

# “PREDICTING MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH HAPPINESS AND ENGAGEMENT AT WORK”

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## **Abstract**

Ample studies have shown that the majority of employees have their ups and downs in their mentality at work and it affects their mental health. Extra work, unexpected working conditions, unrealistic workload expectations, pressure from employers, poor relationships with colleagues, and overambition can create issues with anxiety, stress, depression, and mental health. It's clear that there is a link between mental health and engagement at work. Research on engagement generally suggests that engagement is a positive work-related state of mind. In the present study, the mediating role of happiness in the relationship between intellectual, social, and occupational engagement and mental health is assessed. The study involved 270, 163 females and 107 males. The Engagement Scale, Happiness Scale, and Mental Health Scale were used to collect data for the study, which was done online (via Google Form). Descriptive statistics, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient, and multiple regression analysis were used to analyse the obtained data. The results of the study revealed that the happiness, work engagement and mental health are strongly and positively associated to each other. The happiness and the work engagement are the significant predictor of mental health in which the happiness is the best predictor of mental health. Furthermore, there is no combine contribution found of the predictor variables (The happiness and work engagement) into the mental health level.

**Key Words: Happiness, Intellectual**

## **Engagement, Social Engagement and work Engagement, Mental Health.**

Over the last decade, people's mental health problems are increasing day by day. Employees are no exception. The nature of today's job market requires organizations to be productive and competitive in order to survive safely in the face of constant pressure to turn a profit as quickly as possible. As such, workers are expected to be psychologically connected to their work, to be proactive and committed to high quality standards, to cooperate with others, to be energetic, dedicated, and engaged in their work (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2011). So it can be concluded that "Today's organizations need dedicated employees" (Bakker & Shafeli, 2008, p. 150). However, in this process, employees deal with many circumstances, including management's demands and expectations (Boakye & Ampiah, 2017; Dias-Lacy & Guirguis, 2017). All these factors undoubtedly bring psychological pressures such as anxiety, stress and depression to employees and affect their psychological health as individuals. For this reason, it is incorrect to expect professional success from employees with poor mental health.

The majority of workers have temperamental ups and downs at work that affect their mental health. This problem can become very serious and dangerous not only for our country, but also for its people and society. According to WHO, mental health is a state of well-being that enables people to reach their potential, cope with the pressures of normal life, work productively and contribute to their communities (WHO 2001b). Research on

mental health shows that over 450 million people worldwide suffer from mental or behavioral disorders. Apart from that, 1 in 4 of them will have a mental or behavioral problem at least once in their life (WHO). Wellness as “the process of self-awareness of changes in health and behavior aimed at a healthier physical, mental, emotional, psychological, occupational, and spiritual state.” Mental health can therefore be viewed as being free from mental illness and having a positive appreciation of life.

Mental health includes the ability to form relationships with others that promote health and well-being. Mentally healthy people are able to cope with life's ups and downs and are confident and resilient. Mental health is therefore more than the absence of mental illness/disorder. It represents a positive aspect of mental health and may be reached by people diagnosed with mental disorders. Research shows that mentally healthy people are better at coping with difficult situations, which has been shown to keep you focused, flexible, and creative.

There are many factors that affect our mental health. In other words, it regulates our mental health. Happiness plays a very important role in a person's mental health and is considered one of the most important determinants of subjective well-being (Honkanen et al., 2005). The meaning of happiness is used to indicate that positive effects such as joy, interest, and pride predominate over negative effects such as sadness, fear, and anger. Happiness is the most important key factor in human daily life and has been established by the World Health Organization as a major component of health. Happy people develop self-esteem, a sense of control, optimism, and a sense of purpose by having goals. All factors are positively correlated with a person's psychological well-being. Skevington, MacArthur, and Somerset (1997) found that happiness was ranked as the most important factor in quality of life, higher

than money, health, or sex in a number of focus groups in the United Kingdom. According to Aristotle, fulfilling one's potential was a key component of happiness (Waterman, 1990). Similarly, according to other theorists, happiness occurs when some specific living conditions come together. (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989).

One study found that measures of well-being defined by aspects of healthy functioning were negatively correlated with symptoms of mental illness. Studies show that happy people have fewer symptoms of mental illness (Diener & Seligman, 2002). One study found that happiness can lead to individual and community well-being and never negatively impact people or the humanities (O'Brien, 2008). Another study showed that people who were happier had better life outcomes. Higher coping skills, supportive relationships, superior financial performance and physical health, and longevity (Piqueras et al. 2011). Happiness is therefore an important positive factor that plays a key role in promoting a person's mental health (Saldanha et al., 2021; Bieda et al., 2019; Joo & Lee, 2017; Rahman et al., 2016; Mahakud & Yadav, 2015).

On the other hand, organizations formed by a large number of people, whose leadership qualities and cultural and psychological climate can influence their level of well-being by positively and negatively influencing their employees (Çetin, 2004; Juul, 2008; Harris, 2018). Expressed as well-being, this concept represents the achievement of individual and organizational goals (Bulut, 2016). As such, well-being affects the well-being of all individuals within an organization (Arslan & Polat, 2017). Research also shows that happiness is associated with work engagement (Coetzee & Rothmarm, 2005; Rothmarm & Jordaan, 2006; Money, Hillenbrand & Da Cámara, 2008; Field & Buitendach, 2011; Mather, 2015 Othman, Mahmud, Noranee & Noordin, 2018). Engagement is consistently given by

employees who can benefit the organization through commitment and dedication, advocacy, discretionary effort, full use of talent, and support of the organization's goals and values. One of the most frequently researched topics in the field of positive organizational psychology recently is employee engagement (Sonnentag, 2003; Kulophas, Ruengtrakul & Wongwanich, 2015; Khan, 2016). Work engagement is a positive and satisfying attitude towards work characterized by 'energy, dedication and receptivity' (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez Roma, & Bakker, 2002). Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002, p. 74) define engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind". Engaged employees feel connected to the organization and invest in the organization as a whole, not just their role. Engaged employees are more likely to stay with the company, outperform her by 20% than her peers, and act as an advocate for the company.

Engagement can increase profits, enable organizational agility, and improve efficiency in driving transformational initiatives. Engaged individuals become fully invested in their work, which increases self-efficacy and has a positive impact on physical and mental health. Younger employees may feel positive when they first join the organization, but they can quickly become discouraged. Highly extroverted and adaptable people are easier to join the organization. Engagement is a decision that depends on what an employee is worth investing in themselves. Its levels depend on tenure within the organization, occupation and tenure, but also by sector. The higher the position, the more likely to engaged. Presidents, managers, operations staff, and operational staff tend to be the most dedicated, professional, and least supportive staff, but this varies by organization. There are seven commonly cited factors of engagement. job types, transparent purposeful work, growth opportunities, timely recognition and rewards,

building respectful and confident relationships, open two-way communication systems, and inspiring leadership.

There are various engagement measures. However, due to the lack of a clear definition of employee engagement and the different needs of different organizations, the values measured in these studies can vary widely. Job satisfaction is a weaker predictor of business outcome than engagement, lacking the two-way relationship characteristic of engagement. Both engagement and psychological contracting have cognitive and emotional components and can represent the interaction between employees and employers. Engagement can affect employee hiring, absenteeism, and turnover, and various studies have found links to productivity. This increasingly shows high correlations with individual, group and organizational performance, outcomes related to customer experience quality and measured customer loyalty.

According to Towers Perrin (2007), organizations with the highest percentage of engaged employees saw a 19% year-over-year increase in operating profit and a 28% increase in earnings per share. Looking at the association between work engagement and mental health based on this information, it is hypothesized that organizational satisfaction may also mediate this association. No literature has examined the mediation of well-being between these two variables. A study was therefore conducted to examine the mediating role of happiness in the relationship between work engagement and mental health among employees working in different sectors.

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Çayak, (2021) arranged a correlational study and assessed the level of happiness, work engagement and life satisfaction of seven hundred and sixty-seven teachers. Their level of happiness, work engagement and life satisfaction were measured by Work Engagement Scale the Life Satisfaction Scale

and the Organisational Happiness Scale. The data was analysed by Pearson's correlation, regression analysis, and the bootstrapping method. The result revealed that workplace happiness plays a partially mediating role between life satisfaction and work engagement. Saldanha et al., (2021) have administered Psychological Well-being Questionnaire and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire on one hundred and five participants during the COVID-19 pandemic phase, in order to explore the relationship between the well-being and happiness. Participants with the age ranges between 16-25 years were selected by using continent sampling method. The obtained data were analysed by Thematic and content analysis. The results revealed that psychological well-being and happiness was positively and significantly associated with each other.

Bieda et al., (2019) revealed that there are the reciprocal associations among happiness, positive mental health and life satisfaction over time. Moreover, they disclosed that happiness compared to satisfaction of life and positive mental health may be a primary indicator for positive change in the crucial period in students' lives.

Joo and Lee, (2017) conducted a correlational study on five-hundred and fifty workers of a conglomerate in South Korea to examine the effect of perceived organizational support and psychological capital on happiness in work engagement, careers satisfaction, and subjective well-being. Factor analysis, correlation, reliability and structural equation modelling analyses were used to analyse the obtained data. Results of the study discovered highly engaged worker was gratified with their careers and perceive a greater sense of well-being when they had higher POS and PsyCap in their lives.

Rahman et al., (2016) showed from their study that happiness and mental well-being of university students were positively and

significantly associated to each other. For this, they arranged a correlational study and comprised one-hundred university students from Aligarh Muslim University (India). Mental well-being scale and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire devised by Tenant and colleague (2007) and by Argyle and Hills (1989) respectively were administered to obtain desire data and further, data was analysed by Pearson's correlation.

Mahakud & Yadav, (2015) explored from their research that happy peoples have a lesser amount of chance to predisposed to the mental disorders. They also are more sociable and adore quite good communal wellbeing. They suffer less anxiety, tension and depression.

Mather, (2015) conducted correlational study and administered Utrecht Work Engagement Scale by Schaufeli and Bakker (2003), the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support by Eisenberger et al., (1986), and Happiness Subjective Scale by Lepper & Lyubomirsky, (1997) on twenty-five thousand students affaires professionals of higher education institute of US. Results of the study revealed that the work engagement and happiness were significantly and positively associated to each other.

Ahmadigatab & Taheri, (2011) arranged a correlational study to discover the association among happiness, life quality and psychological health. One hundred and sixty-five students of Babol payam-e-noor university were included by random clustered sampling method. Adult psychological health questionnaire, life quality questionnaire and happiness questionnaire were used to assess their level of psychological health, life quality and happiness respectively. The results of the study revealed a significant psychological health, life quality and happiness were significantly and strongly correlated to each other.

**Aim:**

Main aim of the present study is to

discover the strength of relationship among work engagement, happiness and mental health of the people.

**Objectives:**

The researcher has carried out the present research with the following objectives.

1. To assess the level of work engagement, happiness and mental health of people.
2. To quantify the strength of correlation among work engagement, happiness and mental health.

**Research Questions:**

- 1) Will there be significant relationships between the predictor variables (work engagement and happiness) and mental health?
- 2) What are the relative contributions of the predictor variables to mental health?
- 3) What are the combined contributions of the predictor variables to mental health?

**METHOD**

**Design for Study**

The correlation design was implemented in the present study to observe the correlation among work engagement, happiness and mental health. Further, the stepwise regression analysis was used to exhibit the relative contribution of predictive variables in mental health.

**Sample**

A sample of 270 (163 females and 107 males) with the age ranges from 25 to 57 years were assigned for the present study using random sampling technique.

**Statistical Treatment of the data:**

Obtained data was analysed by Descriptive statistics namely Mean, SD and Pearson’s correlation coefficient and inferential statistics namely multiple regression analysis. However, data was initially screened for outliers and skewness.

**Data collection tools**

**A) The ISA Engagement Scale (ISA ES)**

The ISA engagement scale has been developed by Soane et al. (2012). This scale consists of 9

items and three facets of engagement viz. intellectual, social, and occupational engagement.

**B) Mental Health Quotient Scale (MHQS)**

This scale is developed by Jennifer Jane Newson, and Tara C Thiagarajan (2020). This is a 9-point scale with negative and positive dimensions. The scale provides sub scores of 6 categories of mental health.

**C) Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ)**

This questionnaire is developed by Hills and Argyle (2002). It includes 29 statements about happiness and Ss has to indicate how much they are agree or disagree on seven-point Likert’s scale. This scale is widely used throughout the world scholars.

**Variables under study:**

1. Predictive Variables
  - a) Happiness
  - b) Work Engagement
2. Predicted Variable
  - c) Mental Health

**Procedure**

The data for the study was collected online (via Google Form).

**RESULTS**

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for work engagement, happiness and mental health of people. It can be observed that work engagement has the Mean score of 53.11 with 6.91 standard deviation. Happiness has the Mean value of 134.85 (16.61 SD) and Mental health has the Mean score of 29.00 and SD value of 4.26. Overlook at these mean and SD values we can see that the mean values were three times more than their corresponding SD values. It suggests the distribution of the variables in sample is normal or near normal.

*Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (N = 270)*

	Mean		s	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	SEM		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
<i>W.E.</i>	53.11	0.42	6.91	-0.58	0.148	-0.17	0.295
<i>Happiness</i>	134.85	0.91	16.61	-0.39	0.148	-0.26	0.295
<i>Mental Health</i>	29.00	0.26	4.26	-0.77	0.148	0.01	0.295

W.E.= Work Engagement; SEu = Standard error of the mean; s= standard deviation

But we can't conclude that only on the basis of mean and SD values, hence in order to confirm that the distribution of these three variables are normal or near normal skewness and kurtosis values were calculated. We also observe that the skewness values of these variables are less than 01 (one) and kurtosis values are less than 02 (two) and when we divide skewness and kurtosis values by their corresponding standard error, answers came less than 1.96 which indicate the distribution of these variables in sample were normally distributed. Therefore, we can use the parametric statistics for the further calculations.

**Research Question 01: Will there be significant relationships between the predictor variables (work engagement and happiness) and mental health?**

Since, there is no violation of normality, hence in order to search the answer of this research question obtained data was analysed by Pearson's correlation coefficient. The findings are displayed in

**Table 2.** It revealed that the two sets of scores that is work engagement and happiness were correlated strongly and positively to each other [  $r(268) = .47, p < 0.000$ , one tailed]. Which indicate that the higher the level of work engagement more the happiness level and vice versa.

Table 2: Correlation coefficients among work engagement, happiness and mental health

	Work Engagemen	Happiness	Mental Health
Work Engagemer	1	.47**	.27**
Happines:		1	.48**
Mental Health			1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Further, the table exhibits the correlation coefficient scores of the two sets of scores which is work engagement and mental health. Which is also strongly and positively associated to each other [  $r(268) = .27, p < 0.00$ , one tailed]. Indicating that the more the level of work engagement more the level of

mental health and vice versa.

Finally, table also revealed the association between happiness and mental health. The Pearson's correlation coefficients value is .48, for 268 df this correlation coefficient value is significant at 0.01 level of significance; [  $r(268) = .48, p < 0.000$ , one tailed]. It also indicating that the higher the happiness level more the level of mental health and vice versa. That clearly means the deviation is the scores were not by chance only.

**Research Question 02: What are the relative contributions of the predictor variables to mental health?**

The second aim of this study was to estimate the relative contributions of the predictor variables to the variance in scores of mental health. To this end, stepwise regression analysis and simple multiple regressions were computed with mental health as the dependent measure and work engagement and happiness being the predictors as seen in **Table 3** work engagement and happiness were entered to explore how much variability each of them could significantly account for. As can be observed in table 3, step 1, attending to happiness alone accounted for 23.00 % (R-square = 0.23) of the variance in mental health, the inclusion of work engagement accounted for 24.00% (R-square .24) which resulted in an additional 01.00% in step 2.

**Table 3: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis predicting Mental Health**

Predictors	B	$\beta$	t	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F (1, 268)
Step 1								
Happiness	0.12	0.48	9.06**	0.48	0.23	0.23	0.23	82.14**
(Constant)	12.24		6.57**					
Step 2								
Happiness	0.12	0.46	7.60**	0.49	0.24	0.23	0.24	F (2,267) = 41.42**
Work Engagement	0.03	0.05	0.88#					
(Constant)	11.36		5.36**					

\*\* - Significant at the 0.01 level; # - Not Significant  
 B = unstandardized coefficients  
 $\beta$  = the standardized beta coefficients, gives a measure of the contribution of each variable to the model  
 R<sup>2</sup> = the square of the measure of correlation;  
 $\Delta R^2$  = R Square Change;

In table 3, step 2, indicate that the standardized  $\beta$  values revealed the decreasing order of the predictors: Happiness > work engagement which showing that happiness was the best predictor, ( $\beta = .48$ ,  $t = 9.06$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), while work engagement was not significantly predicts the dependent variable ( $\beta = .05$ ,  $t = .88$ ;  $p > 0.01$ ). Therefore, consequently concluded that the mental health was significantly predicted by happiness. We can also predict the value of mental health on the basis of the value of happiness by using following equation;  $Y = 12.24 + 0.12X$ .

**Table 4: Simple regression analysis predicting mental health (predictor – work engagement).**

Predictor	B	$\beta$	t	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F (1,268)
Work Engagement	0.17	0.27	4.54**	0.27	0.07	0.07	0.07	20.65**
(Constant)	20.23		10.40**					

\*\* - Significant at the 0.01 level;

However, in order not to miss out any evidence on the relative contributions of the predictor variables, a simple regression analysis was performed to find out if work engagement will contribute significantly to the variance in Mental Health. Those findings are presented in **Table 4** revealed that work engagement also contributed 0.70% (R-square = .07) to the variance in mental health and this was found to be significant [ $F(1, 268) = 20.65$ ,  $p < .01$ ]. These results indicated that work engagement is important factor in the mental health of workers.

**Research Question 03: What are the combined contributions of the predictor variables to mental health?**

The third aim of this study was to find out the joint contributions of the predictor variables. Using the stepwise method, a significant model emerged: as seen in **Table 3** step 2, these predictors significantly accounted for 24.00% (R-square = .24); [ $F(2, 267) = 41.42$ ,  $p < .01$ ] of the variance in mental health.

However, it also appears from Table 3 that the work engagement does not contributed into the variance of mental health in association with happiness. It simply means it cannot interactively affect with happiness to the level mental health. In other words, work engagement can contribute to the variance of mental health separately rather than combine

with happiness. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no combine contribution found of the predictor variables into the mental health level.

**DISCUSSION**

The level of Happiness, work engagement, and mental health of workers were assessed and association among them were inspected in the present research. To gather the desire data psychometric scales were administered to 270 participants (163 females and 107 males) via Google Form. Furthermore, combine contribution of Happiness and work engagement into the level of mental health was explored.

Research findings have shown that there are positive and strong correlation among happiness, work engagement and mental health. There was no research has been found in literature review in which all above variables were included together. This study also supported with previous research which documented work engagement can be perceived as a concept related to happiness (Coetzee & Rothmarm, 2005; Rothmarm & Jordaan, 2006; Bakker, Albrecht & Leiter, 2011). This is also in corroborated with the findings of Bieda et al., (2019), Rahman et al., (2016) and Mahakud & Yadav, (2015), they showed that there is significant relationship among happiness, positive mental health and life satisfaction. These results are also

consisted with Mather, (2015), and Bakker & Demerouti (2009) exposed that the work engagement happiness is positively and significantly correlated to each other. Likewise, Coetzee & Rothmarm, (2005); Rothmarm & Jordaan, (2006); Bakker, et al., (2011); Bieda et al., (2019); Çayak, (2021) explored from their study that there is significant positive association between work engagement and happiness.

Likewise, Coetzee & Rothmarm, (2005); Rothmarm & Jordaan, (2006); Bakker, et al., (2011); Bieda et al., (2019); Çayak, (2021) explored from their study that there is significant positive association between work engagement and happiness. Also, Ahmadigatab & Taheri, (2011) and Bieda et al., (2019) exposed from their study a significant correlation between psychological health, life quality and happiness.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of interpretation of results and discussion:

i) The happiness, work engagement and mental health are strongly and positively associated to each other.

ii) The happiness and the work engagement are the significant predictor of mental health. The happiness is the best predictor of mental health among them.

iii) There is no combine contribution found of the predictor variables (The happiness and work engagement) into the mental health level.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the findings obtained from the study, some recommendations can be made for students, researcher scholars & practitioners.

Many factors related to happiness mental health and work-engagement. Experimental and Longitudinal studies can be conducted to explore the effect of these factors on mental health of the person. In present

research the quantitative research method was used. To gain more information about the association of these variables, Qualitative or mixed research methods can also be used.

Moreover, some recommendations can be offered to the research scholars in line with the findings attained from the study. To improve the level of mental health of workers training can be given to administrators to make persons engaged in their work and increasing their level of happiness. Professional support activities can be carried out for persons to cope with the difficulties they face in their work-lives, that cause psychological fear and reduce their mental health.

### **LIMITATIONS**

The present study has certain limitations;

The study conducted online via google form, therefore, researcher has no proper control of on participants. Sample size is only 270. Geographical regions and gender differences were not taken in consideration. Most of participants are female. Taking in consideration these limitation in upcoming studies, it is assumed that it may be helpful to use different research designs.

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