

## THE PORTRAYAL OF HAPPINESS IN EGYPTIAN TV SERIES

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### ABSTRACT

All people around the world are looking for happiness and trying to find its definition, tools, ways and examples to be a guide to live a happy life. Television series can play this role which can be explained by social learning and cultivation theories. According to social learning theory, audiences can learn about happiness' behaviors and attitudes from observing the characters in TV series. According to cultivation theory, heavy viewers can see and believe happiness as it is shown on TV series. Egyptian TV series can play this role due to its great popularity and influential impact on audiences. But, the question is how happiness is portrayed in TV series. The researcher studied the main female and male characters in 25 Egyptian TV series which are considered the most popular ones in 2014. The results show that the majority of the television series associated happiness with a great level of richness neglecting other factors that bring happiness.

**Keywords:** cultivation theory, Egyptian drama, Egyptian media, Egyptian TV series, happiness in drama, happiness in media, happiness in TV series, social learning theory

### The Portrayal of Happiness in Egyptian TV Series

Egyptian television series, soap opera, are very popular all over the Arab world and this popularity increases with the increase of its number during the month of Ramadan. The month of Ramadan is a Muslim Holy month in which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. During Ramadan, Egyptians are used to watch TV series after sunset. These TV series are varied in their genres and kinds and are usually composed of 30 episodes. Applying social learning theory and cultivation theory, it can be said that these TV series are very influential among Egyptians. Although Egyptians are famous for their sense of humor and are expert in creating jokes and comics especially about their problems, they are not considered as happy citizens. According to social learning theory and cultivation theory, Egyptian television series can be a guide and reference for happiness among Egyptians.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

Happiness has been associated with many factors and variables such as education (Noddings, 2003), high income (Stutzer, 2004), age (Frijters & Beaton, 2012), health (Graham, 2008), religion (Lewis, Maltby, & Day, 2005), democracy (Frey & Stutzer, 2000), career success (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008), genes (Nes, Czajkowski, & Tambs, 2010), personal characteristics (Cheng & Furnham, 2003), social life and relationships (Powdthavee, 2008). But, it has been very hard to find a comprehensive, concise and exact definition of happiness due to its differences from one person to another and from one situation to another (Devettere, 2002). Also, conceptions of happiness have been different from one culture to another (Lu & Glimour, 2004). However, researchers have been trying to find universal conditions, requirements and determinants of happiness (Veenhoven, 2004).

Research studies conducted about happiness in the 21st century came with various results. Concerning political factors, it has been found that effective government and political institutions played a crucial role in achieving the well-being of citizens (Frey, 2008). Stability of the government, the rule of law, and control of corruption affected individual well-being (Frey & Stutzer, 2002). Local autonomy, voting and political participation had positive effect on well-being and happiness (Frey & Stutzer, 2000). Civic activism and gender equality positively influenced happiness (Veenhoven, 2012). Concerning economic factors, happiness increased with high incomes (Gerdtham & Johannesson, 2001). Spending money on others had more positive impact on happiness than spending money on oneself (Clark, Frijters, & Shields, 2008). Concerning personal characteristics, there was a relation between high self-esteem and happiness (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). Satisfaction of fixed self traits was a happiness indicator (Carbonell & Frijters, 2004). Happy individuals were successful in many domains, for example in work, income, health, marriage and friendship (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). Most of the research studies recently conducted focused on the traditional ideas about happiness without giving new dimensions and without introducing new trends such as self-help and meditation.

World happiness report has been measuring happiness in countries according to certain variables for example social support, freedom, corruption, GDP per capita and healthy life expectancy (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2013). In 2011, the UN general assembly adopted a resolution stating that happiness is a fundamental human goal and calling for actions and initiatives to promote happiness and develop well-being of all people (Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly, 2011). In 2012, United Nations conference on happiness was held for the first time and the United Nations general assembly declared 20 March as an annual international day of happiness (International Day of Happiness, 2015). It was celebrated for the first time in 2013 (José G. Sison, 2014).

By applying social learning theory on happiness in TV series, the research study suggested that audiences have been learning about happiness' behaviors and attitudes from observing the characters in the series. Social learning theory was proposed by Albert Bandura (Pressley & McCormick, 2006) and based on the idea that people have learnt from observing other people's behavior (Brehm, 2014). The theory said that people have learnt from observation, imitation and modeling (Brain & Mukherji, 2005). It associated learning with cognitive processes (Ashford & LeCroy, 2009). Social learning needed attention, retention, reproduction and motivation (Crawshaw, Budhwar, & Davis, 2014). Bandura determined three basic models of observational learning which were live model, verbal instructional model and symbolic model (Jin, 2012). Live model required performance of the behavior in real life (Schultz & Schultz, 2012). Verbal instructional model included giving instructions and details of a behavior (Limniou, Holdcraft, & Holmes, 2014). Symbolic model involved real or fictional characters performing behavior through mass media (Harris & Sanborn, 2013). Bandura noted that learning was not only influenced by external reinforcement but also by internal self-reinforcement (Goldhaber, 2000). The theory has been very popular in studying criminology and violence on television (Siegel, 2008).

Being influenced by Bandura social learning theory and mainly by the idea that people have been learning from observing the behavior and its consequences, Miguel Sabido, the Mexican writer, producer and director in the 70's, developed Sabido method (Osnes, 2013). This method was based on entertainment education (Seear, 2012). Sabido was a pioneer in creating social change through soap opera by presenting characters with positive role models being rewarded besides negative role models being punished (Singhal & Rogers, 2012).

By applying cultivation theory on happiness in TV series, the research study suggested that exposure to cumulative and repetitive messages about happiness in TV series has been creating audiences' information, data, knowledge and beliefs about happiness in real world. Cultivation theory was developed by George Gerbner and his associates (Danker-Dake, 2008). It focused on the effects of television (Laughey, 2007). The theory suggested that being exposed to the same message for long time led to cultivation which was the teaching of common views and values of the world (Alexander, 2010). Cultivation theory was based on the idea that heavy viewers have been seeing the world as it was portrayed on television (Larson, 2006). Cultivation happened with a cumulative and long term exposure to television which made viewers believe what they have been watching on television as being the real world (Sparks, 2015). Television cultivated viewers' perceptions of reality which most of the time contained misrepresentations of the real world and created negative stereotypes (Reyes, 2008). Research studies showed differences between heavy and light television viewers (De Mooij, 2013). People who spent more time watching television were more likely to perceive the real world as it was shown on television (Lipschultz & Hilt, 2014). Cultivation theory had two main concepts which were mainstreaming and resonance (Perse, 2001). Mainstreaming

occurred when heavy viewers from different groups developed a common view of the world; however, resonance occurred among specific groups whose life experiences were similar to the world of television so they were more affected by cultivation (Shrum & Bischak, 2001). Throughout the development of the theory, cultivation was correlated with different variables such as demographic characteristics (Morgan, 2007). Although cultivation theory focused on the overall exposure to television, many research studies were emphasizing on specific genres and types of programs (Signorielli & Morgan, 2014). The theory has been popular in studying the impact of television on audiences' perceptions of violence (Hamilton, 2000), crime (Romer, Jamieson, & Aday, 2003), racial minorities (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shanahan, 2002), gender differences (Aubrey, Harrison, Kramer, & Yellin, 2003) and material values (Shrum, Burroughs, & Rindfleisch, 2005). Findings from various studies showed that television series, soap opera, had cultivation effect (Harris, M. Bonds-Raacke, & T.Cady, 2004) and the leading characters in these series were very influential among audiences (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005).

Different contradicting results about the correlation between happiness and television have been found. Some studies showed that television did not make its viewers happy (Frey, Benesch, & Stutzer, 2007) so happier people watched television less than unhappier ones (Robinson & Martin, 2008). This could be explained by the fact that television cultivated materialism which was correlated with life satisfaction (Shrum, Lee, Burroughs, & Rindfleisch, 2011). For example, when materialism increased in advertising, judgments about standard of living increased leading to negative standard of living evaluation, negative self-evaluation and life dissatisfaction (Sirgy et al., 2012). Also, watching makeover programs led to body dissatisfaction and lower self-esteem (Kubic & Chory, 2007). Concerning soap operas, some studies associated materialism prosperity with happiness (Wittebols, 2004) but contradictory findings have been found by other researchers indicating that television series did not associate happiness with money (Thomas & Callahan, 1982). Also, other studies showed that watching television did not have a negative impact on individual happiness and life satisfaction (Kataria & Regner, 2011).

Although Egyptian television series have been very influential among viewers, they attracted little attention among scholars. Studies showed that Egyptian TV series and their characters have been very popular in the Arab world (Bernal, 2014) and some African countries due to cultural familiarity and proximity (Syed & Runnel, 2014). The impact of these series in the region has been part of a national pride among Egyptians (Abu-Lughod, 2008). Also, Egyptian TV series are very popular among Arab immigrants all over the world. The series' popularity has been associated with many factors such as being pioneer in the Arab world, containing well-qualified cadres besides the popularity of Egyptian dialect and stars in the Arab world. The majority of the series focused on social issues followed by comedies (Sadek, 2006). These series have been playing an important role in Arab diaspora by making

people feel closer to their countries (Georgiou, 2012). Egyptian TV series have been influenced by political context and were seen by Egyptian viewers not only as an entertainment tool but also as a way to form the national community. The TV series' characters presented common citizens (Abu- Lughod, 2002). Egyptian TV series were used to teach the public the values of nationalism (Levinson, 1999). Also, series were used in health education. Egyptians with high percentages liked and learnt healthy information through these series. Women, rural people, semi-literates and youth were the most affected segments in the population from the series (El Kamel, 1998). Watching these series made Bedouin women of Western Egypt access stories from other world than their local world (Madianou, 2011).

Watching television in general and television series in particular reach its peak during the month of Ramadan. An Egyptian television series is usually composed of 30 episodes aired daily in the evening. The dilemma of the TV series is solved in the last episode showing happy endings. Due to the popularity of watching TV series, Ramadan has been the prime time season of advertising (Dawoud, 2013). Every episode lasts about 45 minutes discussing many topics and covering multiple narrative styles. The main theme in most of the series is a protagonist struggle for recognition in society. Also, series are documenting urban and rural life in Egypt. Although Egyptian series were focusing on local issues, they had an appeal in the Arab countries due to shared cultural experiences (Khalil & Kraidy, 2009). The best production has been usually shown during Ramadan (Dajani, 2009). Ramadan TV series of the 1990s not only produced entertainment and business but also cultural and national identity (Abu-Lughod, 2003). The series were broadcasted at other times of the year after being aired for the first time during Ramadan. Movie stars have been found in all the series which were produced with high budget (Sakr, 2007).

Based on the theoretical framework and literature review, this study presents the following research questions:

1. How is happiness portrayed in Egyptian television series?
2. What is the relation between the portrayal of happiness and the gender of the main character in Egyptian television series?
3. What is the relation between the portrayal of happiness and the social class of the main character in Egyptian television series?

## **METHODOLOGY**

Content analysis was conducted using a purposive sample of 25 Egyptian television series shown during the month of Ramadan in 2014 on Egyptian and Arab satellite television channels. The main male and female characters in these TV series were analyzed to study how happiness was portrayed through these 50 characters. The TV series were chosen based

on the results of a pretest involving 50 Egyptian television viewers who have identified the series they have watched during the month of Ramadan in 2014. 25 TV series mentioned by the audiences in the pretest were included in the sample. The sample consists of the following series: Viva Attata, Girls' Pamper (Dalaa Al Banat), Seven Commandments (Alsabaa Wassaya), Halal Son (Abn Halal), His Excellency (Sahab Al Saada), Time Difference (Fareq Tawqeet), the First Lady (Al Sayada Al Oula), Astonishment (Dahsha), Words on Papers (Kalam Ala Warak), Shamiss, Abden Palace (Saraya Abden), Excellence (Al EXcellance), Halal Mountain (Gabal Al Halal), Adam Apple (Tofahat Adam), Women Prison (Sagn Al Nassa), Countdown (Ad Tanazole), Gynecologist (Doctor Amrad Nassa), Abdull Aziz Street (Shara Abdel Aziz), Pleading (Almorafaa), the Very Big (Al Kabeer Awee), Emperor of who (Ampratorayat Meen), Mother in Laws' Trap (Keed Al Hamayat), I, Mam, and Dad (Ana wa Mama Wa Papa), Old Friend (Sadek Al Omar), and Love Story (Seret Al Hob). The main characters in these TV series were analyzed in the scene containing the climax especially when the main characters explicitly expressing themselves verbally that that they are happy. Quantification was done through nominal level by counting the frequency of units' occurrences in every category. The categories included the factors of happiness proposed by the research which are economic factors, physical appearances, gender, age, education, profession, relationships, places, love, activities, personal characteristics, ways to deal with negative and sad feelings, political factors and nostalgia. The researcher prepared a checklist including the categories and their subcategories to check their occurrences and do descriptive statistics. Inter-coder reliability was conducted through three researchers specialized in the field of television studies. It was found that levels of agreement among coders were more than 90%.

## **RESULTS**

### **Economic Factors and Happiness**

Table 1 below showed that economic factors were highly associated with happiness in Egyptian television series so people from high socioeconomic status was shown happier than those from low socioeconomic status. Income and standard of living were always considered indicators of happiness (Easterlin, 2001) so being rich (82%), driving expensive cars (82%), creating private business (66%), living in a villa (58%), wearing international fashion designers' clothes (58%), getting married to a rich spouse (58%). However, some research studies about happiness found that material purchases and possessions did not bring happiness (Van Boven, 2005). Also, some findings showed that increasing incomes did not increase happiness (Easterlin, 1995). There was always a debate about the correlation between wealth and happiness but wealthy nations and their citizens were considered happier (Veenhoven, 1989). This could explain why television series presented this stereotype.

Table 1. Economic factors associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

Factors	Frequencies	Percent
Being rich	41	82
Driving expensive cars	41	82
Creating private business	33	66
Living in a villa	29	58
Wearing international fashion designers' clothes	29	58
Getting married to a rich spouse	29	58

### Physical Appearances and Happiness

Table 2 below indicated that physical appearances were associated with happiness. Research studies found that good looking persons were happier (Shiota & Kalat, 2012). According to Egyptian television series and as shown in the results, to be happy you should have a beautiful face (60%), white skin (58%) besides being slim (60%). But, these appearances did not represent ordinary Egyptian real image. Globalization of beauty standards has been putting pressure on individuals with different looks (McCracken, 2014). Women want to look like models, actors and actresses without being aware that these looks were due to professional makeup and photoshopped pictures (Sue, Sue, Sue, & Sue, 2015). People defined beauty standards according to the influence of media and when people did not cope with these standards, they had a negative self-image, low self-esteem and depression (Meachen Rau, 2012).

Table 2. Physical appearances associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

Physical Appearances	Frequencies	Percent
Beautiful faces	30	60
Slim	30	60
White skin	29	58
Blond hair	11	22

### Gender and Happiness

Figure 1 showed that men (21 male characters with 42%) appeared happier than women in television series (9 female characters with 18%). This could be explained by the nature of the Arab World where men have been giving more freedom than women and women have been suffering from more restrictions in their lives and their decisions (Tadros, 2010). Studies indicated that women in Arab series did not have recognizable jobs and were more likely than men to be portrayed in sex typed occupations, settings and activities (Kharroub & Weaver, 2014). This portrayal of women has been affecting their happiness portrayal.

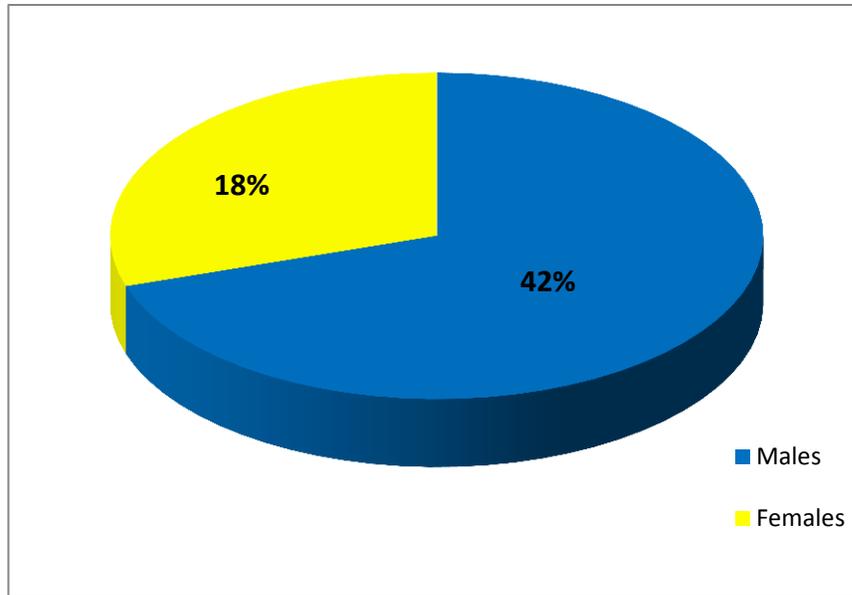


Figure 1. gender associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

### Age and Happiness

According to Figure 2 below, young generations looked happier (38 characters with 76%) than old ones (12 characters with 24%). On the other hand, psychology studies mentioned that older were happier (Yang, 2008). Egyptian television series did not show them enjoying their lives but they were suffering from serious diseases.

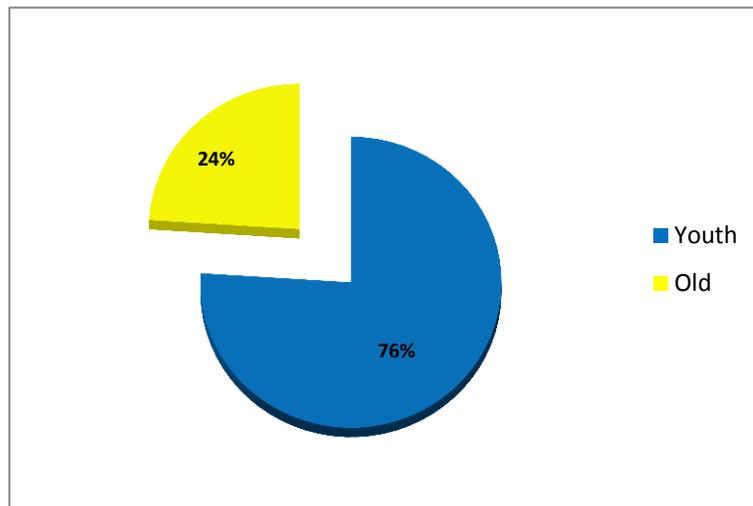


Figure 2. Age associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

### Education and Happiness

Egyptian television series did not associate happiness with education. Being educated or uneducated did not influence Egyptian television main characters' emotions and feelings especially being happy or sad. These television series in a country with a high rate of illiteracy were playing a negative role in society because they did not encourage education and did not support Egyptian illiteracy elimination program. Also, this result disagreed with psychology studies showing that educated people were happier (Coon, 2005).

Table 3. Education associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

Education	Frequencies	Percent
University degree	15	30
Secondary school degree	2	4
Illiterate	2	4
Postgraduate degree	1	2

### Profession and Happiness

Business men and business women were happier than government officials, school teachers, university professors and public employees besides entertainers including actors, actresses, singers and dancers. Through television series, happiness was associated with professions with high income not with high education degrees and knowledge. Moreover, television series did not present real world in Egypt where public employees have been the majority of citizens without economic abilities to create private business. So, focusing on showing unreachable dreams could lead to sadness, depression and dissatisfaction among viewers. Studies found that materialism led to disappointment (Fiates, De Mello Castanho Amboni, & Teixeira, 2008). Also, it was noticed that some female main characters were unemployed in television series, however, in these last days, due to economic problems, women employment has been an economic necessity in Egyptian families.

Table 4. Profession associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

Profession	Frequencies	Percent
Business men and Business Women	33	66
Government officials	3	6
School teachers	1	2
University professors	1	2
Public employees	1	2
Entertainers	1	2

### Relationship and Happiness

Egyptian television series' main characters were happy when being married especially if they were females. Being married was shown in TV series as one of the most important goals and dreams of girls. Research studies demonstrated that married people were happier, healthier and better off financially (Waite & Gallagher, 2002). Also, friendship brought happiness in series. Friends' scenes contained happy moments, positive energy and funny dialogues. This

agreed with other findings showing that the highest level of happiness was reported when talking with friends (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003). However, the majority of the characters did not look happy in scenes with their family members, colleagues and neighbors contradicting Egyptian and Arab culture and traditions which have been giving a great importance to family ties and neighbors' relationships and contradicting psychology studies stated that social environment played an important role in improving the quality of life (Ferriss, 2010).

Table 5. Relationships associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

Relationships	Frequencies	Percent
Marriage	33	66
Friendship	30	60
Family	23	46
Colleagues	15	30
Neighbors	8	16

### Places and Happiness

Restaurant, nightclub, pub and oriental café were shown as happy places in Egyptian television series. On the other hand, university, home, work, religious places, governmental institutions, streets and hospitals were presented in the series as unhappy places. Places associated with fun and laziness were happier places.

Table 6. Places associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

Places	Frequencies	Percent
Restaurant	30	60
Nightclub	22	40
Pub	20	40
Orient café	20	40
University	8	16
Home	8	16
Work	5	10
Religious places(Mosques or churches)	3	6
Governmental institutions	1	2
Streets	1	2
Hospitals	1	2

### Love and Happiness

Being loved (32 characters with 64%) brought more happiness than being in love (18 characters with 36%) because missing the lover, fighting, crying, no sleeping, pain, cries, jealousy, sadness and many other negative feelings were found when the main character was in love.

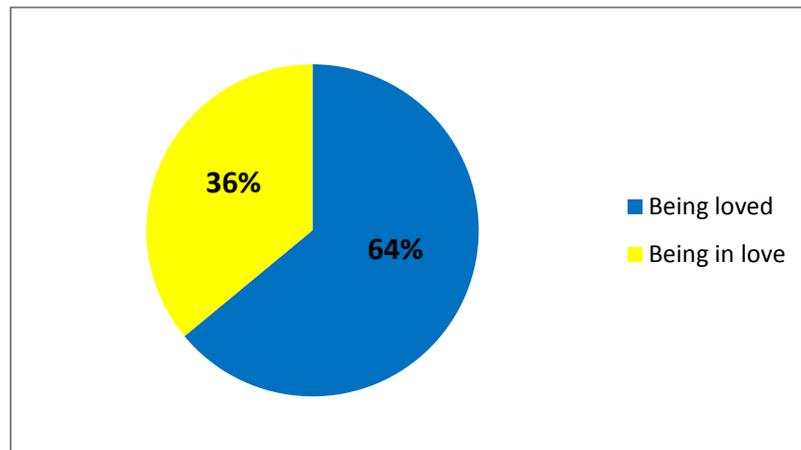


Figure 3: Love associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

### Activities and Happiness

54% of the sample appeared happy when spending nights in parties. These parties depended on music, songs and dances which have been used in these last years in treating psychological problems (Varcroli, 2014). Many activities associated with happiness were not shown in television series with high percentages; however, studies mentioned that activities relevant to happiness were more important than genetic happiness determinants and happiness circumstances (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005).

Table 7. Activities associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

Activities	Frequencies	Percent
Spending nights in parties	27	54
Travelling abroad	18	36
Reading	4	8
Playing music	2	4
Playing sports	2	4
Taking courses	1	2
Practice yoga and meditation	1	2
Volunteering	1	2
Political activism	1	2
Human Rights' activism	1	2
Women rights' activism	1	2

### Personal Characteristics and Happiness

Most of the characters appeared happy when they were energetic, courageous, competitive, sociable, sneaky, and adventurous. Many positive personal characteristics were not shown as bringing happiness such as being helpful, satisfied, healthy, honest, disciplined and religious which are found with percentages less than 50%.

Table 8. Personal characteristics associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

Personal characteristics	Frequencies	Percent
Energetic	40	80
Courageous	35	70
competitive	35	70
sociable	28	56
Sneaky	28	56
Adventurous	27	54
Helpful	24	48
Aggressive	21	42
Satisfied	19	38
Healthy	18	36
Honest	15	30
Disciplined	14	28
Religious	8	16
Talented	6	12

### Ways Used to Deal with Negative and Sad Feelings

In table 9, all the ways used by television characters to deal with negative and sad feelings were found with low percentages. Television series did not spread awareness of the importance of counseling and clinical psychology on the other hand they were associated with sadness and bad reputation. Also, self-help is a new trend in psychology treatment but was not used by television series main characters.

Table 9. Ways used by Egyptian television characters to deal with negative and sad feelings

Ways	Frequencies	Percent
Talking with a friend	23	46
Talking with a family member	22	44
Crying	19	38
Listening to music and songs	14	28
Being isolated at home	11	22
Going to nightclubs	9	18
Drinking alcoholics	8	16
Taking drugs	7	14
Counseling and clinical psychology	1	2
Self-help	1	2

### Political Factors and Happiness

Table 10 indicated that political factors were not associated with happiness in television TV series. The majority of the main characters did not appear in scenes discussing or practicing democracy at homes, governmental institutions or private companies. However, research studies' results indicated that democracy is positively related to happiness (Inglehart & Klingemann, 2000). When the current political tension and Egyptian revolutions were discussed in television series, happiness and sadness emotions were mixed. These results agree with table 7 showing that political activism was not associated with happiness in TV series.

Table 10. Political factors associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series

Political Factors	Frequencies	Percent
Democracy	22	44
Revolution	9	18
Demonstrations	6	12

### Nostalgia and Happiness

Nostalgia and old days were discussed to refer to sad events in the past so nostalgia was not associated with happiness in TV series.

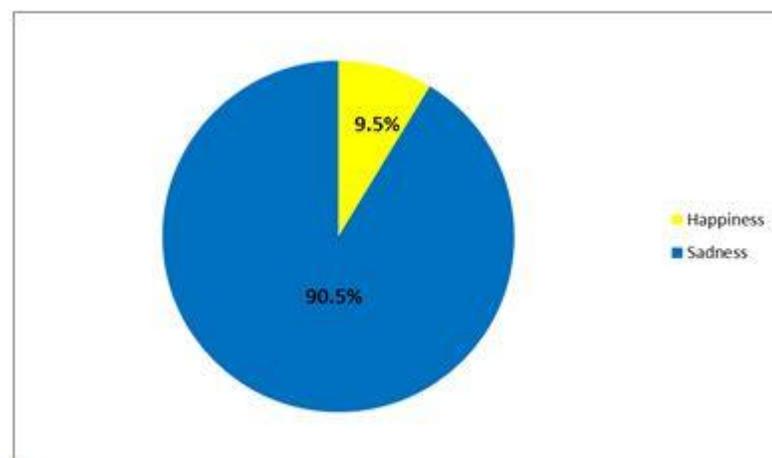


Figure 4. Nostalgia associated with happiness through Egyptian TV series' characters

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Through analyzing 50 male and female main characters in 25 Egyptian television series shown during the month of Ramadan in 2014 on Egyptian and Arab satellite television channels, it can be concluded that the majority of television series associated happiness with being rich, living in a villa, creating private business, driving expensive cars, wearing international fashion designers' clothes and getting married to a rich spouse. People with high socioeconomic status tend to be happier than those with low socioeconomic status. By answering the first research question, it is obvious that happiness is related in TV series to economic factors. The results agree with the traditional view of happiness which is still popular that money brings happiness; however, some studies show that money does not make people happy (Furnham, 2014).

Men generally tend to appear happier than women in the identified television series. Also, happiness among females is related to being beautiful, slim and married. On the other hand, happiness among males is related to being rich and powerful. These results answer the third research question showing inequality in the portrayal of happiness between males and females. Gender representations in American movies are less stereotyped but men are still often to the fore (Gauntlett, 2008). TV series should play a role in encouraging and enhancing women rights in society to lead to their happiness. This could be done by avoiding stereotypes about females and spreading awareness of gender equality especially that gender inequality still exists in the modern world (Ridgeway, 2011).

Young generations look happier than old ones. Business men and women are happier than public employees, scientists and university professors. University, governmental institutions, streets and hospitals are presented in the series as unhappy places. However, nightclubs, pubs and oriental cafes are shown as happy places. Spending nights in parties is associated with happiness. Fun and laziness are promoted by these TV series. But, in a developing country, it is important that TV series encourage people to work to improve and develop the society. Also, associating happiness with negative personal characteristics is not ethical and contradicts culture and traditions in Egypt.

Although the month of Ramadan is a religious period, it is very rare to find religious TV series which their numbers are decreasing annually. Also, ethical and spiritual rituals of Ramadan are not presented in social TV series. Counseling and clinical psychology are associated with sadness not happiness. Moreover, they have a bad reputation and give the patients bad reputation in the society. So, television series do not encourage Egyptians to go to psychiatrists.

It can be concluded from the results of first research question about how happiness is portrayed in Egyptian television series that true happiness is not shown in the majority of Egyptian television series. In a developing country with a high level of poverty, it will be very depressing and discouraging to associate happiness with a great level of richness and neglect other factors that bring happiness.

Television series shown during the month of Ramadan are very popular among Egyptian viewers from different social classes. Social learning theory and cultivation theory show that television can influence viewers by teaching and cultivating references of many aspects in life (Baran & Davis, 2011) and happiness can be one of these aspects. So, TV series should have a social responsibility especially in a developing country by giving various ways of happiness especially the ones that can be easily reached. Also, they should focus on the spiritual and ethical factors of happiness besides presenting new trends in positive psychology such as self-help and meditation.

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