

Happiness Indicators of Female Islamic Education Teachers Regarding Job Satisfaction According to the Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

Happiness is a fundamental goal of life for every individual, regardless of their background or way of life. This study examines happiness from an Islamic perspective, in which elements of happiness and job satisfaction contribute to the formation of faith, morality, and life satisfaction—serving as indicators for daily living. These elements include inner peace, piety, knowledge, practice, morality towards Allah SWT and oneself, cheerfulness, optimism, trustworthiness, and honesty. While previous studies have explored happiness and job satisfaction, many have done so without considering the Islamic viewpoint, focusing only on external aspects. Therefore, this study investigates elements that align with current realities faced by female Islamic Education Teachers (GPI) to serve as guidance and indicators of happiness, which may cultivate individuals and communities that are joyful and excellent. Data obtained from the distributed questionnaires show several factors that contribute to happiness and satisfaction in daily life.

Keywords: Happiness, Indicator, Job Satisfaction, Islamic Education Teachers, Women

Introduction

Happiness is a universal goal sought by all individuals, regardless of profession, gender, or background. In the context of educators, particularly female Islamic Education teachers, the pursuit of happiness is closely tied to their sense of job satisfaction and alignment with spiritual values. Understanding the indicators of happiness from an Islamic perspective offers critical insights into how personal well-being and professional fulfillment can be integrated. This study is essential as it fills a gap in existing literature by focusing specifically on the unique experiences of female Islamic Education teachers in relation to job satisfaction and happiness grounded in Islamic teachings.

Religion is one of the contributing factors to human happiness and joy (Abdul Rashid et al., 2021). Allah SWT states in Surah ar-Ra'd, verse 29:

"Those who believe and do good, for them will be bliss and an honourable destination"

This verse illustrates the virtue of having faith, suggesting that if one is obedient to their religion, Allah SWT will bestow happiness upon them. Studies have found that Islam offers its followers greater happiness due to the daily practices and roles they embrace as Muslims (Abdul Rashid et al., 2021). In Islam, happiness (*sa'adah*) is not only about living a good life but also about experiencing satisfaction, peace, and a sense of meaningful and purposeful living (Ateerah & Lukman, 2019; Kartini & Effendi, 2020). The Quran and Sunnah offer guidance to attain happiness—for instance, doing things willingly and with sincerity leads to inner tranquility, a positive aura, and a purposeful life. A faithful Muslim naturally strives to attain happiness in life, including those who are employed—such as teachers, doctors, civil servants, and others—all working toward the same aim: happiness.

When discussing the teaching profession, various subject areas come to mind, such as Science, Mathematics, Malay Language, Islamic Education, among others. This study focuses specifically on Islamic Education Teachers (GPI). The role of a GPI requires sincerity and patience, as their duty goes beyond simply transmitting knowledge (Norhannan Ramli, 2016). Society views teachers as responsible for shaping individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, morally upright, and righteous—capable of fulfilling the goals of Islamic Education and the National Education Philosophy (Norhannan Ramli, 2016). However, limited studies have examined how female GPI teachers perceive their job satisfaction through the lens of Islamic values, even though they are among the key agents in shaping spiritually grounded students. Thus, understanding their happiness indicators not only benefits the teachers themselves, but also contributes to enhancing the quality of Islamic education, improving student outcomes, and supporting national educational aspirations.

Job satisfaction is a psychological element essential for achieving excellence, motivation, and high performance in one's career. It also reflects one's attitude toward their job (Mitchell, T.R, 1978). For working individuals, job satisfaction is crucial because low job satisfaction can result in unproductive behavior, declining performance, poor cooperation among colleagues, and various other problems (Ibrahim et al., 2018). Such circumstances can affect one's overall happiness and job effectiveness.

The Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 includes a Social Capital Indicator aimed at improving the People's Health Index, with a strategic plan to promote a society that experiences positive improvements in life. Among the targeted groups for polar management are women. Thus, the goal of this policy and program implementation is to ensure that people enjoy a proper standard of living, including mental health and the need for a healthy lifestyle. Sound mental health significantly impacts the lives of women, who are essential contributors to national and societal development. This also applies to female GPI teachers, who are expected to live positive and well-balanced lives, leading to happiness and well-being.

According to a report by the Public Service Department on the Psychological Well-being and Engagement Index of Public Service Officers (as of March 2025), the overall score stands at 6.9—categorized as moderate. The study assessed positive emotions (positive affect), negative emotions (negative affect), life satisfaction, social well-being, and subjective well-being as complementary indicators of national prosperity. Therefore, how can emotional stability be maintained or improved among those affected, in order to nurture a cheerful society with positive emotions and satisfaction in life?

A report by *Berita Harian* dated January 23, 2025, revealed that the three Malaysian states with the highest increases in the 2023 Malaysian People's Well-being Index (IKRM) were Perlis (1.4%), Johor (1.0%), and Pahang (0.5%). These statistics underscore the importance of physical and mental well-being, especially for female GPI teachers in their daily lives. Mentally and physically healthy individuals are more likely to experience happiness, feel useful, realize their potential, and adapt to their surroundings (Zulkarnain & Fatimah, 2019).

The addition of non-core responsibilities to the daily workload of female GPI teachers remains an ongoing challenge, even though such tasks are shared with their male counterparts. Some female GPI teachers, especially those assigned as class teachers, often have to perform administrative tasks beyond academic duties, such as collecting fees, recording co-curricular reports, ensuring classroom cleanliness, managing student attendance, and handling various clerical responsibilities (Azira & Effendi, 2021). These additional duties result in insufficient rest and diminished work quality. This burden leads to role stress, job ambiguity, and emotional strain (Azira & Effendi, 2021; Wu, 2020).

Such imbalances in work culture contrast with factors that contribute to happiness, which include healthy human relationships, emotional well-being, clear organizational goals, and a transparent management system (Nor Elee et al., 2020). Furthermore, GPI teachers face the escalating issues of moral decline among youths and worsening social problems, which directly affect students' futures. As a result, teachers must adopt up-to-date and relevant pedagogical strategies aligned with the Industrial Revolution 4.0 (Zetty et al., 2021). Teachers must also be open to change and demonstrate competence in cognitive, behavioral, and affective aspects, as outlined in the National Education Philosophy (Mazarul et al., 2020).

Therefore, the well-being and happiness of female GPI teachers must be addressed holistically by considering both their spiritual values and professional realities. This study is timely and significant in offering new empirical data and theoretical insights that will benefit educational policymakers, school administrators, and the teachers themselves in building a more supportive, meaningful, and spiritually grounded work environment. An international study by Ramazan (2021) also found a positive and significant relationship between teacher job satisfaction and well-being, including emotional and environmental support from administrators. The study involved 400 primary school teachers in Bolu, Turkey.

Definition of Happiness

Happiness is defined as pleasure, delight, honor, enjoyment, joy, well-being, and similar experiences. It can also be interpreted using terms such as *al-hasanah*, *al-falah*, *al-farih*, *falah* (success), and *fasah* (ease), among various other expressions that describe the concept (Desi, 2019). Another interpretation of *al-sa'adah* derives from the Arabic root *sa'ida – yas'adu – su'ida – sa'aadatan*, which denotes fortune, happiness, a good day, joy, and cheerfulness (Sofia & Sari, 2018).

According to al-Ghazali (2003), happiness is the ability to resist excessive desires and passions, as it is closely connected to spiritual well-being. Islamic scholar Al-Attas (1976) defines happiness as the voluntary submission to Islam, obeying Allah SWT by fulfilling His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. He further explains that happiness consists of three aspects:

the self, the body, and external elements outside the human self. Hamka (1990) states that happiness lies in obedience to the laws of Allah SWT and the embodiment of humanity.

Happiness can be viewed in relation to an individual's religious affiliation and the extent of their understanding of that religion. From a Western perspective, Diener et al. (2005) describe happiness as a broad concept encompassing positive emotions, pleasant life experiences, low levels of negative emotions, and high life satisfaction. A happy person leads a fulfilling life, maintains a positive outlook, experiences fewer negative emotions, and actively leverages personal strengths in daily living.

Definition of Job Satisfaction

In Islam, the concept of work is derived from the Arabic terms *'amala* and *kasb*, which refer to labor or effort performed by humans. From an Islamic viewpoint, job satisfaction is achieved when there is a balance between spiritual and physical fulfillment. Job satisfaction fosters a sense of responsibility and full engagement in achieving professional goals while contributing to organizational productivity.

Job satisfaction may also be seen as a form of reward for the work performed, whether financial or non-financial. When job satisfaction is achieved, employees become more enthusiastic about their work, performance evaluations can be managed effectively, and better outcomes are produced—especially relevant for teachers. According to al-Ghazali (2015), individuals attain satisfaction when they experience the sweetness of faith (*iman*). Faith forms the core of a Muslim's life, guiding them away from inappropriate actions and toward inner contentment. Sincere and consistent devotion to Allah SWT helps individuals avoid becoming slaves to their desires and instead achieve satisfaction voluntarily. Every act done sincerely for the sake of Allah SWT, with the intention of worship, will lead to inner contentment (Nurhashimah et al., 2017).

Research Methodology

The objectives of this study are to identify the key elements of happiness among female Islamic Education Teachers (GPI) from an Islamic perspective, determine the factors contributing to their job satisfaction, examine the relationship between happiness and job satisfaction, analyze whether elements of happiness can predict job satisfaction, and develop an Islamic-based happiness indicator for GPI in relation to job satisfaction.

This study was conducted among female GPI teachers serving in primary schools in the state of Johor. A total of 340 respondents participated in the survey. The questionnaire data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 0.25 to derive descriptive statistics and inferential correlations. The demographic data analyzed included years of service, job grade, marital status, and duration of marriage.

To achieve the first research objective, the elements of happiness were identified based on a theoretical framework combining al-Ghazali's (1958) Concept of Happiness, which includes elements such as wisdom, courage, self-control, and life balance. Additionally, Ibn Maskawayh's (1952) Concept of *As-Sa'adah* (Happiness) includes beauty, prosperity, success, perfection, and comfort.

Job satisfaction elements were identified using al-Ghazali's Job Satisfaction Theory (1976, 1980, 1988), which comprises four key aspects: *ruhiyyah* (spiritual), *jasadiyyah* (physical), *nafsiyyah* (emotional), and *'aqliyyah* (intellectual). These were used to explore the relationship between happiness and job satisfaction, fulfilling the second and third research objectives.

Based on the analysis and literature review of these theories and elements, the fourth objective was achieved by constructing the Happiness Indicator for Female Islamic Education Teachers, comprising three dimensions: faith, morality, and life satisfaction. Each of these dimensions includes specific elements such as inner peace, piety, knowledge, righteous deeds, morality towards Allah SWT and oneself, cheerfulness, optimism, trustworthiness, and honesty.

Research Findings

The reliability of data measurement in this study was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, which indicated a strong internal consistency with a value of 0.90. The analysis of each variable in this study is summarized in **Table 1** below:

Table 1

Cronbach's Alpha Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Strength
Happiness According to al-Ghazali		12	
Wisdom	0.973	3	Very High
Courage	0.717	3	High
Self-Control	0.949	3	Very High
Life Balance	0.810	3	High
Happiness According to Ibn Maskawayh		18	
Happiness	0.696	3	High
Beauty	0.820	3	High
Prosperity	0.882	3	High
Success	0.796	3	High
Perfection	0.833	3	High
Ease	0.873	3	High
Happiness from the Perspective of Faith		12	
Inner Peace	0.659	3	High
Piety	0.873	3	High
Knowledge	0.854	3	High
Divine Practice	0.745	3	High
Happiness from the Perspective of Life Satisfaction		12	
Cheerfulness	0.875	3	High
Optimism	0.842	3	High
Trustworthiness	0.841	3	High

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Strength
Honesty	0.838	3	High
Job Satisfaction		16	
Spiritual (Ruhiyyah)	0.870	4	High
Physical (Jasadiyyah)	0.893	4	High
Emotional (Nafsiyyah)	0.867	4	High
Intellectual (Aqliyyah)	0.884	4	High
Overall	0.965	70	Very High

N = 340

Source: Babbie (2009)

The overall Cronbach's Alpha value obtained from the 70 questionnaire items was **0.946**, indicating a very high level of reliability. These findings confirm that the instrument used in the study has strong validity and reliability, making it suitable for further analysis.

Data Validity

To validate the data from the questionnaire involving specific variables, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were applied. According to standard thresholds, a KMO value above 0.50 and a Bartlett's test p-value below 0.05 indicate sufficient sampling adequacy and significant correlations among variables. Based on Lokman (2008), the test results showed a KMO of 0.99 and Bartlett's test p-value of 0.00, confirming strong data validity.

Table 2

Validity Test Analysis

Main Variable	Sub-Variable	Items	KMO	Bartlett's Test (p-value)	Status
Happiness According to Al-Ghazali	Overall	12	0.870	4981.994 (0.000)	Significant
	Wisdom	3	0.771	1521.539 (0.000)	Significant
	Courage	3	0.498	793.557 (0.000)	Significant
	Self-Control	3	0.762	928.365 (0.000)	Significant
	Life Balance	3	0.810	320.527 (0.000)	Significant
Happiness According to Ibn Miskawayh	Overall	18	0.921	4794.880 (0.000)	Significant
	Happiness	3	0.663	180.953 (0.000)	Significant
	Beauty	3	0.667	381.534 (0.000)	Significant
	Prosperity	3	0.702	524.806 (0.000)	Significant
	Success	3	0.718	381.534 (0.000)	Significant
	Perfection	3	0.718	346.647 (0.000)	Significant
	Ease	3	0.680	502.984 (0.000)	Significant
Happiness – Faith Dimension	Overall	12	0.891	1861.474 (0.000)	Significant
	Inner Peace	3	0.660	154.056 (0.000)	Significant

Main Variable	Sub-Variable	Items	KMO	Bartlett's Test (p-value)	Status
	Piety	3	0.738	518.312 (0.000)	Significant
	Knowledge	3	0.701	194.913 (0.000)	Significant
	Divine Practice	3	0.639	305.825 (0.000)	Significant
Happiness – Life Satisfaction Dimension	Overall	12	0.924	2886.376 (0.000)	Significant
	Cheerfulness	3	0.726	501.730 (0.000)	Significant
	Optimism	3	0.686	452.403 (0.000)	Significant
	Trustworthiness	3	0.694	383.710 (0.000)	Significant
	Honesty	3	0.717	427.293 (0.000)	Significant
Job Satisfaction	Overall	12	0.926	4295.780 (0.000)	Significant
	Spiritual (Ruhiyyah)	3	0.800	698.264 (0.000)	Significant
	Physical (Jasadiyyah)	3	0.831	680.338 (0.000)	Significant
	Emotional (Nafsiyyah)	3	0.786	654.200 (0.000)	Significant
	Intellectual (Aqliyyah)	3	0.818	771.436 (0.000)	Significant
Total Job Satisfaction		70	0.928	27183.634 (0.000)	Significant

N = 340

Source: Arbuckle (2005)

Based on the results, the KMO values exceeding 0.50 and Bartlett's Test p-values below 0.05 confirm the adequacy and significance of the data, thus validating the instrument used in this study.

Relationship Between Happiness and Job Satisfaction Among Female Islamic Education Teachers (GPI) from the Islamic Perspective

This analysis addresses the third objective of the study, which is to examine the relationship between happiness and job satisfaction among female Islamic Education Teachers (GPI). The Pearson Correlation Test was employed to evaluate this relationship.

Table 3

Correlation between Happiness and Job Satisfaction Among Female Islamic Education Teachers (GPI)

Variable	Teacher Job Satisfaction
Happiness	$r = 0.505^{**}$, $p = 0.000$

****Significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

As shown in Table 3, the correlation value (r) between happiness and job satisfaction among female GPI teachers is 0.505, with a significance value of $p = 0.000$. The positive correlation coefficient indicates a significant and direct relationship between the two variables. This suggests that happiness can be influenced by satisfaction in one's professional role, which in turn contributes positively to the overall quality and impact of the institution.

Discussion

Based on the discussion, questionnaire, research findings and data analysis, the fourth objective was achieved, namely to construct a happiness indicator for female Islamic Education Teachers (GPI) from the Islamic perspective. Therefore, the elements derived from the above-mentioned aspects are as follows:

Faith-Based Dimension

a. Inner Peace (Sakinah)

The development of the intellect, spirituality, and physical well-being must be in balance to foster happiness within oneself and the family (Shuhairimi & Huzili, 2012). The commitment of female GPI teachers to their families contributes to a harmonious household, while the inner peace they experience enhances their proactive and committed approach to both family and career development.

b. Piety (Taqwa)

The foundation of *tawhid* (monotheism) is essential in achieving a peaceful and happy life under any circumstance (Sayyid Qutb, 2002). Achieving a balance between physical and spiritual needs is vital, where the core element is the worship of Allah SWT. This builds the essence of *tawhid* within a person, allowing them to seek refuge in, rely upon, and surrender entirely to Allah SWT.

c. Knowledge

Islam places a strong emphasis on the pursuit of knowledge as a means to success in both this world and the hereafter. One of the formulas for achieving *al-falah* (true success) is through the internalization of faith, performing righteous deeds, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and engaging in all virtuous acts. These acts lead to happiness, well-being, and emotional success (Al-Mu'minun 23:1–6; Zainora & Mashitah, 2019). For female GPI teachers, appreciating and pursuing knowledge with the intention of strengthening their relationship with Allah SWT, while nurturing human relationships, is fundamental.

d. Divine Practice ('Amal Ilahiyyah)

To attain genuine love for Allah SWT, one must first know Him as He truly is (Al-Baqarah 2:165). A strong belief in Allah's absolute power reinforces a teacher's inner spiritual strength. As Muslims, there is no greater source of reliance and surrender than Allah SWT alone.

Life Satisfaction Dimension

a. Cheerfulness

A healthy female GPI teacher requires happiness in her life, as it helps her feel valued, beneficial to others, and capable of maximizing her potential for personal and communal happiness. Happy individuals can adapt to others and their surroundings, contributing to cheerfulness that transcends personal boundaries. They find comfort in various circumstances so long as they bring joy to themselves and their environment (Kartini, 2019).

b. Optimis

Optimism fosters a healthy mind and tranquility (*al-sakinah*), enabling individuals to fulfill their duties diligently and engage in positive activities for themselves, their communities, and Allah SWT. It nurtures a sense of responsibility toward family and society. Furthermore, a

healthy mindset cultivates the willingness to sacrifice, mutual trust, life satisfaction, joy (*al-farh*), happiness (*al-sa'adah*), and gratitude. This optimistic mindset empowers female GPI teachers to remain positive in their roles despite the challenges they face.

c. Trustworthiness (Amanah)

Trustworthiness encompasses three core responsibilities: toward Allah SWT, others, and oneself. Every blessing from Allah SWT is a trust that must be safeguarded. As parents, teachers, and leaders, delivering moral guidance, nurturing, educating, and mentoring are part of this trust. For female GPI teachers, these responsibilities are inherent in their roles and deeply connected to ethical conduct and interactions with students in daily life.

d. Honesty

Honesty is an expression of one's self-perception and moral compass—whether positive or negative. It involves self-esteem, trust, emotions, and perceptions of the surrounding environment (Siti Jamiaah et al., 2017). Honest female GPI teachers are approachable and open in interactions. They display optimism, openness to feedback, and resilience. Conversely, dishonest individuals tend to be defensive, insecure, passive, and closed-minded. Therefore, to achieve happiness, female GPI teachers must strengthen their self-confidence and uphold honesty in their conduct (Siti Jamiaah et al., 2017).

Moral (Akhlaq) Dimension

Human beings must be confident in Allah's absolute knowledge of all their actions. Faith increases when one believes that Allah grants goodness to whomever He wills, provided they maintain belief and trust in His omnipotence. This belief positively impacts moral behavior and daily decisions. Allah SWT promises tranquility for those who maintain their faith. Referring to the Qur'an and Sunnah as sources of happiness indicators is accurate, as they provide irrefutable guidance (Sofia & Sari, 2018; Al-Fath 48:4).

Individuals are encouraged to embody noble character traits (*sifat mahmudah*), uphold social relationships, maintain physical and mental health, and protect their psychological well-being. These virtues foster peace (*sakinah*), love (*mawaddah*), and compassion (*rahmah*), creating a sense of harmony and fulfillment. Such character leads female GPI teachers to experience peace, contentment, and success. True happiness for a Muslim lies in obedience to Allah SWT (Al-Baqarah 2:62).

Muslims are urged to uphold divine commands and avoid prohibitions. Good deeds benefit the doer, while evil deeds bring harm to the self. A devout Muslim consistently strives for good and avoids wrongdoing. A Muslim's character remains upright when they have no doubt in Allah's power (Al-Baqarah 2:38). Good character includes smiling, promoting virtue, and preventing vice. Correcting wrongdoing with wisdom and grace is encouraged and aligns with the character of a true Muslim (Hadith, Tirmidhi, No. 2005).

Conclusion

This study was conducted to explore whether the happiness experienced by female Islamic Education Teachers (GPI) influences their job satisfaction. It also examined whether increases in job satisfaction correspond to increased happiness, and how the two are related. The elements in the questionnaire combined al-Ghazali's Concept of Happiness (1958), Ibn

Miskawayh's Elements of Happiness (1952), and al-Ghazali's Job Satisfaction Theory (1976, 1980, 1988), alongside moral foundations grounded in the Qur'an and Sunnah.

These elements serve as guidelines for cultivating values of happiness and job satisfaction among female GPI teachers. The research findings confirmed the study's objectives and demonstrated that teacher happiness can act as a catalyst for job satisfaction. The outlined elements serve as motivational factors for enhanced work performance.

The fourth objective—the development of a happiness indicator—is expected to be applicable and beneficial not only for female GPI teachers but also for educators in general, particularly within school settings. The foundation of *tawhid* and guidance from the Qur'an and Sunnah are essential for daily religious consciousness and spiritual well-being.

Furthermore, the study elaborated on how to achieve happiness from an Islamic perspective, including the development of noble character among working women. Based on the questionnaire analysis, self-regulation emerged as the most highly rated element, particularly in terms of interpersonal relationships and avoidance of harmful behaviors. Respondents agreed that self-discipline fosters individuals who perform good deeds and avoid sinful acts. Practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), prayer, exposure to virtuous influences, and recitation of the Qur'an foster inner tranquility and harmonious living.

As Allah SWT states in Surah al-Nahl (16:97), every righteous act will be rewarded. Therefore, self-regulation is a critical factor in helping female GPI teachers achieve happiness, especially in preserving modesty and avoiding indecency, aligning with the nature of a righteous woman (Adawiyah, 2018). Likewise, the element of prosperity—which includes love, worship of Allah, and maintaining social bonds—is also a path to happiness.

This supports Zulkarnain's (2019) view that individuals who maximize their potential achieve happiness and develop a positive self-concept. Qualities such as compassion, attentiveness, openness to advice, and selflessness foster greater interpersonal harmony (Sunedi, 2018).

Additionally, many respondents agreed with the statement: *"I often smile and laugh when something is funny."* The element of cheerfulness among female GPI teachers is vital for achieving life satisfaction. This aligns with Kartini (2019), who affirms that happy individuals adapt to their surroundings and foster positive relationships, maintain healthy motivation, and strive to live joyful lives. Therefore, to maintain cheerfulness, female GPI teachers must adopt a positive attitude.

In summary, based on the feedback from the distributed questionnaire, it was found that job satisfaction obtained can be influenced by the happiness felt within an individual. A work environment that includes mutually respectful colleagues, understanding administrators, and a satisfying organizational culture will produce quality Islamic Education Teachers (GPI) who are consistently competitive in striving for happiness.

Furthermore, the core foundation of human happiness lies in obedience to Allah SWT, fulfilling His commands and refraining from His prohibitions. Inner strength, on the other hand, arises from adherence to all of Allah's commands, preserving one's manners with Allah

SWT, ethics in interactions with fellow human beings, guarding one's speech, and maintaining respectful relations with colleagues—all of which contribute to happiness and life satisfaction. The elements and factors outlined in this study are hoped to give rise to a harmonious society, emotionally balanced, and ultimately shape a prosperous community.

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