

## The protective effect of job satisfaction in health, happiness, well-being and self-esteem

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The purpose of this article is to analyze the possible effects of job satisfaction on mental and physical health, happiness, subjective well-being and self-esteem. A total of 971 Portuguese-speaking adults participated in this study. Most participants reported high rates of satisfaction with their colleagues, the nature of their work and leadership, while reporting dissatisfaction with regard to salaries and promotions. Results indicated the existence of the protector effect of job satisfaction for health, happiness, subjective well-being and self-esteem, in addition to reinforcing the importance of maintaining a positive evaluation of one's work. As a practical implication, the results may suggest that the effects of personnel management policies which emphasize job satisfaction could potentially lead to improvements in levels of health, happiness, subjective well-being and workers' self-esteem, all of which are factors that can potentially improve organizational performance. The study also considered its limitations and the possibility for future investigation.

**Keywords:** job satisfaction; health; happiness; subjective well-being; self-esteem

### 1. Introduction

Job satisfaction is one of the most relevant variables in the field of Organizational and Work Psychology. It attracts the attention of researchers who aim to contribute empirically to explain its constructs, as well as to understand what elements and variables act as its consequents and antecedents. Job satisfaction is also a focus of human resources managers seeking to develop internal strategies and policies regarding the promotion of workers. The literature suggests several consequences of job satisfaction both within and outside the organization of employment. Prior research also associates job satisfaction with an increase in affective commitment to the organization,[1,2] productivity,[3] organizational commitment,[4] and reduced absenteeism [5] and turnover.[6] Outside the organizational context there are indications that labor dissatisfaction can cause damage to one's physical [7] and mental [8] health, and can decrease one's well-being,[9] happiness [10] and self-esteem.[11,12]

While we have significant evidence for the impact of job satisfaction on maintaining health indices, happiness, well-being and self-esteem, there is also a need to highlight the effect of these variables on the organization of employment. A healthy, happy worker with high self-esteem contributes to the improvement of organizational results,[13] which can be reflected in a decrease of involuntary absenteeism [5] and an increase of productivity, competitiveness [14] and organizational effectiveness.[15]

#### 1.1. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction concerns the assessment of the work experience, through a process that references one's beliefs, values and goals related to work and that guides behavioral tendencies.[16] Locke,[17] one of the leading scholars of this construct, considers job satisfaction to be a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the evaluation that one has of their work and the realization that this evaluation allows concerning the satisfaction of important values.

The concept is multidimensional, as it involves both the overall assessment and the judgment of different factors related to work.[18] As highlighted by Tamayo,[19] these factors include: salary and benefits, colleagues, supervision, working conditions, job nature, career advancement, job stability, personal development and the amount of work. In a study by Cavallieri,[20] job satisfaction is defined using the dimensions of salary, coworkers, promotions and working conditions. However, there is no consensus with respect to the size or assessed factors used to evaluate one's work; therefore, the most cited today are satisfaction with salary, coworkers, leadership, promotions and the nature of one's work itself.[21]

#### 1.2. Physical and mental health

The World Health Organization's (WHO) 1948 Declaration defines health as 'a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of

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disease or infirmity.’[22,p.9] The WHO also recognized health as a resource for everyday life and as a positive concept, emphasizing personal resources and social and physical abilities. Initially health measurements were focused on the identification of disease or the absence of symptoms, and only in the second half of the 20th century did they focus on health, performance and functionality.[23]

We can distinguish between physical, mental and social health.[24] Physical health includes physical functioning, performance and the ability to perform a variety of basic operating activities common to a person in good physical condition. Mental health focuses on symptoms related to affective and mood disorders, anxiety disorders, positive well-being and self-control. Mental health also emphasizes the importance of psychological states, rather than the somatic or physiological manifestations of these states. Social health comprises the interactions and interpersonal activities that indicate social connections.[25]

### 1.3. *Happiness and well-being*

Well-being is a new concept and is often popularly regarded as being synonymous with happiness.[26] It underlies the hedonic conception of happiness, and refers to the pleasure and displeasure of experiences, which cause judgments regarding positive and negative elements in life.[27] Well-being is a broad phenomenon that includes emotional responses from an individual, as well as overall judgments about one’s life satisfaction.[28]

According to Hills and Argyle,[29] happiness is a multidimensional construct comprising cognitive and emotional elements. To Veenhoven,[30] happiness can be understood as a synonym of satisfaction with one’s life, in combination with the concept of subjective well-being proposed by Diener. However, the author does not see life satisfaction as a mere cognitive assessment, but instead views this concept as a global judgment of life based on two sources of measurement. The first source assesses the cognitive comparison with one’s perceived standards of a good life (contentment), while the second encompasses affective information about how a person feels most of the time (hedonic affection).

### 1.4. *Self-esteem*

The concept of self-esteem was first covered by William James in 1890, who defined it as a positive self-consideration obtained by people when they can consistently meet or exceed the important goals of their lives. In the Social Sciences field, self-esteem can be defined as an overall assessment, usually affective, of the merits, values and importance of oneself.[31] It is often thought of as the evaluative component of self-concept.[32] There are scholars who also adopt a dichotomous approach when evaluating self-esteem. This approach divides self-esteem into the categories of high self-esteem, which is defined

as when a person feels that they have value, and low self-esteem, which is characterized as when a person believes that they have no value and, as a result, they suffer from self-pity and self-contempt.[33] According to Rosenberg, the author of one of the oldest and most widely used self-esteem evaluation scales, self-esteem is a positive or negative overall attitude towards oneself.[34]

In the last century self-esteem received significant attention from social researchers, who studied its relation with problems such as drug abuse, crime, unemployment and violence.[31] More recent studies, however, relate the concept to several other aspects, such as well-being, academic success and learning abilities.[35] More specifically, self-esteem in psychology has been the focus of increasing attention, because there are several studies that indicate its causal role in many important life outcomes, such as physical health, interpersonal relationships and psychopathology.[31,36] Self-esteem has also been examined with respect to workers’ behaviors and attitudes.[37]

Studies point out that health, happiness and well-being have different levels of consequences in the labor market, influencing behaviors such as job performance, absences and turnover.[38] In many cases, these constructs tend to have significant and positive associations. This implies a reciprocal relationship, and signifies that the emotions, attitudes and behaviors experienced at work can influence one’s life outside the workplace, and *vice versa*. [39] Some studies indicate that one’s job satisfaction may even influence the health, happiness and well-being of other family members.[40] In addition, self-esteem can improve self-confidence and the ability to handle pressure and fatigue,[41] can influence job satisfaction levels and can affect the results achieved by workers.[42] It is noteworthy that a negative self-perception can negatively influence how workers assess their personal skills and abilities,[43] leading to a lack of appreciation of their own potential.

Faced with this evidence, it is important to understand that the effects of job satisfaction are not limited to workers’ routines, but that they can impact the levels of productivity, quality, organizational competitiveness and profitability throughout the organization.[14] Thus, the main objective of this research is to assess the influence of job satisfaction on the levels of health, happiness, well-being and self-esteem among a sample of employed participants.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. *Sample and participants*

The sample consisted of 971 adult subjects. All subjects were Portuguese speakers, with a mean age of 40.73 (*SD* 11.95) years. Regarding the gender of the participants, the sample was relatively balanced. With regard to marital status, a plurality of sample members was married (44%). The vast majority of participants possessed a

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics ( $N = 971$ ).

| Variable                                  | <i>N</i> | %    |
|---|----------|------|
| Gender                                    |          |      |
| Male                                      | 452      | 46.6 |
| Female                                    | 517      | 53.2 |
| Marital status                            |          |      |
| Single                                    | 270      | 27.9 |
| Married                                   | 426      | 44.0 |
| Civil union                               | 100      | 10.3 |
| Widowed                                   | 10       | 1.0  |
| Emotional commitment                      | 72       | 7.4  |
| Divorced/separated                        | 91       | 9.4  |
| Children                                  |          |      |
| Yes                                       | 509      | 52.6 |
| No  | 458      | 47.4 |
| Education                                 |          |      |
| <4 years of school                        | 1        | 0.1  |
| ≤6 years of school                        | 2        | 0.2  |
| ≤9 years of school                        | 15       | 1.6  |
| ≤12 years of school                       | 98       | 10.2 |
| Bachelor's                                | 287      | 29.7 |
| Master's                                  | 397      | 41.1 |
| PhD                                       | 165      | 17.1 |
| Occupational status                       |          |      |
| Student worker                            | 159      | 16.4 |
| Works for others                          | 611      | 62.9 |
| Self-employed                             | 166      | 17.1 |
| Retired worker                            | 35       | 3.6  |
| Professional category                     |          |      |
| Academic area                             | 214      | 22.0 |
| Business person                           | 12       | 1.2  |
| Management positions                      | 57       | 5.9  |
| Mid-level positions                       | 191      | 19.7 |
| Military field                            | 11       | 1.1  |
| Operational level positions               | 39       | 4.0  |
| Top-level positions                       | 400      | 41.2 |
| Other                                     | 4        | 0.4  |
| Nature of work institution                |          |      |
| Public                                    | 423      | 45.8 |
| Private                                   | 468      | 50.6 |
| Other                                     | 33       | 3.6  |
| Type of activity                          |          |      |
| Industry                                  | 107      | 11.8 |
| Services                                  | 772      | 84.9 |
| Other                                     | 30       | 3.3  |
| Income sufficient to cover daily expenses |          |      |
| Yes                                       | 569      | 59.3 |
| No  | 390      | 40.7 |

university education (87.9%), with 29.74% holding a bachelor's degree, 41.1% having a master's degree and 17.1% possessing a PhD. Furthermore, the majority of study participants works for others (62.9%), acting mostly in top-level positions (41.2%) such as psychologists, doctors or lawyers. Most workers (59.3%) assessed their income as sufficient for daily expenses and worked in the service sector (84.9%). The distribution among professionals working in public and private companies was approximately balanced. Table 1 presents the participants' demographics based upon their responses.

## 2.2. Procedures

The request to participate in the sample was sent over the Internet between October 2014 and February 2015, through the use of email lists, contact with companies and social networks. The collection of online data has become quite common in the field of Psychology and Social Sciences, mainly due to lower printing costs, flexibility and anonymity in responses compared with the use of printed questionnaires.[44] Studies suggest that the results from online surveys maintain statistical equivalence compared with more traditional forms of data collection.[45] The form contained information about the objectives of the study in addition to presenting the research team involved, and included the terms of informed consent. Participants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. The study met the ethical principles and guidelines for research with human beings proposed by the American Psychological Association.

## 2.3. Measures

We used a sociodemographic questionnaire that included items such as age, gender, marital status, education, employment status, nature of the organization of employment and an evaluation of one's salary.

Job satisfaction was measured using the short version of the Satisfaction at Work Scale, developed by Siqueira in 1995.[46] The scale has 15 items and assesses employee satisfaction dimensions, such as the nature of work, colleagues, boss/management interaction, promotions and salary. The short version of the Satisfaction at Work Scale utilizes a Likert-type response format, ranging from 1 = *completely dissatisfied* to 7 = *totally satisfied*. [46] The scale showed good reliability, possessing Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values between 0.77 and 0.90 in the validation studies, while the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values for our study ranged between 0.84 and 0.92.

The perception of physical and mental health was measured by the Portuguese version of the Medical Outcomes Study, 36-item short form (MOS SF-36).[23,47] This scale has 36 items which evaluate four dimensions of physical health and four dimensions of mental health. The four dimensions evaluated for physical health are physical function, performance limitations due to physical health problems, bodily pain and general health perception. Concerning mental health, the scale's dimensions evaluate limitations in performance due to mental health problems, emotional performance, social function and vitality.

The range of responses can be Likert-type, *yes* and *no*, or three-leveled, but the answers must be listed utilizing values ranging from 0 to 100, with higher scores indicating a more favorable state of health.[25] The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values were between 0.78 and 0.93 in the validation tests of the original scale,[48] and ranged from 0.60 to 0.87 in the version validated for the Portuguese population.[47] In

this study the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values were between 0.77 and 0.91.

For the measurement of happiness we used the Covilhã Happiness Questionnaire (CHQ), which was developed by Pereira et al.[49] The scale consists of 41 items, divided into five dimensions: positive emotions, rewarding social interactions, self-care, participation in meaningful activities and engagement with the socioeconomic structure. Responses to the CHQ were obtained using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*, and allow for the assessment of the measurement of overall happiness as well as for each of its dimensions. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient values ranged from 0.63 to 0.90 in the scale's validation studies and were between 0.60 and 0.84 in this investigation.

For the evaluation of subjective well-being, we used the short version of the Portuguese scale of positive and negative affect – PANAS-VRP, which was validated for the Portuguese population by Galinha et al.[50,51] This scale has 10 items that assess positive and negative affect, trait or state as possible responses. In this study, participants were given the following guideline regarding their responses: 'Indicate to what extent, in general, you feel each of these emotions.' The possible answers utilized a Likert scale, ranging from 1 = *nothing or very little* to 5 = *extremely*. In the scale's validation studies, the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values were found to range from 0.86 to 0.89 for positive affect and negative affect, respectively.[52] In this study the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values were 0.88 for positive affect and 0.84 for negative affect.

Self-esteem was measured using the Portuguese version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.[53] This scale has 10 items arranged in a Likert-type response format, ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*, with five of the items being positively orientated and the other five being negatively orientated. The values for the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  ranged between 0.77 and 0.88 in the validation studies of the original scale. For the validation of the scale used in studies concerning the Portuguese population, the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value was 0.86, while in this investigation it was 0.88, indicating the excellent reliability of the measure.

#### 2.4. Statistical analysis

Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 22. Health variables, happiness, subjective well-being and self-esteem were converted into binary measures, using the theoretical median values as references. Values obtained below the theoretical median indicate absence, and values higher than the median indicate presence of the variables. According to the interpretation suggested by the scale's author, the job satisfaction variable was divided into three levels: dissatisfaction, indifference and satisfaction.

For the purposes of logistic regression analysis, the principles of multicollinearity and the proportion of the

sample size of the smallest group in the number of predictor variables were observed.[54] Additionally, we considered the value of Hosmer and Lemeshow for each analysis, establishing a significance level of  $p = 0.05$ .

### 3. Results

The results of job satisfaction indicated that the majority of participants reported high satisfaction rates with colleagues (60.8% satisfied, 22.6% indifferent, 16.5% dissatisfied), the nature of their work (61.1% satisfied, 22.5% indifferent, 16.4% dissatisfied) and leadership (55.8% satisfied, 22.8% indifferent, 21.3% dissatisfied). A plurality of respondents reported dissatisfaction concerning their salary (31.6% satisfied, 19.2% indifferent, 49.2% dissatisfied) and promotions (26.7% satisfied, 29.2% indifferent, 44.2% dissatisfied). Regarding happiness, subjective well-being, self-esteem and health, most respondents reported levels above the theoretical median value (see Table 2).

The results showed that job satisfaction was strongly correlated with happiness,  $r = 0.529$ ,  $p = 0.01$  and the emotional dimension of health,  $r = 0.401$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ; and moderately correlated with positive affect,  $r = 0.344$ ,  $p = 0.01$ , with self-esteem,  $r = 0.325$ ,  $p = 0.01$  and with negative affect,  $r = -0.259$ ,  $p = 0.01$ . We also observed that job satisfaction with was weakly correlated with the physical dimension of health,  $r = 0.219$ ,  $p = 0.01$ . In addition, linear regression analysis showed that happiness, health, self-esteem and well-being exert moderate predictive effects in relation to job satisfaction (see Table 2). It is noted that for the interpretation of these results we used the reference values proposed by Cohen, due to their suitability for the field of social sciences. These values suggest that scores between 0.10 and 0.23 indicate weak correlation; between 0.24 and 0.36 indicate moderate correlation; and 0.37 and above are indicative of strong correlation.[55]

With regards to health, workers satisfied with the nature of their jobs were more likely to report satisfactory physical performance than disgruntled employees, reporting an odds ratio (OR) of 3.68, 95% confidence interval (CI) [1.64, 8.25]. Moreover, workers indicating higher levels of satisfaction with the nature of their jobs were more likely to indicate adequate levels of vitality, reporting OR of 2.40, 95% CI [1.48, 3.89]. Additionally, workers satisfied with their employment conditions were more likely to report favorable emotional performance, demonstrating OR of 4.77, 95% CI [2.40, 9.49]. They were also more likely to have better social functioning, reporting OR of 2.46, 95% CI [1.34, 4.49], and were more likely to demonstrate good levels of mental health, reporting OR of 3.33, 95% CI [1.85, 5.97]. Examining the health of individuals who reported satisfaction with their colleagues, we find that they were more likely to report higher levels of vitality, reporting OR of 2.00, 95% CI [1.22, 3.28], and were 1.96, 95% CI [1.08, 3.52] times more likely to show adequate mental health levels. Some characteristics related to the



Table 2. Results for correlation analyses and linear regression assessing job satisfaction as a predictor of health, happiness, subjective well-being and self-esteem ( $N = 971$ ).

|                     | 1   | 2        | 3        | 4         | 5       | 6                              | 7     |
|---------------------|---|----------|----------|-----------|---------|--------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Job satisfaction | —   |          |          |           |         |                                |       |
| 2. Global happiness | 0.528**                                       |          |          |           |         |                                |       |
| 3. Positive affect  | 0.344**                                       | 0.575**  |          |           |         |                                |       |
| 4. Negative affect  | −0.259**                                      | −0.559** | −0.262** |           |         |                                |       |
| 5. Self-esteem      | 0.325**                                       | 0.644**  | 0.576**  | −0.577**  |         |                                |       |
| 6. Physical health  | 0.219**                                       | 0.447**  | 0.288**  | −0.311**  | 0.351** |                                |       |
| 7. Emotional health | 0.401**                                       | 0.702**  | 0.458**  | −0.602**  | 0.565** | 0.565**                        | —     |
| <i>M</i>            | 4.48  | 3.68     | 3.90     | 1.94      | 3.36    | 82.75                          | 71.20 |
| <i>SD</i>           | 1.09  | 0.50     | 0.69     | 0.77      | 0.47    | 13.31                          | 18.11 |
| Dependent variable  | Predictor                                     |          |          | <i>F</i>  |         | Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> |       |
| Global happiness    | Job satisfaction (nature, salary, colleagues) |          |          | 151.79*** |         | 0.32 (32%)                     |       |
| Positive affect     | Job satisfaction (nature)                     |          |          | 281.63*** |         | 0.22 (22%)                     |       |
| Negative affect     | Job satisfaction (nature, colleagues)         |          |          | 54.19***  |         | 0.99 (9.9%)                    |       |
| Self-esteem         | Job satisfaction (nature, colleagues)         |          |          | 82.74***  |         | 0.14 (44%)                     |       |
| Physical health     | Job satisfaction (nature, colleagues)         |          |          | 32.99***  |         | 0.06 (6.0%)                    |       |
| Emotional health    | Job satisfaction (nature, salary, colleagues) |          |          | 80.74***  |         | 0.20 (20%)                     |       |

\*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

nature of work, such as autonomy and control over one's activities, can produce positive effects on employee health and well-being.[56] These findings provide further confirmation of the effects of job satisfaction on the maintenance of physical, mental and social health.[57,58]

The results also indicated that the chances of a person reporting happiness were 4.01, 95% CI [2.07, 7.78] times greater when the respondent assessed the nature of their work positively. In addition, sample members were 3.17, 95% CI [1.61, 6.26] times as likely to show happiness when they indicated satisfaction with their colleagues. Regarding the dimensions of happiness, having a favorable assessment of the nature of one's work was associated with a 3.88-fold, 95% CI [2.05, 7.35] increase in the odds of reporting positive emotions. In addition, participants with a favorable assessment of their work were 2.27, 95% CI [1.31, 3.95] times more likely to have greater self-care scores. They were also 3.14, 95% CI [1.37, 7.18] times more likely to report significant participation in activities. A positive assessment of satisfaction with one's colleagues was associated with a 2.64, CI 95% [1.33, 5.22] times increase in the chances of showing positive emotions, and these sample members were also 2.96, 95% CI [1.13, 7.72] times more likely to participate in rewarding social interactions. Sample participants who indicated satisfaction with promotions were 4.33, 95% CI [1.37, 13.62] times as likely to report positive emotions, and were 1.90, 95% CI [1.19, 3.01] times more engaged with the prevailing socioeconomic structures. Satisfaction with wage levels increased engagement with socioeconomic structures 3.44, 95% CI [2.29, 5.18] times. We also found that subjects satisfied with the nature of their work were 5.68, 95% CI [2.74, 11.78] times more likely to display positive affect and 63% less likely ( $OR = 0.37$ ), 95% CI [0.21, 0.65] to report

negative affect. In accordance with the results obtained in this study, other research suggests that the well-being and happiness reported by workers are positively influenced by the nature and complexity of their work,[59] the relationship with their colleagues and opportunities for career advancement.[9,58]

The chances of reporting favorable self-esteem were 2.82, 95% CI [1.26, 6.31] times higher among individuals who reported satisfaction with the nature of their work and 2.45, 95% CI [1.08, 5.56] times higher among those who reported satisfaction with their colleagues. Studies suggest that a favorable experience at work can foster increased self-esteem, probably because of the opportunity to establish social interactions, develop skills and experience success and recognition.[60] Table 3 presents the significant results ( $OR$ ), along with the 95% CI values and the  $p$  values.

#### 4. Discussion and final considerations

Correlation analysis and linear regression made it possible to identify the existence of a relationship between job satisfaction, health, happiness, well-being and self-esteem, in line with several investigations previously carried out by other authors.[61–64] For many people, work takes on a role of utmost importance, not only by providing financial support but also by contributing to the development of identity and allowing active participation in society,[65,66] so it is expected that an assessment concerning work has an impact on other spheres of life.[67]

The reported results demonstrate the protector effect of job satisfaction on health, happiness, subjective well-being and self-esteem, in addition to reinforcing the importance of maintaining a positive evaluation of one's work. When

Table 3. Results for the binary logistic regression assessing job satisfaction as a predictor of health, happiness, subjective well-being and self-esteem.

| Variable              | <i>n</i> | %    | Dimension JS (OR) | 95% CI        | <i>p</i>  |
|-----------------------|----------|------|-------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Health                |          |      |                   |               |           |
| PF                    | 942      | 97.0 | —                 | —             | —         |
| PPer                  | 917      | 94.4 | SNW (3.68)        | [1.64, 8.25]  | 0.002**   |
| PP                    | 835      | 86.0 | —                 | —             | —         |
| GHe                   | 868      | 89.4 | —                 | —             | —         |
| EP                    | 890      | 91.7 | SNW (4.77)        | [2.40, 9.49]  | <0.001*** |
| SF                    | 870      | 89.6 | SNW (2.46)        | [1.34, 4.49]  | 0.003**   |
| VT                    | 777      | 80.0 | SC (2.00)         | [1.22, 3.28]  | 0.006**   |
|                       |          |      | SNW (2.40)        | [1.48, 3.89]  | <0.001*** |
| MH                    | 925      | 87.3 | SC (1.96)         | [1.08, 3.52]  | 0.025**   |
|                       |          |      | SNW (3.33)        | [1.85, 5.97]  | <0.001*** |
| Happiness             |          |      |                   |               |           |
| GHa                   | 883      | 90.9 | SC (3.17)         | [1.61, 6.26]  | 0.001**   |
|                       |          |      | SNW (4.01)        | [2.07, 7.78]  | <0.001*** |
| PE                    | 879      | 90.5 | SC (2.64)         | [1.33, 5.22]  | 0.005**   |
|                       |          |      | SNW (3.88)        | [2.05, 7.35]  | <0.001*** |
|                       |          |      | SP (4.33)         | [1.37, 13.62] | 0.012*    |
| SGI                   | 930      | 95.8 | SC (2.96)         | [1.13, 7.72]  | 0.026*    |
| SCA                   | 840      | 86.5 | SNW (2.27)        | [1.31, 3.95]  | 0.004**   |
| PMA                   | 919      | 94.6 | SNW (3.14)        | [1.37, 7.18]  | 0.007**   |
| SSE                   | 295      | 30.4 | SS (3.44)         | [2.29, 5.18]  | <0.001*** |
|                       |          |      | SP (1.90)         | [1.19, 3.01]  | 0.006**   |
| Subjective well-being |          |      |                   |               |           |
| PA                    | 896      | 92.3 | SNW (5.68)        | [2.74, 11.78] | <0.001*** |
| NA                    | 121      | 12.5 | SNW (0.37)        | [0.21, 0.65]  | 0.01**    |
| Self-esteem           | 911      | 93.8 | SC (2.45)         | [1.08, 5.56]  | 0.03*     |
|                       |          |      | SNW (2.82)        | [1.26, 6.31]  | 0.01**    |

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

Note: CI = confidence interval; EP = emotional performance; GHa = global happiness; GHe = general health; JS = job satisfaction; MH = mental health; NA = negative affect; OR = odds ratio; PA = positive affect; PE = positive emotions; PF = physical function; PMA = participation in meaningful activities; PP = physical pain; PPer = physical performance; SC = satisfaction with colleagues; SCA = self-care; SF = social function; SGI = social gratifying interaction; SNW = satisfaction with nature of work; SP = satisfaction with promotions; SS = satisfaction with salary; SSE = socioeconomic structure engagement; VT = vitality.

comparing individuals who show dissatisfaction with their work with those who demonstrate satisfaction, the current study found that those who evaluated their job in a positive manner are more likely to be healthy, with the most prominent effects evident in the dimensions of emotional performance and mental health. Satisfaction with the nature of one's work and with one's colleagues positively influenced physical and mental performance, decreased the chances of individuals feeling the need to reduce their amount of work and decreased workers' difficulties in performing their duties. High reported job satisfaction also increased the odds of reporting good energy levels, increased the quality and quantity of social interactions, and provided workers with additional protection from anxiety, depression and a loss of emotional and behavioral control.

Work plays a key role in psychological protection,[68] and satisfaction with work-related activities and social interactions can help in the recovery of people with mental illness.[69] Furthermore, maintaining workers' health promotes job satisfaction and minimizes costs associated with health insurance and employee absenteeism.[70]

The study found that individuals who revealed more optimism, greater life satisfaction and a higher ability to deal with adverse situations tended to express increased satisfaction with the nature of their employment activities, with the number of promotions received and with the relationships that they have with their colleagues. Participants who were more likely to demonstrate self-care and involvement in meaningful activities, whether social, cultural or political, were also more satisfied with the variety and interest generated by the tasks developed.

Moreover, the study found that contentment in relationships with coworkers increased the chances of social integration. The results also show that satisfaction with salary and promotion opportunities increased one's chances of reporting satisfaction with regard to politics, the economy and justice.

There is evidence that happier people have more favorable work-related results and that those who regularly experience positive emotions and pleasant moods feel safer in the pursuit of their goals, are more likely to effectively confront challenges and are more prone to make

assertive decisions.[71] Studies also indicate that organizational commitment is more frequent among people who are happy and experience a greater frequency of positive affect.[72]

Finally, individuals who felt more respect and value demonstrated greater satisfaction with work-related activities and relationships with their coworkers. Studies indicate that individuals with high self-esteem are less indecisive concerning their careers.[73] Individuals demonstrating high levels of self-esteem also tend to view their careers as successful more often than those with low self-esteem,[74] and they also report higher wages, greater work-related engagement and better job satisfaction.[75]

As a practical implication, the results suggest that the effects of personnel management policies that emphasize job satisfaction can potentially generate improvements in the levels of health, happiness, subjective well-being and workers' self-esteem, all of which are factors that can improve organizational performance.

This study was not without its limitations. The convenience sample was composed solely of Portuguese speakers, which compromises the ability to generalize the obtained results on an international scale. The considered sample presented also highly educated professional workers and a disproportionate of high number of 'job satisfied' participants. Moreover, this cross-sectional study focused on various constructs of self-assessment that tend to change over time. Thus, it is important that longitudinal studies with the aim of observing changes and further developing the evaluated constructs should be conducted in the future.

There are many prior studies that have assessed the influence of job satisfaction on maintaining health, happiness, well-being and self-esteem. However, this research offers a unique approach, and seeks to highlight that individuals satisfied with their work tend to be happier, healthier and report more favorable levels of self-esteem.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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