

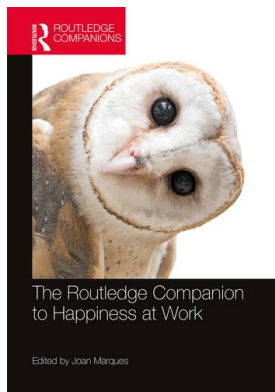
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## The Routledge Companion to Happiness at Work

Joan Marques

### Elusive Happiness

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## ELUSIVE HAPPINESS

## Does Spirituality Matter?

*Thomas Anyanje Senaji and Victor Senaji Anyanje*

### Introduction

The dawn of the new century has tagged with an emerging and exponentially accelerating force for global, societal, and organizational change that require/call for more holistic focus on four fundamental arenas that define the essence of human existence—the body (physical), mind (logical/rational thought), heart (emotions, feelings), and spirit (Moxley, 2000 in Fry, 2003). Despite this being so, the search for clarity on what constitutes happiness and what its antecedents are remain areas for empirical inquiry. Further, whether spirituality is a plausible antecedent of happiness remains an open question.

Spirituality may be defined as comprising more of individual practice, which has to do with having a sense of peace and purpose. It also relates to the process of developing beliefs around the meaning of life and connection with others.<sup>1</sup> This definition has two parts, or limbs. Limb one of this definition highlights the rudimentary components of spirituality to include individuality and peace; to which we add ‘of mind’ and purpose, which at this level constitute personal antecedents of spirituality, which we posit are then fused with limb two, which aspires to reconcile the individuality with some degree of universality whereby individuals seek peace of mind by associating with others who have near-like or share common beliefs in respect of certain aspects of life. A unity of purpose is then created that coalesces around shared beliefs that accommodate the purpose initially intended by the individual to bring about the oft elusive peace of mind. And while peace of mind is a relative state which depends on among other factors, individual perception, we opine that what spirituality does is to proffer an avenue, accepted by those ascribing to the attendant beliefs, where this state can be pursued in an environment which the believers consider as being the most likely to result to a state of peacefulness.

Spirituality which includes religious belief (such as belief in God; fear of God) is an important descriptor of culture in most African countries (e.g., Mbigi & Maree, 1995). A number of organizational failures or successes at both business and government levels still continue to be witnessed in Africa and elsewhere (e.g. Hollensbe, Wookey, Hickey & George, 2014). Since the purpose of any organization is to achieve the goal for which it was established, and since happy organization members are more likely to positively contribute to this aim, it is necessary to examine what the antecedents of happiness are, since happiness would potentially lead to desirable organizational outcomes such as reduced turnover, profitability, growth of market share, and customer satisfaction among others. In this chapter we examine spirituality as a possible antecedent to happiness and attempt to postulate possible relationships between spirituality and happiness.

Spirituality is a broad concept with room for many perspectives. In general, it includes a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves, and it typically involves a search for **meaning** in life. As such, it is a universal human experience—something that touches us all. It is the state of having a connection to God or the spirit world; an example of spirituality is praying every day (Spirituality, n.d.). Though spirituality is an important theme in health research, since a spiritual orientation can help people to cope with the consequences of a serious disease (Gaur & Sharma, 2015), it is equally important in the understanding of organizations from a leadership effectiveness perspective. Spirituality has different definitions, one of these is “a quality that goes beyond religious affiliation that strives for inspirations, reverence, awe, meaning and purpose, even in those who do not believe in any God” (Murray & Zentner, 1989, p. 259). The spirituality construct is operationalised through beliefs that are inherent and rituals that take place in organizations that are studied; and from conversations with informants based on their dispositions with regard to spirituality descriptors discerned from literature.

### Spirituality and Happiness

Research has revealed that attainment of organizational goals may depend on the leadership of these organizations. Effective leadership offers the opportunity to bend personal motivations and group norms, and environmental opportunities toward organizational objectives. This fact is aptly articulated by Cardinal Vincent Nichols in Hollensbe et al. (2014), who asserts that:

The deepest resources for the transformation of business, as for society as a whole, lie within the human heart. It is there we have to seek what it is we truly value and yearn for, and where we can harness the strongest motivation to change—ourselves, our organizations, and our world—for the better.

(p. 1227)

The Cardinal’s assertion has important spiritual implications where the resources for transformation “lie within the human heart”, with implications that there is a need to seek the deeper meaning to life and by extension, how this meaning relates to business; and in the manner in which the society relates with each other either in the context of leader–follower or follower–follower or leader–leader situations in pursuit of organizational and/or societal wellbeing.

### Spirituality

To emphasize the importance of spirituality, we present the following quote:

“How can you live without knowing what your spirit is doing and what your spirit is saying to you?”

*Caroline Myss, Anatomy of the Spirit: The Seven Stages of Power and Healing*

An often-quoted definition, more practical for everyday use, comes from Murray and Zentner (1989, p. 259, quoted in Culliford, 2002, p. 250) positing that:

In every human being there seems to be a spiritual dimension, a quality that goes beyond religious affiliation, that strives for inspiration, reverence, awe, meaning and purpose, even in those who do not believe in God. The spiritual dimension tries to be in harmony with the universe, strives for answers about the infinite, and comes essentially into focus in times of emotional stress, physical (and mental) illness, loss, bereavement and death.

(p. 259)

The foregoing quotes tend to emphasize the subconscious, the inner voice that questions our rationality especially when faced with conflicting yet tough life questions. Those which rationality as a stand-alone determinant cannot adequately decide and the catalyst, spirituality, then becomes vital and even more so, the definition of spirituality which, as depicted by Murray and Zenter (1989), transcends beyond religious persuasions. In the traditional African setting, the spirit world has oftentimes been depicted as the world between the living and the ancestors; a transit where the recently departed reside as they await admission into the ancestral world, a world revered and whose admission is based on deed with good spirits. The good spirits are often used as mediators between the ancestors and the living in times of need, while evil spirits are often used to keep the living in check by causing harm. The latter are usually condemned to roam in the spirit world forever, never to set foot in the land of promise, the revered ancestral world.

And while classical definitions of spirituality tended to concentrate on the religious, ecclesiastical, or matters concerned with the soul, current studies in spirituality adopt much wider definitions, integrating all aspects of human life and experiences (e.g., Muldoon & King, 1995; Schneiders, 1986; Fry, 2003). Further, there has been an often tense relationship between spirituality and psychology, necessitating an examination of the trans-theoretical aspects of spirituality acceptance, forgiveness, hope, prayer, and meditation (Miller, 1999). It has also been found that the understanding of the spirituality of patients is crucial to medical practitioners because it has important implications for treatment.

An examination of leadership effectiveness studies in Africa (see for example Senaji et al., 2014) points to the importance of spirituality through references such as “fear of God”, to “being religious” as some of the cultural descriptors of the African people, and to an effective leader as being one “who inspires”, and “gives hope”. These descriptions—inspiration and hope—fit within the spirituality literature which comprises purpose/vision, altruism, and hope/faith as possible dimensions of spirituality. Consequently, it would appear that effectiveness of leadership would draw substantially from the “spiritual well”. We use this metaphor to underscore the fact that water is a source of life and that wells are an important source of water in Africa given the shortage or absence of piped water to rural communities.

Two main types of spirituality, *mystical* and *social* spirituality, are discernible in existing literature. While the former is based on a desire to move beyond the material world ... beyond the senses, ego and even beyond time, and centers on personal relationships and a sense of unity with all things, the latter is often practiced by people who experience a spiritual feeling in the company of others. Social support is often seen as one of the important aspects of spirituality in general. The other type is *service spirituality*, which is a common form of spirituality in many religious faiths which are predominantly built around serving others as a form of spiritual expression. Closely related to this is *authoritarian spirituality*, which is a particularly strong form of spirituality based around a need for definition and rules. It is particularly common in specific religious practices.

Further, Ellison (1983) suggests that spirituality “enables and motivates us to search for meaning and purpose in life”. It is the spirit which synthesizes the total personality and provides some sense of energizing direction and order. The spiritual dimension does not exist in isolation from the psyche and the soma, but provides an integrative force. It affects and is affected by our physical state, feelings, thoughts, and relationships (Culliford, 2002, p. 250).

Anandarajah and Hight (2001) assert that:

The relationship between spirituality and medicine has been the focus of considerable interest in recent years. Studies suggest that many patients believe spirituality plays an important role in their lives, that there is a positive correlation between a patient’s spirituality or religious commitment and health outcomes, and that patients would like physicians to consider these factors in their medical care.

(p. 81)

By extending the medical field metaphor to the business arena, we argue that organizational health (measured through performance—effectiveness and efficiency) may be partly explained by the spiritual disposition of the organizations' members (both leaders and followers). The medical concept "health" has been widely used as a metaphor to describe the state of organizations as healthy, if organizational/business goals are being met, or unhealthy (or ailing), if the performance does not meet the expectations of various stakeholders. As already stated, effective leadership is crucial for satisfactory performance. The implication is that the more effective the leadership is, the healthier the organizations that they lead will be. Further, this "health" may result from how happy both the leaders and followers are in the organization. We extend this argument by asking whether spirituality has a role in the happiness of people and organizations. Strictly speaking, happiness is a subjective individual level concept, and therefore "organizational happiness" can only be inferred from the proportion of people that are happy in that organization. We also argue that organizational happiness can best be described as an epoch within the organization when a majority of the members feel a degree of contentment with their respective input and the resultant output where their contentment is somewhat higher than their usual level of satisfaction.

### African Spirituality

Spirituality has underpinned the very essence of many African communities since yore and still continues to underpin the current tenets of the modern African society. In the traditional African setup, significant reverence was reserved for the dead. They were believed to constitute the bridge between the living and the superior beings, *the gods*, to whom phenomena such as life, illness, death, rain, famine, thunder, lightning, and flooding amongst others were attributed; the good regarded as blessings, and the converse as curses. Amongst the Tiriki of Kenya, for example, spiritual affinity was/is characterized by reverence of ancestors. Through the initiation rights for example, the *vakhulu* were attuned to the tenets of cultural spirituality through which they were expected to live by the ethos so learned during the *idumi*. Oftentimes, the jubilation during the ceremony also depicted the emotional significance of spiritual affinity/acquiescence, sometimes characterized by the rituals invoked. The term *vakhulu* refers to that which has existed from the beginning of time as bequeathed to the presently living by ancestors; while *idumi* may be translated to mean *a secret* only reserved for and kept by those that have undergone the rite of passage by participating in the attendant ceremonies and rituals.

With traditional beliefs fast taking the form of historical footnotes and being replaced by modern alignments, most practices and emphasis on spirituality have focused on the individual. Rural-urban migration has, for example, distorted the traditional community set-up that was largely ethnicity or tribe based and coalesced a blend of town/city communities that now seek and find spiritual satisfaction predominantly through religious organizations. The ethos resultant of these associations thus define in part the modern coalition of the African spirituality that is composed, among other factors, of origin/cultural affinity, education, environment, religious beliefs, personal beliefs, and societal influence.

### Dimensions of Spirituality

By taking an integrative view of empirical literature, spiritual well-being can be defined in terms of:

a state of being capable of reflecting positive feelings, behaviours, and cognitions of relationships with oneself, others, the transcendent and nature, that in turn provide the individual with a sense of identity, wholeness, satisfaction, joy, contentment, beauty, love, respect, positive attitudes, inner peace and harmony, and purpose and direction in life.

(Gomez & Fisher, 2003)

On the basis of the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging, NICA (1975) model, Fisher (1998) conceptualized a spiritual well-being model, comprising the domains of personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental well-being, and a single global spiritual well-being dimension, and empirically tested the theoretical model which led to the development of a reliable and valid self-rating questionnaire (Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire; SWBQ), which can be used to assess spirituality.

From a leadership perspective, empirical literature suggests that spirituality comprises vision (or purpose), altruism, and faith (or hope) (e.g., Fry, 2003), while another conceptualization comprises of belief in God and search for meaning, mindfulness, and feeling of security (Hardt, Schultz, Xander, Becker, & Dragan, 2012). As a result, some of its measures were adapted from the typology by Fry (2003), comprising purpose/vision, altruism, and faith. There are overlaps between Fry (2003) and Hardt et al. (2012) with regard to purpose (search for meaning, faith/hope (belief in God)), among other subtle overlaps. In this regard, the four spirituality dimensions that largely capture spiritual dispositions that an individual may have are belief in God, search for meaning, mindfulness, and feeling of security (Hardt et al., 2012).

### **Measurement of Spirituality**

Upon conceptualization, attempts have been made to measure spirituality from a predominantly Western perspective. We now describe the measurement of these four dimensions in the context of the scale spirituality measurement scale (Hardt et al., 2012). Though there is a general lack of conceptual distinctions between religion and spirituality, efforts have been made to find this clarity (see Frey, Daaleman & Peyton, 2005). A customization of the spirituality index well-being (SIWB) questionnaire (Frey et al., 2005) can be used to capture some subtle aspects of spirituality and used to measure the spiritual disposition of leaders and followers from an African sample.

**Belief in God.** “Belief in God” and “search for meaning” can be regarded as core dimensions of spirituality, as understood by most researchers. The scale “belief in God” represents the traditional western concept of spirituality. In a bid to measure this construct, the phrasing of the items of the scale “belief in God” in a questionnaire should have the advantage of not specifying which God the participant believes in, that is, followers of all religions that incorporate deism are included.

**Search for meaning.** A second dimension of spirituality is the quest for meaning and sense in life as comprised by the scale “search for meaning” (Hardt et al., 2012), which is an essential question for self-reflecting individuals and which was emphasized in psychotherapy as the core of the “spiritual” core of man’s personality (Fromm, 1950; Frankl, 1964, quoted in Hardt et al., 2012). “Within this dimension, human beings find their quest for a meaningful existence, and the ability to overcome existential suffering” (Hardt et al., 2012, p. 119).

**Feeling of security.** Finally, the fourth subscale, “feeling of security”, characterizes a feeling of safety and trust in the world, a feeling of being at home in the world. In developmental psychology, Erikson (1998) drew a parallel to Hardt et al.’s (2012) scale with the concept of a “sense of basic trust”. According to Erikson, a child develops this “sense of basic trust” within the first few years of life as a foundation for the further development of personality. With “feeling of security”, a dimension that seems to be conceptually underdeveloped in western culture found entrance into the questionnaire. This dimension needs further development in the African context.

**Mindfulness.** Germer (2004, p. 24) asserts that:

mindfulness is a skill that allows us to be less reactive to what is happening in the moment. It is a way of relating to all experience—positive, negative, and neutral—such that our overall suffering is reduced and our sense of well-being increases.

Mindfulness is “keeping one’s complete attention to the experience on a moment-to-moment basis” (Marlatt & Kristeller, 1999, p. 68). Further, from a more Western psychological perspective, it is a cognitive process that employs creation of new categories, openness to new information, and awareness of more than one perspective (Langer, 1989).

Mindfulness can be described as a shift in the way we pay attention. Killingsworth and Gilbert (2010) found that about 47% (46.9%) of waking hours were spent thinking about what wasn’t going on, and concluded that “a human mind is a wandering mind, and a wandering mind is an unhappy mind”. They assert that “the ability to think about what is not happening is a cognitive achievement that comes at an emotional cost”. From this scientific finding, which corroborates ancient traditions including the world major religions (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Taoism), it is plausible to empirically examine the relationship between mindfulness and happiness.

Such findings would shed more light on what interventions would be necessary to improve happiness, which has been found to positively impact physical health which can be linked to longevity of human beings. It should be noted that a wandering mind is the opposite of mindfulness (see Bradt, 2010), because the latter is founded on at least three elements: that attention is held on purpose, that is, not having our mind on “autopilot”; that we are immersed in the present moment by being completely engaged in the “here and now”; and that our attention is held non-judgmentally, where we should aim not to control it by labelling or creating stories, but to be watchers of events. In a study that used a smartphone technology to sample people’s ongoing thoughts, feelings, and actions, Killingsworth & Gilbert (2010) found (i) that people are thinking about what is not happening almost as often as they are thinking about what is, and (ii) that doing so typically makes them unhappy. The whole essence of mindfulness is to be able to live in harmony with yourself and with the world around you.

**Mindfulness measure.** Mindfulness, is the conscious perception of others and the environment. The concept is reflected in various eastern religions, particularly in Buddhism (Suzuki, Fromm, & Martino, 1972). In recent time, it has found some entrance into psychotherapy research (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Lakey et al., 2007). In brief, it describes the development of equanimity (one of the four divine states in Buddhism), overcoming emotional reactivity, and developing friendliness, tolerance, gentleness, placidity, and acceptance (Grossmann & Grossmann, 2007). Mindfulness also includes conscious and attentive contact with others.

## Happiness

Happiness is commonly understood as how much one likes the life one lives, or more formally, the degree to which one evaluates one’s life—as-a-whole positively. A central element in this definition is subjective “evaluation” or “liking” of life, also referred to as “satisfaction” with life (Veenhoven, 2009, p. 45). An earlier definition is by Jeremy Bentham (1789) who defined happiness as the “sum of pleasures and pains”. This definition implies that an evaluation of happiness should comprise all aspects of a person’s life, such as both positive and negatives, pleasant and unpleasant, and successes and failures.

To understand the concept of happiness, we reproduce excerpts of happiness as defined by other contributors.

What is the one thing that all sentient beings desire? Is it not happiness? In the final analysis, are not all our desires just various forms of our one fundamental desire to be happy?

*Michael D A James, 2012, p. 49. Happiness and the Art of Being*

Our desire for happiness is the driving force behind all the countless forms of effort that we are always making. We do not do anything – whether through mind, speech or body – that

is not driven by our fundamental desire to be happy. Each and every one of our actions is motivated by our desire to be perfectly happy.

*Michael D A James, 2012, p. 49. Happiness and the Art of Being*

Happiness is the only good. The place to be happy is here. The time to be happy is now. The way to be happy is to make others so.

*Robert Ingersoll (1833–1899)*

The happy life is to an extraordinary extent the same as the good life.’

*Bertrand Russell (1872–1970)*

Difficult as it may be to achieve a universally accepted definition of happiness, and whilst most of its elements may find universal acclaim, we define the human quest for happiness as that pursuit where the purpose one seeks to fulfil results in satisfaction to a degree deemed by the self as comprising a feeling of contentment beyond that which one would otherwise consider ordinary. Happiness need not necessarily be the fundamental desire, it just may occur as result of fulfilling other fundamental desires, such as maintaining a healthy diet.

Furthermore, while Eckhart Tolle posits that each person has a treasure within them that is infinitely greater than anything the world can offer, the Dalai Lama suggests that the main cause of happy life is within us. Here, the paragon of self is echoed, reminding us of the innate power we possess that can be invoked in times when we are faced with adversity. This power is especially potent in determining how we respond to such adversity, as this is certainly apt to affect how we feel after.

In its widest sense, the word “happiness” is an umbrella term for all that is good. Through this meaning, it is often used interchangeably with terms like “wellbeing” or “quality of life” and denotes both individual and social welfare (Veenhoven, 2015). In this context, it is possible to suggest that the degree of evaluation of wellbeing or quality of life would indicate the degree of happiness. The word “happiness” refers to a judgment, which integrates all the appreciation criteria used. Thus, the idea that someone has all that s/he has ever desired does not necessarily make a person happy. This is to say, despite all material endowments, such a person may feel pain or be depressed. Similarly, the appraisal that one’s life is “exciting” does not necessarily mark oneself as happy either; life may be too exciting to be enjoyable. A Chinese curse says: “May you have interesting times” (Veenhoven, 2015, p. 3).

From a psychologist’s view point, happiness is part of subjective well-being. According to Veenhoven (2015), happiness denotes a subjective appreciation of life by an individual. So there is no given “objective” standard for happiness. A person who thinks he/she is happy, really is happy, even if that person is misinformed. Drawing from this understanding, the elements of subjective well-being are happiness, satisfaction with life, and emotional stability. While happiness is an emotional state about how you feel about yourself and the world, satisfaction with life is a more global judgment about your acceptance with your life, and more of a cognitive assessment. On the other hand, emotional stability is comprised of a low level of neuroticism and a lack of serious personality flaws. In this regard, neurosis is a “poor ability to adapt to one’s environment, an inability to change one’s life patterns, and the inability to develop a richer, more complex, more satisfying personality” (Boeree, 2002). It can be discerned from literature that satisfaction may be closely related to happiness though the two concepts are conceptually distinct. Appropriate perception of self and the environment comprises mindfulness (Suzuki et al., 1972).

Happiness is highly valued in present day society. Not only do people aim at happiness in their own life, but there is also growing support for the idea that we should care for the happiness of other people and that governments should aim at creating greater happiness for a greater number of citizens (Bentham, 1789, cited in Veenhoven, 2009). After “justice”, “equality”, and “freedom”, “happiness” is one of the end-values of modern welfare states (Veenhoven, 1991, p. 5) who further notes that



happiness has two components which comprise the encompassing judgment (the core concept) which is “overall happiness”, a synonym for which is “life-satisfaction”. These components are referred to as “hedonic level of affect” (affective component), which relates to the degree to which various affects that someone experiences are pleasant in character, and “contentment” (cognitive component), which relates to the degree to which an individual perceives that his/her aspirations are met. The distinction between “affective” and “cognitive” aspects of happiness is quite common in the literature, but seeing these as components of overall happiness is not (Veenhoven, 2015).

**Hedonic level of affect.** Hedonic level of affect is different from “mood” because we may experience different moods such as elated mood, each of which with “hedonic tone” or “pleasantness”. Thus the hedonic level of affect concerns only the pleasantness experienced in affects; that is, the pleasantness in feelings and in emotions, as well as in moods. In this regard, a high hedonic level may be based on strong but passing emotions of love, as well as on moods of steady calmness, while a low level may be a result of rejection. A person’s average hedonic level of affect can be assessed over different periods of time: an hour, a week, or a year, as well as over a lifetime. The focus here is on a “characteristic” hedonic level which is the average over a long timespan, such as a month or a year. It should be noted that hedonic level of affect does not presume subjective awareness of that average level.

**Contentment.** This presupposes that the individual has developed some conscious wants and has formed an idea about their realization, and concerns an individual’s subjective perception. When we assess the degree to which our wants are being met, we may look both backwards and forwards. We may assess what life has brought up to now and may estimate what it is likely to yield in the future. This concept concerns the case where someone combines both the past and the future in an assessment. In this regard, the degree to which the aspirations may have been met would suggest a high degree of happiness and vice versa.

Scholars define happiness as subjective enjoyment of life (e.g., Veenhoven, 2009). According to Kalmijn and Veenhoven (2005), the word “happiness” is used in various ways. However, in the widest sense it is an umbrella term for all that is good. In this meaning it is often used interchangeably with terms like ‘wellbeing’ or ‘quality of life’ and denotes both individual and social welfare. From the foregoing, “Overall happiness is the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his/her own life-as-a-whole favorably. In other words: how much one likes the life one leads” (Veenhoven, 2015).

In the past, hedonists used to equate happiness with sensory pleasures only; however, there are more modes of appreciation. Apart from the sensory system, cognition and affect also enable individuals to appraise their life. Thus, evaluations also involve cognitive appraisals, based on aspirations, expectations, and values. The evaluation also draws on affective conditions, in particular on average mood. Some components of happiness include family, religious affinity, sound health, financial stability, cooperation, ability to execute tasks, hobbies, and peace of mind.

**Measuring Satisfaction.** An example of a scale to measure satisfaction, an element of wellbeing, is the Edward Diener Subjective Well-being (SWB) scale. This is a seven-point Likert type scale on satisfaction where a respondent is asked to score statements on satisfaction ranging from “not at all true” (1) and “absolutely true” (7). Typical statements on satisfaction on which the respondent is expected to evaluate as true are presented as Table 18.1.

Based on the example (Table 18.1), the scoring for the Edward Diener SWB scale is as follows: 31–35 Extremely satisfied; 26–30 Very satisfied; 21–25 Slightly satisfied; 20 Neutral point; 15–19 Slightly dissatisfied; 10–14 Dissatisfied; and 5–9 Extremely dissatisfied.

It is emphasized that “when evaluating the favourableness of our life, we tend to use two more or less distinct sources of information: our affects and our thoughts” (Veenhoven, 2015, p. 5), suggesting that both the hedonic and the cognitive components of happiness should be evaluated in order to arrive at an overall happiness state of an individual.

Table 18.1 Satisfaction with Life Scale.

Statement on satisfaction...	Not at all true		Moderately true			Absolutely true	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 In most ways my life is close to my ideal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 The conditions of my life are excellent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 I am satisfied with my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 So far I have gotten the important things I want in life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Measurement of happiness.** In some literature, satisfaction is used as a proxy for happiness, see for example the SWB for satisfaction, where it would be expected that the more satisfied people are, the happier they would be. However, happiness can also be measured using the 29-item Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002) and other psychometrically validated questionnaires such as the well-being questionnaires (e.g., Williams, Pendlebury, Thopmas, & Smith, 2017). Hills and Argyle (1989) have reported an internal reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of 0.90 for the OHI, and studies have also supported its construct and concurrent validity (e.g. Argyle, Martin & Crossland, 1989). This notwithstanding, Veenhoven (2015) provides dimensions along which satisfaction can be measured and concludes that though happiness can be inferred from human “satisfaction” evaluations, happiness is discerned from a combination of “life results and inner qualities” which leads to satisfaction with life. Specifically, “enduring satisfaction with life-as-a-whole” which is what happiness is; this is the meaning the utilitarian philosophers (e.g., Bentham, 1789) had in mind when talking about happiness.

### Psychological Components of the Subjective Well-Being

We argue here that satisfaction may lead to happiness and examine some psychological components of subjective wellbeing (SWB), being cognizant of the fact that happiness is an important dimension of subjective wellbeing. The psychological components of the SWB by Ed Diener and David Myers are high self-esteem, sense of perceived control, extroversion, positive social relationships, and sense of meaning and purpose as follows:

**High self-esteem.** This is the most important predictor of SWB. While western cultures value individual achievement and success, eastern and most African cultures value group success. It is noted that self-esteem is tied to group membership.

**Sense of perceived control.** This is the belief of having some measure of control over life events. Another term associated with this concept is locus of control (Ayedemi-Bello, 2001), where the internal locus is the best state to be in. There is a newer term for this, namely personal control, which is the belief that you can affect outcomes.

However, the reality in life is that we are not always in control: Some occasions may turn over control where we relinquish perceived control. There may be a hurricane, floods, or acts of God where control over such events that are outside your capabilities. There is therefore a need for wisdom, to know when to depend on this belief.

**Extroversion.** This manifests as higher SWB in people who are interested in things outside themselves. Extroverts generally have higher SWB, they seek and enjoy the company of others. However, this does not mean that all introverts are unhappy. Introverts prefer to join a few close friends. Extroverts exhibit optimism and are of “explanatory style”.

Optimism is a “a tendency to expect the best possible outcome; to dwell on the most hopeful aspect of a situation” (Optimism, n.d.) and to look to the future with hope and positive expectations with the associated optimistic explanatory style. An example of this style is as follows: consider the situation of a student and a professor where the professor does not return the student’s phone call about writing a recommendation. In this situation, the explanatory style can be positive or negative:

- **Negative:** my professor hates me; he is ignoring me.
- **Positive:** my professor is out of town, will respond when he returns; make another call in a week.

Based on this example and empirical support, it would appear that the explanatory style adopted would either lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction, a disposition that would impact happiness.

**Positive social relationships.** There is a high correlation of SWB with satisfaction with family and friends. It also involves social support and emotional intimacy which is important for physical and psychological health. Positive social relationships are the strongest external source of SWB. It is noted that social contact is a better predictor of subjective wellbeing than wealth, education, or career. To reiterate the importance of social contact, it is instructive to appreciate the importance of family guard against being a rare person who, as his life draws to a close, wishes he had spent more time with the family rather than at work.

**Sense of meaning and purpose.** This element of subjective wellbeing is defined as spirituality by some scholars. However, it is the quest for meaning and sense in life; within this dimension, human beings find their quest for a meaningful existence, and the ability to overcome existential suffering (Hardt et al., 2012). It does not have to be religious. It is the belief that your life is connected to a greater good and that your life will make a difference.

### Ingredients of Happiness

In life, there are things that will satisfy someone and those that will make them dissatisfied. This is rooted in theories of motivation which attempt to explain human behavior. Since at the core of any motivation is a need, we suggest that once a human need has been met, they will experience some level of satisfaction which can be an antecedent of happiness. In this regard, some of the ingredients of happiness include good health, friends, being good to other people, curiosity, religion or beliefs, learning new things, and completing a difficult task.

However, happiness does not appear to come easy (see Johnson, 2008).<sup>2</sup> For example, negative emotions (fear, anger, despair) are for *survival*. Similarly, positive emotions (curiosity, delight, interest, joy, etc.) are for *growth*. Consequently, the search for happiness has preoccupied man since the cradle of man, or even since creation as recorded in most sacred religious texts. In this regard, the path to happiness lies in discovering our true paths—our meaning, appreciating the lives we have (not the ones we want)—gratitude, and recognizing who we really are—authenticity and self-acceptance (Myss, 2011). On the basis of this assertion, we can argue that nearly all people are capable of much more happiness than they have by being able to see their potential, and being able to create opportunities to invest in their own highest and best self. This leads to the question of: what is it that prevents people from seeing their potential and creating opportunities to invest in their own highest and best?

### Propositions on Spirituality and Happiness

Previous empirical studies (e.g., Francis & Katz, 2000; Gomez & Fisher, 2003) have shown that happiness is correlated positively with extraversion and negatively with neuroticism, which are personal psychological factors associated with the well-being of an individual. Also, happiness is not

correlated with psychoticism. Given this finding, it can be argued that if spiritual well-being domains provide additional variance to the prediction of happiness over the personality dimensions included here, it would imply support for the incremental validity of spiritual well-being. We note that since psychological states such as extraversion and neuroticism may reflect the spiritual well-being of an individual, is possible that spirituality may have important implications for happiness. As Veenhoven (2015, p. 6). notes, “there are good reasons to assume that overall life-satisfaction is mostly inferred from affective experience”, while as Gomez & Fisher (2003) observe, spiritual well-being can also be defined in terms of, among others, satisfaction, which has been found to constitute part definition of happiness.

### **Mindfulness and Happiness**

As posited by Grossmann & Grossmann (2007), mindfulness describes the development of equanimity (one of the four divine states in Buddhism), overcoming emotional reactivity, and developing friendliness, tolerance, gentleness, placidity, and acceptance. It also includes conscious and attentive contact with others and the external environment in which we live—including consciousness about the sustainability of the planet. Based on the reviewed literature we therefore propose that:

P1: There is a significant relationship between an individual’s mindfulness disposition and his/her happiness.

### **Happiness and Security**

A “feeling of security” characterizes a feeling of safety and trust in the world, a feeling of being at home in the world. In developmental psychology, Erikson (1998) drew a parallel to Hardt et al.’s (2012) scale with the concept of a “sense of basic trust”. According to Erikson, a child develops this “sense of basic trust” within the first few years of their life, as a foundation for further development of personality. This analogy can be extended to people in an organization where it may imply the extent to which employees feel that the job is guaranteed in the foreseeable future. If this be the case, then they will be “relaxed”, knowing that a paycheck will be forthcoming. However, if this is not the case, they will be unsettled, not knowing what the future holds for them. This situation will have them worried and therefore not at their happiest levels. From the spiritual point of an individual, a sense of insecurity may set in when someone is faced with the prospect of profound loss either through loss of a loved one or self. In this regard, a person’s ability to cope will depend on the social support around them and their belief in “life after death”. On this basis we propose that even in the face of adversity:

P2: There is a significant relationship between feeling of security and happiness such that the more one feels secure the happier they will be.

### **Personal Factors and Happiness**

Further, Eysenck (1983), found that happiness is comprised of a high level of extraversion and low neuroticism, in that the positive affect in happiness is related to the high and pleasant sociability and interactions with others that constitute extraversion, and the low worries, anxieties, and negative affect that constitute neuroticism. Based on this and other previous findings, we further propose that:

P3: Personal factors have a significant relationship with happiness such that the relationship will be positive for extroverts but negative for introverts.

## Search for Meaning

The notion “search for meaning” is widely documented in literature, including in religious texts. To illustrate man’s search for meaning, we make reference to Viktor Frankl, a concentration camp survivor, who emphasizes the belief that you can find a purpose in life even in terrible condition; and that to give up hope is to give up the will to live (see e.g., Leach, 2018). Some medical study shows that people respond to traumatic stress by developing extreme apathy, giving up hope, and relinquishing the will to live despite no obvious organic cause (Leach, 20218, p. 14). Human beings are in a quest for a meaningful existence, and the ability to overcome existential suffering (Hardt et al., 2012). In this regard, they may draw from their spiritual resources at personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental levels which are dimensions of spiritual well-being (NICA, 1975; Fisher, 2011; Gomez & Fisher, 2003). Based on this observation it may be plausible to propose that:

- P4: The search for meaning is significantly related to happiness such that the more an individual actively seeks for opportunities to improve their lives the happier they will be.

## Happiness by Discovering True Paths

The reviewed literature suggests a question as to what prevents people from realizing their full potential. This question is important because from the cognitive dimension of happiness and based on the Multiple Discrepancy Theory (Michalos, 1985), it should be possible to endeavor to predict the future happiness disposition of an individual. This can be possible if we can psychometrically conduct an assessment based on the propositions by Myss (2011); specifically, that the path to happiness lies in discovering our true paths—our meaning, appreciating the lives we have (not the ones we want)—gratitude, and recognizing who we really are which implies authenticity and self-acceptance. This presents an opportunity to generate empirical knowledge to improve happiness in the workplace. Consequently, we propose that:

- P5: Psychological complements of subjective well-being have a significant relationship with an individual’s happiness such that the more favorable the psychological components are, the happier the individual will be.

## Discussion

Based on the foregoing, we posit that spirituality and happiness, albeit with the caveat of vast meanings or definitions that may be attributed to them, can impact human existence in the various amphitheatres of life. Through the two concepts, a certain ethos may be accepted as basic for the attainment of certain life goals. If concern for another is regarded as a component of spirituality, an adherent of such a belief would gain satisfaction by going the extra mile to meet or uphold such ethos, or, even if such an end is not attained, some degree of contentment would attach to the effort expended in pursuit of that end. This aspect of spirituality finds expression in mindfulness, a spirituality dimension (e.g., Grossmann & Grossmann, 2007 cited in Hardt 2017) which also includes conscious and attentive contact with others.

Most scholars stress contentment, for instance Andrews & Withey (1976) suggest that individuals compute a weighted average of earlier life—aspect evaluations of happiness. In this case, favorable earlier life aspect evaluations would suggest a high degree of happiness. Similarly, Michalos’ (1985) multiple discrepancy theory assumes comparisons of life in terms of what a person has and wants (aspiration-achievement gap) and the use of this comparison as a basis of evaluation of happiness. However, as Veenhoven (2015, p. 6) notes, “there are good reasons to assume that overall life-satisfaction is mostly inferred from affective experience”. Besides, how life should be is a subjective

test that is dependent on individual perceptions of what constitutes a fulfilling life, based on factors such background, upbringing, values, and achievement. Another reason is that life-as-a-whole is not a suitable object for calculative evaluation. Life has many aspects and there is usually not one clear-cut ideal model it can be compared to. Another reason seems to be that affective signals tend to dominate; seemingly cognitive appraisals are often instigated by affective cues (Zajonc, 1980, cited in Veenhoven, 2015). This latter point fits the theory that the affective system is the older in evolutionary terms, and that cognition works as an addition to this navigation system rather than a replacement.

The terms “quality-of-life”, “wellbeing” and “happiness” denote different meanings, and are sometimes used as an umbrella term for everything of value, and the other times to denote special merits (Veenhoven, 2000). These concepts have been classified according to two bi-partitions or dichotomies, between life ‘chances’ and life ‘results’, and between ‘outer’ and ‘inner’ qualities. These dichotomies imply four qualities of life: 1) livability of the environment, 2) life-ability of the individual, 3) external utility of life, and 4) inner appreciation of life. It has been found that the “most inclusive measure of happiness is still how long and happily people live” (Veenhoven, 2000, p. 1).

### **Belief in God and Happiness**

Whereas many proponents of traditional African practices would posit that God is a creation of western religion, all factions (excluding atheists) acknowledge the existence of a superior being from whom the unfathomable originates. They agree that happiness is oft resultant of deeds that are the desires or commands of the superior being, and would therefore consistently seek to live by the script of the being to whom they pledge allegiance in the hope of ultimate satisfaction as a reward for abiding by the rules.

### **Mindfulness and Happiness**

Mindfulness is the conscious perception of others and the environment. The concept is reflected in various eastern religions, particularly in Buddhism (Fromm et al., 1972). In recent time, it has found some entrance into psychotherapy research (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Lakey, Campbell, et al., 2007). In brief, it describes the development of equanimity (one of the four divine states in Buddhism), overcoming emotional reactivity, and developing friendliness, tolerance, gentleness, placidity, and acceptance (Grossmann & Grossmann, 2007). Mindfulness also includes conscious and attentive contact with others. In this regard, it would be of interest to examine what aspects of mindfulness would more strongly predict happiness at both the hedonic and cognitive levels.

### **Search for Meaning and Happiness**

By consciously seeking to understand why we exist and what we should do to better our lives, it can be possible to navigate through the vagaries of life more effectively. Through this disposition, it would be possible to more appropriately interpret life events and what they mean for our collective life. As posited by Hardt et al. (2012), human beings are in a quest for a meaningful existence, and the ability to overcome existential suffering. This ability to overcome life difficult would arise from fortitude which is an important virtue as espoused by most religions including the Catholic religion. This is similarly the case with the African religions, such as in the rituals of the Tiriki (an ethnic group among the Luhya tribe) of western Kenya during the rite of passage of boys into manhood. During this period, perseverance in the face of adversity, an aspect of fortitude virtue, is strongly emphasized where the ability to withstand difficult situations is tested. In this regard, we suggest that it would be of interest to examine the antecedents of mindfulness among people for the purpose of

generating knowledge that would assist in developing appropriate levels of mindfulness, since this is an important dimension of spirituality that may have the potential to predict happiness.

### Feelings of Security and Happiness

Feelings of security characterizes a feeling of safety and trust in the world, a feeling of being at home and at peace in the world notwithstanding the fact that the world may be laden with all manner of problems such as war, hunger, disease, discrimination, and even the prospect of death. It may therefore be plausible to suggest that a person's ability to cope will depend on the social support around them and their belief in "life after death". On this basis we propose that even in the face of adversity one would still feel secure within the available social support (see also Argyle & Lu, 1990). Thus, the more one feels secure, the more likely they will be contented arising from a positive evaluation of life as a whole (see e.g. Veenhoven, 2015).

### Conclusion and Implications

The foregoing paragraphs have suggested some degree of correlation between spirituality and happiness. However, and in the wake of mushrooming religious associations in modern-day Africa, research on the relationship of the two concepts is necessary. Whether spirituality and belief in God comprise the same transaction should also offer insight on whether religion contributes to spirituality and happiness. This review has covered the two concepts of spirituality and happiness, and attempted to point to the possible relationships between them and the need to examine the proposed relationships.

Our review has some implications. The dynamism of the modern society has made it necessary to be proactive in order to survive, remain competitive, and tap into new opportunities. It is little wonder therefore that the pursuit for spirituality has resulted in a significant boom in religious associations in modern day Africa, where congregants coalesce in pursuit of both spiritual nourishment and personal happiness, and this is an area where research can offer significant insight on whether to condemn or embrace such affiliations in the wake of a knowledge society that is increasingly challenging the conventional. Specifically, there is a need to empirically test the instruments developed in the west and the east in the African context to determine the similarities and differences in the conceptualization of both spirituality and happiness. Further, we suggest that practitioners, particularly in management and in the medical field, need to place more emphasis on spirituality and happiness because these two appear to have greater potential for the wellbeing of society if harnessed in the day to day operations. Empirical evidence should also be generated on the relative significance of both the affective (hedonic) and the cognitive dimensions of happiness in order to guide practice.

### Notes

- 1 What is spirituality? Retrieved 8 June 2016 from <http://au.reachout.com/what-is-spirituality>.
- 2 See *Enjoy Life: Keys to Increasing Happiness* by Dr. Elbel. See also <https://slideplayer.com/slide/3619074/>.

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