

Towards Sustainable Happiness: Examining the Impact of CSR on Employee Well-Being

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Abstract. *The main interest of any company is to make as much profit as possible. But, in addition to economic considerations, it is also necessary to take into account the social context in which these companies operate, as well as the well-being of their employees. Now, when stress and burnout are more and more present among employees, the need for a balance between private and personal life is more and more evident. The happiness of employees is closely correlated with the efficiency they offer in solving work tasks, so it is desirable that the work environment ensures their well-being. The present study aims to analyze the relationship between organizational culture and corporate social responsibility (CSR), but also the impact of the latter component on employee happiness. Using Smart PLS on some ordinal data obtained from a questionnaire that intended to obtain answers regarding organizational culture (clan, adhocracy, market and hierarchy) as well as the balance between personal and private life, adaptability to change and occupational health and safety (elements that comprise CSR) and the happiness of individuals, the positive effect generated by CSR on happiness was found.*

Keywords: CSR, happiness, organizational culture, Smart PLS, sustainable development

Introduction

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is implemented in the management of economic organizations by integrating social and environmental components both in the operational activities of companies and in their relations with stakeholders. CSR can be understood as a measure of sustainable development in business because it is often understood as a measure aimed at balancing economic, social and environmental implications, while achieving stakeholders' interests. Among the issues addressed by CSR are eco-efficiency and environmental management, stakeholder engagement, social equity, human rights, employee and community relations, labor standards and working conditions, anti-corruption measures (UNIDO, 2022).

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The current study is an adaptation of the article by Espasandín-Bustelo et al., (2021) in which the positive impact of organizational culture on internal CSR is noted, as well as the relationship between internal CSR and employee happiness.

The first section, dedicated to specialized literature, will shed light on the link between CRS and individual outcomes (Ezzi et al., 2020; Guzzo, Wang, et al., 2022), also referring to older age groups (Goriunova et al., 2016), but also the role of this concept on community well-being (Bolt & Homer, 2024; Rela et al., 2020). It will also be presented the role of CSR on eudaimonia (Cao et al., 2022), job satisfaction (Aharon et al., 2011; Murshed et al., 2023), job performance (Nielsen et al., 2017; Ramdhan et al., 2022), burnout (Y. Liu et al., 2023) and the effect brought by COVID 19 on this management concept, as well as employee well-being (Carroll et al., 2020).

The methodology describes how to obtain the analyzed data, as well as the model and assumptions from which the study starts, also describing the software used to validate the hypotheses formulated. SmartPLS (Ringle et al., 2022) is considered the most thorough software for performing PLS-SEM analyses, as indicated by Henseler (2017). SmartPLS holds the position as the most frequently employed PLS-SEM software, as confirmed by multiple review studies assessing its application across various disciplines (Cepeda-Carrion et al., 2019; J. Hair et al., 2017; Usakli & Kucukergin, 2018). Hypotheses that are intended to be tested in the current study refer to the impact of organizational culture on CSR, but also the internal CSR effect on employee happiness.

Among the results obtained will be found the connection between organizational culture and internal CSR, as well as the influence of the second variable on employee happiness.

Literature review

In the definition provided by the World Bank, Corporate social responsibility is categorized as the interest of business to contribute to sustainable economic development by working with employees, their families, the community and society "to improve the quality of life, in ways that are both good for business and good for development" (Ward, 2004).

As CSR is implemented voluntarily by companies, the government's role in promoting it is considerable, which is why governments in developed nations have implemented an impressive agenda in encouraging this management concept (Wirba, 2023). In his work on the Communitarianism and Individualism perspectives of CSR, Younkins (2001) says that it is "limited to respecting the natural rights of all individual parties".

The balance between private and professional life should be counted among the natural rights of people. Unfortunately, these days this is hard to achieve, which is why this ideology was implemented. Employee happiness and well-being seems to be a topic of interest among researchers, with numerous studies on eudaimonia, subjective well-being and job satisfaction.

In a simplified translation, eudaimonia can be considered the equivalent of happiness, especially individual happiness. The concept is a very old one, starting from Aristotle, who believed that this is a rational activity through which people can pursue what is worth living for (Moore, 2019).

The main methods by which various authors have come to research eudaimonic well-being are the questionnaire and the interview. Another common element found focuses on the difference between eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. Thus, in Czerw (2019) work on diagnosing the eudaimonic well-being of employees, he surveyed a number of 724 employees regarding four factors: positive relations with co-workers, positive organization, contribution to the organization and fit and development, subsequently going to apply a cluster analysis using the K-means

algorithm to be able to distinguish four employee profiles. Another study carried out in the IT field showed that there is a direct link between perceived CSR and knowledge sharing, eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. Both types of well-being are considered important factors in employees' willingness to share their knowledge within the business. The mediating role of eudaimonia between the relationship between perceived CSR and knowledge sharing is also presented (Chtioui et al., 2023). In research conducted by Bauer (2022), the author finds that employee perceptions of CSR positively impact work meaningfulness, job involvement, job autonomy and job aspiration. According to a study conducted on employees in the field of home appliance manufacturing in China, CSR has a positive impact on subjective well-being, also, moral identity is a mediator of perceived CSR and subjective well-being (Liang & Yoon, 2023).

The link between CSR and job satisfaction has been studied over time, with studies showing a direct link between the two concepts. Thus, in the study carried out by (Aharon et al., 2011), the authors found that corporate social responsibility positively influences both organizational justice and job satisfaction. The relationship between the age of employees and the role brought by CSR on their attitude was also studied, noting that CSR has a greater impact on the satisfaction of older employees compared to younger ones (Wisse et al., 2018). Additionally, internal or external CSR effects were also studied, Chatzopoulou et al. (2022) finding that only external CSR is correlated with the increase in employee job satisfaction.

In addition to workplace satisfaction, the role of the CSR in job performance must also be presented, demonstrating the fact that corporate performance depends on employee performance, which is more productive when there is a low burnout (Ramdhan et al., 2022). Burnout was also felt significantly during the COVID 19 pandemic, especially in the medical field, along with depression and anxiety (Carroll et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2022).

Among the fields in which the role of organizational culture, or CSR, on well-being is researched are education (H. Liu et al., 2019; Saengiran, 2013; Santos et al., 2013), hospitality (Guzzo, Abbott, et al., 2022; Hayat & Afshari, 2022; H. (Lina) Kim et al., 2018; M. Kim & Kim, 2021), technology (Jaiswal & Arun, 2022) and health (Jarosova et al., 2017; Macassa et al., 2021; So et al., 2011; Tzeng et al., 2023).

Methodology

In this section will be presented how the data were obtained, together with the research hypotheses, as well as the software used to validate them together with the evaluation of the exterior and interior model.

Data collection

The methodology of this study involved collecting valid data from 123 respondents. The questionnaire utilized for data collection consists of 52 questions and comprised three sections. First section, 10 questions, gathered information about respondents such as: age of the participants, work experience, job title, demographic and social characteristics. Forty-two questions were applied to analyze the impact of five latent variables on employees' happiness. Responses to these questions were recorded on a five-point Likert scale: 1 representing "strongly disagree", 2 indicating "disagree", 3 denoting "neutral", 4 signifying "agree" and 5 representing "strongly agree". The questions were randomly ordered to avoid suggesting a particular response to study participants and to make it difficult to identify the latent variables corresponding to each question.

The questionnaire was designed and hosted using Google Forms. It was accessible for completion from January 07, 2024, to January 27, 2024. All questions were designated as "mandatory". No incentives were offered for participation.

Considering Espasandín-Bustelo et al. (2021), the following variables have been considered: Clan Culture (CL), Adhocracy Culture (AD), Market Culture (MK), Hierarchy Culture (HI), Internal CSR and Employee happiness (HA). Following the methodology presented in the paper mentioned above, Internal CSR was assessed according to the methodology outlined by García del Junco et al. (2018). Internal CSR was categorized into three dimensions: work-life balance and equal opportunities, adaptability to change, and occupational health and safety. In the current research, an adaptation of the questions articulated in the article constituting the source of inspiration was used to formulate the working hypotheses presented, as follows:

- *H1: Clan culture has a positive impact on Internal CSR.*
- *H2: Adhocracy culture has a positive impact on Internal CSR.*
- *H3: Market culture has a positive impact on Internal CSR.*
- *H4: Hierarchy culture has a positive impact on Internal CSR.*
- *H5: Internal CSR has a positive impact on Employee happiness.*

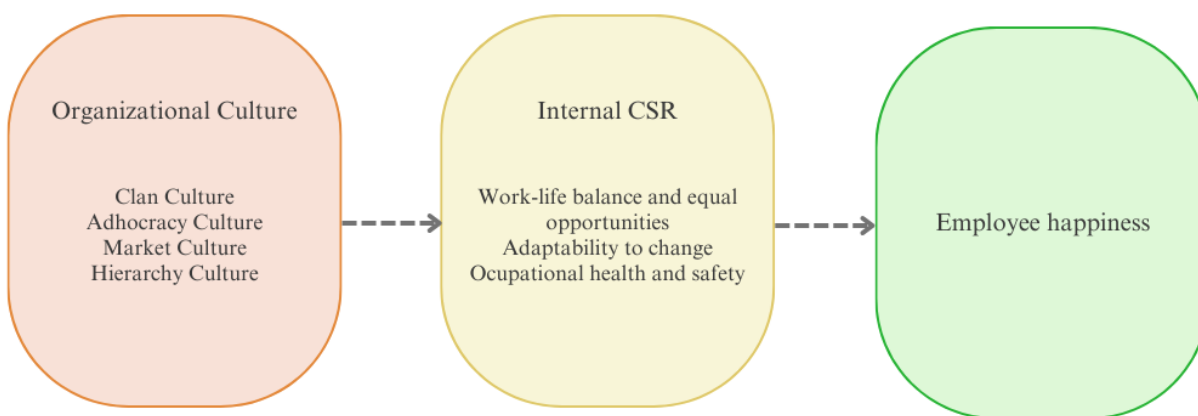


Figure 1. Research model

Source: Authors' own contribution.

Error! Reference source not found. presents the theoretical framework for the systematic investigation of factors influencing employee happiness and the components of Organizational Culture and Internal CSR.

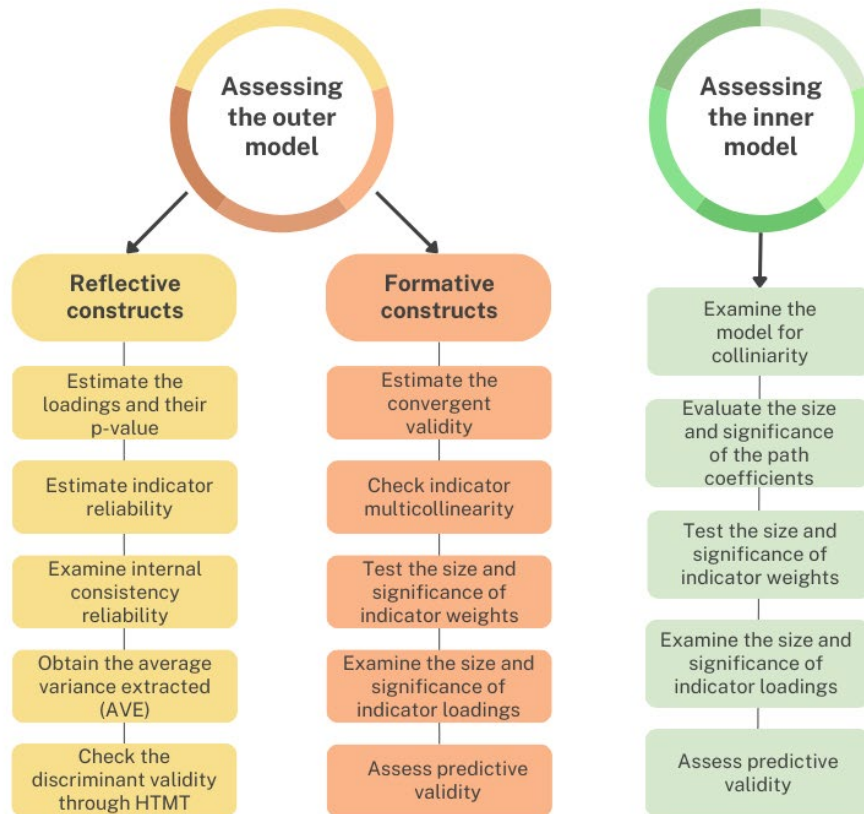


Figure 2. Model validation steps

Source: Authors' own research.

Figure 2 presents the two methods for model validation applied in this paper. The outer model validation is presented as the first step by Hair and Alamer (2022), followed by inner model assessing. Assessing the outer model needs to be approached differently depending on the construct. There are two types of constructs, formative constructs and reflective constructs. Reflective indicators are essentially interchangeable, meaning that the removal of an item does not alter the fundamental nature of the underlying construct. Conversely, with formative indicators, "omitting an indicator is equivalent to omitting a part of the construct" (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001). The assessment of reflective constructs involves five steps as follows: estimating the loadings and their p-values, evaluating indicator reliability, examining internal consistency reliability, calculating the average variance extracted (AVE), and ensuring discriminant validity through Heterotrait-Monotrait index (HTMT) (J. F. Hair & Sarstedt, 2019). It is recommended that indicator loadings should be approximately .70 and statistically significant at .05 or below (equivalent to a t-statistic of ± 1.96). Indicator reliability is determined by squaring the individual indicator loadings. A value of .50 is deemed acceptable, indicating that the item shares at least 50% of variance with the construct (J. Hair & Alamer, 2022). Internal consistency reliability is evaluated through Cronbach's ICSR (α) and Composite Reliability (CR). A threshold of .70 for both measures is commonly deemed acceptable and widely utilized in PLS-SEM research (J. F. Hair et al., 2017). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) indicates the degree to which items within a particular construct correlate positively and share a substantial amount of variance as determined by AVE. Typically, values of .50 or greater are considered indicative of convergent

validity for the construct (Jigani et al., 2020). For discriminant validity, the recommended measure is the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) of correlations. HTMT assesses how well a construct explains the variance in its own indicators versus other constructs. A conservative cut-off of HTMT $< .85$ is suggested, but if there might be shared variance among indicators, a more liberal cut-off of $< .90$ can be used (J. Hair & Alamer, 2022).

The assessment of formative constructs involves following steps: estimating the convergent validity, checking indicator multicollinearity, testing the size and significance of indicator weights, examining the size and significance of indicator loadings and assessing predictive validity (J. F. Hair et al., 2021). Evaluating the convergent validity assesses the degree of positive association between the substantive construct and a reflective measure of the same concept. It's important to note that the substantive construct may also be negatively associated with the specified measure if theory suggests such a relationship. Variance inflation factor (VIF) is used to assess collinearity in all sets of formative indicators. If the VIF exceeds 5, it signals significant collinearity among the indicators impacting construction issues. Ideally, VIF values should be below 3 to avoid any collinearity between indicators, although values ranging from 5 to 3 may still be acceptable if they are theoretically justified. When encountering high multicollinearity, researchers may consider removing one of the indicators from the analysis. The weights assigned to items in formative constructs resemble the beta coefficients found in a multiple regression model. Consequently, these weights tend to be smaller in magnitude compared to estimates obtained in reflective relationships. It is worth noting that the significance of weights is typically evaluated at $p \leq .05$, although $p \leq .10$ may be acceptable for smaller sample sizes. When encountering a non-significant item within a formative construct, it's advisable for the researcher not to immediately discard it. Rather, the item should be assessed based on its absolute contribution, scrutinizing its loading. If the loading of the item is both statistically significant and $\geq .50$ in magnitude, it substantiates the rationale for retaining the item empirically, as it sufficiently contributes to forming the construct (J. Hair & Alamer, 2022).

Results

The study concentrates on Romanian employees, posing challenges in extrapolating the findings and directing subsequent research towards cross-cultural analysis. Encompassing nations characterized by distinct cultural and institutional contexts would facilitate the exploration of the national context's impact on business culture, internal CSR, and employee happiness. Furthermore, this research is temporally restricted as it utilizes cross-cultural data.

The demographic and social profile of respondents is as follows: gender distribution indicates that 72.4% of respondents were female and 27.6% male. Age distribution shows that the majority of respondents fall belong to 21-30 years old category (39%) and to the 31-40 years old category (22%). Residence data reveals that 66.7% of respondents reside in urban areas, while 33.3% reside in rural areas. Regarding occupation, the majority of respondents are employed in the private sector (43.1%), followed by students (22%) and 13% are employed in the public sector. Education level varies, with 34.1% holding a Master's degree, 24.4% holding a Bachelor's degree and 28.5% holding a High School diploma. In terms of monthly income (monthly income has been measured in national currency and translated into euros.), 22% earn between 103€ and 1004€, while 19.5% earn below 271€ and same percentage above 1500€. Marital status distribution indicates that 56.9% of respondents are single, while 43.1% are married. Regarding the most commonly used source of information among respondents 53.7% are using other social platforms, 17.9% are watching TV news, 12.2% are reading scientific journals. In terms of the impact of CSR policies

on the decision to apply for a new job, 39% of respondents indicated being influenced, 39% stated they are not influenced and 22% were not sure.

The data collected from the questionnaire underwent analysis and validation using SmartPLS 4. Components structure is presented in Figure 3.

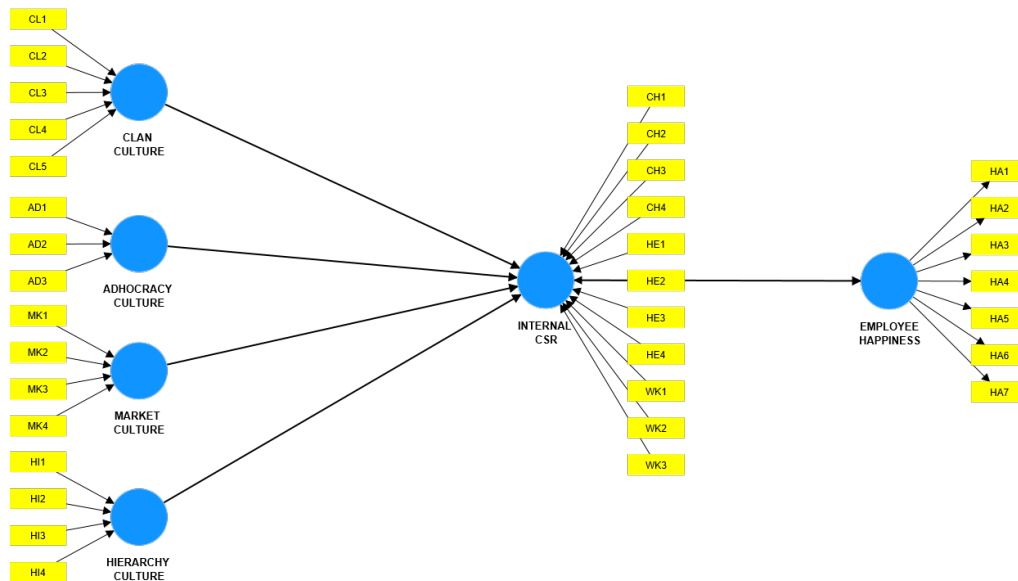


Figure 3. The initial model

Source: Authors' own research.

The Standard PLS-SEM algorithm was run for model evaluation and showed that there were collinearity issues present in the initial model. First removed item was HE1 based on his higher value for VIF indicator. After the removal, Bootstrapping algorithm was run for 5000 subsamples and fixed seed.

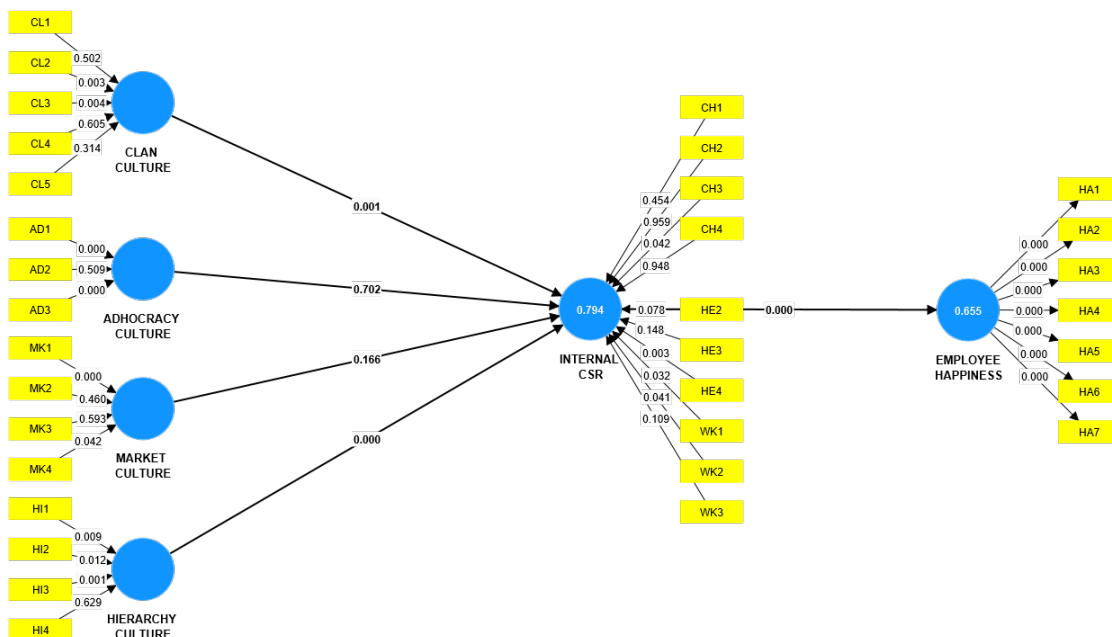


Figure 4. The individual components validation process - step 2

As a result of using the Bootstrapping algorithm, the model illustrated in Figure 4 was highlighted, for which those questions with the highest values of p-value were deleted in turn. The values associated with each question that form the formative variables are recalculated at each step after eliminating a question. After deleting all questions whose p-value exceeded 0.05, the model illustrated in Figure 5 was outlined.

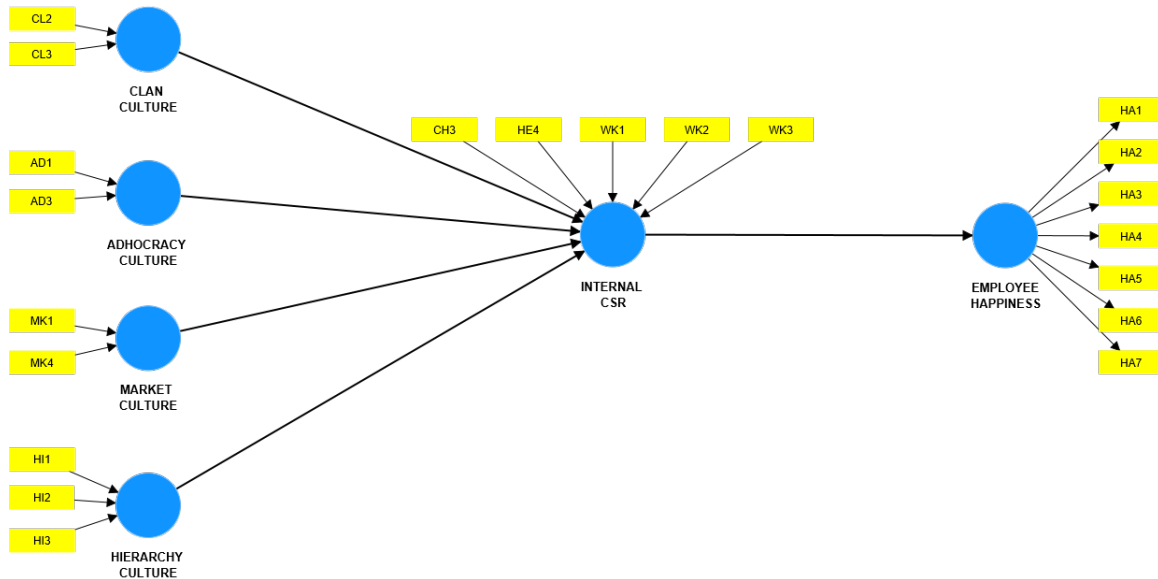


Figure 5. The model

Source: Authors' own research.

Table 1 shows that for all questions composing formative variables the values are below the threshold of 5% (p-value <0.05), associated with a T-value of 1.96. Also, for all these VIF is less than five, for most questions values below three are associated, which indicates non-collinearity. As for the reflective variable, for both AVE and CR the values exceed 0.7 which gives the validity of the model. For the reflective construct, the loadings values exceed 0.8.

Table 1. Individual components indicators

Construct	Item	Scale	Loadings/Weights	AVE/T-values	CR/VIF
Clan	CL2	Formative	0.512	5.643**	2.690
	CL3		0.545	5.885***	2.690
Adhocracy	AD1	Formative	0.659	6.662***	2.116
	AD3		0.413	3.927***	2.116
Market	MK1	Formative	0.831	11.263***	1.501
	MK4		0.255	2.709**	1.501
Hierarchy	HI1	Formative	0.339	3.226**	3.170
	HI2		0.296	2.390*	3.780
	HI3		0.458	3.985***	2.478
Internal CSR	CH3	Formative	0.274	3.437**	2.155
	HE4		0.302	3.255**	2.225
	WK1		0.194	2.222*	3.415
	WK2		0.165	2.335*	2.641
	WK3		0.232	2.518*	3.134

Construct	Item	Scale	Loadings/Weights	AVE/T-values	CR/VIF
Employee Happiness	HA1	Reflective	0.858	0.820	0.970
	HA2		0.908		
	HA3		0.888		
	HA4		0.914		
	HA7		0.935		

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Source: Authors' own research.

After validating the values for formative and reflective constructs, it is necessary to test the validity of the proposed hypotheses, which are shown in Figure 6.

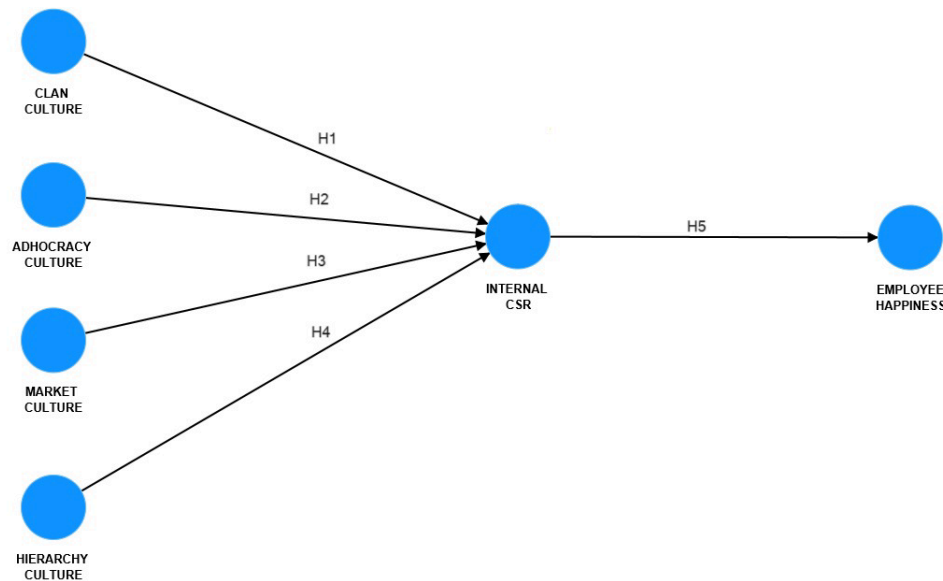


Figure 6. Hypotheses

Source: Authors' own research.

Starting from the hypotheses generated in the research methodology, it was found that not all the premises of the current study have been validated, the model showing that there is no link between adhocracy and internal CRS, respectively marketing and internal CSR (Table 2). However, the most important hypothesis that internal CSR has an impact on employee happiness has been successfully validated (p-value << 0.05).

Table 2. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Decision
H1	Clan Culture -> Internal CSR	Supported***
H2	Adhocracy Culture -> Internal CSR	Not Supported
H3	Market Culture -> Internal CSR	Not Supported
H4	Hierarchy Culture -> Internal CSR	Supported***
H5	Internal CSR -> Employee Happiness	Supported***

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Source: Authors' own research.

Regarding the degree to which endogenous variables are explained by exogenous ones, it is found that for internal CSR variables explain this component in a proportion of 78.20%, while

the variable employee happiness is explicated in a proportion of 65.7%, the rest being explained by other variables not considered in the representation.

Table 3. R²

Construct	R-square
Employee Happiness	0.657
Internal CSR	0.782

Source: Authors' own research.

One method of measuring fit of a model in SmartPLS 4 is the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) by which discrepancies between observed and expected correlations are calculated (Henseler et al., 2014). Its value must be less than 0.08, in the case of model current having a value of 0.04, confirming the fit of the model.

One way to test the robustness of the model is to be sure that there are no linearity issues. In order for there to be no linearity problems, it is necessary that the Quadratic Effect be insignificant, p-value > 0.05 (Sarstedt et al., 2020), which is confirmed for all relationships between variables.

Table 4. Nonlinear effects

Effect	P-value
QE (CL) -> ICSR	0.99
QE (AD) -> ICSR	0.08
QE (MK) -> ICSR	0.26
QE (HI) -> ICSR	0.05
QE (ICSR) -> HA	0.05

Source: Authors' own research.

Another way of testing robustness is endogeneity testing using Gaussian Copula, requiring a higher p-value compared to the 5% threshold (Hult et al., 2018). Since there would be 31 combinations for five exogen variables, the values for exogen singular variables will be presented in Table 5, without showing values for combinations between variables. However, also for the combinations of variables made, in each case it was found that the 5% threshold was crossed, a sign that there are no endogeneity problems.

Table 5. Endogeneity test

	Original sample (O)	P values
GC (CL) -> ICSR	-0.026	0.803
GC (AD) -> ICSR	0.048	0.723
GC (MK) -> ICSR	-0.016	0.859
GC (HI) -> ICSR	-0.055	0.617
GC (ICSR) -> HA	-0.34	0.147

Source: Authors' own research.

Work takes up a significant amount of time in people's lives and activity, so it is very important how they feel, because their mood affects their performance (H.-S. Kim et al., 2022; Magnier-Watanabe et al., 2020). One way of determining employee performance refers to increasing innovative behavior, with studies showing that organizational culture and Corporate

Social Responsibility Perception positively impact innovation among employees (Li et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2019).

Smart-PLS is an easy-to-use program popular with researchers, with several studies testing the relationship between work and well-being of employees in various countries and fields (Aljuaid et al., 2022; Çakıt et al., 2020; Guzzo, Abbott, et al., 2022).

Although the current study was conducted to be distributed to respondents in Romania, other researchers chose to discuss the behavior of respondents in Europe or regions of Europe (Jaškevičiūtė et al., 2024; Macassa et al., 2021), as well as EU member states (Espasandín-Bustelo et al., 2021; Kun & Gadanez, 2022) and beyond (Alkhodary, 2023; Watanabe et al., 2023); one element remains constant: the positive impact of CSR on employee wellbeing.

Conclusion

The concept of CSR flourished from the desire to offer employees and the environment an extra chance to the detriment of maximizing companies' profit in any possible way. The current objective of businesses is to maximize profit, while ensuring that employees have a balance between private and personal life, but also that the environment is not affected by the activities carried out within the enterprises.

The current study aimed to determine the impact brought by organizational culture on internal CSR, as well as the latter variable on employee happiness. In this regard, a number of 123 respondents were surveyed, with five-point Likert scale questions, the model obtained validating the hypothesis according to which internal CSR has a positive impact on employee happiness.

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