

Extent of Happiness among Teachers Working In Secondary School: Influence of Select Secondary Variables

ShivaKumara K^{1*}, Praveena K.B²

ABSTRACT

The present study attempted to assess the level of happiness of teachers' working in secondary schools in Chamarajanagar district in Karnataka State. A total sample of 150 teachers of both genders was randomly selected from various schools of Chamarajanagar district. The sample consisted of all types (Government, Aided & Unaided) of schools. They were administered a Happiness scale developed by the first author having fair reliability and validity. The data were analysed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Chi-square test was applied to find out the frequency differences, and Cramer's V test was applied to find out the associations between happiness and various demographics selected. Results revealed that Majority of the teachers selected had moderate levels of happiness. Teachers in the age group of above 35 years were happier than teachers who were working in the age group of below 35 years. Teachers working in government schools were happier compared to teachers working in unaided and aided schools. Gender and locality did not have significant influence over happiness of teachers.

Keywords: *Happiness, Secondary school teachers, Demographic factors*

Happiness is the ultimate blessing of life but there is nothing absolute about the concept of happiness. Happiness is an indefinable yet all important subject. By and large, happiness is considered to be the ultimate goal in life. Its attainment has been focused by philosophers, psychologists and theologians since the decades. For Plato (427-347 B.C) happiness is harmonious functioning of man's soul. It is subordination of the lower to the higher, of the nonrational to the rational. Thus, for Plato happiness is inevitable concomitant of such harmony. It is the property of the whole soul and demand of any element of the soul for preferential treatment in the matter of happiness would be looked upon as unreasonable (Vlastos, 1994).

In the book *The Pursuit of Happiness*¹, Cicero (106-43 B.C) believes that happiness of life were more of the mind and less of the body. To be happy was to live serenely, above the world's swings of passion and material future. "There is no fool who is happy and no wise

¹ Research scholar Department of studies in Education University of Mysore Manasagangothri Mysore, India

² Assistant professor Department of studies in Education University of Mysore Manasagangothri Mysore, India
**Responding Author*

Received: March 29, 2019; Revision Received: May 3, 2019; Accepted: May 8, 2019

Extent of Happiness among teachers working in secondary school: Influence of select secondary variables

man who is not", echoed the Roman statesman Cicero (Cicero as cited by Myers & Diener, 1996).

In general happiness is defined as "a state of well-being and contentment; a pleasurable or satisfying experience" (MerriamWebster's Collegiate Dictionary 2009). Happiness has been construed as a judgment or evaluation of one's life over a period of time and preponderance of positive affect over negative affect (e.g., Bradburn, 1969; Diener, 1984, 2000). At any moment in time, an individual may be happy, unhappy, or being neutral (including being unconscious, as during dreamless sleep). "The word 'happiness' has two very different meanings. Usually it refers to "a feeling: a sense of pleasure, gladness or gratification. The second meaning of happiness is 'a rich, full and meaningful life'" (Harris, 2011).

Since happiness is the ultimate objective in life, life satisfaction is very closely related to happiness. This is supported by the fact that surveys give very similar results whether happiness or life satisfaction is used. We all enjoy happy feelings, so it's no surprise that we chase them. However, like all our other feelings, feelings of happiness don't last. No matter how hard we try to hold on to them, they slip away every time. And as we shall see, a life spent in pursuit of those feelings is, in the main, unsatisfying. During last decades, health as a human right and social aim is recognized in the world. Mental health criteria include satisfaction sense and tranquility which reflect individual's well-being. Diener et al. (2002) believe that well-being equals personal happiness.

It has been found to be influenced by a large number of factors – demographical, social, psychological, economic, political as well as cultural, though the impact of most of these factors is only modest or inconclusive. For instance, research shows that the relation between happiness and economic growth is not linear (Howell & Howell, 2008), that the influence of social and demographic factors is only modest (Kulshreshtha & Sen, 2006) and that the experience of happiness is affected by cultural and contextual factors.

Determinants of Happiness

Everyone wants to be happy in life and to live in a happy society. Happiness is worth pursuing because it is catching and can spread among friends, neighbors, siblings and spouses like the flu (Fowler & Christakis, 2009). Happiness affects human beings in various ways such as good physical and mental health, long life, accomplishment and good human relations (Seligman & Royzman, 2003; and BenShahar, 2007). The scientific community is concentrating more on the study of happiness and the factors i.e., intelligence, work, physical attractiveness, parenthood, social activity, marital satisfaction, social comparisons, culture, religion etc. are a few to quote. Happiness feeling changes during different phases of life span.

Happiness During Adulthood Meltzer & Ludwig (1967) reported that happiness at different periods in the adult years was remembered as being due to family marriage, good health, and achievements, while unhappiness was associated with illness, physical injuries, death of loved ones, unsuccessful work experience, and failure to reach one's goals. Linn (1973) and Horn (1976) also reported that in adulthood happiness was mostly related with the outer showbiz they wanted to show off their status, which had consult with their jobs, love relationship, salary, and other things at this age. People tried to maintain the respective prestige at any cost. They also became little emotional which made them little weak and they started dwelt with low confidence because of the emotions which they were having with their

Extent of Happiness among teachers working in secondary school: Influence of select secondary variables

family and friends. These gave raise the unhappiness among them. At this age, they never tried to look back towards their adolescence because they mostly tried to achieve their goal for success and prove their superiority among their friends as well as competitors, whereas, on the other hand, they did that for fulfillment of their family's needs and wants. Actually, they were trying to improve and maintain not only their status but also their family's status.

Components of Happiness

In most of the psychological researches, happiness is conceptualized as the total sum of a cognitive and an emotional or affect component (Diener, 1984; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Galinha & Pais-Ribeiro, 2011) that include people's emotional responses, domain satisfaction, and global judgments of life satisfaction.

Diener (1984) in his landmark paper, noted three hallmarks of happiness (or 'subjective well-being', Diener's term for scientific study of happiness): that it is subjective; that it includes positive measures; and that these measures include —a global assessment of all aspects of a person's life. He conceives subjective wellbeing [happiness] consisting of overall satisfaction with life and balance of negative and positive affect. Another happiness researcher, Lyubomirsky (2001), refers to happiness as —the experience of joy, contentment or positive well-being, combined with a sense that one's life is good, meaningful, and worthwhile. Happiness, thus, constitutes of people's life satisfaction and their evaluation of important domains of life such as work, health and relationships. It also includes their emotions such as joy and engagement. In other words happiness is, simply as Diener and Biswas-Diener (2008) puts it, thinking and feeling positively about one's life. Life satisfaction views see happiness judgments about one's life over a span of time. Thus, happiness is being satisfied with, liking, and being pleased with one's life as a whole. Happiness as an attitude of satisfaction with one's life-as-a whole has become one of the most common ways of conceiving of happiness (Chekola, 2010).

In the present study an attempt is made to find out the extent of happiness among secondary school teachers and influence of demographic variables on their happiness level.

METHODOLOGY

Locality of the study

The present study carried out in and around schools of Chamarajanagara, Karnataka State

Sample

The total of 150 teachers in both genders (Male & female) was selected by using random sampling techniques to collect data in present study.

Tool

The researcher developed a questionnaire to elicit information from teachers. Before finalising interview schedule was subjected to pilot study and content validity by field experts. A total of 90 items were constructed to measure happiness levels of the teachers. The interview schedule also included basic demographic details. The reliability of the scale was found to be .899.

Procedure

The first author personally visited all the selected schools in Chamarajanagar district. After obtaining the permission from the authorities and consent form, the happiness scale was

Extent of Happiness among teachers working in secondary school: Influence of select secondary variables

individually administered to all the selected teachers. Once the data were collected, they were scrutinized, coded and fed to the computer. Later data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Chi-square test was applied to find out the significance of difference between various levels of happiness among teachers. Cramer’s V was applied to find out the association between levels of happiness and select demographic factors. Table 1 presents results of chi-square test and table 2 presents results of Cramer’s v tests.

RESULTS

Table 1: Levels of happiness of teachers working in secondary school and test statistics.

Level of happiness	Frequency	Percent	Test Statistics
Low	16	10.7	X ² =97.44; p=.001
Moderate	105	70.0	
High	29	19.3	
Total	150	100.0%	

On the whole we find that a large majority of the sample had moderate levels of happiness to the extent of 70.0%, followed by 19.3% of the sample had high levels of happiness and 10.7% of them had low levels of happiness. Chi-square test revealed a significant difference between low, moderate and high levels of happiness, with chi-square value of 97.44, is found to be significant at .001 level.

Table 2 Levels of happiness of teachers working in secondary school by selected demographic variables and test statistics.

Variables	Response	Happiness level			Total	Test statistics
		Low	Moderate	High		
Gender	Male	F	6	66	21	CV=.191; p=.066
		%	6.5%	71.0%	22.6%	
	Female	F	10	39	8	
		%	17.5%	68.4%	14.0%	
Age	<35 yrs	F	8	16	6	CV=.200; p=.018
		%	26.7%	53.3%	20.0%	
	35-50 yrs	F	5	65	14	
		%	6.0%	77.4%	16.7%	
	>50 yrs	F	3	24	9	
		%	8.3%	66.7%	25.0%	
Locality	Rural	F	3	41	13	CV= .145; p=.208
		%	5.3%	71.9%	22.8%	
	Urban	F	13	64	16	
		%	14.0%	68.8%	17.2%	
Management	Government	F	3	36	17	CV=192 ; p=.026
		%	5.4%	64.3%	30.4%	
	Aided	F	5	40	8	
		%	9.4%	75.5%	15.1%	
	Unaided	F	8	29	4	
		%	19.5%	70.7%	9.8%	

Extent of Happiness among teachers working in secondary school: Influence of select secondary variables

Gender and happiness: Cramer's V revealed a non-significant association between gender and levels of happiness, where CV of .191 was found to be non-significant ($p=.066$). From the table it is clear that the pattern of happiness was same for both male and female teachers.

Age type and happiness: A significant association was observed between age groups and levels of happiness ($CV=.200$; $p=.018$). From the table it is clear that those who were in the age groups of 35-50 and above 50 years were happier than those who were in the age group of below 35 years.

Locality and happiness: A non-significant association was observed between locality and happiness levels where the observed CV failed to reach the significance level of .05 level ($CV=.145$; $p=.208$). In other words, the pattern of happiness was same for teachers irrespective of their domicile.

Management type and happiness: A significant association was observed between management type and levels of happiness ($CV=.192$; $p=.026$). From the table it is clear that those who were working in government schools were happier and those who were working in unaided schools were least happier, and teachers who were working in aided schools were in between,

DISCUSSION

Major findings of the study

- Majority (70.0%) of the teachers selected had moderate levels of happiness.
- Teachers in the age group of above 35 years (25.0%) were happier than teachers who were working in the age group of below 35 years (20.0 and 16.7%)
- Teachers working in government schools (30.4%) were happier compared to teachers working in unaided (9.8%) and aided schools (15.1%)
- Gender and locality did not have significant influence over happiness of teachers.

In the present study it was found that majority of the sample selected had moderate levels of happiness. Gender wise no difference was observed. Studies have revealed that gender was deemed as a minor determinant (Easterlin, 2003). Subramanian, Kim, & Kawachi, (2005) reported that lower likelihood of feeling happier associated with males than the females. This was owing to females were more willing to share their emotions with others compared to males (Nolen-Hoeksema and Rusting, 1999). In contrast, Theodossiou (1998) found the opposite result where males were more likely to feel happier relative to females. In this respect, Umberson et al. (1996) added that females tend to face more distress on social relationships that can lead to unhappy feeling, thus they are less happy compared to males.

The study also revealed that as the age increased, happiness also increased. The influence of age on happiness was found to be ambiguous in the previous studies reported.. Diener et al. (1993) pointed out that age was not significant in determining happiness because of individuals would adjust their aims and goals as they grew older. On the other hand, Gredtham and Johannesson (2001) claimed that the relationship between age and happiness was in U-shape, where individuals tended to feel happier in their very young age (18-34 years) and old age (≥ 60 years) compared to when they were in their mid-age (35-64 years). This U shape relationship was further supported by Peiro (2006). In contrast to the U-shape relationship, Tokuda and Inoguchi (2008) found that the age and happiness are inversely

Extent of Happiness among teachers working in secondary school: Influence of select secondary variables

related, implying that older individuals were more likely to be in the stage of unhappy compared to their younger counterparts.

Teachers working in government schools were happier than teachers working in other types of Institutes. It is obvious that aided and unaided institutions try to extract more work from teachers than government institutes. The freedom part is more in government schools compared to aided or unaided schools.

In terms of educational attainment, the positive relationship between years of education and happiness were often found in the previous studies (Gredtham and Johannesson, 2001; Subramanian et al., 2005; Tokuda and Inoguchi, 2008). However, as demonstrated in the studies of Campbell et al. (1976) and Diener et al. (1993), when the effect of income variable was controlled, the relationship between education and social well-being became insignificant. This was due to the effect on social well-being was attributed to income but not education alone. Similarly, Theodossiou (1998) and Helliwell (2003) also found insignificant relationship between education and happiness.

Studies also show that the relationship between people's life circumstances (e.g., their income, relationship status, or health) and their happiness is not as strong as intuition would suggest (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999). For example, the fulfillment of one's basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness; Deci & Ryan, 2000) is a better predictor of daily positive and negative emotions than one's income (Diener, Ng, Harter, & Arora, 2010). Also, although people do receive an emotional boost from a highly positive event such as getting married, these initial boosts do not last indefinitely (Lucas, Clark, Georgellis, & Diener, 2003), as people tend to adapt to their life circumstances over time (i.e., to experience hedonic adaptation; Lyubomirsky, 2011). Such findings suggest that trying to become happier by improving one's life circumstances – if those circumstances are not dreadful to begin with – is unlikely to pay off.

Theory and research supporting hedonic adaptation suggest that even substantial changes in people's life circumstances (e.g., marriages, divorces, job layoffs; Luhman, Hofmann, Eid, & Lucas, 2012) do not lead to such sustained shifts in well-being. Scientists have identified the key thought patterns that lead to feeling happy. It means that happiness can be learned. With practice, a person can adopt these thought patterns and increase his happiness. The other good news is that feeling happy makes it easier to do the things that make one happier, so adopting happiness habits may be easier than one thinks. Diener (2000) conducted an international survey and found that life satisfaction and happiness were rated as extremely important. It is observed that respondents in India on an average believe that happiness and satisfaction are more important than money.

Most people want to be happy (Diener, 2000) and they seek happiness in a variety of ways – through achieving greater income or more prestigious careers, living walking distance to the ocean, or buying a shiny new car. Evidence suggests, however, that changing one's life circumstances (e.g., marital status, career, location, and income) is not the most fruitful path to greater well-being (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006).

REFERENCES

- Bognar, G. (2010). Authentic happiness, *Utilitas*, 22(3), 272-84.
- Bradburn, N. M. (1969). *The structure of psychological well-being*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55, 68-78.
- Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95, 542-575.
- Diener, E. (2000). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychologist*, 55, 34-43.
- Diener, E., & Suh, E. (1999). National differences in subjective well-being. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener, & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology* (pp. 434-452). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Diener, E., Ng, W., Harter, J., & Arora, R. (2010). Wealth and happiness across the world: Material prosperity predicts life evaluation, whereas psychosocial prosperity predicts positive feeling. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 99(1), 52.
- Diener, E., Sandvik, E., Seidlitz, L. and Diener, M. (1993) The relationship between income and subjective well-being: Relative or absolute? *Social Indicators Research*, 28, 195-223.
- Easterlin, R. A. (2003) Explaining happiness. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 100(19), 11176-11183.
- Feldman, F. (2004). *Pleasure and the Good Life*. (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Gredtham, U-G. and Johannesson, M. (2001) The relationship between happiness, health, and socio-economic factors: result based on Swedish microdata. *Journal of SocioEconomics*, 30(6), 553-557.
- Harris, R. (2011). *The happiness trap*. ReadHowYouWant. com.
- Helliwell, J. F. (2003) How's life? Combining individual and national variables to explain subjective well-being. *Economic Modelling*, 20(2), 331-360.
- Howell, R.T., & Howell, C.J. (2008). The relation of economic status to subjective well-being in developing countries: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134, 536-560.
- Kulshrestha, U., Sen, C. (2006). Subjective well being in relation to emotional intelligence and locus of control among executives. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*, 32(2), 93-98.
- Lucas, R. E., Clark, A. E., Georgellis, Y., & Diener, E. (2003). Reexamining adaptation and the set point model of happiness: Reactions to changes in marital status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 527-539.
- Luhman, M., Hofman, W., Eid, M., & Lucas, R. E. (2012). Subjective well-being and adaptation to life events: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102, 592- 615.
- Lyubomirsky, S. (2011). Hedonic adaptation to positive and negative experiences. In S. Folkman (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of stress, health, and coping* (pp. 200-224). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Myers, D. G., & Diener, E. (1996). The pursuit of happiness. *Scientific American*, 274(5), 70-72.
- Nolen-Hoeksema, S. and Rusting, C. L. (1999) Gender differences in well-being. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener, and N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Peiro, A. (2006) Happiness, satisfaction and socio-economic conditions: Some international evidence. *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 35(2), 348-365.

Extent of Happiness among teachers working in secondary school: Influence of select secondary variables

- Petersen, T. S., & Ryberg, J. (2014). Welfare hedonism and authentic happiness. In *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*, Springer, pages 7033-7037.
- Sheldon, K. M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2006). Achieving sustainable gains in happiness: Change your actions, not your circumstances. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 7, 55-86.
- Subramanian, S. V., Kim, D. and Kawachi, I (2005) Covariation in the socioeconomic determinants of self-rated health and happiness: A multivariate multilevel analysis of individuals and communities in the USA. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 59(8), 664-669.
- Sumner, L.W. (1996). *Welfare, Happiness and Ethics*. (New York: Clarendon Press)
- Theodossiou, I. (1998) The effects of low-pay and unemployment on psychological wellbeing: a logistic regression approach. *Journal of Health Economics*, 17(1), 85-104.
- Tokuda, Y. and Inoguchi, T. (2008) Interpersonal mistrust and unhappiness among Japanese people. *Social Indicators Research*, 89(2), 349-360.
- Tupa, A. (2010). A critique of Sumner's account of welfare, *Utilitas*, 22 (1): 36-51.
- Umberson, D., Chen, M. D., House, J. S., Hopkins, K. and Slaten, E. (1996) The effect of social relationships on psychological well-being: Are men and women really so different? *American Sociological Review*, 61(5), 837-857.
- Vlastos, G. (1994). *Justice and Happiness in the Republic*. Plato (428 BC-347 BC)., 1, 101.

Acknowledgements

The authors profoundly appreciate all the people who have successfully contributed in ensuring this paper in place. Their contributions are acknowledged however their names cannot be mentioned.

Conflict of Interest

The authors carefully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

How to cite this article: Shiva Kumara K & Praveena K.B (2019). Extent of Happiness among teachers working in secondary school: Influence of select secondary variables. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 7(2), 234-241. DIP:18.01.028/20190702, DOI:10.25215/0702.028