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Psychological Well-being at Work and Professional Motivation of High School Teachers in Douala

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Abstract:

This study begins with the observation that primary and secondary school teachers have expressed discontent due to delayed payment of bonuses, lack of financial support even after several years of work, non-recognition of their seniority, and failure to implement promised career advancements. They have reached agreements with their administration to resolve this professional crisis, and some resolutions have begun to be implemented. This should ideally lead to a change in their attitudes in the classroom. However, it is noted that some of them continue to arrive late, fail to grade assignments, and are generally lax in the classroom. This raises the question: what are the reasons for this professional demotivation? The objective of this study is to verify if there is a link between psychological well-being at work and professional motivation of teachers. Dagenais-Desmarais's (2010) theory of psychological well-being at work enabled the operationalization of the general hypothesis into five alternative hypotheses. A quantitative design was employed, and data was collected through a questionnaire administered to 150 secondary school teachers in Douala. Data analysis was conducted using Spearman correlation, yielding the following results: for HR1: $Rho = -0.308$; HR2: $Rho = -0.351$; HR3: $Rho = -0.134$; HR4: $Rho = -0.230$; HR5: $Rho = -0.324$. The results confirm all our research hypotheses. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a significant link between psychological well-being at work and professional motivation of teachers.

Keywords:

Psychological well-being, professional motivation, teachers.



Introduction

The school institution is where learners come to acquire knowledge. Consequently, there are continuous interactions among students, teachers, and administration. The teacher constitutes a central piece of the school's functioning, constantly in direct and constant contact with students, administration, and parents. To carry out their work effectively, a set of conditions has been established. Non-compliance with these conditions poses a hindrance to their work. In addition to non-respect for teachers' rights, they also face disrespectful behaviors, verbal or even physical aggression, and acts of vandalism from students, administration, and sometimes even parents. All of these constitute significant sources of professional demotivation for teachers. The objective of this study is to verify if psychological well-being at work influences the professional motivation of high school teachers in Douala. Dagenais-Desmarais's (2010) theory of professional well-being was employed in this study, allowing the operationalization of our general hypothesis into five secondary research hypotheses. We will begin by presenting the problem, followed by a literature review and theoretical framework. In the methodology section, we will present the research hypotheses, data collection, and analysis instruments. This will be followed by the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the results. Finally, we will present suggestions.

Problem Formulation

The role of the teacher is paramount in the teaching/learning process, being one of the essential links in this process. Like any other profession, the teaching profession is governed by a regulatory framework that defines its functioning. Teachers are entitled to a number of benefits related to the exercise of their profession. Compliance with all texts and laws governing the teaching profession should provide the best working conditions for teachers. However, this is not always the case. This is why teachers have expressed their dissatisfaction through the social defense movement. As a result of this demand, some measures have been taken into account: the construction of offices, toilets, and cafeterias for teachers, payment of some salary allowances, consideration of their advancement, etc. Efforts have been made by education authorities to create favorable working conditions. A change in classroom behavior should ideally be observed. However, we observe that many teachers remain demotivated. This leads us to question why teachers develop this lack of interest in their profession.

Literature Review

Workplace well-being

Thévenet (2017) states that workplace well-being is a collective phenomenon as it concerns all institutions. The notion of workplace well-being varies according to individuals, their status, age, gender, and employment. It is possible to identify a number of variables or key factors that are determinants for quality of life at work. The promotion of well-being is therefore a global desire reflecting collective commitment, involving employees, business leaders, and social partners. The emergence of a common vision of happiness within a company can be considered as the result of personal visions based on individual experiences that add up and interact with each other (Hassani, 2017).

- Quality interpersonal relationships

Well-being is intimately linked to overall performance in a company. It is very difficult to link these two notions because well-being has a subjective dimension while performance is objective in nature (Bachelard, 2017). Any improvement in mental health or psychological well-being leads to more presence and engagement in the company, and this state is given both by the sense of work (content) and the meaning at work (context) (Morin, 2010). Healthy interpersonal relationships reassure the

individual about their own value by confirming their importance to others (increased self-esteem) and developing new contacts.

- Professional fulfillment

Organizations and employees are responsible for creating a healthy work environment so that they can increase productivity and prevent the best talents from leaving the organization. This could allow us to understand that the happiest organizations are those with stronger values. Trying to create strong bonds between workers will also help make everyone happier. The happier employees are, the greater the likelihood of staying in the company (Choo and Bowley, 2007). It is important for employees not to focus solely on salary, as there are many other factors that affect happiness. Moreover, those who only think about the weakness of their salary will focus only on negative feelings instead of focusing on all the positive aspects of their work. This means that it is better to think about the positive effects of an employee's work, such as the usefulness of this work or the number of people it helps (Seligman, 2003).

- The feeling of competence and work motivation

The sense of competence contributes to motivation in several ways: it determines the goals people set for themselves, their perseverance in the face of difficulties, and their assimilation of failures. It has also been demonstrated that the motivational effects of the sense of competence transfer to other tasks within the same context (Zimmerman, 1995). Beliefs about one's own abilities thus influence how people think, feel, motivate themselves, and act. Causality research demonstrates that these beliefs significantly contribute to human motivation and achievements (Bandura, 1991).

- Perception of being recognized at work

According to Bourcier and Palobard (1997, P. 67), "recognition is the constructive and personalized reaction by an individual following an action or attitude, particular or global, which constitutes an effort worthy of note in their eyes." The field of recognition at work refers to the sources, bearers of recognition, and the dynamics between people. Like all human relationships, the act of recognizing constitutes an interaction between two or more people that can be manifested on both sides. However, whether mutual, one-way, or absent in the relationship, it nonetheless represents a form of message that each of the two parties sends to the other. Rooted in work relationships, recognition can be expressed through different levels of interactions. Elsewhere, formal recognition programs are advocated, while others affirm that authenticity, spontaneity, and the quality of human relationships are paramount (Hivon, 1999). Despite the variety of approaches, a synthesis of the main works distinguishes four major forms of recognition.

- Willingness to engage

Internal factors favorable to professional engagement are linked to personal aspects such as self-construction, dedication to others, the desire to give meaning to one's life, social contribution, love for the profession, job satisfaction, and task identification (Bobineau, 2010; Duchesne, 2004). Bobineau (2010) notes that engagement can be motivated by the desire to be useful to others. This goes hand in hand with the need to want to "repair" others. In fact, the person who engages wants to use their skills, resources, and knowledge to help others in need. This is the case, for example, with teachers, healthcare professionals, or social workers.

- Professional motivation

Motivation can be seen as a "set of forces that drive an individual to act" (Legendre, 2005, p.915). Motivational forces come from two sources: an internal source and an external source. Sources internal to the individual are impulses or inner forces that drive them to action. This latter consists of the personal desire to go as far as possible and always succeed better in activities undertaken in order to satisfy oneself (Lafortune, 2008). As for external motivational forces, they come from the environment, whether positive incentives or negative incentives such as sanctions surrounding the individual in order to elicit their action (Duchesne, Savoie-Zajc, & StGermain, 2005).

Explanatory Theory of the Research

The theoretical model adopted in this research is Dagenais-Desmarais's (2010) model of psychological well-being at work. This author explains psychological well-being at work by focusing on two axes. The first axis refers to the "reference sphere." The second axis refers to "directionality." In the first axis, which is the "reference sphere," reference is made to the positive experience lived by the individual at work. It consists of three spheres, namely:

- The individual sphere, representing the positive state of an employee relative to themselves,
- The relational sphere, reflecting the positive state of an employee regarding the social interaction they experience at work,
- The organizational sphere, referring to the interaction between the employee and their organization.

In the second axis, which is "directionality," reference is made to the mechanisms by which the employee elaborates their positive experience, which is realized in two opposing ways, namely:

- Projective work describes the construction of the employee's positive experience by externalizing it towards a given object,
- Introjective work describes it by internalizing the object. Dagenais-Desmarais (2010) transposed eudemonic well-being to the sphere of work. She defines it in five dimensions, namely:
 - Quality interpersonal relationships, consisting of experiencing positive relationships with the people with whom one interacts in the course of their work,
 - fulfillment, which is the perception one has when they have accomplished meaningful and stimulating work that allows them to fulfill themselves as individuals,
 - The feeling of competence, which is the feeling of possessing the required skills to perform one's work effectively and mastering the tasks to be accomplished,
 - The perception of being recognized at work, which is the feeling of being appreciated in the organization for one's work and one's person,
 - The willingness to engage in one's organization. For the author, this involves actively engaging in the organization and contributing to its proper functioning and success.

Methodology of the study

This study was conducted in the city of Douala (Cameroon), specifically in the high schools of the city. Our population consists of secondary school teachers in Douala. The questionnaire was used to

collect our data. It is composed as follows: for sociodemographic characteristics, 8 items were developed. To collect data related to well-being, we used the Positive Work Well-being Index developed by Dagenais-Desmarais, which includes 25 items. For the last part concerning teacher motivation, 11 items were formulated. We will use Spearman's correlation to analyze our collected data.

Hypotheses of our study

We will present for this study the general hypothesis and the research hypotheses that we have formulated.

The main hypothesis

The main hypothesis of this research is: Psychological well-being at work influences the professional motivation of secondary school teachers in Douala. This hypothesis was operationalized into five research hypotheses based on Dagenais-Desmarais's theory (2010).

Specific research hypotheses

To carry out this study, we have the following specific hypotheses:

- HR1: Interpersonal adequacy determines the professional motivation of teachers in Douala high schools.
- HR2: Fulfillment at work determines the professional motivation of teachers in Douala high schools.
- HR3: The feeling of competence at work determines the professional motivation of teachers in Douala high schools.
- HR4: Recognition at work determines the professional motivation of teachers in Douala high schools.
- HR5: The willingness to engage at work determines the professional motivation of teachers in Douala high schools.

Analysis of data and interpretation of results

We will analyze the data we have collected using Spearman's correlation. At the end of each analysis, the interpretation of the results will follow. But before that, it is important to measure the reliability and validity of our data collection instrument.

Justification of reliability and validity through Cronbach's alpha index and the KMO - reliability index.

Cronbach's alpha index will allow us to verify the reliability of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Index

global du test Statistique de fiabilité		
Alpha de Cronbach	Alpha de Cronbach est base sur des items Standardisés	Pas d'items
,798	,706	45

Referring to the data in the table, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient yields a value of 0.798, indicating strong reliability of the data collection tool.

- Validity Measurement

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test is used to measure the validity of the measurement scale.

Table 2: KMO Index and Bartlett's Test

Indice de Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin pour la mesure de la qualité d'échantillonnage.		,532
Test de spécificité de Bartlett	khi-deux approx.	5132,658
	Ddl	990
	Signification	,000

Reading the KMO table, we obtain a value of 0.532, indicating a strong KMO. Therefore, the measurement scale is valid.

Analysis of Research Hypothesis 1

HR1 To determine the correlation between the different variables of this first research hypothesis, we will cross-reference our items using principal component analysis.

Table 3: Principal Component Analysis

		Feel motivated by your superior			TOTAL
		yes	unsure	no	
Have a feel of recognition at work	strongly disagree	6	5	7	18
	Some what disagree	6	11	9	26
	Some what disagree	0	11	4	15
	disagree	8	6	12	26
	agree	12	13	0	25
	strongly agree	21	15	4	40
Total		53	61	36	150

Regarding the feeling of recognition for their work, 18 strongly disagree, 26 disagree, 15 somewhat disagree, 26 somewhat agree, 25 agree, and finally, 40 strongly agree. From the observation of our 150 participants regarding the question of feeling sufficiently motivated by their work, we have 53 who answer yes, that they are sufficiently motivated by their supervisor, 61 who are unsure if they are motivated or not, and finally, 36 who affirm not being motivated by their supervisor.

Table 4: Correlational Analysis of HR1

	Value	Asymptomatic standard Erreur ^a	Approximate T ^b	Signification Approx
Ordinal par Corrélation Ordinal Spearman N valide d'observation valide	-,308 150	,077	-3,937	,000 ^c
a. the null hypothes is not being considered.				
b. the use of the a symptomatic standard error when considering the null hypothesis				
c. based on noumal approximation				

An analysis of the correlation table using symmetric measures reveals that the Spearman correlation test is -0.308, indicating the existence of a link between interpersonal adequacy and professional motivation with a significance level of 0.00. An inverse correlation is observed, indicating that interpersonal adequacy and professional motivation influence each other. Therefore, HR1 is confirmed.

INTERPRETATION: The results obtained confirm research hypothesis HR1 with a rho value of -0.308. This shows the existence of a negatively significant link between interpersonal adequacy and professional motivation. Interpersonal adequacy helps stimulate personal motivation and level of commitment to the organization, generate a sense of having better control over one's work, evoke a higher level of trust, collaboration, and generosity among individuals.

Analysis of research hypothesis HR2

To determine the correlation between the different variables of this second research hypothesis, we will cross our items using principal component analysis.

Table 5: Correlational Analysis HR2 symmetric measures

	Value	Asymptomatic standard Erreur ^a	Approximate T ^b	Signification Approx
Ordinal par Corrélation Ordinal Spearman N valide d'observation valide	-,351 150	,073	-4,555	,000 ^c
a. the null hypothesis not being considered.				
b. the use of the asymptomatic standard error when considering the null hypothesis				
c. based on noumal approximation				

The analysis of the correlation for HR2 shows that Rho = -0.351 with a significance level of 0.000, confirming the existence of an inverse correlation between the two variables. In other words, there is a significant link between work fulfillment and professional motivation.

INTERPRETATION: Consistent with our second hypothesis, work fulfillment is linked to the professional motivation of the teacher with a rho of -0.351, indicating a significantly negative correlation. This means that when the total score of work fulfillment decreases, so does professional motivation. When a teacher experiences happiness in their professional environment, they are motivated to perform all tasks related to their work. According to Spencer (1991:236-237), motivations "are hypothetical states within the organism that activate behavior and drive the organism toward a goal."

Analysis of research hypothesis HR3

To determine the correlation between the different variables of this third research hypothesis, we will cross our items using principal component analysis.

Table 6: Principal component analysis VI3 and VD

		Feel motivated by your superior			TOTAL
		yes	unsure	no	
Feel efficient and competent in their work	strongly disagree	4	0	0	4
	somewhat disagree	4	5	1	10
	somewhat agree	8	13	15	36
	agree	9	11	11	31
	strongly agree	28	32	9	69
Total		53	61	36	150

Regarding feeling effective and competent in one's work, 4 strongly disagree, 10 somewhat disagree, 36 somewhat agree, 31 agree, and finally 69 strongly agree. From the observation of our 150 respondents regarding feeling sufficiently motivated by their superior, we have 53 who answer yes, they are sufficiently motivated by their work, 61 who are unsure if they are sufficiently motivated or not, and finally 36 who are not motivated at all by their superior.

Table 7: Correlational Analysis HR3 Symmetric Measures

	Value	Asymptomatic standard Erreur ^a	Approximate T ^b	Signification Approx
Ordinal par Corrélation Ordinal Spearman N valide d'observation valide	-,123 150	,082	-1,507	,134 ^c
a. the null hypothesis not being considered.				
b. the use of the asymptomatic standard error when considering the null hypothesis				
c. based on normal approximation				

A comprehensive view of the correlation table reveals a value of Rho = -0.123 with a significant threshold of 0.134. This indicates the existence of a significant relationship between the sense of competence and professional motivation. The sense of competence is linked to professional

motivation, meaning that when the total score of the sense of competence decreases, the score of professional motivation also decreases.

Interpretation: Regarding the third hypothesis, the results indicate a Rho value of -0.134. This suggests that as the score of the sense of competence increases, so does the level of motivation. According to Bandura (1995) and Zimmerman (1995), the sense of competence, synonymous with the feeling of being able to control the situation and achieve the desired goal, largely determines motivation and cognitive engagement in a learning or problem-solving activity, effort and perseverance in the face of difficulties, emotional and affective reactions, and learning outcomes.

Analysis of Research Hypothesis HR4

To determine the correlation between the different variables of this fourth research hypothesis, we will cross-reference our items using principal component analysis.

Table 8: Principal Component Analysis VI4 and VD

		Feel motivated by your superior			TOTAL
		Oui	ne sais pas	non	
Having a feeling of knowing what to do in one's job	strongly disagree	0	0	2	2
	Some what disagree	2	6	7	15
	Some what agree	8	5	9	22
	Some what agree	10	22	3	35
	strongly agree	33	28	15	76
Total		53	61	36	150

Regarding the question of feeling confident about what to do in one's job, 2 strongly disagree with feeling confident about what to do in their job, 15 somewhat disagree, 22 somewhat agree, 35 somewhat agree, and finally, 76 strongly agree. From the observation of our 150 respondents regarding feeling sufficiently motivated by their superior, we have 53 who answer yes, they are sufficiently motivated by their superior, 61 who are unsure if they are sufficiently motivated or not, and finally 36 who are not at all motivated by their superior

Table 9: Correlational Analysis HR5

	Value	Asymptomatic standard Erreur ^a	Approximate T ^b	Signification Approx
Ordinal par Corrélation Ordinal Spearman N valide d'observation valide	-,230 150	,083	-2,874	,005 ^c
a. the null hypothesis not being considered.				
b. the use of the asymptomatic standard error when considering the null hypothesis				
c. based on normal approximation				

An analysis of the correlation table reveals that the Spearman correlation test is -0.230 with a significance level of 0.005. This confirms the existence of a negatively significant relationship. Therefore, hypothesis HR4 is confirmed. This means that recognition at work is linked to professional motivation. In other words, as recognition at work increases, professional motivation decreases, and vice versa.

INTERPRETATION: After analysis, we obtained the following result: $\rho = -0.230$, which implies that there is a significant relationship between recognition at work and work motivation. So, when the total score of recognition at work increases, the motivation also increases. According to Bourcier and Palobart (1997), recognition, a motivational tool for employees, helps to understand that recognition at work fosters motivation. This means that a teacher who receives recognition is more likely to be motivated, while also being more involved in their work to generate more results.

Table 10: Principal Component Analysis VI5 and VD

		Feel quite motivated by your superior			TOTAL
		yes	unsure	no	
Want to assert yourself in your organization beyond your workload	strongly disagree	0	6	3	9
	disagree	8	4	9	21
	Some what disagree	4	8	3	15
	Some what agree	0	17	5	22
	agree	17	24	10	51
	strongly agree	24	2	6	32
Total		53	61	36	150

Regarding the desire to be involved in one's organization beyond one's workload, 9 strongly disagree with having such desire, 21 disagree, 15 somewhat disagree, 22 somewhat agree, 51 agree, and finally, 32 strongly agree. From the observation of our 150 respondents regarding feeling sufficiently motivated by their superior, we have 53 who answer yes, they are motivated enough by their work, 61 who are unsure if they are motivated enough or not, and finally 36 who are not motivated at all by their superior.

Table 11: Correlational Analysis HR5

	Value	Asymptomatic standard Erreur ^a	Approximate T ^b	Signification Approx
Ordinal par Corrélation Ordinal Spearman N valide d'observation valide	-,324 150	,083	-4,161	,000 ^c
a. the null hypothesis not being considered.				
b. the use of the asymptomatic standard error when considering the null hypothesis				
c. based on normal approximation				

Spearman's correlation test yields a coefficient of -0.324 with a significance level of 0.000, indicating a significantly negative relationship. This means that work engagement influences professional motivation.

Interpretation:

Work engagement is linked to the professional motivation of teachers. The rho value of -0.324 shows a significantly negative correlation. When work engagement increases, motivation also increases, and vice versa. Vocational commitment, a part of work engagement, is characterized by motivation, inspiration, taste, and talent (Raymond, 1974). Motivation is considered a trigger, a driving force towards action. Motivation can foster teacher engagement at work, as defined by Legendre (2005) as the set of forces that drive individuals to act.

Recommendations

1. We recommend valuing teachers by restoring their rights, meaning they should be reinstated in their dignity by paying all their bonuses and allowances within the stipulated time frame.
2. We also recommend involving teachers in school management by occasionally seeking their opinions on issues encountered in the school environment.
3. Encourage collaboration among students by organizing workshops facilitated by teachers themselves. This aims to foster frequent encounters and create a conducive working atmosphere.
4. Recognize and encourage the efforts of some teachers who work tirelessly to ensure the smooth functioning of the school. These teachers who are always punctual to mentor students, who are responsible for imparting knowledge to students, deserve recognition from their superiors.

Conclusion

Our research stemmed from the observation that some teachers regularly come late, assign homework but fail to correct it, etc. We questioned the reasons behind this demotivation. The objective of this study was to verify the link between psychological well-being at work and the professional motivation of teachers. Five research hypotheses were formulated. Data collection was done through a questionnaire and analyzed using Spearman's correlation. The results concluded that there is a link between psychological well-being at work and the professional motivation of teachers in Douala's high schools.

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