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Title

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Permalink

Journal

ISSN

Authors

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Publication Date

2022

DOI

Copyright Information

Peer reviewed

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Academic Librarians: Their understanding and use of emotional intelligence and happiness

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Title: Academic Librarians: Their Understanding and Use of Emotional Intelligence and Happiness

Abstract:
The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to understand the interrelations between emotional intelligence and happiness through an exploration of academic librarians. The researchers' premise was that academic librarians who rated themselves as more competent in the emotional intelligence dimension would also rate themselves highly in satisfaction with life. Results from the study show that academic librarians self-reported levels of happiness and competence with emotional intelligence that are within average range, however, they struggled to apply emotional intelligence and happiness skills when asked to demonstrate with examples. Limitations are discussed with reference to the survey data, timing, respondents' understanding and concerns around bias. Implications for practice and future research are also presented.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, happiness, joy, satisfaction with life, academic librarians

Introduction

Emotional intelligence and subjective well-being have important effects on an individual's experience of the workplace, mediating burnout and correlating with job success in industries like K-12 education (Mérida-López & Extremera, 2017), nursing (Szczygiel & Mikolajczak, 2018), and government (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). Academic librarianship has similarities to all of these industries and therefore it seems probable that levels of emotional intelligence and well-being could have an impact on library worker job satisfaction and overall organizational morale. Academic librarians frequently report low morale, concerns with job autonomy and satisfaction, and challenges with emotional labor and burnout. These are complex issues, so there is value in asking whether there are librarians who have found ways to be happy and emotionally intelligent in the academic workplace.

This article presents results from a study which sought to measure respondents' happiness and emotional intelligence in order to draw conclusions about the library workplace and determine ways to improve it. A concurrent convergent design was utilized. Happiness was measured using the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) and emotional intelligence was measured using the Short Profile of Emotional Competence (S-PEC). Open-ended and demographic questions were also included. Academic librarians within North America who work in an academic library were invited to participate in this study in order to understand their own emotional intelligence and happiness levels, and perspectives on each.

There were four overall questions that guided this study:
1. What is the overall level of satisfaction with life of participating academic librarians?
2. What is the overall level of emotional intelligence of participating academic librarians?
3. What viewpoints do academic librarians have about exhibiting happiness in the workplace?
4. What viewpoints do academic librarians have about operating with high emotional intelligence in the workplace?

Literature Review

In studies which assess emotional intelligence, happiness, and their use in the workplace, it is typical to discover a connection between the three areas. In published literature, participants who score highly in emotional intelligence assessments and happiness assessments also earn higher workplace performance evaluations or self-rate as successful in the workplace. To determine how participants in this study experienced emotional intelligence and happiness, first it is important to discuss emotional intelligence and its use in the workplace, to discuss happiness and related concepts and how they affect the workplace, to look at the intersection of the two, and finally to review how the two concepts have been discussed in the library and information studies profession.

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a concept which has existed for years in academic literature (e.g., Salovey & Mayer, 1990) but it gained widespread popularity through Daniel Goleman's 1995 book, appropriately titled *Emotional Intelligence*. Goleman's initial definition of EI was the one that became embedded in popular culture; it should be noted that multiple similar and overlapping definitions exist, including from Goleman himself. Over the years, academic constructions of EI have shifted from Salovey and Mayer's emphasis on EI as a social intelligence to include constructions of EI as a set of skills and traits (e.g., Bar-On, 2006), ultimately leading to a popular tripartite formulation of EI as knowledge, abilities, and traits (Mikolajczak, 2009).

Researchers in the 1990s, led by Goleman and colleagues, focused on emotional intelligence in the workplace (Goleman, 1998; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Many others followed in their footsteps, leading to what Ashkanasy and Dorris called the "Affective Revolution" re-evaluating the role of emotions in the workplace (Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017). Research on EI in the workplace is wide-ranging, covering everything from how it mediates employee engagement (Barreiro & Treglown, 2020), impacts employees' short-term coping and long-term workplace performance (Gooty, Gavin, Ashkanasy, & Thomas, 2014), moderates the effects of work-family conflict on teachers (Gao, Shi, Niu, & Wang, 2013), negatively relates to toxic leadership in higher education administrators (Singh, 2018), trains employees to find meaning in their work (Thory, 2016), has an effect on work engagement and psychological empowerment when combined with empowering leadership (Alotaibi, Amin, & Winterton, 2020), and beyond.

A number of EI assessments have been created, many in response to research showing the benefits of higher emotional intelligence in the workplace and outside of it. These assessments are often given to employees as part of workplace training and development, albeit with some controversy as to their validity as instruments capable of measuring emotion (Fineman, 2004) or capturing a distinct set of intelligences (Lam & Kirby, 2002). A 2016 meta-analysis provides information on the various assessments, as well as their relationships with components of subjective well-being (Sánchez-Álvarez, Extremera, & Fernández-Berrocal, 2016). The Profile of Emotional Competence and its derivative the Short Profile of Emotional Competence (S-PEC), which focus on providing an assessment which distinguishes between the various EI competencies to better direct individual future growth, were validated in a 2013 paper (Brasseur, Grégoire, Bourdu, & Mikolajczak, 2013) and a 2014 paper (Mikolajczak, Brasseur, & Fantini-Hauwel, 2014), respectively. The S-PEC, a relatively new scale, has been used to assess health in the elderly (Fantini-Hauwel & Mikolajczak, 2014), as part of a four-variable evaluation of authentic leadership (Peterson, 2017), to assess creativity and age (Nori, Signore,

& Bonifacci, 2018), and to evaluate mental health in cases of cyberbullying (Urano, Takizawa, Ohka, Yamasaki, & Shimoyama, 2020).

Happiness

Happiness is a complex subject with roots in ancient philosophical and religious traditions (Intelisano, Krasko, & Luhmann, 2020) and there are various ways to define it in the academic literature. It can be characterized both as a momentary emotion of pleasure (hedonia) and a long-term feeling of meaning (eudaimonia). There are psychological instruments to measure both as well as a third factor, the absence of negative emotions (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Subjective well-being (SWB), as described by Bowling, Eschleman, and Wang (2010), is an inclusive term used to refer to life satisfaction, happiness, the presence of positive affect, and the absence of negative affect. SWB is therefore useful in capturing perceived happiness and related positive feelings.

As with emotional intelligence, happiness in the workplace is fairly well studied from the perspective of various industries and across various countries. A meta-analysis of job satisfaction and subjective well-being notes that the causal relationship between the two is not fully defined, although the existence of a relationship is clear from the analysis (Bowling, Eschleman, & Wang, 2010). Walsh, Boehm, and Lyubomirsky (2018) argue that happiness leads to success, rather than the typical societal perception of success leading to happiness. A study of 20 European countries shows a relationship between employee productivity and subjective well-being at a broader economic level (DiMaria, Peroni, & Sarracino, 2020). Examples of industries where happiness has been studied include higher education (Elwick & Cannizzaro, 2017), software engineering (Graziotin, Wang, & Abrahamsson, 2014), and information technology (Pradhan, Hati, & Kumar, 2017).

There are a number of psychological instruments that assess happiness, or more broadly subjective well-being, from angles such as cognitive and affective effect, eudaimonia and hedonia, and global and individual points of satisfaction. One well-known scale is the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, a 20-item scale covering emotions felt over the past week (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988); another well-known scale is the Subjective Happiness Scale, a short 4-item scale validated by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999). Diener has created a number of happiness instruments with colleagues (https://eddiener.com/scales) including the popular Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The SWLS is a short 5-item scale looking at self report of global or overall satisfaction with life; it was first published in 1985 (Diener, Emmons, Larson & Griffin, 1985) and has been reviewed for psychometric properties a number of times, most recently in 2008 (Pavot & Diener, 2008). The SWLS has been used in many different studies; including the consequences of abusive supervision (Bennett, 2000), the association of positive emotions with trait resilience in the aftermath of terrorist attacks (Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh, & Larkin, 2003), the relationship between use of Facebook and student life satisfaction and civic engagement (Valenzuela, S., Park, P., & Kee, K.F., 2009), and the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on mental health and resilience among others (Sibley, et al., 2020).

Emotional intelligence and Happiness in the Workplace

The connections between EI, happiness, and workplace success are not necessarily causal, but multiple studies show some link between the three areas: increased competency in the areas of EI, increased happiness or well-being, and increased ability to succeed at work. Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (2016) published a key article exploring EI as a predictor of well-being, personality, and more. Other articles on the topic have looked at emotional intelligence and its relationship to work-family conflict, quality of life, and happiness (Dasgupta & Mukherjee, 2011), between emotional intelligence, personality, and subjective well-being (Higgs & Dulewicz, 2014), whether changes in EI led to changes in related areas such as psychological well-being, subjective health, quality of social relationships, and work success (Nelis, Kotsou, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Weytens, Dupuis, & Mikolajczak, 2011), and different aspects of emotional intelligence and their relationship with subjective well-being (Blasco-Belled, Rogoza, Torrelles-Nadal, & Alsinet, 2019).

Emotional intelligence and Happiness in Academic Libraries

Emotional intelligence is a concept well covered in the research on libraries, although there are gaps in the literature. Nearly all published articles focus on academic librarians and a large proportion focus on library leadership to the exclusion of library workers. The key works in this area include an article on emotional intelligence in library directors (Hernon & Rossiter, 2006), a book on leadership and libraries which has an emphasis on EI and library leadership (Hernon & Rossiter, 2007), another book on leadership in libraries and emotional intelligence (Hernon, Giesecke, & Alire, 2008), an article evaluating the role of EI competencies in library hiring (Promís, 2008), an article exploring EI abilities of library directors and their senior management teams (Kreitz, 2009), a contributed paper looking at how EI helps libraries handle change (Hendrix, 2013), and an article on disaster response teams and EI competencies (Wilkinson, 2015).

In addition to these North American-focused perspectives, there are a number of academic librarians in other areas of the world who have explored this topic. Khan, Masrek, and Nadzar, in particular, have written several articles about academic librarians in Pakistan. The authors researched EI, libraries, and variables such as organizational commitment (2014), job satisfaction (2015), and training needs (2016). Siamak, Haqguyan, and Alizadeh (2014) examine the role of gender on EI in Iranian librarians. Finally, Igbinovia and Popoola (2016) look at how organizational culture and EI affect job performance of library workers in Nigeria. Overall, these works are less tightly focused on library leadership than the United States and Canadian works and they explore novel but highly relevant themes of satisfaction, commitment and performance.

The literature on librarians and happiness is scant and best characterized by its inverse: unhappiness. There are a few articles which focus on library worker or library patron happiness, positivity, and general goodwill. Two key articles in this area were written by Steven Bell; the articles both focus on ways to be positive and create moments of happiness in the library organization, with the 2015 article covering happiness for library users and the 2019 article focused on happiness for library workers. Another key article came out in 2018: Jason Martin wrote about the types of leadership characteristics found in positive library leaders, those whom respondents remembered fondly for their leadership. Notably, there are many, many more articles focused on library worker incivility (Henry, Eshleman, Croxton, & Moniz, 2018; Vraimaki, Koloniari, Kyprianos, & Koulouris, 2019), burnout (Matteson & Miller, 2013), low morale (Davis

Kendrick, 2017), and the burdens of emotional and affective labor (Joe, 2019; Logsdon, Mars, & Tompkins, 2017; Shuler & Morgan, 2013; Sloniowski, 2020). It is clear from the overwhelming emphasis in the literature on the negative aspects of library work that there is a need to understand what supports and nurtures happy library workers.

Emotional intelligence and, to a significantly lesser extent, happiness have been studied separately in academic librarians as shown here but they have not until now been studied together. This study addresses a gap in the literature by providing an initial analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence and happiness in academic librarians.

Methodology

Research Design

This study focuses on a concurrent convergent design which merges data analysis from both quantitative and qualitative data to compare results. This type of convergent design dates back to the 1970s and is "the most well-known" approach according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 77). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 79) offer a flowchart to the steps to take in implementing this type of design. The researchers took the following steps of action with their design procedures:

> *Step 1.*

A.   Design and collect quantitative data: State the research questions, and determine the approach. Obtain permissions, identify the sample and collect close-ended data through use of two validated instruments.

B.   Design and collect qualitative data: Concurrently, state the research questions, and determine the approach. Obtain permissions, identify the sample and collect open-ended data.

> *Step 2.*

A.   Analysis of quantitative data using statistics. Examine Likert responses.

B.   Analysis of qualitative data using thematic analysis.

> *Step 3.* Identify areas represented in both sets of data and compare, contrast and synthesize in charts and discussion. Examine differences with sets of results. Conduct further analysis by transforming data to other data (statistical analysis including thematic counts)
>
> *Step 4.* Interpretation. Summarize and interpret results separately, then discuss how we merged results to help understand the questions.
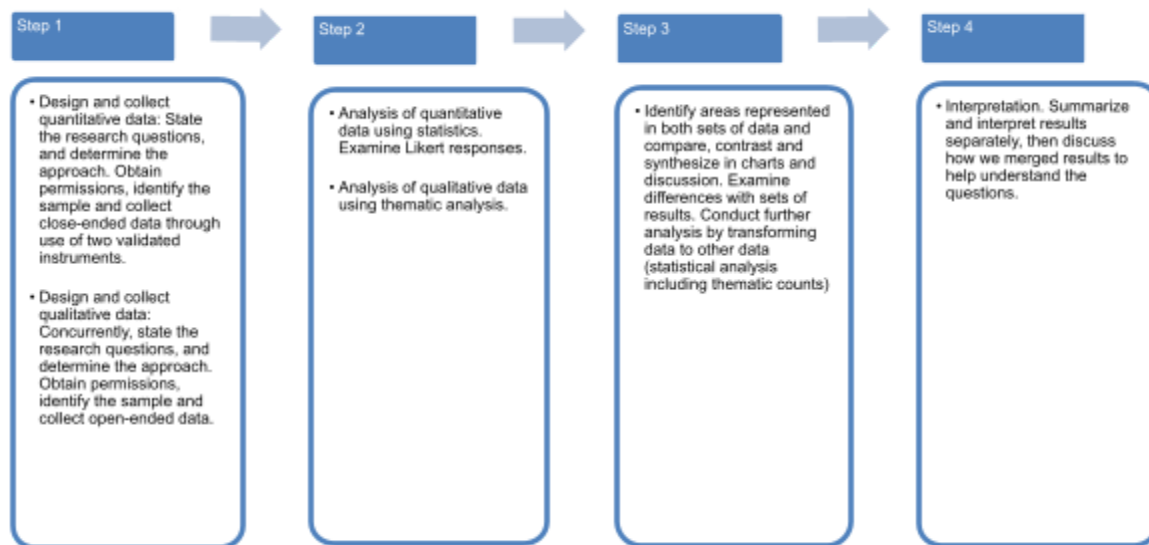
Figure 1: Research Design

Survey

The survey used two validated data instruments, the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) and the Short Profile of Emotional Competence (S-PEC), to measure satisfaction with life and emotional intelligence skills and competencies, respectively. The quantitative data includes demographic items, the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), and the Short Profile of Emotional Competence (S-PEC). The SWLS is a 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one's life satisfaction. The S-PEC consists of a 20-item scale designed to assess emotional intelligence skills and competencies both in relation to oneself and to others. These two instruments were selected because they were the best recognized and validated tools on these topics upon review of other related instruments. Both instruments are self-assessments. The survey also included qualitative open-ended questions to explore participants' thoughts on happiness and emotional intelligence within the workplace. Workplace here relates to the academic library environment in which the participant worked at the time of response.

The informed consent provided the authors' definitions for emotional intelligence ("the ability to understand the emotions of oneself and others and to regulate those emotions appropriately" (L. Martin, personal communication, May 2020)) and happiness ("high psychological and social well-being" (Diener 2019)), while each instrument also provided a short definition of the concept under evaluation. The full survey is available in Appendix A.

Prior to collecting data, the researchers received approval through their Institutional Review Boards to conduct the study and to work as co-PIs on the dissemination and research analysis. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected in parallel via an online Qualtrics survey. The

software allows for anonymity of responses and no identifying information was collected. The survey was open for two weeks from July 1-15, 2020.

Instruments

Because two distinct instruments, the SWLS and the SPEC, were used together, it was necessary to check the construct validity of the two instruments when combined. The first step was to see if all variables fit into one construct, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The conclusion, after discussions with a statistical consultant, was no. After goodness of fit statistics (specifically root mean square error of approximation or RMSEA, comparative fit index or CFI, and standardized root mean squared residual or SRMR) were run in Mplus, it was determined that the SPEC in particular had some questions which led to poor fit and low loadings. The next step was to run an exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The purpose of the EFA was to help determine how many constructs (factors) might exist within the 20 variables. The EFA suggested 3 factors as the best fit. The decision was made to use a three-construct model comprising questions that had a reasonable chance of relating together and had good loadings (see Appendix B for the model). Seven questions (5, 9, 10, 13, 16, 18, and 20) from the twenty-question SPEC could not be added into the model and still maintain a good fit. We chose to move forward with analysis on the questions which formed the model and discarded the data from the seven which did not.

Population and Sample

The target population for this research study was academic librarians who worked at the time of the call in an academic library. The population was an abstract population, as it could include thousands of individuals. To better focus the population for this study, two prominent lists from a professional organization served as the sampling frame: members of the University Libraries Section (ULS) and the Community and Junior College Libraries Section (CJCLS) of the American Library Association (ALA). ULS and CJCLS list subscribers received a link to the consent form and survey on July 1, 2020. A reminder notification was sent one week after the first invitation.

The University Libraries Section (ULS) list is a forum for librarians at universities to ask questions and engage in discourse related to the profession. ULS is a section of the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of ALA. As of July 2020, the ULS listserv moderators report that there are 1,624 listserv members.

The Community and Junior College Libraries list is a discussion group dedicated to issues relating to community and two-year college libraries and learning centers. The Community and Junior College Libraries Section (CJCLS) is also a section of ACRL. As of October 2020, the CJCLS listserv moderators report that there are 2,019 listserv members. To obtain additional responses from this section, the call for participants was also posted to the CJCLS Facebook group.

Taken together, ULS and CJCLS represent the majority of academic librarians who are active in ACRL. The selected academic library members of the American Library Association represent a logical convenience sample of the total number of North American academic librarians. The researchers examined ULS and CJCLS because they wanted to focus on Universities and Community Colleges. Collectively, the two sections have over 5,800 members while the College

Libraries section alone only has 3,300 members. The sample was based on self-selection and may not represent the target population as a whole.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis procedures followed that of Creswell and Plano Clark (2011):

1. Prepare data analysis by downloading the data into their respective systems separately (quantitative data downloaded into Excel and Mplus and qualitative data imported into the qualitative analysis program Dedoose)
2. Explore and analyze data including running coefficients to determine overall results, track topics and themes through coding, and thematic coding analysis
3. Represent the data analysis in statements and themes by using tables and figures
4. Validate data and results by checking for validity and reliability
5. Interpret results, compare findings and address research questions

Findings & Results

Demographics

One hundred and twenty-nine (129) respondents completed all parts of the survey, out of a total of 169 respondents who submitted results. Some questions were not addressed by all survey respondents.
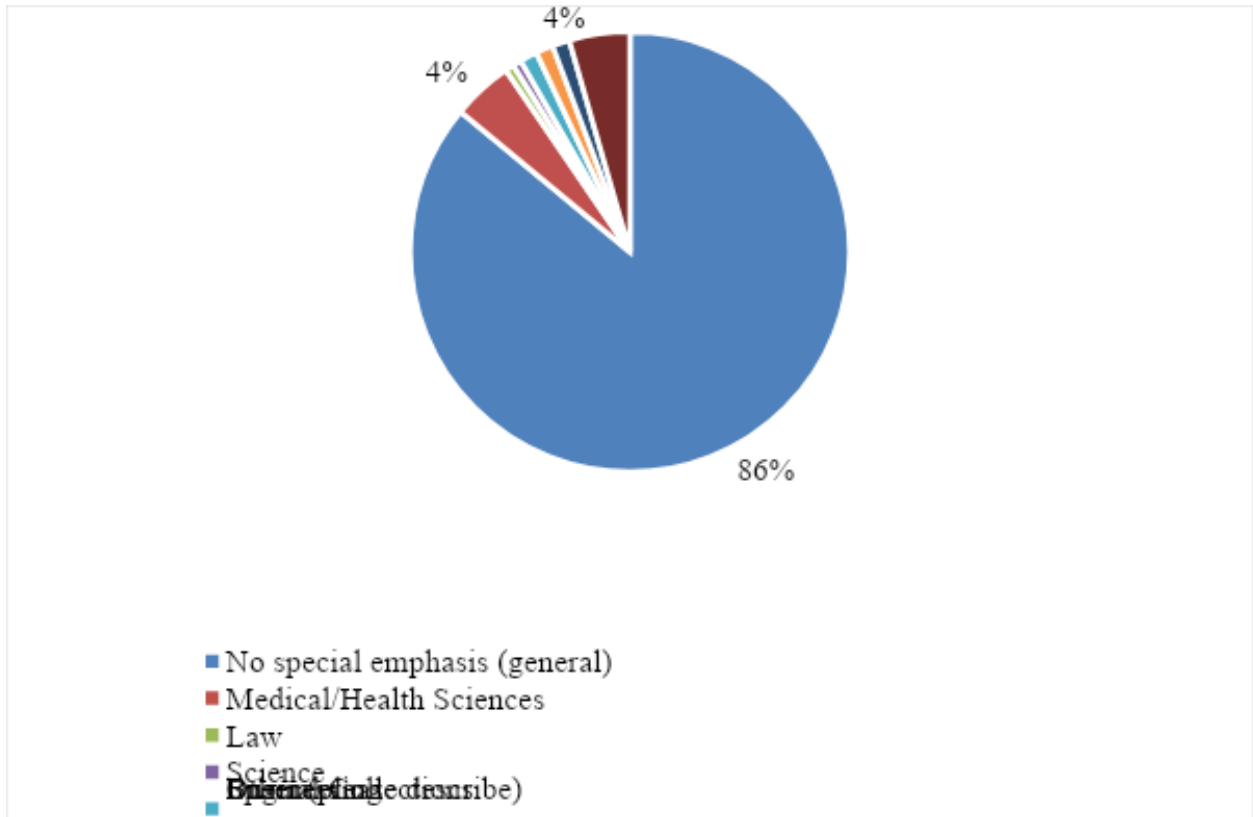
Type of Academic Institution

Respondents were able to select from nine options and only eight were selected (no one identified from a tribal college). Figure 1 shows an equal number of librarians (38%) were from doctoral-granting and associate-granting institutions (n=60 each), forming the majority of survey respondents (N=158). Thirteen percent (n=21) were from master's-granting colleges or universities. In order to analyze specific emotional intelligence and satisfaction with life questions below, some institutional categories were combined with others; details are noted in the section of analysis.
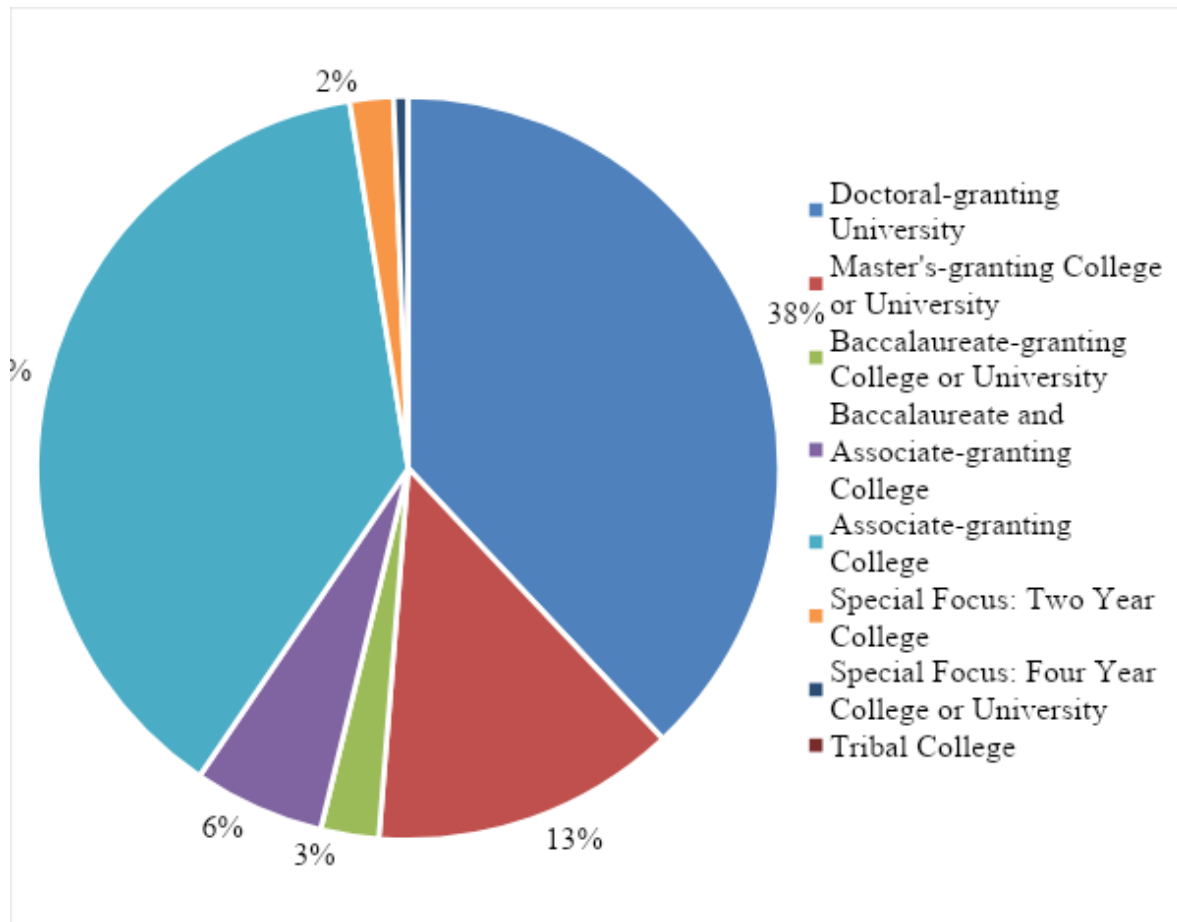
**Figure 2: Type of Academic Institution**

Library Special Emphasis

There were eight options with responses to each option. In figure 2, the overwhelming majority (86%, n=135 of N=157) of respondents were from general academic libraries with no special emphasis. Four percent (4%, n=7) identified as Medical/Health Sciences; four percent identified as Other (4%, n=7). Other responses were a wide variety (reporting n=1 each) including: associates degrees in technical and allied health fields, sustainability, skilled trades, satellite campus to main university, music, art/architecture, and transportation.

Legend:
- No special emphasis (general)
- Medical/Health Sciences
- Law
- Science
- Engineering (I don't know)
- Business (other: describe)

Figure 3: Special Emphasis Type

Size of Institution by Enrollment

As figure 3 indicates, of 157 respondents, 72% came from an institution with at least 5,000 students (48% from an institution with at least 10,000). Only 5% were under 2,000 students. In order to analyze specific emotional intelligence and satisfaction with life questions below, some institutional categories were combined with others; details are noted in the section of analysis.
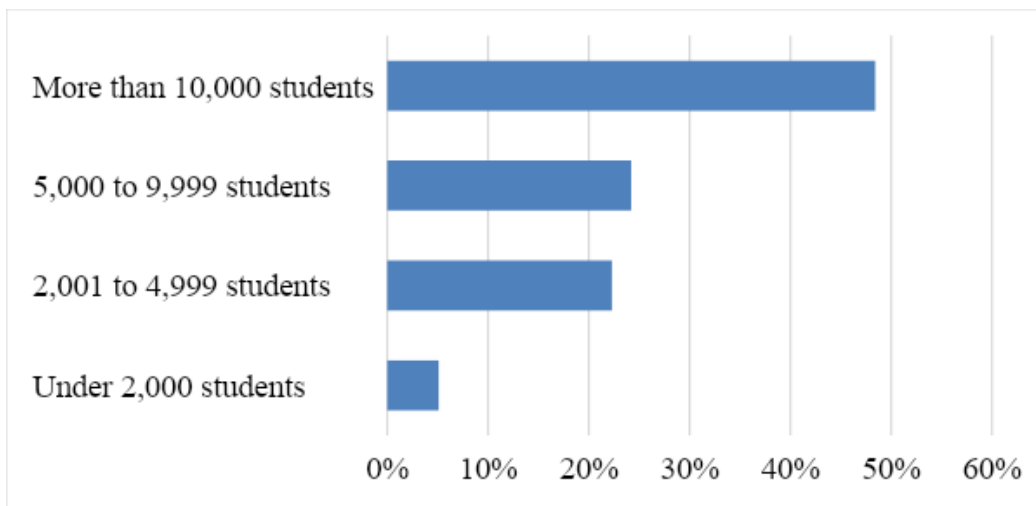
**Figure 4: Size of Institution by Enrollment**

Job Areas

Respondents performed a wide variety of job roles (respondents could select as many roles as applied), with 675 responses made. As figure 4 shows in descending order, reference (subject, liaison, branch, etc.) had the most selections at 18% (n=124), followed by instruction (information literacy, teaching and learning, etc. at 18% (n=122), then student success (outreach, engagement, first year experiences, etc.) at 12% (n=83). The remaining job areas received from 8% to 1% selections.
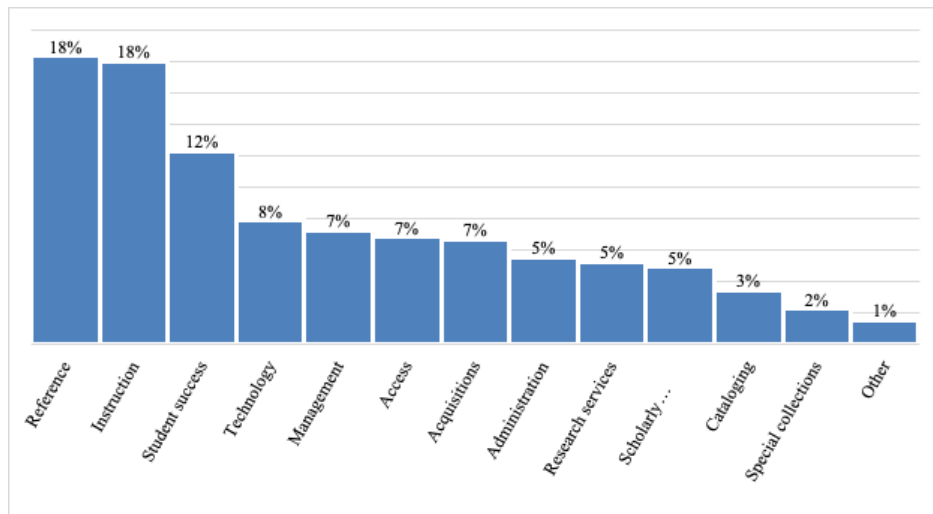
Figure 5: Job Areas

Geographic Location

Based on Geographic Census Regions within the United States, figure 5 shows that nearly all respondents (98%) identified their location as within the United States, with the majority of respondents coming from the South (38%). There were three respondents outside of the United States, in Canada; representation also included all United States Census Regions. The top three regions included 18% (n=28) located in the South-South Atlantic (DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV), followed by 16% (n=25) in the Midwest-East North Central (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI), and 15% (n=24) in the South – West South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX).
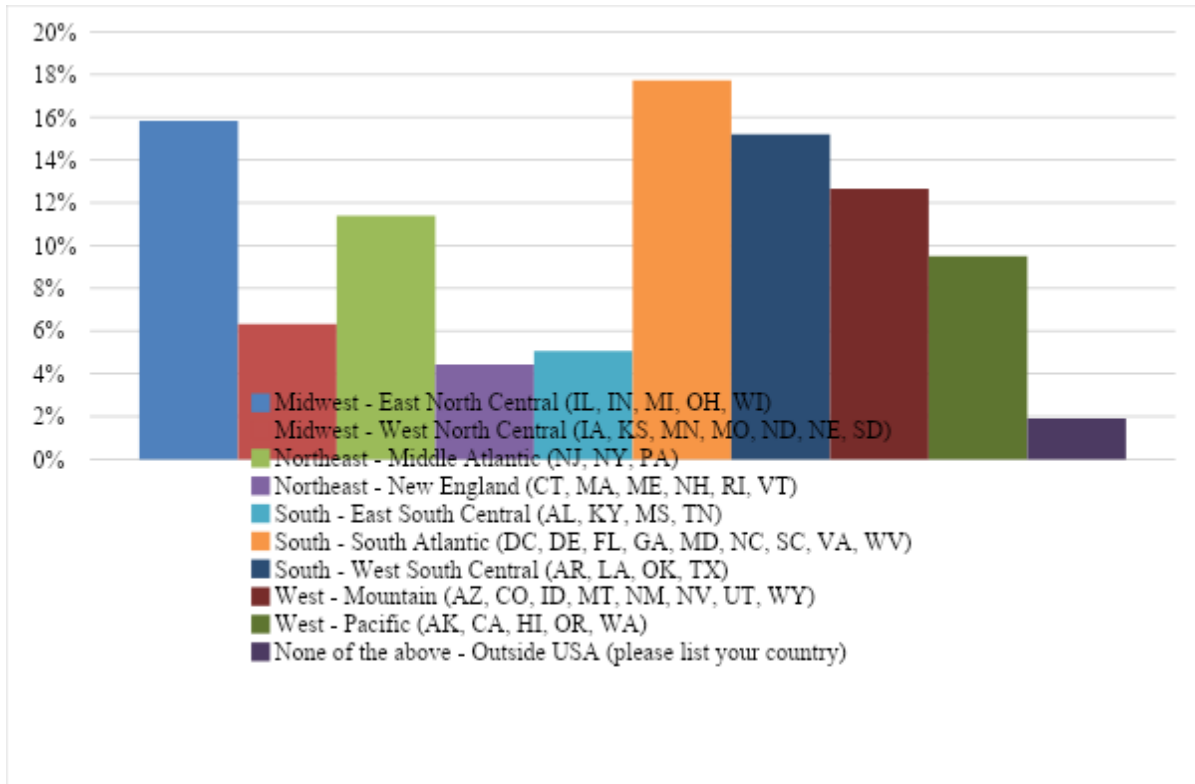
Figure 6: Geographic Location

Years of Experience

As figure 6 denotes, those with more than 20 years of experience formed a slight majority of respondents (28%, n=45) but overall, years of experience was spread out equally. Less than 5 years included 16%, n=26, 5-9 years was 20% of respondents (n=32), 10-14 years was 20% (n=32) and 15-19 years included 15% (n=23).
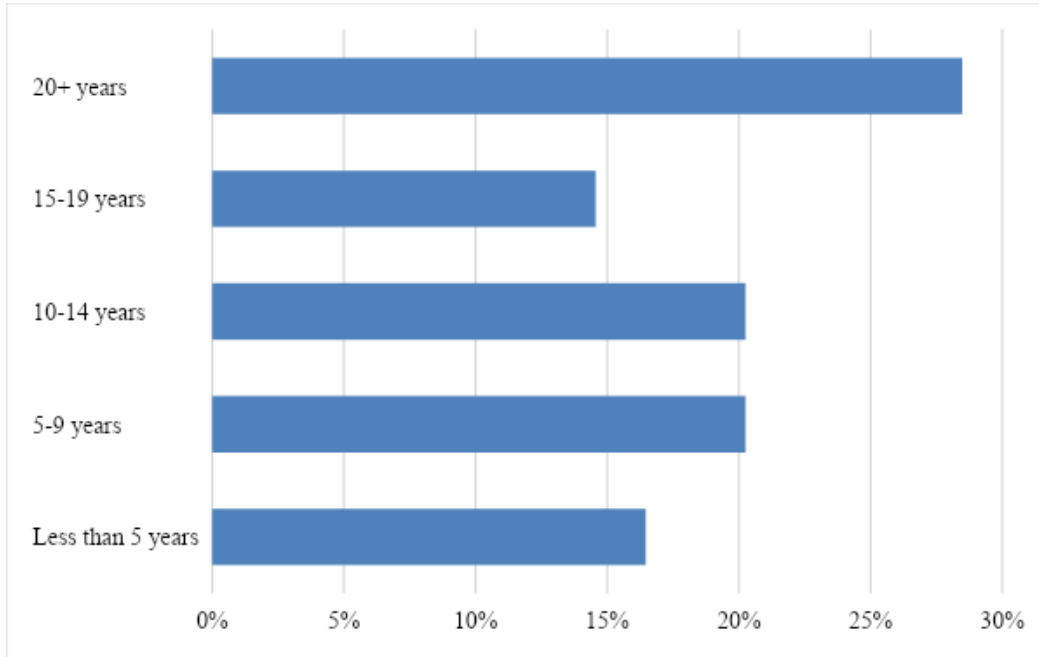
Figure 7: Years of Experience

Education

Two hundred and five selections were made for selection of all education completed; respondents could select multiple options. As figure 7 shows, 71% (n=145) indicated having a Masters degree (MLIS, MA), and 20% (n=41) indicated they had a 4-year college degree or less.
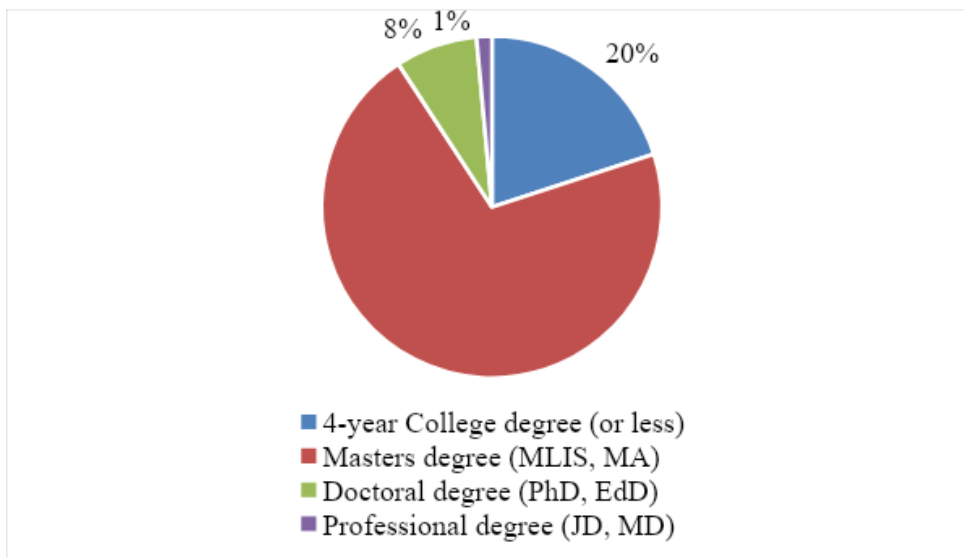
Figure 8: Education

Quantitative

The quantitative data includes respondents' scores on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) and the Short Profile of Emotional Competence (S-PEC). Not all respondents completed each section; relevant numbers of respondents are listed for each.

Of the 155 respondents who completed the Satisfaction with Life section on happiness, the mean score was 4.96 on a 7-point scale. If one follows Diener's categorization of a happy or satisfied respondent as all those scoring in and above neutral, 75% (n=117) of respondents met this criterion. Ten percent (n=17) fell into the lowest two categories of happiness while 2% (n=4) of respondents scored the highest possible score.

Of the 147 respondents who completed the Short Profile of Emotional Competence (S-PEC) section on emotional intelligence, the mean score was 3.49 when using the three-factor model from Appendix B, which excludes specific S-PEC questions. Mean respondent scores across validation surveys for the PEC scale are 3.33, thus respondents in this survey actually scored slightly above the mean.

Years of experience

Respondents' scores were looked at by years of experience. SWLS respondents with less than 5 years of experience scored an average of 4.98, which dipped to 4.82 for those with 5-9 years of experience. Those with 10-14 years of experience scored an average of 4.94, those with 15-19 years of experience averaged 4.89, and those with more than 20 years of experience scored an average of 5.18.

S-PEC respondents with less than 5 years of experience had a mean score of 3.52, as did those with 10-14 years of experience. Those with 5-9 years of experience and those with more than 20 years of experience both had a mean score of 3.47. Finally, those with 15-19 years of experience averaged 3.49.

Years of experience	Average SWLS Score	Average S-PEC Score
Less than 5 years	4.98	3.52
5-9 years	4.82	3.47
10-14 years	4.94	3.52
15-19 years	4.89	3.49
20+ years	5.18	3.47
Not identified	2.00	2.40

Table 1: Years of Experience

Type of institution and Institution size

Respondents' scores were looked at by type of institution (doctoral, associate, etc.) and size of institution (number of students). To establish independence of variables, Pearson's chi square analysis was run. There was a significant association between institution size and enrollment $(X2(4) = 26.325, p < .001)$. There was a moderate association between work experience and

enrollment (X2(8) = 16.324, p < .03). No association was found between work experience and type of institution (X2(8)> = 5.111, p > 0.7).

Respondents from doctoral institutions scored lowest on the SWLS at 4.91. Respondents from master's granting institutions scored the highest at 5.05. For the S-PEC, results were clustered tightly and slightly differently from the SWLS: the lowest scorers were from associate and baccalaureate-granting institutions at 3.19 and the highest scorers were from master's granting institutions at 3.23.

Responses also varied by size of institution. SWLS happiness scores ranged from a low of 4.80 (respondents from institutions with under 5,000 students) to a high of 5.46 (5,000 to 9,999 students). S-PEC scores once again clustered tightly, with the lowest score at 3.18 (respondents from institutions with over 10,000 students) and the highest score at 3.21 (respondents from institutions with under 5,000 students and respondents with 5,000 to 9,999 students).

Type of academic institution	Average SWLS Score	Average S-PEC Score
Associate and baccalaureate	5.02	3.19
Master's	5.05	3.23
Doctoral	4.91	3.20
Not identified	2.00	2.40

Table 2: Type of Academic Institution

Size of institution by enrollment	Average SWLS Score	Average S-PEC Score
Under 5,000 students	4.80	3.21
5,000 to 9,999 students	5.46	3.21
More than 10,000 students	4.90	3.18
Not identified	1.80	2.83

Table 3: Size of Institution by Enrollment

Qualitative

The qualitative section of the survey consisted of three key sub-research questions. The researchers asked respondents to answer:
- a. How would you define emotional intelligence and happiness in the workplace?
- b. Describe a time when you thought you were exhibiting high emotional intelligence in the workplace.
  - i. Did that time impact your own happiness?
  - ii. Others' happiness?
- c. Describe a time when you consider yourself very happy in the workplace.
  - i. Were your emotions impacted?
  - ii. Were others' emotions impacted?

There were 95 responses to a., and 85 responses to b. and c. above.

Once the survey was completed, the raw data was uploaded to Dedoose for thematic analysis and coding by the researchers. The researchers engaged in intercoder reliability where they each independently coded the content of interest. Each paid attention to hidden meanings of possible lines within the content. Upon completion of the coding independently, the researchers discussed the results and which codes were most appropriate to the analysis.

At this point, the researchers also checked for intracoder reliability. Initially there were 1090 excerpts with 1079 frequencies coded. Sixty-one (61) thematic codes were determined each with a developed description. Six subcodes also emerged. To assess the intercoder reliability of coding the qualitative content, the Holsti's coefficient was selected. Holsti's method was used as the codebook was small and a sophisticated coefficient like Scott's pi or Krippendorff's alpha was not necessary. Utilizing percent agreement (Holsti's method), the researchers agreed 42 times resulting in a Holsti's coefficient of 0.688.

The 61 thematic codes were further reviewed and either kept the same, revised, merged or discarded. Upon final review of the codes, 22 total key thematic codes were identified (see Appendix C). Table 4: Thematic Coding identifies the top 10 thematic codes and description of the code ranked by the frequency of the thematic code. "Positive impact/intent" ranked highest with the most coded frequency of 90, followed by "standard EI definition" at 75, and "library workers" closely followed with 74, and "understand others" at 63.

For Question a. above, emotional intelligence was generally well defined (coded 75 times) while happiness was generally poorly defined (the "well-defined" code was used only 38 times), both judged in relation to the provided basic definitions derived from the field of psychology. A respondent defined EI as the "ability to identify and respond to the emotions of oneself and others" which was standard across many responses (23 times) with similar statements of "aware of feelings," another, "managing self emotions," and another "knowing your feelings" and "knowing the feelings of others." Several respondents identified "your own motivation" and "self control" as key elements of emotional intelligence.
Respondents, even those who provided a precise definition for emotional intelligence, often defined happiness in regards to a combination of emotional intelligence and the workplace (that is, the interplay of all three factors) or even failed to define happiness at all. It is striking that respondents seemed to have a strong understanding of emotional intelligence - at least when it came to defining it - and a much weaker understanding of happiness - at least in the workplace. The definitions for happiness in the workplace were often quite limited in their scope and referred to an absence of negative aspects ("when you don't have that feeling of dread every time the alarm clock goes off") as often as the presence of positive ones ("feeling content").

For Questions a. and c. above, the qualitative results show a significant number of respondents conflating happiness with respect. The code "trust/appreciated/valued" was used 62 times in respondents' answers with the majority focused on this "feeling" of being of great work of, or feeling or showing of respect in the workplace. One respondent, for example, stated, "happiness is being fulfilled and I believe in the workplace often comes from also being respected in your role." Two more examples: "happiness is being respected and valued; not just getting everything the way you want it," and "happiness in the workplace includes feeling competent, having positive, supportive, and open relationships with colleagues, feeling like your work matters, and feeling respected by your colleagues."

For Questions b. (a time when you were exhibiting high emotional intelligence) and c. (a time when you consider yourself very happy in the workplace), there are several interesting points that the qualitative data brings forward about the behaviors that respondents highlighted in their examples. Positive impact/intent was reflected 90 times in the coding and represented a situation(s) that had a positive impact on self/others, culture. For example, the code for "supervisor" is used 28 times in respondents' answers. When "supervisor" indicates the respondent themselves, it is always coded as a positive example but when "supervisor" indicates the respondent's supervisor, it is always coded as a negative example. One respondent for example stated, "I've found EI to be most important in situations that involve interpersonal conflicts between team members. As the supervisor, it took a lot of time, energy, and emotional work to support these two individuals in learning how to work together." The respondent continues on to share, "...this did increase their work satisfaction and happiness, which in turn reduced my stress at work and increased my happiness with the work environment." This statement is just one example of a supervisor stating a positive outcome. While this might sound intuitive ("bosses are associated with negative emotions"), it is striking that there are no examples of positive supervising behavior in this dataset (unless it was an example stated by a supervisor not an employee).

Interestingly the majority of the examples for Questions b. and c. were about library workers (staff or librarians) coded at frequency of 74. Respondent examples include "feeling in sync at work...leads to myself and co-workers' happiness," and "resolving a conflict with another staff member required use of my emotional intelligence and led to a better work relationship with my fellow librarian, thus our happiness working together." When the code for campus community is used (23 times in this dataset), it uniformly refers to students rather than faculty or staff. There is one example which mentions a faculty member - in support of something that their students need. While this again might sound intuitive ("students are why we do our jobs"), it is striking that campus colleagues are completely disregarded in the mental landscape of respondents.

Thematic Code	Description	Frequency
positive impact/intent	situation(s) having a positive impact on self/others, culture	90
standard EI definition	contains enough of the pieces of how EI is typically defined	75
library worker	the people mentioned in the example are library workers (staff or librarians)	74
understand others	ability to understand others / judgment of the situation, specific to interpersonal communication (5), others motivation (7)	63

trusted, appreciated and valued	feeling validated / heard in the library workplace, to be of great worth of, feeling or showing of respect; firm belief of truth or strength of person(s) / feeling of certainty, trust in one's own ability	62
internal happiness	mentions of happiness include internal factors (person's feelings, etc.)	60
perceptions	the respondent's thoughts and assumptions of how others around them responded to an example	59
set of skills	is an example of how EI (and, to a lesser extent, happiness) have associated skills that can be learned and developed	55
relationships	situations(s) involving relationships with one another	55
managing emotions / emotional maturity	ability to control emotions tactfully / become mature around own emotions	54

Table 4: Thematic Coding

Discussion

This study started with four research questions:

- What is the overall level of satisfaction with life of participating academic librarians?
- What is the overall level of emotional intelligence of participating academic librarians?
- What viewpoints do academic librarians have about exhibiting happiness in the workplace?
- What viewpoints do academic librarians have about operating with high emotional intelligence in the workplace?

Happiness, or satisfaction with life, of respondents in this study met typical norms. Of the 155 respondents who completed the section on happiness, the mean score was 4.96 on a 7-point scale. As Diener notes, "The average of life satisfaction in economically developed nations is in this [the 4-5] range" (Diener, 2006, para 3.). Despite perceptions of librarians as particularly unhappy people in terms of morale and workplace experiences, the data for this set of respondents does not bear this out.

Respondents' self-assessed levels of emotional intelligence also met typical norms. Of the 147 respondents who completed the section on emotional intelligence, the mean score was 3.49 on a 5-point scale; mean respondent scores from validation surveys for the PEC scale are 3.33. Thus, respondents in this survey actually scored slightly above the expected mean. Those respondents with fewer years in the profession tended to score themselves more highly in emotional intelligence than those who have more years of experience (with the exception of those with 5-9 years of experience). This finding may be due to increased awareness of emotional intelligence or a stronger self-perception by those with fewer years in the profession, to the personalities of people who remain in academic libraries long-term, or to a combination of those or other factors. Overall, data for this set of respondents indicates a typical or even slightly high level of emotional intelligence.

There are two other interesting points that come from looking at the quantitative data. Those respondents who worked at institutions with under 5,000 students self-scored lowest on the SWLS, measuring happiness, but tied for the highest on the S-PEC, measuring emotional intelligence. Studies typically find a positive correlation between happiness and emotional intelligence (or a negative correlation between stress and emotional intelligence), as found in Austin, Saklofske & Egan (2005) for example. Secondly, when looking at years of experience of the respondents and their responses to the SWLS, it becomes clear that there is a dip in satisfaction in the early years of mid-career (5-9 years of experience) which is matched by a corresponding dip in later mid-career (15-19 years of experience). This may be due to external factors such as caregiving demands and geographic limitations, or it could be due to mid-career limitations and frustrated ambitions.

Answers to the two remaining research questions drew primarily from the qualitative data. The researchers sought to learn more about how academic librarians conceive of emotional intelligence and happiness in their workplaces and examples and behaviors that the respondents would highlight. Although the authors carefully considered definitions of the two concepts as published in the literature and provided a basic definition for each in the informed consent for the survey (see the Methodology section), the authors were particularly interested in exploring participants' definitions.

It should be noted that while many respondents capably defined emotional intelligence, a significant proportion of these respondents failed to demonstrate that understanding when providing their examples. It is possible that respondents were able to craft a definition of emotional intelligence without an inherent understanding of what it entails. Respondents' definitions of happiness frequently referred to contentment, satisfaction, and meeting goals. The quantitative questions asked about satisfaction with life (see Appendix A) referred to life being ideal, excellent, not changed if done over, etc., although there is one question about satisfaction. Thus, there is a gap between what respondents conceived of as possible in the workplace and the questions that they answered about their overall satisfaction with life. Statements showed that respondents felt that with this came the feeling of being validated or heard in the workplace. While this certainly may be true if one feels respected then they feel recognized or supported, that does not necessarily mean that respect is happiness. It is interesting that so many responses were merging this notion of respect in the workplace with happiness. Again, this suggests that respondents may not have understood the definition of happiness in the workplace.

Limitations

The research limitations of this study focus on the survey data, timing, respondents' feelings and understanding, and bias. The survey data was collected at one point in time, July 2020, during a pandemic. The survey data encompassed only the ULS and CJCLS sections, where further data could have been included from the College Libraries section (see Methodologies as to reason for selecting ULS and CJCLS). The survey was carried out during the summer and some academic librarians may have been on leave or off-contract. Some academic librarians also may never have responded to this survey due to being overwhelmed by the number of open surveys. Respondents may have felt fatigued during the survey due to its length. Respondents may have understood the terms of emotional intelligence and satisfaction with life differently than intended, leaving the results to be more subjective than anticipated. This research also cannot provide strong evidence of cause and effects as we cannot tell whether happiness or emotional intelligence are causative. Since the participants volunteered to participate in the survey through self-selection sampling, there is likely a degree of self-selection bias. The decision to participate in the study could reflect inherent bias in the participants (for example, if a participant is interested in emotional intelligence behaviors or is unhappy due to a recent situation). Finally, there is also the risk that a participant may have provided dishonest answers. All of these limitations lead to the sample not being representative of the population being studied, and therefore generalizations cannot be made to all academic librarians.

Recommendations & Implications

Although results found here are not generalizable, it is possible to make some recommendations for the profession based on this data in combination with findings from previous studies.

Respondents from this study have an intellectual understanding of emotional intelligence and are often capable of defining it quite thoroughly, but the examples they provided show that the move from intellectual understanding to changed behavior is not complete. Training may help in identifying the distinction between emotions and emotional intelligence, as emotional intelligence is not just about emotions. Therefore, the researchers recommend increased professional development in the area of productive emotional intelligence behaviors and actions.

Other methods to consider include pursuit of cultural intelligence training and establishment of accountability partners to monitor behavioral change. Cultural intelligence training can be utilized here as it comes from the same body of research as emotional intelligence and is the next step to help us to take action when we are not familiar with others' behaviors. The other recommendation for initiation of behavioral change, including behaviors tied to emotional intelligence and happiness, is the use of accountability partners or coaching conversations as a part of departmental or individual goals. Accountability partners provide an external perspective on behaviors to emphasize needed change and continued progress; coaching conversations provide similar feedback within a formal supervisory structure.

Respondents from this study often defined happiness in terms of respect or based on external factors; these definitions stand in stark contrast to definitions in the psychological literature which are focused on both the short and longer-term and include internal factors such as self-esteem in combination with external factors such as relationships. Professional development which focuses on essential understanding of happiness, and in particular its relevance in the workplace, is therefore likely to be necessary as a foundation for understanding

in this area before seeking out more practical training on ways to modify behaviors and actions. The goal for this type of professional development would be to provide theory and understanding of the relevance of happiness in the workplace, which could serve as a counterweight to toxicity if combined with structural change.

At institutions without budgetary resources for paid professional development, the use of readings, talks, webinars, partnerships with other libraries to bring in speakers, and other free forms of professional development is recommended.

The findings of this research study have important practical implications for the profession and future research. There is a possibility the results may have differed if the pandemic had not occurred. A post-pandemic study may prove useful to see if academic librarians' happiness and emotional intelligence have changed upon returning to the workplace.

Further research should be undertaken in a longitudinal design across various time points in order to analyze these two factors (emotional intelligence and happiness) over time. Further, such studies should also consider how emotional intelligence is related to happiness in academic librarians and if there is a cause/effect nature between the two. Research looking at race and ethnicity, gender, or sexuality, etc. would also be beneficial to increasing understanding of emotional intelligence and, in particular, happiness. Lastly, future research examining administration/managements' emotional intelligence and happiness would be beneficial to the practice to see if there are any differences within the hierarchy of academic institutions.

Conclusion

This study provided an opportunity to look at academic librarians' happiness and emotional intelligence in order to draw conclusions about the academic library workplace and recommend ways to enhance the workplace. Our results indicate that more research is needed to examine the relationship between happiness and emotional intelligence. Results of the survey analysis revealed that happiness, or satisfaction with life, and level of emotional intelligence of academic librarians respondents met typical norms. The qualitative results varied with some interesting results for the supervisor and equally with respect. There is a profuse emphasis in the literature on the dismissive elements of library work that there is a need to understand what supports and nurtures happy academic librarians.

Providing librarians with a firmer understanding of happiness as defined in the psychological literature, and the behaviors and situations necessary to produce it, could increase the overall happiness of academic librarians and morale for all library workers. Professional development, for example, which focuses on individual actions and behavior is therefore likely to be effective, even for those librarians who have a foundational understanding of emotional intelligence. Considerations related to the emotional wellbeing of employees and how navigating a pandemic impacts emotional intelligence should be taken into account by library administrations. In addition, a discussion of ways to create happiness in the workplace and the connection between positive emotions and productive workplaces is likely to lead to greater overall happiness among librarians. Another way to improve may be to look at behaviors tied to emotional intelligence and happiness through the use of accountability partners as a part of ongoing departmental or professional goals.

Emotional intelligence and happiness has been studied in academic librarians but they have not until now been studied together. This study helps to fill the gap in the literature by providing an

initial analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence and happiness in academic librarians. Further studies may explore how post-pandemic life has impacted academic librarians' happiness and emotional intelligence, if there is a cause/effect relationship between the two, and an examination of administrative and managements' emotional intelligence and happiness.

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Appendix A: Survey

The survey includes: (a) demographic questions; (b) the 5-item 7-Likert scale "The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS);" (c) the 20-item 5-Likert scale "How Emotionally Intelligent and Competent are You? (The Short Profile of Emotional Competence, S-PEC);" (d) open-ended questions related to emotional intelligence and happiness.

Demographic Questions

    A. What type of academic library best describes where you work?
1. 4-year public university
2. 4-year private university
3. Community or Junior College
4. Other (please describe)

    B. Does your library have a special emphasis? Select only one.
1. No special emphasis (general)
2. Medical/Health Sciences
3. Law
4. Science
5. Engineering
6. Business
7. Special Collections
8. Other (please describe)

    C. What is the size of your institution by enrollment?
1. Under 2,000 students
2. Under 5,000 students
3. Under 10,000 students
4. More than 10,000 students

D. Please select all job areas that apply to your position.
   1. Reference (subject, liaison, branch, etc.)
   2. Research services (data management, analysis, or visualization, digital humanities, grants, etc.)
   3. Student success (outreach, engagement, first year experience, etc.)
   4. Instruction (information literacy, teaching and learning, etc.)
   5. Scholarly communication and publishing (open educational resources, open access, copyright, repositories, etc.)
   6. Special collections (archivist, curator, preservation, etc.)
   7. Access (circulation, ILL, media, research commons, makerspaces, etc.)
   8. Acquisitions (licensing, purchasing, etc.)
   9. Cataloging (metadata, resource description, bibliographer, digital materials, etc.)
   10. Technology (user experience, electronic resources, discovery, digitization, etc.)
   11. Management (coordinator, department head, program director, etc.)
   12. Administration (dean/director or associate dean/director, human resources, assessment, development, communications, budget and finance, etc.)
   13. Other (describe)

E. What is your geographic location (using the map below)?
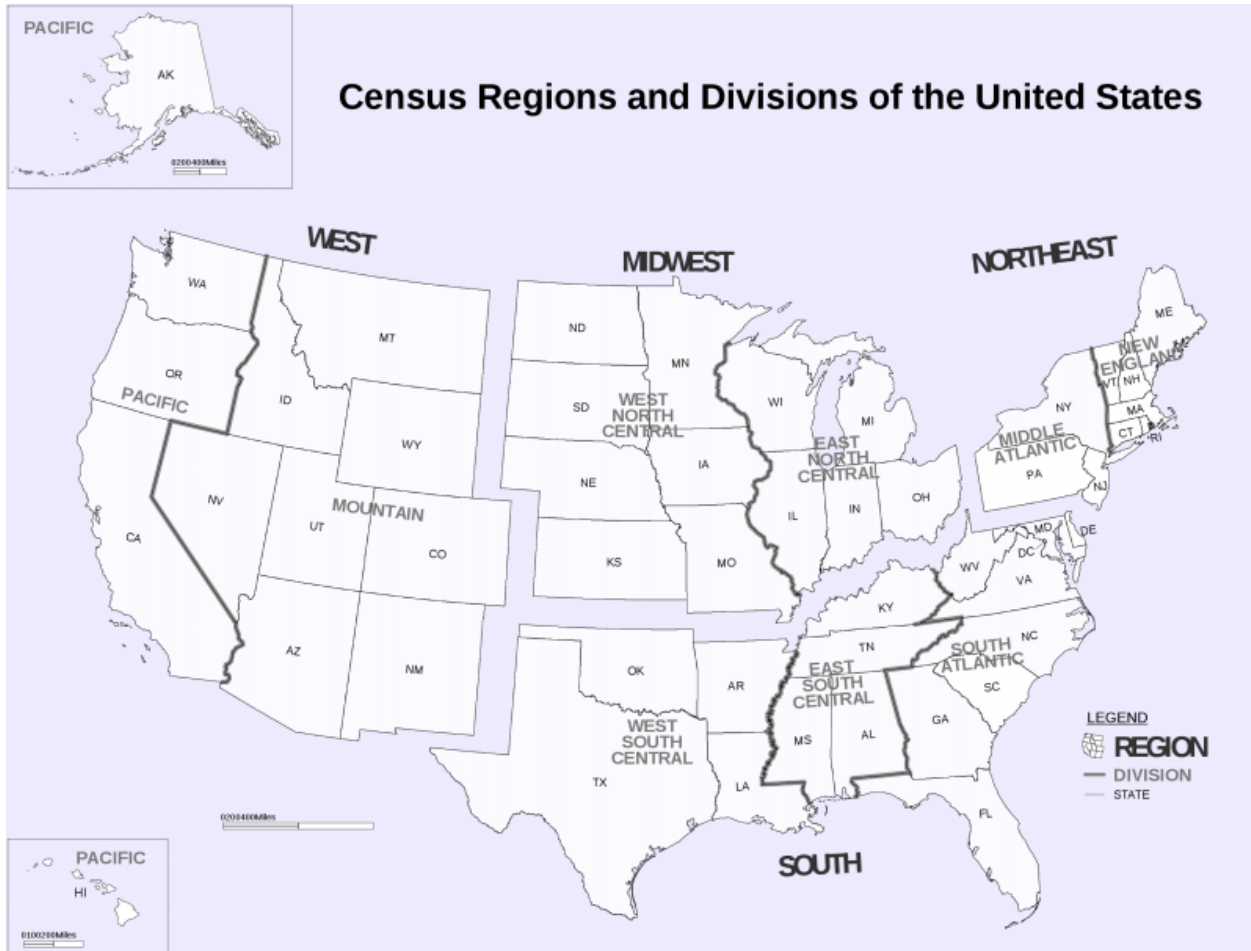
By US Census Bureau -
https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us_regdiv.pdf

o Midwest - East North Central (1)
o Midwest - West North Central (2)
o Northeast - Middle Atlantic (3)
o Northeast - New England (4)
o South - East South Central (5)
o South - South Atlantic (6)
o South - West South Central (7)
o West - Mountain (8)
o West - Pacific (9)
Outside US - Canada
Outside US - Rest of world

F. How many years of experience do you have working in an academic library?
   1. Less than 5 years
   2. 5-9 years
   3. 10-14 years

4. 15-19 years
5. 20+ years

G. Please select all the education you have completed.
1. 4-year College degree or less
2. Masters degree (MLIS, MA)
3. Doctoral degree (PhD, EdD)
4. Professional degree (JD, MD)

The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)

Description of Measure: A 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one's life satisfaction (not a measure of either positive or negative affect). Participants indicate how much they agree or disagree with each of the 5 items using a 7-point scale that ranges from 7 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

Scale:
Instructions: Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with.

Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.
• 7 - Strongly agree
• 6 - Agree
• 5 - Slightly agree
• 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
• 3 - Slightly disagree
• 2 - Disagree
• 1 - Strongly disagree

_____ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
_____ The conditions of my life are excellent.
_____ I am satisfied with my life.
_____ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
_____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Scoring: Though scoring should be kept continuous (sum up scores on each item), here are some cutoffs to be used as benchmarks. 31 - 35 Extremely satisfied 26 - 30 Satisfied 21 - 25 Slightly satisfied 20 Neutral 15 - 19 Slightly dissatisfied 10 - 14 Dissatisfied 5 - 9 Extremely dissatisfied

Reference:
Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The Satisfaction with Life Scale. Journal of Personality Assessment, 49, 71-75.
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How Emotionally Intelligent and Competent are You? (The Short Profile of Emotional Competence, S-PEC)

Instructions Here's another measure of emotional intelligence consisting of 20-items to assess emotional intelligence skills and competencies both in relation to oneself (e.g. identifying and understanding own emotions) and others (e.g. identifying and understanding another's emotions).

To assess these emotional intelligence and competencies, state the extent to which the statements below represent you or otherwise. Very much unlike me; Somewhat unlike me; Neither nor Somewhat like me; Somewhat like me; Very much like me

1. When I am touched by something, I immediately know what I feel.
2. When I feel good, I can easily tell whether it is due to being proud of myself, happy or relaxed.
3. I do not always understand why I respond in the way I do
4. When I am feeling low, I easily make a link between my feelings and a situation that affected me.
5. I find it difficult to explain my feelings to others even if I want to.
6. I am good at describing my feelings.
7. When I am angry, I find it easy to calm myself down.
8. I find it difficult to handle my emotions.
9. My emotions inform me about changes I should make in my life.
10. I never base my personal life choices on my emotions.
11. I am good at sensing what others are feeling.
12. Quite often I am not aware of people's emotional state.
13. I do not understand why the people around me respond the way they do.
14. Most of the time, I understand why the people feel the way they do.
15. Other people tend to confide in me about personal issues.
16. I find it difficult to listen to people who are complaining.
17. When I see someone who is stressed or anxious, I can easily calm them down.
18. If someone came to me in tears, I would not know what to do.
19. I can easily get what I want from others.
20. If I wanted, I could easily make someone feel uneasy.

Scoring Total Emotional Competence score = Average Items 1-20. Total Identification-Self score = Average items 1-2. Total Understanding-Self score = Average items 3-4. Total Expression-Self score = Average items 5-6. Total Regulation-Self score = Average items 7-8. Total Use-Self Score = Average items 9-10. Total Identification-Others score = Average items 11-12. Total Understanding-Others score = Average items 13-14. Total Listening-Others score = Average items 15-16. Total Regulation-Others score = Average items 17-18. Total Use-Others score = Average items 19-20. Reverse Scoring: Items 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 18 are reverse-scored. Interpretation: Higher scores indicate higher emotional competence. Take note of the scores

obtained between your 'self' and 'other' dimensions;if one is substantially higher than the other, this may reflect better emotional competencies in one form relative to the other.

Reference
Mikolajczak, M., Brasseur, S., & Fantini-Hauwel, C. (2014). Measuring intrapersonal and interpersonal EQ: The Short Profile of Emotional Competence (s-pec). Personality and Individual Differences, 65, 42-46.
https://emotivity.my/wp-content/uploads/How-Emotionally-Intelligent-and-Competent-are-You-The-Short-Profile-of-Emotional-Competence-S-PEC.pdf

Qualitative Questions
1. How would you define emotional intelligence and happiness in the workplace?
2. Describe a time when you thought you were exhibiting high emotional intelligence in the workplace.
    a. Did that time impact your own happiness?
    b. Others' happiness?
3. Describe a time when you considered yourself very happy in the workplace.
    a. Were your emotions impacted?
    b. Were others' emotions impacted?
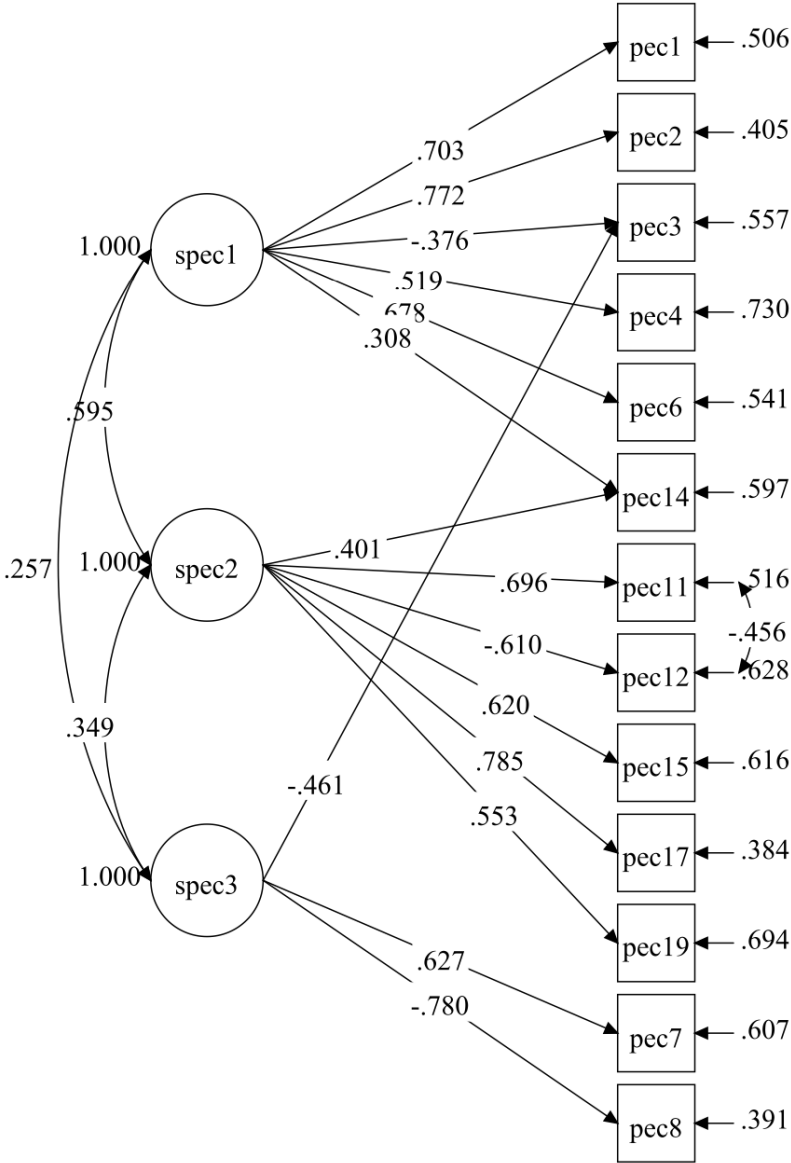
Appendix C: Full Thematic Coding of Qualitative Questions

Thematic Code	Description	Frequency
positive impact/intent	situation(s) having a positive impact on self/others, culture	90
standard EI definition	contains enough of the pieces of how EI is typically defined	75
library workers	the people mentioned in the example are library workers (staff or librarians)	74
understand others	ability to understand others / judgement of the situation, specific to interpersonal communication (5), others motivation (7)	63
trusted, appreciated and valued	feeling validated / heard in the library workplace, to be of great worth of, feeling or showing of respect; firm belief of truth or strength of person(s) / feeling of certainty, trust in one's own ability	62
internal happiness	mentions of happiness include internal factors (person's feelings, etc.)	60
perceptions	the respondent's thoughts and assumptions of how others around them responded to an example	59

set of skills	is an example of how EI (and, to a lesser extent, happiness) have associated skills that can be learned and developed	55
relationships	situations(s) involving relationships with one another	55
managing emotions / emotional maturity	ability to control emotions tactfully / become mature around own emotions	54
support(ed)	to support another; to feel supported by another	51
awareness / self awareness	conscious of / recognize others emotions or own emotions	49
external happiness	mentions of happiness include external factors (promotions, parties, etc.)	45
navigating stressful situation	examples of people having to handle a stressful situation, including interpersonal conflicts (7)	43
not standard definitions	lacks at least one piece of a standard definition of EI or happiness or both	38
unhappiness	example of unhappiness, not happiness	38
standard happiness definition	contains enough of the pieces of how happiness at work is typically defined	38
supervisor	either the person themselves is a boss or they are talking about their boss	28
accomplishment	when feel fulfillment or successful execution	25
satisfied	meeting expectations or wishes of (in situation)	25

negative intent	someone else tried to do something harmful to the respondent; situation(s) which have a negative impact on self and/or others	24
campus community	the people mentioned in the example are faculty, staff, or students	23