

Investigate the Relationship Between Staff Engagement and Workplace Happiness Leading to the Wholesale Construction Organizational Success in Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative correlational study aimed to investigate the relationship between workplace happiness and employee engagement, which contributes to organizational performance. Employee engagement has been recognized as a critical factor supporting the success of construction businesses, as enthusiastic and committed employees are more likely to demonstrate higher productivity and performance at work. Workplace happiness has been identified as one of the factors that enhances employee engagement. The findings indicate a positive relationship between employee engagement and workplace happiness. This significant finding suggests that construction businesses can accelerate organizational growth by ensuring employee satisfaction and fostering a positive work environment. When these two factors are positively associated, organizations can gain substantial benefits through improved staff well-being, increased productivity, and enhanced operational performance. Furthermore, strategic initiatives can be implemented to strengthen employee satisfaction, resulting in a more productive workforce and sustainable organizational growth. This study confirms that happier employees tend to be more engaged, which ultimately contributes to organizational success, although the relationship between employee engagement and workplace happiness has been widely discussed in previous research. Employee behavior and performance are shaped by organizational culture and the work environment. Effective leadership within the organization is essential because it ensures that employees have appropriate conditions to accomplish their tasks while maintaining job satisfaction. These findings provide valuable insights for managers to develop strategies that enhance employee happiness, strengthen employee engagement, and ultimately improve the likelihood of achieving organizational success.

INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that individuals often experience happiness when they achieve success in their careers or workplaces. According to Anchor (2010), happy people create successful careers rather than successful people creating happy lives. Like most businesses, if not all, organizations aim to achieve success and make meaningful contributions to society (Jobs, 2005). Furthermore, Anchor (2010) asserts that a motivated and positive

workforce provides a significant competitive advantage. The conventional standards used by society to evaluate both individual and organizational success may be inadequate. According to Anchor (2010), traditional perspectives have emphasized job success, rewards, and happiness as sequential outcomes; however, evidence suggests that successful employees are often driven by happiness. To understand the underlying factors influencing employee motivation and productivity, organizations have increasingly focused on assessing levels of employee engagement. Wrzesniewski et al. (2002) emphasize the importance of understanding employee engagement because employment plays a significant role in shaping individuals' quality of life as well as their physical and psychological well-being. Furthermore, Hulin (2002) notes that although most individuals work primarily to earn a living, their experiences of employment vary considerably. Consequently, individuals may perceive their jobs as an expression of personal identity or merely as a routine obligation. Therefore, employee satisfaction levels may serve as predictors of employee engagement, which subsequently influences individual and organizational success.

The concept of measuring happiness levels may appear unconventional in many corporate environments and may resemble advice from personal psychology. However, identifying the factors that influence employee engagement is essential because employee engagement is strongly associated with organizational performance. Previous studies have indicated that one of the primary factors affecting employee engagement is the situational context, including supervisory support. According to Bowen and Ostroff (2004) and Wright et al. (Wright et al., 2001, 2005), high-performance work practices and favorable work environments can enhance employee engagement. The measurement of workplace satisfaction has often been overlooked until recent years. The CEO of Zappos, Hsieh (2010), emphasized leadership efforts in developing a positive workplace culture alongside business performance. Hsieh (2010) suggested that a happy workplace can generate exceptional business outcomes while improving employees' quality of life.

Organizational culture and climate can be characterized from either an objective or phenomenological perspective. From an objective perspective, culture and climate are defined through observable attitudes and behaviors that characterize an organization. However, various approaches exist for studying and analyzing organizational culture and climate. Regardless of employees' individual perceptions, organizational culture and climate represent inherent characteristics of the organization. From a phenomenological perspective, organizational culture and climate are examined through employees' perceptions and cognitive interpretations as they participate in daily tasks and organizational processes. In attempting to understand their organizational environment, employees construct cognitive maps and interpret workplace experiences in meaningful ways. The interaction among these cognitive maps continuously shapes employees' perceptions and experiences (Ekvall, 1987). Employee performance is significantly influenced by cognitive perceptions and social relationships, highlighting the importance of workplace happiness as a potential driver of organizational success.

This quantitative correlational study aimed to investigate the relationship between staff engagement and workplace happiness in contributing to wholesale construction organizational success in Cambodia. The Oxford Happiness Inventory and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Employee Engagement Survey will be used as instruments to collect data for the proposed study. The hypothesized relationship between staff engagement and

workplace happiness may assist current and future organizational leaders in developing strategic planning approaches, leadership development programs, and employee management practices. To achieve the objectives of this study, the following research question will be examined: What is the relationship between staff engagement and workplace happiness in contributing to wholesale construction organizational success in Cambodia? A quantitative correlational research design will be employed because it uses numerical data to systematically examine relationships among identified variables. The variables examined in this study can be quantified and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques.

Employees have the capacity to contribute to organizational success or failure (Halvorsen, 2005). It is widely recognized that organizations seek to achieve their objectives and obtain favorable returns on investment. Similarly, most individuals pursue happiness, which is considered a highly valued aspect of human life across societies (Diener, 2000). Traditionally, organizational success and employee happiness have often been considered separate outcomes. This study aims to determine whether employee engagement, which contributes to organizational performance, and employee satisfaction levels are positively related. Happiness, expressed through emotions such as joy, represents a fundamental aspect of human experience. Individuals commonly experience varying degrees of happiness as part of their daily lives (Diener, 2000).

Although philosophers have increasingly explored the concept of happiness (McMahon, 2006), psychological research on happiness has gained significant attention only in recent decades. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) argue that the increased scholarly focus on happiness has emerged from the development of positive psychology. Halvorsen (2005) notes that while disengaged employees may hinder creativity and organizational progress through reduced initiative and delayed task completion, productive and satisfied employees can achieve remarkable outcomes. Numerous positive organizational outcomes have been associated with employee engagement. Employees who demonstrate strong commitment, effective communication, managerial empowerment, collaboration, and a shared sense of purpose are more capable of delivering outcomes expected by organizational leaders and customers.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between staff engagement and workplace happiness in contributing to wholesale construction organizational success in Cambodia. The research objectives are: (1) to measure the level of workplace happiness among wholesale construction employees in Cambodia; (2) to measure the level of staff engagement among wholesale construction employees in Cambodia; (3) to examine the relationship between workplace happiness and staff engagement; and (4) to provide recommendations for organizational leaders to enhance employee engagement and workplace happiness. This research contributes to the theoretical development of employee engagement literature by providing empirical evidence from a distinctive cultural and industrial context. Practically, the findings offer actionable recommendations for construction industry leaders to improve employee satisfaction and engagement, thereby enhancing organizational performance and sustainable growth. Furthermore, this study contributes to policy development by providing evidence that may support government and industry initiatives aimed at improving working conditions and employee well-being within the construction sector.

METHOD

A quantitative correlational research approach was used as the foundation of this investigation. This design was selected because it enabled the researcher to examine the relationship between variables using numerical data and statistical analysis. The research instruments consisted of two survey questionnaires measuring workplace happiness and employee engagement. The Oxford Happiness Inventory and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Work Engagement Inventory were used to assess participants' levels of workplace happiness and employee engagement, respectively. A quantitative correlational design was considered appropriate because it allowed the researcher to examine the association between two or more variables (2001). A qualitative approach was not selected because the study did not aim to explore individual experiences or perceptions but rather to measure the statistical relationship between employee engagement and workplace happiness. The correlational research design was appropriate because it enabled the examination of the relationships among employee engagement, workplace happiness, and organizational success (Burns & Grove, 2005).

The study involved wholesale construction workers in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Participants were selected using a convenience sampling technique. Based on the planned statistical analyses, including correlation and regression tests, a medium effect size, a 0.05 error probability, 80% statistical power, and the number of predictors, the recommended sample size was 84 participants (Faul et al., 2009). Workplace happiness was measured using the overall scores from the Oxford Happiness Inventory, which was treated as a continuous dependent variable. Employee engagement was measured using the overall scores from the SHRM Work Engagement Inventory and was treated as the independent variable. Both variables were operationalized as continuous measures for statistical analysis.

Data were collected from construction workers employed in wholesale construction companies. Before administering the questionnaires, the researcher explained the purpose, scope, and procedures of the study to the participants. The participants were then asked to complete the questionnaires by selecting responses that best represented their perceptions of workplace happiness and employee engagement. The collected data were compiled and stored securely in a password-protected file. Responses related to workplace happiness and employee engagement were entered into a Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet for data preparation and further analysis. Electronic research data were retained securely for three years after the completion of the study before being permanently deleted.

To address the research objectives, Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between employee engagement and workplace happiness. Data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 17.0®. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and measures of central tendency, were used to summarize demographic characteristics and research variables. Frequency distributions were applied to categorical variables, while mean scores were calculated for continuous variables, including workplace happiness and employee engagement scores.

Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to test the research hypothesis and determine the strength and direction of the relationship between workplace happiness and employee engagement. Pearson's correlation analysis is a statistical method used to evaluate

the association between two continuous variables (Moore & McCabe, 2006). The correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to $+1$, where negative values indicate an inverse relationship and positive values indicate a direct relationship between variables (Moore & McCabe, 2006). A coefficient close to zero indicates a weak or no linear relationship between variables. In this study, the correlation between staff engagement and workplace happiness was examined to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between the two variables.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics of the staff engagement and workplace happiness data are presented at the start of this section. A normalcy test was performed, and the outcome was shown. The Pearson correlation test results were then displayed in order to answer the research question.

Results of Study Variables – Descriptive Statistics

This sub-section presents the descriptive statistics for the study variables of staff engagement (employee engagement is used interchangeably) and workplace happiness. Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics, which included the mean and standard deviation values. Staff engagement and happiness at work are ongoing factors.

Table 1. Results of Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	n	Minimum	Maximum	M	S.D.
Workplace Happiness	84	2.50	5.55	4.40	0.65
Staff Engagement	84	1.45	5	3.75	0.68

As shown in Table 1 above, wholesale construction staff's workplace happiness generated and/or displayed a mean score of 4.40, with a minimum and maximum of 2.50 and 5.55, respectively, from the 84 samples. The wholesale construction staff were fairly content, according to the mean score in the 4–5 range. Since the data sets fell between 1 and 6, there were no outliers in the happiness data set.

Wholesale construction staff engagement at work generated and/or displayed a mean score of 3.75, with a minimum and maximum score of 1.45 and 5, respectively, from the 84 respondents. The wholesale construction staff were positively engaged at work, as shown by the mean value being close to the “agree” score of 4. Since the staff engagement data sets fell within the range of 1 to 5 possible scores, there were no outliers. Since they are able to choose and utilize the greatest procedures, techniques, components, and resources from the available sources, profitable and strong organizations have been referred to as electric. Organizations promote continuous development, much like the Japanese kaizen. In leader-driven, visionary, and productive learning companies, everyone is responsible. Senge (1997) defined accountability as taking responsibility for the company's well-being regardless of one's position or identity. Second, everyone has a stake in the business and can alter it. Because our ancestors were adaptable and skilled at change, we are where we are now.

Every company has the ability to grow and learn, and they attempt to learn as much as they can collectively and do so on a regular basis. It is important to remember that individuals inside the organization learn, not the organization itself. Organizations must learn to prioritize their employees if they want to survive and compete in the complicated and varied business

climate of the twenty-first century. Senge (1997) asserts that genuine learning delves into the core of what it is to be human. Through the process of learning, we recreate and rediscover who we are—become capable of doing something we were never capable of. When innate learning difficulties are addressed, effective learning can occur. Senge (1997) argues that in order to comprehend significant issues, we must look beyond individual errors. To put it another way, we have to go beyond individuals and occasions.

Results of Test for Normality

To guarantee the integrity of the analysis's conclusions, preliminary screening of the data was done before performing the statistical analysis using Pearson's correlation test to answer the study's research question. Each study variable's data set should demonstrate the normalcy distribution assumption.

Table 2. Results of Skewness and Kurtosis Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	n	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Workplace Happiness	84	-0.77	0.29	0.68	0.55
Staff Engagement	84	0.95	0.29	1.65	0.55

The study variables of job satisfaction and staff engagement were subjected to a test of normalcy. Initially, the data's skewness and kurtosis statistics for each research variable were acquired. Table 2 provides a summary of each study variable's skewness and kurtosis data. Strong non-normality is indicated by skewness statistics more than three, and non-normality is also indicated by kurtosis statistics between 10 and 20 (Kline, 2005). According to Table 2, the study variables listed had skewness statistic values ranging from -0.95 to -0.77 and kurtosis values ranging from -0.68 to 1.65. All of the research variables' skewness and kurtosis statistics met the requirements listed by Kline (2005), suggesting that all of the data were normally distributed. Since the study variables' data showed a normal distribution, the Pearson correlation test was carried out.

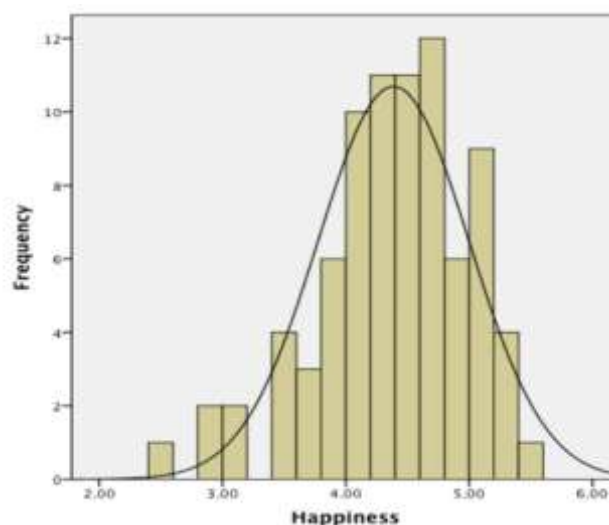


Figure 1. Happiness Variable Histogram

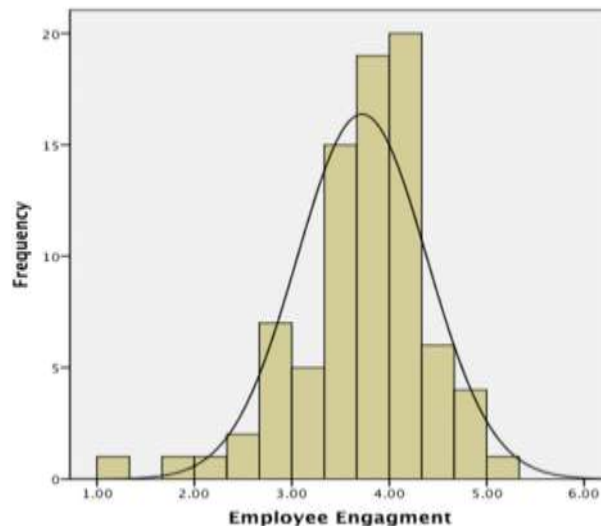


Figure 2. Employee Engagement Variable Histogram

Second, the study variables' histograms are shown in Figure 1, which displays a bell-shaped curve pattern of a normal distribution for the study variables of staff engagement and workplace happiness. This showed that the workplace happiness and staff engagement data sets did not deviate from the necessary assumption of normalcy. Additionally, it was noted that the values were high in comparison to the maximum value for every research variable.

Any firm must prioritize employee engagement since it improves performance (Hassan & Ahmed, 2011; Macey & Schneider, 2008). According to Fisher (2010), happiness is a sensation that is defined by satisfaction and other characteristics like engagement rather than being the same as satisfaction. Fisher's (2010) discussion basically shows that pleasure comes before engagement and includes a number of other qualities of the workplace, such as productivity. This conversation supports the claims made by Lewis et al. (2012) that an employee cannot become engaged until they reach a particular degree of happiness. These reasons support the study's findings and demonstrate that engagement and happiness are related. Rampersad (2006) concurs that employee engagement is impacted by happiness. The author lists a few strategies that can be implemented to guarantee that the intended degree of contentment is attained, enabling an employee to be engaged at work. According to Rampersad (2006), by fostering staff growth, the company has the opportunity to enhance employee welfare, which ultimately results in increased employee satisfaction. Compared to a dissatisfied employee, a happy employee is more likely to be engaged. According to Gavin and Mason (2004), a key factor in employee productivity is job satisfaction. According to Gavin and Mason (2004), dissatisfied workers are less likely to be productive, which is a sign that they are disengaged from their jobs. In this sense, Gavin and Mason (2004) demonstrate that employee satisfaction is a crucial component that needs to be fostered in order for the company to profit from having quality workers (Gavin & Mason, 2004).

Although happiness has been acknowledged as a significant aspect of an individual's life, Albrecht (2010) contends that few have examined workplace happiness as a factor in employee engagement. This claim supports the study's importance since it demonstrates how employee happiness at work has long been overlooked in favor of happiness outside of it. According to the study's findings, an employee's level of workplace happiness is crucial to

their productivity. Since productivity is a key concern in the development of organizations, it is necessary to make sure that workers are productive in their work schedules. Employees that are passionate about their work are seen as motivated to work hard, which means they will exercise extra caution in order to provide meaningful work (Albrecht, 2010).

Results of Pearson Correlation Test

The relationship between workplace happiness and staff engagement, which contributes to organizational success, was examined using Pearson's correlation test. The correlation test was conducted with a significance threshold of 0.05. The degree of the connection (positive or negative) and the intensity of the association (weak, moderate, or strong) were also examined by the Pearson's correlation test. Table 3 displays the Pearson's correlation test findings.

Table 3. Results of Relationship between Happiness and Staff Engagement

	Staff Engagement	
Workplace Happiness	Pearson Correlation	0.38
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
	n	84

Note: * *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Table 3 above, the test's findings demonstrated a substantial positive correlation ($p = 0.01$, $r = 0.38$) between wholesale construction staff's workplace happiness and staff engagement, which contributes to organizational success. This resulted from the p-value being below the 0.05 level of significance. The positive connection implied that an increase in workplace satisfaction would lead to an increase in employee engagement. The association is moderately strong. Staff engagement and workplace happiness were positively correlated, according to the results of the Pearson correlation test. The same behaviors that helped businesses succeed in the past also prevent us from seeing what is needed for success in the future. Future corporate strategy will take into account this favorable association between employee engagement and satisfaction. Today's strong and successful companies are primarily horizontal rather than vertical, and their structures are organic rather than mechanical. They are able to adapt to change and encourage innovation and creativity because of these qualities (Senge et al., 1994).

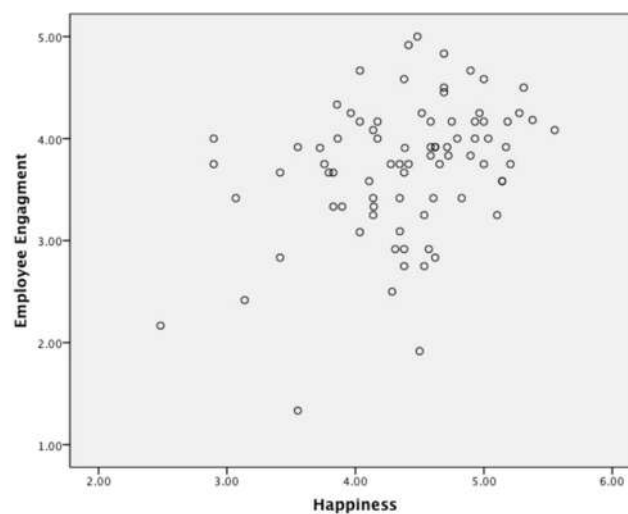


Figure 3. Scatterplot for the Relationship between Workplace Happiness and Staff Engagement.

To illustrate the correlation and linearity between workplace happiness and staff engagement, a scatterplot, as shown in Figure 3, was made. Figure 4 illustrates the relationship between wholesale construction staff's workplace happiness and staff engagement. A growing straight-line pattern suggests that there is a positive correlation between the two. Additionally, Hassan and Ahmed (2011) examine the significance of engagement and the ways in which employers might enhance employees' psychological well-being. According to Hassan and Ahmed's (2011) research, contented workers are engaged, but disgruntled workers struggle to dedicate themselves to their jobs. Ali (2013) discovered that companies' primary responsibility is to encourage employee involvement in a variety of ways. Workers that receive good treatment will be more dedicated to their jobs and increase their output. Workers are constantly searching for methods to make their employer's situation better. Employee dissatisfaction can have an impact on a company's performance through both greater discontent and decreased productivity (Ali, 2013). These workers can really benefit the company if they receive assistance. According to these research, supporting workers and enhancing their wellbeing would probably result in better worker performance, but more significantly, an organization will have engaged workers.

Bowles and Cooper (2012) contend that engagement does not always follow from employee satisfaction. They contend that participation is not always a prerequisite for productivity. They contend that although there are instances in which contented workers become engaged, employee happiness has little bearing on engagement. Even with disgruntled workers, participation can occasionally result in higher production (Robertson & Cooper, 2011). Hiltop and Despres (1994), who contend that increased production is not only attributable to happiness, corroborate this claim. These two considerations lead to the conclusion that while employee involvement is essential to the organization's success, employee engagement is not always correlated with satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to determine whether employee satisfaction influenced employee engagement, which subsequently contributed to organizational success. The findings of this quantitative correlational study supported the hypothesis that employee engagement and workplace happiness were significantly related. The results indicated a positive relationship between employee engagement and workplace happiness. This finding is important because it suggests that organizations can enhance growth and performance by fostering employee satisfaction. Employee engagement reflects employees' enthusiasm, commitment, and involvement in their work, which are influenced by various organizational conditions. The positive relationship between engagement and happiness suggests that satisfied employees are more likely to become engaged, thereby improving productivity and supporting sustainable organizational growth. Workplace happiness represents a positive psychological state associated with employees' overall well-being and satisfaction with their work environment. However, its importance in contemporary organizations has often been overlooked due to the dominant focus on organizational efficiency. This emphasis has neglected an essential human factor that contributes to improved productivity. Organizations have traditionally prioritized

job satisfaction and its relationship with performance improvement. Although this approach has been valuable, previous studies have shown that job satisfaction alone is only one of several factors contributing to employee productivity. This study contributes to existing research by demonstrating the importance of employee engagement in organizational performance, while also highlighting that employee engagement is closely associated with employees' levels of workplace happiness. These findings provide valuable insights for improving employee engagement practices within organizations.

This study contributes significantly to the existing body of knowledge regarding the relationship between staff engagement and workplace happiness. The positive association between these two factors indicates that organizations can obtain substantial benefits by improving employee satisfaction. Furthermore, organizational strategies can be developed to increase employee satisfaction, resulting in higher productivity and sustainable growth. This study confirms that happy employees tend to demonstrate higher engagement and productivity, which ultimately contribute to organizational success, although the relationship between employee engagement and workplace happiness has been examined in previous studies. Employee performance and attitudes are influenced by organizational culture and the work environment. Effective leadership is essential because it ensures that employees have appropriate conditions to perform their responsibilities while maintaining job satisfaction. Based on these findings, managers can implement strategies to enhance employee satisfaction, strengthen engagement, and increase the likelihood of achieving organizational success. The implications of this study include the development of innovative approaches to improving employee–employer relationships, recruitment and selection practices, and employee performance appraisal procedures. This is because maintaining employee engagement requires organizational leaders to develop effective strategies that support employee well-being and satisfaction. Organizational success depends on its ability to adapt and meet employees' needs. Improved performance evaluations and incentive systems are among the strategies that can provide employees with a greater sense of achievement and fulfillment. Enhancing work processes may also improve job satisfaction, which is an important component of workplace happiness. Employees are more likely to experience happiness and demonstrate higher productivity when they find meaning in their work and remain engaged. Staff engagement and workplace happiness may have a reciprocal relationship, in which improvements in one factor contribute to improvements in the other. Therefore, organizations should continuously prioritize employee well-being because satisfied employees are more likely to demonstrate stronger engagement.

Workplace productivity will remain an important topic of discussion in organizational research. A deeper understanding of the measurable benefits of employee engagement can be obtained by evaluating improvements in workplace satisfaction and engagement levels. However, this study did not examine whether other employee characteristics may influence organizational success. Future research should investigate how workplace happiness interacts with other organizational and individual factors to support organizational development. A broader understanding of these relationships would enable organizational leaders to make more informed decisions to improve employee outcomes and organizational performance without creating unnecessary costs. Employees also have social lives outside the workplace, and experiences in personal and professional environments may influence each other. Therefore,

future research should examine whether employees can remain highly engaged at work while experiencing difficulties in their personal lives, or whether personal happiness influences workplace satisfaction. Understanding the relationship between employees' personal well-being and workplace engagement is important, particularly when personal challenges may affect work performance. If personal well-being significantly influences employee engagement, organizations may need to consider broader employee support initiatives. Future studies should also employ experimental or quasi-experimental research designs to establish causal relationships and examine the roles of leadership style, organizational culture, and employee characteristics as potential moderators of the relationship between workplace happiness and employee engagement. Additionally, future research could evaluate interventions designed to improve workplace happiness and assess their effects on employee engagement and organizational performance.

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