Workplace Happiness: A Conceptual Framework

Rituparna Roy, Dr. Juthika Konwar

Abstract : Have you ever heard the word "Arbedjsglæde"? What does it mean? In Denmark, Arbedjsglæde is the most common term which signifies happiness at work. Arbedjsglæde means the happiness that human beings derive on or after doing something. We can say it is a human emotion, a sense of well-being that turns on when one experiences positive about the work they perform and when they feel involved in the professional commitment. When all's said and done 'Happiness' is a highly subjective experience. Happiness and satisfaction are subjective concepts   and are not the same. While for some people monetary assistance can be equated with job satisfaction, on the other hand, some might strive for recognition of their hard-work and lose motivation on failing to achieve so. As well as for some people having a friendly work environment is an indispensable requisite for deriving pleasure. In this article, researchers will capture an in-depth glance into the components of happiness at work and tries to understand why workplace happiness is so imperative to maintaining work motivation.

Keywords: Components of Workplace Happiness, Employee happiness, Organizations contributon, Workplace Happiness Workplace Happiness Matrix

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1. WORKPLACE HAPPINESS

Ingrained in both ancient and modern cultural ethnicities, the pursuit of happiness is a well-liked fixation around the world (Diener, 2000). "Happiness" is universal to all human beings in every culture and everybody searches for happiness (Fisher. 2010, Aydin, 2012). Anyone can be happy at work, not only you could, you should. Happiness is perhaps one of the utmost striking of human pursuits (Diener, Sapyta, & Suh, 1998). Humans are treated as capital and employer's focal point on employee's faults and failings rather than their strengths. In a post-crash world, such approaches are unsustainable, and positive psychology endows with a new-fangled way of managing that will revolutionize the workplace. Work is one of the essential aspects of people's lives (Dulk, Groeneveld, Ollier-Malaterre, & Valcour, 2013). Inspiring happiness and optimistic emotions in the workplace may escalate performance, magnify innovation and ensure organizational effectiveness. Employee happiness is a more and more relevant and indispensable deliberation in the modern workplace. These days an organization spends huge money on happiness coaches and consultants. Now the organization has even appointed a Chief Happiness Officer in charge of maintaining high morale among employees and monitoring and analyzing the happiness levels in your organization. Happiness at work is realized when an individual employs his talents and abilities. (Dutton & Endmun 2007). When one spent more time at work it should be something that makes one's happy something they enjoy. Happiness at job happens after a triumph in doing a task which makes the individual be the pride of what he had done when staffs believe they have an important job, find the task valuable, accept the responsibility, learn and develop at work; feel motivated and energized and find the job enjoyable. (Kjerulf, 2007).

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The important things in the workplace are not only the salary; of course, one may get a fair salary but may not be happy. According to The Career Bliss Team, "while salary and perks are important contributors to employee happiness, what really makes employees rank their company well is the type of work they do, how well they are managed, and how well they are recognized for their work." Being happy at work is important and the organization also recognizes the importance of human resources. According to Tseng (2009), happy at work and a virtuous attitude to the organization is imperative because it may lead to efficiency and organizational goals can be attained. Moreover being 'okay' at work is not actually okay, it missing a huge happiness dividend if one only settles with 'okay'. According to Maenapothi (2007), happiness at work means the situation at work when human resources happy working, resourceful and achieve the targeted goals, both at the level of employees and organizational level. The purpose of the study addresses is the relevance of workplace happiness and implication to individual and organizational functioning and effectiveness in creating workplace happiness.

2.SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The concept of workplace happiness was not there until a few decades ago, and there is a reason for that. In the last few years, we have seen drastic changes in the industrial sector; now work in positions that did not exist twenty years ago. Due to the intensification of work caused by economic uncertainty and an increase in competition, maintaining a level of happiness at work has become more significant and relevant. Happiness has gained increased traction in corporate circles. Workplace happiness is more than a subjective experience. It is not a by-product of external factors like appreciation or incentives; it comes from the way one chooses to manage their thoughts, actions, and reactions on an everyday basis. The extensive literature review examines various inscriptions on the topic of individual happiness, workplace happiness or happiness at the workplace. According to philosophy or theory, descriptions of happiness in the workplace in the literature vary. We all find the countless mission and vision statements nearly in every organization that "our people are our greatest asset". But in many research surveys, it has been found that job satisfaction is not only the key predictor of turnover rates. Employees may be satisfied with their job but not necessary be

happy at work. It is very much important being happy at work and not just satisfied.   Satisfaction is what we think on the other hand happiness is a feeling when we love what we do. Research has also revealed that the unprecedented level of unhappiness at organizations and the direct link between the employees' happiness and business outcomes. Therefore, to promote happiness at the workplace the contributions of human resource and organizations is significant.

3.RESEARCH GAP AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

The question comes out what happens after a successful recruitment and selection process? How many times employers have thought of employee happiness at the workplace and whether they actually did something to make employees happy? Many findings depict the way of initiatives that can be carried out by organizations to foster workplace happiness that are inexpensive to implement. But the picture is still blurred to comprehend what an organization in reality, can do anything to elevate the happiness level of an employee.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the literature review parameters of workplace happiness are identified. Happiness at the workplace is hypothesized to be influenced by these parameters and according to this; we divided these parameters as individual factors and organizations factors to foster happiness at the workplace.

5. Parameters of Workplace Happiness

Happiness in the workplace is important to both individuals and organizations (Fisher, 2010; Simmons, 2014). The senior lecturer in organizational psychology at Alliance Manchester Business School, Mark Batey said: "This is the human era of the workplace. The best places to work are those in which   people can flourish and be their best selves – instead of pretending to be someone else five days a week. The perfect workplace also gives people flexibility and autonomy as to where and how they work,   built   on   a   culture   of   growth   and   trust.

Fig 1: *Parameters of Workplace Happiness*
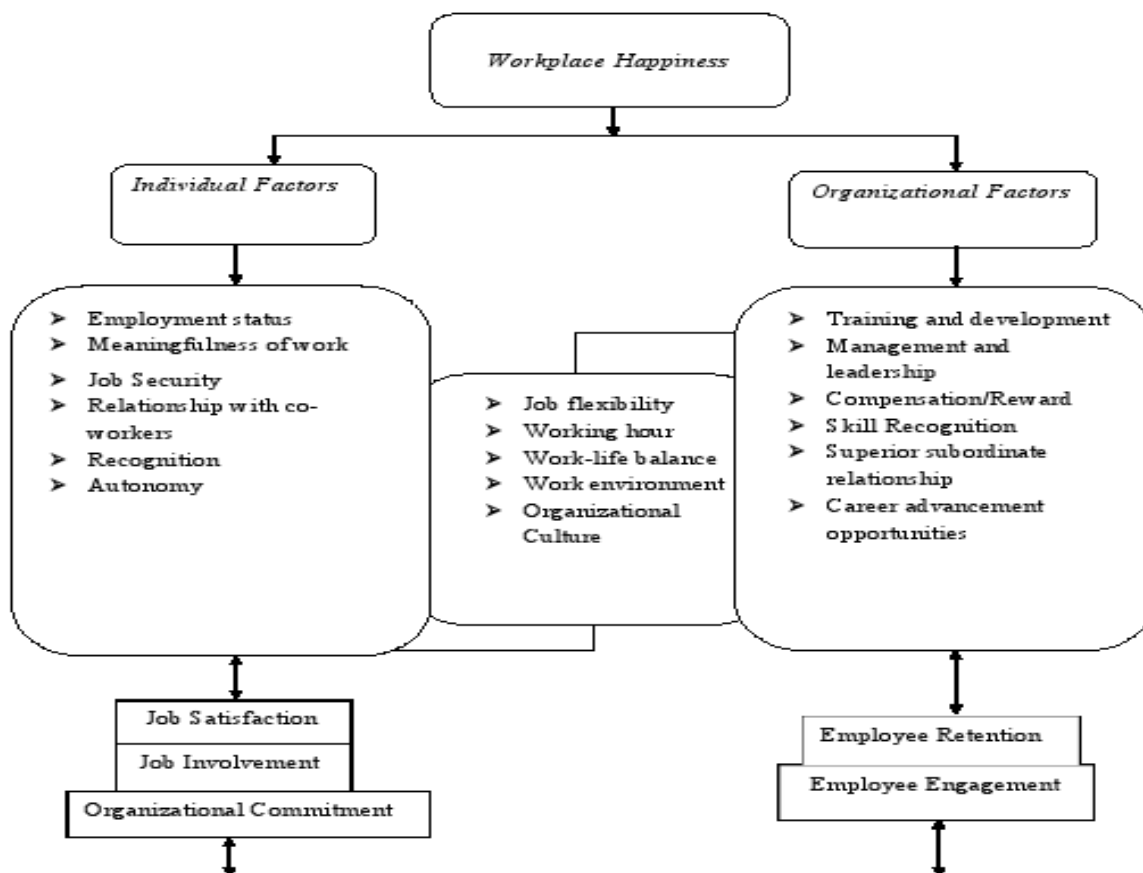
Source: Authors Compilation

5.1 Employee Happiness: Individual Perspectives
It is not just feeling happy all the time something called employee happiness. It is feeling positive about one's work.

➤   Employment Status
Employment status refers to an employment-related position in which a person is being held (Foroutan, 2011). One's happiness depends on their employment status

(Frey & Stutzer, 2000b; Ha and Kim, 2013). In compare to temporary employees, permanent employees seem to be more satisfied with their jobs (Ong & Shah, 2012; Scherer, 2009). Employees are happy when they experience stable employment (Scherer, 2009). Unstable employment not only makes employees feel unhappy but also affects the rate of employee turnover and organizational performance (Dike, 2011).

➢   Meaningfulness of Work

Chalofsky (2003) stated meaningful work as "which gives essence to what we do and what brings a sense of fulfillment to our lives". When people have a sense of meaning in their work, they become more committed to the organization People feel happy when they pursue meaningful activities (Martin, 2008).If employees perceive the worth and meaning of work, they may be happy to do their work (Dimitrov, 2012; MacMillan, 2009). Meaningful work connected employees with their workplace and experience a high level of job satisfaction.

➢   Job Security

To determine whether employees feel happiness at work job security is one of the key factors. Fundamental needs for happiness in life including safety, decent work environment, fair salary, allowances and security (Kjerulf, 2007). A worker with a solid sense of job security efficiently does their work to stay employed and plans to work for the organization for the foreseeable future. Job security and is essential and crucial in order to retain employees in an organization and allow them to work productively and comfortable (Shanti & Mah, 2008).

➢   Relationship with co-workers/Friendship

Co-workers are a distinct part of the working environment, and employees are expected to work harmoniously with other employees (Iqbal, 2010). Co-workers have a crucial effect on the happiness we feel at work (Ojanen (2009, 172). Employees who have meaningful friendship are happier than those who are alone (Snow, 2013). Harmonious interactions with co-workers have been found to have a positive influence on an individual's level of job satisfaction (Ladebo, Awotunde & AbdulSalaam-Saghir, 2008).

➢   Recognition

The key to keeping employees happy in their jobs is to recognize them for their hard work. According to Barton (2002), to increase the level of job satisfaction among employees, recognition is considered the most significant aspect among non-financial rewards. Recognition can be provided a number of ways so managers have to find out what their employees' value most and customize recognition accordingly. Recognitions can be any forms such as; involving employees in decision making, by

➢   Management and Leadership

Management plays an important role in an employee's job satisfaction and happiness (Jackson et.al 2014). The most vital aspect of management is leadership. Guiding, encouraging and participation by the management are detected to pursuit a positive environment (Varila & Viholainen 2000, 74). Warr (2007) defines a positive leader behavior as one that includes willingness to listen employees, showing support respect and concern for employee welfare, and a tendency to show appreciation for employees and their work well done.

increasing their responsibility, by showing empathy towards them and provide them with succession planning and different opportunities to get high designation (Yaseen, 2013).

➢   Autonomy

Autonomy "can be seen to be characterized by the ability to choose how to do one's work; having influence over one's work; flexibility in workload decisions" (Christeen, 2015).It is quite obvious that employee with more autonomy experienced greater feelings of happiness Autonomy on the job influences employee decision to stay in the organization (Spence et al.2009). When employees perceive themselves as having discretionary power in performing their organizational roles, they are more likely to remain in their current organizations because of enhanced ownership in work (Parker & Wall, 1998).

When an employee is being happy at work, they are prepared to fix problems rather than complaining; it is about accepting constructive criticism and persistently trying to enliven oneself without feeling pressurized.

5.2 Employer Contribution: Making a Happy Workplace

It is quite difficult to analyze what makes employees happy, but it is easier said than done to transform the structure of one's daily work pattern and prioritize employee happiness. It has been said that people don't quit their jobs, they quit their bosses. Therefore, instead of struggling to drastically alteration on the whole work environment, an organizations can initially recognize the following factors to be associated with happiness at work.

➢   Training and Development

To keep up with changes in the workplace, it is indispensable for employees to get training and develop new skills throughout their work life. It is one of the key human resource management practices which lead to skills, aptitudes, superior knowledge, optimistic attitude and behavior of employees resulting in the organization in profit (Tangthong, et al., 2014). Every organization needs to be aware of the aspiration for workers to shine. On-the-job training progresses work proficiency, develops an interest in work, gives gratification and reinforces the obligation towards the organization leading to employee retention (Hanif, 2013). In addition, off-the-job training causes employees to pay more attention to the particular training activities, learn new skills and knowledge without distractions paying the complete focus on the training (Elnaga, & Imran, 2013). When employers are given opportunities to develop and train, the employee will be more productive and contented.

➢   Compensations and Rewards

Creating the right compensation plan leads to stronger job satisfaction and overall employee happiness. Rewards and compensations are seen as something given by the organization to employees in response to their contributions and performances as well as to satisfy the employees 'needs (Aguenza & Mat Som, 2012). Employees are encouraged to do a good job, as well as, people are stick with the organization for longer. An organization rewards and compensations strategy should be able to attract scarce and talented employees, retain key and potential employees and also to sustain equity

amongst employees (Terera & Ngirande, 2014).

➢ **Skill Recognition**

The moment new employees start on with the organization the process of skills recognition begins that helps an employer to identify the capacities of the employee. Individual skill recognition is delimited by age and encourages positive behavior, ethics, teamwork, self-confidence, and growth in all employees (Redington, 2007). Skills Recognition endow with people with formal recognition of the competencies that employee have already achieve through formal or informal training, work or life experience.

➢ **Superior-Subordinate Relationship**

The relationship of superior-subordinate is undoubtedly one of the most important relationships that impact your workplace happiness. Any operative program must have strong support from people in senior management positions, and these people must also serve as positive role models to subordinates (Zenger, Ulrich,Smallwood, 2000). Greenhaus (2004) suggested that employees' views regarding organization are strongly concerned with their relationship with the supervisor. Happy workplaces are those where an employer is given the chance to their employee to nurture.

➢ **Career Advancement Opportunities**

Career development is one of the main human resources characteristics that provide the opportunity for employees to continuously be a part of the diverse activities in the organization that develops employees (SHRM, 2012). If employees in their current organization cannot foresee their pathway of career development than there are probabilities that employees will leave the organization the moment, they get an opportunity (Bratton & Gold, 2003). Therefore, to gain and sustain competitive advantage organizations required talented and productive employees and these employees need career development to enhance and cultivate their competencies, (Prince, 2005).

5.2   Common Components: Both Individual and Organizational

➢ **Job Flexibility**

The importance of employment flexibility such as scheduling variations that better accommodate individual work times, workloads, responsibilities, and locations around family responsibilities (Cunningham, 2002; Pleffer, 2007). The report also uncovered that according to 35% of women and 32% of men job flexibility is preferred as the most essential aspect of workplace happiness. Male and female employees have a similar level of desire for flexible working. It helps to increased productivity; reduced employee turnover and absenteeism have been identified as advantages of flexible working for employers (Anon, 2008).

➢ **Work Environment**

When it comes to maintaining a positive outcome in a stressful atmosphere, a hale and hearty workplace environment is superlative. People strive to work and to stay in those organizations that provide a good and positive work environment, where employees feel that they are valued and making a difference (Ramlall, 2003). Spence et al. (2009) stated that a favorable working environment contributes to employee retention. People want to work for an organization that appreciates work performance, has opportunities to grow, a friendly and cooperative environment and a feeling that the organization is a second home to the employee (Ontario, 2004). The most vital thing that persuades employee motivation and happiness, in addition to how resourceful and productive human resource can be, all goes down to their working environment.

➢ **Work-Life Balance**

In today's unpredictable and fast-paced business world, it is not so easy task to achieve work-life balance. But now the work-life balance is the center of attention of every employer especially when an organization considers how difficult it can be to attract and retain the in-house talent. Work-life balance is a state where an individual manages real or potential conflict between different demands on his or her time and energy in a way that satisfies his or her needs for well-being and self-fulfillment (Clutterbuck, 2003). A poor work-life balance can lead to a variety of symptoms which can affect employee's happiness. So, encouraging work-life balance will help employers draw a valuable talent-pool for new recruits and boost retention rates. A balance makes an employee happy at work as well as in personal life.

➢ **Working Hours**

Research proves that a four-day working week enhances happiness and very often leads to better outcomes as well (Ojanen (2009, 162). People may be unsatisfied with their jobs if they have long working hours (Georgellis, Lange, & Tabvuma, 2012).

➢ **Organizational Culture**

Beyond a superlative salary package and job satisfaction, today's job seekers hunt for a good organizational culture, where employee happiness is just as important as increasing profits. Organizational culture is an important recipe for the encouragement or discouragement of behaviors in an organization (Dell and Kumasey, 2013). A well-built organizational culture can be imperative in helping productivity and creating a happy workforce. If employees are excited about the culture of an organization, they tend to become emotionally and psychologically attached to that organization (Sathe, 1983). Robbins and Coulter (2008) describe organizational culture as a set of shared beliefs between members of an organization who are operating as a group.Engender a happier workplace will lead to a more gratifying work environment, better output, and eventually, reduced turnover. Changing current systems and cultivate a culture that helps the workforce sustain wellbeing, happiness, and balance can be strenuous, but it's a worthwhile effort.
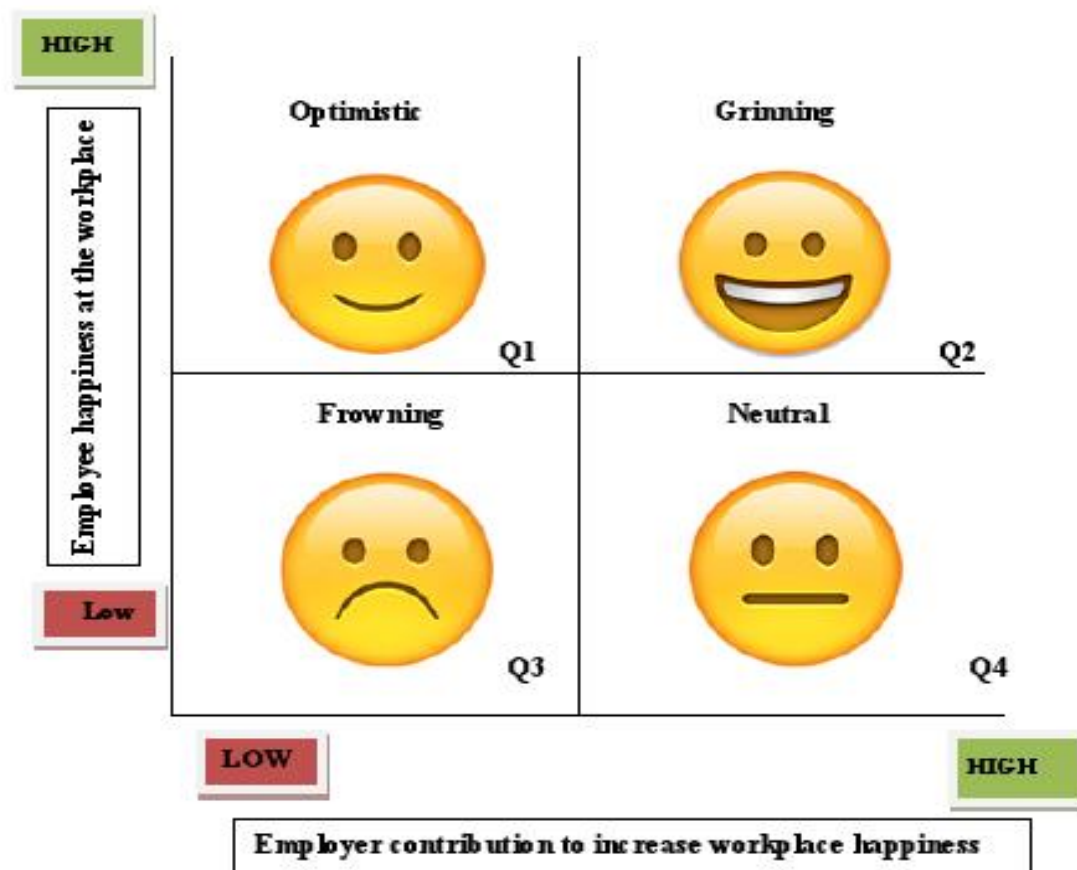
6. Workplace Happiness Matrix

To discover the employee's happiness level at workplace and employer contributions towards workplace happiness this matrix has been formed. This matrix helps to identify the overall status of

workplace happiness. It means one can easily be identified whether employees are happy at their workplace, employees' expectations are met as well as how much contributions organization are giving to make a happy workplace. This matrix is classified into 4(four) quadrants and it goes like:
- ➢ Optimistic
- ➢ Grinning
- ➢ Frowning
- ➢ Neutral

Fig:2 WORKPLACE HAPPINESS MATRIX

Source: Authors Compilation

Quadrant 1: Optimistic -   High employee happiness at the workplace + Low employer contribution to increase workplace happiness

Quadrant 2: Grinning-   High employee happiness at the workplace +High employer contribution to increase workplace happiness

Quadrant 3: Frowning-   Low employee happiness at the workplace + Low employer contribution to increase workplace happiness

Quadrant 4: Neutral-   Low employee happiness at the workplace + High employer contribution to increase workplace happiness

Quadrant1: Optimistic: The employees remain happy in spite of low employer contributions. Through employers are not showing much effort to make employees happy on the other hand, what employee's wants from their job are fulfilled so they are positive and hopeful for the future.

Quadrant2: Grinning: The employees are happy in the workplace as well as employers are giving the effort to increase workplace happiness and make their employees happy. The employee's basic needs from the job are fulfilled which makes them happy in their workplace as well as the employers also putting their contributions to increase happiness in the workplace. This shows the best prospect for long-term organizational success.

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Quadrant3: Frowning: The employees are neither happy in their workplace nor employer trying to keep their employees. Employees are unhappy, dissatisfied with their job and feel negative in their workplace on the flip side employers are not showing any effort to encourage happiness in the workplace and also not giving proper support to employees which will negatively impact workplace happiness.

Quadrant4: Neutral: These employees are less happy in their workplace. The basic need for employees forms the job is not achieved but on the other side, an employer is trying to increase workplace happiness to keep their employees happy.

CONCLUSION:

Going to the workplace, mechanically performing all the duties assigned, and coming home to splurge the rest of the time setting inactive is an ideal picture of an unhappy life. People will work out of love, not out of compulsion. Employees sometimes feel unhappy as their work is not demanding or they are continually asked to do the same assignments. A happy employee will enjoy what they doing and perform all the daily assignments with zeal because they loving their job. Without challenging work, it is hard for an employee to become involved, engaged or optimistic about their work, making it difficult to uphold high performance over time. Successful are those employers who put their employees first or else this may result in the most talented employee who is unhappy leaving an organization. The dark horse is those employers who are successful in creating an immense employee experience where employees actually want to not just need to be

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