

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HAPPY WORKPLACE INDEX

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This research aims to study and develop a Happy Workplace Index using mixed methods research. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected using various methods such as: (1) literature review, (2) happy workplace index synthesis, (3) content validation by experts, (4) pilot study, and (5) analysis and improvement. Selection of organizations for quantitative sampling was done by randomly selecting organizations subjected to external review in 2008. Selection of organizations for qualitative sampling was done by assignment of selection criteria of informants including the organization leader, staff in personnel administration, and human resources management divisions. There were 93 organizations selected for quantitative review and 8 organizations selected for qualitative review. The research tools consisted of a self-evaluation handbook (Happy Workplace Index: Questionnaire for self-assessment), questionnaires for asking the staff and guideline for interviews. Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis and quantitative data were analysed using frequency, percentages, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The result revealed that the developed Happy Workplace Index was comprised of 39 indices set with 5 dimensions. The first dimension was human resources management (6 sub-indices), the second dimension was environment and atmosphere in enhancing health (10 sub-indices), the third dimension was healthy organization creation process (8 sub-indices), the fourth dimension was physical and mental health (11 sub-indices), and the fifth dimension was results (4 sub-indices). Results of EFA created 4 crucial components which are: component 1—Working atmosphere (18 sub-indices) with factor loading between 0.39 - 0.86, component 2—Human resources management (9 sub-indices) with factor loading between 0.48 - 0.67, component 3—Physical and mental health (4 sub-indices) with factor loading between 0.50 - 0.81, and component 4—Growth or organizational products quality (4 sub-indices) with factor loading between 0.35 - 0.77, which adequately

explained variability in the 39 indices and its sub-indices (56.92%). The further research should develop the criteria for evaluating the happy workplace level. Thus, the organization can use the criteria as guidelines for evaluating outcomes of happy workplace promotion activities.

Keywords: Development, Happy workplace index, Company happiness check.

Introduction

Health Promotion in Private Sector Organizations plan by the Thai Health Promotion Foundation aimed to support and promote development of 'good health' in private sector organizations, creating a happy workplace where its members had a good quality of life, and was generally healthy in all four aspects: physical, mental, social, and intellectual. Resulting in sustainable good health with goals being: for people in the organization to work healthily, had a safe, hygienic and healthy environment in which to work, had good skills and worked performance, bonded and cared for its organization, and created new and sustainable innovations in Human Resource Management, which would enable private sector organizations to be more competitive, improved its productivity, and creating adequate revenue satisfying managers and shareholders (Health Promotion in Private Sector Organizations, 2009)

The Health Promotion in Private Sector Organizations plan had received budgetary support in carrying out its health promotional activities in the private sector since 2007 from the Thai Health Promotion Foundation. The results at the organizational level was required but no tools to assess organizational health yet existed to gauge the success of the program. The researchers therefore aimed to study and developed a Happy Workplace index to evaluate organizational health of organizations which had received support and participated in health promotion activities and the success of the activities by determining the question to be answered as: what would a Happy Workplace index be like? **Objective:** To study and develop a Happy Workplace index. **Scope:** This research aimed to create an index for results evaluation in organizations which had participated in the program to promote development of 'good health' in private sector organizations from 2007 to 2010.

Relevant Documents and Research

A balance of healthy in organizations can be occurred from several factors. The concept of creating a healthy organization should compose of 1) Health and safety of the physical environment in the workplace, 2) Harmonious psychological environment including the management system and culture in the organization, 3) Personal health-related resources in the workplace, and 4) Channels for accessing to the community in order to improve health of employees, their families, and other people in the community. (Dive, 2004., Lowe, 2004., Smet, Loch & Schaninger, 2007., WHO, 2010., Burton, 2010.). Healthy organization can be developed by following established systems and steps such as mobilizing resources, assembling related personnel for discussion and meetings, assessing the situations, prioritizing key issues, planning necessary steps, doing—carrying out the plan, evaluation, and improving upon actions taken. (WHO Healthy Workplace Framework and Model, 2010). As such, tools for determining a workplace's health should be available for identifying issues which should be addressed. The importance healthy organization indices were support from administrators, cooperation and participation from employees, policies promoting a healthy workplace, having systemic integration into organizational strategies and process of work, having a procedural structure and work analysis, receiving support of necessary resources, data preparation and training of teamwork, having evaluation and monitoring, using effective measurement tools, and having the methods for promoting the understanding in the issues relating to develop healthy organization. So that people in the organization can continually propel the organization effectively and efficiently.

Workplace Health Promotion produces several benefits at individual and at organizational level. These benefits are the reason why an organization should invest in Workplace Health Promotion (WHP). To be really effective and efficient, a WHP program should comply with certain conditions. WHP should focus on individual behaviors and lifestyle changes as well as on organizational health. After all, health is affected by both individual and organizational influences. Thus, when an organization wants to set up a WHP program concerning voluntary health practices, this should be interlinked with occupational health and safety and organizational change in this organization. The concept of comprehensive WHP is also at the basis of the Company Health Check. This check was developed using evidence and existing questionnaires. The objective of the Check is to involve companies and organizations and to stimulate the setup of WHP activities. This is why the Check focuses on providing companies/organizations not only with information on how they are dealing at the moment with WHP but also provides some tips to start or further develop WHP activities. (Muylaert, Beeck & Broek, 2007) The Company Health Check can provide interesting information on WHP in Europe. So, the Company Health Check should be the guide line to develop the Happy Workplace Index.

Research Methodology

This study employed mixed methods research, collecting data through various methods using quantitative and qualitative data. Population consisted of organization leaders, human resources managers in private sector organizations, academic personnel, and experts in the field from government and private sectors. Sample for quantitative sampling, calculations were made from Taro Yamane's formula (1973). Of a population of 1,357 organizations with 5 degrees of freedom as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}, n = \frac{1,357}{1 + (1,357)(.05)^2}$$

Results in a sample of 309 organizations, so stratified random sampling was performed resulting in 400 organizations with approximately 30% of organizations from each region. Sample for qualitative sampling, selecting organizations were done using purposive sampling following established criteria taking into consideration their implementation such as organization type, area, and size resulting in a sample of 8 organizations. Research Tools for collection of quantitative data consisted of a self-evaluation handbook: 'Happy Workplace Index: Questionnaire for self-assessment' and questionnaires for asking the staff. Research tools for collection of qualitative data consisted of guidelines for interviews.

Happy Workplace Index: Questionnaire for self-assessment was the result of studies on happiness indices at the individual and organizational level such as Human Development Index (HDI), Quality of Life Index (Wasin Prombood, 2006), Sustainable Development Index, Gross National Happiness (GNH), Happy Planet Index (HPI), Excellence Framework for Healthy Workplace (Corbett, 2004), and Healthy Workplace Framework (Burton 2010) in addition to research synthesis and lessons from the Health Promotion in Private Sector Organizations plan, taking qualities such as reliability, validity, utilization, and appropriateness into consideration. Content validation was done by calculating indexes of Item – Objective Congruence: IOC by 8 experts, and reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha resulting in tool precision of 0.926

Data Collection was carried out as follows: 1) Collection of qualitative data was done through thorough interviews of business owners and human resource management managers from 8 organizations and a hosting knowledge forum comprising of 14 organizations. Additional information was gained from observation in hosting participatory programs such as taking part in knowledge sharing forums in the Happy Workplace promotion program from January to April 2010. 2) Collection of quantitative data was done by conducting a study using the self-evaluation handbook: 'Happy Workplace Index: Questionnaire for self-assessment.' The handbook was distributed to human resource management managers and concerned persons through (1) post, (2) e-mail, and (3) telephone interviews and through meeting hand outs. Responses from 93 organizations in the sample make up 23.25% after follow-up.

Data Analysis: Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis, and quantitative data was analyzed using exploratory factor analysis: EFA.

Results: The resulting framework for the Happy Workplace index 39 indices set with 5 dimensions. The first dimension was human resources management (6 sub-indices), the second dimension was environment and atmosphere in enhancing health (10 sub-indices), the third dimension was healthy organization creation process (8 sub-indices), the fourth dimension was physical and mental health (11 sub-indices), and the fifth dimension was results (4 sub-indices) as shown in Figure 1.

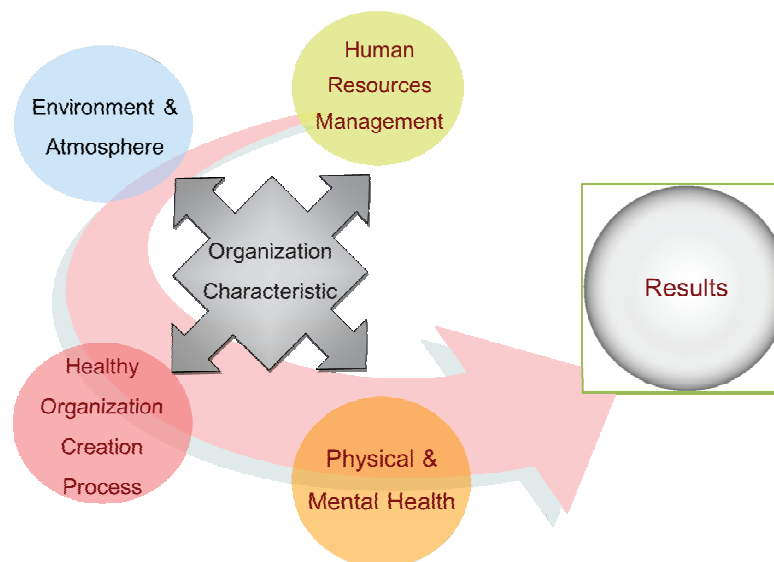


Figure 1. Happy Workplace framework.

Reliability Cronbach's alpha of the 5 dimensions of the Healthy organization index revealed that the fifth dimension, Results, had the lowest coefficient of 0.762 and the second dimension, environment and atmosphere, had the highest coefficient of 0.923

Validity through exploratory factor analysis: EFA to investigate how many components were in each dimension, and how which sub-indices made up those components. From preliminary investigation we found that the relation matrix between each sub-index of each dimension were statistically different at confidence level: 0.05 (Bartlett's test: $\chi^2=2868.673$, $df=741$, $p=0.000$). When reviewing suitability of each index individually, KMO was found to be 0.79, which was high and approaches 1, therefore, the 39 sub-indices were sufficiently related for further analysis as seen in Figure 4.

Analysis of components found that the 39 sub-indices could create 4 crucial components which could adequately explain the variability of the 39 sub-indices (56.92%). The results of Varimax with Kaiser Normalization showed that component 1 accounted for 25.79% of the variability, component 2 accounted for 12.79% of the variability, component 3 accounted for 9.89% of the variability, and component 4 accounted for 8.46% of the variability with component 1-Working environment and atmosphere (18 sub-indices) having factor loading between 0.39 - 0.86, component 2-Human resources management (9 sub-indices) having factor loading between 0.48 - 0.67, component 3-Physical and mental health (4 sub-indices) having factor loading between 0.50 - 0.81, and component 4-Growth or organizational products quality (4 sub-indices) having factor loading between 0.35 - 0.77 as seen in Figures 2 – 5.

Utilization: The quality checked results of indices that could be put to actual use could be summarized as follows: 1) Ideas for implementation in organization, especially systematic organization survey and evaluation which resulted in health levels of the organization and its necessary improvement items and leads to self-evaluation and could be used to set directions for organizational improvement. 2) Ways to manage and balance employee happiness. 3) Reveals gaps, imbalances in employee management

IT systems. 4) Use in follow-up and evaluation of different work processes in the organization and for internal prioritization. 5) Information for comparison between similar size/industry organizations leading to constructive competition. 6) Evaluation results could help promote the organization.

Appropriateness: compilation of related papers and journals and their synthesis resulting in the framework for happy workplace and 68 sub-indices, which were then presented to experts for their evaluation for appropriateness through indexes of Item – Objective Congruence: IOC, and presented to a panel of 8 experts for comments and suggestions relating to appropriateness of the sub-indices, use of language, dimensions, and components resulting in 39 sub-indices to be put to use.

Results of Happy Workplace index improvement from participatory observation, interviews, group discussions, and telephone interviews regarding the use of the self-evaluation handbook for evaluating their own organizations. Suggestions for improvement of the self-evaluation handbook: ‘Happy Workplace Index: Questionnaire for self-assessment’ in each dimension were as follows:

- 1 Human resources management: issues concerning factors internal to the organization such as management of benefits, proper welfare, protection and health care, job reviews, employee recognition, and career development according to potential.
- 2 Working Environment and Atmosphere: The organization supported creation of an environment contributing to a happy workplace by designing communication channels, studied into the environment which was most suitable to the context of the organization and its employees. Employees could readily access facilities contributing to a safe and happy workplace. Morals and ethics were promoted in the organization as well as community service and environmentally friendly activities. In smaller organizations, it was found that there were no written policies regarding development of healthy organization, but was reflected instead in the course of actions of management though the self-evaluation handbook could still be applied. The same problem was not found in medium and large organizations.
- 3 Happy workplace creation process: The organization had processes designed to improve health through activities and communication within the organization by allowing employees of all levels to take part and continually and systematically follow up on the results of these activities. There were 8 sub-indices in this dimension in which organizations reflected on.
- 4 Physical and Mental Health: the dimension which made the organization stand-out as philanthropic and created a state of healthy physical and mental state in employees which would reflect the organization as a whole.
- 5 Results: meaning results which might contribute positively or negatively to the organization from carrying out its activities/happy workplace program. To obtained results from activities using the handbook, the self-evaluator should study the handbook before initializing as the contents are detailed. Some organizations had no trouble with the evaluation, and the questions had multiple dimensions yielding a credible result and framework on which organizations of all sizes could develop.

The researchers had analyzed results and used them to improve the index by selecting them by the following criteria: 1) high component weight, 2) had information to support the evaluation, and 3) was widely accepted by organizations.

The draft was then evaluated together with a panel of experts who suggested the following improvements be made: 1) the handbook should have simple and clear explanations, 2) the number of indices should be few for preliminary trials, 3) adjust calculation of the Healthy organization index to be more clear, and 4) collect data from various sources for use in evaluation. The resulting index for published in self-evaluation handbook comprised of 39 sub-indices.

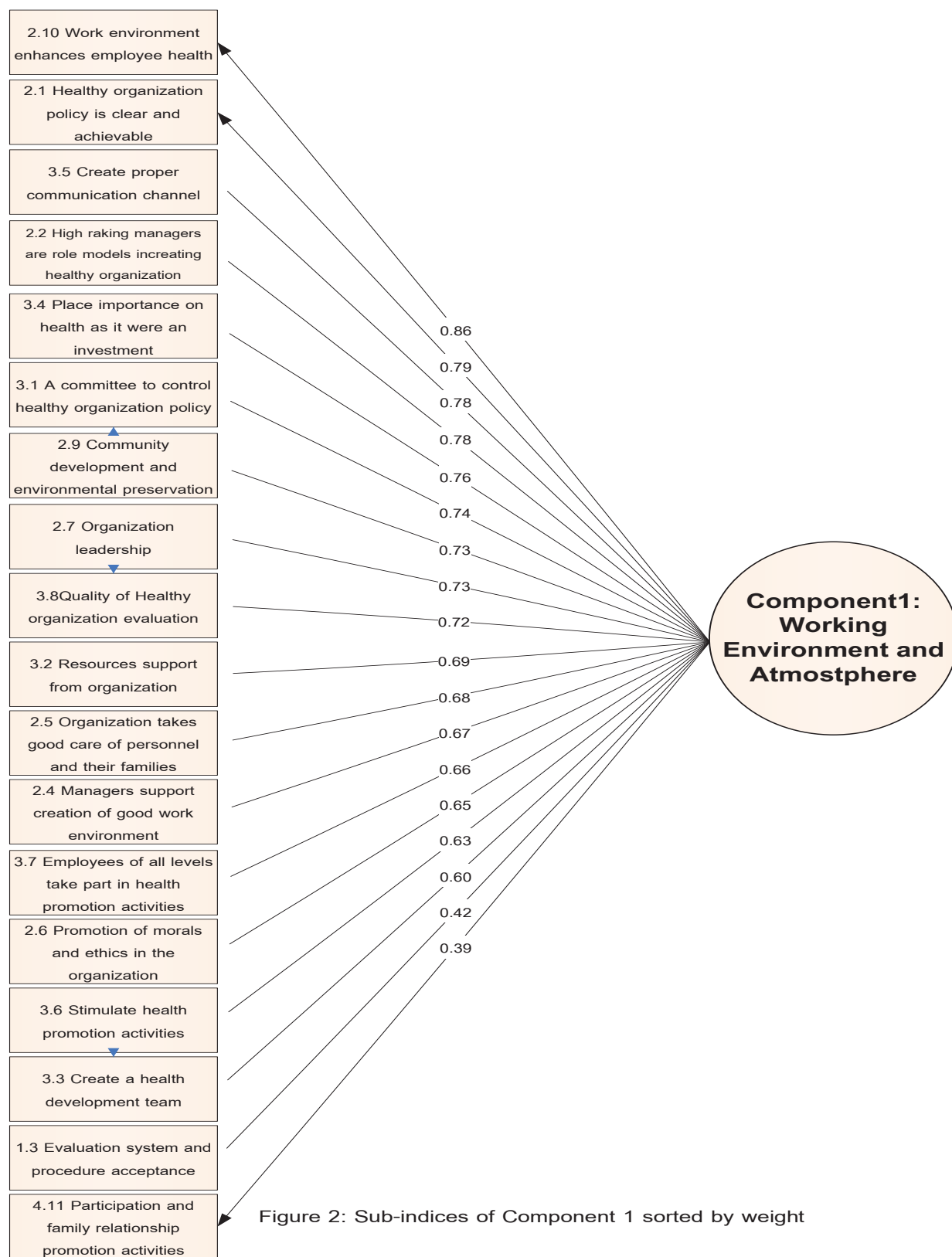
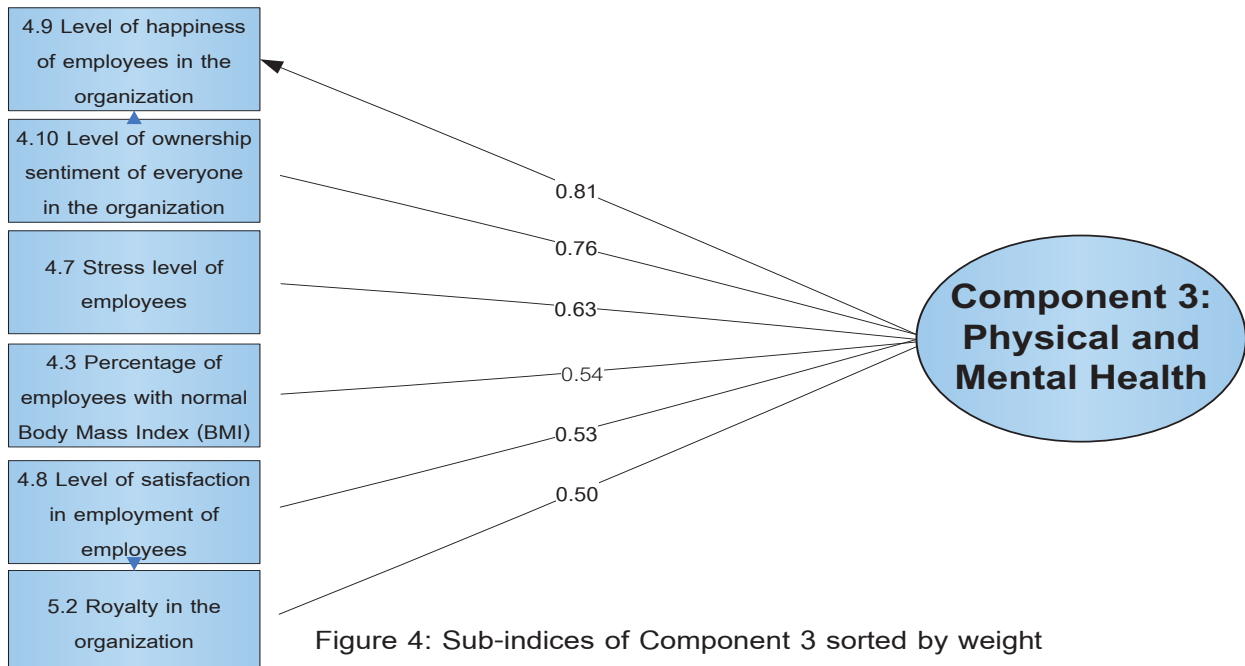
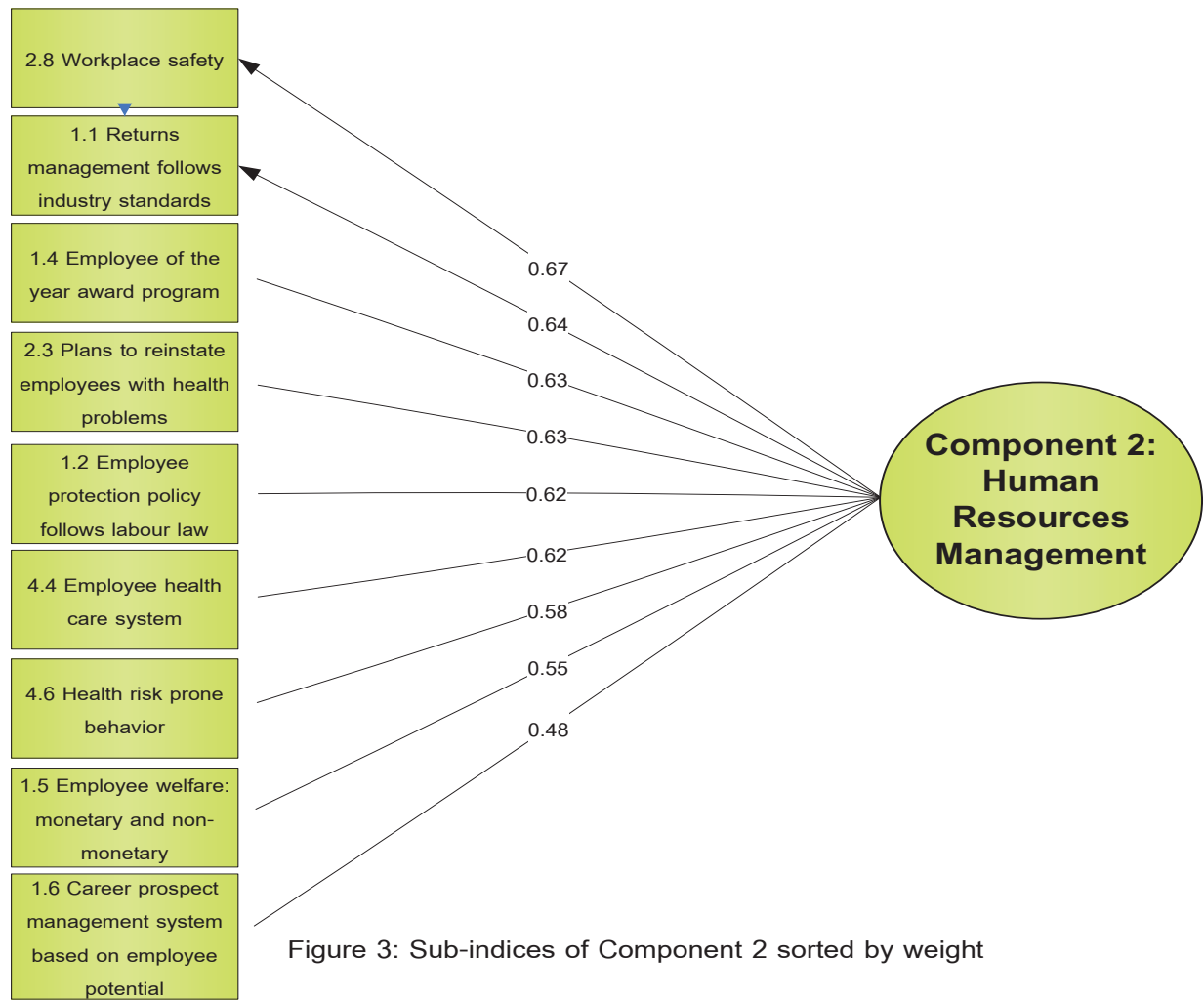


Figure 2: Sub-indices of Component 1 sorted by weight



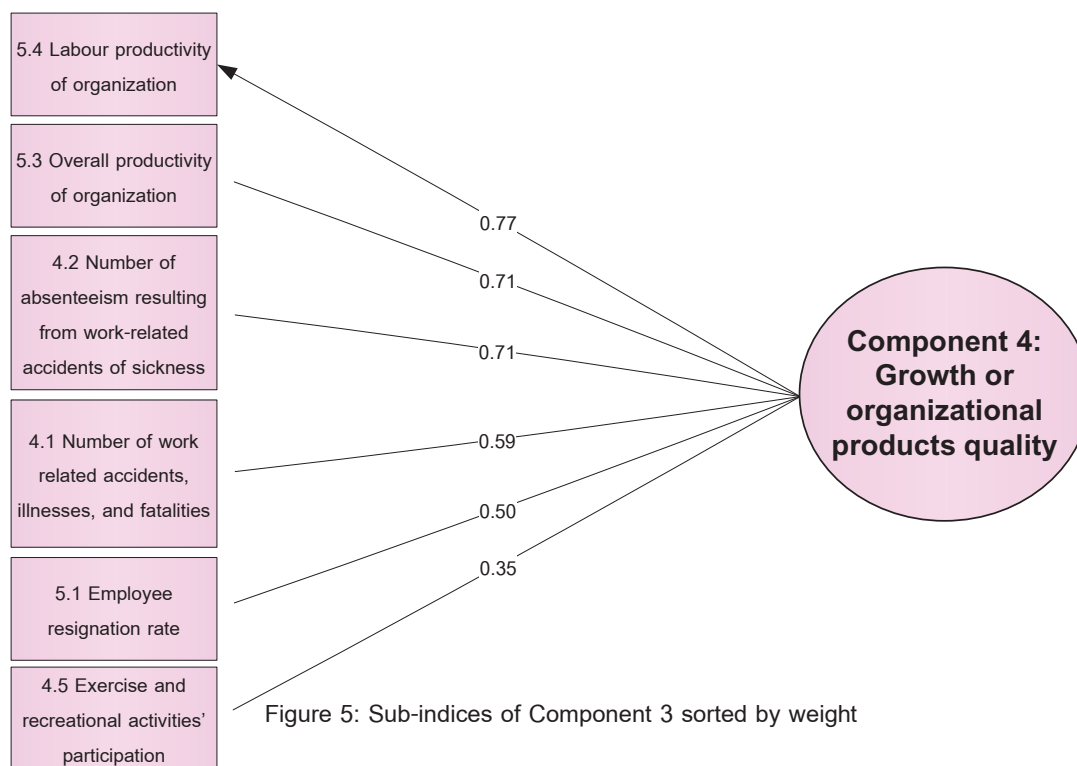


Figure 5: Sub-indices of Component 3 sorted by weight

Conclusion

The development of this Happy Workplace index stemmed from review of literary works on the measure of degree of happiness at both the individual and organizational level. Carrying out the development was done by drafting the index set, present them to a panel of experts for analysis, exploring the possibility of actual use, and conducting trials on private organizations. There were many ways to develop the index (Campbell, Hutchinson & Marshall, 2002; Marshall et al., 2004; Sithisarankul et al., 2003), Sithisarankul et al., 2003, developed a healthy workplace index for improvement of health in organizations through literature review and asking the opinions of a panel of 24 experts on the index. The number of experts on the panel was equivalent to studies conducted by Gagliardi, Fung, Langer, Stem, & Brown (2005). Furthermore, evaluation was done by experts who had direct experience in the field leading to high content relevance.

This study to develop an index was screened by 14 experts whose analysis was based on both knowledge and experience in creation of a healthy organization as they work in the human resource development field. Additionally, two quality tests were applicability and used in private organization evaluation, resulting in the study conducted being of high relevance and was suited for actual use. From expert opinion and studies conducted on private organizations in Thailand, the 39 sub-indices could be categorized into 4 components elaborated as follows:

Component 1 comprised of 18 sub-indices which were: 1) Work environment enhanced employee health, 2) Healthy organization policy was clear and achievable, 3) Create proper communication channels, 4) High ranking managers were role models in creating healthy organization, 5) Place importance on health as it were an investment, 6) A committee to control healthy organization policy, 7) Community development and environmental preservation, 8) Organization leadership, 9) Quality of Healthy organization evaluation, 10) Resources support from organization, 11) Organization took good care of personnel and their families, 12) Managers supported creation of good work environment, 13) Employees of all levels took part in health promotion activities, 14) Promotion of morals and ethics in the organization, 15) Stimulated health promotion activities, 16) Created a health development team, 17)

Evaluation system and procedure acceptance, 18) Participation and family relationship promotion activities. The 18 sub-indices were collectively called “Working Environment and Atmosphere” with the highest component weight of 0.86, similar to Sithisarankul, et al. 2003, that developed of indicators for health promotion in the workplace which resulted in 46 sub-indices divided into 6 groups from the study into healthy organization creation index. The 6 groups were: 1) Workplace health improvement policy, 2) Environmental health in the workplace, 3) Biological environment, 4) Health and employee’s way of life, 5) Healthcare services, and 6) Environmental impact. Overall, this index was suitable for use in organizations, and most indices were concerned with the working environment.

Component 2 comprised of 9 sub-indices which were: 1) Workplace safety, 2) Returns management follows industry standards, 3) Employee of the year award program, 4) Plans to reinstate employees with health problems, 5) Employee protection policy followed labor law, 6) Employee health care system, 7) Health risk prone behavior, 8) Employee welfare: monetary and non-monetary, and 9) Career prospect management system based on employee potential. Together, they formed a component which could be labeled “Human Resources Management.” Managing of people so they feel happy at work had become a crucial factor in environmental and safety management. Investing in the creation of an atmosphere where people work happily was a worthwhile investment as it benefited both the employees and their employer. Chawsithiwong, 2007, stated that people who were happy or an organization with a happy working atmosphere possess the power of creation such as increased productivity, quality, capacity, customer satisfaction, creativity and innovation, adaptability, flexibility, and reduced losses, absenteeism, leaves, stress, accidents, and work-related illnesses.

Component 3 comprised of 6 sub-indices which were: 1) Level of happiness of employees in the organization, 2) Level of ownership sentiment of everyone in the organization, 3) Stress level of employees, 4) Percentage of employees with normal Body Mass Index (BMI), 5) Level of satisfaction in employment of employees, and 6) Relationships in the organization. Together, they form a component which could be labeled “Physical and Mental Health.” Chuenruthai Kanjanachitra et al. (2008) had found in her study into the quality of life of people in industrial and service sectors, 6 main components of which the main component was health. It comprised of 7 indices which were physical health, mental health, food consumption, exercise and recreation, smoking, alcoholic and energy drinks consumption, and sexual and societal behaviors.

Component 4 comprised of 6 sub-indices which were: 1) Labor productivity of organization, 2) Overall productivity of organization, 3) Number of absenteeism resulting from work-related accidents of sickness, 4) Number of work related accidents, illnesses, and fatalities, 5) Employee resignation rate, and 6) Exercise and recreational activities' participation. Together, they form a component which could be labeled “Growth or organizational products quality.” Arunratana Klaipongse (2010) stated that the success of an organization’s development could be evaluated from 4 aspects which were: (1) Personal efficiency and productivity, which was the required characteristic for a person to be suited for the task and be able to accomplish goals as required of him/her by the organization, (2) Productive efficiency and productivity, depending on set rules and standards, resulting in low cost, high quality products leading to customer satisfaction, (3) Operational efficiency and productivity: the processes, procedures, or techniques which resulted in short completion times, small use of resources, non-repetitive tasks, and ease of management, (4) Accomplishment efficiency and productivity: goals and missions accomplished using resources effectively.

Suggestion for Further Study: The happy workplace index should be improved upon for continual use in evaluation of an organization’s health promotion activities.

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