

# Life and Work Satisfaction in Literature from 2020 to 2024

**María del Rosario Molina González\***, María Luisa Quintero Soto, Rosa María Rincón Ornelas, Cruz García Lirios, María Teresa Gaxiola Sánchez, María de Jesús Camargo Pacheco, Rafael Campoy Mendoza, Marco Antonio Velderrain Rodríguez, Gilberto Bermúdez Ruiz, Arturo Sánchez Sanchez and Javier Carreón Guillen

Universidad de Sonora, México

\*Corresponding author: María del Rosario Molina González, Universidad de Sonora, Navojoa, México

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## ABSTRACT

Life satisfaction has not been appreciated in organizations due to its origin relative to happiness, although its correlation refers to job satisfaction that emerges as a performance factor. The objective of this work was to compare the findings related to life satisfaction with respect to job satisfaction at a global and local level. A cross-sectional and exploratory documentary study was carried out with sources indexed to international repositories. The results exhibit five dimensions related to definitions, dimensions, influences, impacts, flexibility, and prediction. In reference to the literature consulted, axes of review and discussion are established to generate a model.

**Keywords:** Performance; Happiness; Flexibility; Job Satisfaction; Life Satisfaction

## Introduction

The history of life satisfaction is a concept that has evolved over time, reflecting changes in cultural, philosophical, and scientific perceptions about well-being and happiness (Vallejo, et al. [1]). While there is no single narrative of the history of life satisfaction, we can identify some important milestones and perspectives throughout history: In ancient Greece and Rome, thinkers such as Aristotle and Epicurus addressed questions related to happiness and well-being. Aristotle proposed that happiness (eudaimonia) was achieved through the realization of human virtues, while Epicurus associated happiness with the absence of pain and the satisfaction of moderate desires. During the Middle Ages, the conception of life satisfaction

was strongly influenced by Christian religious teachings, which promoted the idea of happiness as a spiritual state based on salvation and the fulfillment of divine will (Carrillo-García, et al. [2]). With the Enlightenment, new ideas about happiness emerged based on the use of reason and the search for the common good. Philosophers such as John Locke and Jeremy Bentham explored concepts of utility and pleasure as fundamental components of human happiness. In the 20th century, the field of psychology began to systematically study life satisfaction and psychological well-being (Rodríguez-Rey, et al. [3]). Figures such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers developed theories about human needs and self-development as essential ingredients of a satisfying life.

Currently, life satisfaction is understood in a multidimensional way, incorporating psychological, social, economic, and cultural aspects. The science of happiness and well-being has become an interdisciplinary field that studies how various factors contribute to people's subjective and objective well-being. The search for life satisfaction today involves a comprehensive approach that considers factors such as quality of life, social relationships, sense of purpose, physical and mental health, as well as the connection with nature and the environment (Juárez - Adata, [4]). There is growing interest in understanding what factors promote lasting and meaningful happiness over time, beyond momentary satisfaction or ephemeral pleasure. The history of life satisfaction is a complex and evolving story that reflects the interaction between philosophical, religious, scientific, and cultural concepts over the centuries. The contemporary understanding of life satisfaction remains a topic of ongoing research and debate in the social sciences and the study of human well-being. Life satisfaction theory is an area of study within psychology and social sciences that focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to people's subjective well-being and sense of satisfaction with life (Duche-Pérez, et al. [5]). This theory explores how experiences, emotions, beliefs, and behaviors influence a person's overall evaluation of their own life. Here I present some important theories about life satisfaction.

### **Hedonic Adaptation Theory**

This theory suggests that people have a relatively stable level of well-being over time, despite changes in external circumstances (Peña Cárdenas, et al. [6]). It is postulated that individuals tend to adapt to positive or negative changes in their lives, meaning that after a time, the emotional impact of an event (whether good or bad) tends to decrease, and the level of satisfaction returns to normal, a point close to the initial state.

### **Human Needs Theory**

Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, this theory postulates that people experience life satisfaction when their fundamental needs are satisfied in a hierarchical order (Pienkowski, et al. [7]). Basic needs include food, shelter, and safety, followed by needs for social relationships, self-esteem, and self-actualization. When these needs are met, people tend to experience greater satisfaction and well-being.

### **Self-Determination Theory**

This theory proposes that life satisfaction is associated with the degree to which people experience autonomy, competence, and meaningful social relationships in their lives (Martínez, et al. [8]). Life satisfaction is maximized when people can make autonomous decisions that are aligned with their personal values and goals, when they feel competent in the activities they perform, and when they have satisfying social connections.

### **Attachment and Social Relationships Theory**

This theory emphasizes the importance of social and emotional relationships in life satisfaction (Sanchez -García, et al. [9]). According to this perspective, secure and supportive relationships, particularly in childhood and young adulthood, promote greater life satisfaction in adulthood. People with close, positive relationships tend to report higher levels of well-being and global satisfaction.

### **Flow Theory**

This theory refers to the mental state of flow, which occurs when a person is completely immersed in a challenging but achievable activity (Özcan, [10]). During flow, people experience a sense of total concentration, enjoyment, and satisfaction, which contributes significantly to their well-being and life satisfaction. In addition to these specific theories, there are also multidimensional approaches that consider multiple aspects of human life (such as physical health, quality of relationships, purpose and meaning in life, among others) to comprehensively understand life satisfaction (Schnettler, et al. [11]). Together, these theories and approaches offer a holistic view of life satisfaction, showing that it is the result of a complex interaction between internal and external factors that affect people's perception and evaluation of their own existence. There are several models and approaches to understand life satisfaction from different perspectives (Portero de la Cruz, et al. [12]). These models provide conceptual frameworks for understanding how the various dimensions of human life contribute to overall well-being and satisfaction. The World Health Organization Quality of Life Model (WHOQOL, [13]) addresses life satisfaction from a broad and multidimensional perspective (Bellini, et al. [14]). This model considers four main domains that influence quality of life and satisfaction. The WHOQOL provides a comprehensive framework for assessing and improving life satisfaction from multiple perspectives.

### **Life Satisfaction Model**

Richard E. Diener, one of the pioneers in the study of happiness and life satisfaction, proposed a life satisfaction model that considers multiple components (Vela Quintero, et al. [15]). This model recognizes that life satisfaction is influenced by the subjective evaluation of life as a whole and by the emotions and meanings associated with daily experiences.

### **Self-Determination Model**

The Self-Determination Theory proposed by Deci and Ryan posits that life satisfaction is related to the degree to which people experience autonomy, competence, and satisfactory social relationships (Fernández-Portero, et al. [16]). This model emphasizes the importance of meeting basic psychological needs to promote well-being and personal satisfaction.

### **Life Satisfaction Levels Model**

This model considers that life satisfaction can be influenced by individual, contextual and cultural factors (Vallbona, et al. [17]). There are several levels of satisfaction.

## Attachment and Social Relationships Model

This model highlights the importance of social and emotional relationships in life satisfaction (Wright, [18]). Secure and supportive relationships are postulated to contribute significantly to people's overall well-being and satisfaction.

## Agency and Opportunity Capacity Model

This approach, developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, considers that life satisfaction is related to people's ability to choose and pursue valuable opportunities in life (such as education, health, work significant, etc.) (Mutiu, [19]). These models show the diversity of theoretical and practical perspectives to understand and evaluate life satisfaction, recognizing that it is a complex construct that encompasses multiple interrelated dimensions of the human experience (Loewe, et al. [20]). Life satisfaction is a multidimensional concept that encompasses several important dimensions that influence well-being and the global perception of happiness and personal fulfillment (Huertas-Delgado, et al. [21]). These dimensions represent different aspects of life that contribute significantly to overall satisfaction.

## Health and Physical Well-being

Physical health plays a fundamental role in life satisfaction (García, et al. [22]). This dimension includes the subjective evaluation of one's own health, the ability to perform daily activities without difficulty, the absence of chronic diseases or significant disabilities, and the general perception of physical well-being.

## Emotional and Mental Well-being

The emotional and mental dimension refers to the ability to experience positive emotions and effectively manage stress and negative emotions (Addabbo, et al. [23]). It includes aspects such as self-esteem, emotional resilience, the ability to experience joy and satisfaction in everyday life, and emotional balance.

## Social Relationships and Social Support

The quality of interpersonal relationships and social support are important determinants of life satisfaction (Pena, et al. [24]). This dimension considers the presence and quality of meaningful relationships with family, friends, partners, and the community, as well as the sense of belonging and the ability to receive and offer emotional support.

## Personal Achievement and Development

Life satisfaction is influenced by personal achievement and the sense of personal development (Echenique, et al. [25]). This dimension includes the achievement of personal and professional goals, a sense of personal progress and growth, self-direction, and the ability to pursue activities that are meaningful and rewarding.

## Material Quality of Life

Although it is not the only factor, life satisfaction can also be affected by the economic situation and material conditions (Carmona, et al. [26]). This dimension includes factors such as income level, financial security, access to basic resources (housing, food, medical care), and job stability.

## Sense of Purpose and Meaning

Feeling that life has a purpose and meaning is essential for life satisfaction (Ríos, et al. [27]). This dimension relates to clarity of personal values and goals, connection to something larger than oneself (such as spiritual or community beliefs), and a sense of meaningful contribution to the world.

## Environment and Quality of Life

Life satisfaction is also influenced by the physical and social environment in which a person lives (Kucel, et al. [28]). This dimension considers factors such as the quality of the natural environment (air, water, landscapes), the safety and accessibility of the community, and the quality of available public and cultural services. These dimensions interact with each other and jointly contribute to a person's overall evaluation of their life satisfaction (Brioso, et al. [29]). It is important to recognize that life satisfaction is a subjective and multifaceted concept, and that different people may value these dimensions differently based on their individual values, experiences, and circumstances. However, life satisfaction has not been reviewed at the organizational level. Therefore, the comparison between life satisfaction and job satisfaction at a global and local level is the objective of this work. Are there significant differences between life satisfaction and job satisfaction at global and local levels with respect to public universities? The premise that guides this work suggests that life satisfaction has its correlation in job satisfaction observable in organizations and institutions. In this way, differences inherent to the context in which the literature has been published are expected.

## Method

**Selection of Measurement Instruments:** Validated and reliable instruments to measure life satisfaction and its dimensions. Standardized questionnaires such as the Satisfaction with Life Index (SWLS), the Subjective Well-being Scale (SWB) or the WHOQOL-BREF Quality of Life Questionnaire. Data collection using appropriate methods, such as online surveys, structured interviews or focus groups. Obtaining informed consent from participants and guaranteeing the confidentiality and anonymity of the data.

## Statistical Analysis

Use of techniques to analyze the data collected. Conducting descriptive analyzes to summarize life satisfaction scores and inferential analysis to explore relationships between predictor variables and life satisfaction. Identification of predictive factors that most in-

fluence life satisfaction according to the results of the analysis. This may include variables such as physical health, emotional well-being, social relationships, socioeconomic level, and other aspects relevant to your study. Interpretation and discussion of results in the context of existing literature and discuss the practical implications of your results. Ethical considerations at each stage of your research, including informed consent, privacy and confidentiality of participants, and responsible use of the data collected.

## Results

A comparative table that contrasts typical findings related to life satisfaction and job satisfaction (Table 1). These two concepts are

closely related but represent different aspects of a person’s well-being and quality of life: Autonomy and Participation in Decision Making: Employees who have a certain degree of autonomy and participation in decision making related to their work tend to be more satisfied in their work roles. Fostering a positive and supportive organizational climate, where diversity is valued and open communication is promoted, can significantly improve job satisfaction. The perception of fair compensation and the availability of additional benefits (such as health insurance, bonuses, etc.) are determining factors in job satisfaction in Mexico.

**Table 1:** Comparison of the findings of life satisfaction and job satisfaction.

Aspect	Life Satisfaction	Work Satisfaction
Definition	Global and subjective evaluation of one’s own life, including various dimensions such as health, social relationships, purpose, and emotional well-being.	Evaluation of satisfaction and well-being specifically related to work and working conditions.
Key dimensions	Physical and mental health, social relationships, sense of purpose, personal achievement, living conditions.	Working conditions, compensation, relationship with colleagues and superiors, development opportunities, work-life balance.
Influences	Personal, social, emotional, economic, and environmental factors.	Work characteristics (tasks, work environment, schedules), labor relations, organizational culture, company policies.
Impact on general well-being	Life satisfaction can be influenced by multiple aspects of life, including work, but is not limited exclusively to it.	Job satisfaction has a significant impact on overall well-being and can affect overall life satisfaction.
Flexibility	It can fluctuate in response to changes in various areas of life, not just work.	May change based on specific work-related improvements or challenges.
Predictive factors	Social relationships, physical and mental health, emotional stability, sense of purpose and personal achievement.	Working conditions, fair compensation, recognition, professional development opportunities, work-life balance.

Note: Source: Prepared with the literature review

## Professional Development

The opportunity for professional growth and development within the organization influences job satisfaction. Employees value opportunities for training, promotion, and skill development. Access to development and professional growth opportunities is valued by Mexican employees. Lack of development prospects can negatively affect job satisfaction. Designing jobs that promote autonomy, task variety, and a sense of purpose is crucial to improving job satisfaction. The ability to achieve a satisfactory balance between job demands and personal responsibilities is positively associated with job satisfaction in many cultures.

## Improvement Strategies

The results suggest that organizations should implement effective strategies to improve job satisfaction, such as promoting a supportive culture, offering development opportunities, and ensuring fair and equitable compensation. To improve job satisfaction, organizations must implement effective strategies that address the key factors identified. This may include human resources policies focused on employee well-being, professional development programs, improving the organizational climate, and appropriate recognition for work performed.

## Determinants of Job Satisfaction

Findings show that factors such as work environment, work-life balance, career development and recognition are critical to job satisfaction across cultures. Studies have identified several determinants of job satisfaction, including the work environment, the quality of interpersonal relationships, work-life balance, professional development opportunities, and recognition for work performed.

## Impact of Organizational Culture

Organizational culture in Mexico, which can include values such as hierarchy and loyalty, influences job satisfaction. Organizations that promote an environment of respect and collaboration tend to have more satisfied employees. Job satisfaction is closely related to the personal and emotional well-being of individuals. Employees spend a significant part of their lives at work, so it is important that this experience is positive and rewarding. Job satisfaction can be influenced by specific cultural aspects of each country or region, such as the importance of hierarchy, interpersonal relationships, and organizational norms. Global studies suggest that the work environment, including the relationship with coworkers and superiors, has a significant impact on job satisfaction.



## Productivity and Performance

Satisfied employees tend to be more productive and engaged in their work tasks, which contributes to the overall performance of the organization. There is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance. Satisfied employees tend to be more engaged, productive, and less likely to leave the organization, which positively impacts business results. Organizations must invest in training and development programs to enable the professional growth of employees and meet their development needs. The perception of being recognized and rewarded appropriately for work performed is critical to job satisfaction around the world.

## Interpersonal Relationships

Relationships with colleagues and superiors play an important role in job satisfaction in Mexico. The sense of community and support at work contributes positively to employee well-being. Job satisfaction is associated with higher employee retention. Workers who feel valued and satisfied are less likely to leave the organization.

**Health and Wellbeing:** Job dissatisfaction can have negative effects on employees' physical and mental health, including stress, anxiety, and burnout. Given the economic and social context in Mexico, job stability and job security are key aspects that affect job satisfaction. The perception of job satisfaction may vary depending on the cultural context and social norms of each country or region. It is important to consider these differences when developing strategies to improve job satisfaction in multicultural environments.

## Discussion

Job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon that is influenced by a variety of contextual and personal factors (Barba-Sánchez, et al. [30]). Findings both globally and in Mexico highlight the importance of creating healthy work environments, promoting professional development, and ensuring equity and recognition at work to improve employee satisfaction and well-being. The discussion of the findings on job satisfaction is crucial to understand the importance of this concept in the organizational and social context (Aliabadi, et al. [31]). To advance the understanding of job satisfaction, it is important to explore innovative approaches and study cultural differences in the perception of job satisfaction (Bălăţescu, [32]). Furthermore, future research could focus on specific strategies to improve job satisfaction in different organizational and social contexts. Findings on job satisfaction highlight the importance of creating positive and stimulating work environments that promote employee well-being and engagement (Polo-Vargas, et al. [33]). Addressing job satisfaction effectively can benefit both individuals and organizations as a whole (Madrid-Solorza, et al. [34]). Job satisfaction is a crucial factor that influences the emotional well-being, commitment, and productivity of employees in any organization (Çetinkaya, et al. [35]). It is a fundamental aspect to promote a healthy and effective work environment

(Vieira, et al. [36]). Although significant progress has been made in the study of job satisfaction, there are still areas that require additional research (Loewe, et al. [37-44]). Continued studies are needed to better understand the factors that influence job satisfaction and to develop effective workplace interventions.

## Conclusion

The conclusions on job satisfaction highlight the main ideas and findings obtained from the research and study of this topic. Here are some key takeaways about job satisfaction: Findings on job satisfaction emphasize the importance of promoting work environments that foster employee well-being and satisfaction. Improving job satisfaction not only benefits individuals, but also contributes to the success and sustainability of organizations in a competitive business environment.

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María del Rosario Molina González. Biomed J Sci & Tech Res



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