

THE INTERSECTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL, SOCIAL CAPITAL, AND PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR

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Abstract: In this era of globalization and continuous rapid business changes many enterprises have emerged to offer various products and services in the market, intensifying stiff competition and forcing many to leave the market due to their inability to compete and sustain. Therefore, companies are required to continuously adapt, learn, and innovate to survive. To face such a competition, companies need to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage by optimizing their internal resources. This paper examines the intersection of psychological capital and social capital in relation to pro-environmental behaviour. While both constructs have individually been linked to sustainable behaviours, their combined impact remains underexplored. Addressing this gap, future research should investigate the interrelationships and underlying mechanisms between psychological and social factors. Additionally, exploring moderating and mediating factors can enhance our understanding of these relationships in different contexts. By bridging these gaps, researchers can provide practical insights for promoting environmental consciousness and fostering sustainable behaviours.

Key words: pro-environmental behaviour; psychological capital; social capital; sustainable behaviours

Introduction

The growing impact of globalization, rapid technological changes, and intensified industry competition has made the role of human capital a top priority for both research and practical implementation (Giancaspro et al. 2022). Scholars and practitioners across various disciplinary domains, including management science and organizational behaviour, widely acknowledge the significant value that employees bring to organizations as their most vital intangible assets. With their unique knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal qualities, employees have the potential to make a substantial difference in multiple aspects and add value to the core business (Giancaspro et al. 2022).

Emerging from the realm of Positive Organizational Behaviour (POB), recent research emphasizes the pivotal role of psychology in fostering individual traits that enable employees to flourish and gain a competitive advantage. By integrating psychology into management and business practices, this positive approach effectively supports organizations in achieving sustainable performance (Spreitzer, Porath 2019). Furthermore, Luthans and Youssef (2004) highlight the significance of psychological capital (PsyCap) as a vital form of strategic human capital that can confer a competitive advantage to companies across various sectors.

On the other hand, social capital (SC), which refers to the social connections and relationships among individuals, has also been acknowledged as a valuable resource for organizations (Harraka 2002). The increasing level of SC among members within an organization fosters opportunities for collaboration, reciprocity, and overall well-being in the workplace. Previous researches, both theoretical and empirical, has recognized the influence of social capital on individual creativity (Cannella, McFadyen 2004) as well as at the organizational level (Jang, Shin 2017).

However, there is a scarcity of literature that specifically examines the intersection between Psychological Capital (PsyCap), social capital, and employees' pro-environmental behaviour according to the authors' knowledge. Therefore, the primary objective of this paper is to explore the influence of PsyCap and social capital on employees' pro-environmental behaviour.



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Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

PsyCap, which has its foundations in positive psychology and positive organizational behaviour (POB), refers to an individual's positive assessment of their situation and the belief in their ability to succeed through motivated effort and perseverance. In addition, other studies describe PsyCap as the evaluation and utilization of human resource strengths and psychological capabilities focused on positivity. These strengths and capabilities can be measured, developed, and efficiently managed to improve performance in contemporary work environments (Luthans et al. 2007).

The dimensions of psychological capital

According to Luthans and Youssef (2004), PsyCap is a superior construct that comprises four positive psychological dimensions, namely hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism.

Hope can be described as a motivational drive that guides individuals towards accomplishing their career-related objectives. It is often characterized by the emotions and beliefs individuals hold regarding their future goals. Snyder et al. (2002) have identified hope as a positive motivational state that emerges from a combination of successful agency, which involves goal-directed energy and persistence, and pathways, which involve planning and generating strategies to achieve those goals. It is widely acknowledged that employees who possess hope are more inclined to select and accomplish challenging goals, resulting in enhanced performance (Srivastava, Maurya 2017).

Self-efficacy, as described by social cognitive theory, refers to an individual's belief in their capacity to achieve desired outcomes through their own actions (Bandura 1978). In the workplace, self-efficacy is defined as an employee's conviction or confidence in their ability to mobilize the necessary motivation, cognitive resources, and actions to successfully perform a specific task within a given context. It may be defined as an individual's confidence in their ability to perform effectively in anticipated situations (Stajkovic, Luthans 1998).

Resilience, a concept that has its roots in clinical and developmental psychology, has gained significance in the field of organizational behaviour. It is the ability to effectively bounce back from problems and adapt positively. In the workplace, resilience is defined as the capacity to recover from adversity, conflict, failure, positive progress events, and increased responsibilities. Resilience enables individuals to handle stress, conflict, failure, new challenges, and heightened responsibilities. It empowers individuals to maintain their performance and even surpass previous levels of success in the face of difficulties (Luthans et al. 2007).

Optimism can be defined as a positive outlook or belief in one's ability to succeed in the present and future. It involves attributing positive outcomes to personal, permanent, and pervasive causes, while attributing negative outcomes to external, temporary, and situation-specific causes (Carver, Scheier 2002). As a component of PsyCap, optimism is closely linked to positive emotions and motivation and is seen as realistic. Unlike hope and self-efficacy, which are primarily cognitive in nature, optimism encompasses cognitive, emotional, and motivational aspects (Seligman, Csikszentmihalyi 2000). Optimism can enhance individual motivation and foster a positive expectancy, leading to improved performance outcomes.

Social Capital (SC)

Social capital is defined as the collective resources, both tangible and intangible, that are accessible and derived from an individual or social unit's network of relationships. It is important to note that network relationships are intricate, socially constructed, and unique corporate skills that are challenging to replicate, thereby providing companies with a competitive advantage.

Social capital (SC) is widely recognized as a significant factor in fostering trust and cooperation among individuals at various levels, from organizations to larger communities. It represents the level of people's involvement in public life and the effectiveness of collaborative efforts in addressing common

problems. According to Wu (2018), SC is crucial for building relationships and promoting collective action. The structure and content of social relationships form the basis of SC, with higher levels of interpersonal trust leading to enhanced well-being and productivity in various aspects of life.

Furthermore, social capital (SC) plays a vital role in facilitating the integration of knowledge within organizations. It helps to reduce perceptions of opportunistic behaviour among group members and promotes the development of shared goals among stakeholders (Karahanna, Preston 2013). Higher levels of social capital enable individuals to establish knowledge, understanding, trust, and identification with one another, thereby enhancing effective and efficient teamwork (Ariani 2012). Consequently, it is essential for companies to nurture social capital at both the individual and organizational levels, as it is critical for fostering collective work, promoting interpersonal coordination, and driving economic and community development.

The dimensions of social capital

According to Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998), there are three distinct dimensions of social capital (SC).

The first dimension of social capital is the relational dimension, which focuses on the nature of personal relationships formed through interactions. It encompasses factors such as respect, friendship, and influences on behaviour. In the context of business networks, this dimension explores the linkages, behaviour, attitudes, and trust between firms. It is characterized by high levels of trust, shared norms, obligation, and identification among individuals.

The second dimension is the structural dimension, which pertains to the properties of the social system and the overall network of relationships. It focuses on the pattern of connections among actors and their positions within the network.

The third dimension is the cognitive dimension, which encompasses shared representations, interpretations, and systems of meaning among parties. It includes shared language, codes, and the ability to share knowledge. The cognitive dimension facilitates a common understanding of shared goals and appropriate behaviours within the social system. It also reflects individual skills in evaluating and interpreting work relations with colleagues or supervisors.

Overall, the dimensions of social capital (relational, structural, and cognitive) provide insights into the nature of personal relationships, the structure of networks, and the shared representations and meanings within a social system. These dimensions contribute to understanding the dynamics and resources embedded in social capital, although different perspectives may lead to variations in their definitions and interpretations (Nahapiet, Ghoshal 1998).

Pro-Environmental behaviour (environmentally responsible behaviour)

Environmentally responsible behaviours, also known as pro-environmental behaviours, are voluntary and discretionary actions taken by individuals towards the environment (Paillé et al. 2014). In the workplace, pro-environmental behaviours refer to activities that go beyond employees' job descriptions but have a significant impact on improving the work environment. These behaviours include suggesting innovative ideas to enhance the organization's environmental performance, informing management of potentially environmentally harmful policies, and being willing to voice concerns when policies or rules do not align with the organization's environmental objectives.

Encouraging pro-environmental behaviour among employees is crucial for enhancing the environmental performance of organizations. Such behaviour involves actions like reducing energy consumption, addressing environmental pollution, and preserving the natural environment. Previous researchers have identified several key factors that contribute to the improvement of environmentally responsible behaviours in the workplace, including a green organizational culture, green selection facilities, green recruiting, green purchasing, top management commitment to environmental initiatives, and effective waste management (Shi et al. 2019).

Moreover, Koehler and Hecht (2006) stated that promoting environmentally responsible behaviours not only benefits the environment but also contributes to overall societal well-being, Building on this, numerous studies have highlighted the significant role of psychological capital (PsyCap) in predicting employee behaviours and attitudes (Luthans et al. 2007), including pro-environmental behaviour in the workplace (Sweetman et al. 2011).

Conclusion and future research

This article highlights the significance of PsyCap, social capital, and pro-environmental behavior in the context of organizational performance and sustainability. The findings emphasize the need for organizations to prioritize the development of PsyCap and the cultivation of social capital to foster a positive work environment and promote employees' engagement in pro-environmental initiatives.

Our further research in this area will contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between these factors and inform evidence-based practices for sustainable organizational development.

This paper described only the initial step of the research. The primary objective of the second phase is to examine the relationships between various variables.

The future study aims to investigate the relationship between psychological capital (PsyCap) and green creativity (GC), as well as green work engagement (GWE). Moreover, the study intends to explore how these relationships are mediated by green human resource management (GHRM). Another objective of this phase is to explore the relationship between social capital (SC) and green creativity (GC) and green work engagement (GWE) while examining the mediating effect of GHRM. In the third phase, a survey will be conducted to gather data from a selected sample of the target population.

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