

Emotional wage, happiness at work and organisational justice as triggers for happiness management

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Abstract

Purpose – This study analyses the concept of happiness management based on the empirical validation of the interactions between emotional wage, organisational justice and happiness at work. It complements a holistic view of the management models used in recent corporate governance. This perspective explores the dimension's emotional wage mediating role and influences on organisational justice and happiness at work. The effect of organisational justice on happiness at work is also analysed.

Design/methodology/approach – A quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive and correlational study is proposed. A sample of 502 workers in the education sector in Costa Rica was selected. A structural equation model (PLS-SEM) was developed to test the proposed theoretical model. The SPSS-AMOS 23 and SmartPLS 4 computer programs are used for this purpose.

Findings – The results show that emotional wage has a positive impact on happiness at work and that it mediates positively between organisational justice and happiness at work. Developing organisational policies to include these variables as necessary resources for corporate governance is recommended.

Research limitations/implications – The first limitation of this study is due to the type of sampling, which was purposive. The kind of population and the time of execution of this study were determining factors when deciding on the mode of application of the instrument. However, an attempt to reduce the bias associated with this element could be made by expanding the sample to as many respondents as possible. The second limitation was that the data were collected within a specific time frame. Longitudinal studies address this. The third limitation stems from the scarcity of literature on happiness management. In this regard, this type of research currently needs to be explored in emerging economies. It makes it difficult to determine whether the empirical results obtained in this paper can be generalised to other territories in the global village. Moreover, the last limitation is that the authors of this research have only explored the moderating role of emotional pay in the relationship between the dimensions of organisational justice and happiness at work. It would be interesting to consider other mediating variables to have a clearer picture of the organisational justice–happiness at work construct from the happiness management approach.

Practical implications – As already indicated throughout this research, emotional wage, organisational justice and happiness at work are constructs that positively drive employee satisfaction, motivation and well-being. Human talent management strategies undertaken by organisations should encourage the adaptation of actions that stimulate employees' quality of life, corporate social responsibility and ethical management practices to be more competitive in today's markets. It requires implementing the dynamic management models that provide



internal customers with a high sense of belonging, job satisfaction and commitment to their professional performance. In other words, this will require robust leadership styles and corporate cultures that stimulate employee creativity, loyalty and innovation. For this reason, management of organisations must implement human resources policies to attract and retain creative talent through happy leadership. It requires, among other things that the philosophy of happiness management becomes a critical strategic resource for companies to promote nonfinancial benefits for employees, including emotional wage (Ruiz-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2023).

Social implications – In the current business environment, there has been a transformation in leadership styles, motivation and the development of a sense of belonging in organisations' human capital. Based on this trend, the study of happiness management becomes a social strategy to improve the conditions, in which the organisations compete to attract highly demanded human capital. It is why this research contributes elements that have an impact on citizenship by proposing the management models based on happiness at work and quality of life.

Originality/value – This study adds to the happiness management literature by including emotional wage, organisational justice and happiness at work in human resources and strategic management. It also contributes to the academic debate on the need to formulate organisational cultures that empower workers in their professional performance based on happiness and positive emotions.

Keywords Emotional wage, Happiness at work, Organisational justice, Human capital

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

In the last years of the 21st century, globalisation has led to significant changes in the management models of companies (Singh and Banerji, 2022). Company management must create a work atmosphere favouring productive efficiency, intrapreneurship and corporate well-being (Nicolò *et al.*, 2022). This way, companies will achieve competitive and sustainable advantages in the medium and long term (Colakoglu *et al.*, 2019). To this end, their organisational cultures must be founded on implementing managerial actions that attract creative and innovative talent.

The emotional wage will be vital to achieving this goal (Gil-Vera *et al.*, 2019). An intangible resource that requires a change in the current management models, as they do not consider the concerns and economic and social needs of their human capital (Prince *et al.*, 2021). It is, therefore, not surprising that many people are willing to look for a new job or maintain an aptitude for doing what is essential in developing their professional performance to avoid being dismissed. It is called silent resignation (Karatepe *et al.*, 2022).

This situation will only change once, and corporate governance becomes aware of the importance of having happy workers within their organisations (Ghadi and Almanagah, 2020). It is the optimal way to improve the productive performance of their employees as well as to reduce voluntary disengagement (Pascucci *et al.*, 2022). Both aspects will be more feasible in companies that facilitate internal customers' interpersonal relationships, transversal skills, creativity and innovation competencies (Colakoglu *et al.*, 2019). It requires a strategic direction connecting companies' economic interests with all their professionals' labour and social demands. The first step to meet this challenge must be to undertake human resource policies based on developing psych-directive variables that conceive individuals as one of the corporations' main assets to ensure their business competitiveness (Nyathi and Kekwaletse, 2022).

From this perspective, the managers should promote a corporate culture that stimulates happiness under emotional wage and organisational justice (Kurian and Nafukho, 2022; Singh and Banerji, 2022). Therefore, this research's main objective will be to explore how emotional wage and organisational justice influence workers' happiness. This paper aims to contribute to the happiness management literature by offering a better scientific understanding of the three constructs mentioned above, i.e. emotional wage, organisational justice and happiness at work. In addition to the above, this paper takes Costa Rica as the research scenario. This decision stems basically from three factors: first, this country has one of the most resilient emerging economies to a future global financial crisis

(Rojas-Suárez, 2023). Second, Costa Rica has one of the most advanced educational systems in Central America that best contributes to the competitiveness of its companies in the globalised world. Hence, it is unsurprising that this territory will be the third fastest-growing economy in Latin America in 2023 (Titelman, 2023).

Finally, this paper is structured into four sections: the first section reviews the literature on the dimensions that are the subject of this study. Secondly, the research methodology was adopted in this paper. The third section describes the results obtained in this scientific work. The last section presents the conclusions, discussions, limitations and future lines of research.

2. Review of the literature

2.1 *Happiness at work*

During the last decades of the 20th century, scientific works on the economics of happiness have gained particular importance in the academic corpus due to their multidisciplinary character. This fact has attracted the interest of economists in this social sciences discipline (Benuyenah and Pandya, 2020). In this line of research, we find studies linked to happiness in the work environment (Salas-Vallina *et al.*, 2017). Many of these studies show that happy human capital is a source of productivity and economic profitability (Adnan-Bataineh, 2019). It means that happiness at work becomes an intangible resource that plays a vital role in the competitiveness of organisations in today's digital society (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2019b). Despite this cognitive finding, there needs to be more solid work in recent literature that clearly states that a corporate culture focused on the subjective well-being of its employees is an essential source of economic profitability for companies (Rizkallah, 2021).

However, this fact has not prevented a significant body of academic research from suggesting that companies should develop an organisational culture that is pivotal in pursuing happiness at work for their employees (Ghadi and Almanagah, 2020). Therefore, happiness at work is defined as a multidimensional construct that measures people's positive emotional experiences in their professional position's performance (Espasandín-Bustelo *et al.*, 2020). This intra-organisational approach shows that individuals' happiness at work is conditioned by the human resources actions or practices and are carried out by corporate governance to generate an atmosphere of subjective well-being within their entities (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2022a).

In line with this holistic conceptualisation of happiness at work, many researchers are beginning to explore the relationships of this variable with the objective dimensions: security, health, commitment, education, employment or salary (Galván-Vela *et al.*, 2022a). Regarding the objective dimensions, it is essential to note that previous studies point to positive relationships between happiness at work and other parameters such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment or innovation (Chia *et al.*, 2020). In light of these studies, a string of papers is emerging to examine how psychosocial factors influence happiness at work (Bakker and Vries, 2021). Examples are the variables: job performance, work climate, organisational justice and emotional wage (Kurian and Nafukho, 2022; Selvi and Aiswarya, 2022). Regarding the latter construct, empirical studies exploring happiness at work-emotional wage association are currently at an early stage (Datu and Restubog, 2020). This phenomenon is caused by the lack of organisations implementing the management models based on the two dimensions mentioned above (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2019a; Tarigan *et al.*, 2021). For this reason, there is no empirical evidence on how happiness at work and emotional wage links influence the construction of an innovative ecosystem (Aboramadan and Kundi, 2022).

2.2 *Emotional wage*

The human resource theory argues that strategic models focused on the job satisfaction of their employees are sources of productivity. This way, workers will feel more proactive in the

companies' organisational culture (Martinez-Tur *et al.*, 2022). The emotional wage is an intangible resource that can play a significant role in achieving these achievements (Cuéllar-Molina *et al.*, 2019). Quintero-Arango and Betancur-Arias (2018) define the emotional wage as the factors that achieve workers' emotional well-being through non-monetary human resource management practices.

From this perspective, this psychosocial dimension has very positive effects on the productive performance of companies (Velte, 2019). Previous research has examined that emotional wage is positively influenced by motivation, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Tarigan *et al.*, 2021). Consequently, the authors such as Hovi and Laamanen (2021) show that emotional wage correlates with creative talent attraction and productivity.

In this globalised market, the emotional wage is becoming one of the most significant factors for companies to increase the efficiency of their employees. In this sense, it would be interesting to highlight that emotional wage can be a vital intangible resource to stimulate happiness at work (Lin, 2020). Given this fact, corporate governance should articulate human resources policies that promote the subjective well-being of internal customers through organisational justice, intrapreneurship or emotional wage (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2022b).

Thus, workers happy with their professional performance will be more likely to accept non-monetary incentives offered by their hierarchical superiors, such as the emotional wage dimension. Undoubtedly, this is one of the most valuable resources for companies to enjoy an atmosphere of constructive and positive emotions (Valk and Yousif, 2021). Under this approach, Quintero-Arango and Betancur-Arias (2018) show, on the one hand, that the emotional wage construct is composed of human management, strategic management, motivation and value generation. Moreover, on the other hand, these dimensions constitute a way to improve workers' happiness. In this line of research,

Therefore, the emotional wage variable contributes to the fact that company managers may be attracted to the philosophy of happiness management (Singh and Banerji, 2022). As a management model that fosters the trinomial of happiness at work, organisational justice and emotional wage (Kurian and Nafukho, 2022). Against this backdrop, corporate governance must undertake continuous improvement processes that promote the three above constructs and design a strategic direction promoting workplace happiness (Foncubierta-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2020).

2.3 Organisational justice

In the recent decades of the 21st century, many researchers have devoted themselves to empirically exploring the dimension of organisational justice (Colquitt *et al.*, 2013). One of the reasons for this lies in the relevance of this construct in developing corporate governance governed by ethics and equity (Kurian and Nafukho, 2022). In this sense, organisational justice is defined as a multidimensional variable representing internal customers' perceptions of fairness in the workspace and their reactions to the various types of treatment they receive there (Kim and Chung, 2019). Many published studies on this topic revolve around the three dimensions of organisational justice: distributive, procedural and interactional (Galván-Vela *et al.*, 2022b). These variables are conceptually very different but closely related to each other. Distributive justice is the perception of fairness in distributing outcomes or rewards concerning an employee's contribution (Ramaswami and Singh, 2003). Procedural justice is the perception of fairness in procedures established by management in allocating resources and benefits and decision-making (Mladinic and Isla, 2002). Finally, interactional justice refers to the perception of fair, equitable and appropriate treatment that employees receive from their superiors (Patlán-Pérez *et al.*, 2014).

Organisational justice is an essential factor for companies to generate competitive advantages. This intangible resource also stimulates happiness at work, especially in those organisations that implement a culture that favours work passion and social interactions

(Medina-Craven and Ostermeier, 2020). On this issue, it is worth noting, on the one hand, the growing number of studies that examine how organisational justice affects the dignity and job satisfaction of employees (Meisler, 2013). On the other hand, there are currently still many questions to be answered in the current academic debate on how the dimensions of emotional wage and happiness at work respond to the strategic directions taken by companies through the prism of organisational justice, especially in companies that develop their productive activity in emerging countries (Nauman *et al.*, 2019).

A meta-analysis of research on organisational justice observes that this construct is fundamental for cultivating happiness (Jimenez-Marin *et al.*, 2021). So far, scientific studies on the organisational justice dimension do not consider emotional wage as an essential vehicle for company happiness (Quintero-Arango and Betancur-Arias, 2018). This fact lies in the lack of an academic corpus showing that companies' economic prosperity can be driven by the existing solid links of emotional wage and happiness at work with the organisational justice variable (Gil-Vera *et al.*, 2019).

Based on this heuristic, the top management of companies can implement the management models that undertake actions that reduce wage inequalities, labour disputes and employee turnover (Miao *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, corporate governance based on the synergies of emotional wage and happiness at work will bring about fairer, more efficient organisations (Medina-Craven and Ostermeier, 2020).

2.4 Research hypotheses

Despite a significant volume of scientific studies on the three constructs that are the subject of this research (Vaamonte *et al.*, 2018); there are still many gaps that need to be covered by the literature in these specific areas of academic study in the social sciences. One of the causes is the need for empirical studies that explore, on the one hand, how emotional wage influences the variables of happiness at work and organisational justice. Moreover, on the other hand, to know how the happiness at work factor statistically mediates the emotional wage-organisational justice relationship (Martinez-Tur *et al.*, 2022).

Another gap is found in the need for such research in the education sector in emerging countries (OECD, 2022). It is these institutions' organisational and managerial singularities. Therefore, this paper aims to deepen the inferential understanding of the variables above. In this way, some light can be shed on the mediating role that happiness at work plays in the relationship between emotional wage and organisational justice. Drawing on the recent literature on happiness management (Rizkallah, 2021), the authors of this paper formulate the following four study hypotheses:

- H1. Emotional wage positively influences happiness at work.
- H2. Organisational justice positively influences emotional wage.
- H3. Organisational justice positively influences happiness at work.
- H4. Emotional wage mediates the positive relationship between organisational justice and happiness at work.

The theoretical model shown in Figure 1 is proposed based on these research hypotheses.

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample and data collection

The theoretical model proposed is a descriptive, causal, hypothetical-deductive and quantitative study. The design is non-experimental and cross-sectional, and the data were collected simultaneously. The sample was non-probabilistic and non-random for

convenience. The data were collected from July to December 2022, and a closed online questionnaire was used to manage the data on this issue.

Analysis of variance and post hoc tests were conducted to check for bias in the sample population. Structural equation modelling (SEM) is widely used to explain various statistical relationships through visual representation and model validation. It is a valuable tool for examining experimental or non-experimental data (Dash and Paul, 2021). PLS-SEM was considered more appropriate since this study seeks theoretical development with rarely modelled variables and aims for prediction rather than confirmation.

These tests indicate no significant differences at a confidence level of 95% and a maximum error level of 6%. The demographic profile of the participants can be seen in Table 1. The sample population comprises 502 employees in the education sector in Costa

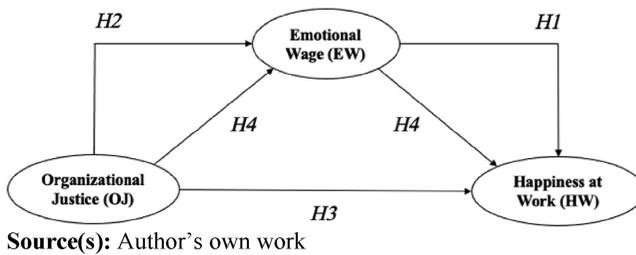


Figure 1.
Theoretical model

Category	Item	Absolute	%
Gender	Female	331	65.9
	Male	171	34.1
Age	18–30 years old	134	26.7
	31–40 years old	140	27.9
	41–50 years old	151	30.1
	51+	77	15.3
Marital status	Married	210	41.9
	Divorced	63	12.6
	Couple	47	9.4
	Separated	2	0.3
	Single	168	33.5
Education	Widow/widower	12	2.3
	Baccalaureate secondary education	9	1.8
	Incomplete university studies	28	5.6
	University baccalaureate	76	15.1
	University degree	214	42.7
	University master's degree	162	32.3
Type of post	University doctorate	13	2.6
	Administrative	86	17
Nature of the organisation	Teacher	416	83
	Private	246	49
	Public	256	51
<i>Total for each category</i>		502	100
	Z/2	1.64	
	SD	1.23	
	Error	0.06	

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 1.
Demographic profile of
participants

Rica, representing education workers aged 18–60 years old with studies ranging from high school to doctorate.

The final sample size of this research, which reached 502 observations, is sufficient to carry out the structural equation model, as [Hair et al. \(2022\)](#) suggested.

3.2 Measures

The questionnaire used by this research contains a Likert-type scale from 1 to 7 to assess the constructs of the theoretical model proposed in this paper. The emotional wage construct was measured with the scale developed by [Quintero-Arango and Betancur-Arias \(2018\)](#), which has a Cronbach's alpha = 0.941. This scale consists of 34 items, divided into four dimensions: human, motivation, strategy and value addition. The happiness at work parameter was assessed with 13 items developed by [Ramírez-García et al. \(2019\)](#), this scale has a Cronbach's alpha = 0.910. Regarding the organisational justice construct, the scale [Patlán-Pérez et al. \(2014\)](#) use has a Cronbach's alpha = 0.951. This scale comprises 19 items measuring the following three elements: distributive, procedural and interactional justice.

The procedure followed for data analysis is the structural equation model by variance method (PLS-SEM). SPSS-AMOS version 23 and Smart-PLS version 4 software were used for this purpose. Also, the Harman's test was conducted ([Podsakoff et al., 2003](#)) to ascertain whether the standard method variance bias affected the item matrix used in the measurement model. All items that passed the previous stages are included in a factor analysis in the one-factor Harman's test. [Fuller et al. \(2016\)](#) suggest that this percentage should be above 40% to consider common variance issues. In this regard, the results revealed a standard variance of less than 40%, indicating no common variance issues in this model.

3.3 Control variables

The authors of this research examine the control variables linked to the constructs of the theoretical model presented in [Figure 1](#). Thus, happiness at work is influenced by marital status and age. Organisational justice is influenced by educational level and job type. Moreover, finally, the emotional wage is affected by academic rank, job type and the nature of the organisation.

4. Results

4.1 Data analysis

Before the statistical analysis, the absence of null data or outliers due to marked tendencies towards extreme values was verified. It avoids future problems in the study of the results. Furthermore, the distribution was checked for univariate and multivariate normality conditions. It was confirmed with kurtosis, Kolmogorov Smirnov skewness tests and the K-set test².

4.2 Evaluation of the measurement model

The evaluation of the measurement model is a way of verifying that the latent variables are adequately measured based on the expected relationships between the constructs. This study used Cronbach's alpha for a reliability analysis (internal consistency) with the SmartPLS software. It gave a value of $\alpha = 0.98$ ($p = 0.01$). For [Hair et al. \(2022\)](#), a Cronbach's alpha above 0.8 means the instrument is reliable and has appropriate internal consistency ([Table 2](#)).

The SPSS-AMOS software was then used to carry out the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) and Barlett's sphericity tests to demonstrate the suitability of the items of the constructs under investigation for exploratory factor analysis. The score obtained for the KMO indicator was equal to 0.951 (5% confidence interval [95% CI]: 0.731–0.860) and for the Barlett's test of

sphericity is a $p = 0.000$ (Approx. Chi-Square = 41562.512; G1 = 1,540 Sig = 0.000). Both results showed that they are significant for undertaking a confirmatory factor analysis.

Based on this information, a confirmatory factor analysis by principal components with varimax rotation was performed to verify the reliability and validity of the scales. In this sense, the authors of this research analysed the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) to assess internal consistency and discriminant validity, as seen in Table 2. Hair *et al.* (2022) point out that if the AVE and CR should be higher than 0.5 and 0.8, as is our case, the property of discriminant validity and internal consistency of the items intended to measure the variables: happiness at work, organisational justice and emotional. Variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis was performed to examine whether multicollinearity existed between the variables of the theoretical model proposed in this research. Previous work indicates that if the values are more significant than 1, as in our case, there are no bias problems in this scientific work (Henseler and Schubert, 2022). Additionally, Table 2 reveals that both Cronbach's alpha and the composite reliability (rh_a) and (rh_b) are more significant than 0.900. Measurements greater than 0.700 in these indicators indicate that the constructs maintain good internal consistency and reliability regarding the variables they intend to measure.

Table 3 shows that all the research constructs also met the conditions established by Henseler and Schubert (2022) for the property of discriminant validity.

4.3 Hypothesis testing

The standardised root means square residual (SRMR) indicates that there is a good model fit when its value is less than 0.10 (Hu and Bentler, 1998). In the case of this study, the SRMR is 0.071. Also, the squared Euclidean distance (d_ ULS), geodesic distance (d_ G), Chi-Square (χ^2) and the normalised fit index (NFI) reached values of 9.787,6.595, 14.615.552 and 0.646, respectively. These data confirmed the validity of the measurement and structural models (Table 4).

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rh_a)	Composite reliability (rh_b)	AVE	VIF
Happiness at work [HW]	0.941	0.949	0.949	0.629	1.879
Organisational justice [OJ]	0.976	0.977	0.978	0.715	1.879
Emotional wage [EW]	0.978	0.978	0.979	0.584	1.000

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 2. Validity of the measurement model

	Happiness at work	Organisational justice	Emotional wage
Happiness at work	0.793		
Organisational justice	0.866	0.846	
Emotional wage	0.722	0.684	0.764

HTMT discriminant validity – heterotrait–monotrait ratio

Organisational justice → happiness at work	0.883
Emotional wage → happiness at work	0.744
Emotional wage → organisational justice	0.698

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 3. Discriminant validity

Likewise, the coefficient of determination (R^2) indicated an inferential relationship between the constructs of organisational justice–emotional wage and emotional wage–job happiness with R^2 of 0.468 and 0.782, respectively (Figure 2). In this sense, Chin (1998) shows that predictive values have a mediation statistical relationship when the values of (R^2) are higher than 0.33.

Once it was estimated that this theoretical model presented an acceptable fit, the research hypotheses set out in this study were tested. For this purpose, on the one hand, the measurement error, whose value should be greater than 0.01, was carried out. On the other hand, the composite reliability index, whose minimum recommended weight should be greater than 0.7.

Based on these empirical results, the hypotheses of this research were accepted since the RH took a value of 1.96 and a $p < 0.05$ (Jones and Edgerton, 2009). It is convenient to indicate that the relationships found for the constructs of this research are of causality and that the behaviour of the correlations of these variables indicated a positive association. Also, Table 5

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.071	0.071
d_ULS	9.787	9.787
d_G	6.595	6.595
Chi-square	14,615,552	14,615,552
NFI	0.646	0.646

Table 4. Model fit indicators **Source(s):** Authors' own work

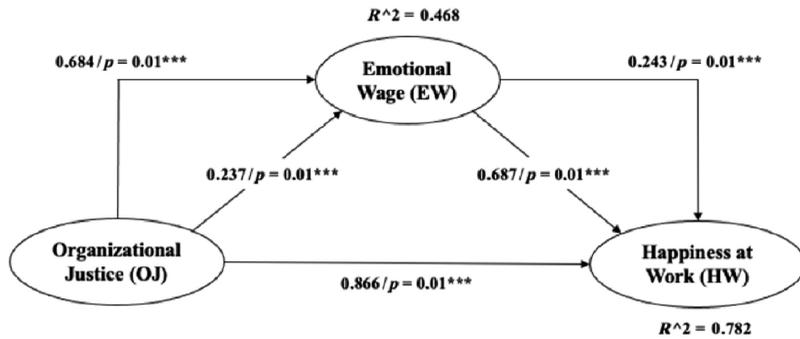


Figure 2. Results of the theoretical model

Hip	Variable	Effect	SE	Composite reliability CR.	p	Contrast
H1	EW → HW	0.243	0.06	0.949	0.01	Not rejected
H2	OJ → EW	0.684	0.04	0.977	0.01	Not rejected
H3	OJ → HW	0.883	0.03	0.978	0.01	Not rejected
H4	OJ → EW → HW	0.166	0.05	0.979	0.01	Not rejected

Table 5. Hypothesis testing **Note(s):** Significant results at $***p = 0.01$ **Source(s):** Authors' own work

shows four phenomena: first, organisational justice significantly influences emotional wage with a $\beta = 0.684$ ($p = 0.01$). Second, emotional wage significantly influences happiness at work with a $\beta = 0.243$ ($p = 0.01$). The third is that organisational justice affects happiness at work, with a $\beta = 0.883$ ($p = 0.01$).

Moreover, the last one is that the emotional wage dimension mediates between organisational justice and happiness at work with a $\beta = 0.166$ ($p = 0.01$). Thus, it can be stated that H1, H2, H3 and H4 are accepted as research hypotheses. Moreover, these findings align with the theoretical model proposed in Figure 1.

To inferentially secure the research hypotheses of this study, the significance and stability of the relationships between the dimensions of the proposed model must be estimated. To this end, the authors of this paper resort to the non-parametric bootstrapping technique with 10,000 samples and a bootstrap at 99%. As shown in Table 6, all the relationships show values of $p = 0.000$. Therefore, there are significant validations between the constructs that are the object of this study by the criteria of Hair *et al.* (2022).

Given the information in Table 6, the validity, significance and predictability of the structural model of this scientific work can be affirmed. With this, all research hypotheses and the proposed theoretical model are robustly confirmed (Figure 2).

5. Conclusions

The findings of this research point to a strong link between emotional wage, happiness at work and organisational justice. This information can be an excellent opportunity for corporate governance to undertake a strategic direction that invigorates the happiness of workers in the daily performance of their professional position. On the one hand, this requires a leadership style that stimulates the commitment of its human capital in the globalised world (Frare and Beuren, 2021). Moreover, on the other hand, happiness management cultivates a happy work environment as a robust vehicle to generate competitive advantages (Valk and Yousif, 2021).

Furthermore, the results of this paper contribute to the scientific advancement of new research on happiness management (Jambrino-Maldonado *et al.*, 2022). In this way, it can be demonstrated that the dimension's emotional wage and organisational justice play a fundamental role in workers' subjective well-being. It means that the intangible resource of happiness becomes a strategic element that organisations stimulate innovation and intrapreneurship. Finally, the findings of this scientific work support the research hypotheses put forward in this paper. It may have important theoretical and practical implications.

	Original sample (0)	Sample mean (M)	SD	T statistics (O/STDEV)	p-value	2.5%	97.5%
Emotional wage → happiness at work	0.243	0.243	0.032	7.513	0.000	0.179	0.306
Organisational justice → emotional wage	0.684	0.685	0.029	23.944	0.000	0.626	0.738
Organisational justice → happiness at work	0.866	0.887	0.012	72.135	0.000	0.644	0.955
Organisational justice → emotional wage → happiness at work	0.166	0.166	0.023	7.301	0.000	0.122	0.212

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 6.
Table of bootstrapping effect estimates

5.1 Theoretical implications

This study presents several theoretical implications for the literature on the strategic management of organisations. First, this work contributes to the growing literature of the happiness management discipline. It is because it is one of the first research studies to address a conceptual model exploring the relationships between the dimensions of happiness at work, emotional wage and organisational justice in emerging countries (Kocollari *et al.*, 2023). Second, the results obtained in this study show, on the one hand, that the emotional wage variable significantly impacts happiness at work. This finding aligns with other research carried out with samples in the territory under study and in other countries. These studies have determined that emotional wage predicts happiness or job satisfaction for employees (Díaz-García *et al.*, 2023).

On the other hand, the emotional wage construct has mediation effects between the dimensions of happiness at work and organisational justice. This result represents an advance in formulating new happiness management theories; it is also congruent with current studies of this attractive business culture (Martínez-Falco *et al.*, 2023). All of this reveals the importance of these three intangible resources for implementing human resources policies to encourage motivation among internal customers (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2023a). Third, the findings of this paper demonstrate that corporate governance should formulate business strategies that integrate happiness management as a philosophy that is a source of economic growth and organisational success (Rando-Cueto *et al.*, 2023). Fourth, this research shows that the variables emotional wage, happiness at work and organisational justice require leadership styles that foster the professional performance of all stakeholders through the lens of social responsibility and decent work (Jha *et al.*, 2023). Finally, and perhaps one of the most significant contributions of this paper, is that it provides a conceptual model that can help companies design management models that improve the happiness at work of the life of their human capital in the era of the “Great Resignation” (Abellán-Sevilla and Ortíz-de-Urbina-Criado, 2023). Therefore, the results achieved in this study have solid theoretical implications for the emerging happiness management literature (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2023b).

5.2 Practical implications

Human talent management strategies undertaken by organisations should encourage the adaptation of actions that stimulate the quality of life of employees in order to be more competitive in today’s markets. It requires implementing the dynamic management models that provide internal customers high job satisfaction. Leadership styles that stimulate employee happiness and innovation are required to attract creative talent. In this way, the happiness management philosophy will become a critical strategic resource for companies to promote nonfinancial benefits for employees (Ruiz-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2023).

5.3 Social implications

There has been a transformation in leadership styles in today’s business environment. To meet this challenge, corporate governance in large companies must undertake organisational cultures that nurture social progress in the post-COVID-19 era (Elías-Zambrano *et al.*, 2021; Mercader *et al.*, 2021). It requires management models that combine economic performance with internal customer happiness and occupational health from the perspective of non-monetary benefits and happiness management (Mu *et al.*, 2023). This way, companies will enjoy a working environment that stimulates their employees’ psychological well-being to build a more entrepreneurial and happier society (Robina-Ramírez *et al.*, 2023).

5.4 Future lines of research

The results of this paper offer many potential avenues for future research. Let us mention those that are relevant enough to deepen the concept of happiness management further. The first is to develop theoretical models of happiness at work that consider the use of mediating variables other than those applied in this paper. According to recent happiness management literature, an excellent example of this would be the following dimensions: organisational dynamic skills, professional performance, work motivation or cultural intelligence.

The second is to conduct studies similar to those described in the previous pages in other types of organisations and emerging economy countries. This information will be precious to consolidate the empirical validity of our results. It would be desirable for these scientific publications to use probability sampling techniques and develop longitudinal studies to establish the causal relationships between the variables under study. It will make it possible to examine the level of job happiness, emotional wage and organisational justice that corporations possess over the long term. Such findings will be crucial to inferentially estimate how these constructs impact their internal customers' work engagement and passion.

Finally, it will undertake qualitative papers exploring the role of happiness at work in the relationship between emotional wage and organisational justice parameters. In light of these enquiries, it will be possible to confirm that these three dimensions significantly affect the creation of happy and innovative organisations. It provided that they formulate business strategies that revolve around the principles of the culture of happiness management.

5.5 Limitations

The first limitation of this study is due to the type of sampling, which was purposive. The kind of population and the time of execution of this study were determining factors when deciding on the mode of application of the instrument. However, an attempt to reduce the bias associated with this element could be made by expanding the sample to as many respondents as possible. The second limitation was that the data were collected within a specific time frame. Longitudinal studies could address it. The third limitation stems from the scarcity of literature on happiness management. In this regard, this type of research currently needs to be explored in emerging economies. It makes it difficult to determine whether the empirical results obtained in this paper can be generalised to other territories in the global village. Moreover, the last limitation is that the authors of this research have only explored the mediating role of emotional wage in the relationship between the dimensions of organisational justice and happiness at work. Considering other mediating variables to understand the organisational justice–happiness at work construct from the happiness management approach would be interesting.

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