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Abstract: *We evaluate the mediating role of flow experience on the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace. Data was obtained using a mixed-method design. Quantitative data were collected using cross-sectional design among professional nurses in Uganda's public hospitals, 429 participants responded to a self-evaluation questionnaire. The results indicate that flow experience partially mediates the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace. Results of mediated-SEM analyses generally support the hypotheses. The results suggest that flow experience can foster the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace. The core elements of flow experience (i.e. challenge skill balance, concentration on the task and perceived control) appear to be key to bringing happiness in the feelings of participating professional nurses and maximizing the chances of generating lasting effects. This study takes flow experience as a new perspective used to explore health sector in Uganda, estimates measurements and tests its role between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace. Study adopts a cross-sectional approach; data are captured in the short term. Demonstrating that improving happiness at the workplace, HR managers should pay much attention to not only Self-driven personality but also cultivate flow experience.*

Key Words: Flow Experience, self-driven personality, happiness, health sector, nurses, Uganda

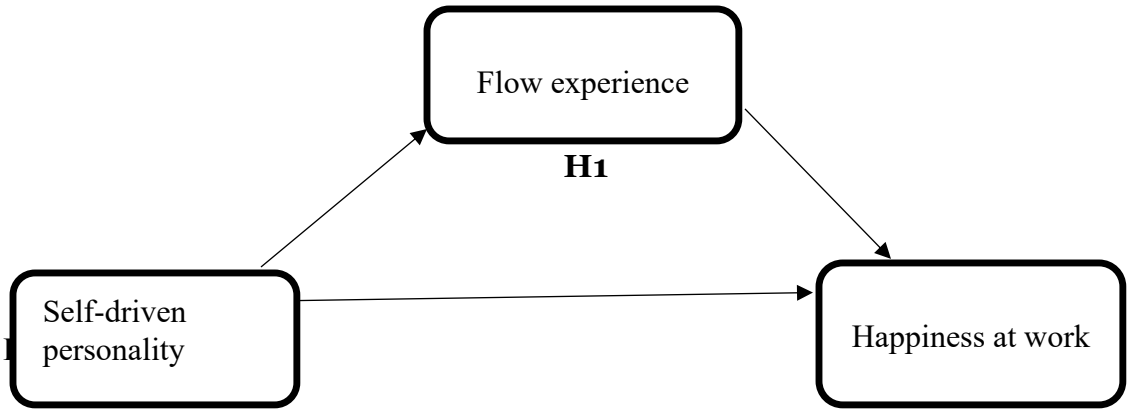
World over, Happiness at the workplace is crucial for improving productivity. Happy employees are productive employees while those employees who are unhappy may not pay full attention to any activity at work (Seligman, 2011). One of the main sustainable development goals for Uganda and the rest of the world is improving health quality (maternal health). However, health policies and systems are not the only basis for quality improvements. More attention should also be focused on nurses in professional

immersion and workflow experience. This study discusses whether flow experience influences self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace.

Flow experience is an area that has flourished research within the past couple of decades. Coming out of sports psychology literature, flow has continued to have a strong presence in that field since 2000 (Bakker, 2008). Flow has also seen an emergence in research in many other areas such as sports psychology over the past decade, including academics, creativity, work, video gaming, and online internet use among others (Asakawa, 2010). Currently, flow is again seeing an emergence into a new area of study – personality and the individual characteristics that contribute to one's self-driven personality (Barrick & Mound, 2005). Knowledge about this phenomenon has been limited until now. This study first examines whether flow is beneficial for happiness at the workplace, following the suggestion of Hurtzand Donovan (2000) to build models that are more explanatory of the personality-happiness relationship. The second goal is to investigate whether flow experience plays a mediator role in the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace. Several studies on flow experience have been conducted (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), but little is still known with regard to how flow experience mediates the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace. This study could help to explain the psychological processes which mediate the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace. The purpose of the study is to examine the mediation role of flow experience in the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace.

Arising out of this literature review, the model in Figure 1 was developed to guide this study.

Figure 1 Mediation of flow experience between Self-driven Personality and happiness at the workplace.



By introducing the concept of self-driven personality, flow theory has acknowledged that some people are more likely to experience flow than others (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Nevertheless, flow researchers have only recently begun to empirically test the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace. The recent findings clearly support the assumption that flow experiences are systematically related to individual differences, for example, the Five-Factor Model of

Personality in the Workplace by Sean Neubert (2013), clearly showed a large correlation between elements of the five-factor model and happiness at the workplace. Employees with this personality can achieve the "flow state experience" more than the average person. Being self-driven is one good gateway to achieving happiness at the workplace (Seligman &Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Activities that lead to flow experiences are said to be 'autotelic'. Autotelic experiences are those that arise from activities which are not done for some anticipated future benefit but because the activity is intrinsically and immediately rewarding and creates happiness (Seligman &Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Thus, the following hypothesis was formulated:

> ***H1****: Flow experience mediates the relationship between self-driven personality and happiness at the workplace.*

Method

Sample

A convenient purposive sample of 429 professional nurses was acquired from five public hospitals i.e. Jinja (n = 104), Kamuli (n = 88), Iganga (n = 85), Moroto (n = 84) and Mbale (n = 68). Initially, 500 questionnaires were distributed among the participants. However, 71 questionnaires were either incomplete or indicating certain response set and were later discarded, remaining with 429 usable questionnaires. Respondents included both male (n = 130) and female (n = 299), with the majority in the age range of between 20 and 30 years (182, 42.4%). The educational level of the respondents included Degree (n= 23), Diploma (n = 164) and Certificate (n = 242). Overall job experience of the respondents' majority were between 6-11 years (182, 41.6%); whereas job tenure in the present hospitals ranged from 1-11 years. Job designations of the respondents were classified as per type of the hospital. In case of primary work unit/area, respondents included; psychiatry/mental health units (n = 6, 1.4%), rehabilitation (n = 5, 1.2%)., medicine (general) (n = 41, 9.6%), nursing care (n = 137, 40%), surgery (n = 21, 4.9%), laboratory (n = 10, 2.3%), obstetrics (n = 44, 10.3%), pediatrics (n = 53, 12.4%), anesthesiology (n = 7, 1.6%), emergency department (n = 64, 14.9%), intensive care unit (any type) (n = 32, 7.5%), and specific Unit (n = 9, 2.1%).

Assessment Measures

The following measures were used to assess the constructs of the study.

Happiness at the workplace. The study used the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) **(**Diener& Seligman, 2002) which consisted of 50 items with four subscales: psychological meaningfulness scale (12 items), personal engagement (14 items), life satisfaction (12 items), and positive emotions (11 items). Response options were based on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1=always without fail to 6= never less than a quarter of the time. Seligman (2002) reported satisfaction Cronbach's alpha for all the subscales (Meaningfulness = .90; Personal Engagement = .80; Life satisfaction = .75; Positive emotions = .79); while Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, (1988) reported adequate construct validity of the said measure suggesting that factor analysis revealed four factor model of happiness at the workplace. For the present sample acquired alpha coefficient Happiness at the workplace (.85) and its subscales of Meaningfulness (.77), Personal

Engagement (.72), life satisfaction (.76) and positive emotions (.71) were satisfactory and acceptable.

Flow Experience. Work related Flow Experience Inventory (Csikszentmihalyi, 2005) consisted of 28 items with three subscales: challenge and skill balance (10 items), concentration on the task (12 items), and perceived control (6 items). Response options were based on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1=always without fail to 6=never less than a quarter of the time. Csikszentmihalyi, (2005) reported satisfactory Cronbach's alpha for all the subscales (challenge skill balance = .88; Concentration on the task = 80; Perceived control = .78); while Csikszentmihalyi, (2005) reported adequate construct validity of the said measure suggesting that factor analysis revealed three factor model of work-related flow experience. For present sample, acquired alpha coefficient for total flow experience (.83) and its subscales of challenge skill balance (.73), perceived control (.75) and concentration at the workplace (.76) were satisfactory and acceptable.

Self-Driven Personality (SDP). The Personality Inventory-Revised (NEO-PI-R, Costa & McCrae, 1992) was used for the self-report. The present study highlighted four positive traits that influence individuals to experience flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2005). SDP Scale consisted of 46 items to be rated on a 6-point scale with response options ranging from 1= this is very much like me to 6= this is not like me at all. Alpha reliability reported in earlier studies for was SDP Scale was .88 (Naude, Kruger, De Beer, Saayman, and Jonker, 2016) and its subscales of Extraversion (.77); Consciousness (.72) Agreeableness (.77); Openness to experience (.78). For the present sample, SDP scale has achieved an alpha coefficient of .83.

Results

Table 1 shows the mean values, standard deviations, and correlations for all the measured variables in this study. The correlation results show low correlations among the variables. This means that multicollinearity was not a problem in influencing the estimated stability of the parameters (Hung, 2011).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	Mean	S.D	Psychological Needs Satisfaction	Psychological Capital	Self- Driven Personality	Flow Experience	Happiness at the Workplace
Self-Driven Personality	3.81	.62	.53**	.45**	1		
Flow Experience	3.52	.58	.52**	.53**	.47**	1	
Happiness at the Workplace	3.98	.56	.44**	.40**	.30**	.51**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Measurement Model

Data analysis applies a multi-step approach. This study first developed the measurement model by conducting confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The models were assessed by the maximum likelihood method using AMOS 23. A structural equation model was then developed to test the hypotheses. To evaluate the model fitness, a chi-square with degrees

Table: 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Scale Reliability

Item Description Loading	Standardized	t-value	AVE	SCR
Self-Driven Personality			0.64	0.92
Conscientiousness				
CON7	.72	14.346		
CON8	.77	13.379		
CON9	.74	14.328		
Agreeableness				
AGR10	.71	10.780		
Extraversion				
EXT5	.60			
EXT6	.87	9.134		
Open to Experience				
OPE3	.74	11.125		
OPE4	.66	10.635		
OPE10	.72	11.542		
Flow Experience			0.71	0.99
Challenge Skill Balance				
CSB1	.55	10.801		
CSB2	.72	11.347		
CSB4	.74	11.994		
CSB5	.73	11.806		
CSB6	.66	10.801		
Concentration on the task				
CT8	.72	13.201		
CT9	.64	11.527		
CT10	.67	11.886		
Perceived control				
PC4	.72	12.716		
PC5	.75	13.179		
Happiness at the workplace			0.64	0.77
Meaningfulness				
PM2	.72	12.936		
PM3	.72	12.847		
PM5	.72	12.771		
PM6	.74	13.096		
PM10	.73	13.128		
Personal Engagement				
Pee	.54	9.216		
DED1	.60	10.585		
ABS2	.59	9.728		
Satisfaction with life				
SL9	.78	6.775		
Positive emotions				
PE3	.82	13.198		

***Note**: t-value is significant at P< .05 when the t-value exceeds 1.96.*
SCR = Scale composite reliability. AVE = Average variance extracted.

of freedom, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit (AGFI), Normal Fit Index (NFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were employed. Good fitness is normally deemed to exist when GFI and NFI are greater than .9, AGFI is greater than .8, and RMSEA is less than .08. As Table 2 shows, flow covers three factors, and the measurement model indicates that factor loadings of all items range between .60 and .77. The Composite Reliability (CR) ranges from .77 to .99, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ranges from .64 to .71. For all measurements, both indices are higher than the evaluation criteria, namely .6 for CR and .5 for AVE (Bagozzi & Yi, 1998). As in Table 2, measurements are fully acceptable when the happiness at the workplace and self-driven personality construct have an AVE value very close to that norm (Liao, Chuang & To, 2014).

Flow experience was measured as a single construct, and the measurement model was estimated by AMOS in this study. The results suggest a good fit of the second order ($\chi 2$ = 94.037, df= 35, GFI= 0.968, AGFI= 0.952, NFI= 0.955, RMSEA= 0.035), which indicates an acceptable fitness. The self-driven personality measurement model indicates that factor loadings range between .60 and .87. The CRs range from .64 to .99, and AVEs range from 0.77 to 0.92. A self- driven personality was measured as a single construct; it was composed of the 4 behavioral dimensions of this process and the AMOS measurement model used in this study. The results suggest a good fitness of the second order ($\chi 2$ = 78.145, df= 58, GFI= .983, AGFI= 0.952, NFI= 0.958, RMSEA= .038).

Happiness at the workplace was measured, and the measurement model indicates that factor loadings of all items range from .50 to 0.82 in this study. The CRs range from 0.60 to 0.64, and AVEs range from 0.60 to 0.77. The results suggest a good fitness of the second order ($\chi 2$ = 96.096, df= 71, GFI= 0.969, AGFI= 0.954, NFI= 0.956, and RMSEA= 0.029), which are above acceptable levels. As Table 2 shows, all item standardized loadings and estimates were positive and significant, evidencing convergent validity (Bagozzi & Yi, 1998). Lastly, the chi-square difference test was performed for all constructs in pairs to examine whether the restricted model significantly differed from the freely estimated model. In the restricted model, the correlation was fixed at one for the pair of constructs under examination (Chang & Cheng, 2009). These results support discriminant validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

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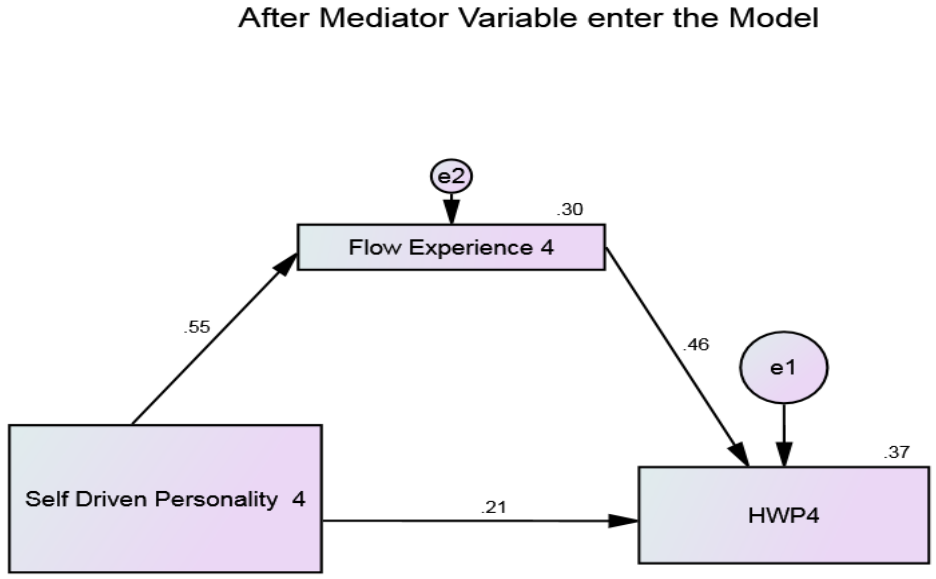
Tests of mediation

Mediation test (using AMOS-Version 23) was carried out to explain the mechanism by which an independent variable exerts its influence on a dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). To examine the primary hypotheses of the current study, we followed the recommendations of Shrout and Bolger (2002), who suggest a bootstrapping procedure to compute a confidence interval around the indirect effect (i.e., the path through the mediator). If zero falls outside of this interval, mediation is said to be present. We used the SPSS macro designed by Preacher and Hayes (2008) for this procedure. These analyses were run separately with ***H1****: Flow experience mediates the relationship*

between self-driven personality & happiness at the workplace and calculated a 95% confidence interval around this effect (values for upper and lower bounds that do not include zero indicate a statistically significant effect with an alpha level of .05). Partial Mediation (B = .391, t-value = 3.3374, p-value .000). Supported.

Figure 2. After Mediator Variable enter the Model



In Figure 2 the mediation model with positive feelings, where the person is totally involved in the activity (e.g. high concentration, perceived control, and challenge skill balance) mediates the direct effect of self-driven personality on happiness at the workplace. Reported coefficients are standardized betas *P < .05.

Table 3. The Results of Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Mediating Effect
FE	<---	SDP	.518	.038	13.681	***	Partial
HWP	<---	SDP	.193	.041	4.671	***	Partial

χ^2 = 94.037, df = 62, AGFI = .952, NFI = .955, RMSEA = .035

Discussions and Implications

According to the conceptual model, the structural equations provided by AMOS software are the presented results in Table 1, and the theoretical path model illustrated in Figure 1. The relationship was statistically significant at conventional levels ($p< 0.05$). Despite the literature suggesting a positive relationship between self-driven personality traits (except for neuroticism), happiness at the workplace, and flow experience, research that empirically analyzes this relationship is scarce (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The first

contribution of the present study to the literature is to examine the relationship among the main constructs of the model. The second contribution is the finding that flow experience has direct effects on professional nurse's happiness. They are often in flow at work when they work hard and are goal oriented. The study established that professional nurses, who are always immersed in activities, perform better at their workplace. This finding is consistent with the assumptions of the Broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001) and the psychology of flow theory (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) that suggests positive emotions broaden individual habitual modes of thinking and acting (Demerouti, 2006).

The findings of this study provide additional evidence that can be integrated with previous literature from sports and music domains (Jackson et al., 2001; O'Neil, 1999). Thus, it seems worthwhile for hospitals' management to promote flow among their professional nurses by creating good working conditions (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Conclusion and future research

Empirical results from this study contribute to understanding the mediation role of flow experience and the relationship among happiness at the workplace, flow experience, and self-drive personality traits. This research concludes that flow experience is beneficial for happiness at the workplace. Hospitals can promote flow among their employees by creating flow-evoking working conditions though work (re)design approaches (Demerouti, 2006).

Limitations

Several limitations of the study should be pointed out for further research. Because the research was conducted in Uganda, the hospital phenomena observed in this study may not hold true in other sectors with different cultures, or in other countries. Therefore, we suggest that further research should be carried out in several different sectors. This may include different range job positions for testing the relationship between flow experience and happiness at the workplace will increase the probability of finding variation in happiness. The small sample size in this study means that generalizability of the present findings should be applied with caution.

Future researchers should increase the sample size and consider other types of careers. While the research model is theorized to be causal, the study only adopts a cross-sectional approach in which cause and effect data are captured in the short term. Further work could consider adopting a longitudinal design to examine the mediation effects and relationship of the factors. Finally, future researchers could explore the relevance of other internal or external factors for building a complete model.

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