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WHEN FEAR OF MISSING OUT BOOSTS JOB PERFORMANCE: UNRAVELING THE POSITIVE PATHWAY THROUGH JOB STRESS AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

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ABSTRACT

Based on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, this study aims to examine the relationship between fear of missing out (FoMO) and job performance (JP) in the workplace context of the Digital Age, while exploring job stress (JS) as a mediator and perceived organizational support (POS) as a potential moderator in this relationship. A quantitative survey design was employed, with 108 full-time employees from various industries participating. The collected data were then analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0 for structural equation modelling in order to test the hypotheses that had been proposed. The findings of the study demonstrate that FoMO exerts a marginally significant and positive influence on JP through JS as a mediator. However, POS demonstrates no significant moderating effect on the FoMO-JS relationship. This research contributes to the growing body of literature that challenges the prevailing negative conceptualizations of FoMO by revealing its potential performance benefits through stress-based mechanisms. The findings extend the challenge-hindrance stress theory by demonstrating how contemporary psychological phenomena can function as challenge stressors. The non-significant effects of perceived organizational support suggest that traditional job resources may operate differently in modern workplace contexts than was previously theorized. The cross-sectional design of the study imposes limitations on the ability to make causal inferences, and the modest explained variance suggests the presence of additional variables that influence these relationships. This study provides novel insights into the positive pathways of FoMO in organizational contexts, offering empirical evidence for stress-based performance enhancement mechanisms while revealing unexpected patterns in organizational support effects.

KEYWORDS: Fear Of Missing Out, Job Performance, Job Stress, Perceived Organizational Support, JD-R Model.

1. INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of digital technologies has introduced new psychological phenomena that significantly influence workplace behavior and performance outcomes. Among these emerging constructs, FoMO has garnered increasing attention in organizational psychology research (Ambat, 2025); Przybylski et al. (2013). Originally conceptualized within social media contexts, FoMO represents individuals' pervasive apprehension about missing rewarding experiences that others might be having (Goldman et al., 2025). While existing literature predominantly frames FoMO as a detrimental force associated with anxiety, depression, and decreased well-being (Tandon, Dhir, Almugren, et al., 2021), emerging evidence suggests more complex relationships between FoMO and performance outcomes in professional settings.

Recent organizational research has begun exploring FoMO's workplace implications, yet significant theoretical and empirical gaps persist (Mari et al., 2024). Most studies emphasize FoMO's negative consequences, including decreased job satisfaction and increased turnover intentions (Fridchay & Reizer, 2022). However, this perspective may overlook potential positive pathways through which FoMO might enhance employee performance. Contemporary stress research indicates that not all stressors are inherently harmful; some can function as challenges that motivate superior performance (Nielsen et al., 2023).

Building on the JD-R model, challenge stressors can promote engagement and achievement when appropriately channeled (Teoh & Kee, 2022). This theoretical framework suggests that FoMO-induced stress might serve as a challenge stressor, potentially enhancing performance under specific conditions. Additionally, organizational resources such as perceived organizational support may influence how employees interpret and respond to such demands (Rockstuhl et al., 2020).

Therefore, this study addresses two primary research questions: (RQ1) How does FoMO influence job performance through stress-based mechanisms? (RQ2) What role does perceived organizational support play in the FoMO-stress-performance relationship? By investigating job stress as a mediating mechanism and examining the moderating effect of perceived organizational support, this research provides theoretical and practical insights into FoMO's complex role in contemporary workplaces.

The study contributes to current literature by (1) extending understanding of FoMO's organizational implications beyond negative outcomes, (2) applying challenge-hindrance stress theory to modern psychological phenomena, and (3) examining organizational support's role in contemporary workplace dynamics.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the literature review and hypotheses development, examining the theoretical foundations of the JD-R model, fear of missing out in organizational contexts, job stress as a mediating mechanism, and the role of perceived organizational support. Section 3 details the methodology, including research design, measurement instruments, and analytical strategy. Section 4 reports the empirical findings, presenting descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing outcomes. Section 5 discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the findings, compares results with previous research, and acknowledges study limitations and future research directions. Finally, Section 6 concludes by summarizing the key contributions and their significance for understanding contemporary workplace phenomena.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Jd-R Model

The JD-R model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how workplace demands and resources interact to influence employee outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). This model distinguishes between job demands (physical, psychological, or organizational aspects requiring sustained effort) and job resources (aspects that help achieve work goals, reduce job demands, or stimulate personal growth). Critically, the model recognizes that demands can function as either challenges or hindrances, depending on their potential for facilitating growth and achievement (Kubicek et al., 2023).

Challenge stressors, such as high workload or time pressure, can enhance performance by promoting engagement and motivation when adequate resources are available (LePine, 2022). Conversely, hindrance stressors impede personal accomplishment and growth. This distinction provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how contemporary demands like FoMO might influence performance through stress-based mechanisms.

The JD-R model's resource perspective is particularly relevant for understanding organizational support's role. Perceived organizational support represents a crucial job resource that can influence both demand

interpretation and stress responses (Kubicek et al., 2023). This theoretical lens suggests that organizational support may function both as a direct influence on stress levels and as a moderator of demand-stress relationships.

1.2. *Challenge–Hindrance Stress Theory*

Challenge–Hindrance Stress Theory, first articulated by Cavanaugh et al. (2000), posits that work stressors differ in their functional consequences and can be classified as either challenge stressors or hindrance stressors. Challenge stressors—such as high workload or time pressure—are demanding but can foster learning, engagement, and enhanced performance because they are perceived as opportunities for growth. In contrast, hindrance stressors—such as bureaucratic constraints, role conflict, or role ambiguity—impede goal attainment and are typically associated with strain, reduced motivation, and poorer work outcomes (Podsakoff et al., 2023). The distinction has been widely applied in organizational behavior research to explain why stress sometimes produces facilitative and at other times debilitating effects (Cooper et al., 2001).

Recent studies have extended this framework by examining how contemporary psychological demands may also function as challenge or hindrance stressors depending on their appraisal and context (LePine, 2022). Empirical evidence suggests that certain technology-related or digital-era demands can elicit adaptive responses that enhance performance, particularly when individuals perceive such stressors as instrumental to achieving work objectives (Liu et al., 2023). Building on this perspective, the present study considers FoMO as a potential challenge-type stressor in the modern workplace (Vahlo & Tuuri, 2025). This framing allows investigation into whether FoMO activates motivational or stress-based mechanisms that influence JP, while situating the study within a well-established theoretical tradition on differentiated stressor effects.

1.3. *Job Performance*

Job performance represents a multidimensional construct encompassing the behaviors and outcomes that contribute to organizational goal achievement (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Traditional conceptualizations distinguish between task performance (core job-related behaviors directly specified in job descriptions) and contextual performance (Demerouti et al., 2014). However, contemporary research has expanded this framework to include adaptive performance, reflecting employees' ability to adjust to changing work demands and technologies (Pulakos et al., 2000).

In the context of digital workplace transformations, job performance increasingly requires employees to demonstrate proactive behaviors, continuous learning, and adaptability to technological changes (Trenerry et al., 2021). Research suggests that performance outcomes in modern organizations are often driven by employees' ability to anticipate opportunities, respond to emerging challenges, and maintain competitive advantage through skill development (Strauss & Parker, 2018). This evolution in performance expectations creates conditions where psychological drivers like FoMO may serve as motivational mechanisms that enhance rather than impair performance outcomes, particularly when they promote engagement with developmental opportunities and organizational changes (Ambat, 2025).

1.4. *Fear Of Missing Out in Organizational Contexts*

FoMO has evolved from social psychology literature as a pervasive anxiety about missing rewarding experiences (Przybylski et al., 2013). In organizational contexts, FoMO manifests as concern about missing career opportunities, professional development activities, networking events, or important organizational changes (Ebner, Soucek, et al., 2025). Recent research has begun examining FoMO's workplace implications, revealing both negative and potentially positive outcomes.

Studies emphasizing FoMO's detrimental effects demonstrate associations with decreased job satisfaction, increased emotional exhaustion, and reduced well-being (Emre & Köse, 2025). However, emerging research suggests that FoMO may also drive positive behaviors, including increased proactive behavior and engagement in career development activities (Tandon, Dhir, Islam, et al., 2021). These mixed findings indicate that FoMO's workplace effects may be more nuanced than initially conceptualized.

The theoretical gap concerning FoMO's positive pathways represents a significant limitation in current understanding. Existing conceptualizations fail to explain why some individuals channel FoMO into productive behaviors while others experience detrimental effects. This study addresses this gap by exploring FoMO's potential as a motivational force that enhances performance through stress-based mechanisms.

1.5. Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support has emerged as a central construct in organizational psychology, rooted in social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity (Wayne et al., 1997). The theoretical foundation suggests that employees develop global beliefs about their organization's commitment to them based on the treatment they receive, which subsequently influences their reciprocal commitment to the organization (Ahmad, 2018). Empirical research has identified key antecedents of POS, including organizational justice, supervisor support, organizational rewards and job conditions, and human resource practices, demonstrating that POS formation is a complex process influenced by multiple organizational factors (Lee & Chui, 2019).

Contemporary research reveals that POS operates through multiple psychological mechanisms, including fulfillment of socioemotional needs, increased felt obligation to help the organization achieve its objectives, and incorporation of organizational membership into social identity (Borgas, 2020). In digital work environments, POS has gained renewed significance as organizations navigate remote work arrangements, technological adaptations, and changing employee expectations (King, 2024). Studies indicate that POS influences a broad range of employee outcomes, including organizational commitment, job satisfaction, performance, and withdrawal behaviors, though the mechanisms through which these effects occur continue to evolve with changing workplace dynamics (Liu et al., 2012).

1.6. Job Stress

The digital transformation of contemporary workplaces has fundamentally altered the nature and sources of job stress, introducing novel stressors that differ qualitatively from traditional workplace demands (Maleksaeedi Ghasraldashti, 2024). Digital technologies have created an "always-on" work culture characterized by constant connectivity, information overload, and blurred work-life boundaries, leading to the emergence of technostress as a distinct form of occupational stress (Murphy et al., 2021). Research demonstrates that digital-age stressors, including continuous email monitoring, social media comparison, and fear of technological obsolescence, can generate both positive and negative outcomes depending on individual and organizational factors (Jena, 2015).

Contemporary studies reveal that digital workplace stressors often exhibit characteristics of both challenge and hindrance stressors simultaneously. For instance, the pressure to stay current with technological developments can motivate skill acquisition and career advancement while simultaneously creating anxiety about competence and relevance (Nawaz et al., 2025). This dual nature suggests that digital-age psychological phenomena like FoMO may operate through more complex stress mechanisms than traditional workplace demands, requiring updated theoretical frameworks that account for the unique characteristics of technology-mediated work environments (Weinert et al., 2023).

In light of the preceding discourse, the present paper puts forward the ensuing research framework. The detail relationships among various constructs are shown in Figure 1.

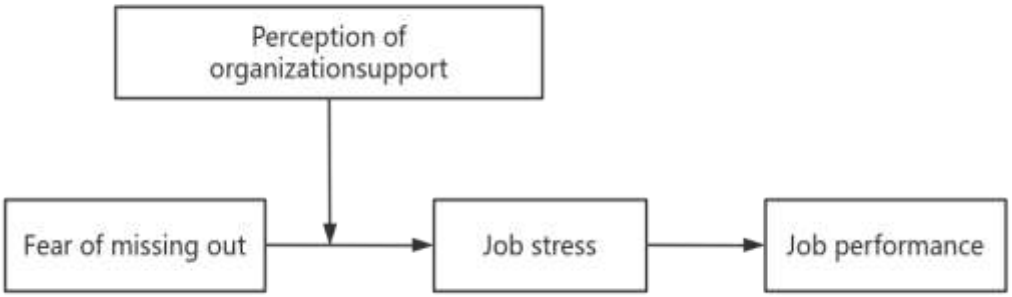

Figure 1: Research Framework.

1.7. Hypothesis Development

1.7.1. Fear Of Missing Out and Job Stress

Within organizational contexts, FoMO manifests as employees' persistent concern about missing career advancement opportunities, critical information, or professional networking events that could impact their career trajectory (Ebner, Soucek, et al., 2025). When employees perceive potential missed opportunities, they experience heightened cognitive load, time pressure, and decision-making anxiety, which collectively contribute to elevated stress levels

(Marsh et al., 2024). Recent empirical evidence supports this relationship, with studies demonstrating significant positive associations between workplace FoMO and stress-related outcomes, including emotional exhaustion and psychological strain (Ebner, Wehrt, et al., 2025). However, while the FoMO-JS relationship appears theoretically sound, the specific mechanisms through which workplace FoMO translates into job-related stress remain underexplored, therefore, the first hypothesis is proposed as below:

Hypothesis 1: Fear of missing out positively influences job stress.

1.7.2. Job Stress and Job Performance

The relationship between job stress and performance has evolved from traditional deficit models toward more nuanced theoretical frameworks that recognize stress's potential performance-enhancing effects. The challenge-hindrance stress framework posits that challenge stressors, characterized by demands that offer potential for personal growth and achievement, can enhance rather than impair performance outcomes (Webster & Adams, 2020). Meta-analytic evidence supports this proposition, demonstrating that challenge-related stress positively correlates with task performance through enhanced motivation, increased effort expenditure, and heightened cognitive engagement (Wang et al., 2024). Nevertheless, this positive relationship is contingent upon stress being perceived as manageable and growth-oriented rather than overwhelming or threatening (Wang & Chen, 2025). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is hereby advanced:

Hypothesis 2: Job stress positively influences job performance.

1.7.3. Job Stress as A Mediator

Job stress is defined as the psychological and physiological response to work-related demands that exceed an individual's coping capabilities (Biggs et al., 2017). Conventional stress research has historically placed emphasis on the detrimental consequences of stress, however, contemporary perspectives have begun to acknowledge the potential benefits of stress, provided it is appropriately channelled (Hochwarter & Thompson, 2012).

The challenge-hindrance stress framework delineates between stressors that facilitate versus impede growth and achievement (Olugbade, 2016). It has been demonstrated that challenge stressors, despite their capacity to induce stress, have the potential to enhance performance by increasing motivation, focus, and effort expenditure. This perspective suggests that FoMO-induced stress might function as a challenge stressor, driving individuals toward superior performance to avoid missing valued outcomes.

The present study seeks to contribute to the extant literature on the subject by providing further evidence to support the hypothesis that stress plays a mediating role in demand-performance relationships. As demonstrated in previous research (McInroe, 2009), the relationship between demanding work characteristics and enhanced performance outcomes is mediated by challenge stress. In a similar vein, research has demonstrated that stress can function as a motivational mechanism, thereby connecting psychological states to behavioural outcomes (Jensen & Toates, 1997).

This proposition is predicated on the notion that FoMO engenders stress, which in turn motivates individuals to enhance their performance in order to ensure that they remain competitive and avoid missing valuable opportunities. This stress-based motivation mechanism may elucidate how FoMO can enhance rather than impair performance under certain conditions. The hypothesis under consideration is outlined as follows:

Hypothesis 3: Job stress mediates the positive relationship between FoMO and job performance.

1.7.4. The Role of Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) represents employees' beliefs about the extent to which their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2020). According to organizational support theory, high POS creates psychological conditions that influence employee motivation, stress responses, and performance outcomes (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

Research demonstrates that POS functions as a critical job resource that can influence stress levels through multiple pathways (Junça Silva & Lopes, 2023). Organizational support may directly affect stress by providing resources, reducing uncertainty, and creating psychological safety. Additionally, POS may moderate how employees interpret and respond to job demands, potentially influencing the relationship between demands and stress responses (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Ott et al., 2019).

Empirical findings regarding POS' relationship with stress-related variables show mixed patterns.

Some studies demonstrate that high POS directly reduces stress levels by providing emotional and instrumental support (Mathieu et al., 2019). Other research suggests that POS moderates demand-stress relationships, with high support environments enabling employees to view demands as challenges rather than threats (Anderson, 2024).

In light of the theoretical intricacy and the inconclusive empirical evidence, the present study aims to examine the moderating effects of POS on the FoMO-stress relationship. The hypothesis is proposed as following:

Hypothesis 4: POS moderates the relationship between FoMO and job stress, such that the positive relationship is weaker when perceived organizational support is high.

2. METHODS

2.1. Research Design and Sample

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to investigate the proposed relationships among FoMO, JS, JP, and POS. The target population comprised full-time employees across diverse industries and organizational hierarchies. Data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed via Wenjuanxing (a professional survey platform in China), which generated unique questionnaire link and QR code. All responses completed electronically via WeChat.

The minimum required sample size was determined using G*Power based on an a priori power analysis ($f^2 = 0.15$, $\alpha = .05$, power = .80, predictors = 3), which indicated that at least 77 participants were necessary (Faul et al., 2009). To ensure sufficient statistical power and to account for potential nonresponse or unusable data, a total of 150 questionnaires were distributed, yielding 114 returned questionnaires; after excluding 6 invalid responses (e.g., uniform answers), a final sample of 108 valid cases was retained for analysis. All participants voluntarily took part in the study, retained the right to withdraw at any time, and were assured that their confidentiality and data protection were upheld throughout the research process.

2.2. Measures

All constructs were measured using established Likert scales with demonstrated reliability and validity. Items were rated on 5-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), shown in Appendix A.

FoMO was measured using the workplace-adopted FoMO Scale originally developed by Przybylski et al. (2013). The 10-item scale includes items such as "I fear others have more rewarding experiences than me" and "I fear my friends have more rewarding experiences than me."

Job stress was assessed using Shukla and Srivastava (2016) Job-Related Stress Scale. The 9-item scale includes items such as "I have a lot of work and fear that very little time to do it." and "I feel so burdened that even a day without work seems bad."

Job performance was measured using the short version of the in-role performance scale developed by Andrade et al. (2020). The 10-item scale includes statements such as “I perform hard tasks properly” and “I try to update my technical knowledge to do my job.” All items assess both task and contextual performance, and the short version was adopted based on the original developers’ recommendation that integrating these dimensions into a unidimensional structure enhances the scale’s robustness.

Perceived Organizational Support was assessed using Eisenberger et al. (1986) short form POS scale. The 6-item scale includes items such as "My work organization really cares about my well-being." and "My work organization values my contributions to its well-being."

In this study, a marker variable—comprising a set of general questions—was used to control for common method bias (CMB) (Oreg, 2003). CMB refers to systematic error arising from similar measurement sources or methods, which may undermine the validity of relationships between variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). These marker items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)(Lin et al., 2015). This approach helps isolate the effects of CMB, thereby ensuring a more accurate assessment of the research model.

2.3. Pretest

A pretest was conducted to ensure the quality and cross-cultural validity of the questionnaire (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Sousa & Rojjanasrirat, 2011). Initially, a bilingual expert who possessed proficiency in both the source and target languages, in addition to expertise in organizational psychology, translated the original questionnaire into the target language independently. Subsequently, another bilingual expert, unaware of the original version, performed a back-translation into the source language. Discrepancies between the original and back-translated versions were identified through cross-comparison, and the target-language questionnaire

was revised collaboratively by the two experts to align with the original conceptual meaning, ensure linguistic accuracy, and maintain cultural appropriateness. The dual translation-back-translation procedure, supplemented by expert consensus, was implemented to minimize translation bias and enhance the questionnaire's reliability and validity (Beaton et al., 2000).

2.4. Analytical Strategy

The main analysis employed partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 4.0 to test the measurement and structural models after data screening and preliminary analysis. PLS-SEM is ideal for smaller, non-normally distributed samples (Sarstedt et al., 2023).

The measurement model was evaluated using internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability), convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The structural model was assessed through path coefficients, significance levels, and R^2 values. Mediation effects were tested using percentile bootstrap confidence intervals (10,000 subsamples) (Hair & Alamer, 2022). The moderating effect of POS was examined through path analysis and interaction term significance testing.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Demographic Characteristics

The demographic profile of the sample is summarized as follows: the average age of participants was 37.3 years; gender distribution was 53.7% male and 46.3% female; in terms of educational attainment, 2.8% held doctoral degrees, 45.3% master's degrees, and 51.9% college or higher education; regarding organizational hierarchy, the sample included 21 senior managers, 49 middle managers, and 38 frontline employees; in terms of organizational type, 66 participants were from private enterprises, and 42 from government agencies and public institutions.

3.2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the main study variables. The results show that Perceived Organizational Support had the highest mean value (M = 3.904, SD = 1.438), indicating that participants generally perceived a relatively high level of organizational support. Job Performance also exhibited a moderately high mean (M = 3.682, SD = 0.816), suggesting that employees rated their performance positively overall. The mean value of Job Stress was 3.366 (SD = 1.068), reflecting a moderate level of stress among respondents. In contrast, Fear of Missing Out recorded the lowest mean (M = 3.172, SD = 1.282), implying that employees experienced a relatively lower tendency toward FOMO compared with other variables. Overall, the standard deviations indicate a reasonable degree of variability across all constructs.

Table 1: Mean Value and Standard Deviation of Latent Constructs.

Study Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fear of Missing Out	3.172	1.282
Perceived Organizational Support	3.904	1.438
Job Stress	3.366	1.068
Job Performance	3.682	0.816

3.3. Cmb Test

CMB was assessed using two complementary approaches. First, Harman's single-factor test was conducted by specifying and testing a single-factor model. The model exhibited poor fit to the data, indicating no significant CMB issue. Second, the marker-variable technique was employed to detect small-to-moderate CMB (Oreg, 2003). A marker variable measuring "Cognitive Persistence" (adopted from Lin et al. (2015)) was incorporated into the questionnaire. After adjusting the correlations among focal variables for the marker variable, all correlation significances remained unchanged. Collectively, these results confirm that CMB does not pose a concern in the present study.

3.4. Measurement Model Assessment

Table 2 presents the measurement model's item loading, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability values for all constructs, which demonstrate satisfactory reliability and validity. All outer loadings exceeded the 0.70 threshold (Yusoff et al., 2020), ranging from 0.709 to 0.963. Cronbach's alpha values (0.882-0.968) and composite reliability (0.908-0.971) surpassed the recommended 0.70 benchmark. AVE values ranged from 0.624 to 0.849,

exceeding the 0.50 threshold for convergent validity. These results confirm adequate measurement quality for all constructs.

Table 2: Results Of the Measurement Model.

Variable	Item	Outer Loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Fear of Missing Out	FOMO1	0.772	0.882	0.908	0.624
	FOMO2	0.724			
	FOMO3	0.816			
	FOMO7	0.862			
	FOMO8	0.709			
	FOMO9	0.845	0.96	0.965	0.753
Job Performance	JP1	0.81			
	JP2	0.854			
	JP3	0.875			
	JP4	0.894			
	JP5	0.849			
	JP6	0.848			
	JP7	0.886			
	JP8	0.923			
	JP9	0.864	0.942	0.952	0.713
Job Stress	JS2	0.751			
	JS3	0.755			
	JS4	0.918			
	JS5	0.907			
	JS6	0.866			
	JS7	0.792			
	JS8	0.887			
	JS9	0.861			
Perceived Organizational Support	POS1	0.915	0.968	0.971	0.849
	POS2	0.922			
	POS3	0.916			
	POS4	0.954			
	POS5	0.853			
	POS6	0.963			

Note: Items FOMO4,5,6,10, JS1 And JP10 Were Deleted Due to Low Loading

4.5. Structural Model Effect Test Results

Based on the results of PLS-SEM analysis, this study empirically examines the hypothesized relationships among FoMO, JS, JP, and POS. Detailed results of the measurement and structural models are presented in Table 3 and Figure 2.

Table 3: Structural Model Assessment.

H	Path	Beta		SE	T-Value	P-Value	R^2	Support	Effect	
H1	FoMO -> JS	0.42		0.139	3.018	0.003	0.2	Yes	Significant	
H2	JS -> JP	0.422		0.177	2.261	0.024	0.159	Yes	Significant	
H3	FoMO -> JS -> JP	0.168		0.098	1.709	0.088		Yes	Marginally significant	
	POS -> JS	-0.235		0.232	1.389	0.165		No	Not significant	
H4	POS*FoMO -> JS	-0.085		0.198	0.601	0.548		No	Not significant	

Note: H-Hypothesis

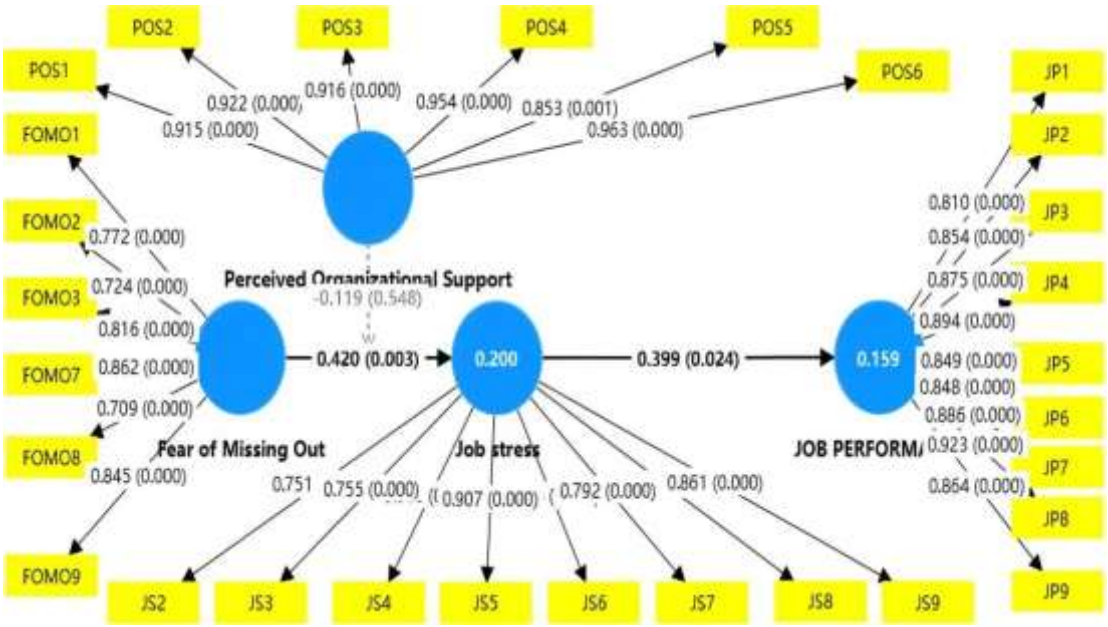

Figure 2: Outer Loadings, Path Coefficients, P-Values And R².

4.5.1. Direct Effect Test Results

In terms of direct effects, the results showed that FOMO had a significant positive impact on work stress (β = 0.42, t = 3.018, p = 0.003, R^2 = 0.20), indicating that as employees' FOMO levels increased, their perceived work stress significantly increased. This result suggests that in a highly connected digital environment, individuals' concerns about information or social opportunities may trigger persistent psychological load and anxiety, leading to higher levels of work stress. Furthermore, work stress also showed a significant positive effect on work performance (β = 0.422, t = 2.261, p = 0.024, R^2 = 0.159), indicating that moderate work stress can stimulate employees' task engagement and performance. Overall, the direct path results supported Hypotheses 1 and 2.

4.5.2. Mediation Effect Test Results

Regarding the mediation effect (see Table 3 and Figure 2), the analysis results showed that the path coefficient for the indirect effect of FOMO on job performance through job stress was β = 0.168 (t = 1.709, p = 0.088), which was marginally significant (0.05 < p < 0.10). This finding suggests that job stress partially mediates the relationship between FOMO and job performance with marginally significance (Pritschet et al., 2016), namely, FOMO indirectly improves job performance by increasing individuals' sense of urgency and task focus. However, since this effect is borderline significant, it should be interpreted with caution, and future research is needed to further verify its robustness (Olsson-Collentine et al., 2019).

4.5.3. Moderation Effect Test Results

With regard to the moderation effect (see Table 3 and Figure 2), the direct effect of perceived organizational support on job stress was not significant (β = -0.235, t = 1.389, p = 0.165), and its interaction with FOMO (POS × FoMO → JS) also failed to reach significance (β = -0.085, t = 0.601, p = 0.548). This suggests that perceived organizational support does not significantly moderate the relationship between FOMO and work stress. That is, regardless of the level of perceived organizational support, the direction and intensity of the impact of FOMO on work stress remain largely unchanged. The findings suggest that the moderating effect of POS on the "FoMO→JS" pathway (H4) is not empirically supported. This conclusion is drawn in accordance with the criteria for moderating effect testing outlined by (Frazier et al., 2004). This objective was accomplished by evaluating the significance of the interaction coefficient (p<0.05). The result may be related to the relatively low variance in perceived organizational support within the sample or the enhanced self-regulatory mechanisms of individuals in a digital work environment.

4. DISCUSSION

This study examined the links among FoMO, JS, and JP in a modern, digitized organizational context using the JD-R framework (Jin et al., 2024). The results indicated that FoMO significantly predicted JS (β = 0.420, p = 0.003), and JS positively influenced

JP (β = 0.422, p = 0.024). The indirect effect of FoMO on JP via JS was only marginally significant (β = 0.168, p = 0.088), suggesting that while stress-based pathways may underlie FoMO's performance-enhancing potential, they are weaker than initially hypothesized. Contrary to expectations drawn from JD-R model, POS neither reduced JS nor moderated the FoMO–JS link.

From the perspective of Challenge–Hindrance Stress Theory, these findings can be interpreted as supporting FoMO's role as a challenge-type stressor: FoMO motivates engagement and performance through stress mechanisms, consistent with emerging conceptualizations that digitally mediated demands can function as challenge stressors (Deng et al., 2025). Indeed, recent meta-analytic and diary research suggests that challenge stressors have small but positive within-person links to performance, whereas hindrance stressors often show non-significant or negative associations (Pindek et al., 2024). Moreover, the marginal mediation effect may reflect appraisal processes: individual perceptions of FoMO may vary dynamically over time, such that its challenge value fluctuates (Shi et al., 2024).

Addressing the non-significant moderation by POS, one plausible theoretical explanation is that in digitally intensive work environments, internally generated stressors like FoMO may operate more independently of traditional job resources (Marsh et al., 2024). Recent extensions of JD-R model into digital contexts emphasize that digital job demands and digital resources have distinct dynamics: what once counted as "resource buffering" may not function in the same way under continuous connectivity and self-regulation pressures (Liao et al., 2024). In addition, when stressors are appraised as personally meaningful challenges rather than externally imposed constraints, classical buffering effects of organizational support may attenuate (Gerich & Weber, 2020). Thus, the absence of moderation by POS in this research model suggests that FoMO's motivational force may stem more from internal appraisal than from external support (Kim et al., 2020).

Collectively, these findings extend both the challenge–hindrance stress and JD-R literatures by demonstrating that FoMO—a contemporary, self-regulated psychological demand—can act as a performance catalyst under certain conditions (Barati-Ahmadabadi et al., 2025). At the same time, the lack of moderation by POS underscores the need to revisit assumptions about the protective role of traditional organizational resources in digital work environments.

4.1. *Theoretical Implications*

This research extends challenge-hindrance stress theory by demonstrating how contemporary digital-age psychological phenomena can function within established stress frameworks. The significant FoMO-JS relationship provides empirical evidence for FoMO's role as a novel workplace stressor, expanding our understanding of modern organizational demands beyond traditional job characteristics. The positive stress-performance relationship supports theoretical propositions that certain stressors can enhance rather than impair performance outcomes (Fried et al., 2008). However, the marginally significant mediation effect suggests that linear mediation models may inadequately capture the complexity of contemporary stress processes, indicating a need for more sophisticated theoretical frameworks. The non-significant organizational support effects challenge conventional wisdom about job resources' stress-buffering capabilities (Johnson, 2023), suggesting that traditional support mechanisms may operate differently in modern workplace contexts characterized by digital connectivity and information abundance.

4.2. *Practical And Social Implications*

Organizations should recognize FoMO as a double-edged phenomenon that can potentially enhance performance through appropriate stress channeling mechanisms. Rather than eliminating workplace FoMO entirely, managers might strategically leverage moderate levels of opportunity awareness to motivate employee engagement while providing adequate support systems to prevent overwhelming stress levels. The ineffectiveness of traditional organizational support measures indicates that contemporary workplaces require innovative support mechanisms tailored to digital-age employee needs, such as personalized career development pathways and targeted stress management interventions. From a societal perspective, these findings highlight the importance of developing digital literacy and psychological resilience skills to help individuals navigate the demands of modern work environments. Organizations should invest in training programs that help employees distinguish between productive and counterproductive forms of workplace anxiety, fostering healthier relationships with digital connectivity and professional development opportunities.

4.3. *Limitations And Suggestions for Future*

Research

It is imperative to acknowledge the limitations of this study, which are as follows. The cross-sectional design of the study imposes limitations on the ability to make causal inferences. The modest explained variance in job performance suggests that additional variables significantly influence these relationships. It is recommended that future research employs longitudinal designs in order to establish stronger causal relationships and examine the dynamic nature of FoMO-JS-JP interactions over time. The experimental study design would allow for the manipulation of FoMO levels, thus enabling the testing of direct causal mechanisms whilst controlling for confounding variables. It is suggested that future studies should also explore potential moderators such as personality traits, coping strategies, and cultural differences in order to identify conditions under which FoMO becomes beneficial versus detrimental for performance outcomes.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The present study elucidates the intricate nature of the FoMO phenomenon in organizational contexts, demonstrating its capacity to enhance job performance through stress-based mechanisms while challenging conventional assumptions about the effectiveness of organizational support. While FoMO exerts a significant influence on job stress, and stress positively affects performance, the overall mediation pathway remains marginally significant. This finding indicates that the relationship is more nuanced than simple linear models suggest. These findings contribute to our understanding of contemporary workplace psychology by demonstrating how phenomena specific to the digital age can function within established theoretical frameworks while requiring new approaches to organizational support and stress management. In the context of digital work environments, it is imperative for organizations to comprehend and adeptly regulate FoMO to enhance employee performance.

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

FoMO	Fear of Missing Out
JP	Job Performance
JS	Job Stress
POS	perceived organizational support
PLS-SEM	partial least squares structural equation modeling
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources
CMB	Common Method Bias

APPENDIX A

Below is a set of statements regarding your daily experiences. Please rate the degree to which each statement aligns with your general experiences using the scale provided. Respond based on your actual experiences rather than how you believe your experiences "should" be. Treat each item as independent from one another when rating.

1 Strongly disagree
2 Disagree
3 Undecided

4 Agree
5 Strongly agree

Dimension	Item	Literature Source
Fear of Missing Out	I fear others have more rewarding experiences than me.	Przybylski et al. (2013)
	I fear my friends have more rewarding experiences than me.	
	I get worried when I find out my friends are having fun without me.	
	I get anxious when I don't know what my friends are up to.	
	It is important that I understand my friends "in jokes".	
	Sometimes, I wonder if I spend too much time keeping up with what is going on.	
	It bothers me when I miss an opportunity to meet up with friends.	
	When I have a good time, it is important for me to share the details online (e.g. updating status).	
	When I miss out on a planned get-together it bothers me.	
	When I go on vacation, I continue to keep tabs on what my friends are doing.	
Perceived Organizational Support	My work organization really cares about my well-being.	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
	My work organization values my contributions to its well-being.	
	My work organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor.	
	My work organization shows little concern for me.	
	My work organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	
	My work organization strongly considers my goals and values.	
Job Stress	I have a lot of work and fear that very little time to do it.	Shukla and Srivastava (2016)
	I feel so burdened that even a day without work seems bad.	
	I feel that I never take a leave.	
	Many people at my office are tired of the company demand.	
	My job makes me nervous.	
	The effect of my job on me is too high.	
	Many a times, my job becomes a big burden.	
	Sometimes when I think about my job, I get a tight feeling in my chest.	
	I feel bad when I take a leave.	
Job Performance	I perform hard tasks properly. ✦	(Andrade et al., 2020)
	I try to update my technical knowledge to do my job. ●	
	I do my job according to what the organization expects from me. ✦	
	I plan the execution of my job by defining actions, deadlines and priorities. ✦	
	I plan actions according to my tasks and organizational routines. ✦	
	I take initiatives to improve my results at work. ●	
	I seek new solutions for problems that may come up in my job. ●	
	I work hard to do the tasks designated to me. ●	

	I execute my tasks foreseeing their results. ●	
	I seize opportunities that can improve my results at work. ✦	
Marker variable	Once I've come to a conclusion, I'm not likely to change my mind.	Lin et al. (2015)
	I don't change my mind easily.	
	My views are very consistent over time.	

Note: □✦Task performance;□● Context performance

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