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Introduction

Forthcoming: International Journal of Happiness and Development

(Special Section: Happiness and well-being in Africa)

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Introduction

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Abstract

This special section aims to advance scholarship on well-being and happiness in Africa. The section covers theoretical, conceptual and empirical contributions which address relevant areas that enhance extant knowledge on linkages between poverty, happiness and well-being in Africa.

JEL Classification: D31; I10; I32; K40; O55

Keywords: Economic Growth; Inclusive Development; Well-Being

In spite of enjoying more than two decades of resurgence in economic growth, a report by the World Bank on the achievement of the millennium development goal (MDG) extreme poverty target revealed that extreme poverty has been decreasing in all regions of the world with the exception of Africa where about half of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa were considerably off-track from reaching the MDG extreme poverty target by the year 2015 (Asongu & Nwachukwu, 2016a, 2016b; Tchamyou, 2018a, 2018b; Tchamyou *et al.*, 2018; Asongu & Boateng, 2018). Meanwhile the statistics of the World Bank substantially contrast with another study in the same year which revealed that nine of the top ten countries with the healthiest diets were from Sub-Saharan Africa, namely (ranked from 1st to 10th): Chad, Sierra Leone, Mali, Gambia, Uganda, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Israel and Somalia (see Gander, 2015). This apparent contradiction between poverty standards that are assessed in monetary terms and the quality of food with which money can buy, is a clear indication that much is yet unknown about poverty, well-being and happiness.

Building on the above, this special section aims to advance scholarship on well-being and happiness in Africa. The section covers theoretical, conceptual and empirical contributions

which address relevant areas that enhance extant knowledge on linkages between poverty, happiness and well-being in Africa.

The articles in this special section have gone through the journal's rigorous peer review process and authors contributing to the section have constructively and positively taken on board the many recommendations for revisions. I would like to thank the anonymous referees for the constructive criticisms and suggestions which have helped to improve the content and rigour of original submissions. Indeed the contributions in this section are substantial evidence of the commitment of these referees and the editorial board of the International Journal of Happiness and Development.

In the light of the above, each article contained in the section stands on its merit. Discussing each article in detail will be a recycle of evidence that the interested reader can easily grasp by directly engaging the article under consideration. Insights into methodological rigour and policy implications are easily accessible. Moreover, a common denominator among the studies in the special section is that the empirical results are succinctly summarised to enhance readability and accessibility by interested readers from scholarly and policy circles who may require technical expertise and reading skills to grasp the corresponding contributions to knowledge. In summary, both specialists and non-specialists readers can be comfortable engaging the richly policy-relevant and easy-to-read articles. I hope that articles in this special section will encourage other scholars to extent the scant scholarship on issues that revolve around happiness and well-being in Africa.

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