

## Happiness at Work: Case of Apparel Industry in Sri Lanka

Oshadhie Silva<sup>1</sup>, Dinesha Siriwardhane<sup>2\*</sup> and Asel Hettiarachchi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,3</sup> Lecturer, Department of Business Economics,  
University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup> Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Economics,  
University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka

\**d.siriwardhane@sjp.ac.lk*

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**Abstract:** The objectives of the study were to; examine the differences in happiness at work among white-collar and blue-collar workers in the apparel industry and to explore the main contributing organizational level factors to happiness at work. Following the case study method, a sample of blue and white-collar employees, selected from a large organization in the apparel industry were used to collect data. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data related to happiness and its determinants. Both ANOVA and ANCOVA models together with qualitative analysis were used to analyze data. It was found that blue-collar workers are happier at work than white-collar workers. Furthermore, it was discovered that job inspiration and work-life quality are the most significant contributors to the happiness of blue-collar employees; job inspiration, leadership, and work quality contribute to the happiness of white-collar employees.

**Keywords:** *Blue-collar Employees, Happiness at Work, Job Inspiration, Job Satisfaction, Well-being of Employees, White-collar Workers*

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### Introduction

Happiness is a fundamental yet hard-to-define concept where everyone has an idea about what it means but the meaning can be different depending on the context. Happiness relates to the experience and the appraisals of people about their lives (Bataineh, 2019). Happiness in the context of economics was first emphasized by nineteenth-century moral philosophers, including Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. In 1972, the 4<sup>th</sup> king of Bhutan declared that they were focusing more on Gross National Happiness than Gross National Production as the former is more important than the latter. International attention to the concept increased (Ura et al., 2012). Currently,

happiness is one of the most concerned fields in recent economic research and policymaking.

Despite the focus on happiness, happiness at work is an underrated topic in economic literature. Happiness at work can be explained as “a mindset that enables action to maximize performance and achieve potential”(Pryce-Jones and Lindsay, 2014). Fisher (2010) defined happiness at work as “pleasant judgments or pleasant experiences at work”. In simplest terms, happiness at work can be defined as how happy people are at work. Even though happiness at work is generally understood as a synonym for job satisfaction, this is a much broader and more complex concept as job satisfaction is only a subpart of happiness at work (Fisher, 2010).

Literature shows that work engagement and happiness are positively related (Field and Buitendach, 2011). Employees tend to engage more in work when they are happy about it. According to Jones and Lindsey (2014), the happiest employees are high-performing. They take one-tenth of the sick leaves compared to least happy colleagues, are six times more energized, and intend to stay twice as long in their organizations. Further, they are productive as twice least happy colleagues. Hence, having happy employees enhances labor productivity, reduces production and waste costs, and gives an organization a competitive advantage. (Smith, 2012 as cited in Salas-Vallina and Alegre, 2018a).

Out of all industries in Sri Lanka, this research focuses on happiness at work in the Apparel Industry. The industry contributes to the country's economy as the largest gross export earner since 1986 (Dheerasinghe, 2009). And the contribution to the economy from the apparel industry is increasing continuously over the years. With the major threat of increasing competition from low-cost competitors, Dheerasinghe (2009) states that the Sri Lankan apparel industry must create a competitive edge over these competitors in Asia, Latin and Central America, Africa, and Eastern Europe. As a strategy to create a competitive edge there is an opportunity to increase the efficiency levels by reducing the labor cost per product. That makes productivity a crucial factor in the industry. Like most other countries, apparel is a labor-intensive industry in Sri Lanka. With the high global demand for the products, employment

opportunities in this industry have increased considerably, especially for women (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2019). This industry provides direct employment opportunities to over 300,000 and 600,000 which include a substantial number of women in Sri Lanka (EDB, 2020).

The Sri Lanka apparel industry has been positioned globally as an ethical sourcing destination with the visionary slogan "Garments without Guilt" where the industry ensures high ethical practices, prevents child and forced labor, ensures worker's rights, and provides personal growth and educational opportunities. These commitments toward employees and society help the industry to sustain its position with high-end brands (EDB, 2020). Having a happy workforce is a requirement for the industry to maintain the vision of "Garments without guilt".

However, the apparel industry experiences high absenteeism and turnover rates. According to Dheerasinghe (2009), the average labor turnover per factory is about 60% per annum. After considering the movements within the industry, the net number of persons leaving the industry is estimated at 25% (Dheerasinghe, 2009). This signals that workers in the industry experience low happiness at work, which affects turnover and causes low productivity levels.

Yet achieving the required productivity level is impossible with the high employee turnover and absenteeism rates prevailing in the industry. Despite higher human resource expenses engaged with recruitment and training of new workers, the average turnover

of an enterprise was 60% per annum, which makes this a foremost problem for almost all apparel companies (Wesarat, 2020).

Most of the organizations in the apparel industry are interested and focused on the above situation and willing to promote happiness at work as a long-term solution, but they have very limited knowledge of what makes employees happy. Also, these factors must be identified at each level of workers for a better outcome. However, literature provides little evidence related to happiness at work, especially among apparel industry workers. Hence, this study aims to fill this gap by examining how happiness at work differs among different groups of employees working in the same working environment and what factors significantly contribute to the happiness of workers at each level.

### **Significance and Justification**

Over the past years, most of the research in the literature has focused on concepts like depression, anxiety, stress, etc. comes under the unhappiness aspect, which takes the focus away from happiness (Januwarsono, 2015). Studies related to the concept of happiness are rather hard to find in the literature. But still, this is quite a new area to the region itself, and studies in the local context are seldom available (Gunawardena, 2015). Hence, the findings of this study are immensely important to enriching happiness literature.

According to Bataineh (2019), past studies on happiness, satisfaction, and well-being focused on the non-work population, creating a research gap in

work-related happiness. Happiness-related experiences benefit the workplace as they result in creativeness, productiveness, and cooperation. Additionally, happier employees achieve goals, maintain healthy social relationships, better integrate information to generate new ideas that promote innovation, and have good relationships with co-workers and customers (De Neve et al., 2013). Hence, at the firm level, the exploration of happiness at work is beneficial in both the short and long run.

Further, this study focuses on the differences in happiness levels between blue-collar and white-collar employees and the factors that contribute to the happiness level of each group. As stated by Jan-Emmanuel and George (2017), data at the global level reveals a significant difference in how blue-collar and white-collar employees are happy at work. Out of two categories, blue-collar workers are the least happy at work. Most blue-collar employments are traditionally labeled as male jobs, including manual work with a high level of physical involvement, effort, and technical skills (Anjum & Parvez, 2013). But the context of the apparel industry is different. Despite the traditional male dominance in blue-collar work, most of the blue-collar work is carried out by female workers. In the Sri Lankan context, almost 78% of the blue-collar workers in the apparel industry are women. Most of them work as sewing machine operators (IPS, 2019). With these differences, it is important to examine whether there is a difference in the happiness level of blue-collar employees, which is female dominant,

compared to the findings in the literature.

Further, in the Sri Lankan context, it is hard to find studies related to happiness at work. On the other hand, happiness among blue-collar and white-collar employees in the apparel industry is not explored in the literature sufficiently. Hence, this research intends to fill this literature gap by enriching the literature on happiness at work.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of this study is to explore the happiness at work among the workers in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. The study specifically intends to examine the differences in the levels of happiness at work between white-collar workers and blue-collar workers and elucidate the most significant factors that contribute to happiness at work in the apparel industry.

### **Literature Review**

Scholars are increasingly interested in broadening the conceptual and empirical base to accurately define and measure well-being and welfare (Nikolava and Graham, 2020). The discipline of well-being has excited human society (Alatartseva and Barysheva, 2015). The concept of well-being can be defined as optimal psychological functioning and experience (Ryan and Deci, 2001). In literature, well-being is categorized into two substantial aspects as subjective and objective well-being.

Subjective well-being represents the internal experiences of individuals (Alatartseva and Barysheva, 2015). OECD (2013) defines subjective well-

being as a better mental status that makes positive and negative evaluations and affective reactions to their experiences.

On the other hand, objective well-being focuses on the material aspects of well-being and the quality of life influenced by those material aspects. Hence, measurements such as having a stable income, access to a better educational level, safety and security, and quality of the social and natural environment are considered in the objective of well-being.

Both subjective and objective well-being measures the quality of human life in the same direction (Nikolova and Graham, 2015). It is important to consider beyond objective aspects, such as income and employment, in measuring well-being in a broader sense. Incorporating subjective aspects to the well-being analysis increases the effectiveness of decisions and is beneficial for policymakers to be proactive in action, as subjective measures reveal hidden benefits or costs of a particular decision (de Neve et al., 2013; Green, 2010; Nikolova and Cnossen, 2020; Oswald et al., 2015).

In further studies, scholars including Lyubomirski (2001), Wesarat et al. (2015), Cropanzano and Wright (1999), and Seligman (2002) equates the subjective well-being concept to happiness where two terms can be used to demonstrate the same phenomenon. Suojanen and Yliopisto (2012) define happiness as “good and satisfactory feelings towards life” which is not a short-run joy or laughter but some long-run feeling. Being happy can be considered a higher level of satisfaction. It is said that happier

individuals tend to be more energetic, active in work, and approach-oriented (Joo and Lee, 2017).

Happiness is again defined and classified in various ways by various scholars. The hedonic view and the eudaimonic view are one of the broader classifications among many. Where the hedonic view defines happiness from the perspective of feelings of pleasure and avoidance of pain. On the other hand, the eudaimonic view defines happiness from the perspective of meaningfulness, self-realization, and virtuousness (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Fisher (2010) exemplified the hedonic approach to happiness as subjective well-being from the two views explained above.

This study is mainly based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. Sender and Fleck (2017) identified Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (also known as dual-factor or two-factor theory), and the positive psychology theory by Seligman(2002) as theories or models applied to individual-level happiness at work. The concept of positive psychology to examine the quality of life was first introduced by Maslow (Salas-Vallina and Alegre, 2018b). As per Maslow's hierarchy, individual motivation is categorized as, i.e., physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness needs, love and esteem, and self-actualization. When both physiological and safety needs are achieved, people seek higher levels of needs in the hierarchy. "Work can be part and the motivation aspect of all these needs, but in today's Western world, most often it is about the self-actualization"

(Suojanen and Yliopisto, 2012). According to Maslow (1943), the higher the person reaches the hierarchy higher the happiness level that person experiences.

The motivation-hygiene theory, developed by Herzberg, was influenced by Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Atan et al., 2021). Herzberg identified two categories of factors that determine job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, motivation, and hygiene factors. They believed that there is a clear difference between factors that cause positive job attitudes and factors which causes negative job attitudes. Motivational factors positively relate to job satisfaction, while hygienic factors avoid job dissatisfaction (Atan et al., 2021).

As per Fisher (2010), happiness at work is an umbrella concept that comprises many constructs. Fisher (2010) categorized happiness at work-related constructs into three levels. First, the transient level is considered the level at which happiness at work varies within-person level. Task enjoyment, emotion at work, momentary effect, and flow state are some constructs under the transient level. Second, the personal level is considered the level where all the variance of interest occurs between individuals. Job satisfaction, engagement, thriving, vigor, affective organizational commitment, and flourishing are some constructs at the personal level. Third, the unit level consists of constructs that derive the happiness of a group, team, or organization at the aggregate level. Unit level engagement, group mood, group task satisfaction are some constructs under unit level. Out of all

personal level constructs are frequently discussed than other two levels of constructs. Among identified constructs, job satisfaction, work engagement and affective organizational commitment was recognized as the most suitable to capture broad level of personal level happiness of workers.

Job satisfaction is defined as the positive feeling towards the task performed, which gives an employee enthusiasm and confidence in the job undertaken (Amin et al., 2021). Work engagement can be conceptualized as an effective and cognitive involvement and enjoyment of the work itself (Fisher, 2010). On the other hand, affective organizational commitment is the feeling of emotional attachment to the organization with a sense of belonging and value match (Fisher, 2010).

Literature shows organizational-level factors that contribute to happiness at work. Some of the main factors are job inspiration, shared organizational values, relationships, leadership, and the quality of work life. Employees have job inspiration when they are satisfied with their job and can achieve goals (Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku, 2011). It can be explained the work engagement and meaningfulness at work (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008; Golparvar and Abedini, 2014). When individuals pursue meaningful work, they tend to get happy (Martin, 2008).

organizational shared value on the other hand contributes to happiness at work significantly. It can be considered as the collective behavior and culture of the organization (Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku, 2011). Organizational

culture is the underlying assumptions of an organization, including signs, symbols, and shared practices (Martin and Meyerson, 1987). As per Januwarsono (2015), organizational culture is one main factor determining happiness at work, and one major dimension is harmonization in the workplace. Other dimensions are co-worker mutual trust, superior and subordinate mutual trust, honesty, and employees are considered the most important asset.

Interpersonal relationships also contribute the happiness at work. It is the interaction, group bonding, and acceptance among co-workers (Chaiprasit & Santidhiraku, 2011). Employees having good interpersonal relationships tend to get positive outcomes such as satisfaction and efficiency (Stoetzer et al., 2009). With the findings of their empirical study, Chaiprasit & Santidhiraku (2011) found that co-worker relationships as one of the significant factors affecting employees' happiness. As employees generally spend about one-third of the time each day at work, relationships with co-workers highly matter to the level of happiness of personnel.

On the other hand, an organization's leadership significantly affects employees' happiness at work. According to Januwarsono (2015), leadership behavior is the activities undertaken by the leader to influence the activities of their subordinates towards achieving the organizational objectives. Leadership style particularly determines the party of job satisfaction of respective subordinates (Demmy et al., 2002). Hence, happiness at work of employees partly depends on their respective leaders'

style of leadership. Based on the empirical findings, Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku (2011) suggested that while paying close attention to employees, they also have to make employees feel good by dedicating themselves to the organization's values.

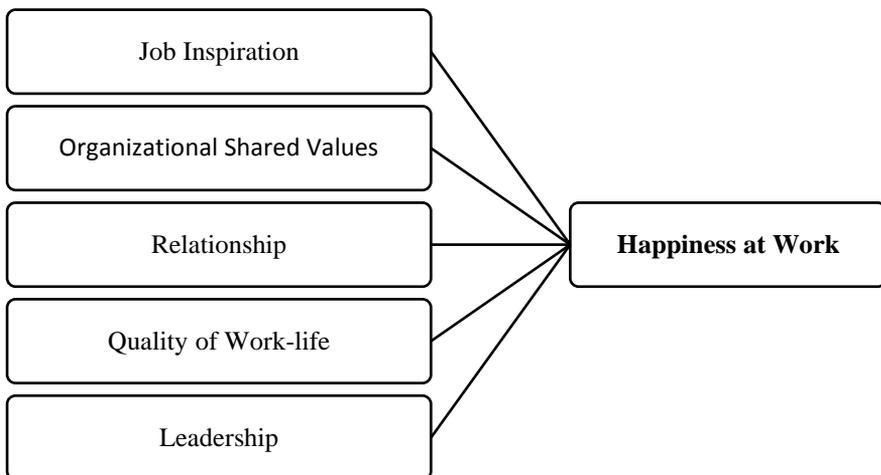
Finally, the quality of work-life can also be considered as one of the main contributors to happiness at work. When people are trustworthy, responsible, and able to make a valuable contribution, they are the most

important resource within the organizations, emphasizing the need to treat them with dignity and respect (Straw and Heckscher, 1984). Literature provides empirical evidence for the significant contribution of these factors to the level of happiness at work. Studies such as Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku(2011); Demmy et al. (2002); Januwarsono (2015); Golparvar and Abedini (2014) show that happiness at work is determined by leadership, interpersonal relationships, quality of work, organizational shared values and job inspiration.

## Methodology

Based on both theoretical and empirical literature, a conceptual framework was developed (figure 1).

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**



To achieve the objectives of the study, six hypotheses were formulated based on both theoretical and empirical literature. These include; i) job inspiration has a positive impact on employee happiness at work in the

apparel industry, ii) organizational shared value has a positive impact on employee happiness at work in the apparel industry, iii) relationship has a positive impact on employee happiness at work in the apparel industry, iv)

quality of work life has a positive impact on employee happiness at work in the apparel industry, v) leadership has a positive impact on employee happiness at work in the apparel industry and vi) employee happiness at work is equal among blue-collar and white-collar workers in the apparel industry.

The apparel industry is providing the highest number of direct and indirect employment in Sri Lanka. Most of the manufacturing firms in the industry are in the southwest of the country. As shown by Export Development Board (EDB) there are more than 300 large and medium-scale manufacturers in the country. There are about 400,000 employers employed in the industry from which the largest share of workers is blue-collar workers who work as factory workers in the industry. Others include professionals such as managers, supervisors, executive officers, engineers, and accountants.

As secondary data related to workers' happiness in the apparel industry is not available, the study is carried out as a case study. The case study was based on a selected apparel manufacturing organization in Sri Lanka with seven factories located around the country. A sample of employees was randomly selected from the selected organization. In sample selection, the cluster sampling method was employed to select samples of blue-collar and white-collar employees. Considering

the representation of each group of employees, 15 white-collar workers and 150 blue-collar workers were chosen to collect data. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, assuring anonymity. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section was on the demographic data of the employees. The second section focused on the measurement of happiness at work of the employees and other independent variables of the study.

As shown in Table 1 study examined the contribution of five variables to the happiness at the work level of employees. Accordingly, the job inspiration, shared organizational values, relationships, quality of work-life, and leadership were examined in the study. The model estimated in the quantitative study is:

$$HAW = f(JI, OSV, REL, QWL, LEA) \quad (1)$$

Where HAW represents happiness at work, JI denotes job satisfaction, OSV denotes shared organizational values, REL denotes relationship, QWL represents the quality of work-life, and LEA denotes leadership. Further, the intercomparison of blue and white-collar employees were examined to see the differences between their happiness level and the contribution of each variable to the happiness level of each employee group. Variables and the measurements used to measure each variable are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Variables and Measurements**

Code	Measurement
<b>Happiness at Work HAW</b>	
HAW1	Strong and vigorous feeling at work
HAW2	Enthusiasm about the job
HAW3	Get carried away when working
HAW4	Level of satisfaction with the nature of the work perform
HAW5	Level of satisfaction on the pay received for the job
HAW6	Level of satisfaction with the opportunities available for promotion
HAW7	Likeliness to spend the rest of career life with the organization
HAW8	Feeling emotionally attached to the organization
HAW9	Feeling a strong feeling of belonging to the firm
<b>Job Inspiration JI</b>	
JI1	The job assigned is specific
JI2	The job assigned is challenging
JI3	Work is interesting
JI4	Having a high level of responsibility
JI5	Job matching with the skills of the individual
JI6	Freedom in decision making
Organizational shared values	
OSV1	Believe in organizational values
OSV2	Practice organizational values
OSV3	The organization treats employees as the most important asset
OSV4	Harmonization is there in the workplace
<b>Relationship REL</b>	
REL1	Recognition from colleagues
REL2	The employee is important to others in work
REL3	Having fun with colleagues
REL4	Preference to get advice from co-workers
<b>Quality of Work Life QWL</b>	
QWL1	The working environment is better, and safety is there
QWL2	Better balance between personal and work life
QWL3	Ability to manage time for both personal and work matters
<b>Leadership LEA</b>	
LEA1	Fair administration
LEA2	Leader paying attention to employees' success

LEA3	Transparent communication of the leader
LEA4	The leader motivates employees, so they work efficiently
LEA5	Leaders focus on desire and creativity in mind so that workers are enthusiastic at work
LEA6	The leader is dedicated to both employees and the organization
	Level of Employment
LE	Binary variable indicating whether the employee is in a white-collar job or blue-collar job (1 for white-collar job and 0 otherwise)

As shown in the table, the level of happiness was measured by using a composite measurement. The study followed shorted scale of happiness at work by Andres Salas-Vallina and Alegre (2018a) to measure happiness at work. This is a composite measurement that uses nine scales. The scales used to measure happiness are, having strong and vigorous feelings at work, enthusiasm about the job, getting carried away when working, level of satisfaction with the nature of the work performed, level of satisfaction with the pay received for the job, level of satisfaction on the opportunities available for promotion, likeliness to spend the rest of carrier life with the organization, feeling emotionally attached to the organization and having a strong feeling of belonging to the firm. Each of these scales is measured through the Likert scale.

Following Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku (2011), job inspiration was measured by using six indicators. These included, whether the job assigned is specific, whether the job assigned is challenging, the level of interest in work, the span of responsibility given to the employee, matching of the skills of the employee to the job engaged, and the freedom given for the employee to make decisions. Further, the

organizational shared values were measured using four scales, following Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku (2011) and Januwarsono (2015). Accordingly, the belief in organizational values, the practice of organizational values, whether the organization treats employees as important assets, and the level of harmonization in the workplace were used.

The relationship was measured using four indicators following Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku (2011). Recognition from colleagues, the importance of employees for other works, having fun with colleagues, and preference to get advice from co-workers were considered. The quality of work life was measured using three indicators following (Chaiprasit & Santidhiraku, 2011). These included the availability of a better and safe working environment, a better balance between personal and work life, and the ability to manage time for both personal and work matters. Finally, leadership was measured using six scales following Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku (2011). These included employee's evaluation of firm administration, level of attention paid by the leader for the success of employees, transparent communication of the leader, level of motivation of employees to work

efficiently, the level of focus of leader on desire and creativity in mind to enthusiastic at work and whether the leader is dedicated to both employees and the organization.

The study employed a mixed methodological approach considering the nature of the subject. In the quantitative analysis, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used. It examined to see whether there is a variation in happiness at work levels between blue-collar workers and white-collar workers. Based on the results, an analysis of variance was carried out to see the most contributing factors to the happiness at work of blue-collar employees. As the size of the sample of white-collar employees was comparatively small qualitative analysis was carried out to explore the most contributing factors to their happiness at the work level.

## **Analysis and Results**

Collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques. First, reliability and validity were tested. A reliability test was conducted to test the degree to which the set of indicators of the latent constructs is internally consistent in their measurements. To measure the internal consistency reliability, the Cronbach Alfa value was considered. As per the results of the reliability test shown in Appendix I, all the variables are having Cronbach Alpha values of more than 0.7, which ensures the internal reliability of the data set.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's

Test of Sphericity were used to test the overall validity of the model. The correlation structure of the variables was tested as having an adequate amount of correlation among the variables is important to the meaningfulness of the factor analysis. Results are presented in appendix II.

As per the results, all the variables are having KMO statistics of more than 0.5 which indicates that all the variables are having an adequate level of correlation structure. Bartlett's test of Sphericity was used to test whether the correlation matrix is identical or whether there is a correlation between variables. Results of the Bartlett test prove that the correlation structure is sufficient to conduct factor analysis at a 0.05 significance level. Altogether it ensures the sample validity.

Factor analysis was used to generate variables for the study. Out of all the scales used to collect data, some scales were dropped due to the low factor loadings. To test the extent to which a set of measured variables represents the latent construct they are designed to measure, construct validity was considered. As per the results of the construct validity in Annex III, all the statements which were used to measure the respective latent variable has factor loadings, of 0.5 which ensures the construct validity of the variables. Before running the regressions, different diagnostic tests were done. First, the correlation analysis was conducted with Pearson correlation statistics. Results are presented in Table II.

**Table II: Correlation analysis**

	JI	OSV	REL	QWL	LEA	HAW
JI	1					
OSV	0.463**	1				
REL	0.533**	0.600**	1			
QWL	0.462**	0.308**	0.36**	1		
LEA	0.376**	0.356**	0.36**	0.16*	1	
HAW	0.605**	0.426**	0.44**	0.41**	0.3**	1

\*\* P < 0.01 \* P < 0.05

As per the results in table II, none of the independent variables are having strong correlation with other independent variables. Hence, no sign of autocorrelation was found. Further, the assumption of normality was tested by using the graphical method. Both histograms of residuals and normal probability plot annex IV prove that residuals are normally distributed. Therefore, it can be concluded that the model fulfilled the assumption of normality. The tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) in Table III implies that the model is free from multicollinearity as the VIF factor for all variables is less than five.

Descriptive statistics of the sample show that about 75 percent of the employees in the sample are females. This is due to the high representation of female employees in the apparel industry. Further, about fifty percent of the employees were below 25 years

while only 3 percent were above 45 years. About 95 percent of the employees had work experience between one to five years. The percentage of married employed was higher among blue-collar employees compared to others. Over 83 percent of employees have studied only up to GCE O/Level. However, a large majority of white-collar employees have completed at least a bachelor's degree.

The first ANCOVA model was used to examine whether there is a significant difference in happiness at work levels between blue-collar workers and white-collar workers. In the model, the level of employment (LE) was used as a binary variable indicating, the level of employment, where 1 = white-collar workers and 0 = blue-collar workers. The results of the ANCOVA model are presented in Table III.

**Table III: ANCOVA**

	COEFFICIENT	STANDARD ERROR	SIG.	COLLINEARITY	
				Tolerance	VIF
<b>CONST</b>	0.055	0.063	0.379		
<b>JI</b>	0.474	0.079	0.000**	0.564	1.773
<b>OSV</b>	0.062	0.079	0.436	0.563	1.776
<b>REL</b>	0.003	0.077	0.971	0.590	1.695
<b>QWL</b>	0.184	0.069	0.008**	0.746	1.340
<b>LEA</b>	0.092	0.064	0.156	0.844	1.185
<b>EL</b>	-0.610	0.237	0.011**	0.749	1.336
<b>N</b>	165				
<b>R</b>	0.667		R Square 0.445		
<b>ADJUSTED R-SQUARE</b>	<b>0.424</b>		F – test	21.14	
			Prob > F	0.00**	
** Implies the rejection of the null hypothesis of the overall significance of the model and significance of independent variables at a significance level of 5%					

As per the estimated F statistics shown in table III, the model has overall significance at a 95 percent confidence level. As shown in the results the level of employment (LE) makes a significant effect on happiness at work. According to the results, being a white-collar worker make a negative effect on the happiness level.

Hence, results suggest that the level of happiness at work between white-

collar and blue-collar employees is significantly different where the white-collar employees enjoy less happiness at work compared to blue-collar employees.

Then the ANOVA model was used to examine the determinants of happiness at work among blue-collar employees. Results are presented in Table IV.

**Table IV: ANOVA for Blue-collar Employees**

	COEFFICIENT	STANDARD ERROR	SIG.	COLLINEARITY STATISTICS	
				Tolerance	VIF
CONSTANT	0.061	0.061	0.315		
JI	0.507	0.079	0.000**	0.557	1.79
OSV	-0.078	0.084	0.357	0.570	1.75
REL	0.124	0.079	0.119	0.612	1.63
QWL	0.162	0.074	0.030**	0.754	1.32
LED	0.042	0.067	0.532	0.847	1.18
N	150				
R	0.665	R Square	0.442		
ADJ R <sup>2</sup> -	0.422	F - test	22.788		
SIG > F	0.00**				

\*\* Implies the rejection of the null hypothesis of the overall significance of the model and significance of independent variables at the 5% significance level

As per the F statistics and coefficient of determination, the model is significant at the overall level. Hence, t statistics were used to test the significance of each independent variable. As per the results, job inspiration (JI) and the quality of work-life (QWL) make a significant impact on the level of happiness at work. Both variables make a significant positive contribution to the level of happiness at work.

The contributing factors of happiness at work among white-collar employees were examined qualitatively, as the size of their sample was not sufficient to run a quantitative analysis. Their responses to the questions used to measure happiness at work were recorded. Results are presented in Table V.

**Table V: Happiness at Work among White-collar Employees**

Code	Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
<b>HAW</b>	Strong and vigorous feeling at work	80.0	20.0	00
	Enthusiasm about the job	86.7	13.3	00
	Get carried away when working	13.3	40	46.7
	Level of satisfaction with the nature of the work performed	73.3	26.7	0.0
	Level of satisfaction with the pay received for the job	40.0	53.3	6.7
	Level of satisfaction with the opportunities available for promotion	60.0	26.7	13.3
	Likelihood to spend the rest of career life with the organization	46.7	26.7	26.7
	Feeling emotionally attached to the organization	46.7	26.7	26.7
	Feeling a strong sense of belonging to the organization	46.7	26.7	26.7
<b>JJ</b>	The job assigned is specific	80	13.3	6.7
	The job assigned is challenging	87	13	00
	Work is interesting	87	00	13
	Having a high level of responsibility	93	13	00
	Job matching with the skills of the individual	87	6.7	6.3
	Freedom in decision making	60	26.6	13.3
<b>SV</b>	Believe in organizational values	93.3	3.7	00
	Practice organizational values	86.7	13.3	00
	The company treats employees as the most important asset	46.7	33.3	20.0
	Harmonization is there in the workplace	40.0	4.7	13.3
<b>REL</b>	Recognition from colleagues	53.3	46.7	00

<b>QWL</b>	The employee is important to others at work	53.3	46.7	00
	Having fun with colleagues	86.7	13.3	00
	Preference to get advice from co-workers	86.7	13.3	00
	The work environment is good and safe	73.3	20	6.7
	Better balance between personal life and job	46.7	33.3	20
	Ability to allocate time for both personal and job matters	66.7	13.3	20
<b>LEA</b>	Fair administration	46.7	40	13.3
	Leaders paying attention to employees' success	86.7	67	6.7
	Leader communicates transparently	73.3	20.0	6.79
	Leaders motivate employees so they work efficiently	73.3	20.0	6.79
	Leaders focus on desire and creativity in mind so that workers are enthusiastic at work	60.0	33.3	6.7
	Leaders are dedicated to both employees and the organization	80.0	13.3	6.7

As per Table V, most of the respondents agree with all the statements used to measure happiness at work. Eighty percent of white-collar employees have a strong and vigorous feeling at work. On the other hand, over 86 percent of white-collar employees are enthusiastic about their employment. Further, they are satisfied with the opportunities for promotion and the nature of the work they perform.

Most white-collar employees have high job inspiration. About 93 percent of them feel that they have been given a high level of responsibility at work. Eighty-seven percent of white-collar

employees believe that the job assigned to them is challenging, interesting, and matches their skills. Eighty percent of employees agree that the job assigned to them is specific.

Further, white-collar employees agree with the two measurements related to the organizational shared values. Over 93 percent of employees believe in organizational values. About 86 percent of employees agree with the practice of organizational values. However, about 60 percent of employees do not agree about harmonization in the workplace. Further, about 34 percent of employees

do not believe that the organization treats them as the most important asset.

In terms of relationships, over 86 percent of white-collar employees enjoy with colleagues and getting advice from co-workers. However, about 47 percent of white-collar employees are not satisfied with the recognition and importance of their colleagues.

In terms of quality of work-life, over 66 percent of white-collar employees are satisfied with the work environment and time allocation between employment and personal matters. However, over 30 percent of employees are not satisfied with the work-life balance.

In terms of leadership, 86 percent of white-collar employees believe that the leader pays sufficient attention to the success of employees. About 80 percent of white-collar employees believe that the leader focuses on desire and creativity mind which helps workers to be enthusiastic at work and success of workers. Further, over 73 percent of employees agree that the leader communicates transparently and motivates employees to work efficiently. However, over 60 percent of workers are not agreed about fair administration.

As per the overall responses of white-collar employees, they are happy at work. Except for organizational shared values, white-collar employees agreed with all other aspects. They enjoy the work and are satisfied with the level of responsibility and recognition at the organization. Further, it was asked from the employees to rank their preferences among salary increments and promotions. About half of the

employees rank salary increment as their first choice while others choose promotion and reputation as their first choice. It signals that white-collar workers not only seek to have higher salary levels but also prefer to have a higher position on the career ladder. On the other hand, for the same question, only 7% of blue-collar workers prefer to get a promotion than a salary increment.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Among many dimensions of happiness economics, this research is about happiness at work which is a very much important topic in the corporate world for the smooth functioning of the organizations. Specifically, this study focused on happiness at work in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. A majority of the employees in the apparel industry are women, blue-collar employees. The first objective of this study was to examine whether the happiness at work among blue and white-collar employees is different. The second objective was to explore the determinants of happiness at work among blue and white-collar employees in the apparel industry.

As per the quantitative analysis, it was found that the happiness at work between white-collar and blue-collar employees is different. Compared to white-collar employees, blue-collar employees enjoy a higher level of happiness at work. The findings of the study contradict the findings in the literature. As per Anjum & Parvez (2013), white-collar workers are highly satisfied with their job than blue-collar workers. Suojanen and Yliopisto (2012) state that “people working in neat white-collar jobs are more likely

happier than those working in factories or outdoors". Given that while literature claims white-collar workers are happier than blue-collar workers, this analysis shows completely different results in the apparel industry. The high level of responsibility of white-collar workers compared to blue collar workers together with the high competitiveness in the industry can be the reason of less happiness at work.

Further, in the second step of the analysis, determinants of happiness at work were examined. Findings of the quantitative analysis to examine the determinants of happiness at work among blue-collar employees show that both job inspiration and quality of work-life make a significant impact on the happiness at work of the blue-collar employees.

Finding related to job inspiration is supported by the findings of Weerasinghe et al. (2017) who claim that job recognition has a significant impact on happiness at work among banking employees in Sri Lanka. However, the results contradict the findings of Chaiprasit & Santidhiraku (2011), where job inspiration was not able to predict happiness at the work level of employees working in Thailand's SME sector. Further, the quality of work-life which is measured by the safe and good working environment, the balance between personal and work life, and the ability to manage personal matters and work matters affect the happiness at work among blue-collar employees. This is consistent with the literature, where Chaiprasit & Santidhiraku (2011). Further, it was found that happiness at work among blue-collar employees is not significantly affected by the

organizational shared value, organizational relationships, and leadership. This is contradicted by the findings of Chaiprasit & Santidhiraku (2011), who show relationships and leadership as significant determinants of happiness at work.

Qualitative analysis of the determinants of happiness at work among white-collar employees shows that they are with strong and vigorous feelings at work and are enthusiastic about their employment. Further, most of them are satisfied with the nature of the work they perform and the opportunities available for them to go up their career ladder. The most significant determinants of happiness at work among white-collar employees are job inspiration, quality of work, and leadership. Factors such as assigning a high level of responsibility, and specific, challenging, and interesting tasks are the most common factors that enhance the job inspiration and thereby the happiness at work of the white-collar employees. Having a good and safe working environment that represents a high quality of work-life also significantly affects the happiness at work among white-collar employees. On the other hand, dedicated leadership, attention of the leadership to the success of employees, transparent communication, and motivation of employees by leaders also increase the happiness among white-collar employees. However mixed evidence was found related to the organizational shared value and relationships.

While most white-collar employees believe that the organizational value and practice of organizational values affect their happiness at work, the

majority of them are not satisfied with the treatment of the organization and the harmonization at the workplace. Further, even though white-collar employees enjoy working with

colleagues and gaining advice from them, they are not happy amount the recognition and importance given to them by their colleagues at work.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Reliability test statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha	No of questions
Happiness at work	0.811	9
Job inspiration	0.802	6
Organizational shared value	0.700	4
Relationship	0.718	4
Quality of work life	0.709	3
Leadership	0.786	6

### Appendix II: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

	HAW	JI	OSV	REL	QWL	LEA	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.779	0.818	0.697	0.651	0.585	0.731	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	301.118	295.023	114.798	155.279	113.865	136.142
	df	15	15	6	6	3	6
	Sig.	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	0.00**

\*\* implies the rejection of the null hypothesis of the correlation matrix is an identity matrix at the significance level of 5%

### Appendix III: Construct validity

Variable	Statement	Factor loading
HAW1	Strong and vigorous feeling at work	0.626
HAW2	Enthusiasm about the job	Dropped due to low factor loading
HAW3	Get carried away when working	Dropped due to low factor loading
HAW4	Level of satisfaction with the nature of the work performed	Dropped due to low factor loading
HAW5	Level of satisfaction with the pay received for the job	0.660

	HAW6	Level of satisfaction with the opportunities available for promotion	0.525
	HAW7	Likelihood to spend the rest of career life with the organization	0.796
	HAW8	Feeling emotionally attached to the organization	0.765
	HAW9	Feeling a strong sense of belonging to the organization	0.825
	JI1	The job assigned is specific	0.818
	JI2	The job assigned is challenging	0.631
	JI3	Work is interesting	0.817
JI	JI4	Having a high level of responsibility	0.673
	JI5	Job matching with the skills of the individual	0.732
	JI6	Freedom in decision making	0.583
	OSV1	Believe in organizational values	0.721
	OSV2	Practice organizational values	0.695
OSV	OSV3	The company treats employees as the most important asset	0.752
	OSV4	Harmonization is there in the workplace	0.734
	REL1	Recognition from colleagues	0.668
	REL2	The employee is important to others at work	0.721
REL	REL3	Having fun with colleagues	0.741
	REL4	Preference to get advice from co-workers	0.819
	QWL1	The work environment is good and safe	0.661
	QWL2	Better balance between personal life and job	0.886
QWL	QWL3	Ability to allocate time for both personal and job matters	0.824
	LEA1	Fair administration	Dropped due to low factor loading
LEA	LEA2	Leaders paying attention to employees' success	0.571

LEA3	Leader communicates transparently	Dropped due to low factor loading
LEA4	A leader motivates employees, so they work efficiently	0.768
LEA5	Leaders focus on desire and creativity in mind so that workers are enthusiastic at work	0.791
LEA6	The leader is dedicated to both employees and the organization	0.814

## Appendix IV

