Introduction: Innovation has become a critical capability of all healthcare organizations, which continuously renew their services, processes and organizational structures. Personal Initiative (PI), which is related directly to innovativeness, is defined as a work behavior characterized by its self-starting nature, by its proactive approach, and by being persistent in overcoming challenges in goal achievement. PI is positively associated with innovative organizational climate and professional performance. Despite extensive discussion in the literature, we did not find any empirical studies about mental health nurses' PI on national as well international levels. **Purpose:** The aim of the present study was to identify the degree of PI among hospital-based mental health nurses and to examine the influence of personal and organizational characteristics on their PI. **Methods:** Ninety-seven nurses working in a large mental health hospital in central Israel participated in this cross-sectional study. Data were collected by a structured self-administered questionnaire comprising the measurement of: (a) personal initiative, (b) work climate promoting initiatives, (c) actual initiative at work, (d) self-efficacy towards initiatives and innovations, (e) nursing work environment, and (f) respondent's demographic data. **Results:** The comparative analysis of data revealed significant differences in actual initiative at work according to the level of nurses' education. Significant negative association between personal initiative (PI) variable and participants' age ($r=-.24$, $p<.05$) was found. Multiple regression analysis demonstrated that self-efficacy, work climate and age explained 30% of actual initiative behavior at work. Moreover, self-efficacy towards initiative and innovations and work climate variables contributed significantly and explained 56% of nurses' personal initiative. **Conclusions:** The results of the current study provide empirical evidence for the relation of age and education level and nurses' PI, emphasizing the importance of these two variables in the development of PI and their effect on actual performance of initiatives at work. Self-efficacy towards performing initiatives and work climate that promotes initiatives played a significant role in prediction of actual innovative behavior at work. Investing in young nurses, fostering and supporting higher education, and creating work environment that promotes motivation, commitment and involvement can help in conversion of innovative vision and creative ideas into actual initiatives and better organizational outcomes.

**Title:**
To Be Initiative or Not To Be! Predictors of Initiative Behavior Among Psychiatric Nurses

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**References:**

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