

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Predicting the Effect of Transformational Leadership on Job Performance: The Intervening Role of Happiness at Work

Jean Paolo G. Lacap^{*1}, Angela Denise S. Pojanas², Erika Joyce V. De Guzman², Jose Angelo P. Culala², Janelo D. Mariamonte², and Patrick S. Carangan²

¹ City College of Angeles, Angeles City, Philippines

² Polytechnic University of the Philippines – College of Business Administration Graduate Studies, Sta. Mesa, Manila, Philippines

*1jgplacap@gmail.com

Happiness at work (HAW) plays a pivotal role in enhancing employee outcomes by fostering a positive work environment and significantly boosting job performance (JP). This study investigates the relationship between transformational leadership (TL) and JP, with HAW serving as a mediating factor. This research involved 230 business process outsourcing (BPO) employees from the National Capital Region in the Philippines. A predictive-causal approach and partial least squares (PLS) path modeling were used to analyze the hypothesized relationships. The results revealed that TL positively and significantly influenced JP and HAW. Furthermore, HAW was found to have a substantial positive impact on JP and mediated the relationship between TL and JP. Grounded in affective events theory (AET), this study highlights how transformational leaders can shape employees' decisions and behaviors. The emotional responses explained by AET demonstrate how HAW and JP are formed in response to workplace stimuli, even within the unique context of the BPO industry.

Keywords: happiness at work, job performance, transformational leadership, business process outsourcing, organization behavior

JEL: L0, L8

Human resource management (HRM) is commonly described as a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets—the people and their individual and collective contributions to the achievement of its objectives (Armstrong, 2006). Managing workforce diversity is a topic of increasing concern in HRM (Brooks & Ross-Gordon, 2004; Chermack, 2003) as it centers on the premise that harnessing differences creates a productive workplace in which employees feel valued and their talents are maximized in the process of accomplishing organizational goals (Bagshaw, 2004).

Transformational leadership (TL) has a significant role in improving organizational and employee performance (Antonakis & Day 2018). Many theories have been proposed to explain why happy employees perform better (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), and several scholars have examined the links between TL, happiness at work (HAW), and job performance (JP; Avolio & Bass, 1997; Burnes, 2004; Cribbin, 1972). According to Cummings et al. (2010), transformational leaders improve employees' JP to achieve better outcomes. Likewise, it was found that the degree of JP of employees, in general, was significantly improved

under TL (Bushra et al., 2011). Indeed, JP is a beneficial behavioral result of leadership (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011).

Meanwhile, Mangold and Miles (2002) stated that HAW are supported by leadership performance. Bambang et al. (2020) mentioned in their study that TL has a positive relationship with HAW. Happiness is not simply pleasure; it is an expansive notion of growing, learning, and thriving as a rational human being (Aristotle, 2014). As TL affects both JP and HAW, it needs to be investigated and explained further (Holten et al., 2018; Pan & Lin, 2015; Patiar & Wang, 2016).

Furthermore, it is beneficial to develop an undertaking that predicts the effect of TL on JP and the intervening role of HAW among business process outsourcing (BPO) employees to better facilitate the management's decision-making in providing solutions to employees' performance at work. Several studies have discussed the effects of TL on job satisfaction, employee engagement, and work engagement (Bambang et al., 2020; Bushra et al., 2011; Lacap, 2009; Valentine, 2018). However, few studies have explored the variables that predict the effect of TL on JP and the intervening role of HAW, and this topic remains unexplored in the Philippine context, which this study aims to cover.

Literature Review

The affective events theory (AET) is a psychological model that focuses on individuals' emotional responses in the workplace (Zhang & Xu, 2021). It examines the causes, structure, and consequences of affective reactions that shape attitudes and behaviors at work (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Affect refers to employees' moods and emotions, whereas attitude is an evaluative judgment based on affect (Carlson et al., 2011). Emotions are a key component of TL, with positive emotions strongly linked to TL outcomes (Gooty et al., 2010; Bissing-Olson et al., 2013; Tepper et al., 2018). At the team level, leaders can foster strong positive feelings that influence work attitudes and behaviors (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002; Doh & Quigley, 2014). Team members evaluate their work based on factors such as self-worth and expectations, which impact their behavior and JP (Norton et al., 2015; Tan et al., 2015).

High-performance work practices, such as job redesign, training, employee empowerment, and

rewards based on organizational performance, enhance affective commitment, engagement, and satisfaction, potentially mediating their impact on employee happiness (Pfeffer, 1998). These practices can boost employees' competence, autonomy, and connections to the organization, promoting happiness (Fisher, 2010). In this study, when a leader motivates and supports their followers, it fosters a sense of belonging, creating positive emotions such as HAW. This sense of belonging can improve JP and overall organizational performance.

Transformational Leadership

Leaders must motivate and enable employees to initiate and implement innovative ideas that improve the company's overall quality and performance (Afsar & Umrani, 2019; Edghiem & Mouzughy, 2018). Avolio and Bass (1997) mentioned that TL is characterized by passion and optimism, focusing on a positive vision of what may be accomplished. This type of leadership has the potential to produce high levels of performance over time because it inspires, motivates, and meets people's basic needs (Saeed et al., 2018). Transformational leaders encourage followers to think beyond their self-interest, provide feedback, set high-performance criteria, assist followers in becoming more innovative and creative, and attend to their followers' needs (Bass, 1985; Yukl, 1999). These leaders treat employees as individuals, not merely as workers (Weib & Süb, 2016). Hence, the most effective leaders are those who actively collaborate with their subordinates and establish strong relationships with them by providing personal care and support (Atan & Mahmood, 2019).

Furthermore, Cleavenger and Munyon (2013) found that transformational leaders pushed employees to become more motivated, perform well, discover new ways of working, and spark creativity. These leaders share the organization's vision with employees, maintain personal connections, listen to suggestions, and capitalize on every opportunity along the way. According to Cherry (2021), TL is a leadership style that fosters positive changes among followers. Transformational leaders focus on helping every group member succeed, promoting positive influences on employee well-being. White (2018) noted that leaders must train employees to take ownership of decisions in their assigned roles, fostering creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills. Individuals like

Jeff Bezos and Steve Jobs exemplify these leadership skills. Morkeviciute et al. (2019) emphasized that TL is a positive way to communicate with employees, proving that it is more beneficial than negatively related approaches. Moreover, Atim et al. (2019) found that leaders who are ready to hear and consider good ideas, a key trait of TL, make employees happier.

Job Performance

JP refers to employees' behaviors and traits that lead to relevant outcomes in task performance, citizenship behavior, and counterproductive performance (Ramawickrama et al., 2017, 2019). Ghaith and Mutia (2019) defined JP as an individual action driven by employees' skills and knowledge. Sobaih et al. (2019) noted that JP reflects an individual's ability to perform work-related duties within job limitations while using available resources, including both task and extra-role performance. Organizational success depends on individual performance (Pushpakumari, 2008), and enhancing JP is key to improving overall productivity (Sonntag, 2002).

TL can improve JP by motivating employees to achieve higher productivity and performance (Zhu et al., 2016). Transformational leaders inspire followers to share their vision and help them achieve their goals (Barling et al., 1996). TL is positively linked to individual and organizational performance (Khan et al., 2020). Positive emotions, such as HAW, boost performance by enhancing creativity, flexibility, and efficiency (Van de Voorde & Van Veldhoven, 2016). HAW is a key job resource that influences employee performance and productivity (Cunha & Rego, 2008).

Happiness at Work

Pryce-Jones (2011) defined HAW as the positive feelings that employees experience while working. Gavin and Mason (2004) noted that HAW involves taking pride and deriving self-esteem from one's achievements. Happiness and satisfaction vary among employees, who may find happiness in monetary rewards, recognition, or motivation (Chowdhury, 2021). Amirullah (2017) found that HAW is linked to income, peer relationships, employment status, and work activities. Employees are happier when they feel respected and acknowledged at work, motivating them to improve. Brooks (2021) stated that alignment with employer values contributes to happiness, while Yang and Chen (2023) emphasized that HAW is fostered by

sharing workloads, adapting strategies, and rewarding efforts.

Carleton (2009) and Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) suggested that happy individuals exhibit higher productivity and less job withdrawal. De Waal and Mroueh (2020) found that increasing employee happiness makes work more attractive and improves employee performance. This was supported by Fluegge-Woolf (2014), who noted that HAW positively correlated with task and creative performance. Abdul Majid et al. (2014) asserted that workplace happiness is vital for productivity. However, Cederstrom and Spicer (2015) argued that pursuing HAW alone may not enhance productivity. Atim et al. (2019) and Sulaiman (2014) observed that communication gaps and a lack of recognition diminished HAW. Eliyana et al. (2020) found that TL positively impacts HAW, especially when mediated by organizational learning. TL fosters employee satisfaction and positive feelings, promoting HAW by addressing employee needs (Ghadi et al., 2011; Eliyana et al., 2020). Alegre et al. (2017) recommended integrating TL to increase HAW as it enhances vigor, perception, and belongingness.

Hypothesis Development

Leadership motivates and inspires team members to create an environment that fosters learning, collaboration, and teamwork to achieve organizational goals and objectives (Maina & Gichinga, 2018; Klingborg et al., 2006; Okoli et al., 2021). Leaders must ensure that all followers understand, embrace, and work towards achieving team goals that affect their performance and the organization's performance as a whole. According to Yuan et al. (2017), TL indirectly enhances organizational and employee performance by fostering trust and commitment, thereby leading to positive work outcomes. It also serves as a strong predictor of organizational performance mediated by organizational learning and innovation (Nguyen & Luu, 2019). On the other hand, the study by Andriani et al. (2018) stated that TL is a leadership style that encourages employees to have vision, mission, and goals, encouraging and motivating them to perform at their best. They proved that there is a positive and significant relationship between TL and JP and that TL is followed by improved employee performance. Previous researchers have established a direct positive effect of TL on JP (Lai et al., 2020; Schwarz, 2017). Thus, we propose that:

H1. Transformational leadership significantly and positively affects job performance.

According to Salas-Vallina et al. (2017), TL, together with organizational learning, can be a driver of HAW in the healthcare setting, which is generally considered a very challenging workplace. On the other hand, the role of transformational leaders is to build a climate of trust, which is linked to an increase in employees' positive perception of their work-life and level of job satisfaction (Akter et al., 2021). Workers with independent thinking, proactiveness, and positive characteristics are more engaged in their work, which is a dimension of HAW (Bailey et al., 2017;). A previous study also showed that TL has a direct influence on HAW (Abdullah et al., 2017). Thus, we propose that:

H2. Transformational leadership significantly and positively affects happiness at work.

Happiness is related to how people experience and appraise their lives. Most people spend their lives working in an organization that they believe can help them improve themselves through constant on-the-job training and sustain their financial needs. According to Bataineh (2019), HAW is more than a sense of pleasure, a positive affective experience, or good feelings; it can influence employees' performance. People are deemed happy when they experience positive emotions at work, which, in turn, can assist in shaping the outcomes of the job market, productivity, and organizational performance of the organization (Field & Buitendach, 2011). It is a common consensus that a happy employee will become a productive employee (Abualoush et al., 2018; Joo & Lee, 2017) and improve their JP (Salas-Vallina et al., 2020). Previous studies have also shown that HAW has a significant influence on JP (Urrutia et al., 2019). Thus, we propose that:

H3. Happiness at work significantly and positively affects job performance.

In addition to studies directly linking TL to JP, prior research has demonstrated that HAW serves as a mediating mechanism in various organizational relationships. Al-dalalmeh et al. (2018) showed that HAW, as an affective component of job satisfaction, mediated the relationship between employee engagement and JP. When employees feel happy at

work, they become more engaged and are more willing to go beyond their formal job requirements, resulting in superior performance.

Similarly, Semedo et al. (2017) examined HAW as a mediator between authentic leadership and employee creativity. Their findings indicated that authentic leaders foster positive emotional experiences and reduce negative emotions in the workplace, thereby enhancing creative performance. This evidence underscores the role of HAW as a psychological mechanism through which leadership styles influence work outcomes.

In the context of transformational leadership, Buil et al. (2019) found significant associations between TL, work engagement, and JP. Notably, one dimension of work engagement—feeling happy while working intensively—was directly related to both TL and JP. This suggests that transformational leaders are more likely to inspire positive affective states at work, which encourages employees to exert extra effort and perform beyond their prescribed roles.

Although Pojanen and Japos (2022) reported that HAW do not mediate the relationship between TL and JP in their specific empirical context, this finding should not be viewed as conclusive or generalizable across all settings. A substantial body of prior empirical evidence consistently demonstrated that TL fosters positive affective states among employees, including HAW, and that such positive emotional experiences subsequently translate into higher employee JP. Thus, the absence of a mediating effect in one study may reflect contextual, methodological, or occupational differences, rather than a rejection of the underlying theoretical framework. This divergence in findings underscores the need for further empirical investigation to re-examine the mediating role of HAW among different employee groups. Thus, we propose that:

H4. Happiness at work mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance.

From the hypotheses presented, Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the four possible relationships: TL and JP, TL and HAW, HAW, and JP, and the mediating effect of HAW on the relationship between TL and JP.

Methods

Participants of the Study

The study participants were employees of BPO companies in the National Capital Region, Philippines. In particular, the respondents were from outsourced positions, including, but not limited to, HR processes, call center operations, and IT services (Abara & Heo, 2013). They were selected using purposive sampling. This is a non-random sampling technique in which the focus is on participants with particular characteristics to be included in the study (Etikan et al., 2016). Out of the 300 distributed surveys, 230 qualified and answered

completely, giving a response rate of 76.67%. The distribution of surveys began in December 2021 and ended in January 2022.

To determine the sufficiency of the sample size, inverse square root and gamma exponential methods were used (Kock & Hadaya, 2018). With a minimum absolute significant path coefficient of 0.215, a significance level of 0.05, and a power level of 0.80, the inverse square root method suggests 134 samples, whereas the gamma-exponential method recommends 121 samples. Hence, the required number of samples must be 121-134; thus, the sample size of 230 is adequate for interpreting the results of the structural model.

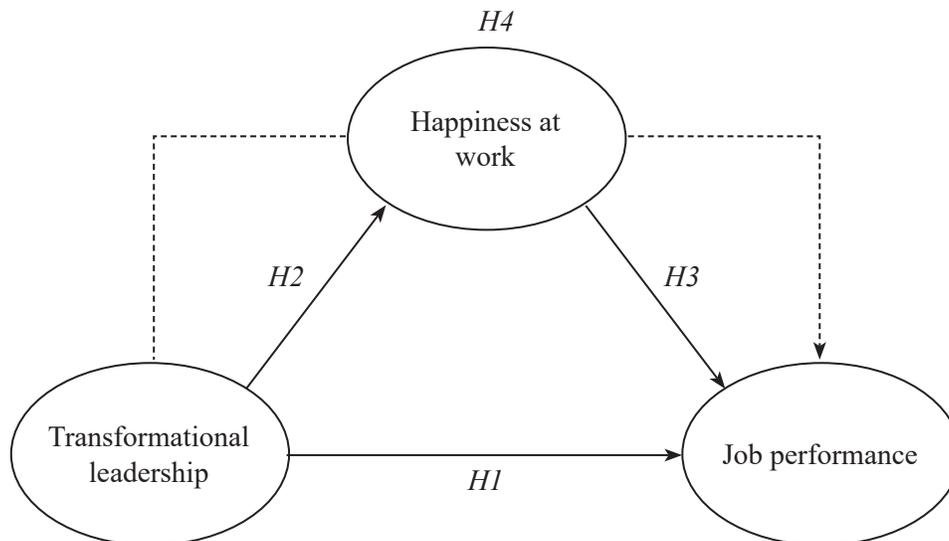


Figure 1
Conceptual Framework

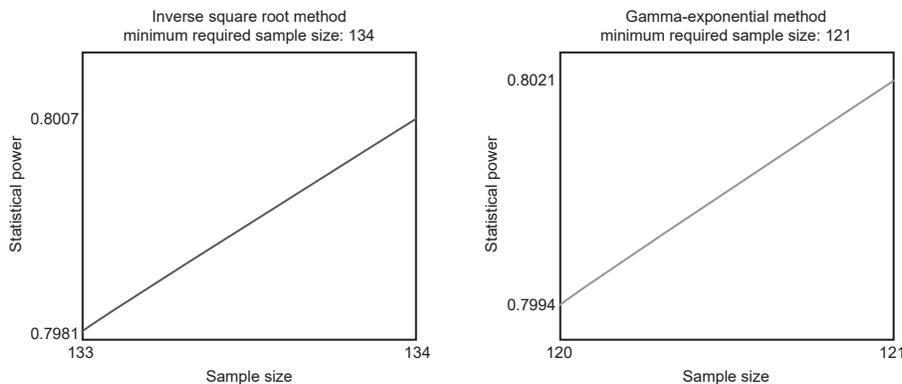


Figure 2
Results of the Inverse Square Root and Gamma-Exponential Methods

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was an online survey questionnaire prepared using Google Forms. The survey included two parts: demographic factors and constructs of the study. The demographic characteristics included the respondent's sex, age, civil status, highest educational attainment, place of work, number of years of employment, and the size of the company they worked for. The second part included questions on TL, HAW, and JP—the constructs of the study.

TL was measured using the seven items from Carless et al. (2000). For the HAW assessment, nine items were adopted from the shortened happiness at work scale (SHAW) by Salas-Vallina and Alegre (2018). JP was measured using three items from Buil et al. (2019). The participants were asked to rate the items for all three constructs using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The validity and reliability of the constructs were measured, as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Data Analysis

A predictive-causal research design was used in the present study to assess the interrelationships between the TL, JP, and HAW constructs. Partial least squares (PLS) path modeling using the WarpPLS software (version 7.0) was used to estimate the parameters. It follows a multi-stage process that includes the following: (a) inner and outer model specifications, (b) assessment of the outer model, and (c) evaluation of the inner model. It determines the constructs' reliability and validity as well as the connections between relationships through this measurement (Barroso et al., 2010).

Results

Assessment of the Measurement Model

The validity and reliability of the constructs were assessed to evaluate the measurement instruments. Reliability refers to a measure's consistency in obtaining almost the same responses from a participant completing an instrument (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha (CA) were analyzed to test the reliability of the constructs. The values of CR and CA must be greater than or equal to 0.7 to indicate good reliability (Kock, 2014; Kock & Lynn, 2012). Table 1 shows that TL (CR=0.961,

CA=0.953), JP (CR=0.859, CA=0.782), and HAW (CR=0.912, CA=0.902) met the acceptable values, indicating that all latent constructs were reliable.

Convergent and discriminant validity tests were performed to validate the measurement model. Convergent validity refers to the quality of the questions in the research instrument. It indicates whether the designer/s of the questions and the respondents have a common understanding of the set of items or questions in the instrument. Convergent validity was verified by determining the factor loading of each latent construct. Each factor loading must be equal to or higher than 0.5, and its p-value must be equal to or less than 0.05 to demonstrate that a construct is acceptable (Hair et al., 2009; Kock, 2017). As presented in Table 1, all constructs have item loadings greater than 0.5, indicating that the required values were met.

Convergent validity was further analyzed by assessing the average variance extracted (AVE). The values of AVE should be equal to or greater than 0.5 to illustrate that convergent validity exists (Kock & Lynn, 2012). The AVE values of the constructs positively indicated convergent validity, as shown in Table 1.

The heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation was used as another measure of discriminant validity. When HTMT is used as a criterion, it is compared to a predetermined threshold. If the HTMT ratio is greater than 0.85, it can be inferred that discriminant validity is lacking (Henseler et al., 2015). Based on the results in Table 2, all constructs exhibited discriminant validity.

Analysis of the Structural Model

Structural model analysis includes the assessment of path coefficients, which are beta coefficients (β), collinearity, effect sizes (f^2), coefficient of determination (R^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2).

Figure 3 and Table 3 present the parameter estimates and effects of the mediation model. The results revealed that TL significantly influenced JP ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.001$). The positive path coefficient indicates that TL affects employees' ability to deal with different kinds of circumstances, thus positively affecting JP. The effect size of the path from TL to JP is small ($f^2 = 0.080$). This assessment supports Hypothesis H1.

The findings also showed that TL significantly influenced HAW ($\beta = 0.587$, $p < 0.001$). There was also a positive relationship between TL and HAW, with a moderate effect ($f^2 = 0.345$). The positive

Table 1. *Item Loadings, AVE, and Reliability of the Variables*

Construct/Item	Factor loading
<i>Transformational leadership: AVE = 0.779; CA = 0.953; CR = 0.961</i>	
TL1	0.871
TL2	0.900
TL3	0.886
TL4	0.871
TL5	0.862
TL6	0.894
TL7	0.893
<i>Job performance: AVE = 0.605; CA = 0.782; CR = 0.859</i>	
JP1	0.761
JP2	0.797
JP3	0.815
JP4	0.737
<i>Happiness at work: AVE = 0.596; CA = 0.902; CR = 0.921</i>	
HW1	0.791
HW2	0.794
HW3	D
HW4	0.824
HW5	0.747
HW6	0.824
HW7	0.814
HW8	0.714
HW9	0.652

All factor loadings are significant (p < .001); AVE=average variance extracted; CR=composite reliability; CA=Cronbach's alpha. D-deleted due to low factor loading.

Table 2. *Discriminant Validity Using HTMT Ratios*

	Transformational leadership	Job performance	Happiness at work
Transformational leadership			
Job performance	0.316		
Happiness at work	0.466	0.425	

path coefficient suggests that the presence of TL in an organization increases the level of happiness of employees at work. Thus, H2 is supported. Analysis of the data also showed that HAW significantly and positively affected JP ($\beta = 0.306, p < 0.001$), with a small effect ($f^2 = 0.125$). This signifies that increasing the level of happiness of employees at work will also increase their JP; therefore, H3 is supported.

Moreover, mediation analysis showed that HAW had an indirect effect on the relationship between TL and JP ($\beta = 0.180, p < 0.001$). This implies that HAW mediates the relationship between TL and JP with a small mediation effect ($f^2 = 0.067$). Therefore, H4 is supported.

The common method bias test was executed by computing the full collinearity variance inflation factor (VIF) to detect multicollinearity among variables. According to Kock and Lynn (2012), the VIF coefficients values allow for the examination of both lateral and vertical collinearity. To ensure that the constructs are free of common biases, the full collinearity VIF values for each construct must be equal to or lower than 3.3 (Kock, 2017). As shown in Table 4, the results of the constructs used passed the common method bias test.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) and predictive validity (Q^2) were assessed as part of the structural model analysis. The effects indicated by path

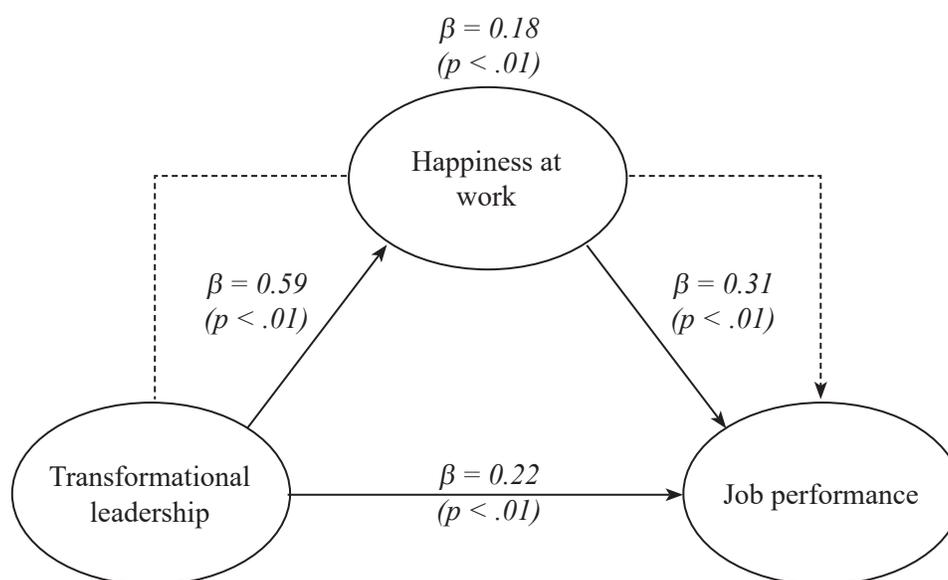


Figure 3
The Structural Model With Parameter Estimates

Table 3. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	β	p	SE	f^2	Decision
Direct effects					
H1. TL \rightarrow JP	0.216	<0.001	0.063	0.080	Supported
H2. TL \rightarrow HAW	0.587	<0.001	0.059	0.345	Supported
H3. HAW \rightarrow JP	0.306	<0.001	0.062	0.125	Supported
Mediating effect					
H4. TL \rightarrow HAW \rightarrow JP	0.180	<0.001	0.045	0.067	Supported

TL - transformational leadership; JP - job performance; HAW - happiness at work; β - path coefficient; p - value; SE - standard error; f^2 - effect size (Cohen, 1988): 0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, 0.35 = large.

Table 4. *FCVIF, R^2 , and Q^2*

Construct	R^2	Q^2	FCVIF
Transformational leadership			1.245
Job performance	0.210	0.205	1.161
Happiness at work	0.341	0.339	1.316

R^2 – coefficient of determination; Q^2 – predictive relevance; FCVIF – full collinearity variance inflation factor

coefficients were established using effect sizes. Having less than 0.02 R^2 coefficients means that the effects are very weak and should be considered irrelevant from a practical perspective (Kock, 2014). Conversely, to conclude that the constructs have predictive relevance, the Stone-Geisser Q^2 coefficients must be greater than zero (Kock, 2017). As shown in Table 4, all the constructs passed the R^2 and Q^2 requirements.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that TL has a significant and positive effect on JP. This indicates that transformational leaders who create an innovative solution to simplify their team's work can stimulate positive affect and emotions among their team members, which, in turn, can influence their employees' JP. Adriani (2021) also ascertained that motivation is a key factor that affects the performance of workers. Transformational leaders should keep their team members motivated and inspired to achieve their goals (Lai et al., 2020). Employees who feel connected and have a strong emotional bond with the company can also significantly affect their workplace performance (Schwarz, 2017).

Moreover, the study also found that TL has a considerable and favorable impact on HAW. These findings suggest that transformational leaders play a crucial role in fostering a favorable atmosphere and positive emotions in the workplace. The passion, level of optimism, and clear vision set by transformational leaders are important indicators of augmenting and creating an environment where employees are happy and satisfied. Previous studies have also ascertained that transformational leadership is a vital antecedent of HAW (Abdullah et al., 2017; Bailey et al., 2017; Salas-Vallina et al., 2017). Moreover, Eliyana et al. (2020) pointed out that leaders who foster a positive

work atmosphere and provide necessary support inspire more satisfied, happy, and motivated employees.

HAW and JP was also found to be significantly and positively related. The results suggest that workplace optimism and the meaningfulness that employees derive from their work have a significant impact on their level of performance. The overall happiness that workers experience from their job itself, the total work environment of the organization, and the all-encompassing nature of their work are antecedents of improved JP. Previous studies have also shown that HAW affects JP (Abualoush et al., 2018; Bataineh, 2019; Joo & Lee, 2017; Salas-Vallina et al., 2017; Urrutia et al., 2019). Furthermore, Abdul Majid et al. (2014) confirmed that happy people are productive. If employees are happy, they are more likely to engage in work and produce creative results for their employers.

Lastly, HAW was found to significantly and indirectly influence the relationship between TL and JP, indicating that transformational leaders enhance performance not only through direct behavioral influence, but also by shaping employees' affective experiences at work. According to the affective events theory, TL functions as a salient source of positive affective events by demonstrating individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and supportive behaviors that trigger positive emotions, facilitate emotional regulation, and promote affective contagion within teams. These repeated positive emotional experiences enable employees to engage in meaning-making at work, fostering a strong sense of purpose, psychological safety, and motivation. Although the indirect effect size is small, its significance highlights the theoretical importance of HAW as a critical affective mechanism linking TL to JP, particularly in organizational contexts where performance is influenced by multiple factors. Consistent with Aldalameh et al. (2018), Buil et al. (2019), and

Semedo et al. (2017), the findings suggest that when employees experience high levels of HAW under TL, they are more likely to exert discretionary effort and demonstrate higher JP, reinforcing HAW as a vital pathway through which TL translates into favorable employee outcomes.

Implications of the Study, Limitations, and Future Research Directions

The present study emphasizes the vital role of TL and HAW in enhancing employee outcomes, particularly in JP. To translate these findings into practice, BPO companies should invest in leadership development programs that equip managers with transformational skills such as effective communication, emotional intelligence, and employee empowerment. These skills enable leaders to inspire and motivate their teams, fostering trust and creating a positive work environment. Simultaneously, companies should implement policies and initiatives that promote HAW, such as recognition programs, flexible work arrangements, and wellness activities. These efforts ensure that employees experience job satisfaction and enjoyment, which in turn lead to positive behaviors, increased productivity, and higher retention rates.

To develop transformational leaders capable of enhancing workplace satisfaction and performance, BPO companies must move beyond conventional leadership training. They should create immersive programs that integrate emotional intelligence and visionary thinking and focus on people-centered leadership. Aspiring leaders can be cultivated through dynamic mentorship systems that foster mutual learning and are rooted in real-world workplace challenges. Fostering a culture of recognition, genuine dialogue, and psychological safety enables leaders to form meaningful connections with their teams. Aligning leadership development with comprehensive performance metrics beyond mere numbers ensures a human-centered approach. By adopting continuous feedback mechanisms and nurturing environments that leaders inspire rather than direct, BPO firms can spark a new era of leadership that transforms not only productivity but also the entire employee experience.

As a global leader in BPO services with a 13% market share (Villegas, 2022), the Philippines must prioritize developing transformational leaders who can effectively enhance both employee well-being and organizational outcomes. The presence of such

leaders is crucial not only for driving financial success but also for creating an optimistic and supportive work environment. By integrating HAW-focused initiatives with TL practices, companies can foster a more engaged and innovative workforce, thereby improving JP at both individual and organizational levels. TL, combined with a commitment to employee happiness, provides a strategic pathway to sustainable growth and resilience in the competitive BPO sector.

Using AET as the theoretical framework, this study shows how transformational leaders can influence members' decisions and behaviors. The AET's argument that emotional responses and their causes prove that the psychological model can fully explain how HAW and JP are formed by a stimulus, TL, even in the context of the BPO industry. By providing innovative solutions and processes that would improve their work, team members tend to improve their JP directly by focusing on their individual goals to achieve overall organizational objectives. Additionally, as measured in the present study, HAW, as a mediating construct in the relationship between a cause (TL) and an emotional response (JP), provides a new way of looking at AET. Our study confirmed that HAW mediates TL and JP. Hence, transformational leaders play a vital role in team members' affect, attitude, and decision-making. Transformational leaders who express support for their people tend to provide meaningful work experiences among employees, thus performing effectively and efficiently.

The present study has several limitations. The sample is confined to employees of BPO companies located in the National Capital Region (NCR), Philippines, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Thus, future studies may include respondents from other major BPO hubs across different regions of the country. Moreover, TL was the only antecedent examined in relation to HAW and JP, suggesting that future research may incorporate other predictors, such as organizational culture, job characteristics, and alternative leadership styles, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of employee outcomes. HAW was also the sole mediating variable considered, and future studies should explore other intervening mechanisms that could indirectly influence the link between TL and JP. In addition, the study employed a cross-sectional, correlational design and relied on self-report measures, which limit causal inference and raise the possibility of a common method bias. Future

research may address these concerns by adopting longitudinal or experimental designs and using multi-source data, such as supervisor-rated or objective performance indicators, to strengthen the robustness of the findings.

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