

Does Psychological Capital (PsyCap) strengthen Organisational Sustainability? Exploring the Mediating Role of E-HRM usage

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ABSTRACT:

This study explores the mediating role of electronic Human Resource Management (e-HRM) in the relationship between Psychological Capital (PsyCap) and Organizational Sustainability. Drawing upon the components of PsyCap—hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience—the research investigates how these psychological resources contribute to sustainable organizational practices when facilitated through digital HRM systems. Utilizing Structural Equation Modeling via Smart PLS, data was analyzed to assess the reliability, validity, and interrelationships among the constructs. The findings indicate a significant positive relationship between PsyCap and Organizational Sustainability, with e-HRM playing a complementary partial mediating role. This highlights the importance of leveraging psychological strengths alongside technological HRM interventions to foster sustainable practices within organizations. The study offers both theoretical and practical contributions, emphasizing the strategic integration of digital HRM tools and psychological empowerment to drive long-term sustainability. It also provides actionable recommendations for practitioners and outlines future research directions aimed at enhancing the model's applicability across different contexts and industries.

1. Introduction

Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future also known as Brundtland Report of 1987 has raised concerns over the threats that the future has in store where ‘A Global Agenda for Change’ was formulated. Most importantly, the report came up with the concept of sustainable development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The report emphasised on making sustainability a criterion to measure the economic and social development of the country. Over the time, the concept has evolved to be consisting of three dimensions that are social, economic and environmental (Kuhlman & Farrington, 2010). Alenzi et al. (2022) expressed sustainability to be a serious concern of twenty-first century. Organizational sustainability is invariably a critical concern for varied firms, as it helps mitigate risks, navigate uncertain conditions, and achieve stability in dynamic and rapidly evolving markets (Carayannis et al. 2015). Rantao & Njenga, (2020) stressed the need of putting a conscious effort to ensure organisational sustainability. Organizations often encounter challenges in building and maintaining a strong talent pool, particularly when staff attrition occurs due to factors like relocation, resignations, retirements, or skill gaps. Addressing these challenges requires a strategic approach, as identifying innovative ways to compete enables organizations to adapt and remain resilient (Odiachi et al. 2023). Among the essential resources needed for this effort Odiachi et al. (2023) suggested human resources to be a critical component. A well-managed and engaged workforce not only ensures continuity but also supports long-term organizational sustainability. Modern solutions like E-HRM can be instrumental in tackling these challenges by offering predictive analytics to anticipate turnover, streamlining recruitment processes, and facilitating continuous employee development. By embracing such strategies, organizations can effectively respond to evolving business demands while securing their competitive edge.

Human Resource Management (HRM) strategically manages an organization's workforce, addressing performance, training, recruitment, staffing, and compensation hence address the requirements for the most valuable resource of an organisation (Stolt, 2010). It has been considered a critical element to ensure organisations' performance (De Alwis et al. 2022). Technology is today impacting every possible sphere in existence. Kemske (2008) viewed the prevalent pressures on existing HR departments that caused the alterations in the traditional ways of working and necessitated the need of organizational innovation. Feroz et al., (2021) insisted on the redefinition of business models through digital technologies as an ongoing process that integrates all core operations, including environmental sustainability, with a focus on aligning sustainability practices within the strategic renewal process driven by digital transformation.

Wegwu (2022) insisted on the importance of healthy employee relations to achieve organisational growth and success. As human capital increasingly plays a key role in gaining a competitive advantage for modern organizations, it's essential to further develop social capital and the emerging concept of positive psychological capital. The question of "Who I am" is becoming just as significant as "what I know" and "who I know" (Luthans et al., 2004). This increasingly stressed on the role of studying the existence of psychological capital (psycap) in an organisation.

The present study proposes E-HRM as an element, the presence of which can organisational sustainability. Zhang & Wang (2006) opined that E-HRM creates various impacts on businesses by enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity while transforming how people create, organize, manage, and operate them. Considering the ongoing changes in the ways of doing business, its impact on organisational sustainability will help the organisations to get a more vivid view on the theme. This will be interesting to know if the whether the relationship is mediated by the psychological capital of the firm or not. Based on the theory in existence, the current study focuses on the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between Psychological Capital (PsyCap) and Organizational Sustainability (OS)?
2. How does e-HRM usage affect Organizational Sustainability?
3. What is the impact of Psychological Capital on the adoption and utilization of e-HRM practices in organizations?
4. Does e-HRM mediate the relationship between PsyCap and Organizational Sustainability?

The article briefly describes the previous studies done on E-HRM usage, organisational sustainability and psycap. The article also proposes a model based on theoretical premises depicting the relationships between E-HRM usage, organisational sustainability and psycap. Next, the research methodology is studied in further detail and then the analysis and interpretation is discussed. Further, the recommendation and future directions are explained along with the study's conclusion.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Formulation

Psychological Capital (Psycap)

Luthans et al. (2004) figured the Psycap consisting of Hope, Self-Efficacy, Optimism and Resilience as first order constructs where hope and efficacy are primarily internally focused, while optimism and resilience have a more external orientation, relying on external attributions and social resources, respectively (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Avey et al. (2011) found that Psychological Capital (PsyCap) positively influence favorable employee attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and psychological well-being. It also promotes constructive employee behaviors like organizational citizenship and is linked with improved performance outcomes, whether assessed through self-reports, supervisor evaluations, or objective metrics. Additionally, PsyCap is significantly associated with a reduction in negative employee attitudes—such as cynicism, intent to leave, job-related stress, and anxiety—as well as a decline in harmful workplace behaviors like work-related deviance. Lorenz et al. (2016) worked to widen the domain of 12 factor Compound Psychological Capital scale (CPC-12 Scale) and Platania & Paolillo (2022) advanced the general claim of CPC-12 Scale by measuring equivalence across sexes. Solms et al. (2024) attempted to address the mental health stress crisis in PhD students by introducing Psycap intervention – a self-compassionate based Psycap training which increased support seeking, reduce work pressure and most importantly increased self-compassion. Dello Russo & Stoykova, (2015) termed Psycap as a positive individual characteristic that can be enhanced with the help of proper training however, the enhancements came with a durability of around a month which expressed the need of re-enforcement.

E-HRM

The early E-HRM studies began around 1995 (Marler & Fisher, 2013; Strohmeier, 2007). Berber et al. (2018) explained e-HRM as a concept involving web-based technologies to deliver HRM services within an organization. It enables a broader range of stakeholders, including the HR department, managers, and employees, to access and utilize these services efficiently. De Alwis et al. (2022) viewed the rise of the internet as a way of introducing Electronic Human Resource Management (E-HRM), transforming traditional HR practices and strategies to help organizations remain competitive in today's challenging market landscape. Feroz et al. (2021) opined that there were times when technologies were regarded as supplementary systems aiding an organization's core functions; however, modern advancements are redefining this role. Johnson et al. (2021) expressed that how Human Resource Information System (HRIS) is transforming the HRM practices. They also viewed the use of E-HRM in effective decision-making process and ensuring communication. A review research article by Feroz et al. (2021) shed the light on the articles on digital transformations and environmental sustainability. De Alwis et al. (2022) studied the influence of E-HRM on modernizing the role of HRM. They insisted on the immediate adaption of E-HRM practices. Parry (2011) found out in his large-scale survey across 12 countries, e-HRM has the potential to enhance the value of HR enabling a more strategic role in the organisation. Fındıklı & Bayarçelik (2015) in an in-depth interview with HR specialists found out time management, easy access to personal data, reduce administration costs, reduction in organizational costs, better and faster communication between manager and employees, reduction the processing time were the advantages of e-HRM usage. Obeidat (2016) in his study found out a positive relationship between e-HRM usage on HRM effectiveness.

Organisational Sustainability

Bastas & Liyanage (2019) viewed the growing global demand for goods and services to be placing substantial operational and financial strain on companies and supply chains, while also negatively impacting the environment and society. Hence, sustainable development is a way out for businesses and all societal stakeholders to embrace new perspectives and strategies. Balasubramanian & Balaji (2022) added to the literature of organisational sustainability and came up with a six-factor measurement model measuring organisational sustainability that are environment management, employee-related sustainability, public related sustainability, financial sustainability, pollution control measures and governance sustainability. Perrott (2014) in his conceptual work expands on the insights of sustainability organizational change theorists to develop an improved sustainability change framework and introduces a more comprehensive and integrated sustainability stage model, offering guidance to managers striving to build more effective and sustainable organizations. Jenkins (2002) explores the organizational design of government agencies to support sustainability and examines the statutory mechanisms required for its implementation. He realised that framing sustainability as a core objective in organizational design and analyzing task interdependence and differentiation, sustainability goals could be achieved effectively. He concludes that a comprehensive evaluation of institutional frameworks is necessary, focusing on organizational design, management strategies, and legislative measures achieve sustainability, followed by their adoption and implementation. Kiewiet & Vos (2007) opined a tailor-made definition of organisational sustainability based on a “what-question”, an “attribute-question” and a “who-question” given the complexities associated with defining it. Lozano (2008) explored the Japanese concept of Kyosei, or the "spirit of cooperation," which emphasizes collective efforts among employees, businesses, customers, governments, and other stakeholders which is further supported by the Multi-dimensional Sustainability Influence Change (MuSIC) framework, which serves as a tool for comprehending and advancing holistic progress toward sustainability in order to foster more sustainability-driven organizations.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the influence of Psychological Capital (PsyCap) on Organizational Sustainability.
2. To analyze the direct impact of e-HRM on Organizational Sustainability.
3. To assess the relationship between PsyCap and e-HRM adoption.
4. To evaluate the mediating role of e-HRM in the relationship between PsyCap and Organizational Sustainability.
5. To validate the measurement model of reflective-reflective higher-order constructs in PsyCap and Organizational Sustainability.

Hypotheses

- H₁:** e-HRM significantly mediates the relationship between Psychological Capital and Organizational Sustainability.
H₂: Psychological Capital has a significant direct effect on Organizational Sustainability.
H₃: Psychological Capital positively influences the adoption and implementation of e-HRM practices.
H₄: e-HRM practices positively affect Organizational Sustainability.

3. Measurement Model Analysis and Interpretation

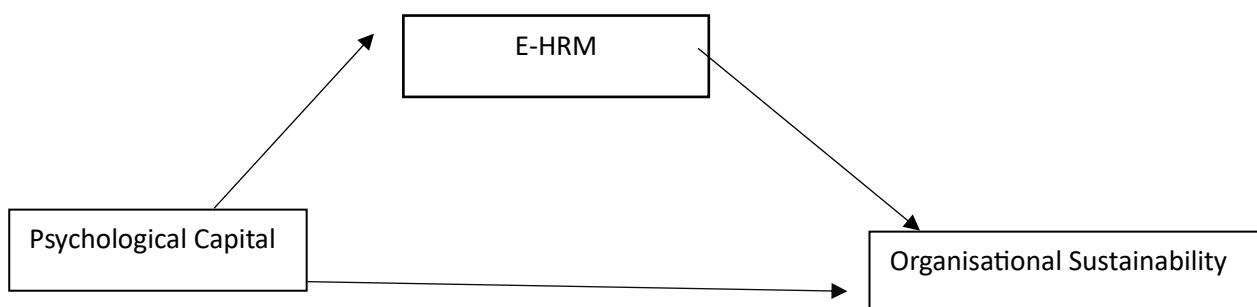


Figure 1: Proposed conceptual model

The conceptual model (figure 1) showcases the relationship between psychological capital and organizational sustainability mediated by E-HRM. On the basis of the proposed conceptual model, the measurement model was assessed to establish the reliability and validity of the constructs (Table 1). First, factor loading of all the items had factor loading more than the minimum acceptable value i.e. 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010) hence, no item was further removed for further analysis.

The two most commonly used methods of reliability i.e. Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability are presented in Table 1. The Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability is above the threshold of 0.70 (J. F. Hair et al., 2011) for all the indicators. Hence, construct reliability is established. Discriminant validity was assessed by Fornell and Larker Criteria in which the square root of AVE (in Bold and Italics) for a construct was found greater than its correlation with other

constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) (Table 2) validity except for EHRM which have a slightly lower AVE i.e. 0.494. however, the construct reliability for all the constructs was greater than 0.70, hence convergent validity was accepted as is. HTMT ratio for the indicators was less than 0.90 (Hair & Alamer, 2022)

Construct	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	rho_C	AVE
Psycap-Hope (PC-H)	PC1-H	0.765	0.712	0.839	0.634
	PC2-H	0.800			
	PC3-H	0.823			
Psycap-Optimism (PC-O)	PC4-O	0.828	0.778	0.870	0.691
	PC5-O	0.856			
	PC6-O	0.810			
Psycap - Self-Efficacy (PC-S)	PC7-S	0.808	0.755	0.859	0.669
	PC8-S	0.829			
	PC9-S	0.818			
Psycap - Resilience (PC-R)	PC10-R	0.882	0.715	0.840	0.639
	PC11-R	0.710			
	PC12-R	0.796			
E-HRM	EHRM1	0.624	0.794	0.853	0.494
	EHRM2	0.685			
	EHRM3	0.761			
	EHRM4	0.790			
	EHRM5	0.650			
	EHRM6	0.693			
Organisational Sustainability - Finance (OS-F)	OS1-F	0.716	0.778	0.858	0.605
	OS2-F	0.865			
	OS3-F	0.833			
	OS4-F	0.682			
	OS5-G	0.769			
Organisational Sustainability - Government (OS-G)	OS6-G	0.783	0.744	0.839	0.566
	OS7-G	0.742			
	OS8-G	0.715			
Organisational Sustainability - Environment (OS-En)	OS9-En	0.750	0.801	0.862	0.557
	OS10-En	0.751			
	OS11-En	0.803			
	OS12-En	0.754			
	OS13-En	0.668			
Organisational Sustainability Pollution (OS-Po)	OS14-Po	0.675	0.781	0.856	0.600
	OS15-Po	0.832			
	OS16-Po	0.721			
	OS17-Po	0.855			
Organisational Sustainability - Employee (OS-Em)	OS18-Em	0.673	0.743	0.839	0.567
	OS19-Em	0.796			
	OS20-Em	0.796			

	OS21-Em	0.740			
Organisational Sustainability - Public (OS-Pu)	OS22-Pu	0.593	0.795	0.859	0.552
	OS23-Pu	0.796			
	OS24-Pu	0.808			
	OS25-Pu	0.790			
	OS26-Pu	0.706			

Table 1: Item loading, Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability and AVE

	PC-H	PC-O	PC-S	PC-R	EHRM	OS-F	OS-G	OS-En	OS-Po	OS-Em	OS-Pu
PC-H	0.796	0.707	0.577	0.526	0.288	0.453	0.320	0.431	0.279	0.366	0.473
PC-O	0.528	0.831	0.595	0.499	0.284	0.304	0.413	0.250	0.337	0.235	0.214
PC-S	0.416	0.455	0.818	0.772	0.220	0.407	0.347	0.239	0.385	0.442	0.225
PC-R	0.370	0.374	0.576	0.799	0.246	0.505	0.399	0.303	0.384	0.433	0.187
EHRM	0.215	0.230	0.138	0.180	0.703	0.604	0.628	0.582	0.427	0.681	0.704
OS-F	0.326	0.240	0.317	0.381	0.482	0.778	0.616	0.675	0.462	0.693	0.604
OS-G	0.233	0.315	0.262	0.293	0.499	0.481	0.753	0.692	0.541	0.565	0.524
OS-En	0.330	0.201	0.141	0.202	0.476	0.532	0.537	0.747	0.622	0.719	0.688
OS-Po	0.203	0.268	0.317	0.308	0.347	0.374	0.417	0.496	0.774	0.839	0.556
OS-Em	0.266	0.173	0.337	0.321	0.535	0.532	0.419	0.556	0.638	0.753	0.881
OS-Pu	0.370	0.127	0.179	0.125	0.562	0.460	0.407	0.544	0.430	0.673	0.743

Table 2: Square roots of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (in bold and italics)

Validating reflective-reflective higher order constructs

Psycap (PC) is a higher order construct in the study based on four lower order constructs Hope, Optimism, Self-Efficacy and Resilience. Organisation sustainability consists of six lower order constructs. It is measured as a reflective-reflective higher order construct in the study. Factor loadings, reliability and validity of the construct was accessed and established. The factor loading of all indicators for PC is higher than the minimum acceptable value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010). No item was further removed for analysis. Reliability was accessed via Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, the value of them came out to be greater than the recommended value of 0.700 (Wasko & Faraj, 2005). For the higher order construct (Table 3). Convergent validity was acceptable as acceptable ad the AVE was higher than 0.500 for higher order construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was assessed by Fornell and Larker Criteria and the square root of AVE (in Bold and Italics) for a construct was found greater than its correlation with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and HTMT ratio for the indicators was less than 0.90 (Hair & Alamer, 2022). Hence, discriminant validity for Psycap and Organisational Sustainability was established (Table 4).

	Outer loadings	Cronbach's alpha	rho_c	AVE
PC-H <- Psycap	0.773	0.768	0.852	0.589
PC-O <- Psycap	0.759			
PC-S <- Psycap	0.784			
PC-R <- Psycap	0.755			
OS-F <- OS	0.745	0.857	0.894	0.585
OS-G <- OS	0.719			
OS-En <- OS	0.792			
OS-Po <- OS	0.715			
OS-Em <- OS	0.837			
OS-Pu <- OS	0.772			

Table 3: Validating higher order constructs

HTMT Ratio			
	EHRM	OS	Psycap
OS	0.79		
Psycap	0.318	0.545	

Fornell and Larcker Criterion			
OS	0.653	0.765	
Psycap	0.25	0.445	0.768

Table 4: HTMT Ratio; Fornell and Larcker Criterion

Mediation analysis

Mediation analysis was performed to assess the mediating role of E-HRM in the relationship between Psycap and Organisational Sustainability. The results (see table 5) revealed a significant indirect effect of Psycap on Organisational Sustainability through E-HRM (H_1 $\beta = 0.144$, $t = 2.027$, $p < .05$). The total effect of Psycap on Organisational Sustainability is significant ($\beta = 0.045$, $t = 7.806$, $p < .05$). With the inclusion of the mediator, the effect of Psycap on Organisation Sustainability was still significant ($\beta = 0.301$, $t = 3.498$, $p < .05$). This shows a complementary partial mediating role of E-HRM in the relationship between Psycap and Organisational Sustainability. Hence, H_1 was supported.

Total effect (PC->OS)			Direct effect (PC->OS)			Indirect effect of PC on OS		
Coefficient t	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value s	Coefficient t	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value s	Hypothesis		
0.445	4.394	0	0.301	3.498	0	(PC->EHRM->OS)	0.144	2.027 0.043

Table 5: Relationship among E-HRM, Psycap and Organisational Sustainability

4. Conclusion

This study set out to explore the intricate relationship between Psychological Capital (PsyCap), Electronic Human Resource Management (e-HRM), and Organizational Sustainability (OS). The empirical findings affirm that PsyCap plays a significant role in enhancing sustainability outcomes within organizations—both through direct influence and indirectly via e-HRM. By adopting a reflective-reflective higher-order construct model using SMART PLS, the research provides robust evidence supporting the multidimensional nature of PsyCap and OS, while also validating the mediating function of technology-enabled HR practices.

The results confirmed that the four dimensions of PsyCap—hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience—are individually reliable and valid contributors to the overall psychological resource pool of employees. Organizations that successfully develop these traits in their workforce are likely to witness a more resilient, adaptable, and forward-thinking employee base, which is essential for facing sustainability challenges in today's complex business environment.

Simultaneously, the deployment and effective use of e-HRM systems were found to positively mediate the relationship between PsyCap and sustainability. This implies that employees endowed with strong psychological capital are more likely to leverage digital HR systems effectively, resulting in improved decision-making, enhanced performance, and more sustainable outcomes across economic, environmental, and social domains. The complementary partial mediation found in this study underscores the synergistic interaction between individual psychological resources and organizational technology infrastructure.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research bridges human capital development with technological enablers of sustainability, contributing to the growing literature that highlights the importance of psychological and digital readiness in achieving long-term strategic goals. It goes beyond the traditional treatment of sustainability as an outcome of external compliance or policy measures and reframes it as an employee-driven, digitally-supported process of transformation.

Furthermore, the study reinforces the value of viewing sustainability not as a monolithic concept but as a multi-dimensional construct encompassing financial prudence, good governance, environmental responsibility, pollution

control, employee well-being, and societal engagement. By measuring and analyzing each of these dimensions, this research provides a more nuanced understanding of how different aspects of sustainability can be fostered through internal capabilities like PsyCap and institutional support systems like e-HRM.

In conclusion, the findings offer a compelling narrative: organizations that nurture their employees' psychological strengths and simultaneously invest in agile, responsive e-HRM systems are better positioned to meet the evolving expectations of sustainability. The interplay between human-centered strategies and digital transformation is no longer optional—it is essential for building resilient, future-ready organizations.

Recommendations and Future Research Directions

Based on the findings of this study, several practical and theoretical recommendations emerge. First, organizations should prioritize the development of Psychological Capital (PsyCap) among employees through targeted interventions, training programs, and a supportive work culture that fosters hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience. HR departments, in collaboration with top management, can design learning modules and coaching frameworks that embed these attributes into the core of organizational behavior. Second, there is a clear need to invest in robust e-HRM systems that are not only technologically sound but also user-friendly and aligned with employee needs. These systems should be utilized to empower staff, streamline HR processes, and gather real-time data for decision-making that contributes to long-term sustainability. Managers should view e-HRM not just as an administrative tool, but as a strategic partner in cultivating a more responsive and sustainable organizational structure.

From a research standpoint, future studies can build on this work by exploring industry-specific or cultural variations in the PsyCap–e-HRM–sustainability relationship. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how these variables evolve over time and respond to organizational change or external shocks. Moreover, while this study focused on the mediating role of e-HRM, future research can examine other potential mediators or moderators such as leadership style, organizational climate, or innovation culture to broaden the understanding of sustainability drivers. It would also be worthwhile to investigate the role of digital literacy and technological adaptability of employees in enhancing the effectiveness of e-HRM practices. Qualitative or mixed-method studies may further enrich the narrative by capturing the lived experiences of employees and HR practitioners in implementing sustainability through psychological and digital enablers. Finally, expanding the model to include environmental and social impact metrics as performance outcomes could strengthen its applicability to global sustainability frameworks such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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