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Predicting of Psychological Wellbeing Through Meaning in Work, Job Satisfaction, Quality of Work Life and Psychological Capital

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Eraj Mohamad Abdalrasoul Alsharghy, PhD Student
Department of Psychology, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.

Ali Mehdad, PhD *
Department of Psychology, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.
alimahdad@iau.ac.ir
Orcid: 0000-0001-9366-5500

Ahmed Abdulkadhim. Johni, PhD
Department of Psychology, University of Al-Qadisiya, Al-Qadisiya, Iraq.

Zahra Yousefi, PhD
Department of Psychology, Isf.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.

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This study was conducted to predict of psychological wellbeing through meaning in work, job satisfaction, quality of work life and psychological capital of teachers in the city of Baghdad. The research method was correlational, using multiple regression analysis. The statistical population consisted of all kindergarten teachers in Baghdad during the spring of 2025. From this population, 202 individuals were selected as the sample through convenience sampling and responded to a set of Questionnaires including Meaning in Work (Ivizan et al., 2013), Job Satisfaction (Smith et al., 1969), Psychological wellbeing (Ryff, 1989), quality of work life (Walton, 1973) and Psychological Capital (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). The research data were analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient and stepwise regression analysis with SPSS26 software. The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship ($p<.01$) between psychological well-being with meaning in work, job satisfaction, psychological capital, and a significant negative

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relationship ($p<0.01$) with quality of work life. Furthermore, the results of stepwise regression analysis revealed that in two steps, job satisfaction and psychological capital were able to explain 39.5% of the variance in psychological well-being, respectively, of which job satisfaction had the highest power with 34.2%. Based on the findings of the present study, to improve teachers' psychological well-being, it is necessary to provide the groundwork for enhancing and increasing job satisfaction and psychological capital. This subject should be considered by the educational policymakers in Iraq.

Keywords: meaning in work, job satisfaction, psychological capital, psychological well-being, teachers, baghdad.

Given the necessity of work for humans, the primary effort of organizational psychologists is not only to provide the essential psychological conditions for working but also to establish the groundwork for ensuring the psychological health and well-being of employees and the factors affecting it.

Ryff (1989) defines psychological well-being as the striving for perfection in realizing one's potential (Ryff & Singer, 1998). Well-being is a key and fundamental concept in a broad line of thinking that includes an individual's general life satisfaction, positive emotions, and the absence of negative emotions. Its first component is a cognitive judgment about how one's life is going, and the next component is the individual's happiness at the level of personal experiences (Diener et al. 2013). Psychological well-being can be defined as affective and cognitive reactions to the perception of personal characteristics and capabilities, adequate achievement, efficient and effective interaction with the world, a desirable connection and relationship with the community, and positive progression over time. This state can also include components such as life satisfaction, energy, and positive mood (Karademas, 2017). Shi et al. (2024) divide psychological well-

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being into two dimensions: happiness well-being, which includes employees' positive experiences regarding their work situations—one key aspect of hedonic well-being being job satisfaction, which has been used in most employee well-being studies (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011)—and Health well-being, which describes the physiological and psychological aspects of employee health in the workplace, including job-related stress, anxiety, fatigue, and burnout. The present study focuses more on Health well-being. Therefore, due to the importance and necessity of psychological well-being for employees in all occupational fields, identifying variables affecting it has been extensively studied.

In this regard, the role and impact of meaning in work on employees' psychological well-being can be mentioned. Meaningfulness, as a primary and fundamental source of intrinsic motivation, has attracted the attention of theorists and researchers in the fields of Industrial-Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior because work is part of human identity and can significantly impact an individual's personal and work life. Spreitzer (1995) defines meaning in work as the value of a work goal or purpose and the judgment of its alignment with the individual's standards and ideals, adding that meaningfulness involves the fit between the prerequisites of the work role and the individual's beliefs, values, and behaviors. General dimensions of meaningful work include: having a purpose or goal, autonomy, control, challenge, achievement, competence, skill, commitment, enthusiasm, constructiveness or providing service to others, self-actualization, growth and goal fulfillment, and living according to one's own values and goals (Fairlie, 2011). Albrecht (2013) defines meaningful work as a positive psychological state through

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which individuals feel they are making a positive, important, and useful contribution to a valuable purpose created through their work. Rosso et al. (2010) point to several sources of meaning in work; according to them, the sources of meaning in work are: the self (including personal values, beliefs, attitudes), others (including colleagues, leaders, social groups, and family), the work (including job design, organizational mission, economic conditions, national culture), and finally, spiritual activities. Therefore, considering the enumerated characteristics that constitute the conceptual meaning of meaningful work (including individuals' feeling of making a positive, important, and useful contribution to a valuable purpose through their work), it is evident that individuals with such feelings will perceive psychological well-being. Research conducted by Annison & Davidson (2023), Jalil & Ali (2023), confirming the impact of meaning in work on psychological well-being supports such an effect and relationship.

Another variable affecting psychological well-being is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is the positive feeling or attitude individuals hold towards their job (Mehdad, 2023). Job satisfaction is defined as the pleasant affective state resulting from an individual's appraisal of their job as achieving or facilitating the attainment of their job values; it is the outcome of job expectations and experiences, is highly subjective and personal. If the difference between expectations and experience is small, the level of satisfaction will be high and vice versa (Pan, 2015). Job satisfaction, as one of the occupational attitudes, is the positive feeling and cognition an individual has about their job duties, conditions, and situation (Tria, 2023). Job satisfaction is

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conceptualized as a multidimensional structure encompassing satisfaction with the nature of the job, supervisor, colleagues, pay, and promotion opportunities (Avery et al., 2015). Therefore, job satisfaction, as one of the main variables of work attitude (Mehdad, 2023), due to the positive feeling it brings following the performance of job duties and tasks, can lead to the perception of psychological well-being. Research conducted by Tatlıcıoğlu et al. (2024), Hamley et al. (2024), Naami et al. (2014), and Mosahebi et al. (2019) confirming the impact of job satisfaction on psychological well-being supports such an effect and relationship.

A different very important variable affecting psychological well-being is quality of work life. Quality of work life refers to the subjective perception of employees in organizations regarding the desirability of the physical and psychological work environment (Mehdad, 2023). Quality of work life constitutes a major part of every working individual's life, and since a significant portion of employees' lives is dedicated to fulfilling work commitments, improving the quality of this work life is undeniably very important (Kara et al., 2018). Quality of work life is the degree to which the work climate is favorable or unfavorable for employees. It is associated with the quality of the relationship between employees and the entire work environment. It is a multidimensional concept and covers various aspects that are fully effective in employees' work and are considered in measuring and improving the quality of work life (Dhamija et al., 2019). Quality of work life is a general term that encompasses employees' feelings about a number of work areas, including: rewards, economic benefits, security, working conditions, organizational and interpersonal relationships, and its

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fundamental concepts in work life. Quality of work life is a comprehensive program that entails various needs and is not limited to changing work content, work rules, integration of standards, organizational improvement, and enrichment. However, in addition to the key factors mentioned above, this program also has many other important features, such as: humanizing the workplace and work to create greater interest and motivation among employees by meeting their needs, creating grounds for their improvement and raising their competencies, respecting their personalities, increasing their cooperation and collaboration, and also paying attention to physical and psychological elements in the work environment (Ataei Sharif et al., 2025). Most definitions provided for quality of work life emphasize the promotion of health, well-being, job security, job satisfaction, increased competence, and balance between work and non-work life, and also provide a proper understanding of the concept of interaction between individuals and their work environment. An important point is that quality of work life is related to psychological well-being both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it suggests that the higher an individual's quality of work life, the higher their psychological well-being. From a practical perspective, extensive efforts have been made over the years by organizational and organizational behavior psychologists to increase positive behaviors and decrease negative behaviors in the work environment by improving the quality of work life (Mehdad, 2023). Research conducted by Falowo & Balogun (2025), Butaru (2025), Adnan Kamil et al. (2024), Entezami Lahijani et al. (2023), Farahlbakhsh et al. (2019), and Hosseini Nia & Hatami (2019) confirming the

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relationship between quality of work life and psychological well-being supports such an effect and relationship.

In addition to the mentioned variables, another variable influencing psychological well-being is psychological capital. Psychological capital, which refers to resources that an individual can use to improve their performance at work and achieve success, and includes self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience (Carmona-Halty et al., 2020), can contribute to employee performance both directly and by affecting other individual and contextual variables (Hussein & Shahrazad, 2022). Also, a person's internal positive psychological resources (individuals' strengths) are called psychological capital (Prasath et al., 2022). Regarding the role of psychological capital on psychological well-being, it is very important to note that the presence of positive states such as hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy in employees, and the contagion of such positive moods to individuals in the work environment, can increase psychological well-being in employees. Research conducted by Yildirim et al. (2025), Kaspour & Zarean (2025), Almurumudhe et al. (2024), Hayavi et al. (2021), Masoumparast et al. (2021), and Amini et al. (2020) confirming the relationship between psychological capital and psychological well-being supports such an effect and relationship.

Based on searches conducted in valid databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, Springer, Emerald, ISI, SID, Magiran, and several other databases, no study was found that simultaneously examined the predictive role of meaning in work, job satisfaction, quality of work life, and psychological capital for the psychological well-being of Iraqi teachers, although some studies have examined the relationship of each of the predictor

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variables or other variables with psychological well-being. For example, Mahdi & Gholami (2025) studied the relationship between emotional labor, psychological well-being, and job commitment of teachers; Mahmood & Tao (2024) studied the relationship between social support, job engagement, and professional well-being of teachers; Ilgan et al. (2015) studied the relationship between psychological well-being and quality of school work life; Okeke et al. (2024) studied the relationship between demographic variables and psychological well-being of primary school teachers; and ... Accordingly, a scientific knowledge gap and lack of scientific evidence seriously exists in Iraq for teachers regarding the variables of the present study. Therefore, the necessity of the present research is to provide research and scientific knowledge about the relationship between meaning in work, job satisfaction, quality of work life, and psychological capital with the psychological well-being of teachers in Iraq, consequently enabling the management of educational organizations and schools in Iraq to better manage the behavior, performance, and efficiency of teachers and, consequently, students by promoting constructs such as meaning in work, job satisfaction, quality of work life, psychological capital, and psychological well-being.

Therefore, based on the reviewed theoretical and research foundations presented, the aim of the present research is to answer these questions:

1- Is there a relationship between meaning in work, job satisfaction, quality of work life, and psychological capital with the psychological well-being of kindergarten teachers in Baghdad?

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2- To what extent does each of the predictor variables predict the psychological well-being of kindergarten teachers in Baghdad?

Method

This research is a descriptive-correlational study utilizing multiple regression analysis. The statistical population of this study consisted of all kindergarten teachers in the city of Baghdad, totaling 4877 individuals working across 203 kindergartens in the four regions of north, south, east, and west. A multi-stage cluster sampling method was employed. First, two regions (north and east) were randomly selected from among the four regions. Subsequently, from the selected regions, 30 kindergartens (15 from each region) were randomly chosen. The number of teachers working in these selected kindergartens was 615. From this group, 225 teachers based on the sample size table of Mitchell and Jolly (2007, p. 235), at the statistical confidence level of 95%, were selected as the sample using convenience sampling method. After collecting the questionnaires, 23 were deemed unusable, ultimately resulting in 202 questionnaires being analyzed. Data analysis was conducted at two levels: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. At the descriptive level, frequency tables, means, and standard deviations were calculated. At the inferential level, Pearson's correlation coefficient and stepwise multiple regression analysis were used. These analyses were performed using SPSS software, version 26. The following questionnaires were used to collect research data. It should be noted that these questionnaires were first translated from Persian into Arabic by a psychologist fluent in Arabic. They were then back-translated into Persian by an Arabic language specialist. After comparing the two versions, discrepancies were

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corrected, and the finalized versions were administered. The study population included 202 people and 13.4% had a diploma, 8.9% had a post-diploma, 43.6% had a bachelor's degree, and 34.1% had a master's degree; 10.4% were under 25 years old, 9.4% between 25 and 30 years old, 18.3% between 30 and 35 years old, 41.9% between 35 and 40 years old, and 20% over 40 years old, and 33.7% were single and 66.3% were married.

Instrument

Work Meaning Questionnaire

To measure meaning in work, the questionnaire by Ivizan et al. (2013) was used. The response scale for this questionnaire is a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree). The test-retest reliability of this questionnaire was reported by its creators as .60 at a significance level of .01. This questionnaire was used for the first time in Iran in the research by Eskandari & Mehdad (2022), where its content validity was reviewed and confirmed by two organizational psychology specialists before use. In that study, the Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was obtained as .82. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was .86.

Job Descriptive Index (JDI)

To measure job satisfaction, one of the valid tools called the Job Descriptive Index, which is used to assess job satisfaction and was developed by Smith et al. (1969) based on a five-factor model, was utilized. This questionnaire consists of 48 items and 5 subscales: Satisfaction with the Nature of the Job (12 items), Satisfaction with Supervisor (13 items), Satisfaction with Co-workers (10 items), Satisfaction with Promotion (6 items), and

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Satisfaction with Pay (7 items). In this study, according to the defined objective, the 12 items related to Satisfaction with the Nature of the Job were used. This questionnaire has been used in numerous studies, all attesting to its high validity and reliability. For example, in studies by Arasteh & Mehdad (2015), and Bashir Hassan AlDabi et al. (2025), the Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was reported as .93 and .90, respectively. In present study, the Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was .93.

Psychological Capital Questionnaire:

In this study, the 24-item Psychological Capital Questionnaire by Luthans et al. (2007), was used to measure psychological capital. This questionnaire includes 4 subscales: Hope, Resilience, Optimism, and Self-Efficacy, with each subscale containing 6 items. The score range is between 24 and 144, with a higher score indicating higher psychological capital. Cronbach's alpha for the subscales was reported by Luthans et al. (2007), as .76 for Hope, .71 for Resilience, .79 for Optimism, and .85 for Self-Efficacy. In the study by Zaben Khawwaf et al. (2024), the reliability of this questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha was reported as .73. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was .93.

Quality of Work Life

To measure Quality of Work Life, Walton Quality of Work Life Questionnaire (1973), was used. It contains 27 items and 8 subscales: Fair and Adequate Pay, Safe and Healthy Working Conditions, Opportunity for Growth and Continuous Security, Constitutionalism in the Organization, Social Relevance of Work Life, Overall Life Space, Social Integration and Cohesion in the Organization, and Development of Human Capabilities. The response scale for this questionnaire is a 5-point Likert scale. This

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questionnaire has been used in numerous domestic and international studies, indicating its high validity and reliability. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was .86.

Psychological Well-being

The short form (18 items) of the Psychological Well-being Questionnaire (RPWB) developed by Ryff (1989) was used. This questionnaire has 6 dimensions (Self-Acceptance, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, and Personal Growth). The total psychological well-being score is obtained by summing the scores of the 6 dimensions. This questionnaire has been used in numerous domestic and international studies, indicating its desirable validity and reliability. For example, Safarinia and Dortaj (2018) reported the Cronbach's alpha for this scale as .86. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was 0.81.

Results

The mean, standard deviation and Normality of data distribution (Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic) of the research variables are presented in Table 1.

As can be seen in Table 1, the mean of meaning in work, job satisfaction, quality of work life, psychological well-being, and psychological capital are 20.23, 47.77, 75.30, 76.94, and 48.44, respectively. Table 2 presents the correlation matrix of the research variables.

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Table 1
Descriptive Index of the Research Sample Group in Research Variables

	Research Variables	Mean	SD	Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic*
1	Meaning in Work	20.23	4.18	.013
2	Job Satisfaction	47.77	9.34	.011
3	Quality of Work Life	75.30	14.13	.012
4	Psychological Well-being	76.94	13.34	.014
5	Psychological Capital	48.44	10.27	.012

*The presented Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistics are all insignificant at the p>.05 level, so the assumption of normality of the data has been met.

Table 2
Pearson Correlation Matrix of Research Variables

	Research Variables	1	2	3	4	6
1	Meaning in Work	1				
2	Job Satisfaction	.73**	1			
3	Quality of Work Life	-.15*	-.28**	1		
4	Psychological Well-being	.42**	.58**	-.21**	1	
5	Psychological Capital	.64**	.72**	-.33**	.58**	1

**p<.01*p<.05

As can be seen in Table 2, there is a significant positive relationship (p<.01) between psychological well-being and meaning in work, job satisfaction, and psychological capital, and a significant negative relationship (p<.01) with quality of work life.

In Table 3, the results of predicting of psychological well-being through meaning in work, job satisfaction, quality of work life,

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and psychological capital through stepwise regression analysis are presented.

Table 3
Prediction of Psychological Well-Being Through Meaning in Work, Job Satisfaction, Quality of Work Life, and Psychological Capital

steps	constant and prediction variables	B	SE	β	t	*p*	R	R^2	F
1	Constant	37.02	3.99	-	9.29	.001	.585	.342	104.14**
	Job Satisfactin	.84	.08	.58	10.20	.001			
2	Constant	32.43	3/99	-	8.13	.001	.629	.395	64.99**
	Job Satisfactin	.50	.11	.35	4.39	.001			
	PsychologicalCapital	.43	.10	.33	4.16	.001			

** $p<.01$

As can be seen in Table 3, the results of stepwise regression analysis revealed that in two steps, job satisfaction and psychological capital were able to explain 39.5% of the variance in psychological well-being, respectively, of which job satisfaction had the highest power with 34.2%. ($p<.01$). The equation for predicting psychological well-being through job satisfaction and psychological capital (in the second and final step) is as follows.

(Psychological Capital (0/43) +Job Satisfaction (32/43+0/50) psychological well-being

Discussion

This study aimed to predict Psychological wellbeing through meaning in work, job satisfaction, quality of work life and

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psychological capital of teachers in the city of Baghdad. , the results of stepwise regression analysis revealed that in two steps, job satisfaction and psychological capital were able to explain 39.5% of the variance in psychological well-being, respectively, of which job satisfaction had the highest power with 34.2%. The findings of this study are consistent with the results of Tatlıcıoğlu et al. (2024), Hamley et al. (2024), Naami et al. (2014), and Mosahabi et al. (2019), regarding the impact of job satisfaction on psychological well-being. They also align with the findings of Yıldırım et al. (2025), Kaspar and Zarean (2025), Almurumudhe et al. (2024), Hayavi et al. (2021), Masoumparast et al. (2021), and Amini et al. (2020), concerning the relationship between psychological capital and psychological well-being.

To explain the finding of this study regarding the predictive power of job satisfaction for psychological well-being, it can be stated that job satisfaction, as one of mainly most important attitudes, is the positive feeling and cognition an individual has about their job duties, conditions, and situation (Tria, 2023). Furthermore, job satisfaction is defined as the pleasant affective state resulting from an individual's appraisal of their job as achieving or facilitating the attainment of their work-related values; it is the outcome of job expectations and experiences and is highly subjective and personal. If the discrepancy between expectations and experience is small, the level of satisfaction will be high and vice versa (Pan, 2015). Therefore, individuals will perceive psychological well-being due to the positive feeling they experience following the performance of their job tasks and duties. Additionally, the impact of job satisfaction on psychological well-being can be explained through the lens of the emotional contagion theory (Mehdad, 2023). Based on this

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theory, human affective states in the workplace, whether positive or negative, spill over into other aspects of people's lives. Consequently, employees who have a positive feeling about their work, experiences happiness and satisfaction from performing their tasks and duties, which leads to their psychological health, and vice versa.

Moreover, in explaining another finding of this study regarding the predictive power of psychological capital for psychological well-being, it is crucial to note that the presence of positive states such as hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy in employees, and the contagion of such positive moods to individuals in the work environment, increases psychological well-being among employees. In other words, these four components of psychological capital—hope optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy—together create a powerful psychological resource that impacts employees' psychological well-being. Furthermore, individuals with high levels of hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy believe that they can overcome work and life challenges and find multiple pathways to solve problems. Such individuals feel they have control over their work environment, rather than the environment controlling them. As a result, this sense of control and mastery reduces stress and helps them manage their environment more effectively, ultimately leading to enhanced psychological well-being for employees under such work conditions.

This study, like other studies, had limitations that should be considered in generalizing and interpreting the results. These limitations include the fact that this study was conducted on kindergarten teachers in Baghdad using a sampling method

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available in Iraq, so caution should be exercised in generalizing the results to other statistical populations, such as other teachers at different educational levels in Iraq. To overcome these limitations, it is necessary to conduct this study on other teachers at different educational levels using a random sampling method and taking into account the role of moderators, so that the generalizability of the results can be fully determined.

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