

# Fostering Positive Psychological Capital in Educators: Insights from the PsyCap Empowerment Program and Its Implications for Organizational Culture in a Thai Primary School

Received: January 20, 2025

Revised: June 13, 2025

Accepted: June 18, 2025

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## Abstract

The study aimed to explore how the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* contributed to the development of Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap) among teachers at a primary school located in the Southern region of Thailand and to investigate how these experiences shaped the school's organizational culture. The *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* was developed by the researcher and was carried out by three trainers. The program included six sessions, each lasting three hours, for a total 18 hours of training. The participants, comprising 13 teachers from a school selected as the case study site, were required to complete learning logs after each training session. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were held following the completion of the training to explore teachers' experiences and perceptions in depth. The qualitative data collected in learning logs and interviews were analyzed thematically. The study revealed substantial positive growth in the participants' personal and professional development, as well as in the school organizational culture. Personally, the program led to greater self-awareness, better stress management and a mindset shift toward seeing challenges as growth opportunities. Professionally, participants embraced student-centered methods and demonstrated enhanced resilience and reflective practice. Systemically, the program promoted a school-wide culture of mindfulness, empathy, and collective effort. The outcomes also implied that the training program contributed to the broader transformation of the school's organizational culture. However, systemic challenges, such as time constraints in preparing student-centered activities and limited communication between the school and parents regarding the school's transformative direction, were identified.

**Keywords:** Positive psychological capital (PsyCap), Teacher development, Organizational culture

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## การเสริมสร้างทุนทางจิตวิทยาเชิงบวกของครู: ข้อค้นพบจากโปรแกรมการ เสริมสร้างทุนทางจิตวิทยาเชิงบวก และผลกระทบต่อวัฒนธรรมองค์กรในโรงเรียน ประถมศึกษาของประเทศไทย

รับบทความ: 20 มกราคม 2568

แก้ไขบทความเสร็จ: 13 มิถุนายน 2568

ตอบรับบทความ: 18 มิถุนายน 2568

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### บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อสำรวจผลของ ‘โปรแกรมเสริมสร้างทุนทางจิตวิทยาเชิงบวกสำหรับครู’ ที่มีต่อการพัฒนาทุนทางจิตวิทยาเชิงบวก (Positive psychological capital หรือ PsyCap) ของครูในโรงเรียนประถมศึกษาแห่งหนึ่งในภาคใต้ของประเทศไทย และวิเคราะห์ว่าประสบการณ์เหล่านี้ส่งผลต่อวัฒนธรรมองค์กรของโรงเรียนอย่างไร โปรแกรมดังกล่าวได้รับการออกแบบโดยผู้วิจัยและดำเนินการอบรมโดยทีมวิทยากรจำนวน 3 คน ประกอบด้วยกิจกรรมทั้งหมด 6 ครั้ง ครั้งละ 3 ชั่วโมง รวมระยะเวลาทั้งสิ้น 18 ชั่วโมง หลังจากจบแต่ละกิจกรรม ผู้เข้าร่วมการอบรมซึ่งประกอบด้วยครูจำนวน 13 คน จากโรงเรียนที่ถูกคัดเลือกให้เป็นกรณีศึกษาจะสะท้อนความคิดเห็นในแบบบันทึกการเรียนรู้ และภายหลังจบโปรแกรมจะเข้าร่วมการสัมภาษณ์ถึงโครงสร้างเพื่อให้ข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์และมุมมองของตน ข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพทั้งหมดถูกนำมาวิเคราะห์โดยใช้กระบวนการวิเคราะห์แก่นสาร (Thematic analysis) ผลการวิจัยพบว่าผู้เข้าร่วมมีพัฒนาการเชิงบวกทั้งในด้านการพัฒนาตนเองในระดับบุคคลและระดับวิชาชีพ ตลอดจนวัฒนธรรมองค์กรของโรงเรียน ในระดับบุคคล โปรแกรมส่งผลให้เกิดความตระหนักรู้ในตนเองมากขึ้น มีทักษะการจัดการความเครียดที่ดีขึ้น และเกิดการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางความคิดโดยมองความท้าทายเป็นโอกาสในการเติบโต ในระดับวิชาชีพผู้เข้าร่วมได้นำแนวทางการจัดการเรียนรู้ที่เน้นผู้เรียนเป็นสำคัญมาใช้ และแสดงให้เห็นถึงความยืดหยุ่นทางจิตใจในการแก้ปัญหามากขึ้น รวมถึงมีความต้องการในการพัฒนาการสอนอย่างต่อเนื่อง ในระดับระบบ โปรแกรมมีบทบาทในการส่งเสริมวัฒนธรรมของโรงเรียนที่เน้นสติ ความเห็นอกเห็นใจ และการทำงานอย่างมีส่วนร่วมของบุคลากรทั้งองค์กร ผลการศึกษายังบ่งชี้ว่าโปรแกรมการอบรมมีส่วนช่วยในการเปลี่ยนแปลงวัฒนธรรมองค์กรของโรงเรียน อย่างไรก็ตาม งานวิจัยนี้ได้พบประเด็นท้าทายบางประการ เช่น ข้อจำกัดด้านเวลาในการเตรียมกิจกรรมที่เน้นผู้เรียน และการสื่อสารระหว่างโรงเรียนกับผู้ปกครองในเรื่องการปรับเปลี่ยนวิถีของโรงเรียน

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## Introduction

The modern educational system is witnessing significant transformation where the entire focus is to be given on the holistic development of the students. This change is reflected in the introduction of positive education as an approach which values the well-being and strengths of students as foundational to their learning journey (Norris et al., 2013). We all see that schools and universities are often more than simply centers of intellectual growth. They're places where children and young adults can develop socially, engage with the wider community, and learn emotional fortitude. In this atmosphere, teachers are and will continue to be significant in developing supportive situations. Research, such as that by Walsh et al. (2018), has established the relationship between positive emotions and an employee's capacity to create an environment conducive to working well. However, the education sector is still confronted with the challenges such as teacher burnout, job dissatisfaction, and lower level of organizational commitment (Madigan & Kim, 2021) that reduce not only the professional satisfaction of educators, but also dissatisfactory students' learning processes. There is a growing interest in the importance of Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap), which becomes a multilevel construct that is more relevant to improving employee job satisfaction and employee work performance. PsyCap, comprising, hope, self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, besides individual development, is essentially known to contribute to organizational policies. It enhances motivation, cognitive functioning, and performance overall through promoting a positive psychological state (Luthans et al., 2007). Avey et al. (2011) discovered that PsyCap is related positively with desirable employee attitudes and behaviors, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, psychological well-being, and organizational citizenship. Furthermore, PsyCap has been found to have a positive effect on performance outcomes as measured by self, supervisor, and objective ratings. On the other hand, it is negatively associated with undesirable employee attitudes and behaviors, including turnover intentions, stress, anxiety, and deviant work behavior. Such results suggest that PsyCap can be an important resource for HRD programs across organizations. This is further supported by the research of Donaldson et al. (2020) which shows the effectiveness of PsyCap in

multiple cultural settings with the relationship with workplace adaptation, skill, proactivity, and performance irrespective of where they are located around the world.

Although numerous international studies have demonstrated the benefits of PsyCap development interventions such as the Psychological Capital Intervention (PCI) by Luthans and Youssef-Morgan (2017) and the Psychological Capital Development Training Intervention (PCDTI), in enhancing teacher well-being, motivation, and classroom performance (Kalman & Summak, 2017), most of these studies have primarily focused on individual-level outcomes. The interventions have been shown to significantly contribute to both personal and professional development by increasing teacher's self-awareness, confidence, positivity and renewed energy for teaching. Additionally, PsyCap has also been related to lower teacher's stress and better handling of the workload, which results in better students' involvement and teaching (Kalman & Summak, 2017). However, there is a critical gap in the literature in understanding how PsyCap development interventions can influence change at the organizational level, particularly in relation to school culture. Limited attention has been given to an explanation of how changes to teachers' psychological capital are likely to influence beyond the individual level to the collective norms, values, and practices of the school as a professional community. Furthermore, Luthans and Youssef-Morgan (2017) highlight the need to examine PsyCap within cross-cultural contexts, as the term "positivity" may be defined differently across cultures. For example, traits such as confidence or assertiveness, which are considered positive in some cultures, may be perceived as arrogance or a lack of humility in others. This suggests that the contribution of PsyCap interventions may vary across cultural contexts and needs to be examined in specific local settings. Collectively, the current study responds to two main research gaps. First, the lack of empirical studies on the contribution of PsyCap development interventions to organizational culture in the educational setting. Second, the need to explore the cross-cultural applicability of PsyCap interventions within the Thai school context, where cultural values and structural characteristics may influence both the process and outcomes of such interventions.

In this study, the researcher developed the workshop program, *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators*, to gain insights into the development of

teachers' PsyCap and emerging changes in organizational culture. The main purpose is to explore how a Western-based Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap) may interact with or contribute to the substantive norms and practices that exist in the Thai educational setting. The present study aims to examine the possibility for the cultivation of PsyCap of teachers to be used in the building of a positive learning environment within the framework of positive education, and in the longer term, for influencing the positive social change. From its examination of these dynamics, the study acts as a case study to bridge the psychological and sociological understanding of teacher development and present educators on the one hand as carriers of existing cultural norms, while on the other as catalysts of social change.

## Literature Review

### Positive psychological capital (PsyCap)

Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap), a key concept within positive organizational behavior (POB), includes four fundamental positive psychological resources: hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism. These parts have synergy and contribute to the creation of an elevated personal development state of being associated with positive attitude and self-generating intrinsic motivation for development, as explained by Luthans et al. (2007). This process of interaction is an important influence on wellbeing and performance at both the personal and organizational levels. In their work, Luthans and Youssef (2007) provide additional explanation into the breakdown of each element and suggest some practical strategies by which PsyCap can be established as follows:

Hope is a construct of positive motivation that comprises two main components: agency, which is the individual's drive or energy to reach goals; and pathways, which are the means to create and realize plans for reaching those goals. Hope focuses on generating alternatives and contingency plans for problems, and can be built through training interventions such as structured goal-setting, and "stretch-goaling" which increase flexibility and creative planning. Hope can also be generated by creating goals and means of achieving them. Goals that are (1) in line with personal values, (2) moderately difficult to achieve, and (3) have a clear start and stop have been shown to mitigate fatigue and improve a patient's quality of life. These three characteristics motivate

sustained effort. Besides setting goals, planning how to achieve these goals and anticipating obstacles is crucial. Once individuals have set their goals, methods, and anticipated obstacles, they should share and exchange ideas with colleagues to refine their plans into the best possible strategy with the least risk of negative outcomes. (Luthans & Youssef, 2007)

Self-efficacy, as introduced by Bandura, reflects an individual's confidence in their ability to complete tasks and positively affect outcomes (Bandura, 1997). This form of positive psychological capital highlights the influence of past successes, learning from others' experiences and confidence in one's ability in generating enduring perceptions of one's capabilities. People with high self-efficacy set challenging goals, take on challenging tasks and keep going in face of obstacles until they reach their goals. Self-efficacy grows from practicing techniques or methods toward goals over time. This can be achieved by sharing to co-workers about short-term goals and engaging in discussions or idea exchanges on how to accomplish them. Co-operative exchanges deepen understandings about working techniques and the meaning of success. Additionally, the vicarious experience of others who have successfully performed a behavior is important in shaping self-efficacy, as it establishes the positive outcome expectancies to one's personal efforts. Social motivation, generated from reinforcement received from facilitators and peers, also activates self-efficacy. (Luthans & Youssef, 2007)

Resilience has been considered as the ability of an individual to cope with the demands of negative as well as positive challenges and to adjust smoothly and come out more strongly as a result. Strategies that help enhance resilience include asset-focused approaches (building resources), risk-focused approaches (reducing vulnerability factors), and process-focused approaches (developing adaptive mechanisms), all aimed at enabling individuals to cope with and grow from crises. Resilience-building frequently starts with self-awareness, as people recognize their own strengths or resources that may enable them to attain success. Reflecting on these qualities and discussing them with colleagues can stimulate broader application of one's strengths and highlight overlooked capacities. These kinds of interactions also support collaborative anticipation of potential obstacles, including the strategies individuals and teams will have to employ to circumvent them. This preemptive process contrasts with the

development of hope, which centered on overcoming obstacles enabling. By looking at both internal assets and external collaboration, resilience becomes a dynamic, proactive ability that is both important to, and possible in, the complexities of modern organizational life. (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

Optimism, one of the key components of Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap), is characterized by a positive explanatory style. Optimistic people explain their success internally, permanently and pervasively, but their failure externally, temporarily and specifically. Such a perspective supports a beneficial style of emotional regulation and teaches persistence in goal striving. While optimism may have dispositional origins, it is possible for people to cultivate it by developing flexible ways of thinking, or “flexible optimism.” Thereby, people are taught to recognize the ways towards their goals and to expect possible obstacles, therefore, cutting negative thinking and promoting positive expectations of success. Collaborating also can support an optimistic orientation by reinforcing a shared sense of wish fulfillment and a collective understanding of what to do, which in turn can increase confidence about goal attainment (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

In summary, PsyCap is a four-factor psychological construct that includes hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism. Every component serves as a standalone factor that, however, interacts with the other for promoting an individual's positive psychological development. These components combine to help facilitate greater intrinsic motivation, flexibility and goal pursuit. Critically, PsyCap is not just a theoretical construct, but a resource that can be intentionally built, for example via structured interventions focused on goal-setting, modeling, social support, and peer support. These are strategies that allow themselves to generate positive expectations, reinforce adaptive coping skills, and engage in proactive problem-solving. In the current study, the knowledge of PsyCap has been applied to design an intervention called the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators*. The next section will consider PsyCap as a positive modifiable psychological resource that is linked to organizational culture and provides for the emergence of positive educational institutions.

### **PsyCap, organizational culture and the teaching profession**

Organizational culture is a shared meaning system held by the members which distinguishes the organization from other organizations. This shared meaning is made up of values, beliefs, and underlying assumptions that are commonly understood in organizations. The key attributes of organizational culture are mainly the ability to adapt, attention to detail, orientation towards the results or outcomes, orientation towards people, orientation toward collaboration and integrity (Robins & Judge, 2024). Aggarwal (2023) addresses the relationship between organizational culture and positive psychological capital (PsyCap) by conducting a systemic literature review. The study introduces the interrelated role of organizational culture and PsyCap in predicting a range of outcomes such as work happiness, job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, burnout, and innovation. Expanding on the value of PsyCap within organizational settings, its importance in teaching profession is specifically apparent. In education, the association between PsyCap and the affective commitment of teachers is an indication of the basic and very important link between teachers' mental health and the effectiveness of the classroom environment (Clarence & George, 2018). A strong PsyCap can enhance teachers' motivation and instructional efficiency, thereby benefiting students' academic and personal development. This underscores the importance of cultivating a supportive workplace that empowers educators to develop their own psychological resources. The Classroom Positive Affect and Engagement Model (CPAEM) merges positive psychology with educational practices, offering a framework for developing 21st-century skills. By emphasizing the cultivation of PsyCap attributes, it promotes teacher well-being and academic achievement (Chupradit & Chupradit 2022). Particularly in adolescent residential settings, such as secondary-level boarding schools, interventions rooted in positive psychology further reinforce the importance of supportive relationships and environments conducive to youth development and social adjustment (Wassanaw et al., 2019). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism—the four core components of PsyCap—play an essential part in managing stress, preventing burnout, and enhancing the professional effectiveness and well-being of teachers. Therefore, the systematic development of PsyCap emerges as a key strategy for fostering a sustainable educational environment, one that is deeply shaped by a positive and supportive organizational culture.



## Methodology

### Research design

This study employed a qualitative research design using learning logs and semi-structured interviews to capture participants' subjective experiences, perceptions and process of PsyCap development and changes within the school.

### Participants

This study was a case study carried out in one school in the southern region of Thailand and consisted of 13 primary school teachers. The school was chosen as it was a small primary school situated in an economically active area, particularly in marine tourism. Due to school's location, the student population was diverse, including both long term locals and other temporary families. The school also commonly enrolled students who were the children of immigrant laborers. These characteristics placed additional demands on teachers beyond classroom instruction, often leading to increased stress and emotional exhaustion. All of the school's teachers voluntarily participated in this research. Although it was conducted in a single school, participants were diverse with respect to gender (11 female and 2 male), age (3 were less than 30, 6 between 30 and 40, 3 between 41 and 50 and one over 50), teaching experience (from 2 to 25 years), subjects being taught (math, science, Thai language, English language, social studies, art, physical education), and grades (1st grade to 6th grade) contributed to the richness of the study's results. The focus was on how the positive psychological capital (PsyCap) developed among teachers engaged in training activities. To ensure ethical standards and voluntary participation, the recruitment process carefully designed, and each stage was thoughtfully prepared to protect the rights and autonomy participants. This organized preparation contributed to providing the participants with a clear and consistent description of the study, ethical integrity and research goals. This study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Prince of Songkla University (Ref. no. HSc-HREC-63-041-1-1).

### PsyCap Empowerment Program Intervention

Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap) can be developed through training intervention. The study indicates

that the development of PsyCap involves the development of hope and self-efficacy, which requires individuals to establish clear goals and pathways to reach these goals. Moreover, recognizing the experiences of others who have successfully achieved this goal can enhance self-efficacy. With respect to resilience, people need to have a high level of self-awareness of who they are and what their strengths and weaknesses are in order to reflect on what personal qualities are likely to be helpful in terms of achieving goals. In order for optimism, people need to be capable of foreseeing potential obstacles they may encounter in the pursuit of their goal. A key insight from the literature is that the development of PsyCap cannot take place in isolation. It necessitates working with others through contemplation, conversation, and mutual learning. Thus, a key part of the PsyCap interventions is the development of exercise for groups to build and engage in deep or personal sharing and active listening with one another. Based on these synthesized findings, a series of training interventions were developed as described in the following section.

The training workshop, titled the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators*, was designed with clearly defined objectives and incorporated key components and modules aimed at enhancing positive psychological capital (PsyCap). The intervention consisted of six sessions, each lasting three hours. These sessions were organized into three main phases: the Preparation Phase, the PsyCap Development Phase, and the Integration Phase. (1) The Preparation Phase is designed to help participants in setting a psychologically safe learning environment and practice deep listening—both are essential for meaningful sharing and collaboration. (2) The PsyCap Development phase includes four sessions. The first two aimed to promote hope and self-efficacy, by prompting participants to set goals, identify pathways to reach them, and learn from the experiences of others. The last two sessions developed aspects of resilience and optimism, helping participants identify their personal strengths to help them achieve their goals and anticipate challenges. (3) The Integration Phase gave participants the chance to integrate all aspects of PsyCap in reflective individual and group exercises. These exercises were developed to assist participants in linking the PsyCap model to actual classroom and teaching settings. To ensure the quality and relevance of the program, content validity was assessed by three experts specializing in positive

psychological capital, educational psychology, and sociology. The results of the evaluation confirmed that the program had strong validity and high-quality content. After receiving the experts' feedback, the training course format was modified and adapted to adhere more closely to the research aims. The training contents and the corresponding objectives are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1** Sessions and Targets of the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators*

Training session	The main objectives of the session	The targeted PsyCap components			
		Hope	Self-efficacy	Resilience	Optimism
Phase 1: Preparation (3 hours)					
1.Communicate with the mind, Think with the heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To establish a foundation of listening behavior and mutual acceptance, which are basic qualities for building PsyCap</li><li>● To be aware of the diversity of colleagues and students.</li></ul>	-	-	-	-
Phase 2: PsyCap Development (12 hours)					
2. Understanding others, understanding ourselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To know oneself, accept oneself and trust others.</li><li>● To create positive expectations in work and personal life.</li></ul>	✓	✓		
3. Change the mindset, renew the life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To raise awareness about setting goals and the methods to achieve them.</li><li>● To increase awareness of the ability to self-improve.</li></ul>	✓	✓		
4. Adjusting mindsets, expanding hearts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To practice reflecting on one's own attributes.</li><li>● To create self-awareness through learning from others.</li><li>● To train in setting goals and anticipating obstacles and ways to avoid them.</li></ul>			✓	✓

Training session	The main objectives of the session	The targeted PsyCap components			
		Hope	Self-efficacy	Resilience	Optimism
5. Walking together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable teachers to collaboratively plan lessons, listen and reflect to one another</li> </ul>			✓	✓
<b>Phase 3: Integration (3 hours)</b>					
6. Seeing, listening, and growing Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable teachers to observe peer classrooms, actively listen to one another, and engage in reflective dialogue.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Implementation of PsyCap Empowerment Program Intervention

The *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* was implemented by three trainers. The trainers, who were experienced faculty members with expertise in leading positive activities to students (e.g., active listening, growth mindset). Furthermore, one of the trainers was a professional primary school teacher. These three trainers had several in-depth discussions with the researcher to co-construct and develop insights into the training approaches.

### Data collection

Thirteen teachers participating in the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* were requested to write reflections on their learning through learning logs after session 2 to 6. The learning logs provided valuable insights into the initial shifts observed of the training program on participants' positive psychological capital. A total of 64 learning logs were collected from the participants as one participant was absent from session 6. The reflective questions aimed to probe into the participants' experiences, observations, and challenges in the program. For validating the quality of the qualitative data, a reliability and validity control were conducted by three experts. Their comments resulted in revisions that improve alignment with the research objective. The questions included: (1) Knowledge gained from the activity (2) Feeling and thoughts about learning from the activity (3) Self-perception from the activity (4) Question arising after participating in the activity and (5) Obstacles or problems

encountered during learning. Following the reflective writing, semi-structured interviews provided further qualitative insights into how the training activities shaped the teachers' experiences and perspectives. All participants agreed to take part in the semi-structured interview, resulting in a total of 13 interviews. The interviews aimed to capture deeper perceptions of the training activities using five main questions adapted from the research by Kalman and Summak (2017) on revitalizing teachers' HERO attributes through PsyCap development training. To strengthen the validity checking process, the same panel of experts who evaluated the learning log questions also reviewed these interview questions. The duration of each interview ranged from 25 to 35 minutes. The interview questions were as follows: (1) Benefits derived from the program and how they were achieved. (2) Observed personal changes after participating in the program and how they manifested. (3) Suggestions for improving the program. (4) Perceived influence of the program on the school and teaching methods, including specific examples and (5) Overall thoughts and conclusions on the program. The interviews were recorded using audio recorders after obtaining participants' consent and transcribed verbatim.

### **Data analysis**

The data obtained from learning logs and semi-structured interviews was thoroughly analyze using thematic analysis. Transcripts were reviewed to identify patterns and themes that recurred in responses. The qualitative data were coded and interpreted thematically, enabling key findings on the influence of the training on the teachers' PsyCap to be identified. The thematic analysis was based on finding units with meaning, then coded and organized into higher orders of meaning. These categories were further synthesized into main themes, which reflected the core issues emerging from the data. This analysis process aimed at uncovering meaning and deepening understanding of how the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* was experienced by teachers, and how it was perceived to influence their positive psychological capital and school environment.

## Findings

### Key Insights from Teachers' Reflections: PsyCap Development Through the Empowerment Program

After the completion of each training session, participants were instructed to reflect upon such thoughts and to record their reflections in learning logs. The table below illustrates the major outcome themes derived from this process and how teachers' PsyCap was influenced by the training. Extracts from the data are referenced as learning log entries (for example L12) to assist with interpretation and to provide context to the results.

**Table 2** Key Themes identified across PsyCap components in the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators*

PsyCap components	Theme identified	Themes description	Example of Quotes from learning logs
Hope	Deepened understanding of hope	Participants gained a clearer understanding of hope as a motivational state, emphasizing pathways and agency to overcome challenges.	<p>"The idea of that the future is a pathways and agency feel so true to me. I've begun the process of mapping out specific routes to achieve my classroom goals and I am feeling optimistic about how we will navigate the obstacles." (L5)</p> <p>"As teachers, we must be patient and not reject students with poor behavior, otherwise their bad impact on society will only get worse." (L7)</p>
	Strategies to implement hope	Participants reported creating an environment of hope in their classroom, as they developed inclusivity, adaptive, and growth-mindset practices.	<p>"In the training I learned about hope and it led me to recognize how important it is to foster a positive image of the future for myself and for my students." (L8)</p> <p>"I learned to know and give opportunities and stop criticizing</p>

PsyCap components	Theme identified	Themes description	Example of Quotes from learning logs
Self-efficacy			those who made mistakes in students.” (L9)
			“Teachers must avoid comparing students; it brings down the confidence.” (L12)
	Boost in confidence to manage classroom challenges	Participants reported increased confidence in managing classroom disruptions and creating an optimal learning experience.	“I’m more comfortable with how to respond to classroom disruptions following the workshop.” (L7) “I feel like I can do things and be successful.” (L4)
	Empowerment to experiment with innovative teaching techniques	Participants felt inspired to explore creative teaching methods, stepping outside their comfort zones.	“I was very afraid to try methods that were outside to my comfort zone before the training. Now, I’m inspired to experiment with creative teaching techniques, confident in my ability to make a positive impact on my students’ learning.” (L4) “I thought about what I can’t do and realize that it was my own mindset holding me back.” (L5)
	Reinforcement of potential to influence change	Participants recognized their capacity to lead and inspire positive change in their classrooms and beyond.	“The training was a reminder of how much I can make change within my classroom and outside of it.” (L2) “I see myself in the future as a better version of myself.” (L9)
	Adoption of positive	Participants adopted positive approaches to managing student	“In managing students, we must focus on the positive to influence behavior.” (L10)

PsyCap components	Theme identified	Themes description	Example of Quotes from learning logs
	behavioral strategies	behavior, focusing on root causes and rewarding positive behaviors.	“In guiding students, we must identify their strengths to adjust behavior. There’s so much potential if we change our mindset and our language.” (L6)
	Development of analytical and positive thinking	Participants enhanced their ability to think critically, solve problems analytically, and maintain a positive mindset.	“It trained me in thinking, analytical thinking, out-of-the-box thinking, and positive thinking.” (L9) “I can still improve a lot by simply changing my mindset.” (L3)
Resilience	Increased patience and understanding	Participants reported enhanced patience and empathy, enabling them to approach challenges with calmness and understanding.	“I’ve become more patient because I see and understand myself and others better.” (L11) “Seeing perspectives of misbehaving students helps me understand their emotions better.” (L6)
	Perseverance in overcoming obstacle	Participants emphasized the importance of persistence, particularly in guiding students with challenging behaviors.	“As teachers, we must be patient and not push away students with bad behavior.” (L3) “As teachers, we must focus on developing both the strengths and the areas where students need encouragement.” (L7)
	Reflective practice and problem-solving	Participants recognized reflective thinking as a key tool in identifying development areas and solving problems effectively.	“The practice of reflective thinking in each activity has helped me identify areas for my own development and enhance my problem-solving skills.” (L8) “Reflective thinking helps to solve problems from their root causes.” (L9)



PsyCap components	Theme identified	Themes description	Example of Quotes from learning logs
	Positive mindset shift	Participants adopted a positive attitude, essential for maintaining resilience and overcoming challenges.	<p>“If we don’t change our mindset to be positive, we will lack effort and intention to do.” (L7)</p> <p>“I can still improve a lot by simply changing my mindset.” (L5)</p>
	Viewing challenges as opportunities	Participants described how the program made them switch from viewing challenges as obstacles to seeing them as opportunities to learn.	<p>“I was able to stay stronger when there would be interruptions in the classroom after the training. Instead of getting discouraged, I now look at them as opportunities to adjust and learn.” (L2)</p> <p>“I see myself changing to new, diverse perspectives.” (L10)</p>
Optimism	Embracing positive attitudes	Participants shared how the training encouraged a focus on the positives and an expectation that good things will happen.	“The training taught me to focus on the positives and to expect good things to happen. This attitude has changed my approach to teaching and interacting with my students.” (L4)
	Openness to feedback and change	The cultivation of an optimistic perspective was seen to enable participants to accept feedback and be open to change.	“Adopting an optimistic perspective has made me more open to feedback and willing to embrace change, trusting that these steps lead to better outcomes for myself and my students.” (L6)
	Positive Thinking in Self and Student Development	Participants emphasized the role of positive thinking in personal and student development, fostering educational growth and student empowerment.	“Using positive thinking in developing ourselves and our students.” (L12)

PsyCap components	Theme identified	Themes description	Example of Quotes from learning logs
	Belief in Behavioral Change	The program reinforced the belief that positive behavioral changes are possible with effort and the right mindset.	“Believe that everyone can change if given the opportunity and understanding.” (L9)

As presented in the table, the program made a positive contrition to the development of teachers’ PsyCap. The promotion of inclusivity and respect for student diversity was a pathway through which hope was reflected in classroom practices. Teachers also increased in Self-efficacy (confidence to manage the classroom and to try new methods). Resilience was enhanced by patience and reflective problem solving, and Optimism was promoted by a positive mindset and openness to feedback. A significant pattern emerged from the overall reflections in the learning logs. At the outset of the training, the most discussed reflections related to what the teachers observed in the students, awareness of student diversity, and plans to use what they learned when they returned to the classroom. As the program evolved, participants started to focus on their beliefs and changes in thinking. They also began to see the importance of reflective activities as part of the change process. This development indicates a deeper level of thought, a movement from superficial application to internalized values that facilitate personal change and societal change more broadly. These reflections indicate a movement towards sustainable change arising from underlying values.

### **Reflections on questions and challenges during the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators***

The reflective learning logs provided as well several questions and barriers participants came across during their participation to the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators*. In relation to questions that emerged post participation in activities teacher’s felt interested in real-world applications of PsyCap. For example, one participant wrote, “How can I transform my thoughts and communication to be more positive?” (L4) and another requested input regarding how to develop attentive listening skills, “I want to get some details about how to increase my listening skills.” (L6).

Moreover, participants considered the society and behavior psychology issue of “Should we give those who do mistakes repeatedly another chance?” (L9), highlighting the challenges of balancing empathy and accountability within educational and societal structures.

In terms of obstacles faced during learning, teachers raised time constraints, including not enough time for discussion: “Sometimes there is not enough time to share my thoughts in detail in doing activities.” (L3). A lack of confidence also emerged as a challenge, one teacher stating, “I’m often slow in my decisions and don’t feel very confident.” (L7). There were other interpersonal related barriers, such as a participant’s remark, “Some of my colleagues are not willing to share their opinion, and it is difficult to understand various point of views.” (L10). Furthermore, some teachers had difficulties in transforming from their fixed mindsets, for example, “It’s difficult for me to let go of old ways of thinking, I still maintain a fixed mindset.” (L5). This analysis emphasizes the need to consider individual and structural barriers to learning, and offers further guidance to facilitate the practical application of psychological and educational concepts.

### **Insights from Semi-structured Interviews on the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators***

Following the insightful reflections provided in the learning logs, this section explored the findings of semi-structured post training interviews. These interviews imparted a richer, more detailed understanding of the ways in which teachers benefited from their participation in the program. In addition to the personal growth and development of PsyCap characteristics, conversations also revealed the influence of the training on the school environment and implications for the future of education. Furthermore, the interviews offered an opportunity for participants to provide suggestions about the program and to report difficulties in the implementation of the acquired knowledge in the classroom. Excerpts from the data collected after participating in the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* were identified as “interview” (I) followed by the participant’s number, e.g., I12.

**Table 3** Insights from teacher interviews on the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators*

Theme identified	Themes description	Example of Quotes from semi-structured interview
Mindfulness and positive communication	Participants developed innovative ways to creatively and mindfully address the classroom problem space, altering their approaches to problem-solving and interactions with the classroom environment.	<p>“The teacher’s task shifted from giving the answer to asking students to think on their own based on guiding questions.” (I1)</p> <p>“In fact, I had studied positive psychology when I was at university but when I started teaching, I had completely forgotten everything! The training taught me to go from quick scolding to finding mutual understanding.” (I5)</p>
Adoption of active learning	Participants implemented active learning strategies in their classes, which promoted student engagement, questioning, and involvement, in the shift away from lecture-based teaching.	<p>“This training had me thinking about things that I can do to have students want to learn mathematics more through active learning.” (I10)</p> <p>“Before the training, we used to impart knowledge through lectures fearing that we would be unable to finish the syllabus. We now concentrate on the learner and make the content interactive.” (I2)</p>
Active participation and reflective thinking	Participants learned to listen to and to involve students more, creating a mutual understanding and a higher level of engagement.	<p>“I try to listen to students in the beginning of the lesson first and see what they may already know of the vocab, encouraging their involvement in learning.” (I4)</p> <p>“This approach makes students feel more involved and reflects on their own growth, which encourages me to give my best as a teacher.” (I3)</p>
Resourceful teaching materials	Participants learned to develop effective teaching materials without significant	<p>“Teaching materials do not have to be costly. It is the mindset, the thought process and the method of the teacher.” (I13)</p>

Theme identified	Themes description	Example of Quotes from semi-structured interview
	financial investment, prioritizing creativity and instructional strategies over budget constraints.	“Simply having paper can be enough, like making charts with students to visually learn fractions.” (I9)
Collaborative learning	Participants observed and adopted a variety of teaching methods during demonstrations of their peers, and implemented innovative approaches in teaching.	<p>“On the third day of training, we learned from peers how they taught and applied the teaching techniques.” (I10)</p> <p>“The training demonstrations gave us an idea how others are teaching and select what fits us.” (I1)</p>
Empowering teachers and students	Participants incorporated growth mindset principles into their teaching as well as to encourage more student expression of opinion and participation.	<p>“When we see our students improved, it makes us think about where we stand as teachers, if we really have given more than 100 percent.” (I3)</p> <p>“I allowed students to decide what topics they would rather learn in advance before I taught, shifting from teaching immediately to listening to them.” (I4)</p>
Empathy and understanding	Participants took on a more empathetic and compassionate attitude, diminishing their initial judgements and making the classroom a safer, more inclusive classroom environment.	<p>“Instead of scolding immediately, I will now ask, ‘Why do you need to do that?’ (I6)</p> <p>“The training made me more comfortable speaking in front of people, and it made students feel safe to share their thoughts without being judged.” (I7)</p>
Positive school cultures	Adoption of active learning strategies resulted in more engaging and joyful learning environments,	<p>“Even in classrooms where teachers prefer passive reaction, we’ve found the atmosphere changing.” (I1)</p> <p>“As every teacher changes and develops, it impacts the overall image of the school. The</p>

Theme identified	Themes description	Example of Quotes from semi-structured interview
	positively transforming the school atmosphere.	school will improve, and parents and the community will see the results and feel more confident in the school's potential." (I4)
Parent-school communication gap	A gap in understanding new teaching methodologies, such as active learning, between parents and the school was identified as a challenge	<p>"Some parents may not understand the new ways of teaching, and they ask why we're not making students memorize as we did or why we do these activities or play in the classroom," he added. (I3)</p> <p>"Organizing expert-parent meetings may bridge this gap." (I13)</p>
Time constraints	Teachers experienced challenges in balancing teaching and non-teaching duties, which affected preparation for active learning activities.	<p>"Active learning is much time-demanding. Maybe we can handle it, but we can't actually handle it because we are so busy doing a lot of other tasks." (I13)</p> <p>"We worry that if we don't cover the curriculum adequately, students are going to struggle in the next grade with another teacher." (I5)</p>

The perspectives shared during the semi-structured interviews offered insights to the influence of the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* on teachers' professional development and the overall school context. Participants reported that the intervention changed how they managed their classrooms with an increased attention to mindfulness, positive communication, and active learning. The combination of these approaches enabled richer, inclusive, and student-centered classrooms. Furthermore, the intervention also promoted teachers' creative activities of creating low-cost teaching materials, and peer demonstration and reflective practices contributed to create a collaborative learning culture. A significant result was the growth in participants' mindset as they embraced empathy, reduced judgment and encouraged active student participation. Although these advantages were considerable, challenges were also identified, including the need for improved communication between parents

and school to counterbalance the expectations regarding new teaching pedagogies, and the additional time required for active learning preparation. Despite these limitations, the program contributed to a positive change in the school culture.

## Discussion and Recommendations

The results of the study demonstrate the extent to which the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* has built positive psychological capital of participants. This intervention, which targeted hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism, contributed to observable changes among individual participants and their school environment. The qualitative findings, drawn from learning logs and semi-structured interviews, reveal the multiple ways in which this training enhanced personal, professional and systemic change in the educational context. Based on these results, the discussion subsequently advances several practical implications for teachers, school principals, policymakers to consider in supporting and adapting the PsyCap approach in different educational contexts.

### Personal and professional transformations

Personally, the program enhanced participants' self-awareness and understanding of PsyCap components, including, hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism. Participants also described increased stress management skills and a more positive perspective, better equipped to deal with challenges. In their reflections, they expressed more self-assurance in maintaining classroom management, trying new approaches and working outside of their comfort zones. Importantly, participants describe a mindset change from perceiving challenges as issues to recognizing them as areas for growth. They also reported a greater sense of confidence in their ability to lead positive changes. These results are consistent with Luthans et al. (2007), who claimed that PsyCap is positively related in turn to the individual's psychological state which supports performance, motivation and self-development.

Professionally, the program contributed to significant changes in teaching strategies and attitudes towards students. Teachers adopted active learning techniques and a more student-centered approach, reflecting a shift from traditional lecture-based methods. This change not only enriched classroom dynamics but also supported the

development of an inclusive and empathetic teaching environment. Importantly, resilience was strengthened, enabling teachers to persist when confronted with difficulties and adopt reflective practices for problem-solving. These changes in professional practice align with the literature on PsyCap's role in promoting adaptive and effective educational practices (Kalman & Summak, 2017).

### **Systemic and organizational shifts**

Collectively, these new practices and shared beliefs among participants indicate a culture change in the school after the training. Features such as mindfulness, listening and empathic communication, and a collaborative atmosphere among teachers and between teachers and students were consistently highlighted throughout reflections. These common practices represent more than a shift in individual behavior; they represent a collective commitment to a more compassionate, and student-centered learning space. Importantly, since all teachers in the school voluntarily participated in the program, it can be inferred that the changes observed reflected not only individual change but also a broader transformation of organization culture change. Therefore, it can be concluded that the program succeeded in creating a positive education culture, forming a new sense of organizational culture at the school that served as the case study site.

### **Sustained development**

Building upon this foundation, the results indicate that the school has started to establish a culture of positivity where teachers are more open to sharing and listening to each other's experiences. In this context there is also a growing application of compassionate communication within the school, which aligns well with Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), collaborative groups of educators who meet regularly to share expertise and work collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students (DuFour et al., 2006). It is possible that the school could capitalize on this momentum by standardizing and integrating this culture into school practices e.g., conscientiously integrating PLC practices into teacher work. For example, the school may consider piloting PLC sessions in which teachers can openly discuss their challenges and co-construct solutions, such as time management in preparing active learning lessons. Moreover, by embedding this cultural change among students in learning environments



that encourage logical thinking and open dialogue through approach such as contemplative education and problem-based learning (PBL) may further reinforce these values. Another critical issue identified was the knowledge gap between schools and parents. Improved school–parent communication could lead to dramatic improvements in the effectiveness of innovative approaches to teaching. This could involve implementing time-dedicated for PsyCap related-activities or setting up workshops to engage parents in understanding and supporting these initiatives. In addition, ongoing follow-up support and professional development could be a means by which longer-term benefits of the program are maintained. Continual professional development can help to ensure that the positive changes established by the program are maintained and become embedded into everyday teaching and school culture.

### Limitation and Recommendation for Future Research

Although this study contributed some valuable insights regarding the development of positive psychological capital (PsyCap) among teachers, several limitations need to be acknowledged. First, this is a single-case study within a small primary school, generalization of the findings is limited to other educational settings, for example, bigger schools, secondary schools, vocational education schools, universities. Therefore, if such PsyCap Empowerment Program expansion to more teachers and different school settings is piloted, it may be useful for advancing scalable models regarding the influence on which the intervention has and be focused on support for systemic change in education. To support this effort, the incorporation of quantitative measurements to complement qualitative findings would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how PsyCap may contribute to teacher performance, student outcomes, and educational reform. Second, while a positive school culture seems to be developing, it is nascent and not yet fully embedded. The success of this approach in the long run may depend on ongoing professional support and follow-up, which could be challenging in resource-constrained setting. Such cultural changes could be further examined in future studies in order to find ways to maintain and institutionalize them, such as with the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and school-based action research projects, which aligns with Luthans and Youssef-Morgan's (2017) conclusion

that sustaining PsyCap development requires post-training follow-up to ensure long-term impact. This fact is especially applicable to the findings of the current study that indicated that the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* encouraged the development of a school culture grounded in mindfulness, empathy and collaboration. These elements, which were not directly highlighted in the conventional Western understanding of PsyCap, might be considered as culturally relevant elaborations of the construct within the Thai educational context. Third, although the teacher collaboration and communication were strengthened, the actual impact on students was not measured and this issue needs to be addressed for future research. Finally, several practical challenges in implementing PsyCap-based interventions. Teachers often reported a lack of time, particularly for active learning preparation. There is also a potential disconnect between school and parents and limited dissemination of the program in the larger community which could limit the wider acceptance and support of the innovative teaching strategies being implemented. Subsequent studies may explore interventions to overcome these practical obstacles, for example, time-saving planning models or school-parent communication approaches that support the implementation of PsyCap-related innovations.

In summary, the *PsyCap Empowerment Program for Educators* indicated potential as a technique for personal and professional development, as well as a mechanism for changing organizational culture in small school environment. The implications of these results highlight the need for educational policies and practices to integrate the positive psychological capital for effectiveness of teaching in dynamic educational contexts. The program should be adapted and implemented among different educational levels and larger school settings to evaluate the scalability and feasibility of the intervention. Moreover, longitudinal studies are needed to assess the long-term impact of PsyCap development on both teacher practices and student outcomes. Developments could also focus on successful strategies, including development of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), time-efficient planning tools, and school-parent engagement techniques—to face practical issues associated with an implementation in the real world.

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