

# **HOW TO MEASURE HAPPINESS: COMPARING GLOBAL REPORTS TO EXPERIENTIAL MEASURES**

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**DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS OF HUMAN WELLBEING | NOVEMBER 11, 2019**

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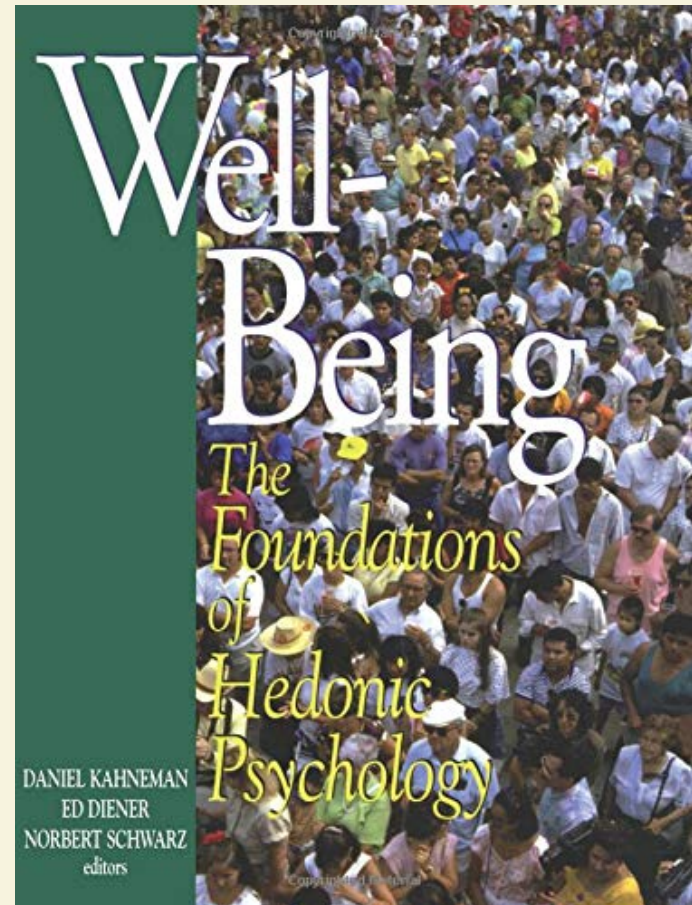
# THE JUDGMENT MODEL

- Task of constructing global judgments is difficult
- Therefore, respondents rely on what is currently on their mind:
  - Domains that happen to be salient
  - Salient comparison standards
  - Mood at the time of judgment
- Result: "Profound" context effects that reduce the reliability and validity of well-being measures

# IMPLICATIONS

**SCHWARZ & STRACK (1999)**

*"There is little to be learned from global self-reports of well-being . . . [W]hat is being assessed, and how, seems too context dependent to provide reliable information about population's well-being."*



**SOLUTION**

**EXPERIENTIAL MEASURES**

# TODAY'S TALK

- Reevaluating the judgment model of SWB
- Concerns about experiential measures



# THE JUDGMENT MODEL OF SWB

## REASONS FOR CONCERN

- Implausibly large effects
- Flexible analyses across studies
- Small samples sizes (Ns around 12 per group)
- Few (if any) replications

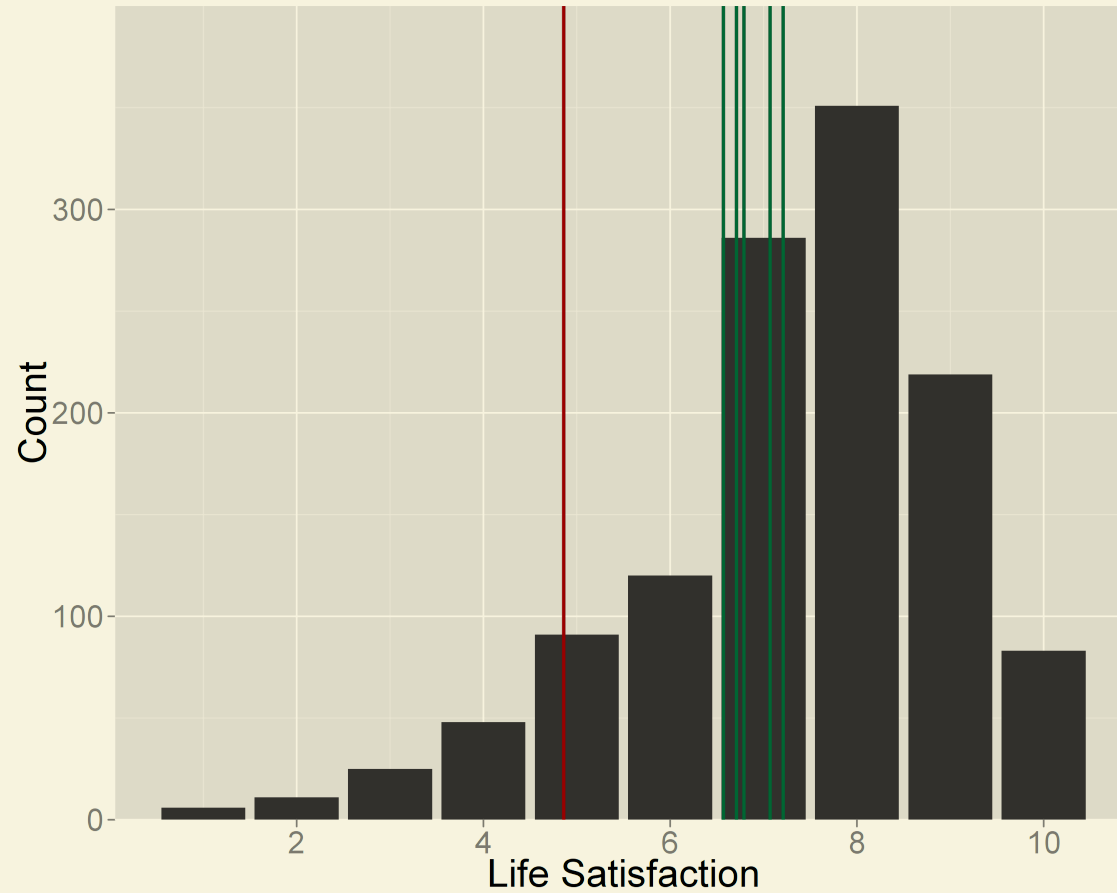
# THE DIME STUDY

- Never published
  - Reported in dissertation
- Implausibly large differences
- Differences not significant
- Total N = 16



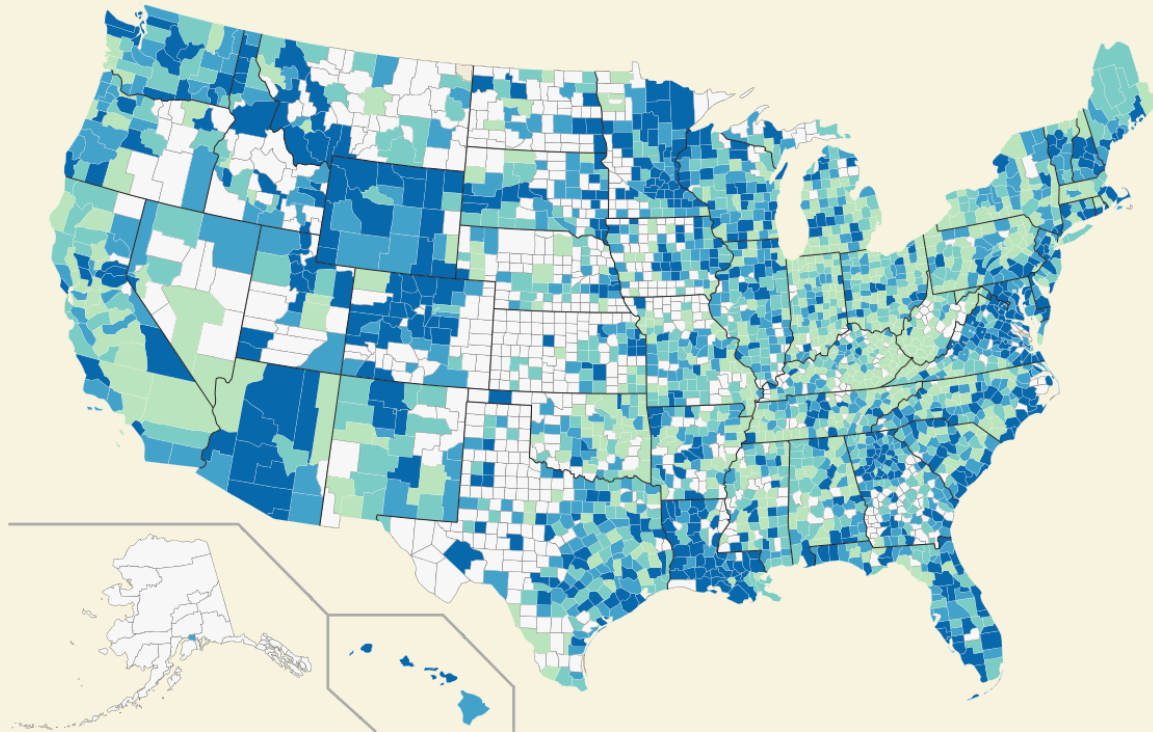
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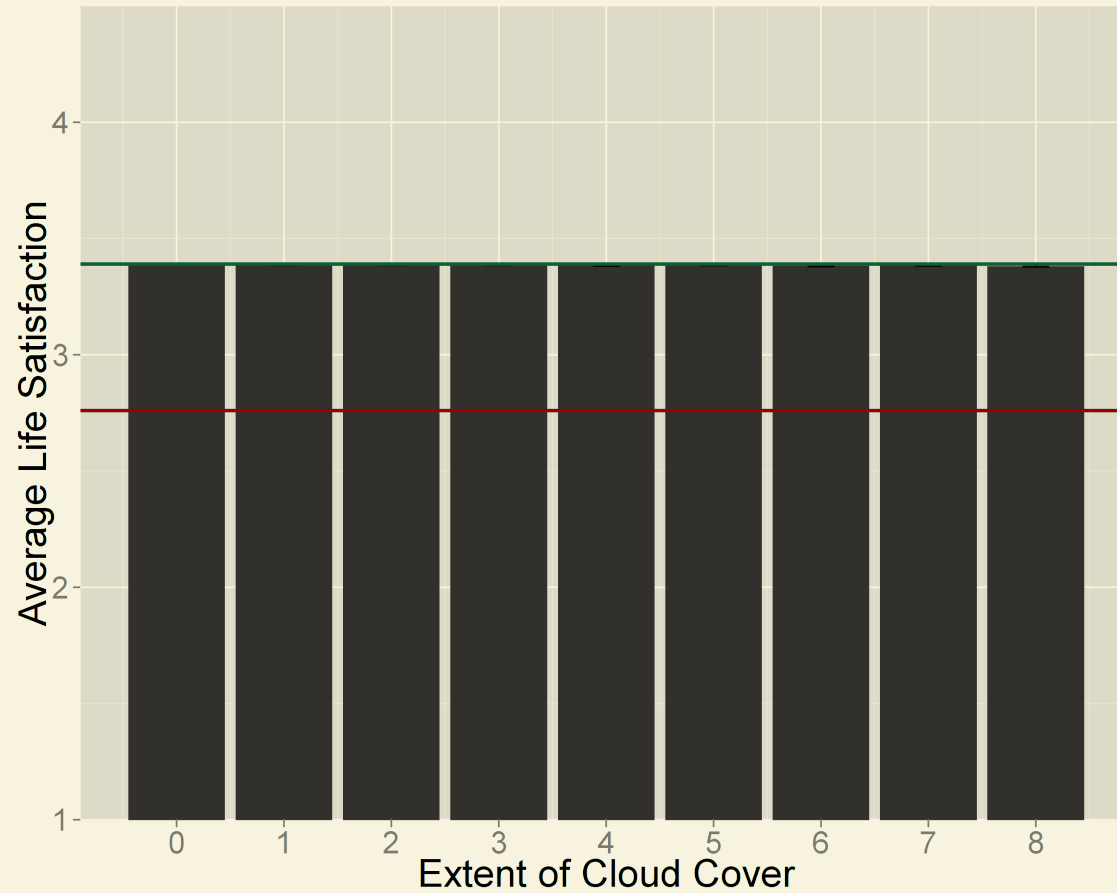
# OUR REPLICATION

LUCAS & LAWLESS, 2013, *JPSP*



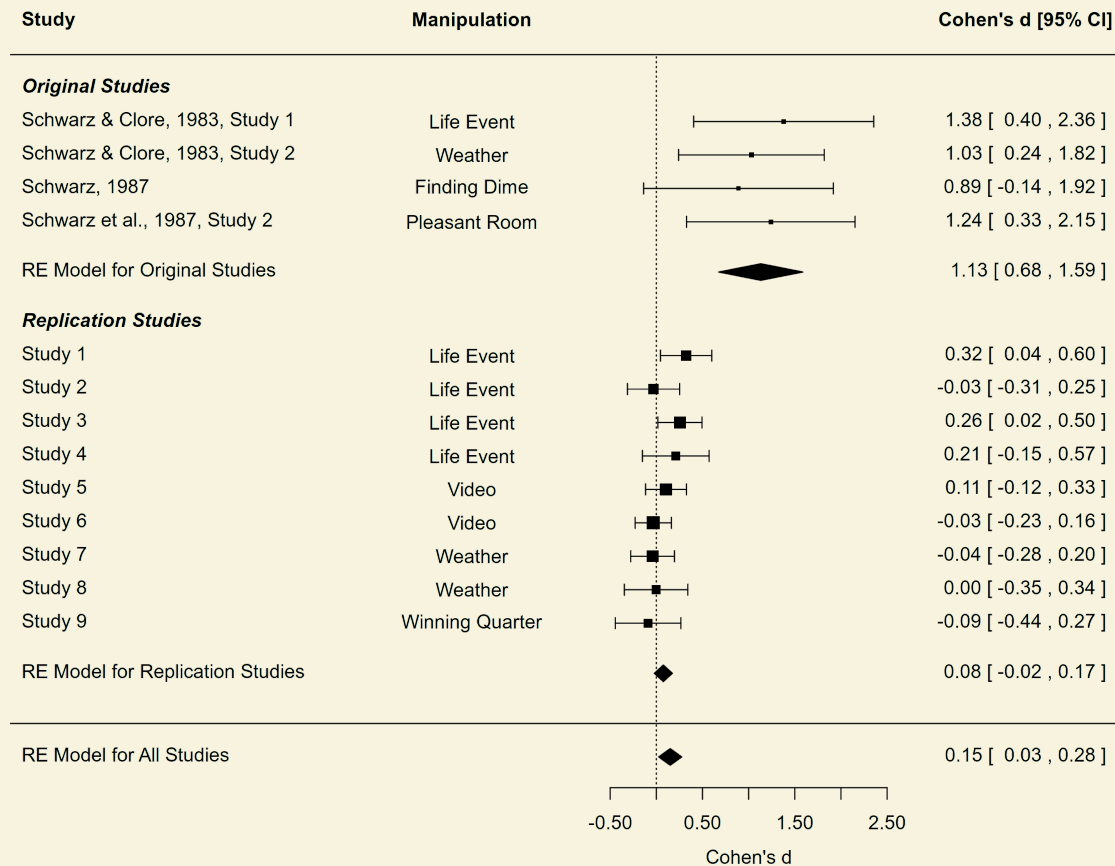
# CLOUD COVER

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# DIRECT REPLICATIONS

YAP ET AL., 2017





# SUMMARY OF MOOD STUDIES

## STRONG CONCERNS ABOUT SIZE AND ROBUSTNESS OF MOOD EFFECTS

- Naturalistic mood induction studies fail to replicate effects
- Effect sizes for laboratory studies are much smaller than in original studies
- Why?
  - Effects of naturally occurring mood inductions on mood are not robust
  - Effects of mood on life satisfaction are small

# BENEFITS OF EXPERIENTIAL MEASURES

- Do not rely on memory
- Do not require aggregation
- Narrow focus could prevent context effects

# PROBLEM:

## HOW THE QUESTIONS SHAPE THE ANSWERS

- Participants make inferences about questioner's intent
- Two subtly different questions may be interpreted very differently if presented after one another in a questionnaire
- But can the *same exact* question be interpreted differently depending on context?
  - For instance, in an intensive repeated measures design?

# DESIGN

	Time 1	Time 2
<b>Single-Role Group</b>	Global Personality Questionnaire	Single-Role Personality Questionnaire
<b>Multiple-Role Group</b>	Global Personality Questionnaire	Multiple-Role Personality Questionnaire

# RESULTS

	Multiple-Role		Single-Role	
	<i>Discrepancy</i>	<i>r<sub>general</sub></i>	<i>Discrepancy</i>	<i>r<sub>general</sub></i>
Study 1	.79	.41	.65	.61
Study 2	.71	.59	.57	.69

Baird & Lucas, 2012

# IMPLICATIONS

- Asking question multiple times causes increased variability
- Asking question multiple times increases effect of situation
- Could be due to conversational norms
- Are there individual differences?

# **RATING FICTIONAL CHARACTERS**

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# RESULTS

## Variability Across

Variability Index	Neutral Objects	Simpsons Characters
Cross-Role	.44/.47	.45
Daily Personality	.34	
Daily PA	.26	
Daily NA	.25	

Baird et al., 2015

# COMPARING WELL-BEING MEASURES

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- Experiential measures more strongly correlated with experiences

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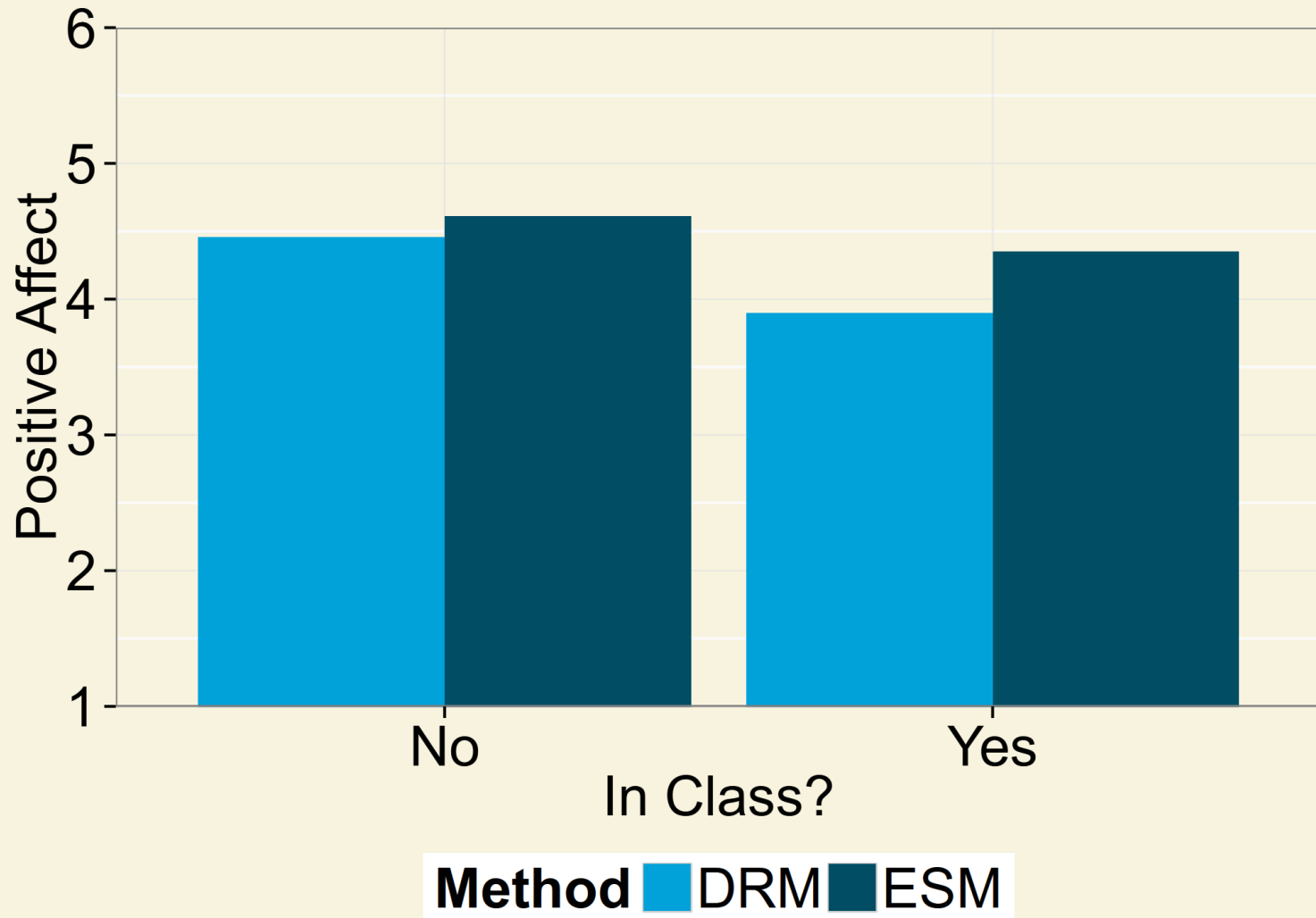
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- Experiential measures more strongly correlated with experiences
- Could this be due to focusing effect?
  - Or even just shared method variance?

# ESM VERSUS DRM

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# VALIDITY

## CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SELF-REPORTED AFFECT AND INFORMANT LIFE SATISFACTION

	Positive Affect	Negative Affect
Global	.35	-.25
DRM	.25	-.09
ESM	.26	-.11

Lucas et al, 2019

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- Experiential measures solve some obvious problems
  - But...effectiveness is sometimes assumed rather than tested
  - Experiential measures may have unique problems
- Need more validation work (for both types)



