

# Creative Psychological Capital: A Conceptual Framework for Future Creativity Research

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**Abstract:** Creative psychological capital is a positive potential that exists within a person who can be judged and developed to produce something new or new order that is defined by self-efficacy, hope, courage, resilience and optimism. This concept is a new positive organizational behavior concept that synthesizes and develops the theory of psychological capital and creativity. The authors assume that the concept of psychological capital can still be developed to be broader so as to capture the phenomenon of individuals with more comprehensive. The development is done by integrating the concept of psychological capital with creativity in which it contains components of psychological capital. The integration of the two concepts resulted in a new construct called creative psychological capital. This article provides a conceptual framework that integrates psychological and creative capital factors, which will ultimately provide theoretical implications and recommendations for future creativity of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) research.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Luthans (2001) wrote about positive organizational behavior (POB) in reaction to the development of positive psychology. Luthans continued to provoke with further articles in 2002 and 2003 showing the positive psychological impact on the field of organizational behavior. The impact was not only on the micro level (micro OB) such as personality-trait but also at the macro level (macro OB) such as group functionalization. The provocation appeared to be quite effective with the emergence of POB-related research to balance negative behavioral research such as stress, burnout, role conflict, absenteeism, turnover intention, deviant behavior, and abusive supervision. Positive organizational behavior concepts seem to continue to evolve in the future because they have a positive impact on individual development and performance. The development of constructs that are derived from positive organizational behavior still needs to be done.

The development of various concepts in the field of organizational behavior, not least the POB, generally revolves around two main issues: conceptual and methodology. Discussion of

conceptual issues, among others, concerns the definition of constructs, the development of theoretical foundations, the development of constructive dimensions, the development of propositions and the development of empirical models. On the other hand, methodological issues typically focus on developing and validating the measurement of a construct.

The study in this article is one of the efforts to develop one of the positive organizational construct behavior that is psychological capital (PsyCap) from the side of conceptual issues. Psychological capital is a construct that was introduced and developed by Luthans and some of his colleagues, people who provoked positive organizational behavior. Psychological capital is a person's positive developmental condition that includes several aspects of self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resiliency (Luthans, 2007).

Increased personal understanding, about the psychological antecedents to creativity can inform efforts to create and foster individual creativity. The authors propose that psychological capital can help explain and predict creative behavior, especially the generation of ideas (Luthans, Avolio, *et al*, 2007; Luthans, & Youssef, 2004; 2007). This PsyCap is

one form of strategic resource that has received considerable attention in the literature relating to human performance (Ardichvili, 2011).

The authors assume that the concept of psychological capital can still be developed more broadly so that it can capture individual phenomena more comprehensively. The development is done by integrating the concept of psychological capital with creativity in which it contains components of psychological capital. The integration of the two concepts resulted in a new construct called Creative Psychological Capital.

The new construct is of course very provocative as it demands a clear set of theories and arguments. This article also outlines the basics of relevant theories to lead to the development of the new construct. The new construct development effort of course not only stops at the conceptual level but continues on the methodology issue especially the measurement problem, this will certainly be the next homework.

## 2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH PURPOSE

Research on psychological capital or PsyCap has been done by several researchers including Avey, Reichard et al. (2011) who has conducted a quantitative meta-analysis of several previous PsyCap studies, found that PsyCap is strongly related to employee-desired attitudes, behaviors, and performance. Furthermore, Newman et al, Newman *et al.* (2014) found that the PsyCap review is also related to creativity (Huang & Luthans, 2014; Rego, Sousa, Marques, & Pina e Cunha, 2012; Sweetman, Luthans, Avey, & Luthans, 2011) and Abbas (2015). PsyCap is rooted in a broader positive movement and is theoretically based on the idea that individuals view the situation in a more positive way and are more likely to thrive. Wood et al. (2010) was able to show that a worldview or a positive mindset has no positive implications for organizational outcomes.

Although a positive psychological source that includes hope, confidence, resilience and optimism is the best dimension to meet PsyCap's criteria, it is not intended to be the only dimension of psychological capital. According to Luthan, Youssef & Avolio (2015) stated that for psychological forces or resources that can be included in psychological capital concepts should have inclusive criteria such as 1) positive behavior, 2) based on theory and research, 3) having valid measurement, 4) state-like

(open to change and development), 5) have a positive influence on attitudes, behaviors and performance desired. Creative according to the author is relevant and has the potential to meet the inclusion criteria and can be used as a potential psychological capital. This study specifically wants to develop creative intervention on psychological capital, so the new construct proposed in this research is creative psychological capital.

The purpose of this article is to develop psychological capital through the inclusive criteria of Luthan, Youssef & Avolio (2015). Various definitions of creativity and psychological capital are presented based on literature review. This article also aims to investigate the remaining empirical studies. We present a brief literature review of empirical studies on the role of psychological capital in building creativity that has been published. Finally, the study provides a conceptual framework to simulate creative psychological capital research and more thorough creativity.

## 3 PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

Psychological capital proposed by Luthans in his book "Psychological Capital: Developing the Human Competitive Edge". Luthans is a professor of management at the University of Nebraska. The concept of psychological capital combines human capital and social capital to gain a competitive advantage through investment or development of "who you are" and "what you can become" (Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Jensen & Luthan, 2006; Luthans, *et al.*, 2007).

Positive organizational behavior (POB) is defined as the study and application of positive and positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and managed effectively for performance improvement in the workplace today (Luthans, 2002). Psychological capital is the condition of a person's positive development and is characterized by (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2015), 1) having a self-efficacy to face challenging tasks and providing enough effort to succeed in those tasks; 2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about current and future success; 3) not easily giving up in achieving the goal and if necessary diverting the path to achieve the goal (hope); and 4) when faced with problems and obstacles can survive and resolve it (resiliency), even more, to achieve success. Psychological capital has 4 dimensions namely 1)

self-efficacy, 2) optimism, 3) hope, and 4) resiliency (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2015). According to Osigweh (1989), psychological capital is an approach that is characterized in dimensions that can optimize the potential of the individual that can help the performance of the organization. These dimensions are self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency. Zhenguo Zhao (2009) mentions that psychological capital is a positive individual development condition that includes four aspects, namely: 1) self-efficacy, 2) optimism, 3) hope, and 4) resiliency.

#### 4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CREATIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL FOR RESEARCH ON CREATIVITY

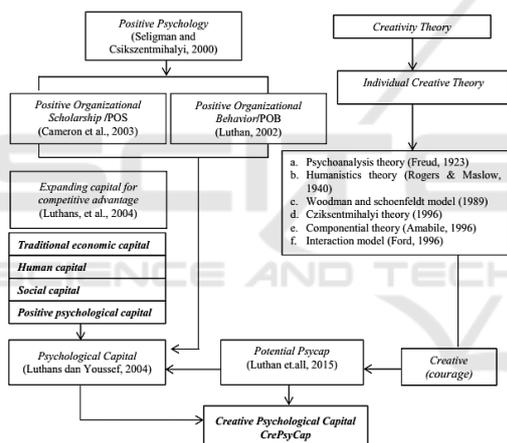


Figure 1. Creative Psychological Capital Synthesis

Creative psychological capital is a positive potential that exists within a person who can be judged and developed to produce something new or new order that is defined by self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resiliency, and courage. Creative psychological capital construct is based on positive psychological theory. Completely this can be seen in Figure 1.

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that the construct of creative psychological capital is built by using two theories, namely positive psychology theory and creative theory. Positive psychology is a scientific perspective on how to make life more valuable. Based on these conditions, it is upheld three major pillars of positive psychology, *first* study of positive emotions, *second* study of positive traits,

and *third* study of positive institutions that support virtue (Seligman, 2005).

Behavioral experts also recognize the untapped potential of a science-based, positive approach. This movement has produced two main parallels that complement each other and serve as a basic perspective for psychological capital. First, the Positive Organizational Scholarship movement or POS (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012) is a movement in organizational science that focuses on dynamics leading to outstanding individual and organizational performance such as developing human strength, producing resilience and restoration, and promoting vitality (Cameron & Caza, 2004). Secondly, Positive Organizational Behavior or POB (Luthans, 2002a; 2002b; Luthans & Youssef, 2007), which is defined as the study and application of a positively oriented power of human resources and a measurable, developed and managed psychological capacity to effectively improve workplace performance (Luthans, 2002b).

Luthans pioneered a positive approach to organizational behavior by mapping positive organizational behavior (POB), which focused on building human strength in the workplace rather than managing its weaknesses. Luthans recommended that POB researchers study a psychological state that can be legally measured and forged in terms of organizational interventions to improve performance. Luthans stated that conditions such as expectations, beliefs and endurance meet these criteria (Luthans, 2002a, 2000b).

In the use of positive psychology and POB, Luthans and Youssef have proposed psychological capital or PsyCap as core constructs that can be developed and managed for performance (Luthans et al, 2004, 2007; Luthans dan Youssef, 2004). This PsyCap can be developed and invested in creativity, and is a higher order than psychological capital (Luthans dan Youssef, 2004; Luthans et al, 2004, 2007). PsyCap is a capital development that begins with human capital (what you know), then develops into social capital (who you know) and last is the psychological capital (who you are) (Avolio dan Luthans, 2006).

This PsyCap is one form of strategic resource that has received considerable attention in the literature relating to human performance (Ardichvili, 2011). By utilizing positive psychological ideas (Peterson, 2006; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and Positive Organizational Scholarship (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003) as well as emerging areas of positive organizational behavior

(Wright, 2003), Luthans and his colleagues developed a psychological capital construct, hereinafter called PsyCap. PsyCap is used to capture individual psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and utilized in performance enhancement (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Using a number of key criteria, they identified four main psychological sources of positive psychological literature that constituted the PsyCap construct, self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Luthans & Youssef, 2007; Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio 2007).

PsyCap is an approach to optimize the psychological potential of an individual characterized by: 1) the existence of self-efficacy i.e doing the necessary actions to achieve success in challenging tasks, 2) positive attribution (optimism), 3) resistance in achieving the goal, i.e the ability to redefine the path to achieve the goal if needed, and 4) when faced with problems and difficulties, able to survive and continue to advance (resiliency) in achieving success (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Thus, the capital of psychology is an approach that is characterized in dimensions that can optimize the potential of the individual that can help the performance of the organization (Osigweh: 1989).

Creative according to the author can be used as a potential psychological capital. Simonton (2009) defined creativity as a genuine and adaptive generation of ideas. Creativity is often conceptualized and measured on the dimensions of creative people, creative processes and products or creative outcomes (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Simonton, 2009). Although creativity is often associated with revolutionary striking ideas, creativity also combines the capacity to find new approaches in problem solving. Creativity adapts to constructive ideas and new mechanisms so as to contribute positively to how the views of others as well as oneself can foster greater creativity or vice versa (Simonton, 2004).

According to Luthans et al, (2015) there were inclusive criteria established for construction in psychological capital such as based on theory and research, having valid measurements, relatively unique to the field of organizational behavior, state-like, having conditions open to development and change and having a positive impact on work-related performance levels and satisfaction.

Based on the latest literature, creativity meets criteria to be grounded and measurable theory and open to development. Creativity has long-established research literature, many of which have investigated the predictors of individual creativity

(Sweetman dan Luthans, 2011). However, little attention has been paid to intervention between creative and individual psychological resources, such as psychological capital or PsyCap and its components. Although there are many interests in positive psychology as facilitators and social mechanisms that can facilitate creativity (Zhou & Ren, 2012) and even the influence of psychological capital (Rego, Sousa, Marques, & Pina e Cunha, 2012; Sweetman, Luthans, Avey, & Luthans, 2011), this positive mechanism can be seen more as moderator and or mediation as well as a process of development (Gupta & Singh, 2014).

In relation to creativity, there are several theories related to creativity, namely the psychoanalytic theory of Freud (1923), the humanistic theory of Rogers & Maslow (1940), woodman and schoenfeldt model (1989), cziksentmihalyi theory (1996), Component theory of Amabile (1996) and the interaction model of Ford (1996). The creative dimension taken in this research is courage.

Courage is an agent, deliberate, and controlled by actors (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2015). Courage is an emotional force that involves execution of the will to achieve goals under different conditions, both external and internal (Peterson dan Seligman, 2004). Rogers (1954) stated that creative expression can be enhanced by two major environmental conditions they were psychological security and freedom. Creative expression requires courage and takes risks to change things that are already established. Selby, Shaw, and Houtz (2005) suggested that personality characteristics are courage in relation to the patterns of creative individuals.

Creativity is about how to think in a way that leads to something new or original. The ability to enforce this cognitive ability in practice requires courage to create, involving open-mindedness and willingness to alter future challenges, uncertainties and emotional vulnerabilities. It is a disposition that enables one to take risks to fulfill the desire to come up with new solutions to solve existing problems.

Pury & Lopez, (2009), (2010), stated that currently courage is an important concern in positive psychology. Peterson and Seligman (2004) defined courage as an emotional force that involves a willingness to achieve goals in the face of opposition from external or internal. While Lopez, O'Byrne, & Peterson (2003) stated that courage is also not only positive behavior that comes in extraordinary situations marked by very high risk, but can also appear in both ordinary and extraordinary occurrences. So this courage becomes a potential element in the psychological capital of small and

medium business owners. This is in line with the statement of Naughton & Cornwall, (2006) which stated that courage is necessary for entrepreneurs to overcome their fears and take further action.

Regarding the measurement of courage, to this day a very diverse approach has been used to measure that courage (Woodward & Pury's, 2007; Norton & Weiss's, 2009; Sekerka, Bagozzi, & Charnigo's, 2009). Overall, the use of multiple steps and the use of various methodologies have increased the understanding and assessment of courage. So as to facilitate research that combines or combines the various methods used in the study of interrelated phenomena from different perspectives and perspectives on empirical studies of courage.

Courage can change the views of others as part of one's social life, both within and outside the work of the organization. Much of the positive psychology conceptualization of courage supports the emerging and context-based nature (Worline, 2012). Pury and Lopez (2009) stated that there is a relationship between courage with a number of circumstances and psychological processes, so that courage can be aligned with the criteria that exist in psychological capital. This is in line with Luthan's opinion, Youssef & Avolio, (2015) that courage is related to the element of psychological capital and the mechanism of positive judgment, especially when described as a source of emerging situations, and positive situational circumstances.

Based on that, then courage as a creative dimension, researcher integrates with other dimensions, such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience from Luthan, Youssef & Avolio (2015). The preposition of the creative psychological capital variable can be seen in Figure 2 below.

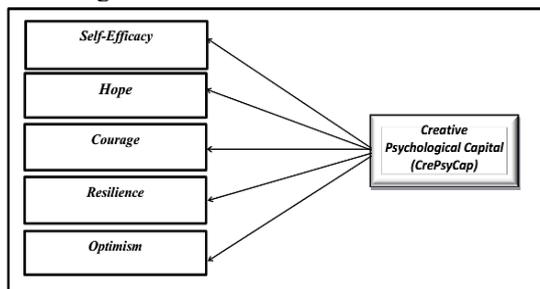


Figure 2. Creative Psychological Capital

## 4 DISCUSSION

Recommendations for future research are proposed in this article. We then demonstrate potential methodological problems in creativity research,

including steps, sampling, analytical methods as well as general method bias issues and cross sectional design. In addition to this section, we discuss the implications of creative psychological capital for creative research in the field of SMEs. We introduce creative psychological capital to design future creativity research.

### 4.1 Future Research

Positive psychology offers many character strengths such as traits and virtues that tend to show considerable stability over time. Unlike genetically determined factors, positive psychological traits exhibit some flexibility. Thus it can experience some growth and development as long as a person obtains an optimal situational factor. The measurement of creative psychological capital in this study does not consider the time horizon. The measurement of creative psychological capital in one span of time is not enough to reveal the factors that cause the gap. Future research needs to involve a longitudinal approach or consider the time change in each stage of creative psychological capital.

### 4.2 Theoretical Implications

Creative psychological capital is a positive potential that exists within a person who can be judged and developed to produce something new or new order that is defined by self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resiliency, and courage. The findings of this article show evidence that creative psychological capital has the potential to build creative behavior. This article thus supports the findings of the existence of psychological capital for creative behavior (Zhou dan Ren, 2012); Sweetman, Luthans, Avey and Luthans (2011); Rego *et al.* (2012); Luthans, Youssef, dan Rawski (2011); dan Walumbwa, Peterson, Avolio dan Hartnell (2010).

### 4.3 Implications for Small and Medium Enterprises

The managerial implications generated based on the findings of this study are the owners of Small and Medium Enterprises can focus on efforts to increase creative psychological capital in order to build creative behavior. Creative psychological capital can be built by increasing hope, self-efficacy, resiliency, optimism, and courage. Practically Small and Medium Enterprises owners can optimize their creative psychological capital by doing market breakthroughs, improving quality, comparative

study, sharing experiences with stakeholders, discussing with members, encouraging family members, consulting with UKM friends, consulting with consultants, learning from the experience of other entrepreneurs, asking for help from friends, joining the community, consulting the government / PLUT, continuously trying on their own, joining various SME forums.

To optimize self-efficacy can be done by establishing support with the local government, following the regular exhibition, the spirit of group members in creating something, innovating the product, asking others to judge before going to the market, seeking market access and looking for unfair competition areas with the product still rare.

To optimize resiliency can be done by giving guarantee to the consumer, consultation with various parties, talking with the group, talking with the family, the stability of the party in the business environment to move forward, following various training from the government, participating in various trainings from the community, training from universities, openness with the family, implementing what becomes the solution, the certainty of raw materials, the existence of information via the internet, the consultation with various parties (government, friends), consulting with skilled person, as well as reading success story from other entrepreneurs.

To optimize optimism can be done by making product improvements, co-planning consultants, convincing to fellow members, encouraging fellow members, evaluating ongoing plans, working tenaciously, running according to the plan, soliciting opinions from various parties to criticize business plans, art communities, social media accounts, training, exhibitions, systems which are consulted with experts, designs which are following the times, and using natural materials.

To optimize courage can be done by always maintaining the quality, always creative, seeking support with various parties, learning to create new product, the spirit of togetherness, getting family support, the assistance, the opening of market access, the desire to produce creative product, having a very broad market opportunity, having different design from other entrepreneurs, having desire to immediately execute ideas, getting support from various parties and government, having partner with various parties, gathering with friends of SMEs, attending various business training, having support from friends, government and family.

## 5 CONCLUSION

In this turbulent knowledge-based economy, creative psychological capital has become one of the most important resources for encouraging creative and innovative behavior, to gain sustainable competitive advantage for small and medium enterprises as well as for individuals. Substantial evidence suggests that creativity makes important contributions to organizational innovation, competitiveness, and survival. We briefly discussed the development of psychological capital through the inclusive criteria of Luthans, Youssef & Avolio (2015). Various definitions of creativity and psychological capital are presented based on literature review. This article also aims to investigate the remaining empirical studies. We present a brief literature review of empirical studies on the role of psychological capital in building creativity that has been published. Stimulate positive organizational behavior research in SMEs field. Therefore, in a broader sense, creative psychological capital in organizational creativity is an important agenda for SMEs. Finally, we hope that this study will stimulate not only a more integrative approach to the empirical research of creative psychological capital on creativity but also future cross-cultural studies.

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