NTU study on happiness

WHAT makes people happy? Family and friends, according to a pilot study of 62 Nanyang Technological University (NTU) undergraduates.

Less important to their happiness levels were money and religion, while the pursuit of academic success could drive the levels down, it found.

These results by Dr Ho Kong Weng of NTU’s economics division were presented at a symposium on interdisciplinary studies on happiness this week, the first of its kind here. The symposium was organised by NTU’s Centre for Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (Class) and Thailand’s Chulalongkorn University economics faculty.

NTU’s Professor Euston Quah, associate director of Class, told The Straits Times that academics have for years been trying to explore the concept of happiness. Economists entered the field relatively late, in the last decade or so.

Academics are trying to come up with more objective measurements of happiness, by observing people’s real behaviour and the choices they make, among other things.

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