THE MEDIATING INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL CULTURE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB HAPPINESS AND JOB SATISFACTION IN DUBAI METRO

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ABSTRACT

The discourse on job happiness and job satisfaction is much available from Western and Eastern countries, but it is still limited in the Middle East. In order to determine and increase the job satisfaction among its employees, management must ensure effective job happiness. Despite this, only few research has examined the relationship between job happiness and job satisfaction among United Arab Emirates government employees. This study examined the effects of job happiness and national culture on job satisfaction among UAE government employees. A quantitative research approach along with a cross-sectional research design has been used to collect data from 357 UAE government employees in the target population through a self-administered questionnaire. This research used a mixed approach in both surveys and interviews to gather data. The analysis was conducted using quantitative and qualitative tools to recognize the gaps and the factors that influence happiness at work. Next, this work provided recommendations to raise job happiness across organizations over the long run. This study's findings emphasize the necessity of correlating national practices, culture, and systems with strategic planning that focuses on employee happiness to improve an organization. The findings emphasize the power of two factors related to boosting employees' positive feelings towards work: leadership style and national culture. The findings also showed that the role of religion in raising happiness, in general, is more precise than its role in increasing happiness at work. Employees from the sample group, who are strongly practicing religious rituals, still show a shallow sense of work regardless of all the facilities they are given to practice their religion.

ABSTRAK

Wacana berkaitan kegembiraan dan kepuasan bekerja telah banyak tersedia dari negara-negara barat dan timur, namun ianya masih terhad di Timur Tengah. Bagi menentukan dan meningkatkan kepuasan bekerja dalam kalangan pekerjanya, pihak pengurusan perlu memastikan kegembiraan bekerja yang berkesan. Walaupun begitu, hanya beberapa penyelidikan telah mengkaji hubung kait antara kegembiraan bekerja dan kepuasan bekerja dalam kalangan kakitangan kerajaan Emiriah Arab Bersatu. Kajian ini mengkaji kesan kegembiraan bekerja dan budaya kebangsaan terhadap kepuasan bekerja dalam kalangan kakitangan kerajaan UAE. Pendekatan penyelidikan kuantitatif bersama reka bentuk penyelidikan keratan rentas telah digunakan untuk mengumpul data daripada 357 kakitangan kerajaan UAE dalam populasi sasaran melalui soal selidik yang ditadbir sendiri. Kajian ini telah menggunakan pendekatan campuran dalam tinjauan dan temu bual bagi pengumpulan data. Analisis telah dilaksanakan menggunakan alatan kuatitatif dan kualitatif bagi mengenal pasti jurang-jurang dan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi kegembiraan bekerja. Seterusnya, kajian ini telah memberikan saranan bagi meningkatkan tahap kegembiraan bekerja di seluruh organisasi dalam jangka masa panjang. Hasil kajian ini menekankan keperluan mengaitkan amalan, budaya, dan sistem nasional dengan perancangan strategik yang memfokuskan kepada kegembiraan pekerja bagi menambah baik sesebuah organisasi. Hasil kajian menekankan kepentingan dua faktor bagi meningkatkan pandangan baik pekerja terhadap pekerjaannya, iaitu: gaya kepimpinan dan budaya nasional. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa peranan agama dalam meningkatkan kegembiraan secara umumnya adalah lebih tepat, berbanding peranannya memberi kegembiraan dalam pekerjaan. Pekerja-pekerja dari kumpulan sampel sama yang teguh mengamalkan akiviti keagamaan, tetap menunjukkan tahap kerja yang cetek walaupun segala kemudahan bagi melaksanakan aktiviti keagamaan mereka telah disediakan.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATION

AMOS	–	Analysis of Moment Structure
CR	–	Critical Ratio
DR	–	Degrees of Freedom
FCSA	–	Federal Competitiveness and Statistical Authority
ILO	–	International Labour Organization
P-value	–	Probability Value
RMSEA	–	Root Mean Square Error of Approximate
SD	–	Standard Deviation
SE	–	Standard Error
SEM	–	Structural Equation Modelling
SPSS	–	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UAE	–	United Arab Emirates
UiTM	–	Universiti Technologi Mara, Malaysia.
UM	–	Universiti Malaya
α	–	Alpha
β	–	Standardized Estimates

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

Many individuals equate contentment with satisfaction, which is described as having favourable assessments of life and a lasting psychological condition of happiness (Mohanty, 2014). In the hedonic view, pleasure is defined by emotions of pleasantness and being regarded favourably. A polar opposite philosophy called the eudemonic view defines it as doing what is morally right, what is righteous, what leads to development, and making an individual's existence more meaningful (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2008). In comparison, these proposals aim to bring about greater well-being for the individuals who believe in them. Happiness is a concept that brings interest across various academic disciplines. Various leaders have demonstrated that they are aware of the advantages of increased happiness and people's well-being (Johnson, 2012). Therefore, there must be a correlation between people's happiness and happiness at the workplace. This study focuses on the role of national culture in the relationship between job happiness and job satisfaction in Dubai Metro. In various economies job market has become complex. Therefore, companies and corporations need to provide employees with conditions that encourage them to work harder. Kaplan and Norton's (1996) research indicated that information systems rely on accounting data. Reliance with such kind of data is not sufficient for measuring the general situation of the company status. The assembly of the United States recognizes systematic measurement and analysis of happiness that ensure sustainable economic development.

Future information systems include intangible measures, like client satisfaction and job satisfaction. Future information systems will require standardized methods that measure intangibles (Kristen & Weslund, 2001). Happiness at work is an important thing. Ensuring employee happiness has become a critical tool that ensures the performance of employees in any organization. Lambert et al. (2002) and Nelson (2012) conducted a study that linked workers' happiness, job satisfaction, and employees' performance. These studies indicated that employees' happiness and job satisfaction ensure efficiency and increase productivity in an organization. According to Fisher (2010), workers' job satisfaction is a concept that brings pleasant judgment and pleasant experiences in the workplace. Thomas (2010) surveyed to understand happiness through a survey conducted with his clients, colleagues, and friend. His work found that the definition of happiness at work falls into different categories. The first category is freedom of managing their own business, knowledge transformation, transparency, job knowledge and skill development, appreciation, and accomplishment. Osward et al. (2009) also indicated that the maximization of happiness positively affects organization productivity.

The extent of employee happiness has been found to positively influence employee motivation and overall job satisfaction at work (Boehm and Lyubomirsky, 2008). Specifically, employees who exhibit a general feeling of contentment and emotional satisfaction with their overall well-being are likely to be motivated to perform exceptionally well in the workplace setting (Fisher et al., 2004). The often-happy employees tend to synchronize and translate their emotional satisfaction towards attaining the organizational goals by exhibiting behaviors that result in greater productivity (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Central to employee happiness is the national culture, which plays an integral part in creating and sustaining employee motivation (Eddington & Shuman, 2008). A supportive and accommodative national culture tends to inspire the employees to feel part of the organization in facilitating the attainment of its mission (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2010). The study of Flynn and Chatman (2001) noted that through its attribute of shared values and beliefs, the national culture has an important influence in determining the employees' attitudes and perceptions, which influences their overall level of happiness. Therefore, the relationship between employee happiness and job satisfaction is mediated by the national culture's nature (Al-Jenaibi, 2015).

Employment satisfaction is higher for individuals who are content with their lives (Eddington & Shuman, 2008). In addition, happiness is associated with signs of career achievement and may improve an employee's degree of productivity, output, and job satisfaction (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008; Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). Organizations need to ze the variables that impact employee happiness to improve their offer of cultural benefits and raise the degree of workplace satisfaction. Employment satisfaction is simply the degree to which an individual enjoys his or her job (Hirschfeld, 2000). It is an optimistic mental condition arising from the appraisal of one's job experience (Locke & Latham, 1990). In comparison, individuals who report work satisfaction are stronger advocates for their company, show greater engagement, participate more and do more inside the organisation than their dissatisfied colleagues (Fisher et al., 2004; Boehm and Lyubomirsky, 2008, Bakker and Oerlemans, 2010).

However, national culture affects employee perceptions and actions by common principles and convictions (Flynn & Chatman, 2001). For this cause, it is important to recognise variables in a national culture that affect employee happiness and, in turn, work satisfaction. Employees in each organisation can be deemed the most significant indicator of performance for the company by their involvement and dedication (Kerego & Mthupha, 1997).

In addition, national culture has been shown to affect employee satisfaction and engagement (MacIntosh & Alison, 2010). It encourages staff not only to be dedicated to the company but also to perform well. Researchers looked at the connection between national culture and work satisfaction (Martins & Coetzee, 2007; Mehr et al., 2012). These scholars also identified a positive interrelation between the two definitions. Their results indicate that national culture can affect the work satisfaction of an employee and, thus, his/her happiness.

However, addressing the seminar of the Emirate Government Services Excellence, the UAE Government is dedicated to transforming all government ministries and agencies by building a happy working atmosphere to sustain jobs (Augsburg, Claus & Randeree, 2009). Employee happiness reflects the government's dedication to delivering programmes that encourage employee happiness and maintain the happiness of the whole population. The Employee Happiness Formula comprises three primary components: workers that are pleased to deliver outstanding government services, government agencies committed to keeping employees comfortable,

constructive and proactive, able to make recommendations and, lastly, leading to the creation of new services that generate happiness.

The idea of happiness is inherited from the founding father of the UAE, the late Sheik Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. He worked tirelessly to render the UAE an incubator of happiness and built an atmosphere of happiness for all people and inhabitants (Althani, 2012). Mohammed Al Falasi, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of the UAE, said the bank is trying to ensure happiness for all workers based on expectations for productivity, performance, regulation and legislation. Saif Al Suwaidi, Assistant Undersecretary for Institutional and Support Systems at the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization, said that a happy working atmosphere is an effective representation of workers and happiness to employees. Mr. Al Suwaidi said the UAE government has been trying to offer happiness to all parts of society (Alsuwaidi, 2019).

1.2   Background

According to the World Bank (2018) official statistics, the UAE labour force increased from 6.42 million adults in 2016 to 6.45 million people at the end of 2017. Dubai Metro accounts for over 67% of its total workforce (World Bank, 2019). The stated facts depict that Dubai Metro plays a significant role in employment creation and economic growth promotion. Based on the survey conducted by Jumana (2017), almost two-thirds of the youth in the Gulf region prefer to work in the government (The Dubai Metro) sector due to its considerably higher pay and better working conditions.

The Dubai Metro sector is an agency responsible for distributing products and services by and for the government atdistributing products and services by and the government at the global, provincial or local levels. Its operations may range from the provision of social security, the maintenance of Dubai Metro utilities, and health services. While it is clear that the Dubai Metro market is a different sector of the Dubai Metro policy from the private sector, it is not often simple to describe its borders. This problem is partially clarified by the presence of private-the Dubai Metro Alliances and Gray Areas. In the case of tribal or feudal communities (though some of them have undergone significant reforms in modern times) whose governance structure is focused

on paternalistic client connections and customs, the distinctions between the private and Dubai Metro sectors are much more blurred since the control of Dubai Metro is not independent from private ownership by the authorities (Elhussein, 2007). However, unique organisations such as cabinet agencies, ministries and local government entities are part of the Dubai Metro market. However, there are grey areas; for example, in the Dubai Metro market, where the government holds 51% of the assets, and in the private sector, where the government owns 49% of the shares (Lawton & Rose, 1994). Moreover, informal bodies, such as the majlis (chamber) in the Arab Gulf States, act as Dubai Metro sector organizations in many conventional communities. They have a huge effect on the structured activities of the Dubai Metro market. These grey fields include the process of selective outsourcing and total outsourcing or collaborating with privately held firms offering full operation on behalf of the government. Despite their name, the Dubai Metro companies are not part of the Dubai Metro market since they are private sector companies that can sell their stock to General Dubai Metro. In addition, they are regulated and handled as private entities within the scope of business law and not the civil service rules and regulations.

The best way to resolve this boundary and the definitional dilemma is to identify the Dubai Metro field operationally as comprising all government-funded organisations. This is the organisational concept followed in this Paper. While funded from the Dubai Metro budget, certain government agencies are not officially considered part of the Dubai Metro market. These involve governments and other special-purpose organisations.

However, the concept of the Dubai Metro sector comprises all government departments supported by Dubai Metro and specifically engaged in the supply of products or services. In this narrow context, the Dubai Metro field does not correspond with the definition of the Dubai Metro Service Organisations, like the defence, international affairs and other key government functions. However, the dividing line is not as clear forward as the preceding sentence might imply. Their shared ground between them has not had to implement any of the industry standards in the past, and government policy measures have settled on their development decisions.

The term also refers to Dubai Metro companies or state-owned entities. However, they vary from conventional government entities in that they are at least technically freer from central government influence and are supposed to function sometimes according to demand and benefit criteria, and the government government

government does not necessarily make their production decisions does not necessarily make their production decisions (although their goals may be set for them by the government). They are part of the Dubai Metro sector in many developed countries, and, in many instances, their budgets are approved by legislative and executive bodies.

In 2012, a business in South Africa launched the "Workplace of Choice" survey to try to change the situation. In this study, it is seen as a crucial point to obtain insight into how UAE Dubai Metro government workers feel about working for the agency and its leadership, about their happiness and job satisfaction. The goal was to identify proposals for change. The survey's weak results represented the workers' pessimistic disposition due to the low situation that the business finds itself in and the steps are taken to adapt to these dysfunctional circumstances. The management then implemented a range of major cultural and institutional improvements, such as better coordination (e.g., on the role of the organisation and its potential strategic strategies), fairness, confidence, cooperation and appreciation, among others.

A second "Workplace of Choice" study was carried out in 2014, and the findings appeared to be a major change from the first time. It has seen an improvement in the degree of happiness and work satisfaction of workers in the company owing to a shift in national culture due to a mere expenditure on their human capital. However, the survey was done only with employers, and casual workers were not included. Therefore, employee happiness study is relevant and essential in the UAE Dubai Metro government offices.

1.3   Problem statement

The productivity of an organization relies on employee job satisfaction. It affects the maximum workforce and dramatically enhances morale and commitment according to the organization amongst the employers. These feelings of proactive nature of the employees are leading forces for personal and professional career advancement in their current organization without thinking of leaving the organization for best probabilities elsewhere (Rane, 2012; Abel, 2013).

If workers feel dissatisfied, they may work differently; through a sense of loyalty, they may stick it out; use voice mechanism, and ignore their responsibilities to the employee of lateness, absence, striking, or reduced effort. The importance of job

satisfaction is not associated only with employees' performance but with its significant participation in workers' cohesiveness for the sustainability of obtaining the company's objectives. It further decreases the role conflicts and -induced tensions among the workers. Besides, job satisfaction is firmly and directly associated with organizational commitment. Job stress and withdrawal attitudes among the employees are directly related to the employer's dissatisfaction with the workplace. A conducive work climate gives employees a sense of pride in what they do. It is already mentioned earlier that it is hard to keep employer job satisfaction in times of economic uncertainties, budget cuts, and layoffs. Employers that enhance monetary initiatives to increase employee satisfaction reap the advantages of decreasing lethargy, absenteeism, and lower employer turnover rates with better organizational citizenship attitudes and commitments (Alhadhrami, 2013).

The most popular features of job satisfaction include salary, quality of employment, management, advancement and connections with colleagues (Robbins, 1993; Hutcheson, 1996). Kerego and Mthupha (1997) described variables that can be adverse to worker satisfaction, including working environments, workplace practises, connectivity, employee empowerment, protection and governance. The significant effect on workers' life in terms of workplace satisfaction is that it includes people's mental or emotional emotions (Buitendach & De Witte, 2005; Sempane, Rieger, Roodt, 2002). Physical and emotional well-being and social life are the two common consequences for workers (Locke, 1976). Consequently, work satisfaction or lack of satisfaction may greatly influence the cost of life and actions of workers, contributing to absenteeism, complaints and termination of jobs (Visser, Breed, & Van Breda, 1997).

Likewise, happier workers have higher job satisfaction and do more in the workplace than their dissatisfied counterparts (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008) do. In comparison, happier workers are more inclined to partake in good extra-role behaviour and are less likely to indulge in withdrawal acts (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008). Subsequently, dissatisfied workers result in a loss of corporate engagement that decreases the company's productivity, efficacy, and success (Johnson & McIntyre, 1998; MacIntosh & Alison, 2010).

However, despite all the attempts, according to the UAE Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority (2019), there is a large turnover of Dubai Metro sector workers (63.1 per cent). Similarly, according to (Shedid & Russell,

2017), there is a shortage of happiness metrics at the workplace in the UAE owing to the cultural belief that influences a satisfied worker in Dubai Metro organisations in the UAE.

One of the real problems of Dubai Metro UAE is unproductive and dissatisfied employees (Karanikola, 2015). While employee satisfaction with their jobs plays a specific role in the development of any organization including image building, performance and overall strategy of Dubai Metro. Considering the increasing number of job-dissatisfied employees in the public sector in the UAE, especially in Dubai, it is very important to address the job-dissatisfaction issue of Dubai Metro employees. Without increasing employee job satisfaction, Dubai Metro's improvement and performance goals seem impossible (Ali, 2021). Furthermore, Mushtaha, Nahlé, Tahmaz and AlKadry, (2019) emphasizes increasing the job satisfaction of Dubai Metro employees rather than other factors.

Previous research has shed light on several factors that influence how satisfied employees are in their jobs. However, even now, research on job happiness has mostly concentrated on assessing the levels of satisfaction reported by employees in the public sector in the UAE (Al-Ali et al., 2019; Al Suwaidi, 2019). According to the research findings, employee job dissatisfaction, such as injustice in the workplace, a lack of a goal-setting strategy, and a lack of defined goals (Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017), plays an essential role in determining perceived job satisfaction.

Previous research indicates that few studies on job satisfaction in Dubai Metro have examined job happiness. This is even though empirical studies have been conducted on job happiness and job satisfaction in the UAE's public sector, as indicated above. Moreover, even though research has been conducted on job happiness and job satisfaction, the scope of such studies has been restricted to examining certain aspects of job happiness and job satisfaction in the workplace (Jabeen, Friesen & Ghoudi, 2018). However, the truth is that one of the most important factors in determining employee behavior in the public sector of the UAE is how satisfied employees are in their jobs (Al Jenaibi, 2010). Because of these circumstances, it will not be possible to get a deeper comprehension of the extent to which employees in public sector organizations in the UAE are satisfied with their jobs. In addition, some researchers concluded that job happiness and national culture in public sector organizations are essential in enhancing employee job satisfaction (Hauff, Richter & Tressin, 2015; Yousuf et al., 2022).

However, as mentioned earlier, only little empirical research has examined the impact of job happiness on job satisfaction in Dubai Metro. Such neglect has been unfortunate because, to a large extent, job happiness directly affects job satisfaction during the employee measurement process. Thus, job happiness is considered critical to the achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Employees job satisfaction are considered a significant issue for job happiness and national culture in UAE public sector organizations, particularly in Dubai Metro. The quality of satisfied employees, a key factor in public sector organization, is poor in the UAE. The main reason for this is low level of competence, employee job satisfaction and lack of proper job happiness system. Dubai Metro with poor quality is one of the main reasons why Dubai is not able to complete metro performance with western countries. In these circumstances it is important to identify the elements that can increase the job satisfaction of employees in Dubai Metro.

In addition, workers in Dubai Metro companies in the UAE are not well pleased owing to inadequate working conditions. Any UAE ministry must provide machinery that is not well kept to ease the employer's function (Singh, 2014). Similarly, according to Amiri (2013), most government organisations are not satisfied with their work due to old work facilities, tight oversight, and weak government programmes in their organisations, which has prompted several federal officials to move to the private sector. These problems have a tremendous effect on employee happiness in the UAE government.

Happiness in the workplace is important for both people and companies (Fisher, 2010; Simmons, 2014), and there is little data on employee happiness in organisations (Fisher, 2010; Hosie, Willemyns, & Sevastos, 2012; Sloan, 2005). It should be more explored to offer ample information to researchers, clinicians, and others who areto offer ample information to researchers, clinicians, and others involved in the notion of happinessin the workplace (Hosie et al., 2012; Sloan, 2005). As a result, it is important to be explored the employee's happiness in their workplace from cultural aspects in a perspective of national importance, which has not been properly examined in the UAE. There is predicted to be a relationship between general happiness and workplace happiness. Employee happiness in their personal life and at work is intimately related to how well they accomplish their jobs.

1.4   Research questions

The primary research questions were formulated from the primary research objectives:

1. What are the factors affecting job satisfaction in the Dubai metro?
2. What is the relationship between work and happiness?
3. Are employees happier working in their own national cultures?

1.5   Research objectives

i.   To investigate the relationship of job happiness with job satisfaction in Dubai Metro.
ii. To investigate the relationship of job happiness with national culture in Dubai Metro.
iii. To investigate the role of national culture in the relationship between job happiness and job satisfaction in Dubai Metro.

1.6   Scope of the research

It is reasonable to conclude that there is a dearth of empirical research examining the issues of job happiness and job satisfaction in public sector organizations in the United Arab Emirates and specifically in the Dubai Metro. This study demonstrates the importance and influence of employee job satisfaction in understanding employee views of advancement and growth. It also contributes to our knowledge of Dubai Metro's employee job satisfaction levels and development. However, only the employees who are employed by Dubai Metro are discussed in this study. This is because the duties and nature of both employees and top management are entirely distinct, making it difficult for the researcher to include both groups in this study.

The primary justification for selecting the Dubai Metro for data collection is that the present government is very focused on the city's growth. In addition, past research has concluded that employees in the public sector of the UAE are the group that has received the least amount of attention in the study of job happiness and job

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