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Modeling Subjective Well-Being at Work: Implications for Organizational Management Effectiveness

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of subjective well-being at work on effective organizational management by analyzing and measuring three key variables: quality of work life, job satisfaction, and happiness at work. The research adopts a positivist, quantitative approach with a descriptive–correlational design. The sample consists of 302 employees randomly selected from a population of 900 staff members employed at universities in Barranquilla, Colombia. To estimate the behavior of the dependent variable based on multiple independent variables, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The results indicate that the level of subjective well-being at work within organizations varies according to employees' perceptions of their quality of work life. Among the variables analyzed, job satisfaction exhibited the strongest influence, followed by quality of work life and happiness at work. Together, these factors contribute to the development of subjective well-being at work. The findings highlight the importance for organizational management of understanding employees' perceptions. The data obtained from this diagnostic model enable organizations to tailor workplace well-being initiatives, allocate logistical and human resources more effectively, and design business strategies that foster higher levels of employee commitment and productivity. Overall, the study concludes that implementing strategies aimed at enhancing employees' subjective well-being supports successful organizational management. This study contributes to the literature by focusing on subjective well-being within the work context, as most previous research has addressed subjective well-being from a general life perspective. Unlike prior studies that have examined quality of work life, job satisfaction, and happiness at work separately or in relation to outcomes such as work environment or productivity, this research integrates these three variables as joint predictors of subjective well-being at work. The resulting measurement model provides valuable insights to support organizational decision-making related to talent attraction, retention, and loyalty, enabling the design of incentive systems and benefit plans aligned with employees' expectations and needs.

Keywords: Subjective well-being; Happiness at work; Quality of work life; Job satisfaction; Business strategy

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Introduction

One of the most persistent challenges faced by organizations is job dissatisfaction, which is often accompanied by increasingly negative employee perceptions. In many regions, precarious working conditions remain prevalent, characterized by low wages, excessive working hours, unfavorable physical environments, rigid labor regulations, limited benefits, insufficient occupational risk protection, and the absence of formal health and pension coverage. These conditions negatively affect employees' quality of work life and extend their impact to workers' families, fostering dissatisfaction and demotivation. From an organizational perspective, companies simultaneously confront market volatility, inflationary pressures, international conflicts, climate change, and intense competition. These dynamics increase operational costs and necessitate the



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implementation of effective organizational strategies and sound human capital management practices [1]. Additional organizational challenges include high absenteeism, elevated turnover rates, reduced job performance, and interpersonal conflicts within work teams [2].

Toshniwal and Narendran [3] argue that employees who experience excessive stress and workload pressure are more likely to report diminished happiness and overall well-being. A negative perception of subjective well-being at work can have serious consequences for both individuals and organizations, including decreased productivity and significant declines in organizational profitability and sustainability. In this context, the World Health Organization [4] emphasizes the urgent need to address mental health issues in the workplace [5].

When work-related stress is not adequately managed, it may lead to mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety and, in extreme cases, suicidal behavior. Mora [6] highlights that negative emotions directly influence individuals' emotional states, mental health, and subjective well-being, underscoring the importance of developing human resource policies that prioritize employees' holistic well-being [7]. Another essential dimension influencing subjective well-being is eudaimonia, which refers to a sense of purpose, meaning, and personal fulfillment. This dimension plays a critical role in fostering employee self-motivation [8].

According to Warr and Inceoglu [9], employees often perceive several organizational factors negatively, including limited opportunities for career development or promotion, feelings of stagnation and professional disengagement, ineffective communication among team members, authoritarian leadership styles in certain units, and the absence of leadership in others. These issues are further compounded by poor conflict management, low levels of trust, communication gaps among organizational leaders, and uncertainty regarding contract renewal, all of which contribute to a global decline in employees' subjective well-being at work [10, 11].

Considering the factors outlined above, several research questions emerge: What is the relationship between subjective well-being at work and job satisfaction, quality of work life, and happiness at work? Does subjective well-being at work influence successful organizational management? More specifically, does the subjective well-being index increase or decrease based on employees' perceptions of (a) quality of work life, (b) job satisfaction, and (c) happiness at work?

To address these questions, this study examines the effects of three independent variables—quality of work life, job satisfaction, and happiness at work—on the dependent variable, subjective well-being at work. This analysis seeks to determine whether higher levels of subjective well-being contribute to successful organizational management. In recent years, organizations have shown increasing interest in fostering organizational happiness by improving employee satisfaction. To achieve this objective, companies aim to develop organizational cultures that promote happiness at work by incorporating flexible working arrangements, diversity, participatory decision-making, customized incentive systems, and respect for diverse perspectives. In parallel, organizations strive to strengthen leadership practices grounded in equity, transparency, and ethical behavior, thereby encouraging teamwork, innovation, effective communication, and quality in products and services [12-14].

Over the past decade, subjective well-being has gained prominence as a key indicator of collective well-being worldwide [15]. Diener [16] defines subjective well-being as individuals' evaluations of their lives, encompassing both cognitive judgments and emotional responses, including positive and negative experiences. Positive emotions are commonly associated with a state of fulfillment referred to as happiness [17]. Similarly, Salvatore [18] conceptualizes happiness as subjective well-being, consisting of three core components: high life satisfaction, frequent positive emotions, and infrequent negative emotions.

Researchers globally continue to investigate subjective well-being to develop models and interventions that promote harmonious work environments, resulting in increased organizational commitment. Within this framework, the present study seeks to identify the factors that exert the greatest influence on effective people management in organizations [13].

This research contributes to the advancement of scientific knowledge by examining subjective well-being in relation to quality of work life, job satisfaction, and happiness at work as fundamental elements in the creation of healthy, stable, and productive work environments. These variables have demonstrated significant influence on organizational performance and success in contemporary organizational contexts, positioning subjective well-being as one of the most impactful factors for modern organizations [19].

The study explores the relationship between subjective well-being at work and successful organizational management through the analysis of employee perceptions of quality of work life, job satisfaction, and happiness at work. Data were collected from a sample of 302 employees across four hierarchical levels within two university institutions. The findings provide insights into how these variables interact and influence workplace well-being management. The results offer practical guidance for organizations seeking to design strategies that enhance subjective well-being, thereby contributing to improved organizational outcomes and the achievement of corporate objectives. Additionally, the study identifies the elements that most strongly shape employees' perceptions and behaviors at both individual and collective levels, as well as their influence on organizational culture.

These insights are particularly valuable for the development of workplace well-being plans, programs, and strategies aimed at improving employees' quality of work life and increasing motivation and organizational commitment.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 presents the literature review and theoretical framework supporting the study hypotheses. Section 3 outlines the research methodology, including sampling procedures and data collection instruments. Section 4 reports the empirical results, which are subsequently discussed in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 presents the conclusions derived from the findings in relation to the research questions and hypotheses.

Literature Review and Hypotheses

D'Ambrosio *et al.* [20] conceptualize well-being as the manner in which individuals assess their lives and make decisions based on those evaluations, shaping how they interact with their surrounding environment. To understand subjective well-being within the work context, Portela *et al.* [21] emphasize the relevance of the Positive Organizational Psychology (POP) perspective. This paradigm focuses on individuals' positive and optimistic attitudes, highlighting how people interpret their experiences and lives. Unlike traditional psychology, which initially concentrated on mental illness and human suffering, positive psychology emphasizes human strengths, virtues, and optimal functioning.

This approach was initially influenced by the work of Salovey and Mayer [22], who introduced the concept of emotional intelligence, later extended to organizational settings. The field gained prominence through the contributions of Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi [23], who formally introduced positive psychology and identified core characteristics of psychologically positive individuals, such as the experience of positive emotions, empathy, optimism, humor, humanity, justice, transcendence, and self-regulation. These personal strengths foster balanced and supportive work environments, suggesting that organizations should encourage such behaviors to enhance organizational success. Research in this area has focused on human well-being, creativity, and the experience of flow at work, where happiness emerges from engagement and enjoyment in daily work activities, ultimately enhancing job performance [24].

Positive psychology has also been explored by scholars such as Seo and Barrett [25], Marks [26], Judge and Erez [27], and Boehm and Lyubomirsky [28], who argue that positive emotions form the foundation of happiness at work, reinforcing the theoretical contributions of Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi [23]. This framework is essential for understanding subjective well-being in organizational contexts. Diener [29] and Lyubomirsky *et al.* [30], further suggest that individuals with positive workplace attitudes tend to enhance negotiation processes, strengthen interpersonal relationships, demonstrate flexibility, offer support to others, and exhibit creativity and enthusiasm.

Recent research in positive psychology highlights the strategic importance of fostering positive emotions in the workplace. Over the past decade, empirical evidence indicates that employees who perceive themselves as happy at work show higher productivity levels and stronger organizational commitment [31]. Moreover, happiness at work contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth) outlined in the United Nations 2030 Agenda [17].

In response to the research objectives and to examine the main variables of the study, the following hypotheses are proposed.

Hypothesis 1

The subjective well-being index varies according to employees' perceptions of their quality of work life

Ho and Kuvaas [32], using data from the Workplace Employment Relations Study [33], analyzed responses from 14,384 employees across 1,347 organizations in the United Kingdom. Their findings indicate that effective human resource management fosters a balance between workplace well-being initiatives and improved organizational performance. The authors argue that promoting subjective well-being enhances employees' quality of work life and contributes to organizational success. Importantly, the study highlights that human resource practices influence employee performance when they are strategically implemented; excessive incentive schemes do not necessarily increase productivity and may result in inefficient expenditures. Instead, well-designed HR systems enhance workforce capabilities, motivate employees, and enable meaningful contributions to organizational objectives, thereby improving perceptions of quality of work life.

Similarly, Guest [34] proposes a model of successful organizational management based on the principle of mutual gains, suggesting that human resource management should simultaneously benefit employees and organizations. This approach requires organizations to genuinely prioritize employee well-being through initiatives that promote quality of work life, including fair compensation, flexible work arrangements, autonomy, and balanced incentive systems that support work-life integration [35, 36]. Consequently, organizations increasingly strive to reduce dissatisfaction factors while strengthening their employer brand to attract and retain top talent, fostering organizational cultures centered on happiness, well-being, and strategic alignment [37].

From a conceptual perspective, Segurado-Torres and Agulló-Tomás [38] define quality of work life as a multidimensional construct aimed at enhancing employee satisfaction by addressing both professional and personal development needs. This includes improving work environments, ergonomics, occupational health and safety, leadership practices, and organizational policies. Casas *et al.* [39] further describe quality of work life as encompassing work schedules, remuneration, physical

conditions, benefits, career opportunities, and interpersonal relationships. Likewise, Jurado-Caraballo *et al.* [40] emphasize its economic, regulatory, environmental, and personal dimensions.

Jaharuddin and Zainol [41] stress the importance of achieving balance between work and personal life, noting its direct influence on employee performance, satisfaction, and talent attraction and retention. Classic contributions by Walton [42] and subsequent studies [43] frame quality of work life as a strategic element of human capital management, shaped by intrinsic job characteristics, organizational culture, and the broader socio-labor environment. Key factors influencing this perception include fair compensation, safe working conditions, reasonable working hours, equity, ethical management practices, work-life balance, and organizational reputation [44].

Hypothesis 2

The subjective well-being index varies according to employees' perceptions of job satisfaction

Judge *et al.* [45] identify job satisfaction as a central aspect of individuals' lives with significant implications for subjective well-being. Job satisfaction reflects a positive emotional state resulting from work experiences and influences both personal attitudes and organizational commitment. Employees' satisfaction depends on their overall job evaluation, including salary, benefits, work environment, flexibility, autonomy, and other intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Higher levels of job satisfaction are consistently associated with stronger organizational commitment and improved performance, directly impacting organizational outcomes.

Research by Unanue *et al.* [46] further explores the link between job satisfaction and subjective well-being within the framework of happy organizations [47]. Lyubomirsky *et al.* [30] define subjective well-being as the experience of positive emotions combined with favorable life evaluations, positioning job satisfaction as a critical determinant of well-being. Similarly, Ryan and Deci [48] emphasize that fulfilling basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—within the workplace enhances job satisfaction and, consequently, subjective well-being. This fulfillment leads to higher motivation, productivity, and organizational commitment [10], underscoring the importance of job satisfaction in creating healthy and sustainable work environments [13].

Hypothesis 3

The subjective well-being index varies according to employees' perceptions of happiness at work

Happiness at work has been widely examined in organizational research. Achor [49] argues that workplace happiness is not solely dependent on external conditions but can be cultivated through positive attitudes and practices. Diener and Seligman [50] associate happiness at work with purpose, personal fulfillment, and goal attainment. Employees who find meaning in their work and feel recognized and valued tend to experience higher levels of happiness, which in turn enhances satisfaction, motivation, and organizational commitment.

Bakker and Oerlemans [51] further link happiness at work to superior job performance, increased creativity, and healthier interpersonal relationships. Consequently, cultivating work environments that promote employee happiness is essential for improving well-being and sustaining long-term organizational success.

Empirical evidence from Lyubomirsky *et al.* [30], Ryan and Deci [48], Achor [49], Diener and Seligman [50], and Bakker and Oerlemans [51] consistently demonstrates that satisfaction and happiness are key drivers of employee commitment and positive perceptions of subjective well-being at work. Accordingly, organizations must assess employees' perceptions to design policies that enhance quality of work life and well-being [52]. Human talent management increasingly promotes happiness at work as a strategy for employee loyalty, development, and productivity enhancement.

The following section presents the methodological framework employed to examine the relationships among the study variables and their effects on subjective well-being at work [53].

Materials and Methods

To accomplish the objective of this study—namely, to identify the factors that most strongly influence motivation, organizational commitment, and perceptions of well-being at work among university employees—a positivist research paradigm was adopted. The study followed a quantitative, correlational approach with an explanatory scope, using a non-experimental, cross-sectional (transactional) design.

The research was conducted between 2018 and 2023. The study population consisted of 900 employees from private universities located in Barranquilla, Colombia, all of whom were employed under either fixed-term or indefinite contracts. From this population, a stratified sampling procedure was applied, followed by simple random sampling, resulting in a final sample of 302 participants with a confidence level of 95%. The sample composition included 14 department directors (5%), 37 general services employees (12%), 108 administrative or service assistants (36%), and 143 faculty members (47%).

Data were collected using three questionnaires based on a five-point Likert-type scale designed to measure levels of agreement and satisfaction. Statistical analysis and data processing were conducted using the SPSS software package to support the interpretation of results.

Data collection methods

Data collection was carried out through a structured questionnaire designed to gather information related to the research problem. The instrument was developed by the authors and subsequently validated by experts, including academics and managers specializing in human talent management. A comprehensive review of existing literature revealed no single instrument capable of simultaneously measuring quality of work life, job satisfaction, and happiness at work. Consequently, the questionnaire was specifically designed to assess these three variables in an integrated manner.

The development of the instrument was informed by previously validated tools. In particular, a questionnaire focused on quality of work life and psycho-affective factors in the workplace served as a reference, drawing on earlier research validated by Buelvas *et al.* [54], who evaluated perceptions of job security among 518 employees from various organizations in Colombia. Additionally, the Job Satisfaction Survey developed by Spector [55] was considered. These instruments were adapted to align with the objectives of the present study, resulting in the *Quality of Work Life, Job Satisfaction, and Happiness at Work Questionnaire*.

Instrument validation was conducted through expert judgment, a recognized methodological approach for assessing research instrument reliability and validity. This process involves obtaining informed evaluations from specialists with expertise in the subject area, thereby ensuring the instrument's methodological rigor [56]. Following this validation process, the instrument demonstrated acceptable levels of validity and reliability.

The questionnaire was administered using a virtual form. It was structured to include clear instructions to guide respondents and minimize potential misunderstandings associated with online completion. Information regarding the purpose of the study was provided, along with assurances of confidentiality and exclusive academic use of the data by the Human Resources Department, in accordance with institutional policies on personal data protection. These measures were intended to encourage accurate and honest responses.

To enhance data reliability, the questionnaire was completed anonymously. However, for future research applications across different economic sectors, the inclusion of sociodemographic variables is recommended. Such variables may include gender, age, socioeconomic status, marital status, type of employment contract, tenure, educational level, hierarchical position, organizational size, economic sector, subsector, and type of educational institution.

The instrument was structured into three sections corresponding to the study variables. The first section comprised 53 items related to quality of work life. The second section included 25 items measuring happiness at work, while the final section consisted of 7 items assessing job satisfaction.

Responses were recorded using five-point Likert-type scales. For the first two sections, response options ranged from *Totally Disagree (TD)* to *Totally Agree (TA)*. In the job satisfaction section, the scale ranged from *Totally Unsatisfied (TU)* to *Totally Satisfied (TS)*. Prior to participation, all respondents provided informed consent, confirming that their participation was voluntary and that the data would be used solely for academic purposes.

Results

Given the evolving dynamics in the associations among the examined variables, this research aimed to assess the method applied for gauging the influence of Subjective Well-being on organizational performance. It also explored the interplay among quality of work life, happiness at work, and job satisfaction in forecasting the outcome of a specific dependent variable or target variable, drawing from various independent or predictor variables (often termed regressors or explanatory factors). A multiple regression approach was employed, which can be formulated as:

(1)

Furthermore, it is essential to understand how quality of work life, happiness at work, and job satisfaction (as independent variables) affect Subjective Well-being (as the dependent variable).

Table 1. Variable Interaction

	M	SD	VIF	1	2	3
1. Subjective well-being	3.18	0.519				
2. Quality of work life	3.15	0.490	1.749	0.795*		
3. Happiness at work	3.34	0.575	1.382	0.640*	0.446*	
4. Work satisfaction	3.15	0.558	1.866	0.838*	0.638*	0.499*

*Indicates correlations significant at the 99% level.

To confirm the validity of the model constructed in this study, the initial phase involves examining the data visually to ensure mutual correlations. Following this, the variables are processed and adjusted as needed to yield a refined, validated model.

Table 2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.925a	0.855	0.853	0.199	2.020

a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of Work Life, Happiness at Work, Job Satisfaction b. Dependent variable: Subjective Well-being

The model accounts for 92.5% of the variance, which adjusts to 85.5% after accounting for sample size and independent variables. Additionally, the standard error of the estimate (the square root of the unexplained variance) is 0.199. The Durbin-Watson (DW) statistic assesses residuals for any notable correlation according to their sequence in the dataset. With a p-value exceeding 0.05, no evidence of serial autocorrelation in the residuals exists at the 95.0% confidence level. The variance analysis, which evaluates if the regression-explained variance significantly differs from (and exceeds) the unexplained variance, is presented as:

Table 3. ANOVAa

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1					
Regression	69.219	3	23.073	584.433	0.000b
Residual	11.765	298	0.039		
Total	80.983	301			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of Work Life, Happiness at Work, Job Satisfaction b. Dependent variable: Subjective Well-being

The ANOVA results demonstrate that the regression model holds statistical significance (p-value < 0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis—that variations in the response variable occur randomly—is rejected, supporting an association between the dependent and independent variables.

Table 4. Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-0.197	0.084		-2.334	0.020
	Quality of work life	0.412	0.031	0.389	13.329	0.000
	Happiness at work	0.206	0.023	0.229	8.810	0.000
	Work satisfaction	0.443	0.028	0.476	15.791	0.000

a. Dependent variable: Subjective Well-being

The findings illustrate the outcomes of applying a multiple linear regression model to characterize the connection between Subjective Well-being and the independent variables (quality of work life, happiness at work, and job satisfaction).

This leads to the regression equation: Subjective Well-being = -0.197 + 0.412 * Quality of Work Life + 0.206 * Happiness at Work + 0.443 * Job Satisfaction.

To assess if the model can be streamlined, observe that the p-values for quality of work life, happiness at work, and job satisfaction are statistically significant (below 0.05 at the 95% confidence level).

The job satisfaction coefficient of 0.443 suggests that, holding other variables constant, a one-unit rise in job satisfaction correlates with an average 0.443 increase in Subjective Well-being.

The Subjective Well-being level in organizations may fluctuate, primarily stemming from employees' views on quality of work life. In this study, job satisfaction emerged as the strongest contributor, followed by quality of work life, and then happiness at work, collectively fostering Subjective Well-being.

Discussion

The survey results, based on mean scores across response categories, indicate that the majority of participants reported positive perceptions of their quality of work life, happiness at work, and job satisfaction. Specifically, 51% of respondents indicated agreement or satisfaction with the variables analyzed, while 36% reported total agreement or complete satisfaction. In contrast, 10% of participants expressed disagreement or dissatisfaction, and only 3% reported total disagreement or complete dissatisfaction. When aggregating the positive response categories (agree/satisfied and totally agree/totally satisfied), 87% of respondents demonstrated a favorable perception of their quality of work life, job satisfaction, and happiness at work. Conversely, the combined negative responses (disagree/dissatisfied and totally disagree/totally dissatisfied) accounted for 13% of the sample, reflecting a minority with unfavorable perceptions.

These findings suggest that job satisfaction exerts the strongest influence on employees' perceptions of subjective well-being at work. This result differs from some prior studies that emphasize the predominant role of overall well-being in shaping quality of work life [57, 58]. Nonetheless, the present findings are consistent with the work of Butt *et al.* [59], who, using a

structural equation modeling approach, identified strong positive relationships between motivational factors and job satisfaction.

The results also align with previous research demonstrating that organizational support and psychological capital enhance employee commitment, job satisfaction, and perceived subjective well-being [60]. Similarly, Badri *et al.* [61] found that job satisfaction, mental health, quality of interpersonal relationships, and the size of individuals' social support networks positively influence perceptions of satisfaction and happiness. These findings reinforce the notion that subjective well-being at work is shaped by both organizational and psychosocial factors.

Additional empirical support for these relationships is provided by Sahni [62], who, through structural equation modeling, identified positive associations between general well-being, work–life balance, professional satisfaction, job control, working conditions, and work-related stress with happiness at work. These dimensions align closely with the concept of quality of work life as validated by Toulabi *et al.* [63]. Complementary insights are offered by Lokman *et al.* [64], who applied the KJ method to identify factors influencing happiness at work through collaborative brainstorming processes.

The results further demonstrate that job satisfaction significantly influences happiness at work, which is closely linked to positive perceptions of working conditions, organizational culture, interpersonal relationships, and leadership quality [65]. Consistent with Semedo *et al.* [66], the findings suggest that organizations must ensure favorable working conditions to foster employee satisfaction and promote positive emotional states that translate into happiness at work.

From a managerial perspective, organizations require motivated, committed, and productive employees to achieve sustained success [67]. The present study highlights that quality of work life extends beyond the availability of resources, encompassing alignment between job roles and organizational objectives, work–life balance, autonomy, and healthy interpersonal relationships that promote cooperation and positive coexistence. Unlike studies that examine these variables in isolation, the current findings emphasize the central role of subjective well-being as a strategic asset for organizations striving to be both happy and high-performing [68, 69].

The analysis further indicates that successful organizational management does not result from a single factor, but rather from the interaction of multiple elements embedded within organizational culture. Beliefs, values, and shared practices shape the work environment and directly influence employees' perceptions of well-being, thereby affecting organizational dynamics and performance [70]. In this regard, positive psychology provides a valuable framework that emphasizes the cultivation of positive emotions and behaviors to create harmonious and productive work environments [71].

However, the effectiveness of human resource practices ultimately depends on sound governance grounded in ethical principles, fairness, and coherence. Such governance fosters trust, motivation, and institutional development, enabling organizations to successfully manage both human and economic resources [72]. As suggested by Guest [34], effective human resource management requires achieving a balance of mutual gains, where employee well-being and organizational performance are simultaneously enhanced.

Overall, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of subjective well-being at work and its relationship with organizational success. The findings support the development of evidence-based strategies aimed at improving work environments through diagnostic assessments of employees' perceptions. Given that each organization operates within a unique cultural and structural context, strategies that are effective in one setting may not be directly transferable to another. Consequently, understanding organizational culture and employees' values, expectations, and experiences is essential for effective human talent management. By leveraging real data on employee perceptions, organizations can design targeted workplace well-being programs that foster personal development, strengthen commitment, and drive organizational success. In this sense, the present study positions subjective well-being at work as a central pillar for achieving sustainable and successful organizations [32].

Conclusions

Based on the empirical evidence obtained in this study, it can be concluded that subjective well-being at work is shaped by the combined influence of the three variables examined, with job satisfaction emerging as the most influential determinant. This finding highlights the central role of employees' satisfaction with their work experiences in fostering overall well-being in organizational settings.

Job satisfaction reflects employees' perceptions of fair working conditions, adequate remuneration, appropriate infrastructure and workplace ergonomics, clear organizational guidelines, respectful treatment, autonomy, opportunities for professional growth, and flexible work arrangements. Variations in job satisfaction significantly affect perceptions of quality of work life, which encompasses employees' evaluations of their working conditions, organizational environment, policies, contractual arrangements, leadership styles, and career development opportunities. These evaluations also involve intrinsic factors such as the alignment between personal and organizational goals and the perceived fairness of compensation relative to job responsibilities.

The findings indicate that 87% of the participants reported positive perceptions of quality of work life, job satisfaction, and happiness at work. Nevertheless, a notable minority (13%) expressed dissatisfaction, citing insufficient guarantees for career development, limited incentives, unfavorable work environments, and a lack of happiness at work. Such dissatisfaction has direct organizational consequences, including increased absenteeism, turnover, and productivity losses. Consequently, organizations must address the diverse needs of their workforce by designing inclusive and adaptive well-being programs that respond to generational differences, varying educational levels, and professional expectations. Tailoring wellness initiatives to specific employee groups is therefore recommended as a strategy to enhance satisfaction and commitment.

Regarding study limitations, the research was conducted within a single institution belonging to a specific sector, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Future research should expand the scope to include multiple institutions within the educational sector, as well as organizations from different economic sectors. Multicase and multisectoral studies would allow for broader validation of the relationships identified and facilitate comparative analysis across contexts.

Finally, this study opens avenues for future research focused on applying principles of positive psychology to organizational development, acknowledging the complexity and subjectivity of human emotions in work contexts. Further research may involve the application of these measurement instruments in diverse organizational environments, the integration of neuroscientific approaches, and interdisciplinary perspectives aligned with emerging concepts such as Society 5.0 and the digital humanities. Such efforts would contribute to the expansion of scientific knowledge in this field and its broader societal impact.

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