

THE DETERMINANTS OF HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE AMONGST WORKERS IN THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR IN LAHAD DATU, SABAH

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, happiness index is used to measure a nation's economic progress by looking at Gross National Happiness. One of the criteria used to measure happiness index is workplace wellness. Since happiness is subjective and it is difficult to define a person's happiness with many confounding factors, this research attempts to determine what influence factors of happiness are at workplace among Government sector workers in Lahad Datu Sabah. Four factors of happiness at workplace such as employment status, income, social support and work conditions towards happiness were proposed. Using a sample of 106 questionnaires collected from several Government agencies in Lahad Datu Sabah, data analyses were conducted using Multiple Regression Analysis, Independent-Sample t-test and One-Way ANOVA. The results showed that there was significant difference in happiness at the workplace between employment status and income level of workers in Government Sector in Lahad Datu Sabah. Generally, there was 62% variation in happiness at workplace as determined by employment status, income, social support and work conditions. The remaining 38% were attributed to other additional factors that had not been considered in this study. Indeed, this research has basically contributed to the research on happiness at workplace for Malaysian public service. Future research could aim to replicate the present findings using larger samples and explore other additional factors as well as an improved conceptualization of happiness at workplace, so that more useful related researches could be conducted.

Keywords: Happiness at workplace, employment status, income, social support, work conditions

INTRODUCTION

The meaning of happiness is often mixed up. It is commonly understood as how much one likes the life one lives and it is regularly referred to as 'satisfaction' with life. Happiness is one of the principal yardsticks for measurement of economic development since the 70's. Happiness was also known as basic needs in measuring the economic development for a country (Hick and Streeten, 1979) until in twenty first century whence many countries focused on Happiness and Human Development Index (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2005). Nowadays, economist draw on recent academic literature exploring the economics of happiness studies that make use of how people in different countries rate their own happiness or wellbeing as one of the indicators to measure a nation's progress by looking at Gross National Happiness (Francis, n.d).

Veenhoven (2006) defined happiness as 'quality of life' or 'well-being' or life is good. Besides that, happiness as a mental or emotional state of well-being was characterized by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy (Bhattacharjee, 2013). The interest in happiness has also extended to workplace experiences (Fisher, 2010). Happiness specifically at workplace must be a part of overall happiness entity. It referred to how satisfied people were with their work and lives (Wesarat, Sharif and Abdul Majid, 2014), the prevalence of positive emotions at work (including affects and moods) as well as perceptions by individuals who, in their work, have expressed and developed their potential, henceforth progressing to achieve their goals in life (Sousa and Porto, 2015). Fisher (2010) asserted workplace happiness as a construct that reflected pleasant judgments (positive attitudes), pleasant experiences (positive feelings, moods, emotions, flow states) or positive affective experience in the workplace. Jones (2010) described workplace happiness as a mindset which allowed someone to maximize one's performance and achieve one's potential.

The influencing factor of employee happiness at workplace is a vital topic which has been discussed among many previous researches and psychologists too. The importance of workplace happiness among employees at work has fundamental consequences for an organization. Happiness at work is applicable to every organization, because it might determine productivity, loyalty and innovativeness among employees in an organization. Employees happiness could be gauged as being more engaged, more motivated, providing better customer service, playing more effective roles in teams and making better leaders and having heightened levels of creativity. However, the happiness at a workplace could be influenced by many factors of the work environment such as working sectors, income, the relationship with employers as well as possibly be determined by employee's self-factors such as attitude, perceptions and many other factors.

For example, Geeta and Pandey (2011) revealed that happiness among workers in the public and private sector was debatable as both provided scopes of happy workers in different ways. They found that the factors that could influence worker happiness should include wellbeing, working hours, work orientation, financial variables and employment status. As the factors are myriad, there is a need for more studies to examine happiness at the workplace either in the public or private sector.

According to Jordan (2018), in the United States, employees in the private sector were happier than employee in the public sector. In Turkey Özsoy, Uslu and Öztürk (2014) found that public sector employees in Turkey were happy based on job and life satisfaction which measured impact from their practices based on bureaucratic processes that might affect employees' job satisfaction. In India, Shobhna and Hartesh (2013) reported that the happier employees in the public sector were those within

their job, who felt more satisfied in terms of considering salary as public sector employees get salary on time and the reward or compensation received by them corresponded with their responsibilities. In Pakistan, Rashid and Rashid (2012) found that friendly co-workers and supervisors were two factors that influenced happiness at workplace among workers in the public sector. In Mexico, Peterson, Puia and Sues (2003) found that friendly supervision and co-workers among public workers, were amongst the factors that increased work happiness.

In Malaysia, Employee Job Happiness Index 2017 survey result has shown that out of 10,143 Malaysian employees surveyed, 58% of the respondents were neutral to being happy with their job while the remaining were unhappy. Malaysian employees reported that having good work location, good colleagues and company reputation are the top three key factors affecting their job happiness (Malaysia JobStreet, 2018).

Many previous literature and researchers often defined happiness at workplace in the public sectors across countries in the world. However, what measurement have they used in their studies to get the result of employee's happiness in the public sector? In addition what are the main factors that influenced happiness at workplace in public sector? There are many factors of happiness at the workplace that numerous researches have tried to establish a better understanding on happiness at workplace (Kesebir and Diener, 2008 and Juniper, 2011). Hackman (2009) supported that the term of happiness at work was broad, so was the wide dispersion about measures related to happiness at workplace. For that reason, it is necessary to find a more accurate measure for happiness at work (Fisher, 2010).

Moreover, some previous studies highlighted the importance of happiness at the workplace and revealed that the research on happiness at the workplace is limited as well as much more still needs to be looked into closely and developed. For example, Awada and Ismail (2019) stated that the trend of workplace happiness is not new and it has gained growing attention in organizations globally. Happiness at the workplace is one of the crucial roles of the human resource management because it is related to the workforce motivation, employee's overall well-being, as well as employee's productivity. Hence, happiness at the workplace needs to be maintained and extended into the operations of organizations. Meanwhile, Rahmi (2018) supported that it is important for companies to create and manage several factors so that they can create the happiness in the workplace. Therefore, research on the determinants of happiness in the workplace needs to be developed and investigated further to obtain insightful knowledge and information for the academics, practitioners and any agencies who are interested in discussing the topic of happiness in the workplace.

Since the issue raised in this paper is on happiness at workplace is influenced by many factors, thus this study attempts to determine the factors that influence happiness specifically at workplace amongst Government sector workers in Lahad Datu Sabah.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Happiness at workplace, related to the constructs in organizational research, varies in several meaningful ways as well as in level modes where happiness could occur at different collective levels such as at individual, work team, work unit, or organization as a whole. For Wesarat et al., (2014), happiness at the workplace referred to how satisfied people were with their lives and work. While, Keser (2016) revealed that happiness was about being satisfied even though the workplace has some negative characteristics which may motivate the individuals to eliminate them, these challenges can make individuals even happier.

This study refers to Fisher (2010), Tadić, Bakker and Oerlemans (2013), Dimitrov (2012) and Andrew (2009) in the definition of happiness at workplace as how satisfied people are with their work and during working time to perform their work as well as being happy to do their work. Fisher (2010) reported that there some determinants of happiness at the workplace such as marital status, supportive social networks, employed, work activities, income, and the status of being at higher social and occupational positions. Therefore, in this research, the discussions will focus on the different reviews of the variables, their definitions and their relationship with happiness respectively at workplace.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE

Employment status refers to an employment-related situation in which an individual holds. In this study, employment status refers to a situation in which Government workers are either 'permanent' or 'temporary/contract'. Berger (2009) found that individual's happiness depended on his employment status as permanent or contract/ temporary employment. Likewise, Wesarat et al., (2014) was into the idea that individuals' happiness depended on his/her employment status such as being employed or unemployed, full-time or part-time employment. Meanwhile, to De Neve and Ward (2017) there were two situations of employment status among workers which made happier individuals in those who were fulltime workers and were more likely obtained employment in the first place while unhappy people, those who were part time worker, and were more likely to lose their jobs. Hence, this study hypothesizes that employment status does influence happiness at workplace by proposing the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant difference in happiness at workplace between employment status amongst workers in Government Sector in Lahad Datu Sabah

INCOME AND HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE

Income referred to the wage and salary payment earned by an individual (Mathur, 2012). A study of income and happiness by Guglielmo, Yannis, Nicholas and Ya (2009) confirmed that there was a strong relationship between a person's income and life satisfaction. Tella, De Newc and MacCulloch (2010) found that happiness was influenced by income adaptation as much as one standard deviation increase in income corresponded to an increase in happiness. Some previous studies revealed the relationship between income and happiness at workplace in many ways such as happy people earned more money (Boehm and Lyubomirsky, 2008), employees expressed positive emotions at increases in pay (Staw, Sutton and Pelled, 1994), happy individuals were successful across income (Lyubomirsky, King and Diener, 2005), while Easterlin (2001) reported happiness and income showed puzzling influence. Hence, this study hypothesizes that income does influence happiness at workplace, thereby proposing the following hypothesis:

H2: There is a significant difference in happiness at workplace between income levels amongst workers in Government Sector in Lahad Datu Sabah

SOCIAL SUPPORT AND HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE

This study defined social support from Winkelman and Winkelman (1998)'s definition as social relationships at work which positively affects individual well-being. Respondents will detail how they feedback to people such as friends and supervisors around them in their workplace. Rami (2013) stated that social support included providing material resources, needed services or financial aid as well as offering care or empathy to somebody who needed it and that might enhance psychological health by increasing one's self-esteem. While Bader, Hashim and Zaharim (2013) reported positive friendship not only influenced happiness of employees but also affected productivity. Rashid and Rashid (2012) ascertained that the domains of social supports such as friendly co-workers as well as friendly supervisors showed significant relationship with happiness at workplace in the public sector. Therefore, this study hypothesizes the significant relationship between social support and happiness at workplace by proposing the following hypothesis:

H3: There is a significant relationship between social support and happiness at workplace amongst workers in Government Sector in Lahad Datu Sabah.

WORK CONDITIONS AND HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE

Work conditions are the activities or duties that are performed by workers. Respondents indicated their working conditions and environment in terms of noise, risk, activities and safety. Tadić et al., (2013) contended individual could have different levels of happiness during different work activities. In organizations, some workers are happy with their work activities while some workers have negative experiences at work. Therefore, managers should play their roles in understanding the meaning of work for employees, then manage the employees well so that they could manage to pursue their happiness whilst doing their work (Cleavenger and Munyon, 2013 and Dimitrov, 2012). Baumeister, Vohs, Aaker and Garbinsky (2013) reported that health conditions of individuals were closely tied to the conditions of working environment such as workload capacity, overtime schedule, traveling, air quality and lighting conditions whereby all of these could affect worker's happiness. Therefore, this study hypothesizes the significant relationship between work conditions and happiness at workplace and proposes the following hypothesis:

H4: There is a significant relationship between work conditions and happiness at workplace amongst workers in Government Sector in Lahad Datu Sabah.

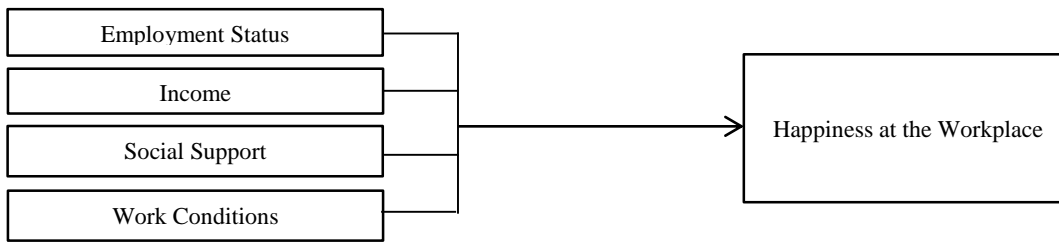
Based on the aforementioned findings of previous literatures, this study investigates the influence of four factors such as employment status, income, social supports and work conditions towards happiness at workplace as presented in the research framework of this study.

METHODOLOGY

This study applied quantitative research to determine the significant difference in happiness at workplace between employment status and income level as well as to examine the relationship between social support, work conditions and happiness at the workplace amongst Government Sector workers in Lahad Datu Sabah.

According to Wesarat et al., (2014), happiness at workplace is important. However, researches on employee happiness in organizations were limited. Nonetheless more such researches should be encouraged to be done in order to provide sufficient knowledge to academics, practitioners, as well as those who are interested in the notion of happiness at the workplace. Therefore, this study develops a conceptual framework of happiness at the workplace as follows. The research framework was adapted from Wesarat et al., (2014).

Figure 1: Research framework



The research framework for this study is developed to accommodate the objectives of this research. It proposed the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. There are four independent variables which are employment status, income, social support and work conditions while the dependent variable is happiness at workplace. This research framework is adapted from Happiness at the Workplace Models developed by Wesarat et al., (2014) about happiness at workplace being influenced by several factors such as employment status, income, friendship, and work activities. Furthermore, the research framework of this study also adapted the Concept of The Work Design by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) where several characteristics of different jobs such as the social support and work conditions at workplace influenced employee happiness.

This research framework illustrated support in line with the Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis and Lofquist 1984) in Fisher (2010). This theory supported that the antecedents of happiness at work involved a fit between person and situation. Individuals could seek both person-job and person-organization fit when choosing employment. The content of the theory was relevant to illustrate the relationship between the employment status, income, social supports, work condition and the happiness at workplace as this study aimed to expound.

In order to collect the data, this study adapts measurement technique from The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) developed by psychologists Hills and Argyle (2002) and The Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ) developed by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006). A structured questionnaire consisting of 44 items survey instrument spread over 4 sections are used in order to examine the hypothesized relationships. Section A of questionnaire consists of 4 questions regarding personal details of respondents such as gender, age, employment status, and income level. There are 6 items in Section B regarding the social support in the workplace; while Section C consists of 5 items regarding work conditions. Finally Section D consists of 29 questions to elicit employees' perceptions about happiness.

The OHQ has been derived from the Oxford Happiness Inventory, (OHI) was used to measure happiness at the workplace. The OHI comprises 29 single statement with six-point Likert scale ranging from 1, strongly disagree to 6, strongly agree. The OHQ demonstrated high scale reliabilities with values 0.91 respectively (Hills and Argyle, 2002). The Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ) was used to measure the assessment of job design and the nature of work Morgeson and Humphrey (2006). Six (6) items questions regarding social support and 5 items regarding work conditions were measured based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree).

Data was collected using a survey method by distributing questionnaire to collect the primary data. The primary data was collected from among workers in the Government sector in Lahad Datu Sabah. A total number of 150 questionnaires were prepared and distributed to the respondents who work in Government sector in Lahad Datu, Sabah. The rational of survey via questionnaires can allow the researcher to collect a large number of responses necessary to estimate a model (Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, 2010).

This study used convenience sampling technique whereby respondents are being selected according to accessibility of researchers to the government offices because of the unavailability of the list of workers who are in the target population are Government sector employees in Lahad Datu. Farrokhi and Hamidabad (2012) supported that convenience sampling is a kind of non-probability or non-random sampling suitable for situation in which members of the target population, for the purpose of the study, could meet certain practical criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, easy accessibility, or the willingness to volunteer.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Data analysis in the study was undertaken using SPSS to conduct the data analysis in examining all the hypothesized relationships which would be illustrated in the research framework. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed randomly to the staff in 21 federal ministries and department offices, 4 state ministries and department offices and 2 local Government offices in Lahad Datu Sabah.

A total of 117 responses were received thereby fulfilling the basic sample size. The response rate was found to be 78%. Richardson (2005) wrote that at least 70% the total of response was needed to make the data set to be desirable; or the acceptable response rate could be 50% when starting a social research survey. Therefore, it has also fulfilled the requirement of minimum sample size given by Hair et al., (2010), which is 100 when considering models containing five or fewer variables. Preliminary data analysis was conducted to find a missing data, outliers and assessing normality. Hence, consequently 10 sets of responses

which have missing values were detected and cleaning process was done by eliminating the response sets which were not completed and the 1 outlier found has been deleted from the data set. The remaining 106 cases were considered for further data analysis.

RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

Table 1 shows the demographic profiles of the respondents. The result indicated that among 106 respondents in the survey of this study, 49.1 percent was male and 50.9 percent female. 47.2% respondents was from the age group of 19 to 30 years old; while 29.2% was from the age group of 31 to 40 years old ; age group of 41 to 50 years old made up 14.2 % while 9.4 % was grouped in 51 to 60 years old. While the employment status of respondents showed 78.3% respondents was permanent workers, with 21.7 % working as temporary/ contract. Respondents with yearly income ranging less than RM 20,000 per year accounted for 25.5%. The results showed that the majority of the respondents (50.9%) were income earners between RM 20,000 to RM 39,000 per year; while 18.9% were those with yearly income ranging from RM 40,000 to RM 60,000 per year. Only 4.7 % accounted for yearly incomes above RM 60,000.

Table 1: Respondents' profile

Category	Sub Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	52	49.1
	Female	54	50.9
Age	19 to 30 years old	50	47.2
	31 to 40 years old	31	29.2
	41 to 50 years old	15	14.2
	51 to 60 years old	10	9.4
Employment Status	Permanent	83	78.3
	Contract/temporary	23	21.7
Income	Less than 20,000 per year	27	25.5
	20,000 to 39,000 per year	54	50.9
	40,000 to 60,000 per year	20	18.9
	Above 60,000	5	4.7

FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis was conducted using a Principal Components Analysis (PCA) on each variable which is a technique to reduce a large number of variables to a smaller set of underlying factors (Coakes, Steed and Ong, 2009). The result of factor analysis shows that, three factors remained after factor analysis was successfully done. The criterion for the significance of factor loadings is the absolute value of above 0.60 which would then fulfill various rules of thumb; with factor loading cutoff criteria at 0.60 (Hair et al., 2010), Kaiser-Myer-Olkin's (KMO) is 0.60 or higher (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013) and Sphericity Bartlett test is important (p<0.05) (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). The inter-correlations among items were checked using a reliability analysis. To achieve a good reliability, the reliability coefficient or Cronbach's alpha should be 0.7 or higher (Hair et al., 2010). The results of the reliability test among those items are tabulated in Table 2.

Table 2: Internal reliability test

	Variables	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Independent Variables	Social Support	3	0.918
	Work Conditions	3	0.755
Dependent Variable	Happiness at the workplace	6	0.835

From the result it clearly showed that the Cronbach's alpha values for all variables were above 0.7, indicating that the measures were acceptable. Among all the variables, social support showed the highest alpha value of 0.9181, while happiness' alpha value was 0.835 contrasting Cronbach's alpha value for work conditions of 0.755.

PEARSON CORRELATION

The results of correlation analysis were tabulated as depicted in Table 3. The correlation analysis of the study variables and results showed that happiness at the workplace has significant correlation with employment status (r= 0.771, n= 106, p= 0.000; <0.05), income (r= 0.287, n= 106, p= 0.003; <0.05). But it showed insignificant correlation with social support (r= 0.116, n= 106, p= 0.235; >0.05), work condition (r= -0.026, n= 106, p= 0.795; >0.05).

Table 3: Pearson’s correlation analysis

		1	2	3	4	5
Happiness at the Workplace (1)	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Employment Status (2)	Pearson Correlation	0.771**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000				
Income (3)	Pearson Correlation	0.287**	0.192*	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003	0.049			
Social Support (4)	Pearson Correlation	0.116	0.092	-0.131	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.235	0.347	0.180		
Work Condition (5)	Pearson Correlation	-0.026	0.017	-0.081	-0.017	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.795	0.861	0.408	0.860	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The result of multiple regression indicates the best prediction of happiness at workplace arising from several influence factors such as employment status, income, social support and work conditions, presented in the following table 4.

Table 4 showed the result of overall effect of the four independent variables on overall happiness at workplace is significant. The significant value (or p-value) was 0.000 which is below the 0.05 level. The result of multiple regression indicated that the overall model explained 62.0 percent of variance in happiness at the workplace, which revealed its statistical significance with $F(4, 106) = 41.121, p < 0.05$. An inspection of individual predictors revealed that employment status ($t = 11.672, p = 0.000; < 0.05$) and income ($t = 2.404, p = 0.018; < 0.05$), exerted significant influence on overall happiness at workplace. On the other hand, social support ($t = 1.092, p = 0.277; > 0.05$) and work conditions ($t = -0.400, p = 0.690; > 0.05$) were not significant influence on happiness at workplace.

Table 4: Multiple regressions analysis

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	t	Sig.
Happiness at the workplace		5.596	0.000
	Employment Status	11.672	0.000
	Income	2.404	0.018
	Social Support	1.092	0.277
	Work Conditions	-0.400	0.690
R ² :	0.620		
F Value:	41.121		
Sig F Change:	0.000		

T-TEST ANALYSIS

An independent sample t-test was carried out to identify the differences between respondents’ employment status on the happiness at the workplace. The results of the independent sample t-test are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: t-Test analysis

		Employment Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig.
Happiness at the workplace	Permanent		83	5.1185	0.44519	t=12.342, p<0.000
	Contract/temporary		23	3.3261	1.02799	

The t-test results in Table 6 indicated the comparison of mean differences in the happiness at workplace among workers in the Government sector in Lahad Datu with employment status permanent mean at 5.118; contract/ temporary mean at 3.326 after applying t- test statistic. The t-statistic for the coefficient showed 12.342 while its p value at 0.000; (p<0.05). Clearly, there is a significant difference in happiness at workplace between permanent and contract workers in the Government sector in Lahad Datu, Sabah whereby permanent workers reported significantly higher levels of happiness at the workplace than contract workers.

ANOVA TEST ANALYSIS

One-way ANOVA was carried out to identify the differences between respondents’ income level and its influence on the happiness at workplace. The result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: ANOVA analysis

Happiness at the workplace	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Less than RM20,000 per year	27	4.043	1.178	7.341	0.000
RM20,000 - RM39,000 per year	54	5.000	0.647		
RM40,000 - RM60,000 per year	20	4.891	0.906		
RM60,000 and above per year	5	4.866	1.238		

The aforementioned table shows the comparison of mean differences in the happiness at the workplace with four income levels using ANOVA test. The result found that the F statistic for one-way ANOVA analysis at 7.341. Its p-value 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean values for happiness at workplace as seen in the lower income group (income RM20, 000 and less per year) compared to the middle and high income group (earned income RM40, 000 to RM 60,000 and above per year) with its p-value at $0.000 < 0.05$. Middle/high income level reported significantly higher levels of happiness at the workplace than lower income group. Hence, there is significant difference in happiness at the workplace between income level workers in Government sector in Lahad Datu, Sabah.

DISCUSSION

This research attempts to determine the influence factors of happiness at workplace among workers in the Government sector in Lahad Datu, Sabah. The significant difference in happiness at workplace between employment status and income level as well as the relationship between social support, work conditions and happiness at workplace amongst workers in Government Sector in Lahad Datu, Sabah were reported.

Multiple regression analysis has shown that R square = 0.620 meaning that 62.0 % of the variation in happiness at workplace is explained by employment status, income, social support and work conditions. In addition, the F-value of 41.121 is significant at p-value =0.000; < 0.05 , meaning that this model is a good descriptor of the relation between happiness at the workplace and its determinants. In other words, the independent variables are associated significantly explaining the variance in happiness at the workplace. However, it still leaves out 38% unexplained in this study. In other words, there are 38% confounding factors that tend to influence happiness at workplace but which have not been considered in this study.

SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE

An independent sample t-test was carried out to identify the differences in happiness at the workplace between employment status of workers. As a result, there were significant mean differences in happiness at workplace among workers in the Government sector in Lahad Datu for the permanent workers and contract workers which means that the hypothesis 1 has been supported indicating that permanent workers are happier than contract/temporary workers in the Government agencies in Lahad Datu Sabah.

This analysis outcome was consistent with the findings of the other researches, such as Berger (2009) and Wesarat et al., (2014) all of which found significant relationship between employment status and happiness. All these studies showed that an individual’s happiness depends on his/her employment status either full time or part time employment because the happiness comes with employment status which gives employment security. However, Berger (2009) cautioned that part-time and full-time employments which may affect employee happiness should be investigated further because in some reasons there were voluntary part-time employees who chose not to work full-time were happier than those full-time employees.

Besides, this result is consistent with the Theory of Work Adjustment that has been used in this study. The said Theory supported that antecedents of happiness at workplace occurred in a situation of a fit between person and the situation (Fisher 2010). Hence, happiness at workplace appeared to depend on stable tendencies in the person. Based on this assumption of person–job fit, employment status leads to happiness at workplace can be described by the needs–supplies fit that occurred when the job and organization supply what the individual needs, wants or prefers such as perceived job security in permanent employment status working in the Government sectors.

SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INCOME AND HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE

The analysis of One-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the significant difference in happiness at workplace between income levels of workers. One-way ANOVA is used to compare the variance between the different groups of respondents' income level within each of the groups. The results showed that happiness at workplace were significantly different among the respondent's income groups indicating that hypothesis 2 has been supported. The comparison of mean differences in the happiness at workplace based on income level showed that the lower income group (income RM20, 000 and less per year) and high income group (earned income RM40, 000 to RM 60,000 and above per year) have significant mean differences in the happiness at the workplace, 4.043 and 4.891 respectively. Thus indicating that high income group reported significantly higher levels of happiness at workplace than lower income group.

This analysis was consistent with the findings gathered by previous researchers in a study among respondents in the other countries. For example, In Germany, Tella et al., (2010) found that happiness was influenced by income adaptation whereby a one standard deviation increase in income was similar to an increase in happiness. De Neve and Ward (2017) found that thousands of individuals in Europe with higher wages were indeed predictive of greater wellbeing or happiness. However, happiness in some job types such as position levels (manager, executive, official) and job design (clerical, sales, service) showed inconsistent results. Nevertheless, this result too was consistent with the study done by Easterlin (2001) who concluded that happiness was influenced by various levels of income in the United States. Easterlin (2001) reported that among all respondents feedback about happiness, 16% in the lowest income class (less than 10,000 dollars) showed lower happiness whereas 44% in the highest income class (70,000 dollars and above) indicated happier state thereby confirming that high income group was happier than lower income group in the United States.

INSIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL SUPPORT AND HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE

Based on the result of Multiple Regression Analysis, $t = 1.092$, $p=0.277$; >0.05 indicating that there is insignificant relationship between social support and happiness at workplace which means that the hypothesis 3 has not been supported. Hence, the worker's feedback to the people around their workplace such as friends and supervisors could not influence happiness at workplace amongst workers in Government sector in Lahad Datu, Sabah.

This analysis was inconsistent with the findings of other researches such as Burger and Caldwell (2000) and Rami (2013) who reported that social support from work colleagues enabled them to perform better could influence people to perform optimally making use of their full potentials. Besides, social support also helped people to cope with various life problems or emotional distress. In other previous studies, for example in Europe, De Neve and Ward (2017) found that the level of support that a worker received from his or her fellow workers was strongly predictive of happiness and workers who reported being members of a trade union generally were more happy with their jobs. Furthermore, In in Pakistan, Rashid and Rashid (2012) in their study about the factors that influence employees' motivation among workers in the public sector revealed that social supports such as friendly coworkers and supervisors have significant relationship on happiness at workplace in the public sector. Similarly in Mexico, Peterson et al., (2003) found that friendly supervision and co-workers among public workers increased work motivation and their happiness too.

The inconsistent result of the relationship between social support and happiness at workplace among workers in Government sector in Lahad Datu Sabah might also be due to the reason that workers in Government sector nowadays have poor quality of friendship or are not happy with the quality of supervision. This is supported by Rashid and Rashid (2012) whose research revealed that public sector jobs were characterized by poor quality of friendship, non-helpfulness and disconcert among subordinates and co-workers. Thus, these factors need to be further discussed and explored in depth.

INSIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK CONDITIONS AND HAPPINESS AT WORKPLACE

Based on the result of Multiple Regression Analysis, $t = -0.400$, $p=0.690$; >0.05 indicating that there is insignificant relationship between work conditions and happiness at the workplace which means that the hypothesis 4 has not been supported. Hence, the worker's response to the working conditions and environment such as noise, risk, activities and safety could not influence the happiness at the workplace amongst workers in the Government sector in Lahad Datu, Sabah. In the previous studies, Lennon (1994) found that the responsibility and routine could be interpreted as evidence that other aspects of control over work are related to happiness at the workplace. From the wellbeing perspective, a healthy work force means the presence of positive feelings in the workers that would result in happier workers (Harter, Schmidt and Keyes, 2002).

The inconsistent result of relationship between work conditions and happiness at the workplace among workers in Government sector in Lahad Datu Sabah might also be due to the fact that many respondents were from job position such as civil defense force, driver, enforcement officer and doctor all of whom have uncomfortable work condition environment such as noises, high risk of accident, exposure to health hazards, long working hours or long traveling time. This is supported by De Neve and Ward (2017) who reported that labor-intensive work was systematically correlated with less happiness and this has been the case across a number of labor-intensive industries such as construction, manufacturing, mining, transport, fishing, farming, and forestry. Baumeister et al., (2013) reported that heavy workload, inappropriate drinking amount, unscheduled overtime, or long- traveling time can cause negative influences to one's health which subsequently affected workplace happiness. Therefore, the factor of types of job towards happiness at the workplace need to be further discussed and explored in length.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has found that employment status and income level did influence happiness at workplace. Nonetheless, social support and work conditions did not influence happiness at workplace. After conducting this research, a better understanding about happiness at workplace particularly in Government sector was documented in this study. The finding of this study is useful for public services in Sabah and could be adapted to other Malaysian Public Services. The findings also could provide some information for government servants in order to understand and show concern as well as take concrete and pragmatic actions on the issue of happiness at workplace. In addition, top management in government agencies can get to know which type of determinants is of most significant influence on happiness at workplace.

This study of happiness at the workplace also has subsequent avenues for researchers and policy-makers to consider. Thus, the result of this study is important to the Government workers and that further research and fine-tuning in some aspects could help better transform public services to become more effective and efficient. This research also has provided helpful information to the management in better understanding how employment status and income level can affect happiness at the workplace thereby creating a better and healthier working ambience which ultimately would influence final production in services or goods output. Its meaningful information could offer human resources management assistance in the recruitment process and in employee satisfaction evaluations. All these subsequently could improve overall productivity in workers thereby boosting an organization's outputs and performance / accomplishment indices. That could mean an overall positive game changing trend.

This study had some limitations that will be useful for the future studies. One of the important limitations was regarding the sample size of the study. The target population of the sample is the entire work force in the Government sector only in Lahad Datu Sabah. Hence, this geographical location does not accurately represent all government servants in Sabah and Malaysia as well. In addition, this study conducted the survey using a convenience sampling procedure. Mackey and Gass (2005) pointed out that the obvious disadvantage of convenience sampling is that it was likely to be biased. Therefore, it is highly recommended for researchers to also conduct the survey in other states of Malaysia entirely by using another method of sampling procedure. Furthermore, this study has found that there were 38% confounding factors that tend to influence happiness at workplace which have not been considered in this study. Therefore, other factors of happiness at workplace such as types of job could be further discussed and explored in future studies.

Future studies may also need to focus on the specific concept of happiness at the workplace since happiness also is typically defined by how people experience and evaluate their lives on the whole and majority of people spend much of their lives at work. Since this study found that employment status and income determine the happiness at the workplace, therefore, more detailed researches could be conducted by combining others factors such as job type and physical as well as human workplace characteristics in studying happiness at the workplace so as to provide a broader encompassing understanding of the concept of happiness at the workplace. It is critically important to gain a solid understanding of the role that employment and the workplace play in shaping happiness for individuals and various communities around the world. This is mentioned by De Neve and Ward (2017) that when considering the world's population as a whole, people with jobs evaluate the quality of their lives much more favorably than those who have no permanent job or unemployed beyond the salary attached to it.

Therefore, the importance of happiness at workplace and exposure to some of the results of previous research both within and outside of Malaysia so that it can be an input for further research, remembering happiness is an important domain especially in life as well as in the work environment. This has been mentioned earlier that nowadays, the economics studies happiness by looking at how people in different countries rate their own happiness as one of the indicators to measure a nation's progress through examining Gross National Happiness. However, the employment and happiness for all countries over the world might be different for reasons of differing political, economic, and cultural variances between countries that could give varying degree of interpretations of the relationship between employment and happiness entirely.

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