

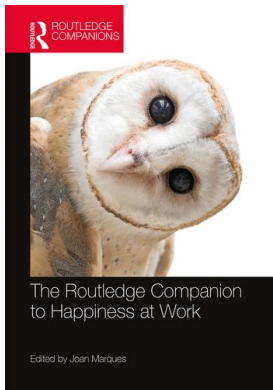
This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 20 Mar 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



The Routledge Companion to Happiness at Work

Joan Marques

The Influence of Religion on Employees' Sense of Happiness

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780429294426-16>

Sarah M. Mutuku, Miriam M. Mutuku-Kioko, Paul S. Kioko

Published online on: 23 Oct 2020

How to cite :- Sarah M. Mutuku, Miriam M. Mutuku-Kioko, Paul S. Kioko. 23 Oct 2020, *The Influence of Religion on Employees' Sense of Happiness from: The Routledge Companion to Happiness at Work* Routledge

Accessed on: 20 Mar 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780429294426-16>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

16

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON EMPLOYEES' SENSE OF HAPPINESS

Sarah M. Mutuku, Miriam M. Mutuku-Kioko, and Paul S. Kioko

Introduction

For thousands of years, humans have been puzzled by the purpose of life and happiness. Over many thousands of years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle said that the purpose of human existence is to achieve happiness. It is indeed a cardinal issue in the major world religions. Nearly all religions view happiness and suffering as both part of human experience, thus, two sides of the same coin. Human beings' struggles in between on their earthly path towards the ultimate place of happiness—heaven, salvation, or paradise.

Happiness is generally taken to mean the mental or emotional state of well-being characterized by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. Physically, four different brain chemicals create happiness: endorphins, dopamine, oxytocin, and serotonin. Human relationships are the most important external factor affecting happiness. The extent to which a country's inhabitants trust each other turns out to be a major determinant of happiness in a society. Happiness is such an important part of life that it has a day dedicated to it. The International Day of Happiness is celebrated on March 20th when the sun is on the same plane as the earth's equator so that day and night are of equal length, creating balance in the earth's celestial coordinate systems.

It is generally argued that happiness, in the form of joy, is encompassed in essentially every basic human emotion. Feeling happy is innate to the human experience, and most people operate on a continuum from being mildly happy to very happy most of the time (Diener, 2000). Many researchers and people in the academic field, particularly philosophers from around the year 2000, have devoted enormous attention to the construct of happiness (Claypool, 2017; McMahan, 2006), but the subject has only recently come to the forefront in psychological research, especially positive psychology. Today there is legitimized attention paid to the concept of happiness (Claypool, 2017). It is now established and widely accepted that good or happy workers can produce results that are extraordinary, while marginal employees tend to jam the process of creativity and progress in the work place.

In religious jargon, it is commonly held that happiness flows from what is conceived in the heart, soul, and mind of the person. That is, the beliefs, values, and predisposition of the person directing the person's steps. In religion, matters of the heart, soul, and beliefs based on a higher calling in a deity originate from the religious affiliation of the person. The word "heart" is sometimes used to mean the place where your deepest and strongest feelings and emotions are. Heart can also be used to refer to someone's character and attitudes that they have about life, people, and the world at large. A person's soul is the spiritual part that is believed to continue to exist after the body is dead. It is the

part of a human being that cannot be seen and is where the true nature of a person and their deepest thoughts and feelings reside. The mind is where someone's thoughts are found. All the three in combination shape someone's character, resulting in a person's personality.

Major world religions include Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism. Each of the religions has happiness as a major issue of focus. Happiness and satisfaction in life come when one truly serves their god. All religions are looking for the true God. This search is a matter of the spirit and the more one grows in the faith of their religion the more the person's spiritual performance in service to a deity. It is generally established that doing the things that a higher deity requires—serving others, the needy, caring about the environment, animals, birds, children, women, elderly etc.—brings one happiness and joy.

Different people define happiness in many different ways but amongst the different definitions there are some commonalities. Someone who is happy has feelings of pleasure arising from some good happenings in their life or around their life, or with general satisfaction with life. Research and interaction with people seems to suggest that happiness cannot be tied to any one single meaning. When looking at happiness at work in particular, no single approach suffices (Pryce-Jones, 2010, p. 3). A key question to ask at this point is “what is happiness?”

Meaning of Happiness

Generally, the concept of happiness is looked at in two different ways. It is seen as being hedonic, accompanied with enjoyable feelings and desirable judgments. Thus, it refers to feelings of pleasure, and can be defined as the positive feelings that accompany getting the material objects one wants, or having the action opportunities one wishes for. Happiness is also seen as being eudemonic, which involves doing virtuous, moral, and meaningful things in life. In short, it means living well or actualizing one's human potentials. It is generally argued that the two have to be present in a human being for a person to function well. Some experts claim that the most important approach to explain an individual's experience is in a hedonic tone, which is concerned with the person's pleasant feelings, satisfying judgments, self-validation, and at a higher level, what Professor Abraham Maslow calls self-actualization. Having self-actualization means engaging in creative and challenging work, participation in decision making, and having job flexibility and autonomy in regard to work. Some experts from psychology argue that hedonic happiness is unstable over a long period of time, especially in the absence of eudemonic well-being. It would appear from this line of thought that, in order for one to live a happy life, one must be concerned with doing virtuous, moral, and meaningful things while utilizing personal talents and skills.

Happiness is subjective and therefore hard to quantify. Happiness is multifaceted. It can be looked at from different perspectives and has many elements within it, or that explain it. Because of this we do not seem to find a consensus on most issues relating to happiness. Some examples from different sources are provided below for illustration of the above fact before moving on with the discussion of this topic.

In some quarters, happiness is seen as freedom and autonomy at the work place, because being able to determine your own hours and self-governing has been known to add joy. Going to work and getting a good salary are other dimensions. They ensure that we can sustain the kind of living we want, and that brings security and privilege in our lives. If we are successful at work, we are happy and our customers are satisfied, and we are gaining knowledge while developing our careers and working in harmony with our colleagues. We have overall satisfaction as a result. Immanuel Kant believed that autonomy is important to human beings because it is the foundation of human dignity and the source of all morality (Hill, 1991). Autonomy gives people happiness and this leads to high performance. Vroom's expectancy theory states that when the outcomes of work performance are offset by the negative impacts on the individual's general wellbeing (and happiness) or are not valued enough by the employee, levels of motivation are low and therefore productivity will be affected negatively (Isaac, Zerbe, & Pitt, 2001). Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a powerful model that shows that feeling a sense of belonging to groups is a significant motivation for human beings. Belonging is

a need that when met increases happiness (Hodson, Christine, 2001). Richard M. Ryan, a professor from the institute for positive psychology, and Edward L. Deci, a professor of the psychology and Gowen professor in social science, define happiness in two perspectives: happiness as being hedonic, accompanied with enjoyable feelings and desirable judgments, and happiness as being eudemonic, which involves doing virtuous, moral, and meaningful things (Ryan & Deci, (2001). Watson & Clark (1994) claim that the most important approach to explain an individual's experience is in a hedonic tone, which is concerned with the subject's pleasant feelings, satisfying judgments, self-validation, and self-actualization.

The different issues elicited by the various comments and discussions on happiness above are captured in the theory on happiness. Each set of ideas below tries to explain the concept of happiness from the perspective of the contributor or contributors to the set of ideas.

Theories of Happiness

There is no single theory on happiness. Many theories on happiness exist and have their basis in different disciplines. Here we outline the key theories that we consider relevant to the topic of interest here.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is particularly relevant to the issue of happiness at work. The hierarchy is a pyramid depicting the levels of human needs, from the most basic (physical) at the bottom to higher needs (psychological) at the top of the pyramid. These needs are physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. Beyond the fulfillment of routine of needs fulfillment, Maslow envisioned moments of extraordinary experience, known as peak experiences, profound moments of love, understanding, happiness, or rapture, during which a person feels more whole, alive, self-sufficient, and yet a part of the world. These moments have been described elsewhere in literature as the Flow. All the levels of needs are relevant to happiness. For example, social needs are about having good people around and interacting with them. This is beneficial to one's happiness because having people around improves cognitive thinking.

The ERG theory built on Maslow's theory and collapsed the five different types of needs into three: Existence needs, Relatedness needs, and Growth needs (ERG). Existence needs are desires for physical being; relatedness needs are desires for good interpersonal relationships; and growth needs are the needs for personal growth and development (Schermerhorn, 2010, p. 352). The theory holds that any of the three types of needs can influence an individual at any time. Satisfaction of needs leads to a feeling of happiness and satisfaction in life at given moments.

The Two-Factor theory of Frederick Herzberg was developed after an intensive interviewing of thousands of people on what turned them on about their jobs at work. The factors that turned workers on in their jobs were described as satisfiers, while those that turned workers off related to the work environment. These were described as hygiene factors. Satisfiers include: achievement, recognition, responsibility, the work itself and related tasks, advancement in one's job and career, and personal growth through human resources development efforts by the employer. On the other hand, dissatisfiers or hygiene factors include: working conditions, interpersonal relations, quality of leadership and supervision at work, organizational policies, and salary. When environmental elements are met, satisfaction will be achieved. Employees tend to be happier and more hardworking when they are in a good working environment, for instance, being happy to work in a good working relationship.

Acquired Needs theory is associated with the work of David McClelland et al., who observed a long time ago that people acquire or develop needs over time as a result of individual life experiences. The three categories of needs here are: need for achievement (desire to do something better, to solve problems, or to master complex tasks), need for power (the desire to control, influence, or be responsible for other people), and need for affiliation (the desire to establish and maintain good relations with colleagues at work). When these needs are met, workers' happiness supposedly increases and so does productivity. Pryce-Jones (2010, p. 24) talks about the structure of

happiness at work as constituted by the contribution or effort that one makes, as well as conviction, which is about motivation. We also look at culture, which is about how well one feels they fit at their work place and all its practices and commitment, which is about engagement at work and confidence, which is the sense of belief in oneself and their job.

Self-determination theory is about intrinsic motivation to three innate psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Self-determination is an important concept that refers to each person's ability to make choices and manage their own life. This ability brings about happiness and plays an important role in psychological health and well-being. Self-determination allows people to feel that they have control over their choices and lives. This leads to the automatic motivation of a worker to excel.

Modernization and freedom of choice argues that free choice has a major impact on happiness. It is argued that when basic needs are met, the degree of happiness depends on the economic and cultural factors in a country that enable free choice in how people live their lives. Happiness also depends on religion in countries where free choice is constrained.

Desire Theory holds that a person's desire drives their actions. We are all born to desire things and the subsequent levels of pleasure and welfare are derived from our actions towards meeting our desires. Heathwood (2006) observes that pleasure and welfare are influenced by a person's desires. Wanting things is part of the human condition which motivates our actions, and desires give us urges and satisfaction of these leads to joy, and when frustrated, sorrow occurs (Schroeder, 2006). Desiring has two dimensions: the content of the desire and the attitude towards desiring it. Content of the desire is what a person desires, whereas attitude is the mental predisposition a person associates with that content (Schroeder, 2006).

Positive Psychology Theory is modern and perhaps the most influential of all the theories of happiness. Positive psychology, initiated by Seligman, is the term given to a collection of studies aimed at researching what makes life worth living. Positive psychology aims to gain a deeper understanding of positive emotions, positive traits, and positive institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Seligman, 2004).

The field of positive psychology has expanded drastically in terms of scientific publications, and has produced many different views on the causes of happiness. All the contributions in this field can be codified into what we call positive psychology theory. Over the years, the field of psychology has largely focused on analyzing mental disorders and human suffering. Happiness was regarded simply as an absence of suffering, but had never been actually studied in depth. Seligman's aim, influenced by humanistic psychology, was not to replace traditional psychology, but to build a more complete picture of human experience. This shifted the main premise of psychology from analyzing psychological issues to analyzing mental health and happiness to its basic components (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Seligman, 2004).

Since its inception, positive psychology has spurred research in a variety of areas, such as happiness, optimism, self-esteem, well-being, motivation, flow, strengths and virtues, hope, resilience, mindfulness, and positive thinking. Specifically, there is a focus on three areas of positive experiences: the past (well-being and satisfaction), the present (happiness and flow), and the future (hope and optimism). These fields of research formed the basis for positive interventions, to increase happiness and well-being. These interventions have been applied in a variety of settings, such as education, human resources, organizational functioning, therapy, career counseling, and health. The sub-theories under the positive psychology theory are briefly examined below.

Authentic Happiness Theory is Seligman's beginning theory of happiness. He described that people can feel happiness from different types of experiences. For example, in pleasant life, engaged life, and meaningful life. The pleasant life refers to feeling positive emotions in the most intuitive way, of feeling pleasant sensations. For example, eating something you like very much because it tastes good, or doing something fun. Gaining happiness at this level necessitates

relatively little effort. Happiness here may not last long. On the other hand, the engaged life is characterized by what has been generally described as flow. Flow refers to the experience of completely losing oneself in an activity. Individuals become very engrossed in what they are doing to the point where nothing else, especially the sense of time, matters. This occurs in many situations of engagement. The meaningful life is about engaging in long lasting and possibly future oriented activities that serve goals beyond oneself, for example engagement in religion, politics, family, or some social activities.

Well-being Theory is an improvement on the Authentic Happiness Theory. As opposed to the goal of achieving happiness, this theory emphasizes the goal of reaching well-being. After all, people are motivated to do many things in life that do not necessarily increase happiness at the present moment. Well-being is about being healthy, happy, and generally having an enjoyable life that is worth living. Well-being, according to Seligman, is described as positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and purpose, and accomplishment (PERMA). Maximum well-being leads to a state of flourishing. Flourishing is generally described as a state of thriving, of being full of vitality, and prospering as individuals and as a group or as a community. It includes economic, social, environmental, and even political management issues in a nation state.

Work and Happiness

Happiness at work is the feeling that employees really enjoy what they do and are proud of themselves. It is a truism that having an employee that cares about their job will motivate other employees to strive for more. Having multiple employees that care about their job will have an infectious effect on others. This will bring the morale up in any organization or company for that matter. Having a good morale will increase the performance of the employees which will benefit the organization, and this will make it take care for its employees.

Today, maintaining a level of happiness at work has become more significant and relevant due to the intensification of work caused by many changes in the economic arena, changing paradigms at work (shorter hours of work, leisure, welfare concerns, etc.), globalization, and competition for diminishing resources, among other factors. Happiness is now a critical factor for success that company executives can no longer ignore. It is an established fact today that companies with higher than average employee happiness exhibit better financial performance and high customer care, hence high customer satisfaction. Reality has brought company executives to the realization that unless they create and maintain positive work environments and supportive leadership, as well as provide employees with freedom and autonomy, that contribute to their happiness, their organizations will not become high performing ones. Success today is largely dependent on becoming a competitive and high performing organization.

Happiness in the work place does not occur in isolation. It is important to outline the key antecedents of happiness in the work place in order to put this issue in the right context. The antecedents include such elements as organization culture, money or salary, job security, potential for growth, job autonomy, work-life balance, belonging to groups, supportive work environment, and good leadership and management. These have been discussed widely in human resources management books and journals.

Organizational culture represents the internal work environment or context created for operating an organization. It can also represent how bosses and peers treat employees. An effective organizational culture supports an employee's happiness and encourages employee satisfaction.

People work to earn money. Money or salary provides workers with sustenance, security, and privilege. Salary and job satisfaction are positively correlated. However, some people believe that job security is another important factor in determining whether employees feel happiness at work. A higher level of job security corresponds to a higher level of job satisfaction alongside a higher level of well-being. Pay raises and promotions make employees happy and provide them with job security and better performance.

Employees expect to grow in their jobs irrespective of the length of their stay in an organization. Organizations that provide their employees with the potential for higher status positions in the future make them happy and increase their productivity.

Job autonomy is the condition of being self-governing or free from excessive external control in the workplace environment. Autonomy is important to human beings because it is the foundation of human dignity and an important source of morality.

Work-life balance is a state of equilibrium, characterized by a high level of satisfaction, functionality, and effectiveness while successfully performing several tasks simultaneously.

Belonging to groups is a significant motivation for human beings. It is the need for affiliation. This is the desire to establish and maintain good relationships with others at work.

When the work environment is supportive of workers there will be satisfaction among them. Employees tend to be happier and more hardworking when they are in a good working environment.

Good leadership and management influence employees positively and make employees increase their happiness at work. Happy employees work better in pursuit of organizational goals.

Why should happiness matter the work place? Research shows that employees who are happiest at work are considered to be the most efficient and display the highest levels of performance. They also display a higher level of loyalty, as they tend to stay for far longer periods in their organizations, they stick in the organization (less turnover at work), are most likely healthier and the most engaged at work, and support their organizations relentlessly in all their engagements.

Religion as a Means Toward Happiness

For thousands of years, humans have been puzzled by the purpose of life and happiness. Over 2700 years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle said that the purpose of human existence is to achieve happiness. Happiness is a central issue in all world religions. According to religious views, happiness and suffering are both part of human existence, two sides of the same coin as it were, and every individual struggles in between on his/her earthly path towards the place of pure happiness, heaven, salvation, or paradise. The word “religion” derives from the Latin term *religio*, which means “to bind together”. Atomistic individuals are linked to family and, in terms of religion, to the larger family of followers or believers in a given religion. Religion is really about a belief in a god or gods and the activities that are connected with this belief, such as prayer or worship in a church, temple or mosque. Different religious persuasions maintain sophisticated systems and practices based on belief in a deity. All religions try to lead adherents to a place of happiness.

Judaism is considered an important religion among world religions. Happiness or *simcha* (Hebrew: שמחה) in Judaism is considered an important element in the service to God. This aspect of happiness or joy or gladness is captured well in the Christian Bible in Psalm 100 (p. 1–2). It reads: “Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all of you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before His presence with singing” (The Reformation Bible Study, New King James Version, 1995). There is no precise equivalent to the word happiness in Hebrew.

Roman Catholicism teaches that the human existence consists in felicity, the Latin equivalent to the Greek word *eudaimonia* meaning blessed happiness. This requires that human beings pursue good causes for acts that lead to happiness. Perfect happiness, or *Beatitudo*, is supposed to be the aim of the adherents and is supposed to be their obsession as this will be attained only in the world to come in God’s presence. This is then contrary to human complexities, like reason and cognition, that do also produce well-being or happiness, but such form is limited and transitory. In this temporal life, while still pursuing temporal happiness and taking pleasure in all the things, one should have a focus on the life to come and prepare for that life. For Catholics, happiness differs from mere enjoyment. Perfect happiness can only be achieved after death, however ethical behavior during

life can bring happiness and lead to salvation. The possibility of relative happiness in this life is recognized, but the importance of moral self-control is emphasized.

Protestantism is the second largest form of Christianity. It has between 800 million and 900 million adherents worldwide, or nearly 40% of all Christians. Protestants reject the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal supremacy and sacraments. Most of the Christian religions recognize the supremacy of Jesus Christ as the son of God, believe in the Trinity, and believe that Jesus Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead. However, different denominations interpret some Christian teachings differently from the others. For example, there are differences in regard to the true day of worship, resurrected life, and how non-followers of Jesus will be treated at the end time, life after death, the Eucharist, and baptism of adults and children. In spite of the differences, they all preach about true salvation and happiness as the ultimate goal of the Christian faith. There have been attempts in different quarters to rank world countries by happiness. The most popular and common ranking is the one contained in the World Happiness Report. The world's countries are ranked on the basis of happiness looked at in terms of factors such as society's view of happiness, levels of GDP, life expectancy, generosity, social support, freedom, and corruption. The surveys on happiness started in the year 2012. According to various ranking surveys the happiest nations are: Denmark, Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, Finland, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia, and Sweden. In the latest ranking, the USA ranks 13th, behind Israel and Austria. One interesting and consistent finding in these surveys is that the top ranked countries have remained in those positions and that they almost all tend to be historically Protestant. These countries are wealthy, peaceful, educated, democratic, have rule of law, and a strong civil society.

To the Protestants and their faith as contained in the Christian bible, happiness is synonymous with joy. The Christian Bible does not speak about happiness directly but speaks of joy. This is to be expressed through rejoicing always in God (Philippians 4:4). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave a summary of who is a happy Christian through the beatitudes (Luke 6, p. 20–23; Mathew 5–7). The beatitudes are in fact an expression of perfection in the life of a true Christian. The beatitudes are grouped into three categories: the first three concern the flight from sin, the next two the active life, and the last three the contemplative life. The Christian moral life is about resisting sin and detaching oneself from it, seeking the good, and, as much as possible in this life, making God the reference point in everything. Blessed are the clean of heart, whose hearts are not troubled by worldly desires and corruption, but focus on God alone even as they seek the satisfaction of their earthly needs and wants (John 14 p. 1). Blessed are the peacemakers who, seeing the beauty of God's providence and possessing the peace that follows therefrom, are able to pass that peace with joy to others. Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness in Jesus Christ. Since God is enough, even suffering is no obstacle to happiness. Those who receive the blessings will rejoice and leap with joy or happiness. The term "Blessed" is more than "fortune" or "happy". It is the fullness of joy for those who enjoy the favor of God in this world and who will enjoy his favor in the world to come.

Islam has over 2 billion followers in the world. The religion itself is nearly 1,300 years old. Practicing Muslims believe that Islam began when the last prophet, Muhammad, began receiving revelations from God. Followers of the faith recorded these revelations in the Qur'an. As with all other world religions, Islam is represented by several major branches: Sunni, Shi'a, Ibadi, Ahmadiyya, and Sufism. These branches started to develop after Muhammad's death when followers of Prophet Muhammad began to disagree on the successor of the religion. Although different, the major denominations all share some common beliefs of monotheism, holy books, etc. All the branches are guided by the holy Qur'an and share same beliefs on happiness. That is, the true way to happiness is to obey God and follow His religion. Pleasures and riches of the world should be of little consequence in the lives of the followers of Islam. Demashqeyyah, an Islam guide, gives the following quotation from the Quran to explain the common view on the meaning of happiness according to the Islamic faith: "Whoever does right, whether male or female, and is a believer, We

will make him live a good life, and We will award them their reward for the best of what they used to do". (Qur'an, 16, p. 97). Demashqeyyah observes that when this kind of happiness penetrates and fills the heart of the believer, he does in fact live in this world as if he were in Paradise. He goes on to observe that such are the people who find true happiness in this world. To reach true happiness, adherents need to know the purpose of our life, how to reach success in the hereafter, and to fulfill the requirements of reaching this success by following the commands of God as in the holy Quran. Islam therefore sees the path of happiness as an ethical path, where happiness and well-being mixes with the enlightenment and enrichment of the soul.

Buddhism is a nontheistic Indian religion and philosophy founded around the fifth century BC by Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, a notable human being who had attained enlightenment and who had sought to offer guidance out of boundless compassion to miserable human beings in order to save them from their sufferings. There is no "God" in Buddhism equivalent to the Christian God, but the religion recognizes the existence of minor gods and goddesses. Buddhism has Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path as its central principles. Buddhism teaches that someone who becomes enlightened without instruction is a Buddha. According to Buddhism, happiness is an inner feeling, a mental state, and can be achieved in earthly life by following ethical behavior that includes knowledge and respect for others and nature, as well as compassion for the needy.

Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions, according to many scholars, with roots and customs dating back more than 4,000 years. Today, with about 900 million followers, Hinduism is the third-largest religion behind Christianity and Islam. Most Hindus live in India. Hinduism is unique in that it is not a single religion but the sum total of many traditions and philosophies. The key belief in Hinduism is that a follower's biggest achievement in this world is happiness, but not the materialistic concerns. It is argued in the Hindu religion that physical or material things cannot bring fulfillment or happiness because you will always want more. To be happy one has to transcend the materialistic and physical things and go for higher things (spiritual) that really makes one happy. So what is it that we human beings want? To answer this question, Hinduism points to the four *purnusharthas*, or aims, of human life: artha, kama, dharma, and moksha. Artha and kama being material and physical wellbeing and social recognition, while Dharma is righteousness, the experience of the divine, and Moksha is ultimate happiness.

Jainism is the religion of the followers of Mahavira, the 24th *Tirthankara*, or 24th in a line of teachers espousing Jain principles. Jain philosophy states that the *jiva*, or soul, can escape the cycle of rebirth and death through strict ethical behavior. When nothing remains but the purity of the *jiva*, that person is called a *jina*, or winner, which is the origin of the term Jain. *Jina* is a happy and accomplished follower of the faith. Jainism is opposed to the craving for accumulation or Karma that burdens the soul, causing attachment and suffering, and denying a follower peace and happiness. Adherents of the faith are taught to pursue non-violence, peaceful co-existence, and love for creation. Those who are able to follow and practice the philosophy are truly the happy lot. Due to respect for created living creatures, Jainism requires a strict vegetarian lifestyle as they cannot harm animals through slaughter or other means for food.

Sikhism is a religion which began in the Punjab region of Northern India. It is founded on the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev and the nine human gurus that followed him. He received a vision to preach the way to enlightenment and God in *Sultanpur*. His views opposed the traditional worships and caste of the Hindu faith. He rejected the concept of God as many gods in all forms, shapes, creatures, created, and non-created forms. Sikhs believe that there is one universal God who is the ultimate creator, sustainer, and destroyer. Rituals, religious ceremonies, or empty worship are considered of little use and Sikhs are discouraged from fasting or going on pilgrimages. The tenets of Sikhism include: honest living/earning, tithing and giving alms, and chanting on God. Pursuance and attainment of these tenets brings happiness and joy, and gives purpose for living on earth.

Confucianism. The Chinese Confucian thinker Mencius, who had sought to give advice to ruthless political leaders during China's Warring States period, founded Confucianism. He believed

that the mind played a mediating role between the “lesser self” (the physiological self) and the “greater self” (the moral self), and that getting the priorities right between these two would lead to sage-hood. He argued that if one did not feel satisfaction or pleasure in nourishing one’s “vital force” with “righteous deeds”, then that force would shrivel or even dry up. More specifically, he focused on the experience of intoxicating joy if one celebrates the practice of the great virtues, especially through music. Doing music is equivalent to making joyful noises to the Christian God when a follower of Christ is full of happiness and joy.

Taoism, also known as Daoism, comprises a variety of related religious and philosophical traditions. Categorization of Taoist sects and movements is very controversial. The group of East Asian religions or philosophies share the concept of Tao. They may be considered as forming a group within world religions. The followers of the Taoic faiths claim at least 500 million members globally. Taoist propriety and ethics places an emphasis on the three Jewels of the Tao: love, moderation, and humility. Taoism operates within the same ancient worldview as Confucianism and Chinese folk religion. Since time immemorial, Chinese thought has been characterized by an awareness of man’s close relationship with nature and the universe, a cyclical view of time and the universe, veneration or worship of ancestors, the idea of Heaven, and belief in the divinity of the sovereign.

Both Confucianism and Taoism are best viewed as complementary rather than competitive. While Confucianism concerns itself with the social and moral side of life, Taoism focuses on the individual, spiritual life. The ideal person in philosophical Taoism is the sage who understands and lives in accordance with the Tao. Knowing that all opposites are relative and interdependent, and that the best way to live is in harmony with the natural course of things (the Tao), a Taoist does not struggle, oppose, or strive. Once this highest level of living and worship is attained, it is argued that a follower of Taoism achieves happiness and joy and interacts peacefully with others and the environment, as well as with animals and birds.

Influence of Religion on Employees’ Sense of Happiness

All religions base their beliefs on a deity, as one can already deduce from the previous sections of this chapter. Adherents of most religions naturally say prayers before undertaking activities and especially arduous tasks in order to get divine inspiration to perform. They believe in a God who directs everything. One’s religion has the capacity to influence work-related issues, such as job satisfaction, work performance, or engagement. There is support and evidence that employees who openly discuss their religious beliefs at work are often happier and have higher job satisfaction than those employees who do not (Lyons, Wessel, Ghumman, Ryan, & Kim, 2014). Studies show that employees who are open about their religion are happier at work (Science Daily, 2014). Such employees are also well engaged at work. Employee engagement has been connected to several positive effects within organizations. Employees who have a sense of teamwork, a sense of a common purpose, and a strong commitment to effective communications and managerial empowerment are able to produce excellent results as per the expectations of customers and leaders alike (Claypool, 2017). Religion encourages employees to focus on the ultimate end of life, which is happiness arising from service to God. Religious beliefs can profoundly affect how employees do their jobs. Happiness at work produces productive workers, help businesses to grow faster, helps grow motivated and engaged workers, and enables motivated workers to influence others positively, leading to overall increased productivity at work among other positive influences.

Conclusion

More than a decade of research into measuring happiness shows the importance of happiness at work. Recently, happiness has become a major area of focus at the work place because of changing

dynamics. Businesses are increasingly focusing on happiness as the key to engaging today's workers more, in an effort to excel. Happiness is subjective and therefore a concept hard to quantify, since it is multifaceted. It can be looked at from different perspectives and has many elements within it or that explain it. Several theories developed to explain happiness at work do not look at the concept through the same lens. However, the various theories considered in this chapter capture many of the key ideas relating to happiness. The more relevant theories today appear to be those based on positive psychology. However, even though a consensus of some sort is found in all world religions, there is no specific theory developed from the religious perspective to make propositions about happiness. There is, of course, agreement among all the known world religions that adherents must seek happiness and joy in their service to God and humanity as the ultimate concerns in order to hope to enjoy life in the world to come after death.

References

- Carr, A. (2004). *Positive Psychology: The Science of Happiness and Human Strengths*. Hove, Brunner-Routledge, New York, NY.
- Claypool, K. K. (2017). *Organizational Success: How the presence of happiness in the workplace affects employee engagement that leads to organizational success*. PhD thesis, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology.
- Demashqeyyah, A. (ND). *The Way To Achieve Happiness*. Retrieved from <https://www.islam-guide.com/way-to-happiness.htm>.
- Diener, E. (2000). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), January, 34–43.
- Fisher, C. D. (2010). Happiness at Work. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(4), 384–412. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2370.2009.00270.x.ISSN 1468-2370.
- Heathwood, C. (2006). Desire satisfactionism and hedonism. *Philosophical Studies*, 128(3), 539–563.
- Hill, T. E., Jr., 1991, *Autonomy and Self-Respect*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hodson, C. (2001). *Psychology and work*. New York: Routledge.
- Isaac, R. G., Zerbe, W. J., & Pitt, D. C. (2001). Leadership and motivation: The effective application of expectancy theory. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 13(2), 212–226.
- Kansas State University (2014). Employees who are open about religion are happier, study suggests. *Science Daily*, 17 December. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/12/141217113524.htm>.
- Lyons, B., Wessel, J., Ghumman, S., Ryan, A. & Kim, S. (2014). Applying models of employee identity management across cultures: Christianity in the USA and South Korea. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35(5), 678.
- McMahon, D. M. (2006). *Happiness: A history*. New York, NY: Grove Press.
- Pryce-Jones, J. (2010). *Happiness at Work*. Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, UK.
- Ryan, R. M. and E. L. Deci, 2001, On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 141–166.
- Seligman, M. E., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2014). *Positive psychology: An introduction*. Netherlands: Springer, pp. 279–298.
- Seligman, M. E. (2004). *Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment*. Simon and Schuster.
- Schermerhorn, J. R. (2010). *Introduction to Management*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Schroeder, T. (2006). Desire. *Philosophy Compass*, 1(6), 631–639.
- Sproul, R. C., (1995) *The Reformation Study Bible; The New King James Version of the Christian Bible*. Nashville: Nelson Publishers.
- Warr, P. (2007). *Work, happiness, and unhappiness*. Mahwah: Laurence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Watson, D., & Clark, L. A. (1994) "The PANAS-X: manual for the positive and negative affect schedule", The University of Iowa.