

The Relationship between Happiness, Subjective Well-Being, Creativity and Job Performance of Primary School Teachers in Ramhormoz City

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Abstract

The research aimed to investigate the relationship between happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City. Hence, a sample of 330 individuals was selected through random stratified sampling. The research tools included Oxford Happiness Inventory, Subjective Well-being Scale by Keyes and Magyarmv, Creativity Inventory by Randsip and Patterson Job Performance Inventory. The research employed a correlational method and the data were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis. Results indicated that, there is significant relationship between happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City. The results of regression analysis indicated that, happiness and subjective well-being are the strongest predictors of job performance.

Keywords: happiness, subjective well-being, creativity, job performance

1. Introduction

Teachers are regarded as the most important and influential elements at school and also responsible for their job performance, students' academic achievement and goal-oriented actions at the organization of education. Therefore, teachers are bound to be highly motivated and work with powerful motivation. Generating motivation causes individual success to affect the total effectiveness of school (Baldauf & Crown, 2000). Vast literature in organizational and industrial psychology has shed light upon the identification, assessment and enhancement of job performance. Each organization needs its employees to perform their job at an acceptable level of efficiency. This subject is also of crucial importance in governmental organizations in which weak performance means the inability to provide legal public services and private companies that may go economically bankrupt if they deliver poor performance. From a social perspective, each individual's best wish for organizations is having employees who do their jobs well. Good performance increases the organization's efficiency and directly leads to the enhancement of national economy and also extends the adequacy of offered services (Bavldavf & Crown, 2000).

One of the related variables to job performance is happiness. A positive feeling such as happiness has always been appreciated throughout history. According to Aristotle, the lowest levels of happiness is hedonism and for want of a better word, pleasure. In the moderate level, happiness equals success and achievement and in the highest level, happiness is achieved through spirituality (Eysenck, 1990). Put it another way, Aristotle considers happiness as spiritual life and Plato regards that as a balanced state between three elements of wisdom, emotion and desires. Our research sheds a brighter light on this very specific notion because it's believed that, psychology is the sciences of living happily. Psychologists' efforts throughout the worlds are to identify the barriers of happiness, alleviate emotional pains and devise methods thereby; individuals can adapt themselves to life. Psychologists intend to explore the rules of living better so that, the human can predict himself/herself better and once this is attained; s/he will be able enough for controlling and inhibiting while necessary. If the human can't get to know the accurate rules of life, s/he can't declare having a happy life.

Conforming to the valid rules of life brings happiness and happiness is mastery and mastery is not possible unless one abides by such rules (Boskaliya, 2014). Dadgar et al. (2014) in their research on the relationship

between leadership styles, organizational commitment, happiness and job performance of nurses concluded that there is significant relationship between happiness and job performance. Gholami et al. (2013) found out that there is significant and positive relationship between the happiness and job performance of the employees working in the education office. Anaseri (2013), Neshat-Doust et al. (2009), Adeli-Nasab (2013), Kerns et al. (2008), Field (2011), Boehm et al. (2011), Fisher (2010), Shawnachor (2010) also came to the same conclusion. Salari-Nahand (2010) in a study on the role of happiness at organizations included that happiness can lead to higher levels of efficiency, better quality productions and senses of pride and honor in employees. Seligman (2011), in a study on the relationship between happiness and job performance concludes that, teachers with low levels of happiness are more exposed to job emotional capture.

The second variable related to job performance is subjective well-being. In recent decades, positive psychology has tried to devote attention to humans' abilities. This science is currently known as having done comprehensive studies for well-being and happiness in different educational, hygienic, therapeutic and academic realms (Linley, 2004). Positive psychology is known as a movement for directing individuals toward growth and actualization and does not intend to be replaced with any of the other psychological therapies (Seligman, 1990). Scientific society has recently documented evidences for the conceptualization of different aspects of positive psychology, particularly well-being. The theoretical aspects of health in positive psychology include autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance (Riff, 1989). Kavousi-Kousha et al. (2014), in their research on the relationship between psychological well-being and job performance of nurses in Mashhad City concluded that there is significant relationship between subjective well-being and job performance. Naami et al. (2013) investigated the role of perceived job success in the prediction of job well-being in the employees of the industrial company located in Isfahan City and concluded that, there exists significant relationship between job success and its aspects and job well-being.

Vahedi and Ghani-Zadeh (2009) in their research indicated the significant relationship between subjective well-being, life satisfaction and job performance. Schulte et al. (2014) investigated well-being among the employees of 34 countries and concluded that, there is significant relationship between subjective well-being and job performance of employees. Avery et al. (2011), Alma and Rive (2012), Wright et al. (2009), Ulundi et al. (2004) and Cropanzano (2009) came to the same conclusion in investigating the relationship between subjective well-being and job performance.

The third job performance-related variable is creativity. Creativity has been defined by considering its effects, stages or the very notion of itself. Some of the psychologists have considered creativity and problem-solving as similar processes. Gagné considers problem solving as to be in the highest level of learning and asserts that creativity is a specific kind of problem solving. However, in problem solving, the individual is faced with a situation to which s/he should find a way; whereas, in creativity, the individual creates both the problem and the solution (Seif, 2007). Vernon defines creativity as the individual's ability to create ideas, put forward hypothesis and innovative insights and restructuring other realms which is regarded as an original and valuable task (Hosseini, 2008). Stenberg knows the creative thinking as a combination of innovative ability, flexibility and sensitivity for the theories that enables the individuals to reflect on different results can provide others with satisfaction. Gilford considers intelligence and creativity as two separate kinds of intellect and relates intelligence to convergent thinking while relating creativity to divergent thinking. From his point of view, divergent thinking has psychological genuineness in problem solving that involves flexibility features, as well (Abedi, 2006).

Tabeshfar (2013) in a study on the relationship between creativity and job performance of female working employees in high schools located in Yasouj concluded that there is significant relationship between these two variables. Behtari-Nezhad (2013), Nazem and Hamoudi (2006) and Schliemann (2014) came to the same conclusion with regard to the relationship between creativity and job performance. Taejon and Hokang (2010) in their research found out that higher creativity in marketers is associated with their better performance and higher benefits of the organizations for which they work.

Given what was mentioned, the present research aimed to investigate the relationship between happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City. The hypotheses of the research are as following:

First hypothesis: there will be significant relationship between happiness and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City.

Second hypothesis: there will be significant relationship between subjective well- and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City.

Third hypothesis: there will be significant relationship between creativity and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City.

Fourth hypothesis: there will be significant simple and multiple relationships between happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City.

2. Method

The research is regarded amongst applied types of studies and employs descriptive-correlational method in which the variables of happiness, subjective well-being and creativity are regarded as predictive variables and job performance is the criterion variable. The statistical population included 2500 elementary school teachers (1650 female (65%) and 880 male (35%)), out of whom, a sample of 330 (215 female and 115 male) was drawn using random stratified sampling based on Morgan table. Descriptive (frequency distribution, mean, and diagram) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression) were used to analyze the research data using SPSS19. The research tools were as following:

2.1 Measures and Covariates

Oxford Happiness Inventory:

Happiness Questionnaire was derived as an improved version of the Oxford Happiness Inventory by Argyle et al. (1989). The scale has 29 items which include the 20 items of the Oxford Happiness Inventory and an additional 9 items (Nourbala et al., 2002). This questionnaire has 5 scales including life satisfaction, positive mood, health, competency and self-esteem. Responses are based on a 6-point rating scale. Hills and Argyle (2002) reported acceptable validity for the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire by providing data on correlations with other self-report scales of personality traits, human strengths and subjective well-being. The scale possesses a high scale alpha reliability of 0.91. The inter-item correlations for Oxford Happiness Questionnaire ranged from -0.04 to 0.65. The personality variables correlate very strongly with this scale. In terms of construct validity, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire appears to be the preferred measure in terms of its construct validity. The Cronbach alpha in the present questionnaire using bisection was reported to be .87 and .85. The result of Cronbach alpha in the present research was obtained to be 0.89.

Subjective Well-being Scale:

Subjective Well-being Scale is a 45-item questionnaire which was designed and developed by Keyes and Magyarmv to assess emotional, psychological and social well-being. The internal consistency of emotional well-being subscale in positive and negative emotion's section were .91 and .78, respectively. The psychological and social well-being subscales had average internal consistency of .4 and .7, respectively. The total validity of these two scales was equal to .8 and higher (Keyes & Magyarmv, 2002). Factorial validity was used to assess the questionnaire's validity. The results of confirmative factor analysis have confirmed the 3-factor structure of this questionnaire. In the research by NeshatDoust (2004), the reliability coefficient using test-retest was reported to be equal to .86. The reliability of the scale of subjective well-being and the subscales of emotional, psychological and social well-being equaled .75, .76, .64 and .76, respectively (Golestani-Bakht, 2007). Cronbach alpha in each of the above-mentioned cases was estimated to be .80, .86, .80 and .64, respectively. These coefficients are indicative of the questionnaire's acceptable internal consistency (Golestani-Bakht, 2007). The content validity of the present research was assessed and confirmed by seeking for the opinions of experts. The result of Cronbach alpha in the present research was obtained to be .87.

Randsyp Creativity Inventory:

Randsyp Creativity Inventory was designed by Randsyp in 1979. Alavi et al. (2003), Goli (2006), Siyadat et al. (2007) and Ameri et al. (2002) have confirmed this questionnaire's reliability to be equal to .86, .98, .98, .92 and .83, respectively (Rostami, 2009). Ghahreman-Tabrizi (2005) and Siyadat-Jahromi (2007) have reported its Cronbach alpha to be equal to .82 (Pour Tahmasebi, 2010). Moreover, the reliability of the questionnaire by Damani (2010) and Pour Tahmasebi (2010) was estimated to be .76 and .78, respectively. The content validity of the present questionnaire has been approved by the experts. The result of Cronbach alpha in the present research was obtained to be 0.87.

Patterson job performance questionnaire:

Patterson job performance questionnaire has been designed and developed by Patterson (1970) and translated by Arshadi and ShokrKon (1996). Manzari and Shokr-Kon (1996) have estimated its reliability coefficient on a sample of boy high school teachers in Ahvaz City to be equal to .84 using Spearman-Brown formula and odd-even bisection method. Amini and Nouri (1996) have reported its reliability by Cronbach alpha and

bisection to be equal to .70 and .58, respectively. Sayyahi and Shokr-Kon (1996), Khoshkam, Neisi, and Shokr-Kon (2007) and Kordli (2009) have all estimated this questionnaire's reliability and report acceptable level of reliability for this questionnaire. The content validity of the questionnaire has been investigated and confirmed by the experts. The result of Cronbach alpha in the present research was obtained to be 0.85.

3. Results

The descriptive findings including frequency distribution and percentage have been presented in Table 1 in accordance to gender, age and educational degree.

The mean and standard deviations of the variables of job performance, happiness, subjective well-being and creativity have been demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 1. Frequency distribution and percentage in accordance to gender, age and educational degree

Gender	Female	215	65%
	Male	115	35%
Age	30 to 40 years old	130	38%
	40 to 50 years old	145	43.8%
	Over 50 years old	55	18.2%
Educational degree	B.A. or B.S.	180	56.65%
	M.A or M.S.	137	36.8%
	Ph.D.	13	6.6%

Table 2. The mean and standard deviations of the variables of job performance, happiness, subjective well-being and creativity

Indices	Mean	Standard deviation	N
Happiness	46.71	10.29	330
Subjective well-being	157.09	30.79	330
Creativity	49.08	16.53	330
Job performance	25.87	5.64	330

As observed in Table 2, the mean and standard deviation in the variable of happiness equals to 46.71 and 10.29, respectively. The means of the variables of subjective well-being, creativity and job performance equal 157.9, 49.08 and 25.87, respectively. Moreover, the standard deviations of the variables of subjective wellbeing, creativity and job performance equal 30.79, 16.53 and 5.64, respectively.

The correlation coefficients of the variables of happiness, subjective-wellbeing, creativity and job performance have been presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The correlation coefficients of the variables of happiness, subjective-wellbeing, creativity and job performance

Predictive variables	Criterion variable	r	P	n
Happiness		.386	.0001	330
Subjective well-being	Job performance	.245	.0001	330
Creativity		.173	.0002	330

As observed in Table 3, there is significant relationship between happiness and job performance. Therefore the first hypothesis is confirmed ($r=.386$, $P<.05$). Moreover, there is significant relationship between subjective well-being and job performance ($r=.245$, $p<.05$). Hence, our second hypothesis is confirmed. Furthermore, there is significant relationship between creativity and job performance ($r=.173$, $p<.05$). Therefore, the third

hypothesis is also confirmed.

The results of multiple regression analysis regarding happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of elementary school teachers have been presented in the table below.

Table 4. The results of multiple regression analysis regarding happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of elementary school teachers

Multiple correlations MR	Determination coefficient RS	Ratio of S Probability of P	Variables and regression coefficients			Fixed ratio 12.79
			Creativity	Subjective well-being	Happiness	
.410	.168	21.94=F .0001=P	.015=B	.025=B	.180= B	
			.045= β	.136= β	.328= β	
			.83=t	2.55= t	5.83= t	
			.407=P	.011=P	.0001=P	

As observed in Table 4 and based on the results of multiple regression analysis using entry method, the multiple regression coefficient for the combination of happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of elementary school teachers in Ramhormoz City equaled .40 and the determination coefficient equaled .168 that is significant at $p < .0001$. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is also confirmed. With regard to the obtained coefficients, it can be concluded that, 16.8 percent of the total variance of job performance is explained by the predictive variables of happiness, subjective well-being and creativity.

The results of step-wise regression analysis for the variables of happiness, subjective well-being and creativity for the prediction of job performance have been presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The results of step-wise regression analysis for the variables of happiness, subjective well-being and creativity for the prediction of job performance

	Predictive variables	R	R2	B	SE	Beta	T	Level of sig.
1	Happiness	.386	.149	.212	.028	.386	7.589	.0001
	Fixed ratio			15.97	1.335	-	11.963	.0001
2	Happiness	.408	.166	.188	.029	.343	6.448	.0001
	Subjective-wellbeing			.025	.010	.137	2.571	.0011
	Fixed ratio			13.14	1.723	-	7.630	.0001

As observed in Table 5, all the variables of happiness, subjective well-being and creativity entered the equation in order to identify the highest portion in the explanation of job performance. In the first step, happiness could explain .149 percent of the total variance of job performance. In the second step, the variable of subjective well-being could explain .166 percent. Therefore, the variables of happiness and subjective well-being can explain 16.6 percent of the total variance of job performance and are its best predictors.

4. Discussion

The research aimed to investigate the relationship between happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City. Based on the results of Table 3, there exists significant and positive relationship between happiness and job performance of elementary school teachers. This result is in line with the results of the research by Dadgar et al. (2014), Adeli-Nasab (2013), Anaseri (2013), Gholami et al. (2013), Salari-Nahand (2010), Neshat-Doust et al. (2009), Seligman (2011), Field (2011), Shawn (2010), Fisher (2010) and Boehm and Lyubomirsky (2011). In the explanation of these results, it can be mentioned that the thoughts and behaviors produced and shown by happy individuals are helpful and adaptive. These individuals have a more clear perspective of issues; try to directly solve their problems and ask for help while necessary. Happy individuals with healthy personality are generally responsible, decent and law-abiding citizens. A happy individual tries to commit to positive thinking for doing his/her daily tasks and explore better

alternatives for solving minor or major problems. A happy individual is usually regarded as a charming and exultant person who can more easily establish bonds with others. Happy individuals are more approachable and amiable and have higher social skills and participate more in social activities.

Happy individuals are usually more extroverted and more capable of creating and strengthening relationship with others. Happy individuals are happy both in either the presence or absence of others and equally enjoy their own company or others' company, living in either rural area or urban area, and employment in either a solitary or social jobs. Cui-Vma and Han-Geng (2004) assert that, happy individuals' performance in different realms of life such as marriage, friendship, employment, money-making and health is better than individuals with low levels of happiness. The results of the research by Myers and Patterson indicated that happiness can boost someone's psychological and physical health and happy individuals are more successful and far way healthier than unhappy individual. They have more social commitment and involvement and are more satisfied with their job as compared to their colleagues. According to Veenhoven (1994), happiness gives motives for action and facilitates social and political relationships causing the maintenance of health and increasing life expectancy. Some of the researchers like Schwarand-Strac (1991) believe that, happy individuals have bias in processing the information and their bias is in favor of producing more happiness. That is to say that, these individuals process and interpret the data in a way that leads to more happiness. On the other hand, happy individuals feel more secure; decide more easily; have higher levels of cooperative spirit; and feel more satisfied. According to Costa and McCrae (1981, cited in Eysenck, 1990) happy individuals develop mood-enhancing thoughts and behaviors toward themselves and are more optimistic, grateful and content. Whereas, unhappy individual usually resort to their dreams; attribute the blame to others and avoid the problems as far as possible. Karami-Nouri et al. (2002) have shown in their studies that happy individuals have higher levels of self-esteem; like themselves; attend to code of ethics; behave wisely; have higher levels of self-mastery and psychological energy; think more about their abilities rather than their inabilities; and cope with stress far better than unhappy individuals.

As observed in Table 3, there is positive and significant relationship between subjective well-being and job performance of elementary school teachers. These findings are in line with the results of the studies by Kavousi-Kousha et al. (2014), Naami and Pirayai (2013), Vahedi and Ghani-Zadeh (2009), Schulte et al. (2014), Alma and Rive (2012), Avery et al. (2011), Wright and Cropanzano (2009) and Ulundi (2004). In the explanation of this finding, it can be mentioned that, expressing high levels of well-being positively affects individuals' job performance. Veenhoven (2008) asserts that, individuals with high levels of subjective well-being also have higher levels of physical health. Moreover, these individuals are happier, more optimistic and positivist. What's more, these individuals have higher levels of emotional stability; are more satisfied with their life and efforts. Seligman (2002) believes that, individuals with higher levels of subjective well-being have lower levels of job stress. Machine and Hicks (1999) contend that, individuals who have a positive perspective toward self and the world can more easily prevent bad events from happening and act more actively upon getting out of bad situations.

Myers and Diener (1995) revealed that, individuals with high levels of subjective well-being mainly experience positive emotions and have positive evaluations of their surrounding events and phenomena; whereas, individuals with lower levels of subjective well-being evaluate the same events as negative and are more probable to experience negative emotions such as anxiety, depression and aggression. Riff (1989) indicated that, subjective well-being is defined as overall feelings of satisfaction and positive feelings toward self, others, family, career, etc. Schulte et al. (2014), Alma and Rive (2012), Avery et al. (2011) have also indicated that individuals' job performance is affected by their levels of subjective well-being and the increase in subjective well-being results in higher quality service in the work environment.

Given the results of Table 3, there is significant and positive relationship between creativity and job performance. This finding is in line with the results of research by Tabeshfar (2013), Behtari-Nezhad (2013), Nazem and Hamoudi (2006), Schulte et al. (2014) and Taejon and Hokang (2010).

In the explanation of this finding, it can be mentioned that, creativity exerts significant effect on job performance. Beecher (1980) has indicated that creative individuals feel duty bound to exceed the expectations. According to Taylor and Baron (1963), having a sense of humor and exultant behaviors are general characteristics of creative individuals. Creative individuals believe that humor leads them toward winning and sound strategies. Creative individuals are usually successful and pursue ambitious goals. Thurstonand and Mylnjr (1954) show that, coming up with new ideas, thoughts and notions are proper methods for solving the problems at works and showing better job performance. Innovation and creativity are the essential elements of complex, modern and fast-paced life of humans. Pir-Khaefi (2004) has shown in his research that individuals who can think creativity while faced with problems have higher levels of self-confidence and think wisely in the process of decision

making for life issues and personal matter. Creative individuals are flexible and able to work toward, achieve and develop alternative solutions to problems and do not to stick to only one way of doing things. These individuals predict long-term effects of their coping responses and carefully evaluate the situation. These individuals confront with their problems with adequacy and mastery and their goal is to evaluate the situation, to ask for others' help and support if necessary and solve the problem through a practical plan. Creative individuals consider life as an opportunity to solve the problems and try to confront with the issues with hope, patience and sense of humor. Thurston (1954) asserted that, creative individuals are not afraid of problems; worry less about the future and agree upon the best ideas in difficult situation. These people attend to the progress of culture and act upon the movement of the wheels of progress and development in the society.

Another findings of the research indicated that, there is significant relationship between happiness, subjective well-being, creativity and job performance of primary school teachers in Ramhormoz City. Moreover, happiness and subjective well-being are the strongest predictors of job performance.

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