



Measuring Instruments for Human Resource Management and Employee Happiness

K.I. Uresha¹

H.H.D.P.J. Opatha²



(Corresponding Author)

^{1,2}Department of Human Resource Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka.

¹Email: shaniuresha@sjp.ac.lk Tel: +94779992167

²Email: poojaopatha@sjp.ac.lk Tel: +94763970842

Abstract

A contextual endeavor is made to discover trending and highly focused sector on measuring Human Resource Management (HRM) functions together with employee happiness. Although in the present-day human resource professionals accept the essentiality of sound human resource management and employee happiness in achieving organizational strategic objectives successfully, they are continuously struggling to assess these two areas as there is a knowledge gap on measuring instruments. This study was carried out to address the contextual niche on measuring human resource practices along with employee happiness and aimed to answer three research questions as there is a significant need to assess these areas practically. An extensive inspection of literature has done to answer the research questions of the study i.e. (1) what is HRM? (2) what is employee happiness? (3) how to measure HRM and employee happiness? The desk research strategy was adopted to answer these research questions. As a response, two comprehensive research instruments were developed to assess human resource management practices in an organization together with employee happiness.

Keywords: Instrument, HRM, Employee Happiness, Measure, Organization, HR professionals.

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Contents

1. Introduction	181
2. Research Questions and Objective	181
3. Method	181
4. Literature Review	181
5. Conceptualization of Constructs	182
6. Discussion and Conclusion.....	184
References.....	185

Contribution of this paper to the literature

This study adds two measuring instruments to measure Human Resource Management and Employee Happiness to the existing literature on human resource management and employee happiness.

1. Introduction

Happy employees are considered as the key input to achieve organizational success. Employee happiness leads to employee job satisfaction and employee wellbeing which are considered as major organizational outcomes. Amidst the busier work environment, individuals are engaging in multitasking in both their work life and family life at once which results in contradictory performances. This would cause work stress among employees which may affect the successful performance of their job tasks. To mitigate this contradiction standardized human resource practices must be conducted by the organization in order to make employees feel less pressure. Proving the fact (Wickramasinghe & Perera, 2012) assert right HRM practices keep employees unified and allow them to perform their job peacefully. Hence HRM is treated as an investment rather than considering it as a cost due to the high impact of HRM towards the achievement of organizational strategic objectives. With the discovery of the significance of employee happiness towards organizational success, employee happiness has become a prime trend among human resource practitioners to set up a satisfied and committed labor force. Perera and Madagamage (2018) say that it is the obligation of the management, particularly top managers to consider improving the job satisfaction of employees.

Very few researches have been conducted in this area that acknowledge the impact of the right HRM practices on employee happiness. When investigating the literature, there are several measurements presented by different authors to measure human resource practices in organizations. Moreover, although happiness index is one of the well-known measurements of appraising happiness, that does not specifically reflect employee happiness in the workplace. Therefore, literature does not present proper measurement instruments or questionnaires to measure the degrees of right HRM practices and employee happiness. Hence this study addresses the niche in literature by presenting two standardized instruments to measure the degrees of appropriate HRM practices and employee happiness. These instruments will mainly contribute to research studies which are aiming at investigating the impact of HRM practices on employee happiness, finding the relationship between HRM practices and employee happiness, and measuring the degrees of right HRM practices and employee happiness.

2. Research Questions and Objective

Following are considered as the research questions focused in this study.

1. What is HRM?
2. What is Employee Happiness?
3. How to measure HRM and Employee Happiness?

This research paper has its objective to find answers for the above mentioned three specific research questions.

3. Method

This study explored to give contribution to the existing knowledge on human resource management and employee happiness which are trending and essential topics in the present business context. To address above mentioned research questions systematically, a comprehensive literature survey is conducted by using desk research strategy along with logical beliefs.

4. Literature Review

4.1. HRM

Employees are considered as the key to achieve organizational goals successfully. The organization cannot achieve an excellent workforce which fully contributes to the success of the organization without having good human resource management within the organization. Human resource management plays a strategic role in managing the exclusive resource of “humans” in the workplace. Human resource management acts as a moderator who links employees with the achievement of organizational objectives which reflects the gravity of human resource management function in the organization. Human resource management contributes to the development of business organizations (Arachchige & Robertson, 2015).

An extensive definition of human resource management which reflects the organizational strategic aspect is presented by Opatha (2009) as; “*Effective and efficient utilization of human resources to achieve goals of an organization*”.

As per Eneh and Awara (2016) define HRM as; managing individuals who devote for the achievement of organizational goals personally or inclusively in a systematic and strategic procedure.

HRM directed towards gaining a competitive edge through a personal, economic, and systematic approach, employing a fully committed and qualified labor pool (Storey, 2007). Further, according to Wilton (2016) HRM aimed at managing employer and employee relationships by utilizing appropriate fundamentals, processes, and actions.

Based on the above details following definition is developed for HRM; “HRM is directing employee actions towards the achievement of organizational strategic objectives and employee objectives productively by maintaining strong employer and employee relationship”.

4.1.1. Human Resource Management Functions

In the modern dynamic business environment, to face the continuous challenges successfully organizations tend to become more employee oriented. Having a satisfied and motivated workforce is one of the main targets of employee orientation. Marescaux, De Winne, and Forrier (2018) assert employees get the signal through HRM, that they are being valued and cared by the organization and, organization focuses on their happiness and

development. Human resource functions are utilized to create and maintain a satisfied and motivated workforce. Thus, activities used to administer employee actions can be identified as human resource management functions.

Opatha (2009) has identified a comprehensive set of human resource functions that cover all the employee related activities widely. Those functions are; job design, job analysis, human resource planning, recruitment, selection, hiring, induction, performance evaluation, training and development, career management, pay management, welfare management, management of incentives, employee movements, health and safety management, discipline management, grievance handling, and labor relations.

Human resource management literature suggests different views on human resource functions. Itika (2011) states human resourcing, managing performance appraisal, personal training and development, compensation/reward management, personnel relations and other administrative functions such as health and safety, pensions, personal information systems are vital to manage employees.

Recruitment, selection, training, and development are the central human resource functions that HR practitioners tend to outsource in the present context Anthonia and Omotayo (2012).

As per Ahammad (2017) learning and development, recruitment and selection, professional development, performance appraisal, benefits, and compensation, ensure legal compliance, equality, and diversity, and strategic HR outline activities that are essential to manage employees.

Recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, rewarding and industrial relations are the fundamental affairs that directly relate with managing employees (Tubey, Rotich, & Kurgat, 2015).

Moreover, Obedgiu (2017) declares that adjust and direct employees towards the business strategy, reengineer organizational processes match to organizational change, admit and acknowledge employee ideas and most importantly attracting and select most suitable employees, deliver sufficient training for their development, appraise employee performance and compensate them based on their talent are identified as key functions to maintain a better employer-employee relationship.

Wilton (2016) declared human resource functions under two categories namely; basic functions and support functions. He recognizes personal resourcing, managing rewards, managing performance, employment relations, and human resource development as basic functions and employee wellbeing, equality and diversity management, health, and safety as support functions.

4.2. Employee Happiness

Happiness is the ultimate objective of an individual that he/she wishes to be achieved in life. Happiness brings peace to the lives of people. In Buddhism, it is said that "*Santhutti paraman dhanan*" which means that contentment or happiness is the greatest wealth. A happy person in terms of his various life aspects works happily and produces better results. For example, a happy employee works efficiently and effectively and produce what the organization expects him/her to produce. Sometimes happy employees have the possibility of promoting organizational citizenship behaviour, job involvement, job commitment, and job satisfaction. These are known as employee-related attitudes (Opatha & Opatha, 2019).

Kaczmarek (2017) has defined happiness as:

"Happiness in psychology has two references. First, happiness is an umbrella term for several theories of well-being. These theories cover intrinsically rewarding and valued experience, positive beliefs about self and the world, or positive psychological functioning. Second, happiness has been considered a basic emotion by most theorists within the psychology of emotions".

Opatha. (2019) has defined happiness as a feeling of pleasure, satisfaction, or becoming pleased. Veenhoven (2017) defines happiness is the degree to which an individual evaluates the overall quality of his/her life positively or how much one prefers the life one lives. If you are a happy person you love the life you live and love the things, persons, etc. around you that support you to be happy.

It is found that human beings can provide companies with a competitive advantage through their creativeness and innovativeness (Kowalski & Loretto, 2017). It can be believed that happy employees derive more innovative and creative ideas, opinions as their minds are filled with positive feelings and thoughts. Supporting to enhance employee subjective and objective well-being of the employee is one of the major HR strategies in the twenty-first century (Kowalski & Loretto, 2017).

Happiness can be divided into hedonic happiness and eudaimonic happiness (Opatha, 2019). Hedonic happiness is defined as subjective wellbeing and according to Opatha (2019) hedonic happiness is categorized as affective hedonic happiness and cognitive hedonic happiness. Affective hedonic happiness has two major components i.e. emotions and moods (Opatha, 2019) and it refers to the degree to which people can enhance pleasure over pain in their lives through positive emotions and moods. Cognitive hedonic happiness is composed with two factors i.e. global life satisfaction and dimensional life satisfaction (Opatha, 2019) and it refers to the degree to which people think that they are spending a happy life as a whole and in terms of different aspects of life (eg; family, work, religious, etc.). Eudaimonic happiness derives from one's living according to virtues and self-fulfilment and when someone's life becomes meaningful (Opatha, 2019). Hedonic happiness is derived from the experiences of pleasure and enjoyment while eudaimonic happiness is derived from experiencing meaning and purpose (Vinney, 2020).

Considering the above details relating to happiness, the following definition was developed for the term happiness.

"Happiness is the sense of joyfulness and meaningfulness relating to the aspects of an individual's life."

5. Conceptualization of Constructs

5.1. Measuring HRM

The effective functioning of HRM leads to employee satisfaction and most importantly determines the level of employee happiness which is related to their work life. Happy employees are more productive workers who are essential to an organization in accomplishing their business targets. Hence, measuring human resource practices is imperative in determining employee happiness. HRM literature suggests different parameters to measure HRM. As per (Kottawatta, 2015) numerous criteria are considered in past studies to measure human resource activities but the strong suit is those criteria are distinct from one to another.

Different authors have present various dimensions, indicators, and statements aimed at measuring human resource practices. After a rigorous analysis of past literature, authors have presented some effective parameters in measuring human resource practices. Referring to Opatha (2009) and Kottawatta (2015) dimensions and indicators were identified and considering to diverse studies such as; Demo, Neiva, Nunes, and Rozzett (2012); Mabaso (2012); Hirschi, Freund, and Herrmann (2014); Chaubey and Rawat (2016); Itang (2015); Biggs, Swailes, and Baker (2016) and Gomathi (2014) authors have developed the statements for each dimension and indicator which are presented in Table 1. The instrument for measuring HRM is depicted in Table 3.

Table-1. Statements for each dimension and indicator for measuring HRM.

Dimension	Indicator	Statement
Employment Planning	Job Design	My job is highly enriched (I have the ability to plan, do, and control my job).
	Job Analysis	I know clearly what duties need to be performed by myself.
	HRP	HR department of my organization analyzes future employee demand and supply yearly.
Staffing	Recruitment	The organization I work for widely disseminates information about both external and internal recruitment processes.
	Selection	The organization I work for uses various selection instruments (e.g. interviews, tests, etc).
	Hiring	Appointment letter given by my organization when hiring an employee contains all the necessary information in a detailed way.
	Induction	Induction training programs in my organization provide an excellent opportunity for newcomers to learn comprehensively about the company and job.
Human Resource Development	Performance Evaluation	The organization I work for periodically conducts competency-based performance appraisals and disseminates results to its employees.
	Training and Development	The organization I work for invests in my development and education, promoting my personal and professional growth in a broad manner.
	Career Management	HR Department of my organization provides counselling and career education for its employees to develop their future career plans and goals.
Rewards Management	Pay Management	The organization I work for offers me a fair salary that is compatible with my skills, training, and education.
	Incentive Management	In the organization where I work, I get incentives such as promotions, commissioned functions, awards, bonuses, etc.
	Welfare Management	The organization I work for provides various welfare facilities like medical facilities, transportation facilities, feeding facilities, loan facilities etc.
Employee & Labor Relations	Employee Movements	Employee movements such as promotions, transfers etc are not encouraged by personal biasness and favoritism but by performance of employees in my organization.
	Health and Safety Management	The organization I work for has programs or processes that help employees to cope up with hazardous incidents and prevent workplace accidents.
	Discipline Management	HR Department implements preventive and corrective disciplinary procedures to maintain the discipline of employees.
	Grievance handling	In my organization, there are methods to identify the root causes of the grievances of employees and provides suitable solutions.
	Labour Relations	A culture of harmonious working relationships is encouraged in my organization.

Source: Opatha and Uresha (2020).

The level of the instrument was interval and the summated rating received on an 18-item, 5-point Likert scale of HRM was the relevant operational definition. Concerning each of the statements mentioned above, respondents can be asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale, and the act of transforming into a different variable (with new values from 1 to 5) can be done after calculating the composite indexing. The transforming can be done by using the following points scale:

Points

- 18 – 32.4 - Very low level of HRM practices.
- 32.5 - 46.8 - Low level of HRM practices.
- 61.3 – 61.2 - Moderate level of HRM practices.
- 61.3 – 75.6 - High level of HRM practices.
- 75.7 – 90 - Very high level of HRM practices.

5.2. Measuring Employee Happiness

Happiness is a subjective term that cannot be defined or measured exactly as it differs from individual to individual. According to Veenhoven (2017) there are three types of happiness: 1) overall happiness, also called 'life-satisfaction', 2) affective component called 'hedonic level of affect' and 3) cognitive component called 'contentment' and all these three types of happiness can be measured using single direct questions, such as below.

- Overall Happiness: "How do you feel about your life as a whole...?"
- Affective Happiness Component: "How is your mood these days...?"
- Cognitive Happiness Component: "How do you think about what you have accomplished in your life...?"

Opatha (2019) has mentioned that hedonic happiness is represented through a pleasant life while eudaimonic happiness is represented through a good life and meaningful life. The pleasant life is devoted to the pursuit of positive emotions, the good life is devoted to the pursuit of engagement and meaningful life is devoted to the pursuit of service to others (Opatha, 2019). As per Seligman (2011) there are three elements for happiness under the original theory of authentic happiness: 1) positive emotions, 2) engagement and, 3) meaning and under the well-being theory there are five elements: 1) positive emotions, 2) engagement, 3) relationships, 4) meaning and purpose and, 5) accomplishment. According to Vinney (2020) psychological wellbeing is a synopsis for happiness and psychological wellbeing is measured with six constructs relating to self-actualization i.e. autonomy, personal growth, purpose in life, self-acceptance, mastery, and positive connections to others.

Considering the above literature on measuring happiness and happiness questionnaires developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999); Hills and Argyle (2002) (Oxford Happiness Questionnaire), Opatha (2019) the authors developed a questionnaire to measure happiness.

The authors developed a questionnaire to measure employee happiness is depicted below in Table 4 and dimensions, indicators, and statements for each dimension and indicator are shown in Table 2. In constructing the measurement for employee happiness authors considered the above literature mentioned. Dimensions for measuring employee happiness were hedonic happiness and eudaimonic happiness. Indicators of hedonic happiness were affective hedonic happiness (positive emotions and moods) and cognitive hedonic happiness (global life satisfaction and dimensional life satisfaction). Engagement and accomplishment (the good life) and, relationships and meaning and, purpose (meaningful life) were the indicators of eudaimonic happiness. Further, referring to wellbeing theory by Seligman (2011) positive emotions were considered as an indicator of hedonic happiness while engagement, relationships, meaning and purpose, and accomplishment were considered as indicators of eudaimonic happiness. According to the three types of lives introduced by Opatha (2019) positive emotions were considered as an indicator coming under the pleasant life which belongs to hedonic happiness. Engagement and accomplishment were considered as indicators of the good life while relationships and meaning, and purpose were considered as indicators of a meaningful life that belongs to eudaimonic happiness.

Table-2. Statements for each dimension and indicator for measuring employee happiness.

Dimension	Indicator	Statement	
Hedonic Happiness (Pleasant Life)	Affective Hedonic Happiness (Positive Emotions and Moods)	I often feel joy, contented and fortunate in my life rather feeling sadness, disgust and anger.	
		I often experience cheerful and good moods.	
		I feel that life is very rewarding to me.	
		I feel pleased with the way I am.	
	Cognitive Hedonic Happiness	I often wake up with a fresh mood.	
		• Global Life Satisfaction	I am well satisfied about everything in my life.
		• Dimensional Life Satisfaction	I am highly satisfied with my job. My marriage/personal life makes me happy honestly. I do exercises and I am very healthy. I am a good follower of my religion.
Eudaimonic Happiness (Good Life and Meaningful Life)	Engagement and Accomplishment (Good Life)	I have a sense of direction in my life.	
		I am fully engaged with my works.	
		I feel good when making ethical decisions.	
		I feel a sense of improvement or expansion over time.	
		There is a gap between what I would like to do and what I have done.	
	Relationships and Meaning and Purpose (Meaningful Life)	I have very warm feelings towards almost everyone.	
		I do have fun with other people.	
		I do have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life.	
		I have a sense of feeling that I have served more to the society.	
		I am very happy with what I have done.	

Source: Opatha and Uresha (2020).

The level of the instrument is interval and the summated rating received on a 20-item; 5-point Likert scale of happiness is the relevant operational definition. Concerning each of the statements mentioned above, respondents can be asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale, and the act of transforming into a different variable (with new values from 1 to 5) can be done after calculating the composite indexing. The transforming can be done by using the following points scale:

Points

- 20 – 36 - Very low level of happiness.
- 37 – 52 - Low level of happiness.
- 53 – 68 - Moderate level of happiness.
- 69 – 84 - High level of happiness.
- 85 – 100 - Very high level of happiness.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

In this conceptual study, HRM is known as directing employee actions towards the achievement of organizational strategic objectives and employee objectives productively by maintaining strong employer and employee relationships through sound human-related functions. Happiness is considered as a sense of joyfulness and meaningfulness relating to the aspects of an individual’s life. HRM and Employee Happiness are two crucial

concepts as in a business organization proper functioning of HRM contributes to make employees happy in terms of different aspects of their lives.

Lewis and Beauregard (2018) define work-life balance as to how well multiple roles in life are being balanced by individuals. Work-life balance initiatives in an organization are promoted by HRM and this will lead to make employees happy through assisting them to build up a balance between work life and family life. Further one of the major functions of HRM is to handle grievances of employees. Grievance means any discontent or dissatisfaction arising from a feeling or a belief of injustice felt by an employee or a group of employees in connection with the work environment (Opatha, 1994). Handling grievances to the satisfaction of employees will make them happy and ultimately, they will work productively to achieve the organizational goals and objectives. As concern for productivity is vital (Akuratiyagamage & Opatha, 2004) in many organizations in Sri Lanka and the world, contented or happy employees are integral to achieve a higher level of productivity for the organizations. Thus, employees' happiness is of utmost importance to achieve organizational success and progress of success. Perera and Madagamage (2018) say that it is the obligation of the management, particularly top managers to consider improving the job satisfaction of employees. According to Opatha and Uresha (2020) found that there is a significant positive impact from HRM on employee happiness and this can be further described in statistically as 45.6% of the variance in employee happiness is explained by human resource management.

This paper attempts to contribute to the existing literature on human resource management and employee happiness by introducing two instruments to measure HRM and employee happiness. Researchers and business decision-makers can utilize these two measuring instruments of HRM and employee happiness and do further researches to find the degrees of their organizations' HRM level and employees' happiness level, the correlation between HRM and employee happiness, the impact of HRM on employee happiness and many other useful studies to make evidence-based decisions.

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Annexure

Annexure 1

Table-3. Instrument for measuring HRM.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Average	Agree	Strongly Agree
My job is highly enriched (I have the ability to plan, do, and control my job).					
I know clearly what duties need to be performed by myself.					
HR department of my organization analyzes future employee demand and supply yearly.					
The organization I work for widely disseminates information about both external and internal recruitment processes.					
The organization I work for uses various selection instruments (e.g. interviews, tests, etc).					
Appointment letter given by my organization when hiring an employee contains all the necessary information in a detailed way.					
Induction training programs in my organization provide an excellent opportunity for newcomers to learn comprehensively about the institution.					
The organization I work for periodically conducts competency-based performance appraisals and disseminates results to its employees.					
The organization I work for invests in my development and education, promoting my personal and professional growth in a broad manner.					
HR Department of my organization provides counselling and career education for its employees to develop their future career plans and goals.					
The organization I work for offers me a fair salary that is compatible with my skills, training, and education.					
In the organization where I work, I get incentives such as promotions, commissioned functions, awards, bonuses, etc.					
The organization I work for provides various welfare facilities like medical facilities, transportation facilities, feeding facilities, loan facilities etc.					
Employee movements such as promotions, transfers, etc. are not encouraged by personal biasness and favoritism but by performance of employees in my organization.					
The organization I work for has programs or procedures that help employees to cope up with hazardous incidents and prevent workplace accidents.					
HR Department implements preventive and corrective disciplinary procedures to maintain the discipline of employees.					
In my organization, there are methods to identify the root causes of the grievances of employees and provides suitable solutions.					
A culture of harmonious working relationships is encouraged in my organization.					

Annexure 2

Table-4. Instrument for measuring employee happiness.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Average	Agree	Strongly Agree
I often feel joy, contented and fortunate in my life rather feeling sadness, disgust and anger.					
I often experience cheerful and good moods.					
I feel that life is very rewarding to me.					
I feel pleased with the way I am.					
I often wake up with a fresh mood.					
I am well satisfied about everything in my life.					
I am highly satisfied with my job.					
My marriage life makes me happy honestly.					
I do exercises and I am very healthy.					
I am a good follower of my religion.					
I have a sense of direction in life.					
I am fully engaged with my works.					
I feel good when making ethical decisions.					
I feel a sense of improvement or expansion over time.					
There is a gap between what I would like to do and what I have done.					
I have very warm feelings towards almost everyone.					
I do have fun with other people.					
I do have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life.					
I have a sense of feeling that I have served more to the society.					
I am very happy with what I have done.					

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