Introduction

Organizational scholars recognize happiness or subjective well-being (SWB) as a central issue in research, and inquiry on happiness is based on a long history that spans multiple philosophical traditions through the ages and across cultures (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2011). Organizational and psychological literature provides ample evidence indicating that happiness can produce a variety of outcomes. Happier people sense that their lives have greater meaning (King, Hikcs, Krull, & Del Gaiso, 2006) and are more productive at work (Zelenski, Murphy, & Jenkins, 2008), experience less physiological illness (Larsen & Fredrickson, 1999) with higher levels of disease immunity (Pressman & Cohen, 2005), and are less suicidal (Koivumaa-Honkanen, Honkanen, Koskenvuo, & Kaprio, 2003).

As such, happiness has been measured as an independent variable that produces desirable outcomes at the individual, organization, and community levels. However, defining and measuring happiness varies within each study. Some research utilizes self-report questionnaires, interview ratings, peer reports, and memories of pleasant and unpleasant events (Sandvik, Diener, & Seidlitz, 1993) while others redefine and measure happiness or SWB as psychological constructs including positive emotion, optimism, self-esteem, satisfaction, and self-efficacy (Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996). However, measuring happiness by utilizing associated constructs such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, satisfaction, and health-related criteria is problematic. Utilizing a variety of existing proxy measures appears to be a pragmatic response to the absence of a reliable research method that defines and captures the expressed image of socio-emotional influences on human well-being. What if there is a more accurate way to measure happiness to better understand and inform the development of real happiness and, as a result, increase the level of joy and happiness for research participants? Exploring a better research method is based on the assumption that an understanding of unique contexts and situations by which individuals report their own state and levels of happiness can’t be obtained by asking questions associated with pre-determined and generalized psychological constructs that are defined by lab researchers. Andrews and Withey (1976) stated that evaluating measures of people’s feelings that are not clear and directly observable presents major problems. People’s perceptions of happiness are influenced by many factors in addition to their feelings; such perceptions are often internal, private, inherently unobservable phenomena.
Because memories of joy and happiness are very real and important to those who experience and savor them, allowing their personal voice to be heard in an unstructured setting and analyzing results using qualitative research methods is more reliable in defining and accurately measuring degrees of happiness.

On the other hand, dominant research defines happiness as an independent variable (e.g., happiness explains higher job productivity) instead of a dependent variable (e.g., which conditions increase happiness at the workplace?). Research should pay attention not only to what benefit happiness brings to organizations (as an independent variable), but more importantly to what factors explain different levels of individual happiness at workplace.

This chapter therefore suggests that a participatory method of qualitative research (i.e., photovoice) will serve as an alternative measure of happiness as a dependent variable to understand the deeper meaning of happiness in a participant’s own terms. Using photovoice in this research also challenges the prevailing notion of personal joy through happiness, through which an individual can attain and control one’s physical, cognitive, and psychological state regardless of social context. Family and friends, and relations and interactions with others appear as major themes to explain personal happiness or joy regardless of one’s personal traits and differences in culture and religion.

More importantly, photovoice also involves a meaning-making and perspective-taking opportunity within a community of participants, including the researcher. Many scholars who used self-report to measure individual happiness often complemented the limitation of self-reports with written interviews. Such interviews can include asking and analyzing a subject’s pleasures and pains, hopes and concerns, interests and goals. The expert (researcher) judges this complex material and converts it into a numeric response to avoid problems associated with self-reporting, where subjects differ in terms of the definition and self-reported level of happiness. As such, the researcher controls both the data analysis and interpretation. Compared to the linear process of data collection, analysis and interpretation using self-reporting and interviews, photovoice creates a cycle of data collection, collective meaning making, and perspective taking, which will become another layer of data that could refine and change the direction of interpretation. This process involves both researchers and subjects through conversations between both parties.

**Defining and Measuring Happiness**

Brickman and Campbell (1971) originally proposed the hedonic treadmill theory, which states that people briefly react to good and bad events, but in a short time they return to neutrality. This is similar to how human noses quickly adapt to new scents, and a new awareness of smell disappears after a while. Thus, happiness and unhappiness are merely short-lived reactions to changes in people’s circumstances. According to this model, people constantly strive to achieve happiness by accomplishing the next goal, new stimuli, obtaining the next social relationship, or solving the next problem. As such, they are unaware that they are doing so, not realizing that such efforts are futile in the long run. Happiness is sought through the pursuit of those pleasurable goals that capture our momentary interest. The happiness system in this regard is hypothesized to reflect changes in circumstances rather than the overall desirability of the circumstances themselves (Carver & Scheier, 1990). Treadmill theory therefore implies that many organizational interventions to increase the happiness of their employees are meant to fail after short term positive effects fade out. An employee who receives a very large raise or important promotion is sometimes no happier shortly after they receive the major reward than they were before receiving it. If this is the case, no change in life or job circumstance would ever lead to lasting changes in well-being (Wright, 2006).

If true, then why bother to study employee well-being at all? Are there any intervention strategies to help better select, place, and train employees based upon their well-being and happiness? This chapter explores the possibility of developing a lasting change strategy for happiness or joy.
intervention using qualitative participatory action research. In other words, this work proposes the alternative method of photovoice as not only a research method but also an intervention to increase overall individual well-being.

Under the treadmill model of happiness, researchers measure happiness as a self-report of the emotional state at the given moment. Thus, we suggest that the notion of happiness studied and captured moment-by-moment as a temporal state is problematic in creating sustained joy. A state of happiness should not be employed as merely a hedonic, momentary reaction to stimuli such as taking a rollercoaster ride, visiting a new place, having an appetizing meal, or achieving something new. As such, a predetermined condition to measure happiness excludes the cognitive thought process that involves determining the level, depth, and breadth of happiness. Therefore, level of happiness is not only captured at the level of emotional condition of feeling, but can be captured at the cognitive level of thought. Natural human ability that embraces the whole process of conscious meaning making, perspective taking and reflective thinking of past events that were not initially experienced as happy moments can be viewed as necessary experiences resulting in joy. Long lasting memories of happiness people cherish over time can be used to capture core values or patterns of happiness that can overcome the shortcomings of treadmill theory of happiness. Photovoice allows people to reflect on past events retrospectively and reflect on them individually, along with other subjects and researchers. Their derived sense of happiness in this regard is not temporary or momentary “feelings” that diminish over time. When people are reminded of their happy memories, warm and positive emotional responses of joy result even though they are not experiencing those events presently.

Perceiving happiness as a private introspection is problematic; therefore, happiness introspection is not the inner perception of an independent pre-existing private realm of emotion but is rather a metacognition of socially constituted experience. Thus, happiness can be associated with and experienced in the social and cultural context of the subject. Happiness should therefore be taken as a socially embodied understanding of human experience. Investigating the phenomenological matrix of happiness-related practices, we suggest taking a cognitive neuroscience perspective. Cognitive neuroscientists (e.g., Ledoux, 1989; Ochsner & Gross, 2005; Ochsner & Phelps, 2007) have studied internalized forms of social cognition including emotions. They found that cognitive control over emotion is possible with effort and intentionality of thought about our emotions, i.e., efforts are made to reappraise/reframe them. The emotion-cognition interaction (Ochsner & Phelps, 2007) and cognitive reframing (Ledoux, 2017) are actually beneficial as they each create new and richer meanings to measures of happiness. The photovoice process includes the component of collective meaning making, perspective taking, and cognitive reframing, thus changing the way people think about everyday happiness. By altering high-level thought about the meaning of emotional situations of happiness, people can be motivated to recognize and replicate happy moments of their lives and learn forms of reappraisal, ways to manage and regulate their emotions in a healthy manner to generate a state of joy (Gross, 2013). As photovoice method is a participatory action-research method, an active intervention component of collective meaning making is embedded in this approach.

**Photovoice Method**

Photovoice is a visual action research method. Photovoice is also a participatory and qualitative method of research, in which participants take pictures that document various aspects of their lives and express their voices. Photovoice was founded on the principles of feminist theory, particularly Freire’s notion of education for critical consciousness (Freire, 1970; 1973). Since its development, photovoice has been applied to a wide range of studies involving subjects of marginalized groups, the oppressed, and to minors. Photovoice has been used to understand the effects of emotional
oppression by gender and ethnicity, including but not limited to indigenous groups, Native Americans, single moms, refugees, victims of sexual abuse, drug abuse, injustice, experiences of racial discrimination, gender inequality, people with intellectual disabilities, subjects functioning under depression, autism, learning disabilities, elementary-aged children, hospice patients, and the illiterate. Photovoice is an action oriented method, while photography is strategically used as a tool of collective social change. The process turns the camera lens toward the lived experiences of vulnerable people and offers them the opportunity to record, reflect, and critique personal and community issues in creative ways. In the process of analysis and presentation, it often involves policy makers, law enforcement teams, and decision makers in a community of research so that collective social change is more attainable. As the process of photovoice research is mutual and participatory, it enables people to think critically about their own situations, recognize their strength, and voice their concerns to demand or act on desirable change in their own community. Wang and Burris(1997) emphasized the notion of community empowerment, community representation, and community enhancement through a documentary photography of photovoice. As such, the procedure of photovoice involves 1) enabling people to record and reflect their community’s strengths and concerns; 2) promoting critical dialogue and knowledge about important community issues through large and small group discussions of photograph, and 3) reaching policymakers to obtain any desirable changes needed in a community (Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell & Pestronk, 2004).

Data Collection (Capture) for Photovoice Project on Happiness

Happiness is important and valuable to people, particularly most, if not all, college students. On a scale from 1 (“not important”) to 7 (“extraordinarily important and valuable”), college students in 41 nations rated happiness at 6.39, extraordinarily important in their lives (Diener, Sapyta, & Suh, 1998). Other research shows that respondents to a survey saw happiness as more important in judging quality of life than either wealth or moral goodness (Diener, 2000; King & Napa, 1998). We explored ways to instill and promote happiness in students’ lives by developing a photovoice project on happiness in a semester long course.

Photovoice was introduced to a class of Business Research Method students at Wittenberg University, Ohio, US in the fall of 2018.

Part 1: Preparation

The photovoice project was part of the class projects and assignments in Business Research Methods. It was a four-credit hour course for sophomore and junior undergraduate students in business majors. A total of sixty-one students (52% female) participated in the photovoice project over a four-week period. Once students were familiarized with the process of photovoice and informed of the benefit of using this method in researching organizational issues, students took pictures or searched through their own personal pictures to illustrate the happiest moment in their lives.

Part 2: “3 Pictures Capturing Happy Moments of My Life”

Participants spent two weeks either taking pictures or finding old pictures taken in the past to illustrate and document moments of happiness. Each team member brought three of their best photos reflecting happiness for group analysis (by team only). Teams of 3–5 students met initially to discuss and select the best five (5) pictures representing happiness as a group so that they could present them to the entire class.
Part 3: Class Meeting and Discussion (Data Analysis)

During two sessions of 90-minute long class meetings, a total of 61 images were posted on the class presentation board. Each student was then given the opportunity to explain their chosen picture. The class was then engaged in dialogue about images according to the SHOWeD format (Latz, 2017) which was taught in previous class sessions. SHOWeD is a way to converse about an image taken and chosen using the photovoice method. Many students brought an image with captions, answering SHOWeD prompts as follows:

S: What do you SEE here?
H: What is really HAPPENING?
O: How does this relate to OUR lives?
W: WHY does this happen? This question prompted discussion of the entire class’s perceptions of the root causes of the circumstances they had just described.
D: What can I DO to replicate it? This question is intended to bring action towards their findings on happiness. How can they do more to bring happiness to their daily lives?

With this presentation and discussion prompt, the researcher initiated a class discussion beginning with a straightforward question, to which students openly responded with descriptions of what they observed in the photographs. With regard to the first photo, team members described “a mom and a child dancing”, noting, for example, that they were “smiling or laughing” and appeared to be “very close to each other”. We asked the entire class to tell us what they thought the story behind the picture might be, or to suggest common themes the teams found from their pictures.

S: I see me and my mom dancing. Me and my mom are sharing a happy moment. Me and my mom are very close.
H: I was so extremely happy and proud of my mother in this picture. I strive to be like her in so many ways. At this moment I was so happy to be her son.
O: Everyone has a mother, if you choose to speak to them or not, there is only one woman that brought you into this world, at least, love them just for that.
W: This happens because you create an unbreakable bond with your mother.
D: Be thankful for everything and everyone that you have in your life. Be nice to your parents and remember that they’re not perfect and that’s okay.

Following are comments shared by other students:

“People are naturally drawn to other people. It is nice to share an intimate connection and experience things with others and share moments for the rest of your life.”

“Spending time with our loved ones naturally makes people happy. People are happy on any events or activities especially when they are with the people they love.”

“My happiness is found in my family too. They are my rock and provide me with the necessary foundation to become successful and independent through their unconditional love and support. They come first and will always be the most important people to me.”

“They all truly bring me joy to look at and think about. My family is the most important thing to me in my life.”
Data Analysis for Photovoice Project

Data analysis follows a similar data coding method of grounded theory techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The only difference is that research participants are concurrently engaged in the process of content analysis. Text fragments were coded. Codes were improved and specified by comparing them within and across different transcripts. Codes with similar content were grouped into broader concepts (subthemes), and further comparison and grouping of these concepts led to the identification of four (4) different themes. When no new themes emerged from further analysis of the data, participants move to the next step to gain more in-depth insight into the contribution of each theme to define and understand happiness. Coding was created, and two students recorded these codings both on Blackboard and in a Google document that were shared to all students immediately after each student finished their presentation. Initial coding was used to create the following word cloud that was presented to the class upon completion of the coding exercise.

Later, codings were created and categorized to themes and sub-themes and adjustments were made as discussed. Other images were coded as “achievement” or “accomplishment” at a glance. However, further conversation turned toward what Wang and Burris (1997) described as the application of a critical stance toward the image just described. Hidden social context that was not fully

Figure 3.1  Mom and Son. Picture taken by Karla Bishop and provided by Chase Bishop (both shown in the photo). Used with permission.
captured in images were categorized under “pursuing goals” and “achievement of short-term goals”. Later, these were replicated (double categorized) under the supportive relationships with family and friends.

This is a picture of my team after we beat our biggest rival team Wooster. This game was at The College of Wooster, so it was a big win. The achievements I have accomplished throughout my basketball career are what bring me such purpose and joy, and the friendships and connections I have made with my teammates along the way will stay with me forever. The competition of basketball is another reason why I love it but you can just see the passion in my coach and that’s how all of my team is and that is what makes me enjoy basketball so much because it brings my entire team together.

This is a picture of me swimming at the NCAC conference meet. I was extremely exhausted, but still giving my all. Giving what I have left to the point where I could not stand right away after getting out of the pool because of how tired my legs were. This relates to how no matter what is going on in our lives no matter what you’re going through you can still push through anything and give your all. It shows how hard work and effort can give you the results you want. Sticking out all the hard sets and pushing through everything that is going on for that one moment. The one moment to show off all the work you put in.

It is a true showcase of my skill and hard work… Some of my favorite people in my life were there to witness my achievement and success. This is a happy moment, being able to
Figure 3.3 Winning. Picture taken and provided by Connor Seipel. Used with permission.

Figure 3.4 NCAC. Picture taken by Byron Manchester and provided by Connor Flanagan (shown in the photo). Used with permission.
show off all I had done throughout the season. Sharing the memories with all the family, friends, coaches, and others that care so much in attendance. This is a representation of people we can share these happy moments with, we all have a support system.”

From this discussion, more comprehensive and abstract themes were developed relating to participants’ understanding of the “happiness as building healthy relationships with others (family and friends) and sharing as much as time through activities, events, and vacation with loved ones”.

Acts of communal meaning-making is an integral part of this method. Measure of happiness is not taken by individual self-report which limits any reflective thinking, perspective taking, and communal meaning making process as with data analysis. In other words, researchers are not the ones who define terms, determines who participates, and who does not. Rather, participants are included in research design and the entire process of research analysis. Participants are actively engaging in conversation with others and the researcher in terms of data analysis, interpretation, and implication.

Part 4: Further Group Reflection (meaning making, perspective taking) and Follow Up Research

Students further reflected on the idea of happiness within their own groups. Each group from a total of 11 teams conducted follow up research (using their choice of any research method learned, e.g., survey, interview, secondary data analysis) and presented their new findings. All of the students’ follow up research and presentation confirmed what they initially discussed about happiness in their photovoice images which resonated and reaffirmed other scientific studies examined. Students submitted their group reflection in a format of their choice, such as a paper, PowerPoint slides, or produced video footage.

Last year as a student I was really struggling academically, trying to balance my academics, my work, and my social life and it just was not working for me… I was falling into a slump and I ended up spending a lot of time by myself and just sitting in my dorm room alone… but thankfully through the great relationships I had with my friends on this campus who constantly called me out, asked me to join their study groups… took short trips to nearby towns to get away, I was able to come out of that and just start being a lot more positive. I realized that happiness is directly related to relationships.

(from Group 1 reflection paper after class photo presentation)

Our group defines happiness as the appreciation of the lives of others. Our happiness is through time we spend with other people we care or people who care for us. We as a group feel that relationships are the key part to pursue happiness.

(from Group 3 reflection paper after class photo presentation)

We looked at a study done in Colorado (Happiness by the Numbers: 8 Stats That Could Change Your Life by Jessica Cassity). The study involved 300 students who reported that when they regularly spend about a quarter of their hours each day with family and friends, they are 12 times as likely to report happiness. At the same time, having regular contacts with 10 or more friends has a significant impact on happiness and having a robust social network is linked to positive health factors including longer life.

(Group 2 team presentation, December 4, 2018)

Our team conducted follow up interviews with our ten friends we asked them to describe their happiness moments in lives and how they define happiness… we found that every single person that we talked to mentioned that family or friends or some type of
relationship in all of their experiences (including graduation ceremonies, sport games, 
wedding, vacation, party etc.) is core to define happiness in one’s life.

(Grupo 5 team presentation, December 4, 2018)

Argyle (2001) found that social relationships are the greatest single cause to happiness and other 
aspects of well-being; Colbert, Bono and Purvanova (2016) argued that friendship was most strongly 
associated with positive emotions at work. However, the mere existence of social relationships and 
frequency of contact with others are not strong indicators to subjective well-being and positive 
emotional affect (Lucas & Dyrenforth, 2006). Instead, close relationships that are characterized by 
affectively pleasant interactions based on care for each other’s welfare are more likely to contribute 
to a true state of happiness or joy (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Participants in the photovoice project 
on happiness narrated conditions of events where images of happiness moments were taken. Often, 
it was at a friend’s wedding, family vacation activities, winning a game in a team sport, receiving a 
surprise birthday party by a sibling living out of state, making apple butter with dad all day long. All 
in common, social relationships that were associated with happiness came from feeling understood 
and appreciated, sharing something meaningful or fun activities as Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, 
and Ryan (2000) found as evidence in their study.

Another aspect of happiness that is narrated by project participants is that those close relationships 
create a safe space to reveal central aspects of the self to each other; in other words, they felt 
comfortable to bring forth their true self and wholeness (or lack thereof) of person in their re 
lationships without being concerned by worldly judgement toward them. Intimacy theory suggests 
that those in good relationships engender positive emotions when partners feel close and connected, 
perceiving that partners are responsive and accretive, thus having the ability to reveal the true self 
(Ryan & Deci, 2001). Some descriptions on happy moment images described as “my girlfriend brings 
out the best in me” (Savanah Philips). “My husband is someone I can truly be myself around and he brings out 
the best in me” (Elizabeth Wallen).

Part 5: Action Strategy Session

Photovoice method is action oriented, asking a question at the end of each image presented; “What 
can I DO to duplicate/change it?” This question was intended to bring action toward the students’ 
findings on happiness. An additional element within the SHOWeD framework was created by 
emphasizing “what can be implemented in our lives to be happier? How can we do more to bring 
happiness to our daily lives?” Two students shared their reflections on happiness strategies they 
found as a group regarding how to pursue more happiness.

We looked at five TED Talks about happiness to help our argument and develop strategies 
that can be used to achieve that ultimate goal of happiness. Dan Gilbert posed a scenario. If 
you were faced with two situations, winning the lottery or losing both your legs, which 
would you prefer? It seems like a simple question, but evidence shows that one year after 
either winning the lottery or become paraplegic, both groups are equally happy with their 
lives. Shockingly, research suggests that people have a psychological immune system where 
we are able to synthesize happiness and change our view of the world to allow ourselves to 
feel better. We have two types of happiness, natural happiness occurs when we get what 
we wanted, and synthetic happiness occurs when we do not get what we wanted. Gilbert’s 
research suggests that our ability to cope and generate personal happiness can be done 
through synthetic happiness in which we are able to create contentment and joy out of 
even life’s most traumatic experiences.

(Grupo 6 team presentation, December 6, 2018)
The story of Sam Berns, a 17-year-old who suffers from a rare disease called Progeria which affects his growth, skin, and heart, relates to Gilbert’s argument for synthetic happiness. In his talk, Sam says that when asked by people about his challenges and what others should know about him, he responded that he lives a very happy life. Throughout the course of his discussion, he describes three things one must do to achieve a happy life. First, we must be okay with what we cannot do. We cannot waste time feeling sorry for ourselves and must focus on the things we can do. Second, we must surround ourselves with high-quality people that we enjoy being around, and third, always keep moving forward. This allows you to stay focused and get through the hard times by looking forward to the bright future ahead.

(Reappraoch or perspective taking concerning situations that bring stress and anxiety are discussed further as a theme for action strategy. One student pointed out the effect of random acts of kindness and duplication strategy that was presented as one of the team’s happy moment images.

You see a table with flowers and candles in this picture. I decided to surprise my girlfriend with a candlelit dinner. This was for no special occasion, but just for fun and random. I believe people, in general, need to be more spontaneous to be happy. Spontaneity is

Figure 3.5 Dinner Setting. Picture taken and provided by Andrew Herron. Used with permission.
the key to happiness. Organization, structure, control, and expected surprise are great, but sometimes the spur of the moment adventures lead to the best memories that you can make. One must not be afraid to be daring and take a risk.

The Group reflection presentation below confirmed the same theme of happiness action strategy.

Raj Raghunathan takes a different approach on happiness and argues that the world has two types of people... those who try to control everything in their lives and those who do not. Research has shown that the more uncertain we are about something in life, the more happiness we get from that uncertain thing. When you try to control everything, you experience more tension. For example, when we know we have a gift from someone, we are happier before we know what the gift is or why we got it. Once we have opened it up and know what it is, that excitement and happiness kind of goes away. He suggests that we should seek inner control rather than seeking control over other people and situations. To do this, adopt a healthy lifestyle of eating healthy, sleeping well, exercising daily, and meditating. Staying healthy is imperative for inner control. Uncertainty is a natural part of life, and if we seek inner control we realize that it brings happiness to our lives.

Then, the class generated the following action steps. Letting go of control and striving, going with the flow and being present at the current moment, and never missing the opportunity to spend time with your friends and family were discussed further as take away action strategies to live a happy or joyful life.

**Discussion and Recommendations**

As such, the use of the photovoice method in nature provides great benefits that allow co-creation of meaning making and perspective taking in research, followed by an action orientation where participants take away strategies to adopt and use in their daily lives as derived from their own thought engagement process. This method can be easily applied to organizational research and corporate policy interventions in employee wellbeing. Findings from this work with photovoice informs three considerations for managers and leaders to augment a sense of happiness at the workplace: 1) hosting events where employees can voice out with photos concerning their sense of wellbeing and happiness realized in an organizational context, and then create happiness policy around findings; 2) providing intentional opportunities where people can build meaningful relations and support networks at the workplace, and 3) creating psychological safety that allows people bring the wholeness of themselves to the workplace through team projects.

It is noteworthy to acknowledge another major benefit of using photovoice at workplace wellbeing intervention. Photovoice will ensure the voices of everyone, including marginalized groups whose voices are seldom taken into policy changes or consideration for further actions at workplace. Photovoice involves top management teams and bottom workers who will engage in a conversation together so that any decision that will impact the lives of all stakeholders will come out of conversations with all.

**Limitation of Interventions and Implication**

Rarely do interventions for developing happiness at the workplace have broad, long-lasting consequences; they are often also ephemeral (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2011). The long term effects of interventions are often overstated because effects are observed only early on. McNatt and Judge (2004) found that organizational intervention aimed to increase the self-efficacy of new accountants
had a positive effect on performance immediately after its intervention, but there was little difference observed three months later. In order for any successful organizational interventions to raise employee happiness, the management team should take considerable care and effort to maintain any gains realized. Diener, Lucas and Scollon (2006) revised the hedonic treadmill model of well-being and proposed the adaptation theory of well-being. When implementing well-being interventions, people might initially react positively to interventions just as they do to naturally changing conditions, but over time they may adapt to the intervention and return to their former levels of well-being. Thus, research suggests that effective interventions must change people’s baseline well-being, and measurements must be repeated over a long period of time to rule out the possibility that the effectiveness of the intervention is only temporary.

There are a number of other cognitive restructuring techniques designed to be beneficial in temporarily altering an employee’s current emotional state or providing more permanent changes in their behavior. One such technique involves learned optimism. Learned optimism is a developed style emphasizing positive thought patterns. As the name implies, employees are trained to better utilize “learned” optimism techniques, both within and outside the work environment. It might be worthwhile basing a photovoice session around learned optimism and measuring its lasting impact in an organization.

**Conclusion**

Hedonic treadmill theory considers the process of finding happiness is ongoing and a never-ending pursuit of individual goals. This definition of happiness as temporal emotional state is problematic in understanding how joy is derived from happiness in a context of lived experiences of individuals within their own unique context. For example, self-reporting of emotional conditions logged daily over a given research period does not provide a comprehensive picture of the happiness people experience daily. Major life events that illustrate a perfectly happy moment cannot necessarily be captured and create sustained joy when happiness is associated with a transient emotional expression. This type of method ignores the profound impact that humans’ deliberate efforts of thriving in a state of joy generate happiness through a perspective taking, reappraisal, reflective, and collective meaning making process. The photovoice method for happiness reveals that participants define and recognize happiness and a state of joy in their social relationships with family, friends, sport teams, and club members. In this regard, real happiness is defined by participants in their relationships with others and in certain social situations. This method allows richer and deeper meaning making out of events that were shared by participants and when participants developed their own happiness-pursuit strategies together with other participants during the research process. As such, photovoice can be considered a relational, reflective process executed by the researcher and participants in a collaborative manner.

Photovoice democratizes the process of research to generate shared knowledge and actionable policy as it increases critical consciousness, connectedness, and agency among its participants. Photovoice is a participatory action research approach that can result in the transformation of individuals and organizations when used effectively in the workplace.

**References**


