

# Moderating role of psychological capital between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior and its dimensions

Shaheen, Sidra

National Institute of Psychology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan  
([sidrah\\_1shaheen@hotmail.com](mailto:sidrah_1shaheen@hotmail.com))

Bukhari, Imran

National Institute of Psychology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan ([imranpsy@yahoo.com](mailto:imranpsy@yahoo.com))

Adil, Adnan ✉

Department of Psychology, University of Sargodha, Pakistan ([livespirit786@yahoo.com](mailto:livespirit786@yahoo.com))



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## Abstract

The present study examined the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS), psychological capital (PsyCap), organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and its dimensions including organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals (OCBI) and organizational citizenship behavior towards organization (OCBO). PsyCap was proposed to moderate the relationship of perceived organizational support with OCB and its dimensions. Data were collected from a conveniently drawn sample ( $N = 325$ ) of employees of public and private sector banks of Islamabad and Rawalpindi cities of Pakistan. Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), PsyCap Questionnaire (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (Lee & Allen, 2002) were used to measure the focal constructs of this study. Significant positive correlations were observed among all variables of the present study. Hierarchical regression analyses showed that psychological capital dampened the positive relationship of perceived organizational support with overall organizational citizenship behavior and its dimension of organizational citizenship behavior towards organization. Limitations and suggestions for upcoming studies have been discussed.

**Keywords:** perceived organizational support; psychological capital; organizational citizenship behavior; organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals; organizational citizenship behavior towards organization

## **Moderating role of psychological capital between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior and its dimensions**

### **1. Introduction**

Since the last decade, attention of organizational psychologists has been mainly centered on positive psychological constructs and their outcomes in organizations. According to Friedman (2005), one of the significant characteristic of modern organizations of today's world is fluidity after globalization. The business environments are changing rapidly, the policies of organizations are becoming more and more flexible, and the internal boundaries of those organizations are becoming unclear, which results in uncertain job demands for the employees. In these circumstances of uncertainty and malleability, behavioral scientists should focus on positive human strengths that can be developed and effectively managed for their performance impact. Psychological capital is a viable positive resource in this context because it encompasses strength and ability to swiftly counter an upcoming problem with a positive mental set comprising of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Organizational citizenship behavior is certainly not recognized by the management but it serves to develop effective organizational functioning and creates a sustainable environment for the employees, consequently enhancing their performance. Perceived organizational support and PsyCap are linked to diverse advantages for the employees and organizations which includes extra role behaviors or organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). These behaviors are not necessary for the job but help develop organizational effectiveness (Lee & Allen, 2002).

The aim of the present study is to explore the relationship between perceived organizational support, psychological capital and organizational citizenship behavior among employees of private and public sector banks. Psychological capital is chosen as a moderating variable between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior. Both perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior are related to organizational behavior and a positive resource like psychological capital can act as a moderator between the two constructs. The ground to opt for these variables is that recent theory and research have supported perceived organizational support as an important construct related to fruitful outcomes at individual and organizational level. In the endogenous work settings of Pakistan, studies exploring the influence of PsyCap on OCB are scarce. Secondly, it brings positive aspects and strengths of human behavior to our attention rather than the weaknesses of employees. The present research persuades others because the sample consists of employees in financial institutions like banks where the working environment is sensitive, the policies are strict and changes in technology takes place rapidly. Bank employees are usually confronted with challenging tasks and problems, loads of work, and shortage of time. In such scenario, banks must motivate their employees for accepting new challenges to keep their organization well-matched with the challenges they face. Therefore, banks should provide their workers with the factors that connect their workers to job and also aid in creating and maintaining capabilities to counter the challenges and defend against adversities.

#### *1.1 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)*

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is defined as the behavior that includes those helping behaviors of employees, which are not included in their job description; they can be performed optionally, which ultimately benefit their employing organization (Lambert, 2006). For instance, organizational citizenship behavior comprises of assisting, cooperating and accommodating colleagues, volunteering extra work, and sharing new and innovative ideas. Williams and Anderson (1991) offered a unique classification clarifying the difference between the behaviors which are directed towards individuals as OCBI and the behaviors which are directed towards organization as OCBO. For example, OCBI may include the behavior like altruism along with other helping behaviors including courtesy, cheerleading and peacekeeping. According to Williams and Anderson,

OCBO can comprise conscientiousness, along with sportsmanship and civic virtue.

### *1.2 Psychological Capital and OCB*

The emerging era of positive psychology stresses upon strengths, talents, skills and potentials of workers rather than their imperfections. Behavioral scientists emphasize that a more positive scheme is required to assist the employees and their organizations to accept and counter the challenges and ups and downs of today's modern organizations which are based upon rapidly changing technologies (Luthans, 2002). Considering this idea Luthans (2002) have established a core construct mainly termed as psychological capital or PsyCap. Luthans and Youssef (2004) defined PsyCap as a person's constructive and positive state of growth and development that is characterized by hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism.

Avey, Luthans, and Youssef (2010) examined the effectiveness of PsyCap in predicting attitudes and behaviors related to job. They found that PsyCap was positively associated to organizational citizenship behaviors. Gupta (2010) investigated the relationship of high performance HRM practices, organizational citizenship behaviors, and psychological capital. He also found a positive association between psychological capital and organizational citizenship behaviors. Beal and Stavors (2013) also studied PsyCap, resistance to change, and OCB and found a significant positive relationship between PsyCap and organizational citizenship behaviors.

Qadeer and Jaffery (2014) examined PsyCap, organizational climate and OCB in Pakistan. Their results indicated that PsyCap was positively related to OCB, OCBI, and OCBO. The positive association of PsyCap and OCB was also confirmed recently by Golestaneh (2014). In another research Abrar, Baig, Shabir, and Javed (2014) investigated the impact of workplace incivility and PsyCap on OCB in telecommunication sector of Pakistan. This study also indicated a positive association between PsyCap and OCB. Murthy (2014) also observed positive association of PsyCap with work engagement and OCB. Nikpay, Siadat, Hoveida, and Nilforooshan (2014) found positive association of PsyCap with both dimensions of OCB.

### *1.3 Perceived Organizational Support, PsyCap, and OCB*

According to organizational support theory (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011), the workers who obtain valued assets (e.g. rise in pay, opportunities for developmental training) build up POS and hence feel obliged to struggle hard to pay back their employing organization. They help their organization to develop rapidly and to attain its objectives due to the custom of reciprocity. According to Neves and Eisenberger (2015), perceived organizational support (POS) can be explained as the view of employees about the care which they receive from their employing organization and the degree to which their performance is appreciated and acknowledged by their organization. An earlier research in organizational behavior studied organizational support by examining the positive relationship between workers and their management in which employees were beneficially motivated to complete their tasks in a required time. Besides this, they were emotionally identified with their employing organization. Thus, the workers started to engage themselves in contributing towards their organization and achieved their common goals irrespective of the reward policy. Therefore, the recognition of increased organizational support leads to improved relationships of workers with their management and subordinates. This in turn affects OCBs and encourages employees to engage in higher order moral behaviors regardless of reward policy (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Since psychological capital is a person's positive psychological state linked to work, so, organizational factors and job demands may also have an effect on psychological capital. In a study, Yamg, Yang, Yeh, and Mui (2013) investigated the impact of perceived organizational support (POS) and PsyCap on sports burnout of physical education students. The findings indicated that POS and the four dimensions of PsyCap together can reduce burnout. It means that POS and PsyCap are positively linked. Liu, Hu, Wang, Sui, and Ma (2013) studied POS, PsyCap, and depression in male correctional officers. Results of their study indicated a positive

relationship between POS and PsyCap (including its four components). Research on the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and PsyCap showed that POS has a positive influence on the four dimensions of PsyCap (Hui, Cao, Lou, & He, 2014).

Shore and Wayne (1993) studied the relationship of POS, organizational commitment, and OCB. They observed a significant positive relationship between POS and OCB. Miao (2011) also examined the relationship of POS, job satisfaction, task performance, and OCB and found a positive relationship between POS and OCB. Among these variables, POS was the best predictor of OCB. Ali (2009) studied the impact of POS and leader-member exchange on OCB in Pakistan and found that POS and leader-member exchange were positively related to OCB. Nisar, Marwa, Ahmad, and Ahmad (2014) explored impact of POS on OCB in education and banking sector of Pakistan. Their results illustrated that POS has a positive impact on OCB. In another indigenous study on OCB, Sabri (2014) observed a positive relation between POS and OCB. Muhammad (2014) also found that POS was positively associated with both OCBI and OCBO. In another study, POS was studied along with psychological empowerment, OCB, job embeddedness and job performance in fast food industry (Karavadar, 2014). Findings of this study indicated a significant positive relationship between POS and OCB. These findings demonstrate the perspective of social exchange that if the workforce sense organizational support, it builds feelings of obligation in them and they are hence morally obliged to reciprocate their employing organization in the form of OCBs.

On the basis of above mentioned studies, highlighting the importance of the constructs, the following hypotheses were proposed:

- Perceived organizational support will be positively related to psychological capital among employees of banks.
- Perceived organizational support will be positively related to organizational citizenship behavior and both of its dimensions i.e., OCBO and OCBI among employees of banks.
- Psychological capital will be positively related to organizational citizenship behavior and both of its dimensions i.e., OCBO and OCBI among employees of banks.
- Psychological capital will moderate the relationship of perceived organizational support with OCB and both of its dimensions i.e., OCBO and OCBI such that it will strengthen their positive relationship.

## **2. Method**

### *2.1 Participants*

Data of the present study were collected from a conveniently drawn sample of  $N = 325$  bank employees including men ( $n = 227$ ) and women ( $n = 98$ ) of private sector ( $n = 172$ ) and public sector ( $n = 153$ ) banks in Islamabad and Rawalpindi cities of Pakistan. The inclusion criterion was the employees having at least graduate level of education with a job experience of at least one year. 175 participants were married. 104 employees were graduate and 221 had a postgraduate level of education. Out of the total sample, 91 employees have contractual jobs, the rest of the participants had regular jobs. The age range of the sample was 20-60 years ( $M = 31.33$ ,  $SD = 7.25$ ). The job experience ranged from 1.5 years to 38 years ( $M = 5.3$ ,  $SD = 5.7$ ).

### *2.2 Instruments*

In order to measure the constructs of the study, self-report and psychometrically sound measures were utilized. The details of these instruments are as follows

**Survey of Perceived Organizational Support Scale (SPOS)** - Short version of Survey of Perceived Organizational Support Scale (SPOS; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986) with 8 items was used. It is a 7-point Likert type scale where 1 indicates a “strong disagreement” and 7 indicate a “strong agreement”. Items number 2, 3, 5 and 7 are reversed scored items. According to the authors of the scale, it has an alpha reliability of .90.

**Psychological Capital Questionnaire** - PsyCap was assessed by Psychological Capital Questionnaire (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). It comprise of 24 items having 6-point Likert-type scale. 6 indicates a “strong agreement” and 1 indicates a “strong disagreement” with the item. It has four subscales of self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience. Item number 13, 20, and 23 are reversed scored items. Reliability of the scale was .90 (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007).

**Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale** - Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale by Lee and Allen (2002) was used. The scale comprise of sixteen statements that include an 8-item subscale for OCBs directed at individuals within the organization (OCBI) and an 8- item subscale for OCBs directed at the organization (OCBO). It has a 5-point Likert type scale (1= never, 5 = always). Reliabilities of the scale were found to be .83 for OCBI and .88 OCBO (Lee & Allen, 2002).

### 2.3 Procedure

The data were collected from public and private sector banks. The managers of the banks were contacted for the consent of data collection from the staff. The employees were approached separately. Consent form, demographic sheet and the aforementioned scales were provided to the staff. All of the participants were guaranteed of confidentiality and their data were solely utilized for the reason of research. Average time for filling the questionnaire was 15 minutes. Participation in the research study was voluntary; however complete involvement was highly valued. A total of 480 questionnaires were circulated in the banks, out of which 325 were retained and utilized for analysis. The response rate was 68%. The managers and the participants were thanked for their participation.

### 3. Results

Means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and the correlations were computed. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to check the effect of predictors that is, POS and PsyCap on OCB and its dimensions. Univariate analysis of variance was done to see the effect of demographic variables on the study variables. All the scales used in the present study had satisfactory levels of reliability and distribution of all scales was in normal range. All the variables of the present study were significantly positively related to each other.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics, Alpha Coefficients of Reliability, and Zero Order Correlations of Variables of the Present Study (N = 325)*

Variables	M	SD	α	Range		Sk <sup>a</sup>	Ku <sup>b</sup>	1	2	3	4	5
				Actual	Potential							
POS	36.43	9.76	.77	14-92	8-56	.48	2.19	-	.54*	.42*	.34*	.45*
PsyCap	100.43	18.11	.90	49-132	24-144	-.74	-.23	-	-	.69*	.59*	.69*
OCB	57.36	11.66	.85	29-121	16-80	-.09	1.91	-	-	-	.86*	.88*
OCBI	25.39	5.31	.75	8-41	8-40	-.47	.01	-	-	-	-	.61*
OCBO	28.66	6.27	.80	12-44	8-40	-.71	-.27	-	-	-	-	-

Note. POS = perceived organizational support. PsyCap = psychological capital. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior. OCBO = organizational citizenship behavior targeted at organization. OCBI = organizational citizenship behavior targeted at individuals.

<sup>a</sup>Standard error of skewness = .14 <sup>b</sup>Standard error of kurtosis = .27 \*p < .001

Table 2 suggested Control variables predicted OCB and its dimensions in positive direction explaining 15%

variance in organizational citizenship behavior, 16% variance in organizational citizenship behavior towards organization and 12% variance in organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals. In step II, perceived organizational support predicted organizational citizenship behavior and its dimensions in positive direction, explaining 13% unique variance in organizational citizenship behavior, 15% variance in organizational citizenship behavior towards organization and 9% variance in organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals.

**Table 2**

*Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses for Predictors of Organizational Citizenship Behavior and its Dimensions (N = 325)*

Predictor	OCB		OCBO		OCBI	
	$\Delta R^2$	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	$\beta$
Step I	.15***		.16***		.12***	
Control variables <sup>a</sup>						
Step II	.13***		.15***		.09***	
Organizational Support		.38***		.41***		.32***
Step III	.25***		.23***		.18***	
Organizational Support		.09		.12*		.07
PsyCap		.65***		.63***		.54***
Step IV	.02**		.03**		.008	
Organizational Support		.08		.12*		.07
PsyCap		.60***		.58***		.51***
Organizational Support x PsyCap		-.12**		-.14**		-.09
Total $R^2$	.55***		.57***		.40***	

Note. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior. OCBO = organizational citizenship behavior targeted at organization. OCBI = organizational citizenship behavior targeted at individuals.

<sup>a</sup>Control variables include gender, marital status (married and single), banking sector (public and private), age, job status (regular and contractual), education (graduate and postgraduate), and income.

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

In step III, psychological capital also predicted organizational citizenship behavior and its dimensions in positive direction explaining about 25% additional variance in organizational citizenship behavior and 23% variance in organizational citizenship behavior towards organization, and 18% in organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals. In fourth step, the interaction term of perceived organizational support and PsyCap was found significant and added a unique variance of 2% in the prediction of OCB and 3% in organizational citizenship behavior towards organization. However, this interactive term did not explain a significant unique variance in OCBI. This demonstrated that psychological capital moderated the relationship of perceived organizational support with OCB and OCBO such that it has dampened their positive relationship

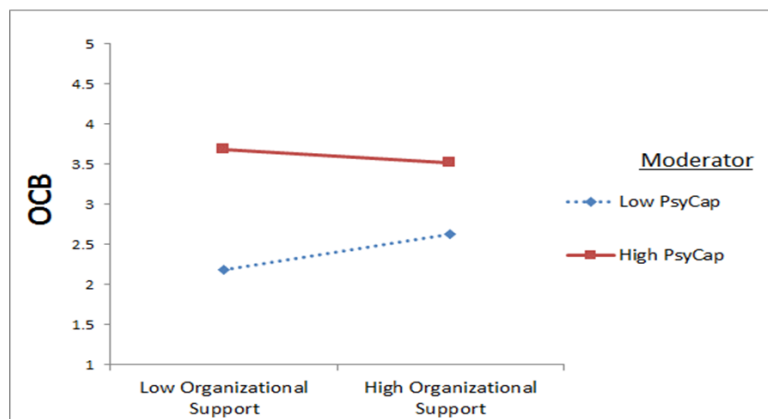


Figure 1. Moderating role of psychological capital between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior

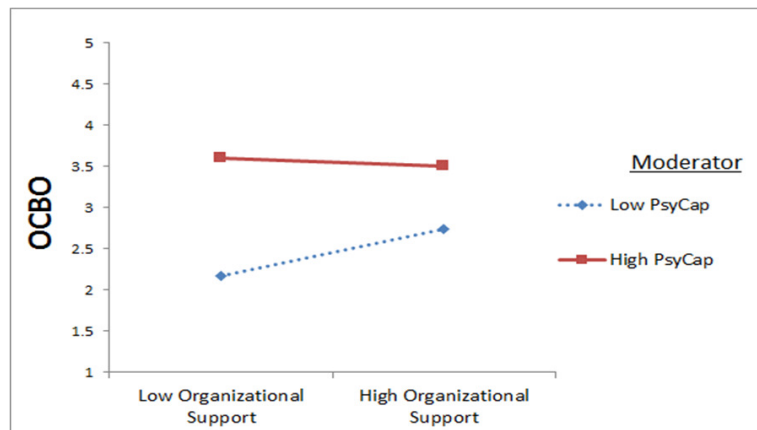


Figure 2. Moderating role of psychological capital between perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior targeted at organization

Overall, control variables, POS, PsyCap, and their interaction explained 55% variance in organizational citizenship behavior, 57% in organizational citizenship behavior towards organization and 40% in organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals.

#### 4. Discussion

The present study was undertaken to investigate how positive psychological resources in the form of PsyCap and the support that the employees receive from their supervisors, subordinates and the organization as a whole contributes to their higher moral behaviors such as OCBs and how today' organizations can capitalize upon these positive resources for performance impact. Correlation analysis showed that the first hypothesis of the present study was supported by the data as a significant positive relationship ( $p < .01$ ) between POS and PsyCap was found (see Table 1). These results are consistent with the previous studies on POS and PsyCap. Studies by Liu et al. (2013); Hui et al. (2014); Yamg et al. (2013) and Gupta (2010) also showed that there was a positive relationship between POS and PsyCap.

Findings of the study also indicated that there was a significant positive relationship ( $p < .01$ ) between POS and OCB and its two dimensions (see Table 1). This relationship was further validated in regression analysis where POS turned out to be positive predictor of OCB and both of its dimensions (see Step II of Table 2). Thus, the second hypothesis of the present study was also supported. It has been highlighted in previous researches that perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior are positively related to each other (Miao, 2011; Kaplan, Ögüt, Karayel, & İlhan, 2013). Other researchers like Birjulin, Bormann, Cropanzo, and Randall (1999) and Muhammad (2014) have highlighted that there is also a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and the two constructs of organizational citizenship behavior that is, OCBI and OCBO. These findings also suggest that the employees who are the recipients of support are morally obliged to pay back the recipient (organization), at the very least serving the recipient whereas doing it no harm. Thus, the employees engage in citizenship behaviors to reciprocate the perceived organizational support to the organization.

The third hypothesis was supported in the light of the findings as PsyCap positively predicted OCB and both of its dimensions (see Table 2). Studies by Abrar et al. (2014), Beal and Stavors, (2013), Golestaneh (2014), Murthy (2014), Nikpay et al. (2014), Qadeer and Jaffery (2014), and Luthans et al. (2008) have established the same relationship in their researches. As Luthans et al., (2008) explained that psychological capital is associated to manifold performance outcomes in the workplace including OCBI. Employees who are higher in psychological capital are more likely to perform exceedingly desirable extra role behaviors, which are vital for today's organizations.

The fourth hypothesis was concerned regarding the moderating role of PsyCap between the relationship of perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior (including OCBI and OCBO). It was not supported in the light of the results. High PsyCap dampened the positive relationship between POS and OCB (including its OCBO dimension). The reason behind such type of relationship may be that if an employee has high positive psychological resources such as PsyCap, that employee may engage in extra role behaviors like OCB regardless of any environmental motivation like POS. If a person has high PsyCap (a personal resource) it would neutralize the impact of POS (an environmental resource) on OCB and OCBO. PsyCap did not predict any type of impact in the relationship of perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals (OCBI). It is obvious that when an individual gains support from their organization in the form of supervisor and coworkers support, that individual will reciprocate the supervisor and the coworkers with citizenship behaviors like OCBI.

## 5. Implications

The results of the current study have many implications for employees as well as employers. In this modern world, the organizations are constantly competing with one another for profit margin and continued existence. Employers and managers of organizations should focus their attention on the development and maintenance of POS and PsyCap to equip their employees with essential psychological resources and perception of support by their organization, which would enable the employees to perform extra role behaviors like OCBs. This might benefit the functioning of the organization because POS creates the feelings of responsibility in employees and such employees may help organization to attain its objectives.

The current research has implications for effective human resource management and suggests that management should be employee centered. Due to this, the supportive associations between the employers and their workforce will boost up which may ultimately perk up citizenship behaviors. The leaders/employers should sketch organized schemes and policies which can propose an investment in PsyCap development and exhibit acknowledgment of the services of employees that can endorse OCBs. The present study has social implications for individuals working together. According to the principle of social exchange, when employees perceive care and support from their organization, they would feel a social responsibility to repay or reciprocate the organization and coworkers with pro-social behaviors like citizenship behaviors.

### 5.1 Limitations and Suggestions

The present study is a cross sectional survey design with self-report measures. The correlational nature of our findings does not warrant any causal interpretations. The main setback of using self-report instruments is response set and inflation of measured relationships among variables. Therefore, it is suggested that in future research, data should be obtained from supervisors as well as coworkers. The present study has been conducted with employees of a specific area of Pakistan, so it is not likely to generalize the findings of the study on the population of banks in all cities of Pakistan, which may have varying organizational climate and environment. The generalization can be enhanced if different banks from all over the country are included in such a research. The current research results cannot be generalized to organizations other than banks, which have entirely different environment, organizational climates, procedures, rules and regulations. It is recommended to incorporate other organizational sectors such as education sector, telecommunication sector, military services, and civil services so that findings can be generalized across occupations and organizations.

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