



## EXAMINING THE PERCEPTION OF HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING AT WORK IN TERMS OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between perceived happiness and perceived affective well-being perceptions according to demographic factors. A questionnaire consisting of three parts was used as data collection tool in the research. In the first part of the data collection tool, the demographic information form which consists of the participants' gender, marital status, number of children, date of birth (generation), level of education, time in position, number of employees in operation, duration of work in operation, In the second part of the questionnaire, the Job-Related Affective Well-being Questionnaire developed by Katwyk, Fox, Spector and Kelloway (2000) and adapted to Turkish by Bayram, Kuşdil, Aytaç and Bilgel (2004) Being Scale- JAWS). The Oxford Happiness Scale (Subjective Wellness Perception Scale) developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) and adapted to Turkish by Dogan and Sapmaz (2012) is included in the third part of the data collection tool. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the scales were calculated as 0,96 and 0,93, respectively. All of the 262 people who were reached by sampling method were included in the sampling. As a result of the research, subjective well - being perception has a positive and significant effect on the perception of work - related well - being as a result of the research conducted to investigate the relationship between perception of happiness and affective well - being according to demographic factors. In addition, it has been determined that these influential demographic variables on subjective well-being perception of work-related well-being have no significant and significant role.

**Keywords:** Happiness, subjective well-being, happiness at work, work-related affective well-being.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Today's technological and economic developments have changed the working life throughout the world from positive to negative. It has become imperative for individuals to acquire new skills because of more complex tasks. This obligation has positive and negative effects on people (Wingerden et al., 2017: 164). Change is not limited to personal skills alone. At the same time, it is known that negative or positive emotions experienced in the business environment where competition is intense affect the whole life of the individual to a great extent. Many studies (Archambault and Grudin, 2012; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Liu, et al., 2016) have focused on examining how this effect occurs. In particular, the relationship between job satisfaction, work ethic, burnout and employee commitment (Makikangas, et al., 2016) and happiness has been investigated. In this context, it will be useful to examine the relationship between the worker's perceptions of happiness and work-related affective well-being according to demographic factors.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Perception of Happiness

Happiness is considered the essence of a good life; satisfaction, life satisfaction, positive emotions and having a meaning in life as a concept that contains concepts (Çankaya and Square, 2018: 208). Happy people are under the influence of positive emotions and experience moods such as sadness, anxiety disorder and irritability (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005: 112). But here is a mutual interaction. The social environment of the individual also has a significant effect on happiness (Marks and Fleming, 1999: 302). Many analyzes show that happy people have more concrete benefits than others, they have more positive effects in social environments (family, work and social environment) and they are more creative and productive. Happiness is also influenced by one's beliefs and assumptions. In a study by Koo and Suh (2007), participants were asked whether happiness meant the same for everyone, and the majority of responses showed that people linked happiness to certain standards. These limited beliefs show that people create a border to be happy (Shin, et al. 2017: 650).

When literature is examined, it is seen that happiness is generally used in the same sense as subjective well-being. According to Diener (1984), which makes the most valid definition in this regard, subjective well-being is to get satisfaction from life, to live positive emotions frequently and negatively. While the concept of subjective well-being depends on subjective judgments and emotions related to the life of the individual, the concept of well-being refers to a lifestyle and standard that will enable the individual to feel good (Güner and Bozkurt, 2018: 4). In the literature, various concepts such as psychological well-being, wellness, quality of life, life satisfaction and positive affect are seen frequently in addition to the concept of subjective well-being. All of these concepts relate to the conditions of the individual's positive functioning and happiness, so they are largely related, although their meanings are not exactly the same. Goodness is most commonly associated with psychological well-being. But despite this general definition, what exactly is good formation is a controversial subject (Small and Pluralist, 2018: 77). Davis (1981) stated that happiness is influenced by four variables in the study of "happiness theory". These variables, expressed as beliefs, desires, thoughts and temperaments, determine the happiness level of the individual (Fidan, 2018: 20).

There are some factors that lead the person to unhappiness and happiness. These are listed below (Kırık and Sönmez, 2017: 17);

- Self-esteem, lack of confidence,
- Not being satisfied with the achievements he achieved,
- He does not consider people sufficiently valuable and cares about himself excessively,
- Inadequate success in domestic and social relations,
- Pessimistic, timid, unstable or inconsistent in any matter,
- Not to be admired by people, to experience high levels of hatred, anger, guilt, shame.

Happiness is also related to genetic factors. In order to investigate this relationship, David Lykken of the University of Minnesota conducted a research on 4,000 twins. The results showed that the happiness came from the genetic program with 50% and therefore it was hereditary. In this case, It is stated that the person is joyful, has the capacity to cope with stress, and has a tendency towards depression and anxiety. In the same study, 40% of happiness was achieved with learning, and the remaining 10% was reached as a result of environmental conditions (Soysal, 2018: 157). Happiness is also closely related to adaptation theory in psychology. According to the adaptation level theory, people's happiness is not simply relative to others. At the same time, the person compares himself / herself. Persons compare the current situation and state with their current state and status. If the condition of the person improves, the standard of happiness increases. It has been proven by researches that the threshold levels of happiness of the winners are very high after winning the bonuses. Although they earn 50,000-1 million bonuses, it is concluded that the happiness levels of these people are not higher than before. After winning the jackpot, they started to enjoy the fun of everyday activities such as watching television, shopping for

clothes or chatting with friends. Because their happiness standards have increased and happiness has now become more inaccessible (Arthaud-Day and Near, 2005; Sdorow, 1993, Çirkin and Göksel, 2016).

Some generalizations accepted by society regarding demographic variables affecting happiness are listed below (Furnham, 2014: 55);

- Men are happier than women,
- Younger people are happier than elderly people,
- Married people are happier than single people,
- Parents with children are happier than those without children,
- Increasing number of children negatively affects one's happiness.

## 2.2. Perception of Well-Being

Happiness in the workplace is the satisfaction of the worker with which the employee has and the positive feelings he feels towards his work are negative emotions (Diener, Sandvik and Pavot, 1991). Happiness in the workplace expresses the positive interaction of the employee with his colleagues and managers (Aegean, 2018: 43). Bakker and Temerouti (2013) stated that the happiness of the workplace is related to the physical and mental health of the employee. The happiness of employees in the workplace is defined by the concept of "affective good sense of work" (Morrissy, Boman and Mergler, 2013: 158). Identifying a worker's potential to use his / her potential and identifying himself / herself with the business he / she is working with will provide his / her happiness (Hefferon and Boniwell, 2014: 77). For this reason, happiness in business affects individual happiness, and individual happiness affects happiness in workplace (Baysal, 1993: 16). When it comes to business, employees are of critical importance. Happy employees are social people who communicate positively with their surroundings, who are efficient, sharing and developing. These positive characteristics of happy employees also affect the performance of the business positively (McKenna, 2006: 296). The employees who are happy in the company they work in are more than 180% more energetic and personal than their unhappy ones, they are 108% more connected to their businesses, they love their job as 79% more, their motivations are 50% higher and their achievements are 30% higher (Pryce- Jones, 2010: 3-4).

Due to the increasing competition in business life, enterprises are trying to use all resources effectively. The most valuable and non-replicable source of the company is human resources. In order to benefit from the capacity of the existing human resources, it is necessary to eliminate the factors that make them unhappy. In this context, employee happiness is an important and important concept for enterprises (İslamoglu, 2010: 3). Despite the importance of employee happiness, enterprises have not shown interest in this concept for many years. Employee happiness has been investigated in the organizational context related to the concepts of job satisfaction and employee satisfaction which are almost synonymous. To get the most from employees, the working potency and what to do is not clear (Believe, 2014: 43). To determine this, demographic factors need to be examined in addition to the operational factors that affect employees' happiness at work. In this context, the variables affecting the happiness in the workplace were examined on a demographic basis.

In the Karasek demand-control model, A and B represent two different levels of strain. Level A indicates the degree of strain that would occur if the level of control of employees' work was low or high. B level indicates the level of strain that will arise due to the high and low level of the job-related demand level, in which the employees' control levels are high. Based on this model, it can be said that as work demands increase and decision making authority decreases, job-related strain will increase. It is at the core of this model that active or passive employees will experience high or low job-related strain, depending on whether or not demand and control balances exist. (Karasek, 1976: 28). Karasek (1976) formulates job-related strain as in the following equation.

### 3. RESEARCH

#### 3.1. The Purpose and Importance of Research

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between perceived happiness and perceived affective well-being perceptions according to demographic factors. The research is expected to contribute to the theoretical and practical aspects of the literature.

#### 3.2. Data Collection Technique and Scope of Research

A questionnaire consisting of three parts was used as data collection tool in the research. In the first part of the data collection tool, the demographic information form which consists of the participants' gender, marital status, number of children, date of birth (generation), level of education, time in position, number of employees in operation, duration of work in operation.

In the second part of the questionnaire, the Job-Related Affective Well-being Questionnaire developed by Katwyk, Fox, Spector and Kelloway (2000) and adapted to Turkish by Bayram, Kuşdil, Aytaç and Bilgel (2004) Being Scale- JAWS). The scale consists of 20 items and 2 dimensions of the five-point Likert type (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree) type. On the scale, 10 items (m2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 12) were found to be positive emotions expressing positive feelings about work (m1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17) constitute the "negative emotions" sub-dimension expressing negative emotions related to work. When the total score of the scale is taken, the items in the negative emotional sub-dimension are reverse coded. The total score that can be taken on the scale is between 20 and 100 and the high score indicates the high level of affective work related to the work. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale was 0.96; The coefficients of the sub-dimensions were calculated as 0.95 and 0.93, respectively.

In the third part of the questionnaire, the Oxford Happiness Scale (Subjective Wellness Perception Scale) developed by Hills and Argyle (2002) and adapted to Turkish by Doğan and Sapmaz (2012) is used. 28 items are in one dimension in the scale of five likert type (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree). In the scale, 11 items (m1, 5, 9, 12, 13, 18, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28) are reverse encoded. The total points that can be taken are in the range of 28 to 140 points and high score generally indicates happiness is high. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0,93.

#### 3.3. Data Analysis Technique

SPSS 21.0 statistical software program was used to evaluate the data. The Cronbach Alpha test was used to test the reliability of the research scales. Then, the averages, standard deviations and normality distributions of the variables of the study were determined. Since the scale and subscale scores did not show any significant deviation from the normal, parametric tests were used. Pearson correlation test to determine the relationship between scale scores; Hierarchical regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between subjective happiness and work-related perception of well-being and demographic variables. The significance level was 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ).

#### 3.4. Demographic Characteristics of Main Mass

Of the 262 employees who participated in the survey, 49.2% were female and 50.8% were male. 22.1% of participants were single, 77.9% were married. 30.2% of the participants have no children, 29.4% have one child, 35.1% have two children, 5.3% have 3 or more children. 13% of the participants were baby boomer (1946-1964), 57.6% X generation (1965-1979) and 29.4% Y generation (1980-1999). 73.3% of the participants were undergraduates and 26.7% were trained at the graduate level. The working time of 8.4% of the participants is less than 1 year, 14.5% is 1-3 years, 77.1% is 4 years and over. The number of employees in the enterprise where 87.4% of the participants are employed is 0-50 persons and the number of employees in the operation of 12.6% is more than 50 people. The duration of operation in the enterprise where 11,1% of the participants are present is less than 1 year, 22,1% is 1-3 years, 66,8% is 4 years and more. 6,9% of the participants had a total working time of 2 years and less, 12,6% of them 3-5 years, 17,2% of them 6-10 years, 63,4% of them more than 10 years.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1. Descriptive Statistics of Scale and Sub-Dimensions

Participants' feeling of well-being scale total score was  $56,37 \pm 16,87$ , and when the lowest (20) and highest (100) points that can be taken into account were taken into consideration, it can be said that participants' perception of work was moderate (100-20 = 80 / 3 = 26,7; 20-46,7: low, 46,8-73,3: moderate, 73,4-100: high). The positive emotional score for work ( $27,03 \pm 8,48$ ) was moderate; negative emotions related to work ( $30,66 \pm 9,36$ ) were found to be moderate (50-10 = 40/3 = 13,3; 10-23,3: low, 23,4-36,7: moderate; 36, 8-50: High).

Participants' subjective well-being total score was  $89.60 \pm 16.71$ , and when the lowest (28) and highest (140) scores were taken into account, it can be said that participants' level of happiness was moderate (140-8 = 112/3 = 37, 3: 28-65,3: low, 65,4-102,7: moderate, 102,8-140: high). Descriptive statistics of the scale and its sub-dimensions are given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics of Sale and Sub-Dimensions

Scale and Sub-Dimensions	N	$\bar{x}$	SS	Skewness
Positive Emotions	262	27,03	8,48	-0,02
Negative Emotions	262	30,66	9,36	-0,01
PERCEPTOIN OF WELL-BEING	262	56,37	16,85	-0,03
SUBJECTIVE WELL- BEING PERCEPTION	262	89,6	16,71	-0,25

### 4.2. Correlation Analysis Results Between Variables

A positive and significant relationship was found between the positive emotions of work and subjective well-being perception scores ( $r = 0.70$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

A negative and significant correlation was found between negative emotions of work and subjective well-being perception scores ( $r = -0,64$   $p < 0,05$ ).

Positive and significant correlation was found between perception of well-being subjective well-being perception ( $r = 0,70$   $p < 0,05$ ).

**Table 2.** Correlation Analysis Results Between Variables

	2	$\bar{x}$	4
1, Positive Emotions	-0,70**	0,94**	0,70**
2. Negative Emotions	1	-0,95**	-0,64**
3. PERCEPTION OF WELL-BEING		1	0,70**
4. SUBJECTIVE WELL- BEING PERCEPTION			1

\*  $p < 0,05$  \*\* $p < 0,01$

### 4.3. Results of the Regression Analysis

The positive emotions of work and the perception of well-being of employees with a high perception of work are high. Employees with high negative emotions of work have a low subjective perception of well-being. Positive emotions of employees with a high perception of subjective well-being and perception of well-being related to work are high. Employees with low subjective well-being perception have a high level of negative emotion related to the job. Table 3 presents the results of the hierarchical regression analysis showing the effect of the perception of well-being on subjective well-being perception and the role of demographic variables.

**Table 3:** Results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis.

	Independent Variables	B	SH <sub>B</sub>	β	t	P
Model 1	Constant	75,635	7,158		10,567	<b>0</b>
	Positive Emotions	1,002	0,138	0,509	7,277	<b>0</b>
	Negative Emotions	-0,428	0,125	-0,24	-3,428	<b>0,001</b>
	R=0,712      R <sup>2</sup> =0,507    ΔR <sup>2</sup> =0,503					
	F <sub>(2, 259)</sub> =133,006      p=0,000					
Model 2	Constant	76,731	10,345		7,417	<b>0</b>
	Positive Emotions	1,007	0,143	0,511	7,037	<b>0</b>
	Negative Emotions	-0,43	0,13	-0,241	-3,319	<b>0,001</b>
	Gender1	-1,55	1,53	-0,05	-1,01	0,312
	Marital Status <sup>2</sup>	-0,02	2,1	0	-0,01	0,994
	Level of Education	2,9	1,77	0,08	1,63	0,104
	Number of Employees	-0,43	2,37	-0,01	-0,18	0,857
	Number of Children	1,92	1,03	0,11	1,86	0,064
	Generation	0,43	1,6	0,02	0,27	0,79
	Working Time	-2,19	1,51	-0,08	-1,45	0,149
	Duration of Operation	1,12	1,32	0,05	0,85	0,397
	Total Time	-0,93	1,09	-0,05	-0,85	0,396
	R=0,725      R <sup>2</sup> =0,526    ΔR <sup>2</sup> =0,505					
F <sub>(11 250)</sub> =25,218      p=0,000      F Changing= 1,131    R <sup>2</sup> Changing p= 0,341						

In the first step of the hierarchical regression analysis, the effect of positive and negative emotions related to work on subjective well-being perception of the dependent variable was investigated. The first model was found to be suitable ( $F(2; 259) = 133,01$ ;  $\Delta R^2 = 0,50$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). The work perception of well-being accounts for about 50% of the total variance in the subjective well-being perception variable (Table 3). Positive and significant effect of job positive emotions on subjective well-being perception ( $\beta = 0,51$ ;  $t = 7,28$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ), according to the standardized regression coefficient  $\beta$  in the first model; Negative emotions related to work have a negative and significant effect on subjective well-being ( $\beta = -0,24$ ;  $t = -3,43$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ) (Table 3).

In the second model, which was established to determine the role of demographic variables in the effect of perception of work-related well-being on subjective well-being, none of the demographic variables had a significant effect on subjective well-being perception ( $p > 0,05$ ); positive emotions positively affect the subjective well-being perception in the first model ( $p = 0,51$ ;  $t = 7,04$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ); negative emotions with a negative and significant effect on the subjective well-being perception in the first model have a negative and significant effect on the second model ( $\beta = -0,24$ ;  $t = -3,32$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). In the first model, the positive perception of work related positive and negative emotions revealed 50% of the variance in subjective perception ( $R^2 = 0,507$ ); ( $R^2 = 0,526$ ) but the change of 0,02% ( $1 \cdot \Delta R^2 - 2 \cdot \Delta R^2 = 0,019$ ) was not statistically significant ( $p = 0,341$ ) in the second model in which the demographic variables were included ( $p > 0,05$ ) (Table 3). When the first and second models were evaluated together, positive emotions on the work had a positive and significant effect on subjective well-being; negative feelings about work had a negative and significant effect on subjective well-being perception; increased sense of subjective well-being perceived as positive emotions for work increase; it was found that as the negative emotions related to work increased, the perception of subjective well-being decreased and the perception of work-related goodness did not have a meaningful and significant role in these effective demographic variables on the subjective well-being perception.

In the literature, the relationship between the perception of well-being and the perception of subjective well-being is bi-directional, and the effect of subjective well-being on the perception of well-being at work and the role of demographic variables in this effect are shown in Table 4. In the first step of the hierarchical regression analysis, the effect of the independent variable subjective well-being perception on the perceived well-being perception, the dependent variable, was examined. The first model was found to be suitable ( $F(1; 260) = 256,33$ ;  $R^2 = 0,496$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). The Perception of the Subjective well-

being describes about 50% of the total variance in the work related well-being perception variable (Table 4). In the second model, which was established to determine the role of demographic variables in the effect of Subjective Well-Being Perception on the perception of well-being of work, it was found that the duration of the position in the position had positive positive and significant effect with the perception of well-being at work ( $\beta = 0,11$ ;  $t = 2,01$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ); other demographic variables had no significant effect ( $p > 0.05$ ).

In the first model, subjective well-being perception, which is a positive effect on work-related well-being perception, has a similar positive effect on the second model ( $\beta = 0,71$ ;  $t = 15,85$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). In the first model, the subjective well-being perception accounts for 50% of the variance in the perception of work-related well-being ( $R^2 = 0.496$ ); it was observed that the variance explained in the second model, which included the demographic variables, increased to 52% ( $R^2 = 0.518$ ) but the change of 0.02% ( $1. \Delta R^2 - 2. \Delta R^2 = 0.022$ ) was not statistically significant ( $p = 0.259$ ).  $> 0.05$ ) (Table 4).

When the first and the second model were evaluated together, it was observed that the perception of subjective well-being had a positive and significant effect on the perception of well-being. It has been found that these influential demographic variables on subjective well-being perception of work-related well-being have no significant and significant role.

**Table 4.** Results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis (Bi-Directional).

	Independent Variables	B	SH <sub>B</sub>	$\beta$	t	p
Model 1	Constant	-7,282	4,044		-1,801	0,073
	Subjective Well-Being Perception	0,71	0,044	0,705	16,01	<b>0</b>
	R=0,705      R <sup>2</sup> =0,496 $\Delta R^2=0,495$					
	F <sub>(1, 260)</sub> =256,328      p=0,000					
Model 2	Constant	-11,554	8,388		-1,377	0,17
	Subjective Well-Being Perception	0,712	0,045	0,706	15,851	<b>0</b>
	Gender <sup>1</sup>	2,358	1,546	0,07	1,526	0,128
	Marital Status <sup>2</sup>	-0,065	2,106	-0,002	-0,031	0,975
	Level of Education	-2,66	1,79	-0,07	-1,48	0,14
	Number of Employees	1,41	2,39	0,03	0,59	0,555
	Number of Children	-0,32	1,05	-0,02	-0,31	0,759
	Generation	-0,61	1,62	-0,02	-0,38	0,707
	Working Time	3,05	1,52	0,11	2,01	<b>0,046</b>
	Duration of Operation	-2,22	1,33	-0,09	-1,67	0,097
	Total Time	0,89	1,1	0,05	0,81	0,417
	R=0,720      R <sup>2</sup> =0,518 $\Delta R^2=0,499$					
F <sub>(10 251)</sub> =26,997      p=0,000      F Changing= 1,260    R <sup>2</sup> Changing: p= 0,259						

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Businesses that want to succeed in today's business world, where competition is constantly gaining momentum, have to benefit from the highest level of human resources they have. The fact that the people hired to do the present jobs have a well-educated, necessary experience, feelings of belonging to the institution to which they work, and are peaceful and happy, affect the success of the business positively.

Only the employees who provide the expected performance are not enough to provide the competitive advantage of the operator, they need the employees who own and operate as their own place of business. The fact that employees are happy in both private and business life is one of the most important criteria affecting performance.

For this purpose, subjective well - being perception has a positive and significant effect on the perception of work - related well - being as a result of the research conducted to investigate the relationship between perception of happiness and affective well - being according to demographic factors. In addition, it has been determined that these influential demographic variables on subjective well-being perception of work-related well-being have no significant and significant role.

The research is limited to 262 participants who are easily reached by sampling, which prevents them from being generalizable. By adding more number of participants and demographics as well as occupation group, ownership title, department, performance and salary variables, it will be possible to achieve more generalized results.

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