



Research Article

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A Case Study Investigating Faculty Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) and the Efficacy of the WRQoL Scale in a Medium-sized Private Gulf Higher Education Institution

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Abstract

The study evaluates the Happiness Department initiative in a Gulf Higher Education Institute (GHEI). The Department seeks to create a state of wellbeing among the teaching faculty members by mitigating the identified key stressors. The objectives of the study were: (i) To determine the correlation between stressors and faculty perception of the Happiness Department. (ii) Propose amendments to the WRQoL questionnaire to assist administrators in testing program efficacy. (iii). We found that to boost happiness, schools should indeed focus on the identified stressors. This exploratory study design uses the predetermined WRQoL Scale. It was found to be an accurate measure of overall work satisfaction. However, we present an adaptive model. The adaptive model we propose may be better suited for Gulf-based institutions. Faculty members unanimously perceive that a happiness department should exist that is tasked with minimising the workplace stressors.

Keywords: Higher Education, Faculty Stress, Quality of Work Life (QoWL), Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL)

1. Introduction

Happiness is conceptualised as the ability to exercise the autonomy of choice and the agency to utilise the requisite tools-intelligence and virtue in its actualisation (Gavin and Mason 2004). Many studies reiterate the need for balance, as it is untenable to be happy in every conceivable situation in life; however, a positive and happy work environment is necessary for employees to thrive (Boehm and Lyubomirsky 2008). At the risk of not oversimplifying the phenomena, Boehm & Lyubomirsky (2008) reiterated that happiness is not a magic bullet to guarantee success but works in tandem with other characteristics such as intelligence, social skills, and perseverance. Opponents of *happiness studies* heavily scrutinise the field, stating that the operationalisation of happiness is Western-centric. In that regard, literature studying happiness oversamples western and English-speaking organisations.

For this reason, this study aims to add another region and perspective to happiness studies. Early literature suggests that job satisfaction is a significant area of interest for employers due to the financial implications it has for a firm (Landy 1989; Lawler and Porter 1966; Mullarkey and Wall 1999). However, the initial theoretical work (Maslow 1962), prioritised happiness as a fundamental need of human beings.

Happiness in the workplace increases productivity; research states that employees who feel satisfied in the workplace and have positive experiences, perform better (Yusoff et al. 2016; Gavin and Mason 2004; Rego et al. 2011). Researchers (Subbarayalu and Al Kuwaiti 2019) found that improving the conditions of work in a Higher Education Institution (HEI) increases the likelihood of the growing psychosocial factors at work in Saudi Arabia. Some research posit that individuals yearn for 'contentment, love, and happiness; all derived from meaningful work' (Caplan 1975). One Gulf Higher Education Institution (GHEI) commissioned a *Happiness Department* dedicated to employee wellbeing and happiness. Institutions that proactively seek to minimise dissatisfaction directly may reap benefits. However, it may also lead to the oversimplification of the issues that surround dissatisfaction, which may lead to a failure in addressing stressors (Gershon et al. 2009; Dieleman, Gerretsen, and van der Wilt 2009).

Stress refers to the disruption of the balance between the cognitive-emotional-environmental systems because of external factors (Lazarus and Folkman 1984; McGrath 1976). External factors are referred to as stressors colloquially and in research. Faculty stressors can include teaching load (Berebitsky and Ellis 2018), interpersonal regulation (Pappa, Elomaa, and Perälä-Littunen 2020), and managers and supervisors (Martin, Lord, and Warren-Smith 2020). Researchers (Rego et al. 2011) posit that happiness is a subjective experience; therefore, people are as happy as they believe they are happy. On the other hand, some scholars consider *happiness* as psychological wellbeing, a multi-dimensional construct that covers several variables. Variables related to the happiness of higher education faculty members include work-life balance flexibility (Nikunen 2012), self-determination (Thies and Kordts-Freudinger 2019), and teaching (Stupnisky, Hall, and Pekrun 2019). Efforts to maximise happiness are indispensable in the arsenal of businesses if the end goal is increased workplace productivity (Rego et al. 2011). Studies show that happiness transfers by proxy; therefore, organisation-wide effort must be made (Yusoff et al. 2016). Though straightforward in other fields, in academia, measuring happiness is an arduous task due to the multiple hats that academics wear in the execution of their duties.

This research seeks to explore the GHEI's Happiness Department's likelihood of success, in creating a state of wellbeing among the teaching faculty members by mitigating the identified key stressors found in the GHEI, and other (HEIs). The critical stressors in this research are derived from a review of the critical literature on the subject (Tytherleigh et al. 2005), which utilised a sample of fourteen HEIs. It was found that the most significant stressors in HEIs are; job insecurity, poor work relationships, lack of job control, poor work-life balance, inadequate resources, pressure to publish, administrative pressures, unreasonable deadlines, too much administrative paperwork, insufficient administrative and technical support, lack of opportunity for promotion and ineffective communication (Fontinha, Easton, and Van Laar 2019b; Tytherleigh et al. 2005; Zautra, Eblen, and Reynolds 1986). Some motivation factors according to Herzberg Two Factor Theory can come in various forms such as monetary compensation, building good relationships, physical health, permit creativity and personalisation, given chances of expression, avoid micromanaging, allow fun moments and more casual communications among employees and others (Maidani 1991; Huhman 2016; Zautra, Eblen, and Reynolds 1986).

Objectives

O1. To determine the correlation between stressors and faculty perception of the *Happiness Department*

O2. To propose amendments to the Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) questionnaire to assist administrators in testing program efficacy.

O3. To create recommendations that can be implemented by an institution trying to reduce organisational stress.

2. Quality of Work-Life (QoWL) Theoretical Framework

This section will firstly evaluate various factors on QoWL, and secondly seek to present and evaluate the studies on QoL and WRQoL to justify the need for additional research to be done in the area, most specifically, this present study is essential to the growing field. The application of the amendments and recommendations drawn from this study can be considered in WRQoL rescaling.

The QoWL theoretical framework was developed using the work of (Loscocco and Roschelle 1991), who believed that assessing the quality of life in the work field, both work and non- work factors are essential. The theory is based on the ideology that certain work-related and non-work-related factors are inseparable. These subscales are tested in the QoWL survey developed by Portsmouth University and tested and retested globally. The theory seeks to elucidate organisations on the interaction between these factors and WRQoL. The work and non-work factors represented are Job and Career Satisfaction (JCS), General Wellbeing (GWB), Home Work Interface (HWI), Stress At Work (SAW), Control At Work (CAW), Working Conditions (WCS)

For more than half a century, Quality of Life (QoL) theorists have developed the field with several iterations built on the core principle of QoL. One such iteration is QoWL which gives life to WRQoL, both assessing QoL targeting the working world. Researchers have used tools to evaluate stressors and the impact on general wellbeing (GWB) in various professions. GWB is a crucial area of research interest in the HEI, especially as universities expand and face competition locally and globally (primarily as they aim to climb the QS Rankings). Recent studies across the UK, Canada, Australia, China, the USA and India suggests that that work-related stress is prevalent in higher education (Pandey and Tripathi 2001; Tytherleigh et al. 2005; Kinman, Jones, and Kinman 2006; J. Sun et al. 2007; Catano et al. 2007; Court and Kinman 2008; Winefield et al. 2008; Buckholdt 2013). With direct and indirect pressure, faculty members endeavour to remain ahead of the increased competition in the field of higher education; faculty members often identify factors that will make work more effective and productive.

2.1 Effect of stress on QoWL

Traditionally, academia is regarded as a prestigious field, reserved for those who have reached the pinnacle of formal education training. As a reward for achieving high levels of knowledge, academia was traditionally seen as a low-stress alternative to vocational jobs. Due in part to several factors, such as flexibility, job security, and autonomy (Zautra, Eblen, and Reynolds 1986). However, in recent decades, the demand and competition within HEIs have seen this relatively low-stress occupation becoming one that has high levels of dissatisfaction (Kinman and Wray 2014). Some researchers examine the association between stressors and work performance, making strategies for stress management and performance management (Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti 2016; Edwards, Guppy, and Cockerton 2007). For some organisations, the relative contribution of non- work factors may be slight, thus emphasising the need for countermeasures for use within the working environment. For other organisations, a substantial contribution of non-work stressors to the prediction of work performance may indicate more generic countermeasures (Murphy 1995).

Some critical stressors in the field of academia are associated with productivity metrics linked to publishing and increased administrative tasks; both increased the level of stress in faculty members working in academia. Studies conducted between 2010 and 2016 have shown that faculty members have reported that the HEI in which they work is stressful (Catano et al. 2010; Coetzee and Rothmann 2005; Winefield et al. 2008; Kinman, Jones, and Kinman 2006; Tytherleigh et al. 2005), not only is there an identification of stress, but many faculty members believe that stressors increase year after year. (Kinman and Wray 2017). Distress is a core factor in a person's QoWL as described by research (Fevre, Kolt, and Matheny 2006). The main reason for the growing level of stress in the HEIs is linked to various changes in policy and operation that universities are continually going through (Whitley and Glaser 2014). It serves as no surprise why academia, a traditionally low-stress occupation, is faced with high

levels of stress in various studies, in many instances, the reported level of stress far exceed many other occupational groups including several that are traditionally high-stress occupations (Love, Edwards, and Irani 2010; Winefield et al. 2008)

The Job Demands- Resources Model of Burnout (Demerouti et al. 2001), states that high-stress levels among academics are related to a multitude of work-related factors, these include work overload, time pressure, unfavourable physical environment among other factors. These are significant stressors that adversely affect GWB, alternately having a level of control at work, and social support enhances productivity (Gavin and Mason 2004). Additionally, overcommitment and multiple parallel tasks lead to poor work-life balance; however, they are acceptable practices in working environments where long hours are the norm (Hogan et al. 2014). Academics are disproportionately more likely than non-academics in higher education to report higher levels of stress at work (Fontinha, Easton, and Van Laar 2019a). Owing in part to the demands of the HEI in which they work (Kinman and Wray 2014) and possibly due to the absence of sufficient resources to do the tasks required effectively (Demerouti et al. 2001), which directly leads to an increase in stress (Fevre, Kolt, and Matheny 2006). Unlike other occupations, academics also report less favourable perception of working conditions, lower perceived control/participation in decisionmaking at work, and lower levels of commitment to the organisation (Fontinha, Easton, and Van Laar 2019a)

2.2 Other factors that impact QoWL

One study meta-analysed research on job satisfaction concluded that the correlation between *job security* and QoWL is statistically significant (Dorasamy and Letooane 2015b). In addition to this, it is found that job insecurity is higher in the HEIs. Conclusion thus, management must seek to ameliorate the working environment and create a sense of security for staff. Studies have identified that *inadequate resources* to perform one's job task is another crucial factor that leads to stress and dissatisfaction. Inadequate resources include objects, personal characteristics, as well as energies in the workplace (Tytherleigh et al. 2005). It was also found that a loss or a threat of loss of these resources has a significant causal relationship on the stress in HEI (Schulze 2008). Some researchers believe that the *publish or perish* phenomena directly correlate to stress (Abouserie 1996). The practice leads to a lack of creativity and a drastic reduction in morale for many academics. The emotional effects are felt more prevalent in young faculty. However, it is not unheard of that senior, and mid-level faculty also suffer from the dreaded publish or perish anxiety. In addition to this, many faculty members have hectic schedules. Many have several classes in addition to administrative work. To make matters worse, studies (W. Sun, Wu, and Wang 2011) posit that adding to issues such as 'tight deadlines and research funding' A key stressor is an ability for these tasks to converge in leading to a promotion.

Studies show that a lack of resources and poor communication are key stressors for employee burnout, according to a comprehensive study (Goehring et al. 2005). Additionally, it has been found that a strong correlation between certain working deficiencies such as communication and their link to psychological stress exists (Sohn, Choi, and Jung 2016).

Throughout the literature (Dorasamy and Letooane 2015b; Fontinha, Easton, and Van Laar 2019b; Schulze 2008), one constant factor that positively affects employee happiness is remuneration. Additionally, inadequate remuneration is a critical factor that leads to organisational stress in HEIs (Müller, Alliata, and Benninghoff 2009). It is shown (Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti 2016; Dorasamy and Letooane 2015b; Schulze 2008; Subbarayalu and Al Kuwaiti 2019; D. Van Laar et al. 2017) that receiving bonuses and rewards in exchange for work is a critical motivational factor. To this end, incentives are recommended for employees to feel valued in the organisation. (Schimmoeller 2012), citing Henry Fayol's 1916 classical essay adds that the rewarding of personnel is critical. However, others believe that self-esteem plays an integral role, citing Maslow's hierarchy of needs in an organisation (Springer 2011). Nevertheless, according to studies (Maidani 1991), achievements should be lauded to boost satisfaction levels of an employee.

2.3 Work environment on QoWL

When employees can build positive relationships at the workplace, they stay longer, work harder and perform to their best potential (D. Van Laar et al. 2017; Parker and Martin 2009; Edwards, Guppy, and Cockerton 2007; Schulze 2008; Easton and Laar 2013; Demerouti et al. 2001; Dorasamy and Letoane 2015b; Sinval et al. 2019; Subbarayalu and Al Kuwaiti 2019; Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti 2016; Al-Zboon 2016; Edwards et al. 2009a). Since people enjoy being social, a pleasant social environment in the workplace makes a notable difference for all employees, which correlates with Maslow's third level of needs in an organisation (Springer 2011). Creating a healthy environment of support, compassion, belonging, and respect will help people build relationships and stay motivated through the ties that they make. Additionally, people like to work in a place where they have a close relationship with the employer, senior management, and colleagues (AlZboon 2016), which is in line with Peter and Waterman's characteristics of influential culture, which focuses on the 'productivity through people' (Akin and Hopelain 1986, Peter and Waterman 1982). It is generally believed that people feel appreciated and comfortable in the work environment that is nourishing to the mind and spirit.

Additionally, respect and trust make the employee work harder (Subbarayalu and Al Kuwaiti 2019). Thus, aligning with Deal and Kennedy's *strong culture* and the *value* teamwork and trust plays (Zautra, Eblen, and Reynolds 1986, Deal and Kennedy 1982). There should always be *esprit de corps* (the spirit of one); according to Schimmoeller (2012), this creates a happier and more stable environment. With an increase in stress, HEIs are now faced with more cases of absenteeism and availing of sick and personal days. Both are linked to a reduction in productivity as well as a high turnover rate. To this end, stress management is vital in the retention of faculty (Abouserie 1996).

2.4 Expected work turnover rate on QoWL

People who can enjoy better physical and mental health as they perform at work are the happiest (Darren Van Laar, Edwards, and Easton 2007). If a workplace creates intense stress and work pressure for employees, this increases the likelihood that the employees will face illness and demotivation (Edwards, 2015). Employees need to be regular at work, but they should not be forced to work extra hours or do other work in the absence of a colleague (Edwards et al., 2009; Darren Van Laar et al., 2007). Peter and Waterman's perspective of a healthy organisational culture, suggests employers must 'stick to the point' to avoid pressuring an employee with undue mental stress (Akin and Hopelain 1986; Peter and Waterman 1982). Moreover, it is also believed that employees should be allowed to have time out to rest and refresh so that they could return to work with new enthusiasm.

2.5 Lack of job control on QoWL

Every employee has an opinion, and many of these opinions could be doorways to innovation (Subbarayalu and Al Kuwaiti 2019). When people are managed through *bureaucracy*, they may lose their voice (Abouserie 1996). Therefore, adversely affecting active contribution towards the decisionmaking and problem-solving efforts of the organisation. A workplace that forces people to work as anonymous workers whose voice is not heard and has no worth is not healthy (Edwards, Guppy, and Cockerton 2007; Fontinha, Van Laar, and Easton 2018). They also retorted that unhealthy environments discourage people from expressing their autonomy. Such a workplace is very demotivating for employees and increases the occurrence of stagnation and low performance (Edwards et al. 2009b). Effective leaders invite their workers to think creatively and critically and offer opinions that accelerate professionalism (Fontinha, Van Laar, and Easton 2018). The aforementioned reflects the decisionmaking technique referred to as the 'individual approach', where managers do not make decisions without consulting the employees (Edwards, Guppy, and Cockerton 2007).

2.6 Administrative pressure on QoWL

Micromanagement is the compulsive control of every part of a task delegated to an employee (Huhman, 2016). It is a critical organisational stressor in many organisations (Kaur and Singh 2013). It is demotivating to the employee who is skilled and motivated to work at their best potential and to create innovative ideas. When micromanaged, it becomes impossible for employees to produce the best solutions and innovate (Sewell 2006). The work environment becomes one in which the employee follows instructions and guidelines of the manager who is trying to control their accomplishments and productivity (Hoops 1999). When work is only about following instructions, it does not allow room for trials and experimentation (Hoops 1999). This results in implementing the same solutions and traditional methods of doing things recommended by managers; there is no progress (Lane et al. 2010). Creativity and innovation are thus forgotten.

The adverse effects of micromanaging have been mentioned by (Huhman 2016) in her article in *Entrepreneur*, she writes, that the results of micromanagement did not nurture the strengths of her employees; instead, it drove a wedge in the working relationship. Employers who want their employees to work hard and finish their tasks on time should not micromanage them (Kaur and Singh 2013). Managers should know the strengths of each employee and estimate the time needed to complete tasks (Huhman 2016). According to Taylor's Scientific Management Theory, this is the best way to select the employee right for the job that can complete it efficiently (Taylor 2004).

2.7 Poor work-life relationship and balance on QoWL

Organisations that do not foster interpersonal relationships in the workplace are likely to have a substantial number of unhappy employees and dissatisfaction (Dorasamy and Letoane 2015a). More casual interaction among employees reduces work stress and brings positivity in the workplace. *Rituals* are part of adopting an excellent and robust culture in an organisation, according to Deal and Kennedy's characteristics of influential culture (Zautra, Eblen, and Reynolds 1986; Deal and Kennedy 1982).

It can be inferred from the literature that a myriad of factors plays a pivotal role in the QoWL. Additionally, it is shown sufficiently that a positive QoWL experience is beneficial not only to the organisation but also to the individual.

3. Research Method

3.1 Study Design

This study explored the QoWL and the ability of a dedicated 'happiness department' in mediating the perceived stressors found in a GHEI. Faculty members from all colleges were sampled for this research in the mid-sized private university. The total teaching faculty of the university is 128, with *10 Fulltime* faculty members, *two visiting professors*, and *16 adjunct faculty*. For this research, adjunct faculty were not sampled, as (Fontinha, Easton, and Van Laar 2019b) show part-timers were more prone to having a positive work relationship. It is believed that adjunct faculty have a positive organisational outlook due to the flexibility and the reduction of the time spent in the organisation. Therefore the stressors such as excessive administrative work and flexible work hours would not be applicable. Therefore, N=112 faculty members are relevant to this inquiry. Visiting Professors were included because they interface with the organisation on the same level as the Full-time faculty. In this research, no demographic information was collected through the survey. We do not believe that gender was an essential factor in the perceived stressors as faculty members are expected to carry the same amount of responsibility regardless of gender. Though some female faculty members who are also active in maintaining a home may have a higher level of non-work-related stress, we find this possibility to be negligible. For the general faculty members, a convenient random sample was utilised by email blasts to faculty members encouraging them to complete the survey. The survey tool Question Pro prevented the duplication of survey respondents, 25 per cent of the university teaching staff were sampled.

3.2 Instrumentation

The predesigned QoWL survey was distributed to teaching faculty members via Questionpro, the online survey portal. The QoWL survey has six subsections, JCS, GWB, HWI, SAW, CAW, WCS, and Happiness Department; the first five of which have been identified in the literature review. The survey consisted of a classical QoWL survey which includes 32 items, with an additional eight questions. The survey utilised a 5-point Likert scale denoting 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree all information from one to 40 were convenient to input. Demographic information was not collected in this survey, as it was believed that asking identifying questions may taint the results, in so much as they may change the behaviour of the employee who would otherwise prefer to remain anonymous. The 32nd question of the classical QoWL survey is designed to capture the overall satisfaction of the teaching faculty member.

The additional eight questions of the survey are not part of the original QoWL survey predesigned question. These were included to ascertain the perception of a dedicated 'happiness department'.

All ethical considerations were observed, faculty were informed that the completion of the survey was completely voluntary and anonymous; also they were not required to divulge information that could identify them (age, sex, rank, time of employment, or college employed in). n=28 respondents, SPSS version 23.0.0, was used in performing the data analysis.

3.3 Analytical methods

A Confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine the validity of the QoWL questionnaire using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test as well as Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Additionally, an exploratory promax was conducted.

4. Results

4.1 The Quality of Working Life Survey Results

For the participants included in the study (n=28), the mean QoWL score was 2.91. Table 1 summarises the mean, median and standard deviation for each of the scale's six factors; and for the overall QoWL score. The last row of Table 1 illustrates how the faculty in this study compared to their UK counterparts. Those results indicate that the faculty in the present study scored within the lowest 25% of the population when compared to faculty in the UK (Easton and Van Laar, 2018, p. 55).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for Work-related quality of life scale (n=28)

	GWB	HWI	JCS	CAW	WCS	SAW	QoWL
N	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
Mean	3.24	2.44	3.26	2.77	2.99	1.71	2.91
Median	3	2	4	3	3	1	3
SD	1.08	1.18	1.17	1.13	1.31	0.89	1.23
	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below
UK-referenced percentiles	30th percentile	20th percentile	40th percentile	25th percentile	25th percentile	20th percentile	25th percentile

The results in Table 1's last row are confronting, but Lau, Cummins & McPherson (2005) advise social scientists to guard against cultural response bias. The authors observed that cultural difference in how happiness and satisfaction are perceived may augment self-reported responses. Nonetheless, it is important to pursue the exploratory study, with recommendations of further studies dedicated to the cultural bias in the Gulf Middle East and North Africa.

4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

We conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to evaluate the QoWL scale's internal structure. According to Easton & Van Laar (2018), the QoWL's 23 items consists of six factors. Pallant (2011) recommends that, before performing an EFA, researchers should inspect the data set's suitability for factor analyses. Researchers often use the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value to determine whether it is appropriate to conduct a factor analysis. Table 2 shows that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value for the unreduced data set was 0.457. As the survey had a relatively low response rate and small sample size (N=29), a low KMO value was expected. Usually, a KMO value below 0.6 indicates that the sample size is inappropriate to conduct a factor analysis. Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988) advise that data sets with low KMO scores can yield useful information as long as the researcher makes clear the scope of the results. Hence the low KMO score for this study does not preclude further exploration.

Despite the low KMO score, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity indicated statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), supporting the appropriateness of a factor analysis

Table 2: The Findings from Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test for Sphericity KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.457
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	494.694
	df	253
	Sig.	.000

Using Kaiser's Criterion, (Yong and Pearce 2013) only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were retained for further evaluation. The scree plot reveals six such factors as shown in Figure 1.

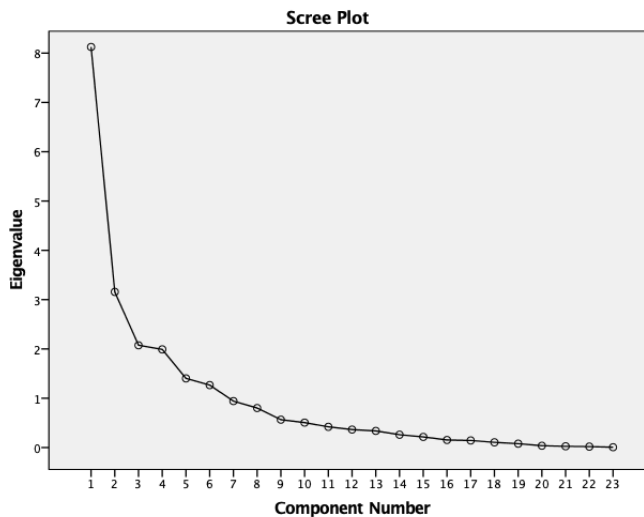


Figure 1: Figure 1 Screen plot for QoWL survey

The existence of six factors is consistent with the QoWL's factor structure as proposed by Easton and Van Laar (2018). Those authors also suggested that the QoWL's six factors are not orthogonal. As such, we conducted an exploratory promax rotation in SPSS 23.0.0 to aid interpretation of the factors (see Table 3). As the six factors explained a total of 78.33% of the variance, the factors have a high explanatory value.

Table 3: Total variance explained by the six factors

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings ^a
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	8.125	35.324	35.324	8.125	35.324	35.324	5.608
2	3.157	13.725	49.049	3.157	13.725	49.049	5.520
3	2.075	9.020	58.069	2.075	9.020	58.069	4.287
4	1.991	8.656	66.725	1.991	8.656	66.725	4.355
5	1.403	6.099	72.824	1.403	6.099	72.824	4.014
6	1.267	5.509	78.333	1.267	5.509	78.333	2.474

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.

The exploratory analysis revealed several low loading items. Items with loadings lower than 0.5 were removed as per Rick, Briner, Daniels, Perryman and Guppy's (2001) instructions. Accordingly, WCS₁, GWB₄, and HWI₃ were deleted. A confirmatory factor analysis was done on the remaining 20 items. Table 3 presents the pattern matrix for that analysis.

Significantly, the six factors identified in the present study are different from those identified in the original iteration of the Scale by Easton et al. (Easton and Van Laar 2018). As mentioned previously, the QoWL scale contains six correlated factors - JCS, GWB, WCS, SAW, HWI and CAW. In the present study, the sub-constructs of those factors did not form the expected clusters. Instead, some sub-constructs clustered with those from other factors. For example, some sub-constructs of GWB clustered with the sub-constructs of SAW to form a new factor; this factor is absent from the original Scale by Easton et al. (Easton and Van Laar 2018). For more natural referencing, the newly-formed factors were named *adapted factors*. That name is appropriate considering that those factors represent contextual adaptations of Easton and Van Laar's classical Scale.

Table 4: Pattern matrix for adapted factors

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
WCS ₃	.972					
JCS ₂	.887					
JCS ₄	.650					
JCS ₃	.514					
SAW ₁		.927				
SAW ₂		.837				
GWB ₂		.598				
GWB ₃		.587				
GWB ₆			.869			
GWB ₅			.710			
GWB ₁			.532			
CAW ₁				.900		
CAW ₂				.728		
CAW ₃				.564		
HWI ₁					.928	
WCS ₁					.734	
WCS ₄					.572	
JCS ₁						.930
JCS ₅						.504

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 15 iterations.

The adapted factors reveal several meaningful relationships. For the participants sampled, job career satisfaction links significantly with how safe they feel in their work environment; and working patterns associate with feelings of job flexibility and perceptions of satisfactory work conditions. Moreover, stress at work connects strongly with feelings of unhappiness, depression and life satisfaction.

The newly identified factors were named Work and Career Growth (WCG), Wellbeing Demotivation (WBD), Reported Life Status (RLS), Internal External Efficacy (IXE), and Family Variable (FAV). Of these factors, WCG is shown to have a statistically significant causal effect on CAW, which was the only factor retained from Easton and Van Laar's (2018) original scale.

Together, the factors emerging from the Exploratory Factor Analysis were WCG, WBD, RLS, IXE, FAV and CAW.

4.3 Comparing Models

As discussed previously, the EFA revealed several adapted factors. In what follows, a multiple linear regression (MLR) was used to investigate the explanatory strength of those factors. Given that WCG, WBD, RLS, IXE, and FAV were adapted from Easton and Van Laar's (2018) original factors, it would be instructive to compare the explanatory strength of the adapted and original factors. To that end, we developed two MLR models: A model based on the adapted factors (MLR_{Adapted}) and a model based on the original factors (MLR_{Original}). We then compared the predictive strength of those models.

Overall Quality of Working Life (OVL) was the dependent variable for both models. However, for MLR_{Adapted}, WCG, WBD, RLS, IXE, FAV, and CAW were the independent variables. For MLR_{Original}, the independent variables were JCS, GWB, WCS, SAW, HWI and CAW. Table 4 summarises the percentage of variability in OVL that can be explained by the combination of SAW, CAW, JCS, HWI, GWB, WCS. The results show that the original factors can explain approximately 66.5% [Table 5] of OVL's variability can be explained by the original factors. R-squared values over 60% indicate that the independent variables are strong predictors of the dependent variables (Ho, 2017). With an R-squared value of 63.3% [Table 7], MLR_{Adapted} was a marginally weaker predictor of Overall Quality of Working Life than MLR_{Original}.

Table 5: Model summary for MLR_{Original}

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.860 ^a	.740	.665	.63643

a. Predictors: (Constant), SAW, CAW, JCS, HWI, GWB, WCS

b. Dependent Variable: OVL

Table 6: Coefficients and collinearity statistics for MLR_{Original}

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-.866	.720			-1.204	.242		
CAW	-.206	.153	-.173		-1.350	.191	.758	1.320
GWB	.107	.236	.073		.453	.655	.482	2.073
1 HWI	.113	.241	.100		.471	.642	.277	3.608
JCS	.867	.325	.600		2.665	.014	.245	4.085
WCS	.071	.339	.066		.210	.835	.127	7.879
SAW	.393	.209	.294		1.884	.074	.510	1.960

Table 7: Table 7 Model summary for MLR_{Adapted}

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.846 ^a	.715	.633	.66604

a. Predictors: (Constant), CAW, FAV, IXE, WBD, WCG, RLS

b. Dependent Variable: OVL

Table 8: Coefficients and collinearity statistics for MLR_{Adapted}

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-.897	.634		-1.414	.172		
WCG	.351	.152	.326	2.305	.031	.678	1.475
WBD	.537	.227	.364	2.370	.027	.574	1.741
1 RLS	-.202	.230	-.156	-1.880	.389	.430	2.325
IXE	.394	.156	.346	2.527	.020	.724	1.381
FAV	.413	.171	.352	2.419	.025	.640	1.563
CAW	-.157	.159	-.131	-1.990	.333	.772	1.296

Table 6 shows that five of MLR_{Original's} independent variables are insignificant ($p > 0.05$). In a Multiple Linear Regression, insignificant variables are not meaningful or unique predictors of the dependent variable (Pallant, 2011). For MLR_{Original}, only JCS was a significant and unique predictor of Overall Quality of Working Life. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), insignificant variables may arise because a model's independent variables are highly correlated. Easton and Van Laar (2018) also observed a high correlation among the factors in the original QoWL Scale. The results in the present research, therefore, align with those of Easton & Van Laar.

Combined, the original factors in the classical QoWL have reliable explanatory power. Individually, perhaps those variables are too correlated to discuss their unique impact on Overall Quality of Working Life. The adapted factors may be an alternative for further analysis. Their effects are, in general, unique and significant [Table 8]. Such variables are easier to interpret and report than highly correlated ones (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). With that in mind, the adapted variables were used in the discussion.

4.4 Perceptions of the Happiness Department

Eight items were added to the classical QoWL Scale, intended to capture the respondents' opinions of their local institution's happiness department. Those items had a low mean score of 2.42. On average, the faculty sampled had an unfavourable opinion of their institution's happiness department.

To aid exploration of those results, an exploratory factor analysis revealed only one factor, named Perceptions of the Happiness Department (HAP). Table 9 shows that all the HAP sub-constructs loaded strongly unto HAP ($r > 0.6$). The first HAP sub-construct had the weakest relationship to Perceptions of the Happiness Department ($r = 0.642$). That sub-construct is related to whether faculty believed the happiness department could help to ease publication pressures. The Department's ability to alleviate publication pressures plays a crucial role in perceptions of the happiness department, as indicated by the relatively high r-value. However, for the faculty in the sample, perceptions about the Department's ability to relieve publication pressures are less influential on HAP than other considerations.

Table 9: Factor matrix for Perceptions of Happiness Department

	Perception of Happiness Department
	1
HAP1	.642
HAP2	.885
HAP3	.807
HAP4	.912
HAP5	.933
HAP6	.929
HAP7	.739
HAP8	.918

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
a. 1 factors extracted. 4 iterations required.

Compared to the other sub-constructs, HAP5 and HAP6 had the most substantial influence on Perceptions of the Happiness Department. HAP5 relates to whether faculty believe the happiness department can help to reduce administrative work. HAP6 gauges faculty opinions about whether the happiness department can help to reduce the institutional turnover rate.

Table 10: Correlation between HAP sub-constructs and Overall Quality of Working Life

		HAP1	HAP2	HAP3	HAP4	HAP5	HAP6	HAP7	HAP8	OVL
HAP1	Pearson Correlation	1	.659**	.422*	.676**	.540**	.476*	.661**	.527**	.282
HAP2	Pearson Correlation	.659**	1	.743**	.750**	.834**	.822**	.567**	.843**	.199
HAP3	Pearson Correlation	.422*	.743**	1	.745**	.802**	.766**	.516**	.772**	.153
HAP4	Pearson Correlation	.676**	.750**	.745**	1	.822**	.813**	.737**	.836**	.179
HAP5	Pearson Correlation	.540**	.834**	.802**	.822**	1	.926**	.674**	.830**	.222
HAP6	Pearson Correlation	.476*	.822**	.766**	.813**	.926**	1	.692**	.895**	.217
HAP7	Pearson Correlation	.661**	.567**	.516**	.737**	.674**	.692**	1	.649**	.233
HAP8	Pearson Correlation	.527**	.843**	.772**	.836**	.830**	.895**	.649**	1	.145
OVL	Pearson Correlation	.282	.199	.153	.179	.222	.217	.233	.145	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Although faculty had strong and unfavourable opinions of the happiness department, Table 10 shows that those opinions do not correlate significantly ($p > 0.05$) to the respondents' Overall Quality of Working Life. Presumably, the happiness department has little impact – positive or negative – on the respondents' working life.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

- Overall, it is suggested that HEIs focus on the critical stressors identified in research as the essential stressors in higher education. These issues include publication pressures, competitive remuneration, flexible working hours, job security, reduction of administrative duties, faculty retention (reduce employee turnover rate), opportunities for personal growth through promotions. The creation of the specialised Department was counterintuitive when it comes to ensuring faculty happiness as research has shown that the drive to pinpoint the issues may lead to an oversimplification of what makes the employees happy. Observations from this research show that this was also the case in this instance, as the Happiness Department was tasked with handling issues that were not pertinent to the faculty members especially as it relates to the stressors identified.
- The WRQoL scale does allow a broad range of work-related measures to be evaluated (job and career satisfaction, general wellbeing, homework interference, stress at work, control at work and working conditions). However, there are inconsistencies in the factor loading in our research, which was also pointed out in others. Though the loading issue may not disqualify the WRQoL Scale, it does lead one to ponder on the reason behind the lack of transferability.
- Suppose an organisation chooses to utilise the WRQoL Scale. In that case, it must introduce organisational development intervention programmes based on the diagnosis provided by WRQoL scale results, which should lead to the periodic retesting and re-evaluation of quality of life, this can measure the impact of the interventions.
- The adaptive model we propose may be better suited for Gulf-based institutions. However, this requires further research, as our sample size does not permit generalisations.
- Results show that members unanimously believe that a department should exist that is tasked with minimising the workplace stressors and by extension improve the quality of life for faculty members. However, currently, the Department has no significant statistical relationship with OVL, which undermines its relevance in its current iteration.

6. The deletion of variables which fail to load has led to a review of the literature to find that several other studies have removed items for statistical insignificance in the predefined factors. These studies were conducted in Asia and Turkey. We suggest future researchers conduct a meta-analysis on all data collected using the WRQoL Scale in HEI to determine if the issue of poor factor loading is as a result of regional bias or if the original Scale carries some level of western bias.
7. Since the conclusion of the research, The Happiness Department was disbanded as part of the institutional COVID19 response to non-essential staff. This leads one to believe that faculty happiness was neither a priority nor a serious endeavour. Now more than ever, faculty members should be supported for the additional mental stress that has arisen due to the Covid19 pandemic.

5.1 Limitations

One fundamental limitation of this study is that in the Gulf region, there are unspoken and expressed rules of speaking positively or not at all. We believe that given this atmosphere, it greatly affected the 78.96% completion rate of the survey, in addition to the 68 person's viewing the disclaimer and only 38 attempting the survey. In addition to the six were dropped out without completing the survey.

Work is sparse in the Gulf region in this field; therefore, it must be explored more intently as the region is fast growing with HEI institutions.

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