

Enhancing managerial intrapreneurship: investigating the influence of psychological capital, well-being and work–life balance

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper investigates intrapreneurship from the perspective of positive organizational behavior. The research sheds light on the relationship between psychological capital (PsyCap) and the managers' intrapreneurial intention (INI) by looking into the mechanisms through which positive states influence INI and testing the mediation effect of well-being (WB) and work–life balance.

Design/methodology/approach – The study uses confirmatory factor analysis of the structural equation modeling to test the proposed model and mediation analysis to test the hypothesized relationships against data from a survey of 211 managers.

Findings – Results show that PsyCap strongly influences managers' INI. PsyCap strongly influences work–life balance and WB, while the latter mediates the direct relationship between PsyCap and INI.

Originality/value – This study is the first to investigate intrapreneurship from the perspective of positive organizational behavior. It contributes to the literature by providing theoretical and empirical evidence of the importance of PsyCap in increasing INI. Moreover, this study is the first in a non-Western, post-socialist, post-conflict country and could provide valuable insights into similar contexts.

Keywords Intrapreneurial intention, Psychological capital, Well-being, Work–life balance, Managers

Paper type Research article

Introduction

Intrapreneurship has attracted growing academic interest (Gawke *et al.*, 2019; Perlins *et al.*, 2022), particularly concerning intrapreneurial intention (INI) (Razavi and Ab Aziz, 2017). Its relevance stems from its positive association with firm performance, profitability, growth and survival (Antoncic and Hisrich, 2001). In increasingly competitive and complex environments, firms must foster innovation beyond the founder level (Zhao, 2005). This necessitates embedding entrepreneurial behavior across organizational levels, emphasizing



intrapreneurship as a behavioral norm. As individual behavior shapes organizational outcomes (Nadler and Tushman, 1980), fostering intrapreneurial conduct becomes central to value creation. Intrapreneurs, often driving innovation from within, play a key role in this process (Blanka, 2019; Felício *et al.*, 2012).

While the importance of intrapreneurship is well-established, research on the personal resources that enable managers to develop INI remains fragmented and theoretically underdeveloped (Aydin *et al.*, 2024; Lajçi, 2025). Despite evidence that personal resources serve as key individual-level antecedents of innovative behavior (Kwon and Kim, 2020) and INI among managers (Lajçi *et al.*, 2025), the field lacks a comprehensive understanding of how these resources operate within organizational contexts. This theoretical gap is particularly pronounced regarding the psychological mechanisms through which personal resources translate into intrapreneurial behavioral intentions (INI), leaving practitioners without clear guidance on fostering intrapreneurial mindsets among their managerial workforce. Building on this identified gap, this study poses a fundamental research question: How do managers' personal psychological resources influence their INI, and what mechanisms mediate this relationship?

To address this question, we adopt a positive organizational behavior framework, which offers a compelling theoretical lens for understanding intention formation by emphasizing how positive psychological states enhance proactive workplace behaviors (Gawke *et al.*, 2019) and enable individuals to initiate innovative activities within organizational constraints (Hornsby *et al.*, 2009). This perspective is particularly relevant for managers, who serve as key figures for organizational innovation (Kör *et al.*, 2021) and the principal bearers of intrapreneurial initiatives (Desouza, 2011), yet must navigate complex organizational dynamics while maintaining positive outlooks to effectively drive change from within (Antoncic and Hisrich, 2003).

Research highlights the role of positivity in shaping individual attitudes, intentions and behaviors in contemporary workplaces (Avey *et al.*, 2010). Positive organizational behavior, rooted in positive psychology, underscores how positively oriented behavior can enhance performance (Tenney *et al.*, 2016; Avey *et al.*, 2010). This perspective is embodied in psychological capital (PsyCap), a construct comprising hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism (Luthans and Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Management and organizational behavior scholars have shown sustained interest in PsyCap due to its link to employee attitudes, behavior and performance (Newman *et al.*, 2014). For managers, PsyCap constitutes a key personal resource associated with enhanced performance (Pitichat *et al.*, 2018), effective leadership, and the capacity to drive innovation (Luthans and Youssef-Morgan, 2017; Henson and Beehr, 2017). However, despite this promise, the mechanisms through which PsyCap fosters the intention to pursue intrapreneurial initiatives remain underexplored (Blanka, 2019).

This study investigates the relationship between managers' PsyCap and their INI, defined as the psychological precursors to intrapreneurial behavior (Chouchane *et al.*, 2021). The theoretical framework integrates the theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991) with the broad-and-build theory of positive emotions (BBTPE; Fredrickson, 2004) to examine how positive psychological states influence intrapreneurial outcomes. Integrating TPB and BBTPE offers a powerful lens for understanding how emotions influence behavioral intentions and actions.

This research offers three primary contributions. First, it extends intrapreneurship research beyond its traditional entrepreneurship domain (Perlines *et al.*, 2022) by applying positive organizational behavior perspectives. Second, it establishes empirical connections between PsyCap and INI, moving beyond existing studies that link PsyCap to entrepreneurial intentions (Chevalier *et al.*, 2022) as cognitive precursors to potential venture creation (Welter and Scrimshire, 2021). Our study advances this understanding by investigating how PsyCap influences intrapreneurial behavioral intentions within existing organizational structures, where managers must translate psychological resources into concrete innovative actions while navigating established hierarchies and processes. Additionally, our research specifically examines employed managers within established organizations, a distinct population that faces unique challenges in balancing intrapreneurial activities with existing managerial

responsibilities and organizational constraints. This context creates different psychological dynamics and resource requirements compared to independent entrepreneurship. Moreover, our study extends beyond the traditional PsyCap framework by integrating well-being (WB) and work–life balance as complementary personal resources (mediators), addressing calls for research into how PsyCap influences individual outcomes through intermediate mechanisms (Newman *et al.*, 2014). Third, it addresses the notable gap in intrapreneurship research within developing economies, particularly the Western Balkans (Berisha *et al.*, 2020). Kosovo is a developing country in a post-socialist, post-conflict period characterized by collectivist cultural norms and high power distance. This environment presents unique challenges to intrapreneurship, such as heightened fear of failure, low motivation for innovation and rigid hierarchies, which make it an ideal context to examine how individual psychological resources can spur intrapreneurial activity despite these barriers (Hysa and Mansi, 2020; GEM, 2022). Focusing on individual-level psychological factors, this research addresses determinants of intrapreneurship that may be more immediately actionable than environmental factors requiring longer-term structural changes.

Theory and hypotheses development

Intrapreneurship, defined here as a manager’s agentic and anticipatory behavior to create new business ventures and strategic renewal within an existing organization, lacks a unifying theory and has been examined through diverse lenses (e.g. motivation and social learning theories) (Gawke *et al.*, 2019; Neessen *et al.*, 2019; Blanka, 2019). To advance this domain, this study adopts a positive organizational behavior perspective (Luthans *et al.*, 2010), focusing on how constructive psychological resources drive INI (Pandey *et al.*, 2020). Prior organizational behavior research has largely overlooked intrapreneurship, concentrating instead on related concepts like innovative work behavior (De Jong and Den Hartog, 2010). However, evidence suggests that a positive state of mind encourages INI (Gawke *et al.*, 2019).

Academic scholarship has corroborated the importance of PsyCap in fostering intrapreneurship (Deprez *et al.*, 2024). Extending this line of inquiry, this study examines PsyCap as a foundational personal resource that shapes managers’ INI (Hornsby *et al.*, 2009). PsyCap—comprising hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism—captures a forward-looking, self-assured orientation toward overcoming challenges and achieving goals (Luthans and Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Although PsyCap has been linked to enhanced performance (Pitichat *et al.*, 2018) and proactive work behaviors (Gawke *et al.*, 2019), it remains underexplored in intrapreneurship research (Blanka, 2019). By situating PsyCap within the intrapreneurial domain, this study connects two streams of scholarship, positive organizational behavior (Luthans *et al.*, 2010) and intrapreneurship, typically studied in isolation. In doing so, the study moves beyond dominant entrepreneurship-centric accounts (Perlines *et al.*, 2022) and grasps underlying mechanisms through which PsyCap relates to individual-level outcomes (Newman *et al.*, 2014), particularly in the context of intrapreneurship.

The proposed framework (Figure 1) integrates the TPB (Ajzen, 1991) with the BBTPE (Fredrickson, 2004) to explain how PsyCap influences INI both directly and indirectly through WB and work–life balance. TPB offers a motivational account of intrapreneurial behavior,

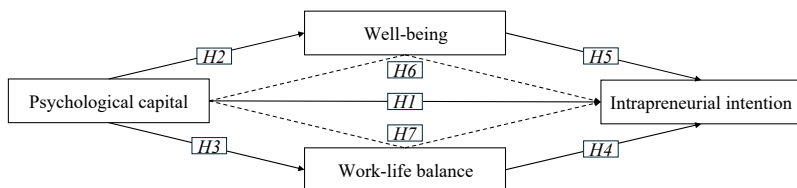


Figure 1. Conceptual framework. Source: Authors’ own work

suggesting that intentions stem from attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control. TPB's concept of perceived behavioral control is widely used in entrepreneurial research, including studies on intrapreneurship (Chouchane *et al.*, 2021; Neessen *et al.*, 2019), and is particularly relevant here. It mirrors PsyCap's efficacy and resilience dimensions, which foster confidence and a proactive mindset (Mahfud *et al.*, 2020). Managers with high PsyCap are more likely to feel capable of navigating challenges, reinforcing the sense of control that underpins stronger INIs (Douglas and Fitzsimmons, 2013). TPB also informs the use of mediators, emphasizing that background factors such as personal resources shape intentions primarily through proximal evaluations (Conner and Armitage, 1998). In this model, WB and work–life balance serve as such evaluations, transmitting the effect of PsyCap on INI. This mediated application aligns with TPB's use in prior organizational (Chen and Yin, 2017) and entrepreneurship research (Kautonen *et al.*, 2015).

Complementing this cognitive-motivational view, Fredrickson's (2001) BBTPE offers an effective account of how PsyCap operates through WB and work–life balance. BBTPE posits that positive emotions expand individuals' momentary thought-action repertoires and help build enduring personal resources (Fredrickson, 2013). Through its optimism, hope and resilience components, PsyCap fosters more frequent positive emotional experiences at work (Culbertson *et al.*, 2010). These emotional states, in turn, accumulate over time, enhancing overall WB and enabling the development of additional cognitive and relational resources. Managers high in PsyCap tend to interpret challenges constructively and see success as attainable, which supports a sense of fulfillment and balance (Avey *et al.*, 2010). These elevated states of WB and equilibrium broaden perspectives—encouraging openness, creativity and discretionary effort—and build the psychological capacity to pursue intrapreneurial initiatives. In effect, PsyCap initiates an upward spiral: improving WB increases managers' readiness to engage in proactive, change-oriented behaviors. Empirical work supports these links, showing that positive emotions can drive innovation, initiative-taking and entrepreneurship (Grichnik *et al.*, 2010). BBTPE has been applied to explain how entrepreneurs persist after failure (Hayward *et al.*, 2010) and how PsyCap predicts organizational citizenship behaviors—closely aligned with intrapreneurship in established firms (Avey *et al.*, 2011; Moriano *et al.*, 2014). By integrating BBTPE with TPB, the study's framework accounts for both the emotional and cognitive pathways through which PsyCap fosters intrapreneurial outcomes. As shown in Figure 1, PsyCap is positioned as a driver of INI, directly and via its effects on WB and work–life balance.

This theoretical integration advances research at the intersection of intrapreneurship and positive organizational behavior. The study extends intrapreneurship theory by foregrounding psychological resources and emotions, shifting attention from predominantly structural or contextual explanations (Blanka, 2019; Neessen *et al.*, 2019). At the same time, the study broadens the scope of positive organizational behavior (Luthans *et al.*, 2010) by linking it to a novel outcome: INI. In doing so, the study highlights how PsyCap, WB and work–life balance contribute to innovation-oriented intentions at work (Gawke *et al.*, 2018; Escrig-Tena *et al.*, 2022). The next section outlines the specific hypotheses for the direct and mediated paths in the model.

Psychological capital and intrapreneurial intention

PsyCap is expected to have a direct positive influence on managers' INI. Individuals high in PsyCap tend to maintain a positive outlook on success and a strong sense of personal efficacy and control over achieving their goals (Youssef-Morgan and Luthans, 2015).

Within the TPB framework, confidence in one's capacity to act—captured by perceived behavioral control—strengthens intention formation (Ajzen, 1991). This claim can be supported because individuals higher in PsyCap have positive expectations concerning work (optimism), believe they create their success (efficacy and hope) and demonstrate perseverance to setbacks (resilience) when compared with those lower in PsyCap (Avey

et al., 2011). Ashkanasy and Ashton-James (2007) maintain that managers with a positive mood are likely to be more optimistic, entrepreneurial and risk-taking, as their perception and assessment of situations is positively biased. Empirical studies support these links: self-efficacy predicts entrepreneurial intention (Douglas and Fitzsimmons, 2013) and mediates the positive relationship between intrapreneurship and opportunity recognition (Liao *et al.*, 2022); resilience helps managers navigate the uncertainties of internal venturing (Kromidha and Bachtiar, 2024) and optimism fosters positive expectations about outcomes (Tan and Jellis, 2012). PsyCap has been associated with creativity and problem-solving, which are the pervasive manifestations of intrapreneurship (Iqbal *et al.*, 2024). Building on this theoretical foundation and prior evidence, it is hypothesized that:

H1. PsyCap is positively associated with the INI of managers.

Psychological capital and well-being

The association between PsyCap and WB is grounded in the positivist paradigm (Youssef-Morgan and Luthans, 2015). This study proposes that PsyCap enhances managers' WB. As a core personal resource, PsyCap fosters positive emotions by orienting individuals toward optimism and hope (Imran and Shahnawaz, 2020). This aligns with BBTPE, which suggests that such emotional states broaden perspective and contribute to psychological WB (Fredrickson, 2004). Managers high in PsyCap are more likely to experience fulfillment and satisfaction at work, supported by a resilient and forward-looking mindset (Luthans *et al.*, 2024). Empirical studies consistently identify PsyCap as an antecedent of WB, showing immediate and sustained effects on happiness, thriving and reduced stress (Salanova *et al.*, 2010; Avey *et al.*, 2010). By enabling individuals to appraise experiences more positively and maintain confidence in goal attainment, PsyCap contributes to a greater sense of balance and contentment (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2021; Rabenu *et al.*, 2017). Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

H2. PsyCap is positively associated with the well-being of managers.

Psychological capital and work-life balance

The proposed framework expects PsyCap to strengthen managers' perceived work-life balance. Both constructs share roots in positive psychology, pointing to a conceptual fit (Morganson *et al.*, 2014). Managers high in PsyCap tend to cope more effectively with demands and maintain a constructive view of how they allocate time and energy (Hilbrecht *et al.*, 2008). This adaptive orientation enables them to meet work obligations without depleting resources needed for personal life, supporting a more sustainable balance across domains. Empirical research shows that individuals with higher PsyCap report greater satisfaction across life roles (Avey *et al.*, 2011), likely due to more efficient resource use and reduced interference between work and non-work spheres. PsyCap's resilience and optimism support recovery from setbacks and help maintain perspective, which is key to avoiding work-life conflict. When managers feel capable and positive at work, they are more likely to set boundaries and draw on resources to meet professional and personal commitments (Beauregard and Henry, 2009). Based on this reasoning, it is hypothesized that:

H3. PsyCap is positively associated with managers' work-life balance.

Work-life balance and intrapreneurial intention

Managers' work-life balance is expected to facilitate the formation of INI. A balanced integration of work and personal life can help restore psychological resources, enabling discretionary investment in innovation-related efforts at work. Without strain from work-life conflict, managers are more likely to pursue new initiatives, as they retain the cognitive and

emotional capacity to do so. Prior research links work–life balance to positive outcomes such as energy, engagement and innovative behavior. For instance, individuals with higher perceived balance report elevated positive affect and vigor (Russo *et al.*, 2016) and increased creativity and initiative-taking (Chen and Huang, 2016). These findings suggest that balance in personal life may support extra-role behaviors such as intrapreneurship. Related evidence from studies on entrepreneurial employees shows that those experiencing imbalance tend to express external entrepreneurial intentions—potentially seeking flexibility (St-Jean and Duhamel, 2020)—whereas those with greater balance focus on innovation within their current roles (Neneh, 2021). Although direct research on the link between work–life balance and INI remains limited (Chandra and Mathur, 2021), consistent associations with proactivity suggest a positive relationship (Wood *et al.*, 2020). Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

H4. Work–life balance is positively associated with the INI of managers.

WB and intrapreneurial intention

Managers' WB is expected to influence their INI positively. WB reflects a positive psychological state characterized by satisfaction and frequent positive emotions. Managers who experience high levels of WB are more likely to pursue novel ideas and workplace improvements for several reasons. First, consistent with the broaden-and-build framework, positive emotions expand the cognitive scope, fostering creativity, openness and opportunity recognition—factors conducive to intrapreneurial behavior (Slåtten, 2011). Second, high WB often correlates with greater work engagement and discretionary effort (Van De Voorde and Van Veldhoven, 2016), increasing the likelihood of investing in initiatives beyond core responsibilities. Empirical evidence supports these links: affective WB has been shown to correlate with intrapreneurial behavior (Preenen *et al.*, 2019), while lower WB may limit individuals' capacity or motivation to engage in such efforts. Although the role of WB in shaping INI remains underexplored (Zhang *et al.*, 2015; Contreras-Barraza *et al.*, 2022), the existing evidence suggests a positive relationship (Escrig-Tena *et al.*, 2022). Based on this rationale, it is hypothesized that:

H5. Well-being is positively associated with the INI of managers.

Work–life balance and WB as mediators

WB and work–life balance are proposed as mediating mechanisms linking PsyCap to INI. Beyond its direct influence, PsyCap may shape INI by first enhancing WB and balance, which in turn support the formation of innovation-oriented goals. This pathway aligns with TPB (Ajzen, 1991), which holds that internal states mediate the relationship between personal factors and intentions. Prior research in organizational behavior and entrepreneurship has identified WB and work–life balance as mediators connecting individual resources to work outcomes (Escrig-Tena *et al.*, 2022; Imran and Shahnawaz, 2020). As positively valenced constructs rooted in emotional and evaluative processes, PsyCap, WB and work–life balance form a coherent chain of influence. From a TPB perspective, WB and balance may influence perceived desirability and attitudes toward intrapreneurial behavior (Douglas and Fitzsimmons, 2013)—managers who feel fulfilled and balanced may view intrapreneurial engagement as both attainable and worthwhile. From a BBTPE standpoint (Fredrickson, 2013), PsyCap contributes to developing these positive states, which broaden cognition and build the psychological capacity needed for proactive action. These perspectives suggest that part of PsyCap's effect on INI operates through its impact on WB and work–life balance (Chan *et al.*, 2017; Kautonen *et al.*, 2015). Hence, a mediation is hypothesized as follows:

H6. Well-being mediates the relationship between PsyCap and INI.

H7. Work–life balance mediates the relationship between PsyCap and INI.

Method

Procedure and participants

Data were gathered through questionnaires distributed among business managers in Kosovo, a developing economy. Managers of businesses of varying industries and sizes in Kosovo were approached for participation in the study. Given the lack of a sampling frame for managers in the country, non-random sampling was used (Cumming, 1990). Companies were randomly chosen from a database of Kosovo Chamber of Commerce members, and their human resource departments were approached via email or phone to inform them about the study and receive approval to conduct the survey. Then, managers who were approached by human resources and accepted to be part of the survey received the questionnaire. Three hundred seventy online (Qualtrix) and paper questionnaires have been distributed to potential respondents. The authors received 224 surveys (60.5% response rate). The rest of the questionnaires were not completed in time, or the respondents did not reply. Thirteen questionnaires were dropped because the data were incomplete, and at least one statement of a study scale was left unanswered. Therefore, a total of 211 questionnaires were useable for further analysis. The mean and median age of the respondents was 32.1 (± 6.5).

Regarding other demographics, most of the sample was male (62.6%). More than half of the respondents had an undergraduate degree (54.5%). Another 40.3% had a graduate degree. Middle managers were represented the most (45%), followed by senior and junior managers. The mean tenure of managers in their organizations was 6.7 years (± 5.4).

Measures

Measures used in this study were administered in Albanian. Since none of the measures were available in this language, they were translated from English using the back-translation method. Items of all measures included in the survey were scored on a five-point Likert scale, indicating the level of agreement (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Psychological capital. Luthans *et al.*'s (2007) instrument was used to measure managers' PsyCap. The instrument consists of 24 items, with six items used to identify each dimension (hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism). A sample item is: "I feel confident analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution." Previous research (Arshi *et al.*, 2021) has adopted the PsyCap scale and supported it as a reliable measure.

Work-life balance. Work-life balance was measured using four items from the scale developed by Brough *et al.* (2014). A sample item is "I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I have available for non-work activities." Authors indicate acceptable internal consistency of the measure, with alphas ranging from 0.84 to 0.94.

WB. WB was measured using the Work and WB Survey, a shortened version (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006) of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Wilmar *et al.*, 2002). Work engagement, as operationalized with this scale, has been extensively used as a proxy to measure WB (Chi *et al.*, 2023). A sample item is "I am enthusiastic about my job." An average score of the nine items was calculated to measure managers' WB. Schaufeli *et al.* (2006) support the validity and reliability of the shortened version of UWES. Other studies have utilized this scale to measure WB and consider it psychometrically commendable (Gusy *et al.*, 2019).

Intrapreneurial intention. Managers' INI was measured using the instrument developed by González-Serrano *et al.* (2019). The instrument consists of two subdimensions: innovation and risk. A sample item is: "I would develop new ways of doing things within the company." Coefficient alphas in González-Serrano *et al.*'s (2019) study samples reached 0.89 and 0.90.

Control variables

Previous studies have demonstrated that individual differences and organizational settings influence INI. Following these studies, to reduce unobserved heterogeneity, this study controlled for individual differences like age, gender, marital status, education and tenure (Gawke *et al.*, 2018). This study used management support as a control variable, as it has been attested to

influence individual intrapreneurship (Rabl *et al.*, 2022). It was measured using the Management Support scale developed by Kuratko and colleagues (Kuratko *et al.*, 2014). Lastly, the authors controlled for social desirability bias (SDB), as this tendency has been deemed important to consider when investigating intrapreneurship (Briganti and Samson, 2019). To test SDB, the Social Desirability-Gamma Short Scale developed by Nießen *et al.* (2019) was used.

Data analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the AMOS 26 software was performed as a first step. It was used to produce the measurement model and test the measures' accuracy. A measurement model was developed for each of the four scales used in the study. Model fit improvement interventions were performed to ensure model fit and scale accuracy. For hypothesis testing, the macro process of SPSS was used. It has been established as a valuable tool for testing mediation, even over and above other competing methods (Hayes *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, similar studies testing the mediation effects have performed the CFA for the measurement model and switched to Process in SPSS for hypothesis testing (Maslakci *et al.*, 2021).

Measure properties

Data were checked for common method variance (CMV) and collinearity problems to determine the instrument properties (Ghauri *et al.*, 2020). Following the guidelines suggested by Podsakoff *et al.* (2003) for *ex ante* interventions in survey design to minimize the risk of CMV, respondents were assured verbally and through a cover letter that the survey was anonymous and that the measures were independent. Moreover, a psychological separation between measures was ensured to alleviate the possibility of CMV. After gathering the data, Herman's single-factor and variance inflation factor (VIF) tests were performed. The Harman test showed a variance of 27.1%, way beyond the 50% threshold (Fuller *et al.*, 2016), which indicates that common method bias (CMB) is not detected. To further assess potential CMB and acknowledging limitations inherent in existing detection approaches (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2024), the marker variable technique was applied post hoc (Lindell and Whitney, 2001). A fixed mindset construct, operationalized using a three-item subset from Dweck's (2013) Implicit Theories of Intelligence Scale, served as the marker. This measure, scored on a 5-point Likert scale consistent with the study's main instruments, satisfied standard criteria for marker variable selection. Specifically, it demonstrated low and statistically nonsignificant correlations with the study variables (range = -0.123 to -0.40), indicating minimal conceptual overlap. In line with established guidance, the marker was treated as theoretically unrelated and nonideal (Richardson *et al.*, 2009). The CFA model was re-estimated with the marker variable included. A comparison of model estimates, with and without the marker, revealed negligible changes in the strength of observed relationships. The difference in explained variance between the two models was 8.3%, which remains well below the 25% threshold recommended for concern (Williams *et al.* (1989).

To address any possibility of multicollinearity, the authors tested the three independent variables for VIF. Ratios for PsyCap, WLB and WB are 1.48, 1.02 and 1.49, respectively, which are beyond the <4 cutoff (Hair *et al.*, 2019), indicating no issue of multicollinearity.

Reliability tests show good psychometric properties of all study measures. Cronbach's alpha for PsyCap was $\alpha = 0.9$. Reliability scores for components were 0.88 for self-efficacy, 0.83 for hope, 0.63 for resilience and 0.64 for optimism. Alphas for mediation variables (WB = 0.86; WLB = 0.79) and the independent variable (INI = 0.86) were acceptable. Further tests and interventions are performed with the measurement model's CFA.

Results

CFA is conducted to determine the validity of the established theoretical instruments used in the study and to test the hypotheses (Brown, 2015). The first step is to generate the

measurement model. Skewness and kurtosis were initially assessed as prerequisites for data normality in CFA. It was noted that the scores are inside limits and that normality is present (Byrne, 2016). CFA is performed for each instrument used in the study. Factor loading is checked to determine whether to keep the instruments in the original or perform item deletion. Following Hair *et al.* (2019), the predetermined theoretical cutoffs are used as criteria for item omission, namely the 0.3 cutoff (Field, 2017). Furthermore, the correlation of error terms was done as a post hoc modification for model fit, a routine practice in SEM-based studies (Byrne, 2016). Authors limit error term correlation within batteries of constructs (Gerbing and Anderson, 1984) and between items with similar wording (Heene *et al.*, 2012) to comply with good practices in this regard (Hoyle, 1995). The >0.10 cutoff criteria for modification indices (Jorgensen, 2017) were used to determine which error terms to correlate. The fit indices for the measures are presented in Table 1.

In the PsyCap scale, the three negatively stated items (13, 20 and 23) had poor loading, and their regression weights were not significant, which has been the case in previous research (Cid *et al.*, 2020). Another two items loaded poorly (14 and 24). Most model fit indices did not meet the thresholds. CFA was repeated after deleting 5 items of the PsyCap scale. The respecified model better fits the data in concordance with previous theoretical assumptions (Worthington and Whittaker, 2006). The chi-square relative to the degrees of freedom (χ^2/df), which was inside the ≤ 3 cutoff (Kline, 1998) in the original model, improved after item deletion to 1.935. CFI and TLI improved to 0.906 and 0.901, respectively, meeting the >0.9 recommended threshold (Schumacker and Lomax, 2010). The SRMR index went down from 0.082 to 0.067, below the >0.8 threshold (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Only GFI (0.870) did not meet the threshold for reasonable fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

The CFA for WB yielded good factor loadings except for one (item 8, deleted). Furthermore, with the covariation of error terms, the model fit indices showed a good fit with the data. Every index considered for model fit testing was within the proposed thresholds. Similarly, the CFA for WLB showed good factor loadings and fit indices. This suggests that the WB and WLB measures are appropriate, and hypothesis testing can be conducted.

Concerning INI, the two dimensions suggested by González-Serrano *et al.* (2019) could not be estimated. The data support the unidimensionality of the INI scale with good factor loading and model fit. Apart from RMSEA (0.095), all other indices showed a good model fit with the data. Moreover, CFI and GFI showed excellent fit, above the ≥ 0.95 cutoff (West *et al.*, 2014).

Table 1. Fit indices for study measures

Indices	Models					
	PsyCap (all 24 items)	PsyCap (5 deleted items)	WB (all 9 items)	WB (1 deleted items)	WLB (all 4 items)	INI (all 7 items)
χ^2	572.184 ($p = 0.000$)	350.174 ($p = 0.000$)	241.459 ($p = 0.000$)	43.728 ($p = 0.000$)	0.242 ($p = 0.623$)	25.966 ($p = 0.002$)
χ^2/df	2.307	1.935	8.943	2.572	0.242	2.888
GFI	0.817	0.870	0.808	0.953	0.99	0.968
CFI	0.829	0.906	0.761	0.965	1.000	0.976
TLI	0.810	0.901	0.682	0.943	1.016	0.944
RMSEA	0.079	0.067	0.194	0.087	0.000	0.095
SRMR	0.082	0.067	0.107	0.039	0.006	0.032

Note(s): PsyCap-psychological capital; WB-well-being; WLB-work-life balance; INI-intrapreneurial intention; χ^2 -chi-square; χ^2/df -chi-square divided by degree of freedom; GFI-goodness of fit index; CFI-comparative fit index; TLI-Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA-root mean square error of approximation; SRMR-standardized root mean residual

Source(s): Authors' own work

Hypothesis testing

After CFA determined the item structure of the study measures, and the model fit indices demonstrated that the measurement model was acceptable, hypothesis testing could be performed. Given that mediation analysis using the macro Process provides results for each path between variables, it was used to test all the hypotheses (Choi *et al.*, 2020). Since two mediators are present in the model, parallel mediation is conducted. The significance of the relationships was determined by ascertaining whether confidence interval levels included zero (MacKinnon, 2008). Results support five of the seven hypotheses proposed. The regression results for the first five hypotheses are presented (Table 2).

PsyCap has a strong and significant influence on INI ($\beta = 0.611$; $p < 0.001$), WB ($\beta = 0.740$; $p < 0.001$) and WLB ($\beta = 0.389$; $p < 0.001$) of managers. Hence, hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 are supported. Furthermore, results support hypothesis 4: WB positively and significantly influences INI ($\beta = 0.236$; $p < 0.001$). The influence of WLB on INI was not significant; therefore, hypothesis 5 is not supported.

Table 3 presents the regression results from the mediation analysis. One of the two hypotheses testing the mediation effect was supported.

Hypothesis 6 suggested that WB mediates the influence of PsyCap on INI. The results support partial mediation, as the indirect effect of WB is 0.175, contributing to the stronger direct effect (0.611) of PsyCap on INI. No support is found for the indirect effect of WLB on the relationship between PsyCap and INI. The effect is negative (-0.028) and not significant.

Lastly, mediation analysis was performed using the Process macro, including the control variables as covariates. The effect of control variables in the model is not significant. No support was found for the influence of gender, age, education and tenure on the relationship between variables. Also, the authors did not find any significant influence of management support. Furthermore, the study tested for SDB. Also, this test yielded no significant result, suggesting that SDB is not an issue.

Discussion

This study investigated managers' INI from a positive organizational behavior perspective. It was hypothesized that PsyCap influences managers' INIs. Furthermore, the study tested whether positive states like WB and work–life balance influence this relationship as mediators. The findings provide strong empirical support for our integrated theoretical model, which combines the TPB (Ajzen, 1991) and the BBTPE (Fredrickson, 2004). Specifically, individual psychological resources (PsyCap) and positive emotional states are central to forming INI (Avey *et al.*, 2011; Gawke *et al.*, 2019). The results show that individuals' positive psychological resources (PsyCap) and activated positive emotions can fuel INI even in a developing, post-conflict environment with considerable structural and cultural impediments

Table 2. Regression results

Hypotheses	Hypotheses paths	Beta	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI	Conclusion
H1	PsyCap > INI	0.611	0.104	5.832	0.000	0.4051	0.8187	Supported
H2	PsyCap > WB	0.740	0.074	9.923	0.000	0.5934	0.8876	Supported
H3	PsyCap > WLB	0.389	0.129	3.004	0.003	0.1340	0.6457	Supported
H4	WB > INI	0.236	0.077	3.037	0.002	0.0027	0.0828	Supported
H5	WLB > INI	-0.072	0.039	-1.847	0.066	-0.1499	0.0049	Not supported

Note(s): PsyCap-psychological capital; INI-intrapreneurial intention; WB-well-being; WLB-work–life balance; SE-standard error; *t*-test score; *p*-probability value; LLCI-lower level of confidence interval; ULCI-upper level of confidence interval

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 3. Mediation regression results

Hypotheses	Hypotheses paths	Effect	Beta	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI	Conclusion
		Total	0.758	0.076	9.874	0.000	0.6070	0.9098	
		Direct	0.611	0.104	5.832	0.000	0.4051	0.8187	
H6	PsyCap > WB > INI	Indirect	0.175	0.057	Significant		0.0571	0.2844	Partial mediation
H7	PsyCap > WLB > INI	Indirect	-0.028	0.019	Not significant		-0.0748	0.0022	No mediation

Note(s): PsyCap-psychological capital; INI-intrapreneurial intention; WB-well-being; WLB-work-life balance; SE-standard error; *t*-test score; *p*-probability value; LLCI-lower level of confidence interval; ULCI-upper level of confidence interval

Source(s): Authors' own work

to intrapreneurship. This suggests that internal resources play a compensatory role in contexts where external support for innovation is limited – a theoretical insight extending intrapreneurship research into developing economy settings. This contribution is especially relevant for Kosovo, a developing country marked by post-socialist transition and economic fragility. Where institutional and infrastructural enablers are weak (Hysa and Mansi, 2020), PsyCap can compensate for these contextual deficiencies, emerging as a viable pathway for fostering innovation through individual resourcefulness.

The most overriding finding is that PsyCap significantly, positively strongly influences managers' INI. This relationship aligns with research linking PsyCap to job satisfaction (Paliga *et al.*, 2022), organizational commitment (Idris and Manganaro, 2017), work engagement (Joo *et al.*, 2016), innovative work behavior (Jha, 2021) and creativity (Yu *et al.*, 2019), which are the building blocks toward intrapreneurship. Proponents of PsyCap (Luthans and Youssef-Morgan, 2017) maintain that positive PsyCap leads to worthwhile, productive, ethical and sustainable outcomes. The present findings reinforce the TPB principle that perceived behavioral control—reflected in PsyCap's efficacy and resilience—drives intention formation (Ajzen, 1991; Mahfud *et al.*, 2020). Managers high in PsyCap are more likely to pursue intrapreneurial activity (Douglas and Fitzsimmons, 2013; Bičo and Knezović, 2023). Bestowing personal resources of hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism helps cultivate further positive emotions, which nourish a state of WB in line with the predictions of the BBTPE. These, in turn, trigger behavioral intentions at work (Fredrickson, 2013). In developing economies where uncertainty and institutional instability may reduce perceived behavioral control, PsyCap can restore agency (Arslanagic-Kalajdzic *et al.*, 2019; Berisha, 2013), overriding contextual constraints and generating intentionality where external enablers fall short (Hysa and Mansi, 2020; GEM, 2022).

The strongest observed relationship is between PsyCap and WB. This aligns with prior studies across diverse contexts (Luthans and Broad, 2022). PsyCap enhances managerial WB; managers with high PsyCap view their circumstances more positively, hence demonstrating greater WB. Alongside performance, WB is a key outcome of PsyCap interventions (Lupša *et al.*, 2020). When PsyCap and WB are aggregated, their effect on INI is amplified, supporting hypothesis 7. Managers who feel hopeful, efficacious, resilient and optimistic demonstrate greater WB and act more intrapreneurially. In line with BBTPE, this confirms that WB acts not only as an outcome but as an enabler—broadening cognitive and emotional resources that feed into proactive and innovative intentions (Fredrickson, 2013; Culbertson *et al.*, 2010). Thus, PsyCap's impact on INI is both direct (via TPB mechanisms) (Ajzen, 1991; Chouchane *et al.*, 2021) and indirect (via the emotional spiral described in BBTPE) (Avey *et al.*, 2011; Escrig-Tena *et al.*, 2022).

Based on previous theorization (St-Jean and Duhamel, 2020), it was expected that WLB would influence INI. Although the effect is negative ($\beta = -0.072$) and insignificant, it resonates conceptually. When managers perceive equilibrium in work and personal life, they may become protective of it. Intrapreneurial activity, which entails risk and energy demands, may be seen as disruptive. In developing countries like Kosovo—characterized by long working hours and limited flexibility (ILO, 2022)—work-life balance is often fragile and difficult to maintain (Ford and Collinson, 2011). Managers may prioritize stability over risk, perceiving intrapreneurial activity as a potential threat to hard-won equilibrium (Gawke *et al.*, 2018); thus weakening WLB's motivational role. Managers in such contexts often lack alignment with contractual working hours (Ford and Collinson, 2011), making them more susceptible to poor WLB. This could explain why Kosovo ranks among countries with the lowest employee entrepreneurship alongside other developing economies (GEM, 2015). Unlike WB, WLB depends more on social capital and organizational support (Direnzo *et al.*, 2015), which may explain its insignificance in mediating the PsyCap-INI relationship. Thus, while WLB aligns conceptually with positive organizational behavior, its influence on INI may be more contextually constrained.

Study results are emic to the cultural context in which they were gathered. Kosovo exhibits high collectivism, power distance and low uncertainty avoidance (Berisha, 2013). These traits have been associated with stronger PsyCap (Han *et al.*, 2012). In such cultures, individuals often channel positive psychological resources toward group-serving behavior.

The strong PsyCap–INI relationship may thus reflect cultural endorsement of group advancement through proactive effort. Self-efficacy, in particular, exerts a stronger influence on INI in low-uncertainty-avoidant contexts (Arslanagic-Kalajdzic *et al.*, 2019), like Kosovo. In this environment, where formal innovation supports are scarce, personal resources compensate for systemic gaps (Gawke *et al.*, 2019; Pitichat *et al.*, 2018). The findings suggest INI can thrive in developing contexts when psychological enablers are activated. Kosovo thus contributes theoretically as a representative of underexamined developing settings (Berisha *et al.*, 2020).

This study's findings support the extension of BBTPE to intrapreneurship literature. The positive organizational psychology perspective has traction in intrapreneurship research, predominantly through PsyCap. Furthermore, it was evidenced that TPB is a viable theoretical underpinning for comprehending the relationship between PsyCap and INI. These theories offer a dual lens to understand how internal resources and emotional states shape innovation intent, particularly in settings with limited external support. This expands intrapreneurship theory to developing country contexts where innovation must often arise from within.

Conclusions, implications, limitations and future research directions

This study highlights the compensatory role of psychological resources, especially in developing countries with limited institutional support for innovation. It contributes to intrapreneurship theory by showing how PsyCap and WB drive INI despite structural constraints. Integrating the TPB and the BBTPE provides a robust theoretical foundation for explaining how control beliefs and positive affect interact to generate innovative intent.

Implications for research

The study presents some important implications for research and practice. Theoretically, this study instigates the positive organizational behavior approach to intrapreneurship. This research contributes to a better understanding of the relationship between PsyCap and INI and the underlying mechanisms from the viewpoint of positive states and emotions. It also supports combining cognitive–motivational (TPB) and affective–developmental (BBTPE) theories to examine intention formation, especially where structural enablers are weak. On a foundational basis, findings instill that the TPB and the BBTPE can serve as theoretical underpinnings in explaining INI and its antecedents. This is particularly relevant as BBTPE remains underutilized in intrapreneurship research.

Research to date has highlighted the importance of social and human capital as important characteristics of intrapreneurs (Blanka, 2019). The present study makes a case for the relevance of PsyCap. Previous studies have examined the relationship of PsyCap with work outcomes, whereas the current study presents PsyCap as an antecedent to intentions. This reframing emphasizes intention as a psychological precursor to behavior—particularly useful in resource-constrained environments.

The study has made a case for including WB and WLB as underlying mechanisms in explaining the transmission of positive states into intentions. The differentiated roles of WB and WLB suggest that while both relate to PsyCap, only WB consistently links to INI, highlighting boundary conditions for these mediators.

Another notable implication is the confirmation of the theoretical consistency of measures. The instrument structure estimations suggest that all the constructs are well explained by their components, and they are valuable instruments for research, including in developing economy contexts. However, future research should consider item formulation, particularly the effect of negatively worded items on construct validity.

Implications for practice

Pertinent implications are provided for managers and organizations. Since PsyCap is an indispensable resource for managers, they should pursue self-improvement activities that increase their resources. Managers should systematically and purposefully demonstrate workplace positivity as it spirals further positive emotions and actions from self and others (Luthans *et al.*, 2010). Managers can influence the PsyCap and other positive resources of employees in their organization (Avey, 2014), provided they know its components and mechanisms of influence on countless favorable behaviors. PsyCap, when nurtured intentionally, supports managers' ability to generate and sustain INI.

Study findings have practical training implications and can be taken as relevant inputs for intrapreneurship development. Given that PsyCap strongly influences INIs and given that PsyCap resources are open to development and management (Avey *et al.*, 2010; Kiegler *et al.*, 2021), organizations should include PsyCap in their training programs or other interventions. PsyCap interventions have been found to increase participants' PsyCap and performance, even if their format is short or online (Luthans *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, studies have demonstrated that positive psychology interventions develop intrapreneurship among managers (Deprez *et al.*, 2024). Targeted training can increase managers' positive emotional capacities to exhibit INIs beyond their in-role performance (Abid and Polo, 2025). Through interventions to increase PsyCap, WB and WLB, organizations can equip managers to be more positive about their state (Kiegler *et al.*, 2021; Luthans and Broad, 2022) and show INI and behaviors that are beneficial for the organization's strategic renewal and new value creation (Ravina-Ripoll *et al.*, 2022). This may be especially impactful in developing economies like Kosovo, where change often begins with individual initiative.

Information on PsyCap, INI, WB and WLB can be used for recruitment and placement. If included in the selection criteria, these state measures would serve as performance proxies and would help distinguish between applicants. They should also be integrated into HR recruitment, promotion and placement practices to ensure strategic alignment. These interventions could empower managers to instigate their INI within the companies (Douglas and Fitzsimmons, 2013). Such alignment may also reduce talent loss to external entrepreneurial pathways.

Limitations and directions for future research

The study has inherent shortcomings. Hypotheses were tested using a national sample, which hampers the generalizability of results. Moreover, a convenience sample was used, which may pose a representativeness issue. Future studies should adopt cross-national designs, as culture (Antoncic and Hisrich, 2001) and time (Honig, 2001) influence intrapreneurial dynamics.

There are shortcomings in the theoretical underpinnings on which the research is grounded. The study tests TBP as a theory but not as a framework. Nonetheless, it extends TPB with constructs from positive organizational behavior and introduces BBTPE to intrapreneurship, albeit with cross-sectional limitations. Future research could model intention formation as a dual-path process—combining beliefs and emotional broadening—using longitudinal or experimental approaches.

Since the current study is cross-sectional, reciprocal or reverse causality could be an issue. The former could occur in the PsyCap-INI relationship, as has been attested in a previous study (Pandey *et al.*, 2020). Also, Gawke *et al.* (2017) hypothesize that intrapreneurship could build personal resources, suggesting reverse causation compared to this study. Future research could further investigate the directions of influence between the constructs employed in this study. Furthermore, future research on intrapreneurship should employ longitudinal study designs, observations and diary studies. Further work should also examine how PsyCap and WB function as psychological enablers in under-resourced contexts.

This study opens an exciting new avenue of research in intrapreneurship from the perspective of positive organizational behavior. Special attention should be paid to developing

economies, where the interaction between personal resources and innovation remains underexplored but theoretically rich.

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