
MODERN STRATEGIES FOR EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND CORPORATE CULTURE

Miroslava OSTRIHOŇOVÁ

Department of Business Finance, Faculty of of Business Management,
University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia

Zuzana HAJDUOVÁ

Department of Business Finance, Faculty of of Business Management,
University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia

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Abstract

The paper identifies and evaluates some selected dimensions of corporate culture that contribute to employee motivation and engagement, linking them to happiness management, employee well-being, gender equality, and inclusion. If corporate culture is the space of an organization, then employees are the elements that must function within this space to help the organization achieve its goals. The ideal state is one where corporate culture becomes the culture of each individual, and at the same time, each individual contributes the best part of themselves to it. It reveals that the absence of happiness management in organizations leads to accumulated stress, emotional exhaustion, or psychological issues among employees, potentially resulting in burnout. In this context, artificial intelligence (AI) emerges as an intriguing factor with varying perceptions. From the perspective of progress and employee support, AI can be perceived both as a tool and as a colleague. In today's era of technological advancement, AI presents a new challenge, with ongoing studies attempting to explore its implications. However, rapid technological development continuously brings along new insights. AI is gradually becoming an integral part of every organization and individual. The findings indicate that happiness management, well-being, gender equality, inclusion, and AI are highly relevant topics. Understanding—or at least striving to understand—they are not only beneficial but essential for organizations to achieve their strategic objectives.

Keywords: engagement, management, motivation, corporate culture, artificial intelligence

JEL Classification: M12, C67, L88

Introduction and theoretical background

In the past few decades of the 21st century, there have been significant concerns among companies in the academic and professional world to examine the subjective well-being of citizens (Sanagust in-Fons et al., 2020), as well as happiness at work within organizations (Foncubierta-Rodríguez et al., 2020). The latter concern has become prominent and gained considerable significance after the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly during the 'Great Resignation.' One reason for this phenomenon is the significant number of companies that, in today's globalized society, have unknowingly become toxic and stressful, creating a conflict-ridden environment for their human capital. These and other factors limit the mental health and professional growth of their workforce. This situation is exacerbated when it coexists with leadership styles focused merely on achieving short- and medium-term speculative successes in the age of artificial intelligence (Abell an-Sevilla and Ortiz-de-Urbina-Criado, 2023; Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2024).

Motivation is key for employees. Motivation is the force that enables employees to act toward a specific goal (Johanson et al., 2000; Mura et al,2024). It determines outcomes such as productivity, performance, and perseverance. Arshadia (2010) confirmed the positive influence between motivation and performance in his study. Motivation includes the support of autonomy, meaning that managers in the organization pay attention to every decision that leads to the well-being of employees. Additionally, appropriate regulations are in place to cover the needs of flexible work. Motivation is fundamental in businesses, such as employee competence and relationship building (Arshadia, 2010; Van den Berghe et al., 2014; Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020).

Currently, the importance of happiness management is gaining prominence. At first glance, this may seem like an overestimated factor, but scientific research points to the importance of employee happiness and its relevance and dependence on performance and productivity.

The success of an organization largely depends on the compatibility of its employees with the corporate culture. Any imbalance between these variables can adversely affect productivity and business success. (Corolyn L. Armada, 2024; Dubravska et al,2015).

New literature on happiness management shows that corporations focused only on maximizing the economic benefits for their shareholders do not cultivate happiness at work within their companies (Rando-Cueto et al., 2023). Through this asset, company leadership can implement a philosophy of happiness management as an organizational culture, providing well-being, prosperity, and quality of life for their human capital (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2024).

Human resources need to be managed professionally to create a balance between the needs of employees, the demands and capabilities of the business, and the importance of quality human resources for the development of the company (Mappamiring et al., 2020; Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020)."

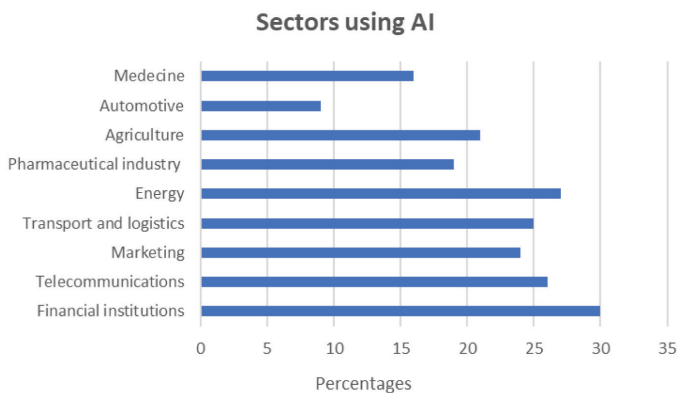
This paper focuses on the analysis of existing literature and research in the field of corporate culture, its impact on employee motivation, and how modern technologies, especially AI, influence the process. How AI affects or changes behavior is being examined in this paper. Based on these insights, it will be possible to raise awareness about AI and formulate recommendations for managers on how to utilize corporate culture to motivate employees effectively, with the goal of improving performance and achieving business objectives.

Material and methods

Official statistics on company culture are usually part of broader research and surveys focusing on the working environment, employment or productivity. These statistics are often published in various surveys conducted by reputable organizations such as Gallup Deloitte. These statistics include data on employee engagement, work culture ratings, perceptions of leadership style, and satisfaction with the work environment. Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are currently used by 36% of Slovak companies, with another 34% expecting to adopt them in the near future. A third of these companies plan to implement AI within one year, and nearly half within three years. The primary benefits that companies expect from AI include faster data processing, better analysis, and forecasts (71%), higher work productivity (52%), and higher work quality and outputs (31%).

AI is already partially affecting the labor market, as 11% of companies in the survey reported that the implementation of AI led to a reduction in the number of jobs, mostly in manufacturing and administration. On the other hand, 4% of businesses indicated that the number of jobs increased after the introduction of AI tools (Fig.1).

Figure 1 Sectors using AI



Source: own processing using data from the ITAS (2024)

The quantitative research survey was conducted using a questionnaire that allows for the provision of normative information about organizational culture while being less resource-intensive in terms of time and financial resources compared to clinical methods (e.g., interviews) and ethnographic methods (e.g., participant observation). Therefore, a questionnaire survey is the most suitable method for analyzing organizational culture, provided the research focuses on measurable manifestations of culture. The questionnaires were distributed in printed form within the organization due to the nature of the research. The survey consists of two parts. In each part, respondents were provided with instructions on how to respond to statements or answer questions. The collected data were subsequently converted into an electronic format.

This approach is advantageous because it facilitates systematic data collection and analysis, while the structured nature of the questionnaire ensures consistency in responses. Furthermore, by utilizing quantitative analysis, the research is positioned to offer generalizable insights into organizational culture.

The survey focused on testing the following hypotheses:

- The hypothesis regarding the perception of AI and its impact on employee satisfaction is statistically formulated as follows: We are examining whether there is a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between two groups of employees:
Group A: Employees who perceive AI as a colleague (collaborative approach)
Group B: Employees who perceive AI as a tool (neutral or mechanical usage)
To compare the average satisfaction between these two groups, we can use:
Independent two-sample t-test: This test will determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in average satisfaction between the groups. The test statistic (t) and p-value will help us ascertain whether the observed differences are or not due to random variations in the data. In this analysis, employee satisfaction will be the dependent variable, and the independent variable will be a dichotomous variable (0 = AI as a tool, 1 = AI as a colleague). The significance of the regression coefficient will indicate whether the perception of AI has a significant impact on overall employee satisfaction.
- We hypothesize that a higher rate of AI usage may have either a positive or negative relationship with employee satisfaction. Simple Linear Regression: In this analysis, the independent variable will be the intensity of AI usage (measured on a continuous scale, e.g., the percentage of time spent working with AI), and the dependent variable will be overall employee satisfaction. Testing Statistical Significance: The significance of the regression coefficient will allow us to verify whether there is a significant relationship between the rate of AI usage and satisfaction. If the regression coefficient is positive and significant, it will indicate a positive association; a negative coefficient would suggest a negative impact.
- We hypothesize that work flexibility, the number of training hours completed, and the level of team collaboration may have both individual and cumulative effects on employee satisfaction. Multiple Linear Regression: In this analysis, employee satisfaction will be the dependent variable, and the independent variables will be work flexibility (scaled variable), number of training hours (continuous variable), and team collaboration (scaled variable). Assessment of Significance: Evaluating the significance of individual regression coefficients will show whether any of these factors play a dominant role in explaining satisfaction. If some factors interact (e.g., effective training may enhance the positive impact of team collaboration), we can include interaction terms in the model.

Results and discussion

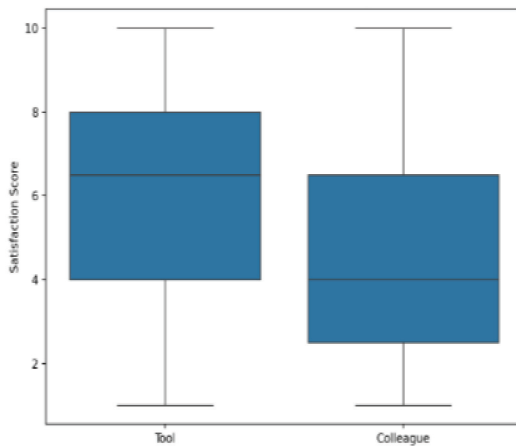
In this section, we will focus on the results of our analysis. From February 2024 to November 2024 we conducted a survey in manufacturing companies within the development and innovation departments. The goal of the survey was to explore modern motivation tools and organizational culture in collaboration with artificial intelligence (AI). In total, 67 completed questionnaires were collected. This research aims to provide insights into the role of AI and other work-related factors in shaping

organizational culture and employee satisfaction. The results could contribute to developing effective strategies for enhancing motivation and well-being in the workplace.

Most employees perceive AI as either a tool (Tool) or a colleague (Colleague). Employee satisfaction ranges from 1 to 10, with an average score of 5.61. The rate of AI usage varies significantly, with an average value of 52.55. Flexibility and training hours also vary, with an average flexibility rating of 5.10 and an average of 9.82 training hours. The average team collaboration rating is 5.84. From this research, we are selecting some findings.

Satisfaction distribution according to AI perception (Fig. 2).

Figure 2 Satisfaction distribution according to AI



Source: own processing

This graph illustrates a significant difference in satisfaction between employees who perceive AI as a tool and those who perceive it as a colleague. Employees who view AI as a tool exhibit higher median satisfaction. The graph also shows a slight negative correlation between the rate of AI usage and satisfaction, suggesting that higher AI usage does not necessarily lead to increased satisfaction. Expanding on this, the data indicates that employees who see AI as a tool may feel more empowered and supported in their tasks, leading to higher satisfaction levels. Conversely, those who perceive AI as a colleague might experience challenges in collaboration or integration, potentially lowering their satisfaction. Additionally, the negative correlation between AI usage and satisfaction could imply that excessive reliance on AI might introduce complexities or reduce the perceived value of human contributions, thereby affecting overall satisfaction.

This nuanced understanding highlights the importance of balancing AI integration with human-centric approaches to maintain and enhance employee satisfaction. There is a statistically significant difference in satisfaction ($p = 0.043 < 0.05$): This indicates that the difference in satisfaction levels between the two groups is statistically significant, meaning it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Employees perceiving AI as a tool are more satisfied (average 6.18) than those perceiving it as

a colleague (average 4.78): This suggests that employees who view AI as a tool tend to have higher satisfaction levels compared to those who see it as a colleague. The relationship between the rate of AI usage and satisfaction was presented with the following results, demonstrating a slight negative correlation between the rate of AI usage and satisfaction. This suggests that higher AI usage does not necessarily lead to increased satisfaction.

The analysis reveals the following correlations: Strongest Positive Correlation: Team collaboration (0.20). This indicates that higher levels of team collaboration are associated with increased satisfaction. Slight Negative Correlations: Training hours (-0.14) and AI usage rate (-0.13). These suggest that an increase in training hours and AI usage rate is slightly associated with a decrease in satisfaction. Minimal Impact: Flexibility (-0.01). This shows that flexibility has a negligible effect on satisfaction. These findings highlight the importance of team collaboration in enhancing employee satisfaction, while also suggesting that excessive training and AI usage might have a slightly adverse effect. Flexibility appears to have little to no impact on overall satisfaction. The correlation matrix of all factors shows the correlation coefficients between each pair of factors, indicating the strength and direction of their relationships (Tab.1).

Table 1 The correlation matrix

	Satisfaction_Score	AI_Perception	Flexibility_Rating	Training_Hours	Team_Collaboration
Satisfaction_Score	1.00	-0.13	-0.01	-0.14	0.20
AI_Perception	-0.13	1.00	0.28	0.14	-0.12
Flexibility_Rating	-0.01	0,28	1.00	-0.11	0.06
Training_Hours	-0.14	0,14	-0.11	1.00	0.01
Team_Collaboration	-0.20	-0.12	0.06	0.01	1.00

Source: own processing

Training_Hours has a very high loading on the first factor, indicating that this factor primarily captures information about the amount of training or education. Practically, this means that variability in the number of training hours significantly influences this latent factor. Team_Collaboration has a negative loading on the second factor, which may suggest that this factor is closely related to the nature of team collaboration. Satisfaction_Score and Flexibility_Rating have moderate negative loadings on both factors, signalling that they are dispersed across both latent dimensions. AI_Perception has relatively weak loadings on both factors, which may indicate that this variable does not significantly contribute to explaining the latent structure compared to the other variables. Overall, the analysis suggests that there are two main dimensions or factors that capture the combined effects of the given variables. One factor is primarily dominated by the number of training hours, while the second factor exhibits a strong relationship with the nature of team collaboration.

In this way, we can reduce the complexity of the original model and further explore how these latent factors relate, for example, to overall satisfaction or other business indicators.

The literature analysis has shown that corporate culture and its impact on management and other employees are subjects of extensive research. Among the most frequently addressed topics is the impact on management. Current trends indicate that an essential part of effective management is the implementation of modern motivational tools aimed at fostering a positive mindset, a sense of happiness, and an optimistic outlook, referred to as happiness management. It is stated that a happy manager leads happy employees, and together they form a happy organization that produces better results. The current scientific and technological progress brings about rapid development in technologies, and AI is precisely the technology that advances in every minute of its existence. It has its supporters, who can be called enthusiasts, but it also has its detractors, who are critics and constantly express concerns about where this progress will lead.

Previous scientific studies empirically show that the absence of corporate happiness in companies is synonymous with stress, emotional exhaustion, or psychological problems among their internal employees (Robina-Ramirez et al., 2023a,b). Not only do these elements and many others negatively affect work performance and motivation but they also lead to suboptimal work performance due to ineffective and incorrect decisions from a functional and operational perspective. Under such conditions, it is not surprising that the professional activity of employees is characterized by low productivity and low innovative work behavior (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2024).

A closer look at this phenomenon shows that to reverse this situation, it is necessary to find a source of happiness at work. A significant chain of academic studies suggests that the dimension of happiness at work plays a crucial role in proactively enhancing creativity skills, intrapreneurship, and digital innovation among all members of organizations (Galiano Coronil et al., 2021). In this line of research, a substantial part of the scientific work recognizes that an attractive philosophy of happiness management represents the foundation of business culture to increase people's happiness at work (Hatami et al., 2023). This appealing social culture allows corporate management to take managerial steps to stimulate customers' internal emotions through creativity, organizational justice, or effective communication. It requires happy leaders who support management within their organizations, prioritizing the generation of ideas from their employees (Ruiz-Rodriguez et al., 2023). In this context, companies can improve their operational and managerial processes. This is a necessary aspect to consider with the advent of artificial intelligence, which brings very drastic changes in the organization of work in corporations in the post-COVID-19 economy (Sanchez-Hernandez et al., 2023; Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2024).

Based on the results of our analysis, we have identified key areas where strategic measures need to be implemented to optimize the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in organizations, to improve team collaboration, and to increase overall employee satisfaction.

- *Supporting the Perception of AI as a Tool:* To ensure that artificial intelligence is not met with resistance but it is perceived as an effective tool for improving work processes, it is essential to implement targeted and continuous communication within organizations. A key element is educating employees through targeted awareness campaigns and training that highlight the practical benefits of AI and demonstrate its real-world applications in everyday work environments.

- *Tailoring AI Usage:* The survey results indicate that the blanket implementation of AI without considering individual needs and work styles may have limited effectiveness. Therefore, it is important to tailor the level of AI usage to reflect the specific needs of individuals and teams. This may include the flexible adaptation of AI solutions according to work tasks, customized training for individual departments, and the gradual implementation of new tools with an emphasis on their real added value.
- *Enhancing Team Collaboration as a Key Factor of Satisfaction:* The survey results show that team collaboration is one of the most significant factors influencing employee satisfaction. Organizations should actively promote a culture of collaboration, whether through team workshops, joint projects, or the introduction of mentorship among colleagues. At the same time, it is important that technological solutions, including AI, support effective communication and the coordination of teams rather than their isolation.
- *Re-evaluating the Content and Form of Training Programs:* The survey findings suggest that the mere number of training hours may not be a decisive factor for success. It is therefore necessary to analyze the effectiveness of existing educational programs and focus on their quality. Practically oriented training, interactive workshops, and simulations of real work situations may be more effective than passive lectures.
- *Personalized Approaches to AI Utilization:* Different employees and departments may have varying requirements for AI usage. Personalized training and individual counselling will enable employees to understand how AI can help them in their specific work area, thereby increasing the adoption of these technologies while minimizing resistance to change.

Conclusion

The examined scientific studies are based on theoretical foundations and other empirical studies. Based on the analysis of the literature and key studies, we have demonstrated that the correlation between corporate culture and employee motivation, as well as modern motivational tools, is very strong.

The findings from this paper are intended to serve as a tool for managers in establishing modern employee motivation tools. The study should contribute to understanding how companies can effectively utilize corporate culture to support their employees using modern motivational tools such as happiness management, gender equality, wellbeing, and artificial intelligence (AI).

The research should also explore the impact of technological innovations on corporate culture and employee motivation. Taking globalization into account, it is also important to examine cultural differences between regions and countries and their impact on employees in a global context. The aim of this paper was to explore the connection between corporate culture and modern employee motivation tools. Furthermore, it aims to encourage readers to think about the attractive philosophy of happiness management, which is associated with productivity, innovation, competitiveness, and intrapreneurship (Galvan-Vela et al., 2021).

Company managers will thus be able to coexist with the five horsemen of the apocalypse, ensuring the work and satisfaction of their human capital (Robina-Ramirez et al., 2023b). On the other hand, they will be able to design organizational cultures based on creativity, emotional reward, happy leadership, and corporate social

responsibility (Diaz-Garcia et al., 2023). These elements are the foundation for building a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable economy.

In this approach, this paper seeks to bring the fact to the attention of academic and professional workers that artificial intelligence will bring about many challenges to management, including the introduction of new management models, the success of which will depend on those leaderships where the culture of happiness management is present as the grail of quality of life, corporate wellbeing, and productive excellence (Jimenez-Marin et al., 2020).

In conclusion, we would like to thank the authors of the scientific study for thoroughly processing the contributions of various authors and providing us with a good springboard for opinions in the field of AI, happiness management, and gender equality (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2023; Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2024).

Current developments indicate that the importance of corporate culture and its impact on employee motivation is becoming increasingly significant, and the use of modern motivational tools is a necessity. Globalization and digitalization create an environment where rapid adaptability and innovation are key. Companies that can effectively leverage their culture to support innovative and strategic decisions will have a competitive advantage. Technological progress allows for better analysis and interpretation of large amounts of data, which can support more informed and faster decision-making. A culture of openness to technology and data-driven approaches will therefore become increasingly important. Moreover, the growing emphasis on sustainability and social responsibility requires companies to integrate these values into their strategies.

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Correspondence address:

Ing. Miroslava Ostrihoňová., Department of Business Finance, Faculty of Business Management, University of Economics in Bratislava, Dolnozemská cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava, Slovakia. email: miroslava.ostrihovaa@euba.sk

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4175-0571>

doc. RNDr. Zuzana Hajduová PhD., MSc., Department of Business Finance, Faculty of Business Management, University of Economics in Bratislava, Dolnozemská cesta 1, 852 35 Bratislava, Slovakia. email: zuzana.hajduova@euba.sk

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9381-776X>