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# Are rural accommodation employees able to aspire to transcendent happiness in their work? An exploratory model

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In this paper, we aim to propose formulas based on indicators to develop the transcendent happiness of employees in the tourism industry. Specifically, three factors are proposed as determinants of transcendence happiness (THP): corporate culture (CO), internal communication (IC), and employee-centered personnel management (EPM). To this end, a model proposes to help guide employees in the tourism industry toward happiness. From a sample of 443 employees in tourist accommodations in Spain, we explore the feasibility of an SEM-PLS model based on already validated scales. Our results show, on the one hand, the critical role of organisational culture in the pursuit of employee happiness and, on the other hand, the mediating effect of internal communication between personnel management and transcendent happiness. This ground-breaking study fills two gaps in the current happiness management literature. The first is considering transcendent happiness as an innovative key to corporate governance. It requires a corporate culture that fosters all human capital's personal growth and work-related well-being. In addition, secondly, to demonstrate that the variables of internal communication and passion at work positively influence the transcendental happiness of internal customers in rural establishments. Between internal communication and personnel management based on the employee's growth, the organisational culture has the most significant impact not only on personnel management but also on the achievement of the happiness of private employees. To this end, rural accommodations should design organisational patterns based on codes of conduct in the social relations between employees and managers.

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## Introduction

Different studies have analysed the impact of organisational culture, internal communication and people management on firm management (Aini et al., 2021; Chi et al., 2021; Juliana et al., 2021; Ipinazar et al., 2021; Robina-Ramírez et al., 2021a; Smrek, 2021; Thomas et al., 1998). Some studies have linked these factors to the pursuit of happiness in the company. Thus, internal communication can contribute to corporate happiness (Sun et al., 2021; Ćorić et al., 2020; Andersson, 2019) and a participative and collaborative organisational culture (La Porte, 2001). Therefore, internal communication and happiness become synonymous with human talent loyalty and business success (Thelen and Formanchuk, 2022; Linke and Zerfass, 2011), where an open, fluid, and effective horizontal type of internal communication prevails (Ewing et al., 2019; Mazzei, 2010).

Communicative and organisational factors align with the company's strategic mission and corporate image by designing a corporate structure that promotes the collective happiness of its internal customers (Walden, 2021). For Suh and Battaglio (2021), a corporate strategy that promotes happiness will positively affect the organisation's performance and internal communication that fosters its corporate image (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2021a). In the tourism sector, assertive and motivating internal communication impacts the quality of services, reducing labour conflicts (Chikazhe and Nyakunuwa, 2021) and fostering organisational commitment (Chaudhary, 2019). Customers perceive this commitment when human capital management is oriented toward the happiness at work of their employees (Ecklebe and Löffler, 2021). One of the challenges caused by the tourism sector's pandemic has been maintaining a good climate and a high degree of commitment within the organisation in the face of the restrictions and uncertainty caused by Covid-19 (Li et al., 2021). Hence, this study explores factors contributing to maintaining employee happiness in rural hotels in Spain.

This paper does not refer to corporate happiness built on the harmony between the person and the organisation as many of the studies have pointed out (Chung et al., 2019; Hosie and Sevastos, 2009; Omar et al., 2013). Corporate happiness is based on knowledge of "transcendent happiness". Whereas corporate happiness is based on creating quality, egalitarian, and dialogic public relations between management and employees (Lee, 2022; Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2019). Transcendent happiness is built from the values and moral principles of the person as requirements for professional service (Robina-Ramírez et al., 2020a). This transcendent happiness leads workers to perceive that meaning at work is found in the development of values they acquire during their working day (Robina-Ramírez and Pulido-Fernández, 2021a). Values and moral principles are the base of prosocial behaviour and deliver passion at work (Diener et al., 2010; Robina-Ramírez et al., 2021b).

According to Diener et al. (2010), morality is not only related to happiness and prosocial behaviour but also passion at work. Positive social behaviour stems from morality as a root of optimism and respect which develop a sense of personal kindness and competence (Staub, 2013). Morality also provides renewed interest in working with passion (Schumann, 2001) which helps to find work harmony and work involvement (Pavot and Diener, 2008).

Whereas social behaviour is the consequence of optimism and respect which develop a sense of personal kindness and competence indistinctly, passion at work comes from personal qualities, work harmony and work involvement (Pavot and Diener, 2008). Therefore, the pursuit of happiness is not only linked to social and organisational improvement but also to the moral well-being of individual employees (Veenhoven, 2015).

However, corporate happiness in the tourism sector cannot only be based on creating quality, egalitarian and dialogic public

relations between management and employees (Lee, 2022; Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2019). This paper does not refer to corporate happiness built on the harmony between the person and the organisation. The employee is integrated into participatory decision-making, free from conflict. Happiness understands as the development of values and moral principles of the person as requirements for professional service. This happiness transcends the organisational and privileges the process of building the person in the company. This transcendent happiness leads workers to perceive that meaning at work is found in developing values acquired during their working day (Robina-Ramírez et al., 2021b).

The contribution of this study is twofold: (1) it presents a perspective on the company's mission that goes beyond the strictly organisational one. It is to determine which factors of corporate culture (CO), internal communication (IC) and employee-centred personnel management (ECM) can lead to greater employee happiness (EH). (2) explores a new model that orients employees towards happiness in the tourism industry.

The paper is structured as follows. The theoretical framework addresses the relationship between the three variables mentioned and their impact on the endogenous variable. Then, the research methodology presents. Finally, the study's results are discussed, and conclusions and limitations are provided.

## Theoretical framework

**Transcendent happiness.** Transcendence is a rich, cross-cultural and multi-layered concept. It has been defined in many ways (Weathers et al., 2016). Some link to the search for the sacred. In contrast, others identify with developing personal qualities and values (Robina-Ramírez and Fernández-Portillo, 2020a). Both bring new meaning to human action beyond merely relational or organisational (Zinnbauer and Camerota, 2004). Although some studies address the relationship between transcendence and tourism, a lack of literature explores how organisational culture and internal communication factors employee happiness in tourism companies (Buzinde, 2020; Haldorai et al., 2020).

This paper analyses the role of "transcendent" happiness on the dimensions of internal communication, organisational culture and work-centred people management. Based on the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory, it is observed that employees are attracted to an organisation with which they share beliefs and values (De Cooman et al., 2009). Attraction-Selection-Attrition theory not only studies how the employee adapts to the culture of the organisation (Schneider, et al., 2000) but also to the internal culture (Butler and Brown, 2023) through employee-centered personnel management. Based on job typology, job functions and team management, the Attraction-Selection-Attrition theory emphasises the attributes of employees and their organisational behaviour in order to better match them to the organisation.

Under ASA Theory, the study of employee personality traits associated with different work situations in organisations is emphasised (Schaubroeck and Fink, 1998). According to Koburtay and Syed (2021) under the ASA theory, organisational culture and internal communication might affect the employees' happiness and psychological well-being. Workers are attracted to the organisational culture, its principles, values, and beliefs (attraction) when they share similar attributes to those required in the organisation. With these criteria they are selected (selection) or dismissed (attrition) (Salter, 2006). This identification of values and beliefs (attraction) experienced by employees are important elements of satisfaction and well-being (Senasu et al., 2019). Such identification with the organisation helps to improve the employee's psychological functioning in the ordering

company (Ryan and Deci, 2001) affecting their state of well-being and happiness (Kotera and Van Gordon, 2021).

This happiness lies in connecting these values and developing them among employees. The aim is to move from the purely relational-organisational to the relational-growth dimension of the employee. In this case, the priority is to develop experiences based on implementing values linked to the organisation or the spiritual nature of the employees. These values lead to develop prosocial behaviour and passion for work at the organisation which ends up in employees' spiritual benefits (Pavot and Diener, 2008).

This way of measuring and understanding happiness at work is interested in fulfilling organisational goals and addressing other aspects related to the role of morality (Phillips et al., 2017). According to Diener et al. (2010) morality is not only related to happiness and prosocial behaviour but also to passion at work. Whereas social behaviour is the consequence of optimism and respect which develop a sense of personal kindness and competence indistinctly, passion at work comes from personal qualities, work harmony, and work involvement (Pavot and Diener, 2008). Therefore, the pursuit of happiness is not only linked to social and organisational improvement but also to the moral well-being of individual employees (Veenhoven, 2015). Moral well-being is supported by principles. Among these principles would be: "do good and avoid evil" or "treat others as you would like to be treated". These behaviours allow measuring the value of building a fairer and more equitable organisation. It has also a spiritual reward for employees when they live according to their beliefs guided by their moral behaviour and spirituality (Vallerand et al., 2003). As a result, companies become axes on which to transform society through concrete experiences and challenges (Robina-Ramírez et al., 2020b). Being introduced to the three elements of transcendent happiness: prosocial happiness, passion at work as well as their spiritual benefits the following hypotheses are analysed:

$H_1$ : Prosocial happiness positively influences transcendent happiness in tourism businesses.

$H_2$ : Passion at work positively influences transcendent happiness in tourism companies.

$H_3$ : Spiritual benefits positively influence transcendent happiness in tourism businesses.

**Happiness and employee-centred people management.** In recent decades, people management and workplace well-being has been widely explored (Cole et al., 2009; Janker et al., 2021; Nimmi et al., 2022). Most academic works are characterised by finding strong positive evidence of the relevance of corporate happiness in management models. It identifies organisational benefits with talent, transformational leadership, etc. (Elkhwesky et al., 2022; Salas-Vallina et al., 2022; Castellanos-Redondo et al., 2020).

The literature on the relationship between personnel management and personal benefits from the pursuit of transcendent happiness is currently sparse (Sánchez-Vázquez and Sánchez-Ordóñez, 2019). However, as Joo et al. (2020) argue, personnel management has shifted from organisational development to employee development. Personnel management in the tourism industry should not only be concerned with meeting organisational objectives but also with having a workforce that is motivated and committed to the organisation's strategy (Yao et al., 2019).

Human capital in the tourism and hospitality industry is currently characterised by a high level of psychological exhaustion (Radic et al., 2020). One of the reasons for this is that these tasks perform in a stressful environment, which causes physical and

emotional exhaustion (Goh and Lee, 2018). It results in their employees becoming disengaged in the daily performance of their duties. To avoid this, managers must provide solid operational support to recognise their involvement and work effort (El-Said and Aziz, 2022). It requires human resource management that formulates policies aimed at stimulating the professional growth of its employees. Such management action will significantly help customers feel happy when they enter their establishments (Mert et al., 2021). Therefore, companies should undertake personnel management models that focus on actively promoting the happiness of their employees (Kirillova et al., 2020). After mentioning the role that Personnel management plays in transcendent happiness the following hypothesis can be conveyed:

$H_4$ : Personnel management positively impacts transcendent happiness in the tourism business sector.

**Transcendental happiness and organisational culture.** The literature reveals that in recent years tourism business management has focused on theoretically examining the effects of happiness at work from the organisation's perspective rather than employees' emotions (Akgunduz et al., 2022; Atan et al., 2021). It has led to a gap in the literature in the empirical exploration of the link between transcendent happiness based on personal employee growth and organisational culture (Espasandín-Bustelo et al., 2021).

According to Schein (1987), organisational culture focuses on and embeds organisational patterns in every member. These patterns define by codes of conduct, designs, traditions and social relations in organisations. Multipolar studies of happiness and organisational culture enjoy growing interest in the academic world, especially in psychology, sociology and business organisation (Bastida et al., 2022). In this regard, happiness at-work researchers are gradually introducing the culture of happiness management, which is based on employee growth, into their work.

This attractive philosophy feeds the need to weave corporate governance models that gravitate around the collective happiness of their human capital (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2019). It will improve the quality of services and organisational commitment (Zheng, 2022). In this way, companies not only avoid inappropriate behaviours and attitudes of their workforce but also bring greater meaning to their job performance (Gatling et al., 2016). According to Gordon and Christensen (1993), corporate governance models based on collective happiness improve their corporate culture through team and individual orientation. It leads managers to be innovative, assuming risks under well-planned objectives. Collective happiness delivers a positive experience that allows individuals to transcend their competence limits in search of happiness (Milliman et al., 2017). It plays an exciting role in the organisational culture of tourism companies because customers perceive the quality of service received (Benitez and Medina, 2022). Taking into account how organisational culture affects staff management and transcendent happiness it is worth mentioning the following hypotheses:

$H_5$ : Organisational culture positively impacts staff management in tourism enterprises.

$H_6$ : Organisational culture positively impacts transcendent happiness in the tourism business sector.

**Transcendental happiness and internal communication.** Limited research on strategic leadership and management in the hospitality industry has focused on empirically exploring the possible non-linear relationship between happiness-internal communication constructs within their organisations (Kress, 2005; Ponting, 2020). The literature shows solid academic

evidence of the influence of internal communication and happiness on branding, social capital, or service delivery and quality (De Vries et al., 2020).

The latter factor is particularly relevant in tourism because its staff is in direct and continuous contact with customers (Wu et al., 2021).

This psychological experience is affected by the personality characteristics of employees and by the internal communication strategies carried out by interpersonal companies and communication ethics (Boğan and Dedeoğlu, 2022). In this way, companies in the tourism sector will be able to increase the work commitment of their employees (Bell, 2022). It will do by promoting values that stimulate their human capital's personal growth and job satisfaction (De Vries, 2001).

According to Verčič et al. (2012), internal communication and satisfaction depend on the type of feedback employees receive from job evaluation, contribution to organisational success, social relationships within the teamwork, etc. Regarding social relationships, informal communication plays a key role in internal communication which eventually affects the communication climate. The health of the working environment also influences the promotion, values, and principles of the company.

However, there is no solid empirical evidence exists on how pursuing transcendental happiness influences internal communication in tourism companies. Hence, the emerging literature shows that people's values and social behaviour are intangible resources that positively drive communicative empathy and happiness within organisations (Milliman et al., 2018). Transcendental happiness is crucial for stimulating engagement and internal communication (Haldorai et al., 2020). Having said that the following hypotheses can be drawn from the section:

*H<sub>8</sub>*: Informal communication positively impacts the transcendental happiness of tourism enterprises.

*H<sub>9</sub>*: Organisational climate positively impacts internal communication in tourism companies.

*H<sub>10</sub>*: Informal communication feedback positively impacts internal communication in tourism companies.

*H<sub>11</sub>*: Informal communication positively impacts internal communication in tourism enterprises.

**Methodology**

**Partial least-squares structural equation model analysis.** This statistical technique is well suited to establishing dependence relationships between latent variables and indicators (Sarstedt et al., 2016). The software applied to design and generate model results is SmartPLS 3 version 26, which is highly recommended for composite models in the social sciences (Rigdon et al., 2017).

**Population and sample.** To measure hotel employees' perceptions of factors influencing their pursuit of happiness in the workplace, the research team sent an email to all 17 Spanish tourism regions. Based on data extracted by the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE, 2021), a population of 11,340 rural hotels was used. To verify these data, the general directorates of tourism were contacted. During the months of January and February 2022, a total of 623 responded positively. In March 2022, invitation letters will be sent to the managers of rural hotels.

In order to test the questionnaire, two online sessions were proposed. In the first one, during the first week of April, the scientific nature of the study was explained. A summary of six explanatory papers on the importance of organisational culture, internal communication, transcendental happiness and personnel management based on employee growth was handed out. In the second week, the wording of the questionnaire will be discussed according to the already validated scales expressed in Table 1 and Fig. 1, corresponding to the four proposed latent variables: transcendental happiness (THP), corporate culture (CC); internal communication processes (IC); and employee-centred personnel management (EPM).

**Personal characteristics of employees.** Table 2 shows the personal characteristics of the employees participating in the study. 54% are men, mainly in the 40–49 age group, and their main educational background has completed university studies.

**Model and assumptions.** Developing the model and hypotheses allows for quantifying the relationships between multiple variables and developing the structural hypothesis with direct and indirect causal effects. Hypotheses relate two variables to explain

**Table 1 Indicators for measuring the factors from validated scales.**

Scale	Author	Items
THP1: Subjective prosociality	Diener et al. (2010)	Sense of life, rewarding social relationships, commitment, contribution to happiness, competence, personal kindness, optimism, and respect.
THP2: Passion at work		Work experiences, work-related learning, memorable experiences, personal qualities, work harmony, passion for work, uncontrolled passion, work involvement
THP3: Spiritual well-being	Vallerand et al. (2003)	Sharing spiritual matters, living according to beliefs, spiritual reading, spiritual guidance, the importance of spirituality, closeness to God, vital influence
CI1: Internal communication, satisfaction with feedback	Tkalac Verčič et al. (2009)	Negative feedback, contribution to organisational success, job evaluation, positive feedback, positive job communication, availability towards the boss, satisfaction with the boss, communication of work problems, job recognition, availability towards colleagues, communication between colleagues, communication results, acceptance of critical comments
CI2: Satisfaction with informal communication		Decisions are taken, negative, informal communication, timing and usefulness of informal communication, information work protocols, income and benefits, organisational changes, and legal regulations.
CI3: Satisfaction with the communication climate		Relevance, sense of belonging, promotion of values, meeting objectives,
CC: Corporate culture. CC1: Team orientation	Gordon and Christensen (1993)	Interrelation of work, co-operation between units, understanding of objectives
CC2: People orientation		People development, promotion opportunities, managerial coverage, personal growth and development
CC3: Innovation		Innovative managers, taking risks, acting independently.
CC4: Planning		Guidance, planning, clarity, achievement of objectives, the definition of business plans
GPT: Worker-centred personnel management.	Martín et al. (2008)	Pride in work, clarity of tasks, the importance of work, empowerment, creativity, support for family, motivation
GPT1: Intrinsicmotivation.		
GPT 2: Participation at work	Lodahl and Kejnar (1965).	Job satisfaction, work relevance, other non-work activities, non-work duties, work as part of a whole, and work-life balance.
GPT 3: Perceived organisational support	Eisenberger et al. (1986).	Pride in the organisation, concern for well-being, personal attention, valuing its contributions, consideration of goals and values, help



Fig. 1 List of tourist accommodations.

Table 2 Personal characteristics of employees.		
Gender	N = 443	
Male	239	0.54
Female	204	0.46
No response	0	0.00
Total	443	1.00
Age		
1829	109	0.25
3039	124	0.28
4049	135	0.30
5059		0.09
Over 60		0.08
No response	0	0.00
Total	443	1.00
Level of studies		
Primary education		0.09
Secondary education	108	0.24
University degree	205	0.46
Masters degree	91	0.21
No response	0	0.00
Total	443	1.00

causal relationships. The exploratory model defined can be seen in Fig. 2.

Transcendent happiness (THP); corporate culture (CC); internal communication processes (IC); employee centred personnel management (ECM)

There are 11 working hypotheses:

$H_1$ : Prosocial happiness positively influences transcendent happiness in tourism businesses.

$H_2$ : Passion at work positively influences transcendent happiness in tourism companies.

$H_3$ : Spiritual benefits positively influence transcendent happiness in tourism businesses.

$H_4$ : Personnel management positively impacts transcendent happiness in the tourism business sector.

$H_5$ : Organisational culture positively impacts staff management in tourism enterprises.

$H_6$ : Internal communication positively impacts staff management in tourism companies.

$H_7$ : Organisational culture positively impacts transcendent happiness in the tourism business sector.

$H_8$ : Informal communication positively impacts the transcendent happiness of tourism enterprises.

$H_9$ : Organisational climate positively impacts internal communication in tourism companies.

$H_{10}$ : Informal communication feedback positively impacts internal communication in tourism companies.

$H_{11}$ : Informal communication positively impacts internal communication in tourism enterprises.

**Results**

**Measurement model.** The constructs' measurement model, called external models in PLS-SEM, shows the relationships between constructs and indicators. Model variables such as happiness,

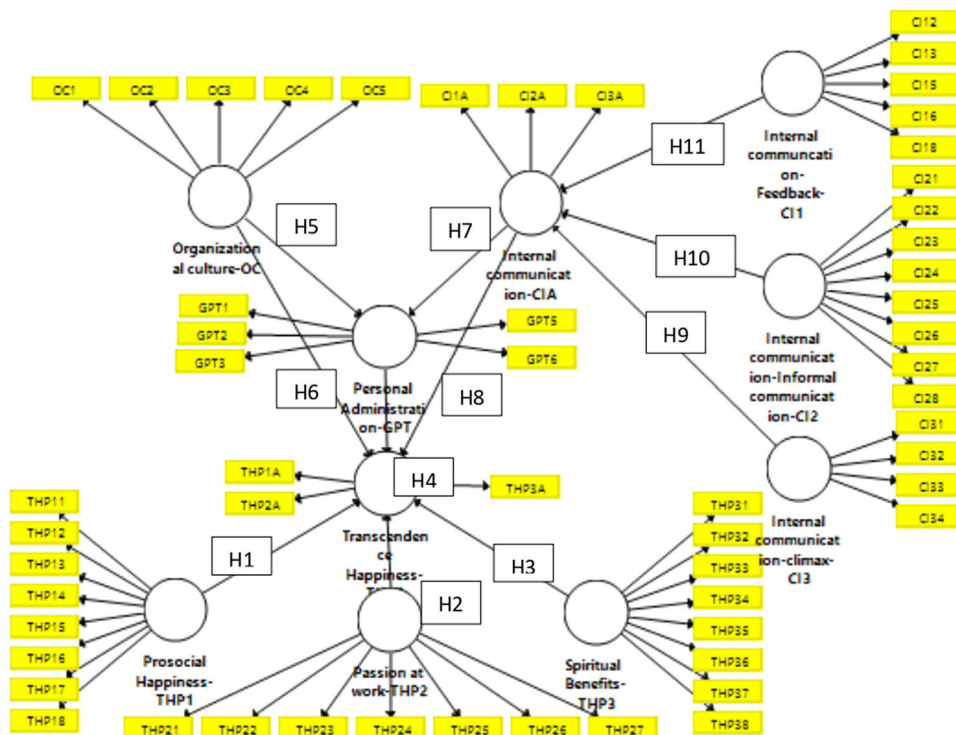


Fig. 2 Model.

internal communication, organisational culture and people management models reflect common factor constructs (Henseler et al., 2016). These are behavioural constructs that affect employees in rural hotels. The indicators have been treated as reflective standard factor models, typical for behavioural constructs. The latent variable thoroughly explains its variance, and random errors are uncorrelated. The commonly used rule is the one set out by Carmines and Zeller (1979), which determines the boundary of the coefficient  $\lambda$  (individual loadings)  $> 0.707$ . Thus, seven indicators with  $\lambda < 0.707$  have been eliminated: PA4, PA7, TPH39, TPH40, CI12, and CI18 (see Table 3).

Composite reliability, a measure of the internal consistency of each scale, was analysed using the *composite reliability* (CR) as well as the confidence interval of the CR. In all cases, the CR value is more significant than 0.7, so it can affirm composite reliability in all first-order constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Convergent validity expresses the extent to which the set of indicators of a scale represents a single underlying factor, showing its probable unidimensional character (Henseler et al., 2009). The parameter average variance extracted (AVE) is the leading indicator of convergent validity. It requires that the AVE of all constructs is equal to or greater than 0.5. In this model, this is true in all cases (see Table 4).

The analysis of the first-order model’s measurement instruments ends with the discriminant validity assessment. The criteria for assessing discriminant validity were those of Fornell and Larcker (1981) (see Table 5).

From the HTMT analysis, it is not apparent that there may be excessive overlap or convergence in the relationships between constructs (see Table 6).

The goodness-of-fit indicators show valid values (SRMR below 0.08). The SRMR parameter takes a value of 0.076, with the desired value below 0.08 (Ramayah et al., 2017).

**Structural or internal model.** The structural model also called the internal model, links the latent variables. This model shows

the relationship between the constructs through the formulated hypotheses. The significance of the path coefficients and their relevance is based on standard bootstrap errors as a basis for calculating the *t*-values of the path coefficients or confidence intervals (Streukens and Leroi-Werelds, 2016). A path coefficient is significant at the 5% level if the zero value does not fall within the 95% confidence interval. In this case,  $p < 0.05$  and *t* statistic  $< 1164$ . Table 7 shows that seven hypotheses are accepted while four are rejected.

The main objective of PLS-SEM is to maximise the variance explained through the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) (Henseler et al., 2015). In addition to measuring the explanatory power of the model, it also analyses the predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) in order to be able to replicate the model in other settings under similar circumstances (see Table 8).

**Conclusion and discussion**

According to Chin (1998), the explanatory significance of the model is moderate-high  $R^2 = 0.518$ . Table 9 shows that internal communication ( $R^2 = 0.416$ ) and personnel management ( $R^2 = 0.431$ ) contribute to achieving employee happiness in rural tourism enterprises. In the case of internal communication, informal communication ( $R^2 = 0.259$ ) is what most concerns employees, above the feedback obtained ( $R^2 = 0.107$ ) and the communication climate ( $R^2 = 0.050$ ). On the other hand, good people management depends mainly on organisational culture ( $R^2 = 0.336$ ) above internal communication ( $R^2 = 0.095$ ). In the case of employee happiness, it depends to a greater extent on the passion with which one works ( $R^2 = 0.197$ ).

If we measure the degree to which each of the (exogenous) explanatory constructs (GPT, OC, CI) contribute to explaining the endogenous variables (TPH) in terms of the  $R^2$ . Effect sizes of 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 are small, medium and large, respectively (Cohen, 1992; Kock, 2014). The sample size is sufficient for a high effect size hypothesis (*f*-size  $> 0.35$ ). Moreover, it is also sufficient for a generic medium effect size hypothesis (*f*-size between 0.15

**Table 3 Loads.**

	CI1	CI2	CI3	CIA	GPT	OC	THP1	THP2	THP3	THPA
CI12	0.822									
CI13	0.791									
CI15	0.822									
CI16	0.776									
CI18	0.850									
CI1A				0.937						
CI21		0.820								
CI22		0.810								
CI23		0.761								
CI24		0.779								
CI25		0.824								
CI26		0.768								
CI27		0.803								
CI28		0.810								
CI2A				0.928						
CI31			0.887							
CI32			0.801							
CI33			0.806							
CI34			0.857							
CI3A				0.939						
GPT1					0.836					
GPT2					0.777					
GPT3					0.846					
GPT5					0.875					
GPT6					0.799					
OC1						0.888				
OC2						0.877				
OC3						0.841				
OC4						0.815				
OC5						0.886				
THP11							0.843			
THP12							0.797			
THP13							0.761			
THP14							0.839			
THP15							0.759			
THP16							0.791			
THP17							0.821			
THP18							0.814			
THP1A										0.943
THP21								0.874		
THP22								0.813		
THP23								0.827		
THP24								0.840		
THP25								0.814		
THP26								0.797		
THP27								0.791		
THP2A										0.891
THP31									0.843	
THP32									0.790	
THP33									0.782	
THP34									0.825	
THP35									0.775	
THP36									0.803	
THP37									0.831	
THP38									0.808	
THP3A										0.906

**Table 4 Reliability and validity.**

	Cronbach Alpha	rho_A	RC	AVE
CI1	0.871	0.873	0.907	0.661
CI2	0.918	0.920	0.933	0.635
CI3	0.859	0.865	0.904	0.703
CIA	0.928	0.928	0.954	0.874
GPT	0.885	0.895	0.916	0.685
OC	0.913	0.914	0.935	0.743
THP1	0.922	0.925	0.936	0.646
THP2	0.920	0.925	0.936	0.677
THP3	0.924	0.926	0.937	0.652
THPA	0.901	0.903	0.938	0.835

and 0.35). In almost all cases, the effect size is small. However, the size of the effect of organisational culture on people management, and to a lesser extent on happiness, stands out. It explains the centrality of organisational culture in determining employee happiness (see Table 10).

According to the hypotheses obtained, the strength between organisational culture on personnel management (H5: OC GPT:  $\beta = 0.489$ ;  $T = 8.572$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ) and on employee happiness (H4: OC THP:  $\beta = 0.331$ ;  $T = 5.286$ ;  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ) is again striking. They are also significant in internal communication on personnel management. H7 and H8 are insignificant, which leads us to analyse the mediation effect of organisational culture and internal communication between personnel management and employee happiness. Figure 3 shows a mediation analysis of the OC variable on the relationship between THPA and GPT and the CIA variable on the relationship between THPA and GPT.

Table 11 shows that organisational culture ( $a1*b1$ ) does not mediate the people management–happiness relationship. It is insignificant due to including the zero between the intervals (Nitzl et al., 2016). As the direct effect  $c'$  is significant, there is only a direct effect. However, the indirect effect of GPT between CIA and TPH ( $a2*b2$ ) mediates the personnel management–happiness

**Table 5 Fornell-Larcker criterion.**

	CI1	CI2	CI3	CIA	GPT	OC	THP1	THP2	THP3	THPA
CI1	0.813									
CI2	0.718	0.797								
CI3	0.485	0.646	0.839							
CIA	0.546	0.625	0.470	0.935						
GPT	0.164	0.216	0.166	0.447	0.827					
OC	0.085	0.152	0.216	0.440	0.628	0.862				
THP1	0.286	0.262	0.288	0.158	0.176	0.183	0.804			
THP2	0.253	0.313	0.247	0.180	0.189	0.159	0.758	0.823		
THP3	0.336	0.351	0.332	0.251	0.233	0.143	0.656	0.537	0.807	
THPA	0.227	0.295	0.239	0.348	0.493	0.375	0.543	0.581	0.417	0.914

**Table 6 Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT).**

	CI1	CI2	CI3	CIA	GPT	OC	THP1	THP2	THP3	THPA
CI1										
CI2	0.802									
CI3	0.562	0.729								
CIA	0.606	0.675	0.523							
GPT	0.187	0.234	0.182	0.492						
OC	0.096	0.165	0.242	0.478	0.690					
THP1	0.321	0.287	0.324	0.170	0.185	0.199				
THP2	0.280	0.339	0.278	0.192	0.200	0.171	0.819			
THP3	0.372	0.379	0.372	0.271	0.255	0.155	0.712	0.578		
THPA	0.256	0.323	0.271	0.382	0.541	0.413	0.591	0.631	0.454	

**Table 7 Path coefficients.**

	$\beta$	Lower	Higher	t statistic	P-value
g	0.216	0.212	0.082	2.629	0.009**
H2:	0.339	0.339	0.072	4.677	0.000***
THP2 → THPA					
H3:	-0.013	-0.007	0.076	0.166	0.868
THP3 → THPA					
H4: GPT → THPA	0.331	0.325	0.063	5.286	0.000***
H5: OC → PT	0.535	0.540	0.063	8.489	0.000***
H6: OC → THPA	0.212	0.210	0.066	3.187	0.002**
H7: CIA → GPT	0.034	0.041	0.056	0.617	0.537
H8: CIA → THPA	0.093	0.093	0.051	1.842	0.066
H9: CI1 → CIA	0.196	0.193	0.068	2.885	0.004**
H10: CI2 → CIA	0.415	0.419	0.083	5.013	0.000**
H11: CI3 → CIA	0.106	0.106	0.068	1.567	0.118

Statistical significance:  $P < 0.05$ ; \*\* $P < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $P < 0.001$ .

**Table 8 Coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) and Stone-Geisser test ( $Q^2$ ).**

	$R^2$	$Q^2$
CIA	0.416	0.356
GPT	0.431	0.287
THPA	0.509	0.419

relationship, which is different from zero. The direct effect is significant as well. According to Nitzl et al. (2016), there is partial mediation. Both  $c'$  and  $a2 \times b2$  have the same sign, so it is complementary mediation. The variance gives the magnitude of the direct effect over the indirect effect explained (VAF), being  $< 0.80\%$  justifies that the mediation is partial. It explains that personnel management should be concerned with internal IC communication to bring employees happiness.

This model has significant predictive relevance, reaching positive values in all cases (existence of predictive capacity coefficient  $Q^2$  THPA = 0.421,  $Q^2$  CIA = 0.421,  $Q^2$  GPT = 0.421), with a medium relevance for all endogenous variables.

Five conclusions emerge from the study:

1. Employees of tourist accommodation in Spain consider that organisational culture, internal communication and personnel management based on the individual employee's

growth contribute decisively to improving their happiness. This result aligns with Junça Silva and Coelho (2022) study. In this work, the authors empirically show the moderating role played by organisational culture in the happiness at work dimension. In this line of research, recent literature shows that the variables of internal communication and personnel management are essential elements in the development of leadership styles that foster transcendental happiness based on the personal growth and ethical values of their human capital in the performance of their professional position (Robina-Ramirez et al., 2022b). As mentioned throughout this article, this fact is relevant to tourist accommodations as their employees are in direct contact with customers (Liu-Lastres et al., 2023).

2. The presented model provides moderate explanatory power and has a predictive relevance for other rural accommodation establishments in Spain or other countries. The socio-economic, legal, and administrative conditions would require operating in a similar environment. It can be achieved by public governments formulating policies that link residents' happiness with the business success of rural tourism accommodation (Wang et al., 2021). Several contemporary studies indicate that residents' subjective well-being improves when they have a tourism industry that connects their happiness and quality of life with the economic benefit of these hotel establishments (Godovykh



et al., 2023; Lisha et al., 2022). This link positively increases when these companies enjoy an organisational culture governed by the principles of corporate social responsibility and happiness management (López-Sanz et al., 2021).

3. Among the three factors presented, the organisational culture has the most significant impact on staff management and the happiness of private employees. To this end, rural accommodations should design organisational patterns based on codes of conduct in the social relations between employees and managers, given the importance of customer perceptions of the quality of the service received (Benitez and Medina, 2022). Hence the importance of developing corporate governance models that gravitate around the collective happiness of their human capital (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2019; Robina-Ramírez et al., 2022a). It improves the quality of services and organisational commitment (Zheng, 2022).
4. Internal communication between managers and employees in rural accommodations has become essential as it is necessary to achieve proper personnel management in the company, ultimately leading to employee happiness. This finding adds to the emerging scientific production that highlights the importance of the intangible resource of happiness at work in the economic development of organisations (Ataide et al., 2023). In this line of research, an essential body of scientific studies suggests that internal communication and personnel management dimensions lead to the harmonious happiness of internal customers (Rando-Cueto et al., 2023; Verčič and Men., 2023). It is not a trivial issue in tourism companies. It is because their human capital performs their profession in a strenuous and stressful environment (Hoyos-Babilonia et al., 2023).
5. Pro-sociality and passion at work directly influence transcendent happiness. However, employees in tourist

accommodations need to give more importance to issues related to spirituality in the course of their work. Happiness management specialists must still address this topic (Jambrino-Maldonado et al., 2022). Hence, the absence of academic works that address transcendent happiness is one way those managers achieve ethical, fair and moral organisations (Espasandín-Bustelo et al., 2021). A gap that should be explored by strategic management when there is considerable scientific evidence that employees' prosocial behaviour and passion at work are determined by their level of happiness in the workplace (Pavot and Diener, 2008). In this way, the biased approach in the recent tourism literature that happy organisations are a dystopia in the post-Covid-19 era can be avoided (Ahumada-Tello et al., 2022).

**Theoretical implications.** This paper contributes to the theoretical literature by being one of the first to explore transcendent happiness in the rural tourism industry (Hwang et al., 2021). This construct has yet to be studied in the work-related happiness literature. It is because specialists in this academic discipline have focused most of their scientific productions on exploring the happiness of people in the performance of their professional position based on the dimensions: of leadership style, organisational climate or working conditions (Fitriana et al., 2022; Jeong et al., 2022). This novel study aims to close two gaps in the current happiness management literature (Jambrino-Maldonado et al., 2022). The first is considering transcendent happiness as an innovative key to corporate governance. It requires a corporate culture that fosters all human capital's personal growth and work-related well-being (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2021b). Moreover, secondly, to demonstrate that internal communication and passion at work positively influence the transcendent happiness of internal customers in rural establishments (Hunter, 2022).

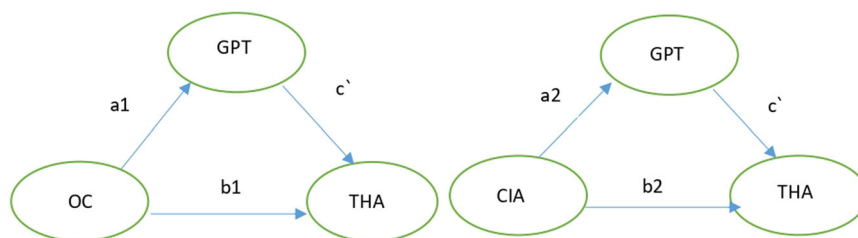
**Practical implications.** This academic work provides interesting results for managers of rural establishment companies in the post-Covid-19 era. This sector is characterised by management

**Table 9 Analysis of variance by constructs.**

	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>	Direct effect	Correlation	Variance explained
CIA	0.416	0.376			0.416
CIA1			0.196	0.546	0.107
CIA2			0.415	0.624	0.259
CIA3			0.106	0.470	0.050
GPT	0.431	0.287			0.431
OC			0.535	0.628	0.336
CIA			0.212	0.447	0.095
THPA	0.518	0.419			0.518
THP1			0.216	0.544	0.118
THP2			0.339	0.581	0.197
THP3			-0.013	0.417	-0.005
GPT			0.331	0.494	0.163
OC			0.034	0.375	0.013
CIA			0.093	0.348	0.033

**Table 10 Effect size.**

	CIA	GPT	OC	THPA
CI1	0.032			
CI2	0.092			
CI3	0.009			
CIA		0.034		
GPT			0.313	
OC				
THP1				0.021
THP2				0.101
THP3				0.005
THPA	0.048	0.114	0.163	



**Fig. 3** Mediation effect of GPT over OC-THA and CIA-THA.

**Table 11** The mediating effect of GPT over CIA-THA.

	Direct effects $\beta$	Percentile IC		Bias-corrected		VAN
		Lower (5%)	Upper (95%)	Lower (5%)	Upper (95%)	
H1: $c'$	0.331	0.222	0.440	0.228	0.446	
$a1$	0.535	0.427	0.633	0.637	0.843	
$b1$	0.267	-0.056	0.130	0.170	0.326	
$a2$	0.212	0.106	0.440	0.107	0.326	
$b2$	0.093	0.010	0.176	0.011	0.177	
<b>Indirect effects <math>\beta</math></b>						
H2:	0.143	-0.029	0.071	0.048	0.149	30%
$a1 \times b1$						
H3:	0.020	0.002	0.047	0.011	0.056	6%
$a2 \times b2$						

models where frontline employees suffer work-related stress, anxiety, burnout, and psychological distress (Ariza-Montes et al., 2019). It is, therefore, not surprising that, at present, people are showing a remarkable disinterest in working in this particular sector, especially in Europe (Walmsley et al., 2019). Therefore, one of the first practical implications of this work is to show the managers of these companies to adopt the attractive philosophy of happiness management to improve the well-being of their employees (Galván-Vela et al., 2022). The second is implementing human resources practices to make employees feel integrated and supported by the organisations. In this way, tourism accommodation managers will increase, on the one hand, the commitment of their internal customers and, on the other hand, their transcendental happiness (Ugwu et al., 2022). Third, internal communication, organisational culture, and work passion play a very relevant role in the transcendental happiness of employees in rural tourism companies (Ravina-Ripoll et al., 2023). Fourth, hotel managers should adopt a leadership style that creates a positive work environment that stimulates employees' inner growth and subjective happiness (Xue et al., 2021).

Moreover, lastly, that service excellence and quality are born in corporate happiness. Given the direct interactions, their workforce has with customers (Mekoth et al., 2022). Hence, they must carry out a strategic direction that improves their human capital's affective skills, self-development, confidence and self-motivation. It will enhance their responsibility, performance, psychological well-being, enthusiasm and motivation. And not their intention to leave the organisation, motivated by the high doses of work-related stress they suffer in the daily performance of their professional activity (Asghar et al., 2021).

**Limitations and future lines of research.** The results of this original work are not without their corresponding limitations. The first is the focus groups' organisation with the rural accommodation employees. In the accommodations, work is carried out in double shifts. It means doubling the opinion survey of a significant number of employees. Secondly, the data were collected at a specific time interval. Therefore, it would be interesting to carry out a longitudinal or experimental study to explore whether the findings reached in this paper are contradictory concerning different periods. Third, this work has been carried out in the spatial framework of Spain. Conducting this research in other countries to compare the empirical results is interesting.

Moreover, this determines whether cultural and socio-economic factors directly influence the results of this research.

Fourth is the choice of variables that explain transcendental happiness. Exploring other dimensions of happiness management and human resource theories would have been better. Despite the limitations discussed above, this paper addresses the research hypotheses addressed in the pages read so far in a structured, rigorous and literature-based manner.

So far, the emerging studies on subjective well-being in rural accommodation organisations have yet to focus on examining the transcendental happiness of their human capital. Given this gap in the literature, future research should empirically demonstrate that business success in the rural tourism industry lies in the corporate happiness of its workforce. This scientific knowledge illuminates new fields in this particular social science discipline. One is to show that transcendental happiness is a vital seed for cultivating competitiveness and sustainability in the era of Industry 4.0. The other is to show that happiness management contributes that the current management models of rural hostelry requiring more productive, happier organisations with ethical values.

### Data availability

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available as a form of supplementary file and/or from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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## Author contributions

The authors contributed equally and they jointly supervised this work. Contributors to the concept or design of the article: R. Ravina-Ripoll, R. Robina-Ramírez. Contributed to analysis and interpretation of data: R. Ravina-Ripoll, R. Robina-Ramírez. Drafting work or critically revising it for important intellectual content: R. Ravina-Ripoll, R. Robina-Ramírez. Final approval of the version: R. Ravina-Ripoll, R. Robina-Ramírez. Agreement to be responsible for all aspects of work: R. Ravina-Ripoll, R. Robina-Ramírez.

## Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

## Ethical approval

The study was conducted according to the Business School's Committee of Ethics, section 2<sup>a</sup>, protocol number 4/2022.

## Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained verbally from all 443 individual participants who gave an interview and were included in the study. As the authors of this paper, we undertook not to include any personal identifying details of the participants (names, dates of birth, identity numbers and other information), as well as photographs or social media profiles.

## Additional information

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