

**THE EFFECT OF ISLAMIC WORK ETHICS ON  
ACADEMICS' CAREER SUCCESS: THE  
MEDIATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL  
CAPITAL RESOURCES**

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**Abstract**

Everyone is working hard to be successful in his/her career and life overall as well. However, that requires an individual to be more ethical, committed, and self-contented towards his/her expected goal. Hence, this study aims to explore the influence of Islamic work ethics (IWE) on academics' career success (ACS), besides the role of psychological capital (PsyCap) as mediation between IWE and ACS. The study follows a deductive methodological approach, while the Structural Equation Modelling technique (SEM) applied for analyzing the model. The data was collected from full-time academic staff in public universities in Sudan. After analyzing 236 questionnaires, the findings indicated that IWE is positively related to the ACS. Furthermore, PsyCap was a significant mediator between IWE and ACS. Accordingly, these results were contributed to the theory of conservation of resource (COR) by identifying the role of IWE as one of the peace resources that help academic staff in generating additional resources to achieve their career goals. Lastly, the practical implications and new streams for further studies are discussed.

**Keywords:** Islamic Work Ethics, Academics' Career Success, Psychological Capital.

**1. Introduction**

Career success is a resource that has a prominent impact on academic staff performance by increasing their motivation and satisfaction. It also enhances academicians' ability to achieve the university's vision and mission in the long-run.<sup>1</sup>Hence, career success phenomenon becomes an interesting area of research in human resource (HR) platform<sup>2</sup> that has a considerable effect on individuals along with the organization.<sup>3</sup> For an individual, career success increases his/her self-esteem, commitment, engagement, competent identity to a particular area of career<sup>4</sup> in the short term, whereas, it has a significant effect on his/her feelings toward life satisfaction and happiness in the long run.<sup>5</sup> More importantly, career success pushes the wheels of the organization towards development and sustainability through the success of employees.<sup>6</sup>

However, the organizations today and universities, in particular, have adopted the new concept of "psychological contract shift" which lift-up the responsibility of career development from university management to the academic staff which increases their day-to-day academic overload.<sup>7</sup> As a result, academicians need to be more proactive in managing and developing their careers with respect to attaining their

career success in the future.<sup>8</sup> In a similar vein, the public universities in Sudan have low interest in improving the career success indicators among academic staff which consist of; objective indicators (i.e., position, promotion, pay, and publication [4Ps]) and subjective indicators (i.e., career and job satisfaction).<sup>9</sup> For example, Zakaria highlighted that public universities pay inadequate salary and bonuses to their academic staff, besides, the lack of financing for projects.<sup>10</sup> In relation to this, El-Shikieri and Musa found that some of the academicians in Sudanese universities were dissatisfied and had no commitment to their institutions.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, the anecdotal evidence ensures that there are two types of career success indicators (objective/extrinsic and subjective/intrinsic) which need to be taken into considerations by the public universities in Sudan. Wherein, objective success involves tangible indicators like salary, promotion, and publication meanwhile, subjective success contains career and job satisfaction. Although this study focuses on subjective career success (SCS)<sup>12</sup> for measuring academics' career success for several reasons; a) subjective career success increases the employees' happiness and life satisfaction.<sup>13</sup> b) Subjective success in career improves the employee proactivity, performance in general and learning skills development which contribute to the organization productivity. However, it reduces employees' turnover intention, actual turnover, and other deviant behaviors.<sup>14</sup>

To achieve career success, academic staff requires psychological resources in order to enhance their motivations. According to Spurk and his colleagues, who argue from the conservation of resource (COR) perspective, career success is a resource which people work hard to protect from loss or keep it through investing in other resources.<sup>15</sup> In line with the logic of COR theoretical approach, this study focuses on psychological resources' role in elevating the level of academics' career success. For instance, Islamic work ethic (IWE) and psychological capital (PsyCap) as personal psychological resources can predict and generate additional resources such as SCS. That in line with the empirical evidence, which emphasized that IWE has a significant effect on employees' commitment, satisfaction, organization citizenship behavior (OCB), while, reducing the employee turnover intention.<sup>16</sup>

Although the importance of academics' career success is a phenomenon, there is a lack of antecedents and mediators to provide more explanation of academics' career success in term of theory and practice.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, the objectives of this study are First; to utilize Islamic work ethics (IWE) as a primary predictor for academics' career success

because, the previous research showed a lacking in investigating that relationship between IWE and career success. Second; this study introduces PsyCap's resources (hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism [HERO]) as a mediating variable between IWE and academics' career success.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Career success**

Career success is defined as "the positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements one accumulates as a result of work experiences."<sup>18</sup> Career success is more related to the individual's considerations about a positive career outcome related to his/her experiences over time.<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, Arthur and colleagues narrate another definition showing the dynamic nature of career success. That it is "the accomplishment of desirable work-related outcomes at any point in a person's work experiences over time."<sup>20</sup> Moreover, career success evaluated based on two types of indicators which are objective and subjective success indicators.<sup>21</sup>

Objective career success (OCS) is observed by the third parties or considered as tangible indicators such as salary, promotions, hierarchical status, and publication, whereas the subjective career success (SCS) is focusing on intangible indicators which subjected to personal evaluations based on prior experiences such as job and career satisfaction.<sup>22</sup> From the subjective viewpoint, people have different career aspirations, values, and desires towards organizational factors such as work status, income, employment security, progression in the job, learning process, and work-family balance in terms of time-spent versus gained benefits.<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, objective success has a useful link with the social role and official position at the workplace that comprised from the income, job level, occupation, family situation, and tasks.<sup>24</sup> Further, objective success is reflecting the social understanding that shared by groups instead of the individual.<sup>25</sup> However, current literature depicts that, there is no comprehensive definition and specific measurement for career success due to the scholars' standpoint of profession's background and environment.<sup>26</sup>

On one hand, Arthur and colleagues<sup>27</sup> reported that the majority of traditional studies focused on exploring the objective success that related to progression, advancement, salary (pay), external marketability,<sup>28</sup> number of research publication, promotion, and/or

current positions.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, the contemporary researches concentrated on studying the career success from the subjective side that is measured by job satisfaction, career satisfaction, and internal marketability.<sup>30</sup> Consequently, there is a lack of consistency among scholars regarding comprehensive indicators that measure career success. Accordingly, this study focuses on subjective career success (psychological success)<sup>31</sup> because it was recently found that SCS influences OCS in the long term.<sup>32</sup> In other words, when an individual becomes more satisfied in his/her career, they will be motivated and happily working for achieving his/her success in career regardless of tangible incomes for that career.

In addition, career success has been studied from different perspectives related to the context of a career's nature, such as manager success, student success, worker success, and teachers' success. However, all the stated contexts have their considerations about career success in terms of their measurements. Regarding this, Abele and others depicted that career success varies from one occupational context to another, and there is a difference between measures of career success as well. Therefore, this research focuses on academics' career success in public universities in Sudan, since little is known about their experiences of career success.<sup>33</sup>

## **2.2 The Role of Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory**

Conservation of resource (COR) theory<sup>34</sup> is considered as one of the essential theories in the last 30 years.<sup>35</sup> COR deals with "objective reality" or "common appraisal" that is shared through groups of people, organizations, and culture<sup>36</sup> because it concentrates on circumstances that are related to stressors and challenges. Originally, the theory was proposed to deal with life stress. However, COR became a major theory in the field of burnout research as well as the emerging fields in positive psychology.<sup>37</sup> The primary tenet of that theory is that people strive to gain, retain, foster, and protect their resources.<sup>38</sup> Further, COR theory proposed that some issues play a central value for human related to health, well-being, peace, family, self-preservation, and a positive sense of self, even if the core elements of sense of self differ culturally.<sup>39</sup> This emphasizes that the organization should work hard to increase the motivation resources among employees in order to retain them in their organization.

Empirically, COR theory indicates that employee has a motivation for promoting, maintaining, and developing his/her existing

resources in order to get or acquire additional resources in the future. In other words, the presence of suitable individual resources which can be represented by a person's skills, material wealth, social networks and free time. Thus, all these factors contribute to one's well-being.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, this model is guided by COR assumption that academic staff strives to gain, maintain, and foster the positive resources which in turn assist them to achieve their career success in the future. According to Alarcon and colleagues, the person who is high in PsyCap's resources can be acquiring a vast reservoir of resources or considered as person who less likely to have inadequate personal resources which leadss them to experience a high level of physical and psychological well-being.<sup>41</sup> Hence, this model is driven by personal resources (Islamic work ethics and psychological capital) that act as personal motivators for guiding academic staff for achieving their career success. Therefore, the theory of COR plays a significant role in explaining the model understudy (see figure 2.1).

### **2.3 Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) and Academics' Career Success**

In general, Islam is a way of life specially in any Muslim country, but IWE is a belief about the work ethic that has varied across time and countries.<sup>42</sup> Recently, the prime role of religious beliefs and the notion that they have a potential connection with practices in management and organizational outcomes surfaced.<sup>43</sup> This connection however is deemed unclear because of the dearth of studies conducted in this area. Despite the fact that anecdotal evidence asserts that religion is shaping peoples' daily lives.<sup>44</sup> Traditionally, scholars of business and management have neutralized the organizations by putting the religion out of the equation. So, they ignored the possible association between religion and other domains in management at the workplace.<sup>45</sup> In contrast, the religious part is very important among employees within an organization due to their ethical issues controlled by religious commands. In fact, there are several religions over the world, but only two popular theories based on religion concepts which are; Protestant work ethics (PWE) which reflects the Christianity's prospective and Islamic work ethics (IWE) that is grounded in the Islamic perspective.<sup>46</sup>

IWE began to attract researchers' attention during the middle of the 1980s. Since then, it has not been investigated enough in relation to the possible mediators and outcomes. Hence, many gaps still exist which have been identified in the seminal work of Mohamed, Karim and Hussein in Malaysia.<sup>47</sup> IWE is described as the ethics that is rooted in the ground of Islamic teaching and principles which depend on the Islamic faith.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, IWE is vital for many organizations in order to reduce

the unethical behavior and practices in the workplace such as sexual harassment, corruption, deviant cases, fraud, and many others.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, IWE refers to the principle of right and wrong clearly advocated through the word of Allah Almighty.<sup>50</sup> Many years later, Beekun defined IWE as a set of moral codes and goodness principles that distinguish right practices from wrong in the workplace based on an Islamic perspective.<sup>51</sup>

Originally, IWE is stemmed from two Islamic main resources that *The Holy Quran* (the word of Allah Almighty) and Sunnah of Prophet *Hadrat Muhammad Rasulullah Khatam un Nabiyyin Sallallahu 'alaihi wa 'ala Alihi wa Ashabihi wa Sallam*, while the other two resources are consensus of scholars (*Ijmaa'*) and analogy (*Qiyas*) which have been established by Muslim scholars to deal with a newer situation that need to be addressed and judged. Therefore, ethics can be applied in every part of Muslims' life or organizational practices. Accordingly, there are two dimensions shaping the ethics in Islam; first set ethics toward the creator (Allah Almighty). Thus, every Muslim has to believe in the creator (Allah Almighty) is one and then has to worship Him alone in a way that is described in the Holy Qur'an and the authentic sayings and teachings of the Prophet *Hadrat Muhammad Rasulullah Khatam un Nabiyyin Sallallahu 'alaihi wa 'ala Alihi wa Ashabihi wa Sallam*. Second set, ethics toward other people; a Muslim as a person, needs to respect the code of conduct with others during his/her lifespan through maintaining well treatment and relationship with others.<sup>52</sup>

On the other hand, IWE has contradicted the theory X, which assumes that a human (man) is lazy and inherently dislikes work.<sup>53</sup> While, IWE motivates people to work through emphasizing the importance of work as a virtue for human's needs fulfilment, besides the necessity to achieve the life-balance among the individual itself and overall society.<sup>54</sup> IWE also stimulates an individual to work hard for achieving his/her expected objectives, which is advocated by several Quranic verses and authentic Hadiths. For example, Allah Almighty says:

“He is the one who has made the earth subjugated for you, so walk on its shoulders, and eat out of His provision, and to Him is the Resurrection.”<sup>55</sup>

In Sunnah, there is a hadith on how to perform the work properly to earn a living in an Islamic way. Prophet *Hadrat Muhammad Rasulullah Khatam un Nabiyyin Sallallahu 'alaihi wa 'ala Alihi wa Ashabihi wa Sallam* said:

“If someone goes out to seek nourishment for his small children, he is in the way of Allah Almighty. And if he works for his old father and mother, he is in the way of Allah Almighty. And if he works for himself for modesty, it is in the way of Allah Almighty, but if he works for the purpose of pride and boasting, he is in the way of Satan.”<sup>56</sup>

Related to this, the empirical evidence emphasized the value of IWE, besides, it is the ability to increase employees’ intrinsic motivation for achieving their positive outcomes (e.g., success, commitment, and OCB) whereas it is negatively related to counterproductive behavior.<sup>57</sup>

Further, the literature showed that there is a limitation and sacristy of IWE research. Although, IWE has been studied more in banking sector<sup>58</sup> but is limited in other fields. In line with this, IWE has been studied with a variety of work outcomes such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational performance,<sup>59</sup> OCB,<sup>60</sup> spur helping behavior.<sup>61</sup> These researches indicated that IWE has a positive relationship with positive work outcomes. According to Salahudin and colleagues investigated the effect of IWE on SMEs organizational commitment in Malaysia.<sup>62</sup> The results showed that IWE has a direct effect on organizational commitment. In a different context, In Pakistan, Tufail and others examined the impact of IWE on female academic staff’s OCB mediated by employee engagement.<sup>63</sup> The study confirmed that IWE is directly related to OCB and indirectly through employee engagement. In other words, an individual with IWE is more engaged in his work and has high OCB in the workplace. Moreover, there are other studies related to IWE that have been conducted during Covid-19 pandemic situation which has had a clear effect on economic and business of the whole world.<sup>64</sup> However, the evidence showed that IWE has a positive impact on employees’ outcomes, such as public service motivation in Iraqi institutions,<sup>65</sup> job satisfaction in Indonesian financial institutions,<sup>66</sup> and moderates the relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational practice in Pakistan.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, we propose that the IWE has a positive relationship with academics’ psychological career success because when the academic staff embraces IWE principles, they become more stimulated to work hard and achieve success in their career.

**H1: IWE IS POSITIVELY RELATED TO ACADEMICS’ CAREER SUCCESS.**

#### **2.4 Islamic work ethics and Psychological capital resources**

As mentioned earlier, IWE is needed in the organizations nowadays due to the importance of promoting employees' ethics at the workplace. The prior studies have shown the role of IWE in momentum employees' satisfaction and motivation as well as all positive resources such as psychological capital (PsyCap) resources (HERO).<sup>68</sup> Accordingly, Sehat and his colleagues examined the effect of IWE on PsyCap resources (HERO) among newcomers who work in 6 public organizations in Iran. The result revealed that IWE has a positive effect on PsyCap. This work opens the gate for scholars by showing the possibility of using IWE as a predictor for positive psychological resources.

Recently, empirical evidence emphasized that IWE has both direct and indirect effects on attitudinal as well as behavioral outcomes for Malaysian employees in Islamic financial bank institutions.<sup>69</sup> This evidence related to the assumption of COR theory that people who embrace IWE; they strive and work hard for generating additional resources such as HERO. However, and according to our best of knowledge, the study by Sehat<sup>70</sup> is the only study that has been published in Web of Science, Scopus, or Google scholar platforms which investigates the direct effect of IWE on PsyCap, although the importance of investigating the direct and indirect relationship between IWE and PsyCap for expanding the theoretical perspective and practice in organizations. Therefore, and based on the COR assumptions, we theorize that IWE promotes academic staff resources to attain their success in career.

## **H2: IWE IS POSITIVELY RELATED TO ACADEMICS' PSYCAP'S RESOURCES (HERO)**

### **2.5 Psychological Capital and Academics' Career Success**

Psychological capital (PsyCap), a newly emerged construct under the umbrella of positive psychology research is defined as "the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace."<sup>71</sup> Additionally, PsyCap has a positive psychological strength, which is defined as "one's positive appraisal of circumstances and probability for success based on motivated effort and perseverance."<sup>72</sup> PsyCap comprises four dimensions that are hope, (self)-efficacy, resilience, and optimism, the so-called (HERO).<sup>73</sup> More specifically, PsyCap refers to "an individual's positive psychological state of development and is

characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success.<sup>74</sup>

Previous literature showed that PsyCap has a strong effect on several work outcomes such as career success and work-life balance, performance and satisfaction. Related to this, Dorenzo and others found that PsyCap had predicted employability and career success as well as work-life balance.<sup>75</sup> In other words, employees with high PsyCap resources would be more successful in their career and committed to continue working in the organization. In addition, Luthans and others<sup>76</sup> examined the effect of PsyCap on management students' performance and satisfaction at the University of Midwestern in the US. The result revealed that PsyCap has a positive effect on both employees' performance and satisfaction. In a different context, Luthans and his colleagues have studied the role of PsyCap on 422 workers' performance in China. The findings showed that PsyCap is positively correlated with workers' performance.<sup>77</sup> In Sudan, there is one study has done by Mohammed and colleagues that has examined the direct relationship between PsyCap and career success. The results discovered that the positive effect of PsyCap on career success among academicians in Sudanese universities.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, PsyCap resources (HERO) have a significant impact on academics' career success.

### **H3: PSYCAP IS POSITIVELY RELATED TO ACADEMICS' CAREER SUCCESS.**

#### **2.6 The mediation role of Psychological capital resources**

Currently, the anecdotal evidence detected that PsyCap mediates several types of attitudes and behaviors. For example, PsyCap played a significant mediator role between servant leadership and its positive outcomes (i.e., intention to remain and OCB) and negative outcomes (i.e., lateness attitude).<sup>79</sup> In other words, PsyCap helps employees with reducing their lateness and enhancing their intention to remain and OCB. In China, Ngo and colleagues have examined the mediation effect of PsyCap resources between gender and career success. The result revealed that PsyCap resources mediate the relationship between gender and career success.<sup>80</sup> Recently, Mohammed and others have investigated the

mediation role of PsyCap in the relationship between protean career orientation (PCO) and career success. The results confirmed that PsyCap has a significant mediation effect between PCO and career success of university teachers in Sudanese context.<sup>81</sup>

Moreover, Hobfoll and others have stressed the importance of the COR theory as a comprehensive theory for explaining the antecedents, mechanisms, and outcomes of career success.<sup>82</sup> Based on this, the employees who experience PsyCap resources, they will work hard to protect these resources and generate additional resources for attaining their success in career and psychological well-being as well. In other words, employees with IWE will devote more effort to achieve their career success by increasing their positive PsyCap resources (HERO). Therefore, we propose that PsyCap has a mediation role between IWE and academics' career success.

**H4: PSYCAP WILL MEDIATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IWE AND ACADEMICS' CAREER SUCCESS.**

**The Study Model**

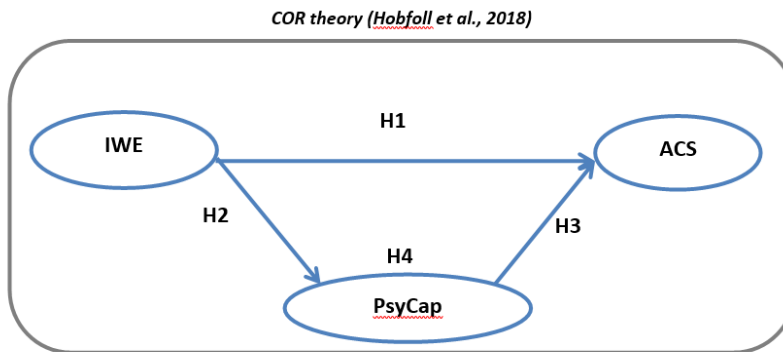


Figure 2.1: Study Framework Based on COR theory

**3. Research Methods**

**3.1 Procedures and Instruments**

Data was collected from 5 public universities in Sudan in order to meet the purpose of this study by employing a self-administered questionnaire (hand to hand). First, we applied the

*G\*power 3.1* software<sup>83</sup> for calculating the sample size with the following criteria:  $f^2 = 0.15$  (medium),  $\alpha = 0.05$ ,<sup>84</sup> number of predictors = 2 and the power was set at 80%.<sup>85</sup> The sample size required to test the model is 68 respondents, but this number was tripled to be 204 for having a useful effect size. Second, on the other hand, the data were collected by distributing 50 bundles of questionnaires to each of these five universities, which mean the complete questionnaires distributed were 250. However, the final questionnaires collected were 236, which is equivalent to the response rate 94.4%.

Finally, the questionnaire formed in 3 parts: part (A); involves questions about career success, part (B) covers the questions about PsyCap and PCO. Lastly, part (C) includes information related to the demographic data of the respondents. The items used to measure academics' psychological career success adopted and adapted from Greenhaus and colleagues work in 1990.<sup>86</sup> Whereas the measurements related to gauge PsyCap and IWE were adapted from Luthans and colleagues in 2012,<sup>87</sup> and Tufail work in 2016,<sup>88</sup> respectively. The authors asked respondents to select the suitable answer according to their opinion based on the Likert scale from 1–5 points, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree.

### 3.2 Respondents' Profile

The demographic data of the participants are specified in Table (1.2) which comprised of males (66.9%) and females (33.1%). A majority of the respondents are PhD holders; the percentage being 50.8%. This is due to the requirement of being a lecturer in public universities in Sudan. Most of the respondents are located in Khartoum and Sudan University (32.6% and 28.8%), respectively. These universities are considered the top two in Sudan and have more students compared to the other universities.

<i>Respondents' Profile Data</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Gender</i>	Male	158	66.9

	Female	78	33.1
<b>Age</b>	Less than 25 Yrs	15	6.4
	25 – 35	85	36.0
	36 – 45	78	33.1
	More than 45 Yrs	58	24.6
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	71	30.1
	Married	159	67.4
	Divorced	6	2.5
<b>Educational Level</b>	Bachelor's degree	15	6.4
	Master's degree	100	42.4
	PhD	120	50.8
	Others	1	.4
<b>Experience</b>	Less than 5 Yrs	53	22.5
	5 – 10	67	28.4
	11 – 15	46	19.5
	More than 15 Yrs	70	29.7
<b>Working Institution</b>	University of Khartoum	77	32.6
	Sudan University of Science and Technology	68	28.8
	University of Gezira	36	15.3

	Al-Neelain University	32	13.6
	Omdurman Islamic University	23	9.7

Table 3.1: Articulate the participants' profile

#### 4. Data Analysis and Results

For evaluating this study's model, Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique was used through applying the smart-PLS 3.2.6 is a new version released.<sup>89</sup> We followed the structural equation modeling (SEM) theory which recommends any model to undergo through two-stage analytical procedures<sup>90</sup> that can be applied for both reflective and formative constructs.<sup>91</sup> Accordingly, we conducted the measurement model test (validity and reliability of constructs) followed by the structural model (testing the hypotheses),<sup>92</sup> testing the path coefficients besides the use of bootstrapping method (5000 resampling) for loadings.<sup>93</sup>

##### 4.1 Measuring Reflective Criteria

There are two types of validity used for assessing the model's measurements, which are the convergent validity (CV) and followed by discriminant validity (DV).

###### 4.1.1 Convergent Validity

The convergent validity of measurements model is evaluated through analyzing three criteria; (1) factors loadings, (2) average variance extracted (AVE), and (3) composite reliability (CR).<sup>94</sup> There are three criteria found in the literature for acceptable value for loadings are >0.5, 0.6, or 0.7.<sup>95</sup> However, the last criterion (>0.7) is recommended by methodologists nowadays. Hence, the items' loadings for this model were above 0.7, except one item related to IWE measures was 0.69. Besides, the composite reliability (CR) for every dimension was more than threshold 0.7; and the AVE for every variable achieved more than 0.5, as suggested in the literature (see Table 4.1).

Sec ond ord er	First order/ dimens ions	It ems	Facto r  Load ings	Cronb ach's  Alpha	rho _A	Comp osite  Reliab ility  (CR)	Avera ge  Varia nce  Extrac ted  (AVE)
<b>P s y c h o l o g i c a l C a p i t a l</b>	Efficac y	Se2	0.733	0.823	0.82 4	0.876	0.587
		Se3	0.779				
		Se4	0.826				
		Se5	0.76				
		Se6	0.728				
	Hope	Ho1	0.715	0.758	0.76 4	0.847	0.581
		Ho3	0.756				
		Ho4	0.744				
		Ho5	0.83				
	Resilie nce	Re1	0.799	0.764	0.77 6	0.848	0.584
		Re2	0.805				
		Re4	0.734				
		Re5	0.713				
	Optimi sm	Op3	0.758	0.797	0.79 7	0.868	0.623

		Op4	0.802				
		Op5	0.828				
		Op6	0.766				
	Islamic Work Ethics	IW E1	0.792	0.891	0.896	0.915	0.606
		IW E11	0.766				
		IW E2	0.857				
		IW E3	0.765				
		IW E4	0.753				
		IW E5	0.818				
		IW E7	0.69				
	Academics' Career Success	Sub 1	0.793	0.807	0.834	0.864	0.564
		Sub 2	0.82				
		Sub 3	0.534				
		Sub 4	0.826				
		Sub 5	0.743				

Table 4.1: Assessment of Construct Convergent Validity

	<i>Hope</i>	<i>Optimism</i>	<i>Resilience</i>	<i>Efficiency</i>	<i>ACS</i>	<i>IWE</i>
<i>Ho1</i>	<b>0.715</b>	0.238	0.424	0.441	0.215	0.398
<i>Ho3</i>	<b>0.756</b>	0.368	0.456	0.392	0.21	0.373
<i>Ho4</i>	<b>0.744</b>	0.329	0.46	0.46	0.305	0.27
<i>Ho5</i>	<b>0.83</b>	0.454	0.484	0.49	0.281	0.414
<i>Op3</i>	0.399	<b>0.758</b>	0.33	0.399	0.227	0.371
<i>Op4</i>	0.313	<b>0.802</b>	0.272	0.385	0.221	0.346
<i>Op5</i>	0.364	<b>0.828</b>	0.296	0.368	0.384	0.258
<i>Op6</i>	0.375	<b>0.766</b>	0.298	0.389	0.328	0.25
<i>Re1</i>	0.486	0.303	<b>0.799</b>	0.388	0.304	0.334
<i>Re2</i>	0.55	0.321	<b>0.805</b>	0.466	0.231	0.417
<i>Re4</i>	0.406	0.383	<b>0.734</b>	0.276	0.243	0.326
<i>Re5</i>	0.359	0.128	<b>0.713</b>	0.258	0.249	0.305
<i>Se2</i>	0.5	0.418	0.394	<b>0.733</b>	0.354	0.26
<i>Se3</i>	0.459	0.397	0.299	<b>0.779</b>	0.299	0.324
<i>Se4</i>	0.473	0.355	0.374	<b>0.826</b>	0.293	0.338
<i>Se5</i>	0.389	0.306	0.341	<b>0.76</b>	0.287	0.233
<i>Se6</i>	0.415	0.391	0.372	<b>0.728</b>	0.276	0.365
<i>Sub1</i>	0.318	0.37	0.253	0.253	<b>0.793</b>	0.123

<i>Sub2</i>	0.318	0.34	0.222	0.354	<b>0.82</b>	0.058
<i>Sub3</i>	0.051	0.243	0.068	0.134	<b>0.534</b>	-0.148
<i>Sub4</i>	0.21	0.209	0.309	0.304	<b>0.826</b>	0.033
<i>Sub5</i>	0.252	0.221	0.325	0.373	<b>0.743</b>	0.092
<i>IWE1</i>	0.332	0.246	0.35	0.333	0.056	<b>0.792</b>
<i>IWE11</i>	0.379	0.28	0.339	0.349	0.059	<b>0.766</b>
<i>IWE2</i>	0.383	0.288	0.379	0.323	0.055	<b>0.857</b>
<i>IWE3</i>	0.382	0.27	0.399	0.245	0.111	<b>0.765</b>
<i>IWE4</i>	0.405	0.403	0.362	0.349	0.121	<b>0.753</b>
<i>IWE5</i>	0.382	0.361	0.366	0.339	0.005	<b>0.818</b>
<i>IWE7</i>	0.328	0.246	0.276	0.206	-0.016	<b>0.69</b>

Table 4.2: Cross Loadings

#### 4.1.2 Discriminant Validity

There are three criteria for assessing the discriminant validity (DV), namely by examining cross-loadings; Fornell-Larcker criterion; and HTMT. First, for evaluating the items' cross-loadings scores, that can be described as score of outers loadings for items of latent variable in one construct should be greater than the respective items' cross-loading of latent variable's cross-loading for another latent variable.<sup>96</sup> Table 4.2 reflects that the outer loading of each indicator was greater its respective latent variable than its cross-loading on another latent variable.

Second, for examining the DV, the criterion Fornell-Larcker was applied wherein the square root of AVE for each latent variable should be ranked higher than its correlation with another latent variable. In line with the stated criteria, we found that the square root of AVE for every latent variable was more than its correlation with another latent variable. The outcome is explained in Table 4.3 below.

Finally, based on Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) as a new criterion for assessing discriminant validity which was proposed by Henseler since 2015.<sup>97</sup> This recent approach was able to reveal the estimation of the true correlation between two latent variables.<sup>98</sup> For assessing HTMT, the threshold value should be less than 0.90, which had been suggested by Henseler.<sup>99</sup> If the result is above 0.90, this shows a lack of discriminant validity. Relatedly, table 4.4 shows that the HTMT criterion according to the rule of thumb that all values should be less than 0.90. Eventually, Table 4.5 shows that all hypotheses were supported because of the t-value > 1.96 and P<0.01. While the PsyCap plays a significant mediator on the relationship between IWE and academics' career success (see discussion part). In addition, the result of R square test for endogenous variables was (0.276) for academics' career success and (0.301) for PsyCap while all these values considered as substantial, which is more than the threshold (0.26) based on Cohen's rule of thumb.<sup>100</sup> On the other hand, the exogenous variable reported based on the Cohen (1988) rule of thumb which indicates that (0.02, 0.15, and 0.35) small size, medium size, and substantial effect respectively. For this model, IWE has a relationship with academics' career success has a small size (0.068). In contrast, IWE has a relationship with PsyCap has a substantial effect (0.431), and finally, PsyCap in relation with academics' career success is having a substantial impact (0.373) as well (see table 4.5) below.

	<i>ACS</i>	<i>Efficacy</i>	<i>Hope</i>	<i>IWE</i>	<i>Optimism</i>	<i>Resilience</i>
<i>A. Career Success</i>	0.751					
<i>Efficacy</i>	0.395	0.766				
<i>Hope</i>	0.333	0.586	0.762			
<i>IWE</i>	0.076	0.398	0.478	0.779		
<i>Optimism</i>	0.368	0.489	0.461	0.389	0.789	

<i>Resilience</i>	0.335	0.466	0.599	0.456	0.38	0.764
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Table 4.3: Fornell and Larcker Criterion

	<i>ACS</i>	<i>Efficacy</i>	<i>Hope</i>	<i>IWE</i>	<i>Optimism</i>	<i>Resilience</i>
<i>Academic Career Success</i>						
<i>Efficacy</i>	0.462					
<i>Hope</i>	0.39	0.739				
<i>IWE</i>	0.152	0.459	0.579			
<i>Optimism</i>	0.46	0.602	0.585	0.456		
<i>Resilience</i>	0.401	0.572	0.774	0.545	0.474	

Table 4.4: HTMT Criterion

## 4.2 Structural Model Assessment

To get an appropriate result from path modeling technique, we run bootstrapping for the path coefficient. Specifically, we analyzed the path coefficient, <sup>101</sup> R<sup>2</sup> (R-Square) of Cohen, <sup>102</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup> (Q-Square), <sup>103</sup> (see table 4.5 and figure 4.1) which reflects the hypotheses testing.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	t-value	Decision	R <sup>2</sup>	f <sup>2</sup>
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<b>H1</b>	IWE -> Academics' Career Success	-0.265	0.074	***3.587	Supported	0.276	0.068
<b>H2</b>	IWE ->PsyCap	0.549	0.086	***6.369	Supported	0.301	0.431
<b>H3</b>	PsyCap -> Academics' Career Success	0.622	0.071	***8.783	Supported		0.373
<b>H4</b> (mediation)	IWE -> Academics' Career Success	0.341	0.083	***4.125	Supported		

Table 4.5: Results stemming from Structural Modeling

Note: \*\*\*p<0.005, \*\*p<0.01, \*P<0.05. IWE (Islamic Work Ethics), PsyCap (Psychological Capital), and ACS (Academic Career Success).

**The Statistical Model**

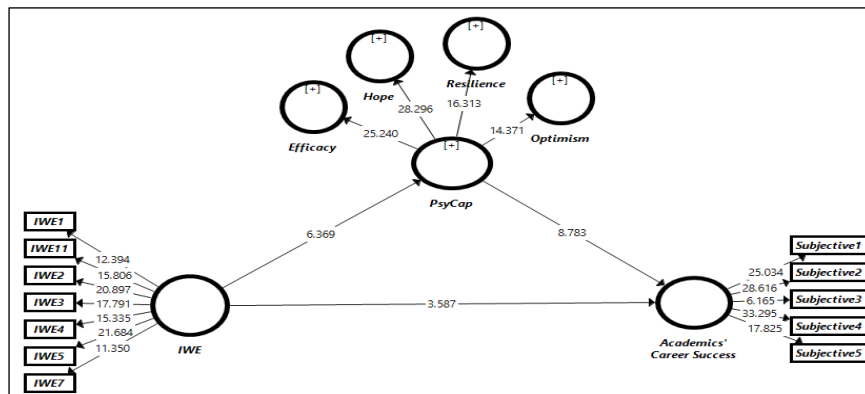


Figure 4.1: The Statistical Model of the Study

**5. Discussion and Conclusion**

This study aims to investigate the impact of IWE on academics' career success in public universities in Sudan besides the role of PsyCap in mediating the relationship between IWE and academics' career success based on the COR theory. The results showed that all hypotheses have

supported which are sectioned into direct effect and indirect effect as following.

Firstly, for the indirect effect, IWE has a positive impact on PsyCap and academics' career success. PsyCap is positively related to academics' career success. These findings are congruent with previous studies which emphasized the significant role of IWE on enhancing employees' positive outcomes, such as job satisfaction, locus of control, positive psychological resources, and OCB.<sup>104</sup> In addition, the theoretical tenets of COR pointed out that persons seek to gain resources that are in line with their characteristics, conditions, objects, and energies.<sup>105</sup> So, IWE and PsyCap are resources that academicians need to obtain and that help them to generate additional resources in the future. These resources considered as "entities that either are centrally valued in their own right (e.g., self-esteem, close attachments, health, and inner peace), or act as means to obtain centrally valued ends (e.g., money, social support, and credit)."<sup>106</sup> Grounded on that logic, IWE is a personal resource that related to inner peace which enhances individuals to gain their success in a career as well as psychological well-being. Moreover, IWE, is a resource that is captures the Muslim belief system, besides his/her internal and external values such as dedication and perseverance at work. Where, IWE transforms individual to be more hopeful, self-efficacious, resilient, and optimistic to achieve their career success.

Secondly, the results also revealed that PsyCaphas has a positive impact on academics' career success. This result support other scholars' findings<sup>107</sup> who came to the same conclusion. However, in terms of mediation, this study found that PsyCap has a positive mediation effect on the relationship between IWE and academics' career success. We argue that this is an essential finding in academics' career success literature because prior studies focused on the role of PsyCap as predictor or outcome<sup>108</sup> instead of checking its value in being a mechanism to gain positive outcomes. However, recently, Newman and his colleagues found that PsyCap mediates the relationship between social support and refugees' well-being in Australia.<sup>109</sup> That finding showed the value of PsyCap for increasing refugees' well-being. Similarly, in this study, PsyCap resources are considered as an essential mechanism that helps academicians to attain their career success. Moreover, according to the COR theory, academicians who embrace IWE which helps them to generate positive PsyCap resources (i.e., hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism) which in turn would help them achieve their career success in career.

## **6. Significance of the Study**

This study aspires to contribute to the theory and practice in the area of career success of academics in the universities. From the theoretical perspective, the study investigated the role of IWE on academics' career success as well as the mediation effect of PsyCap on that relationship. However, a few studies had been conducted in this area. Also, the results of this study expanded the COR theory<sup>110</sup> by documenting that IWE is one of the peace resources that enhances individuals for generating additional resources to achieve their goals. Relating to this, people who have IWE resource, they can attain their success in a career directly or indirectly by generating other resources such as hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism (HERO).

From the practical perspective, the findings will be beneficial not only to the academic staff but also to the universities as well as it would be helpful in increasing their understanding of the psychological resources that have the potential to generate career success of the academics. Furthermore, the study supported the proposal for institutions to pay attention to developing an individual(s) psychological resource (IWE and HERO) that might increase their opportunity to achieve their career success.

Finally, this study also provided direction for future research that researchers need to apply COR theory for a different type of resources to identify the suitable resources that could assist employees for fulfilling their goal.

## **7. Limitations and Future Avenues**

The positive psychology movement<sup>111</sup> has three streams; positive emotions, positive individual traits, and positive institutions. This study focused on positive individual traits (IWE and PsyCap) only and their influence on the career success of academics from the COR theory perspective. Further, IWE has multi-values, especially in the Muslim community (population). However, this study investigated the full-time lecturers in Sudanese public universities only. These limitations may open new streams for researchers and academicians while addressing career success from other positive psychological predictors, for example, positive emotions and positive institutions or they could apply other theories that address career success such as the goal-setting theory. They can also replicate this model in different contexts for having more validation.

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