

Determinants of Workplace Happiness and its Impact on Performance: A Study in an Intermunicipal Transport Company

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ABSTRACT **Objective.** Analyze the factors influencing employee happiness and its relationship with job performance in an intermunicipal transport company in Valle del Cauca. **Methodology.** A quantitative, correlational methodology was used, involving surveys administered to 70 employees through instruments based on Likert scales to measure happiness and performance. The study examines happiness as a multifactorial phenomenon, highlighting the relevance of emotional self-regulation, perceptions of work, and opportunities for professional development. **Results.** The results indicate that internal happiness and a positive perception of work are significantly related to job performance, whereas family relationships show a weaker correlation. It was also found that longer tenure may be associated with higher happiness levels, although it does not necessarily imply a perception of professional growth. The article's main contribution lies in establishing that managing emotional well-being, along with recognition and participation conditions, are key determinants in enhancing employee performance. **Conclusions.** The conclusions emphasize that strengthening emotional skills, promoting clear pathways for professional growth, and improving recognition practices should be prioritized to boost productivity and organizational well-being.

KEY WORDS Emotional self-regulation, Organizational climate, Job performance, Workplace happiness, Transformational leadership, Productivity.

Determinantes de la felicidad en el trabajo y su impacto en el desempeño: un estudio en una empresa de transporte intermunicipal

RESUMEN **Objetivo.** Analizar los factores que influyen en la felicidad de los empleados y su relación con el desempeño laboral en una empresa de transporte intermunicipal ubicada en el Valle del Cauca. **Metodología.** Se empleó una metodología cuantitativa y correlacional, que consistió en la aplicación de encuestas a 70 empleados mediante instrumentos de escala de Likert para evaluar la felicidad y el desempeño. El estudio examina la felicidad como un fenómeno multifactorial y destaca la relevancia de la autorregulación emocional, las percepciones laborales y las oportunidades de desarrollo profesional. **Resultados.** Los hallazgos demuestran una asociación significativa entre la felicidad interna y la percepción positiva del trabajo y el desempeño laboral, mientras que las relaciones familiares muestran una correlación más débil. También se encontró que una mayor antigüedad puede estar asociada con niveles más altos de felicidad, aunque no implica necesariamente una percepción de crecimiento profesional. La principal contribución de este artículo consiste en establecer que la gestión del bienestar emocional, junto con las condiciones de reconocimiento y participación, constituye un determinante clave para mejorar el desempeño de los empleados. **Conclusiones.** Las conclusiones subrayan que el fortalecimiento de las habilidades emocionales, el establecimiento de vías claras para el crecimiento profesional y la mejora de las prácticas de reconocimiento son esenciales para impulsar la productividad y el bienestar organizacional.

PALABRAS CLAVE autorregulación emocional, clima organizacional, desempeño laboral, felicidad en el trabajo, liderazgo transformacional, productividad.

Determinantes da Felicidade no Trabalho e seu Impacto no Desempenho: Um Estudo em uma Empresa de Transporte Intermunicipal

RESUMO **Objetivo.** Analisar os fatores que influenciam a felicidade dos funcionários e sua relação com o desempenho no trabalho em uma empresa de transporte intermunicipal localizada na região do Valle del Cauca, na Colômbia. **Metodologia.** Foi utilizada uma metodologia quantitativa e correlacional, consistindo em questionários aplicados a 70 funcionários utilizando instrumentos de escala Likert para avaliar a felicidade e o desempenho. O estudo examina a felicidade como um fenômeno multifatorial e destaca a relevância da autorregulação emocional, das percepções do trabalho e das oportunidades de desenvolvimento profissional. **Resultados.** Os resultados demonstram uma associação significativa entre a felicidade interna e uma percepção positiva do trabalho e do desempenho no trabalho, enquanto os relacionamentos familiares apresentam uma correlação mais fraca. Também foi constatado que maior tempo de serviço pode estar associado a níveis mais elevados de felicidade, embora isso não implique necessariamente uma percepção de crescimento profissional. A principal contribuição deste artigo é estabelecer que a gestão do bem-estar emocional, juntamente com o reconhecimento e a participação, é um determinante fundamental para a melhoria do desempenho dos funcionários. **Conclusões.** As conclusões destacam que o fortalecimento das habilidades emocionais, o estabelecimento de caminhos claros para o crescimento profissional e a melhoria das práticas de reconhecimento são essenciais para impulsionar a produtividade e o bem-estar organizacional.

PALAVRAS CHAVE autorregulação emocional, clima organizacional, desempenho no trabalho, felicidade no trabalho, liderança transformacional, produtividade.

Introduction

This study examines the factors that influence employee happiness and its relationship with job performance within an intermunicipal transport company in Valle del Cauca. The motivation stems from the need to understand how emotions, perceptions of work, and organizational conditions affect productivity and well-being in sectors characterized by high levels of public interaction. The research is grounded in the recognition that workplace happiness represents a strategic pillar for business sustainability and competitiveness.

The research problem focuses on identifying the factors that affect employee happiness and analyzing how these elements relate to job performance. This inquiry emerged from observations of phenomena such as high staff turnover, reduced performance, and emotional exhaustion in the transport sector. As outlined in the project proposal, the central hypothesis posits that employees experiencing higher levels of happiness tend to perform more efficiently and consistently.

The main objective of the study was to analyze the factors that impact employee happiness and its correlation with job performance in the selected company. To achieve this, three specific objectives were defined: to identify the key factors influencing happiness based on a review of scientific literature; to assess workers' happiness levels using standardized measurement tools; and to determine whether leadership styles affect organizational happiness.

The research draws on theoretical frameworks that conceptualize happiness from a comprehensive perspective. Muriel, García del Junco and Ibáñez (2022) argue that happiness increases productivity and reduces absenteeism. For its part, Erazo and Riaño (2021) distinguish between hedonic happiness, which is rooted in immediate pleasure, and eudaimonic happiness, which is associated with personal growth. Meantime, León (2021) states that happiness at work enhances mental health and performance. And Gómez et al. (2019) highlight that a positive work environment reinforces both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Finally, the OMS (2022) warns that

psychosocial working conditions have a direct impact on employees' mental and emotional well-being. These foundations support the analysis of happiness as a multifactorial phenomenon closely tied to job performance.

A quantitative correlational research design was adopted. Data were collected through surveys administered to a sample of 70 employees. A Likert scale was used to measure happiness, and a specific questionnaire was employed to assess perceived job performance. Statistical analysis included Spearman's rank correlation tests, due to the ordinal nature of the data, as well as descriptive procedures to characterize responses. Additionally, a happiness index was constructed through the standardization of survey responses, which enabled the classification of employees into three groups: low, medium, and high happiness.

The main findings indicate that emotional self-regulation and perceiving one's work as meaningful are the factors most strongly associated with high levels of happiness. While family relationships remain relevant, they show a weaker correlation with workplace well-being. Longer-serving employees tend to report higher levels of happiness, although the study also identified instances where longevity does not necessarily translate into a sense of professional growth. It was found that the absence of workplace recognition and limited development opportunities negatively affect the satisfaction of a considerable number of employees.

The discussion confirms that happiness is neither a homogeneous phenomenon nor a purely external emotional state. Emotional well-being is shaped by the ability to regulate emotions, the sense of purpose derived from one's work, and the perceived potential for growth within the organization. The study also draws a clear distinction between performance and productivity. While productivity is concerned with output volume, performance refers to the quality with which tasks are executed. This distinction was essential for accurately interpreting the influence of happiness within the workplace context.

The study concludes that inner happiness, emotional self-regulation, and the recognition of one's professional contribution are decisive factors in strengthening job performance. It

also recommends conducting a socioeconomic assessment of the workforce to identify external conditions that may affect employee well-being. Furthermore, an analysis of educational attainment is proposed as a relevant variable for better understanding employees' professional development expectations and needs.

The study's main contribution lies in demonstrating that workplace happiness should not be regarded as a secondary consequence of material working conditions. Rather, it is a structural component that directly influences quality, productivity, and organizational sustainability. By empirically confirming the link between emotional well-being and job performance, the study offers a framework for analysis and action that can guide transport companies and other sectors with high staff turnover in developing more effective human resource management strategies.

The significance of this contribution lies in its practical applicability. The company under study, along with similar organizations, may use these findings to design emotional support programs, professional development pathways, and recognition policies that positively impact employee performance and satisfaction. Additionally, the study contributes to academic research by incorporating a multidimensional approach to measuring organizational happiness, integrating emotional, social, and work-related variables.

The document is structured into several sections. The first presents the theoretical framework underpinning the study, addressing concepts such as workplace well-being, transformational leadership, organizational climate, and job performance. The second details the methodology used for data collection and analysis. The third outlines the research findings in a clear and structured manner, emphasizing the connections between happiness and performance. The fourth offers a discussion of the results in light of theoretical references and previous studies. Finally, the document concludes with practical recommendations derived from the findings.

Theoretical Framework

This section explores the theoretical, legal, and organizational foundations underpinning

the relationship between happiness and job performance, integrating key concepts such as workplace well-being, organizational commitment, leadership, and organizational climate. These elements are critically interrelated in promoting human talent, enhancing productivity, and ensuring business sustainability—particularly in service sectors characterized by high levels of interpersonal contact.

Workplace well-being constitutes a fundamental pillar of organizational efficiency. According to Muriel, García del Junco and Ibáñez (2022), happiness in the workplace increases productivity, whereas its absence undermines attention and performance. This perspective aligns with a broader consensus that recognizes happiness as a vital human pursuit. Jiménez et al. (2020) and Fondón, Tobar-Pesántez and Ahumada-Tello (2019) emphasize that happiness directly affects employee health and job performance, making it a strategic priority for organizations. At the institutional level, Albarraçín et al. (2024) highlight that the study of workplace well-being has gained prominence in both academic and corporate environments due to its positive impact on organizational management.

Happiness at work is conceptualized through two primary lenses. Erazo and Riaño (2021) describe a hedonic perspective focused on pleasure and subjective well-being (Cuadra y Florenzano, 2003), and a eudaimonic perspective that emphasizes personal growth and the search for meaning (Castillo, 2011; Romero, Brustad y García, 2007). This distinction is essential to understanding that workplace happiness is not a uniform phenomenon but rather a complex construct involving emotional satisfaction, self-fulfillment, and social connection.

In the same analytical vein, job performance emerges as a concrete expression of individual well-being. González and Vilchez (2021) define performance as the effective fulfilment of responsibilities in alignment with individual skills and competencies. For its part, ypo (2020) expands this view by linking organizational performance to structural efficiency, communication flows, and adaptability, following the framework of Ibarra and González (2010). Similarly, Gómez et al. (2019) stress that policies promoting respect, trust, and camaraderie positively influence organizational climate and, by extension, productivity.

Numerous studies corroborate the link between happiness and performance. León (2021) argues that workplace happiness enhances employee output. This assertion is reinforced by Zenteno-Hidalgo and Durán (2016), who underline that high-performance human resource practices foster sustainable organizational synergies. Team diversity, driven by globalization and intergenerational interaction, is another critical variable that, according to Zamarripa, Vega and Ortega (2022), strengthens organizational success.

As such, workplace happiness is increasingly recognized as a business management strategy. Muriel, García del Junco and Ibáñez (2022) assert that well-being, satisfaction, pride, and optimism foster greater productivity. This contemporary approach is rooted in classical thought. Aristotle and Democritus already conceptualized happiness as the ultimate goal of life—an idea echoed in modern interpretations of organizational well-being (León, 2021).

Recent literature emphasizes that job performance depends not only on technical competencies, but also on emotional factors. León (2021) and Gómez et al. (2019) caution that employees' emotional states directly impact their effectiveness. Also, the OMS (2022), in its "Informe mundial sobre salud mental. Transformar la salud mental para todos", underscores broader social issues—such as discrimination and inequality—that negatively affect mental health. Workplace harassment and psychological violence (commonly referred to as mobbing) are among the most reported complaints and have severe implications for employee well-being.

Organizational factors such as pride in belonging and trust in leadership are key to workplace happiness (Cruz, Ramírez y Sánchez, 2015). However, Corilloclla (2018) warns that neglecting the pursuit of happiness can diminish productivity. In response, Reig-Botella and Rico (2019) advocate for healthy organizations that balance employee development with corporate results, grounded in the principles of positive psychology.

Within this context, the OMS (2022) affirms that mental health is more than the absence of illness—it is an intrinsic component of both individual and collective well-being. In line with this, the OMS and

OIT (2022) recommend addressing mental health risks such as excessive workloads, toxic behaviours, and other factors that generate workplace distress.

Andrade de Noguera (2023) and UNICEF (2022) project that by 2030, job offers must guarantee not only economic stability but also emotional well-being. In this light, they underscore the need for workplace programs that strengthen mental health. Organizational commitment, or engagement, emerges as a key link between happiness and performance. Salcedo (2023) observes that engagement reduces staff turnover and enhances internal stability. Quiroz-González and Muñoz-Jaramillo (2020) add that automation and artificial intelligence have transformed motivational dynamics, making emotional management increasingly relevant. In this regard, burnout, conceptualized by Maslach and Jackson (1981) through the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, is understood as a chronic stress response in service-oriented professions.

The motivational theories such as Vroom (1964) expectancy theory help explain how commitment aligns individual interests with organizational goals, creating healthier and more productive work environments. Organizational leadership is another key component in this equation. According to Bernal, Lucio and Pedraza (2018) and Quiñones and Espíritu (2023), the absence of effective leadership undermines an organization's image and growth.

Among leadership models, transformational leadership stands out for its ability to inspire and develop teams. Kouzes and Posner (1987) and Ruesta (2024) argue that transformational leadership drives sustainable change and motivates employees to exceed expectations. Serrano and Portalanza (2014) stress that this leadership style harmonizes individual and organizational interests, fostering personal growth. The satisfaction of hierarchical needs, as outlined by Maslow (Quintero, 2011), aligns with transformational leadership practices, fostering an environment conducive to motivation and self-fulfilment.

Leaders' perceived behaviour, as noted by Blanco (2023) and Hespanhol et al. (2021), directly influences organizational performance. According to the OIT (2016), stress is defined as a

physical and emotional response to perceived harm resulting from a mismatch between demands and the resources or capacities an individual believes they possess. Work-related stress arises from the organization and design of work and interpersonal dynamics, manifesting when demands exceed a worker's resources, capabilities, or needs. It may also emerge when individual or collective knowledge and skills do not match the expectations imposed by organizational culture. Furthermore, the OIT warns that occupational stress remains one of the leading causes of absenteeism, accounting for between 40% and 60% of lost workdays.

At the national level, Colombian legislation supports the importance of workplace well-being. Resolutions 2764 of 2022 and 2646 of 2008 establish employers' responsibility in preventing psychosocial risks. According to surveys conducted by the Ministerio del Trabajo (2019) and the OMS (Houtman et al., 2008), between 20% and 33% of Colombian workers report high levels of stress, underscoring the urgent need for effective policy responses.

Theoretical, normative, and empirical evidence demonstrates that workplace happiness, organizational commitment, effective leadership, and a positive organizational climate are not only ethically desirable but also essential conditions for the sustainability and competitiveness of organizations in an increasingly dynamic global market.

Methodology

This research follows a quantitative approach (Hernández y Mendoza, 2018), applying measurement instruments to assess both employee happiness and job performance. Happiness was evaluated using a Likert scale, while job performance was assessed through a questionnaire focused on aspects such as productivity and work quality. Data collection was carried out via electronic surveys over a two-week period in November 2024. The analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and linear regression to identify the relationship between happiness and performance. In addition, a comprehensive review of academic

literature was conducted, selecting relevant studies to extract key insights and formulate evidence-based recommendations aimed at enhancing productivity and performance within organizations.

For its part, the research is classified as a correlational study. It focuses on examining the relationship between employee happiness and job performance through the collection and analysis of survey data and scientific literature.

The study draws on both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through surveys administered to employees of the company under study. The instrument, based on the work of Jiménez-Sierra et al. (2021), measured levels of happiness and perceptions of job performance within the organizational environment. A total of 70 out of 100 employees were surveyed, providing insights into the factors influencing their well-being and productivity. The survey included a Likert-scale evaluation of happiness dimensions and a questionnaire on productivity and work quality. Secondary sources comprised a review of academic literature, including journal articles, theses, and books related to organizational happiness and job performance. The literature review covered topics such as job satisfaction, the impact of leadership, and organizational climate, serving as both a theoretical foundation and a comparative framework for interpreting the findings.

Data were collected through a literature review and the application of a specialized research instrument. A systematic search was conducted in academic databases and digital repositories using inclusion criteria to identify relevant studies addressing employee happiness and its relationship with job performance. This process followed the methodological guidelines proposed by García and Chicaíza (2011) for validity in studies of this nature.

Additionally, a survey was applied based on the validated instrument developed by Jiménez-Sierra et al. (2021), designed to measure workplace happiness in employees of small and medium-sized enterprises. The instrument utilized a Likert scale and evaluated five main categories: happiness, job satisfaction, positive emotions, attitudes toward work, and organizational climate. It was previously pilot-tested, achieving a Cronbach's alpha above 0.78, ensuring internal consistency. Moreover,

findings from the literature review were organized into a bibliographic matrix that systematized key information from each study, including year of publication, authors, and main objectives.

Data analysis was structured around five core categories, based on the validated instrument by Jiménez-Sierra et al. (2021), and organized according to the methodological specifications of Londoño-Cardozo and Pineda-Henao (2024) for the systematization of qualitative variables (Table 1). The category *Happiness* encompassed various dimensions: internal happiness, emotional self-regulation, family relationships, and work activity. *Internal happiness* reflected the individual's sense of fulfillment, emotional balance, and personal well-being. *Self-regulation* assessed the capacity to maintain positive thoughts and a sense of mental peace. *Family relationships* captured the support, unity, and harmony within the family as elements associated with personal well-being.

The category *Job satisfaction* evaluated the employees' overall satisfaction with their work activity, considering the extent to which individual expectations were met in their role. The category *Positive emotions* explored the worker's level of optimism, future outlook, and personal development, reflecting the emotional state tied to their life and career expectations. The category *Attitudes toward work* measured commitment, identification with job duties, and the perception of one's personal value within the organization, assessing emotions such as pride and enthusiasm in task execution. The category *Organizational climate* examined perceptions of the physical and social work environment, opportunities for participation, the existence of health and safety systems, and mechanisms for professional recognition and development.

Table 1. Categories and subcategories for measuring workplace happiness

Category	Subcategories	Explanation
Happiness	Internal Happiness	Assessed fulfillment, emotional balance, contentment, and internal well-being.
	Self-Regulation	Assessed positive thinking, peace with the environment, and mental well-being.
	Family Relationship	Assessed support, unity, and family harmony as a foundation for well-being.
Job Satisfaction	Overall Satisfaction	Assessed the employee's overall satisfaction with their current job.
Positive Emotions	Optimism Toward the Future	Assessed the employee's optimistic outlook regarding future development.
	Personal Development	Assessed the sense of progress and individual growth.
Attitudes Toward Work	Pride and Personal Value	Assessed feelings of pride, satisfaction, and sense of workplace belonging.
	Physical Environment	Assessed the physical conditions of the workplace.
Organizational Climate	Occupational Health and Safety	Assessed the presence of safety and well-being mechanisms.
	Recognition and Benefits	Assessed compensation and recognition policies.
	Organizational Participation	Assessed opportunities for involvement in organizational processes.
	Professional Development	Assessed training and career growth opportunities within the company.

Source: authors own elaboration.

On the other hand, the data used in this analysis were derived from a validated research instrument consisting of 21 questions addressing aspects such as internal happiness, emotional self-regulation, family relationships, and work-related activity. A total of 70 surveys administered to the organization’s personnel were included in the analysis.

For methodological reasons, the original categories from the instrument were restructured and regrouped according to the variables that were effectively measured, with the aim of facilitating

numerical analysis and ensuring consistency in data processing. This reorganization allowed for the clear identification of items directly related to the primary variable of interest—internal happiness.

To streamline data management, the variables were systematically renamed, and the data types were verified, confirming that all variables were categorical, most of them based on a Likert scale. The correspondence between the measured aspects, the newly defined variables, and the original survey questions are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Analyzed variables and corresponding survey items

Aspect	Variable	Survey Question
Characterization	Tenure	Please select the time range that corresponds to your tenure with the company.
	Department	Please select the department to which you belong.
	Gender	You are:
	Age	Select the age range that applies to you.
Internal Happiness	Happiness1	I feel fulfilled.
	Happiness2	I feel in balance.
	Happiness3	I feel content most of the time.
	Happiness4	I feel in harmony with myself.
	Happiness5	I feel in good spirits.
Self-Regulation	Positive_Thinking	I think positively most of the time.
	Peace_With_Environment	I feel at peace with my environment.
	Mental_Wellbeing	I feel mentally well.
Family Relationship	United_Family	I have a united family.
	Structured_Family	I have a well-structured family.
	Family_Support	I have the support of my family.
	Family_Harmony	I feel in harmony with my family.
Work Activity	Job_Importance	I consider my work important.
	Job_Enjoyment	I enjoy my work.
	Best_Effort	I try to do my job to the best of my ability.
	Persistence	When things don’t go well at work, I remain persistent.
	Professional_Skills	My job allows me to apply my professional skills.

Source: authors own elaboration.

With the database organized, a descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the behavior of the study variables. For the characterization variables, graphical analysis was used to visualize their distribution. Since most of the variables consisted of categorical responses on a Likert scale, stacked bar charts were employed to represent the proportions of each response option across the different survey items.

This descriptive analysis was applied to all questions in the dataset in order to observe the frequency of each response and gain an overall understanding of the results. This process enabled the identification of patterns and trends in the data prior to conducting more detailed analyses.

In this sense, to construct the happiness indicator, the responses to questions related to internal happiness were first standardized. As these items followed a Likert-type format, numerical values were assigned to each response: Never = 1, Almost never = 2, Occasionally = 3, Sometimes

= 4, and Always = 5. This conversion allowed for quantitative comparisons across responses.

metimes = 4, and Always = 5. The same standardization process was applied to items measuring emotional self-regulation, family relationships, and work-related activity, as they followed the same scale format and needed to be converted for further analyses, such as variable correlation assessments.

Once converted, the items were grouped according to the specific aspect they measured. For each group, the meaning of the responses was calculated, generating independent numerical indicators for internal happiness, emotional self-regulation, family relationships, and work activity.

After calculating the happiness indicator, results were classified into three levels: low, medium, and high happiness. This categorization was based on the 33rd and 66th percentiles of the indicator's distribution, dividing respondents into three approximately equal-sized groups (Figure 1).

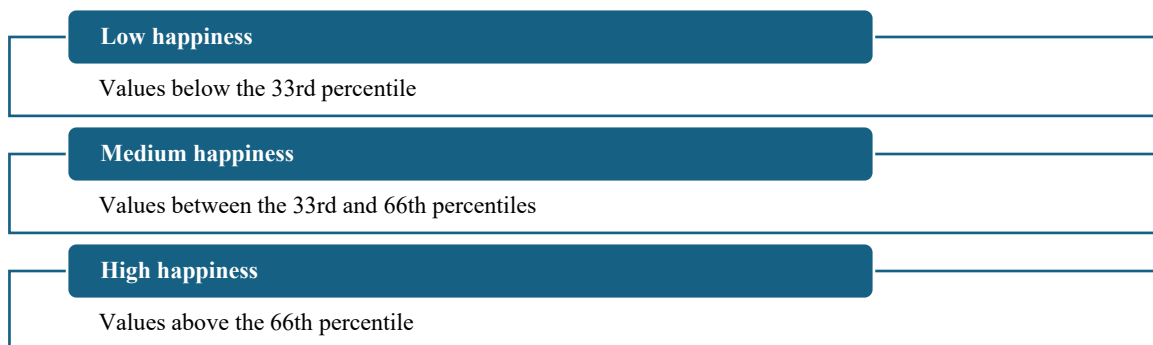


Figure 1. Categorization of Happiness Levels. Source: authors own elaboration.

A percentile represents a value that divides an ordered dataset into 100 equal parts. The 33rd percentile marks the value below which 33% of the data fall, while the 66th percentile marks the 66% threshold. The use of percentiles allows for segmentation of the sample in accordance with its actual distribution, which is particularly important when the data are not normally distributed, thereby avoiding arbitrary cut-offs.

The calculation of a given percentile P_k follows the formula:

$$P_k = k \times (n + 1)$$

where k is the percentile expressed as a decimal (e.g., 0.33 for the 33rd percentile), and n is the total number of observations.

If the result is not an integer, linear interpolation between the closest values is used to improve precision (Weiss, Weiss and Griffey, 2016).

This classification made it possible to analyze the distribution of happiness among respondents and to profile employees according to their happiness level. To complement the analysis, the data were grouped based on the assigned happiness level, and within each group, the most frequent responses to each question were identified. This approach facilitated the observation of patterns and trends at each level, allowing for the recognition of shared characteristics among respondents and providing key insights into the factors associated with higher or lower levels of happiness.

For its part, to analyze the relationship between the internal happiness indicator and the aspects of emotional self-regulation, family relationships, and work activity, Spearman's rank correlation was applied. This non-parametric technique is suitable when data, as in this case, are derived from Likert-type scales and do not follow a normal distribution. Unlike Pearson's correlation, Spearman's method does not require assumptions of normality or linearity, making it appropriate for identifying monotonic associations between ordinal variables (Mondragón, 2014).

Prior to conducting the analysis, the Shapiro-Wilk test was applied to verify the distribution of the data. The results confirmed that the internal happiness indicator did not follow a normal distribution, thereby justifying the use of non-parametric methods (Restrepo y González, 2007).

The calculation of Spearman's correlation was based on ranking the data, assigning each value its relative position within the ordered set. Differences between the ranks of each observation pair were then computed, and the following formula was applied:

$$\rho = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

where d_i represents the difference between the ranks of each observation, and n is the total number of observations.

The analysis was performed using the RStudio software, employing the `cor()` function with the Spearman method. The relationships were assessed between the happiness indicator and each individual statement corresponding to the three analyzed aspects, as well as between the happiness indicator and the composite indicators for self-regulation, family relationships, and work activity.

To determine the statistical significance of the observed correlations, the following hypothesis test was conducted:

Null hypothesis (H_0): no correlation exists ($\rho = 0$).

Alternative hypothesis (H_a): a correlation exists ($\rho \neq 0$).

The p value was obtained from the distribution of the Spearman correlation coefficient. If $p < 0.5$, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a statistically significant correlation. If $p \geq 0.5$, there was insufficient evidence to affirm a true relationship between the variables, as the observed association could be attributed to random chance.

Spearman's coefficients, which range from -1 to 1 , allowed for the assessment of both the strength and direction of the relationship: values near 1 indicate a strong positive association; values near -1 indicate a strong negative association; and values close to 0 suggest no meaningful relationship. It is important to note, however, that a significant correlation does not necessarily imply causation between variables.

This rigorous approach provided empirical evidence regarding the strength and direction of the associations between internal happiness and the aspects under analysis, thereby supporting the study's conclusions.

Results

The descriptive analysis of employee characteristics revealed that 39% of respondents

have been working at the company for more than five years, while 27% have a tenure between one and twelve months (Figure 2). This indicates a workforce composed of both experienced employees and recent hires.

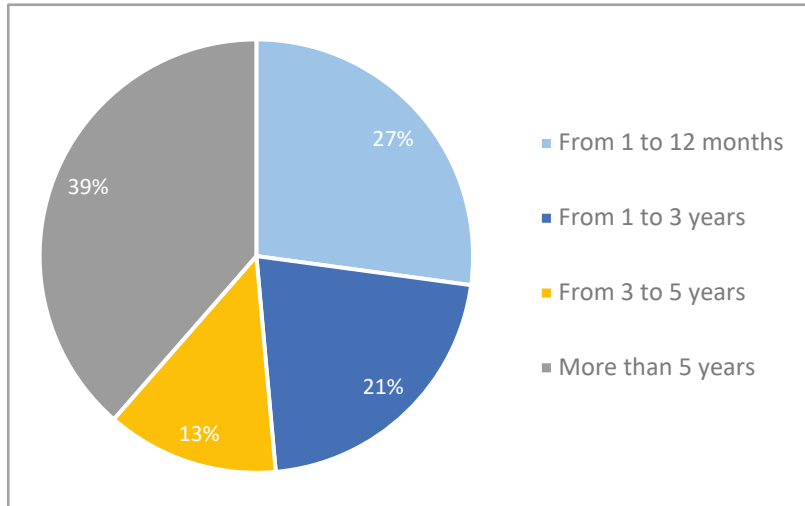


Figure 2. Length of Employment at the Company. Source: authors own elaboration.

Regarding the department to which respondents belong, the majority (44 individuals) identified as drivers, followed by 16 employees

working in the human resources and/or administrative areas (Figure 3).

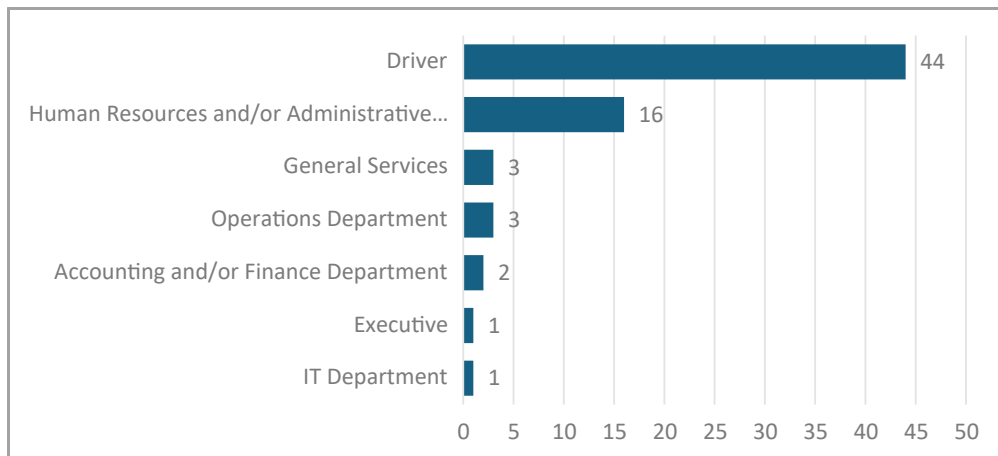


Figure 3. Departmental Affiliation. Source: authors own elaboration.

Regarding gender distribution, 66% of respondents identified as male and 34% as female. In terms of age, the most representative groups were those aged 25 to 29 and 40 to 44, suggesting that the

workforce is primarily composed of individuals in the intermediate stages of their professional lives (Figure 4).

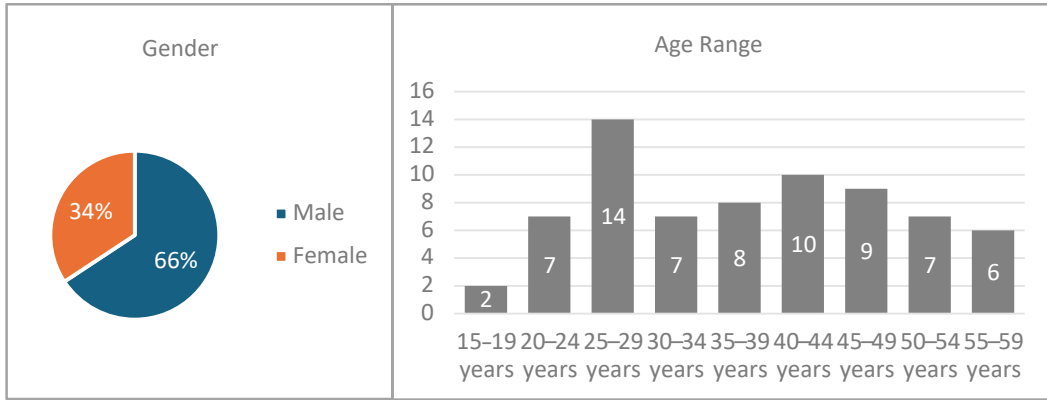


Figure 4. Gender and Age Range. Source: authors own elaboration.

With respect to internal happiness, responses showed a generally positive trend, with a concentration in the 'Sometimes' and 'Always' categories (Figure 5). For instance, in response to the statement "I feel in good spirits," 34% of respondents answered 'Always' and 40% answered 'Sometimes,' indicating a high level of perceived well-being.

Negative frequency responses were relatively rare. However, it is noteworthy that 3% of respondents indicated they "Almost never," feel balanced or fulfilled. Overall, the chart suggests that most respondents experience moderate to high levels of internal happiness.

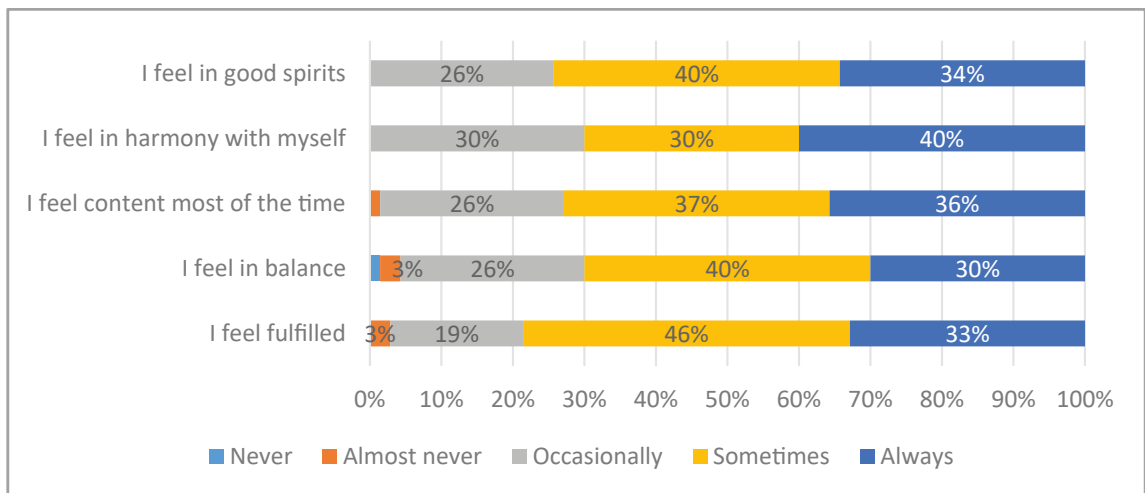


Figure 5. Internal Happiness Dimension. Source: authors own elaboration.

In the dimension of emotional self-regulation, the results also revealed a predominantly positive trend (Figure 6). A total of 39% of respondents

stated that they always think positively most of the time, indicating a solid capacity for emotional management and optimism.

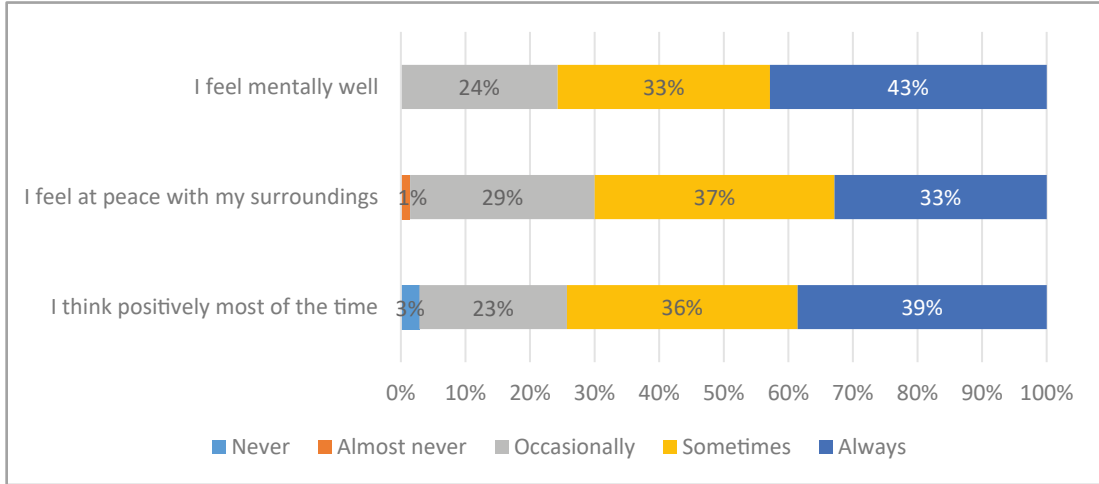


Figure 6. Self-Regulation. Source: authors own elaboration.

Regarding family relationships, the majority of respondents answered 'Always' to statements related to having a united family, receiving family support, and having a well-structured family

environment. However, it is important to highlight that 1% of respondents stated they never receive support from their family (Figure 7).

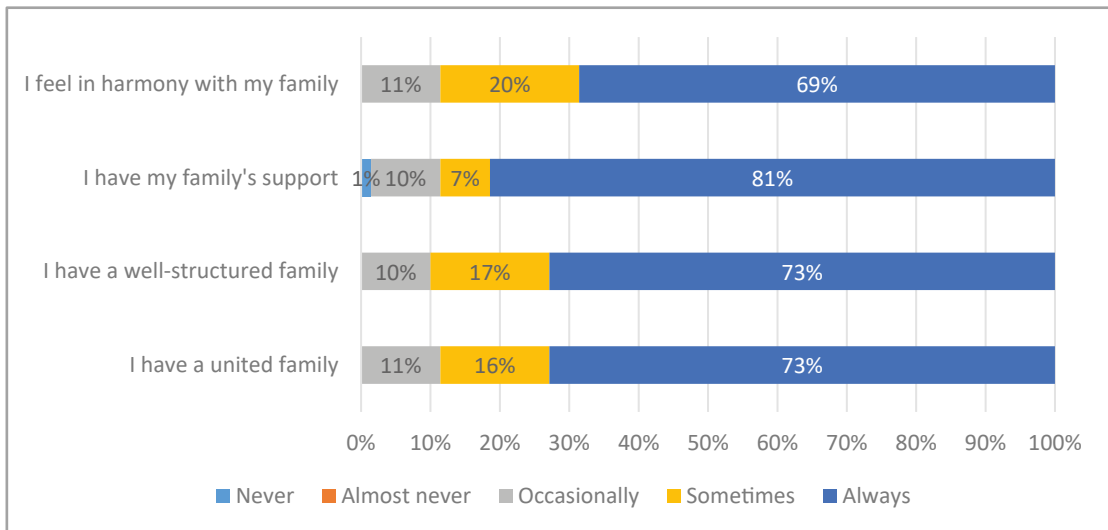


Figure 7. Family Relationship Dimension. Source: authors own elaboration

In terms of work activity, 80% of respondents reported that they 'Always' consider their job important and strive to do it to the best of their ability. As for job satisfaction, 49% indicated that they always enjoy their work, while 24% answered 'Sometimes,' suggesting that while most employees experience satisfaction, a notable proportion has more variable perceptions (Figure 8).

On the other hand, responses were more diverse when asked about the opportunity to apply their professional skills. While 49% stated that their job 'Always' allows them to apply their professional capabilities, 17% indicated 'Never,' and 7% responded "Almost never," revealing differing perceptions about opportunities for professional development within the company.

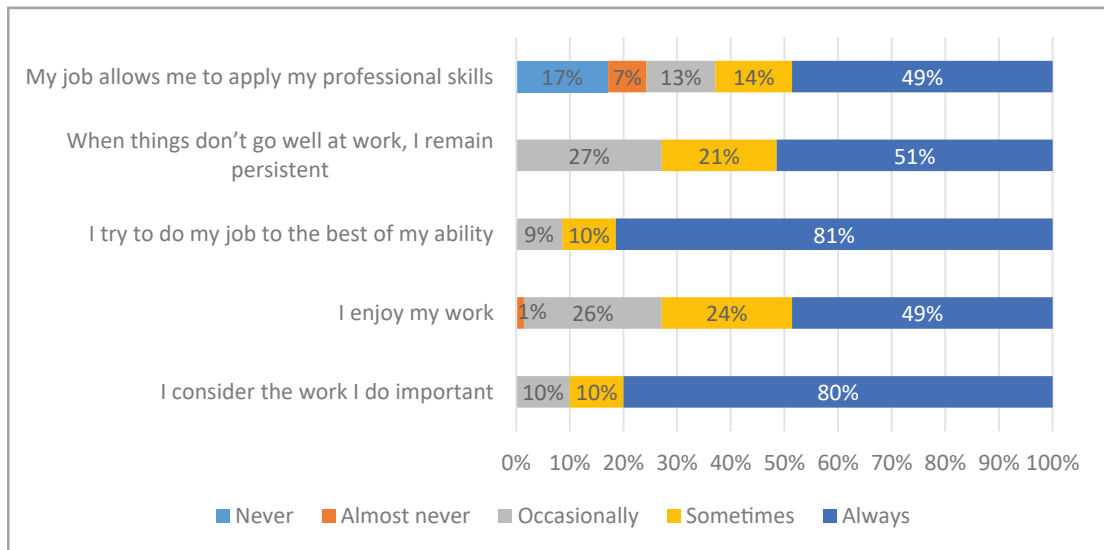


Figure 8. Work Activity Dimension. Source: authors own elaboration

The happiness level indicator was constructed by standardizing responses on a numerical scale from 1 to 5 and calculating the average of the values corresponding to five statements related to internal happiness. The distribution analysis shows that most employees report moderate to high levels of happiness, with a notable concentration at value 4.

Low levels of happiness were infrequent, suggesting that few employees have a negative perception of their well-being. This distribution reflects a positive trend, likely associated with favorable working conditions or personal factors that contribute to workplace well-being. The graphical representation of this distribution is shown in Figure 9.

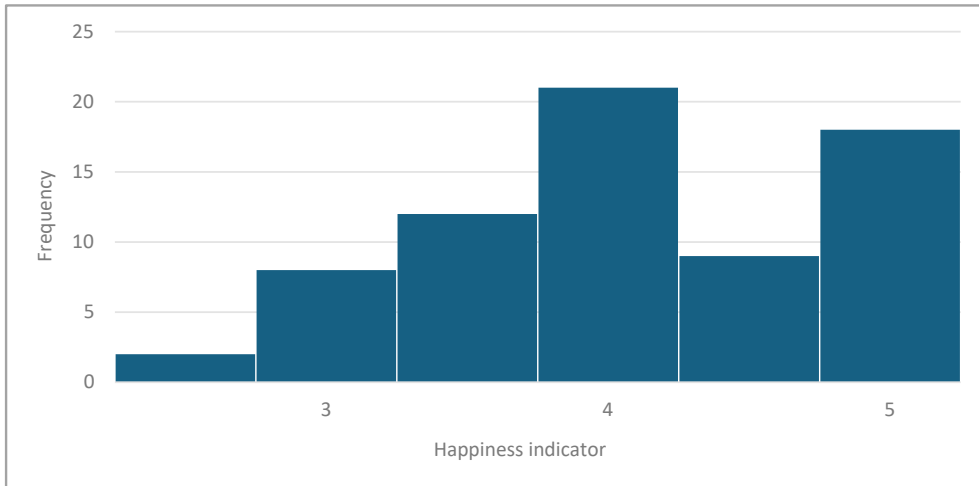


Figure 9. Distribution of Happiness Level Indicator. Source: authors own elaboration

The happiness indicator was categorized into three levels (low, medium, and high), using the 33rd and 66th percentiles as cut-off points, allowing for a more representative segmentation of employees. The 33rd percentile corresponded to a value of 3.8; employees scoring below this threshold were classified in the low happiness category. The 66th percentile, with a value of 4.4, defined the medium

level (scores between 3.8 and 4.4), while those scoring above 4.4 were placed in the high happiness category. Based on this classification, among the 70 respondents, 27 were classified as having high happiness levels, 21 fell into the medium category, and 22 were categorized as having low happiness. The distribution of employees according to this classification is illustrated in Figure 10.

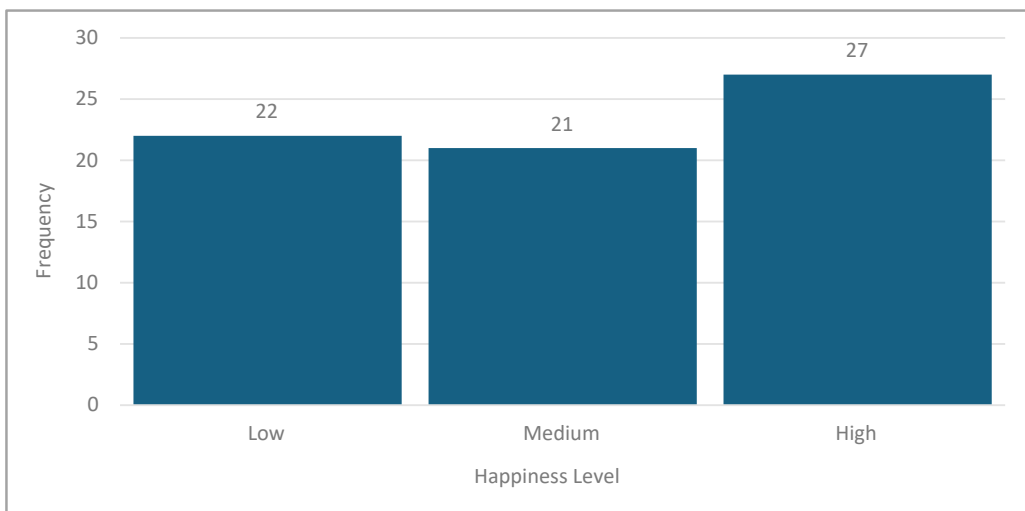


Figure 10. Categorization of Happiness Level Indicator. Source: authors own elaboration.

Meantime, with each employee classified according to their happiness level, a detailed characterization was conducted by examining how external variables behave within each category. This approach made it possible to identify the dominant

factors within each group and how these groups differ from one another. The variables showing the most marked differences across happiness levels are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Variables with Greatest Differences by Happiness Level

Variable	High Happiness	Medium Happiness	Low Happiness
Thinks positively	Always (21)	Sometimes (15)	Occasionally (13)
Peace with environment	Always (19)	Sometimes (13)	Occasionally (16)
Mentally well	Always (23)	Sometimes (16)	Occasionally (16)
Considers work important	Always (25)	Sometimes (8)	Occasionally (12)
Enjoys work	Always (23)	Always (19)	Always (13)
Job improves skills	Always (25)	Sometimes (8)	Occasionally (12)
Job allows skill development	Always (20)	Always (9)	Occasionally (7)

Source: authors own elaboration.

Employees in the high happiness category are characterized by a consistently positive perception across all evaluated dimensions. Most have worked at the company for over five years, are male, and serve as drivers. In terms of emotional well-being and work environment, the predominant response is ‘Always’ across all variables, indicating a stable sense of job satisfaction and strong family support.

The medium happiness group, while still exhibiting a generally positive trend, displays greater variability in responses. In emotional dimensions such as “Thinking positively,” “Peace with the environment,” and “Mental well-being,” the most common response is ‘Sometimes.’

Finally, the low happiness level reflects less emotional stability, with most responses falling into the ‘Occasionally’ category regarding personal well-being. Although family support remains strong, enjoyment of work and the perception of professional growth are lower compared to the other two groups.

Considering the descriptive analyses and the established happiness levels, a relationship was observed between internal happiness and the three

assessed aspects—most notably, work activity, where greater variability in responses was recorded.

To further examine this relationship, a correlation analysis was conducted using the 12 statements corresponding to the three dimensions of interest on an individual basis. In addition, a numerical indicator was constructed for each dimension, allowing for the evaluation of the overall correlation between each aspect and the internal happiness indicator.

Since the data are based on a Likert scale—which is ordinal in nature and does not follow a normal distribution— the most appropriate statistical test for measuring the relationship between these variables is Spearman’s rank correlation. This test is particularly well-suited when linearity cannot be assumed and when the variables are ordinal, as is the case with Likert-type responses. Unlike Pearson’s correlation, Spearman’s method operates on data ranks, making it more robust in the presence of non-normality.

The correlation matrix presents the specific values indicating the relationship between the internal happiness indicator and each of the variables

from the other dimensions (Table 4). While the matrix includes correlations among all variables, the main focus is on the relationship between internal happiness and the other dimensions under analysis.

By applying the correlation function between the happiness indicator and the 12 statements across the various assessed dimensions, the results shown in Table 4 were obtained.

Table 4. Correlation Between Aspects and the Happiness Level

Aspect	Statement	Correlation Coefficient
Self-Regulation	Thinks positively	0.69
	Peace with environment	0.74
	Mentally well	0.77
Family	United family	0.12
	Well-structured family	0.14
	Family support	0.22
	Family harmony	0.26
Work Activity	Considers work important	0.35
	Enjoys work	0.62
	Does best at work	0.33
	Remains persistent	0.49
	Applies professional skills	0.47

Note: It is important to note that Spearman's correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to 1. Values between ±0.70 and ±1.00 indicate a strong relationship between variables, while values between ±0.40 and ±0.69 suggest a moderate but statistically significant association. Coefficients ranging from ±0.10 to ±0.39 reflect a weak correlation, and values between -0.10 and 0.10 indicate no clear relationship between the variables.

Source: authors own elaboration.

The happiness indicator shows a strong and positive correlation with the statements related to the self-regulation dimension, with coefficients exceeding 0.69. In contrast, the family relationship dimension presents weak correlations, ranging from 0.12 to 0.26, indicating a minimal relationship. Meanwhile, the statements concerning work activity display moderate correlations, with values between 0.35 and 0.46.

Additionally, the analysis considers the correlation between the happiness indicator and the overall indicators for each dimension, rather than evaluating each question individually (Table 5). These indicators were constructed by standardizing responses on a numerical scale from 1 to 5 and calculating the average of the statements corresponding to each dimension. With these indicators in place, the correlation between the happiness indicator and the three dimensions was calculated using the appropriate statistical function, yielding the results presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Correlation Matrix

	Happiness_Indicator	Self_Regulation_Indicator	Family_Indicator	Work_Indicator
Happiness_Indicator	1	0.82	0.17	0.57
Self_Regulation_Indicator	0.82	1	0.16	0.67
Family_Indicator	0.17	0.16	1	0.14
Work_Indicator	0.57	0.67	0.14	1

Source: authors own elaboration.

The happiness indicator shows a strong and positive correlation with the self-regulation indicator (0.82), which confirms the results observed in the individual correlations of the associated survey items. In contrast, the correlation with the family relationship indicator is low (0.17), while the correlation with the work activity indicator is moderate (0.57).

Additionally, the statistical significance of the Spearman correlation test was assessed, considering a correlation to be statistically significant when the *p*-value is less than 0.05. In this case, the correlations between happiness and both self-regulation and work activity were statistically significant. Conversely, the correlation between happiness and family relationships was not significant, indicating insufficient evidence to support an association between these two variables.

Overall, these results suggest that for the company under study, employee happiness is more closely linked to self-regulation and work activity. This highlights the importance of these factors in supporting employee well-being.

Discussion

The analysis confirms that when examining the relationship between happiness and job performance, it is essential to clearly differentiate between the concepts of performance and productivity. Although often used interchangeably, these terms refer to distinct constructs. Productivity focuses on the quantity of outcomes achieved

relative to resources used, while performance refers to the quality and efficiency with which assigned tasks are executed. This distinction is not merely semantic; it determines the types of organizational strategies required to enhance employee well-being and effectiveness. In this study, both dimensions were integrated, acknowledging that employee happiness can influence both productivity (efficiency) and performance (quality), in line with the perspective of González and Vilchez (2021).

The findings reinforce the idea that workplace happiness is deeply linked to internal factors, particularly emotional self-regulation. Self-regulation, understood as the ability to manage emotions, thoughts, and behaviors adaptively, emerged as the dimension most strongly correlated with internal happiness. This result aligns with the frameworks proposed by Muriel, García del Junco and Ibáñez (2022) and Jiménez-Sierra et al. (2021), who argue that emotional control is a core component of subjective well-being in organizational contexts. From this perspective, the employee is not a passive recipient of external conditions, but an active agent in the construction of their own well-being.

Work activity also showed a moderate correlation with happiness levels, indicating that positive perceptions of one’s job, recognition of one’s role, and a sense of personal impact within the organization contribute meaningfully to emotional well-being. This relationship not only supports the arguments of Gómez et al. (2019), but also highlights the importance of recognition practices and fostering a sense of purpose as key elements of effective human talent management strategies.

The analysis of family relationships as a factor associated with workplace happiness reveals nuances that warrant closer examination. From a strictly statistical standpoint, the observed correlation coefficient was low, which could suggest a limited influence of family support on work-related well-being. However, a more qualitative and field-informed interpretation helps refine this conclusion. Despite long working hours that limit family interaction, the presence of strong emotional support—even at a distance—contributes indirectly to emotional stability. In line with Cruz, Ramírez and Sánchez (2015), family support, though not always visible in quantitative indicators, functions as an emotional buffer against workplace demands.

This interpretation is supported by the fact that 99% of employees reported having family support—a figure that suggests an underlying affective structure contributing to the overall medium-to-high happiness levels observed. The analysis suggests that strong emotional ties serve a protective function, especially in work environments characterized by long hours and high physical and emotional demands. This finding underscores the importance of moving beyond a strictly numerical reading of results to consider the emotional and subjective meanings embedded in the work experience.

The distribution of happiness levels in the sample revealed a positive trend, with most employees reporting medium or high levels of happiness. This pattern indicates that, despite the demanding nature of the sector, there are both internal and external factors sustaining acceptable levels of well-being. This result aligns with the frameworks of the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization, which emphasize workers' resilience as a key factor in maintaining mental health in high-pressure environments.

However, the presence of a significant portion of employees with low levels of happiness should not be overlooked. This finding indicates that, although the general environment may be favorable, there are specific areas in need of targeted intervention. Organizational well-being, therefore, should not be understood as a homogeneous state but rather as a dynamic phenomenon requiring differentiated and

responsive support strategies tailored to individual employee realities.

The discussion led to several concrete recommendations for the company. It was emphasized that a comprehensive workplace well-being plan is needed—one that goes beyond financial incentives to include initiatives for emotional support, recreation, and family integration. Activities such as stress management workshops, family engagement events, and symbolic recognition programs were proposed as core strategies to strengthen workplace happiness. This vision is consistent with the recommendations of the OMS and OIT (2022), which advocate for active well-being policies as a means to promote healthy work environments.

In addition, the need to incorporate formal psychological support within the organizational structure was identified. The proposal to hire an in-house psychologist to provide timely assistance to employees facing emotional crises responds to evidence showing that unresolved emotional burdens directly impact performance and service quality. Such a measure would not only address immediate needs but also serve as a preventive mechanism to mitigate psychosocial risks, in line with the guidelines of Colombia's Resolution 2646 of 2008 on psychosocial risk.

From a holistic perspective, workplace happiness was recognized as a construct resulting from the dynamic interaction of personal, familial, and organizational factors. It cannot be understood in isolation from employees' broader living conditions. As noted by Zenteno-Hidalgo and Durán (2016), the boundaries between personal and professional life are fluid and mutually influential; therefore, any strategy aimed at enhancing workplace well-being must account for this complexity.

The conclusion of the analysis reaffirmed the existence of a meaningful relationship between happiness and job performance—one that cannot be explained solely by individual traits or isolated work conditions. A systemic approach is needed, one that integrates organizational policies, emotional support strategies, recognition practices, and work-life balance initiatives. The findings reinforce that employees' emotional well-being is not a luxury

or secondary benefit, but a strategic component of organizational efficiency and service sustainability.

Conclusions

The analysis confirms that workplace happiness plays a central role in employee performance and productivity within the organization studied. The findings reveal that emotional self-regulation and perceiving one's work as meaningful are the factors with the greatest influence on happiness, while family support plays a lesser role in the work environment. This suggests that organizational management should prioritize initiatives that strengthen emotional competencies and a sense of purpose in the workplace over external factors unrelated to professional life.

The study identified that commitment and performance quality are higher among employees who report high levels of internal happiness. Enjoyment of work and perceptions of professional growth emerged as key elements in job satisfaction. However, some employees expressed difficulties in finding real opportunities for advancement, which poses a barrier to sustained levels of happiness and organizational commitment.

The data also reveal that longer tenure in the company is associated with higher happiness levels. However, this cannot be interpreted solely as a positive effect. Prolonged tenure may also reflect passive adaptation, where employees tolerate workplace conditions without perceiving opportunities for growth. These dynamic underscores the need to evaluate retention factors carefully rather than assume that length of service guarantees well-being.

In terms of organizational climate, the study found that material conditions and safety are perceived as adequate, but recognition and opportunities for participation are lacking. The absence of structured recognition policies directly affects how employees perceive the value of their work and limits the development of a positive organizational climate. Informal participation spaces do not compensate for this gap, making it

necessary to institutionalize effective mechanisms for dialogue and recognition.

It was also demonstrated that workplace happiness is not a unitary phenomenon. Its measurement must include dimensions such as emotional self-regulation, optimism about the future, and perceptions of professional growth. Approaches that focus exclusively on working conditions or economic benefits are insufficient to explain the workplace well-being. The correlation analysis confirmed that while family relationships are relevant, they exert less influence than work-related variables.

Based on these results, it is recommended that a socioeconomic study of employees be conducted. This study should gather detailed information on income, access to services, and material living conditions that may affect overall well-being. These insights would enable the company to design compensation and support policies that are better aligned with the actual needs of its workforce.

It is also recommended to conduct a study aimed at identifying employees' educational levels. Education may be a key factor in perceptions of workplace happiness. Understanding this variable would help inform the design of training and development strategies tailored to the existing workforce, fostering professional growth and enhancing internal motivation.

Programs to strengthen emotional self-regulation skills should also be implemented. The evidence shows that the ability to manage stress, maintain positive thinking, and sustain mental well-being significantly impacts employee happiness. Investing in the development of these skills will enhance both individual well-being and overall organizational productivity.

It is also necessary to establish clear pathways for professional growth. A lack of perceived development opportunities affects job satisfaction and weakens organizational commitment. Career plans should be accessible, transparent, and aligned with employees' competencies and aspirations, ensuring that everyone can envision a future within the company.

Furthermore, it is advisable to reinforce systems for recognizing employee performance. Explicit acknowledgment of both individual and team achievements helps foster a sense of belonging and organizational pride. The implementation of incentive programs—whether monetary or symbolic—can strengthen motivation and improve the work climate.

Finally, the promotion of transformational leadership styles is strongly recommended. Effective team management requires leaders who can inspire, build trust, and guide collective efforts toward common goals. Leadership that recognizes and nurtures individual strengths will be more effective in creating healthy, goal-oriented work environments.

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