

***Satisfied and Happy: Establishing Link between
Job Satisfaction and Subjective Well- Being among Filipino Teachers***

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The Asian Conference on Education 2014
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

Job satisfaction refers to people's reactions and feelings towards aspects of their jobs. On the other hand, subjective well-being refers to people's evaluations of their lives which include cognitive judgments, such as life satisfaction; and affective evaluations like moods and emotions. The present study describes the relationship between job satisfaction and subjective well-being specifically among Filipino basic education teachers. Two hundred fifty-one Filipino basic education teachers who came from 52 government schools from the provinces of Pampanga and Tarlac in the Philippines whose years of service ranged from one to 36 were asked to respond to the Generic Job Satisfaction Scale and the Satisfaction with Life Scale. The study employed a descriptive-correlational design. After collecting the questionnaires from the participants and analyzing the data using SPSS 15.0 software, it was noted that the participants had high job satisfaction and high subjective well-being. Also, it was revealed that job satisfaction was significantly related to subjective well-being ($r=.43$, $p<.01$). The researcher looked into the possible implications of these findings to the population at hand.

Keywords: Filipino teachers; positive psychology; job satisfaction; subjective well-being

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Introduction

Most people spend a quarter of their lives working (Blanchflower & Oswald, 1999) that is why an interesting topic for those who work for organizations and who study them is job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). Positive and negative aspects of a job influence satisfaction (Romle & Shamsudin, 2006) because job satisfaction is a variable that is attitudinal in nature (Spector, 1997). When people are satisfied with their jobs, they will more likely be creative, flexible, innovative, and loyal (Wicker, 2011).

Job satisfaction can be best understood either by focusing on employees or organizations. The humanitarian perspective believes that people deserve to be treated with respect and with fairness. On the other hand, the utilitarian perspective believes that job satisfaction can result to employee behaviors that can eventually affect the functioning of an organization therefore job satisfaction can be considered a reflection of organizational functioning (Spector, 1997).

With specific reference to employees, job satisfaction is an indicator of emotional well-being or psychological health (Spector, 1997). It gives an emotional state that provides pleasure and can lead to positive work attitude and better performance (Wicker, 2011). The understanding of people's well-being in the workplace is important (Blanchflower & Oswald, 1999). Employees with high level of satisfaction show positive attitude and those who are dissatisfied show the opposite (Romle & Shamsudin, 2006).

Since job satisfaction is the way people feel about their jobs (Spector, 1997), people's mindset and attitudes do have an effect in their actions and performances, and in turn can affect the way they handle projects and responses to certain situations (Wicker, 2011). Job satisfaction reflects how happy one is with his/her job and can be improved by changing one's attitude or environment (MacDonald & MacIntyre, 1997). Analyzing job satisfaction is important because it is a measure of individual well-being (Clark, 1996).

In contrast, subjective well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives which may include cognitive judgments and affective evaluations as assumed by Eddington and Shuman (2008). Cognitive judgment may include life satisfaction while affective evaluations include moods and emotions like that of positive and negative emotional feelings. People with high subjective well-being are said to be satisfied with their lives and do experience frequent positive emotions and infrequent negative emotions. Subjective well-being is the psychological term for happiness. Life satisfaction in general is believed to be a conscious cognitive judgment of one's life and criteria for judgment are always relative to the individual (Pavot & Diener, 1993).

Specifically, Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith concluded in 1999 that a happy person possesses the following traits: 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. Although said researchers noted that the description of the happy person may change since research in the area of subjective well-being is progressing in a rapid manner.

In the end, conducting a study on teachers' job satisfaction and its possible link to their subjective well-being is a worthy undertaking. It must be recognized that education will never be completed without teachers for the obvious reason that teachers occupy the most important part of the educational process (Rao & Kumar, 2004). Several studies have reported that, in any given year, 30 percent of the variation in students' test scores could be attributed to teachers while literature with consistency finds that students' learning is influenced by teachers (Hunt 2009).

Methodology

Research design

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. A descriptive-correlational design is used when one is interested in describing relationships among variables without seeking to establish causal connections. Variables correlated in this study were job satisfaction and subjective well-being.

Participants

Two hundred fifty-one Filipino basic education teachers who completely responded to the given questionnaires 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 were married and 64 were single. Their years of service as teachers ranged from one to 36 ($M=10.43$, $SD=7.61$). All of them have permanent tenures.

Research instrument

The researcher utilized the Generic Job Satisfaction Scale (GJSS) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The GJSS was developed by MacDonald and MacIntyre (1997). The items in the scale focused on employees' feelings or 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. It has 10 items which are responded through a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). Current reliability of the scale using the responses of the participants of this study is .84.

On the other hand, the SWLS was developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985). The scale 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. Additionally, the scale assesses the positive side of an individual's experience (Pavot & Diener, 1993). The scale has five items that can be responded through a Likert scale of 1 to 7 (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). Items are global rather than specific in nature (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Current reliability of the scale using the responses of the participants in this study is .81.

Results and Discussion

It is generally assumed that people who are satisfied with their jobs tend to be satisfied with their lives and vice versa and the conduct of a research specifically among teachers with emphasis on job satisfaction and subjective well-being is a worthy undertaking.

Nurturing and at the same time developing students has been the primary role of teachers. However, in the current times, this has changed. A 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 the community (Pillay, Goddard & Wilss, 2005). And since the teaching profession is regarded as a calling, it also requires the moral inseparability of work and one's life (Ahammed, 2011).

To be able to achieve the purpose of this study, two instruments were responded to by the 251 participants. These were the GJSS and the SWLS. Using SPSS 15.0 to analyze the responses of the participants, the results are presented in two tables. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the GJSS while Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for SWLS. The correlational coefficient between job satisfaction and subjective well-being is also discussed.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for the Generic Job Satisfaction Scale

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 was administered to the participants. It reports the means and standard deviations for all the responses of the two hundred fifty-one participants on the GJSS. As can be seen 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 pertain 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 pertain to salary ($M=3.61$, $SD=.91$), concern of the management towards the teacher ($M=4.04$, $SD=.61$), and getting along with supervisors ($M=4.04$, $SD=.64$).

The main ideas imbedded in the three items with highest means are worth discussing in detail. As 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. As early as 1975, significant, positive and linear relationship had already been established between overall-job satisfaction and company tenure in the study conducted by Hunt and Saul. The importance of job security was acknowledged by Senol (2011) who believed that it is impossible for an employee to be motivated if he/she constantly worries about the future of his/her employment. Additionally, according to the Society for Human Resource Management (2012), with reference to the surveys they conducted, only two aspects of job satisfaction remained to be in the top five aspects of job satisfaction since 2002 and job security was one of them while Sousa-Poza and Sousa-Poza (2000) found job security to be one of the determinants of job satisfaction.

The good feeling one has working for a school was parallel with the findings of Net Impact (2012), where having a work that has social impact on the world is considered to be an important life goal. In relation, employees who find their work fulfilling and satisfying are more likely to be satisfied (SHRM, 2012). The good feeling the participants have in this study about their jobs is further reflected in their years of service where the mean was 10.43 years. It could be assumed that the participants would not stay long in their profession if they didn't have a good feeling about it. Similarly, in the study conducted by Malik (2011), the work itself was found to be the most motivating aspect of the job 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 setting. 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 (SHRM, 2012).

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 (Parvin & Kabir, 2011) while Sousa-Poza and Sousa-Poza (2000) found pay to be one of the determinants of job satisfaction. It must be noted that the academic ranks of the participants in this 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.

The 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 (SHRM, 2012). Also, Sousa- Poza and Sousa-Poza (2000) found relations with management to be one of the determinants of job satisfaction. Romle and Shamsudin (2006) found that management practices do have an impact to employees' job satisfaction.

Regarding 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." MacDonald and MacIntyre (1997) believed that high scorers tend to have few sleeping problems, happy in personal life, don't feel worn out at the end of the day, don't desire counseling, and rarely worry. Additionally, 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 in relation to the total mean score gathered from the instrument.

For Bakker and Oerlemans (2010), happiness at work is a more likely predictor of job performance and job satisfaction was found to be an indicator of employee retention in a survey conducted by HR Council for the Non-Profit Sector in 2008. Van Horn, Taris, Schaufeli, and Schreurs (2004) found that lower job satisfaction manifests itself in many aspects, ranging from exhaustion and lower work commitment to lack of concentration and psychosomatic complaints.

The result found in this study was similar to the result of the study conducted by Leppanen (2011). Teachers in the study of Leppanen were specifically satisfied with the social aspect of their work and seeing the results of their work. Rao and Sridhar (2003) believed that job satisfaction is a primary requirement of the teaching and learning process. Teachers who attain adequate job satisfaction can fulfill educational objectives and national goals. As observed in the study conducted by Josias (2005), low level of employee satisfaction is associated with an increase in the number and frequency of sick leave days. 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). It can be said therefore, that if teachers' job satisfaction are low, then the more absences they will commit.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Satisfaction with Life Scale

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	1.00	7.00	5.23	1.31

almost nothing.

Whole Instrument: M=5.41 SD=1.10 Interpretation=High Satisfaction

Table 2 specifically summarizes the information relevant to the profile of the second instrument that was administered to the participants. It reports the means and standard deviations 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 pertain to satisfaction with life (M=5.65, SD=1.09). On the other hand, the item with lowest mean pertain to getting the important things one want in life (M=5.21, SD=1.28).

Regarding 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. With reference to the interpretation given by Diener (2006), scores between 25 to 29 are considered high scores. Individuals who score in this range like their lives and feel that things are going well. Of course their lives are not 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 the respondent 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. 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, Judge and Hulin (1991) found a significant causal link between subjective well-being and job adaptation. Job adaptation in their study refers to numerous withdrawal and other adaptive behaviors enacted by individuals in organizations. The researchers claimed that 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. Therefore, it can be said that when teachers have low subjective well-being, they are more likely to commit adaptive behaviors.

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 basing from the measures of correlation given by Subong (2006). This result was in contrast with the result of the study conducted by Ahammed (2011) 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. It must be noted however that the study conducted by Ahammed was among university teachers.

MacDonald and MacIntyre (1997) believed that the degree of overall happiness was one of the strongest correlates of job satisfaction and since items in GJSS were 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.

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 high 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 professional experience. Rather, these are experiences 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 their creative talents, occasions for socialization and interpersonal relationships.

Conclusion

As can be drawn from the results of the study, teachers' job satisfaction had a significant relationship with their subjective well-being. By employing a descriptive-correlational research design, the researcher was able to portray how job satisfaction can influence subjective well-being and vice-versa. 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.

The findings will help school managers understand holistically various factors which could possibly contribute to the improvement of teachers' job satisfaction and subjective well-being. Likewise, this will also be purposeful in the practice of Guidance and Counseling as it will allow guidance counselors to assist teachers in making them realize the worth of job satisfaction and subjective well-being. Designing counseling programs that addresses attainment of positive and joyous conditions among teachers is a sound and viable option in helping them perform tasks expected in the teaching profession.

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