**////Title: Achieving Sustainable Competitive Advantage in Organisations: Happiness Management**

**////Standfirst:**

Sustainable Development Goal 12 refers to responsible production and consumption. Professor Rafael Ravina-Ripoll at the University of Cádiz in Spain and his colleagues (Luis Bayardo Tobar-Pesantez, Estela Núñez-Barriopedro and David Almorza-Gomar) have addressed a lack of research and understanding in the literature about how management models based on happiness management can help promote sustainable and ethical development in the COVID-19 era.

**////Bodytext:**

The United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 in a universal call to action to end poverty. Sustainable Development Goal 12 refers to responsible production and consumption. In the literature, there is growing encouragement to embrace responsible production and consumption through the most efficient use of resources. Recent events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have made the need to achieve sustainable and ethical development in the commercial world even more urgent.

It is argued that a management model, in which behaviours, values and social norms contribute to individual well-being within an organisation can not only serve as a brand identity but create a corporate philosophy and culture that can contribute to the development of a better world. Professor Rafael Ravina-Ripoll at the University of Cádiz in Spain is driving forward research into this critical concept.

Happiness management is an emerging model of management that pivots on the happiness of its human capital (that is, employees) to improve organisational productivity, innovation, intrapreneurship within the established company and passion for work. These factors, if successfully promoted, would serve to increase the viability of organisations.

Professor Ravina-Ripoll and his colleagues have published one of the first empirically based papers specifically developing happiness management as a construct. Grounded in the existing literature and theory, this work is already attracting considerable attention, having received the award for the best paper at the 20th International Congress of Public and Non-Profit Marketing held in 2021.

Professor Ravina-Ripoll and colleagues begin by explaining that branding allows organisations to strengthen their corporate identity and differentiate themselves from competitors. In doing so, an organisation can invigorate their growth and competitiveness, although little has been published on this new wave of corporate happiness to date.

The innovative organisational culture of happiness management requires scientific research to confirm its utility. As such, Professor Ravina-Ripoll and colleagues have sought to identify how brand orientation may influence happiness management as an appropriate strategic direction for organisations.

Happiness is one of the main assets that managers of organisations possess to cultivate the subjective well-being of their employees, foster a positive atmosphere in the workplace and increase the job satisfaction of their human capital. The governance style adopted by an organisation has a direct impact on organisational happiness, not least through positive experiences, emotional pay and interpersonal relationships.

Professor Ravina-Ripoll and colleagues investigated the relationship between brand orientation and happiness management in the current COVID-19 era. They conducted a questionnaire survey with 216 managers of small- and medium-sized companies in Andalusia, Spain, across the service, construction and industry sectors and analysed the responses. They specifically wanted to test their theoretical model in which factors relating to brand orientation were predicted to positively impact happiness management.

The researchers identified that four factors relating to brand orientation – values, norms, artefacts and behaviours – all positively contribute to the concept of happiness management in organisations. They note that these four pillars are connected and complement each other, representing a cycle of responsible and sustainable production.

In discussing the findings, Professor Ravina-Ripoll and colleagues note that the dimension of ‘value’ allows higher-level management to increase responsible and sustainable value while meeting the needs of stakeholders.

In the dimension of ‘norms’, marketing managers can design strategies that connect directly to the organisation’s mission, vision and values.

For the dimension of ‘artefact’, the brand identities of mission, vision and values must be significantly related to the organisational culture and strategic plan.

Finally, for the dimension of ‘behaviour’, the increases in creativity, efficiency and motivation serve to guarantee the happiness of the employees.

As such, Professor Ravina-Ripoll and colleagues propose that corporate happiness should be understood to be a differential, strategic factor motivating intrapreneurship, technological innovation, organisational inclusion and emotional intelligence.

The researchers suggest that future research should look at a broader range of participants to gain a more international perspective, and also note that other types of organisations such as non-profit organisations should be studied.

This SciPod is a summary of the paper ‘Happiness Management: A Culture to Explore From Brand Orientation as a Sign of Responsible and Sustainable Production’, published in the open access journal Frontiers in Psychology. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.727845

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