, (iv) Regulatory Quality, (v) Rule of Law and (vi) Control of Corruption

Fereidouni et al. (2013) analyse the impact of these six governance factors on happiness in the MENA region. Results indicate that all governance factors are directly related to happiness,

except for voice and accountability, control of corruption, and regulatory quality (Fereidouni et al., 2013). Good governance results in creating employment opportunities, rising income, providing efficient education, and lowering happiness inequality in a country (Ott, 2011).

### 2.2.1 Good Governance and Citizen Happiness Model

Several inspirational examples of governance improve well-being. But incidentally, are they not more widely understood and applied? One standard reason is the Einstellung effect, whereby the existence of established methods dramatically limits the search for better approaches. Interviews of those in the relevant positions in public administration suggest that this effect has been magnified in recent times by increasing risk aversion. This shows up through a variety of new regulations that constrain service delivery and stand in the way of even experimental innovations, especially those that empower patients and students to help each other in ways that improve their lives but disrupt normal professional delivery patterns (Bilalić et al., 2008).

These limits are, in turn, made more binding by fear that should anything by chance go wrong in the course of informal care, the organisation or department opens itself up to the risk of lawsuits. Possible solutions might include some risk-assuring comfort from higher levels more able to shoulder and spread these risks. To break the Einstellung effect sufficiently to convert ideas into practice may require experimental field trials of sufficient scale and realism as to force the take-up of proven successes. For example, even chess masters unconsciously stop looking effectively for better strategies once they have something plausible in hand, thereby dragging the quality of their play down by three standard deviations in the skill distribution (Bilalić et al., 2008).

Akgum et al. (2022) discussed three distinct strands of the research on governance and happiness:

- One strand of literature focuses on the relationship between inequality and happiness.
- A second strand of it examines the relationship between income inequality and happiness inequality.
- The third strand of it focuses on the determinations of happiness including some macroeconomics variables.

### 2.3 Conceptualising Citizen Happiness and Subjective Well-Being

As per Allied Business Academies (2018), the citizen happiness concept is alternatively used for the definition of subjective well-being (SWB), although this is more specifically known in academic literature. Subjective well-being is a description of individuals' cognitive, as well as affective, evaluations of life, including:

- Life satisfaction (global assessment of one's life),
- Positive affect (Presence of Positive Emotions),
- Negative affect (absence of unpleasant emotions) (Allied Business Academies, 2018).

As per (Allied Business Academies, 2018), happiness has been theorised along two traditions:

1. Hedonic well-being – pleasure, enjoyment
2. Eudaimonic well-being – meaning, purpose, fulfilment

Science Direct (2020) mentions, international surveys, such as the Gallup World Poll, as well as the World Happiness Report, have regularised the assessment of happiness via life evaluation surveys (for instance, the Cantril Ladder), balance, as well as sense of purpose surveys. This provides cross-sectional happiness-level comparisons that have been used extensively to examine happiness effects, especially from 'governance indicators'.

In more recent times, governments are now making a direct connection between certain policies and happiness, such as Bhutan's Gross National Happiness, the UK's statistical measurement of happiness, the UAE with a Minister of Happiness, and others that are embedding happiness factors within educational, health, and urban development frameworks (Related, 2019).

As per EduDel (2018), in India, happiness has entered the policy arena, firstly, by way of the World Happiness Reports, which produced a relatively low positioning of India in the international indices, and secondly, by way of the Happiness Curriculum launched by the Government of NCT of Delhi, which is aimed at enhancing the overall happiness of school-going children by bringing mindfulness, Socio-Emotional learnings, and contemplations into the education system (EduDel, 2018).

#### **2.4 Urban Governance, Quality of Life and Happiness**

The urban scale has attracted specific attention because more than half of the world's population now lives in cities, and urban governance shapes daily experiences of transport, housing, public spaces and environmental quality.

A body of work examines how urban governance and city performance affect quality of life (QoL) and happiness. Pazos-García (2025), for example, analyses a set of city-level variables such as e-governance, transparency and city reputation and finds that these elements of good city governance are positively related to quality of life and overall city performance (Pazos-García, 2025).

Cities pack a lot into a small space—opportunity, stress, and everything in between. The way a city is run shapes how people feel about their daily lives. Glaeser et al. (2001) state that how citizens commute, the roof over their head, the air they breathe, whether they feel safe and how easily they can get what they need, all these together form their level of happiness.

Cities that are managed well, with efficient public services, a spirit of tolerance, and real civic engagement, usually see people reporting higher happiness (Florida et al., 2013). When city leaders focus on being inclusive, keeping things green, and helping neighbours connect, people feel like they belong. That sense of trust and community makes a real difference. Putnam (2000) points out that when people join in, trust and cooperation grow. That pays off in well-being. In cities, when neighbors join resident associations or committees and use forums to raise issues, they don't just feel better about how things are run. They start to believe they can make a difference together.

Big international groups like the OECD back this up. Their Cities for Well-Being plan pushes city governments to look past just making money or chasing growth. They argue that what really matters is quality of life—things like mental health, safety, a clean environment, and giving people a voice (OECD, 2020). This becomes even more important in massive cities like Delhi, where broken-up governance and uneven services can really shape how people experience life in the city.

How well public services work really shapes how people feel about their government. It's not just about the policies on paper—what matters is how those services actually show up in people's lives. Things like how quickly one gets help, how easy it is to access services, how staff treat the citizens needing help, and what happens when there is a complaint. All of that leaves an impression leading to happiness (Andrews et al., 2017).

Research shows that when service delivery works well, people trust institutions more. It even boosts how happy they feel day to day, even if their economic situation doesn't change (Helliwell et al., 2018). In cities, it's those daily moments—going to the doctor, dealing with schools, using public transport, sorting out something at the local office—that really shape how people see their community and government. These experiences add up and matter.

Systematic reviews of happiness in urban environments highlight <sup>277</sup> the importance of access to green spaces, cultural and leisure amenities, healthcare, a clean environment and low congestion as determinants of happiness. Samavati (2024) show that urbanites tend to be happier in well-kept neighbourhoods with greenery, good public services and well-designed public spaces, and propose a framework of “happy urban public spaces”.

Research on urban governance and wellbeing in informal settlements illustrates how deficits in basic services, insecure tenure and weak responsiveness of city governments undermine residents’ well-being. Te Lintelo et al. (2018), studying seven informal settlements in Bangladesh, find that people’s subjective assessments of their well-being correlate strongly with objective indicators (water, sanitation, housing, security), underscoring the material governance–well-being link.

Welfare policies around health, education, food, and social protection have a big impact on happiness, especially for vulnerable groups. Inclusive governance helps cut down on inequality and makes people feel things are fair and just (Drèze & Sen, 2013).

Kapur and Mukhopadhyay (2018) stress that it’s not just about having welfare schemes—it’s about how well they’re run. When targeting is clear, leakages are low, and people are treated well, <sup>316</sup> both material and psychological well-being go up. So, the way welfare is governed has a real impact on happiness in India.

International policy <sup>53</sup> initiatives, such as the WHO’s Urban Governance for Health and Well-being, emphasise that urban governance is central <sup>275</sup> to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and “health for all”, and they advocate participatory, multi-sectoral models of city governance to enhance well-being (World Health Organization, 2016).

A city’s happiness cannot be separated from its environment. Bad air, noisy streets, endless traffic, and hardly any green spaces—they all take a toll on people’s bodies and minds. Studies

show that when the environment suffers, so does everyone's sense of well-being, even if their income or job stays the same (Welsch, 2006).

Research by MacKerron and Mourato (2013) goes further. They found that just being around cleaner air or green spaces lifts people's moods right away and makes them more satisfied with life. So, good environmental governance—things like cutting pollution, managing waste, and planting more trees—really matters for happiness. In Delhi, where air pollution is constantly in the news, better environmental policies aren't just nice to have. They're essential if the city wants its people to be healthier and happier.

How people get around a city affects their happiness. Long commutes, unreliable buses or trains, and traffic jams all add stress and make life less satisfying (Stutzer & Frey, 2008).

De Vos and colleagues (2013) show that when people feel good about their daily travel—when it's smooth, safe, and affordable—they're happier overall. Good public transport isn't just about helping the economy. It's about making lives better.

These studies collectively suggest that city-level governance arrangements—including planning, service delivery, participation and responsiveness—are key determinants of citizen happiness, particularly in dense metropolitan regions such as the NCT of Delhi.

## **2.5 Citizen Participation, Accountability and Trust**

The literature on governance has a strong theme of citizen participation, accountability, mechanisms as agents for good governance practices and happiness. Participatory governance improves the citizenry's feelings of agency, sense of inclusion, and sense of belonging, which are either directly or indirectly linked to subjective well-being.

It has been emphasised by Indian policy commentators that citizen engagement promotes inclusiveness, trust-building, and accountability in institutions, which helps to develop collaborative state-society partnerships. For instance, a 2024 policy note in Citizen

Participation towards Good Governance emphasises the use of participatory instruments, for instance, social audits, public hearings, etc. Transparency is increased, and accountability is improved in service delivery, which is linked with greater citizen satisfaction (VisionIAS, 2024).

### 2.5.1 Vision

Empirical surveys, such as the Voice of India's Citizens Survey—a component of the Annual Assessment of India's City-Systems (ASICS)—poll citizen perception of the quality of life and governance in Indian cities, including Delhi. The findings repeatedly come out that, where citizens feel their voices are heard and visible, follow-up on grievances, satisfaction scores with the city governments are superior (Janaagraha, 2023).

The literature also indicates the role that grievance redressal systems can play. Undelayedly, time-bound fair and clear complaint mechanisms confirm the impressions of procedural justice and respect. These contribute to increasing trust and happiness. When complaints get handled quickly, transparently, and with respect, people trust institutions more and feel more satisfied (Van Ryzin, 2011). Procedural justice theory backs this up—it says fair processes boost legitimacy and make people more likely to play by the rules, even if the outcome isn't what they hoped for (Tyler & Huo, 2002). So, grievance systems aren't just about fixing problems; they're about making people feel seen and respected. In India's government setup, making these systems stronger goes hand-in-hand with citizen-focused governance and happier communities.

Lastly, in India, official statements from the highest levels of state and central governments have also become more reassuring. Statements like those clearly stated by the Government of India's Department of Administrative Reforms—that grievance redressal should not be

confined to the disposal of complaints but to the 'satisfaction of the citizen'—link governance to the citizens' happiness (Press Information Bureau, 2023).

## 2.6 Good Governance and Happiness in the Indian Context

In India, the debate on "good governance" and "citizen wellbeing" has centred on a number of factors such as key themes:

1. **Administrative Reforms and Service Delivery:** Measures aimed at streamlining procedures, simplifying, corruption and providing time-bound services have been distilled into state-level Right to the Public Services Acts and central missions such as Sevottam, Mission Karmayogi, and "Digital India" (Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances, 2009; Government of India, 2015; Government of India, 2020).
2. **E-governance and e-delivery of services** – The National e-Governance Plan and subsequent initiatives, such as the Digital India initiative, National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA), emphasise accessibility, transparency, and citizen feedback via online portals (MeitY, 2021).
3. **Citizen surveys under NeSDA** gauge satisfaction levels with online services, highlighting expectations of timeliness, reliability and usability (Government Medical College Srinagar, 2022).
4. **Urban governance reforms** – Following the 74th Constitutional Amendment, municipalities were expected to assume greater responsibility for urban planning and service delivery. However, studies by civil society organisations such as Praja and Janaagraha show that devolution has been partial and uneven, impacting the quality of urban governance and citizens' quality of life (CWAS, 2023; Praja Foundation, 2024).

5. **Happiness and well-being initiatives** – Beyond national rankings in the World Happiness Report, some Indian states and cities have experimented with happiness policies. The Happiness Curriculum in Delhi schools is one such example, aimed at cultivating emotional resilience and happiness among children and indirectly contributing to a culture of well-being (EduDEL, 2018).
6. **India's federal system** really shapes how things work for citizens. Having lots of layers of government often leads to overlapping responsibilities, which can blur accountability and mess with how services get delivered (Arora & Goyal, 2014).
7. Rao and Singh (2005) point out that for things to work, different levels of government need to coordinate well. In Delhi, where authority is split between central, state, and local bodies, these overlaps create real challenges that affect how satisfied people feel with their government and their lives. Understanding how federalism works is key to figuring out how governance and happiness connect in Delhi.

The Indian literature also includes sector-specific studies linking governance and satisfaction—for example, studies on citizen perception of health schemes, urban transport, water supply and doorstep delivery of public services. These studies typically find that transparency, timeliness, staff behaviour and accountability mechanisms are strong predictors of citizen satisfaction and trust in government (Centre for Civil Society, 2021).

It may be summed up that above above-referred literature studies may be divided into following two areas:

- i) Governance factors influencing the Happiness of citizens, summarised in Table 2.2
- ii) Effect of Good Governance on Citizens' Happiness, summarised in Table 2.3

Table 2.2: Governance Factors Influencing Happiness

Sr. No.	Research Area / Governance Factor	Outcome for Happiness	Reference(s)
1	Participation & Voice	Enhances sense of agency, belonging and increases happiness	Frey & Stutzer (2000); Putnam (2000)
2	Transparency & accountability	Builds trust and citizen satisfaction	UNDP (1997); VisionIAS (2024)
3	Government effectiveness/service quality	Reliable services improve daily well-being	Andrews et al. (2017); Helliwell et al. (2018)
4	Rule of law	Ensures fairness and security, supporting life satisfaction	Kaufmann et al. (2008); UNESCAP (2009)
5	Control of corruption	Reduces inequality and improves happiness, especially in poorer countries	Youssef & Diab (2021); Ott (2011)
6	Political stability & absence of violence	Creates security, positively affecting happiness	Youssef & Diab (2021)
7	Digital governance / e-governance	Improves access, responsiveness and trust	Bertot et al. (2010); United Nations (2022)
8	Inclusiveness & equity	Reduces disparities and raises well-being	UNESCAP (2009); Drèze & Sen (2013)

9	Urban governance & public services	Better housing, transport, safety and amenities increase happiness	Glaser et al. (2001); Florida et al. (2013)
10	Environmental governance	Cleaner air and green spaces enhance mood and life satisfaction	Welsch (2006); MacKerron & Mourato (2013)
11	Mobility & transport governance	Reduced commute stress raises happiness	Stutzer & Frey (2008); De Vos et al. (2013)
12	Grievance redressal & procedural justice	Fair and timely complaint handling increases trust and happiness	Van Ryzin (2011); Tyler & Huo (2002)

Table 2.2 synthesises the key governance factors identified in the literature that shape citizen happiness. The studies consistently highlight that, beyond economic outcomes, procedural and institutional qualities such as participation, transparency, accountability, service effectiveness and inclusiveness play a crucial role in influencing subjective well-being. Urban service delivery, environmental quality, mobility and grievance redressal mechanisms emerge as particularly important in citizens' everyday experiences of governance. Together, these factors suggest that happiness is closely linked to how governance is practiced on the ground, reinforcing the view that people's well-being depends not only on policy goals but also on fair, responsive and citizen-centric processes.

Table 2.3: Effect of Good Governance on Happiness (Empirical Evidence)

Sr. No.	Research Area / Study Focus	Outcome on Happiness	Reference(s)
1	Governance quality & life evaluations	Higher governance quality is associated with higher SWB across countries	Helliwell & Huang (2008)
2	Technical vs democratic quality of government	Both service delivery and democratic institutions positively affect happiness	Helliwell et al. (2014)
3	Direct democracy & participation	Participation increases happiness independent of income	Frey & Stutzer (2000)
4	Democratic institutions	Strong democratic governance linked with happier citizens	Hudson (2006)
5	Governance dimensions in MENA	Overall governance raises happiness; effects vary by income level	Youssef & Diab (2021)
6	Six WGI indicators & happiness	Most governance factors positively related to happiness	Fereidouni et al. (2013)

7	Good governance & inequality	Good governance reduces happiness inequality	Ott (2011)
8	Service delivery performance	Effective services raise satisfaction and daily happiness	Andrews et al. (2017); Helliwell et al. (2018)
9	Urban governance & QoL	Better city governance improves quality of life and happiness	Pazos-García (2025); OECD (2020)
10	E-governance & trust	Inclusive digital governance increases trust and satisfaction	Bertot et al. (2010); United Nations (2022)
11	Welfare governance	Well-governed welfare policies improve material and psychological well-being	Drèze & Sen (2013); Kapur & Mukhopadhyay (2018)
12	Environmental governance	Pollution control and green policies significantly improve happiness	Welsch (2006); MacKerron & Mourato (2013)

Table 2.3 summarises empirical evidence demonstrating the positive association between good governance and happiness across diverse contexts. The findings indicate that both democratic quality (voice, participation and institutional trust) and technical quality (effective service

delivery and administrative performance) contribute significantly to higher life satisfaction and subjective well-being. Cross-national and regional studies further show that governance quality can reduce happiness inequalities and enhance trust even when income levels remain unchanged. Overall, the evidence underscores good governance as a multidimensional determinant of happiness, providing a strong rationale for examining how governance reforms in the Indian and NCT of Delhi context may influence citizen well-being.

## 2.7 Country-Specific Studies

Several studies have been carried out in different countries, which have been summarised in Table 2.4. Huang (2019) chose the city of Nanjing, China, to study the effect of urban parks on citizen happiness before and during the COVID-19 pandemic; the results show that residents with access to urban parks are happier, and sub-district scale urban parks have the highest positive association with residents expressing happiness. They used nine independent factors and developed the regression model

Yap and Geetha (2018) studied happiness in the academic environment in Malaysia. They selected the School of Engineering as a case and the Green National Happiness Index (GNH), which was developed by the Centre for Bhutan Studies. From GNH, the authors developed the Green Institutional Happiness Index (GIHI) by taking nine key areas. The nine areas chosen were psychological well-being, health, time use, education, cultural diversity, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity, and living standard. The study results show a strong relationship between happiness and education, and further observed that the coexistence of both happy staff and students is important at learning institutes to create an ideal learning environment.

Table 2.4: Summary of Happiness and Governance Studies in Different Countries

Country	Observations
Canada	<p>Sharpe et al. (2010) studied the levels of life satisfaction or happiness in citizens residing in different cities in Canada. The microdata were collected from the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) for 2007 and 2008. The most important economically and statistically significant determinants of individual happiness in Canada were perceived mental health, perceived health status, high levels of stress, an individual's sense of belonging to their local community, unemployment, marital and immigration status. It was also found that the most important reason for geographical variation in happiness in Canada is differences in the sense of belonging to local communities, which is generally higher in small CMAs, rural areas, and Atlantic Canada.</p>
China	<p>Huang (2019) studied the relationship between income inequality at the city level, personal distributive justice beliefs, and individual happiness, based on the data collected from a nationwide survey in China. The data was obtained from the China Labour-force Dynamics Survey (CLDS) during July – August 2012. The survey used multistage-cluster stratified probability proportionate to size (PPS) sampling, covering 29 provinces (the whole country except Hong Kong, Macao, Tibet, and Hainan provinces), 116 cities, and 187 counties. It was found that income inequality at the city level lowers happiness among Chinese people. It was also found that personal distributive justice beliefs play a momentous role in happiness. Specifically, as an effective social psychological mechanism, they can alleviate the negative effects of income inequality on happiness.</p>

Italy	<p>Facchinetti and Siletti (2022) studied the Quality-of-Life index, the Better Life index, and the Equitable and Sustainable Well-Being index (BES) in the context of Italian citizens. The features, structures, coverages and availability were discussed for each index. The BES index was found to capture the features of the Stiglitz Commission suggestions.</p>
Japan	<p>Fang and Niimi (2015) presented the distributional effects of the determinants of happiness using panel data analysis in Japan. The authors wish to observe an asymmetry between the effects of positive and negative changes on individual happiness, and if it exists, whether such an asymmetry is uniform across the happiness distribution, i.e., the possibility of loss aversion. The data was obtained from the preference parameters study of Osaka University. It was found that feeling relatively poor has a greater negative effect on happiness than the positive effect of feeling relatively rich, i.e., losses bite more than gains. No evidence for loss aversion is detected with respect to expected future income changes, as individual happiness is found to be more sensitive to gains than to losses.</p>
	<p>Niimi (2018) examined the determinants of happiness inequality in Japan using unique data from the “Preference Parameters Study” of Osaka University. The survey for the study was conducted annually during the period 2003-2013. It was found that household income has a negative and significant effect on happiness inequality, as found for other advanced economies, though people’s perception of their relative standing in the income spectrum also matters for the dispersion of happiness. The regression results show that the insecurity faced by people about their jobs and life after retirement is also significantly associated with the widening of happiness inequality.</p>

Kyrgyzstan	<p>Namazie and Safney (2001) studied the self-supported measures of satisfaction with life in Kyrgyzstan, using the 1993 household survey data. The data were obtained from the Kyrgyzstan Multipurpose Poverty Survey (KMPS), which is a World Bank-sponsored household survey, based on the World Bank's well-established Living Standard Measurement Survey. The survey was carried out during October and November in 1993 and covered approximately 2,000 households and 10,000 individuals. Regression analysis was used for the data, and it was found that economic well-being has a great effect on happiness. The dissatisfaction with life is concentrated among the old, the unemployed, the divorced and ethnic Russians and other Slavs.</p>
Malaysia	<p>Yap and Geetha (2018) studied the factors that influence happiness among Sabahans. The questionnaire from the 'happiness initiative' was adapted, and a total of 378 respondents were selected based on convenience sampling. Factor analysis and the PLS-SEM method were applied for data analysis. The study found that family relationship has the greatest positive impact on happiness in Sabah. It showed that Sabah citizens were found to be encountering their happiest moment with family relationships, followed by financial situation, community and friends, health, work and government. The study also found that the happiness of Sabahans was highly contributed by financial situation compared to community and friends, and health. It indicated that Sabahans continually travel on the highway to wealth in the chase of happiness.</p>
Netherland and Japan	<p>Takahashi et al. (2018) did a comparative study between the factors that affect happiness in Japan and in the Netherlands from both macro (country level) and micro (individual level) perspectives. It was confirmed through the results of macro analysis that social support (i.e., having relatives or friends you can count</p>

	<p>on to help you when you are in trouble) is the factor that significantly improves the level of life evaluation both in Japan and the Netherlands compared to other countries. The longitudinal data analysis in this paper also revealed that healthy life expectancy and generosity are insignificant, although their significance has been claimed in earlier studies. It was found that Netherlands showed greater trust on others in general than Japan, and Japan showed greater trust on families (family trust) than the Netherlands, a factor that had an influence on happiness levels of individuals in the respective countries.</p>
Bangladesh	<p>Devine et al., (2019) studied the role of religion in well-being and life chances in Bangladeshi citizens. Primary data was collected during the wellbeing in developing countries (WeD) programme carried out between 2002 and 2007 using the Resource and Needs Questionnaire (RANQ). The primary data was supplemented using interviews from the period 2008-2016. It was found that religion matters to wellbeing because it influences the everyday social and political processes that determine people's life chances.</p>
Spain	<p>Cunado and Garcia (2013) studied the relationship between air pollution, climate and reported subjective well-being (or happiness) in Spanish regions. Three different data sources were used; European Social Survey to obtain happiness data, measures of per capita GDP, unemployment rate and population density data for each of the Spanish regions from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística and data on air pollution and climate from the Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino. It was found that, after controlling for most of the socio-economic variables affecting happiness, there are still significant regional differences in subjective well-being. Furthermore, climate and air pollution</p>

	variables play a significant role in explaining these regional differences in happiness.
South Africa	Kollamparambil (2020), explored the trends and determinants in happiness and happiness inequality in South Africa at the individual and aggregate district municipality level using the four waves of National Income Dynamics data. The study uses National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) panel data, with a countrywide representative sample of over 28,000 people in 7300 households across South Africa. Regression was used for the data analysis. It was found that that while both happiness as well as income levels show increasing trends in recent years, the inequality trends differ substantially between income and happiness measures. The paper also identifies the significant determinants of happiness and happiness inequality and finds that income determines happiness level as well as happiness inequality at both individual and aggregate level. At the aggregate level, income inequality has significant negative and positive impact on happiness levels and happiness inequality respectively.
Turkey	Eren and Asici (2017) analysed the determinants of happiness in Turkey between 2004 and 2013 by relying on TURKSTAT's Life Satisfaction Surveys. Ordered logistic regression was used for data analysis. It was found that income ranks played an important role for the happiness of individuals in Turkey. In addition to this, degree of hope is found to be the strongest estimator of happiness along with expectations from future. Also, being married makes people happier only if they are satisfied from their marriage and education brings more happiness only if it helps to increase income.
USA	Graham and Pettinato (2001) explored the demographic determinants of happiness in 17 countries in Latin America, as well as the effects of

	<p>macroeconomic trends and attitudes about the market on happiness. The data analysis is based upon the Latino barometer conducted annually from 1997-2000. Comparative references from Russia and USA were also taken into account. It was found that the determinants of happiness in Latin America are remarkably similar to those in the advanced industrial countries. A negatively skewed perceptions gap between individuals' objective economic situations and their subjective evaluations in both Latin America and Russia was found. That gap, in turn, has negative effects on happiness. Furthermore, Inflation and unemployment have negative effects on happiness in both contexts, while pro-market attitudes and preference for democracy have positive effects.</p>
ASEAN-5	<p>Zhu et al., (2016) studied the the impact of foreign direct investment (FDI), economic growth and energy consumption on carbon emissions in five selected member countries in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN-5). The secondary data for the study was acquired from the 'world developmental indicators. A panel quantile regression model was applied. It was found that the impacts of various factors on carbon emission are evidently heterogeneous and that energy consumption has a positive and significant effect on carbon emissions. Also, the effect of economic growth is negative and significant in the uppermost quantile, which suggests that a higher level of economic growth can mitigate the increase in carbon emissions in high-emissions ASEAN countries. In addition, it was found that trade openness has a negative influence on carbon emissions.</p>
OECD Countries	<p>Fleche et al., (2012) explored issues with assessing wellbeing in OECD countries based on self-reported life satisfaction surveys in a pooled regression over time and countries, at the country level and the OECD average. It was found</p>

that in addition to income the state of health, not being unemployed, and social relationships (having friends, not being divorced) are particularly important for wellbeing. The results also show that cultural differences are not major drivers of differences in life satisfaction.

Helliwell et al., (2014) studied three main objectives for this paper; first is to review existing studies of the links between good governance and subjective wellbeing. The second is to bring together the largest available sets of national level measures of the quality of governance, and to assess the extent to which they contribute to explaining the levels and changes in life evaluations in 157 countries over the years 2005-2012, using data from the Gallup World Poll in the World Happiness Report 2013. The third objective is to use subjective wellbeing research to suggest ways in which governance as to improve lives in all countries, as measured by peoples' own evaluations. The results confirm earlier findings that the delivery quality of government services dominate democratic quality in supporting better lives. The results show not just that people are more satisfied with their lives in countries having better governance quality, but also that actual changes in governance quality since 2005 have led to large changes in the quality of life. Well-being benefits can arise where nations have stronger social fabrics that enable them to better weather economic or other crises. Results also show that changes in public confidence in national institutions are important sources of changes in life evaluations even after account has been taken of the effects of changes in delivery quality, GDP per capita and social support.

<p>Nine European countries</p>	<p>Arvin and Lew (2010) studied relationship between the foreign aid disbursements of a donor country and its level of happiness. Three questions were asked First, do higher aid flows make a donor happier? Second, does a happier donor give more aid? Third, does causality proceed in both directions simultaneously? 8 donors were studied. A causality test as prescribed by Granger was adopted for the study. The results reveal that for only two important European donors, France and the UK, the aid-happiness link is a positive causal relationship from happiness to aid.</p>
<p>MENA</p>	<p>Fereidouni et al., (2013) studied the effects of governance matters on happiness in the MENA region while controlling for other relevant determinants. The paper applies panel random effects regression analyses by using data from 14 MENA countries over the period of 2009-2011. The empirical results show that higher level of political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness and rule of law significantly increase happiness in the region. Furthermore, the paper finds that voice and accountability, regulatory quality and control of corruption variables have positive relationship with happiness but are not significant.</p>
<p>130 Nations</p>	<p>Ott (2011) studied the impact of government on both average happiness and inequality in happiness in nations. This research was based on data about happiness in 78 relatively rich nations around 2000 and subsequently 130 rich and poor nations around 2006. The data was collected from the World Bank website. A positive relation was found between the quality of government, the technical quality in particular, and average happiness in nations. The findings suggest that improvement of the technical quality will usually lead to a higher average happiness. It was also found that the relation between the size of</p>

	government and average happiness depends on the quality of governments; big government adds to happiness only when its quality is good.
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## 2.8 Governance and Citizen Happiness in NCT of Delhi

<sup>59</sup> The National Capital Territory of Delhi presents a unique governance context with overlapping jurisdictions—Union Government, elected Delhi Government, <sup>41</sup> Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and Delhi Cantonment Board. This fragmented governance style has direct consequences for service delivery and citizen experience.

### 2.8.1 <sup>59</sup> Status of Governance and Service Delivery

The Praja Foundation's report on the <sup>59</sup> Status of Governance and Service Delivery in Delhi records the distribution of duties in respect of a number of agencies, but only a small subset of the 18 essential city services that is entirely within the scope of the urban government, while is shared or controlled by other levels. This has contributed to a lack of accountability and makes it more complicated for civilians to blame, which in turn may impact satisfaction and trust (Praja Foundation, 2023).

Praja's later reports, as well as the Urban Governance Index (UGI) 2024, indicate that Delhi is ranked comparatively low in terms of organisational structure and empowerment when compared to Indian cities, despite a relatively high per capita income. Issues include incomplete devolution, weak mayoral authority and limited citizen participation mechanisms (Hindustan Times, 2024; Praja Foundation, 2024).

At the same time, other assessments, such as <sup>61</sup> the Annual Survey of India's City Systems (ASICS), have occasionally found Delhi to be among the better-scoring Indian cities on certain

governance dimensions, especially urban planning and design, though still falling far short of benchmark global cities like London and New York (CWAS, 2023).

### 2.8.2 Citizen Perceptions and Satisfaction

Survey-based studies on citizen satisfaction with public services in Delhi are scattered but informative. Earlier surveys indicated rising satisfaction with health, education and transport services relative to previous years (Hindustan Times, 2022).

A specialised study on doorstep delivery of public services in Delhi (linked to <sup>187</sup> amendments to the Delhi Right of Citizen to Time Bound Delivery of Services Act) reports generally positive citizen perceptions regarding convenience, reduced corruption and time-saving, although concerns remain about awareness and coverage (ResearchGate, 2022).

Civil society reports on civic complaints and ward committee deliberations in Delhi show that large volumes of complaints are registered in areas such as <sup>331</sup> solid waste management, water supply, roads and street-lights. The responsiveness and timeliness of complaint resolution vary substantially across zones, influencing citizen satisfaction and trust (Praja Foundation, 2022).

### 2.8.3 Sectoral Governance and Well-Being

Sector-specific evidence also links governance to well-being in Delhi:

- **Sanitation and environment:** Delhi's performance in national cleanliness rankings (Swachh Survekshan) has been mixed, with NDMC areas performing well and the larger MCD often lagging. Cleanliness and waste management are important determinants of <sup>124</sup> perceived quality of life and urban happiness (The Times of India, 2023).
- **Health services:** Primary health-care reforms, including neighbourhood-level centres (for example, Arogya Mandirs and earlier Mohalla-type clinics), aim to improve easy

access, especially for women, the elderly and low-income groups. Adequate and accessible healthcare is consistently cited in the international literature as a determinant of happiness in urban environments (The Times of India, 2022).

- **Digital governance and paperless administration:** The rapid expansion of e-Office in Delhi—moving from a small fraction of departments to a large majority—has been framed as a means to enhance efficiency, transparency, file-tracking and decision-making speed. Such digital governance reforms, if perceived as effective by citizens, can positively affect satisfaction with government functioning (The Times of India, 2024).
- **Integrated command, data and grievance systems:** Recent plans to establish an Integrated Command and Control Centre, Unified Data Hub and WhatsApp-based governance interfaces are intended to streamline service delivery, crisis management and grievance handling. These align with the global trend of using technology to improve responsiveness and, indirectly, citizens' daily experience and happiness (The Times of India, 2024).

#### **2.8.4 Citizen Participation and Urban Governance in Delhi**

Janaagraha's <sup>61</sup> Governance and Citizens in Urban India: Evidence from Delhi highlights that citizen awareness of urban governance structures is limited, and participation in formal forums (ward committees, area sabhas) is relatively low. Nonetheless, citizen participation is positively associated with better perceptions of service delivery in neighbourhoods where active civil society and resident welfare associations (RWAs) are present (Janaagraha, 2025).

Other studies and handbooks on Government-to-Citizen services in Delhi document how <sup>315</sup> policies in areas such as education, health, transport, food security and labour influence ordinary citizens' lives. They underscore that the impact of these policies depends not just on

their design but on implementation quality, frontline staff behaviour and ease of access (Centre for Civil Society, 2021).

The Delhi-specific literature on the whole indicates a situation that is characterised by a complex set of innovations (doorstep delivery, e-Governance, happiness curriculum, NHCs) as well as challenges (fragmentation, service variability, civic issues). While many studies touch upon citizen satisfaction with specific services, very few directly examine overall happiness or subjective well-being <sup>320</sup> in relation to multi-dimensional good governance indicators at the city level. This gap justifies the present study.

### **2.9 Emerging Themes: Governance of Well-Being and Potential Risks**

A newer critical literature warns that the “governance of well-being” can sometimes turn happiness into a tool of power—used to legitimise government agendas or deflect attention from material deprivations. Rivera (2024) discusses how happiness policies may be used symbolically or instrumentally, potentially masking structural inequalities.

Similarly, some democratic quality studies find that traditional measures of democracy (elections, civil liberties indices) are not always strongly correlated with life satisfaction when separated from the quality of service delivery and rule of law. Flavin’s updated cross-national analysis shows that when governance is decomposed into “process” and “delivery” dimensions, it is the latter—policy outcomes and service quality—that more consistently predicts life satisfaction (Flavin, 2023).

Emerging work also explores the role of trust. For example, Li (2025) and related studies show that trust in local government and perceptions of fairness in political processes are important mediators between governance quality and life satisfaction. Where institutions are perceived as fair, unbiased and responsive, citizens report higher happiness even at similar income levels. These perspectives remind researchers to:

- Distinguish between symbolic and substantive aspects of governance;
- Consider distributional aspects of well-being (who benefits from governance reforms);  
and
- Pay attention to citizens' own meanings of happiness and well-being, rather than imposing purely technocratic measures.

For a study in NCT of Delhi, this implies that the measurement of citizen happiness should include both overall life satisfaction and domain-specific satisfaction (health, education, transport, safety, environment, governance) and should be interpreted in light of structural conditions and equity.

### 2.10 Synthesis and Research Gaps

From the above review, several key insights emerge:

Robust global evidence shows that good governance—especially effectiveness, <sup>343</sup> control of corruption, rule of law and <sup>145</sup> trust in institutions—is positively associated with higher happiness and life satisfaction. At the cross-national level, <sup>241</sup> Ott (2010) shows that good governance not only <sup>126</sup> raises average happiness but also reduces inequality in happiness across citizens, suggesting both efficiency and equity effects of governance quality.

Urban governance <sup>126</sup> plays a crucial role in citizen well-being, with city-level governance quality shaping daily experiences of services, infrastructure and public spaces.

Citizen participation and accountability mechanisms strengthen both governance quality and subjective well-being by enhancing agency, trust and perceived fairness.

Trust in public institutions really matters when it comes to connecting good governance with how happy people feel. When people trust these institutions, they believe that public officials are doing their jobs well, making fair decisions, and actually working for the common good.

That trust goes a long way—it cuts down on uncertainty, makes interactions smoother, and helps people feel safe. All of this adds up and makes people happier (Uslaner, 2002).

Bjørnskov and his team (2010) show that places with strong laws and real efforts to keep corruption in check report much higher life satisfaction. Corruption doesn't just waste money—it makes people feel like the system's rigged, that justice isn't real, and that the government isn't really on their side (Rose-Ackerman & Palifka, 2016).

The capability approach really shifts how we think about development. Instead of just counting money or resources, it asks: Can people actually live the lives they want? Sen (1999) puts it simply—real freedom matters. So, good governance isn't just about boosting everyone's income. It's about opening doors: better schools, health care, safety, fair justice, and a real say in decisions. When governments mess this up, people feel it, no matter how much the economy grows.

168 There's also a lot of talk about trust and how solid institutions matter. Rothstein and Teorell (2008) point out that when public institutions are fair, efficient, and clean, people actually start to trust their government. That trust ends up making life feel better. Studies back this up—confidence in public institutions helps explain why good governance and happiness go hand in hand, especially in democracies where people expect their leaders to answer for their actions (Helliwell & Wang, 2011). They find that trust, whether it's trust in other people or in institutions, has a powerful link to happiness. And this holds true even when you factor in things like income, jobs, and health. So, reforms that push for more transparency, accountability, and ethical leadership don't just help the economy. They make people feel better about their lives, in a real, measurable way.

In India, there is substantial work on administrative reforms, e-governance and citizen satisfaction with individual services, but relatively limited research directly linking composite measures of good governance with citizen happiness at the state or city level.

Put all this together, and it's clear: happiness isn't just about money or material stuff. It's about fairness, getting heard, being treated right, and actually trusting the folks in charge. Good governance shapes all of that.

Helliwell and co-authors (2018, 2020) use data for 157 countries and find <sup>136</sup> strong empirical linkages between government quality and national happiness, <sup>24</sup> even after controlling for income and other socio-economic variables. <sup>136</sup> Improvements in governance within a plausible policy time horizon are associated with significant increases in national life evaluations. Importantly, service delivery quality (for example, effectiveness in delivering education, health, water and public safety) generally has a stronger association with happiness than purely procedural democratic indicators (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2018; Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2020).

Feeling safe and trusting the justice system really shapes how happy people are. When the rule of law works, when things are fair and predictable, and rights actually get protected—people worry less. They don't feel as anxious or insecure. Research backs this up: crime, fear of being a victim, and feeling like one has been treated unfairly all drag down life satisfaction (Powdthavee, 2005).

Tyler (2006) makes an important point. It's not just about what happens in court or how laws turn out, but how the whole process feels. If people think the process is fair and decisions are made honestly, they trust the system more and say they're happier.

At the sub-national level, Cárcaba et al. (2022) examine Spanish municipalities and define three dimensions of local good governance: accountability, government efficiency and control of corruption. They find that better local governance is <sup>326</sup> associated with significantly higher individual subjective well-being, even controlling for personal and contextual factors (Cárcaba, González, & de la Cuesta, 2022).

Studies of neighbourhood governance during COVID-19 in China show that responsive local governance, effective epidemic management and clear communication enhanced residents'

happiness and reduced anxiety, while failures in local governance eroded well-being and trust (Zhang & Pan, 2021).

Emerging work also explores the role of trust. As noted earlier, trust in local government and perceptions of fairness can mediate the influence of governance on life satisfaction (Li, 2025).

Overall, the global literature points to a robust positive association between good governance and citizen happiness, with especially strong effects through public service delivery, corruption control, rule of law and institutional trust.

The measurement of happiness and governance poses significant methodological challenges.

Subjective well-being is typically assessed using self-reported measures of life satisfaction and affect, such as the Cantril Ladder, which has been widely used in international surveys including the Gallup World Poll (Cantril, 1965).

The OECD (2013) provides comprehensive guidelines for measuring subjective well-being, emphasising reliability, cross-cultural comparability and the use of multiple indicators. These guidelines support the use of happiness measures as legitimate policy-relevant indicators rather than purely subjective or anecdotal assessments.

Similarly, governance is measured through composite indices such as the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), which capture dimensions like government effectiveness, rule of law and control of corruption. While such indices are widely used, critics argue that they may not fully capture sub-national variations in governance quality (Stiglitz et al., 2009).

For a study focused on the NCT of Delhi, combining perception-based measures of governance with subjective well-being indicators offers a more nuanced understanding of how citizens experience governance in their daily lives.

However, there is no comprehensive empirical study that systematically quantifies the relationship between multiple good-governance dimensions (for example, transparency,

service delivery quality, responsiveness, participation, digital governance) and citizen happiness/subjective well-being across different districts or demographic groups in Delhi.

Existing work on happiness in Delhi focuses mainly on school-based interventions (Happiness Curriculum) rather than broader adult citizen happiness and its connection with governance (EduDEL, 2018).

These gaps justify the proposed research on “Good Governance and Citizen Happiness: A Study in NCT of Delhi.” The present study may, thus, contribute by:

- Operationalising a multi-dimensional index of good governance at the city/zone level;
- Measuring citizen happiness and life satisfaction through a structured survey;
- Analysing the strength and nature of association between governance dimensions and happiness; and Identifying policy levers in governance that can most effectively enhance citizen happiness in the NCT of Delhi.

## 128 CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology utilized to examine the research question under study. It provides an explanation of the research design and the systematic methods followed to ensure that the study produces valid and reliable results. Several approaches have been adopted for the present study by keeping in mind the research objectives as the prime components of the research. The use of multiple methods, as per their appropriateness can help to overcome the deficiencies of one method over another. The mixed method approach is used to enhance the strength of research outcomes as the data has been taken from varied resources. The case study method and empirical analysis, along with judgement making models for developing and investigating the framework have been used. The objective of best practices has been dealt with by the case study method. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) has been utilised to evaluate the data collected through survey and to validate the proposed framework. This chapter outlines the comprehensive methodology employed to address the research questions, including the data collection methods, sampling scheme, tools and instruments used, the theoretical foundation, and the data analysis techniques applied. By providing a transparent and clear account of the methodological selections, this chapter sets up the objectivity of the research process and displays how the objectives of the study are rationally and methodically addressed.

#### 103 3.1 Research Design

Kerlinger (1986) states that *"a research design is the plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions."* The research

186  
 design of this research is given in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 : Research Design

Research Design	Cross-sectional Descriptive Research Design
Respondents	Beneficiaries, Policy Makers, Policy Implementation Executives
Data Collection	Primary Data using a structured questionnaire
Sample size	271 Respondents 5 interviews of the policy makers 5 interviews of policy implementation executives
Sampling Technique	Convenience and Purposive Sampling
Scale	A comprehensive scale comprising 40 items across the policies. Validate and reliability checked, and scale purification done in the pilot testing.
Tools	Excel and SPSS
Techniques	Descriptive Analysis, Total Interpretative Structural Modeling, Case Study

### 3.2. Research Objectives

- To identify the different aspects of individual and citizen happiness.
- To study the various happiness indices and identify the factors contributing to the happiness of high-ranking countries.
- To study the impact of Government Policies of Law and order/ pollution, health/ education, and creating opportunities with the mediating role of implementation efficiency on citizen happiness.

- To develop a framework of the role of AI in good governance and the impact of smart cities on citizen happiness.

### 3.3 Research methodology

Detailed review of literature has been conducted and research gaps are listed. After the research gaps analysis, the research objectives are developed. For achieving the research objectives, a conceptual research framework is proposed. In this research framework, the research objectives are taken as prime component of study and the entire research work will proceed in the direction of fulfillment of the research objectives. The different methods used for the study are explained in detail as follows:

#### 3.3.1 Case Study Method

The case study is defined as "A process of doing research by collecting multiple pieces of evidence from real life experiences, which results in an in-depth qualitative analysis of particular problem underhand". In vibrant economic conditions, the case study method can help in providing inherent knowledge of inside methods and practices of the organizations understudy. Case research method can be distinguished with conventional approach by presenting chance to the researcher to investigate the study in their exclusive technique instead than pursuing fixed models and methods. The results of case research method are additionally effective as findings are obtained from in-thorough analysis of researcher's understanding and can precedent to some unique and novel outcomes. The major challenges in employing case research method are time taking process, accessibility of restricted information, broad view of results, paying visits to meet concerned people, etc. In this study, the best practices of citizen happiness policies are analyzed using the case study method. The purpose of using case research method is to get familiarized with processes and best practices of Indian Policies leading to citizen happiness. In this study,

best practices are listed through in-depth review of past studies followed by discussions with Indian experts of government of India and State government have been done. A methodical approach is followed starting from selection of case study, collecting information, investigation of information, and disseminate the results. The officials of the concerned department in government sector have been contacted personally or over phone for conducting interviews in order to collect data for the study. The gathered data is examined, and case study findings are discussed to comprehend the actual policies of the concerned authorities. The framework in Table 3.2 has been used to develop the case study.

Table 3.2: Case Research Methodology

Steps	Comments
Defining the Research Question	To develop a framework of the role of AI in good governance and the impact of smart cities on citizen happiness
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assess the relevance</b> of selected government policies in enhancing subjective well-being.</li> <li>• <b>Evaluate the intensity of implementation</b> of these policies in terms of resource allocation and budgetary commitment.</li> <li>• <b>Analyse the quality of execution</b>, focusing on efficiency, transparency, and citizen satisfaction.</li> <li>• <b>Identify high-impact policy areas</b> that align with Smart City pillars such as mobility, governance, environment, health, and education.</li> <li>• <b>Develop a multidimensional framework</b> for linking urban policy interventions to citizen happiness metrics.</li> </ul>

Selection of the Case	<b>Examining Delhi smart</b> city initiatives, provides practical insights into how AI-driven governance impacts citizen wellbeing.
Developing Research Instruments	A structured questionnaire is developed to capture major issues related to citizen well being which is further followed by interviews and observations.
Data Collection	The data is collected by conducting a survey through questionnaire and face to face interviews and discussions with middle and senior level officials of Government of NCT Delhi. In few cases, telephonic interviews are also conducted.
Data Analysis	The data collected from various sources are analyzed by Descriptive and Significant Analysis of Government Policies linked to Smart Cities Mission.

Source: Adapted from Eisenhardt (1989)

### 3.3.2 Total Interpretive Structural Modelling (TISM)

Total Interpretive Structural Modelling (TISM) has been defined as “It is a well-known approach for recognizing associations among specific factors which pertains to the problem or study at hand”. It determines the related associations among found elements. The results are persuaded on ordering of separate elements by taking a joint arrangement of these relationships into regard. This technique is Interpretive as it interprets the links of variables based on specialist view. It is named structured as it observes a structured approach to precise simple results from the complicated problems. It is a method which models the final outcome in ordered and graphic format. Total Interpretive Structural Modeling (TISM) is the improved version of ISM with more benefits in terms of reliable interpretation of outcomes. It helps in building well-expressed conceptual model which interprets both the

points and connects. Furthermore, it creates a structural representation of the original problem state in the form of a digraph that presents communication more effectively by preserving few important transitive connects. This approach is also proved to be tough, orderly and efficient which makes this method more favourable over many other methods.

In this study, total interpretive structural modeling is used for analysis of the policies pertaining to citizen well being. This method is utilized to comprehend the citizen happiness

### 3.3.3 Research Instrument

One of the aims of this study is to find out which are the policies that are highly relevant to the citizens in increasing their happiness. The government of India, as well as state governments, have formulated various social welfare policies for their citizens to benefit. Because of various reasons such as inefficient formulation of policy, lack of resources and budgetary support, and pilferage in the implementation of policy, it has been seen that the policy has become ineffective at various times. In order to achieve various aims of the study, a valid and reliable instrument of measurement has been developed. The survey tool includes questions to collect socio-demographic information of the respondents, items to gauge the relevance of policy, rigor in the implementation of policy, and implementation quality of the policy.

The scale that has been applied in the measurement tool is the Likert scale type with five points. The Likert scale, first introduced by Rensis Likert in 1932, is an extensively used psychometric scale designed to measure attitudes, opinions, or perceptions across several disciplines, including psychology, education, social sciences, and business research. The central concept of the Likert scale concerns presenting respondents with a series of statements and asking them to suggest their level of agreement or disagreement on a proportional agree-disagree continuum, typically ranging from 5 to 7 points. While the 5-point scale is most conventional,

variations such as 4-point, 6-point, and 7-point scales exist to provide notable sensitivity or to avoid neutral responses, depending on the research design (Joshi et al., 2015). The elementary benefit of the Likert scale lies in its ease of use and flexibility, allowing researchers to compute subjective constructs such as satisfaction, perception, or attitude, which are else challenging to evaluate directly. By gathering the responses across multiple items, the Likert scale provides an interval-level guesstimate of the underlying construct, allowing the use of parametric statistical techniques, although some debate continues regarding whether Likert scale data are truly ordinal or interval in nature (Allen and Seaman, 2007). The scale's development was grounded in the need for more trustworthy and replicable measures of attitude, moving beyond the former dichotomous or forced-choice procedures that limited response variability and reduced the warmth of research instruments. Likert's methodology emphasized constructing statements that evidently represent a single measurement of the construct under investigation. Using multiple items to obtain the breadth and depth of the attitude, so enhancing internal consistency and reliability of the scale. Over the decades, the Likert scale has been widely adapted in educational research, where it is often used to assess students' satisfaction with courses, teaching effectiveness, or learning environments. For instance, studies examining student engagement in online learning frequently utilize Likert items to obtain learners' perceived self-efficacy, satisfaction, and motivation levels (Kuh et al., 2011). Similarly, in organizational behavior research, Likert scales are commonly used to measure employee engagement, job satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, and organizational commitment. This provides actionable details for management decision-making (Spector, 1997). One of the significant benefits of the Likert scale is that it balances out ease of administration with meaningful data collection. Respondents can promptly give their opinions without the cognitive burden associated with open-ended questions. This makes it appropriate for large-scale surveys and cross-sectional studies. Moreover, its structured format allows for

straightforward coding and statistical analysis. Which includes measures of central tendency, correlation, and regression, enhancing comparability across different populations and contexts. Nonetheless, the use of the Likert scale is not without limitations. Respondents may exhibit **central tendency bias**, regularly selecting neutral or mid-point responses, or **acquiescence bias**, the tendency to agree with statements regardless of content. Such response patterns can distort findings if not carefully addressed in survey design. For example, by opposite-coding some items or including negatively formulated statements to balance response tendencies (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Another limitation involves the assumption of equal intervals between scale points. While Likert items are often considered as interval data for parametric analyses, some scholars argue that the psychological distance between, for instance, "agree" and "strongly agree" may not be uniform across respondents. This may affect the explanation of statistical results. Besides this, the cultural and linguistic differences can impact how respondents interpret the scale. Thus, leading to variations in reliability and validity across diverse populations (Chen et al., 1995). Despite these challenges, several strategies exist to enhance the robustness of Likert-scale instruments. Thorough item construction, pre-testing, and pilot studies can improve clarity and reduce ambiguity. Reliability assessment using Cronbach's alpha ensures internal consistency. Factor analysis may be utilized to examine whether items cluster as expected, which provides the construct validity evidence. In contemporary research nowadays, digital survey platforms have further enhanced the utility of Likert scales. This enables advanced branching and real-time data collection while maintaining ease of data collection. Likert scales also facilitate longitudinal studies by allowing researchers to track changes in attitudes or perceptions over time. This supports program evaluation, policy assessment, and organizational development initiatives. For example, in educational program evaluation, repeated Likert-scale assessments can uncover changes in student attitudes toward teaching methods, curriculum changes, or institutional services which may guide on the

evidence-based interventions. In clinical and psychological research, Likert scales remain foundational for assessing constructs such as anxiety, depression, stress, and quality of life. Regularly creating part of larger standardized instruments like the Beck Depression Inventory or the Perceived Stress Scale, signifying their resourcefulness and enduring relevance (DeVellis, 2017). In summary, the Likert scale is a versatile, reliable, and widely adopted tool for measuring subjective constructs across a broad range of disciplines. Its structured format, ease of administration, and adaptability to various research contexts make it a cornerstone of survey research. While researchers must remain aware of potential biases, interpretive challenges, and cultural considerations. Also, the careful design and validation procedures can ease these concerns. The continued use of Likert scales in education, psychology, business, and social science research attests to their enduring utility in capturing attitudes and perceptions. It provides meaningful insights for theory development, policy formulation, and practice improvement. As research methodologies develop over time, the Likert scale remains a foundational instrument which is bridging qualitative subjectivity with quantitative analysis. This scale enables nuanced perception of human opinions and attitudes systematically and measurably.

The questions of the model ask for the opinion of the respondents. The instrument is composed of questions related to 10 policies (part of a full study of about 32 questions) related to the social welfare of the citizens. The questionnaire has been designed on the basis of qualitative findings.

A pilot test is carried out to determine the type of user on whom the opinion will be taken, the type of model that will be designed, the way of determining the measurement instrument, devising application procedure, performing the analysis of the model, recording the variation observed in the answers, for performing adjustment to the design for evaluation, and for determining the standards for designing the sample.

Accordingly, a structured questionnaire has been designed to understand the effects of different policies in the area of social welfare. In order to recognize the policies, a list of policies from the central as well as state governments is compiled that are applicable to the residents of NCT Delhi. Students and faculty members from colleges and universities, government officials, and professionals such as doctors and lawyers are chosen from the sample of the pilot test. Certain statements from the pilot study are rephrased to have an unambiguous meaning. More than 30 policies are listed, from which ten policies are chosen to be used in this study. These policies are from the state as well as the central government, both old and new.

### 3.4 Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundations are discussed in next sections.

#### 3.4.1 Policy Relevance and Implementation

The ten policies selected for the study have been evaluated on the following three aspects:

- (i) Relevance of the policy in enhancing happiness:
- (ii) Intensity of implementation:
- (iii) Quality of implementation:

Government policies are meant to improve the well-being of the citizens. However, due to a lack of ground level information, understanding or other such reasons, framed policies are not appropriately relevant. In that case, citizens and beneficiaries are unable to connect to them and use them, resulting in wastage of efforts and resources. Thus, policies must be relevant to address the issues for which they have been framed.

Along with the relevance of the policy, it is equally essential that the policies are implemented in right spirit. To successfully implement a policy, it is desired to provide sufficient resources in terms of administrative setup, planning, budgets, and other resources. All this together will define the intensity of the implementation. Along with the resources, it is also important that

adequate mechanisms are set up to prevent corruption, to reduce wastages of the resources, and to focus on the quality of services delivered. In this study, these aspects of policy design and implementation have been kept in view throughout the study.

To study the implications of happy citizens for business environment and economic stability, a Delphi study was conducted. The study had six senior-level corporate executives, six bureaucrats responsible for policy planning and implementation, and three university professors in the areas of strategic management, human resources, and social sciences to discuss the implications of the social policies, happiness, on the business environment. The help of literature on these aspects is also taken as input for discussions and to validate the outcome of the discussions.

### 3.4.2 Government Policies in India

The policies implemented by the Government of India and the state governments are studied through a structured questionnaire. In this study, 16 policies that are associated with the economic and business growth of the country have been presented. The conceptual lineage is that the policies help to enhance the happiness of the citizens, and these citizens, when working in the job market, help to enhance the business ecosystem and the growth of the economy.

a) To determine the relevance of the selected policies for citizen happiness and how far these policies are effectively deployed. The effective deployment of the policies is studied by analysing the intensity of the implementation and the quality of implementation. For the present study, 305 responses have been collected. However, 34 responses were found to be incomplete. Hence, the same were discarded only 271 were used for the present study. The respondents consist of Administrators (8.1%), Faculty (22.1%), Students (31.7%), Lawyers (14.8%), social workers (9.6%), corporate employees (7.0%), and others from miscellaneous areas. About 84% have an annual

income below 20 Lakhs, and the male-to-female respondent ratio is 60.1:39.9. Further, 40% respondents were below 48% and 45.8% were between 41 and 60%. The remaining are above the age of 60 years.

- b) To study the application of Artificial intelligence in the design and deployment of the policy. For this, the literature and reports are studied, and discussions are held with eight experts- four from policy area, two from the Computer technology area, and two from the academic community.

### 3.5 Research Hypothesis

In order to attain research objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

**Hypothesis 1:** All the social policies considered in this research are relevant to enhance citizen happiness.

**Hypothesis 2:** All the social policies considered in this research have a good intensity of implementation.

**Hypothesis 3:** All the social policies considered in this research have a moderate level of quality of implementation.

The most relevant policies and the quality and intensity of their implementation have been identified through testing of above hypotheses.

### 3.6 Profile of the Respondents

A total of 305 responses were collected, and out of that, 271 were used for the present study.

The others were discarded due to their incompleteness. The profile of the respondents is given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Profile of the Respondents

<b>Profession</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Administrator	22	8.1
Faculty	60	22.1
Corporate Employee	19	7
Student	86	31.7
Lawyer	40	14.8
Social Worker	26	9.6
Others	18	6.7

<b>Income</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below 10 Lakh	113	41.7
10-20 Lakh	114	42.1
20-40 Lakh	25	9.2
Above 40 Lakh	19	7

<b>Qualification</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
UG	109.0	40.2
PG	80.0	9.5
PhD	63.0	23.3
Other	19.0	7

Gender		
Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	163.0	60.1
Female	108.0	39.9

Age		
Category	Frequency	Percentage
18-40	130	48
41-60	124	45.8
Above 60	17	6.2

### 3.7 Conclusions

In this chapter, the research design utilized for the research work has been discussed. The salient features of mixed research methods have been discussed, which comprises case study method, TISM and Descriptive analysis. A logical approach to access the findings and conclusions of the study besides validation of results, has been presented. This method has been utilized for understanding and analyzing the best practices of citizen happiness in India. Total Interpretive Structural Modeling has been applied to establish the contextual relationship among all challenges faced by Indian policy makers to ensure the well being of citizens. Lastly, the survey method has been used to validate the results for the proposed framework on citizen happiness and also to test the proposed research hypotheses. Although the short note of all methodologies used in the research framework has been discussed but all the methodologies are explained in detail in their respective chapters to sustain the continuousness and usefull understanding of contents.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES IN**  
**ENHANCING CITIZEN HAPPINESS, ECONOMIC STABILITY AND BUSINESS**  
**ECOSYSTEMS**

**4.0 Introduction**

Citizen happiness is the main thrust of the government policies. A happy society is essential not only for a good quality of life but also for economic stability, growth, and a good business ecosystem. Several articles and research studies show that the happiness of people is becoming a business imperative, as when people are happy, businesses, society, and the state thrive. A happy workforce increases productivity because employees are more focused, creative, and entrepreneurial. In this chapter, the effectiveness of the social welfare policies of the governments in India is studied in achieving the objective of citizen happiness. In the study, first, the relevance of the policy and intensity of implementation by way of providing resources/budgets as well as deploying good processes, persons, and systems to implement are examined. At a second level, the implications of happy citizens, who are the workforce for the business, are studied towards creating a business ecosystem of high productivity, creativity, and innovations, along with a Positive and cooperative environment with quality, safety, and environmental consciousness.

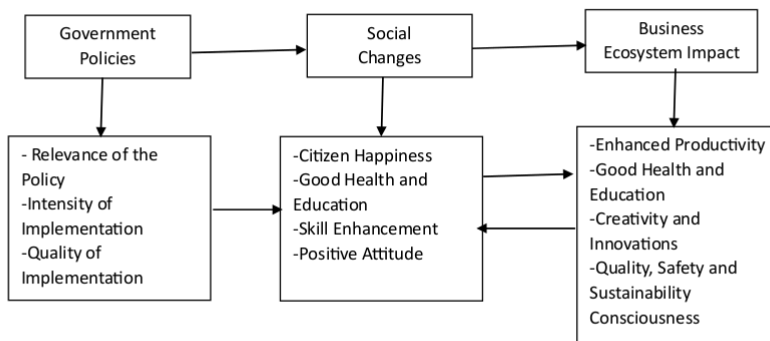
The government's responsibility increases manifold in developing social welfare policies for its citizens. By developing the relevant policies, the happiness of the citizens can be enhanced. It is not only the relevance of the policy; the policy also should be provided with adequate budgets and administrative support to meet the expectations of a large population size. Corruption in implementation can plague any good policy however well backed with resources. Thus, it is very important to see that the quality of the implementation is corruption-free.

This chapter presents the research <sup>1</sup> guided by the two objectives:

- a) To study the impact of social welfare policies of the governments (Central Government and Government of NCT of Delhi) in enhancing the happiness of the Indian citizens. The implications of a happy citizen.
- b) The implications of happy citizens in creating a conducive business environment and economic stability

#### <sup>1</sup> 4.1 Conceptual Framework and Social Welfare Policies

Government policies are important policy interventions to build the society, workforce, and the business ecosystem, along with other policies like economic, trade, etc. A conceptual model of how the policies impact the business ecosystem with social changes is presented in Figure 4.1. The model provides the framework for how the Government policies are helping in developing a happy, healthy, and sensitive society. Workforce coming out of such a society will create an impact on the business ecosystem in the form of enhanced productivity, skilled workforce, conscious towards quality, safety, and sustainability, etc.



#Authors representation

Figure 4.1: Conceptual Model of Policy Social Change and Impact on Business Ecosystem

There are several policies in India designed to promote the well being of the citizens. In this research, a select 40 policies of Central government of India and the Government of NCT Delhi have been considered to examine their relevance and quality of implementation.

#### 4.2 Research Instrument

The objectives of the research are to identify the policies that are highly relevant for the citizens in enhancing their happiness. The Government of India and state governments conceive policies for social welfare of their citizens. Due to several reasons, like poor design of the policy, lack of adequate resources and budgetary support, the pilferage in the implementation, the policy has been ineffective many times. To achieve the objectives, a measurement instrument is developed that is valid and reliable. The variables proposed in the study match the questions of the measurement instrument. The questionnaire consists of socio-demographic data of the respondents, questions to measure the relevance of the policies, rigor in the implementation of the policy, and quality of implementation of the policy. The Likert-type scale with five points has been used in the measurement instrument. The questions of the model ask for the opinion of the respondents. The instrument is composed of questions related to 10 policies (part of a full study of about 32 questions) related to the social welfare of the citizens. The questionnaire has been designed on the basis of qualitative findings.

A pilot test is conducted to select the kind of user that will give his/ her opinion; the design of the model; finding the measurement instrument; devising application procedure; carrying out the analysis of the model; noting the variation in the answers; to carry out adjustments to the design for the evaluation; and to lay down criteria for the design of the sample.

A structured questionnaire was developed to study the impact of various policies in the domain of social welfare. To identify the policies, a list of policies of both the central government and the state government, relevant for the people of NCT Delhi, was generated. The pilot test was

carried out. Students, faculty, and staff of universities, government officers, and professionals like doctors, lawyers, and residents of NCT Delhi were included in the sample of the pilot test. From the pilot study, certain statements were reframed to attain clarity and remove ambiguity. Out of a list consisting of more than 30 such policies, ten are selected for the present study. These represent both the state and the central government, new as well as old ones.

#### **4.3 Policy Relevance and Implementation**

The ten policies selected for the study have been evaluated on three aspects, namely:

- (iv) Relevance of the policy in enhancing happiness:
- (v) Intensity of implementation:
- (vi) Quality of implementation:

Government policies are meant to improve the well-being of the citizens. Many a time, due to a lack of proper understanding or due to a lack of data, the policies are framed for which citizens and beneficiaries are not able to connect to resulting in wastage of efforts and resources. Thus, policies must be relevant, helpful in solving the problems of society.

Along with the relevance of the policy, it is equally essential that the policies are implemented in right earnest. To successfully implement a policy, it is desired to provide sufficient resources in terms of administrative setup, planning, budgets, and other resources. All this together will define the intensity of the implementation. Along with the resources, it is also important that adequate mechanisms should be set up to prevent corruption, reduce wastages of the resources, and focus on the quality of services delivered. In this study, these aspects of policy design and implementation have been kept in view throughout the study.

To study the implications of happy citizens for business environment and economic stability, a Delphi study was conducted. The study had six senior-level corporate executives, six bureaucrats responsible for policy planning and implementation, and three university

professors in the areas of strategic management, human resources, and social sciences to discuss the implications of the social policies, happiness, on the business environment. The help of literature on these aspects is also taken as input for discussions and to validate the outcome of the discussions.

#### **4.4 Research Hypothesis**

The research aims to examine the impact of some select social policies implemented by the Indian Government and the Delhi Government on the citizens' happiness. The following hypotheses were formulated:

**Hypothesis 1:** All the social policies considered in this research are relevant to enhance citizen happiness.

**Hypothesis 2:** All the social policies considered in this research have a good intensity of implementation.

**Hypothesis 3:** All the social policies considered in this research have a moderate level of quality of implementation.

Through testing of these hypotheses, the most relevant policies and the quality and intensity of their implementation have been identified.

#### **4.5 Profile of the Respondents**

A total of 305 responses were collected, and out of that, 271 were used for the present study. The others were discarded due to their incompleteness. The respondents consists of Administrators (8.1%), Faculty (22.1%), Students (31.7%), Lawywes (14.8%) social workers (9.6%), corporate employee (7.0%) and others from mislaneous ares. About 84% are having annual income below 20Lakhs and male female respondents ratio is 60.1:39.9. Further 40%

respondents were of the age below 48% and 45.8% are from 41-60%. Rest are above the age of 60 years.

#### 4.6 Statistical Analysis of Government Policies

In this section, the results of the analysis of responses received from the participants of the study are presented and discussed. The results of all the 40 policies are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Analysis of all the policies considered in this research

Sno.	Description of the Government Policy	Relevance of the policy			Intensity of Implementation			Quality of Implementation		
		Mean	SD	p-value	Mean	SD	p-value	Mean	SD	p-value
1	Government policy of providing ration at subsidized rate	3.92	1.05	0.00	3.73	1.05	0.00	3.59	1.14	0.00
2	Government policy of taking care of senior citizens through local police	3.72	1.04	0.00	3.40	1.09	0.00	3.30	1.13	0.00
3	Government policy of building toilets	3.74	1.18	0.00	3.51	1.07	0.00	3.34	1.17	0.00
4	Government policy of providing Free Covid Vaccine	4.01	1.13	0.00	3.90	1.09	0.00	3.84	1.12	0.00
5	Government policy of National Pension Scheme (NPS)	3.51	1.46	0.00	3.20	1.45	0.03	3.29	1.46	0.00
6	Government policy of Allotment of Yoga teacher	3.46	1.18	0.00	3.26	1.18	0.00	3.33	1.11	0.00
7	Government policy of Tourism for elderly persons	3.55	1.14	0.00	3.27	1.17	0.00	3.34	1.10	0.00
8	Government policy of providing free	3.80	1.24	0.00	3.70	1.20	0.00	3.67	1.21	0.00

	1 travel for women in DTC buses									
9	Government policy of promoting electric vehicles	3.75	1.28	0.00	3.33	1.37	0.00	3.27	1.37	0.00
10	Government policy on enforcing Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificate for vehicles	3.73	1.31	0.00	3.36	1.28	0.00	3.26	1.31	0.00
11	Government policy on reducing stubble burning	3.45	1.42	0.00	3.02	1.40	0.80	3.07	1.42	0.44
12	Government policy of Odd-Even number use of vehicles to reduce pollution	3.28	1.34	0.00	3.24	1.34	0.00	3.23	1.32	0.00
13	Government policy of organizing Sports tournaments at State and National Level	3.54	1.26	0.00	3.24	1.29	0.00	3.29	1.31	0.00
14	Government policy of developing parks	3.77	1.07	0.00	3.51	1.13	0.00	3.35	1.12	0.00
15	Government policy of Chandrayaan launch	3.61	1.34	0.00	3.39	1.36	0.00	3.40	1.42	0.00
16	Government policy of giving Prize money to sports persons	1.95	2.15	0.00	1.58	1.92	0.00	1.51	1.90	0.00
17	Government policy of developing Sports infrastructure `	3.78	1.31	0.00	3.33	1.31	0.00	3.37	1.32	0.00
18	Government policy of enhancing	3.99	3.32	0.00	3.53	1.19	0.00	3.45	1.26	0.00

	expenditure on defense									
19	Government policy of creating nation pride	3.72	1.28	0.00	3.42	1.31	0.00	3.49	1.29	0.00
20	Government policy of Implementing GST	3.46	1.29	0.00	3.29	1.28	0.00	3.20	1.30	0.01
21	Government policy of doing away with the interview for group 3 and 4 posts	3.46	1.38	0.00	3.35	1.38	0.00	3.40	2.84	0.02
22	Government policy of providing services through online	3.79	1.22	0.00	3.46	1.24	0.00	3.49	1.26	0.00
23	Government policy of launching mobile App to upload pic of garbage in the locality	3.71	1.20	0.00	3.35	1.29	0.00	3.29	1.28	0.00
24	Government policy of construction of roads and flyovers	3.75	1.25	0.00	3.46	1.22	0.00	3.42	1.28	0.00
25	Government policy of direct benefit transfer to the marginalized society	3.75	1.13	0.00	3.39	1.10	0.00	3.44	1.10	0.00
26	Government policy of providing educational loan with state guarantee	3.74	1.16	0.00	3.48	1.15	0.00	3.33	1.27	0.00
27	Government policy of improving school building and making smart classrooms	3.70	1.28	0.00	3.34	1.34	0.00	3.31	1.33	0.00
28	Government policy of improving the quality of teachers	3.73	1.23	0.00	3.36	1.27	0.00	3.28	1.27	0.00

	by providing training									
29	Government policies of generating jobs	3.38	1.42	0.00	2.99	1.39	0.93	2.92	1.48	0.37
30	Government policy of promoting startups and entrepreneurship	3.61	1.29	0.00	3.19	1.28	0.02	3.24	1.29	0.00
31	Government policy of promoting skill development	3.62	1.32	0.00	3.22	1.33	0.01	3.20	1.32	0.01
32	Government policy of organizing Job Melas	3.49	1.36	0.00	3.00	1.37	0.97	3.13	1.92	0.27
33	Government policy of Jan Aushidhi Kendra	1.90	2.15	0.00	1.51	1.95	0.00	1.45	1.91	0.00
34	Government policy of creating Mohalla Clinics	3.87	1.36	0.00	3.50	1.42	0.00	3.48	1.44	0.00
35	Government policy on improving health facilities in the hospitals	3.78	1.23	0.00	3.41	1.29	0.00	3.25	1.33	0.00
36	Government policy of providing public transport (Metro and feeder buses)	3.81	1.25	0.00	3.67	1.31	0.00	3.46	1.39	0.00
37	Government policy of actions against corruption	3.59	1.36	0.00	3.21	1.37	0.01	3.08	1.43	0.35
38	Government policy of improving law and order	3.54	1.39	0.00	3.25	1.40	0.00	3.11	1.45	0.21
39	Government policy of installing camera (CCTV) for	3.77	1.30	0.00	3.46	1.32	0.00	3.30	1.40	0.00

	improving law and order									
40	Government policy of frequently changing petrol prices by linking with international crude oil price	3.47	1.33	0.00	3.32	1.36	0.00	3.13	1.38	0.12

The analysis show that all the policies are not equally relevant. The Government policy of providing Free Covid Vaccine has the highest score of 4.1, whereas the Government policy of Jan Aushidhi Kendra has got a least score of 1.90.

#### 4.7 Analysis of Social Welfare Policies

In this section, which is part of a comprehensive research, ten policies that are more recent or widespread have been considered to analyze their impact on citizen happiness. The following social policies are considered:

A detailed analysis of the following ten policies related to social welfare are presented in this section.

Sr. No.	Statement about the Government policy and Happiness
A	Government policy of providing ration at subsidized rate
B	Government policy of taking care of senior citizens through local police
C	Government policy of building toilets
D	Government policy of providing Free Covid Vaccine
E	Government policy of Allotment of Yoga teacher
F	Government policy of Tourism for elderly persons
G	Government policy of providing free travel for women in DTC buses

H	Government policy of developing parks
I	Government policy of direct benefit transfer to the marginalized society
J	Government policy of providing educational loan with state guarantee

However, in this paper, which is part of an ongoing comprehensive research, ten policies that are more recent or widespread have been considered to analyze their impact on citizen happiness. The following social policies are considered:

**a) Government policy of providing ration at a subsidized rate**

The National Food Security Act (NFSA), provides 5 kilograms of food grains per person per month at Rs 2-3 per kg to ensure food and nutritional security for all. From December 2022, a scheme to provide free ration to 81.35 crore poor people was launched for one year. To address the issue of migration of workers, a new Central Sector scheme was launched to fulfill the vision of One Nation - One Price - One Ration.

**b) The government policy of taking care of senior citizens through the local police**

The population of senior citizens was 104 million, (2011 census) and is expected to reach 173 million by 2026. (Agarwal 2021) observed that the senior citizens are one of the vulnerable sections of society. Small families and migration of children to other cities and countries leaves the older people to fend for themselves. Community policing is one of the solutions to provide safety to elderly people. It envisions the citizens taking the lead in finding the issues of crime/order in their area, with police playing the role of facilitators.

**c) The government policy of building toilets**

In order to attain a national status of 'Open Defecation Free', the initiative of building toilets was taken by the Government of India. As per the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GOI Report 2021-22:

- 66,020 public toilet blocks across 3,296 cities are visible in Google Maps, covering more than 70% of India's urban population
- A total of 4,371 cities (out of 4,372) have declared themselves ODF (99% progress), of which 4,316 cities/ ULBs have been certified as Open Defecation Free (ODF) after third-party certification.

**d) Government policy of providing a Free COVID-19 vaccine**

During the tough time of COVID-19 pandemic Govt. of India and state govts. took a policy initiative to provide free vaccine to the citizens. Approximately 2.2 crore covid vaccines were administered. Having access to preventive and curative healthcare, helps the workforce to take fewer sick leaves and remain productive throughout the year. Ayushman Bharat Scheme provides free health insurance to low-income Indians creating sense of confidence and security that illness doesn't prevent them from economic activities.

**e) Government policy on the Allotment of Yoga teachers**

Govt of Delhi launched a scheme named 'Dilli ki Yogshala', where any group of residents who want to learn Yoga in any part of the city could give a missed call, and yoga teachers would be sent by the Delhi government to their place. The objective of the scheme has been to help yoga aspirants learn yoga in a perfect way.

**f) Government policy of Tourism for elderly persons**

The Govt of NCT of Delhi launched the 'Mukhyamantri Tirth Yatra Scheme ' in 2018. Under this scheme, senior citizens, i.e., people over the age of 60, are taken for a pilgrimage free of cost. Though the scheme was to be suspended for a year and a half due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been very popular among the senior citizens. Between 2018 and 2020, 35,000 people from Delhi were taken on trips for pilgrimages to religious places.

**g) The government policy of providing free travel for women in DTC buses**

The Government of NCT of Delhi offered free travel facilities to women in state-run buses since 2019. This facility has empowered women to pursue their careers and also to save money for the welfare of their families. Women passengers availed 13.04 crore free trips in DTC and 12.69 crore in cluster buses during the year 2021-22.

**h) Government policy of developing parks**

Parks play an important role in maintaining the closeness of humans to nature. Govt. of Delhi is transforming around 18000 city parks, into world-class ecological assets of the city. For this purpose, the Delhi Government formulated a policy to create community-owned accessible green spaces for all residents through the digitization of parks, increasing civic participation, capacity building of horticulture agencies, and going beyond beautification. Green spaces have been designed for multiple activities such as gyms/sports, botanical, food, dog walks and live events. A support mechanism has been created to develop/maintain these facilities with active involvement of the public.

**i) Government policy of direct benefit transfer to the marginalized society**

The Direct Benefit Transfer scheme was launched in 2013, with the primary motive of ensuring that benefits are directly transferred electronically to the bank accounts of beneficiaries. Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Mission was the nodal point for the implementation of the DBT programs to reduce delay in payment, curbing theft, duplication, and ascertaining perfect delivery. The policy has altered the mechanism of 380 schemes administered through 55 ministries. In the financial year 2017–18, benefits worth INR 2,02,224 crores (USD 30.58 billion) were transferred by the central government to 12.4 billion beneficiaries under different DBT programs.

Digital Policy Implementations help in enhancing the ease of doing business. Aadhaar has been adopted as a national digital identity that simplifies 'Know Your Customer' processes for banks, telecom, and government services through faster verifications, less paperwork, and

smooth operations. Aadhaar-linked bank accounts ensure subsidies and welfare benefits reach the right individuals by reducing fraud and leakages. It streamlines governance and service delivery, improving transparency, reducing red tape, and making it easier to start and run businesses. This integrated approach strengthens both the supply (workforce) and demand (business climate) sides of the economy.

**j) Government policy of providing educational loans with a state guarantee**

The government policy of providing educational loans with state guarantees aims to support students in pursuing higher education by offering financial assistance thereby increasing the overall skill level of the workforce, adaptable to changing industry needs and technological advancements, leading to increased productivity. With the state guarantee, banks and financial institutions are more willing to provide loans to students, as the government assures repayment in case of default. Moreover, the educated population promotes innovation as well as entrepreneurship.

**4.7.1 Relevance of the Social Policies in Enhancing Happiness**

The respondents were asked to rate the ten social policies identified for this study on a Likert scale, where 5 means the policy is highly relevant in enhancing happiness, whereas 1 means it has the least relevance. The results are presented in Figure 4.2. For the policy of providing ration at a subsidized rate, out of 271 respondents, 97 rated the policy as highly relevant, 87 as relevant. So, together 67.9% respondents feel that it is very helpful, especially for the weaker section of the society, as India has poor performance in terms of malnutrition of children below the age of ten.

The responses on the policy of taking care of senior citizens through local police, 68 respondents have perceived that it is highly relevant, whereas 99 respondents have opined it as

relevant; together, the percentage is 61.6%. For the policy of building toilets, 88 respondents observed that it is highly relevant, and 80 respondents expressed that it is relevant; together, the percentage is 61.9%. For the policy of providing a Free COVID-19 vaccine, 125 respondents feel that it is highly relevant, and 64 respondents feel it is relevant; together, the percentage is 69.7%. For the policy of Allotment of Yoga teacher, 55 respondents think that it is highly relevant and 90 respondents feel it is relevant, together the percentage is 53.5%. For the policy of Tourism for elderly persons, 64 respondents perceived it to be highly relevant and 82 respondents observed it as relevant, together the percentage is 53.8%. For the policy of providing free travel for women in DTC buses, 108 respondents feel that it is highly relevant, and 59 respondents mention it is relevant; together, the percentage is 61.6%. For the policy of developing parks, 80 respondents opined that it is highly relevant, whereas 87 respondents found it to be relevant; together, the percentage is 61.6%. For the policy of direct benefit transfer to the marginalized society, 84 respondents mentioned it to be highly relevant, and 83 respondents stated it to be relevant; together, the percentage is 61.6%. For the policy of providing educational loans with state guarantee, 87 respondents thought that it is highly relevant, and 79 respondents expressed it to be relevant; together, the percentage is 61.2%.

The above analysis shows that policies like providing free COVID-19 vaccine, free ration are the most relevant, whereas allotment of yoga teachers and providing free pilgrimage to the elders are relatively less relevant. The p- p-value for all the policies concerning relevance is zero, indicating that hypothesis 1 is rejected, thereby policies are relevant in enhancing happiness. However, the descriptive analysis shows that the degree of relevance is different for different policies.

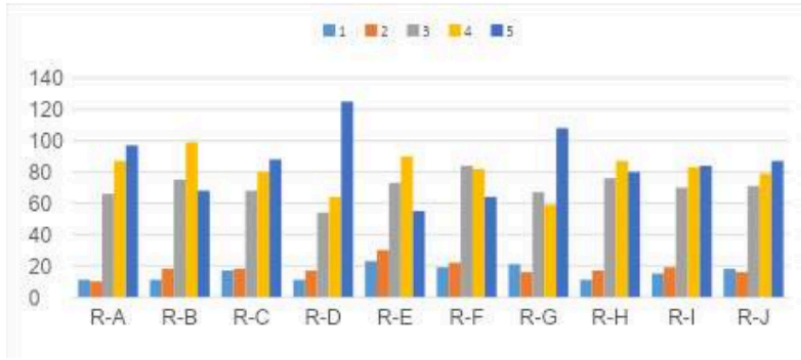


Figure 4.2: Rating-wise number of respondents of social policies

#### 4.7.2 Descriptive Analysis: Relevance, Intensity, and Quality of Implementation

In the questionnaire, each social policy was evaluated on three aspects by the respondents. Table 4.2 presents the descriptive statistics of the same. The policy of providing free ration has a mean score of 3.92 as far as relevance is concerned. However, the study indicates that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.73, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.59 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of taking care of senior citizens through local police has a mean score of 3.72 as far as relevance is concerned. However, on the basis of respondents' perception, it is found that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.40, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.30 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The similar results of other policies indicates that some policies have high relevance but they lack in adequate implementation. The p-test of significance with a test value of 3, all the policies are significant on all three aspects, namely relevance, intensity of implementation, and quality of implementation. The results are also available in Table 4.2 itself. Figure 4.3 provides the results of this analysis as a bar chart. The bar chart shows that the relevance of all the policies varies from 3.46 (providing Yoga teacher) to 4.01 (Free Covid Vaccine), i.e., much above the moderate relevance value of

3. Further is observed that the mean score for Intensity of implementation is lower than the mean score of relevance. This indicates that at the implementation stage, no policy is overemphasized. The mean score of intensity of implementation varies from 3.26 (providing yoga teacher) and 3.9 of providing free vaccine. The quality of implementation mean score for most of the policies is below the mean score of intensity of implementation, and it varies from 3.30 for taking care of senior citizens through local police to 3.84 for the free COVID-19 vaccine. It is interesting to note that the quality of implementation is higher than the intensity of implementation for two policies, namely, providing yoga teachers and providing free tourism for senior citizens. For these two policies, the implementation is highly efficient compared to the budgets and resources allocated.

Table 4.2: Significant analysis and Mean score of Social Welfare Policies.

Sr. No	Statement about the Government policy and Happiness	Relevance of the policy in enhancing Happiness			Intensity of the Implementation (resources committed/ budgets provided)			Quality of the Implementation (corruption free/ efficient/ well planned and controlled)		
		Mean	SD	p-value	Mean	SD	p-value	Mean	SD	p-value
A	Government policy of providing ration at subsidized rate	3.92	1.054	0.00	3.73	1.053	0.00	3.59	1.138	0.00
B	Government policy of taking care of senior citizens through local police	3.72	1.041	0.00	3.40	1.087	0.00	3.30	1.133	0.00
C	Government policy of building toilets	3.74	1.183	0.00	3.51	1.074	0.00	3.34	1.166	0.00
D	Government policy of providing Free Covid Vaccine	4.01	1.132	0.00	3.90	1.093	0.00	3.84	1.119	0.00
E	Government policy of	3.46	1.179	0.00	3.26	1.177	0.00	3.33	1.112	0.00

	Allotment of Yoga teacher									
F	Government policy of Tourism for elderly persons	3.55	1.14 3	0.00	3.27	1.16 6	0.00	3.34	1.10 3	0.00
G	Government policy of providing free travel for women in DTC buses	3.80	1.24 3	0.00	3.70	1.20 4	0.00	3.67	1.21 1	0.00
H	Government policy of developing parks	3.77	1.06 9	0.00	3.51	1.13 2	0.00	3.35	1.11 9	0.00
I	Government policy of direct benefit transfer to the marginalized society	3.75	1.13 4	0.00	3.39	1.09 6	0.00	3.44	1.09 7	0.00
J	Government policy of providing educational loan with state guarantee	3.74	1.16 4	0.00	3.48	1.15 4	0.00	3.33	1.27 3	0.00

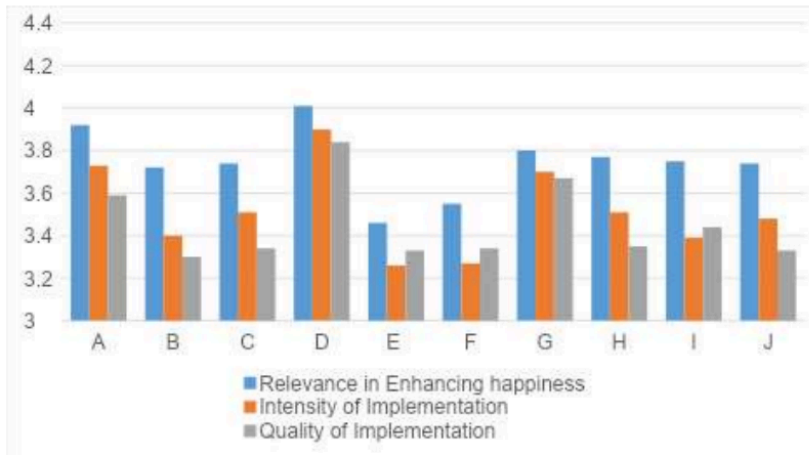


Figure 4.3: Respondents' analysis of Relevance, Intensity, and Quality of implementation of ten social welfare policies.

#### 4.7.3 Comparative Analysis Between Relevance and Intensity of Implementation of Social Policies

A cross tabulation was created using SPSS between the relevance of the policies and intensity of Implementation for the policy of providing ration at a subsidized rate. The frequency is presented in Table 4.3. The table shows that 16.9% respondents have given a moderate score for both relevance and intensity, further 14% have given a score of significance for relevance and intensity; 21% have given a highly significant on relevance and high intensity. This shows that 52% respondents have given the same rating for relevance and implementation. The Pearson Chi-Square test, as given in Table 4.4, to test Hypothesis 4; the p value is 0.0, which indicates that the Intensity of implementation is not independent of the relevance of the policy. Rather 52% respondents have given the same rating to both aspects of public policy.

Table 4.3: Cross Tabulation of Relevance and intensity of implementation of the Government policy of providing ration at a subsidized rate

		Intensity of the Implementation					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Relevance of the Policy	1	6	1	1	1	2	11
	2	2	2	3	1	2	10
	3	1	4	46	10	5	66
	4	2	5	31	38	11	87
	5	0	1	10	29	57	97
Total		11	13	91	78	77	271

Table 4.4: Chi Square Test of Independence of Relevance of Policy and Intensity of Implementation for the Government policy of providing rations at a subsidized rate.

	Value	df	p-Value
Pearson Chi-Square	197.511 <sup>a</sup>	20	.000
Likelihood Ratio	149.588	20	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	86.858	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	271		

#### 4.7.4 Relation between Relevance and Quality of Implementation of Social Policies

A cross tabulation was created using SPSS and between relevance of the policies and the quality of Implementation. The frequency is presented in Table 4.5. The table shows that 14 % respondents have given a moderate score for both relevance and intensity; further 14.7 % have given a score of significant for relevance and quality; 18.8 % has given highly significant on relevance and high quality Thus overall, only 47.5% respondents have given the same rating for relevance and implementation. The analysis also shows that only 42 respondents out of 271 (15.5%) have given a higher rating to the quality of implementation, as compared to 92 respondents (34%) who have given a low rating to the quality of implementation.

The Pearson Chi-Square test indicates that the policy attributes' relevance of the policy and quality of implementation of the policy are not independent at  $p=0.0$ . Rather, 47.5% respondents have given the same rating on both attributes.

Table 4.5: Cross Tabulation of the Relevance of Policy and the Quality of Implementation of the Policy

R1 * Q1 Cross tabulation							
Count							
		Quality of Implementation					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Relevance of the Policy	1	5	1	2	1	2	11
	2	1	3	4	0	2	10
	3	4	5	<b>38</b>	13	6	66
	4	3	8	25	<b>40</b>	11	87
	5	3	5	22	16	<b>51</b>	97
Total		16	22	91	70	72	271

#### 4.8 Implications of Citizen Happiness on Economic Stability and Business Ecosystem

Happiness leads to high motivation, good health, and better behavior. Several studies have indicated that happy citizens lead to a more productive, creative, and stable workforce. Citizen happiness positively impacts the work culture, team spirit, and fosters a higher level of industrial relations. Keeping the workforce happy is the responsibility of both the employer and the government.

##### 4.8.1 Social Policies and Capacity Buildup for Business

The policy of education loans helps students, particularly from low and middle-income backgrounds, to have access to higher education and vocational training on one hand, and on the other hand, it increases the overall skill level of the workforce, that is adaptable to changing industry needs and technological advancements, leading to increased productivity. Moreover, the educated population promotes innovation as well as entrepreneurship.

Having access to preventive and curative healthcare, helps the citizens in many ways - a) availability of free medicines help citizens to maintain them in healthy state b) free vaccinations and chronic disease management services ensure long life and better health; c) Schemes like Ayushman Bharat provide free health insurance to low-income Indians that creates a sense of confidence and security that illness doesn't prevent them from economic activities and d) all these collectively help workforce take fewer sick leaves and remain productive throughout the year. In a way, 'Healthcare Access leads to Healthier Workforce'.

Digital Policy Implementations help in enhancing the ease of doing business. Aadhaar has been adopted as a national digital identity that simplifies 'Know Your Customer' processes for banks, telecom, and government services through faster verifications, less paperwork, and smooth operations. Aadhaar-linked bank accounts ensure subsidies and welfare benefits reach the right individuals by reducing fraud and leakages. It streamlines governance and service delivery, improving transparency, reducing red tape, and making it easier to start and run businesses. This integrated approach strengthens both the supply (workforce) and demand (business climate) sides of the economy.

#### **4.8.2 Happiness and Business Ecosystem**

Some of the implications of happy citizens on the business ecosystem are:

- a) **High productivity:** A happy citizen has better health, reduced stress, and thereby less illness and higher motivation. A mentally and physically fit workforce provides high productivity, leading to improved financial health of the organization and better wages for the employees. Thus, a happy worker triggers a virtuous cycle.
- b) **Low Attrition rate:** Due to better health, improved wages, and a stress-free work environment, there are fewer chances for a worker to search for another job, leaving the current employer. Having a long-term relationship and trust, the employer provides

opportunities for career growth within the organization, just like in Japanese work culture, where lifetime employment is a norm.

- c) **High creativity and innovations:** A positive mood is essential to be creative, and also creativity and happiness are interconnected. Happy people are more creative, and creativity boosts their positive mood. Creative people are happier as they have the feeling of creating something new.
- d) **Passionate to learn additional skills:** Multiskilled workers provide flexibility in the scheduling of the activities, especially in environments where the demand is uncertain, new products launch, and design changes are frequent, and technology is changing at a faster pace.
- e) **Participative and entrepreneurial mindset:** For a good business environment, it is important that employees involve themselves and own the business operations. A participative mindset is willing to work as a team in problem solving, improvement, and development. They look for opportunities for improvement, new business ideas to create value, and are usually flexible and adaptable.
- f) **Positive and cooperative feelings about the organization:** Positive emotions like happiness, social well-being, and emotional attachments build and spread positive and strong feelings towards the organization. A happy worker feels their work is meaningful and always has a feeling of cooperation and involvement.
- g) **Enhanced quality, safety, and Sustainability Consciousness:** A business ecosystem should have the basic elements that the employees are sensitive towards, quality of products, safety of the workplace, and care for the environment.

#### **4.8.3 Business Support for Social Policies and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)**

Businesses can both support and benefit from effective social policies by aligning their core operations with broader societal goals. For instance, companies that invest in workforce

welfare, such as healthcare, education, and family-friendly workplace policies, often experience higher productivity, lower attrition, and enhanced reputation. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives aligned with national development priorities can magnify the impact of social policies while also building goodwill and trust among consumers and regulators. In return, businesses gain a stable and skilled labor force, improved market access, and resilience against social unrest.

Private sector partnerships can significantly enhance the implementation of social policies through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). These models leverage private sector efficiency, innovation, and capital for the delivery of public services such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, and sanitation. Successful PPPs involve shared governance structures, risk-sharing mechanisms, and transparent accountability systems. For example, collaborations between corporations and vocational training institutions have improved employability outcomes and aligned educational outputs with labor market demands.

#### **4.9 Conclusions**

Happiness is an innate state of human beings, but the same is affected by worries and anxiety experienced in various dimensions – health, law and order around oneself, old age security, fulfilment of physical and social needs, etc. People feel miserable when they are not secure about their jobs, worried about their health, feel insecure due to law and order, worry about old age security and need for help, or their loved ones are in danger or have restricted personal freedom, or are treated unfairly. These worries can be substantially addressed and reduced by the implementation of appropriate government policies, thereby enhancing the happiness among the citizens. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been observed that governments of many countries have played a significant role in reducing the possible threats due to this

disease so that citizens may live fearlessly. Social policies of the government in every country and state are very important for the welfare and happiness of the citizens. These policies safeguard them from crimes through various preventive actions and institutions. Moreover, government policies help in increasing the safety not only in general but also while being in travel by air, by sea, or on the road.

The social policies help in enhancing social well-being and the happiness of the citizens, which in turn leads to the development of a conducive business environment and a stable economy of the country. A happy and healthy workforce forms the foundation for economic development, labor productivity, human capital, and public-private partnerships. It also influences consumer behavior, entrepreneurship, and a positive mindset. Policies like education loans, healthcare access create a skilled and healthier workforce. Workers show their willingness to upskill themselves and also to learn other contemporary skills.

The Government policies have strong relevance in the enhancement of citizens' happiness in any country, be it developed or developing. Through appropriate policy formulation and implementation with the required zeal, governments not only overcome societal challenges and provide relief to the citizens, it also help to create a business environment which meets the global standards of productivity, quality, and sustainability. The growth in business activities with high productivity also leads to organizations supporting the government's social policies through CSR activities. In a way, the economy can create a virtuous cycle where governments craft policies of social welfare, leading to citizen well-being and happiness. The happy citizen, a workforce, helps in enhancing productivity and excellence in business, and then the business supports the government in its social policies.

The above research has been undertaken with the objective of finding out the impact of appropriate government policies on the life of citizens in terms of their happiness and ease of life. However, there is another dimension related to the happiness and ease of life from the

viewpoint of business and involvement of business in public projects through public-private partnerships. Businesses can both support and benefit from effective social policies by aligning their core operations with broader societal goals. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives aligned with national development priorities can magnify the impact of social policies while also building goodwill and trust among consumers and regulators. Similarly, Private sector partnerships can significantly enhance the implementation of social policies in areas such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, and sanitation. However, these areas are not covered in the domain of this paper and may be included in future studies.

## CHAPTER : 5

### QUALITATIVE VALIDATION OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTION TO CITIZEN HAPPINESS

#### 5.0 Introduction

Citizen happiness is an important consideration in framing the policies by the governments. Nordic countries have always occupied the top ranks in the World Happiness surveys since their inception. In this chapter, a detailed analysis has been carried out to ascertain the factors contributing to <sup>27</sup> the happiness of the citizens of the Nordic countries. After the analysis, the Total Interpretative Structural Model (TISM) has been developed for the effective planning and implementation of Government policies.

#### 5.1 Factors of Nordic Countries Governance Related to Citizen Happiness

<sup>25</sup> Nordic countries—Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Iceland—have been recognized for <sup>146</sup> the high levels of happiness and well-being of their citizens. This section explores how specific elements of the Nordic countries' governance model contribute to citizens' happiness. Initially, 18 factors were identified from the notes of the scholar who visited the Nordic Countries. On detailed discussions and analysis, some factors appear to be subsets of another, and a few were similar in nature. Such factors are combined together and renamed, and finally, twelve factors are considered in this study.

##### 5.1.1 Trust in Institutions

Trust in institutions <sup>297</sup> is one of the most significant factors that is responsible for citizens' happiness in any country, and the Nordic countries' governance model is found to have this notable feature of having <sup>240</sup> a high level of trust between citizens and their governments. The World Happiness Report (2018) also stresses that high trust in institutions is one of the

significant determinants of happiness. Helliwell et al (2020) say that due to high transparency in their systems, Nordic countries rank consistently at higher levels. Highly transparent systems assure the citizens that their needs are prioritized. In Denmark and Sweden, citizens have strong freedom of information laws, which provide them with the right to access official documents from public authorities. So, these countries boast one of <sup>125</sup> the highest levels of trust in public institutions globally. Citizens in these countries trust that their governments act in their best interests and manage public resources effectively; therefore, they experience greater levels of satisfaction in their lives. Further, it creates a positive feedback loop in which citizens, because of trust, are more enthusiastic to participate in the political systems as well as their communities, leading to enhancement of overall happiness in these countries (Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005).

### **5.1.2 Rule of Law and Justice**

Nordic countries consistently rank among the top nations for the rule of law, with Denmark, Norway, and Finland recurrently scoring in the top five globally. The Nordic countries have been globally recognized for their well-established legal frameworks, creating a strong <sup>325</sup> rule of law and justice. Equality before the law, accountability of government officials, protection of fundamental rights, and fair legal processes are some of the important dimensions of the rule of law in these countries, which promise impartial enforcement of laws for citizens as well as governments. Legal systems in these countries are framed to be accessible, efficient, and affordable to the citizens. This commitment inculcates a strong feeling among the citizens that their legal systems are transparent, reliable, and impartial. In Norway, inhabitants are provided legal aid under the Legal Aid Act if they are unable to afford hiring private lawyers. Sweden also offers legal aid to persons who require aid in civil and criminal cases. These arrangements

ensure that justice is not limited to those with financial resources but is available to everyone, thereby promoting the rule of law and social equity.

In the Nordic countries, judicial independence is a major characteristic of the rule of law, empowering judicial systems to be independent from political influences and external pressures. It ensures that judicial decisions are solely based on the law and facts of cases. This independence of the judiciary maintains public trust in the legal system. Above all, criminal justice systems in these countries are considered to be fair and humanitarian. The prisons in the Nordic countries, particularly in Norway and Sweden, focus on reform rather than punishment, with a mission to provide education, training, and psychological support to overcome their challenges. The criminal justice systems in these countries, instead of being punitive, emphasize developing a rehabilitative environment, thus contributing to overall stability and happiness in society. This helps in creating a culture of forgiveness and reintegration of inmates into society. It also reduces long-term costs in handling crime in society.

### **5.1.3 Social Welfare and Public Services**

A Comprehensive welfare system is the pivotal pillar of the Nordic countries' Governance Model. Nordic countries provide universal access to essential services such as healthcare, education, etc., which helps citizens enhance overall well-being with reduced levels of stress and promotes economic equality.

### **5.1.4 Healthcare systems**

Anell (2015) mentions that Sweden's healthcare system has been widely recognized for its superior-quality, universal care, contributing to high life expectancy and low infant mortality rates. All residents, irrespective of their socio-economic status, are provided universal access

to healthcare services, ensuring equitable care. Though the system is largely tax-funded, it reduces direct costs for the patients, which gives them a feeling of less financial strain on health care, thus reducing the anxiety regarding medical expenditure. (Burstrom, 2012). Saltman & Bergman (2005) have expressed that patient-centric care, providing full information to them about their conditions and their involvement regarding treatment decisions, generates satisfaction among them. They also add that remote areas are extended healthcare facilities by telemedicine and mobile clinics. Electronic health record management system enhances system efficiency and outcomes for the patients. Ageing and chronic patients get customized support that is not only helpful in reducing their stress but also generates easy situations for their family members. Public health initiatives focusing on preventive care <sup>299</sup> play a crucial role in early detection of diseases, leading to timely cure, improved health outcomes, and increased life expectancy. Being the leader in medical research and innovation, Sweden's widespread strong vaccination programs, health education, and preventive chronic disease management make its health care system unique. General practitioners serve as gatekeepers to specialized services, encouraging efficient utilization of resources. Burnstrom (2012) concludes that Sweden's healthcare system outshines because of its universal accessibility, efficient fund management system, standardization of care, and focused preventive facilities.

Moreover, <sup>329</sup> the importance of mental health and well-being has also been recognized. Even during health crisis times like the COVID-19 crisis, these nations have successfully implemented wide-ranging mental health <sup>184</sup> services and community support programs to address the psychological and emotional needs of their citizens.

### **5.1.5 Education and Human Development**

The governance model in the Nordic countries is also distinguished for its prominence in education and human development. Education in Nordic countries is free at all levels, including

higher education, and the education system focuses on nurturing personal development together with academic achievement. The education systems are planned to encourage equality of opportunity, <sup>131</sup> ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their socio-economic background, can access high-quality education (Sahlberg, 2015).

Finland, in particular, is renowned for its education system, which is frequently cited as a model for promoting both student well-being and academic success. This focus on education has long-term benefits for happiness by enabling social mobility, reducing inequality, and developing a well-educated, adaptable workforce. The student-centric approach and strong emphasis on teacher quality make the Finnish education System globally recognized. Free school meals and transportation ensure equal access for all students. The holistic well-being of students by integrating physical and mental health services, along with academics, is the focus of the Finnish Education System. A balanced approach towards academics, arts, physical education, and life skills develops harmony among students at societal as well as physical-mental level. Active involvement of parents in their children's educational processes <sup>131</sup> creates a strong partnership between schools and families. Hargreaves et al. (2007) observed that Finland's Education system follows a continuous monitoring and assessment instead of standardized tests. To ensure good professional standards and to elevate respect for the teaching profession, all teachers are <sup>243</sup> required to hold at least a master's degree (Sahlberg, 2015). They are provided autonomy in respect of curricula as per local needs for promoting personalized learning.

Schooling in Finland spans from ages 7 to 16, offering pre-primary, basic, upper secondary, and higher education, encompassing vocational and academic tracks. The research-driven policies of the world-renowned education system ensure its continuous progression to meet changing societal needs, consistently positioning Finland among the top performers in international assessments like PISA (Hargreaves et al., 2007)

### 5.1.6 Employment Policies and Work-Life Balance

Labour policies in the Nordic countries support high employment protection, fair wages, and strong labour unions, leading to better job security. Sweden and Denmark have been recognised as having among the lowest working hours in Europe. It allows citizens to maintain a better work-life balance. Generous parental leave policies are another jewel in these countries. In Norway and Iceland, both parents are entitled to extensive paid leave, with a portion of the leave reserved exclusively for fathers. This not only promotes gender equality but also helps in sharing parenting responsibilities, contributing to greater happiness and satisfaction within families (Amalds et al., 2013). The governance model emphasizes holistic job training, re-skilling, and employment services. These measures ensure that the workforce remains adaptable to changing market conditions, thereby sustaining their employability over time (OECD, 2021). This comprehensive approach supports individual well-being along with strengthening the overall economy by developing a resilient workforce.

Eurofound (2017) states that work-life balance is one of the key determinants of the happiness of its citizens. Shorter working hours, flexible work environment, and a balanced personal and professional life enhance overall happiness as well as family dynamics.

### 5.1.7 Equality for all & inclusiveness

Equality for all is one of the significant characteristics of Nordic countries. All citizens in these countries are treated with legal equality, irrespective of their background. The Gini coefficient, a measure of income inequality, has been found to be consistently low in the Nordic countries, which demonstrates the more equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities. A fairer society contributes to a higher quality of life for all citizens, leading to a happy society.

Laws are enforced impartially for all, and discrimination is discouraged at all levels. The rights of various vulnerable groups like minorities, immigrants, and individuals with disabilities are

protected. Sweden and Finland have anti-discrimination laws for the protection of individuals from discrimination in both public and private sectors. As per reports of the Ministry of Justice, strong legal protections against domestic violence and sexual harassment help in forming a safer environment. Gender equality policies of Norway for the grant of parental leave to both parents, equal pay legislation, and gender quotas in leadership positions help in building a more inclusive society, improving overall quality of life of all citizens. Iceland has been a global leader in gender equality due to its progressive policies that promote equal rights and opportunities for all genders (World Economic Forum, 2022). Legal frameworks like the Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men Act and welfare measures like on-site childcare and telecommuting options further enhance workplace equality and job satisfaction (Gislason, 2021). In Nordic countries, women are encouraged to hold significant roles like president, prime minister, etc., which ensures women's perspectives in policy making.

The social services of Iceland, including healthcare, childcare, and eldercare, on the one hand strengthen gender equality and on the other support families. OECD (2021) states that there is a strong link between equality in society and the overall well-being of society, as is found in the case of Iceland being a high ranking in global happiness indexes. Hence, it is concluded that the policies of inclusiveness that concentrate on social equality, gender equality, and minority rights create a sense of belongingness and impartiality for all, thus reducing social tensions. Helliwell et al. (2020) found that a higher level of gender equality has a positive relationship with overall life satisfaction of natives, particularly women. If women in society are happy, they support an increase in happiness in families, and thus happiness multiplies manifold.

### 5.1.8 Economic Stability of Nordic Countries

The economic model of Nordic countries integrates free-market capitalism with an all-inclusive welfare state and robust labour market policies. This model helps these nations to maintain economic stability. The governments in Nordic countries manage balanced budgets and low public debt. Denmark and Sweden have strong fiscal policies focusing on low levels of government debt. As per OECD (2021), Denmark's government debt was only about 36.7% of GDP, while Sweden's stood at 39.7%. This fiscal wisdom supports governments to respond effectively to economic challenges without compromising the interests of future generations. This ensures that citizens are protected against economic risks originating from unemployment, illness, retirement, etc., thus making a way for them to maintain their decent standard of living, even during uncertain times. Andersen et al (2007) describe that their welfare model is not only redistributive but also universal, and at the same time, it ensures that the benefit reaches all and the model remains sustainable through a progressive taxation system and wise financial planning.

The sovereign wealth funds for leveraging the natural resources or to maintain pension etc. are also prime factors for economic stability in Nordic countries. <sup>132</sup> The Government Pension Fund Global, also known as the Norwegian Oil Fund, is the largest sovereign wealth fund in the world. The assets of this fund exceeded \$1.3 trillion USD in 2023. This fund saves oil revenues for future generations and provides a buffer to the economy, thus maintaining economic stability.

### 5.1.9 Citizen Participatory Governance

Citizens' participation in governance is another factor that adds to the happiness of citizens. The robust systems for citizen engagement allow the natives of these countries <sup>296</sup> to participate in the decision-making processes through local governance, civil society organizations, or

through the voting process. This generates a sense of empowerment and social responsibility that helps in enhancing citizens' happiness. Norway and Denmark recurrently rank in the top positions of the <sup>318</sup> Democracy Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit, which indicates the strength of their democratic institutions. The participatory governance model helps prevent political violence and creates a way forward to the peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue and negotiation. Helliwell et al. (2021) mention that active participation in civic and political processes becomes the cause of higher levels of happiness as it helps individuals to <sup>91</sup> have a sense of purpose and agency. Further, they feel more connected to their government and empowered to influence policies affecting their lives (Frey & Stutzer, 2000). As per Maslow's theory, humans have a great urge for social recognition. By giving them participatory rights, the Nordic countries increase personal satisfaction, happiness, as well as social cohesion, ultimately leading to a happy society.

#### **5.1.10 Freedom and Human Rights**

The Nordic countries are signatories to key <sup>105</sup> human rights treaties, including the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Through these treaties <sup>365</sup> protection of human rights of the citizens is advocated at the highest level. Human rights have been intensely integrated into the legal systems of the Nordic countries. Even the courts refer <sup>35</sup> to international human rights norms in their rulings. Ombudsman <sup>35</sup> for Human Rights in Sweden has been assigned the task of monitoring the <sup>35</sup> implementation of human rights. This ensures that the legal system resolves disputes as well as actively protects individual rights and freedoms and addresses violations. As the Governments protect human rights, citizens of these countries enjoy overall freedom for their own activities, which significantly promotes their overall happiness. Moreover, the protection of freedom creates an open and tolerant society. Members of such societies may chase their personal, professional, national or social goals without any fear of suppression

### **5.1.11 Reduced Corruption**

It has been found <sup>324</sup> that the Nordic countries have the lowest levels of corruption in the world. Their strong democratic institutions with principles of transparency, accountability, and active public participation, leading to high trust between citizens and the governments, help in greater compliance with laws, which becomes the cause of a reduction of corruption in these countries. The welfare measures for citizens adopted by their model of governance eradicate the causes due to which people engage in corrupt practices. As per The Economist, Nordic countries' concentration on equitable distribution of wealth and strong social safety forms such socio-economic conditions that help in the mitigation of corruption. Cultural practices of fairness, civic responsibility, and modesty in leadership also become factors of reduced corruption. The public sector recruitments in these countries are merit-based, offering competitive salaries and requiring high standards of professional conduct. These practices minimize opportunities for corruption. As per OECD studies, the public administrations of these countries maintain low levels of bureaucratic inefficiency, thus reducing corruption.

The active civil society and a free, independent press expose corruption at early levels. These countries have been ranked highly in global press freedom indices. Investigative journalism makes the authorities accountable. These combined factors contribute to the reduced levels of corruption in Nordic countries, making them models of good governance and increasing the citizens' happiness.

### **5.1.12 Environmental Sustainability**

Nordic countries honour their commitment to environmental sustainability. These countries have heavily invested in environmental conservation, renewable energy, and sustainable urban planning to provide clean and healthy living conditions for their citizens. UNDP (2021) mentions that environmental quality is positively related to both physical and mental health. If

natives are physically and mentally fit, that adds to their happiness and they enjoy a quality of life. Norway's sovereign wealth fund, which is based on oil revenues, is managed sustainably to provide long-term benefits to the citizens without compromising the environment. It helps in maintaining a high standard of living of the citizens and also ensures intergenerational equity, a key element of long-term happiness (Bjomskov, 2019). They have been at the forefront of promoting green energy, sustainable development, and climate change alleviation. Their <sup>213</sup>commitment to reducing carbon emissions and investing in renewable energy sources contributes to long-term environmental security, which in turn enhances overall societal stability. Iceland banks almost entirely on renewable energy sources, with geothermal and hydropower providing its total electricity. This has <sup>342</sup>made the country more resilient to global energy price shocks and environmental disruptions (UNDP, 2021). <sup>367</sup>Nordic countries are also leaders in climate change adaptation strategies, developing infrastructure that is designed to <sup>123</sup>withstand extreme weather events such as floods, storms, and rising sea levels. Sweden and Denmark have been global leaders in reducing their carbon footprints and transitioning to renewable energy, with Sweden aiming to become fossil-free by 2045. This proactive approach to environmental security ensures that future generations can live in peace without the looming threat of resource conflicts or environmental degradation.

#### 5.1.13 Peace and Security

Nordic <sup>303</sup>countries have been recognized to have low levels of violent crime, which contributes to the peace and security of their citizens. As per the Global Peace Index, Iceland, Norway, and Denmark rank <sup>311</sup>among the top 10 most peaceful countries in the world. Iceland, in particular, has held the top spot for many years, with consistently low crime rates and strong societal bonds. Social cohesion is one of the key factors of the low crime rate in these countries. The welfare model of these countries alleviates the root causes of criminal behaviour by promoting

economic equality and providing social support to vulnerable sections of society. Moreover, a strong rule of law and citizens' trust in institutions also enable citizens to enjoy peace and security. As per OECD, 2021, more than 75% of citizens in Sweden and Norway express trust in the police, which indicates the presence of a robust social bond between the government and the citizens. Gender equality is also one of the major factors that impact national peace, as Caprioli (2005) finds that societies with greater gender equality tend to experience lower levels of conflict and violence. Even the potential sources of conflict and instability are also reduced by timely addressing the issues such as <sup>262</sup> mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence. The Nordic Council of Ministers in 2020 emphasized that a combination of social welfare services, including health care, with law enforcement solves these issues comprehensively.

#### **5.1.14 Resilience to Crises**

The Nordic countries have been globally acknowledged for their resilience to crises. They have displayed their effectiveness in managing crises through their strong governance, social welfare systems, trust in institutions, and harmony in society. The transparent, accountable, and well-coordinated governance systems respond quickly and decisively to any type of crisis. Be it <sup>164</sup> the COVID-19 pandemic or the global financial crisis, they have demonstrated their capability to respond rapidly to the threats. Finland has been recognized for the preparatory steps taken for maintaining a robust stockpile of essential supplies, including medical equipment and personal protection supplies, that helped in crisis management effectively (World Health Organization, 2018). It helped limit the spread of the virus and minimized its impact on society as well as the economy of Finland. During <sup>67</sup> the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, the economies of the Nordic countries proved extraordinarily resilient in comparison to other European nations. In Norway, the impact of the economic downturn could be minimized with the cushion originating from its sovereign wealth fund. Thus, high levels of public spending

and social welfare support could be maintained (Mehlum, Moene & Torvik, 2006). Active labour market policies with up-skilling programs and employment subsidies helped maintain low levels of unemployment, thus supporting economic recovery in Denmark and Sweden. Andersen et al. (2012) mention that the economies of these countries benefit from a mix of industries that spread risk and reduce dependence on any single sector, contributing to the overall economic stability.

## **5.2 TISM Model of Implementation of the Factors Affecting Citizen Happiness**

In the section 5.2, several factors of the environment that the policies of the government create and that affect the happiness of the citizens are identified. However, these factors are not independent in nature; rather, some are driving others. Certain aspects are directly controlled by the government policies, and many others are derived from the basic factors.

### **5.2.1 Identification of Factors for TISM Modelling**

In this paper, initially, 18 factors were identified through literature and based on the experience of one of the authors. Sushil (2017), in his paper, argued that the most critical challenge in using the TISM model is the number of pair comparisons that need to be made, which increases exponentially. Also, with the increase in the number of factors, the challenge also involves the transitivity check on the reachability matrix. Consequently, 12 enablers were finalized by brainstorming with the experts. Though most research adopted literature review as a method to identify the enablers, this paper has extensively taken the views of experts, as one of the authors is a senior bureaucrat and actively involved in policy design and deployment. This study has considered the expert opinion to authenticate the chosen elements.

### 5.2.2 Total interpretive structural modelling (TISM) Methodology

Total interpretive structural modelling (TISM) consists of pair comparison of the factors that are used to develop the contextual relationship among the factors. The four types of relations between the two factors may be

V - Enabler i will help in achieving Enabler j,

A - Enabler j will help in achieving Enabler i,

X - Enabler i and j will improve each other and

O - Enabler i and j are unconnected

TISM has the advantage of converting ill-structured mental models into well-articulated models, which can be used by the policy planners to decide and prioritize the policy design and implementation. Resources can be rationally assigned to the different factors. For example, initially, more resources are required for the driving factors appearing at the bottom of the diagraph. These factors drive the other factors and thus facilitate their achievements. Once these driving factors are adequately achieved, then the resources can be shifted to the higher-level factors in the diagraph. In addition, TISM has the advantage of providing interpretation of all the links along with nodes and retaining select transitive links that have meaningful interpretations, while for ISM, all the transitive links are dropped (Sushil 2017). Interpretative Structural Modelling Technique has been used to develop the relationship between these factors affecting citizen happiness. The technique has the following steps:-

1. Identifying the factors affecting citizen happiness (given in Table 5.1). These factors are finalized through literature and discussions with the experts. The approach of Mutually Exclusive and collectively exhaustive has been applied to ensure that the TISM model is comprehensive.
2. Develop mutual contextual and interpretation relationships among the factors. For this, a panel of six experts consisting of two senior bureaucrats having experience in policy design

and deployment, two senior corporate executives conversant with policy impact on businesses, and two academicians, one from social sciences and one from a business school.

3. Converted the contextual relationship into a structure self-interaction matrix (SSIM) (Also in Table 5.1).

4. Develop the initial reachability matrix (RM) (Table 5.2) and check for transitivity. By incorporating all the transitivities, develop the final reachability matrix (Table 5.3).

5. Partitioned the reachability matrix into different levels (Table 5.4) and drew the diagraph (Figure 5.1).

6. Incorporate conceptual logic on the digraph and create a TISM model. This will also identify any conceptual discrepancy.

7. Perform MICMAC analysis by plotting the driving power and driven power of each factor (Figure 5.2).

Table 5.1: Structural Self-Interaction Matrix

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Environmental Sustainability		O	A	O	O	O	V	A	A	O	O	O
2	Equality for all			O	V	O	O	V	O	O	A	O	O
3	Reduced corruption				O	A	A	O	O	O	O	O	O
4	Peace and Security					O	O	V	O	A	O	O	O
5	Rule of Law and Justice						O	O	O	V	O	V	O
6	Economic Stability							O	O	O	V	O	O
7	Citizen Happiness								O	A	O	A	O
8	Participation and Inclusiveness									O	O	A	V
9	Trust in Institutions										O	O	O
10	Social Welfare and Public Services											O	O
11	Freedom and Human Rights												O
12	Resilience to Crises												

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Table 5.2: Initial Reachability Matrix

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Driving Power
1	Environmental Sustainability	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
2	Equality for all	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	4
3	Reduced corruption	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
4	Peace and Security	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
5	Rule of Law and Justice	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	4
6	Economic Stability	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
7	Citizen Happiness	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
8	Participation and Inclusiveness	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
9	Trust in Institutions	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
10	Social Welfare and Public Services	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
11	Freedom and Human Rights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
12	Resilience to Crises	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
		4	3	3	3	1	1	6	3	2	2	2	2	

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Table 5.3: Final Reachability Matrix

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Driving Power
1	Environmental Sustainability	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
2	Equality for all	1*	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1*	6
3	Reduced corruption	1	0	1	0	0	0	1*	0	0	0	0	0	3
4	Peace and Security	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
5	Rule of Law and Justice	1*	1*	1	1*	1	0	1*	1*	1	0	1	1*	10
6	Economic Stability	1*	1*	1	1*	0	1	1*	1*	0	1	0	1*	9

7	Citizen Happiness	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
8	Participation and Inclusiveness	1	1	0	1*	0	0	1*	1	0	0	0	0	1
9	Trust in Institutions	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
10	Social Welfare and Public Services	1*	1	0	1*	0	0	1*	1*	0	1	0	1*	7
11	Freedom and Human Rights	1*	1*	0	1*	0	0	1*	1	0	0	1	1*	7
12	Resilience to Crises	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
		9	6	3	8	1	1	12	6	2	2	2	7	

Table 5.4: Level Partitioning

Elements	Reachability Set	Antecedent Set	Intersection Set	Level
1	1,	1,2,3,5,6,8,9,10,11,	1,	2
2	2,8,	2,5,6,8,10,11,	2,8,	3
3	3,	3,5,6,	3,	3
4	4,	2,4,5,6,8,9,10,11,	4,	2
5	5,	5,	5,	5
6	6,	6,	6,	5
7	7,	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,	7,	1
8	2,8,	2,5,6,8,10,11,	2,8,	3
9	9,	5,9,	9,	3
10	10,	6,10,	10,	4
11	11,	5,11,	11,	4
12	12,	2,5,6,8,10,11,12,	12,	2

The diagram developed from partitioning the reachability matrix into different levels, as figure 5.1 has been captioned as the Structure of Implementation of Citizen Happiness by Nordic Countries. This is called the Total Interpretative Structural Model. The model helps to understand the implementation of the various activities. The model is built on the premise that the activities are not independent; rather, some activities help to drive the achievement of others. For example, environmental sustainability is derived from factors like economic stability, reduced corruption, rule of law, justice, and trust in the institutions. Therefore, to achieve environmental sustainability, it is important to first work on other policies that will

create the foundation, and then the specific environmental improvement policies will give better results. The end goal can be achieved by working on the supporting policies, which are crucial in building the foundation for efficient and good outcomes.

The technique of TISM through MICMAC analysis also helps to identify the factors/ policies that can be independently pursued. This study has identified reduced corruption and <sup>145</sup> trust in the institutions as the independent policies, meaning that to build a good society, it is essential that society is corruption-free and that they have trust in the institutions. Activities 5,6,10,11 in quadrant IV have high driving power. These activities, namely Rule of law and justice (5), Economic stability (6), social welfare and public services (10), and freedom and human rights (11), are at the bottom of the TISM model. These are the foundation of any governance model to build a strong and sustainable outcome. The limitations of the MICMAC analysis is that it is subjective based on experts' judgement. In some cases, it may oversimplify the complex relationship among the factors. It is also silent on the nature of the relationship, whether linear or non-linear, and the intensity of the relationship. It only provides the direction of the relationship.

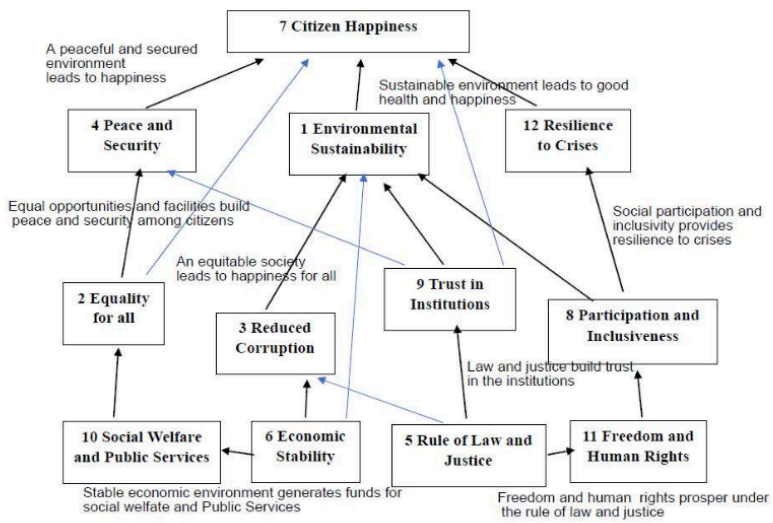


Figure 5.1: Structure of Implementation of Citizen Happiness by Nordic Countries

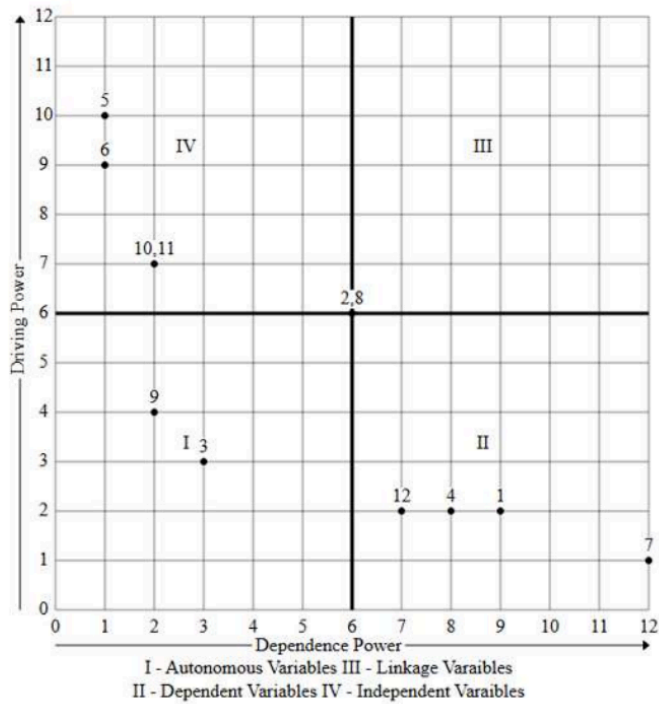


Figure 5.2: MICMAC Analysis of Factors of Citizen Perception

### 5.3 Implications on Business and Economy

The factors in Nordic countries can contribute significantly in the growth of business and economy when implemented properly. On the basis of interviews with business professionals, published reports, Table 5.5 provides a brief summary of the implications of these factors. Resilience encourages learning and growth, turning challenges into opportunities. In a constantly changing business environment, resilience aligns with the organizational goals of growth, innovation, and continuous evolution.

Table 5.5: Role and Implications of Governance Factors for Business and Economy

SN	Factor	Role and Implications for Business and Economy
1	Environmental Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Manufacturing, green energy, and waste reduction can lead to reducing the operational cost and enhancing competitiveness</li> <li>• Need for compliance can lead to innovations in new materials, processes, logistics, packaging, etc</li> </ul>
2	Equality for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations have a major role in providing equal opportunities.</li> <li>• This will provide diversified teams that will be more creative and productive.</li> </ul>
3	Reduced corruption	<p>Corruption is a disease in a society that impacts individuals as well as organizations.</p> <p>Erode trust in government and institutions, poor morale, and high cost of doing business. Business becomes less competitive in the global market, and the growth also gets hampered.</p>
4	Peace and Security	<p>A peaceful and secure social environment creates growth in the business and economy.</p> <p>Reduced risks and uncertainty.</p> <p>Enhanced global investments</p>
5	Rule of Law and Justice	<p>Fair competition</p> <p>Creativity and innovations, Intellectual property rights</p> <p>Reduced crimes and violence at places of work</p> <p>Less litigation cost</p>
6	Economic Stability	<p>Job creation, less unemployment</p> <p>Improved per capita income, reduced disparity</p>
7	Citizen Happiness	<p>Positive attitude of the workers and high productivity</p> <p>Better quality, safety and environmental consciousness</p>

8	Participation and Inclusiveness	Diversity in discussions and idea generation Increased employee participation and empowerment Less attrition
9	Trust in Institutions	Effective implementation of Policy Strong Financial and legal framework Stable and predictive business environment
10	Social Welfare and Public Services	Improved health of the workforce Social well-being Civic amenities
11	Freedom and Human Rights	International trade Global acceptance Better labour relations Reduced litigations
12	Resilience to Crises	Reduced downtime Reduced loss of productivity Quick and better response to natural disasters

The factors of governance affect the welfare of the citizens as well as enhance their competency and happiness. A society with a positive mindset, good health, quality education, and skill development helps enhance business productivity, contributing to economic growth and environmental sustainability. Nordic business practices are characterized by a strong focus on work-life balance, trust among workers and the management, discipline, and punctuality. The Nordic countries have shorter working hours, about 20% less than the USA and India, yet their productivity is high. Further, the workers in these countries have flexibility in working hours, location, and a good number of paid leaves for vacations. Also, the organization has a flat decision-making structure with very little bureaucracy, collaborative decision-making, and a focus on long-term rather than a transactional approach towards value creation.

In non-Nordic countries like India, the challenges of implementing the positive factors of Nordic countries are immense, primarily due to a lack of trust among society, poor quality of

public utilities by the government, and economic inequality. These factors affect the business environment and also lead to corruption, crimes, and fraud. The countries must put positive efforts to enhance trust by strengthening the judicial system, making it more accountable.

#### **5.4 Results and Discussions**

Good governance impacts citizens' happiness in several key ways. The four main factors driven by the good government are social welfare and public services, Economic stability, Rule of Law and Justice, and Freedom and Human Rights.

**5.4.1 Social Welfare and Public Services** - Good governance ensures that high-quality public services such as healthcare, education, infrastructure, and social security are accessible to the citizens. Access to these essential services improves quality of life, reduces stress, and increases the happiness of citizens (Bjornskov et al., 2010).

**5.4.2 Economic Stability** - Governments that implement sound economic policies create an environment favourable to growth and job creation. Economic stability reduces unemployment and poverty, key factors in citizens' well-being (Clark & Oswald, 1994). Better job opportunities and fair wages contribute to financial security and improved living conditions, which in turn increase the happiness of the citizens (Helliwell & Huang, 2008).

**5.4.3 Rule of Law and Justice** - A well-functioning legal system ensures that justice is served efficiently and in an impartial manner, inculcating a sense of fairness and equality among the citizens, leading to happiness. People feel more secure when laws are applied consistently, and corruption is minimized (Ott, 2011). The rule of law contributes to higher life satisfaction by creating a neutral and fair environment for all (Helliwell & Huang, 2008).

**5.4.4 Freedom and Human Rights** - Governance that respects human rights and promotes freedom of expression, movement, and association contributes significantly to citizens' overall happiness. Protection of civil liberties creates a more open and tolerant society where

individuals can pursue their goals without fear of suppression (Veenhoven, 2000). Studies show that personal freedom is closely <sup>293</sup> linked to life satisfaction and happiness (Inglehart et al., 2005).

**5.4.5 Equality for all** – Social welfare and Public Services are the major drivers <sup>307</sup> in providing the basic needs like food, shelter, education, health, electricity, water, etc., of the citizens. Effective management of public resources ensures their equitable distribution among the citizens. It reduces disparities and promotes the overall well-being of the citizens (Ott, 2011). Hence, there are fewer conflicts. At the same time, these types of situations enhance feelings of security & trust in the institutions, leading to enhanced contentment and happiness of the citizens.

**5.4.6 Reduced Corruption** – Governance that minimizes corruption leads to more efficient public services and reduces inequality. Among other factors, economic stability, the rule of law, and justice are the two major factors affecting the reduction of corruption. Citizens are happier when they know that public resources are not being drained off for personal gain, and when they have fair access to opportunities and services (Helliwell et al., 2014). Corruption-free environments generate greater trust in government. This helps in building a society with better social stability.

**5.4.7 Trust in Institutions** - Good governance creates trust between citizens and their government. When institutions are reliable, fair, and transparent, citizens feel more secure and confident that their interests are being protected. Trust in political and legal systems reduces uncertainty and promotes social cohesion (Rothstein & Stolle, 2008). A strong legal and justice system ensures that other institutions are working fairly. Research shows that institutional trust leads to higher levels of happiness, as it ensures citizens perceive the system as fair and predictable (Helliwell et al., 2014).

**5.4.8 Participation and Inclusiveness** – Freedom and Human Rights to a large extent ensure participation of citizens and political processes, economic growth, and social harmony. The

benefits of the growth are inclusive. Good governance promotes citizen participation in decision-making processes, enabling people to feel more connected to their government and empowered to influence policies affecting their lives (Frey & Stutzer, 2000). Inclusive governance that considers the voices of all social groups, including minorities and vulnerable populations, creates a sense of belonging and enhances community well-being (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

**5.4.9 Peace and Security** - Governments that ensure both internal and external security provide citizens with a stable environment in which to live. The feeling of equality creates a peaceful society by reducing conflicts. Also, the trust in institutions is very important for creating a society with lives of peace and harmony. Even with low economic prosperity, a peaceful society is always happier. The absence of conflict and violence is critical to happiness, as it reduces fear and anxiety, allowing people to focus on their personal lives and community development (Helliwell et al., 2014). Peace and security are fundamental to the pursuit of happiness in any society (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

**5.4.10 Environmental Sustainability** - Good governance integrates policies that promote sustainable development for better utilization of natural resources and environmental protection. These practices help in building healthier living conditions, such as cleaner air and water, which directly improve the overall health of the citizens (Oishi & Diener, 2014). Good governance practices for environmental protection also contribute to ensuring a stable future for the citizens, which in turn leads to long-term happiness (Brown & Kasser, 2005). Many a time, due to a lack of economic prosperity, like in third-world countries and developing countries, the government is not able to commit sufficient funds to ensure environmental stability. A good economy ensures that citizens are able to afford environmentally friendly green products and services.

**5.4.11 Resilience to Crises** - Good governance helps to build resilience against crises, such as economic downturns, natural disasters, or pandemics. Effective crisis management prevents undue hardship and stress, preserving citizens' well-being even in challenging times (Helliwell & Huang, 2008). Resilience is essential for maintaining happiness in times of uncertainty and adversity (Frey & Stutzer, 2000).

The non-economic factors outlined and discussed above create an environment of social security, trust, and develop capacity and capability to take new ventures and overcome crises. Oswald, Proto & Sgroi (2015) conducted controlled experiments on the shop floor where some randomly selected individual workers were made happy, and it was observed that their productivity was 12% higher than that of the other workers in the group. Also in the same study, a group of workers was identified who have faced some real-world shocks and are unhappy. It was observed that their productivity is low compared to that of the average workers. The findings show that happiness can stimulate motivation, positive attitude, reduce stress, and thereby enhance concentration and better outcomes in the form of more output, better quality, and concern for safety and the environment. Diener et al. (2004) emphasized that, along with economic indicators, it is also important that governments and organizations work on non-economic indicators. For the well-being of society, important non-economic predictors include social capital, equality and inclusiveness, strong and trustworthy institutions, democratic governance, and human rights. In the business ecosystem, these non-economic factors influence work satisfaction, quality, safety, and profitability. It is therefore important that organizations, as well as nations, monitor the well-being of workers and take steps to improve it.

The non-Nordic countries can map their demographic and social well-being profiles to suitably prioritize and rationalize the existing policies with proper budgets and efficient deployment. They can focus on robust public services and improved law, order, and justice. Khan (2022)

studied the factors motivating and inspiring the women entrepreneurs venturing in India. He observed that the government policies, incentives, and fast clearances are playing a key role in the inclusiveness of the women entrepreneurs. Sharma and Kumar (2024) studied the government initiative of one district one product and observed that the scheme has strengthened the technology and marketing of the metal and craft products of the Moradabad district in Uttar Pradesh and helped in enhancing the income of the craftsmen. Athira and Ramesh (2024) observed that corporate tax avoidance decreases with the increase in country-level happiness. Stronger governance is also necessary to reap the advantage of greater national happiness with reduced corporate tax avoidance. By bolstering governance structures, strategies to enhance general well-being and societal participation, a mutually beneficial relationship can be established, benefiting both society and businesses. Nordic countries, having high economic prosperity and a smaller population, have strong social safety nets, education, and health for all. Many of these policies may not be directly deployed in countries like India due to differing political, cultural, and economic structures.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above discussions, it is concluded that the Nordic countries' model of governance stands out as a powerful framework where citizens enjoy consistent happiness because of holistic welfare systems. The Nordic countries' consistent top ranking in the United Nations World Happiness Report indicates their commitment to good governance. Citizens in these nations express high levels of trust in government, strong social support networks, a balance between work and life, and good mental and physical health—all factors that contribute to happiness.

High-quality education in these countries empowers the citizens, robust healthcare systems safeguard the health of all irrespective of their status and background, progressive labour

policies provide the populations a great cushion even during the times of economic crisis, and gender equality makes the societies inclusive. The prominence of transparency and citizen trust in public institutions develops a sense of security, further enhancing overall life satisfaction (Helliwell et al., 2020). The robust social safety nets and supportive labour policies across the Nordic countries further ensure that individuals can balance work and family life effectively (Ronsen, 2020).

Finally, the governance in these countries has emerged as an example of the profound relationship between good governance and citizens' happiness, in which strategic welfare policies help in building a cohesive, resilient, and thriving society. This approach illustrates that equitable governance can lead to substantial improvements in individual and collective well-being. OECD (2020) highlights how free or heavily subsidized healthcare and education contribute to higher life satisfaction by reducing economic barriers to essential services. Andersen et al. (2012) found that the welfare policies also reduce poverty and inequality, which are key factors in creating higher levels of happiness. Furthermore, these services provide a sense of safety that reduces the impacts of unemployment, illness, or other life risks, thereby helping citizens to live fearlessly with less anxiety and greater security.

The combination of fair governance, efficient public services, low corruption, political inclusion, and economic stability ensures that citizens' needs are met and their rights are protected. Consequently, the overall quality of life in these countries is very high, leading to a more satisfied, happier population. Citizens' participation in governance gives them a sense of achievement that creates further happiness. By promoting social cohesion and engaging actively in global peace efforts, these countries have created societies where citizens enjoy fulfilling life with a sense of contribution.

The study will be of immense use to the policy makers as they will be able to focus on factors having high driving power, as well as independent factors, as identified in the MICMAC

analysis. It is recommended to extend the present work by integrating policy factors with the social welfare and business ecosystem factors with proper constructs. In this, the demographic factors can be taken as the moderating factors, and economic growth as the mediating factor. Data can be collected from one of the Nordic countries, like Finland, and one from a non-Nordic country, like India.

The model identifies four main drivers of citizen happiness: social welfare and public services, <sup>322</sup> rule of law and justice, freedom and human rights, and economic stability. These drivers foster participation, inclusivity, resilience to crises, trust in institutions, and environmental sustainability. The model can be used by policymakers to adopt and implement the right policies. These factors of Nordic countries are further studied to find their implications for the business and economy. The findings show that these factors and happy citizens have a strong <sup>333</sup> impact on enhancing the performance of the organizations locally as well as globally by producing better quality products and attracting more investments for growth.

## CHAPTER 6

### ROLE OF AI IN DESIGN AND DEPLOYMENT OF PUBLIC POLICIES

#### 6.0 Introduction

The integration of Public Policy and Artificial Intelligence has the potential to improve the design and deployment of public policies. Public policies played a significant role in enhancing citizen happiness, along with shaping and governing business activities. Not only fiscal and trade policies, but also social and governance policies significantly influence citizens' lives and business performance. The analysis of the responses on the relevance of the policy, intensity of implementation, and the quality of implementation of some select policies in India indicates a gap in the proper design and deployment of the policies

Artificial Intelligence tools have the capabilities to analyse large-scale, diverse data of demographic, social, and economic parameters and also to simulate the policy decision variables to arrive at the best policy. The capabilities of digital integration, data capturing, and monitoring can be used for an effective deployment and control.

The proposed model suggests that Artificial intelligence can act as a significant moderator in the effective design and deployment of public policy. Further, a targeted, systems approach to integrating Artificial Intelligence in the design and deployment of public policy can enhance citizen happiness, leading to an improved business and economic ecosystem.

#### 6.1 Artificial Intelligence Role in Public Policy

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is witnessing an increased event around VUCA- volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. The last two decades have seen the economic crisis of 2008, the COVID-19 pandemic, wars, climate change, environmental challenges, technological penetration of artificial intelligence, smart devices, cloud computing, electric vehicles,

economic growth, disparity in income, nationalism replacing globalization, etc. In this environment of macro and micro changes, the role of government and public policies becomes very vital to provide security, growth, and opportunities to its citizens, businesses, and economy.

Public policy generally consists of the set of action plans, laws and behaviour adopted by the government. It is simply what the government or a public official does or does not do about a problem that comes before them for consideration and possible action. Policy is what the government chooses to do about a particular issue, problem, or welfare of the people. It may also be in response to some issue or problem in the present or in the future. It can be in the form of rules, regulations, ordinances, or laws. In general, people are worried about their jobs, unemployment, semi-employment, and also have the fear of losing their jobs. They also have fears about their lives and also of their dear ones due to various types of dangers, security and safety issues, natural disasters, etc. People also feel insecure in an uncertain environment, which may lead them to depression, anxiety, and other physical and mental health problems.

A lot of public policy has to do with reducing such worries, reducing the threat of communicable diseases such as COVID 19, reducing the threat from natural disasters such as Hud-Hud which hit the eastern coast or the floods of Kerala or the earth quake of Gujarat and Uttarakhand which resulted in huge losses in lives and property, and from crimes through various preventive actions and institutions, increasing the safety of travel by air, by sea, or on the road, reducing the chances of industrial safety, etc. (3) Public policy can help in generating employment by promoting industry. India has seen remarkable growth in GDP and the prosperity of its citizens through policies related to Information Technology, implementation of computerization, and the opening of its economy, thus attracting opportunities as a destination for outsourcing of the IT sector. Singh et al. (2022) studied the facilitators and inhibitors of happiness and observed that family and friends, health and well-being,

accomplishment, recreation, and personal attributes play an important role as facilitators of happiness. Further, they found unfavorable surroundings, strained ties, work and play hindrances as inhibitors for happiness.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), though so far not having a one accepted definition, is a set of technologies, software, and hardware to perform the task of human intelligence. With the increase in computational power and cloud storage on one hand and increased complexities, uncertainties, and ever-increasing expectations of competition and society, AI can play a significant role in the policy formulation, deployment, and measurement of the impact of the policy.

Citizen happiness is an important goal of the governments while managing the affairs of the country/ state/ municipality. By designing adequate public policies which provide transparent administration, the well-being of the citizens, and confidence to the people that the mechanism exists to help them in case of any disaster or emergency. Due to limited resources available with the states and different countries/ states have different requirements depending upon the economic prosperity and political environment; it is essential to develop a policy suitable for the people for whom policy is being designed. In India, so far, the policy being framed under various five-year plans and under Niti Ayog is more focused on protecting local markets, creating its own industry, increasing GDP, attracting foreign investment, etc, and very little attention has been paid to citizen happiness directly. This research aims to develop a framework for public policy with the objective of improving citizen happiness by applying Artificial Intelligence in the design, deployment, and monitoring of the policies.

## 6.2 Analysis of Government Policies in India

The policies implemented by the Government of India and the state governments are studied through a structured questionnaire. In this paper, select 16 policies which are associated with

the economic and business growth of the country have been presented. The conceptual lineage is that the policies help to enhance the happiness of the citizens, and these citizens, when working in the job market, help to enhance the business ecosystem and the growth of the economy. The objective of the paper is twofold-

- a) To determine the relevance of the selected policies for citizen happiness and how far these policies are effectively deployed. The effective deployment of the policies is studied by analysing the intensity of the implementation and the quality of implementation. For this study, a total of 305 responses were collected, and out of that, 271 were used for the present study. The others were discarded due to their incompleteness. The respondents consist of Administrators (8.1%), Faculty (22.1%), Students (31.7%), Lawyers (14.8%), social workers (9.6%), corporate employees (7.0%), and others from miscellaneous areas. About 84% have an annual income below 20 Lakhs, and the male-to-female respondent ratio is 60.1:39.9. Further, 40% respondents were below 48% and 45.8% were between 41 and 60%. The remaining are above the age of 60 years.
- b) To study the application of Artificial intelligence in the design and deployment of the policy. For this, the literature and reports are studied, and discussions are held with eight experts- four from policy area, two from the Computer technology area, and two from the academic community.

The results of the study regarding objective 1 are presented in Table 6.1 and the results of objective 2 regarding applications of AI in policy design and deployment are presented in section 6.4.

Table 6.1: Analysis of the Government Policies for their Design and Deployment

		Relevance of the policy			Intensity of Implementation			Quality of Implementation		
		Mean	SD	p-value	Mean	SD	p-value	Mean	SD	p-value

A	Government policy of National Pension Scheme (NPS)	3.51	1.46	0.00	3.20	1.45	0.03	3.29	1.46	0.00
B	Government policy of promoting electric vehicles	3.75	1.28	0.00	3.33	1.37	0.00	3.27	1.37	0.00
C	Government policy on enforcing Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificate for vehicles	3.73	1.31	0.00	3.36	1.28	0.00	3.26	1.31	0.00
D	Government policy of Chandrayaan launch	3.61	1.34	0.00	3.39	1.36	0.00	3.40	1.42	0.00
E	Government policy of enhancing expenditure on defense	3.99	3.32	0.00	3.53	1.19	0.00	3.45	1.26	0.00
F	Government policy of Implementing GST	3.46	1.29	0.00	3.29	1.28	0.00	3.20	1.30	0.01
G	Government policy of doing away with the interview for group 3 and 4 posts	3.46	1.38	0.00	3.35	1.38	0.00	3.40	2.84	0.02
H	Government policy of providing services through online	3.79	1.22	0.00	3.46	1.24	0.00	3.49	1.26	0.00
I	Government policy of construction of roads and flyovers	3.75	1.25	0.00	3.46	1.22	0.00	3.42	1.28	0.00
J	Government policy of providing educational loan with state guarantee	3.74	1.16	0.00	3.48	1.15	0.00	3.33	1.27	0.00
K	Government policies of generating jobs	3.38	1.42	0.00	2.99	1.39	0.93	2.92	1.48	0.37
L	Government policy of promoting startups and entrepreneurship	3.61	1.29	0.00	3.19	1.28	0.02	3.24	1.29	0.00
M	Government policy of promoting skill development	3.62	1.32	0.00	3.22	1.33	0.01	3.20	1.32	0.01
N	Government policy of organizing Job Melas	3.49	1.36	0.00	3.00	1.37	0.97	3.13	1.92	0.27

O	Government policy of actions against corruption	3.59	1.36	0.00	3.21	1.37	0.01	3.08	1.43	0.35
P	Government policy of improving law and order	3.54	1.39	0.00	3.25	1.40	0.00	3.11	1.45	0.21

Mean values are on a five-point Likert scale.

The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire reveals that the relevance of the policies is not the same for all respondents. Some policies like the Government policy of enhancing expenditure on defense (E-3.99), the Government policy of providing services online (H-3.79), the Government policy of promoting electric vehicles (B-3.75), and the Government policy of construction of roads and flyovers (I-3.75) are highly rated on relevance. On the other hand, policies like the Government's policies of generating jobs, the Government's policy of organizing Job Melas, the Government's policy of implementing GST, and the Government's policy of doing away with the interview for group 3 and 4 posts are less relevant. Further, the policies that are rated as less relevant also have a low score on intensity of implementation and the quality of implementation. Maybe because of poor deployment, society is not able to see their relevance.

### 6.3 Applications of AI in Effective Policy Implementation

AI is affecting every walk of society. In the last decade and a half, due to enhanced computation power, storage on cloud and cloud computing, high-speed internet, and software in data sciences and analytics, applications have been generated in agriculture, manufacturing, and the services. However, so far not much reported research and articles are available for their effective implementation in government departments for policy planning, deployment and monitoring. One of the reasons may be lack of political will, skilled manpower and the lack of IT infrastructure (Khan et al. 2024). To implement the IT, a close and regular engagement of the stakeholders is essential. IT is not like you purchase and start using it.

With the review of literature and discussions with the experts, a model has been developed and presented as Figure 6.1. The model depicts how the AI can be applied in the policy design, deployment, monitoring and improvement. The applications of AI tools like Big data analytics, simulation can provide the scientific base to examine the need for the policy and also to optimize the policy parameters in terms of budgets required, identification of beneficiaries, and the implementation channels. Alternative ways of implementation, i.e., directly or through the franchise route or through private partnership, etc. can be studied at the design stage itself.

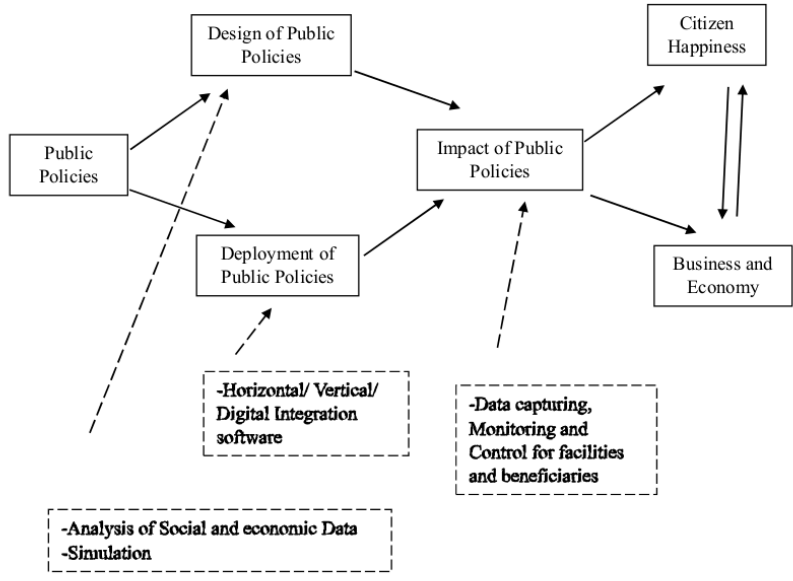


Figure 6.1: Artificial Intelligence-Enabled Public Policy Design and Deployment Model

(Source: Authors)

For the effective deployment, effective coordination and integration are essential. This integration should be both vertical and horizontal and facilitated by digital integration. The success of any policy is the positive feedback from the beneficiaries and also to revise the policy parameters and variables in case the desired results are not achieved. For this AI tools like data capturing, monitoring and control of facilities and beneficiaries will be highly useful. Table 6.2 uses the concept of life cycle, outlines the challenges and important considerations at each stage, and also provides a direction for the application of AI tools.

Table 6.2: AI Applications and Benefits at Different Stages of Policy Life Cycle

	Life Cycle Stage	Challenges and Important Considerations	Applications and Benefits of AI
1	Designing the policy	Predicting needs Relevance Stakeholders	Analyse vast datasets related to economy, demography, technologies, industry growth, education and skill development infrastructure etc to predict the needs of the industry and citizens' expectations.
2	Developing the Policy	Simulating the various scenarios	Simulation to predict the potential impact and outcome of the various policy options. Risk assessment and the loopholes in the policy.
3	Deploying the Policy	Budgets and resource requirements Selection of Partners Selection of beneficiaries	Optimization of the resources, funds. Selection of partners using machine learning. Matching of the applicants/ beneficiaries with the appropriate service delivery, and

			personalized delivery of the services.
4	Monitoring the Policy	Establishment of KPIs Assessment and Feedback Controls Personalisation	Self-sustained collection of data from the primary sources using sensors and online feedback. Data-driven adjustment of the policy.
5	Maintaining the Policy	Pilferages and misuse of funds, beneficiaries	AI-powered chatbot inquiry handling, providing information and counselling, handling grievances.
6	Renewing the Policy	Predicting changes in the demographic and economic conditions of society	

Source: Authors' compilation from literature and inputs from AI experts, academicians and bureaucrats

#### 6.4 Conclusions

Artificial intelligence has great potential in streamlining the government policy design and deployment. Proper implementation of public policies not only improves the well-being of the citizens but also creates a positive environment for the growth of industry and economy. In this paper, sixteen select government policies are studied through the analysis of the responses received to a structured questionnaire. Further, models and roadmaps have been presented for the application of AI in the government sector to properly conceive and design the policy. AI can be effectively used to monitor the policies. The present study will be helpful as a base study to develop more rigorous research proposals. Further research can be carried out to understand the preparedness of the government department to embrace AI in their decision-making and monitoring activities. There may be several limitations and challenges, different from the

corporate world and <sup>24</sup> it is essential to identify the same and develop the applications conducive to the needs of the government.

## CHAPTER 7

### IMPACT OF SMART CITIES POLICIES IN DELHI: A CASE STUDY

#### 7.0 Introduction

<sup>336</sup> Government of India launched Smart Cities Mission in 2015. Since then, many policy initiatives have been taken in various Indian cities by the State Governments also. Govt. of NCT of Delhi has also implemented many schemes to improve not only the infrastructure but also to improve ease of citizens' living in the city. It is important to investigate the relationship between government policies linked to the Smart Cities Mission and their perceived impact on citizen happiness in Delhi. The policies related to social welfare, environmental sustainability, digital governance, public healthcare systems and urban infrastructure are the key areas that have been included in the study. In rapidly transforming urban landscape, an effort has been made through the present study, to create a new framework for assessing urban policy effectiveness and suggest happiness-centric governance modalities.

#### 7.1 Smart Cities

Rapid urbanization is one of the most evident trends in India since the time of independence. Migration of rural population to urban cities creates pressure on urban infrastructure, housing, energy, water, transport arrangements, healthcare as well as governance systems. In order to address these issues, either new cities need to be developed or existing cities should be expanded by developing smarter systems to align available resources with the citizens' requirements. In this background, Government of India, in 2015, <sup>337</sup> under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narender Modi took a policy decision to transform 100 cities of the country as smart cities. Delhi, being the capital city, attracts key focus of the Government. Hence, policy interventions ranging from pollution control to digital service delivery and healthcare access

have been made to improve the facilities for the citizens. Though these initiatives have been taken to improve urban living, their actual impact on happiness of citizens needs to be explored. In this direction, through the present research, it is attempted to study three critical dimensions of government policies, namely, relevance to happiness, intensity of implementation and quality of execution. A structured questionnaire has been employed to evaluate citizens' perceptions with the core objectives of the Smart Cities Mission to understand the dynamics of the urban policy implementation towards citizens' experiences and their well-being in India's capital.

The Smart Cities Mission (SCM), launched by the Government of India in 2015, aims to enhance quality of urban lives, through citizen-centric development and inclusive growth. Delhi, being a premier city, has witnessed a range of policy interventions—from mobility upgrades and pollution control to digital service delivery and public health initiatives. In the available literature, it has been found that such interventions create a scope of exploration of their impact towards relevance to citizen happiness, intensity of implementation, and quality of execution. In the context of urban policy, citizen happiness and satisfaction have become important markers of the quality of governance.

Governance plays an important role in shaping citizen perceptions of policy effectiveness. Ahluwalia (2019) reviews the institutional limitations of urban governance in India with the argument that empowered local bodies are essential for delivering happiness-enhancing services.

Dutta and Butola (2020) further explore political engagement at grassroot levels, suggesting that participatory governance improves trust and satisfaction that are key elements in creating happiness through public policy.

Aijaz (2020) describes that on the one hand policy interventions have helped in improvement of urban aesthetics and better transportation systems whereas some policies suffer due to poor

planning and less involvement of citizens. According to Joachim and Sujaya (2023) sustainability, inclusivity, and citizen feedback are significant parameters of policy assessment. Nigam (2024) offers a detailed overview of the Smart Cities Mission, emphasizing its multi-dimensional approach to urban transformation. The study highlights the linkages of infrastructural upgrades and digital integration to improve the quality of life, a concept closely tied to subjective well-being and happiness of the natives. Kumar (2024) with the focus on Delhi, identifies implementation gaps and citizen dissatisfaction with certain projects, such as smart parking and waste management, which resonate with the scope of present study, namely, quality of policy execution. Das (2024) has explored the significance for a more transparent decision-making process to respond to the needs of the citizens. Tayeng et al. (2024) have expressed that usage of smart infrastructure supports sustainable urban growth.

In the present-day governance systems, technology-driven feedback mechanisms have been widely used to know citizen sentiments. Dhenge et al. (2024) identified through their survey data that citizens active involvement helps in improvement of their satisfaction with city governance.

Overall, the available literature clarifies that citizen perspectives should be taken into cognizance when assessing the success of urban policies.

## 7.2 Government Policies Related to Smart Cities

The questionnaire survey was conducted during this research and presented in chapter 3. The main objectives of the surveys and this study based on survey is to:

1. **Assess the relevance** of selected government policies in enhancing subjective well-being.
2. **Evaluate the intensity of implementation** of these policies in terms of resource allocation and budgetary commitment.

3. **Analyse the quality of execution**, focusing on efficiency, transparency, and citizen satisfaction.
4. **Identify high-impact policy areas** that align with Smart City pillars such as mobility, governance, environment, health, and education.
5. **Develop a multidimensional framework** for linking urban policy interventions to citizen happiness metrics.

Following government policies have been observed from the angle of Smart Cities upgradations in Delhi:

k) **The government policy of building toilets for smart sanitation**

In order to attain a national status of 'Open Defecation Free', the initiative of building toilets was taken by the Government of India. As per the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, GOI Report 2021-22:

- 66,020 public toilet blocks across 3,296 cities are visible in Google Maps, covering more than 70% of India's urban population
- A total of 4,371 cities (out of 4,372) have declared themselves ODF (99% progress), of which 4,316 cities/ ULBs have been certified as Open Defecation Free (ODF) after third-party certification.

This policy is linked with Smart Cities Mission and has direct impact on public health and dignity. It helps in maintaining smart sanitation.

l) **The government policy of providing free travel for women in DTC buses for smart mobility**

The Government of NCT of Delhi offered free travel facilities to women in state-run buses since 2019. This facility has empowered women to pursue their careers and also to save

money for the well-being of their families. Women passengers availed 13.04 crore free trips in DTC and 12.69 crore in cluster buses during the year 2021-22.

This policy has been framed for smart mobility in the city and impacts on gender equity as well as provides better accessibility to women

m) **Government policy of providing a Free COVID-19 vaccine and Ayushman Bharat Scheme for smart health**

During the tough time of COVID-19 pandemic Govt. of India and state govts. took a policy initiative to provide the free vaccine to the citizens. Approximately 2.2 crore covid vaccines were administered. Having access to preventive and curative healthcare, helps the workforce to take fewer sick leaves and remain productive throughout the year. Ayushman Bharat Scheme provides free health insurance to low-income Indians creating a sense of confidence and security that illness doesn't prevent them from economic activities.

These schemes are to provide accessible healthcare to the citizens in the direction of smart health management systems

n) **Government policy of direct benefit transfer to the marginalized society for smart governance**

The Direct Benefit Transfer scheme was launched in 2013, with the primary motive of ensuring that benefits are directly transferred electronically to the bank accounts of beneficiaries. Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Mission was the nodal point for the implementation of the DBT programs to reduce delay in payment, curbing theft, duplication, and ascertaining perfect delivery. The policy has altered the mechanism of 380 schemes administered through 55 ministries. In the financial year 2017-18, benefits worth INR 2,02,224 crores (USD 30.58

billion) were transferred by the central government to 12.4 billion beneficiaries under different DBT programs.

Digital Policy Implementations help in enhancing the ease of doing business. Aadhaar has been adopted as a national digital identity that simplifies 'Know Your Customer' processes for banks, telecom, and government services through faster verifications, less paperwork, and smooth operations. Aadhaar-linked bank accounts ensure subsidies and welfare benefits reach the right individuals by reducing fraud and leakages. It streamlines governance and service delivery, improving transparency, reducing red tape, and making it easier to start and run businesses. This integrated approach strengthens both the supply (workforce) and demand (business climate) sides of the economy.

Providing such online services is part of smart governance that impacts transparency and builds trust among citizens.

o) **Government policy of developing parks for smart environment**

Parks play an important role in maintaining the closeness of humans to nature. Govt. of Delhi is transforming around 18000 city parks, into world-class ecological assets of the city. For this purpose, the Delhi Government formulated a policy to create community-owned accessible green spaces for all residents through the digitization of parks, increasing civic participation, capacity building of horticulture agencies, and going beyond beautification. Green spaces have been designed for multiple activities such as gyms/sports, botanical, food, dog walks and live events. A support mechanism has been created to develop/maintain these facilities with active involvement of the public.

This initiative links to the very purpose of Smart Cities Mission of improving environment and positively impacts the pollution reduction efforts that is the need of the hour.

### 7.3 Analysis of Government Policies in India

The government policies that have been described in the previous section, are studied through a structured questionnaire. In this paper, select 05 policies which are associated with the Smart Cities Mission have been evaluated on three aspects, namely:

- (vii) Relevance of the policy in enhancing happiness:
- (viii) Intensity of implementation:
- (ix) Quality of implementation:

The conceptual lineage is that the policies help to enhance the happiness of the citizens, and the happy and satisfied citizens, when working in the job market, help to enhance the business ecosystem and the growth of the economy leading to development of further smart cities.

Government policies are meant to improve the well-being of the citizens. Many a time, due to a lack of proper understanding or due to a lack of data, the policies are framed for which citizens and beneficiaries are not able to connect to resulting in wastage of efforts and resources. Thus, policies must be relevant, responsive to the needs of the citizens and helpful in solving the problems of society.

Along with the relevance of the policy, it is equally essential that the policies are implemented in right earnest. To successfully implement a policy, it is desired to provide sufficient resources in terms of administrative setup, planning, budgets, and other resources. All this together will define the intensity of the implementation. Along with the resources, it is also important that adequate mechanisms should be set up to prevent corruption, reduce wastages of the resources, and focus on the quality of services delivered. In this study, these aspects of policy design and implementation have been kept in view throughout the study. For this study, a total of 305

responses were collected, and out of that, 271 were used for the present study. The others were discarded due to their incompleteness. The respondents consist of Administrators (8.1%), Faculty (22.1%), Students (31.7%), Lawyers (14.8%), social workers (9.6%), corporate employees (7.0%), and others from miscellaneous areas. About 84% have an annual income below 20 Lakhs, and the male-to-female respondent ratio is 60.1:39.9. Further, 40% respondents were below 48% and 45.8% were between 41 and 60%. The remaining are above the age of 60 years.

#### 7.4 Results and Discussions

The analysis of the respondents is provided in the Table 7.1. In this for the policies related to the smart cities are analysed on relevance of the policy, Intensity of Implementation and the Quality of Implementation

Table 7.1: Descriptive and Significant Analysis of Government Policies linked to Smart Cities Mission

	Relevance of the policy			Intensity of Implementation			Quality of Implementation		
	Mean	SD	p-value	Mean	SD	p-value	Mean	SD	p-value
Government policy of building toilets	3.74	1.18	0.00	3.51	1.07	0.00	3.34	1.17	0.00
Government policy of providing Free Covid Vaccine	4.01	1.13	0.00	3.90	1.09	0.00	3.84	1.12	0.00
Government policy of providing free travel for women in DTC buses	3.80	1.24	0.00	3.70	1.20	0.00	3.67	1.21	0.00
Government policy of developing parks	3.77	1.07	0.00	3.51	1.13	0.00	3.35	1.12	0.00
Government policy of providing	3.79	1.22	0.00	3.46	1.24	0.00	3.49	1.26	0.00

services through online									
Government policy of direct benefit transfer to the marginalized society	3.75	1.13	0.00	3.39	1.10	0.00	3.44	1.10	0.00

Mean values are on a five-point Likert scale. The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire reveals that the relevance of the policies is not the same for all respondents.

This study evaluates government policies in Delhi across three dimensions: Relevance to Citizen Happiness, Intensity of Implementation, and Quality of Implementation. Each dimension was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with accompanying standard deviations and statistically significant p-values (all < 0.001), indicating robust public perception data. Key Findings of the study are as following:

#### 1. High-Impact Policies

- **Free Covid Vaccine** emerges as the most positively rated policy across all dimensions, reflecting its universal relevance, strong rollout, and perceived quality.
- **Free DTC Travel for Women** also scores highly, suggesting strong alignment with citizen needs, especially towards gender equity domains.

#### 2. Moderate Performance

- Policies like **Online Services**, and **Park Development** show moderate scores, indicating decent implementation but potential gaps in accessibility or consistency.
- **Building Toilets** and **Direct Benefit Transfer** are seen as relevant but slightly lag in execution quality, hinting at operational or outreach challenges.

## 7.5 Conclusions

The study on smart cities reveals that

- **Relevance vs. Implementation Gap:** The above policies show a disconnect between perceived relevance and implementation quality (e.g., Health Facilities, Toilets), indicating that while citizens value these initiatives, execution may be falling short.
- **Equity-Driven Success:** Policies targeting vulnerable groups—such as free travel for women catch higher scores, highlighting the importance of inclusive design in public policy.
- **Digital and Infrastructure Synergy:** Online service delivery and transport infrastructure are moderately rated, suggesting that while digital and mobility solutions are appreciated, they require continuous refinement to meet evolving citizen expectations.

### Recommendations

- **Invest in Quality Assurance:** Policies with high relevance but lower quality scores should prioritize transparency, feedback loops, and service audits.
- **Leverage Citizen-Centric Metrics:** Future evaluations should integrate qualitative feedback and real-time data to capture relevant citizen experiences.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSIONS

#### 8.0 Introduction

<sup>179</sup> Happiness is the ultimate goal of wellness and well-being. <sup>27</sup> Happiness is defined as the subjective enjoyment of one's own life as a whole and is also referred to as 'life-satisfaction'.

At the state level, the very purpose of governance is citizen happiness. Government policies like providing subsidized food, free COVID-19 vaccine, non-economic benefits like providing toilets, developing parks, and providing educational loans with state guarantee, <sup>1</sup> reduce the hardship, provide better civic amenities, and create opportunities for growth. All these together help to enhance the collective happiness of the citizens, which can be defined as a state of harmony, which emerges with the satisfaction of their physiological and psychological needs, leading to a meaningful and contented life (Singh et.al. 2022).

<sup>168</sup> The research aims to explore the multifaceted nature of individual and citizen happiness by identifying its key aspects and factors. It seeks to examine various global happiness indices and <sup>259</sup> analyze the factors that contribute to the happiness of high-ranking countries. The goal is to identify the role of government policies—particularly those related to social welfare, law and order, pollution control, healthcare, education, and opportunity creation—and how their relevance and implementation efficiency impact citizen happiness.

<sup>1</sup> A pilot test is conducted to select the kind of user that will give his/ her opinion; the design of the model; finding the measurement instrument; devising application procedure; carrying out the analysis of the model; noting the variation in the answers; to carry out adjustments to the design for the evaluation; and to lay down criteria for the design of the sample.

A structured questionnaire was developed to study the impact of various policies in the domain of social welfare. To identify the policies, a list of policies of both the central government and

the state government, relevant for the people of NCT Delhi, was generated. The pilot test was carried out. Students, faculty, and staff of universities, government officers, and professionals like doctors, lawyers, and residents of NCT Delhi were included in the sample of the pilot test. From the pilot study, certain statements were reframed to attain clarity and remove ambiguity. Out of a list consisting of more than 100 such policies, forty are selected for the present study. These forty policies selected for the study have been evaluated on three aspects, namely:

- (x) Relevance of the policy in enhancing happiness:
- (xi) Intensity of implementation:
- (xii) Quality of implementation:

Government policies are meant to improve the well-being of the citizens. Many a time, due to a lack of proper understanding or due to a lack of data, the policies are framed for which citizens and beneficiaries are not able to connect to resulting in wastage of efforts and resources. Thus, policies must be relevant, helpful in solving the problems of society.

Along with the relevance of the policy, it is equally essential that the policies are implemented in earnest. To successfully implement a policy, it is desired to provide sufficient resources in terms of administrative setup, planning, budgets, and other resources. All this together will define the intensity of the implementation. Along with the resources, it is also important that adequate mechanisms should be set up to prevent corruption, reduce wastages of the resources, and focus on the quality of services delivered. In this study, these aspects of policy design and implementation have been kept in view throughout the study.

To study the implications of happy citizens for the business environment and economic stability, a Delphi study was conducted. The study had six senior-level corporate executives, six bureaucrats responsible for policy planning and implementation, and three university professors in the areas of strategic management, human resources, and social sciences to discuss the implications of the social policies, happiness, on the business environment. The

help of literature on these aspects is also taken as input for discussions and to validate the outcome of the discussions.

#### **Profile of the Respondents:**

A total of 305 responses were collected, and out of that, 271 were used for the present study. The others were discarded due to their incompleteness. The respondents residing in NCT of Delhi, consisting of Administrators (8.1%), Faculty (22.1%), Students (31.7%), Lawyers (14.8%), social workers (9.6%), corporate employees (7.0%) and others from miscellaneous areas. About 84% have annual income below 20Lakhs, and male-female respondent ratio is 60.1:39.9. Further, 40% respondents were of the age below 48, and 45.8% were between 41-60. The rest are above the age of 60 years.

#### **8.1 Impact of the Government Policies in Enhancing Happiness**

In the questionnaire, each Government policy was evaluated on three aspects by the respondents. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the same. The policy of providing free ration (A) has a mean score of 3.92 as far as relevance is concerned. However, the study indicates that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.73, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.59 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of taking care of senior citizens (B) through local police has a mean score of 3.72 as far as relevance is concerned. However, on the basis of respondents' perception, it is found that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.40, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.30 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of building toilets (C) has a mean score of 3.74 as far as relevance is concerned. However, it is found in the study that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.51, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.34 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The

policy of providing Free Covid Vaccine (D) has a mean score of 4.01 as far as relevance is concerned. However, the responses indicate that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.90, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.84 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of Allotment of Yoga teacher ( E ) has a mean score of 3.46 as far as relevance is concerned. However, on the basis of the study of responses, the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.26, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.33 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of Tourism for elderly persons (F) has a mean score of 3.55 as far as relevance is concerned. However, the responses indicate that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.27, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.34 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of providing free travel for women in DTC buses (G) has a mean score of 3.80 as far as relevance is concerned. However, the results indicate that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.70, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.67 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of developing parks (H) has a mean score of 3.77 as far as relevance is concerned. However, the respondents' perception shows that the intensity of implementation has a mean score of 3.51, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.35 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of direct benefit transfer to the marginalized society (I) has a mean score of 3.75 as far as relevance is concerned. However, the intensity of implementation, as per the results of the study, has a mean score of 3.39, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.44 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned. The policy of providing educational loans with state guarantee (I) has a mean score of 3.74 as far as relevance is concerned. However, the intensity of implementation, on the basis of results, has a mean score of 3.48, slightly less than the relevance. The mean score is 3.33 as far as the quality of implementation is concerned.

## 8.2 TISM Model of Factors Contributing to Citizen Happiness

The diagraph developed from partitioning the reachability matrix into different levels, as figure 2 has been captioned as the Structure of Implementation of Citizen Happiness by Nordic Countries. This is called the Total Interpretative Structural Model. The model helps to understand the implementation of the various activities. The model is built on the premise that the activities are not independent; rather, some activities help to drive the achievement of others. For example, environmental sustainability is derived from factors like economic stability, reduced corruption, rule of law, justice, and trust in the institutions. Therefore, to achieve environmental sustainability, it is important to first work on other policies that will create the foundation, and then the specific environmental improvement policies will give better results. The end goal can be achieved by working on the supporting policies, which are crucial in building the foundation for efficient and good outcomes.

## 8.3 Applications of AI in Effective Policy Implementation

AI is affecting every walk of society. In the last decade and a half, due to enhanced computation power, storage on cloud and cloud computing, high-speed internet, and software in data sciences and analytics, applications have been generated in agriculture, manufacturing, and the services. However, so far, not much reported research and articles are available for their effective implementation in government departments for policy planning, deployment, and monitoring. One of the reasons may be a lack of political will, skilled manpower, and the lack of IT infrastructure (Khan et al. 2024). To implement the IT, a close and regular engagement of the stakeholders is essential. IT is not like you purchase and start using it.

With the review of literature and discussions with the experts, a model has been developed and presented as Figure 3. The model depicts how the AI can be applied in the policy design, deployment, monitoring, and improvement. The applications of AI tools like Big data analytics,

simulation can provide the scientific base to examine the need for the policy and also to optimize the policy parameters in terms of budgets required, identification of beneficiaries, and the implementation channels. Alternative ways of implementation, i.e., directly or through the franchise route or through private partnership, etc. can be studied at the design stage itself.

#### 8.4 Impact Assessment of Smart City Policies in Delhi

For the effective deployment, effective coordination and integration are essential. This integration should be both vertical and horizontal and facilitated by digital integration. The success of any policy is the positive feedback from the beneficiaries and also to revise the policy parameters and variables in case the desired results are not achieved. For this, AI tools like data capturing, monitoring, and control of facilities and beneficiaries will be highly useful. The analysis of the respondents is provided in Table 1. In this for the policies related to the smart cities are analyzed on **relevance of the policy**, Intensity of Implementation, and **Quality of Implementation**.

Mean values are on a five-point Likert scale. The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire reveals that the relevance of the policies is not the same for all respondents. This study evaluates government policies in Delhi across three dimensions: Relevance to Citizen Happiness, Intensity of Implementation, and Quality of Implementation. Each dimension was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with accompanying standard deviations and statistically significant p-values (all < 0.001), indicating robust public perception data.

Key Findings of the study are as follows:

##### 1. High-Impact Policies

- **Free Covid Vaccine** emerges as the most positively rated policy across all dimensions, reflecting its universal relevance, strong rollout, and perceived quality.

- **Free DTC Travel for Women** also scores highly, suggesting strong alignment with citizen needs, especially towards gender equity domains.

## 2. Moderate Performance

- Policies like **Online Services**, and **Park Development** show moderate scores, indicating decent implementation but potential gaps in accessibility or consistency.
- **Building Toilets** and **Direct Benefit Transfer** are seen as relevant but slightly lag in execution quality, hinting at operational or outreach challenges.
- **Relevance vs. Implementation Gap:** The above policies show a disconnect between perceived relevance and implementation quality (e.g., Health Facilities, Toilets), indicating that while citizens value these initiatives, execution may be falling short.
- **Equity-Driven Success:** Policies targeting vulnerable groups—such as free travel for women catch higher scores, highlighting the importance of inclusive design in public policy.
- **Digital and Infrastructure Synergy:** Online service delivery and transport infrastructure are moderately rated, suggesting that while digital and mobility solutions are appreciated, they require continuous refinement to meet evolving citizen expectations.

## 8.5 <sup>41</sup> Limitations and Scope for Future Work

### Context-Specific Scope

- Although the concept of citizen happiness is gaining global attention, its definition and measurement vary widely by situation and context.
- This research focuses only on select public policies within NCT of Delhi, limiting the generalizability of findings.

### Sample and Methodological Boundaries

- The study draws responses exclusively from residents of NCT of Delhi and is based on descriptive analysis, expert interviews, and case studies.
- Advanced quantitative methods such as Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) are planned for future analysis to identify key variables and validate their relationships.

#### Need for Empirical Validation of Economic Impact

- The impact of citizen happiness on business and the economic environment has been assessed through qualitative inputs.
- A more rigorous empirical study will be required in the future to verify these relationships and measure their strengths statistically.

### 8.6 Conclusion

Happiness is an innate state of human beings, but the same is affected by worries and anxiety experienced in various dimensions – health, law and order around oneself, old age security, fulfillment of physical and social needs, etc. People feel miserable when they are not secure about their jobs, worried about their health, feel insecure due to law and order, worried about old age security and need for help, or their loved ones are in danger or have restricted personal freedom or are treated unfairly. These worries can be substantially addressed and reduced by the implementation of appropriate government policies, thereby enhancing the happiness of the citizens. The main objective of all public policies is to lessen the hardships of citizens by providing better civic amenities and creating opportunities for overall development. All these together result in the enhancement of the happiness of the citizens. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been observed that governments of many countries have played a significant role in reducing the possible threats due to this disease so that citizens may live fearlessly. Social policies of the government in every country and state are very important for the welfare

and happiness of the citizens. These policies safeguard them from crimes through various preventive actions and institutions. Moreover, government policies help in increasing the safety not only in general but also while being in travel by air, by sea, or on the road.

Though social policies help in reducing anxieties, fear, and significantly influence on enhancement of happiness of the citizens, it has been seen that due to faults in the conceptualization of the policies or due to lack of resources to implement the policies or sometimes due to corruption and other factors, these policies are not able to create the necessary impact in the society. This study has examined ten such policies and observed that all of them have significant relevance in enhancing citizen happiness. Though all policies are relevant in enhancing the citizens' happiness, the intensity of implementation and quality of implementation of these policies stand low in comparison to the first attribute. The above discussion of results clearly indicates that some policies, though highly relevant, suffered due to poor implementation.

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