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Happiness Index among Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists of India

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Abstract

Recently, 'The World Happiness Index 2018', a report of UN, which measured 156 countries in terms of happiness, has placed India in the 133rd position, a drop of 11 places from previous year's122nd rank. Happiness finds a variable form of definition as it is a subjective feeling that may be momentary joy, long-term joy, and joy at total life. There is an increment in number of institutions offering the graduation and post- graduation courses in the private sector, and increased number of Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists. As stated above, happiness being a subjective, the present study made an attempt to identify a functional definition with universal parameters with which happiness could be quantified and measured. The study aimed at investigation of Happiness Index among Indian Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists. The objectives were to measure happiness index using a standardized questionnaire on happiness (Oxford Happiness Inventory) given by Hills. P and Argyle. M (2012), along with relation of happiness index to demographic and work related variables. Variables like, marital status, number of children, Spouses Employment Status, Housing type, education status did not show statistically significant differences in happiness index scores. Factors like engagement in regular physical activity, stress in past six months, participation in recreational activities, status of mental health and physical health, coordination with other professionals significantly influenced the happiness scores among Indian Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists.

Key words: Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists of India, Happiness Index, Oxford Happiness Inventory, Work culture, Physical and mental health.

1. Introduction

Recently, '*The World Happiness Index 2018'*, a report of UN, which measured 156 countries in terms of happiness, has placed India in the 133rd position, a drop of 11 places from last year's122nd rank. Happiness finds a variable form of definition as it is a subjective feeling that may be momentary joy, long-term joy and joy at total life (Sharifi. K., Sooky. Z., Tagharrobi. Z., & Akbari. H., 2006). Pursuit of happiness is indicated in motives for human efforts.

Boehm.J. and Lyubomirsky. S. (2008) stated that happiness increases positivity and helps to improve a person's creativity, and mediates in attain of their goals. Happiness would

help to achieve success in professional and personal life. Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists serving the needs of the people with communication disabilities needs them to be altruistic, self-confident, dedicated, creative, kind, and energetic.

Quality of life among the professionals who provide rehabilitation services have been studied. Mclaughlin. E., Lincoln, M., & Adamson. B (2008), conducted a study on Speech-Language Pathologists about their perception on attrition and work life in Australia. It was reported that the factors such as workload, efficacy, recognition, support, learning and autonomy determined the level of stress and satisfaction.

Manchaiah, V., Easwar, V., Boothalingam, S., Chundu, S., & Krishna, R. (2015), investigated on Indian Audiologists for their self-examined psychological, work environment and professional satisfaction among Indian audiologists. The study was carried out as a cross-sectional survey with seeking the information on effort- reward-imbalance modified questionnaire. The study included around seventy one from India. They made observations of no correlation between demographic factors (i.e., gender, education, work type, and work settings) the scores of selected questionnaires.

Goswami. S.P, Ramkumar and Mathews.S (2018), conducted a study on Indian Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists who had graduated courses during the academic years of 1967 to 2012 in a premier Institute. Study established the relation between demographic and professional variables (age, age group, gender, educational qualification, work setting, annual income, and working hours per week) with the income and work satisfaction given by the participants. The study was conducted on a total of 112 participants. It was reported that a significant relation existed between the income and job satisfaction. It also highlighted that income was not the only factor for job satisfaction.

Need for the study

Though studies analysed the factors like, job satisfaction, psychological and work and quality of life related aspects, a standardized measure of happiness among the serving Audiologist and Speech-Language Pathologists was addressed.

There is an increment in number of institutions offering the graduation and post- graduation courses in the private sector, and increased number of Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists. As stated above, happiness being a subjective, the present study made an attempt to identify a functional definition with universal parameters with which happiness could be quantified and measured.

2. Aim & Objectives

The study aimed at investigation of Happiness Index among Indian Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists. The objectives were to measure happiness index using a standardized questionnaire on happiness (Oxford Happiness Inventory) given by Hills. P and Argyle. M (2012), along with relation of happiness index to demographic and work related variables.

3. Method

3.1. Instruments

Data collection instruments were a researcher-made demographic and occupational characteristics questionnaire, and the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI).

3.2. Research Design and Sampling

A total of 177 professionals working either as Audiologists/ Speech- Language Pathologists/ ASLP, with minimum 3 months of work experience participated in the study. The present study was a cross sectional, electronic social media based online – survey Google Forms. Only a working professional with a link of questionnaire provided by the researchers could respond in the survey.

3.3. Procedure

The initial part of the questionnaire had demographic parameters and occupational characteristics like age, gender, number of children, marital status, educational status, spouse's employment status, housing type, family income, engagement in regular physical activity, and others. The occupational characteristics part included on professional's official position, employment status, working hours, the level of interest, monthly salary, satisfaction with salary, clinical work experience, engagement in recreational activities at workplace, quality of working life, satisfaction with staff member, the level of occupational stress, satisfaction with patients' and family members' feedbacks, satisfaction with the conduct and the performance of physicians, colleagues, and hospital authorities, and satisfaction with welfare facilities at workplace. The items had the multiple choice options in response form.

The third part had questions to measure happiness index which was derived by using Oxford Happiness Inventory (**Appendix- I**) with 29 items in six subscales, on self-esteem, satisfaction with life, efficiency, positive affect, sense of control, and mental health. "Strongly disagree","Moderately disagree", "Slightly disagree", "Slightly agree", "Moderately agree", and "Strongly agree". These six points are scored from 1 to 6, respectively. The scores were sub scaled for with reverse items and an Index was derived out of it (Total score/29), minimum being with 1 and highest being 6 with an average index of 4.6 reported in the literature.

Statistical Procedures

IBM 20.0 version of SPSS was used. Descriptive statistics provided case summaries. The responses were checked for normalcy using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The relation of happiness index derived was correlated with the demographic aspects using Independent sample t test for k related parameters. Chi square test with correlation coefficient was used to compare the relationship between the happiness index scores and occupation and demographic variables. A p value of less than 0.05 was considered to be statistically significant.

4. Results and Discussions

The objectives of the current study were to measure happiness index using a standardized questionnaire on happiness (Oxford Happiness Inventory) and its relation with demographic and work related variables.

4.1. Demographic variables.

The demographic parameters and occupational characteristics like age, gender, number of children, marital status, educational status, spouse's employment status, housing type, family income, engagement in regular physical activity, and others. Table 4.1.1 depicts the information on the selected variables.

Table 4.1.1. *Demographic Variables and Happiness Index Scores.*

Demographic Characteristics	Groups	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Happiness Index Score (Mean)	(S.D)	Test of Significance level
Age	20- 29 Years. 11 Months	137	77.4	4.640	0.850	0.730
	30- 39 Years. 11 Months	29	16.4	4.842	0.539	
	40- 49 Years. 11 Months	6	3.4	4.776	0.520	
	50- 59 Years. 11 Months	5	2.8	4.476	0.821	
Gender	Male	133	75.1	4.653	0.808	0.398
	Female	44	24.9	4.731	0.770	
	Not specified	0	0	0.000	0.000	
Marital Status	Married	51	28.8	4.732	0.634	0.380
	Other (Living- In)	4	2.3	5.095	0.460	
Spouse's employment status	Single	122	68.9	4.634	0.862	0.131
	Employed	70	39.5	4.771	0.606	
	Others	50	28.2	4.654	0.917	
	Unemployed	11	6.2	4.812	0.971	
Housing Type	Not Specified	46	26	4.509	0.865	0.753
	Belonging to relatives	8	4.5	4.259	1.653	
	Governmental	4	2.3	4.750	0.415	
	Leasing	39	22.0	4.596	0.949	
	Private	113	63.8	4.731	0.688	
	Others	13	7.3	4.171	0.231	
	Yes	107	60.5	4.842	0.767	

With respect to age range, 137 constituting the 77.4% of participants were from the age group of 20 years to 29years.11 months. 16.4%, 3.4% and 2.8% represented the age ranges of 30 to 39.11years, 40 to 49.11 years and 50 to 59.11 years older respectively. Female participants were 75.1% with a number of 133 and Male participants were 44 in number with 24.9% in the total numbers. Professionals in the age range of 30 to 39y.11months had the highest happiness index (Mean: 4.84, S.D- 0.85) on contrary to 50 to 59y.11month older (4.41, S.D- 0.83). However, the group differences were not statistically significant.

Males with a score of 4.73, (S.D- 0.76) were happier compared to Female counterparts (4.65, S.D- 0.80). However,statistically not significant. The HI scores was not statistically significant across variables of age, gender, marital status, Housing type, Spouse's employment status. The HI score was higher among the individual who engaged in physical activity (with a statistical significance of 0.003) compared to their counterparts.

Table 4.1.2: Physical and Mental Health and the Happiness Index Score.

Demographic Characteristics	Responses	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Happiness Index Score (Mean)	(S.D)	Test of Significance level
Engagement in Physical Activity	No	67	37.9	4.426	0.992	0.003
	Yes	110	62.1	4.823	0.608	
Serious stress during past six months	No	102	57.6	4.764	0.820	0.006
	Yes	75	42.4	4.548	0.752	
Satisfaction with Physical Health	No	79	44.6	4.479	0.796	0.000
	Yes	98	55.4	4.829	0.767	
Satisfaction with Mental Health	No	69	39	4.403	0.776	0.000
	Yes	107	60.5	4.842	0.767	

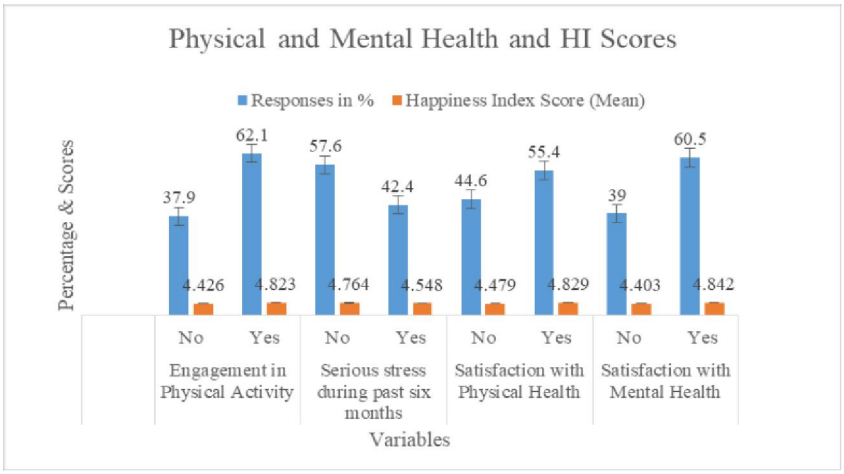

Figure 4.1.1: Graphical representation of physical and mental related parameters and HI score.

Participants with sense of satisfied physical and mental health found to have higher scores of HI. Individuals with a history of stress episodes in the previous six months were reported to have lesser HI score of 4.548 with a S.D of 0.752. The present findings are in coherence with the earlier reported studies on stress and state of physical and mental health. (Goswami. S.P, Ramkumar & Mathews.S., 2018).

From the table 4.2.1, it was found that majority of the participants of the study worked in private college and Institution (27.7 %). Upon the observation, participants who worked as Freelancers, Govt. sectors and self- employment had higher scores of HI. However, place of working was not significantly influenced HI scores. 50. 28 % of the total participants had the education of post-graduate in Audiology and SLP (MASLP).

The level of education and the related HI scores were not statistically significant among the groups with statistical significance of 0.219. Most of them worked as ASLPs with official designation.

HI scores associated with variables like length of working hours, official designation, educational status among the participants was not statistically significant.

Table 4.2.1: Happiness Index Scores and Occupational Characteristics.

Occupational Characteristics	Groups	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Happiness Index Score Mean	S.D	Test of Significance levels
Current Working Place	Freelancers	4	2.30	5.086	0.327	0.219
	Govt. Projects	1	0.60	5.379	0.000	
	Govt. College/ Institution	14	7.90	4.768	0.777	
	Govt. Hospital	16	9.00	4.377	1.255	
	Home Health agency	1	0.60	3.379	0.000	
	Private clinic	1	0.60	4.715	0.686	
	Private College/ Institution	49	27.70	4.775	0.581	
	Private Companies/ Research Org.	26	14.70	4.729	0.526	
	Private Hospital	43	24.30	4.310	0.195	
	Public school/ School Set- Up	12	6.78	4.862	0.422	
	Self Employed (Independent Practitioners)	9	4.90	5.060	0.508	
	Skilled Audiology and SLP facility	1	0.60	5.276	0.797	
Educational Status	Graduation	38	21.47	4.897	0.385	0.502
	Post-Graduation in Audiology	20	11.30	4.697	0.973	
	Post-Graduation in Audiology & SLP	89	50.28	4.481	0.554	
	Post-Graduation in Speech-Language Pathology	30	16.95	4.798	0.815	

The satisfaction among the participants about the monthly salary payment and the amount influenced the HI scores. Individuals who reported to have satisfaction had HI scores of 4.918 with S.D. of 0.503 compared to individuals who had reported 'no' or 'may be' and the level of significance was less than 0.005 in Independent Kruskar Wallis test. Manchaiah, V., Easwar, V., Boothalingam, S., Chundu, S., & Krishna, R. (2015) had reported that Audiologists with lesser payments were not satisfied with the job.

4.2.2: *Working Hours and Salary, Happiness Index Scores.*

Occupational Characteristics	Groups	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Happiness Index Score Mean	S.D	Test of Significance levels
Official Position	Audiologists	43	24.29	4.879	1.011	0.055
	Speech- Language Pathologists	35	19.77	5.259	0. 415	
	ASLPs	55	31.07	5.212	0.171	
	Swallowing Therapists	8	4.52	5.483	0.489	
	Faculties	21	11.86	5.103	0.464	
	Research Officers/Assistants/JRF/SRF	15	8.47	4.310	0.381	
Length of Working Hours	5 to 8 Hours	102	57.63	4.693	0.696	0.394
	8 to 11 Hours	62	35.03	4.691	0.759	
	Less than 5 Hours	3	1.69	4.632	0.743	
	More than 11 Hours	10	5.65	4.851	0.741	
Monthly salary	15,000 to 30,000 INR	80	45.20	4.700	0.605	0.000
	30,000 to 45,000 INR	33	18.64	4.915	0.430	
	45,000 to 60,000 INR	21	11.86	5.084	0.480	
	60,000 to 75,000 INR	6	3.39	4.874	0.273	
	Above 75,000 INR	11	6.21	4.414	0.638	
	Not Specified	26	14.69	4.013	1.415	
Are you satisfied with your current salary?	Maybe	31	17.51	4.767	0.559	0.005
	No	93	52.54	4.685	0.618	
	Yes	54	30.51	4.918	0.503	

From the table 4.2.3, the quality of working life with most satisfaction reported to have higher HI score with a mean of 5.084, S.D of 0.274. Satisfaction with respect to family and patient's feedback and conductance of head and other professionals in the work had influence on HI scores.

In a study by Mclaughlin, et al, (2008) on the perceptions about the relationships between job stress, work satisfaction and job and profession retention, established that reward and feedback helped in retention of SLPs in their job. The present findings of the study are in supportive of it with higher HI score among the participants with most satisfied levels in the feedback.

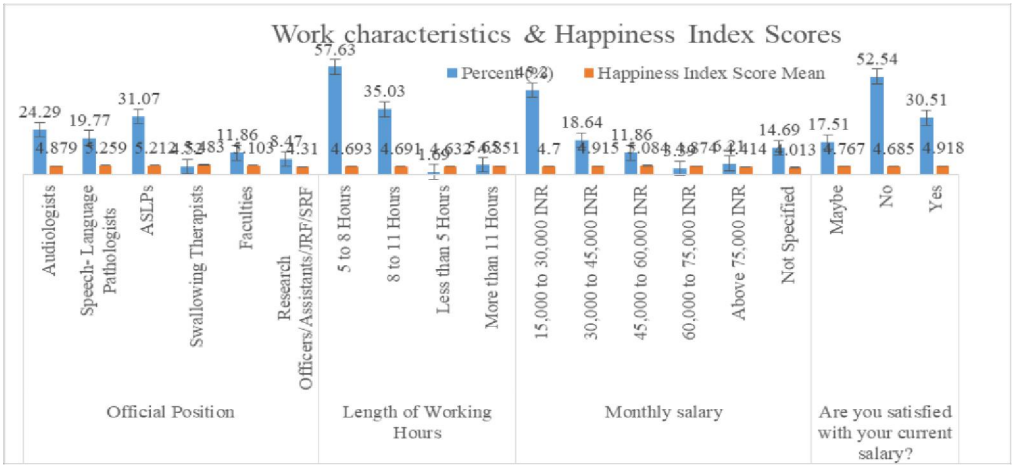

Figure 4.2.1: Graphical representation of work characteristics and HI scores.

4.2. Work quality satisfaction and Happiness Index score

The spearman correlation coefficient test was administered to establish the relation between works related satisfaction and the happiness index scores. From the table 4.3.1, HI Scores were in positive correlation with quality of work life with a correlation coefficient of (rho). 265 which was statistically significant.

Factors like satisfaction with the staff members, Satisfaction with the conduct and the performance of physicians, colleagues, head-, and office authorities poorly correlated with the HI scores.

Table 4.2.3: *Satisfaction ratings and Happiness Index Scores.*

Factors	Ratings (1- Least; 5- most)	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Happiness Index Score Mean	S.D	Test of Significance levels
Satisfaction with Quality of working life	1	4	2.30	4.629	0.640	0.007
	2	13	7.30	4.456	0.566	
	3	52	29.40	4.678	0.524	
	4	83	46.90	4.751	0.682	
	5	21	11.90	5.084	0.274	
Satisfaction with Quality of Staff Members	1	7	3.95	4.493	0.677	0.597
	2	21	11.86	4.688	0.572	
	3	51	28.81	4.828	0.586	
	4	68	38.42	4.736	0.576	
	5	24	13.56	4.713	0.747	
Satisfaction with Patient and Family Members Feedback	1	1	0.56	3.724	0.000	0.001
	2	14	7.91	4.552	0.533	
	3	42	23.73	4.479	0.617	
	4	77	43.50	4.853	0.608	
	5	40	22.60	4.884	0.493	
Satisfaction with Conductance of head, Colleague and other professionals in the team	1	6	3.39	4.819	0.794	0.015
	2	25	14.12	4.755	0.661	
	3	64	36.16	4.691	0.500	
	4	57	32.20	4.832	0.586	
	5	17	9.60	4.624	0.861	

The level of occupational stress negatively correlated with the HI scores with correlation coefficient (rho) of -.155 with a statistical significance of 0.042 in q single tailed test.
The feedback from the family members and the clients positively correlated with HI scores with correlation coefficient (rho) of .276 with a statistical significance less than 0.005. The work environment has an influence on the psychological well-being as well as the physical well- being of a professional (Theorell & Karasek, 1996). The present study is in coherence with the earlier reported studies.

Table 4.3.1: *Correlation Co-efficient between works related satisfaction and the Happiness Index Scores.*

		Satisfaction with Quality of working life	Satisfaction with staff number	The level of occupational stress	Satisfaction with patients' and family members' feedback	Satisfaction with the conduct and the performance of physicians, colleagues, head-, and office authorities	Happiness Index Scores
Satisfaction with Quality of working life	Spearman (rho) with significance levels	1.000 (0.000)	.491** (.000)	-.198** (.009)	.423** (0.000)	.428** (.000)	.265** (.000)
Satisfaction with staff number	Spearman (rho) with significance levels	.491** (.000)	1.000	-.146 (.057)	.167* (.029)	.510** (.000)	.020 (.791)
The level of occupational stress	Spearman (rho) with significance levels	-.198** (.009)	-.146 (.057)	1.000	-.184* (.015)	-.179* (.018)	-.155* (.042)
Satisfaction with patients' and family members' feedback	Spearman (rho) with significance levels	.423** (.000)	.167* (.029)	-.184* (.015)	1.000	.310** (.000)	.276** (.000)
Satisfaction with the conduct and the performance of physicians, colleagues, head-, and office authorities	Spearman (rho) with significance levels	.428** (.000)	.510** (.000)	-.179* (.018)	.310** (.000)	1.000	.037 (.632)
Happiness Index Scores	Spearman (rho) with significance levels Sig. (2-tailed)	.265** (.000)	.020 (.791)	-.155* (.042)	.276** (.000)	.037 (.632)	1.000

Summary and Conclusion

The present study made an attempt to objectify and measure happiness index among Indian Audiologists and Speech- Language Pathologists. Variables like, marital status, number of children, Spouses Employment Status, Housing type, education status did not show statistically significant differences in happiness index scores. Factors like engagement in regular physical activity, stress in past six months, participation in recreational activities, status of mental health

and physical health, coordination with other professionals significantly influenced the happiness scores.

However, study limits itself in generalization as the number of respondents were lesser and skewed to younger aged professionals. Future studies with larger sample size is indicated.

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Appendix- I

Instructions

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

Below are a number of statements about happiness. Would you please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each by entering a number alongside it according to the following code:

1=strongly disagree;
2=moderately disagree;
3=slightly disagree;
4=slightly agree;
5=moderately agree;
6=strongly agree.

You will need to read the statements carefully because some are phrased positively and others negatively. Don't take too long over individual questions; there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers and no trick questions. The first answer that comes into your head is probably the right one for you. If you find some of the questions difficult, please give the answer that is true for you in general or for most of the time.

1. I don't feel particularly pleased with the way I am. ( ) .....
2. I am intensely interested in other people. .....
3. I feel that life is very rewarding. .....
4. I have very warm feelings towards almost everyone. .....
5. I rarely wake up feeling rested. ( ) .....
6. I am not particularly optimistic about the future. ( ) .....
7. I find most things amusing. .....
8. I am always committed and involved. .....
9. Life is good. .....
10. I do not think that the world is a good place. ( ) .....
11. I laugh a lot. .....
12. I am well satisfied about everything in my life. .....
13. I don't think I look attractive. ( ) .....
14. There is a gap between what I would like to do and what I have done. ( ) .....
15. I am very happy. .....
16. I find beauty in some things. .....
17. I always have a cheerful effect on others. .....
18. I can fit in everything I want to. .....
19. I feel that I am not especially in control of my life. ( ) .....
20. I feel able to take anything on. .....
21. I feel fully mentally alert. .....
22. I often experience joy and elation. .....
23. I do not find it easy to make decisions. ( ) .....
24. I do not have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life. ( ) .....
25. I feel I have a great deal of energy. .....
26. I usually have a good influence on events. .....
27. I do not have fun with other people. ( ) .....
28. I don't feel particularly healthy. ( ) .....
29. I do not have particularly happy memories of the past. ( ) .....

Notes. Items marked ( ) should be scored in reverse indicates components of the OHQ short scale. The sum of the item scores is an overall measure of happiness, with high scores indicating greater happiness.

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