



# Emotions and the Use of Emojis for Emotion Recognition in Corporate Social Networks, Literature Review

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**Abstract.** Managing employee emotions can lead to an improvement in the corporate climate and therefore to better cohesion of the corporate social network. In reality with many employees, especially those where people are spread over vast territories, the difficulties in detecting emotions become greater. Hypothesizing the usefulness of emoji-emoticons to simplify the recognition of emotions even in complex situations, we have carried out a literature review of the scientific articles which talk about emotions and emoji-emoticons. Our job consisted in researching, cataloguing and summarizing the main studies done and published by researchers in the last ten years concerning emotions and the use of emojis as a tool for the discovery and understanding of emotions in corporate working groups, to then make a brief analysis. Much research has been done and many methods have been developed in the field of emotional-sentimental detection, just as there is much research relating to the generic use of emojis, in general, and in the corporate field. Unfortunately, we have found few studies regarding the use of emojis for emotion recognition and identification in the workplace. As a result, we have found scientific evidence of the importance of emotions in companies, noting that the different types of graphic inserts (emoji-emoticons) can be a valid support tool for human resources for detecting and analysing employee emotions. We believe we have achieved the goal of our work in providing concrete help with this literature review for future scientific developments in this field

**Keywords:** Corporate social network, Emoji, emoticons, Human Resources, Emotions, Organizational climate, Quality of work, Well-being.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sociological scientific study can have society as its object, with its networks and intersections, trying to give shape and meaning to the thought and characteristics of people, individuals and groups. Society, as empirically studied science, experiments with the proposed theses, linking them to the concept of physicality and concreteness that manifests itself in people and their behaviour in relation to others. Group life with the expression of relationships between individuals enriches daily activities by generating feelings and emotions. These relationships and bonds change continuously, creating dynamism in the interconnections, which can be considered as the result of curiosity and the continuous approaching and moving away to discover new horizons and opportunities for personal growth.

Discovering the secrets that drive people to behave in a certain way towards others is probably one of the 'core businesses' of economic sociology. Economic actors are people who seek the concreteness and tangibility of 'objects', where the concept of economy is no longer just venial, that is, of material and monetary possession, but of inner and affective satisfaction and well-being. The 'objects' satisfy personal needs and acquire the ability to become means of transferring well-being and therefore sensations and emotions. Aware entrepreneurs, shareholders and top management consider the emotional value essential to achieve maximum economic (monetary) entrepreneurial success, but also sensory and emotional satisfaction of all economic subjects involved in the economic cycle.

Analysing the emotional sphere, we could assume that by using iconographic graphic representations (emoji-emoticons) individuals could both discover and express more easily the emotions that develop in the relationship with others. We find it interesting to discover and highlight how researchers in the last decade have detected emotions together with the importance of using graphic aids (especially emoji-emoticons) to discover and understand the emotional complexities of corporate social life. Representing the thoughts, values, sensations and emotions of corporate social groups with the use of graphics and iconography could be effective for a simpler representation of the links between economic actors and therefore understand and intervene in the dynamics of the corporate social network.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

We searched Google Scholar databases for the years 2011 to November 2022 related to the subject of study, emotions and emoji-emoticons in the workplace. The keywords used have been formulated in the following search string: 'emotion AND feeling AND social AND network AND (emoji OR emoticon) AND "human resources" '. From 1160 results, eliminating duplicates, books and textbooks, collections, and scientific articles not freely available, we have selected 43 useful for research. To complete this search, a further search string was used, string B: 'emotion AND (emoji OR emoticon) AND (employee OR workers) AND ("human resources" OR "working group") ', detecting 1100 entries, and after their verification and elimination of duplicates we have highlighted 36 useful ones. Combining the results of the two strings, we have considered the 19 most representatives for us in more detail (Table 1).

We then considered the relevant passages of other researchers, which the authors of the selected articles

(referring to them in their works) have, like us, considered relevant. We have also considered the relevant passages of the articles of the 'screening' phase. All of these are not included in the table but we deem it useful to identify them in the final literature (Figure 1).

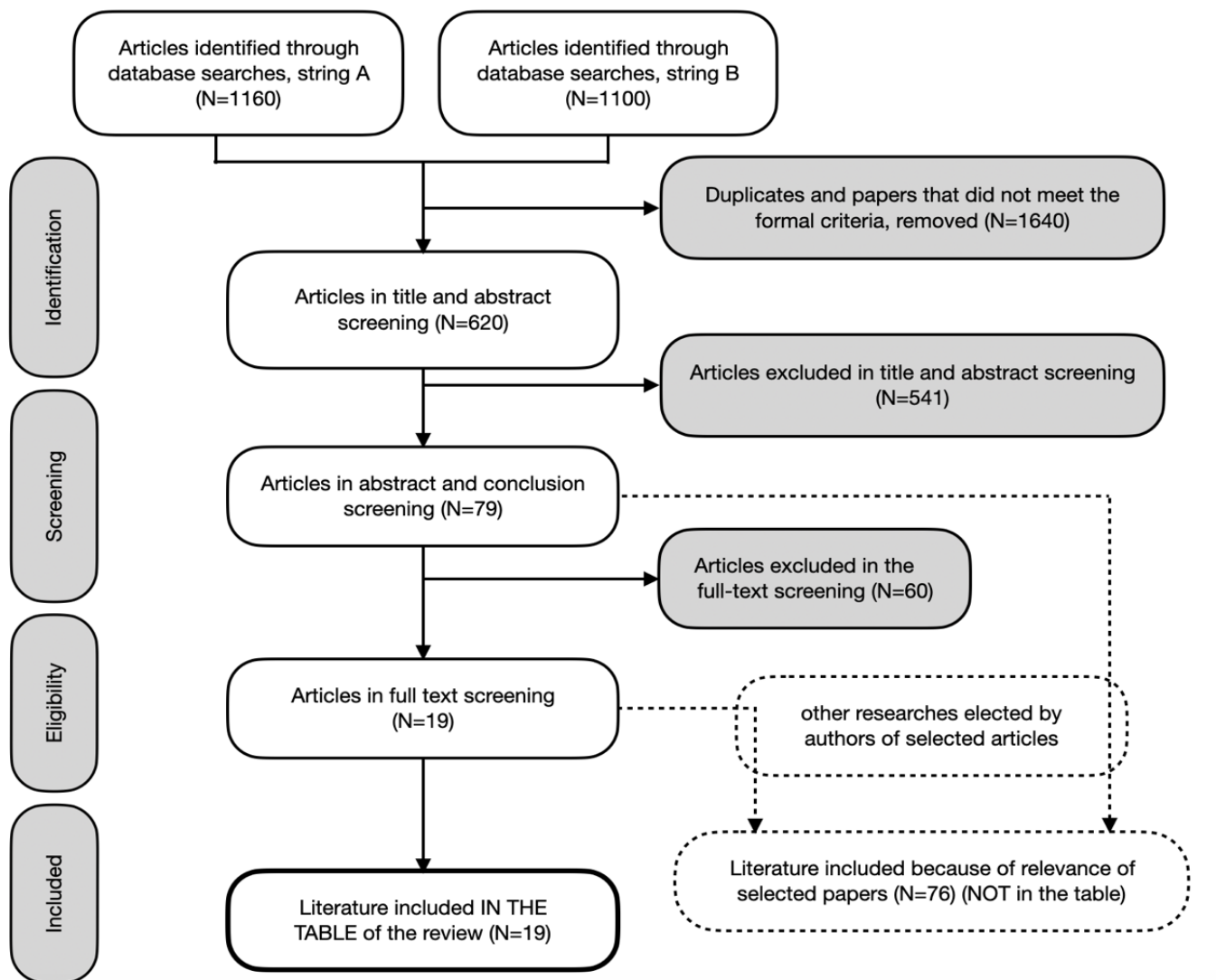


Figure 1: Method flowchart.

### 3. MOST RELEVANT LITERATURE

Table 1: Most relevant literature.

Reference	Title	Relevance
(Bai et al., 2019b)	A Systematic Review of Emoji: Current Research and Future Perspectives	A systematic review of emojis with analysis of the applications, methods and tools used in the various fields of application
(Cheshin, 2020)	The Impact of Non-normative Displays of Emotion in the Workplace: How Inappropriateness Shapes the Interpersonal Outcomes of Emotional Displays	Externalization, authenticity, the influence of emotions and characteristics of the subjects who express them; Influence of viewer characteristics, display, and context on the appropriateness of emotion display
(Connelly & Turel, 2016)	Effects of team emotional authenticity on virtual team performance	emotional authenticity in virtual teams and performance due to team emotional authenticity; perception of authentic expression of emotions; emoticons for more emotionally authentic communication
(Dowling, 2018)	Putting Social to Work: Examining the Communication Strategies that Make Enterprise Social Successful	The exploitation of technological evolution in communication for employee engagement and productivity; use of emojis in corporate social networks (Slack)
(Dutta & Mishra, 2021)	Chatting with the CEO's Virtual Assistant: Impact on Climate for Trust, Fairness, Employee Satisfaction, and Engagement (Article - Empirical)	Use of AI to understand employee need and emotions, also with virtual agents
(Ellensburg, 2012)	Emoticons as social information: The effect of emoticons on interpersonal perception in computer-mediated business communication	Thesis of negative influence in the use of emojis in the professional field
(Ganebnykh et	Project team acquiring based on digital footprint	Analysis of emojis with McCrae's five-factor theory of

Reference	Title	Relevance
al., 2021)		personality and expectation factors
(Idris et al., 2021)	Systematic Literature Review of Profiling Analysis Personality from Social Media	A systematic review of personality profiling from social media for recruitment
(Smailović, 2014)	Sentiment Analysis in Streams of Microblogging Posts	Using tweets to predict events
(Leonardi, 2022)	Communication challenges and transformations in the Digital Era: emoji language and emoji translation	communication with emojis and it's translation, universally worldwide
(Leslie, 2019)	This other atmosphere: against human resources, emoji and devices	Emoji evolution; emoji, emoticons, workplace pictograms and work environments
(J. Loglia, 2013)	How Emoticons Affect Leader-member Exchange	effects of emoticons in the LMX (Leader-Member eXchange)
(J. M. Loglia & Bowers, 2016)	Emoticons in Business Communication: Is the : Worth it?	how emoticons improve and clarify communication in business; comparison of FTF, CMC, and LMX communications; Emojis to express mood, authenticity, influence and charisma
(McStay, 2020a)	Emotional AI, soft biometrics and the surveillance of emotional life: An unusual consensus on privacy	Privacy of emotional information
(McStay, 2020b)	Emotional AI: The Rise of Empathic Media	emoji to understand the perception of individual and collective perspectives and emotions
(Mihuandayani et al., 2018)	Profiling Analysis Based on Social Media for Prospective Employees Recruitment Using SVM and Chi-Square	useful research as IT support for the recruitment - repositioning of employees in the company
(Moffitt et al., 2020a)	Accessibility and emotionality of online assessment feedback: Using emoticons to enhance student perceptions of marker competence and warmth	Use of emoticons to enhance student perception of marker
(Petrie, 2015)	The Effects of Emoticons on Supervisory E-Mails	use of emoticons in the workplace, and interaction between the presence of an emoticon and the tone of the message; the influence of emotions in the world of work; Leaders' emotions and emotional intelligence on employees (LMX)
(Pfeiffer et al., 2017)	Visualizing Workload and Emotion Data in Air Traffic Control - An Approach Informed by the Supervisors Decision Making Process	Graphic representations of emotions

#### 4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF EMOTIONS

Leslie (2019) identifies the emotional state as an expression of one's mood and personality, a capacity that throughout history has developed in human beings with their work and their ability to care for others (Leslie, 2019). We find richness and human resourcefulness in the ability to do things but also in the expression of the emotional state, highlighting the transition from the moral question, typical of the nineteenth century, to greater attention to the morality of emotions and attitude (Leslie, 2019). With progress and ever greater attention to the satisfaction of individuals, people, with their emotional states, have ever greater weight and meaning. The top management has acquired the awareness that employee well-being leads to an inevitable improvement in company performance, which pushes top management to discover new ways and tools to propose and offer employees the best possible working environment.

Well-being is described by emotions and recognizing them as soon as possible, at their first manifestation, helps to understand and deal with them already as they develop (Albraikan et al., 2018). The activity of understanding and adequate management of the feelings experienced by the individual in relationships with others is therefore important (Mayer & Gaschke, 1988). This importance is denoted by the voluntary or involuntary behaviour of people who thus try to determine what social impact the reactions due to the externalization of their emotions have caused (Cheshin, 2020). For entrepreneurs and business stakeholders, understanding employee emotions can help create social cohesion and increase levels of Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) (Petrie, 2015). Bellingan used the longitudinal digital diary method, where employees recorded daily voice diaries relating to their working day when leaving the plant and with this methodology the relevant factors for measuring daily well-being were monitored and analyzed (Bellingan et al., 2020).

##### 4.1. Emotions and Feelings in the Corporate Network

What most distinguishes people from machines are their thoughts and ideas. Thoughts and ideas arise from the 'feeling' of people and their emotions. 'Emotion' and 'feeling' are however two distinct terms that do not yet have a shared definition to distinguish them from each other (Gross, 2020). We could say that emotions are those characteristics that make a person human and can be fleeting, while feelings are those strong sensations that help people express themselves to others, thus transmitting and demonstrating their emotions (Gross, 2020). Increasing emotional intelligence, i.e. the ability to evaluate and understand one's own and others' emotions, can improve organizational results, absenteeism and turnover, the company climate and the communication quality of employees (Petrie, 2015). A corporate reality is therefore linked to the influence that emotions and feelings cause in people, in employees, as it affects the effectiveness and success of work teams (Connelly & Turel, 2016), of the corporate community.

Emotions are often classified into two categories, positive (or good) emotions and negative (or bad) emotions. This distinction is generally accepted even if there is a current of thought that questions the correctness of this distinction (Fredrickson, 2001; Lindebaum & Jordan, 2012; Solomon & Stone, 2002), and the fact remains that the only definition of “good” or “bad” emotions is insufficient (Cheshin, 2020). Undoubtedly, good or bad emotions must, first of all, be discovered and recognized, preserving them in their reality and authenticity. We could assume that positive emotions lead to the creation of a proactive, success-oriented corporate social network. The positive (or good) emotion will have to be authentic to create a true and real bond, otherwise, it will only create a non-constructive deviation of 'people feeling'.

The emotions expressed therefore can be authentic or false (Hideg & van Kleef, 2017). Inauthentic emotional manifestations are considered inadequate and lead to a negative outcome for both the exhibitor and the organization and can be intentionally expressed differently from how they feel in reality, to try to show an emotion appropriate to the context (Cheshin, 2020). Therefore, the real emotion will not be expressed but that emotion which is required and desired at that particular moment by the environment and culture present in the company. Leaders with high emotional intelligence play a key role in employees' personal contributions as they can bring confidence in the achievement of work tasks and challenges, while simultaneously generating a creative workforce (Petrie, 2015). There is then a proportionality between the emotional authenticity of the team and its performance, its credibility and trust in behaviours (Connelly & Turel, 2016). In summary, an incorrect or distorted understanding of emotions does not create a link between the nodes of the social network but on the contrary, could even distance them from each other.

The most intense emotional manifestations are often perceived as inappropriate (Cheshin, 2020), but to this analysis, we should add the cultural factor of the person. For example, Cheshin (2020) (Cheshin, 2020) himself has carried out research on the gender influence (male-female) of the exhibitor and the receptor of emotions, noting the diversity of expression and perception. According to the researcher, in order to adequately express emotions, it is necessary to pay attention to three particularities of the subject: the characteristics of the subject, the modalities of expression and the characteristics of the real context. The characteristics of the subject (state, gender) are identified as the most influential characteristics, the modes of expression concern the intensity and modality, and then the characteristics of the real context concern the place and time during which emotions are expressed (Cheshin, 2020). Barasch (Barasch et al., 2016) has noticed how, for example, the happiness shown in certain situations by some people with too much emphasis could make them judge more naive, in other cases the same emphasis could even be perceived as insufficient.

The effects of emotional displays in the workplace can then differ depending on whether it is from an intrapersonal or interpersonal perspective (Cheshin, 2020). Emotions, good or bad, are not only felt internally but are also manifested externally with emotional manifestations which can influence the emotional state of others and organizations. Petrie (2015, p.28) has found in his research that “*leaders who express their emotions achieve productivity gains and can be more persuasive, increase organizational citizenship behaviour levels, increase job satisfaction ratings, influence the mood of the followers, increase individual creativity and increase cooperation*” (Petrie, 2015). Experiencing sadness is, for example, unpleasant, while bringing comfort to a sad situation can lead to the achievement of a positive result for the interlocutor or the entire group (Cheshin, 2020; Hendriks et al., 2008). We can therefore say that in certain moments it can be 'nice' to feel 'bad' or, conversely, to be considered 'bad' and still feel 'good'.

The representation of the detection of emotions must then be easy to read and immediately understandable. Usually, numerical scales are used but, as noted and also summarized by a table by Pfeiffer (2017), the graphical representation with a coordinate system or compass, with coloured points on a map, with a time representation, etc. can be very effective.

Returning to the classification of emotions more in the psychological-sociological field, the classifications probably most used are that of Ekman, 6 emotions (anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, surprise) (Ekman, 1992a, 1992b, 2005) and that of Plutchik (happiness, sadness, anger, fear, trust, disgust, anticipation and surprise) (Kellerman & Plutchik, 1968; R. Plutchik, 1967; Robert Plutchik et al., 1979). These main distinctions are also denoted in searches with a language other than English (Leonova, 2020).

The phase of discovery or rediscovery of emotions and feelings is not always easy and trivial. Once recognized, emotions must be properly catalogued and used for the good of people, the corporate community and corporate success. We could divide the types of emotion detection into two main categories: the "contact" ones, where the person directly and physically intercede, and the "contactless" ones, the area of interest of this research, where the presence of the person being analyzed is not necessary.

The corporate social core network is that unity that people create to complement each other in the pursuit of a common goal, in full compliance with the desirable total satisfaction of individuals.

#### 4.2. The Privacy of Emotions in the Corporate Social Context

In the company, the ethical problem of privacy is not negligible and it is necessary to avoid that people are identifiable and that their emotions become a bargaining chip and therefore for profit or manipulative purposes (McStay, 2020a). The company will have to guarantee the most absolute anonymity, both during the collection and during the analysis and use of the data, given that usually, the collection of data is precisely for actions aimed at the people involved in the research, and not a free expression and voluntary expression of personal emotions as occurs mainly in social channels.

McStay (McStay, 2020b, 2020a) takes up and clearly exposes the research of Wiewiórowski (Wiewiórowski, 2019) according to which facial expressions are not moral laziness, as the thesis of the European Data Protection Supervisor states. Even large databases should consider emotion data anonymous, although there remains the possibility, with data analysis, to infer identity simply by combining this data with other publicly available data (McStay, 2020a). Even the GDPR does not refer to the management of emotions but only to the possible identification of biometric data (European Union, 2017). According to the research conducted by McStay, as the possibility of monitoring emotions with AI increases, the legislator will have to worry about regulating this monitoring, following the interests of commercial power and respect for private and family life, even if there is only a weak consensus on the need for privacy (McStay, 2020a). People are usually not against the collection and use of data concerning their emotions, they are permissive to the use of their private emotional data, reserving however the right to know its management, data control and operational analysis procedures (McStay, 2020a).

## 5. THE EMOJIS

### 5.1. Appearance of Emoji or Emoticons

Emojis, pictographic symbols, are an advanced version of emoticons (Aull, 2019), an evolution of simple punctuation marks as the first stylized reproductions of facial expressions useful for expressing emotion. The smiley face, a precursor to emojis, especially the yellow smiley face, enjoyed great success in the 1960s and spread widely in the 1980s (Bai et al., 2019b). With this simple smiley, a great impact on individual mood could be expressed (Ganster et al., 2012). In terms of the interpretation of information between the emoticon made of punctuation :), the smiley and the emoji 😊 there are no major interpretative differences (Bai et al., 2019b). Emojis are the most used today as they are the richest in content, speed of interpretation of information and expressiveness (Barbieri, Ronzano, et al., 2016; Prada et al., 2018). Emoticons activate the same brain pathways as non-verbal communications (Connelly & Turel, 2016; Yuasa et al., 2011), an incredibly important type of communication because it also considers tone and context (J. M. Loglia & Bowers, 2016). Even using purely facial emojis, which express more emotions than non-facial ones (Jaeger et al., 2019), we must always pay particular attention when using them (Olaya, 2018) since these emojis can be interpreted more ambiguously than non-facial ones. facials (Chairunnisa & A.S., 2017).

Although information from researchers has been collected that could lead to an initial thesis of irrelevance or negative influence on one's professional image for those who use emojis in a corporate context (Ellensburg, 2012), the most recent research indicates the opposite. Emojis can be an important social resource as with them we can express emotions and feelings, which take shape and speak of our particular state (Leslie, 2019), help and assist the expression of emotions (Aldunate et al., 2018; Bai et al., 2019a; Cheshin, 2020; Esposito et al., 2017; Leslie, 2019; Wall et al., 2016; Walther & D'Addario, 2001) and could play a fundamental role as a universal form of communication, universally accepted and understood throughout the world (Leonardi, 2022).

The use of emoji is useful for enriching the text with an emotional message (Gross, 2020) or for enriching digital language through a poetic vision (Stoicescu, 2017) and contextually improving the attractiveness of the message for its recipients (Cramer et al., 2016). Used as a visual paralanguage (Alshenqeeti, 2016), with text the emoji manages to form a complete meaning (Zhou et al., 2017), integrating it and improving its understanding and credibility (Bai et al., 2019b; Daniel & Camp, 2018; Donato & Paggio, 2018).

### 5.2. Different Uses of Emojis

Novak (Novak et al., 2015) created the first sentiment lexicon called Emoji Sentiment Ranking, a map of the most used emojis. Bai (Bai et al., 2019b) then identified various categories of emoji, based on the content, meaning and expression of emotions. Hogenboom (Hogenboom et al., 2013) analyzed the emotions expressed by emoticons to improve the lexicon-based method of classification of feelings. The most connected and enthusiastic people about the use of emojis also meet in various forums, including »<https://www.reddit.com/r/EmojiReview/>«, where they exchange ideas, explore the various meanings of emojis and propose new ones modify existing ones (Bai et al., 2019b).

On the basis of their emotional distribution, among the latter in particular, positive emotions (happiness, joy, excitement...), neutral emotions and negative emotions (sadness, anger, upset...) are highlighted (Novak et al., 2015). Ares & Jaeger (Ares & Jaeger, 2017) found that most emojis have a rich meaning and therefore can express more than one emotion, which is then interpreted differently by people. Some positive emojis can then express irony or satire (Novak et al., 2015; Vanin et al., 2013).

The meaning of emoji also varies according to the specific context (Gawne & McCulloch, 2019), cultural background (Park et al., 2014) and linguistic and social contexts and environment (Bai et al., 2019b). Generally, users use emojis by combining them with texts, with positive messages, preferring them to negative, sad or angry ones (Cheng, 2017). In countries where people have a high power distance, emojis expressing negative emotions are used more, while in countries where individualism and a long-term orientation prevail, emojis representing positive emotions prevail (Bai et al., 2019b; Lu et al., 2016). Lin & Chen (Lin & Chen, 2018) analysed emoji use based on interpersonal distance. The more distant the interpersonal relationship between people, the more static the use of emojis will be. Among people who are more sociable and intimate, and those who have a common liking for a particular subject, the emojis used will be more vivid and specific.

In addition to the intercultural differences and those due to national development indicators identified with

the help of the K-MEANS clustering algorithm (verification of the differences between the first, second and third world (Ljubešić & Fišer, 2016)), it is also necessary to pay attention to differences present within the same country (Bai et al., 2019b; Barbieri, Kruszewski, et al., 2016).

Emoji research in the behavioural sciences focuses on three aspects: motivation, preference, and influencing factors (Bai et al., 2019b). Therefore emojis are also used to manage and maintain interpersonal relationships (Chairunnisa & A.S., 2017) and as a tool to measure customer satisfaction (Jaeger et al., 2017, 2019).

### 5.3. Use of Emojis in Business

Bai in his systematic review, analyzing the use of emoji across the board, noted the success: "Simplicity, convenience and conduciveness to emotional expression are the main motivations attracting users to use emoji" (Bai et al., 2019, page 4). With social networks and with the help of emojis, everyone can voluntarily convey their emotion. The diffusion of emojis is demonstrated by our mobile phones and in some structures (public offices, shops, service activities, etc.) where users can express their degree of satisfaction and therefore their emotions with a simple click (Leslie, 2019). Davies (Davies, 2015) and Grandey (Grandey et al., 2013) identify the possibility of analyzing employee behaviour with emojis. Bai (Bai et al., 2019b) summarize how the use of emojis can add emotional or contextual meaning to communication, aiding in conversation-communication management and thus playing an important role in managing and maintaining interpersonal relationships (Chairunnisa & A.S., 2017; Gantiva et al., 2020; Kelly & Watts, 2015). The use of emoticons can significantly increase the markers and therefore facilitate the understanding of emotions (Moffitt et al., 2020b).

Emoji-emoticons, therefore, become an important means of non-verbal communication in the professional field (J. M. Loglia & Bowers, 2016), where their use also differs according to the sender who writes-sends them (Ellensburg, 2012). Emoticons make up for CMC (Computer-Mediated Communication) in their understanding, help express emotions, increase communicative intimacy, help understand tasks and increase feelings of sympathy (Petrie, 2015). Since emoji collections mainly contain emojis representing negative emotions, their free use in the company ('email etiquette') must be carefully evaluated (Petrie, 2015), to avoid the emergence of specific bad moods typical only of some employees, which could instead lead to a negative view of the whole workplace (Leslie, 2019).

In LMX (Leader Management eXchange) communication, Petrie (2015) empirically did not notice major differences in the interpretation of emails with or without emoticons, while theoretically noting the importance and communicative influence of positive emoticons (Petrie, 2015). Loglia (2016) on the other hand, noted the importance and advantage of using emoticons in the workplace to achieve effective leadership and increase the perception of the supervisor's credibility, authenticity and charisma (J. M. Loglia & Bowers, 2016). Emoticons can make up for the shortcomings of CMC that FTF (Front-To-Front Communication) has, particularly in LMX communication, in interpreting people's moods in emails (J. M. Loglia & Bowers, 2016), in the authenticity of relationships (Ilies et al., 2013), and improved understanding of emotions when discussing and coordinating tasks (Luor et al., 2010). Having verified that emojis have also been included in psychometric scales and have given good results (Marengo et al., 2017; Phan et al., 2019), it should be noted that the use of emojis in corporate communication is not always effective, or at least raises interpretative questions. For example, it has been found that when managers use these symbols in their written email communications they are often considered less competent (Glikson et al., 2018; Riordan & Glikson, 2020). Embedding emoticons in emails could be perceived as an ineffective and inappropriate practice, also leading to negative results for the manager himself and the organization (Cheshin, 2020). For example, Eser (2011) found that in the school environment, students prefer FTF communication as it is better able to express emotions, utility and social presence, reserving communications where communication is required for IM (Instant Messaging) greater wealth of information (Eser et al., 2011). Therefore, a correct key to emoji meanings is important which led researchers to develop emoji emotional lexicons (Ares & Jaeger, 2017; Bai et al., 2019b) also automated based on official definitions (see emojiopedia) to reduce as much as possible the influence of human subjectivity (Fernández-Gavilanes et al., 2018).

In the company, corporate social networks have also taken hold as "instant messaging" tools (e.g. Slack), where emojis are often used and therefore the writer's emotions are expressed through them. These collaborative tools are useful for reducing the distance between the members of a group team even when in reality they are physically distant from each other for a greater commitment of the individuals. In this way, problems related to the support of organizational goals and objectives can be solved, with an additional added value as this messaging can also become a forge of ideas (Dowling, 2018). In any case, the use of corporate social media must be planned and have clear objectives and expectations and as far as possible unrelated to personal ones, involving employees with infrequent communications, otherwise, they become a distraction for carrying out one's work duties (Dowling, 2018).

### 5.4. Emoji For Business Human Resources

If researchers consider emojis useful for discovering and enhancing the emotions of employees and all human resources present in the company, it is useful to understand how emojis can be used as a business tool. Emojis present themselves as an objective aid for the automation of emotional monitoring in the company. In particular, graphic inserts could be useful for understanding the emotions of people-employees in larger companies, where, for obvious numerical reasons, it is not possible to speak often and regularly with all employees (Cheshin, 2020).

Constant monitoring of emotions would allow for an improvement in job satisfaction and performance. Recognizing a feeling immediately can be very beneficial as it would help to deal with it correctly (Albraikan et al., 2018) and then manage individual feelings in relationships with others adequately (Mayer & Gaschke, 1988). Organizations are called to implement new communication technologies for faster reception and distribution of information with the consequent creation of relationships of trust between colleagues to increase employee engagement and productivity (Dowling, 2018).

In the corporate environment, the use of emojis is not always the same for everyone, particularly important are the effects of emoji-emoticons in emails from leader to member (J. Loglia, 2013; Skovholt et al., 2014). Gedde (Geddes et al., 2020) found that people with higher hierarchical status are emotionally freer to express themselves without having to undergo labelling. Their emotional displays are deemed justified and often appropriate (Callister et al., 2017). In the corporate emotional network, it is therefore important to consider the intensity of the expression of emotions so that it does not become inappropriate and exaggerated (Arik et al., 2012; Cheshin, 2020). Researchers agree that the formal aspect and the greater or lesser hierarchical expression in the organization influence more than the social context, environment and corporate culture (Cheshin, 2020; Matsumoto et al., 2008).

Emotions, an expression of personality, influence professional skills and consequently also economic decisions (Wei et al., 2017). It will be important to take this into account during the personnel selection process and the correct placement of candidates so that everyone can fill the position (Idris et al., 2021) and the appropriate company function. The selection and placement activity (internal and external) must be a continuous activity within the company which varies according to the emotions that develop in the social group.

The research by Lee (Lee et al., 2014) shows that simplicity, playfulness and interactivity are the causes of the easy use of emoticons-emoji and thanks to the design, users are encouraged to use them more often, consequently increasing their desire to express themselves. The use of emoticons can improve communication and clarify intentions by partially compensating for FTF non-verbal communication, where the tone, context, voice inflexion, loudness, facial expressions, gestures and body language play an important role (J. M. Loglia & Bowers, 2016). Emojis are useful in CMBC (Computer Mediated Business Communication), as they help to understand non-verbal communication and also for better expressiveness in leadership (J. M. Loglia & Bowers, 2016). Individuals, by recognizing their emotions more easily and clearly, will have a higher degree of self-esteem and will be able to adapt more easily to the social environment (Albraikan et al., 2018; Brackett & Salovey, 2006; Mayer & Salovey, 1990). High use of emoticons could decrease the perception of power, competence, status and morality (Ellensburg, 2012), but at the same time enrich the information and the context making the leader appear more authentic, recognizable, charismatic and closer to his subordinates (J. M. Loglia & Bowers, 2016).

## 6. RESULTS

With our analysis we have found that researchers have demonstrated the importance, in respect of privacy, of emotions in the corporate workplace. This starts from their correct and prompt recognition, even with the use of emojis, up to their adequate management and use for business purposes and personal growth.

In summary, the researchers highlighted the appearance of graphic inserts in the corporate world, initially with the use of the smile (smile) and then of emojis for the evaluation of a product and a service. Thus we try to measure the emotions that buyers-users express (Ares & Jaeger, 2017; Jaeger et al., 2019), to then influence their behaviour, attracting them and stimulating their willingness to buy (Das et al., 2019).

Having demonstrated the ability of emoticons to create a positive emotional climate (Gabriel et al., 2016), they have now ascertained the usefulness of emojis in the company for displaying employee emotions (Cheshin, 2020). With emojis it is possible to identify the emotions and satisfactions of employees that help them to stay and strengthen our 'being part' of the corporate social network (Leslie, 2019).

We can therefore summarize and hypothesize that the use of emojis could soon become indispensable for complete communication (Matsumoto et al., 2008). If with the analysis of the social environment of organizations, it is possible to define the position that each employee occupies within the organization and therefore in the organizational hierarchy (Cheshin, 2020), thanks to the emoji expressed by the employees we could represent (and probably also develop) a more effective corporate emotional organization.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Emojis have therefore become an integral part of our world, trying to make up for the lack of emotional communication typical of FTF communication. The increasing lack of human contact has created a large communication gap that iconic communication with emoticons and emojis can fill. Considering the corporate emotional network, the use of emojis can help understand the emotions that develop among employees. The company will be able to intervene promptly by finding alternative solutions for collaboration and training of working groups, and therefore improve and resolve critical situations arising due to the incompatibility of two or more people. Company personnel would thus become more productive, efficient and effective since individuals, following the teachings of the concept of 'embeddedness' of Granovetter (Granovetter, 1985, 1992) and the researchers of the new economic sociology, would be part of a balanced group. In these working groups, relationships can be close enough to each other for correct collaboration, but at the same time also distant enough to maintain a fair amount of uncertainty and instability (and also privacy) to lead to greater creativity and a proactive and stimulating way between the employees. Constant monitoring in the company, even with emojis,

could become a tool for increasing well-being which could indirectly transfer from the company environment to family and social environments outside the workplace.

## 8. FUTURE RESEARCH

In general, we can see from this literature review that the literature on emojis and emoticons is very broad but there may still be ample room for development precisely as regards the use of emojis for the discovery and management of employee emotions.

It is therefore desirable to deepen this literature review with the analysis of other texts and also deepen the graphic representation of corporate emotional social networks. This could lead to the development of a method of analyzing employee emotions with emojis that represent the nodes of corporate networks, therefore the actors. A literature review of emoji analysis techniques would also be useful.

It could be interesting to research whether and how right and necessary it is for corporate ties, the ties between members of a work community, to be strong and firm. The importance of network cohesion may be convenient for stability, but perhaps a more unstable network could allow individuals to grow more effectively thanks also to the right dose of relational uncertainty, typical of 'non-strong' bonds. If we then consider the emotional social networks for each individual emotion, new doors could be opened to a level of social analysis and research that we could define as multi-dimensional.

## Author Contributions and Supports

PF contributed to the conception, research and design of the study and wrote all sections. PF, TBV and EDU contributed to manuscript revision and reading. TBV and EDU approved the submitted version. This work has not benefited from any contribution or support from any company or institution.

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