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Model For Determining Happiness Among Women Employees In The Garment Industry

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Abstract

The Indian Garment manufacturing sector has contributed to a very significant percentage of the GDP and exports of the country. This sector has been employing the maximum number of women workforces in the country. This paper discusses the personal and economic condition of women working in the Garment manufacturing sector in the southern state of Tamilnadu. The involvement of women in the work place and at a family level are explored and the resultant impact on their overall happiness in life is studied. A conceptual model was proposed and tested to find out the factor which drives happiness levels among the women employees in the textile manufacturing industry. The structural equation model was used to prove the construct relationships.

Key words: Job Satisfaction, Happiness, Work-life, stress, lifestyle, personality, Structural equation model

Introduction:

The Apparel industry in India is vital to the economy of the country. The textile, and apparel sector contributes 14% to industrial production, 4% to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and constitutes 15% of the country's export earnings (Solanki, 2017). The apparel industry in Tamil- Nadu state has been a forerunner and is contributing to massive employment opportunities. Coimbatore region of Tamil Nadu State has around 148 textile spinning mills and has earned a name as the "Manchester of South India" because of the extensive textile industry fed by surrounding cotton fields. It is the only industry to have employed women from a very long time.

In present-day India, women have become a significant force in the labor market. Women are breaking away from the traditional stereotype roles as wives, mothers, cooks and, so forth. Women have gone into male-dominated jobs and, their participation in the labor force is on the rise. A report published by 'The Hindu' says that women employees constitute nearly 30% of the workforce in the textile mills. They are capable of operating machinery including cutting machines and lathe. (The Hindu, dated June 2019). In the state of Tamil Nadu, apparel industry is female-dominated. There are specific skilled and semi-skilled jobs in the apparel sector, which is marked specially for women. Women are exposed to rigorous work, discipline, fixed working hours, specific production norms etc. Today due to the shortage of labor in textile spinning mills, operations are run with a considerable number of women work laborers through multiple shifts. Women are ready to work for low wages and longer working hours in inhospitable conditions. Women have grabbed the opportunity and have boldly accepted the challenges in this textile sector. Although men and women must equally participate in the economic development of the nation, it is quite essential for women to do so, their personal career growth and improvement of their status in the society.

The economic conditions of women not only have a profound effect on their health and well-being but also that of their children and families and subsequent generations. The challenges faced by women working in textile mills is that they are under pressure to successfully balance both, their professional as well as domestic lives (Agapiou, 2002). In a male-dominated country like India, men offer little or no assistance in household chores in most of

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the instances. Ahmed and Aminah (2007) who, studied the work-family interruption for 239 married female employees, reveal that women experienced more impedance in the family due to their work. Gunavathy and Suganya (2007), have coined the term" work-life lop-sidedness" for professional and domestic life imbalance. Based on their study, more than two-third of the women respondents expressed that they are facing mental disturbances as their work is obstructing their individual life. This constant pressure to succeed in work and to maintain a smooth family relationship has been the reason for depression and have significant implications on their physical and mental health. Therefore, the overall happiness of an individual is of at most importance to succeed at home and in professional life. This study addresses various factors and drivers which contribute to the overall happiness of women employed in the Textile industry sector.

Literature Review:

Happiness is a reflux phenomenon leading to pleasant emotion and satisfaction. It is also known as "Positive emotion" (Seligman, 2002). Positive emotion from the past include satisfaction, pride, and contentment: emotion about future are hope, optimism, and faith: emotions from present are pleasures and gratifications. Pleasure is a resultant of feeling happy and, it is entirely subjective. Subjectively, it could be from the senses(bodily) or due to the feelings such as bliss, fun, comfort, and amusement (higher pleasure). Seligman (2002) has classified the higher pleasures into three classes based on the intensity as high intensity, moderate intensity, and low intensity. Regardless of the various levels of classification, pleasure can be enhanced through various indulgences subjectively.

Martin Seligman (2002), says that happiness as a term can be inter-changeably used with well-being. Happiness, satisfaction, and well-being are interrelated concepts about the quality of life (Phillips, 2006). Satisfaction at work too significantly impacts the motivation of worker's productivity and performance (Frey 2008, and Diener and Biswas Diener 2008). Happiness Index is a measure of the level of happiness in one's life and also the factors contributing to it. Happiness, as already stated is a subjective emotion, and the factor affecting it is gender, specifically based on a demonstration done for a study (Ecbermann 2000).

Objective:

The present study aims at identifying the crucial issues related to socio-economic profile of women employees in the garment spinning mills by analyzing the factors and drivers that contribute to their overall happiness. The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To understand the personal background of women workers in the study area
2. To estimate the job profile of women workers in the study area
3. To study the economic status of women workers in the study area
4. To examine the drivers of employee happiness
5. To propose, validate and test a suitable model for employee happiness

Theoretical framework:

Studies conducted by (Brayfield, Wells, and Strate,1957; Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers, 1976: Iris and Barrett, 1972) show a correlation between job satisfaction and happiness. Most of the studies of the job satisfaction-happiness relationship have reported that correlation is positive, while a deeper study on various sub sections of employees have suggested that the nature of the relationship may not be uniform across the entire labor force.

Demographics and job characteristics influence self-management of job-happiness (Soan 2012). Happiness within an organization or group can play the role of signaling, which means the transmission of how members of the group feel about their interpersonal relations with others (Hess and Kirouac, 2000). Zelenski et al. (2008) concluded that happy people

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indeed are productive at the trait perspective and that people are more productive when in a happy mood at the state view.

Quality of work-life seems to have a positive influence on other organizational outcomes such as voluntary and citizenship behaviors (e.g., Warr 1999), customer satisfaction (e.g., Lau and May 1998), and low turnover and reduced absenteeism (e.g., Farrell and Stamm 1988; Hom et al. 1992; Huang et al. 2007). Quality of work-life is also positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and esprit de corps (e.g., Koonmee et al. 2010; Lee et al. 2007).

Employees' positive experiences in work-life should have a positive impact on their overall life satisfaction and happiness. This relationship can be explained using the bottom-up spillover theory of life satisfaction (Andrews and Withey, 1976; Campbell et al. 1976; Diener 1984; Sirgy, 2002). Quality of work life is high when employees are engaged in their work (Stairs and Gaplin 2010), have ample opportunity to utilize their skills (Campion and McClelland 1993), and are intrinsically motivated to do their job (Deci and Ryan 1985).

The health and wellness services operation can be successful because it initiates a transformation process, which includes segmentation analysis to understand better, individual motivations toward attitude and behavior change. This operations then leverages a combination of tools and resources to guide and support employees to live healthier lifestyles (Jacob, 2002; Loeppke et al 2003; Pronk, 2005; Boehm et al. 2008b, c; Hewitt Associates LLC, 2008).

Promoting health in the workplace improves employee health and wellbeing, enhances productivity, and, therefore, the success of organizations (Harden et al., 1999; Benedict and Arterburn, 2008; Black, 2008). Graham et al. (2011) examine the health conditions that cause the most unhappiness. They show that the unpredictability of certain health conditions, such as anxiety and pain, have stronger adverse effects on happiness than more certain physical conditions such as mobility and self-care. Kapteyn et al. (2007) find that happiness is more affected by anxiety about financial or health problems than it is by the difficulties themselves. Similarly, Nelson et al. (1995) and Ferrie et al. (1995) show that the privatization of public organizations increases job insecurity for employees and causes a significant reduction in happiness.

The negative feelings in terms of depressions, sadness, anger, and worry have negative relations with happiness. As demonstrated by Ng et al. (2009), the connection between stress and happiness is different, and more complicated. Stress at the individual level is in a negative way related to happiness, but at the national level in a positively way.

Dedicated employees are less likely to leave their organizations because they are likely to feel responsible and obliged to stay in their organizations (Maertz and Griffeth, 2004). Agreeable employees tend to remain at their organizations by fostering positive relationships with coworkers (McCrae and Costa, 1991) and adapting well to any given environment (Maertz and Griffeth, 2004). Personality traits are among the most consistent predictors of such subjective experiences as work happiness and subjective well-being (Barrick and Mount, 1991). Resilience can lead to positive results in times of adversity because resilient people adapt flexibly to unexpected problems or setbacks and bounce back more readily (Masten and Reed, 2002). In uncertain situations, realistically, optimistic expectations and interpretations help employees increase or maintain their level of motivation, efforts, and performance (Jensen et al., 2007; Seligman, 1998).

Unemployment reduces life satisfaction while having an insignificant effect on happiness. Personally, experiencing unemployment reduces life satisfaction, but unemployment and happiness are not related (Böckerman; Ilmakunnas, 2005). It seems clear that happiness in

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one's working life does "spill over" into one's non-work life. Tait, Padget and, Baldwin's (1989). Research has demonstrated a link between satisfaction with life and career satisfaction (Smith et al., 2012; Spurk et al., 2011), life satisfaction and calling (Duffy et al., 2013), and career satisfaction and happiness (Pan & Zhou, 2013). However, Duffy et al. (2013) revealed that career success is mediated by personal trait characteristics of pessimism and optimism while optimism leads to further career advancement (Smith et al., 2012).

The above arguments lead us to the following hypotheses: -

Hypothesis 1: The personality of a person influences lifestyle

Hypothesis 2: Improved lifestyle changes brings employee happiness

Hypothesis 3: Improved quality of work-life leads to improved occupational health

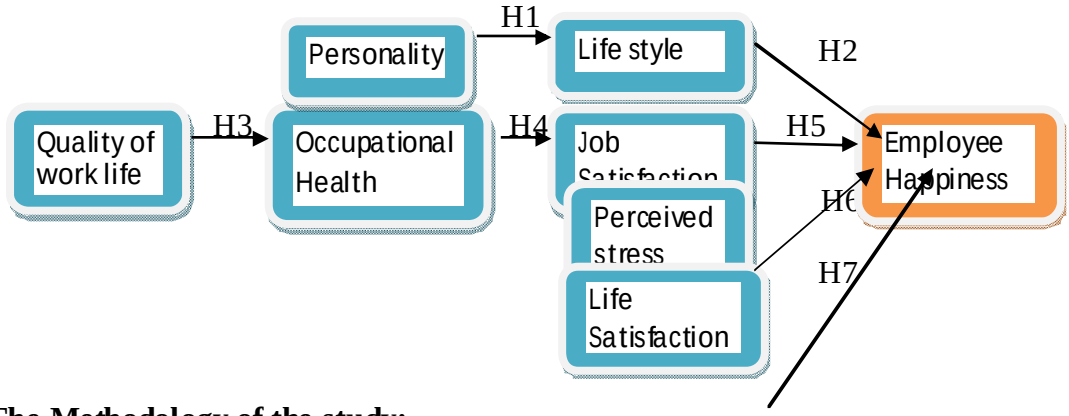
Hypothesis 4: Better occupational health will lead to greater job satisfaction

Hypothesis 5: Higher levels of job satisfaction will contribute to overall employee happiness

Hypothesis 6: As perceived stress on the job increases the happiness of the employee decreases

Hypothesis 7: Overall satisfaction in life has a positive influence on employee happiness

Conceptual Model:



The Methodology of the study:

A micro-level study was conducted on the status of women employees in the textile industry. The Government of India had taken major steps concerning women issues through a number of legislations that promotes education and political participation of women (Collier, 1998). This study aims to explore the economic activities of women for their individual as well as family growth' as a consequence of a state of overall happiness.

Research Design:

The research design in the present study is a Descriptive Research Design. This design is suitable for the study because only a minimum number of researches have been conducted in this area. Yet, there is a vast scope for further study. The proposed research is descriptive rather than experimental.

Universe:

Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu is the place where the study was conducted. Women working in textile mills residing in Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu constitute the universe for the study.

Sample:

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The researcher selected 125 respondents based on simple random sampling from the universe. Tools of the study :

The study involves primary data collection. A pre-designed questionnaire is employed to gather the data required for the study.

Analysis of data:

SPSS package was used for analyzing the collected data. The relevant frequencies and tables for the crucial variables will be studied and interpreted in terms of the objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics and other suitable techniques of statistics was used to interpret the data gathered by the researcher.

Results and Discussion:

The study shows that near 40% of the women employees have the experience of working in the Textile industry for five years or more. About 96 % of the employees are working for about 40 hours per week. 70% of the employees preferred the day shift from 7 AM to 3 PM, which has helped them to balance both work and family. And nearly 76% of the women workers are youngsters between the age category of 18 to 25 years. A majority of 86% of the women work as line employees in textile manufacturing, and a mere 5 to 6% work as lead and supervisory levels in the organization. As far as their marital status is concerned, nearly 80% are single, and 20 % are married women with children. There seems to a large workforce comprising of young unmarried girls in this industry. Their family's economic conditions seem to have drawn them into this industry. And 83% of the women have an education background only up to the school level and hence only are employed as line workers. About 45% are from very humble family background, and another 47% are from the moderate family backgrounds. Nearly 76% of the women come for work from the villages and suburbs around Coimbatore city. About 28% of the women, when confronted with questions wanted to pursue education. On the other hand, 20% are in employment only to get married and settle in life. Majority of the women, about 68% are stressed because of family problems, due to the environment at home and employment was the way out of this condition.

When confronted with the question on job satisfaction, the women felt that their satisfaction on the work that they do is an indicator to success of the company and it also depends on the benefits they receive from the job. According to women, their work-life quality depends on the support they receive from the supervisors and management on their work. The majority of the women working in these garment manufacturing mills seem to have a family-oriented style of living. The majority of the Women employees felt that they are equipped with proper safety instructions and training on their job, and the company organizes frequent wellness programs. The women employees had a feeling that the financial burden was the vital cause of the stress and also that they were unable to plan family activities due to organization commitments. It was found that the employees were highly disciplined and helpful, when their personalities were analyzed. Recognition that the women employees receive from society as a person who is employed acts as a primary cause of their happiness. Therefore, social recognition seems to be the major cause of their contentment. The employee's optimism about their future career was a primitive cause for their overall reason for their life satisfaction.

The proposed hypotheses and conceptual modal were tested using structural equation modeling on Visual PLS. The independent constructs were tested for their overall influence on the dependent construct, which is the happiness of the employee based on the proposed model. The reliability and validity of the constructs were checked before running the model for its best fit.

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Table 1: Reliability of Constructs

Reliability and AVE			
Construct	**Composite Reliability**	**AVE**	**Cronbach Alpha**
Job_Sati	0.749402	0.542047	0.789087
Qual_WL	0.850233	0.488433	0.783931
Life_sty	0.748925	0.533938	0.743556
Occ_Heal	0.850987	0.488827	0.789061
Per_stre	0.865986	0.512476	0.770077
Plty	0.869820	0.427933	0.820109
Life_sat	0.866055	0.483560	0.821786
Emp_Happ	0.823168	0.496421	0.725493

(Job_sat = Job satisfaction, Qual_WL=Quality of work-life, Life_sty = Life-style, Occ_Heal = occupational health, Per_stre = perceived stress, Plty = personality, Life_sat = life satisfaction, Emp_Happ = Employee happiness)

It can be inferred from the above table, that the constructs are sufficiently reliable to carry out the testing of the hypotheses.

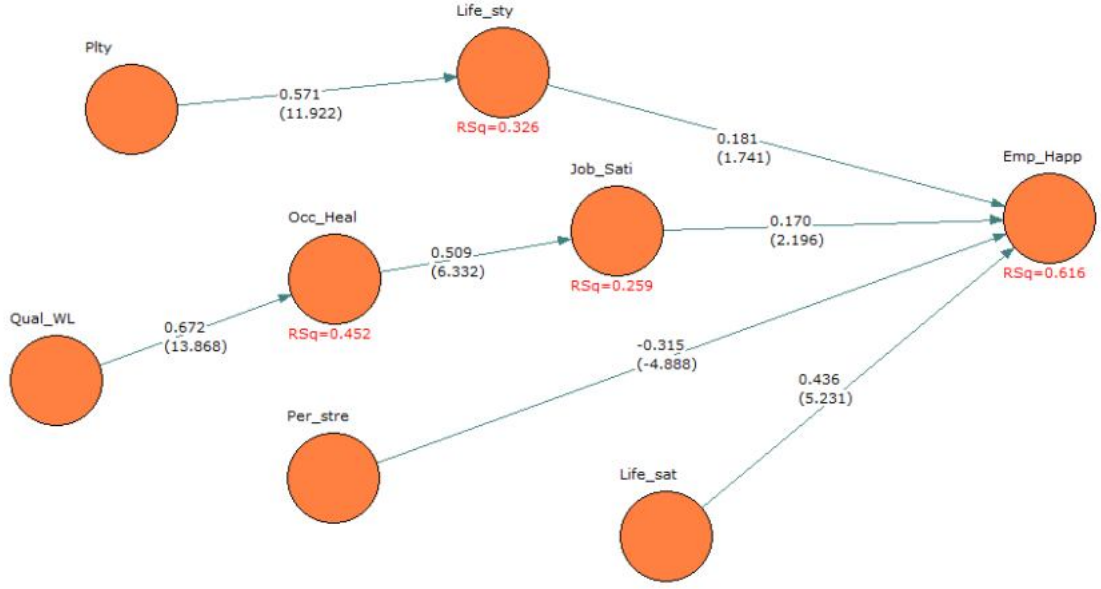

Fig 1: Structural Equation Model for employee Happiness

Table 2: Bootstrap summary

Structural Model--BootStrap				
	Entire Sample estimate	**Mean of Subsamples**	**Standard error**	**T-Statistic**

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Job_Sati->Emp_Happ	0.1700	0.1600	0.0774	2.1959
Life_sty->Emp_Happ	0.1810	0.1860	0.1039	1.7414
Per_stre->Emp_Happ	-0.3150	-0.3238	0.0644	-4.8876
Life_sat->Emp_Happ	0.4360	0.4316	0.0833	5.2310
Qual_WL->Occ_Heal	0.6720	0.6815	0.0485	13.8681
Plty->Life_sty	0.5710	0.6120	0.0479	11.9218
Occ_Heal->Job_Sati	0.5090	0.5238	0.0804	6.3319

The above table gives the bootstrap summary for the hypotheses testing. By testing the relationship of constructs in Hypothesis 1, it can be seen that the 'T = 11.9218' and the β = 0.571, which proves that there exists a significant positive relationship between personality and life-style of the employees. The Regression coefficient, R^2 = 0.326, which shows that the personality of the employee has a 30% influence on their lifestyle. On the other hand, in hypothesis 2, the 'T = 1.7414< 2' and the β= 0.181, proves that there is no significant relationship between lifestyle and employee happiness. While testing hypothesis 3, the 'T= 13.868 > 2' and the β= 0.672 with an R^2 value of 0.452, proving that quality of work-life has a significant influence on occupational health. It was found that 'T = 6.332 >2' and β = 0.509 with an R^2 value of 0.259, proving that occupational health has a positive influence on job satisfaction, looking at the relationship of constructs in hypothesis 4. By examining hypothesis 5, it was found the 'T= 2.196 > 2 and β = 0.170 showing that there exists a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee happiness. It was found though there exists a significant relationship with ' T = -4.888' and β = -0.315, the relationship appears to be negatively correlated, while examining hypothesis 6. Which in turn proves that as perceived stress increases, the level of employee happiness decreases. On examining the final hypothesis 7, ' T= 5.231 > 2' and β = 0.436 showing that as employee life satisfaction improves, the overall happiness also increases. The bootstrap re-sampling function was carried out to create a stable model, and the overall effect of the independent constructs on the dependent construct is about 61%, with a R^2 value of 0.61.

Conclusion:

There has been a considerable change in government policy to empower and attract women into the work-force to bring about a balanced economic growth. The need for labor and competition has also led employers to introduce schemes that focus on attracting women at a young age. The economic condition and growing family commitments are seen to be the driving factors for such a maximum influx of women into the organization work-force. The women employees have adapted themselves to the reality of the harsh working conditions in these textile-manufacturing industries and have proved to be equally competent with the male work-force. This study encapsulated both the internal and external factors affecting the women employees both in the professional life in the organization and in their personal family life. The study concludes that satisfaction in both professional and personal life contributes to their overall happiness. This happiness resonates with the family and into the organization in terms of significant productivity and a pleasant work environment.

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