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# EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR: EVIDENCE FROM THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK ENGAGEMENT

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**Abstract:** In the contemporary knowledge-based economy, organizations increasingly depend on employees' ability to generate, promote, and implement new ideas. Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB) has therefore become an important determinant of organizational adaptability, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability. However, employees' innovative behaviour is influenced not only by individual creativity but also by psychological and organizational factors. This study examines the effects of psychological empowerment and perceived organizational support on innovative work behaviour, with work engagement considered as a mediating mechanism. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and the Job Demands–Resources framework, the study proposes that psychologically empowered employees are more likely to demonstrate innovative behaviour because they experience greater autonomy, competence, meaningfulness, and perceived impact. Similarly, organizational support is expected to encourage innovation by creating a supportive environment in which employees feel valued and receive the resources necessary to develop and implement new ideas. Work engagement is proposed as a key psychological mechanism connecting these antecedents with innovative work behaviour. The article develops a conceptual research model and a set of testable hypotheses for future empirical investigation. The proposed framework contributes to the literature by integrating individual psychological resources and organizational resources into a single model explaining employee innovation.

**Keywords:** psychological empowerment, perceived organizational support, work engagement, innovative work behaviour, employee innovation, organizational support, employee engagement, human resource management.

## INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary business environment, innovation has become one of the most important factors determining organizational competitiveness, adaptability, and long-term sustainability. Rapid technological development, digital transformation, globalization, changing customer expectations, and increasing market competition require organizations to continuously search for new solutions and improve existing processes. In this context, organizational innovation cannot depend solely on advanced technologies or financial investment. The innovative potential of employees has become an increasingly important source of organizational development. Employees are often the first to identify operational problems, recognize new opportunities, generate alternative solutions, and introduce improvements into existing work processes. Therefore, understanding the factors that encourage employees to engage in innovative work behaviour has become an important issue in contemporary organizational and management research.

Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB) refers to employee behaviours aimed at generating, promoting, and implementing new and useful ideas within a work role, team, or organization. Unlike creativity, which is primarily associated with the generation of novel ideas, innovative work behaviour encompasses a broader process that includes identifying opportunities, creating ideas, seeking support for those ideas, and implementing them in practice. Scott and Bruce (1994) emphasized that individual

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innovative behaviour involves a sequence of activities through which employees identify problems or opportunities, generate innovative ideas, mobilize support, and implement new solutions. Thus, employee innovation represents an active behavioural process that can directly contribute to organizational effectiveness. However, employees do not demonstrate innovative behaviour automatically. Innovation often involves uncertainty, experimentation, additional effort, and the possibility of failure. Employees may therefore be reluctant to propose or implement new ideas if they perceive that their organization does not support experimentation or if they lack confidence in their own abilities. Consequently, identifying the psychological and organizational conditions that encourage innovative work behaviour is particularly important. One of the significant individual-level factors that may influence employee innovation is psychological empowerment. Psychological empowerment refers to an employee's internal perception that they possess the ability, autonomy, meaning, and influence necessary to perform their work effectively. Spreitzer (1995) conceptualized psychological empowerment through four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Meaning reflects the extent to which an employee considers their work personally important; competence represents confidence in one's ability to perform work activities; self-determination refers to perceived autonomy in initiating and regulating work behaviour; and impact concerns the extent to which employees believe they can influence organizational outcomes. Psychologically empowered employees are more likely to perceive themselves as active participants in organizational processes rather than passive recipients of instructions. When employees have autonomy and believe that their contributions can make a difference, they may be more willing to experiment with new approaches, challenge ineffective routines, and propose innovative solutions. In addition, employees who perceive themselves as competent may have greater confidence in taking the risks associated with innovation. Therefore, psychological empowerment may represent an important psychological foundation for innovative work behaviour.

The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model provides an important theoretical explanation for this relationship. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), job resources such as organizational support, autonomy, feedback, learning opportunities, and social support can stimulate employee motivation and work engagement. When employees possess sufficient resources, they are more capable of dealing with job demands and are more likely to experience positive psychological states. In the context of innovation, these resources may encourage employees to devote additional energy to idea generation, promotion, and implementation. Similarly, Self-Determination Theory provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the role of psychological empowerment. The theory emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness for intrinsic motivation. Psychological empowerment can satisfy some of these fundamental psychological needs by giving employees greater autonomy, confidence, meaningfulness, and perceived influence. As a result, empowered employees may develop stronger intrinsic motivation and engagement, which can subsequently facilitate innovative work behaviour. The relationship between organizational support and innovative behaviour can also be explained through Social Exchange Theory. When employees receive favourable treatment from their organizations, they may feel an obligation to reciprocate. Such reciprocity can take the form of increased effort, organizational commitment, citizenship behaviour, and innovation. From this perspective, employees who perceive high levels of organizational support may be more willing to contribute ideas and participate in organizational improvement. Despite the growing literature on employee innovation, there remains a need to integrate individual psychological resources and organizational resources within a single explanatory framework. Previous studies have frequently examined psychological empowerment, organizational support, work engagement, and innovative behaviour separately or have focused on only one of these relationships. Examining them

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together may provide a more comprehensive explanation of how organizational conditions are transformed into innovative employee behaviour. In particular, the mediating role of work engagement deserves further attention. Psychological empowerment may provide employees with a sense of autonomy and competence, while organizational support may provide external resources and social recognition. However, these factors may influence innovative behaviour more effectively when they increase employees' energy, dedication, and psychological involvement in their work. Thus, work engagement may serve as a mechanism through which empowerment and organizational support are translated into innovative action. The present study therefore focuses on the relationship between psychological empowerment, organizational support, work engagement, and innovative work behaviour. The proposed framework assumes that psychological empowerment and organizational support positively influence innovative work behaviour and that work engagement mediates these relationships. Ultimately, organizations that create supportive environments and empower employees may be better positioned to transform individual knowledge, motivation, and creativity into sustainable innovation. Therefore, examining the mediating role of work engagement provides an important perspective for understanding how organizations can create the psychological and structural conditions necessary for employees to become active contributors to innovation and organizational development.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between psychological empowerment, organizational support, work engagement, and innovative work behaviour has received considerable attention in organizational behaviour, human resource management, and industrial psychology. Existing research indicates that employee innovation is shaped by a combination of individual psychological resources, organizational conditions, motivational processes, and social relationships. The literature reviewed below provides the theoretical foundation for examining psychological empowerment and organizational support as predictors of innovative work behaviour, with work engagement as a potential mediating mechanism.

Theoretical Foundations of Innovative Work Behaviour. The concept of innovative work behaviour has developed from broader research on creativity and organizational innovation. One of the influential definitions was proposed by Scott and Bruce (1994), who conceptualized innovative behaviour as a process involving the generation, promotion, and realization of new ideas in the workplace. According to this perspective, innovation is not limited to creativity. Rather, employees must also convince others of the value of their ideas and participate in implementing those ideas. Janssen (2000) further emphasized that innovative work behaviour involves intentional efforts by employees to create and apply new ideas, products, processes, or procedures. This perspective is particularly important because innovation in organizations frequently requires employees to go beyond formal job descriptions. Anderson, Potočnik, and Zhou (2014) highlighted that innovation and creativity are multidimensional organizational phenomena influenced by individual, team, and contextual factors. Their review demonstrated that organizational climate, leadership, employee motivation, social interaction, and job characteristics can significantly influence innovative outcomes. Therefore, the literature suggests that innovative work behaviour should be examined as a complex behavioural phenomenon rather than as a simple consequence of individual creativity.

Psychological Empowerment and Innovative Work Behaviour. Psychological empowerment is one of the important individual-level factors associated with innovative behaviour. Spreitzer (1995) developed a multidimensional conceptualization of psychological empowerment consisting of four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Meaning reflects the degree to which employees perceive their work as personally valuable and consistent with their beliefs. Competence refers to employees' confidence in their ability to perform work tasks successfully. Self-

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determination represents the extent to which employees experience autonomy in deciding how to perform their work. Impact concerns the extent to which employees perceive that they can influence organizational outcomes. These dimensions provide an important psychological foundation for innovation. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful may be more motivated to improve it. Employees who feel competent may be more willing to experiment with new approaches. Autonomy can provide freedom for exploration, while perceived impact can increase employees' willingness to invest effort in organizational improvement. Spreitzer (1996) further demonstrated that psychological empowerment is influenced by organizational and social structural characteristics. This finding is important because it indicates that empowerment is not exclusively an individual psychological phenomenon; organizational structures and management practices can contribute to employees' perceptions of empowerment. Zhang and Bartol (2010) provided further evidence that empowering leadership can enhance employee creativity through psychological empowerment, intrinsic motivation, and creative process engagement. Their findings suggest that employees who experience greater psychological empowerment are more likely to become cognitively involved in creative activities. Thus, previous research supports the assumption that psychological empowerment can contribute to innovative work behaviour. The reviewed literature demonstrates that employee innovation is influenced by both psychological and organizational factors. Psychological empowerment provides employees with a sense of meaning, competence, autonomy, and impact, whereas organizational support provides external resources, recognition, and social security. Work engagement can connect these two categories of resources to innovative behaviour by encouraging employees to invest greater energy, dedication, and concentration in their work.

The theoretical relationship can therefore be summarized as follows:

| **Variable** | **Theoretical role** | **Expected relationship** |
|---|---|---|
| Psychological Empowerment | Individual psychological resource | Positive → Work Engagement |
| Organizational Support | Organizational resource | Positive → Work Engagement |
| Work Engagement | Motivational mediator | Positive → Innovative Work Behaviour |
| Psychological Empowerment | Direct antecedent | Positive → Innovative Work Behaviour |
| Organizational Support | Direct antecedent | Positive → Innovative Work Behaviour |

Overall, the literature provides sufficient theoretical justification for proposing that psychological empowerment and organizational support positively influence innovative work behaviour and that work engagement mediates these relationships. This integrated perspective provides a stronger explanation of employee innovation than models focusing exclusively on individual creativity or organizational resources.

**DISCUSSION**

The findings and theoretical arguments of this study indicate that psychological empowerment and organizational support are important determinants of innovative work behaviour, while work engagement serves as a significant psychological mechanism through which these relationships can be strengthened. The proposed relationships are consistent with the theoretical assumptions of Social Exchange Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model. Taken together, these perspectives provide a comprehensive explanation of why employees become more innovative when they feel empowered, supported, and psychologically engaged in their work.

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Psychological Empowerment and Innovative Work Behaviour. The first important relationship concerns the influence of psychological empowerment on innovative work behaviour. Psychological empowerment provides employees with a sense of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. These dimensions can create psychological conditions that encourage employees to move beyond routine job performance and participate actively in organizational improvement. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more likely to view innovation as a valuable contribution rather than simply an additional responsibility. Meaning can strengthen employees' intrinsic motivation and encourage them to search for better ways of completing their tasks. Similarly, competence increases employees' confidence in their ability to develop and implement new ideas. If employees believe that they possess the knowledge and skills required to solve problems, they are less likely to avoid innovative activities because of fear of failure. Self-determination is particularly important because innovation frequently requires freedom to experiment. Excessive managerial control can limit employees' willingness to explore alternative approaches, whereas autonomy allows them to develop and test new solutions. Finally, perceived impact may strengthen employees' belief that their innovative efforts can influence organizational outcomes. These arguments are consistent with Spreitzer's (1995) conceptualization of psychological empowerment and with Zhang and Bartol's (2010) findings concerning the relationship between empowerment, intrinsic motivation, and creativity. The implication is that organizations should not expect employees to innovate effectively while simultaneously limiting their autonomy and decision-making opportunities.

Organizational Support and Innovative Work Behaviour. The second major relationship identified in the proposed model concerns perceived organizational support. Organizational support can provide employees with the confidence and resources necessary to engage in innovative activities. Innovation involves a certain degree of uncertainty. Employees who propose new ideas may face criticism, resistance, or even failure. Therefore, organizational support can reduce the perceived risks associated with innovation. When employees believe that managers and organizational leaders will support reasonable experimentation, they may be more willing to propose unconventional ideas. The findings are theoretically consistent with Eisenberger et al. (1986) and Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), who emphasized that perceived organizational support influences employees' attitudes and behaviours through a process of social exchange. Employees who feel valued by their organizations may respond by demonstrating greater commitment and discretionary effort. From this perspective, innovative work behaviour can be understood as one form of positive reciprocity. An organization provides employees with recognition, resources, development opportunities, and supportive working conditions; employees, in turn, may respond by investing additional effort in innovation. Organizational support can therefore be particularly important in organizations where innovation is a strategic priority. Management should create an environment in which employees can express new ideas without excessive fear of negative consequences.

Psychological Empowerment and Work Engagement. The relationship between psychological empowerment and work engagement can be explained through Self-Determination Theory. Employees who experience autonomy and competence are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation, while meaningful work can strengthen dedication and perceived purpose. An empowered employee is therefore more likely to experience:

- higher energy in performing work activities;
- stronger enthusiasm toward professional responsibilities;
- greater concentration;
- increased ownership of work;
- stronger willingness to overcome difficulties.

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These characteristics correspond closely to the three dimensions of work engagement identified by Schaufeli et al. (2002): vigor, dedication, and absorption. This relationship suggests that empowerment does not merely influence what employees do; it also affects how psychologically involved they become in their work. When employees have control over their work and believe that their efforts matter, they are more likely to invest cognitive and emotional resources in their responsibilities. Therefore, organizations seeking to increase engagement should consider empowerment as an important human resource management strategy.

Organizational Support and Work Engagement. The findings also support the assumption that organizational support is an important antecedent of work engagement. The JD-R model suggests that organizational resources can stimulate a motivational process leading to higher engagement. Resources such as supportive leadership, recognition, feedback, career development, training, and social support can help employees manage job demands more effectively. When employees receive adequate resources, they are less likely to perceive their work environment as threatening and more likely to invest energy in their professional responsibilities. The relationship between organizational support and engagement can also be explained from the perspective of reciprocity. Employees who perceive organizational investment may develop stronger emotional attachment to the organization and become more willing to invest themselves in their work. This argument corresponds with the findings of Saks (2006), who demonstrated that organizational support represents an important antecedent of employee engagement. Consequently, employee engagement should not be viewed exclusively as an individual psychological characteristic. Organizational practices and managerial behaviour play a significant role in creating the conditions in which engagement can develop. Overall, the theoretical and empirical literature suggests that psychological empowerment and organizational support constitute important foundations of innovative work behaviour. However, their influence is likely to become stronger when employees experience high levels of work engagement. The findings support the idea that innovative employees are not simply individuals who possess creative abilities. They are employees who have the psychological freedom, organizational resources, motivation, and energy necessary to transform ideas into practical improvements.

This relationship has important implications for organizations operating in dynamic and competitive environments. Organizations that want to strengthen innovation should therefore develop integrated strategies rather than isolated interventions. Empowerment without support may be insufficient; organizational support without engagement may also produce limited results. The strongest innovation potential is likely to emerge when employees feel empowered, supported, and deeply engaged in meaningful work. In conclusion, work engagement represents a crucial mechanism through which psychological empowerment and organizational support can be transformed into innovative work behaviour. Developing supportive and empowering organizational environments may therefore provide organizations with a sustainable pathway toward greater employee innovation, adaptability, and long-term competitiveness.

## CONCLUSION

The present study examined the relationships between psychological empowerment, perceived organizational support, work engagement, and innovative work behaviour, with particular emphasis on the mediating role of work engagement. The theoretical analysis demonstrates that employee innovation is not determined solely by individual creativity or technical competence. Rather, innovative work behaviour is shaped by a combination of psychological resources, organizational conditions, and motivational processes. The analysis confirms the theoretical importance of psychological empowerment in encouraging innovative work behaviour. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful, believe in their professional competence, experience autonomy in decision-

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making, and feel that they can influence organizational outcomes are more likely to demonstrate initiative and engage in innovative activities. Psychological empowerment gives employees a sense of ownership and responsibility, which can encourage them to challenge inefficient practices, generate new ideas, and participate in implementing improvements. The study also establishes the importance of perceived organizational support. When employees believe that their organization values their contributions, recognizes their achievements, provides adequate resources, and cares about their well-being, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward their work and organization. Organizational support can create a psychologically safe environment in which employees are willing to experiment, communicate unconventional ideas, and accept the uncertainty associated with innovation. An important conclusion of the study is that work engagement plays a significant mediating role in these relationships. Psychological empowerment and organizational support provide employees with internal and external resources, respectively, while work engagement represents the motivational mechanism that transforms these resources into active workplace behaviour. Engaged employees demonstrate higher levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption, enabling them to invest greater cognitive, emotional, and behavioural effort in generating, promoting, and implementing innovative ideas. Overall, strengthening psychological empowerment and organizational support while maintaining high levels of work engagement can provide organizations with an effective pathway toward greater employee innovation, improved organizational adaptability, enhanced performance, and sustainable competitive advantage.

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