



**The Quintuple Bottom Line Model - an innovative approach  
to analysing happiness at work applied to the Generation Y  
in Germany**

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### **Abstract**

Work is an essential life domain as it influences the overall well-being. Therefore, happiness at work is important for individuals. Since the number of older jobholders in Germany is declining, companies are forced to respond to this issue by addressing the topic happiness at work to retain and attract the new members of the workforce. Hence, companies have to understand what factors make the German Generation Y happy at work. In order to find an answer for this issue an innovative Quintuple Bottom Line model was developed which helped to conduct an empirical research. This model contains thirty-five factors that impact the employees' hedonic and eudaimonic happiness at work. The results of the conducted study allow setting up a hierarchy concerning the strength of influence on happiness at work of these thirty-five factors and thus to identify which are the strongest influencing factors on the German Generation Y's happiness at work. Furthermore, the results helped to identify that although both types of factors have to be considered, a job that contains primary factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness is more important for becoming happy at work than a job that primarily contains factors that lead to hedonic happiness.

**Keywords:** Hedonic happiness, Eudaimonic Happiness, German Generation Y, Quintuple Bottom Line Approach



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### **Index of Abbreviations**

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
Gen Y	Generation Y
QBL	Quintuple Bottom Line
TBL	Triple Bottom Line
WLB	Work-Life Balance



## **1 Introduction**

As the labor market is tightening it is important for companies to recruit and retain talented employees (Oladipo et al. 2013, 55). In Germany especially, this concern is a relevant topic, given the fact that a large proportion of the ageing population will start to retire and a significant gap in the labor market will emerge in the next 10 to 15 years (Johnson Controls 2010b, 10). Due to the generational change in Germany, companies are dependent on the youngest members of the workforce, namely the members of the Generation Y (Gen Y) (Johnson Controls 2010b, 7). Additionally to the generational change, companies have to face another issue related to the workforce. A study done by Orizon in 2014 yielded that over one third of the German Gen Y is actively searching for a new job, because they are not happy with their current job situation (Orizon 2014, 10). This indicates that it is important for them to do a job that makes them happy. Furthermore, the well-being of the workforce is in the best interest of companies, as they benefit from the advantages of a happy workforce, one of which is the retention of the employees (Harter/Schmidt/Keyes 2003, 206-207). Hence, it is important that employers offer jobs that make the workforce feel happy at work in order to recruit and retain talented employees and thus to be successful and sustainable in the long term (Chalofsky/Krishna 2009, 200). Therefore, companies have to understand what factors make the German Gen Y happy at work and what they have to offer this coveted generation in order to win them over.

So far several studies have analyzed the factors that make an employer more attractive for the German Gen Y and the aspects of the job that are important for this generation. However, there have been no studies devoted to the investigation of the factors that influence the German Gen Y's happiness at work, including a consideration of both types of happiness, namely hedonic happiness, which is the feeling of pleasure, and eudaimonic happiness, which refers to living a good life (Ryan/Huta/Deci 2008, 139). Therefore, this paper will investigate what factors influence the strongest the German Gen Y's happiness at work and which conceptualization of happiness is more important for this generation in order to be happy in the workplace. Hence, this paper aims to answer the following two research questions: What factors have the strongest influence on the German Gen Y's happiness at work? Is it more important for this generation to do a job that results in hedonic happiness or eudaimonic happiness?



This paper consists of five chapters. Following the introduction, the second chapter of the paper explains the two conceptualizations of happiness and provides an overview of the main characteristics of the German Gen Y. In order to answer the research questions, the third chapter provides a new model that is based on the Quintuple Bottom Line (QBL) model and serves as a framework for the survey conducted in the context of this paper. The fourth chapter comprises the research methodology and the analysis of the findings of the conducted study. Finally, the fifth chapter describes the strength and limitations of the study, and provides suggestions for future research and the conclusion.

## **2 Concept Definition**

### **2.1 Hedonic and Eudaimonic Happiness**

Since the beginning of the intellectual history there has been a debate about the meaning of the term happiness (Ryan/Deci 2001, 142). Many psychologists have been trying to define happiness and contributed to the discussion of this term by conducting empirical research (Leslie/Aaker/Robin 2010, 1). After surveying millions of people and measuring their individual happiness, the term was defined as the sense of meaning combined with the experience of pleasure (Achor 2010, 39). The overall definition of happiness by researchers reflects the two main conceptualizations of the term happiness that have been compiled by philosophers. Throughout history philosophers have defined happiness in different ways (Kesebir/Diener 2008, 117-118). However, the largest division is between two broad philosophical definitions of this term (Fisher 2010, 385): hedonic happiness and eudaimonic happiness (Waterman 1993, 678).

The hedonic type of happiness, also called momentary happiness (Seligman 2002, 45), refers to achieving positive feelings and pleasure, hence to achieving happy moments (Ryan/Deci 2001 143-144). These pleasant feelings are only short-lived reactions (Diener/Lucas/Scollon 2006, 305), as an individual in a short period of time adapts to the new life event (Diener et al. 2006, 311). In the literature this phenomenon is called hedonic treadmill (Leslie et al. 2010, 2). In contrast, eudaimonic happiness refers to the actualization of human potentials (Ryan/Deci 2001, 143) and is experienced when an individual is fully engaged in his life activities (Bhullar/Schutte/Malouff 2013, 2) and when he lives a meaningful life (Baumeister/Vohs/Aaker/Garbinsky 2013, 506). Thus, if a person makes an effort to live a good life it gives rise to the feeling of eudaimonic happiness (Waterman 1993, 678). This type of happiness is also called enduring (Seligman 2002, 45) or sustained happi-



ness (Poon Tip 2013, 17), as the duration of eudaimonic happiness is long lasting (Huta/Ryan 2010, 735). In sum, happiness refers to both the pursuit of pleasure and the pursuit of purpose that represent two different ways to achieve happiness (Peterson/Park/Seligman 2005, 27).

## **2.2 German Generation Y**

The term Generation Y was first used in the trade journal *Ad Age* in 1993 (Parment 2009, 15). The start and end dates which determine the Gen Y vary among researchers. While Smola and Sutton (2002, 365) state that the individuals of the Gen Y were born between 1979 and 1994, Parment (2009, 15) claims that the Gen Y includes those individuals that were born between 1984 and 1994. As there is no clearly defined period of time, this paper will refer to people who were born between 1980 and 1994 as the Gen Y.

The members of the German Gen Y were born into a country that underwent a period of important changes. It was shaped by the German reunification, the transition from the East-West conflict to a predominant Western culture, and the worldwide advancing globalization (Bruch/Kunze/Böhm 2009, 108). It is a very self-confident generation. However, due to the disorientation caused by the amount of available information and options it pursues stability and security (DGFP 2011, 11-13). The Enactus-Study from 2014 (Pfeil 2014, 3-4) identified values that are shared by all the Millennials in Germany. These values are loyalty, tolerance, freedom of choice and decision. Regarding work, a study conducted by Hays (2014, 6) found out that the German Gen Y reflects the successful approach to work which was shaped by the elder generations. Thus, it is a generation that still focuses on a good education and high quality skills, as well as on hard work and innovation. However, Smola and Sutton (2002, 365) state that over time, and thus with the emerging generations, the meaning of work has changed. Young adults indicate that they do not want to work as hard as the previous generations (Cran 2010, 95). This also accounts for the German Gen Y who, despite showing to be traditionalists regarding the successful approach to work, is also showing changes in their attitude toward work (Hays 2014, 6).

Several studies have been conducted to analyze the factors that are most important for the German Gen Y in their professional life. However, what still remains unknown is which factors have the strongest influence on the German Gen Y's happiness at work. In order to answer this issue a holis-



tic approach is needed, which is beneficial to conduct empirical research. To be specific, this model needs to address the factors that influence hedonic happiness and eudaimonic happiness at work, thus allowing them to be analyzed separately. Consequently, the next chapter deals with the development of a new innovative model.

### **3 Development of an Innovative Model: Quintuple Bottom Line Model from an Employee's Perspective**

#### **3.1 Origin of the Quintuple Bottom Line Model and its Five Dimensions**

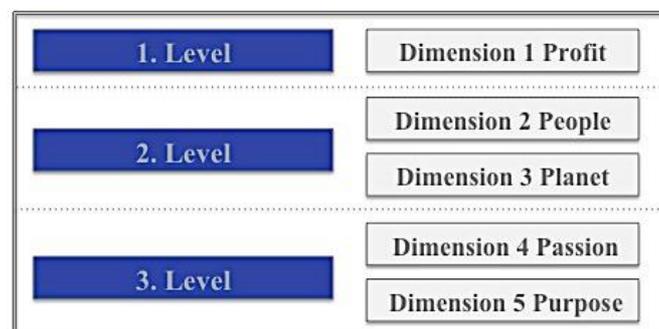
The QBL approach is a well-structured model, which, if reformulated from an employee's perspective, helps to conduct this empirical study. The origin of the QBL approach was the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach, which is the predecessor model. The TBL approach arose because of an ongoing sustainability movement that emerged in the 1990s, which required organizations to focus beyond the traditional measures of profit (Hollos/Blome/Foerstl 2012, 2968). Elkington (2004, 1) stated that organizations have to pay more attention to social and environmental dimensions, which was the origin of the TBL approach in 1994. The idea behind the TBL approach is that the success of a company should not only be measured by the economically generated value (simple bottom line) but also by including the social and environmental performances of a company (Norman/MacDonald 2004, 243). Due to this, the TBL approach is seen as an important framework to support sustainability objectives (Slaper/Hall 2011, 4). In 1995, Elkington (2004, 2) developed a new formulation for the TBL approach. Since then, this tool has also been referred to as the 3Ps, which stands for profit, people and planet – the other names given to the three dimensions of the framework (financial, social, environmental) (Tullberg 2012, 310).

The first level of the TBL approach contains dimension one "Profit" and refers to economic variables like the return on investment, paid taxes, income or expenditures (Slaper/Hall 2011, 4-5). The second level of the approach includes the dimensions two "People" and three "Planet", and relates to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities of a company (Hubbard 2009, 185). Dimension two People refers to the impact companies have not only on the stakeholders but also on the local communities (Hubbard 2009, 180). This dimension can include measurements of health of the employees (Slaper/Hall 2011, 5), as well as measures of sponsorships (Hubbard 2009, 185). Dimension three Planet refers to environmental variables (Slaper/Hall 2011, 5), thus to the amount of

resources a company uses for manufacturing products or providing services and at the same time the by-products that are generated (e.g., waste) (Hubbard 2009, 180). Therefore, this dimension comprises measures such as electricity and fuel consumption or solid and toxic waste management (Slaper/Hall 2011, 5).

Poon Tip (2013, 148) argues that the TBL approach lacks a third level, which allows to better evaluate the success of the people and enables “to understand the human side of the business” (Poon Tip 2013, 148). In order to achieve sustainability, the TBL approach has to be modified (Poon Tip 2010). According to Poon Tip (2010), the TBL approach has to evolve and he suggests extending it by a third level, that incorporates two more Ps, namely Purpose and Passion (Poon Tip 2013, 148; see Illustration 1).

Illustration 1: Levels and Dimensions of the Quintuple Bottom Line Model



Source: Author's own illustration

The extended approach comprising five dimensions (Profit, People, Planet, Passion and Purpose) constitutes the QBL approach (Poon Tip 2014b). This approach implies that companies have to expand their spectrum on how to achieve success by looking at the passion and the purpose their business delivers (Poon Tip 2010). They have to engage their employees (Poon Tip 2014a) and customers in a higher purpose than the product or service they sell (Poon Tip 2010). Employees have to feel passion for their job and integrate what they do into their purpose in life (Poon Tip 2014a). Companies have to focus on the third level of the QBL approach in order to engage their stakeholders and to be successful, because happy people drive the performance of a company, customer satisfaction, as well as staff retention (Poon Tip 2014a). To sum up, the QBL is an approach that



does not only focus on the concept of sustainability in terms of profit, people and planet, but it broadens the spectrum that evaluates the success of an organization by focusing also on the passion and the purpose of a business (Poon Tip 2013, 148).

### **3.2 Quintuple Bottom Line Model Reformulated from an Employee's Perspective**

Many psychologists and researchers have set up theories to explain what has to be considered to make employees feel satisfied within the workplace, that is, what causes job satisfaction. Thus, there are several theories and models which deal with the topic job satisfaction. However, a model or a theory that focuses on the overall happiness at work of employees and comprises factors that lead to both types of happiness has not been established thus far. Hence, there is no holistic model that takes into account both the factors that lead to hedonic happiness and the factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness.

In order to conduct the empirical study that helps to answer the research questions of this paper, an innovative model is developed in the following. This model addresses both types of factors and allows to clearly separate them from each other, thereby making it possible to analyze the two types of happiness individually.

When taking together the factors that influence happiness at work from theories about job satisfaction and further literature research, thirty-five factors can be identified that have an influence on happiness at work (see Table 1). However, to structure these factors and to be able to differentiate hedonic from eudaimonic factors a framework is needed. Due to its structure, the QBL approach serves as a basis for developing the new model. Therefore, the five dimensions are reformulated from an employee's perspective and, consequently, each dimension will refer to a category of factors that influence happiness at work. Table 1 presents an overview of the reformulated dimensions and their respective factors.



Table 1: Overview of the Reformulated Dimensions of the Quintuple Bottom Line Model and its Respective Factors

Dimension	Factors
<b>1. Profit</b>	<b>Compensation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial reward (fixed and variable)</li><li>• Material goods</li></ul>
<b>2. People</b>	<b>Co-workers, peers and supervisors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationship with co-workers/supervisors</li><li>• Leadership style</li><li>• Communication with co-workers/supervisor</li><li>• Autonomy</li><li>• Feedback</li><li>• Goal setting</li><li>• Recognition</li></ul>
<b>3. Company</b>	<b>Organization</b> <b>Sub-dimension: Work context</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organizational culture</li><li>• Organizational structure</li><li>• Job security</li><li>• Promotion opportunities</li><li>• Office environment</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Location of the company</li><li>• Overtime compensation</li><li>• Games area and fitness</li><li>• Events</li><li>• Mediation courses</li><li>• Work-Life balance measures</li></ul> <p><b>Sub-dimension: Job features</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flexible working hours</li><li>• Flexible workplace</li><li>• Opportunities to travel</li><li>• Job design (job rotation, job enrichment, job enlargement)</li></ul> <p><b>Sub-dimension: Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Corporate social responsibility activities</li><li>• Product/Service</li></ul>
<b>4. Passion</b>	<p><b>Passion for work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passion for the job (engagement, intrinsic motivation, flow)</li><li>• Task identity</li><li>• Skill variety</li></ul>
<b>5. Purpose</b>	<p><b>Purpose to work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Task significance (purpose)</li><li>• Contribution to communities</li><li>• Pro-Social behavior</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development and learning opportunities</li></ul>
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Source: Author's own table

The first level, equivalent to dimension one Profit, refers to the generated earnings of a company in the original model. However, in the newly developed model it will refer to the compensation an employee receives from his employer. The second level contains two dimensions: People and Planet. In the new model, dimension two People refers to factors of the job which are related or influenced by co-workers, peers and supervisors. Dimension three Planet, which refers to the impact a company has on its environment, will refer to a narrowed environment in the new model, namely to all the factors that are directly related to the organization. Hence, it will be renamed into Dimension three Company. In order to better structure the factors comprised in dimension three Company, three sub-dimensions are created, namely the sub-dimension work context, which refers to the factors that are related to the work environment and to the company policies; the sub-dimension job features, which refers to factors that are directly linked to the task the employee executes; and the sub-dimension business, which refers to a company CSR activities, as well as a company's product(s) or service(s). Lastly, the third level of the QBL approach contains the dimensions four Passion and five Purpose. In the new model, the former refers to factors at work that are related to the passion the employees feel for their job and the latter refers to factors that are related to the purpose employees see in their jobs.

After the reformulation of the five dimensions from an employee's perspective, the thirty-five factors that influence happiness at work were assigned to the suitable dimension, thus classified into categories that represent the same features (see Table 1).

In order to provide a clear understanding of the five reformulated dimensions and the respective factors, in the following subchapters every dimension is described individually. Thus, based on literature research the influence on happiness at work of the factors of each dimension is analyzed in detail.



### **3.2.1 Dimension One Profit: Compensation**

Dimension one Profit is redefined as the compensation an employee receives from a company in return for the job he performs. Thus, the factors that are comprised in this dimension are the financial reward (fixed and variable components) and the material goods (e.g., company car or cell-phone).

Mustapha (2013, 246-247) conducted a study with data from 320 respondents and concluded that *financial rewards* are positively correlated to job satisfaction. According to Frey (2008, 27), the relationship between income and happiness yielded a statistically significant result and therefore salary has a positive effect on an employee's happiness. Besides the fixed component of compensation, also variable components influence job satisfaction. Heywood and Wei (2006, 537) discovered that individual pay schemes and profit sharing are associated with higher job satisfaction. Green and Heywood (2008, 724) support this finding. They conducted a study with a sample of more than 11,000 individuals aged between 20 and 65 (Green/Heywood 2008, 714) and found out that profit sharing and bonuses enhance overall job satisfaction (Green/Heywood 2008, 724). Pouliakas (2010, 618) stated that as long as bonuses are large enough for an individual they have a positive influence on job satisfaction. However, as employees adapt to the payment of bonuses the job satisfaction starts to decrease if it stays constant (Pouliakas 2010, 599). This also applies to an increasing income, because employees adapt fast to a new amount of salary (Stutzer/Frey 2004, 203). Thus, this issue of adaptation reflects the phenomenon of the hedonic treadmill.

Moreover, also *material goods* (e.g., company car, business cellphone) provide the feeling of pleasure at the beginning, but this positive emotion is only transitory, as the perceived higher utility of material goods starts to decline over time due to the feeling of adaptation (Stutzer/Frey 2004, 203). Frey (2008, 40) states that "happiness wears off when it is generated by material things."

To conclude, financial rewards (fixed and variable components) and material goods have an influence on hedonic happiness. However, as employees adapt to the salary, payment of bonuses and material goods this generated happiness depends on the modifications over time. Hence, employers should reward their employees with different and variable components.

### **3.2.2 Dimension Two People: Co-workers, Peers and Supervisors**

Dimension two People is redefined as a category for the factors that are related and influenced by the co-workers, peers and supervisors of an employee. Several factors fall under this dimension,



namely the relationship with co-workers and supervisors, leadership style, communication with co-workers and supervisors, autonomy, feedback, goal setting, and recognition.

Because of the importance of *relationships* for the experience of happiness, findings regarding interpersonal relationships at work have been receiving increasing attention (Fisher 2010, 396). A study conducted by Parvin and Kabir (2011, 119) identified that the relationship between co-workers influences job satisfaction. As peers fall into the category of co-workers of an employee (Sias 2008, 58), this finding also accounts for the relationship of an employee with his peers (Sias 2008, 74). Furthermore, the result of this study yielded that also the relationship a worker has to his supervisor impacts his job satisfaction (Parvin/Kabir 2011, 119). Hence, positive or negative relationships between employees influence their job satisfaction (Rahman/Iqbal 2013, 21).

Furthermore, the *leadership style* of a supervisor impacts the employee's job satisfaction. Gerstner and Day (1997, 835) discovered that a supportive supervisor has a positive influence on the satisfaction of an employee. Furthermore, Madlock (2008, 71) states that the job satisfaction of an employee is positively related to a relational-oriented leadership style, but also to a task-oriented leadership style. DeGroot and colleagues (DeGroot/Kiker/Cross 2000, 363) conducted a study whose results showed that charismatic leadership highly correlates with job satisfaction. Hence, the behavior of a supervisor towards his subordinates influences the worker's happiness at work.

A research study conducted by Chaiprasit and Santidhiraku (2011, 198) yielded that good *communication* between employees influences the happiness they perceive in the workplace. Additionally, the communication competence of a supervisor is a predictor for job satisfaction of subordinates (Madlock 2008, 66). Effective communication between subordinates and supervisors are positively associated with employees' job satisfaction (Kim 2002, 236-237). Thus, the communication between co-workers and between supervisors and their subordinates is an important factor for happiness at work.

Furthermore, if leaders provide their subordinates with the feeling of *autonomy*, job satisfaction increases (Deci/Connell/Ryan 1989, 589). An employee perceives autonomy if the supervisor provides meaningful information, understands and acknowledges the perspective of the employee and encourages self-initiation rather than controlling subordinates (Deci/Eghrari/Patrick/Leone 1994, 123-124). Autonomy contributes to the experience of responsibility (Hackman/Oldham 1976, 257) and enhances job satisfaction (Jin/Lee 2012, 33).



Moreover, *feedback* influences the workers' happiness at work. After Fisher (2010, 396), the employee's perceived performance is a determinant of positive emotions, hence hedonic happiness. Therefore, she states that the knowledge of how well employees are performing should be continually available for them. Kluger and colleagues (Kluger/Lewinsohn/Aiello 1994, 292) state that feedback influences employees' satisfaction (Kluger et al. 1994, 292), so that this factor can generate momentary happiness.

Locke (1968, 186) recognized that *goal setting* is a decisive factor for achieving a task, and Bandura and Cervone (1986, 94) stated that achievement leads to positive feelings. Moreover, Locke and Latham (2002, 714) stated that goal setting positively impacts motivation and, as a result, influences job satisfaction. Hence, providing clear objectives and task clarity through goal setting contributes to enhancing employees' job satisfaction (Ting 1996, 449).

According to Luthans (2000, 31–32), *recognition* is a tool for rewarding employees, which can assume the form of financial recognition (such as bonuses) or the form of non-financial recognition. The factor financial recognition is comprised in the factor financial reward (fixed and variable components) in dimension one Profit. Hence, the term recognition, which is included in dimension two People, refers to the non-financial recognitions. The purpose of recognition is to communicate to the employees how well they executed a task, which enhances their job satisfaction (Danish/Usman 2010, 160). Researches confirmed that recognition is a factor that positively influences job satisfaction (Tessema/Ready/Embaye 2013, 11; Imran/Ahmad/Nisar/Ahmad 2014, 1539). A study conducted by Ali and Ahmed (2009, 278) revealed that recognition and satisfaction have a significant relationship and that if the offered recognition by a company is modified a corresponding change in job satisfaction can be identified as a result.

The findings analyzed above imply that the factors comprised in dimension two People have an influence on the hedonic happiness of employees.

### **3.2.3 Dimension Three Company: Work Context, Job Features and Business**

As mentioned above, dimension three comprises all the factors related to the organization that have an influence on the happiness of employees at work. This dimension was divided into three sub-dimensions to better structure the factors.

One sub-dimension is called work context and refers to those factors that are related to the work environment and the company policies. Several factors are comprised in this sub-dimension, name-



ly the organizational culture, the organizational structure, job security, promotion opportunities, the office environment, the location of the company, overtime compensation, a games area and fitness, events, mediation courses, and Work-Life Balance (WLB) measures.

The *organizational culture* of a company refers to a set of values that defines how a company conducts its business (Barney 1986, 657). Zavyalova and Kucherov (2010, 223) conducted a study whose results yielded that the level of job satisfaction differs with different organizational cultures. Furthermore, they argue that the satisfaction is stronger the more consistent and integrated the internal company environment is. Lok and Crawford (2004, 334) showed that organizational cultures that are supportive and innovative have a positive impact on job satisfaction. Thus, these studies indicate that the type of organizational culture influences the satisfaction of employees at work.

The *organizational structure* of a company is also a relevant factor of the work context. Carpenter (1971, 463), who analyzed the relationship between organizational structure and job satisfaction, compared flat, medium and tall structures and the resulting level of job satisfaction. His results showed that the more hierarchical levels an organization had, the less the satisfaction of an employee. This implies that a firm's organizational structure impacts its workers' experience of happiness.

Besides these aspects of the work context, *job security* plays a crucial role for the experience of happiness at work. In contrast to job security, job insecurity can be defined as the subjective perception of the probability of losing one's job involuntarily (Sverke/Hellgren/Näswall 2002, 243). Sverke and colleagues (2002, 249) conducted a meta-analysis based on 28,885 employees from fifty independent samples and found out that job insecurity and job satisfaction have a strong relationship in that job insecurity leads to a decrease in job satisfaction. Hence, Sverke and colleagues (2002, 242) argue that the job security a company provides has an influence on the feeling of an employee toward his job.

Additionally, *promotion opportunities* within a company are relevant to the job satisfaction of a worker. The results of a regression analysis done by Naveed and colleagues (Naveed/Usman/Bushra 2011, 304) showed that promotion opportunities are a predictor for job satisfaction.

Langston, Song and Purdey (2008, 54) conducted a survey whose results yielded that there are differences in job satisfaction because of the *office environment* a company offers. Thus, this factor is



a further relevant aspect of the sub-dimension work context and refers to the architecture and the design, as well as to the environmental factors of an office. Idson (1990, 1016) identified that the size of a company impacts the job satisfaction of employees. Moreover, the architectural design of an office influences the feeling of a worker regarding his job (Danielsson 2010, 75). Also the design of the workplace, the infrastructure (e.g., furniture, used technology) (Parveen/Sohail/Naeem/Azhar/Khan 2012, 98-99), the office type (e.g., shared-room office or small, medium, large open-plan office) and the environmental factors in an office (e.g., noise, privacy, temperature) impact the job satisfaction of employees (Danielsson/Bodin 2009, 241).

The *location of a company* plays an important role for the workforce. O'Neill (2010, 4) stated that the geographical location of a company is an important feature for employees. Workers show differences in the choice on what means of transportation they favor the most to get to work (e.g., car, bicycle, walking, public transport) and, consequently, also differences in the choice with regards to the location of the company (e.g., urban or rural area) (Johnson Controls 2010a, 50). Hence, the workplace location and the access to the company are important for the employees' happiness as they contribute to his attraction and retention (Johnson Controls 2010a, 8).

Moreover, in some jobs it is often possible to have to work overtime, which can lead to the feeling of dissatisfaction (Buxel 2009, 14). Therefore, the company policy on *overtime compensation* is a further factor that has to be considered in the sub-dimension work context, as this factor influences the employee's job satisfaction (Buxel 2009, 38).

Furthermore, it is important for an organization to offer work that provides enjoyment or fun, thus ensuring a good work context that makes employees feel happy at work. In order to identify activities that provide fun at work, Ford and colleagues (Ford/McLaughlin/Newstrom 2003, 19-21) surveyed more than five hundred individuals and concluded that important activities that encourage fun at work are social events (e.g., picnics), stress release activities (e.g., exercise facilities) and games. Karl and colleagues (Karl/Peluchette/Harland 2007, 432) found evidence that employees who perceived a higher level of fun at work also experienced a higher level of job satisfaction. Hence, social events, stress release activities and games contribute to fun and, consequently, enhance workers' job satisfaction. Therefore, employers have to organize social *events* as they contribute to fun (Ford et al. 2003, 21) and, as a result, increase job satisfaction (Karl et al. 2007, 432). Moreover, Elkind (2008, 2) stated that playing is an important driver of a happy life. Accordingly, companies should provide a work context where *games* are integrated in daily activities (e.g., a



games area with a football table and other games). Also stress release activities are relevant to enhancing fun at work and thus increase job satisfaction. Hence, a company that provides *exercise facilities* (e.g., fitness) encourages stress release (Ford et al. 2003, 21). A further approach to achieve stress release is providing *meditation courses*. Mindfulness meditation can help to develop mindfulness, thus training aspects of attention (Tan 2012, 45). By developing mindfulness, a compassionate attitude is cultivated, which facilitates the feeling of well-being (Hollis-Walker/Colosimo 2011, 226). Hence, mediation practices in a company result in developing the consciousness of the employees, which improves their physical health and their satisfaction (Schmidt-Wilk et al. 1996, 440).

The last aspect of the work context that is important to mention, are the *WLB measures*. Clark (2000, 751) defines the WLB as “satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with minimum of role conflict.” Kossek and Ozeki (1998, 145) found out that there is a negative relationship between work-life conflict and job satisfaction. Moreover, Malik and colleagues (Malik/Saleem/Ahmad 2010, 117) stated that WLB generates job satisfaction and that the higher the perceived WLB, the higher the employee’s job satisfaction. Hence, WLB is a major contributor to hedonic happiness at work and it is therefore important that employers provide measures that support the WLB.

The next sub-dimension of dimension three Company is called job features. It comprises the factors that are directly linked to the job and the task an employee executes, and that influence his hedonic happiness at work. These factors are the work organizational measures (flexibility regarding working hours and workplace), opportunities to travel and the three techniques used for job design, namely job rotation, job enlargement and job enrichment.

An employee’s job satisfaction is influenced by the *flexibility* of his *working hours* and *workplace* (Davies 2013, 3-4; Malik et al. 2010, 117). The factor flexible working hours refers to the arrangement of the working hours according to one’s preferences (Beauregard/Henry 2009, 11). Scandura and Lankau’s (1997, 387) study yielded that the provision of flexible working hour programs is positively related to job satisfaction. The factor flexible workplace refers to the ability of doing the job from somewhere else besides the office (Beauregard/Henry 2009, 11). A study conducted by IBM (IBM Center for Applied Insights 2012, 3), which surveyed more than six hundred employees of



large enterprises from diverse industries, yielded that a flexible workplace can influence the job satisfaction of employees.

Additionally to these factors, employees enjoy having a job that allows them to *travel* (Peters/Zvonkovic/Bowman 2008). Cairncross and Bultjens (2007, 7) state that especially young employees expect from their employers to offer them the opportunity to travel at work, which if not fulfilled can have a negative influence on their job satisfaction.

Furthermore, the factor job design comprises three techniques, namely *job rotation*, *job enrichment* and *job enlargement*, which all influence how the employees experience their job (Hackman/Oldham 1976, 250-253). The technique job rotation means that employees are moved between different tasks (Hackman/Oldham 1976, 253) and it can influence the workers' job satisfaction (Ho/Chang/Shih/Liang 2009, 6). The factor job enrichment implies adding several factors to the job of an employee, so that he has the opportunity to use all his abilities (Davoudi 2013, 107). Mohr and Zoghi (2006, 14) found out that this technique has a positive impact on job satisfaction. Finally, the factor job enlargement refers to the horizontal expansion of the job (Raza/Nawaz 2011, 268), hence increasing the quantity of activities employees perform (Dessler 2005, 138), which can also lead to an increase in job satisfaction (Chung/Ross 1977, 115). Hence, if the techniques used for job design are correctly implemented they can positively impact the employee's happiness at work.

The third and last sub-dimension is called business and refers to a company's CSR activities and its delivered product or service. *CSR* means that companies integrate social demands in their business and thus that they do business in a responsible way (Garriga/Melé 2004, 65). The results of a study done by Greening and Turban (2000, 271) showed that companies that have a high corporate social performance are more attractive for employees. This is due to the fact that through CSR activities companies show that one of their concerns is their workers (Rupp/Ganapathi/Aguilera/Williams 2006, 540), including the enhancement of their workers' job satisfaction (Mirvis 2012, 110). Tziner and colleagues (Tziner/Bar/Oren/Kadosh 2011, 69-71) confirm this statement in their study, whose results yielded that the perceived CSR activities of a company by an employee and his job satisfaction are positively correlated. Moreover, the *product* a company produces and sells or the *services* a company offers have an impact on the satisfaction of an employee at work (Heskett/Jones/Loveman/Earl Sasser/Schlesinger 1994, 164).



To conclude dimension three Company, the factors comprised in the sub-dimension work context, job features and business were all proven to have an influence on the job satisfaction of workers and are therefore relevant factors that can contribute to enhancing hedonic happiness at work.

### **3.2.4 Dimension Four Passion: Passion for Work**

So far factors influencing job satisfaction, hence the hedonic happiness of workers, have been analyzed. However, in order to understand what causes eudaimonic happiness at work the following part comprises two dimensions whose factors ultimately lead to enhancing the sustained happiness of employees at work. These are dimension four Passion, which is analyzed in the following, and dimension five Purpose, which is analyzed in the next part of this chapter.

Dimension four Passion refers to the factors that reflect the passion of employees toward their job. It comprises three factors: the passion for the job itself, which is influenced by the feeling of engagement, intrinsic motivation and flow; and two characteristics of the job, namely task identity and skill variety.

According to Vallerand and Houliort (2003, 177), passion is defined as “a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy.” When employees love their job and when it has become part of their identity, then they have become *passionate about it* (Vallerand/Houliort 2003, 176). However, there are two types of passion: the obsessive and the harmonious passion (Vallerand/Houliort 2003, 178). The former type of passion has no significant relationship to the worker’s performance (Ho/Wong/Lee 2011, 40); it is positively associated with negative feelings (Carbonneau/Vallerand/Fernet 2008, 978) and, consequently, does not boost happiness. Therefore, obsessive passion is not relevant to the reformulated QBL approach. However, harmonious passion is. It enhances the employees’ happiness, as they willingly engage in their job and have control over the activity they love executing; thus, they do not have any conflicts with other life domains (Vallerand/Houliort 2003, 178). If workers experience harmonious passion, they expend greater intensity and quantities of cognitive energy into their work, which leads to a high state of engagement with the job (Ho/Wong/Lee 2011, 41). Macey and Schneider (2008, 4) state that if an employee is engaged he feels passion for his job. Hence, engagement with one’s job influences the passion an employee feels for the job, as well as his well-being at work (Rothmann 2008, 14). According to Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, and Bakker



(2002, 74), engagement is “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption.” The authors (Schaufeli et al. 2002, 74-75) describe vigor as the willingness to invest energy and effort into one’s job; dedication as a feeling of inspiration, challenge and pride, and absorption as the fact of being fully concentrated on one’s work, whereby employees can only with difficulty detach themselves from their job and do not realize the passing of time. This can result if employees immerse themselves in the condition of flow. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1997, 29), the flow experience is “one that many people have used to describe the sense of effortless action they feel in moments that stand out as the best in their lives.” When a person is in flow he is totally involved, no other thing seems to matter, and he has an intrinsic interest to keep on executing the activity (Salanova/Bakker/Llorens 2006, 2). In order to achieve the condition of flow, it is important that challenges and skills are in balance (Csikszentmihalyi 1997, 31). According to Carbonneau and colleagues (2008, 978), flow is related to the feeling of engagement and thus harmonious passion. Intrinsic motivation is similar to flow, but it is experienced in a less intensive way (Fisher 2010, 390). Intrinsic motivation means that employees do their job because of an inherent interest (Ryan/Deci 2000, 55). These intrinsically interesting activities are jobs whose reward is in the activity itself (Ryan/Deci 2000, 57). Engagement and the feeling of intrinsic motivation are related (Vansteenkiste/Lens/Deci 2006, 20). Both intrinsic motivation and flow are variables that belong to the family construct of happiness at work (Fisher 2010, 388). Hence, if a company manages to offer jobs that make its employees feel the condition of flow or intrinsic motivation and thus feel engaged with it, the passion for the job is influenced and, consequently, the eudaimonic happiness of the employees at work.

Furthermore, if an employee feels a meaningful connection to his work it means that he has passion for his job (Perttula/Cardon 2012, 193). The meaningful connection to one’s work can be enhanced through two factors: *task identity and skill variety* (Hackman/Oldham 1976, 257). Hackman and Oldham (1976, 256) explain that task identity refers to the fact of executing a job from the beginning to the end with a visible result, and skill variety involves the use of diverse talents of the employee and requires different tasks for carrying out the job. Furthermore, the authors state that through both task identity and skill variety the employee experiences the job as valuable and worthwhile. Hence, if companies encourage these factors and the meaningful connection of an employee to his job is enhanced as a result the passion for the job increases.



To conclude, the three factors comprised in dimension four Passion, hence the passion for one's job, task identity and skill variety, influence the worker's passion for his job and thus his eudaimonic happiness at work.

### **3.2.5 Dimension Five Purpose: Purpose to Work**

Dimension five Purpose is the last dimension of the reformulated QBL model. Employees' eudaimonic happiness at work can be enhanced if they do a job that provides the feeling of doing something meaningful, that is, a job that makes them feel that they are part of something which is bigger than themselves (Hsieh 2010, 237). Therefore, the factors comprised in dimension five Purpose refer to factors that influence the actual purpose workers see in their job, including task significance, contribution to communities (e.g., charity work, volunteering), prosocial behavior, and development and learning opportunities.

Accordingly, the factor *task significance* is relevant to this dimension. This factor bears on the meaning a task has for oneself (Grant 2008, 110). According to Hackman and Oldham (1976, 257), it refers to the degree to which the job of an employee impacts the life of other people. Furthermore, the authors stated that when the results of the work influence the well-being of others, it enhances the meaningfulness of the work for the employee. Hence, it influences his eudaimonic happiness at work.

Furthermore, if a person performs moral duties it leads to the experience of happiness (Anik/Aknin/Norton/Dunn 2009, 7). Thus, besides a significant job, it is important for employees to do activities at work that *contribute to communities*. According to Piliavin (2009, 172), volunteering leads to experience eudaimonic happiness. Additionally, doing kind acts, like charity, can contribute to enhancing enduring happiness (Sheldon/Lyubomirsky 2004, 139).

Moreover, *prosocial behavior* is a further factor of dimension five Purpose. After conducting an experiment, Anik and colleagues (Anik/Aknin/Norton/Dunn 2009, 4) stated that happier people give more, but that giving makes people also feel happier. Moreover, the results of a study yielded that when a company gives their workers the opportunity to spend money on other employees, it increases their feeling of happiness (Anik/Aknin/Norton/Dunn/Quoidbach 2013, 15). Hence, prosocial spending or giving cultivates happiness (Aknin/Sandstrom/Dunn/Norton 2011, 225).

According to Aristotle, eudaimonia can be achieved if people develop their potential (Kashdan/Biswas-Diener/King 2008, 222). This refers to the feeling of achieving self-realization by



developing one's capabilities (Waterman/Schwartz/Conti 2008, 42). As activities that afford personal development and growth are strongly related to eudaimonic happiness (Ryan/Deci 2001, 146), it is also relevant to employees to have *development and learning opportunities*.

In sum, the four factors of dimension five Purpose imply factors that contribute to the sense of eudaimonic happiness of employees at work.

### **3.3 Conclusion of the Innovative Quintuple Bottom Line Model**

The newly developed model consists of five dimensions which comprise thirty-five factors that have an influence on an employee's happiness at work. The innovative model distinguishes the factors that cause hedonic happiness from the factors that cause eudaimonic happiness in the workplace. The dimensions one Profit, two People and three Company contain factors that lead to hedonic happiness. On the contrary, the third level contains the dimensions four Passion and five Purpose comprise factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness. As a result, the new model constitutes an ideal framework to conduct the survey and achieve the objectives of this paper.

## **4 Research Approach and Analysis of the Findings**

### **4.1 Methodology, Measurements and Participants**

This paper has two main objectives: First, to find out which factors have the strongest influence on the German Gen Y's happiness at work; and second, to discover which type of happiness (hedonic or eudaimonic) this generation mainly pursues in their job. In order to answer the two research questions, an empirical study has been conducted based on the innovative model which was developed in the previous chapter.

The quantitative research was done by an online survey. Taking into consideration that 98 percent of the members of the German Gen Y are internet users (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen 2015) makes an online survey a suitable method for surveying the members of this generation in Germany. The questionnaire was divided into three main parts. The first part of the questionnaire of this study comprises some general opening questions which allow finding out how job and happiness are interrelated from the respondents' point of view and two filter questions to sort out respondents (Knäuper 1998, 70) who do not form part of the German Gen Y. The intention of the opening ques-



tions is to prepare the sample for the topic examined in the subsequent technical questions. The second part comprises more specific questions (Balnaves/Caputi 2001, 84) that serve to answer the research questions of this paper. In the third and last part of the questionnaire, questions about the demographic data of the respondents are asked.

For the opening questions Likert-Scale questions served to analyze the relationship between the terms job and happiness from the respondents' point of view. Moreover, a Cantril-ladder was used to measure the general well-being of the respondents (van Praag/Baarsma 2004, 11). The collected data of Cantril-questions are analyzed by arithmetic means (van Praag/Baarsma 2004, 18). Concerning the technical questions, Balnaves and Caputi (2001, 84) suggest that the format of the questions and the type of responses required for this format should be consistent in order to assure accuracy of the answers. Hence, to examine the first research question a five-point Likert Scale was used to assure that the evaluation of the strength of influence of the factors on happiness at work is not distorted by the way the question is asked. Furthermore, the second part of the questionnaire deals also with the second research question of this paper. In order to answer this question, a ranking approach was used. This approach asks respondents to rank alternatives from the most preferred to the least preferred alternative (Lareau/Rae 1989, 729). Hence, the respondents have to rank the five dimensions regarding the importance they have for their happiness at work. The ranking approach is an effective method, which forces the value choice between the alternatives (Alwin/Krosnick 1985, 548) and leads to a clearly identified ranking order.

The data for this study was collected by surveying members of the Gen Y in Germany during the first ten days of June 2015 (see Appendix N° 1). At the end of the period of ten days 151 persons were reached. From these 119 completed the entire questionnaire, that is, 79 percent of the whole sample. However, from the 119 respondents five were sorted out by the filter questions in the first part of the questionnaire. Therefore, from the 151 respondents 114 generated usable data. Thus, the findings of this survey result from the analysis of the answers of 114 members of the German Gen Y.

#### **4.2 Result Analysis**

The opening questions of the questionnaire served to understand how the job and the concept of happiness are interrelated for the respondents. The question of the general well-being of the respondents, which was measured by using a Cantril-ladder, yielded an arithmetic mean of 8.38. With the value ten being the best possible life the respondents can think of, the resulted value indicates



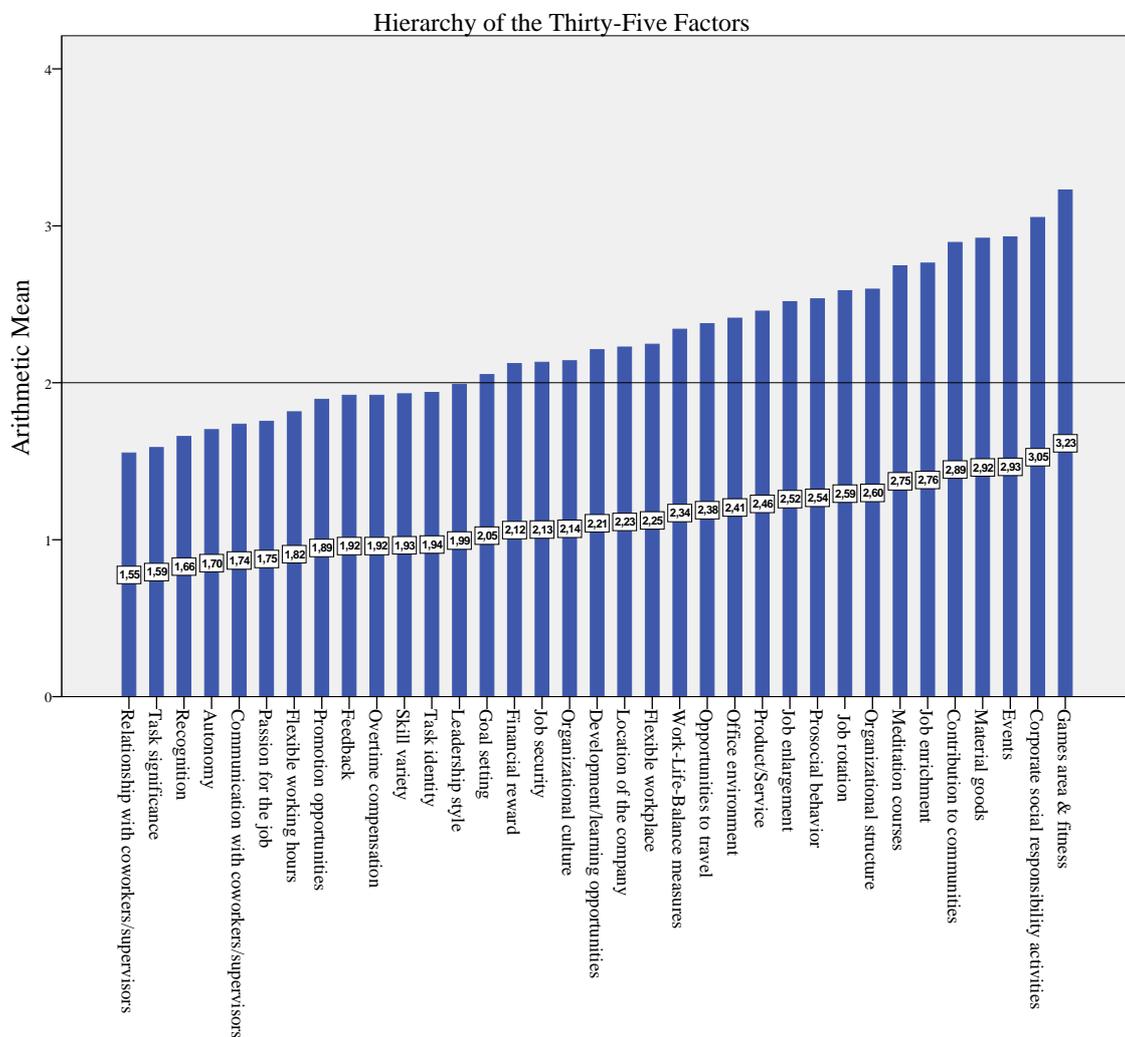
that they evaluate the general well-being of their present lives high. Concerning the importance of the job in the respondents lives, around 50 percent evaluated the private life as being more important than the job. However, almost 90 percent indicated that the job takes on an important role in their lives. Hence, although the private life is evaluated as something more important or equally important the job is an important aspect in the lives of the respondents and has a great impact on their general well-being, according to 84.2 percent of the respondents. 93.9 percent of the sample stated that doing a job that makes them feel happy is important for them and 87.7 percent indicated that they are willing to sacrifice hours of their private life for their job. From this data it can be deduced that the members of the German Gen Y consider the life domain work as important and as having a great influence on their overall happiness. Furthermore, executing a job that makes them feel happy is essential for them. Hence, in order to understand what factors have the strongest influence on the German Gen Y's happiness at work the results of the evaluation of the thirty-five factors are analyzed in the following part.

In order to answer the first research question of the paper the respondents had to evaluate the strength of influence of the thirty-five factors on happiness at work individually by using a five-point Likert Scale. Thus, every factor has five answer options from which the respondents selected one. These five answer options concerning the strength of influence ranged from very strong (coded with the number one) to very weak (coded with the number five). The factors are ordinal variables, as the used codes for each answer (one to five) adopt a clear order (Bühl/Zöfel 2005, 108). By calculating the arithmetic mean of the ordinal variables, that is, of the thirty-five factors, a hierarchy can be established regarding their strength of influence on happiness at work. An arithmetic mean with a value of one is the best grade a factor can get and indicates that it has a very strong influence on happiness at work, whereas a mean of five is the worst grade a factor can get and indicates that the factor has a very weak influence on happiness at work. Illustration 2 below shows an overview of the evaluation of the factors in a diagram.

As can be observed in Illustration 2, among the thirty-five factors the factor relationship with co-workers and supervisors achieved the lowest mean with the value of 1.55. Thus, this factor influences happiness at work the strongest. It is followed closely by the factor task significance, which achieved a mean of 1.59. According to these findings, the happiness of employees of the German

Gen Y is greatly influenced by the relationship between colleagues and with the supervisor, and by doing a job that the employee perceives as meaningful. These two factors are followed by another eleven

Illustration 2: Hierarchy of the Thirty-Five Factors with Regards to Their Strength of Influence on Happiness at Work



Source: Own illustration based on survey

factors in the following order: recognition, autonomy, communication with co-workers and supervisors, passion for the job, flexible working hours, promotion opportunities, feedback, overtime



compensation, skill variety, task identity, and leadership style. These eleven factors all achieved a mean with a value lower than 2.0 and therefore also indicated to have a very strong to strong influence on the German Gen Y's happiness at work. These eleven factors are mainly from dimension two People and four Passion. Only three of them fall under dimension three Company. To conclude, overall there are thirteen factors that indicate to have a mean lower than the value of 2.0 and thus to have a very strong to strong influence on happiness at work. Therefore, these thirteen factors are categorized as strong influencing factors (see Table 2).

Table 2: Categorization of the Thirty-Five Factors

<b>Strong</b> influencing factors	Mean <2.0	<b>Middle</b> influencing factors	Mean 2.0– 2.5	<b>Weak</b> influencing factors	Mean >2.5
1. Relationship with co-workers & supervisors	1.55	1. Goal setting	2.05	1. Job enlargement	2.52
2. Task significance	1.59	2. Financial reward	2.12	2. Prosocial behavior	2.54
3. Recognition	1.66	3. Job security	2.13	3. Job rotation	2.59
4. Autonomy	1.70	4. Organizational culture	2.14	4. Organizational structure	2.60
5. Communication with co-workers & supervisor	1.74	5. Development and learning opportunities	2.21	5. Meditation courses	2.75
6. Passion for the job	1.75	6. Location of the company	2.23	6. Job enrichment	2.76
7. Flexible working hours	1.82	7. Flexible workplace	2.25	7. Contribution to communities	2.89
8. Promotion opportunities	1.89	8. WLB measures	2.34	8. Material goods	2.92



9. Feedback	1.92	9. Opportunities to travel	2.38	9. Events	2.93
10. Overtime compensation	1.92	10. Office environment	2.41	10. CSR activities of the company	3.05
11. Skill variety	1.93	11. Product/Service	2.46	11. Games area & fitness	3.23
12. Task identity	1.94				
13. Leadership style	1.99				

Source: Own illustration based on survey

The strong influencing factors are followed by another eleven factors that achieved a mean between the values of 2.0 and 2.5. All of these factors fall under dimension three Company with three exceptions: goal setting from dimension two People, financial reward from dimension one Profit, and development and learning opportunities from dimension five Purpose. As the mean of these eleven factors ranges from the values of 2.0 to 2.5, it can be concluded that although influencing happiness at work, the strength of the influence is not as strong as the strength of influence of the thirteen factors that belong to the category of strong influencing factors. Hence, these eleven factors have a strong to moderate influence on the German Gen Y's happiness at work, which is why they are categorized as middle influencing factors (see Table 2). The remaining eleven factors of the overall thirty-five factors achieved a mean with a value higher than 2.5. These factors are categorized as weak influencing factors (see Table 2), because the value of their mean indicates that they exert a moderate influence on happiness at work.

In sum, the factors of dimension one Profit, three Company and five Purpose are mainly included in the middle and weak influencing factors. Only four factors of these three dimensions, namely task significance, flexible working hours, promotion opportunities, and overtime compensation, belong to the category strong influencing factors. This indicates that, besides these four factors, the factors of the dimensions one, three and five do not have such a strong influence on the German Gen Y's

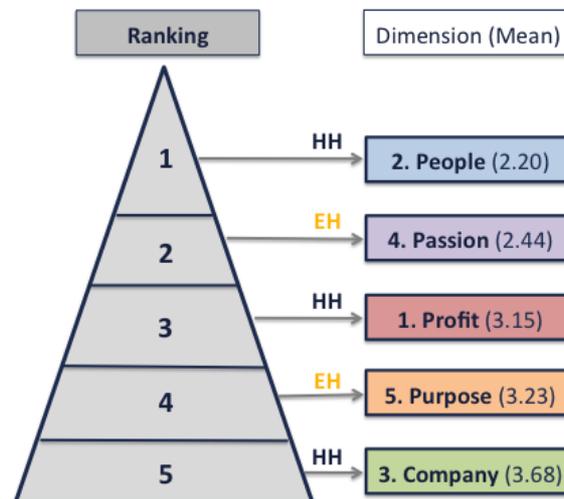


happiness at work. In contrast, the factors of dimension two People and four Passion overall indicate to have a very strong to strong influence on the German Gen Y's happiness at work. To conclude, among the thirty-five factors comprised in the innovative QBL model a hierarchy regarding their strength of influence on the German Gen Y's happiness at work can clearly be identified.

After finding out what factors influence the happiness of the German Gen Y the strongest, the second aim of the paper is to find out if a job containing factors that lead to hedonic happiness or containing factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness at work is more important for the German Gen Y's happiness at work. As dimensions one Profit, two People and three Company comprise hedonic factors, and dimensions four Passion and five Purpose comprise eudaimonic factors, the respondents of the German Gen Y were asked to rank the five dimensions intuitively according to the importance the dimensions have on their happiness at work. Therefore, the ranking ranged from the rank one, indicating to be the most important dimension, to the rank five, indicating to be the least important dimension for the respondents' happiness at work.

Illustration 3 provides an overview of the resulting ranking order of the five dimensions. It can be observed that dimension two People, with a mean of 2.20, achieved the lowest mean and thus the first place. Dimension four Passion closely followed with a mean of 2.44 and achieved the second place in the ranking. Dimension one Profit achieved a mean of 3.15. Thus, the respondents indicated that compensation is the third most important dimension for their happiness at work. Dimension five Purpose achieved a mean of 3.23. When evaluated alone, the factor task significance yielded a very low mean of 1.59, in contrast to the other factors of dimension five (development and learning opportunities, contribution to communities and prosocial behavior), which achieved relatively high means. This indicates why, when the four factors were evaluated together under dimension five, this dimension only achieved the fourth place in the ranking. Finally, altogether the three sub-dimensions of dimension three Company achieved the fifth place in the ranking with a high mean of 3.68. This shows that factors related to the working environment, the policies of a company, as well as to the job features and the type of business of a company, in general are of lower importance for the happiness of the young employees in Germany.

Illustration 3: Overview of the Ranking Order of the Five Dimensions

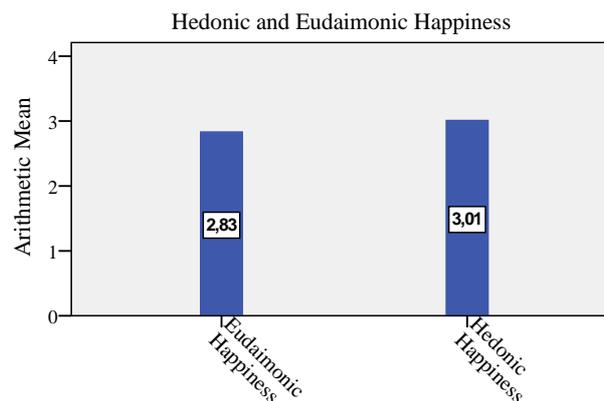


Source: Author's own illustration

When taking into account the ranking order of the entire sample, it can be observed that in the ranking the dimensions alternate between one dimension that comprises factors that lead to hedonic happiness and one dimension that comprises factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness, namely dimension two People, four Passion, one Profit, five Purpose, and three Company. As dimension two People and one Profit achieved the first and third place respectively, it would seem that factors contributing to hedonic happiness at work are of higher relevance to the German Gen Y. However, the respondents answered one control question regarding their happiness at work. On a five-point Likert Scale, with a scale ranging from very important (coded with the number one) to very unimportant (coded with the number five) they had to evaluate one item. Hence, the respondents indicated how important it is for them to achieve the higher-purpose type of happiness at work. According to Hsieh (2010, 237), this “type of happiness is about being part of something bigger than yourself that has meaning to you.” It refers to a long-lasting happiness (Hsieh 2010, 237) and thus to the achievement of eudaimonic happiness. The arithmetic mean of this item achieved a value of 2.24, as almost 70 percent of the sample indicated that it is very important or important to achieve this type of happiness at work. Hence, the findings of the ranking approach and the control question did not yield a precise answer to the second research question.

For this reason, the overall arithmetic mean of the dimensions that represent hedonic happiness (that is, dimensions one Profit, two People and three Company) and the overall arithmetic mean of the dimensions that represent eudaimonic happiness (that is, dimensions four Passion and five Purpose) were calculated to find an answer for the second research question (see Illustration 4). The results indicate that, in contrast to the overall mean of the dimensions that reflect hedonic happiness, which achieved a value of 3.01, the dimensions that reflect eudaimonic happiness were evaluated with lower ranks by the respondents and therefore yielded an overall better mean with a value of 2.83. To conclude, although the difference is small, it turns out that eudaimonic happiness overall was evaluated as more important for the German Gen Y's happiness at work.

Illustration 4: Arithmetic Mean of the Overall Hedonic and Eudaimonic Happiness



Source: Author's own illustration

## 5 Overall Conclusion

### 5.1 Strengths and Limitations

The major strength of the conducted study is the developed model itself, which differentiates between factors that lead to hedonic happiness and factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness and thus allowed to analyze these separately. This innovative model can be considered a more holistic model as it contains factors that cause happiness at work and not only factors that are limited to job satisfaction.



The conducted study also has some limitations. A quantitative research in form of an online survey was conducted. However, online surveys present a barrier to probability-based sample surveys (Couper 2000, 467), as it cannot be ensured that all the target population will go online and have the possibility to receive the survey link in the timeframe in which the survey is active. Moreover, the time constraints of the study represent another limitation. The short period of ten days in which the link of the online survey was active impacted the amount of respondents who completed the questionnaire. Thus, if there had been more time to conduct the survey a larger number of completed surveys could have been obtained.

## **5.2 Suggestion for Future Research**

As the results of this study analyze what to consider in order to make the overall German Gen Y happy at work, the question arises what employers have to consider the most for the happiness of their older employees. Thus, ideally future work conducts the same study with other generations that are still employed and also with the following new members of the workforce like the Generation Z. The findings of these studies would help companies to understand how to treat the members of different generations at work to make them feel happy. Additionally, as the things that make individuals happy change over time (Leslie et al. 2010, 6) the same study has to be conducted with the German Gen Y in the future in order to understand how companies have to adapt their strategy to make this generation happy at work.

## **5.3 Summary and Conclusion**

The presented study for the first time indicates what are the strongest influencing factors for the German Gen Y's happiness at work and what type of happiness (hedonic or eudaimonic) at work is of higher relevance to this generation.

To meet the objectives of this paper and to provide in-depth answers, an empirical study was conducted. However, in order to be able to execute it an innovative model was needed that comprises factors that lead to hedonic happiness and factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness at work. The QBL model consists of five dimensions that are comprised in three levels. The first level contains dimension one Profit, the second level contains dimension two People and three Planet, and the third level contains dimension four Passion and five Purpose. Due to its structure, the QBL model served as a framework to develop the new model. For this purpose, the five dimensions were re-



formulated from an employee's perspective and thirty-five factors that influence happiness at work were assigned to the corresponding dimensions. This model served as a basis for the study, as it comprises a significant amount of factors that influence both types of happiness at work and as it differentiates and thus allows analyzing separately the factors that lead to hedonic happiness (comprised in dimension one, two and three) from the factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness at work (comprised in dimension four and five). Accordingly, a quantitative study was done to fulfill the aims of this paper. For this purpose, an online survey in form of a self-administered questionnaire was developed, which included questions concerning each factor and the five dimensions.

Individuals want to be happy in life (Sheldon/Lyubomirsky 2007, 129) and being happy at work correlates strongly with the general well-being (Kantak/Futrell/Sager 1992, 4). Hence, it is important for an individual to do a job that makes him feel happy. This was affirmed by the executed survey which yielded that the members of the German Gen Y consider it important to do a job that makes them feel happy.

In order to answer the first research questions of this paper, hence which factors have the strongest influence on happiness at work for the German Gen Y, the arithmetic mean of the evaluation of each of the thirty-five factors was calculated. These arithmetic means served to identify a hierarchy regarding the strength of influence of the factors on happiness at work and thus to classify them into the categories strong influencing factors, the middle influencing factors and lastly weak influencing factors. The results show that the factors of dimension two People, thus factors that are mainly related to the co-workers or the supervisor of an organization, as well as to the passion for work and to the fact of doing a significant job, have a strong influence on the young employees' happiness at work. In contrast, the factors that refer to compensation, as well as the factors that relate to the work context and to the job features, were overall evaluated as having a weaker influence on the happiness at work of the German Gen Y.

In order to answer the second research question of the paper, hence whether hedonic or eudaimonic happiness at work is more important for the German Gen Y, the arithmetic means of the five dimensions were calculated. Based on these, it was further possible to discover that the dimensions that comprise factors that lead to eudaimonic happiness, thus that reflect sustained happiness (that is, dimensions four Passion and five Purpose) were evaluated better and hence are overall more important for happiness at work than dimensions that reflect hedonic happiness. Thus, the



findings of the study suggest that a job that primarily contains factors that lead to sustained happiness is more important for the German Gen Y in order to become happy at work. However, as the findings of the first research question yielded that both hedonic as well as eudaimonic factors have an influence on the happiness at work of the German Gen Y, factors that lead to hedonic happiness should not be neglected.

To conclude, if companies take the findings of the analysis into consideration they could not only benefit from the advantages of a happy workforce but also from the ability of retaining and recruiting the members of the German Gen Y and thus win the war for talents.



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**Appendix N° 1: Participants of the Survey**

**Field report of participants:**

	Absolute number	Percentage
Overall sample	151	100,00%
Fully completed questionnaires	119	78,81%
Useful data of fully completed questionnaires	114	75,50%

**Percentage share of the different segments in a category:**

(Source of diagrams: Author's own illustrations)

