





The Effect of Organizational Happiness on Organizational Reputation among Employees of Selected Martial Arts Federations: The Mediating Role of Resilience

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of organizational happiness on organizational reputation among employees of selected martial arts federations, with the mediating role of resilience. The present study was descriptive–correlational in nature, and the data were collected in the field through questionnaires using a survey method. The statistical population consisted of all employees of the martial arts, judo, wushu, karate, and taekwondo federations, totaling 337 individuals, from whom 175 participants were selected as the statistical sample using proportional stratified random sampling. Data were collected using the Organizational Happiness Questionnaire by Krolf (2007), the Organizational Reputation Questionnaire by Fombrun and Van Riel (2003), and the Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale. Data analysis was conducted using correlation coefficients, multiple regression analysis, and structural equation modeling. All statistical analyses were performed using PLS and SPSS software. The results showed that organizational happiness has a significant effect on organizational reputation and resilience among employees of the selected martial arts federations, such that 27.98% of the variance in organizational reputation and 25% of the variance in resilience were explained by organizational happiness. In addition, resilience had a significant effect on organizational reputation, explaining 8.76% of its variance. The results of the Sobel test also indicated that resilience plays a mediating role in the relationship between organizational happiness and organizational reputation among employees of the selected martial arts federations. Therefore, given the importance of organizational happiness and resilience in enhancing employees' organizational reputation in martial arts federations, it is recommended that managers and officials of these federations design and implement regular and targeted programs to promote happiness in the workplace.

Keywords: Resilience; Organizational Reputation; Selected Martial Arts Federations; Organizational Happiness

1. Introduction

In contemporary organizational studies, increasing attention has been devoted to understanding the psychological and social mechanisms that enable organizations to sustain performance, legitimacy, and competitiveness in turbulent environments. Among these mechanisms, organizational happiness, organizational vitality, resilience, and organizational reputation have emerged as critical constructs that jointly shape employee attitudes and organizational outcomes. Rapid environmental changes, heightened uncertainty, and intensified stakeholder scrutiny have compelled organizations—particularly service-oriented and public institutions—to move beyond purely structural or financial considerations and focus more deeply on employee-centered and reputational dimensions of performance (Niazi & Zolghadrqari, 2023; Taherian et al., 2023).

Organizational happiness and vitality refer to positive psychological states experienced by employees, characterized by enthusiasm, meaningful engagement, optimism, and a sense of purpose at work. These constructs are increasingly recognized as strategic resources that enhance creativity, commitment, and discretionary behaviors within organizations. Prior research has demonstrated that happy and vital employees are more likely to exhibit proactive behaviors, adapt to change, and contribute constructively to organizational goals, especially under conditions of pressure and uncertainty (Soodagar & Nasti-Zaee, 2021; Taherian et al., 2023). From this perspective, organizational happiness is not merely an individual-level phenomenon but a collective capability that strengthens organizational functioning.

Parallel to this line of inquiry, organizational resilience has gained prominence as a key explanatory concept for how organizations and their members respond to adversity, crises, and sustained stress. Resilience encompasses the capacity to absorb shocks, adapt to changing conditions, and recover while maintaining core functions and identity. Recent studies emphasize that resilience operates at multiple levels—individual, team, and organizational—and is deeply intertwined with psychological resources such as optimism, self-efficacy, and meaning-making (Mahamat et al., 2025; Reyhani et al., 2022). In organizational contexts, resilient employees are better equipped to cope with uncertainty, sustain performance, and support collective recovery efforts.

The integration of resilience into organizational research has been particularly salient in sectors exposed to high

volatility and public scrutiny, such as sports organizations, educational institutions, and public services. Empirical evidence suggests that resilience enhances strategic agility, innovation, and continuity, especially during crises such as pandemics or economic disruptions (Moghaddam et al., 2022; Zhou & Lan, 2025). Moreover, resilience is increasingly conceptualized not only as an outcome but also as a mediating mechanism through which organizational conditions and leadership practices influence broader organizational outcomes (Panda & Singh, 2025; Pourpaki et al., 2025).

One of the most critical outcomes influenced by employee psychological states and adaptive capacities is organizational reputation. Organizational reputation reflects stakeholders' collective perceptions regarding an organization's credibility, reliability, and social value. It is widely acknowledged as a strategic intangible asset that shapes stakeholder trust, employee identification, and long-term organizational success (Bromley, 2022; Fombrun & Foss, 2023). Unlike image, which may be short-term and communication-driven, reputation is formed over time through consistent patterns of behavior, performance, and ethical conduct.

Extant literature indicates that employees play a central role in the formation and maintenance of organizational reputation. Their attitudes, behaviors, and interactions with external stakeholders directly influence how organizations are perceived. Studies have shown that positive job attitudes, organizational commitment, and citizenship behaviors are significantly associated with favorable reputational outcomes (Nochmani et al., 2021; Taleghani et al., 2022). Consequently, understanding the internal antecedents of reputation—particularly psychological and behavioral factors—has become a critical area of inquiry.

Organizational happiness and vitality have been proposed as key antecedents of organizational reputation, as they foster positive employee behaviors, enhance service quality, and strengthen alignment between organizational values and employee actions. Research in diverse organizational settings suggests that when employees perceive their work as meaningful and experience positive emotions at work, they are more likely to act as ambassadors of the organization, reinforcing its reputation among stakeholders (Chavoshbashi, 2022; Lotfi Jalalabadi et al., 2023). These findings underscore the reputational implications of investing in employee well-being and positive organizational climates.

At the same time, resilience may function as a critical explanatory bridge linking organizational happiness to reputation. Happy organizational environments can cultivate psychological resources that enhance employees' resilience, enabling them to maintain constructive behaviors even under stress. In turn, resilient employees are more capable of sustaining high-quality performance and positive stakeholder interactions during challenging periods, thereby protecting and enhancing organizational reputation (Astrida & Aprilianti Lizar, 2023; Boakye et al., 2022). This mediating role of resilience aligns with emerging integrative models that connect well-being, adaptive capacity, and reputational outcomes.

Recent scholarship further emphasizes the relevance of resilience in contemporary organizational contexts characterized by crisis exposure, digital transparency, and rapid feedback cycles. For example, research on organizational responses to crises highlights that resilient organizations are better able to manage stakeholder communications, respond to criticism, and preserve reputational capital (Crijns et al., 2022; Florez-Jimenez et al., 2025). These insights suggest that resilience is not only an internal coping mechanism but also a strategic asset with external reputational consequences.

Despite growing interest in these constructs, several gaps remain in the existing literature. First, many studies have examined organizational happiness, resilience, and reputation in isolation, without adequately exploring their interrelationships within a unified explanatory framework. Second, empirical research in the context of sports and related organizational settings remains limited, particularly with respect to employee-centered models that integrate psychological well-being and reputational outcomes (Moghaddam et al., 2022; Reyhani et al., 2022). Third, there is a need for more mediational analyses that clarify the mechanisms through which internal organizational conditions translate into reputational benefits.

Furthermore, cultural and institutional contexts may shape the dynamics among happiness, resilience, and reputation. Studies conducted in non-Western and public-sector environments highlight the importance of contextualized models that account for organizational norms, leadership practices, and stakeholder expectations (Niazi & Zolghadrqari, 2023; Sepahvand et al., 2022). Addressing these contextual dimensions can enrich theoretical understanding and enhance the practical relevance of research findings.

Building on these theoretical and empirical foundations, the present study adopts an integrative perspective that positions organizational happiness as a key antecedent of organizational reputation, with resilience serving as a mediating mechanism. By drawing on contemporary research in organizational behavior, resilience studies, and reputation management, this study seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on how internal psychological resources shape external organizational evaluations (Fombrun & Foss, 2023; Malik, 2023; Panda & Singh, 2025). In doing so, it responds to recent calls for multidimensional and process-oriented approaches to understanding organizational effectiveness in complex environments.

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of organizational happiness on organizational reputation with the mediating role of resilience among employees.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

The present study is a descriptive research of the correlational type and is based on structural equation modeling; in terms of purpose, it is classified as applied research. The statistical population of the study included all employees of the martial arts, judo, wushu, karate, and taekwondo federations, totaling 337 individuals. According to the Krejcie and Morgan table (1970), a sample of 175 employees from the martial arts, judo, wushu, karate, and taekwondo federations was selected using proportional stratified random sampling. In addition to library-based studies, field methods were used to collect data in this research. Three standardized questionnaires were employed in the study.

2.2. Measures

1. **Organizational Happiness Questionnaire:** The Organizational Happiness Questionnaire was developed by Krolf (2007) to measure organizational happiness. This questionnaire consists of 23 items and six components: learning, self-disclosure, participation, positive thinking, meaningfulness of work, and interest in work. Responses are rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

2. **Organizational Reputation Questionnaire:** This questionnaire was developed by Fombrun and Van Riel (2003). It consists of 26 items and is designed to assess the

level of organizational reputation and credibility. Responses are scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

3. Resilience Questionnaire: The Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) was developed by Connor and Davidson (2003) to measure coping strength in the face of pressure and threat. This questionnaire includes 25 items across five subscales: perception of personal competence, trust in one’s instincts/tolerance of negative affect, positive acceptance of change and secure relationships, control, and spiritual influences.

2.3. Data analysis

Given that the questionnaires used in this study are standardized and have been repeatedly used in numerous studies, they possess adequate reliability. In this study,

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the measurement instruments. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the organizational happiness, organizational reputation, and resilience questionnaires were calculated as 0.87, 0.81, and 0.91, respectively, indicating acceptable reliability. In the present study, Cronbach’s alpha was used to assess the reliability of the research instruments, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was applied to examine the normality of the data, and structural equation modeling was employed for data analysis. All analyses were conducted using PLS and SPSS software.

3. Findings and Results

First, the demographic characteristics of the participants are presented.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Under 40 years	79	45%
	41 years and above	96	55%
Gender	Female	82	47%
	Male	93	53%
Educational Level	Associate’s and Bachelor’s degrees	63	36%
	Master’s and Doctoral degrees	112	64%

As shown in the table above, 47% of the participants were female and 53% were male. In addition, 45% of the participants were under 40 years of age, while 55% were 41

years of age or older. Furthermore, 36% of the participants held a bachelor’s degree, and 64% held a master’s or doctoral degree.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Research Variables

Statistics / Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Organizational Happiness	72.11	7.52	28	104
Resilience	52.74	6.11	25	81
Organizational Reputation	79.26	7.93	36	93

According to the table above, the mean scores for organizational happiness, resilience, and organizational reputation were 72.11, 52.74, and 79.26, respectively.

To examine the normality of the data, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was used, and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Normality Test of the Data

Statistics / Variables	K–S Value	Significance Level	Result (Normal/Non-normal)
Organizational Happiness	0.267	0.125	Normal
Resilience	0.191	0.112	Normal
Organizational Reputation	0.251	0.137	Normal

Table 3 presents the results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the variables follow a normal distribution.

In the following section, the main research model is presented in terms of standardized coefficients and the significance (z) coefficients.

Figure 1

Standardized Coefficients of the Main Research Model

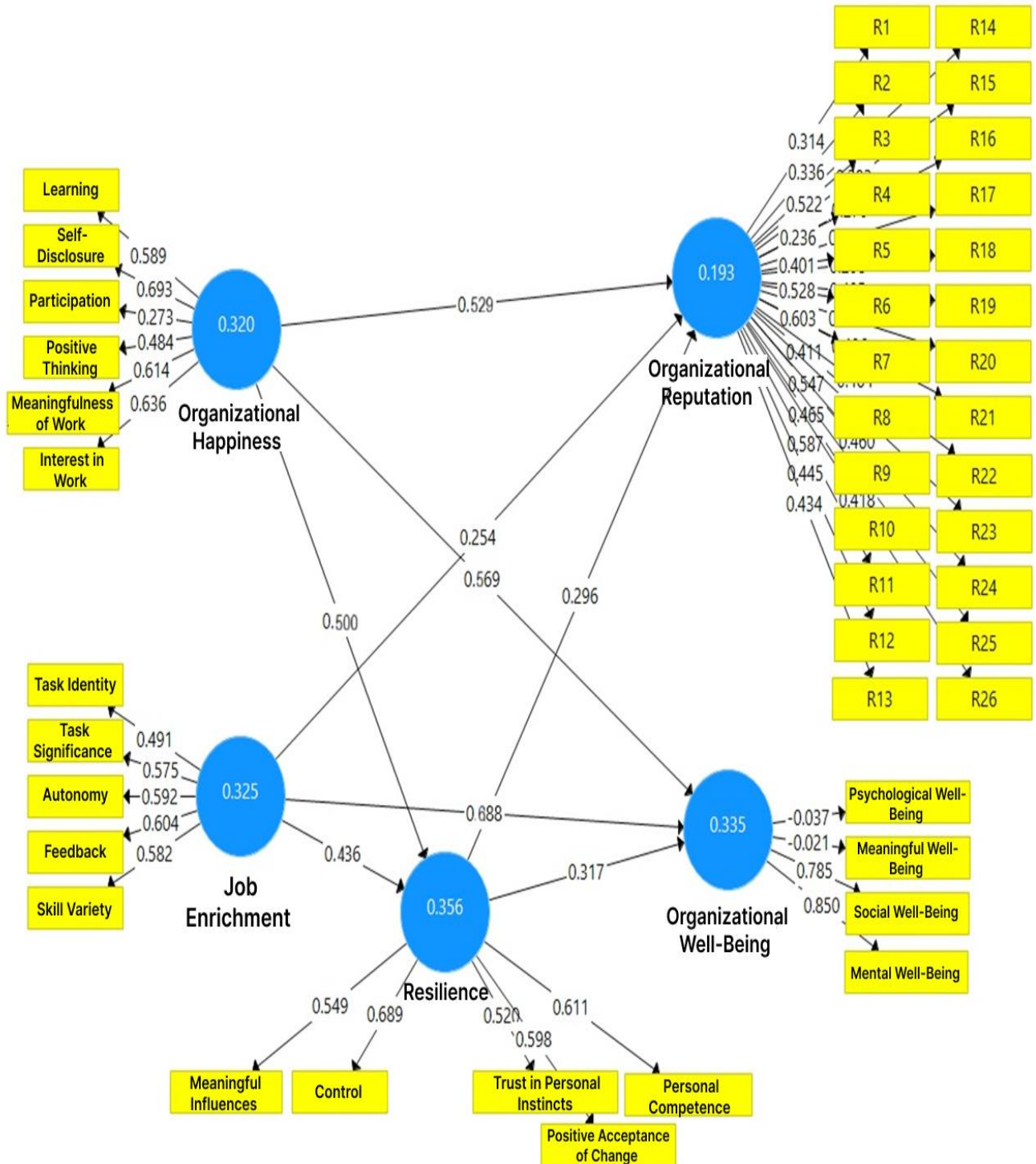
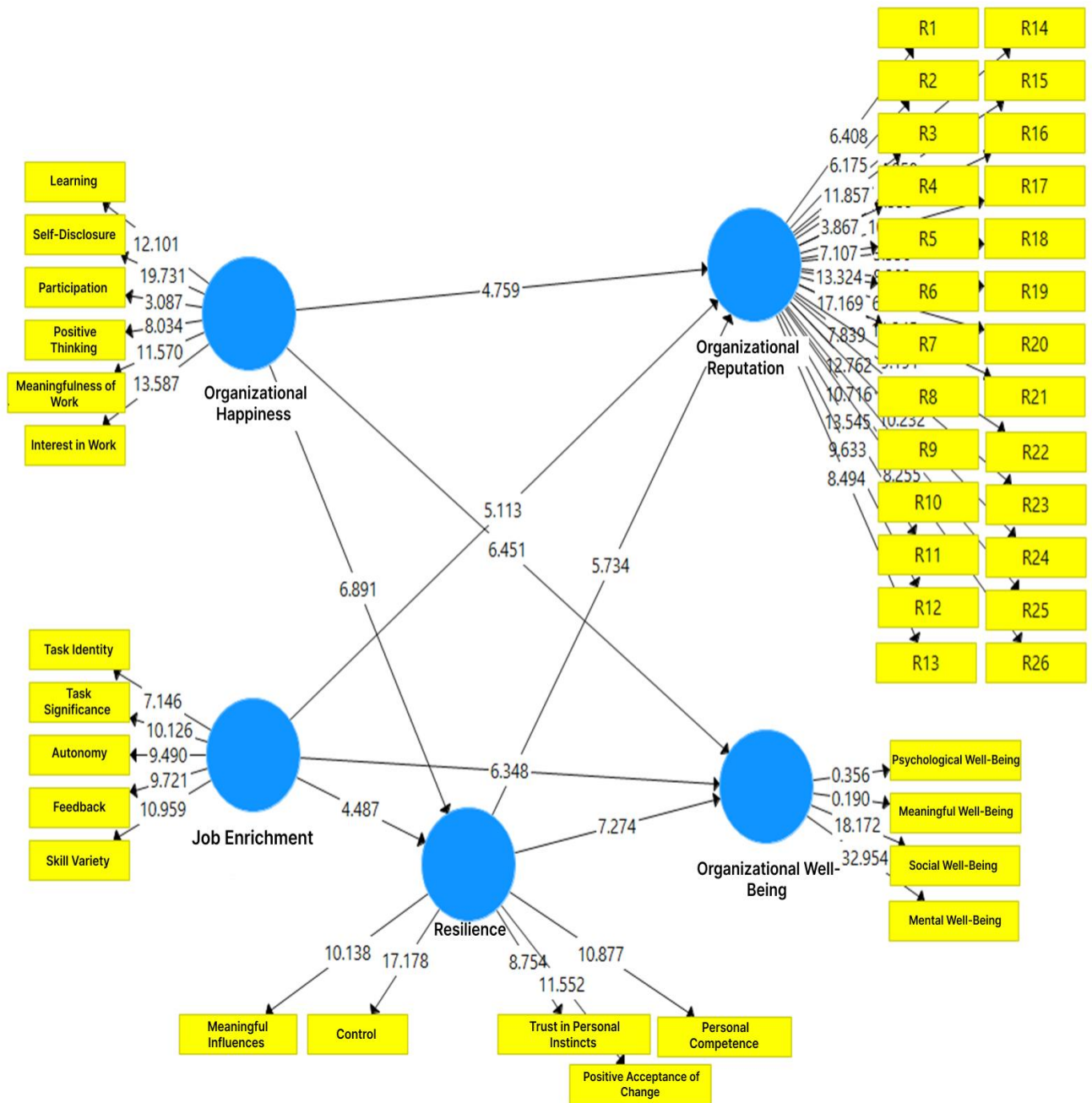


Figure 2

z-Values (Significance Coefficients) of the Main Research Model



Subsequently, to test the research hypotheses, the structural model path coefficients are examined.

Table 4

Path Coefficients between Organizational Happiness, Resilience, and Organizational Reputation

Path	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	Significance Level (p-value)
Organizational Happiness → Organizational Reputation	0.529	4.759	0.000
Organizational Happiness → Resilience	0.500	6.891	0.000
Resilience → Organizational Reputation	0.296	5.734	0.000

The path coefficient ($\beta = 0.529$) indicates that organizational happiness has a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational reputation. The t-value ($t = 4.759$), which is greater than 1.96, confirms the significance of this relationship. The p-value ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) further supports the acceptance of the hypothesis. In addition, the R^2 value is 27.98%, indicating that 27.98% of the variance in organizational reputation is explained by organizational happiness.

The path coefficient ($\beta = 0.500$) indicates that organizational happiness has a positive and statistically significant effect on resilience. The t-value ($t = 6.891$), which exceeds 1.96, demonstrates the significance of this relationship. The p-value ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) confirms that the hypothesis is supported. The R^2 value is 25.00%, meaning that 25.00% of the variance in resilience is explained by organizational happiness.

Moreover, the path coefficient ($\beta = 0.296$) indicates that resilience has a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational reputation. The t-value ($t = 5.734$), which is greater than 1.96, indicates the significance of this relationship. The p-value ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) confirms that the hypothesis is supported. The R^2 value is 8.76%, indicating that 8.76% of the variance in organizational reputation is explained by resilience.

To test the mediating role, the Sobel test was applied. Accordingly, the calculation of t-values from the structural equation model is required for the Sobel test. Based on Figure 2, the observed t-values are 4.759, 5.734, and 6.891, all of which exceed ± 1.96 . Therefore, resilience plays a mediating role in the relationship between organizational happiness and organizational reputation among employees of selected martial arts federations.

The table below presents the standardized direct, indirect, and total effects among the constructs.

Table 5

Standardized Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of the Main Research Variables in the Mediating Model of the Fourth Hypothesis

From Construct	To Construct	Direct Effect c (Sig.)	Direct Effect c' (Sig.)	Indirect Effect b (Sig.)	Total Effect (Sig.)
Organizational Happiness	Organizational Reputation	0.251 (0.01)	0.031 (0.001)	0.006 (0.01)	0.257 (0.01)

Based on the data presented in the table above, the direct effect between organizational happiness and organizational reputation ($\beta = 0.25$) is statistically significant. However, after introducing the mediating variable, the path coefficient between these two constructs (c') decreases and loses its statistical significance, while the indirect effect becomes significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that resilience plays a mediating role in the relationship between organizational happiness and organizational reputation among employees of selected martial arts federations.

4. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of organizational happiness on organizational reputation, with the mediating role of resilience among employees. The findings of the structural equation modeling indicated that organizational happiness has a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational reputation. This result underscores the growing recognition that employees' positive psychological states are not merely individual outcomes but constitute strategic organizational resources that influence how organizations are perceived by internal and external stakeholders. This finding is consistent with the

reputation management literature, which emphasizes that reputation is built through sustained patterns of employee behavior, attitudes, and interactions rather than solely through formal communication strategies (Bromley, 2022; Fombrun & Foss, 2023).

The significant relationship between organizational happiness and organizational reputation suggests that employees who experience higher levels of happiness, meaning, and engagement at work are more likely to demonstrate behaviors that enhance organizational credibility and trust. Such employees tend to interact more positively with clients, partners, and the broader public, thereby reinforcing favorable reputational perceptions. This interpretation aligns with empirical evidence showing that positive job attitudes and psychological well-being are closely associated with employees' willingness to act as organizational ambassadors (Nochmani et al., 2021; Taleghani et al., 2022). In this regard, organizational happiness can be understood as a foundational condition that supports the consistent delivery of value and ethical conduct, both of which are central to reputation formation.

The results also demonstrated that organizational happiness has a significant positive effect on employee

resilience. This finding supports the notion that positive organizational climates foster psychological resources that enable employees to cope more effectively with stress, uncertainty, and change. Happiness at work is often associated with optimism, perceived support, and a sense of control, all of which are core components of resilience. Prior studies have similarly shown that supportive and positive organizational environments enhance employees' adaptive capacities and their ability to maintain performance under adverse conditions (Soodagar & Nasti-Zaee, 2021; Taherian et al., 2023). Thus, the present findings reinforce the view that organizational happiness plays a critical role in strengthening the internal resilience of the workforce.

The positive and significant effect of resilience on organizational reputation constitutes another key finding of this study. This result indicates that resilient employees contribute to reputational strength by sustaining constructive behaviors and performance even during challenging situations. When employees are capable of managing pressure, adapting to change, and maintaining emotional stability, organizations are better positioned to respond effectively to external demands and crises. This, in turn, enhances stakeholders' perceptions of organizational reliability and competence. Similar conclusions have been reported in studies highlighting the role of resilience in safeguarding organizational legitimacy and reputation during periods of disruption (Crijns et al., 2022; Florez-Jimenez et al., 2025).

Importantly, the mediating analysis revealed that resilience plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between organizational happiness and organizational reputation. The reduction and loss of significance in the direct path between organizational happiness and reputation after introducing resilience, alongside the significance of the indirect effect, indicates that part of the influence of happiness on reputation operates through enhanced employee resilience. This finding provides empirical support for integrative theoretical models suggesting that positive psychological states translate into external organizational outcomes through adaptive and coping mechanisms (Panda & Singh, 2025; Pourpaki et al., 2025). In other words, happiness creates the psychological foundation upon which resilience is built, and resilience subsequently enables employees to act in ways that protect and enhance organizational reputation.

This mediating role of resilience is particularly meaningful in contemporary organizational contexts characterized by volatility and heightened public scrutiny.

Organizations increasingly face reputational risks arising from crises, rapid information dissemination, and stakeholder activism. In such environments, resilient employees serve as stabilizing agents who help maintain service quality, ethical conduct, and constructive stakeholder relationships. Prior research in sports, public, and service organizations has similarly emphasized that resilience enhances organizational continuity and reputation by enabling adaptive responses to environmental shocks (Moghaddam et al., 2022; Reyhani et al., 2022). The present study extends this literature by empirically demonstrating resilience as a psychological mechanism linking internal happiness to external reputation.

The findings of this study are also consistent with research emphasizing the interconnectedness of organizational vitality, well-being, and adaptive performance. Studies on organizational vitality suggest that energetic and engaged employees are more innovative, responsive, and committed, which contributes indirectly to positive organizational evaluations (Lotfi Jalalabadi et al., 2023; Niazi & Zolghadrqari, 2023). By integrating resilience into this framework, the present study highlights how vitality and happiness are transformed into sustainable reputational advantages through employees' adaptive capacities.

Furthermore, the results resonate with leadership and organizational behavior studies that link employee resilience to discretionary and citizenship behaviors. Resilient employees are more likely to go beyond formal job requirements, support colleagues, and uphold organizational values under pressure, all of which reinforce positive reputational signals (Boakye et al., 2022; Malik, 2023). These behaviors are especially salient in service-oriented and public-facing organizations, where employee conduct is highly visible and directly shapes stakeholder perceptions.

From a broader theoretical perspective, the findings support a resource-based view of organizational reputation, wherein intangible human and psychological resources serve as antecedents of reputational capital. Organizational happiness and resilience can be conceptualized as valuable, rare, and difficult-to-imitate resources that provide organizations with a competitive advantage in maintaining trust and legitimacy (Bromley, 2022; Fombrun & Foss, 2023). By empirically linking these resources within a mediational framework, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how internal organizational conditions are translated into external reputational outcomes.

5. Conclusion

Finally, the results should be interpreted in light of contextual factors emphasized in prior research. Studies conducted in non-Western and institutional settings suggest that collective values, organizational norms, and leadership practices can amplify the effects of happiness and resilience on organizational outcomes (Chavoshbashi, 2022; Sepahvand et al., 2022). The consistency of the present findings with this body of research suggests that the happiness–resilience–reputation linkage may be robust across diverse organizational contexts, while still being sensitive to cultural and institutional characteristics.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw causal inferences regarding the relationships among organizational happiness, resilience, and organizational reputation. Second, the reliance on self-report questionnaires may have introduced common method bias and social desirability effects. Third, the study was conducted within a specific organizational and sectoral context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other industries or cultural settings.

Future research could address these limitations by employing longitudinal or experimental designs to better capture causal dynamics among happiness, resilience, and reputation over time. Researchers are also encouraged to incorporate multi-source data, such as supervisor ratings or external stakeholder assessments, to reduce potential response bias. Additionally, comparative studies across different sectors and cultural contexts could provide deeper insights into how contextual factors shape the mediating role of resilience in the happiness–reputation relationship.

From a practical perspective, organizations should prioritize the systematic promotion of organizational happiness through supportive leadership, meaningful work design, and positive organizational climates. Developing resilience-enhancing programs, such as training in coping skills and adaptive thinking, can further strengthen employees' capacity to manage stress and uncertainty. By integrating happiness and resilience initiatives into strategic human resource practices, organizations can create a sustainable foundation for enhancing and protecting their organizational reputation.

Authors' Contributions

M.B. conceived the study idea, designed the research framework, and supervised data collection at the counseling

centers. M.G. conducted the statistical analyses, including SEM using SPSS and AMOS, and contributed to the interpretation of the findings. F.D. managed instrument selection, coordinated participant recruitment, and drafted the initial manuscript. All authors contributed to revising the paper critically for important intellectual content and approved the final version.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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