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## Job Satisfaction and Individual Happiness among Employees: An Emperical Evidence at Public Higher Education Institution

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### Abstract

Employees are an organization's most asset. It will help not only the employees, but also the organizations, if they are satisfied with their workplace and the work itself. Employee happiness is also influenced by their understanding of the company's future. As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate the link between job satisfaction and five variables: income, coworker, management, type of work, and advancement, all of which contribute to individual happiness. Using simple random selection, data was obtained from 126 respondents at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTEM), a public higher education institution in Malaysia. The data was then extracted using SPSS Version 22.0. According to the data, there is a favorable link between compensation, coworker, management, job type, and advancement. According to the findings, the nature of work and advancement are the most important variables influencing employee happiness, which leads to job satisfaction. Furthermore, the hypothesis test results indicated a strong link between income, coworker, management, kind of job, and promotion. These data may be used to influence policy implementation by human resources or other organizational management in a higher education institution. They might, for example, utilize job happiness (mental well-being) as a predictor of employee actions and then develop recruiting strategies to help sustain employee happiness and satisfaction, therefore assisting in employee retention.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Job Performance, Individual Happiness

### Introduction

As the relationship between these two elements has been statistically proven in many significant ways (Abuhashesh et al., 2019), life satisfaction refers to a judgemental and cognitive process (Diener et al., 1985) in which people evaluate the quality of their lives based on a series of criteria. As a result, when it comes to the relationship between employee satisfaction and workplace productivity, more research is needed. A happy employee, it is often assumed, will become a productive employee (Joo & Lee, 2017; Abualoush et al., 2017). Furthermore, Fashola et al (2017) state that happiness and excitement are the most basic human psychological requirements that influence both physical and mental health. Happiness

is an interior condition resulting from human perception and experience (Uchida & Oishi, 2016). Happiness, according to the experts, is a collection of enjoyment, a combination of maximal good benefits and the least negative feeling without suffering. Happiness and vitality are the most basic natural human aspirations and psychological requirements. As a result, happiness and its determinants have been identified as an essential topic (Mehrdadi et al., 2016).

This is since engaged workers tend to have a higher level of motivation and interest in their professions and organisations (Shaffer et al., 2016). These personnel are also more productive and more willing to go above and beyond in order to contribute to the survival and success of their organisations (Shaffer et al., 2016; Obeidat et al., 2018). Job satisfaction is an important component in employee engagement and will aid in the achievement of organisational goals for small firms. Employee engagement is influenced by the antecedents of job satisfaction and incentives (Sugandini et al., 2018). Good salary, coworkers, management, the nature of the work, and promotions have all been highlighted as factors (Fogaca & Antonio, 2016). Few research explored the relationship between employee happiness and performance using the individual's level of income, job satisfaction, workplace, and surroundings as a reason. According to the research's assumption, a high degree of employee happiness at a company leads to greater performance (Leung & Lin, 2022). Employee happiness and satisfaction imply a positive return on investment for the company (Haddad et al., 2018). Employee happiness and work satisfaction are vital to any company, and several studies have been done by academics, business executives, and academics.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To identify the contributing factor of job satisfaction (pay, colleague, management, nature of work, promotion) towards individual happiness among employees at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), Melaka.
2. To identify the relationship between job satisfaction (pay, coworker, management, nature of work and promotion toward individual happiness among employees at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), Melaka.
3. To investigate which dimension of job satisfaction that influences individual happiness the most among employees at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), Melaka.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Individual Happiness**

Academics, practitioners, and even legislators have made happiness one of the most talked-about topics. Some people consider happiness to be a psychological and subjective state of well-being. When a person likes what he or she is doing at work, they are happy (Pangarso, 2019). Happiness frequently has beneficial consequences as well as a sense of overall fulfilment (Rogala & Cieslak, 2019). Businesses must hire employees that use a variety of techniques to delight their consumers, then reward and recognise their proper behaviour. Employees' experiences at work have also been enhanced by a high degree of pleasure (Mohammed & Mohammad, 2019). Over the last decade, the notion of happiness and positivity at work, encompassing job satisfaction, work engagement, work enjoyment, and good feelings at work, has acquired substantial traction. Furthermore, according to Alaarj and Mohamed (2017), employee satisfaction is attained when there is a trusting culture, pride, and delight in working with co-workers. It is supported by Abid and Barech (2017), who state that respect, fair treatment, and credibility are the foundations of a trusting relationship

between employees and employers. Happiness, according to Khosrojerdi et al., (2018), has many meanings, including immediate delight, long-term joy, and overall life joy.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is described as a sense of fulfilment, happiness, or contentment that arises because of doing one's job (Flora et al., 2017). It is the degree to which one feels positively or adversely about one's job's intrinsic and/or extrinsic features. According to the study, job satisfaction is seen as an emotional response to all the elements that an individual encounters at work. The degree to which an employee is pleased with his or her employment is determined by their values and motivations (Abdulwahab, 2016). Furthermore, a study by Waleed et al (2019) discovered that job satisfaction has a significant positive effect on job performance, indicating that a higher salary is reasonable for work in the organisation, the supervisor praises people who do good work, relationships with other employees in this company are excellent, and the current job provides the right professional development. Several prior research have supported the concept that work happiness and job performance are positively related. Vroom (1964), Chia-Hao and Ting Ya (2018), Coe and Salanova (2018) and Thompson and Bruk-Lee (2021), for example, studied the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance and discovered that the two are linked.

### **Pay**

The entire amount of monetary and non-monetary remuneration supplied to an employee by an employer in exchange for work completed is referred to as pay (Hee et al., 2018). According to Hasmi et al (2019), incentive is critical in motivating employees to achieve the organization's objectives. There will be people working at various levels in a company. Rewarding and encouraging productive staff will increase their output. Through an organisation, this will indirectly help to offering the greatest quality services to clients. Furthermore, incentives and awards may help employees accept any change or development inside the company.

### **Colleague**

Workplace interpersonal interactions are critical, especially for employee well-being (Haar et al., 2019). The focus of the researchers' study on healthy workplace interactions is relational management, which includes the self. Employees can develop specific abilities that enable them to perform and succeed when confronted with workplace obstacles, according to the theory. These competences are centred on socialisation, relationships, and social support (Haar et al., 2019). Further study has backed up the initial findings, indicating that workplace friendship has an influence on job performance, job participation, job happiness, and organisational commitment and identity (Ting & Ho, 2017; Akila & Priyadarshini, 2018). Pignata et al. (2017) found that supportive colleague connections function as a buffer against stressful professional activities and situations in a qualitative study. According to Aalto et al. (2018), collegial support and a favourable team atmosphere have a beneficial influence on physician wellbeing characteristics such as sleep quality, workability, and distress.

### **Management**

Salas-Vallina et al (2020) investigated if well-being-oriented human resource management and workers had a beneficial relationship. Management may show that they care about their employees or staff by listening to them and communicating properly. Management is guiding a company's resources and efforts toward possibilities that provide economically important

results. Management also assists organisations in accomplishing their goals by acting, encouraging, and educating workers, as well as giving information that aids employees in adopting more successful activities.

### Nature of Work

Because employees spend so much time at work, the physical work environment may have a significant impact on job satisfaction. A decent workstation, some seclusion, and dividing the social and quiet spaces, as well as adequate lighting and some plants, are all aspects that contribute to workplace happiness (Malik et al., 2017). Employees desire to keep their position, high levels, and power in return for their abilities, such as knowledge, ability, education, and skills, according to Wnuk (2017). Employees that are unable to achieve their employment requirements become unhappy. As a result, employee discontent has an impact on the company for which they work. Job happiness is essential for employee engagement and productivity. As a result, leadership qualities that improve work satisfaction are critical for fostering a feeling of belonging, motivating people, and lowering replacement costs. Daily annoyances, such as needless busy work or pointless administrative duties, have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction (Akwuole, 2017).

### Promotion

When an employee rises the organisational structure and into a position of increased responsibility, it is said that they have been promoted (Mohammed & Mohammad, 2019). Boredom may be caused by boring employment in the same job for many years and performing the same everyday duties, however this can be addressed with new responsibilities and tasks. Employees who are unsatisfied with the advancement opportunities accessible to them are more likely to leave the company (Abdelmoula & Boudabbous, 2019).

The following is a research framework that adequately depicts the connection between variables in this study, based on the prior literature evaluation. Meanwhile, this study's structure is based on Spector (1985) and Hills and Argyle (2002), as shown in Figure 1.

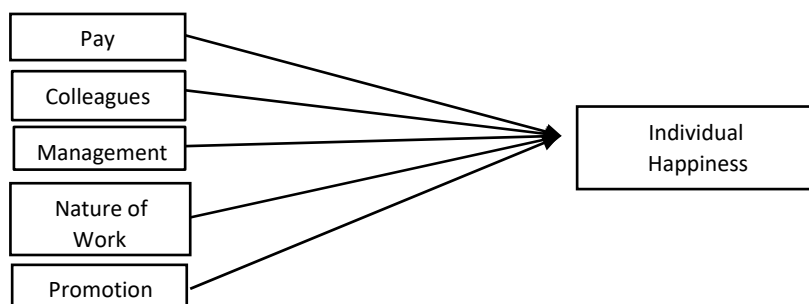
H1 - Pay positively influences individual happiness.

H2 - Colleague positively influences individual happiness.

H3 - Management positively influences individual happiness.

H4 - Nature of work positively influences individual happiness.

H5 - Promotion positively influences individual happiness



**Figure 1: Research Framework. Source: (Spector, 1985; Hills & Argyle, 2002)**

## Methodology

The instrument used for this study was a questionnaire, the 5-point Likert scale assessment in the questionnaire initiated the process of analysing the findings of this study. It was constructed to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and individual happiness among employees. There are five variables were identified from Spector (1985) and Hills and Argyle (2002) model which are pay, colleague, management, nature of work and individual happiness among employees. The questionnaires were converted into digital form due to the COVID 19 pandemic and distributed to the targeted respondents. A total of 126 e-questionnaires were distributed using Google Form to the respondents whose are public servant at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), a higher public education institution in Melaka, Malaysia. A simple random sampling method was used to determine the population's sample size. Employees who had worked at UTeM for at least a year and then were regarded to have working experience were the study's target demographic. The usability and reliability of the returned questionnaires were first checked, and 126 responses were found to be complete and valid for data analysis using Statistical Programme for Social Science (SPSS) 22.0 software. Five variables were measured in this research, namely pay, colleagues, management, nature of work, and promotion, which were adopted from different sources to meet the purpose of the study. They were adapted from Spector (1985) and Hills and Argyle (2002). All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

## Results and Discussions

### Descriptive Statistics

The demographic sample of this study consisted of 37 (29.4%) men and 89 (70.6%) women. From the sample, 39.7% comes from the population of 36 to 45 years old, 33.3% from the age of 46 until 55 years old, 15.9% from the age of 56 until 60 years old, and a figure of 11.1% from the age of 26 years old to 35 years old. The entire population (100%) work as a full-time worker of the institution. In terms of education, only 14.3% of the population were a master's holder and most of the respondent were a bachelor's degree holder. 96.8% of the respondent possess an income more than RM4000 while 3.2% gains income ranging from RM3000 to RM3999. From the total number of 126 respondents, 110 (87.3%) of them worked more than ten years, 11 (8.7%) worked from six to ten years and only five (4%) of them worked from three to five years.

Table 1

### *Cronbach's Alpha Statistics*

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
Pay	0.962	3
Colleague	0.911	3
Management	0.878	3
Nature of Work	0.847	3
Promotion	0.883	3
Individual Happiness	0.938	13

To ensure the reliability and validity of the items used in this study, a reliability test was utilized. As depicted in Table 2, the cut-off Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.70 were generally

accepted (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Besides that, a correlation analysis was also carried out to identify the relationship between five factors of job satisfaction with employee happiness. As being depicted by table 2 below, the extent of how strong or positive the relationship between variables was used to identify the sources of strength of the correlation used in this study as being proposed by (Salkind, 2012).

Table 2 below depicted the correlational result that shows a significant relationship between pay, colleagues, management, nature of work as well as promotion as an element in achieving individual happiness.

Table 3  
Results of Correlation Test

Relationship	r Value	Result
Pay and individual happiness	0.397	Weak and positive relationship
Colleague and Individual Happiness	0.493	Strong and positive relationship
Management and Individual Happiness	0.430	Strong and positive relationship
Nature of Work and Individual Happiness	0.527	Strong and positive relationship
Promotion and Individual Happiness	0.524	Strong and positive relationship

The correlational analysis shows that there was a weak relationship between pay and individual happiness with a recorded value of ( $r=0.397, p<0.05$ ). This indicates that pay has a little relationship with employee happiness at this institution. Meanwhile, other dimension such as colleague indicates a strong relationship with individual happiness with a value of ( $r=0.493, p<0.05$ ). Similarly, there was also a strong relationship between management and individual happiness with a recorded value of ( $r=0.430, p<0.05$ ). Apart from that, there was a strong relationship between the nature of work and individual happiness at a recorded value of ( $r=0.527, p<0.05$ ). Lastly, there was a strong relationship between promotion and individual happiness at a recorded value of ( $r=0.524, p<0.05$ ). Thus, it was suggested that the nature of work and promotion possess a strong relationship to boost employee's happiness just like other factors such as management, pay and colleagues. Using this basis, this study at hand answered all five proposed hypotheses that is H1 until H5. The results were depicted in Table 3 below.

Table 3  
Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis - Statement	Significance	Results
H1 - Pay positively influences individual happiness	0.397	Supported
H2 - Colleague positively influences individual happiness	0.497	Supported
H3 - Management positively influences individual happiness	0.430	Supported
H4 - Nature of work positively influences individual happiness	0.527	Supported
H5 - Promotion positively influences individual happiness	0.524	Supported

To answer one of the research questions regarding which dimensions of job satisfaction that most impact the individual happiness, multiple regression analysis was tested. The result of the analysis was recorded in Table 4. The results indicated that 37.6 variances in individual happiness was explained with the recorded R Square value of .376. The assumption for multivariate correlation analysis was also met with the recorded Durbin Watson value of 1.612 in which it falls between the range of 1.5 to 2. With the value of ( $\beta=.263$ ,  $p<.001$ ), nature of work turned out to be the dimensions of job satisfaction that influences individual happiness the most. This finding was followed by promotion ( $\beta=.222$ ,  $p<.001$ ), colleagues ( $\beta=.137$ ,  $p<.001$ ), management ( $\beta=.077$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and pay with ( $\beta=.050$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Apart from that, the value of  $VIF<10$  and the  $Tolerance<1$  indicating that there were no issues related to collinearity. Thus, the findings support the notation that pay, colleagues, management and promotion possess the capability in influencing the individual happiness and nature of work is the dimension that affects it the most.

Table 4  
Multiple Regression Analysis

Independent variables	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
Nature of work	.263	.559	1.790
Promotion	.222	.493	2.029
Colleagues	.137	.470	2.126
Management	.077	.580	1.724
Pay	.050	.629	1.590
R Square	.376		
F	14.455		
Sig. F Value	.000		
Durbin Watson	1.612		



The assumption of normality and linearity were also fulfilled by the regression analysis with the Normal P-P Plot showing normality and the Scatterplot showing the linearity. Figure 2 below shows the recorded normality while figure 3 shows the recorded linearity.

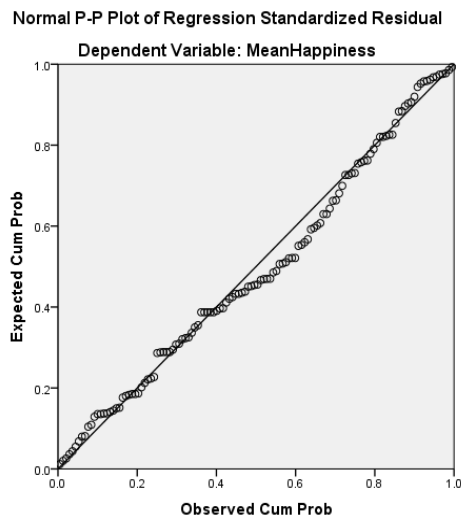


Figure 2: Normality

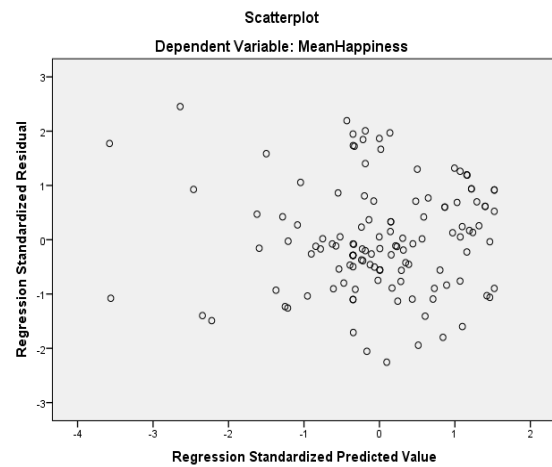


Figure 3: Linearit

## Discussion

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between pay, colleagues, management, nature of work and promotion and individual happiness among employees. From the findings, nature of work and promotion were most important factors that influence employee's happiness; therefore, it indicates to job satisfaction. Nevertheless, additional research is required because according to Akwuole (2017), he discovered that just because an employee accepts a job for a specific reason does not imply, he or she is satisfied. Job satisfaction occurs when the nature of the task and the benefits received align with the employee's motivation needs. Besides that, the three remaining independent variables which are pay, colleagues and management as well influence the employee happiness and lead to job satisfaction with strong enough relationship. Hasni et al (2019) stated that rewards were critical in motivating employees to succeed the organization's goals. It has been demonstrated that rewarding and promoting employees increases their production. However, this study found that pay has only a modest link with the aspect of individual satisfaction, indicating that other potential factors should be examined further. Pay is monetary and extrinsic incentive that includes things like a salary, a bonus, and a cost-of-living allowance, among other things. According to Walsh, Boehm, and Lyubomirsky (2018), pay must be commensurate with the amount of work performed. If the salary is not believed to be commensurate with the workload, the employee will be dissatisfied, and his or her motivation will be impaired. When pay is based on performance, it is more likely to deliver positive effects in terms of employee productivity and job satisfaction (Walsh et al., 2018). Furthermore, salary should be determined by the employee's talent and experience (Adnan, 2019). The recession or corporate policy may be one of the causes of inequitable remuneration. Because "people need people" (Ghadi & Almanaga'h, 2020), positive interpersonal relationships are also a source of workplace happiness. Supportive relationships at work might be vital for preserving psychological and physical wellness (Kun & Gadancz, 2019). Ponocny (2020) also mentions some characteristics of workplace

relationships that may help one's perception of his or her job, such as the presence of face-to-face groups with reciprocal help patterns and socio-emotional support for everyone; a sense of community; and the organization's openness to the individual's ideas and feelings. The nature of work refers to the working environment, as well as the various sorts of job tasks and employee challenges that a business may encounter. It entails the degree of fairness and equity with which the salary is paid (Mahmud et al., 2021). Nature of work, according to Mahmud et al (2021), refers to the core everyday duties performed as part of a job, as well as any other non-routine tasks that may be required. Employees carry out their everyday tasks and responsibilities in the workplace. Promotion is also considered as an essential influence in individual happiness among employees, according to the findings. This is since it has the potential to improve or grow an employee's ability and knowledge. Directly, the promotion will elevate workers' status in the organization's structure and provide them more responsibilities. Employees will be motivated to work more efficiently and effectively because of the promotion, which will help them develop their skills (Asaari et. al., 2019).

### **Conclusion**

All independent variables had a significant impact on job satisfaction and individual happiness among this institution's personnel. This research was based on previous research that was relevant. More research is needed because the current literature indicates that there have been modest studies on the subject in other industries/fields. As a result, in addition to contributing to theoretical advancement, this research will assist higher education administrators in developing and implementing policies to increase staff performance. However, the researchers suggest that future studies be conducted with a bigger sample size to improve generalizability. Because the study's focus was solely on the topic of education, other organizations were overlooked. As a result, additional research might be done in different sorts of organizations to add to the body of knowledge. The use of a quantitative methodology as the major method of data collection and analysis in this study may limit the accuracy of the results. As a result, future research could use alternative methodologies, such as case studies, to improve the accuracy of the results, particularly in terms of conjectured links. Finally, the study population consisted solely of higher education institutions. As a result, it is proposed that future research look at other types of organizations or industries when investigating organizational commitment to improve the study's generalizability.

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