

Building Job Satisfaction: The Integration of Mental Workload, Quality of Work Life, and Happiness

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ABSTRAK

This quantitative study investigates the impact of mental workload, quality of work life, and happiness at work on job satisfaction among prison officers at Lembaga Pemasyarakatan Kelas IIB Pariaman (n=47). Data were collected through a survey using validated scales. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Cronbach's alpha were employed to ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments. Multiple regression analysis using STATA 12 revealed that both quality of work life and happiness at work have significant positive effects on job satisfaction, while mental workload does not significantly influence it. These findings align with previous studies highlighting the importance of employee well-being in enhancing job satisfaction. Practical implications suggest that organizations should focus on improving quality of work life and fostering happiness at work to boost employee satisfaction, which can subsequently enhance organizational performance. However, mental workload should be managed carefully, considering its potential indirect impact on satisfaction.

Keywords: *Happiness at work, job satisfaction, mental workload, quality of work life*

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which individuals feel positively or negatively about their jobs, encompassing various factors such as work environment, leadership, and personal expectations (Vetrivel et al., 2022). It plays a critical role in organizational contexts, serving as a key determinant of employee behaviour and organizational effectiveness. High levels of job satisfaction are associated with increased employee engagement, productivity, and retention, while dissatisfaction can lead to high turnover rates and decreased organizational commitment (Egenius et al., 2020; Desai, 2018).

In the contemporary organizational landscape, maintaining job satisfaction presents significant challenges, particularly in the face of increasing competition and evolving work environments. Organizations are compelled to adapt to rapid changes, including technological advancements and shifting employee expectations. One of

the primary challenges is the need to balance organizational goals with employee needs, particularly in terms of job security, workload, and recognition (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018). As competition intensifies, organizations often prioritize efficiency and productivity, which can inadvertently lead to increased stress and burnout among employees, negatively impacting their job satisfaction (Barili et al., 2022; "A Study of Job Burnout, Job Satisfaction, and Intention to Leave Their Present Job Among Healthcare Workers Using Structural Equation Modelling", 2023). Furthermore, external factors such as economic fluctuations and labour market dynamics can influence job satisfaction levels, as employees may feel insecure about their positions, leading to decreased morale and engagement (Díaz-Carrión et al., 2020).

Mental Workload, quality of work life and Happiness at Work and Its Impact on Job Satisfaction: The interplay between mental workload, quality of work life, happiness at work, and job satisfaction is a critical area of study in organizational psychology. Mental workload refers to the cognitive demands placed on employees during their work tasks, which can significantly influence their overall job satisfaction. Research indicates that high mental workload is often associated with increased job-related stress, which can detrimentally affect both the quality of work life and job satisfaction (Afshari et al., 2020; Zeng et al., 2020). For instance, emergency technicians experiencing high mental demands reported lower job satisfaction levels, highlighting the negative impact of excessive workload on employee morale (Afshari et al., 2020). Similarly, studies have shown that healthcare professionals facing heavy workloads tend to experience decreased job satisfaction and increased stress, leading to a decline in their quality of work life (Zeng et al., 2020).

Moreover, the quality of work life encompasses various factors, including work environment, relationships with colleagues, and overall job conditions, which collectively contribute to employee happiness at work. A positive work environment that fosters good interpersonal relationships and supportive leadership can enhance job satisfaction and, consequently, employee happiness (Tarigan, 2023; Chantabul, 2023). For example, a study on police personnel found that a conducive work environment significantly correlated with both job satisfaction and happiness at work, suggesting that employees who feel supported and valued are more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction (Tarigan, 2023). Conversely, a negative work environment characterized by high stress and poor relationships can lead to dissatisfaction and decreased happiness, further emphasizing the importance of a supportive workplace culture (Negri et al., 2021; Nowrouzi et al., 2016). Happiness at work is not only a result of job satisfaction but also acts as a mediator that influences various organizational outcomes, including employee performance and retention. Research has shown that employees who report higher levels of

happiness at work are less likely to consider leaving their jobs and are more engaged in their tasks (Al-Ali et al., 2019; Butt et al., 2020). This relationship underscores the importance of fostering happiness within the workplace as a means to enhance job satisfaction and overall employee well-being. The research objective is to analyze the impact of mental workload, quality of work life, and happiness at work on job satisfaction. Also, explain how this research can contribute to human resource management by creating more effective strategies to improve job satisfaction.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a multifaceted construct that encompasses various dimensions of an employee's experience within the workplace. It is often defined as the extent to which individuals feel content with their jobs, influenced by factors such as work environment, relationships with colleagues, and the nature of the work itself. The intrinsic happiness derived from producing work Altundağ & Çalbayram (2020). This definition highlights the complexity of job satisfaction, as both individual differences and external factors shape it.

Research has consistently shown that job satisfaction is a critical predictor of employee performance and organizational commitment, making it a vital area of focus for management (Katebi et al., 2021). The relationship between job satisfaction and various psychological factors, such as happiness and well-being, has been extensively studied. Aydin and Gümüşboğa (2023) found that psychological capital positively influences subjective happiness, with job satisfaction acting as a mediator in this relationship (AYDIN & GÜMÜŞBOĞA, 2023). This suggests that employees who possess higher levels of psychological capital are more likely to experience job satisfaction, which in turn enhances their overall happiness.

Furthermore, Hardiyanto et al. (2019) emphasized that a positive work environment significantly contributes to job satisfaction, reinforcing the idea that external conditions play a crucial role in shaping employees' perceptions of their jobs (Hardiyanto et al., 2019). Thus, fostering a supportive workplace culture is essential for enhancing job satisfaction and, consequently, employee happiness. Moreover, the implications of job satisfaction extend beyond individual well-being to organizational outcomes. Al-Ali et al. (2019) demonstrated that job happiness mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance, indicating that satisfied employees are more likely to exhibit higher levels of productivity and lower turnover intentions (Al-Ali et al., 2019). Similarly, Tarigan (2023) highlighted that police personnel who experience job satisfaction are less likely to withdraw from their roles, underscoring the importance of job satisfaction in retaining talent within organizations (Tarigan, 2023).

Mental Workload

The negative impact of mental workload on job satisfaction has been extensively documented in the literature, highlighting how excessive cognitive demands can lead to decreased employee morale and overall job satisfaction. For instance, a study by Afshari et al. (2020) found that higher levels of mental workload were significantly associated with lower job satisfaction among pre-hospital emergency technicians, indicating that as mental demands increase, job satisfaction tends to decline. This relationship is further supported by Gubbins et al. (2015), who reported that a substantial percentage of pharmacists in the U.S. felt that their workload negatively affected their mental and emotional health, which in turn influenced their job satisfaction. These findings suggest that managing a mental workload is crucial for maintaining a satisfied workforce.

Moreover, the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between workload and employee well-being has been emphasized in various studies. Cayupe (2023) noted that excessive workload generates stress, which hinders job satisfaction and ultimately affects teachers' work capacity. Similarly, Aydemir and Arli (2018) highlighted a negative relationship between quantitative workload and job satisfaction, reinforcing the idea that high workloads can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction and disengagement among employees. This mediating effect underscores the importance of addressing workload issues to enhance job satisfaction and overall employee well-being.

Additionally, the implications of mental workload extend beyond individual job satisfaction to organizational outcomes.

Research by Huyghebaert et al. (2018) indicated that high workload contributes to negative feelings about one's job, leading to lower job satisfaction and potentially higher turnover intentions. Furthermore, studies have shown that organizations with high mental workload environments may experience increased absenteeism and decreased productivity as employees struggle to cope with the demands placed upon them (Rostami et al., 2021). Therefore, organizations need to implement strategies aimed at reducing mental workload and promoting a healthier work-life balance to foster higher levels of job satisfaction and retain talent.

Hypothesis 1: workload has a negative effect on job satisfaction

Quality of Work Life

The quality of work life (QWL) has been recognized as a significant determinant of job satisfaction across various sectors and professions. QWL encompasses a

range of factors, including working conditions, relationships with colleagues, and opportunities for personal and professional growth. Research has consistently shown that a positive quality of work life correlates with increased job satisfaction. For instance, a study conducted by Dargahpour et al. highlighted a positive and significant relationship between QWL and job satisfaction among nurses in a teaching hospital, indicating that improvements in work conditions directly enhance job satisfaction levels Dargahpour et al. (2022).

Similarly, Kermansaravi et al. (2022) found that faculty members at Zahedan University of Medical Sciences experienced higher job satisfaction when their quality of work life was positively perceived, emphasizing the importance of supportive work environments in promoting employee satisfaction. Moreover, the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between QWL and organizational outcomes has been underscored in various studies. This finding aligns with the work of Rostami et al., who identified that work-related quality of life was a crucial predictor of job satisfaction among occupational therapists, suggesting that organizations that prioritize QWL can foster a more satisfied and engaged workforce (Rostami et al., 2021). These studies collectively illustrate that improving QWL not only enhances job satisfaction but also contributes to greater organizational commitment and performance. In addition to the direct effects of QWL on job satisfaction, factors such as work-life balance and perceived organizational support have also been shown to play critical roles.

Hypothesis 2: Quality of work life has a positive effect on job satisfaction

Happiness at Work

Happiness at work has been increasingly recognized as a crucial factor influencing job satisfaction across various sectors. Research indicates that when employees experience happiness in their work environment, they are more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction. For instance, Butt et al. found that organizational leaders who prioritize employee happiness by creating safe working conditions and providing necessary support significantly enhance job satisfaction among employees Butt et al. (2020). This aligns with the notion that positive experiences in the workplace, such as supportive management and a conducive work environment, contribute to overall job satisfaction, thereby fostering a more engaged and productive workforce.

Moreover, the relationship between happiness at work and job satisfaction is further supported by studies examining employee engagement and organizational

commitment. Algarni and Alemeri demonstrated that employee happiness positively correlates with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, suggesting that happier employees are more likely to be committed to their organizations and satisfied with their jobs (Algarni & Alemeri, 2023). This finding is echoed in the work of Tarigan, which emphasizes that job satisfaction is critical for employees in fulfilling their responsibilities and that happiness at work directly impacts the quality of services provided by personnel (Tarigan, 2023). These studies collectively highlight the importance of fostering happiness in the workplace as a means to enhance job satisfaction and overall organizational effectiveness. Additionally, the correlation between happiness at work and job satisfaction is evident in various professional settings, including education and healthcare.

Hypothesis 3: happiness at work has a positive effect on job satisfaction

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to collect data from respondents. The population in this study was the police of the Class IIB Pariaman Penitentiary, with a sample size of 47 people. The sample selection was carried out using the total sampling technique, where the entire population was included in the study. The instruments used in this study consist of several scales whose validity and reliability have been tested in previous studies. Happiness at work measured using Seligman's theory (2005) which includes four aspects, namely the fulfillment of physiological (material), psychological (emotional), social, and spiritual needs. Each aspect is measured using a 5-item scale. Mental workload adapted from Hancock & Meshkati's (1988) theory, mental workload was measured using eight items that measure workers' ability to meet job demands that can cause mental workload. Job satisfaction is measured using a 10-item scale based on the definition developed by Purba et al. (2019), which describes employees' attitudes or feelings towards various pleasant and unpleasant aspects of their work. Quality of work life is measured by a 6-item scale referring to Subbarayalu & Al Kuwaiti (2019), focusing on the balance between personal life and work and its impact on stress and job satisfaction.

The validity of the instrument was tested using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to ensure that the items used can describe the constructs being measured well. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha method to assess the internal consistency of the items in each scale. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to test the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Data analysis was performed using STATA software version 12.

RESULT

Based on Table I, which presents the demographic data of respondents, the majority of respondents in this study were male, with a percentage of 78.7%, while women were only 21.3%. The age distribution shows that most respondents are between 28 and 44 years old, with the 28-35 age group dominating at 42.6% and 37-44 at 44.7%. This indicates that the majority of the research sample is of productive age, which has the potential to have more established work experience and a more mature view of organizational dynamics.

In terms of education, the majority of respondents are high school graduates with a percentage of 66%, followed by Diploma graduates at 23.4%, and only 10.6% have a bachelor's degree. Meanwhile, the length of service or job tenure shows that most respondents have work experience between 5-10 years (34%) and 1-5 years and 15-20 years, each at 23.4%. This shows that the sample consists of respondents who are quite experienced in the world of work, which can affect their views on quality of work life (QWL), happiness at work (HAW), and job satisfaction (J.S.).

Table I Respondent Profile

No	Demographics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender		
	Men	37	78.7
	Female	10	21.3
2	Age		
	20-27	2	4.3
	28-35	20	42.6
	37-44	21	44.7
	>45	4	8.5
3	Educational		0
	Senior High School	31	66
	Diploma	11	23.4
	Bachelor	5	10.6
4	Jon Tenure		0
	1-5	11	23.4
	5-10	16	34
	11-15	6	12.8
	15-20	11	23.4
	>20	3	6.4

n = 47

Table 2. Results of Research Instrument Testing

Items	Validity (Confirmatory Factor Analysis)				Reliability	
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4		
MWI	0.726				0.649	
MW2	0.797					
MW4	0.522					
MW6	0.637					
MW7	0.519					
JS1		0.653				0.818
JS2		0.773				
JS4		0.744				
JS5		0.769				
JS6		0.589				
JS7		0.606				
JS8		0.557				
JS9		0.692				
QWL1			0.755		0.791	
QWL2			0.709			
QWL3			0.775			
QWL4			0.753			
QWL5			0.623			
QWL6			0.648			
HAW1				0.877	0.867	
HAW2				0.883		
HAW4				0.857		
HAW5				0.852		

Instrument testing in this study involved validity testing using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Based on the test results, most items have a strong loading factor above 0.5, indicating adequate validity. For example, items for the mental workload variable have varying loading factors, with the highest value at MW2 (0.797) and the lowest value at MW7 (0.519). For the job satisfaction variable, the item with the highest validity is JS2, with a factor value of 0.773, while JS7 has the lowest validity, with a value of 0.606.

On the reliability side, the test results show that the research instrument is quite reliable. For example, the items for the quality of work life variable show high-reliability values with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.791, indicating that this instrument is consistent in measuring the intended construct. Likewise, the happiness at work variable shows very good reliability with the highest reliability value on item HAW2 (0.883). Overall, these results confirm that the instrument used in this study is valid and reliable in measuring the variables studied.

Table 3. Correlation Between Variables

	Mental workload	Job Satisfaction	Quality of Work Life	Happiness at Work
Mental workload	1.0000			
Job Satisfaction	-0.1678	1.0000		
Quality of Work Life	-0.1529	0.7432	1.0000	
Happiness at Work	-0.1787	0.7460	0.7187	1.0000

The results of the correlation test between research variables show diverse relationships between the measured variables. The correlation table shows that there is a significant positive correlation between quality of work life and job satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.7432 and between happiness at work and job satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.7460. This shows that when employees have a good quality of work life and feel happy at work, their level of job satisfaction tends to increase significantly.

In contrast, there is a negative correlation between mental workload and other variables, including job satisfaction (-0.1678), quality of work life (-0.1529), and happiness at work (-0.1787). Although this correlation is not very strong, this result suggests that increasing mental workload is not always directly related to increasing job satisfaction or other aspects of well-being. This negative correlation can also be interpreted as meaning that motivational factors do not play a significant role in the context of this study, in contrast to the strong roles played by quality of work life and happiness at work.

Table 4. Regression Analysis Results

Number of obs = 47						
F(3, 111) = 28.09						
Prob > F = 0.0000						
R-squared = 0.6622						
Adj R-squared = 0.6386						
Root MSE = 2.4161						
JS	Coeff.	Std. Err.	t	P>t	[95% Conf.	Results
M.W.	-.0344	.0995	0.731	-.2351		Not Supported
OWL	.5249	.1472	0.001	.2279		Supported
HAW	.5952	.1725	0.001	.2473		Supported
_cons	11,958	3.167	0.000	5,570		

HAW (Happiness at Work); POS (Perceived Organizational Support); HRP (Human Resource Practice); R.G. (Religiosity)

The results of hypothesis testing using regression analysis show that the data support two of the three hypotheses proposed in this study. Specifically, quality of work life and happiness at work have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. The coefficient value for QWL is 0.5249 with a p-value of 0.001, while the coefficient value for HAW is 0.5952 also with a p-value of 0.001. This shows that the better the quality of work life and the higher the level of employee happiness at work, the greater their level of job satisfaction.

However, the test results for the mental workload variable show that its effect on job satisfaction is not significant, with a coefficient of -0.0344 and a p-value of 0.731. These results indicate that, in the context of this study, mental workload does not directly affect employee job satisfaction. This finding implies that employee welfare management is more related to aspects of quality of work life and happiness at work than simply improving mental workload.

DISCUSSION

This finding is in line with previous studies that emphasize the importance of QWL and HAW in improving employee job satisfaction. For example, Kosec et al. found that employee well-being is positively related to job satisfaction and life satisfaction, which in turn contributes to job performance Kosec et al. (2022). Therefore, improving the quality of work life and happiness at work not only increases job satisfaction but can also contribute to better performance within the organization. However, the results of this study also show that mental workload does not have a significant effect on job satisfaction.

This finding is in line with research conducted by Tarigan, which emphasizes that happiness at work contributes to job satisfaction, especially in the context of a positive work environment and support from coworkers (Tarigan, 2023). Thus, increasing QWL and HAW can be an effective strategy for organizations to improve employee job satisfaction. In addition, research by Peláez-Fernández et al. revealed that happiness and emotional intelligence interact to predict job satisfaction, where employees who have high levels of happiness and emotional intelligence report higher job satisfaction (Peláez-Fernández et al., 2021). This suggests that happiness at work not only has a direct impact on job satisfaction but can also strengthen the relationship between psychological factors and job

satisfaction. By creating a work environment that supports and encourages happiness, organizations can improve overall employee job satisfaction.

These findings mirror the results of other studies showing that mental workload does not always have a direct impact on employee job satisfaction. For example, research by Cayupe highlights the importance of factors such as self-efficacy and organizational commitment in mediating the relationship between workload and job satisfaction (Cayupe, 2023). This suggests that while mental workload can affect employee well-being, its effects on job satisfaction may be more complex and influenced by other factors.

Conclusion

This study concludes that quality of work life and happiness at work have a significant impact on increasing employee job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous studies that emphasize the importance of employee well-being in creating a productive and satisfying work environment. With the fulfilment of physiological, psychological, social, and spiritual needs at work, employees tend to be more satisfied and able to make positive contributions to the organization. However, this study also found that mental workload did not have a significant effect on job satisfaction, indicating that other factors, such as coworker support, emotional intelligence, and organizational commitment, may play an important role in mediating the relationship between workload and job satisfaction. The next research could incorporate the variable of emotional intelligence, where according to the findings of Jadmiko (2017) emotional intelligence has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

Based on these findings, there are several practical implications that organizations can implement: Improving Quality of Work Life, organizations should focus on creating a balance between personal life and work and pay attention to employee

well-being as a whole. Well-being programs, flexible working hours, and a conducive work environment can help employees achieve this balance and increase job satisfaction. Building Happiness at Work, organizations can create a work culture that supports employee happiness through recognition, rewards, and the creation of a positive work environment. Improving psychological, social, and spiritual aspects in the workplace will contribute to increased job satisfaction and productivity. Mental Workload Management, although mental workload does not directly affect job satisfaction in this study, organizations need to consider factors such as employee self-efficacy and commitment in managing workload. Self-development training and employee skill enhancement can help them cope with high job demands. By implementing these strategies, organizations are expected to increase job satisfaction, reduce stress, and improve overall employee performance, thus positively impacting organizational success.

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