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Women Happiness at Workplace in Modern Age- A Conceptual Approach

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Abstract

Happiness is an emotional concept, which has been observed and researched in various disciplines of science, especially in psychology. Happy people do more work, be enthusiastic, be ready for learning new things, be competitive and more over they are optimistic. Happy people spread happy smile and they are empathetic. When happiness is expressed, it creates a conducive environment in workplace. So happiness is required in human resources to attain competitive advantage and financial performance. In this article, authors tried to do a conceptual review of similar literature and research reports. This article focused on understanding the concept of happiness, happiness in business organizations, women and happiness, challenges faced by women in workplace in digital era, factors that influence women in digital age. This article further developed a conceptual model, which can be used as a tool for survey research.

Keywords:

Happiness, Women happiness, Digital era challenges, happiness factors

Introduction

The term happiness have been studied and explored by lots of researchers, scholars, spiritual gurus in different areas of psychology, physiology, astrology and in broader aspects of science. Happiness is purely an emotional state of mind, it can be seen when a person experiences favorable or desirable situations. A person shows his happiness when matters around him has positive vibrations. Happiness is a way of expressing one's emotions,

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feelings, moods, attitude, and wellbeing in an optimistic manner.When someone is happy he/she shows optimism, delightfulness, joy, enthusiasm and affection. Happiness is the most important aim that many people trail in their own inner world, because "happiness" is universal to all people in every culture and everybody in the world searches for happiness (Fisher, 2010 &Aydin, 2012). (Xanthopoulou, Bakker &Schaufeli, 2012) defined happiness as an experience of an individual regarding less negative affect, more frequent positive affect as well as an entire sense of satisfaction in whole life.

Happiness

Happiness is viewed in two ways in research literature, hedonic view and eudaimonic view. Hedonic view of happiness is explained as pleasant feelings and favourable judgements, whereaseudaimonic view of happiness consists of morally right, virtuous, true to one's self, meaningful and growth (Ryan and Deci, 2001; Ryff& Singer, 2008).Hedonic view is subjective well-being i.e. judgements of life satisfaction, balance and greater number of positive feelings, very few or rare negative feelings (Diener*et al.*,1999; Schimmack, 2008). Researchers found that many experienced hedonic happiness that is pleasantness or unpleasantness, while they studied the structure of mood, affection and emotions (Watson *et al.*,1999). In contrast, eudaimonic tone, self-actualization and validation implies that a happy life consists of doing right and virteous, pursuing important goals, growing, enhancing skills and talents, irrespective of one's situational feelings (Seligman, 2002; Sheldon &Elliot, 1999; Warr, 2007). When these views were studied and measured, they had strong correlation.

Happiness and business organizations

The concept, happiness in workplace, has emerged as an important factor as and when human resources have become an integral part of the business. Since this concept is entirely emotional and behavioral this doesn't apply to any other resources that are needed for running a business, such as materials, money and machine. Way back in previous centuries, in factories happiness was not a criteria as men were not considered as human beings but as merely machines. Happiness came in to the picture when the business world started using intellectual capital and thereby organizations started looking for the parameters to make their

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employees happy and contented, in turn increases their financial performance. In addition to that happiness of employees has become an important variable to have positive customer satisfaction, positive company image and thereby higher profits. Over a period of time, the term happiness in workplace has gained significant importance which includes work engagement, job satisfaction, work enjoyment and positive emotions at work (Slemp&Vella-Brodrick, 2014).Happiness is shown through pleasant moods, positive emotions, subjective well-being and positive attitudes and in recent years the interest in happiness has extended to workplace (Fisher, 2010). She demanded that an inclusive measure of individual level of happiness comprises of work engagement, job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment. Happiness and well-being are highly sought goal by all human beings (Diener, 2000), and which is similar that humans turned to be employees who searches for happiness at workplace, so firms need to care about the well-being and happiness of their human resources. Happy employees are more likely to accomplish their targets, work effectively as a team, willing to help their colleagues and they are more open to accept the organizational change. Happy employees perform well and they are more prone to catch opportunities in the workplace, show openness, willingness and confidence (Cropanzano& Wright, 1999), (Gupta, 2012; Januwarsono, 2015).

Individuals' happiness at workplace

Happiness has not been researched extensively, it is not because the researchers are not interested in this term, but many positive terms in the workplace often ends up in happiness, so it is considered that happiness is a broader term which contains various sub elements or constructs of positive work and non-work related factors such as job satisfaction (Brief, 1998; Cranny *et al.*,1992), Affective organizational commitment, engagement, affective well-being at work, emotion at work, task enjoyment, employee morale, team effectiveness etc and these were measured as dependent and independent variable in organizational research. These factors clearly indicate that happiness can be formed and expressed in different levels of individual's perspectives such as transient level, person level and unit level. Transient states of happiness means positive feelings vary within person include positive mood, discrete emotions and experience of flow, he or she shows varied mood of happiness at different

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situations(Weiss &Cropanzano, 1996). Person level happiness is the most measured construct which includes job satisfaction, affectivity, typical mood at work and affective commitment. When it comes to the unit level of happiness it majorly defines the happiness in collective terms such as work units, teams and organization as a whole. Happiness in this context is measured by how employees get along effectively in teams respective to their job (Harter *et al.,* 2002). Relationships between those happiness constructs are different in in different levels(Chen *et al.*,2005), which means that person's happiness varies according to the various constructs and different levels. Later researches happened in terms of happiness, which includes all these constructs and happiness of the individuals has become on of the main factor for organizational success. In a research, (Neshatdoost*et al*., 2009) at a steel company, determined the factors influencing happiness and the results shown that the employees' happiness issignificantly related to their overall life satisfaction, job satisfaction, optimism, family satisfaction, happiness in marriage,sports and adventure, partying, belief in god, studying, travelling and exploring, physical illness and psychologicalproblems. Happiness makes the employees do their routine work effectively. Happiness leads to satisfaction, it makes the employees to go for work (Olsson, Gärling, Ettema, Friman, &Fujii, 2013) and many research studies showed that positive minded people work more effectively than negative minded ones.

Women's happiness at workplace

Women tend to do all tasks simultaneously, women's brain function more in multitasking compare to the men's. So women can be in all levels of management and prove themselves to be successful. Women has the power of managing their personal life and career, thus creating a perfect balance between both. Career is just one of the important aspect for them along with family, religion, community, friendship. Women become happy when they are able to maintain a balance between all these elements especially their energy and effort- intellectual, spiritual, emotional, physical and imaginative skills (Halpin, 2005). Recruiting more women to workplace may increase the financial performance. Fortune 500 companies' researches

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show that with the highest representation of women on boards financially outperform companies with the boards which have less women taskforce. A study revealed that higher women workforce actually brings an organization a better place to work (CCL, 2017), organizations having a higher percentage of female talent have more job satisfaction, more meaningful work, more organizational dedication, and less burnout. It is also found that women employees are more engaged and reduced turnover intention.Women work effectively when they get a favourable workplace climate, an understanding superior and flexible working hours. When they are performed well, they become happy.When it comes to the happiness, a person's positive feelings are reflected from past, focusing on present and looking in to the future. These three situations make her happy (C. Peterson et al, 2005). Grateful blessings of the past helps in deriving happiness and makes them to be engaged in their job, finds meaningfulness, and ends in happy experiences at workplace than negative experiences. Happiness comes from experiences in the workplace that earns positive thought, emotions and images, help the employees to respond positively which results in productive, resilient and creative ones(B.L. Fredrickson, &C. Branigan. 2005). Past and present positive experiences ends in future positive emotions which makes them hopeful and optimistic. This helps them to use positive goals and use company's strategies to become more resilient. Women would like to stay in their current organization when they feel they are enjoying their work, and they have a job that helps them to fit in all other areas of their life. Women compare their past positive feelings to draw positive energy to be in present situation and it helps them to forecast the optimistic future.

Challenges faced by women in digital age

Workforce of the future need to cope with the technological innovations and digital tools. They should possess a digital mind set tool to unleash the potential of technological industrial revolution. There should be increasing motivation in the workforce to tackle the difficulties in their career and life by aligning people, technology and process. Women in this era struggles to face these challenges posed by constantly changing digital world. Family plays a major role in women's life. Major challenge faced by women is to take care of the family needs as

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well as balancing their career prospects. Family commitments, personal health and wellness, marital relationship, finding time to enjoy the hobbies and other passions are major concerns of women. Women in their mid-age have to take care of their personal health and wellness, because of lifestyle diseases and lack of proper nutrition. They get constant stress from their job and family life management. Great awareness about personal healthcare and nutrition is one of the challenges faced by working women. Many women have lots of hobbies and passion they have acquired in their young phase of the life. Career and married life become the first priority and majority of the working women are forced to forget their extra interests, as they have to earn money and care the family needs. Family commitments always top first in the challenges faced by women in this era. Researches shown that women who get to spend more time with family are more productive in work. Companies with the highest technology are also facing challenges to engage their employees. Humans especially women are more concerned about their family welfare; children's health, education and their future. They constantly think of their personal matters and it makes them unhappy in workplace. Senior management can focus more on women employees' mental health and other challenges faced by them. Economic pressure is another challenge, being mostly middle class families, both partners have to do their job and look in to their career advancements. This financial pressure across all level of family structure make women to work hard to meet the demands of the family.

Many women lack a strong professional network which is essential for their professional life. This leads to negative feeling and lack of confidence which make them unhappy. Digital world has lots of opportunities to find and build a strong professional network, due to lack of quality time, most of the women don't give importance to it and realize it when they try to do their career advancement. Gender disparity is still a challenge, even though the world talks about gender equality and many claim they attained it. Many women in all countries irrespective of development classes still suffer gender disparity in their workplace. This makes the women less confident, less secure and highly demotivated, result is unhappiness. Urban women are more self-confident, give least importance to the social judgement, but in the case of rural areas, still women are considered to be homely and socially fit figure. This

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makes women mentally inferior and they always look on social judgements. This make them feel that they are less competent and less committed, leads to unhappiness. Higher education to progress in their career is a hindering on for many working women especially married and having children. Constantly changing digital technology and global competition stress the need of acquiring or updating higher education have become a challenge for them.

Many countries are strongly considering globalization to boost the economy. This change gives impact on the multinational companies to train their employees and expect higher work efforts form them. It has become a prerequisite for the companies to face the future world, when deprioritized it becomes the companies' weakness and they have to work on constant pressure which leads to overall unhappiness. Impact of globalized business operations are companies have to experiment, take risks and face challenges. All these are to be effectively managed through the workforce. They are to be encouraged to take up professional training and development programs to get equipped with these challenges.

Women's happiness in digital age- factors

Women feels happy and motivated when they are given attention, care and safe workplace climate. Two sides of a tale is, women is viewed as a strong human who is capable of being successful in career and managing work and family, on the other side she is being criticized for not taking care of her children to accomplish her career goals. At a macro aspect, women love to have a perfect balance between career and their children. Supportive organization culture is one of the major factor in women happiness at workplace. Supportive culture comprises of interactions with colleagues and superiors, talent management and career opportunities. Successful women look for advanced career opportunities to be successful in their job. Healthy interactions with their co-workers give them confidence and happiness at workplace. It makes them joyful and safe at work. They want respect, positive relationships and compassion. Women rarely are considered for succession planning, and there is only fewer chances for getting into senior leadership positions which makes them unhappy. Women expect to be mentored to take up the position which demands organizational

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visibility and decision making. A survey reported that only 34% percent of the women believe they have a chance to be in higher positions, which makes the rest of the women unhappy about their job(The Rockefeller Foundation,2016). Career advancement mentoring and career building connections make women more confident in their job and make them happier. Well structure recognition and rewards make women happier at job. A successful strategy for rewards and recognition helps in uplifting the talented women profile, which also recognize the innovative ideas, leadership, team contributions and exceptional efforts put in their job. Salary and perks is the major aspect for any working women, as they have financial pressure to raise their children. A well-structured salary and recognition norm should be developed by the management to keep their prospective women employees happy

Family friendly work-life balance policies make women happier and committed to their job. A survey conducted by (Fairygodboss,2016) World Economic Forum in Davos, found a positive correlation between the maternity leave allowance and job satisfaction. Children are the major influence in making a decision to work, so women expect the companies to have children friendly HR policies, they feel positive organizational citizenship behaviour. Flexible working hours and set targets have a positive influence on employees' happiness. Opportunities for meaningful work plays a vital role in women's happiness. Women always like to have challenging roles with supportive resources, and they want the work to make a difference from rest to contribute on peoples' lives. Successful employees like to be heard and empowered, when it comes to the case of female employees, empowerment in their job role means giving respect to them and they turn happier. Empowerment is a natural process that comes out of trust and proper communication. Women work more when they are empowered. Personal health, welfare, nutrition, mental health also should be considered by the companies and set these as goals for their employees. Women needs extra support to manage their mental as well as physical health, they feel happy when they are mentally and physically fit. Gender equality and gender respect is much sought factor in today's world. Women treated with respect and no disparity, turn to be smart and happy ones. Training and development programs on this issue can be held frequently so as to respect the opposite gender, which makes the workplace environment a happy one. Sponsorship from senior

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management for higher education instils great faith on women employees, they get more engaged to the work. This has to be constantly monitored through their performance and career guidance, counselling should be given periodically. This has to be done in earlier stages of career with lower seniority.

Globalization and its effects are increasingly hitting the companies. Building talents in the organizations is the only way to solve the bad effects. This can be achieved through training their employees in leadership capabilities. They have to be trained on collaboration (working in partnership), direction, execution (achieving results through others), influence, inspirational leadership (getting others to follow one's vision), competitive edge (driving change and innovation), business judgement (making strong commercial decisions) and building talent (building capabilities in others to achieve competitive advantage). This is often seen in all multinational companies, but extra focus can be given for women who work in middle and senior level management. Women in these levels, concentrate on career advancement, recognition and respect. When they are given opportunities to gain knowledge in managing international or global operations, they outperform and bring financial success to the companies.

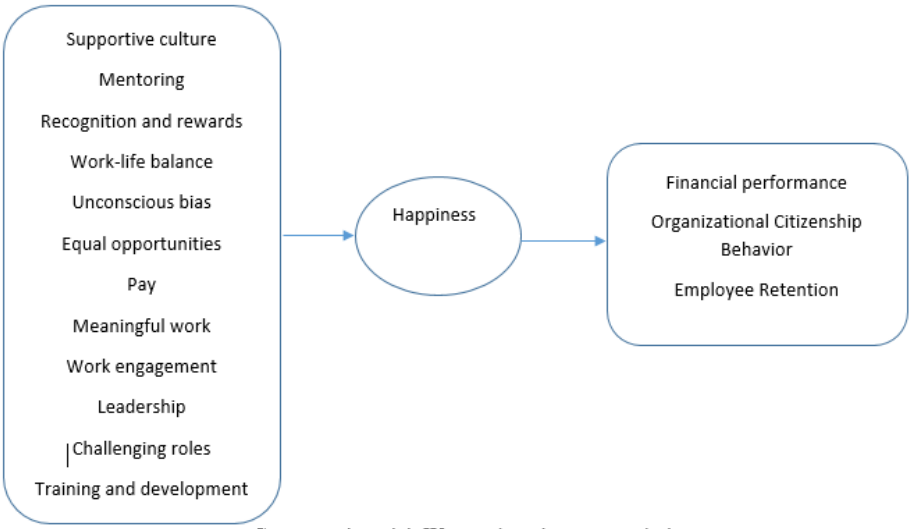
A further breakdown reveals many other factors which make women employees happy and contented are, giving supportive environment and programs aided to become, people regard, emotionally intelligent, breadth of perspective, resilience, drive to what is necessary, sacrifices to progress, self-belief, experimenting new ideas and innovations, conceptual thinking, social flexibility, decisiveness, risk-taking, boldness to face ambiguity. When there are given employees become optimistic, passionate and happy.

Conceptual model

This model is derived after reviewing the articles in both academic and business reports. This can be further studied and analysed in many sectors and can learn gender differences in these factors, which may help to find out the needed factors by different gender, age, marital status, seniority position, income etc.

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Conceptual model: Women happiness at workplace

Conclusion

Giving attention to the happiness of the employees, helps to reap great rewards for the organizations in forms of reputation, brand image, market potentiality and financial performance. All these can be achieved through making human resources happy and contented. Gender balanced workplace environment proved to be a happy place, where men and women together achieve goals. They are motivated and engaged, when all the above discussed factors are given. When women are treated equal they find meaning in their work. Make them happy providing meaningfulness, flexible working hours, and offer them real opportunities to lead and grow. Real women want them to be seen, interacted and heard with fairness, treated with dignity and respect. In terms of business performance, Deloitte's research revealed that inclusive culture works best for women employees, to meet financial standards, more likely to be high performing, highly innovative, higher team performance, better business outcomes and team collaboration(Deloitte, 2018).

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