

Inclusive Leadership and Adaptive Performance in Jordanian HEIs: Role of Psychological Capital

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Abstract: Study Objective: The objective of current study is to evaluate the influence of inclusive styles on psychological capital and adaptive performance among academic staff in Jordanian Higher Education Institutions, further it examines the mediating role of psychological capital in shaping the relationship between inclusive leadership and adaptive performance. These findings assist to clarify how leadership practices can promote adaptive ability and resilience among academic staff. **Methodology:** A quantitative study design was used, with a self-administered questionnaire provided to academic staff. A total of 222 from 10 participants public Jordanian HEIs were participated in this study. The data collection started end of September, 2023 and ended on the first of May, 2024. The respondent of this study is formed on a 5-point Likert scale utilized. This study adopted Inclusive Leadership Scale (Carmeli et al., 2010), Adaptive Performance Scale (Charbonnier-Voirin & Roussel, 2012) and PsyCap Questionnaire (Luthans et al., 2007) to measure the constructs. Data are analyzed using smart PLS and SPSS. **Results:** The findings indicate that inclusive style significantly contributes to enhancing adaptive performance ($\beta = 0.246, p < 0.001$) and psychological capital ($\beta = 0.287, p < 0.001$) among academic staff in Jordanian HEIs. Additionally, it was suggested that PsyCap effect ($\beta = 0.069, p = 0.029$) is partially mediated ($\beta = 0.069, p = 0.029$) alongside a significant direct effect. **Recommendations and Conclusion:** Findings The results have shown that inclusive leadership is an essential for promoting adaptive performance among faculty members in Jordanian public universities. This is done by its direct effects on performance, in addition to the indirect effects on psychological capital, which proved to be a partial mediator in the relationship between leadership and performance. These results highlight the significance of implementing inclusive leadership in academia to help academics build resilience and respond adaptively to challenges. Therefore, the study suggests a demand for developing inclusive leadership styles within the university environment and detailed training programs for gaining accesses to psychological capital components including hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism in order to improve academic achievements and adaptation to changes in the university settings.

Keywords: Adaptive Performance, Inclusive Leadership, Psychological Capital.

القيادة الشاملة والأداء التكيفي في مؤسسات التعليم العالي الأردنية: دور رأس المال النفسي

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المخلص: الهدف: يهدف هذا البحث إلى تقييم تأثير أساليب القيادة الشاملة على رأس المال النفسي والأداء التكيفي لدى أعضاء الهيئة التدريسية في الجامعات الحكومية الأردنية، كما يدرس الدور الوسيط لرأس المال النفسي في تشكيل العلاقة بين القيادة الشاملة والأداء التكيفي. تساعد هذه النتائج على توضيح كيف يمكن لممارسات القيادة أن تعزز القدرة على التكيف والمرونة لدى أعضاء هيئة التدريس. **المنهج:** تم استخدام تصميم دراسة كمية، مع استبيان ذاتي تم تقديمه لأعضاء هيئة التدريس. تتكون عينة الدراسة من 222 مشاركاً في 10 مؤسسات تعليم عالي حكومية في الأردن. بدأ جمع البيانات في نهاية سبتمبر 2023 وانتهى في الأول من مايو 2024. تم تشكيل المستجيبين لهذه الدراسة على مقياس ليكرت من 5 نقاط مستخدم. اعتمدت هذه الدراسة مقياس القيادة الشاملة (كارميلي وآخرون، 2010)، ومقياس الأداء التكيفي (شاربونيه-فوارين وروسيل، 2012) واستبيان رأس المال النفسي (لوثانز وآخرون، 2007) لقياس المفاهيم. تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامجي PLS و SPSS. **أهم النتائج:** تشير النتائج إلى أن أسلوب القيادة الشاملة يسهم بشكل كبير في تحسين الأداء التكيفي ($\beta = 0.246, p < 0.001$) ورأس المال النفسي ($\beta = 0.287, p < 0.001$) لدى أعضاء الهيئة التدريسية في الجامعات الأردنية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أُشير إلى أن تأثير رأس المال النفسي ($\beta = 0.069, p = 0.029$) متوسط جزئياً ($\beta = 0.069, p = 0.029$) بجانب تأثير مباشر ذي دلالة إحصائية. **الاستنتاجات والتوصيات:** تشير نتائج الدراسة إلى أن القيادة الشاملة تُعد من العوامل المهمة في تعزيز الأداء التكيفي لدى أعضاء الهيئة التدريسية في الجامعات الحكومية الأردنية، وذلك من خلال تأثيرها المباشر على الأداء وكذلك من خلال تعزيز رأس المال النفسي، الذي ظهر كوسيط جزئي في العلاقة بين القيادة والأداء. وتؤكد هذه النتائج أهمية تبني ممارسات القيادة الشاملة في بيئات التعليم العالي، لما لها من دور في دعم مرونة الأكاديميين وتكيفهم مع التحديات. وبناءً على ذلك، توصي الدراسة بضرورة تعزيز أنماط القيادة الشاملة داخل الجامعات، إلى جانب تصميم برامج تدريبية تهدف إلى تنمية مكونات رأس المال النفسي، مثل الأمل، والكفاءة الذاتية، والمرونة، والتفاؤل، لما لذلك من أثر إيجابي على الأداء الأكاديمي والتكيف مع التغيرات المؤسسية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القيادة الشاملة، رأس المال النفسي، الأداء التكيفي.

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INTRODUCTION

Dynamic organizational environment requires rapid adaptations. Employees' ability to adapt to these ongoing changes has become crucial. In higher education institutions, where academic tasks and societal expectations grow continuously. (Kaltainen & Hakanen, 2022; Zhang et al., 2024). Consequently, Adaptive performance, defined as the capacity of staff members to develop new skills and adapt to different situations (Charbonnier-Voirin et al., 2010), has considered a vital competency for academic staff (Tan & Antonio, 2022). Academic staff are expected to remain current and updated within their specializations and maintain high teaching standards (DePauw, 2019; Jia et al., 2022; Howell, Hamilton & Jordan, 2023).

Despite the growing interest in adaptive performance, however, important dimensions as interpersonal adaptability and cultural adaptability are remained unexplored especially in HEIs. Since these features are essential where faculty members must constantly deal with various student populations and collaborate on academic projects (Rana et al., 2021). The current study approaches this gap by focusing on learning adaptability and interpersonal adaptability as critical components of adaptive performance in HEIs.

Institutional success is widely driven by leadership, which significantly impacts employees' performance (Tamimi & Jondi, 2023). In this regard, inclusive leadership -which is characterized with openness, accessibility, and availability in their interactions with members (Carmeli et al., 2010)- fosters a positive environment where employees feel empowered and positively response to change (Fatima et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2024). While traditional leadership styles indicate limited effectiveness in higher education, inclusive leadership promote change ability and innovation (Sani Mert & Aslan, 2021; Katsaros, 2025). However, empirical research in inclusive leadership in HEIs is limited, especially in developing countries. Additionally, there is an absence of a standardized theoretical model, and its consistent application among different context (Aboramadan & Dahleez, 2022; Bataineh et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Shakil et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2024; Yu, 2020).

Yet another emerging concept that is related to adaptation is psychological capital, which refers to psychological abilities and positively oriented human resource qualities such as hope, efficacy and resilience that may successfully managed to enhance performance (Luthans, 2002). PsyCap is a potential factor for improving productivity and performance because it is related to the way leaders and employees persuade one another (Nanesa & Fatmala, 2022). Previous research has indicated that PsyCap plays as a mediator between leadership styles and positive organizational outcomes (Wang, Chen & Zhu, 2021). However, its role among academic staff remains unclear (Zhang et al., 2024) and limited literature exists in regarding its antecedents on the relationship between leadership styles and AP (Bak et al., 2022; Rana et al., 2021).

Accordingly, to address these gaps, this study is incorporating positive organizational behavior strategies and positive psychology principles in order to encourage leaders to adopt inclusive leadership styles in public HEIs in Jordan . It also responds to prior calls for further studies on leadership styles in Arab educational settings and the relationship between IL and AP (Aboramadan & Dahleez, 2022; Qurrahtulain et al., 2020).

This study employs Self-Determination Theory, which states that when leaders fill the employees' fundamental needs - autonomy, competence, and relatedness - they promote positive performance and intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005). This Inclusive leadership is consistent with SDT by creating a workplace environment that enhances employees' autonomy and psychological

safety environment (Zhang et al., 2018). Therefore, SDT supports the proposed role psychological capital as a mediator, it serves as a bridge between leadership and AP, contributing positive institutional outcomes (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Thus, this study investigates into how inclusive leadership affects adaptive performance and the potential role of PsyCap in mediating this relationship among academic staff at Jordan's public HEIs.

Research Hypotheses

The research hypothesis' descriptions and codes are presented in table 1

Table 1: Descriptions and Codes for Research Hypotheses

Code	Description	Path
Causal Effect Hypotheses		
H1 ⁺	Inclusive Leadership has a positive impact on Psychological Capital.	IL → Psy-Cap
H2 ⁺	Inclusive Leadership has a positive impact on Adaptive Performance.	IL → AP
H3 ⁺	Psy-Cap has a positive impact on Adaptive Performance.	Psy-Cap → AP
Mediation Effect Hypotheses of Psychological Capital (Psy-Cap)		
H4 ⁺	Psychological Capital (Psy-Cap) mediates the relationship between IL and AP.	IL → Psy-Cap → AP

Theoretical Framework

To support in the creation of the study's hypotheses, a theoretical framework was created, as shown in Table 1. The matching model, presented in Figure 1, visualizes the direct and mediated interactions proposed in this study.

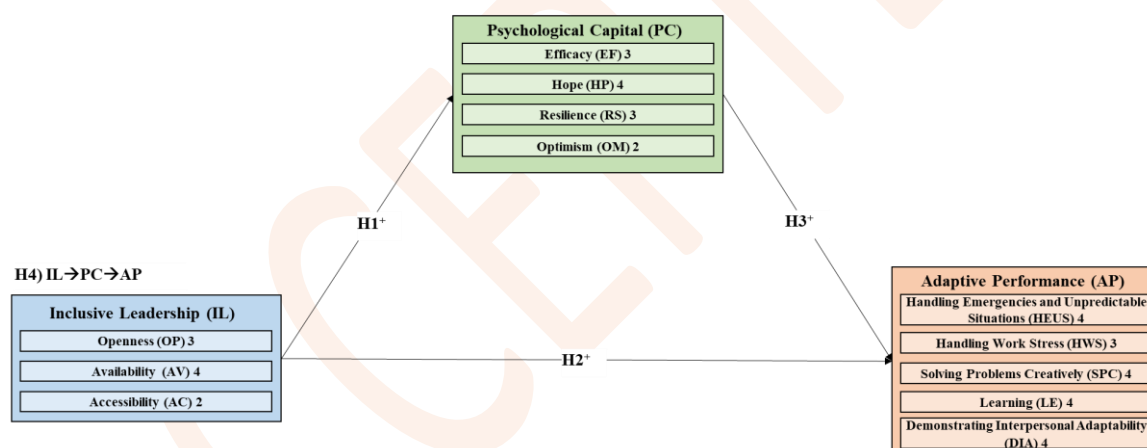


Figure (1): Research Hypotheses in Theoretical Framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Inclusive Leadership

Carmeli, Reiter-Palmon, and Ziv (2010) proposed a method for identifying the behavioural manifestations of these markers. They suggest that this measure conveys norms of accessibility and availability by emphasizing a leader's physical presence and willingness to consult on any subject. Hence, IL aims to achieve shared objectives by developing, adapting, and innovating while balancing requirements and recognizing diversity (Ackaradejruangsri et al., 2022). Moreover, it is important to focus on developing and researching the barriers that restrict the efficacy of leadership styles in enhancing organizational performance, as well as implementing strategic changes with the help of change leaders. Raising academic department heads' knowledge of the value of leadership abilities in advancing educational initiatives within departments and colleges is crucial (Al-Qaisi, 2025).

Inclusive leadership (IL) has three dimensions, which are accessibility, availability, and openness (Carmeli et al., 2010). The first dimension is openness, which is based on how the leader stands out by being responsive to fresh suggestions from staff members. When a leader is more open and

communicative, they pay attention to how openness can improve work efficiency while also listening to people's fresh perspectives. A global leader can assist people in obtaining employment and reduce work-related incidents (Rodriguez, 2018). The second component is availability, which helps the leader communicate with employees better by knowing what goes through their minds and how they are involved in decision-making processes, as they have valuable knowledge about their distinctive roles (Hassan & Jiang, 2021).

This means that employees can consult a leader at any time, not only for support and guidance but also to facilitate job participation and career independence. Leaders tolerate individuals' opinions and failures by listening to them, rationally tolerating their mistakes, and providing encouragement and guidance to support individuals when they make mistakes (Jasim et al., 2020). The third is availability. This dimension identifies the way that a person can reach his/her leader at work, openly discusses his ideas, and reveals the challenges that he encounters while working build distinguished relationships between the leader and individuals. Bao et al. (2022) indicate that employees are more invested in their jobs when they are led by inclusive leaders; they highlight that by strengthening 'inclusive leadership qualities, firms can enhance the alignment between job requirements and employee professional skills and reap the benefits of increased employee work engagement. Leaders should maintain the IL style by emphasizing accessibility, openness, and empowerment and creating opportunities for workers to discuss innovative ideas, express opinions, and be motivated to execute beneficial concepts (Qurrahtulain et al., 2022).

Psychological Capital

Psychological resources are capabilities that can be measured, improved, and accomplished appropriately in today's work to improve performance. According to COR theory's conceptualization of resources and the movement for Positive Organizational Behaviour (POB) (Hobfoll, 2001).

The first element of psychological capital is self-efficacy which refers to confidence and faith in knowledge in a specific domain. The second dimension is hope which refers to a feeling motivated and distinguished by action and pathways towards objective accomplishment. The hope process requires perseverance, motivation, and a proactive search for alternate paths. The third dimension is optimism is a general expectation of a positive outcome (Bannay et al., 2020). The last dimension of resilience is the capacity to maintain and mend encounters, disagreements, failures, or circumstances that need an increase in commitment (Shakil et al., 2021). Scholars have examined psychological capital in a number of domains, such as management conduct (Miao et al., 2021) and attitudes (Avey et al., 2022; Youssef & Luthans, 2013). Previous studies have examined the use of PsyCap in project management (Harms et al., 2017), banking (Khalid et al., 2020; Santos & Ponchio, 2021), and intellectual capital (Asare et al., 2023).

Adaptive Performance

Several studies have identified three performance indicators: task, contextual, and counterproductive (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). Task performance involves executing the key responsibilities that are expressly defined in description of a job while contextual performance refers to activities that shape the culture of an organisation (Northouse, 2022).

Furthermore, Han and Williams (2008) define adaptive performance in organizations as a subset of work performance distinct from task performance and citizenship conduct. This concept supports the premise that people's capacity to adapt to workplace changes is indicated by how successfully they handle those adjustments. Leadership appears to be one of the motivators of adaptive performance,

and this is found in the literature. For example, paradoxical leadership (Li & Ding, 2022) and task-oriented leadership (Adams & Webster, 2022), shared leadership (Rousseau & Aubé, 2020), transactional leadership (Hoandră, 2017), servant leadership (Kaltiainen & Hakanen, 2022; Kaya & Karatepe, 2020), self-leadership (Marques-Quinteiro et al., 2019), innovative leadership and creative leadership (Riza et al., 2020), and empowering leadership (Xu & Zhang, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adapted deductive methodology, cross-sectional and quantitative approach, which is based on social exchange theory and self-determination theory to develop testable hypotheses.

As for the data collection, the study employed an online survey, which was developed using the SurveyMonkey website (SurveyMonkey Inc., Portland, OR) and distributed the link to the participants' emails. To ensure participants' privacy, the survey was designed to delink responses from respondents' e-mail addresses. To avoid having one person respond more than once, the software generates a unique identifier. In addition, each questionnaire involves a cover letter that guarantees respondents the confidentiality of their information.

Study Population and Sampling

The target group included academic staff from various ranks, such as assistant lecturers, lecturers, assistant and associate professors, as well as full professors, who work at Jordan's 10 public HEIs. Based on statistics from the Jordanian Ministry of Higher Education and the websites of Jordanian public HEIs, the total of the population consists of 7,429 academic staff from public universities. Due to the broad distribution of public HEIs in various governorates in the Kingdom, cluster sampling method was employed; this design allows accurate generalizations to the population of interest.

To determine the sample size for this study, a priori power analysis was performed using G*Power 3, assuming a statistical power of 0.95, a significance level (α) of 0.05, and a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$). This analysis identified a required minimum sample size of 222 respondents. Given the size of the target population, cluster sampling method was employed to enhance representativeness. Of 450 questionnaires, 380 responses were received, for an 84.4% response rate. However, after screening and eliminating unusable ones, due to failure to meet the data collection criteria or were returned uncompleted, 222 fully completed surveys were received for the analysis.

Research Instrument

This study employed a questionnaire in which participants were required to score the questions on a five-point Likert scale, beginning with 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

1. **Inclusive Leadership:** This study adopted Carmeli et al. (2010) scale. Scale measures respondents' perceptions of their leader's openness, availability in times of need, and accessibility when seeking advice or support.
2. **Psychological Capital:** The construct is measured via twelve items adapted from Luthans F., Youssef, C. M., & Avolio, B. J., (2007), Retrieved from Mind Garden, Inc. website). The scale is based on four dimensions (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency).
3. **Adaptive Performance:** the study adapted Charbonnier-Voirin, D., & Roussel, P. (2012) scale. The scale captured five dimensions: "response to emergencies and unforeseen events, stress management, creative problem-solving, learning adaptability, and interpersonal flexibility".

4. **Demographic Information:** The respondents' ages, gender, experience, academic ranking and education level.

DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

This part summarizes the empirical data and the analysis performed to examine the hypotheses of the study, Data analysis was carried out in two phases using SPSS 26 for descriptive statistics and SmartPLS 4.0 for model testing through structural equation modeling (SEM).

Sample Profile

Over 222 collected useful questionnaires, 164 (73.9%) were received from male and 58 (26.1%) were received from female. In terms of age distribution, 0.9% of respondents were under the age of 35, Around 30.2% of participants were aged between 30 and 39, making it the most represented age group. The largest group (43.2%) was between the ages of 40 and 49. Meanwhile, 23.4% were aged 50 to 59, and only 2.3% were 60 or older.

In specifying marital status, 80.6% of the respondents were married, 4.5% were divorced, 0% were separated, 0.9% were widowed and 14.0% were single. In order to determine the respondents' level of education, the findings were 3.6% had Bachelor degree, 11.3% had Master's Degree and 85.1% had PhD degree. Additionally, participants were required to indicate their academic rank. As the results, 12.7% were assistant lecturer, 9.5% were lecturer, 32.0% were Assistant Professor, 29.7% were associate professor and 19.8% were professor. In specifying work experience, 18.9% had below 5 years, 32.9% had 5-10 years, 20.3% had 11-15 years, 14.9% had 16-20 years, 9.0% had 21-25 years and 4.1% had more than 26 years.

Evaluating the Measurement Model

Assessment of Convergent Validity

To examine convergent validity of the measuring model, factor loading of the indicators and their corresponding constructs was studied, to assess convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) approach was applied, following the criteria set by Hair et al. (2017), All item loadings were above the threshold, with values ranging from 0.789 (HP1) to 0.943 (AC2), indicating strong representation of the constructs. While AVE results' test was ranged between 0.676 (for Resilience (RS)) and 0.885 (for Accessibility (AC) which means that all values fulfilling the widely recognized cutoff point for a construct's AVE of at least 0.50.

Discriminant validity

Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Discriminant validity was established using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, as displayed in Table 2, where each construct's AVE square root exceeded its correlations with other variables.

Table (2): AVE and Correlation Values for Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker)

	AP	IL	PC
Adaptive Performance (AP)	0.885		
Inclusive Leadership (IL)	0.315	0.901	
Psychological Capital (PC)	0.310	0.287	0.845

The postulated variables' inter-correlations dropped below the 0.85 criterion, ranging from 0.287 to 0.315 (Kline 2005). The analysis also revealed that, for each construct, Table 2 presents evidence that the square root of each construct's AVE exceeded its correlations with other constructs. This supports discriminant validity, consistent with the recommendation by Fornell and Larcker (1981), as further

explained by Hair et al. (2014), indicating that each construct is more strongly related to its own items than to others in the model.

HTMT Analysis for Discriminant Validity

The HTMT values in Table 3 were used to validate the discriminant validity of the constructs in the measurement model.

Table (3): Supporting Construct-Level Discriminant Validity with HTMT Results.

	AP	IL	PsyCap
Adaptive Performance (AP)			
Inclusive Leadership (IL)	0.346		
Psychological Capital (PsyCap)	0.342	0.327	

The HTMT values, which ranged from 0.327 to 0.346, were all less than 0.90 for the theorized constructions. In the context of this research, the HTMT results show that each construct is conceptually distinct from the others, supporting discriminant validity using Henseler et al.'s (2015) recommendations.

Structural Model

Model Fit and Predictive Power

The values of R^2 for Psychological Capital (**Psy-Cap**) and Adaptive Performance (AP) were 0.083 and 0.152, respectively, representing weak and moderate values, respectively, per suggestions by Cohen (1988). It means, for instance, 15.2% of the two predictors of adaptive performance (AP) account for variability in AP.: Inclusive Leadership (IL) and Psychological Capital (**Psy-Cap**). The values of Q^2 for PsyCap and Adaptive Performance (AP) were 0.516 and 0.664, in that order, far more than zero, indicating the model's predictive value, as shown by Chin (2010). Overall, to summarize, the model exhibits an acceptable fit as well as solid predictive relevance. Since it is so near to the cutoff value of 0.08 (Hair et al., 2016), structural model's SRMR value with 95% CI is 0.071, demonstrating an acceptable fit. Please refer to Figure 2, Measurement Model with Standardized Factor Loadings in Appendix A for a detailed illustration of the model's structure.

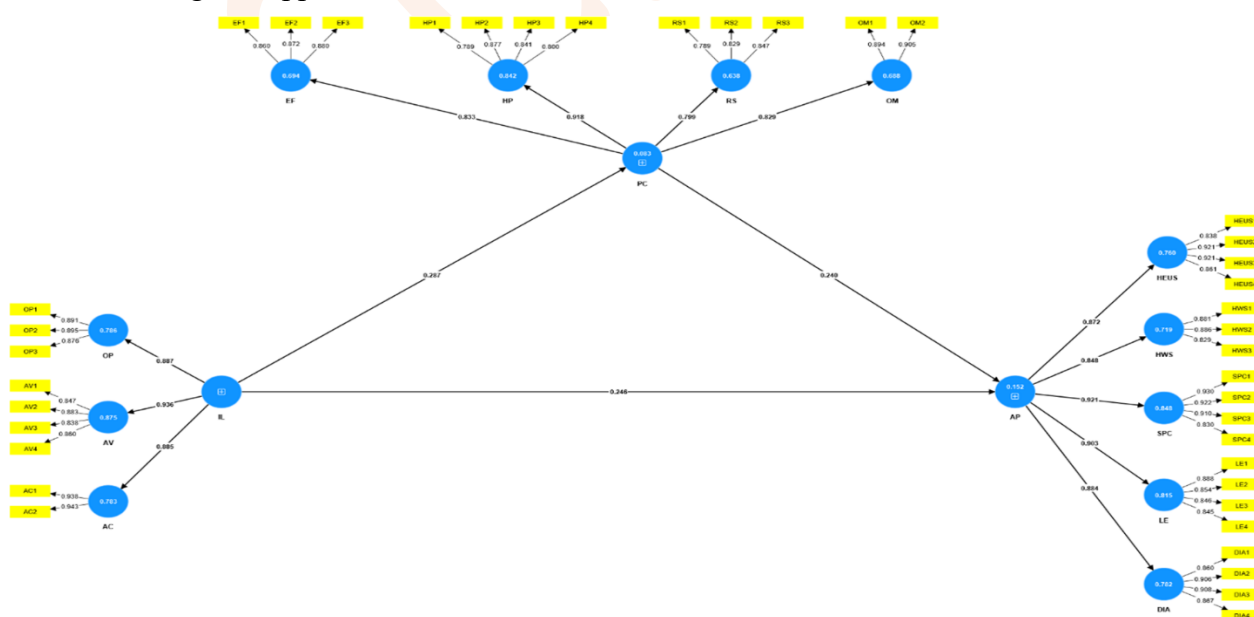


Figure (2): Measurement Model with Standardized Factor Loadings.

Hypotheses Test

Examining Causal Effect Hypotheses

Table 4 displays the path coefficients and results of analysing hypothesised causal effects.

Table (4): Results of Examining Causal Effect Hypotheses.

Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Deviation	t	p	95% LL-CI	95% UL-CI	f ²	VIF	Hypothesis Result
IL \rightarrow PsyCap	0.287***	0.058	4.959	< 0.001	0.168	0.397	0.090	1.000	H1 ⁺) Supported
IL \rightarrow AP	0.246***	0.058	4.219	< 0.001	0.126	0.354	0.065	1.090	H2 ⁺) Supported
PsyCap \rightarrow AP	0.240**	0.09	2.678	0.007	0.072	0.427	0.062	1.090	H3 ⁺) Supported

*p< 0.05, **p< 0.01, ***p< 0.001

The SmartPLS 4.0-PLS graph of structural model for testing the causal effects of the hypothesized constructs is summarized in Figure. (Check Appendix B)

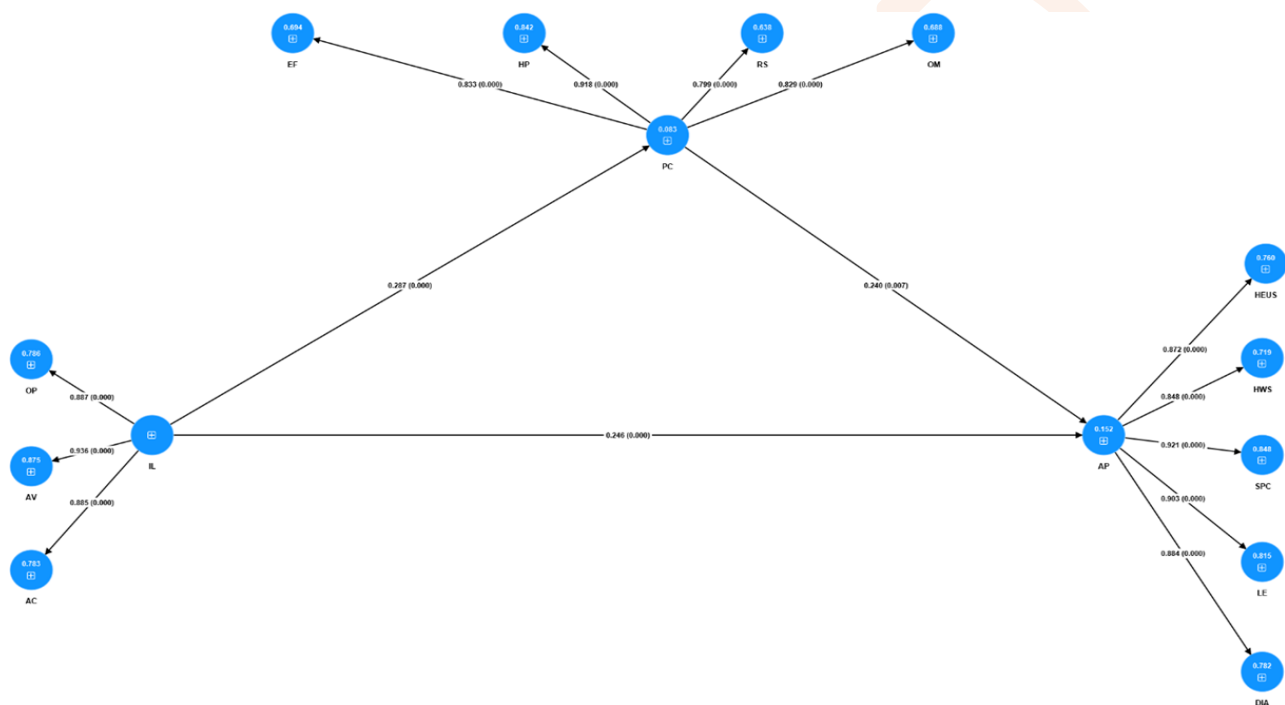


Figure (3): PLS Graph of Structural Model.

(H1+) IL has a positive effect on Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

The current study shown a positive relationship between PsyCap and inclusive leadership; however, as presented in Table 4, In predicting Psychological Capital (PC), IL had a t-value of 4.959 and a p-value of 0.001, respectively. The t-value of 4.959 suggests a very low (0.001) probability that the observed effect occurred by coincidence, implying that IL has a significant impact on PsyCap. This is supported by the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval, which excludes 0 and confirms the result's stability. The standardized path coefficient of 0.287 indicates a positive association between IL and PsyCap, implying that higher levels of IL are related with increased PsyCap. A small effect size was found for the relationship between IL and PsyCap ($f^2 = 0.090$). The VIF value for IL was 1.000, well below the 3.3 benchmark, indicating no multicollinearity concerns. This supports the assumption that common method bias is unlikely to affect the results. The path analysis strongly supports Hypothesis 1, with IL positively predicting PsyCap ($\beta = 0.287$), supported by a t-value of 4.959, confidence intervals between 0.168 and 0.393, and a highly significant p-value ($p < 0.001$).

(H2+) IL has a Positive effect on Adaptive Performance (AP)

The findings indicate that inclusive leadership considerably improves adaptive performance, as evidenced by a t-value of 4.219 and p-value of 0.001. At this level of significance, the regression coefficient is clearly not zero, and the confidence interval excludes zero, indicating the effect's reliability. With a standardized path coefficient of 0.246, it is clear that higher levels of inclusive leadership are positively connected with better adaptive performance among the participants in this study. The f^2 was 0.065, showing a small effect size. The VIF was 1.090, which was below the 3.3 threshold and showed no indication of collinearity. With $\beta = 0.246$, 95%LL-CI = 0.126, 95%UL-CI = 0.354, $t = 4.219$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.065$, and $VIF = 1.090$, these findings showed that H2 is supported.

H3+) PsyCap has a positive impact on Adaptive Performance (AP)

PsyCap had an extensive predictive influence on adaptive performance, with a t-value of 2.678 and a p-value of 0.007. coefficient was statistically significant at the 1% level, implying a non-zero association. The measured path coefficient ($\beta = 0.240$) indicates a positive relationship between the variables. The effect magnitude was minimal, as indicated by the f^2 of 0.062. The VIF was 1.090, The variance inflation factor ($VIF = 1.090$) was within the acceptable range, indicating the absence of multicollinearity. With $\beta = 0.240$, 95%LL-CI = 0.072, 95%UL-CI = 0.427, $t = 2.678$, $p = 0.007$, $f^2 = 0.062$, and $VIF = 1.090$, These results provide support for Hypothesis 3.

Mediation Effect Hypotheses

To determine the presence of mediation effects, the estimated path coefficients for the relation between IVs, M, and DVs were evaluated. After testing mediation effect hypothesis, Table .5 displays the standardized effects of several routes.

Table (5): Overview of Mediation Path Analysis Results.

Path: IV→M→DV	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Deviation	T-value	P-value	Hypothesis Result
IL→PC→AP					
Total Effect of IL on AP without PSY-CAP (path a)	0.315***	0.059	5.341	<0.001	
Direct Effect of IL on AP with PSY-CAP (path a')	0.246***	0.058	4.219	<0.001	
Indirect Effect of IL on AP through PSY-CAP (path bc)	0.069*	0.032	2.183	0.029	H4) Supported / Partial Mediation
Effect of IL on PSY-CAP (path b)	0.287***	0.058	4.959	<0.001	
Effect of PSY-CAP on AP (path c)	0.240**	0.09	2.678	0.007	

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; IL = Inclusive Leadership; AP = Adaptive Performance; PSY-CAP= Psychological Capital

H4) PsyCap mediates the relationship between Inclusive Leadership (IL) and AP

According to the findings, which are displayed in Table 5, Inclusive Leadership (IL) significantly improves Adaptive Performance (AP) both directly (path a': $\beta = 0.246$, $t = 4.219$, $p < 0.001$) and overall (path a: $\beta = 0.315$, $t = 5.341$, $p < 0.001$). Inclusive Leadership (IL) had positive and substantial impacts on (Psy-Cap) (path b: $\beta = 0.287$, $t = 4.959$, $p < 0.001$) and (Psy-Cap) on Adaptive Performance (AP) (path c: $\beta = 0.240$, $t = 2.678$, $p = 0.007$). The findings suggested that the link between (IL) and (AP) is partially mediated by (Psy-Cap). H4 was validated by the phenomena. Additionally, the results showed that (IL) significantly improved (AP) indirectly through (Psy-Cap); $\beta = 0.069$, $t = 2.183$, $p = 0.029$.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study show how inclusive leadership style promote adaptative performance in addition to psychological capital, through fulfilling fundamental psychological needs and developing positive behaviors. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory the study supports that inclusive leaders fulfilling fundamental psychological needs which develops positive behaviors among academic staff, in specific inclusive leadership positively impact PsyCap (Deci & Ryan, 2000). These findings are verified by the previous literature Ain et al., 2023 who stated that IL is emerging as a critical aspect in improving PsyCap. Moreover, additional studies highlighted positive relation between IL on PsyCap in different institutional context (Dai & Fang, 2023; Fang et al., 2019; Umrani et al., 2024). Furthermore, the study shows that there is a positive relation between inclusive leadership and adaptive performance in HEIs context. This result is consistent with prior studies that investigated the role of inclusive leadership in private and public higher education institutions (Al-Khateeb et al., 2023; Shaqra, 2021). (Qurrahtulain et al., 2022; Yu, 2020) have demonstrated that inclusive leadership contributes to a precise prediction of adaptive performance. While, Katsaros (2025) indicates that inclusive leadership impact adaptive performance through indirect pathway through employee creativity among Gen Z staff. In Jordanian setting, inclusive leadership significantly enhances adaptive performance as it promotes employee tenacity and adaptability, particularly under challenging settings (Zainal et al., 2022). These outcomes also respond to the calls of other researchers (Aboramadan & Dahleez, 2022; Qurrahtulain et al., 2020) who emphasized the need of investigating this relationship.

The study also indicates that PsyCap positively impact adaptive performance, this supports earlier results that examined psychological capital in higher education context (Da Costa et al. 2021; Mutonyi, 2021). While, Luo et al., (2022) have demonstrated that psychological capital contributes to a precise prediction of adaptive performance in the hotel sector. The study enlightens mediating role of PsyCap between IL and AP. This is aligned with the findings of prior research on the positive role of PsyCap between IL and AP in service sector (Ain et al., 2023). Despite its significance, research on PsyCap's role as a mediator remains scarce in public, as there is sector lacks sufficient knowledge of PsyCap's antecedents and impacts (Bak et al., 2022). By this, these results present practical implications for leadership development and employees' performance in the public area, in addition to their theoretical contributions.

CONCLUSION

As a result, a structural model was created to investigate one mediation effect hypothesis (H3) as well as three proposed causal effects (H1 and H2). This was accomplished by doing the path analysis and evaluating the dependability of the path coefficients for every suggested path using SMART-PLS 4.0. The findings of the route analysis suggest that IL greatly enhances Psy-Cap and AP levels. The research found that PsyCap partially mediates the effects of IL on Adaptive Performance. H4 was therefore supported. The study provides empirical evidence that IL plays a crucial role in building PsyCap and AP in Jordanian universities' context. However, effective implementation of accreditation standards in many universities is a major concern for higher education authorities in Jordan. Therefore, HEC and university leaders should ensure the allocation of the necessary resources for the establishment of QECs; the appointment of qualified and competent QA personnel; and the effective

implementation of the quality standards as proposed by HEC and other relevant accreditation bodies/council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted in public sector universities in Jordan. Therefore, future researchers could carry out a comparative study between universities in Jordan and other countries such as Palestine or Malaysia. This will enable researchers in the future to compare the performance of Jordanian universities in all aspects with universities in other countries that have better reputations, performance, and ranking in world university rankings. This will also provide an opportunity to substantiate study's outcomes on a broader spectrum. Since the sampling unit in this study was faculty members, there is a possibility that faculty members may have overrated their responses. Therefore, future researchers could include other stakeholders, such as administrative managers in their studies to gain a more realistic view of the performance of Jordanian universities.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

One limitation of current study is its reliance on close-ended questions that may have respondents prevented respondents from providing deeper points of view. Future studies could employ open-ended questions to more in-depth qualitative input. Moreover, current study employed cross-sectional methodology in order to collect that only provides a preview of the results and there might be a possibility of the diverse nature of the results if carried out in some other time period. Therefore, future researchers may have the opportunity to collect data by adopting a longitudinal approach, which will give them more comprehensive perspective and a concise description of each variable in the study.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

- **Ethical approval and consent to participate:** This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their inclusion in the study.
- **Availability of data and materials:** All data materials related to this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.
- **Author contribution:** Enas AlZoubi designed the study, collected, and analyzed the data. Dr. Kartinah Ayupp and Dr. Rusli Ahmad supervised the research, contributed to manuscript revisions, and guided the development of the final version. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.
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