

# **EMPLOYEE HAPPINESS AT A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**

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**By**

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in Business Administration to be awarded at the Nelson Mandela  
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## DECLARATION

I, **Daniel Matthys McConnell**, hereby declare that the treatise for Students qualification to be awarded is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another University or for another qualification.

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15 December 2016

Date

## ABSTRACT

Happiness, or the concept of well-being can be traced back to the era of Aristotle (384 to 322 BC), Epicurus (341 to 270 BC), John Locke (1632 to 1704) and more recently Ed Diener (DOB 1946), who played an integral part in the well-being revolution. People have very different ways in seeking happiness, whether it is closely associated to their personal life, the work environment or in society, they are constantly striving towards a goal of experiencing happiness at its purist form.

Bursts of absolute joy and the purist form of immediate gratification cannot provide a path to finding happiness and well-being. The process is intricate and requires a variety of variables integrated into a combination of events and lifestyle experiences to culminate into an existence which produces a feeling of inner peace and fulfillment. Current research suggests that this is not an attainable state of existence, but human nature drives every individual to seek out a path to finding true happiness.

The advent of the modern day economic crisis has changed the global environment to the extent where society is attempting to find a new norm to operate in. As a consequence, individuals are presented with new challenges which have forced them to re-evaluate their path to finding a balance in their lives. These changes have added new challenges to deal with and adapt to as new forces in the global environment start to shape a new tomorrow. People spend a large portion of their existence working to earn an income and to provide a means of supporting themselves and their dependents. The challenges they face are enhanced by the strains of working in stressful and pressurised working environments as their employers are also adapting to the changing global environment. Economic pressure is passed on to employees, as they are pushed to achieve the financial results demanded by shareholders.

The last ten years has seen a wealth of research being conducted in the space of well-being and how it relates to business has gained popularity. The study of epidemiology refers to the study of components of human behaviour, which have a negative impact on individual functioning, like stress and anxiety disorders. Well-being in the workplace

can counter these ailments and create a working environment absent of these negative afflictions which damage the productivity of a workforce. Employers who understand the positive aspects associated with well-being are in a position to effectively deploy their employees to produce improved financial results. The starting point for many organisations is to determine the current level of happiness in their businesses and to establish what variables are responsible for the current state of well-being.

The main objective of the empirical study was to determine the level of happiness at a financial institution. The target population (354 potential respondents) is the regional office the financial institution based in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Potential respondents received electronic requests by email, requesting their participation in the study. A total of 164 completed questionnaires were returned (46.33%) and analysed.

Literature was reviewed to develop a conceptual model. Seven variables were identified as having an influence on employee happiness and have the potential to change employee well-being levels to aid organisations in their quest to adapt to the prevailing economic conditions and stress people have to deal with on a daily basis. The results from the study show that Work-life, Safety and Security, Growth and Development, Health, Recognition and Reward, Autonomy and Social Connectedness are all closely associate with employee well-being. Safety and security, Autonomy and Recognition and Reward have direct positive associations with the concept of well-being and have a significant relationship and potential to enhance well-being.

The end result is that with the correct interventions by an employer, well-being can be measured and applied in the working environment. The correct combination of variables can have a positive impact in the work environment. A happy workforce can be an advantage to an organisation, their interventions can add great value to employees by increasing their commitment to the organisation and ultimately the business can benefit from their Interventions by seeing their efforts being realised in their financial results.

**Key words:** Employee happiness, eudaimonic, happiness, hedonic, positive psychology, subjective well-being, and well-being.

## DEDICATION

- To my beautiful wife, Leonie, for her encouragement, unconditional love and support during the treatise and throughout the masters programme.

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## CHAPTER 1

# PROBLEM INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

---

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Since the Great Depression of the 1930's, the world has not seen an economic crisis like is being experienced today. The current economic crisis contributes to changes in the work environment which cannot be ignored (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). Subsequent to the global economic crisis in 2008, employee health and wellness have become a growing concern for organisations operating in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Werner, et al., 2011, p. 228).

Werner et al. (2011) further emphasizes the impact that the lack of attention given to employee wellness has had on the global economy, accounting for approximately four percent of the cost global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The South African Department of Labour estimates the cost to the South African economy to be about R30 billion per annum, this being due to job-related illness and accidents (Werner, et al., 2011; Sieberhagen, Rothmann & Pienaar, 2009).

There is a strong body of evidence pointing to the benefits found in having a committed workforce in that they are less likely to leave, will attend work regularly, perform effectively and will perform well in the organisation (Meyer & Maltin, 2010). Happiness depends on the individual (Oishi, Diener & Lucas, 2007), therefore the problem is the inability of organisations in being able to unlock the inherent potential of the individual.

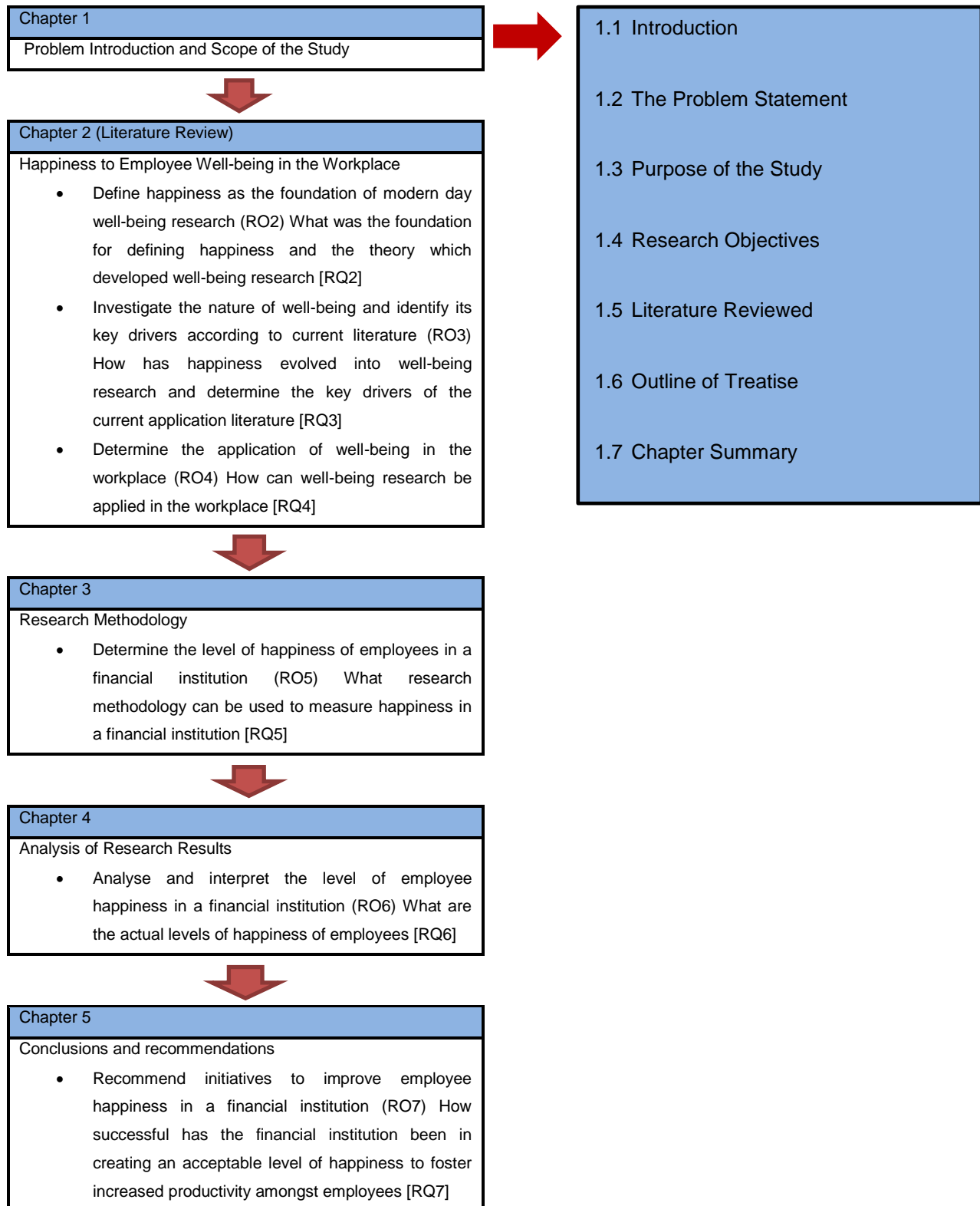
According to Werner et al. (2011, p. 228) organisational wellness is largely dependent on employee well-being. Therefore, the solution for organisations lies in their

commitment to unlocking the potential of employees by measuring employee wellness to determine the factors which need to be considered when designing a healthy and safe work environment (Werner, et al., 2011).

It has been suggested that legislation might be needed to ensure that the safety, health and wellness of employees (Sieberhagen, Rothmann & Pienaar, 2009). However, employers can be proactive in their approach to employee wellness by implementing employee wellness programs. This study aims to guide employers in understanding the meaning of happiness, employee well-being and the subjective nature of employee happiness in the workplace.

In this chapter the research problem is discussed, followed by introducing the reader to the scope of the study as outlined under the headings in Figure 1.1.

**FIGURE 1.1: DETAILED STRUCTURE OF CHAPTER 1**



## 1.2. THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Kinicki and Fugate (2012, p 8) emphasise the importance of the human factor in organisations and the role that people, individually and collectively, play in the success of an organisation. If individual human and social capital is applied properly, they can add to the continued success of an organisation (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012). Human capital is described as being, “the productive potential of an individual’s knowledge and actions” (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012, p. 8). Social capital is described as being, “the productive potential resulting from strong relationships, goodwill, trust and cooperative effort” (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012, p. 10).

Happiness depends on the individual and is the main purpose of human life (Oishi, Diener, & Lucas, 2007), therefore when people approach their goals and engage in interesting activities they should achieve a sense of positive well-being (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009).

However, not all individuals have the same motivation stimuli and thus each employee will react differently to certain situations. The aim of the study is to provide organisations with guidance in order to understand the nature of employee well-being and to what extent they can intervene to influence employee happiness to ultimately ensure the progress in achieving sustained improvement of financial performance by the organisation.

Historically, organisations have focused heavily on what is wrong with people, followed by trying to make them better in order to achieve positive financial growth (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012). The 21<sup>st</sup> century gave rise to a new thinking called positive psychology which focuses on human strengths and potential to prevent mental and behavioural problems with the aim of improving general quality of life (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012).

Culture plays a very important role in pursuing happiness, where individualistic cultures may be prone to higher levels of depression and loneliness. Collectivist societies have shown tendencies to have better success rates at pursuing happiness due to citizens being more socially engaged (Ford, et al., 2015).

Organisations can take note of the successful application of happiness research as a measure of growth by the country of Bhutan. In 1972, the King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuck suggested the development and implementation of a Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index for Bhutan. The GNH Index has been an established practice for more than forty years (since the 1970's) and has been so successful in utilising the GNH Index it has replaced the use of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a growth indicator for Bhutan (Happiness Research Institute, 2013).

Similarly, the Danish government has been successful in capturing the essence of happiness research at a national level. Results indicate that levels of happiness have remained at a constantly high level for the last four decades (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014).

The factors which contributed to the well-being of the Danish people and their continued strong performance as a nation is partly due to the presence of a strong civil society, a well-functioning democracy, a high degree of security, trust, freedom and prosperity, together with good working conditions that allow room for a balanced life (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014).

Both countries (Bhutan and Denmark) stopped using GDP as the main indicator of a country's economic output, as this measure fell short in identifying and evaluating overall quality of life in society. In his report on National Income for the period 1929 to 1932 to the U.S. Senate, 73rd Congress in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session; Simon Kuznets warned against using GDP as a means to gauge the success of an economy (Kuznets, 1934; Sulkowski & White, 2015). These two examples present a case for further investigation at organisational level on specific interventions which may contribute to creating a happy employee environment to enhance the performance of an organisation.

When people approach their goals and engage in interesting activities they should achieve a sense of positive well-being (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009). A positive state of well-being leads to greater inner motivation and commitment for what an individual is attempting to accomplish, as they become immersed in experiencing an engaged life (Allen & McCarthy, 2015). When an individual is engaged in an interesting activity that

matches their ability and skill set and challenges them to perform at an optimum level, they are said to experience a sense flow and are deemed to be very happy people (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009; Allen & McCarthy, 2015).

Therefore, employee well-being is more than a physical phenomenon and the absence of illness, but includes measures of personal growth and indices of optimal functioning (Meyer & Maltin, 2010). Happiness has not been a commonly used term in organisational research, but there has been similar research done in the field of job satisfaction which has indicated that there is evidence that the two aspects have similar traits (Fisher, 2010). Further development of this field of study has revealed broader concepts with greater emphasis on the impact of happiness or positive affect in the workplace. A common construct in work-related happiness focuses on hedonic experiences while other constructs include both hedonic and eudaimonic content (Fisher, 2010).

### **1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study will determine the level of happiness in a financial institution by using identified variables which influence employee well-being. The variables will be determined by conducting a literature review based on previous research conducted in this field of study. The level of employee happiness and the relationship the determined variables have in significantly enhancing employee happiness can provide guidance to the financial institution in developing wellness programs.

The study aims to provide guidance to the organisations who value the contribution their employees make and value employee well-being at the workplace. Organisations which focus on the benefits associated with greater employee well-being are able to apply specific interventions to increase employee contribution to the organisation by enhancing their well-being. Through specific implementation of these strategies it is hoped that:

- Organisations are able to increase employee productivity;
- Increase the quality of service and higher profitability;
- Employees will experience higher levels of job satisfaction and increased wellbeing.

## **1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

### **1.4.1 MAIN RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The primary research objective for this study is to determine employee happiness in a financial institution.

### **1.4.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

To achieve the main research objective, the secondary research objectives are:

- Define happiness as the foundation of modern day well-being research;
- Investigate the nature of well-being and identify its key drivers according to current literature;
- Determine the application of well-being in the workplace;
- Determine the level of happiness of employees in a financial institution;
- Analyse and interpret the level of employee happiness in a financial institution;
- Recommend initiatives to improve employee happiness in a financial institution.

## **1.5. LITERATURE REVIEWED**

There are numerous sources on the topic of happiness, with the challenge being able to find the sources which clearly define happiness in the modern sense. Happiness is not a new concept, but it has developed over time to become a relevant topic in understanding how employees cope in the workplace. Happiness has developed over time to focus on the well-being of employees. The resources used in this study include:

- Annual reviews;
- Articles and essays;
- Books;
- E-journals;
- Psychology journals;
- Reports;
- Textbooks;
- The internet.

Every effort was used to keep the varied resources relevant, accredited and peer reviewed to aid in both the understanding of the concepts and the relevance to the research topic.

## 1.6. OUTLINE OF THE TREATISE

The treatise includes the following chapters, specific reference is made to the research objectives in the chapter and the research questions used to address the research objective.

Chapter 1 Problem Introduction and Scope of the Study

Chapter 2 (Literature Review)

Happiness to Employee Well-being in the Workplace

- Define happiness as the foundation of modern day well-being research (RO2). What was the foundation for defining happiness and the theory which developed well-being research [RQ2]?
- Investigate the nature of well-being and identify its key drivers according to current literature (RO3). How has happiness evolved into well-being research and determine the key drivers of the current application literature [RQ3]?



- Determine the application of well-being in the workplace (RO4). How can well-being research be applied in the workplace [RQ4]?

#### Chapter 3 Research Methodology

- Determine the level of happiness of employees in a financial institution (RO5). What research methodology can be used to measure happiness in a financial institution [RQ5]?

#### Chapter 4 Analysis of Research Results

- Analyse and interpret the level of employee happiness in a financial institution (RO6). What are the actual levels of happiness of employees [RQ6]?

#### Chapter 5 Research finding, recommendations and conclusion

- Recommend initiatives to improve employee happiness in a financial institution (RO7). How successful has the financial institution been in creating an acceptable level of happiness to foster increased productivity amongst employees [RQ7]?

## 1.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the study and draw attention to the main problem being addressed. The concept of happiness is not new to the world. People actively adopt practices to enhance their lives. This can be in the form of short-lived experiences, providing them short periods of happiness or they actively change their lives to find a happy balance which builds a foundation to have a happy existence. The workplace is not that different and the benefits people gain from working in a happy productive environment can reduce job-related illness, accidents and increase the commitment of the workforce. The benefits associated with having a happy workforce are projected to the bottom line earnings of the organisation. Employees will be less likely to leave, attend work regularly, perform effectively and increase productivity.

There are benefits associated with both employer and employee, but creating the platform to increase employee happiness needs to be driven by the employer. Creating a work environment where employee well-being becomes part of the organisation's culture can have a great impact on the entire organisation.

The focus of the study is to determine the level of happiness in a financial institution. The chapter highlighted the main problem associated with this and provided specific sub-problems associated with not having a well-being program in the workplace. All this with the aim of meeting the requirements set out in the research objective of the study.

Chapter two provides insight into the topic of employee happiness or employee well-being under the heading, literature review, Happiness to Employee Well-being in the Workplace.

## CHAPTER 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW

---

### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided an introduction to the study and emphasised the reasons for conducting further research into the field of happiness in the workplace. It aims to be the cornerstone for asking important research questions and establishing research objectives to provide the required direction of the chapters that follow.

The Dalai Lama (Lama & Cutler, 1998, p. 16) said, “The very purpose of our existence is to seek happiness” (Ford, et al., 2015). People all have very different ways in seeking happiness, it may be through their personal life, at work or in society. Their approaches to seeking happiness may be founded in a hedonic approach or based on finding meaning in life by means of an eudaimonic approach (Henderson & Knight, 2012). In this chapter of the study the original thinking proposed by Greek philosophers, founded in rudimentary constructs and not supported by empirical research is investigated. The concept has provided a foundation for psychologists to debate the topic further (Henderson & Knight, 2012). The theory which forms the foundation for well-being studies and current thinking on the subject is then discussed.

The chapter continues with a discussion on the relationship between happiness and well-being, focusing on the subjective nature of well-being. The ongoing debate between contemporary psychologists follows, where they are mostly in agreement that the value hedonic and eudaimonic approaches in seeking happiness need to be recognised, as both approaches play an important role in defining aspects of well-being (Henderson & Knight, 2012). Finally, the chapter concludes by focusing on the importance of well-being in the workplace. Employee well-being is more than a physical phenomenon and the absence of illness, but includes measures of personal growth and indices of optimal functioning (Meyer & Maltin, 2010).

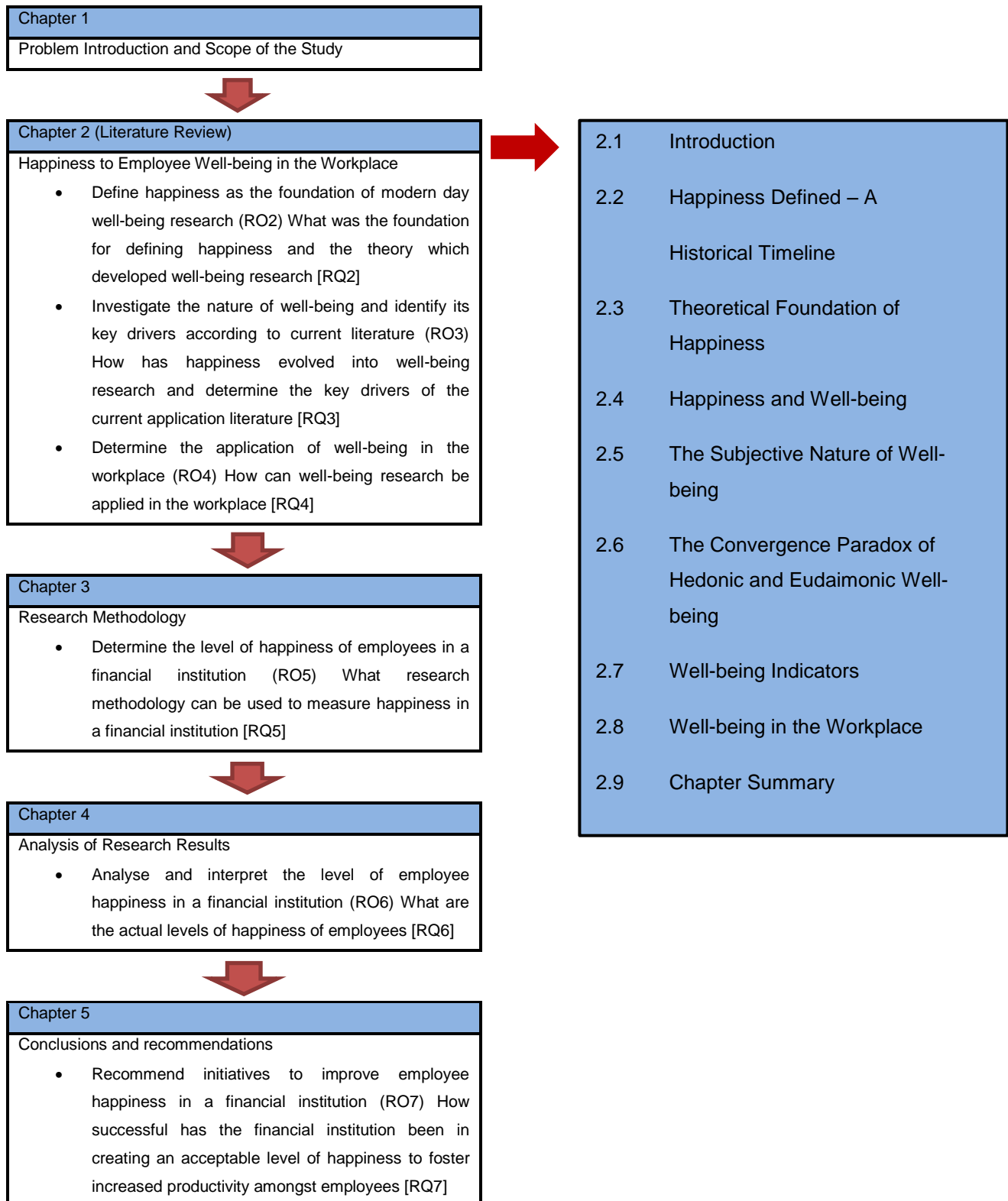
Happiness has not been a commonly used term in organisational research, but there has been similar research done in the field of job satisfaction which has indicated that there is evidence that the two aspects have similar traits (Fisher, 2010). Further development of this field of study has revealed broader concepts with greater emphasis on the impact of happiness or positive affect in the workplace. A common construct in work-related happiness focuses on hedonic experiences while other constructs include both hedonic and eudaimonic content (Fisher, 2010).

Based on the ongoing debate between researchers on the science of well-being, the complexity of the topic and the lack of consensus make it difficult to determine the true nature and construct of how to measure well-being, often being construed as being controversial (Ryan & Deci, 2001). However, there is real evidence that the foundation for wellbeing can be found in both hedonic and eudaimonic approaches (Henderson & Knight, 2012; Meyer & Maltin, 2010).

In this chapter the three research objectives and research questions as outlined in Figure 2 are addressed by answering the subsequent research questions:

- (RO2) Define happiness as the foundation of modern day well-being research.
  - [RQ2] What was the foundation for defining happiness and the theory which developed well-being research?
- (RO3) Investigate the nature of well-being and identify its key drivers according to current literature.
  - [RQ3] How has happiness evolved into well-being research and determine the key drivers of the current application literature?
- (RO4) Determine the application of well-being in the workplace.
  - [RQ4] How can well-being research be applied in the workplace?

**FIGURE 2.1: DETAILED STRUCTURE OF CHAPTER 2**



## **2.2. HAPPINESS DEFINED – A HISTORICAL TIMELINE**

Historical role models like great thinkers, philosophers, scientists and artists have often discussed and debated the definition of happiness (Garaigordobil, 2015; Oishi, Graham, Kesebir & Galinha, 2013; Graham, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2001). They laid the foundation for modern scholars to continue the pursuit of defining happiness, but they could never agree on what defined happiness (Veenhoven, 2015; Oishi, Diener & Lucas, 2007). Although happiness is an elusive concept (Veenhoven, 2015), Western scholars have made strides in understanding “happiness” (Diener, 1994). Their contribution in defining the meaning of happiness has provided modern scholars with a foundation to continue building upon.

### **2.2.1. ARISTOTLE (384 TO 322BC)**

Aristotle placed emphasis on the fact that one’s need to constantly seek greater fulfillment and happiness over time is a never-ending journey (Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016).

Happiness depends on the individual and is the main purpose of human life (Oishi, Diener & Lucas, 2007). A person can attain happiness by means of wealth, pleasure and gaining respect from their peers, as it is part of the journey to eventually being happy. Aristotle further maintains that happiness is an end in itself and whether one finds true happiness, the end of one’s life will encompass the total achievement of one’s life (Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016). Aristotle made reference to specific external factors such as good friends, health and resources which have a direct effect on happiness (Oishi, Graham, Kesebir & Galinha, 2013).

To Aristotle, the hedonic pursuit of happiness lacked sophistication as a means to attain happiness and compared human pursuit of hedonic happiness to humans being slaves to their own desires (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Aristotle fostered greater affiliation with the term eudaimonic happiness, as this perspective provided him with platform to explain his view of true happiness as an expression of virtue, finding true human worth and a degree to which humans are fully functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

### **2.2.2. EPICURUS (341 – 270 BC)**

Epicurus explained happiness as being in a neutral state, free from all worry in an attempt to find inner tranquility. The pursuit of this inner tranquility is achieved through the pursuit of physical pleasures which can be found through a process of philosophical contemplation. Although this may sound like happiness is a personal journey, Epicurius goes further by explaining that there is a better chance of achieving inner happiness through the association of a society of like-minded individuals (Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016; Bergsma, Germaine & Liefbroer, 2008).

### **2.2.3. JOHN LOCKE (1632 – 1704) ENGLISH PHILOSOPHER**

John Locke was one of the earliest philosophers who used the writings of early Greek Philosophers to develop his own interpretation of happiness by coining the phrase 'pursuit of happiness' (Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016; Locke, 1999).

*“The necessity of pursuing happiness [is] the foundation of liberty. As therefore the highest perfection of intellectual nature lies in a careful and constant pursuit of true and solid happiness; so the care of ourselves, that we mistake not imaginary for real happiness, is the necessary foundation of our liberty. The stronger ties we have to an unalterable pursuit of happiness in general, which is our greatest good, and which, as such, our desires always follow, the more are we free from any necessary determination of our will to any particular action...” (Locke, 1999, p. 249).*

He further examines happiness in its full context as being the greatest pleasure humans are capable of experiencing and in contrast misery being the greatest pain (Locke, 1999; Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016).

In 1776, Thomas Jefferson used Locke's phrase “pursuit of happiness” and incorporated it into the Declaration of Independence, where he refers to the people's inalienable right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” (Musikanski, 2014; Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016). Thomas Jefferson and John Locke did not see the “pursuit of happiness” as the pursuit of pleasure, property, or self-interest, but that it speaks more to the freedom of an individual to be able to make decisions. The freedom an individual

has to make these decisions is based on intellectual ability and moral code, ensuring the best possible life for a human being (Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016).

#### **2.2.4. ED DIENER (DOB 1946)**

Ed Diener has been instrumental in developing a better understanding of the term happiness. Through his research he was able to coin the phrase subjective well-being as being an aspect of happiness which can be measured empirically (Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016). However, recent hedonic psychology explores the pleasure/pain continuum by using subjective well-being as the main assessment tool (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Subjective well-being consists of three variables which are at times expressed as being happiness: life satisfaction, positive moods or emotions and the absence of negative moods or emotions (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Lucas, Scollon & Diener, 2006).

Apart from the great thinkers, philosophers, scientists and artists mentioned earlier (Garaigordobil, 2015), little is known about how people think and feel about happiness (Fave Antonella, et al., 2016). The field of well-being research is complex (Ryan & Deci, 2001) and the foundation for further study is found in the early definitions of happiness. Two perspectives of research into well-being have dominated current research: the hedonic approach (focus on pleasure attainment and pain avoidance) and the eudaimonic approach (focus is on meaning, living a moral and virtuous life, self-realisation and what it means to be a fully functioning person) (Henderson & Knight, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Apart from the two perspective viewpoints which form the basis of well-being research, there are specific theoretical aspects which are grounded nature of well-being. These main theories which contribute to defining well-being are discussed in the following section.

### **2.3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF HAPPINESS**

It is well documented that the topic of human happiness has been discussed and debated for millennia by philosophers and scholars alike (Diener, 1984). The fundamental desire to achieve a state of happiness has been a focus for every human being (Peale, 1953). Living a good life and achieving a fulfilled existence are core



characteristics. The presence of love, wisdom and non-attachment were the key to early definitions of well-being. Utilitarian's such as Jeremy Bentham spoke of the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain as being the key (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009).

Over time, theories have developed and in turn have formed part of the foundation for modern day scholars' understanding of the concept of happiness. Each theory has played a part in understanding this concept and developing it further (Diener, 1984; Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009). Individual happiness occurs when needs are met and goals are fulfilled leading to a desired end state called happiness (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009).

Theories that are more relevant to understanding happiness are discussed in the sections that follow.

### **2.3.1 MOTIVATION THEORY - MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS**

Individuals have specific needs and once these needs are met and sustained, the individual has an opportunity to meet the next level of needs. There is a positive association between the degree to which individual's needs are met and the degree of resulting life satisfaction they experience (Omodei & Wearing, 1990).

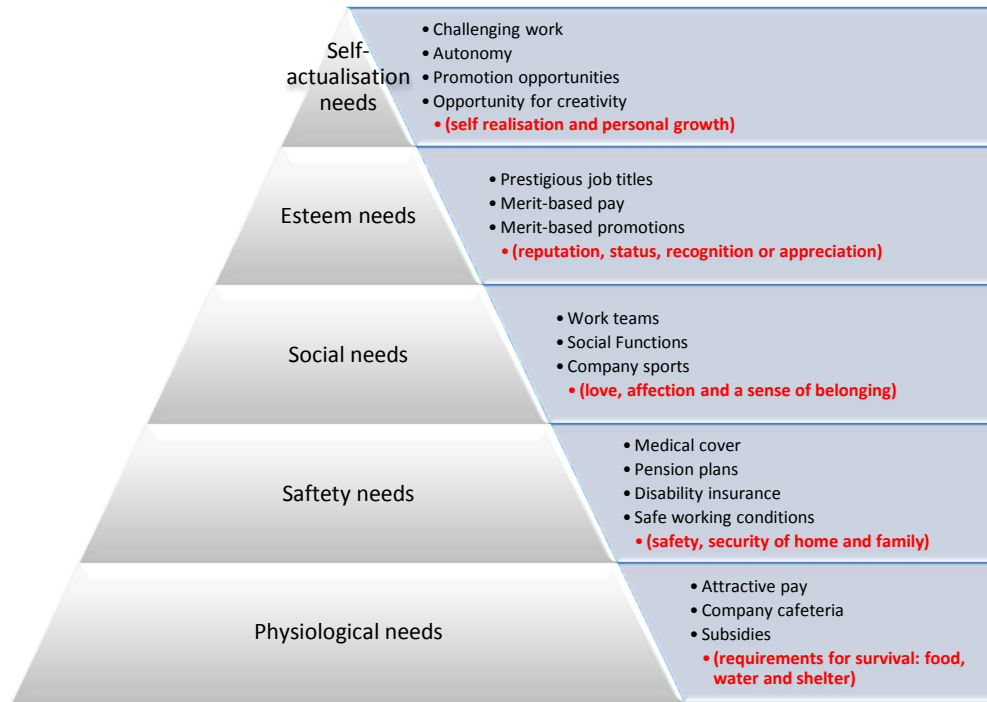
Abraham Maslow – The Father of the Hierarchy of Needs stated:

*“Human life will never be understood unless its highest aspirations are taken into account. Growth, self-actualization, the striving toward health, the quest for identity and autonomy, the yearning for excellence (and other ways of phrasing the striving “upward”) must by now be accepted beyond question as a widespread and perhaps universal human tendency” (Maslow, 1954, p.12-13).*

In a work situation, employees who do not meet their required needs cannot function properly (Werner, et al., 2011). Human needs are categorised in five groups in a proponent hierarchy from physiological to safety to social to esteem and lastly to self-actualisation needs (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012). Once a specific need is satisfied a natural process initiates the following step in the process. Werner, et al. (2011) adapted the

hierarchy model to suit the work environment and the needs of employees as depicted in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to the work environment



Source: Werner, et al. (2011), p.88

Werner, et al. (2011, p. 86-89) explain an adapted hierarchy of needs in the context of the work environment as follows. The model does not apply to every employee, but is a good way to explain how employees are motivated by satisfying specific needs in the work environment. The lowest levels are satisfied first, physiological and safety needs are attractive requirements for employees to join a company or they work merely to satisfy these needs. The need to satisfy a need to provide themselves and their families with nourishment and protection from harm is a foremost need. The higher order needs are deemed growth needs which satisfy the employee's aim to become physically and psychologically healthy. There are very few employees who will ever reach the level of self-actualisation and a moment spent in this realm can mean one experiences a feely of being energised and alive. These are often referred to as "peak experiences" which add to the need to attain this level more often.

### **2.3.2. GOAL THEORY**

Goal theory can be used in explaining subjective well-being due to the combination of tension reducing and pleasure activities individuals experience and partake in (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009).

Research has shown that when people have a specific goal to strive towards, there is a profound effect on the levels of motivation they experience (Werner, et al., 2011). The allocation of specific, challenging and attainable goals can lead to higher performance (DuBrin, 2013). If individuals achieve the goals set for them, they experience a sense of satisfaction and achievement which in turn has an impact on their self-esteem (Werner, et al., 2011).

In a work environment, setting goals for individuals is as important as setting goals for the group. However, setting goals is more effective if individual and group goals are set together. This is due to the nature of the work environment where individuals are often compelled to work together as teams. The end result can lead to an increase in overall productivity of employees (DuBrin, 2013).

### **2.3.3. THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY**

The origin of the notion of happiness can be found in economic and political theory, with specific reference to economic utility (Duncan, 2005).

In economics, the term utility relates to the satisfaction experienced due to levels of consumption, with more being better and the additional satisfaction attained as a result of additional consumption (Hirschey, 2009). Marginal utility is the measure of the added satisfaction due to the consumption of one unit (Hirschey, 2009).

Bentham's principle of utility paved the way for economists to further their understanding of utility, by initially treating economy as a calculation of pleasure and pain (Duncan, 2005). Bentham explained utility as being the direct result that a specific object or activity has on increasing or decreasing overall happiness (Duncan, 2005).

A more expansive application of utility is used by scholars studying the economics of happiness (Graham, 2005). Using a combination of traditional techniques used by

economists and combining it with techniques used by psychologists, they are able to highlight the non-economic factors which have a direct effect on human well-being (Graham, 2005).

#### **2.3.4. EASTERLIN PARADOX**

The term “hedonic treadmill” is commonly used to interpret the Easterlin paradox (Graham, 2005; Kets de Vries, 2016). A simple explanation of hedonic happiness is maximising pleasure and minimising pain and discomfort (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014). Human aspirations have a direct link to income earned and once basic needs have been met these aspirations increase as their income rises (Graham, 2005).

This is a short lived experience and does not provide the benefit of eudaimonic happiness. In Greek, the word eudaimonia means “happiness” (Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016) and to live a eudaimonic life is to find meaning in your life, finding a place in the world and having a sense that your life has been part of something greater (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014).

A psychological interpretation of the Easterlin paradox is explained by the “set point” theory of happiness (Kets de Vries, 2016). Each individual is programmed to have a specific happiness point which they use as a measuring stick and will return to this level over time. Major events which have large scale impact on one’s life, but short lived results which over time also fades and the individual will return to their optimum level of happiness (Graham, 2005).

#### **2.3.5. BIG FIVE THEORY OF PERSONALITY (FIVE FACTOR MODEL)**

An individual’s personality can also have an impact on how they experience their relationship with happiness (Kets de Vries, 2016). The Big Five Theory of Personality finds its origins from applying the principles of the psychological approach to personality psychology (De Raad & Mlacic, 2015). The basis for having the five personality traits lies in the characteristic adaptations these personality traits exhibit, covering the developmental aspects and learning experiences of individuals (De Raad & Mlacic, 2015).

The Big Five Theory argues that one's attitude and behaviour towards certain aspects which have an impact on individual lives is driven by five major personality traits (Kets de Vries, 2016; McCrae & Costa Jr, 1991). The five personality traits in question are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience (McCrae & Costa Jr, 1991; Kets de Vries, 2016).

In summary, the abovementioned theories all have a role to play in the happiness levels of individuals. When people approach their goals and engage in interesting activities they should achieve a sense of positive well-being (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009). A positive state of well-being leads to greater inner motivation and commitment for what an individual is attempting to accomplish, as they become immersed in experiencing an engaged life (Allen & McCarthy, 2015). This positive sense of well-being can be explained by the term called "flow" (Allen & McCarthy, 2015). When an individual is engaged in an interesting activity that matches their ability and skill set and challenges them to perform at an optimum level, they are said to experience a sense flow and are deemed to be very happy people (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009; Allen & McCarthy, 2015).

## **2.4. HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING**

In his attempt to define happiness, Diener (2000, p 34) contemplated the meaning of "What is the definition of a good life?" Moral discussions by philosophers have also tried to define what constitutes a good life (WHO, 2012). Some philosophers describe happiness as living a morally good life, while others describe happiness as leading a pleasant life (Veenhoven, 2015). In modern terms, life satisfaction and happiness are semantically different terms and are often used interchangeably in scientific literature (Fave Antonella, et al., 2016). The World Health Organisation (2012) goes further by mentioning that what people value remains constant and rarely changes. It is human nature to actively seek things in life that provide a sense of pleasure and avoid situations that bring pain into one's life (Oishi, Diener & Lucas, 2007). People will seek

out ways and means to be happy as it simply feels good (Oishi, Diener & Lucas, 2007; Kets de Vries, 2016).

Happiness is viewed as a positive feeling which is contingent on specific actions taken by individuals (Ford, et al., 2015) to achieve a specific goal. The hedonic treadmill is used to explain how individuals adapt to the challenges life throws at them. They overcome the obstacle, bounce back, start again and keep going (Kets de Vries, 2016).

Therefore, the only person who can answer whether they are happy with life is the individual, as only they know whether they are happy or not (Diener, 2000; Peale, 1953). Many documented works make reference to the similarity between “happiness” and “well-being”, thus showing the close link between the two concepts (Fave Antonella, et al., 2016). Well-being is defined as a state of being in good health, experiencing a sense of happiness and comfort (Oxford University Press, 2016). Therefore, it is safe to say that when speaking about well-being one is referring to the state of happiness of the individual.

## **2.5. THE SUBJECTIVE NATURE OF WELL-BEING**

For millennia, the concept of happiness has been pondered. Philosophers to scholars have tried to decipher the meaning of happiness and how it fits into our existence (Diener, 1994; Graham, 2005; Garaigordobil, 2015; Oishi, Graham, Kesebir & Galinha, 2013). The Dalai Lama summed it up best in saying that “the very purpose of our existence is to seek happiness” (Ford, et al., 2015). Human well-being is elusive by nature and affects us personally, but will always remain to be one of the main aspects of our lives which define us as human beings (Kets de Vries, 2016).

### **2.5.1. WELL-BEING IS A FEELING**

Apart from the Greek philosophers and scholars who laid the foundation for further study into happiness, it has been used by presidents in speeches and including in constitutions. It is clear that happiness is an important topic (Diener, 1984; Graham,

2005; Garaigordobil, 2015). The question remains, who is ultimately responsible for our happiness?

Is being happy something that one can learn, are individuals influenced by external factors which make them happy? Or, are individuals responsible for their own happiness?

The Oxford Dictionary defines subjective as:

*“Based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions”.*

The emphasis placed on the words personal feelings, mean it is your own thoughts and ideas, your own feelings and opinions.

In turn, The Oxford Dictionary defines well-being as:

*“The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy”.*

Here our attention is drawn to the word happy, speaking about our state of mind. Happiness is therefore a feeling, a personal account of individual well-being or happiness. When asked the question, “Are you feeling happy”? A person will make a conscious decision about how they are feeling at that very moment, based on external factors and their personality. Diener (2000, p. 34) states, “There are additional features of a valuable life and mental health, but the field of subjective well-being focuses on people’s own evaluations of their lives”.

Personality plays an important role in how individuals perceive happiness, they determine what constitutes happiness. Happiness is subjective by nature, concluding that individuals are responsible for their own happiness (Kets de Vries, 2016). Marcus Aurelius (Roman Emperor from 161 to 180) stated, “The happiness of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts” (Kets de Vries, 2016).

It is for this reason that one can measure levels of individual happiness or at the minimum come to some type of measurement (Diener, 2000). As happiness is a subjective experience and depends on the individual determining their own happiness researchers are able to measure levels of happiness (Kets de Vries, 2016).

## 2.5.2. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HAPPINESS

Each individual has a distinct personality and this has a direct impact on how they view their own happiness (Kets de Vries, 2016). It is an individual's state of mind which determines how they approach certain situations and whether they are going to react in a positive or negative way (Kets de Vries, 2016). The five factor model or the Big Five Theory argues that one's attitude and behaviour towards certain aspects which have an impact on individual lives is driven by five major personality traits, as depicted in Table 2.1 below (Kets de Vries, 2016; McCrae & Costa Jr, 1991).

Table 2.1: Tabulation of the Big Five Theory of Personality

Personality trait	Behavioural and attitude inclination	Trait relationship with happiness
Extraversion	Talkative Social Assertive	Experience more life rewards and tend to be happier than people who are introverts
Agreeableness	Kindness Cooperation Warmth Friendliness Sympathy Deflect interpersonal conflict	The nicer one is the happier you tend to be
Conscientiousness	Responsibility Orderliness Dependability	Acting the right way makes us feel a lot better about ourselves
Neuroticism	Anxiety Depression Anger Shame Worry Insecurity	Emotionally unstable people worry more and are less happy
Openness to experience	Capacity for imagination Independent and divergent thinking	Having an active imagination and testing our intellect leads to happier people

Source: Kets de Vries (2016, p. 4)



Subjective well-being has a close relationship to these five personality dimensions (McCrae & Costa Jr, 1991). Kets de Vries (2016) makes reference to the relationship between happiness and extraversion, in that extraverts show a greater tendency to be happy than people who are not. In his explanation of the extreme side of the Big Five Theory, Kets de Vries (2016) mentions that raised levels of neuroticism are linked to lower levels of happiness or in layman terms, people that are emotionally unstable worry more and are therefore less happy.

### **2.5.3. THE IMPACT OF SOCIETY ON THE INDIVIDUAL'S WELL-BEING**

Although individuals are ultimately responsible for their own happiness and well-being, people face many outside influences which play a role in determining their levels of happiness (Kets de Vries, 2016). Society and macro forces play an influencing role on an individual's life, creating new constructs of happiness and how they choose to interpret it (Kets de Vries, 2016). The social networks which people come into contact with in their private and work life have a significant effect on how they interpret information which impacts on their attitude towards life and their choices (Kets de Vries, 2016).

The importance of cultural values in society and the workplace plays an important role in determining individual happiness, as an individual's culture supports their individual self-determination (Majid, Sharif & Wesarat, 2015). The fact that people place different values on specific things becomes more evident when investigating the difference between western and eastern cultures, as conceptions of happiness varies among different societies and cultures (Majid, Sharif & Wesarat, 2015).

Ford et al. (2015) found that culture plays an important role in whether people are able to find happiness, as people have more success in finding happiness if it is pursued in a socially engaging way. This is more evident in collectivist societies, as people with higher levels of well-being are more encouraged by their culture to seek happiness through social engagement (Ford, et al., 2015).

## **2.6. THE CONVERGENCE PARADOX OF HEDONIC AND EUDAIMONIC WELL-BEING**

In the previous section explored and gained an insight into the subjective nature of happiness. Diener (2000) places the responsibility of happiness in the hands of the individual, as it is a democratic decision whether one's life is worthwhile. In well-being research the term happiness is often seen as being synonymous with life satisfaction (Fave Antonella, et al., 2016). Philosophers and social researchers have debated and defined the nature of happiness in a variety of ways. Their views on how to classify happiness rests on two philosophies, hedonic happiness (short-term happiness) and eudaimonic happiness (long-term happiness) (Fisher, 2010; Garaigordobil, 2015; The Happiness Research Institute, 2014). The largest divide in thinking is found in the very terms philosophers and social researchers have used to define happiness (Fisher, 2010).

### **2.6.1 HEDONIC WELL-BEING**

Hedonic well-being is a subjective assessment of the quality of one's life, driven by both positive and negative feelings which are associated with obtaining pleasure from an activity (Garaigordobil, 2015). In essence, hedonic pleasure is about maximising pleasure and minimising pain and discomfort through one's actions (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014; Ryan & Deci, 2001). It is well-being expressed in various forms, from bodily pleasure, one's appetite for self-interest and the pleasure of the body and mind (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The special nature of these short-lived experiences can provide a sense of heightened satisfaction by invoking strong positive emotions (Huta, 2016; The Happiness Research Institute, 2014; Fisher, 2010). These experiences of heightened pleasure can lead to individuals becoming engrossed in what they are doing and are referred to as experiencing a sense of flow (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014; Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009; Allen & McCarthy, 2015; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Fisher (2010) describes flow as a form of intrinsic motivation achieved when one is absorbed by what one is doing, it is an enjoyable state of mind where one experiences a sense of euphoria, exhilaration and finds a experiences a deep sense of enjoyment from the activity.

Therefore, when people express their feelings due to many pleasant and unpleasant emotional experiences, while being engaged in interesting activities and they are satisfied with their lives one can say these individuals have abundant subjective well-being (Diener, 2000).

Modern day hedonic psychology uses subjective well-being as an assessment tool to measure human well-being, which consists of three components (Ryan & Deci, 2001):

- Life satisfaction;
- Positive mood or emotions;
- The absence of negative mood or emotions.

People evaluate their lives in terms of their experiences, emotions and feelings; and the field of research which best illustrates this is that of subjective well-being (Diener, 2000; Fisher, 2010).

## **2.6.2 EUDAIMONIC WELL-BEING**

The Dalai Lama (Lama & Cutler, 1998, p. 16) said, “*The very purpose of our existence is to seek happiness*”. Individuals have a choice about how they go about seeking happiness. Do they follow the hedonic course or do they seek a greater goal in the term happiness, regardless of how they feel at any given point in time (Fisher, 2010).

Eudaimonic well-being is a contrasting term to hedonic well-being and is closely associated with self-validation and self-actualisation (Fisher, 2010). It makes reference to the fact that a happy life involves doing what is right, growing as an individual, chasing important life goals and developing one’s skills (Fisher, 2010). On the path to seeking happiness, one has to find a place in the world to ensure that as an individual, you are part of something greater than yourself (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014).

One cannot be happy all the time, seeking short lived experiences of happiness can lead one to become unhappy if a state of happiness cannot be achieved immediately, it is unsustainable over time (Fisher, 2010). Eudaimonic theories posit that not every outcome or desire will result in well-being if said outcome or desire is achieved even if it

produces a pleasurable outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Therefore, from an eudaimonic perspective one cannot associate well-being with subjective happiness (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

### **2.6.3 FINDING A BALANCE BETWEEN HEDONIC AND EUDAIMONIC WELL-BEING**

In the last ten years of research into hedonic and eudaimonic well-being indicators, researchers have found that there is a correlation between the two constructs (Fisher, 2010). The evidence gathered by researchers indicates that well-being is best conceived as a multidimensional phenomenon which includes both hedonic and eudaimonic approaches (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

When standing alone, hedonic happiness is unsustainable over a long period of time without the presence of eudaimonic aspects of happiness, as each provide a different approach to finding happiness in one's life (Fisher, 2010). They each offer a different approach to well-being, but together they are better and provide a holistic understanding of well-being (Fisher, 2010). The fact that some indicators overlap shows that there is a convergence of factors to consider when measuring well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

## **2.7. WELL-BEING INDICATORS**

There has been a call by social scientists and policymakers to obtain conceptual clarity on well-being research and to match this with the general public's understanding of the concept (Blakar, Carlquist, Fave, Nafstad & Ulleberg, 2016). This field of research has had significant impact on society, the academic field and policymakers worldwide. Although this is not a new field of study, it can be traced back to before Christ when philosophers first discussed the phenomenon of happiness (Graham, 2005; Garaigordobil, 2015; Veenhoven, 2015; Oishi, Diener & Lucas, 2007). Thus building a foundation to expand our knowledge on the subject and provide policymakers and organisations alike with guidance to build a happier society.

The quality and quantity of research into the domain of well-being by scholarly scientific researchers has developed significantly over time. The terms “happiness”, “a good life” and “life satisfaction” have been used to describe well-being research, but the subsequent understanding of these concepts may differ from that of the public (Blakar, Carlquist, Fave, Nafstad & Ulleberg, 2016). The World Health Organisation defines quality of life as “an individual’s perception of their position in life in the culture and value systems in which they live, in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns” (Blakar, Carlquist, Fave, Nafstad & Ulleberg, 2016). The body of evidence that has been gathered on well-being has thus far predominantly been focused on the developed world. Conceptions of happiness and well-being vary among different societies and cultures, with the majority of focus having been placed on Western and Eastern cultures (Majid, Shari & Wesarat, 2015). The field of research does not offer scope for comparison between Western, Eastern and African cultures due to the lack of scholarly work in the field on the African continent.

Our reliance has to be placed on the work of Western and Eastern scientific scholars and the established organisations focusing on the domain of well-being research. The lack of research in developing nations, with specific emphasis on the African continent, may be a reason why people would associate well-being with material goods and relative to their economic position, or wealth.

### **2.7.1 THE MISCONCEPTION THAT FINANCIAL WEALTH IS SYNONYMOUS WITH WELL-BEING**

The misconception among people is that money can buy happiness and is the variable that should be used to measure well-being (OECD, 2011; Happiness Research Institute, 2013). A new field of research, the economics of happiness focuses on a combination of utility and welfare as a means to unravel the notion of happiness (Graham, 2005). It is not the intention of this new field to replace income based measures of well-being but to compliment them. Research has shown that happiness levels tend to be higher in countries where income levels are higher (Graham, 2005). The abundant availability of literature, research and discussions on measuring happiness has led psychologists to the conclusion that neither financial means nor consumption is a guarantee to further

individual happiness (Sulkowski & White, 2015). Happiness levels seem to rise as income levels increase, but this is only true up to a point. Studies have indicated that in wealthier countries, the increase in per capita income does not ensure an increase in levels of happiness (Graham, 2005).

There are many aspects that shape people's lives (OECD, 2011), they may choose a lower paying job that offers greater rewards than mere financial stability, but a job that is more rewarding (Graham, 2005). While one may experience obstacles due to income parameters, people may choose to maximise their utility by desiring things that provide a positive utility based on their ability to achieve this desire (Read, 2004). People have the ability to adapt more in the monetary arena than in the non-monetary arena (Graham, 2005). Well-being is more susceptible to life changing events like death, loss and divorce to mention but a few. These life changing events have a long lasting impact on individual's well-being (Graham, 2005). In some cases the impact of life changing events may not only have an impact on the individual, but may also have an impact on the collective or the social groups that people associate with (Graham, 2005).

### **2.7.2. FROM BHUTAN TO THE HAPPY DANES**

The world is in a time of economic crisis, it is changing and contributing to changing work and social environments (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). A fixation of growing wealth through increased consumption patterns has blinded human beings. In some circles policy makers believe that the pursuit of happiness may be an apt replacement for constant growth of consumption in business and economic policy (Sulkowski & White, 2015). The Bruntland Commission's definition of sustainable development is brief but given the widespread use is the standard definition most commonly used. The definition states that the "ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987; Sulkowski & White, 2015). This definition suggests that humanity may be better served if the organising principle and measuring tool for economic growth shifts away from the concept of consumption as the main focus (Sulkowski & White, 2015).

Since 2000, the world has started moving in a direction which compliments the suggestion to move away from constant growth and focus on human well-being as indicators for economic growth. Certain parts of the developed world have designed models to measure key performance indicators which can be used as an alternative measure of economic growth and steer them away from using material and financial growth mechanism (Sulkowski & White, 2015):

- Genuine Progress Indicator;
- Gross National Happiness Indicator;
- UN Human Development Indicator;
- Calvert-Henderson Quality Life Indicator.

### **2.7.2 (A) GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS (GNH) INDEX OF BHUTAN**

In 1972, the King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchunck suggested the development and implementation of a Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index for Bhutan. The GNH Index has been an established practice for more than forty years (since the 1970's) and has been so successful in utilising the GNH Index it has replaced the use of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a growth indicator for Bhutan (Happiness Research Institute, 2013). GDP is a good indicator of a country's economic output, but falls short in identifying and evaluating overall quality of life in society. The specific analysis and measurement that is essential in measuring well-being, happiness and quality of life in a city are the factors which determine societal cohesion, strength of social fabric and the quality of the city (Happiness Research Institute, 2013; Sulkowski & White, 2015). In his report on National Income for the period 1929 to 1932 to the U.S. Senate, 73rd Congress in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session; Simon Kuznets warned against using GDP as a means to gauge the success of an economy (Kuznets, 1934; Sulkowski & White, 2015).

The success of the GNH Index meant it is now steadily being implemented globally (Bates, 2009; Sulkowski & White, 2015). The GNH Index is based on Buddhist belief that “material and spiritual development can complement each other rather than compete”. The four essential aspects of this philosophy are (Tideman, 2011; Sulkowski & White, 2015):

- Conservation of the natural environment;
- Ecological sustainable development;
- Good governance;
- Preservation of cultural values.

The GNH Index was able to provide empirical researchers with specific measurable attributes used to measure happiness (Zurick, 2006; Sulkowski & White, 2015):

- Cultural vitality;
- Ecological vitality;
- Education;
- Good governance;
- Living standards;
- Mental health;
- Physical health;
- Social and community vitality;
- Spiritual health;
- Time balance.

As a result of the success of the GNH Index in Bhutan, the rest of the world started to catch up, with specific reference to the United States of America, France and the United Kingdom admitting and giving serious consideration to start tracking happiness in their respective countries (Sulkowski & White, 2015).

#### **2.7.4. (B) THE HAPPY DANES**

The Danish government has been successful in capturing the essence of happiness research at national level. International happiness surveys which have been published by organisations like Gallup, the World Values Survey and the European Social Survey have all ranked Denmark as one of the happiest nations amongst countries surveyed (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014).

The World Database of Happiness has gathered data from happiness surveys from around the world for the past forty years. Since 1973, there have been more than 60



surveys carried out in Denmark. Results indicate that levels of happiness have remained at a constantly high level for the last four decades (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014).

The Happiness Research Institute Report, 2014: The Happy Danes makes specific reference to the factors which contributed to the well-being of the Danish people and their continued strong performance as a nation. This is in part due to the presence of a strong civil society, a well-functioning democracy, a high degree of security, trust, freedom and prosperity, together with good working conditions that allow room for a balanced life (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014). These factors present a case for further debate on specific interventions which may contribute to creating a happy society (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014).

Although the results have shown that Denmark ranks highest in world rankings in terms of happiness levels, it is hard to believe that all Danes are happy. Research conducted in the United States of America has concluded that people who are more motivated to pursue happiness, may experience less positive outcomes, thus affecting their happiness (Ford, et al., 2015). Culture plays a very important role in pursuing happiness, where individualistic cultures may be prone to higher levels of depression and loneliness. Collectivist societies have shown tendencies to have better success rates at pursuing happiness due to citizens being more socially engaged (Ford, et al., 2015).

In the case of Denmark, evidence of this has been identified due to the high consumption of anti-depression medicines in the country. Research has further indicated that it can be difficult to maintain happiness levels in an existing happy society (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014).

### **2.7.3. THE CONTRIBUTION BY THE OECD TO WELL-BEING**

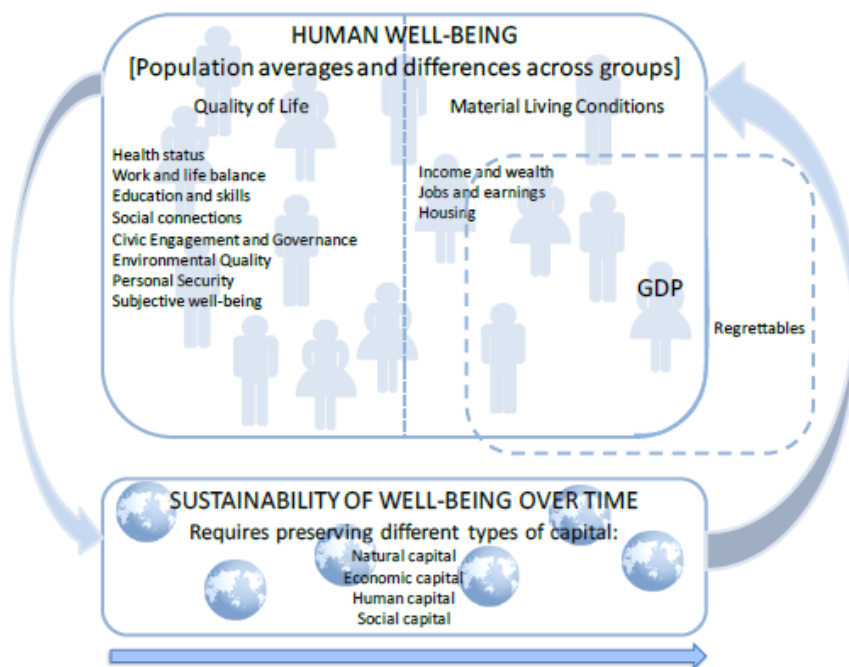
The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was established in 1961 (OECD, 2016). The headquarters are situated in Paris, France and they have thirty-five member countries who contribute towards the existence of the

OECD and the work they do to promote policies, which aim to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world (OECD, 2016).

The OECD works with member governments to help them understand economic drivers, identify factors impacting on social and environmental change. Additional measurement and information analysis which may provide guidance in understanding well-being is also collected, these include productivity and global trade flows. All the information gathered provides a healthy foundation for the OECD to analyse and compare data in predicting future trends in global economies (OECD, 2016).

The OECD's work on global trends compliments their research conducted in the field of well-being with the development of the Better Life Index. Their philosophy that there is more to life than GDP figures, economic indicators and statistics adds greater value to the Index (OECD, 2016). They have identified eleven critical topics which they deem essential in measuring well-being. These topics have been divided into three separate categories.

Figure 2.3: Framework for OECD well-being indicators



Source: OECD (2011, p. 6) Better Life Index: Compendium of Well-being Indicators

The framework (Figure 2.3) is comprised of three distinct conditions (material living conditions, quality of life and sustainability of well-being over time) which impact on the lives of people and focus on the way these conditions interact to provide an indication of human well-being (OECD, 2011). OECD (2011, p. 5-6) Better Life Index: Compendium of Well-being Indicators offers an explanation as to how the framework is integrated to measure well-being. Material living conditions or economic well-being is determined by income and wealth, jobs and earnings and the related housing conditions people live under. The non-financial attributes associated with the quality of life of people provides an understanding of the opportunities, which shape people's lives to allow them opportunities which enhance their lives and well-being. The last construct allows researchers the opportunity to evaluate and gather further insight into the impact which certain types of capital (natural, economic, human and social) may have on the first two factors over a period of time.

## **2.8. WELL-BEING IN THE WORKPLACE**

Since the Great Depression of the 1930's, the world has not seen an economic crisis like is being experienced today. The current economic crisis is contributing to changes in the work environment which cannot be ignored (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). The urgency shown by international bodies to develop an understanding of well-being and how it relates to business and development is gaining popularity (Sulkowski & White, 2015). The last ten years have seen a wealth of research being conducted, creating large amounts of empirical knowledge about the reasons and processes that make people happy in the workplace (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013).

The economic crises has subsequently given rise to increased unemployment figures globally and creates concerns about the well-being of the world population, as unemployment can have a negative impact on well-being (Kets de Vries, 2016; Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). Unemployment is creating a negative impact on life satisfaction resulting in higher instances of people suffering from depression, loss of identity, hopelessness and negative physical health (Kets de Vries, 2016; Warr,

2009). As a result, a connection between the emotional state of people, the financial health of the business and the economy has been identified. Thus employees working in an organisation can have an impact on the financial performance of the organisation if left unchecked (Sulkowski & White, 2015).

By addressing work related well-being factors, employees become more satisfied with their jobs, experience frequent positive emotions (like joy and happiness) and less negative emotions (like sadness and anger) (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). Although the term happiness has not been used extensively in the academic world, different constructs of the term have been used to describe it in the past with terms all referring to pleasant experiences at work (Fisher, 2010; Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). The terms most commonly used are job satisfaction (being the most commonly used and most central to the topic of well-being in the workplace), work engagement, flow at work, positive emotions and work enjoyment (Fisher, 2010).

#### **2.8.1. WHO BENEFITS FROM INCREASED EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING?**

Psychologists have long pondered what constitutes the components of human behaviour which impact negatively on individual functioning. The specific cause of these components may be assigned to the study of epidemiology which refers to diseases like depression, stress and anxiety disorders (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014; Allen & McCarthy, 2015; Kinicki & Fugate, 2012). This may lead to the misguided conclusion by society that people are generally dissatisfied and unhappy with life (Allen & McCarthy, 2015).

Happy people have a tendency to act differently and this can lead to activities and reactions which in turn encourage more happiness with people who come into contact with them (Warr, 2007). For employers to truly benefit from employee well-being they need to form an understanding of what constitutes employee well-being. The paradox nature of well-being means there is no formulae to create a successful working environment to achieve well-being in the organisation (Kets de Vries, 2016).

### **2.8.2. THE ROLE OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY IN THE WORKPLACE**

Positive psychology plays an important role in ensuring employee well-being, as it creates an environment where people can experience happiness and optimism to ultimately flourish in whatever they are doing. It does however require both internal (the individual) and external stimuli (the working environment) to allow people to achieve this state of mind (Allen & McCarthy, 2015). The role of the employer is to create an environment which is conducive to achieving optimal human functioning.

People are not happy all of the time, they may only be happy for a short period of time and it is dependent on the personal well-being of the individual (Fisher, 2010). Their emotions are short-lived and the odds are stacked against the employer to maintain a constant level of happiness within their organisation. Individuals are more prone to momentary mood fluctuation, but group constructs provide a relatively stable base over time (Fisher, 2010).

### **2.8.3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WELL-BEING AND THE WORKPLACE**

The last ten years have seen the creation of a wealth of empirical data which examines the relationship between the working environment and employee well-being (Fisher, 2010). The working environment contributes substantially to well-being and thus the importance of finding a balance between the two is critical for an organisation to achieve any form of success (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). In essence, job satisfaction creates a platform for life satisfaction to grow, as work can be a source of happiness (Allen & McCarthy, 2015).

In the past, organisations had a relationship with psychology, but this relationship was preoccupied with what was wrong with people. The field of positive psychology has opened up a new dimension of study for scholars and a new operating environment for organisations (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012). The rise of positive organisational behaviour gave birth to positive psychology at a subjective level, focusing on valued subjective experiences (Fisher, 2010). Researchers foresee a convergence of concepts of human and social capital and that of positive psychology to evolve in positive organisational behavior which emphasises well-being of employees (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012; Fisher, 2010). Positive psychology may facilitate behaviours which ensure reproductive

success in the area of social relationships, physical health, longevity, coping, executive functioning and resource building (Allen & McCarthy, 2015).

There are benefits to organisational life for employees, as it creates a platform to experience social engagement, achieve job satisfaction, have positive experiences and have the opportunity to enhance well-being (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). Employee well-being does not only provide benefits to the employees alone, but is also beneficial to employers, the wider community and society as a whole (Kets de Vries, 2016).

Psychologists have established that neither an increase of monetary rewards nor the resulting increased consumption of goods can guarantee increased levels of well-being (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Sulkowski & White, 2015)

#### **2.8.4. ADAPTING TRADITIONAL MEASURES OF WELL-BEING TO**

##### **MEET THE NEEDS OF TOMORROW**

The Gross National Happiness (GNH) Index for Bhutan makes reference to ecological vitality as one of the ways to elicit responses from individuals in measuring well-being (Zurick, 2006; Sulkowski & White, 2015). The OECD has also placed emphasis on environmental factors impacting well-being and how it has become a concern for people due to the impact it has on environmental sustainability (OECD, 2011).

Environmental management in organisations and the impact of the global economic crises can play an important role in employee well-being (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). Traditional measures of well-being do not compliment the way in which the global environment is changing (Sulkowski & White, 2015). Traditional happiness measures focused on GDP, company revenue and profits, income, material wealth and consumption (Sulkowski & White, 2015). To address the change in thinking, new indicators for well-being need to be incorporated in research. These indicators should include aspects relating to climate change, ecosystem collapse and new global threats to security aspects across the world (Sulkowski & White, 2015).

Researchers have found no correlation between employee well-being and financial performance, but they have found a positive correlation between employee well-being and the extent to which an organisation has developed a reputation for supporting green initiatives (Sulkowski & White, 2015).

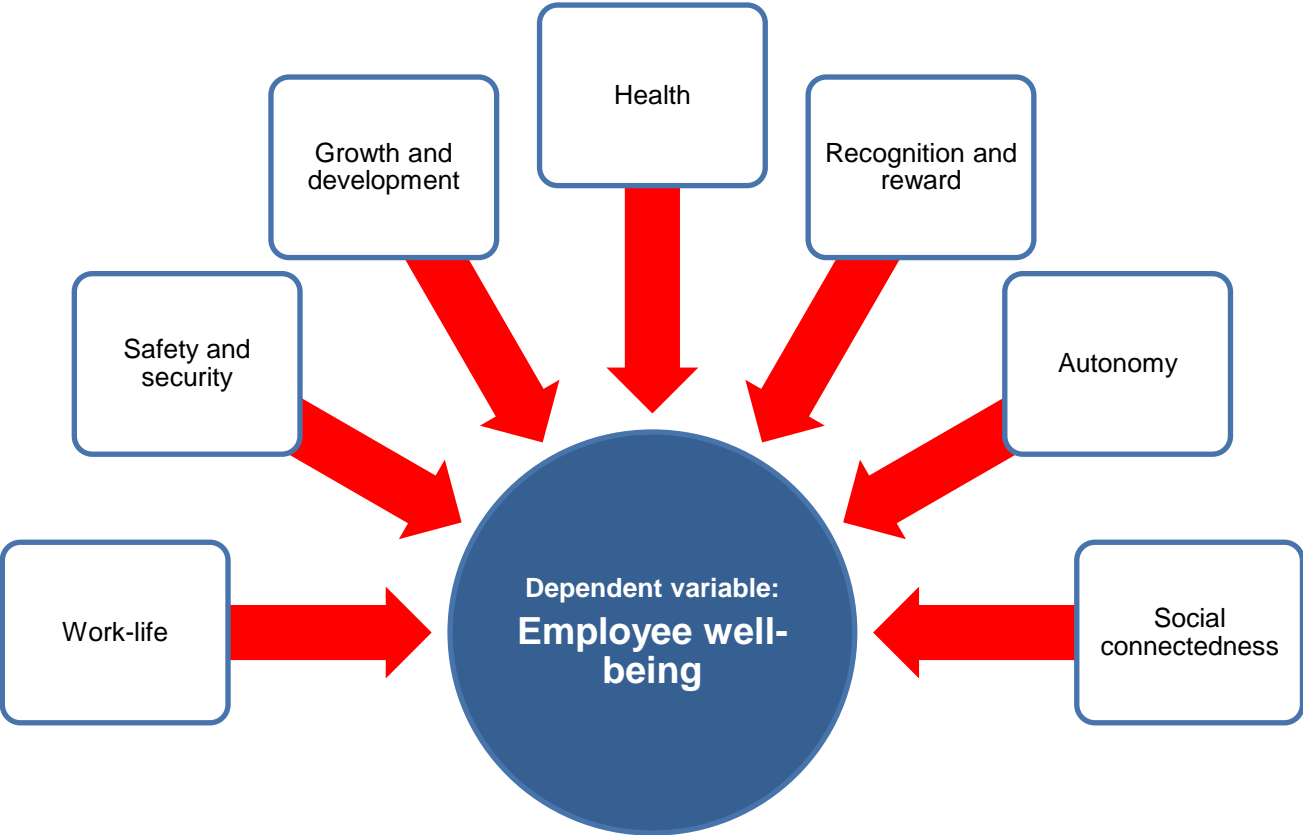
## 2.9 THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The literature review identified specific variables which have the ability to positively influence employee well-being. For the purpose of this study the following independent variables have been used in the conceptual model as being the most commonly discussed factors which may have a positive impact in the dependent variable, employee well-being:

- Work-life;
- Safety and security;
- Growth and development;
- Health;
- Recognition and reward;
- Autonomy;
- Social connectedness.

Figure 2.4 is a depiction of the conceptual model, representing the potential each independent variable has of being a potential factor to consider focusing on, in an attempt to enhance employee well-being in the workplace.

Figure 2.4: A conceptualised model to determine employee well-being



Source: Author’s own construction

The empirical study aims to determine which of the independent variable in the conceptual model need to be considered as being important considerations when organisations like the financial institution in question wishes to enhance employee well-being.



## 2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The literature review chapter served the purpose of providing a foundation for the empirical research portion of the study. The aim of the study was to determine the level of employee happiness at a financial institution. The literature highlighted the fact that happiness is not a new concept or topic of discussion. Greek philosophers first debated the meaning of life (Garaigordobil, 2015; Graham, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2001), world leaders found the value in happiness by including it in their constitutions (Musikanski, 2014) and scholars are still debating how best to measure well-being (Henderson & Knight, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

The importance of human well-being is highlighted by the establishment of world organisations which study the impact of individual happiness. They aim to guide governments in formulating fresh policies which guide economic growth in terms of measuring human well-being and not focusing on traditional indices of GDP growth and consumption. The application of these policies in the workplace can foster a happy working environment by focusing on similar aspects which address factors of well-being other than mere profit maximisation.

Theory which addressed basic human needs (Werner, et al., 2011) and goals (DuBrin, 2013; Werner, et al., 2011), utility as a result of increased activity while addressing basic human needs (Hirschey, 2009; Duncan, 2005) were discussed. The focus then moved to the personality of individual's being a determining factor in each person's life, as not every individual is wired the same and they express their feelings about well-being in different ways. Finally, the Easterlin paradox was investigated, which explains the short-lived benefits of hedonic happiness and the fact that it does not address eudaimonic happiness which is the ultimate goal to achieve high level well-being to ensure optimal performance in the workplace (Graham, 2012; Kets de Vries, 2016).

For employers to be able to realise the bottom line benefits of creating a happy working environment, it is important for employers to start laying the foundation of a working environment where employees love what they are doing (Kets de Vries, 2016). When

employees are happy they become more successful, more productive, more creative and ultimately produce higher quality work (Kets de Vries, 2016; Oswald, Proto & Sgroi, 2014).

Success is not the magic key to employee happiness, but happiness can ultimately be the key to success (Kets de Vries, 2016).

The following chapter will link the findings of the literature review with the hypothetical model proposed in chapter 1, with the aim of finding associations between the independent variables and employee happiness in the workplace as the dependent variable.

## CHAPTER 3

# METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

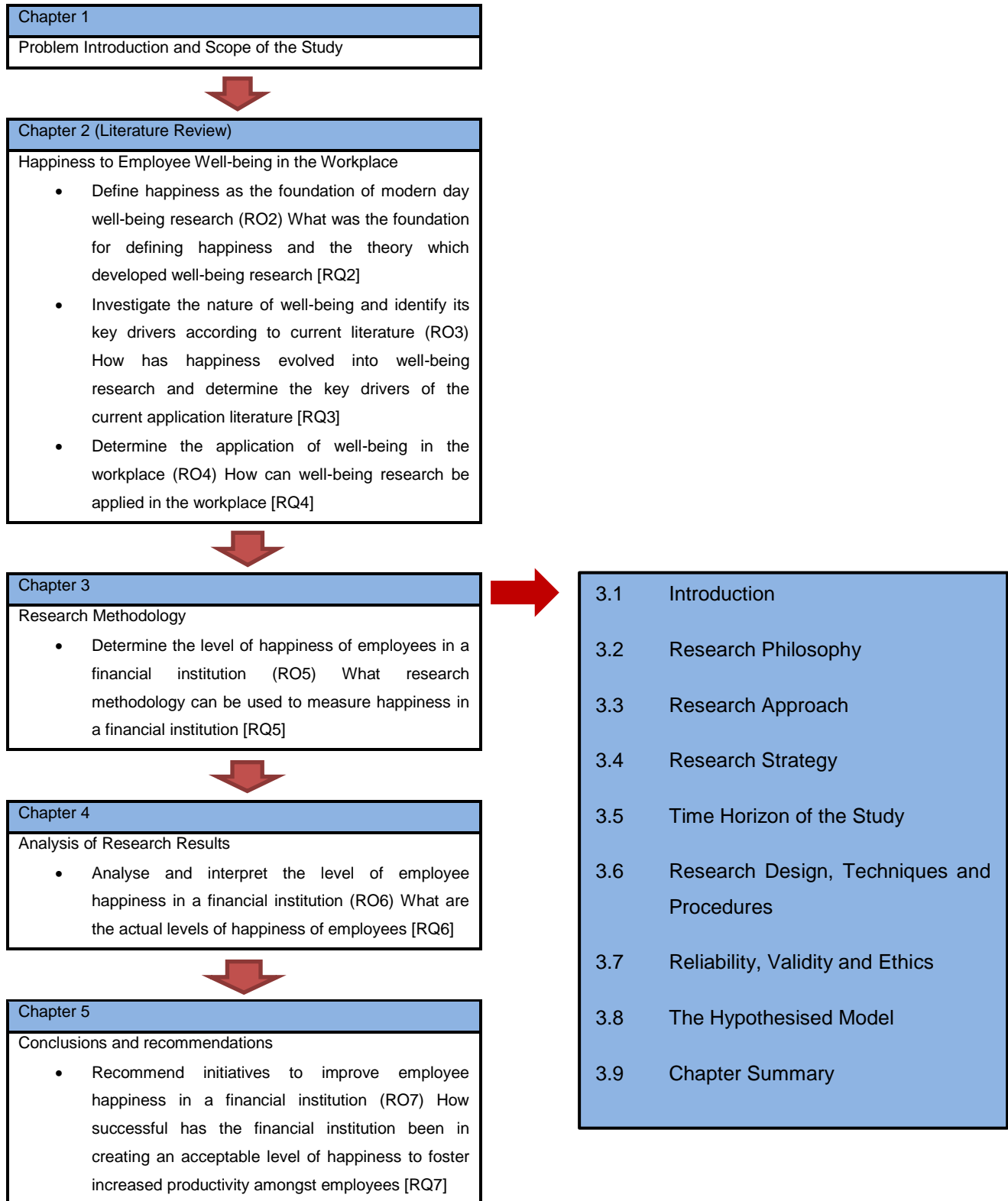
The previous chapter introduced the concept of employee happiness, more commonly referred to as employee well-being. The literature review also provided a knowledge base to formulate hypothesis statements, which inform the research methodology adopted for this study on employee well-being in a financial institution. Research is the systematic process of collecting and analysing data in the form of information obtained from respondents. The data are analysed to increase the knowledge base of the phenomenon which is being investigated (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001).

Chapter three provides an overview of the research methodology used to collect, analyse and interpret the empirical data obtained from respondents in the study. The applied research methodology is discussed under the following headings as depicted in figure 3.1:

- Research philosophy;
- Research approach;
- Research strategy;
- Time horizon;
- Data collection methods
- Research paradigm;
- Reliability and validity of data.

Further mention should be made that research is the process in which scientific methods are employed to expand the researcher's knowledge base in a particular field of study (Welman & Kruger, 2001).

**FIGURE 3.1: DETAILED STRUCTURE OF CHAPTER 3**



## **3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY**

The aim of developing a research philosophy is to develop better understanding and create greater knowledge, by researching a specific problem in a particular organisation (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). Based on a variety of definitions, research is a process of enquiry in a systematic and methodical manner with the aim of increasing one's knowledge (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p. 3).

During the research process one makes a number of assumptions which help shape how one understands the research questions, the methods applied and how the data are interpreted in the subsequent findings (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

### **3.2.1 FIVE MAJOR RESEARCH PHILOSOPHIES MOST COMMONLY ADOPTED BY RESEARCHERS**

There are five main research philosophies used in business and management (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015):

- Positivism;
- Critical realism;
- Interpretivism;
- Postmodernism;
- Pragmatism.

To be in a position to adopt a methodology for the study (investigating employee happiness levels at a financial institution) one is compelled to create a detailed understanding of the philosophies which drive decision making on which method is most appropriate to obtain unbiased data.

#### **3.2.1.1 POSITIVISM**

As a positivist researcher, one would take on a philosophical stance working towards an observable social reality to produce unambiguous and accurate knowledge (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). Therefore, the aim of using a positivist philosophy is to obtain pure data and facts, uninfluenced by human interpretation or bias by remaining neutral

as a researcher and detached from the data to avoid influencing the findings (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015; Crotty, 1998).

A highly structured methodology is required to facilitate replication with the emphasis being on quantifiable observations which facilitate statistical analysis (Gill & Johnson, 2010; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

### **3.2.1.2 CRITICAL REALISM**

A researcher dwelling in the realm of critical realism focuses on explanations of what one sees and experiences in terms of the underlying structures of reality that shape the observable events (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

The focus is to explain observable organisational events by focusing on the underlying causes, which are driven by the social structure of the organisation and shapes the everyday organisational life (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

### **3.2.1.3 INTERPRETIVISM**

An interpretivist researcher aims to create new and richer understandings of social networks in an organisation. It operates in the realm of subjectivism to develop new interpretations and experiences of organisational and social networks (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

The language, culture and history of people from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds makes them experience the workplace in different ways (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, it is important that researchers observe an organisation from the perspectives of different groups of people, as people of different cultural backgrounds will react differently under different circumstances (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

### **3.2.1.4 POSTMODERNISM**

In order to conduct research using the postmodernism philosophy, the researcher conducts research with the view that the dominant form of thinking is the current status quo. A study is conducted with the aim of building power relationships with respondents and listening to the dominant language spoken. The dominant theme being the current

state, but this current state can change as society changes its view point (Calás & Smircich, 1997).

Postmodernist researchers deconstruct the language spoken and separate the realities from the instability in an organisation, to conclude what the accepted truth actually is. The aim is to seek information which was not discussed or made visual by reading between the lines of what was actually discussed. Essentially, challenging the established way of thinking (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

Therefore, as a postmodernist, one would be inclined to deconstruct a variety of any forms of data, from texts, images, conversations, voices and numbers (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). A challenge for postmodernist researchers is to deal with the power relationship which exists between the researcher and the respondent or information, researchers need to be aware of their moral and ethical behaviour (Calás & Smircich, 1997; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

#### **3.2.1.5 PRAGMATISM**

Pragmatic researchers' ideology is based on practical outcomes or solutions to the research problem and the research question. They believe multiple realities exist and solutions cannot be based on a single point of view (Sulkowski & White, 2015).

Pragmatism is founded on the viewpoint that there are many ways one can interpret the world, there is not one single point of view which describes a specific situation, thus there is a need include different ways to undertake research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

#### **3.2.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY ADOPTED**

A credible research philosophy is grounded in the methodological choice, research strategy, data collection techniques and the analysis procedures (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). Positivists claim that the essence of science is objective verification which finds its home in the positivist paradigm (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

For the purposes of this study, the positivist philosophy was adopted due to the nature of the research being conducted. The main objective is to determine the level employee happiness at a financial institution. Respondents were asked to provide their subjective view on specific dependent variables. The aim is to observe social reality to produce unambiguous and accurate knowledge in the form of pure data and facts, which is not influenced by human interpretation or bias.

### 3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

There are different approaches which researchers can use in the design of their research project. The research approaches most commonly used are deductive, inductive and lastly abductive. A detailed comparison of the three approaches is represented in table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Comparison of deduction, induction and abduction reason approaches

	<b>Deductive</b>	<b>Inductive</b>	<b>Abductive</b>
<b>Logic</b>	In a deductive inference, when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true	In an inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions	In an abductive inference, known premises are used to generate testable conclusions
<b>Generalisability</b>	Generalising from the general to the specific	Generalising from the specific to the general	Generalising from the interactions between the specific and the general
<b>Use of data</b>	Data collection is used to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection and so forth
<b>Theory</b>	Theory falsification or verification	Theory generation and building	Theory generation or modification; incorporating existing theory where appropriate, to build new theory or modify existing theory

Source: Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2015, p. 145)



The research approach applied in this study is based on a deductive approach. Collis and Hussey (2014, p.7) explain deductive research as being a study in which a conceptual and theoretical structure is developed and then tested by empirical observation. Further motivation for the decision is based on six essential steps which the deductive approach will follow (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015, p. 146):

1. Put forward a tentative idea, a premise, a hypothesis (a testable proposition about the relationship between two or more concepts or variables) or set of hypotheses to form a theory.
2. By using existing literature, or by specifying the conditions under which the theory is expected to hold, deduce a testable proposition or number of propositions.
3. Examine the premises and the logic of the argument that produced them, comparing this argument with existing theories to see if it offers an advance in understanding. If it does, then continue.
4. Test the premises by collecting appropriate data to measure the concepts or variables and analysing them.
5. If the results of the analysis are not consistent with the premises (the tests fail!), the theory is false and must either be rejected or modified and the process restarted.
6. If the results of the analysis are consistent with the premises then the theory is corroborated.

### **3.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY**

An evaluation of the research approach was conducted in section 3.3. It concluded that the most suitable approach for this study is a deductive research method. Section 3.4 discusses the research paradigm which distinguishes between the specific approaches we aim to use when collecting data.

A research paradigm is based on shared assumptions, concepts, values and practices about doing research. To describe it in a simpler manner, it is an approach to thinking about and doing research (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

A simple explanation to verify the difference between quantitative and qualitative research is that quantitative researchers employ measurement and qualitative researchers do not use a measurement tool (Bryman & Bell, 2011). A case can be made against the convergence of the two paradigms due to the fact that quantitative and qualitative researchers make different epistemological assumptions, they belong to different research cultures and have different research biographies (Brannen, 2005).

### **3.4.1 THE QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH PARADIGM**

The purist form of quantitative research relies on the collection of numerical data (Sukamolson, 2010) and it follows the confirmatory scientific method where the focus is on hypothesis testing and theory testing (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The primary role of quantitative research is to test the hypothesis with empirical data to establish if the hypothesis is supported by the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Sukamolson, 2010).

Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 37-38) refer to the collection and analysis of data as being a key attribute of quantitative research due to:

- The deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research;
- Incorporates the practice and norms of the natural scientific model and positivism;
- Takes a view of social reality as an external objective reality.

In quantitative research, one can make an assumption that cognition and behaviour are predictable and explainable, based on determinism that all events are determined by one or more causes (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The use of quantitative research as a paradigm construct encourages researchers to identify cause and affect relationships to assist in making probabilistic predictions and generalisations based on the sample and related to the population (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

### **3.4.2 THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PARADIGM**

Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 38) define qualitative research as being a research strategy which places the emphasis on words rather than the quantification of data in the collection and analysis process. It emphasises an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research and rejects the practice of the natural scientific model and positivism. Qualitative research takes a view of social reality as constantly shifting emergent property of individuals' creation.

### **3.4.3 COMMON APPROACHES TO QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**

The paradigm adopted to facilitate the research to show the relationship between the dependent variable (employee well-being) and the independent variables (Work-life, growth and development, safety and security, health, recognition and reward, autonomy and social connectedness) is the quantitative or positivistic approach.

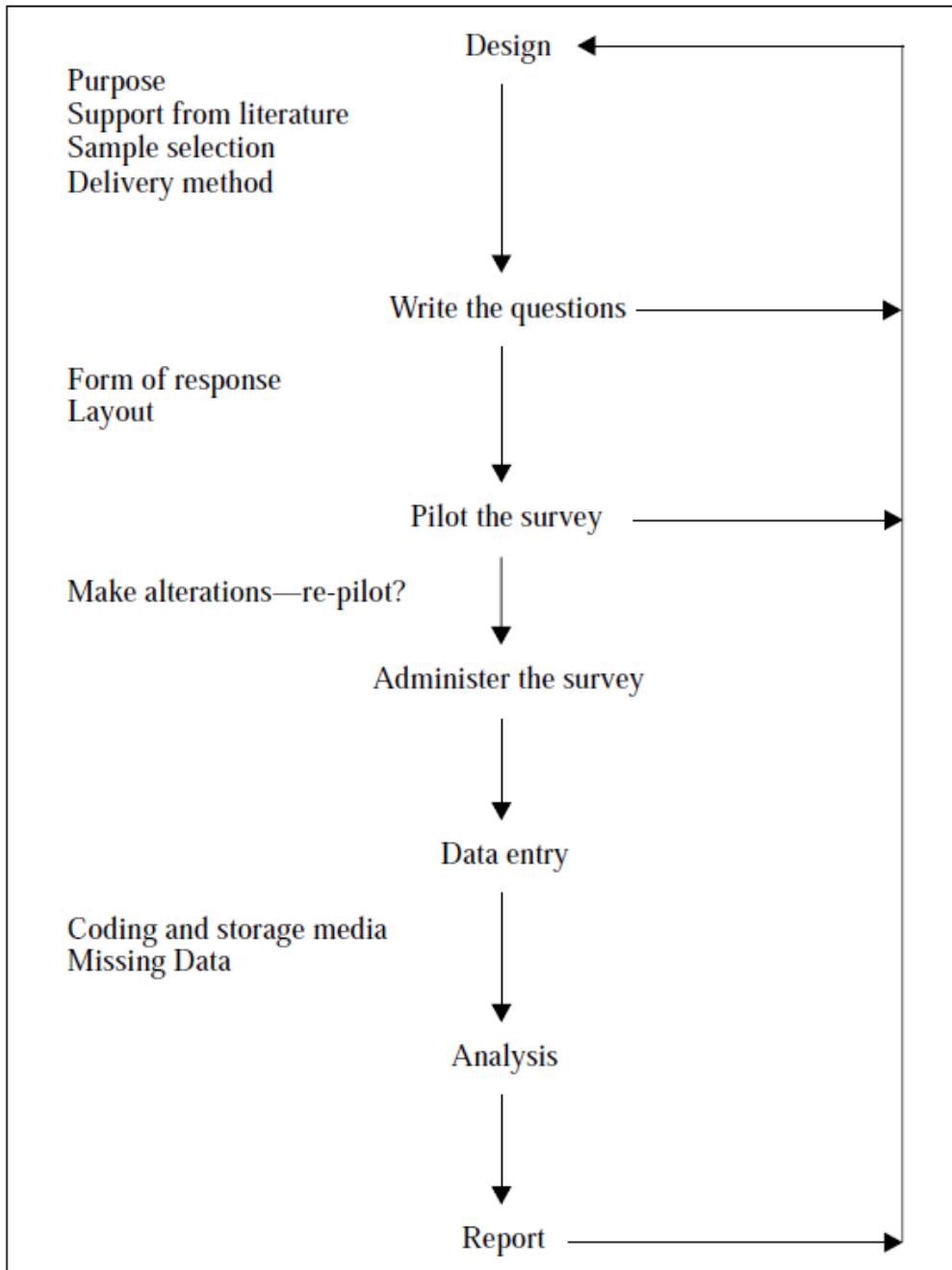
There are numerous approaches to consider when formulating the research strategy, which include the survey, the approach chosen for this study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015; Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007):

### **3.4.4 SURVEY RESEARCH**

Based on the nature of the study, the most appropriate approach to conducting the study was used, this being the survey method. A survey can be conducted by posing questions to respondents (individuals, a department in a company or the entire company) via face-to-face, telephone or questionnaire (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). Respondents need to be asked questions drawn from the literature review and the questions need to be relevant to the research objectives and research questions of the study (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007). The size of the sample is important to consider due to poor response rates (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007). The respondents need to be representative of the population to ensure validity of the data collected (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

The collection of data is important to ensure consistency of the data collection method to ensure that the work is not compromised. A structured approach to the survey process is depicted in figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: The survey process



Source: Adams, Khan, Raeside & White (2007, p.129)

### **3.5 TIME HORIZON OF THE STUDY**

The time period over which a study is conducted may be performed in two ways and is specific to the required outcome of the study and the research investigating questions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015). The terms used to describe these data collection periods are longitudinal or cross-sectional surveys (Jusoh, Kindy & Shah, 2016). The survey time period is commonly referred to as a wave or a snap shot and can be conducted in one wave (cross-sectional survey) or in multiple waves (longitudinal survey) to obtain the desired outcome of the study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

Longitudinal surveys provide researchers with the opportunity to conduct a survey with a specific cohort of individuals over a long period of time, thus ensuring greater significance of the data gathered (Niemeier & Yee, 1996). In contrast, cross-sectional surveys are performed in one wave with one sample of the population, thus greatly reducing the impact and significance of the study (Niemeier & Yee, 1996).

According to Jusoh, Kindy and Shah, (2016, p895) cross-sectional surveys are the research method that is commonly used in developmental psychology and other areas including the social sciences. Both methods may be used to generate statistical measures, but depends on the desired outcome of the study. Given the nature of this study and the constraints facing the researcher, a cross-sectional survey is the most appropriate method to conduct the research.

### **3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN, TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES**

Research design is a series of steps, the blueprint to reaching the research objectives of the study and answering the research questions. This is achieved by specifying the methods and procedures detailing the process for collecting and analysing the information needed (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007).

The research design can have an adverse effect on the reliability and validity of the study through a poorly executed research process (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White,

2007). Therefore, the quality of the information gathered and the methods applied by the researcher can have an impact on the credibility of the study.

### **3.6.1 POPULATION**

The target population that is being investigated is a regional office of well-known financial institution in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. The population is a representation of the financial institution's group structure.

The financial institution's value proposition to its clients is based on them having fully integrated regional presence in the form of a regional office where all the different business units for the group are represented. All regional office staff are housed in one building, thus providing convenient access to the population sample.

### **3.6.2 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD**

Adams, Khan, Raeside and White (2007, p.87) describe sampling as the process or technique of selecting a suitable sample for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. It is a subset of data values drawn from a population, as it is not always possible to collect every data value for the entire population (Wegner, 2012). Researchers rarely survey the entire population as the cost is too high and the time taken to interview the entire population is time consuming (Creative Research Systems, 2015; Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007; Wegner, 2012).

An accurate representative sample emphasises the importance of being in a position to draw conclusions based on the real world or the representative population (Adams, Khan, Raeside, & White, 2007). Sampling can be done by either using non-probability sampling (not selected randomly) or probability sampling (selected on a random basis, by chance) methods (Wegner, 2012, pp. 153-157).

Table 3.2: Probability and non-probability sampling methods

Probability		Non-probability	
Method	Description	Method	Description
Simple random	Members chosen randomly, equal chance of selection	Convenience	Chosen by availability, at the convenience of the researcher
Systematic random	Population selected at uniform intervals, relative to first sampling unit	Judgement	Researcher uses own judgement to select best sampling units
Stratified random	Population grouped into segments (strata), sample unit selected from each group	Quota	Non-random selection of sampling unit to fill quota
Cluster random	Population naturally divided into clusters, sample made up of randomly selection of clusters	Snowball	Respondents nominate members of sample unit, non-random and potentially biased

Source: Based on Wegner (2012, p. 153-157)

The sample was selected from the financial institution employee database and includes all employees (permanent and part-time employees) working in the building. This sample is regarded as a non-probability convenience sample as the contact details of each employee were provided. Each employee was categorised into the specific business unit they work for. The Business units employing less than five people were categorised under the heading “Other” (highlighted in Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Population of respondents per business unit at the financial institution

FLOOR	RESPONDENT TYPE	POTENTIAL NUMBER
5 <sup>th</sup>	Business banking	87
5 <sup>th</sup>	Asset finance	10
6 <sup>th</sup>	International Banking	35
6 <sup>th</sup>	Online banking	9
6 <sup>th</sup>	Homeloans	8
6 <sup>th</sup>	Large Corporate banking	3
6 <sup>th</sup>	Desktop Support	3
6 <sup>th</sup>	Connect telecoms	4
7 <sup>th</sup>	Private clients/wealth/fiduciary services	20
7 <sup>th</sup>	Trust services	78
8 <sup>th</sup>	Insurance Brokers	11
8 <sup>th</sup>	Building management services	5
9 <sup>th</sup>	Merchant Services	9
9 <sup>th</sup>	Premier banking	1
9 <sup>th</sup>	Public sector banking	2
9 <sup>th</sup>	Smart solutions	1
9 <sup>th</sup>	Savings and investments	1
9 <sup>th</sup>	Consumer asset finance	30
9 <sup>th</sup>	Financial planning	2
9 <sup>th</sup>	Consumer credit	17
	Total population	354

Source: Author's own construction based on financial institution employee list



### **3.6.3 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

The literature review was used to formulate the research questions to provide relevance in the way the questions were constructed and to remain true to the aim of the study (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007). The research was divided into two sections. Section one consisted of closed ended questions designed to capture the demographic profile of respondents. In section two of the questionnaire, respondents were presented with specific statements relating to the dependent (employee well-being) and independent (work-life, safety and security, growth and development, health, recognition and reward, autonomy and social connectedness) variables under investigation. Respondents were asked to respond to a variety of five point Likert rating scale statements ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Wegner, 2012, p. 11). Respondents were asked to answer all the questions and the questionnaire was designed to prompt respondents to answer questions they may have left out. Sections two is designed to ask questions which are positively phrased and specific to the dependent variable (employee well-being) and the independent variables (work-life, safety and security, growth and development, health, recognition and reward, autonomy and social connectedness) under investigation. For ease of reference, a copy of the questionnaire is attached under Appendix C.

### **3.6.4 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION**

A variety of delivery instruments exist to choose from to survey the population, one can choose between face-to-face interviews, mail questionnaires, peer dissemination, telephone and e-mail/web questionnaires (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007). The questionnaire was loaded onto an online survey software tool called QuestionPro. A link to the QuestionPro website ([www.questionpro.com](http://www.questionpro.com)) was attached to an email sent to respondents where they were asked to complete the online questionnaire. The self-administered questionnaire was sent to the email addresses of all employees (354 employees) working at the financial institution.

In order to ensure a high response rate, the questions asked were clear and relevant to the study. The length of the questionnaire was kept to a minimum, it had no complex questions and a clear set of instructions was included on the questionnaire (Adams,

Khan, Raeside & White, 2007). To emphasise the importance of the study and the relevance to the organisation, an email explaining the reason and the relevance of the research was included in the email sent to respondents (please refer to Appendix B). Regular email correspondence was sent to the population sample to encourage them to complete the questionnaire.

### **3.6.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Statistics consist of three components, these being descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and statistical modelling (Wegner, 2012). For the purpose of this study, inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. The statistical components at the heart of the analysis are regression and correlation analysis. These will be utilised to investigate the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables which comprise the components of the conceptual model. To aid in the analysis, Dr. Jan du Plessis will make use of a data analysis software system, Dell Statistica, version 13 to analyse the data.

#### **3.6.5.1 INFERENCE STATISTICS**

According to Wegner (2012, p. 7) Inferential statistics helps the researcher understand the “bigger population picture” of a random variable, based on the sample evidence. By using this method of analysis, the sample findings are used to estimate the population parameters values of the random variables to enable the researcher to draw conclusions about the target population (Wegner, 2012).

#### **3.6.5.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

Descriptive statistics identify the location (concentration), spread (dispersion) and shape (skewness) of the data (Wegner, 2012). In other words, descriptive statistics are used to summarise the data into visual formats represented in the form of charts, tables and graphs for easier understanding and recognition of data anomalies (Collis & Hussey, 2009).

Multiple regression analysis was used to gain insight into the relationships between employee well-being (dependent variable) and its proposed determinants (independent

variables mentioned in Figure 1.2). Data correlation was also used to shed light on the association between the quantitative variables.

### **3.7 RELIABILITY, VALIDITY AND ETHICS**

Adams et al. (2007, p. 235) mention two approaches that can be used to test and evaluate measurements of variables to ensure the quality of the data, research design methods and the overall accuracy of study results.

The two methods are known as:

- Reliability;
- Validity.

Reliability and validity enhance the accuracy of the measuring instrument and are considered to be fundamental elements in the process to providing high quality results (Dennick & Tavakol, 2011).

#### **3.7.1 RELIABILITY**

Reliability is a method used to estimate the consistency of the measurement (degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time) when it is used under the same conditions with the same subjects (Adams, Khan, Raeside, & White, 2007). Therefore, when the outcome of the measuring process is reproducible, the measuring instrument can be considered to be reliable (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007).

Collis and Hussey (2009, p.204) mention three ways to estimate the reliability of responses are that are used regularly in research projects:

##### **Test-retest:**

Respondents answer the same questions twice. The more their responses remain unchanged the more reliable the test.

##### **Split halves:**

The questionnaire is split into two halves and a correlation of the two data sets is made.

**Internal consistency:**

Every item is correlated across the sample to evaluate the extent to which items within the research instrument present analogous results.

Cronbach’s coefficient alpha (Cronbach’s alpha) was developed to provide a measure internal consistency of a test or scale and is expressed as a number between 0 and 1 (Dennick & Tavakol, 2011). The closer a Cronbach’s alpha is to 1.00 the higher the instrument’s internal consistency and thus considered to be reliable (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2001).

Table 3.4: Levels of reliability (Cronbach’s alpha)

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient	Level of reliability
<0.50	Poor reliability
0.50	Satisfactory reliability (basic research)
>0.70	Acceptable reliability (academic acceptance)
>0.80	Very good reliability

Source: Arnolds and Boshoff (2001, p.40)

Table 3.5 below represents the validity testing (using Cronbach’s alpha) of the research instrument, representing the validity scores made up of the responses given to specific statements referring to the independent variables.

All the independent variables obtained reliability scores acceptable for academic research. The independent variables, health and safety and security achieved scores between 0.7 and below 0.8, implying acceptable reliability. The remaining five variables (work-life, growth and development, recognition and reward, autonomy and social connectedness) all scored above 0.8, providing very good reliability in terms of internal consistency of the data.

Table 3.5: Cronbach's alpha values for the measuring instrument independent variables

Independent variable	Cronbach's alpha
Happiness	0.92
Work-life	0.93
Safety and security	0.75
Growth and development	0.89
Health	0.74
Recognition and reward	0.92
Autonomy	0.93
Social connectedness	0.90

Source: Author's own construction based on statistical data

### 3.7.2 VALIDITY

Validity is considered to be the strength of our conclusions, inferences or propositions (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007). It is taken as the degree to which the test is measuring what it should be measuring, more simply, the accuracy of your measurement (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 53; Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007, p. 237). Errors in the research can undermine the validity of the study (Collis & Hussey, 2014). Careful attention should be given to the procedures followed, inaccurate or misleading measurements and poor samples construction to avoid measuring what was not intended by the researcher (Collis & Hussey, 2014). According to Adams et al. (2007, p. 237) there are four types of validity commonly examined in research methods.

- Internal Validity examines the relationship between the study and the outcome observed by testing whether it is a causal relationship.
- External Validity refers to the researcher's ability to generalise the results of the study to other settings.
- Construct Validity examines if there is a relationship between how the researcher operationalised concepts in the study to the actual causal relationship. By trying

to generalise the conceptualised treatment and outcomes to broader constructs of the same concepts.

- Conclusion Validity examines whether there is a relationship between the study and the observed outcome.

### **3.7.3 ETHICS**

Researchers face moral choices which may impact their decision making during the research process. Therefore, it is difficult to determine a clear set of rules to guide the researcher during the research process and in making moral choices. The nature of ethical behaviour is based on the individual's moral grounding and interpretation of what is ethical (Greener, 2008). It is for this reason that many institutions adhere to a professional code of ethics or a set of formal documents guidelines which aim to send a message to the professional community about moral standards guiding the institution in question (Komic, Marusic & Marusic, 2015). The researcher for this treatise obtained ethical clearance (Annexure D) from Nelson Mandela Municipality University Business School after the submission of the questionnaire (Annexure C).

## **3.8 THE HYPOTHESISED MODEL**

The following null and alternative hypotheses were developed with the aim of achieving the research objectives mentioned in section 1.4 for testing with empirical research.

$H_{O1}$  = Work-life exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A1}$  = Work-life positively influences employee well-being.

$H_{O2}$  = Safety and security exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A2}$  = Safety and security positively influence employee well-being.

H<sub>O3</sub> = Growth and development exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

H<sub>A3</sub> = Growth and development positively influence employee well-being.

H<sub>O4</sub> = Health exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

H<sub>A4</sub> = Health positively influences employee well-being.

H<sub>O5</sub> = Recognition and reward exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

H<sub>A5</sub> = Recognition and reward positively influence employee well-being.

H<sub>O6</sub> = Autonomy exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

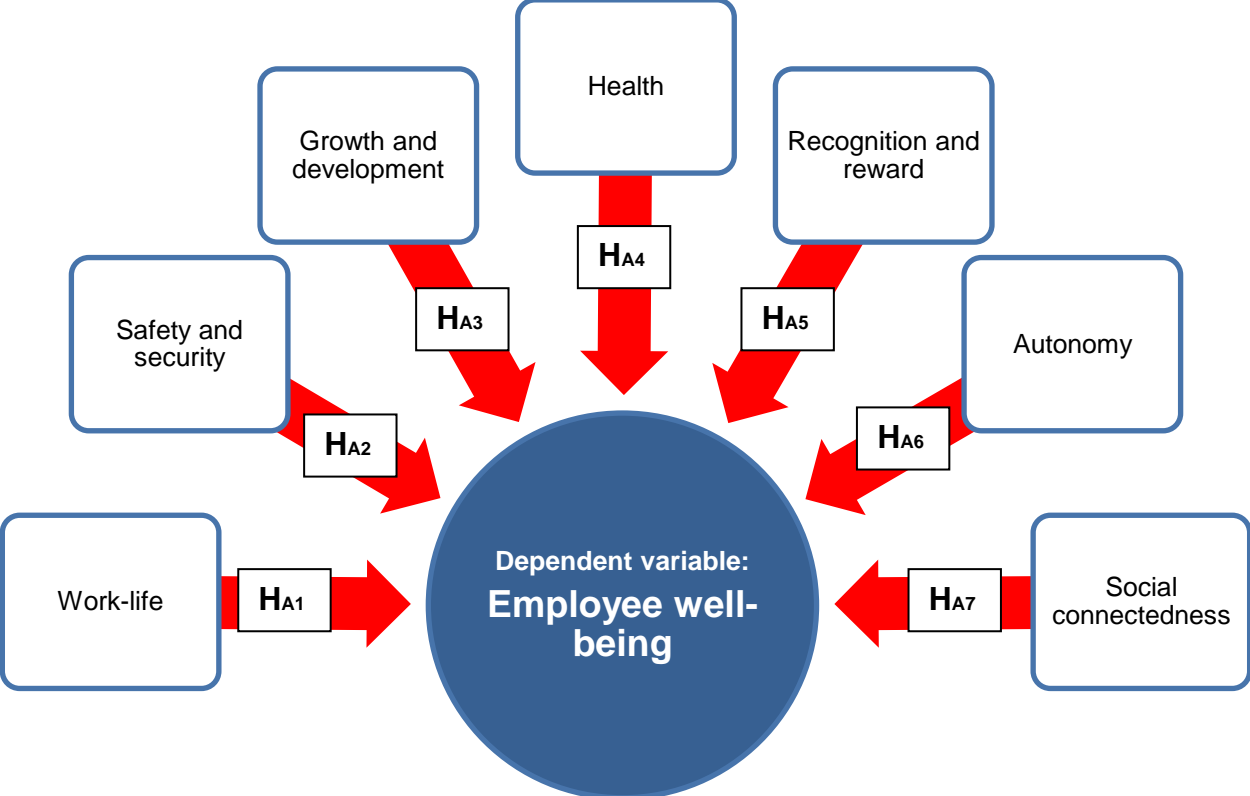
H<sub>A6</sub> = Autonomy positively influences employee well-being.

H<sub>O7</sub> = Social connectedness exerts no influence on employee well-being.

H<sub>A7</sub> = Social connectedness positively influences employee well-being.

The literature reviewed in chapter two mentioned the above independent variables, with each variable having the ability to positively influence employee well-being. The aim of the alternative hypothesis is to provide evidence to support the findings from the literature review, which proves the positive impact each independent variable is able to have in on employee well-being in an organisation.

Figure 3.3: The hypothesised model to determine employee well-being



Source: Author's own construction



### **3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter provides a theoretical understanding of the research methodology applied to this particular study. The discussion centered around the research process, the way in which data is collected and the analysis procedures used to ensure the reliability and validity of the study.

A positivistic philosophy was applied by using a quantitative approach to survey employees at a financial institution. The research instrument was constructed by using specific themes identified in the literature review.

The following chapter provides an outline of the empirical results obtained from the application of the research instrument and based on both descriptive and inferential statistical components.

## CHAPTER 4

# EMPIRICAL RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

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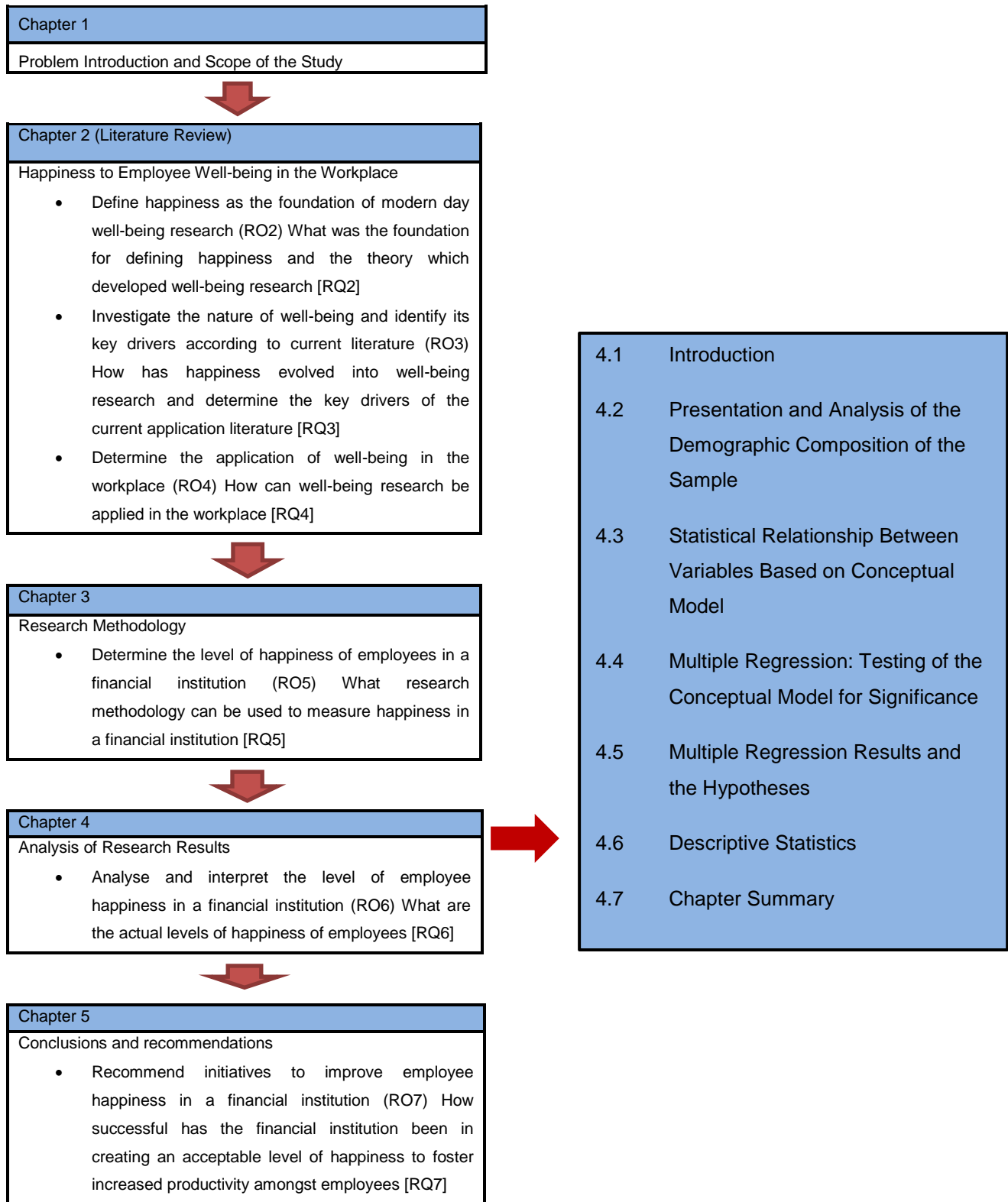
## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided an outline of the research methodology employed to test the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables as described in the hypothesized model in Figure 3.3 in chapter three. The literature review in chapter two provided the knowledge base to formulate greater understanding of the independent variables listed below and the ability the independent variables possess to positively influence the outcome of employee well-being if properly applied.

- Work-life;
- Safety and security;
- Growth and development;
- Health;
- Recognition and reward;
- Autonomy;
- Social connectedness.

The systematic process to collect reliable data in order to analyse the responses of employees at a financial institution was also discussed. The empirical results of the study are reported in chapter four and results are analysed to determine the level of employee well-being and to examine the extent in which certain variables are able to influence employee well-being.

**Figure 4.1: Detailed structure of chapter 4**



## 4.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE

The first section of the questionnaire (question 1 to 17) contained questions specifically designed to obtain demographic information about the respondents. The questions include gender, age, race, marital status, highest level of education, employment status, household size, number of dependent children and monthly household income.

Biographic questions relating to specific aspects to respondents work activities were also asked, these questions being:

- Position in organisation;
- The division respondents work for;
- Tenure;
- Time taken to get to work to work;
- Means of transport used to get to and from work.

Table 4.1 summarises the results of the demographic breakdown of the sample. The population sample (354 potential respondents) was selected from the financial institution employee database, including all employees (permanent and part-time employees) working in the building. A total number of 164 responses were received out of a potential 354, making the response rate 46%.

The results indicate that the majority of respondents were female (71%), older than 35 years and 62.20% (102) are married. Household sizes (figure 4.2) were evenly spread across the range, tapering off to a household size of 5 (12%) and more than 5 (4%).

Figure 4.2: Q11 What is the size of your household (how many people do you live with)?

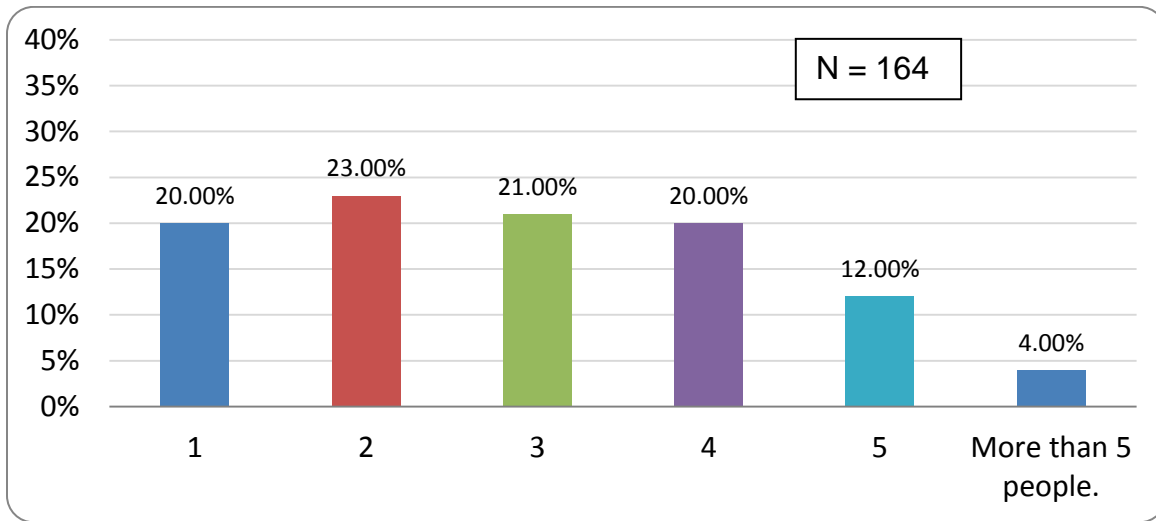
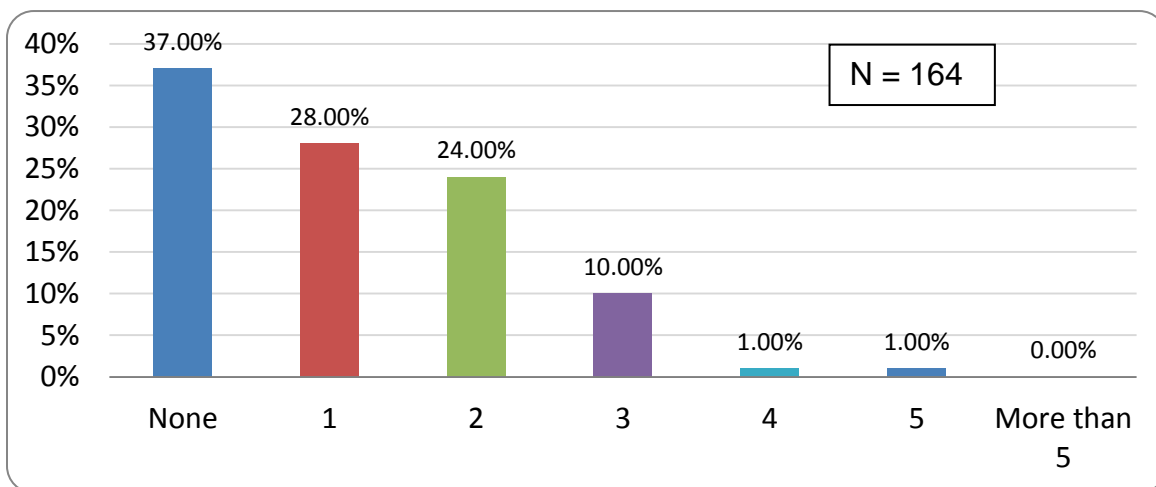


Figure 4.3 indicates that a large number of respondents (37%) did not have any dependent children living with them. The majority of households (52%) had no more than two children living with them.

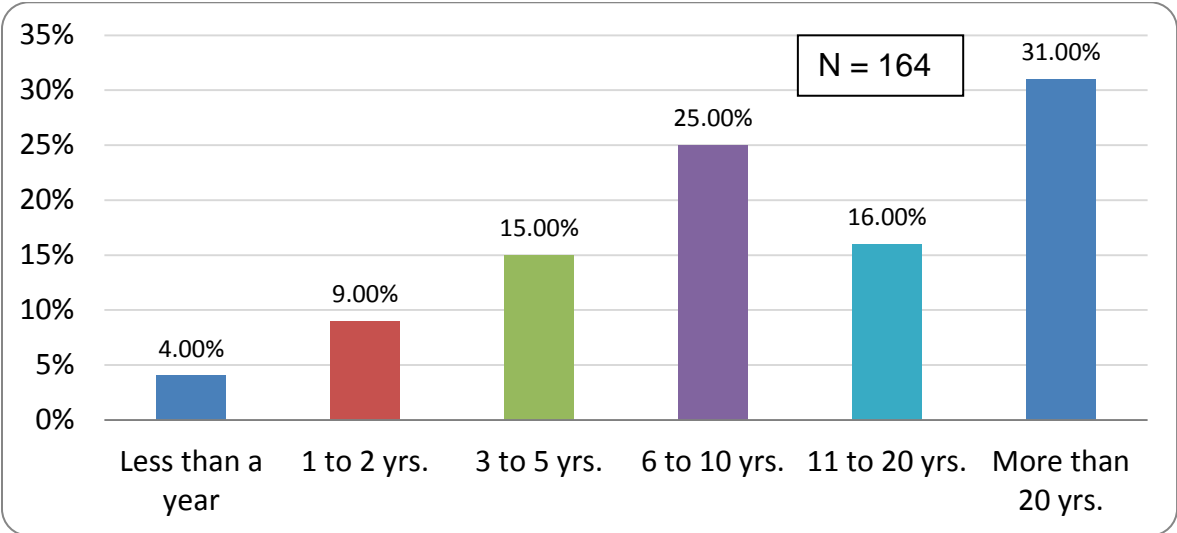
Figure 4.3: Q12 How many dependent children do you have living with you?



In terms of the level of education of respondents, more than half of respondents (55.49%) have furthered their education after leaving school, with 46 people having a National Diploma (28.05%), 22 an Undergraduate degree (13.41%) and 23 Post graduate degree (14.02%).

Tenure data as depicted in Figure 4.4 below, consistently rises up to the 10 years of employment with one institution and then decreases to 16% of employees who have been employed for a period ranging from 11 to 20 years. This may indicate that employees may seek opportunities outside the organisation after a period of employment with the same institution. The high number of respondents who have had more than 20 year’s tenure with the same institution (31%), may be due to the fact that the building in which respondents work is a regional office. Employees working in this building hold more senior positions and have a responsibility towards the running institution’s regional operations.

Figure 4.4: Q9 Tenure - How long have you been employed by your current employer?



Therefore, a higher number of respondent’s (108) household income levels fell into a range between R15 000 and R44 999 (65.86%) and 36% of respondents indicated their household income to be in excess of R45 000 per month.

Table 4.1: Demographic composition of the sample

<b>N = 164</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Frequency of responses</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	47	29
	Female	117	71
<b>Age</b>	18 to 25 yrs.	4	2.44
	26 to 35 yrs.	45	27.44
	36 to 45 yrs.	58	35.37
	46 to 55 yrs.	40	24.39
	56 years and older	17	10.37
<b>Race</b>	Asian	1	0.61
	Black	19	11.59
	Coloured	33	20.12
	Indian	5	3.05
	White	106	64.63
<b>What is your current marital status?</b>	Divorced	17	10.37
	In a relationship	11	6.71
	Living with my partner	12	7.32
	Married	102	62.20
	Separated	0	0.00
	Single	20	12.20
	Widowed	2	1.22
<b>What is your highest level of education?</b>	Did not finish school	0	0.00
	Matric/Grade 12	73	44.51
	National Diploma	46	28.05
	Undergraduate degree	22	13.41
	Post graduate degree	23	14.02
<b>Employment status</b>	Full time	163	99.39
	Part time	1	0.61
<b>Position in organisation</b>	Clerk/operations	82	50.00
	Management	19	11.59
	Middle management	25	15.24
	Product Specialist	14	8.54
	Regional manager	9	5.49
	Specialist Sales	10	6.10
	Team Leader	5	3.05

	If other, please mention .....	-	-
<b>What division do you work for?</b>	Asset finance	13	7.93
	Business banking	69	42.07
	Consumer asset finance	6	3.66
	Consumer credit	1	0.61
	Homeloans	-	-
	Insurance Brokers	8	4.88
	International Banking	12	7.32
	Merchant Services	5	3.05
	Online banking	7	4.27
	Private clients, wealth & fiduciary services	17	10.37
	Trust services	14	8.54
	IT	4	2.44
	Building management	2	1.22
	Points of presence	6	3.66
<b>Tenure - How long have you been employed by your current employer?</b>	Less than a year	7	4.27
	1 to 2 yrs.	14	8.54
	3 to 5 yrs.	24	14.63
	6 to 10 yrs.	41	25.00
	11 to 20 yrs.	27	16.46
	More than 20 yrs.	51	31.10
<b>In what suburb of Port Elizabeth do you live?</b>	Northern suburbs	32	19.51
	Southern suburbs	76	46.34
	Western suburbs	35	21.34
	Other	21	12.80
<b>Household size</b>	1	33	20.12
	2	38	23.17
	3	35	21.34
	4	32	19.51
	5	19	11.59
	More than 5	7	4.27
<b>How many dependent children do you have living with you?</b>	None	60	36.59
	1	46	28.05
	2	39	23.78
	3	16	9.76



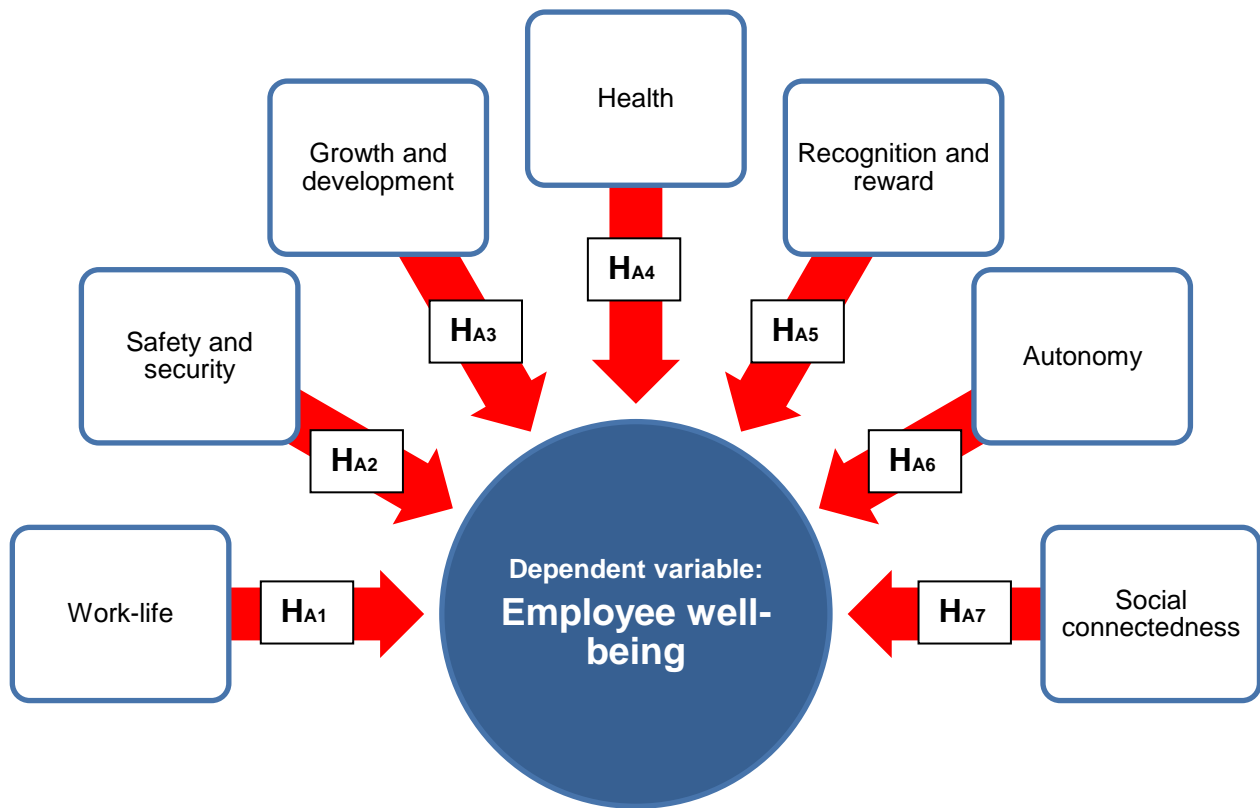
	4	2	1.22
	5	1	0.61
	More than 5	0	0.00
<b>Do you live with your parents?</b>	Yes	9	5.49
	No	155	94.51
<b>Do any of your parents live with you?</b>	Yes	17	10.37
	No	147	89.63
<b>How long is your commute to work?</b>	Less than 15 min	42	25.61
	16 to 30 min	82	50.00
	31 to 45 min	29	17.68
	46 to 60 min	6	3.66
	More than a hour	5	3.05
<b>What means of transport do you use to get to and from work?</b>	In my own car/motor cycle	143	87.20
	Lift club	11	6.71
	Bus	3	1.83
	Bicycle	1	0.61
	Bicycle	3	1.83
	Taxi	2	1.22
	Walk	1	0.61
<b>What is your monthly household income?</b>	Less than R14999	20	12.20
	R15000 to R29999	57	34.76
	R30000 to R44999	51	31.10
	R45000 to R59999	21	12.80
	More than R60000	15	9.15

Source: Author's own construction based on empirical data

### 4.3 STATISTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIABLES BASED ON CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The aim of the study is to determine the level of employee well-being (happiness) in a financial institution based on the conceptual model in figure 2.4, which was developed from literature in chapter two. To determine the strength of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, a hypothesized model was developed to test this relationship (figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5: The hypothesised model to determine employee well-being



Source: Author's own construction

To determine the level of significant influence these independent variables may have on the dependent variable, specific null and alternative hypotheses were developed in chapter three to test this relationship.

#### 4.3.1 EFFECT SIZE

To determine the strength of the association between two numeric variables, correlation analysis was applied to determine the strength of the association (Wegner, 2012, p. 305). This correlation is represented by the symbol  $r$  and the measure is called Pearson's correlation coefficient (Wegner, 2012, p. 306).

The effect size or correlation size for Pearson's correlation coefficient indicates the strength of the relationship between variables and the significance of the measure. For the purpose of this study the following guidelines for the interpretation of the correlation (Wuensch, 2015, p. 1) have been used.

Small correlation:  $0.1 < |r| \leq 0.3$

Medium correlation:  $0.3 < |r| \leq 0.5$

Large correlation:  $0.5 < |r| \leq 1.0$

To measure the proportion of variation in the dependent variable (which is explained by the independent variable), the sample correlation coefficient is squared ( $r^2$ ) (Wegner, 2012, p. 309). The resulting measure, the coefficient of determination values ranges between 0 and 1 (or 0% and 100%) with this measure being useful as it measures how strong the two variables are associated (Wegner, 2012, p. 310).

#### **4.4 MULTIPLE REGRESSION: TESTING OF THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR SIGNIFICANCE**

Table 4.2 presents the multiple regression analysis used to test the significance of the relationship between the dependent variable and the seven independent variables and how all the independent variables influence well-being when applied simultaneously. To determine the significance threshold of the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables, a threshold cut-off for the p value was set at 0.05. An independent variable with a p value  $< 0.05$  was considered to have a significant relationship with the dependent variable.

**Table 4.2: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis of the relationship between Employee Well-being and the independent variables**

<b>N = 164</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>t value</b>	<b>p values</b>
Intercept		0.415	0.284	1.458	
Work-life	0.56	0.176	0.084	2.089	0.1117
Safety and Security	<b>0.65</b>	<b>0.297</b>	<b>0.074</b>	<b>4.005</b>	<b>0.0001*</b>
Growth and development	0.49	-0.064	0.049	-1.309	0.1295
Health	0.50	0.057	0.077	0.741	0.2878
Recognition and Reward	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.182</b>	<b>0.061</b>	<b>2.963</b>	<b>0.0012*</b>
Autonomy	<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.199</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>3.154</b>	<b>0.0012*</b>
Social connectedness	0.47	0.082	0.077	1.062	0.6192
R-squared		63.71			
Adjusted R-squared		62.06			
No. of observations		164			
<p><b>p value threshold = <math>p &lt; 0.05</math></b>  <b>*(items in red show significant relationships)</b></p>					

The multiple regression results for the influence the independent variables have on well-being indicate medium correlation for Growth and development (0,49) and social connectedness (0,47). Work-life (0,56), safety and security (0,65), health (0,50), recognition and reward (0,70) and autonomy (0,72) all had large correlation results, indicating a significant relationship with well-being.

Table 4.3 presents the correlation results for safety and security (0,65), recognition and reward (0,70) and autonomy (0,72), indicting each independent variable as having a significant relationship with well-being. This is emphasized by the positive beta correlations scores for the independent variables.

Table 4.3 Large correlation results with significant relationships

<b>N = 164</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>t value</b>	<b>p value</b>
Intercept		0.415	0.284	1.458	
Safety and Security	<b>0.65</b>	<b>0.297</b>	<b>0.074</b>	<b>4.005</b>	<b>0.0001*</b>
Recognition and Reward	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.182</b>	<b>0.061</b>	<b>2.963</b>	<b>0.0012*</b>
Autonomy	<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.199</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>3.154</b>	<b>0.0012*</b>
	<p><b>p value threshold = <math>p &lt; 0.05</math></b>  <b>*(items in red show significant relationships)</b></p>				

## 4.5 MULTIPLE REGRESSION RESULTS AND THE HYPOTHESIS

In this section the hypotheses are measured against the results obtained from the multiple regression analysis to test the strength of the relationship and to determine whether each independent variable can have a significant effect employee on well-being.

### 4.5.1 HYPOTHESIS FOR WORK-LIFE

$H_{01}$  = Work-life exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A1}$  = Work-life positively influences employee well-being.

The statistical results show that work-life does not significantly influence employee well-being with a p value of 0.1117 ( $>0.1$ ). The alternative hypothesis is, therefore, not supported and the null hypothesis is accepted. This means work-life does not have a significant influence on employee well-being when applied in conjunction with other well-being variables.

#### **4.5.2 HYPOTHESIS FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY**

$H_{O2}$  = Safety and security exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A2}$  = Safety and security positively influences employee well-being.

The statistical results show that safety and security significantly influences employee well-being with a p value of 0.0001 ( $<0.001$ ). The null hypothesis is, therefore, not supported and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This means safety and security does significantly influence employee well-being when applied in conjunction with other well-being variables.

#### **4.5.3 HYPOTHESIS FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

$H_{O3}$  = Growth and development exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A3}$  = Growth and development positively influences employee well-being.

The statistical results show that growth and development does not significantly influence employee well-being with a p value of 0.1295 ( $>0.1$ ). The alternative hypothesis is, therefore, not supported and the null hypothesis is accepted. This means growth and development do not have a significant influence on employee well-being when applied in conjunction with other well-being variables.

#### **4.5.4 HYPOTHESIS FOR HEALTH**

$H_{O4}$  = Health exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A4}$  = Health positively influences employee well-being.

The statistical results show that health does not significantly influence employee well-being with a p value of 0.2878 ( $>0.1$ ). The alternative hypothesis is, therefore, not supported and the null hypothesis is accepted. This means health does not have a significant influence on employee well-being when applied in conjunction with other well-being variables.

#### **4.5.5 HYPOTHESIS FOR RECOGNITION AND REWARD**

$H_{O5}$  = Recognition and reward exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A5}$  = Recognition and reward positively influences employee well-being.

The statistical results show that recognition and reward significantly influences employee well-being with a p value of 0.0012 ( $<0.01$ ). The null hypothesis is, therefore, not supported and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This means recognition and reward does significantly influence employee well-being when applied in conjunction with other well-being variables.

#### **4.5.6 HYPOTHESIS FOR AUTONOMY**

$H_{O6}$  = Autonomy exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A6}$  = Autonomy positively influences employee well-being.

The statistical results show that autonomy significantly influences employee well-being with a p value of 0.0012 ( $<0.01$ ). The null hypothesis is, therefore, not supported and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This means autonomy does significantly influence employee well-being when applied in conjunction with other well-being variables.

#### **4.5.7 HYPOTHESIS FOR SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS**

$H_{07}$  = Social connectedness exerts no influence on employee Well-being.

$H_{A7}$  = Social connectedness positively influences employee well-being.

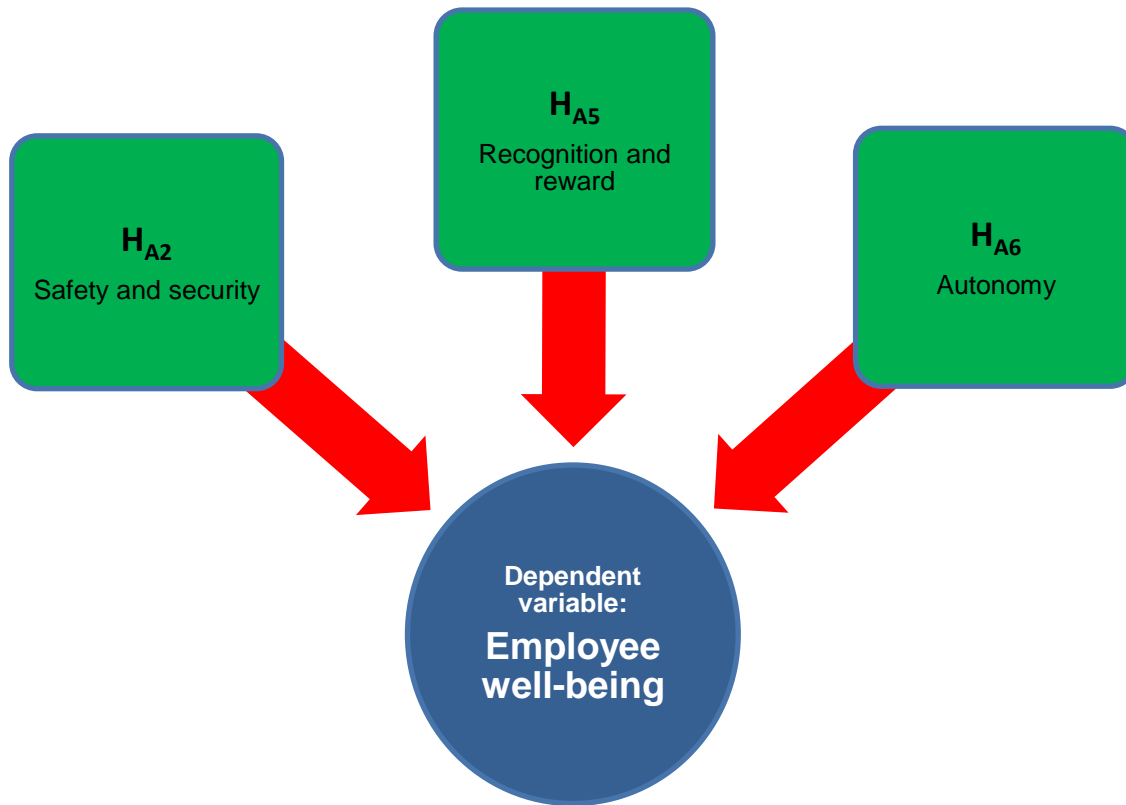
The statistical results show that social connectedness does not significantly influence employee well-being with a p value of 0.6192 ( $>0.1$ ). The alternative hypothesis is, therefore, not supported and the null hypothesis is accepted. This means social connectedness does not have a significant influence on employee well-being when applied in conjunction with other well-being variables.

#### **4.5.8 ACCEPTED HYPOTHESES BASED ON MULTIPLE REGRESSION RESULTS**

Multiple regression results, as depicted in table 4.3 by the p value results, show that safety and security, autonomy and recognition and reward are the only independent variables which have a significant relationship with employee well-being. The results in table 4.3 are represented in the accepted hypotheses model depicted in figure 5.4 below.



Figure 4.6: Accepted hypotheses to enhance employee well-being



Source: Author's own construction

## 4.6 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The primary research objective for this study was to determine employee happiness in a financial institution. The literature review identified seven independent variables which if applied correctly in the work environment may yield positive results in trying to improve an employee's well-being with the aim to improve productivity in the working environment. A conceptual model was developed to form the cornerstone of the research to be conducted.

Research was conducted whereby respondents were asked to register their level of agreement to multiple statements based on a five point Likert-style scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

For the purpose of the analysis the responses obtained from employees at the financial institution have been grouped into three categories, namely:

- Strongly disagree to disagree;
- Neither agree nor disagree;
- Agree to strongly agree.

The structuring of the statements aim to illicit responses ranging from 1 to 5, with one being associated with negative perceptions and five implying positive perceptions of the statements. The descriptive analysis which was conducted provided greater understanding of the perception of the respondents to specific aspects relating to the independent variables which comprise the conceptual model.

#### **4.6.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR HAPPINESS**

The results shown in table 4.4 and Figure 4.2, with a mean of 3.69, indicate that respondents are generally happy and responses are skewed towards agreement with the statements. Mean scores for all statements range from 3.55 (lowest mean score per statement recorded) to 4.35 (highest mean score per statement recorded).

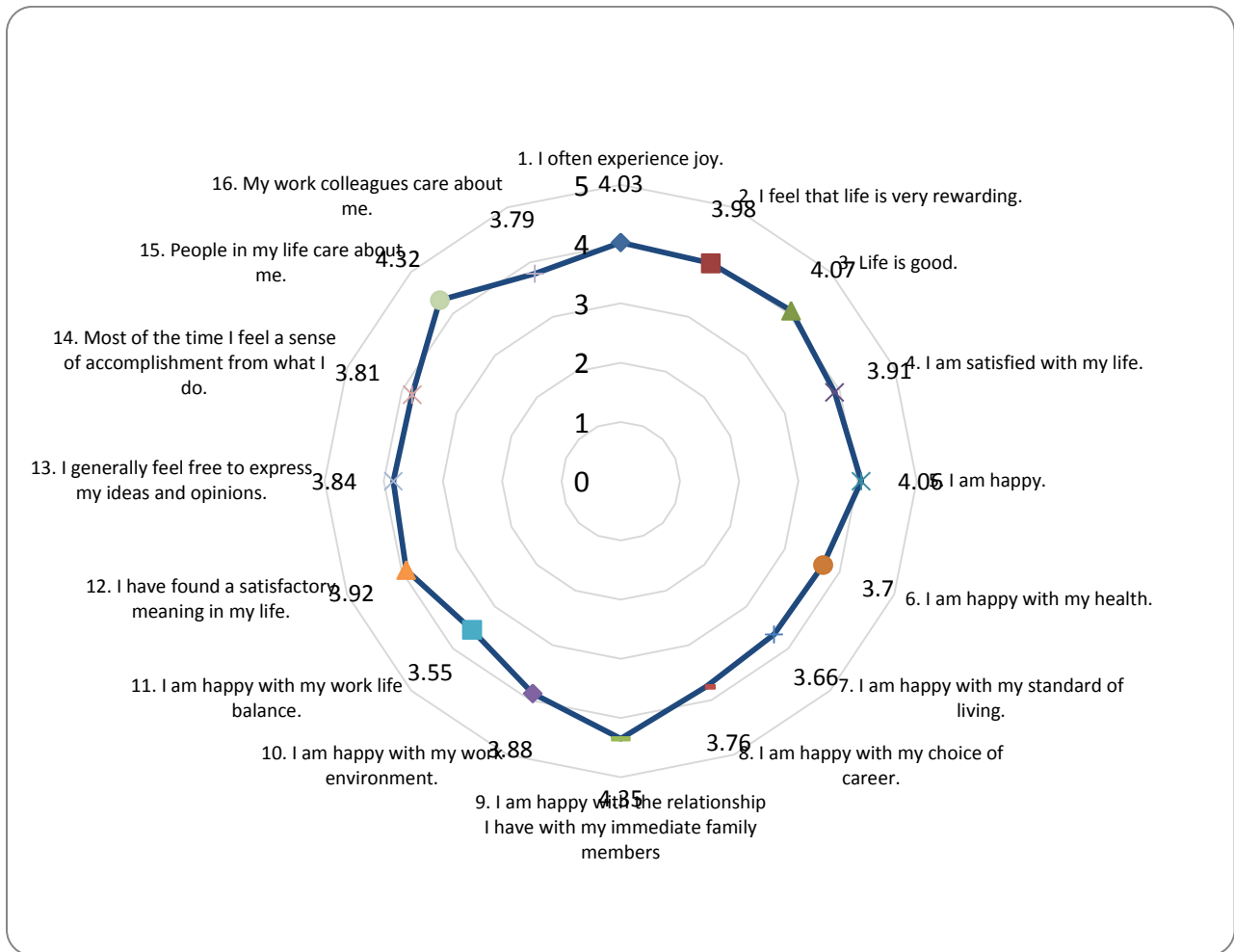
It is worth noting that significantly higher mean scores were recorded for “I often experience joy” (Mean of 4.03); “Life is good” (Mean of 4.07); “I am happy” (Mean of 4.06); “I am happy with the relationship I have with my immediate family members” (Mean of 4.35) and “People in my life care about me” (Mean of 4.32). The results indicate that employees at the financial institution are mostly happy employees.

Table 4.4: Descriptive statistics for happiness

Happiness	Code	Strongly disagree to agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree to strongly agree (%)	Mean
I often experience joy.	HAP1	4.88	10.37	84.76	4.03
I feel that life is very rewarding.	HAP2	2.44	18.29	79.27	3.98
Life is good.	HAP3	2.44	13.41	84.15	4.07
I am satisfied with my life.	HAP4	4.88	19.51	75.61	3.91
I am happy.	HAP5	2.44	14.63	82.93	4.06
I am happy with my health.	HAP6	14.02	17.68	68.29	3.7
I am happy with my standard of living.	HAP7	14.63	18.90	66.46	3.66
I am happy with my choice of career.	HAP8	8.54	22.56	68.90	3.76
I am happy with the relationship I have with my immediate family members.	HAP9	1.83	4.88	93.29	4.35
I am happy with my work environment.	HAP10	7.93	14.02	78.05	3.88
I am happy with my work life balance.	HAP11	15.85	20.73	63.41	3.55
I have found a satisfactory meaning in my life.	HAP12	3.05	21.34	75.61	3.92
I generally feel free to express my ideas and opinions.	HAP13	7.93	16.46	75.61	3.84
Most of the time I feel a sense of accomplishment from what I do.	HAP14	8.54	15.85	75.61	3.81
People in my life care about me.	HAP15	0.61	6.71	92.68	4.32
My work colleagues care about me.	HAP16	7.32	21.95	70.73	3.79
<b>N = 164; Mean = 3.69</b>					

Source: Author's own construction based on empirical data

Figure 4.7: Current levels of happiness in your working environment and life in general



#### 4.6.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR WORK-LIFE

The results shown in table 4.5 and Figure 4.3, with a mean of 3.56, indicate that respondents are in agreement and content with the balance in their work-life environment. Responses are positively skewed towards agreement with the statements. Mean scores for all statements range from 2.63 (lowest mean score) to 4.10 (highest mean score).

The data recorded for two statements are worth noting and significant in the context of the independent variable (work-life). A higher than normal mean score was recorded for “My work does not suffer because of responsibilities in my personal life” (Mean of 4.10)

compared to a lower but still positive mean score for “My personal life does not suffer because of my work responsibilities” (Mean of 3.61). This would indicate that there is a greater negative influence on one’s family life due to an individual’s working environment. However, the impact of one’s personal life does not negatively the results of one’s work environment.

The negative impact that work has on one’s personal life is reinforced by the disagreement respondents indicated with the statement “I never worry about my work outside working hours” (Mean of 4.10).

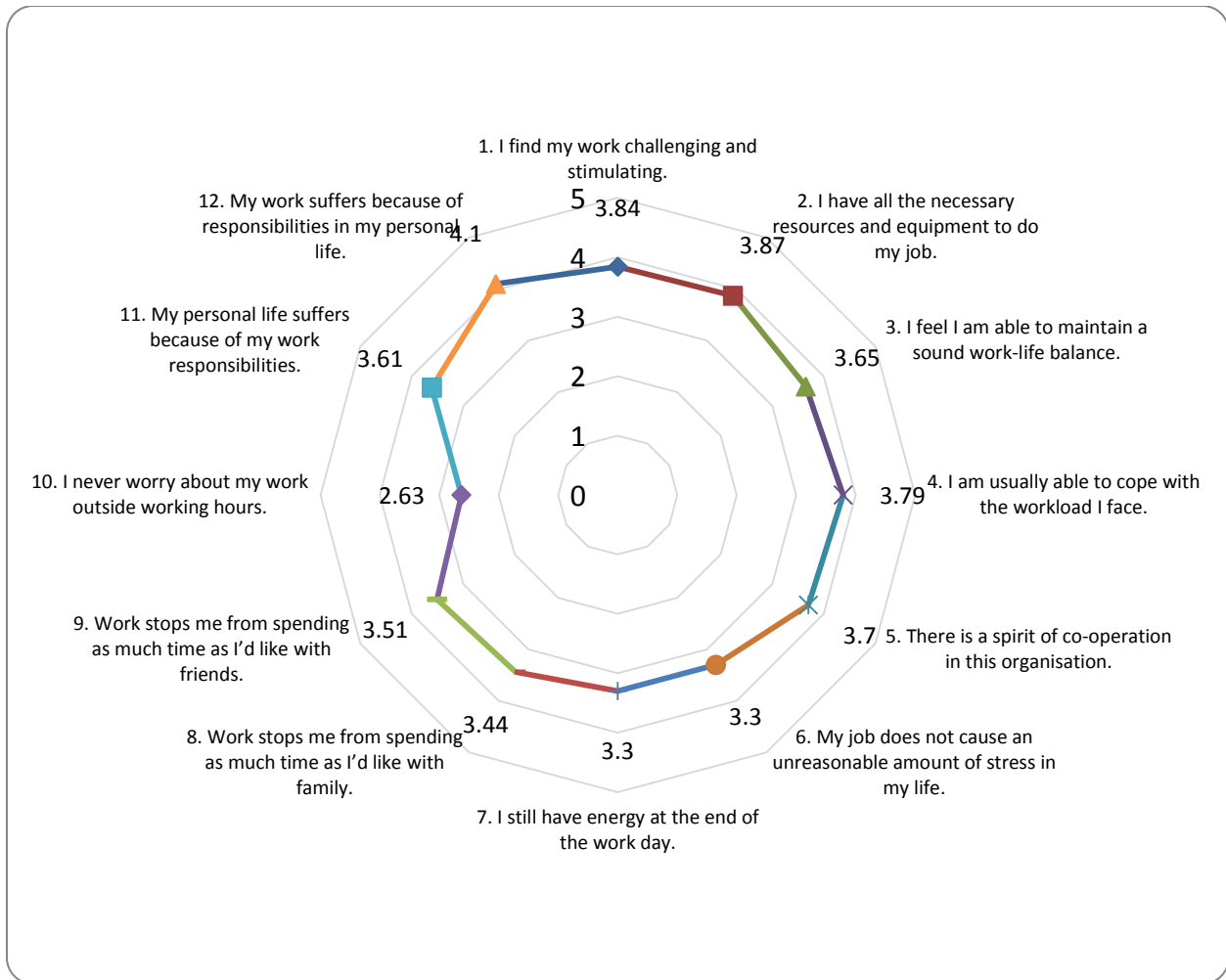
The results indicate that employees at the financial institution are mostly in agreement that there is a good balance in their work-life environment.

Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics for work-life

Work-life	Code	Strongly disagree to agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree to strongly agree (%)	Mean
I find my work challenging and stimulating.	WK1	5.49	19.51	75.00	3.84
I have all the necessary resources and equipment to do my job.	WK2	6.71	13.41	79.88	3.87
I feel I am able to maintain a sound work-life balance.	WK3	12.20	19.51	68.29	3.65
I am usually able to cope with the workload I face.	WK4	12.20	10.98	76.83	3.79
There is a spirit of co-operation in this organisation.	WK5	8.54	22.56	68.90	3.7
My job does not cause an unreasonable amount of stress in my life.	WK6	25.00	21.95	53.05	3.3
I still have energy at the end of work every day.	WK7	23.17	23.17	53.66	3.3
Work does not stop me from spending as much time as I'd like with family.	WK8	19.51	26.22	54.27	3.44
Work does not stop me from spending as much time as I'd like with friends.	WK9	18.90	21.95	59.15	3.51
I never worry about my work outside working hours.	WK10	54.27	19.51	26.22	2.63
My personal life does not suffer because of my work responsibilities.	WK11	15.85	19.51	64.63	3.61
My work does not suffer because of responsibilities in my personal life.	WK12	6.10	12.80	81.10	4.10
<b>N = 164; Mean = 3.56</b>					

Source: Author's own construction based on empirical data

Figure 4.8: Work-life experiences in the workplace



#### 4.6.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY

In terms of the conceptual model, safety and security have a large correlation and significant relationship to well-being. The results shown in table 4.6 and figure 4.4, with a mean of 3.65, indicate that respondents are generally agreed with the statements. Mean scores for all statements range from 3.00 (lowest mean score) to 4.27 (highest mean score).

Respondents were unsure about their future financial position when they retire. The mean score for the statement “I have made enough provision for my retirement.” (Mean of 3.00) provides insight into their concern about their future financial well-being. This

gives rise to the employee’s undecided disposition about their provision for retirement and add to their feeling of an uncertain financial position when they reach retirement age. The stress associated with having concerns about their future may become more prevalent as they approach retirement age and specific financial guidance at an early stage in their career may reduce the stress associated with financial uncertainty.

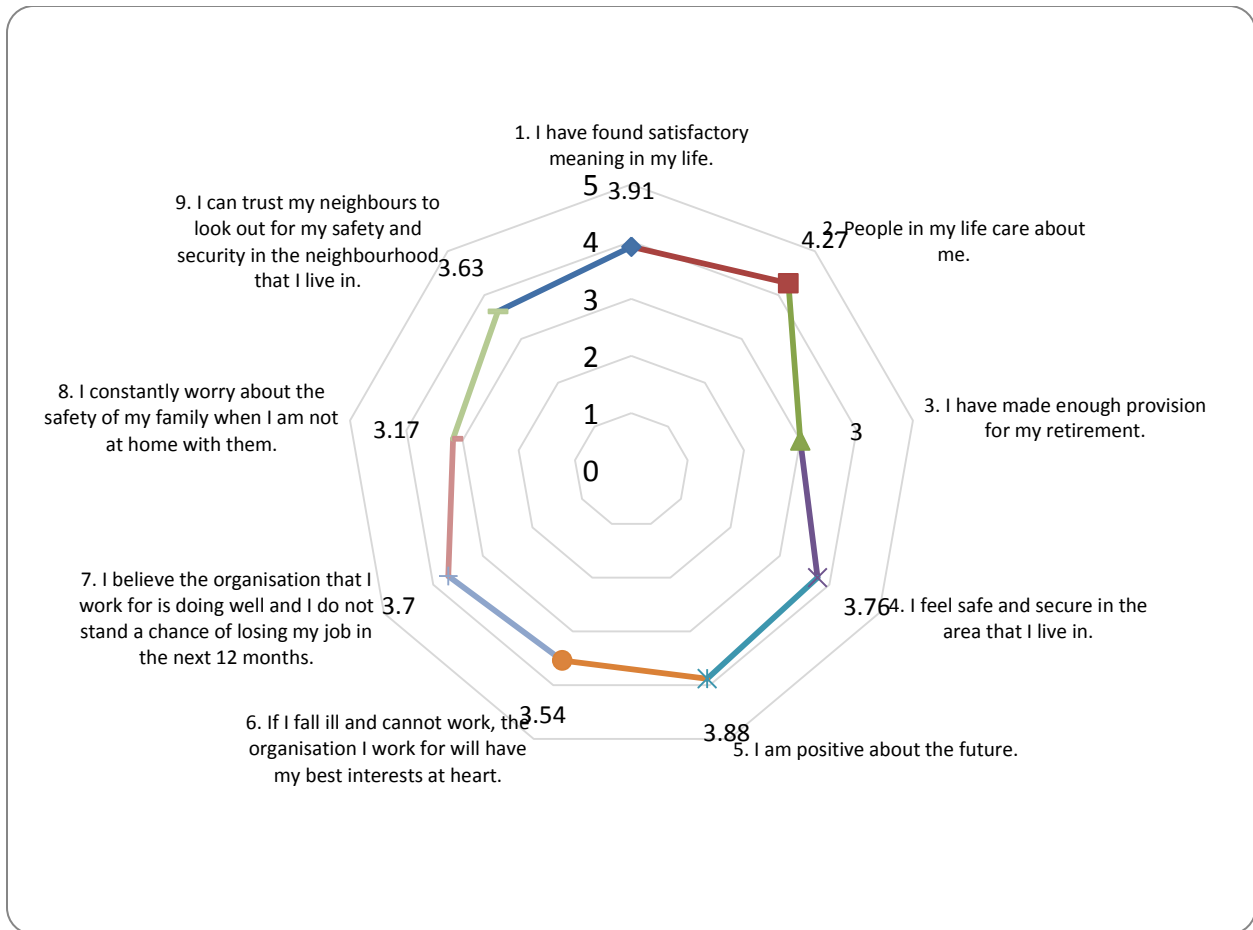
Table 4.6: Descriptive statistics for safety and security

Safety and security	Code	Strongly disagree to agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree to strongly agree (%)	Mean
I have found satisfactory meaning in my life.	SS1	4.88	15.24	79.88	3.91
People in my life care about me.	SS2	1.22	4.88	93.90	4.27
I have made enough provision for my retirement.	SS2	35.98	26.22	37.80	3
I feel safe and secure in the area that I live in.	SS4	10.98	14.02	75.00	3.76
I am positive about the future.	SS5	4.27	20.73	75.00	3.88
If I fall ill and cannot work, the organisation I work for will have my best interests at heart.	SS6	9.15	33.54	57.32	3.54
I believe the organisation that I work for is doing well and I do not stand a chance of losing my job in the next 12 months.	SS7	7.93	26.22	65.85	3.7
I never worry about the safety of my family when I am not at home with them.	SS8	25.61	31.71	42.68	3.17
I can trust my neighbours to look out for my safety and security in the neighbourhood that I live in.	SS9	10.98	23.78	65.24	3.63
<b>N = 164; Mean = 3.65</b>					

Source: Author’s own construction based on empirical data



Figure 4.9: Safety and security in the workplace and the area that you live in



#### 4.6.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

In terms of the multiple regression analysis, Growth and development have medium correlation and did not have a significant relationship to well-being. This may be the case due to the fact that 44% (n = 73) of respondents have not continued their education after leaving school and they hold a clerical (operations) position in the organisation. Meaning they do not deem growth and development as a priority for them and may only see their position as being a second income for the family unit.

The results shown in table 4.6 and figure 4.4, with a mean of 3.54, indicate that respondents are generally agreed with the statements relating to growth and

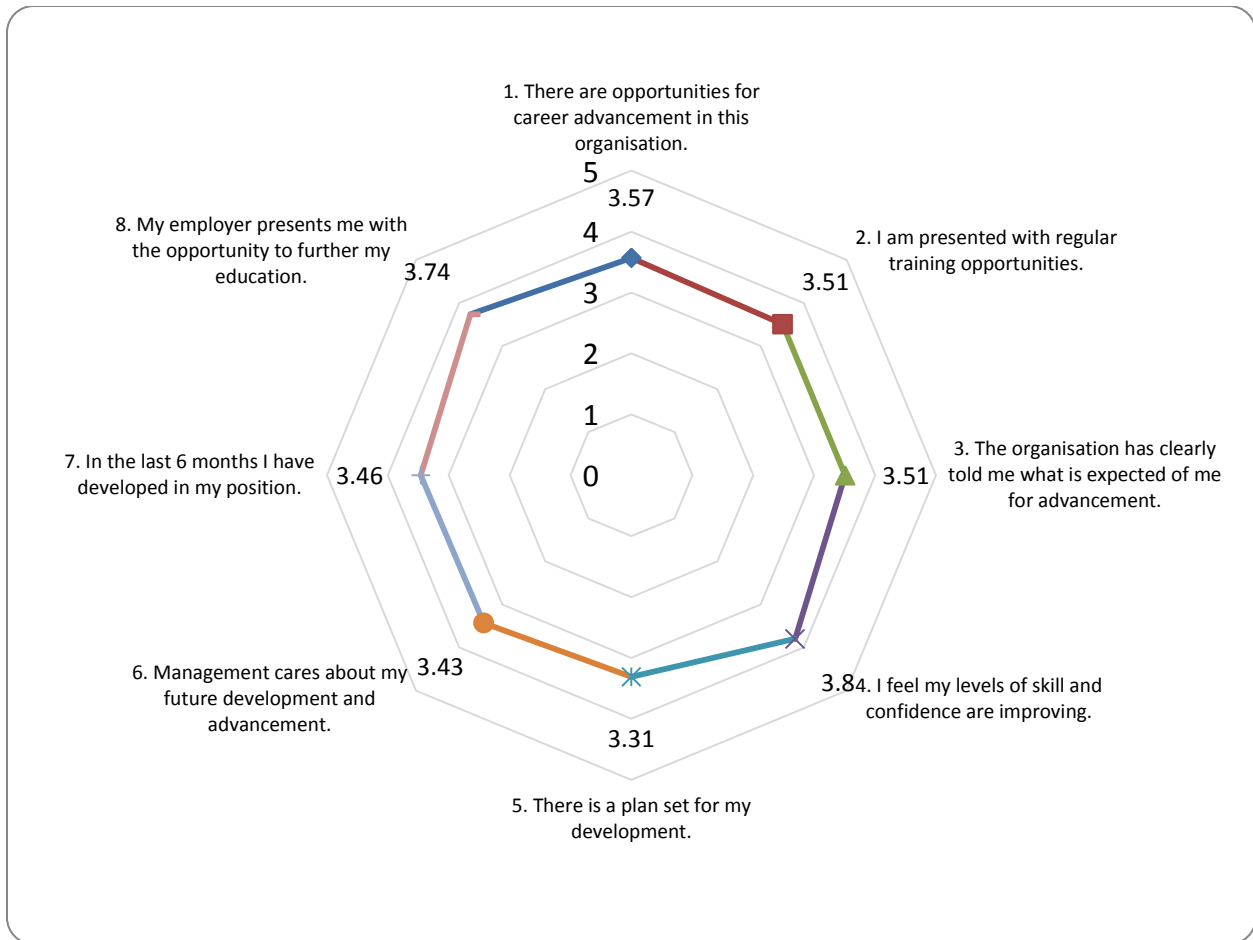
development. Mean scores for all statements range from 3.31 (lowest mean score) to 3.80 (highest mean score).

Table 4.7: Descriptive statistics for growth and development

Growth and development	Code	Strongly disagree to agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree to strongly agree (%)	Mean
There are opportunities for career advancement in this organisation.	GD1	14.63	23.17	62.20	3.57
I am presented with regular training opportunities.	GD2	15.85	24.39	59.76	3.51
The organisation has clearly told me what is expected of me for advancement.	GD3	16.46	21.95	61.59	3.51
I feel my levels of skill and confidence are improving.	GD4	3.05	23.78	73.17	3.8
There is a plan set for my development.	GD5	18.29	35.98	45.73	3.31
Management cares about my future development and advancement.	GD6	15.85	28.66	55.49	3.43
In the last 6 months I have developed in my position.	GD7	15.85	28.05	56.10	3.46
My employer presents me with the opportunity to further my education.	GD8	10.37	18.90	70.73	3.74
<b>N = 164; Mean = 3.54</b>					

Source: Author's own construction based on empirical data

Figure 4.10: Growth and development in the workplace



#### 4.6.5 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR HEALTH

The multiple regression analysis indicated that health has a strong correlation to well-being, but the level of significance the variable has was low in terms of the influence the health has in its relationship to employee well-being in terms of the conceptual model. Respondents produced a neutral mean score for “I receive stress management support or advice at work” (3.10), indicating that they do receive support from their employer to address stress management, but may feel the intervention leaves them undecided as to the positive outcome it may have.

However, a large majority of respondents strongly agreed that they “have access to a dedicated health and wellbeing intranet site” (mean = 3.97). This may indicate the lack of knowledge of the well-being systems that the financial institution has made available to employees and that they are unaware of how they may benefit from this intervention. Respondents also indicated that they disagree with the statement “I wake up feeling rested” (3.00) and are often tired when they go to work.

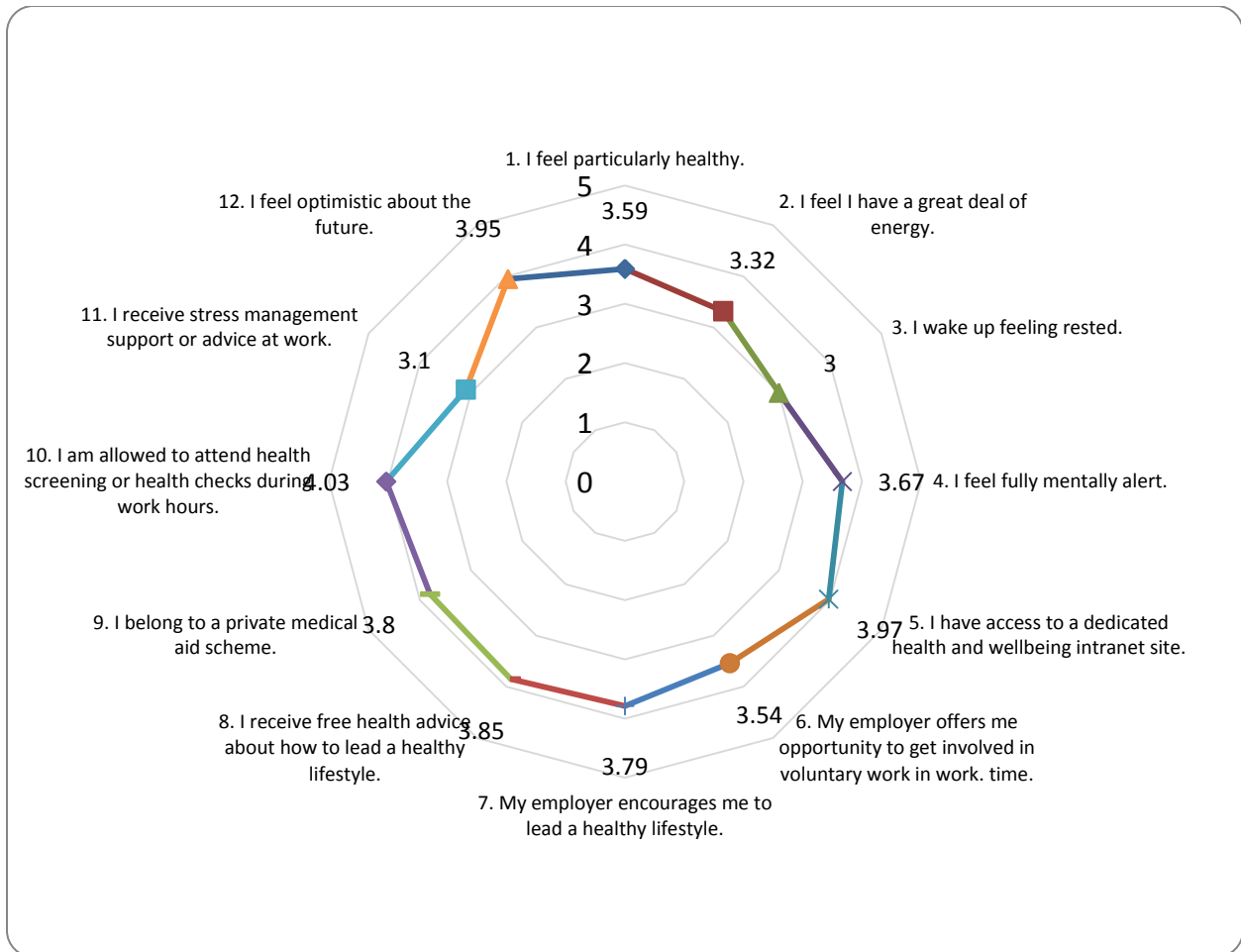
The results shown in table 4.8 and figure 4.6, with a mean of 3.63, indicate that respondents generally agreed with the statements relating to health. Mean scores for all statements range from 3.00 (lowest mean score) to 4.03 (highest mean score).

Table 4.8: Descriptive statistics for health

Health	Code	Strongly disagree to agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree to strongly agree (%)	Mean
I feel particularly healthy.	HEA1	18.90	17.07	64.02	3.59
I feel I have a great deal of energy.	HEA2	23.78	26.83	49.39	3.32
I wake up feeling rested.	HEA3	40.24	20.73	39.02	3.00
I feel fully mentally alert.	HEA4	7.93	23.78	68.29	3.67
I have access to a dedicated health and wellbeing intranet site.	HEA5	3.05	14.02	82.93	3.97
My employer offers me opportunity to get involved in voluntary work in work time.	HEA6	9.76	34.15	56.10	3.54
My employer encourages me to lead a healthy lifestyle.	HEA7	5.49	24.39	70.12	3.79
I receive free health advice about how to lead a healthy lifestyle.	HEA8	4.88	18.29	76.83	3.85
I belong to a private medical aid scheme.	HEA9	14.63	6.10	79.27	3.80
I am allowed to attend health screening or health checks during work hours.	HEA10	3.66	8.54	87.80	4.03
I receive stress management support or advice at work.	HEA11	28.05	35.37	36.59	3.10
I feel optimistic about the future.	HEA12	2.44	19.51	78.05	3.95
<b>N = 164; Mean = 3.63</b>					

Source: Author's own construction based on empirical data

Figure 4.11: Health in the workplace



#### 4.6.6 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR RECOGNITION AND REWARD

Recognition and reward have a strong correlation and significant relationship to well-being. The results shown in table 4.9 and figure 4.8, with a mean of 3.61, indicate that respondents agreed to strongly agreed with the statements. Mean scores for all statements range from 3.47 (lowest mean score) to 4.03 (highest mean score).

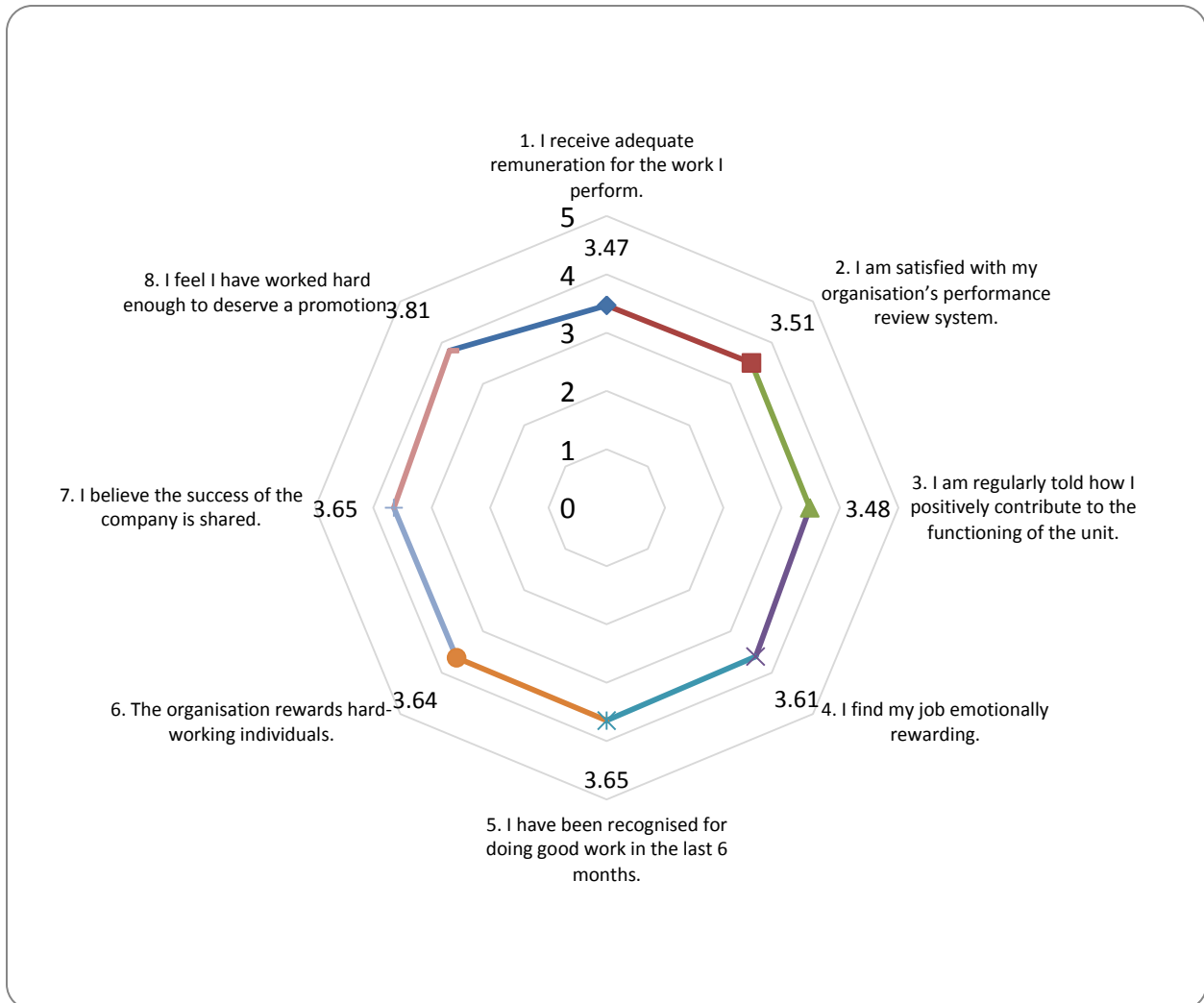
The majority of respondents felt that they have worked hard enough to deserve a promotion, with only 1.84% disagreeing with the statement “I feel I have worked hard enough to deserve a promotion” (mean = 3.81).

Table 4.9: Descriptive statistics for recognition and reward

Recognition and reward	Code	Strongly disagree to agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree to strongly agree (%)	Mean
I receive adequate remuneration for the work I perform.	RR1	16.56	25.15	58.28	3.47
I am satisfied with my organisation's performance review system.	RR2	15.95	24.54	59.51	3.51
I am regularly told how I positively contribute to the functioning of the unit.	RR3	15.34	26.99	57.67	3.48
I find my job emotionally rewarding.	RR4	9.20	28.22	62.58	3.61
I have been recognised for doing good work in the last 6 months.	RR5	13.58	17.28	69.14	3.65
The organisation rewards hard-working individuals.	RR6	12.27	23.31	64.42	3.64
I believe the success of the company is shared.	RR7	11.04	25.77	63.19	3.65
I feel I have worked hard enough to deserve a promotion.	RR8	1.84	30.67	67.48	3.81
<b>N = 164; Mean = 3.61</b>					

Source: Author's own construction based on empirical data

Figure 4.12: Recognition and reward in the workplace



#### 4.6.7 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR AUTONOMY

In a similar vein, autonomy has a strong correlation and significant relationship to well-being. The results shown in table 4.10 and figure 4.9, with a mean of 3.77, indicate that respondents agree to strongly agree with the statements. Mean scores for all statements range from 3.24 (lowest mean score) to 4.08 (highest mean score).

The majority of respondents agree that they have been allowed a fair amount of autonomy in the workplace (mean = 3.77). However, more respondents felt that they



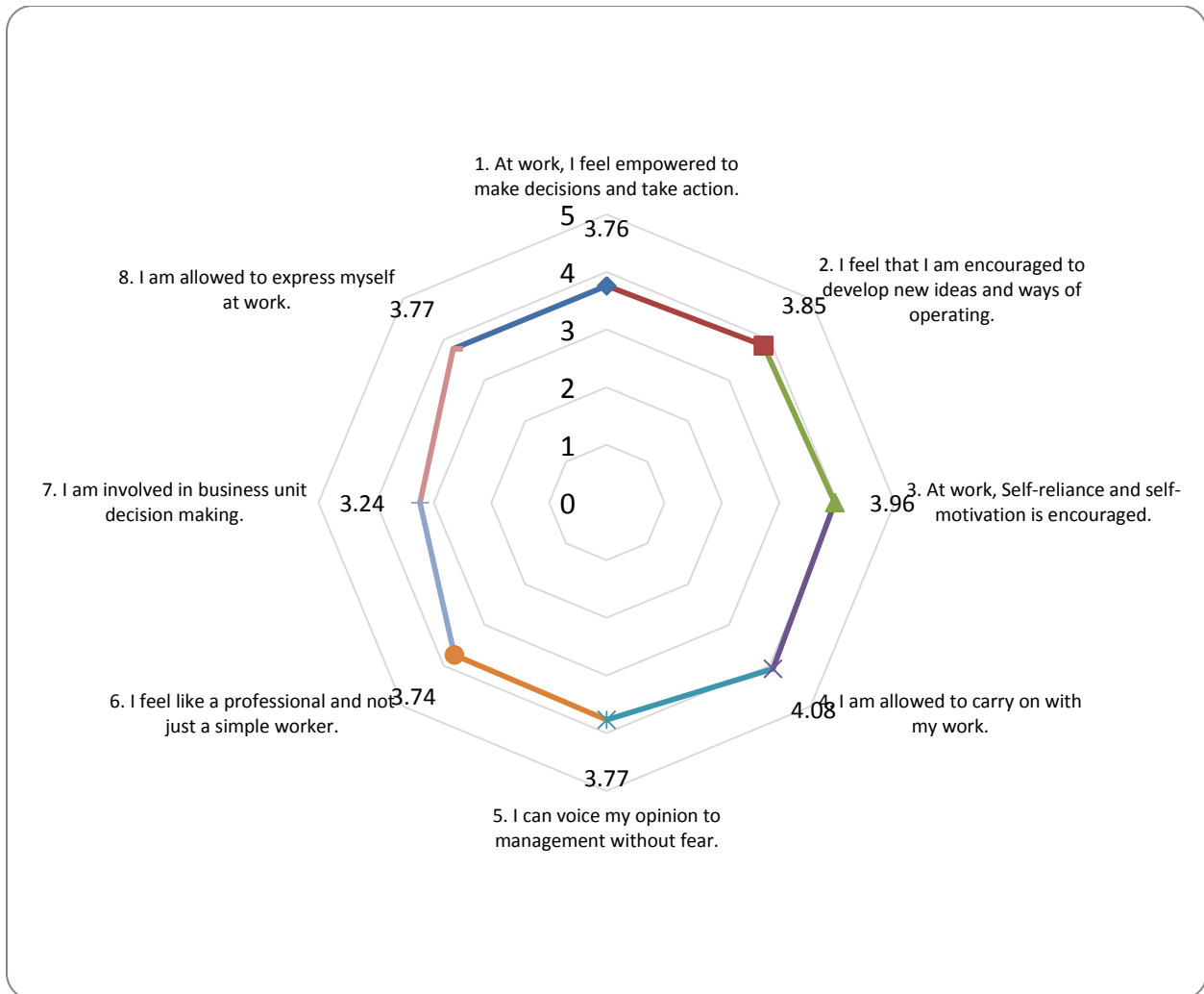
were not involved in the day-to-day decision making of the business. This is evident by the larger amount of employees disagreeing (21.95%) with the statement “I am involved in business unit” (mean = 3.24).

Table 4.10: Descriptive statistics for autonomy

Autonomy	Code	Strongly disagree to agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree to strongly agree (%)	Mean
At work, I feel empowered to make decisions and take action.	APE1	9.15	21.34	69.51	3.76
I feel that I am encouraged to develop new ideas and ways of operating.	APE2	6.10	18.90	75.00	3.85
At work, Self-reliance and self-motivation is encouraged.	APE3	5.49	12.20	82.32	3.96
I am allowed to carry on with my work.	APE4	3.05	7.32	89.63	4.08
I can voice my opinion to management without fear.	APE5	9.76	18.29	71.95	3.77
I feel like a professional and not just a simple worker.	APE6	10.37	19.51	70.12	3.74
I am involved in business unit decision making.	APE7	21.95	35.98	42.07	3.24
I am allowed to express myself at work.	APE8	10.37	16.46	73.17	3.77
<b>N = 164; Mean = 3.77</b>					

Source: Author’s own construction based on empirical data

Figure 4.13: Autonomy in the workplace



#### 4.6.8 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

The multiple regression analysis for social connectedness indicated that there is no significant relationship ( $B = 0.082$ ) with employee well-being, although the variable has a medium correlation (0.47) to well-being. The results shown in table 4.10 and figure 4.9, with a mean of 3.77, indicate that respondents agree to strongly agree with the statements relating to social connectedness. Mean scores for all statements range from 3.61 (lowest mean score) to 4.10 (highest mean score).

The close bond between employees is emphasized by the high mean score for the statement “I enjoy good relations with my work colleagues” (mean = 4.1). This may be

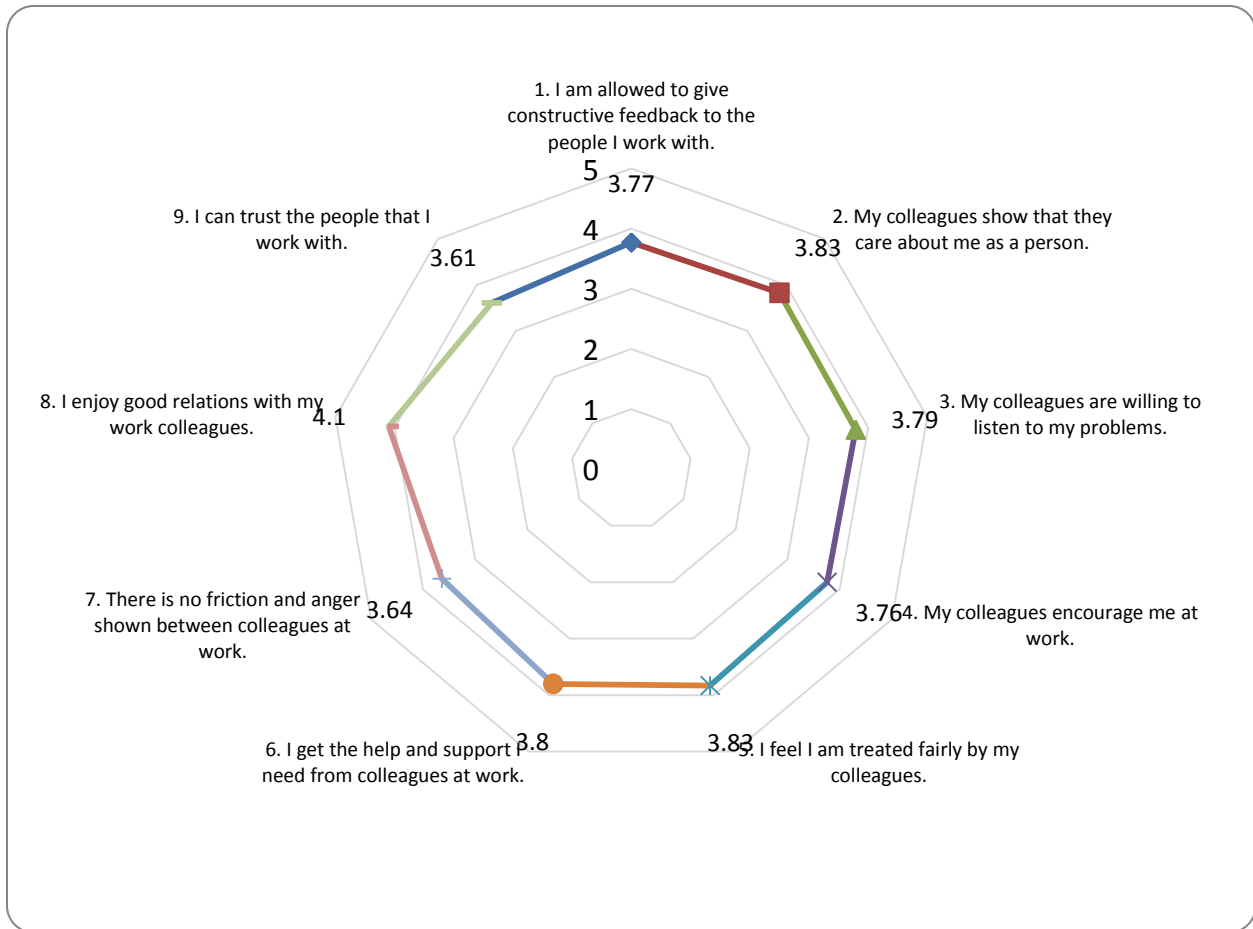
the reason why the average mean for this variable is consistently high, as employees at the financial institution have a well-established social system in place.

Table 4.11: Descriptive statistics for social connectedness

Social connectedness	Code	Strongly disagree to agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree to strongly agree (%)	Mean
I am allowed to give constructive feedback to the people I work with.	SOC1	9.15	15.85	75.00	3.77
My colleagues show that they care about me as a person.	SOC2	7.93	16.46	75.61	3.83
My colleagues are willing to listen to my problems.	SOC3	10.37	17.68	71.95	3.79
My colleagues encourage me at work.	SOC4	7.32	21.34	71.34	3.76
I feel I am treated fairly by my colleagues.	SOC5	12.20	15.85	71.95	3.83
I get the help and support I need from colleagues at work.	SOC6	7.32	20.12	72.56	3.8
There is friction and anger shown between colleagues at work.	SOC7	15.24	23.78	60.98	3.64
I enjoy good relations with my work colleagues.	SOC8	2.44	11.59	85.98	4.1
I can trust the people that I work with.	SOC9	12.80	25.61	61.59	3.61
<b>N = 164; Mean = 3.79</b>					

Source: Author's own construction based on empirical data

Figure 4.14: Social connectedness in the workplace



## 4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the empirical results of the research findings of the survey were presented. The population sample size was 354 potential respondents. A total number of 164 completed surveys were returned ensuring a response rate 46%. The information obtained was analysed using both inferential and descriptive statistical methods.

The demographic composition of the sample revealed that the majority of respondents were female (71%), older than 35 years (69%), they were predominantly married

(62.20%), more family units had dependent children (63%) and 52% of families with dependent children were limited to 2 dependent children. More than half of respondents (55.49%) had furthered their education after leaving school, with 46 people having a National Diploma (28.05%), 22 an Undergraduate degree (13.41%) and 23 Post graduate degree (14.02%).

The multiple regression results were presented to establish the influence of the independent variables on well-being. The following independent variable delivered medium correlation results for Growth and development (0,49) and social connectedness (0,47).

Work-life (0,56), safety and security (0,65), health (0,50), recognition and reward (0,70) and autonomy (0,72) all had large correlation results. Positive beta correlations scores for the following independent variables, indicate that a significant relationship exists between them and the dependent variable (well-being).

- Safety and security;
- Recognition and reward;
- Autonomy.

A review and presentation of descriptive statistics related to the variables within the research provided greater insight into the drivers behind the independent variables and the impact these have on well-being. The mean scores related to answers for each collated variable ranged between 2.63 and 4.27 indicating an agreement with the majority of statements. Further examination of individual statement responses highlighted focus areas which may impact on individual well-being drivers.

The following chapter aims to discuss research findings and the relationship the independent variables have with employee well-being. The discussion will focus on the conceptual model being adapted to realise a hypothesized model and the empirical research identifying a revised hypothesized model to enhance employee well-being when applied in the work environment. Recommendations for improvement and future research is presented and discussed.

## CHAPTER 5

# RESEARCH FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

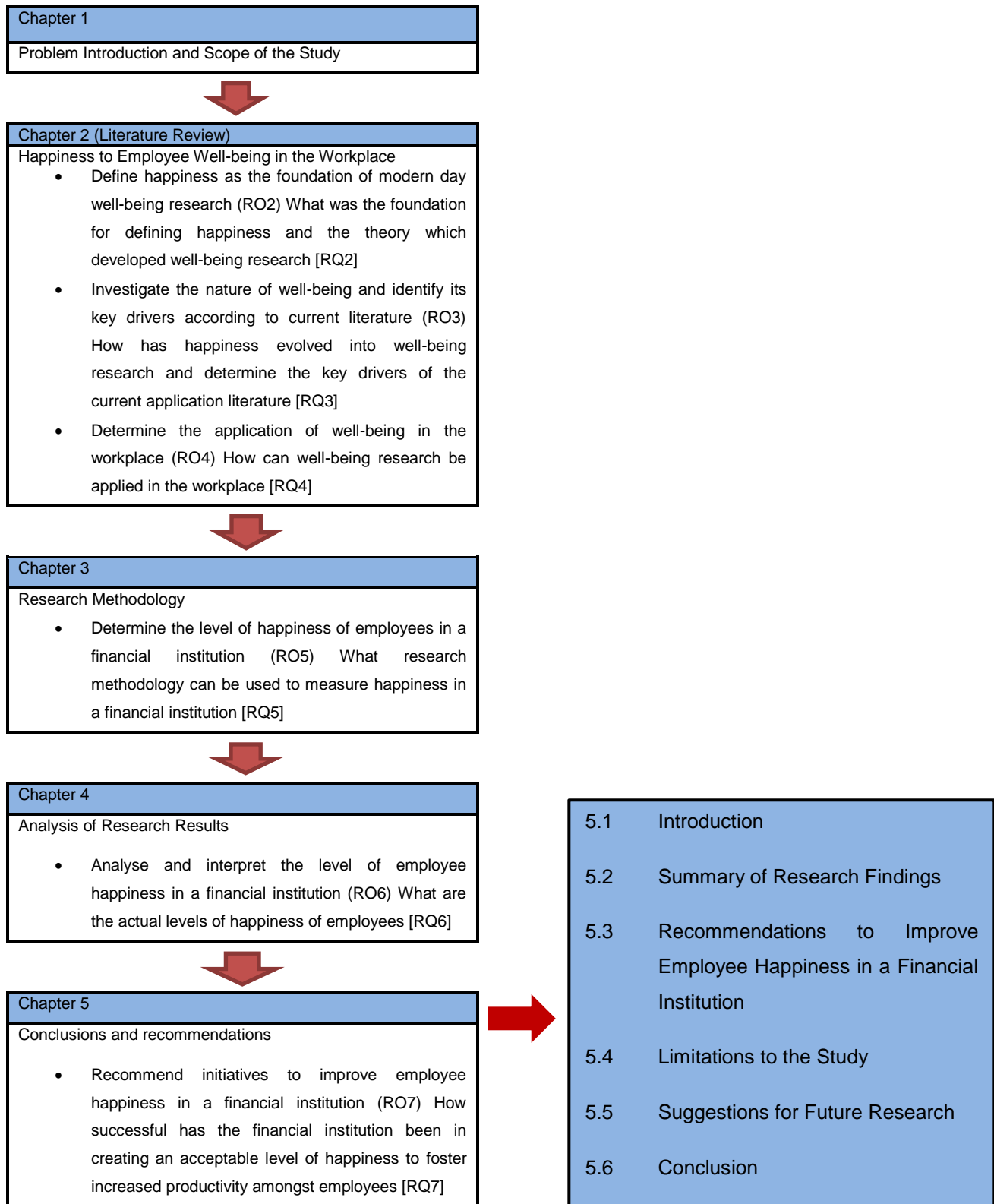
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### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four provided insight into the research conducted on employee happiness at a financial institution. The data on the demographic profile of respondents, multiple regression analysis and descriptive statistics were presented. Inferential statistics were used to make deductions based on the demographic profile of respondents and the correlation between the dependent and independent variables described in the conceptual model. Furthermore, the descriptive statistics which were analysed pointed out some valid observations relating to the views of the respondents surveyed.

The concluding chapter aims to link the literature review to the findings presented in the previous chapter by revisiting the study's stated problems, the literature, comparing these aspects to the findings and making recommendations based on the limitations of the study.

**FIGURE 5.1: DETAILED STRUCTURE OF CHAPTER 5**



## **5.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The main objective of the study was to determine the level of happiness at a financial institution. Specific secondary objectives were designed to aid the process of successfully determining the well-being of employees by addressing these objectives during the literature review and empirical study. Success of the study depends on the manner in which the objectives have been addressed and if the study has been able to determine the level of happiness of employees and whether further research on the subject of well-being can be implemented in the future.

### **5.2.1 HAPPINESS DEFINED AS THE FOUNDATION OF MODERN DAY WELL-BEING RESEARCH**

Historical role models like great thinkers, philosophers, scientists and artists have often discussed and debated the definition of happiness (Garaigordobil, 2015; Oishi, Graham, Kesebir & Galinha, 2013; Graham, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2001). They laid the foundation for modern scholars to continue the pursuit of defining happiness, but they could never agree on what defined happiness (Veenhoven, 2015; Oishi, Diener & Lucas, 2007).

Ed Diener has been instrumental in developing a better understanding of the term happiness. He coined the phrase subjective well-being and identified it as being an aspect of happiness which can be measured empirically (Pursuit of Happiness Inc, 2016).

Although the field of well-being research is complex (Ryan & Deci, 2001), two perspectives of research into well-being have dominated current research. The hedonic approach focused on pleasure attainment and pain avoidance while the eudaimonic approach is focused on meaning, living a moral and virtuous life, self-realisation and what it means to be a fully functioning person (Henderson & Knight, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2001). A simple explanation of hedonic happiness is maximising pleasure and minimising pain and discomfort (The Happiness Research Institute, 2014)



### **5.2.2 THE NATURE OF WELL-BEING AND THE IDENTITY OF KEY DRIVERS**

Well-being is elusive by nature and affects us personally, but will always remain to be one of the main aspects of one's life which define us as human beings (Kets de Vries, 2016). There is a positive association between the degree to which individual's needs are met and the degree of resulting life satisfaction they experience (Omodei & Wearing, 1990).

Each individual is programmed to have a specific happiness point which they use as a measuring stick and will return to this level over time. Major events which have large scale impact on one's life, but short lived results which over time also fades and the individual will return to their optimum level of happiness (Graham, 2005).

People seek out ways and means to be happy as it simply feels good (Oishi, Diener & Lucas, 2007; Kets de Vries, 2016). Personality plays an important role in how individuals perceive happiness, they determine what constitutes happiness. Happiness is subjective by nature, concluding that individuals are responsible for their own happiness (Kets de Vries, 2016). It is for this reason that one can measure levels of individual happiness or at the minimum come to some type of measurement (Diener, 2000). As happiness is a subjective experience and depends on the individual determining their own happiness researchers are able to measure levels of happiness (Kets de Vries, 2016).

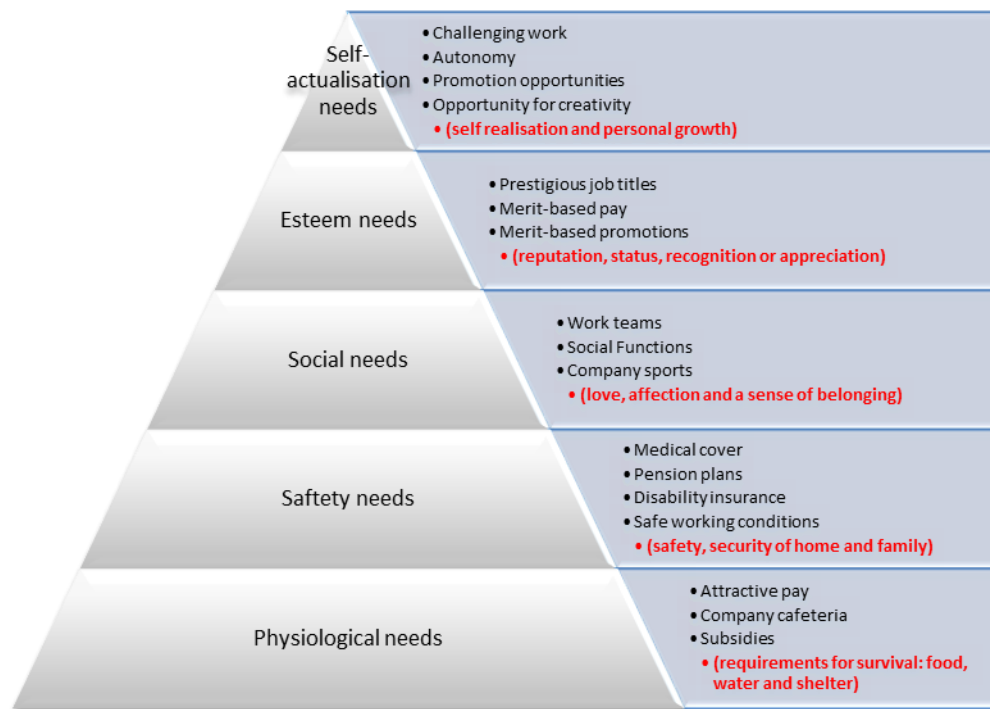
The evidence gathered by researchers indicates that well-being is best conceived as a multidimensional phenomenon which includes both hedonic and eudaimonic approaches (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

### **5.2.3 THE APPLICATION OF WELL-BEING IN THE WORKPLACE**

The current economic crisis is contributing to changes in the work environment which cannot be ignored (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013). The last ten years have seen a wealth of research being conducted, creating large amounts of empirical knowledge about the reasons and processes that make people happy in the workplace (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013).

In a work situation, employees who do not meet their required needs cannot function properly (Werner, et al., 2011). Human needs are categorised in five groups in a proponent hierarchy from physiological to safety to social to esteem and lastly to self-actualisation needs (Kinicki & Fugate, 2012). Werner, et al. (2011) adapted the hierarchy model to suit the work environment and explains how employees are motivated by satisfying specific needs in the work environment.

Figure 5.2: Application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to the work environment



Source: Werner, et al. (2011), p.88

Research has shown that when people have a specific goal to strive towards, there is a profound effect on the levels of motivation they experience (Werner, et al., 2011). If individuals achieve their goals set for them, they experience a sense of satisfaction and achievement which in turn has an impact on their self-esteem (Werner, et al., 2011).

Certain parts of the developed world have designed models to measure key performance indicators which can be used as an alternative measure of economic

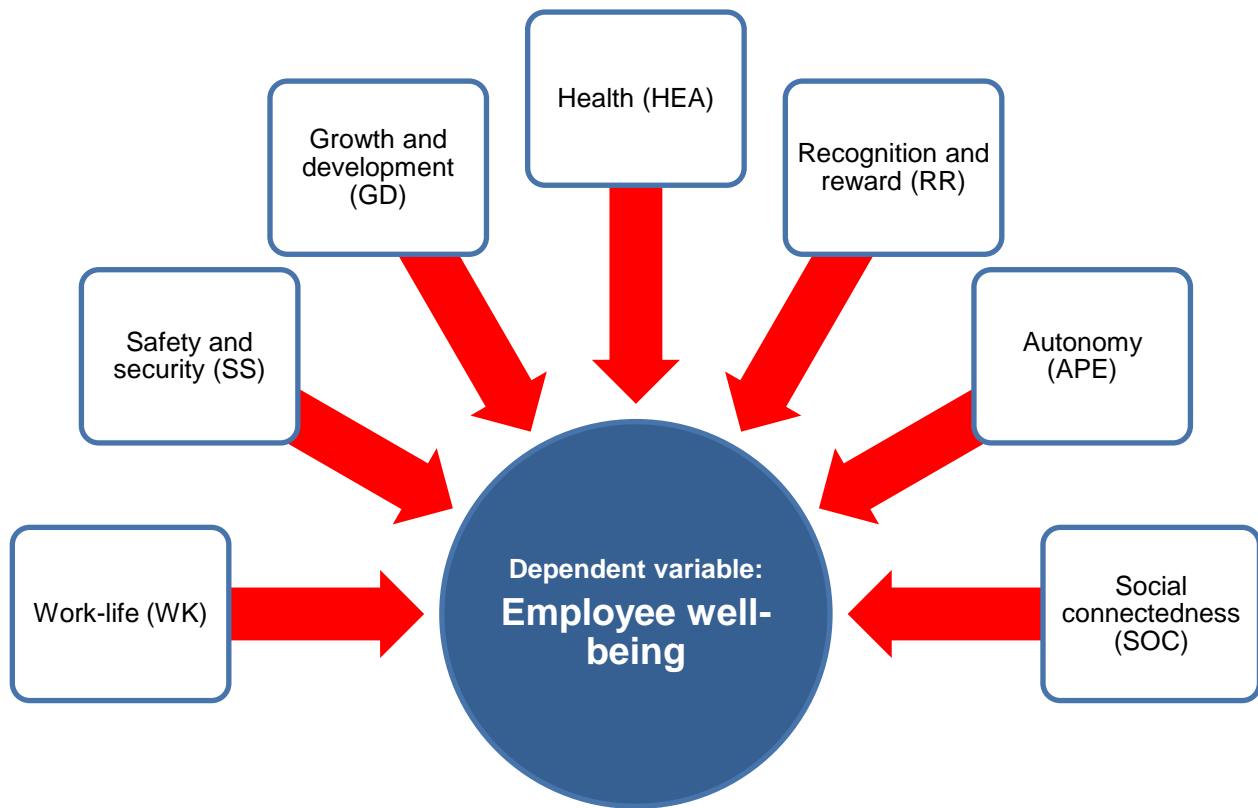
growth and steer them away from using material and financial growth mechanism (Sulkowski & White, 2015). This has prompted employers to seek new ways to harness these models to adapt to the working environment in an attempt drive employee behavior in a positive manner, by looking after their well-being which in turn ensures the financial well-being of the organisation. In essence, employees working in an organisation can have an impact on the financial performance of the organisation if left unchecked (Sulkowski & White, 2015).

#### **5.2.4 DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF HAPPINESS OF EMPLOYEES IN A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**

The empirical research conducted in the literature review, has identified a connection between the emotional state of people, the financial health of the business and the economy. For employers to truly benefit from employee well-being they need to form an understanding of what constitutes employee well-being. The paradox nature of well-being means there is no formulae to create a successful working environment to achieve well-being in the organisation (Kets de Vries, 2016).

For the purpose of this study, a conceptual model (Figure 5.3) was created to test the theory of previous research and apply this to a financial institution to determine the level of employee well-being at the institution.

Figure 5.3: A conceptual model to determine employee well-being



Source: Author's own construction

### 5.2.5 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE HAPPINESS IN A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

The population sample (354 potential respondents) was selected from the financial institution employee database, including all employees (permanent and part-time employees) working in the building. A total number of 164 responses were received out of a potential 354, making the response rate 46%.

The questionnaire is divided into two sections, the first being made up of a combination of demographic and biographic questions providing a detailed description of the respondents. In the second section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to

indicate their level of agreement to statements anchored in Likert-style scales questions ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The results from the multiple regression analysis indicated that only three of the independent variables (Autonomy, recognition and reward and safety and security) offered a strong and significant relationship to well-being. The following independent variables displayed weaker relationships (correlation) with the dependent variable.

- Work-life (correlation 0,56, Beta coefficient 0,176 and p value = 0.112 );
- Growth and development (correlation 0,49, Beta coefficient - 0,064 and p value = 0.129);
- Health (correlation 0,50, Beta coefficient 0,057 and p value = 0.288);
- Social connectedness (correlation 0,47, Beta coefficient 0,057 and p value = 0.619).

Although correlation scores did indicate the relationships were medium to large, they did not display the same significance as safety and security, recognition and reward and autonomy.

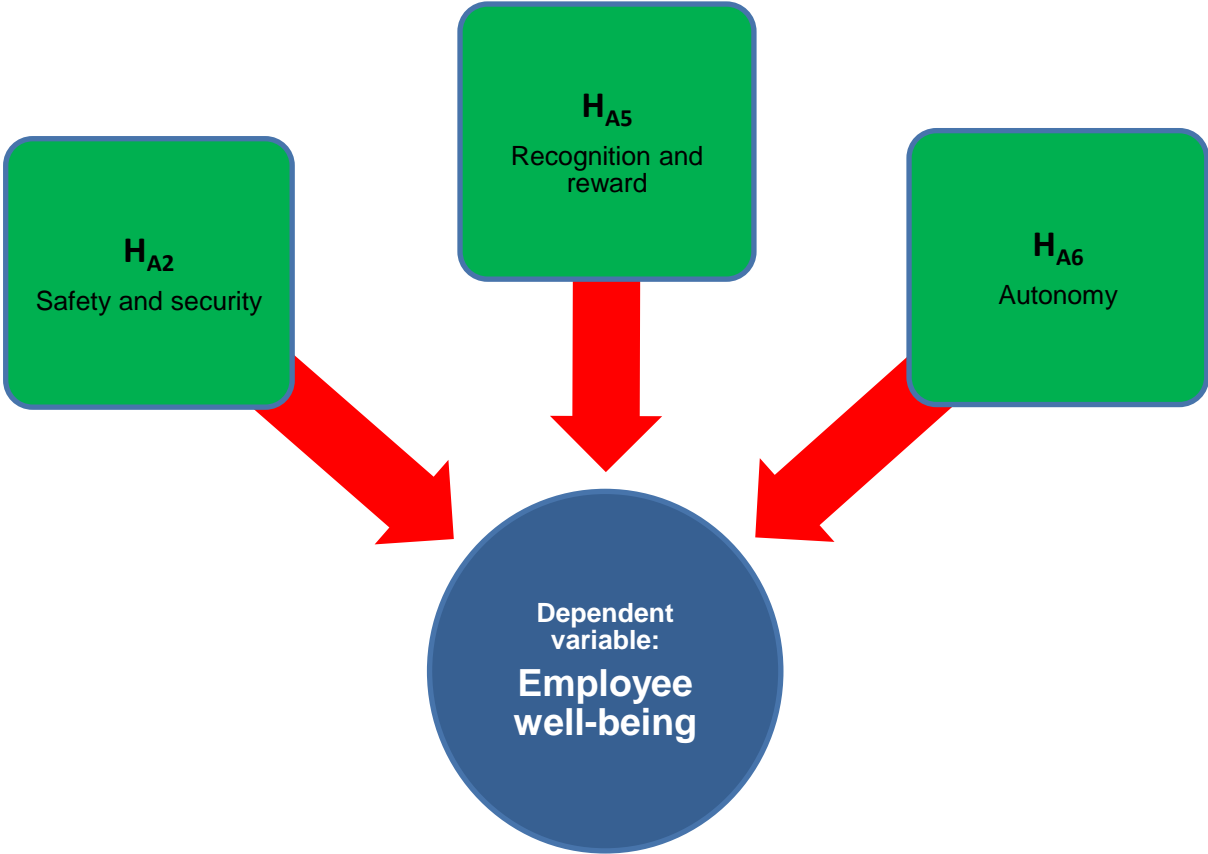
Table 5.1 Large correlation results with significant relationships

<b>N = 164</b>	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>t value</b>	<b>p value</b>
Intercept		0.415	0.284	1.458	
Safety and Security	<b>0.65</b>	<b>0.297</b>	<b>0.074</b>	<b>4.005</b>	<b>0.0001*</b>
Recognition and Reward	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.182</b>	<b>0.061</b>	<b>2.963</b>	<b>0.0012*</b>
Autonomy	<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.199</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>3.154</b>	<b>0.0012*</b>
<p><b>p value threshold = p &lt; 0.05</b>  <b>*(items in red show significant relationships)</b></p>					

As indicated in Table 5.1, the empirical results have identified three accepted independent variables from the hypothesized model that have a large correlation and

significant relationship with the dependent variable (employee well-being). Based on these results, if an employer wishes to enhance employee well-being, the organisation needs to include these variables in their model to enhance employee well-being. The adapted conceptualized model is depicted in Figure 5.4 and should form the basis for an employer to start developing a plan to enhance employee well-being.

Figure 5.4: Accepted hypotheses to enhance employee well-being



Source: Author's own construction

## **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE HAPPINESS IN A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**

The last ten years has seen significant development of research in the field of employee well-being. Although still relatively new, and mainly concentrated in the West, Europe and the Far East very little research has been conducted in Africa. The research methodology made use of literature obtained from academics based across the globe and took cognisance of the impact previous research has had on the topic of well-being. A variety of tried and tested tools were used to ensure that the information was reliable and applicable. The application of literature allowed the formulation of a conceptual model which was tested using research methodology, statistical tools such as correlation and multiple linear regression. The collection and analysis of the data collected enabled the researcher to formulate findings which relates to the variables researched. Recommendations are based on the variables included in the conceptual model and the relevant statistical analysis applied to the captured data.

The current levels of happiness in the financial institution surveyed, indicate that existing interventions have established a high level of life satisfaction and well-being in the organisation. Means scores for happiness range from 3.55 (I am happy with my work-life balance) to 4.35 (I am happy with the relationship I have with my immediate family), indicating that the people surveyed are agree to strongly agree (70.73%) with statements relating to their happiness levels. The following independent variables were tested for correlation and significance to indicate the importance of the relationship they have in enhancing employee well-being.

### **5.3.1 WORK-LIFE**

Finding a balance between commitments of work and one's private life is an important aspect of an individual's life. Too much work can have a negative impact on one's life outside the work environment, like having health issues and the relationship a person may have with the people outside the work environment (OECD, 2011, p. 22).

Respondents were generally happy with the balance they have between working and their private life (mean = 3.56). However, they still worry about their work outside

working hours (mean = 2.63), indicating that they are not able to enjoy their private life due to the pressures of work and the workload.

The negative impact is that people cannot comfortably take part in activities outside of their work environment (OECD, 2011, p. 22). Further investigation into this is encouraged to determine the reason why employees are not able to focus on their private life due to work pressure. Human capacity in the work environment can cause excessive workloads, lack of knowledge and training may be required to ensure optimal performance to complete tasks once assignment. Offering a solution to underlying issues at work may enable people to better deal with the stress related to excessive workloads.

### **5.3.2 SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Findings from the empirical research have identified safety and security as having a significant relationship and influence on the well-being of individuals. Although the mean score for safety and security is 3.65, indicating that respondents were in agreement with most statements, they did highlight provision for retirement and the safety of their families as areas they are concerned about. All employees contribute to a pension fund, but life and economic pressures hinder them from providing additional financial savings to ensure financial security after retirement. The provision of financial planning advice on a regular basis may provide guidance in determining ways to contribute additional saving to provide greater comfort in planning for one's retirement.

The safety of an individual and their family outside of the working environment may not be deemed the responsibility of the employer. Crime can lead to loss of life and property, leading to individuals experiencing post-traumatic stress, anxiety and constantly having feelings of vulnerability which can impact on productivity levels at work (OECD, 2011, p. 32).

However, if an employer is aware of the concerns of employees they are able to provide interventions and guidance to employees to ensure their individual safety and that of their families. Personal development plans are useful platforms to ensuring growth and further development to enable employees the opportunity for advancement within the



organisation to enable them an opportunity to secure better and safer living conditions for their families.

### **5.3.3 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Employees at the financial institution are mostly happy with their prospects for growth and development, with more than half of respondents agreeing with all the statements (mean = 3.54). A focus area for the employer is to continue developing personal development plans for employees. Fewer respondents were in agreement that “there is a plan set for their development”. Personal growth and development plans are essential in creating a platform for sustainable growth of the organisation and enhancing the well-being of employees.

It is evident in two statements that employees were less convinced that their employer did not take their growth and development seriously. When asked, “Management cares about my future development and growth” and “In the last six months I have developed in my position”, more respondents were unsure or did not agree with the statement. A greater effort by leadership to take charge of the growth and development of employees needs to be implemented to build up the confidence of employees that their employer places their development at a higher priority level.

### **5.3.4 HEALTH**

According to the OECD (2011, p 20), a person’s health status is considered to be one of the most valued aspects associated with well-being. It impacts on the quality of their living conditions, the jobs they are able to do, being able to earn a sustainable income and provide for their families. To be productive in the work environment, one needs to have a healthy disposition in order to achieve the goals of the organisation and be seen as a productive member of the work environment. Being an active participant in the day-to-day activities associated with work can only be achieved if one is healthy, resulting in being able to participate in the success of the organisation through recognition and reward and growth and development. Removing the stresses associated with work and being healthy can enhance the associated work-life environment.

Respondents could not agree or disagree with the statement, “I wake up feeling rested” meaning they are not able to start the work day in a truly committed and vibrant manner. The benefits associated with a well-rested employee are essential in achieving daily targets and fulfilling obligations in the work environment. Well-being programs are there to assist employees in finding ways to cope with work-life stressors. Employers can find great benefit in promoting the current well-being program (employees agreed that they “have access to a dedicated health and well-being intranet site” (mean = 3.97) and encouraging employees to use the service as a means to enhance the health status.

### **5.3.5 RECOGNITION AND REWARD**

The results from the empirical research indicated a large correlation and significant relationship between well-being and recognition and reward. The benefits associated with recognition for a good performance and achieving high standards in the workplace builds the individuals self-esteem and makes them feel useful in society and the work environment. They feel needed and is seen as a key resource in the success of the organisation. They feel motivated to fulfill their ambitions in the organisation, are eager to continue growing and developing their skills and abilities to the benefit of their employer and colleagues. However, recognition in an open environment and society needs to be further enhanced by rewarding the individual appropriately to drive home the message that they are valued.

### **5.3.6 AUTONOMY**

The importance associated with autonomy in the workplace is emphasized by the empirical results in the research findings. Autonomy indicated a large correlation with well-being and the importance of the relationship is evident in the fact that the relationship of autonomy with well-being is significant. The results indicate that respondents agree to strongly agree with the statements. Mean scores for all statements range from 3.24 (lowest mean score) to 4.08 (highest mean score).

The majority of respondents agreed that they are allowed a fair amount of autonomy in the workplace (mean = 3.77). However, employees felt that they were not involved in

the day-to-day decision making of the business. Feeling empowered, being able to voice opinions without fear and being given authority to be involved in decision making processes are important aspects to increasing productivity in the workplace. By including employees in the management decision making process through consultation and steering away from a hierarchical management structure can only benefit employers to stimulate the workforce to take ownership of their positions in the organisation and strive to work towards the best interests of the organisation.

### **5.3.7 SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS**

Social networks (family, friends and colleagues) can offer material and emotional support to individuals in a time of need. The frequency of contacts and the quality of relationships people form in their social networks can be considered important determinants of well-being (OECD, 2011, p. 26). The importance of social networks in the workplace is emphasized by the responses of respondents. When asked, “I enjoy good relationships with my work colleagues”, 85.98% of respondents agreed to strongly agreed with the statement. Overall, respondents were positive about their social connectedness with a mean score of 3.79. The challenge faced by employees and their employer, is to maintain a healthy working environment where they encourage open communication to create an environment where colleagues are trust each other and can rely on democratic decision making processes to enhance social interactions (OECD, 2011, p. 26).

## **5.4 LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY**

Collis and Hussy (2009, p. 125) describe a weakness or deficiency in research as being a study limitation. Certain limitations to the study have been identified and need to be pointed out and can serve as possible alternatives to replicating similar research. Hence, future research may be conducted to ensure greater accuracy and validity to the research.

#### **5.4.1 SAMPLE SIZE**

The minimum sample size required to do the study was initially 100 respondents. Although a total of 164 surveys were returned, the sample size is not sufficient to obtain a truly reliable and representative view of the entire organisation.

#### **5.4.2 REGIONAL REPRESENTATION OF SAMPLE**

The empirical research was only conducted at the regional office of the institution in the Eastern Cape. The employee compliment at this office is a small portion of the total number of people employed at the financial institution. Each region in South Africa experiences different challenges and the results from this research cannot be seen as a representation of the entire organisation.

#### **5.4.3 LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH**

Time constraints associated with this study has limited the researcher in terms of type of research conducted. To obtain a better understanding of the organisation and the impact specific initiatives may have on the well-being of employees have not been researched.

#### **5.4.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

Although the results indicated that all independent variables had a medium to large correlation to well-being, it was evident that three independent variables had a significant relationship with well-being. Upon further investigation (simple regression analysis), it was found that all independent variables, when the relationship is individually analysed, show that they all had significant relationships with the dependent variable. The resulting conclusion is that further investigation is needed to determine which combination of independent variables may have the greater impact on well-being.

## **5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The previous section identified certain limitations, which if addressed may add greater value to this research study. The following aspects may be taken into consideration if similar research into the field of employee well-being is being pursued by fellow researchers.

### **5.5.1 SAMPLE SIZE**

Conducting research with a larger sample size would increase the validity of the research, as it would ensure a decrease in the standard error (narrower confidence interval) and ensure a more precise estimate of the population parameters (Wegner, 2012, p. 172).

### **5.5.2 CONDUCT RESEARCH NATIONALLY**

Each region in South Africa, specifically the metropolitan areas, present the researcher with a different set of dynamics. Respondents in Cape Town Durban and Gauteng face different challenges, like traffic, crime, children (time travelled to and from schools) and the different economic dynamics of each city. These factors need to be taken into consideration to establish a wholistic outlook for the organisation.

### **5.5.2 LONGITUDINAL STUDY**

Due to the differences mentioned in the previous point, specific interventions cannot be researched in one study. By conducting longitudinal research, researchers are able to track the changes (whether positive or negative) due to interventions instituted by the organisations and adapt to the outcomes presented by the research. Therefore, well-being can be monitored to ensure that there is positive growth in well-being amongst employees.

### **5.5.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

Adopting a qualitative research paradigm may allow researchers to identify specific issues which are not clearly defined in the research. An in depth investigation by

conducting focus groups with employees in the financial institution, may uncover underlying aspects of well-being which can be adopted to investigate further or remove from the basket of well-being initiatives. It provides a different approach by obtaining in-depth responses from respondents through their words and not merely numeric data.

#### **5.5.4 DATA ANALYSIS – APPLYING STEPWISE REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

In this study, the use of multiple regression analysis, identified three of the four independent variables as being positively correlated as well have having a significant relationship to well-being. Simple linear regression analysis provided a different outcome, in that all the independent variables possessed large correlation to well-being and had a significant relationship to the dependent variable. An alternative for the researcher is to use stepwise regression analysis. Stepwise regression is commonly used when one is dealing with multiple independent variables and it fits the regression model, by adding or dropping co-variates, one at a time and based on specified criterion (Sunil, 2015). It allows the researcher the opportunity to identify the most effective combination of independent variables, which show large correlation and a significant relationship.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the research treatise was to determine the level of happiness (well-being) of employees at a financial institution. A literature study provided the background in formulating a better understanding of the term happiness and the dynamics associated with this topic. Through better understanding, a conceptual model was developed to aid in achieving the main objective of the study.

The research revealed organisations can benefit from developing a work environment which encourages employee well-being. There are many facets to developing an environment where well-being is encouraged and the journey starts with the employer. Employees will adapt and either accept the opportunity to enhance their lives by improving their lives through positive interaction with elements which encourage improved well-being. The benefits to the employer will be seen by the level of increased

engagement, productivity and improved financial results. The process is not an exercise which will deliver immediate results, but needs to be implemented over time, developed and adapted to suite the culture of the organisation. The ultimate decision to be happy lies with the individual as well-being is subjective by nature, the individual is responsible for their own well-being.

Short lived experiences of happiness (hedonic happiness) and joy may provide short term results, but these initiatives cannot be sustained to provide the desired results. By creating an environment which enhances employee well-being over time is through initiatives which create long term enhancement in working conditions which add value to a person's life, allowing them to achieve an ultimate state of true happiness (eudaimonic happiness) has been found to be the path to sustainable well-being. The research conducted has identified three important variables which are greater in significance and offer a better opportunity for employers to increase levels of well-being. Autonomy, recognition and reward and safety and security have been identified as the three most significant variables which employers can apply in their quest to develop a healthy and happy working environment.

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# APPENDIX

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## APPENDIX A: RESEARCH ALIGNMENT PLAN

### Title

Employee Happiness in a Financial Institution

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### Research problem

Financial institutions do not make use of measurement tools to determine the level employee happiness.

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### Main Research Objective

<b>RO1</b>	<b>Determine employee happiness in a financial institution</b>
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### Secondary Research Objectives

<b>RO2</b>	<b>Define happiness as the foundation of modern day well-being research</b>
<b>RO3</b>	Investigate the nature of well-being and identify its key drivers according to current literature
<b>RO4</b>	Determine the application of well-being in the workplace
<b>RO5</b>	Determine the level of happiness of employees in a financial institution
<b>RO6</b>	Analyse and interpret the level of employee happiness in a financial institution

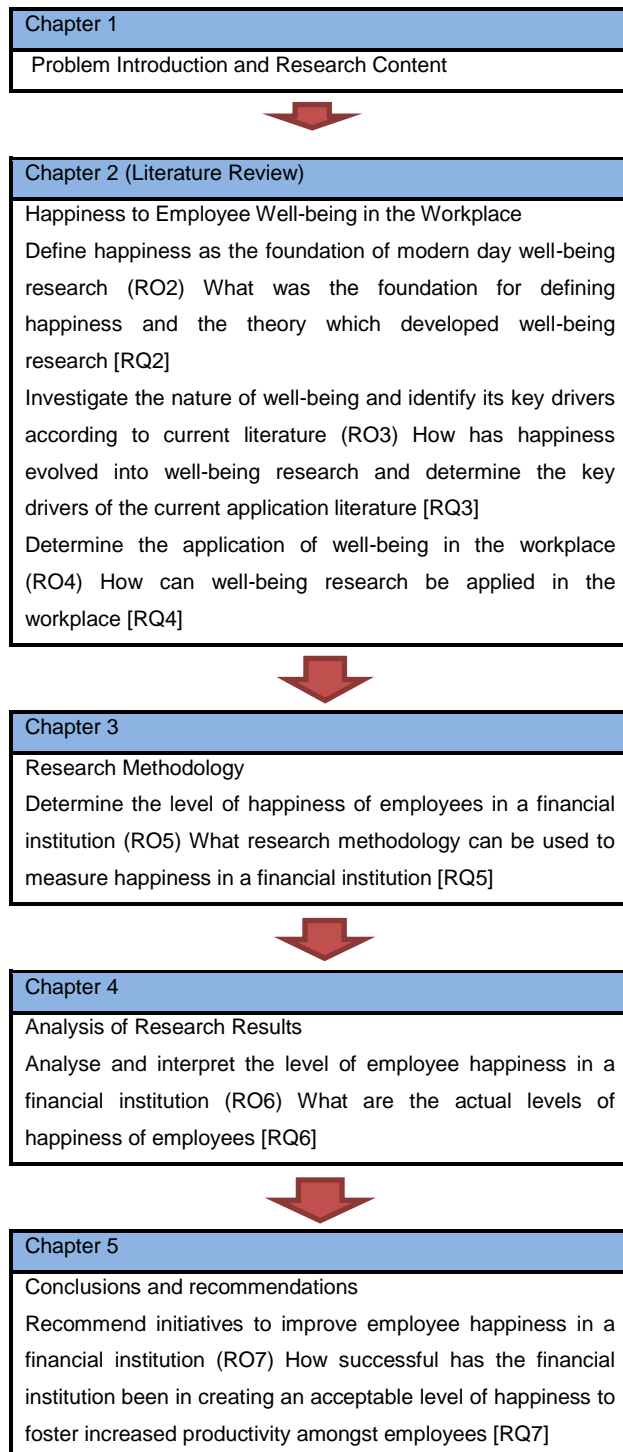
**RO7** Recommend initiatives to improve employee happiness in a financial institution

## Research Questions

Main Research Question	Main Research Objective	Research Strategy	Chapters	Chapter Deliverables
<b>RQ1</b> What is the extent of employee happiness levels in a financial institution?	<b>RO1</b> What is the level of employee happiness in a financial institution?	Literature study, research design, analysis of results, discussion and evaluation	Treatise	How has the work environment at a financial institution impacted on happiness levels of employees

Secondary Research Questions	Secondary Research Objectives	Research Strategy	Chapters	Chapter Deliverables
<b>RQ2</b> What was the foundation for defining happiness and the theory which developed well-being research	<b>RO2</b> Define happiness as the foundation of modern day well-being research	Literature study	Chapter 2	How has happiness research evolved into a meaningful tool to measure economic growth
<b>RQ3</b> How has happiness evolved into well-being research and determine the key drivers of the current application literature	<b>RO3</b> Investigate the nature of well-being and identify its key drivers according to current literature	Literature study	Chapter 2	The application of happiness in the business environment
<b>RQ4</b> How can well-being research be applied in the workplace	<b>RO4</b> Determine the application of well-being in the workplace	Literature study	Chapter 2	The extent to which South African organisations have adopted happiness research
<b>RQ5</b> What research methodology can be used to measure happiness in a financial institution	<b>RO5</b> Determine the level of happiness of employees in a financial institution	Research design process	Chapter 3	Methodology used to measure happiness of employees
<b>RQ6</b> What are the actual levels of happiness of employees	<b>RO6</b> Analyse and interpret the level of employee happiness in a financial institution	Analysis of results	Chapter 4	Survey results
<b>RQ7</b> How successful has the financial institution been in creating an acceptable level of happiness to foster increased productivity amongst employees	<b>RO7</b> Recommend initiatives to improve employee happiness in a financial institution	Discussion and evaluation of results	Chapter 5	Application of survey results in determining levels of happiness and proposed application of continuous study

# Research Alignment Plan: Chapter Structure



## APPENDIX B: CONTENT OF EMAIL SENT TO RESPONDENTS

Dear Colleague

I would appreciate your assistance in completing my online survey as part of my final research assignment for my current post graduate studies.

My aim is to obtain a receive 150 plus questionnaires from the staff working at FNB Newton Place, as this will add greater significance to my research results. You will not be asked to fill in any contact details or employee numbers, but responses to basic demographic questions are asked. The survey should take approximately 15 min to complete.

All responses will remain confidential and secure. Thank you in advance for your valuable insights and the time taken to complete the survey.

I have contracted with QuestionPro, an independent research firm, to field your confidential survey responses. Please click on this link to complete the survey:

<http://www.questionpro.com/t/AMXhRZXoiK>

**I have found that the process is a lot quicker if the above link is copied and pasted into the Google Chrome URL, Internet explorer takes a bit long to load.**

If you have any questions, please contact Niel McConnell on 0833847623 or email: [s214358607@live.nmmu.ac.za](mailto:s214358607@live.nmmu.ac.za) with any questions.

Thank You

## APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE

# Employee Happiness in a Financial Institution

Please take your time in answering the questions as accurately as possible. For each question, mark only one answer per statement, there are no correct or incorrect answers.

### Demographic profile questions

Please answer each of the questions by selecting the correct answer next to each question.

Q No's	Categorical factor	Range	Coding
1	Gender	Male Female	1 2
2	Age	18 to 25 yrs. 26 to 35 yrs. 36 to 45 yrs. 46 to 55 yrs. 56 years and older	1 2 3 4 5
3	Race	Asian Black Coloured Indian White	1 2 3 4 5
4	What is your current marital status?	Divorced In a relationship Living with my partner Married Separated Single	1 2 3 4 5 6

		Widowed	7
5	What is your highest level of education?	Did not finish school	1
		Matric/Grade 12	2
		National Diploma	3
		Undergraduate degree	4
		Post graduate degree	5
6	Employment status	Full time	1
		Part time	2
7	Position in organisation	Clerk/operations	1
		Management	2
		Middle management	3
		Product Specialist	4
		Regional manager	5
		Specialist Sales	6
		Team Leader	7
		If other, please mention .....	8
8	What division do you work for?	Asset finance	1
		Business banking	2
		Consumer asset finance	3
		Consumer credit	4
		Homeloans	5
		Insurance Brokers	6
		International Banking	7
		Merchant Services	8
		Online banking	9
		Private clients, wealth & fiduciary services	10
		Trust services	11
		IT	12
		Building management services	13
		Points of presence	14
9	Tenure - How long have you been employed by your current employer?	Less than a year	1
		1 to 2 yrs.	2
		3 to 5 yrs.	3
		6 to 10 yrs.	4

		11 to 20 yrs.	5
		More than 20 yrs.	6
10	In what suburb of Port Elizabeth do you live?	Northern suburbs	1
		Southern suburbs	2
		Western suburbs	3
		Other	4
11	Household size	1	1
		2	2
		3	3
		4	4
		5	5
		More than 5	6
12	How many dependent children do you have living with you?	1	1
		2	2
		3	3
		4	4
		5	5
		More than 5	6
13	Do you live with your parents?	Yes	1
		No	2
14	Do any of your parents live with you?	Yes	1
		No	2
15	How long is your commute to work?	Less than 15 min	1
		16 to 30 min	2
		31 to 45 min	3
		46 to 60 min	4
		More than a hour	5
16	What means of transport do you use to get to and from work?	In my own car/motor cycle	1
		Lift club	2
		Bus	3
		Bicycle	4
		Taxi	5
		Walk	6
17	What is your monthly household income?	Less than R14999	1
		R15000 to R29999	2
		R30000 to R44999	3
		R45000 to R59999	4



		More than R60000	5
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## General happiness

Please answer each of the questions by selecting the correct answer next to each question.

Your answers are a reflection on how you view each statement relating to <u>your</u> current levels of happiness in <u>your</u> working environment and life in general.	Code	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I often experience joy.	HAP1	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that life is very rewarding.	HAP2	1	2	3	4	5
Life is good.	HAP3	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with my life.	HAP4	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy.	HAP5	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy with my health.	HAP6	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy with my standard of living.	HAP7	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy with my choice of career.	HAP8	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy with the relationship I have with my immediate family members.	HAP9	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy with my work environment.	HAP10	1	2	3	4	5
I am happy with my work life balance.	HAP11	1	2	3	4	5
I have found a satisfactory meaning in my life.	HAP12	1	2	3	4	5
I generally feel free to express my ideas and opinions.	HAP13	1	2	3	4	5
Most of the time I feel a sense of	HAP14	1	2	3	4	5

accomplishment from what I do.						
People in my life care about me.	HAP15	1	2	3	4	5
My work colleagues care about me.	HAP16	1	2	3	4	5

## Recognition and reward

Your answers are a reflection on how you view each statement relating to recognition and reward in the workplace.	Code	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I receive adequate remuneration for the work I perform.	RR1	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with my organisation's performance review system.	RR2	1	2	3	4	5
I am regularly told how I positively contribute to the functioning of the unit.	RR3	1	2	3	4	5
I find my job emotionally rewarding.	RR4	1	2	3	4	5
I have been recognised for doing good work in the last 6 months.	RR5	1	2	3	4	5
The organisation rewards hard-working individuals.	RR6	1	2	3	4	5
I believe the success of the company is shared.	RR7	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have worked hard enough to deserve a promotion.	RR8	1	2	3	4	5

## Autonomy

Your answers are a reflection on how you view each statement relating your autonomy in the	Code	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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workplace.						
At work, I feel empowered to make decisions and take action.	APE1	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I am encouraged to develop new ideas and ways of operating.	APE2	1	2	3	4	5
At work, Self-reliance and self-motivation is encouraged.	APE3	1	2	3	4	5
I am allowed to carry on with my work.	APE4	1	2	3	4	5
I can voice my opinion to management without fear.	APE5	1	2	3	4	5
I feel like a professional and not just a simple worker.	APE6	1	2	3	4	5
I am involved in business unit decision making.	APE7	1	2	3	4	5
I am allowed to express myself at work.	APE8	1	2	3	4	5

## Work-Life

<b>Your answers are a reflection on how you view each statement relating to your work-life experiences in the workplace.</b>	Code	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I find my work challenging and stimulating.	WK1	1	2	3	4	5
I have all the necessary resources and equipment to do my job.	WK2	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I am able to maintain a sound work-life balance.	WK3	1	2	3	4	5
I am usually able to cope with the workload I face.	WK4	1	2	3	4	5
There is a spirit of co-operation	WK5	1	2	3	4	5

in this organisation.						
My job does not cause an unreasonable amount of stress in my life.	WK6	1	2	3	4	5
I still have energy at the end of work every day.	WK7	1	2	3	4	5
Work stops me from spending as much time as I'd like with family.	WK8	1	2	3	4	5
Work stops me from spending as much time as I'd like with friends.	WK9	1	2	3	4	5
I never worry about my work outside working hours.	WK10	1	2	3	4	5
My personal life suffers because of my work responsibilities.	WK11	1	2	3	4	5
My work suffers because of responsibilities in my personal life.	WK12	1	2	3	4	5

## Growth and Development

<b>Your answers are a reflection on how you view each statement relating to your growth and development in the workplace.</b>	Code	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
There are opportunities for career advancement in this organisation.	GD1	1	2	3	4	5
I am presented with regular training opportunities.	GD2	1	2	3	4	5
The organisation has clearly told me what is expected of me for advancement.	GD3	1	2	3	4	5
I feel my levels of skill and confidence are improving.	GD4	1	2	3	4	5
There is a plan set for my	GD5	1	2	3	4	5

development.						
Management cares about my future development and advancement.	GD6	1	2	3	4	5
In the last 6 months I have developed in my position.	GD7	1	2	3	4	5
My employer presents me with the opportunity to further my education.	GD8	1	2	3	4	5

### Safety and security

<b>Your answers are a reflection on how you view each statement relating to your safety and security in the workplace and the area that you live in.</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree or disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
I have found satisfactory meaning in my life.	SS1	1	2	3	4	5
People in my life care about me.	SS2	1	2	3	4	5
I have made enough provision for my retirement.	SS2	1	2	3	4	5
I feel safe and secure in the area that I live in.	SS4	1	2	3	4	5
I am positive about the future.	SS5	1	2	3	4	5
If I fall ill and cannot work, the organisation I work for will have my best interests at heart.	SS6	1	2	3	4	5
I believe the organisation that I work for is doing well and I do not stand a chance of losing my job in the next 12 months.	SS7	1	2	3	4	5
I constantly worry about the safety of my family when I am not at home with them.	SS8	1	2	3	4	5
I can trust my neighbours to look	SS9	1	2	3	4	5

out for my safety and security in the neighbourhood that I live in.						
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## Health

<b>Your answers are a reflection on how you view each statement relating to your general health in the workplace and the factors that impact on your health in the workplace.</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree or disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
I don't feel particularly healthy.	HEA1	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have a great deal of energy.	HEA2	1	2	3	4	5
I rarely wake up feeling rested.	HEA3	1	2	3	4	5
I feel fully mentally alert.	HEA4	1	2	3	4	5
I have access to a dedicated health and wellbeing intranet site.	HEA5	1	2	3	4	5
My employer offers me opportunity to get involved in voluntary work in work time.	HEA6	1	2	3	4	5
My employer encourages me to lead a healthy lifestyle.	HEA7	1	2	3	4	5
I receive free health advice about how to lead a healthy lifestyle.	HEA8	1	2	3	4	5
I belong to a private medical aid scheme.	HEA9	1	2	3	4	5
I am allowed to attend health screening or health checks during work hours.	HEA10	1	2	3	4	5
I receive stress management support or advice at work.	HEA11	1	2	3	4	5
I feel optimistic about the future.	HEA12	1	2	3	4	5

## Social connectedness

<b>Your answers are a reflection on how you view each statement relating to your social connectedness in the workplace.</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree or disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
I am allowed to give constructive feedback to the people I work with.	SOC1	1	2	3	4	5
My colleagues show that they care about me as a person.	SOC2	1	2	3	4	5
My colleagues are unwilling to listen to my problems.	SOC3	1	2	3	4	5
My colleagues encourage me at work.	SOC4	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I am treated unfairly by my colleagues.	SOC5	1	2	3	4	5
I get the help and support I need from colleagues at work.	SOC6	1	2	3	4	5
There is friction and anger shown between colleagues at work.	SOC7	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy good relations with my work colleagues.	SOC8	1	2	3	4	5
I can trust the people that I work with.	SOC9	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

# APPENDIX D: FORM E



FORM E

**ETHICS CLEARANCE FOR TREATISES/DISSERTATIONS/THESES**

*Please type or complete in black ink*

FACULTY: Business School \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT: Business School \_\_\_\_\_

I, (surname and initials of supervisor) Professor M Cullen \_\_\_\_\_

the supervisor for (surname and initials of candidate) Daniel M McConnell \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (student number) 214358607 \_\_\_\_\_

a candidate for the degree of Masters in Business Administration \_\_\_\_\_

with a treatise/dissertation/thesis entitled (full title of treatise/dissertation/thesis):

Employee Happiness at a Financial Institution \_\_\_\_\_

considered the following ethics criteria (please tick the appropriate block):

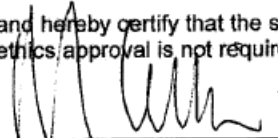
	YES	NO
1. Is there any risk of harm, embarrassment of offence, however slight or temporary, to the participant, third parties or to the communities at large?		X
2. Is the study based on a research population defined as 'vulnerable' in terms of age, physical characteristics and/or disease status?		X
2.1 Are subjects/participants/respondents of your study:		
(a) Children under the age of 18?		X
(b) NMMU staff?		X
(c) NMMU students?		X
(d) The elderly/persons over the age of 60?		X
(e) A sample from an institution (e.g. hospital/school)?		X
(f) Handicapped (e.g. mentally or physically)?		X



3. Does the data that will be collected require consent of an institutional authority for this study? (An institutional authority refers to an organisation that is established by government to protect vulnerable people)		X
3.1 Are you intending to access participant data from an existing, stored repository (e.g. school, institutional or university records)?		X
4. Will the participant's privacy, anonymity or confidentiality be compromised?		X
4.1 Are you administering a questionnaire/survey that:		
(a) Collects sensitive/identifiable data from participants?		X
(b) Does not guarantee the anonymity of the participant?		X
(c) Does not guarantee the confidentiality of the participant and the data?		X
(d) Will offer an incentive to respondents to participate, i.e. a lucky draw or any other prize?		X
(e) Will create doubt whether sample control measures are in place?		X
(f) Will be distributed electronically via email (and requesting an email response)?		
Note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If your questionnaire <b>DOES NOT</b> request respondents' identification, is distributed electronically and you request respondents to return it <i>manually</i> (print out and deliver/mail); <b>AND</b> respondent anonymity can be guaranteed, your answer will be NO.</li> <li>If your questionnaire <b>DOES NOT</b> request respondents' identification, is <i>distributed via an email link and works through a web response system</i> (e.g. the university survey system); <b>AND</b> respondent anonymity can be guaranteed, your answer will be NO.</li> </ul>		X

Please note that if **ANY** of the questions above have been answered in the affirmative (**YES**) the student will need to complete the full ethics clearance form (REC-H application) and submit it with the relevant documentation to the Faculty RECH (Ethics) representative.


and hereby certify that the student has given his/her research ethical consideration and full ethics approval is not required.

  
 SUPERVISOR(S)

8/12/16  
 DATE

  
 HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

8/12/16  
 DATE

  
 STUDENT(S)

8 DECEMBER 2016  
 DATE

Please ensure that the research methodology section from the proposal is attached to this form.

Please note that by following this Proforma ethics route, the study will **NOT** be allocated an ethics clearance number.

# APPENDIX E: TURNITIN REPORT

12/14/2016

T711TR0: Treatise (Moodle 88236... | MBA: Treatise Final Submission - Part 1 ...

Originality    GradeMark    PeerMark

## Employee Happiness at a Financial Institution

BY DANIEL MATTHEWS MC COINWELL



10%  
SIMILAR

### EMPLOYEE HAPPINESS AT A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

#### ABSTRACT

Happiness, or the concept of well-being can be traced back to the era of Aristotle (384 to 322 BC), Epictetus (341 to 270 BC), John Locke (1632 to 1704) and more recently Ed Diener (DOB 1948), who played an integral part in the well-being revolution. People have very different ways in seeking happiness, whether it is closely associated to their personal life, the work environment or in society, they are constantly striving towards a goal of experiencing happiness at its purist form.

Bursts of absolute joy and the purist form of immediate gratification cannot provide a path to finding happiness and well-being. The process is intricate and requires a variety of variables integrated into a combination of events and lifestyle experiences to culminate into an existence which produces a feeling of inner peace and fulfillment. Current research suggests that this is not an attainable state of existence, but human nature drives every individual to seek out a path to finding true happiness.

The advent of the modern day economic crisis has changed the global environment to the extent where society is attempting to find a new norm to operate in. As a consequence, individuals are presented with new challenges which have forced them to re-evaluate their path to finding a balance in their lives. These changes have added new challenges to deal with and adapt to as new forces in the global environment start to shape a new tomorrow. People spend a large portion of their existence working to earn an income and to provide a means of supporting themselves and their dependents. The challenges they face are enhanced by the states of working in stressful and pressurised working environments as their employers are also adapting to the changing global environment. Economic pressure is passed on to employees, as they are pushed to achieve the financial results demanded by shareholders.

The last ten years has seen a wealth of research being conducted in the space of well-being and how it relates to business has gained popularity. The study of epidemiology refers to the study of components of human behaviour, which have a negative impact on individual functioning, like stress and anxiety disorders. Well-being in the workplace can counter these ailments and create a working environment absent of these negative afflictions which damage the productivity of a workforce. Employers who understand the positive aspects associated with well-being are in a position to effectively deploy their

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