

Happiness and Psychological Capital

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Happiness/ PsycCap/ HERO/ Hope/ Efficacy/ Resilience/ Optimism/ Faith

Happiness has long been considered too personal and complicated to measure. It is generally believed that happiness is an emotional state that cannot be explained or analyzed scientifically. However, is this really so? Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky of the University of California, Riverside, is a leading expert in the study of happiness. She used a questionnaire of statements to quantify a person's state of happiness, and her research revealed that about half of happiness is determined by hereditary factors and the other half by environmental factors. That is to say, if interpreted positively, 50% is changeable. Drawing from positive psychology, Fred Luthans, Professor Emeritus of the University of Nebraska, created psychological capital (PsyCap). He is generally recognized as the author of the first mainline textbook on organizational behavior, and he first focused on a behavioral approach to management and then moved on to found and create the terms for positive organizational behavior (POB) and PsyCap.

PsyCap takes an evidence-based approach, and it draws from positive psychology in general and positive organizational behavior in particular. The positive psychological resources of PsyCap are hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism, or the HERO within. HERO is state-like and thus developable; it impacts attitudes, behaviors, performance, and well-being.

Hope is defined as a positive motivational state based on goal-directed energy and pathways to meet goals. Hope has two key dimensions, the willpower to pursue goals and the waypower to achieve them. Efficacy is defined as the individual's confidence about his or her abilities to successfully execute a task. Resilience is defined as the capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure, or even positive events, progress, and increased responsibility. Optimism is a positive 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. Over many years, PsyCap has been applied not only to many companies throughout the

world but also to military forces.

Can technology make you happy? Dr. Kazuo Yano, Fellow and former Corporate Chief Scientist at Hitachi who is the architect of a sensor for measuring happiness, believes future technology can be used to amplify our happiness. He advocates that it is possible to accurately sense happiness. He successfully revealed a high correlation between certain patterns of activity and a person's subjective sense of happiness at work.

This paper will explore the possibility of collaboration between PsyCap and measuring happiness with a sensor and seek possible synergy and applications. The author will also show the results of survey the author conducted based on PsyCap questionnaire. Then she will also explore the role of religion and faith in pursuing happiness and discuss whether they can be a positive factor in enhancing happiness. The author believes diversity and inclusion as well as transcultural management practices can also contribute to increasing happiness at work, at home, and in society.

References

Fred Luthans and Carolyn M. Youssef-Morgan, "Psychological Capital: An Evidence-Based Positive Approach," *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, January 2017.

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Kazuo Yano, *The New Invisible Hand*, to be published.