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## Happiness Model and Educator Performance in The Teaching and Learning Process

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**Abstract:** The performance of Vocational Program lecturers at Private Polytechnics in West Java shows signs of being below par. This study aims to investigate the impact of organizational culture, lecturer morale, and empowerment on lecturer happiness, and how these factors ultimately affect the performance of lecturers at private polytechnic universities in West Java. The primary framework utilized in this research is a combination of Management Science and Organizational Theory. By employing a Middle Range Theory approach, the study also incorporates elements of Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior. Additionally, the study draws upon the applied theories of Organizational Culture, Morale, Empowerment, Happiness, and Performance. A comprehensive review of the literature has led to the formulation of the following hypotheses: Organizational culture and work enthusiasm have a simultaneous influence on happiness, organizational culture directly impacts happiness, work enthusiasm significantly affects happiness, and happiness directly influences lecturer performance.

**Keyword:** organizational culture, lecturer work enthusiasm, empowerment, lecturer happiness, lecturer performance.

### INTRODUCTION

The educational system in Indonesia has yet to achieve its goal of producing competent human resources, let alone making significant advancements in enhancing the nation's overall quality. This is evident in the decreasing human development index (HDI) or Indonesia's human development index (IPM).

Over the course of the past four years, Indonesia has experienced a significant decline in its Human Development Index (HDI). Specifically, in 2013, Indonesia held the 108th position in terms of development, but by 2014, this ranking had plummeted to 124th place.

The welfare level of the Indonesian population has experienced a significant decline, as evidenced by the statistics on life expectancy at birth. The Human Development Report

(HDR) in 2013 revealed that the average life expectancy for Indonesians was 71.5 years. However, the subsequent HDR in 2014 reported a decrease in life expectancy to 69.4 years for the Indonesian population (UNDP, HDR 2015).

According to the Human Development Report of 2015, also known as HDR 2015, the Human Development Index (HDI) reveals that Indonesia holds the 109th position out of 174 countries. Interestingly, Indonesia is only one level higher than Vietnam. In comparison, Malaysia holds the 56th position, Brunei holds the 25th position, and Singapore holds the 22nd position. It is predicted that in 2016, Indonesia's HDI will further decline from 0.684 to 0.0682. Consequently, Indonesia's ranking among the 175 countries will also decrease from the 109th position to the 112th position. The presence of low participation rates in education, high drop-out rates, limited access to continuing education, and low academic achievement serve as indicators of the failure of Indonesia's national education system, as stated by the UNDP in 2015.

Based on the competitiveness ranking provided by the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas, 2015), it can be inferred that Indonesia's position is fourth among ASEAN countries. Singapore holds the highest competitiveness ranking, followed by Malaysia (25th), Brunei Darussalam (28th), and Thailand (38th). Indonesia itself is placed at the 50th position. Notably, Cambodia has experienced the most significant increase in competitiveness, rising by 24 levels since 2011. Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Singapore have also seen improvements, with 11, 6, 5, and 3 level increases, respectively. Conversely, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Timor Leste have observed a decline in their competitiveness rankings.

Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the foundations of technology preparedness, efficiency in the goods market, and sophistication in business have witnessed an upward trend since 2014. Conversely, there has been a decline in the ranking of higher education and training, dropping from 69th place in 2014 to 73rd place in 2015, resulting in a change of -4. Consequently, it appears that higher education in Indonesia is facing certain challenges.

The prosperity of a nation or state in maintaining a sustainable competitive edge relies heavily on education, particularly higher education offered by both public and private tertiary institutions. This aligns with the viewpoint expressed by Bathi, Zaheer, and Rehman (2014: 2848) as well as Romeniello, Rena, and Cinque (2014: 2) in their work "The New Focus on Knowledge as a Competitive Resource". The significance of education, particularly higher education, lies in its pivotal role in fostering "knowledge creation". This, in turn, leads to a continuous cycle of innovation and ultimately results in the attainment of a sustainable competitive advantage.

The specific focus of this context revolves around Private Higher Education (PTS) in Indonesia. These institutions serve as an alternative approach to enhancing the caliber of human resources and are confronted with mechanisms promoting market openness. As a result, there has been a surge in intense competition among tertiary institutions, particularly following educational reforms that have enabled foreign universities to establish a presence in Indonesia, either through direct operations or partnerships with local universities. Thus, the challenges and competitive landscape faced by higher education institutions in Indonesia align with the aforementioned circumstances.

Even within the Southeast Asian ranking, it becomes apparent that Indonesian higher education institutions have failed to secure the top position, with only reaching the 7th position. This observation highlights that the quality of tertiary institutions in Indonesia remains comparatively lower than that of other tertiary institutions in Southeast Asia.

In light of the aforementioned statement, there is an imperative to enhance the caliber of higher education in Indonesia. Sugiyono, Warella, and Susi Sulandari (2015) conducted an

evaluation and found that there exists a multitude of criteria for appraising the excellence of a tertiary institution, particularly in terms of global benchmarks. Each institution possesses distinct assessment criteria that distinguish it from others, leading to a diverse set of indicators by which a tertiary institution can be deemed world-class.

According to Harris and Rass (2015:2), teacher efficiency significantly influences teacher effectiveness. With Harris' assertion in mind, it is reasonable to suggest that the limited growth in academic positions for polytechnic lecturers is likely a result of their own performance in fulfilling the Tridharma of Higher Education, particularly in terms of research endeavors and a lack of community engagement.

According to Theresia Puji Rahayu (2016), Arief & Habibah (2015), Anggun R Praseyo (2015), Wesarat, Sharif, & Majid (2015), Ilies, Morgeson, and Nahrgang (2005), and Devadoss and Sudha (2013), happiness can be defined as a concept encompassing both positive emotions experienced by individuals, such as ecstasy, as well as positive activities that may not have an emotional component, such as engaging in activities that bring personal fulfillment. This sense of happiness can have a significant impact on employee performance, as low levels of happiness are often associated with decreased job performance.

As stated by Pryces & Jones (2010), happiness in the workplace refers to an individual's consistent experience of positive emotions. This is achievable through individuals' understanding, management, and influence over their work environment, with the aim of optimizing performance and fostering job satisfaction. Happiness at work encompasses a subjective evaluation of one's own emotional state in relation to their work activities. Suojanen (2012) identifies various factors that contribute to happiness at work, such as salary, working hours, colleagues, work environment, management, personality, and attitudes. Moreover, the value placed on one's job significantly impacts their level of happiness at work. This aligns with the findings of an initial survey conducted in 2017, which involved 30 Polytechnic Lecturers who held teaching certificates. The survey revealed inadequacies in financial aspects, particularly in funding for lecturer research, which should be supported by institutions. Additionally, there were reported challenges in interacting with colleagues, as many lecturers were occupied with teaching commitments outside of the institution.

There are various factors that play a role in determining the happiness of individuals in their workplaces. These factors include positive interactions with colleagues, having a supportive work environment, finding joy in the work being done, having good leadership, maintaining a healthy work-life balance, having a variety of tasks, feeling confident in one's abilities, feeling valued and appreciated, being part of a cohesive team, having a satisfactory salary, and achieving personal and professional goals (Chiumento, 2006). On the other hand, Kjerufl (2007) argues that the key factors contributing to happiness at work are the outcomes and relationships that are fostered within the organization. In other words, the organizational culture plays a significant role in determining employee happiness. Based on this perspective, it is suggested that the dissatisfaction experienced by lecturers in their jobs can be attributed to the organizational culture.

According to Monica & Prasetya (2016), WN Sinaga (2014), SCY Assagaf (2015), Ho, Wong, and Lee (2009), Thorgren, Wincent, and Siren (2013), and Lavigne, Forest, Fernet, and Baraud (2014), it is widely agreed upon that employees who experience a sense of fulfillment in their work or view their work as a source of joy, also known as passion, tend to perform at a higher level. This understanding suggests that the low performance and dissatisfaction among Polytechnic Lecturers can be attributed to their job status. Teaching is still regarded as a relatively insignificant profession, leading lecturers to seek alternative job opportunities or pursue other business ventures in pursuit of higher income. Consequently, teaching becomes a secondary occupation, while their primary focus shifts elsewhere (Initial

Survey, 2017). Despite this, it is important to note that work enthusiasm is characterized by a strong inclination towards activities that bring personal enjoyment and fulfillment, prompting individuals to invest their time and energy into such endeavors.

According to Putu Chori Suryadewi et al. (2014), Ari Fdinding (2006), Alvin Arifin (2014), Aalie, Harada, and Noor (2016), Kemi and Jenyo (2016), and Ukil (2016), it has been agreed upon that the satisfaction and productivity of employees will see an increase when they are able to effectively carry out the tasks assigned to them by their leaders. This concept is commonly referred to as empowerment, which involves the process of strengthening the capabilities of individuals within an organization. This is achieved through various means such as enhancing skills, building trust, delegating authority, and assigning responsibility. By implementing this framework, organizations can enhance their performance to meet desired outcomes.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The significance of human resources in an organization cannot be overstated, as their involvement plays a crucial role in achieving organizational objectives. Recognizing the pivotal role of human resource management, it is imperative to prioritize the attention given to HR within an organization to enhance their performance.

In order to enhance the performance of the HR department within an organization, it is imperative for organizational management to prioritize various factors. These factors include the overall well-being and contentment of the human resources themselves, as well as aspects such as empowerment, morale, and the organizational culture.

In order to bolster the evidence for the hypothesis put forth by the authors, they will place significant emphasis on the theory and findings of prior studies that corroborate the research paradigm model. This model focuses on the impact of organizational culture, morale, and empowerment on happiness, and the subsequent implications for human resource performance.

### **Relationship between Organizational Culture and Morale**

The connection between Organizational Culture and employee morale is undeniable. A robust organizational culture should foster and enhance the passion and enthusiasm of employees towards their work, and vice versa. This assertion aligns with the research conducted by P. Yukthamarani Permarupan, Roselina Ahmad Saufi, Raja Suzana Raja Kasim, and Bamini KPD Balakrishnan in 2013.

According to the findings of the research, there is a correlation between organizational culture and employee morale. In order for employees to have high morale, they require a solid foundation provided by a strong organizational culture. Similarly, a strong organizational culture relies on the morale of its employees for support. Both of these factors play a significant role in fostering employee productivity in the workplace (Suwarno, 2016).

According to Nurmansyah (2011), morale can be defined as the act of performing tasks with increased enthusiasm, resulting in improved speed and quality of work. The concepts of enthusiasm and work ethic are closely intertwined, as noted by Nitisemito (2005). When employees possess a high level of enthusiasm for their work, tasks are completed more efficiently, and the negative consequences of low morale, such as absenteeism, are minimized. Consequently, this boost in morale and enthusiasm leads to an increase in employee productivity. Ultimately, these observations indicate the development of a robust work culture within the organization.

## **Organizational Culture Relations with Empowerment**

The significance of employee participation in the attainment of organizational objectives cannot be overstated. When all aspects within an organization are engaged, the outcome is enhanced planning and outcomes, leading to the expedited achievement of organizational goals. Employee involvement can manifest through collaborative teamwork, which signifies the establishment of a positive work environment and a robust organizational culture (Fandy Ciptono; 2003).

Enabling and offering avenues for employees to assume managerial roles at a level commensurate with their responsibilities, both individually and collectively, is at the core of employee empowerment. This practice has the potential to fortify the organizational work culture (Leovani; 2016). Moreover, according to Gibson et al (2006), employee empowerment, specifically on an individual level, involves providing opportunities and fostering motivation for employees to utilize their unique abilities, expertise, resources, and past experiences to effectively meet deadlines. The empowerment of employees within an organization is intricately tied to the development of its overall organizational culture.

The correlation between enthusiasm for one's work and empowerment is a subject of great interest. It has been observed that individuals who exhibit a high level of enthusiasm in their work tend to experience a greater sense of empowerment. This empowerment can manifest in various ways, such as increased confidence, motivation, and a sense of control over one's professional life. On the other hand, those who lack enthusiasm for their work are more likely to feel disempowered and trapped in their current circumstances. Therefore, fostering work enthusiasm is crucial in promoting a sense of empowerment among individuals.

According to Riniwati (2011), the level of empowerment among employees and the relationship between top-level managers and lower-level managers will play a significant role in determining the level of motivation and dedication displayed by employees in their pursuit of self-actualization, accomplishment, and effective utilization of managerial authority for maximizing the potential of human resources. Ultimately, this will have a profound impact on the overall performance in attaining organizational objectives.

The incorporation and empowerment of employees within an organization is intricately tied to employee satisfaction, motivation, and enthusiasm, also known as employee morale. This is due to the fact that when employees are involved in their work, they perceive themselves as having significant personal worth and feel appreciated and acknowledged by the organization (Fandy Ciptono, 2003).

The concept of empowerment encompasses the optimization of human resources within an organization, taking into account their abilities and capacities. Empowerment involves the creation and education of individuals, ensuring that everyone within the institution or organization has the opportunity to showcase their skills, be innovative, and exhibit quality performance. The objective of empowering subordinates is to foster shared decision-making and collaboration between leaders and subordinates, enabling them to collectively drive change by implementing various managerial approaches. By establishing a system that empowers human resources in the workplace, it cultivates a sense of motivation and dedication among employees, enabling them to meet their job responsibilities and maximize their personal growth. (Eko Nusantoro, 2017).

## **The Effect of Organizational Culture on Happiness**

According to Garcia et al. (2007), organizational culture plays a significant role in fostering happiness in the workplace. They argue that there is a direct correlation between an individual's values and the level of happiness they experience, highlighting the importance of culture in shaping one's overall well-being. Similarly, Thin (2010) asserts that the

measurement of happiness universally depends on the cultural context in which one exists. This viewpoint is further reinforced by Warr (2011), who emphasizes that various aspects of happiness are intricately tied to cultural influences.

The assertions made by the aforementioned experts find validation in the research conducted by Lu and Gilmour (2004), which examines the impact of culture on the overall happiness of the American population. Additionally, Dorn et al. (2007) present a cross-sectional study of 28 countries, utilizing data from the International Social Survey Program, to establish a positive correlation between culture and levels of happiness. Moreover, Ford et al. (2015) offer research findings that underscore the existence of a strong association between happiness and culture. This correlation is further emphasized by Oishi et al. (2013), who posit that culture and the passage of time are conducive to an increase in happiness. The significance of culture as a determining factor for happiness is further supported by the research conducted by Ye et al. (2014).

### **The Influence of Work Enthusiasm on Happiness**

Research conducted by Vallerand (2012) suggests that the presence of a positive and enjoyable work experience contributes to an individual's sense of fulfillment and happiness. This idea is further supported by the findings of Vallerand and Verner-Filion (2013) who discovered that the fulfillment of work enthusiasm is directly linked to overall happiness levels. Additionally, Kaiser et al (2008) conducted research indicating that the fulfillment of positive perceptions in the workplace fosters a harmonious work spirit and ultimately increases happiness.

### **The Effect of Empowerment on Happiness**

Empowerment is one of the causes of increased happiness, in line with what was stated by Bentwich (2012) that by empowering one's abilities, that person's happiness increases, because the person concerned feels that his existence is recognized. The same thing was expressed by Crane and William (2002) that when individuals feel empowered, the happiness they achieve is felt to be limitless. Then, Hope (2017) suggests that when the mindset of empowerment is properly adopted it will lead to success and happiness.

The opinions of the experts above are supported by research from Santoso and Kulathunga (2016) that empowerment is a major factor in increasing levels of happiness. Then Kim and Shin's research (2017) shows that there is a significant relationship between empowerment and happiness. Furthermore, Mishra (2016) stated his research that women who are empowered have a tendency to increase happiness. Vazife, and Saadatyar (2017) explained their research that aspects of psychological empowerment can increase employee happiness.

### **The Effect of Happiness on Performance**

The appropriate placement of happiness is crucial, as it has been proven that individuals who foster a positive environment tend to enhance their own performance (Anchor, 2010). Diener (2009) echoes this sentiment, asserting that while happiness does not directly boost employee performance, contented employees often exhibit improved performance levels. Consequently, by incorporating happiness and well-being into one's life, individuals gain better control over their lives, subsequently enhancing their future performance (Silito, 2013).

The viewpoints expressed by the aforementioned experts are substantiated by the findings of Demircioglu (2014), which indicate a correlation between happiness and enhanced performance. This correlation is further supported by the research conducted by Cai et al. (2017), which demonstrates that higher levels of happiness have a positive impact on performance. Farahani et al. (2011) also reach a similar conclusion in their study,

highlighting the significant influence of happiness on performance. Additionally, Finkbeiner, Russell, and Helton (2016: 277-285) elucidate in their research that happiness plays a supportive role in boosting performance. Furthermore, the research conducted by Lyubomirsky, King, and Diener (2005:803-855) suggests a strong association between happiness and increased performance.

## CONCLUSION

Drawing upon the literature review and framework discussed earlier, the authors proceed to formulate the research hypothesis in the subsequent paragraph. Their proposed hypothesis is as follows: The simultaneous impact of organizational culture and work enthusiasm on happiness is a recognized phenomenon. The impact of organizational culture on happiness is undeniable. The level of enthusiasm one has for their work directly impacts their overall happiness and well-being. The performance of lecturers is influenced by the state of happiness they experience.

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