

Psychological Capital and Work Life Balance on Employees: A Meta-Analysis Study

(Studi Meta Analisa Psychological capital dan Work life balance pada Karyawan)

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Diterima 14 Desember 2023, Disetujui 23 Desember 2025, Dipublikasi 29 Desember 2025

Abstract: Previous studies have shown many correlation results between psychological capital and work-life balance in employees, but no studies have looked for true r values by considering the size effect between the two variables. The purpose of this study is to see the true r value between psychological capital and work-life balance in employees. The total sample in this study is 2934 employees divided into 16 studies in 6 selected journals. Based on the results of the meta-analysis carried out, it is known that there is a moderate association between psychological capital and work-life balance in employees. This indicates that strengthening psychological capital in employees can be a strategy in improving work-life balance and thus will help both individuals, organizations, and academics in designing interventions and policies that support better welfare and performance in employees.

Keyword: employees; meta-analysis; psychological capital; work life balance

Abstrak: Penelitian sebelumnya banyak menunjukkan hasil korelasi antara psychological capital dan work-life balance pada karyawan, namun belum ada penelitian yang mencari besar pengaruh dengan mempertimbangkan effect size antara kedua variabel. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk melihat nilai true r antara psychological capital dan work-life balance pada karyawan. Total sampel dalam penelitian ini adalah 2.934 karyawan yang terbagi dalam 16 studi yang terdapat di dalam 6 jurnal terpilih. Berdasarkan hasil meta-analisis yang dilakukan, diketahui bahwa terdapat hubungan positif yang sangat signifikan antara psychological capital dan work-life balance pada karyawan. Hal ini menandakan bahwa penguatan modal psikologis pada karyawan dapat menjadi strategi dalam meningkatkan work-life balance yang bermanfaat, baik bagi individu, organisasi, maupun akademisi, dalam merancang intervensi dan kebijakan yang mendukung kesejahteraan serta kinerja karyawan yang lebih baik.

Kata kunci: karyawan; meta analisis; psychological capital; work life balance

INTRODUCTION

In the life of an ordinary adult, an individual has 7 to 8 roles that must be lived in his life (Nagy, Froidevaux, & Hirschi, 2019), such as spouse, parents, friends, family, and employees. Balancing these roles can be a challenge in itself because each role has different duties and responsibilities. Imbalance of roles in one's life can cause individuals to experience stress and other psychological discomfort. This can have a negative impact on an individual's well-being, both physically and mentally. Individuals who find it difficult to balance roles may also find it difficult to engage in social and family activities, which can exacerbate their condition (Bian & Sukor, 2024).

Therefore, work life balance is an important thing to discuss. Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2003) define work life balance as the extent to which individuals are involved and satisfied with the role they are carrying out. Furthermore, Sirgy and Lee (2018) stated that work-life balance is characterized by a high degree of involvement in both occupational and personal domains, accompanied by minimal interference or conflict between the social roles associated with each other. Fisher-McAuley, Stanton, and Jolton (2003) divided work life balance into 3 dimensions, namely work interference with personal life, personal life interference with work, and work/personal life enhancement.

Based on the results of previous research, it is known that one of the internal factors that influence work life balance is psychological

capital (Karatepe & Karadas, 2014; Christy et al., 2021; Sen & Hooja, 2015). Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007) define psychological capital as a positive psychological condition that is owned by individuals and is characterized by (1) individual beliefs about their ability to complete a task or problem, (2) individual motivation to identify ways to achieve goals, (3) positive expectations of the future, and (4) individual ability to rise when faced with failure or difficult situations.

Hobfoll et al. (2018) said that in life people strive to obtain, retain, and protect resources, which are defined as objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual or serve as a means to achieve valued goals. This indicate that people are trying to use their psychological capital to obtain, retain, and protect their work-life balance (Samroodh et al., 2023).

Furthermore, Sarwar et al. (2021) explained that psychological capital has the potential to serve as a linking mechanism between external factors outside the individual and individuals' evaluations of the state of role balance. Sarahsanty and Lie (2025) indicate that individuals with strong goal-setting abilities, perseverance, positive self-expectations, and adaptability (Christy et al., 2021) are less likely to experience personal-professional role interference and are more likely to derive enhancement from both roles (Dayal, 2024).

Previous systematic reviews have examined psychological capital in relation to general well-being (Tiwari & Kaushik, 2023) and work-related outcomes (Blasco-Giner,

Meneghel, & Déprez, 2023; Aggarwal, 2024); however, these reviews did not specifically focus on work–life balance nor did they employ meta-analytic techniques. Therefore, a quantitative synthesis of the relationship between psychological capital and work–life balance remains limited, underscoring the contribution of the present study.

The purpose of this meta-analysis research is to determine the true r value between psychological capital and work life balance in employees after considering effect size, closeness of relationship, data heterogeneity, symmetry/asymmetry distribution of values, and publication bias.

METHOD

The method used in this meta-analysis study is as follows.

Research design. This meta-analysis study was conducted to find the true r and the effect size of several studies regarding the correlation of psychological capital and work life balance.

Data sources and study participants. In this study, data sources consisted of journal articles on the relationship between psychological capital and work life balance. Participants of the study were the samples from primary studies that consisted of employees from several countries, such as Turkey, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and India.

Literature search strategy. Literature search was conducted using Google Scholar as the primary search engine, as it indexes a wide range of psychology journals across multiple publishers, using the keywords “psychological

capital” and “work life balance”. The literature search was carried out between June 18–30, 2023, and limited to literature that was published in 2018–2023.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria. Literature was included if they met the following criteria: (1) quantitative research, (2) involving the variable psychological capital as the independent variable and work life balance as the dependent variable, and (3) using English. Literature was excluded if they consisted of letters to editors, thesis and dissertation results, proceedings, and other gray literature, as well as literature that does not have r , t , F , β values.

Data extraction procedure. All the literature obtained was manually screened based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Statistic Analysis. Literature that complies with the inclusion criteria is then analyzed to obtain correlation value data and also the number of samples from each literature. While the values of r , t , F , β obtained are converted to correlation values. After that is done, the next step is to find the standard error value and effect size based on the correlation value and the number of samples obtained, for later use in the analysis using JASP.

RESULT

From Figure 1, we could see that during the identification stage, a total of 12 records from the register. After removing 1 duplicate record, 11 records remained for screening. In the screening stage, the titles and abstracts of the 11 records were screened for relevance. As a result, 1 record was excluded due to not

meeting the inclusion criteria. The remaining 10 reports were sought for retrieval, and all reports were successfully retrieved.

At the eligibility stage, 10 full-text reports were assessed for eligibility. Of these, 4 reports were excluded because the study populations did not match the predefined inclusion criteria.

Finally, in the included stage, 6 studies met all eligibility criteria and were included in the review and meta-analysis.

The total number of samples used in this study consisted of 2934 employees in several countries such as Turkey, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and India, where the research characteristics used in this meta-analysis research can be seen in Table 1.

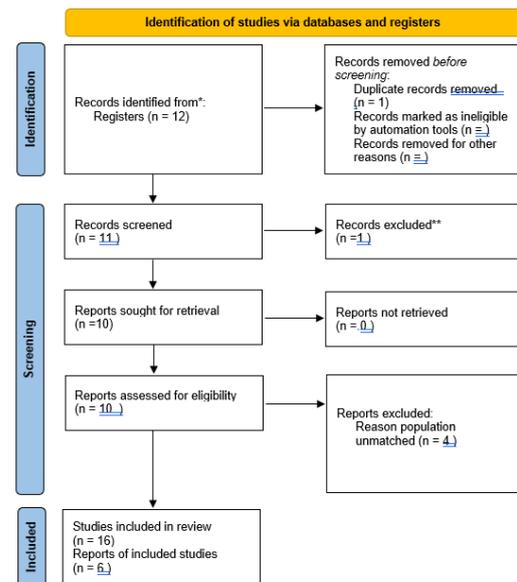


Figure 1. Selection process

Table 1. Research characteristics

no	Study	Sample Size	Participants	Psycap Scale	WLB Scale	National Setting
1	Kole & Kurt 2018 - Study 1	252	Service sector employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Carlson dkk (2009)	Turkey
2	Kole & Kurt 2018 - Study 2	252	Service sector employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Carlson dkk (2009)	Turkey
3	Kole & Kurt 2018 - Study 3	252	Service sector employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Carlson dkk (2009)	Turkey
4	Kole & Kurt 2018 - Study 4	252	Service sector employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Carlson dkk (2009)	Turkey
5	Suganda (2022)	100	Millenial and gen Z employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Haar (2013)	Indonesia
6	Sarwar, Panatik, Sukor, Rusbadrol (2021)	450	University employees	Avey (2008)	Valcour (2007)	Pakistan
7	Geh (2022) - Study 1	31	WFH employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Hayman (2005)	India
8	Geh (2022) - Study 2	31	WFH employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Hayman (2005)	India
9	Geh (2022) - Study 3	31	WFH employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Hayman (2005)	India
10	Geh (2022) - Study 4	31	WFH employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Hayman (2005)	India
11	Priyanath, Tennakoon (2022) - Study 1	162	Employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Greenhouse dan Beutell (1985)	Sri Lanka
12	Priyanath, Tennakoon (2022) - Study 2	162	Employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Greenhouse dan Beutell (1985)	Sri Lanka
13	Priyanath, Tennakoon (2022) - Study 3	162	Employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Greenhouse dan Beutell (1985)	Sri Lanka

14	Priyanath, Tennakoon (2022) - Study 4	162	Employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Greenhouse dan Beutell (1985)	Sri Lanka
15	Priyanath, Tennakoon (2022) - Study 5	162	Employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Greenhouse dan Beutell (1985)	Sri Lanka
16	Anwar, Ahmad, Akhtar, Bino, dan Ali (2023)	342	Employees	Luthans, Youssef, dan Avolio (2007)	Geurts (2005)	India

Another way to find out publication bias related to the relationship between psychological capital and work life balance is to do a file drawer analysis, which can be seen in Table 5, where the Fail-safe N value of research participants is 2585,000, which is greater than $5K + 10 = 95$. This indicates that the data in this study are symmetrical; there is no publication bias that occurs. The different analysis results between the Funnel test, Egger test, and File drawer analysis indicate that although the data on the relationship between psychological capital and work life balance are asymmetric, the data are classified as free from bias (Rosenthal, 1979; Sutton et al., 2000).

Based on the results of the Q statistical analysis, which can be seen in Table 2, it is known that the 16 studies used in this study are heterogeneous, with $Q = 91.670$ and $p < 0.001$.

Table 2. Fixed and Random Effects

	Q	df	p
Omnibus test of Model Coefficients	91.67	1	< .001
Test of Residual Heterogeneity	52.228	15	< .001

In Table 3, it can be seen that there is a very significant positive relationship between psychological capital and work life balance in employees ($p < 0.001$; CI 0.328–0.496), with

true r 0.412, which indicates that the strength of the relationship between psychological capital and work life balance in employees is moderate.

Table 3. Coefficient

Estimate	SE	z	p	95% CI	
				LL	UL
0.412	0.043	9.574	< .001	0.328	0.496

Note. Wald test.

From the results of the forest plot analysis in Figure 2, it is also known that the effect sizes of the studies used are very varied, with a range starting from $z = -0.11$ with a 95% confidence interval (-0.45; 0.26) up to $z = 0.63$ with a 95% confidence interval (0.53; 0.74), and the average value of $z = 0.41$ with a 95% confidence interval (0.33; 0.50).

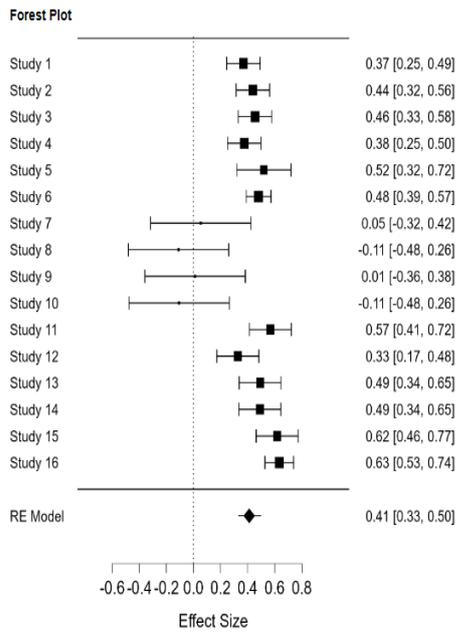


Figure 2. Forest plot

In this study, researchers also conducted an analysis related to publication bias. Based on the results of the funnel plot in Figure 3, where there is an asymmetric distribution of results, it indicates that there is publication bias. However, the asymmetry of the distribution of results does not always indicate publication bias, so further analysis using the Egger test was conducted. Based on the results of the Egger’s test, which can be seen in Table 4, it is known that the data used in this study related to the relationship between psychological capital and work life balance is asymmetrical, which indicates publication bias ($z = -4.410$; $p < 0.01$).

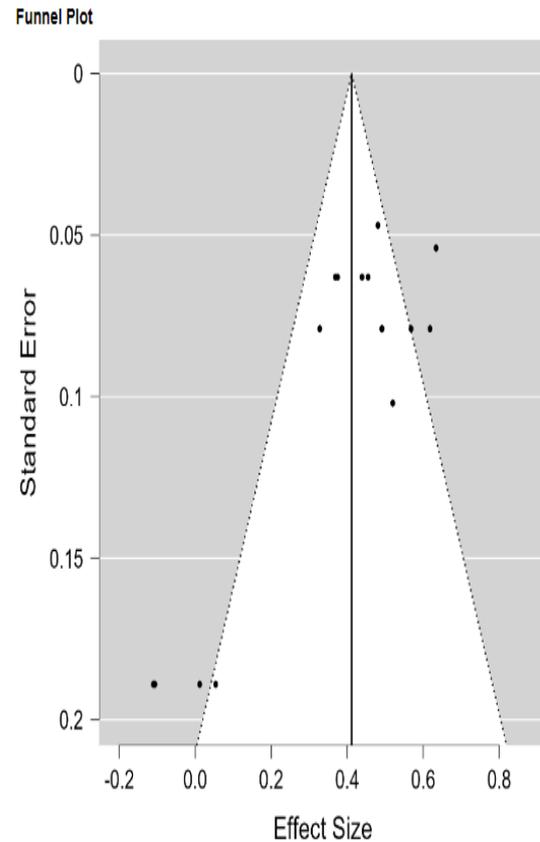


Figure 3. Funnel test

Table 4. Regression test for Funnel plot asymmetry ("Egger's test")

	z	p
sei	-4.410	< .001

Table 5. File Drawer Analysis

	Fail-safe N	Target Significance	Observed Significance
Rosenthal	2585	0.05	< .001

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis conducted on studies related to the relationship between psychological capital and work life balance in employees, it can be concluded that

there is moderate positive relationship between psychological capital and work life balance where the strength of the relationship between the two variables is moderate. The implications of this research are the understanding that psychological capital is essential in improving work life balance and individual welfare. So it becomes important for organizations to provide support and training to improve psychological capital. In addition, this research also implies that psychological capital is one of the internal factors related to work life balance. Future researchers are expected to consider using other internal variables such as personality, emotional intelligence, before considering external variables.

DISCUSSION

The results of the meta-analysis study conducted show that the true r value of the relationship between psychological capital and work life balance is moderate ($r = 0.412$; $p < 0.001$). The moderate association between psychological capital and work life balance can be explained by Conservation of Resources theory, which explained that work life balance is influenced not only by internal factors but also external resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Individuals' ability to set goals, demonstrate persistence in task completion, and remain flexible in problem solving helps them to evaluate and respond to role demands (Sarwar et al., 2021); however, these capacities are not always sufficient to compensate for excessively heavy role burdens (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

This moderate association also indicates that individuals who have a high level of psychological capital tend to find it easier to achieve a good level of work-life balance (Christy et al., 2021). Individuals with high psychological capital not only excel at fulfilling their job responsibilities, manage time and making priority, but also possess a greater capacity to manage and resolve conflicts between their personal and professional lives.

Individuals who have confidence and believe in their ability to achieve goals have a feeling of being able to control existing situations and, in the end, are more able to balance their roles (Sen and Hooja, 2015; Situmorang and Wijayanti, 2018). These individuals often demonstrate enhanced resilience and adaptability, enabling them to develop effective coping strategies in response to stressors and challenges without sacrificing aspects of their other lives (work/personal). And, consequently, they are better equipped to maintain a balanced work-life dynamic.

Furthermore, Anushi, Priyanath, and Tennakoon (2022) said that resilience helps individuals to be able to rise from the problems faced both in their personal and work lives. This indicates that resiliency as dimension of psychological capital plays a crucial role in enabling individuals to recover and adapt effectively when confronted with challenges and adversity. It also enables people not only to manage stress and setbacks in their personal lives, such as relationship difficulties or health issues, but also to navigate professional obstacles, including workplace pressure, organizational changes, or career setbacks.

This is in line with the results of research conducted by Karatepe and Karadas (2014), where individuals who have a high level of psychological capital are characterized by individual belief that they can complete their tasks and responsibilities, are able to find the best solutions to problems that arise, and having a more positive attitude in dealing with stressful situations, is better able to manage tasks and responsibilities and also protect individuals from role conflicts that may occur.

Fellen et al. (2021) said that people with higher levels of work life balance tend to be more productive and demonstrate enhanced higher performance. A well-maintained work life balance is also associated with lower levels of stress and reduced risk of burnout, which ultimately contributes to improved overall well-being, job satisfaction, and productivity in both their personal and professional domains.

A major strength of this study is its use of a meta-analytic approach, which allows for a more reliable and generalizable estimation of the relationship and is theoretically grounded in Conservation of Resources theory. However, the heavy reliance on self-reported data, differences in measurement tools, restricts causal inference and may increase heterogeneity across studies. The results indicate that psychological capital serves as an important internal resource for managing between work and personal roles, while also emphasizing the persistent role of external factors. Therefore, initiatives aimed at improving work-life balance should address not only individual psychological resources but

also organizational and environmental conditions that influence work life balance.

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Notes: * Journals that were used for meta-analysis