Romero-Rodríguez and Castillo-Abdul
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Internal communication from a happiness management perspective: state-of-the-art and theoretical construction of a guide for its development

Luis M. Romero-Rodríguez[1,3] and Bárbara Castillo-Abdul[2*]

Abstract

Objective This study aims to conduct a literature review and meta-analysis on the use of Happiness Management strategies in internal communication. The objective was to extract theoretical constructs of dimensions and indicators for the development of a guide for its application, validated by a panel of experts.

Methods A systematic literature review and meta-analysis was performed under the protocol of the PRISMA Extension Guide of articles indexed in the Scopus database (2019–2024). The total number of extracted documents ($n=479$) was screened based on the inclusion criteria, and the sample was delimited by 49 studies. Subsequently, after reading and analyzing the research, the dimensions and indicators of internal communication from a Happiness Management perspective were clustered. This guide was submitted to a panel of 13 experts who determined the reliability and validity of the construct and content using the Content Validity Index (CVI).

Results The dimensions and indicators emerging from the literature were validated with an average ($\overline{X}$) of 3.36/4, achieving a level of inter-judge agreement (CVI) of 0.86, an excellent agreement of 86%, and an average score of 2.90/4 (high). The guide was composed of 9 dimensions of internal communication: Attitudes of the leader, employer or supervisor, Climate and communication policies, Feedback and recognition, Organizational environment and structures, Peer and informal communication, Organizational culture and business perspective, Employee-organization relationship, Communication media and platforms, and Employee attitudes, which brought together 103 variables. These dimensions were then reorganized into the three macro-dimensions of the Happiness Management philosophy: (1) active construction of a healthy work environment and well-being, (2) formation of employees' positive personality, and (3) active emotional experience during the working day to build the internal communication development guide from the Happiness Management perspective.

Conclusions Integrating Happiness Management into internal communication can significantly enhance employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. The validated framework provides a detailed guide for aligning internal communication strategies with the Happiness Management principles.

Keywords Employee psychological well-being, Corporate communication, Business communication, Corporate sense of belonging

*Correspondence:
Bárbara Castillo-Abdul
barbara.castillo@udit.es
Full list of author information is available at the end of the article

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Introduction

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations shifted their work models and dynamics to remote modalities and hybrid work systems [1, 2], which negatively affected organizational culture and sense of corporate identity and belonging [3]. However, organizations have also been challenged to maintain the psychological well-being of employees who, after confinement, could feel isolated, hopeless, and overwhelmed [4]. Telecommuting and hybrid work models have resulted in more static and isolated collaborative networks, which reduce synchronous (face-to-face) communication and increase asynchrony (i.e., emails and messaging services), potentially hindering the exchange of information between employees [5] and, above all, their relational maintenance–that is, the informal communicative dynamics of interpersonal connections that facilitate the socialization of co-presence [6, 7].

Previous studies, such as Men and Sung (2022) [8] and Qin and Men (2023) [9], have emphasized that symmetrical internal communication positively influences employee-organization relationships, shaping the positive character of the organization and enhancing trust, mutuality of control, commitment, and satisfaction. Furthermore, this study concluded that peer support communication was positively associated with employees' psychological well-being and that increased organizational trust positively mediated the effects of both corporate symmetric communication and peer support communication on employees' psychological well-being, recommending the creation of an effective internal communication environment, both at the corporate and peer levels, to cultivate employees' organizational trust.

Moreover, internal communication can reduce perceptions of discrimination in multicultural organizations, improve perceived organizational justice, and establish stronger relationships between employees and the organization [10, 11], as well as being essential for motivation, trust, overall organizational culture, and a greater sense of belonging [12].

Happiness management perspective

Happiness Management is a perspective or philosophy that involves creating a positive work environment, focusing on the satisfaction of the organization's members, creativity, and innovation while promoting the value of relationships [13, 14].

It has been proven that in organizations with a good working environment and types of leadership that allow for the creation of good levels of relationships with various internal stakeholders, soft skills and the horizontal, vertical, and oblique collaboration necessary for creativity and innovation can be promoted [15], aspects of utmost importance for the survival of organizations in contexts that change as the current one. Likewise, previous research has demonstrated the correlation between "happy organizations" and relational loyalty with external stakeholders, such as customers and shareholders, among others [16, 17].

Integrating the Happiness Management perspective into internal communication involves supporting the positive psychology of employees from three dimensions: the active construction of a healthy work environment and well-being, the formation of employees' positive personality, and the active emotional experience during the working day, which is associated with better performance at work and positively influences people, corporate leadership, and their interactions with others [18–20].

However, internal communication under the Happiness Management approach involves much more than relational activities (such as recognitions, awards, celebrations, corporate integration activities, among others), but it is a transversal mechanism of the way of communicating that involves management and leadership styles [18], constant reviews of the work environment, mediation protocols to solve complex personal and professional issues, emotional training and psychological support to employees, among others [21]. Previous research has emphasized the relationship between internal communication and job satisfaction (e.g., [22–25]), internal communication styles and employee commitment to the organization (e.g [26])., and the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance (e.g [27–29]). However, most of these studies have analyzed internal communication from the perspective of isolated functions, and not as an integrated system.

This study conducts a systematic literature review and meta-analysis on the use of Happiness Management strategies in internal communication to extract theoretical constructs organized into dimensions and indicators, which will be subsequently validated by a panel of experts, to finally build a taxonomy development of internal communication from the macro-dimensions of Happiness Management.

To this end, we intend to theoretically review [30] the relationships that exist between internal communication, job satisfaction, and organizational trust, two indicators of vital importance analyzed in previous literature (e.g [8, 9, 31, 32]), with Happiness Management philosophy as a co-variable. The Research Questions (RQ) that emerged for this study are as follows:

> RQ1. What are the dimensions, indicators, and theoretical variables that emerge from scientific literature on internal communication through the Happiness Management approach?

RQ2. What is the agreement between internal communication researchers and practitioners on the dimensions, indicators, and variables emerging from the literature, and what are their main suggestions?
RQ3. How would a taxonomy of Happiness Management philosophy applied to Internal Communication be organized?

Materials and methods

Literature review and meta-analysis

In order to answer the questions posed, the methodological procedure of the systematic literature review was designed in accordance with the PRISMA Extension Guide (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) [33]. In this sense, this study was a meta-analysis from a mixed perspective with an explanatory scope.

For the analysis, the Scopus database was consulted with the aim of finding data that shed light on the emerging research on Happiness Management and Internal Communication, as well as, subsidiarily, the relationships between internal communication, job satisfaction, and organizational trust.

The search terms used were combined with the Boolean operators [AND] and [OR] ("Internal Communication" AND "Job Satisfaction" OR "Organizational Trust" OR "Happiness Management") as terms for the article title, abstract, and keyword in the database, emerging 479 documents. The search and screening were performed between September 2023 and April 2024. The filtering of the results was limited to «article» document types published in English, Spanish, or Portuguese between 2019 and 2024, resulting in 159 emerging documents from this first screening.

Based on the bibliometric analysis performed using VosViewer software, a co-occurrence network was mapped to analyze the density of the thematic connections of the emerging metadata of the documents, resulting in 1094 nodes of associations divided into four clusters (Fig. 1). In this case, the closer two nodes appear in the documents, the more robust the association between them and the closer they are on the map, so that aspects such as "job satisfaction" are closely related to studies on "leadership", "trust" or "job performance" and "internal Communication". This visualization provided a contextual view of the current direction of research in the field. It is important to note that almost a quarter of the scientific production on the subject points to the COVID-19 situation, creating a separate cluster (red) focused on interpersonal communication and workload in the context of the pandemic.

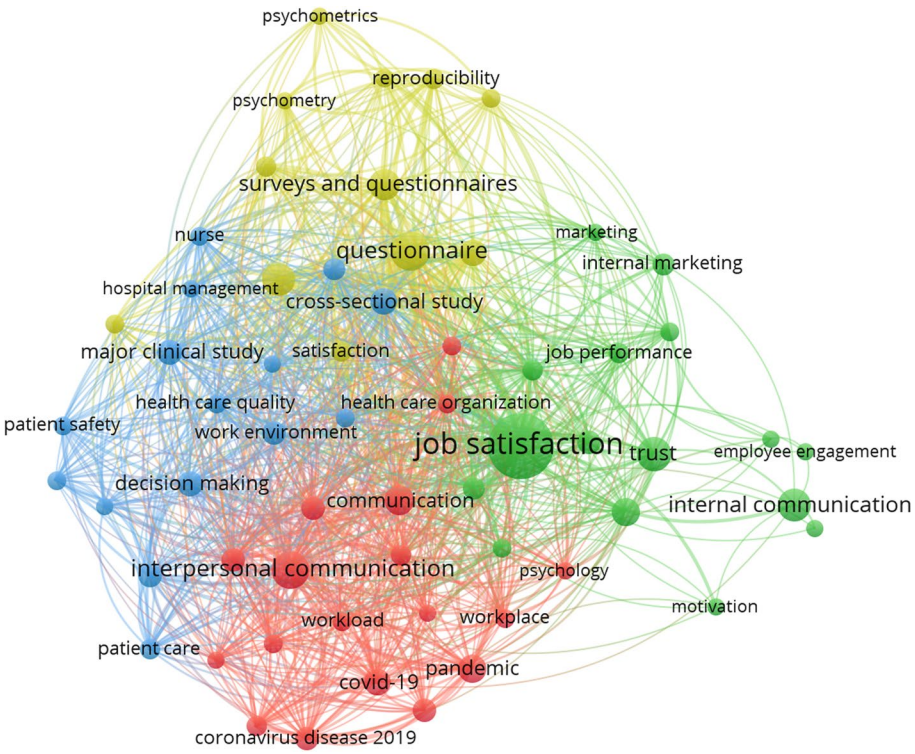


Fig. 1 Thematic correlations map

After the analysis of bibliometric correlations, the titles and abstracts of the documents ($n=159$) were read, which allowed for the exclusion of 110 studies that did not meet the necessary criteria to be considered eligible. For example, topics on the incidence of job satisfaction in the humanization of healthcare and clinical studies on the effect of burnout, among others, were discarded because they were not directly related to the objectives of this research. After this screening, $n=49$ studies were considered eligible (available at https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10837632), on which the full-text reading was developed (Fig. 2).

Organization of variables and emerging theoretical dimensions

From the literature review and document-based content analysis, the theoretical dimensions and indicators were extracted and organized into clusters. From these dimensions and emerging variables, a hermeneutic unit was created in AtlasTi v. 25 to organize them into families of codes and networks, which allowed for an initial organized taxonomy. Subsequently, a survey of a panel of experts was conducted to validate the proposed theoretical taxonomy of internal communication, which will allow, as a final step, the structuring of the internal communication development guide according to the three macro-dimensions of Happiness Management (Fig. 3).

The expert panel was conducted between April and June 2024. The panel consisted of 13 experts in internal communication, human resources, management, and organizational psychology, including 8 university professors/researchers and 5 from the professional or business sector. Inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) those with more than 10 years of experience in the field of internal communication, human resources, and/or industrial psychology; (2) those who considered themselves competent to validate a guide on dimensions and indicators of internal communication under the philosophy of Happiness Management; and (3) those who completed all the mandatory questions of the expert judgment survey. The experts were asked to assess the quality, concreteness, centrality, and importance of each dimension and its content.

Regarding the selection of experts, it is important to note that the scientific literature does not specify consistently how many experts are necessary to validate this procedure [34]. This is because the choice of experts is multifactorial and depends on aspects such as the number of available experts who have the necessary expertise on the subject [35], those who perceive themselves as having the capacity to evaluate the proposed instrument, and time or resource limitations [36]. However, for classical expert judgment methods, 5–10 experts are usually used, whereas other types of administrations, such as computer-based Delphi methods,

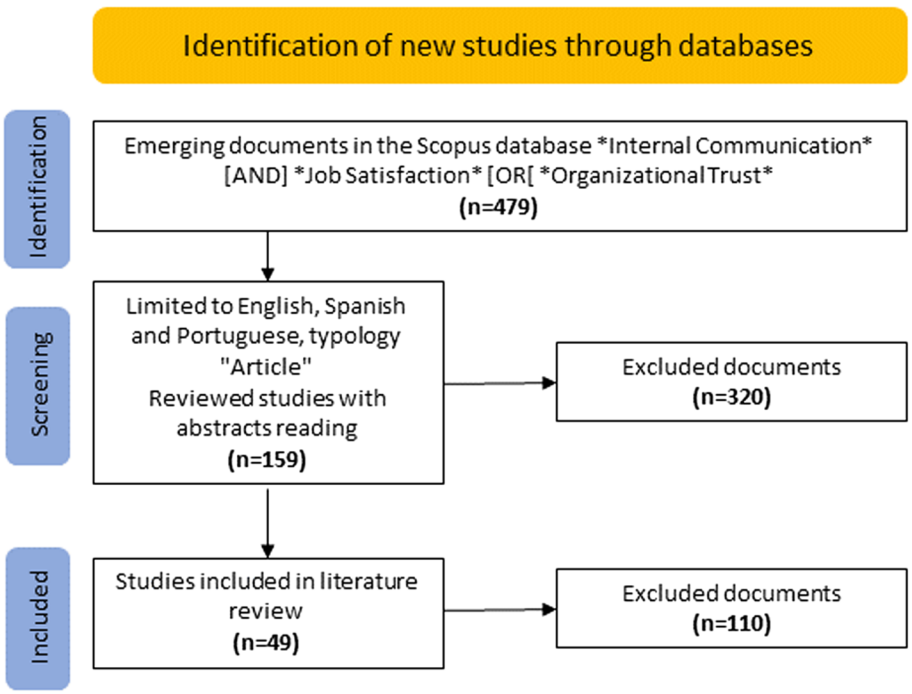


Fig. 2 Sample screening procedure - PRISMA

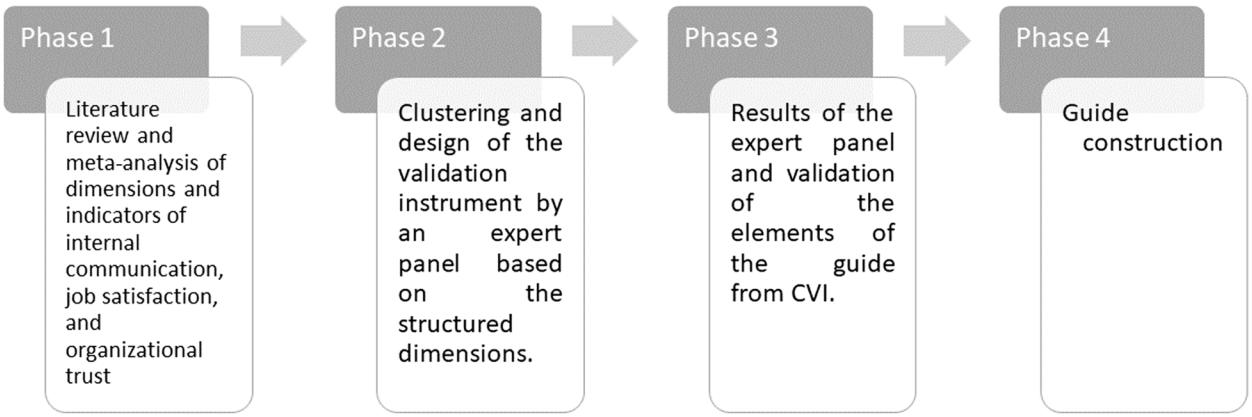


Fig. 3 Phases for the construction, validation and evaluation of the application guide

use larger samples [37, 38]. Budescu and Chen (2015) [39] conclude that good validation results are obtained when between 3 and 16 experts are used, with 6 being optimal. However, when there are many differences in the criteria between experts, it is always necessary to increase the number until there is redundancy, that is, sample saturation.

In addition to using the average of the responses as an indicator of validity, the Content Validity Index (CVI) was also used to measure the level of inter-judge agreement, which was calculated by adding the percentage agreement scores of all items that received a rating of "3" or "4" from the experts [40, 41].

$$CVI = \frac{N\ of\ raters\ giving\ a\ rating\ of\ 3\ or\ 4}{N\ total\ of\ raters}$$

Items are considered adequate if agreement is above 79%, questionable if agreement is 70–79% and unacceptable if agreement is below 69%. The initial models were evaluated in terms of the clarity, concreteness, centrality, and relevance of each structured dimension using a 4-point Likert scale (e.g., 1 = not clear, 4 = very clear).

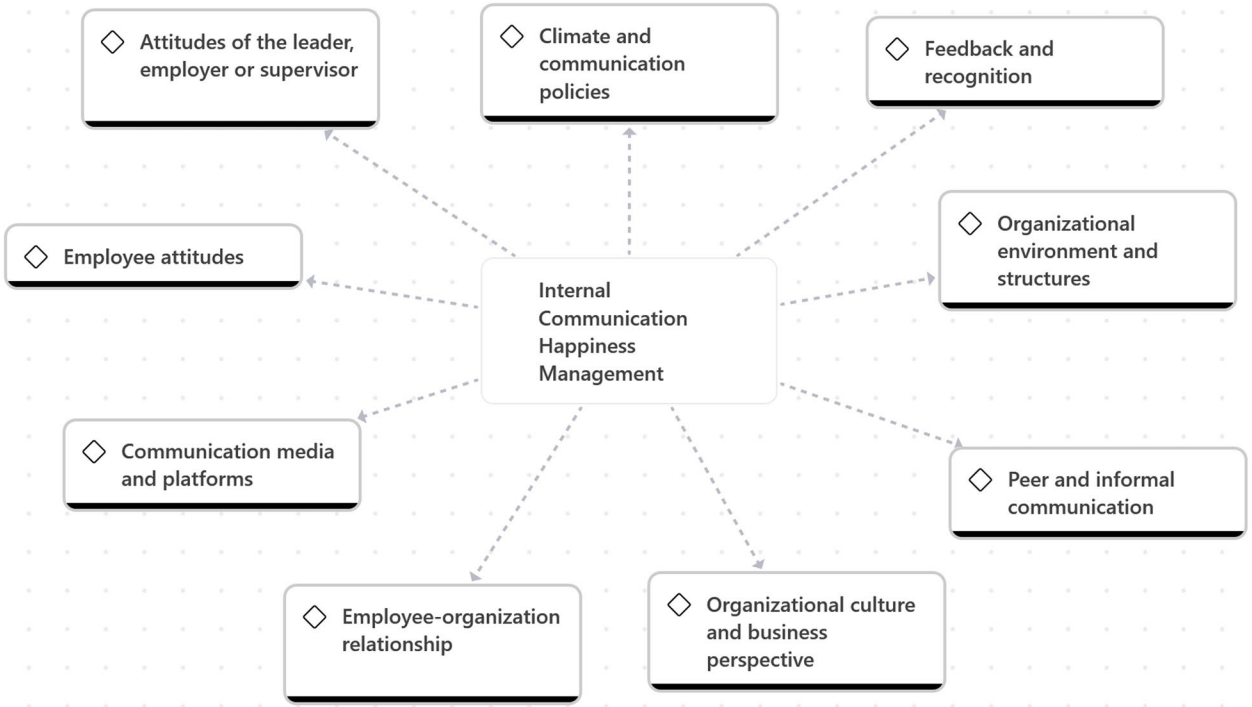


Fig. 4 Network of integrative dimensions of internal communication

Table 1 Theoretical constructs organized in integrative dimensions

Dimension	Variable	Authors
Attitudes of the leader, employer or supervisor	Level of HR involvement	Sahoo & Mohanty (2019) [42]
	Transformational leadership ability and performance	Sung & Hu (2021) [24]; Boukamcha (2023) [43]; Mohd et al. (2020) [44]; Meng & Berger [45]
	Reponsiveness	Goula et al. (2022) [46]; Akkaya et al. (2022) [47]
	Satisfaction with communication and relationship with immediate superior	Položki Vokić et al. (2021) [48]; Kim et al. (2023) [49]; Zamecník & Kozisec (2021) [50]
	Affective trust toward supervisors	Yue et al. (2023) [51]
	Empathetic listening / communication	Neill & Bowen (2021) [52]; Yue et al. (2023) [51]
	Assertive communication	Neill & Bowen (2021) [52]; Gómez-González & Gallardo-Echenique (2023) [53]
	Corporate symmetrical communication	Qin & Men (2023) [9]; Men & Sung (2022) [8]; Bowens et al. (2021) [54]
	Manager oriented to personal factors	Trofimov et al. (2019) [55]
	Democratic leadership style	Trofimov et al. (2019) [55]
	Supportive and participative leadership	Almaslukh et al. (2022) [56]
	Two-way communication between leadership and employees	Vazirnia et al. (2023) [57]
	Mutual consensus	Kim et al. (2023) [49]
	Management styles	Curilla et al. (2023) [58]
Climate and communication policies	Participative and employee supportive communication	Amadu & Anyarayor (2022) [59]
	Effective internal communication environment and strategies	Qin & Men (2023) [9]; Goula et al. (2022) [46]; Al Naggar (2022) [60]; Stol et al. (2024) [61]; Miao & Zhang (2024) [62]; Atouba (2021) [63]
	Symmetrical internal communication and openness in communication styles	Lee et al. (2022) [64]; Qin & Men (2023) [9]; Men & Sung (2022) [8]; Amadu & Anyarayor (2022) [59]
	Transparent internal/organizational communication	Lee et al. (2022) [64]; Kim et al. (2023) [49]; Miao & Zhang (2024) [62]
	Level of development of communication	Trofimov et al. (2019) [55]
	Internal attention to conflicts	Bowens et al. (2021) [54]
	Complete information	Almaslukh et al. (2022) [56]
	Recruitment communication and selection process	Gara & La Porte (2020) [65]
	Positive perceptions of internal communication and satisfaction	Tkalac Verčič & Men (2023) [66]; Santoso et al. (2023) [67]; Mangkang & Chutima (2022) [68]; Nemteanu et al. (2022) [69]; Lee et al. (2022) [64]; Boukamcha (2023) [43]; Mohd et al. (2020) [44]; Duarte & Silva (2023) [70]; Nguyen & Ha (2023) [71]; Curilla et al. (2023) [58]; Tankovic et al. (2022) [72]; Djordjevic et al. (2021) [73]
	Assertiveness among workers	Curilla et al. (2023) [58]
Feedback and recognition	Personal feedback satisfaction	Gómez-González & Gallardo-Echenique (2023) [53]; Položki Vokić et al. (2021) [48]; Zamecník & Kozisec (2021) [50]; Neill & Bowen (2021) [52]
	Transparent evaluation	Goula et al. (2022) [46]
	Reward and incentive systems	Nemteanu et al. (2022) [69]; Bowens et al. (2021) [54]; Mohd et al. (2020) [44]; Goula et al. (2022) [46]; Boukamcha (2023) [43]
	Perceived organizational support	Mangkang & Chutima (2022) [68]; Bowens et al. (2021) [54]; Duarte & Silva (2023) [70]; Meng & Berger (2022) [45]
	Propper remuneration perception	Curilla et al. (2023) [58]
Organizational environment and structures	Organizational structure	Sopow (2020) [74]

Table 1 (continued)

Dimension	Variable	Authors
	Job and organizational climate	Sopow (2020) [74]; Ravina-Ripoll et al. (2023) [75]
	Work harmony	Mangkang & Chutima (2022) [68]
	Knowledge	Nemteanu et al. (2022) [69]
	Structural empowerment	Boukamcha (2023) [43]
	Workload	Bowens et al. (2021) [54]
	Satisfaction with roles	Bowens et al. (2021) [54].
	Internal crisis communication practices	Al Katheeri et al. (2024) [76]
	Training and development	Mohd et al. (2020) [44]; Boukamcha (2023) [43]
	Institutional environmental building	Meng & Berger (2022) [45]
	Pay scale	Kim et al. (2023) [49]
Peer and informal communication	Satisfaction with horizontal communication	Položski Vokić et al. (2021) [48]
	Satisfaction with informal communication	Položski Vokić et al. (2021) [48]
	Informal communication behavior	Koch & Denner (2022) [77]
	Supportive peer communication	Qin & Men (2023) [9]
	Relations with colleagues	Trofimov et al. (2019) [55]
	Increase social interactions	Vazirnia et al. (2023) [57]
	Employees' regular interactions	Prabakaran & Patrick (2023) [78]
	Interpersonal relationships	Curilla et al. (2023) [58]
Organizational culture and business perspective	Digital transformation	Wuersch et al. (2023) [79]
	Brand-centered training	Sung & Hu (2021) [24]; Sahoo & Mohanty (2019) [42]
	Brand ideology	Sung & Hu (2021) [24]
	Innovation	Akkaya et al. (2022) [47]; Stol et al. (2024) [61]
	Intrapreneurship	Ravina-Ripoll et al. (2023) [75]
	Employability culture	LaGree et al. (2023) [80]
	Leadership empowerment	LaGree et al. (2023) [80]; Sahoo & Mohanty (2019) [42]
	Organizational/Corporate culture	LaGree et al. (2023) [80]; Sopow (2020) [74]; Trofimov et al. (2019) [55]; Meng & Berger (2022) [45]
	Organizational performance	Kazakov et al. (2020) [81]
	Intrinsic shared values / positive cultural values	Mangkang & Chutima (2022) [68]; Miao & Zhang (2024) [62]; Curilla et al. (2023) [58]
	Organizational philosophy	Mangkang & Chutima (2022) [68]
	Internalized mission statement	Miao & Zhang (2024) [62]
	Training and development	Almaslukh et al. (2022) [56]; Mohd et al. (2020) [44]
	Selection and appointment	Almaslukh et al. (2022) [56]; Gara & La Porte (2020) [65]
	Sense of community	Vazirnia et al. (2023) [57]; Sung & Hu (2021) [24]
Employee-organization relationship	Job satisfaction	Al Samman & Mohammed (2020) [82]; Sahoo & Mohanty (2019) [42]; Duarte & Silva (2023) [70]; Karaferis et al. (2022) [83]; Nguyen & Ha (2023) [71]; Kim et al. (2023) [49]; Atouba (2021) [63]
	Affective commitment	Al Samman & Mohammed (2020) [82]; Kurniawati & Raharja (2023) [84]
	Reliability	Goula et al. (2022) [46]
	Assurance	Goula et al. (2022) [46]
	Responsiveness	Goula et al. (2022) [46]; Akkaya et al. (2022) [47]
	Empathy	Goula et al. (2022) [46]
	Participation in decision-making	Al Naggar (2022) [60]
	Continual education	Al Naggar (2022) [60]
	Perceived job fit	Kurniawati & Raharja (2023) [84]

Table 1 (continued)

Dimension	Variable	Authors
	Perceived organization fit	Thai et al. (2023) [85]; Boukamcha (2023) [43]; Kim et al. (2023) [49]
	Satisfaction with organizational perspective	Gómez-González & Gallardo-Echenique (2023) [53]
	Organizational integration	Gómez-González & Gallardo-Echenique (2023) [53]
	Employees' understanding the meaning of their work	LaGree et al. (2023) [80]
	Employee-organization behaviors	Thai et al. (2023) [85]
	Employee-organization relationship quality	Lee et al. (2022) [64]; Men & Sung (2022) [8]; Duarte & Silva (2023) [70]
	Workplace engagement	Sopow (2020) [74]; Nguyen & Ha (2023) [71]; Sung & Hu (2021) [24]
	Perceived organizational support	Mangkang & Chutima (2022) [68]; Bowens et al. (2021) [54]; Duarte & Silva (2023) [70]; Meng & Berger (2022) [45]
	Skills capitalization	Nemteanu et al. (2022) [69]
	Employee job engagement	Lee et al. (2022) [64]; Nguyen & Ha (2023) [71]; Meng & Berger (2022) [45]
	Organizational engagement	Sopow (2020) [74]; Nguyen & Ha (2023) [71]; Yue et al. (2023)
	Positive psychological capital	Atouba (2021) [63]; Kurniawati & Raharja (2023) [84]
Communication media and platforms	Satisfaction with the quality of communication media	Položki Vokić et al. (2021) [48]
Employee attitudes	Teamwork	Al Naggar (2022) [60]
	Innovation	Stol et al. (2024) [61]; Akkaya et al. (2022) [47]
	Collaboration / Cooperation	Stol et al. (2024) [61]
	Ability	Eshet (2023) [86]
	Integrity	Eshet (2023) [86]
	Benevolence	Eshet (2023) [86]
	Commitment	Kurniawati & Raharja (2023) [84]
	Motivation	Kurniawati & Raharja (2023) [84]; Sahoo & Mohanty (2019) [42]; Zamecník & Kozisec (2021) [50]
	Personality	Kurniawati & Raharja (2023) [84]
	Job embeddedness	Akkaya et al. (2022) [47]
	Adaptative skills	LaGree et al. (2023) [80]
	Emotional wellness	Sopow (2020) [74]
	Perceived autonomy	Prabakaran & Patrick (2023) [78]
	Intrinsic rewards	Mohd et al. (2020) [44]

Results

Theoretical dimensions and variables of internal communication

From the reading and meta-analysis of the documents that were part of this study, 49 indicators and 172 variables were extracted (https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10991444). In order to organize these dimensions and variables into families of emerging codes, a Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) was carried out, resulting in 9 integrative dimensions of internal communication (Fig. 4).

QDA made it possible to eliminate or concentrate on duplicate variables and organize them within the nine emerging dimensions as families of codes. In this sense, the 172 variables initiated were made up of 99 theoretical variables (Table 1).

As shown in Table 1, the theoretical variables are distributed in a non-equitable manner, resulting in an unequal density by dimensions, with "Employee-organization relationship" concentrating 21 variables (21.1%) and, therefore, greater theoretical research interest,

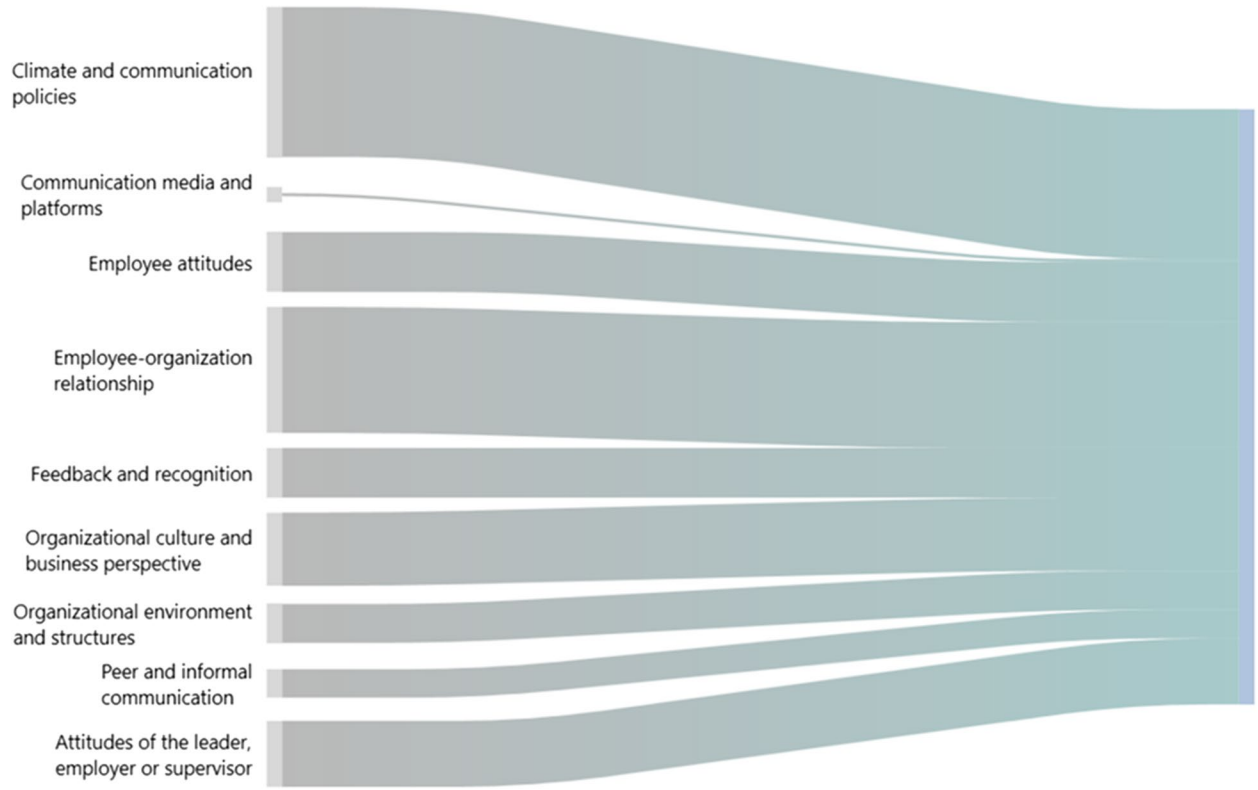


Fig. 5 Density semantic relation tree of indicators

Table 2 Results of the expert panel

Dimension	Clarity	Concreteness	Centrality	Relevance	Total	CVI	Score
Attitudes of the leader, employer or supervisor	3.384	3.076	3.076	3.461	3.25	0.82	2.66
Climate and communication policies	3.461	3.153	3	3.461	3.269	0.84	2.74
Feedback and recognition	3.461	3.153	3.230	3.692	3.384	0.84	2.84
Organizational environment and structures	3.538	3.538	3.384	3.538	3.5	0.92	3.22
Peer and informal communication	3.538	3.230	3.307	3.230	3.326	0.86	2.86
Organizational culture and business perspective	3.461	3.384	3.615	3.538	3.5	0.88	3.08
Employee-organization relationship	3.538	3.384	3.538	3.538	3.5	0.92	3.22
Communication media and platforms	3.076	2.923	3.076	3.307	3.096	0.75	2.32
Employee attitudes	3.384	3.461	3.461	3.538	3.461	0.92	3.18

Table 3 Suggestions from the panel of experts for the improvement of dimensions

Dimension	Suggestions
Climate and communication policies	Intense attention to crisis prevention and intercultural communication
Communication media and platforms	It may be helpful specify different types of channels such as one-way vs. two-way, mediated vs. interpersonal etc.
Employee attitudes	Include the variable "adaptation to change" in this dimension

Table 4 Theoretical constructs of internal communication validated by expert's panel

Dimension	Variable
Attitudes of the leader, employer or supervisor	Level of HR involvement
	Transformational leadership ability and performance
	Reponsiveness
	Satisfaction with communication and relationship with immediate superior
	Affective trust toward supervisors
	Empathetic listening / communication
	Assertive communication
	Corporate symmetrical communication
	Manager oriented to personal factors
	Democratic leadership style
	Supportive and participative leadership
	Two-way communication between leadership and employees
	Mutual consensus
	Management styles
Climate and communication policies	Participative and employee supportive communication
	Effective internal communication environment and strategies
	Symmetrical internal communication and openness in communication styles
	Transparent internal/organizational communication
	Level of development of communication
	Internal attention to conflicts
	Complete information
	Recruitment communication and selection process
	Positive perceptions of internal communication and satisfaction
	Assertiveness among workers
	Intense attention to crisis prevention and intercultural communication
Feedback and recognition	Personal feedback satisfaction
	Transparent evaluation
	Reward and incentive systems
	Perceived organizational support
	Propper remuneration perception
Organizational environment and structures	Organizational structure
	Job and organizational climate
	Work harmony
	Knowledge
	Structural empowerment
	Workload
	Satisfaction with roles
	Internal crisis communication practices
	Training and development
	Institutional environmental building
	Pay scale
Peer and informal communication	Satisfaction with horizontal communication
	Satisfaction with informal communication
	Informal communication behavior
	Supportive peer communication
	Relations with colleagues

Table 4 (continued)

Dimension	Variable
	Increase social interactions
	Employees' regular interactions
	Interpersonal relationships
Organizational culture and business perspective	Digital transformation
	Brand-centered training
	Brand ideology
	Innovation
	Intrapreneurship
	Employability culture
	Leadership empowerment
	Organizational/Corporate culture
	Organizational performance
	Intrinsic shared values / positive cultural values
	Organizational philosophy
	Internalized mission statement
	Training and development
	Selection and appointment
	Sense of community
Employee-organization relationship	Job satisfaction
	Affective commitment
	Reliability
	Assurance
	Responsiveness
	Empathy
	Participation in decision-making
	Continual education
	Perceived job fit
	Perceived organization fit
	Satisfaction with organizational perspective
	Organizational integration
	Employees' understanding the meaning of their work
	Employee-organization behaviors
	Employee-organization relationship quality
	Workplace engagement
	Perceived organizational support
	Skills capitalization
	Employee job engagement
	Organizational engagement
	Positive psychological capital
Communication media and platforms	Satisfaction with the quality of communication media
	One-way and two-way (bilateral) channels
	Mediated and interpersonal channels
Employee attitudes	Teamwork
	Innovation
	Collaboration / Cooperation
	Ability
	Integrity
	Benevolence

Table 4 (continued)

Dimension	Variable
	Commitment
	Motivation
	Personality
	Job embeddedness
	Adaptative skills
	Emotional wellness
	Perceived autonomy
	Intrinsic rewards
	Adaptation to change

while at the opposite extreme "Communication media and platforms," only reported one emerging variable (1.01%) (Fig. 5).

Expert panel results on dimensions and emerging theoretical variables

The structure of the dimensions and variables of internal communication was validated with an average ($\overline{X}$) of 3.36/4, achieving a level of inter-judge agreement (CVI) of 0.86, with an excellent concordance of 86% and an average score of 2.90/4 (high) (Table 2).

The most significant comments and recommendations made by expert panelists are as follows (Table 3).

All these suggestions have been taken into account when creating the internal communication development guide under the Happiness Management philosophy proposed in this research, incorporating in the «Climate and communication policies» dimension, the variable «Intense attention to crisis prevention and intercultural communication», in the «Communication media and platforms» dimension, the variables «One-way and two-way (bilateral) channels' and «Mediated and interpersonal channels», and finally, in the «Employee attitudes» dimension, the variable «Adaptation to change» (Table 4). In this sense, the final theoretical structure was defined in 103 variables, distributed unevenly across nine dimensions of internal communication.

Guide for the development of internal communication from the perspective of happiness management

The Happiness Management philosophy is a transversal mechanism for communicating, generating relational links, promoting the co-creation of internal communication, and managing leadership styles [18]. This philosophy requires constant review of the work environment, mediation protocols to resolve complex personal and professional issues, emotional training, and psychological support to employees, among others [21].

Taking into consideration that Happiness Management involves supporting the positive psychology of employees from three macro-dimensions: (1) the active construction of a healthy work environment and well-being; (2) the formation of the positive personality of employees; and (3) the active emotional experience during the working day [18–20], the proposed guide will organize the dimensions and variables of internal communication reviewed into these three macro-dimensions, seeking not only to organize the theoretical variables, but also to provide practitioners with a visual guide to these variables and constructs.

It is important to explain that, logically, many variables of each dimension can belong to several dimensions of internal communication (Table 4), and even to two macro-dimensions of Happiness Management simultaneously. In this sense, the effort of this categorization, rather than creating a homogeneous and immovable construct, lies in organizing the variables to provide a guide to Happiness Management in internal communication.

The active construction of a healthy work environment and well-being

Firstly, the macro-dimension Active construction of a healthy work environment and well-being is configured by three dimensions of internal communication, which are: (1) Attitudes of the leader, employer or supervisor; (2) Climate and Communication policies and; (3) Organizational environment and structures. According to the theoretical constructs of internal communication, to address this macro-dimension of Happiness Management, it is necessary to consider the 36 variables that are distributed among the three dimensions referred to above (Table 5).

Table 5 Construction of a healthy work environment and well-being macro-dimension development guide

HMD*	D*	Variables	Explanation/Tactics/Results
Construction of a healthy work environment and well-being	Attitudes of the leaders, employer or supervisor	Level of HR involvement	Fostering transparency, addressing employee concerns promptly, and facilitating effective feedback channels.
		Transformational leadership ability and performance	Inspiring and motivating employees, fostering a culture of openness and trust, and encouraging innovative ideas
		Responsiveness	Ensuring timely feedback, addressing issues promptly, and fostering a culture of active listening.
		Satisfaction with communication and relationship with immediate superior	Fostering trust, openness, mutual respect, and avoiding conflict and mobbing situations.
		Affective trust toward supervisors	Encourages open dialogue, honest feedback, and collaboration, leading to more effective information sharing and stronger team cohesion.
		Empathetic listening and communication	Reduces misunderstandings, and strengthens relationships, leading to a more cohesive and collaborative work environment.
		Assertive communication	Promoting clarity, respect, and confidence. It encourages direct, clear and honest exchanges.
		Corporate symmetrical communication	Ensuring balanced, two-way exchanges between employees and management.
		Manager oriented to personal factors	Understanding individual employee needs and motivations. This personalized approach fosters trust, engagement, and open dialogue.
		Democratic leadership style	Encouraging participation, valuing diverse opinions, and fostering a sense of ownership among employees
		Supportive and participative leadership	Fostering an inclusive environment where employees feel valued and heard.
		Two-way communication between leadership and employees	Encourages feedback, addresses concerns promptly, and ensures everyone is aligned with organizational goals
		Mutual consensus	This collaborative approach fosters trust, reduces conflicts, and aligns team members with shared goals, leading to more effective and harmonious information exchange
		Management styles	Adaptable leaders who value transparency, feedback, and collaboration create open channels for dialogue, align team goals, and enhance trust.
	Climate and Communication policies	Participative and employee supportive communication	Fostering inclusivity, trust, and engagement. This approach encourages open dialogue, values employee input, and creates a collaborative environment
		Effective internal communication environment and strategies	Ensures consistent messaging, encourages feedback, and aligns team efforts.

Table 5 (continued)

HMD*	D*	Variables	Explanation/Tactics/Results
		Symmetrical internal communication and openness in communication styles	Encourages honest dialogue, reduces misunderstandings, and aligns team efforts
		Transparent internal/organizational communication	This openness ensures everyone is informed, reduces misunderstandings, and encourages honest feedback.
		Level of development of communication	Ensuring clarity, consistency, and effectiveness. This leads to better information flow.
		Internal attention to conflicts	Addressing issues promptly and constructively. This approach reduces tension, leading to a more harmonious and collaborative work environment.
		Complete information	Ensuring everyone has access to all necessary details to achieve their work objectives and goals effectively and efficiently.
		Recruitment communication and selection process	Setting clear expectations, fostering transparency, and ensuring cultural fit.
		Positive perceptions of internal communication and satisfaction	When employees feel heard and valued, they are more likely to participate actively, share ideas, and collaborate effectively.
		Assertiveness among workers	Promoting clear, direct exchanges and reducing misunderstandings. This confidence in expressing ideas and concerns fosters a culture of respect and collaboration
		Intense attention to crisis prevention and intercultural communication	Fostering preparedness, reducing misunderstandings, and promoting inclusivity, leading to a more resilient and cohesive organization.
	Organizational environment and structures	Organizational structure	Clarifying roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines. This reduces confusion, ensures efficient information flow, and fosters accountability
		Job and organizational climate	When employees feel valued and supported, they are more likely to share ideas, provide feedback, and collaborate effectively.
		Work harmony	When employees get along well and respect each other, they are more likely to work together effectively.
		Knowledge	Ensuring employees are well-informed and capable of sharing accurate information.
		Structural empowerment	Providing employees with the authority, resources, and support they need to make decisions.
		Workload	Centralizing tasks, streamlining workflows, and providing real-time updates.
		Satisfaction with roles	When employees are satisfied with their roles, they are more engaged and motivated, leading to open and effective communication.

Table 5 (continued)

HMD*	D*	Variables	Explanation/Tactics/Results
		Internal crisis communication practices	Ensure timely, clear, and accurate information dissemination, reducing confusion and panic. This builds trust, maintains morale, and ensures coordinated responses,
		Training and development	Equipping employees with essential skills, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and promoting effective information sharing.
		Institutional environmental building	By creating a supportive and inclusive environment, employees feel valued and more willing to communicate effectively.
		Pay scale	A fair and transparent pay scale boosts employee morale and trust, leading to open and honest communication.

**HDM* Happiness Management Macro-dimension, *D* Dimensions

Table 6 Formation of the positive personality of employees macro-dimension development guide

HMD*	D*	Variables	Explanation/Tactics/Results
The formation of the positive personality of employees	Peer and informal Communication	Satisfaction with horizontal communication	Fostering collaboration, boosting morale, encouraging innovation, speeding up problem-solving, and strengthening team unity.
		Satisfaction with informal communication	Fostering camaraderie, enhancing morale, and increasing job satisfaction.
		Informal communication behavior	Encourages spontaneous interactions, builds trust, and creates a more connected and responsive work environment.
		Supportive peer communication	Encourages open dialogue, quick problem-solving, and stronger interpersonal relationships, leading to a more cohesive and efficient work environment.
		Relations with colleagues	Leads to a more cohesive work environment, quicker problem-solving, and increased overall productivity.
		Increase social interactions	Fostering stronger relationships, boosting morale, and encouraging open dialogue.
		Employees' regular interactions	Leads to better collaboration, quicker problem-solving, and a more cohesive work environment
		Interpersonal relationships	Fostering trust, encouraging open dialogue, and enhancing collaboration.
	Organizational culture and business perspective	Digital transformation	Enabling real-time collaboration, enhancing employee engagement, and streamlining information sharing through digital tools like instant messaging and online platforms.
		Brand-centered training	Aligning employees with the brand's values and goals, fostering a unified message.
		Brand ideology	Aligning employees with the company's values and mission, fostering a unified message.
		Innovation	Introducing new tools, platforms and methods, fostering a culture of open dialogue, and encouraging creative problem-solving.
		Intrapreneurship	Fostering a culture of innovation, encouraging open dialogue, and empowering employees to share ideas.
		Employability culture	Fostering continuous learning, enhancing employee engagement, and promoting adaptability.
		Leadership empowerment	Fostering a culture of openness, providing clear guidance, and recognizing contributions. This empowers employees, enhances engagement, and motivates them to achieve their best.
		Organizational/Corporate culture	Encouraging open dialogue, and aligning employees with shared values and goals.
		Organizational performance	Fostering a culture of excellence, encouraging transparency, and aligning employees with common goals.

Table 6 (continued)

HMD*	D*	Variables	Explanation/Tactics/Results
		Intrinsic shared values / positive cultural values	Fostering trust, encouraging open dialogue, and aligning employees with shared goals.
		Organizational philosophy	Aligning employees with shared values and goals, fostering a culture of trust and openness.
		Internalized mission statement	Aligning employees with the organization's core values and goals.
		Training and development	Enhancing employees' skills, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and promoting engagement.
		Selection and appointment	Ensuring the right fit for roles, fostering a culture of transparency, and aligning new hires with organizational values.
		Sense of community	Fostering trust, encouraging open dialogue, and enhancing collaboration.
	Employee-organization relationship	Job satisfaction	Satisfied employees are more likely to collaborate effectively, share information freely, and contribute to a cohesive and productive workplace1.
		Affective commitment	Fostering a strong emotional bond between employees and the organization.
		Reliability	Fostering trust, ensuring consistent information sharing, and enhancing accountability.
		Assurance	Ensuring consistent and clear messaging, and enhancing employee confidence.
		Responsiveness	Quick responses help address issues promptly, reduce misunderstandings, and create a more dynamic and efficient work environment.
		Empathy	Fosters understanding and trust among team members. It helps in resolving conflicts, enhancing collaboration, and creating a supportive work environment.
		Participation in decision-making	Empowers employees, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability.
		Continual education	Keeps employees updated on best practices and new skills, fostering a culture of learning and adaptability.
		Perceived job fit	When employees feel their skills and roles align, they are more likely to share ideas, collaborate effectively, and contribute to a cohesive work environment.
		Perceived organization fit	Enhances employee alignment with company values and culture, fostering a sense of belonging.
		Satisfaction with organizational perspective	Aligns employees with the company's vision and goals, fostering a unified direction.
		Organizational integration	Fosters a cohesive work environment by aligning departments and processes. This alignment enhances communication flow, reduces silos, and promotes collaboration.

Table 6 (continued)

HMD*	D*	Variables	Explanation/Tactics/Results
		Employees' understanding the meaning of their work	This sense of purpose fosters open communication, as employees are more likely to share ideas, feedback, and collaborate effectively.
		Employee-organization behaviors	Positive employee-organization behaviors, such as mutual respect and alignment with company values, foster a collaborative and open communication environment
		Employee-organization relationship quality	Encourages open, honest communication and collaboration, leading to more effective problem-solving and alignment with organizational goals.
		Workplace engagement	Boosts morale and commitment, leading to more proactive and open communication.
		Perceived organizational support	Boosts employee morale and loyalty. This support encourages open communication, as employees feel valued and confident in sharing ideas and feedback.
		Skills capitalization	Support leverages employees' strengths, fostering a culture of recognition and growth.
		Employee job engagement	Enhances motivation and commitment, leading to more proactive and open communication.
		Organizational engagement	Fosters a sense of belonging and commitment among employees.
		Positive psychological capital	Positive psychological capital, including confidence, hope, resilience, and optimism, enhances employee well-being and engagement.

**HDM* Happiness Management Macro-dimension, *D* Dimensions

The formation of the positive personality of employees

The macro-dimension «The formation of the positive personality of employees» is also configured by three dimensions of internal communication: (1) peer and informal communication, (2) organizational culture and business perspective, and (3) employee–organization relationship. According to the theoretical constructs of internal communication, to address this macro-dimension of Happiness Management, it is necessary to take into account the 44 variables that are distributed among the three dimensions mentioned above (Table 6).

The active emotional experience during the working day

The macro-dimension «The active emotional experience during the working day», is configured by the remaining three dimensions of internal communication: (1) Communication media and platforms; (2) Feedback and recognition and; (3) Employee attitudes. According to the theoretical constructs of internal communication, to address this macro-dimension of Happiness Management it would be necessary to take into account the 23 variables that are distributed among the three dimensions referred to above (Table 7).

Conclusions

This study explores the integration of the Happiness Management perspective into internal communication, with the aim of enhancing employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. This research systematically reviewed the literature and conducted a meta-analysis to identify key dimensions and indicators of internal communication from a Happiness Management perspective. These dimensions were validated by a panel of experts, resulting in a comprehensive guide for the development of internal communication strategies.

Table 7 Active emotional experience during the working day macro-dimension development guide

HMD*	D*	Variables	Explanation
The active emotional experience during the working day	Communication media and platforms	Satisfaction with the quality of communication media	Fostering clarity, reducing misunderstandings, and promoting timely information exchange.
		One-way and two-way (bilateral) channels	One-way channels ensure clear, consistent messaging from leadership, while two-way channels foster feedback, engagement, and collaboration.
		Mediated and interpersonal channels	Mediated channels (emails, intranets) ensure consistent, wide-reaching information dissemination, while interpersonal channels (face-to-face meetings) build trust, rapport, and immediate feedback.
	Feedback and recognition	Personal feedback satisfaction	Employees feel valued and heard, leading to more effective collaboration, problem-solving, and overall organizational cohesion.
		Transparent evaluation	Employees understand performance expectations and outcomes, fostering open dialogue, continuous improvement, and a collaborative culture.
		Reward and incentive systems	Recognizing contributions fosters a positive, communicative culture, driving engagement and productivity.
		Perceived organizational support	Employees feel valued and supported, leading to more effective information sharing, collaboration, and a positive work environment.
		Propper remuneration perception	Fostering fairness, satisfaction, and trust.
	Employee attitudes	Teamwork	When team members work together effectively, they share information more freely, solve problems collectively, and build a supportive environment.
		Innovation	Encouraging creative solutions, open dialogue, and continuous improvement.
		Collaboration / Cooperation	Build a supportive environment, enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.
		Ability	Ensuring competence, confidence, and clarity in interactions. Skilled employees communicate effectively, share knowledge, and collaborate efficiently.
		Integrity	When employees act with integrity, they communicate openly and ethically, leading to a more cohesive and reliable organizational culture.
		Benevolence	When employees act with kindness and consideration, they build trust and openness.
		Commitment	Improves internal communication by fostering dedication, reliability, and consistency.
		Motivation	Driving engagement, enthusiasm, and proactive information sharing.
		Personality	When employees bring their unique traits, they enhance interactions, build stronger relationships, and create a dynamic, inclusive work environment.

Table 7 (continued)

HMD*	D*	Variables	Explanation
		Job embeddedness	When employees feel deeply integrated into their roles and the organization, they communicate more openly, share information freely, and collaborate effectively.
		Adaptative skills	Employees who adapt well to changes communicate more effectively, collaborate efficiently, and contribute to a dynamic, resilient organizational culture.
		Emotional wellness	Fostering a positive, supportive environment. When employees are emotionally well, they communicate more openly, handle conflicts better, and collaborate effectively, leading to a healthier, more cohesive workplace.
		Perceived autonomy	Fostering trust, empowerment, and initiative.
		Intrinsic rewards	When employees find personal fulfillment in their work, they communicate more openly, share ideas freely, and collaborate effectively.
		Adaptation to change	Fostering flexibility, resilience, and proactive problem-solving.

**HDM* Happiness Management Macro-dimension, *D* Dimensions



Fig. 6 Internal communication dimensions from a happiness management perspective macro-dimensions

The research identified nine dimensions of internal communication: leadership attitudes, communication climate, feedback and recognition, organizational environment, peer communication, organizational culture, employee-organization relationship, communication media, and employee attitudes. These dimensions encompassed 103 variables and provided a detailed framework for internal communication. The dimensions and indicators were validated with a high level of agreement among experts, achieving a Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.86. This indicates the high reliability and relevance of the proposed framework for internal communication.

The identified dimensions were organized into three macro-dimensions of Happiness Management: active construction of a healthy work environment, formation of positive employee personality, and active emotional experience during the workday (Fig. 6). This categorization aligns internal communication strategies with the principles of Happiness Management, promoting employee well-being, and organizational success.

This study provides a practical guide for organizations to implement internal communication strategies that foster employee well-being and engagement. By focusing on the identified dimensions and indicators, organizations can create a supportive and positive work environment, enhancing overall performance and satisfaction.

Integrating Happiness Management into internal communication is a promising approach for improving employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. The validated framework offers a comprehensive guide for developing internal communication strategies that align with Happiness Management principles. Future research should explore the application of this framework in different organizational contexts to further validate its effectiveness and adaptability.

Authors' contributions

Conceptualization: L.R.; Data curation: L.R.; Formal analysis: L.R, B.C.A; Research: L.R, B.C.A.; Methodology: L.R.; Supervision: L.R; Visualization: L.R, B.C.A.; Drafting -original draft-: B.C.A; Drafting -revision and editing-: L.R., B.C.A. All authors have approved the submitted version and have agreed both to be personally accountable for the author's own contributions.

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Data availability

Sequence data that support the findings of this study have been deposited in Zenodo: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10837632.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Approval by an ethics committee was not necessary because the present study was of a documental nature.

Consent to participate

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

Author details

[1]Department of Communication Sciences and Sociology, Rey Juan Carlos University, Cam. del Molino, 5, Fuenlabrada, Madrid 28942, Spain. [2]University of Design, Innovation and Technology (UDIT), Av. de Alfonso XIII, 97, Chamartín, Madrid 28016, Spain. [3]ESAI Business School, Espiritu Santo University, Av. Samborondón 5, Samborondón, Guayaquil 092301, Ecuador.

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