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Positive Mental Health and Happiness at Work in a Sample of Portuguese Workers: A Web-Based Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract: Positive mental health in individuals' lives and happiness at work have been growing concerns for organizations. This web-based cross-sectional study aimed to understand these two factors and their interrelationship in a population of workers. Data were collected with an e-questionnaire from 1768 individuals currently employed in various public and private organizations. The variables studied included: social and occupational data, happiness at work, and positive mental health. Study participants showed good levels of positive mental health and happiness at work. Positive mental health was positively associated with both organizational 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-actualization) ($R^2 = 0.249$). Organizations wishing to make employees happier and more productive should promote mental health in the workplace. Interventions that focus on the adoption of positive coping techniques in the workplace, such as training focused on increasing intrapreneurial self-capital, should also be explored.

Keywords: workplace happiness; productivity; positive mental health; job; health promotion

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1. Introduction

Work patterns have been evolving speedily in the modern world because of changing work settings (such as the growing globalization of business, and new technology and organizational practices). In this framework, a happier work atmosphere encourages employees to perform their jobs well and improves the organization's success (Gu et al., 2022). Happy people are generally more productive, while those who are unhappy tend to have

greater difficulty concentrating on their tasks, which can negatively affect their performance (Wesarat et al., 2015; Sousa & Carvalho, 2023; Misra & Srivastava, 2023). Moreover, happy individuals tend to be more engaged, efficient, and satisfied with their work, as well as with their relationships with colleagues. In contrast, unhappy and disconnected employees perceive the work environment more negatively and contribute less, leading to a detrimental impact on the organization (Mckee, 2019).

Happiness is closely linked to subjective well-being and encompasses life satisfaction, positive affect, and low levels of negative affect (Carr, 2004; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2004; Medvedev & Landhuis, 2018; Seligman, 2011). Research suggests that emotions and cognition are interrelated, influencing work performance and overall job satisfaction (Mckee, 2019; Hökkä et al., 2020). Initially explored in psychology and later in economics, workplace happiness is associated with job satisfaction and is recognized as a key factor in improving organizational productivity (Wesarat et al., 2015; Krause-Pilatus, 2014).

In this context, organizational happiness can be defined as the subjective perception of well-being and satisfaction in the work environment, resulting from the interaction between individual and contextual factors of the organization (Dutschke & Dias, 2023; Dutschke et al., 2024; Fisher, 2010). However, this concept is not homogeneous and can be analyzed from two complementary perspectives: eudaimonic and hedonic. Eudaimonic well-being is associated with personal development, self-realization, and a sense of purpose at work, while hedonic well-being is related to pleasure and immediate satisfaction in the professional environment (Seligman, 2011; Ryff & Boylan, 2016).

These two dimensions influence organizational results differently, impacting productivity, employee engagement, and job satisfaction (Salas-Vallina et al., 2020; Oswald et al., 2015). Thus, understanding the interaction between the eudaimonic and hedonic components of happiness at work allows us to design more effective strategies to promote an organizational culture that balances employee well-being and organizational performance.

The role one performs within the organization is an important element, because organizational happiness is associated with happiness in the different job functions (Fisher, 2010; Dutschke, 2013). According to Dutschke (2013), the following factors affect both levels of happiness: internal environment, recognition and trust, personal development, salary, liking one's work, sustainability and innovation, identifying with the work function, leaders and organization, objectives, and balance between the profession and family, among others. The author emphasizes the importance of assessing happier professionals, who tend to be more productive, while ensuring that multiple organizational and functional factors influence their happiness. At the organizational level, workplace culture, leadership, recognition, trust, and innovation play a crucial role in fostering a positive environment. At the functional level, factors such as personal development, fair compensation, job satisfaction, alignment with work functions, clear objectives, and work–life balance contribute to individual well-being and engagement. Together, these elements shape a sustainable and fulfilling professional experience, benefiting both employees and the organization (Oswald et al., 2015; Dutschke, 2013).

In addition, a healthy organization must include essential aspects such as health and safety in the workplace; a harmonious psychological environment, including a management system and organizational culture; and human resources and means to improve the health of employees and their families (WHO, 2010; Sorensen et al., 2018). Mental health is an integral component of the World Health Organization's definition of health as a complete state of physical, mental, and social well-being (WHO, 2021). This concept is related to the concepts of happiness and productivity (Ryff & Boylan, 2016; Salas-Vallina et al., 2020). In an experimental study, a causal link between happiness and employee performance was identified, wherein happier people had higher levels of productivity

(Oswald et al., 2015). Valuing people and promoting their mental health is essential to the success and productivity of organizations.

Positive mental health comprises "emotional and psychological components of well-being and suggests positive functioning". While happiness frequently refers to "subjective or hedonic well-being, the psychological component of positive mental health refers to eudaimonic ideas such as self-acceptance or life purpose" (Bieda et al., 2019, p. 129). The absence of positive elements makes people more vulnerable to psychological problems. Thus, strategies to promote mental health should try to increase people's resources and mental health and reduce mental suffering.

The detrimental impacts of poor mental health extend beyond the direct expenses of treatment and encompass much bigger indirect costs associated with lost productivity, such as absenteeism and presenteeism (i.e., poor performance while still working) (Wu et al., 2021; de Oliveira et al., 2023; Gilbreath & Karimi, 2012). Promoting mental health in the workplace reduces productivity losses (Ammendolia et al., 2016). The work environment should be salutogenic and promote a healthy exchange of values, rights, and duties among the organization's actors, where everyone is valued, and their interests taken into account.

Recent research has shown a link between employee mental health and a variety of organizational outcomes, such as daily work behavior, job satisfaction, employee emotional expression, job performance, and company success (Yu et al., 2021; Cao et al., 2022; Ford et al., 2011; Montano et al., 2017). Employees with good mental health may "exhibit a positive working state and devote themselves to work tasks with greater enthusiasm, whereas poor mental health may result in inactivity at work and deterioration of interpersonal relationships, which, in turn, negatively affects employee work performance" (Lu et al., 2022, p. 1).

To date, evidence has mostly focused on the negative aspects of occupations, such as job stress and burnout. This emphasis on the negative elements of employees' mental health offers little direction in how to promote and improve total well-being and happiness. Furthermore, no study in Portugal has examined the relationship between happiness at work and positive mental health.

By adopting a positive psychological approach, the aims of this study were: (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 organizational happiness, functional happiness, positive mental health, and productivity perception between groups; (d) to determine the correlations between positive mental health, organizational happiness, functional happiness, years in organization and function, and productivity perception; and (e) to identify predictive factors associated with overall happiness.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Design

A web-based cross-sectional design was conducted among the Portuguese adult active population. This study was reported following the Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) checklist (von Elm et al., 2008).

2.2. Setting and Sample

According to PORDATA (2020), there were about 5.1 million working people in Portugal. An online sample size calculator (SurveyMonkey©) was used to determine the sample size required for this study. Hence, the minimum required sample size of $n = 664$ was calculated for proportions, considering the most conservative scenario (a proportion of 50%), a confidence level of 95%, and a margin of error of 5%.

The study's inclusion criteria were the following: (1) individuals aged ≥18 years; (2) working in public or private organizations; (3) ability to read and write in Portuguese; (4) access to the Internet/email; and (5) provide informed permission and thoroughly answer all the questions used to identify the study variables.

2.3. Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed online using a Google form, from May to July 2020, when Portugal was in lockdown due to COVID-19. Individuals were recruited by receiving the questionnaire's web link through the research team's network of contacts, through community groups in social networks (Facebook and Instagram), and through other participants with a non-probabilistic snowball sampling procedure.

2.4. Instruments

The data collection tool consisted of a questionnaire characterizing social and occupational aspects, such as educational level, time in the organization, time in function, intention to leave the company, and productivity perception.

The Positive Mental Health Questionnaire (PMHQ), initially developed by Lluch (2003), was translated and validated for the Portuguese population by Sequeira and Carvalho (2009). This 39-question questionnaire contains a series of statements about each person's way of thinking, feeling, and acting. Questions are grouped into six factors/dimensions (personal satisfaction, prosocial attitude, self-control, autonomy, problem-solving skills and self-actualization, and interpersonal relationship skills). Participants have four possible answers presented on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4: "always or almost always"; "most of the time"; "sometimes"; and "rarely or never". The global score of PMHQ varies from 39 points (low positive mental health) to 156 points (high positive mental health). Cronbach's alpha for the PMHQ in this sample was 0.92.

The Happiness at Work Scale developed by Dutschke et al. (2024, 2015) includes a first part with 38 questions using a five-point Likert scale (1: "I totally disagree " to 5: "I totally agree"), which measures the level of happiness of the individual within the organization (Organizational Happiness). The second part of the questionnaire includes 26 questions with the same Likert scale and measures the respondents' own perspective on what makes them happy in the job (Happiness in Function). These items reflect the following components: workplace relationships, acknowledgment and respect, continuous learning, personal development, sustainability and job/family balance, and leadership (Dutschke et al., 2024, 2015).

All the scale items are positive; there are no negative items. A high score indicates that the individual had higher levels of happiness. In this study, Cronbach's alpha value for this scale was 0.92, indicating excellent internal consistency (Polit & Beck, 2016).

2.5. Ethical Considerations

Electronic consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study. Before answering the main questionnaire, all participants supplied informed permission for participation, data collection, and analysis by clicking the "Yes, I agree and give my informed consent" box on the digital form. Responses to the electronic questionnaire were anonymous; no personal data were requested to identify the participant. The design did not contain any ethical aspects requiring prior authorization from the Local Ethics Committee. The current research followed the ethical guidelines of the Helsinki Declaration, ensuring that all participants received the same information while completing the questionnaires. The research was in accordance with European Data Protection Law.

2.6. Data Analysis

The number of cases in each category and corresponding percentages were compiled for the qualitative variables. The minimum, maximum, and mean values, and the standard deviation (SD) were compiled for the quantitative variables. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess the reliability of the scales in this sample. Pearson linear correlation coefficients (r) were used to measure correlations between variables. Furthermore, Student's t-test was employed for mean comparisons between two groups, and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) with Bonferroni correction was utilized for comparisons among more than two groups. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Levene tests were used to examine the assumptions of normality and variance uniformity required for mean comparisons. Furthermore, a logistic regression analysis was performed to determine the associations between the predictor variables (i.e., socio-occupational variables and positive mental health questionnaire) and the outcome variable (happiness at work). *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (IBM SPSS Statistics software), version 28.0, was used for data analysis. All tests considered a level of significance of 5% ($p < 0.05$).

3. Results

3.1. Sample Description

Of the 1982 survey participants, only 1768 (89.2%) provided a complete response to the variables used in the analysis: 1060 employees were female (59.95%) and 708 were male (40.05%). Professionals belonged to several sectors according to the following frequencies and percentages: commerce (n = 255, 14.4%); tourism, catering, and leisure (n = 230, 13%); consulting and teaching (n = 221, 12.5%); nursing (n = 171, 9.7%); communication and information (n = 166, 9.4%); health and social support (n = 154, 8.7%); financial and insurance (n = 136, 7.7%); industry (n = 129, 7.3%); state employees (n = 127, 7.2%); construction and real estate (n = 101, 5.7%); creative industry and transport (n = 78, 4.4%).

The sample was characterized according to the relevant socio and occupational variables, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Socio-occupational characteristics of the sample (n = 1768).

Education	***n***	**%**
Primary school	15	0.8
High school	321	18.2
Professional Education	156	8.8
Higher education	1237	70.0
Missing data	39	2.2
Time in the organization (years)		
Less than 1 year	333	18.83
1–2 years	358	20.25
3–5 years	316	17.87
6–10 years	181	10.24
More than 10 years	579	32.75
Missing data	1	0.06
Time in function (years)		
Less than 1 year	297	16.8
1–2 years	331	18.72
3–5 years	333	18.83
6–10 years	226	12.78
More than 10 years	580	32.81
Missing data	1	0.06

Table 1. *Cont.*

Education	*n*	%
Intention to leave the company		
I don't like anything	824	46.60
I would not like	282	15.95
Indifferent	298	16.86
Would	163	9.22
I would very much like	199	11.26
Missing data	2	0.11
Productivity perception		
Very bad	19	1.07
Bad	36	2.04
Average	219	12.39
Good	839	47.45
Very Good	645	36.48
Missing data	10	0.57

Regarding qualifications, most of the sample (70%) had higher education. The majority of the participants had more than 10 years of experience in their organization and 46.6% of the professionals stated that they had no intention of leaving their company. Most participants had positive productivity perceptions, either good (47.45%) or very good (36.48%).

3.2. Description of Results on Positive Mental Health and Happiness at Work

Below we describe the results for the two instruments: Positive Mental Health Questionnaire and Happiness at Work Scale. Table 2 summarizes the results for the former's six dimensions.

Table 2. Results of Positive Mental Health Questionnaire (*n* = 1768).

PMHQ	Item No.	Min./Max	M	SD	Average Score (M/Total Items)
F1: Personal satisfaction	8	11–32	27.82	3.67	3.45
F2: Prosocial attitude	5	8–20	17.51	2.36	3.50
F3: Self-control	5	6–20	15.70	2.85	3.14
F4: Autonomy	5	5–20	16.39	2.58	3.28
F5: Problem-solving and Self-actualization	9	9–36	29.89	4.82	3.32
F6: Interpersonal relationship skills	7	11–28	21.58	2.77	3.08
PMHQ total	39	82–156	128.90	14.61	3.31

Abbreviations: M—mean; SD—standard deviation; PMHQ—Positive Mental Health Questionnaire.

Overall, the professionals in our sample indicated high levels of positive mental health, with a global mean of 128.90. The results show higher means of personal satisfaction and pro-social attitude and lower means concerning self-control and interpersonal skills (see Table 2). Participants showed good levels of organizational happiness (M = 3.76; SD = 0.86), happiness in function (M = 3.89; SD = 0.79), and total happiness at work (M = 3.83; SD = 0.81).

3.3. Comparisons Between PMHQ, Organizational Happiness, Happiness in Function and Participants' Socio and Occupational Variables

An ANOVA was used to compare PMHQ, Organizational Happiness, and Happiness in Function, taking into account educational qualifications, time in the organization, time in the function, intention to leave the company, and productivity perception. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of scale results according to participants' socio and occupational variables (n = 1768).

Variables	PMHQ M (SD)	Organizational Happiness M (SD)	Happiness in Function M (SD)
Education			
Primary school	2.83 (0.44)	3.51 (0.61)	3.50 (0.62)
High school	3.31 (0.40)	3.79 (0.86)	3.88 (0.83)
Professional education	3.23 (0.43)	3.85 (0.87)	3.95 (0.85)
Higher education	3.32 (0.35)	3.75 (0.86)	3.88 (0.78)
ANOVA *	F = 10.081; p < 0.001	F = 1.446; p = 0.227	F = 1.409; p = 0.238
Time in the organization (years)			
Less than 1 year	3.30 (0.37)	3.93 (0.87)	4.00 (0.82)
1–2 years	3.27 (0.38)	3.83 (0.80)	3.90 (0.76)
3–5 years	3.32 (0.40)	3.80 (0.84)	3.97 (0.78)
6–10 years	3.32 (0.35)	3.80 (0.84)	3.97 (0.77)
More than 10 years	3.32 (0.36)	3.59 (0.88)	3.77 (0.81)
ANOVA *	F = 1.088; p = 0.361	F = 9.797; p < 0.001	F = 5.207; p < 0.001
Time in function (years)			
Less than 1 year	3.34 (0.37)	4.00 (0.86)	4.06 (0.83)
1–2 years	3.30 (0.37)	3.87 (0.80)	3.92 (0.76)
3–5 years	3.29 (0.41)	3.78 (0.83)	3.89 (0.77)
6–10 years	3.32 (0.34)	3.72 (0.79)	3.90 (0.73)
More than 10 years	3.30 (0.37)	3.59 (0.90)	3.76 (0.82)
ANOVA *	F = 0.797; p = 0.527	F = 13.309; p < 0.001	F = 6.953; p < 0.001
Intention to leave the company			
I don't like anything	3.39 (0.35)	4.21 (0.72)	4.30 (0.68)
I would not like	3.23 (0.39)	3.72 (0.64)	3.81 (0.59)
Indifferent	3.25 (0.36)	3.44 (0.63)	3.58 (0.60)
would	3.21 (0.36)	3.25 (0.74)	3.39 (0.67)
I would very much like	3.24 (0.41)	2.89 (0.91)	3.16 (0.87)
ANOVA *	F = 20.19; p < 0.001	F = 190.99; p < 0.001	F = 166.44; p < 0.001
Productivity			
Very bad	3.23 (0.35)	2.83 (1.10)	2.87 (1.10)
Bad	3.07 (0.50)	3.37 (0.93)	3.48 (0.91)
Average	3.15 (0.41)	3.50 (0.89)	3.61 (0.83)
Good	3.32 (0.33)	3.71 (0.82)	3.83 (0.75)
Very Good	3.36 (0.39)	3.97 (0.84)	4.10 (0.77)
ANOVA *	F = 16.82; p < 0.001	F = 23.79; p < 0.001	F = 28.90; p < 0.001

* ANOVA test with Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons (alpha = 0.05).

There were significant statistical differences in PMHQ according to educational qualifications, as the participants with primary education had lower average values compared to other groups. Organizational happiness and function also varied significantly according to time in organization and function. Those working for less than a year reported the highest mean, while those working longer than ten years reported the lowest values.

Significant statistical differences were also found (in all scales) according to intention to leave the company. Employees who expressed that they did not want to leave the organization had the highest mean value of positive mental health, organizational happiness, and happiness in function.

Productivity perception varied statistically in all scales. Employees who perceived themselves as more productive presented higher mean values of positive mental health, organizational happiness, and happiness in function.

3.4. Correlations Between Happiness Scale and Other Variables

We used Pearson correlations to better understand the relationships between PMHQ factors and total, organizational and function happiness scales, years in organization and function, as well as productivity perception. Table 4 depicts the correlation matrix.

Table 4. Pearson correlations between PMHQ factors and total, organizational and functional happiness scales, years in organization and function, and productivity perception.

Variables	OH	HF	TH	YO	YF	P
F1: Personal satisfaction	0.37 *	0.41 *	0.40 *	0.01	−0.03	0.18 *
F2: Prosocial attitude	0.21 *	0.26 *	0.25 *	0.01	−0.03	0.07 *
F3: Self-control	0.26*	0.28 *	0.28 *	0.02	−0.01	0.16 *
F4: Autonomy	0.14 *	0.19 *	0.17 *	0.09 *	0.08 *	0.11 *
F5: Problem-solving and self-actualization	0.27 *	0.31 *	0.30 *	0.02	−0.02	0.14 *
F6: Interpersonal relationship skills	0.17 *	0.19 *	0.19 *	−0.01	−0.04	0.08 *
PMHQ Total	0.32 *	0.37 *	0.36 *	0.03	−0.01	0.17 *
Organizational Happiness (OH)	-	0.92 *	0.98 *	−0.15 *	−0.17 *	0.26 *
Happiness Function (HF)	-	-	0.98 *	−0.10 *	−0.12 *	0.25 *
Total Happiness (TH)	-	-	-	−0.12 *	−0.15 *	0.24 *
Years in Organization (YO)	-	-	-	-	0.68 *	0.12 *
Years in Function (YF)	-	-	-	-	-	0.11 *

Notes: * $p < 0.01$. Abbreviations: PMHQ—Positive Mental Health Questionnaire; OH—Organizational Happiness; HF—happiness in function; TH—total happiness; YO—years in organization; YF—years in function; P—productivity perception.

There were several statistically significant positive correlations among the several variables. These results show that better positive mental health (in all dimensions) was associated with greater happiness, at both the organizational and functional levels. Seniority, both in function and organization, was also positively correlated with the perception of higher productivity and more autonomy. Nevertheless, despite the weak correlation, seniority was negatively associated with the happiness indicators (organizational, functional and total).

3.5. Predictors of Happiness in Work

We performed stepwise multiple linear regression analysis to identify the predictors of overall happiness. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of hierarchical regression analysis concerning overall happiness score.

Block	Variables	B	SE	β	t	Sig.	R^2 Change	Sig. F Change
I	(Constant)	5.524	0.293	-	18.831	0.000	0.115	<0.001
	Age	0.031	0.005	0.209	6.805	0.000		
	Productivity perception	0.552	0.047	0.275	11.776	0.000		
	Education	−0.034	0.046	−0.017	−0.738	0.461		
	Time in the organization	−0.155	0.036	−0.147	−4.300	0.000		
	Time in function	−0.224	0.035	−0.207	−6.326	0.000		
II	(Constant)	2.003	0.401	-	4.998	0.000	0.134	<0.001
	Age	0.022	0.004	0.152	5.304	0.000		
	Productivity perception	0.393	0.044	0.195	8.874	0.000		
	Education	−0.099	0.043	−0.050	−2.318	0.021		
	Time in the organization	−0.151	0.033	−0.143	−4.541	0.000		
	Time in function	−0.168	0.033	−0.155	−5.110	0.000		
	Personal satisfaction	0.149	0.013	0.335	11.451	0.000		
	Prosocial attitude	0.021	0.022	0.031	0.971	0.332		

Table 5. *Cont.*

Block	Variables	B	SE	β	t	Sig.	R^2 Change	Sig. F Change
II	Self-control	0.013	0.017	0.022	0.719	0.472		
	Autonomy	−0.038	0.016	−0.061	−2.375	0.018		
	Problem-solving and self-actualization	0.036	0.012	0.108	3.086	0.002		
	Interpersonal relationship skills	−0.029	0.016	−0.051	−1.791	0.073		

Abbreviations: B—unstandardized coefficient; SE—std. error; β—standardized coefficients.

The first step of the hierarchical multiple regression was significant $F(5,167) = 43.379$, $p < 0.001$, and accounted for 11.5% of the variance. Among the core social and occupational domains, age, productivity perception, time in the organization, and time in the function emerged as significant predictors of happiness. In the next step, three of the PMHQ factors (personal satisfaction, autonomy, and problem solving and self-actualization) significantly contributed an additional 13.4% of the variance. The remaining variables had no significant effect on happiness. The final model was significant, $F(11,166) = 50.175$, $p < 0.001$, accounting for 24.9% of the variance in overall happiness scores.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that positive mental health is significantly associated with greater perceived organizational and functional happiness. These results align with previous research indicating that well-being in the workplace contributes to employee engagement and job performance (Wesarat et al., 2015; Mckee, 2019; Krause-Pilatus, 2014; Sender et al., 2021). However, beyond direct associations, it is crucial to consider the role of workplace dynamics, such as leadership style, organizational support, and team cohesion, in shaping both happiness and productivity (Walsh et al., 2018). In our study, professionals indicated high positive mental health, in its various dimensions: personal satisfaction, pro-social attitude, self-control, autonomy, problem-solving and self-actualization, and interpersonal relationship skills.

People with better mental health have greater cognitive capacities, either concentrating on a task or solving problems. Also, their self-control and social regulation skills provide them with better interpersonal skills, improve their interpersonal relationships, and create healthy and happy environments in organizations. Our results are therefore important indicators for the strategic management of human resources in organizations, where to promote mental health is to promote organizational happiness and employee function. In line with these associations, we also found that employees who did not want to leave the organization exhibited the highest mean average of positive mental health, organizational happiness, and happiness in function. These results are congruent with previous studies (Wang & Yang, 2016; C. C. Yang et al., 2018).

Seniority, both in function and organization, was also positively correlated with perceived higher productivity and more autonomy. Our results also indicate that permanence in the same organization and function was related to lower values of organizational happiness and happiness in function. Therefore, despite the weak correlation, seniority was negatively associated with happiness indicators (organizational, function, and total). This result can be explained by the organizational demands and the emotional exhaustion felt by professionals because they have prolonged experience of the organization's constraints and cannot change them. The strategic management of human resources plays a particularly important role in preventing situations of emotional exhaustion and encouraging positive mental health, in order to reduce productivity losses (Ammendolia et al., 2016; Bubonya et al., 2017).

Higher values in organizational happiness and happiness in function are related to higher levels of positive mental health and its factors. Other studies indicate that, in general, those who are happy at work have higher rates of subjective well-being, higher levels of positive than negative affect, and greater satisfaction (Wesarat et al., 2015; Carr, 2004; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2004). An earlier study identified the protective effect of work satisfaction on health, happiness, subjective well-being, and self-esteem (Satuf et al., 2018). The present study allowed a better understanding of what is needed to be happy in one's work organization and job function, and of how this concept of organizational happiness and function (Dutschke, 2013) is related to higher levels of positive mental health and its dimensions in the professional working context.

How we feel is related to what we think and how we think; that is, thought influences emotion and, in turn, emotion influences thought (Mckee, 2019). Therefore, positive mental health is a dynamic concept that includes thoughts and feelings (Carvalho et al., 2022). Understanding what factors affect how we think and feel at work and in our work role will help identify what is necessary to be happy.

We identified statistically significant predictors of happiness at work. Based on multivariate analysis, happiness increased with age, productivity perception, personal satisfaction, problem-solving, and self-actualization. Previous studies (Carver, 2014) state that happy employees are productive employees, and also indicate that happiness increases with age (Morgan & O'Connor, 2017). Similar results were found by Lu et al. (2022) suggesting that employee mental health positively impacts workplace happiness and job performance. Conversely, happiness decreases with education level, seniority in organization and in function, and autonomy. Higher-educated and more experienced workers often earn more money, but they are also more likely to be disappointed when their income expectations and professional valorization are not realized, and this disappointment can have a detrimental effect on happiness (D. Yang et al., 2022). However, despite identifying key predictors of happiness at work, a significant portion of the variance in organizational happiness remains unexplained. This finding aligns with previous research, which suggests that subjective and contextual factors play a complex role in shaping employees' perceptions of workplace happiness (Dutschke et al., 2024; Fisher, 2010). Given this, it is crucial to explore additional determinants, such as organizational culture and leadership styles, as these elements have a profound impact on employees' experiences (Ford et al., 2011; Montano et al., 2017). Organizational culture can shape how employees perceive their work environment, either fostering or hindering job satisfaction and engagement (Schein, 2017). Similarly, leadership styles that emphasize emotional support and employee recognition can significantly enhance workplace happiness and overall well-being (Salas-Vallina et al., 2020). Future research should consider these factors to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms influencing happiness at work. The current study has significant implications for practice and policy. The promotion of well-being and mental health is essential to maintain or improve health in organizations, creating a workplace where its members have a good quality of life and are physically, mentally, socially, and intellectually healthy, and consequently more productive. However, while our findings contribute to a deeper understanding of workplace happiness and mental health, it is crucial to acknowledge that these constructs do not exist in isolation but are shaped by broader cultural and societal influences.

Although this study provides valuable insights into workplace happiness and mental health, it is essential to consider the potential influence of cultural factors. Research has shown that cultural values, national work ethics, and societal attitudes toward well-being significantly impact employees' perceptions of happiness and productivity in the workplace (Diener et al., 2018). In collectivist cultures, workplace happiness tends to be closely

linked to social harmony and group cohesion, whereas in individualist cultures, personal achievement and autonomy play a more prominent role in job satisfaction (Triandis, 1995).

Given that our study was conducted within the Portuguese context, future research should explore how cultural dimensions shape the relationship between mental health, workplace happiness, and productivity. Comparative studies between different countries or regions would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of how organizational and societal factors interact to influence employee well-being. This perspective could provide valuable insights for multinational organizations and policymakers aiming to promote workplace happiness across diverse cultural contexts.

Promoting mental health and well-being in the workplace not only enhances employee satisfaction and engagement but also contributes to an optimistic mindset and organizational sustainability (Velez et al., 2024; Maurício & Laranjeira, 2023). Research indicates that workplaces that foster psychological safety and proactive well-being strategies tend to have higher retention rates, increased innovation, greater overall performance (Oswald et al., 2015; Montano et al., 2017), and low levels of psychological distress and presenteeism (Maurício & Laranjeira, 2023; Pereira et al., 2022). Future initiatives should focus on integrating structured interventions, such as intrapreneurial self-capital training and resilience-building programs, to enhance employees' coping mechanisms and long-term job satisfaction.

Despite these contributions, the current study has certain shortcomings. First, the cross-sectional structure precluded causal inferences between independent and dependent variables. A longitudinal study on organizational happiness, including case studies from different industries, would be of major relevance. Second, there was some risk of selection bias since some workers are denied internet access and those with heavier workloads may not have participated in the study. Third, the validity of self-reported measures may have been jeopardized, for example, by socially desired responses. Finally, evaluating how national culture influences organizational happiness and positive mental health would be relevant. Future research may look toward improving workplace happiness and studying the influence of actions on various measures of workplace well-being (Tandler et al., 2020).

5. Conclusions

Organizational happiness is needed, but assessing people's health is also critical to the success of an organization. Our results indicate a positive correlation between organizational happiness and positive mental health. The correlation between positive mental health and being happy in function was higher than with being happy in the organization. As always, professionals feel happier in their job functions than in the organization.

Happier professionals have a higher positive mental health index. They feel more personal satisfaction, have a better prosocial attitude, have more self-control and autonomy, have better problem-solving and self-actualization strategies, and have more interpersonal relationship skills. The happiest professionals feel more stimulated by the changes that usually occur in their daily life, have better relations with their bosses, face the future with optimism, do not consider life boring and monotonous, control their emotions better, feel satisfied with themselves and with their physical aspect, maintain personal balance when in the presence of unfavorable pressures, and seek to find the positive aspects of the "bad" things that happen. Happy individuals also have less need to develop their ability to cope with stress, emotional balance, and tolerance to frustration and anxiety.

Organizational happiness is also related to productivity, as happier professionals have a better relationship with hierarchy, a better ability to deal with stress, frustration, and anxiety, lower absenteeism (for illness and other reasons), less desire to change companies and feel more productive.

Promoting mental health in the workplace produces several benefits, both individual and organizational. These benefits are the reason why an organization and the strategic management of human resources must invest in promoting mental health and organizational happiness.

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