

Happiness at Workplace – A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: **Aim:** The field of happiness in the workplace (HAW) is dynamic and continuously evolving, necessitating ongoing discussions across multiple research platforms. The purpose of this paper is to review the existing literature, examine the determinants and consequences of HAW, and highlight the importance of this area for future researchers. **Methodology:** In this paper, we adopt the systematic literature review method to comprehensively explore the existing literature on HAW. **Findings:** The study findings uncovered the determinants and consequences of HAW across multiple levels, including organizational, social, and psychological. **Implications:** The study's results emphasized significant contributing factors that lead to HAW, which could inspire stakeholders to enhance working conditions and improve employee happiness. Additionally, the paper identifies gaps in the literature and proposes a roadmap for future research, highlighting the significance of further investigation in this critical area. The implications of these findings for both researchers and practitioners are discussed in detail in the paper.

Keywords: happiness, happiness at workplace, antecedents, consequences, measurements.

1. Introduction

The work environment has experienced rapid changes in recent times [1], including increased internationalization of business [2], evolving organizational practices [3], continual advancements in technology [4], the rise of retrenchment and outsourcing [5], and an increase in temporary employment, among other things [6]. The changes in the nature of work and organizations have a significant impact on employees, leading to feelings of dissatisfaction and unhappiness [7]. However, research has shown that maintaining happiness at work can have a positive impact on employee productivity ([8]). As a result, a positive impact on employee productivity through maintaining happiness at work can lead to improved organizational performance [9]. Conversely, unhappiness in the workplace has been found to decrease productivity [10]. Thus, HAW is crucial not only for the well-being of employees, but also for the overall success of the organization [11]. Happiness at work refers to an individual's overall satisfaction with their work and life, as well as their subjective well-being in the workplace [12]. This paper offers a comprehensive systematic literature review of the available research on HAW, highlighting the determinants and consequences of happiness at

work at multiple levels. Furthermore, it provides a roadmap for future research in this critical area.

Some argue that every organization should consider having a Chief Happiness Officer (CHO) [13], who is the main driver in making and keeping the workplace happy. In some organizations, the Chief Happiness Officer (CHO) role has been alternatively referred to as the Chief Well-Being Officer, with the two terms being used interchangeably. Many companies have now appointed a Chief Well-Being Officer or a CHO. Companies like SAP, Coca-Cola, Ernst & Young, Google, Unilever, Deloitte, and Siemens have already appointed CHOs. These organizations believe that happy employees are more productive, innovative, motivated, energetic, and optimistic, which has led to the growing importance of the CHO role [14]. Organizations find it easier to manage absenteeism and retain employees when they have a happy and satisfied workforce [15]. CHOs can implement various strategies, such as organizing celebrations, family get-togethers, training programs, and similar events to foster a better organizational environment.

A systematic literature review on happiness at work is crucial now for identifying gaps in research, synthesizing findings, and informing policy and practice. It can help researchers understand the state of the research, identify areas for future investigation, and provide evidence-based recommendations for improving workplace well-being. Overall, a literature review can advance our understanding of happiness at work and provide valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.

The current paper makes a five-fold contribution to the literature. First, it provides a comprehensive summary of the available research on happiness at work, highlighting the determinants and consequences of happiness at various levels. Second, it identifies gaps in the existing literature and suggests potential avenues for future research. Third, it raises awareness about the importance of happiness at work for the well-being of employees and the success of organizations. Fourth, it offers practical insights for managers and policymakers to develop strategies to improve happiness at work and enhance employee productivity and organizational performance. Five, it contributes to the growing literature on happiness and well-being, helping to advance the scientific understanding of these

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concepts in the context of work and organizations.

2. Methodology

This paper employs the systematic literature review methodology to examine the available literature on happiness at work. A systematic literature review is a research method that involves systematically and comprehensively searching for, selecting, and critically evaluating existing literature on a specific topic [16]. The purpose of a systematic literature review is to synthesize and analyze the findings of the identified studies in order to provide a comprehensive and unbiased summary of the current state of knowledge on a particular topic. Research papers published in SCOPUS-listed journals from 2010 to 2022 were included in the review. Journals listed in Scopus are generally considered to be of high quality and are frequently used as a metric to assess the impact of research output [17]. Scopus employs a rigorous selection process to ensure that only high-quality, reputable, and relevant journals are indexed.

The keywords included for the search process included happiness, happiness at work, job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational commitment, joy, and fun. The researchers conducted a thorough search across various databases, including Google Scholar, journal websites, EBSCO, and ProQuest, identifying 843 articles. The authors employed the PRISMA model to conduct a rigorous screening of the papers. PRISMA stands for "Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses." PRISMA is a widely used model for conducting and reporting systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses [18]. The PRISMA model provides a structured approach for conducting a systematic literature review and ensures transparency and reproducibility in the review process.

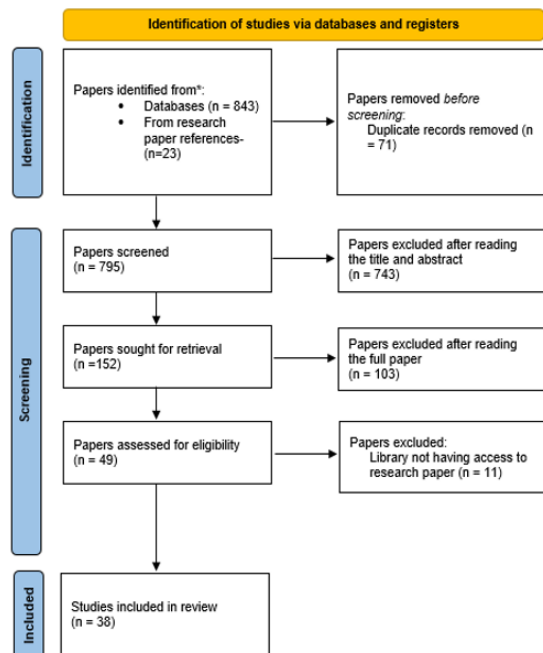


Fig. 1. PRISMA diagram to illustrate the method of selection of research papers

Upon reviewing the references of these articles, an additional 71 relevant ones were found. After removing 71 duplicate articles, the researchers were left with 795 unique articles. Next, the researchers screened these articles by reading their titles and abstracts, and removed 643 articles that were only remotely related to the topic of study. The remaining 152 articles were reviewed in full, and 103 more were eliminated as they did not directly relate to happiness at work. This left the researchers with 49 articles, but unfortunately, 11 of them were inaccessible. Finally, after carefully reviewing the remaining 38 articles, the researchers selected them for the final analysis. Overall, this comprehensive and systematic approach ensured that only the most relevant and high-quality articles were included in the study.

3. Concept of Happiness and Happiness at Workplace

Ed Diener was a pioneering psychologist who made significant contributions to the study of well-being and happiness. He defined happiness as a subjective experience of life satisfaction, which includes positive emotions such as joy and contentment, as well as a sense of fulfillment and purpose in one's life [19]. According to [19], happiness is not just about feeling good in the moment, but also about having a sense of meaning and purpose in life. He believed that happiness is a multifaceted construct that includes both emotional and cognitive components, and that it can be measured using a variety of methods, including self-report surveys and physiological measures. Diener's research on happiness has influenced the field of positive psychology, and has led to the development of interventions and therapies aimed at promoting well-being and happiness. He was a proponent of the idea that happiness is a skill that can be learned and cultivated through intentional practices such as gratitude, mindfulness, and positive social relationships.

Happiness is something that everyone keeps searching for, immaterial of the culture each belongs to [12]. The term happiness is frequently used interchangeably with other words, such as joyfulness, wellness, satisfaction, peacefulness, and quality of life [12]. This is because these concepts are highly interrelated, with similar values and measurements that contribute to positive impacts on one's life, leading to personal growth and development. Psychologists often refer to happiness as subjective well-being, emphasizing the importance of an individual's subjective perception of their own level of happiness and life satisfaction [20]. Subjective well-being refers to people's overall evaluations of their lives, which include cognitive judgments of satisfaction and affective appraisals of moods and emotions [21]. It is typically viewed as having two interrelated components: cognitive evaluations of life satisfaction, which can be assessed both globally and in specific domains such as work, health, relationships, and leisure; and affect balance, which involves experiencing predominantly positive feelings and infrequent negative emotions [22]. There is a correlation between the characteristics and resources that society values and happiness, as shown by various studies. For instance, research has found that factors such as marriage [23], a comfortable income [24],

good mental health [25], and longevity [26] are associated with higher levels of happiness. While success may contribute to happiness, studies have found a weak correlation between the two. Other factors such as social connections [27], personal values [28], and mental and physical health [29] also influence happiness. Moreover, research shows that happiness can predict success [30], with happier individuals having better job performance [12], higher income [32], and stronger social relationships [33]. Thus, it is essential to recognize the bidirectional relationship between happiness and success rather than assuming a one-way causal relationship.

Happiness at work refers to the positive emotional state experienced by employees while they are working [12]. It is characterized by a sense of fulfillment, engagement, and satisfaction with one's job, and a positive attitude towards the workplace and colleagues.

To promote happiness at work, employers can create a positive work environment that fosters employee well-being, engagement, and job satisfaction [35]. This can be achieved through policies and practices [36] that prioritize work-life balance [37], employee autonomy [12] and decision-making [39], and recognition and feedback. Employers can also provide opportunities for personal and professional growth, such as training and development programs, mentoring, and coaching. In addition to organizational interventions, individual employees can also take steps to cultivate happiness at work. This can include building positive relationships with colleagues, finding meaning and purpose in one's work, practicing gratitude and mindfulness, and maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

4. Determinants of Happiness at Work

Numerous factors impact employee happiness at work, as evidenced by the review of literature. Table 1 presents several determinants that contribute to happiness at work across different levels: organizational, social, and psychological. At the organizational level, factors such as organizational culture, leadership, and job characteristics influence happiness at work [8]. The study by [8] found that organizational culture affects the level of happiness in the workplace. Similarly, the study by [38] found that income, employment opportunities, and work engagement have a significant impact on happiness at work.

At the social level, co-worker support and friendship are important determinants of happiness at work [40]. Positive social relationships with colleagues contribute to greater job satisfaction and happiness at work. Social status and relationships with co-workers were also found to be important factors in contributing to happiness at work [8] found that friendship was an important social level determinant of

happiness at work.

Lastly, psychological level determinants such as self-esteem, freedom, enjoyment in work, quality of work life, alignment of individual and organizational values, perceived organizational support, and psychological capital are important factors that contribute to happiness at work. [8] Self-esteem, freedom, and enjoyment in work were positively associated with happiness at work. [40] found that quality of work life and alignment of individual and organizational values were important psychological factors that contributed to happiness at work. [43] found that perceived organizational support and psychological capital were positively related to happiness at work. [41] found that full-time employment, income, and meaningful activities were important psychological determinants of happiness at work, while cultural values were important social determinants of happiness at work.

Overall, these determinants highlight the importance of creating a positive work environment that fosters supportive social relationships, provides opportunities for personal and professional growth, and aligns individual values with organizational values to increase happiness at work.

5. Outcomes of HAW

The consequences of happiness at work at the organizational level are manifold and can have a significant impact on the overall success of the organization. Table 2 highlights some of the key consequences of promoting happiness at work, including accommodating changes in the workplace, reducing turnover rates, increasing firm profitability, promoting work engagement, improving productivity, and promoting innovation, energy, and optimism. Accommodating changes in the workplace and complying with organizational values can create a more positive workplace culture, leading to a sense of loyalty and commitment towards the organization. When employees feel valued and anticipate reinforcements, they are more likely to be engaged and productive, leading to better performance and a more successful organization [45].

Reducing turnover rates is another important consequence of promoting happiness at work [46]. High levels of turnover can be costly for organizations, leading to lost productivity, increased recruitment costs, and decreased employee morale. When employees are happy and engaged, they are more likely to remain with the organization, reducing turnover rates and improving overall performance. Increasing firm profitability is another important consequence of promoting happiness at work. When employees are happy and engaged, they are more likely to be productive, innovative, and energetic, leading to better performance and increased profitability for the organization. This can also lead to increased customer

Table 1
Determinants of HAW

Organizational Level Determinants	Social Level Determinants	Psychological Level Determinants
Organizational culture [8]	Social status, relationships with co-workers [8]	Self-esteem and freedom [8]
Leadership and Job characteristics [44]	Co-worker support and friendship [40]	Enjoyment in work [44]
Income, employment opportunities and work engagement [12]	Friendship [41]	Quality of work life and Alignment of individual and organizational values [42]
Perceived organizational support [43]		Psychological capital [43]
Full-time employment, Income, meaningful activities [41]		Cultural values [41]

Table 2
Outcomes of HAW

Organizational Consequence	Psychological Consequence	Social Consequence
Accommodate changes in the workplace, attentive to instructions and complying with organizational values [45]	Feel valued and anticipate reinforcements, Realization of corporate spiritual values [45]	Enhanced communication and socialization [45]
Reduces turnover rates [46]	Feeling of relevance in the organization [48]	Connectedness in the workplace [47]
Increases firm profitability [46]	Career satisfaction and Sense of well-being [43]	Motivational processes of social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity [43]
Work engagement [43]		
Productive [47] [41]		
Innovative, Energetic, Optimistic [47]		

satisfaction, as happy employees are more likely to provide better customer service. Promoting work engagement is another important consequence of happiness at work [43]. Engaged employees are more likely to be committed to the organization, leading to increased productivity, better performance, and lower turnover rates. This can also create a more positive workplace culture, leading to increased morale and job satisfaction among employees.

Improving productivity is another important consequence of promoting happiness at work [47] [41]. Happy and engaged employees are more likely to be productive, leading to increased efficiency and better performance for the organization. This can also lead to increased profitability, as productive employees are more likely to contribute to the success of the organization. Finally, promoting innovation, energy, and optimism is another important consequence of happiness at work [47]. When employees are happy and engaged, they are more likely to be creative and innovative, leading to new ideas and better performance. This can also create a more positive workplace culture, leading to increased morale and job satisfaction among employees.

At the psychological level, happiness at work has numerous consequences that can impact an employee's overall well-being, satisfaction, and motivation. Table 2 above highlights some of the key psychological level consequences of promoting happiness at work, including feeling valued and anticipating reinforcements, realization of corporate spiritual values, feeling of relevance in the organization, career satisfaction, and sense of well-being [45]. Feeling valued and anticipating reinforcements are critical aspects of happiness at work [47]. When employees feel that their contributions are appreciated, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged, leading to better performance and job satisfaction [48]. Reinforcements, such as positive feedback, recognition, and rewards, can also increase employees' sense of self-worth, leading to higher levels of happiness and well-being.

The realization of corporate spiritual values is another important consequence of happiness at work. When employees feel that their work is meaningful and aligned with their personal values, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated, leading to better performance and job satisfaction. This can also create a more positive workplace culture, leading to increased morale and job satisfaction among employees. Feeling of relevance in the organization is also an important psychological consequence of happiness at work. When employees feel that their work is relevant and important to the organization, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated, leading to better performance and job satisfaction. This can also

lead to a sense of belonging and loyalty to the organization, leading to lower turnover rates and higher levels of engagement. Career satisfaction and sense of well-being are also important psychological consequences of happiness at work. When employees are satisfied with their careers and feel a sense of well-being, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged, leading to better performance and job satisfaction. This can also lead to increased resilience, better mental health, and overall higher levels of well-being.

Promoting happiness at work can also have important social level consequences that impact employees' interactions with their colleagues and the overall workplace culture. The table above highlights some of the key social level consequences of promoting happiness at work, including enhanced communication and socialization, connectedness in the workplace, and motivational processes of social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity. Enhanced communication and socialization are critical social consequences of happiness at work [45]. When employees feel happy and engaged, they are more likely to be open to communication, collaboration, and teamwork, leading to better relationships with their colleagues and a more positive workplace culture. This can also lead to increased innovation and productivity as employees share ideas and work together more effectively.

Connectedness in the workplace is also an important social consequence of happiness at work [47]. When employees feel connected to their colleagues and the organization, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated, leading to better performance and job satisfaction. This can also lead to increased trust and collaboration among employees, leading to a more positive workplace culture and better outcomes for the organization as a whole. Motivational processes of social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity are also important social consequences of happiness at work [43]. Social exchange theory suggests that employees are motivated to engage in behaviors that benefit the organization when they believe that the organization will reciprocate with rewards or benefits. When employees are happy and engaged, they are more likely to engage in behaviors that benefit the organization, leading to better outcomes for the organization as a whole. The norm of reciprocity also suggests that employees are more likely to engage in positive behaviors when they feel that they are treated fairly and with respect, leading to a more positive workplace culture and better outcomes for the organization.

6. HAW: Measurement Scales

Measuring happiness at work is an important area of research in organizational psychology, as it has been shown to have

significant impacts on employees' well-being, job performance, and organizational outcomes. Among the various tools and techniques used to assess happiness at work, two popular scales are [12] and [39]. These scales measure happiness at work using three key dimensions: work engagement, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. While both scales share similar dimensions, Fisher's scale is more comprehensive, consisting of 31 items, while Valina's scale is more concise, with only 9 items. The choice of scale depends on the specific research question, context, and resources available, but both scales have been shown to be reliable and valid measures of happiness at work.

Table 3
Instruments to measure HAW

Instrument Name	No. of Items
Happiness at work [12]	31
Shortened Scale of Happiness at work [39]	9

7. Future Research Agenda

The future research scope in terms of antecedents of happiness at work is broad and multi-faceted. Some potential areas of investigation could include exploring the impact of organizational culture and leadership styles on employee happiness, examining the role of job design and work-life balance in promoting happiness at work, and investigating the influence of individual factors such as personality traits and coping mechanisms. Additionally, there is a need to examine the impact of external factors such as socioeconomic conditions and political climate on workplace happiness. As the field of happiness at work continues to evolve, there will likely be many opportunities for researchers to explore the antecedents of workplace happiness from different angles and perspectives.

The future research scope in terms of consequences of happiness at work is also broad and varied. One potential area of investigation could be the impact of workplace happiness on employee motivation, productivity, and job satisfaction. Another area could be the relationship between workplace happiness and employee health, well-being, and stress levels. Additionally, it may be useful to explore the effects of workplace happiness on organizational outcomes such as employee retention, organizational commitment, and financial performance. As the field of happiness at work continues to evolve, there will likely be many opportunities for researchers to investigate the consequences of workplace happiness from different angles and levels of analysis, such as the individual, team, and organizational levels.

The future research scope in terms of the measurement of happiness at work is crucial for advancing the field of happiness at work. One potential area of investigation could be the development of new and more comprehensive measures of workplace happiness that capture both the cognitive and affective aspects of employee well-being. Another area could be the exploration of the psychometric properties of existing measures of workplace happiness and the development of measures that are more reliable and valid. It may also be useful to investigate the cultural and contextual factors that influence the measurement of workplace happiness across different

countries and organizations. As the field of happiness at work continues to evolve, there will likely be many opportunities for researchers to advance the measurement of workplace happiness and contribute to the development of more accurate and useful measures for assessing and promoting employee well-being.

8. Implications

A systematic literature review on happiness at work has practical implications for individuals, organizations, and policymakers. The review emphasizes the significance of factors such as work engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment for happiness at work. It can help individuals identify such factors and take steps to improve them, as well as choose jobs or organizations that promote happiness at work. For organizations, the review provides insights into the antecedents and consequences of happiness at work, which can aid in the design and implementation of interventions that boost productivity, reduce turnover, and improve employee well-being. Policymakers can utilize the review's findings to develop policies and regulations that promote happiness at work and societal well-being, such as laws that support work-life balance, workplace safety, and fair employment practices. Overall, a systematic literature review on happiness at work can lead to the creation of more productive and satisfying work environments, benefitting all stakeholders.

A systematic literature review like the current one on happiness at work has significant academic implications. It provides a comprehensive overview of existing research, identifies gaps for further investigation, supports the development of theories and models, aids in the development of measurement tools, and promotes interdisciplinary collaboration.

9. Limitations

Although systematic literature review is widely regarded as the most comprehensive method for identifying and analyzing literature on a particular topic, it is not without its limitations. Firstly, limiting the review to only papers from 2010 onwards may have excluded relevant studies conducted before 2010, which could have provided valuable insights into employee happiness at work. Secondly, the review's focus on Scopus listed papers may have resulted in a bias towards studies published in specific disciplines or regions, thereby potentially excluding studies from other relevant fields or regions. Thirdly, the exclusion of studies published in non-English languages may have also resulted in the omission of relevant studies from non-English speaking countries. Lastly, as with any systematic literature review, the review's conclusions are only as strong as the studies included in the analysis. If the included studies have limitations in their methodology or sample size, it could impact the accuracy of the review's findings and conclusions.

10. Conclusion

The systematic review has provided a comprehensive and in-

depth understanding of the concept of happiness at work, encompassing its antecedents and consequences. The review highlights the importance of happiness at work for individuals, organizations, and society, along with the factors that contribute to it. The antecedents of happiness at work are found to be diverse, encompassing individual and organizational factors, and the outcomes range from individual well-being to organizational productivity. Although significant progress has been made in this area, there is still a need for further research to examine the mechanisms and contextual factors of happiness at work, as well as potential negative consequences.

In conclusion, this systematic review has provided valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers striving to promote happiness at work and enhance individual and organizational outcomes. By gaining a deeper understanding of happiness at work, it is possible to create more fulfilling, productive, and healthy work environments that benefit all stakeholders.

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