



The Effect of Organizational Well-Being on Organizational Flourishing among Employees of Selected Martial Arts Federations: The Mediating Role of Psychological Flexibility

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to examine the effect of organizational well-being on organizational flourishing among employees of selected martial arts federations with the mediating role of psychological flexibility.

Methods and Materials: The present research employed a descriptive-correlational design using structural equation modeling. The statistical population consisted of 337 employees from the martial arts, judo, wushu, karate, and taekwondo federations, from which 175 participants were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using the Organizational Well-Being Questionnaire, the Organizational Flourishing Questionnaire, and the Psychological Flexibility Questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using correlation analysis, multiple regression, and structural equation modeling with PLS and SPSS software.

Findings: The results indicated that organizational well-being significantly predicted organizational flourishing ($\beta = 0.460$, $t = 5.766$, $p < .001$) and psychological flexibility ($\beta = 0.584$, $t = 3.156$, $p < .001$). Psychological flexibility also significantly predicted organizational flourishing ($\beta = 0.496$, $t = 6.600$, $p < .001$). Mediation analysis revealed that psychological flexibility significantly mediated the relationship between organizational well-being and organizational flourishing, as the direct effect of organizational well-being on organizational flourishing decreased after inclusion of the mediator while the indirect effect became significant. Organizational well-being explained 21.16% of the variance in organizational flourishing and 34.10% of the variance in psychological flexibility, while psychological flexibility explained 24.60% of the variance in organizational flourishing.

Conclusion: The findings demonstrate that organizational well-being enhances organizational flourishing both directly and indirectly by strengthening employees' psychological flexibility, highlighting psychological flexibility as a core psychological mechanism in sustainable organizational development within sport federations.

Keywords: Organizational well-being; organizational flourishing; psychological flexibility; sport federations; structural equation modeling

1 Introduction

In contemporary organizational science, employee well-being has emerged as a central determinant of sustainable organizational performance, particularly within human-centered institutions where emotional, cognitive, and behavioral resources directly shape organizational outcomes. Organizations operating in high-pressure and performance-driven environments—such as national sports federations—face increasing demands to cultivate not only productivity but also psychological resilience, motivational capacity, and adaptive functioning among their employees. Recent global research highlights that the quality of employees' psychological experience at work profoundly influences organizational stability, innovation, retention, and collective growth (Ahmad et al., 2025; Parsaei & Shayan Mehr, 2024). Consequently, modern management scholarship increasingly frames organizational success not merely as an economic construct but as a psychosocial system rooted in employee well-being, developmental capacity, and psychological flexibility (Bani Hassan et al., 2022; Fahrudin, 2025).

Organizational well-being represents a multidimensional construct encompassing emotional health, job satisfaction, perceived support, security, and meaningfulness of work. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that high levels of occupational well-being mitigate burnout, enhance job satisfaction, and strengthen employees' engagement with organizational goals (Abkhiz & Mikaeli Manie, 2020; Ahmad et al., 2025). In sport-related organizations, where occupational stressors are amplified by performance expectations, public accountability, and intense competition, the need for systematic attention to employee well-being becomes even more pronounced (Bani Hassan et al., 2022; Esmailnasab & Miryoosefi, 2020). Sport federations function not only as administrative bodies but as complex social ecosystems requiring psychological stability, motivational alignment, and collective coherence to operate effectively.

Parallel to the growing emphasis on well-being, the concept of organizational flourishing has gained prominence in management theory. Organizational flourishing extends beyond operational efficiency and financial success to include organizational vitality, internal trust, collaborative climate, structural adaptability, participative governance, and sustainable development. Organizations characterized by flourishing exhibit higher levels of innovation, collective commitment, and long-term resilience (Parvin et al., 2021;

Shakibaei et al., 2019). Such organizations cultivate environments in which employees experience professional growth, meaningful contribution, and psychological ownership over institutional goals. Within sport organizations, flourishing becomes a strategic asset, enabling federations to adapt to dynamic policy landscapes, technological change, and international performance pressures (Parvin et al., 2021; Poursoltani Zarandi & Iraj Naghander, 2014).

Despite the theoretical significance of organizational flourishing, its antecedents remain underexplored in sport management literature. Existing studies suggest that structural flexibility, leadership quality, knowledge management, and organizational culture contribute substantially to flourishing processes (Haraghi et al., 2015; Seyednaghavi et al., 2019). However, emerging evidence indicates that the psychological conditions of employees—particularly well-being and flexibility—constitute foundational mechanisms through which these structural factors exert influence. Psychological processes serve as the internal engine that transforms organizational policies into lived organizational experience (Koller & Hicks, 2016; Lee, 2019).

Psychological flexibility, a construct rooted in contextual behavioral science, refers to the capacity to remain open to experience, adapt behavior to situational demands, regulate emotional responses, and pursue valued goals despite adversity. Psychological flexibility enables individuals to cope effectively with occupational stress, maintain performance under pressure, and sustain long-term psychological health (Akbari et al., 2021; Taqavi Deilami Pour & Pali, 2025). In organizational settings, psychologically flexible employees demonstrate superior problem-solving skills, emotional regulation, decision quality, and interpersonal effectiveness (Haraghi et al., 2015; Seyednaghavi et al., 2019). Consequently, psychological flexibility is increasingly recognized as a strategic psychological resource supporting organizational development and adaptability.

The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding these relationships. According to the JD-R model, employee well-being emerges from the balance between occupational demands and available psychological and organizational resources. When employees possess sufficient resources—such as psychological flexibility, social support, autonomy, and job security—the negative impact of job demands diminishes, enabling sustained engagement and

performance (Ahmad et al., 2025; Lee, 2019). Organizational well-being thus becomes both a product of effective resource management and a catalyst for further organizational development.

Within sport federations, these dynamics acquire heightened importance. Sport organizations operate in complex socio-political environments characterized by stakeholder scrutiny, fluctuating funding, international competition, and evolving governance standards. Employees within these institutions encounter chronic stressors related to event coordination, athlete management, regulatory compliance, and public accountability (Bani Hassan et al., 2022; Esmailnasab & Miryoosefi, 2020). Psychological flexibility allows employees to navigate these pressures constructively, preserving emotional stability while maintaining professional effectiveness (Akbari et al., 2021; Fahrudin, 2025). At the organizational level, the collective psychological flexibility of staff becomes a critical driver of adaptive capacity and institutional resilience.

Empirical research increasingly confirms the interconnectedness of well-being, psychological flexibility, and organizational outcomes. Abkhiz and Mikaeli Manie demonstrated that occupational well-being significantly predicts job satisfaction and reduces burnout among educators, illustrating the protective role of psychological resources in demanding work environments (Abkhiz & Mikaeli Manie, 2020). Similarly, Ahmad and colleagues found that psychological well-being mediates the relationship between organizational stressors and work performance, highlighting the centrality of mental health in organizational functioning (Ahmad et al., 2025; Ullah et al., 2025). In sport-specific contexts, Esmailnasab and Miryoosefi reported that organizational health and psychological capital significantly enhance employee well-being and performance in sports organizations (Esmailnasab & Miryoosefi, 2020).

Research on professional development further underscores these relationships. Parvin et al. revealed that professional growth among physical education teachers depends heavily on supportive organizational climates that nurture psychological well-being and adaptive functioning (Parvin et al., 2021). Similarly, Bashir and Hussan emphasized the importance of continuous professional development for strengthening teachers' engagement and resilience, reinforcing the role of organizational context in psychological flourishing (Bashir & Hussan, 2020). Healy et al. also demonstrated that effective professional development interventions improve knowledge transfer,

confidence, and instructional practices among physical educators (Healy et al., 2019).

Cultural and ethical dimensions further complicate this landscape. Cervantes and Clark highlighted the importance of cultural humility and social justice in physical education training, suggesting that organizational well-being must be grounded not only in efficiency but also in ethical and cultural sensitivity (Cervantes & Clark, 2019). These principles align with contemporary management perspectives emphasizing inclusive governance, employee voice, and participatory leadership as pillars of organizational flourishing (Parvin et al., 2021; Seyednaghavi et al., 2019).

Psychological capital research further complements these findings. Koller and Hicks found that psychological capital qualities—including hope, resilience, self-efficacy, and optimism—are strongly associated with psychological well-being among mental health professionals, reinforcing the notion that internal psychological resources underpin sustainable organizational performance (Koller & Hicks, 2016). Recent investigations by Taqavi Deilami Pour and Pali confirmed that psychological empowerment enhances job performance through the mediating roles of professional identity and psychological well-being (Taqavi Deilami Pour & Pali, 2025). Similarly, Rezagholiyan et al. demonstrated that emotional regulation and self-compassion significantly influence subjective well-being through complex mediating mechanisms (Rezagholiyan et al., 2025).

In the context of technological transformation, new challenges and opportunities emerge. Fahrudin's work on AI-driven content moderation organizations illustrates how psychological well-being becomes even more critical in digitally intensive work environments characterized by cognitive overload and emotional strain (Fahrudin, 2025). These findings reinforce the universality of well-being and flexibility as core organizational resources across diverse professional domains.

Despite extensive evidence on these constructs independently, few studies have systematically examined the integrated model linking organizational well-being, psychological flexibility, and organizational flourishing—particularly within national sport federations. Existing sport management research has focused predominantly on leadership, governance, and performance outcomes, often overlooking the psychological mechanisms that enable organizational development from within (Bani Hassan et al., 2022; Esmailnasab & Miryoosefi, 2020). Moreover, while flexibility in human resource processes has been studied in

public sector organizations (Seyednaghavi et al., 2019), the mediating role of psychological flexibility between well-being and organizational flourishing remains largely unexplored.

Addressing this gap is essential for advancing both theory and practice. Understanding how organizational well-being cultivates psychological flexibility—and how this flexibility, in turn, fosters organizational flourishing—provides a comprehensive framework for designing evidence-based management interventions in sport federations. Such insights enable administrators to move beyond surface-level reforms toward deep organizational transformation grounded in psychological science and human development principles.

Accordingly, the aim of the present study is to examine the effect of organizational well-being on organizational flourishing among employees of selected martial arts federations, with the mediating role of psychological flexibility.

2 Methods and Materials

The present study is a descriptive research of correlational type and is based on structural equation modeling; in terms of purpose, it is considered an applied research. The statistical population of the study consisted of all employees of the martial arts, judo, wushu, karate, and taekwondo federations, totaling 337 individuals. According to the Krejcie and Morgan table (1970), a sample of 175 employees from the martial arts, judo, wushu, karate, and taekwondo federations was selected using proportionate stratified random sampling. In this study, in addition to library research, field methods were employed for data collection. Three standardized questionnaires were used in this research.

1. **Organizational Well-Being Questionnaire:** The Organizational Well-Being Questionnaire developed by Peter Warr (1990) was designed as an assessment instrument to measure various dimensions of employee well-being and job satisfaction in the workplace. This questionnaire consists of 48 items and 7 components: opportunity for control, opportunity for skill use, clarity of work goals, social support, job security, work value, and

work meaningfulness. The items are scored on a 5-point Likert scale.

2. **Organizational Flourishing Questionnaire:** The Organizational Flourishing Questionnaire was developed by Spidey (2007) and consists of 6 components and 28 items, with the primary objective of measuring organizational flourishing from employees' perspectives. This questionnaire includes the following components: organizational transparency (items 1–5), mutual trust (items 6–10), cooperation (items 11–15), delegation of authority (items 16–20), low organizational layering (items 21–25), and participation (items 26–28).
3. **Psychological Flexibility Questionnaire:** This questionnaire was developed by Kashdan et al. (2020). It comprises three components: avoidance (withdrawal from negative emotions and events that occur during goal pursuit), acceptance (embracing emotions that arise in the process of goal pursuit), and utilization (using negative emotions as a source of motivation to pursue goals). The instrument contains 15 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Given that the questionnaires used in this study are standardized instruments and have been repeatedly applied in numerous studies, they possess adequate reliability. Moreover, in the present study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess the reliability of the measurement instruments. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the organizational well-being, organizational flourishing, and psychological flexibility questionnaires were calculated as 0.81, 0.79, and 0.82, respectively, which are considered acceptable. In this study, Cronbach's alpha test was used to determine instrument reliability, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was used to examine data normality, and structural equation modeling was applied for data analysis. All statistical analyses were conducted using PLS and SPSS software.

3 Findings and Results

First, the demographic characteristics of the participants are presented.

Table 1*Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Under 40 years	79	45
	41 years and above	96	55
Gender	Female	82	47
	Male	93	53
Educational Level	Associate's and Bachelor's degrees	63	36
	Master's and Doctoral degrees	112	64

As shown in Table 1, 47% of the participants were female and 53% were male. In addition, 45% of the participants were under 40 years of age and 55% were 41 years and older.

Furthermore, 36% of the participants held associate's or bachelor's degrees, whereas 64% held master's or doctoral degrees.

Table 2*Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables*

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Organizational Well-Being	157.56	14.36	85	233
Organizational Flourishing	98.19	7.62	53	132
Psychological Flexibility	51.83	5.16	36	71

According to Table 2, the mean scores of organizational well-being, organizational flourishing, and psychological flexibility were 157.56, 98.19, and 51.83, respectively.

To examine the normality of the data, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was employed, the results of which are presented in Table 3.

Table 3*Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test of Normality*

Variable	K–S Statistic	Significance Level (p)	Result
Organizational Well-Being	0.364	0.084	Normal
Organizational Flourishing	0.258	0.073	Normal
Psychological Flexibility	0.247	0.137	Normal

Table 3 shows the results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. Based on these findings, the variables follow a normal distribution.

First, the main research model is presented in terms of standardized coefficients and the z significance coefficients.

Figure 1

Standardized Coefficients of the Main Research Model

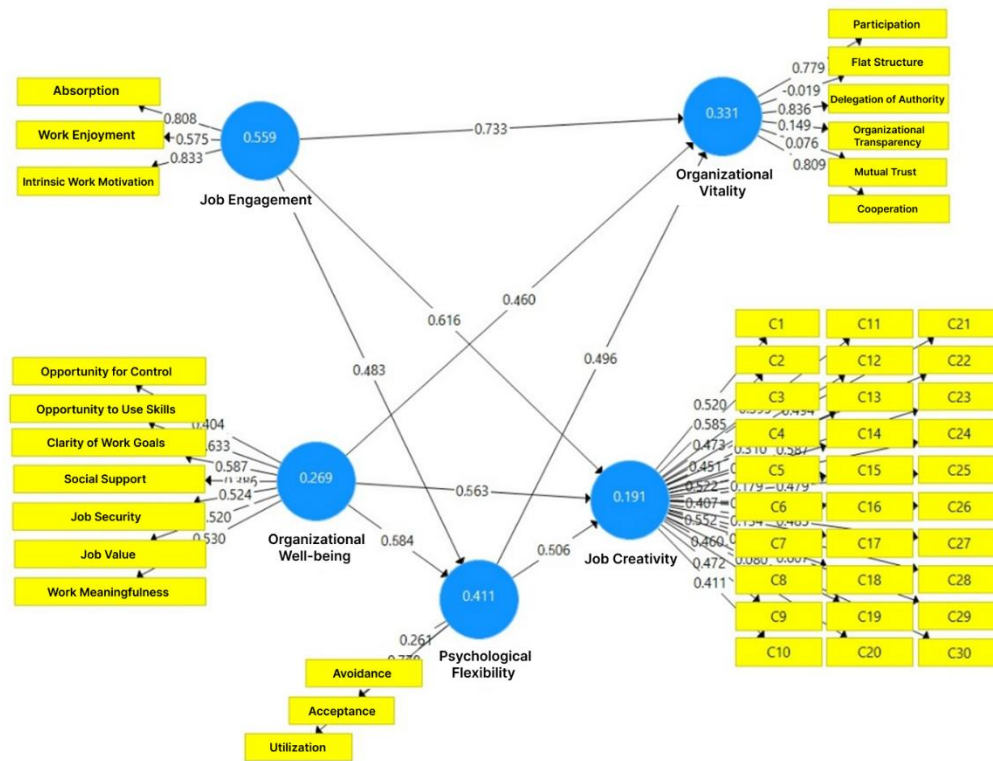


Figure 2

Z Significance Coefficients of the Main Research Model

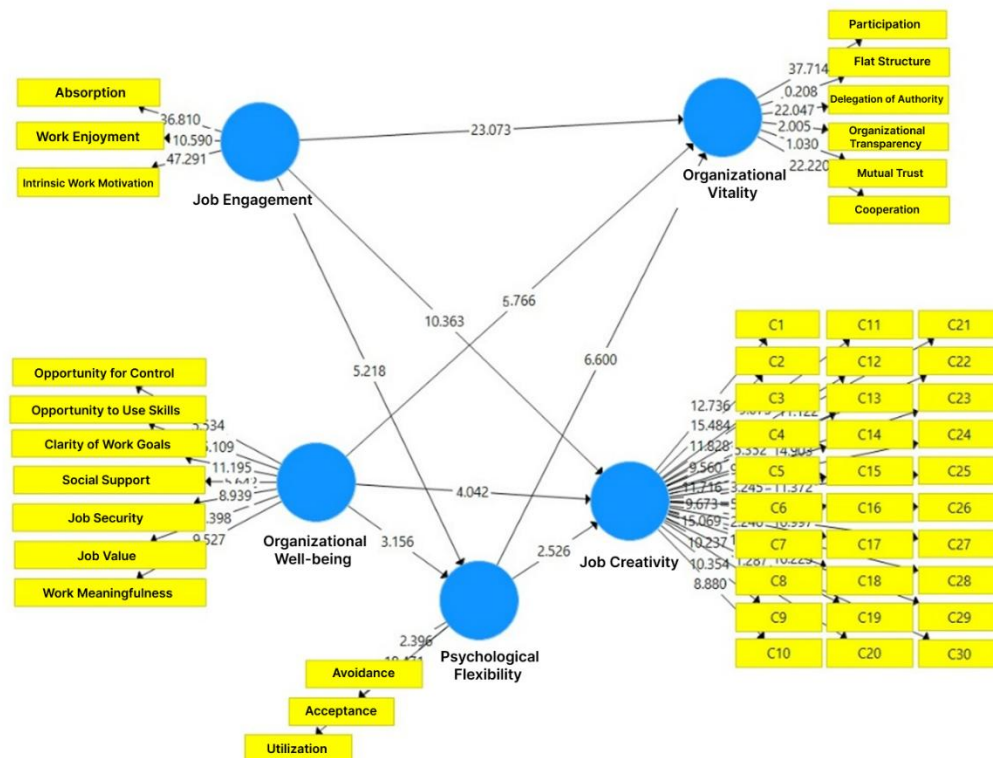


Table 4*Structural Model Results and Mediation Effects*

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-value	p-value	R ²	Direct Effect (c)	Direct Effect (c')	Indirect Effect (b)	Total Effect
H1	Organizational Well-Being → Organizational Flourishing	0.460	5.766	0.000	0.2116	—	—	—	—
H2	Organizational Well-Being → Psychological Flexibility	0.584	3.156	0.000	0.3410	—	—	—	—
H3	Psychological Flexibility → Organizational Flourishing	0.496	6.600	0.000	0.2460	—	—	—	—
H4	Organizational Well-Being → Organizational Flourishing (with mediator)	—	—	—	—	0.460 (p = 0.01)	0.035 (p = 0.001)	—	—

The structural equation modeling results demonstrated that organizational well-being has a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational flourishing ($\beta = 0.460$, $t = 5.766$, $p < .001$), explaining 21.16% of the variance in organizational flourishing. Organizational well-being also exerted a significant positive influence on psychological flexibility ($\beta = 0.584$, $t = 3.156$, $p < .001$), accounting for 34.10% of the variance in psychological flexibility. Furthermore, psychological flexibility significantly predicted organizational flourishing ($\beta = 0.496$, $t = 6.600$, $p < .001$), explaining 24.60% of its variance. Mediation analysis using the Sobel test confirmed the mediating role of psychological flexibility in the relationship between organizational well-being and organizational flourishing, as all associated t-values exceeded the critical threshold of ± 1.96 . The direct effect of organizational well-being on organizational flourishing ($c = 0.460$, $p = .01$) decreased substantially and lost statistical significance after inclusion of the mediator ($c' = 0.035$, $p = .001$), while the indirect effect became significant ($b = 0.067$, $p = .01$). The total effect of organizational well-being on organizational flourishing was 0.337 ($p = .01$), indicating a significant partial mediation, thereby supporting all four research hypotheses.

4 Discussion

The present study sought to examine the effect of organizational well-being on organizational flourishing among employees of selected martial arts federations, with the mediating role of psychological flexibility. The findings provide strong empirical support for the proposed structural model and contribute meaningful insights to the sport management and organizational psychology literature. The results revealed that organizational well-being significantly predicts organizational flourishing, organizational well-being significantly predicts psychological flexibility,

psychological flexibility significantly predicts organizational flourishing, and psychological flexibility serves as a significant mediator in the relationship between organizational well-being and organizational flourishing. These results confirm the central role of psychological and organizational resources in shaping sustainable organizational development.

The first hypothesis demonstrated that organizational well-being exerts a positive and significant influence on organizational flourishing. This finding aligns with extensive theoretical and empirical literature emphasizing that employees' emotional, psychological, and social experiences at work are fundamental drivers of organizational effectiveness, cohesion, and growth. Parvin et al. conceptualized organizational flourishing as a multi-dimensional construct encompassing trust, cooperation, structural flexibility, participation, and transparency, all of which are nurtured within supportive and healthy work environments (Parvin et al., 2021). Similarly, Bani Hassan et al. reported that organizational well-being significantly enhances social performance within the Ministry of Sport and Youth, reinforcing the strategic importance of well-being in sport-related institutions (Bani Hassan et al., 2022). The present findings extend these conclusions by demonstrating that well-being is not merely associated with positive outcomes but is a primary predictor of organizational flourishing in sport federations.

Furthermore, the second hypothesis confirmed that organizational well-being significantly predicts psychological flexibility. This result corroborates the growing body of evidence suggesting that psychologically healthy organizational climates foster adaptive emotional regulation, cognitive openness, and behavioral resilience among employees. Abkhiz and Mikaeli Manie demonstrated that occupational well-being strengthens self-regulation and reduces burnout through enhanced psychological resources

(Abkhiz & Mikaeli Manie, 2020). Similarly, Koller and Hicks identified psychological well-being as a key determinant of psychological capital, including flexibility-related attributes such as resilience and optimism (Koller & Hicks, 2016). The current study extends these findings by situating psychological flexibility as a direct outcome of organizational well-being in sport organizations, where stressors are inherently high and adaptive functioning is critical for sustained performance.

The third hypothesis indicated that psychological flexibility significantly predicts organizational flourishing. This result supports theoretical models suggesting that flexible cognitive and emotional processes enable employees to engage constructively with organizational challenges, cooperate effectively with colleagues, and adapt to evolving institutional demands. Haraghi et al. demonstrated that organizational flexibility—both structural and psychological—enhances innovation and organizational development (Haraghi et al., 2015). Likewise, Seyednaghavi et al. reported that flexibility in human resource processes leads to improved organizational performance and employee commitment in the public sector (Seyednaghavi et al., 2019). The present findings build upon this literature by empirically establishing psychological flexibility as a core psychological mechanism through which organizations achieve flourishing outcomes.

The most theoretically significant contribution of the study lies in the confirmation of psychological flexibility as a mediator between organizational well-being and organizational flourishing. The mediation analysis revealed that when psychological flexibility was introduced into the model, the direct effect of organizational well-being on organizational flourishing diminished substantially, while the indirect pathway through psychological flexibility became significant. This indicates that organizational well-being fosters organizational flourishing largely by enhancing employees' psychological flexibility. This finding integrates previously fragmented strands of research into a coherent explanatory framework. Lee's application of the JD-R model demonstrated that psychological well-being mediates the relationship between job resources and positive organizational outcomes (Lee, 2019). Ahmad et al. similarly found that psychological well-being serves as a key mediator between organizational stressors and employee performance (Ahmad et al., 2025; Ullah et al., 2025). The present study advances this framework by positioning psychological flexibility—not merely general well-being—as the central mediating mechanism.

In the context of sport federations, these findings carry particular significance. Employees in sport organizations are exposed to unique stressors including event pressures, public scrutiny, athlete management demands, and performance accountability. Esmailnasab and Miryoosefi emphasized that organizational health and psychological capital are crucial for maintaining employee well-being in sport organizations (Esmailnasab & Miryoosefi, 2020). The present results suggest that fostering psychological flexibility enables employees to convert well-being resources into sustainable organizational development, thus supporting the long-term stability and growth of sport federations.

Moreover, the findings are consistent with research on professional development and educational organizations. Bashir and Hussan highlighted that continuous professional development strengthens teachers' engagement and adaptability (Bashir & Hussan, 2020). Healy et al. demonstrated that professional learning interventions enhance confidence and instructional effectiveness among physical educators (Healy et al., 2019). Parvin et al. further emphasized that professional development is deeply embedded within supportive organizational climates (Parvin et al., 2021). Together with the present findings, this body of research underscores that psychological and organizational flourishing are mutually reinforcing processes grounded in employees' adaptive capacities.

Cultural and ethical dimensions also intersect with these results. Cervantes and Clark argued that socially just and culturally responsive educational environments require high levels of psychological openness and adaptability among educators (Cervantes & Clark, 2019). Psychological flexibility serves as a foundational competence for navigating cultural diversity, ethical dilemmas, and organizational change, thereby strengthening institutional legitimacy and cohesion.

Technological transformation introduces additional complexity to these dynamics. Fahrudin's investigation of AI-driven content moderation organizations revealed that psychological well-being and flexibility are indispensable resources for coping with cognitive overload and emotional strain in digitally intensive workplaces (Fahrudin, 2025). These findings resonate strongly with the present study, suggesting that regardless of sector, psychological flexibility is a universal mechanism linking employee well-being to organizational effectiveness.

5 Conclusion

Finally, the present study contributes to emerging evidence on empowerment and performance. Taqavi Deilami Pour and Pali demonstrated that psychological empowerment enhances job performance through psychological well-being and professional identity (Taqavi Deilami Pour & Pali, 2025). Rezagholiyan et al. similarly identified emotion regulation as a mediator of subjective well-being (Rezagholiyan et al., 2025). These findings collectively support the present model, which positions psychological flexibility as the psychological engine transforming organizational well-being into flourishing organizational systems.

Despite its contributions, this study is subject to several limitations. The cross-sectional design restricts causal inference, and longitudinal designs would better capture the dynamic interplay among organizational well-being, psychological flexibility, and organizational flourishing. The reliance on self-report instruments may introduce response bias and common method variance. Additionally, the study sample was limited to selected martial arts federations, which may constrain generalizability to other sport organizations or occupational sectors.

Future studies should employ longitudinal and experimental designs to examine causal pathways and temporal stability of the proposed model. Expanding the sample to include diverse sport organizations and cultural contexts would enhance external validity. Researchers may also explore additional mediating and moderating variables such as leadership style, organizational culture, and digital transformation to further refine the theoretical model.

Sport federation administrators should prioritize organizational well-being initiatives, implement psychological flexibility training programs, redesign human resource policies to foster adaptive work environments, promote participatory leadership structures, and integrate mental health promotion into strategic planning processes to cultivate long-term organizational flourishing.

Authors' Contributions

M.A.G.Z.H. conceptualized the study, developed the research design, and supervised the overall project. R.M.Y. contributed to data collection coordination, instrument administration, and initial data screening. M.M.Z. conducted the statistical analyses, including regression and structural equation modeling, and interpreted the findings. M.E. participated in manuscript drafting, critical revision, and

integration of theoretical and empirical sections. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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