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Subjective well-being in organizations

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Abstract

This chapter focuses on the concept of subjective well-being in organizations. We use the circumplex model of affect as a theoretical framework to distinguish between specific types of work-related subjective well-being, including work engagement, job satisfaction, happiness at work, workaholism, and burnout. In addition, we will link positive types of work-related SWB to job performance. Specific attention is paid to capturing the dynamics of SWB in work settings on a daily basis.

Keywords: Burnout; Employee engagement; Happiness; Job satisfaction; Subjective well-being; Workaholism.

1. Introduction

Modern organizations expect their employees to be proactive and show initiative, take responsibility for their own professional development, and to be committed to high-quality performance standards. Thus employees are needed who feel energetic and dedicated – organizations need engaged workers (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). This is illustrated by Ulrich (1997), who writes in his seminal book *Human Resources Champions*: “Employee contribution becomes a critical business issue because in trying to produce more output with less employee input, companies have no choice but to try to engage not only the body but the mind and soul of every employee” (p. 125).

Research has shown that about 85% of all employees in the European Union (Parent-Thirion, Fernández-Macías, Hurley & Vermeulen, 2007) and 86% of all employees in the USA (Handel, 2005) are (very) satisfied with their jobs. Do these high levels of job satisfaction coincide with high levels of job performance or is more needed than job satisfaction alone? In recent years, a growing number of researchers have focused on positive indicators of Subjective Well-Being (SWB), including job satisfaction (Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001), work engagement (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008), and happiness at work (e.g., Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008; Warr, 2009).

This chapter focuses on the concept of positive SWB in organizations. In particular, we will use the circumplex model (Russell, 1980, 2003) as a broad theoretical framework to distinguish between positive and negative types of work-related well-being. Positive indicators of SWB include work engagement, happiness at work, and job satisfaction. Negative indicators include workaholism and burnout. In addition, we will

discuss the impact of positive work-related SWB on job performance. We will argue that a combination of high pleasure and high activation is needed for optimal job performance. We will close this chapter with a description of exciting new ways to capture the link between positive forms of SWB at work and job performance on an intra-individual and daily basis by using diary study designs and the day reconstruction method.

2. Defining subjective well-being

Subjective well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. This evaluation may take the form of cognitions when a person makes a conscious evaluative judgment about his or her satisfaction with life as a whole. However, the evaluation of one's life may also be in the form of affect, i.e. as the experience of unpleasant or pleasant emotions in reaction to life. Thus, a person is said to have high SWB if he or she is (a) satisfied with his or her life; and (b) experiences frequent positive emotions such as joy and happiness, and infrequent negative emotions such as sadness and anger (Diener, Sandvik & Pavot, 1991).

2.1 The circumplex model of affect

How can experiences of positive emotions be further defined? Russell's (1980, 2003) circumplex model proposes that affective states arise from two fundamental neurophysiological systems, one related to a pleasure–displeasure continuum and the other to arousal, activation, or alertness. Each emotion can be understood as a linear combination of these two dimensions as varying degrees of both pleasure and activation (see Figure 1). Specific emotions arise out of patterns of activation within these two neurophysiological systems, together with interpretations and labeling of these emotional experiences.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

For instance, the degree of activation while experiencing positive (pleasurable) emotions varies considerably (Freedmann, 1978; Warr, 2007). Feeling calm and content implies a lower level of activation compared to feeling happy, engaged, excited or enthusiastic. Similarly, unpleasant emotions may range from “feeling bored or depressed” to “feeling upset, anxious or tense”. The circumplex model emphasizes that emotions are not discrete and isolated entities but instead are interrelated based on the two neurophysiological systems of pleasure and activation. Corroborating this, researchers have long noted the difficulty that people have in assessing, discerning, and describing their own emotions (Saarni, 1999). This difficulty suggests that individuals recognize emotions as ambiguous and overlapping experiences. Similar to the spectrum of color, emotions seem to lack the discrete borders that would clearly differentiate one emotion from another (Russell & Fehr, 1994). Indeed, researchers exploring the subjective experience of emotion have noted that emotions are highly intercorrelated both within and between the persons reporting them (Russell & Carroll, 1999). Using statistical techniques such as multidimensional scaling and factor analysis of subjective reports of emotional words, faces, and experiences, research has repeatedly yielded two-dimensional (2-D) models of affective experience (Lang, Bradley, & Cuthbert, 1998; Larsen & Diener, 1992; Russell, 1980; Thayer, 1989).

3. Work-related subjective well-being

Applying Diener et al.’s (1991) definition of SWB to the workplace, an employee has high work-related SWB if he or she is (a) satisfied with his/her job and (b) experiences frequent positive emotions and infrequent negative emotions. The former

refers to job satisfaction as a cognitive evaluation of one's job. The latter refers to positive emotions employees experience at work indicative of engagement, happiness or satisfaction (as an affective experience). In contrast, employees who experience mainly negative emotions at work may suffer from burnout or workaholism. Further on, employees may either experience high activation levels (workaholism, engagement, happiness) or low activation (satisfaction, burnout) at work. In this section, we discuss positive and negative forms of work-related SWB in more detail and we place them within the circumplex model of affect as demonstrated in Figure 2.

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

3.1 Positive Forms of Work-related SWB

3.1.1 Work engagement

Work engagement is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the circumplex model as it resembles high levels of pleasure and activation (see Figure 2). Work engagement is most often defined as "... a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002, p. 74). In engagement, fulfillment exists in contrast to the voids of life that leave people feeling empty as in burnout. Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work, and experiencing a sense of significance and enthusiasm. Absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work. Note that there are other perspectives on work engagement in the literature as well (e.g., Kahn, 1990; Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010; Rothbard & Patil, this volume).

In essence, work engagement captures how workers experience their work: as stimulating and energetic and something to which they really want to devote time and effort (the *vigor* component); as a significant and meaningful pursuit (*dedication*); and as engrossing and interesting (*absorption*; Bakker et al., 2008). Research has revealed that engaged employees are highly energetic, self-efficacious individuals who exercise influence over events that affect their lives (Schaufeli et al., 2001). Because of their positive attitude and high activity level, engaged employees create their own positive feedback, in terms of appreciation, recognition, and success (Bakker, 2009; Rothbard & Patil, this volume). Engaged employees often indicate that their enthusiasm and energy also appears outside work, for example in sports, creative hobbies, and volunteer work. Engaged employees are no supermen – they do feel tired after a long day of hard work. However, they describe their tiredness as a rather pleasant state because it is associated with positive accomplishments. Finally, engaged employees are not addicted to their work. They enjoy other things outside work and, unlike workaholics, they do not work hard because of a strong and irresistible inner drive, but because for them working is fun (Schaufeli, Taris & Bakker, 2006).

The most often used instrument to measure engagement is the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010; Schaufeli et al., 2002) that includes a subscale for each of the three engagement dimensions: vigor, dedication and absorption. The UWES has been validated in several countries in Europe, but also in North America, Africa, Asia, and Australia (Bakker, 2009).

3.1.2 Happiness at work

Several researchers (e.g., Cropanzano & Wright, 1999; Easterlin, 2001; Lyubomirski, 2001; Seligman, 2002) have equated the term SWB with the term happiness. In this chapter, however, we will treat happiness as a positive form of SWB, equating high pleasure and moderate levels of activation. Being happy refers to somewhat higher levels of activation as being satisfied or content and somewhat lower compared to being enthusiastic, or excited (see Figure 2).

More than 90% of all people agree with the statement “a happy worker is a productive worker” (Fisher, 2003). Why? One explanation could be that happy individuals are more active, approach-oriented, energetic, interested in their work, sympathetic to their colleagues and persistent in the face of difficulties compared to unhappy employees. Another explanation is that employees’ happiness may generate more job-related resources. For instance, happy employees may act in a pleasant way so that colleagues are more inclined to provide instrumental, social, or emotional support.

Happiness is often operationalized by a single question (e.g., how happy are you?; Veenhoven, 1984). It is important to distinguish happiness as a specific emotion from other measures that cover a whole range of positive and negative emotions. One example is the Job Affect Scale (JAS) which includes various emotional states at work (e.g., excited, happy, relaxed, nervous) that are felt by employees during the preceding week (Brief, Burke, George, Robinson, & Webster, 1988; Burke, Brief, George, Robertson, & Webster, 1989). Another popular measure is the positive affect and negative affect scale (PANAS), consisting of 10 positive affect and 10 negative affect items (Watson & Clark, 1992). In line with other researchers (e.g. Fredrickson, 2001), however, we argue that it is important to differentiate between various types of positive emotions (e.g., based on both

pleasure and activation levels) to better understand consequences of SWB in the workplace.

3.1.3 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is probably the most studied form of work-related SWB at this point in time. Satisfaction – as a form of affect - can be positioned in the right lower quadrant of Figure 2, as it reflects a high level of pleasure and a low level of activation. Locke (1969) defined job satisfaction as a “pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job” (p.317). Employees who are satisfied with their jobs experience high pleasure, but may have limited energy or aspirations (Grebner, Semmer & Elfering, 2005). For instance, employees in this low activation - high pleasure quadrant may recognize that their job is not ideal, but realize that it could be worse. According to Büssing, Bissels, Fuchs and Perrar (1999), a decrease in level of aspiration could result in a positive state of satisfaction. This may explain the high percentage of satisfied workers often found in attitudinal studies.

It is important to distinguish between *overall* measures of job satisfaction that reflect an affective evaluation of the job, and *facet-specific* measures of job satisfaction that reflect a more cognitive evaluation of being satisfied with individual facets of the job. *Overall* job satisfaction is often assessed with a single item. For instance, Kunin (1955) developed an outline of faces that range from unhappy to happy. Later versions have varied the number of faces, as well as gender (Dunham & Herman, 1975). More recently, asexual smiley faces are used (Warr, 2007). Single item assessments often boil down to questions like “all things considered, how satisfied are you with your job in general?” As

such, *overall* job satisfaction is closely related to the experience of satisfaction as a positive emotion in the workplace.

Alternatively, separate satisfaction items may cover specific features of the job. For instance, twenty specific job features are covered in the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). In such questionnaires, “intrinsic” job features are often distinguished from “extrinsic” features. For instance, satisfaction may be focused on job content (e.g., the amount of cognitive and physical workload, or autonomy in the job) or extrinsic features (e.g., one’s salary). Another facet-specific measure of job satisfaction is the Job Descriptive Index (JDI; Kinicki, McKee-Ryan, Schriesheim & Carlson, 2002) that covers five different aspects of the job: satisfaction with work itself, pay, promotion opportunities, supervision and coworkers. As such, facet specific measures of job satisfaction represent a rather cognitive evaluation of one’s job.

3.2 Negative Forms of Work-related SWB

3.2.1 Workaholism

In the circumplex model, workaholism is positioned in the upper left quadrant, as it reflects low(er) levels of pleasure and a high level of activation regarding work. Workaholism is defined as a strong inner drive to work excessively hard (Oates, 1971; Schaufeli et al., 2008). Workaholics have the compulsion to work incessantly, and tend to allocate an exceptional amount of time to work. They work beyond what is reasonably expected to meet organizational or economic requirements (Taris, Schaufeli & Shimazu, 2010). Their compulsive tendencies make workaholics devote more resources (e.g., time, effort) to work, leaving them with fewer resources to devote to their family and other

facets of their non-work life. As a consequence, workaholics often neglect their life outside their job.

Indeed, survey studies have shown that workaholism is positively related to working overtime and work-family conflict (Bonebright, Clay, & Ankenmann, 2000). Because workaholics are willing to sacrifice personal relationships to derive satisfaction from work (Porter, 2001), it is not surprising that research shows a negative relationship between workaholism and relationship quality (Bakker, Demerouti & Burke, 2009). There is also accumulating evidence that workaholism is related to poorer psychological and physical well-being (e.g., Andreassen, Ursin, & Eriksen, 2007; Burke & Matthiesen, 2004). Workaholics love to work, but the repetitive and addictive character of their behaviors seems to drain their energy resources.

3.2.2 Burnout

Burnout is positioned on the lower left quadrant of the circumplex model as it reflects low levels of pleasure and activation. Burnout was originally conceived as a work-related syndrome that most often occurs among individuals who work with other people (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). However, research of the past decade has shown that the two core burnout dimensions – emotional exhaustion and cynicism – can be observed in virtually any occupational group (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2002). Emotional exhaustion refers to a general feeling of extreme chronic fatigue, caused by continuous exposure to demanding working conditions. Cynicism is defined as a callous, distanced and cynical attitude toward the work itself or the people with whom one works.

Of these two burnout dimensions, emotional exhaustion appears to be the central variable in the burnout process (Shirom, 2005). A number of studies have indeed shown

that exhaustion is more strongly related to important outcome variables (such as absenteeism) than the other burnout dimensions (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Leiter's (1993) process model of burnout proposes that cynicism should be seen as a consequence of emotional exhaustion. Accordingly, feelings of exhaustion arise from stressful working conditions, whereby employees are repeatedly confronted with high job demands (such as work pressure or high emotional demands) and as a consequence, they can develop a cynical attitude as a coping strategy to distance themselves emotionally and mentally from work (e.g., Bakker, Schaufeli, Sixma, Bosveld & Van Dierendonck, 2000). Consistent with our categorization of SWB using the circumplex model (see Figure 2), some studies have suggested that burnout is the opposite of work engagement (González-Romá, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Lloret, 2006).

4. Positive work-related SWB and job performance

How do different forms of work-related SWB relate to job performance? Traditionally, organizational psychologists have examined the link between employees' job satisfaction and performance (e.g., Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001). More recently, however, scholars have started to examine other indicators of positive work-related SWB (e.g., work-engagement; Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Warr, 2007) to better understand how SWB relates to job performance. Below we discuss how three different forms of positive work-related SWB (work engagement, happiness at work, and job satisfaction) are associated with job performance.

4.1 Work engagement

There are at least four reasons why engaged workers perform better than non-engaged workers (Bakker, 2009). First, engaged employees often experience active,

positive emotions, including joy and enthusiasm. These positive emotions seem to broaden people's thought-action repertoire (Fredrickson, 2001; Sekerka, Vacharkulksemsuk, & Fredrickson, this volume), implying that they constantly work on their personal resources. Second, engaged workers experience better health. This means that they can focus and dedicate all their energy resources to their work. Third, engaged employees create their own job and personal resources. If needed, they ask for performance feedback or they ask colleagues for help. Finally, engaged workers transfer their engagement to others in their immediate environment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2009; Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2009). Since in most organizations performance is the result of collaborative effort, the engagement of one person may transfer to others and indirectly improve team performance.

The number of studies showing a positive relationship between employee engagement and job performance is increasing (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010). For example, Bakker, Demerouti and Verbeke (2004) showed that engaged Dutch employees received higher ratings from their colleagues on in-role and extra-role performance, indicating that engaged employees perform well and are willing to go the extra mile. In addition, Halbesleben and Wheeler (2008) in their study among American employees, their supervisors, and their closest coworkers from a wide variety of industries and occupations showed that work engagement made a unique contribution (after controlling for job embeddedness) to explaining variance in job performance.

Salanova, Agut and Peiró (2005) conducted an important study among personnel working in Spanish restaurants and hotels. Contact employees ($N=342$) from 58 hotel front desks and 56 restaurants provided information about organizational resources,

engagement, and service climate. Furthermore, customers ($N=1,140$) from these units provided information on employee performance and customer loyalty. Structural equation modeling analyses were consistent with a full mediation model in which organizational resources and work engagement predicted service climate, which in turn predicted employee performance and then customer loyalty.

As a final example, in their recent study among Greek employees working in fast-food restaurants, Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2009) made a compelling case of the predictive value of work engagement for job performance, on a daily basis. Consistent with hypotheses, results showed that employees were more engaged on days that were characterized by many job resources. Daily job resources, like supervisor coaching and team atmosphere contributed to employees' day-levels of optimism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem, which, in turn, explained daily work engagement. Importantly, employees with higher levels of daily engagement produced higher objective daily financial returns.

4.2 Happiness and Job satisfaction

Does scientific research confirm the positive link between happiness and performance? There are various challenges in answering this question. First, the terms happiness and job satisfaction are often used interchangeably in organizational research (Hosie et al., 2006). However, as discussed, happiness can be distinguished from satisfaction as an emotion that reflects higher levels of activation. Furthermore, 'facet specific' job satisfaction reflects a more cognitive evaluation towards various features of the job whereas 'overall' measures of job satisfaction seem to tap affective experiences of

employees. Each type may have a different effect on job performance (e.g., Schleicher, Watt & Greguras, 2004).

A review that incorporated 254 studies showed an average correlation between overall job satisfaction and performance of .30 after correction for measurement errors, with a stronger correlation for employees who performed tasks of higher complexity (Judge et al., 2001). Interestingly, the authors compared this result with a previous meta-analysis of Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985) who reported a correlation of .17 between *facet-specific* measures of job satisfaction and job performance across 74 studies. Thus, it appears that overall job satisfaction relates more strongly to job performance compared to facet-specific measures of job satisfaction. Likewise, an influential meta-analysis of Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (2005) reported studies that link happiness – defined as the experience of positive emotions (both context-free and at work) – and job performance. The authors reported an average correlation of 0.27.

Taking a more detailed approach, Fisher and Noble (2004) related employees' current mood to the way they evaluated their task performance whilst executing the task and afterwards. Not surprisingly, correlations between current mood and performance ratings whilst performing the task ($r = 0.41$) and afterwards ($r = 0.57$) were strong. As self-ratings of performance are biased by an individual's feelings, it is important to have information about employee performance that is independent from the target person. Lee and Allen (2004) showed that work-related positive affect (e.g., enthusiasm, excitement) was positively correlated with colleagues' ratings of help provided to other individuals ($r = .18$), and with ratings of citizenship behavior directed at the organization more broadly ($r = .24$). Other studies have operationalized organizational performance as financial

turnover. For instance, Koys (2001) showed that overall employee satisfaction correlated 0.35 with store profitability in the subsequent year.

It should be noted that many of the studies reported above are cross-sectional in nature. Such studies cannot determine causality. Job satisfaction or happiness may either *cause* good performance, *follow from* good performance, or both. Looking into this issue, Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) analyzed 10 studies with longitudinal research designs that included a diverse set of SWB measures that were affective in nature (e.g., PANAS, one-item happiness, positive emotions on the job) as well as job performance (e.g., supervisory evaluations, salary, absenteeism, second interviews) across different time frames (ranging from 3 months to 19 years). On the whole, the authors reported an average longitudinal correlation of .24, suggesting that happiness *precedes* job performance.

4.3 Preliminary Conclusions

We addressed the question whether high levels of job satisfaction would coincide with high levels of job performance or whether more is needed than job satisfaction alone. Results show that positive affective states of SWB besides job satisfaction that are characterized by high levels of pleasure and higher levels of activation - such as work-engagement and happiness at work - are positively related to high levels of job performance. Further on, results show that *overall* job satisfaction – reflecting high pleasure, but low activation– is also associated with job performance. However *facet-specific* job satisfaction – reflecting a more cognitive evaluation of various job features – appears to be only weakly or not associated to job performance. In conclusion, other types of work-related SWB besides job satisfaction do relate to high levels of job

performance. Also, it appears that emotional, rather than cognitive, forms of job satisfaction are positively related to a job performance.

5. Daily SWB

As affective forms of work-related SWB relate to job performance, it becomes critical to accurately capture emotional experiences of employees in real-time or on a daily basis. It is challenging to capture emotional experiences in the workplace, because emotions are usually short-lived (Fredrickson, 2001; Sekerka et al., this volume), General survey methods are therefore not able to capture such within-person fluctuations in emotional experiences. In this section, we discuss two exciting new ways to capture the link between positive forms of SWB at work and job performance on an intra-individual and daily basis: the diary study and the day reconstruction method.

5.1 Diary Research

In diary studies, employees are kindly requested to fill in short questionnaires including state measures once or several times a day, for several days in a row (e.g. five or ten successive days). An important advantage of diary research is that it relies less on retrospective recall than regular surveys, since the questions relate to individuals' perceptions and feelings on a certain day. In addition, when daily changes in, for example, work engagement are temporarily separated from daily changes in outcomes like performance and personal initiative, state work engagement can be causally related to such outcomes.

Moreover, diary research may also reveal what the day-to-day triggers are of state engagement. For example, Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) investigated how daily fluctuations in job resources (i.e., autonomy, coaching, and team climate) were related to employee's

personal resources (i.e., self-efficacy, self-esteem, and optimism), work engagement, and company's financial returns. Forty-two employees working in three branches of a fast food company completed a questionnaire and a diary booklet over five consecutive workdays. One of the most significant findings of this study was that previous days' coaching had a positive, lagged effect on next days' work engagement (through next days' optimism), and on next days' financial returns.

As another example, Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Heuven, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2008) examined whether daily fluctuations in colleague support predicted day-levels of job performance through first self-efficacy and then work engagement. Forty-four flight attendants filled in a questionnaire and a diary booklet before and after consecutive flights to three intercontinental destinations. As in the previous study the dynamic nature of the relationships among the study variables were investigated using a within-subjects design, in which employees were followed on multiple occasions over a number of days. Results of multilevel analyses revealed that colleague support had unique positive lagged effects on work engagement and self-efficacy, and indirectly influenced job performance.

Sonnentag, Dormann, and Demerouti (2010) suggest intensifying conceptual development on day-specific (or even momentary) work engagement in order to arrive at a better understanding of how day-specific engagement corresponds to enduring engagement in experienced quality and configuration. In addition, they argue that it is an open question whether the scales used to assess enduring work engagement (see Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010) are valid for the measurement of state work engagement. Clearly, the time anchors on the UWES (e.g., "a few times a month") do not fit with a daily reporting schedule. The appropriateness of item wording to capture the day-to-day

variations in energy and dedication remains an open question. Expanding existing measures with new items or alternative response formats would help to refine critical instruments.

Until now, individual difference variables have made a minor contribution in research on state work engagement. According to Sonnentag et al. (2010) personality may influence the variability of work engagement within a person, interacting between predictors and state work engagement, or between engagement and outcomes. As an example of this kind of research, Bledow and Schmitt (2008) argued that positive affectivity would make employees less dependent on positive events occurring during a work day. Consistent with this hypothesis, their diary study among German software engineers showed that positive affectivity moderated the relationship between positive events and work engagement. The positive relationship was stronger for engineers low in positive affectivity. In another diary study, Bakker and Xanthopoulou (2009) hypothesized that daily engagement would cross over from one colleague to another. In addition, since extraversion is the disposition to be sociable and cheerful, they predicted that extraverts (vs. introverts) would interact more often with their colleagues. The frequency of daily communication was expected to moderate the crossover of daily work engagement, which in turn would determine colleagues' daily performance. Results confirmed the crossover of daily work engagement, but only on days that employees within a dyad interacted frequently. Moreover, as predicted, members of the dyad influenced each other's daily performance through a process of engagement crossover.

5.2 Day Reconstruction Method

The Day Reconstruction Method (Kahneman, Schkade, Schwartz & Stone, 2004) is a useful and innovative way to capture how employees experience their job from moment to moment as reflected in the positive and negative feelings that accompany their daily activities. The DRM combines elements of experience sampling and time diaries, and is designed specifically to facilitate accurate emotional recall. Respondents are first asked to fill out a time diary summarizing episodes that occurred in the preceding day. In particular, respondents describe each episode of the day by indicating: when the episode began and ended; what they were doing (by selecting activities from a provided list); where they were; and with whom they were interacting. To ascertain how employees feel, respondents are asked to report the pleasure and intensity of their feelings in accordance with the circumplex model of affect (Russell, 1980, 2003). For instance, affective response categories can be based on adjectives such as feeling happy, engaged, bored, or stressed.

Importantly, when people report on their current feelings, the feelings themselves are accessible to introspection, allowing for more accurate reports on the basis of experiential information. Affective experiences are fleeting and thus not available to introspection once the feeling dissipated. Accordingly, the opportunity to assess emotion reports based on experiential information is limited to methods of momentary data capture (Stone, Shiffman, Atienza, & Nebeling, 2007). Once the feeling dissipated, the affective experiences need to be reconstructed on the basis of other information. The Day reconstruction method pertains to a specific *recent episode* so that people can draw on episodic memory, retrieving specific moments and details of the recent past. Such reports can often recover the actual experience with some accuracy, as indicated by their

convergence with concurrent mood reports used in experience sampling methods (e.g., Kahneman et al, 2004; Stone, et al, 2007).

It is important to emphasize that *global* reports of past feelings are based on semantic knowledge. When asked how people “usually” feel during a particular activity (e.g., at work), people draw on their general beliefs about the activity and its attributes to arrive at a report. The actual experience does not figure prominently in these global reports because the experience itself is no longer accessible to introspection and episodic reconstruction is not used to answer a global question. Importantly, a person’s ‘global memory’ often fails to reflect what he or she actually experienced from moment to moment (Schwarz, Kahneman & Xu, 2009).

In sum, the DRM method can be used for assessing (a) within-person fluctuations in daily emotions and (b) relate these emotions to actual behavior (activity), circumstances (time, place, social interaction), and – if desired - daily performance. For example, research has demonstrated that work engagement is associated with in-role performance whereas workaholism is not (Schaufeli, Taris & Bakker, 2006). Looking into this issue, Bakker, Oerlemans, Demerouti and Sonnentag (2010) followed 85 employees during non-work hours by using a day reconstruction approach. Results show that daily work-related activities during non-work hours at night have a stronger negative relationship with daily SWB (feeling happy, vigorous and recovered) for employees who score high (vs. low) on trait workaholism *and* that physical activities have a stronger positive relationship with SWB for employees high (vs. low) on trait workaholism. These results imply that organizations should actively refrain employees and particularly workaholics from working during non-work time and instead promote physical exercise.

6. Future Research

The present chapter clearly shows that positive SWB is very important in organizations, since it contributes to bottom line outcomes such as job performance. Despite these promising results, further research is needed. First of all, most previous studies on SWB in organizations are cross-sectional in nature. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine the possibility that positive forms of work-related SWB either (a) precede job performance, (b) follow from job performance, or (c) are reciprocally related to performance. In addition, we need a better understanding of how organizations can enable SWB. Previous research has suggested that increasing job resources would facilitate work engagement and thriving (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Spreitzer, Lam & Fritz, 2010), but we need more research on the specific SWB interventions that are effective.

Furthermore, it would be very interesting and relevant to find out what the prevalence is of job satisfaction. What percentage of the work force has decreased the level of aspiration (i.e. activation) in order to adapt to negative aspects of the work environment? What type of interventions do we need to turn job satisfaction into more positive forms of SWB, such as work-engagement and happiness at work?

It is also important to better understand the underlying psychological and behavioral processes that explain *why* positive forms of work-related SWB relate to job performance. Are engaged workers more proactive than those characterized by job satisfaction? Do energetic and dedicated employees engage in job crafting behaviors (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001), through which they optimize their work environment and thrive? There is indeed some preliminary evidence for the idea that engaged employees are more inclined to mobilize their job resources and look for challenges (Tims & Bakker, in press).

Future research should also aim to answer the question whether there is a dark side of positive SWB. Halbesleben, Harvey and Bolino (2009) hypothesized and found that engagement was associated with higher work interference with family due to the resources engaged employees expended when they engaged in extra-role work behavior such as organizational citizenship behaviors. These findings illustrate that employees may become too engaged or even addicted to their work, which eventually may interfere with opportunities to recover from work-related efforts during off-job time.

Finally, we believe that there is a great future for diary and DRM research on SWB in organizations. Such research designs enable an examination of the most proximal processes at work leading to state SWB. Daily recordings of positive SWB, if combined with daily measures of job demands and resources, may reveal which aspects of the work environment facilitate flow and engagement at work. In addition, daily changes in flow and engagement may be related to daily learning behavior and job performance.

7. Conclusion

We started this chapter with the question whether high levels of job satisfaction coincide with high levels of job performance, or whether more is needed than job satisfaction alone. Our review of research on SWB in organizations suggests that optimal job performance is most likely when SWB is a combination of high activation and high pleasure. Job satisfaction reflects only low to average levels of activation (and high pleasure) and refers to a more cognitive evaluation of one's job which may not be enough to enhance performance. Work engagement and happiness at work are more likely predictors of job performance – organizations need engaged workers (Bakker & Leiter, 2010; Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). In addition, we conclude that the best methods to

assess these states may be daily diaries and DRM, since emotions are fleeting and require a real-time approach.

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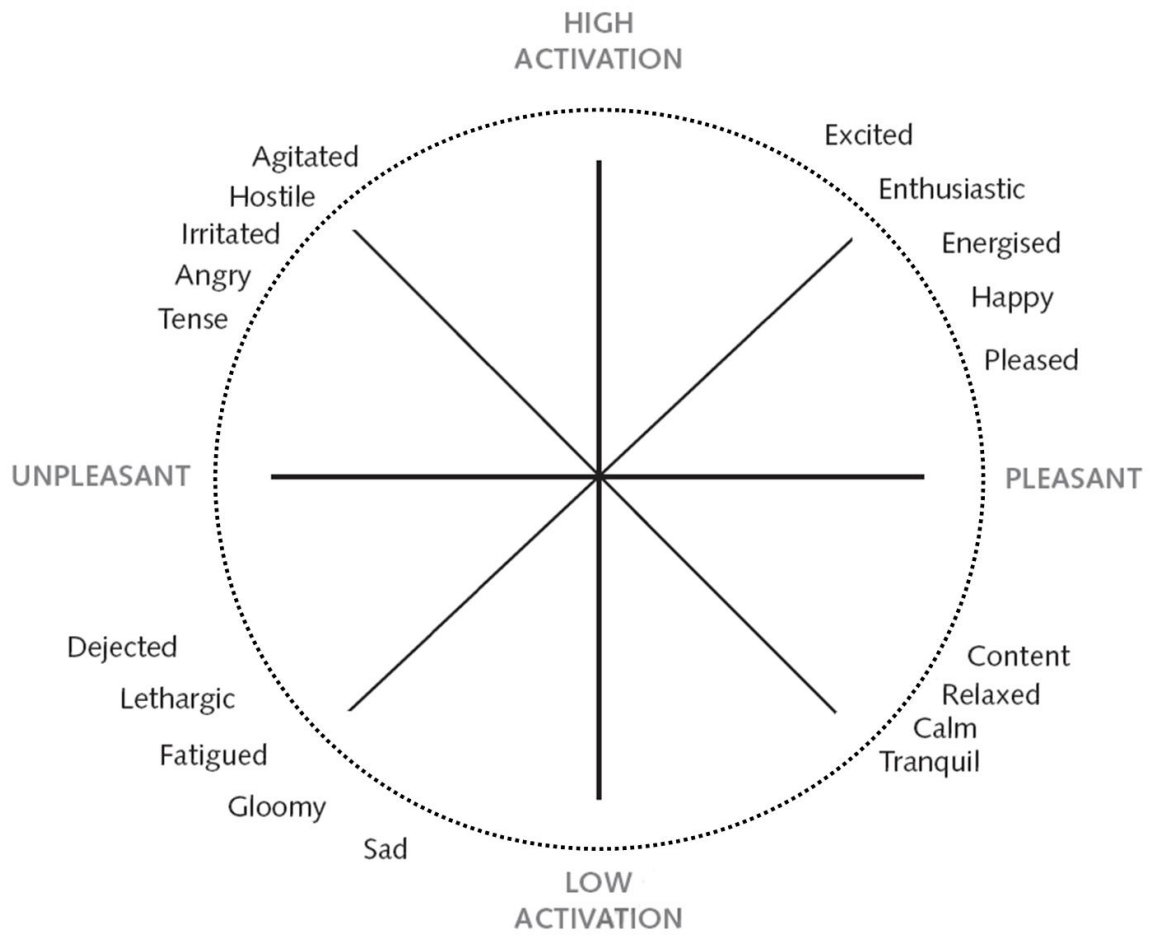


Figure 1. A two-dimensional view of subjective well-being (Russell, 1980, 2003).

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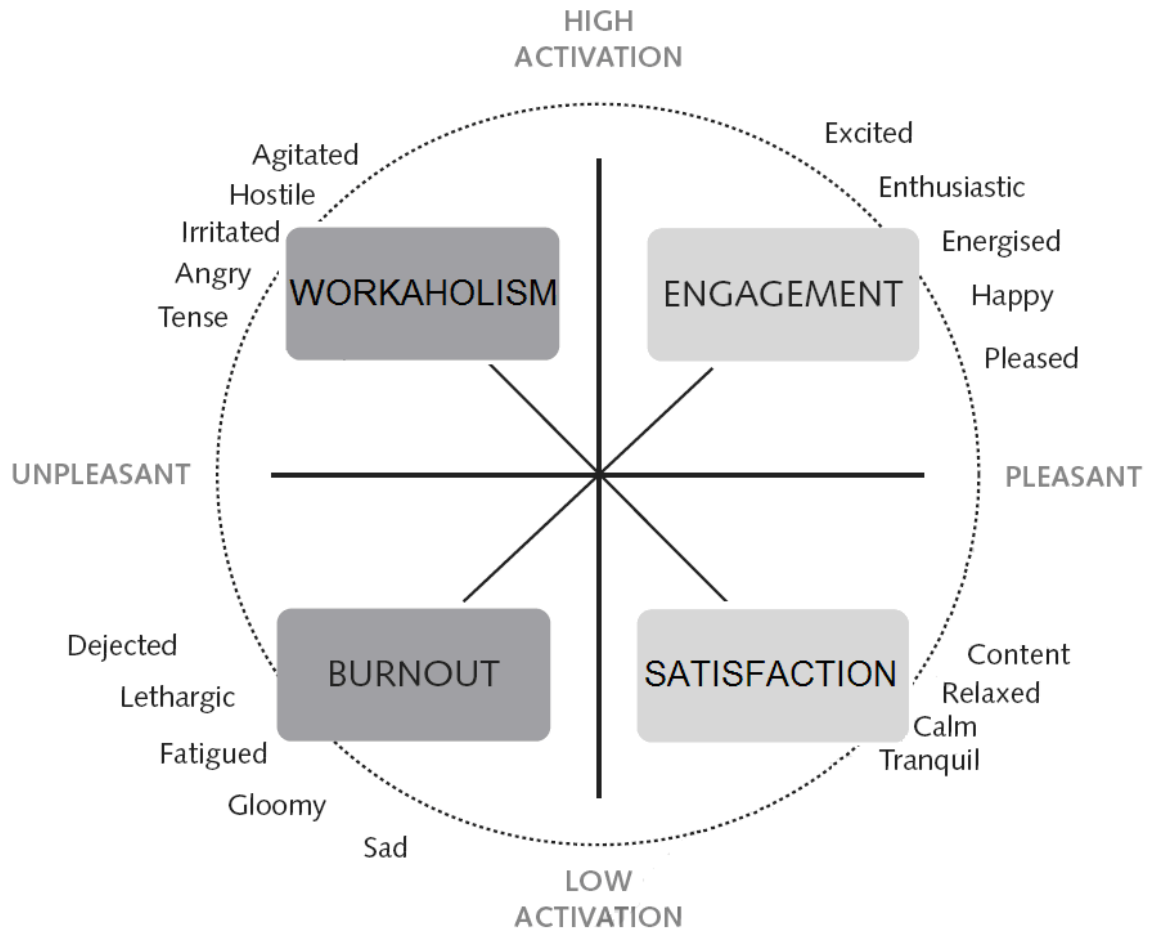


Figure 2. A two-dimensional view of work-related SWB (adapted from Russell, 1980, 2003).