

# Artificial intelligence and well-being in Ibero–American organisations: trends, gaps and opportunities in happiness management research (2021–2025)

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## Inteligencia artificial y bienestar en las organizaciones iberoamericanas: tendencias, carencias y oportunidades en la investigación sobre la gestión de la felicidad (2021-2025)

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## Inteligência artificial e bem-estar em organizações ibero-americanas: tendências, lacunas e oportunidades na pesquisa sobre gestão da felicidade (2021–2025)

Priscila Inés Villanueva González, Javier Gaona Loredo,  
Magda Lizet Ochoa Hernández and Chaima ElHichou-Ahmed  
(*Author affiliations can be found at the end of the article*)

### Abstract

**Purpose** – This study aims to systematically analyse the state of knowledge on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America during 2021–2025, within a context shaped by the post-pandemic period, accelerated digitalisation and the advance of technologies based on artificial intelligence.

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**Design/methodology/approach** – A systematic review was conducted following preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses guidelines. The search was carried out in Web of Science using a bilingual search equation focused on happiness management, workplace happiness, emotional salary and workplace well-being. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied (period 2021–2025; journal papers; English, Spanish and Portuguese; Ibero–American context; and full-text availability), along with an additional criterion of geographical balance. The final sample comprised 15 papers, which were analysed from both bibliometric and thematic perspectives.

**Findings** – The evidence indicates that the field in Ibero–America is in a process of consolidation, with a concentration of scholarly output in Mexico, Spain and Portugal, and a predominance of cross-sectional quantitative studies using surveys and Likert-type scales, alongside a growing use of multivariate techniques (e.g. structural equation modelling). Thematically, the studies focus on determinants of workplace well-being and happiness and their relationship with performance, innovation and retention; and the integration of happiness management as a managerial approach linked to intangible resources (emotional salary, organisational justice and mental health). Regional, methodological (scarcity of longitudinal designs and mixed methods) and theoretical integration gaps persist.

**Originality/value** – It provides an up-to-date regional synthesis (2021–2025) that identifies patterns, thematic cores and gaps, and proposes a future agenda featuring emerging constructs such as “happy salary” and “digital happiness”, as well as the need for culturally adapted instruments for Ibero–American contexts.

**Keywords** Happiness management, Workplace well-being, Workplace happiness, Ibero–America, Systematic review, PRISMA, Digital transformation, Artificial intelligence

**Paper type** Research paper

## Resumen

**Objetivo** – Analizar de manera sistemática el estado del conocimiento sobre happiness management y bienestar laboral en Iberoamérica durante 2021–2025, en un escenario marcado por la postpandemia, la digitalización acelerada y el avance de tecnologías basadas en inteligencia artificial.

**Diseño/metodología/enfoque** – Se realizó una revisión sistemática siguiendo PRISMA. La búsqueda se efectuó en Web of Science con una ecuación bilingüe centrada en happiness management, felicidad en el trabajo, salario emocional y bienestar laboral. Se aplicaron criterios de inclusión/exclusión (periodo 2021–2025; artículos; inglés/español/portugués; contexto iberoamericano; texto completo) y un criterio adicional de equilibrio geográfico. La muestra final incluyó 15 artículos, analizados desde una perspectiva bibliométrica y temática.

**Resultados** – La evidencia indica que el campo en Iberoamérica se encuentra en consolidación, con concentración de producción en México, España y Portugal y predominio de estudios cuantitativos transversales con encuestas y escalas tipo Likert, además de un uso creciente de técnicas multivariadas (p. ej., SEM). Temáticamente, los trabajos se orientan a (i) determinantes del bienestar/felicidad laboral y su relación con desempeño, innovación y retención, y (ii) la integración del happiness management como enfoque de gestión vinculado con recursos intangibles (salario emocional, justicia organizacional, salud mental). Persisten brechas regionales, metodológicas (escasez de longitudinales y métodos mixtos) y de integración teórica.

**Originalidad/valor** – Aporta una síntesis regional actualizada (2021–2025) que identifica patrones, núcleos temáticos y vacíos, y propone una agenda futura con constructos emergentes como “salario feliz” y “felicidad digital”, además de la necesidad de instrumentos culturalmente adaptados para contextos iberoamericanos.

**Palabras clave** Happiness management, Bienestar laboral, Felicidad en el trabajo, Iberoamérica, Revisión sistemática, PRISMA, Transformación digital, Inteligencia artificial

**Tipo de artículo** Trabajo de investigación

## Resumo

**Objetivo** – Analisar sistematicamente o estado do conhecimento sobre gestão da felicidade e bem-estar no trabalho na Ibero-América durante 2021–2025, num cenário marcado pela pós-pandemia, pela digitalização acelerada e pelo avanço das tecnologias baseadas em inteligência artificial.

**Desenho/metodologia/abordagem** – Foi realizada uma revisão sistemática seguindo o PRISMA. A pesquisa foi realizada na Web of Science com uma equação bilingue centrada em gestão da felicidade, felicidade no trabalho, salário emocional e bem-estar no trabalho. Foram aplicados critérios de inclusão/

exclusão (período 2021–2025; artigos; inglês/espanhol/português; contexto ibero-americano; texto completo) e um critério adicional de equilíbrio geográfico. A amostra final incluiu 15 artigos, analisados de uma perspectiva bibliométrica e temática.

**Resultados** – As evidências indicam que o campo na Ibero-América está em consolidação, com concentração da produção no México, Espanha e Portugal e predominância de estudos quantitativos transversais com inquéritos e escalas do tipo Likert, além de um uso crescente de técnicas multivariadas (por exemplo, SEM). Tematicamente, os trabalhos orientam-se para (i) determinantes do bem-estar/felicidade no trabalho e sua relação com desempenho, inovação e retenção, e (ii) a integração da gestão da felicidade como enfoque de gestão ligado a recursos intangíveis (salário emocional, justiça organizacional, saúde mental). Persistem lacunas regionais, metodológicas (escassez de estudos longitudinais e métodos mistos) e de integração teórica.

**Originalidade/valor** – Contribui com uma síntese regional atualizada (2021–2025) que identifica padrões, núcleos temáticos e lacunas, e propõe uma agenda futura com conceitos emergentes como “salário feliz” e “felicidade digital”, além da necessidade de instrumentos culturalmente adaptados aos contextos ibero-americanos.

**Palavras-chave** Gestão da felicidade, Bem-estar no trabalho, Felicidade no trabalho, Ibero-América, Revisão sistemática, PRISMA, Transformação digital, Inteligência artificial

**Tipo de papel** Trabalho de pesquisa

## 1. Introduction

Recent years have been characterised by accelerated digital transformation, which has radically reshaped work and social environments (Rodríguez-Reyes and Pasillas, 2025). Following the COVID-19 pandemic, traditional ways of working were altered, encouraging the intensive integration of digital technologies into organisational processes and everyday life (Rangel-Lyne and Salazar-Altamirano, 2025). Added to this process is the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), which has triggered a series of structural changes across multiple domains, particularly in the world of work (Amorós *et al.*, 2023). In this regard, Galvan-Vela *et al.* (2024) note that AI is rapidly transforming the labour landscape, generating both opportunities and challenges related to employment, job quality and the dynamics of organisational settings.

In this context of accelerated transformation, human talent management faces increasingly complex challenges. As noted by Martínez-Arvizu *et al.* (2025a), talent retention and the reduction of work-related stress have become key challenges in contemporary organisational management. In response, happiness management has emerged as a strategic approach to addressing persistent issues such as employee turnover, emotional exhaustion and organisational disengagement, while simultaneously fostering healthier and more sustainable work environments (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2024a). Complementarily, Salazar-Altamirano *et al.* (2025a) emphasise that the diversity of contexts and approaches through which workplace happiness has been examined highlights its theoretical and empirical relevance, as well as its direct influence on productivity, engagement and workplace well-being. Along the same lines, Castro-Martínez *et al.* (2024) argue that promoting organisational happiness and employee well-being is essential not only to ensure an adequate quality of working life but also to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the productive system.

Although workplace happiness and employee well-being have been widely studied at the international level, there remains a need to deepen their analysis in diverse sociocultural contexts. Deroncele-Acosta *et al.* (2025) warn that, while workplace well-being has been extensively examined in Europe, North America and Asia, a significant gap in scientific output persists in Latin America, limiting the ability to develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon in the region. From this perspective, it is pertinent to examine workplace happiness and well-being in socio-economic realities different from those traditionally studied, particularly within the Ibero-American context (De Urbina Criado *et al.*, 2023). In this regard, Salazar-Altamirano *et al.* (2025b) note that the USA concentrates the majority of studies

related to happiness management and workplace well-being, followed by countries such as Australia and Spain, thereby highlighting a structural gap in the scientific literature concerning the Ibero–American context. This shortcoming becomes even more evident in the analysis of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in emerging economies such as Mexico, where empirical evidence remains limited (Martínez-Arvizu *et al.*, 2025b).

Following this line of argument, the problem that gives rise to this study lies precisely in the existing knowledge gap regarding the evolution of happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America over the past five years. This period is particularly relevant, as it has been marked by unprecedented transformations in work environments resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, accelerated digitalisation and the increasing adoption of technologies based on AI (Hernández-Arteaga *et al.*, 2025). These changes have substantially altered the way individuals relate to their work, generating new working conditions that directly affect employee well-being. Nevertheless, the scientific literature available for the Ibero–American context remains incipient and fragmented (Salazar-Altamirano *et al.*, 2025c).

Although empirical evidence suggests that the incorporation of digital technologies has contributed to improving workforce productivity, it has also intensified mental workload, cognitive fatigue and adverse effects on workers' mental health and well-being. In this regard, Supriyadi *et al.* (2025) indicate that the excessive use of digital resources leads to mental exhaustion, reduced job performance and increased stress levels. Against this backdrop, Valentim *et al.* (2025) emphasise that organisations aspiring to have happier and more productive employees must prioritise the promotion of mental health in the workplace as a strategic pillar of management.

Although countries such as Mexico, Spain, Portugal, Colombia and Brazil have begun to incorporate practices related to happiness management, scientific output in this field remains limited. Quintanilla *et al.* (2022) point out that the scarcity of studies on happiness in business and corporate organisations in Ibero–America highlights the need to strengthen this line of research, both from theoretical and empirical perspectives, to understand its regional specificities.

While recent reviews (Quintanilla *et al.*, 2022; Rando-cueto *et al.*, 2023; Salazar-Altamirano *et al.*, 2025a) have substantially contributed to consolidating the field of happiness management and identifying its thematic evolution, there remains a need for a regionally grounded and context-sensitive synthesis that integrates empirical findings, methodological patterns and contemporary organisational transformations shaping happiness management within Ibero–American environments. Most existing reviews adopt broader bibliometric or global perspectives, which, although valuable, do not fully capture how workplace happiness has been conceptualised, operationalised and empirically examined in Ibero–American organisations during the post-pandemic period marked by accelerated digital transformation and growing incorporation of AI. This omission is theoretically relevant, as contextual variables such as labour market structures, levels of informality, organisational maturity and sociocultural dimensions may significantly influence the determinants, manifestations and managerial implications of workplace well-being and happiness. Accordingly, a systematic review of literature published between 2021 and 2025 was conducted.

In this context, AI is not approached merely as a technological backdrop but as a transversal analytical lens through which contemporary organisational transformations can be interpreted. Even when not directly operationalised in empirical models, AI increasingly shapes managerial processes, decision-support systems and human–technology interaction patterns within digitally transforming environments. Therefore, examining happiness management in Ibero–American organisations during the 2021–2025 period necessarily entails situating workplace well-being within the broader reconfiguration of work structures influenced by AI.

In light of this background, the present study addresses this gap by conducting a systematic review of the literature on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America during the period 2021–2025, following the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) methodology offering a regional synthesis of trends, gaps and future research opportunities that contributes to a more contextualised and analytically robust understanding of happiness management in Ibero–America. The main objective is to analyse the state of knowledge on happiness management and workplace well-being in the Ibero–American context in the post-pandemic stage, identifying recent advances, the main research gaps and the implications that technological transformation and the adoption of AI pose for the future of work. Based on this purpose, the following research questions are proposed:

- RQ1. What has been studied regarding happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America?
- RQ2. Which methodological designs predominate in research conducted within this context?
- RQ3. What have been the main findings reported in studies on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America?
- RQ4. What are the main gaps and limitations identified in the existing literature?
- RQ5. How do the post-pandemic stage and the adoption of artificial intelligence influence happiness management and workplace well-being?

Finally, the article is organised as follows. Section 2 provides the conceptual and empirical foundations of happiness management and workplace well-being within the Ibero–American context. This is followed by Section 3, which outlines the systematic literature review procedure, including the search strategy, inclusion and exclusion criteria and analytical approach adopted. Section 4 then presents the main bibliometric and thematic findings derived from the analysed studies. Subsequently, Section 5 critically examines these results in relation to previous research and considers their relevance, considering post-pandemic transformations and the increasing adoption of AI in work environments. Section 6 summarises the principal insights of the study, followed by Section 7 outlining the theoretical, practical and social implications for organisational management. Finally, Section 8 acknowledges its limitations and identifies directions and research gaps for future studies on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 *Happiness management and workplace well-being*

The post-pandemic period marked a turning point in work environments (Mercader *et al.*, 2025a, 2025b). Organisations were faced with the need to rapidly integrate new technologies and work modalities, such as hybrid and remote arrangements, which have significantly redefined the labour dynamics of human talent (Salazar-Altamirano *et al.*, 2024). Within this context of continuous change, the search for management approaches oriented not only towards organisational efficiency but also towards strengthening workplace well-being and the adaptive capacity of organisational members has gained particular relevance (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2023). In this regard, Calderón *et al.* (2024) define workplace well-being as the set of conditions and practices present in the work environment that contribute to employees' physical and mental health, satisfaction and productivity. From a broader perspective, Arrieta-Valderrama *et al.* (2019) conceptualise workplace well-being as a programme composed of activities or strategies aimed at addressing employees' real needs, generating

benefits within the organisation and extending to the family and the community in which individuals operate, thereby highlighting its comprehensive and multidimensional nature.

Based on these definitions, workplace well-being can be understood as a construct that transcends the immediate organisational space and incorporates social and community dimensions (Colenberg *et al.*, 2020). However, alongside the development of this approach, recent literature has begun to pay greater attention to happiness at work as a specific dimension of subjective well-being in the labour context (Salazar-Altamirano *et al.*, 2025d). In this respect, Sánchez and Veliz (2024) define happiness at work as a state of mind among employees in which aspects extending beyond economic considerations are enhanced. Complementarily, happiness management is defined as the techniques and practices used by organisations to foster a positive emotional climate among their employees, thereby improving overall well-being and productivity (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2022). These conceptual approaches make it possible to distinguish between workplace well-being, understood as a broad framework of organisational conditions and policies and happiness management, which focuses more specifically on the emotional and psychological domain of the worker (Manzoor *et al.*, 2025).

Thus, while workplace well-being adopts a holistic perspective that integrates organisational, social and personal factors, happiness management is primarily oriented towards strengthening positive emotional states within the work environment (Martínez-Arvizu *et al.*, 2025c). This distinction does not imply a rigid conceptual separation, but rather a complementary relationship, insofar as both approaches converge in the creation of work environments that foster performance, satisfaction and organisational commitment.

From an ethical and cultural perspective, some authors argue that happiness management transcends its instrumental dimension and should be understood as an organisational approach aimed at promoting subjective well-being through responsible and socially committed practices. In this sense, happiness management is conceived as a framework that raises organisational awareness of the need to develop strategies that foster personal and collective happiness as a foundation of organisational well-being (Zambrano *et al.*, 2021). Likewise, from a social standpoint, Jiménez-Marín *et al.* (2020) point out that happiness management enables organisational and communicative practices to be oriented towards social well-being objectives, integrating principles of social marketing and collective responsibility. Consistently, within the university sphere it is recognised that the relevance and social responsibility of organisations constitute a means of promoting quality of life, human progress and sustainable development, reinforcing their social function beyond academic performance (Hernández-Arteaga *et al.*, 2025). Taken together, these approaches allow happiness management to be understood as a management philosophy that integrates organisational strategies and social marketing aimed at sustainability and well-being, contributing to the development of more prosperous and socially responsible organisations (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2024).

From a historical perspective, the origins of happiness management can be traced to positive psychology, studies on quality of working life and theories of human motivation (Núñez-Barriopedro *et al.*, 2019). Nevertheless, its consolidation as an organisational management approach is relatively recent and has been driven by empirical evidence that consistently links employee well-being with job performance (Andrade *et al.*, 2024). In line with this, Torres-Flórez *et al.* (2023) note that in recent years, happiness at work has become a topic of growing relevance for organisations, due to the multiple benefits associated with having employees who are satisfied both professionally and personally.

Moreover, recent literature highlights that happiness management has gained particular relevance in the context of SMEs. Núñez-Sánchez *et al.* (2025) indicate that, at a global

level, SMEs have begun to incorporate this approach as a strategy to promote employee well-being, increase productivity and stimulate innovation. From this perspective, happiness can be understood as an intangible resource that helps to reduce resistance to change in the face of contemporary technological, business and social challenges, thereby facilitating processes of organisational adaptation and transformation (Abellán-Sevilla *et al.*, 2024).

Consequently, strengthening workplace well-being not only improves employees' health but also increases their level of organisational commitment, demonstrating its positive impact on performance and organisational sustainability (Cáceres-Lozano *et al.*, 2023). In this vein, other studies conducted within the field of organisational management and sustainability show that certain business strategies can actively contribute to the generation of well-being and happiness experiences. In particular, it has been noted that specific organisational practices oriented towards customer experience design can stimulate the creation of an atmosphere of pleasure and happiness during interactions with organisations' physical environments (Jiménez-Marín *et al.*, 2021).

Within this conceptual framework, it is pertinent to systematically analyse how happiness management and workplace well-being have been addressed in recent scientific literature, particularly in the Ibero-American context (Amorós *et al.*, 2020). Accordingly, the following section presents a structured review of the main studies published during the period 2021–2025, with the aim of identifying trends, methodological approaches and research gaps that may guide the future development of the field.

## 2.2 Artificial intelligence and organisational transformation

The contemporary organisational landscape is increasingly shaped by accelerated digital transformation and progressive integration of AI into managerial, operational and strategic processes. To ensure conceptual clarity within this study, it is necessary to delimit the notion of AI adopted herein and to distinguish it from broader concepts such as digitalisation or technological transformation.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) definition, an AI system is a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments, with systems varying in their levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment (OECD, 2024). This definition highlights two essential elements: firstly, AI systems operate through inference mechanisms that transform data into outputs with practical consequences; secondly, they may function with varying degrees of autonomy, thereby potentially altering decision-making structures within organisations.

From an organisational perspective, AI is not merely a technological tool but a transformative force that can reshape management practices, leadership dynamics, performance evaluation systems and human–technology interaction. Recent scholarship emphasises that AI increasingly influences how information is processed, how strategic and operational decisions are made and how employees experience cognitive demands and workload within digital work environments (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2024a; Amorós *et al.*, 2023). Consequently, AI contributes to redefining the structural and psychosocial conditions under which workplace well-being and happiness are constructed.

Within the scope of this study, AI is conceptualised as a structural contextual factor embedded in the post-pandemic organisational environment, rather than as an individual-level adoption variable. Although AI is not always directly operationalised in the empirical studies included in this review, it constitutes a critical background condition shaping contemporary work contexts characterised by hybrid models, algorithmic decision-support systems,

data-driven management and increased technological interdependence. These transformations may indirectly affect employees' perceptions of autonomy, organisational justice, stress, creativity and overall workplace well-being.

By framing AI as a component of the organisational digital ecosystem that influences managerial processes and work experiences, this study aligns its theoretical positioning with broader discussions of how post-pandemic digital environments reconfigure the determinants and manifestations of happiness management in Ibero–American organisations.

### 3. Methodology

The purpose of the present study was to comprehensively examine the state of knowledge on happiness management and workplace well-being in the Ibero–American context, with the aim of identifying research trends, prevailing theoretical frameworks and existing gaps in the literature. To achieve this objective, a systematic literature review approach was adopted, following the PRISMA guidelines proposed by Moher *et al.* (2009), which are widely recognised for their contribution to transparency, traceability and methodological rigour in the identification, selection and synthesis of scientific evidence.

In accordance with the structure established by the PRISMA guideline and its most recent update (Page *et al.*, 2021), the review process was conducted in three sequential stages: identification, screening and final selection of studies. During the identification stage, an exhaustive search was carried out in the Web of Science database, selected for its international relevance and for concentrating high-quality scientific output from a wide range of countries and disciplines. This database enabled a systematic exploration of research related to happiness management and workplace well-being in the Ibero–American context.

The search period covered the past five years, in response to the paradigm shift generated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the accelerated incorporation of digital technologies and AI in work environments. To retrieve the studies, the following search equation was designed: “happiness management” OR “happiness at work” OR “workplace happiness” OR “gestión de la felicidad” OR “felicidad laboral” OR “salario emocional” OR “emotional wage” OR “well-being at work”. To minimise the risk of bias and ensure the relevance of the included studies, inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined in advance.

The inclusion criteria considered full-text documents that directly addressed the variables under study, published as open-access scientific journal articles, focused on the Ibero–American context and indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. The exclusion criteria comprised studies published prior to 2021, works written in languages other than English, Spanish or Portuguese, documents that were not scientific journal articles (such as books, theses or book chapters), as well as research conducted outside the Ibero–American countries considered in this study, specifically Colombia, Spain, Mexico, Ecuador, Portugal, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Costa Rica, Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela.

After applying the initial inclusion and exclusion criteria, 40 studies with high thematic relevance in the Ibero–American context were identified. However, a refinement process was undertaken to construct a final analytical sample of 15 articles. This refinement was guided by three criteria; 1) geographical balance across Ibero–American countries to avoid over-representation of specific national contexts; 2) thematic complementarity, prioritising studies that address different dimensions of happiness management and workplace well-being rather than duplicating similar analytical models; and 3) methodological robustness, favouring studies with clear research designs, transparent data collection procedures and coherent analytical frameworks.

In cases where multiple studies originated from the same country, particularly Spain, which showed a higher concentration of publications, priority was given to those offering distinctive theoretical contributions, diverse sectoral contexts or advanced analytical techniques.

This procedure ensured regional representativeness and analytical depth while maintaining conceptual diversity within the review.

Although 40 studies met the initial eligibility criteria, the final sample was intentionally refined to 15 articles to ensure regional representativeness and analytical depth. This decision also reflects the emerging and still consolidating nature of happiness management research in Ibero–America, where the volume of indexed publications remains limited and concentrated in specific academic clusters. Therefore, this delimitation was guided by the need to avoid over-representation of specific national contexts and research clusters, thereby strengthening the contextual balance of the review. Rather than aiming at exhaustive numerical coverage, the review prioritised conceptual relevance, geographical diversity and interpretative coherence. This methodological choice is acknowledged as having implications for the scope of generalisation, favouring contextual sensitivity and analytical robustness over statistical comprehensiveness.

Additionally, a basic quality appraisal was conducted for the studies included in the final sample. This assessment considered criteria such as clarity of research objectives, methodological transparency, adequacy of sample description and consistency between research design and reported conclusions. Given that all selected studies were peer-reviewed articles indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection, they met minimum standards of scientific rigour.

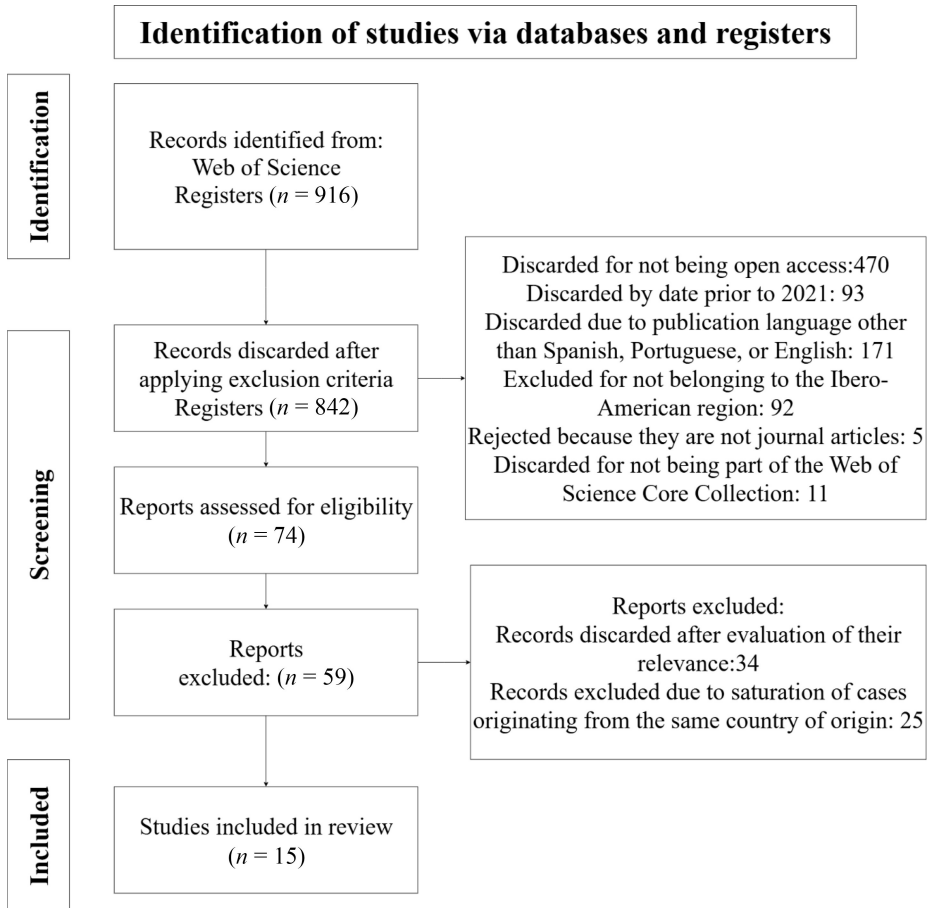
Figure 1 presents the document selection process. In the first stage, records retrieved from the Web of Science database were identified. In the second stage, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to discard documents that did not meet the established requirements. Finally, in the third stage, the studies that passed the screening were assessed in full text, thereby constituting the final sample of 15 articles included in the systematic review.

#### 4. Results

The results of the systematic review make it possible to identify the main characteristics, trends and patterns that define recent scientific production on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America during the period 2021–2025. After applying the identification, screening and selection process described in the methodological section, 15 articles were included, offering relevant contributions to addressing the proposed research questions. Taken together, these studies provide a structured overview of the current state of the field, as well as its conceptual, methodological and thematic evolution in the Ibero–American context.

Overall, the results indicate that research on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America is in a phase of consolidation, characterised by growing empirical interest, a progressive diversification of analytical approaches and the emergence of academic clusters with sustained and high regional impact output. In this regard, the contributions led by Ravina–Ripoll, Salazar–Altamirano, Martínez–Arvizu and Galvan–Vela stand out recurrently, as their research articulates a substantial part of the conceptual and empirical advances identified in the analysed sample.

To complement the analysis of scientific production and to contextualise the findings of the systematic review, a descriptive bibliometric analysis was conducted using the Web of Science platform, focusing on the Ibero–American context and on publications from the past three years. This analysis made it possible to identify the authors with the highest recent productivity in the field of happiness management, offering a panoramic view of academic leadership and the concentration of research during the period considered. Figure 2 presents the main authors identified under these criteria, serving as contextual support that is not limited exclusively to the studies included in the final sample of the review.

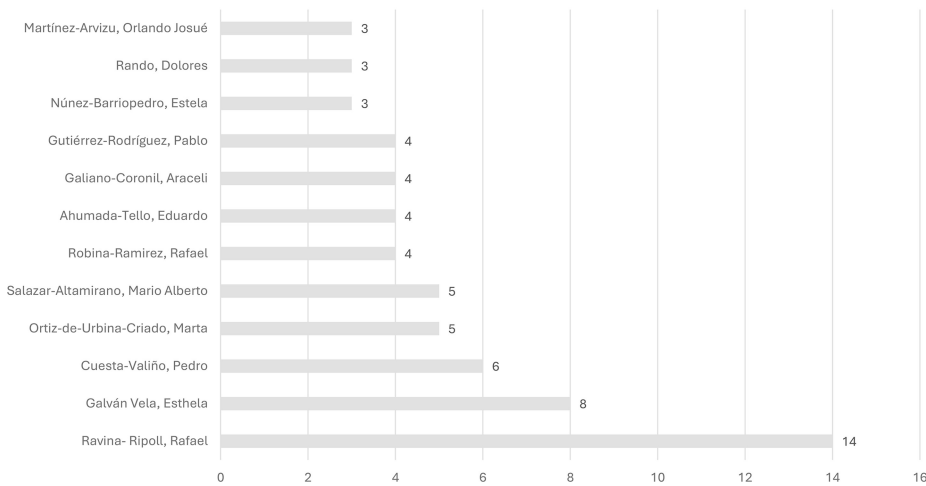


**Figure 1.** PRISMA diagram

Source: Own elaboration based on [Page et al. \(2021\)](#)

As can be observed, scientific production is concentrated among a relatively small number of authors. Rafael Ravina–Ripoll stands out prominently, leading the field with the highest number of contributions, followed by Esthela Galván Vela (eight publications) and Pedro Cuesta-Valiño (six publications). In addition, a group of authors with an intermediate level of output is identified, such as Ortiz de Urbina Criado (5) and Salazar-Altamirano (5), who have contributed steadily to the development of the field. They are followed by a cluster of authors with four publications each (Robina-Ramírez, Ahumada-Tello, Galiano-Coronil and Gutiérrez-Rodríguez). This distribution suggests the presence of consolidated academic leadership alongside emerging researchers such as Martínez–Arvizu (3), Rando (3) and Núñez–Barriopedro (3), who collectively strengthen the theoretical and empirical expansion of happiness management.

[Table 1](#) presents the general characteristics of the included studies, enabling a systematic comparison of bibliographic and contextual information. With regard to geographical



**Figure 2.** Leading authors in happiness management according to publication frequency  
**Source:** Own elaboration

distribution, a significant concentration of research can be observed in Mexico, Spain and Portugal, which act as key hubs of scientific production in the field of Ibero–American happiness management. Mexico accounts for four studies (Articles 1, 4, 11 and 14), particularly highlighting the contributions of Salazar-Altamirano, Martínez-Arvizu and Galván-Vela, focused on the analysis of workplace well-being, innovation, organisational justice and turnover intention in educational and business contexts. Portugal and Spain each contribute three studies, with a strong presence of Ravina–Ripoll in research linking happiness management to strategic variables such as emotional salary, brand orientation and organisational sustainability. Brazil contributes two studies, while Costa Rica, Colombia and Ecuador each contribute one study, reinforcing the need to expand scientific production in other countries across the region.

The concentration of scientific production in Mexico, Spain and Portugal may be associated with the consolidation of specific academic networks and research groups that have actively promoted happiness management as a managerial approach. Additionally, these countries have experienced a significant post-pandemic organisational restructuring process and digital transformation initiatives, which may have stimulated scholarly interest in workplace well-being and managerial innovation.

Table 2 summarises the methodological characteristics of the analysed studies and reveals a clear predominance of the quantitative approach, present in 12 of the 15 articles. These studies predominantly use cross-sectional, non-experimental, descriptive, correlational and causal designs, in several cases complemented by advanced analytical techniques such as structural equation modelling (SEM) and exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. In this regard, the studies by Martínez-Arvizu *et al.* (2025c) and Galvan-Vela *et al.* (2024) stand out for their rigorous use of structural equation models and multigroup analysis, which contribute to strengthening the methodological robustness of the field within the Ibero–American context.

The predominance of quantitative, cross-sectional designs may reflect an effort to legitimise the field through statistically robust explanatory models, particularly in a research

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the studies analysed

Article code	Research title	Author(s) and year	Country	Source title	Keywords	DOI
1	Happiness management and workplace well-being: evolution, key insights, and future directions. A systematic review	Salazar-Altamirano <i>et al.</i> (2025a, 2025b, 2025c, 2025d)	México	<i>Metodos-revista de ciencias sociales</i>	Happiness management, workplace well-being, job satisfaction, digital transformation, organisational psychology	<a href="https://doi.org/10.17502/mrcs.v13i1.848">10.17502/mrcs.v13i1.848</a>
2	Emotional wage, happiness at work and organisational justice as triggers for happiness management	Ravina-Ripoll <i>et al.</i> (2024a, 2024b)	Costa Rica	<i>Journal of Management Development</i>	Emotional wage, happiness at work, organisational justice, human capital	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-02-2023-0046">10.1108/JMD-02-2023-0046</a>
3	Positive mental health and happiness at work in a sample of Portuguese workers: a Web-based cross-sectional study	Valentim <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Portugal	<i>Administrative Sciences</i>	Workplace happiness, productivity, positive mental health, job, health promotion	<a href="https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci15020044">10.3390/admsci15020044</a>
4	Happiness at work in small- and medium-sized enterprises: an analysis of innovation and creativity	Martínez-Arvizu <i>et al.</i> (2025a, 2025b, 2025c)	México	<i>BMC Psychology</i>	Digital innovation, innovation culture, creativity, happiness at work, organisational well-being, structural equation modelling, employee engagement, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)	<a href="https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-02980-x">10.1186/s40359-025-02980-x</a>
5	The multidimensional outcomes of happiness at work when there is no explicit strategy: the views of B2C employees	Barbosa <i>et al.</i> (2023)	Portugal	<i>International Journal of Business and Society</i>	Productivity, motivation, performance, satisfaction, loyalty, profitability, business success.	<a href="https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.5614.2023">10.33736/ijbs.5614.2023</a>
6	Happiness at work and psychological trauma in nurses	Feitor and Borges (2022)	Portugal	<i>REV Rene</i>	Nursing, happiness, psychological trauma, occupational health	<a href="https://doi.org/10.15253/2175-6783.20222371953">10.15253/2175-6783.20222371953</a>

(continued)

**Table 1.** Continued

Article code	Research title	Author(s) and year	Country	Source title	Keywords	DOI
7	Subjective well-being and its correlation with happiness at work and quality of work life: an organisational vision	Mendoza-Ocasal <i>et al.</i> (2022)	Colombia	<i>Polish Journal of Management Studies</i>	Workplace happiness, happiness at work, organisation	10.17512/pjms.2022.26.1.13
8	The happy level: a new approach to measure happiness at work using mixed methods	Sender <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Brasil	<i>International Journal of Qualitative Methods</i>	Happiness at work, job satisfaction, narrative analysis, sentiment analysis, measurement	10.1177/16094069211002413
9	A bibliometric study on work happiness	Sánchez and Veliz (2024)	Brasil	<i>Revista gestion de las personas y tecnologia</i>	Happiness, happiness at work, job happiness	10.35588/yh4dkd02
10	Neuroleadership: a new way for happiness management	Ruiz-Rodríguez <i>et al.</i> (2023)	España	<i>Humanities and Social Sciences Communications</i>	N/A	10.1057/s41599-023-01642-w
11	Happiness management and turnover intention: sectoral differences in stress mediation effects	Martínez-Arvizu <i>et al.</i> (2025a, 2025b, 2025c)	México	<i>Revista de estudios empresariales-segunda época</i>	Happiness management, work-related stress, turnover intention, JD-R theory, multigroup analysis	10.17561/ree.n2.2025.9542
12	Happiness management: a culture to explore from brand orientation as a sign of responsible and sustainable production	Ravina-Ripoll <i>et al.</i> (2021)	España	<i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>	Happiness management, brand orientation, responsible, sustainable production, SEM, values, norms, behaviours	10.3389/fpsyg.2021.727845
13	Bibliometric analysis, evolution and trends of happiness management in scientific literature	Rando-Cueto <i>et al.</i> (2023)	España	<i>ANDUII</i>	Happiness management, bibliometric analysis, Spain, organisational well-being, VOS viewer, COVID-19	10.12795/anduli.2023.i23.10

(continued)

Table 1. Continued

Article code	Research title	Author(s) and year	Country	Source title	Keywords	DOI
14	The trinomial commitment, satisfaction and organisational justice in the binomial happiness and turnover intention	Galvan-Vela <i>et al.</i> (2024)	México	<i>Retos-revista de ciencias de la administración y economía</i>	Job happiness, turnover intention, organisational justice, job satisfaction, affective engagement	<a href="https://doi.org/10.17163/ret.n28.2024.01">10.17163/ret.n28.2024.01</a>
15	Employee satisfaction and retention: social marketing and happiness	Galiano-Coronil and Blanco-Moreno (2024)	Ecuador	<i>Retos-revista de ciencias de la administración y economía</i>	Glassdoor, semantic network analysis, social marketing, satisfaction, retention, happiness management, work environment, social marketing	<a href="https://doi.org/10.17163/ret.n28.2024.04">10.17163/ret.n28.2024.04</a>

**Table 2.** Research methodological designs

Article code	Approach	Type and design	Data collection techniques	Instruments or scales used	Sample size and type	Data analysis	Validity/reported reliability
1	Qualitative	Systematic review of the literature	Systematic search and screening of databases (Scopus and Web of Science) using inclusion and exclusion criteria; document analysis	N/A	19 articles selected from a total of more than 300 initial records	Frequency analysis	N/A
2	Quantitative	Descriptive, causal and hypothetical-deductive cross-sectional	Closed questionnaire	Emotional salary scale by <a href="#">Quintero-Arango and Becanur-Arias (2018)</a> , work happiness scale by <a href="#">Ramirez-Garcia et al. (2019)</a> , organisational justice scale by <a href="#">Patiñan Pérez et al. (2014)</a>	502 workers in the education sector in Costa Rica (49% private and 51% public). Non-probability sample for convenience	Modelling of structural equations PLS-SEM with Smart-PLS4 and SPSS-AMOS 23; reliability analysis (Cronbach, KMO, AVE and CR), discriminant validity and bootstrapping (10,000 SAMPLES, 99%)	Cronbach's alpha = 0.50.98 (p50.01), KMO = 0.951 (5% confidence interval 95% CI): 0.731–0.860), Bartlett's test of sphericity is a p 5.0.000 (approx. Chi-square 5 41,562.512; GI 5 1.540 Sig 5 0.000)
3	Quantitative	Cross-sectional correlational	Online questionnaire	The Positive Mental Health Questionnaire (PMHQ), initially developed by <a href="#">Lluch Canut (2003)</a> , was translated and validated for the Portuguese population by <a href="#">Sequeira and Carvalho (2009)</a> . The happiness at work scale developed by <a href="#">Dutschke et al. (2024, 2015)</a>	1,768 workers (59.9% women and 40.1% men) non-probabilistic (snowball sampling)	Descriptive and correlational analysis (Pearson), ANOVA, F-test, hierarchical multiple linear regression and IBM SPSS V28 software	Positive Mental Health Questionnaire (PMHQ) Cronbach's alpha 0.92, happiness at work scale Cronbach's alpha = 0.92
4	Quantitative	Non-experimental cross-sectional study	Structured questionnaire (five-point Likert scale) administered digitally	Digital innovation adapted from <a href="#">Paladino (Six items)</a> , culture of innovation: Santos-Vijande (three items), creativity: Zhou and George (12 items), happiness at work: Ramirez-Garcia (11 items)	Non-probability convenience sampling; 208 employees (commerce, industry, services and education)	Measures of central tendency, asymmetry and kurtosis; exploratory factor analysis; and structural equations	High reliability: $\alpha > 0.90$ ; composite reliability $> 0.7$ ; AVE $> 0.5$ ; discriminant validity
5	Quantitative	Exploratory and descriptive	Semi-structured face-to-face interviews	Interview script prepared by the authors	12 employees of B2C companies in Portugal (intentional non-probability sample)	Content analysis with Nvivo Plus 11	N/A

(continued)

Table 2. Continued

Article code	Approach	Type and design	Data collection techniques	Instruments or scales used	Sample size and type	Data analysis	Validity/reported reliability
6	Quantitative	Cross-sectional, non-experimental, descriptive and correlational	Self-administered questionnaire	Shorted happiness at work scale (SHAW) (Galás-Vallina <i>et al.</i> , 2018), nine items, seven-point Likert scale, $\alpha = 0.867$ . Impact event scale-revised (IES-R) (Matos <i>et al.</i> , 2011, Portuguese version), 22 items, five-point Likert scale, $\alpha = 0.928$ . Sociodemographic and professional questionnaire designed by the authors	$n = 113$ nurses (90 from a specialty hospital and 23 from a primary care unit) (convenience sampling)	Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, student's <i>t</i> -test and Mann-Whitney test (Software: SPSS V.25)	SHAW: $\alpha = 0.631-0.867$ (adequate internal consistency). IES-R: $\alpha = 0.798-0.928$ (high reliability)
7	Quantitative	Positivist, explanatory, transactional, and non-experimental	Structured Likert-type questionnaire (five points)	Questionnaire on quality of work life, job satisfaction and workplace happiness, adapted from Spector (1994) and applied in Mendoza-Ocasal <i>et al.</i> (2022). The instrument comprises 53 items on quality of work life, 25 items on workplace happiness and seven items on job satisfaction	302 employees at a university in Barranquilla (Colombia), 47% professors, 36% administrative assistants, 12% general services and 5% department heads. Simple random sampling	Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, SPSS software v.27.0	Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.895$ ; content validation by three experts
8	Mixed	Mixed sequential exploratory design, consisting of an initial qualitative phase (narrative analysis) and a subsequent quantitative phase (automated sentiment analysis)	In-depth and semi-structured interviews	Happy level (HL) indicator was developed by the authors	16 participants (middle managers) from 53 companies in Brazil contributed a total of 167 work experiences. Intentional sampling	Manual coding processes calculate the happiness level using data generated by a function of the NVivo Plus software, calculate the happiness level using data generated by the LIWC software configured with the Brazilian Portuguese dictionary. Calculate the happiness level using data generated by Polyglot. Calculation of the happiness level by counting lexical polarity. Analysis of concordance	Triangulation, member checking, process auditing, thick description, theoretical saturation and standardised interview protocols

(continued)

**Table 2.** Continued

Article code	Approach	Type and design	Data collection techniques	Instruments or scales used	Sample size and type	Data analysis	Validity/reported reliability
9	Quantitative	Descriptive bibliometric study	Documentary review of scientific articles in the Scopus, Scielo and Web of Science databases, applying search equations and thematic filters	N/A	421 articles in Scopus, 138 in Scielo and 183 in WoS (census sample, all results from the search equation)	between manual and automated methods Comprehensive scientific mapping analysis of scientific literature (Bibliometrix and VOSviewer software)	N/A
10	Mixed	Integrative literature review (bibliometric + reflective qualitative analysis). Combines bibliometric techniques with in-depth analysis and logical reasoning	Document search in the Scopus database, using the title, abstract and keyword fields	N/A	412 documents	A co-word analysis was used together with the SciMat programme and the construction of strategic diagrams (centrality and density)	N/A
11	Quantitative	Non-experimental cross-sectional design	Online questionnaire	Happiness at work scale (Feitor and Borges, 2022) – five items. Work-related stress scale (Inoue <i>et al.</i> , 2014) – eight items. Turnover intention scale (Bohima and Roodt, 2013) – six items	414 employees, 51.69% were employed in public institutions, while 48.31% worked in the private sector. Non-probability sampling	Analysis of central tendency measures, covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) and multigroup analysis (MGA)	$\alpha$ Cronbach: 0.871 (happiness), 0.857 (Stress), 0.940 (turnover). CR > 0.77, AVE > 0.54, HTMT < 0.85. Goodness of fit: CFI = 0.962, RMSEA = 0.075, SRMR = 0.052. Convergent validity, discriminant validity and factor invariance confirmed
12	Quantitative	Descriptive, randomised and exploratory	Structured online survey	The Baumgarth brand orientation scale was used for this purpose (Baumgarth, 2010; Baumgarth <i>et al.</i> , 2013). Happiness management construct – five items adaptados de Ruiz-Rodríguez <i>et al.</i> (2023) and Núñez-Barrtopedro <i>et al.</i> (2019).	The sample comprises 216 people with the profile of managers of small- and medium-sized companies in Andalusia, random sample without replacement	Structural equation modelling, SPSS 27 statistical software	$\alpha$ Cronbach: 0.915 (happiness management); convergent and discriminant validity confirmed CR > 0.9, AVE between 0.65 and 0.90

(continued)

**Table 2.** Continued

Article code	Approach	Type and design	Data collection techniques	Instruments or scales used	Sample size and type	Data analysis	Validity/reported reliability
13	Quantitative	Bibliometric study	Systematic review of scientific publications indexed in the Scopus database	medidos en escala Likert de 1 a 5 puntos N/A	106 records found that include the term happiness management	Bibliometric analysis using indicators of production, citation, collaboration, keyword co-occurrence and temporal evolution; use of network maps	N/A
14	Quantitative	Non-experimental, cross-sectional, correlational and causal	Structured survey administered to university professors via digital questionnaire	Job satisfaction: <a href="#">Ramirez-García et al. (2019)</a> scale (ten items). Affective commitment: <a href="#">Meyer et al. (1991)</a> was used, only in its "affective" dimension (six items). Organisational justice: evaluated using a scale developed by <a href="#">Niehoif and Moorman (1993)</a> (15 items). Job satisfaction: (1993) scale (15 items). Job satisfaction: the <a href="#">Veray-Alicea (2016)</a> scale (five items). Intention to rotate: three items from the <a href="#">Mobley et al. (1978)</a> scale	392 teachers from public and private universities in Mexico; non-probability sampling	Correlational analysis, exploratory factor analysis, causal correlation analysis and structural equations	High reliability reported (Cronbach's $\alpha$ between 0.882 and 0.963; validity (AVE > 0.5) and discriminant validity confirmed (Fornell-Larcker criterion)
15	Quantitative	Descriptive	Web scraping a través de la versión Octoparse 8	N/A	138,764 reviews of 136 companies in the period between 2021 and 2023. The sample selection was based on specific criteria to ensure a robust and representative data set. Only companies with more than 10,000 employees were included	Semantic network analysis	N/A

**Note(s):** HTMT= Heterotrait–monotrait ratio (of Correlations); CFI = Comparative fit index; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = Standardized root mean square residual; ANOVA = Analysis of variance; KMO = Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure (of sampling adequacy); AVE = Average variance extracted and CR = Composite reliability

domain still undergoing consolidation. SEM and multivariate techniques enable the testing of complex relational frameworks linking happiness management to organisational variables such as performance, innovation and turn over intention. However, this methodological orientation may also indicate a relative underdevelopment of longitudinal and qualitative approaches capable of capturing contextual and processual dynamics in greater depth.

Studies adopting mixed-methods approaches incorporate narrative analysis, automated sentiment analysis and logical reasoning, as in the cases of [Sender et al. \(2021\)](#) and [Ruiz-Rodríguez et al. \(2023\)](#), while purely qualitative approaches appear only marginally, being limited to a single study based on semi-structured interviews. With respect to sampling, non-probabilistic convenience sampling predominates, although some studies incorporate simple random sampling, highlighting a clear opportunity to strengthen the generalisability of results in future research.

Regarding data collection techniques, the majority of studies use structured questionnaires administered online through Likert-type scales. Among the most frequently used instruments are the Positive Mental Health Questionnaire (PMHQ), the Happiness at Work Scale, the Shortened Happiness at Work Scale (SHAW) and the Questionnaire of Quality of Work Life, Job Satisfaction and Workplace Happiness, reflecting a trend towards the standardisation of the measurement of workplace well-being and happiness.

[Table 3](#) summarises the objectives and main findings of the included studies, making it possible to identify the thematic lines that guide recent scientific production. Transversally, research objectives focus on analysing the determinants of happiness at work, exploring organisational factors associated with well-being, validating explanatory and relational models through multivariate techniques and examining new theoretical approaches such as neuroleadership, emotional salary and hybrid measurement models. Within this framework, the studies by [Ravina-Ripoll et al. \(2021, 2024\)](#) and [Salazar-Altamirano et al. \(2025a\)](#) play a central role by integrating strategic, cultural and sustainability dimensions into the analysis of happiness management.

Regarding the findings, the studies converge in recognising that workplace well-being and happiness management are closely linked to organisational functioning, individual and collective performance and critical variables such as organisational justice, work-related stress, creativity, innovation and turnover intention. In particular, the works by [Martínez-Arvizu et al. \(2025b\)](#) and [Galván-Vela et al. \(2024\)](#) provide robust empirical evidence on the mediating and moderating roles of these variables across different sectors, reinforcing the understanding of happiness management as a complex and relational phenomenon.

Finally, [Table 4](#) presents the main knowledge gaps and future research lines identified by the analysed studies. Consistently, the authors agree in pointing out the scarcity of research integrating happiness management and workplace well-being with variables such as organisational justice, emotional salary, mental health and productivity through longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches. Likewise, the need to broaden study contexts, diversify economic sectors and strengthen comparative analysis among Ibero-American countries is emphasised. These gaps reinforce the relevance of the research agendas promoted by authors such as [Ravina-Ripoll](#), [Salazar-Altamirano](#), [Martínez-Arvizu](#) and [Galván-Vela](#), who have made significant contributions to the consolidation of the field and to the identification of new paths for theoretical and empirical development.

The visible concentration of publications among a limited number of authors suggests the existence of consolidated research clusters driving the development of the field in Ibero-America. While this academic leadership contributes to theoretical continuity and cumulative knowledge building, it may also influence thematic convergence and methodological homogeneity

**Table 3.** Key findings

Article code	Author(s) and year	Country	Research objective	Key findings
1	<a href="#">Salazar-Altamirano et al. (2025a, 2025b, 2025c, 2025d)</a>	México	Analyse and synthesise the scientific development of workplace happiness from 2010 to 2024	Most of the studies analysed use a quantitative, cross-sectional design, using surveys and questionnaires as primary data collection methods. Research has predominantly focused on large companies in sectors such as banking, health care and education. Traditional theories such as positive psychology and the job demands-resources model continue to be widely used. The most commonly used dimensions to measure happiness at work include engagement, job satisfaction and emotional well-being. Key findings indicate that leadership styles, organisational culture and job autonomy significantly influence workplace happiness
2	<a href="#">Ravina-Ripoll et al. (2024a, 2024b)</a>	Costa Rica	Analyse the concept of happiness management based on the empirical validation of the interactions between emotional wage, organisational justice and happiness at work	Emotional wage has a positive impact on happiness at work and that it mediates positively between organisational justice and happiness at work
3	<a href="#">Valentim et al. (2025)</a>	Portugal	(a) to characterize a sample of workers regarding sociodemographic and professional variables; (b) to determine the levels of happiness and positive mental health status; (c) to measure and compare organisational happiness, functional happiness, positive mental health and productivity perception between groups; (d) to determine the correlations between positive mental health, organisational happiness, functional happiness, years in organisation and function and productivity perception; and (e) to identify predictive factors associated with overall happiness	Positive mental health was positively associated with both organisational happiness domains and function and with perceived productivity ( $p < 0.001$ ). Using a multiple linear regression model, we found four predictors of overall happiness at work: age, perception of productivity, seniority and positive mental health factors (personal satisfaction, autonomy and problem-solving and self-actualisation) ( $R^2 = 0.249$ )
4	<a href="#">Martínez-Arvizu et al. (2025a, 2025b, 2025c)</a>	México	Analysing the relationship between digital innovation, innovation culture, creativity and happiness at work in the context of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Mexico	The synergy between digital innovation, innovation culture and creativity is crucial for fostering happiness at work, although the effect varies depending on company size. In small companies, organisational flexibility facilitates the direct effect of digitalisation on creativity and happiness at work. However, in medium-sized companies, a stronger focus on innovation culture is required to maximise these benefits
5	<a href="#">Barbosa et al. (2023)</a>	Portugal	To bring to the fore the perception of employees on the effects of happiness at work, considering workers themselves, the customers they deal with and ultimately the company they work for	Even without a formal strategy in place, when employees are happy, SMEs experience clear benefits in work performance and outcomes. Motivation is the main result of workplace happiness, driving greater energy, creativity, engagement and productivity

*(continued)*

**Table 3.** Continued

Article code	Author(s) and year	Country	Research objective	Key findings
6	Feitor and Borges (2022)	Portugal	Analyse the relationship between levels of happiness at work and psychological trauma in nurses and its variation as a function of sociodemographic/professional variables	<p>at both individual and organisational levels. Employee–customer relationships improve, as happier workers show more empathy, support and availability, leading to greater customer satisfaction, trust and loyalty. Employees take initiative to exceed customer expectations, which strengthens customer retention and boosts profitability. Happiness at work also leads to stronger employee commitment and focus on company goals, creating a deeper emotional connection to the organisation – even in the absence of an explicit happiness strategy</p> <p>The average score on the abbreviated scale of happiness at work was 4.25 (<math>\pm 1.05</math>), while the average score on the revised scale of impactful events was 24.8 (<math>\pm 13.9</math>). Gender, dependents and leisure activities influenced job satisfaction, while age, children, leisure activities, professional experience and working hours affected psychological trauma. A weak negative correlation was found between job satisfaction and psychological trauma (<math>r = -0.270</math>). Overall, nurses reported moderate job happiness and low psychological trauma, indicating that higher levels of happiness may serve as a protective factor against psychological trauma</p>
7	Mendoza-Ocasal et al. (2022)	Colombia	Analyse the factors that affect subjective well-being in the workplace and their importance for business management	<p>The findings identify two key factors influencing workers' perceptions of quality of life and workplace happiness among 302 employees. Component 1 reflects motivational or intrinsic factors, while Component 2 represents maintenance or organisational factors. Both components show significant correlations, with 67.4% of the variance in quality of life and workplace happiness explained by these combined factors. This indicates an interconnection between motivation and organisational conditions, mediated by individual perceptions. Employees place higher value on organisational aspects (Component 2) when assessing quality of work life, whereas motivational factors (Component 1) are more relevant to workplace happiness. Overall, well-being at work is determined by quality of work life, which is primarily shaped by organisational factors</p>

(continued)

Table 3. Continued

Article code	Author(s) and year	Country	Research objective	Key findings
8	<a href="#">Sender et al. (2021)</a>	Brasil	Propose a different approach to measuring happiness at work, using mixed methods to address the complexity of the phenomenon	The results indicate that the proposed approach overcomes the limitations of traditional questionnaires by capturing the complexity and subjectivity of job satisfaction without restricting the topics to predefined questions
9	<a href="#">Sánchez and Veliz (2024)</a>	Brasil	Analyse scientific output in relation to happiness at work, showing the impact it has on scientific output in the Scopus, SciELO and Web of Science databases	Scientific output per year is increasing, and more and more countries are interested in improving the well-being and working conditions of their workers to increase their job satisfaction
10	<a href="#">Ruiz-Rodríguez et al. (2023)</a>	España	Analyse the role of neuroleadership in the application of happiness management	It is observed that the consideration of the management of emotions and cognitive processes in the work environment is attracting interest to develop a leadership focused on making better workplaces. A new line of action focused on the management of happiness is emerging. In addition, neuroleadership is presented as a new way of understanding management
11	<a href="#">Martínez-Arvizu et al. (2025a, 2025b, 2025c)</a>	México	Analyses the impact of happiness management on turnover intention, considering work stress as a mediating variable and evaluating the differences between public and private sector employees	The multigroup analysis confirms that the relationships between happiness management, work-related stress and turnover intention vary notably between public and private sectors. In the private sector, happiness management plays a more decisive role in reducing both stress and turnover intention, highlighting the importance of organisational well-being in contexts with lower job stability. In contrast, in the public sector, turnover intention appears to be more strongly influenced by work-related stress, likely due to factors such as bureaucracy and limited incentives
12	<a href="#">Ravina-Ripoll et al. (2021)</a>	España	Design a structural equation modelling (SEM) to analyse the main critical dimensions of brand orientation to influence happiness in responsible and sustainable entities	Brand orientation has a positive and significant influence on happiness management in organisations
13	<a href="#">Rando-Cueto et al. (2023)</a>	España	Analyse the concept of “Happiness management” in the scientific literature due to the growing interest in aspects related to happiness management in social and professional spheres, which has resulted in recent research	The positioning of Spain as a benchmark country in the international literature on “Happiness management” and the influence of COVID-19 on the spread and citation of publications stand out
14	<a href="#">Galvan-Vela et al. (2024)</a>	México	Empirically analyse the relationships between organisational justice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment with job satisfaction and turnover intention among teachers in Mexico	Job satisfaction, organisational commitment and organisational justice are interrelated among teachers, and secondly, these variables positively explain job happiness and negatively explain the intention to rotate

*(continued)*

**Table 3.** Continued

Article code	Author(s) and year	Country	Research objective	Key findings
15	<a href="#">Galiano-Coronil and Blanco-Moreno (2024)</a>	Ecuador	Examine how elements of social responsibility and happiness management can be effectively integrated into corporate strategies to improve employee satisfaction and retention, especially during periods of high turnover, such as the Great Resignation	The main results indicate that both current and former employees highly value a supportive and positive work environment and career growth opportunities. However, significant disadvantages include overwork, long hours and poor management practices. The study highlights that the critical factors influencing employee satisfaction and retention include a positive work environment, opportunities for career growth and effective management practices

within the region. This pattern is not uncommon in emerging research domains, where early institutionalisation often depends on specialised networks that later diversify as the field matures.

## 5. Discussion

This section interprets the results of the systematic review in light of the study's objective and the existing literature, with the aim of explaining their meaning, justifying their relevance and clearly showing how the findings address the research questions. Overall, the synthesised evidence suggests that research on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America (2021–2025) is in a phase of consolidation, with visible advances in quantitative modelling and a thematic agenda increasingly connected to contemporary organisational challenges, although regional asymmetries and methodological limitations persist.

The findings are discussed below according to the research questions posed.

With regard to *RQ1*:

*RQ1.* What has been investigated about happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America?

The results show that recent Ibero–American scientific production has focused on two dominant lines. Firstly, a set of studies aimed at identifying determinants of workplace well-being and happiness (e.g. leadership, organisational culture, autonomy and positive mental health), as well as their relationship with performance and productivity indicators. Secondly, research that conceptualises happiness management as a management approach that can be integrated into organisational practices and intangible resources, such as emotional salary, organisational justice and corporate sustainability. This reading converges with literature emphasising the strategic relevance of well-being and happiness in organisations ([Castro-Martínez et al., 2024](#)) and aligns with the argument that the Ibero–American field requires the consolidation of culturally situated evidence ([Deroncele-Acosta et al., 2025](#)).

Within this framework, authors such as Ravina-Ripoll, Salazar-Altamirano, Martínez-Arvizu and Galvan-Vela are observed to act as thematic articulation nodes. Their work connects well-being with critical organisational variables (justice, innovation, turnover intention and stress), contributing to greater conceptual density and managerial applicability within the field:

**Table 4.** Gaps and future lines of research

Article code	Country	Knowledge gaps	Future lines of research
1	México	Predominance of quantitative and cross-sectional studies, which prevents the analysis of long-term well-being trends. The need for further research in diverse sectors and companies of different sizes, along with the development of new theories and measurement tools, is crucial for advancing our understanding of this complex and multifaceted phenomenon	Future research should prioritise longitudinal and mixed-method studies to examine how workplace happiness evolves over time and to capture the complexities of individual and organisational factors influencing well-being. Future research should develop and test new theoretical models that better account for modern workplace transformations, integrating insights from fields such as neuroscience, artificial intelligence and digital well-being
2	Costa Rica	There is little empirical data linking emotional wages, organisational justice and job satisfaction in emerging economies	Develop theoretical models with new mediating variables; replicate in other sectors and emerging economies; use probability sampling; include qualitative studies; explore commitment and passion for work
3	Portugal	Lack of studies examining the relationship between happiness at work and positive mental health	Future research should explore how cultural dimensions shape the relationship between mental health, workplace happiness and productivity
4	México	There is a significant gap in the literature on how autonomy, sense of belonging and opportunity to exercise creativity affect SMEs, especially in emerging contexts such as Mexico	Future research should consider longitudinal methods to establish causality and explore temporal dynamics. Future studies could replicate the analysis used in the research to different sectors and geographic regions, and use larger samples to verify the external validity of the results. Future studies could employ a longitudinal design to analyse how the implementation of innovation strategies and the promotion of a creative culture impact job happiness over time. Future studies are encouraged to triangulate data using alternative sources, such as supervisor ratings, behavioural observations or objective performance. Future research could explore the role of other emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence or data analytics, in the relationship between creativity and happiness at work

*(continued)*

**Table 4.** Continued

Article code	Country	Knowledge gaps	Future lines of research
5	Portugal	There are few studies on companies that implement explicit strategies to promote happiness at work, especially in SMEs, which tend to have limited resources. Although it is recognised that happiness at work can improve service quality and customer satisfaction, the specific impacts on customer behaviour and decisions have been little explored	Compare companies with and without happiness strategies; include B2B sectors; use other methodological approaches; consider other variables to explain happiness
6	Portugal	Few studies in the Portuguese context analyse happiness at work and its relationship with psychological trauma in nurses. The happiness levels of nurses, in most cases, are evaluated in a general way and not with specific instruments for measuring happiness at work	N/A
7	Colombia	There are many organisations around the world that do not have wellness programmes, and those that do not conduct studies on employee perception	Future research should contextualize, deepen and measure the impact of the variables studied, using more diverse methodological designs applied in different organisational settings
8	Brasil	Lack of a widely accepted and comprehensive measure of workplace well-being. Lack of linguistic libraries and semantic frameworks applied to the automated analysis of workplace well-being	Complement the study with a new round of data collection, gathering new work experiences or create a completely new research project to serve as a database. A second approach involves an in-depth analysis of the libraries used to identify which are the best and replicate or incorporate improvements. Finally, we suggest studying the impact of combining the use of machine learning techniques with sentiment analysis
9	Brasil	Happiness at work as a construct has not been sufficiently addressed and lacks a level of study commensurate with its relevance. There is insufficient information to fully understand the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance	Conduct studies from different perspectives and explore the topic in depth

*(continued)*

Table 4. Continued

Article code	Country	Knowledge gaps	Future lines of research
10	España	There is little work on leadership and happiness management and that new studies on the effect of neuroleadership on happiness management have not yet been developed	It is necessary to analyse the management of happiness from the perspectives of neuroscience and organisational behaviour
11	México	Lack of empirical evidence on the specific role of happiness management in influencing turnover intention in the Mexican context	Future research could explore the impact of internal marketing on the relationship between happiness management, work-related stress and turnover intention. It is recommended that the multigroup analysis be expanded beyond the comparison between the public and private sectors, incorporating variables such as gender, age, hierarchical level and generational differences. Future studies could adopt a longitudinal approach to assess whether the impact of happiness management on stress reduction and turnover intention is sustainable in the long term
12	España	The literature on happiness economics currently lacks a substantial body of work on happiness management, as this area of research is still in its early development	Develop longitudinal and international studies; build second-order SEM models; explore non-profit organisations
13	España	Global research exhibits geographical polarisation, with Spain emerging as a dominant hub for scientific dissemination. While Spanish researchers lead in publication volume and universities show notable research momentum, the nation's international scientific trajectory remains brief. Comparatively, authors of other nationalities achieve higher citation rates, indicating a disparity between output and academic impact	It is recommended that future lines of research broaden the geographical focus through comparative studies that go beyond the Spanish case, explore specific contexts such as education and SMEs, delve deeper into the strategic relationship between happiness management and sustainability, especially with the SDGs develop and validate digital tools for measuring it, and adopt interdisciplinary perspectives
14	México	Lack of studies that quantitatively explore how the trinomial of emotional commitment, job satisfaction and organisational justice affects the binomial of happiness and intention to rotate	Future research should explore how the academic success of universities depends largely on the environment geared towards fostering creativity, active participation, loyalty and happiness among their professors

*(continued)*

**Table 4.** Continued

Article code	Country	Knowledge gaps	Future lines of research
15	Ecuador	Existing research has addressed employee well-being, culture and management practices in a fragmented manner. However, there is a critical gap in understanding their synergy in ensuring organisational sustainability, particularly during labour market disruptions such as the Great Resignation	Future research could adopt a multi-method approach, combining quantitative analysis of Glassdoor reviews with qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups with employees from different organisational sizes and industries

*RQ2.* Which methodological designs predominate in studies conducted in this context?

The evidence reveals a clear predominance of the quantitative paradigm, mainly supported by cross-sectional and non-experimental designs (descriptive, correlational and causal), with frequent use of online surveys and Likert-type scales. This pattern is consistent with that reported in regional reviews, which highlight the hegemony of quantitative approaches and the recurrent use of variables such as engagement and job satisfaction to operationalise happiness and well-being. In addition, an increasing use of multivariate techniques and SEM is observed, which strengthens the explanatory capacity of the field in the Ibero–American environment.

However, although there are contributions using mixed and qualitative approaches, their presence remains marginal. For example, [Sender \*et al.\* \(2021\)](#) propose measurements that seek to capture the complexity of the work experience beyond traditional instruments, and [Ruiz-Rodríguez \*et al.\* \(2023\)](#) explore emerging approaches such as neuroleadership linked to happiness at work. Taken together, these findings suggest that the field has advanced in quantitative robustness, but still requires greater methodological diversity to capture post-pandemic dynamics ([Hernández-Arteaga \*et al.\*, 2025](#)) and processes associated with digital transformation ([Rangel-Lyne and Salazar-Altamirano, 2025](#)):

*RQ3.* What have been the main findings reported in studies on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America?

The analysed studies converge on a key finding: workplace well-being and happiness at work are consistently linked to relevant organisational outcomes, such as perceived productivity, performance, innovation and retention. [Valentim \*et al.\* \(2025\)](#), for example, report positive associations between positive mental health, domains of organisational and functional happiness and perceived productivity, as well as statistically significant predictors of workplace happiness. In the case of SMEs, [Barbosa \*et al.\* \(2023\)](#) argue that employee happiness is associated with improvements in performance, motivation, creativity, engagement and productivity, in addition to positive effects on the employee–customer relationship.

Furthermore, the results highlight relational findings that reinforce a systemic understanding of the phenomenon. For instance, [Ravina-Ripoll \*et al.\* \(2024a, 2024b\)](#) show that emotional salary has a positive impact on happiness at work and acts as a mediator between organisational justice and happiness. Complementarily, contextual relationships are identified that nuance these effects. The relationship between happiness management, stress and turnover intention

differs according to the public or private sector in multigroup analyses, and the effect of digital innovation and innovation culture on happiness at work is stronger in medium-sized SMEs than in micro and small firms. From a discussion standpoint, this suggests that happiness management in Ibero–America is increasingly being studied as a contingent phenomenon, dependent on organisational and sectoral conditions, which enhances its practical usefulness:

RQ4. What are the main gaps and limitations identified in the existing literature?

The synthesised evidence allows the identification of structural gaps at three levels. Firstly, a geographical and contextual gap due to the concentration of studies in a small number of countries and the limited representation of other Ibero–American contexts. Secondly, a methodological gap arising from the predominance of cross-sectional designs and non-probabilistic sampling, which restricts causal inference and generalisability. Thirdly, a theoretical and integrative gap, as the systematic integration of variables such as organisational justice, emotional salary, mental health and productivity into comparable and regionally replicable models remains insufficient.

These gaps are consistent with the need identified in the literature to strengthen the empirical development of the field in Ibero–America (Quintanilla *et al.*, 2022; Deroncele-Acosta *et al.*, 2025). At the same time, the results of the review indicate that part of the emerging agenda is already oriented towards addressing these gaps, particularly through multivariate models and mediation and moderation analyses, contributing to the progressive consolidation of the field.

Finally:

RQ5. How do the post-pandemic stage and the adoption of artificial intelligence affect happiness management and workplace well-being?

It is important to clarify that the reviewed studies do not directly operationalise human–AI interaction as a primary analytical variable. However, the findings consistently reflect organisational contexts characterised by accelerated digital transformation and increasing reliance on data-driven management systems. Within this broader technological environment, AI can be understood as a contextual element embedded in post-pandemic organisational restructuring processes. In this sense, while AI is not empirically measured in most of the reviewed models, the evidence suggests a growing emphasis on human-centred management approaches aimed at mitigating stress, strengthening mental health and fostering organisational justice in digitally transforming environments. This is consistent with evidence linking intensive use of digital resources to mental exhaustion, lower performance and increased stress (Supriyadi *et al.*, 2025), as well as with the idea that promoting mental health is central to sustaining productivity and well-being (Valentim *et al.*, 2025). Moreover, the results suggest that in scenarios of technological change, happiness functions as an intangible resource that can facilitate organisational adaptation and reduce resistance to change, particularly in SMEs and sectors exposed to accelerated innovation. In this sense, AI operates as a structuring dimension of the contemporary organisational environment, indirectly influencing the psychosocial conditions under which happiness management strategies are designed and implemented.

Taken together, the evidence reviewed suggests that happiness management in the Ibero–American context can be conceptualised not merely as a set of isolated well-being initiatives, but a strategic organisational resource embedded within digitally transforming environments. In this context, characterised by accelerated technological change, hybrid work structures and data-driven governance, happiness management appears to function as a mediating and adaptive mechanism that supports organisational resilience, innovation capacity and talent retention. From a broader theoretical perspective, this positioning aligns

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with resource-based views of the firm, which recognise intangible assets as sources of sustained competitive advantage. Simultaneously, it resonates with human-centred management approaches that emphasise the centrality of psychological safety, organisational justice and meaningful work in shaping sustainable performance.

## 6. Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to systematically analyse the state of knowledge on happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America during the period 2021–2025, within a context marked by transformations derived from the post-pandemic stage, accelerated digitalisation and the growing incorporation of AI-based technologies. Based on the review conducted, the results allow for the extraction of relevant conclusions that contribute both to the academic understanding of the phenomenon and to its future projection within the field of organisational management.

Firstly, the findings confirm that happiness management and workplace well-being have moved beyond being peripheral concepts to progressively consolidate as strategic axes of organisational analysis in Ibero–America. Although scientific production still displays an uneven distribution across countries, the reviewed evidence shows a clear evolution towards more robust explanatory models, in which happiness at work is systematically linked to organisational variables such as organisational justice, innovation, mental health, turnover intention and performance. This progress reflects a transition from descriptive approaches towards analytical perspectives with greater explanatory capacity and practical usefulness.

Secondly, the study shows that recent Ibero–American literature has prioritised the use of quantitative methodologies and multivariate models, which have helped to strengthen the empirical validity of the field. However, this methodological consolidation coexists with persistent limitations associated with the predominance of cross-sectional designs and non-probabilistic sampling. Consequently, one of the central contributions of this work lies in systematising these methodological trends, providing a reference framework that makes it possible to identify both the advances achieved and the opportunities for improvement required for the future development of the area.

Moreover, the results reveal that the post-pandemic context has acted as a conceptual accelerator in the study of workplace well-being and happiness at work. The reviewed evidence suggests that the intensification of digital technology use and the reconfiguration of work environments have increased the relevance of variables related to mental health, emotional management and adaptation to change. In this sense, happiness management emerges not only as an approach oriented towards subjective well-being but also as an organisational resource that can help to mitigate the adverse effects of cognitive overload, work-related stress and uncertainty associated with technological transformation.

From an integrative perspective, this study provides a structured and up-to-date overview of the field in Ibero–America by identifying recurring thematic cores, dominant methodological patterns and unresolved research gaps. Unlike previous reviews with a more global scope or focused on specific contexts, the added value of this research lies in its regional approach, which makes it possible to highlight the sociocultural, organisational and economic particularities that influence how happiness at work is conceptualised and managed in Ibero–American countries.

Finally, the conclusions of this study lay the foundations for advancing towards a more coherent, comparative and context-sensitive research agenda, in which happiness management and workplace well-being are addressed as dynamic, interrelated and strategic phenomena. This justifies the need, in the following sections, to examine the theoretical, practical and social implications derived from the findings, as well as to acknowledge the study's limitations and

the future research gaps that must be addressed to strengthen the scientific maturity of the field in Ibero–America.

## **7. Implications: theoretical, practical and social**

The findings of this systematic review generate a set of relevant implications that go beyond a mere description of the state of the art and contribute to strengthening the future development of happiness management and workplace well-being in Ibero–America. The main theoretical, practical (including managerial) and social implications are presented below, articulated coherently with the results and the preceding discussion.

### *7.1 Theoretical implications*

Drawing on the empirical patterns identified in the results, particularly the predominance of quantitative explanatory models, the concentration of research in specific national contexts and emerging integration of variables such as organisational justice and emotional salary, this study offers several theoretical implications for the advancement of happiness management research in Ibero–America. The reviewed evidence supports the view that happiness at work should not be interpreted solely as an individual affective state, but rather as a relational and systemic construct influenced by specific organisational, cultural and technological conditions. In this regard, the results support integrative approaches that link positive psychology with contemporary organisational theories, such as social exchange theory, organisational justice and job demands–resources models.

Furthermore, the review highlights the need to move towards multicausal and contingent theoretical models capable of explaining how happiness management interacts with variables such as innovation, mental health and turnover intention across different organisational contexts. This theoretical orientation makes it possible to overcome reductionist perspectives and fosters the construction of analytical frameworks that are more sensitive to post-pandemic transformations of work and the increasing incorporation of AI-based technologies. Consequently, the study opens up the possibility of developing middle-range theories that integrate emotional, structural and technological dimensions in the analysis of workplace well-being.

### *7.2 Practical and managerial implications*

Based on the reviewed evidence demonstrating consistent associations between workplace well-being, organisational justice, innovation and turnover intention, several practical and managerial implications can be derived for organisations operating in digitally transforming environments. The results suggest that happiness management can become a strategic management tool, particularly in organisations operating in environments characterised by high uncertainty, accelerated digitalisation and competitive pressure. Beyond isolated well-being initiatives, the evidence indicates that happiness management needs to be integrated transversally into human resource policies, leadership practices and organisational design.

From a managerial perspective, organisations can translate these findings into concrete actions, such as the design of emotional salary systems aligned with perceptions of justice, the promotion of empathetic and transformational leadership and the implementation of practices that foster autonomy, creativity and innovation. Likewise, in contexts involving the adoption of digital technologies and AI, happiness management can function as a mechanism to mitigate stress and cognitive overload, facilitating processes of adaptation to change and reducing organisational resistance.

In the case of SMEs, which are particularly relevant within the Ibero–American productive fabric, these implications acquire additional strategic value. The reviewed literature suggests

that, even with limited resources, SMEs can obtain significant benefits by incorporating well-being and happiness practices, improving not only internal performance but also the quality of relationships with customers and other stakeholders. In this way, happiness management is positioned as a lever for sustainable competitiveness rather than as an additional cost for the organisation.

### 7.3 Social implications

Considering the findings that link workplace well-being to mental health, organisational sustainability and broader socio-economic conditions within Ibero-American contexts, important social implications emerge from this reviewed. The results of this study reinforce the idea that workplace well-being and happiness at work have impacts that extend beyond the organisational sphere. The evidence suggests that healthy work environments contribute to improving workers' quality of life, strengthening their mental health and generating positive effects within their family and community contexts. In Ibero-American societies characterised by high levels of labour informality, inequality and precariousness, these implications acquire particular relevance.

From this perspective, happiness management can be understood as an instrument of organisational social responsibility, aligned with broader objectives of sustainability and human development. Promoting workplace well-being not only responds to business interests, but can also help to reduce social tensions, enhance social cohesion and foster more dignified and humanised models of work within a scenario of accelerated technological transformation.

Taken together, the theoretical, practical and social implications derived from this study underscore the need to conceive happiness management as an integral, strategic and context-sensitive approach. This vision makes it possible to move towards management models that harmonise efficiency, well-being and sustainability, thereby laying the foundations for a critical analysis of the study's limitations and future research gaps, which are addressed in the following section.

## 8. Limitations and future lines of research

Despite the contributions, the present study presents several methodological and conceptual limitations that warrant explicit consideration to delimit the interpretative scope of the findings.

Firstly, a limitation inherent to the adopted design lies in the bibliometric and systematic nature of the review. While this approach makes it possible to offer a structured, comparative and replicable overview of the state of knowledge, it also entails reliance on the quality, availability and focus of previously published studies. In this regard, the review was restricted to articles indexed in Web of Science, which may have excluded relevant research published in other databases, grey literature or applied studies conducted by organisations and consultancies that are not always disseminated through academic journals.

Secondly, although a geographical balance criterion was applied to avoid the over-representation of certain countries, the final sample still reflects a concentration of scientific output in a limited number of national contexts. This situation constrains the generalisability of the findings to the entire Ibero-American region and highlights the need to expand research to countries and productive sectors that remain underexplored, particularly in emerging economies and work environments characterised by informality, precariousness or high turnover.

From a methodological perspective, the review shows that recent literature continues to be dominated by cross-sectional designs and quantitative approaches, which limits the ability

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to capture temporal dynamics, adaptation processes and cumulative effects of happiness management and workplace well-being. Consequently, a priority line for future research lies in the development of longitudinal studies and quasi-experimental designs that allow for the analysis of how happiness and well-being at work evolve over time, particularly in scenarios of continuous technological transformation.

Beyond these limitations, the main prospective value of the study lies in the identification of emerging and innovative research lines that have not yet been systematically explored in the Ibero–American literature. Firstly, the study proposes advancing towards the analysis of the “happy salary”, understood not merely as an extension of emotional salary, but as a multidimensional construct integrating fair economic compensation, temporal flexibility, personalised benefits and perceptions of equity. Empirically examining how happy salary interacts with organisational justice, productivity and talent retention represents a high-impact theoretical and practical opportunity.

Secondly, there is a strong emerging need to conceptualise and operationalise digital happiness in work environments. This construct would make it possible to analyse how everyday interaction with digital technologies, remote working platforms and AI influences workers’ emotions, motivation and well-being. Future research could explore digital happiness as a mediating or moderating variable between AI adoption, cognitive load, technostress and job performance, opening up a largely unexplored field within organisational literature.

In addition, a significant gap is identified in the development and validation of measurement instruments adapted to the Ibero–American context. Although internationally consolidated scales exist, there is a need to design and validate hybrid instruments that integrate hedonic, eudaimonic and digital dimensions of workplace well-being, incorporating variables such as digital happiness, happy salary, technological trust and enjoyment in human–AI interaction. Such instruments would enable more refined, culturally sensitive measurements aligned with the challenges of contemporary work.

A particularly relevant avenue for future research concerns the need for empirical studies that directly examine the interaction between AI systems and workplace happiness. While AI has been framed in this study as a contextual driver within digitally transforming organisational environments, there remains a significant gap in empirical research explicitly analysing human–AI interaction, algorithmic management systems, technostress, digital autonomy and their potential effects on well-being. Addressing this gap would allow for a more precise understanding of how technological transformation reshapes the psychosocial foundations of happiness at work.

Finally, a disruptive line of research is proposed that approaches happiness management from an ecosystem perspective, considering not only the organisation and the individual but also their impact on customers, communities and territories. Within this approach, 360-degree workplace happiness could be linked to concepts such as extended organisational happiness, collective well-being and social sustainability, integrating economic, social and emotional metrics within a single analytical framework.

In sum, although the present study presents limitations inherent to its design and scope, these same limitations open up clear opportunities for the development of a more ambitious, innovative and context-sensitive research agenda. Exploring emerging constructs such as happy salary and digital happiness, developing new measurement instruments and adopting longitudinal and ecosystem-based approaches will not only strengthen the scientific maturity of happiness management but also position Ibero–American research as an international benchmark in the study of workplace well-being and happiness.

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### Further reading

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**Author affiliations**

Priscila Inés Villanueva González, School of Business Administration, Technological Institute of Costa Rica, Cartago, Costa Rica

Javier Gaona Loredo, FEPZM, Universidad Autonoma de San Luis Potosi, San Luis Potosi, Mexico

Magda Lizet Ochoa Hernández, Facultad de Comercio y Administración, Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas, Tampico, Mexico, and

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Chaima ElHichou-Ahmed, Department of General Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universidad de Cádiz, Algeciras, Spain

**Corresponding author**

Chaima ElHichou-Ahmed can be contacted at: [chaima.elhichou@uca.es](mailto:chaima.elhichou@uca.es)