

The Factors Affecting Happiness, Work and Performance of University Academic Staff: Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok Chanthaburi Campus

Siripa Wittayapornpipat^a, Narinjong Wongaud^{b*}

^a*Department of Entrepreneurship Management for Faculty of Social Technology, Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Thailand*

^b*Department of Digital Agricultural of Business for Faculty of Social Technology, Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Thailand*

**Corresponding author: narinjong_wo@rmutto.ac.th*

*Received 28 October 2022; Revised 22 February 2023; Accepted 15 March 2023;
Published Online 22 March 2023*

Abstract

This research aims to study the levels of happiness at work and investigate any relationship between happiness at work and the performance efficiency of academic staff at the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus. The sample group consisted of 93 lecturers, obtained using stratified random sampling. The research instruments were questionnaires constructed with a content validity between 0.60 and 1.00. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, Pearson' Correlation Coefficiency, and Backward Multiple Regression Analysis. The results found that the overall score of specific aspects (happiness at work and performance efficiency of academic staff) was at a high level. The relationship between happiness at work factors in overall performance factors showed that the happiness at work factors in the aspect of personal life balance ($B=0.301$) and relationship with colleagues and community ($B=0.209$) positively influenced work effectiveness, according to statistical significance at the 0.05 level. Both factors, personal life balance (X_4) and relationship with colleagues and community (X_6), predicted the effectiveness of performance at 32.1 percent with regression analysis equation was $2.085 + 0.301X_4 + 0.209X_6$. While the factors of happiness in work in the remaining four aspects, freedom of work, positive environment for work, advancement and job security, and compensation, do not affect the performance effectiveness of the academic staff.

Keywords: *Happiness at Work; Performance Effectiveness; University Academic Staff*

1. Introduction

In many countries, the 21st century has brought about social changes, such as personal and work, environment, economy, and culture. Many businesses and government organizations should adapt to new strategies and changes to survive. Organizational restructuring, strategy formulation, and management strategies have become critical factors used to cope with those changes. Accordingly, people are the organization's heart (Nging & Yazdanifard, 2015), and every person in any organization desires to work happily. The higher performance of any organization arises from happier employees because happier employees are the most productive in any workplace (Aldana, 2023; Dasa, 2009; Mongdee, Romyen, & Udomkijmongkol, 2022). Therefore, many organizations pay attention to personnel development, especially development that helps allow personnel to work happily. Many attempts to promote happiness and stimulate a good consciousness in an organization, based on the traditions and culture of the people in the organization, have been tried (Warrick & Gardner, 2021). For example, Charaba (2022) explores ways to keep employees happy and healthy at work. Recently, Wilcox (2023) suggested 13 ways to increase employee happiness and productivity in 2023. Those attempts and stimulation are the foundations to help develop employees' potential towards a sustainable way of happiness, which will lead to the natural strengthening of the organization's foundation.

Nowadays, the trend of creating happiness at work in Thailand has become more widespread (Chalongbun, 2016; Nomngamsak, Charoenarpornwattana, & Tubsree, 2021). Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus is an agency that recognizes the importance of providing an environment for happy people at work. The workload of the employee at the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok consists of five main aspects: teaching, researching, academic service, preserving arts and culture, and supporting the organization. These five workloads are an essential part of university development. Creating the factors that directly affect happiness at work is the essential drive-in performance effectiveness for the university. Unfortunately, the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus lacks analytical data on levels of happiness at work and productivity. This research is intended to study factors that affect employees' happiness at work in the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus, and to evaluate the relationship between levels of happiness at work and effectiveness performance. From this research, understanding the factors that affect happiness at work will enable policymakers to update necessary policies to develop and maintain employees' workplace happiness. This research contribution afterward can only bring positive outcomes for the organization.

2. Objectives

- 1) To study the levels of happiness at work of academic staff in the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus.
- 2) To study the relationship between work happiness level and performance effectiveness of academic staff in the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus.

3. Research Conceptual Framework

Happiness at work refers to the positive feelings that arise within a person in response to events that occur at work, including an emotional state and a mind that is pleased or satisfied with what one does that arises from a problem-free state, gives a qualified position, and achieves the efficiency results that one had hoped at work. The study factors that affect a person's response in this research to happiness in work are compensation, a positive environment for work, advancement and job security, relationship with colleagues and communities, freedom of work, and personal life balance. These factors are indicators that reflect the effectiveness of work operations in a university. The conceptual research framework can explain the relationship, as shown in conceptual research framework.

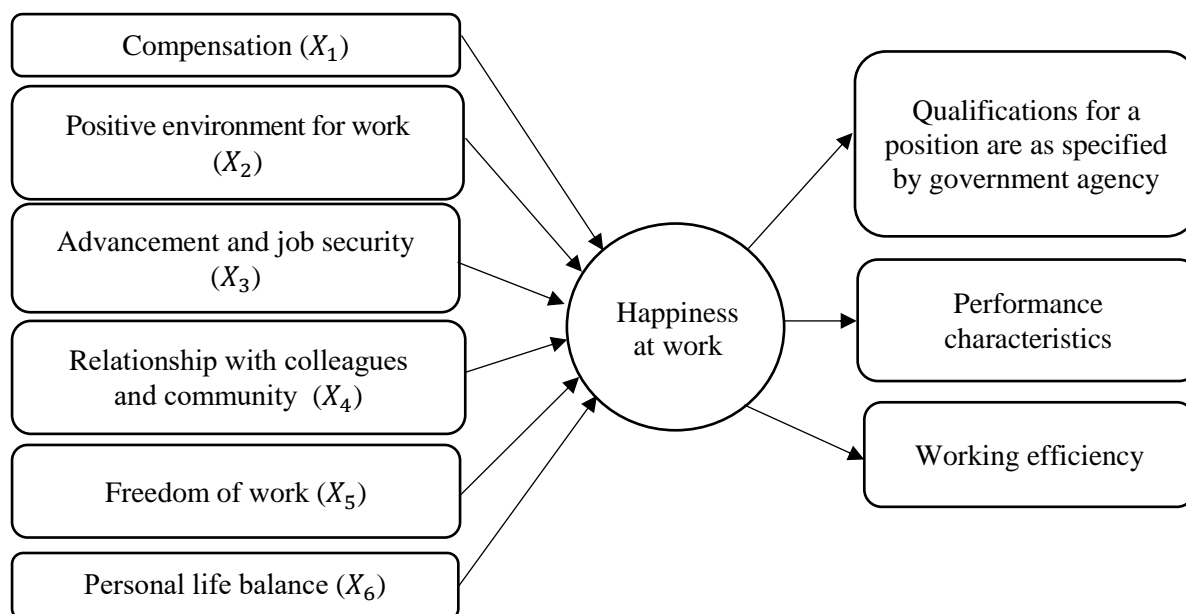


Figure 1 Research conceptual framework

4. Research methodology

4.1 Research design

This research was conducted at the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok Chanthaburi Campus, a higher education institute located in Chanthaburi Province, Thailand. This study employed a quantitative approach, using a questionnaire to assess the level of happiness and factor affecting happiness at work of academic staff with at least two years' work experience.

4.2 Population and Sample

The target population of this study was academic staff working at the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus. The total population size of academic staff was 121 persons. (Information from September 31, 2020)

The sampling formula was employed to determine the study's sample size using Taro Yamane formula (1967). Its error rate is 5 percent. The formula was expressed in Equation 1.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \quad (1)$$

Where n = Sample size
 N = Population size 131 people
 E = Sampling tolerance equal to 5% or 0.05

The results indicated that the questionnaire sample number should consist of 93 individuals out of the population of 121. However, nine more questionnaires were delivered to ensure a complete collection of questionnaires, increasing the sample number to 102. Due to differing staff population numbers of each faculty, the stratified random sampling was used to find a proper sample size for each; by using in Equation 2. The sample size of the participants in each faculty on the campus is shown in Table 1.

$$n_x = \frac{(n)N_i}{N} \quad (2)$$

Where n_x = sample size
 n = required sample size
 N_i = population of the respondents
 N = whole population

Table 1 List of academic staff in each faculty

Faculty	Target Population Size	Sample Size
Agro-Industrial Technology	75	63
Social Technology	46	39

4.3 Research Instruments

The research instrument consisted of a checking list and rating scale questionnaire. The close-ended questions were developed, based on the research framework, to get information from participants. The questionnaire consists of 3 sections; 1) Socio-demographic data, 2) Factors affecting the happiness at work of an employee, and 3) Effectiveness of employees' performance. The Likert scale was used as a measurement for questions in sections 2 and 3, with a scale of 1-5, starting from strongly unhappy/disagree (1) to strongly happy/agree (5). The questionnaire was checked for quality as follows:

1) the content validity using Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) from three experts in the fields of social sciences was 0.95.

2) the reliability coefficient, based on Cronbrach's Alpha Coefficient, was 0.90.

4.4 Data collection and data analysis

This research was conducted from May to September 2021. One hundred and two questionnaires were distributed to participants through the employer. Ninety-five valid questionnaires were recovered, providing a valid response rate of 93.1 percent.

Descriptive statistics with the percentage, the mean, and the standard deviation (S.D.) were used to analyze the characteristics of participants. The research statistics used to study the relationship between employee happiness, and work effectiveness was a multiple correlation coefficient, having a 95% confidence level. Backward multiple regression analysis was used to create forecasting equations of effectiveness from happiness at work. By investigating whether any independent variables can predict or explain the variation of the dependent variable, the relationship can be written in Equation 3 (Chanaboon, 2017).

$$\text{Prediction Equation } \hat{y} = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + \dots + b_kX_k \quad (3)$$

5. Results

5.1 Characteristics of participants

Most of the respondents are female (52.6%). The largest group of participants was the age of 35-40 years old (25.26%). The majority of participants were single (48.42 %), graduating with a Master's Degree (72.6 %), having the status of a university employee (75.8%), having an income of between 35,000-40,000 THB (28.9%) and having a family size of 3-5 person (63.5%).

Analysis of participants' s work information found that over half of the participants were lecturers without academic positions (68.42%). The largest group of participants had 6-10 years of teaching experience (26.32%). The teaching load of most participants was between 11-15 hours per week (44.21 %).

5.2 Level of employees' s happiness at work

Assessment of happiness at work of academic staff found that overall happiness was at a high level, showing an average of 3.71. The factor with the highest happiness level at work was freedom of work. While the factor with the lowest happiness level at work was compensation from employment, the rank of academic staff's happiness at each factor is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Level of academic staff 's happiness at each factor

No.	Variables	Mean	S.D.	Level
1	Freedom of work	3.87	0.59	high
2	Personal life balance	3.85	0.57	high
3	Relationships with colleagues and community	3.83	0.56	high
4	Positive environment for work	3.66	0.61	high
5	Advancement and job security	3.63	0.67	high
6	Compensation	3.44	0.73	high
Overall level of happiness at work		3.71	0.69	high

5.3 Effectiveness of performance of academic staff

This study found that the overall effectiveness of performance of the academic staff was at a high level, having an average of 4.05. The aspect of working efficiency was the highest level, while the factor of qualifications for a position are as specified by government agency was the lowest level. The performance level is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Rating scale on performance effectiveness of academic staff at each aspect

No.	Indicator items	Mean	S.D.	Level
1	Aspect of working efficiency	4.13	0.46	high
2	Aspect of performance characteristics	4.05	0.50	high
3	Aspect of qualifications for a position are as specified by government agency	3.96	0.45	high
Overall level of performance effectiveness		4.05	0.47	high

5.4 Relationship between happiness at work and performance effectiveness

The analysis results of multiple correlation coefficients between the level of happiness at work and the effectiveness performance of academic staff in the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok Chanthaburi Campus are shown in table 4.

Table 4 Multiple correlation coefficient between variables and selection into regression equation

Model	R	dR ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig
1	0.598 ^a	0.357	0.313	8.144	0.000*
2	0.597 ^b	0.357	0.320	9.863	0.000*
3	0.594 ^c	0.353	0.324	12.276	0.000*
4	0.580 ^d	0.336	0.314	15.344	0.000*
5	0.566 ^e	0.321	0.306	21.715	0.000*

* Statistical significance at 0.05 level

a. Predictors: (Constant); Personal life balance (X_6), in the terms of advancement and job security (X_3), compensation (X_1), relationship with colleagues and community (X_4), environmental conducive to work (X_2), freedom of work (X_5)

b. Predictors: (Constant); Personal life balance (X_6), in the terms of advancement and job security (X_3), compensation (X_1), relationship with colleagues and community (X_4), freedom of work (X_5)

c. Predictors: (Constant); Personal life balance (X_6), compensation (X_1), relationship with colleagues and community (X_4), freedom of work (X_5)

d. Predictors: (Constant); Personal life balance (X_6), relationship with colleagues and community (X_4), freedom of work (X_5)

e. Predictors: (Constant): Personal life balance (X_6), relationship with colleagues and community (X_4)

From Table 4, when the next variable was eliminated, the change of R^2 was tested. It was found that subsequent variable elimination resulted in a statistically significant decrease in R^2 value. Thus, the analysis ended in Model 5, where $R^2 = 0.321$ ($p < 0.05$). The results indicated that the factor of personal-life balance and relationship with colleagues and community co-explained 30.6 percent (Adjusted = 0.306) of the variance in work effectiveness. Therefore, these two independent variables, personal-life balance and relationship with colleagues and community, were entered into the prediction equation.

Table 5 Analysis results of relationship between levels of happiness at work and performance effectiveness of the academic staffs using Backward Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Constant	2.085	0.301	6.931	0.000*
Relationships with colleagues and communities (X_4)	0.301	0.070	4.319	0.000*
Personal life balance (X_6)	0.209	0.068	3.067	0.003*
R = 0.566 ^c Adjusted $R^2 = 0.306$ $R^2 = 0.321$ SE = 0.350				

* Statistical significance at the 0.05 level

From Table 5, the coefficient value, resulting from backward multiple regression analysis, can be explained as follows:

All six aspects of factors affecting happiness at work are not considered, the constant value was 2.085 units.

If happiness at work in terms of relations with colleagues and community increases by 1 unit, it results in increasing effective performance by 0.301 units.

If happiness at work, in terms of relations with colleagues and community, increases by 1 unit, and the remaining five aspects of happiness at work were constant, the resulting effective performance increases by 0.301 units.

If happiness at work, in terms of personal-life balance, increases by 1 unit, and the remaining five aspects of happiness at work were constant. The resulting effective performance increases by 0.209 units.

In addition, this study found that factors not included in the regression equation were: compensation, environment favorable to work, advancement and job security, and freedom of work. These factors did not account for any variability and did not affect the performance effectiveness of academic staff in the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok Chanthaburi Campus.

Predictor coefficients were written as equations to enable predicting the effectiveness of the performance of academic staff in the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok Chanthaburi Campus by giving raw scores.

As shown in Equation 3, the formular can express: $Y = 2.085 + 0.301X_4 + 0.209X_6$.

6. Discussion

The research results of the factors affecting happiness, work, and performance effectiveness of university academic staff at Rajamangala university of technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus are discussed as follows:

The findings for happiness at work of academic staff in Rajamangala university of technology Tawan-Ok Chanthaburi Campus show a mean score of 3.71, indicating the happiness of academic staff is at a high level. The mean happiness score was higher than the research of Kecek, Isa, and Shahlal (2021), who found the lecturer's happiness mean score, 3.11, was at a moderate level. This different mean score might be due to different indicators of happiness measurement. When the separated aspect was considered, this research found that the average happiness score for every aspect was at a high

level. The freedom of work factor received the highest score in Table 2. The indicator of happiness is freedom of work. This indicator involves that the university executives should give the staff the opportunity to express their opinions on performance, allows the team to choose to work according to their aptitude, allows staff to work equally, and provides fair policies and regulations.

The mean happiness score is followed by the aspect of personal life balance (a mean score = 3.85) and the aspect of a relationship with colleagues and community (a mean score = 3.83). Most staff are young, healthy people, having small size family. Therefore, their life balance is not a negative factor affecting happiness at work. Equitable welfare and fair job assignments likely allow staff to be friendly and admit to being very happy in their relationship with colleagues and community. In the sequence, the happiness score was the aspect of positive environment for work (a mean score = 3.66) and advancement and job security (a mean score = 3.63). The supported environment and facilitating working can motivate work happiness (Atan, Özgüt, & Silman, 2021; Gudalov & Treshchenkov, 2020; Kossek, Valcour, & Lirio, 2014) because of creative ideas, problem-solving, and problem-solving imagination can happen in the right environment to actions (Calavia, Blanco, & Casas, 2021).

Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus provides a comfortable work environment with clean and safe space, which can reduce the level of work stress and indirectly increase employees' happiness. The university also give opportunity and encouragement to academic staff to submit academic works, to help advance to a higher position with position payouts. The result is staff who are very happy, in terms of advancement and job security.

The mean happiness level of lecturers, in the work environment and workplace, in this study (3.66) was higher than Malaysian lecturers (3.24) (Kechek et al., 2021). Although the happiness score of income or compensation in this study was the lowest, compared to other indicators, it was higher than those works of Kechek et al. (2021). In this research, the results of factors affecting happiness at work were similar to Srirongthong (2022), who concluded that the definition of a happy workplace, from the perspective of university lecturers, is defined as an organization where personnel at every level are delighted. This result is due to the following four factors: working environment, administrative (executive and administration policy), workplace relations, and compensation and welfare.

The analysis results of multiple correlation coefficients found that happiness at work of academic staff had a highly significant positive correlation with performance effectiveness ($p < 0.05$).

To create equations to forecast work efficiency from the happiness at work, the authors found that factors in the aspect of personal-life balance and relationship with colleagues and community are significant factors in the performance effectiveness of academic staff in the Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok, Chanthaburi Campus. In addition, when raw data was substituted into the predicting equation, this research can predict performance effectiveness, with the prediction coefficient or the combined predictive power of 32.1 percent ($R^2 = 0.321$).

7. Institutional research board

This research has granted research ethics committee certificate of approval, the RMUTTO REC NO. is 006/2021. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, the level of happiness at work of academic staff at Rajamangala university of technology Tawan-Ok Chanthaburi Campus and their performance efficiency were at a high level with a mean of 3.71 and 4.05, respectively. Two aspects of factors affecting happiness at work, personal-life balance and a relationship with colleagues and community, can predict the performance effectiveness of the academic staffs of the university at 32.1%.

References

Aldana, S. (2023). *Why are happy employees more productive in the workplace?* Retrieved from <https://www.wellsteps.com/blog/2022/05/17/happy-employees-more-productive/>

- Atan, A., Özgüt, H., & Silman, F. (2021). Happiness at Work and Motivation for a Sustainable Workforce: Evidence from Female Hotel Employees. *Sustainability*, 13(14), 7778. doi:10.3390/su13147778
- Calavia, M. B., Blanco, T., & Casas, R. (2021). Fostering creativity as a problem-solving competence through design: Think-Create-Learn, a tool for teachers. *Thinking skills and creativity*, 39, 100761. doi:10.1016/j.tsc.2020.100761
- Chalongsun, P. (2016). The Happiness of Personnel in the Performance of Government. *Journal of MCU Peace Studies*, 6(Special Issue), 590-599.
- Chanaboon, S. (2017). *Chapter 6: Inferential Data Analysis. Statistics and Data Analysis in Introduction to Health Research*. Khon Kaen: Khon Kaen Provincial Public Health Office.
- Charaba, C. (2022). *How to keep your employees happy and healthy at work*. Retrieved from <https://www.peoplekeep.com/blog/four-ways-to-keep-your-employees-healthy-and-happy>
- Dasa, C. (2009). *Happy workplace*. Retrieved from http://www.il.mahidol.ac.th/th/images/stories/echange/7-05-52_Column_6.pdf
- Duangsuwan, A. (2008). The comparative study on Quality of work life and Organization Commitment of Civil Servants and University Staffs: A Case Study of Prince of Songkla University, Hadyai Campus. *Academic Services Journal*, 19(2), 1-15.
- Gudalov, N. N., & Treshchenkov, E. (2020). The Resilience of the EU Neighbours to the South and to the East: A Comparative Analysis. *Croatian International Relations Review*, 26(86), 6-41. doi:10.37173/cirr.26.86.1
- Kecek, N. N. A., Isa, K., & Shahlal, S. S. (2021). Organization Factor Contribute Lecturers' Happiness. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management* (pp. 702–710). Retrieved from <https://www.ieomsociety.org/proceedings/2021india/202.pdf>
- Kossek, E. E., Valcour, M., & Lirio, P. (2014). The Sustainable Workforce: Organizational Strategies for Promoting Work–Life Balance and Wellbeing. *Work Wellbeing*, 3, 295-318.
- Mongdee, T., Romyen, L., & Udomkijmongkol, C. (2022). Happiness at Work Affecting Performance Effectiveness of the Personnel of Sakon Nakhon Provincial Administration Department, Interior Ministry. *Interdisciplinary Academic and Research Journal*, 2(5), 691-712. doi:10.14456/iarj.2022.120
- Nging, T. K., & Yazdanifard, R. (2015). The General Review of How Different Leadership Styles Cause the Transformational Change Efforts to Be Successful. *International Journal of Management, Accounting and Economics*, 2(9), 1130-1140.
- Nomngamsak, K., Charoenarpornwattana, P., & Tubsree, C. (2021). Happy workplace factors and activities of food industry employees. *Journal of Global Business Review*, 23(2), 1-13.
- Srirongthong, P. (2022). Quality of Work Life of Personnel in Chatuchak District, Bangkhen District and Ladprao District Offices. *The Academic Journal: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Nakhonsawan Rajabhat University*, 9(1), 59-74. Retrieved from <https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/hssnsru/article/view/257276>
- Warrick, D. D., & Gardner, D. G. (2021). Leaders Build Cultures: Action Steps for Leaders to Build Successful Organizational Cultures. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics*, 18(1), 37-53.
- Wilcox, L. (2023). *13 Ways to Increase Employee Happiness & Productivity at Work In 2023*. Retrieved from <https://nectarhr.com/blog/employee-happiness-at-work>
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper and Row.