

An analysis of the relationship between personality types and happiness of medical faculty

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Abstract

In order to develop quality healthcare professionals it is essential to know the factors that affect their workplace happiness. This study dwells into the personality types of healthcare professionals in order to investigate whether the personality types of healthcare professional affect their workplace happiness and if so how it is affected. The study used a version of the Myers Briggs type indicator and the Job Central Happiness Indicator to ascertain personality types and the happiness levels of the respondents. The study was conducted among a random sample of 102 doctors (N=102) from North Bengal Medical College, Siliguri. The study showed that personality type has no significant influence on workplace happiness.

Keywords: Healthcare, Workplace, Happiness, Quality and Personality Types.

Introduction

Happiness is an important topic in organizational research because of its many effects on the success of the organization and some organizations strive to maximize organizational happiness. Happy employees create a more positive working environment for organizations. Personality has been considered as one of the factor that act as sources of workplace happiness.

The influence of personality on employee's behavior can be traced back to the Hawthorne Studies. It is a good predictor of behaviors, which are not possible to envisage using the general mental abilities, knowledge, skills and concrete situations (Barrick & Mount, 2005; Ones, Viswesvaran & Dilchert, 2005 in S Ovidiu). Individual's behavior is determined by his personality characteristics and situational factors, which are changeable during the time. In order to exchange and predict work behavior, knowledge about an individual's personality characteristics and his surroundings is required (K.S. Cook et.al., 1983).

During the past decade the topological approach to ascertaining personality influences has produced a large number of studies based on Jungian personality types. Dr. Carl G. Jung was a Swiss physician-psychiatrist who developed a comprehensive theory to explain personality. Myers (1976) explained that the central tenet of Jung's theory was that what appears to be random human behavior is actually quite orderly and occurs in patterns.

There is a need in medical education to understand the factors involved in professional happiness. A review of the literature revealed that no study had utilized Myers - Brigg's Type Indicator temperaments in attempting to explain individual teacher differences as they relate to job satisfaction variables. This study attempts to do just that.

A study of related literature

Various studies have examined the relation of personality traits to happiness and have yielded consistent findings. Extraversion and Neuroticism have been repeatedly found to be the strongest predictors of happiness levels, accounting for up to half of the total variance in various measures (Argyle & Lu, 1990; Brebner, 1998; Francis, 1999; al., 1998; Myers & Diener, 1995).

Mansoor Momeni et.al.(2011) studied the relationship between personality variables and happiness among the students of University of Tehran (UT). Their findings show that extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness impacts positively on happiness, While Neuroticism and openness impacts negatively on happiness.

Eysenck (1983) noted that "Happiness is a thing called stable extraversion...the positive effect in happiness seemed to be related to easy sociability; with a natural, pleasant interaction with other people...then it only makes sense that happiness can be associated with extraversion. Similarly, if worries and anxieties make up negative effect in happiness, it can easily be seen that instability and neuroticism are also connected to unhappiness".

Kenneth O. Doyle and Seounmi Youn (2000) found that Extraverts were happier than Introverts, and Tender minders were happier than Tough minders. They identified patterns of similarities and differences across personality types in the meaning of happiness with respect to good eating habits, financial insecurity, anxiety and tension, financial optimism, and health concerns.

Greg Huszczo, Megan Endres (2013) used MBTI to investigate effects of gender and personality on choice of happiness strategies and found that Females with "Feeling" preferences expressing significantly higher

use of happiness strategies than Males with “Thinking” preferences. Females with “Thinking” preferences and Males with “Feeling” preferences showed few significant differences from other types.

Very little number of studies has been found to establish relation between personality type and happiness. In this direction the present study may contribute some knowledge in happiness and personality research

Significance of the study

In this study an attempt was made to identify personality types of medical faculties and to relate these to work place happiness. Different types of people have demonstrated preferences for different ways of thinking and looking at their experiences, which were manifested in different behavior patterns. Different occupations and jobs provided various settings in which certain types of people felt comfortable and were happy. By identifying personality types of medical educators professional knowledge was gathered about the types of people who selected that occupation.

There was little or no research done on medical faculty and within the academic context. The present study is an in depth exploration of the relationship between personality and happiness will definitely help to find ways and means to meet challenges that require a new understanding in the faculty attraction, selection and retention space. This study attempts to add to the dynamics of personality and happiness in health institutes in India.

Objectives of the study

There were two primary objectives that the study sought to fulfill. The primary objective of the study was to find out the relationship between the personalities types as indicated by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicators (MBTI) and happiness at work. The secondary objective was to find out personality profile of medical teachers.

Methodology

The study sought to test the following hypotheses:-

Hypotheses:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between personality type and workplace happiness.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between personality type and workplace happiness.

The study was descriptive research study with no intervention by the researchers. 120 faculty members with at least one year of teaching experience from West Bengal were asked to fill in the questionnaires. The questionnaire was administered to 120 faculty members chosen randomly. The number of people who returned the questionnaire was 102.

Two instruments were used to collect data for this study. One was Job central Happiness Indicator and the other related to Personality characteristics based on the

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) in a revised form to suit the objective of the study.

The Myers Briggs type indicator: The MBTI is a self-report questionnaire based on Carl Jung's theory of psychological types. There are eight personality preferences which are paired along four bi-polar scales. There is no right or wrong responses and all eight preferences are equally valid. Irrational mental functions, Sensing (S) or Intuition (N), relate to how an individual perceives information, while rational mental functions, Thinking (T) or Feeling (F), provide insight into how one makes judgments or decisions based upon their perceptions. A Sensing person prefers to gather facts and information's by using one or more of five concrete senses, where as Intuition types look for meaning or relationships in their observations. Thinking individuals are inclined to make judgments and decisions based on logic and objective data and Feeling types prefer to make a judgment based more on their personal values and subjective data. The two opposite pairs of mental attitudes, Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I) and Judging (J) or Perceiving (P), represent how individuals prefer to orient or direct their time and energy and how one deal with the world around them, respectively. Personality results from a preference for and an interaction of these attitudes and functions. The four dimensions can be combined to identify sixteen personality types designated by 4 letters representing each of the preferred mental attitudes and function (e.g. ESTJ, INFP etc). No one personality type is regarded as superior in any way, but certain types are anticipated to be more naturally skilled or comfortable in certain contexts or roles (Stephen A. Jessee et. al., 2006).

Jobs central works happiness indicator is tool used to study how happy workers are with their jobs. It has been widely used in Singapore where online participation is voluntary and open to all Singapore workers above the age of 16. It is widely recognized as a comprehensive tool to ascertain workplace happiness.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of personality type and personality traits of all 102, medical faculty doctors. The doctors had predominant traits of Extraversion (E), sensing (S), feeling (F) and perceptive (P). Most doctors had a preference for Extraversion(57%) rather than Introversion(43%), Sensing perception(53%) rather than Intuitive perception(47%), Feeling judgment(62%) rather than Thinking judgment (38%) and a Perceiving orientation(59%) rather than Judging orientation(41%). Thinking was the weakest trait of the doctors only 38% demonstrated such a style. It could be reasoned that 'feeling' is required to realize patient's problems, which is why doctors are naturally high in it. Extraversion is necessary to interact and communicate with patient and

other parties, while ‘sensing’ helps to collect factual information rather than relying on intuition. Finally, being perceptive helps them to keep their opinion open for new information. As a group doctors displayed E-S-F-P traits.

As it is evident from Table 1 INFP had the maximum representation at 16% followed by personality type ESTJ at 15%, the personality ENFP 10% and ESFP and ISFP both type 9%. If we carefully look at the type preferences we will find that NFP (26/102) were

having a dominant preference over SFP (18/102).The personality type INFJ,INTJ and ENTJ found minimum representation at 2.5% and 2%. In this study INFJ, INTJ and ENTJ were minorities, which is not astounding given in small sample. These personalities carry important qualities such as originality, interest in discovering causes, ability to solve problems in more concrete fashion and to think about problem critically found least among the doctors.

Table 1: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Doctor Type and Traits (N=102)

Sensin Type		Intuitive Types		Trait	
Thinking	Feeling	Feeling	Thinking		
ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ	Judging Introverts	Extroversion 57%
%=3	%=3.5	%=2.5	%=2.5		Introversion 43%
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP	Perceiving Introverts	Sensing 53%
%=3.5	%=9	%=16	%=3.0		Intuition 47%
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP	Perceiving Extroverts	Thinking 38%
%=3.0	%=9	%=10	%=6		Feeling 62%
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ	Judging Extroverts	Judging 41%
%=15	%=7	%=5.0	%=2.0		Perceiving 59%

Approximately 84% of the respondents were male and 16% were female. In this survey dominant personality type of female were ENFP (3/16) followed by INFP (2/16).No female were found with ENTJ, ESTP, ESFJ, ISTP and ISTJ type. Female doctors displayed E-N-F-P traits, 50% of the female doctors were introverted, and 56% intuitive and 75% were both feller and perceiver. In case of female thinking was also weakest trait. Only 25% of female doctors had such style. This result coincide with other studies that female are feelers, intuitive and perceivers. According to Myers & McCauley’s (1985) Manual, A guide to the development and use of the myers-briggs type indicator, 68% of females prefer the feeling function as a means of decision making. In the process of making decisions Feeling types will select for harmony within the group first and foremost. They are often deemed to have a passionate quest for meaning that appreciates human qualities with warmth (Berens, Cooper, Linda, & Martin, 2002).

Table 2: Personality and Happiness (frequency distribution)

Type/Happy	Very unhappy	Unhappy	Moderately happy	Happy	Very happy	Total
ENTP	1	1	1	3	0	6
ENTJ	0	0	2	0	0	2
ENFP	1	0	1	7	1	10
ENFJ	1	0	2	2	0	5
ESTP	0	0	1	2	0	3
ESTJ	0	2	7	5	1	15
ESFJ	1	2	0	3	1	7
ESFP	0	0	3	4	2	9
INTP	1	0	1	1	0	3
INTJ	0	1	1	0	1	3
INTP	1	0	2	0	0	3
INFP	0	2	6	7	1	16
ISTP	0	1	1	2	0	4
ISTJ	0	0	1	1	1	3
ISFP	1	0	4	4	0	9
ISFJ	1	1	0	1	1	4

Total	08	10	33	41	10	102
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Table 2 shows ESFP type represent maximum (2%) number of very happy doctors, but INFP (16%) personality type had highest representation. Hammer (in Leonie Tickle,2009) found that a number of studies suggested that those types who were less frequent or underrepresented in an occupation tend to be less satisfied or had higher intention to leave the occupation that did those types who were more frequent or whose fit with the occupation was judged to be better. This statement is not fully true in this survey, ESFP represent maximum number of very happy doctors compare to INFP. There was no ESFP type of faculties in very unhappy group. Only 9% faculty doctors had ESFP type personality. This type is attracted to business and medicine (Myers, 1962). In this study ESFP displaced respondents' group traits. These types of people are outgoing, friendly, and accepting. ESF personality type enjoys working with others to make things happen. Bring common sense and a realistic approach to their work, and make work fun. They are also flexible and spontaneous, adapt readily to new people and environments. Learn best by trying a new skill with other people.

No ENTJ, ESTP and ISTP personality type of doctors were either very happy or very unhappy. ISFJ, ESFJ and ENFP personality type had same (1%) percent in both group. No ENTP, ENFJ, INTP, and ISFP type of respondents were very happy but 1% each of this type was very unhappy. In this survey it was found that no ESTJ, ESFP, INTJ, INFP, ISTP and ISTJ personality type of doctors were very unhappy. ENFP (7), INFP (7), ESTJ (5), ESFP (4), ISFP(4), ENTP(3) and ESFJ(3) type of doctors were moderately happy they lack enthusiasm.

Analysis of data in this study failed to show relationships between MBTI personality types of medical faculty and their happiness at work. ISFJ, ESFJ and ENFP types were both in very happy and very unhappy group. Hypothesis that personality type has no significant influence on workplace happiness is accepted. There were no differences in type preference between faculties who were very happy or very unhappy at work; nor was it possible to predict happiness from MBTI preference scores.

Conclusions and Summary

Medical faculties play an important contributor role in shaping a future doctors intellect and hence happiness at work assumes great important in this context. Health care institutions need to consciously measure personality of faculty in recruiting, retaining and developing them. The present study found that personality type of faculties had no relation with work place happiness. While this study provided new data on the personality characteristics of medical faculty, it did not provide prediction capabilities that would aid recruitment of potential medical educator.

Based on the results from this investigation, the following recommendations are made.

1. Administrators need an understanding of all types of teachers. The application of personality type theory could assist administrators in better understanding and reinforcing all teachers, and in appreciating their unique teaching styles.
2. Administrators should seek strategies that will assist unhappy faculties to cope with areas of their job they dislike or to alter circumstances that are in conflict with their preferences. In this way, unhappiness may be lessened and good teachers may be retained.
3. An understanding of personality type theory would allow teachers to improve their interactions with students.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will assist administrators in the implementation of programs to monitor the workplace happiness of the medical faculty in an effort to improve the services provided to students and patients as well as increasing retention. This study demonstrated an empirical connection between personality type and workplace happiness in a sample of medical teachers, future work will pick up where the study left off and develop a more refined and nuanced understanding of how personality type affects a variety of job performance characteristics.

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