

Understanding the Dynamics between Psychological Capital (PsyCap) and Job Satisfaction (JS): A 2024 Research Synthesis

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Abstract

Psychological capital (PsyCap) and its relationship to job satisfaction (JS) have emerged as key areas of interest for practitioners and scholars in human resource management and organizational behavior. This study seeks to provide a complete and systematic analysis of the most recent empirical evidence on PsyCap and its effects on job satisfaction. Using an analytical scoping review technique, the study is confined to studies published in 2024. A total of 16 peer-reviewed empirical research was thoroughly evaluated to uncover relevant trends and insights. Seven different criteria were used to evaluate the analyzed studies: 1) methodology, 2) population/sample size, 3) statistical data analysis techniques, 4) country of origin, 5) major findings, 6) organizational sector or industry, and 7) usage of moderators and mediators. This review's findings show a constant beneficial association between PsyCap and JS, which is often mediated by psychological characteristics like employee engagement, resilience and organizational commitment. This synthesis is meant to be a useful resource for academics, professionals, and researchers, interested and involved in Positive Organizational Behavior and the importance of psychological capital in boosting workplace outcomes.

Keywords: Psychological Capital, Job Satisfaction, Mediators, Analytical Scoping

Introduction

Recently, organizations have recognized the significance of psychological resources in influencing employee performance and attitudes. A concept based on Positive Organizational Behavior, psychological capital (PsyCap) has drawn special attention among these resources because of its observable and developable attributes. PsyCap, which is made up of optimism, resilience, efficacy, and hope, is thought to be a behavioral capacity that can be improved, which makes it a helpful tool for improving employee outcomes. In organizational research,

job satisfaction, which is characterized as a positive emotional state brought on by an assessment of one's job and work experiences is one of the most often researched outcomes (Locke, 1976). Work satisfaction affects important organizational outcomes including commitment, productivity, and retention in addition to being a gauge of personal well-being. An increasing number of empirical research on the relationship between PsyCap and job satisfaction in various cultural and professional contexts were published in 2024. Legowati and Mustika (2024), for instance, studied Indonesian coal miners and discovered that PsyCap significantly raised job satisfaction, with hope being the most powerful factor. Similar findings were made by Nasrin (2024), who looked at workers in Bangladesh and found that, even after controlling for position ambiguity, PsyCap was a very reliable indicator of job satisfaction. Applying these findings to the healthcare industry, Shaban et al. (2024) discovered that PsyCap accounted for around one-third of the difference in job satisfaction among Egyptian community nurses, with self-efficacy being the most significant characteristic.

The results of these empirical studies consistently demonstrate that PsyCap has a direct and significant impact on job satisfaction across industries, while the relative importance of different PsyCap components varies according to occupational preferences. Given the absence of moderating effects like psychological well-being in some situations (Legowati & Mustika, 2024) and the fact that PsyCap predictive function has persisted in spite of role-related difficulties (Nasrin, 2024), it appears that PsyCap is a universal psychological tool for boosting job satisfaction. This paper's goal is to provide a critical analysis and summary of the empirical research on PsyCap and job satisfaction from 2024, emphasizing convergent findings, contextual variations, and theoretical and practical implications.

Research Purpose and Questions

Even though the amount of research data is increasing, no empirical investigation has yet to compile the most recent data from 2024 into an accurate analytical evaluation. A focused scoping evaluation of research released in a single year can identify novel perspectives, methodological trends, and context-specific findings without becoming influenced by previous data, which is important given the speed at which organizational contexts are changing. Furthermore, a summary of the most recent study provides new information for practitioners and scholars who want to develop interventions that enhance workers' psychological resources and, consequently, their dedication to company objectives.

The current work intends to analyses and map the findings of 16 peer-reviewed research studies published in 2024 that investigate the association between PsyCap and JS. The objectives include:

1. Provide an in-depth explanation of Job Satisfaction (JS) and Psychological Capital (PsyCap);
2. Present a current summary of empirical findings derived from research articles published just in 2024.
3. In 2024 research situations, evaluate variables and mediators influencing this relationship.
4. Examine the methods and measuring instruments used in the selected study.
5. Describe how PsyCap development activities could boost work satisfaction.

This study focuses on the most recent research and integrates data from various organizational and cultural contexts to offer useful recommendations relevant to the current workplace. In an era of unprecedented shifts, this synthesis is meant to be a valuable tool for scholars advancing the theories of PsyCap and JS as well as practitioners aiming to cultivate committed, determined, and passionate workforces.

Literature Review

Psychological Capital

An individual's positive psychological state of growth is symbolized by psychological capital (PsyCap), a key concept in the field of good organizational behavior (POB). In contrast to conventional forms of capital, such as social or human capital, PsyCap focuses on "what you can become" and "who you are" (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). According to Luthans et al. (2015), it is generally defined by four quantifiable and developable dimensions: optimism (positive attributions about present and future success), resilience (the capacity to bounce back and even grow stronger from adversity or setbacks), hope (perseverance toward objectives and, when necessary, redirecting paths to success), and self-efficacy (confidence in one's ability to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at difficult tasks).

Collectively, these elements constitute a higher-order construct that has been shown to positively influence desired workplace outcomes like organizational commitment, performance, and job satisfaction (Newman et al., 2014; Avey, Reichard, Luthans, & Mhatre, 2011). Additionally, PsyCap is considered to be both state-like—accessible to intervention—and different from more fixed traits like personality, which makes it a valuable area of study for organizational development strategies (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017).

Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction is one of the most thoroughly researched constructs in organizational behavior and industrial psychology, and is commonly defined as an employee's positive or negative evaluation of their job or work experiences. One of the most generally referenced definitions is that of Locke (1976), who defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences." This idea highlights the cognitive assessment of work environments as well as the ensuing emotional reactions. Psychological capital and Job satisfaction interact together to create a higher-order construct that has been shown to positively affect desired workplace outcomes like performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Newman et al., 2014; Avey, Reichard, Luthans, & Mhatre, 2011). Additionally, this idea highlights the cognitive assessment of work environments as well as the ensuing emotional reactions. Scholars consider job satisfaction to be a complex concept that encompasses elements including pay, peers, opportunities for advancement, supervision, and the nature of the work itself (Spector, 1997). True job satisfaction, according to theoretical frameworks like Herzberg's two-factor theory, is largely influenced by hygiene factors, which are extrinsic factors like compensation and working conditions, and intrinsic motivators, which are defined as intrinsic factors like achievement and recognition (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Empirical research consistently shows that higher job satisfaction is associated with greater organizational loyalty, lower turnover, and better performance, making it an important outcome variable for both employees and businesses (Judge, Weiss, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Hulin, 2017; Aziri, 2011).

Psychological Capital and Job Satisfaction

Recent empirical studies repeatedly demonstrate that psychological capital, or PsyCap, significantly affects how satisfied employees are with their jobs. PsyCap has established itself as a vital psychological tool by proving to be a good predictor of satisfaction in a range of organizational and cultural contexts across multiple 2024 studies. In their 2024 study,

Legowati and Mustika examined Indonesian coal miners and found that PsyCap significantly improved job satisfaction, with hope being the most significant contributing factor.

PsyCap merely is a powerful predictor of satisfaction, even when overall well-being fluctuates, as evidenced by the surprising lack of attenuation of this link by psychological well-being. According to Nasrin (2024), there is a strong positive correlation between PsyCap and job satisfaction among Bangladeshi workers. PsyCap remained a powerful predictor, indicating its ability to shield people from organizational constraints and ambiguity, even though her research showed that job uncertainty impacted happiness. According to Shaban et al. (2024), PsyCap accounted for around one-third of the distinction in job satisfaction among Egyptian community nurses in the healthcare sector. The most potent of its elements was self-efficacy, which emphasized the value of having faith in one's own skills in demanding professions like nursing. This study lends credence to the idea that various PsyCap characteristics can be more or less important in different work environments.

These empirical conclusions are supported by a larger study conducted in 2024. According to Donaldson (2024), those with higher PsyCap are more likely to experience job satisfaction and fulfillment, a relationship that is entrenched in the broader framework of positive organizational behavior. Similarly, Han et al. (2024) found that flight attendants who had more psychological capital been more satisfied with their jobs, which in turn led to being more committed to the company. These statistics demonstrate how widely PsyCap can be used to enhance favorable employee outcomes.

PsyCap is a global predictor of job happiness, according to the 2024 body of research, which also highlights the contextual importance of its different features. In situations involving a lot of resources or pressure, hope and self-efficacy in particular seem to be particularly significant. Crucially, multiple studies have shown no moderating effects, indicating that PsyCap directly influences satisfaction rather than depending on other aspects of wellbeing. These findings have obvious applications: in order to optimize staff well-being, firms seeking to increase job satisfaction should fund PsyCap development initiatives like training in resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy in addition to addressing structural problems like role clarity.

Research Methodology

A structured literature search was carried out across three prestigious academic databases Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), and Google Scholar—to guarantee an exhaustive and methodologically sound empirical review. The selection of these databases was based on their broad indexing of peer-reviewed publications from various fields, with a focus on management, psychology, and organizational behavior research. One of the largest databases of abstracts and citations of peer-reviewed literature is provided by Elsevier's Scopus. Google Scholar offers more access to scholarly outputs, such as open-access papers and early online releases, while Web of Science is renowned for its carefully selected, high-quality journal collection.

The following inclusion criteria were applied while choosing articles, Articles must be empirical in nature, presenting primary data and analysis; they must be published in peer-reviewed academic journals; they must be written in English; and their primary focus must be

on Job satisfaction (JS) and Psychological Capital (PsyCap), either as primary variables or through mediating/moderating constructs. Conference proceedings, book chapters, editorials, dissertations, conceptual papers, and non-English publications were among the exclusion criteria. 94 distinct articles from all three databases were found in the first search: There are 42 articles in Scopus, 21 in Web of Science, and 31 in Google Scholar.

After evaluating titles and abstracts, 32 publications were considered potentially relevant. A full-text eligibility assessment was then applied to these. We eliminated conceptual studies with no empirical support ($n = 8$) and duplicates ($n = 10$). A final set of 16 empirical papers that satisfied all inclusion/exclusion criteria and were chosen for evaluation were determined by applying all of the criteria and tracking backward citations for comprehensiveness. Every one of the Sixteen studies was methodically coded according to:

- The nation of origin Sectoral focus (public sector, healthcare, education, etc.)
- Sample size; Mediating and moderating variables (e.g., resilience, leadership, and work satisfaction)
- Research design and methods (e.g., regression, SEM, PLS-SEM); Important discoveries relating PsyCap and JS.

Study Selection Process

The study selection method adhered to PRISMA criteria. A total of 40 records were found through database searches. After deleting ten duplicate studies, 30 records remained. Following title and abstract screening, 8 studies were excluded because they did not match the inclusion criteria, leaving 22 full-text publications for eligibility assessment.

During the full-text review, four non-empirical (review/theoretical) papers and two non-English studies were removed. The final review contained 16 empirical papers that met all of the inclusion criteria. The modified PRISMA flow diagram (Figure 1) summarizes the selection procedure.

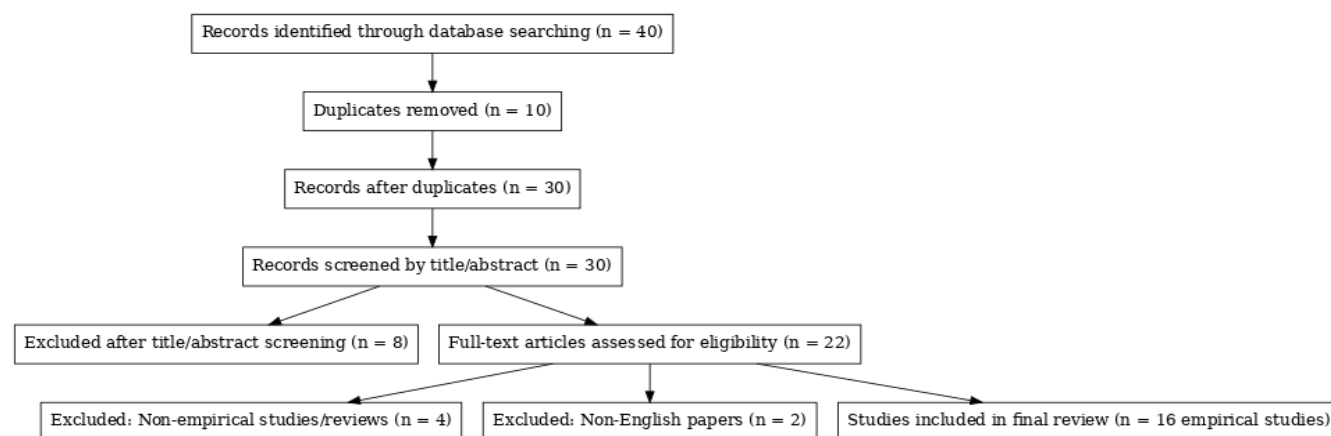


Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram

Table 1

Study Selection Summary

Stage	Number of Studies
Records identified through database searching	40
Duplicates removed	10
Records after duplicates	30
Excluded after title/abstract screening	8
Full-text articles assessed for eligibility	22
Excluded: Non-empirical studies/reviews	4
Excluded: Non-English papers	2
Final included empirical studies	16

Results and Discussions

To answer the other research question, the fourteen research publications were examined. All things considered, our results show that there are deficiencies in several dimensions, including 1) population, 2) data analysis methods, 3) moderators and mediators, 4) research fields, 5) research findings, and 6) the study's the sector. We have summarized our observations in the table below.

Table 2

Research Articles Analysis

Author(s)	Year	Country	Sector	Dependent Variable	Sample Size	Mediator	Moderator
Zhang et al	2024	Pakistan	Healthcare (Nursing)	Mental Health	578	PsyCap, Job Satisfaction (sequential)	None
Sen	2024	India	Life insurance & Telecom	Performance, Stress, Job Satisfaction	300	None	None
Hazan et al	2024	Israel	Education (Teachers)	Burnout	123	PsyCap	None
Hazan	2024	Israel	Education & Family Studies	Job Satisfaction	141	None	None
Yetgin	2024	Turkey	Mixed Sectors	Job Satisfaction	451	PsyCap	None
Yildirim et al	2024	Turkey	Healthcare	Job Satisfaction, Work Performance	302	PsyCap	None
Zaheer & Rauf	2024	Pakistan	Visual-Impairment Employees	Job Satisfaction	160	PsyCap	None
Arif	2024	India	Education	Job Fulfillment	136	None	None
Teng et al	2024	China	Healthcare (Nursing)	Job Satisfaction	494	None	None
Tran et al	2024	Vietnam	Labour Market	Job Satisfaction, Engagement	361	None	None

Legowati & Mustika	2024	Indonesia	Coal Mining	Job Satisfaction	207	None	Psychological Well-being
Yao et al	2024	China	E-commerce	Job Satisfaction	483	None	Perceived Org. Support, Emotional Intelligence
Zaeni et al	2024	Indonesia	Banking	Job Satisfaction, Performance	290	Job Satisfaction	None
Eroğlu et al	2024	Turkey	Education	Job Satisfaction	412	PsyCap	None
Mirsolaim	2024	Iran	Education (Teachers)	Academic Performance	200	None	None
Díaz et al	2024	Spain	Public Sector	Satisfaction & Engagement	326	Job Satisfaction	Goal-Oriented Climate

Articles Distribution by Country

With only minor contributions from Europe, research is primarily conducted in Asia, especially in Turkey, Pakistan, and India. PsyCap's broad applicability is further demonstrated by the sectoral diversity that is observed, encompassing public administration, finance, mining, healthcare, education, and telecommunications. Often studied outcomes including engagement, performance, burnout, and job satisfaction, as well as the existence of moderators and mediators, demonstrate the intricate ways in which PsyCap affects workplace dynamics.

Overall, results show that PsyCap is relevant across cultures and sectors, but they also highlight the need for more research in overlooked industries and areas. Turkey accounted for the greatest percentage (18.7%) of the total number of articles, followed by Pakistan, India, China, Israel, and Indonesia, each of which contributed 12.5%. With respective contributions of 6.3%, Vietnam, Iran, and Spain made the smallest amounts. Overall, the results demonstrate that Asia has a significant concentration of PsyCap research, while Europe has less presence.

All things considered, the graph indicates that PsyCap research is largely found in Asia, particularly in Turkey, Pakistan, and India, while Europe is underrepresented. This uneven regional distribution implies that there are many chances to expand our knowledge of PsyCap globally by conducting additional research in underrepresented regions, particularly in Western and African contexts.

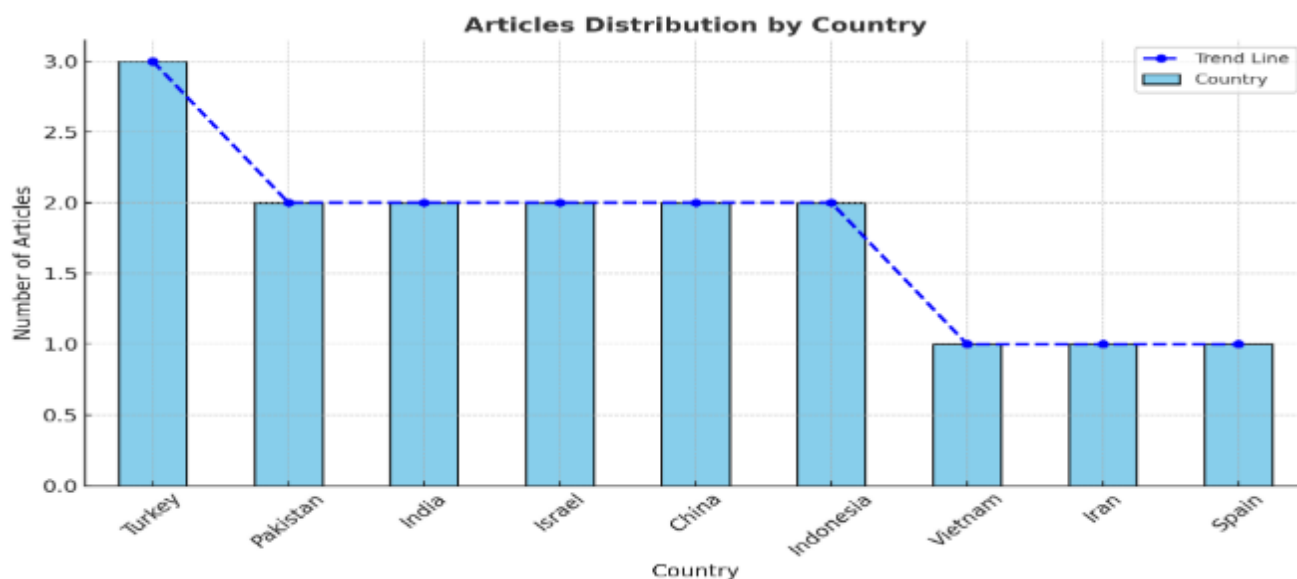


Figure 2: Articles Distribution by Country

Population Analysis

Sample sizes from 16 empirical research on Psychological Capital (PsyCap) published in 2024 are distributed comparably in the bar chart. The height of each bar represents the number of participants in that particular study.

There is noticeable diversity among the studies. Zhang et al. (2024, Pakistan) reported the biggest sample size, with 578 individuals from the nursing field. Large-scale studies representing healthcare, education, and organizational contexts were also carried out by Yetgin (2024, Turkey) with 451 respondents, Teng et al. (2024, China) with 494 nurses, and Yao et al. (2024, China) with 483 e-commerce participants. On the other hand, more context-specific questions are reflected in smaller-scale studies as Arif (2024, India) with 136 faculty members and Hazan-Liran & Karni-Vizer (2024, Israel) with 123 teachers.

Two key insights emerge from this distribution. First, healthcare and education sectors dominate larger sample investigations, reinforcing their significance in PsyCap-related research on organizational well-being and employee performance. Second, cross-country differences reveal contrasting methodological approaches, with Pakistan, China, and Turkey emphasizing large-scale surveys, while Israel and India rely on smaller, targeted samples.

Overall, the chart underscores the methodological diversity in PsyCap research, demonstrating how larger datasets enhance generalizability, whereas smaller samples yield deeper, context-specific insights together enriching the global understanding of PsyCap and its associated outcomes such as job satisfaction, burnout, and organizational commitment.

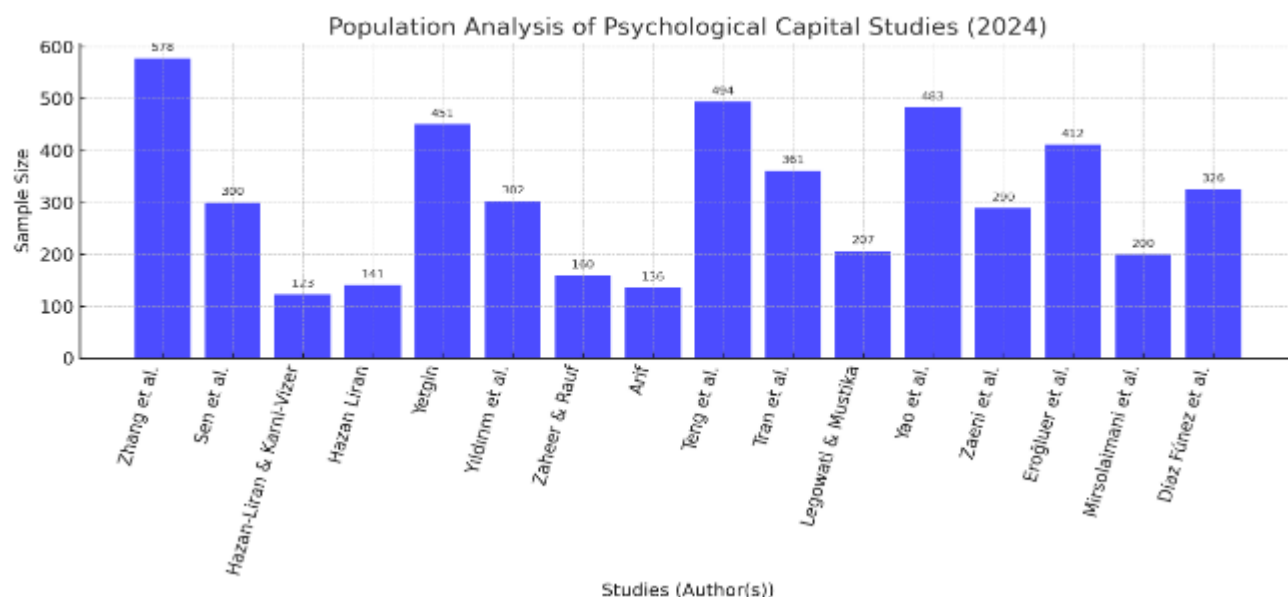


Figure 3: Population Analysis

The Sector or Area of the Study

Healthcare and education are clearly the focus of the sectoral allocation of 2024 studies on psychological capital (PsyCap) and work satisfaction. With the greatest sample sizes, healthcare—especially nursing and medical contexts—dominates, e.g., Zhang et al., 2024; Teng et al., 2024; Yıldırım et al., 2024). The industry's increased susceptibility to stress and burnout is reflected in this focus, and research continuously shows that PsyCap improves performance, job happiness, and mental wellness. Additionally, education becomes a crucial area of research (e.g., Hazan-Liran, 2024; Arif, 2024), where PsyCap has been demonstrated to improve commitment and satisfaction while reducing stress in rigorous educational environments.

PsyCap research has progressively extended beyond these fundamental areas into newer industries such as banking, insurance, e-commerce, labor markets, and coal mining (e.g., Sen et al., 2024; Yao et al., 2024). Despite their modest scope, these studies broaden the scope of PsyCap's application by connecting it to outcomes like engagement, performance, and organizational support. According to the findings, PsyCap research continues to focus on healthcare and education because of their psychological and societal demands, but the increasing attention being paid to the corporate and industrial sectors indicates that PsyCap is becoming more widely recognized as a universal factor that influences job satisfaction and organizational well-being.



Figure 4: The Sector or Area of the Study

Methodology Analysis

The methodological analysis of 16 PsyCap research from 2024 shows a lack of qualitative designs and a consistent emphasis on quantitative techniques. This dominance is a reflection of the field's propensity for statistical generalizability, measurement accuracy, and empirical rigor. Large-scale surveys, regression analysis, and structural equation modeling (SEM) were among the methods commonly used, especially in studies pertaining to healthcare and education where sample sizes frequently surpassed 400 participants. These methods made it possible for researchers to examine intricate connections between PsyCap, performance, job satisfaction, and associated mediators and moderators.

However, a significant vacuum in the research is highlighted by the lack of qualitative studies. Quantitative approaches offer generalizability and depth, but they could ignore PsyCap's tactile and contextual aspects. It is still unclear how people understand PsyCap, deal with stress, and create meaning in their work. The need for qualitative or mixed-methods designs in future research is indicated by this methodological imbalance. These designs could enhance existing knowledge by capturing complex, lived experiences using PsyCap in a range of professional contexts.

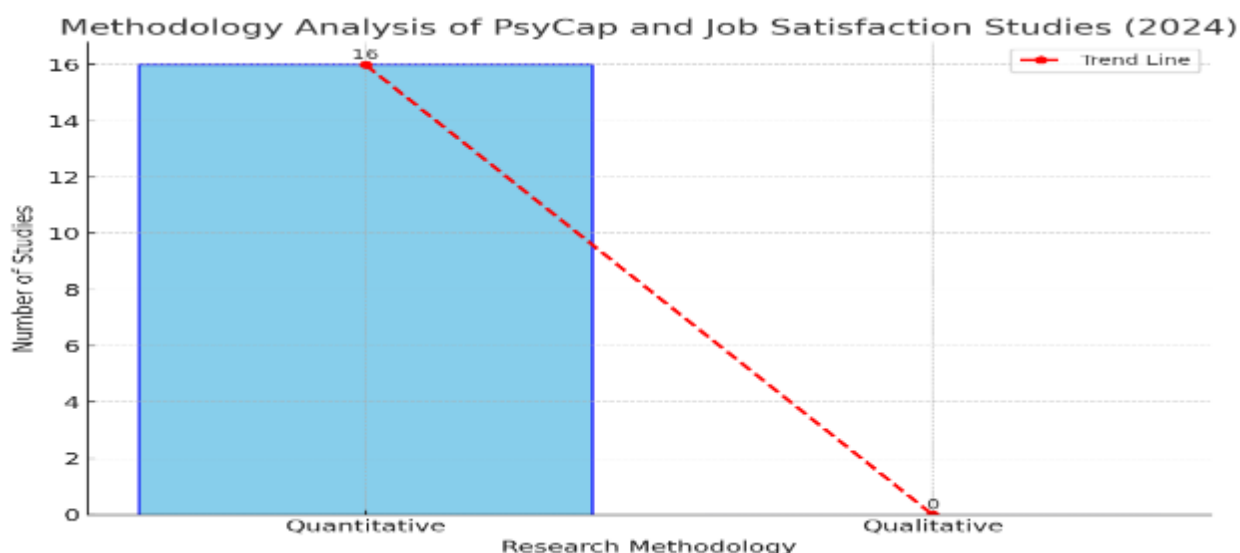


Figure 5: Methodology Analysis

Data Analysis Method

The review of statistical methodologies reveals that Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is the most widely applied technique, dominating the analytical approaches across the examined PsyCap studies. Its prevalence reflects the method's strength in testing complex frameworks that involve direct, indirect, and moderated effects between constructs such as job satisfaction, burnout, and organizational commitment. The frequent application of SEM across healthcare, education, and corporate sectors highlights its suitability for capturing the multidimensional nature of PsyCap and its workplace outcomes.

In contrast, regression analysis, correlation analysis, and descriptive statistics were used less frequently, serving primarily to validate hypotheses, test bivariate associations, and summarize demographic data. While these supplementary techniques enhanced interpretability, they lacked the explanatory depth of SEM. The overall trend demonstrates the field's preference for advanced statistical modeling to ensure rigor and generalizability, but also points to a methodological gap. Future studies could benefit from incorporating longitudinal designs, multilevel modeling, or mixed-method approaches to capture PsyCap's dynamics across time and organizational hierarchies.

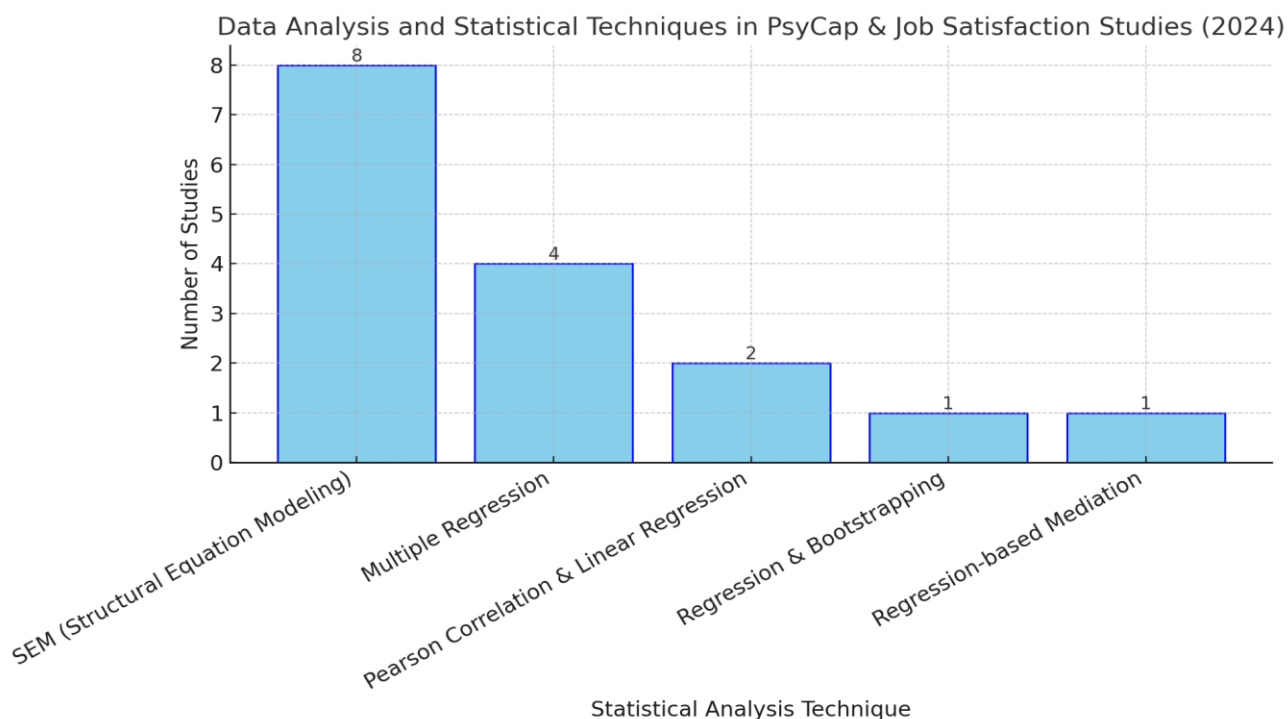


Figure 6: Data Analysis Method

Mediators and Moderators Analysis

The analysis of mediators indicates that PsyCap itself is the most frequently examined mechanism, appearing in 25% of studies as a link between organizational factors and job satisfaction. Other mediators included job satisfaction (12.5%) and psychological well-being (6%), though the majority of studies (56%) did not incorporate any mediating variables. This trend reflects a research preference for testing direct effects of PsyCap on outcomes such as performance, engagement, and burnout, with fewer studies exploring the underlying pathways.

Moderator usage was even more limited, with 81% of studies excluding moderating variables altogether. Where applied, Goal-Oriented Climate, Perceived Organizational Support (POS), and Emotional Intelligence (EI) each accounted for only 6% of cases. These findings suggest that while mediators have been more actively investigated, moderators remain underexplored. Future research could benefit from examining contextual factors such as leadership style, organizational culture, or national context to better understand the conditions under which PsyCap exerts its influence on job satisfaction and related outcomes.

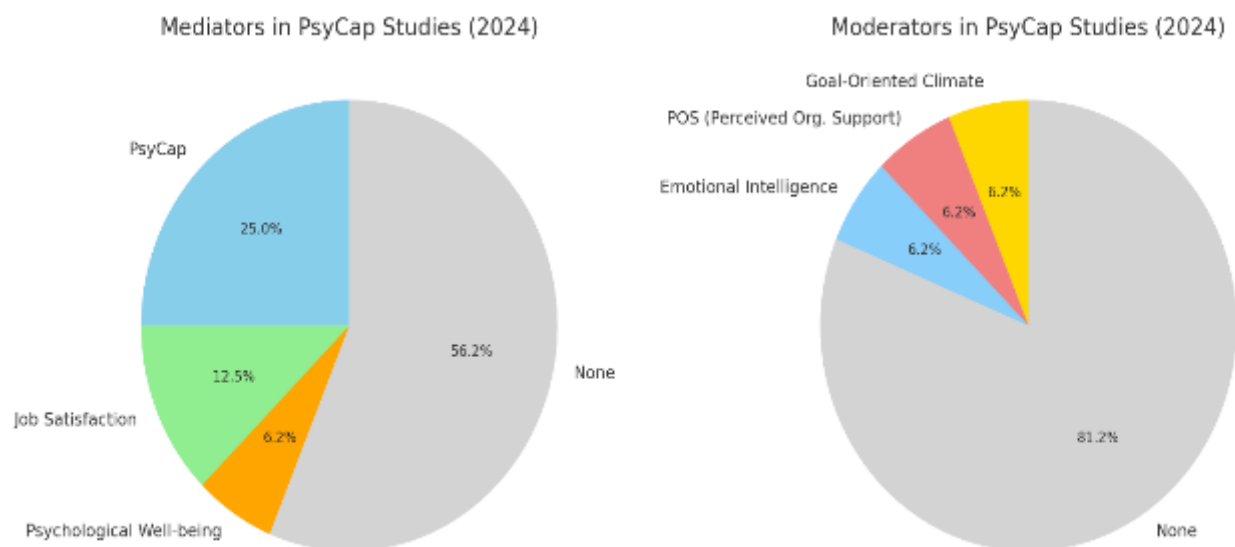


Figure 7: Mediators and Moderators Analysis

Conclusion

This analysis of sixteen empirical research from 2024 confirms the robust and reliable relationship between job satisfaction (JS) and psychological capital (PsyCap) in a variety of settings. A crucial psychological tool that supports worker happiness, performance, and well-being is PsyCap, which includes hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy. Its importance is particularly evident in highly demanding industries like healthcare and education, where it reduces stress, burnout, and fatigue in addition to enhancing job satisfaction, hence highlighting its theoretical and practical value in Positive Organizational Behavior.

Methodologically analyzed, every study that was assessed used quantitative designs and often relied on big sample sizes and sophisticated statistical tools like structural equation modeling (SEM). A significant gap is highlighted by the lack of qualitative and mixed-method techniques, even though this improves rigor and generalizability. Including such techniques may provide more profound understandings of how PsyCap is utilized, fostered, and experienced in various organizational and societal contexts.

Geographically, PsyCap research is still mostly focused in Asia, with China, India, Pakistan, and Turkey making the most contributions. In terms of sectors, the most common are healthcare and education. The necessity for more extensive research across geographical areas and sectors, including manufacturing, technology, and creative economies, is highlighted by this unequal distribution. Furthermore, compared to moderators, there is a greater dependence on mediators, specifically PsyCap and work satisfaction, which implies that organizational and contextual factors are understudied.

PsyCap's pivotal role in improving job satisfaction and associated outcomes is generally reaffirmed by the findings, which also highlight important areas for more research. Future studies should incorporate moderators, broaden their regional and sectoral focus, and vary their methodology in order to fully capture the complexity of PsyCap's influence. For practitioners, making an investment in PsyCap development is a strategic tool to create

resilient, engaged, and high-performing workforces in addition to providing a route to increased job satisfaction.

Research Contribution

This scoping review contributes theoretically by integrating recent 2024 empirical findings to strengthen the conceptual link between psychological capital (PsyCap) and job satisfaction, highlighting PsyCap's role as both a mediator and moderator in organizational outcomes. Contextually, it extends the discussion to diverse cultural and industrial settings, demonstrating how PsyCap enhances employee resilience, performance, and satisfaction in rapidly changing workplaces. By situating PsyCap within contemporary organizational realities, the study enriches existing knowledge and provides a foundation for scholars and practitioners to design context-sensitive strategies that promote sustainable employee well-being and productivity.

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