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Psychological Capital and Organizational Support as Joint Correlates of Job Performance Among Health Sector Employees in Anambra State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
The psychological resources of the employees and the external organizational climate in which the employees operate are jointly determinants for employee job performance in public health institutions. This research involved psychological capital and perceived organizational support as two variables which were interlinked and were correlated to job performance in the employees of the Anambra state ministry of health, Nigeria, with the theories of Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), Positive Organizational Behaviour theory (Luthans, 2002), Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986) and Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964). An employee correlational design was used, and 400 employees were selected out of a population of 2,000 employees with the help of stratified random sampling with the help of Taro Yamane's (1967) formula. The participants were asked to fill out the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007), Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986), and the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (Koopmans et al., 2014). Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to analyse the data at a .01 level of significance. Psychological capital ($r = .64$, $p < .01$) and organizational support ($r = .61$, $p < .01$) both significantly and positively predicted job performance. There were significant correlations between all dimensions of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, resilience, optimism) and organizational support (fairness, supervisor support, rewards and job conditions, employee valuation) and job performance. The results suggest that improving the performance of workers in public health institutions is a complex process influenced by three factors: psychological factors within the institution, environmental factors in the institution, and the interaction between them. Also, HR strategies that target both of these aspects are more likely to be effective than those targeting only one of these aspects. Implications of theory and practice are explored.

Keywords: psychological capital, perceived organizational support, job performance, public health workforce, correlational study

1. INTRODUCTION

Job performance in public health institutions is determined by multiple factors, both internal and external, that create the organizational context in which the employees work. These two aspects of organizational research are represented by two streams of research: psychological capital, which involves employees' internal psychological resources; and perceived organizational support, which involves employees' beliefs about their organization's values and care for them. While each has been explored in great depth individually, there has been less research on them jointly as part of one public health workforce, even though there are theoretical arguments why internal psychological resources and external organisational support are complementary and mutually reinforcing resources (Hassan & Usman, 2021).

Psychological capital is a state-dependent set of positive psychological components comprising of the four capacities: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, that together support a person to remain effective at work and maintain their motivation in a challenging and resource-limited organizational context (Luthans, 2002; Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). In contrast, the concept of perceived organizational support refers to employees' subjective interpretations of how much their organization values and recognizes the importance of their work and how much organizational leadership is truly dedicated to supporting their psychological, occupational and personal health (Eisenberger et al., 1986). These two constructs exist as two different psychological resources that are used within organizational systems; they are not mutually exclusive, but complement each other. The implications for theory and practice are significant: An individual can have high levels of internal psychological capital (self-efficacy, resilience, hopeful orientation, and optimistic disposition), and still have a significantly reduced capacity to perform when he or she is placed in an environment that lacks support, resources, fair treatment systems, and recognition. On the other hand, those working in an organizationally supportive environment, where their efforts are substantively recognized and the working environment is satisfactory and they are treated fairly by supervisors, may still have problems when their internal psychological resources are not sufficiently developed or have been exhausted. Integrated organizational effectiveness, in which both types of support, psychological capital as the internal psychological architecture and PES as the external institutional scaffolding, validation and resource allocation, are cultivated and activated simultaneously, can only be achieved if both types of support are cultivated and activated simultaneously (Hassan & Usman, 2021). Performance results from the synergistic interaction between these complementary resource systems are greater than what either resource dimension can achieve alone.

In the public health sector, as in other sectors, professionals in the Nigerian state ministries of health encounter many challenges, such as substandard equipment, high workloads, and the pressures of brain drain and attrition of health workers (Eze & Nwosu, 2022). The results of Adebayo and Ajayi (2023) showed that psychological capital was a significant predictor of job performance of the workers in the health sector, whereas the results of Nwankwo and Eze (2021) indicated that organizational support predicted commitment and performance of the civil servants in South-East Nigeria. However, few studies have looked at both constructs at once in the context of one ministry of health of one state, which leaves questions about the relative and combined contribution of both to performance in this context. The Anambra State Ministry of Health, which coordinates implementation of health policy at the State level, is a suitable forum to address this gap.

This study therefore investigated the psychological capital and organizational support as well as their respective dimensions as correlates of job performance among workers of the Anambra State Ministry of Health. The following hypotheses were tested:

H1: Psychological capital will significantly correlate with job performance among employees of the Anambra State Ministry of Health.

H2: Organizational support will significantly correlate with job performance among employees of the Anambra State Ministry of Health.

H3: The dimensions of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism) will significantly correlate with job performance.

H4: The dimensions of organizational support (fairness, supervisor support, rewards and job conditions, and employee valuation) will significantly correlate with job performance.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Psychological Capital and Job Performance

The psychological capital is an integrated concept, derived from four psychological positive states—self-efficacy, hope, resilience and optimism—each with empirical links to job performance outcomes in a variety of Nigerian organizational settings and occupational areas. Building on Nigerian empirical studies, the job performance predictions of psychological capital have been seen in various employment settings, with significant positive relationships observed in the context of civil service (Afolabi & Nkechi, 2021), manufacturing (Bakare & Chidimma, 2020), and healthcare delivery systems (Danjuma & Aisha, 2022; Kalu & Rachael, 2023). In addition to the overall psychological capital effects, the decomposition of psychological capital shows that the different dimensions are not equally predictive across occupational settings and performance measures, indicating that certain psychological dimensions may be more important than others in specific organizational and sectoral contexts and as drivers of performance. In relation to workers of small and medium sized enterprise, self-efficacy was the most significant predictor of performance outcomes at the dimensional level of analysis, suggesting that self-efficacy for each task and belief in having the capability to mobilize the needed effort and resources is the key psychological lever into performance in entrepreneurial and small-scale organizational settings (Gimba & Rukayat, 2022). On the other hand, in academic institutional context, hope and optimism served as better predictors of academic staff performance, and so, motivational agency toward goal attainment and explanatory orientation to success and failure events may be the more salient psychological processes influencing the effectiveness of academic staff performance in academic institutions that apply knowledge strategies (Ibe & Nke, 2021). These differential dimensional relationships suggest that the performance influence of psychological capital is mediated by context-specific processes; that is, the role characteristics, types of organizational structure, and sector of the economy moderate which dimensions of psychological capital have a primary influence on performance variation.

2.2 Perceived Organizational Support and Job Performance

In the empirical studies conducted in Nigeria, perceived organizational support has emerged as a consequential predictor variable in several studies investigating determinants of job performance in different occupational fields and administrative levels and results have shown significant relationship between perceptions of the organizations' support and aspects of employee performance. For civil servants in Lagos State, organizational support was predictive of two dimensions of task performance: completing prescribed job tasks in the required quality and efficiency, and the contextual performance dimensions that included organizational citizenship behaviors, interpersonal cooperation, and discretionary contributions beyond the scope of one's official job responsibilities (Adeyemi & Oladipo, 2021). In the health delivery system, the connection between organizational support and performance can manifest in a variety of mechanism-based ways, including direct mechanistic pathways that link supportive institutional environments directly to the effectiveness of health workers' performance, and indirect mechanistic pathways involving intermediate psychological or behavioral mechanisms that link organizational support to performance. A multifaceted relationship pattern was observed in the case of health workers in Anambra State administrative jurisdiction (Okafor & Chukwu, 2021). The supervisory dimension of organizational support, which represents the degree to which immediate supervisors value their employees' contributions, are supportive of employees in providing needed instrumental support and guidance, and are concerned about employees' wellbeing, is a unique and powerful part of the organizational support construct that has a significant impact on employees' performance in various job settings and positions. In the Abuja area, there was a significant association between the level of performance and the quality and consistency of supervisory support (Rasheed & Tolulope, 2022), while in Akwa Ibom State, teachers' performance was significantly predicted by the amount and quality of the support received from supervisors, such as recognition, encouraging, and instrumental/technical assistance (Ekanem & Etuk, 2022). The convergent empirical evidence from geographically decentralized Nigerian jurisdictions and different occupational groups confirms that supervisor mediated organizational support is a powerful and widely applicable performance antecedent in Nigerian organizational contexts,

suggesting that investments in the capacity of supervisors and supportive leadership practices in organizations pay off in terms of performance, regardless of occupation or organizational setting.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinning that supports this research is formed by four mutually reinforcing and complementary theoretical frameworks that together explain the relationship between psychological and organizational resources to performance outcomes. Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) posits that people actively and strategically strive to maintain valued resources, which include tangible resources and psychological ones such as hope, optimism, resilience and self-efficacy, and that the loss of resources creates psychological strain, performance decline, while the acquisition of resources promotes coping abilities and stress resilience. COR theory implies that workers with wide resource portfolios have a higher adaptive capacity in response to occupational stress and organizational demands, and thus can sustain or even enhance their performance in settings with significant occupational pressures, or with limited resources. This theoretical approach, which considers psychological capital as a resource that can be preserved, is complemented by the theoretical approach of Positive Organizational Behaviour (POB) theory (Luthans, 2002) that views psychological capital as a state-like psychological resource that can be intentionally developed through organizational interventions such as structured training programs, developmental coaching, leadership practices, and supportive institutional policies aimed at strengthening hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy in organizational workforces. However, Organizational Support Theory (OST) by Eisenberger et al. (1986) defines and theorizes the external scaffolding for individual psychological resources—the organizational-level dimension—perceived organizational support, as employees' subjective perceptions of the institutional valuation, fairness, care by supervisory resources, and provision of resources. Social Exchange Theory (SXT; Blau, 1964) is the overarching theory that explains the integration mechanism, in which employment relations are regarded as dynamic reciprocal exchanges in which one party (the organization) offers the other party (the employee) resource inputs that are valuable to the employee, and in turn the employee makes inputs to the organization that are valuable to it in the form of commitment, effort, or action. Together, these four theoretical frameworks shed light on the fundamental interdependence and functional complementarity of psychological capital and perceived organizational support, as two components, internal and external, respectively, that work synergistically: (a) Psychological capital is the internal psychological architecture (namely, self-beliefs, motivational agency, adversity resilience, and future orientation) that undergirds the capacity of individuals to perform, and (b) Perceived organizational support is external institutional context of working with others (procedural fairness, supervisory encouragement, adequate compensation, advancement opportunities, and meaningful recognition, which validates, sustains, and amplifies internal psychological resources to perform). (Hassan & Usman, 2021).

3. METHOD

3.1 Design and Participants

A cross-sectional correlational design was employed in order to study the relationships between psychological capital, organizational support and job performance without any manipulation of variables. The sample size was 400 employees of the Ministry of Health in Anambra State, Nigeria, comprising 2000 (Anambra State Ministry of Health, 2024) workers, which was stratified using the department and staff cadre of the ministry as strata. Sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula, $n = N / [1 + N(e)^2]$, which resulted in a minimum sample size of about 333 participants at a 5% margin of error, and the sample was increased to 400 to obtain greater representativeness to offset potential attrition. These involved employees from both the administrative and technical categories of all age brackets (25-60 years) and both genders.

3.2 Instruments

Three standardized instruments were used. Psychological capital was measured using the 24 psychological capital questionnaire (PCQ; Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007) and has a total reliability of .89 in the validation study in the USA and .84 in a Nigerian sample (Okeke & Okonkwo, 2023). Perceived organizational support was assessed using the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support

(SPOS) by Eisenberger et al. (1986) with internal consistency of .97 in the original study and .86 among the Nigerian civil servants (Okolie & Uche, 2021). The Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ; Koopmans et al., 2014), an instrument comprising of 18 items that measures task performance, contextual performance and counterproductive work behaviour, was used to measure job performance, as it has been validated by Idemudia and Ugwu (2020) among Nigerian employees. The response formats of all instruments were in the 5-point Likert format.

3.3 Procedure and Data Analysis

Institutional permission was received before data collection began; participants gave informed consent, and they took part voluntarily under anonymity and confidentiality, as per the guidelines of the American Psychological Association. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness before being analyzed. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used in SPSS version 27 for analysis; all four hypotheses were tested at a .01 significance level.

4. Results

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Psychological Capital, Organizational Support, and Job Performance (N = 400)

Variable	Mean	SD
Psychological Capital	3.68	0.59
Self-efficacy	3.74	0.62
Hope	3.66	0.58
Resilience	3.61	0.64
Optimism	3.71	0.60
Organizational Support	3.55	0.63
Fairness	3.49	0.66
Supervisor Support	3.58	0.61
Rewards and Job Conditions	3.52	0.65
Employee Valuation	3.60	0.59
Job Performance	3.70	0.57

The level of psychological capital (M = 3.68), organizational support (M = 3.55), and job performance (M = 3.70) for employees was found to be moderately high. The relatively low standard deviations suggest that the responses were concentrated, with self-efficacy having the highest mean across the psychological capital dimensions and employee valuation having the highest mean across the organizational support dimensions.

Hypotheses 1 and 2. Psychological capital and organizational support will significantly correlate with job performance.

Table 2. Zero-Order Pearson Correlation Between Psychological Capital and Job Performance

Variable	1	2
1. Psychological Capital	1.00	—
2. Job Performance	0.64**	1.00

Note. **p < .01.

Table 3. Zero-Order Pearson Correlation Between Organizational Support and Job Performance

Variable	1	2
1. Organizational Support	1.00	—
2. Job Performance	0.61**	1.00

Note. **p < .01.

Both psychological capital (r = .64, p < .01) and organizational support (r = .61, p < .01) were significantly and positively correlated with job performance. The strength of both of the correlations was comparable, with psychological capital having a slightly higher correlation with job performance than organizational support. Both hypotheses were thus confirmed.

Hypotheses 3 and 4. The dimensions of psychological capital and organizational support will significantly correlate with job performance.

Table 4. Zero-Order Pearson Correlation Between Dimensions of Psychological Capital and Job Performance

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Self-efficacy	1.00				
2. Hope	0.58**	1.00			
3. Resilience	0.55**	0.57**	1.00		
4. Optimism	0.60**	0.59**	0.56**	1.00	
5. Job Performance	0.59**	0.56**	0.53**	0.57**	1.00

Note. **p < .01.

Table 5. Zero-Order Pearson Correlation Between Dimensions of Organizational Support and Job Performance

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Fairness	1.00				
2. Supervisor Support	0.62**	1.00			
3. Rewards & Job Conditions	0.58**	0.60**	1.00		
4. Employee Valuation	0.57**	0.63**	0.59**	1.00	
5. Job Performance	0.48**	0.62**	0.55**	0.60**	1.00

Note. **p < .01.

There was a significant and positive correlation at p < .01 between each of the four dimensions of psychological capital (self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience) and job performance, with all four dimensions of organizational support (supervisor support, employee valuation, rewards and job conditions, and fairness) also showing significant and positive correlations at p < .01. The strongest correlates among the psychological capital dimensions were self-efficacy and among the organizational support dimensions was supervisor support. Hypotheses 3 and 4 were thus supported.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study confirmed the theoretical hypothesis that psychological capital and organizational support are independent and significant predictors of job performance because both were found to correlate with performance. The psychological capital finding is similar to the study conducted by Adebayo and Ajayi (2023), Danjuma and Aisha (2022), and Kalu and Rachael (2023) who found that

psychological capital can boost the overall performance of health workers in the Nigerian health sector and the findings of the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) revealed that psychological resources are buffers against the stress of employees in the workplace. The finding of organizational support is congruent with previous findings by Okafor and Chukwu (2021), who reported similar results among health workers in the same state and Nwankwo and Eze (2021), and corroborates Organizational Support Theory (Okafor et al, 2021; Eisenberger et al, 1986) and Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) which explain performance as a response to perceived organizational support.

Both the internal psychological factors and external organizational factors contribute to the employee's performance with a comparable magnitude ($r = .64$ for psychological capital and $r = .61$ for organizational support), indicating that neither type of factor alone is enough to explain employee performance; both types of factors contribute and are largely independent of each other. This aligns with the assumption that a combination of psychological resourcefulness and organizational support is needed to support high performance among employees, while either resource alone may not be enough to compensate for structural challenges common in Nigeria's public health bureaucracy (Hassan & Usman, 2021).

At the level of the dimensions, the findings for self-efficacy as the strongest correlate of psychological capital at the psychological level is in line with what has been noted by Gimba and Rukayat (2022) and aligns with Bandura's emphasis on self-belief as a proximal driver of effortful performance, while the finding for supervisor support as the strongest correlate of psychological capital at the organizational level is in line with what has been noted by Ekanem and Etuk (2022) and Balogun and Akinyemi (2021) emphasizing the important role of immediate supervisors in making organizational policy into employees' lived experiences of support. These dimensional results point to the interventions that focus on self-efficacy and supervisory practices as the most effective entry points to enhance performance, but not at the expense of other interventions that focus on building psychological capital and organizational supports.

6. Implications, Limitations, and Conclusion

The results indicate that public health institutions' HR strategies need to focus not only on psychological capital, but also on organizational support. In real terms, it means implementing psychological-capital-enhancing interventions, like self-efficacy training, resiliency workshops, and goal-setting coaching, as well as organizational-level changes that increase supervisor support, procedural fairness, distribution of rewards and formal recognition systems. Both predictors are equally strong, so it is not likely that a single domain will have the greatest impact on performance improvements.

Because of the correlational design of the study, causation is impossible to be inferred, and self-report measures may have common-method biases. The cross-section sample also does not represent other private sector or public sector organizations. To draw causal inferences, future studies should be conducted using longitudinal or experimental designs to test whether organizational support moderates or mediates the relationship between psychological capital and performance or to utilize the integrative approach in other ministries, sectors, and country contexts.

Finally, the results of this study show that psychological capital and organizational support are both significant, largely independent correlates of job performance in employees of a state health ministry in Nigeria, and that the dimensions of psychological capital (namely self-efficacy) and the dimensions of organizational support (namely supervisor support) have distinct explanatory power. The results add to the Conservation of Resources, Positive Organizational Behaviour, Organizational Support and Social Exchange theories and offer empirical support for a combined human resource strategy aimed at enhancing internal psychological resources of staff members and their organizational environment.

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