

Employment as decent work: a human right in the agribusiness sector

El empleo como trabajo decente: un derecho humano en el sector agroindustrial

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El objetivo del presente manuscrito fue examinar cómo la garantía del trabajo decente como derecho humano en una empresa agroindustrial contribuye al logro del Objetivo de Desarrollo Sostenible 8 y a la calidad de vida de los trabajadores. El estudio se desarrolló desde un enfoque cuantitativo, diseño no experimental y corte transversal, se aplicó a 50 trabajadores operativos de una empresa agroindustrial en Sinaloa mediante encuesta estructurada. Se utilizó análisis descriptivo, correlacional y regresión lineal con apoyo de SPSS. Los resultados muestran una relación positiva y significativa entre trabajo decente e ingreso digno ($\beta = 0.8675$; $R^2 = 0.647$), con evidencia estadística robusta que respalda la hipótesis planteada. El estudio confirma que el trabajo decente es un derecho humano fundamental y un pilar clave para lograr justicia social, equidad y desarrollo sostenible. Se identificó un impacto positivo y significativo en la percepción de los trabajadores respecto al ingreso digno.

Palabras claves: Bienestar laboral, Derechos humanos, Desarrollo sostenible e Ingresos dignos.**Abstract**

The objective of the present manuscript was to examine how the guarantee of decent work as a human right in an agro-industrial company contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 and the quality of life of the workers. The study was conducted from a quantitative approach, non-experimental design, and cross-sectional cut, applied to 50 operational workers of an agro-industrial company in Sinaloa through a structured survey. Descriptive, correlational, and linear regression analysis were used with the support of SPSS. The results show a positive and significant relationship between decent work and dignified income ($\beta = 0.8675$; $R^2 = 0.647$), with robust statistical evidence supporting the proposed hypothesis. The study confirms that decent work is a fundamental human right and a key pillar for achieving social justice, equity, and sustainable development. A positive and significant impact on workers' perception of decent income was identified.

Keywords: Workplace well-being, Human rights, Sustainable development and Decent income.OPEN ACCESS
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Introduction

Global Context of Decent Work and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Sustainable development has been characterized and defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. On September 25, 2015, the United Nations global leaders established 17 Goals as part of the 2030 Agenda. These constitute a set of global targets to eradicate poverty, safeguard the planet, and ensure prosperity for all, as a component of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years. To achieve these goals, everyone must contribute: governments, the private sector, and civil society (United Nations [UN], 2025a).

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2025), decent work encapsulates the ambitions of individuals throughout their professional careers. It means the possibility of obtaining productive work that generates a fair wage, safety in the workplace and social protection for all, better opportunities for personal growth and social integration, freedom for people to express their views, organize, and participate in decisions that impact their lives, as well as equal opportunities and treatment for all, both men and women. Productive employment and decent work are essential elements for achieving equitable globalization and reducing poverty.

At the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, decent work and the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda—job creation, social safeguards, labor rights, and social dialogue—were transformed into essential components of the recent 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda promotes sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth and full and decent employment, and will be a key area of action for the ILO and its members. Furthermore, other crucial elements of decent work are extensively addressed in the objectives of many of the other 16 goals of the new United Nations development vision (ILO, 2025).

According to the UN (2025b), Goal 8 aims to promote inclusive and sustainable economic development, as well as the creation of employment and decent work for all. An increase in labor productivity and a reduction in the global unemployment rate have been observed. However, it is essential to continue making progress in increasing employment opportunities, particularly for young people, reducing informal work and inequality in the labor market (mainly regarding the gender pay

gap), fostering safe and secure work environments, and improving access to financial services to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth.

The principles of Goal 8, decent work and economic growth, promote the creation of opportunities for people by securing productive work that provides a living wage, physical well-being and workplace safety, social protection for families, social integration, and prospects for personal development—dimensions that are addressed in this research for in-depth analysis. The continued lack of decent work opportunities, insufficient investment, and low consumption erode the basic social contract underlying democratic societies: the right of all to share in progress (UN, 2025b).

The UN (2025b) establishes the targets for Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda, which include the need to maintain growth in per capita gross domestic product (GDP) according to the specific conditions of each country, with particular emphasis on achieving a GDP growth rate of at least 7% annually in the least developed countries. In parallel, the goal is to gradually improve the efficiency of natural resource use and overall consumption, with the aim of decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the principles established in the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, starting with the most industrialized countries.

Regarding the labor market, the target set for 2030 is to ensure full and productive employment and decent working conditions for all people, without distinction of gender, age, or physical condition, guaranteeing equal pay for work of equal value. On the other hand, the goal is to implement policies aimed at promoting sustainable tourism, which contribute to job creation and the strengthening of cultural heritage and local production (UN, 2025b).

Characteristics and Challenges of the Agro-industry

According to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, 2025), agro-industries are a mechanism for converting agricultural raw materials into value-added products, simultaneously creating income and job opportunities, and fostering global economic growth in both developed and developing nations. The culinary production process transforms relatively heavy, perishable, and usually inedible raw materials into more practical and shelf-stable, flavorful foods or alcoholic beverages. It promotes food security by minimizing waste and losses

throughout the food chain, as well as increasing food availability and marketability.

For its part, Mexico stands out in the agro-industrial sector by encompassing the production, processing, and sale of agricultural, forestry, and biological products; This adds value to agricultural products, providing them with durability and availability, especially those that are more perishable, in addition to employing impeccable procedures in quality selection and categorization. The agro-industry, which drives value chains, has performed well in the Mexican economy, as it is generally one of the most relevant factors for the country's progress. It is estimated that 30.2 million hectares (ha) are cultivated in Mexico, with irrigated areas generating more than half of the country's food (Conagua, 2018; Government of Mexico, 2017).

González (2023) argues that the approach of the agricultural frontier transforms rural communities located near or within it into victims of the agro-industry, as it contaminates uncultivated lands and water sources with agrochemicals, or creates hidden deposits of these products, impacting other primary sectors such as livestock, aquaculture, and fishing. Furthermore, the prevalence of individuals suffering from illness due to exposure to these toxins is higher in these communities, and although the health system has identified this, no public health warnings are issued nor is the amount of agrochemicals used monitored.

Importance of Decent Work in the Agribusiness Sector

Decent work in the agribusiness sector aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As previously mentioned, these actions correspond to SDG 8, specifically target 8.8, which emphasizes the need to protect labor rights and promote a safe and risk-free work environment for all workers. A safe and dignified work environment not only positively impacts employee well-being but also contributes to improved productivity, reduces losses due to absenteeism, and strengthens the organization's reputation.

Furthermore, regarding the prevention of occupational risks and diseases: studies have shown that high noise levels, dust, and the use of machinery without adequate controls contribute to the development of work-related illnesses. Promoting decent work involves identifying and minimizing these risk factors. Regarding the company's social commitment: The adoption of safety policies and measures demonstrates the organization's ethical responsibility towards its workers,

which in turn strengthens its social legitimacy and contributes to its long-term sustainability. Therefore, it is important to analyze why guaranteeing decent work in the agribusiness sector is crucial for improving workers' quality of life, increasing productivity, and contributing to sustainable development (Correa and Valdéz, 2024).

Justification and Literature Gap:

The analysis of decent work in the agribusiness sector is crucial due to the precarious working conditions that persist in the sector, characterized by high levels of informality, long working hours, low wages, and frequent exposure to physical, chemical, and biological risks (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2021). These conditions not only violate fundamental workers' rights but also limit the possibilities for social and economic development in rural communities, where agribusiness is one of the main sources of employment.

In Latin America, specifically in Mexico, the agribusiness sector faces significant challenges in meeting these standards due to structural factors such as inequality, limited access to technical education, and the absence of effective public policies to improve working conditions in rural areas (Barrientos, 2019). In this context, research is necessary to understand how agribusinesses are addressing or could address these challenges, identifying both barriers and successful practices that can guarantee a safer, more equitable, and dignified work environment.

Therefore, researching decent work in the agribusiness sector not only responds to an academic need to fill this gap, but also represents a fundamental contribution to designing recommendations that guide public policies, corporate social responsibility programs, and sustainability strategies that strengthen worker well-being and the competitiveness of the agribusiness sector.

The objective of this research is to examine how the guarantee of decent work as a human right in an agribusiness contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 8 and improving the quality of life of workers. According to the law, a guarantee is responsible for protecting and ensuring respect for rights, while a right is a legal claim or entitlement. Guarantees typically entail responsibilities and obligations, ensuring the exercise of rights without abuse and, therefore, preserving the legal order (Kirillova, 2022). Furthermore, it is hypothesized that decent work significantly impacts and is positively correlated with workers' perception of a living wage. Regarding the article's structure, in addition to this introduction, there is a theoretical framework that synthesizes international, national, and local research.

The following section explains the methodology used, which is quantitative in approach, with a descriptive-correlational scope and a non-experimental, cross-sectional field design. The article concludes with the results, discussion, and conclusions.

Theoretical Framework or Theoretical Foundation

The theory of human development, promoted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), maintains that decent work is essential for the integral growth of individuals, beyond economic development. This theory emphasizes that employment must ensure dignity, equity, protection, and freedom, in accordance with the Human Development Index (HDI). The ILO incorporates this theory into its definition of decent work, which is defined as "productive employment under conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity" (ILO, 1999, cited in Anker & Anker, 2021). In the current scenario, this theory underscores the importance of public policies that promote high-quality work to reduce poverty and inequality, particularly after the COVID-19 crisis.

Similarly, the right to work was initially recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) in Article 23, which specifies the right of everyone to satisfactory work under equitable and dignified conditions that ensure their existence in accordance with their human dignity. However, the concept has evolved into "decent work," which advocates for the improvement of working conditions (ILO, 2025). Likewise, since the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), employment has been recognized as a fundamental human right.

Both concepts are closely linked to fundamental human rights; however, the concept of decent work integrates different elements that are important to describe, such as physical well-being and safety at work, social protection and integration, prospects for personal development, and a living income (UN, 2025b). According to Polo et al. (2023), occupational safety and health are aspects that not only improve workers' quality of life but also increase productivity and reduce costs related to workplace accidents and illnesses. This aligns with Requena's (2024) findings, which link occupational safety and health to job satisfaction, well-being, and quality of life in the workplace.

Recent studies highlight that implementing decent work policies directly contributes to improving employee health, well-being, and satisfaction, which in

turn increases productivity, reduces staff turnover, and enhances the reputation and sustainability of companies. However, the specialized literature reveals a significant gap in the analysis of specific strategies adopted by agribusiness companies to promote adequate working conditions, particularly regarding gender equality, compliance with safety regulations, and the integration of small producers into responsible value chains (Barrientos, 2019; ILO, 2021).

Souza et al. (2023) indicate that another essential component of decent work is social protection and integration. These dimensions ensure that employment not only provides income but also security, dignity, and opportunities for inclusion for all workers. Similarly, Ramírez and Corredor (2022) point out that social integration is fundamental to equity and is directly linked to the promotion of decent work, especially for historically vulnerable groups. Consequently, companies seek to address integration needs by promoting dignified and sustainable employment opportunities for all.

Regarding the personal development prospects component, which impacts decent work, the literature is extensive concerning people's understanding of work as offering career and life development that includes well-being and personal growth, allowing them to improve their skills and abilities, feel motivated and valued in their environment, and provide better prospects for personal development and social integration. This implies that work should enable individuals to improve their capacities, skills, and overall well-being (Grisales, 2020; Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2024).

The elements of decent work are important, but we must also point out that workers expect not only what is described in the previous sections, but also to receive sufficient income to guarantee an adequate quality of life, which translates into personal and family well-being. This is fundamental for the fulfillment of labor and human rights, especially for people in vulnerable situations, with precarious jobs, and in rural areas.

Arief (2023) considers that agribusiness refers to activities that optimize the use of agricultural products, providing high added value through technology and biotechnology. It plays a crucial role in economic growth, increasing income, absorbing labor, and improving regional development. Rahayu (2021), for his part, states that agribusiness plays a crucial role in regional development by providing food, generating foreign exchange through exports, creating jobs, increasing regional income, and alleviating poverty in the areas where it is established.

The main challenges facing agribusiness globally in terms of working conditions are: Precarious employment in rural areas, due to the fact that many farmworkers are employed informally, with low wages and without access to social security or adequate legal protection. A deficit in technical training: the technological updating of the sector demands new skills, but there is a significant gap between the required skills and the available training, especially in advanced agricultural technologies. Gender gaps persist, with women often concentrated in informal, low-wage jobs within agriculture, offering limited opportunities for leadership positions or access to land ownership.

Other challenges include adverse working conditions: long working hours, exposure to chemicals, and a lack of basic services such as potable water or sanitation facilities are common on many farms. Exclusion of small-scale producers: many small-scale farmers, including indigenous and rural communities, face obstacles to joining formal value chains due to a lack of technical support or financing and the demands of international standards. The sustainability, traceability, and labor standards required by global markets compel companies to adopt best practices, representing a considerable challenge for many local businesses (Ghezzi et al., 2022).

At the Latin American level, Gallo et al. (2019) reviewed the literature in various databases, revealing that Brazil has a significant number of articles related to decent and healthy work in the agribusiness sector in Latin America. The most studied subsector is sugarcane, from the perspective of the health impact of using and being exposed to agrochemicals. The authors conclude that raising awareness of the problem has led to progress in improving the health and well-being of workers in the agro-industry.

In Colombia, the health and safety of palm oil producers is being questioned, as exposure to high temperatures and agrochemicals significantly affects the health of workers in this agro-industry. Based on data collected from 10 union leaders and 165 workers, a proposal is made to provide these workers with protection through health policies that offer them workplace safety and social security (Gallo et al., 2020).

Contrary to what was mentioned, a study by Ramírez (2020) offers an overview of decent work levels in relation to Mexican wages. Official data was processed based on the 2019 National Survey of Occupation and Employment. The results show that, at the individual

level, 44.3% of wage earners are at low levels, 8.4% at medium levels, and 47.3% at high levels. A slightly higher participation rate among women is noted, with 49% at high levels compared to 46.1% for men. The study also confirms that the highest levels of decent work are found in the northern region of the country.

Methodology

Type of study

The study is based on a positivist paradigm with a quantitative approach, a descriptive-correlational scope, and a non-experimental, cross-sectional field design (Hernández & Mendoza, 2018).

Population and sample

The study population consisted of the workers of an agro-industrial food production company, whose identity is withheld for privacy reasons. The company is located in the Batamote district of Guasave, Sinaloa, in the northern part of the state. Limited permission was obtained from management to administer the survey, making probabilistic sampling impossible. Therefore, a non-probabilistic, convenience, and purposive sampling method was used. The selection criterion was the operational staff available at the time of the survey (Hernández & Mendoza, 2018). The sample consisted of n=50 workers across different shifts. It should be noted that the company's total workforce varies considerably due to its seasonal nature; under normal working conditions, there are typically an average of 100 operational workers across the different shifts.

Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

The technique used in this study was a survey, where information was gathered through structured questions. The instrument used was a questionnaire with a Likert scale, with ratings from 1 to 5, where 1 was identified as "strongly disagree," 2 as "disagree," 3 as "neither agree nor disagree," 4 as "agree," and 5 as "strongly agree." The independent variable was identified as "decent work," and the dependent variable as "perception of a living wage." Four dimensions were obtained from the independent variable: physical well-being and safety at work, personal protection, social protection, and prospects for personal development. A single dimension, "living wage," was used for the dependent variable, "perception of a living wage."

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was validated through expert

judgment, which involved defining the theoretical construct, validating the operational definitions, and validating the instrument's metrics through a pilot test. (Tarazona, 2020). For reliability and internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used with the following interpretation: values less than 0.5 are unacceptable, between 0.5 and 0.6 indicate poor consistency, between 0.6 and 0.7 indicate questionable consistency, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are acceptable, between 0.8 and 0.9 indicate good consistency, and finally, values greater than 0.9 are considered excellent (Riva et al., 2024).

Analysis Techniques

To obtain the results, the statistical software SPSS version 27 was used. Initially, a descriptive statistical analysis was performed, obtaining measures of central tendency and dispersion for each of the variables and dimensions analyzed. Following the descriptive analysis, the correlation matrix was calculated, and finally, a linear regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

Results

Cronbach's Coefficient

The reliability and internal consistency analysis of the instrument, using Cronbach's coefficient, revealed adequate values in all evaluated dimensions. This statistical measure allows us to estimate the degree to which the items in each dimension are correlated with each other; that is, the coherence with which they assess the same construct.

Table 1
Cronbach's Coefficient

Dimension	Cronbach's Coefficient	Interpretation
Physical well-being and safety at work	0.7319	Acceptable
Social protection	0.7795	Acceptable
Social integration	0.8070	Good
Perspectives for personal development	0.7739	Good
Decent income	0.7899	Good
General	0.9370	Excellent

Source: Prepared by the authors using data from the applied instrument (2025).

Table 1 shows that the overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the coefficient for each dimension exceed the recommended minimum of 0.70, indicating that the scales used exhibit adequate internal consistency. Specifically, the "Social Integration" dimension reaches a value of 0.8070, which can be considered good reliability. The remaining dimensions fall within an acceptable range, suggesting that the items are coherently measuring the aspects they are intended to assess in each dimension.

These results provide empirical evidence that the instrument used is statistically reliable and, therefore, suitable for measuring the variables of interest. Furthermore, the overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient obtained for the set of twenty items comprising the instrument was 0.9370, indicating excellent internal consistency.

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistical analysis of the five dimensions evaluated, providing an overview of the responses provided by the participants. Measures of central tendency and dispersion provide essential information about the shape and spread of the collected data, which is fundamental for subsequent inferential analysis. The main statistics for each dimension are detailed below:

Table 2
Descriptive statistics by dimension

Statistics	Physical well-being and safety at work	Social protection	Social integration	Personal development perspectives	Decent income
Mean	3.64	3.59	3.56	3.645	3.715
Median	3.75	3.75	3.5	3.75	3.75
Mode	3.75	3.75	4	4	4
Variance	0.5132	0.6295	0.5193	0.587	0.5102
Standard deviation	0.7164	0.7934	0.7206	0.7661	0.7143
Kurtosis	-0.4114	-0.7375	-0.6709	-0.2249	-0.744
Skewness	-0.1548	-0.0473	0.0002	-0.2503	0.2114

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the instrument (2025).

Overall, the mean values range from 3.56 to 3.72, indicating a moderately positive perception of the evaluated aspects by the respondents. The close agreement between the means and medians in most dimensions suggests an approximately symmetrical distribution, which is reinforced by the skewness values close to zero.

The standard deviation, ranging from 0.71 to 0.79, indicates a moderate level of dispersion, demonstrating that most participants responded around the central

values. The negative kurtosis values in all dimensions show slightly platykurtic distributions, that is, flatter than the normal distribution, although within acceptable ranges.

Analysis of the average results obtained for each dimension of the instrument allows us to identify the overall value that participants assign to the different aspects evaluated. These dimensions were structured based on the theory of decent work, and their averages reflect the central tendency of individual perceptions regarding the measured factors. Table 3 presents the average values for each dimension.

Table 3
Average values by dimension

Dimension	Average result
Physical well-being and safety at work	3.640
Social protection	3.590
Social integration	3.560
Perspectives for personal development	3.645
Living income	3.715

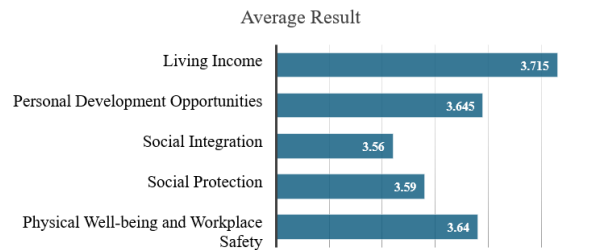
Source: Prepared by the author using data from the instrument dimensions (2025).

The results in Table 3 show that all dimensions have values above the midpoint of the scale (3.0), indicating a positive assessment by the respondents. In particular, the dimension corresponding to a living wage obtained the highest average value (3.715), indicating that, in general, employees perceive that living wage conditions exist.

The dimensions of personal development prospects (3.645) and physical well-being and safety at work (3.640) were also well-rated, suggesting that the organization provides training opportunities and promotes healthy and safe work environments. In contrast, the dimensions with slightly lower scores, such as social integration (3.560), while still within a positive range, could be addressed to strengthen internal processes of interaction and participatory decision-making.

Taken together, these averages allow us to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in the context of decent work, and provide an empirical basis for strategic decision-making focused on social well-being and a living wage.

Figure 1
Average scores by dimension



Source: Authors' own elaboration using data from the instrument (2025).

The Pearson correlation matrix shown in Table 4 allows us to examine the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the dimensions that make up both the independent variable (Decent Work) and the dependent variable (Living Income). The values obtained reflect significant and consistent associations between the different dimensions of the instrument. The main findings indicate that all correlations between the dimensions have positive values, meaning that higher scores in one dimension tend to increase scores in the others. The dimensions of the independent variable, decent work, show moderate to high correlations with each other, ranging from 0.6209 to 0.7734, which suggests a coherent construct structure. In particular, the highest correlation is observed between social protection and integration, with a value of 0.7734, indicating a strong relationship between these two aspects of the work environment. Regarding the relationship with the decent income variable, all dimensions show positive and significant correlations. The Social Protection dimension with decent income showed a correlation of 0.7506, while the Physical Well-being and Job Safety dimension showed a correlation of 0.7327. These values reflect that perceived benefits and the physical and emotional conditions of the environment are the factors that contribute to the perception of a decent income. The other dimensions also show strong associations with the perception of a decent income: the Social Integration dimension with decent income had a correlation of 0.6856, and the Personal Development Perspectives dimension showed a correlation of 0.6737.

Table 4
Pearson Correlation Matrix

Dimension	Physical well-being and safety at work	Social protection	Social integration	Perspectives for personal development	Decent income
Physical well-being and workplace safety	1	0.6888	0.6209	0.6943	0.7327
Social protection	0.6888	1	0.7734	0.7251	0.7506
Social integration	0.6209	0.7734	1	0.7394	0.6856
Personal development perspectives	0.6943	0.7251	0.7394	1	0.6737
Living income	0.7327	0.7506	0.6856	0.6737	1

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the applied instrument (2025).

The research instrument was structured to evaluate two main variables: an independent variable, related to decent work, and a dependent variable, associated with living income. Each variable is composed of dimensions that group specific items, designed to capture the different theoretical components of each construct. Table 5 presents the variables and their component dimensions with their average scores:

Table 5
System of Variables

Variable Name	Dimensions Included	Average Result
Independent Variable: Decent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical well-being and safety at work; Social protection Social integration Prospects for personal development 	3.6088
Dependent variable: Living income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living income 	3.7150

The results shown in Table 5 indicate that the dependent variable obtained the highest score of 3.7150, demonstrating a favorable perception among workers regarding a living wage. This suggests the existence of working conditions that promote a living wage, such as satisfaction with the work environment, recognition, and opportunities for professional development.

Meanwhile, the independent variable, which assesses decent work, reached an average value of 3.6088, also above the midpoint. This result suggests that, in general, employees perceive positively the actions implemented

by the organization in relation to physical well-being, workplace safety, and economic, social, and professional aspects.

The relationship between both variables through their dimensions allows us to identify the existence of internal consistency in the decent work variable, as well as the possibility that decent work directly impacts the perception of a living wage among staff, an aspect that will be evaluated in greater depth through correlational and regression analysis.

Table 6
Results of the linear regression analysis

Element	Result
Dependent variable	Decent work
Independent variable	Living income
Coefficient (slope, β)	0.8675
Intercept	0.5844
R-squared (R^2)	0.647
F-statistic	87.94
p-value (model)	< 0.001 (1.99e-12)
Standard error of the coefficient	0.093
Confidence interval (95%)	[0.682, 1.054]

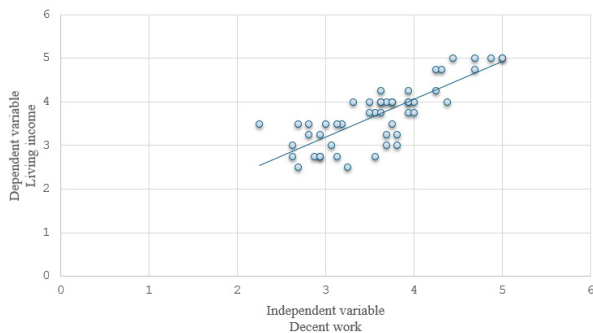
Source: Prepared by the author using data obtained from SPSS version 27, (2025).

The results obtained allow us to conclude that there is a positive, direct, and significant relationship between decent work and the perception of a living wage in the organization studied. The magnitude of the β coefficient (0.8675) reflects a strong effect, meaning that an improvement in decent work is consistently associated with higher levels of perceived living wages.

The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.647$) indicates that the model is able to explain almost two-thirds of the variability in the dependent variable, which represents an adequate fit within the social sciences. The p-value associated with the model confirms that this relationship is not due to chance and is supported by high statistical reliability.

Overall, the model provides robust empirical evidence that supports the hypothesis that decent work significantly impacts and is positively correlated with workers' perception of a living wage.

Figure 2
Scatter plot of the variables



Source: Author's own elaboration using data obtained from SPSS version 27 (2025).

Discussion

As a result of the analysis of the collected and processed data, the relevance of the study of decent work as a human right in the agro-industrial company located in Batamote, Guasave, Sinaloa, can be established. This study contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 and to improving the quality of life of the workers who were the subjects of the study.

The key findings are that the values obtained reflect significant and consistent associations between the different dimensions of the instrument and the study variables, where hypotheses were formulated.

The main findings indicate that all correlations between the dimensions show positive values, reflecting that perceived benefits and the physical and emotional conditions of the environment are the factors that contribute to the perception of a living wage. The other dimensions also show strong associations with the perception of a living wage. The social integration dimension had a correlation of 0.6856 with a living wage, and the personal development prospects dimension had a correlation of 0.6737. These results are consistent with the ILO's findings, which highlight that decent work, by guaranteeing conditions of safety, equity, and personal development, improves job satisfaction and employee well-being.

Similarly, the results coincide with those mentioned by Martin et al. (2021), who indicate that implementing decent work policies contributes to physical well-being and safety at work, social protection and integration, personal development prospects, and a living wage—all integral elements of decent work.

The personal development prospects dimension stands out among all the dimensions due to its higher rating. This is broken down into the training and development opportunities offered by the company and the way in which it promotes professional growth within the organization. As Romero-Rodríguez et al. (2024) and Grisales (2020) mention, these elements influence workers' perceptions of decent work, along with the feedback staff receive to improve their performance and the career and internal promotion plans defined for employees. These elements contribute to workers' favorable perceptions of a living wage.

The highest correlation was identified between social protection and a living wage ($r = 0.7506$) and between physical well-being and workplace safety and a living wage ($r = 0.7327$), confirming the findings of Polo et al. (2023), who argue that workplace safety and health not only improve quality of life but are also associated with greater job satisfaction. Similarly, Requena (2024) highlights that safe and healthy work environments contribute significantly to well-being and the perception of an adequate income. However, the social integration dimension ($r = 0.6856$) showed a slightly lower correlation, which could indicate, as suggested by Ramírez and Corredor (2022), that opportunities for social inclusion in the agribusiness sector still face challenges, especially in rural contexts where participation in decision-making is limited.

Contrary to the results of Ramírez (2020), who found that 44.3% of Mexican wages fall below the decent work level, the current study presents a more positive perception of the analyzed agribusiness company. This could be attributed to the company's own characteristics, which appear to implement labor practices that offer better conditions compared to the national average. It could also be attributed to the author's findings regarding the company's location in northern Mexico, which, due to its location, offers better decent work conditions because of the formal employment within the agribusiness sector of the state of Sinaloa.

Despite the positive results found in the study, contradictions with the literature were identified. For example, Gallo et al. (2019, 2020) highlight that in Latin American agribusiness, specifically in the sugarcane and palm oil subsectors, working conditions are precarious. In the present study, the physical well-being and workplace safety dimension obtained a high score (3.640), suggesting that the company implements more effective safety measures than those studied in other Latin American contexts.

Conclusions

Regarding the research objective, which was to examine how the guarantee of decent work, represented by the dimensions of physical well-being and safety at work, social protection and integration, and prospects for personal development, contributes to workers' perception of a living wage, the achievement of this objective confirmed that decent work is inherent to human rights and forms part of the foundation for social justice, equity, and sustainable development in any society. The results from the company under study demonstrate a positive and significant impact on workers' perception of a living wage. The quantitative and descriptive-correlational approach showed that the dimensions comprising the concept of decent work exhibit positive and statistically significant correlations with the perception of a living wage, thus confirming the appropriateness of the methodology.

The linear regression analysis demonstrated a coefficient of determination of 0.647, which reinforces the robustness of the proposed model and confirms

the hypothesis: that decent work directly impacts the perception of a living wage. The main contribution of this research lies in demonstrating, through a study conducted in the agro-industrial sector, that implementing adequate working conditions promotes worker well-being, improves organizational sustainability, and, above all, contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 8. This is particularly relevant for the agro-industrial sector, which is traditionally affected by precarious employment, informality, and structural gaps.

The study lays the groundwork for future research regarding the need for comparative analyses among different companies in the sector, as well as the sample size, which could be larger to reveal some situations not currently being observed in the sample, such as social integration and gender equality, dimensions that received less favorable scores. Finally, it would be pertinent to identify whether there is an interaction between public policies, unionism, and business practices that guarantee decent work in rural areas.

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