The Subjective Happiness Scale

The Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS; Lyubomirsky, 2007; Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999) is a brief questionnaire that requires respondents to make a judgement about how happy they are. The SHS is based on the subjectivist’s approach, which considers the respondents’ unique perspective about their own happiness (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). Using their own happiness criteria, individuals are asked to make an overall judgement about how happy (or unhappy) they are. The measure has good psychometric properties, and is strongly correlated with other psychological well-being scales.

Goal

The goal of the SHS is to measure global subjective happiness.

Advice

Although the SHS is usually self-administered, it can also be completed by interview format.

Scoring

First, reverse the score on item 4. Reversing a score is done by exchanging the original value of an item by its opposite value: a score of 1 turns into a score of 7, a score of 2 turns into a score of 6, etc. Then, calculate a mean score by adding the 4 individual scores and dividing this number by 4. Higher scores reflect higher levels of subjective happiness.

Suggested Readings


Instructions

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you. (Please take note of the labels, or anchors, for each of the four items.)

1. In general, I consider myself:

   not a very happy person | | | | | | | | a very happy person
   1       2       3       4       5       6       7

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

   less happy | | | | | | | | more happy
   1       2       3       4       5       6       7

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

   not at all | | | | | | | | a great deal
   1       2       3       4       5       6       7

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

   a great deal | | | | | | | | not at all
   1       2       3       4       5       6       7

Total Score:

Weighted Score (Total Score /4):