Psycho-Organizational Determinants of the Involvement at Work among Female Staff of the Regional Center for University Works-Abidjan 1

Loba Saga Bernard[*], Kone Amegnan Lydie, Djaha Koffi Henri

Department of Psychology, Félix Houphouet Boigny University of Abidjan Cocody, Côte-d'ivoire

Abstract When conducting the present study, our objective is to examine the influence of work/family life conflict and self-esteem on the work involvement of female staff at the Regional Center for University Works-Abidjan 1. In this respect, we have adopted a quantitative approach. A sample of 70 subjects was made up through the on-site sampling technique. We thus used a questionnaire to collect data from the different participants. When applying the analysis of variance to the data collected, two results emerged. On the one hand, the work/family life conflict has a direct influence on the work involvement of the subjects studied. On the other hand, work involvement among the female staff of CROU-Abidjan 1 is related to self-esteem.

Keywords Work/family life conflict, Self-esteem, Work involvement, Female staff

1. Introduction

Today, workplace attitudes represent a classic research area in the field of human resources management. Thus, the involvement of employees, their commitment and their active participation are becoming an important factor in the efficiency of current organizations (T. Périlleux, 1997). In a changing world and in the face of stiff competition between organizations, the involvement of workers represents an asset that can easily make the difference and ensure the sustainability of the company. According to A. Cohen and N. Hudecek (1993), involvement helps to increase employees' willingness to put effort into their work, raise their performance level and reduce the rate of absenteeism and staff turnover.

Work involvement is considered the third principle of the quality management system. According to ISO 9000/V2015, people at all levels are the very essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their skills to be used for the benefit of the organization. This statement is in the opinion of C. Defelix et al (2014) who do not fail to recall the major role played by human capital in the processes of organizational involvement. In this respect, human capital, says F. Gacha (2013, p.3) is "an indispensable and essential source for the smooth running of an administration".

However, according to several reports by the United Nations and the World Bank, the functioning of most African administrations is currently experiencing various difficulties. The performance of a public administration is most often evaluated according to the criteria of effectiveness, economy, efficiency and relevance of the services offered. However, all these qualities depend on human resources. That is why today, there is more and more talk of a new practice - taking the human factor into account - which is essential for improving the quality of public services (A. Benabbou, 2001).

In this perspective, many Western countries are continually updating their public service management methods. In Africa, unfortunately, the situation seems to be developing in the opposite direction. After independence, the management method received from the colonial power remains the panacea of leaders who are exploiting the public service. As a result, promotion and mobility or any other benefit related to the position of the agents are compromised, as they are based on criteria left to the exclusive judgment of the hierarchical supervisor (F. Gacha, 2006).

Moreover, the means used to motivate civil servants are questionable. Although human resources management in the public sector can be organized and operated in a neutral manner because it is governed by the laws of the general civil service statute, it is now the panacea of the political authorities in power. Politicians exploit the services of the public administration as they please (F. Gacha 2015, p.316). Therefore, this practice of politicization of administrative management reveals multiple phenomena such as absenteeism of agents, unjustified expenses, embezzlement of public funds, slowness of services, unpunished crimes,

* Corresponding author:
docbernardloba7@gmail.com (Loba Saga Bernard)

overconsumption of the fleet of vehicles, demotivation of staff and the dissatisfaction of users (F. Gacha, 2013, p.3).

Indeed, there does not seem to be a real policy of staff motivation within the Ivorian civil service. This is why, despite the reforms put in place since 1982, we still observe behaviors considered undesirable among civil servants. Indeed, not a day goes by without users talking about staff demotivation. This lack of motivation is reflected in negligence at work, absenteeism and delays, a decline in professional consciousness, by files that remain unanswered, are lost or simply "vanished".

The Ivorian public administration struggles to give full satisfaction to its users. They blame it for its slowness in processing administrative files, the incompetence of some of its agents and also the lack of involvement by many at work. According to the National Institute of Statistics (INS, 2005), many Ivorians have lost confidence in the government. This situation can be explained by the fact that Ivorian public administrations do not shine in terms of the quality of certain services, nor the quality of relations with their users.

For instance, in a study conducted at the Ministry of Animal and Fisheries Resources, M. A. Kouamé (2019) reveals that the behavior of the civil servants of the said ministry is not spared by the phenomenon of deviations from the regulatory texts. Delays, absences, untimely strikes are the evils that characterize these officials. In another sector of activity, N. Ba (2022) indicates that health workers have been for some time the object of virulent criticism and reproaches from many users because of their lack of commitment, their low involvement at work and their poor treatment of patients. Rather than investing themselves in their professional duties, they are discourteous and engage in practices other than those related to their duties (watching TV, manipulating telephones or even having a meal during office hours) without really caring about the patients' condition.

This observation can also be made among the staff of the Regional Center for University Works of Abidjan 1. The main responsibilities of this center are to manage university residences and restaurants and related services, to provide healthcare for students, and to develop sports and cultural activities for students. It is also called upon to develop and support all initiatives likely to improve the living and working conditions of students.

On the ground, however, the realities are quite different. Indeed, in a survey conducted in 2021 among some students, 35% of them consider their resources insufficient and are compelled to work in order to meet their primary needs (food, housing, transportation, etc.). The Secretary General of the Student and School Federation of Côte d'Ivoire (FESCI) said that the prices of rooms in the university residences of the Regional Center of University Works of Abidjan (CROU-A) have increased slightly. Double rooms have gone from 3,500 to 6,000 CFA francs and single rooms from 4,000 to 10,000 CFA francs per month. The survey also revealed that 51% of students reported skipping meals, 43% were compelled to partner in order to rent dormitories, 39% of young girls were pushed into prostitution and 27% of young boys into drug use.

All these facts lead students to incriminate the State, specifically the managers and agents of the CROU. They believe that the precarious living conditions in which they live are due to the non-involvement of the centers' staff in the quest for their well-being. Moreover, 42% of them are not satisfied with the services offered by this staff. Among the behaviours decried, they mention the frequent delays, the administrative burden, the presenteeism and the indifference regarding the users.

The rationale for this study is the place that the Ivorian authorities give to the administration in the economic, social, cultural and political development of the country. According to H. Lem (1993, p.21), "the administration is the instrument of the state that ensures security and public order and translates the intentions of leaders into concrete actions affecting the interests and well-being of the population.

From this point of view, and in accordance with the current emergence policy, it is therefore a must for the Ivorian administration to have motivated workers who are involved in their professional tasks. Indeed, given its importance in today's organizations and its multidimensional nature, the study of organizational commitment remains an important step in the understanding of organizational behavior, particularly when one is interested in employees whose employment relationship is characterized by weak organizational links.

We should note with F. Biétry and P. Laroche (2011) that organizational commitment was first conceptualized in an affective mode, that is to say as a desire, before being extended to two other complementary dimensions by N. Allen & J. Meyer (1991): a need and a moral obligation. The model of three-dimensional involvement by N. Allen & J. Meyer (1997, p. 93) envisions organizational involvement as a "psychological state with an affective dimension, a calculated dimension, and a normative dimension and which has an influence on the decision to remain a member of the organization".

The currents located exclusively on the affective dimension only take into account the affective, emotional attachment of the employee and then differ according to the object of the attitude considered. However, involvement is defined as a psychological attachment felt by the person (C. O'Reilly and J. Chatman, 1986). With regard to the cognitive dimension, a single position is found in the literature. This is the approach sometimes described as instrumental or calculated (N. Commeiras, 1994), which should not be equated with rationality, that is to say with a calculation of the subject's interests. Involvement depends on what the employee considers to be perceived, but also on his or her expectations with regard to his or her professional situation, and even on his or her ideals. It seems not only to be characterized by a process of judgment but, as K. Gaertner and S. Nollen (1989), it depends on the perceptions or beliefs that the person has formed.

Some theories seem to take into account both the affective

and cognitive dimensions of the attitude, such as those, for example, linking commitment to the values or ethics of the subjects (M. Weber, 1958; P. Morrow, 1983). We find this same dialectic between the affective and the cognitive in the so-called normative implication. This refers to the set of internalized normative pressures that push an individual to act in the direction of the company's objectives and interests, not in order to benefit from it but because it is moral to act in this way (Y. Wiener, 1982).

These theories make it possible to highlight certain determinants of work involvement. E. Lawler et al (1986) and T. Wils et al (1998) suggest that four sets of practices can positively influence employee involvement and mobilization: information sharing, skill development, power sharing and recognition systems. The degree of diffusion of these processes to lower levels of the organization and the quality of their implementation would have a determining effect on the level of success of involvement. C. Lévy-Leboyer (2001), as for him, evokes the notion of four "Cs" to guarantee the motivation and involvement of employees. Among the "Cs" mentioned, we find control and autonomy, which intensifies involvement with the organization, communication and access to information, putting the individual in the position of an actor and giving him or her a margin of initiative, training or, more precisely, the possibility of increasing one's skills and finally the complexity, which amounts to asserting that the more complex the work activities, the more likely they are to be motivating, as opposed to piecemeal, routine tasks.

For B. Chaminade (2005), there are a certain number of elements that the company can take into consideration to promote the involvement of its personnel. These elements can be classified into three main categories: meeting staff expectations, training and skills development, and participation in decision-making. A. Wilkinson et al. (1998) suggest that three interrelated elements are essential to ensure staff involvement in continuous improvement: delegation of authority, skills development through training, and organizational and interpersonal communication between different levels of management.

As far as he is concerned, C. Louche (2007, p.153) identifies five groups of characteristics. Personal characteristics include education, age, gender, perceived competencies, skills, job level and seniority. Job characteristics include autonomy, skill variety, job scope, and challenge. Role states include issues of ambiguity or conflict and overload. Relationships with hierarchy and with others. Organizational characteristics include size and degree of centralization.

On his part, Y. Fosto (2017) distinguishes three types of determinants: individual, cultural and organizational. Individual determinants are related to the personality, self-esteem and history of the subject. These are relatively stable aspects of personality. Some people are naturally committed. The individual determinants revolve around two concepts. On the one hand, there is the need for accomplishment or success. This need is strongly correlated with the need to be effective and competent. On the other hand, there is the need to be an "actor", to be at the source of the events one experiences. People identify themselves as being "active" or "passive". In the first case, they think they have real power over events and like to act on their lives. In the second case, they think that things are imposed on them from outside and that they have little power to change them. They therefore do nothing. The first ones are involved contrary to the second ones.

The cultural determinants are related to the value systems encountered in companies: the value of the care professions is not the same as those of retail or administration. The place occupied by work is a function of moral and religious values, of social hierarchy and of the aspirations advocated by society.

Organizational determinants concern the relationship of man to his work in an organization that can either facilitate or block involvement. Challenges offered, the means made available, the reward system, autonomy, are all factors related to involvement. Work experiences will stimulate or, on the contrary, divert the involvement of the employee towards another goal.

This brief review of the literature on the determinants of work involvement leads us to conclude that the role of the organization and the structure it proposes makes it possible to reflect on action to improve the level of work involvement. This reflection leads us, within the framework of this study, to examine the effect of two variables which seem to be significant to us in the explanatory approach to the phenomenon studied. These are the conflict between professional life and family life and self-esteem.

In Côte d'Ivoire, to our humble knowledge, no research has yet addressed simultaneously the weight of these two variables in relation to work involvement. However, the changes observed in the labor market over the last thirty years have placed the work/family dynamic at the heart of the debate. Women are now more active than men in the labor market. There are more and more single-parent families and more women have responsibilities for elderly parents and others. Also, the rapid increase in working hours, much heavier workloads, etc. are real constraints to which women are exposed. All of these social and professional changes constantly challenge self-esteem, one of the important elements of organizational behavior.

These considerations lead us to issue the following working hypothesis:

Hypothesis n°1: Employees who strongly experience a conflict between professional life and family life are less involved at work than their colleagues who experience such a conflict weakly.

Hypothesis n°2: Employees characterized by low self-esteem are less involved at work than their counterparts in whom this esteem is high.

For their verification, we submitted these hypotheses to the test of facts.

2. Methodology

The approach adopted here involves the description of the variables, the precision of the field of study, the characteristics of the participants, the data collection equipment and the conduct of the survey.

2.1. Description of Variables

The two independent variables of the study relate to the conflict between professional life and family life and self-esteem, and the dependent variable relates to work involvement.

The conflict between professional life and family life is manifested by all the difficulties that arise when the demands or cumulative roles of life at work and life outside work prove to be incompatible on certain levels, so that the exercise of one of these roles interferes with the other. Qualitative in nature, this variable has two modalities. Employees experiencing a strong conflict between professional life and family life are opposed to those experiencing such a conflict weakly. For the former, the role tensions experienced in the family sphere significantly and negatively impinge on their ability to give the best of themselves at work. In the seconds, the situation is not the case.

Self-esteem is one of the fundamental dimensions of personality. It relates to the way in which an individual evaluates his degree of competence, his importance and his qualities according to a system of values and personal standards. In other words, it is the judgment by the individual of his personal merit. The two modalities of this qualitative variable are, on the one hand, employees with low self-esteem and, on the other hand, those with high self-esteem. The former underestimate their values and abilities while the latter overestimate them.

Involvement at work is considered, according to R. Mowday (1998), as a general force leading the individual to identify with and commit to the organization in which he works. Involvement depends not only on what the employee considers to be perceived, but also on his or her expectations with regard to his or her professional situation, and even on his or her ideals. It allows, in this perspective, to decide on the performance of the latter. The execution of the work in a short time, the evacuation of the work, the achievement of the objectives set are all indicators of the agent's involvement in the work. Quantitative in nature, it is assessed using a four-point Likert-type metric scale comprising eighteen items. Its theoretical scores vary from 18 to 72. The minimum score corresponds to the employee less involved in the work and the maximum score that of the employee more involved in the work.

2.2. Study Field

The study took place at the Felix Houphouët-Boigny University of Abidjan Cocody, precisely at the Regional Center for University Works Abidjan 1. This center initially comes from the National Center for University Works (CNOU) created on January 1, 1964 and which, subsequently, was split into three entities by Decree No. 97-21 of January 15, 1997 creating three Regional Centers for University Works: Abidjan (CROU-A), Bouaké (CROU-B) and Daloa (CROU- D).

2.3. Participants

The workers who took part voluntarily in the study are defined by all the female staff working at CROU-Abidjan 1. There are seventy of them, all selected using the on-site sampling technique. This technique consists in selecting and interviewing the subjects of the sample by going to the places commonly frequented by them. We agree to specify that these subjects are retained following the control of certain parasitic variables, in particular age, seniority, amount of salary, type of task, nature of the employment contract and family responsibilities.

2.4. Material

The field investigations were carried out by means of a questionnaire as is appropriate for a study with a quantitative approach. In its final version this questionnaire has four main parts. The first concerns socio-demographic characteristics (age, level of education, marital status, number ofdependent children, etc.). The second is a twelve-item scale that assesses work-life conflict. The third measures self-esteem using a scale of sixteen items. The fourth assesses work involvement using the scale of J. Meyer et al. (1993) translated into French by F. Durrieu and P. Roussel (2002). This scale contains eighteen items.

The administration of the questionnaire took place on site that is to say at the workplace of the employees in an individual mode. We were able to collect data which was then compiled. The statistical processing that followed made it possible to highlight the contingency tables.

3. Results

Taking into account the working hypotheses formulated, we have highlighted two types of results.

Table 1. Comparison of mean scores for work involvement according to life conflict professional / family life

Conflict between professional life and family life	Average	Standard Deviation	Number	T-value	Significance
Employees experiencing a strong conflict between professional life and family life	M1= 43,03	6,98	40	6,2	Calculated T is greater than theoretical T at all probability thresholds, at 68 ddl there is a significant difference between the calculated means
Employees with a low professional/family life conflict	M2 = 37	9,09	30		

Source: from study data

3.1. Work/Family Life Conflict and Work Involvement

Student's T test is applied to the table above.

Analysis of this table shows that at 68 ddl and at the probability threshold of .01, the Tcal (6.2) > Tth (2.62). Similarly, examination of the average scores for the involvement of the two groups indicates a higher average score recorded among female employees with a strong professional/family life conflict (m = 43.03) compared to that of employees with a low level of conflict. a conflict between professional life and family life (m = 37).

Thus, hypothesis n°1 which postulates that employees who experience a strong professional life/family life conflict are less involved at work than their colleagues who experience such a conflict weakly is confirmed. This result can be explained by the fact that any intensely experienced conflict leads the individual to an imbalance in all its forms. In turn, this imbalance can easily harm the implementation of one's intellectual resources. Also, the degree of conflict between the professional sphere and the family sphere induces significant stress in the subject. However, one of the effects of stress is to have a negative effect on the ability to be alert and concentrate. There is a kind of reduction of both psychic and physical energy in the subject to the point that his motivation to work takes a hit, hence a drop in his involvement in his professional tasks.

This result is clarified in the light of W. Goode's theory of role tension (1960), which is based on the fact that in an individual involved in his work and in his role within the family circle, resources are limited and external demands generate role conflicts. Proponents of the role tension theory explain that the individual's strong involvement in work and family contributes to role overload. This can be a cause of conflict and stress, due to the increase in these roles which, through the effect of a communicating vase, absorb time and energy (C. Doyle & P. Hind, 1998; P Moen & Y. Yu, 2000). The malaise caused by a multiplicity of roles that are too important and characterized by stress, role conflicts and a lack of emotional support would result in an increase in job dissatisfaction (G. Krantz et al., 2005).

3.2. Self-Esteem and Involvement at Work

In the table below, we applied the Student's T test.

At 68 ddl and at the probability threshold of .01, the analysis of the table in presence reveals a Tcal (7.4) > Tth (2.62). It should also be noted that employees characterized by high self-esteem have a higher average (m = 45.42)

than that of employees characterized by low self-esteem (m = 39.35). The significance of the difference observed therefore confirms hypothesis n°2, according to which employees characterized by low self-esteem are less involved at work than their counterparts in whom this esteem is high. We can explain this result by the fact that in general, subjects with low self-esteem depreciate and underestimate their abilities. Everything happens as if they live an inferiority complex in which they are deeply rooted. The negative mental image they have of themselves confines them to a kind of limit of actions and initiatives. This explains the fact that they fail to invest themselves effectively at work. Not believing in their own values, they find it difficult to feel motivated at work, hence a drop in their involvement in the professional tasks assigned to them.

The self-efficacy theory of A. Bandura (1986) supports this explanation. For this author, the beliefs of an individual with regard to his ability to successfully accomplish a task or a set of tasks are to be counted among the regulatory mechanisms of behavior. Thus, individuals who have a low sense of self-efficacy in a particular area avoid difficult tasks that they perceive as threatening. They have low levels of aspiration and low commitment to their chosen goals. Faced with difficulties, they stumble over their personal deficiencies, obstacles and the negative consequences of their actions rather than focusing on how to achieve satisfactory performance. They decrease their efforts and quickly give up in the face of difficulties.

4. Discussion

Our study is conducted with the aim of highlighting some determinants of work involvement. Specifically, our goal is to examine the effect of work/family life and self-esteem on this organizational behavior among female staff at Regional Center of University works Abidjan 1. To achieve this, we have formulated two operational hypotheses which, moreover, are confirmed. The two levels of results are:

- Firstly, employees who strongly experience a professional life/family life conflict are less involved at work than their colleagues who experience such a conflict weakly.
- Secondly, workers with low self-esteem are less involved at work than their counterparts with high self-esteem.

Table 2. Comparison of average scores for work involvement according to self-esteem

Self-esteem	Average	Standard Deviation	Number	T-value	Significance
Employees with high self-esteem	M1= 45,42	6,50	38	7,4	Calculated T is greater than theoretical T at all probability thresholds, at 68 ddl there is a significant difference between the calculated means
Employees with low self-esteem	M2= 39,35	10,56	32		

Source: from study data

The first result agrees with those of several authors. For example, J. Quick et al. (1997) show that the conflict between private life and work life reduces the professional involvement of the employee and increases the level of perceived stress. Along the same lines, L. Duxbury et al. (1998) indicate that employees who experience a work/private life conflict are less inclined to get involved with the presumed source of the conflict, namely the organization. For their part, J. R. Mesmer-Magnus and C. Viswesvaran (2005) underline that the conflict between professional life and family life is associated with an increased perception of professional stressors (ambiguity of roles and status, tensions between colleagues, pressures, etc.) but also non-professional (demands induced by the role of parent, conflicts with family members, friends, etc.). In this case, they continue, this perception is associated with an attitude of withdrawal vis-à-vis the organization, an attitude which is materialized by a decrease in the involvement of the employee. For their part, A. Day and T. Chamberlain (2006) clearly show that the increase in conflicts between the role at work and the role of wife increases involvement at the parental level but seriously affects that linked to the couple itself and to the organization. As for M. Lourel and N. Guéguen (2007), they show that the negative effects of private life on professional life exert a direct influence, that is to say a weakening of affective involvement among workers.

The second result converges with the conclusions of several works carried out. A. K. Korman (1976) predicts that individuals with high self-esteem will develop and maintain positive attitudes toward work (such as job satisfaction) and will act productively because these attitudes and behaviors are consistent with their feeling of being competent. On the other hand, individuals with low self-esteem will develop and maintain negative attitudes towards work and will act in non-productive ways in order to be consistent with their feeling of being incompetent people. As far as he is concerned, H. Gameti (2006) demonstrates that employees who have low or average self-esteem are less motivated at work compared to those who have high self-esteem. In the same vein, K. Tsiglo (2005) reveals that agents who self-evaluate positively generally perform well at work, unlike those who self-evaluate negatively. On his part, C. Allain (2017) maintains that a person who has good self-esteem tends to adopt a global development approach to increase their potential and feel more competent. She regularly takes stock of her career and draws lessons from her victories and her failures. As for him, A. Floor (2010) affirms that a subject with high self-esteem therefore maintains a very constructive relationship with error [...] By being less concerned about the risk of failure, he will multiply the actions that will gradually nurture and consolidate his self-confidence and push him to renew his initiatives. Conversely, for the subject with low self-esteem, the slightest failure is experienced as a major personal and social catastrophe.

5. Conclusions

At the end of our study, it is worth noting that among a myriad of factors explaining work involvement, the work/family life conflict and self-esteem remain important determinants. They are now real levers on which managers can rely to achieve a certain organizational efficiency. In this perspective and in the specific case of our research, managers would benefit from implementing a personal development policy for some of the workers in this center. This policy would help them to overcome their limitations and lack of self-confidence and to give the best of themselves at work. Also, social actions in terms of assistance to the female staff of this center could contribute to significantly reduce the effects of stress arising from the work / family life conflict. This way, their involvement at work could be boosted.

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