

## Psychological Capital and Innovative Behavior: Examining the Mediating Role of Organizational Support

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of psychological capital on innovative behavior of managerial level employees of star rated hotels in Kathmandu valley emphasizing the mediating role of organizational support. To achieve the stated objectives, descriptive and casual comparative research design was used. The data were collected from the primary source using a structured questionnaire administered through convenience sampling technique. The respondents comprised 205 managerial level employees working in different departments of star hotels in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Process macro 4 Hayes, (2022) was used for analyzing the structural relationships among the constructs. The findings reveal that psychological capital has no significant effect on innovative behavior of employees. Furthermore, the study finds that organizational support mediates the relationship between psychological capital and innovative which may be achieved by providing resources, encouragement, and a conducive environment. This study highlights the mediating role of organizational support to enhance the innovative behavior of employees. The outcomes of the study explore how organizational support mediates the relationship between Psychological Capital and innovative behavior, providing new insights into the mechanisms that drive innovation in the workplace. The findings can help managers fostering strong organizational support which significantly enhance the innovative behavior of employees. Managers should focus on creating a supportive work environment that nurtures employees' psychological capital to drive innovation and maintain a competitive edge. To enhance the generalizability of this research, it would be beneficial to include a larger sample size, particularly from larger companies. Expanding the study to include international perspectives and utilizing a mixed-method approach could also provide deeper insights to the study

## INTRODUCTION

Positive psychology has become a key branch of psychology, focusing on improving human well-being and quality of life by highlighting positive experiences, personal strengths, self-potential, and individual growth and development (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This approach was adapted for the organizational context by leveraging positive human traits, potentials, and strengths in the workplace to enhance employee performance and organizational effectiveness (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Psychological Capital, a foundational concept in Positive Psychology, highlights the importance of self-growth and promoting positive organizational behavior. It is built on four key resources: Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, and Optimism (HERO) which drive goal-oriented attitudes and are strong indicators of success (Luthans & Youssef, 2017). This concept operates within an integrated resource model, suggesting that psychological stability and desired outcomes are best achieved by focusing on a holistic set of resources rather than relying on any single one. This holistic approach is essential during challenging times and plays a significant role in enhancing human well-being (Hobfoll, 2002).

The Broaden-and-Build Theory asserts that positive emotional states arise from a well-developed psychological condition, leading to socio-emotional growth, enhanced functioning, and an expanded range of thought-action repertoires (Fredrickson, 2001). Positive moods, strengthened by psychological capital, play a crucial role in enhancing self-regulation and goal-oriented behavior by broadening attention, deepening cognitive processes, and encouraging thoughtful consideration. This indicates that positive experiences empower individuals to evolve, becoming more focused, exploratory, resilient, and socially connected.

Regularly concentrating on positivity broadens an individual's awareness, making them more attentive, adaptable, and creative in addressing life's challenges (Aspinwall, 1998; Fredrickson, 2004).

Innovative work behavior empowers employees to seek out opportunities, develop creative ideas, and implement them effectively in the workplace, fostering positive change for both individuals and the organization as a whole (De Jong et al., 2008). Innovation centers on result-oriented actions through a multistage process: identifying problems, generating ideas, forming coalitions to develop these ideas, and implementing them by refining existing strategies or creating new ones, benefiting both individuals and the organization (Scott & Bruce, 1994). De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) defined innovative work behavior as the implementation of changes, the creation of new ideas, and the refinement of work processes aimed at improving overall performance. Kleysen and Street (2010) described innovative work behavior as an extensive process encompassing the creation, introduction, and execution of novel and valuable ideas.

Innovative work behavior fuels performance and boosts organizational competitiveness to meet objectives. It emerges from the dynamic interaction between individual employees, team processes, and organizational management practices (Rego et al., 2012). This behavior pertains to an individual's ability to initiate and implement changes, including the adoption of new procedures, practices, and techniques to achieve goals. It also involves the generation and integration of novel ideas, perspectives, and methods to address work-related challenges effectively. (Asbar et al., 2019). It encompasses the entire process of introducing, applying, and implementing new concepts and practices to enhance work performance, affecting both individual and team levels (De Jong, 2008). De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) outlined four critical components of innovative work behavior: opportunity exploration, idea generation, championing, and application. These components represent the stages that innovative behavior goes through to boost work performance and drive organizational success.

Organizational support refers to how much employees perceive that their contributions are appreciated and their well-being is prioritized by their employer. This concept encompasses a range of support mechanisms, including the provision of resources, the creation of a supportive work environment, and the assurance of fair treatment and recognition (Eisenberger et al., 2006). Research indicates that employees who perceive strong organizational support are more inclined to engage in innovative activities and contribute new ideas (Abbas & Raja, 2015). Furthermore, such support helps reduce stress and boost job satisfaction, fostering an environment conducive to innovation (Afsar et al., 2014). Organizational support is crucial for enhancing psychological capital by offering resources and fostering a positive work environment. This support strengthens employees' resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy (Bhurtel, 2020; Nepal Tourism Board, 2023). This support fosters innovation behavior by encouraging creativity and the adoption of new practices, essential for staying competitive in the dynamic hospitality sector (Shrestha & Subedi, 2022). Additionally, a supportive organizational culture that includes managerial backing and recognition significantly contributes to a work environment conducive to both psychological well-being and innovative initiatives (Gautam & Adhikari, 2021). Drawing upon these issues, this study examined the impact of psychological capital on innovation behaviour of managerial level employees of star hotels in Kathmandu valley as the mediating effect of organizational support.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Organizational Support and Psychological Capital**

Psychological capital, comprising self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism, is greatly enhanced by robust organizational support. This support, including resource availability, recognition, and a positive work environment, is essential for boosting employees' psychological well-being and overall performance (Luthans et al., 2023). Organizations that invest in employee development, provide clear communication, and foster a supportive culture see substantial benefits in both individual and organizational outcomes (Gautam & Adhikari, 2021). Recent research emphasizes that organizational support not only strengthens psychological capital but also drives innovation by encouraging risk-taking and creative problem-solving (McKinsey & Company, 2023). For instance, a supportive culture that promotes autonomy and continuous learning significantly enhances employees' resilience and optimism, leading to sustained engagement and innovative contributions (Shrestha & Subedi, 2022). Thus, integrating strong organizational support systems is vital for cultivating psychological capital and fostering an innovative organizational environment. Based on these facts, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

H1: Organizational support positively influences psychological capital

### **Organizational Support and Innovation Behavior**

Organizational support plays a crucial role in fostering innovation behavior by providing the necessary resources, encouragement, and conducive environment for creative thinking. Supportive organizational cultures that emphasize managerial backing, recognition, and opportunities for professional development significantly enhance employees' willingness to engage in innovative activities (Gautam & Adhikari, 2021; Eisenberger et al., 1986). Research indicates that organizations prioritizing support for innovation see increased employee engagement in creative problem-solving and the implementation of new ideas (McKinsey & Company, 2023). Amabile et al. (2004) found that organizational encouragement and the provision of sufficient resources are key predictors of innovation. Additionally, fostering a supportive environment where employees feel valued and empowered to take risks without fear of negative consequences leads to higher levels of innovation and organizational adaptability (Shrestha & Subedi, 2022; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Based on these facts, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

H2: Organizational support positively influences innovation behavior

### **Psychological Capital and Innovative Work Behavior**

Suroso et al. (2021) demonstrated that psychological capital significantly enhances innovative behavior. Kuang et al. (2022) found a strong correlation between positive emotions and increased innovative behavior among employees in the new media sector across major Chinese cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Hangzhou. Similarly, Saputri et al. (2023) identified a significant positive relationship between psychological capital and innovative behavior within the culinary MSME sector in Jambi. Hasanah et al. (2019) revealed that psychological capital aids students from the Health Training Agency at the Ministry of Health in overcoming challenges related to innovative work behavior. Baharudin and Ekowati (2022) showed that higher levels of

psychological capital significantly boost innovative behavior among employees at the Bandar Kidul Ikat weaving company in Kediri City, facilitating the creation, introduction, and execution of valuable new ideas for both individuals and the organization. Furthermore, Anggraeni and Rachmawati (2023) emphasized the importance of robust psychological capital in enhancing innovative behavior among BUMN employees, suggesting it as a critical factor in the employee selection process. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

H3: Psychological capital positively influences innovation behaviour

#### **Organizational Support Mediates between Psychological Capital and Innovation Behavior**

Organizational support acts as a crucial mediator between psychological capital and innovation behavior by creating an environment that nurtures and leverages employees' psychological resources effectively. Psychological capital, which includes attributes like self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism, significantly influences an individual's capacity to innovate (Luthans et al., 2007; Avey et al., 2011). When organizations provide strong support—such as managerial encouragement, recognition, and opportunities for professional development—it enhances these psychological traits, thereby promoting innovative behaviors (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Recent research indicates that such support not only bolsters psychological well-being but also fosters a culture of creativity and risk-taking, which is essential for continuous innovation (McKinsey & Company, 2023; Shrestha & Subedi, 2022). For instance, companies that prioritize organizational support see significant improvements in their employees' ability to generate and implement novel ideas (Amabile et al., 2004; Gautam & Adhikari, 2021). This supportive environment ensures employees feel valued and confident, which drives them to engage in innovative activities, illustrating the critical mediating role of organizational support between psychological capital and innovation behavior (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009; Sonnentag & Frese, 2002). Based on these facts, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

H4: Organizational support mediates the relationship between psychological capital and innovation behavior

**Theoretical Model**

Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical mediation model that includes a sole mediating variable, organizational support (OS), positioned between the independent variable, psychological capital (PC), and the dependent variable, innovative behavior (IB).

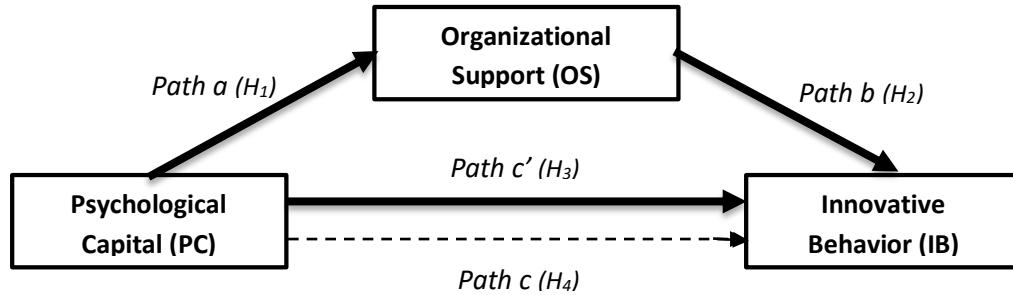


Figure 1. Hypothetical Mediation Model of the Study

**METHODOLOGY**

To achieve the stated objectives of this study, a descriptive and casual comparative research design was used. The target population of this study is all the managerial level employees who are working in different capacities of Nepalese commercial banks operating in Kathmandu Valley. The target population for this study was 205 respondents. The structured questionnaire was administered through personal visits, emails, and social media applications. Convenience sampling method was adopted in this study. In total, 325 questionnaires were administered to the managerial level employees from the star rated hotels in Kathmandu valley. Of these, 209 were returned (the response rate was 64. 31%). Altogether, 205 responses were used for data analysis, 4 were excluded due to multiple nonresponses. Among the total respondents, 77.88% were male, and 22.12% were female. Among them, 90.44% were married, and 9.64% were unmarried. The majority of the respondents (85.4%) were between the ages of 40 and 55 years. All the respondents have passed a bachelor’s degree. Process macro 4 Hayes, (2022) was used for analyzing the structural relationships among the constructs. To assess the research variables, a 5-point Likert scale with labels of strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5) was employed. To determine the internal reliability of the model, Cronbach’s alpha test was used as suggested by Cronbach (1951). The Cronbach’s alpha values for each variable obtained was above 0. 7, which suggests the reliability of the data for further analysis (Taber, 2018). The values for the variables are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach’s Alpha	No. of items	Remarks
Psychological Capital	0.851	6	Reliable
Organizational Support	0.886	7	Reliable
Innovative Behavior	0.781	5	Reliable

**RESULT**

The descriptive analysis and correlation coefficients of the study variables have been presented in table 3 below. Measured on a five-point Likert scale, the mean values for psychological capital (PC), organizational support (OS), and innovative behavior (IB) were 3.798, 3.232, and 3.367 respectively, indicating that all these factors are perceived as satisfactory within their organizations. The Pearson correlation coefficient results show that PC is positively and significantly related to OS ( $r = 0.211, p < 0.00$ ). However, it does not show such relationship with IB ( $r = 0.081, p > 0.00$ ). Additionally, OS has a significant relationship with IB ( $r = 0.249, p < 0.00$ ).

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis and Correlation Coefficients

	Mean	SD	PC	IB	OS
PC	3.798	0.548	1		
IB	3.232	0.821	0.081	1	
OS	3.367	0.622	0.211**	0.249**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

PC- Psychological capital, IB- Investment behavior, OS- Organizational support

This study attempts to examine the direct and indirect effects of PC on IB, with OS acting as the mediator. The results of the analysis are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6. Table 4 presents a significant effect of PC on OS ( $\beta = 0.2394, p = 0.0024, LLCI = 0.0859, ULCI = 0.3929$ ). Since there is no zero between the LLCI and ULCI, the effect of PC on OS (path a) is significant. Therefore, H1, which states that PC significantly affects employees' OS, is accepted.

Table 3. Regression Analysis of PC on OS

<b>R</b>	<b>R-sq</b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>P</b>
0.2110	0.0445	0.3718	9.4589	1.0000	203.0000	0.0024
	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
Constant	2.4573	0.2987	8.2274	0.0000	1.8684	3.0463
PC	0.2394	0.0778	3.0755	0.0024	0.0859	0.3929

As shown in Table 5, OS had a significant indirect effect on IB ( $\beta = 0.3198, t = 3.4803, p = 0.0006, LLCI = 0.1386, ULCI = 0.5010$ ). Since there is no zero between the LLCI and ULCI, the 'path b' is significant, confirming H2, which states that the OS significantly impacts the IB.

With the presence of OS, PC ( $\beta = 0.1043, t = 0.4334, p = 0.6652, LLCI = -0.1604, ULCI = 0.2508$ ) has no significant effect (path c') on IB rejecting H3. This further leads to 'indirect only mediation'. The indirect effect of PC on IB through OS (path c) is significant ( $\beta = 0.0767, bootstrapped\ 95\% \text{ confidence interval: } 0.0157, 0.1593$ ). This means that PC affects IB primarily through its impact on OS. The results support a full mediation model where OS mediates the relationship between PC and IB. PC significantly influences OS, which in turn influences IB.

Therefore, H4, which states that OS mediates the relationship between PC and IB, is accepted.

Table 4. Regression Analysis of PC and OS on IB

<b>R</b>	<b>R-sq</b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>P</b>
0.2506	0.0628	0.6372	6.7699	2.0000	202.0000	0.0014
	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
Constant	1.9840	0.4515	4.3938	0.0000	1.0936	2.8743
PC	0.0452	0.1043	0.4334	0.6652	-0.1604	0.2508
OS	0.3198	0.0919	3.4803	0.0006	0.1386	0.5010

Table 5. Summary of Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects of PC on IB

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Path</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>Result</b>	
H1	PC -> OS	a	0.2394	0.0778	Supported
H2	OS -> IB	b	0.3198	0.0919	Supported
H3	Direct effect: PC-> IB	c'	0.0452	0.1043	Rejected
H4	Mediated effect: PC -> OS -> IB	c (axb)	0.0767	0.0374	Supported

The results of the mediation analysis reveal that PC has an indirect impact on IB through OS. They also establish that the total effect of PC on IB is channeled through OS, which means that indirect effects are critical in understanding the effects of PC on IB. The findings emphasize the significant role of PC in influencing IB through the mediation of OS. These results provide valuable insights for developing targeted interventions and underscore the need for further research to explore other potential mediators or moderators.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that psychological capital and innovative behavior, contrary to expectations, do not have a significant direct effect in the context of star hotels in Kathmandu. This is surprising given the robust evidence in existing literature that highlights psychological capital comprising self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience as a critical predictor of various positive organizational outcomes, including innovation and performance (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). Similarly, innovative behavior has been widely recognized as essential for organizational competitiveness and growth, especially in service-oriented industries like hospitality (Janssen, 2000). However, in this specific context, the anticipated positive relationship between psychological capital and innovative behavior of the employees was not supported, suggesting that other factors might overshadow the potential benefits of these individual attributes in star hotels.

Interestingly, organizational support emerged as a significant mediating factor, influencing the relationship between psychological capital and innovative behavior. This finding aligns with the Social Exchange Theory, which posits that employees reciprocate perceived organizational support with positive behaviors such as enhanced performance and commitment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The significance of organizational support in this context could indicate that, while individual psychological resources and innovative tendencies are important, their effectiveness is heavily contingent on the organizational environment. In star hotels, where the work environment can be highly demanding and customer expectations are exceptionally high, the presence of strong organizational support might be crucial in leveraging psychological capital and fostering innovative behaviors among employees. This underscores the importance of a supportive organizational culture in maximizing the potential of psychological capital and innovation in the hospitality sector. The findings of this study are in line with research by Eisenberger et al. (1997), who found that perceived organizational support significantly enhances employees' work outcomes, suggesting that when employees feel valued and supported by their organization, their performance improves regardless of individual attributes like psychological capital. Similar to the findings of Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), who emphasized the pivotal role of organizational support in enhancing employee outcomes, this study reinforces the idea that a supportive organizational environment is crucial for maximizing employee performance, especially in high-pressure settings like star hotels. However, the lack of significant direct effects of psychological capital and innovative behavior contradicts previous studies such as those by Avey, Reichard, Luthans, and Mhatre (2011), who found that psychological capital significantly predicts work performance across various contexts, and by Scott and Bruce (1994), who highlighted the strong influence of innovative behavior on employee performance.

This study also resonates with the work of Chiang and Hsieh (2012), who demonstrated that organizational support directly influences job satisfaction and performance, underscoring the critical role of the organizational environment in employee behavior. However, these results are at odds with the conclusions drawn by Luthans et al. (2007), who identified psychological capital as a strong predictor of employee performance across different industries, including hospitality. Additionally, the study contradicts with Damanpour and Schneider (2006), who argued that innovative behavior is a key driver of organizational success, particularly in dynamic and customer-focused industries. The contradiction suggests that in the unique context of star hotels in Kathmandu, the effect of individual psychological resources and innovative behaviors may be mitigated by the overarching influence of organizational support structures.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This study aimed to explore the relationships between psychological capital and innovative behavior of managerial level employee in star hotels in Kathmandu, with a particular focus on the mediating role of organizational support. Contrary to the initial hypothesis, the results revealed that psychological capital and innovative behavior do not have a significant direct effect on employee performance. This finding suggests that, within the context of star hotels, the inherent psychological resources of employees such as resilience, optimism, and creativity may not directly translate into enhanced performance without the presence of other supportive factors. The unique challenges of the hospitality industry, including high customer expectations and the fast-paced work environment, may dilute the impact of these individual traits unless they are bolstered by strong organizational support systems.

The study also highlighted the crucial role of organizational support in mediating the relationship between psychological capital and innovative behavior of managerial level employee. The significant impact of organizational support suggests that in star hotels, the presence of a supportive organizational environment is vital for enabling employees to effectively leverage their psychological resources and innovative capabilities. This underscores the importance of fostering a supportive culture where employees feel valued, empowered, and equipped to perform at their best. For managers and policymakers in the hospitality industry, these findings emphasize the need to prioritize organizational support mechanisms, such as training, recognition, and a positive work environment, to fully harness the potential of their workforce. Ultimately, while psychological capital and innovative behavior are important, their effectiveness in enhancing employee performance in star hotels largely depends on the level of organizational support provided. Though

Though the overall model is statistically significant, the independent variables did not explain much of the variance in IB. Hence, future studies should also incorporate other variables and contexts to test the model

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