



UNIVERSITY OF  
**KWAZULU-NATAL**™  
—  
INYUVESI  
**YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

**UNDERSTANDING THE FACTORS THAT  
CONTRIBUTE TO HAPPINESS AT WORK  
WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN FINANCIAL,  
RETAIL AND MEDICAL CORPORATE  
SECTORS**

**Submitted by**

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*Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the academic requirements for the degree of PhD in the  
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**Revised March 2020**

## Supervisors' Approval

As the candidate's supervisor, I have approved this thesis for submission.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

As the candidate's co-supervisor, I have approved this thesis for submission.

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## Declaration

I, **Sudeshnee Ramiah**, declare that:

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## **Dedication**

This Dissertation is dedicated to My Dad, Vishnu Ramiah.

I will always be grateful for your ongoing encouragement and support in my education and my work. I am thankful for all the things that you have prepared me for and now realise the true depth of your presence throughout my life, thank you for your effortless dedication. Thank you for supporting me in my ambitions and helping me get through them. You are a man of conviction and have taught me humility, strength, bravery and independence. You are an inspirational mentor and have always believed in my potential. As I try to walk in your footsteps, I am more grateful for all the knowledge that you have shared with me and the irreplaceable life lessons. While my dream of you being witness to this degree will no longer be, I want to thank you for trying to soldier on for us. You are my pillar and ongoing support.

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## **Abstract**

This study aims to explore the factors that contribute to happiness in financial, retail and medical institutions within South Africa. The study used a qualitative approach to gather and interpret data which resulted in a happiness model that can be applied in the institutions that contributed to the research. A key recommendation is to ensure that international models are not applied in organisations without adequate integration as it may not be applicable to our unique South African organisations.

## **Glossary of Terms**

Corporate Organisations	A form of an organisation that has an existence independent of its owners and is not owned by the government.
Happiness	Used to describe a mental or emotional state which is pleasant or positive.
Work	An activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result.
Workplace	A place where people work, such as an office or factory.
South Africa	South Africa is a country on the southernmost tip of the African continent.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

In this chapter the background, problem statement, as well as the research methodology which includes the research design, research instruments and ethical considerations, are discussed, and an outline is provided of the research method and chapter division.

### **1.1 Introduction**

Despite where one resides, their economic status or their age, Mogilner, Aaker and Kamvar (2012) indicate that most individuals seek happiness. While happiness can be attained by individuals in several ways as there is a great need for individuals to feel happy, individuals are not sure how to achieve happiness and the options on how to get there remain unclear as well. Although many people strive for happiness, the concept of happiness, and how people achieve this impact on a variety of factors in the workplace.

Wesarat, Sharif and Majid (2014) indicated that people who experience happiness would be productive. Hence it is essential to understand the factors that can affect employee happiness as it can enhance happiness in the workplace. This is supported by research done by Clark, Diener, Geogellis and Lucas (2008) who indicated that being and remaining happily employed is essential to individuals as this impacts their well-being and results in recovery once an individual is re-employed. Research done by Pryce (2010) has led to the introduction of a model which measures five distinct factors of happiness in the workplace, which aims to support the concept of happiness in South African organisations. While this model is being applied in South African organisations, there are no norms set within South Africa to explore the factors that contribute to happiness in corporate South Africa. The instrument has been used in organisations such as Dimension Data, Gauteng Education Department, SABC, ABSA, ADCorp, to name a few.

### **1.2 Background to the study**

Happiness at work can be affected by both short-lived events and chronic conditions which are found in a task, job and organisation (Fischer, 2010). This has resulted in an increased focus on happiness at work through understanding pleasant moods and emotions, well-being and positive attitudes.

In South Africa Fave, Freire, Brodrick and Wissing (2011) contributed to the knowledge of research that indicated that two concepts, namely hedonia and Eudaimonia had investigated happiness at work. On the one part, the concept of hedonia focusses on positive emotions and life satisfaction while on the other hand, eudaimonia concentrates on psychological well-being.

Limited research in corporate South Africa with regards to happiness at work, has been undertaken by Field and Buitendach (2011). This research, therefore, contributes to exploring factors and the meaning of happiness at work.

International researchers also researched the concept of hedonia and eudaimonia (Fredrickson, 1998, 2005, 2013; Waugh, 2006). Kashdan further investigated the concept of hedonia, and eudaimonia. Biswas-Diener and King (2008) cited that happiness was viewed as Eudaimonia by Aristotle as when one would live life to its fullest potential or in accordance with some internal virtue.

This research uses a model by Pryce-Jones (2010), which is made up of contribution, conviction, culture, commitment, and confidence. This model is a happiness model that is currently being applied using a happiness instrument called the iPPQ to test happiness within South African organisations. The constructs that make up this model are described in more detail below.

A contribution describes the effort that goes into completing a task. A contribution is partially determined by an individual's perception of the effort that they put into completing a task. Secondly, conviction describes an individual's motivation despite the circumstances he or she is in. Thirdly, culture refers to the way one feels at work. The fourth component, commitment, is the extent to which one is engaged at work. Lastly, confidence is the belief that one has in themselves and their job (Jones, 2010).

In addition, pride, trust, and recognition are also strongly linked to the 5Cs. Pride comes from identifying with your organisation while trust is built with your colleagues and senior leaders. Recognition is established through who you are, what you do, how you work, and how dedicated you are. It has less to do with money and rather more with how you prefer to be recognised (Jones, 2010).

Happiness has been defined by many researchers which confirms concepts pertaining to an individual's experience or mindset. As an example, happiness has been defined by Ryan and Deci (2001) as "optimal psychological functioning and experience". However, Jones (2010) suggested that happiness is a "mindset which allows you to maximise performance and achieve your potential. You are doing this by being mindful of the highs and lows when working alone or with others" which is the definition of happiness that is adopted for this study? (Jones, 2010).

It is the writer's view that these essential individual variables are integral to investigate happiness at work. It's vital to understand that happiness is not a merely a feel-good aspiration but rather a state of psychological wellbeing. It is thus essential to be mindful of factors that influence happiness at work in South Africa compared to the five-factor model, described below, currently being used within a work context.

The model that is used for the purpose of this research is a model by Pryce (2010), which is made up of contribution, conviction, culture, commitment and confidence. This forms the foundation that guides this research.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

South African research done by Rothman and Rothman (2010) and Streimikiene and Grundey (2009) indicated that the understanding of factors that contribute to happiness at work impact positive emotions in the workplace. These factors include job satisfaction, commitment, growth, organisational commitment, job involvement, engagement, organisational culture, job security, as well as personal relationships. Rothman and Rothman (2010) indicated that the factors, as mentioned earlier, impacted positively on productivity and retention in the workplace (Streimikiene & Grundey, 2009). The writer's view is that happiness at work can be influenced by various action within an organisation as well as the environment where they complete a specific action. Additionally, an individual's happiness can be affected by the working conditions in an organisation as well as its climate. Kesebir and Diener (2008) also highlighted the importance of happiness is a critical concept as happiness leads to better health, better work performance, and better relationships and more ethical behaviour, hence the importance of understanding the happiness experience in South African organisations.



While limited studies exist that explore the factors that affect happiness at work in organisations in South Africa, research has been conducted in the correctional services industry which specifies influential factors such as extra work, doing working outside one's jobs description, unserviceable equipment, and high job demands. Other studies that focused on the correctional services included a review of the occupational and the impact on the health of correctional services individuals conducted by Kunst (1988) and was linked to a further study by Mdletyse and Coetzee (2012) in South Africa which centred on the changes in the department which has led to depression, stress, hostility and resentment. Additionally, concerns that emanated were of salary, staff shortages, lack of recognition and motivation as well as a physical threat. Botha and Pienaar (2006) indicated that these individuals spend more time away from hobbies and leisure activities and perceive remuneration as inadequate. Earlier research conducted on stress and ethical behaviour among SA managers where factors such as the fear of lay-off and lower-income, fear that individual and business objectives will not be achieved and the increasing unhealthy competitive will lead to conflict and aggression in the workplace were noted (Van Zyl, 1997). Furthermore, research conducted by Mncwango and Winnaar (2009) indicated that most salaried South Africans are affected by job security as workers appear more satisfied with their job content rather than the ability of their job to secure their material needs.

Asegid, Belachew and Yimam (2014) indicated that staff were satisfied with autonomy, leadership, relationship, promotion, working environment and group cohesion, professional training, recognition at work and perceived employment opportunity. While several studies focussed on specific factors that impacted happiness in South Africa, limited research has been done in corporate South African organisations to understand the factors that affect happiness in the workplace.

Martins and Coetzee (2007) showed that South African employees experienced fewer positive experiences regarding leadership, communication, control and decision making in the workplace.

Martins and Coetzee (2007) who contributed to research in the public sector further highlighted that remuneration amongst black employees in the group aged and below was low. This resulted in a challenge for South African leaders as they would need to achieve organisational goals while ensuring employee's needs is met within the organisation. The impact of these results on this age group was that employees might not be satisfied with their salaries requiring

motivation from the leaders. Motivation is important to ensure that they reach the goals of the organisation. While salaries may not be aligned in South African organisations, individuals may continue to work due to the unemployment statistics in South African, which is highlighted below.

International researchers such as Youssef and Luthans (2007) and Fischer (2010) indicated that the understanding of factors that contribute to happiness resulted in positive and productive organisations with low turnover. This is beneficial as positive psychology, and positive organisational behaviour, which is a social work context is made up of individuals and their respective interactions.

Lewis (2011) showed that the world of work is important as it filled the waking hours of individuals. Additionally, it generated income for individuals and contributed to positive self-esteem and fellowship. Moreover, it created opportunities for meaningful activities and produced goods and services that society values. This further supports this research, as it is essential to understand what contributes to happiness at work. This is influenced by the extent of changes that occur in the workplace, which is described below.

Yousef and Luthans (2007) indicated that there were many changes in the workplace in the way both leaders and employees function, which impacted morale as well as the performance of individuals. They further indicated that these have social implications such as decreased physical and psychological engagement, health and well-being, which impacted an employee's happiness at work. Changes in the workplace affect the way an individual functions in an organisation as it impacts on climate and turns the psychological impact that it has on individuals. This happens despite the age bracket to which an employee belongs and is discussed hereafter.

As per Twenge and Campbell (2010) employees were faced with the same challenges despite the generation that they belonged to and it was the leader's responsibility to ensure that the expectations of the workforce are managed. An environment that supports and acknowledges the generational differences among employees would need to be appreciated. Researchers such as Twenge and Kesebir (2010) indicated that leadership is critical in directing individuals within an organisation to perform optimally.

Mdletyse and Coetzee (2012) also indicated that apart from high unemployment, there has been increasing concerns about the extent to which rising crime rates affect the lives of individuals in South African society. The growing distress over the effects of crime is thought to have been driven by the awareness that crime victims suffer in terms of natural loss and psychological trauma from their experiences. Powdthavee (2003) also contributed to the statement, as previously mentioned. Research conducted by Powdthavee (2003) indicated that victims from households exposed to crime have a substantially lower subjective well-being score on average compared to those from non-victimised households. Additionally, this could result in lower levels of perceived quality of life for the respondents from non-victimised households (Powdthavee, 2003).

While employees may be in low-income jobs, the high unemployment rate requires them to continue to work. Additional trauma is caused by the socio-economic circumstances in which South Africans live, i.e. high crime rates which may influence the psychological make-up of South African workers. Further investigation into what contributes to their happiness at work is required, and this is what this research aims to achieve.

As the research instrument norms have not been tested within South Africa yet applied as a South African happiness instrument, this study focused on South African organisations. Furthermore, it is vital to explore the factors that impact happiness within South African organisations as South African studies have focused on public sector organisations and not on specific corporate organisations.

#### **1.4 Research objectives**

This study aims to explore the factors that contribute to happiness in South African corporate organisations. The employee experience of happiness is also investigated in this research.

#### **1.5 Qualitative research question**

What are the factors that contribute to happiness in Corporate South African organisations?

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

Happiness in the workplace is dependent on the way an individual thinks, that is their frame of mind. The definition that been adopted by this study to define happiness is “a mindset which allows you to maximise performance and achieve your potential. You do this by being mindful of the highs and lows when working alone or with others” (Jones, 2010). Several constructs make up the demographic variables that influence individuals at work which are important in understanding what contributes to happiness at work in South Africa. While research focusing on happiness in the mining and nursing sector has been undertaken in South Africa, there is limited research in the Corporate Sector, and this is the aim of this research.

A qualitative study is being used to give a richer understanding of the concept.

## **1.7 Literature process**

A literature review was done focusing on elements relating to happiness at work as well as factors contributing to happiness at work. Furthermore, research was done on positive psychology, and the broaden-and-build theoretical framework was applied.

Applicable articles published between 1999 and 2018 were identified using the following sources: Textbooks, subject journals, Emerald, Sabinet online, EBSCOHOST, previous PHD studies and Google Scholar. Cross-referencing was done when identifying other essential sources of information while studying a specific article mentioning a reliable source.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

The research question was researched through a systematic qualitative process. A qualitative research process, as defined by Tracy (2013), focusses on experiences that have been lived and honours local meaning. It allows one to interpret a participant’s viewpoint and store, which results in further self-disclosure from participants. The process of interviewing or observing participants can result in further self-disclosure from participants and allows an intuitive understanding of events.

### **1.8.1 Research design**

The study followed a qualitative research approach through the use of interviews. Breakwell, Smith and Wright (2012) indicated that that use of interviews allows for flexible information gathering. It involves a conversation which has a specific structure and purpose and requires careful listening to gather required data about the topic being investigated (Breakwell, Smith & Wright, 2012 and Lim, et al., 2017). This is supported by researchers Marlow and Boone (2011, citing Kudushin and Kadushin (1997) where an interview is described as a conversation which entails the exchange of ideas, attitudes and feelings. An interview has a purpose and is like an engagement with an individual where the participant agrees to contribute (Marlow & Boone, 2011).

All interviews in this research were audio-recorded which allows the researcher to refer back to the session to ensure all interviews were transcribed accurately for further analysis, as cited by in Breakwell, Smith and Wright, (2012). This is supported by research done by Camfield and Palmer-Jones (2013) who indicated that audio-recordings further allow other researchers to appraise this work in their related fields by testing whether the insights of the study are applicable elsewhere (Camfield & Palmer-Jones, 2013).

### **1.8.2 Participants**

The study involved participants from the medical, financial and retail industry. Participants were selected based on their seniority in the industry. A sample of 21 participants was extracted from the business areas and are representative of senior leadership.

The study involved participants from financial, retail and medical organisations in South Africa. Senior Managers were selected from the financial, retail and medical industry. A total of 21 Senior Managers were purposively selected from the 31-60 age group. This non-probability sampling technique was chosen for practical reasons because the selected sample illustrates some features or process in which the research is interested (Silverman, 2011).

The various roles that each participant held were in the areas of Human Resource Management, Functional learning and development, Operational Management, International Banking, as well

as leadership development. These positions covered key areas within a business environment to ensure teams are functioning, and there is an optimal business operation.

Each organisation provided a list of their senior teams to the researcher. The researcher then selected participants based on their seniority as well as experience. Individuals were then approached to determine who voluntary would participate in the study.

A purposive sampling method was used in this research. This is a technique that can also be referred to as judgement sampling, which as per Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) are when participants are selected based on particular criteria that they possess.

As this research required specific leadership criteria, it was used in the sampling technique and ensured that all participants took part in the research voluntarily and met the criteria for this research. This research required proficient, knowledgeable individuals who were able to provide information relevant to their knowledge and experience in an articulate, expressive and reflective manner. All participants were selected based on seniority in the business.

Furthermore, Guetterman (2015) indicated that purposive sampling allows the researcher to be reflexive and make decisions in response to empirical findings as well as theoretical developments that occur in the study.

This research does not allow one to generalise from the sample, but rather to explain, describe and interpret phenomenon from the information that is obtained from participants.

### **1.8.3 Research Instrument**

A semi-structured interview tool was used for this study. Interviews used in this research was a collection tool that is widely used and can be described as a flexible data collection tool. It involves a conversation which has a specific structure and purpose and requires careful listening to gather required data about the topic being investigated (Breakwell, Smith & Wright, 2012).

This type of research produces findings not arrived by statistical procedures or through quantification (Lim, Tadmor, Fujisawa, MacDonald, Gallagher, Eusebio, Jackson, Temel,

Greer, Hagan, & Park, 2017). It is a research approach that is ideal in exploring phenomena and experiences that are not captured through a quantitative process or an objective process. This type of research produces analysis that can explore reasons or associates between phenomena (Lim, et al., 2017).

#### **1.8.4 Data Analysis – Thematic Analysis**

This phase employed a qualitative approach where 21 interviews were conducted with individuals selected from different organisations. Individuals identified from senior managers and across three South African (Retail, Finance & Medical) industries. Purposive or judgmental sampling appropriate for the present study, which is an acceptable sampling approach that uses the judgment of an expert in selecting cases with a specific purpose in mind (Neuman, 1997).

Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. The researcher attempted to interpret the data by coding and writing down significant points of convergence. The themes were coded under the different meanings as reflected from the transcripts. To increase confidence and reduce bias in the qualitative interpretation of data, participants were contacted to examine the already identified emerging themes (Creswell, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). To ensure further validation, a research methodology expert-approved of the themes and analysis, as suggested by Gray (2009).

Audiotapes were transcribed verbatim, and every effort was made to minimise distortions and bias. Braun and Clark's (2006) approach was used to extract themes from the data. The themes were coded per the different meanings as reflected from the manager's interviews. To increase confidence and reduced bias in the qualitative interpretation of data, participants were contacted to examine the already identified emerging themes critically (Creswell, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Braun and Clark's (2006) method guided the process of data collection. Before the interview process, all participants were given a background to the study, and it was explained that this is a voluntary process. Additionally, participants were made aware that the process is confidential, and their identities would not be revealed in the outcome. It was explained that all interviews would be recorded. The participant was then given a detailed consent form to review and sign. The consent form detailed the objectives of the study. The interview took

place at a convenient time and venue for the participant. All interviews were conducted in an area free from noise and interruptions. Once all interviews were completed, the recordings were transcribed by an external provider. The recordings were transcribed verbatim as per the interview. All data were transcribed into an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts were checked against the tapes for “accuracy”. A sample of transcripts was sent to the participants to verify accuracy and to ensure that the recordings were transcribed accurately.

The researcher collected all data. Once the data was transcribed, all data was read and an initial list of ideas generated. Each data set was worked through systematically, and equal attention was given to each data item. All data items were given equal attention in the coding process. The process of extracting themes involved a coding process through an inclusive and comprehensive process.

Once the coding process was completed, the codes were then collated into potential themes. No themes were generated from a few vivid examples, as all themes have sufficient data to support them. In some instances in this process, the themes collapsed into one. A review of the themes was done to ensure that no themes were missed. Additionally, this was done to ensure that the themes worked with the data set. All themes were checked against each other as well as the original data set. Each theme is consistent and distinctive. The essence of each theme was defined and refined to ensure that the essence of what each theme meant was covered. Each theme was organised into a consistent account with an accompanying narrative.

All data was analysed and interpreted, rather than just paraphrased or described. The analysis of data matches, as well as the extracts, illustrated the analytic claims. The analysis of the data reflected results that were well organised about the topic, with a balance of narrative data and illustrative extracts in a timeous manner that is not rushed. The written report has a thematic analysis that is explicated and the described method and reported analysis is consistent. The language that is used is consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006).

## **1.9 Structure of the thesis**

Six chapters constitute the thesis:



Chapter 1 presents an introduction, background to the research, problem statement, research questions and a summary of the methodology.

Chapter 2 explores the literature review focusing on happiness at work and positive psychology. The theoretical framework is included in this chapter.

Chapter 3 focuses on research relating to factors relating to happiness at work.

Chapter 4 focuses on the research methodology. This chapter describes the research setting, research design and well as the sampling approach. Additionally, the data collection procedure and data analysis approach are included.

Chapter 5 discusses the qualitative results. The presentation of this data contributes to the discussion, analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data (Findings and interpretation).

Chapter 6 addresses the conclusions and recommendations of the research. This chapter contributes to the justification and significance of the study as a contribution to science and society.

### **1.10 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, the current research is discussed, as well as the background of the study. The chapter presents the research problem and objectives with the research questions this study aims to achieve. The latter part of the chapter presents the significance of the study, followed by an outline of the chapters. Chapter 2 discusses the literature review of the study. The research method is explained, which includes the design of the research used, the participants and procedure and the research instruments. An outline of the chapter overview is also given.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter commences with a definition of the concept of happiness and descriptions of positive psychology and happiness at work. It continues with a general overview of the definition of happiness at work, the causes of happiness and the factors that contribute to happiness at work. The theoretical framework is also be discussed in this chapter. The chapter concludes with an understanding of the theoretical framework to be applied in this study.

### **2.2 Positive psychology**

#### **2.2.1 Conceptualisation of positive psychology**

Positive psychology began when Martin Seligman declared that we need to focus on the good in people as well as in the world (Lopez & Snyder, 2011). Martin Seligman began a movement centred on the over-emphasis of negative mental disorders, destructive tendencies, self-centred motivation and persons as isolated entities rather than participants in communications which was done to support his concept on the need to focus on the good in people (Seligman, 2007). As per Seligman (2007), *“psychology is not just the study of the disease, weakness, and damage, it also is building what is right.”* The aforementioned is supported by an understanding of what positive psychology means to individuals and is further described in the research below.

Positive psychology is described as the study of positive human attributes, including well-being, optimism, forgiveness, self-esteem, fascination, creativity, resilience, savouring, wisdom and spirituality (Sachau, 2007). Heffron and Boniwell (2011) indicated that positive psychology focussed on well-being, happiness, flow, personal strengths, wisdom, creativity, imagination and characteristics of positive groups and institutions. Positive psychology, as researched by Hefferon and Boniwell (2011), did not only focus on positive thinking and positive emotions, it also concentrated on what made communities and individuals succeed. This was supported by researchers, including Yousseff and Luthans (2007) and Lewis (2011). This is supported by recent research done by Anamika and Jasmine (2020), who indicated positive psychology is linked to optimism as well as defining the way an individual defines their life occurrences.

Research conducted by Sachau (2007) showed that positive psychology is the study of positive human attributes which includes well-being, optimism, forgiveness, self-esteem, fascination, creativity, resilience, savouring, wisdom and spirituality. This research further emphasised the importance of positive psychology for human resource professionals. It showed that the goals of positive psychologists are consistent with those of most human resource development professionals. Both professions are interested in enhancing skills, increasing interest, elevating satisfaction, encouraging ethical behaviour, improving performance and fostering creativity (Sachau, 2007). This is important in the work industry to determine the factors that impact on work productivity in an individual. Money, Hillenbrand and Da Camara (2009) described positive psychology as the understanding of mental illness and dysfunctional behaviour or those individuals that are suffering from psychological distress. They further indicated that positive psychologist researchers are of the view that positive psychology provides insights into the study of psychological health, which can be achieved by studying the positive side of human experience. The focus on understanding people's lives and the factors that are associated with life satisfaction has been the focus of positive psychology Money, Hillenbrand & Da Camara (2009) and indicated that all individuals have their unique make-up (Roberts & Creary, 2012).

Positive psychology is about understanding how to get the optimal output from people in a highly efficient and cost-effective way. Positive psychology deals with phenomena that contribute to positive psychology and knowledge of how to be productive. It creates a paradigm to the importance of using a positive approach.

Youssef and Luthans (2007) study of positive psychology focussed on a positive approach to living. They indicated that positive psychology, applied in ensuring positive organisational behaviour (POB), attempted to give a renewed emphasis, but not provide a resolution or paradigm shift, to the importance of a positive approach. As per Lewis (2011), the paradigm shift in positive psychology differed from positive thinking as it was a science that looked at researching phenomenon whereas positive thinking dealt with the realm of anecdotes and exhortation – if something did not work, it was because one was not positive about it. Furthermore, positive psychology was about knowledge which contributed to productive lives while positive thinking was about persuading people that they in are in control of their lives –

if something happened to them, it was their fault. Seligman (2011) further indicated that positive emotions impacted on relationships.

Positive psychology is linked to individuals who have their own identity and is further described in the paragraph below.

A basic premise of positive psychology is that human beings focus on and are driven by the possibilities of the future rather than focusing on the past (Seligman, 2011). Seligman (2011) further indicated that the mental state of a person's psychological well-being depended on attribution in general and could not be based on an ongoing search. Through research, he was able to conclude that the focus of positive psychology of happiness was well-orientated change.

Sekerka, Vacharkulksemsuk and Fredrickson (2012) indicated that positive emotions such as joy, interest and appreciation functioned in the short-term to broaden one's attention and resulted in bodily activity to build one's cognition, social, psychological and physical resources over the long-term. The understanding of emotions in an organisation creates a productive and sustainable workplace. Positive emotions play a significant influence in creating organisational development. The broaden-and-build effects of positive emotions and can be used to drive change dynamics and develop organisations that genuinely reflect the meaning of sustainable enterprise. Positive emotions transcend the feelings of being positive at an individual level to the broader organisation. Feeling positive has the power to transform individuals, small groups and organisations both in the short- and long-term and gives one reason to be optimistic about successful sustainable enterprise in organisations. Broaden-and-build is a theory that indicates that positive emotions broaden the scope of attention and cognition, which in turn widens an array of concepts such as thoughts and actions (Fredrickson, 2005).

Carlsen, Ladsverk and Mortensen (2011) describe that a crucial part of pessimism is the idea of individuals having hope. Many parts of social science have experienced hope which is a fundamental category of human practice. Although organisations must experience hope, hope needs to move inward to the individual's lives as well as outward to broader causes and purposes. Experiences of hope are relational both in how they are sustained and in their functions. Hope assumes the conviction that the future is open-ended and is generative of possibilities that can be influenced. Hope is supported by dialogue which entails an individual's concerns and ideals. Hope is generative, which means it is a source of positive affect and action

and as such, the engine of all human creativity and cultural development. Hope opens the doors to unknown possibilities and creates emotionally charged individuals and accommodates both potentially positive outcomes and negative elements of despair, doubt, conflict and loss.

While individuals experience both positive and negative emotions, research conducted by Seligman (2011) indicated that positive emotions expressed by individuals would result in physically healthier individuals who are more resistant to illness and may even live longer. The locus of positive psychology is that despite the difficulties of life, it must be acknowledged that most people adjust to different circumstances. A basic premise of positive psychology is that human beings focus and are driven by the possibilities of the future rather than focussing on the past. Seligman (2011) further indicated that the mental state of a person's psychological well-being depends on arbitration in general and cannot be based on an ongoing search. Through research, he was able to conclude that the focus of positive psychology of happiness to well-orientated change. Having understood the impact of positive emotions on positive psychology and in turn, happiness at work, the effect of negative emotions needs to be explored.

Negative emotions as per Sekerka, Vacharkulksemsuk and Fredrickson (2012) resulted in a lack of concentration by individuals and mobilised cardiovascular and other bodily systems to support quick, survival promotion action. Examples of negative emotions are anger, fear and worry. Positive emotions such as joy, interest and appreciation function in the short-term to broaden one's attention and result in bodily activity to build one's cognition, social, psychological and physical resources over the long-term. The understanding of emotions in an organisation creates a productive and sustainable workplace. While negative emotions have a negative effect on individuals, the impact of positive emotions is discussed below.

Research done by Fredrickson (2013) indicated that positive emotions played a significant influence in creating organisational development. The broaden-and-build effects of positive emotions can be used to drive change dynamics and develop organisations that genuinely reflect the meaning of a sustainable enterprise. Positive emotions transcend the feelings of being positive at an individual level to the broader organisation. Feeling positive has the power to transform individuals, small groups and organisations both in the short- and long-term, giving one reason to be optimistic about successful sustainable enterprise in organisations. Positive Psychology involves optimal human functioning, which aims to unravel and promote factors that permeate individual and communal satisfaction and happiness. It benefits

individuals in understanding what is best in human nature and what does not work. It is, therefore, essential for this research to unpack the understanding of happiness in the workplace.

As described by Lewis (2011), positive psychology differed from positive thinking in that positive psychology dealt with the experimentation and endorsement of phenomena and was a science that looked at researching phenomenon. In contrast, positive thinking dealt with the realm of anecdote and exhortation, and if something did not work, it was because they were not positive about it. Furthermore, positive psychology is about knowledge which contributes to productive lives while positive thinking is about persuading people that they are in control of their lives. If something happens to them, it is their fault. Seligman (2011), indicated that positive relationships and positive accomplishments would also contribute to the theory of well-being. Seligman (2011), as per his observations, suggested that positive, supportive relationships are essential for people around the world during various periods. He also noted that positive accomplishments are necessary for individuals as this provides goals for them. It also presents challenges for which they can strive as they too would want to feel a sense of competence and mastery both of themselves and their environment. Miller (2008) critiqued the concept of positive psychology where a positive attitude associated with achievement, success and happiness may tend to pre-suppose a narrow range of emotional responses.

Furthermore, this research indicates that people cannot be transformed into optimistic, goal setting, goal achieving extroverts as they lead healthy lives. The critique this researcher continues to adopt is that positive psychology is still beneficial for this research. The relationship between positive psychology and happiness is described in the next section.

## **2.3 Happiness at work**

### **2.3.1 Defining Happiness at Work**

Jones (2010) defined happiness at work as *“a mindset which allows you to maximise performance and achieve your potential. You do this by being mindful of the highs and lows when working alone or with others”*. This definition contains three essential components. Firstly one needs to be conscious of both the highs and lows, which affords a perspective that facilitates the appropriate management of a situation. Secondly, an individual’s role within a group-work environment is acknowledged. Thirdly, acceptance that such a view allows for

increasing performance and realising potential. This implies that within the growth process, difficult emotions such as anger, frustration, disappointment, failure, jealousy or shock can sometimes contribute to happiness (Jones, 2010). The researcher uses this definition for this study. The following section focuses on defining happiness as it relates to a hedonistic and eudaimonic discussion.

Veenhoven (2012) describes happiness as constituting two components which are the hedonic level of effect and contentment. Intuitively affective appraisal and cognitively guided evaluation guides individual evaluation and depending on the mix of an object. Income is tangible and can be evaluated by comparing the earnings of different individuals, while attractiveness is a feeling. Contrarily we may exceed our aspirations yet feel miserable.

According to Gavin and Mason (2004), happiness is a holistic ideal which speaks to the whole person, one whose life is complete in the sense that his or her reasonable desires are fulfilled over his or her lifetime. Happiness, as per the Greeks, is not primarily rooted in receiving sensual pleasure, honours or money. Instead, it is as a result of freedom which is an individual's ability to make choices. These are individuals who can think independently and are free to choose and thereby control their fate. It is the ability to deal with knowledge and information that one has, and it deals with virtue which is an individual's moral character. Further research concerning happiness is described below, where an internal locus of control determines happiness.

Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, and King (2008) explained that Aristotle's view of happiness, which is called eudaimonia, means that one should live to their fullest potential with some inherent virtue. Happiness is seen through the right action by an individual.

Diversely, Henderson and Knight (2012) interpreted that the eudaimonic approach emphasises that well-being and happiness are ongoing processes and not end states. Delle Fave, Massimini and Bassi (2011), however, showed that eudaimonia suggests a life of virtue and actualisation one's potential toward well-being.

Dell Fave, Massimini and Bassi (2011) also indicated that hedonic suggests that maximising one's pleasurable moments is the pathway to happiness. A hedonic psychological approach has generally been considered an internal state which represents a variety of subjective evaluations

about the quality of one's life. The impact on understanding an individual's internal state is vital in organisations as it determines what is required for an individual to attain happiness.

In conclusion, it is essential to understand that being happy is influenced by one's attitude toward life and depends on an individual who is summarised in the paragraph below from work done with Lewis (2011).

Lewis (2011) highlighted that as per John Lennon: "*Life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans*". This links to positive psychology which indicates that good organisational results occur when you are busy making your organisation the right place to be. This is supported by research undertaken by Lewis (2011), who indicated that it is essential that leaders live the values that their organisation preaches. Positivity is not a brand of positive thinking, nor is it about pretending bad things do not happen or that people do not feel down. Instead, it refers to the balance of positive emotions to negative ones. This tends to affect both individual's as well as an organisation's well-being. This leads to research topics on factors that determine happiness at work. It is imperative to comprehend the factors that determine happiness at work so that organisations understand what impacts on an employee, simultaneously acknowledging their make-up, which is essentially the focus of this study.

Martinas (2012) indicated the context of understanding happiness at work is vital as current civilisation is a system which is complex and is made up of individuals who interact with each other as well as the environment. The dynamics in which we function are reflected in our human actions which are managed by decisions of individuals. This would mean that the way we behave and our efforts in a situation is determined by a choice that we make and are managed by several possibilities which are recognised by the circumstances in which we live.

### **2.3.2 Importance of Happiness in the Work Environment**

Research conducted by Taris and Schreurs (2009) supported the concept that a happy, productive worker was related to organisational performance. This meant that the average level of employee well-being was associated with organisational performance in organisations. Furthermore, high levels of exhaustion were related to adverse performance, which could result in low client satisfaction and low productivity, which in turn could result in high personnel costs.



As researched by Peterson, Park and Seligman (2005) orientation to engagement differed from orientations to pleasure or meaning. They further indicated that orientation to pleasure was not as strong as individual predictors of life satisfaction or as orientations to engagement or meaning. These are important to understand as it reflects the value added to a life rich in engagement and purpose and the cost subtracted from a life deficient in these respects.

This is important to understand as it impacts on individuals and the organisations in which they work. This is supported by research done by Warr (2007) which suggested that people at work are happier if their jobs contain certain features that are generally desirable and if their characteristics and mental processes encourage the presence of happiness.

Fisher (2010) reinforced that an environment created happiness by indicating that happiness at work was an umbrella concept that included a large number of constructs ranging from transient moods and emotions to relatively stable attitudes and highly durable individual dispositions. Both short-lived events and chronic conditions influenced happiness in the task, job and organisation. He further indicated that happiness is caused by the environment, personal contributors, as well as situational factors. As mentioned above, happiness is determined by several individuals and situational factors which is further emphasised by Fisher. This is further elaborated on by discussing research done by Streimikiene and Grundey (2009).

As indicated by Fisher (2010), happiness was a distinct number of constructs which reflected some form of happiness or positive affect that has been used in research. Research done by Streimikiene and Grundey (2009) indicated that well-being tended to be strongly affected more by personality factors, personal relationships and social participation than by economic factors. Their research further showed that happiness not only produced a quantitative improvement which resulted in increased efficiency but also a qualitative one by making a better product through pride, belief and commitments to one's job. Streimikiene and Grundey (2009) were able to conclude that motivation in work also has a significant impact on happiness, productivity and satisfaction. This can be described using an example of a person who loves wooden blocks and receives a set and after playing with them for a while, becomes bored. Consideration of how one could make oneself happier could be that one could do much more or could try and appreciate what one has built and feel proud of oneself to the gift giver. Alternatively, one could acquire more blocks or learn scientific ways to combine existing

pieces better and build more enjoyable products. The third approach refers to an economic approach and the fourth to a hedonomic approach which compliments one another. Economics studies how to maximise wealth with minimum resources while hedonomics studies how to maximise happiness with limited wealth. Hsee, Hastie and Chen (2008) indicated that happiness is made up of constructs that are influenced by an individual's personality at work which impacts the productivity of an individual which impacts on the output, hence the economics of an organisation. The concept of eudaimonia and hedonia as described above affects an individual's happiness at work which is further influenced by the environment, personal circumstances as well as the situational factors to which an individual is exposed. This is described below.

Fisher (2010) indicated that happiness was caused by the environment, personal contributors, as well as situational factors. Happiness at work is an umbrella concept that includes a large number of constructs ranging from transient moods and emotions to relatively stable attitudes and highly stable individual dispositions. Both short-lived events and chronic conditions influence happiness in the task, job and organisation. As indicated by Warr (2007), people at work are happier if their jobs contain certain features that are generally desirable and if their characteristics and mental processes encourage the presence of happiness.

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As researched by Lewis (2011), understanding the world of work is vital as work takes up the bulk of one's day. It fills the waking hours of hundreds of millions of people. Work is essential as it generates and income for individuals. It also contributes to one's positive self-esteem and fellowship. Furthermore, it creates opportunities for meaningful activities and produces goods and services that society values Lewis (2011). It is essential to understand what contributes to positive organisational behaviour as the world of work is one of the most significant areas of

people's lives. Additional research by Liat (2020) indicates that happiness can be described by factors that contribute to positive psychology such as joy, interest and pride and less negative feelings such as sadness, anxiety and anger.

Twenge and Campbell (2010) summated that employees in the workplace are faced with the same challenges despite the generation to which they belong, including but is not limited to, improvement of skills, job satisfaction, job success, and achieving work-life balance. The approach to these challenges is independent of the generation to which one belongs. This originated as a result of changes in personality traits as well as work attitudes that have occurred from one generation to another. The younger generation appeared to be more self-confident, have increased self-esteem as well as narcissism, increased locus of control, a decrease toward social approval and increased anxiety and depression. There was also an increased focus on time spent outside of work. These staff members are generally focussed on developing skills that allow them to transfer from job to job, expect fulfilling work and quick promotions. They favour work-life balance and flexibility more than other generations. This typically describes your newer-generation workforce and implies that organisations implement policies to promote work-life balance, however not at the expense of business operations.

Furthermore, this generation may require more guidance and mentoring concerning career paths. As a younger generation enters the workforce, organisations need to determine a gap analysis on the expectations of the changing workforce. Leaders need to create an environment that acknowledges and appreciates the generational differences among employees.

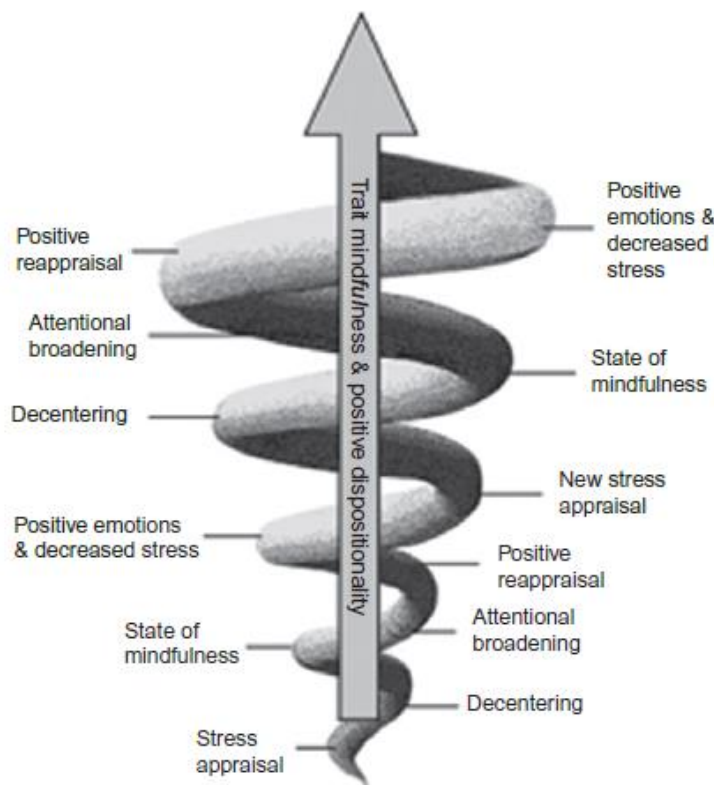
The impact of understanding the relationship between positive and negative emotions and happiness in organisations is crucial as it determines the key characteristics of individuals and their effects within a work environment.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

Frederickson's 'broaden-and-build theory of positive emotion' forms the foundation of this study.

This theory describes the form and function of a subset of positive emotions, including joy, interest, contentment and love. These are positive emotions that initiate momentary thought-

action arising from positive emotions. This theory suggests that positive and negative emotions are distinctive and complementary. Furthermore, this theory suggests that positive emotions broaden the scope of attention, cognition and action by widening the array of precepts, thoughts and actions. This theory predicts that different positive emotions like amusement and contentment produce broadening relative to neutral states (Fredrickson, 2005). Furthermore, this theory suggests that moments in one’s life may provide a sense of oneness with other individuals. It has been argued that these moments include positive emotions which have an interpersonal benefit, namely intuition. Joy, as well as other positive emotions, bring people closer and seem almost necessary for forming and maintaining relationships (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006). The following is a representation of the spiral of positive emotions.



**Figure 1. Upward spirals of positive emotions that can counter downward spirals of negativity. Adapted from Garland et al. (2010) – pg.35**

The diagram above (Figure 1) reflects the effect that positive emotions and impact that negative emotions have on individuals. This is important to note as it can assist in educating and managing individuals with both positive and negative emotions.

This theory predicts that the effect of modern-day emotions broadens people’s sense of self to include others, which over time may produce greater feelings of self-other overlap and oneness.

This allows a more sophisticated understanding of others which may then smooth the progress of the relationship, allowing a better appreciation of each other (Waugh & Fredrickson, 2006).

#### **2.4.1 Key Principles of the Broaden-and-build Theory**

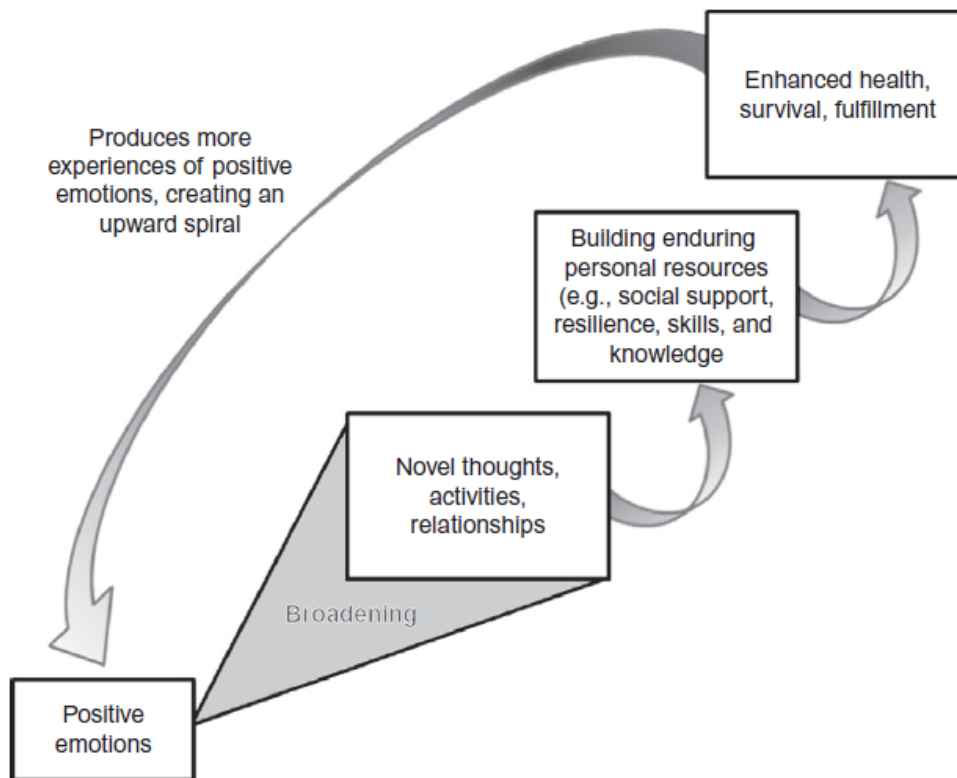
Fredrickson (2013) indicated that the broaden-and-build theory described the emotions required to broaden awareness and their role in building resources. Positive emotions broadened an individual's accessible catalogue of thoughts and action-urges which served to loosen the hold that a particular negative emotion gained on an individual's mind-set by its associated urge for a specific action. Positive emotions also have an impact on one's heart condition. Positive emotions can serve as efficient antidotes for the cardiovascular sequelae of negative emotions should an individual broaden their mind-sets and positive emotions. Positive emotions are experienced independently from negative emotions which is why this theory asserts that positive emotions evolved as psychological adaptations that increased our human ancestor's odds of survival and reproduction. As per Fredrickson (2013), this further emphasised that positive emotions support both present and future emotional enhancement. Fredrickson (2013) conducted research which also indicated that positive emotions widened the array of thoughts and actions that sprung to mind, e.g., play or explore. This facilitated generativity and behavioural flexibility. The broadened mindsets benefit individuals over time through exploration and play, which builds several personal resources like social connections, coping strategies and environmental knowledge. These assist in managing future threats and increase one's odds of survival. This theory helps individuals understand the link between people's positive emotions and their subsequent generativity, resilience and growth.

Fredrickson (2013) further investigated that negative emotions narrowed people's behavioural urges towards specific actions that may have been life-threatening. This could cause fight or flight reactions. Research by Garland et al. (2010) further supported this in that negative emotions create a downward spiral that results in defensive behaviour, feelings of inefficacy and self-destruction.

Waugh and Fredrickson (2006) further elaborated that positive emotions still significantly predicted self-other overlap controlling for the effect of negative emotions. This suggests that beyond negative emotions, positive emotions may be of primary importance in the formation of new relationships.

Furthermore, as per Fredrickson (2013), the broaden-and-build theory had offered one generative framework for sustained empirical contributions in this area of emotions science. The broadening aspect of this theory is made by looking beyond the emotional rewards that good feelings bring. At the same time, the build effect shows that it pays to look beyond the experimental moment to understand the function of affective states over the long-term. Waugh and Fredrickson (2006) further indicated that this theory predicted that the effect of modern-day emotions broadened people's sense of self to include others, which over time may have produced more significant feelings of self-other overlap and oneness. This allows a more complex understanding of others which may then smooth the progress of the relationship, allowing a better appreciation of each other.

As per the diagram below, the impact of positive emotions as a result of a happy worker results in a broadening of ideas through thoughts. A happy worker results in novel relationships. The broadening of innovative thoughts, activities and relationships results in the building of resources such as knowledge, skills, resilience and social support which, in turn, results in a healthy organisation where individuals have a sense of fulfilment. This summarises the concept of the broaden-and-build theory. The reverse is also valid, that is, if a worker experiences negative emotions, it could result in a drop in an individual's performance which in turn has a negative impact on an organisation's productivity. This is reflected in the diagram below (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. Adapted from Fredrickson and Cohn (2008, Fig.48.1, pg. 16)**

The above paragraphs describe that positive emotions result in broadening of positive thoughts and relationships, which has a positive effect on the building of resources and in turn, high survival in organisations. The reason for using this theory in this research is described below.

As this study aims to determine the factors that contribute to happiness at work, this theory supports the research of understanding individuals within a South African work context and the factors that contribute to happy work experiences.

As per Fredrickson (2013), positive emotions have been shaped by millennia through natural selection which was required to build an individual's resources for survival. This build function was done through momentarily broadening one's scope of awareness that created a form of consciousness within individuals. This included a more extensive array of thoughts, actions and perceptions that were typical, that is, positive and negative emotions that come to be part of our universal human nature through selective pressures that are related to survival, albeit on different timescales. Negative emotions resulted in adaptive significance which was experienced as the need to fight, flee or spit. Associated urges drove behaviour that would save

a life. In contrast, positive emotions carried adaptive significance for individuals in the past. This broadened mindset allowed for the discovery of new knowledge, new alliances and new skills. This led to the accrual of new resources which might make the difference between surviving and succumbing to various threats. Resources built through positive emotions also increased the odds that individual's experienced positive emotions with their attendance broaden-and-build benefits which resulted in improving an upward spiral for survival, health and fulfilment.

The broaden-and-build hypothesis proposes that positive emotions relative to negative emotions and neutral states widen an array of thoughts, action urges and perceptions that spontaneously come to mind. This hypothesis is consistent with research done by the late Alice Isen, Isen and Spassova (2009). Isen always compared the effects of positive and negative emotions. She also attempted to introduce a wide range of techniques to induce positive emotions, ranging from having participants read a list of positive words, view cartoons or watch a short comedy clip, hears success feedback, to have them receive a small bag of candy as an unexpected gift (Fredrickson, 2013). The broaden-and-build theory, therefore, suggests that positive emotions may play a central role in self-expansion, causing people to feel more positive emotions and possibly have a greater sense of self-other overlap and oneness with other people.

Furthermore, it suggests that as a relationship grows and becomes more stable, it may be less influenced by small fluctuations in emotions. This relationship will become a built-resource that would serve to buffer stress in times of adversity and have a positive effect on individuals (Waugh and Fredrickson, 2006).

This theory supports the research objectives in determining the factors that contribute to happiness at work.



## **Chapter 3: Factors that Contribute to Happiness at Work**

This chapter focuses on a literature review of the factors that contribute to happiness at work. Constructs are identified and defined in this chapter.

### **3.1 Background**

Research conducted by Rego, Ribeiro, Cunha and Jesuino (2011) indicated that organisations and leaders could create a happy organisation, which in turn would result in a committed workforce. These factors can, in turn, promote a positive workforce which results in a more productive workforce. The importance of understanding that happiness is a valuable tool to maximise performance in organisations, and this results in optimal human behaviour and job performance.

As previously stated, the focus of this research concerns the importance of understanding happiness and the role that it plays on individuals in South African organisations.

Happiness on the quality of life and well-being is indicative of a positive view of the environment in which one works and lives (Veenhoven, 2006). The importance of happiness and positive emotions was discussed in previous chapters, while this chapter focuses on the factors that have been investigated that contribute to happiness at work by other researchers.

### **3.2 Research factors contributing to happiness at work**

Work-engagement positivity influences work commitment (Field & Buitendach, 2011). This contributes to the understanding that in the workplace well-being can predict the positive organisational outcome of affective corporate responsibility which supports organisations in understanding the levels of happiness of workers and the benefits it brings to organisations. Happiness at work influences job satisfaction as well as organisational commitment (Swart & Rothmann, 2012). These researchers further indicated that engagement is also a factor that influences happiness at work as it provides social connections as well as purpose in teams. Engagement allows individuals to understand goals through communication which provide purpose and direction in organisations. Individuals can apply the skills they have, thereby enhancing productivity in teams and positive work outcomes. Additionally, it supports the

concept that positive attitudes encourage positive engagement and increased organisational commitment. Motivation is, in turn, increased in teams which benefit the practice of human resource practitioners. Based on these studies, the researcher concludes that motivation, commitment, engagement, communication, as well as purpose are key factors that contribute to happiness at work. Other factors that support happy organisations are discussed below.

### 3.3 Contributing factors to happiness at work

As cited in Fisher (2010), the concept of factors contributing to happiness at work has been researched, and the emerging factors are detailed below in Table 2:

**Table 1. Happiness-related constructs in the workplace (Fisher, 2010, pg. 385)**

<b>Transient Level</b>	<b>Person Level</b>	<b>Unit Level</b>
State job satisfaction.	Job satisfaction.	Morale/collective job satisfaction.
Momentary affect.	Dispositional affect.	Group affective tone.
Flow state.	Affective organisational commitment.	Group mood.
Momentary mood at work.	Job involvement.	Unit-level engagement.
State engagement.	Typical mood at work.	Group task satisfaction.
Task enjoyment.	Engagement.	
Emotion at work.	Thriving.	
State intrinsic motivation.	Vigour.	
	Flourishing.	
	Affective well-being at work.	

The transient level refers to more real-time events, which may result in emotions at work. The person-level focusses more on individual thinking and interest while the unit-level relates to the teams.

Chairpravit and Santidhirakul (2011) studied the influence of a positive work environment on happiness at work and concluded that relationships, quality of work-life and leadership further impacted happiness at work. This research summated that positive relationships result in positive communication amongst employees and positive teams that work together to achieve common goals within an organisation. Leaders drive communication in organisations which need to ensure communication is ongoing, and individuals within organisations are heard (Chairpravit & Santidhirakul, 2011). This creates an organisation driven by motivation, support and promote a positive work experience for employees. Leadership as a critical driver of individual performance in an organisation is further summated in research done by Rego, and Cunha (2008) who indicated that an employee's stress level would increase should their leader not be credible or trustworthy. Leaders need to behave honestly, treat employees with respect as well as provide meaningful work, apply fairness in decision-making when promoting and rewarding individuals.

The impact of culture is additionally supported by research done by Rego, Ribeiro, Cunha and Jesuino (2011) who indicated that leadership could impact on a committed workforce should they encourage honesty in an organisation. The influence that leaders have on organisations is instrumental in creating co-operative teams and promoting motivation resulting in positive communication as well as influencing culture in organisations. This forms the next discussion around the influence of culture on organisations.

The culture within the workplace promotes the concept that a positive climate is a key factor in ensuring happiness at work as it increases work performance positively (Rego & Cunha, 2008). Furthermore, a climate that supports work and family roles promotes a positive culture in the workplace. This research further reiterates that a positive climate ensures greater camaraderie amongst employees, thereby increasing positive relationships and motivation. Boehm and Lyubomirsky (2008) investigated the concept that happy individuals perform optimally in an organisation resulting in supportive teams and cooperation among individuals. Culture has a positive influence on individuals within a work environment through relationships that are positive in teams.

Additionally, research by Rego, Ribeiro, Cunha and Jesuino (2011) supports the notion that culture affects productivity positively when leadership promotes virtuous climates which in turn creates a productive work-force. Organisations that are faced with challenging times and have characteristics of virtue, integrity, ethics, trust and respect strive to do well (Froman, 2009). We can thus summate that positive relationships drive motivation, supportive teams, positive culture and teams with positive work relationships support the motivation of employees in organisations. The importance of understanding motivation in organisations is discussed in the following section.

A positive work environment results in happy workers which will allow for workers to manage situations which are challenging and in turn supports a productive work environment where individuals can develop (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008). Productivity at work is supported by a positive work environment (Zelenski, Murphy & Jenkins, 2008). Furthermore, a positive work environment promotes happiness at work which is an opportunity for personal development (Rego & Cunha, 2008). This further increases motivation as well as a sense of empowerment amongst individuals.

While a happy workforce is vital in an organisation, it does not dilute the importance of intelligence, affluence, connection and perseverance in the success of an organisation (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008).

This can be characterised by specific factors of job/task characteristics as detailed below in Table 3 Fisher (2010).

**Table 2. Job/Task characteristics related to happiness (Fisher, 2010, pg. 395)**

Hackman and Oldham (1975)	Morgeson and Humphrey (2006)	Warr (2007)
Task significance. Skill variety. Task identity. Feedback from the job. Autonomy.	Work scheduling autonomy. Decision making autonomy. Work methods autonomy. Task variety. Task significance. Task identity. Feedback from job. Job complexity. Information processing. Problem-solving. Skill variety. Specialisation. Social support. Initiated interdependence. Received interdependence. Interaction outside organisation. Feedback from others. Ergonomics. Physical demands. Work conditions. Equipment used.	Opportunity for personal control. Opportunity for skill use. Externally generated goals. Variety. Environmental clarity. Contact with others. Availability of money. Physical security. Valued social position. Supportive supervision. Career outlook. Equity.

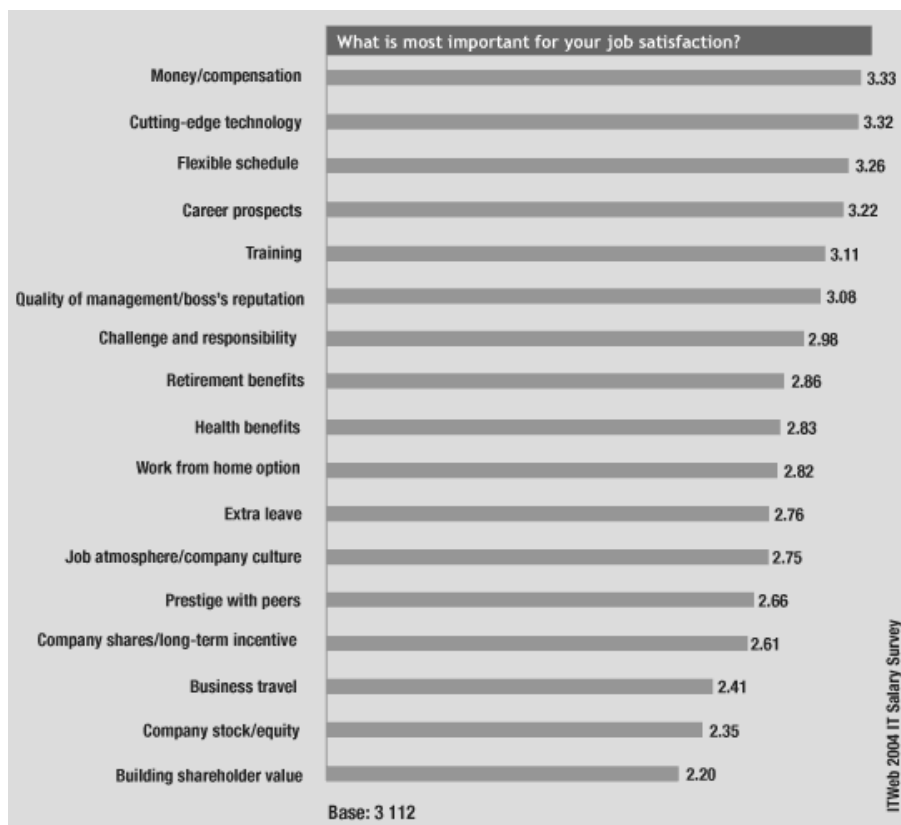
As is shown in Tables 2 and 3, the concept of happiness can be described as an umbrella concept which is influenced by events in an organisation as well as key attitudes that make up individuals within the structure (Fisher, 2010). The impact of job satisfaction that results in happiness at work can be influenced by factors such as relationships between both supervisors as well as colleagues (Krause, 2014). Furthermore, job security, as well as promotional opportunities such as job autonomy, are factors that contribute to happiness at work. Events in an organisation result in relationships between individuals and provide a sense of independence which contributes to work experiences. Martinas (2011) advocates that we live in a world where we are in a constant state of interaction, resulting in individuals making choices

influenced by the circumstances in which they find themselves. Happiness is, therefore, a concept that is driven by individuals.

Productivity is influenced by happiness at work, and a happy worker is a productive worker (Yang, 2014; Swart & Rothman, 2012; Rego, Ribeiro, Cunha & Jesuino, 2010; Fisher, 2010). This motivates the essence of further research in this area within a South African context.

The tables above support this research in understanding the factors that have been researched. The understanding of happiness at work is further tested in South African Corporate organisations and expanded on in this research (Fisher, 2010).

Contrary to this, research conducted on job satisfaction indicated that the factors detailed in Figure 3 play an essential role in job satisfaction in organisations (Štreimikienė & Grundey, 2009).



**Figure 3. Salary Survey: Money can buy happiness Štreimikienė and Grundey (2009)**

Figure 3, as cited in Štreimikienė and Grundey (2009), indicates that money is a primary motivator in the workplace. However, money would need to be integrated with other factors to contribute to happiness at work. Additionally, happiness contributes to a quantitative improvement by increasing efficiency as well as a qualitative improvement by making a better product and by creating pride and commitment to one's job. Motivation also has a significant impact on happiness, productivity, as well as satisfaction. The figure above also indicates that it is important to choose a career in line with the type of work that one would prefer to do.

The international factors described above relate to international research. Limited research has been conducted in this field within a South African perspective. The following section discusses factors contributing to happiness at work in South Africa.

Key elements contributing to happiness at work in South Africa relate to employees reaching expected outcomes as well as out-performing their peers. This relates to a highly competitive environment, learning from the past and improvement in performance (Verhofstadt, Bleys & Ootegem, 2014).

Other factors contributing to happiness would be work-engagement as well as effective commitment resulting in positive relationships with satisfaction with life, well-being and work engagement (Field & Buitendach, 2011). Mahadea and Ramroop (2015) indicated that happy individuals have positive personal relationships and positive work engagement and are, therefore treated fairly at work, thereby supporting productive teams. A highly competitive environment, where key learnings are extracted and are supported by work engagement and organisational commitment, result in a happy worker in South Africa. This promotes well-being in organisations which has a positive impact on South African workers.

Limited research indicates that key elements contributing to happiness within South Africa are work-engagement and organisation commitment, while international key elements are Leadership and Culture. The key elements of each of these concepts are now discussed in further detail.

### **3.3.1 Impact of Commitment and contribution to happiness at work**

Schaufeli (2013) described work engagement as “*an emotional involvement or commitment*”. It is normally a state that is desirable for an individual to be in and may refer to engagement both with individuals and organisations. This researcher further concluded that work engagement defines a blend of job satisfaction, commitment to an organisation as well as a behaviour where one would go beyond the requirements of the job. Furthermore, work engagement can be described as “*an unique positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption.*” As work engagement supports the development of work-place strategies, it is evident that it leads to more engaged and committed employees (Geldenhuys, Laba & Venter, 2014). This, in turn, leads to positive workplace outcomes as it improves meaningful work. The extent to which work engagement contributes to happiness at work is validated through this research as well as that of other South African researchers including Mahadea and Ramroop (2015) and Field and Buitendach (2011).

### **3.3.2 Organisational Commitment’s contribution to happiness at work.**

It is important to identify with an organisation’s goals and values to ensure congruence between individual and organisational goals (Chalofsky & Krishna, 2009). It has become increasingly important to drive organisational commitment through the motivation of employees to foster work engagement and productivity, thereby promoting meaningful work, employee commitment and engagement. Consequently, there is enhanced organisational productivity, retention and sustainability and an ensured positive culture fit (Manetje & Martins, 2009). This research correlates a positive relationship with culture and commitment to an organisation resulting in high motivation from an employee, and an attachment to and involvement in the organisation. This is significant in understanding the impact that it has on the current research.

### **3.3.3 Leadership that contributes to happiness at work**

Prewitt, Weil and McClure (2011) indicated that leadership could be defined as the ability to inspire others by setting an example. Results are driven through inspiring individuals and motivating people to achieve their goals which benefit the organisation in which they work. A leader creates a future strategy for the business and the individuals that work in it through sound communication methods. Baker, Perreault, Reid and Blanchard (2013) indicated that leaders are partners within an organisation that support their teams by managing and resolving key



issues which affect the organisation. They build organisations by having a positive influence on the people that make up teams. Rogel (2014) indicated that this is done through various leadership behaviours and leadership styles, where each leader adapts their behaviour and transforms organisations.

To be influential in business, a leader must have visibility, confidence and set goals for the organisation (Studer, 2009). Additionally, they must present the required resources to support organisations with the necessary coaching to support individuals within teams. Goleman (2018) indicated that the link between leadership and organisational culture is vital as the climate of an organisation is set by the leaders who influence attitudes, decision-making, communication as well as emotions within an organisation.

Moreover, the behaviour of leadership supports happiness at work, employee well-being and life satisfaction, ergo the notion that a happy worker results in a happy worker at home (Yang, 2013). Positive job satisfaction is an important concept in organisations due to the hypothesis that a happy worker is a productive worker. A leader's values and ethics must resonate within an organisation to promote ethical employee behaviour and ensure that this does not conflict with individual values. Trust and culture is an important concept in supporting happy employees as leaders create this environment. As per this study, this is prevalent in Asian organisations and would need further investigation in the South African context.

### **3.3.4 Culture as a factor contributing to happiness at work.**

Schein (2004) defines culture as a concept that is driven by interactions with others and is shaped by leadership behaviour. Culture is created, embedded and evolved when, in addition to leadership contributions, the structure of an organisation, as well as its rules and norms, guide and determine behaviour. Leaders are instrumental in creating a culture in organisations which impacts on the functioning of an organisation as they reinforce the adoption of their own beliefs, values and assumptions.

The importance of understanding culture is as a result of South Africans working in a global community as well as the effect that it has on happiness at work. The concept of global environment communities is discussed further in the next paragraph. Javidan (2008) argued that working cross-culturally in a global environment has two major responsibilities, namely,

to understand and appreciate their culture and to understand the other cultural societies in which one would operate. This is also applicable in individual groups within organisations. While research by Dwirantwi (2012) indicated that organisational culture provides an advantage to a successful organisation, it also supports the internal capacity of the individuals that make up the organisation. Fisher (2010) highlighted the importance of organisational culture. Knowledge of organisational culture has become increasingly prominent as organisations realise the impact such knowledge could potentially have on their effectiveness and sustainability (Botha & Pienaar, 2006).

An effective functioning organisation is a success factor which, as per Ramarumo et al. (2013) indicates that this supports the notion of employee appreciation and creates a strategic competitive advantage for organisations. Culture might be the “ultimate strategic asset” for many companies, especially in the advanced nations (Flamholtz & Randle, 2012).

The impact on organisational culture as well as the aspects that contribute to organisational culture is investigated further in this research. The role of leaders is becoming increasingly important in creating organisational culture, which entails showing initiative, creating autonomy and creativity in supporting key decisions in organisations which is important in understanding leadership in organisations (Diskienė, Marčinskas & Stankevičienė, 2010).

While key aspects of leaders are mentioned above, it is important to understand the factors required within leaders in a South African corporate context. This is further investigated in this research.

### **3.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter researched studies that investigated factors that affected happiness in the workplace. Research in this field has been extensively researched internationally, but there is limited research conducted in South Africa. The key factors that contribute to happiness have been described in this chapter.

## **Chapter 4: Research Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the research methodology followed in the current study. A discussion regarding the research setting, research design, sampling method, data collection method, data analysis methods is reflected in this study.

The attached research proposal has been changed from a mixed-method to a qualitative study. Ethical clearance has been approved for this change.

To better understand the factors that contribute to understanding happiness at work as well as the employee experience of happiness, this research is divided into two different parts, namely, the literature review and the empirical section. The literature review discusses existing scientific knowledge on the subject. The second part of the study focusses on empirical research, which uses qualitative measures to reach the research objectives.

#### **4.1.1 Part 1: A Literature review on happiness, positive psychology and factors of happiness.**

The literature consulted in this study focussed on existing research findings related to Happiness, Positive Psychology and Factors of happiness, respectively.

Applicable articles published between 1940 and 2020 were identified through consulting the following sources: Textbooks, subject journals, Emerald, Sabinet online, WEBfet, ISI Web of Knowledge, EBSCOHOST, ProQuest, SA ePublications, JSTOR and Google Scholar. The following search terms were used (individually or in combination): orientations to happiness, pleasure, engagement, meaning, positive psychology, positive organisational behaviour, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Cross-referencing was done when identifying other essential sources of information while studying a specific article mentioning a reliable source.

### **4.1.2 Part 2: Empirical Study**

The research focussed on a qualitative approach and used a thematic analytic approach to analyse the necessary information from participants.

### **4.1.3 Research Setting**

This study used a qualitative research approach that involved participants from the financial, retail and medical industries in the various selected corporate organisation in South Africa. Organisations that were selected were from the private sector. All participants in the different industries were similar in that they were leaders with experience in leading teams. They aimed to ensure optimal productivity within their respective business areas. Each leader was unique in the way they would lead their staff and had solid habits in executing their specific tasks.

Each organisation was approached to request permission to interview individuals within each organisation. The organisations were selected to gather a fair sample of individuals across multiple organisations in a South African corporate context. Once permission was granted from each organisation, the participants were selected based on their seniority in the organisation. The seniority of the participants resulted in a particular age group being used in this study as well as experience in determining the required outcomes of the study. The age group that was used in this sample was between 31-60 years.

All interviews were done at the respective organisation' premises in a venue provided by the organisation. Interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis at a time suitable for each participant. The venue was private to ensure confidentiality was maintained.

Each participant was briefed on the research, and it was indicated that participation in the research was voluntary and would be used in the analysis to determine the research objectives of this study. Permission was obtained from each participant to audio record the interview.

## **4.2 Research Design**

A qualitative research design was used in this study to achieve the specific objectives identified. Breakwell, Smith and Wright (2012) described qualitative research as an approach that focuses on individual experiences. It is an approach that focuses on how people encounter their world

through social as well as cultural practices. This is supported by research done by Malterud (2001) who indicated that qualitative research is a systematic collection, organisation and interpretation of textual material which can be derived from talking or from observation. Additionally, he elaborated that this type of research is used to explore meanings of social phenomena as experienced by individuals who support the objectives of this research which aims to focus on understanding the factors that contribute to happiness at work. The qualitative research approach supports the understanding and meaning of this topic through structured interviews. Hence qualitative research is focussed on individual understanding individual experiences and recording these experiences either by interviews or observation. Furthermore, as per Tracy (2013), qualitative research is rich and holistic, which allows an understanding of a sustained process through focussing on experiences that have been lived and honours local meaning. It enables one to interpret a participant's viewpoint and story and can result in further self-disclosure from participants. The process of interviewing or observing participants can result in further self-disclosure from participants and allows an intuitive understanding of events. It is a process that allows an individual to express their experiences of an event which assists in understanding their opinions.

Pope and Mays (2006) supported the above, which indicates that qualitative research allows participants the opportunity to give their views through an interview. They have suggested that qualitative research deals with talk or words rather than numbers and is focussed on the classification of social phenomena. Based on this it is important that qualitative research should always be a discrete investigation that is judged not against the criteria of others but according to what is most appropriate intrinsically, intuitively and within the research community in which the study was conducted (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). All qualitative data must be reliable and valid.

This research was done using face to face interviews which allowed the participant to express themselves freely. Additionally, any clarity could be provided during the process, and further elaboration could be provided where necessary.

While there are advantages to this research approach, the challenges that can be experienced by qualitative researchers, as discussed by Malterud (2001) are reflexivity where the background and position affect the angle of the investigation. Secondly, previous personal or professional experiences or beliefs can introduce preconceptions to a researcher.

A researcher's frame of reference or the theories and models by which a researcher is influenced can affect such research. While this is a challenge, it can be mitigated through ensuring the data is interpreted through competing conclusions. A researcher should also declare any beliefs before the start of the study. The nature of the study determines the extent of the findings that can be drawn and the extent to which findings can be used. Recent research conducted by Breakwell, Smith and Wright (2012), indicated that the researcher should ensure that he or she adopts an attitude of openness with the research conducted. Additionally, all phenomena being investigated are informed by careful receptivity as well as informed curiosity about the questions being asked. All phenomena being investigated include any contradictions that may relate to the criteria being investigated.

For this research, the researcher was aware of the positive challenges in qualitative research, and therefore, she ensured that any preconceptions, beliefs or views did not influence her. Furthermore, the researcher had a structured interview to ensure that the objective of the research was reached.

In summary, this research approach aims to understand the relationship between people and objects. This is done within the world they reside in and aims to ensure that the complexity of these relationships is not lost (Breakwell, Smith & Wright, 2012). As per Lim, et al. (2017), this research approach explores phenomena and experiences that are not captured through a quantitative process, but rather through an objective process. The use of a qualitative approach allowed the researcher to explore experiences as well as phenomena not easily captured through a quantitative or more objective process.

The research approach selected, as indicated above, allowed for results that can explore experiences as well as extract understanding of the factors that contribute to happiness in South Africa.

### **4.3 Participants**

The study involved participants from financial, retail and medical organisations in South Africa. Senior Managers were selected from the financial, retail and medical industries. A total of 21 Senior Managers were purposively selected in the age group between 31-60. This non-

probability sampling technique was chosen for practical reasons because the selected sample illustrates some features or process in which the researcher is interested (Silverman, 2011).

The various roles that each participant held were in the areas of Human Resource Management, Functional Learning and Development, Operational Management, International Banking, as well as Leadership Development. These positions covered key areas within the business environment to ensure teams are functioning, and the business is operating optimally. The table below is a summary of the participants.

**Table 3. Happiness-related constructs in the workplace (Fisher, 2010, pg. 385)**

Sectors	Retail	Medical	Financial
	6	9	6
Job titles of participants.	Executive functional skills, learning & development. (P16). Senior Human Resource Manager.* 2 (P15); (P20) Human Resource Executive in transformation & operations. (P21) Executive Human Resources & Transformation in IT & group restructuring. (P12). Leadership & development executive. (P17)	Executive. (P5) Chief Operations Officer. (P1) Service Manager. * 5 (P8); (P9); (P10); (P13); (P19) Human Resource Manager. (P8) Business process manager. (P14)	Head of liabilities. (P3) Learning partner for human capital. (P4) Manager of an international bank. (P2) HR Divisional Director. (P6) Senior Manager. (P11) HR Assistant Manager. (P18).

Each organisation provided a list of their senior teams to the researcher. The researcher then selected participants based on their seniority as well as experience. Individuals were then approached to determine who would participate in the study voluntarily.

A purposive sampling method was used in this research. This is a technique that can also be referred to as judgement sampling, i.e. when participants are selected based on particular criteria that they possess (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). In this research, the criteria applied in selecting participants is discussed hereafter.

As this research required specific leadership criteria, the sampling technique ensured that all participants met these criteria. This research required proficient, knowledgeable individuals who were able to provide information relevant to their knowledge and experience in an articulate, expressive and reflective manner. All participants were selected based on seniority in the business.

Purposive sampling allows the researcher to be reflexive and make decisions in response to empirical findings as well as theoretical developments that occur in the study (Guetterman, 2015).

This research does not allow one to generalise, but rather to explain, describe and interpret phenomena from the information that is obtained from participants.

## **4.4 Research Procedure**

### **4.4.1 Procedure**

#### *Permission request from the participating organisation*

The researcher approached the Executive Heads of each organisation to request participation in the research. Additionally, a letter was written to the retail organisations to request permission to approach a selected group of participants for the research. The research topic, objectives as well as the potential impact on each participating employee, were outlined to each organisational head. The researcher explained the value of the research to the organisation and that all responses would be confidential. Verbal consent was provided to the researcher to continue with the research.

#### *Permission request to the individual employee*

All participants were called to request their participation in the research. A face-to-face meeting was scheduled where the researcher presented her topic, the impact that the study will have on



the participating individual as well as on the organisation. The researcher ensured confidentiality of the responses and possible value to the organisation.

Participation in this study was declared voluntary, and the participants had an option to withdraw at any time. All interviews were conducted face-to-face with the participants. Ethical considerations were discussed, as well as the objectives of the research.

#### **4.4.2 Ethical Consideration**

Ethical approval was obtained from the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the KwaZulu-Natal. Ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality were adhered to throughout the study. The protection and fair treatment of the research participants was upheld during this research project.

The absence of ethical considerations could lead to consequences such as the exploitation of the research participants, researchers overstepping the ethics laid down by legislation through councils such as the Health Professional Council of South Africa (HPCSA), which could result in the violating the protection of research participants.

This data will be held in storage at the University of KwaZulu-Natal for three years.

#### **4.4.3 Research Data Collection**

Upon the granting of ethical clearance by UKZN (HSS/1378/016D in Appendix 2), senior managers were invited from different organisations to participate. The aims and objectives of the research were explained to the participants. By signing informed consent, the participants consented to be audio-taped. The interview was scheduled at an appropriate time and venue for the participant and was conducted in English. The interviews were of approximately 30 in duration. Data collection was conducted over two (2) months.

Structured interviews were used to collect data for this study. Structured interviews have fixed questions asked in a specific order where respondents are asked the same questions in a specific

order (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). This allows an interviewer to limit nonresponse and mitigate any inappropriate responses.

In this research, the researcher has used a structured interview to collect data which was recorded with the participant's permission. Data was transcribed by an independent individual to ensure accuracy and no bias.

The research was conducted in a setting suitable and familiar to the candidate being interviewed (Breakwell, Smith, & Wright, 2012). The researcher ensured that the setting was familiar to and selected by the participant. The richness of the data gathered was supported by the environment as well as the relevance of the data collected.

#### **4.4.4 Informed Consent**

All participants were briefed on the objectives of the research. They were allowed to ask any questions before taking part in the interview. Participants were selected based on their position within the organisation and experience in working with teams. All participants were requested to sign a written informed consent form. This form included information regarding the purpose of the study, its objectives and the method in which data would be collected. The informed consent also included that participation was voluntary.

#### **4.4.5 Privacy**

Participants were informed that the data collected would be shared with the supervising researcher. They were also informed that the university community would have access to the data collected, without any personal details being disclosed. Furthermore, they were informed that the data collection was for a PhD study and that the findings might be disseminated through publication. No objections were raised by participants regarding privacy.

#### **4.4.6 Anonymity and Confidentiality**

The researcher conducted all the interviews with the participants. During data collection, personal email accounts were used to return consent forms where individuals required a further read on the details of the consent. All participants were informed that no personal details would

be used in the research. Additionally, they were informed that no information would be shared with their employers. Anonymity was maintained during the research write up as no personal details were used in formulating the write-up, which assured confidentiality.

#### **4.4.7 Protection**

This study posed no threat to causing any physical harm to the participants or to the premises where the interviews were conducted. However, as participants would be talking about a subject that could cause emotional distress, the interview would be stopped should the participant, e.g. cry during the interview. The researcher would provide emotional support to the participant.

#### **4.4.8 Protection of Sensitive Information**

All of the participant's personal information was protected. No names or information that would lead to the identification of the participants was disclosed. All participants were assigned a code. It was explained to the participants, during the briefing process, who would have access to the information. Participants were once again reminded that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study.

#### **4.4.9 Storage of Research Data**

All interviews were audio-taped and stored.

#### **4.4.10 Creditability**

Accuracy and interpretation were followed in terms of the research processes to ensure creditability. Ethical clearance was given, and permission was obtained from all participating institutions as well as the participants.

#### **4.4.11 Transferability**

Transferability and generalisability in qualitative research are questioned due to the limited number of participants that took part in this research. The objectives of the qualitative approach

are to determine the factors that contribute to happiness at work in South Africa. Organisations were selected from the corporate sector within South Africa and the data, therefore, applies to the corporate sector.

#### **4.5 Data Analysis**

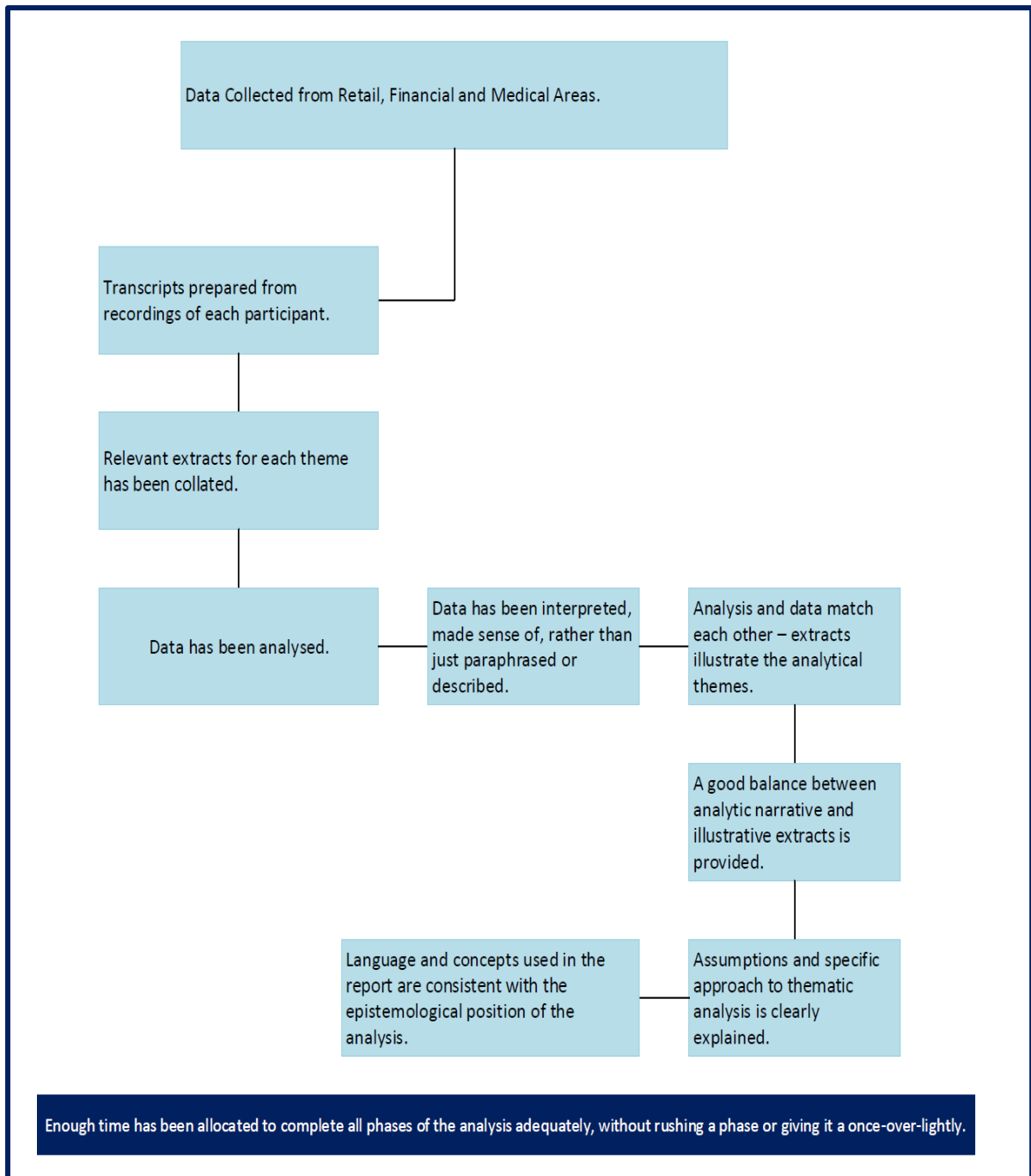
This phase employed a qualitative approach where 21 interviews were conducted with individuals selected from different organisations. Individuals were identified from senior managers and across three South African industries (Retail, Finance & Medical). Purposive or judgmental sampling was appropriate for the present study, which is an acceptable sampling approach that uses the judgment of an expert in selecting cases with a specific purpose in mind (Neuman, 1997).

Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. The researcher attempted to make the data meaningful by coding and writing down significant points of convergence. The themes were coded under the different meanings reflected by the transcripts. Participants were contacted to examine the already identified emerging themes to increase confidence and reduce bias in the qualitative interpretation of data (Creswell, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). An independent, trained individual transcribed all interviews. Transcripts were then sent to a sample of participants to verify if the information was captured correctly. Individuals confirmed via email if transcripts were accurate.

Participants were contacted to examine the already identified emerging themes critically to increase confidence and reduce bias in the qualitative interpretation of data (Creswell, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

The themes and analysis were approved by a research methodology expert to ensure further validation (Gray, 2009).

Audiotapes were transcribed verbatim, and every effort was made to minimise distortions and bias. The approach detailed in Figure 4 below, was used to extract themes from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes were coded under the different meanings as reflected by the manager's interviews.



**Figure 4. Adaptation of sequential Steps for proper thematic analysis Braun & Clarke 2006, pg. 96**

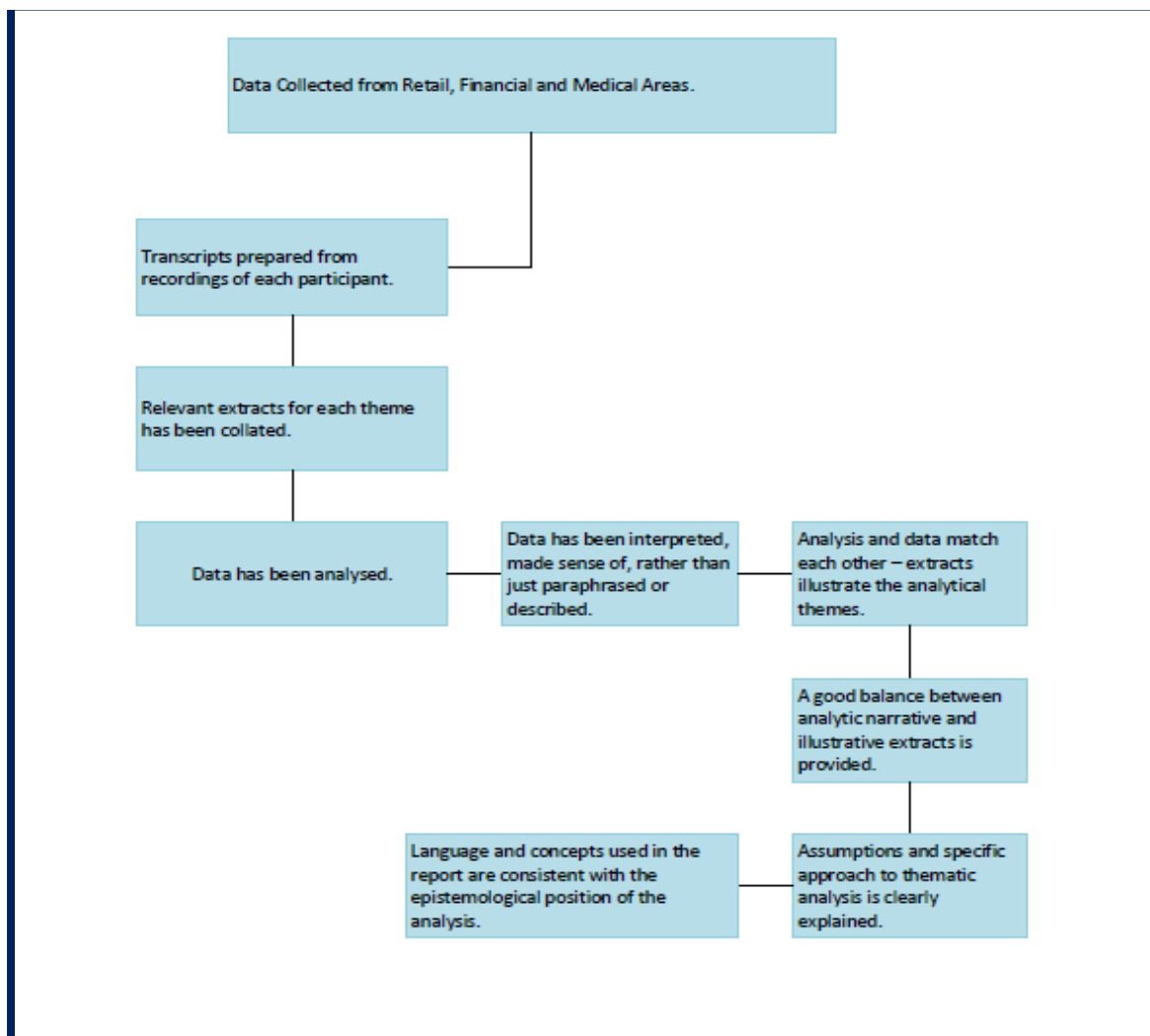
#### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter addressed the methodology and design of the study, which focused on the instruments used in the study, the sampling, data collection methods and the data analysis is explained.

## Chapter 5: Qualitative Findings

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the qualitative research findings of the study. Through the process of thematic analysis, the themes and subthemes were identified as guided by Braun and Clarke (2006). The process of their application in this study is depicted below in Figure 5, as indicated in the research methodology chapter.



**Figure 5. Adaptation of sequential: Steps for proper thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006, pg. 96)**

As depicted above, interviews were conducted to collect data from participants employed in the retail, financial and medical sectors. The subsequent transcriptions afforded the emergence of central themes that emanated and allowed associated findings. The analysis describes the

themes that have been extracted with the right balance between the analytical narratives and illustrative extracts. This chapter includes the findings of the qualitative data and qualitative analysis. There were several themes and sub-themes about factors that contribute to happiness and creating an understanding of an individual's experience of happiness at work that was evident from the interviews. Emerging from this were themes related to leadership, climate and respect. Each theme and its subthemes are interwoven and discussed with supporting quotations from the employees engaged in the different interviews, and relevant literature is integrated into the discussion. The following table is a summary of the main themes, sub-themes and themes within the sub-themes that were extracted throughout the research. The quotations represent verbatim responses that were given by the participants in this study. Table 4 details themes that emerged from the interviews.

## **5.2 Thematic Analysis**

The following process was followed in gathering data for this study. Each organisation was approached and permission was requested to interview selected participants for the study. Once participants were selected, the objective of the study was explained and their voluntary participation was requested. All interviews were recorded with permission from the participant. Once interviews were completed, recordings were transcribed for each participant and relevant themes were extracted as per the participant's responses. Relevant extracts were then extracted and collated for each theme. The data was analysed based on responses which were then interpreted, made sense of rather than paraphrased or described. Data was then analysed and matched with each and extracts were then extracted to illustrate the analytical themes. The results presented provide a good balance between the analytical narratives and illustrative extracts provided.

## **5.3 Themes**

The following themes emerged from this study:

**Table 1. Themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews**

Theme	Sub-Theme	Sub-Theme
Leadership	Communication	Transparency
	Motivation	Feedback
		Being challenged
		Role Clarity
	Listening	
	Achievement of Goals	Industry Knowledge
Pride		
Climate	Recognition	Monetary
	Trust	
	Teams	
	Coaching	
Respect		

Hereafter, each theme and its subsequent sub-themes are discussed, supported by literature as well as verbatim quotations from the participants.

## 5.4 Results and Analysis

### 5.4.1 Theme 1: Leadership

South African researcher Kgatle, (2018) indicated that South African politicians should adopt a servant leadership approach and would be required to be more trustworthy and accountable. Servant leadership's characteristics include respect for staff, where employees are partners in the achievement of the goals of the organisation and leaders lead by example. Leaders need to ensure that employees have clear role clarification and work toward common goals with clear performance objectives (Guerra, 2009). Leadership was identified as a pervasive theme by participants which is indicated in the data responses as follows:



P2: *“Trust vision of your leaders.”*

P3: *“Trust vision of your leaders.”*

This concept of trust is further indicated by P5, who stated, *“Trust in the vision of your leader.”*

P6 also indicated, *“Trust vision of leaders.”*

This concept of trusting the vision of a leader is further indicated by P8, *“Trust vision of leaders.”*

P9 indicated the importance of understanding work requirements and well as having the right resources to complete these tasks and stated:

*“Well, I think number one the team needs to know that there is support from leaders, leaders understanding the workload, workforce, and details of processes. Obviously knowing that you need to give them the tools, you need to come with certain innovations as to improve on processes because I think your team sort of depends on making things easier for them and I think also the understanding of their workload at certain times when we have peak or when certain businesses have their peak times, so I think it is actually important then to really show your support. I also think one of the most important things is to know how to get down dirty with them, to be able to get your hands dirty even if it is small things that you do. I think that counts a lot for them and I think transparency is also another big thing so if you know that there is issues with systems or issues with team dynamics, address it, sort it out but also give them the opportunity to voice their opinion.”*

Additionally, P9 indicated, *“I think a lot of them know what you know or what your knowledge is based on certain things in the industry, so you cannot be a leader if you do know the business, you cannot be a leader if you do not know when they need your help and cannot identify their issues and their problem. So I think what helps is I can pick it up before they come to me that I have identified certain things, and I think that is why you need to touch base constantly to know what is happening is that you can go to them with a solution before they even sometimes bring you the problem, it is about identifying those kinds of things because I think we ultimately supposed to have their back, so you are supposed to have an eagles eye view of issues and*

*situations that is going on, and that is where listening comes in because having to listen and hear the issues and having to be able to do something about it proactively will make the difference so that they know that you are doing something about it.”*

This invariably creates pride within teams which can be facilitated and demonstrated by a leader:

P6: *“If you have the right leadership style and the right leader I think that just comes naturally around the pride of the team because it is not just one, it is the team dynamics that creates the proudness that comes from the leadership.”*

Taking the lead is important in demonstrating to teams the concept of servant leadership in that you are responsible for leading and getting involved in teamwork:

P19: *“Lead by example if I ask people to work late, for example, I work with them, I would never ask anyone to do something that I would not do. The biggest part of my job is just to be that support, sometimes just to hear out their concern and address every concern. I do not want to look at management purely on performance. It is just my job is almost to serve them, making their life easier and making them happier at work.”*

This is further emphasised by P7: *“So open communication and participation is important in a team. You know you cannot just have a team and no players so participation is important where there is involvement and if you as leader if you do not drive that participation and you are not involved your team will not be involved either so I think that is two open things that I have come across that is openness and communication. Can I say to somebody I need to do a task and I do not know how to do it so involvement from leadership as well, myself having to know what to do before delegating a task I would prefer knowing how to do the task and showing somebody how to do the task and get their input will it work or not.”*

P4 also indicates: *“I think culture and I think the leadership drive commitment in an organisation.”*

The employees concluded that leadership refers to factors that include role clarification, knowledge about the job, and having a vision and trust. This supports research done in South

African organisations by Kgatle (2018), who indicated that servant leadership is important in ensuring South African organisations prosper. Employees need to have clear role clarification as well as clear goals in order to direct organisations, thereby supporting the importance that vision, knowledge, trust, role-clarification are important constructs of happiness at work which is aligned to the participant's responses received (Guerra, 2009). Furthermore, this confirms that leadership is a factor that contributes to happiness at work and supports the understanding of an employee's experience of happiness in the workplace. Van Zyl, Deacon and Rothmann (2011) supported that Industrial Psychologists experience high levels of work-role fit as it aligns to the type of job function they have in organisations. Littman-Ovadia, Lavy and Boiman-Meshita (2016) linked to the relationship that positive emotions have a positive effect on happiness at work and in turn, result in positive outcomes. This has been discussed in earlier chapters and is supported by participants' responses in that leaders need to be positive in supporting teams towards a shared vision. Should a leader be included to empower and recognise the talents of others, the commitment of individuals in an organisation increases and this should be utilised to the benefit of the organisation (Mahembe & Engelbrecht, 2014).

Sub-themes that are connected to leadership are communication, motivation, listening and achievement of goals are discussed further hereunder.

#### ***5.4.1.1 Communication***

Communication is a sub-theme of leadership. Research done by Miftari (2018) indicated that leadership communication is imperative. Communication is essential as it includes dialogue between individuals. Leaders build solid relationships through communication which result in an inspired vision for the organisation (Baker, Mathis, Stites-Doe & Javadian, 2016). This is a shared concept in this research as per the participant's responses below.

Leader's communication patterns within teams are imperative as was particularly emphasised below:

P1: *"If you constantly communicate to your people you keep them posted on what is happening and what the next set of goals is and if you allow them to contribute, they will be positive, they will feel that they have a role to play."*

Furthermore, communication is vital for participants 3 and 7:

P3: *“I think communication is very important and because my team is remote in other words, one is in KZN, and one is in the Cape, consistent contact is very important for me. As I do not see them on a regular basis, I try to make contact once a week with them to find out how things are going.”*

P7: *“Important in terms of actions would be open communication. That is very important that there is openness among the team they can say what are their concerns and challenges. It needs to be a two way, not just one person saying and the other person doing because it is a team effort. So open communication and participation is important in a team. As a leader, if you do not drive that participation, and you are not involved, your team will not be involved either.”*

Open communication is still important. The open communication ensures that the feedback loop is maintained and the benefits thereof are noticeable as per participant 1:

P1: *“Currently, we are doing culture surveys where we give people an opportunity to say what they feel is working and what they feel is not working. This allows you to understand what the people actually want and then we do training projects out of that.”*

P6: *“You have got to constantly engage with them how to do that so it is constant communication, constant interaction, and constant guidance around that because not everyone is equipped for that.”*

Participant 8 indicated that talking to individuals is an important characteristic of leaders.

P8: *“By talking to them on a daily basis, giving them what the work is all about and also just being positive and hearing if there is a problem with them how to solve the problem. Every morning I am finding what they are doing and how they are doing it and how we can do it better.”*

Communication is an important concept in South African organisations which is indicated by the above participants. This is supported by research done by South African researcher Chasi (2017) who concluded that the importance of communication within societies was

demonstrated by great leaders such as Nelson Mandela. Participant 1 and Gilley, Gilley and McMillan (2009) reinforced this by suggesting that effective communication by leaders promotes job satisfaction as well as organisational commitment in changing organisations which is critical due to the rapid changes all organisations are currently facing. This is influenced by the way leaders communicate and motivate their employees (Cetin, Karabay & Efe, 2012). Cetin, Karabay and Efe (2012) further supported that a leader is critical in guiding the organisation and leading individuals to reach the required goals. This links to the importance of effective leaders in supporting goals and providing a vision to organisations. To achieve this, leaders must communicate adequately as an interactive leadership style drives communication. This is important as it allows feedback as well as individuals an opportunity to provide suggestions and comments.

Based on the research findings together with the participant's responses, the researcher can conclude that communication is an important element of leadership that contributes to happiness at work. It further creates an understanding that through open two-way communication, employees are allowed to discuss their viewpoints on matters within an organisation. Communication provides leaders with a platform to guide their teams, and this increases organisational commitment and allows transparency of leaders. Communication is important in supporting change in an organisation as this results in a more profound commitment to changing an individual's attitude toward change (Shin, Taylor & Seo, 2012). Effective communication is significant in driving change and motivating employees which result in increased motivation, job satisfaction, perceived equity and organisational commitment (Gilley, Gilley & McMillan, 2009).

In summary, research done by Skeepers and Mbohwa (2015) concluded that through communication, leaders promoted trust, good working relationships and increased organisational commitment. Transparency is a sub-theme of communication as it strengthens skills to lead organisations effectively. Discussion of the sub-theme of communication follows hereafter.

#### *5.4.1.1.1 Transparency*

Transparency is defined by Farrel (2016) as the sharing of information which may be comfortable or uncomfortable as it a concept where there are no hidden agendas or conditions.

Furthermore, it refers to information that is required for collaboration, cooperation and collective decision making. It is a valuable concept for leaders as it promotes organisational processes which draw on the expertise of employees. Transparency supports effective communication, coordination and improves which areas need focus (Dabbish, Stuart, Tsay & Herbsleb, 2013). The following participants indicated the importance of transparency in organisations.

P9 also acknowledged trust and further suggested the importance of transparency and honesty:

*P9: "Trust: transparency, you need to be honest about what your plan is, you need to be honest about what your outcome is, and you need to be honest in order to get things done. You need to recognise why you need to do certain things. So if I were to select a certain person I would have to know what contribution that person made and what set of skills did that person have that brought something completely different to the team, that brought us forward or the real strength that helps the business."*

Transparency is a significant trait of leaders, as explained by the next participant:

*P18: "Be someone who has got an open door policy. Be transparent whenever you work in a team. People like a leader or somebody that are managing the project to be transparent. You have also got to be able to drive people in a positive manner. People want to be led by people that they can look up to and that they feel is a good leader."*

The participant also stressed the essential skill of transparency as a requirement from a leader:

*P9: "You need to come with certain innovations as to improve on processes because your team depends on making things easier for them. It is important to show your support. One of the most important things is to know how to get down dirty with them, to be able to get your hands dirty even if it is small things that you do. Transparency is also another big thing so if you know that there is issues with systems or issues with team dynamics, address it, sort it out but also give them the opportunity to voice their opinion."*

Research by Farrel (2016) concluded that transparency promotes open communication and leads to optimally functioning teams. A leader sets the tone for transparency through how they

communicate (Salazar, 2017). It is evident that transparency enhances commitment within an organisation and higher levels of transparency correspond to higher levels of perceived supervisory support, organisational justice, strategic understanding and lower levels of roles. The researcher can summate from the participant responses that communication is important to leadership which is further enhanced by transparency in supporting teams. Khandelwal and Khanum (2017) indicated that leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Junior, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Steve Biko displayed characteristics of transparency in their leadership styles which resulted in guiding individuals along in the process of being dependable. The concept of the positive effect of transparency is further supported by research done by Okeyo and Juma (2017), where the importance of transparency was enforced. The link between communication and transparency is demonstrated by Farrel (2016) who showed that transparency and open communication are key concepts through which a foundation of established organisational values and leadership commitment is engrained in an organisation.

The researcher can conclude that as per the participant's responses as well as supporting literature, transparency is a key factor that supports communication, a factor of happiness in a South African context.

Furthermore, the impact of leadership style as per South African researchers Naile and Selesho (2014) indicated the positive impact motivation would have in inspiring and influencing individuals within a work context. Leadership behaviours positively influence individuals in organisations ergo the importance of understanding the impact of motivation in organisations is the next subject to be discussed.

#### ***5.4.1.2 Motivation***

The next sub-theme of leadership is motivation which is described by Kontodimopoulos, Paleologou and Niakas (2009) as the driving force that individuals use in pursuing and satisfying their needs. It impacts on behaviour as well as an individual's attitude to tasks that they complete while attaining a goal. Furthermore, researchers Robins, Judge, Odendaal and Roodt (2009) indicated that it is an individual's passion, direction and persistence of effort towards attaining a goal, which is the result of the interaction of an individual and a situation in which they may find themselves.

The close link between communication and motivation is described by participants 1, 3 and 14:

P1: *“If people are not motivated, you are not going to get any production out of them. There is no benefit in the company then because the company is only as strong as its people are.”*

P3: *“I make sure that the team is together, well informed, communicate properly to them, keep them up to date at what is going on in a higher level and also filter the information, so they get what is relevant to them and not this whole lot of information that does not apply to them.”*

Motivation in teams is driven by knowing the people in your team:

P14: *“In order to motivate your team you need to know the people in your team have different personalities. If you know the kind of people that you have in the group then you will be able to bring different ideas, being able to stand in for a coach these kind of things motivate them.”*

Motivation is an important concept in keeping teams driven.

P18: *“It is really important to be motivated and to keep people feeling positive about what they are doing and feeling happy about what they are doing. Engagement is important when motivating people.”*

Motivation too can be intrinsic, so too can motivation as mentioned by P20:

P20: *“Motivation comes from within. I do not believe that it is the extrinsic motivation I believe it is intrinsic and that you do from within. Factors that will impact my motivation is how engaged I am so it does depend on my engagement levels. Conditions must be right for me to find motivation myself.”*

Furthermore, P19 supports the concept of motivation indicating the importance of teams and driving towards results as well as teamwork:

Such a respectful space is motivational, as P19 particularly reveals some phrases that inspire:



P19: *“Being aware of your team and how they are feeling. Motivation can be through words such as, ‘things will get better’, ‘let’s push through this’, ‘if you need help I am there for you’. It is the daily routine things that I use to motivate my team.*

The conducive environment created and perpetuated by leaders through mentoring and coaching commits to achieving desired outcomes. Coaching provides development in specific issues, whereas mentoring revolves around developing the individual’s professional career and creating motivation for individuals.

P5: *“Outcomes must be reached, and that is why, as a manager, you have to ensure that you motivate people, and they also ensure that outcomes are reached.”*

Motivation is important in driving goal attainment in organisations:

P14: *“If teams are not motivated, we are not going to reach our goals, and people are going to get bored. So people that are motivated they usually do more than what is expected of them. I think they can bring new ideas and be innovative as well. Also, people that are motivated, the mistakes that they make is minimal compared to those that are not.”*

Research on communication done by Cetin (2012) included transparency as an integral part of motivating individuals in an organisation and therefore important to leadership in an organisation. This is supported by research done by Naile and Selesho (2014), who indicated that leadership styles influenced the level of motivation that employees have in an organisation. Furthermore, it motivates, inspires and influences employees in creating a positive organisational climate that encourages employees to work harder. Additionally, the notion of intrinsic recognition is important to ensure leaders manage intrinsic rewards in organisations as this relates to intrinsic motivation for individuals (Nujjoo & Meyer, 2012). Higgs (2010) further emphasised that effective leaders use their motivation and communication skills to ensure individual behaviours influence change positively. This can be done through understanding the emotional change in individuals and the need to manage both positive and negative experiences that are driven by leaders. The importance of understanding organisational changes as well as the emotional quotient of individuals is important as organisations are in a constant state of transformation; therefore, leadership is critical and requires key characteristics which include listening.

The above factors confirm that happiness, both intrinsic and extrinsic at work, is influenced by the extent to which individuals are motivated and describes the extent of how individuals experience happiness at work in organisations. Additionally, it supports positive and negative emotions that play a role in understanding the behaviour of individuals in organisations.

#### *5.4.1.2.1 Feedback*

Feedback has been identified as one of the themes of motivation which is described in this section. Research by Chandrasekar (2011) indicated that feedback is a loop between measurable outputs and goals and one is given the success of achievement of goals through a feedback medium. Visscher (2013) indicated that feedback is the process of giving individuals information about the outcome of a task undertaken. It provides information about the outcome of the task, whether successful or not.

Providing feedback and acknowledging employees is important in an organisation as indicated by participants 11 and 16, which in turn motivates employees.

P11: *“By giving positive feedback, by being open by helping the person understand what their gaps are and I being their line manager will address those gaps.”*

P16: *“Giving them feedback if they have done well to make sure that they know. If they achieve a goal as a team, celebrate it among the team.”*

P15 also pointed to the dissemination of knowledge and providing feedback as being necessary:

P15: *“Sharing knowledge and also getting feedback from my team and trying to understand whether they understand what needs to be done. Making them aware that they can rely on me in terms of the knowledge I can pass on, and them knowing that I am there to support them.”*

This participant further indicated the importance of giving feedback to individuals:

P 9: *“I try to show them that I am there, that I listen to them, that I give them the support. The feedback that they give me is what I take into account. Most of the times, I try to repeat when I*

*give them feedback on the information they have given. I try to highlight where I have got it from, who is it that I got it from and how I think it actually helps and it worked because I think they want to know their insight is valued.”*

Feedback is critical in ensuring individuals keep motivated:

P21: *“Knowing what they like doing and enjoy working. Give them tasks or projects that they enjoy that tends to motivate them quite a lot. Give them feedback, I will say “well done on this“, “well done on that”, so the giving of feedback and appreciation. Acknowledging them, so they get the exposure for their work, they are acknowledged at all levels, so they get to work with people at different levels.”*

Research by Baker, Perreault, Reid and Blanchard (2013) indicated that a successful organisation is supported by leaders that drive meaningful feedback which supports positive cultures that value free-flowing communication channels between all members. Furthermore, an organisation can create and maintain a high performing climate through high performing individuals and a focused process of providing feedback. As feedback is a sub-theme of motivation, we can conclude that, as discussed in the previous section, it is through a leader that effective feedback is managed which is indicated by these researchers as well in relation to feedback. How feedback is communicated, as per the writer, impacts the motivation of an individual. Additionally, research conducted with teams indicated that learning conversations together with feedback is beneficial to teams East, Bitchener and Basturkmen (2012). We can thus deduce that meaningful feedback promotes a positive climate as individuals are motivated. Feedback as per the research presented promotes happiness in the workplace and can be regarded as a factor of motivation that contributes to happiness in the workplace. Pelgrim, Kramer, Mokkink and Van der Vleuten (2012) indicated that the delivery of feedback is prominent in organisations as a communication tool in the manner in which it is delivered. It allows for individuals to understand areas of development about set goals that need to be achieved (Adcroft, 2011). This allows changes in behaviour and in turn, motivates employees as they understand areas that may require improvement. Additionally, it is important to ensure individuals are given continuously new challenging tasks to drive stimulation in teams (Chan & Hodgson, 2010). This ensures that employees constantly reflect and strive for doing better in the tasks they undertake, which is a self-regulatory process and may increase the confidence

of the employees. This is described as “being challenged” and is a sub-theme of motivation and is discussed in the following section.

#### *5.4.1.2.2 Being Challenged*

The next sub-theme of motivation is “being challenged” which can be described by characteristics that an individual displays when faced with challenging tasks. Research by Ohly and Fritz (2009) suggested that when an individual is challenged at work, it results in proactive behaviour, which results in creative individuals.

Additionally, a challenging environment is an impetus for motivation as eluded to by participants P11 and P16:

P11: *“Motivate them by giving them challenges. Give them high challenges and high targets and say go for it. If they are not motivated, they lose focus.”*

P16: *“To improve the culture would be to achieve the things that we set out to achieve, because that build my inspiration and so on. Secondly, I think I need to continually nurture a culture of open communication, frank, honest, open communication, I would like to improve specifically is my teams' ability to innovate. I continuously encourage innovation, so I am hoping those daily conversations will improve the culture.”*

Organisations where the vision is adequately understood, promote and assert achievement:

P6: *“Making them understand the vision of the business and where their contribution is. So in terms of where their value lies.”*

Furthermore, it is important to ensure one is continuously challenged in a work environment:

P3: *“Making sure that you are challenged all the time and that you have something to do, and it is not the same thing every day. So having a specific goal or focus and being able to measure it and see how far you have come and where you are going to so that for me keeps me interested in what I am doing. Being able to do your job without any supervision and without any assistance, understanding what is required of you and managing to deliver what is required.”*

The above results indicate that it is important to ensure teams remain resilient and are in a relationally, demanding environment (Bjarnadottir, 2011). It is important to build teams that stimulate support among colleagues together with a supportive training record with ongoing training and guidance to ensure individuals are kept stimulated. Tims, Bakker and Derks (2013) indicated that individuals would be happier in an organisation where they are stimulated by interesting work and have good relationships with managers and colleagues as well as high salaries. Additionally, this study indicated that they require independent work. It is evident in the results presented that more challenging work increases happiness at work by increasing the motivation of individuals at work. We understand the employee experience of happiness at work results from having a shared vision and challenging work. Being challenged is a sub-theme of motivation which is a sub-theme of leadership. Research done by Ohly and Fritz (2009) concluded that employees are motivated by work that challenges them. Leaders drive challenging work in organisations. Furthermore, individuals must understand the work that they should be performing in an organisation and have role clarity, another sub-factor of motivation which is discussed hereunder.

#### *5.4.1.2.3 Role clarity*

Role clarity is a process by which individuals are socialised into a role or function through the clear direction of the tasks that they are required to do (Lapointe, Vandenberghe & Boudrias, 2014). Role clarity is positive in that it allows the socialisation of individuals in a role and can ensure optimal performance in that an individual knows what is expected of them. Additionally, role clarity provides job information as well as supports supervisory relationships in decision making (Els & Van Schalkwyk, 2011). The importance of role clarity as a sub-section of motivation is supported in the statements from the participants below.

*P5: "I am a people's person and a goal achiever so as long as the goals interest me and the people interest me, I will always be interested and committed. I like challenges I even go look for them and in my present job I am very fortunate there is always challenges. That keeps me very committed."*

Additionally, role clarity promotes visionary thinking:

P6 *“If teams see that their value and engagement contributes to the bigger picture then they would remain motivated. They have got to understand what their contribution is. Why they remain motivated is important because that contributes to their success and to the company’s success. You do not have to constantly be with them, they are motivated if they understand their role and are engaged with the environment.”*

Furthermore, role clarity is also evident in this supportive concept which implied consistently meeting with staff:

P15: *“Understanding what is happening in their world in terms of their role and being able to support them in their space. So supporting them, supporting the team, giving inputs where it is needed, and meeting with them continuously.”*

Role clarity is important in understanding what is expected of each individual to achieve a successful outcome:

P21: *“If they want to achieve something as a team, they each need to understand what is their role in delivering the outcome. They need to know each other’s strengths like who can do what better than others and they need to communicate all the time with each other.”*

Leaders are instrumental in providing role clarity. Accordingly, when employees are aware of what is expected of them, this results in high impact and in reaching expectations of an organisation (Mendes & Stander, 2011). An employee who is enthusiastic about their work has positive emotions about their work. This correlates with the results of this research in that positive emotions contribute to positive work outcomes which confirm that role clarity is a factor of happiness at work. The correlation of role clarity with leaders and sub-ordinates positively influences how a leader supports work relationships through role clarity where an individual understands what they need to do in a task (De Villers & Stander, 2011). It clarifies the roles and expectations in a work area, thereby creating a positive, supportive relationship between a leader and their sub-ordinates which benefits the attainment of goals. A solid vision in organisations supports role clarity (Jones, 2010). Vision statements in organisations are generally brief motivational outlines that direct a specific future which applies to a specific group. They reflect a broad outline of long-term direction and is something that can be sacred to an organisation.

Role clarity is thus a supportive factor of motivation at work that supports leadership in leading teams and is, in turn, a factor of happiness at work. Listening too supports leadership and is a sub-theme in the leadership factor. While communication and decision making are important skills for a leader, listening too is an important trait as it allows leaders to clarify requirements of the group and in turn understand the group which is described in the next section (Spears, 2010).

#### ***5.4.1.3 Listening***

Listening is a process of hearing what an individual says and choosing to remember necessary information which is then connected to form meaning (Ahmadi, 2016). It can be described as a mental ability which helps us understand the world around us and is important in successful communication.

Moreover, leaders who are strategically attentive and inclusive within their teams are celebrated.

*P13: “Acknowledging them, listening to their suggestions and doing this in a group activity where everyone is present. They also feel their voice counts, and they also feel that if something good comes from it then well done, and that would motivate the person. And that their suggestion did make a contribution.”*

Yet another indispensable aspect of listening is the ability to listen to teams objectively:

*P13: “Listening to listen to my team and allowing them to say whatever is on their minds and any suggestions they have. Maybe looking at the end goal and obviously, if something is done well, it also helps to remain positive in going forward to continue to be motivated.”*

Not being prejudicial was yet another essential trait of a leader in addition to listening:

*P14: “Being available, listening to them and not taking them for granted and my willingness to help wherever I can and not being biased or taking sides.”*

Listening indicates that leaders support teams which is conveyed by P9:

P 9: *“I try to show them that I am there, that I listen to them, that I give them the support. The feedback that they give me is what I take into account. Most of the times, I try to repeat when I give them feedback on the information they have given. I try to highlight where I have got it from, who is it that I got it from and how I think it actually helps and it worked because I think they want to know their insight is valued.”*

P11: *“I really listen to them and try to understand their situations as far as I can and support them in that way.”*

P17: *“Probably number one is listening, number two is allowing them to express their opinion without being judged and to give a view and to give an open platform where they can give a view.”*

Listening is an important trait in leadership behaviour, which was also indicated by research done on the workforce of the future by (Bhattacharyya, 2017). This concept is further supported by Groysberg and Slind (2012), who indicated that listening is an important trait for leaders as it allows leaders to stop talking and attend to what people are saying. This signifies respect for individuals and provides a degree of humility at all levels and supports commitment by individuals to an organisation. We can, therefore, conclude that listening is a concept that requires leaders to be attentive to the requirements of individuals and teams. Listening is thus an important factor that supports leadership in an organisation and in turn, allows one to understand the concept of what creates an employee experience of happiness in the workplace.

The next sub-theme of leadership is the achievement of goals which, as described below, relates to individuals achieving performance objectives. The results of this research demonstrate that this is an important concept which is integrated with the concepts of listening, motivation and communication. Groysbberg and Slind (2009) summate that listening to individuals is a key trait of leadership that supports the other qualities of communication, trust, transparency as well as motivating individuals as discussed earlier in this chapter.



#### **5.4.1.4 Achievement of Goals**

Research done by Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu and Rooyen (2009) defined the achievement of goals as clear expectations and practice that needed to be in place for individuals to understand what was required of them. Based on an individual's will, they will be able to execute what is required of them, and this will result in the achievement of goals.

Achieving goals increases self-actualisation and pride incrementally and maintains professionalism which contributes to team success as per participants P1 and P4:

P1: *"When I know what my job is about I would be confident and also when I have proper people knowledge when I come up with an obstacle with people then I know how to deal with it then I know that it will be the right way to deal with it."*

P4: *"Achieving your goals to contribute to the success of the team and to achieving goals as a team and to the bigger organisation. Happy staff, happy customer. It is understanding how they want to be approached and treating them as individuals that have personal goals as well as company goals they need to achieve. It is my interaction in terms of how I manage them and managing and leading in many situations at some point you have to manage depending on the situation."*

Having a leader who demonstrates a commitment to professionalism is a valued organisational style, as is evidenced by the participant below:

P5: *"Lead by example and have an open relationship with my senior managers. I would regularly ask them in a meeting if there is anything they were not satisfied with in my decision making or where I could assist them more or where I could improve."*

In understanding roles, leaders can provide support to individuals within an organisation:

P9: *"The team needs to know that there is support from leaders, leaders understanding the workload, workforce, and details of processes."*

Goals that are set by individuals must indeed be completed:

P13: *“Making sure something is done, and that can be a task, making a phone call, attending a meeting, completing a task that was given whether it was important or not making sure that the task was done. For within a group, everyone must be committed, and if it was just one person making sure that person is committed as well.”*

It is important to have a positive culture to achieve goals:

P15: *“We have a can-do it culture or attitude, we are always working towards getting the job done. I think we are always focusing on the end result.”*

To ensure work is achieved in organisations, role clarification, as well as fit, is important. This was echoed and clarified by researchers in South Africa (Rothman & Rothman, 2010). Additionally, a variety needs to be provided for workers as well as learning opportunities and autonomy which, in turn, contributes to attaining meaningfulness in jobs. Jacobs, Rendard and Snelgar (2014) supported this by indicating that organisations should support their employees in an environment where they can source intrinsic rewards as this increases the achievement of goals for workers. This, in turn, supports the attainment of vision in organisations. These researches thus suggested that should workers understand what is required of them and create meaning for their work, they would attain the achievement of goals in organisations.

International research done by Cascio (2010) indicated that individuals, with explicit and measurable goals, should be managed through the timing of deadlines to ensure understanding of what is required. Evaluation of work is important to ensure adequate feedback and rewards are in place. Individuals need to be coached in the achievement of these goals by understanding what is required of them (Laschinger, Wong, Cummings & Grau, 2014). Leaders are key in promoting positive practices that prevent burnout in organisations, thereby providing the link to achieving goals and leadership. Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2014) indicated that leadership style, organisational commitment and work satisfaction are interrelated. A holistic, meaningful approach to leadership, where individuals work collaboratively with a leader and their team towards a common vision and goal through sound processes and procedures, resulting in high energy levels and optimal performance (Gialamas, Pelonis, & Medeiros, 2014). This was echoed by research conducted by Mills and Spencer (2005) who indicated that

leaders need to play an active role in promoting decision making with regards to an organisation's values and goals.

This research supported that members of a group tend to have the same goals. Shared ideology for the group accentuates leaders driving innovation in an organisation (Nabil, Abderraouf & Nadira, 2017). We can thus conclude, as per the research presented and the participant responses, that increased happiness at work requires employees to have clear expectations, supportive leaders with a vision and high energy, sound decision making and transparent processes and procedures. We can further deduce that an employee's experience of happiness is influenced by leaders who collaborate with individuals to achieve a clear vision. Cascio (2010) also indicated that in a work environment that is changing, individuals need to understand what is expected of them for them to reach their goals.

Industry knowledge is a sub-theme of achievement of goals where one needs to understand the environment they work in both from a macro and micro level for them to function optimally. This is expanded on hereunder.

#### *5.4.1.4.1 Industry Knowledge*

Yet another essential aspect of understanding one's goals is industry knowledge. To understand what one is required to achieve in terms of one's internal goals, it is also important to understand what the industry challenges are. This is demonstrated in the participant responses below.

P1: *"When you work with people, there is always changes and things that you need to manage. You need to understand what is happening in your industry to lead and stay ahead in the industry, but the people will keep you on your toes."*

P15: *"If there is an understanding of our strategy and what needs to be done, then I am confident they will be able to achieve."*

The vision of an organisation results in clear expectations and sets organisations apart from each other (Pryce-Jones, 2010). This allows individuals to understand what sets their organisations apart from other organisations in similar industries. It furthermore supports that

priorities are in place in organisations. Smith and Brennan (2010) indicated that industry knowledge is critical in organisations to drive performance. Based on this research, we can conclude that industry knowledge is an important factor for the achievement of goals and drive the achievement of critical objectives in an organisation. While this has not been presented in the literature of this study, we can conclude that this is a new factor of happiness at work in organisations. The next sub-theme of achievement of goals is pride which is discussed in the following section.

#### *5.4.1.4.2 Pride*

Pride, a sub-theme of achievement of goals, is defined by Gouthier and Rhein (2011) as an emotion that an individual experiences as a result of a successful event. Furthermore, it could mean that employees have pride in the organisation in which they work. Pride as an emotion is confirmed by research done by Tracy, Shariff and Cheng (2010) who indicated that pride is a psychologically important and evolutionarily adaptive emotion which links to positive emotions. The following are statements linking to the pride of individuals in an organisation.

Once you achieve your goals, a sense of pride is felt by individuals. P9 indicated this concept:

*P9: "Pride is about what you put out, what you deliver as a person, what you deliver as a service manager or leader and what you deliver as a consultant so whatever it is that I am doing I need to do it properly I need to do it with a level of professionalism I need to deliver that kind of I do not think there is room for sloppy work."*

P7 suggested that team dynamics are improved by employing appreciation and gratitude.

*P7: "Take pride in what you are doing as a leader the rest of the group will see that. Take pride in the work that you are giving in the service that you are rendering, even in the group you know when you are proud to go and stand up in front and say you are a part of the team. Recognition is important within the group and for myself."*

P5 also maintained the concept of pride:

P5: *“You must be proud of the work that you do. What drives mine, a successful team with a successful outcome.”*

Additionally being able to carry out a task lends itself to be proud:

P6: *“Being able to carry out a task to your full competence and your capability level with ensuring that full delivery is achieved in the work environment.”*

Furthermore, pride is elaborated on in terms of recognition as below.

P13: *“Recognition in my team would be a type of reward that would be given or shown not necessarily an object. Pride goes hand in hand with trust because there is a bit where people do not want to acknowledge when something is done wrong or presented is not an appropriate way then you get a sense that the person is very proud and they do not want to acknowledge it.”*

Pride is an emotion which is evident in various settings and regulates interpersonal behaviour in organisations (Van Osch, Zeelenberg, Breugelmans & Brandt, 2019). It is an outcome that is experienced when being recognised for various achievements and results in approval, status or social standing of individuals in organisations. This is confirmed by the participant’s responses above in that recognition creates pride in individuals. Bolló, Bóthe, Tóth-Király, and Orosz (2018) confirmed that pride is an emotion which is heightened by the recognition received in organisations. We can thus conclude that pride has a positive link to the achievement of goals which is demonstrated by the leadership of an organisation. Pride is thus a sub-theme of achievement of goals and a sub-theme of leadership.

The next theme that is discussed is climate which impacts on happiness at work and influences an employee experience at work.

#### **5.4.2 Theme 2: Climate**

The second main theme, climate, depicts the narratives of how climate as a factor influences happiness at work.

Whereas culture refers to the environment in which one works, organisational climate is the general feel of the organisation which can potentially influence the behaviour of an organisation or the result of the individuals that make up the organisation and interact with each other as well as the organisational policies, structures and processes (Castro & Martins, 2010). Organisational climate is the events and experiences which would influence the patterns of employees, whereas culture refers to the way these patterns of shared values, common assumptions and beliefs exist (Currie & Watterson, 2010). The following responses refer to the organisational climate in organisations.

Participant P3 and 17 refers to the change in the organisation and the impact it has on the climate in the organisation:

*P3: "I think the way we are where we work right now those are some of the values that we rank. So I would say culture the way the general business is operated."*

*P17: "We have just come out of a change it is fairly new to the team the team is only a year old there are new people and new members to the team. So they are in a phase now of almost starting to feel some stability they are starting to feel that is now becoming a standard operative model or standard operating procedures that they need to follow. As a leader, I also know what is expected where before it was a little more we are still laying the foundation we are still trying to define. So at the moment, I think the team is in a little better space. There is a common understanding what the goal is and getting the team to execute based on that."*

Furthermore, P14 indicates the climate of the individuals in the organisation which is a safe environment where they can talk about concerns openly and P5 indicates that it is important to be in a climate that is fun. P6 indicates the importance of engagement creates climate and P8 and P9 refers to being positive in an organisation. P10 indicates the importance of acknowledgement.

*P14: "I think we have got very open minded people most of them are not afraid to voice out their opinions and it is people that are willing to go the extra mile, helping one another and who are also willing to learn."*

*P5: "You must have fun as well, you have got to allow your team to also have some fun. You should respect each and every one of them"*

*P6:"So definitely the surveys help and constant engagement but also because we our culture is very entrepreneurial you are getting businesses that are very mature and immature so it is allowing them to adapt and be resilient. You have got to constantly engage with them how to do that so it is constant communication, constant interaction, and constant guidance around that because not everyone is equipped for that."*

*P8: "By being positive myself and to always try and see the bigger picture because I believe if you are being positive and getting the energy right the team will follow and take your lead."* Furthermore, this individual indicates, *"They are adapting so what we are doing is to keep the culture of the company's culture so that family-orientated culture, everybody try and be happy at work."*

*P9:"Having the right people being vocal and also influence at the same time and also having to use positives and not ignore the negatives because I think the negatives normally come out as things that we can work on. I think it also knowing the individuals in the team and knowing what their strengths are and having to know pawns."*

*P10: "I think by thanking them more, motivating them, encouraging them. Also I think it is also important is not keep them in their comfort zone give them extra responsibility so it makes them feel important as well."*

P13 refers to the diversity that makes up the culture of the organisation and P4 describes how to treat individuals in an organisation.

*P13: "The current is very diverse, there are a lot of races, religions, point of views and lifestyles. So I think having that there it is a diverse group. The overall motivation and wellness is brought forward to want to work with a team and that you can pick up with the communication skills, how they interact with each and other how they present themselves within the group."*

*P4: "It is understanding how they want to be approached and treating them as individuals that have personal goals as well as company goals they need to achieve."*

The importance of climate in an organisation promotes commitment in an organisation and can influence routine Human Resource processes (Lumley, Coetzee, Tladinyane & Ferreira, 2011). Organisations that support a positive climate result in an environment where employees can thrive, be creative and increase productivity, thereby creating a successful organisation (Castro & Martins, 2010). We can thus deduce that a positive climate enhances happiness at work which is aligned to the research presented in this study. Additionally, the climate is made up of several constructs which are different from other researchers. These factors are recognition, trust, teams and coaching. The first factor of recognition is discussed hereafter.

#### **5.4.2.1 Recognition**

Research by Brick (2012) indicated that recognition is the celebration of an employee's or organisation's success which helps create the groundwork to support internal and external customers. The following descriptors are an indication of what participants experience concerning recognition in the workplace.

Driving recognition creates a positive climate for individuals and P1 particularly raised the subjective interpretation of such acknowledgement:

*P1: "Recognition is quite important to everybody. Everybody needs sometimes a little bit of recognition, but the challenge is sometimes to figure out what recognition is to each individual because that differs."*

Recognition of staff proficiency and capability sustains the empowerment ethos:

*P6: "The leadership style that I would have that they can carry out their duties as well by empowerment by accountability by giving them recognition."*

P6 reaffirms how the culture of recognition is practised organisationally:



This participant elaborated on the impact of recognising individuals, which is an element of open communication and pride in organisations.

P12: *“Having that open communication and publicly recognising someone that ultimately leads to being proud of the individual and proud of the work that they are doing and they being proud of the organisation they work for. Because as much as we want to believe people work for an organisation, they work for someone and that someone is the line manager.”*

The above participant also elaborated on how such pride can be potentially challenging. Nonetheless, internal incentive and appreciation by an individual are inherent factors indicated by P16:

P16: *“There is a certain amount of intrinsic motivation required. I can motivate you through money, but intrinsic motivation is critical.”*

This participant also emphasised that positive energy is central to motivate employees:

P16: *“I motivate my team through positive energy.”*

Furthermore, this individual indicated that non-monetary rewards could give recognition:

P10: *“Trust is very important, recognition is just as important, and people would always want money, you cannot always be giving money just a thank you in a meeting to individuals who has really outperformed.”*

Finally, those leaders that demonstrate their commitment inspire recognition:

P18: *“Having leaders that follow through with what they say they are going to do and obviously it starts with identifying what needs improvement, where do the gaps lie, what are our people saying, what are our team saying, what do they want more of. Taking all of that feedback and doing something with it, fulfilling milestones. Being able to say you have said that and I have listened and now we have done something. Take the quick wins and show people that this is what you have said and I am able to help you I am able to meet you halfway that instils pride, recognition and trust within any team.”*

The culture of adequate display of recognition impacts the level of trust that commences with the self, which invariably has repercussions on the organisation:

Abualrub and Al-Zaru (2008) researched the importance of recognition of staff which is emphasised in a study that was focused on nurses and the importance of the recognition of achievements. It assists by lowering stress and retention of staff. Furthermore, recognition is supported by research done by Brown-Crowder (2017), who indicated that despite generational differences, recognition for work done is important for all employees of all ages. This indicated that despite age, recognition of staff is important as it keeps individuals motivated.

The importance of positive job characteristics which can be supported by recognition is linked to key factors within an organisation including training, development, career development, positive job characteristics and supervisor support (Van Dyk, Coetzee & Takawira, 2013). These are key retention factors that can be considered in support of positive organisational culture and in turn, retention of staff. A further requirement in retention as per the participant's responses is feedback, in other words, rewards are important for recognising staff as well as providing adequate training and development. This is discussed in the following section.

This links to research by South African researchers Du Plessis and Barkhuizen (2012) who indicated the importance of HR practitioners in organisations as they influence the change process to drive the success of the workplace into the future. This embodies various changes within the South African context. Opportunities for growth and advancement for employees remained high on the dimensions that contributed to happiness at work for individuals as this brought about a sense of progress and resulted in happiness at work. This study further alluded to individuals indicating that money is not the only driver of happiness, praise and positive relationships with colleagues and managers contributing to overall happiness in the workplace.

Lastly, research by Chanrasekar (2011) summated that the culture in which individuals work is important in motivating employees as monetary remuneration is not sufficient. An organisation requires ongoing feedback, as described above, with direction through goal setting and ensuring employees are aware of what is expected of them. It is important to ensure that there is sufficient human interaction which in turn enhances individualised support and encouragement to all employees.

These results indicate that recognition includes non-monetary recognition. Recognising employees in an organisation is critical as it increases morale and in turn, creates a positive climate in organisations. This is supported by literature findings in that recognition is a key factor of happiness at work. Recognition can also be driven by monetary mechanisms which are a sub-theme of recognition and discussed hereunder.

#### *5.4.2.1.1 Monetary Recognition*

Monetary recognition of staff is essential in organisations as indicated by the following participants:

Recognition can be done via incentive rewards:

P6: *“Recognition can be in many ways by informal rewards. Your bonus is your incentive, your informal rewards is your day to day interactions that you have with them. The informal team buildings, the informal meetings the informal vouchers.”*

Another associated factor of recognition is monetary, which is related to salary:

P3: *“Motivation in my team is basically remuneration, salary-wise, ratings. What I found out recently is a team is quite driven by getting praised by higher levels or people outside our team. So making sure that they are recognised for whatever effort they put even if it's just an email to say, well-done team, well done this person. Recognition in money wise as well as in praise wise.”*

P4 further supports that money recognises individuals positive work performance:

P4: *“There is several different ways. I think the key to understanding this is what motivate individuals, so as a team, we might not have the same things that motivate us. An example the two individuals appreciate time off from work, where I know for the fact the one is focused on monetary value. So if we motivate her with reward in terms of monetary she is much happier whereas the other two it is a combination, it is about recognition amongst the team members.”*

*So different things motivate each staff member, and I think it is when you understand that when you need to play up those levels to keep up those levels.”*

P10 further supports the importance of money:

*P10: “Obviously, in a team, I think money is very important. I do not think I go with motivating them with money only, but you can always give them positive feedback, encourage them. Also get involved in assisting them, getting down and getting dirty with them in order to reach your ultimate.”*

Monetary rewards, as a type of recognition, differs amongst organisations and teams and contributes to positive, motivated individuals (Ali & Ahmed, 2009). Furthermore, this researcher stated that there is a positive correlation between rewards and recognition with work satisfaction and motivation. If a higher focus is placed on rewards and recognition, it could have a positive impact on motivation and in turn, high levels of job performance. Money as a contributor to happiness is positively correlated to the literature of this study, and we can, therefore, conclude it is a positive re-enforcer of recognition and a factor of happiness at work in a South African organisation.

Trust as a concept that influences the climate of an organisation, is a sub-theme and is discussed next.

#### **5.4.2.2 Trust**

Trust is created when an expectation is created by an individual and where an action is taken to develop and reinforce an expected outcome (Kramer, 2010). The following are participant’s views of trust in an organisation:

*P1: “Trust is a difficult thing because you need to prove yourself before somebody trusts you. So if people do not believe in me, then they will not trust me, so I have to sort of lead by example in order for them to trust me.”*

P14 and P4 reaffirm what P1 observed:

P14:” *Trust is something that is earned it is not expected of people you need to earn that trust.*”

P4 *“We all understand very clearly that without trusting each other we will not be able to work efficiently as a team and everybody understands that everybody takes time and pride in what they do. So if I can trust that you are committed in what you do it fits into the organisation's culture.”*

The importance of trust and recognition further resonates:

P3: *“Trust and recognition that my team is looking for. Whether it is just being an email or a well done, thank you or an award that they get at the end of the year, they look for those kinds of things. I think it goes a long way in building their trust in you if you show them that they are recognised. Trust is also something that cannot happen over a quick period. Every time they have an issue how I go about solving it, I see that they trust in me more now than when I started with this team. So trust is something that is built over time, recognition is something that can happen quickly, but there is different forms of recognition in terms of financial rewards and recognition in terms of recognising achievements.”*

Trust is an important concept that is related to recognition, as well:

P10: *“Trust is very important, recognition is just as important, and people would always want money, you cannot always be giving money just a thank you in a meeting to individuals who has really outperformed.*

Furthermore, trust is an important concept to individuals within organisations as it directly relates to organisational integrity:

P7: *“Trust is important to me. I need to trust that I believe in what the organisation stands for. I need to trust myself that I believe in it, and then I need my team to trust myself that I trust the organisation. The recognition in the group is quite important if you are constantly giving negative feedback, I am sure the team will also become negative.”*

Verbal and non-verbal communication must be consistent when communicating with individuals and solidifies the concept of trust in organisations by leaders (Baker, Mathis, Doe & Javadian, 2016; Bellou & Gkorezis, 2016). Trust, too, is an essential leadership trait earned by leaders that are authentic and straightforward as communication needs to be done in a conducive manner (Groysberg & Slind, 2012). Trust is an essential concept in organisations which is influenced by the way it is executed through leaders and the correct communication mediums. It is a concept built within organisations and promotes a focus on outcomes which is evident in the research below.

Trust, a social and psychological resource that allows one to focus on one's job, is built with one's colleagues and senior leaders (Jones, 2010). As trust is built with both colleagues and leaders, it is important to understand the impact of teams in organisations. This was also highlighted in feedback from individuals as per the next section of this discussion.

Through open communication, managers can promote trust in the workplace, which creates good working relationships and fosters a culture of safety in the workplace (Skeepers & Mbohwa, 2015). Trust is earned and an important leadership trait in successful organisations as is reflected in participant responses and literature reviews. We can thus deduce that trust, which is a sub-theme of climate, is an important factor of happiness at work. The next sub-theme of climate is teams and is discussed hereafter.

#### **5.4.2.3 Teams**

A team is a group of individuals working toward a common purpose (Katzenbach & Smith, 2015). The following are descriptors of what participants indicate with regards to teams:

Enthusiasm within Teams facilitates a positive climate, as indicated by participants 2 and 9:

*P2: "Teamwork is very important because everyone can pull through to one goal and obviously that is a growing market trend."*

*P9: "No team is an island, so you need one another you cannot focus on your own; you need the buy-in of one another to be able to get a job done."*

P10, in particular, elaborates on how to extend such an ethos:

P10: *“It’s also important not keep them in their comfort zone give them extra responsibility, so it makes them feel important as well.”*

The systemic, collaborative team ethos and meeting targets are sustained through a culture that liberates respect. This is employed by participants 1, 21 and 6:

P1: *“A family orientated culture so people care for each other naturally and therefore they would go the extra mile for each other naturally. The team culture comes naturally, they know they cannot do anything on their own.”*

P21: *“We are a team who respects each other’s space. The team understands that there is team members that are knowledgeable that has been around for a long time. The team also respects it when we have got people that have a different view, the culture is very much that everyone respects that we come from different backgrounds and everybody has a contribution to make, so I drive that quite a lot.”*

P6: *“Knowing that they are adding to the companies values that they are making a difference that this contributing to the bigger profitability, knowing that they personally make a difference.”*

This participant further indicated that:

*“If the team is accountable and responsible, it is empowering them. Empower them based on their competence and their capability, which allows them to bring their own ideas and suggestions into the environment.”*

This participant indicates that leaders can motivate employees which enhances trust:

P6: *“In terms of other motivation it is just recognising them as an individual and growing and motivating them within the team so identifying where the gaps are and also how do we work with those gaps to make them better to contribute to the team. Leaders can also motivate through team buildings where strategy is communicated. “The other thing is that we have team buildings where I would then highlight the strategy again and see because it changes in terms*

*of the nature of the business that we have so you have got to constantly adapt which is constantly checking in with them and making sure that the strategy is aligned to where they are, driving specific goals, and recognising the individuals potential.”*

The distinctive direction for their teams in understanding the workload, their employees and specific processes were also noted:

Embedded attainment of goals and teamwork are critical components, as noted by participants P5 and P16:

P5: *“The team individually should be motivated to realise that teamwork is the answer to effective work procedures and effective work ethics. Once they realise that teamwork is important, you have to let them realise that each one has to contribute towards teamwork and nobody can sit on the sideline. If you want to increase your productivity and reach your end goals, you can only do that as a motivated team, working together as a team.”*

P16: *“Motivated teams provide discretionary effort. So motivation is a direct result of discretionary effort being delivered by individuals which just means that you achieve goals as a team.”*

A culture that stimulates change and exploration is respected and maintained by participants P19 and P13:

P19: *“Feel constantly challenged, I find, I will find something that really interests me in the organisation, I will tackle it, I will do whatever I can to implement it if it is a project, once it is finished I need something else, so I need to just keep myself challenged.”*

P13: *“I do a lot of research in the space that I am in. I am always looking for new improvements, trying to create the positive environment and culture with colleagues.”*

Teamwork is a criterion required for improvement of performance in an organisation which is driven by team building and conflict handling and affected by self-awareness (Kabir & Dey, 2015). Radhika and Kalyani (2017) suggested that self-awareness is the most fundamental attribute of emotional intelligence and helps one understand another’s emotions. To understand



another's emotions, it is important to understand one's own thereby assisting one to understand a situation before reacting to it. Understanding an organisational climate as well as the leadership of an organisation is important in understanding the role of teams in an organisation. Research by Bibi, Zafar and Kausar (2018) provided evidence that there is a strong relationship between organisational climate, leadership practices as well as team performance and significant in understanding the role of teams in organisations. We can thus conclude that teamwork is influenced by climate as well as leadership governance in an organisation. It is important to have clear expectations from a leader, as described earlier in this research. This is supported by South African researchers Castro and Martins (2010) who indicated that it is also important for a leader to know their organisations and what is required from individuals to create a supportive environment promoting productivity and creativity. In having clear work expectations and understanding the importance of teamwork, work inefficiencies are prevented (Mousa, 2017). The improvement of teamwork was proposed to transform the impact of the occurrences of adverse outcomes. The functioning of the team would be improved through teamwork, collaboration and communication, which are key traits of a positive culture. As per previous research, we can conclude that teamwork is a factor that influences happiness at work and contributes to an experience of happiness at work. It is thus evident that teamwork, in collaboration with supportive leaders that are committed to coaching and supporting individuals support a positive climate, hence the importance of understanding coaching in organisations.

#### **5.4.2.4 Coaching**

A coach can be described as a partner that supports someone in reaching their goals. This can be a disciplinarian who changes individuals unwanted actions (Flaherty, 2010). A coach provides long-term excellence performance, self-correction as well as self-generation. The following are indicators of what coaching means to participants:

Coaching as per this participant is critical in development:

P4: *“The environment that I am in right now you need to have a passion for what you do, they are constantly exploring new directions and options of learning and teaching people in organisations and general environment, and for me, it is more about your passion. Firstly you need to have that, and that is what keeps me interested in what I am doing is that I am interested*

*in learning and exploring all-new opportunities and avenues of teaching people in the organisation.”*

Such a conducive and facilitative environment further generated opportunities within teams:

*P16: ” Start of co-creating where you want to go which has helped me a lot as a leader in the team and to guide what we are doing and to create that collaborative energy among team members. Managing team dynamics and doing that actively as a leader, creating opportunities for team members to collaborate on projects, creating situations where they are given problems in meetings and being able to solve them because that creates that collective momentum. Feedback on the team’s performance helps people feel they working towards a common goal.”*

The following participant further reinforces a concomitant benefit of Coaching within the team:

*P21: “I have got a team that is mixed, some seasoned people and some new people so there is a different approach with the different ones and they are all over the country. We do not do a lot of face to face one on one time. It is specialised to the person, coaching them in terms of their work. The more seasoned people I give them a lot more responsibility and accountability because they know they can do more. ”*

Research conducted in the teaching field indicated that capacity building through coaching and mentoring provides support to teachers which equips them with the required skills to deal with students. Capacity building through coaching and mentoring, coupled with a positive school climate of empathy, encouragement and an open-door policy are characteristics that support the ability to deal with challenging student behaviours in the classroom (Ornelas, 2017). South African research supports the concept of coaching. It has been researched that both informal and formal coaching is important and that people interact and are led with a coaching lens (Fox, 2017). Coaching supports teams by providing direction for individuals to achieve goals which are an important concept.

The climate of an organisation determines the way hiring, compensation and development of individuals take place. It establishes and underpins factors such as structure, membership criteria, performance management, communication patterns, expectations and priorities. Other factors that are influenced by climate are decision-making practices and teaming practices.

Climate is not formed by individual people's values, but by what it takes for people to fully deliver on customer requirement. Leadership drives direction based on customer requirements and understanding of industry requirements. A leader creates an enterprise to fully deliver on promises to customers through the creation of unity and empowerment of people (Schneider, 2017). The ability to lead change, leadership, employee's job performance and business acumen are key competencies required by a leader (Zaqout, 2016). It is important to have respect in organisations, a sub-theme of leadership in an organisation which is described hereafter.

#### **5.4.2.5 Respect**

Respect is described as a level of courage, respect and teamwork, which has been discussed by participants in this research (Collins, 2017).

Respect within teams is demonstrated through listening as indicated by P3.

P3: *"I also give them that respect to say listen you are away from where I am and I do not see you every day so I expect you to do your day to day things and manage your day that way."*

Furthermore, respect is elicited through how team members behave as per P4 and P5 and how managers are treated as per P9.

P4: *"We are respectful and we challenge each other as well and we know when to challenge and when to speak up as well."*

P5: *"Secondly I believe that you should respect each and every one of them and they have got to respect you."*

P9: *"I do not think it is important for them to like me I think it is important for them to respect that in the capacity of the position that I am in that I am able and I am competent to be able to make decisions to better or to better me or for the business. I think it is important for them to know and it is not for them to respect me as a person but it is being able to respect the fact that I have the ability to manage them and they respect the decisions that I make because of the best interests of the company and the people if you do not live by that then I think it is a recipe for disaster."*

P7 and P 11 indicates the importance of have colleagues respect:

P7: *“Something worthwhile, positive emotions, trust vision of leaders, interest in job and colleagues respect.”*

P11: *“They must be willing to respect one another as a team because I have seen and been in teams where people do not respect each other and when that happens then they cannot work together, there is always squabbles there is always issues, work gets behind. So I think respecting one another is very important and the other thing I think is that they must be able to go the extra mile for each other and that is what I always tell them when you are done with your work do not sit and say you are finished ask the next person what can I help you with so it is that willingness to go the extra mile for one another.”*

A facilitative environment asserts respect as per participant 13, 5 and 19 is essential:

P13: *“Bearing in mind that if someone speaks to me with respect they have my best interest at hand.”*

The participant elaborates:

P13: *“How I carry myself and how I present myself to my colleagues. I speak with respect I assume that I would be getting respect back. When you are spoken to with respect you are more approachable and people can confide in you.”*

This participant extrapolates further by an illustration:

P5: *“If you work hard you must have fun as well. In other words, you have got to allow your team to also have some fun, not fun in the sense of functions but good sense of humour. Secondly, I believe that you should respect each and every one of them and they have got to respect you and you have to ensure that happens. Then you have got to be strict but very fair at all times.”*

P19: *“I am happy to engage in any conversation if someone disagrees with me but at the same time you do not need to be disrespectful, you need to respect my view and I need to respect yours.”*

As per the research conducted in FMCG groups by Eustace and Martins (2014), the importance of leadership and organisational climate is emphasised as leaders have an influence on the climate of an organisation. South African organisations are faced with a number of challenges which include cultural diversity, performance management and black economic empowerment. These influence the respect leaders receive from their teams.

### **5.5 Summary of Chapter**

This chapter describes the findings as per the data collected for this study. Key themes identified in contributing to happiness at work are leadership, climate and respect. All supporting narratives have been indicated in this chapter.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusions, Recommendations and Limitations**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, conclusions are drawn from the study. Findings from the literature, as well as empirical results from the study, are included. This chapter sheds light on the limitations of the study and makes recommendations to Corporate South African organisations for future research.

To understand the factors that contribute to happiness at work as well as the employee experience of happiness, this research was divided into two parts, namely, the literature review and the empirical section. The former discussed scientific knowledge on the subject while the latter focussed on the empirical study using qualitative measures to reach the research objectives.

As summarised in earlier chapters, happiness at work is a process that is influenced by various conditions in the workplace that can be related to a task, job and the organisation in which an individual works (Streimikiene & Grundey, 2009). Happiness can be described by two concepts, namely, hedonia and eudaimonia, which focus on what individuals experience with positive emotions and life satisfaction as well as psychological well-being (Veenhoven, 2010). An individual's attitude toward life influences happiness, hence the importance of understanding the concept of happiness in organisations as individuals are continually interacting with each other as well as the environment (Fisher, 2010; Grundey, 2009).

This study involved participants from financial, retail and medical organisations in South Africa. A purposive sampling technique was used where participants were selected from the financial, retail and medical organisations in South Africa. Senior managers were selected between the of 31 – 60 age group. The participants were from various roles in the organisations in the areas of Human Resource Management, Functional learning and development, Operational Management, International Banking, as well as leadership development. These positions covered critical areas within a business environment to ensure teams are functioning, and there is an optimal business operation. Each organisation was approached, and permission was granted to research their respective organisations amongst these teams. Participants were selected based on their experience as well as seniority and were selected voluntarily to

participate in the research. As this research required specific leadership criteria, this was applied in the sampling technique used.

## **6.2 Conclusions**

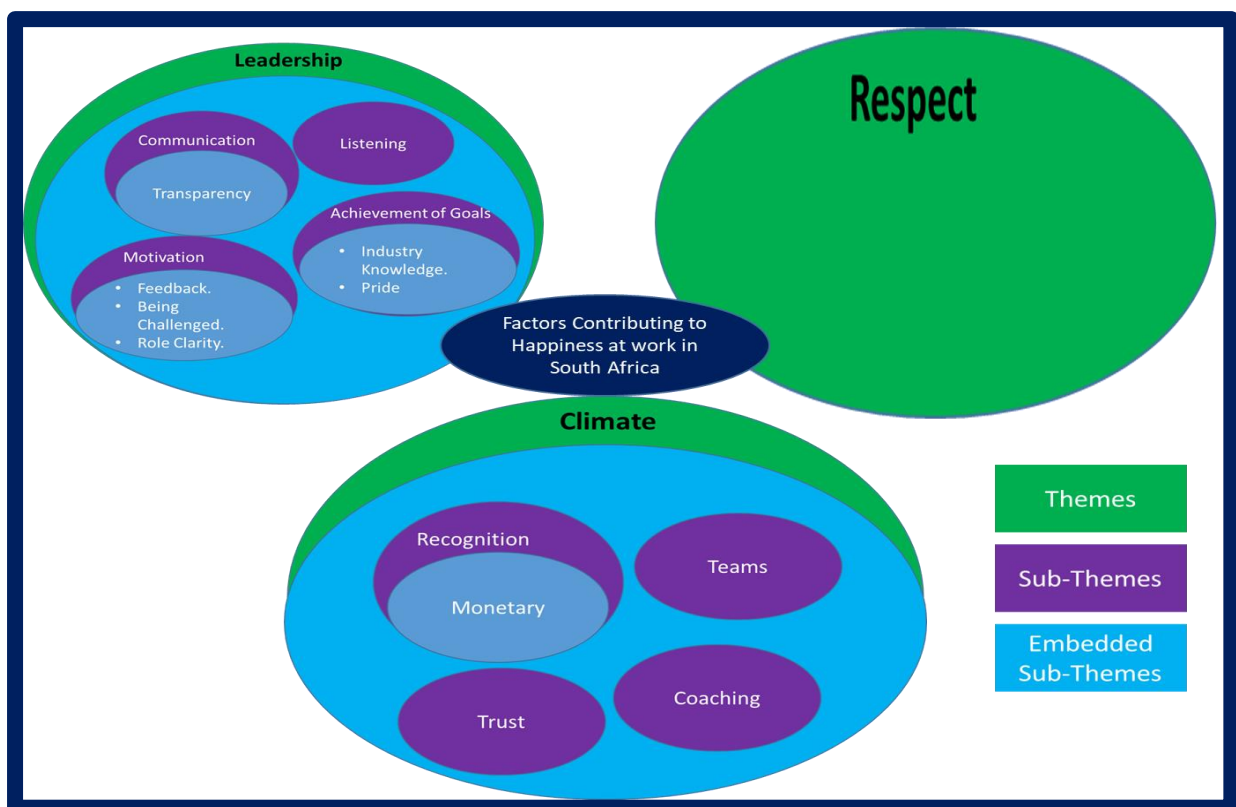
This research aimed to identify factors that contributed to the happiness in South African organisations. It contributed to the body of research in that it was able to present a model to South African organisations that would increase employee happiness. This study identified factors, sub-factors and embedded themes that contributed to happiness in selected corporate South African organisation. These are beneficial as they allow leaders to direct their behaviour in ensuring happiness is maintained in organisations which in turn results in a productive worker.

The research process used in this study was a qualitative approach as identified by Breakwell, Smith and Wright (2012) that focused on individual experiences. It followed a systematic collection, organisation and interpretation of textual material, which was derived through face-to-face interviews with participants from three corporate organisations (Malterud, 2001). As per Lim, et al. (2017), this research approach explored phenomena and experiences that were not captured through a quantitative process, but rather through an objective process. The use of a qualitative approach allowed the researcher to explore experiences as well as phenomena not easily captured through a quantitative or more objective process.

The key factors identified as contributing factors to happiness at work in South Africa were Leadership, Climate and Respect. These were further divided into sub-themes which have embedded themes that have been discussed in this study. Leadership as a first theme had sub-themes, namely, communication, motivation, listening and achievement of goals. Leadership bolsters communication, goals, industry knowledge, transparency, coaching, listening, and commitment within a work environment (Iwu, 2013). Iwu (2013) indicated that leadership is instrumental in contributing to job satisfaction and meaningful work experiences, which positively impacts the work environment. Job satisfaction is linked to positive emotional states, resulting from one's job experience. The next central theme that contributed to happiness at work was the climate. While limited research exists where climate is a contributory factor to happiness at work in South Africa, we can conclude as per this research that climate contributes to happiness at work.

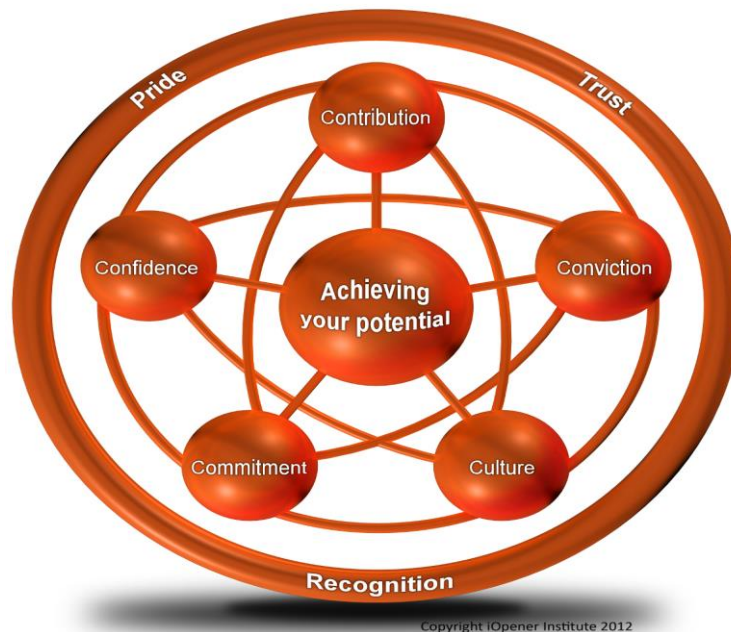
Respect is the final theme that has been identified as a factor that contributes to happiness at work in South Africa. Respect is the level of admiration that one may have for an object or person as a result of its qualities, ability or achievement (Colins, 2017). Respect as a factor contributing to happiness at work has been researched by Eustace and Martins (2014), who confirmed that leadership respect is critical and an element of happiness at work. This research confirms this concept which concludes that respect is a factor of happiness at work.

The diagram below (Figure 6) is a summary of the factors that contribute to happiness at work in South Africa. The main themes highlighted were leadership, respect and climate. Each factor had sub-themes as well as embedded themes identified in the sub-themes. This is a new model that has been researched and applied to South African employees and replaces the Pryce model which is being used Jones (2010) (Figure 7)



**Figure 6. Factors Contributing to Happiness at Work in South Africa**





**Figure 7. Factors Contributing to Happiness at Work as per Jones, (2010)**

### **6.3 Synopsis of the study**

*Chapter one* provides an introduction and research background of the study. A business and research case was built on why there is a need to identify factors that contribute to happiness in South Africa. Research done by Wesarat, Sharif and Majid (2014) indicated that happiness in a workplace could improve productivity and long-term happiness, hence the importance of understanding happiness in the workplace. Research by Rothman and Rothman (2010), Fisher (2010) and Streimikiene & Grundey (2009) supported this research which indicated the impact of understanding happiness factors and the positive impact it has on productivity and retention. An international model was developed by Jones (2010) and used in South African organisations. This model measured key contributors to happiness which are reflected internationally, however, the significance of this study was to determine factors that were exclusive to South Africa. This is due to the limited research done in South Africa that focusses on critical factors that contribute to happiness in the workplace.

*Chapter two* provides a review of the past and present literature that is available in the areas of positive psychology and happiness. The conceptualisation of positive psychology was given to

contextualise the research in this paradigm. Seligman was the founder of positive psychology and research done by Seligman (2011) indicated that the study of positive psychology involved understanding perspectives on what makes life worth living, focussing on what is good and functional contrary to the tradition of psychology that focussed on pathology. Thereafter, happiness was defined, and the importance of understanding happiness in a work context was discussed. Happiness was described using the concepts of eudaimonia and hedonia. Eudaimonia was described by Henderson and Knight (2012) as an ongoing process of wellbeing and happiness and not end states.

Furthermore, Delle Fave, Massimini and Bassi (2011) indicated that the eudaimonic approach suggested that living a life of virtue and actualising one's inherent potential was the way to well-being. Additionally, Delle Fave, Massimini and Bassi (2011) indicated that hedonia suggested that maximising one's pleasurable moments was the pathway to happiness. The importance of happiness in an organisation was discussed by Taris and Schreurs (2009), who supported the concept that a worker who was happy and productive had a direct correlation to organisational performance. Lastly, this chapter focuses on broaden-and-build, a theoretical framework which was summarised by Fredrickson (2013) who indicated that the broaden-and-build theory described emotions that were required by individuals to broaden their awareness and build resources.

*Chapter three* discusses the factors that contribute to happiness at work. International research focussed on factors as researched by Fisher (2010) and Chairpravit and Santidhirakul (2011) who indicated that a positive work environment, relationships, quality of work-life, culture, communication as well as leadership impacted happiness at work. South African researchers, Field and Buitendach (2011) and Swart and Rothman (2012) indicated that factors such as work engagement, organisational commitment, communication, having a sense of purpose and direction in an organisation contribute to happiness at work. Furthermore, Verhofstadt, Bleys and Ootegem (2014) and Mahadea and Ramroop (2015) indicated that work engagement, organisational commitment and highly competitive environment contributed to happiness at work.

*In Chapter four*, a description of the qualitative approach was given, as well as the data collection process and analysis. A qualitative approach was used in this study which was guided by a purposive sampling method. Furthermore, a structured interview was used to gather data

that provided the researcher with data to analyse. A thematic analysis was applied for the data analysis.

*Chapter 5* presents and discusses the results of the qualitative study. The chapter extracted factors that contributed to happiness at work in South African organisations. Three key factors that contributed to happiness at work were extracted, namely, leadership, climate and respect. The sub-theme identified in leadership was communication which also had an embedded theme, namely, transparency. A second sub-theme in leadership was motivation with embedded themes of feedback, being challenged and role clarity. Achievement of goals was the next sub-theme with industry knowledge and pride as embedded themes. Listening was the last sub-theme identified in leadership. Climate was the next central theme identified in this research which had four sub-themes, namely, recognition, teams, trust and coaching. Monetary was an embedded theme in recognition. Respect was the last central theme identified.

#### **6.4 Limitations**

The following must be considered to place these results in context:

- The first limitation was the sample size that was used, which could have influenced the results. Malterud (2001) suggested that a sample size must be evaluated continuously in a research process to ensure the adequacy of the sample is sufficient for the results required.
- The second limitation was that the sample was limited to the corporate sector within South Africa, and cannot be a generalisation of the entire South African population.
- As a result of the study using a qualitative approach, a smaller sample was used than would have been with a quantitative research approach.
- The use of purposive sampling has resulted in a specific leadership group that was tested in determining the factors that contributed to happiness at work. The researcher may be subject to bias when selecting participants. This is supported by research done by Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) who indicated that purposive sampling could result in a researcher being unable to draw differences in the selection of participants and is limited when the variables in the study are qualitative.

## **6.5 Recommendations**

Happiness is an essential concept for organisations in South Africa to understand. Despite understanding that individuals may differ in their personalities, it is necessary to understand the factors that contribute to their happiness in a work context and to create a conducive environment to happiness to support employees in their development which in turn produces optimal productivity and turnover in their organisations.

While monetary recognition is important in South African organisations, it is imperative that leaders need to be focussed and trained in crucial attributes such as communication, motivation, listening and achievement of goals. Leaders in South Africa are required to adopt a servant leadership approach which includes critical characteristics of accountability, driving motivation, listening and helping individuals achieve their goals (Kgatle, 2018).

Furthermore, organisations should ensure that leaders understand what employees expect from them during the recruitment phase and adopt this in an Individual Development Plan to support growth and achievement in employees. This ensures goal achievement on a personal and organisational level (Geston, 2009). Furthermore, it ensures that there are no hidden agendas between leaders and their employees (Farrel, 2016).

Key communication channels should be investigated in each organisation to determine its success in driving transparency and keeping employees updated. Communication, as described by Baker, Mathis, Doe and Javadian (2016), is imperative as it encourages dialogue between individuals and ensures that employees and leaders are continually engaging.

Organisations need to ensure employees are kept motivated by using key motivation strategies, including monetary and non-monetary initiatives. This can be done through various team-building activities, or by ensuring individuals are provided with feedback, understand their roles and are constantly being challenged in their work. Chandrasekar (2011) and Visscher (2013), indicated that feedback was a medium that allowed one to show the success of one's achievement. Additionally, it provided individuals with information about the task that was undertaken. Role clarity as researched by Lampointe, Vandenberghe and Boudrias (2014) was a process by which individuals were socialised into a role or function through the precise direction of the tasks that they are required to do.

Leaders need to ensure that employees function in an optimal climate where recognition is maintained, and trust is encouraged. Furthermore, teams need to be coached and directed to function optimally.

Leaders also need to ensure that respect is maintained in an organisation. Based on the happiness model that is suggested by this research, through the use of a larger sample, a questionnaire can be developed to suit South African cultural norms and diversities to test and improve the happiness factor in organisations.

## **6.6 Final Conclusions**

In this final chapter, the integrated results of the research were presented, and recommendations were made, which was specific to the research objectives of the study. Furthermore, the limitations of the study were presented. The research results indicated that happiness at work is an important concept. Moreover, South Africans have specific factors that contribute to employee happiness at work which would need to be considered in understanding individuals as well as teams at work. The specific factors that contribute to happiness at work are leadership, climate and respect, which have further sub-themes and embedded sub-themes which have been discussed.

## **6.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided an overall conclusion of the thesis. It provided a summary of each chapter and a conclusion to the research findings. The chapter also included the limitations that were encountered by the researcher and recommendations to the organisations on how to improve the happiness of employees.

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## Appendices

## Appendix 1: Research Project Proposal

Sudeshnee Ramiah (PhD Psychology)

### RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL



SCHOOL OF APPLIED HUMAN SCIENCES

### ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPLICATION FORM

(HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES)

#### **SECTION 1: PERSONAL DETAILS**

- |     |  |                                  |
|-----|--|----------------------------------|
| 1.1 | Full Name & Surname of Applicant:                      | Sudeshnee Ramiah                 |
| 1.2 | Title (Ms/ Mr/ Mrs/ Dr/ Professor etc)                 | Miss                             |
| 1.3 | Applicants gender                                      | Female                           |
| 1.4 | Applicants Race (African/:Coloured/Indian/White/Other) | Indian                           |
| 1.5 | <b>Student Number</b> (where applicable)               |                                  |
| 1.6 | School   | School of Applied Human Sciences |
| 1.7 | Faculty  | Psychology                       |
| 1.8 | Campus   |                                  |
| 1.9 | Existing Qualifications                                | MCom (Human Resource Management) |

1.10 Proposed Qualification for Project PhD (Industrial Psychology)

**2. Contact Details**

Tel. No.

Cell. No. 0833816463

e-mail [sudeshnee10@gmail.com](mailto:sudeshnee10@gmail.com)

Postal address 159 13th Avenue

Laudium

Gauteng

*We are satisfied with the academic merit and viability of the research project:*

**1. Supervisor:**

*Name:.....Signature:.....Date:.....*

**2. Academic Coordinator:**

*Name:.....Signature:.....Date:.....*

**3. Academic Leader (Discipline):**

*Name:.....Signature:.....Date:.....*

**4. Other Reviewers:**

*Name:.....Signature:.....Date:.....*

**5. Academic Leader (Researcher Post Graduate Studies):**

*Name:.....Signature:.....Date:...*



### 3. SUPERVISOR/ PROJECT LEADER DETAILS

NAME	TELEPHONE NO.	EMAIL	DEPARTMENT / INSTITUTION	QUALIFICATIONS
Prof. J. H Buitendach	031-260-2022	<a href="mailto:Buitendach@ukzn.a.c.za">Buitendach@ukzn.a c.za</a>	Psychology	PhD.

## SECTION 2: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 3. Project title:

Understanding happiness at work within South Africa.

#### 3.1 Background

According to Luthans (2002), the study of Positive Organisational Behaviour (POB) is related to the study and application of positively orientated human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance management. This Positive Organisational Behaviour incorporates concepts from the domains of attitudes, personality, motivation and leadership. Luthans (2002).

The performance aspect of Positive Organisational Behaviour differentiates this concept from literature with regards to positive psychology. The impact of performance is an indication of an endpoint to the wide definition of Positive Organisational Behaviour. Luthans & Avolio (2009)

Research done by Sachau (2007) indicates that positive psychology is the study of positive human attributes which includes well-being, optimism, forgiveness, self-esteem, fascination, creativity, resilience, savouring, wisdom and spirituality. This research further emphasised the importance of positive psychology for human resource professionals. It was indicated that positive psychologists are consistent with the goals of most human resource development professionals. Both professions are interested in enhancing skills, increasing interest, elevating satisfaction, encouraging ethical behaviour, improving performance and fostering creativity. (Sachau, 2007).

As indicated by DeNeve & Cooper (1998), psychological well-being is a measure of pleasantness which is based on individual feelings and is widely conceptualised in terms of the overall effectiveness of an individual's psychological and social functioning. Situational factors need to be examined in order to understand the momentary, short-term experience of subject well-being such as daily events, goal strivings and resources. (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998).

As John Lennon famously said: "Life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans. This links to positive psychology which indicates that good organisational results occur when you are busy making your organisation a good place to be. It is important that leaders live the values that an organisation preaches. Positivity is not a brand of positive thinking, nor is it about pretending bad things don't happen or that people don't feel down. Instead, it makes reference to the balance of positive emotions to negative ones. This tends to affect both individuals as well as organisation well-being. Lewis (2011).

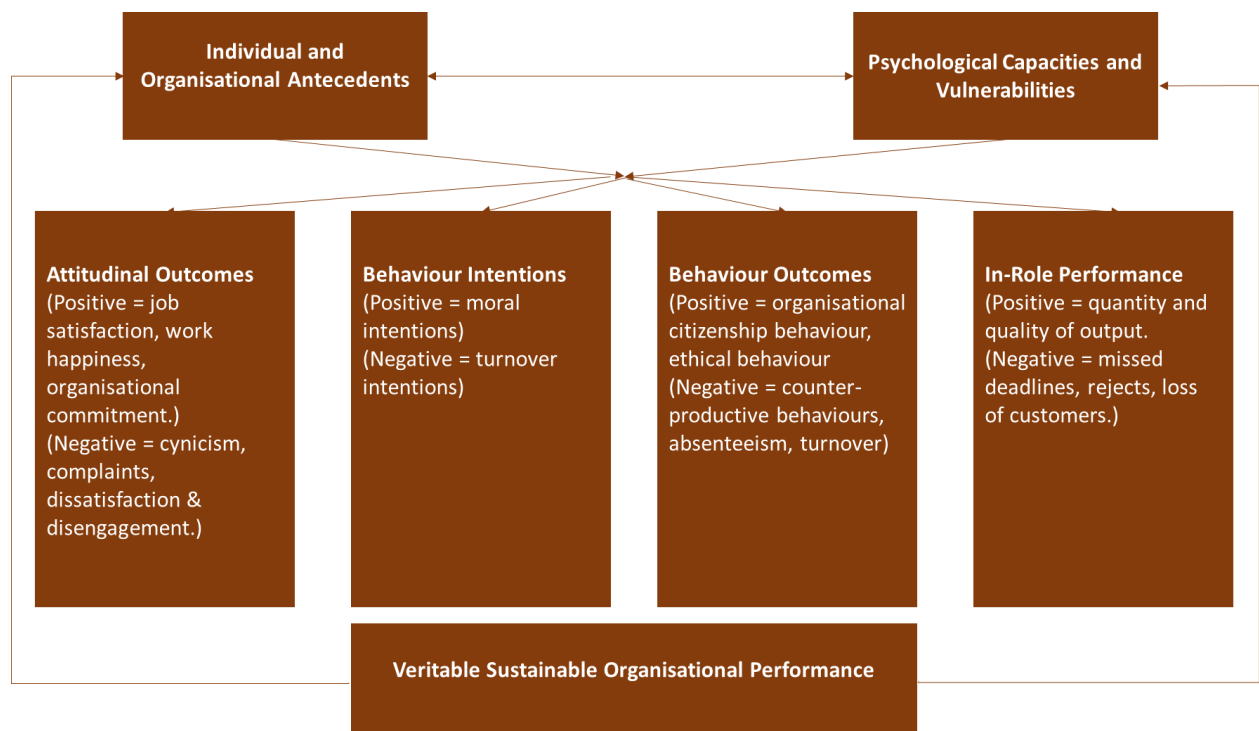
### **Happiness at work**

Diener indicated in 2000 that happiness is of great importance to most people, it has been found to be a value that individuals strive to achieve in most societies. Diener (2000). Being happy is important to the human experience and most people are mildly happy much of the time. Diener & Diener (1996). Happiness is caused by the environment, personal contributors as well as situational factors. Happiness at work is an umbrella concept that includes a large number of constructs ranging from transient moods and emotions to relatively stable attitudes and highly stable individual dispositions. Happiness is influenced by both short-lived events and chronic conditions in the task, job and organisation. Fisher (2010).

Research done by Ryan and Deci in 2000 indicates that humans will be motivated and display well-being in organisations to the extent that they experience psychological need satisfaction within those organisations. This theory has however not been tested cross-culturally. Ryan & Deci (2000).

For the purpose of this research, we will view happiness as an attitudinal outcome which will result in behaviour.

The diagram below gives us an indication that happiness can be described as an attitudinal outcome.



**Figure 1. Youssef C & Lutherans F (2010)**

This research is being done across cultures with the understanding that this varies across cultures. The current gap is that not a lot of studies have investigated the variation across cultures. Based on data we will also design interventions to support happiness at work.

**Approaches to happiness (Eudamonic, Hedonistic & Mixed)**

The two approaches to happiness which are eudaimonia and hedonia will be used in this study. Aristotle’s view of happiness which is called eudaimonia indicated that one should live to their fullest potential with some internal virtue. Happiness is seen through the right action by an individual. Kashan et.al (2008).

The predominant view amongst hedonic psychologists is that well-being consists of subjective happiness and concerns the experience of pleasure versus displeasure broadly construed to include all judgements about the good/bad element of life. Happiness is thus reducible to physical hedonism, for it can be derived from the attainment of goals or valued outcomes in varied realms. (Diener, et al, 1999). According to Waterman (2008), hedonia is a subjective experience of pleasure defined by the philosopher Kraut (1979).

### **Research Objective:**

This study is interested in understanding happiness constructs at work and interventions that improve happiness at work. This will assist in improving productivity at work, reduce absenteeism, increase work engagement and motivation. This study will aim to determine the elements that contribute to happiness at work and validate this information through a qualitative approach. A happy employee will experience more respect from their colleagues and will be more effective and efficient at work and the consistency across countries. The central objective of this study will be to measure the effort, conviction, culture, commitment and confidence at work using quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis. This will be a new contribution to the field of happiness at work as no previous study has focussed on the measurement of effort, conviction, culture, commitment and confidence at work in relation to happiness using both a quantitative and qualitative approach.

## **4. Literature Review**

### **4.1 Positive Organisational Behaviour**

Youssef and Luthans in 2007 define POB as “the study and application of positively orientated human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance improvement in today’s workplace”. In addition to this and in accordance with the POB framework, the capacity must be theory and research-based and measurable. The measurements must be valid and the capacity must be stated like meaning it should be open to change and development. The POB should, in addition, have demonstrated the ability to have an impact on performance. Youssef & Luthans (2007)

Research in the field of positive psychology does not claim to have revealed the importance of positivity to people, there have been many positive constructs in organisational research such as positive affectivity, positive reinforcement, procedural justice, job satisfaction and commitment, pro-social and organisational citizenship behaviour, core self-evaluation and many others. Youssef & Luthans (2007).

According to Luthans & Avolio (2009), a consequence of Positive Organisational Behaviour is called PsyCap. This is defined as an individual’s positive psychological state of development characterised by:

- Being confident which the self-efficacy is which the effort is taken to take on and succeed at challenging tasks.
- Be optimistic which is the ability to make a positive attribution to succeed currently and in the future.
- Perseverance towards goals and where necessary, redirecting paths to goals. This will refer to hope to succeed.
- Resilience which is the ability to bounce back when faced with problems, adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond to attain success. Luthans & Avolio (2009).

PsyCap relates to organisational performance and has been found to be a predictor of performance, satisfaction as well as absenteeism in organisations. It's related to organisational commitment and an individual's intention to stay in an organisation. PsyCap adds value to an organisation's financial capital, human capital and social capital. Youssef & Luthans (2010). The four capabilities that makeup PsyCap are self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience.

Self-efficacy is primary about confidence, which is a feeling of quietly and fundamentally knowing that for all the anxiety around a task you have the capability to do the task. Self - efficacy feelings are correlated to performance. Individuals who are self- efficient welcome new challenges which will add to their experience. Individuals who have high levels of self -efficiency have five characteristics, they will set high standards for themselves, and elect for difficult tasks. They are individuals who enjoy challenges and are highly self- motivated and will invest the necessary effort to accomplish their goals when faced with obstacles. Lutherans (2007).

The next capability that forms part of PsyCap is Hope. Hope is a construct that encompasses willpower and direction. Synder (2000). This can be displayed as the desire to achieve something and as an ability to find a way. Hope can be defined as a cognitive state of mind and a way of thinking with the ability to plan. This creates willpower which motivates the search for new paths and success of forging new pathways which increases an individual's determination to keep going. Performance and hope have a well-established relationship, the more hope a person has the higher the performance is. Managers and leaders have a role in encouraging hopeful behaviour by using goal-setting appropriately and ensuring the

necessary resources are available which can assist in modelling and reinforcing hopeful behaviour. Hope is a characteristic that is transient and can be developed through specific activities. Lewis (2011).

To summarise self-efficacy is a state of belief, hope is a state of mind and the next capability that will be discussed is optimism which is a state of explanation. Optimism and is used as an explanatory style that attributes positive events to personal, permanent and pervasive causes and interprets negative events in terms of external temporary and situation-specific factors. An example of this would be attributing a good facilitation session to your skills whilst a negative feedback session to a poor venue. Seligman (2006)

The fourth PsyCap capability is resilience which is the ability to rebound from setbacks to recover the ability to function effectively. Resilience can be attributed to coping in extremely difficult situations in a productive way which is developed through experience and the accumulation of assets and strategies. Lewis (2011).

## **4.2 Positive Psychology**

Positive psychology which is applied in ensuring POB attempts to give a renewed emphasis which is not a resolution or paradigm shift) to the importance of a positive approach. Youssef & Luthans (2007)

Seligman describes positive psychology as, "The aim of positive psychology is to begin to catalyse a change in the focus of psychology from preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building positive qualities"(Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology is thus the scientific study of optimal human functioning. Linley (2007).

There are current three streams of positive traits which are the Big Five personality traits, core self -evaluations and positive psychological traits. Youssef & Luthans (2007)

Conscientiousness, emotional stability, extroversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience are categories as the Big Five personality traits. Barrick & Mount (1991). These dimensions have been shown to strongly relate to performance as well as individual-level outcomes such as happiness, physical and psychological health, spirituality and identity, interpersonal level outcomes such as quality of relationships with peers, family and romantic others as well as social and organisational level outcomes. These will entail

occupational choice, satisfaction, performance, community involvement, criminal activity and political ideology. (Ang, Van Dyne & Koh, 2006).

Core self-evaluations are also classified as a positive trait that has an effect on work-related outcomes. This evaluation indicates that the higher an individual's self-evaluations, the more positive the person's self-regard. This will result in more goal self concordance and a higher intrinsic value which will result in a higher intrinsic motivation which will trigger higher performance and satisfaction. Judge, Bono, Erez, & Locke (2005).

Research done on positive psychological traits, enduring character strengths, virtues and values has increased over the years. These serve as a foundation for more transient states. Youssef & Luthans (2007).

Positive traits are characterised by relative stability over time and applicable across situations, a positive state like capacities are relatively more open to change and development. These are more relevant in today's workplace and lie across a continuum. One extreme of the continuum would be positive states that are vary changeable representing momentary feels such as pleasure, positive moods, and definitions of happiness. The remainder psychological resource capacities that are more open to development are hope, efficacy, optimism and resilience. Youssef & Luthans (2007)

Positive psychology differs from positive thinking in that positive psychology deals with the experimentation and endorsement of phenomena. This is a science that looks at researching phenomenon whereas positive thinking deals with the realm of anecdote and exhortation, which is if something didn't work, it's because you were not positive about it.

Furthermore, positive psychology is about knowledge which contributes to productive lives whilst positive thinking is about persuading people that they in control of their lives hence if something happens to them, it's their own fault. Lewis (2011).

As the workplace becomes a place of survival and requires high success and necessitates higher than average performance it is important to understand the link between positive psychology and POB as the social context is still made up of largely of individuals and their interactions. Youssef & Luthans (2007). This supports the objective of this study which is to understand happiness at work within South Africa.

### 4.3 Happiness in the workplace

Happiness at work has been described by Ryan and Deci (2001) as “optimal psychological functioning and experience.” Jessica Pryce Jones describes happiness at work as a “mindset which allows you to maximise performance and achieve your potential. You do this by being mindful of the highs and lows when working alone or with others.” (Pryce-Jones, 2010). There are a number of constructs that make up demographic variables which influence individuals at work as mentioned previously which will be evident in understanding the mindset of individuals at work.

Attention to happiness at work in the form of pleasant moods and emotions, well-being and positive attitudes has been attracting increasing attention throughout psychology. (Fisher, 2010). The causes and correlates of demographic variables such as sex, age, occupation, education, social class, income, marriage, employment, ethnicity, leisure, religion, life events and activities, competencies have been investigated against happiness by Kahneman, Diener and Swart. A positive correlation exists between these variables and happiness. (Kahneman, Diener, Swart, 1999). These variables are integral make-ups of individuals and their complexity, hence important to recognise when investigating happiness at work. It’s important to understand that happiness is not a flaky, nice to have, feel-good aspiration. As happiness has a massive impact on an individual as well as colleagues’ output, it is a need to have business fundamental. (Pryce-Jones, 2010).

As indicated by Fisher (2010), happiness is a distinct number of constructs which reflects some form of happiness or positive affect that has been used in research. Research done by Streimikiene & Grundey indicates that well-being tends to be strongly affected by personality factors, personal relationships and social participation than by economic factors. Their research further indicated that happiness not only produces a quantitative improvement which results in increasing efficiency but also a qualitative one by making a better product by virtue of pride belief and commitments to one’s job. They were able to conclude that motivation in work also has a significant impact on happiness productivity and satisfaction. (Streimikiene & Grundey 2009). Figure 1, below indicates as per Burrows (2004), the elements that made individuals happy at work.



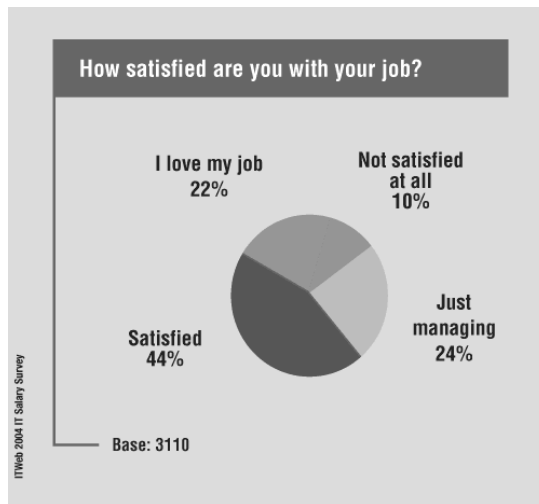


Figure 1 (Burrows, T. (2004). Salary Survey: Money can buy happiness.

Current research has not been able to describe the effect that commitment, culture, conviction, contribution and confidence have with regards to happiness at work. This research will aim to determine the effect of commitment, culture, conviction, contribution and confidence have on happiness at work within South Africa.

In addition, this research will be able to give one a view of current elements that contribute to happiness at work in South Africa and across countries.

Happiness at work is made up of a number of factors. This research will focus on the five factors called the 5C's that play a major role in your happiness at work. Contribution is a factor that determines your effort and perception at work. The amount of motivation that you have in various circumstances will determine your conviction. How well you fit and feel at work is determined by your culture. Commitment will determine the extent to which you are engaged with your work. The sense of belief that you have in yourself and the job that you do will be determined by the amount of confidence that you have at work (Pryce-Jones, 2010).

Research done by Lu, Gilmour and Kag has indicated that levels of happiness across cultures have a consistent difference. (Lu, Gilmour & Kag, 2001). This correlates to findings by Myers & Diener where they found that people in individualistic societies claim to be happier than their counterparts in collectivistic societies (Myers & Diener, 1995). Research done by Hinks and Gruen indicates that happiness and satisfaction are closely related concepts and have proven to correlate to work undertaken by sociologists, psychologists and economists. Happiness in South African has also been indicated in this

research paper to bear similarities with happiness equations in developed countries (Hinks & Gruen, 2007).

Furthermore, it has been investigated by Rego, Ribeiro, Pina E Cunha and Jesuino that organisations and leaders can promote a happier and more affectively-committed workforce if they encourage positive perceptions in their employees. This needs to be done in a genuine and sustainable way. One would also need to consider a virtuous organisational climate may also impact productivity positively. Rego, Ribeiro, Pina E Cunha & Jesuino (2011).

As indicated by Warr, people at work are happier if their jobs contain certain features that are generally desirable and if their own characteristics and mental processes encourage the presence of happiness. Warr (2007).

There are a number of concepts that are related to happiness which I will describe briefly below:

- Emotion and Mood
  - Emotion has a number of affect-based similarities with happiness. The term affect can be described as the way in which one is affected or disposed of. This is treated as an elementary feeling which is described by Russell as a “primitive, universal and irreducible mental plane. Russell (2003).
  - Feelings are inherent in emotion as well as in subjective well- being.
  - Emotions can be described as being typical of brief duration whilst moods are somewhat more extended and can be of moderate duration. Warr (2007).
- Attitude
  - These are evaluations of objects, along a dimension ranging from positive to negative. The objects that one describes can be either oneself, people or issues. An attitude is normally described having three principle components namely affective, cognitive and behavioural which are reflected in feelings, beliefs and actions respectively.

- Perceived Quality of Life
  - This notion was common in the 1970s and measured based on one's living conditions e.g. availability of housing or actual living conditions. The focus of this area is on one's quality of working life. Warr (2007).
- Stress
  - Stress can refer to a:
    - A negative response to environmental inputs e.g. a person experiencing stress.
    - Causal inputs where stress is described in relation to one's job.
    - An overarching construct as in the discussion of stress.
  - It is good that environmental stressors are separated from people's negative responses. Warr (2007).
- Mental Health
  - Mental health can be described in terms of subjective well-being, competence, aspiration, autonomy and integrated functioning. Warr (2007).

Research done by Ryan and Deci in 2000 indicates that humans will be motivated and display well-being in organisations to the extent that they experience psychological need satisfaction within those organisations. This theory has however not been tested cross-culturally. Ryan & Deci (2000). Happiness is a common word that is understood in many cultures. Rojas (2005).

Happiness in western cultures tends to emphasise the self-improvement and personal agency with a fixation on the pursuit of happiness which will bolster the efforts of these individual's to enhance well-being. Asian cultures in comparison tend to focus less on individuals as opposed to the group and would provide weaker support and endorsement of its members' happiness-boosting activities. Boehm, Lyubomirsky & Sheldon (2011).

Happiness at work is made up of a number of factors. This research will focus on the five factors called the 5C's that play a major role in your happiness at work. Contribution is a

factor that determines your effort and perception at work. The amount of motivation that you have in various circumstances will determine your conviction. How well you fit and feel at work is determined by your culture. Commitment will determine the extent to which you are engaged with your work. The sense of belief that you have in yourself and the job that you do will be determined by the amount of confidence that you have at work. Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010).

This research approach will follow the happiness model as created by Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010) which has five clear factors. These five factors have a role in happiness at work and defined as below:

- Contribution which is about the effort one makes and an individual's perception of this.
- Conviction is about the motivation one has despite the circumstances one is in.
- Culture is about how one feels fit at work.
- Commitment is the extent to which one is engaged with work.
- Confidence is the belief that one has in themselves and their job.

I will now describe each factor in a little more detail as per Jessica Pryce-Jones.

Contribution is an important component of happiness and is made up of Outside-In and Inside-Out elements. Outside In elements consist of the following:

- Achievement of goals.
- Having clear objectives.
- Raising issues that are important and ensuring that one is secure in their job.

It is important to ensure that an individual creates their own goals that suit their personal needs. This allows one to increase their purposes and is vital to ensure one's maximising of their contribution. In order to achieve these goals, one would need to break these down into achievable objectives which allows success. In order to ensure the accomplishment of goals, it's imperative that one raise issues that matter and will help the achievement of goals and objectives. This is a reflection of good team relationships. This results in a

more focussed approach on what one does and contributes to a better result. Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010).

Inside-Out elements consist of:

- Being listened to.
- Getting positive feedback.
- Being respected by your boss.
- Feeling appreciated at work.

Listening requires a connection with an individual and is fundamental to one's happiness at work. This influences productivity and is an important element of contribution. In addition, it is important to be skilled in giving neutral or negative feedback as poorly delivered negative feedback results in an employee who is unhappy and can result in an increase in sick leave. Positive feedback builds contribution that is an employee's input or effort in his/her work. In validating an individual's participation to work results in a feeling of appreciation which is supported by expressing a thankful approach to work done by a staff member. Respect in an organisation has a three-way impact, from your boss to you, from you to your boss and between your team members as well. Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010).

This reflects the importance of understanding an individual's goals and objectives in a job and the ideal requirements from a leader to support an individual which includes listening, respect, feedback and feeling valued.

Conviction is the second-factor influencing happiness which is doing the right things for an organisation which is aligned to your personal principles. Key elements of conviction are:

- Being motivated.
- Being efficient and effective.
- Being resilient.
- Having an impact.

Motivation includes purpose, direction and effort and is enhanced through choice, competence and connectedness. Efficiency and effectiveness are closely linked and both require energy to stay on top of your game. Resilience happens in the moment and the longer term. Being proactive is the most effective way of building resilience as you equip yourself for what might come. Your perception that the work you do has a positive impact on the world involves making sense of your working life in the broadest context. This involves linking what you do to the effect you have on the wider group of people as which will reflect the depth and breadth of the impact it has. Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010).

The third of the 5C's is culture which refers to the place where your preferences for how you like to work are matched. Culture differs from contribution and conviction as these two are about what you do at work whilst culture refers to the environment in which you do it. This would imply that you would have much more control on contribution and conviction than you would have on culture. Culture consists of enjoying your job and liking your colleagues. Should you enjoy working with your colleagues it is indicative of strong social support. Furthermore, it includes appreciating the values of your workplace and having a fair ethos at work which includes being in control of your daily activities. Culture also includes changing the terminology used in the workplace that is if you don't like what's being used. Having a strong ethos at work is important as it indicates that you have control of your daily activities. This is important for psychological well-being which will result in more control and influence that one realises. Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010).

Commitment which is the next factor that we will discuss which indicates that you cannot be loyal at work unless you are happy. Commitment results in dedication until you reach a goal and involves a positive attitude, behaviour and motivation which in turn affects your overall contribution. Being committed to your job requires doing something worthwhile and being interested in your job, believing in the vision of your organisation and having strong bursts of positive emotion. These feelings interact and reinforce one another. Finding meaningful work and identifying your overall purpose is fundamental to making a difference to yourself and others. Interest in your job is displayed through vital engagement. Should a leader communicate the vision of an organisation effectively, this will result in a belief in the organisation. Commitment can be displayed through positive emotion and hope helps you access positive emotion when the going gets tough Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010).

The last factor that is part of the 5C's is confidence. The other factors that are contribution, conviction, commitment depend on confidence. Confidence influences what you do and how you manage in your working environment as it helps you make the right choices and do the right things. Getting things done, having high levels of self-belief and understanding your role backwards and forwards are key elements that makeup confidence. In order to get things done, you would need to have self-control, understand procrastination and using mind tools that work for you. This is influenced by understanding one's beliefs, using self-talk, centring and working with imagery. Success influences one's self-belief which is impacted by watching others succeed, persuading one to take on challenges and correctly interpreting one's mental and physical state. In order to attain confidence in one's job, it's important to know your job backwards and forwards and is made up of knowing that your job fits your initial expectations and how it influences with your career plan. Should you recommend your organisation to a friend, this is also reflective of many of the elements within the 5 C's. Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010).

In addition pride, trust and recognition are also strongly linked to the 5C's. Pride comes from identifying with your organisation whilst trust is built with your colleagues and senior leaders. Recognition is established through who you are, what you do, how you work and how dedicated you are. It has less to do with money rather do with how you prefer to be recognised. Jessica Pryce-Jones (2010).

In conclusion, it is important to understand that being happy is influenced by one's attitude toward life and depends on an individual.

This research aims to validate the factors that contribute to the 5 C's and determine the impact that this will have on happiness at work within South Africa.

### **How self-determination influences happiness at work.**

Awareness of your approach at work, individual behaviour versus group behaviour and growth in accepting discomfort and difficulty are important constructs in understanding happiness at work. Awareness extends to being mindful and having perspective on a situation allowing you to manage a situation better. Happiness focuses on individual behaviour and the influence you will have on a group. Furthermore, happiness also entails understanding both positive and negative emotions at work (Pryce-Jones, 2010).

## **Approaches to happiness**

There are two common approaches to happiness namely Eudaimonic and Hedonistic. Hedonic suggests that maximising one's pleasurable moments is the pathway to happiness whilst the eudaimonic approach suggests that living a life of virtue and actualising one's inherent potential is the way to well-being. A hedonic psychological approach has generally been considered an internal state which represents a variety of subjective evaluations about the quality of one's life Delle Fave, Massimini & Bassi (2011b).

Eudaimonic approaches emphasise that well-being and happiness are ongoing processes and not end states. Henderson & Knight (2012).

## **5. Theoretical Framework**

### **Self-determination theory.**

As indicated in research done by Leal, Miranda & Carmo in 2012, the self-determination theory can be summarised as a continuum of self-determination that indicates six types of motivation which vary qualitatively according to the internalisation of external rules of behaviour. This theory states that individual's motivations differ, and are determined and driven by contexts that support psychological needs that manifest themselves in different ways, making students' motivation for learning "a complex, multi-determined phenomenon. This can be inferred by observing behaviour in a real performance situation or by self-reporting. (Leal, Miranda, Carmo, 2013).

Research on this theory had begun by Porter in 1968 who proposed a model of work motivation based on the motivation theory of Vroom which focussed on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This is the basis of the current Self-Determination theory which makes a distinction between two different motivational issues which is the purpose of an activity and why would you want to accomplish this goal. (Leal, Miranda, Carmo, 2013).

This theory will contribute to the current research in understanding what drives and motivates employees in South Africa and in turn contributes to happiness at work.

### **Broaden-and-build Theory**

This theory describes the form and function of a subset of positive emotions, including joy, interest, contentment and love. These are positive emotions that will initiate



momentary thought-action arising from positive emotions. This theory suggests that positive and negative emotions are distinctive and complementary. Furthermore, this theory suggests that positive emotions broaden the scope of attention, cognition and action widening the array of precepts, thoughts and actions. This theory predicts that different positive emotions like amusement and contentment produce broadening relative to neutral states. Fredrickson (2004). This theory will support this research in understanding the impact of happiness constructs on positive and negative emotions.

### **Location of Study**

This study will be conducted within South Africa across the following industries namely:

- Business / Professional Services.
- Education.
- Retail.
- Finance / Banking / Insurance.

## **6. Research Methodology**

### **6.1 Rationale**

As the workplace becomes a place of survival and requires high success and necessitates higher than average performance it is important to understand the link between positive psychology and POB as the social context is still made up of largely of individuals and their interactions. Youssef & Luthans (2007).

Organisations currently are in a constant state of change and have a number of challenges as a result of the change. These changes are brought about by globalization, new technologies, changes in culture, employees and customers' needs and values as well as a constant demand for efficacy and efficiency. This requires ongoing adaptation by organisations in order to remain competitive, especially in the current challenges facing the marketplace. This also has an effect on the well-being and health of the working population with implications on the economy. Raquel Rodríguez-Carvajal, Bernardo

Moreno-Jiménez, Sara de Rivas-Hermosilla, Abraham Álvarez-Bejarano and Ana Isabel Sanz Vergel (2010).

Understanding the world of work is important as work takes up the bulk of one's day. It fills the waking hours of hundreds of millions of people. Work is important as it generates income for individuals. It also contributes to one's positive self-esteem and fellowship. Furthermore, it creates opportunities for meaningful activities and produces goods and services that society values. Lewis (2011). As the world of work is one of the most significant areas of people's lives it is important to understand what contributes to positive organisational behaviour. Lewis (2011).

*"Pleasure is the good feeling that comes from satisfying homeostatic needs such as hunger, sexy and bodily comfort. Enjoyment, on the other hand, refers to the good feelings people experience when they break through the limits of homeostasis - when they do something that stretches them beyond what they were - in an athletic event, an artistic performance, a good deed, a stimulating conversation. Enjoyment, rather than pleasure, is what leads to personal growth and long-term happiness."* Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000).

We can thus deduce from this that the experience of engaging in more meaningful work is likely to result in more sustained happiness among employees. Organisations can thus generate opportunities for workers to have more engaging and meaningful work. This can, in turn, result in more performance orientated outcomes of employees as well as employee commitment. Furthermore, the positive psychology lens allows a finer understanding of what drives and motivates employees to flourish and achieve their full potential at work. This supports the rationale of this study which aims to understand and interpret elements that contribute to happiness at work.

As the way of work in organisations change it is imperative that we explore how we can understand and utilise elements of happiness and positive psychology to support individuals within organisations. The world of work is dynamic with changes that affect employees, managers and consumers. Despite the size of the organisation or whether it is privately owned or publicly trading, local or international the world of work is changing. Casio (2010).

Employees in the workplace are faced with the same challenges despite the generation that they belong to. This includes but not limited to improvement of skills, job satisfaction, job success and achieving work-life balance. The approach to these challenges independent on the generation that one belongs to. This would have come about as a result of changes in personality traits as well as work attitudes that have occurred from one generation to another. The younger generations seem to be more self-confident, increased self-esteem as well as narcissism, increased locus of control, a decrease toward social approval and an increase in anxiety and depression. There is also an increase in focus on the time spent outside from work. These staff members will generally be focussed on developing skills that will allow them to transfer from job to job, expect fulfilling work and quick promotions. They will favour work-life balance and flexibility more than other generations. This would typically describe your newer generation workforce and would imply that organisations implement policies to promote work-life balance, however not at the expense of business operations. Furthermore, this generation may require more guidance and mentoring with regards to career paths. As a younger generation enters the workforce organisations will need to determine a gap analysis on the expectations of the changing workforce. Leaders would need to create an environment that acknowledges and appreciates the generational differences among employees. Twenge & Campbell (2010).

Leaders are essential in creating a positive work culture that enables collective resourcefulness and generates dynamics that results in a positive outcome. This would require strategic planning in order to map out and formulate the implementation of positive creative approach which will result in the formation of sustainable work culture. Wooten & Cameron (2010).

Leaders and employees function in an uncertain environment due to the many changes. This results in important decisions which impact morale as well as the performance of individuals which has social implications such as decreased physical and psychological engagement, health and well-being which impacts an employee's happiness at work. Luthans, Youssef & Avolio (2007).

This study will benefit organisations in understanding what contributes to an individual's happiness at work. This study will investigate through a quantitative approach the elements that contribute to happiness at work using secondary data.

This will be testing by using a qualitative approach through interviews with senior managers and will assist in supporting organisations through ensuring a happy, motivated and productive work-force.

## **6.2 Research Design**

An integral part of the research process is the research design McCall (1994). A mixed approach will be used for the purposes of this research which will focus on elements of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Quantitative research is defined as a “language of variables, hypothesis units of analysis and causal explanations. Neuman (1997). In contrast, qualitative research is defined as an approach that relies “largely on the interpretative and critical approaches to social sciences. The two approaches differ from each other in important ways, but both are alternatives to positivism which is the foundation of quantitative research. Neuman (1997).

Quantitative research is highly developed and builds on applied mathematics and manipulates numbers that represent empirical facts in order to test an abstract hypothesis with a variable construct.

Qualitative methods are more appropriate for hypothesis generation than for hypothesis testing. Qualitative methods allow a greater depth of understanding concepts that are generated from quantitative research whilst qualitative methods often result in better objectivity and generalizability than quantitative ones. A mixed-method approach allows for the use of the respective strengths of each approach which allows one to escape the respective weaknesses for each approach. Tashakkori & Teddlie (1998).

A mixed-methods study involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study in which the data is collected concurrently or sequentially. Data is then integrated into the process of research. In a mixed-method approach one method maybe weighed stronger than the other and the integration of the data maybe comprehensive or restricted. A mixed-method approach may result in a blended approach within a co-ordinated cluster of individual studies. Polit & Beck (2004).

Mixed methods are those that combine qualitative and quantitative approaches into the research methodology of the multi-phased study. Tashakkori & Charles (1994).

According to Mertens qualitative data can be used to test hypotheses which concerns how certain dynamics affect the results evident in qualitative data. Mertens (1994).

The advantages of a mixed-method approach are as follows:

- A mixed approach will be able to answer more complex questions than qualitative or quantitative research in isolation. As a qualitative approach is more appropriate for hypothesis generation and a quantitative approach is more appropriate for hypothesis testing, a mixed-method approach will enable the researcher to simultaneously answer a combination of exploratory and confirmatory questions. This can result in a theory being generated and verified in the same investigation.
- A quantitative study can be used to describe causal effects and a qualitative interview can be used for explaining and how these effects are generated. This can result in a study answering complex research questions related to both causal descriptions and causal explanation. Lund (2012).
- Qualitative and quantitative methods may result in a more complete picture of the domain under study as they relate to different objects or phenomena yet complement each approach. Lund (2012).
- Valid inferences are provided by this type of research approach. Results from the different strategies result in qualitative and quantitative coverage and may produce a more complete picture of the domain under study. This results in the validity of corresponding inferences and conclusion increasing more than with the convergence within each strategy. Lund (2012).
- A mixed-method approach may result in divergent or contradictory results which can lead to extra reflection, revised hypothesis and further research. Thus, given that data has been analysed and collected correctly, such divergence can generate new theoretical insights. Lund (2012).

### **6.3 Research Approach and Research Questions:**

#### **Quantitative Approach:**

This research approach will make use of the secondary data obtained from the IPQ institute. It is a tool that measured happiness constructs amongst 1085 individuals within SA.

Secondary data has been collected by the iOpener institute using the following approach:

- Participants were selected via professional consulting projects via “samples of opportunity”.
- Confidentiality is assured to participants and has been administered to senior management within various industries in South Africa.
- The instrument is an on-line instrument delivered to consulted participants. A paper-based instrument is available where technology is not available.

The Cronbach alpha scores for this instrument globally is 0.7. A more detailed analysis of these scores are:

#### **Contribution**

- World: .78
- SA: .74

#### **Conviction**

- World: .71
- SA: .62

#### **Culture**

- World: .76
- SA: .75

#### **Commitment**

- World: .80
- SA: .72

### Confidence

- World: .85
- SA: .81

### Description of Statistics – Quantitative

Participants in this study are from the various fields such as accounting, agriculture, business, engineering, legal, mining, finance, retail, telecommunications are full-time employees', self-employed and business owners.

The following Tables indicate the business areas that this study will cover:

**Table 1: Participants**

Row Labels	Number of Participants
Business / Professional Services	410
Education	324
Retail	269
Finance / Banking / Insurance	82
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1085</b>

**The following is an indication of the number of females and males that the study will cover:**

**Table 2: Males and Females**

Row Labels	Count of Males and Females
Female	619
Male	466

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1085</b>
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The following age groups form part of this study.

**Table 3: Age Groups**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number of People</b>
21-30	16
31-40	177
41-50	400
51-60	304
60+	187
Above 60	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1085</b>

### **Research Questions**

The research questions aimed to be addressed in this approach will be as follows:

- Using a factor analysis, determine the factors that contribute to happiness within a South African context.
- This will aim to determine the impact of happiness relating to the 5 C's within an organisational context that contributes to employee happiness at work.

### **Qualitative approach:**

This phase will use a qualitative approach where interviews will be conducted with individuals selected from different organisations. Individuals identified will be from senior



managers and across 4 industries within South Africa. Purposive or judgemental sampling will be used for this phase of the study. This is an acceptable sampling approach for special situations. It uses the judgement of an expert in selecting cases or it selects with a specific purpose in mind. Neuman (1997).

This study will use a sequential approach where the researcher will have a quantitative phase and then a qualitative phase. A phenomenological analysis approach will be used in analysing data from this phase of the study. It's an approach that will focus on lived experiences where a sample is selected purposively in order to provide a project with a particular experience. Questions will be prepared to be open and expansive, where the participant will be encouraged to talk at length. A thematic study will result as a part of the interview transcript being analysed. Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009).

The following industries will be used to identify participants to take part in the interviews. The following mixed method sampling approach will be used for this study using a purposive sampling approach.

<b>Row Labels</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Business / Professional Services	5
Education	5
Retail	5
Finance / Banking / Insurance	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>20</b>

### **Sampling Approach:**

The sampling technique that will be used in this research study will be both purposive and probability sampling which is a technique utilised in a mixed-method approach. Teddie & Yu (1994).

- The differences in the sampling techniques can be summarised below.

Dimension of Contrast	Purposive Sampling	Probability Sampling
Other names.	Purposeful sampling. Nonprobability sampling. Qualitative sampling.	Scientific sampling. Random sampling. Quantitative sampling.
Overall purpose of sampling.	Designed to generate a sample that will address research questions.	Designed to generate a sample that will address research questions.
Issue of generalizability.	Sometimes seeks a form of generalizability (transferability).	Seeks a form of generalizability (external validity).
Rationale for selecting cases/units.	To address specific purposes related to research questions.  The researcher selects cases she or he can learn the most from.	Representativeness, the research selects cases that are collectively representative of the population.
Sample size.	Typically small (usually 30 cases or less).	Large enough to establish representativeness (usually at least 50 units).
Depth/breadth of information per case/unit.	Focus on depth of information generated by the cases.	Focus on breadth of information generated by the sampling units.
When the sample is selected.	Before the study begins, during the study or both.	Before the study begins.
How selection is made.	Utilises expert judgement.	Often based on application of mathematical formulas.
Sampling frame.	Informal sampling frame, somewhat larger than sample.	Formal sampling frame typically much larger than sample.
Form of data generated.	Focus on narrative data.  Numeric data can also be generated.	Focus on numeric data. Narrative data can also be generated.

Mixed method sampling methodology uses a combined approach to sampling to meet the specific research design. This can be summarised in the table below.

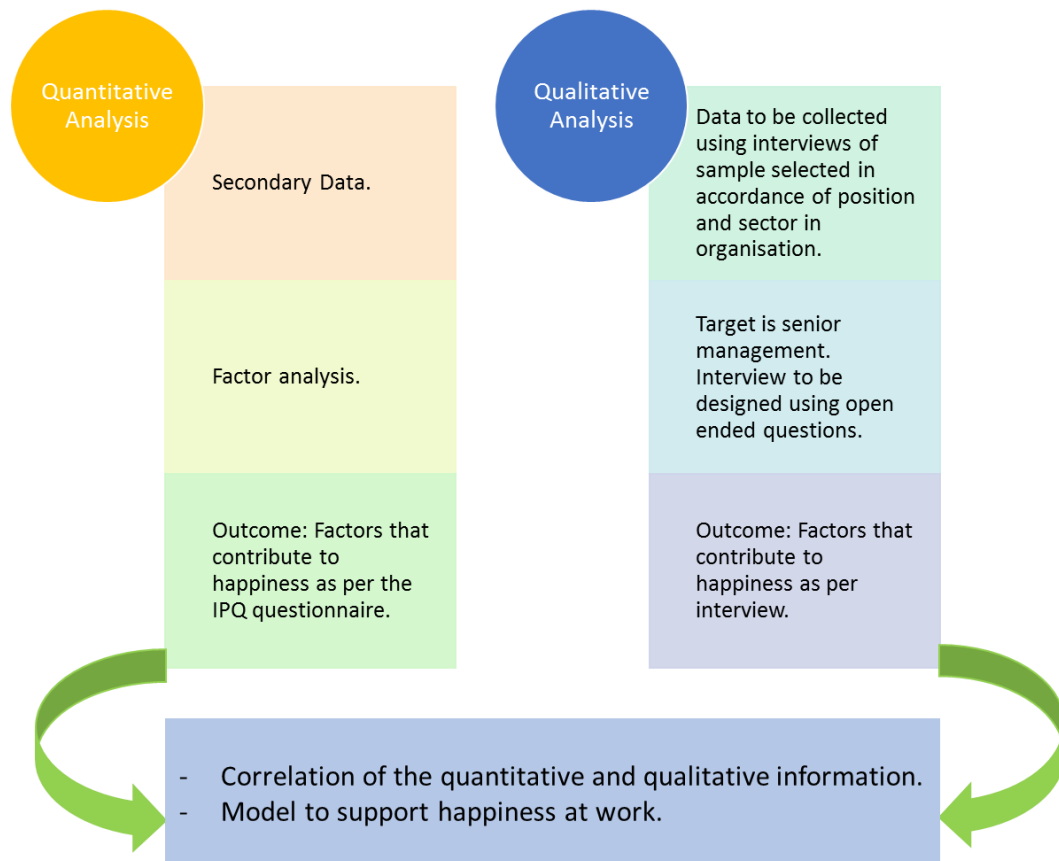
Dimension of Contrast	Mixed Methods Sampling
Other names.	Designed to generate a sample that will address research questions.
Overall purpose of sampling.	For some strands of a research design, there is a focus on external validity issues. For other strands, the focus is on transferability issues.
Issue of generalizability.	All those employed both probability and purposive sampling.
Rationale for selecting cases/units.	For some strands of a research design, there is a focus on representativeness. For other strands, the focus is on seeking our information rich cases.
Sample size.	There are multiple samples in the study. Samples vary in size dependent on the research strand and question from a small number of cases to a large number of units of analysis.
Depth/breadth of information per case/unit.	Focus on both depth and breadth of information across the research strands.
When the sample is selected.	Most sample decisions are made before the study starts, but QUAL orientated questions may lead to the emergence of other samples during the study.
How selection is made.	There is a focus on expert judgement across the sampling decisions, especially because they interrelate with one another. Some QUAN-orientated strands may require application of mathematical sampling formulae.
Sampling frame.	Both formal and informal frames are used.
Form of data generated.	Both numeric and narrative data are typically generated. Occasionally, mixed methods sampling strategies may yield only narrative or only numeric data.

## Research Questions

The research questions aimed to be addressed in this approach will be as follows:

- What factors contribute to happiness at work?
- How do individuals experience happiness at work in different industries?
- How do the factors differ from results in the quantitative approach?
- Design a model that contributes to happiness at work.

The figure below summarises the quantitative and qualitative approach and the results of this study:



## 6.4 Data Analysis

Data collected in the mixed-method approach based on sequential sampling is collected and analysed from one phase of the study which could be qualitative or quantitative are

used to inform the other phase of the investigation. Data analysis can be applied at each sequence of the study and each phase by itself may use a mixed approach and provide conceptual and/or methodological grounds for the next phase. Tashakkori & Teddie (1998).

The data that has been collected has been captured on excel in Microsoft Excel. This data will be processed using a statistical package known as SPSS. The SPSS program (2003) will be used to carry out the statistical analysis. This will involve descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of the statistical analysis generated on the basis of the use of the descriptive and inferential statistic will be presented in the form of tables and graphs and will be subsequently discussed. The following statistics will be decided on based on the results required. The following statistics will be decided on based on the results required. However, an example of the statistics required will be utilised as follows:

- Descriptive statistics comprising of frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, and measures of dispersion.
- Inferential statistics comprising of the spearman rank-order correlation analysis of variance, the t-Test and t-Distribution, multiple regressions etc.

An approach called interpretative phenomenological analysis is a method recently developed to support qualitative inquiry. It's an approach that will focus on lived experiences. A sample is selected purposively in order to provide a project with a particular experience. Hence participants are selected in order to represent a perspective concerned with understanding a particular phenomenon in particular contexts. This approach will focus on small sample sizes. Interviews and diaries maybe the best means of accessing such accounts of experiences. Questions should be prepared to be open and expansive, the participant should be encouraged to talk at length. A thematic study will result as a part of the interview transcript being analysed. Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009).

A qualitative approach will be used to determine the areas that individual's. This will be done by interviewing selected candidates from various industries and interviewing these individuals to determine if the elements that contribute to happiness at work as per the quantitative approach is supported by the qualitative data.

## **7. Proposed work plan**

(Set out your intended plan/timetable of work for the research, indicating important target dates necessary to meet your proposed deadline as agreed with your supervisor).

Table 4: Proposed work plan.

STEPS	DATES
Present Proposal to the Ethics Board	November 2015
Obtain Ethical Clearance	November 2015
Data Collection	December 2015 – February 2016
Data Analysis	March 2016
Submit Draft 1	April 2016
Submit Draft 2	June 2016
Submit Final Thesis	September 2016

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## Appendix 2: Approval from the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee for the University of the KwaZulu-Natal



6 September 2019

Ms Sudeshnee Ramiah (214584583)  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Ramiah,

**Protocol reference number: HSS/1378/016D**  
**Project title: Factors contributing to Happiness at work in South Africa**

### Approval Notification-Amendment/Recertification

This letter serves to notify you that your application for an amendment and recertification dated 23 June 2019 has now been granted Full Approval.

- Change in Methodology

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

.....  
Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)

/dd

Cc Supervisor: Professor Johanna Hendrina Buitendach and Dr Kwaku Opong Asante  
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Jean Steyn  
cc School Administrator: Ms Ayanda Ntuli

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Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
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### Appendix 3: Qualitative Questionnaire

<b>Name of Individual</b>	
<b>Position</b>	
<b>Job Title</b>	
<b>Sector</b>	
<b>Number of Direct Reports</b>	

**Section A: Contribution**

What actions would a team be required to perform in order to contribute to a team approach?

Is team work important in ensuring outcomes are reached?

How important do you think the following is with regards to making a contribution to a team approach?

Item	Rating (1-5) 1 = High importance 5 = Low Importance
Achieving Goals.	
Raising Issues.	
Feeling Insecure.	
Being listened to.	
Positive Feedback.	

**Section B: Conviction**

How do you motivate your team?

Why is it important that teams remain motivated?

How do you make a positive impact on your team?

How important do you think the following is with regards to motivating teams?

Item	Rating (1-5) 1 = High importance 5 = Low Importance
Feeling motivated.	
Feeling efficient.	
Feeling effective.	
Feeling resilient.	
Making a positive impact.	

**Section C: Culture**

How would you describe the current culture in your team?

How would you improve the culture in your team?

How important do you think the following is with regards to culture?

Item	Rating (1-5) 1 = High importance 5 = Low Importance
Loving your job.	
Liking your colleagues.	
Appreciation of organisational values.	
A fair culture.	
Control over activities.	

**Section D: Commitment**

How would you define commitment?

What drives your commitment in your current role?

How do you ensure you remain interested in your job?

How important do you think the following is with regards to commitment at work?

Item	Rating (1-5) 1 = High importance 5 = Low Importance
Something worthwhile.	
Positive emotions.	
Trust vision of leaders.	
Interested in job.	
Colleagues respect.	

**Section E: Confidence**

How would you define confidence?

What drives your confidence in your team?

How do you instil confidence in your ability with your team?

How important do you think the following is with regards to confidence at work?

Item	Rating (1-5) 1 = High importance 5 = Low Importance
Getting things done.	
Self-belief.	
Job fits expectations.	



Job fits career plan.	
Recommend to a friend.	

**Section F: Trust, Recognition & Pride**

How would you define trust, recognition and pride in your team and organisation?

What drives your trust, recognition and pride in your current role?

What percentage of time are you happy at work?

What percentage of time are you engaged at work?

How would you rate your overall happiness at work?