

Happiness Impacting Psychological Well-Being of Government and Private School Teachers with Self-Esteem as a Moderator

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Abstract

The present study was conducted upon 170 government and private school teachers of Punjab, India. The purpose was to study the differences in the happiness level of the teachers of two sectors and its impact upon the psychological well-being of teachers moderated by self-esteem. Instruments used were Oxford Happiness Questionnaire by Argyle and Hills, Rosenberg's self-esteem Questionnaire, and Psychological Well-Being Scale by Bhogle and Prakash. The data analysis was done using Jamovi software to get S.D and t values. The results showed no difference in the happiness level of the teachers of the government and private schools, and happiness significantly impacts the psychological well-being of teachers moderated by self-esteem. The study further mentions the limitations and future recommendations.

Keywords: government and private school teachers, happiness, psychological well-being, self-esteem

Teaching is an essential service to humanity. It builds the society and the nation and is sometimes called the “Mother of all Professions” (Nenty et al., 2015). It is considered the most trusted profession as it builds trust and integrity. It not only allows teachers to evaluate their work but also judge the work of other staff. (Hargreaves et al., 2006, as cited in Nenty et al., 2015). According to Boroko (2004), the development of teachers as professionals is necessary to facilitate classroom learning, improving schools’ results and pupils’ learning outcomes (Postholm, 2018). Besides interacting with students, teachers also learn by interacting with their colleagues, coordinating with them, and mentoring each other.

There is a difference between teachers’ knowledge and their teaching methods across the globe and in one nation. There have been various developments in different sectors, and Educational Sector is no exception. India has shown great interest and commitment towards increasing the literacy level for the past few years. Its education’s contribution to GDP has risen from 0.67% in 1951 to 3.54% in 2004 (Tilak, 2004). Along with the structure of education, its quality has also undergone many changes as many professional courses like I.T. and engineering have expanded, giving people various career options (Gouda et al., 2013).

However, the differences between government and private schools in India regarding resources available to teachers and students cannot be ignored. It has been found that even after years of schooling, government school children do not acquire basic skills in literacy and numerals (Pandey et al., 2008 ASER 2005, 2006, 2007 and PROBE 1999, as cited in Goyal and Pandey, 2012). Factors like lack of resources, poor quality of education, poverty, and illiteracy of their parents were the prime reasons. However, it is identified that teachers’ inactivity and absence are the root cause of the same (Goyal and Pandey, 2012).

In their findings, Gouda et al., (2013) suggest that the standard of the infrastructure of schools depends upon their ownership- private or government. It was also found that government primary school costs are less than private primary schools in India. Private schools generate high revenue for administrative or management expenses and teachers’ salaries, which are not much concern for government agencies. It is also found that the performance of private school children is better than government school children in reading, writing, and mathematics. The same is that the teachers in private schools are accountable to the managers hiring or firing them and the parents. This is not the case with government school teachers as they are more concerned about salaries and promotions than performance. The results also indicated that a school’s infrastructure affects a teacher’s motivation and attitude towards the job. They are more likely to show a positive attitude when provided with adequate facilities and infrastructure.

Previous research has studied the impact of various factors like stress, well-being, happiness, spirituality, social support, work environment, etc., to understand their cause and effect on the teachers’ performance. However, the present study tends to examine if there is a difference in the happiness level and if it significantly predicts the psychological well-being of India’s government and private school teachers, with self-esteem as a moderator.

Happiness can be related to how one appreciates his own life. Studies have also proved that happy individuals live to lead a healthy life and have a more effect on one’s life than non-smoking (Veenhoven, 2008, as cited in Benevene et al., 2018). According to Sigmund Freud (1930), people strive for happiness and to remain happy. There are two sides to this. One is that they want to be free of any pain and experience a significant amount of pleasure (Craig, 2020). However, some research suggests that happiness results from some brain activities in “hedonic

systems.” It can be said that parts that generate happiness have a widespread network (Kringelbach and Berridge, 2010).

Psychological well-being has a lot of importance than just impacting the physical health of an individual. It is also more than just the absence of psychological distress like depression or anxiety (Fitzgerald et al., 2019). It is often understood in combination with happiness or other positive emotions and optimal and effective functioning of one's life (Deci & Ryan, 2008 as cited in R. Winefield et al., 2012). According to Huppert, 2009, people with high psychological well-being are happy, reliable, supportive, and satisfied with their lives (R. Winefield et al., 2012). Self-esteem can be defined as how one thinks and feel about himself (Rosenberg, 1965, as cited in Borji et al., 2019). According to Coopersmith, 1967, self-esteem is an evaluative process in which an individual becomes aware of his capacity, worth, and success (Borji et al., 2019). Self-esteem has been a significant concern for various psychologists. Abraham Maslow gave a theory of “Hierarchy of Needs” where he emphasized self-esteem as a considerable drive of an individual, which he fulfils to move to self-actualization.

Literature Review

Pan and Zhou (2012) conducted a study on 994 part-time MBA students from different organizations across China. The study aimed to study the relationship between Career Success and Happiness using moderators like Career Success Value (Internal satisfaction) and Career Commitment. While testing the effect of objective and subjective Career Success (Salary and managerial level) on happiness, it was found through regression analysis that salary had a significant impact upon the middle-income employees' happiness but had no impact upon employees with low or high salaries. However, impact of the managerial level on happiness was not that significant. Career Success Value was also found to moderately impact the effect of salary on happiness. While evaluating the impact of Career Commitment, it was found that the graph was steeper for employees with high commitment than with low commitment, indicating that it has a moderate effect on the relationship studied.

A study was conducted by Wong, Gong, and H. Fung (2019) to determine the differences in the effects of Valuing Happiness on Subjective Well-Being between 117 young and 131 old adults of China. The role of interdependence and independence within the groups were also assessed for their mediating role. Participants completed their self-report measures in the laboratory that measured the value of happiness, interdependence, independence, and subjective well-being. The findings showed a positive relation between valuing happiness, interdependence, and independence in older adults. But their subjective well-being was positively associated only with interdependence. On the contrary, a positive association was found among young adults between valuing happiness and independence, which was not insignificant to well-being. Thus, we can conclude that young adults benefit from valuing happiness when they are not dependent upon others but seek happiness in a socially disengaged way. But older adults may seek emotional support for the same.

Abbas Abdollahi et al., (2018) investigated a relationship between two types of perfectionism (Personal Standard Perfectionism and Evaluative Concerns Perfectionism), Emotional intelligence and happiness. It also aimed to study if emotional intelligence moderately affects the relationship between perfectionism and happiness. Participants of the study were 412 Malaysian high-school children who were asked to complete self-report questionnaires. The structural model showed that students with higher emotional intelligence and P.S. perfectionism experience more happiness, and E.C. perfectionism was negatively related to

happiness. Multigroup analysis was used to determine if E.I. mediates between perfectionism and happiness, and it was found that it significantly does.

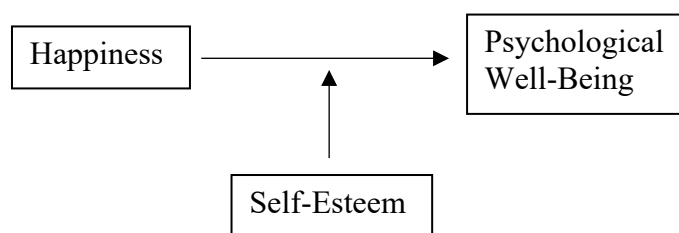
Halil Eksi et al., 2020, conducted a study on 378 teachers in Turkey to study the relationship between stress, spirituality along its three dimensions (anomie, transcendence, and harmony), and well-being. The researchers used the correlational research design to study the variables. While using Cronbach Alpha and Confirmatory Factor Analysis, a significant relationship was found among all the variables. It was found through a path model that stress positively contributes to anomie, which further predicts transcendence, harmony, and happiness. It was also found that anomie is negatively related to happiness, while transcendence is positively related.

You li and Ren-Chang Zhang (2019) surveyed 615 kindergarten teachers to evaluate their work stress, social support, psychological capital, and well-being. They used Teacher Stress Inventory, Psychological Capital Scale, Work-Related Well-Being Questionnaire, and Social Support Questionnaire. Descriptive statistics showed that work stress was negatively related to other variables, whereas social support, psychological capital, and well-being were positively correlated with each other. The mediating effect of psychological capital between occupational stress and well-being and social support between psychological capital and work-related well-being was found. This study was helpful for teachers in China. It helped them understand and avoid stressful environments, practice physical and mental well-being, and maintain their psychological capital.

Job Satisfaction is often understood as one's judgment about his job (Spector, 1997; Manuti and Palma, 2007, as cited in Benevene et al., 2018), and job satisfaction with self-esteem impact a person's happiness (Bowling et al., 2010, as cited in Benevene et al., 2018). Benevene et al., conducted a study to examine how job satisfaction and self-esteem mediate between happiness and health of school teachers. The study was conducted on 300 teachers of the State of Kerala in India. Findings showed that job satisfaction directly impacts happiness, health, and self-esteem of the teachers. Thus, this study stresses promoting employees' job satisfaction to improve their health and increase their happiness.

Often a positive relation is found between self-esteem and spirituality (Stern and Wright, 2018, as cited in Mitra Borji et al., 2019). Self-Esteem is also a considerate predictor of resilience (Mitra Borji et al., 2019). Therefore, a study was conducted by Mitra Borji et al., in 2019 to study if self-esteem mediates the relationship of resilience and spiritual health. The study was conducted upon 240 students of Iran University of Medical Sciences, and Spiritual Health Questionnaire, Coopersmith self-esteem Inventory, and Connor Davidson resilience scale were used. The findings suggested that self-esteem mediates the relation between resilience and spiritual health. Thus, we can conclude that people can develop a positive attitude towards their life by strengthening their self-esteem and enhancing resilience and spirituality.

Theoretical Framework



Hypothesis

1. There is a significant difference between the happiness level of government and private school teachers.
2. Happiness will predict the psychological well-being of the government and private school teachers.
3. Self-Esteem moderately impacts the relationship between happiness and psychological well-being.

Methods

The research is a quantitative study that aims to study the differences in the level of Happiness (Independent Variable) and its impact on the Psychological Well-Being (Dependent Variable) of Government and Private School Teachers with self-esteem as a moderator.

Context and Participants

The study was conducted upon 170 government and private school teachers of Punjab, India. The data was collected through google forms for some, and the rest were collected through distributing the questionnaires to the participants. The researcher collected the data from both male and female teachers aged 30-40 years. Non-teaching staff was excluded. Prior instructions were given, and respondents were asked to respond accordingly.

Research Instruments

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire: Michael Argyle and Peter Hills developed this questionnaire in 2001. It has been derived from Oxford Happiness Inventory. It includes 29 items to which the participant has to respond on a six-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. The scale has an internal reliability value of 0.91, test-retest reliability of .73 and the concurrent validity of .73 (Liaghatdar et al., 2008).

Psychological Well-Being Scale: This scale was developed by Sudha Bhogle and J Prakash in 1995. It is a 28-item scale where the participant has to respond either with the “yes” or “no” option. The scale has a test-retest reliability of 0.71. The scale has concurrent validity of 0.62 (after correlating it with the well-being scale developed by Nagpal and Sell) (Chandrashekara and Sampathkumar, 2017).

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale: Morris Rosenberg developed this psychometric scale in 1965. It is a 10-item scale that measures one’s attitude towards himself. It is uni-dimensional, and the participant answers it on a four-point Likert scale. The scale is highly reliable as it has an internal consistency of 0.77. Test-retest reliability is 0.85 (two weeks period) and 0.63 (for 7-months intervals).

Data Analysis

The results were analysed using jamovi software. First, a normality test was done to check if the data is normally distributed or not and whether to use parametric or non-parametric tests. Then Independent T-Test was done to check the differences in the mean of happiness levels of government and private school teachers. To check if happiness positively impacts psychological well-being, regression analysis was used. In the end, moderation regression was done to check if self-esteem moderates the relationship between happiness and well-being.

Results

To check if the data were normally distributed or not, a normality test was done.

Table 1

Scores of Normality of the Data Collected

Variable	Mean	Sk	Kurtosis	W	p
Happiness	4.49	- .350	-0.643	0.975	0.004*
Psy. Well-Being	27.8	- .0172	- 0.304	0.982	0.026**
Self Esteem	21.7	- 1.04	0.656	0.907	.001***

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .05$

The p-value for all the variables- happiness, self-esteem, and psychological well- being were less than .05; thus, the researcher used the non-parametric test as the data was not normally distributed.

To check if the researcher should accept or reject the study's first hypothesis (H1), which states that there is a significant difference between the happiness level of government and private school teachers, the researcher used an independent T-test.

Table 2

Independent T-Test Scores of Happiness of Government and Private School Teachers

Happiness Level	N	M	S.D	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Private Sector	85	4.54	0.58	1.21	0.228*
Government Sector	85	4.43	0.581		

Note. * $p > .05$

Since p is 0.228, which is more than .05, the difference between the happiness level of the government and the private sector is not significant. Thus, we reject the hypothesis (H1) that there is a considerable difference between the happiness level of government and private school teachers.

The researcher also conducted a regression analysis to check H2, which states that happiness will predict the psychological well-being of the government and private school teachers.

Table 3

Regression Analysis Between Happiness and Psychological Well-Being Scores

Predictor	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	r^2	F	<i>p</i>
Happiness	0.630	10.50	.001	0.396	110	.001

Note. Happiness predicts psychological well-being ($p < .01$)

Regression Analysis indicated that happiness significantly impacts the teachers' psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.630$, $p < .01$). The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = .40$) showed that happiness

could explain 40% of the variation in psychological well-being. The model is adequately fit ($F=110$, $p<.01$)

To analyse if self-esteem moderates the relationship between happiness and psychological well-being, the researcher used Moderation Regression. The intercept shows the psychological well-being's (DV) position in the absence of Self Esteem (independent variable).

Table 4
Moderation Estimates

	Estimate	S.E	Z	p
Happiness	4.025	0.4897	8.22	.001
Self-Esteem	0.296	0.0703	4.21	.001
Happiness*Self Esteem	0.247	0.1268	- 1.95	0.05*

Note. * $p=.05$

Moderation analysis showed that the effect of happiness and psychological well-being is contingent upon self-esteem ($p=.05$)

Table 5
The Effect of the Predictor (Happiness) on the Dependent Variable (Psychological Well-Being) at Different Levels of the Moderator (Self-Esteem)

	Estimate	S.E	Z	P
Average	4.02	0.496	8.12	.001
low	3.04	0.655	7.65	.001
High	5.01	0.762	3.99	.001

Note. $p<.05$

The results showed that at a low level of self-esteem, the impact of happiness on psychological well-being is 3.04, at an average level, it is 4.00, and at a high level, the effect is 5.00. The effect is most significant at the high level of self-esteem, followed by an average and low level. The p is .001 at all the levels, which is significant. We can say that the relation between happiness and psychological well-being is strongest when self-esteem is high.

Discussion

The present research aimed to study the impact of happiness on the psychological well-being of government and private school teachers of Punjab, India, moderated by self-esteem. Teachers are a group of employees who are not adequately addressed in the literature concerning this context (Benevene et al., 2019). Thus, the study's objective was to study the differences in the happiness level of government and private school teachers, its impact upon their psychological well-being, and the moderating role of self-esteem. 170 teachers of 30-40 years of age participated in the study. The results were analysed using jamovi software. The researcher conducted a normality test to check if the data were normally distributed or not. Table 1 of the result showed that the p-value for all the variables that are happiness, self-esteem, and psychological well-being was less than .05, which means that the data was not normally distributed. The researcher, therefore, used the non-parametric test.

The first hypothesis stated that there is a significant difference in the happiness level of government and private school teachers. The researcher conducted an independent T-test and found that there is no significant difference between the happiness level of government and private school teachers $p > .05$ (Table 3). It is generally assumed that government employees are more satisfied with their work thus are happier than private employees (Jyoti, 2017). But the results of this study presented a different picture. The results are quite encouraging for both sectors. It is seen that private schools are more equipped with the latest technologies like smart class boards, which help private school teachers to make the concepts easier for the students and lower their burden. Private schools also provide a better working environment and physical conditions, making their teachers happier and satisfied with their jobs. However, in contrast, the government sector offers lesser competition between the employees because they enjoy cordial relations with their colleagues. Government jobs are also considered to be more secure than private ones. There are also various resources like NGOs and other organizations through which government schools receive aid to improve the working environment and conditions for teachers and the students and equip themselves with essential infrastructure, which has helped lessen the gaps between the two sectors.

In their study, Kumara K and K.B (2019) found that teachers of government schools were 20.6% and 15.3% more comfortable than unaided and aided schools, respectively, as they enjoy more freedom. Arora and Srivastava (2019) studied the level of social, mental, and professional happiness of male and female teachers of self-financed and aided colleges. They found that teachers of aided colleges scored less on social and cognitive happiness due to an overload of work. Teachers of private institutions also tend to lose their mental, social, and professional happiness due to high competition among them.

The present study highlights certain benefits from which management of both sectors would benefit. The private sectors school could ensure that the teachers enjoy their work-life balance and are not overburdened with the work. Efforts can be made to increase the satisfaction and happiness of private teachers concerning pay and promotion. This study would also help the management to consider job security as an essential aspect of the happiness level of the teachers. On the other hand, workshops can be arranged to help teachers of government schools improve their teaching methods. A clean and hygienic working environment with adequate infrastructures like a blackboard, lab equipment, table, and chair for government school teachers would also help enhance their happiness levels.

The second hypothesis stated that happiness significantly impacts the teachers' psychological well-being. The regression analysis was conducted to study the same, and it was found that happiness significantly affects the teachers' psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.630$, $p < .01$). It means that the happier the teachers are, the more will be their psychological well-being. Happiness is experiencing joy for a brief or a long time. It is an emotion that enables individuals to be satisfied with their lives and experience their well-being. Psychological well-being is all about how well one's life is going on. However, one doesn't need to feel good all the time as being disappointed due to not getting the expected promotion or experiencing grief due to the loss of a loved one is a part of life. Still, one must manage these negative emotions as part of their long-term psychological well-being (Huppert, 2009). Thus, happiness and psychological well-being are mental states of experiencing positive emotions with physical, social, and psychological functioning (Sundriyal & Kumar, 2014).

Carrillo et al., 2019 conducted a study on nursing professionals to examine if different humor styles promote psychological well-being. The results suggested that adapted humor styles like

affiliative and self-enhancing promote well-being and aggressive humor indicates poor psychological well-being. At the same time, self-defeating humor was also found to boost the psychological well-being of nursing professionals. Previous studies also found that happiness and life satisfaction decrease the chances of psychopathological problems like depression or stress (Gilman et al., 2006, Proctor et al., 2010, as cited in Demirbatir, 2015). Demirbatir, 2015 in their studies, also found that students with a higher level of happiness scored low on depression, anxiety, and stress levels.

Our study shed light on the impact of happiness on teachers' well-being, significantly affecting their professional and personal lives. There can be various factors on which the teachers' happiness and well-being are dependent, for example, cooperation at the workplace, classroom climate, opportunities for their development, support in both professional and personal lives, etc. Reducing the level of burnout is also necessary to increase their efficiency in teaching. Fiorilli et al., (2019) found that high emotional competence can help in reducing the burnout levels of teachers and can also improve it through effective training and meditation programs. The study is beneficial to understand that teachers must be given various opportunities to train themselves well, making them satisfied with their work fostering their happiness and well-being.

The third hypothesis stated that self-esteem moderately impacts the relationship between happiness and well-being. Moderation analysis showed that the effect of happiness and psychological well-being is contingent upon self-esteem ($p=.05$). It was found that the impact of happiness on psychological well-being was most significant at a high level of self-esteem. As self-esteem predicts both variables, we can say that their psychological well-being is better the happier the teachers are. According to Rosenberg, 1965, people with high self-esteem are more confident in their lives and have a more heightened sense of self-worth than people with low self-esteem (Yu et al., 2019). Therefore, teachers who scored high on self-esteem trust their abilities to be successful and thus need society to recognize and respect them. Higher self-esteem is very crucial for teachers as it is related to one's self-image. Lower self-esteem would distort their self-image, making them incapacitate in their career (Mbuva, 2016). Teachers who show high self-esteem in their daily teaching would also inculcate high self-esteem in their students. This means that the high self-esteem of teachers not only promotes their happiness level and psychological well-being and plays an integral role in the growth of their students.

Hill, 2015 found that self-esteem predicts life satisfaction and subjective well-being. In her study, it was also found that male participants scored high on self-esteem but low on satisfaction and subjective happiness than females who scored low on self-esteem but had higher levels of life satisfaction and subjective well-being. There was a stronger relationship between satisfaction and subjective happiness than self-esteem with both the variables. Self-esteem, however, is strongly correlated with both life satisfaction and subjective happiness.

The present results have powerful implications for the profession of teachers. As stated above, teachers with higher self-esteem have a high level of happiness and enhanced psychological well-being; some policies must be made to improve their self-esteem. To enhance teachers' self-esteem, the management of schools must provide effective feedback that would tell them how to improve their teaching styles or appreciate them whenever their class does well. There must be open communication between management and teachers, and management must take effective actions to resolve the issues faced by the teachers so that they feel necessary. There must be some activities planned in a month to enhance the self-esteem of the teachers, which would spread positivity among them and boost their teaching ability.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

The study has some limitations regarding the first hypothesis that it does not significantly differentiate the private and government school teachers on the happiness level. It does not focus on the sub-components of happiness. The gender differences were also not considered. As there are very few researches that compare the government and private school teachers, future studies could find differences concerning other variables between teachers of both sectors. They could also use a qualitative/mixed-method approach to help get rich insights into the participants' experiences. It also doesn't study the differences in the psychological well-being of government and private sector teachers or consider the sub-components of psychological well-being. Thus, future researchers could consider these limitations and conduct their research respectively. The study's limitations concerning the third hypothesis are that our findings cannot be generalized as they are limited to the Punjab state of India. Future studies could conduct a cross-cultural study across the different locations of India. It would also be interesting to study the role of job satisfaction as a mediator.

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