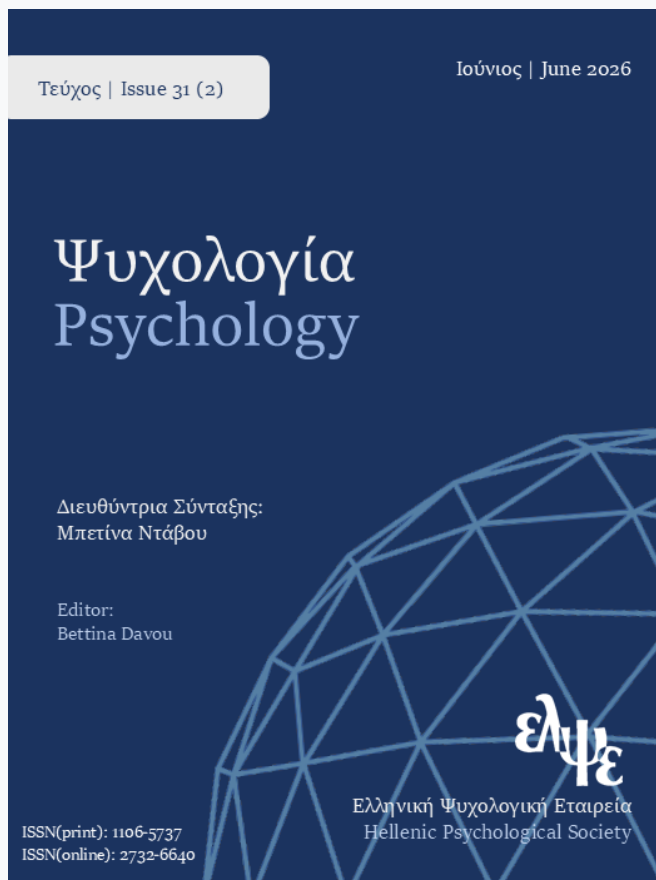


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The influence of psychological capital and affective organizational commitment on intention to stay in a Thai university post-reorganization

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Mental health Positive psychology Organizational psychology	Organizational changes have significantly impacted the psychological work environment, posing challenges in retaining committed employees. This study examined the influence of psychological capital (PsyCap) and affective organizational commitment (AOC) on intention to stay (ITS). A cross-sectional study was conducted among 264 staff at an autonomous university in Bangkok, Thailand, using stratified random sampling. Data were collected via a self-administered questionnaire covering demographics, PsyCap, AOC, and ITS. It demonstrated strong validity (IOC = 0.66–1.00) and reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .73–.94). Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to examine relationships among variables. Results revealed that PsyCap significantly predicted AOC ($\beta = .71, p < .001$), supporting its role as an antecedent. PsyCap also had a direct effect on ITS ($\beta = .55, p < .001$), partially mediated by AOC. In the final model, AOC remained a strong predictor of ITS ($\beta = .52, p < .001$), while PsyCap's effect decreased ($\beta = .18, p = .006$), confirming partial mediation. The model explained 46% of the variance in ITS, primarily via the PsyCap → AOC → ITS pathway. In conclusion, PsyCap fosters emotional commitment, which enhances retention. Cultivating positive psychological resources can help organizations reduce turnover and support long-term success.
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Amid economic fluctuations and technological disruptions, many organizations undergo restructuring, which brings significant changes to their structures, processes, roles, and responsibilities. While the primary goal of restructuring is to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and improve performance, it often introduces uncertainty and challenges for employees (Ugboro, 2006). A current example is the transformation of universities in Thailand, where government policy is shifting publicly supported institutions toward greater autonomy. These autonomous universities are expected to operate with increased managerial independence, demonstrating flexibility, adaptability, and innovation in response to evolving societal needs. Although this shift aims to streamline administration and enhance competitiveness—aligning more closely with private and international models—it also has a substantial impact on the human resource system. Employees now face more rigorous performance evaluations and reduced benefits in comparison with the traditional civil service system, which may affect their sense of job security and organizational commitment.

In response to these evolving dynamics, organizations face the ongoing challenge of attracting and retaining employees who are not only capable but also committed to their roles and motivated to remain. This has led to a growing emphasis on understanding and promoting employee engagement and retention, both of which are vital for organizational effectiveness and long-term sustainability. A dedicated and engaged workforce plays a crucial role in driving success and ensuring continued growth. Consequently, active participation and commitment from

staff are essential, as they directly influence not only organizational performance but also employees' organizational commitment—a key factor in shaping their willingness to stay and grow with the organization. (Bakker et al, 2008; Li et al, 2013).

The most commonly cited model of organizational commitment is the three-component model of organizational commitment which is defined by Meyer & Allen (1991) as: “a psychological state that characterizes the staff's relationship with the organization, and has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization” and it includes three dimensions: (1) affective commitment which is based on the emotional attachment through which employees identify with the organization's goals and values; (2) continuance commitment which is based on the cost of leaving the organization, implied by personal investment and expected profit; and finally, (3) normative commitment which is based on the obligation felt by staff to stay in the organization and these obligations are based on outside social norms (Meyer et al, 2002; Lahkar et al, 2013). However, the dimension most related to personal psychological issue and internal factors of the organization is affective commitment. Furthermore, it has been assumed as one of the predictors of employee retention. Employees with high levels of affective organizational commitment (AOC) experience a sense of belonging, loyalty, and enthusiasm towards their work and the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Employee retention is a crucial issue for organizations to maintain a stable and productive workforce. It is very important for employees to have a good attitude toward the organization (Khan & Yusoff, 2016). Then, they will work at full capacity and produce effective results for the organization. Therefore, organizations must continuously support employees' efforts and cultivate positive attitudes to stay aligned with organizational goals (Luthans et al, 2015). This is a personal development that allows one to show their potential to the fullest if the organization places importance on human resources. In the field of psychology, there is growing focus on the crucial role of employees' psychological well-being and attitudes in influencing their loyalty and longevity within an organization (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

One emerging concept that has gained attention in recent years is psychological capital or PsyCap is widely used and promoted in various populations. PsyCap refers to an individual's positive psychological resources encompassing self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience. These are the resources that individuals possess and how they can contribute to their well-being and performance in various domains, including the workplace (Luthans et al, 2007). This concept of PsyCap was introduced by Fred Luthans and colleagues in the early 2000s as a positive counterpart to the traditional concept of human capital. This concept in organizational psychology has gained increasing attention due to its potential impact on employee well-being, performance, and overall organizational effectiveness (Khan & Yusoff, 2016). However, the chronology between PsyCap and its outcomes in terms of employees' loyalty and attachment to their organization is still not clear. By investigating the relationship between PsyCap, AOC, and intention-to-stay (ITS), organizations can gain valuable insights into strategies for enhancing employee engagement, reducing turnover, and fostering long-term organizational success.

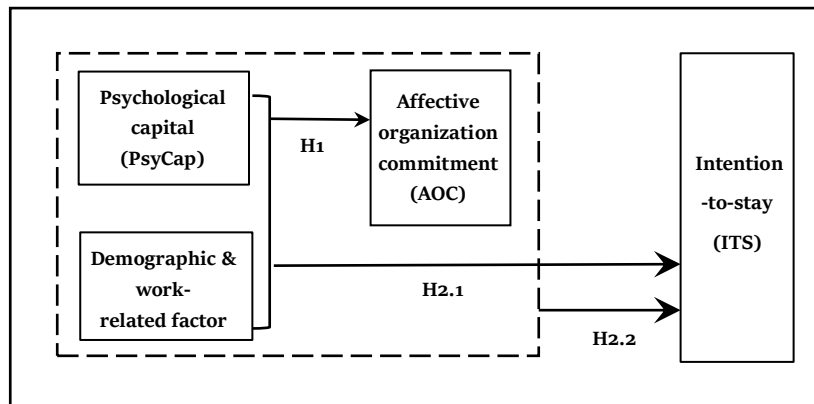
Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore the influence of PsyCap and AOC on ITS, as well as to examine potential mediation effects. It seeks to understand how these psychological resources contribute to employee commitment levels and the likelihood of employees staying with the organization. The study sheds light on how organizations can foster a positive work environment and retain their valuable staff. Based on the framework shown in Figure 1, the research hypotheses sought to test the effects of PsyCap and AOC on ITS, while controlling for personal factors. The hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): PsyCap has an influence on AOC after controlling for demographic and work-related factors.

Hypothesis 2.1 (H2.1): PsyCap has an influence on ITS after controlling for demographic and work-related factors.

Hypothesis 2.2 (H2.2): Both PsyCap and AOC have an influence on ITS after controlling for demographic and work-related factors.

Figure 1. The study framework and depicts the relationships between psychological capital, affective organizational commitment, intention-to-stay, and the control variables



Method

Participants and study area

A cross-sectional study was conducted and approved by the ethical committee of Srinakharinwirot University. The study adhered to the Declaration of Helsinki, and participants were provided with informed consent before data collection, with a commitment to ensuring confidentiality.

The target population consisted of all employees who held permanent positions and had worked for at least one year at University X, an autonomous university located in Bangkok, Thailand. In terms of organizational context, University X was established in 1974 and underwent reorganization from a public university to an autonomous university in 2016. As of 2022, the university encompassed 35 faculties, institutes, and centers, employing a total of 5,913 active staff members. The majority of these employees (4,046, or 69.4%) were support staff, while the remainder were academic staff. Despite the reorganization, a notable percentage of staff members, averaging about 5% each year, continued to resign, impacting the organization's management. The sample selected from the university X was obtained using the proportional stratified random sampling method. A minimum sample size estimate, based on the general rule of thumb for regression analysis, suggests having at least 20 events per variable to ensure stable and reliable estimates while accounting for non-response rates. The required sample size was at least 264 individuals (Austin & Steyerberg, 2015).

Measures

The self-administrated anonymous questionnaire consisted of four parts as follows: Part 1 was demographic and work-related data, including gender (male, female, LGBT+), age group (<30, 31-40, 41-50, >50 years old), educational level (below bachelor, bachelor or higher), monthly income (<20,000, 20,001-30,000, 30,001-40,000, >40,000 baht per month), work duration (<5, 5-10, 11-20, >20 years), job title (administrative, operational), source of salary support (government budget, university income, other sources), and working location (main campus, other campus); Part II was PsyCap, consisting of 24 items which cover 4 domains including self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. It was adapted from Luthans, Youssef & Avolio (2007);⁸ Part III was AOC, consisting of 4 items. It was adapted from Allen & Meyer (1997). Part IV was ITS, consisting of 6 items. It was adapted from Cowin & Hengstberger (2006). Each item in Part II-IV was rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The total score for PsyCap, AOC, and ITS variables ranged from 24 to 120, 4 to 20, 6 to 30 points, respectively. Higher scores indicated higher levels of PsyCap, AOC, or ITS.

The questions in parts II-IV of this questionnaire underwent: 1) content validity assessment by 3 experts in the field of organizational psychology, yielding IOC values ranging from 0.66 to 1.0; and 2) reliability testing through a pilot study involving 60 operational staff at University X, who were not part of the main study. Based on the pilot data, the PsyCap, AOC, and ITS questionnaires showed Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .94, .73, and .81, respectively.

Statistical analysis

All data were analyzed using utilized SPSS version 25.0 (Field, 2009). Qualitative data were reported using frequencies and percentages, while quantitative data were summarized using means and standard deviations. The normality of the quantitative data was assessed through skewness and kurtosis values. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to examine relationships among variables. To investigate the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable—both individually and collectively, as outlined in the framework in Figure 1—hierarchical linear regression analysis was employed, with all regression assumptions thoroughly tested beforehand. A significance level of $p < .05$ was applied, and results were reported using unstandardized coefficients (b), standardized coefficient (β) and R-squared (R^2) values (Cohen et al, 2003). A mediation analysis was also conducted and illustrated in a diagram.

Results

A total of 264 samples returned the questionnaire with complete answer. The majority were female, middle-aged, had a bachelor's degree, and were engaged in operational work on the main campus with less than 10 years of work experience. Detailed demographic and work-related information of participants, who were selected through stratified random sampling was presented in Table 1.

The descriptive statistics in terms of mean and standard deviation, tests of normality in terms of skewness and kurtosis, and bivariate correlation coefficient estimates for the main variables of this study was shown in Table 2. The values of skewness (range = -0.54 to -0.28) and kurtosis (range = -0.51 to 0.28) indicated that all variables had an acceptable level of normal distribution, with the commonly used reference ranges for skewness being -3 to 3 and for kurtosis being -1 to 1. Moreover, all study variables showed acceptable to good correlations. The correlation analysis demonstrated that PsyCap had significant positive correlations with AOC and ITS. AOC was also significantly positively correlated with ITS.

Regarding the research hypothesis testing, the hierarchical regression using the Enter method indicated that H1: PsyCap, after controlling for demographic and work-related factors, significantly predicted AOC with $\beta = .71$, $p < .001$. The full model accounted for 52% of the variance in AOC (adjusted $R^2 = 0.52$, $F(9,254)=32.42$, $p < .001$), which represents a large effect size according to Cohen's (2013) criteria. Likewise, the results of the hierarchical linear regression analysis, with PsyCap and AOC as direct and indirect influences on ITS, support H2.1 and H2.2, as shown in Table 3. These results were examined step by step in relation to the hypotheses, as follows:

1) The entry of all demographic and work-related variables as the first step of the regression analysis produced a statistical model with $F(8, 255) = 2.38$ and $p = .018$. This model explained approximately 4% of the variance in ITS, as explained by demographic and work-related variables. However, no single variable had a strong predictive effect.

2) Adding PsyCap as the second step of the regression analysis resulted in a statistical model with $F(9, 254) = 15.33$ and $p < .001$. PsyCap showed a positive association with ITS ($\beta = .55$, $p < .001$), indicating its significant influence on ITS. The model explained 33% of the variance (adjusted $R^2=0.33$). This step produced a Cohen's f^2 of 0.43, which is considered a large incremental effect beyond demographics.

3) When AOC was added, the model improved significantly, with $F(10, 253) = 23.30$ and $p < .001$. In this final model, the inclusion of AOC increased the explained variance by $\Delta R^2 = 0.13$ (12.7%) and yield a Cohen's f^2 of 0.24, indicating a medium-to-large effect. AOC was a strong predictor of ITS ($\beta = .52, p < .001$), while the effect of PsyCap was reduced ($\beta = .18, p = .006$), confirming partial mediation. The overall explanatory power of this final model increased to approximately 46% of the variance in ITS, suggesting a large effect size.

Table 1. Demographic and work-related information of participants in the study

Variables	Number (n=264)	Percent (100%)
Gender		
- Male	49	18.6
- Female	201	76.1
- LGBT+	14	5.3
Age group (years)		
- <30	57	21.6
- 31-40	110	41.7
- 41-50	78	29.5
- > 50	19	7.2
Educational level		
- Below Bachelor's degree	18	6.8
- Bachelor's degree	169	64.0
- Higher than Bachelor's degree	77	29.2
Monthly income (Baht)		
- <20,000	25	9.5
- 20,001-30,000	146	55.3
- 30,001-40,000	78	29.5
- >40,000	15	5.7
Work duration (years)		
- <5	94	35.6
- 5-10	87	33.0
- 11-20	68	25.7
- >20	15	5.7
Job title		
- Director of Dean office/Head of unit	30	11.4
- Operating work	234	88.6
Source of salary support		
- Government budget	172	65.1
- University income	77	29.2
- Other sources	15	5.7
Working location		
- Main campus	179	67.8
- Others	85	32.2

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and correlation between variables in this study

Variables	Descriptive statistics				Correlation coefficient(r)		
	mean	SD	Skew	Kurt	PsyCap	AOC	ITS
1.Positive psychology capital (PsyCap)	106.14	12.37	-0.54	-0.51	-		
2.Affective organization commitment (AOC)	17.12	2.60	-0.66	-0.39	0.72	-	
3.Intention-to-stay (ITS)	26.61	3.58	-0.28	-0.28	0.57	0.67	-

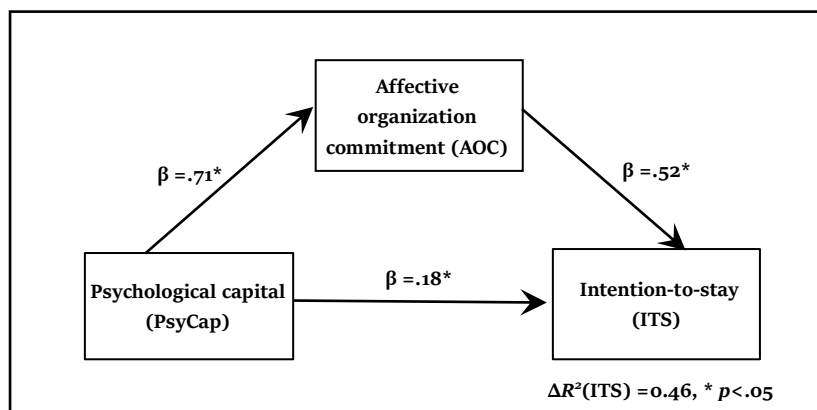
Table 3. Results of the hierarchical linear regression model in this study

Predictor variables	Demographic & work-related factors -> ITS		PsyCap -> AOC		PsyCap -> ITS		PsyCap -> AOC -> ITS	
	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β
Constant	24.00		0.88		9.21		8.58	
Gender	0.31	.04	-0.04	-.01	0.19	.02	0.22	.03
Age group (years)	0.21	.05	0.22	.07	0.28	.07	0.12	.03
Educational level	-1.06	-.16	-0.02	<.01	-0.65	-.10	-0.64	-.10
Monthly income (Baht)	0.09	.19	0.10	.03	0.34	.07	0.27	.05
Work duration (years)	0.26	.09	0.08	.03	0.15	.05	0.10	.03
Job title	0.39	.03	-0.19	-.02	-0.08	-.01	0.06	.01
Source of salary	-0.17	-.04	0.09	.03	0.12	.03	0.06	.01
Working location	0.01	.02	0.02	.06	-0.01	-.03	-0.02	-.06
PsyCap	-	-	0.15*	.71*	0.16*	.55*	0.05*	.18*
AOC	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.72*	.52*
<i>F</i> (df1, df2)	2.38 (8, 255)		32.42 (9, 254)		15.33 (9, 254)		23.30 (10, 253)	
<i>R</i> square	0.07		0.54		0.35		0.48	
Adjusted <i>R</i> square	0.04		0.52		0.33		0.46	

Note: AOC: Affective Organization Commitment, ITS: Intention to stay, PsyCap: Psychological Capital, *b* = unstandardized coefficient, β = standardized coefficients, * *p* < .05

The results of the hierarchical linear regression model showed adjusted *R*² values ranging from 33% to 46% of the variance, which signifies a moderate amount of variance explained. The mediation model with the standardized path coefficients is also shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Mediation model showing the standardized path coefficients



Discussion

This study aims to provide valuable insights into the psychological mechanisms that influence employees' PsyCap and AOC on ITS within the context of university reorganization.

Hypothesis 1 explored the direct effect of PsyCap on AOC. The results demonstrated that PsyCap positively and significantly predicts AOC ($\beta = .71$), explaining a substantial 52% of the variance in AOC. This represents a large effect size according to Cohen's $f^2 = 1.07$, indicating that PsyCap accounts for a substantial proportion of variance in AOC beyond demographic and work-related factors. The findings are aligned with the broaden-and-

build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), which suggests that positive psychological states broaden individuals' thought-action repertoires and help build enduring personal and social resources. In a university setting, staff and faculty members with higher PsyCap are likely to feel more emotionally engaged with institutional goals and values, enhancing their commitment.

Hypothesis 2.1 examined the direct relationship between PsyCap and ITS. It revealed a significant positive effect ($\beta = .55$), with PsyCap explaining 33% of the variance in ITS (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.43$, large effect). This supports prior findings that PsyCap contributes to retention-related outcomes. Staff and faculty members with high PsyCap are more likely to remain with their institution. These findings are consistent with Avey et al. (2011) study, supporting the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, which posits that individuals strive to obtain and protect valuable resources—including positive psychological capacities (Luthans et al., 2017). In universities undergoing transformation or reorganization, fostering PsyCap can be a strategic approach to retain competent staff by enhancing their sense of stability and engagement.

Hypothesis 2.2 tested the mediating role of AOC in the relationship between PsyCap and ITS. When both PsyCap and AOC were included in the model, AOC emerged as a strong and significant predictor of ITS ($\beta = .52$), while PsyCap remained significant but with a reduced effect size ($\beta = .18$). The variance explained in ITS increased from 33% to 46% ($\Delta \text{adjusted } R^2 = 13\%$, Cohen's $f^2 = 0.24$, medium-to-large effect), indicating that a considerable portion of PsyCap's effect on ITS is mediated through AOC. This means that PsyCap influences ITS not only directly but also indirectly through increased AOC. This mediating relationship highlights that while PsyCap directly supports retention, its impact is largely channeled through employees' emotional commitment to the organization. These findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that AOC is a central pathway linking PsyCap to retention outcomes (Avey et al., 2011; Luthans et al., 2017). Accordingly, enhancing PsyCap can directly and indirectly strengthen university staff retention through affective organizational commitment, supporting employee stability during reorganization.

This study revealed no deviations from the proposed hypotheses or unexpected findings. Nonetheless, certain limitations remain and should be considered, including the organizational change profile from a public organization and the fact that the study was conducted in only one organization. However, this pattern of change may still occur in other universities or organizations, allowing the results to be applied to promote positive psychology for employees. Secondly, this study has methodological limitations, such as its cross-sectional design, which poses challenges in determining temporal or causal relationships, as well as the use of self-reported measures. However, the study was analyzed using a hierarchical regression model, with each variable entered step by step, which helps explain the chronology in this study. Moreover, it is necessary to conduct further longitudinal studies to observe causal relationship models. Lastly, the final model explains nearly 48% of the intention to stay, indicating that additional factors still need to be explored. Caution should therefore be exercised when applying this model in practice, and future studies are encouraged to include such variables to better explain and validate the PsyCap-retention relationship (Rindfleisch et al., 2008).

In the context of higher education institutions or organizations undergoing change—such as restructuring or policy shifts—it is crucial to cultivate positive psychological resources among staff to enhance AOC and reduce turnover (Newman et al., 2014). PsyCap, which encompasses self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, plays a vital role in supporting employees through such transitions. Interventions like resilience training, strengths-based coaching, and positive leadership practices have been shown to improve well-being, engagement, and retention (Abbas et al., 2014; Hernández Varas & García Silgo, 2021). Fostering AOC requires more than individual development—it also depends on organizational practices. Strategies such as inclusive decision-making, transparent communication, and aligning personal and institutional values create a strong foundation for emotional commitment (Park, 2017). When employees feel recognized, supported, and aligned with the organization's purpose, their sense of belonging and loyalty strengthens. A work environment grounded in trust

and fairness enhances this effect, promoting sustained engagement and a greater intention to stay (Albrecht, 2018). Ultimately, a PsyCap-informed approach to change management not only supports individuals but also contributes to long-term organizational stability and performance. Organizations can benefit from PsyCap development programs that build self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience—key predictors of organizational commitment and retention (Dello Russo, 2015). These practices help retain talent and promote a positive organizational climate through and beyond transitions.

For implications, this study highlights practical strategies for enhancing employee retention through the development of PsyCap. Organizations can strengthen AOC by offering PsyCap training programs that build self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Fostering a positive work environment—characterized by trust, fairness, and transparent communication—further promotes emotional commitment and reduces turnover. During periods of change, involving employees in decision-making and providing adequate support can help maintain commitment and enhance the institution's reputation. Future research is recommended in organizations undergoing transitions. Such studies should explore additional factors influencing the PsyCap–retention relationship, such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, and leadership styles. Investigating different organizational and cultural contexts would provide a deeper understanding of how PsyCap and AOC function across settings and help develop more comprehensive, culturally responsive retention strategies (Newman et al, 2014; Park et al, 2017).

In conclusion, PsyCap indirectly influences employees' intention to stay by fostering affective organizational commitment. Higher commitment levels are linked to a stronger desire to remain with the organization. PsyCap's positive psychological resources strengthen emotional connections, foster a sense of identification with the organization, and promote active engagement, thereby reducing turnover intentions. These findings provide guidance for organizations—especially those undergoing transformation—in improving retention. Enhancing PsyCap and fostering affective commitment may strengthen the work environment, which in turn supports staff retention and contributes to sustainable organizational outcomes.

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ΕΜΠΕΙΡΙΚΗ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ | RESEARCH PAPER

Η επίδραση του ψυχολογικού κεφαλαίου και της συναισθηματικής οργανωσιακής δέσμευσης στην πρόθεση παραμονής σε πανεπιστήμιο της Ταϊλάνδης μετά την αναδιοργάνωση

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ΛΕΞΕΙΣ ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ	ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ
Ψυχική υγεία Θετική ψυχολογία Οργανωσιακή ψυχολογία	Οι οργανωτικές αλλαγές έχουν επηρεάσει σημαντικά το ψυχολογικό εργασιακό περιβάλλον, δημιουργώντας προκλήσεις στη διατήρηση των αφοσιωμένων εργαζομένων. Η παρούσα μελέτη εξέτασε την επίδραση του ψυχολογικού κεφαλαίου (PsyCap) και της συναισθηματικής οργανωσιακής δέσμευσης (AOC) στην πρόθεση παραμονής (ITS). Διεξήχθη συγχρονική μελέτη σε 264 μέλη προσωπικού ενός αυτόνομου πανεπιστημίου στην Μπανγκόκ της Ταϊλάνδης, με χρήση στρωματοποιημένης τυχαίας δειγματοληψίας. Τα δεδομένα συλλέχθηκαν μέσω αυτοσυμπληρούμενου ερωτηματολογίου που κάλυπτε δημογραφικά στοιχεία, PsyCap, AOC και ITS. Το ερωτηματολόγιο έδειξε υψηλή εγκυρότητα (IOC = 0,66–1,00) και αξιοπιστία (άλφα του Cronbach = 0,73–0,94). Για την εξέταση των σχέσεων μεταξύ των μεταβλητών χρησιμοποιήθηκε ιεραρχική πολλαπλή ανάλυση παλινδρόμησης. Τα αποτελέσματα έδειξαν ότι το PsyCap προέβλεψε σημαντικά την AOC ($\beta = 0,71, p < 0,001$), επιβεβαιώνοντας τον ρόλο του ως προγενέστερος παράγοντας. Το PsyCap είχε επίσης άμεση επίδραση στην ITS ($\beta = 0,55, p < 0,001$), η οποία μεσολαβήθηκε μερικώς από την AOC. Στο τελικό μοντέλο, η AOC παρέμεινε ισχυρός προγνωστικός δείκτης της ITS ($\beta = 0,52, p < 0,001$), ενώ η επίδραση του PsyCap μειώθηκε ($\beta = 0,18, p = 0,006$), επιβεβαιώνοντας τη μερική μεσολάβηση. Το μοντέλο εξήγησε το 46% της διακύμανσης στην ITS, κυρίως μέσω της διαδρομής PsyCap → AOC → ITS. Συμπερασματικά, το PsyCap ενισχύει τη συναισθηματική δέσμευση, η οποία βελτιώνει τη διατήρηση του προσωπικού. Η καλλιέργεια θετικών ψυχολογικών πόρων μπορεί να βοηθήσει τους οργανισμούς να μειώσουν την αποχώρηση εργαζομένων και να υποστηρίξουν τη μακροπρόθεσμη επιτυχία.
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