

Happiness of High School Teachers: The Role of School, Gender and their Interaction Effect

Anita Sharma

Department of Psychology, Himachal Pradesh University, Sumer- Hill, Shimla-5

ABSTRACT: The present work examined the role of school, gender and their interaction effect on happiness using 2x2 ANOVA. Chinese Happiness Inventory was administered on a sample of 200 high school teachers drawn randomly from government and private schools from Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh. ANOVA has yielded a highly significant F-ratios for the main effect of gender ($F=16.67$, $p<.01$), and for the Interaction effect of School x Gender ($F=3.90$, $p<.05$). The rationale for the results is given in the discussion section.

Keywords: Happiness; Government and Private School Teachers; Gender.

1. INTRODUCTION

Happiness is something that cannot be bought, bribed or strived for, but can be taught. Whoever is happy will make others happy too. Happiness spreads like fragrance in the environment.

‘Positive emotions (such as Happiness) are an essential daily requirement for survival’. People believe that they work more productively when they are around positive/happy people. Positive emotions are contagious so having a teacher or student who is positive can help the other students to be positive and work to the best of their abilities (Clifton and Roth, 2005).

Teacher is the main instrument in disseminating the knowledge. There is a significant correlation between happiness and education. A happy student is more likely to perform well in school. A happy teacher is likely to have low level of fear, hostility, anxiety, guilt and anger; high degrees of energy, vitality and activity, a high level of self esteem and an emotionally stable personality, a strong social, healthy, satisfying, social relationship and well directed. A happy teacher gives his students, the most of what he has.

The happier the teachers, the happier the classroom, the happier the children. It demonstrates how happiness is effective and beneficial to the students in aiding with their learning. In observing high school classrooms it is evident that a teacher with happy mood brings energy and subsequently more excited to learn about something if it proves interesting and something as simple as teacher expressing excitement over a subject matter can change the student outlook on the material. As we know the future of any country is growing in the form of its children in schools. One happy teacher leads to happy children, who lead to a happy nation and hence a happy World. The importance of teachers and their role is in developing the nation's human and material resources (National Commissions, 1983).

To become happier, we have to change our inner attitudes as much as our outward circumstances. That helps to find the positive force in ourselves, and to see the positive side in others. Happiness depends on a lot more than your purchasing power. It depends on our tastes, which acquire from our environment – and on the whole social context in which live. Most of the research points to 7 main factors: income, work, private life, community, health, freedom, and a philosophy of life (Shah and Marks 2004; Singer and Ryff 2001).

"The adults in these happy places recognize that one aim of education (and of life itself) is happiness. They also recognize that happiness serves as both means and end. Happy children, growing in their understanding of what happiness is, will seize their educational opportunities with delight, and they will contribute to the happiness of others. Clearly, if children are to be happy in schools, their teachers should also be happy. Too often we forget this obvious connection. Finally, basically happy people who retain an uneasy social conscience will contribute to a happier world" (Nel Noddings, 2003).

The school environment is a happier place with the help of the teachers expressing a more positive attitude in their classrooms, while they are teaching. This method is a domino effect in and of itself; the happier the teachers, the happier the classroom, the happier the children. In observing high school classrooms, it is evident that a teacher with a positive vibe brings energy and subsequently more learning to the classroom. The attitude of teachers is a teacher characteristic and component of teacher personality. "Teachers with strong positive attitudes about teaching had students whose self-esteem was high. Students seem to recognize the effectiveness of teachers who are satisfied with their teaching performance."

For people to lead truly *flourishing lives* they need to feel they are personally satisfied and developing, as well as functioning positively in regard to society (Singer and Ryff, 2001).

Teachers hold a very important ability in their hands. They hold the ability to educate children, which means they have the capability to shape and mold the attitudes and beliefs that their students possess. When this possession is used in an appropriate and beneficial way, it has incredible outcomes. Before teachers educate their students, they must take a moment to reflect upon the purpose of education, the materials and concepts to be taught, the techniques to teach these ideas and the role of and relationships between school and society (Layard, 2005; Shah and Marks, 2004).

Many factors influence teachers' job satisfaction or happiness. Some, such as compensation and the ability to act independently, are widespread throughout the profession. Other factors are linked to the subject taught and the grade level. A final group of factors impacting satisfaction derive primarily from personal attitude and inclination. Compensation contributes directly and nearly universally to teacher job satisfaction, although it is more of a concern for teachers working in poorer districts. Teachers who receive more generous packages of salaries and benefits reported, all else being equal, a greater degree of happiness with their work. Low salaries remain a concern for many educators and most feel that additional bonuses or other compensation could both improve morale and results (Gregory Hanson, 2003).

Seligman, (2002) gave the positive psychological definition of happiness as consisting of both positive emotions (Comfort) and positive activities (absorption). Psychologist Martin Seligman provides the acronym PERMA to summarize many of Positive Psychology's findings: humans seem happiest when they have *Pleasure* (tasty foods, warm baths, etc.), *Engagement* (or *flow*, the absorption of an enjoyed yet challenging activity), *Relationships* (social ties have turned out to be extremely reliable indicator of happiness), *Meaning* (a perceived quest or belonging to

something bigger), and finally *Accomplishments* (having realized tangible goals).

Diener, (2000) defined happiness as "person's cognitive and affective evaluation of his or her life in terms of well being and contentment." Happiness is a mental state of well-being characterized by positive emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. A variety of biological, psychological, religious, and philosophical approaches have striven to define happiness and identify its sources (Sharma, A. & Malhotra, D. 2011).

Happiness at work is a mindset that allows people and their organizations to maximize performance and achieve their full potential. Benefits of happiness include getting promoted faster, earning and learning more, generating more creative ideas, being healthier and achieving greater success (Jessica, 2010).

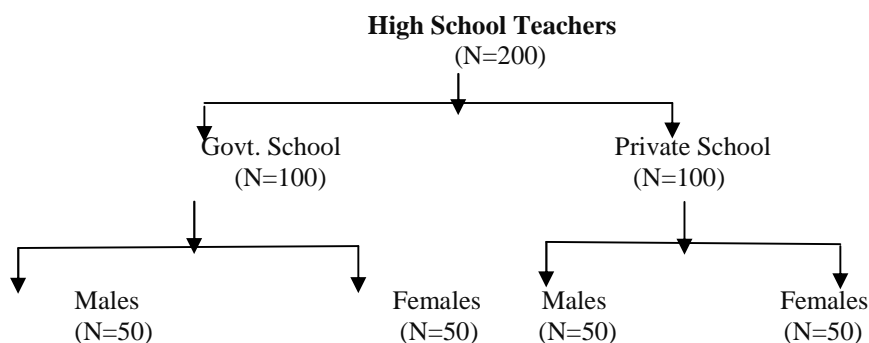
2. METHOD

2.1 DESIGN

ANOVA (analysis of variance) 2x2 factorial design was applied to verify if there were significant differences between government and private school teachers and between male and female on the variable of happiness.

2.2 SAMPLE

A sample of 200 teachers was drawn randomly from different government and private high schools from Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh with an equal number of males and females. The participants' ages ranged from 25 to 55 years, with a mean age of 39.8 years. The layout of the sample is as under:



2.3 RESEARCH TOOLS USED:

Chinese Happiness Inventory (Lu & Shih, 1997)

This inventory consists of 48 statements. The scores were given before the statement ranging from 0 to

3. The minimum and maximum Happiness scores can be obtained by a subject from 0 to 144 respectively. The chronic alpha of this inventory is 0.95.

3. RESULTS

TABLE-1: Summary of 2x2 ANOVA on Happiness

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F
---------------------	----	----	----	---

A School	202.01	1	202.01	0.65
B Gender	5191.81	1	5191.81	16.67**
A X B (School x Gender)	1214.67	1	1214.67	3.90*
Within (Error)	61044.94	196	311.45	
Total	67644.16	199		

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

TABLE-2: Means Contingency Table for Happiness

Gender	Government School	Private School
Male Teachers	85.74	78.82
Female Teachers	70.64	73.54

3.1 Interpretation

Main Effect of Schools (A)

In case of Schools, Government (High School Teachers) scored slightly higher on Happiness than those of Private (High School Teachers) (78.19 v/s 76.18) and hence, failed to reach the level of significance in ANOVA (See Table-1), where 'F'-ratio is found to be 0.65, which is not significant.

Main Effect of Gender (B)

In the case of Gender, Males (High School Teachers) scored significantly higher on Happiness than Females (High School Teachers) (82.28 v/s 72.09), which has turned out to be highly significant in ANOVA (See Table-2), with significant 'F'-ratio i.e. 16.67, $p < .01$. This indicates that Males (High School Teachers) are

experiencing higher Happiness than Females (High School Teachers).

Interaction Effect of School X Gender (A X B)

The Interaction effect of School x Gender is significant in ANOVA (See Table-1), with 'F'-ratio i.e. 3.90, $p < .05$. The Interaction table (1) and figures (1 & 2) show that Schools and Genders have positive and significant effect on Happiness. The gender figure-1 reveals the icon once effect that is at the males' end, government school teachers are experiencing significantly more Happiness is that of female and at the females' end, private school teachers are more happier than government school teachers because of stationary job. The curve further reveal that the difference is more pronounced at the males' end between private and government school teachers then at the females' end.

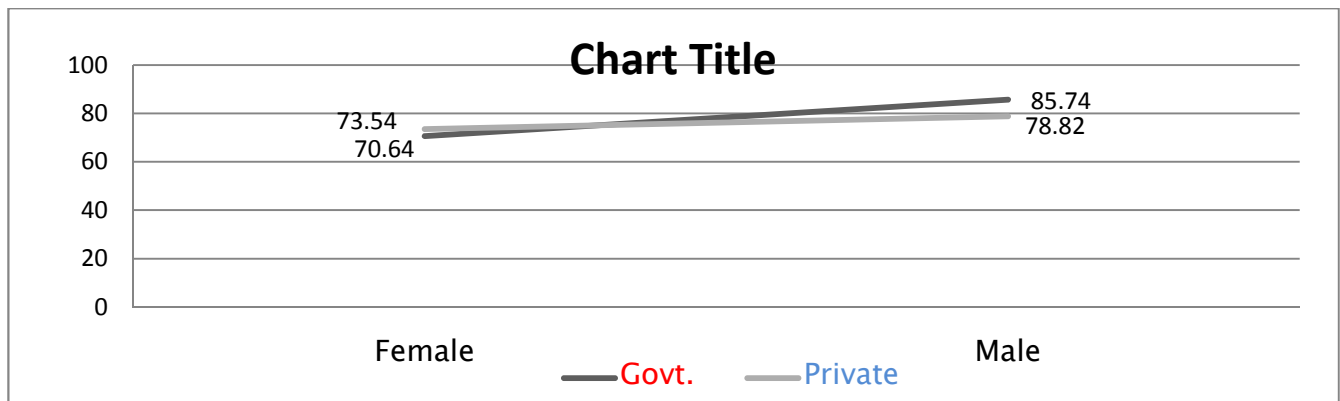


Figure-1: The Interaction Effect of School X Gender (A x B) on Happiness

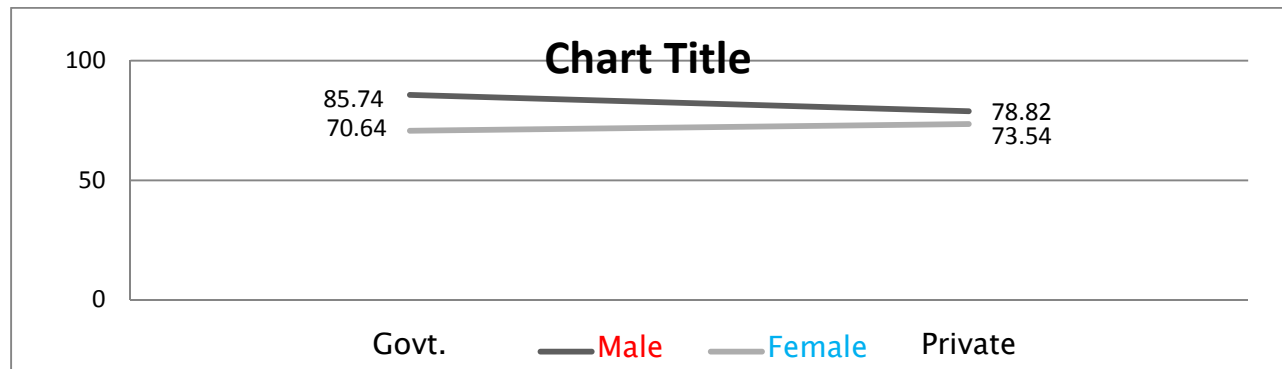


Figure-2: The Interaction Effect of School X Gender (A x B) on Happiness

Schools, figure-2 shows that at the government school end as well as at the Private school end, the difference between Males and Females is highly significant, but the difference is more pronounced at the government school. It shows that, male teachers irrespective of the type of school are happier than female teachers.

The curves further reveals that the male teachers belonging to government school are more happier to that of private school males. On the whole, male teachers have reported significantly higher level of happiness to that of female teachers.

4. DISCUSSION

The results revealed that government high school teachers scored slightly higher on Happiness than those of private high school teachers (78.19 v/s 76.18 see Table-2 & Figure-1), but failed to reach the significant level in ANOVA (See Table-1), where 'F'-ratio is found to be 0.65, which is insignificant.

The analyses of variance indicate that the main effect of gender on happiness was found to be significant, with F-ratio being 16.67, $p < .01$ (see Table-1). Males' score was found to be significantly higher than females' (82.28 v/s 72.09 see Table-2 & Figure-2). The reason being that traditional male role in our culture is that of wage earner and head of the family. And females are under great pressure on both social and economic front. Increased responsibilities from work and family are a source of strain. By virtue of feminism, women are referred to as the weaker gender, so females are more prone to giving into the pressure of work and family. Hence, males are experiencing more happiness than

females. Loosemore and Waters (2004) investigated the differences in sources and levels of happiness between working males and females. The results indicated that overall men experience slightly higher levels of happiness than women. Although there are common sources of happiness for both men and women, there are also some differences.

Further, the result of the present study can be best quoted, through the interaction effect of school x gender, which is found to be significant with F-ratio being 3.90, $p < .05$ (see Table-1).

The Interaction depicts that, at the females' end i.e. the government and private school female teachers are scoring almost the same on happiness (70.64 v/s 73.54 see Table-2 & Figure-1). The main difference lies at the males' end, where government school male teachers are significantly higher on happiness than private school male teachers (85.74 v/s 78.82 see Table-2 & Figure-1). The rationale behind this is that family is mainly dependent on the financial income of male members. Private school teachers with less income, very few benefits and incentives always worry about making both the ends meet. While government school teachers with higher salaries and good perks are able to fulfill all basic needs of the family. So, government school male teachers are experiencing higher happiness than private school male teachers. But in case of females, both government school and private school female teachers are scoring almost the same on happiness. The reason being that for females, government and private both the schools offer secure job, flexible working pattern and more opportunities to combine a proper career with caring responsibilities.

To conclude, education is the great equalizer in our society and the key not only to solving our social problems but to rescuing our children. Teachers are the most important resources in our society. There is no more noble profession than educating the children. The importance of teachers and their role is in developing the nation's human and material resources.

Teachers have a very important ability in their hands. They have the ability to educate children, which means they have the capability to shape and mould the attitudes and beliefs that their students possess. When this possession is used in an appropriate and beneficial way, it has incredible outcomes. Before teachers educate their students, they must take a moment to reflect upon the purpose of education, the materials and concepts to be taught, the techniques to teach these ideas and the role of and relationships between school and society. The purpose of the teacher is to provide students with a beneficial education that prepares them for life. Education should not only prepare students for life academically, but morally, socially and for a variety of vocations as well.

When teachers incorporate variety into their classroom, the students are able to discover their strengths and weaknesses and their interests and desires. Obviously, a beneficial education is important so that once students have completed their schooling, they are able to use the knowledge and experiences they have gained to achieve success. Teachers have the power to create a beneficial learning environment for their students. Teachers must establish good relationship with each of the students. This relationship must be based on respect and trust. Not only must teachers educate their students, but they must also ensure that their students are learning and retaining the information.

All above mentioned qualities of a teacher are due to his happiness (which further, helps to ameliorate the qualities of a teacher). The happiness helps to push-up or enhances the qualities of a teacher.

In the nutshell, the evidence provided by the present work suggests that the male teachers are happier than female teachers and further government school male teachers are experiencing higher happiness than private school male teachers because of secured job. Thus, Government should give regular jobs to the teachers to elevate their self esteem which in turn would increase their happiness and happier teachers produce happiest students thereby making the nation strong, happy and healthy from all angles.

REFERENCES

- Clifton, D. & Rath, T. (2005). Every moment matters, How full is your bucket? *Positive strategies for work and life*. Gallup Press, New York, pp. 47-51.
- Diener, E. (2000). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychology*, 55(1), 34-43.
- Gregory Hanson (2003). Article: *What Factors Impact Teacher Job Satisfaction?*
<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-factors-impact-teacher-job-satisfaction.htm>.
- Jessica, P.J. (2010). *Happiness at work: Maximizing your psychological capital for success*. Boston, MA. Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 1-13.
- Layard, R. (2005). *Happiness: Lessons from a new science*. London: Allen Lane, pp. 310.
- Loosemore, M. and Waters, T. (2004). Gender differences in occupational stress among professionals in the construction industry. *Journal of Management in Engineering*, 20, 3-5.
- Lu, L. & Shih, J. B. (1997). Source of happiness: A qualitative approach. *Journal of social psychology*, 137(2), 181-188.
- National Commissions, (1983). *The teacher and society*. www.teindia.nic.in
- Noddings, N. (2003). *Happiness and education*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp 320.
- Rothman, S., & Coetzer, E.P. (2003). The Big-Five personality dimensions and job performance. South Asian. *Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 29 (1), 68-74.
- Seligman, Martin E.P. (2002). *Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment*. New York: Simon and Schuster, pp 275.
- Shah, H. and Marks, N. (2004). *A well-being manifesto for a flourishing society*. London: New Economics Foundation.
- Sharma, A. & Malhotra, D. (2011). Happiness disposition in government and private school students: the role of extraversion, hardiness and social factors. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 7(1): 43-50.
- Singer, B and Ryff, C (Ed) (2001). *New horizons in health: An integrative approach*. Washington: National Academies Press.