

Review Paper

The Concept of Marxism Happiness in China

Su Yun & Muhammad Azizan Sabjan*

School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author: mazizan@usm.my

Received: 31 December 2023

Accepted: 26 January 2024

Abstract: China has been the socialist country since 1949, when the new country was established. Communist Party of China (CPC) selected Marxism as the governing ideology for China which is consistent with the hierarchical and centre government system. CPC is dedicated to improving happiness of society for the citizens within the framework of Marxism ideology. However, the concept of Marxism happiness, and its development are still limited in terms of understanding and study. This paper explored the development of concept of Marxism happiness through the different works of Marx from his early writing to the authoritative academic book. The researcher then defined the concept of Marxism Happiness. This paper employs document analysis and thematic analysis to provide a clear understanding of the concept of Marxism Happiness and its implication for the happiness of Chinese citizens, meanwhile, it would be conducive to the researchers and policy makers in ideological construction of a country.

Keywords: Marxism happiness; philosophy; ideology, ideology China

Introduction

China has been the socialist country since 1949, when the new country was established. Communist Party of China (CPC) selected Marxism as the governing ideology for China, which is consistent with the hierarchical and centre government system. CPC is dedicated to improving society's happiness for the citizens within the framework of the Marxism ideology (Huo, 2022). Currently, China is experiencing an era of rapid change, characterized by the rapid accumulation of wealth, a rapidly changing political landscape, unprecedented scientific and technological development, and a new societal era unprecedented in history (Xu & Li, 2022). Upon reflecting on the economic, political and ideological issues of this era, it becomes apparent that ideological issues play a very important role behind each aspect. The deeper we think about the real issues, the more we cannot avoid confronting the ideological matters (Xu & Li, 2022). Wen (2022) regards the evolution of Marxism ideology as a crucial component of China's contemporary ideology development and posits that it can provide a sound theoretical framework for further advancement, particularly as socialism with Chinese features has entered a new age. However, in contemporary society, social ideology and value orientation are increasingly diverse and turbulent, with both mainstream and non-mainstream ideologies coexisting, and advanced and backward are intertwining, and social trends are diverse and turbulent. Marxism ideology is also facing serious challenges (Jia, 2022).

Nonetheless, what is concept of Marxism happiness, and its development remain limited in terms of understanding and study (Yang & Yang, 2023). This paper aims to explore the development of concept of Marxism happiness and to define the concept itself. It seeks to assist scholars and policy makers in gaining a clear understanding of Marx concept of happiness from ideological aspect. The researcher adopted document

analysis via different resources such as books, journals, reports, and thesis, with data analysed using thematic analysis.

Methodology

The methodology in this paper includes the research design, data collection and data analysis.

1. Research Design

This paper adopted qualitative case study approach as its research design, since qualitative research and methods have features such as: It does not rely on numbers but rather on description, reasoning, and the use of words in order to achieve its ends of understanding and characterization. Qualitative data exploration focus on the “why” and “how” of decision making process, which are not graphable because of its exploratory nature (Cresswell & Poth, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2019; Rajasekar et al., 2006). Case studies are a method of research commonly used in evaluation wherein the evaluator conducts an in-depth examination of a specific instance (typically a programme, event, activity, process, or individual) (Creswell & Creswell, 2019, p.50; Yin, 2018).

2. Data Collection

In this research, the aim was not only to explore the phenomenon of happiness further, but also to engage in philosophical research. It sought to elucidate the concept of Marxism happiness through an examination of its the historical development and various themes across different works authored by Marx, Engels, their followers, Marxists, and other researchers in different periods. Additionally, this research selected China as a case study to explore the concept and development of Marxism happiness. Therefore, the data collected in this study mainly derive from different journals in China, as well as other sources like Web of Science, Scopus, Willey etc., further, books including edited volumes, and monographs written by Marx, Engels, their followers. And other researchers from different times were utilized. All the sources are closely to the evolution of Marxism concept of happiness, and the Marxism concept of happiness in China.

3. Data Analysis

This paper utilised document analysis by thematic analysis, the document mainly derived from the books, theses, report, and journals (Morgan, 2021), the books were predominantly consist of Marxism serials such as collections of Marxism works, Marx’s thesis, Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, etc. The thematic analysis was conducted focusing on the evolution of Marx’s concept of happiness, namely, the happiness based on religion, happiness based on materialism, Karl Marx PhD thesis, Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, A Critique of the German Ideology, Holy Family, Manifesto of the Communist Party, Capital, as well as Marx’s Concept of Happiness in China.

Literature Review

Yang and Zhang (2022) indicate that the concept of Marx’s happiness is a kind of ideology, representing the systematic ideology formulated by Marx on the basis of a certain socio-economic foundation, the economic economical foundations and political systems. Marxism theory serves as the concrete expression of Marxism ideology. The concept of the happiness for the people within the socialist ideology with Chinese characteristics not only derives from the historical development of human happiness, but also primarily stems from Marxism theory of happiness, especially Marx’s thought on happiness of the people, which originated from a deep interpretation and development of Marx’s theory (Zhu, 2023). Zhang et al. (2022) believe that the concept of Marxism happiness is a scientific ideology grounded in historical materialism, serving as the cornerstone in the social construction of China (Liang, 2020).

Notwithstanding, there remains unclear information regarding the origin and development of the concept of Marxism happiness. As a matter of fact, Marxism concept of happiness was impacted by various philosophers across different periods, evolving from the religion to materialism, from the initial stage to

mature concept. Marx did not define the happiness of Marxism explicitly (Yang & Yang, 2023), rather, his concept is scattered throughout his different works, with later scholars offering varying definition according to his works. Therefore, the author aims to elucidate the origin and development of Marxism happiness concept based on the works by Marx and Marxists across different periods as outlined below:

1. Happiness based on Religion

When Marx was in his middle school, he wrote an article titled "Reflection of a young man the choice of a profession". Marx believes our profession should serve the society, and be based on the welfare of mankind and our own perfection, these two are not in conflict (Marx, 1929): Marx (1929) argues:

"If we have chosen the position in life in which we can most of all work for mankind, no burdens can bow us down, because they are sacrifices for the benefit of all; then we shall experience no petty, limited, selfish joy, but our happiness will belong to millions, our deeds will live on quietly but perpetually at work, and over our ashes will be shed the hot tears of noble people."

During this period, Marx's happiness was influenced by the Christianity, Christian Happiness regarded Christian doctrine as the fundamental starting point, the Bible was seen as the guide of human happiness. It emphasized that mankind must rely on the divine power of God to achieve true happiness, with major representatives such as Augustine, Thomas and Aquinas (Cao, 2017; Zhu, 2023).

2. Happiness based on Materialism

Marxism concept of happiness varies according to the development of Marxism. Karl Marx was influenced by religion when he was young, he joined in the Young Hegelians which makes him transit from idealist to materialist from 1835 to 1841 when he was a university student (Gan, 2015; Qi, 2023). According to Hegel, ideas precipitate material events, while Marx contends that material conditions give rise to held ideas. In this perspective, Hegel's merit lies in his clear differentiation between empirical phenomena and conceptual ideals (Jackson, 1990; Jin, 2023). During this period, Marx embraced a generally materialistic perspective. Simultaneously, he personally adopted atheism and rejected the idea that human happiness is reliant on religion, famously stating that "religion is the opium of the people." In doing so, Marx emphasized non-religious ideals, connecting his own ideas to natural reason and challenging the notion of religion as mere illusory fantasies (Horii, 2017). Marx realized that humans, being part of the material world, inherently need to produce to survive and achieve their fundamental requirements. To fulfil these needs, they must establish a complicated hierarchical system, with consciousness and mental experiences find their base within this productive activity (Qi, 2023).

Marx's critique of Hegel's legal theory was significantly influenced by Feuerbach's assessment of Hegel. According to Feuerbach, Hegelian philosophy remains confined within the domain of theology. Regarding the concept of the idea as the determinant of reality, nature, and the material world, Feuerbach sees it as essentially an intellectual reflection of the theological notion that God, a non-material and abstract entity, created nature and the material existence (Pimenta, 2020). In this sense, Marx believes the happiness can be in the form of material nature. Marx's materialism asserts that individuals' consciousness is shaped by their social existence, as opposed to idealism, and that the economic structure, or base, of society determines the superstructure, encompassing elements such as law, politics, religion, and morality (Celikates, 2011). Marx argues that the function of the superstructure, is to contribute to the existing economic structure's material reproduction and stabilization (Celikates, 2011).

Hence, the concept of Marx' happiness is based on the superstructure of society including the politics, law and economical structure, and is rooted the material production. To put it differently, Marx affirms that in the process of social production, individuals unavoidably participate in specific relationships, which are not under their control. The relationships of production align with a specific stage in the development of the material forces of production (Marx, 1959). The entirety of these production relationships forms the economic framework of society, which serves as the actual basis for the emergence of legal and political systems, as well as specific forms of social awareness. The mode of material goods production exerts a profound influence

on the broader trajectory of social, political, and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of individuals that molds their existence, but rather their social existence that shapes their awareness (Marx, 1959).

3. Karl Marx's PhD Thesis

Marx finished his PhD thesis called "The difference between the Democritean and Epicurean philosophy of nature" in 1841, Marx explained Epicurus the freedom philosophy. Epicurus posited that, even within the emptiness, atoms deviate slightly from a straight line, and he argued that freedom arises from this deviation (Marx, 1902). Epicurus opposed the fetters of religious theology on man's spiritual freedom, and he argued for the freedom of the human individual by the declination of the atoms, which in Marx's view was an affirmation of man's subjectivity, a search for his spiritual freedom and happiness, but Epicurus still focus on idealism (Zhang, 2021). Marx asserts that our life requires practical understanding, not mere speculation and empty hypotheses. We should live with clarity, just as the study of nature aims to explore the fundamentals of what is crucial. Similarly, happiness is found in the understanding of natural phenomena (Marx, 1902). Moreover, Marx values the idea that attaining precise knowledge about the most crucial aspects of things is the province of natural science, and happiness is contingent upon this. Our current life does not require ideologies and false opinions; our sole necessity is a peaceful and untroubled existence (Marx, 1902).

4. Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right

Marx critiques Hegel for the separation between the state and civil society, as well as the division between particular interests and the absolutely universal. He contends that the bureaucracy is founded on this very separation (Marx, 1970). Meanwhile Hegel recognizes the division between civil society and the political state, yet he seeks the unity of the state to be manifest within the state itself. This is to be accomplished by having the classes of civil society, while retaining their distinctiveness, constitute the Estates as a component of legislative society (Hegel, 1952). However, Hegel also posits that civil society comes into existence in integral relation to the state, and the bureaucrats are representatives of the state within civil society (Marx, 1970). Therefore, Hegel states when individuals pursue their selfish goals, which are influenced by universal conditions, a system of extensive interdependence is established. Within this system, the well-being, happiness, and legal standing of one person become intertwined with those of all others (Hegel, 1952). It is through this interconnected system that individual happiness and other aspects are realized and safeguarded. This system can be initially perceived as the external state, a state shaped by necessities, and as the state envisioned by rational understanding (Hegel, 1952;).

Hegel mentions the happiness in legislature part, he states the legislative agenda, concerning private individuals, is more specifically delineated under two categories: the state's provision for their well-being and happiness, and the requisition of services from them (Hegel, 1952). Marx indicates that the legislature should obey the law of reason rather than the will of an individual, the legislature doesn't make the law, it just discovers and formulates the constitution. In this sense (Marx, 1970). However, Hegel states that the ultimate goal of the state is the well-being of its citizens. This assertion is only partially accurate. The stability of the state itself becomes uncertain if the individuals within it are not content, if their personal objectives remain unfulfilled, and if they do not perceive the state as a vehicle for their satisfaction (Hegel, 1952).

In a nutshell, according to Hegel, the state represents the self-realization of the absolute spirit, and only through the state can a high degree of centralization be achieved—a state that is truly universal and unified. The state is absolute, the family and civil society are relative, and only by submitting to the unity of the state can individual happiness and freedom be achieved (Zhang, 2016). However, Marx highlighted that both the family and civil society collectively constituted the foundation of the state. He characterized the family as the 'natural basis' and civil society as the 'artificial basis' of the state. Moreover, he criticized Hegel's perspective on the state as an ethical entity representing universality. Marx mentioned that "the political state cannot exist without the natural foundation of the family and the artificial foundation of civil society. They are necessary conditions for the state (Xu & Zhang, 2021). According to Marx, he argues that Hegel's perspective is flawed as he mistakenly believes that the state surpasses civil society, whereas in reality, the state is completely inherent within the interactions of individuals working collectively in civil society. Marx asserts that Hegel

fails to recognize the fundamental democratic contribution of individuals in shaping the state (Bielenberg, 2022).

In addition to that, Hegel's philosophy can be recognised as idealism. Marx's critique of mysticism goes further by challenging the fundamental coherence of Hegel's claim to engage in dialectic. Marx's fragmentary critique of Hegel's *Logic* presents the initial stages of an assault on Hegel's dialectical framework, suggesting that it devolves into a form of Platonic diairesis (division), characterized by inherent flaws such as arbitrariness (Schuringa, 1998).

5. Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844

After finding the foundation of happiness based on the critique of Hegel's philosophy of right, Marx delves into exploring the happiness of human, particularly, through the labour. However, Marx observed that the capitalists deprive the happiness of workers. He stated that even in the wealthiest societies, the majority suffers, as industries exploit men's lives in pursuit of wealth rather than the happiness of human (Marx & Engels, 1844). The reality is that labour is external to the worker; it does not belong to his essential being. In stead of affirming themselves, workers deny themselves, experience discontentment rather than contentment, and do not freely develop his physical and mental energy, instead, they mortify their bodies and ruin their minds. Consequently, the workers feel detached from their true selves both outside and within their work (Marx & Engels, 1844). Marx called it as "labour of alienation", the capitalist exploits the surplus value of labour and achieves the wealth. There are forms of alienation including the forced labour, the objectified labour, personal relationships with wealth, money as the object of life, division of labour, subsistence wages, creative labour, alien society, and bureaucratic rule (James, 2015; Wang, 2023). 'Alienation for Marxism starts with exploitation' that is, in the relationship between capital and labour (Øversveen, 2022).

In his "Manuscripts," Marx emphasizes that as the worker invests more effort in labour, the external world of objects they create exert greater power over them, diminishing their inner richness and reducing their sense of ownership (Zhang & Zhu, 2023). Marx concurs that as the product expands, the worker's existence diminishes. The worker's estrangement from their product implies that their labour transforms into an external entity, separate from themselves. This entity exists independently, as something foreign to the worker, exerting its own power and standing against them. It signifies that the life infused into the object becomes an antagonistic and unfamiliar force that confronts the worker (Marx & Engels, 1844).

In Marx' search for the alienated nature of workers' labour, Marx discovers that the subject of alienation should be the practice of labour, that the essence of man is formed in the practice of labour, the fruits of labour are the material basis of man's existence, a materialist theory of alienation with a realistic dimension (Fewell, 2019; Wang, 2023). This objectification and alienation of labour is also evidence of the realisation of labour under capitalist private ownership, while the workers, who stand in opposition to labour, are de-realised and become alienated subjects who are enslaved and exploited by the object (Wang, 2023; Zhang, 2016b).

Marx notes the capitalists reverse the social relationship, since it is evident that the labour of the workers makes the production, while the product dominates and rules the workers on the contrary. This is the inversion of the relationship between the creative subject and the created object, and this is the hostile alienation of the labour relation (Zhang & You, 2021; Zhang, 2023). What's more, Marx highlights the entire product of labour should belong to the worker, yet in reality, the worker receives only the smallest part of the product, which is necessary for his subsistence, not as a human being but as a worker (Marx & Engels, 1844).

In modern capitalist society, the production and circulation of commodities, mediated by money, has transformed society into a kingdom of things dominated by capital, which in turn has become a social force that dominates and enslaves people, and then it leads to the money as the object of life as well as fetishism (Yin, 2022). Capital fetishism is one of the most alienating and insidious forms of fetishism, which conceals the exploitation and injustice brought about by the capitalist mode of production. Money worship is a universal psychology in capitalist societies, where capitalists worship and possess money for the purpose of multiplying it and converting it into capital, thus transforming money fetishism into capital fetishism (Jia, 2023; Kong & Liu, 2016).

Marx continues his critique of Hegelian dialectic and philosophy in his manuscript. Marx disagrees with Hegel's assertion that the liberal state would eradicate arbitrary rule and injustice. According to Marx, bureaucracy serves as a tool of state power, prioritizing personal goals over human happiness (James, 2015). Marx predicts that bureaucrats would have an interest of their own but not the human being's happiness or wellbeing. "Bureaucracy is the essence of the state," he asserts, "preserved as a secret and mystery through ossified and formalistic behaviour. On an individual bureaucrat level, the state's purpose transforms into their personal goal, often manifested in the pursuit of a career." (Marx, 1970).

Although Hegel recognized that labour constituted the essence of man and the wellbeing of the man, he was unable to channel this idea into the development of the real world. Unlike Hegel, Feuerbach developed the doctrine of the unity of man with nature, viewing it as the result of a self-generated, natural unity. Marx transcended the limitations of Feuerbach's materialism by demonstrating that the unity of man and nature lies in the practice of material production by man, i.e. in his labour activity (Yu, 2016; Zhang & You, 2021).

6. A Critique of the German Ideology

Marx criticizes Feuerbach's understanding of reality, asserting that Feuerbach considers the essence of a thing or a person to be their existence, where the conditions of existence and the way of life and activities of an individual determine their sense of fulfilment. However, Marx argues that Feuerbach views every exception to this as a mere unhappiness, an abnormality that can not be changed (Marx & Engels, 1932). Therefore, if millions of proletarians are dissatisfied with their living conditions and their existence does not align with their essence, Marx suggests that, based on the quoted passage, this unfortunate situation is seen as inevitable and should be endured silently (Marx & Engels, 1932). Therefore, Marx and Engels (1932) affirm that people can not be liberated unless they have access to adequate food, drink, housing, and clothing. Liberation is not a mere mental act but a historical one, dependent on historical conditions, industrial and commercial development, agricultural progress, and the improvement of social interactions.

Therefore "man in reality" interpreted by Marx and Engels should be the objective material basis of human emancipation. The practical starting point for the search for human emancipation in the "Ideology of German" is the "man in reality" in certain "material conditions of life" (Cao, 2023). They are human beings, they need to engage in activity, to produce materially, and therefore their well-being is based on certain material, non-arbitrary boundaries, preconditions and conditions of activity (Cao, 2023). "Activities" here refers mainly to human social labour activities " This continuous sensual labour and creation, this production, is the very deep foundation of the whole existing sensual world, and if it were to stop for even one year, Feuerbach would see that not only would there be a great change in nature, but the whole human world and his (Feuerbach's) intuitive faculties, even his own existence, would be gone (Li & Li, 2023; Zhang & You, 2021). Therefore, Marx believes that the happiness should be the emancipation of labour, the labours should be satisfied in material conditions and in mental aspects.

7. Holy Family

Marx & Engels (1975) mentioned happiness in "Holy Family" several times. For example, Max and Engels criticize that Herr Szeliga for equating education and civilization exclusively with aristocratic education, which prevents him from recognizing that industry and trade establish universal realms distinct from Christianity, morality, domestic happiness, and civic welfare. In this context, Herr Szeliga reduces Christianity to an individual quality, 'piety,' and morality to another individual quality, 'probity' (Marx & Engels, 1975). This is a kind of metaphysics from the view of Marx and Engels. They also criticize the mysticism. Certainly, through its boundless compassion, divine dialectic transforms the "unhappy, old, childish man" into a "strong man" in the metaphysical sense. In doing so, he comes to embody a highly valuable, profoundly content, and decisively influential factor in the life-process of the absolute mystery (Marx & Engels, 1975). Marx and Engels believe this kind of happiness is a kind of absolute idealism.

In the idealism view, the value of commonplace fruits no longer resides solely in their inherent qualities but rather in their speculative nature, assigning each of them a specific role in the life-process of 'the Absolute Fruit' (Marx & Engels, 1975). Idealists believe the satisfaction of sensual needs is directed in content to a

limited number of particular objects, and the pursuit of happiness; on the one hand, leads back to the satisfaction of desires; on the other hand, it is subjective to the will of each individual with regard to objectively existing objects. In order to escape the bondage of the "phenomenal world" and the contingency and variability of happiness, and to attain the "highest happiness" of the rational man, one must never leave the discursive activity of thinking, which carries the entire task of attaining happiness.

Yang and Wu (2022) argue "Holy Family" is a satire on the acknowledged leader of the Young Hegelians, Bruno Bauer and his supporters, who, like Jesus and his disciples, were as arrogant in their approach to the reality of human existence and the roots of historical progress as they were to the masses, and who, armed with the critique of the critique, devoted themselves specifically to the missionary work of discursive idealism. Marx and Engels emphasize that living, real individuals, specifically the masses, create everything. The means and methods through which the public create history are rooted in practical, sensory activities, namely material production and livelihood. The production of material resources forms the foundation for human survival, development, and happiness (Jia, 2023; Mi, 2020).

8. Manifesto of the Communist Party

In Manifesto, Marx indicates that the bourgeoisie continually takes advantage of the proletariat by exploiting their labour to make money and amass wealth. However, the bourgeoisie unintentionally plays a role in their own downfall during this process. The bourgeoisie will be overthrown when the proletariat eventually realises its own potential and seizes control in a revolution (Marx & Engels, 2016). In communist confession of faith section, it answers the question of the principles of Communist Party, the answer is that each person aspires to find happiness. The individual's well-being is inherently connected to the well-being of all, and so forth (Marx & Engels, 1848). It highlights the happiness of individual and collective happiness, emphasizing their interconnectedness. Meanwhile, it focusses on the existence, for instance, in 13rd question, Manifesto mentions a "happy existence", which states communism has emerged only with the advent of machinery and other inventions that have made it feasible to envision a comprehensive development and a contented existence for all members of society (Marx & Engels, 1848). It acknowledges the happiness derives from reality and material existence, emphasizing the importance of focusing on people living in current moment and providing them material needs, we need to pay attention the human in reality.

9. Capital

In Capital, Marx mentions happiness several times. Marx cites Adam Smith from "Wealth of Nations", stating that equal amounts of labour, regardless of time or location, should hold the same value for the labourer. In their usual state of health, strength, and activity, with the average level of skill and dexterity, they should consistently contribute a comparable share of their comfort, freedom, and happiness (Marx, 1976). Meanwhile, Marx suggests that labour, in its impact on the value of goods, is considered merely as an expenditure of labour power. However, he also contends that this expenditure signifies the sacrifice of rest, freedom, and enjoyment, rather than encompassing the typical activities of a person (Marx, 1976).

On the other hand, Marx exposes the truth of capitalism, namely the surplus of value and accumulation, he states that in contrast to maintaining the existing distribution, the recurring misery or happiness of the entire human race has been deemed insignificant. Preserving the outcomes of force, fraud, and chance has been labelled as security, and in the pursuit of this false sense of security, all the productive capacities of humanity have been relentlessly sacrificed (Marx, 1976). Unhappily, a perpetual conflict persists between the masters and their workers. The continual objective of the former is to expedite and economize their work by employing any means necessary. Conversely, the latter are equally vigilant in seizing every opportunity to exert pressure on their master's to meet elevated demands (Marx, 1867).

Marx criticises the capitalism to ensure the happiness of society, comprising not only non-workers but also those in less fortunate circumstances, it is deemed necessary that a significant portion of them should be both ignorant and impoverished. Knowledge has the dual effect of expanding and multiplying our desires, and the fewer things a person desires, the more easily their necessities can be met (Marx, 1867).

Marx discusses the connotation of happy society and criticize the capitalism as well. For the labour, the happiness should be based on liberty, ease, health, strength, and activity, they have right to improve their skill and dexterity. They have right to have rest, freedom, enjoyment, and usual activities of man, they deserve the equal treatment according to their working, they have right to get knowledge to know the world but not ignorant to the society.

10. Marx's Concept of Happiness in China

As a matter of fact, Karl Marx didn't develop systematic concept of happiness, nor did he define the specific definition of happiness concept, while Marx's concept of happiness is pervasive and evolving (Zhang, 2012; Zhang, 2021b). Zhu, (2023) indicates that happiness is a state of physical and psychological well-being that arises when people's basic survival needs are moderately satisfied, and their developmental needs are also met. This state of being physically and emotionally happy with one's life in general can result from the constant search for new satisfaction.

Marx's uniqueness lies in his value theory, which stands out as the only one consistently incorporating monetary analysis. He introduces money right from the outset in the assessment of value. Marx's central focus is on capital as a "social relation of production," encompassing two defining characteristics: The exploitation of labour within a monetary-based economy that produces commodities and an inherent tendency towards crises (Bellofiore, 2018). The connection between money and class exploitation, as well as the endogenous nature of crises, stems from the belief that in a capitalist economy, the newly created "value added" (a monetary measure) originates exclusively from the labour of wage workers, specifically their abstract labour activity (Bellofiore, 2018). Therefore, Marx's happiness was built on the non-exploitation economy, namely, the superstructural economical society.

Similarly, Jin (2023) argues that the wellbeing of Marx's view is based on societal reality, it highlights human being should gain happiness through their labour practice, not only should the citizens pay attention to the physical enjoyment, but also focus on the pursuit of spiritual life. In addition, Marx's view about happiness does not just highlight the individual aspect from physical and psychological level, but he attaches importance to the development of society and world (Xu, 2019).

While in front of public benefit, Marx emphasizes the collective interests are higher than individual interests. Ma and Liu (2019) consider there is a conflict between collective interests and individual interests, Marx addresses the citizens should pay more attention to the collective benefits firstly, collective happiness. Although collective interests are higher than individual interests, it is also necessary to ensure the satisfaction of individual interests.

Likewise, the realization of personal wellbeing can be restricted by the economic development of society; however, the development of economy can promote the individual happiness, human wellbeing depends on the societal physical, political and spiritual civilization (Jin, 2022).

Generally speaking, Marx's concept of happiness is based on social reality, it attaches importance to people's practical activities to achieve wellbeing, emphasis the unity of human happiness and human nature, the coordination of labour creation and enjoyment of life, the integration of material life and spiritual life, the harmony of individual happiness and social wellbeing (Zhang & Wang, 2021).

Discussion

Based on literature review above, it can be found that the concept of Marxism happiness can be categorized different themes, namely, the material and psychological aspect, the economic development, societal and individual happiness. From perspective of material and idealistic, Marx concurs the happiness is based on the atheism but not religion. From economic side, he supports superstructure encompassing elements such as law, politics, religion, and morality. His concept of happiness is grounded in the existence rather than consciousness, we need to focus on the "reality" but not ideology. It highlights human being should gain happiness through their labour practice. Meanwhile, Marx acknowledges that the family and civil society collectively constitute the foundation of the state; therefore, happiness should also emanate from these spheres. Marx notices the capitalist exploits the surplus of value and deprive the happiness of working class. The real happiness for the

individual labourers should be the human emancipation, the happiness should satisfy the individual interests, including the liberty, ease, health, strength, and activity, the labourers have right to improve their skill and dexterity. They have right to have rest, freedom, enjoyment, and usual activities of man, they deserve the equal treatment according to their working, they have right to get knowledge to know the world without remaining ignorant to the society.

As a matter of fact, Marx himself never defined the concept of Marxism happiness. However, he mentioned the happiness in different stages in different stages of his life, from his middle school, transitioning from the religionism to materialism, to his PhD thesis, Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, A Critique of the German Ideology, Holy Family, Manifesto of the Communist Party, Capital, Marx's Concept of Happiness. In addition, within the Chinese background, especially in the different stages of China's development, the Chinese scholars have developed their own Marxism happiness, Marx's notion of happiness is grounded in social reality, placing significance on practical activities for achieving well-being. It underscores the unity of human happiness and human nature, the harmonious coordination of labour creation and the enjoyment of life, and the integration of material and spiritual aspects of life. Additionally, it emphasizes the harmonious relationship between individual happiness and social well-being.

Conclusion

China has been the socialist country since 1949, when the new nation was established. Communist Party of China (CPC) selected Marxism as the governing ideology for China, which is consistent with the hierarchical and centralized government system. However, there is limited studies on the concept of Marxism. To explore the concept Marxism happiness and its development, this paper utilised qualitative approach through document analysis and thematic analysis. As a matter of fact, there is no specific definition of Marxism happiness. However, researchers have identified development of concept of Marxism happiness in different stages of academic works, and from the scholars in China and abroad. In the background of China, the concept of Marxism places importance on people's practical activities to attain happiness. It emphasizes the unity of human happiness and human nature, the coordination of labour creation and the enjoyment of life, as well as the integration of material life and spiritual life. Additionally, it underscores the harmony between individual happiness and social well-being.

Acknowledgement: We would like to express our gratitude to all those who have assisted in completing this article.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Conflicts of Interest: There is no conflict on this study.

References

- Bellofiore, R. (2018). Karl Marx's 'critique of political economy.' *Oxford Academic*, 1–16.
- Bielenberg, A. P. (2022). *The relationship between civil society and the state between Hegel and Marx*. <https://alioshabielenberg.com/the-relationship-between-civil-society-and-the-state-between-hegel-and-marx/>
- Cao, F. Z. (2017). *Research on the concept of happiness in Marx philosophical view* [Doctoral thesis, Party School of the Central Committee of CPC]. <https://kns-cnki-net-443.wvwn.sjlib.cn/kns8/DefaultResult/Index>
- Cao, Y. Z. (2023). Inner logic of Marx and Engels' human emancipation thought: A textual study based on the German Ideology. *Journal of Hehai University*, 2(5), 42–49. <https://doi.org/10.3876/j.issn.1671-4970.2023.02.005>
- Celikates, R. (2011). Karl Marx: Critique as emancipatory practice. In K. de Boer & R. Sonderegger (Eds.), *Conception of critique in modern and contemporary philosophy* (pp. 101–118). Palgrave Macmillan.

- Cresswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed). Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2019). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed). Sage Publications.
- Fewell, J. H. (2019). Division of labor. *Encyclopedia of Animal Behavior*, 674–681. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-809633-8.20882-0>
- Gan, Y. C. (2015). *The concept of Marxism Happiness*. Science Publication.
- Hegel, G. W. F. (1952). *Hegel's philosophy of right*. Oxford University Press.
- Horii, M. (2017). Contextualizing “religion” of young Karl Marx: A preliminary analysis. *Critical Research on Religion*, 5(2), 170–187. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2050303217690897>
- Huo, X. M. (2022). Marxist ideology theory and socialist ideology construction. *Exploration*, 5, 5–13. <https://doi.org/10.13996/j.cnki.taqu.2022.05.005>
- Jackson, M. W. (1990). Marx's “critique of Hegel's philosophy of right.” *History of European Ideas*, 12(6), 799–811. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-6599\(90\)90211-V](https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-6599(90)90211-V)
- James, F. P. (2015). Marx's concept of alienation: With a brief assessment. *Philosophy Study*, 5(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5313/2015.01.001>
- Jia, L. F. (2022). The contemporary construction of Marxist ideological discourse. *Theory Journal*, 3, 88–94. <https://doi.org/10.14110/j.cnki.cn-37-1059/d.2022.03.011>
- Jia, M. Y. (2023). Marx's theory of alienated labour and its implications for contemporary mental alienation: Based on the 1844 economic and philosophical manuscripts. *Labor Philosophy Research*, 8, 83–91.
- Jin, Z. M. (2022). Analysis of Marx's concept of happiness: theory source, main content and contemporary value. *Journal of Yanbian Party School*, 38(4), 18–24. <https://doi.org/10.16332/j.cnki.cn22-1302/d.2022.04.003>
- Jin, Z. M. (2023). *The research on Marx's viewpoint of happiness*. <https://kns-cnki-net-443.wvwn.sjlib.cn/kns8/DefaultResult/Index>
- Kong, M. A., & Liu, C. C. (2016). Criticism from “alienated labour” to “fetishism”: Also on the re-examination of Marx's theory of alienation. *Journal of Xiamen University*, 277(3), 21–28.
- Li, H. J., & Li, D. H. (2023). On labour dialectics as the essence of Marx's Philosophy: Rereading theses on Feuerbach and the German ideology. *Journal of Changchun Normal University*, 42(5), 9–14.
- Liang, T. (2020). To maintain the guiding status of Marxism in the field of ideology as steady as a great rock. *Public Governance and Safety*, 12, 2931. <https://doi.org/10.19881/j.cnki.1006-3676.2020.12.05>
- Ma, N., & Liu, J. H. (2019). Change in happiness concept in Marx's practical philosophy. *Journal of Northeast Normal University*, 3, 91–96.
- Marx, K. (1867). *The capital*. Progress Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315743677-6>
- Marx, K. (1902). *The difference between the Democritean and Epicurean philosophy of nature*. Progress Publishers.
- Marx, K. (1929). Reflections of a young man on the choice of a profession. *Marx Engels Collected Works*, 1, 683–685.
- Marx, K. (1959). Preface to a contribution to the critique of political economy. *Knowledge and Postmodernism in Historical Perspective*, 1–3. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230117457_4
- Marx, K. (1970). *Critique of Hegel's philosophy of right*. Cambridge University Press.
- Marx, K. (1976). *The capital*. Penguin Books.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1844). *Economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844*. Prometheus Books.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1848). *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Progress Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315095394-8>
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1932). *A critique of the German ideology*. Progress Publishers.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1975). *The holy family, or critique of critical criticism against Bruno Bauer and Company*. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels Collected Works.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (2016). *Collected works of Karl Marx*. Delphi Classics.

- Mi, Z. H. (2020). *The people are the true creators of history: An introduction to the “Holy Family” of Marx and Engels*.
- Morgan, H. (2021). Conducting a qualitative document analysis. *Qualitative Report*, 27(1), 64–77. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5044>
- Øversveen, E. (2022). Capitalism and alienation: Towards a Marxist theory of alienation for the 21st century. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 25(3), 440–457. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13684310211021579>
- Pimenta, T. L. (2020). Alienation and fetishism in Karl Marx’s critique of political economy. *Nova Economia*, 30(2), 605–628. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0103-6351/4958>
- Qi, Y. (2023). *Marx’s thought on happiness and its contemporary value*. <https://kns-cnki-net-443.wvwn.sjlib.cn/kns8/DefaultResult/Index>
- Rajasekar, S., Philominathan, P., & Chinnathambi, V. (2006). Research methodology. *Research Gates*, 1–53. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/2174858_Research_Methodology
- Schuringa, C. (1998). Marx’s critique of Hegel’s philosophy of right. *Crisis & Critique*, 8(2), 347–367.
- Wang, M. (2023). Marx’s idea of alienated labour : A textual study based on the economic and philosophy manuscripts of 1844. *Economic Constructure*, 1, 42–44.
- Wang, Y. Z. (2023). Marx’s idea of the division of labour and its contemporary revelations: An example from the German ideology. *West Journal*, 5, 5–10. <https://doi.org/10.16721/j.cnki.cn61-1487/c.2023.09.012>
- Wen, B. Y. (2022). An analysis of the development mechanism of sinicized Marxist ideology. *Chongqing Social Sciences*, 2, 67–78.
- Xu, J. T., & Zhang, W. (2021). Young Marx’s restoration, critique and transcendence of classical liberalism: An analysis based on the critique of Hegel’s philosophy of right. *Journal of the Party School of the Nanjing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China*, 3, 1–9.
- Xu, X. Y., & Li, J. X. (2022). On the origin and evolution of Marxist ideology theory. *Journal of Heihe University*, 7, 7–9. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1674-9499.2022.07.003>
- Xu, Y. X. (2019). *Study on the concept of Marx’s happiness* [Master thesis, Jilin Administration College]. <https://kns.cnki.net/kns8?dbcode=CDMD>
- Yang, H. W., & Wu, S. Y. (2022). The logical proof of Marx’s idea of the “real man”: A textual examination of the holy family. *New Heights*, 41(2), 61–68. <https://doi.org/10.14112/j.cnki.37-1053/c.2020.02.001>
- Yang, J. F., & Yang, J. (2023). The original investigation and contemporary enlightenment of Marxist ideology theory. *Journal of Longdong University*, 34(4), 64–68.
- Yang, Q., & Zhang, Y. (2022). An analysis of Marxist ideological characteristics and the connotation of value of the times. *Journal of Changji University*, 2, 19–23.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th, ed ed.). Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.1177/109634809702100108>
- Yin, Z. X. (2022). Marx’s theory of alienated labour and the free and comprehensive development of man. *Ability and Wisdom*, 128–131.
- Yu, L. (2016). The theory of alienated labour: The central axis of young Marx’s thought. *Dong Yue Tribune*, 43(7), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.15981/j.cnki.dongyueluncong.2022.07.018>
- Zhang, F. (2016a). *Research on Marx’s early thought of happiness*. Master thesis, Ningxia University.
- Zhang, F. (2016b). *Research on Marx’s early thought of Happiness*.
- Zhang, J., & You, X. (2021). The research of the reversal of Hegel’s values about labor by Marx’s theory of alienation. *Contemporary Forien Marx Review*, 26, 307–320.
- Zhang, S. F. (2012). *Marx’s concept of happiness*. Master thesis, Fujian Normal University.
- Zhang, S. S. (2021a). *Research on Marx’ labour happiness view and its development in the new era* [Master thesis, Shandong University]. <https://kns-cnki-net-443.wvwn.sjlib.cn/kns8/DefaultResult/Index>
- Zhang, S. S. (2021b). *Research on Marx’s labor happiness view and its development in the new era*. <https://kns-cnki-net-443.wvwn.sjlib.cn/kns8/DefaultResult/Index>
- Zhang, T., Ren, X., & Li, M. (2022). On the logic of Marxist ideology theory: Also on some contemporary ideological issues. *Social Sciences Journal of University in Shanxi*, 34(11), 26–32.

- Zhang, W. W., & Wang, C. J. (2021). Exploration on the connotation of a better life in the new era based on Marx's concept of happiness. *Journal of Nanjing Communist Party School*, 91(1), 533–558. <https://doi.org/10.21608/jsbsh.2021.35691.1229>
- Zhang, Y. B. (2023). The scientific theory of the alienated labor in the embryonic form of das kapital and its deletion: A study of marx's economic manuscripts (1863-1865) (by. *Journal of East China Normal University*, 1, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.16382/j.cnki.1000-5579.2023.01.001>
- Zhang, Z. T., & Zhu, P. (2023). Marx' theory of alienated labour and its guiding significance for labour education. *Journal of Yangzhou University*, 27(1), 55–62.
- Zhu, Y. N. (2023). *Research of Marx's thought on happiness of the people*. <https://kns-cnki-net-443.wvwn.sjlib.cn/kns8/DefaultResult/Index>