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# The Impact of Organizational Happiness on the Working Life Quality; a Case Study among Isfahan University's Staff)

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## ABSTRACT

Nowadays, the lack of happiness in organizational environments is one of the main problems for these organizations. In these organizations, organizational structures and management strategies should be looking for some tools and methods to perform the duties of the employee more effectively and increase the productivity through increasing monetary satisfaction, meeting vital needs and individually staff development in their organizations. Considering the issue, one of the newest and most efficient techniques is the creation of a happy organization with relaxation and satisfaction for staff by organizational management. The present study has been conducted to examine the effects of organizational happiness on the working life quality among Isfahan university staff. To do so, a sample of 200 employees was selected randomly. The data was collected through questionnaires. Data analysis was done by SPSS 18 and Amos 20. The results indicated that among university employees the quality of work life was highly affected by organizational happiness.

**Keywords:** Happiness, Organizational Happiness and Quality of Work Life.

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## Introduction

Nowadays, the lack of happiness in organizational environments is one of the main problems for these organizations. In these organizations, organizational structures and management strategies should be looking for some tools and methods to encourage the employees perform their duties better and increase their productivity through enhancing monetary satisfaction, meeting their vital

needs and individually staff development in their organizations. In relation to this issue, one of the newest and most efficient techniques is the creation of a happy organization with relaxation and satisfaction for staff by organizational management. This can lead to permanent happiness in organization members and consequently in the total area of society, in addition to efficiency improvement.

Happiness is a Persian word encompassing mental relaxation and peace of mind which is created in the mind of people and today has been eliminated in the lives of many people. Today organizational structures are the most important reasons for losing organizational happiness. Organizational happiness is a new concept in the field of managing organizational behavior. Happiness at work is achieved when a person uses her/his abilities and talents to achieve her/his business objectives (Duttonal, 2007: 12). Organizational happiness, leads to productivity, efficiency, accuracy in decision-making, increasing longevity and quality of work life and *etc.* Quality of life can be caused by several factors: the multidimensional nature of the construct, its application in different professional areas such as medicine, psychology, human geography, development studies, economics, Sociology, and finally the analysis level that can be related to agents, processes, positions or structures that organizational happiness is related to the last one (Ghaffari and Omid, 2009).

Organizational happiness and its effect on the organization staff and quality of work life have been insufficiently dealt in research. Thus, the present study has attempted to study the effect of organizational happiness on the quality of work life among university staff. Therefore,, the concept of happiness and organizational happiness have been studied, measured and analyzed and finally the relations between organizational happiness and quality of work life have been studied among Isfahan university staff.

### **The Theoretical Literature**

In the next section, first, we will review the organizational happiness and the quality of work life separately then we will discuss

the relationship between these two sectors.

### **Organizational Happiness**

Happiness is an emotion that arises when human needs are satisfied and makes the life enjoyable. Living happily is an answer to how to live and it can strengthen the will of the people. Happy people have common features: positive action in addition to positive thinking, asking what they need, willing to change, lack of fear of change and knowing opportunities and planning for the future. Positive emotions such as happiness have been considered from ancient times. According to Aristotle, there are at least three kinds of happiness; at the lowest level is the common people's idea who consider happiness equal to success and prosperity and at higher level Aristotle happiness or happiness comes from spirituality. The psychologists in the late twentieth century have begun to pay attention to positive emotions. Vinhoven (1988) in a research study concluded that till 1960 research related to happiness and its categories including satisfaction, joy and positive emotions had been 62 cases. Research related to happiness has increased from 1960 and various organizations have also studied happiness (Argyle, 2001). Research on Influential factors of happiness continued. Costa and Mc Crae claimed that they had discovered genes for happiness. These two psychologists relates happiness to extroversion and emotional stability and because these character traits have largely genetic basis, (Mirshah Jafari, 2002). This claim accelerated the research of this area and now a large number of variables affecting happiness have been found.

In Plaster's view (2009), Organizational happiness is pleasant and an activity that brings fun, laughter and joy to people. These activities can be formal or managed

or employees will participate spontaneously and informally. Happiness, well-being and mental health are an important mental topic that can be related to family, workplace, community and the individual. These factors can leave effects on abilities, knowledge and memories of the person. Not only do they also influence the individual belief of the environment and the related factors, but also, they can affect person's performance positively or negatively. According to the psychological issues related to its impact on individual and organizational performance of staff, "happiness" is of particular importance in organizations. Relying on studies done by the Institute in Great Britain, an index has been defined for "happiness" based on its people working in organizations with different degrees of happiness. Also, based on the studies conducted, there is a direct relationship between happiness and productivity in organization and by increasing staff happiness, their productivity also increases, so teaching happiness in organizations have had many benefits. Further, sustainable organizational and individual benefits can be achieved by low cost (MirshahJafari, 2002).

### **Quality of work life**

Today the concept of quality of work life in contemporary management has become a major social issue around the world (Luthans, 1998), while in the past decades only personal life (non-working) was emphasized (MohebAli, 1997). Proponents of quality of work life theory search for new systems to staff to enable them to balance between work life and personal life (Okder, 2006). In a practical approach, quality of life is defined as a general concept that cover all aspects of the life including monetary satisfaction, vital needs, plus the transitional aspects of life

such as personal development, self-knowing, and ecosystem health (Balvin, 1994).

The quality of work life programs includes any improvement in organizational culture that causes employees' excellence and growth in the organization (Philipo, 1998). Hence, the value system of the quality of work life considers investment on people as the most important variable in strategic management (Shareef, 1990). The study findings indicate that the components of these programs reduce employee complaints, reduce the rate of absence from work, reduce disciplinary regulations, increase positive attitudes of employees and increase their participation in the programs of recommendation system (Gorden, 1993). On the other hand, to meet the needs of the employees of the organization will lead to make efficient and improve performance (Shareef, 1990). Lio presents three approaches in the evaluation of quality of life concept: 1. Defining quality of life based on its components, such as happiness, satisfaction, wealth, lifestyle, etc. 2. Defining quality of life through using objective and subjective social indicators such as GDP, health, welfare index, education index. 3. Defining quality of life based on the definition of variables or factors affecting quality of life (QOL) and considering the context and circumstances in which quality of life is determined (Lio, 1976). In this study, quality of life was considered with emphasis on Walton model for quality of work life with 8 parameters as follows: fair and adequate payment, safe and healthy working environment, providing opportunities for continued growth and security, legislating in the organization, social dependence in working life, the general atmosphere of life, social unity and cohesion, the development of human capabilities

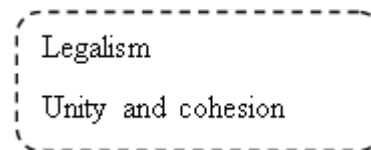
(Walton, 1973). The organization that considers its staff quality of work life enjoys the benefits of having more committed workforce and more committed workforce means higher productivity of workforce (Organ, 1988). Managers that are looking to increase productivity and improve quality of life, try to improve job attitudes, and increase the incentive for people to work better and strengthen their commitment to the organization and try to reduce the rate of employee absenteeism, turnover, and other preventive behaviors, increase organization productivity and employee job performance (Saatchi, 2005). Leaving work is very costly for organizations and every time a person leaves his job, the substitute individual will be hired and trained to be employed and the newcomer should have enough time to get experienced (Mahdad, 2010). Staff morale has direct impact on quality of people work life, and quality of people work life has direct impact on leaving the organization (Johnsrud, 2002). Therefore, lack of attention to staff morale will reduce quality of work life and increase work absenteeism, turnover, and their mental stress indirectly through fatigue or dissatisfaction with work. So, inspiring working environment for the employees could meet the basic requirements. Therefore, the aim of this study is to answer whether there is a relationship between organizational happiness and dimensions of quality of work life among Isfahan university employees.

### Conceptual model of the research

Conceptual model of the research is a conceptual Model based on the theoretical relationships that are identified as important research issues between some factors of research. By studying research experiences in the realm of the problem,

this theory will flow logically. In this paper, based on the research topic and theoretical literature presented, the research conceptual model has explained the impact of organizational happiness on the quality of work life among Isfahan university staff.

Quality of work life  
 Fair payment  
 Safe environment  
 Providing growth opportunities  
 Staff happiness  
 Social independence  
 General life atmosphere  
 Developing human capabilities



**Figure1.** Conceptual model of the research

### Research Hypothesis

#### The Main Hypotheses:

Organizational happiness and quality of work life has positive and significant relationship between Isfahan university staff.

#### Secondary Hypotheses:

Organizational happiness and the perception of fair payment have a significant and positive relationship between Isfahan university staff.

Organizational happiness and the perception of safety environment creates a positive relationship among Isfahan university staff.

Organizational happiness and perception of growth opportunities has a positive and significant on the relationship among Isfahan university staff.

Organizational happiness and perception of legalism has a positive and significant relationship among Isfahan university staff.

Organizational happiness and perception of social independence has a positive and significant relationship among Isfahan university staff.

Organizational happiness and perception of general atmosphere of life has a positive and significant relationship among Isfahan university staff.

Organizational happiness and perception of unity and cohesion has a positive and significant relationship among Isfahan university staff.

Organizational happiness and perception of developing human capabilities has a positive and significant relationship among Isfahan university staff.

## Research Methods

### Research Community and Sample

In terms of objectives and methods for data collection, this research is descriptive. The statistical community of this study is

comprised of employees of the Isfahan University. In this study, random sampling was used. So, 200 questionnaires were distributed and 195 questionnaires were accepted for analysis. Questionnaires used in this study consist of two parts. Rating scale varied from strongly agree to strongly disagree and for each grade 1 to 5 was used.

### Measuring Research Variables

Content validity of the used questionnaire was approved by university professors and university experts of Isfahan and Shahrekord. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the test. Cronbach's alpha for all variable questions in the analytical model of research was 0.89, which is an acceptable level. In Table 1 Cronbach's alpha for each of the variables of the study are:

**Table 1.** Cronbach's Alpha

variable	Number of Questions	Reference	Cronbach's alpha
Happiness	20	Ahmad and Rafigh	0.91
Quality of work life	25	Walton	0.88

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics of demographic variables

	Variable	Frequency	Frequency percent
gender	male	92	47.2
	female	103	52.8
age	20-30	5	2.5
	30-40	106	54.4
	40-50	67	34.4
	50-60	17	8.7
Education	Graduated from high school	8	4.1
	Associate Degree	29	14.9
	B.A	123	63.1
	M.A and higher	35	17.9

Cronbach alpha coefficients for each variable and all of questions are 0.75, which indicates the reliability of the questionnaire.

### Data Analysis

Three demographic variables were selected in this research including gender, age and education of employees. The table

below shows the descriptive statistics for each of the demographic variables.

Descriptive statistics related to demographic variables are presented in the above Table. As it is clear from the results, 47.2% of the participants were male and 52.8% were female. Frequency percent of those between 20-30 years was 5/2%, those between 30-40 years was 54.4%, 40 to 50 years was 34.4% and 8.7% of the population were individuals between 50-60 years of age. Descriptive statistics of education also shows that 4.1% of people graduated from high school

14.9% had associated degree, 63.1% were bachelor of art and 17.9% were master of art and higher.

Results of one-sample t-test show that the mean of happiness and quality of work life (= 3) is higher than average level and statistically is significantly different from 3.

### Results of confirmatory factor analysis

In the first step, the measurement models are fitted. The fitted model indices are given in Table 4.

**Table 3.** One-sample t-test results

variable	number	mean	T- statistics	Significance level
happiness	195	3.64	7.93	0.000
Quality of work life	195	3.93	8.32	0.000

**Table 4.** The measurement models indices

variables	CIMIN/DF	RMSEA	RMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI
Staff happiness	2.38	0.06	0.03	0.96	0.93	0.97	0.98
Quality of work life	1.87	0.04	0.01	0.98	0.96	0.98	0.99
Fair payment	2.30	0.05	0.02	0.98	0.95	0.96	0.97
Safe work environment	1.11	0.01	0.006	0.99	0.98	0.99	1.00
Preparing development opportunities	1.38	0.04	0.01	0.98	0.95	0.98	0.99
legalism	2.72	0.06	0.03	0.96	0.93	0.90	0.92
Social independence	2.76	0.06	0.02	0.95	0.92	0.95	0.96
General life atmosphere	2.40	0.06	0.01	0.96	0.93	0.98	0.9
Unity and cohesion	2.61	0.06	0.02	0.95	0.91	0.95	0.97
Developing human capabilities	2.53	0.07	0.01	0.97	0.91	0.97	0.98

Fitness indices are in an acceptable range for all measurement models. These indices indicate a good fit of the model given data and the collected data support the model well. The factor loads are all greater than 0.3 and they have a significance level of 0.000.

### Results of structural equations modeling analysis of the main model

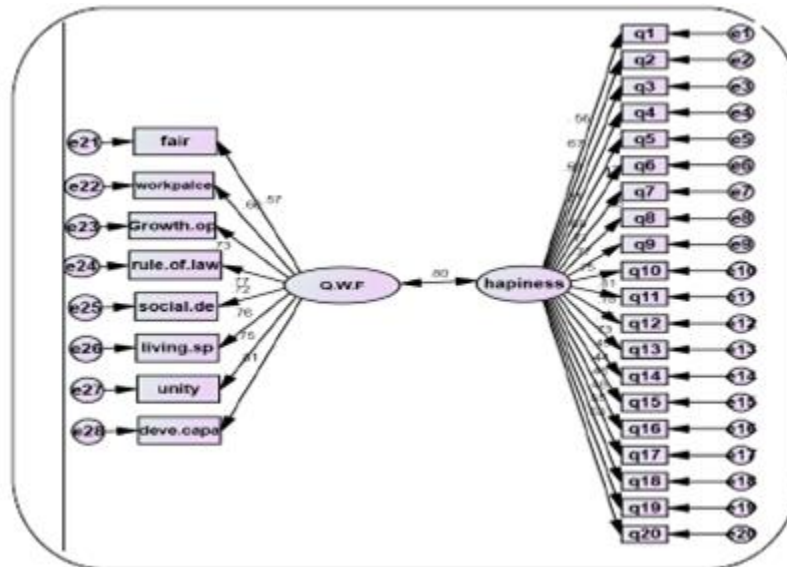
After verification of measuring patterns in the first step, to test the hypotheses, structural equation model has been fitted and analyzed in the second step. The overall model indices are presented in Table 5.

The results of the data presented in Table 6 are as follows:

Amos output results in the standard estimation part show that the model of path analysis is an appropriate model.

**Table 5.** Fitness indices of the main model

	CMIN/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	IFI	RMR
Receptionarea	1.35	0.06	0.92	0.90	0.93	0.94	0.93	0.03
	1>,3<	0.08<	0.90>	0.90>	0.90>	0.90>	0.90>	Closeto zero



**Figure 2.** Structural equations modeling analysis of the main model

**Table 6.** Results of the main hypotheses test

hypothesis	sample	Significance number	correlation coefficient	Test result
Happiness-quality of work life	195	0.000	0.79	accepted

The normal square K is 1.35 which is between 1 and 3. RMSEA value of model is 0.03 and is appropriate, the value of GFI and AGFI and NFI and CFI and IFI indices are all higher than 90%. And finally, RMR value is close to zero. Values of fitness indices for the model are in reception are a and these indices indicate good fitness of the model by data and the collected data support the model well. Hypotheses with regression coefficients and partial indices

of the main hypotheses are presented in Table 6.

The results of the main hypotheses test are as follows:

Hypothesis1: There is a positive correlation between happiness and quality of working life.

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.000 and is smaller than 0.05, it can be said that there is a positive and significant relationship between staff happiness and their quality



of working life. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was confirmed.

In this section, to test the structural equations model and analysis, sub-hypotheses have been studied. In Table 7, the overall indices of sub-model fitness are presented.

**Results of structural equations modeling analysis of sub-models**

**Table 7.** Fitness indices of sub models

	CMIN/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	IFI	RMR
sub-hypotheses 1	1.76	0.06	0.89	0.88	0.91	0.93	0.93	0.05
sub-hypotheses 2	1.43	0.05	0.91	0.90	0.90	0.95	0.95	0.04
sub-hypotheses 3	1.36	0.04	0.90	0.89	0.89	0.95	0.95	0.03
sub-hypotheses 4	1.59	0.05	0.91	0.90	0.91	0.93	0.93	0.03
sub-hypotheses 5	1.42	0.05	0.92	0.91	0.92	0.95	0.96	0.04
sub-hypotheses 6	1.40	0.04	0.89	0.88	0.90	0.93	0.93	0.04
sub-hypotheses 7	1.55	0.05	0.90	0.89	0.89	0.92	0.92	0.03
sub-hypotheses 8	1.76	0.06	0.90	0.89	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.03
Reception area	1>,3<	0.08<	0.90>	0.90>	0.90>	0.90>	0.90>	Close to zero

The results of the data presented in Table 7 are as follows.

Amos output results in standard estimate of sub-models show that the path analysis model is an appropriate one. Chi square value is located between 1 and 3. RMSEA value of the models are suitable, GFI and AGFI values and indices of NFI and CFI and IFI are all close to higher than 90%. And finally, RMR value is near zero. Fitness

indices values for the model all are in reception area and these indices show good fitness of the model by data and the collected data support the model well. Hypotheses with regression coefficients and partial indices values for each hypothesis are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Results of the main hypothesis test

	Hypothesis	Sample	significanc e number	correlatio n coefficient	
Happiness	→ fair payment	195	0.000	0.53	confirmed
Happiness	→ safe work environment	195	0.056	0.09	rejected
Happiness	→ preparing growth opportunity	195	0.031	0.32	confirmed
Happiness	→ legalism	195	0.000	0.77	confirmed
Happiness	→ social independence	195	0.000	0.61	confirmed
Happiness	→ general atmosphere of life	195	0.000	0.49	confirmed
Happiness	→ Unity and cohesion	195	0.000	0.63	confirmed
Happiness	→ developing human capability	195	0.041	0.19	confirmed



**The results of the sub-hypothesis test:**

**Hypothesis 1: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational happiness and the perception of fair payment among Isfahan university staff.**

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.000 and is smaller than 0.05, it can be said that there is a positive and significant relationship between happiness and the perception of fair payment among Isfahan university staff. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was confirmed.

**Hypothesis 2: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational happiness and the perception of safety in the work environment among Isfahan university staff.**

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.056 and is more than 0.05, it can be said that there is no positive and significant relationship between happiness and the perception of safety work environment among Isfahan university staff. Thus, Hypothesis 2 wasn't confirmed.

**Hypothesis 3: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational happiness and the perception of preparing growth opportunity among Isfahan university staff.**

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.031 and is smaller than 0.05, it can be said that there is a positive and significant relationship between happiness and the perception of preparing growth opportunity among Isfahan university staff. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was confirmed.

**Hypothesis 4: There is a significant positive relationship between**

**organizational happiness and the perception of legalism among Isfahan university staff.**

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.000 and is smaller than 0.05, it can be said that there is a positive and significant relationship between happiness and the perception of legalism among Isfahan university staff. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was confirmed.

**Hypothesis 5: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational happiness and the perception of social independence among Isfahan university staff.**

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.000 and is smaller than 0.05, it can be said that there is a positive and significant relationship between happiness and the perception of social independence among Isfahan university staff. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was confirmed.

**Hypothesis 6: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational happiness and the general atmosphere of life among Isfahan university staff.**

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.000 and is smaller than 0.05, it can be said that there is a positive and significant relationship between happiness and the perception of general atmosphere of life among Isfahan university staff. Thus, Hypothesis 6 was confirmed.

**Hypothesis 7: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational happiness and the perception of unity and cohesion among Isfahan university staff.**

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.000 and is smaller than 0.05, it can be said that there is a positive

and significant relationship between happiness and the perception of unity and cohesion among Isfahan university staff. Thus, Hypothesis 7 was confirmed.

**Hypothesis 8: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational happiness and the perception of developing human capabilities among Isfahan university staff.**

According to the significance level of the test that is equal to 0.000 and is smaller than 0.05, it can be said that there is a positive and significant relationship between happiness and the perception of developing human capabilities among Isfahan university staff. Thus, Hypothesis 8 was confirmed.

### Conclusion

The research results showed that organizational happiness has a significantly positive effect on the quality of work life among Isfahan university employees. Generally organizational happiness affects significantly and positively each of the elements of quality of work life including perceptions of fair payment, perception of providing growth opportunities, perception of legalism, perception of social dependence, perception of general atmosphere of life, perception of unity and cohesion and perception of developing human capabilities among Isfahan university employees, except the perception of the safety of the work environment. This means that it can be expected that the quality of work life increase by investment on organizational happiness. Put it more clearly, organizational happiness as one of the important organizational elements can help an organization to develop the quality of working life and it can provide advantages for them in comparison with other organizations.

Results of this research about organizational happiness in Isfahan university show that

employees should be active and they should be occupied and should remove their negative emotions and problems of their work environment, they should improve their relationships with others, they should develop positive thinking, they should reduce their work expectations and aspirations, they should always try to be themselves, they must work on their character 's health, they should try to reduce their work concerns, and develop their social character, they should be highly efficient in their work life, happiness should be worthy for them, they should consider the real time and they should be able to organize better. Happiness and Joy are the basic elements in the social development and inner evolution of human and no doubt happy people will have high performance in workplace. If you want to have a healthy progressing organization, we should be happy. By delegating tasks and creating love and incentives for people this opportunity provided for them to be creative and innovative. Organization that values happiness can grow.

Further limitations of this study indicate that in Iranian society, systematic research has not been done on organizational happiness for staff. Some staff did not cooperate and with the wrong answer due to fear that the research findings may affect their future performance; therefore, this affected the results of the present. The researcher faced various problems in coordination with some officials. Finally, the lack of awareness about the necessity and positive outcomes of promoting research among respondents was observed.

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