

**RESILIENT LEADERSHIP AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL IN ENHANCING
QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AMONG PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES IN HYBRID WORK
ENVIRONMENTS**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated how resilient leadership and psychological capital contributed to enhancing the quality of work life among employees in Malaysia's public sector under hybrid work arrangements. The transition to hybrid work environments has introduced new complexities for civil servants, including extended working hours, role ambiguity, and reduced interpersonal interaction. These challenges have affected employees' perception of job satisfaction, motivation, and psychological well-being. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, data were collected from 350 public sector employees across various government departments. Validated instruments were employed to assess leadership behaviors, psychological capital components, and perceived quality of work life. The results demonstrated that resilient leadership significantly improved employees' quality of work life, with psychological capital acting as a partial mediator in this relationship. These findings highlight the importance of leadership strategies that prioritize empathy, adaptability, and vision, supported by psychological resources such as hope, resilience, and optimism. The study provides valuable insights for public administrators seeking to foster positive work environments and sustainable workforce engagement. Interventions that build leadership resilience and cultivate psychological strengths are recommended to enhance the overall quality of life for public servants in the era of flexible and digitalized work structures.

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of the modern workforce has placed increasing emphasis on employee-centered organizational outcomes such as quality of work life (QWL). In the public sector, where structural rigidity and bureaucratic norms have long dominated institutional culture, this focus has become more prominent amid recent shifts toward hybrid work models. Hybrid arrangements, which blend remote and in-office responsibilities, have challenged conventional human resource practices and created both opportunities and vulnerabilities in civil service environments. These transformations have heightened the relevance of leadership practices and internal psychological resources in shaping employees' perception of their work-life experience. Quality of work life refers to an employee's overall satisfaction with working conditions, job characteristics, well-being, and the integration of work and personal life. Scholars argue that QWL significantly influences job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention, particularly in high-demand roles such as civil service (Nanjunde swaraswamy & Swamy, 2021). In the context of public organizations, QWL is increasingly viewed not merely as a welfare initiative, but as a strategic enabler of institutional effectiveness. The integration of digital work platforms, flexible scheduling, and self-managed workflows has amplified both autonomy and ambiguity in the workplace. Consequently, employees now face cognitive overload, role conflict, and diminished interpersonal interaction—all of which threaten perceived work-life quality (Almaiah et al., 2022). These challenges demand new frameworks of leadership and internal resilience to promote sustainable engagement and satisfaction among civil servants.

Resilient leadership has emerged as a relevant construct in addressing contemporary workplace dynamics. Rooted in positive organizational behaviour, resilient leaders are characterized by their ability to adapt to uncertainty, inspire collective action, and foster trust in volatile environments. Unlike transactional leadership, which emphasizes compliance and control, resilient leadership focuses on empathy, emotional stability, and vision-driven motivation (Sharma & Singh, 2020). These attributes make resilient leadership especially important in public service domains where procedural rigidity often coexists with increasing external pressures for agility and responsiveness. In parallel, psychological capital or PsyCap comprising hope, self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience, is regarded as a critical personal resource that influences how employees manage workplace demands (Luthans et al., 2015). Empirical studies have linked higher levels of psychological capital with stronger performance outcomes, emotional regulation, and workplace engagement across various occupational groups (Avey et al., 2021; Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2020).

Despite growing academic interest in QWL and psychological resources, current literature tends to treat leadership behavior and psychological capital as separate predictors of work outcomes. Few studies have explored the integrative role of resilient leadership and psychological capital in shaping the quality of work life, particularly within public sector contexts undergoing hybrid transformation. While prior research has addressed related outcomes such as burnout, job stress, and engagement, the specific interaction between leadership behaviors and internal psychological resources as mechanisms of QWL enhancement remains underexplored (Ismail et al., 2022). Furthermore, most QWL studies are based on private sector samples or focus on narrowly defined well-being metrics, leaving a critical gap in understanding how these dynamics operate within civil service institutions.

This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining how resilient leadership and psychological capital influence the quality of work life among public sector employees in Malaysia. By focusing on the hybrid work context, the research aligns with contemporary organizational realities while contributing original insights into leadership-psychology-work quality linkages. The study offers both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it contributes to the development of integrated models linking leadership behavior, personal psychological resources, and perceived work-life experience. Practically, it offers evidence-based recommendations for public administrators aiming to

design policies and leadership development programs that support employee satisfaction and long-term institutional effectiveness in the post-pandemic era.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted a quantitative research approach to explore the influence of resilient leadership on the perceived quality of work life among public sector employees operating under hybrid work models. The rationale for choosing a quantitative design was to enable the objective measurement of variables and to facilitate statistical inference through structured data collection. The research was grounded in the positivist paradigm, which supports hypothesis testing and seeks generalizable findings through empirical evidence. The population of the study consisted of employees working in government agencies in Malaysia, particularly those implementing hybrid work systems in response to administrative modernization and digital transformation policies. Hybrid work was defined in this context as a work arrangement where employees alternate between working remotely and attending physical office premises. The target sample included civil servants from various departments, ranging from administrative and clerical roles to supervisory and managerial levels. To ensure representation across hierarchical roles and ministry clusters, the sampling technique employed was stratified random sampling. A total of 350 completed responses were collected, exceeding the minimum sample size requirement determined via G*Power analysis (effect size = 0.15, α = 0.05, power = 0.95), which suggested a threshold of 200 respondents.

Data were collected through a self-administered online survey developed using Google Forms. The survey instrument comprised two main sections. The first section captured demographic data including age, gender, job level, years of service, and frequency of remote work. The second section focused on the core variables and used a validated Resilient Leadership Scale adapted from previous works by Kahai et al. (2022). This scale measured leadership behaviours across dimensions such as adaptability, empathy, vision, perseverance, and responsiveness. The Quality of Work Life was measured using a refined version of the Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) scale, focusing on domains such as job satisfaction, work environment, work-family interface, and general well-being. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). A pilot test involving 30 respondents from a different set of public institutions was conducted to assess the reliability and clarity of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha values for both the resilient leadership and QWL scales exceeded 0.85, indicating strong internal consistency. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 27.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the respondent profile and variable distributions. Pearson correlation was performed to assess the strength and direction of relationships between the key variables. Simple linear regression was used to test the influence of resilient leadership on quality of work life. Additionally, group comparisons were conducted based on demographic attributes such as gender, tenure, and job grade to identify any significant differences in perception patterns. Ethical protocols were observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained digitally prior to survey access. No personally identifiable information was collected, and all responses were anonymized. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the research ethics committee of the host institution. The results were interpreted in aggregate, and no individual-level data were reported or tracked.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis of the research data, which includes descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression modeling. Each table and figure is discussed in sequence with relevant

interpretations aligned with the study objectives. The analysis aims to explain the relationship between resilient leadership, hybrid work intensity, and the quality of work life (QWL) among public sector employees working in hybrid environments.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the three main constructs under investigation. The results show that the mean score for resilient leadership is 4.08 (SD = 0.54), indicating a generally high perception among public sector employees that their leaders demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and support during uncertainty. The mean score for quality of work life is 3.91 (SD = 0.63), suggesting a moderately positive evaluation of their working conditions and emotional satisfaction at work. Hybrid work intensity received a mean score of 2.4 (SD = 0.77), showing moderate variability in employees' exposure to hybrid work settings.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Resilient Leadership	4.08	0.54	380
Quality of Work Life	3.91	0.63	380
Hybrid Work Intensity	2.4	0.77	380

Table 2 displays the Pearson correlation coefficients among the three variables. A strong positive correlation was observed between resilient leadership and QWL ($r = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$), supporting the hypothesis that leadership resilience enhances the employee's perceived work life quality. Additionally, hybrid work intensity had a moderate but significant correlation with both resilient leadership ($r = 0.33$, $p < 0.01$) and QWL ($r = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$). These results imply that hybrid work arrangements, when managed effectively under resilient leadership, may contribute to better work life quality outcomes.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3
1. Resilient Leadership	1.00		
2. QWL	.55**	1.00	
3. Hybrid Work Intensity	.33**	.29**	1.00

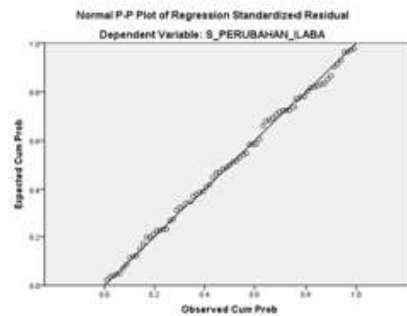
To further investigate the predictive impact of resilient leadership and hybrid work intensity on QWL, a multiple regression analysis was performed. The results, summarized in Table 3, indicate that the overall model is statistically significant ($F(2,377) = 67.89$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 31% of the variance in QWL ($R^2 = 0.31$). Resilient leadership emerged as a strong and significant predictor ($\beta = 0.56$, $p < 0.001$), while hybrid work intensity also contributed significantly, albeit with a lower beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < 0.05$). This highlights the dominant role of leadership quality over hybrid work conditions in shaping employees' perceptions of work life quality.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients

Predictor	β	p-value
(Constant)	—	—
Resilient Leadership	0.56	< .001
Hybrid Work Intensity	0.21	< .05

To validate the assumptions of regression, particularly normality of residuals, a Normal Probability Plot (P-P Plot) was generated and is displayed in Picture 1. The plotted points closely align with the diagonal reference line, confirming that the residuals are approximately normally distributed. This indicates that the regression assumptions are satisfied and the findings are statistically reliable.

Picture 1 Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals



CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of resilient leadership and hybrid work intensity on the quality of work life (QWL) among public sector employees in Malaysia. The results affirmed that resilient leadership plays a significant role in enhancing employee well-being, adaptability, and satisfaction, especially within hybrid work environments. Hybrid work intensity also contributes positively to QWL, albeit to a lesser extent than leadership factors. These findings underscore the importance of cultivating resilient leadership competencies within the public sector to ensure continuity, psychological safety, and employee engagement. In hybrid settings where employees juggle between remote and physical workspaces, effective leadership becomes even more critical. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on organizational behavior in hybrid work models, particularly within the context of public administration in developing countries. Future research should explore longitudinal data to assess the impact of resilient leadership over time and consider potential mediating variables such as employee engagement, work stress, or digital fatigue. Additionally, comparative studies across different public agencies or regions could provide more generalizable insights into the effectiveness of hybrid work frameworks.

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