



“Happiness Management»: Review of scientific literature in the framework of happiness at work

«Happiness Management»: Revisión de literatura científica en el marco de la felicidad en el trabajo

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Abstract

The changes in the world of work and organizations and their impact on people's lives have raised a new way of approaching the relationship between work and happiness. A bibliometric study is carried out of the works on the economy of happiness that have been published in Spanish between 2000 and 2018. To do so, the EDS-Multidisciplinary search engine (EBSCO Discovery Service) is used, selecting 95 publications that deal with this subject. As a result of the study a greater production of theoretical approaches is found on the subject as opposed to empirical research. In the latter, the works are fundamentally analyzed from the economic and psychological perspective. The clearly growing trend of scientific production on happiness and work has two important aspects: On the one hand, the very time of great changes, which emerges continuously new explanatory and prescriptive paradigms; and, on the other hand, this increase agrees with the end of the economic crisis. Overcoming and leaving behind the preoccupations of this great imbalance of the world economic system has once again focused the interest on making companies more productive and humane, preserving occupational health and improving personal development. In this sense, the urgent need for a multidisciplinary approach to this area from empirical research that contributes to improving relations between the world of work and the subjective well-being of people is highlighted.

Resumen

Los cambios en el mundo del trabajo y de las organizaciones y su impacto en la vida de las personas han planteado una nueva forma de abordar las relaciones entre trabajo y felicidad. Se realiza un estudio bibliométrico de los trabajos que sobre economía de la felicidad se han publicado en lengua española desde el año 2000 hasta el 2018. Para ello, se utiliza el buscador EDS-Multidisciplinar (EBSCO Discovery Service), seleccionándose 95 publicaciones que tratan esta temática. Como resultado del estudio encontramos una mayor producción de abordajes teóricos sobre el tema frente a la investigación empírica. En ésta última, los trabajos son fundamentalmente analizados desde la perspectiva económica y la psicológica. La tendencia claramente creciente de la producción científica sobre felicidad y trabajo tiene dos vertientes importantes: Por un lado, el propio tiempo de grandes cambios, que hace surgir continuamente nuevos paradigmas explicativos y prescriptivos; y, por otro lado, coincide este incremento con el fin de la crisis económica. Superar y dejar atrás las preocupaciones de este gran desequilibrio del sistema económico mundial, ha vuelto a centrar el interés por hacer más productivas y humanas las empresas, preservando la salud laboral y mejorando el desarrollo personal. En este sentido se destaca la imperiosa necesidad de un abordaje multidisciplinar de esta área desde la investigación empírica, que contribuya a mejorar las relaciones entre el mundo laboral y el bienestar subjetivo de las personas.

Keywords | palabras clave

Happiness and work, subjective wellbeing, positive psychology, leadership, happiness management, positive and healthy organizations, work and change, economy of happiness.

Felicidad y trabajo, bienestar subjetivo, psicología positiva, liderazgo, gestión de felicidad, organizaciones positivas y saludables, trabajo y cambio, economía de la felicidad.

Suggested citation: Sánchez-Vázquez, J.F., & Sánchez-Ordóñez, R. (2019). “Happiness Management»: Review of scientific literature in the framework of happiness at work. *Retos Journal of Administration Sciences and Economics*, 9(18), 249-260. <https://doi.org/10.17163/ret.n18.2019.05>

1. Introduction

Due to the dynamic trends that constitute our society, from time to time their most stable bases are reviewed and changed, and important progress is made in their configuration. These leaps in the line of progress remove all traditional structures, values, institutions and affect significantly people's lives.

Numerous researchers in recent times have found that the impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Learning and Knowledge Technologies (LKT), along with globalization and other important social factors, have focused on the change in people (Castells, 2008). This is a key fact in the world of work and organizations, where all the ancient paradigms that characterized successful companies and that were followed and prescribed for all organizations have been disauthorized and removed. The neoliberal paradigm of capitalist production was conceived for the population, resources, needs and problems of 250 years ago. The criteria of utility and freedom prevailed and the structures enhanced factors far removed from sustainable and responsible development, solidarity and cooperation, altruism and social protection, the well-being and satisfaction of people, their health and quality of organizational life, and their happiness.

This incompatibility in older systems is unsustainable in the face of the demands of change. Thus, an important current of anthropological, economic, social and psychological thinking has emerged that concentrates in the so-called approach of the "Economy of Happiness" (Rivas, 2015; Frey, 2018). On this, there is no inventor, a pioneer, not a year of birth, nor an organization that pilots its contents, nor these are unique, but there is a story in this approach and it is full of outstanding milestones: among others, the "Easterling paradox", the "Gross National Happiness" index created by Jigme Singye, king of Bhutan, who was followed by alternative rates of GDP collecting concepts such as well-being, equity, justice, environment, free time, life expectancy, education, compassion, solidarity, etc.

In this sense, contributions, including the 1999 Nobel Prize in Economics to two psychologists (Kahneman and Tversky) and in 2001 and 2014 to economists with psychological contributions (Akerloff and Tirole, respectively) are innumerable. It is also important to bring up the consolidation of Positive Psychology and Corporate Social Responsibility, the "Great Place to Work" ranking, as an indicator of happy companies and the declaration, in 2010 by the UN, of March 20 as World Happiness Day.

Faced with the demands of change, within the field of Labor Psychology and Organizations, as in the other Social Sciences, the debate on happiness and the positive has become very interesting (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2011). There are already multiple concretions and models that try to highlight the relationships between happiness and work. Therefore, it is important to note as the objective of this study the state-of-the-art in the Spanish literature of existing research on happiness, in order to be able to understand the present and to predict the future in this field.

Many of the recent contributions to this object of study recover the classic hedonistic and eudamonic double vision of happiness, which operate together and emphasize the experience of subjective well-being or target well-being - although social welfare is added-. The equation would go through a set of evaluative experi-

ences (comparison of achievements, successes and failures, losses, in life), a set of affective experiences (positive and negative experienced emotions and moods) sensory (pleasures and pains felt), as people combine these experiences to different degrees (de los Rivers, 2016; De Barbieri, 2018).

The most consistent life strategy on the path of happiness seems to have two directions: avoid discomfort and achieve a purpose, a sense of life (Thivissen, 2018). This second factor is where everything related to working life can be located. Schnell (as quoted in Retzbach, 2018), describes four characteristics of the meaning of life: the significance - a sense of what is being carried out - the belonging - a feeling that there is a place in the world - coherence - what happens in life is harmonious and congruent - and guidance - knowing the values and objectives that are being defended. Other authors also include generativity - creating something beneficial for later generations.

A similar direction takes the contributions of Positive Psychology (Vera, 2006 and 2008), which configures five characteristics: positive emotions, commitment, interest, meaning and purpose (Seligman, 2011). Ultimately subjective happiness and well-being go hand in hand (Diener, 2000; Popescu, 2016). And for work and organizations, the key to this proposal is personal growth, adding self-esteem, optimism, resilience, vitality, self-determination and positive relationships.

Different models give different concretions to this field (Bakker, Rodríguez-Muñoz & Derks, 2012). For example, Salanova (2010) notes that both structural and social resources, positive psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience and linkage) and the institution's results shape the "Positive and Healthy Organization". Also, and from another perspective, financial literacy (financial skills and knowledge) and economic decisions, together with emotions and culture, influence economic well-being, and therefore the happiness of people (Garay, 2015).

Warr's contribution (2013), which employs a vitamin metaphor, highlights the explanatory nonlinearity of sources of happiness and unhappiness at work. On the one hand, it separates environmental and personal factors. Among the first would be "opportunity for the control, opportunity for the use and acquisition of skills, externally generated goals, variety, clarity of the environment, contact with others, availability of money, physical security, social position supervisor support, career development and equity" (p.100). Among the latter would be: "comparisons with other people, comparisons with other situations, comparisons with other eras, assessments of a situation related to self-efficacy, assessment of novelty or familiarity, assessments of personal relevance" (p.102). Likewise, the theory of demand and labor resources of Bakker and Demerouti (2013, as cited in Rivas, 2015, p. 31) explains that:

[...] the work characteristics can be organized into two categories: demand and labor resources that can be found in almost all jobs and are the triggers of negative (deterioration of health) and positive aspects (motivational process). Job crafting or individual adjustments to demands and resources can make the work environment more engaging, less exhausting, healthier, and more productive.

It also proposes the theoretical model of positive experiences in which personal factors interpret and value the perception of environmental factors, labor and

extra-labor resources and demands, influencing the degree of subjective well-being (Rodríguez & Cifre, 2012; Cifré & Navarro, 2013).

Like other authors, Sánchez's team (2018) has investigated the concept of "Organizational Happiness" by finding very different concrete factors in the organizations in his sample. Some of these factors of happiness are: managers' concern for well-being, flexible structures, diversity, democracy in decisions and the validity of opinions, achievements are shared and valued, addressed fairly, transparency and ethics, teamwork, innovation, communication, quality and talent are especially careful, and motivational and compensation factors are promotion, incentives, conciliation, appreciation and trust.

On the other hand, in the academic field initiatives and teams are known that are now carrying out transnational empirical studies to study "Happiness Management", which has been defined as a multicultural management model focused on the following resources: creativity, commitment, technological innovation, internal entrepreneurship and social responsibility to develop happiness in organizations and in people. This is how this comprehensive study addresses organizational happiness, which fosters a working climate of innovation, constructive communication and positive emotions, as well as work happiness, a complex set of satisfactions and vital meanings of engagement, trust, team culture and development. One of the projects referred to is the so-called "Happiness Management, creativity and well-being in the age of Industry 4.0 from the perspective of the social sciences and humanities", which sponsored by the Salesian Polytechnic University of Ecuador, brings together thirty researchers from twenty universities around the world. The purpose is to explore how the vectors of creativity, emotional development and social welfare (quality of life, satisfaction, good living or common good) influence - in the age of Industry 4.0.- entirely to the holistic pursuit of the happiness of their human talent. In this way, the highest policy makers, economic and business leaders will be able to cultivate ecosystems and productive links based on the guiding principles of sustainability, innovation, know-how, social responsibility, engagement, knowledge management and collaborative learning.

Also in the organizational field, and mainly in the areas of human resource development and strategic planning, research advancement is required, since different studies find the relationships of organizational happiness with efficiency (Baker, Greenberg & Hemingway, 2007). Thus, Fernandez (2019), using Carter's studies (2017), selects different surveys and studies providing clear evidence that it is necessary to seek that correlation:

Table 1. Previous studies showing a correlation between happiness and job production

Name or entity	Contribution
Happiness and Productivity (University of Warwick)	Happy employees in their workplace are 12% more productive.
Iopener Institute (Oxford University)	People with higher rates of happiness in their work perform better: they spend 80% of their time on the tasks entrusted. In contrast, the dedication to the tasks they should perform of people with rates of non-happiness at work decreases by up to 40% of their time.
University of California (Berkeley)	Happy people are 86% more creative.
Gallup	A happy company increases customer ratings by 10%, it has 55% less staff turnover, it retains 44% more to its employees, it has 41% less absenteeism, it has 58% fewer security issues, and it has 40% fewer defective products.
Shawn Anchor	The happy, motivated and satisfied worker with their work achieves a 37% increase in sales, 31% in productivity and 19% in efficiency, and unhappy employees have an average of 15 days more sick leave than average.
HBR	A happy employee is 300% more creative and innovative and has 125% less stress.
Hays Group	Happy people are 43% more productive and the cost of replacing an employee is between 50% and 150% of the salary.
Social Market Foundation	Happy employees are 20% more productive.
Forbes	A happy company has 66% fewer job losses.
Greenberg & Arawaka	A happy company is 31% more productive.
Framingham Heart Study	People who surround themselves with happy people have a 25% increased chance of mimicking this mood.

From what is observed in Table 1, it is evident that well-being and productivity environments that respond to the needs and changes of society must be sought, not only by company managers, who have the mission of driving that binomial, but by the employees and skateholders.

Finally, although it is not the subject of this study, it should be noted that critical analyses on the subject of happiness are recurrent. There are two documents that are especially critical in criticism: The paradoxical happiness of Lipovestsky (2014) and the analysis on positive psychology of Lazarus (2003).

Furthermore, despite the contributions made from the Economy of Happiness, it must not be forgotten that "other" realities such as poverty, the submerged econo-

my or precarious employment coexist, situations in which the construct “work” and “happiness” or “happy organizations” hardly have a place.

It is therefore necessary that disciplines such as economics or psychology, among others, acquire more commitment in the solutions of what are still social problems. It should be reverted to Lewinian proposals in which the link between research and action or professional application results in programmes and interventions that lead to social changes, in which a happiness economy for all becomes a reality (Yela & Saiz, 2013). In this way, that model of life can be approached, where subjective well-being and happiness prevail without forgetting that, for this to be possible, they must be included in the political agendas (Morales, Nouvillas & Arias, 2012). All this also fits with the “Economy of the Common Good” - a paradigm that includes the Economy of Happiness - and the Welfare State; realities that need to be further developed.

It is believed that in the development of this area neither of the individual dimensions should be neglected - because further progress should be made in the study of personal happiness and subjective well-being to create assessment tools that reflect the dimensions of the most model collective dimensions-, since happiness-related development rates and objectives contribute to the improvement of societies and communities.

2. Materials and method

With the aim of identifying the interests of researchers in the field of happiness at work and Happiness Management, this analytical and bibliometric study has been chosen in this study by a selection of units of analysis that met a series of criteria that would allow to verify the interest of the authors in the scientific literature of the selected topics in the Spanish language. To this end, scientific documents have been analyzed, whose texts could be obtained from the EDS-multidisciplinary databases (EBSCO Discovery Service). This search engine allows access to full-text databases of scientific publications in different areas.

As for the terms to be analyzed, the following key words were used: happiness economics, happiness at work, work and happiness, and “Happiness Management”. These terms are the main ones that must be considered for the search to collect as fully as possible research related to the subject of study. The search was delimited from 2000 to 2018, since the time analysis unit is significant by the change of the millennium. It was also chosen to select only Spanish as the language of the publication. The articles meeting these criteria and which were selected and analyzed have been 95, a number that is considered sufficient to be analyzed in the classification categories of the bibliometric studies of a term.

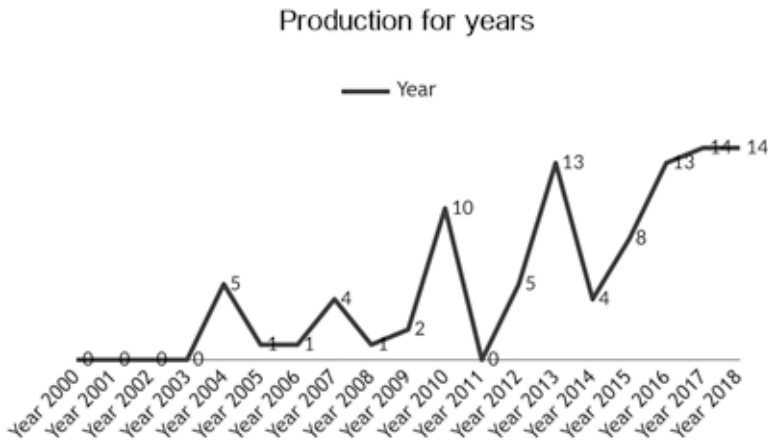
The analyses have focused on grouping the different elements of this sample source unit, which are expected to be representative by their selection form, into categories that group the studies into the most relevant classifications to evaluate the scientific production. Thus, the production relating to the years, the thematic areas in which the studies have been focused, the type of scientific document, the theoretical

or empirical character of the contents, the countries and the disciplines of each study have been categorized.

3. Results

First, the production of the documents is presented for years. Although quite uneven, it can be observed that from 2011 there is evidence of a more or less stable increase in the scientific production in this field.

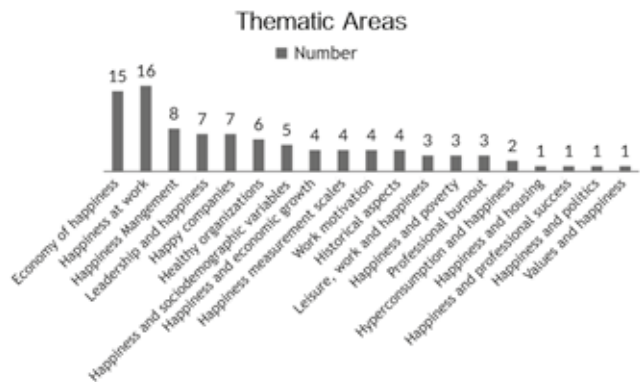
Figure 1. Evolution of publications on happiness and work in multidisciplinary EDS



Source: Own elaboration using the data extracted from Multidisciplinary EDS (2019).

The subject areas covered in the articles were then discussed and as shown in Figure 2, these analyze the subject of the Happiness Economy, mostly linked to various variables related to work and economic development. The two areas that have been studied the most in the scientific production of these years are happiness at work (18%) and Happiness Economy (17%), corresponding mostly to theoretical approaches. Then the most studied areas correspond to topics related to the world of work: leadership and happiness (8%), happy companies (8%) organizations (7%). Then a group of documents that have to do with sociodemographic variables are observed in relation to the Economy of Happiness (5%), and to the same extent studies that look at economic growth, the scales of happiness measurement, job motivation or studies that have to do with the historical background to this topic. More minority (3%) other works are presented that analyze from various perspectives happiness, such as leisure and work, poverty or professional burnout. In addition, there are critical studies on this topic addressed from hyperconsumption (2%). Finally, there is a small group of documents that examine various aspects such as the influence of housing, professional success social and labor policies and values (1%).

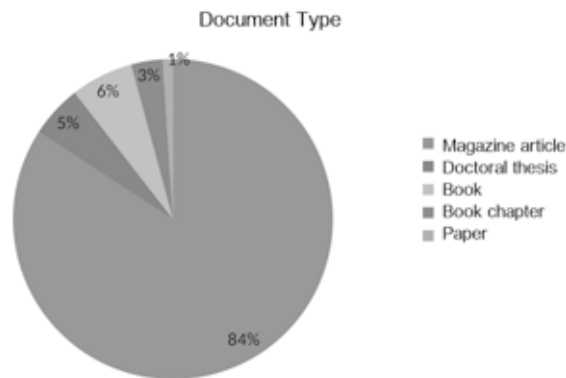
Figure 2. Main topics of emerging articles in multidisciplinary EDS



Source: Own elaboration using the data extracted from Multidisciplinary EDS (2019).

In addition, the types of scientific documents in which the topics covered by this study have been addressed, with mostly the journal article (86%) the preferred format for presenting these types of studies. Far from the subject are in the approach of this topic the doctoral theses, books, book chapters and presentations as can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Support type/format of emerging multidisciplinary EDS documents



If examining the disciplines to which the articles of the journals analyzed, it is found that most of the publications are divided between the areas of economics and the company (40%), and psychology (28%), and farther away in terms of number, journals belonging to human resources, history, education or other very minority (politics, health, etc.). This is the transdisciplinary character of happiness in the Social Sciences. As to the nature of these documents, they were analyzed whether they had been theoretical approaches or empirical research on the subject. The

results after the analysis were that 59% of emerging documents are theoretical analyses of the issue and 41% empirical research.

Within empirical research, the work is carried out at 50% in Latin America (Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela) and the other 50% in Spain - remembering that the search criteria were done in the Spanish language-. Although the first distribution is very dispersed, Brazil has six jobs being the country with more works; followed by Argentina, Chile and Colombia with two and Mexico, Bolivia and Venezuela with one.

4. Conclusions and discussion

With these results some clear interpretations can be made, since the breakdown and relationships that these data have may be relevant for assessing the interests and progress of researches.

The clearly growing trend of scientific production on happiness and work has two important aspects: on the one hand, the time of great changes, which continuously brings forth new explanatory and prescriptive paradigms. In this sense "Organizational Happiness" can be a new conceptualization that includes the old constructs of motivation, satisfaction, quality of working life, engagement, passion for work, subjective well-being, etc. On the other hand, this increase agrees with the end of the economic crisis. Overcoming and leaving behind the concerns of this great imbalance of the global economic system has refocused the interest in making companies more productive and human, preserving occupational health and improving personal development (Peiró, 2011; Ramos & Peiró, 2014).

The review of the thematic areas places most studies at the core of models that deal with economics, work and happiness. This is obvious, since researchers may be thought to treat the general aspects in a majority way, both in their economic aspect that has always been interested in comparisons of the different indexes between countries (Rivas *et al.*, 2015), like the one related to this research (Rodríguez & Cifre, 2012).

But despite this more general data, it is observed that issues that are more concrete have been addressed. In the next place it was very much to be expected that leadership and its relationships with happiness would be studied. This growing interest in "Happiness Management" reflects the advancement in the studies of transformational, emotional, positive, authentic, servant leadership that were trending in positive leadership research (Yukl, 2008; Sánchez, 2010; Blanch *et al.*, 2016). As leadership is the most strategic psychosocial aspect in organizations, its optimization is very visible. Even some companies have left behind the names of Chief of Staff, Director of Human Resources or Director of People by changing them to the Director of Happiness (e.g. Open English). Many current studies are working this construct (Ravina, Villena & Gutiérrez, 2017; Ravina, Tobar & Marchena, 2019).

The theme of leadership is followed by two categories that have to do with previous interests, such as happy companies and healthy and positive organizations, which is the ideal of the optimal functioning of the health of individuals and organizations and the effective management of their well-being and development (Lorente

& Vera, 2010; Salanova, 2010; Salanova *et al.*, 2017; Rivera *et al.*, 2018). And in the following places are the relationships of the descriptors studied with sociological aspects (demography, economic growth, history, leisure, poverty, housing, politics).

There are also proposals for scales of measure and which are not uncommon to find. Despite the proposal of some instruments of specific measure of happiness at work (Salas, Alegre & Fernández, 2013) it is necessary to deepen the research in this area for the construction of these tools.

On the other hand, the documents address other psychosocial aspects such as motivation, success and values. Taken together, the variables discussed in the various documents studied are those that have an impact on the concept of happiness applied to the world of work in both its positive and negative aspects.

In addition to the above, some of the topics covered in these documents highlight the importance of people's subjective well-being in the world of work, personal satisfaction and the negative influence of variables that are interfering with it. The selected articles cover all those dimensions that actually have to do with this: demographic, social and economic variables, health and those that have to do with the behavior and the vital situation of people.

As for the results of the type of scientific document, there are more journal articles, as expected. Only five doctoral theses, three books and three book chapters have been indexed. This is very convenient, since the dissemination of journals and their global reach may be higher. It is also necessary to use comparative meta-analyses in this field that compile studies globally and show the effectiveness of the various models that seek positive affections at work.

Separately, the nature of the document, which mostly reflects the theoretical studies of the subject in this period, has been analyzed separately. It is necessary to make more emphasis on empirical research results that favor the emergence of evidence and build healthy organizations and job models. These can lay the foundations for important models, as discussed above, but should be accompanied by studies that reflect the reality.

The disciplines to which the journals in which the analyzed publications have been made, reflect the two-sided nature of the subject, economic and psychological as a reflection of the well-being of people. It is necessary to provide psychology, not only from their work areas but also from other areas such as economic psychology (Billón, 2002; Bonavia & Quintanilla, 2005; Quintanilla, 2010); it can add knowledge about people's economic behaviour as producers of positive or negative attitudes in their field of work. Economic factors have a central influence on people's behavior, not only in their private area but also in their public area, and thus in their working life.

As for the future lines of research, we are at a time of reviewing the models used in this research, and we find both in our academic and organizational environments the broad interest of the subject and, therefore, the need to a multidisciplinary, global and scientific approach that allows clear evidence of the effectiveness of its application.

Therefore, it is necessary to have a multidisciplinary approach of the subject to find ways not only of economic growth, but for it to contribute to the prosperity of people in all its dimensions.

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