WHAT BRINGS HAPPINESS TO WORKPLACE?

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ABSTRACT

Pursuing happiness is one, if not the most, important driver of human beings. In modern days, workplace has taken the major part of a lot of people's life. As a consequence, the quality of work time greatly impacts the quality of one's living. Although some of the external factors have been studied on the influence of workplace happiness, the cross-influence with internal characteristics is quite limited. In this research, we studied the influence on Workplace Happiness by Meaningful Work, Perceived Organizational Support, Organization Commitment, with the modulation of Psychology Capital.

151 knowledge workers were surveyed. We found all independent factors including external and internal factors such as Meaningful Work, Perceived Organizational Support, and Psychology Capital significantly contribute to Workplace Happiness, when Organization Commitment mediate the effect of external factors. However, the modulation from Psychological Capital to the influence from Organizational Commitment is not significant. This might suggest the independence relationship in between and both internal and external factors should be emphasized while we want to pursue greater happiness degree.

Keywords Workplace Happiness, Organization Commitment, Meaningful Work, Perceived Organizational Support, Psychology Capital

ABBREVIATIONS

PsyCap (Psychological capital)

INTRODUCTION

With the progress of modern management, more companies aware both physical health and mental health of employee should be taken care to ensure the stability and the productivity. On top of this benefit, due to intensive 'Talent War', a workplace that takes good care of employees can also enhance the employer branding to attract highly talented people. Since the talent market is highly competitive, employees with the critical skills are much harder to find and obtained than before. To make the situation even worse, modern technologies also help good performing employees a quicker and wider access to new positions. These make the employers branding even more crucial than before (Bersin, 2013).

As a consequence, the trend of running for one of the best employers or best work place gets its popularity among enterprises around world. Goffe and Jones (2013) proposed six principles to create the best workplace on earth: 1. Let People Be Themselves, 2. Unleash the Flow of Information, 3. Magnify People's Strengths, 4. Stand for More Than Shareholder Value, 5. Show How the Daily Work Makes Sense, 6. Have Rules People Can Believe In. According to the above suggestion, the meaning of work and the provided support and caring from the company are the best ways to establish the best workplace.

Earlier researches revealed the importance of organizational commitment. It plays a role that as a predictor of performance and engagement. Besides, organization commitment is considered to relate to job satisfaction and motivation. The relationship between workplace happiness and organization commitment worth further looks.

In addition, modern psychology has adopted the new paradigm, positive psychology. As a consequence, more companies begin to emphasize on the positive state of human mentality. Among other capitals such as financial capital and social capital, psychology capital (PsyCap) is considered to be one of the important resources that able to enhance the performance of individual and eventually of the organization. Whether PsyCap influence the workplace happiness is yet to be considered.

LITERATURE & THEORY

Job Demands-Resources Model

Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) states there are potential factors that will trigger pressure in workplace. These factors can be categorizes as job demands and job resources and these two type have different impacts on employees and organizations. (Bakker, Demerouti, de Boer, & Schaufeli, 2003)

Bakker and Demerouti (2007) considered, job demands is the necessary physical and psychological resource devoted when an employee is required to fulfill a job. Although job demands don't necessary bring negative result (Lu, Kao, Siu, & Lu, 2010; Lu, Siu, & Lu, 2010), it might bring pressure when it is higher than the tolerance of employee.

Job resources refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organizational resource, such as learning and development opportunities. Although job resource may not thoroughly resolve the pressure from job, these resources can motivate employees (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). As long as job resources can fulfill the psychological demand, the employee's willingness to work will also increase. (Meijman & Mulder, 1998)

Bakker, Emmerik, and Riet (2008) stated job demands and job resources have different effect on employees: job demands have negative correlation with employee's health while job resources have positive correlation with attitude (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According, to balance the both side in a proper way is the purpose of optimizing human resource. (Bakker, et al., 2007)

Besides, job resources can be categorizes into intrinsic resource and extrinsic resource. Intrinsic job resources refer to automasy or competence. Extrinsic job resources refer to the praise or support that might help employee achieve goals. Recent researches have shown commitment human resource is an important initiative that can provide employee both intrinsic and extrinsic job resource. (Arthur, 1994; Dyer & Holder, 1988)

Walton (1985) categorized strategic human resource management into two types, control type and commitment type. Both strategies aim to increase the efficacy of employee and productivity. Rather than forcing employees to work efficiently and paying by production, commitment type takes encouraging and motivating approach. The organization will try to fulfill the psychological demand of employees and help them understand the goal of the organization while providing them with resources to complete individual's job goal more efficiently. (Arthur, 1994; Whitener, 2001; Wood & de Menezes, 1998)

Researches revealed, commitment type organization will have higher organization commitment and trust, and the behavior citizenship is more easily triggered (Lin & Hsieh, 2007). This approach can also make employees more willingly to share individual's knowledge and experience and let employees have higher level of trust to organization.

Workplace Happiness

'Happiness is often operationalized as subjective well-being, a concept comprising three components – life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect' (Gard, 2012). Carruthers and Hood (2004) considered well-being as the concepts make people considered happiness, optimistic, and energetic, self-realization and satisfaction. Lu (1998) also considered 'Subjective Wellbeing' is a deep evaluation of life quality; it includes positive emotions and subjective feelings about the whole satisfaction of life.

Many scholars considered 'Wellbeing' is one subjective experience that includes satisfaction, positive emotion, and negative emotion. Which means the evaluation of wellbeing includes both emotion and cognitive level (Andrew & Withey, 1976; Emmons, 1999; Watson & Tellegen, 1985). Keyes (2013) stated, 'there is growing recognition of the personal and social utility of subjective well-being, both higher levels of hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing'.

Whether well-being comes from external or internal factors? Sheldon and Kasser (2001) considered wellbeing comes from the satisfaction when achieving desired goal and the experience then become the driving force for pursuing well-beings. Sarvimi and Stenbock-Hult (2000) claimed, it is not the high quality life if one has no pain completely, but if one have balanced pain and happiness can man have the best quality of life and live well. Some scientists stated well-being and ill-being born side-by-side and the combination of them is zero (Diener, 1984) Other scholars considered wellbeing is relating to characteristics that vary from different type of persons (Headey & Wearing, 1991; Stone & Kozma, 1985). Yet another group of scholars proposed well-being is through comparison to one's life goal or other circumstance, for instance, one's past history or others' life situation (Rim, 1993; Argyle, 1987). This indicates well-being can be influenced by life events.

As summarized above, there is no yet a single index that can cover all aspect of well-being. Keyes (2006) summarized, "The nearly 50 years of research on subjective well-being has yielded as many as 13 distinct dimensions of subjective well-being in the United States. Consequently, new directions in subjective well-being are emerging such as the study of mental health as a complete state, which suggest the need for greater scientific attention to the integration of hedonic and eudaimonic measures and theory."

We can at least found three aspects that can be put into consideration when talking about well-being, such as emotional, psychological, and social levels. If one can fulfill self-expectation and self-assurance, then this individual can build his/her own value and so is one's workplace happiness.

Workplace happiness is the satisfying feeling one experienced when one interact with one's boss, colleges, or client. Taris and Schreurs (2009) stated happy workers are productive workers. The improvement of mutual relationship can increase organizational performance. In addition, the increment of wellbeing among employees is not only important to workers, it also provides good influence to organizations and customers. On the contrary, low well-being will bring low engagement or even loss of employee (Parker and Martin, 2009). From the research by Cenkseven and Sari (2009), workers' subjective wellbeing can be predicted by life quality in workplace. As a brief conclusion, Workplace happiness means the satisfaction and happiness when workers interact with managers, colleagues, subordinates, and clients. This may also be influenced by one's own experience, background, and pressures.

Organization Commitment

Organization Commitment is an indicator of the affiliation, the degree of devotion and the intention of resign between the employee and the company. An employee with higher organization commitment identify oneself more with the organization while devoting more effort in one's job and less likely to resign.

The cause of organization commitment has been discussed from different aspect. Earlier researches considered organizational commitment an exchange mechanism between employee and employer. The exchange can be through benefits or feelings (Becker, 1960; Morris & Sherman, 1981). Kanter (1968) and Herbiniak and Alutto (1972) both considered organizational commitment as the result of considering the opportunity cost or afraid of the loss of established relationships. From psychological view, organization commitment is considered as employees have positive and active attitude, including the loyalty or the acceptance of organizational goal and value (Porter & Smith, 1970; Porter,Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974; Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990; Price, 1997). Kawakudo (1987) defined organization commitment the wiliness to stay in the organization while Mowaday, Porter, and Steers (1982) considered organizational commitment should also include the attitude to make positive contribution. This does not only influence the devotion one hav in the organization but also reprsent the combination between individual and the organization. This linkage is not just important for the individual but also to the organization and the society.

Robbins (2001) claimed organization commitment is when employee accept the organization and it goal then this employee has the commitment to become one part of the organization. Accordingly, organization commitment is often used as a tool to measure loyalty. Other researches revealed it can be used as an indicator for the organizational effectiveness (Steers, 1997). Clinebell and Shadwick (2005) proposed organizations with higher organization commitment have employees rely more on and have more trust in the organization. Simultaneously the flow rate and the number of late arrival is reduced. It can also reinforce the perceived value of the organization's goal and effectively increase the production of employees.

Meaningful Works

Works can be defined as paid employment (Guest, 2002). Brief and Nord (1990) considered the meaning of work relies on the understanding of the purpose of job, aka, pespected achievement on jobs. Earlier researches also indicated the meaning of work is quite influential to several important organizational results (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Locke & Taylor, 1990; Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997; Wrzesniewski, 2003). Although 'meaning' is a common word indaily life, there are at least two levels of contents within, such as what is meaning and what brings meaning. In addition, 'meaning' and 'meaningfulness' are usually interchanged (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). Basically, meaning stands for what one considers his or her job represents (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). On the other hand, although individual's definition to job meaning is still influenced by environment and social context, it is still very subjective (Wrzesniewski, Dutton, & Debebe, 2003). On top of that, even if a job has its own specific role to the society, does not automatically mean it is meaningful to individual. 'Meaningful' refers to the degree of importance one thing means to the individual and 'meaningful job' refers to when individual experiences the specific importance to one and has positive meanings at the same time.

'Being happy and finding life meaningful overlap, but there are important differences', stated Baumeister, Vohs, Aaker, and Garbinsky (2013). In a recent review, Rosso et. al. (2010) considered the meanings of job can come from four aspects: self, others, work context, and spiritual life. Although several fundamental concepts in the study of meaning of work such as callings and vocations have deep theological roots, limited empirical researches have been generated on the topic of spirituality and work, even lesser on the meaning of work (Calvin, 1574, Luther, 1520; Rosso et. al., 2010; Weaver & Agle, 2002).

Perceived Organizational Support

Comparing to the labor intensive industrialization times, modern business relies mainly on knowledge workers. These new generation workers are more privileged with their own knowledge assets and do not need to cling to a sole enterprise through one's career. Companies should be aware of this situation and consider from employees' perspective to evaluate each initiation.

Levinson (1965) proposed employee view organization as a living entity through "personified" and view the policies come from an integrated unit rather from the separated decision makers. Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) stated perceived organizational support is the employee's feeling about the degree the organization cares about their well-being and emphasizing their contribution. When employees feel the balance in between, they will pay more effort and commit more to exchange the physical and spiritual rewards (Esienberger et al., 1986; Wayne, et al., 1997).

The psychological mechanism behind perceived organizational support is social exchange and the psychological contract between employee and the organization (Esienberger et al., 1986; Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994). Eiseberger et. al. consider the exchange is mainly composited by work effort and compensation. Witt (1991) proposed perspective organization support is mere a belief within employees own mind.

In addition, both effort-reward expectancy and needs for socioemotional are also mentioned when referring to perceived organizational support. When employees feel support from organizations, both mechanisms will trigger employee to commit extra effort to achieve organization's goal (Armeil, Eisenberger, Fasolo& Lynch, 1998).

Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) considered there are three antecedents for perceived organizational support: fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and job conditions. The effect of perceived organizational support can be discussed in two levels, individual and organizational. At individual level, perceived organizational support can cause positive attributes then increases satisfaction toward job and salary. Organization theory also considered higher perceived organizational support can increase the obligation from employee and increases one's diligence, organization commitment and creativity (Eisenberger,et al., 1990), while reduce the confliction between roles and pressure (Harris, Harris, Harvey, 2007). At organizational level, perceived organizational support can enhance job performance and reduce resignation and unasked absence (Rhoades, et. al., 2002).

Psychological capital

On the other side, the business world begins to emphasize the importance of 'Psychological Capital' (Luthans, F., Luthans, K. W., and Luthans, B. C., 2004). This index was raised to capture the essence of long term competitive advantage under today's hyper competition. Although this sounds more as a commercial term, the content of it is highly correlated to the positive psychology status. Luthans et al. (2004) compared traditional capital, human capital, social capital, and psychological capital and suggested traditional capital as 'what you have', human capital as 'what you know', social capital as 'who you know' and lastly psychological capital as 'who you are'.

Luthans, Youssef & Avolio (2007) and Luthans et al. (2004) defined psychological capital that can bring positive emotion as:

1. Self-Efficacy: The development of individual's positive status such as confidence to devote oneself and complete all challenging work successfully;

2. Optimism: Positive attributions to current and future success;

3. Hope: Persistence and willing to change the way to do things in order to achieve success;

4. Resiliency: When facing difficulties, one can endure, jump back, and even pass beyond to achieve success.

Along with the trends of increasing competition and more focus on human beings, organizations begin to put more emphasis on the psychological status of employee as this also affect the success and performance of organizations.

Relationship between variables

Happiness can come from the fulfilling process of one's goal and this intension to be satisfied can be a key driver for the increment of happiness (Sheldon, et. al., 2001). Work can bring the feeling of achievement, reveal one's value, help individual blend in social groups, and increase happiness (Morse & Weiss, 1955). A meaningful job brings the feeling of more valuable to the participants and provide positive expectations. We then propose hypothesis I: meaningful job positively affects workplace happiness.

Perceived organization support indicates the degree of employees' feeling about how the organization cares about their well-being and emphasizing their contribution. One experienced the support from organization mainly through the interaction with colleges and managers, which are the key elements for workplace happiness. As a sequence, our hypothesis II is: perceived organizational support positively affects workplace happiness.

Rosso et. all (2010) stated the meanings of work come from four aspects: 1. self, such as value system, motivation, and belief ; 2. Others, such as colleges, leaders, communities, and families; 3. Work context, such as work design, financial environment, and nationwide culture; and, 4. spiritual life, such as spiritual and religious callings. Organizational commitment comes from the strong belief and the wiliness to accept the goal and value

of an organization. One has the intention to make effort and to become part of the organization. Our hypothesis III: meaningful works positively affects organizational commitment.

Employees intend to form holistic impression toward organization about the degree about the support and faith from organization. Perceived organizational support reflects the subjective feeling on this measurement (Esienberger et al., 1986 ; Wayne, et al., 1997). When employees feel the balance between contribution and feedback, one will pay more effort and demonstrate commitment toward organization in exchange of material and mental rewards. The hypothesis IV is: perceived organizational support positively affects organizational commitment.

Porter et al. (1970) stated perceived organizational support as employees' positive and aggressive tendency according to psychological viewpoints. We proposed hypothesis V: organizational commitment positively affects workplace happiness. Accordingly, organization commitment should mediate the influence between meaningful job and workplace happiness (hypothesis VI) and between perceived organizational support and workplace happiness (hypothesis VII).

PsyCap refers to the four characteristics that can contribute to positive emotions. Individuals with higher PsyCap can stay positive more easily in difficult situations or can they rebound quicker from down times. This capital helps individuals be aggressive and effective under various circumstances. People with higher PsyCap should be more emotionally peaceful and less effected by other factors. As a result, our hypothesis VIII is PsyCap modulates the relationship from organization commitment to workplace happiness.

METHODOLOGY

We investigated relating theories and extracted the suitable inventories. Although workplaces come in various sizes and shapes, this study particularly focuses on the office worker who has several colleagues and managers, so the various indexes can be fully examined. The inventory is then distributed through training institute and various organizations. Total 151 effective responses was collected.

Among the 151 response, more than 78% of the participants have worked for the current company for more than a year, which can represent a good sign that these respondents already have an existing impression of their own employing organization.

Workplace happiness is assessed with the instrument adopted from Liu (2011). This 15-item-inventory is to evaluate the satisfaction and happiness when one works in the working environment and interact with manager, colleagues, subordinates, and clients. Each item is in five-point scale. Organizational commitment is measured with Organizational Commitment Inventory modified from Mowday (1982). The inventory has 11 items. The 8-item Perceived Organization Support Questionnaire is the abbreviation from the origin inventory (Eisenberger, et. al., 1986, 1990, 1997). The 10-item Work and Meaning Inventory by Steger, Dik, & Duffy (2012) is used to evaluate Meaningful Work. Psychology Capital is evaluated with PsyCap Questionnaire (Luthans, et. al, 2007). It includes 24 items and each item is five-scale.

The data were analyzed by the SPSS statistical package, using the frequencies, reliability, Pearson correlation, and multi-level regression.

RESULTS

The Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficient for workplace happiness is 0.915, and the Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficient for PsyCap is 0.954. The Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficient for meaningful work, perceived organizational support, and organizational commitment is 0.892, 0.901 and 0.929, respectively. The reliability is high and the results are acceptable.

As shown on Table 1, the correlation between meaningful works and organizational commitment ($r=0.565$, $p<0.01$) and workplace happiness ($r=0.589$, $p<0.01$) are both significant. The relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment is also significant ($r=0.721$, $p<0.01$), so is with

workplace happiness (r=0.578, p<0.01). Organizational commitment also significantly correlates with workplace happiness (r= 0.674, p<0.01). Psychological capital is also significantly correlated with workplace happiness (r= 0.680, p<0.01). Our hypotheses I to V are verified.

Table 1 Correlation Matrix of Dependent and Independent Variables

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Workplace Happiness	-				
2. Organizational Commitment	0.674**	-			
3. Psychological Capital	0.680**	0.540**	-		
4. Meaningful works	0.589**	0.565**	0.460**	-	
5. Perceived Organizational Support	0.578**	0.721**	0.478**	0.562**	-

With the existence of organization commitment, the correlation between meaningful works and workplace happiness dropped to 0.306 (p<0.01). Hypothesis VI is partially supported. The correlation between perceived organizational support and workplace happiness dropped to 0.192 and become insignificant. Our hypothesis VII is fully supported.

In order to test hypothesis VIII, we extracted samples into high and low PsyCap groups, which is one standard deviation above or below the average. The count of high PsyCap is 24 and the count of low Psycap is 23. Z score is 0.1578 and p(two-tail) is 0.8746, which is not significant. Hypothesis VIII is not supported.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

The result of this study, with office workers as participants, indicated the influence through organizational commitment from the work itself and the environment on the happiness of workplace. From the result of this research, the more meaningful a work is to a worker, the worker will enjoy more when doing it. While the correlation between happiness and meaningfulness are wildly varied from previous researches, as simply having fun or suitable relaxing can also bring the feeling of happiness, our research suggests the making of meaning in workplace seems to be an effective strategy to enhance happiness at workplace. At the same time, when one feels the work one does is valuable to oneself, the worker also commits more to it. However, the contribution to workplace happiness from meaningful work is not fully mediated by organizational commitment. One may enjoy and devote to the work due to the intrinsic value rather than commits oneself to the organization.

According to Job Demands-Resource model, the more resource an employee has, the more challenge one can face and overcome. When one feels subjectively being supported by the employer, one will likely to pay back accordingly due to mainly psychological balancing desire. Workers tend to commit more when such circumstance exists. On the other hand, happiness also comes from the positive relationships with others. The support from organization comes through the behaviors of executives, managers, and colleagues. As a result, the higher the perceived organizational support is indeed the abstraction of social support from workplace and can reflect on workplace happiness.

The result echoes earlier researches on the positive relationship between PsyCap and workplace happiness. However, the resistance effect of PsyCap is not supported in this study. The possible cause might be the differentiation between the high and low group is not large enough as both of the cut-off points (4.42 and 3.42, respectively) are still above the fifty percent threshold, which is “three” from the 5-point Likert scale.

A possible direction for the evaluation of the modulation effect from PsyCap is to specifically choosing the base with the average around three as well as with larger deviation. With the increment of difference in between, the true effect from PsyCap can be magnified and the relationship will then be highlighted.

Earlier researchers have verified the positive relationship between workplace happiness and productivity (Lin, Lu, Wu, & Wu, 2012). The competition among modern business environment also pushes organizations put more emphasis on the well-being of employees to ensure the sustainable productivity. We recommended

managers, human resource professionals and even individual workers can make meanings of works. Management level can also work with human resource department to provide a friendlier and more supportive environment, so the employee can also enjoy the closeness and reduce distress. These findings echo the components of evolving happiness (Buss, 2000) and suit modern society.

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