An Evaluation of Happiness Status of Academic personnel in Nigerian University Community: Work Environ Perspective

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Abstract

Educationists, in recent times have accepted the importance of happiness in human life. They have acknowledged that teaching and learning goals and objectives are consistent with happiness. Quality and equity education lead to the enhancement of capabilities and functioning, which facilitates positive life that brings about happiness and development. The ideal university system generally enhances happiness of the university community which overflows in the society. It is in line with these assertions that this work aimed to ascertain the happiness status of academic personnel in Nigerian University community with emphasis on their working environment. Linear Regression Model method was employed and the work discovered that the academic personals of the Nigerian university community are not happy. The work therefore, concludes that university teachers/lecturers are key when it comes to building society's happiness and recommends that university academic community be taken more seriously in terms of provisions that will enhance their happiness.

Keywords: Happiness, Work Environment, University Community, Academic Personnel

JEL Classification: I21

1. Introduction

When the ancient philosophers speak of happiness, what they meant is ultimate end in life. Aristotle's basic claims is that "happiness is the highest of all goods attainable by effort…it is an end that is unique in that of all the ends that men may adopt, this alone is always chosen for its own sake and never as a means to some other end" (Barrow, 2012). In other words, man's ultimate aim is to achieve happiness. He emphasized that happiness is a product of active pursuit of virtue in life endeavor. Economists' empirical studies in global economy have opened a new field of research called the economics of happiness or 'happiness economics' that is gaining increasing attention among economists, psychologists, sociologists and the public. Particularly, economics of happiness was stimulated by the happiness paradox which was a found explanation of the existing contradiction in

contemporary economics' notion of well-being as a simple function of income or improved Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as the main vision for the development of societies (Zevnik, 2014).

According to Barrow (2012), promotion of happiness is all about "fitting of square pegs into square holes, round pegs into round holes…or correlation of individual's outlook and the contours of his actual situations". Impliedly, the concept happiness has three essential conditions - security, self-esteem and realism. Security here stands for strong ties with immediate associates e.g. friends, families, work mates etc. Self-esteem stands for pride in one's own worth. That is, feeling of adequacy in terms of life provision without being hopeless. While realism is all about expectations of life endeavors by behaving accordingly, not fantasized. Sen's approach to quality of life seemed to be a bit expansive way of happiness. He suggested/covered new indicators such as democracy, social capital, health, rights, freedom, working conditions and fundamental capabilities. These indicators formed the basics in the 1990's 'list of fundamental human needs that is developed into the United Nation's (UN) Human Development Indicators (HDI) (Bruni, 2006). Since then, the UNDP's *Human Development Report*s (HDR) has argued that 'human development' be the target of development policy, rather than economic growth. Indeed, it has a wider accepted scope in terms of measurement of human wellbeing/happiness ahead of income and poverty. Over the years income has not only increasingly become means towards achieving an end, rather an end in itself which is argued to have obvious weaknesses' (McGillivray, 2006).

Educationists, in recent times have accepted the importance of happiness in human life. They have acknowledged that teaching and learning goals and objectives are consistent with happiness. Alternative terms often employed by educationist in terms of happiness concept, are for instance, 'high self-esteem', achieving a sense of 'well-being', or developing a 'positive outlook' etc. It is popularly agreed that education should make society feel *better*, and that teachers hold societal treasure to preparing students to become happy, obedient and contribute to others' happiness beyond school life (Roberts, 2016). In other words, quality and equity education lead to the enhancement of capabilities and facilitates functioning positive life that brings about happiness and development (Schuelka & Maxwell, 2016). Professional happiness of university teachers therefore, has to do with value attached to life from the perspective of teachers own development and social value from the perspective of education for students happiness (Lei, 2022).

John Henry Newman in Atanda and Imam (2016) stressed that university is a place 'where …enquiry is pushed forward and discoveries verified and perfected and rashness rendered and innocuous and error exposed by the collision of minds with minds, knowledge with knowledge. Is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, and a minister of the faith and an Alma Mater of rising generation'. The academics staff play laudable roles in the universities all over the world as they are the major drivers of these generations. The ideal university system makes provision for teaching, learning and research processes conducive enough and capable to impact desirable change in the learner's behavior through critical thinking. Such a process must be housed by ideal environment with structures and facilities, level playing

grounds that aids teaching, learning and research that forms the tools of producing knowledge (Atanda & Imam, 2016; Isa & Yusoff, 2015). After all Smith (1934) put it that an ideal university should have "Freedom to teach, freedom to learn, freedom to investigate - these are the primary requirements of intellectual life, and the history of our universities clearly shows that their denial brings stagnation and death". The ideal university system generally enhances happiness of the university community which overflows to the society.

University of Ibadan and University of Nigeria Nsukka were established in 1963 and 1960 respectively (full-fledged university status) as mark of the emergence of university education in Nigeria and Sir EricAshby commission's recommendations in 1959, led to the establishment of first generation universities. The Universities of Calabar, Ilorin, Jos, Sokoto, Maiduguri, Port Harcourt and Ado Bayero University, Kano was the second generation universities as propelled by the Third National Development Plan (1975-1980). The third and the fourth generations' universities sprang between 1980 – 1990 and 1991 to date making the number of universities more than a hundred in Nigeria (both government and privately owned) (Ejoigu & Sule, 2012). Precisely, there are hundred and seventy Universities in Nigeria[1]. Over a hundred universities is in the right direction for a country like Nigeria with population of more than a hundred and sixty million. However, the attitude of federal and state governments opening up new universities without adequate infrastructure in place, inadequate funding and provisions is a heart bleeding matter and hampers academics from functioning properly (Ejoigu & Sule, 2012; Isa & Yusoff, 2015). In furtherance, the academic staff in these universities are expected to put in their best in the areas of lectures, administer and mark examinations, supervise project/thesis, as well as perform administrative roles like Heads of department, Deans of faculties, Senates, Committee and Council memberships, Directors of Centers and Institutes and the likes (Atanda & Imam, 2016). Although, private universities are doing better in provisions, but the very high fees charges makes it no go area for an ordinary citizen (Ejoigu & Sule, 2012).

The inadequacies in the university system like the issues of welfare of the academic staff has consequential implications known as the, "brain drain phenomenon" where vibrant academics opts for better reward in other sectors or abroad (Ejoigu & Sule, 2012), frequent Academic staff Union of Universities (ASUU) Strike over inadequacies; funding, over-enrolment, overcrowded classrooms and overstretched available facilities (Isa & Yusoff, 2015). The question now is what is the happiness status of academic staff of the Nigerian university in terms of workplace environment? The objective of the study is to ascertain the happiness status of the academic staff of Nigerian university community using staff work environment yardstick. The motivation for the study on the other hand, is the novelty of the study on lecturer's happiness in relation to his teaching environment in Nigeria. It's common in the field of economics that subjective wellbeing, pleasure,

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[1] https://www.google.com/search?q=how+nmany+universities+in+Nigeria&rlz=1C1JJTC_enNG959NG 960&oq=how+nmany+universities+in+Nigeria&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i13l2j0i13i30l7.26361j0j15&sour ceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

psychological wellbeing, positive mental state, life satisfaction and some others are often interchangeably use for happiness. This work will also employ same.

2. Literature Review

In economics, the concept of happiness emanated from technical term, "utility" theory. In the words of the theorist, Jeremy Bentham "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone that one points out what one ought to do, as well as to determine what ought not to do (Abbinnett, 2013; Bentham, 2000). According to Mill in Bavetta, Naverra and Maimone (2014), in support of utilitarian principle said "actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness". Modern economist assumed that the role of an economy is to ensure maximum utility but today, it's replaced with a broader concept or framework of happiness. A normal work consumes one third of one's day. It's a means that provides economic returns and also sources of human health, work can therefore, be said to be a source of happiness for an individual (Erkuş & Fındıklı, 2021). Work however, can make one sick depending on who you are, what you do and workplace environment or conditions. Work environment with dull and monotonous work, difficult relationships with others could be frustrating and damaging tone's resilience, happiness and even physical health (Johnson, Ivan, & Cary, 2018). On the other hand, work is very rewarding when it involves good relationships with companions, regular feelings of sense of belonging and achievement; and this makes a key factor of happiness at work. In a sample of almost a thousand managers, 87% attested to the fact that happier workplace gives competitive advantage (Díaz, 2022).

The "workplace environment" comprises of the physical and social conditions where the employees perform their daily responsibility. Physical conditions include the job operation and atmospheric facilities; job characteristics such as workload, the complexity level etc.; organizational structure such as culture, leadership, playing grounds etc.; and workplace social conditions are the way employees' duties are split into various works; the definition of work are roles, workload level, and the offered opportunities. Upon achieving positive physical and social workplace conditions, employees end up feeling happy, hence improved productivity that has chain effect to profitability (Awada & Ismail, 2019). Negative approach of the employer towards these features of workplace environment does not only affect employee's turnover rates but also inflict their health (Erkuş & Fındıklı, 2021). Employees' engagement (provisions of welfare of staff and work aiding facilities both soft and hard infrastructures) is paramount when happiness of an employee is desired. These provisions facilitate a better return for investors, and tend to dominate customers interest and satisfaction, lower staff turnover rates, lower absenteeism, produces higher employee performance and such employer perform better financially (Johnson et al., 2018). Happy employees are better placed to realize successful problem-solving in the workplace by motivations and meeting their needs. These could include both material, non-material and financial; especially personality and career advancement (Awada & Ismail, 2019).

Happiness is generally a product of "sufficiency economy". Happiness at work therefore, depends on individual behavior, where there is the practice of the philosophy of sufficiency economy. The philosophy of sufficiency economy is a phrase that meant decent ways of economic life and people's behavior at all levels, especially in the area of economic development. In other words, to keep pace with the globalization era by focusing on morality, honesty and appropriate knowledge; to live life with patience and perseverance; to be balanced and flexible enough to support the changes in today's world and the need for sufficient economy. These practices, characteristics and achievements are what portrays economic development which can eventually lead to happiness at work (Kittinorarat, 2022).

These afore-expressions are no different from professional teacher's workplace conditions. Ethically, happiness or well-being is the foundation of teachers' psychological quality. Happiness tend to erase teachers' professional stress which also addresses their physical and mental health, thus enhancing their professional well-being (Lei, 2022). Happiness is a very important indicator and a basic capital for teacher/lecturer in carrying out their duties. A lecturer's happiness at work place or in performing their responsibility increases job satisfaction (Amin, 2022). This means that a happy lecturer with a sense of happiness does his/her work more diligently which will result in a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

3. Methodology

In the happiness studies, researcher asks respondents on how happy they are, how satisfied with their lives they are and the responses are compile statistically as universal measure that are used to compare people's happiness status from different societies. It is believed that this type of statistical finding have a broad accuracy, because its self-expression approach of measurement. This is also the case with this research work.

The research team in line with Baron and Kenny in Sekaran and Rogers (2010), choose 383 questionnaires and added 40% (Adomi, Ayo, & Nakpodia, 2007) for non-response that made up 459 questionnaires administered in Nigerian academic staff community. Out of this, number returned were 414, this underwent processing via SPSS statistical package. The questionnaire used was adapted from sources; Workplace happiness: Organizational role and the reliability of self-reporting. The questionnaires were administered in two randomly selected universities across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. This study applied Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) given a set of latent variables to determine the factor structure of a variable and its internal reliability, and correlation to determine the direction of relationship with a simple linear regression. The linear regression model is given as follows:

$$y = a + bx + \mu \ \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots.1$$

Where y is the dependent variable, x represent independent variables, a and b are the parameters of the model, and μ is the unobserved term.

4. Results

This study employed factor analysis to extract factors that properly explain each construct so as to be able to map out the right questions to run effective regression. Table 1 displayed the Principal Component analysis using the extraction method

which produces the initial values and extraction values using all factors with eigenvalue greater than one. The factor analysis is used to extract few factors that will reduce the variables for proper numbers of variables for regression computation. Factor analysis for work environment for 3 extract factor

Table 1: Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
My organization is a good place of work	1.000	.621
My organization is well managed	1.000	.572
I feel motivated to do the best I can in my job	1.000	.602
My promotions and other benefits are consistent	1.000	.157
I'm satisfied with recreation (sport, canteen, food subsidy) facilitiess in my work place	1.000	.516
I'm satisfied with the health care rovision in my wok place	1.000	.510
The green vegetation is jealously guarded for conservation and beauty of my work place	1.000	.492
It is safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done within my organization	1.000	.250
I do feel like quitting or changing my job	1.000	.646
I'm satisfied with employment insurance scheme	1.000	.560
I'm satisfied with the on-the-job trianing (seminar, workshop and long term training sponsorship) in my work place	1.000	.544
I'm satisfied with internet base facility/provisions at my work place	1.000	.387
I'm satisfied with union roles in my work place	1.000	.410
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Source: Authors' Compilation

Table 2 displayed actual factors that were extracted. There were three factors with eigenvalues greater than one. The percentage of variance column under sums of squared loading revealed that factor one accounts for 22.515% of variability in all 13 variables, factor 2 accounts for 12.860% and factor 3 accounts for 12.834%.

Table 3: Extracted Factors

				Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.952	30.397	30.397	3.952	30.397	30.397	2.927	22.515	22.515
2	1.258	9.678	40.076	1.258	9.678	40.076	1.672	12.860	35.374
3	1.057	8.133	48.209	1.057	8.133	48.209	1.668	12.834	48.209
4	.978	7.523	55.731						
5	.972	7.475	63.206						
6	.851	6.545	69.751						
7	.765	5.886	75.637						
8	.647	4.978	80.616						
9	.635	4.881	85.497						
10	.565	4.344	89.841						
11	.476	3.659	93.500						
12	.448	3.443	96.943						
13	.397	3.057	100.000						

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Source: Authors' Compilation

Table 3 displayed that the first 3 subtests,5th, 6th, 7th, 10th, and 11th subtests loaded strongly on factor 1 with the one with highest value 0.752 which is I feel motivated to do the best I can in my job.

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
My organization is a good place of work	.567	-.322	.443
My organization is well managed	.689	-.293	.112
I feel motivated to do the best I can in my job	.752	-.193	.004
My promotions and other benefits are consistent	.254	-.171	-.252
I'm satisfied with recreation (sport, canteen, food subsidy) facilitiess in my work place	.715	.068	-.019
I'm satisfied with the health care rovision in my wok place	.662	.257	-.072
The green vegetation is jealously guarded for conservation and beauty of my work place	.561	.389	.162
It is safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done within my organization	.470	-.122	-.119
I do feel like quitting or changing my job	-.221	.728	.260
I'm satisfied with employment insurance scheme	.608	.404	-.164
I'm satisfied with the on-the-job trianing (seminar, workshop and long term training sponsorship) in my work place	.688	.233	-.124
I'm satisfied with internet base facility/provisions at my work place	.274	-.081	-.553
I'm satisfied with union roles in my work place	.271	-.111	.569

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.[a]; a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Table 4 displayed the Principal Component analysis for happiness using the extraction method which produces the initial values and extraction values using all factors with eigenvalue greater than one. The extraction indicated that only one factor is extracted.

Table 4: Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
How happy are you in the organization	1.000	.653
How happy are you interms of promotion processes	1.000	.696
How happy are you interms of working condition	1.000	.619

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Table 5 displayed actual factors that were extracted. There was one factor with eigenvalues greater than one. The percentage of variance column under sums of squared loading revealed that factor one accounts for 65.605% of variability in all 3 variables.

Table 5: Total Variance Explained

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.968	65.605	65.605	1.968	65.605	65.605
2	.565	18.841	84.447			
3	.467	15.553	100.000			

SExtraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Authors' Computation

Regression from the Factor Analysis

Table 6 displayed that the dependent variable is I feel motivated to do the best I can in my job and the independent variables is How happy are you interms of promotion processes. The mean and standard deviation of dependent variable values are lower than the independent variable values

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
How happy are you interms of promotion processes	5.0099	1.50573	405
I feel motivated to do the best I can in my job	2.5778	.93977	405

Source: Authors' Computation

In the regression analysis, Table 7 displayed that the linear regression explained 72.23 percent of model represented by the value of R-square. These indicated that for a University community to be happy is when work environment is good.

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	R^2 Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.850ᵃ	.722	.721	.79518	.722	1045.580	1	403	.000

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), I feel motivated to do the best I can in my job
Source: Authors' Computation

Table 8 displayed the regression model: Y = 1.501 + 1.361x. Y is the dependent variable (Happiness) and x is the independent variable (Work Environment). One unit change of happiness is 1.361 changes in work environment. This indicated that the rate of change is low; Nigeria University community is not happy because the work environment is not good enough.

Table 8: Coefficientsᵃ

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.501	.115		12.996	.000
	I feel motivated to do the best I can in my job	1.361	.042	.850	32.335	.000

Note: a. Dependent Variable: How happy are you interms of promotion processes
Source: Authors' Computation

Table 9 displayed that the dependent variable (Happiness) is weakly agreed with the independent variable (Work Environment) in both Kendall's tau_b and Spearman's rho methods. The weak relationship indicated that Nigeria University community is not happy because the work environment is not good enough. It indicated that when there is no good working environment in the community for the staff, there will be no happiness in the University community which goes to mean less effective learning and the likely result is poor output and poor performance.

Table 9; Correlations

			My organization is a good place of work	How happy are you interms of promotion processes
Kendall's tau_b	My organization is a good place of work	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.363**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	407	407
	How happy are you interms of promotion processes	Correlation Coefficient	.363**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	407	415
Spearman's rho	My organization is a good place of work	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.421**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	407	407
	How happy are you interms of promotion processes	Correlation Coefficient	.421**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	407	415

*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
Source: Authors' Computation

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The purpose of education is to build individual's experience of happiness and develop the ability to be happy. Impliedly, it's when teachers/lectures are prone to provisions of what it takes to be happy they can have the ability to guide students to feel happy. Happiness of academics personnel is like happiness of the nation, for they are promoters of curricular thinking and politics. Happiness of a teacher simply rolls or transmits to the society via the perpetual student society connection. University teachers plays a crucial role in molding students' moral quality and socialist core values, and students' happiness is very important component of such values. Therefore, happiness of university community is an important ingredient at building the society's happiness. Finally the work recommends that university academic community be taken more seriously in terms of provisions that facilitate happiness. This will not only build the teacher to live longer to impact knowledge, but improve student's morals and happiness which will naturally flow to build larger national happiness.

6. Acknowledgement

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