Management Factors Influencing the Management of the Happy Workplace for Police Stations in Thailand

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Abstract

This research paper aims to study the happiness levels in accordance with the "Happy Workplace" principles by the Thai Health Promotion Foundation for police stations in Thailand, and to investigate the causal influences of management factors on the happy workplace management of police stations in Thailand. This research is a quantitative research, based on data collected from 380 samples from the target population of 1,671 commissioned and non-commissioned police officers who have participated in the prototype happy workplace project previously conducted in nine police stations around the country by Sudsakorn et al. (2017). The results from the data analyses indicated that: (1) under eight levels of happiness in Happy Workplace principles, the happiness level of the police stations in Thailand was found to be highest at the "Happy Heart" (kind-hearted; considerate) level, followed by the "Happy Soul" (good spirit) and "Happy Society" (good society), respectively; "Happy Money" was scored lowest, reflecting the fact that even though Thai police officers are working under financial limitations, insufficient budget and operational resources, they still manage to work cooperatively and sacrifice their personal happiness for their work; and (2) the management factors that have the most positive and significant influences on happiness in police stations are organizing and leading. The two other factors, planning and controlling, however, have insignificant influences on happiness.
Keywords: Management Factors, Happy Workplace, Police Station

Introduction

In the world today, innovative technologies have not only dramatically changed the lifestyles of individuals, families and people as a whole but "disrupted" the structure of the society, economy as well as politics of numerous countries (Solis, 2015). The world is striving relentlessly towards growth for capitalism which benefits only a few certain segment of its "rich" population. The impact of this phenomenon has raised moral and ethical concerns, particularly in societal and environmental perspectives (Deloitte, 2018). This "technological disruption" is seen to have a drastic effect on the psychological well-being of people at workplace, which could possibly obstruct the ultimate goal of attaining sustainable development (Joyce et al., 2018, UNCTAD, 2018). For this reason, the management of both private and public sectors in Thailand, including the Royal Thai Police, are now paying greater attention to issues on "happiness" of individuals at the workplace.

Essentially, the management of Royal Thai Police is presently under the process of being reformed. This reform, designed to keep track with disruptive technologies, has been long-awaited by Thai people, in hope of more efficient police force - a protector of justice and peace - in the country. Nevertheless, given the nature of the police's work, which regularly

faces authoritative burden and pressures of protecting the public, majority of Thai police officers are constantly under stress. In addition to the work stress, numbers of police officers are also plagued with personal stress, ranging from family and financial problems to health concerns (Beshears, 2017). In order for a reform of any management to be effective, the employees of such management should be in a healthy and happy state. Hence, it is necessary for the management of the Royal Thai Police to improve the life quality of its officers, in order to build a healthy, happy workforce, equipped for a reform.

In this respect, the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (Thai-Health) has been promoting the "Happy Workplace" concept, encouraging all organizations in Thailand to implement its principles which consist of eight dimensions: (1) Happy Body, (2) Happy Heart, (3) Happy Relax, (4) Happy Soul, (5) Happy Money, (6) Happy Brain, (7) Happy Family, and (8) Happy Society. These eight dimensions of happiness are indicators that organizations can use to measure "gross workplace happiness" of their employees - a reflection of the employees' well-being and quality of life (Chalieyam & Jiangwiwantkul, 2013). According to "Happy Workplace" concept, it is believed that happiness can "drive [an] organization towards success" (Limkriengkrai, n.d.).

Research Objectives
For the reasons mentioned above, this research aims to signify the importance of happiness at workplace. The objectives of this quantitative research are (1) to explore the happiness level under the Thai-Health's concept of "Happy Workplace" in Thai police stations, and (2) to study the causal influences of management factors on happy workplace management of Thai police stations.

Literature Reviews
Happy workplace is a concept defined by Thai-Health as part of human resource development process. It is seen as a holistic approach to obtaining sustainable human resource in a situation of continuous internal and external changes. Accordingly, an organization needs to have a purpose or mission to strategically build a happy work environment in support for its vision of sustainability. Considering that employees are the most important assets of an organization, it is therefore essential to maintain the happy state of the employees in every dimension in order to attain work efficiency, organizational commitment, affective well-being at work, work involvement and engagement, as well as having employee flourishing sustainably together with an organization (Bavonaswakul, 2017; Fisher, 2010).

Moreover, happy workplace is defined as a place where employees feel comfortable, like a "second home" (Wasanthanarat & Wuthiwatchaikeaw, 2016). Dive (2004), in his *The Healthy Organization*, also affirmed that a happy workplace is an organization with a purpose, capable of growing and developing its employees to their full potentials. Additionally, Lowe (2004) asserted that a happy workplace is an organization which accommodates a happy and healthy environment for its employees which, in consequence, helps increase operational outcomes. In summary, a happy workplace should encourage, captivate and create both physical and mental happiness for the employees, in order to make them feel as one with the organization and fully committed to accomplish the organizational goal.

Principles of organizational management can be based on numbers of theory - most prominence may be Gulick & Urwick's (1937) *POSDCORB* as cited in Graham & Hays (1991), which stands for planning (P), organizing (O), staffing (S), directing (D), coordinating (CO), reporting (R), and budgeting (B). For the management of police force,

however, the applicable organizational management principles may be Bartol & Martin's (1998) POLC as cited in Sudsakorn et al. (2017) which stands for planning (P), organizing (O), leading (L) and controlling (C). In organizational management, particularly for police force, leading and controlling are widely considered as the key managerial functions. Under POLC concept, the four management factors are defined as: (1) planning - determines the result-based approach to achieve the mission and objectives of the organization; (2) organizing - deals with task allocation for each respective department in an organization and organizes the necessary resources, e.g., raw materials, personnel, etc. to achieve the end result; (3) leading - involves having a leader (manager) who can communicate, motivate, inspire and encourages his/ her employees to willingly and enthusiastically work towards organizational success; and (4) controlling - involves monitoring and evaluating the organizational performance to see whether it meets the strategic plan and goal of the organization. Essentially, a manager who can successfully implement these four managerial tasks will most likely help create a happy workplace for his/ her employees.

Research Methodology

From the literature review above, the researcher has conceptualized a framework that investigates the impact the four managerial dimensions, POLC, has on Thai-Health's 8-level of happiness at workplace. Accordingly, the hypotheses of this research are: Hypothesis 1 (H1): Planning has significantly positive impact on happiness at workplace; Hypothesis 2 (H2): Organizing has significantly positive impact on happiness at workplace; Hypothesis 3 (H3): Leading has significantly positive impact on happiness at workplace; and Hypothesis 4 (H4): Controlling has significantly positive impact on happiness at workplace. To test these hypotheses and attain the research objectives as mentioned above, this research has been conducted quantitatively as follows:

(1) The target population of this research were 1,671 commissioned and non-commissioned police officers who have participated in the prototype happy workplace project previously conducted in nine police stations around Thailand by Sudsakorn et al. (2017). Sample groups were determined by classifying the target population into five zones, representing Bangkok and eight regions of Thailand, namely: (1) Bangkok (Metropolitan Police Bureau); (2) central, western and eastern regions (Provincial Police Region 1 and 7); (3) northeast region (Provincial Police Region 3 and 4); (4) northern region (Provincial Police Region 5); and (5) southern region (Provincial Police Region 8 and 9). The nine police stations selected to represent each region of Thailand for this study had either earlier participated in the Thai-Health's "Happy Police Station" project and had shown exceptional progress since 2014 or received "Outstanding Police Station for the People Award" during the years 2011-2015.

(2) In this study, structural equation model (SEM) by using LISREL (linear structural relations) program was applied to statistically analyze the data collected for the research. According to Wolf et al. (2013), a sample size required for SEM could range from 30 to 460 cases, whereas Comrey & Lee (1992) suggested a sample size to parameters ratio within a range of 15:1 to 20:1 for SEM. Given that there are 12 variables/ parameters in this study's model, the minimum sample size (n) for this study could be between 180 to 240 (15×12 variables = 180 police officers or 20×12 = 240 police officers). For this study, data from a sample size of 380 commissioned and non-commissioned police officers (larger than minimum recommendation), approximately 42 police officers from each of the nine police stations, were collected.

(3) This research used a measurement called "Happinometer" developed by the Institute for Population and Social Research (Mahidol University, n.d.) to collect data on the happiness level in the nine selected Thai police stations. The four management factors, POLC, were, on the other hand, measured by the scale developed by the researcher.

Research Results

Aligned with the research objectives, the results of this research were analyzed in two parts: (1) the research results from a study of happiness level in Thai police stations; and (2) the research results from a study on causal influences of management factors on happy workplace management in Thai police stations. The results were analyzed from data collected via questionnaires distributed to a sample of 380 commissioned and non-commissioned police officers. Table 1 below detailed the sample background characteristics, consisting of genders, police ranks, age and body measurements.

Table 1 Background Statistics of the Sample

Background Characteristics	Frequency (n = 380)	Percentage (%)
Gender: Male	349	91.60
Female	31	8.40
Ranks: Non-commissioned	267	70.30
Commissioned	113	29.70
Age: 18 - 30 years	68	17.90
31 - 40 years	62	16.30
41 - 50 years	152	40.00
51 - 60 years	98	25.80
Weight: $\overline{X}$ = 69.97, SD = 11.17; Waist: $\overline{X}$ = 34.09, SD = 4.65; Height: $\overline{X}$ = 169.20, SD = 6.34		

Given the nature of the police force, nearly 92% of respondents were male. 70% of the respondents were non-commissioned police officers. The majority of the respondents (40%) were aged between 41 - 50 years old. The average body measurements of 380 respondents were: weight 70 kilograms, waist 34 centimeters and height 169 centimeters.

From analyzing the data of these respondents, the first part of the research result showed descriptive statistics of happiness levels/ dimensions in Thai police stations as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Happiness Levels/ Dimensions

Happiness Levels/ Dimensions	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Meaning
Happy Body	3.26	0.72	medium
Happy Relax	3.13	0.70	medium
Happy Heart	3.80	0.76	high
Happy Soul	3.75	0.78	high
Happy Family	3.49	0.86	medium
Happy Society	3.57	0.71	high
Happy Brain	3.55	0.78	high
Happy Money	3.00	0.76	medium

The top three dimensions of happiness which gained relatively highest statistical mean scores ($\overline{X}$) are Happy Heart ($\overline{X}$ = 3.80), Happy Soul ($\overline{X}$ = 3.75) and Happy Society ($\overline{X}$ = 3.57), whereas Happy Money gained the lowest statistical mean score of $\overline{X}$ = 3.00.

As for the second part of the research results, the descriptive statistics of the four management factors are as detailed in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of the Four Management Factors

Management Factors (POLC)	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Meaning
Planning	3.75	1.06	medium
Organizing	3.73	0.90	medium
Leading	3.82	0.88	high
Controlling	3.80	0.96	high

Leading gained the highest statistical mean score of $\bar{X}$ = 3.82, followed by controlling ($\bar{X}$ = 3.80) and planning ($\bar{X}$ = 3.75) respectively. Organizing, on the other hand, gained relatively lowest statistical mean score of $\bar{X}$ = 3.73.

Results from SEM Analysis: The outcome from the fit of model analysis by LISREL was, at first, inadequate for the hypothesized model of the research. The resulting fit indices were initially χ^2 = 342.931, df = 48, p < 0.001, χ^2/df = 7.144, GFI = 0.869, NFI = 0.962, NNFI = 0.956, CFI = 0.968, RMR = 0.037, SRMR = 0.062 and RMSEA = 0.127. In order to obtain the goodness of fit, the model was modified or "re-specified", by which fixed parameters were set free (Loehlin, 2004). Consequently, the modification of the model has to be iterated several times in LISREL until the modified chi-square became statistically non-significant with the recommended p-value > 0.05 and RMSEA < 0.05. Hence, the model became adequately fit with the following resulting fit indices: χ^2 = 48.163, df = 37, p = 0.103, χ^2/df = 1.301, GFI = 0.952, NFI = 0.994, NNFI = 0.997, CFI = 0.998, RMR = 0.012, SRMR = 0.018 and RMSEA = 0.028.

Essentially, the ultimate aim of SEM is attaining the result in effect sizes or magnitude of the relationships between exogenous (POLC) and endogenous (Happiness) variables. This result is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Effect Sizes of the Relationship between Exogenous and Endogenous Variables: Results from SEM

Exogenous variables: POLC	Endogenous variable: Happiness (R^2=0.704)		
	TE (SE)	IE (SE)	DE (SE)
Planning	0.006 (0.044)	-	0.006 (0.044)
Organizing	0.438** (0.078)	-	0.438** (0.078)
Leading	0.412** (0.078)	-	0.412** (0.078)
Controlling	0.038 (0.057)	-	0.038 (0.057)

** p < 0.01, TE=Total Effect, IE=Indirect Effect, DE=Direct Effect, SE=Standardized Error

As reported in Table 4, coefficient of determination (R^2) of happiness at workplace is 0.704 which indicates that the impact of POLC on happiness can be, on the whole, 70% explained by the research's hypothesized model. However, only two management factors from POLC have statistically significant causal effect on happiness at workplace, i.e., organizing with a total effect of β = 0.438 and leading with a total effect of β = 0.412 where p-value < 0.01. The size of the causal effects which both organizing and leading have on happiness are considered as medium to almost large (Cohen, 1992). Both planning and controlling, nevertheless, have statistically insignificant effect on happiness at workplace. The overall results of SEM analysis are depicted in Figure 1.
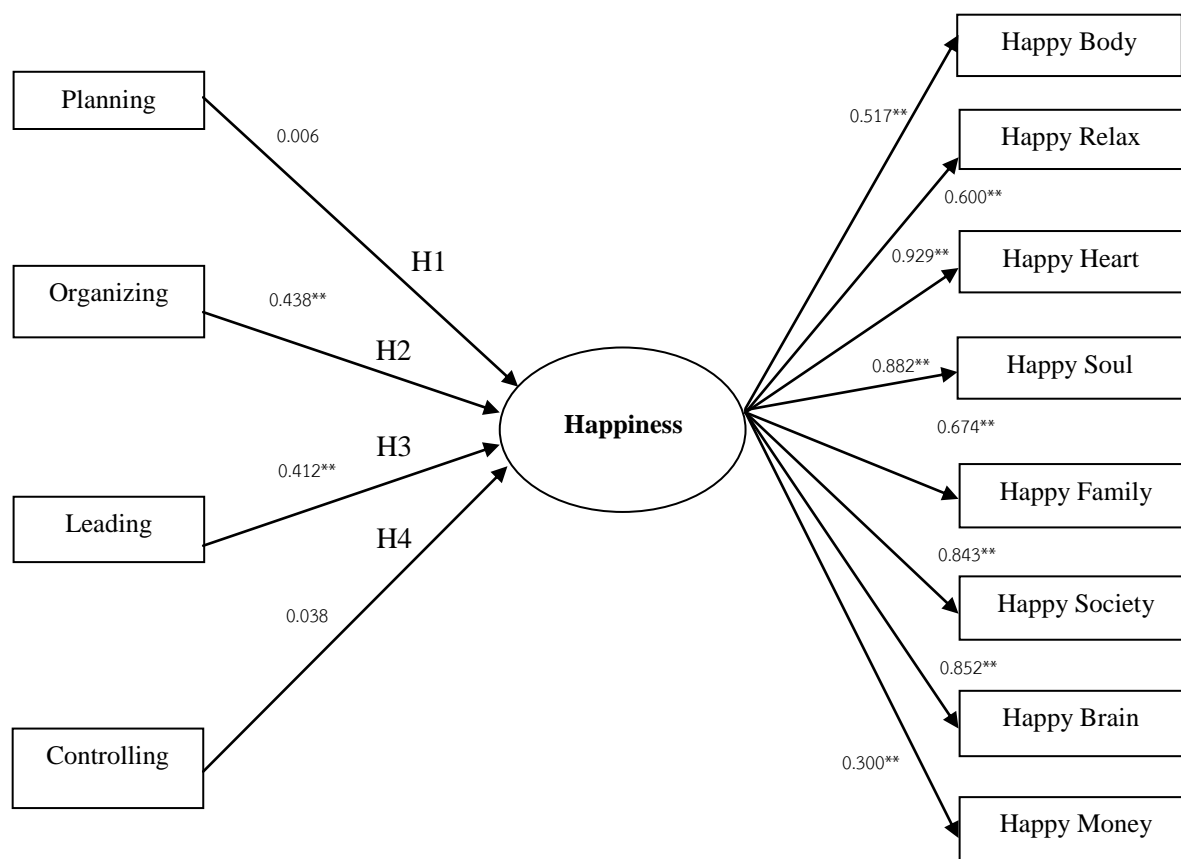
Figure 1 Structural Equation Model Estimates

From the SEM analysis, all four hypotheses of this research study were tested. As depicted in Figure 1, hypotheses H2 and H3 (organizing and leading have significantly positive impact on happiness at workplace) were confirmed, whereas H1 and H4 (planning and controlling have res

Discussion and Recommendation

The findings in this research have to great extent fulfilled the objectives of this research. Contributions are made particularly to improving the managerial functions of Thai police stations in order to build a happy workplace for the Thai police force. In this respect, three main issues are discussed and recommended as follows:

Issue on happiness: Given that the majority of Thai police officers work under financial limitations as well as insufficient budget and operational resources, they are inevitably drawn together - they become mutually dependent on each other, more considerate toward each other, and work cooperatively. Moreover, Thai police officers have a great responsibility in taking care of and protecting the well-being of people. They have been trained to sacrifice their personal comfort to serve and protect the people and community and to be spiritual about it. All these cooperative and pro-social work behaviors are reflected in the happiness level of the nine Thai police stations which, from the findings of this research, was found to be highest at the "Happy Heart" (kind-hearted; considerate) level, followed by the "Happy Soul" (good spirit) and "Happy Society" (good society), respectively. However, Thai police low salary and compensation, relative to the workload and the burden of responsibility police officers have to bear, have largely led to financial problems. It is common to see Thai police officers using their own pocket money to operate their own police work. Considering that the

police duty often requires 24-hour work and that police regulations do not support police officers to take off duty or second jobs, it is thereby difficult for Thai police officers to make extra income. For this reason, "Happy Money" was scored the lowest in relation to other happiness level.

Issue on management factors: The findings of this research have shown that two management factors, organizing (β = 0.438) and leading (β = 0.412), have significantly positive impact on happiness at workplace. The impact of the other two management factors, planning and controlling, on happiness at workplace, however, was shown to be insignificant. The reasons for these results lie in the fact that Thai police stations are small-size operational unit with limited budget and resources. It is, hence, necessary for these police stations to have an effective managerial skill in organizing in order to operate and render their services efficiently. Additionally, Thai police management has a bureaucratic structure and exhibits a hierarchy of authority. The head of a Thai police station is required to strictly lead his/ her police subordinates according to the rules and regulations. With respect to building a "Happy Workplace" in a police station, it is vital for the head of the police station not to only have a good organizing skill but also a leadership quality in order to coordinate and create a happy work environment for the police officers.

Implication: In creating a "Happy Workplace" for a police station in Thailand, it is essential for Royal Thai Police to understand the importance of managing happiness at workplace and to develop an adequate leadership with both organizing and leading capabilities to successfully achieve happiness implementation. It is also important to note that in order to sustain happiness at workplace a head of a police station is required to improve both planning and controlling skills as well. Hence, it is recommended that the training program for commissioned police officers should include courses on improving managerial skills and knowledge necessary for attaining happy work environment in Thai police stations.

Conclusion

The results of this study have indicated that the happiness level of Thai police officers in accordance with the "Happy Workplace" principles was highest at "Happy Heart", followed by "Happy Soul" and "Happy Society" respectively. "Happy Money", on the other hand, earned the lowest mean score, exhibiting the fact that, even though Thai police officers have to work under tight budget and limited financial and operational resources, they still managed to maintain their happiness by working cooperatively with their heart and soul and by sacrificing their personal happiness for the goodness and well-being of the people. The sacrifices the police officers have to make were reflected in relatively low mean scores of "Happy Body", "Happy Relax" and "Happy Family".

Moreover, the findings from this research also confirmed that the managerial functions which have a significantly positive impact on happiness level in Thai police stations were organizing and leading. Thereby, to maintain a good happiness level in the police station, it would be necessary for a head of a Thai police station to be equipped with not only an exceptional organizing skill but also a considerable leadership quality. All these managerial skills are needed for the Thai police force to successfully change and reform for better quality of life at workplace and better quality of work for the people and the country as the whole.

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