

An empirical analysis of psychological capital factors influencing job performance among public servants in Klang Valley

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of psychological capital on job performance among public servants in Malaysia. Psychological capital, covering self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, has gained significant attention within positive organizational behavior research. Although these traits are known to help employees succeed, there is little research on them within the Malaysian government sector. The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory postulates that psychological resources enable employees to manage stress effectively, maintain motivation, and enhance performance. A quantitative research design was developed, using an online survey distributed to 300 targeted respondents from ministries and public universities in the Klang Valley. Nonetheless, 185 respondents' questionnaires were valid for analysis. Research instruments used in the analysis comprised 49 items and demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging between 0.782 and 0.824. Data analysis was conducted in SPSS Version 29 using measurements such as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between all four dimensions of psychological capital: resilience, optimism, hope, and job performance. The strongest drivers of success were performance, resilience, optimism, and hope. The model accounted for 61.5% of the variance in job performance

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contributed by all four dimensions of psychological capital variables. Hence, the study contributes to the advancement of positive psychology literature by validating COR theory within a Malaysian public sector context. The findings highlighted the importance of implementing human resource development strategies and targeted training initiatives to strengthen psychological capital to enhance employee well-being, productivity, and overall organizational effectiveness.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's organizational environment that is highly competitive, job performance is a key component that plays a crucial role in ensuring an organization's success. This variable is significant in the organizational and industrial-organizational psychology studies. According to Campbell et al. (2019), job performance refers to behaviours relevant to organizational goals, measurable through their impact on achieving those goals. Since employee performance is an essential element within organizations, factors influencing performance must be understood in the context of management. Tims et al. (2023) further define job performance as actions and outcomes that contribute to organizational goals, noting that psychological factors also influence employee well-being. Therefore, organizations must assess performance holistically, covering both outcomes and the various behavioural aspects involved in task execution.

Theoretical and empirical studies have found multiple factors influencing job performance. In 2022, Professor Fred Luthans, a management expert in the United States (US), considered a promising approach to enhancing employee performance. Past studies indicated psychological capital components, including self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, were positively impacting job performance (Luthans et al., 2020; Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007). However, this concept remains relatively underexplored across diverse contexts and needs to be further analysed. Employee performance is a critical agenda in modern organizations (Tüzün et al., 2018), as it directly impacts overall organizational performance. Ensuring consistent optimal performance among staff is not an easy task, and this issue poses challenges for organizations. Moreover, performance depends on work outcome, employee behaviour, and attitude. Performance evaluation systems within organizations have increasingly begun to consider behavioural elements. Previous research shows that positive behaviours influence job performance (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Maher et al. (2017) and Nasurdin et al. (2018) further highlight those behavioural factors, including sociological, scientific, and psychological aspects tied to personal resource or psychological capital, affect individual performance.

In addition, Kappagoda et al. (2014), stated that employee's psychological resources could influence the quality of service they provide to customers, which ultimately contributed to better performance. Conversely, Saithong-in & Ussahawanitchakit (2016) found that chronic stress, emotional instability, and slow career progression lead to negative effects on organizational performance. Meanwhile, Sheldon & King (2001) suggested that a positive psychological approach enhances employees' psychological strengths to enable staff to handle workplace challenges more effectively. Components such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience have been identified as core psychological strengths crucial for productivity and improved performance (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2015). Studies on the influence of psychological capital on job performance have been conducted not only in universities, but also across multiple sectors and industries, including banking, police departments, hospitality, and tourism sectors. Santos and Tüzün

et al. (2018) concluded that most of these studies were conducted internationally in the US, Egypt, Brazil, Turkey, South Korea, India, and Pakistan. However, studies specifically focusing on psychological capital and job performance within the public sector in Malaysia remain limited (Mohd Nasurdin et al., 2018). Therefore, this study is significant as the public service sector plays an important role in improving the quality of life and overall well-being of society. The findings are expected to contribute to practical insights in improving human resource management and development, particularly in Malaysia's public sector.

1.1 Research Problem

Low levels of psychological well-being among employees in Malaysia require serious attention, as they can affect organizational productivity and performance and may hinder economic growth and national development. Dr. Chua Sook Ning, founder of Relate Mental Health Malaysia (Relate), stated that mental health-related issues among Malaysian employees cost the nation RM14.4 billion annually, which was equivalent to 1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018. She further emphasized that most employers lack the knowledge and strategies to handle employees who were facing such challenges (Kaur & Hakimie, 2020). Moreover, employee termination contributes to long-term national losses by depleting skilled human capital, thereby impeding the government's aspirations towards national excellence by 2050. Datuk Adnan Mat (2022), the President of CUEPACS, estimated that around 400,000 civil servants suffer from serious work-related stress, with some cases ending tragically. Hence, the government needs to implement interventions and recovery programmes for civil servants who engage in negative behaviours due to stress. The issue of psychological well-being among civil servants has received increasing attention in Malaysia, as they face many challenges in today's demanding work environment. There are three key challenges that civil servants face:

Psychological Stress and Burnout

The problem of stress and burnout among Malaysian civil servants has received significant attention in recent studies. According to Mansor et al. (2023), civil servants in Terengganu experienced a high level of work stress, which negatively affected their job performance. Stress has negative impacts on how many things people can do, how creative they are, and their mental health. Ching (2024) noted, that burnout is a serious problem for public sector workers, especially those who are working in the healthcare sector. Ongoing job stress leaves people feeling worn out, negative, and less able to do their jobs well. The main reasons for these problems include too much work, not enough resources, and workplaces that do not offer support. In fact, healthcare workers face a higher risk of burnout due to constant job demands and insufficient rest.

Rising Cost of Living

The rising cost of living that is affecting civil servants is becoming a significant problem in Malaysia. They feel pressure from higher prices for basic needs, housing, education, and healthcare (Public Service Department [JPA], 2022). It becomes harder for civil servants to feel good mentally and emotionally because of the gap between how much things cost and how much civil servants earn. According to JPA's Annual Report (2022), Malaysia's cost of living rose by 5.2% in 2022 compared to 2021, which had increased the average monthly spending of civil servants from RM3,200 to RM3,370, mostly spent on food, transportation, and housing. Because of this, 68% said they felt more stressed, only 45% could keep a balance between work and personal life (down from 52% in 2021), and 30% said they had mental health

problems such as anxiety and depression (up from 22% in 2021). Overall, people completed 3% less work, 54% said they felt less motivated, and attendance dropped to 96% (from 98% in 2021). The main reasons were higher food prices, a 4.8% increase in fuel prices, and a 5.5% increase in transportation costs (JPA, 2022).

Work-Life Balance

According to Rashid (2021), difficulties in achieving work-life balance are increasingly common among Malaysian civil servants, who struggle to manage time between work responsibilities and family obligations. They are unable to maintain a work-life balance, which leads to negative issues such as stress, family conflicts, and a reduction in quality of life. The study findings showed that 70% of civil servants faced difficulties in achieving balance, with 65% working over 50 hours per week. In addition, 60% reported high mental stress, while 55% experienced symptoms such as anxiety, fatigue, and sleep problems. Moreover, 50% faced family conflicts, including reduced family time (40%) and disputes with spouses or children (35%). Finally, 58% experienced an overall decline in life quality, particularly in physical health (45%) and life satisfaction (50%), due to excessive workloads. This highlights the urgency to address work-life balance issues. Strengthening psychological resources such as self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism as one approach, alongside fostering a positive organizational culture through values and supportive behaviours, will enable the workers to improve their job performance.

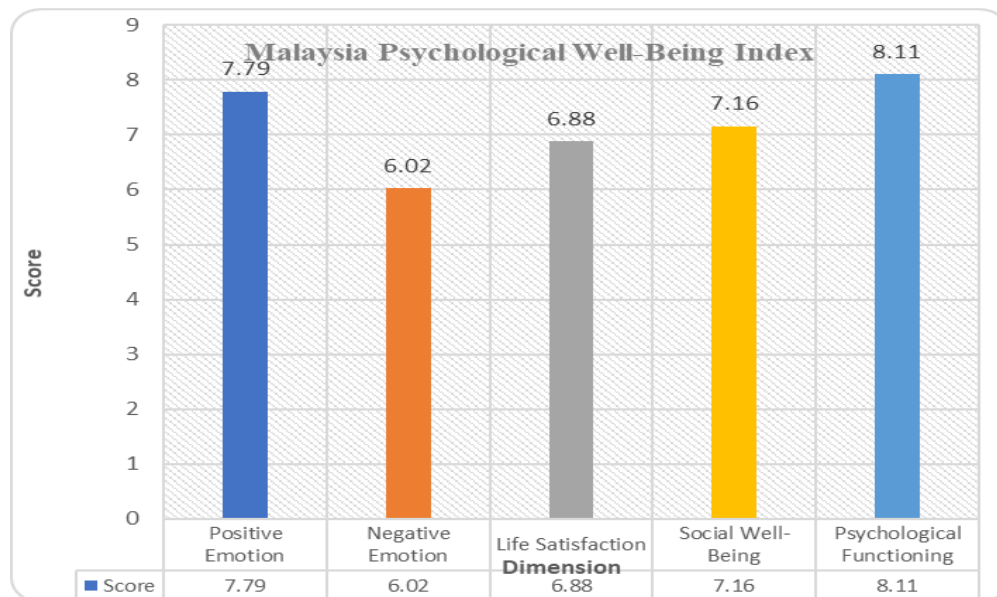


Fig. 1. Malaysia Psychological Well Being Index (2026)

Source: Malaysia Psychological Well-Being Index (IKPM), Public Service Department (2026)

Figure 1 shows that civil servants' mental health is at a moderate level, with a score of 7.2 out of 8 (Public Service Department, 2026). These results showed that mental and emotional health are crucial. Datuk Borhan Dolah, the Director-General of Public Service, emphasized the need for awareness, action, and leadership to protect physical, spiritual, and emotional health. An organization's success depends on

building a positive workplace and maintaining the employees' good health. Several steps have been suggested for the government to improve positive mental health among civil servants, including initiating mental health programmes for employees who have not yet encountered any mental health issues. Another method is to implement more effective community counselling services for everyone.

1.2 Research Question and Objectives

This study seeks to address the following questions:

- (i) Is there a significant relationship between self-efficacy and job performance?
- (ii) Is there a significant relationship between hope and job performance?
- (iii) Is there a significant relationship between optimism and job performance?
- (iv) Is there a significant relationship between resilience and job performance?
- (v) To what extent do self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience influence job performance

Accordingly, the specific objectives are:

- (i) To identify the relationship between self-efficacy and job performance in the public sector.
- (ii) To identify the relationship between hope and job performance in the public sector.
- (iii) To identify the relationship between optimism and job performance in the public sector.
- (iv) To identify the relationship between resilience and job performance in the public sector.
- (v) To evaluate the extent to which self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience influence job performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Job Performance

Over the past two decades, research on the job performance concept has been conducted by many researchers. Research in management science indicates that job performance is a key factor contributing to organizational productivity and success. These findings have encouraged more researchers to investigate various factors that may impact performance, such as ability, motivation, personality, and management or leadership style (Kanat-Maymon & Reizer, 2017). However, research on performance remains limited as it has often been regarded as a stable variable. According to Borman & Motowidlo (1993), job performance has been widely studied in industrial and organizational psychology, organizational behaviour, and human resource management. Consequently, Murphy (1989) defined job performance as an individual's career focus, emphasizing behaviour rather than outcomes. This is because when managers focus only on outcomes, employees may look for the simplest way to achieve them. Later, in the 90s, Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, & Sager (1993) defined job performance not only as identifiable behaviour based on tasks and responsibilities, but also as an evaluation of those behaviours. Meanwhile, Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit (1997) defined job performance as behaviour or activities oriented toward achieving corporate goals. Furthermore, job performance has been associated with factors such as how individuals manage available resources to accomplish their tasks (Roodt & La Grange, 2001).

Hogan & Holland (2003) stated that task performance refers to performing the main parts of a job using the necessary skills and knowledge to get the job done. This means that people are judged by how well they can perform the tasks listed in their job descriptions. Meanwhile, contextual performance is the actions that benefit the workplace and its people, such as taking on extra responsibilities, helping their co-workers, and getting along well with other workers. This is often seen as friendliness and cooperative attitudes that contribute to the social harmony of the workplace environment. According to Mohd Nasurdin et al. (2018), job performance is linked to factors such as job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviour, and work engagement, all of which positively influence performance. Nevertheless, there are a few studies that focused on individual psychological strengths or psychological capital and their relationship with job performance, especially in the public sector (Saithong-in & Ussahawanitchakit, 2016). Specifically, the role of psychological capital elements covering elements such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience in shaping performance levels has not been fully explored, particularly in the local context.

Job performance has become a priority in today's organizations due to its direct link with productivity. According to Chen (2015), organizations are constantly seeking strategies to improve efficiency and maximize profitability. A high-performing workforce supports organizational sustainability and future growth. Nevertheless, performance is a complex phenomenon and should be understood as the accumulated value of the organization, rather than solely as an evaluation of behaviours contributing to organizational goals (Rich et al., 2010). Research on self-efficacy, hope, resilience, optimism, and job performance could be viewed not only in terms of task or role outcomes, but also in terms of the social aspects of work that could contribute to overall organizational performance (Acemoglu & Autor, 2011).

Relationship between Psychological Capital Dimensions and Job Performance

Research on psychological capital offers a new perspective on positive organizational behaviour. Luthans (2002) and Luthans et al. (2004) stated that self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience are four personal resources or capacities that can be developed and foster positive organizational behaviour. While Luthans & Youssef (2007) found that these four dimensions form the construct of psychological capital and define an individual's positive psychological state. According to Abdullah et al. (2020), workplace values positively affect employees' mindset, thus helping them to generate new ideas, and improve their well-being at work.

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

According to Hobfoll (1989), the concept of psychological capital is grounded in the conservation of resources (COR) theory. This theory explains the relationship between personal characteristics and work outcomes, arguing that individuals must acquire resources to differentiate their actions from others. These resources include personal traits and characteristics, such as inner strengths, as well as situational factors. These resources are entities that are highly valued or act as means of obtaining highly valued goals. Next, Hobfoll (2002). Wright & Hobfoll (2004) stated that self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience are personal resources that are considered important for organizations (in Kim et al., 2017). Employees not only perform tasks to achieve organizational goals, but they must also stay motivated to maintain high performance. In addition, employees who possess high self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience are supposed to take responsibility, maintain positive workplace relationships, and master their work environment (Aalessandri et al., 2018). According to Hobfoll (2020), psychological capital dimensions

serve as resources that help employees manage work stress and sustain performance. This supports the COR theory, which postulates that accumulated positive experiences and resources create reinforcing positive cycles and impacts. Other studies by Mauno, Kinnunen & Ruokolainen (2007) also validated that work engagement enhanced an individual's well-being. Meanwhile, several other studies showed significant relationships between the dimensions of psychological capital and job performance (Polatci & Akdogan, 2014; Avey & Nimnicht, 2009; Luthans et al., 2007; Stajkovic, 2006). High levels of psychological capital were associated with greater motivation and performance. It can be concluded that the combined dimensions forming psychological capital positively affect job performance (Fredrickson, 2001).

2.2 Self-Efficacy

According to Bandura (1986), the concept of self-efficacy originated from the social cognitive theory. Bandura defined self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their ability to perform specific tasks to achieve desired outcomes. Self-efficacy concerns not only actual ability, but also confidence in what one perceives they can achieve. It influences how people think and act, and individuals with high self-efficacy view challenging tasks as things to be mastered rather than avoided. They are more likely to achieve higher performance because they persist and remain resilient in the face of obstacles. Self-efficacy is crucial in the workplace context and is defined as confidence in one's ability to prepare, stay motivated, and find strategies to succeed (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). While Luthans (2002) further defined self-efficacy as employees' belief in their ability to complete a given task or responsibility. Higher self-efficacy would lead to putting in greater effort to achieve the set goals. Previous studies demonstrated that self-efficacy significantly influenced performance (Santos et al., 2018).

2.3 Hope

The concept of hope, as introduced by Snyder (1991), or known as the hope theory, refers to individuals' belief in their capacity to generate pathways and sustain motivation (agency) to achieve their goals despite facing various obstacles. Individuals who possess high hopes are more motivated and persistent in achieving their goals. Thus, hope enhances problem-solving, creativity in the workplace, and resilience under stress, thereby supporting work performance. Moreover, Youssef & Luthans (2007) reported that hope influences both performance and job satisfaction. Luthans & Norman (2007) also confirmed that hope plays an important role in improving individual outcomes. A meta-analysis done by Miao, Humphrey, and Qian (2017) indicated that emotional intelligence, which incorporated hope, influenced job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational behaviour. Emotional Intelligence could also reduce stress and make people more dedicated to their workplace. Similarly, according to the American Psychological Association (2023), hope is an important factor in establishing a healthy work environment. In fact, hope could help employees to handle problems and perform better at their jobs, leading to better results and creating a higher level of satisfaction.

2.4 Optimism

Optimism refers to the act of looking at situations positively and expecting good things to happen, especially during tough times. According to Luthans et al. (2004), optimism is a key part of psychological capital, whereby people who are optimistic are more likely to look for opportunities to succeed and stay calm when things become difficult at their workplace. As a result, these people would strive to do well in their jobs. Optimism is also associated with better job performance and job satisfaction (Youssef & Luthans,

2007). Optimism helps people do better at work (Hough et al., 2020). It also affects how well people do and how happy they are with their careers (Amarnani et al., 2020). In fact, optimism helps people to stay motivated and bounce back when working towards company goals. Nevertheless, excessive optimism can lead to overconfidence, riskier choices, and poor work performance (Sweeny & Shepperd, 2017).

2.5 Resilience

Resilience refers to an individual's ability to recover from stress and failure, and to continue striving for high performance. It reflects the psychological strength to face challenges without long-term negative effects. Highly resilient individuals overcome difficulties and adapt using flexibility and effective strategies to reach their goals. Youssef & Luthans (2007) found that resilience is a crucial element of psychological capital that is linked to performance and satisfaction. Luthans & Norman (2007) similarly confirmed that resilience contributes to improving the performance and psychological well-being of an individual. According to Varshney & Varshney (2023), resilience acts as a mediator between self-concept and performance, reducing counterproductive behaviours and enhancing contextual performance. Resilience improves satisfaction, performance, and reduces stress (McGee, 2020). These findings suggest that organizations should focus on developing workers resilience through training and psychological support to strengthen job performance.

2.6 Demographic Factors and Job Performance

Judge & Bono (2001) stated that higher positions in organizations are associated with better performance because of greater authority, resources, and support. Individuals in higher positions also have greater leadership skills and experience, which will contribute to high performance. In this study, demographic factors such as education level, position, and tenure were also added to the four dimensions of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience). We had also run regression testing to examine their effects on job performance.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

In the preceding section, our discussion focused on four elements of psychological capital: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Based on past research findings, all of these variables significantly influenced job performance. Figure 2 presents the conceptual framework for this study, which is grounded in the theory of Psychological Capital (PsyCap) (Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Luthans et al., 2007). The model postulates four key components: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience in influencing job performance. The arrows in the framework indicate hypothesized positive significant relationships between these four PsyCap components and job performance. Collectively, the framework suggests that enhancing employees' psychological capital can strengthen their performance in organizational settings, particularly in the public sector.

3. METHODOLOGY

This section discusses research design, measurement instruments, sample data analysis, and research findings. The analysis includes a demographic profile of respondents, a reliability test for the measurement instruments, descriptive results of study variables, correlation test results, and regression analysis results, which are further explained in the research findings section.

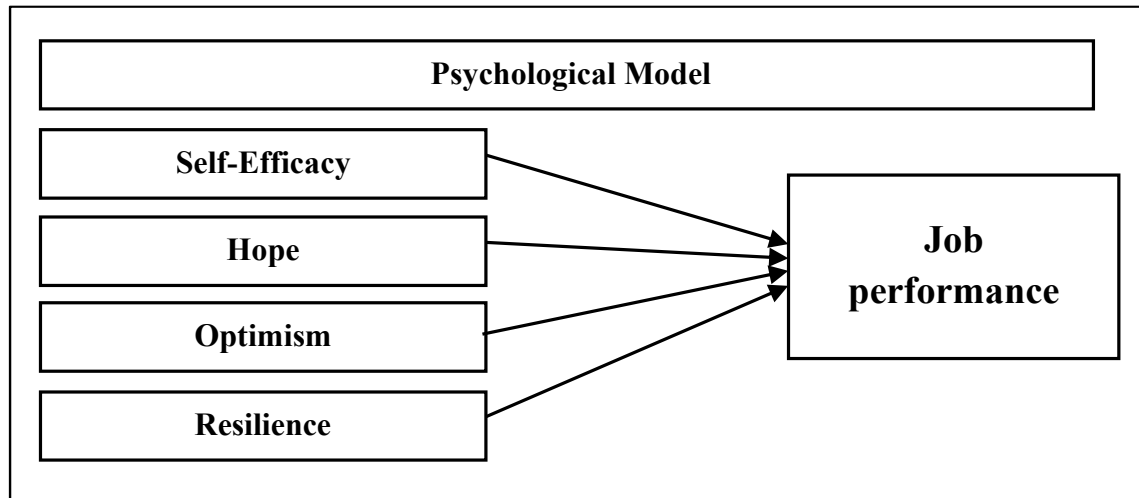


Fig. 2. Conceptual Framework

3.1 Research Design, Measurement Instruments, Sample, and Data Analysis

This study aims to investigate the effect of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience) on the job performance of public servants. The research employed a quantitative research method, employing an online survey distributed via email and the WhatsApp application. The questionnaire consisted of three main sections, with a total of 49 measurement items. The first section contains seven items regarding the demographic profile of respondents, gender, age, ethnicity, education level, organizational position, salary scale, and year of service. The second section consists of 24 items representing the dimensions of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Luthans et al., 2007). The third section comprised 18 items related to job performance (Kappagoda et al., 2014). All measurement items indicated the levels of agreement or disagreement using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The unit of analysis in this study consists of public sector employees. The targeted study sample was 300 public sector employees from various positions across several government ministries and public universities located within the Klang Valley area. The distribution of online questionnaires and collection of responses took place for over two weeks. Moreover, the time required to complete one questionnaire was approximately 7 to 10 minutes. Out of the 300 targeted participants, 185 (61.67%) returned completed questionnaires. For sample selection, since the public sector involves a large population, this study employed random sampling for data collection. The data were then analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 29. The analytical tests included descriptive analysis, reliability testing, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Based on Table 1, the findings showed that the majority of respondents were female, with 55.7%, aged between 41 and 50 years, with 28.6%, and of Malay ethnicity, with 88.1%. Professionally, most respondents

held a bachelor's degree, accounting for 41.1%, and worked at the Management and Professional level with 56.2%. Then, in terms of salary, most respondents earned RM8,000 and more, with 21.1%, followed by those earning between RM2,100 and RM3,000, accounting for 18.9%. Next, in terms of tenure, over a quarter of the respondents had served for more than 21 years, accounting for 25.9%, followed by those with 6 to 10 years and 11 to 15 years of service, each representing 20%.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents According to Demographic Information (N = 185)

Variable	Demographic Information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	82	44.3
	Female	103	55.7
Age	21 - 30 years	33	17.8
	31 - 40 years	48	25.9
	41 - 50 years	53	28.6
	51 years and above	51	27.6
	Malay	163	88.1
Race	Chinese	14	7.6
	Indian	7	3.8
	Others	1	0.5
	Doctorate Degree	13	7.0
Education Level	Masters Degree	47	25.4
	Bachelors Degree	76	41.1
	Diploma/ STPM	36	19.5
	SPM	13	7.0
Position	Management and Professional: Grade 41-56	104	56.2
	Support Group I: Grade 29-40	39	21.2
	Support Group II: Grade 19-28	33	17.8
	Support Group III: Grade 11-18	9	4.9
	RM 1100 – RM 2000	10	5.4
Salary Rate	RM 2100 – RM 3000	35	18.9
	RM 3100 – RM 4000	27	14.6
	RM 4100 – RM 5000	30	16.2
	RM 5100 – RM 6000	13	7.0
	RM 6100 – RM 7000	16	8.6
	RM 7100 – RM 8000	15	8.1
	RM 8000 and above	39	21.1
	1 - 5 years	34	18.4
Length of Service	6 - 10 years	37	20.0
	11 - 15 years	37	20.0
	16 - 20 years	29	15.7
	21 years and above	48	25.9

4.2 Reliability Test of Measurement Instruments

Cronbach's Alpha reliability test was one of the methods used to assess the reliability or internal consistency of a study's scale or instrument. According to the Rasch measurement model, acceptable Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.71 to 0.99 (Bond & Fox, 2015). Table 2 shows that the reliability test results for all four elements of the psychological capital variables were good and acceptable, with α values ranging from 0.782 (self-efficacy) to 0.815 (optimism). Similarly, the construct of job performance ($\alpha = 0.824$) also demonstrated good reliability of the research instrument.

Table 2. Results of Cronbach's Alpha for Research Instruments

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Total Item (N)
Psychology Model		
Self-Efficacy	.782	6
Hope	.756	6
Optimism	.815	6
Resilience	.747	6
Job Performance	.824	18

4.3 Descriptive Results of Study Variables

Table 3 presents the total scores for psychological capital and job performance. The total scores for variables are categorized into two levels, namely high and low. All dimensions of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience are considered *low* if the total score falls within the range of 14–22, and *high* if within 23–30. Meanwhile, job performance is categorized as *low* if the total score falls within the range of 55–65, and *high* if it falls within 66–90. The study results indicate that all dimensions of psychological capital and job performance are at a high level, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Results of Self-Efficacy, Hope, Optimism, Resilience, and Job Performance

Variables	Total Score	Standard Deviation	Level
Self Efficacy	27.68	3.333	High
Hope	27.57	3.313	High
Optimism	23.69	2.866	High
Resilience	25.92	3.749	High
Job performance	68.17	7.667	High

4.4 Correlation Test Results

A correlation test was performed to examine the strength of the relationship between the components of psychological capital (independent variable) and job performance (dependent variable). As shown in Table 4, all dimensions of psychological capital are positively and significantly correlated with job performance: self-efficacy ($r = 0.513$, $p = 0.001$), hope ($r = 0.623$, $p = 0.001$), optimism ($r = 0.585$, $p = 0.001$), and resilience ($r = 0.693$, $p = 0.001$). All constructs were found to be free from multicollinearity issues, as the correlation coefficients between the independent variables and the dependent variable were less than 0.90 (Hair, 2010). These statistical findings indicated that the research instruments achieved the required level of reliability and validity. Based on these results, Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4 are accepted and supported. The findings confirmed that higher levels of employees' psychological capital are associated with improved job performance.

Table 4. Correlation Results between Variables

Model Psychology Component	Self-Efficacy	Hope	Optimism	Resilience
Job performance	0.513**	0.623**	0.585**	0.693**

4.5 Regression Analysis Results

Table 5. Regression Analysis Results between Psychological Capital and Job Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std error	Beta		
Constant	.594	.228	-	2.606	.010
Education Level	.031	.034	.074	.906	.366
Length of Service	-.010	.014	-.036	-0.743	.458
Position	-0.28	.038	-.061	-0.743	.458
Self-Efficacy	.015	.064	.019	0.230	.818
Hope	.150	.074	.194	2.020	.045
Optimism	.322	.046	.362	7.051	.001
Resilience	.267	.052	.391	5.163	.001
F value			40.856		
Sig.			.001		

Finally, the results of the regression analysis (Table 5) indicated that hope, resilience, and optimism were the only components of psychological capital that significantly contributed to job performance. The study findings indicated that the value of R^2 is 0.615, which means that this model explained 61.5% of the variation in job performance based on the four psychological capital factors. The remaining 38.5% was due to other factors not included in this study model. The F-statistic for this model was 40.856 with a p-value < 0.001 , indicating that the overall model was statistically significant. The results of the regression analysis confirm that resilience, optimism, and hope are three significant psychological capital factors that have positive effects on job performance in the public sector. This is evidenced by the standardized coefficients for resilience ($\beta = 0.391$, t-value = 5.163), optimism ($\beta = 0.362$, t-value = 7.051), and hope ($\beta = 0.194$, t-value = 2.020), which are higher than the other factors in the model, with significance values of $p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.05$.

This study aims to examine the relationship and effect of the four components of psychological capital on job performance. Theoretically, the findings of this study supported the theory of psychological capital in the context of the Malaysian work environment. Based on the psychological capital theory, each individual has psychological resources that can be developed to improve workplace performance. This theory is grounded in Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources Theory (2002); this theory explains that individuals possess internal and intrinsic resources that provide psychological strength when facing workplace difficulties. According to Luthans & Youssef (2004), these psychological resources include hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism. Psychological capital is closely linked to occupational health objectives, specifically to achieve a high level of employees' psychological well-being (Avey et al., 2009; Avey et al., 2010).

The findings of this study indicate that there is a positive relationship between the dimensions of psychological capital and job performance. Nonetheless, regression analysis shows that only three elements, such as hope, resilience, and optimism, have significant effects on job performance. This is consistent with previous research findings indicating that the components of psychological capital positively and significantly influence workplace outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviour, and also job performance (Lan, 2019; Okolie & Emoghene, 2019; Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017; Luthans et al., 2007; Kappagoda, 2014; Durrah et al.,

2016). This emphasizes that the positive psychology approach developed by Seligman is grounded in positive values that stimulate employee performance. Therefore, it could be suggested that human resource development strategies that enhance psychological capital (such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience) could reduce the negative effects of job stress and increase work commitment (Avey, Luthans & Jensen, 2009; Avey, Wernsing & Luthans, 2008).

Moreover, these findings align with studies by Saithong-in, & Ussahawanitchakit (2016), who demonstrated that optimism is crucial in helping individuals face challenging situations and achieve work goals. Optimism is viewed as the courage to confront challenges and maintain enthusiasm in various workplace conditions. These results are also supported by Hough, Sumlin, & Green (2020), who found that workplace optimism directly improves individual performance. Similarly, the study by Varshney (2023) found that resilience serves as a mediator between self-concept and job performance, while McGee (2020) identified resilience as an essential element in improving job satisfaction and performance.

From a practical perspective, these results offer significant implications for organizational human resource management. Management departments, especially in the government sectors, need to pay attention to employee training and development programmes that are aimed at building psychological capital and shaping positive attitudes and behaviours. This could lead to improved job performance at the workplace. In addition, human resource management should be more proactive in creating a conducive work environment by fostering positive values, providing support, and ensuring employee welfare through rewards, recognition, a work-life balance, and attractive career opportunities. Indeed, a workplace environment that is supportive would encourage interaction and communication, enhance motivation, promote team spirit, and strengthen relationships between employees and management. Ultimately, the study found that when employees perceive that their organizations are concerned about their welfare and well-being, this would in turn, bolster their motivation, hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism, thereby driving overall organizational performance.

5. CONCLUSION

The research findings demonstrate that psychological capital is essential for fostering positive organizational behaviour, particularly within the public sector. When equipped with high psychological capital, employees consistently strive to improve their job performance, even when facing various challenges in their workplace. From an academic perspective, this study contributes to enriching positive psychology approaches to human resource development, especially within the Malaysian public sector. It also expands the existing literature by incorporating Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory to better understand the factors influencing job performance. It underscores the critical role of organisational encouragement and support in helping employees acquire and cultivate valuable personal resources (psychological capital) needed to maintain high performance levels. Despite these contributions, this study has its limitations, as it solely focuses on public-sector employees. Consequently, future researchers are encouraged to extend this research to other sectors to enhance generalisability. Additionally, intervention studies through psychological capital training may also be conducted to promote positive behaviour and minimise negative behaviour, thereby further optimising job performance in organizations.

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7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The author declares that this research was conducted without any personal interests, commercial or financial conflicts, and confirms that there are no conflicts of interest with the funding body.

8. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Nurul Masyitah Syahirah Saharum: conceptualization; formulation of research questions and theoretical framework; data collection; data analysis; draft writing; **Maymunah Ismail:** research methodology; project administration. **Saeidah Jantan:** manuscript review and editing.

9. DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT/SUPPLEMENTARY DATA

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The datasets generated and analyzed during the current research are not publicly available due to confidentiality and privacy considerations but may be shared for academic purposes in accordance with institutional guidelines. No supplementary data beyond those reported in the manuscript were generated.

10. ETHICS STATEMENT

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical standards for research involving human participants. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review body prior to data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study, and confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the research process. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences.

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