

Presenting a Model of Managers' Psychological Capability in Public Organizations

Majid. Dadkhah Tehrani¹, Akbar. Etebarian^{2*}, Mehrdad. Sadeghi Dehcheshmeh³, Mehraban Hadi. Peykani¹

¹ Department of Public Administration, Is.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

² Department of Public Administration, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan (Khorasgan), Iran

³ Department of Cultural Management and Planning, Is.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: etebarian@khusf.ac.ir

Article Info

Article type:

Original Research

How to cite this article:

Dadkhah Tehrani, M., Etebarian, A., Sadeghi Dehcheshmeh, M., & Peykani, M. H. (2026). Presenting a Model of Managers' Psychological Capability in Public Organizations. *International Journal of Innovation Management and Organizational Behavior*, 6(2), 1-11.
<https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.ijimob.4975>



© 2026 the authors. Published by KMAN Publication Inc. (KMANPUB), Ontario, Canada. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to identify and develop a comprehensive model of managers' psychological capability in public organizations.

Methods and Materials: This study employed a qualitative research design using thematic analysis with an inductive approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with managers and employees working in public organizations. Sampling was conducted purposively and continued until theoretical saturation was achieved, which occurred after 22 interviews. The interview data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed systematically through open coding, categorization of basic themes, abstraction into organizing themes, and integration into global themes, following established procedures for inductive thematic analysis to ensure analytical rigor and conceptual coherence.

Findings: The analysis resulted in the identification of 94 basic themes, which were clustered into 17 organizing themes and ultimately integrated into four global dimensions of managers' psychological capability. These dimensions included: (1) the capability of inner regulatory capacity and emotion management, (2) the capability of cognitive adaptability and mental-social resilience, (3) the capability of personality integration and moral-psychological maturity, and (4) the capability of social skills and effective interaction. The findings indicate that managers' psychological capability is a multidimensional and integrative construct that encompasses emotional regulation, cognitive flexibility, ethical coherence, resilience, and relational effectiveness, all of which jointly shape managerial functioning in public organizations.

Conclusion: The study concludes that managers' psychological capability represents a holistic psychological framework that underpins effective leadership in public organizations and extends beyond isolated constructs such as empowerment or psychological safety. By offering an empirically grounded and context-sensitive model, the findings provide a robust foundation for leadership development, managerial selection, and organizational policy aimed at enhancing psychological effectiveness and sustainable performance in the public sector.

Keywords: Psychological capability; public managers; public organizations; qualitative research; thematic analysis

1 Introduction

In contemporary organizational environments, particularly within public and semi-public institutions, managers are increasingly confronted with complex psychological, social, and ethical demands that extend far beyond technical competence and administrative expertise. Rapid environmental changes, heightened accountability, intensified stakeholder expectations, and persistent uncertainty have amplified the psychological pressures placed on managerial roles. As a result, scholars and practitioners alike have emphasized the necessity of understanding the psychological capacities that enable managers to regulate their internal states, engage effectively with others, and sustain organizational functioning under challenging conditions. These developments have positioned psychological capability as a critical, yet undertheorized, construct in management and organizational research (Rezazadeh Taloukolaei et al., 2024; Zafar et al., 2025).

Psychological capability in management contexts refers to a multidimensional set of inner resources that allow leaders to manage emotions, maintain cognitive flexibility, uphold ethical integrity, and foster constructive social interactions. Prior research has often examined related constructs such as psychological empowerment, psychological capital, psychological safety, and emotional intelligence; however, these constructs are frequently investigated in isolation and primarily within private or Western organizational settings (Dai & Fang, 2023; Xing-gui et al., 2023). Consequently, the holistic psychological architecture that underpins managerial effectiveness—particularly in public organizations characterized by bureaucratic complexity and sociopolitical constraints—remains insufficiently articulated (Khomideh et al., 2022).

One of the dominant streams of research addressing managers' psychological functioning has focused on psychological empowerment. Studies consistently demonstrate that empowered managers and employees exhibit higher levels of work engagement, innovative behavior, and affective commitment, while also contributing positively to organizational performance (Kranthi et al., 2024; Pourdavood & Aghighi, 2023). Empowering leadership styles enhance individuals' sense of meaning, competence, autonomy, and impact, which in turn reinforce their psychological readiness to cope with organizational demands (Al Otaibi et al., 2023). Nonetheless, empowerment alone does not fully capture the internal

regulatory and moral dimensions of managerial functioning, particularly in contexts where ethical dilemmas and emotional labor are pervasive.

Parallel to empowerment research, a growing body of literature has emphasized psychological safety as a foundational mechanism linking leadership behavior to desirable organizational outcomes. Psychological safety enables individuals to express ideas, voice concerns, and acknowledge errors without fear of negative consequences, thereby fostering learning, adaptability, and trust (Ahmed & Khan, 2023; Kim & Kwak, 2022). Inclusive leadership has been shown to cultivate psychological safety by promoting openness, fairness, and respect, which subsequently enhances employee voice and engagement (Alwali, 2024; Siyal, 2023). However, much of this research conceptualizes psychological safety as a contextual or climate variable rather than as a capacity rooted in managerial psychological competence.

Ethical leadership and moral integrity constitute another critical domain closely related to managers' psychological capability. Empirical evidence suggests that leaders who demonstrate ethical consistency, honesty, and moral courage significantly reduce turnover intentions, organizational silence, and deviant behaviors (Abas et al., 2024; Rastgar & Hasani, 2023). Ethical leadership not only shapes external behaviors but also reflects deep psychological coherence between values, emotions, and actions. In public organizations, where managers often navigate conflicting interests and normative pressures, the capacity for ethical self-regulation becomes particularly salient (Sepahvand et al., 2022). Despite this, ethical competence is frequently treated as a normative attribute rather than as a psychologically grounded capability that can be systematically analyzed and developed.

Recent research has also highlighted the detrimental consequences of deficient psychological capability in leadership roles. Toxic leadership behaviors—characterized by emotional volatility, manipulation, and disregard for employee well-being—have been linked to organizational trauma, cynicism, and psychological distress among staff (Ibnis Shaid Bin Abdul et al., 2024; Rahmani & Ghanbari, 2024). These findings underscore the importance of examining not only positive leadership traits but also the underlying psychological capacities that prevent destructive leadership patterns. From this perspective, psychological capability functions as both a protective factor for leaders and a stabilizing force for organizations.

Another important strand of literature emphasizes the role of psychological needs, energy, and motivation in managerial effectiveness. Drawing on self-determination theory, researchers argue that managers' ability to sustain psychological energy, regulate stress, and maintain intrinsic motivation directly influences their leadership behaviors and decision-making quality (Huyghebaert-Zouaghi et al., 2023; Peymannia, 2022). Leaders who lack psychological vitality are more susceptible to burnout, rigidity, and emotional exhaustion, which ultimately impair organizational functioning. Nevertheless, existing studies tend to operationalize these variables quantitatively, offering limited insight into the experiential and structural dimensions of psychological capability.

In the context of organizational change and innovation, psychological capability becomes even more critical. Inclusive and humble leadership styles have been shown to stimulate innovative work behavior by enhancing psychological empowerment, trust, and emotional openness (Joshy & Varghese, 2024; Pourdavood & Aghighi, 2023). Similarly, leaders' capacity for cognitive flexibility, ambiguity tolerance, and reflective learning enables organizations to adapt to uncertainty and complexity (Dai & Fang, 2023; Zahed Babolan et al., 2023). These capacities, however, are rarely integrated into a unified conceptual framework that explains how managers internally process, regulate, and translate psychological resources into effective action.

Within public organizations, the need for such an integrated framework is particularly pressing. Public sector managers operate under rigid regulations, political scrutiny, and limited autonomy, conditions that intensify emotional strain and ethical tension (Mehdizadeh et al., 2023; Shams et al., 2023). While competency models for public managers have traditionally emphasized technical skills and formal authority, recent scholarship argues for a shift toward psychologically informed models that account for emotional regulation, moral maturity, and relational effectiveness (Khomideh et al., 2022; Rezazadeh Taloukolaei et al., 2024). Yet, empirical efforts to identify and systematize these psychological dimensions remain fragmented.

Moreover, much of the existing research relies on predefined constructs derived from Western theoretical traditions, potentially overlooking culturally embedded expressions of psychological capability in non-Western public organizations. Studies conducted in Middle Eastern and Asian contexts suggest that leadership effectiveness is deeply intertwined with relational harmony, moral

credibility, and emotional influence, dimensions that may not be fully captured by conventional leadership models (Alwali, 2024; Siyal, 2023). This highlights the importance of inductive, qualitative approaches capable of uncovering context-sensitive psychological dimensions grounded in lived managerial experiences.

Despite the growing recognition of psychological factors in leadership and management research, there remains a notable gap in the literature regarding a comprehensive, empirically grounded model of managers' psychological capability, particularly within public organizations. Existing studies often focus on isolated outcomes such as engagement, voice behavior, or performance, without systematically examining the underlying psychological architecture that enables managers to function effectively across emotional, cognitive, moral, and social domains (Adekanmbi et al., 2023; Xing-gui et al., 2023). Addressing this gap requires an exploratory approach that allows psychological dimensions to emerge from the perspectives of managers themselves.

In response to these theoretical and empirical shortcomings, the present study adopts a qualitative, inductive approach to identify and conceptualize the dimensions of managers' psychological capability in public organizations, drawing on thematic analysis to capture the depth, complexity, and contextual specificity of this construct.

Accordingly, the aim of this study is to identify and develop a comprehensive model of the psychological capability of managers in public organizations.

2 Methods and Materials

The present study was designed with the aim of identifying the dimensions of managers' psychological capability in public organizations. In terms of purpose, this research is developmental-applied; with regard to data collection, it is descriptive; and in terms of the certainty of data, it is considered exploratory. Given the existing gaps in the related literature, a qualitative approach was selected for conducting the study in order to enable the researcher to identify the dimensions of managers' psychological capability in public organizations. Accordingly, interviews were conducted with 22 managers and employees of public organizations until theoretical saturation was achieved. Sampling in this study was carried out using a purposive method. In qualitative research, the sample size continues to increase until no new data add to or modify the emerging

theory; this condition is referred to as theoretical saturation. In addition, data analysis was conducted using the thematic analysis method based on the inductive approach (Attride-Stirling). Thematic analysis is a method commonly used for analyzing data in primary qualitative studies and transforms data into rich and detailed information. In this method, basic themes represent the key points of the text, and by combining them, organizing themes are formed. In the present study, initial codes were first extracted from the interview texts; then, by categorizing these codes, basic themes were identified. Subsequently, through abstraction of the categories, organizing themes were developed, and finally, global themes were formed.

Table 1*Examples of Selected Texts and Identified Basic Themes*

No.	Extracted Texts	Interviewee	Basic Themes
1	Anxious individuals generally transmit anxiety very easily, almost like something contagious, as if it is truly something that spreads when one is in a group. When someone who is leading and guiding a situation continuously transfers anxiety to others or responds with low mood, impatience, and lack of motivation, this really undermines the encouraging and motivating aspect, and it destroys the sense of calm among employees and subordinates, and ultimately damages others as well. For success, we need this sense of calm.	Interview 3	1. Creating calm
2	In dealing with problems and incidents, he tried to remain patient and composed and attempted to get personally involved and stay informed about the work, resolving the issue in some way. He might give a reminder, a warning, or a notice to the individual—for example, saying that the work was done incorrectly and should not have been done that way—but then he would quickly take care of it himself.	Interview 7	2. Patience and forbearance; 3. Composure
3	It means that others can actually trust him and move forward, smoothing their path. Also, colleagues who work alongside that manager can pursue the organization's goals with a sense of reassurance and peace of mind.	Interview 11	4. Building trust
4	Regarding managers' psychological characteristics, emotional stability is very important. A manager must keep his or her emotions and feelings in balance in order to perform managerial duties.	Interview 5	6. Emotional balance
5	Especially when I observe a behavior from managers that can help me—even if they cannot actually solve my problem but still make an effort and do their best—this becomes very valuable to me. It makes me feel better about my organization, feel a sense of belonging and commitment. My manager is so good, empathizes with me, and makes an effort to resolve my problem.	Interview 12	9. Empathy
6	In my opinion, self-management is a good term, or self-efficacy—this is also necessary. If I cannot perform, then the work will not be done and the entire system will fall apart. Motivation is also necessary; if I do not have sufficient motivation to perform tasks, the work will face difficulties.	Interview 15	12. Self-motivation
7	A manager whose social relationships are very strong creates social acceptance and popularity among staff.	Interview 16	17. Likeability
8	His anger was mostly expressed politely and respectfully, due to employees' underperformance and questions about why a task had not been completed on time. He made one feel ashamed; he would not say anything directly, but would go and do the work himself, which made us feel embarrassed. Because of this kindness and his management style, his employees and students who assisted him all worked wholeheartedly for him.	Interview 10	18. Kindness creation

In the second step, based on the functional similarities among the basic themes, several themes were grouped into a single category referred to as an organizing theme. In the previous stage, 94 basic themes were identified and

3 Findings and Results

Data analysis in this study was carried out using the thematic analysis method. In the first stage, based on the conducted interviews and the texts obtained related to managers' psychological capability in public organizations, the relevant dimensions were identified and extracted. Then, initial coding was performed. After completing this stage, similar codes were grouped together in order to decide on how to combine and integrate them for the formation of basic themes. Table 1 presents examples of the extracted basic themes.

categorized into 17 organizing themes. Table 2 presents the classification of basic themes within the framework of organizing themes.

Table 2*Classification of Basic Themes and Extraction of Organizing Themes*

No.	Basic Themes	Organizing Themes
1	Creating calm	Psychological calm
2	Patience and forbearance	
3	Composure	
4	Building trust	
5	Creating a sense of reassurance among employees	
6	Balance in emotions	Psychological balance and emotional stability
7	Balance in behavior	
8	Balance in decisions and communications	
9	Empathy	Emotional intelligence
10	Compassion	
11	Motivating others	
12	Self-motivation	
13	Creating warmth	
14	Emotional-affective attractiveness	
15	Creating a sense of being valued in others	
16	Creating intimacy	Emotional influence and interpersonal attraction
17	Likeability	
18	Creating kindness	
19	Winning hearts	
20	Spiritual influence	
21	Cooperation	Psychological flexibility
22	Adaptability	
23	Adjustability	
24	Tolerance and forbearance	
25	Willingness to be flexible in affairs	
26	Authority	Psychological power
27	Decisiveness	
28	Self-confidence	
29	Courage in affairs	
30	Honesty	Moral-psychological integrity
31	Truthfulness	
32	Confidentiality	
33	Candor and transparency	
34	Consistency	
35	Paying attention to and valuing others	Social intelligence
36	Appreciation and praise	
37	Respect for subordinates	
38	Creating a sense of dignity in subordinates	
39	Constructive interactions with superiors	
40	Collectivism	
41	Philanthropy	
42	People-oriented behavior	
43	Creating camaraderie	
44	High energy	Psychological energy
45	Tirelessness	
46	Perseverance	
47	Immersion in work	
48	Intrinsic motivation	

49	Sense of humor	Emotional–social creativity
50	Good temper	
51	Pleasant demeanor	
52	Positive thinking	
53	Hopefulness	
54	Inner vitality	
55	Organized mind	Self-regulation
56	Personal order and discipline	
57	Accuracy	
58	Self-control	
59	Occupational discipline	
60	Planning and scheduling	
61	Avoiding extreme reactions to crisis situations	Ambiguity tolerance
62	Maintaining calm when confronting problems and challenges	
63	Acceptance of contradictions (positive and negative consequences of events and decisions)	
64	Patience in achieving results	
65	Willingness to change and transform	
66	Openness to new ideas and technologies	
67	Ability to analyze past experiences for learning and inner growth (reflectivity)	Inner awareness
68	Acceptance of strengths and weaknesses without excessive judgment or denial (self-acceptance)	
69	Alignment between inner values and outward actions in the organizational environment (value–behavior congruence)	
70	Ability to listen to and analyze internal dialogues and their impact on performance (awareness of inner dialogue)	
71	Recognition of needs such as belonging, meaning, growth, and psychological safety in the workplace (awareness of inner psychological needs)	
72	Understanding triggering factors in psychological and behavioral reactions at work (analysis of emotional–behavioral triggers)	
73	Awareness of current psychological states such as stress or satisfaction to regulate appropriate behavior (awareness of momentary psychological states)	
74	Commitment to ethical principles even in difficult conditions	Ethical leadership
75	Active listening and respectful behavior	
76	Accountability for ethical violations	
77	Consistency between words and actions	
78	Choosing options aligned with human values	
79	Creating a psychologically safe climate for employees	
80	Decisive بُرخور د with unethical behaviors	
81	Expressing opinions in sensitive situations	Moral courage
82	Loyalty to principles	
83	Standing up against unethical behaviors	
84	Expressing truth without fear of consequences	
85	Accepting mistakes and expressing weaknesses in the professional environment (readiness for vulnerability)	Psychological participation
86	Creating an open psychological space for employees' cognitive participation (willingness to hear others' viewpoints)	
87	Expressing genuine emotions in interactions without defensiveness (emotional transparency)	
88	Creating participatory relationships based on trust and respect (facilitating intimate dialogue)	
89	High tolerance for opposing beliefs and opinions	
90	Willingness to discuss, negotiate, and engage in dialogue	
91	Rapid recovery from negative emotions (emotional recovery)	Psychological restorability
92	Cognitive reappraisal after failure (cognitive reconstruction)	
93	Using negative experiences for personal growth (learning from failure)	
94	Sustaining performance under conditions of hopelessness (maintaining motivation in crises)	

In the final step, based on the functional similarities among the organizing themes, several themes were grouped into a single category referred to as a global theme. In the previous stage, 17 organizing themes were identified, which

in this stage were categorized into 4 global themes. Table 3 presents the classification of organizing themes within the framework of global themes.

Table 3

Classification of Global Themes

Organizing Themes	Global Themes
Psychological calm	Capability of inner regulatory capacity and emotion management
Psychological balance and emotional stability	
Emotional intelligence	
Psychological energy	
Emotional–social creativity	
Self-regulation	
Inner awareness	
Psychological flexibility	Capability of cognitive adaptability and mental–social resilience
Mental–psychological resilience	
Psychological restorability	
Ambiguity tolerance	
Psychological power	Capability of personality integration and moral–psychological maturity
Moral–psychological integrity	
Moral courage	
Social intelligence	Capability of social skills and effective interaction
Emotional influence and interpersonal attraction	
Psychological participation	
Ethical leadership	

4 Discussion

The findings of the present study led to the identification of four overarching dimensions of managers' psychological capability in public organizations: the capability of inner regulatory capacity and emotion management, the capability of cognitive adaptability and mental–social resilience, the capability of personality integration and moral–psychological maturity, and the capability of social skills and effective interaction. Collectively, these dimensions portray psychological capability as a multidimensional, integrative construct that operates across intrapersonal regulation, cognitive–emotional adaptation, ethical coherence, and relational effectiveness. This conceptualization extends existing leadership and management literature by moving beyond fragmented constructs and offering a holistic psychological framework grounded in the lived experiences of managers in public organizations.

The first global dimension, the capability of inner regulatory capacity and emotion management, highlights the central role of psychological calm, emotional balance, self-

regulation, inner awareness, emotional intelligence, psychological energy, and emotional–social creativity. This finding underscores that effective managerial functioning in public organizations begins with the capacity to regulate internal emotional states and sustain psychological vitality. Prior studies have emphasized that leaders who can manage their emotions and maintain inner balance are more capable of creating supportive and motivating work environments (Huyghebaert-Zouaghi et al., 2023). Emotional regulation and psychological energy allow managers to remain composed under pressure, thereby preventing the emotional contagion of stress and anxiety among employees, a phenomenon that has been linked to reduced engagement and increased deviant behaviors (Abas et al., 2024). Moreover, the present findings align with research on psychological empowerment, which suggests that managers' internal sense of competence and self-regulation enhances their ability to empower others and foster positive organizational climates (Al Otaibi et al., 2023; Kranthi et al., 2024). By integrating emotional intelligence with self-regulation and inner awareness, the study provides a more

comprehensive understanding of how internal psychological processes shape managerial effectiveness.

The second dimension, the capability of cognitive adaptability and mental-social resilience, encompasses psychological flexibility, ambiguity tolerance, mental resilience, psychological restorability, and adaptability to change. This dimension reflects managers' capacity to cognitively reframe challenges, recover from setbacks, and remain functional amid uncertainty. Public organizations are frequently characterized by bureaucratic constraints, political pressures, and ambiguous decision-making contexts, which intensify the need for cognitive adaptability. The findings are consistent with studies demonstrating that leaders who tolerate ambiguity and exhibit psychological flexibility are better equipped to manage change and sustain performance during crises (Dai & Fang, 2023; Zahed Babolan et al., 2023). Psychological resilience and restorability, as identified in this study, also align with evidence indicating that leaders' ability to recover from negative emotional experiences reduces burnout and enhances long-term effectiveness (Peymannia, 2022). Furthermore, inclusive leadership research suggests that cognitively adaptable leaders are more likely to create psychologically safe environments, thereby facilitating learning and innovation (Kim & Kwak, 2022; Siyal, 2023). The present findings extend this literature by conceptualizing adaptability and resilience as core psychological capabilities rather than situational responses.

The third global dimension, the capability of personality integration and moral-psychological maturity, captures psychological power, moral-psychological integrity, and moral courage. This dimension emphasizes the alignment between inner values, ethical principles, and outward managerial behavior. In public organizations, where managers often face ethical dilemmas and competing stakeholder demands, such integration is particularly critical. The findings resonate strongly with prior research on ethical leadership, which highlights that leaders' consistency between words and actions reduces organizational silence and turnover intentions (Mehdizadeh et al., 2023; Rastgar & Hasani, 2023). Moral courage, identified as a distinct organizing theme, reflects managers' willingness to express ethical positions and confront misconduct despite potential personal costs. This is consistent with evidence suggesting that ethical courage strengthens trust and legitimacy in leadership roles (Sepahvand et al., 2022). Additionally, research on leadership integrity indicates that employees' perceptions of

leaders' moral coherence significantly influence psychological safety and voice behavior (Adekanmbi et al., 2023; Ahmed & Khan, 2023). By framing these attributes as elements of psychological capability, the study deepens the understanding of ethics as an internally regulated psychological process rather than merely a normative expectation.

The fourth dimension, the capability of social skills and effective interaction, integrates social intelligence, emotional influence and interpersonal attraction, psychological participation, and ethical leadership. This dimension reflects managers' ability to build trust-based relationships, engage employees emotionally and cognitively, and facilitate participatory interactions. The findings corroborate extensive literature demonstrating that relationally skilled leaders foster higher levels of employee voice, engagement, and commitment (Ahmed & Khan, 2023; Alwali, 2024). Social intelligence and emotional influence enable managers to connect with diverse stakeholders, a capacity shown to be particularly important in public and educational organizations (Rezazadeh Taloukolaei et al., 2024; Zahed Babolan et al., 2023). Moreover, psychological participation aligns with studies emphasizing inclusive leadership, which encourages shared decision-making and open dialogue, thereby enhancing organizational trust and reducing psychological distress (Ibnis Shaid Bin Abdul et al., 2024; Joshy & Varghese, 2024). The present study contributes by integrating these relational competencies into a unified psychological capability framework rather than treating them as isolated interpersonal skills.

Taken together, the four global dimensions suggest that managers' psychological capability functions as a dynamic system in which internal regulation, cognitive adaptability, moral integration, and social interaction mutually reinforce one another. This systemic view aligns with recent calls in leadership research for integrative models that capture the complexity of managerial functioning (Xing-gui et al., 2023; Zafar et al., 2025). Notably, the findings also illuminate the detrimental consequences of deficits in psychological capability. Research on toxic leadership and organizational trauma demonstrates that managers lacking emotional regulation, ethical coherence, and relational sensitivity can inflict long-lasting psychological harm on employees and organizations (Rahmani & Ghanbari, 2024). The present model implicitly identifies these deficits by highlighting the capacities required to prevent such outcomes.

Another important contribution of the study lies in its contextual grounding within public organizations. Unlike much of the existing literature, which focuses on private-sector or Western contexts, the findings reflect the specific psychological demands of public-sector management, including accountability, moral responsibility, and relational legitimacy. This contextual sensitivity echoes prior research emphasizing the need for culturally and institutionally grounded leadership models (Khomideh et al., 2022; Shams et al., 2023). By employing an inductive qualitative approach, the study captures nuanced psychological dimensions that may be overlooked by standardized quantitative instruments.

5 Conclusion

Overall, the discussion of findings suggests that managers' psychological capability is not a singular trait but a composite of interrelated capacities that collectively shape managerial behavior and organizational outcomes. This integrative perspective advances theoretical understanding and provides a robust foundation for future empirical testing and practical application.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the qualitative nature of the research, while suitable for exploratory purposes, limits the generalizability of the findings to other organizational contexts. Second, the data were collected from a specific set of public organizations, which may reflect contextual and cultural characteristics not present in other sectors or countries. Third, the reliance on self-reported interview data may introduce subjective bias, as participants' accounts are influenced by personal perceptions and social desirability. Finally, although thematic analysis allowed for in-depth exploration, the absence of quantitative validation restricts the ability to assess the relative weight and predictive power of the identified dimensions.

Future research could build on the present findings by developing and validating quantitative measurement instruments for managers' psychological capability based on the identified dimensions. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to examine how psychological capability evolves over time and how it influences managerial effectiveness under changing organizational conditions. Comparative studies across public and private sectors or across different cultural contexts could further enhance understanding of contextual variations in psychological

capability. Additionally, future research may explore the mediating or moderating role of psychological capability in the relationship between leadership styles and organizational outcomes such as performance, innovation, and employee well-being.

From a practical perspective, organizations can use the findings of this study to redesign leadership development and selection programs with a stronger focus on psychological capabilities. Training interventions can be developed to enhance managers' emotional regulation, cognitive flexibility, ethical maturity, and social interaction skills. Human resource policies may also incorporate psychological capability criteria into performance appraisal and promotion systems. Furthermore, organizational leaders can foster environments that support the development of psychological capability by promoting reflective practices, ethical dialogue, and participatory decision-making, thereby strengthening both managerial effectiveness and organizational sustainability.

Authors' Contributions

M.D.T. conceptualized the study, designed the qualitative research framework, and led the thematic analysis process. A.E. contributed to the development of the interview protocol, supervised data collection, and participated in coding and theme refinement. M.S. assisted in data analysis, verified the credibility and trustworthiness procedures, and contributed to the interpretation of findings. M.H.P. collaborated in literature review, organization of themes and subthemes, and drafting the manuscript. All authors jointly reviewed and revised the manuscript, approved the final version for publication, and take full responsibility for the integrity and accuracy of the work.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our gratitude to all individuals helped us to do the project.

Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding

According to the authors, this article has no financial support.

Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

References

Abas, B., Bukhari, S. A., Farrukh, M., & Iqbal, S. (2024). Examining the Socio-Psychological Dynamics of Interpersonal and Organizational Deviances: The Moderating Influence of Interpersonal Justice and Perceived Organizational Support. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 45(6), 935-953. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-07-2023-0350>

Adekanmbi, F. P., Ilesanmi, O. A., & Ogunyemi, K. (2023). The impacts of perceived leadership integrity, psychological safety, and organizational culture in sustaining employee voice. *Journal of Management Development*, 42(5), 345-362. <https://ujcontent.uj.ac.za/esploro/outputs/journalArticle/The-impacts-of-perceived-leadership-integrity/9933410007691>

Ahmed, S., & Khan, M. A. (2023). Leader-member exchange and employee voice behavior: The mediating role of psychological safety. *Public Organization Review*, 23(3), 987-1004.

Al Otaibi, S. M., Amin, M., Winterton, J., Bolt, E. E. T., & Cafferkey, K. (2023). The role of empowering leadership and psychological empowerment on nurses' work engagement and affective commitment. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 31(6), 2536-2560. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-11-2021-3049>

Alwali, J. (2024). Innovative work behavior and psychological empowerment: the importance of inclusive leadership on faculty members in Iraqi higher education institutions. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 37(2), 374-390. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-03-2023-0084>

Dai, X.-X., & Fang, Y. (2023). Does Inclusive Leadership Affect the Organizational Socialization of Newcomers From Diverse Backgrounds? The Mediating Role of Psychological Capital. *Frontiers in psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1138101>

Huyghebaert-Zouaghi, T., Gillet, N., Fernet, C., Thomas, J., & Ntoumanis, N. (2023). Managerial predictors and motivational outcomes of workers' psychological need states profiles: A two-wave examination. *European Journal of work and organizational psychology*, 32(2), 216-233. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2022.2127354>

Ibnis Shaid Bin Abdul, R., Singh, S. S. B., Taat, M. S., & Mosin, M. B. (2024). Exploring the Effect of Inclusive Leadership on Psychological Distress Through Organizational Climate Mediation and Moderation. *Humanities and Social Sciences Letters*, 12(2), 425-442. <https://doi.org/10.18488/73.v12i2.3787>

Joshy, L., & Varghese, R. (2024). Unveiling the mechanisms by which inclusive leadership influences the good soldier syndrome among health-care employees. *Leadersh Health Serv (Bradf Engl)*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/LHS-11-2023-0089>

Khomideh, K., Rangriz, H., Khastar, H., & Kheirandish, M. (2022). Redesigning the Selection and Appointment Model for Social Security Organization Managers Based on Competency Models Using a Grounded Theory Approach. *Psychological Science Quarterly*, 21(118), 1943-1956. <https://doi.org/10.52547/JPS.21.118.1943>

Kim, S. Y., & Kwak, W. J. (2022). Effect of Inclusive Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior in the Military Organization: The Mediating Effect of Psychological Safety and Moderating Effect of Tenure. *Korean Academy of Leadership*, 13(3), 69-104. <https://doi.org/10.22243/tklq.2022.13.3.69>

Kranthi, A. K., Rai, A., & Showry, M. (2024). Linking resonant leadership and learning organizations: The role of psychological empowerment as a mediator in faculty members among higher educational institutions in India. *Acta Psychologica*, 248, 104365. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104365>

Mehdizadeh, I., Rajaeepor, S., & Siadat, S. A. (2023). Organizational Silence and Positive Leadership Strategies: The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment. *Journal of Public Administration*, 15(1), 67-93. <https://www.sid.ir/paper/1093221/fa>

Peymannia, B. (2022). Matrix Model Effectiveness in Job Burnout and Organizational Commitment of Managers of Ahvaz electric Power Distribution Company. *Psychological Achievements*, 29(2), 171-188. <https://doi.org/10.22055/psy.2022.40620.2837>

Pourdavood, M. R., & Aghighi, A. (2023). The Effect of Humble Leadership on Organizational Performance with the Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment and Innovative Work Behavior. *Proceedings of the Seventeenth International Conference on Management, Economics, and Development*, Tehran.

Rahmani, I., & Ghanbari, S. (2024). The effect of toxic leadership on the creation of organizational trauma with the mediating role of organizational cynicism among middle and high school teachers. *Psychological Achievements*, 31(1), 231-252.

Rastgar, A. A., & Hasani, H. (2023). Investigating the Mediating Role of Benevolent Rule-Breaking and Leader-Follower Exchange in the Impact of Ethical Leadership on Employees' Intent to Leave (Case Study: Social Security Organization of Tehran). *Psychological Research in Management*, 9(2), 203-223. https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://civilica.com/doc/1900306/&ved=2ahUKEwjCrIWIktaOAxWLcKQEHbuxKNoQFnoECBgQAQ&usg=AOvVaw34lr73u9p7L42W_QQNzmVO

Rezazadeh Taloukolaei, F., Zameni, F., & Enayati, T. (2024). Identifying the Dimensions and Components of Good Governance and Organizational Development at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences [Research Article]. *Iranian Journal of Educational Sociology*, 7(1), 113-123. <https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.ijes.7.1.11>

Sepahvand, R., Fathi Chegeni, F., & Azimi, H. (2022). The Effect of Positive Leadership on Organizational Whistleblowing Via the Mediation of Psychological Intimidation. *Journal of Development of Logistics and Human Resource Management*, 17(63), 1-26. <https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/1866037>

Shams, A., Jannesar Ahmadi, H., & Rajabi, M. (2023). Investigating the impact of organizational health on job satisfaction with the mediating role of organizational commitment in the National Petroleum Products Distribution Company of Mashhad. *Psychological Researches in Management*, 9(1), 119-138.
<https://doi.org/10.22034/jom.2023.703856>

Siyal, S. (2023). Inclusive Leadership and Work Engagement: Exploring the Role of Psychological Safety and Trust in Leader in Multiple Organizational Context. *Business Ethics the Environment & Responsibility*, 32(4), 1170-1184.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/beer.12556>

Xing-gui, Z., Lin, Z., Chen, X., Zhang, Z., & Liu, D. M. (2023). Leader-follower Congruence In psychological Capital: Effects on LMX and Turnover Intention. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 44(4), 489-502.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/lodj-09-2020-0419>

Zafar, H., Cheah, J. H., Ho, J. A., Suseno, Y., & Tian, F. (2025). How green servant leadership influences organizational green performance? The roles of employee green creativity, voluntary pro-environmental behavior and green psychological climate. *Personnel Review*, 54(4), 971-995.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-10-2023-0843>

Zahed Babolan, A., Abdolahzadeh, M., & Esmaeili, M. (2023). A Meta-analysis of the Antecedents and Consequences of Organizational Socialization in Iranian Educational Organizations. *Sociology of Education*, 10(1), 214-223.
<https://doi.org/10.22034/ijes.2023.2006997.1439>