

## Positive Personal Factors of Well-being, Happiness, and Social Responsibility in Tourism Sector Workers

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of positive personal factors, such as happiness, orientation towards happiness, and employees' personal well-being, as elements of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in tourism organizations in the Bahías de Huatulco tourist destination in Mexico. These factors contribute to fostering a healthy and productive work environment. A non-experimental, cross-sectional, descriptive study was conducted on the three positive personal factors, which allowed for identifying the positive personal qualities and their influence on the implementation of CSR practices and employees' active participation in social and environmental initiatives. The main findings indicate that promoting the development of positive personal factors among tourism sector employees significantly improves their well-being and happiness, which may be linked to enhanced productivity and better customer service quality. It is concluded that a work environment that fosters these aspects can reduce stress and burnout, increase job satisfaction and commitment, and strengthen the ability to deliver exceptional service—an essential element for the competitiveness of tourism service providers.

**Keywords:** Positive Personal Factors, Orientation to Happiness, Personal Well-being, Corporate Social Responsibility, Tourism Sector.

## **Introduction**

The workforce is fundamental to success in the tourism sector, as it requires constant and meaningful interaction with customers. Employees must demonstrate a high level of commitment and interpersonal skills to deliver personalized and unique services. Therefore, positive personal factors, such as well-being, happiness, resilience, emotional intelligence, and optimism, are essential not only for individual performance and customer satisfaction but are also closely linked to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Kim & Lee, 2018).

This study analyzed the influence of positive personal factors, such as happiness, orientation to happiness, and employees' personal well-being, as components of CSR in tourism organizations in the Bahías de Huatulco tourist destination in Mexico.

Recent research highlights the need for empirical evidence on positive personal factors across all areas of society. For this reason, the present study focused its interest on the tourism sector, specifically on employees providing customer service.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Ryff and Keyes (1995) present a multidimensional model of personal well-being that considers positive psychological aspects. This model includes six dimensions: self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relationships, environmental mastery, and autonomy.

Peterson, Park, and Seligman (2005) propose three pathways to achieving happiness, referred to as "types of orientations to happiness." The first is hedonism, which focuses on the pursuit of pleasure; the second, eudaimonia, encourages a meaningful life aimed at achieving satisfaction; and the third, flow, refers to the active enjoyment derived from engaging in fulfilling activities (Ramos, 2022).

In *The How of Happiness*, Lyubomirsky (2008) defines happiness as "the experience of joy, contentment, or positive well-being, combined with the sense that life is good, meaningful, and worthwhile." This definition aligns with subjective well-being. Lyubomirsky uses a Likert-type scale with four items to measure general happiness, known as the Subjective Happiness Scale.

In the tourism sector, workforce management is crucial for the success and sustainability of service-providing companies. Positive personal factors such as happiness, well-being, resilience, emotional intelligence, and optimism are essential not only for individual well-being but also for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). These factors establish the foundation for employees to make effective decisions, fostering a positive and sustainable work environment that benefits both companies and society. By promoting these factors, tourism companies improve productivity and create unique customer experiences, enhancing their market positioning.

Chen and Yu (2018) emphasize that companies should create conditions enabling their workforce to recover from and adapt to adverse situations—a concept known as resilience. In the tourism sector, service providers often face high-pressure situations and rapid changes in customer behavior, making resilience a critical skill. Resilient teams can enhance performance even in challenging conditions, contributing to a stable and productive work environment.

In a sector like tourism, which requires constant customer interaction, high emotional intelligence is indispensable. This ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others facilitates efficient problem-solving and minimizes conflicts, thereby enhancing customer relationships and service quality. It also fosters optimism, enabling the workforce to see the positive side of situations and promote innovative and creative behaviors (Tang & Tang, 2020).

CSR practices that aim to enhance societal well-being and sustainable development include fostering positive personal factors among employees as a key component. Companies that cultivate resilience, emotional intelligence, and optimism are better equipped to implement sustainable practices and respond to social and environmental crises. Employees who feel valued and supported by their employers are more likely to actively participate in CSR initiatives, strengthening the organization's commitment to the community and environment (Hernández-Ponce et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2020).

According to Hwang and Kim (2021), promoting and strengthening well-being—encompassing physical and mental health, work-life balance, and social support—in customer-facing roles is critical for workforce enthusiasm and productivity. Employees with high levels of well-being are more likely to maintain a positive attitude toward their work, resulting in greater efficiency and effectiveness in daily tasks.

Happiness at work, viewed through the lens of general satisfaction and joy derived from the work environment, positively correlates with productivity in the tourism sector. Innovation, creativity, collaboration, and adaptability are essential for delivering unique experiences to all stakeholders involved in tourism operations (demand and supply) (Mathe-Soulek et al., 2020).

Literature suggests that companies should develop, strengthen, and promote positive personal factors as these efforts enhance employees' quality of work life, fostering a healthier and more productive work environment. Lee (2020) notes that employees who feel supported and valued by their organizations demonstrate greater commitment and warmer, more personalized interactions with clients, resulting in improved customer satisfaction. In the tourism sector, where direct customer interaction is critical, this well-being translates into higher-quality customer service and more satisfying guest experiences.

In the tourism sector, where direct contact with the customer is crucial, this well-being is reflected in higher quality customer service and a more satisfactory experience for guests. Likewise, it is relevant to highlight that happiness at work is also positively related to service quality, resulting in the workforce going above and beyond in their functions, showing empathy, courtesy and willingness to solve problems, thus improving the customer experience (Hwang & Kim, 2021).

Research highlights that a work environment promoting employee well-being and happiness significantly reduces stress and burnout, improving employees' ability to provide consistent, high-quality service (Mathe-Soulek et al., 2020).

Similarly, positive personal factors such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience play a crucial role in enhancing well-being, happiness, and social responsibility among workers in the tourism sector. These personal resources have been found to moderate the relationship between job demands, job control, social support, and employee well-being at work, underscoring their importance in maintaining a positive work environment in the hospitality industry (Demirović-Bajrami et al., 2022).

Moreover, the adoption of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices, including economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic dimensions, has been shown to positively influence employee attitudes, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, ultimately reducing turnover intentions in the hospitality sector (Jarkovská & Jarkovská, 2022; Li et al., 2023; Licandro et al., 2024). Additionally, aligning business entities within the accommodation sector with CSR principles, focusing on environmental sustainability and employee engagement, further promotes well-being and social responsibility among workers in the tourism industry (Hernández-Ponce et al., 2021; Wojciechowska-Solis et al., 2021). Simultaneously, reducing stress and increasing job satisfaction enable employees to better handle work demands and maintain a positive attitude towards customers.

## **Problem**

In the tourism sector, employees are a key resource for enhancing service quality and customer satisfaction. However, the state of the work environment significantly impacts the well-being and happiness of employees. Key areas for business organizations to focus on include building workforce resilience and fostering emotional intelligence to minimize challenges and increase productivity. Neglecting these factors can lead to a work environment plagued by productivity issues and poor customer service.

Additionally, managing stress levels and long working hours for employees in tourism companies is a critical aspect of business management. Without adequate resilience, employees may become overwhelmed by stress, negatively affecting their performance and contributing to an unstable work environment. The lack of support in developing this capacity can result in higher staff turnover rates, which directly impacts service continuity and quality (Guchait et al., 2023).

Emotional intelligence, well-being, and happiness are equally critical in this context. Employees without the skills to manage their emotions and those of others may struggle to resolve conflicts and maintain harmonious workplace relationships. This not only affects customer service quality but can also create a tense and uncooperative work environment. Without a clear focus on developing emotional intelligence, tourism companies risk deteriorating both workplace climate and customer satisfaction (Karatepe & Karadas, 2022).

Optimism, on the other hand, drives proactivity and innovation. Employees lacking an optimistic outlook may be less inclined to take initiative and seek creative solutions to challenges. This limits the company's ability to adapt to changing market demands and offer unique customer experiences. Conversely, a lack of optimism among employees can lead to decreased morale and motivation, thereby reducing overall productivity (Chen et al., 2022).

Failing to address these positive personal factors extends beyond individual implications and directly impacts Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the tourism sector. Without employees who are well, happy, resilient, emotionally intelligent, and optimistic, it becomes challenging to implement and sustain socially responsible and sustainable practices. Employees who do not feel supported or valued are less likely to participate in CSR initiatives, weakening the company's commitment to the community and the environment (Borboa-Álvarez et al., 2020; Li et al., 2023; Licandro et al., 2024).

Neglecting positive personal factors such as employee well-being and happiness in the tourism sector leads to numerous challenges, from stress and burnout to a lack of emotional skills. These issues affect individual performance, productivity, and optimism, as well as the quality of customer service. To thrive in a competitive market, tourism companies must invest in developing these positive attributes in their workforce. Only by doing so can they ensure a healthy and productive work environment that benefits employees while strengthening their social responsibility and long-term success.

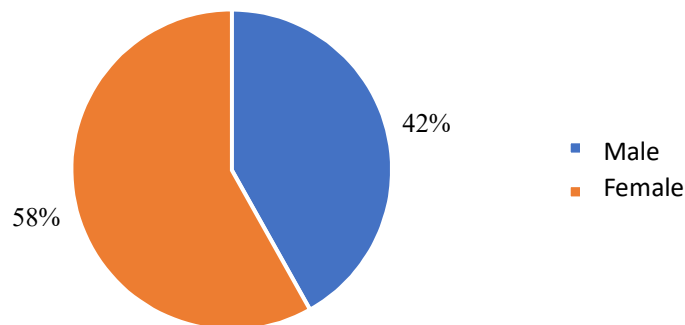
To address the issue examined in this study, the following research question was developed: What is the influence of the positive personal factors identified in the literature, such as happiness, orientation to happiness, and employees' personal well-being, as elements of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in tourism organizations in the Bahías de Huatulco destination in Mexico, in fostering a healthy and productive work environment?

## Methodology

A non-experimental, cross-sectional study with a descriptive purpose was conducted to examine the three positive personal factors described: happiness, orientation to happiness, and personal well-being. Additionally, a theoretical review of previous studies was undertaken to explore how positive personal factors contribute to a healthy and productive work environment.

To evaluate these positive personal factors, previously validated instruments implemented in the Mexican population were used. These instruments were based on the theories of happiness (Lyubomirsky, 2008), orientation to happiness (Peterson, Park, and Seligman, 2005), and personal well-being (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). Participants were then asked to complete a self-reported paper questionnaire. Reliability analyses using Cronbach's alpha were conducted, yielding acceptable values for the happiness scale (.73), orientation to happiness scale (.81), and personal well-being scale (.94). Descriptive statistics for each scale were subsequently analyzed.

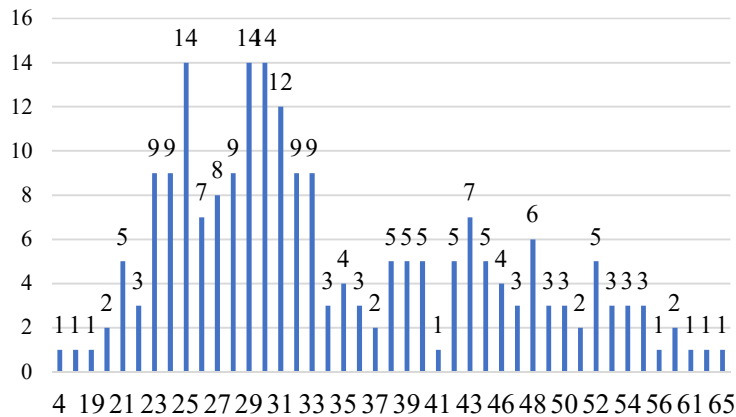
Figure 1. Gender of the Participants



Source: Own elaboration

The survey was administered to a convenience sample of 218 tourism sector workers in Mexico. Key demographic characteristics of the sample include: 58% female and 42% male participants (Figure 1), with an age range of 17 to 65 years and a mean age of 34.56 (SD = 10.56) (Figure 2).

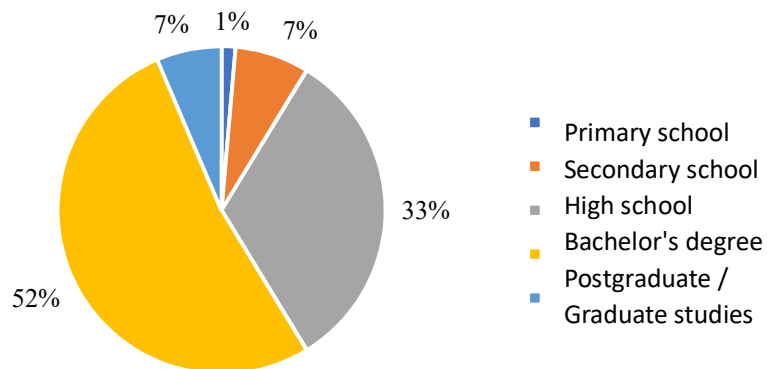
Figure 2. Ages of the participants



Source: Own elaboration

The educational levels are presented in Figure 3, showing that the majority hold a bachelor's degree (52%), followed by high school (33%), with 8% having a lower level of education and 7% holding a postgraduate degree. Regarding monthly income, 32% reported being at the average level, while 36% are above and 32% below average (Figure 3).

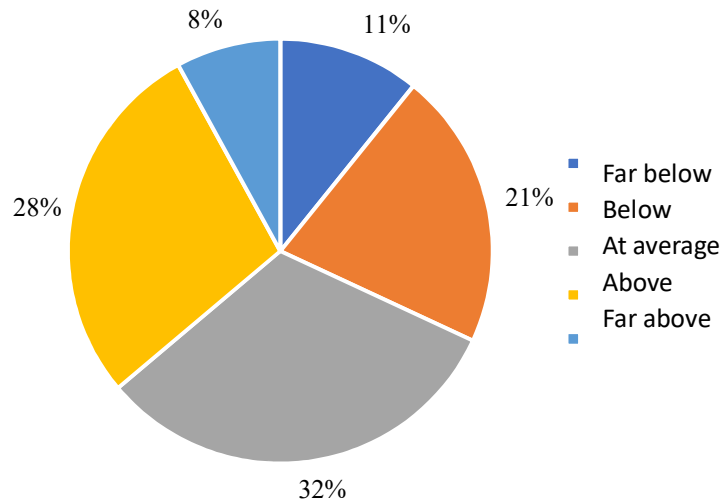
Figure 3. Percentage of Participants' Educational Levels



Source: Own elaboration

It is important to note that monthly income falls within the average or above the national median in 60% of cases combined (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percentage of Participants' Monthly Income



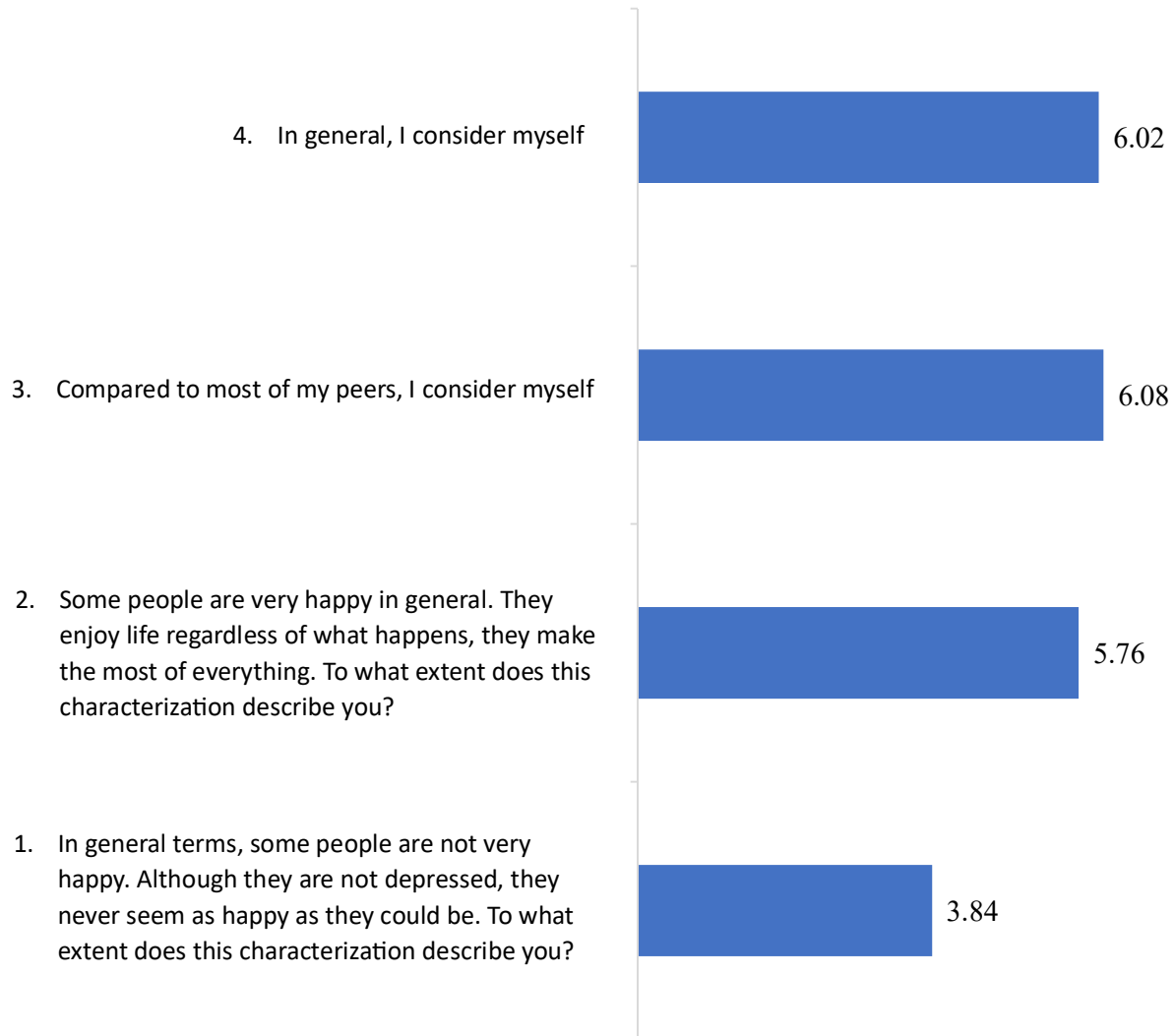
Source: Own elaboration

## Main results

The General Happiness Scale uses a 7-point Likert response format, where 1 means "Not happy at all" and 7 means "Very happy." The highest mean was found in the item "2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself" ( $M = 6.08$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ). In contrast, the lowest mean was observed in the item "4. In general, some people are not very happy. Although they are not..." ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = 2.02$ ).

The General Happiness Scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha score of .42, indicating that it does not meet the necessary reliability threshold of .60 for social sciences, thus lacking internal consistency. The scale uses a 7-point Likert response format, where 1 means "Not happy at all" and 7 means "Very happy." The highest mean was observed in the item "2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself" ( $M = 6.08$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ), while the lowest mean was found in the item "4. In general, some people are not very happy. Although they are not..." ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = 2.02$ ).

Figure 5. Average response for the General Happiness scale



Source: Own elaboration based on Lyubomirsky, (2008).

Figure 6. Average response to the Happiness Orientation scale.



Source: Own elaboration based on Peterson, Park, and Seligman (2005).

The Orientation to Happiness scale achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of .80, indicating sufficient reliability of .60 for social sciences, demonstrating adequate internal consistency. The scale uses a 5-point Likert response format, where 1 indicates "Completely unlike me" and 5 indicates "Very much like me." The highest mean was found in the item "2. My life has a great purpose" (M = 4.50, SD = .84), while the lowest mean was observed in the item "17. I have spent a lot of time thinking about what life means and trying to fit into it" (M = 3.34, SD = 1.25).

Figure 7. Average response of the Personal Well-being scale



Source: Own elaboration based on Ryff and Keyes (1995).

The Personal Well-being scale achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of .94, demonstrating the necessary reliability of .60 for the social sciences and indicating adequate internal consistency. The scale uses a 6-point Likert response format, where 1 indicates "Totally disagree" and 6 indicates "Totally agree." The highest mean was found in the item "9. Overall, over time, I feel that I continue learning more about myself" (M = 5.54, SD = .90), while the lowest mean was observed in the item "2. I have been able to build a home and a way of life to my liking" (M = 4.78, SD = 1.29).

## Conclusions

This study found that participants exhibit a higher level of orientation to happiness through eudaimonic well-being, as they indicate having a strong sense of purpose in life. Additionally, they show high scores in the two other types of well-being, flow and hedonic, with the latter presenting the lowest score (Ramos, 2022). Within the personal well-being scale, three items with high scores stood out, focusing on the dimension of personal growth. This indicates that over time, participants have developed new self-awareness skills, take pride in them, and focus their lives on the continuous process of self-study.

Although the necessary reliability was not found within the General Happiness scale, the data showed that participants consider themselves to have high levels of happiness, describing themselves as happy individuals, similar to their peers, and satisfied with their lives.

It is important to emphasize the necessity of promoting research on the relationship between positive personal factors, such as well-being and employee happiness, and their impact on customer service in the tourism sector. The findings conclude that fostering a work environment with high levels of well-being and happiness significantly impacts customer service quality, which is crucial in the tourism industry.

A workforce with high levels of well-being and happiness is not only more committed and loyal but also demonstrates superior performance and greater productivity (Mathe-Soulek et al., 2020). Therefore, it is fundamental to develop workplace well-being measures, such as physical and mental health, work-life balance, and social support, as these have a direct impact on team motivation and performance.

Based on the present research, it is worth noting that employees with good levels of well-being will have a positive attitude toward their roles. According to Lee (2020), this translates into greater efficiency and effectiveness in their daily tasks. In tourism, where direct service to customers is key, high levels of well-being and happiness result in higher service quality and a more satisfying experience for visitors. For this reason, companies should include the promotion of positive personal factors, such as well-being and happiness, within their CSR philosophy. These factors are associated with creativity in problem-solving, increased collaboration, and a greater willingness to contribute to organizational success (Hwang & Kim, 2021).

Finally, organizations must adopt a positive approach to well-being and happiness, as this will reduce stress and burnout levels as part of personnel management, thereby improving the delivery of high-quality service (Mathe-Soulek et al., 2020). In summary, fostering employee well-being and happiness in tourism companies and service providers not only enhances workers' quality of work life but also has a direct and positive impact on customer service. Empirical evidence supports that for a company to remain competitive and sustainable in the long term, CSR policies should promote workforce satisfaction and happiness, resulting in personalized and unique service offerings.

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