

Psychological Capital, Work Happiness, and Innovative Behaviour: Evidence from Millennials Worker of Star-Rated Hotels

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the innovative behaviour of starred hotel employees driven by their psychological capital and happiness at work. An explanatory sequential analysis with a positivistic paradigm were applied through the Smart PLS approach. Data were collected through a cross-sectional survey of 129 millennial employees at starred hotels which were validated through in-depth interviews with different levels millennial employees. The findings of the study indicate that happiness at work fully mediates the effect of psychological capital on innovative work behaviour. Psychological capital offers psychological resources that enable employees to experience job happiness, which in turn fosters the development of innovative behaviour. Happiness at work creates an internal drive to try new things, participate in innovation efforts, and contribute to improving work processes. Several dimensions play an important role in the formation of innovation through work happiness, namely a positive work environment, career development opportunities and flexibility, work-family balance, recognition and appreciation. The practical implications of this study offer recommendations for star hotel management to enhance organizational culture that fosters employees' happiness at workplace by implementing recognition and appreciation programs, providing work-life balance facilities, and strengthening positive work relationships. Theoretically, these findings align with the conservation of resources theory which is emphasizing the reinforcement of internal resources to support innovative work behaviour. Future research is encouraged to validate these findings in different contexts to enhance generalizability.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry has made significant progress since the challenges caused by the pandemic, marked by many businesses regaining performance stability. However, on the other hand, this industry also faces major challenges in maintaining competitiveness, especially in dealing with rapid changes in customer preferences and demands for more innovative services (Kim & Lee, 2021). To remain competitive, companies must remain agile, innovate, and adapt to changing customer needs by adopting key trends. The hospitality industry in the modern era demands continuous innovation to improve competitiveness and customer satisfaction. In this context, employee innovative behaviour plays a key role in driving transformation and service excellence (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). In the hospitality sector, employees who develop a high level of innovation not only improve operational efficiency but also create unique experiences for guests, which ultimately contributes to the sustainability of the industry (Kim & Lee, 2021; Bani-Melhem et al., 2018; Wu & Wu, 2019).

Employee innovative work behaviour in the hospitality industry is influenced by various factors, one of which is psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007). Psychological capital, which includes self-confidence, hope, resilience, and optimism, has been shown to improve individual performance in various sectors (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Psychological capital can improve individual performance and create a more innovative work environment (Rego et al., 2021; AlKahtani et al., 2021; Probst et al., 2017; Soni & Rastogi, 2019). In addition, happiness at work also contributes significantly to employee innovation levels, as a positive work atmosphere encourages the exploration of new ideas and calculated risk-taking (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019). Unlike other industries, the hospitality sector tends to be slower to prioritize employee well-being. Workers in the hospitality industry often face long working hours, irregular schedules, and high-stress roles. This can have implications for decreased morale, satisfaction, and retention, including overall employee innovative behaviour.

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Innovation in hospitality services relies heavily on employee creativity and initiative, which are ultimately influenced by their psychological factors and work environment (Gupta et al., 2020).

There is no debating that acquiring information about the elements that propel creativity is rendered more challenging by generational disparities in the workplace. Presently constituting the majority of the hospitality workforce, millennials distinguish themselves from earlier generations in their personality characteristics and preferences (Wang et al., 2022). They have higher expectations for a creative work environment, are more likely to value work-life balance and seek meaning in their work. The importance of psychological capital and happiness on the job to this generation's innovative behaviours must thus be better comprehended.

The influence of psychological capital and job happiness on innovative work behaviour can be explained through the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. The COR theory suggests that individuals strive to protect and build their personal resources, which include physical, social, and psychological resources (Bettini et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2018). When individuals perceive threats to their resources, such as through job stress or uncertainty, they may experience resource loss, which can lead to negative outcomes such as burnout, decreased job satisfaction, and decreased motivation. However, individuals with high levels of psychological capital may be better equipped to cope with these resource threats and maintain their personal resource levels (Sihag, 2020; Suseno & Gengatharen, 2018). For example, individuals with high levels of self-efficacy may be more likely to perceive resource threats as challenges to be overcome rather than insurmountable obstacles, which may help them develop innovative solutions. Similarly, optimistic and hopeful individuals may create their own job happiness that may contribute to increased innovative behaviour in the workplace.

Several studies have examined the factors influencing innovation in the hospitality industry, including the role of organizational culture (Chang et al., 2021), leadership style (Kim & Lee, 2021), and employee training and development (Gupta et al., 2020). However, there are several research gaps that have not been widely explored. Most research on psychological capital focuses on its impact on employee performance in general (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Studies that specifically examine its impact on innovative behaviour in the hospitality industry are still limited, especially in the context of the millennial generation. In addition, many previous studies examining employee innovation in the hospitality industry were conducted without considering generational differences (Zhao et al., 2021). Given the unique characteristics of the millennial generation, studies that focus on this group are urgently needed to understand the dynamics of innovative behaviour more specifically.

This study was conducted to highlight the importance of a psychological approach in human resource management in the hospitality industry. Psychological capital has been shown to improve employee performance and engagement in various sectors (Rego et al., 2021). Meanwhile, happiness at work has been identified as a factor that strengthens employee motivation and creativity (Lyubomirsky et al., 2020; Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019). Previous studies have shown that happiness at work can increase employee satisfaction and loyalty, but how it specifically interacts with psychological capital to drive innovative behavior remains unclear (Zhao et al., 2021). Furthermore, studies linking psychological capital and happiness at work in driving innovation in the hospitality industry are still limited. Previous studies have focused more on organizational and leadership factors in increasing innovation (Chang et al., 2021), without delving deeper into individual psychological factors, especially since there are unique generations in the current workforce. Therefore, a more personalized and psychologically based management approach is needed to create a work environment that supports innovation. Additionally, understanding the factors of happiness at work from a multigenerational perspective can help organizations design more effective and inclusive policies (Lyubomirsky et al., 2020).

Based on the COR theory, employees with strong psychological capital will have an impact on increasing happiness at work, which in turn will encourage them to behave innovatively at work (Field & Buitendach, 2011; Kawalya et al., 2019; Othman et al., 2018; Stairs & Galpin, 2010). This theory emphasizes the importance of resource acquisition in explaining performance-enhancing workplace behavior (Hobfoll & Leiberhan, 1987). The theory postulates that the presence of personal resources might cause the development of new resources, either internally or externally (de Clercq et al., 2018). Individuals are driven to acquire, preserve, and invest adequate resources in order to achieve their duties and prevent potential future failures (Walter & Hobfoll, 2006). Individuals regard psychological capital as a significant and useful internal resource that assists them in coping with adverse job situations (Hobfoll et al., 2018). The hospitality industry is known for its high demands and risks, often give enormous pressure on employees to maintain service standards and maximize hotel revenue. The COR theory provides standing point in this research to explain how psychological capital enables employees to better respond to challenging situations by building internal resources like happiness at work, which may, in turn, imply to innovative behaviour at workplace. This study aims to explore more deeply the interaction of happiness at work with psychological capital and innovative work behaviour of millennial employees in the hospitality sector. Specifically, this study aims to confirm four research problems, namely:

- RQ1. How does psychological capital affect the innovative work behaviour of millennial employees in starred hotels in Bali?
- RQ2. How does psychological capital affect the work happiness of millennial employees in starred hotels in Bali?

RQ3. How does work happiness affect the innovative work behaviour of millennial employees in starred hotels in Bali?

RQ4. How does work happiness mediate the effect of psychological capital on the innovative work behaviour of millennial employees in starred hotels in Bali?

This study offers a novel approach by focusing on the intersection of psychological capital, happiness at work, and innovative work behaviour particularly. While previous research has examined psychological capital and innovation in general organizational settings, few have looked at how these psychological resources interact to drive innovation in hospitality, a sector that often receives little attention in terms of employee psychological well-being. This study also addresses a critical gap in earlier research by focusing on millennials, recognizing their unique work values, need for meaningful work, and expectations for work-life balance, which are very different from the older generations. Prominently, this study is among the first to integrate Conservation of Resources (COR) theory as the underlying framework to elucidate how psychological capital can buffer against resource depletion and enhance happiness at work, which in turn promotes innovation. By doing so, the study advances theoretical understanding of indirect mechanisms through which personal psychological factors influence innovation within a specific generational and industrial context.

2. METHOD

This study uses an explanatory sequential analysis, which was conducted by quantitative approach followed by qualitative approach. According to [Creswell \(2010:25\)](#), the quantitative approach is predetermined, uses statistical analysis to process data, and makes interpretations based on the statistical results. The design of this study is cross-sectional, meaning that data were collected at a single point in time. While this approach is effective for discovering correlations between variables, it restricts the capacity for deriving causality. Future research should include a longitudinal design that will more accurately acquire changes over time and improve causal inferences. The population in this study was hotel employees working in three-, four-, and five-star hotels located in Badung Regency, Denpasar City, and Gianyar Regency, Bali Province.

The sampling technique used was simple random sampling, a technique that provides an equal opportunity for each element in the population to be selected as a research sample. The sample in this study focused on employees with rank-and-file levels (technical) because this group is the majority in the operational structure of the hotel business. The Lemeshow formula was used to determine the appropriate sample size. Therefore, a minimum of 100 respondents was deemed appropriate to ensure generalizability. Furthermore, to ensure proportional representation from each region, cluster sampling was applied by grouping the population based on the number of star-rated hotels in each district/city. The number of samples from each area was distributed proportionally to the total number of hotels in Denpasar, Badung, Gianyar, and Tabanan. In qualitative stage, semi-in-depth interview was conducted with some millennials working in different levels of managerial hierarchy. Informants were chosen based on three key criteria: (1) born between 1981 and 1996, (2) having at least one year of job experience at the current hotel, and (3) willingness to participate voluntarily in the interview. In this phase, a thematic analysis was applied to discover reoccurring themes, patterns, and insights linked to psychological capital, happiness at work, and innovative work behavior from an array of perspectives of the informants.

The research instrument used was the result of the adoption and adaptation of various multi-item scales that have been tested in previous studies to ensure the validity and reliability of the measurement of the variables studied. Innovative work behavior was measured using a six-item scale developed by [Scott & Bruce \(1994\)](#), which was then modified based on the study of [Bani-Melhem et al. \(2018\)](#), which specifically adjusts the context of the hospitality sector. To measure psychological capital, the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) developed by [Luthans et al. \(2007\)](#) was used. This instrument consists of 24 items covering four main dimensions, namely self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience, with each dimension measured through six items. Meanwhile, employee perceptions of happiness at work were measured using the Happiness at Work Questionnaire (HAWQ) developed by [Salas-Vallina & Vidal \(2018\)](#). This instrument is used to identify the level of employee happiness in the context of their work as a whole. To test the hypothesis and build a feasible structural model (fit model), this study uses a variance-based or component-based approach with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for analysing models with high complexity and relatively moderate sample sizes.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

Evaluation of Goodness of Fit – Outer Model (Measurement Model)

The measurement model in this study consists of a reflective measurement model where the variables of psychological capital, happiness at work, and innovative work behaviour are measured reflectively. Evaluation of the reflective measurement model consists of validity evaluation (convergent validity and discriminant validity) and reliability evaluation. Validity evaluation is reflected in the loading factor value higher than 0.708 and average variance extracted (AVE) more than 0.50, while discriminant validity evaluation can be seen from cross-loading, Fornell-Larcker criteria, and heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). On the other hand, reliability evaluation is indicated by the composite reliability value and Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.70. The results of the measurement model test can be seen in Figure 1.

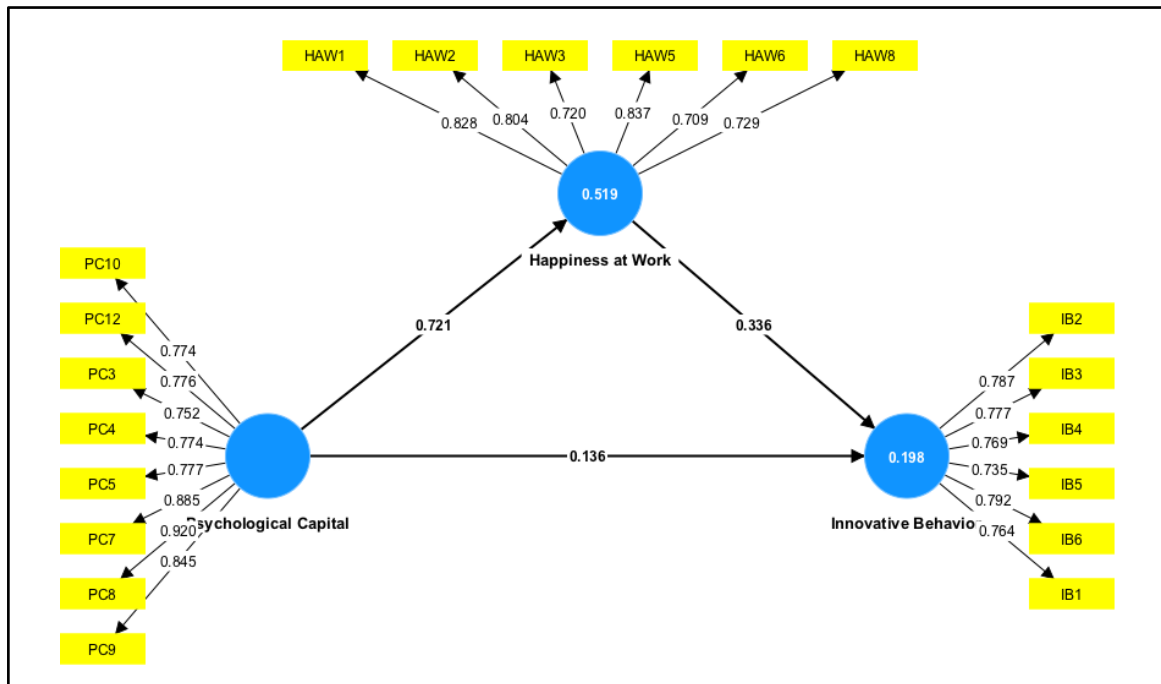


Figure 1. Outer model

Table 1. Outer loading, composite reliability, average variance extracted

Variables	Indicators	Outer Loading	Croanbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Happiness at Work (HAW)	HAW1	0,828	0,865	0,874	0,598
	HAW2	0,804			
	HAW3	0,720			
	HAW5	0,837			
	HAW6	0,709			
	HAW8	0,729			
Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB)	IB1	0,764	0,867	0,892	0,594
	IB2	0,787			
	IB3	0,777			
	IB4	0,769			
	IB5	0,735			
	IB6	0,792			
	PC3	0,752	0,927	0,933	0,664

Psychological Capital (PC)	PC4	0,774
	PC5	0,777
	PC7	0,885
	PC8	0,920
	PC9	0,845
	PC10	0,774
	PC12	0,776

The research variables are measured by valid indicators with outer loading between 0.774 and 0.920. This means that all indicators are valid in reflecting the measurement of psychological capital, work happiness, and innovative work behaviour. The level of variable reliability is acceptable as indicated by Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability above 0.70. The level of convergent validity indicated by the AVE value of $0.664 > 0.50$ has met the requirements for good convergent validity. Overall, the variation of measurement indicators contained in the variables reaches 66.4 percent.

Table 2. Fornel-larcker criterion

	Happiness at Work	Innovative Work Behaviour	Psychological Capital
Happiness at Work	0,773		
Innovative Work Behaviour	0,434	0,771	
Psychological Capital	0,721	0,378	0,815

Table 3. Heterotrait monotrait ratio (HTMT)

	Happiness at Work	Innovative Work Behaviour	Psychological Capital
Happiness at Work			
Innovative Behaviour	0,461		
Psychological Capital	0,768	0,388	

Evaluation of discriminant validity is conducted using the Fornell-Larcker criteria. Discriminant validity is a form of evaluation to ensure that variables are theoretically different and proven empirically or through statistical testing. The Fornell-Larcker criterion is that the root of the AVE of the variable is greater than the correlation between variables. The happiness at work has an AVE root of 0.773, which is more correlated with innovative work behaviour (0.434) and psychological capital (0.721). The innovative work behaviour has an AVE root of 0.771, which is more correlated with happiness at work (0.434) and psychological capital (0.378). The psychological capital has an AVE root of 0.815, which is more correlated with happiness at work (0.721) and innovative work behaviour (0.378). These results indicate that the discriminant validity of the psychological capital, happiness at work, and innovative work behaviour variables is attained. [Hair et al. \(2019\)](#) recommend HTMT because this validity measure is considered more sensitive or accurate in detecting discriminant validity. The recommended value is below 0.90. Test results showing an HTMT value below 0.90 for a pair of variables indicate that discriminant validity is met.

Evaluation of Goodness of Fit - Inner Model (Structural Model)

The structural model evaluation is carried out in three stages. First, checking for the absence of multicollinearity between variables with the Inner VIF (Variance Inflated Factor) measure. An Inner VIF value below 5 indicates that there is no multicollinearity problem between variables ([Hair et al., 2021](#)). Second, testing the hypothesis between variables by looking at the t-statistic or p-value. If the calculated t-statistic is greater than 1.96 (t-table) or the p-value of the test results is less than 0.05, there is a significant influence between the variables. In addition, it is necessary to convey the results and 95 percent confidence interval of the estimated path coefficient parameters.

Table 4. Inner variance inflated factor (VIF)

	Inner VIF
Happiness at Work -> Innovative Work Behaviour	2,080
Psychological Capital -> Happiness at Work	1,000
Psychological Capital -> Innovative Work Behaviour	2,080

Table 4 shows that the estimation results indicate that all inner VIF values in each variable are greater than 0.2 and less than 5, so the level of multicollinearity between variables is low. These results strengthen the results of parameter estimation in SEM-PLS, which are robust (unbiased). Thus, the structural model does not have collinearity problems among predictor variables and can be continued to the next test. The next step is to evaluate the structural model in PLS using R-square (R^2) for endogenous variables, path coefficient values, or t-values for each path to test the significance between variables in the structural model. The higher the adjusted R^2 value, the better the prediction model of the proposed research model (Ghozali and Latan, 2012).

Table 5. Determination coefficient

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Happiness at Work	0,519	0,515
Innovative Work Behaviour	0,198	0,185

Table 5 shows the R^2 value for the psychological capital variable on work happiness of 0.515 is concluded moderate, which has an effect of $0.515 \times 100\% = 51.5$ percent. Meanwhile, the R^2 value for the psychological capital and happiness at work on innovative work behavior of 0.185 is concluded as weak, which has an influence of $0.185 \times 100\% = 18.5$ percent.

Inner model testing is conducting by assessing at the Q-square (Q^2) value, which is a goodness-of-fit model test. If the Q^2 value is greater than zero, it shows that the model has a predictive relevance value. Based on the calculation, the Q^2 value is 0.605, so it can be concluded that the model is has predictive relevance value. This means that 60.5 percent of the variation in the innovative work behavior variable can be explained by the variables used in this study, while the remaining 39.5 percent is explained by other factors which are not discussed in the model. The goodness of fit model can also be considered by looking at the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value. From the test results, it is known that the NFI value is 0.674. Based on the rules of thumb determined by Hair et al. (2017), an NFI value close to one indicates that the model fits the data perfectly, so the model has good goodness of fit. Whereas an NFI value closer to 1.0 implies a better fit, values ranging from 0.60 to 0.80 are still considered acceptable for complex models, especially in studies conducted with PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2016). The complexity of the structural model and the number of variables included contributed to its fairly moderate NFI value. However, this value is still within the acceptable level. When combined with the high Q^2 value and significant path coefficients, the model displays appropriate overall fit for explanation and prediction.

Hypotheses Testing

Figure 2 shows the results of evaluating direct and indirect impacts on the structural model (inner model).

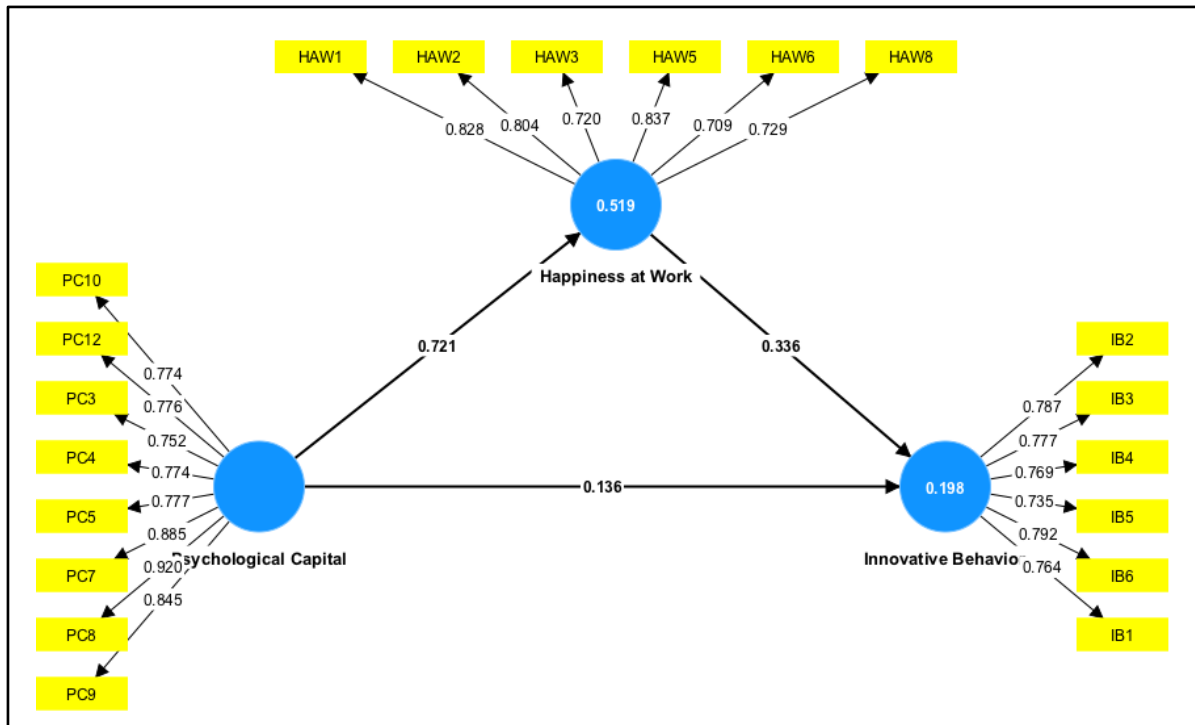


Figure 2. Inner model

Based on the inner model of Figure 2, the results of hypotheses testing are as follows:

- H₁: psychological capital has a positive and significant effect on innovative work behavior. The p-value of the psychological capital on innovative work behavior is $0.154 > 0.05$ with a beta value of 0.136 and a t-statistic value of 1.427. Because the t-statistic value $< t\text{-table}$ ($1.427 < 1.96$), it can be concluded that **hypothesis 1 is rejected**.
- H₂: psychological capital has a positive and significant effect on work happiness. The p-value of the psychological capital on happiness at work is $0.000 < 0.05$ with a beta value of 0.721 and a t-statistic value of 15.091. Because the t-statistic value $> t\text{-table}$ ($15.091 > 1.96$), it can be concluded that **hypothesis 2 is accepted**.
- H₃: happiness at work has a positive and significant effect on innovative work behavior. The p-value of the happiness at work on innovative work behavior is $0.000 < 0.05$ with a beta value of 0.336 and a t-statistic value of 3.664. Because the t-statistic value $> t\text{-table}$ ($3.664 > 1.96$) it can be concluded that **hypothesis 3 is accepted**.
- H₄: happiness at work mediates the effect of psychological capital on innovative work behavior. The p-value of the psychological capital on innovative work behavior is mediated by happiness at work $0.000 < 0.05$ with a beta value of 0.242 and a t-statistic value of 3.496 compared to the t-table of 1.96. Because the t-statistic value $> t\text{-table}$ ($3.496 > 1.96$) it can be concluded that **hypothesis 4 is accepted**. Based on the classification of mediating variables, it can be concluded that the mediation effect of happiness at work in this study is included in indirect-only mediation (**full mediation**) because the direct effect is not significant, while the indirect effect is significant.

B. Discussion

Hypothesis testing concludes that hypothesis 1, which states that psychological capital has a positive and significant effect on the innovative work behavior of starred hotel milenial employees, is rejected. This means that the psychological capital possessed by employees (such as optimism, hope, self-confidence, and the like) does not play a significant role in encouraging or increasing their innovative work behavior. This finding can be explained from the external and internal aspects of the individual. From the external side, environmental factors in the hotel industry may be an important factor influencing innovative work behavior. It is undeniable that starred hotels have various special demands, such as high service standards and strict procedures, which can be obstacles in implementing innovative ideas (Moliner et al., 2019; Park & Min, 2020), especially in the context of the starred hotel industry in Bali, which is mostly managed by international chain hotel groups. In addition, the dynamics of

the hotel industry in Bali, which is influenced by tourism trends and intense competition, can create strong pressure on employees to maintain existing service standards (Han, 2021). This may reduce the space for innovative ideas that are experimental in nature, so strong management initiatives are needed to create an environment that supports innovation.

From an internal perspective, individual variation among employees also needs to be considered. Individual variation refers to differences in characteristics, attitudes, and psychological tendencies between individuals working in the same environment (Aboobaker & Edward, 2020; Szabó et al., 2022). In the context of the results of this study, this means that each millennial employee may have different psychological capital. Psychological capital can vary, with some employees being more predisposed to innovative work behavior than others. Some employees may have strong psychological capital, which makes them more optimistic and hopeful and have high levels of self-confidence (Kumar et al., 2022; Oshio et al., 2018). When millennial employees of starred hotels are faced with job demands that may be high in terms of service standards, strict rules, or complex procedures, they may be more likely to conserve their psychological resources rather than use these resources to generate innovative work behavior. Therefore, the insignificant effect between psychological capital and innovative work behavior may reflect that employees tend to prioritize conserving their resources over taking risks in carrying out innovative behavior.

Furthermore, exploring this finding through a multigenerational lens gives it a more profound meaning. Compared to other generations (such as Generation X or Baby Boomers), millennials prioritize work-life balance, emotional well-being, and meaningful work experiences (Indrayani et al., 2024). While older generations may engage in innovative behavior as part of their job responsibilities or internal drive to improve organizational outcomes, millennials may be reluctant to extend effort beyond suggested roles unless they perceive psychological safety, autonomy, and personal growth opportunities (Liu et al., 2024).

Hypothesis testing states that psychological capital has a positive and significant effect on the work happiness of starred hotel employees. Individuals who have strong psychological capital are more likely to have a positive view of their work, feel more motivated, and be better prepared to face challenges that arise in their work environment. The ability to maintain optimism and hope in work can help millennial employees cope with stress and pressure that may arise in the hospitality industry, which often demands high levels of service. High optimism allows employees to see challenging situations as opportunities for growth and learning, rather than as obstacles that hinder progress (Kang & Busser, 2018; Soni & Rastogi, 2019). This ability helps them to be less affected by pressure, so they stay focused on the task and remain calm in the face of difficult situations (Kawalya et al., 2019). High motivation helps employees to stay committed to their goals, which in turn reduces the impact of stress that arises from work in the demanding and stressful hospitality industry (Satici et al., 2023).

The finding state that happiness at work has a positive and significant effect on the innovative work behavior of starred hotel millennial employees. These results reflect a close relationship between individual psychological well-being and the level of innovation in the work environment. Employees who feel happy in their jobs tend to be more motivated, enthusiastic, and have a positive outlook on the work environment. Feelings of happiness create an atmosphere that supports collaboration and creativity. Happiness at work also has a positive impact on communication between coworkers, which can increase the exchange of ideas and collaborative support (Mousa et al., 2020; Salas-Vallina & Alegre, 2021). In addition, happy employees tend to feel more confident in expressing their innovative ideas without fear of being criticized or judged. Feelings of happiness create a more inclusive and supportive environment, where every employee feels valued and recognized (Melief et al., 2020). This provides additional encouragement for them to actively participate in the innovation process. When employees feel happy and satisfied with their jobs, they tend to be more motivated to create change and engage in innovative behavior (Bibi et al., 2022).

A significant finding in this study is that happiness at work mediates the influence of psychological capital on innovative work behavior of starred hotel millennial employees. Psychological capital can provide the psychological resources needed for starred hotel employees to cope with high job pressure and demands. Strong psychological capital can increase employees' self-confidence in facing challenges and give them the belief that they can generate innovative ideas. However, the key role lies in the underlying mechanism by which psychological capital influences innovative work behavior through happiness at work. This mediated interaction becomes even more pertinent when addressed from a generational point of view. Millennials put a higher priority on happiness, emotional satisfaction, and meaning at work than prior generations such as Generation X or Baby Boomers (Zarwi et al., 2022). For millennials, being happy at work is not solely the consequence of high performance; it is a fundamental requirement for engagement and innovation. Older generations, on the other hand, may engage in creative activity out of a feeling of responsibility, long-term organizational commitment, or personal ambition, regardless of how fulfilled they are at work.

Within the framework of conservation of resources theory, when millennial employees invest their psychological capital in their work, they not only conserve these resources but also enhance their well-being and work happiness. This investment of psychological resources includes the use of optimism, hope, and self-confidence in carrying out daily work tasks. The resource investment premise in conservation of resources theory

states that when individuals invest their psychological resources, such as psychological capital, in their work, this results in increased well-being and work happiness, which can then have implications for the creation of innovative work behaviors (Benevene et al., 2019; Semedo et al., 2019). Conservation of resources theory and the resource investment premise provide a strong view of how strong psychological capital can enhance employee work happiness in the hospitality industry, which in turn has an impact on more innovative work behaviors.

Happiness at work, as a result of strong psychological capital, creates a positive and satisfying psychological environment in the workplace. Employees who feel happy tend to be more motivated, satisfied, and enthusiastic in carrying out their tasks. These positive feelings trigger feelings of achievement and satisfaction with their work. Furthermore, happy employees tend to be more open to innovative ideas, dare to try new approaches, and actively participate in creating creative solutions to work challenges (Kawalya et al., 2019; Mousa et al., 2020). In this context, psychological capital provides psychological resources that enable employees to feel happy in their work, which in turn encourages them to behave innovatively. Happiness at work is a bridge that connects internal factors (psychological capital) with work outcomes (innovative behavior) in the context of the hospitality industry. As a result, the positive influence of psychological capital on innovative work behavior occurs mostly through increasing employee work happiness (Basinska & Rozkwitalska, 2022; Satıcı et al., 2023; Bani-Melhem et al., 2018; Ho & Chan, 2022; Zhou et al., 2020).

In the context of this study, the type of mediation that occurs is full mediation. Full mediation occurs when the role of the mediator (in this case, happiness at work) fully explains the relationship between the exogenous variable (psychological capital) and the endogenous variable (innovative work behavior). Psychological capital does not directly affect innovative work behavior because its effect on innovative work behavior is fully explained by happiness at work. Happiness at work functions as a mechanism that connects psychological capital with innovative work behavior. When employees feel happy in their jobs, this creates an internal drive to try new things, participate in innovation, and contribute to improving work processes. The results of this study underline that work happiness is a key factor in linking strong psychological capital with higher innovative work behavior among millennial employees of starred hotels in Bali.

To strengthen this finding, interviews were conducted with five millennial employees working in a five-star hotel who are in the age range of 25-35 years. From the results of interviews with five people representing rank-and-file positions (n=3), supervisors (n=1), and department heads (n=2), several aspects that contribute to their work happiness can be explored. Five main contributors of the sense of happiness at work include:

1. Positive work environment. A positive work atmosphere, including good relationships between coworkers and management, as well as cultural diversity that is accepted, can provide a sense of comfort and work happiness for millennial workers.
2. Career development opportunities. Opportunities for career growth and development are important for millennial employees. They look for jobs that provide opportunities to improve their skills and achieve their career goals.
3. Work-life balance. Millennial employees highly value a balance between work and personal life. Flexible work schedules or remote work options can help create work happiness.
4. Recognition and appreciation. Recognition for their contributions and achievements at work is critical. Reward programs or recognition systems can increase work happiness. Challenges in work, such as varied tasks and interesting projects, can make millennial employees feel involved and happy in their work.
5. Flexibility in career planning. Millennial employees value flexibility in planning their careers, including the opportunity to try different roles or departments in the hospitality industry.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and hypothesis testing that have been conducted, this study concludes that of the four hypotheses proposed, three are accepted, while one hypothesis is rejected. The main findings indicate that psychological capital is not proven to have a direct positive and significant effect on innovative work behaviour of starred hotel millennial employees. However, psychological capital is proven to have a positive and significant effect on happiness at work, and happiness at work ultimately has a positive and significant effect on innovative work behaviour. Furthermore, happiness at work acts as a full mediator in the relationship between psychological capital and innovative work behaviour.

The theoretical implications of these findings indicate that work happiness is a crucial element that bridges the relationship between psychological capital and innovative work behaviour, especially in the context of millennial employee of the hospitality industry. This supports the approach that views happiness not only as an outcome, but also as a catalyst for positive behaviour in the organization. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of integrating aspects of employee psychological well-being in human resource management, especially in efforts to encourage work innovation at the operational level. From a practical perspective, the results of this study provide a number of recommendations that are relevant to various parties.

For employees, it is important to continue to develop aspects of psychological capital such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience, as an effort to increase stress resistance and support work happiness. Focusing on improving interpersonal relationships, achieving work-life balance, and accepting work achievements are also strategic steps in creating a more meaningful and enjoyable work experience. Meanwhile, for star-rated hotel management, these results underline the importance of creating a work culture that supports employee happiness, through recognition programs, appreciation, work-life balance support facilities, and open and positive communication in the work environment. This can be accomplished through specific initiatives such as employee recognition and incentive programs. Take into account "Employee of the Month" awards or point-based systems that recognize daily contributions and service excellence. Appreciation programs are also encouraged, such as providing monthly thank-you luncheons or commemorating staff birthdays and work anniversaries. In addition, although psychological capital does not directly affect innovative behaviour, management is still advised to implement psychological development training that can strengthen the mental and emotional foundations of millennial employees in the long term. For example, resilience-building workshops, growth mindset coaching sessions, or peer mentoring or storytelling sessions from senior staff may all support millennial employees in building up their mental and emotional core.

Although this study was designed and implemented following scientific principles, there are several limitations that need to be considered. First, this study uses a cross-sectional approach, which does not allow for longitudinal causality tracing. Therefore, further research with a longitudinal design is recommended to test the validity of the relationship between variables over time. Second, this study is limited to a specific geographical context, namely employees of starred hotels in Bali with specific characteristics, such as age, length of service, and position. This may limit the generalization of the findings to different industrial or regional contexts. Future research may consider expanding the study area and using more representative sampling methods to strengthen external validity. In addition, further research is also recommended to explore other mediating or moderating factors, such as organizational innovation climate, work engagement, or transformational leadership, which may influence the relationship between psychological capital, happiness at work, and innovative work behaviour of millennial employees or other generation in hospitality context.

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