

# Employee job security and job performance: the mediating role of well-being and the moderating role of perceived organizational support and psychological capital

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European Journal  
of Management  
and Business  
Economics

Received 9 January 2023  
Revised 2 July 2023  
13 October 2023  
4 January 2024  
Accepted 18 February 2024

## Abstract

**Purpose** – Grounded in social cognitive career theory, this study investigates how employees' perceptions of job security and well-being affected their performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also examines the moderating effects of perceived organizational support and psychological capital on well-being and performance.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Using a two-wave time-lagged design, data were collected from 279 frontline employees in public service organizations in Saudi Arabia.

**Findings** – The study's results show that perceived job security significantly affects job performance. Employee well-being significantly and positively influences job performance and partially mediates the relationship between perceived job security and job performance. Additionally, perceived organizational support and psychological capital positively moderated the relationship between employee well-being and job performance during the pandemic.

**Practical implications** – This study suggests that policymakers and practitioners need to prioritize addressing the job security concerns and well-being of frontline employees during a pandemic to enhance employee performance.

**Originality/value** – Our findings present significant implications for policymakers in the context of job security and performance within public organizations in emerging countries.

**Keywords** Job security, Employee well-being, Job performance, Perceived organizational support, Psychological capital, Saudi Arabia, COVID-19

**Paper type** Research paper

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The authors acknowledge financial support from Abu Dhabi University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Grant number: 19300768.

Moza Tahnoon Al Nahyan: Writing –review, editing, Writing –original draft, revising the document (Revision 1, Revision 2 and Revision 3), Methodology, Data curation, Conceptualization. Fauzia Jabeen: Writing –original draft, Methodology, Data curation, Conceptualization, Writing –review and editing. Ibrahim Alhosani: Writing –original draft, Methodology, Data curation, Conceptualization. Mesheal Alabdulrahman: Validation, Methodology, Conceptualization. Jawaher Majdi Al Ahababi: Writing –original draft, Methodology, Data curation, Conceptualization. Sherine Farouk: Methodology, Data curation, Conceptualization.



European Journal of Management  
and Business Economics  
Emerald Publishing Limited  
e-ISSN: 2444-8494  
p-ISSN: 2444-8451

DOI 10.1108/EJMBE-01-2023-0011

## 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a high degree of uncertainty into the business landscape (Charoensukmongkol and Pandey, 2023). Tuzovic and Kabadayi (2021) suggest that the service sector has experienced significant disruption, with companies struggling to maintain their viability. While many individuals lost their jobs, those who remained employed had to grapple with the pandemic's psychological impacts while working remotely. The pandemic has severely disrupted service delivery channels, causing many companies to struggle to maintain service continuity (Suthatorn and Charoensukmongkol, 2023). This high level of business environment volatility during the pandemic provides a backdrop for studying employee behavior and its outcomes in service organizations.

Job (in)security presents an invisible problem for organizations and is a distraction that impacts individual performance (Jones *et al.*, 1998). Witte's seminal study (1999) validated that job (in)security is a catalyst for diminishing employee well-being. While the benefits of various employee-related practices were explored in many contexts before the pandemic (Haque, 2023), the pandemic's impacts have posed challenges for all organizations (Charoensukmongkol and Pandey, 2023). The pandemic has significantly altered employee behavior and disrupted work outcomes (Mehmood *et al.*, 2023) and hence, the perceived job security of public sector employees in an emerging Arab country, where the pandemic has altered employment dynamics and made them as vulnerable to job loss as their private sector counterparts, warrants further examination (Mehmood *et al.*, 2022).

It is crucial to determine whether the quality of organizational support is adequate to alleviate employees' job security concerns (AlHashmi *et al.*, 2019). Another factor that could impact employees during the pandemic is the management of work within the organization (Puyod and Charoensukmongkol, 2021). Essentially, perceived organizational support (POS) and psychological capital (PsyCap) lay the groundwork for adding resources that enhance the workforce's collective mindset and encourage excellence in their respective workplaces (Froman, 2010). Understanding employees' challenges regarding their POS and PsyCap is critical to improving their overall well-being during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, social distancing measures hinder resource and emotional support that rely on the organization's culture (Jabeen and Isakovic, 2018), playing a significant role in fostering positive psychology, which is vital for optimal employee productivity.

Furthermore, employee reactions can vary based on organizational and external environmental factors (Morgeson *et al.*, 2015). Rapid changes in job categories (Kramer and Kramer, 2020) and employees' acceptance of remote work (Akgunduz *et al.*, 2018) can lead to job insecurity (Blustein *et al.*, 2020). In a recent study, Aguiar-Quintana *et al.* (2021) highlighted that the employees' job security did not affect their performance. However, some studies (Staufenbiel and König, 2010) reported a positive relationship between job insecurity and job performance and related it to the suppressor effect on employees' performance. According to them, employees with high job insecurity will be motivated to work harder to prove their worth to the organization. However, the impact of these reactions on performance is not adequately documented in the context of developing countries during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, such varying findings advocate the existence of some mediating and moderating variables that could alleviate or even converse the influence of job (in)security on job performance.

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) provides a framework for predicting changes in human and cognitive behaviors (Duffy *et al.*, 2014). Human behaviors are shaped by the interplay of internal feelings, emotions, and surroundings (Chang and Edwards, 2015). SCCT helps construct a research framework that articulates the relationship between work activities, environmental factors, and psychological needs (Jemini-Gashi *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, this study, grounded in SCCT, aims to explore the influence of employees' perceptions of job security and well-being on their performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1. How does job security and employee well-being affect job performance during social distancing protocols?
- RQ2. How does the mediating effect of employee well-being affect perceived job security and job performance?
- RQ3. How does POS moderate the role of employee well-being and job performance such that the relationship strengthens as POS increases?
- RQ4. How does PsyCap moderate the role of employee well-being and job performance such that the relationship strengthens as PsyCap increases?

This study offers three significant contributions to the existing literature. First, we base our research model on the theoretical foundations of the SCCT framework, a novel approach in COVID-19 research. A comprehensive understanding of SCCT factors can significantly improve employee performance, even after a pandemic. Second, we examine the moderating role of PsyCap and POS, demonstrating how to enhance employee job performance. Lastly, our study concentrates on frontline employees in public organizations in Saudi Arabia, a context that has previously received insufficient academic attention. The study findings shall provide insights to the service organizations to establish a work environment to improve their employee's well-being and performance.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses development

### 2.1 *Employee's well-being versus job performance*

Employee well-being pertains to their optimal mental and physical health, which is influenced by organizational dynamics and occasionally extends to factors beyond the workplace. The enhancement of employee well-being is a primary task for many global employers and leaders, because it directly impacts individual and organizational performance (Johari *et al.*, 2019). Usman (2017) further emphasizes that an employee's mental state is a critical determinant of job performance. Given the pandemic's impact on well-being, researchers have focused on exploring the organizational factors that affect employees' work and psychological outcomes (Puyod and Charoensukmongkol, 2021). The psychological well-being of employees encompasses various organizational factors such as innovation, creativity, and engagement in organizational roles and job-related activities, all of which promote improved individual performance.

Kundi *et al.* (2020) underscore the importance of promoting psychological well-being, while García-Cabrera *et al.* (2018) suggest that a healthy organization stems from the enhancement of employees' mental well-being, leading to improved job performance. This context clarifies the necessity for employees to maintain robust mental and physical health to positively impact both individual and organizational performance. Workplace culture, encompassing various facets of employer-employee interactions, can foster greater job satisfaction (Jabeen *et al.*, 2018). When employees are satisfied with their specific job duties, it facilitates higher individual job performance, thereby boosting overall organizational performance. However, the social distancing measures imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic have created conditions that challenge employees' ability to sustain a psychological state conducive to fulfilling their organizational roles effectively (Kundi *et al.*, 2020). In essence, the shift to remote work, necessitated by pandemic protocols, has disrupted employees' engagement with workplace culture, a critical factor in their psychological and physical well-being. Therefore, we propose the following:

- H1. Employee well-being positively affects job performance during social distancing protocols.

## 2.2 Perceived job security and job performance

An organization can cultivate a workplace culture that promotes intrinsic motivation among employees, which is rooted in employee-employer relationships and interactions. Gerhart and Fang (2015) argue that this intrinsic motivation significantly impacts employee performance through various micro-factors. An individual's intrinsic perspectives, emotions, and environment play a role in shaping their behavior (Chang and Edwards, 2015). SCCT has become a crucial framework for illustrating the interplay between cognitive, environmental, and behavioral factors (Liguori *et al.*, 2020). This theory helps structure an investigation into the significance of environmental influences, psychological factors, and work activities. These elements encompass individual differences in self-perception and personality, variations in temperament, decision-making processes, workplace interaction, and consultative skills.

Ganta (2014) argued that workplace motivation significantly shapes employees' sense of job fulfillment. This suggests that during remote work, the absence of the workplace culture fostered by the broader organizational culture could potentially impact employees' perceived job security, thereby inducing stress (Gerhart and Fang, 2015; Jabeen *et al.*, 2020). Employees under stress often demonstrate reduced performance, leading to diminished organizational output. Moreover, fears about job security typically arise when employees are required to alter their work schedules, resulting in decreased performance. This is because employees may view themselves as dispensable, given the organization's apparent capacity to operate effectively with a smaller workforce.

Darvishmotevali and Ali (2020) argue that job security boosts employee well-being, which in turn influences long-term performance. Cheng and Chan (2008) found that job security positively impacts employees' mental and physical health. These conditions affect job security, which subsequently influences overall well-being and performance. Lowe (2020) contends that the foundation of healthy organizations is employee well-being. Prior research supports the importance of examining employee well-being to understand the relationships between various HR dimensions and employee outcomes (Khoreva and Wechtler, 2018). Additionally, Darvishmotevali and Ali (2020) demonstrated that a sense of job security correlates with higher scores on several work-related well-being indicators, such as elevated levels of emotional engagement. This suggests that an increase in perceived job security can enhance individual resources. Therefore, our study aims to clarify the relationship between job security and job performance by improving employee well-being. Consequently, we propose the following hypotheses:

- H2. Perceived job security positively affects employee job performance during social distancing protocols.
- H2a. There is a direct effect of perceived job security on job performance.
- H2b. There is an indirect effect of perceived job security on job performance through the mediating role of employee well-being.

## 2.3 Moderating role of POS on employee well-being and job performance

Eisenberger *et al.* (1986, p. 501) define POS as "employees' beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being." Organizations provide crucial training that enables employees to handle job-related stress and adopt new skills and strategies to address organizational challenges (Ariza-Montes *et al.*, 2018). This acquisition of effective work skills simplifies tasks, leading to enhanced job satisfaction. Cheng and Yi (2018) demonstrate how attributes such as hope and resilience affect an employee's well-being, thereby influencing their job performance. Prior studies (Charoensukmongkol and Suthatorn, 2022; Shen *et al.*, 2018) contend that certain human

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resource actions, including organizational leadership and culture, forecast positive relationships. Social distancing disrupts specific human resource management practices, resulting in reduced employee motivation, a situation that often leads to decreased job performance (Khoreva and Wechtler, 2018). Previous research (Guang and Charoensukmongkol, 2022) confirmed that POS is a crucial practice that can strengthen the effects of workplace factors on work outcomes and employee well-being.

Human practices significantly influence the role of POS in employee well-being and job performance. Haddon (2018) discusses the correlation between employee productivity and human resource practices, particularly in relation to employee well-being and performance. Kosinski *et al.* (2015) reveals that human resource initiatives, such as individual or group motivation, can boost job performance, which in turn leads to improved organizational productivity. Therefore, POS can be a vital tool in managing stress and fostering a positive outlook on life, which promotes a mindset conducive to achieving goals (Roemer and Harris, 2018). While POS traits may be inherent in an employee's character, organizations and human resource managers should proactively invest time and resources in prioritizing employee well-being (Naseer *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H3. POS positively moderates the relationship between employee well-being and job performance, such that the relationship strengthens as POS increases.

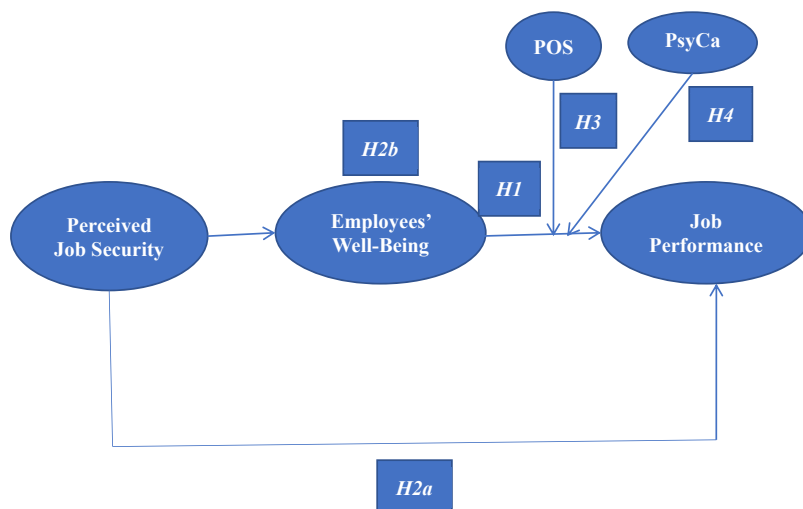
#### 2.4 The moderating role of PsyCap on employee well-being and job performance

PsyCap is defined as an individual's positive psychological state of development, encompassing elements such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Luthans *et al.*, 2015). Each of these characteristics positively influences overall health and work-related outcomes (Alarcon *et al.*, 2013). Luthans *et al.* (2015) further characterize PsyCap as a state that demonstrates a readiness for change. Self-efficacy pertains to an individual's confidence in their ability to successfully perform organizational roles. People with high self-efficacy are typically determined to reach their goals and often strive to achieve organizational objectives as if they were their own (Kotzé, 2018). Optimism, on the other hand, is the trait of expecting positive outcomes from one's efforts (Carver *et al.*, 2010). Optimistic individuals usually maintain a positive attitude, which helps them remain steadfast when addressing crises and seeking positive change in personal and organizational challenges (Krok, 2015). Lastly, resilience, a common trait among highly adaptable individuals, is crucial when encountering challenges or adversities (Friedman *et al.*, 2017). It enables employees to bounce back from difficult situations while simultaneously learning from the experience (Luthans and Youssef-Morgan, 2017).

Regarding employees' PsyCap, a positive correlation can be established between their mental state and job performance. Thus, PsyCap can serve as a dependable resource that enables workers to manage stressful situations (Fu and Charoensukmongkol, 2022). Moreover, while PsyCap can be inherent in an employee, organizations and human resource managers need to invest more time and resources in prioritizing employee well-being. The social distancing measures implemented during the current pandemic have created a challenging environment for meeting employees' developmental needs. Consequently, employee well-being has become a priority during this pandemic. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H4. PsyCap moderates the relationship between employee well-being and job performance, such that the relationship strengthens as PysCap increases.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model of this study.



**Figure 1.**  
Conceptual model

**Note(s):** POS: Perceived Organizational Support, PsyCap: Psychological Capital  
**Source(s):** Authors

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Sample and data collection

The data for this study were gathered from frontline employees in public service organizations across five municipal bureaus in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from September to December 2021. These bureaus, which include municipal public offices and transport, civil affairs, land and housing, and healthcare, provide essential public services. After securing approval from the respective organizations' HR departments, a list of employees with at least two years of experience was compiled. The survey was then distributed to a random sample of frontline employees within each public organization.

In this study, we used a time-lagged design to mitigate the risk of common method bias (CMB) (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012). Data were gathered in two waves, six weeks apart. In the first wave (T1), we collected data on perceived job security, employee well-being, and demographic information. With the help of the HR department, we distributed the survey to 500 employees and received 350 valid responses, a response rate of 70%. In the second wave (T2), six weeks later, we collected data on POS, PsyCap, and job performance from the initial 350 respondents. We received 279 valid responses, a response rate of 79.71%. The final sample consisted of these 279 employees, 45.9% of whom were male and 54.1% female. Additionally, 69.1% held a bachelor's degree, and 30.9% had a master's degree.

#### 3.2 Measures

We used measurement items from previous studies for our survey. The survey was translated into Arabic, and then back-translated into English by a certified local translation service. Perceived job security was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Filimonau *et al.* (2020), with a sample item being, "When the Covid-19 crisis is over, my job will be secure" ( $\alpha = 0.896$ ). Employee well-being was measured using an 11-item scale adapted from Tennant *et al.* (2007), with a sample item being, "I've been feeling good about myself" ( $\alpha = 0.937$ ). Job performance was measured using an 18-item scale from Ramos-Villagrasa *et al.* (2019), with a sample item being, "I managed to plan my work so that I finished it on time" ( $\alpha = 0.884$ ). POS

was measured using an eight-item scale adapted from Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), with a sample item being, “My organization strongly considers my goals and values” ( $\alpha = 0.720$ ). PsyCap was measured using a 24-item scale adapted from Luthans (2007), with a sample item being, “I feel confident analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution” ( $\alpha = 0.914$ ).

### 3.3 Data analysis

Initially, we examined the characteristics of the data and the significance of the individual variables using descriptive statistics and a one-sample *t*-test, respectively. Following these analyses, we conducted a correlation analysis of the variables using Pearson’s correlation. We also employed a hierarchical least squares regression to test the models outlined in the previous section. These analyses included tests for autocorrelation, multicollinearity, and the normality of residuals. All tests were performed using IBM® SPSS® Statistics software.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Reliability, validity, and CMB

As shown in Table 1, we used a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The reliability of the constructs was confirmed by Cronbach’s alpha values exceeding the 0.70 threshold (Nunnally, 1970; Elkhwesky *et al.*, 2023a). Convergent validity (Table 1) was then evaluated using factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) measures. All items had significant factor loading ( $p < 0.001$ ), and the AVE for perceived job security and employee well-being exceeded 0.50, establishing convergent validity (Table 1; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Although the AVE for job performance, POS, and PsyCap was less than 0.5, the composite reliability exceeded 0.6, making the construct’s convergent validity acceptable. Furthermore, the AVE was greater than the shared variance, that is, the square of the intercorrelations among constructs, indicating the constructs’ discriminant validity (Hair *et al.*, 2019). We used Harman’s single-factor test to examine the measurement context effect, which revealed multiple distinct factors. The first factor accounted for 31.676% of the variance, suggesting that CMB was unlikely to be a concern in our survey.

### 4.2 Descriptive statistics and one-sample *t*-test

Following the verification of response reliability, we integrated descriptive statistics and one-sample *t*-test results. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 2.

The results in Table 2 reveal that perceived job security has a mean score of 3.9229 and a standard deviation of 0.91494, indicating minimal volatility and slight variation in responses. Employee well-being has a mean score of 3.46 and a standard deviation of 0.82337, also suggesting low volatility in responses. Similar low volatility is observed in the statistics for

Variable	Cronbach’s alpha	CR	$\lambda$	AVE
Perceived job security	0.896	0.927	0.872–0.879	0.762
Employee well-being	0.937	0.946	0.694–0.871	0.616
Job performance	0.884	0.894	0.645–0.793	0.392
POS	0.720	0.824	0.684–0.827	0.477
PsyCap	0.914	0.922	0.549–0.778	0.373

**Note(s):**  $\lambda$ , factor loadings

**Source(s):** Authors

**Table 1.**  
Variable reliability

job performance, POS, and PsyCap. Furthermore, the skewness coefficient for all variables is close to zero, implying a normal distribution of the data.

Table 3 displays the results of the one-sample *t*-test, which was used to determine whether the data variation was significant. The perceived job security variable has a *t*-statistic of 71.618, indicating its statistical significance at a 0.01 level of significance. The *t*-statistics for employee well-being and job performance are 70.345 and 103.827, respectively, both of which are statistically significant at a 0.01 level of significance. The variables POS and PsyCap are also significant at the 0.01 level, because their two-tailed significant statistics are close to zero. Their respective *t*-statistics, 98.745 and 110.420, further confirm their statistical significance.

#### 4.3 Correlation analysis

Table 4 displays the results of Pearson's correlation with significance. There is a significant positive correlation between perceived job security and employee well-being, although the

**Table 2.**  
Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Perceived job security	3.9229	0.91494	-0.806	0.146	0.569	0.291
Employee well-being	3.4676	0.82337	-0.462	0.146	0.195	0.291
Job performance	3.4844	0.55955	-0.012	0.146	1.407	0.291
POS	3.3759	0.57105	-0.084	0.146	1.948	0.291
PsyCap	3.5618	0.53880	-0.141	0.146	2.313	0.291

**Note(s):** *N* = 279  
**Source(s):** Authors

**Table 3.**  
One-sample *t*-test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
Perceived job security	71.618	278	0.000	3.92294	3.8151	4.0308
Employee well-being	70.345	278	0.000	3.46758	3.3705	3.5646
Job performance	103.827	277	0.000	3.48441	3.4183	3.5505
POS	98.745	278	0.000	3.37590	3.3086	3.4432
PsyCap	110.420	278	0.000	3.56183	3.4983	3.6253

Test value = 0  
**Source(s):** Authors

**Table 4.**  
Pearson's correlation

	Perceived job security	Employee well-being	Job performance	POS	PsyCap
Perceived job security	1				
Employee well-being	0.392**	1			
Job performance	0.383**	0.563**	1		
POS	0.293**	0.526**	0.668**	1	
PsyCap	0.328**	0.582**	0.740**	0.678**	1

**Note(s):** \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)  
**Source(s):** Authors



correlation is moderate, at 39.2%. Job performance also shows a statistically significant positive correlation with perceived job security, with a correlation of 38.3%. Both variables are directly proportional to job security during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, both POS and PsyCap show a strong correlation with employee well-being and job performance.

#### 4.4 Impact of perceived job security on employee well-being

We use a hierarchical least square (HLS) regression to examine the effect of perceived job security during the COVID-19 pandemic, considering the moderating variables of POS and PsyCap. The results of the HLS regression are displayed in [Tables 5 and 6](#).

The SPSS software performed the HLS regression on Model I and Model II concurrently. According to the HLS analysis results in [Table 5](#), Model I accounted for 15.3% of the population, while Model II represented 40.9% of the population. Furthermore, our models did not display any autocorrelation.

[Table 6](#) provides the coefficient statistics. In Model I, there is a positive correlation between perceived job security and employee well-being, with a *t*-statistic of 7.085, indicating a highly significant probability at a 0.01 level of significance. Model II further illustrates the positive effect of perceived job security on employee well-being, even when considering the presence of POS and PsyCap. The *t*-statistic for perceived job security in this model is 4.214, and with a significance level of 0.01, this variable, along with POS and PsyCap, are statistically significant, explaining their impact on employee well-being. Based on these statistics, Hypothesis 2 (H2) remains valid, owing to the significant positive influence of perceived job security on employees' job performance. Additionally, both moderators significantly and positively affected employee well-being during the pandemic, so we cannot reject Hypotheses 3 (H3) or 4 (H4).

#### 4.5 Impact of perceived job security on job performance

According to the results presented in [Table 7](#), Model III accounted for 14.7% of the population results, whereas Model IV accounted for 61.4%. Furthermore, the regression showed no signs of autocorrelation.

According to [Table 8](#), there is a positive correlation between perceived job security and job performance. This correlation is statistically significant, as evidenced by a *t*-statistic of 6.89 and a near-zero probability value. Model IV further illustrates the positive correlation between perceived job security and job performance, moderated by POS and PsyCap. The coefficient of perceived job security in this model has a *t*-statistic of 3.359 and a significance probability of 0.001, indicating a significant positive correlation at the 0.01 level of significance. Additionally, no multicollinearity issues were found among the independent variables.

Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> -square	Adjusted <i>R</i> -square	Std. Error of the estimate	<i>R</i> -square change	Change statistics			Sig. F change	Durbin-Watson
						<i>F</i> -change	df1	df2		
I	0.392	0.153	0.150	0.75894	0.153	50.199	1	277	0.000	
II	0.640	0.409	0.403	0.63625	0.256	59.564	2	275	0.000	1.998

**Note(s):** Predictors: (constant), perceived job security  
 Predictors: (constant), perceived job security, POS, PsyCap  
 Dependent variable: employee well-being  
**Source(s):** Authors

**Table 5.**  
Hierarchical least squares regression analysis model summary (equations I and II)

**Table 6.**  
Hierarchical least  
squares regression  
analysis coefficient  
statistics (equations I  
and II)

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		<i>t</i>	Sig.	Correlations		Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Zero-order	Partial	Tolerance	VIF
I										
(Constant)	2.085	0.200			10.404	0.000				
Perceived job security	0.352	0.050	0.392		7.085	0.000	0.392	0.392	1.000	1.000
II										
(Constant)	-0.319	0.277			-1.152	0.250				
Perceived job security	0.187	0.044	0.208		4.214	0.000	0.392	0.246	0.883	1.132
POS	0.312	0.091	0.216		3.409	0.001	0.526	0.201	0.534	1.872
PsyCap	0.562	0.098	0.368		5.728	0.000	0.582	0.327	0.521	1.918

**Note(s):** Dependent variable: employee well-being

**Source(s):** Authors

#### 4.6 Mediation analysis

This study applied the method proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) to assess the mediating role of employee well-being in the relationship between perceived job security and job performance. Simple and multiple regression analyses were used to evaluate the four critical conditions suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) for confirming the mediating relationship.

Table 9 presents the results of the simple regression analysis, demonstrating a positive correlation between perceived job security and employee well-being ( $\beta = 0.33, t = 6.81, p < 0.00$ ), thereby satisfying the first condition of Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation methodology. The second condition is also met, because perceived job security correlates significantly with job performance ( $\beta = 0.22, t = 6.50, p < 0.00$ ) (H2a). The third condition is fulfilled because employee well-being is positively and directly linked to job performance ( $\beta = 0.38, t = 11.31, p < 0.00$ ). For the fourth condition, Table 10 reveals that employee well-being partially mediates the relationship. Specifically, Table 10 shows that the correlation between perceived job security and job performance remains significant, but is reduced ( $\beta = 0.10, t = 3.33$ ) when employee well-being is introduced as a mediating variable. Thus, employee well-being partially mediates the relationship between perceived job security and job performance (H2b). Figure 2 presents the structural model.

#### 4.7 Moderation analysis

We conducted a moderation analysis using the PROCESS macros in SPSS software, as introduced by Hayes (2018). This tool employs a conditional process analysis to investigate the relationship between two variables, moderated by a third variable. It determines the existence of a moderating effect by incorporating a linear interaction term into a multiple regression model. This analysis necessitates the consideration of both the lower limit confidence interval (LLCI) and the upper limit confidence interval (ULCI). Given that the LLCI value was 0.3859 and the ULCI was 0.4367, both of which are not equal to zero, the output is based on the  $p$ -value ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating a significant effect, as outlined in the hypothesis.

Table 11 demonstrates that POS significantly moderates employee well-being, as evidenced by a  $t$ -statistic value of 4.38 and a  $p$ -value of 0.00, which is below the 0.05 threshold. This signifies the importance of POS at the 95% confidence level. Similarly, Table 12 reveals that PsyCap significantly moderates employee well-being, with a  $t$ -statistic value of 6.70 and a  $p$ -value of less than 0.05, indicating its significance at the 95% confidence level. Table 13 presents the model summary.

Figures 3 and 4 show visual representations of the conditional effects of the primary predictors.

Hypothesis 1 (H1) is accepted, indicating a positive correlation between perceived job security and job performance. Similarly, there is a statistically significant positive correlation between employee well-being and job performance, validating Hypothesis 2 (H2).

Model	$R$	$R$ -square	Adjusted $R$ -square	Std. Error of the estimate	$R$ -square change	Change statistics				Durbin-Watson
						$F$ change	df1	df2	Sig. F change	
III	0.383	0.147	0.144	0.51781	0.147	47.467	1	276	0.000	
IV	0.784	0.614	0.610	0.34945	0.467	166.008	2	274	0.000	1.906

**Note(s):** Predictors: (constant), perceived job security  
Predictors: (constant), perceived job security, POS, PsyCap  
dependent variable: job performance

**Source(s):** Authors

**Table 7.**  
Hierarchical least squares regression analysis model summary (equations III and IV)

**Table 8.**  
Hierarchical least  
squares regression  
analysis coefficient  
statistics (equations III  
and IV)

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		t	Sig	Correlations		Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Zero-order	Partial	Tolerance	VIF
III	(Constant)	2.567	0.137		18.769	0.000				
	Perceived job security	0.234	0.034	0.383	6.890	0.000	0.383	0.383	1.000	1.000
IV	(Constant)	0.363	0.152	0.134	2.383	0.018				
	Perceived job security	0.082	0.024	0.291	3.359	0.001	0.383	0.199	0.126	0.883
	POS	0.285	0.050	0.498	5.662	0.000	0.668	0.324	0.212	0.534
	PsyCap	0.517	0.054		9.595	0.000	0.740	0.501	0.360	0.522

**Note(s):** Dependent variable: job performance  
**Source(s):** Authors

Additionally, perceived job security is significantly related to job performance, supporting Hypothesis H2a. Employee well-being partially mediates the relationship between perceived job security and job performance, confirming Hypothesis H2b. Both moderators significantly enhance the relationship between employee well-being and job performance during the

IV	DV: employee well-being					DV: job performance				
	$\beta$	$R^2$	Std. Error	$t$	Sig	$\beta$	$R^2$	Std. Error	$t$	Sig
Perceived job security	0.339	0.144	0.050	6.819	0.000	0.221	0.133	0.034	6.500	0.000
Employee well-being	-	-	-	-	-	0.382	0.317	0.034	11.316	0.000

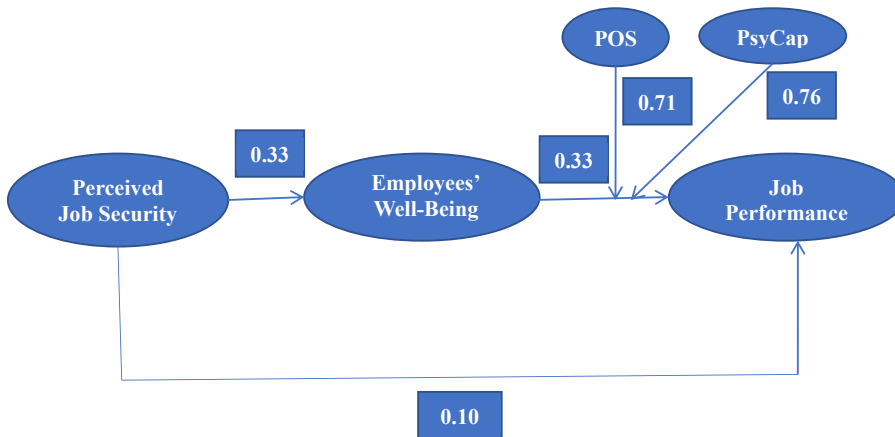
**Note(s):** IV: independent variables, DV: dependent variables  
**Source(s):** Authors

**Table 9.**  
Regression analysis

Independent variables	$F$	$R^2$	Job performance			
			$\beta$	Std. Error	$t$	Sig
Perceived job security	42.244	0.344	0.107	0.032	3.337	0.001
Employee well-being			0.337	0.036	9.396	0.000

**Source(s):** Authors

**Table 10.**  
Multiple regression



**Source(s):** Authors

**Figure 2.**  
Hypothesized  
structural model

	$\beta$	se	$t$	$p$	LLCI	ULCI
constant	0.85	0.43	1.98	0.05	0.00	1.70
WB	0.27	0.13	2.13	0.03	0.02	0.52
POS	0.58	0.13	4.38	0.00	0.32	0.84
Int_1	-0.02	0.04	-0.6	0.55	-0.09	0.05

**Source(s):** Authors

**Table 11.**  
Results of POS  
moderation analysis  
(model I)

pandemic. Consequently, we can confidently conclude that our analyses substantiate all four hypotheses, demonstrating that the relationships between the variables under consideration are statistically significant.

## 5. Discussion

This study explored the impact of perceived job security on employee well-being and job performance amid the social distancing measures enforced during the COVID-19 pandemic. While prior research has examined the effects of such measures on employee well-being (Tuzovic and Kabadayi, 2021) and the relationship between job security, subjective well-being, and job performance (Darvishmotevali and Ali, 2020), the influence of perceived job security and employee well-being on job performance has not been investigated. The findings of this study not only confirm the existence of such an effect, but also identified POS and PsyCap as moderating factors. The research showed that perceived job security positively influenced both job performance and employee well-being. Furthermore, this relationship was found to be stronger when moderated by POS and PsyCap.

**Table 12.**  
Results of PsyCap  
moderation analysis  
(model 2)

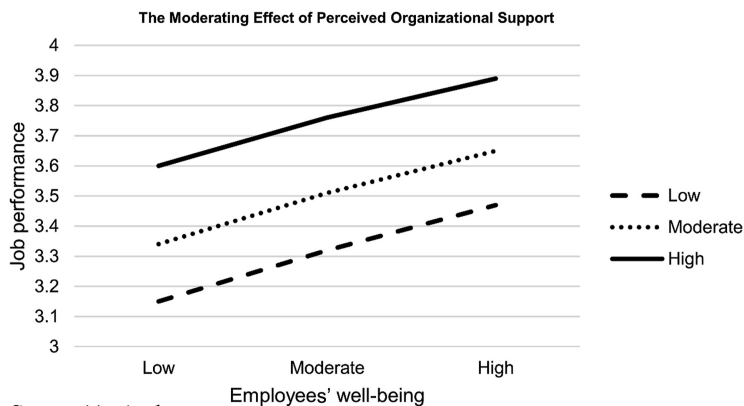
	B	se	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
constant	0.22	0.40	0.55	0.58	-0.57	1.01
WB	0.29	0.12	2.40	0.02	0.05	0.52
PsyCap	0.79	0.12	6.70	0.00	0.56	1.02
Int_1	0.04	0.03	-1.32	0.19	-0.11	0.02

**Source(s):** Authors

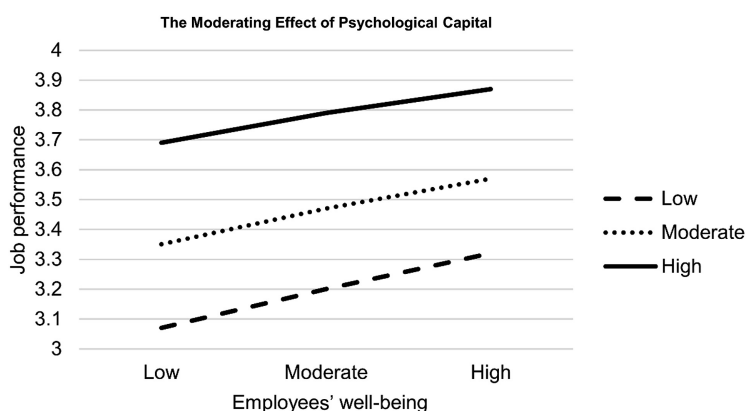
**Table 13.**  
Model summary

	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	MSE	<i>F</i>	DF1	DF2	<i>p</i>
Model 1	0.71	0.51	0.16	94.61	3.00	274.00	0.00
Model 2	0.76	0.58	0.13	124.18	3.00	274.00	0.00

**Source(s):** Authors



**Figure 3.**  
The moderating effect  
of POS on the  
association between  
employee well-being  
and job performance



Source(s): Authors

**Figure 4.**  
The moderating effect  
of PsyCap on the  
association between  
employee well-being  
and job performance

Our findings align with those of previous research. For instance, [Umrani et al. \(2019\)](#) discovered that job security and organizational support positively influenced employees' job performance. They proposed that ensuring job security and providing organizational support could enhance employees' job performance, a conclusion that resonates with our findings. [Usman \(2017\)](#) also found that improved psychological well-being positively affected job performance among corporate employees. Earlier studies have explored the impact of employee well-being on job performance from various angles. In their research on the relationship between employee well-being and performance, [Edgar et al. \(2017\)](#) found that different aspects of well-being contributed differently to employees' task and contextual performance, with happiness and trust showing a positive correlation with both types of performance. [Johari et al. \(2019\)](#) demonstrated that positive feedback positively affected employee well-being, serving as a significant mediator in the relationship between feedback and job performance.

This study's findings revealed a significant impact of perceived job security on employees' job performance. [Darvishmotevali and Ali \(2020\)](#) discovered a positive correlation between job security and employees' job performance, primarily through an increase in subjective well-being. The study also tested a second hypothesis (H2), suggesting a positive effect of employee well-being on job performance, which yielded significant positive results. Given its direct influence on both individual and organizational performance, enhancing employee well-being remains a top priority for many companies and executives. Therefore, this study's findings confirm a positive correlation between both employee well-being and job security with employee job performance.

Moreover, our findings indicate the critical role of employee well-being in the relationship between perceived job security and job performance. The data suggest that employee well-being contributes to a positive reciprocal response, which is manifested in their job performance. Our results confirm that when organizations invest in creating a secure job environment, and this is positively perceived by employees, it leads to an enhancement in job performance (H2a and H2b).

Our findings indicate that POS has a moderating effect on employee well-being and job performance, with the relationship strengthening as POS increases. [Cheng and Yi's \(2018\)](#) study emphasized how POS elements such as hope and resilience affect employee well-being and performance. They argued that POS plays a crucial moderating role in assessing employee well-being and job performance, because it gauges the degree to which employees

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believe their employer values their contributions. It also illustrates the company's concern for its employees' well-being and its potential to meet their socio-emotional needs. This study's results reveal that these socio-emotional needs influence job performance through the effect of POS on employee well-being, which subsequently has a positive effect on job performance.

This study also used PsyCap as a moderator, which demonstrated a significant and positive impact on employee well-being and job performance. The assumption was that this relationship would strengthen as PsyCap increased. [Fida et al. \(2015\)](#) found that each PsyCap attribute positively influenced overall health and work-related outcomes. PsyCap, encompassing traits such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and adaptability, is a set of resources that enhance work performance and success. Our findings indicate a significant positive moderating effect of PsyCap attributes on employee well-being and job performance. This affirms that PsyCap could be one of the essential tools that [Folkman and Lazarus \(1984\)](#) identified as necessary for employees to manage stressful workplace situations.

### *5.1 Theoretical implications*

This study presents three significant contributions to academic knowledge in this field of research. First, it expands upon the evolving body of work on the application of SCCT in the context of job security and performance, offering insights into previously unexplored implications. This is the first empirical study to apply the SCCT model in the setting of the COVID-19 pandemic within an emerging Arab country. Second, the study addresses the lack of prior literature on the effect of job security and employee well-being on work performance. We believe our findings will assist practitioners in uncovering new insights into employee work performance. Researchers will gain a deeper understanding of the contrasting outcomes, because the results support both hypotheses **H1** and **H2**. Furthermore, the application of both POS and PsyCap to assess their effect on job performance yielded a positive effect. Third, this research could offer a fresh perspective on additional ways to amplify the positive effect of employee well-being on job performance. Lastly, this study enriches the existing literature in the context of emerging Arab countries by introducing a new boundary condition of employee well-being, considering PsyCap and POS. In this study, PsyCap and POS were found to bolster the relationship between employee well-being and job performance.

### *5.2 Practical implications*

The study's findings provide crucial recommendations for practitioners and policymakers. First, managers might observe an uptick in employee job performance as a result of simultaneous enhancements in employees' well-being and perceived job security. Therefore, managers should place a high priority on employees' psychological, social, and health well-being ([Elkhwesky et al., 2023b](#)). Our findings suggest that increasing employee well-being should be a primary focus for organizations, given its direct effect on employee job performance ([Johari et al., 2019](#)). Practitioners can boost their employees' well-being by providing mentorship, encouragement, assistance when needed, and offering team-building opportunities to make employees feel valued.

Second, this research is significant because it offers organizations a deeper understanding of the effect of well-being on work performance. It forms the foundation for a variety of organizational outcomes, such as innovation, creativity, and employee engagement in organizational tasks. Thus, managers could potentially value employees' psychological well-being to ensure improved job performance. They should develop policies and practices to enhance their employees' PsyCap through training and soft skills programs, thereby improving their mental health and job performance. We also discovered that if a company fails to implement measures for maintaining job security, employees' negative attitudes and



behaviors related to work become apparent. Consequently, managers should consider ways to enhance employees' perceived job security factors to ensure optimal professional performance. Organizational strategies aimed at improving employees' job performance may not be effective if the employees lack self-confidence and experience stress. Interventions such as employee participation in planning, information sharing, and execution can reduce job insecurity and improve desired outcomes. By developing training programs and providing opportunities for employees to reflect on their work and learn new knowledge, practitioners can mitigate the effect of work stressors, thereby boosting their confidence and performance at work.

Lastly, it could be advantageous for managers to differentiate between employees with high and low levels of POS. It is crucial for businesses to ensure employees understand their value. By implementing effective performance management systems, managers can make employees feel appreciated and reassure them of their significant contributions to the workplace. Additionally, endorsing employees through a reward system can assist organizations in maintaining high levels of job security and productivity.

## 6. Conclusion

This study aimed to assess the impact of perceived job security and employee well-being on job performance during the implementation of social distancing protocols. Additionally, it examined the enhanced effect of PsyCap and POS on employee well-being during this period. Our findings emphasized the positive influence of POS and PsyCap on employee well-being and their combined direct effect on job performance. We anticipate that our findings will aid managers in formulating policies that enhance employee well-being and bolster perceived job security. Furthermore, the insights gained from this study could enable managers to better understand their employees' performance and devise effective strategies for improvement.

## 7. Limitations and future directions

The study has several limitations, including the use of self-reported data for analysis, which may introduce social desirability bias and generalization, potentially affecting the validity and credibility of the results. The study focused on the impact of job security and employee well-being on job performance, but other relevant variables could also influence job performance. Future research could incorporate dimensions such as work stress, conscientiousness, adaptability, and integrity. Additionally, the study did not consider the multidimensional structure of well-being, including psychological, social, and health aspects, and their potential impact on employee performance. This leaves unexplored areas for researchers and practitioners to investigate. The data were collected from Saudi Arabia, limiting the generalizability of the results to other national contexts. Future studies should aim to ensure the generalizability of the results across diverse cultures and contexts.

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**Further reading**

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