

Satisfied and Happy: Establishing Link between Job Satisfaction and Subjective Well-Being

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Abstract – Job satisfaction pertains to people's reactions and feelings towards their jobs. It is an indicator of emotional well-being or psychological health. On the other hand, subjective well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives which may include cognitive judgments and affective evaluations. With the aim of knowing the possible relationship between job satisfaction and subjective well-being, 251 teachers who came from 52 government schools were asked to respond to the Generic Job Satisfaction Scale (GJSS) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The item on the GJSS which registered the highest mean pertained to job security ($M=4.35$, $SD=.62$) while the lowest means were observed on items that pertained to concern of the management towards the teacher ($M=4.04$, $SD=.61$) and getting along with supervisors ($M=4.04$, $SD=.64$). As to the items in the SWLS, the highest mean was observed on the item that pertained to satisfaction with life ($M=5.65$, $SD=1.09$) while the item with lowest mean pertained to getting the important things one wants in life ($M=5.21$, $SD=1.28$). Generally, the participants of the study had high job satisfaction and subjective well-being. Also, it was revealed that job satisfaction was significantly related to subjective well-being with job satisfaction predicting subjective well-being.

Keywords – correlation, Filipino teachers, job satisfaction, positive psychology, subjective well-being

INTRODUCTION

The Spillover Theory states that affect is segmented in a variety of life domains which may include family life, leisure life, community life, and work life. Work life domain in particular is considered to be a psychological space in which all affective experiences related to work are stored. Affective experience in the work life domain, for example job satisfaction, stems from the satisfaction of an employee's various needs [1].

A review of extant empirical research found support to the Spillover Theory. Data indicated that people who were satisfied with their jobs were also satisfied with the other specific domains of life and with life in general. Conversely, people who were dissatisfied with their jobs were also dissatisfied with other domains of life and with life as a whole. Furthermore, it was identified that support for the Spillover hypothesis provided by research that relates job satisfaction and life satisfaction was consistent with empirical research that test the relationships between other manifestations of work and non-work. Some aspect of work like occupation, task demands,

or social interaction opportunities were related to some aspect of non-work like leisure activities, distribution of household duties, or social participation [2].

Specifically, it was concluded from a research that the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction was positive and significant, and the constructs appear to mutually influence one another. The cross-sectional results further suggest a strong bidirectional relationship that was equivalent in magnitude. The longitudinal results, which may be more valid, suggest a significant and moderate effect of life satisfaction on job satisfaction over a five-year period and a significant, but relatively weak effect of job satisfaction on life satisfaction over the same time interval [3].

Similarly, in another study, it was revealed that job satisfaction had a positive and direct impact on life satisfaction. It was claimed that the effect of job satisfaction was significantly larger than for life satisfaction on job satisfaction [4]. On the other hand, it is assumed that the degree of overall happiness is a

strong correlate of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is influenced by variables external to the workplace [5].

Using the above-mentioned principles as guiding post, this study was conducted specifically to determine whether such claims apply to Filipinos particularly among basic education teachers.

Job Satisfaction

Majority of people spend a quarter of their lives working [6] that is why an interesting topic for those who work for organizations and who study them is job satisfaction [7]. Different aspects of a job which may in turn be positive or negative influences satisfaction [8]. This is so because job satisfaction is believed to be variable that is attitudinal in nature [7]. If people are satisfied with their jobs, they will more likely be creative, flexible, innovative, and loyal [9].

Job satisfaction is best understood either by focusing on employees or organizations and such can be explained by two existing perspectives. The Humanitarian perspective reiterates that people deserve to be treated with respect and with fairness. The Utilitarian perspective on the other hand believes that job satisfaction lead to employee behaviors contributory to the functioning of an organization. Thus, job satisfaction is actually a reflection of organizational functioning [7].

With emphasis on employees, job satisfaction is an indicator of emotional well-being or others would refer to as psychological health [7]. It is an emotional state associated with pleasure and can lead to positive work attitude and improved performance [9]. Understanding of people's well-being in the workplace is important [6]. Employees with high level of satisfaction manifest positive attitudes while those who are dissatisfied manifest the opposite [8].

Considering that job satisfaction is tantamount to how people feel about their jobs [7], mindsets and attitudes affect employees' actions and performances, which in turn affect the way projects are handled and responses to certain situations [9]. Job satisfaction is a manifestation of how happy people are with their jobs and can be enhanced either by changing people's attitudes or by changing their environments [5]. Understanding job satisfaction is important because it is associated with well-being [10].

Subjective well-being

Subjective well-being on the other hand refers to how people evaluate their lives which includes cognitive judgments and affective evaluations [11].

Cognitive judgments include life satisfaction while affective evaluations include moods and emotions which are generally categorized as either positive or negative emotional feelings. People with high levels subjective well-being are satisfied with their lives and experience frequent positive emotions. Subjective well-being is the psychological term for happiness. Life satisfaction in general is a conscious cognitive judgment of life and criteria for judgment are always relative to individuals [12].

Specifically, a happy person possesses the following: blessed with a positive temperament, tends to look on the bright side of things and does not ruminate excessively about bad events, and is living in an economically-developed society, has confidants, and possesses adequate resources for making progress toward valued goals. It must be noted however that descriptions associated with happy people are changing considering the fact that researches on subjective well-being are progressing rapidly [13].

Considering the key point of the Spillover Theory where dissatisfaction in one area of life may bleed to other areas, job satisfaction and subjective well-being as experienced by teachers cannot be separated or a demarcation line can be placed between them. Happiness in life or subjective well-being may affect satisfaction at work and vice versa. Therefore, giving due attention to teachers satisfaction at work may eventually influence their happiness in life as a whole. Satisfied and happy teachers are productive teachers and proactive teachers are needed to ensure quality education.

In the end, the conduct of a study on teachers' job satisfaction and its possible link to subjective well-being is a worthy undertaking. Education will never be complete without teachers because teachers are the most important element of the educational process [14]. Several studies have already reported that, in any given year, 30% of the variation in students' test scores can be attributed to teachers while literature with consistency found that students' learning was influenced by teachers [15]. To date, no extant literature is available on linking teachers' job satisfaction and subjective well-being which is specifically conducted among basic education teachers in the Philippines. And for that reason, this study was conducted.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study generally aimed to establish a link between job satisfaction and subjective well-being.

Specifically, it was guided by the following objectives : (1) to determine participants' job satisfaction, (2) to determine participants' subjective well-being, (3) to determine the relationship between participants' job satisfaction and subjective well-being, and (4) to determine whether participants' job satisfaction can significantly predict their subjective well-being.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design

The correlational research design was used in this study. This design describes the relationship between variables. Specifically, to determine the possible relationship between job satisfaction and subjective well-being, correlation analysis was used. The goal of correlation analysis is to see whether two measurement variables covary and at the same time quantify the strength of said relationship. On the other hand, to ascertain whether job satisfaction predicts subjective well-being, linear regression was used. Linear regression expresses the relationship in the form of an equation.

Research instruments

The Generic Job Satisfaction Scale (GJSS) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were utilized in this study. Items in the GJSS focused on employees' feelings and reactions towards aspects of their jobs. Structural characteristics of the job (i.e. actual value of wages, status, autonomy, etc.) were not considered to be as important in determining employee job satisfaction as the reactions of employees to those characteristics. The scale is relevant to practically any occupation. Model of job satisfaction presented focuses on the reaction to events rather than the events themselves [5]. GJSS has 10 items which are responded through a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). Current reliability of the scale with the responses of the participants of this study is .84.

On the other hand, the SWLS assesses life satisfaction as a whole and does not assess health and finances but allows subjects, in whatever way they choose, to weigh these domains [16]. Additionally, the scale assesses the positive side of an individual's experience [12]. The scale has five items that can be responded through a Likert scale of 1 to 7 (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). Items in the SWLS are global rather than specific in nature [12]. Current

reliability of the scale using the responses of the participants in this study is .81.

Participants

Two hundred fifty-one Filipino basic education teachers who completely-responded to the given research instruments were considered participants of this study. These basic education teachers came from 52 government schools from the provinces of Pampanga and Tarlac in the Philippines. There were 142 females and 109 males. One hundred eighty-seven of them were married and 64 were single. Their years of service as government teachers ranged from one to 36 (M=10.43, SD=7.61). All of them are permanent employees.

Statistical treatments

Means along with standard deviations were used to describe the nature of the data collected from the participants. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was calculated to find out the relationship between the variables of the study. Also Linear Regression was used to statistically predict the outcome variable. Job satisfaction was the predictor variable.

Ethical considerations

Since this study used teachers as participants, only those willing to participate in the study were included. Their willingness to participate was the assurance that they were giving their true responses to the items of the research instruments. Also, strict confidentiality was observed so as not to reveal the true identity of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Traditionally, nurturing and at the same time developing students have been the primary role of teachers, however in the current times, this might have changed. Typical teacher's work, nowadays, include not only teaching, but also the learning of new skills, keeping abreast with new technology, and dealing with parents, and even with the community at large [17]. And since the teaching profession is regarded as a calling by many, it also requires the moral inseparability of work and one's life [18].

Using SPSS 15.0 to analyze the responses of the participants in the study, results are presented in four tables.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the GJSS

Items	Min.	Max.	M	SD
1. I receive recognition for a job well done.	1.00	5.00	4.10	.70
2. I feel close to the people at work.	1.00	5.00	4.21	.56
3. I feel good about working for this company (school).	1.00	5.00	4.29	.55
4. I feel secure about my job.	1.00	5.00	4.35	.62
5. I believe management (administration) is concerned about me.	1.00	5.00	4.04	.61
6. On the whole, I believe work is good for my physical health.	1.00	5.00	4.11	.67
7. My wage (salary) is good.	1.00	5.00	3.61	.91
8. All my talents and skills are used at work.	1.00	5.00	4.18	.66
9. I get along with my supervisors (immediate heads).	1.00	5.00	4.04	.64
10. I feel good about my job.	1.00	5.00	4.18	.58

Whole Instrument: M=4.11, SD=.65, Interpretation=High Satisfaction

Table 1 specifically summarizes the information relevant to the profile of the first instrument that administered to the participants. It reflects the means and standard deviations for all the responses of the two hundred fifty-one participants on the GJSS. As can be gleaned in the Table, all of the means of the items in the instrument were higher than three which was supposedly the mean with one as minimum and five as maximum. Items with the highest means pertained to job security (M=4.35, SD=.62), the good feeling of working for the school (M=4.29, SD=.55), and the feeling of being close to people at work (M=4.21, SD=.56). On the other hand, items with lowest means pertained to salary (M=3.61, SD=.91), concern of the management towards the teacher (M=4.04, SD=.61), and getting along with supervisors (M=4.04, SD=.64).

Ideas imbedded in the items with highest means are worth giving emphasis. With reference to job security, it must be noted that all of the participants of this study had permanent tenures and were all working for government schools. This fact could explain why the item that pertained to job security was highly-rated. In the Philippines, graduates of teacher education

programs would always aspire to be employed in a government school because working for a government school is always tantamount to having a permanent tenure. After graduation, graduates would find employment first in private schools and would use such employment to gain necessary teaching experience. And since these fresh graduates still have to wait to take the Licensure Examination for Teachers which is usually schedule in August and March, being employed in private schools is always a viable option. Being licensed is not necessarily a requirement to be hired in a private school while it is always a requirement to be hired in a government school.

As early as 1975, a significant, positive and linear relationship had already been established between overall-job satisfaction and company tenure [19]. This could be associated with the fact that an employee will never be motivated if there is uncertainty in employment [20]. With reference survey results, only two aspects remained to be in the top five aspect of job satisfaction since 2002 and job security was one of them [21]. Job security is one of the determinants of job satisfaction [22].

The good feeling one has while working for a school was parallel with the findings a study, where having a work that is assumed to have social impact on the world was considered to be an important life goal [23]. Employees who find their work fulfilling and satisfying are more likely to be satisfied [21]. The good feeling the participants have in this study about their jobs can be further highlighted by their years of service where the mean was 10.43 years. The participants would not stay long if they do not feel good about it. Similarly, in another study, work itself was found to be the most motivating aspect of the job [24] although said study was conducted among tertiary level faculty members.

The feeling of being close to people being the third item with the highest mean was a reflection of the importance of relationships in the work settings. It is assumed that relationships of employees with co-workers are important to success at work. Building of alliances across organizations is helpful for employees to accomplish their work and organizational goals. The forming of positive relationships makes the workplace and work itself more enjoyable, thus, in turn increase job satisfaction and engagement [21].

On the other hand, the main ideas imbedded in the three items with lowest means are also worth discussing in detail. Salary having the lowest mean

can be explained by the fact that money is considered to be a good motivator and it must be recognized that employees work for money and need money. Good salary and compensation are key factors to satisfy employees [23]. In one study, it was identified that pay was one of the determinants of job satisfaction [25]. It must be noted that the academic ranks of the participants during the conduct of the study were Teachers I to III and said ranks had salaries ranging from Php 18,549 to Php 22,982 (approximately USD 450 to 560) per month at that time.

Concern of the management towards the teacher having the second lowest mean and getting along with supervisors having the third lowest mean could be explained again by the importance of relationships in the workplace. Employees' relationships with their supervisors are considered to be the central element of employees' affiliation to an organization. Recognition of employees' performances through praise, awards and incentives is believed to be a cost-effective way of increasing their morale, productivity, and competitiveness [21]. Relations with management had been found to one of the determinants of job satisfaction [22] and management practices impacts employees' job satisfaction [8].

As to the whole instrument, the summated mean of the total scores of the participants was 4.11 or 41.11 when multiplied with the total number of items. A total score of 39 to 41 is a reflection of "High Satisfaction." High scorers tend to have few sleeping problems, happy in personal lives, don't feel worn out at the end of the day, don't desire counseling, and rarely worry [5]. Also, it can be gleaned that the responses were very homogenous as reflected in the computed standard deviation value of .65. Therefore, the mean scores of the participants had minimal dispersion.

Happiness at work is a more likely predictor of job performance [26], and job satisfaction is an indicator of employee retention [27]. Lower job satisfaction on the other hand manifests itself in many aspects, ranging from exhaustion and lower work commitment to lack of concentration and psychosomatic complaints [28].

It must be noted that the results of this study were similar with earlier studies conducted. Teachers in one study were specifically satisfied with the social aspect of their work and seeing the results of their work [29] while in another study, it was revealed that that job satisfaction was a primary requirement of the teaching and learning process. Teachers who attain adequate

job satisfaction fulfilled educational objectives and national goals [30]. Low level of employee satisfaction was associated with an increase in the number and frequency of sick leave days in another study. Even if relatively weak correlation between job satisfaction and absenteeism was established, it was nevertheless statistically significant for all the dimensions of the Job Satisfaction Survey (pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, co-workers, nature of work and communication) [31].

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for SWLS

Items	Min.	Max.	M	SD
1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.	1.00	7.00	5.60	.86
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.	2.00	7.00	5.31	.98
3. I am satisfied with my life.	1.00	7.00	5.65	1.09
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.	1.00	7.00	5.21	1.28
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	1.00	7.00	5.23	1.31
<i>Whole Instrument:</i>			<i>M=5.41,</i>	<i>SD=1.10,</i>
<i>Interpretation=High Satisfaction</i>				

Table 2 specifically summarizes the information relevant to the profile of the second instrument. Means and standard deviations are reported for all the responses of the two hundred fifty-one participants on the SWLS. As can be seen in the Table, all of the means of the items in the instrument were higher than four which was supposedly the mean with one as minimum and seven as maximum. The item with the highest mean pertained to satisfaction with life (M=5.65, SD=1.09). On the other hand, the item with lowest mean pertained to getting the important things one wants in life (M=5.21, SD=1.28).

With reference to the whole instrument, the summated mean of the total scores of the participants was 5.41 or 27 when multiplied with the total number of items. Scores from 25 to 29 were considered high scores. Individuals who score in this range like their lives and feel that things are going well. Their lives may not be perfect, but they feel that things are mostly good. Furthermore, just because the person is satisfied does not mean she or he is complacent. In fact, growth and challenge might be part of the reason why one is satisfied. For most people in this high-scoring range,

life is enjoyable, and the major domains of life are going well– work or school, family, friends, leisure, and personal development. The person may draw motivation from the areas of dissatisfaction [32]. The responses were also very homogenous as reflected by the computed standard deviation value of 1.10. Therefore, the mean scores of the participants had minimal dispersion in relation to the total mean score gathered from the instrument.

As to the possible impact of subjective well-being to work, it was found in a study that causal link exist between subjective well-being and job adaptation. Job adaptation in the study referred to numerous withdrawal and other adaptive behaviors enacted by individuals in organizations. Those unhappy and dissatisfied with their lives were significantly more likely to engage in adaptive behaviors than those with high subjective well-being. Adaptive behaviors include being late, being absent, quitting, missing meetings, chatting with co-workers and the like [33]. Therefore, it can be said that when teachers have low subjective well-being, they are more likely to manifest adaptive behaviors.

Table 3. Correlation between Job Satisfaction and Subjective Well-being

	N	Mean	SD	R
Job satisfaction	251	41.12	4.23	.42
Subjective well-being	251	27.00	4.20	

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

Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient revealed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 15.0) Software, a significant correlation ($r=.43$, $p<.01$) between job satisfaction and subjective well-being was established and correlation between said variables was moderate [34]. This result was in contrast with the result of an earlier study where the relationship between teaching satisfaction and life satisfaction was not established despite the participants being highly satisfied with both teaching as well as life in general [18]. It must be noted however that said study was conducted among university teachers and in another country.

The degree of overall happiness is one of the strongest correlates of job satisfaction [5] and since items in GJSS are believed to be related to variables external of the workplace, it could be assumed that job satisfaction and life satisfaction influence each other. Problems related to work may cause disruptions at

home and problems related to home may also cause disruptions at work.

Table 4. Linear regression analysis with Job Satisfaction as the predictor

R	R-Squared	Sig.	B
.43	.18	.00	9.53 + .43 (subjective well-being)

With reference to Table 4, the R value column presents the simple correlation between job satisfaction and subjective well-being which was .43. The R-squared value on the other hand indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, subjective well-being, can be explained by the independent variable, job satisfaction. In this case, 18% can be explained. In general, the higher the R-squared, the better the model fits that data. In line with the Spillover Theory that affect can be segmented in a variety of life domains which may include family life, leisure life, community life, and work life [1], it can therefore be said that subjective well-being is influenced not only by job satisfaction but by other life domains as well. Focusing on the Significance column, it can be observed that overall the regression model statistically significant predicted the outcome variable since the $p<.00$, which is less than 0.01.

In the end, the implications of these findings are important for teachers as well as for the management and governing bodies of government schools. Regardless of the very positive and reassuring findings that ascertain teachers have high satisfaction and subjective well-being, the significant correlation between job satisfaction and subjective well-being is one that cannot be ignored. It is important to realize that teachers' satisfaction or contentment with their jobs is not merely a professional experience. Rather, this is an experience that can impact subjective well-being which in turn can affect the teaching and learning in any educational institution. Hence, it is important for management and governing bodies to assume roles in helping teachers value and appreciate their jobs since it contributes to their sense of well-being, and this can be by way of supportive environments and appropriate teachers' assistance programs such as formal counseling services, opportunities to promote creative talents, occasions for socializations and interpersonal relationships.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

As can be drawn from the results of the study, teachers' job satisfaction had a significant relationship with their subjective well-being with job satisfaction significantly predicting subjective well-being. Therefore, it can be surmised that experiencing job satisfaction is crucial in the participants' subjective well-being. This proved to be another input in the growing pool of knowledge in the field of Positive Psychology particularly on the continuous proliferation of researches on job satisfaction and subjective well-being.

Considering that this study was conducted only among basic education teachers, it is therefore suggested that similar studies be conducted among teachers in the higher education. Other variable can be explored as well like that of involvement to leisure activities and community activities since these domains have also been identified in the Spillover Theory. By considering these other domains, a more holistic understanding of the subject matter can be presented.

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