THE HOLISTIC EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE HOPE, WELL-BEING AND ENGAGEMENT THROUGH CHANGE.

Document Five:
Thesis

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Dedication

For my family, thank you.

THESIS STRUCTURE

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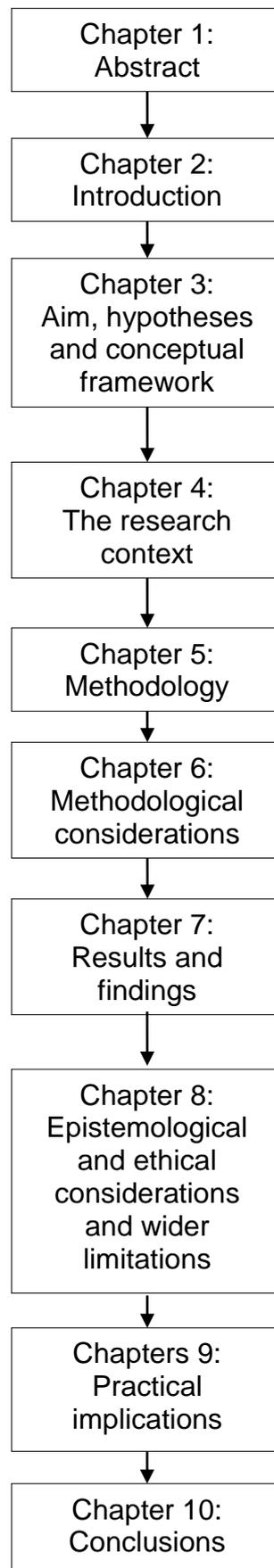
The holistic evaluation of employee hope, well-being and engagement during a period of change

1. ABSTRACT

The landscape of the public sector has changed. Economic recession and the demand for greater efficiencies have created a need to measure and improve employee well-being, whilst attaining individual and organisational goals without additional financial reward.

Drawing upon hope theory as defined by C. R Snyder, particular attention is given to the predictive nature of trait hope over other state-like constructs of psychological capital, including hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism. In literature, hope is recognised for its state and trait-like qualities. It is defined as an active process through which goals can be attained through agentic thinking and pathways actions. Research (Bandler & Grinder, 1979; Woodbury, 1999; Green, 2001: Silbiger, 1999; Pullin, 2002) supports the view that individuals who attain individual goals are more likely to achieve organisational objectives. Furthermore, hope has been found to be an important predictor of psychological adjustment to stressful life events (Michael & Snyder, 2005; Valle et al. 2006) and an organisation which fosters hopeful thinking in employees, can counter the detrimental impact of change fatigue by encouraging employees to work towards a shared goal.

Hope as a singular construct is compared to well-being as defined by four questions devised by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and employee engagement in a survey of 242 employees. To breach the gap in the availability of large or longitudinal data sets relating to hope in the workplace, benchmarking of the same employee engagement and well-being questions is conducted using staff survey data of a large civil service department over a

five-year period. Findings are also benchmarked to the national UK findings of the ONS evaluation of well-being.

A decline in engagement as defined specifically by four questions looking at role and purpose, contribution of individual work and perception of motivational support to achieve organisational objectives was found across the five-year period which correlated with the most significant periods of change. Employees who are high in hope report better engagement, are more satisfied with life and are happier at work using new national measures of well-being than those with hope scores below the mean.

When taken together evidence suggests a holistic explanation of subjective well-being and future ability for goal attainment can be made through a simple combined application of hope and well-being scales in the workplace.

2. INTRODUCTION

The social world is changing. Increasingly, an importance is being placed on positive psychological states as a means of measuring success and well-being, defined as a, "prevailing sense that life is good" of employees (Myers, 2002). In November 2010, the Conservative Liberal coalition government announced the creation, by the Office for National Statistics, of a new measure of social well-being through the 'happiness index' (Stratton, 2010). This innovative first for social policy in the United Kingdom opens the door to a greater acceptance and understanding on the importance of positive organisational behaviour in the public-sector workplace. POB is defined as, "the study and application of positively-orientated human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace" (Luthans, 2002b: p59).

In the background of this shift towards social policy, defined in part by an attitudinal measure of happiness, is a coalition government striving to reform in the face of economic recession and unprecedented levels of public deficit. For those working in the education-funding world of the public sector this reality has led to a series of organisational changes (documented at appendix A).

"The public sector can be defined as that part of the economy controlled by national, state, or local government to provide a range of critical public goods and services to members of society." (Macleod and Todnem, 2009:p4). Public sector employers want employees to understand their role and purpose and to remain committed to achieving organisational objectives as government priorities change. However, the prevailing economic pressures and change in government in 2010 may mean that employers are failing in their ability to clearly articulate expectations around organisational understanding including understanding of the role and purpose for employees. This could be as a result of the need for government priorities to change and as a result of external pressures placed upon the government by bodies such

as the media. An alternative viewpoint is to consider this as part of a deliberately antagonistic strategy towards the civil service by a government seeking to make efficiency savings.   Particularly in this time of austerity, the media has appeared to seek to exploit stories of waste, such as the scandal of the Member of Parliament expenses and more recently around payment of tax for 'benefits' such as car allowance for senior civil servants. (Watson and Swinford, 2013).

The organisations within the civil service operate to deliver ministerial strategy, vision and priorities and as such could be considered to be a mirror which reflects the stability of the government. Organisational change often results from changes to government priorities and the regulation it imposes (Greenberg and Baron, 2008: p630). Whilst this position is also true of the private sector it is the public sector which must quickly adapt and change to be fit for purpose to deliver changes in government. To illustrate this point, some employees, whose views are included within the data used in this research have, without actively applying to change roles, worked for the Learning and Skills Council, the Young People's Learning Agency, Government Office and the Education Funding Agency as part of the Department for Education. This amounts to four different organisations over a four-year period between 2009 and 2013. This is despite criticism in the media (e.g. Martin, 2013) that the civil service can be slow to react to change. This was a comment made by former Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in a politically right leaning newspaper, in which he described the civil service as not being, "fit for purpose". In response, the head of the civil service, cabinet secretary, Sir Jeremy Haywood is said to have agreed that the civil service lacked business acumen and was sometimes slow to change as a result of restrictions placed upon it by the statutory need to, "excessively consult upon changes." The recognised need to change and opposing pressures is likely to be a contributing factor in the inability of civil service employers to clearly articulate the role and purpose of their organisation to employees.

The inability of public sector organisations to clearly articulate their role and purpose for employees may also be due to the pressures of the fluctuating economic conditions which in turn places additional challenges on the

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government to respond. There is a prevailing issue of public accountability to provide efficiencies by supporting employees in such a way as to reduce the administration costs associated with them. This is an area recognised from literature (Greenberg and Baron, 2008: p631) as placing challenges on organisations which leads to change. It is not the change itself, but the inability to respond effectively and to communicate with employees which is more likely to lead to uncertainty about role and purpose of a changing organisation.

It is this context which has led to a desire to understand the meaning of 'hope' in the workplace and the potential value of being able to measure it. Miller, (1989:p23) states that, "the importance of hope as a means for individual goal attainment is universally accepted. However, despite its wide acceptance… how persons maintain hope while confronting adversity (is) not well known."

As a consequence of this gap in literature there is little research to support a view of what the 'normal' or expected hope values of employees might be. Research (see Snyder et al. 1991b) based on university students set the expectation that the mean hope of the normal population would be 49; with those in psychiatric settings up to 4 points lower (Pearlman et al. 1990; Irwing et al. 1990). However there is no research to benchmark mean hope for employees, including those subject to organisational change. There is an expectation therefore that this thesis will provide a measure of employee hope from which further research may be benchmarked.

The benefit of benchmarking for organisations is, that given the prevailing economic conditions both existing performance and the introduction of new initiatives are determined against similar organisations (Davis, 1998). The challenge for human resource management, and indeed development is rather 'chicken and egg' in that it is difficult to justify the introduction of new initiatives without evidence. This can either be achieved through piloting or by providing comparable data benchmarked from other organisations.

The potential introduction of hope theory in the workplace is therefore unlikely to be an attainable goal without prior demonstration of its value. A reason for

considering well-being within the scope of the research is that its introduction by another government department, the Office for National Statistics provides an important precedent for the acceptance of aspects of positive psychology. Furthermore the introduction of well-being may therefore provide a mechanism through which positive organisational behaviours including hope theory may be explored.

Hope is chosen above other constructs of positive psychology because of its simplistic and yet strong predictive qualities in earlier research described at documents 2, 3 and 4. (Rukin Pursglove, 2012). Unlike psychological capital which includes hope as one of its constructs each requiring individual attributes to be state-like (Luthans & Jensen, 2002), hope theory recognises the state and trait-like nature of goal attainment. For human resource management to consider the value of hope in the workplace, it is considered first necessary to benchmark it alongside well-being in the wider society and organisations outside of the one included in this thesis.

This approach and need to benchmark hope in order to first understand it is not considered incompatible with the idea of Positive Organisational Behaviour (POB). In 2000 Seligman and Czikszentmihalyi set the stage for the development and understanding of POB in a special edition of the journal, American Psychologist. This paper articulated the long held view of positive psychology to focus, not on the maladaptive or abnormal aspects of human existence, but the positive. This ideology was developed into the term, 'Positive Organisational Behaviour' (Luthans, 2002a) with specific regard to supporting employees in an organisational environment.

The organisational context which is at the forefront of POB is important since change affects employees in different ways. Frequent exposure to change may lead to cynicism amongst staff and change fatigue (Stensaker and Meyer, 2012). It can also influence negative human responses such as fear, anxiety and ambivalence. Ambivalence was considered at document four in relation to some employees demonstrating both active and passive pathways to goal attainment. Anxiety is also considered as one facet of well-being and thus is measurable through a change process. On the other hand exposure

to change can lead to positive reactions and outcomes in some employees, especially where the capability for change is supported and developed (Stensaker and Meyer, 2012). Reactions to change can be considered as a process through which the barriers of change may be broken down so that employees move to a position of acceptance, or even support for the process. Considering this aspect of POB using longitudinal analysis highlights a value in this methodological approach.

Psychological capital, abbreviated to 'psycap' is a construct of POB and was developed as an attempt to meet the criteria for POB initially set by Luthans, (2002a). This criteria included the requirement for human resource development that POB constructs must be state-like. (Luthans and Jensen, 2002). Psycap includes the construct of hope as taken from Snyder's Hope Theory, but only focusing on its state-like qualities.

Hope theory itself arose from a clinical need to provide a measurable understanding of why some individuals are able to achieve positive personal goal outcomes where others are not. In its application to a business or organisational context, hope theory is perhaps unhelpfully named as the title does little to provide a credible explanation of goal attainment to opponents of hope theory, who, in writing from a different epistemological standpoint, may hold a fantastical understanding of hope as being something ethereal rather than tangible.

'Hope' was defined (Snyder et al. 1991a: p287) as a "positive motivational state" that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful agency, (goal directed energy) and pathways (planning to meet goals).[1] This is sometimes described as the will-power and the way-power required to achieve a goal outcome. Hope is a mechanism to understand an individual's goal-setting behaviours and the likelihood of attainment. It is described as 'an efficient theory', in that it can predict success or failure of the goal and the likelihood of the employee in supporting wider organisational objectives. "All non-random behaviours can be attributed to goal-setting behaviour" (Snyder,

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[1] See appendix B for a full glossary of terms used.

2002). Hope theory is so-named because it emphasises future expectancies, for example around the setting of goals (Ciarrochi et al. 2007). However, the term 'hope theory' without understanding this context can be mis-interpreted.

Hope has been studied from many perspectives over the past few decades including theology although not with the same meaning as that given to hope theory, resilience (Williamson, 1998; Williamson, 2000; Roesch et al. 2010), nursing (Stephenson et al. 1991) and as a mechanism for coping (Craig & Edwards, 1983) and more recently has been applied to academic achievement (Snyder & Clair, 1976; Babyak et al. 1993,). In many examples of the application of hope theory, hope has been used to predict or retrospectively understand the outcome. In both scenarios, hope score has been found to be a predictor of a successful outcome through the transitional process of change.

However, hope in an organisational context has yet to be fully explored or applied to understanding employee goal attainment during periods of change. Despite some research (e.g. Valle at al. 2006) finding a positive correlation between hope and life satisfaction, there is a gap in knowledge in understanding hope as a positive motivational state on employee well-being.

Hope, it will be argued, may act to neutralise or counter individual resistance and promote resilience to change across organisations. Individuals who are high in hope have consistently been found to be more able to achieve goal outcomes (see above) than those low in hope. This is helpful both to individuals and organisations in adapting to changing goals. Since individuals who are higher in hope (by which it is meant to be above the mean for their group) can adapt to change more easily, it is logical to deduce that their resistance to change might be lower and well-being higher or even if resilience to change remains high, the outcome of the ability to attain goals is undiminished. This view is discussed as part of the research process for this thesis.

In addition to the construct of hope this thesis draws in well-being and organisational engagement. Both of these terms have diverse and yet often

defined meanings in literature. Such contributions to well-being literature tend to focus on a definition based on the dimensions of well-being rather than an attempt to provide a more global definition (Dodge et al, 2012). In the context of this thesis well-being is defined against the four dimensions used to measure it as developed by the ONS. These four dimensions relate to happiness, anxiety, life satisfaction and feelings that things in life are worthwhile. The rationale for the definition of well-being as given by these four dimensions is explained by the ONS (ONS, 2013b). According to the ONS, well-being includes objective measures such as crime statistics but also the subjective measures used here. These were devised following extensive consultation on what well-being meant to people. However crucially, whilst the ONS justify the inclusion of each of the four aspects, it does not seek to define them. For example, life satisfaction is given to be a measure of how people evaluate their lives as a whole rather than focussing on individual feelings such as happiness or anxiety. (ONS, 2014)

This is not to say that the definition of well-being is the four dimensions as given by the ONS, only that, for the purpose of this thesis, it is a definition which importantly gives access to a measure and data for well-being which appears both valid and reliable.

Organisational engagement too is a construct which is highlighted in this thesis. In literature engagement is defined as "the harnessing of organisation members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (Kahn, 1990). However, in the context of this thesis, 'engagement' refers specifically to the broad range of questions asked of staff in the Department for Education staff surveys. 'Engagement' is a much quoted term in the civil service used to benchmark government agencies against each other from year to year.

Four questions are chosen which appear across all years of the staff survey and are representative of a broad understanding of engagement in this context. Furthermore a specific measure of employee engagement is given in relation to the staff survey data only. This measure is a composite response calculated by the mean of responses to each survey. (OCR, 2013). This

figure is calculated the company conducting the staff surveys on behalf of the DFE, OCR International.

There is a strong rationale for including the staff survey data within this thesis focusing on hope and well-being which are positive psychological constructs. "Unlike psychology, in positive organisational behaviour (POB) research the context of the organisation is of primary importance." (Avey et al. 2008). If the ultimate aim is to develop hope or other aspects of POB, including PsyCap more widely then it is first important to understand the context in which the research is taking place. Furthermore the longitudinal nature of staff surveys means that time can be modelled as an independent variable. (Wright, 2007).

For the theoretical model of hope to explain the relationship with well-being and organisational experience through change, it is necessary to understand the perspective deployed to inform the methodology used. There are a number of issues to consider pertaining to the ontology, epistemology and methodology. Crotty, (1998:p10) sets out a framework by which researchers can consider how their methodological position is determined by their ontological and epistemological perspective. Ontology in this context can be described as, "the theory of social entities" (Bryman, 2001:p505) or the assumptions made to identify the truth. The ontological orientation of this thesis is one of objectivism, however this is particularly challenging given the predominantly subjective nature of the main areas of study; hope and well-being. Epistemology in the context of this thesis can be described as, "the theory of knowledge" (Bryman, 2001:p503). The epistemology provides the philosophical underpinning which legitimises the creation of knowledge through a framework produced from the methodology. The epistemological position is broadly realist although there is acknowledgement and further discussion of the merits of aspects of positivism as it holds the dominant position in business research, and aspects of social constructionism.

Within a mode of knowledge hope could be considered to have been established from mode two. That is knowledge which is developed from practice (Gibbons et al. 1994: p3-4). The field of positive psychology and its literature has developed concurrently with the emergence of hope theory from

the 1990s onwards. The definition of hope and acceptance of that meaning has been key in establishing the traditional academic view of hope more commonly associated with mode one. Mode two knowledge is associated with a problem-solving approach which uses specific knowledge from across a range of academic disciplines to resolve a research question. This thesis draws knowledge predominantly from business and psychology whilst reflecting upon the philosophical position of the researcher and access to specific, local knowledge of the civil service. Mode one knowledge on the other hand, is more traditional in its creation usually resulting from a theoretical approach applied in academic disciplines. It is necessary for the approach to accept that hope theory is a concept devised through knowledge across many disciplines which can be appropriately applied to business and professional practice.

If the term 'hope' is accepted, not as an abstract concept, but as a construct of a psychological strength that describes the process of goal attainment, then measured hope is a psychometric quality which can facilitate change through individual and organisational objective setting. Acceptance of hope as something measureable is challenging since the theory depends upon 'agency', a concept which is neither observable nor objective. A positivist view of hope might equate it to something ethereal and therefore this research argues that hope can and should be treated as a structure which can be represented through a measurable scientific standpoint, albeit one which is socially constructed. Hope is not a social construction. It has been found to apply consistently across cultures and diverse groups (Chang & Banks, 2007) confounding the hypothesis proposed by Snyder at al. (2002) that some cultural groups would have lower measurable hope as a result of their environment. Positivists expect that everything is ultimately measurable, but the subjective interaction between human and event cannot be predicted, which means it cannot be measured. Only the outcome is measurable unlike hope theory that predicts the likelihood of successful goal attainment. As such a case will be made that hope theory most closely fits within a realist perspective, with the view of the author being critically, rather than empirically realist.

The same epistemological position would also apply to well-being. Well-being is a concept about, "what makes life worth living" (Seligman, 2011:p8). In an organisational context well-being is defined as, "employee welfare and their general, wider experience of life." Employee well-being includes the physical, emotional and psychological needs of the individual and may encompass specific issues such as stress, anxiety, exhaustion, depression and insecurity. (Woodall & Winstanley, 2001:p39; Cully et al. 1999:p113). More broadly defined as, "a healthy, contented or prosperous condition, (Shorter OED, 2007:p3605) like hope, well-being has been considered as something slightly abstract, divorced from science as a concept which until recently had no universally accepted measurement unlike hope which has become academically established. The epistemological view taken of well-being is that it is a socially constructed concept, but one which, with an appropriate methodology, can be given meaning to enable it to be objectively measured on a more global, rather than subjective scale (Levett, 2000). Unlike hope, the ontology of knowledge creation for well-being appears from literature to be in its infancy as there is little universal consensus as to what well-being is or how it can be measured. Based on the concept of modes of knowledge (Gibbons et al. 1994) it appears from the emergence of the Office for National Statistics political response for a need to measure economic performance beyond fiscal measures, that well-being is entrenched in mode two, but is seeking acceptance in mode one. Key to that acceptance is a definition of well-being that is embraced and owned by academics in a particular field. A good definition of well-being which consists of individually measurable elements enables a value of well-being to be placed upon an individual employee experiencing organisational change. Through such an understanding it is possible to measure the impact of change during and after a period of transition at an individual and organisational level from the mean responses of staff. Such a definition of well-being, however, fails to align well-being with any particular academic discipline.

Such a view of the concepts of hope and well-being indicate that the research for this thesis cannot be undertaken from a positivist standpoint. If it were then it could be expected that the research was aiming to use hope theory and the theory of well-being to predict behaviour of individuals within an

organisational framework. On one level this is true since the researcher is unconcerned with 'why' people are more hopeful. Evidence presented previously (Rukin Pursglove, 2012) argues that hope is a trait as well as a state. However, there is a greater concern about the relationship between hope and well-being and any subsequent relationship to organisational objectives and organisational understanding through change. Such a need for a greater understanding of the underlying relationships does not lend itself to a positivist perspective and therefore a broadly realist approach is adopted, albeit with an acknowledgement that much of the understanding of well-being is socially constructed. This thesis acknowledges both empirical and critical realism. Empirical because the methods used will help inform the understanding (the reality) of what hope and well-being are in an organisational context. Critical realism, on the other hand, "offers the prospect of introducing (or recommending) changes which can transform the status quo" (Bryman and Bell, 2007: p18). Realism in general draws some similarities with positivism; namely that the same methods for data collection can be used across business and psychology as the two fields brought together in this thesis. However, positivism does not go far enough to support a view that what cannot be directly measured and confirmed by the senses exists which makes the application to the predominantly subjective concepts of hope and well-being difficult. A critical realist approach accepts that any statement which contributes to the knowledge of hope and well-being in the context of organisational change are fallible and open to challenge. This is felt to be inappropriate in developing mode two knowledge in business that draws upon theories and assumptions from across many academic areas. Being open to the possibility that work is fallible invites the prospect of challenge which in turn will add to the credibility of the thesis and research outcomes if the work can be seen to stand up to scrutiny.

Hope, measured through scales such as the Adult Hope Trait Scale (Snyder et al, 1991b) can indicate an individual's perceived motivation for pursuing a goal (agency) and the ability to identify workable routes or methods to attain that goal outcome (pathways). There is evidence of a strong link between the employees who attain their own objectives also supporting the achievement of organisational objectives. Research (see Green, 2001, Bandler & Grinder,

1979 and Woodbury, 1999) identifies that individuals within an organisation who can clearly articulate their own goal objectives are more likely to be successful and support organisational objectives. This is relevant to understand how hope theory can be applied practically from the clinical to the business environment. 'Goal congruence' is a management term (Silbiger, 1999:p109) given to describe how individual goals come together to support organisational objectives and whilst the credibility of the author could be questioned from an academic perspective, the sentiment supports earlier research which describes the relationship between the individual and organisational goal outcomes**.** If hope theory provides a mechanism to measure goal setting behaviour and achievement of these goals then why would an employer not wish to know which of its actual or potential employees was most hopeful? Hope could provide an explanation as to link that facilitates change both on an individual and organisational level.

This research thesis uses five years of staff survey data from the Department for Education to identify, describe and analyse changes in employee attitude towards their organisation during a period of organisational change. The relationship with hope, as a model of goal attainment is explored as part of a holistic explanation of subjective well-being using national benchmarked data of well-being. This is in addition to an author-designed survey of 242 employed people which brings together the data sets derived from the DfE staff survey data and Office for National Statistics data on well-being. This is to take into account the limited availability of relevant data which measured hope in employee groups.

This research thesis explores these themes of hope and well-being to understand the experience of organisational change on employees in the public sector over a sustained period of time; to understand if change fatigue, defined as a passive acceptance of change (Turner, 2011) exists, or attitudinal perception to employment environment during the transition is constant. The past few years have seen the introduction of an accepted measure of perceived social well-being described in the media as a measure of happiness (Rogers, 2011) using four questions included within the national Annual Population Survey (ONS, 2012). In 2012 the Department for

Education staff survey included these same questions as a measure of well-being amongst staff. The relationship between the measure of well-being and hope scores is tested. Furthermore, the value of hope theory in a change context is explored, to define, for the first time, the characteristics of hopeful behaviour and how these are useful in an organisational context. The purpose of the research is to understand the influence of hope and well-being on employee engagement. This is defined as personal and organisational objectives and organisational understanding. In turn organisational understanding is defined by four questions included in both the DfE staff survey data and the 2012-13 survey.

One of the key benefits for understanding the link between individual goals through hope theory and the achievement of organisational goals and objectives is that a shared vision and objectives are key to successful change management (Pullin, 2002). A shared vision through goals which are clearly articulated to, and understood by employees can overcome initiative fatigue which is akin to the change fatigue previously described. Initiative fatigue occurs when a change management programme overlaps without a definitive endpoint and results with employees viewing new initiatives with cynicism.

Larsen et al. (2007) recognise the importance of hope (in counselling) but states that it is the implicit application of hope rather than an overt focus on it which is important   The rationale is that the overt emphasis of hope could be seen as an imposition of the counsellors own beliefs. This translates to organisational situations too. This research is not about looking for explicit ways in which to foster hope amongst employees, but understanding hope through the application of goal-setting behaviour. Such a distinction is crucial if hope theory is to be accepted as a work practice, rather than the imposition of a personal belief structure in the workplace. Whilst such an explicit approach may be acceptable in, for example, nursing (Larsen et al. 2007) it could be considered as an inappropriate breach of the work-life balance in an organisational context. Well-being as a term is, however, generally accepted within the workplace. This research will argue that 'well-being' should be accepted as a measure of the present condition of employees and 'hope' is the prediction of their ability to achieve future goal outcomes. As such, when

taken together, hope and well-being theories can be used to provide a holistic understanding of an employee in their organisational environment.

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3. AIM, HYPOTHESES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Aim

The aim of this research study is two-fold; to identify, describe and produce analysis of changes in employee attitude towards their organisation during a period of organisational change; and to explain the relationship with hope, as a model of goal attainment and subjective well-being.

3.2 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Employee organisational engagement and change

Research question 1: What happens to organisational engagement through periods of change? Organisational engagement is defined through four survey questions consisting (in summary) of understanding organisational purpose, understanding objectives, contribution of individual work to organisational objectives and perception that the organisation motivates the individual to achieve its objectives.

Impact of change on organisational engagement: hypotheses

  I. During extended periods of transitional change employee understanding of organisational purpose will fall.

  II. During extended periods of transitional change employee understanding of their organisational objectives will fall.

  III. During extended periods of transitional change employee understanding of how their work contributes to organisational objectives will fall.

  IV. During extended periods of transitional change employees will perceive that their organisation provides less motivational support to achieve organisational objectives.

Hope and employee outcomes

Research question 2a: Is there a relationship between employee hope and organisational understanding?

Research question 2b: Is there a relationship between high hope and individual performance review outcomes?

Understanding the role of hope: hypotheses
   V.   There is a positive relationship between hope and employee understanding of their organisation's purpose and objectives.
  VI.   Employees with high individual hope are more likely to achieve and exceed their own performance objectives.

Employee hope and well-being

Research question 3: Is there a relationship between hope and well-being within a group of employees?

Employee hope and well-being: hypotheses
  VII.   Employees with high hope scores are more satisfied with life in general.
 VIII.   Employees with high hope scores are happier.
   IX.   Employees with high hope scores are less anxious.
   X.   Employees with high hope will rate their belief that the things they do in life are more worthwhile than those with low hope.

Conceptual Hypotheses
  XI.   There will be conceptual differences between hope and well-being which will support a view that well-being is a measure of an individual in the present, whereas hope is a measure of future.

3.3 Conceptual Framework
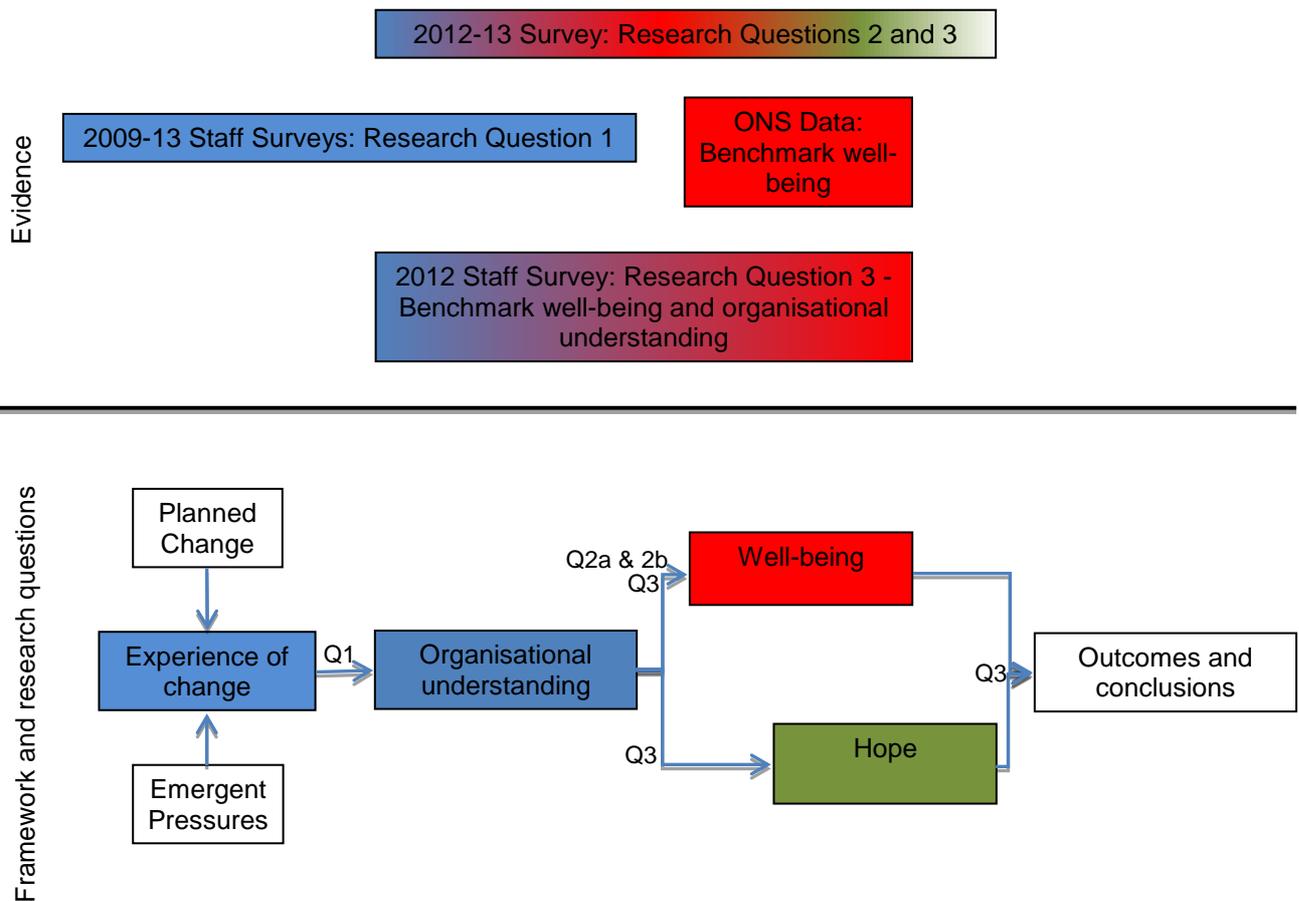
Figure 1: Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework shown in figure 1 sets out each of the three areas of consideration; organisational understanding, hope and well-being, and how the research questions will be addressed for each. The evidence section shows which existing or new data set will be used to evidence or benchmark the findings.

The conceptual framework takes into consideration the limitations of the available data in order to draw conclusions about hope based on benchmarking of well-being and employee engagement. Hope is only measured in the 2012-13 survey of employed respondents (n242). Well-being data is available in the 2012-13 survey, in the ONS data (n165,000) and in the 2012 and 2013 staff survey responses (n 3,484 and n3,113).

4. THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

Through the medium of a literature review, this chapter explores the context in which this research has been produced. Starting with an explanation of research undertaken to date to explore the concept of hope, then covering a comprehensive review of literature relating to hope, well-being, psychological capital and organisational change issues which have informed previous research and conceptual thinking. This section concludes with a look at the latest theory and research which highlights the underpinning thinking and rationale for this thesis.

4.1 How did I get here from there?

The last two decades have seen the rise of positive psychology defined by Compton (2005), as a set of processes using research, theory and intervention techniques to understand the positive, the adaptive, the creative and the emotionally fulfilling elements of human behaviour. Park, Peterson and Seligman (2004) reveal that of all the variables associated with positive psychology which has been examined; it is hope which has consistently been found to be stable as a measure linked to life and work satisfaction. Furthermore, hope is recognised as an important facet of the human change process (Larsen and Stege, 2010). Therefore, it could be argued that understanding the role of hope in an organisational context is necessary to support employees at an individual level through the change process. Such a view of organisational thinking could be seen at odds with the dominant conventional positivist view of management that would expect judgements about hope to be measureable and quantifiable. Fortunately the rise of hope theory brought about measures which, it is claimed, enabled hope to be established as a measurable concept. Although there remains a recognition that hope is unlikely to be accepted within a positivist sphere, there is much uncertainty about the individual process of hope theory which is removed from a concrete reality.

The psychology of hope itself has largely been founded on the lifetime work of C. R. Snyder (1944-2006). Snyder (1994) '*You can get there from here*' introduced hope as a concept which explains the, "perception that one's goals can be met" (p5). Widely applied across other settings, including health and clinical (Elliot, 2005 stated that research in this area had 'exploded'), and across academia (Dweek, 1999, Snyder et al. 2002, Gillham and Reivich, 2004), hope has received 'little attention in the workplace' (Juntunen and Wettersten, 2006).

This research report is therefore in part an attempt to redress the evidential gap in knowledge of hope of understanding individuals in an organisational context. It is the final piece of work in a series which examines hope theory in the context of organisational change. The previous documents leading to this one are referred to as Document Two, Document Three and Document Four. The findings of each of these have informed the ontological and methodological basis of this research.

Document Two was a review of literature pertaining to Hope Theory through an exploration of its meaning for employees during periods of organisational change. Document two explored the concepts of 'state' and 'trait' hope and how these might differ. In exploring the concepts of state and trait hope it was noted that the early work of Snyder was perhaps too simplistic in explaining the process of goal attainment only in terms of 'pathways + agency = hope'. Other external factors such as resilience or coping ability were excluded from the theory (Roesch at al. 2010) but were considered in the wider context of being a part of positive psychology. Whilst the phrase 'psychological capital' was not explicitly discussed each of the four components: hope, efficiency, resilience and optimism were included in the review of literature. The key requirement for each construct of psychological capital to be considered a 'state' led to a discussion on the merits of state and trait hope.

The concepts of state and trait hope emerged to explain how, on one hand hope was enduring (trait), but on the other hand it could alter over time as a result of intervention (state). It is recognised that underlying hope is a broadly stable individual characteristic but events can result in small fluctuations in

hope score (Larsen et al. 2007).   In measuring hope there is a recognition that is it difficult to measure the distinction between state and trait hope.

For research purposes trait hope was considered to be more helpful in understanding the relationship between hope as the dependent variable and other factors such as organisational change. The discussion of state versus trait was helpful in considering the way in which research questions are posed in order to ensure they reflect traits or states as required. It was recognised that state and trait hope each have a hope scale dedicated to the measurement of that aspect of hope. Whilst this assumes that a difference between state and trait was recognised by researchers developing the scales, upon closer examination it appears that the two scales are very similar in content. The key difference between the two, as can be expected from the term 'state' is a focus in the questions on timeliness. The Adult State Hope Scale (ASHS) (Snyder et al., 1996) asks respondents about their goal-directed thinking at any given point in time. The ASHS is also a shorter scale consisting of three items for each of agency and pathways compared to four for the Adult Hope Trait Scale. As each item is scored on a scale of one to eight , with only the pathways and agency items counting, the range of response scores for the state scale is narrower (ranging from 6-48) whereas the trait scale ranges from 8-60. The conclusion was drawn that the Adult Hope Trait Scale (AHTS), also known as the Dispositional Hope Scale would be a more valuable tool for this research as it would enable surveys to be completed over a non-specific time period and enable a greater range of responses to be given. Furthermore since reviews of hope in the workplace are limited, this research would enable a baseline measure of hope to be determined for the purpose of human resource management with a view that further research may be beneficial for human resource development. The development of these scales with which to measure hope suggests an attempt to align hope theory to a positivist methodology however this feels too absolute when considering the individual nature of goal attainment.

Document Three explored storytelling within organisations to consider how stories of hope are used by employees during periods of organisational

change. The findings reveal the value placed upon truth and meaning in the way in which stories were used by employees. Stories were defined by those which were deeply symbolic, that lacked 'truth' and appeared fanciful, but which were used to portray meaning and secondly, stories which were factually truthful, but less symbolically rich. Both types of stories conveyed meaning about hope within the organisation. The findings of Hutchens (2010) were supported, notably that stories are used for a number of purposes, including to provide reassurance about the change process, to respond to an awkward situation and to provide credibility to substantiate claims that had been made.

For the purposes of document five, document three demonstrated the applicability of hope theory in an organisational context. Employees spontaneously conveyed messages about goal setting behaviour and expectations through the use of stories. Ability to articulate pathways was noted, especially amongst employees within the organisation who were perceived to be more successful. A weakness of the research was, however, that hope scores were not recorded for the storytellers due to the ethnographic nature of the research technique undertaken. Document three demonstrated substantial support for Snyder's early position on hope theory. Described in Snyder (2002) it was stated that during interviews about their thought processes, individuals could talk readily about their goals for the day. This was the case regardless of whether the use of the word 'goals' was stated explicitly, or implied in reference to hope. Individuals and employees in a work context structure their work and personal aspirations in the context of goal achievement. However, as already discussed the early view of hope within the context of hope theory is too simplistic to explain the nuances of state and trait hope. At document four it was hoped to further explore whether all hopeful thinking was equal by analysing the pathways thinking required to reach the desired goal outcome.

Document four considered employees' experiences of organisational change through an internet-based survey. The survey incorporated the Adult Hope Trait Scale as devised by Snyder et al. (1991b) and was partly designed to act as a pilot for this thesis. The findings confirmed the applicability of using the

Adult Hope Trait Scale, which was devised as a clinical tool, within an organisational setting. From a realist perspective, it could not simply be assumed that a theory of hope developed on individuals accessing clinical support were 'normal' in the sense that their behaviour or goal-setting ability would reflect the wider population including groups of individuals that work within organisations in the United Kingdom. There was found to be a statistically significant relationship between hope scores of employees and the number of pathways articulated for the attainment of the goal objective. Furthermore, the findings suggested that not all hope is equal since the outcomes appear to depend on active and passive pathways actions to achieve the goal aspirations. In this context, passive is defined as a pathway which requires no positive action or change to the status quo. It is a 'wait and see' approach or an expectation that others will act on their behalf. Such inaction is not to be viewed negatively since taking a 'wait and see' approach might be a strategic decision in the best interests of the individual. The research at document four has led to a revised model of hope being proposed which is illustrated at figure 2 below. This model explains the process to goal attainment for an individual who is high in hope. Whilst it has been recognised that there are differences in goal types (Lazarus, 1999 and Snyder, 2002) there has, to date, been no identification of the differences and characteristics in goal-directed behaviour in an organisational context. The findings from document four further suggest that whilst not incorrect, the model of hope theory as 'pathways + agency= hope' may be too simplistic to fully explain the process of goal attainment for an individual employee.

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │      Goal setting       │
                    │  'I would like to do'   │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                │
                                ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │        Agency           │◄──────────────┐
                    │    'I can do this'      │               │
                    └─────────────────────────┘               │
                                │                             │
                                ▼                             │
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐               │
                    │       Pathways          │               │
                    │                         │               │
                    └─────────────────────────┘               │
                      │                    │                   │
                      ▼                    ▼                   │
        ┌──────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────────┐    │
        │ Positive / Active    │  │   Passive Pathways   │    │
        │ Pathways             │  │ 'Things to stop      │    │
        │ 'Things to do'       │  │  doing'              │    │
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                    │       Barriers          │               │
                    │ 'What happens if I get   │              │
                    │  stuck?'                │               │
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                                │                             │
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                    │    Goal attainment      │───────────────┘
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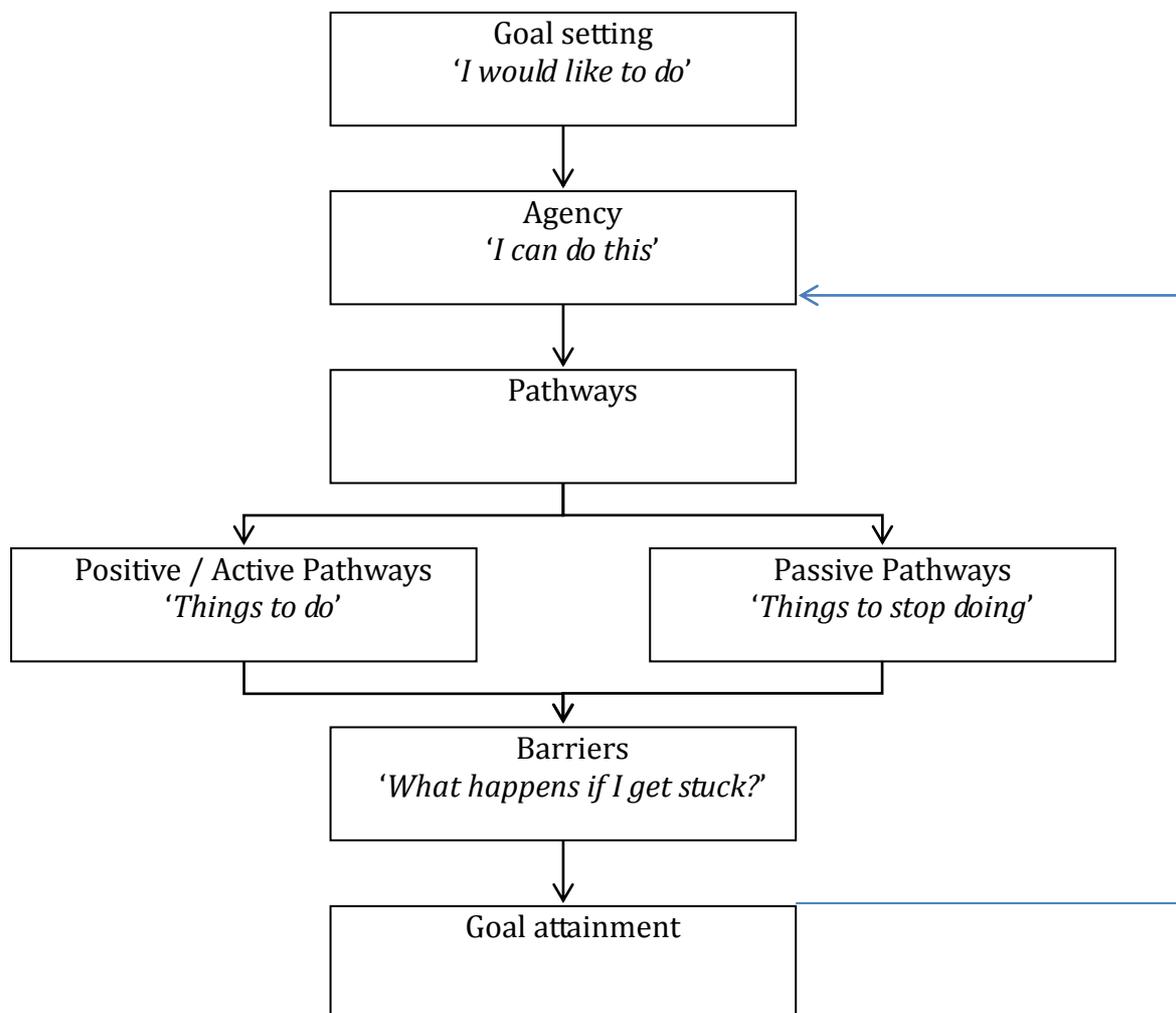
Figure 2: Process of goal attainment for high hope individual

The model illustrates the process that an individual who is high in hope
follows in order to achieve their goal outcome. At the first stage a goal is set;
'this is what I need or would like to do'. Agency, or the internal drive to
succeed is required which is akin to the internal belief structure that success
is possible; 'I can do this'. Imagine someone wanting to bake a really lovely
cake for a special occasion. The goal is a finished cake. Agency is the belief
that success is possible and achievable regardless of any prior positive or
negative experiences of baking. Pathways are the actions that are required to
reach the goal. Document four demonstrated that someone who is high in
hope is more able to articulate multiple pathways; 'I will need ingredients from
the shop and a recipe and access to kitchen equipment.' These are active
pathways as a positive action is required. The baker may also be required to

stop doing things to achieve the goal; 'stop watching television'. Now imagine that the cake burns in the oven. Someone low in hope may give up at this barrier whereas someone high in hope, will according to the theory of hope, think agentically of alternatives pathways to the achievement of the goal; 'bake another cake in a cooler oven or go to the shop and buy a ready-made cake'. Hope theory explains in detail the process through which an individual achieves a goal regardless of their situation within and outside of their organisation. Hope is basically a theory about the process of how people achieve goal outcomes.

Similar processes have been described without the ambiguous title. Gollwitzer (1993 and 1999) proposed a distinction between what was defined as 'goal intentions' and 'implementation intentions'. In this model a goal intention is akin to a goal outcome in hope theory. Both could be characterised by the statement 'I intend to do X'. An implementation intention is defined as a plan. The example given can be interpreted as, 'If X happened then I will do Y.' Whilst this is not explicitly called hope there appears to be a semantic, if not conceptual overlap with pathways thinking to overcome barriers to goal attainment. One potential theme through this thesis which will be discussed again is not that there are alternative models to explain hope, rather that other researchers have not identified with the term 'hope' in discussing and proposing models of goal attainment. This is a theme which has emerged from extensive reviews of literature across the previous documents undertaken to support this thesis.

These earlier documents (three and four) had also become pre-occupied with seeking to resolve the question of whether it was possible to teach hope which is predicated on the requirement for state over trait hope. Hope which is state-like, a requirement of POB, would suggest that certain interventional strategies may increase hope. Further reading in preparation for this research (e.g. Larsen et al. 2007) has reached a conclusion that it is possible to instil hope; however it is the subtle application of this to the workplace which is of relevance here. Fostering hope to improve workplace satisfaction or engagement, especially during periods of change and supporting the attainment of goals for the benefit of the individual and organisation is likely to

be considered as a more acceptable construct than furthering any notions of turning managers into teachers of hope.   To win over managers to accepting the value in measuring hope, it is first necessary to demonstrate the predictive value of hope in relation to employee engagement, well-being and individual and organisational goal outcomes. Therefore, finally from document four the value of hope to the workplace environment and how it relates to business activity was recognised as being an area for further development.

4.2 Positive psychology in context

This section explores aspects of positive psychology and positive organisational behaviour as applied to an organisational context including the challenge presented by the POB requirement that hope should be state-like. The justification for using the Adult Hope Trait Scale focusing on trait hope over the Adult State Hope Scale is discussed. The wider measurement and relationship with well-being are also discussed as well as the meaning of hope and the development of a theory which puts both state and trait hope, as a framework for goal attainment into context. The intrinsic links between goals and organisational objectives are explored.

Until fairly recently the focus on psychology was to consider maladaptive behaviour and psychopathology (Valle at al. 2006). The emergence of positive psychology was a response in recognition of the need to also examine psychological strengths of individuals (Seligman and Csikszmentihalyi, 2000). The field of positive psychology is still emerging and its application to the workplace is in its relative infancy. Despite this, attempts have been made to respond to the need for positive psychology in the workplace through the development of Positive Organisational Behaviour (POB). The aspiration of POB is line with those of this thesis in seeking to develop ways in which to embrace positive psychology in a workplace context, however the requirement of POB constructs to be state-like is methodologically challenging.

Hope has been compared to other positive psychological concepts or variously listed as strengths of character and it is not difficult to hypothesise how a relationship between these concepts is therefore conceivable. Shorey et al. (2002) point out that it is not challenging to find at least one study which supports a relationship between each positive construct variable. Furthermore, an in depth review of hope and optimism, for example, undertaken at document two (see pages 19-21) found that on one hand, some researchers used the terms hope and optimism almost interchangeably (Aspinwall and Leaf, 2002 and Gillham and Reivich, 2004) whereas other research identifies conceptual differences (Seligman, 2002). The same confliction may also apply to hope and well-being as there is a risk of drawing conclusions about a relationship between hope and well-being on the basis of a study where significant conceptual differences remain.

Hope is also considered as one construct of 'Psychological Capital'or PsyCap. Taken together under the acronym, 'HERO', psychological capital requires constructs to demonstrate state-like qualities for the purpose of human resource development. PsyCap is currently considered to consist of one of four constructs. Initially five areas were considered including confidence (Luthans and Jensen, 2002) which perhaps indicate that the current definition of PsyCap is still open to discussion and challenge. The four constructs included hope, but also efficacy, resilience and optimism, hence the acronym 'HERO'. Each of the four elements are considered to have state-like properties but also the potential propensity to contribute towards goal attainment.

Research to support PsyCap is interesting in terms of a potential ability to measure positive outcomes. There was found to be a strong correlation for the predictor of performance and satisfaction in a composite correlation of the four constructs of HERO, than when using any of the individual measures alone including hope. (Luthans, Avolio et al. 2007).

A reasonable question therefore is to ask why this thesis focusses on hope theory and the use of the Adult Hope Trait Scale rather than PsyCap. There are several reasons for this. Firstly in preparing for this thesis a commitment

was made to explore the value of hope in the workplace. Hope has a substantial body of supporting literature, although there is very little in the application of hope to the workplace. Research at document four found support for the application of the Adult Hope Trait Scale to the workplace. (Rukin Pursglove, 2012). This is further discussed in detail in the following sections. This previous research led this thesis down a path it was appropriate to complete, perhaps before recommending further research aspirations around PsyCap.

Secondly, and of greater importance is that the difference between trait and state is not considered to be arbitrary, rather they should be viewed on a continuum; a view supported by Avey at al. (2008). Each of the four constructs which make up PsyCap are subject to both state and trait theories. State and trait hope and trait and learned optimism (Seligman, 1998) were both discussed at document two. Considering hope at document two, both the Adult State Hope Scale and Adult Hope Trait Scale, also known as the Dispositional Hope Scale were discussed. Despite their titles which appear to indicate a clear difference in the two measures, there is in fact a considerable overlap between both scales. The Adult State Hope Scale is a six-item self-report questionnaire consisting of three agency and three pathways items. The range of scores is 6-48. A measure of internal reliability of the combined hope score indicates a range between .79 and .95, the same range for agency and a lower range of .59-.93 for the pathways items. The Adult State Hope Scale produces test re-test correlations of .48-.93 (Snyder et al. 1996).

The Adult Hope Trait Scale on the other hand includes almost the <u>same</u> questions, but with the aim of being less time bound. However there is one additional item for agency and pathways as well as including four distractor item questions. As a consequence, the range of hope scores is wider (8-60), although internal reliability is broadly consistent and the focus on goal attainment less obvious through the inclusion of the distractor items.

The third reason to focus on hope over PsyCap is that there is no unequivocal measure which can be reasonably used in the workplace. The 24-item PCQ includes six items measuring hope shows promising reliability overall

((Luthans et al. 2007), but it includes too many questions to reasonably be adopted in the workplace alongside a measure of well-being as part of the staff survey. Other measures of PsyCap include gathering of multiple peer-ratings (Wood et al. 2010) and a more modest PCQ-12. The I-PCQ purports to measure only implicit PsyCap and shows promise as a tool for the workplace as it consists of 12 items responded to on a 7-point likert scale. However, hope theory research proposes that hope for an individual consists of a consists of agency and pathways. The i-PCQ includes only one question on hope about a belief that a goal can be accomplished (Harms & Luthans, 2012). Since hope is not about positive belief alone, then this scale as one which measures hope is unconvincing for the purpose of considering hope in the workplace, although worth further consideration in future research on wider applications or development of positive organisations. It is perhaps more helpful therefore, not to focus on psychological capital, but the broader aspiration of POB in considering positive belief in the workplace as part of the field of positive psychology.

Positive psychology is about "happiness in three guises- positive emotion, engagement and meaning" (Seligman, 2011:12). Positive psychology has many applications in the workplace. A holistic consideration of employees lends itself to understanding that a happy, hardworking, productive workforce which performs well against performance objectives starts with the individual. Each individual should be considered as a piece of a jigsaw requiring all of the pieces to be in place before the picture can be fully realised. In this context, well-being is increasingly recognised as an essential aspect of management reporting, certainly in the public sector and largely as a direct consequence of the recognition of well-being as an indicator of economic performance (Stratton, 2010).

Nationally, the traditional indicator of economic performance, the Gross domestic product, (GDP) attempts to provide, in a single figure, a measure of the state of the economy. The GDP can be measured in three ways; through an output measure of the value of goods and services produced across all sectors of the economy, through an income measure of the value of income generated across the populous and government including exports minus

imports. In the United Kingdom the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for producing GDP figures every three months so their inclusion of an additional measure of national well-being is particularly relevant.

The inclusion of a societal measure of well-being is an attempt to address one of the limitations to GDP recognised through the 'Easterlin Paradox'[2] in the 1970s (ONS, 2013a).   Surveys of happiness undertaken over the past few decades indicate that happiness fluctuates, without any clear upward trend, however Johns and Ormerod, (2007) found that over the same period Gross National Product had shown a clear overall upward trend.   A common misconception is that happiness is not linked to wealth (Biswas-Diener, 2013) however data using the model developed in the Easterlin Paradox indicates that national levels of life satisfaction do increase with wealth to a point at which it plateaus. This view was however challenged by some economists using data which indicates that nation states with higher GDP per capital have greater mean life satisfaction scores (Wolfers and Stevenson, 2008). However, beyond a critical point increases in GDP do not result in increased 'happiness' (ONS, 2013b). Furthermore measuring GDP through volumes of goods and services is counter intuitive to measuring well-being since negative events such as terrorist attacks or divorces will contribute to an increased GDP. Such 'regrettables' (Seligman, 2011:p211) demonstrate that GDP is too blunt a measure to understand the true measure of the wealth of a nation through satisfaction or happiness indicators. During times of recession where GDP is falling it is politically expedient to find other measures to measure the wealth of a nation such as well-being to demonstrate that progression is still being made within the wider economy as a result of interventions made by the government. At an organisational level within the public sector it is beneficial for managers to understand how employees compare to national indicators of well-being as comparisons can be made across teams as a measure of performance. There is also an important link for organisations between the well-being of employees, their work-life balance offer and what an employee's time is worth. For example, the point of diminishing returns on individual satisfaction against increased salary where an employee is asked to give up

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[2] Appendix J illustrates the UK data for the Easterlin Paradox (ONS, 2013a).

their free-time for increased salary may increase satisfaction up to the point where the financial benefits are outweighed by the loss of free-time. Unhappy, unsatisfied employees are likely to leave (Wright and Bonett, 1992) so understanding well-being and satisfaction can help manage staff turnover.

Measuring well-being, however, is controversial since there are different perspectives of what well-being means and this point is of particular relevance when considering the merits of analyses of 'happiness' and well-being data. Defined as, "a healthy, or prosperous condition" (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 2007:p3605) well-being consists of several elements. The number of elements is subject to debate but in the region of four (Seligman, 2011) or five (Office National Statistics, 2012).

Broadly all models of well-being fall into one of two perspectives; 'the good life' and the 'happy life' and can be measured in one of two ways; through an objective evaluation of individual circumstances or by self-evaluation. Whilst there are advantages to each model, the main concern about an objective evaluation is that a set of arbitrary factors much be agreed against which to judge well-being. These may have no bearing on individual priorities.
The good life is one which involves, "prosperity, morally good deeds, integrity, personal morality and devotion to family and friends" (Raz, 2004: p270). The good life is eudaimonic and is, "conducive to happiness" (Shorter OED, 2007:p872) but is more sustainable than the alternative.

The alternative perspective is that of the 'happy life'. The happy life is characterised by 'satisfaction with life events' (Raz, 2004: p271). The happy life is more hedonistic, "in pursuit of pleasurable aims" (Shorter OED, 2007:p1227). In this model of well-being, satisfaction with life events and a belief that actions undertaken by the individual are linked to positive and negative effect which are sub-sets of a happy life. Both of these two models of well-being are in their own right flawed from an organisational perspective. An employee with a happy life might, for example be happy as a result of selfish or un-altruistic actions. Their motives and behaviours may not benefit their organisation.

An employee with a good life may undertake actions which benefit their organisation for the good, but these actions may be undertaken passively. In other words the same outcome may be reached regardless of whether the action was intended or not. An employer may wish to differentiate between two employees who both achieve the same outcome, but only one of whom intended to reach this for the benefit of their organisation. For example, two city traders make the same profit; one intended to reach that outcome and did so by taking calculated and agreed risks in line with company policy. The other gambled and won on a risky strategy that may have backfired. In addition, an employee who undertakes 'good' actions for their organisation, actively or passively may consider themselves to be unhappy and dissatisfied with their career and so seek to leave as a result. A balanced approach to measuring well-being therefore seeks to consider both aspects of the happy life and the good life in the workplace.

One model of five elements consisting of positive emotions, engagement, meaning, positive relationships and accomplishment (Seligman, 2011) offers an alternative perspective to that of the ONS which includes happiness, anxiety, life satisfaction and worth. The model proposed by Seligman (2011) includes two elements; 'positive emotion' and 'engagement' which are subjective in nature. However the other elements, described in the model as 'objective elements', could also be considered as subjective and dependent upon the perspective of the individual. The need for positive relationships and accomplishment will depend upon the individual and whilst these can be measured they can no more be assigned a value than the stated subjective elements. This calls into question the challenge in providing a scale to measure a subjective experience. This is perhaps why literature has moved away from considering 'happiness' as the objective benchmark. It is possible to list factors which contribute towards happiness but not to pinpoint what causes happiness due to its subjective nature. Secondly, since it is not possible to state the physiological process required to feel happy, it is difficult to gauge increases or decreases due to intervention. One country, Bhutan, has measured national happiness since the 1970s. However, this is a measure of happiness in name as 33 indicators are included in the measure, (GNHC, 2012).

The ONS perspective of well-being appears to encompass a model of well-being as shown in figure 3:
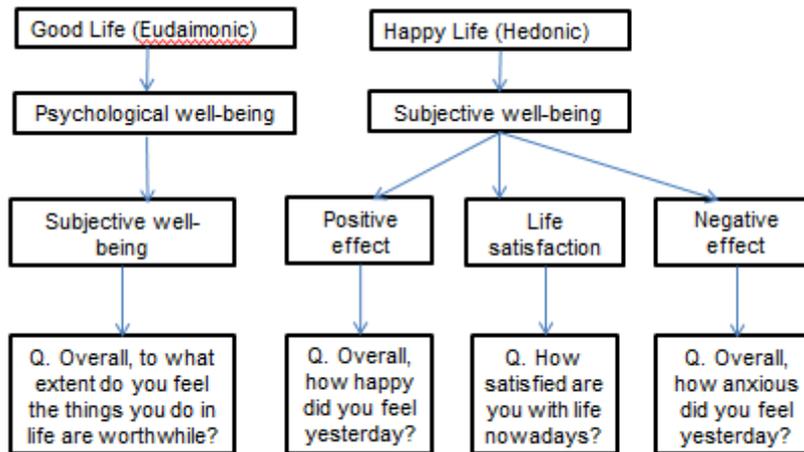
Figure 3: Dimensions of well-being met by the ONS questions

Such a model of well-being provides an explanation of a multi-dimensional approach and justification for the use of four single-item questions as a measure of well-being. This approach has some advantages over a multi-item approach to measuring well-being. The first is that it is simpler and quicker to administer than a multi-item approach. Whilst a multi-item scale enables internal reliability to be evaluated (e.g. through the use of Cronbach's alpha) this is unnecessary if single item questions provide a valid and reliable approach.

This research makes the assumption that focussing on measuring well-being in the workplace is actually a good thing. On the face of it an employer who seeks to reduce workplace stress and provide a happy and fulfilling environment for employees should be welcomed. However there are additional considerations in proposing an approach which embraces the well-being culture, not least in the impact on privacy of employees. This is discussed by Westervelt, (2014). There is also a challenge in ensuring that well-being is not tokenistic. Whilst the aim at this stage is to measure hope

and well-being as a tool for benchmarking, the next stage would be intervention to improve well-being.

How appropriate it is as a measure of workplace 'happiness' is also open to debate, however, in the workplace especially, thinking in terms of 'happiness' is unhelpful as much of the literature relating to this area focuses too narrowly on job satisfaction and work stress. Happiness is multi-faceted (Warr, 2011: pxi) yet, as a concept is well understood and has 'meaning' for a layperson, albeit not consistently so. For this reason it makes sense to include happiness within measures of well-being and to follow the example set by psychologists of using the term 'subjective well-being' rather than happiness (Warr, 2011:p8). Trying to measure 'happiness' ignores the need for individual choice; for undertaking tasks for their own sake and to support personal perspectives. It does not take into account that some people choose to live alone or that undertake activities for the experience rather than to win. For this reason the model of 'authentic happiness' (Seligman, 2002) was updated to include these elements (Seligman, 2011). A measurement of well-being includes several elements, some of which are subjective which, when taken together provide a framework for understanding the term well-being. Wright and Huang, (2012) define, "well individuals as those who are more prone to positive emotions and less prone to experience negative emotions." As such, well-being is a global state which summarises how an individual is in the present. This is distinct from happiness which has been found to fluctuate as a state.

The alternative view of well-being as being the 'good life' or the 'happy life' is a hybrid model of the two which one would advocate starts with the happy life but continues ideologically in pursuit of the good life. In contrasting well-being to hope theory well-being superficially feels like a measure of present happiness and current life satisfaction. Although some proponents have sought to describe well-being through the pursuit of valuable accomplishments (Seligman, 2011), relationships and goals (Raz, 2004) it is hope theory which is directly forward looking in pursuit of these. I would strongly argue therefore that hope is a key element of well-being as it is that element which moves individuals from the here and now to the future. Such a

proposal rests with finding a relationship between current well-being theory and hope theory.

In the workplace well-being can be considered as the psychological aspect of ergonomics which is the term given to understanding the interaction between humans and their environment in order to optimise well-being and overall system performance. (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 2007: p858). Research over the past decade has found that employee well-being is significantly related to, "work outcomes including job performance, employee retention, workplace accidents, sick days… and customer engagement" (Wright and Huang, 2012). Improved employee well-being has also been found across several studies including a review of seven research papers in one paper, to be strongly linked to productivity, (Xanthapoulou et al. 2012:p1051). The mechanisms for this are discussed and include an understanding of the so called 'positive indicators' such as happiness and life satisfaction on the desire to succeed. In hope theory such a drive to succeed is 'agency' and accepted as a key element. This supports the idea that hope and well-being are linked.

Wright and Quick, (2011) identify that a significant gap in well-being research is to understand the role of individual personality characteristics or strengths. Hope is identified as one such strength which may encourage positive employee well-being. However, their understanding of hope within that context is not defined. Hope has also been found (Michael and Snyder, 2005) to predict psychological adjustment to stressful life events. In this study the event was a bereavement, but the outcome of the study found that the college students with higher hope adjusted better. Whilst a bereavement is not the same as an organisational change on the 'Social Readjustment Scale' (Holmes and Rahe, 1967), business readjustment scores 39 out of 100 compared to the death of a close friend at 37 out of 100, although the death of close family scores 63 . Death of a spouse scores 100 out of 100 although this is unlikely to have applied to the college students in the study. Therefore since both 'business readjustment' and bereavement are stressful life events it may apply that employees who are higher in hope are more easily able to adjust to organisational changes as they would to a bereavement.

Many conceptual models for hope now exist as the various disciplines seek to develop a model which is compatible with, and useful to their field of understanding. Stephenson, (1991:p1459), for example, defines hope as, "a process of anticipation that involves the interaction of thinking, acting, feeling and relating and is directed towards a future fulfilment that is personally meaningful." Whilst this definition of hope captures many aspects of hope theory, including goal orientation it does not provide a definition of hope that is universally acceptable since it does not easily relate to an organisational environment.

Hope Theory was developed by C. R. Snyder (Snyder et al. 1991a, Snyder et al., 1996 and 2002) to resolve the prevailing understanding that 'hope' was a "structure whose foundations are unsound at best and non-existent at worst" (Snyder, 1994: p4) and to evolve an understanding of 'hope' into a model which could be applied in everyday situations, including those within an organisational context. [3] The definition of hope as a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful agency and pathways is derived from a cognitive behavioural perspective and provides a focus on goal-setting behaviours.

The early view of hope through the 1950's and 1960's was given as, "the perception that one can reach desired goals" (Cantril, 1964) although such a definition lacked an understanding of the key elements of hope theory including agency and pathways thinking as defined by Snyder et al. (1991b). Further research, (Elliot and Sherwin, 1997) however, suggests that there may be alternative theories, which account for hope related behaviours and indeed, whilst a link between hope and outcome exists, individuals who score highly on hope scales may fail to achieve a successful outcome. In an organisational context understanding hope may explain how individuals seek and achieve goal outcomes and provide a framework for personal development, however "working models of hope have yet to clarify ways in which hope can be enhanced." (Elliot and Sherwin, 1997).

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[3] A more detailed explanation and critique of hope theory can be found in document two; p6-39.

Snyder (1994:p5) suggests that, "hope involves the perception that one's goals can be met." In isolation this would not distinguish 'hope' from anything more than a dream that something will happen. However, importantly Snyder suggests that everyone has 'hope' but only those that score highly on 'hope scales' demonstrate the ability to reach their dreams. This view appears to have come from an ethnomethological standpoint in that Snyder appears to have drawn his conclusions from studies of everyday interviews with individuals in a semi-natural environment. Many of these studies took place in clinical settings but the conclusions appear to have been drawn also from later work with university students in the United States.

One possible application in an organisational context and through change processes in particular is that hope is said to be most important to individuals living in unpredictable, uncontrollable circumstances (Synder at al. 2002). This is primarily where the locus of control for the changes are with the employer and not the employee. However, there are challenges for adopting such a simplistic view. First is to ask if it is reasonable to assume that research applied in academic and clinical settings will apply as well to the business environment. Is there some way in which high school and university students in the United States and those receiving psychiatric care are in some way different to public sector employees in the United Kingdom?[4] Secondly, the view that hope is most helpful to those living in unpredictable circumstances is open to challenge, especially when taken out of the context to which the statement applied; that of minority ethnic adolescents living in urban areas of the USA. Further research which explored this issue found there to be no significant difference in hope scores across different racial groups (Chang & Banks, 2007). Furthermore some proponents of hope have sought to modify hope theory from the simple model proposed. This includes the addition of an additional component of 'coping' for dealing with challenging circumstances (Roesch et al. 2010). However, the research undertaken by Roesch et al. (2010) is based on an acceptance of hope theory which prejudices the findings from altogether dismissing the model, in the same way

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[4] An attempt to resolve this question was made at document four which confirmed the applicability of the Adult Hope Trait Scale across groups.

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that this thesis conceptually is unlikely to conclude that the model of hope theory is fundamentally flawed. Additionally, it focuses only on high hope individuals when considering the relationship between hope and coping strategies. Failing to consider mal-adaptive coping strategies in their research was perhaps odd in that the introduction identifies that much research into hope is neglectful in only focussing on positive attributes, rather than negative ones which could be compared to low hope. These findings suggest one of two possible conclusions. Firstly that the hope theory model of agency + pathways=goal attainment may be too simplistic to explain individual differences, circumstances, scenarios and outcomes. Secondly, the Roesch et al. (2010) research may be implicitly providing evidence of an overlap, relationship or correlation between hope and other recognised aspects of positive psychology. This may be a weakness of hope theory if it is not conceptually distinct. In relation to coping, Tennen at al. (2002) found there to be an empirical overlap between hope and coping scales. This was recognised by Shorey et al. (2002).

A rather more broad definition of 'hope' as "a perception that one's goals can be met" was agreed by a number of researchers at a conference in 1994 (Snyder, 1994: p3) bringing together the work of many social scientists (Cantril (1964), Erikson, Post & Paige (1975), Farber (1968), Frank (1968), Gottschalk (1974), Melges & Bowlby (1969), Menniger (1959) and Stotland (1969)) who together agreed this definition of hope.   Hope Theory provides a framework by which to explain the process individuals go through to achieve their goal objectives. Such support lends considerable credibility even to the simplistic explanation of hope theory however, each of these authors, all social scientists write from a perspective of openness towards aspects of positive psychology. Such a carefully constructed definition of hope as that agreed is, in many respects uncontroversial.

Hope Theory was further defined (Snyder et al. 1996) as a cognitive set comprising agency (the belief in one's capacity to initiate and sustain actions) and pathways (the belief in one's capacity to generate routes to goal achievement) to reaching goal objectives. Intrinsically, hope theory explains the process of attaining goals once they have been set. Positivist opponents

of hope would not only argue over the semantics of a definition of hope, but would argue about its existence at all. Setting goals through hope theory is a subjective experience to the individual and therefore removed from an objective reality required within a positivist framework. As a theory it provides little to explain the process of goal-setting or the relative importance employers may place on them. Organisational goals are akin to organisational objectives, albeit that goals are smaller units which together form the objective. An organisational objective can be defined as a goal, mission or purpose of a business, established by management and communicated to its employee (Business Dictionary, 2013). For the purposes of this research an organisational objective is defined as a goal given over to an employee to achieve in support of the organisational purpose. Employee understanding of, and commitment to organisational objectives can be measured through performance reviews and staff surveys.

The importance of studying hope lies in understanding the ways in which individuals and employees within organisations set goal objectives in line with personal and organisational priorities. Organisational objectives provide a focus for employees to work towards which is beneficial both to the individual and their organisation. Snyder et al. (1997) observed that psychologists have been fascinated between the development and expression of motives that 'walk the tightrope' between personal ambition and the collective good. This makes an assumption that goals are ambitious and progress the individual towards a desired end. Several factors appear to impact on the type of goal chosen. Taking time to plan has, for example, been found to increase goal striving (Gollwitzer and Oettingen, 2011) or how challenging a goal is perceived to be. The same might be said of organisational objectives which may be imposed on the employee without their implicit commitment to them. One of the greatest challenges of adopting an understanding of goal attainment using hope theory is to explain how an evaluative approach to experience is considered. The acknowledgement of 'state' or situational hope could explain the impact of experience, and yet, in literature, any recognition of past events is omitted. Hope theory may be too simplistic to explain goal theory as it appears as a linear process. 'To reach the goal, I will do X and

when presented with a barrier I will do Y….'. Similarly, teology, or the selection of action in light of goals (Seligman, 2013) is not explicitly considered. Teology would suggest that *appropriate* pathways are taken to attain the goal outcome. Perhaps this is implicit in hope theory, rather than explicit.

Antagonists of hope theory (e.g. Aspinwall and Leaf, 2002) criticise not only the simplicity of the model but that the concepts of pathways and agency alone do not universally explain the process of goal attainment. Two issues (different types of positive and negative goals, the latter which the individual may wish to avoid and different types of active and passive pathways) have already been mentioned. In addition, the need for external intervention of another person contributes towards the goal attainment is not adequately explained by hope theory which considers hope theory only as an individual process. Lazarus, (1999) discussed what would constitute a legitimate goal in the 'hoping process'. It was proposed that only legitimate goals can fill the void of needing to attain a positive action. Snyder (2002) later defined this theory as the repair definition of hope. Lazarus's proposal, however, assumes that hope theory is only about fixing something which is broken, which echoes clinical, rather than wider applications. However, there remains a concern not explicitly reflected within hope theory that some goals are undertaken at a sub-conscious level (Oettingen and Gollwitzer, 2002). Shorey et al. (2002) in an author's response to the seminal article on hope 'Rainbows in the Mind' counter that sub-conscious goal attainment is an adapted form of pathways thinking in which 'mental rehearsal' of the required behavioural response may lead to goal attainment. It should be borne in mind however, that this is a theoretical discussion of cognitive aspects of thinking and mental processing. It would not be realistic to expect that Shorey et al. (2002) which includes Snyder as a key author of 'Rainbows in the Mind' would agree with potential deficiencies in hope theory. Rather they seek to explain the challenges posed in the context of hope theory.

Snyder (2002) later proposed a difference in the types of goals set, with the highest hope individuals setting themselves goals which they believed would be more challenging or would be required to be completed in a shorter

timeframe. At face value, this concept appears sensible and plausible within an organisational context. Simple tasks such as setting performance objectives with the goal of future promotion can be explained with higher hope employees seeking to achieve more challenging objectives.

There is, however significant and growing evidence of goal congruence in organisations where individual objectives align in support of the organisational mission (Silbilger, 1999 p109). Organisational goal congruence has been defined as, "the agreement... among employees on the importance of the goals the organisation could be pursuing" (Vancouver et al. 1994). The terminology is applied inconsistently across many aspects of individual employee differences; politics and performance (Witt, 1998), satisfaction and well-being (Hofer et al. 2010) and performance management. It is, however, consistently related to organisational goals or mission. Taking the given definition of goal congruence at face value is unhelpful since it describes the importance of a joint belief in goals, but does not explain the congruence assumed in other research which seeks to relate organisational goals with other factors. In the context of this thesis goal congruence is given to be the relationship between individual and organisational goal outcomes where it is assumed that the achievement of individual goals as part of the objective setting process will support the achievement of organisational goal objectives. Since hope theory purports to indicate the likelihood of successful goal outcomes based on individual characteristics it is perhaps surprising that more interest has not been placed on the value of measuring individual hope in the workplace in support of organisational objectives.

Hope theory states that individuals who are 'high hope' will demonstrate a number of pathways to achieve their goal and will have the 'agency' or internal drive to undertake the pathways until the objective is achieved and the goal realised. 'Pathways' can be described as all the possible actions that an individual could take to achieve a goal outcome. Someone high in hope would be expected to have the ability to derive multiple, alternative pathways to goal achievement.

Individuals who are 'low hope' will neither have the ability to derive alternative pathways if they fail to attain an objective first time, or will lack the motivational drive to achieve the objective. Between the two; people with moderate hope can either be (Snyder, 2002) those who are able to articulate the possible pathways needed to achieve a goal, but who lack the agency to achieve or those who have the agency, but who lack the ability to consider the necessary pathways. This can be illustrated thus:

AGENCY	PATHWAY	AGENCY

1 – LOW HOPE
- Low Willpower
- Low Waypower

2a – MODERATE HOPE
- Low Willpower
- High Waypower

2b – MODERATE HOPE
- High Willpower
- Low Waypower

3 – HIGH HOPE
- High Willpower
- High Waypower

Action A — Weak Agency

Action A or Action B — Weak Agency

NEED

Action A — Strong Agency

Action A or Action B or Action C — Strong Agency

GOAL
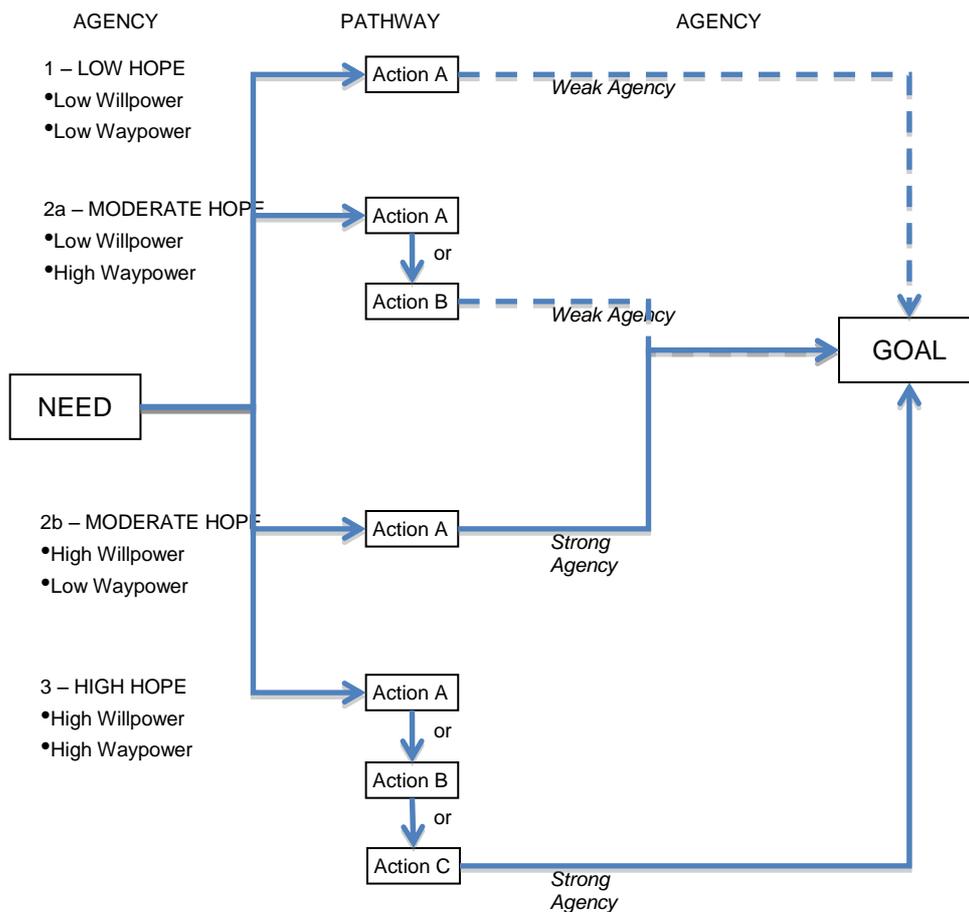
Figure 4: Model of Hope Theory (derived from Snyder, 2002 description of hope).

The 'pathways to achievement' element demonstrates how people can internally conceptualise cause and effect to initiate and sustain the pathways needed to achieve the goals. 'Agency thoughts or agentic thinking' Snyder et al. (1996) suggested, provided the motivational component to hope. In other words in order to achieve the desired outcome, it is not enough simply to set the goal, it is necessary to imagine the necessary path to achieving that goal and having the emotional desire to achieve it. For example, having a goal of climbing Everest is in itself insufficient to realise that goal unless the ways

needed to achieve it including the finances, fitness etc. can be imagined through pathways thinking and one is emotionally motivated to achieve it through agency. In this example 'agency' is the internal drive or desire to achieve the goal outcome of reaching the summit of Everest. Each possible pathway behaviour required to attain the goal will require agency in order for it to be realised.

That hope can be measured is essential in enabling research to take place which broadens understanding of the wider applications of hope theory. The development of measures of hope is discussed in more detail at document four. However, suffice to say that several scales have been developed to measure hope around a common theme and similar questions. Two measures are of note which were discussed in greater detail in document two (pages 14-17) and are summarised here. Firstly, the Adult Hope Trait Scale (AHTS)[5], (Snyder et al. 1991b) which purports to measure global or trait hope. That is to say, a measure of hope which is stable overtime and unaffected by situational pressures. Secondly, the State Hope Scale (Snyder et al. 1996) measures 'situational' or state hope by asking respondents to focus on recent events. Practically, the difference between the two is a subtle nuance in the format of each question. In the AHTS, the questions are not time specific. This will not negate the bias that recent events may have on respondents completing the scale, although it will be taken into account in the normed hope score.

The AHTS was used for previous research at document four to test the application of the hope scale, developed largely in a clinical environment, to employees. The findings suggest that mean hope scores of a small sample (n=53) employees of 49.5 was consistent with previously published means of 49 (Snyder, 2002). It is important that the AHTS is considered as a valid measure of trait hope in employees as responses to the survey for this research was collected over a period of time during which events may have significantly impacted upon state hope score.

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[5] See appendix C for permission to use the Adult Hope Trait Scale and appendix D for a transcription of the scale.

The distinction between state and trait are not idiosyncratic however. In literature pertaining to the use of hope theory the distinction is rarely made. Since there are validated scales to measure each, it is perhaps assumed that hope can be both a state and a trait. Consider, for example the idea of acquired traits that are learned as a result of experience (Reber, 1995: p807) versus inherited traits and already the line between state and trait becomes blurred. For many researchers however, it is simply unnecessary to clarify is the hope they are measuring is state or trait or indeed, both.

Well-being, on the other hand is considered to be subjective and measures of it could, if applied correctly, indicate the well-being of the wider population. (ONS, 2011). Well-being, defined as a state characterised by health, happiness and prosperity is individually subjective and situational. Scales aimed at measuring well-being have been established over the years largely focused on measuring happiness (Argyle, 2001) or satisfaction with life (Diener et al. 1985). This has culminated in the development of four questions devised by the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2011). These questions define well-being through a measure of subjective happiness, life satisfaction, anxiety and feeling of self-worth. Interestingly, two of the four questions on happiness and anxiety are time-specific relating to how respondents felt 'yesterday'. The remaining two questions are global and not linked to a specific timeframe defined by the parameter of the question. Much attention has been focussed on the validity of a measure of happiness since it is difficult to quantify the impact on life satisfaction of such a personal perspective or attribute. Positive affective traits such as happiness are thought to be fairly stable over time (Watson & Slack, 1993) and can have an enduring impact on motivation and job-related perception (Wright & Staw, 1999).

Happiness has been described as, "partly innate, very stable and with a known physiological basis" (Argyle, 2004: p21-22) but affected by satisfaction with life and positive and negative effects. If this view is correct the repeated measures of happiness across time and population should remain fairly constant affected only by individual's positive and negative life events. In the event of organisational change which affects a discreet survey population it is

plausible that the situational measure of well-being; happiness and anxiety may be affected by recent events. Organisational change affects employees differently. One person's stress is another's stimulus (Mowbray, 2012) and this will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

4.3 Organisational change is the only constant?

"One of the challenging topics facing managers and organisational psychologists today is the fundamental issue of why people are motivated to do anything at all," Furnham, (2005: p277) states that for decades, many approaches, theories and models have been developed and evaluated in support of an explanation and to further understanding.

That change is the only constant is a clichéd term used inappropriately to reflect a set of events which are not fully understood. Change is, according to Bridges (1995:p3) 'situational'.   Change in organisations can be conceptualised (Todnem and Maclod, 2009:p13) as planned changes and emergent pressures. The 'planned changes' approach can be broadly interpreted from the literature as being the strategic direction taken by an organisation in a proactive attempt to plan for future contingencies. In contrast, 'emergent pressures can be interpreted as being reactive to the influence of socio-economic factors such as those previously described, including the prevailing economic recession and changing Government priorities. These two agents of change determine the response to change for the organisation and can therefore influence the experience of change for the individual. These are referenced in the conceptual framework at figure 1.

However it is the psychological process of transition which impacts upon employees' emotional well-being. Transition is, by definition (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 2007) the, "action or process from one condition to another." By definition then, it is the transition through the change which is the constant since it is a continuous process. Organisational change fatigue is recognised as being a condition affecting a situation where an organisation becomes too tired of the change process to support an effective transition (MacIntosh et al. 2007). Whilst there are a number of actions that can be taken to mitigate change fatigue there are a number of dynamics recognised by MacIntosh et al. which exacerbate change fatigue. This includes protracted and prolonged periods of change.

Turner (2011) defines change fatigue as, "passive resignation" which is neither an acceptance nor rejection of the change. Instead it is a general apathy towards it." Such a definition may provide an explanation for the findings of previous research (Rukin Pursglove, 2010) at document four, which found support for a concept of active and passive hope. It is hypothesised that it in the process of setting of goals, which tangentially relate to the organisation, some employees adopt a passive attitude towards goal attainment due to their fatigued experience of the protracted change process, which they have been subject to. It is possible to test this by use of longitudinal analysis of staff perception surveys undertaken in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. 'Change fatigue', is recognised as a scenario where employees become weary from the process of change. Whilst difficult to define or quantify at an individual level change fatigue can present a number of issues at an organisational level. These may include a 'regrettable turnover' (Cooper, 2011) where the most talented employees, especially within the public sector which has less scope to use pay levers to retain staff, risk losing employees through poaching by other organisations and voluntary severance. Secondly, employees wary of being re-deployed or being made compulsorily redundant become disillusioned, report lower job satisfaction and suffer more psychological distress (Mowbray, 2009). 'Presenteeism', where employees turn up for work to avoid absence marks, but continually underperform, is another common issue in organisations experiencing organisational change (Mowbray, 2012).

The workplace should provide an environment and culture in which employees are able to feel successful and happy. It is known from literature (Seligman, 2002) that 'happy' people tend to be more successful, healthier and more engaged with their work. 'Unhappy people do not perform well at work' (Mowbray, 2012) and are less capable of focussing on the goals required for the organisation to succeed.

Whilst the intention of this thesis is to focus on structural change in the organisation, as perhaps the dependent variable due to the challenges of isolating the impact of change from other variables such as changes in staffing in provides the context by which the research is undertaken.

Document two, the literature review covered change management in greater detail and it is fair to acknowledge that literature in this area is extensive. There is little need to revisit this literature in depth as it has little bearing on the conceptual framework or hypotheses for the thesis. However it is sufficient to identify that change management literature from an individual perspective falls broadly into one of four approaches. These are; behavioural, cognitive, humanistic and psychodynamic (Cameron and Green, 2004:p51) summarised in table 1 below. The cognitive approach identified advocates the use of goal-setting behaviour which will include, by definition, Hope theory.

APPROACH	SUMMARY	CHARACTERISED BY:	THEORIES
Behavioural	Change due to changes in behaviour through reward and punishment, positive and negative reinforcement	360 degree feedback and performance management	• Operant conditioning (Pavlov's dog). (Mullins, 2007: p182) • Theory X and theory Y. (McGregor, 1960) • Hygiene Factors. (Herzberg, 1968)
Cognitive	Change outcomes result from changes in the way people think and behave.	• Objective setting • Visionary	• Hope theory (Snyder et al. 1991b) • Affirmation technique (Cameron & Green, 2004)

Humanistic	Change through managers with emotional self-awareness	• Addressing the hierarchy of needs. • Consultation • Value-based management	• The Gesalt Cycle. (Perls et al. 1951) • Maslow hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1970) • Myers BriggsType Indicator (Myers, Briggs et al., 1998)
Psycho-dynamic	Psychological process of change. A focus on internal beliefs	• Counselling • Emotional awareness	• Kubler-Ross Model (1969) of change and adjustment. • Model of transformation (Satir et al. 1991)

Source: Rowan, 1983 and Cameron and Green, 2004

Table 1: Approaches to change management

However, the employees within the organisations upon which this research is focused have been subject to a series of significant changes across a sustained period of time which has provided the background to the study of hope. These changes are detailed at appendix A starting with the inception of the Learning and Skills Council in April 2001 to the present day. In 2010 the Learning and Skills Council dissolved with many of staff transferring under the Transfer Undertaking the Protection of Employment (TUPE) to the Young People's Learning Agency. A year later, in 2012 the same staff were transferred to the Education Funding Agency when the Young People's Learning Agency ceased to exist.

In the context of this research it is necessary to understand if perception of the change process is constant since it is hypothesised that hope is necessary to sustain the attainment of goals, especially during periods of emotional fatigue. Therefore one must first demonstrate that experience and perception of change alters over time. The four staff surveys from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (which became the Department for Education in May 2010) and surveys from the Department for Education are used for this purpose. It is not necessary to make an assumption of repeated measure within the groups completing the surveys; however with low staff turnover of around 5% annually it could be assumed that many staff perceptions are re-tested over the period covering the five surveys.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families and Department for Education staff survey reports were each conducted by ORC International. Staff are expected to participate and response rates are high. In 2009 there were 2,350 responses, which if it assumed that each member of staff completed only one return is an 82% response rate. In 2010 there were 2,066 returns, 85% of staff responded. In 2011 there were 2,279 responses (89% of total staff), 3,484 (92%) in 2012 and 3,113 (91%) in 2013. The increase in total responses in 2012 reflects the transition of staff under the Transfer Undertaking the Protection Employment arrangements from the Young People's Learning Agency, National College and Teaching Agency to the Department for Education.

The annual staff survey conducted on behalf of the Department for Education has the stated aims; to measure organisational understanding as a proxy for role performance and job satisfaction. In this context the inclusion of a national measure of well-being is interesting as research (Wright et al. 2007) found a direct correlation between well-being and job performance, whilst carefully controlling for extraneous variables (Wright and Huang, 2012). According to Cranny et al. (1992: p6) organisations measure job satisfaction primarily because of the presumed direct relationship to short-term goals including increased individual productivity and long-term organisational

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objectives including employee adjustment and retention. Job satisfaction is defined as, "an emotional reaction to a job that results from the incumbent's comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired. (Cranny et al. 1992:p1). Job satisfaction is said to arise from, "the achievement of job values in work situations" according to Locke and Henne (1986). Cranny et al. (1992: p1) further ascertain that employees of the future will need to be adaptive, cooperative and willing to accept change. Happiness is used as a proxy by which employees most likely to be able to meet the challenges of change are measured; however it is acknowledged that happiness is a concept which is hard to change in the minds of individuals. It is now understood that there is a strong correlation between positive emotional states and job satisfaction. Elevated satisfaction scores have been found to be associated with positive emotional temperaments (Downey, 2008). This is an unsurprising observation however, understanding what job satisfaction means in the context of understanding what makes employees happy has proved to be more elusive. Equally performance is not always associated with satisfaction and thus a more powerful measure of performance ability may stem from understanding which employees are able to use hopeful thinking to support their own and organisational objectives.

It is interesting that the present coalition government has sought to introduce a requirement on civil and public servants to evaluate the impact of new policy initiatives on the happiness of the population. This new requirement introduced in spring, 2011 now sits alongside cost benefit analysis and equality impact measures as a requirement before new policy can be implemented. (DfE, 2012). Understanding hope as a measureable construct then which relates to job satisfaction and may provide greater understanding of the relationship with happiness. Although, this of course assumes that there is a correlation between hope and happiness as found by Tennen et al. (2002).

According to Seligman & Csikszentmihal, (2000) happiness is one aspect of positive affect which covers three areas of human experience; positive subjective states, positive individual states and positive institutions. Positive subjective states include positive emotions such as happiness or satisfaction

with life whilst positive individual states include aspects of personality such as courage or persistence. So whilst happiness, hope and optimism may all be recognised as positive affective traits happiness may vary from hope and optimism in that it is considered to be a constant trait. Whilst happiness may be a concept which is more easily understood, hope may provide a way of facilitating happiness in a workplace environment. In the current political climate this potentially has wider implications in terms of the development of social policy.

Although any such policy would need to consider the prevailing environment, it is expected, for example, that employees who have been subject to protracted periods of change would be more likely to adopt a passive attitude towards the hopeful attainment of goals. As such, it is conceivable that change may alter the balance of hope and happiness in the form of employee well-being.

4.4   Where are we now?

This section summarises the current perspective on hope, and well-being within public policy with a view to providing the rationale and justification of this research.

The introduction of a national measure of subjective well-being has provided a catalyst for renewed enthusiasm of research into positive psychology. Resilience of employees to change has been a key theme (Mowbray, 2012), this view supported by the introduction of civil service-wide resilience training for managers. The prevailing view of well-being across the public sector has, since the introduction of the four well-being questions, been intrinsically tied.

The findings from the 2012 and 2013 staff surveys, which are discussed in detail in the following sections indicates that well-being appears lower for staff working for the Department for Education than in the wider United Kingdom population. The need to be 20% more efficient as a consequence of the Comprehensive Spending Review has resulted in open voluntary redundancy

rounds and the need to undertake a re-structure of all staff. The response to this has been to focus on improving well-being of staff, which will be measured again in the 2013 staff survey. The focus of this well-being has been resilience training and stress management which is an interpretative response to addressing the four areas raised within the well-being questions. A more responsive approach may have been to undertake further analysis to try and understand why there is such a variation in well-being responses of staff compared to national means. There remains an inconsistency of what well-being means in the wider public sector and policy forum which appear to support the belief in the popular media that the Government is seeking to influence happiness rather than well-being. (Stratton, 2010; BBC, 2010).

This research thesis therefore sets out that happiness is a single element of well-being. In times of austerity, where public sector pay has been frozen for three years (BBC, 2013a) and staff are being asked to do more with fewer resources, well-being in the workplace has never been more significant. That it may be linked to strengths of character such as hope, as proposed by Wright and Quick, (2011) as well as being found to link to job performance (Wright et al. 2007) forms the basis for the rationale in undertaking this research.

5. METHODOLOGY

This chapter aims to improve the understanding of the research design and methodologies to be used to develop this research. Firstly, it presents a structure for the research undertaken, followed by a justification for the proposed methodology. Methodological considerations will be covered in detail in the following section.

5.1 Summary of approach

This section summarises the methodology used to establish the data from which the research findings are derived.

The research methodology has been split into different themes considering each of the three areas of organisational engagement, well-being and most importantly, hope raised in the research questions and hypotheses. Using primary research and two sources of secondary research provides an opportunity to gauge changes in organisational understanding over time as well as benchmarking the findings from the primary data.

Benchmarking is recognised as a legitimate and valuable tool which is maturing in the public sector. Benchmarking can be used to seek comparison based on robust research of other organisations performance. More importantly research considering staff survey data has greater credibility and value if it can be understood that other similar organisations are performing better or worse during the same prevailing economic conditions. There is however little available data which compares engagement as measured by the Department for Education with organisations or people outside of the civil service.

Whilst it can be helpful to compare government department, it can also be insightful to consider comparable data. However the measurement of well-being is not yet widespread and hope has yet to be embraced at all.

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As articulated in the conceptual framework on page 22 the methodlogical approach is predicated on the limited availability of the data pertaining to hope. In summary of the approach, an author created survey evaluated hope of employed people. These hope scores are benchmarked against previous studies conducted and the findings on mean hope presented at document four (Rukin Pursglove, 2012). The same author created survey measures engagement as defined by the four questions on organisational understanding used in the 2009-2013 DfE staff surveys by way of benchmarking.

Finally, employee well-being was included in the author created survey as it had recently been introduced in the 2012 staff survey and repeated in 2013 following the adoption of this measure of 'national happiness'. Well-being scores were benchmarked against the Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey.

Table 2 summarises the source data used for the thesis.

Research construct	Defined by/ as	Measure	Benchmarked
Hope	Snyder et al. (1991) Hope theory: pathways + agency= Goal outcome	2012-13 survey n242	Previous studies : Snyder et al. 1991b, Pearlman et al. 1990. Document 4 (Rukin Pursglove, 2012)
Engagement	4 questions: 1-I have a clear understanding of my organisation's purpose 2-I have a clear understanding of my organisation's objectives 3-I understand how my work contributes to my organisational objectives 4-My organisation motivates me to achieve its objectives	2012-13 survey n242	2009-2013 DfE staff surveys
Well-being	4 questions: 1-How satisfied are you with life nowadays? 2-Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in life are worthwhile? 3-Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? 4-Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?	2012-13 survey n242	2012 and 2013 DfE staff surveys

Table 2: Source and benchmarking data

The first part of the research is a longitudinal analysis of a limited number of questions from the five staff surveys which took place in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 within the Department for Education. Former Learning and Skills Council employees who had become part of the Young People's Learning Agency in 2010 joined the Department for Education in 2012 and were then subject to a short period of relative stability, of six months before the next set of changes were announced across the Department for Education. The analysis of the four staff surveys covering the transitional period 2009-2012 is an opportunity to consider how organisational understanding changes over time.   Three criteria were used to select the organisational understanding questions from the staff surveys:

1. Questions which provide a broad overview of perception about the organisation;

2. Questions which asked for a attitudinal response relating to organisational understanding and objective or goal setting behaviour; and

3. Questions which were repeated across different surveys.

Since the same questions are often repeated across each year of the survey a direct comparison can be made and a judgement on the impact of the additional staff joining the Department for Education and their perceptions of the changes. The four questions chosen to encapsulate organisational engagement were:

i. 'I have a clear understanding of my organisation's purpose';
ii. 'I have a clear understanding of my organisation's objectives';
iii. 'I understand how my work contributes to my organisational objectives'; and
iv. 'My organisation motivates me to achieve its objectives'.

OCR International who produce the staff surveys on behalf of the Department for education also provide an overall employee engagement figure called the 'engagement index' calculated across mean responses to five questions included in the survey. One of these questions are those chosen to represent

engagement (questions iv above). The other four questions which make up this combined engagement figure are:

    i.   I am proud when I tell others I am part of this organisation.

    ii. I would recommend the DfE as a great place to work.

    iii. I feel a trong personal attachment to the DfE; and

    iv. My organisation inspires me to be the best in my job. (OCR, 2013).

These questions broadly encapsulate engagement across all aspects of the staff survey unlike the four questions of organisational understanding and engagement chosen for the 2012-13 survey which relate to goal attainment and organisational objectives. As with all the staff surveys, the engagement index figure is only reported on a year to year basis.

In 2012 the Department for Education included, for the first time, the four questions developed by the Office for National Statistics as a subjective measure of national well-being. These four questions ask respondents about life satisfaction, situational happiness and anxiety; "how happy/ anxious did you feel yesterday" and how worthwhile they consider the things they do in life are. The data from four well-being responses taken from the 2012 Department for Education staff survey was compared to the same four question responses published in the Annual Population Survey by the Office National Statistics and within the 2012-13 survey. No statistical analysis was presented on the staff survey to compare data between years or to compare well-being in the 2012 and 2013 surveys to the ONS annual population survey. Regression analysis was trialled but a simple visual presentation fo the data across years illustrated engagement and well-being sufficiently to enable inference about the impact of change on engagement. Furthermore access to the total number of data responses for each of the four questions was provided by the Department for Education. However, the format of available data from the Annual Population Survey is provided in percentages along with the mean responses score and since the sample size of 165,000 is a rounded figure it is not possible to accurately distil the actual number of responses in each grouping. Further statistical analysis would therefore be subject to challenge.   To enable a comparison to be made in presenting the results the responses from all three data sets are therefore provided in percentages rather than absolute terms as would be more conventional.

The DfE also choose to report the well-being data using the same methodology as reporting on all questions in the staff survey, that is by calculating the percentage of positive responses. The ONS organises well-being scores out of ten into one of four groups. For the question about life satisfaction, worthwhile and happiness these groups are 0-4, 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10. For anxiety the groups are 0-1, 2-3, 4-5 and 6-10 where the reverse scores are considered positive. The DfE therefore report a positive response for the three areas of life satisfaction, worthwhile and happiness as an response at 0-6 and for anxiety as any response between 0-3.

The results section includes a comparison of these two methodological approaches; the first using the percentages and the second using the mean score which yield a differing picture. The consideration and limitations of these two approaches are discussed later.

The inclusion of the four well-being questions in the 2012 and 2013 staff surveys is the key benefit of this secondary data set as it enables well-being in an organisational context to be benchmarked against the national picture within the Annual Population Survey (Office for National Statistics, 2012). It may have been possible to design this research using only the 2012 staff survey, however in doing so the opportunity to consider changes in organisational understanding over the transitional period would have been lost.

The second part is an author designed survey, known as the 2012-13 survey targeted at employed people who would be likely to have organisational objectives and a performance review process. This primary research is herein referred to as the 2012-13 survey as results were collected between November 2012 and January 2013. The well-being findings from the 2012-13 survey data were benchmarked against the 2012 staff survey which incorporated the same four questions as well as data from the Annual Population Survey, produced by the Office for National Statistics.

The 2012-13 survey draws in hope theory but also takes the opportunity to revisit some of the questions from the Department for Education staff surveys. The survey is transcribed in full at appendix E. The survey was open for responses via 'Survey Monkey' and responses were elicited through a process called 'snowballing'. An initial list of 106 contact names was drawn up comprising of individuals known to the author and who worked in public or private sector companies. A covering email (at appendix E) was sent to the initial list of names. Recipients were requested in the covering email to complete the survey, but also to forward the email to friends and colleagues who may be willing to also complete the survey. This process of snowballing through a network of contacts proved to be a responsive and successful method of sampling for the research undertaken at document four. It is recognised as a valid method or purposive, non- probability sampling (Trochim, 2006). It is a beneficial technique since attracting friends and colleagues of a known contact may mean the recipient is more likely to respond than if the request had come from an unknown researcher. A clear disadvantage to this technique is that it is not possible to fully control who completes the survey and the sample may be skewed towards similar networks of contacts. However, this is also true of other methods of sampling, especially where multiple techniques are used concurrently. In addition to snowballing via a network of contacts, an article was written about the author and researcher for the staff intranet-based newsletter which is emailed out on a weekly basis. This article (at appendix F) included a request for people to take part in the survey. Since all responses came in via survey monkey it is not possible to establish precisely how many responses could be attributed to this article, however 20 responses were received in the two-day period following the bulletin being emailed to all staff (c.4,000) in the Department for Education.

The 2012-13 survey was, in part, piloted during previous research at document four (Rukin Pursglove, 2010) although the primary purpose of this was to assess the suitability of the Adult Hope Trait Scale as a test for employees. The questionnaire consists of 16 headline questions including a transcription of the four national subjective well-being questions and the Adult Hope Trait Scale (AHTS) devised by Snyder et al. (1991b). The previous

research (Rukin Pursglove, 2010) demonstrated that the AHTS was an appropriate measure of hope in an organisational setting. The survey, as stated, also provides an opportunity to continue the longitudinal analysis of employee perception to change and a selection of the most pertinent questions from the Department of Education staff surveys as discussed were included. These questions relate to employee understanding of organisational objectives, purpose of the organisation and whether the employee believes that their organisation provides motivation to achieve its objectives. These questions were selected to test if a relationship exists between employees who understand and buy-in to their organisational objectives, performance review processes and hope. For each of the questions from the Department for Education staff surveys and again in the 2012-13 survey respondents were asked to rate their agreement to the statement on a Likert scale of five possible responses ranging from strongly agree through neither to strongly disagree.

Three questions in the survey seek to test the longstanding misconception about what hope is. Most articles and references returned on a search for 'hope' refer to a more secular idea of hope as being as an elusive aspect of 'faith'. In this context hope is a belief in attaining something intangible and without scientific proof that the goal, or the pathways to achieve it actually exist. 'Hope' is a term which, it seems, is universally understood but without universal understanding. In other words, ask anyone what 'hope' is and they will give you an answer but those answers will vary depending on their belief structure. Three questions were designed to test if there is any relationship between hope as defined within this research and faith, religion or an idea of 'karma' as there is common understanding taken from a positivist perspective that hope is something ethereal rather than a tangible model for understanding goal attainment.

The four well-being questions represent a balanced approach to the measurement of a subjective state. The questions comprise of three different approaches. Firstly, an evaluative approach asks employees to step back from work and reflect upon their wider life. This question asks;

_____

i.   How satisfied are you with life nowadays?

This question is abbreviated to 'satisfaction'. The second approach is eudemonic and seeks to measure an individual's pursuit of happiness in general. This question asks:

ii.   Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in life are worthwhile?

This question is abbreviated to 'worthwhile'. Finally, an approach drawing on recent experience considers an individual's recent state of well-being. These questions ask;

iii. Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?, and
iv. Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

These questions are abbreviated to 'happy yesterday' and 'anxious yesterday'.

6. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter covers the methodological considerations which have been taken into account to ensure so far as was possible that the findings of the research report are both useful and valid. A number of techniques for ensuring validity and reliability are discussed including sampling, survey design and the use of statistical techniques.

6.1 Overview

Methodology is the broad term given to the body of knowledge from which researchers draw techniques from which to explain and analyse their research. A good methodological approach indicates the limitations, resources and identifies pre-suppositions in the research (Miller, 1983). In any research project there will be a number of considerations, some universal to all research and some unique. The epistemological approach may influence the perspective from which research is written and may influence research design. The choice of design, "reflects decisions about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process" (Bryman & Bell, 2007:40) although this will be influenced too by practical considerations of time, resources and accessibility.

Further consideration must also be given to the utility of the findings and how these can be best exploited. It could be considered that one aim of this research is to convince managers of the value of adopting a POB strategy which embraces hope and well-being. To do this effectively the research must be seen as relevant to the organisation. It is for this reason that a longitudinal analysis of staff survey data is included which can then be linked to the target areas of hope and well-being. The unique contribution in this regard is considering what a longitudinal analysis might reveal over the year to year results currently provided to managers. Furthermore the outcomes must be simple to understand and adaptable so that the principles can be

applied to the workplace. The aspiration is to demonstrate a quantitative tool in the form of the Adult Hope Trait Scale which could form an addition to the staff survey. The precedent for this has already been made in the adoption of the four well-being questions from the 2012 staff surveys onwards. With over 4,000 employees, any approach based on one to one interactions, for example through a qualitative approach would be considered unviable. Furthermore qualitative approaches applied across all teams would be open to interpretation and challenge. In understanding where the organisation is and benchmarking hope a quantitative method is preferred. For a longer-term strategy for human resource development a qualitative approach could also be considered where the application of an intervention is made on an individual or team basis. However this is an area for future (action) research.

Sometimes it is necessary to make compromises on research design to make the available resources fit the research questions. The ideal methodology would have been to have only used the longitudinal staff survey data since 2009, but with the inclusion of both the four well-being questions and, as a minimum, the transcription of the Adult Hope Trait Scale questions. Such a methodology would have yielded a large within-groups sample that would have enabled greater conclusions about the impact of organisational change to have been made. The compromise, however, was to take the four years of staff survey data and to attempt to benchmark it for the three research areas of interest; organisational understanding, well-being and most importantly, hope.

Furthermore, whilst it is advantageous to benchmark the 2012 staff survey, well-being data and the 2012-13 survey data to national measures of well-being, compromises again need to be made since the format in which the data is presented was not consistent. This issue in particular is discussed in more detail in the following two chapters of this thesis.

6.2 Sampling Methodology

The uncontrolled nature of the sampling techniques used meant that gateway questions at the start of the 2012-13 survey were necessary. At document

four which had, in part acted as a pilot for this research, the gateway question asked respondents to confirm that they had previously worked for the Learning & Skills Council. For this thesis, the gateway question focussed on employment status as only those respondents who were employed and could relate to having their own organisational objectives were of interest. The question of employment status appeared on the first page of survey questions, at question five. 'Skip logic' was used so that only respondents who stated that they were employed in the private, public or voluntary sectors or self-employed were given the opportunity to complete all the questions. Respondents who stated that they were not employed ('not looking for work', or 'not employed, looking for work') or 'not able' to work were re-directed to question 11. Despite this justification of the sampling technique used it is acknowledged that the methodology is haphazard since it is difficult to precisely establish the source of each response.

Furthermore it is difficult to gauge how random the sample is, or representative of employed people in general. It can only be assumed, rather than quantified that the majority of respondents from the public sector would indeed be employees within the Department for Education. The imprecise nature of this may make test re-test reliability difficult for the data derived from the 2012-13 data set. Sample size varied considerably across the three data sources used. The primary data collected, the 2012-13 survey data, consisted of 242 responses. However, in the context of a target population of employed respondents the figure, although adequate is disappointingly low. Similar studies looking at hope however, notably those which provided a benchmark for the mean value of hope in document four (page 54) were similar or fewer in number; 384 university students (Snyder et al. 1991b), 97 psychiatric outpatients (Pearlman et al. 1990) and 109 psychiatric inpatients (Irwing et al. 1990).

The secondary data sets used to provide a benchmark against organisational understanding and well-being were significantly larger. The Department for Education staff surveys consisted of between 2,350 responses in 2009 (82% of staff) to 3,484 in 2012 (92% of staff). Such a large response rate should be considered valid although an important consideration is that the mandatory

expectation of completion will result in an element of a 'protest vote' or respondent bias by some employees which may result in some of the data being skewed from an accurate perception of staff at that time. Well-being question responses from the 2012-13 survey and the 2012 staff survey were benchmarked against the 165,000 responses within the Annual Population Survey undertaken by the Office for National Statistics. Such a vast sample size is credible in measuring responses to the well-being questions posed, although this does not necessarily mean that the four questions are valid in measuring well-being although this is an ontological, rather than methodological concern.

6.3 Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process for this thesis care was taken to ensure the best practices of research ethics were adopted as set out in Fisher, 2007(p63-70). A Nottingham Business School (NBS, 2009) ethical approval form was submitted and accepted which gave permission to proceed with the research. Different considerations were required for access to, and use of, the three different data sets used; Departmental staff surveys, publically available Office for National Statistics data and the 2012-13 survey.

Firstly, permission was sought from Senior Managers and from Human Resources to use the staff survey data. This permission was also sought more generally from predecessor organisations; the Learning and Skills Council and the Young People's Learning Agency to use the staff survey data and request that staff contribute to additional surveys. Access was granted to use all the data available to all staff on the internal intranet web-page. This data was already presented in a format which anonymised participant responses by the third party organisation, OCR International, who were commissioned to conduct the surveys. The responses to the well-being questions were not made available to all staff, however access for the purpose of 'unbiased' research was granted by Human Resources in providing the data requested. Only headline data was provided which restricted further analysis being undertaken.

Data from the Office for National Statistics is openly available on the internet and has undergone a rigorous process of anonymisation to ensure that participant's right to privacy is observed. Primary data collected (2012-13 survey) included further considerations. The first question[6] sought the informed consent of respondents for the information provided to be used for research purposes. The right to privacy was ensured by limiting questions of descriptive indicators only to gender, age in ten-year brackets and employment sector. Responses were collected via self-completion on Survey Monkey rather than being undertaken individually by the researcher. In the case of a very few responses (3-4) it may have been possible to confidently guess the identity of the respondent from their response to the questions on goals and pathways. This, in addition to the sensitive nature of some of the responses resulted in a decision not to list all the responses in the appendices as was the case at document four. Findings from the research have, with the exception of the analysis using staff survey data and conclusions made about the relationship between hope and well-being, been maintained as confidential within the Department for Education.

Furthermore in deciding which material would be of benefit to the Department for Education for the purposes of continuous improvement, and ethically appropriate to share, consideration was given to literature on ethical organisations. The importance of this was highlighted in the collection of qualitative data at document three. Staff survey data which was supposedly collected and used confidentially by the organisation was found to be compromised when an analysis showed that the ethnic minority group within an office (totalling three members of staff) were invited to discuss the findings with the senior management team. This breakdown of confidentiality and trust was an anecdotal example of corporate misconduct (Verbos et al. 2007) whereby that organisation could be considered to have failed to follow adequate controls to prevent unethical behaviour. In this example, reporting should not have taken place of groups fewer than 5 to increase confidentiality.

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[6] 'I understand that by completing this survey I am giving consent for my responses to be used anonymously for the purposes of research.'

Positive organisational scholarship has been described as a 'lens' through which the application of positive psychology in the workplace provides an insight into what an ethical organisation looks like (Verbos et al. 2007). It focuses on positive dynamics and attributes; resilience is given as an example but it could equally apply to hope on the basis that hope too has been described as an individual attribute. In the application to decisions about how to use this research corporately it was necessary to consider if there would be any unethical behaviours or outcomes as a result of sharing some, or all of the expected data outcomes. This process focussed on the creation of the survey questions by asking, so far as it was possible to predict from document four, the likely outcomes, minimising the identifying questions. The survey was hosted on a professional survey tool, Survey Monkey. An identified recommendation for the Department for Education in sharing the limited findings was that the organisation at present does not have a written code of ethics which covers activity such as the annual staff survey.

6.4 Respondent and experimenter bias

This section primarily relates to the Department for Education staff surveys and author-designed 2012-13 survey in which issues of bias are discussed. Reflexivity which could form part of this section is discussed in detail at Document Six.

For the DfE staff surveys, 2009-2013, participation by staff in the survey was considered mandatory. Employees are expected to participate and are sent multiple email reminders between the survey launch and deadline, with additional emails targeted at teams with low completion rates. Consequently participation is high. This may reflect the position that employees welcome the opportunity to express their views of the organisation or it may be because employees are told to complete it. With each survey there is a possibility of a protest vote or exaggeration of responses to make a point (respondent bias). However, since opposing views may, in effect cancel each other out whilst it is helpful to be mindful of respondent bias it is both difficult to calculate the

impact of it and to take it into too much consideration. On the other hand as a researcher, the likelihood of some experimenter bias should be discussed. Experimenter bias occurs where messages about expectations are subtly conveyed to respondents who then act in a way which they may otherwise not have done. Whilst the survey data cannot be altered the choice of questions from within the survey could be strategically chosen to portray a particular perspective. This issue was managed by the selection of the questions from the staff survey, considered most appropriate to show organisational understanding prior to accessing data on the same questions from previous surveys.

Bias can occur at any stage within the research, from the initial review of literature to analysing and publishing the results. Sackett, (1979) identified 56 ways in which bias may occur, although not all of these apply to every type of research.

As an author-designed survey, the 2012-13 survey is more susceptible to the immediate possibility of experimenter bias, although the development and production of the staff surveys, may also have been subject to some biases on behalf of the researchers who produced it. On one level experimenter bias is an issue of human inability to be objective, although some mitigating actions were undertaken to maintain the need to minimise subjectivity.

To minimise bias, a process of content analysis was used. Defined as, "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications" (Berelson, 1952: p18), content analysis can broadly be interpreted as setting the rules for the research at the start and then not deviating from them. The 'rules' may include elements of bias, for example reflecting the interests of the author, but further subjectivity is minimised. The methodology of using a survey questionnaire lends itself to such an approach as once the questions are established and the survey is 'live' it is not possible to deviate from that script, unlike perhaps in qualitative research.

6.5 Reliability

The issue of reliability is mainly one of consistency. If a measure were to be repeated, is it reasonable to expect that the same outcome could be predicted? In considering the application of this question to this thesis it is necessary to recall the different component elements; the primary and secondary research surveys, the latter of which included a transcription of the Adult Hope Trait scale.

The first test of reliability, stability, questions whether the measures used are stable over time so as to assume that fluctuations in data are due to extraneous variables. It is difficult to ascertain this for the Department for Education or Office for National Statistics data. One of the short comings of using secondary data is the need to have confidence in the stability of the measure. The second test, internal reliability is a judgement of whether the items in the scale when combined each contribute to the same measure, for example through the use of Cronbach's alpha. Internal reliability of the Adult Hope Trait Scale was discussed in detail at document four (pages 45-47) supported by an analysis using Cronbach's alpha on each of the measures of pathways, agency and distractor items, and the former two of which are combined to produce the measure of hope. One must assume therefore that the secondary data sets and the hope score produced from a calculation using the Adult Hope Trait Scale are reliable, if not valid. However, these logical arguments are deduced from theories and models of what organisational understanding of employees, hope and well-being are. It is recognised that phenomenologically, validity can never be truly valid since what is understood to be valid cannot be universally accepted.

A third aspect of reliability deals with inter-observer consistency (Bryman and Bell, 2007: p163) which is a complex issue about interpretation which on one level can only be overcome through a reflexive process which seeks to lay bare the realist epistemology of the researcher.

6.6 Validity

Validity too is a concern which an entire thesis could be devoted to. Validity refers to whether or not the measures used in this thesis measure what they purport to measure (Bryman and Bell, 2007: p165). The key issue of concern is whether the proposed methodology lends itself to measuring any possible relationship between the key concepts defined within the thesis; organisational understanding, hope and well-being. Taking each in turn; organisational understanding is defined by the parameters of the questions used in the Department for Education survey. It is an overarching term which is not used in any global sense as the interpretation of the outcome is based upon the individual question rather than an assumed whole. In reporting the Department for Education staff survey outcomes the researchers, OCR International combined the questions, along with others to provide an 'employee engagement index'. However, this raises questions about what employee engagement means in a wider context and how it could be defined. On face value it seemed more valid to define organisational understanding through the individual use of the questions when presenting the results, rather than to attempt to re-create an arbitrary construct around organisational understanding or employee engagement.

Secondly, if hope theory is considered as a model which explains how likely it is that an individual can reach their goal outcomes then at face value the Adult Hope Trait Scale appears valid. Literature has evidenced the predictive validity of hope by showing that individuals with higher hope have consistently better outcomes on academic success (Pearlman et al, 1990) and within psychiatry (Irwing et al. 1990).

Well-being is more challenging to make judgements of validity about since with the exception of the Office for National Statistics, the formula of happiness, anxiety, satisfaction and feelings of worth have not been widely researched or accepted. On face value, it seems like a sensible combination of attributes which takes into account eudaimonic and hedonic perspectives of

well-being. However, one of the outcomes of this research is to use construct validity to deduce whether any relationship between hope and well-being is due to the two concepts being aligned.

7. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This chapter lays out the research thesis findings and a summary of the results set against the research questions and hypotheses posed.

7.1 Employee understanding of, and engagement with their organisation during change

In seeking to answer research question one in chapter three and test hypotheses I- IV, staff survey data from the Department for Education between 2009-2013 was compared. Each of the four statement questions of employee understanding of their organisation was considered separately. Positive responses, that is those where the responses indicated 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the statement were compared for each year and benchmarked against the responses to the same question in the 2012-13 survey.   Response rates for each year of the staff survey are given below in table 2:

	n	% of all staff
2009	2,350	82
2010	2,066	85
2011	2,279	89
2012	3,484	92
2013	3,484	91

Table 3: Table showing response rates for DfE staff surveys

With such a high percentage of the total population of the DfE included, responses are representative across gender and grade of staff.
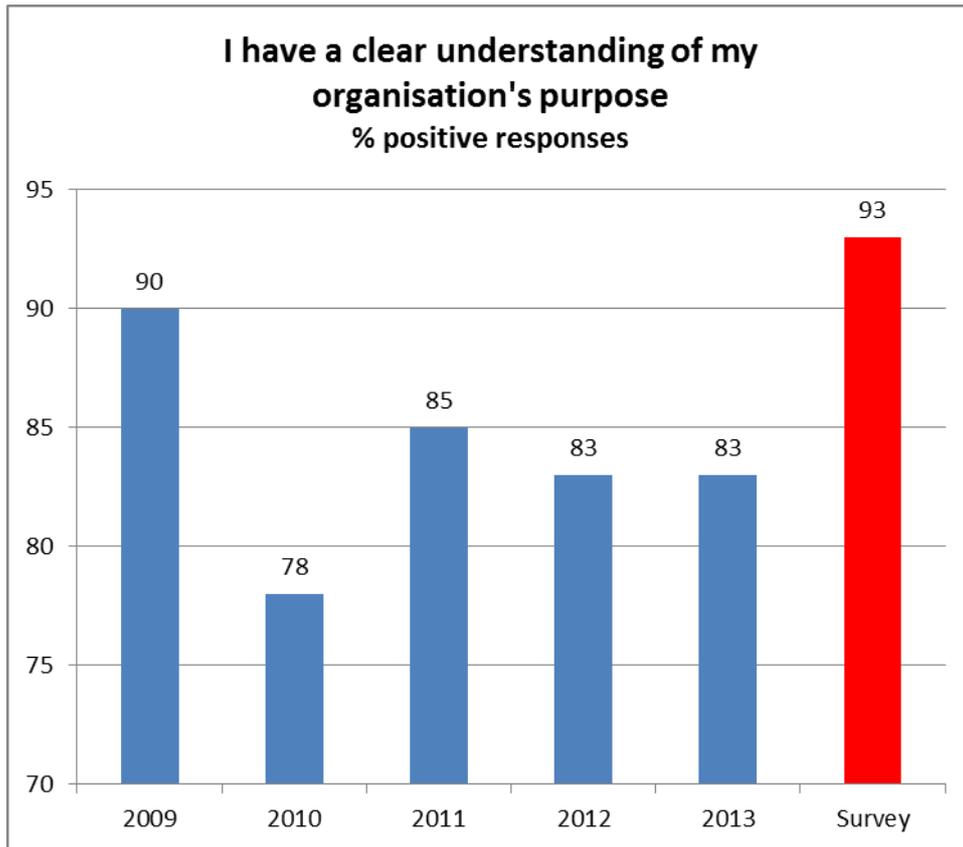
**Figure 5: 'Organisational engagement' question 1.**
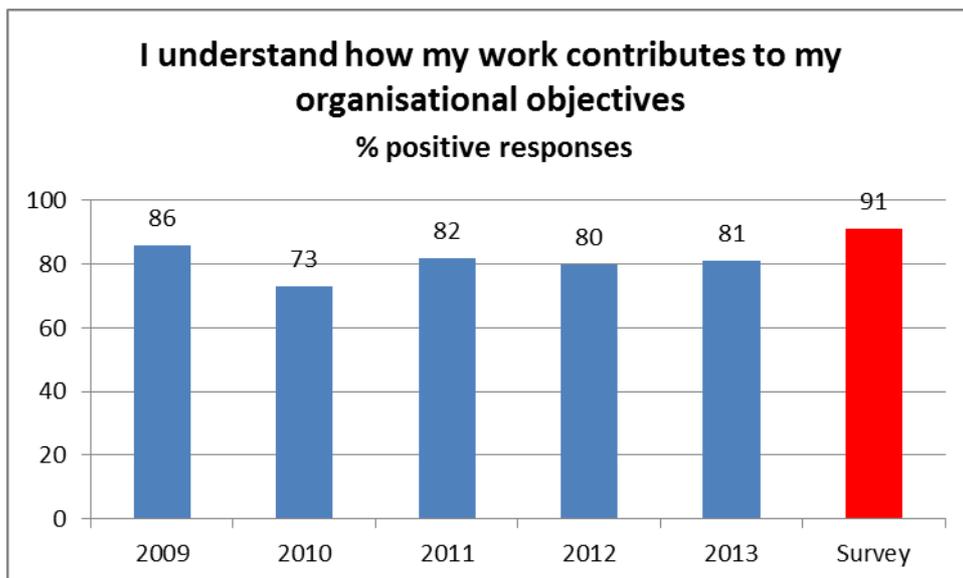
**Figure 6: 'Organisational engagement' question 2.**
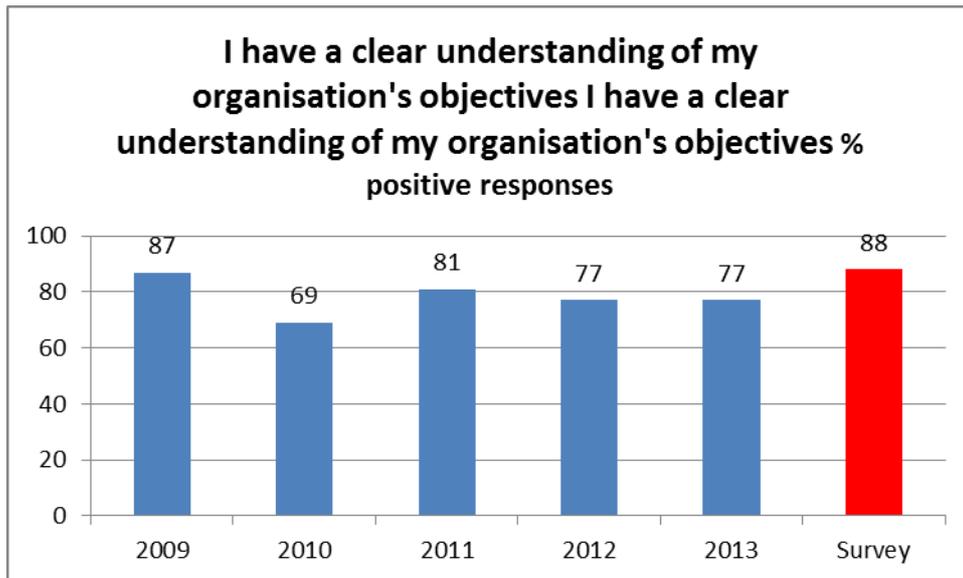
Figure 7: 'Organisational engagement' question 3.
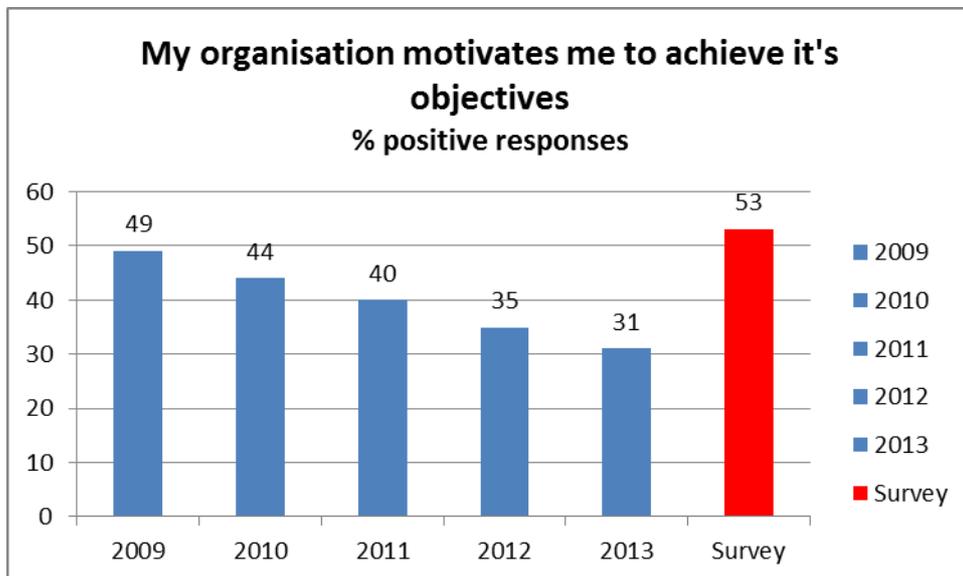
Figure 8: 'Organisational engagement' question 4.

The four figures (5-8) each appears to indicate the impact of two significant periods of change for staff working at the Department for Education. The first of these in 2010 and followed in 2012. Positive responses from employees to organisational understanding of purpose and objectives compared to a wider survey of respondents benchmarked in the 2012-13 survey.

The 'engagement index' scores produced by OCR international on behalf of the DfE also indicate a declining picture of engagement across the five-year period.
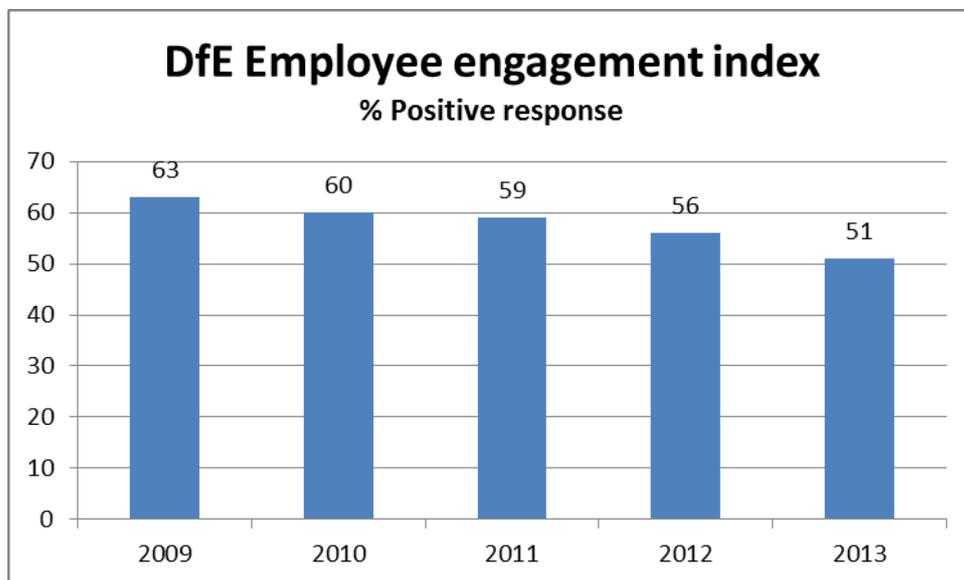
Figure 9: DfE Employee engagement index.

7.2 The 2012-13 Survey

Respondents

A total of 242 responses were received to the author created survey comprising 167 (69.0%) responses from women and 75 (31.0%) from men. The ages of the respondents were grouped across six ten-year age brackets. Nearly 95% of respondents were aged 21-59, the most represented group (42%) were aged 30-39. This is illustrated in figure 9 below. The majority (65.2%) of respondents claimed not to be followers of faith or religion. A demographic breakdown of all the data can be viewed in detail at annex F.
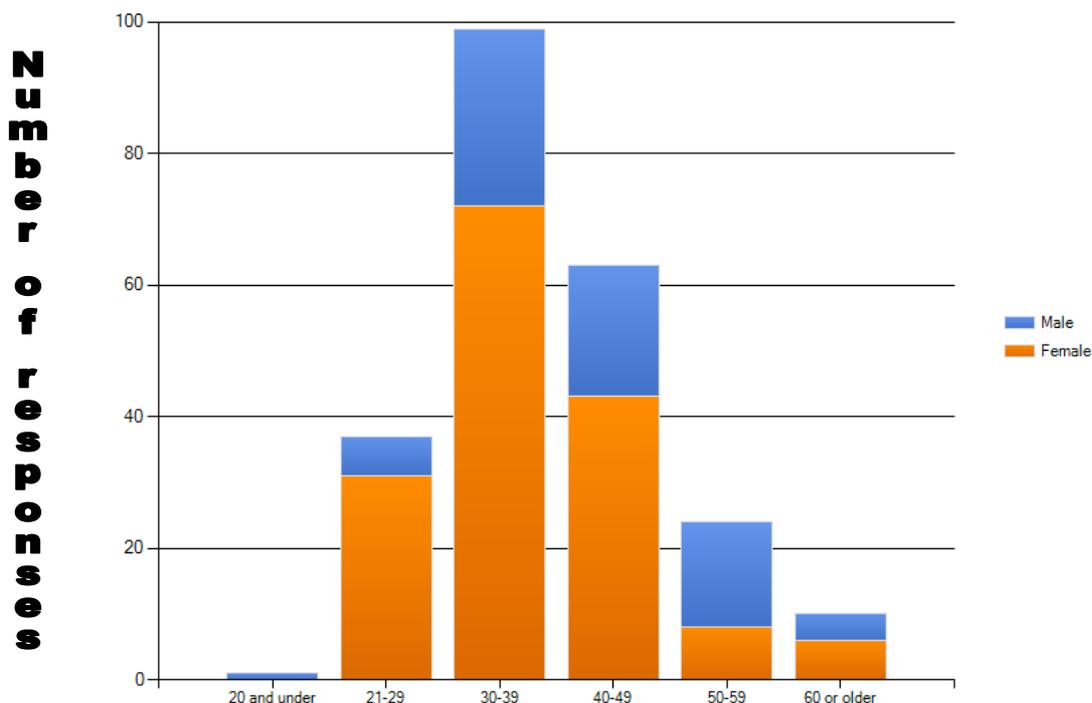
Figure 10: Age of respondents by gender.

Not all the respondents completed every question. Indeed a filter was applied to the questions so that respondents who were not in employment ('not in employment, but looking for work', 'not in employment, not looking for work' and 'disabled, not able to work') were automatically excluded from answering questions about their organisation which would not have been relevant. A total of 212 of the 242 respondents were employed (87.6%) and 30 were 'not

employed'. A total of 181 (74.8%) respondents completed the Adult Hope Trait Scale questions and well-being questions. These questions were mandatory and so respondents, upon reaching these questions who did not wish to respond had only the option to complete the question or to terminate the survey. This may have contributed to the 25.2% of respondents who failed to complete the full survey having answered the first question.

Just over half (52.5%) of responses were received from people working in the public sector, the majority of which it can be assumed due to the method of attracting respondents will work for the Department for Education. A further quarter (25.6%) worked in the private sector. The remaining quarter of respondents comprised the self-employed (7.9%) those working in the voluntary/ third sector (1.7%) and those not currently able or wanting to work as illustrated in the pie chart at figure 10 below.
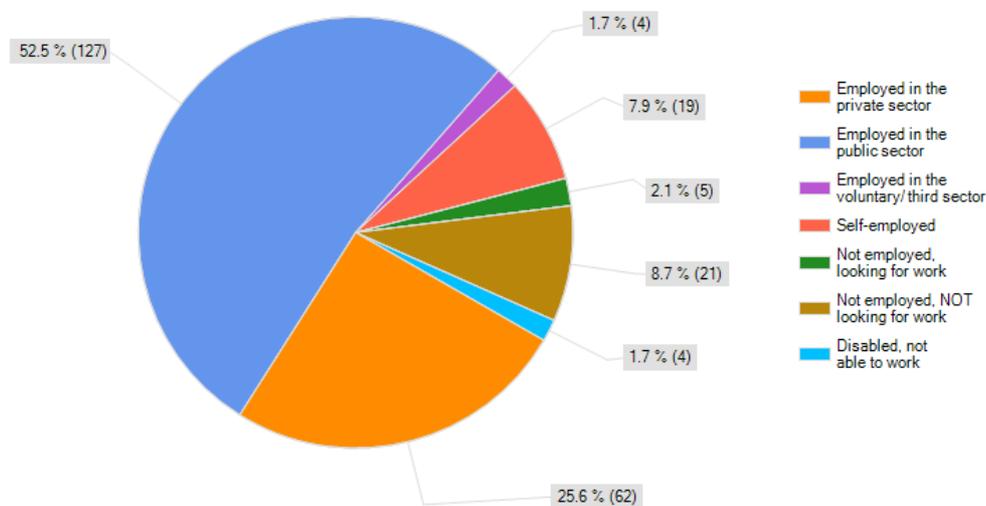
Figure 11: Employment status of respondents.

Respondents reported a varied recent employment history with only 28.2% of respondents employed in the same role for the previous five years. Nearly a third of respondents (31.3%) reported working in two different roles and a

further 36.9% reported working in three or more over the same five-year period. Women were more likely to have been in fewer roles over the same period as illustrated in the pie chart at figure 11 below.
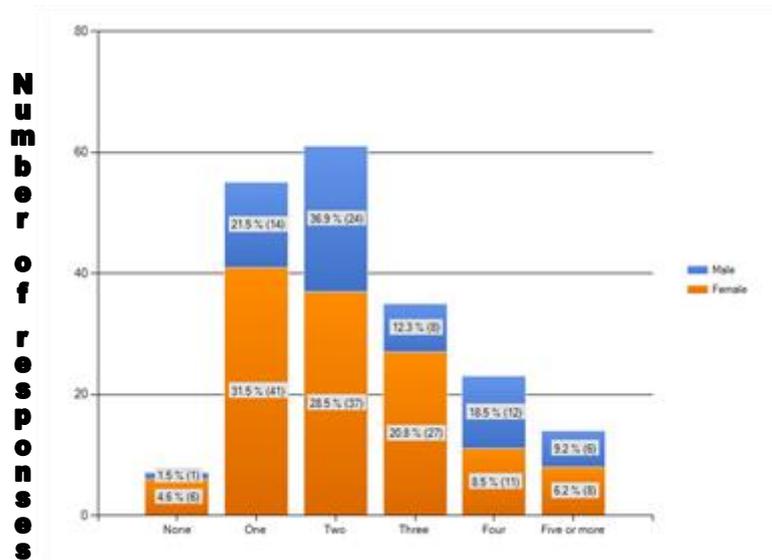
Figure 12: Number of different roles or jobs undertaken by respondents over the previous five years.

The mean hope score across all respondents was 48.54 (n177) although men were found to be more hopeful with a mean hope score of 49.77 (n62) compared to women with a mean hope score of 47.88 (n115). In previous published studies mean hope was reported to be 49 (Snyder, 2002), but up to four points lower for psychiatric in and out patients (Pearlman et al. 1990). A high hope score is considered to be one which is above the mean. Therefore for the purposes of this research high hope is considered to be a score equal to or greater than 49. A low hope score is consider to be equal to or smaller than 48. The calculation of the mean hope score from the twelve questions in the Adult Hope Trait Scale also produces a whole number.

7.3 Organisational Understanding and Hope

A total of 195 respondents completed the section on organisational understanding and the four questions repeated from the Department staff survey, however only 191 completed all the questions. In addition 195

responded to the question on individual performance reviews. Only respondents who reported being employed in the public, private or voluntary sector were included. Of these the majority (75.9%) claimed to have at least met all of their individual objectives at their last performance review as illustrated in figure 12. This question provides no indication however of how 'SMART'- specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely the objectives were, and nor does it provide any level of verification of managerial or organisational agreement. However, simply as a measure of individual performance outcome this question provides an indication of individual value to their organisation in terms of meeting expectations of behaviour and outcomes at their last review.
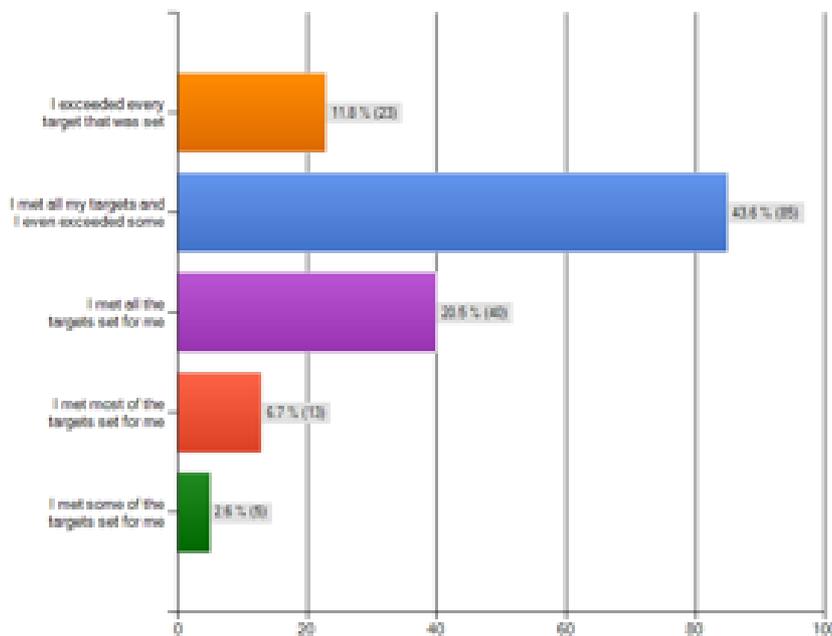
Figure 13: Most recent individual performance review outcomes for employed respondents.

Employed respondents were then asked to respond to the same four 'organisational understanding' questions from the Department staff surveys 2009-2012. In every instance the response rate from the 2012-13 survey produced a higher number of positive responses than from the Department staff surveys. A positive response includes all respondents indicating a response of 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to a question.

Since over half (52.6%) of all respondents in the 2012-13 are employed in the public sector and the Department for Education was targeted for responses then it is likely that many of the same respondents had completed both surveys. It is perhaps even more surprising just how much higher the positive responses to the 2012-13 survey where, when used as a benchmark compared to the Department staff surveys. It is also of interest to note the steady decline in positive responses to the question 'my organisation motivates me to achieve its objectives' (table 2) which perhaps indicates a loss of confidence of staff in their employer. For each of the four questions in the Department staff survey responses there is a decline in the positive response rate in 2010. This is important to note as the first significant organisational changes since 2001 took place from April 2010[7] and was followed by a change of government in May 2010 which inevitably led to considerable uncertainty among civil servants whose work is ultimately governed by ministers.

The organisational question responses in the 2012-13 survey were then compared to the total hope scores calculated for each respondent. For each of the organisational questions the respondents who provided a positive response (agree or strongly agree) had a high mean hope score (≥49).

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[7] See the timeline at appendix A for a full timeline of relevant changes to the public sector.

| Question	Number of positive responses	Mean hope Score
I have a clear understanding of my organisation's purpose	151	49.2
I have a clear understanding of my organisation's objectives	139	49.3
I understand how my work contributes to my organisation's objectives	142	49.5
My organisation motivates me to achieve its objectives	80	49.9

Table 4: Table showing relationship between organisational understanding and high hope.

High hope is also a feature of respondents who state they exceeded all of their own individual objectives. The mean hope score was found to be 54.53 from a small group of respondents (n15). Respondents who, 'met all of their objectives and exceeded some' were also had high hope scores with a mean of 49.21 (n52).

A Pearson correlation co-efficient identified that it is likely that there is a statistically significant relationship between employees who understand their organisations purpose and objectives and their reported happiness at work on a scale of 0-10 where 0 is very unhappy and 10 is very happy. The Pearson correlation co-efficient measures the linear relationship between two variables, or questions from the survey data. In this case the two variables are happiness at work, from the question 'I am happy at work', and understanding of organisational purpose, from the question 'I have a clear understanding of my organisation's purpose', and between happiness at work and 'I have a clear understanding of my organisations objectives'. Pearson produces a value (r) between +1 and -1 where 0 indicates no linear correlation between the two variables. A negative Pearson output up to -1 indicates that as one variable increases the other decreases. It can also reflect the way in which the responses to the questions are structured. The responses to the question of happiness at work ranged from 0 (meaning low) to 10 (meaning high) whereas the questions around organisational purpose and objectives are reversed as they range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. If the

responses ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree then a positive correlation (up to +1) might be expected where happiness increased with understanding of organisational objectives or purpose (see figure 13 below)

A Pearson correlation co-efficient of -.326 (n160)[8] for understanding organisational purpose and -.226* (n157) for organisational objectives against 'happy at work' was calculated and although this does not explain the causality of the relationship with the variable 'happy at work', it appears plausible to conclude that there is a relationship between these variables.
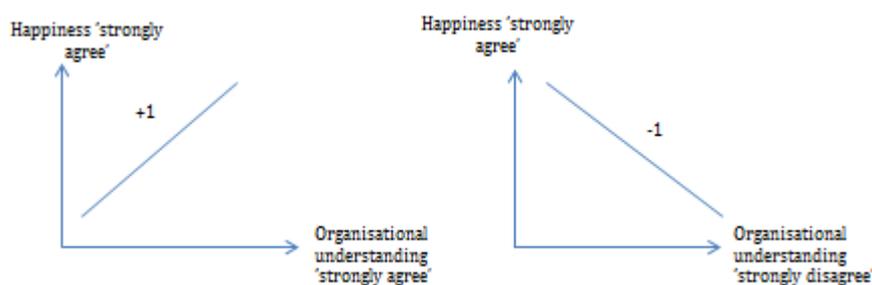
Figure 14: Pearson correlation co-efficient

Broadly as organisational understanding of purpose and objectives increases, so does self-reported employee happiness at work.   Both variables should be of importance to an employer.

A similar relationship was suggested by a Pearson correlation co-efficient between employers who report meeting their individual personal objectives set by their organisation and perceived happiness at work. Pearson was -.482* (n157).

Further Pearson correlation co-efficient (-.526, n157*) suggested a relationship between perceived happiness at work and 'my organisation motivates me to achieve its objectives'.

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[8] *Significant at the 0.1 level (2-tailed)

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7.4 Hope and Well-being

The four well-being questions put by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the Annual Population Survey conducted between April 2011- March 2012 were compared with the same questions asked in the Department for Education staff survey 2012[9] and the 2012-13 survey data. The mean response rate on a scale of 0-10 was recorded and is summarised in table 3 below.

Source data	Mean rating of subjective 'well-being' question responses (scale 0-10)			
	Life satisfaction	Happy yesterday	Anxious yesterday	Worthwhile
Office for National Statistics. Annual Population Survey. April 2011- March 2012. (n 165,000)	7.4	7.3	3.1	7.7
Department for Education. Staff Survey. Autumn 2012. (n 3,484)	6.8	6.6	4.1	7.2
Research Survey. November 2012- January 2013. (n 185)	6.8	5.3	4.1	6.7

Non respondents not included

Table 5: Summary of subjective well-being questions across data sets.

The ONS data is considered as a benchmark for the other two data sets on the basis of its substantial number of respondent. Looking at the data using a mean response indicates that Department for Education employees are less satisfied with life, less happy and more anxious on a typical day and feel that the things they do in life are less worthwhile. The 2012-13 survey data recorded a few months later indicates the same level and satisfaction and

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[9] This data was not available for 2013.

'feeling anxious yesterday' as within the Department for Education staff survey. However, happiness yesterday was significantly lower than either the Department for Education staff survey or the ONS. Similarly, feeling that the 'things in life are worthwhile' are also lower than in the Department for Education staff survey or the wider population (ONS, 2012).

However, there is an alternative way to look at the data as it is presented by the Office for National Statistics. Taking each question in turn the responses are grouped into low, medium and high for each of the 'happy', 'life satisfaction' and 'worthwhile' questions. The 'how anxious did you feel yesterday' question also included a 'very low' group in addition to low, medium and high. This methodology was considered valid for the ONS data across 165,000 respondents. However for smaller samples the results interpreted using grouped data can be interpreted very differently compared to using a mean response score.

Taking each question in turn when grouped the question, 'how satisfied are you with life nowadays' responses can be summarised as:-

	Low 0-4	Medium 5-6	High 7-10
2011-12 ONS data (n 165,000)	6.6%	17.5%	75.9%
2012 DFE staff survey (n 3,484)	15%	23%	62%
2013 DFE staff survey (n 3,113)	18%	25%	57%
2012-13 Research survey (n 185)	16%	19%	65%
2012-13 Research survey: mean hope score (n 181)	42.3	49.4	49.9

Non-respondents not included

Department for Education data rounded

Table 6: 'Life satisfaction' question comparison.

As illustrated in table 4 more than double the percentage of respondents report low satisfaction with life than in the ONS data. This is a nuance which is not captured using the mean score. In each of the Department for Education 2012 and 2012-13 survey data, fewer respondents are in the 'high' group, with 3% more (65%) over the Department for Education staff survey.

Respondents in the 2012 Department for Education staff survey and the 2012-13 survey are also less happy than those in the ONS survey. Whilst this is also identified in the mean score the grouped data suggests that the respondents in the 2012-13 survey are slightly more happy than the staff in the Department for Education survey. Both methods, however, identify that staff and the 2012-13 survey respondents are less happy than the general population at the point in which the survey was conducted.

A similar discrepancy can be identified with the 'anxious yesterday' questions. Using the mean rating there is no difference between 2012 Department for Education staff survey or the 2012-13 survey at 4.1, a whole one point higher than the wider population in the ONS data. Using the grouped percentage, four per cent more in the 2012-13 survey are reported to be in the high group than in the Department for Education staff survey, although both groups have more in the high anxious group and fewer in the very low and low 'anxious yesterday' group than in the ONS data. Tables 5-7 illustrate the remaining three well-being questions:

|	Low 0-4	Medium 5-6	High 7-10
2011-12 ONS data (n 165,000)	11%	18%	71%
2012 DfE staff survey (n 3,484)	19%	23%	58%
2013 DfE staff survey (n 3,113)	21%	25%	54%
2012-13 Research survey (n 185)	19%	22%	59%
2012-13 Research survey: mean hope score (n 181)	44.9	49.9	49.6

Table 7: 'Happy yesterday' question comparison.

	Low 0-4	Medium 5-6	High 7-10
2011-12 ONS data (n 165,000)	5%	15%	80%
2012 DfE staff survey (n 3,484)	10%	21%	69%
2013 DfE staff survey (n 3,113)	11%	23%	66%
2012-13 Research survey (n 185)	18%	22%	60%
2012-13 Research survey: mean hope score (n181)	45	48.9	49.4

Table 8: 'Worthwhile' question comparison.

	Very low 0-1	Low 2-3	Medium 4-5	High 6-10
2011-12 ONS data (n 165,000)	37%	23%	18%	22%
2012 DFE staff survey (n 3,484)	22%	28%	20%	30%
2013 DfE staff survey (n 3,113)	18%	24%	21%	37%
2012-13 Research survey (n 185)	23%	28%	15%	34%
2012-13 Research survey: mean hope score (n 181)	49.7	49	49.4	49.2

Table 9: 'Anxious yesterday' question comparison.

There is a decline in well-being across the two DfE staff surveys in 2012 and 2013 as indicated in figure 15. This is measured by the percentage of positive scores, including for anxiety where low scoring responses between 0-6 out of ten could as a positive response.
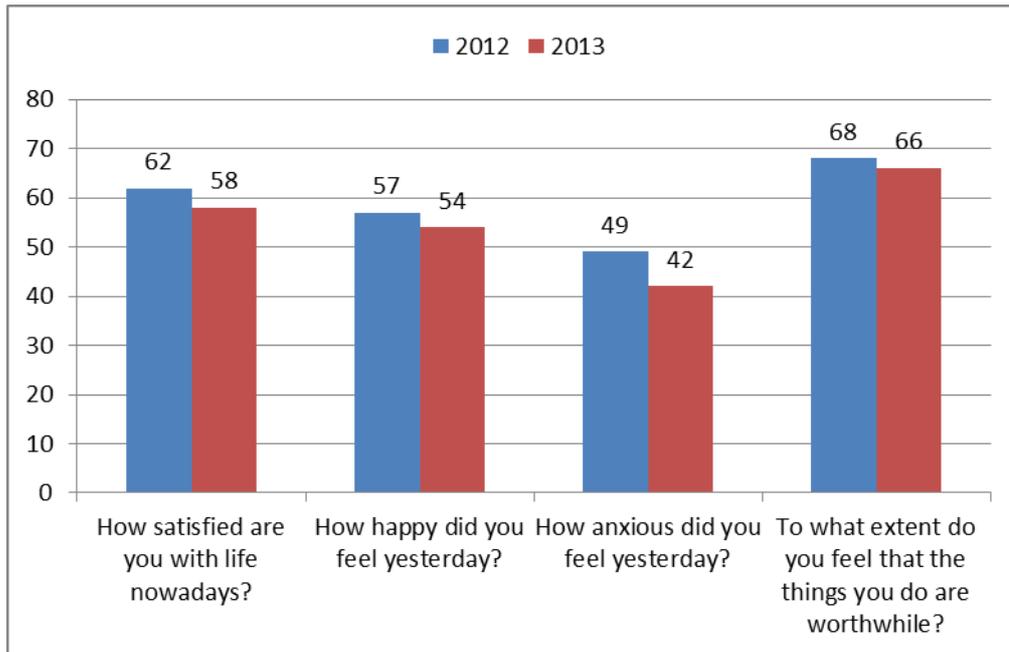
Figure 15: DfE Well-being scores 2012 and 2013 by % of positive responses.

In summary of these well-being questions, the results indicate that employees in the Department for Education staff survey and the 2012-13 survey are less happy and more anxious when asked about a recent fixed point in time (yesterday) than people in the wider population. Overall satisfaction with life and feeling that the things one does in life are worthwhile are also lower in the employed groups than in the wider population. This may be due to the experience of change, but may also be related to other factors outside of the direct remit of this research. This may include, for example, being employed. However, the year on year outcomes of the Departmental staff surveys from 2009 onwards provides support for the hypothesis that employees experiencing prolonged, unstructured periods of change have lower subjective well-being than the wider population.

The 2012-13 survey results for the well-being questions for each group were compared to the total hope score using a Pearson correlation co-efficient. The pattern of hopes scores indicate a relationship between each of the four well-being questions and the total hope score. This was then tested using a chi square analysis which supported a statistically significant relationship between overall life satisfaction and hope. (X^2 is 6.06, 2 degrees of freedom)

and happy yesterday and hope (X^2 is 5.30, 2 degrees of freedom). No such relationship was confirmed using chi-square between 'worthwhile' or 'anxious yesterday' and hope. The calculations for this analysis can be found at appendix I.

7.5 Summary and discussion of Key Results

The findings from the comparison of staff survey data between 2009 and 2013 broadly indicate an overall decline in organisational engagement of employees. On the question, 'I have a clear understanding of my organisation's purpose' there is a decline of 12% between 2009 and 2010, then a modest increase in 2011 and further decline in 2012. Overall, positive responses of those who agreed or strongly agreed to the question are 7% lower in 2012 than in 2009. A similar pattern of response was found to the question, 'I have a clear understanding of my organisation's objectives' which also had the lowest number of positive responses in 2010 and an overall decline between 2009 and 2012 of 9%.

This pattern of responses again repeats for the question, 'I understand how my work contributes to my organisation's objectives'. The year 2010 again has the lowest number of positive responses with an overall decline between 2009 and 2012 of 5%. The pattern of responses is more negative for the question, 'my organisation motivates me to achieve its objectives' with a year on year decline in positive responses between 2009 and 2012. There is an overall decline of positive responses across these years of 13%.

For each of the four questions there are two important issues to consider. The first is that for each question in 2009, the percentage of positive responses was near to, (albeit slightly below) the mean response rate for the same question in the 2012-13 survey. It is important to note that this sample was collected only once across a short period in 2012 and 2013, around the time that the 2012 staff survey was completed. By 2012 there is an evidential gap across all questions between employees in the staff survey and a sample of employees across the wider range of sectors in the 2012-13 survey, even though a high proportion of responses include Department for Education staff.

The second issue to consider is to question the relevance of the year 2010 or the period preceding the 2010 staff survey; 2009-2010 as across three of the four questions positive responses were lowest for this year. Looking at the

timeline of key events at appendix A, it is evident that the dissolution of the Learning and Skills Council non-departmental government body took place at this time with the transfer of staff to the newly created Young People's Learning Agency and Skills Funding Agency. Those staff, who later transferred into the Education Funding Agency (part of the Department for Education) during that period around 2011 would not have been included in the staff survey data for 2009 and 2010, but it is probable that this change reflected wider changes in government priorities at that time. In addition, the Labour Government of 2009 was preparing for the General Election in May, 2010. This period of preparation brings many changes to government priorities and spending which appears to have contributed to lower organisational understanding at that time.

One possible explanation for the decline across the four questions of organisational understanding is as a result of the increased job insecurity over the period of the change. This may result where an employer, especially one such as the civil service known for job security, breaks the psychological contract of its employees. However, whilst this may appear to be a logical conclusion, evidence from literature appears to contradict this explanation. Evidence deduced from employees on temporary and short-term contracts have been found to have consistently higher levels of well-being; they are happier, more satisfied and motivated than employees on permanent contracts (Burchell, 2010). This goes against what may be expected as logically, employees on permanent contracts should have greater job security. However, those on temporary or short-term contracts do not have the same commitment to the psychological contract with their employer. Furthermore, in many instances the employer of employees on short-term contracts is a third-party such as a recruitment agency.

Whilst it is not possible to isolate the change process as the cause of this decline it is likely to have had an impact. Key however, is that during that four-year period of continuous change, interventions aimed at improving efficiencies have not only failed to prevent the decline in employee understanding, it appears to have made the position worse. Initiative fatigue

and a lack of shared vision are recognised pitfalls which can prevent successful change programmes in organisations (Pullin, 2002). Furthermore, models of continuous improvement which aim to take each part of a business process, improve it and put it back together can only be successful in the overall context of an informed programme of change, and not undertaken on an ad hoc basis which is reactive to changing priorities.

A relationship between hope and organisational understanding was found in the 2012-13 survey and may also have been apparent in the 2009-2013 staff surveys had it been measured. It would be very interesting to know if hope scores would have decreased alongside overall organisational understanding or as the trait hope scale was used, would it have remained stable if it had been measured in the staff surveys? The relationship between hope and organisational engagement would be an area for further research, especially if this could be conducted longitudinally. Such an approach has been proposed (see Avey et al. 2008) as a process by which inference can be made on causality. It may also provide evidence to support the stability of hope as measured through the Adult Trait Hope Scale.

A positive correlation was found between employees in the 2012-13 survey reporting happiness at work and understanding their organisations purpose and role. This suggests that employees benefit in terms of this contribution to their psychological well-being by understanding their organisational role and purpose. Perhaps this is about understanding 'who I am' and 'what I do' and being able to articulate that to colleagues, family and friends. Maslow (Maslow, 1970) recognised this need for self-esteem, and this position, whilst not unchallenged, has yet to be dismissed as a necessary component for individual satisfaction, emotional and cognitive development in the workplace. Self-esteem has also been found to correlate positively with hope (Ciarrochi et al. 2007) in literature.

What is unclear without further research is the direction of the relationship between happiness at work and organisational understanding in this study. Are employees who understand their organisations role and purpose happier at work as a result, or are happier employees more likely to want to engage

and take time to understand their organisations role and purpose? Could it be a combination of the two? This issue of causality and direction of relationship is discussed further in the final discussion and conclusion (chapter 9). In spite of this there are benefits for the employer in understanding this relationship and taking action to articulate organisational role, purpose and objectives.

From the results taken from the 2012-13 study, mean hope of 48.54 is slightly lower (less than 0.5 points) than reported by the developer of the Adult Hope Trait Scale (Snyder, 2002). This is not a significant difference and validates the use of the Adult Hope Trait Scale as a consistent measure of trait hope for people in organisations. Other studies (Pearlman et al. 1990 and Irwing et al. 1990) have found hope scores to be up to four points lower than the standard normalised mean of 49 published by Snyder et al. (1991). However these groups include psychiatric in and out patients. Whilst 0.5 points is not statistically significant it could be argued that it is still relevant and if not due to variations in the population then it could reflect the impact of on-going change. However it would not be possible to conclude this without a longitudinal analysis which sought to measure the difference in hope score across a period of significant change. Furthermore, the Adult Hope Trait Scale, unlike the State Hope Scale aims to measure trait hope which is thought to be more stable and resilient to external pressures and as such it could be expected that variations due to 'change' should be mitigated against and reduced. Further research comparing the two scales is needed however, due to the similarities of the scales.

The statistically significant relationship between hope and two of the four aspects of well-being was confirmed. Overall, life satisfaction was found to be positively related to hope score and 'happiness yesterday' was statistically linked to hope. The evaluative aspects of asking respondents how satisfied they are relates well to the idea of goal setting behaviour; the ability to articulate and attain goal outcomes. The concept of happiness is strongly linked to life satisfaction through the original model of authentic happiness (Seligman, 2005) and to the revised model of happiness as one intrinsically linked to well-being theory (Seligman, 2011). However no statistically significant relationship was found between hope and feeling that the things

undertaken in life are worthwhile. This could be expected as hope, happiness and satisfaction are also aspects of positive belief. It should not be assumed therefore that it is inevitable that positive feelings will correlate since each aspect measures a different construct. It is possible to be 'hopeful' but not 'happy' or to be 'dissatisfied with life' in general but 'happy yesterday'.

This is important in researching positive organisational behaviour that assumptions are not made which fail to recognise employee individuality. Furthermore, for research in this field to be seen as credible assumptions should not be made based on assumed 'truisms' rather than through the testing of hypotheses.

Happiness and life satisfaction are both considered to be positive indicators of wellbeing (Seligman, 2011, Raz, 2004, Xanthopoulou et al. 2012). Their positive relationship with hope supports the view that hope should be considered as an additional essential element for the measurement of employee well-being. As an ethically sound response, this provides a value for using the measurement of hope in the workplace away from the direct application of measuring hope as part of a recruitment process or in other ways which could detract from its value as a tool of positive psychology.

7.6 Hypotheses Re-visited

In summary the evidence presented in this section indicate support, or otherwise for the hypotheses:

Impact of change on organisational understanding: hypotheses

I. During extended periods of transitional change employee understanding or organisational purpose will fall. **Supported.**

II. During extended periods of transitional change employee understanding of their organisational objectives will fall. **Supported.**

III. During extended periods of transitional change employee understanding of how their work contributes to organisational objectives will fall. **Not supported.**

IV. During extended periods of transitional change employees will perceive that their organisation provides less motivational support to achieve organisational objectives. **Supported.**

Understanding the role of hope: hypotheses

V. There is a positive relationship between hope and employee understanding of their organisation's purpose and objectives. **Supported.**

VI. Employees with high individual hope are more likely to achieve and exceed their own performance objectives. **Supported.**

Employee hope and well-being: hypotheses

VII. Employees with high hope scores are more satisfied with life in general. **Supported.**

VIII. Employees with high hope scores are happier. **Supported.**

IX.   Employees with high hope scores are less anxious. **Supported.**

X. Employees with high hope will rate their belief that the things they do in life are more worthwhile than those with low hope. **Not supported.**

Conceptual Hypotheses

XI.   There will be conceptual differences between hope and well-being which will support a view that well-being is a measure of an individual in the present, whereas hope is a measure of future. **Supported.**

8. EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND WIDER LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Several themes emerged from the research which merit further consideration. These include a discussion of the methodological and epistemological approach to undertaking research on hope and well-being theory in an organisational context. The meaning of hope, links to well-being theory and their practical and ethical application to the workplace are discussed. In particular, the value of hope and well-being as constructs of psychological strength in the workplace are considered.

A number of issues arose during the course of the writing this thesis, which, having not been previously considered in full warrant a discussion as to their impact and influence on the findings. The first of these is a decision and desire to focus on trait hope as defined by hope theory (agency + pathways = goal outcomes) as a discrete construct rather than encompassing hope within the framework provided by psychological capital. This could be considered as a limitation of the research given evidence (Luthans et al. 2007) which suggests that measuring 'HERO' together may provide a stronger indication of outcomes than measuring hope alone. However the findings of this research support the view that assumptions about the positive correlational relationship between aspects of positive belief cannot be made. The hypothesis that those high in hope would alos consider that the things they do in life are worthwhile provided not to be supported. There is a danger in adopting PsyCap that constructs of positive psychology are considered to be as one.

The state-like requirements of PsyCap over hope theory is also challenging since a valuable strategy for the adoption of hope measurement in the workplace is the ability to provide benchmarked values of hope across different organisations. Since hope theory proposes that hope is both a trait and a state there is value for human resource management in benchmarking hope 'performance' but also in seeking development strategies to increase hope of employees. Evidence presented by Snyder et al. (1991b) and Snyder

et al. (1996) categorically differentiating between state and trait hope is inconvincing. In this regard support is given to Luthans et al. (2007) that it is perhaps better to think of hope as a continuum between state and trait. In this regard the issue of trait hope versus state hope is perhaps a red-herring since the body of evidence suggests that hope displays characteristics of both. More controversial perhaps is the claim that some measures of hope can differentiate between the two in isolation from each other. Furthermore, until there is a greater understanding of what hope 'looks like' in the workplace of a normal population it is perhaps unwise to introduce additional variables to those already introduced as a result of the attempt to measure national well-being.

A second issue is the justification for the methodological approach of using two additional secondary data sets as part of the research in addition to the 2012-13 author designed survey, when neither of the comparator sets included a measure of hope. The aim of the research was to consider the predictive value of hope in the workplace. A significant contribution of this thesis to the wider body of knowledge is that it was demonstrated that hope scores of employees are fairly consistent with previously published hope scores from university or psychiatric populations. The rationale for including five years of staff survey data was justified on the grounds that it provided a valuable context against which the research took place. This was a deliberate strategy to nurture managerial engagement with the research findings as a way of opening a dialogue on hope and well-being of employees. For this research to actually be seen as a valuable contribution there needs to be a way of ensuring the findings are immediately tangible and relevant.

Another benefit unrelated to hope is the demonstration of the value of longitudinal research techniques which portray a rich story of employee engagement over the five-year period. Until now staff survey data has only been presented year to year without any awareness of the culmulative impact over several years. This approach is perhaps ethically questionable because the presentation of the longitudinal data has been presented as part of a deliberate strategy to influence managers in presenting the findings to think about the other research outcomes. Research on positive psychology, well-

being or hope alone may have been more difficult to present, but this is easier in the context of first a discussion on the longitudinal outcomes relating to the departments own staff engagement survey data. This is followed by the introduction of well-being data from the 2012-13 survey and how that compares to the departmental data from the 2012 and 2013 staff surveys and the national comparisons. Finally hope can be introduced as a measure which purports to predict positive employee engagement. In the context of weak and declining staff engagement, hope is therefore presented alongside well-being as an opportunity to holistically measure the current and future state of employees. Whilst the widespread adoption of hope is unlikely at this stage this approach has opened the door to an acceptance of positive organisational behaviour in the widest sense.

Other issues which may be seen to undermine the credibility of the research concern the design of the 2012-13 survey. The decision to use Survey Monkey was initially difficult as it was felt that the survey may lack credibility over the software package (Trust) used at document four. The Trust package was invisibly hosted on the University server so it appeared not to have a commercial connection, but it was beset with issues, namely that every question if unanswered would default to 'prefer not to say' which could not be resolved for this thesis. This meant that it was easy for respondents to miss one or more of the responses required to calculate the Adult Hope Trait Scale score. In piloting the 2012-13 survey on five respondents, no issue was raised about the hosting of the survey on Survey Monkey and indeed further reassurance came when the Department for Education began to use it for their externally facing customer service surveys. There were some advantages to using Survey Monkey, namely around functionality and the ability to filter respondents based upon their responses to particular questions. This 'split logic' was used to direct only respondents who stated they were 'employed' to further questions about their organisational understanding and performance objectives. Another advantage was the ability to separate sections of questions onto different pages as they appeared to the respondent on screen. Such psychological separation so-called (Podsakoff et al. 2003: p887) has two benefits; firstly to make the survey appear less daunting to complete than one very long page of questions. The second benefit is to

make it appear that the measurement of the predictor variable (hope or well-being) is not connected with the criteria variables (well-being, performance objectives or organisational questions).

The sample size of 242 responses was considered an acceptable response rate although it was disappointing that 61 respondents (25%) skipped the Adult Hope Trait Scale questions. Response rates on the other questions varied between 180 responses (question 16) to 195 responses (questions 6, 8 and 8). One reason for this was respondent choice as only some questions (those marked with an * in appendix G) required a response before the respondent could move onto the next question. The second reason was that a filter (split logic) was applied so only the 212 employed respondents were able to complete the questions related to their performance review or organisational understanding.

The use of secondary data as part of the thesis presented key issues worthy of discussion. The first concerns the format of accessible data. The Office for National Statistics does not publically provide raw data of actual numbers of respondents. The available data included a percentage of responses against their pre-defined brackets (0-4, 5-6 and 7-10 for the satisfaction, happy and worthwhile and 0-1, 2-3, 4-5 and 6-10 for anxious) and the mean score for all respondents. This meant that to enable a comparison to be made with the Department for Education staff survey data and the 2012-13 data, the information needed to be presented in the same way. There was no option therefore to be more sophisticated in terms of looking at responses across different groupings. Using secondary data from the Department for Education staff survey also meant that the inclusion of questions were limited to those prescribed within the survey. Ideally there would have been well-being data across all years although the inclusion of these questions only in 2012 reflects the changing political view of the importance of measuring societal well-being at that time.

The success of this research is predicated upon the accepted use of the Adult Hope Trait Scale as a tool to measure trait hope of individuals within any context, including that of an organisational environment. The rationale of

using this scale over other hope scales was discussed in depth at document four (Rukin Pursglove, 2012) and was justified in that a one-time measure of hope of respondents was taken which lends itself more to the trait over the state hope scale. The prevailing view of the Adult Hope Trait Scale is that it is a scale which measures the enduring nature of individual hope. However the slightly lower mean hope score found in this study compared to the published mean of 49 (Snyder, 2002) whilst consistent with studies of psychiatric in and out patients (Pearlman et al. 1990; Irwing et al. 1990) may be indicative of the impact of sustained periods of change on employees. However, there is no way to ascertain this without a repeat study using the Adult State Hope Scale longitudinally over a period of time. Such research may also be helpful in understanding the differences in state and trait hope and the validity of the respective scales in relation to these. In further developing understanding of the value of measuring hope in the workplace, one suggestion would be to include a measure of hope alongside well-being in annual staff surveys.

There is a realisation that in reaching this point the epistemological standpoint of the researcher has evolved since previous research considering hope, was undertaken at documents three and four. At document four in particular, an empirically realist approach was adopted since this enabled the understanding of hope to develop over time. An empirically realist approach asserts that the reality of hope could be understood through the appropriate application of a suitable methodology. Understanding hope as an empirical concept relies upon an acceptance that scales such as the Adult Hope Trait Scale enable hope to be measurable. Agency is a key element of hope theory and yet the drive to achieve goal outcomes is in itself difficult to define or measure. Since respondents who achieved their performance objectives were found to have hope scores above the mean it is possible to conclude that in the workplace the meaning of hope relates to the attainment of individual goals.

Bhaskar, (1989: p2) describes empirical realism as superficial, as such an epistemology can fail to recognise that there are underlying structures to the phenomena.' Further to document four and with increased understanding and awareness of hope theory and well-being as the phenomena in question, it

was recognised that the more substantial critical realism may be more appropriate. Alongside this, it can be argued that hope, like well-being is a socially constructed phenomena since expectation and goal-setting behaviour is socially determined. In other words the goal is self-set and therefore culturally or socially constructed. Hope theory, on the other hand is a process for determining goal outcomes. This process is universal so it could be argued that whilst hope is a social construction, hope theory is not. It could not be expected that undertaking the same survey as the 2012-13 survey used for this research would yield the same outcomes in, say Japan or the United States where cultural norms differ to the United Kingdom. That said, hope has been found to be culturally universal (Chang and Banks, 2007) in challenging the assumption held by Snyder that ethnic minority groups would have lower hope because, on average, they face greater adversity (Roesch et al. 2010). Positivists expect the science of hope to transcend culture in addition to being empirically testable and yet, whilst hope score may be used to predict likely behaviour of individuals in their organisation it is not an absolute prediction. That is to say that hope score is not a fool proof method for predicting which employees will meet their own and organisational objectives, rather it is just an indicator of it. Indeed, to refer back to the original aspiration of this thesis which was to consider if there was a way to gauge individual differences between employees using a measure of hope, it is difficult to conclude that this has been achieved. Since the research considers mean outcomes in a quantitative format, some aspects of individuality whilst not without value, may have been lost. In this regard, it may have been beneficial to supplement this research with the inclusion of some semi-structured interviews to provide a richer context for the findings within the context of a critically realist approach.

For a while it was felt that a combined critical realist perspective and social constructionism could not be compatible as a way of viewing hope theory. The alignment of an approach which adopts both critical realism and social constructionism may appear as a contradiction. However there is precedent for research using such an approach in relation to housing theory. (Fopp, 2008). Although the social construction is described as 'weak' in the sense that it is, "modest, rejecting the relativistic implications of its stronger cousin,"

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the justification for a combined approach is strongly supported by a discussion of the merits across several epistemologies. Weak social construction recognises that reality is socially constructed. However realism allows for an acceptance that individuals are capable of personal reflection upon their circumstances, perhaps through periods of organisational change. Choices made during these events cannot be scientifically predicted as they are influenced and determined by societal expectation and pressures. Realism it seems can be compatible with moderate constructionism (Shilling, 2005). Whilst true social constructionists may deny the reality of such an existence and positivists may deny hope in its empirical form, their conclusion is that hope is best considered from a socially constructed critical realist perspective. This epistemology, whilst supporting the ontological position and methodological approach also allows for theoretical debate of the underlying mechanisms behind hope and well-being. This could include a debate about the prominence of hope as a strength of character in predicting well-being and the relationship between the attainment of individual and organisational goals. This is helpful in explaining and rationalising some of the outcomes which, taken at face value could be morally unpalatable.

Ethically it is, in many ways fortuitous that hope theory can only predict a likelihood of success in individual goal-setting behaviour rather than being an absolute predictor of it. A conclusion which may be drawn from this research is that employers should seek to employ individuals who are high in hope as they are more likely to achieve their own and organisational objectives, be more satisfied and happier at work. The aim of this research is certainly not to render those with low hope scores as unemployable although it is not inconceivable to consider this as a long-term outcome if the inclusion of an un-moderated measure of hope score as part of recruitment or in the workplace were to become popular. Psychometric testing of employees is commonplace but since difference employers value different traits this results in few groups being universally undesirable. The predicament for hope theory is to explain the benefits of low hope or else find evidence to demonstrate that it is possible to teach hope to overcome this perceived shortfall in desirability.

Researchers have argued that it is possible to instil hope (Larsen et al., 2007) and there is a multitude of literature (e.g. Gruwell, 2009) which explore the idea of increasing hope without considering it against the framework set out in hope theory as a means for goal attainment. It is not too far a step to consider that the ethereal view of hope as a positive belief could conclude with hope as a concept for successful goal outcome although this does not necessarily mean that it will be possible for individual employees to learn to be more hopeful.

Further work in this area is clearly warranted in understanding the value and meaning of hope in the workplace.

9. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

One of the principals of the DBA stated in the course handbook (2009) is to help 'change practice as well as understand it'. These practical implications apply at an individual and organisational level and as a wider contribution to knowledge.

At an individual level the research has enabled me as a researcher manager to become much more reflexive in understanding that my colleagues adopt their own perspectives in undertaking tasks, when work of our teams' overlaps. Good reflexivity "emphasises the need for sensitivity to other viewpoints." (Van de Ven, 2007:p291). The vision of the organisation has changed slightly too. There has been a recognition and articulation of a need to think beyond headline strategy based on Government priorities and to focus on our most important resource; our staff. The newly created role of the Head of Service Improvement and team gives an important message to staff that the organisation recognises the need for continuous improvement rather than change. Staff survey data and well-being responses have become increasingly important to understand how to support individual staff development.

Within the organisational context, the four questions of well-being that came from the Office for National Statistics and were used to support this thesis were repeated in the staff survey in 2013 and 2014.   Baseline data has been used to compare this part of the civil service against the civil service as a whole and nationally against the wider population. To date the evidence has suggested that well-being is consistently lower in the Department for Education than other departments and across the UK population as a whole. This data has been used to provide the evidence base to justify recently introduced interventions such as programmes of support to improve staff well-being, a set of site specific well-being groups and to encourage a better work-life balance. The well-being group in particular offers, for the first time, the opportunity to discuss ways in which well-being can be integrated holistically

into the working lives of the organisation's employees. It is a significant step forward in accepting an approach which utilises the findings from this research and moves the Department towards adopting the benefits of psycap.

Whilst there are currently no plans to measure hope across the organisation the testing of the applicability of the Adult Hope Trait Scale has validated an approach to measure hope alongside well-being in the future and in other organisations seeking such a measurement tool to bring about change.

The measurement of hope and well-being is however being measured as part of a pilot development programme for new staff alongside a psychometric tool for assessing development areas. Early feedback from staff involved in the pilot is positive. If successful this programme could be rolled out for all new starters and for existing staff who are seeking a career change or progression within the organisation.

As a wider contribution to knowledge the practical implications of this research are that this research pulls together a number of themes or explanations of individual behaviour towards the attainment of individual and organisational goals. These are discussed in greater detail in the following section.

10. FINAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the thesis are intriguing. Hope as a characteristic or strength of personality appears to predict employees who are more likely to positively engage with their organisation. Staff survey data of the four questions of organisational engagement broadly indicate a decline in understanding of, and belief in the organisation during the change period. These findings appear to support the view that the organisation, the Department for Education, at present, is experiencing change and initiative fatigue. Where employees passively accept change, but do not engage with it could be due to a number of factors including poor communication with staff, failing to explain the benefits of change and lack of strategic direction. Hope scores appear to be a predictor of employees who have greater organisational understanding and believe their organisation motivates them to achieve its objectives. This position may be unique to this organisation. However, studies conducted across other organisations including case study analysis across several employers (Renwick, 2003) indicates a worse position more broadly across employee engagement, with inconsistent approaches across human resources and managers, even across different teams in the same organisation. As such, one explanation of the overall decline in organisational understanding, whilst acknowledging that the questions of employee engagement in the Renwick study and organisational engagement in this thesis are different , may be that the past five years of staff surveys have been levelling in line with national averages from a very high base in 2009. Of course, the decrease in overall organisational understanding from the 2009-2013 staff surveys may also be due to other factors, some of which are difficult to evidence. Benchmarking may be a useful tool to bridge this gap. "Benchmarking offers evidence, not theory, that ideas invested elsewhere can work, opening the doors for innovation." (NCUED, 1996: p76).

One view is that since the downturn in economic prosperity in the United Kingdom, recession and changes in government, it has become necessary to make efficiency savings. As a deliberate strategy or not, it could be said that in the last few years the government has adopted an antagonistic view

towards civil servants. This can be evidenced by an increase in the scapegoating of Civil servants over Ministers. This criticism of the Government was made by the former cabinet secretary (the head of the civil service), Lord O'Donnell (Wright, 2013) as a means of deflecting blame from ministerial decisions. Civil servants whose purpose is to translate ministerial decisions into policy and operational delivery are prevented from responding publically by the 'Civil Service Code' (The Civil Service, 1996). Opinion polls of government are reported to improve in line with criticism of the civil service by government ministers (Wright, 2013).

The second perceived benefit of the government adopting an antagonistic strategy towards the civil service is that it creates an unhappy, unpleasant working environment which may encourage civil servants to leave. Compulsory redundancies are unpopular and will be strongly contested by the Unions, but it should be recognised that the civil service is already at its smallest since 1945 (Times, 2013) with one in three of all civil servants leaving since 2010. The government now propose to reduce the civil service from around 444,000 to 380,000 employees.

The press and media who it could be argued hold government to account, have been quick to publicise examples of perceived waste and a focus on the civil service, perhaps encouraged by government, deflects attention away from a coalition seeking re-election, together or independently of each other, in two years' time.

Maybe the diminished organisational understanding by employees simply reflects a lack of strategic direction provided by the current government and translated across civil service departments to employees. It would therefore be interesting to compare the staff survey data from the Department for Education to another department as this may provide an opportunity to consider the wider influence of government strategy over and above the changes taking place in one area.

In addition, the cumulative effect of the transitional process over such a long period of time, may account for the difference in well-being scores between

the data from the Office for National Statistics 2011-2012 and the Department for Education, 2012. On all positive indicators; happiness yesterday, feeling that the things undertaken are worthwhile and life satisfaction were all lower and anxiety higher for employees than across the general population. These findings may show the negative impact of a change process on individuals, but may also show that people who are employed are less happy, less satisfied, have less belief that the things undertaken are worthwhile and are more anxious than the wider population. However, preliminary findings of the Office for National Statistics data, repeated for the period 2012-2013 shows an increase in well-being of the wider population over the previous year. This increase of 1.1% of the sample of 165,000 indicating their life satisfaction as 7 out 10 or above has been attributed to a decline in UK unemployment (BBC, 2013b). However, it is not possible to deduce from this evidence alone whether the reason why employees in the 2013 staff survey appear to have lower overall well-being is because they are employed or another factor such as the change process, although data (ONS, 2013c) from the 2012-13 national survey of well-being in the annual population survey indicates that employed people have higher levels of positive well-being and lower levels of 'feeling anxious yesterday' than both unemployed and inactive groups. With access to the full data set from the 2011-12 annual population survey from the Office for National Statistics it would be possible to compare employed to non-employed individuals in the year studied.

The findings from the 2012-2013 survey do appear to support a view of goal congruence as respondents who responded positively to all four questions of organisational understanding had high mean hope scores. So respondents who are most likely to attain goal outcomes through the hope theory process of agentic thinking and pathways actions are more likely to respond that they understand how their work contributes to organisational objectives and believe their organisation motivates them to achieve. One explanation of these findings is that hope may act to counter negative beliefs and as such, one might expect that the direction of the causal relationship to follow, that individuals who are high in hope are more likely to understand their organisations role and purpose, to believe that their work contributes to organisational objectives and to believe that their organisation motivates them

as individuals towards achieving objectives on behalf of their organisation. Hope theory would suggest that an individual is more likely to attain a goal objective because they are driven by agentic thinking to follow the pathways needed. The knowledge and belief that goals are achievable will in itself give confidence which may then apply across other aspects of employment, such as those areas set of by the four questions of organisational understanding. The findings do appear to evidence that individuals most likely to achieve their own goal outcomes are also most likely to understand and support the attainment of their organisational objectives.

Evidence was also found to support many of the hypotheses which support the understanding of a relationship between hope and well-being. Statistical relationships were found to suggest an association between hope and 'happiness' and hope and 'satisfaction'. However no such relationship was found between hope and 'anxiety' and hope and 'worthwhile'. This supports the view that hope and well-being as defined by these four elements are conceptually different. However, it is too early to draw conclusions about the concurrent validity of the four well-being questions as a construct to define well-being, because literature in this field is still emerging. In relation to figure 3 in chapter 4, section 2, the view that hope is statistically related to 'happiness' and 'satisfaction', the questions for which are both subjective and hedonic may reflect a view of hope as a state which is transient rather than a trait which is more stable over time. Ideally, it would be interesting to repeat the 2012-13 again using the Adult State Hope Scale to test this hypothesis with a larger sample size that the 242 participants included here. One possible explanation for the relationship between hope and two aspects of well-being (happiness and life satisfaction) is that hope affects individual perception of subjective well-being. This is a view put forward by Werner, (2012) who found that across a similarly sized sample to this thesis, of 172 individuals with serious mental illness, hope was found to be a strong predictor of subjective well-being (a co-efficient of 0.52). In the Werner study, hope was measured using 'the hope scale' although it is unclear if this is the state or trait hope scale. From the year given (Snyder et al. 1991) it can be assumed that the scale is the Adult Hope Trait Scale, the same scale used in this thesis. Subjective well-being, however, was measured using the

Personal Well-being Index which consists of a number of different domains focussing on eight questions around life satisfaction. As such, this supports the view that hope and life satisfaction are related although neither this thesis not the Werner study provides evidence of the direction of the relationship, suffice to say that a link between hope and satisfaction is apparent.

Earlier researchers have been more confident in determining the direction of the relationship. In particular, Park, Peterson and Seligman (2004) report that hope, as one strength of character can predict life satisfaction. Of the 24 strengths simultaneously associated with life satisfaction, several were found to predict this aspect of well-being. In response, in a metaphor based on George Orwell's 'Animal Farm', Snyder, (2004) states that not all strengths are equal and that hope is at the forefront, although this is not based on any further assessment of the findings. Whilst Park et al. (2004) agree the value of hope; it is made clear that other strengths may have a stronger association with life satisfaction. As such there is an argument to say that the value of hope in the workplace is to consider it as a more holistic view of well-being which includes hope as a future-looking component.

Hope as a concept has already begun the process of acceptance and challenge within its own academic discipline, positive psychology. It is argued that both hope and well-being emerged from the same intellectual paradigm and both developed knowledge within mode two (Gibbons et al. 1994). It is further argued that the process for acceptance of hope is further established, that theoretical knowledge and understanding of hope theory has commenced and as such hope has become established in mode one. In ten years' time, when the political imperative of the recession which gave rise to this definition of well-being has passed, perhaps well-being will also have become established in mode one or else dropped from the political agenda and need to problem solve that defines mode two knowledge. Furthermore, that hope and well-being are related in some aspects, but not across all four elements supports the conceptual hypothesis that well-being may be a measure of the condition of an individual at the present time, whereas hope is forward looking. This view cannot be clearly deduced from the findings alone but is presented as a hypothetical or 'generative mechanism' (Bhaskar, 1989:p2)

which explains the more holistic view of well-being theory. According to a critical realism perspective, it is important to arbitrate between theories and to seek a theory which appears to be most explanatory, whilst being aware that the components of knowledge are constructed in the social world (Fopp, 2008). It could, however be argued that much research is undertaken without too much consideration being given to epistemology. This can be advantageous since the research will reflect the natural position of the author without being based artificially on the constraints of a particular epistemology.

The value of this research therefore, from an organisational perspective is from the increased knowledge of the relationship between employee understanding of their organisation, well-being and the ability to attain individual and organisational goal outcomes. The ability to measure hope is a powerful tool with an unhelpful title for individual employees in organisations. From a personal perspective the implications of this thesis on the authors professional practice are discussed at document six alongside a critical reflection of the process undergone and findings.

In summary of this, the findings of the thesis have supported real and evidential changes in professional practice which could not have been foreseen at the outset of the process. The early findings from the longitudinal analysis of the 2009-2013 staff survey data was presented to Management Board. Until that point in time staff survey outcomes were only reflected upon on a year to year basis with the data compared to the previous year. As such, the overall position between 2009 and 2013 had not been considered. In this respect it appeared as if there had been short-term organisational memory loss which failed to identify the longer term staff perceptions which had been captured. The first immediate outcome of this thesis has been to change this approach to considering staff survey outcomes over a longer period to identify on-going trends and how these may relate to the prevailing political climate. The thesis supports the use and value of longitudinal analysis in organisations as a measure of where the organisation is and how it compares to an earlier position. In one sense such analysis is the ultimate benchmarking, especially for organisations which are reasonable unique in their purpose or services offered.

The second outcome has been an agreement as to the value of measuring subjective well-being of staff, both in order to be able to make comparisons between years, but also to benchmark against the national picture provided by the Office for National Statistics. Less progress has been made with the findings relating to hope at an organisational level although work around this is in development with a smaller study involving semi-structured interviews currently in planning for the next performance round starting next April. It is anticipated that hope will be measured using the Adult Hope Trait Scale with one half of the team located in one office and the Adult State Hope Scale with the remainder of the team located in another office. This will be repeated at the end of the performance review period twelve months later. The aim of this is two-fold; firstly to explore any differences between the two scales in an organisational context, but also to begin to assess how practical it may be to include a measure of hope for all staff as part of the performance review process. Possible, wider applications of using hope theory, for example in recruitment, have not been considered at this stage.

The process of undertaking this doctoral programme has, on an individual level provided confidence, knowledge and tools to undertake and analyse further research. The part of the organisation in which the author works has recognised a need to consider how to develop staff taking individual differences into account. As a consequence, a new role, Head of Service Improvement was created for me to fulfil this organisational requirement. Part of that role requires brokerage across the academic and professional spheres, taking on board the theoretical application of knowledge of positive psychology (mode one), applying and testing it through action research (mode two) to the workplace through individual and team development activities.

The future direction of research in this area is expanding. The recent and emerging literature on prospection (Seligman et al. 2013) provides future direction for further research illustrated in figure 14 below. Unlike hope theory which suggests a linear process and which asserts that pathways and agency are applied to attain a goal outcome, prospection is guidance towards future behaviour based on evaluative representation of present states. Prospection

places a greater emphasis on evaluation of experiences than hope theory despite the recognition of both trait and state, or situational hope. At this present time no measure exists to quantify prospection although the theory may account for specific employee behaviours in attaining goal as a result of their experience. This could potentially address one of the key weaknesses identified in the evaluation and critique of hope theory. It is, however, recognised that it is challenging to measure and quantify cognitive processes required to achieve goal attainment although a qualitative case-study approach of individual thought processes my shed further light on this theory.
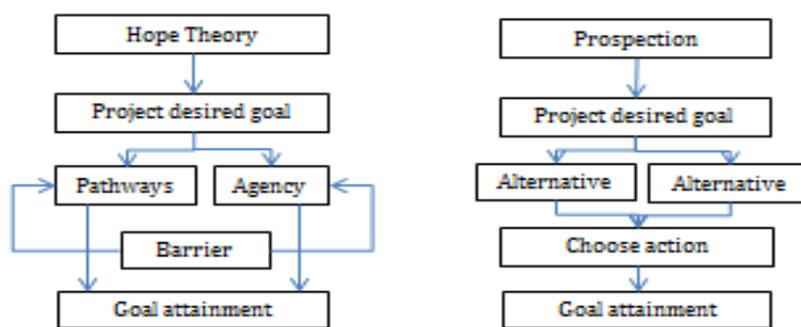
Figure 16: Theoretical differences between hope theory and prospection

Further research may be considered which reviews the application of measures of PsyCap as an alternative to measuring hope and well-being.

The value for professional practice however is to provide practical applications in the workplace. For now at least the proposed approach of measuring well-being and hope provides the most holistic understanding of present condition of employees and prediction of their future success in goal attainment. This in turn can be used to support individual employees through their performance review process. In doing so would achieve the likeliest outcome that individuals in achieving their own objectives would support organisational goal outcomes.

Appendix A:

Timeline of Machinery of Government Changes

April 2001   The Learning and Skills Council is established by the Learning & Skills Act from 72 Training and Enterprise Councils and the transfer of the functions from the Further Education Funding Council.

                            The Department for Education and Skills created from a merger of the Department for Education and Employment and the Department for Work and Pensions.

February 2005   Agenda for Change programme announced. 'Theme 7' as part of the Agenda for Change is an organisational restructure of all posts within the Learning and Skills Council.

May-June 2006   Learning and skills Council staff operating under 'work to rule' following unresolved agreement over the number of proposed redundancies (1,300) as part of 'theme 7'.

June 2007   Gordon Brown, prime minister, announces that the Department for Education and Skills will be replaced by two new Departments and that the Learning and Skills Council will be dissolved to align to the new Departments. These changes are termed, 'Machinery of Government'.

June 2007   Department for Education and Skills (DFES) split into the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

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December 2009	'Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning bill' receives Royal Assent. This allows for the dissolution of the Learning and skills Council by September 2010 following the creation of 'successor bodies'.
September 2008	'Shadow' National Apprenticeship Service created.
April 2009	National Apprenticeship Service formally established. First tranche of LSC staff transfer.
September 2009	'Shadow' Young People's Learning Agency and 'shadow' Skills Funding Agency created.
April 2010	Formal establishment (by an act of parliament) of the Young People's Learning Agency, a non-departmental government body (also known as a quango) and the Skills Funding Agency, part of the mainstream civil service. The National Apprenticeship Service becomes a discreet department within the Skills Funding Agency.
	Responsibility for commissioning of provision for 16-18 year olds and 16-25 year olds with a learning difficulty assessment transfers to the Local Authorities.
	Remaining Learning and Skills Council staff transfer under TUPE to the Skills Funding Agency, Young People's Learning Agency, Local Authorities, Government Office, Regional Development Agencies or the Department.
May 2010	General Election. Labour Government replaced by a Conservative/ Liberal democrat coalition.
May 2010	George Osborne announces a £500 billion 'Bonfire of the Quangos' as part of efficiency savings.

	Department for Education created bringing together all the education functions of the DIUS and DCSF.
October 2010	First 200 'quangos' (non-departmental government bodies) are scrapped. Young People's Learning Agency highlighted as being 'under review'.
October 2010	Government announces the 'Spending Review'. The Young People's Learning Agency will be dissolved and replaced by a new body, the Education Funding Agency.
April 2012	Creation of the Education Funding Agency.
October 2012	Announcement of closure of six Education Funding Agency locations by April 2014.
November 2012-February 2013	Voluntary redundancy round open for all staff.
July 2013	All staff in Young People Group move to new roles within a new structure, or take voluntary redundancy.

Appendix B:

Glossary of key definitions

Adult Hope Trait Scale (AHTS)- A tool devised by C. R. Snyder to measure trait hope. The AHTS consists of 12 questions; four each of agency, pathways and distractor items each with a response ranging from 1-8. The sum of agency and pathways is combined to give the hope score ranging from 8 to 60.

Agency- The internal motivation or drive to attain a positive goal outcome.

Agentic thinking- Positive thinking and drive to consider pathways to reach the goal outcome.

Barriers- Events or circumstances which may prevent the attainment of a goal outcome. An individual high in hope will be driven (agency) to find alternative ways (pathways) to reach their goal.

Hope- A positive motivational state which can be used to predict successful goal attainment through agentic thinking and pathways actions which together overcome barriers to success.

Pathways- The actions, processes or events required to attain the goal outcome.

POB- Acronym for Positive Organisational Behaviour

PsyCap- Abbreviation of Psychological Capital.

Teology- The selection of actions in light of goals.

Well-being- A healthy, contented or prosperous condition which is subjective to individual perception.

Appendix C:

Permission to use the Adult Hope Trait Scale

"If a questionnaire is on our website, that means the author wanted to make it available for download and usage."

Best,

Peter

On Jul 23, "Rukin Lorna (YPLA)" <Lorna.Rukin@ypla.gov.uk> wrote:

> Thank you for the response. The author was C R Snyder (now deceased).

>

> As the scale is on your website can I use it for my research?

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Peter E. Schulman [mailto:schulman@sas.upenn.edu]

> Sent: 23 July 2010 16:07

> To: Rukin Lorna (YPLA)

> Subject: Re: Use of the Adult Hope Scale

>

> Hi Lorna,

>

> Sorry, but I don't know who the author of this scale is.

>

> Best,

> Peter

>

> On Jul 23, "Rukin Lorna (YPLA)" <Lorna.Rukin@ypla.gov.uk> wrote:

> > To whom it may concern,

> >

> > I am a doctoral student in the UK, studying at Nottingham Business School and I would like to seek permission to use Snyder's Adult Hope Scale as part of a questionnaire exploring the value of hope in the workplace. I appreciate the author is no longer with us and wondered if there was anybody else I needed to seek permission from in order to use the survey published on your website?

> >

> > Best wishes,

> >

> > Lorna Rukin

The Adult Hope Trait Scale   (Snyder et al, 1991b)

Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes YOU and put that number in the blank provided.

1. = Definitely False
2. = Mostly False
3. = Somewhat False
4. = Slightly False
5. = Slightly True
6. = Somewhat True
7. = Mostly True
8. = Definitely True

___ 1. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.

___ 2. I energetically pursue my goals.

___ 3. I feel tired most of the time.

___ 4. There are lots of ways around any problem.

___ 5. I am easily downed in an argument.

___ 6. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me.

___ 7. I worry about my health.

___ 8. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.

___ 9. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.

___10. I've been pretty successful in life.

___11. I usually find myself worrying about something.

___12. I meet the goals that I set for myself.

Note. When administering the scale, it is called The Future Scale. The agency subscale score is derived by summing items 2, 9, 10, and 12; the pathway subscale score is derived by adding items 1, 4, 6, and 8. The total Hope Scale score is derived by summing the four agency and the four pathway items.

Appendix E:

Covering Email to elicit responses

Dear friends and colleagues,

Please can you spare a few minutes to help me?
I am undertaking research for my Doctorate in Business Administration. For this final thesis I am looking at how people have adapted to changes that have taken place in their work environment over the last few years, to establish if there are ways that people could be better supported in achieving their goals and aspirations.

I would be really grateful if you could take the time (approx. 10 minutes) to complete the questions on the following survey found on the link below. All responses will be treated in the strictest of confidence and I have no way of tracking who has responded.

In order to increase the validity of my findings I need as many people as possible to respond. If you are able to, please share the link to the survey with friends and colleagues.
Please feel free to email any questions or comments you may have.

Thank you,
Lorna

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Lornadba

Appendix F:

Article to elicit survey responses

Five minutes with...Lorna Rukin
07/01/2013

Lorna Rukin is a Senior Adviser in the East Territorial team of the Education Funding Agency.

Lorna, tell us about what you do?

'We are a small team within the EFA responsible for funding and allocations for all 16-19 year olds and up to 25 for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities across a large geographic area. The funding allocated is largely formula based and we ensure that institutions and stakeholders understand the funding calculations. We also manage the wide variety of cases that arise during the year and any infrastructure changes. We provide support to the local authorities in the East Midlands and East of England as they fulfil their statutory duties in relation to the provision we fund. So whilst I'm based at the Coventry office I spend a lot of time in our Ruddington and Histon offices and out and about in the East territory.

'The work of the team is really varied. Recently I've been briefing providers about the forthcoming changes to the funding formula for 2013/14 and working closely with the local authorities on the transfer of funding for high needs students. This is coming up to our busiest time of the year when, in addition to working on the allocations, I will be assessing applications from local authorities to fill gaps in provision in their areas. We will also be receiving capital applications in January which is probably the annual event I enjoy working on the most as the outcomes are very tangible for the learners. I'm very fortunate in that what we do is really varied and is both rewarding and at times quite challenging.

'On a personal level, I love a good challenge. Last year I ran the London marathon for the first time raising more than £2500 for Whizz Kidz, a charity which provides specialist equipment for children. I started training shortly after the birth of my second son. This year my biggest challenge will be to finish the doctorate which I started four years ago whilst working for the Learning and Skills Council. It's broadly based upon organisational psychology and how aspects of positive belief such as hope and optimism can help people meet their own and their organisation's objectives through change. I'm still looking for people to take part in the survey. You can contribute to this by following this link.'

Return to Our People.

Appendix G:

2012-13 Research Survey

*Indicates a mandatory question

1. I understand that by completing this survey I am giving consent for my responses to be used anonymously for the purposes of research?

○ Yes

○ No

*2. What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

3. Which category below includes your age?

○ 20 and under

○ 21-29

○ 30-39

○ 40-49

○ 50-59

○ 60 or older

4. Would you consider that you are a follower of religion or faith?

○ Yes

○ No

*5. Which of the following categories best describes your main employment status?

○ Employed in the private sector

○ Employed in the public sector

○ Employed in the voluntary/ third sector

○ Self-employed

○ Not employed, looking for work

○ Not employed, NOT looking for work

○ Disabled, not able to work

6. How many different jobs or roles have you had in the last five years?

○ None

○ One

○ Two

○ Three

○ Four

○ Five or more

7. If you left your current role, how confident are you that you would find alternative role around the same salary and without needing to move house?

Very confident   Confident   Neither   Not very confident   Not at all confident   N/A

8. Thinking about the objectives of your current or most recent organisation and the objective setting process, how far do you agree with the statements below?

Strongly agree   Agree Neither   Disagree   Strongly disagree

I have a clear understanding of my organisation's purpose

I have a clear understanding of my organisation's objectives

I understand how my work contributes to my organisational objectives
My organisation motivates me to achieve its objectives

*9. Thinking about your last performance review at work, which one statement best describes the outcome?

○ I exceeded every target that was set

○ I met all my targets and I even exceeded some

○ I met all the targets set for me

○ I met most of the targets set for me

○ I met some of the targets set for me

○ I met none of the objectives set for me

○ Does not apply/ Prefer not to say

10. Was the decision to leave your last employment your choice or were you forced by circumstances beyond your control?

○ Own choice

○ Forced by circumstances beyond my control

○ Not applicable

*11. Thinking about the year ahead at work and at home, what are the key goals you would like to achieve?

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*12. Thinking about your most important goal, what will you need to do to achieve it?

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*13. Read each item carefully. Using the scale below select the number which best describes you.

1. = Definitely False
2. = Mostly False
3. = Somewhat False
4. = Slightly False
5. = Slightly True
6. = Somewhat True
7. = Mostly True
8. = Definitely True

I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.

I energetically pursue my goals.

I feel tired most of the time.

There are lots of ways around any problem.

I always lose in an argument.

I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me.

I worry about my health.

Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.

My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.

I've been pretty successful in life.

I usually find myself worrying about something.

I meet the goals that I set for myself.

*14. Please rate the following statement on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning very low and 10 meaning very high?
How satisfied are you with life nowadays?

Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in life are worthwhile?

Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?

Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

I am happy at work?

I am happy at home?

15. Which one of these statements best describes you?
- ○ If I want something in life, I go and get it
- ○ In life, what will be, will be
- ○ Don't know

16. Do you believe in karma or fate?
- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know

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Appendix H:

Summary of responses to 2012-13 survey

What is your gender?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Female	69.0%	167
Male	31.0%	75
	answered question	**242**
	skipped question	**0**

Which category below includes your age?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
20 and under	0.4%	1
21-29	15.7%	38
30-39	42.1%	102
40-49	26.4%	64
50-59	10.7%	26
60 or older	4.5%	11
	answered question	**242**
	skipped question	**0**

Would you consider that you are a follower of religion or faith?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Yes	34.0%	82
No	66.0%	159
	answered question	**241**
	skipped question	**1**

Which of the following categories best describes your main employment status?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Employed in the private sector	25.6%	62
Employed in the public sector	52.5%	127
Employed in the voluntary/ third sector	1.7%	4
Self-employed	7.9%	19
Not employed, looking for work	2.1%	5
Not employed, NOT looking for work	8.7%	21
Disabled, not able to work	1.7%	4
	answered question	**242**
	skipped question	**0**

How many different jobs or roles have you had in the last five years?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None	3.6%	7
One	28.2%	55
Two	31.3%	61
Three	17.9%	35
Four	11.8%	23
Five or more	7.2%	14
answered question		**195**
skipped question		**47**

If you left your current role, how confident are you that you would find alternative role around the same salary and without needing to move house?

Very confident	Confident	Neither	Not very confident	Not at all confident	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
19(9.9%)	55(28.6%)	23(12.0%)	65(33.9%)	26(13.5%)	4(2.1%)	3.13	192
					answered question		**192**
					skipped question		**50**

Thinking about the objectives of your current or most recent organisation and the objective setting process, how far do you agree with the statements below?

Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Response Count
I have a clear understanding of my organisation's purpose	89	93	5	7	1	195
I have a clear understanding of my organisation's objectives	66	103	14	7	2	192
I understand how my work contributes to my organisational objectives	77	97	11	6	1	192
My organisation motivates me to achieve its objectives	32	69	37	38	15	191
answered question						**195**
skipped question						**47**

Thinking about your last performance review at work, which one statement best describes the outcome?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I exceeded every target that was set	11.8%	23
I met all my targets and I even exceeded some	43.6%	85
I met all the targets set for me	20.5%	39
I met most of the targets set for me	6.7%	13
I met some of the targets set for me	2.6%	5
I met none of the objectives set for me	0.0%	0
Does not apply/ Prefer not to say	14.9%	29
answered question		195
skipped question		47

Was the decision to leave your last employment your choice or were you forced by circumstances beyond your control?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Own choice	52.7%	99
Forced by circumstances beyond my control	30.3%	57
Not applicable	17.0%	32
answered question		188
skipped question		54

Which one of these statements best describes you?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
If I want something in life, I go and get it	45.3%	82
In life, what will be, will be	39.2%	71
Don't know	15.5%	28
answered question		181
skipped question		61

Do you believe in karma or fate?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	57.8%	104
No	27.2%	49
Don't know	15.0%	27
answered question		180
skipped question		62

Appendix I:

Calculation of results

Chi Square:

'How satisfied are with life nowadays?' against low and high hope

(E= Expected value)

	Low (≤ 48) n	High (≥49) n	Total
Low satisfaction	a 5 (E= 9.5)	b 6 (11.5)	21
Medium satisfaction	c 9 (11.3)	d 16 (13.7)	25
High satisfaction	e 39 (42.2)	f 54 (50.8)	93
Total	63	76	139

Calculate X² using $X^2= \sum (O-E)^2/E$

a. 2.13
b. 2.63
c. 0.47
d. 0.39
e. 0.24
f. 0.2

Total= 6.06

Degrees of freedom (df) = 2

Significance level(2df) 0.01 > 4.605

'How happy did you feel yesterday?' against low and high hope

(E= Expected value)

	Low (≤ 48) n	High (≥49) n	Total
Low satisfaction	a 18 (E= 12.7)	b 11 (16.3)	29
Medium satisfaction	c 10 (12.7)	d 19 (16.3)	29
High satisfaction	e 34 (42.2)	f 50 (47.3)	84
Total	62	76	142

Calculate X² using $X^2= \sum (O-E)^2/E$

a. 2.21
b. 1.72
c. 0.57

d. 0.45
e. 0.2
f. 0.15

Total= 5.30

Degrees of freedom (df) = 2

Significance level(2df) 0.01 > 4.605

Appendix J:

The Easterlin Paradox: UK applied data

The Easterlin Paradox: UK data
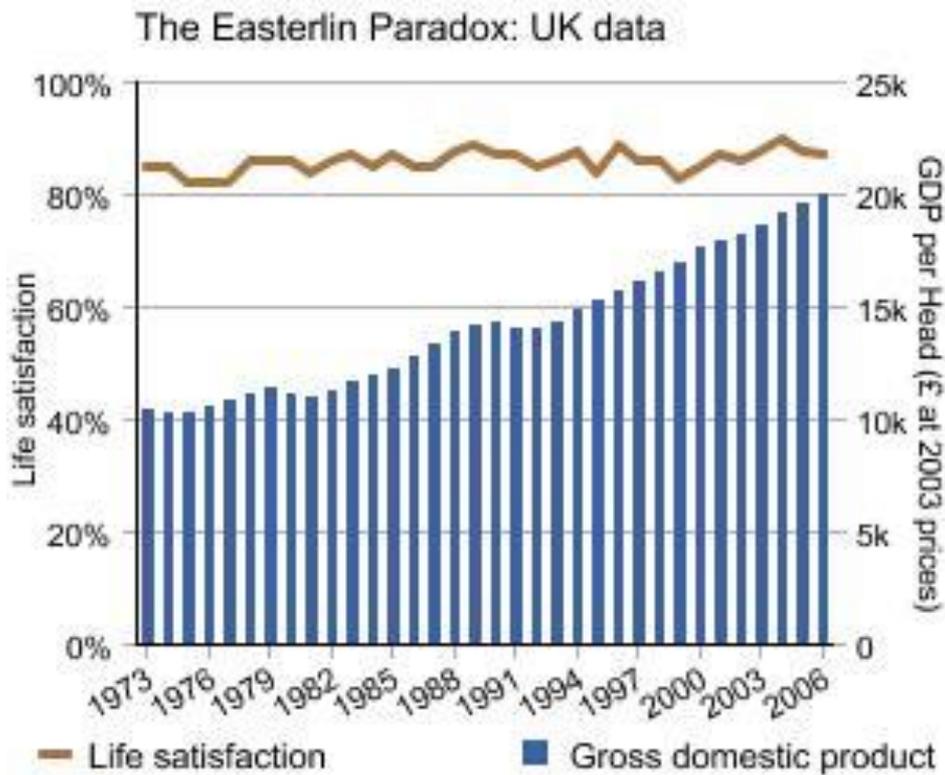
Taken from: National Office for Statistics, 2013a.

Available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/people-

places/communities/societal-wellbeing?format=normal

Accessed: 1 March 2013.

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