

## Psychological Well-Being And Motivation Of Educators In Relation To Their Years Of Experience In The Profession During Online Teaching In The Covid-19 Era.

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### ABSTRACT

This research sought to comprehensively examine the motivation and psychological well-being of educators actively involved in online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. A diverse sample of 101 educators from various educational settings, including institutions, universities, schools, and tuition centres, participated in the study. The investigation utilized the RYFFS scale to measure psychological well-being and the WEIMS scale to assess motivation. Applying the statistical technique of analysis of variance (ANOVA), the study revealed a significant disparity among groups. These groups were categorized based on educators' experience, resulting in three distinct categories reflecting different numbers of years in the field. The analysis indicated a noteworthy impact on the psychological well-being of educators, suggesting that the challenges posed by the shift to online teaching during the pandemic influenced their mental health. Interestingly, the study found no substantial difference in the motivation levels of educators across these different experience-based groups. However, a notable change was found in the sub domains of the motivation of educators. This implies that, despite the significant impact on psychological well-being, educators' motivation remained relatively consistent regardless of their varying levels of experience. These findings provide valuable insights into the nuanced effects of online teaching during the pandemic on educators' mental health and motivation, contributing to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted challenges faced in the education sector.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Psychological Well-Being, Educators, Covid-19

The COVID-19 pandemic transformed the landscape of education, placing educators at the forefront of adapting to change, overcoming challenges, and contributing to the collective efforts to ensure continued learning for students. Motivation serves as the driving force that initiates, guides, and sustains purposeful patterns of behaviour. It prompts individuals to take action, whether it's as simple as grabbing a glass of water to quench thirst or delving into a book to gain knowledge. Motivation encompasses biological, emotional, social, and psychological forces that activate behaviour. In everyday language, the term "motivation" is commonly used to explain why an individual pursues a particular course of action. It is the primary catalyst behind human actions. Motivation not only refers to the factors that trigger behaviours but also involves the elements that regulate and maintain these goal-directed actions (although such motives are often not directly observable). Consequently, we often have to infer the reasons why people do what they do based on observable behaviours.

Pinder (1998) characterized work motivation as "a set of energetic forces that originates both within and beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behaviour and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration." Motivation is thus manifested by thought, effort, and perseverance. The ability to assess factors that reinforce, channel, and support work behaviour over an extended period (Steers et al., 2004) is crucial for understanding employee motivation and for developing interventions aimed at enhancing motivation, thereby improving job satisfaction and performance. To date, most research focusing on individual factors in work motivation has explored differences that can be captured through self-report measures of personality, influence, interests, and values (Kanfer et al., 2008). In the organizational psychology literature, four primary assessment frameworks are employed to evaluate work motivation, including projective, objective, implicit/explicit, and subjective measures.

Psychological well-being (PWB) is the state of psychological health and happiness, encompassing life satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment. While it's important to avoid a dualistic approach that separates physical well-being from PWB, acknowledging that physical well-being includes aspects like health, fitness, and the ability to perform daily

activities is beneficial. PWB goes beyond just perceptions of physical health; it encompasses an individual's outlook on life, including self-esteem, self-efficacy, relationships with others, and overall life satisfaction. A monistic perspective, recognizing the integral interconnection between physical well-being and PWB, is preferable.

The ancient Roman poet Juvenal aptly expressed the idea that "mens sana in corpore sano" ("a sound mind in a healthy body") is highly desirable. PWB exists on a continuum, ranging from a lack of well-being associated with illness or mental health issues to optimal well-being, possibly reaching the state of self-actualization as described by Abraham Maslow. Many individuals may place their PWB on the healthier side of the continuum. Striving for psychological resilience, life balance, and happiness, perhaps adopting a positive psychology approach, can bring one closer to optimal PWB. Brian C. Focht also highlighted the connections between PWB and health-related quality of life (HRQL).

The contemporary debate, sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic, spurred research into unique fully online teaching practices during the pandemic (with a significant increase in trials) and the future of this practice post-COVID, which could lead to a hybrid teaching approach. Unexpected scenarios emerged, such as universities experimenting with alternative solutions for students without internet access at home and conducting practical lessons face-to-face while delivering theoretical lessons online. Distance teaching for many universities resulted in the loss of significant economic gains. This shift in perspective underscores the need to move towards a social analysis of the impact of technology on the professional lives of individuals and to describe the ongoing changes that affect professional well-being. Despite paradigmatic discordance, the succession of different models reflects the evolution of a professional paradigm oriented towards competence and well-being. The five constituent components of well-being—self-esteem, self-determination, positive emotions, optimism, and resilience—emerge as central to guiding future research developments.

The issue of educator motivation is deeply felt by school governance boards and leadership, as educators' motivation influences that of students. These approaches aim to foster greater interaction with students, enhance self-determination, promote structured collaborative learning processes, and reduce the reliance on traditional lessons. One of the main concerns for educators is to maintain high levels of student motivation. However, education ranks among the professions with the highest levels of stress, and educators often express a desire to leave the profession. The context of the pandemic has further complicated educational relationships with students, exacerbating this dynamic.

The shift to online teaching, particularly intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic, had a profound impact on educators' psychological well-being. The challenges of adapting to virtual classrooms, managing technology, and maintaining student engagement contributed to heightened stress levels. The blurred boundaries between professional and personal life, coupled with the demands of remote teaching, led to increased feelings of isolation and burnout. Educators faced the pressure of addressing diverse student needs in a digital environment, amplifying the mental load. The absence of physical interactions and the inherent uncertainties of online teaching added to anxiety levels. Despite resilience and adaptability, many educators reported heightened stress, fatigue, and a sense of disconnection. Recognizing and addressing the mental health implications of online teaching was imperative, requiring institutional support, professional development focusing on well-being, and strategies to foster a positive virtual teaching environment.

In the light of previous researches it was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference between motivation and psychological well-being of educators with respect to number of years in the profession.

In 2021, Etxebarria and colleagues examined the psychological state of teachers in Spain during the COVID-19 crisis, focusing on the challenges they encountered when returning to face-to-face teaching after school closures. With schools shut in March 2020 to mitigate the virus spread, educators swiftly transitioned to online teaching during lockdown. The reopening of schools in September 2020 brought about heightened uncertainty, leading to notable psychological symptoms among teachers. The study involved 1,633 educators in the Basque Autonomous Community, utilizing the DASS-21 scale to measure stress, anxiety, and depression. The results revealed a substantial percentage of teachers exhibiting symptoms of anxiety, stress, and depression. Factors like gender, age, job stability, teaching level, and parental status were identified as influencing these symptoms. The study underscores the profound psychological impact on educators during the pandemic and emphasizes the importance of tailored support measures.

In 2020, Thomas, Kumar, et al. explored the psychological well-being and work life quality of school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic in India. The widespread impact of the virus led to diverse effects like stress, anxiety, and physical problems among individuals. The educational field, particularly the teaching process, faced a significant halt. Teachers experienced heightened stress, affecting their mental well-being and diminishing the quality of their professional life. The study emphasizes the importance of teachers prioritizing their mental health during these challenging times, suggesting various approaches to navigate through and maintain a higher quality of work life.

In 2020, Regina and Teresa examined the professional well-being of Portuguese educators during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their study, utilizing an anonymous online survey, highlighted a positive pre-pandemic view that diminished

amid the crisis. Factors like gender, years of service, health, and perceptions of teaching challenges emerged as predictors of educators' well-being. The study recommends interventions focusing on emotional management and digital skill development, emphasizing the urgent need for increased investment in public policies to revive and strengthen the teaching profession.

In 2019, Baker, Peele, et al. explored the impact of COVID-19 on teachers, assessing needs from 454 New Orleans charter teachers. The pandemic imposed significant expectations on teachers, revealing seven stressors and four protective factors. Teachers facing more stressors reported poorer mental health and challenges in teaching. In contrast, those with more protective factors found it easier to adapt and teach. Black teachers reported better mental health, more protective factors, and less negative impact from stressors compared to White teachers. Notably, the absence of connection and online teaching difficulties proved most challenging, while support from colleagues and administrators was highly beneficial. Addressing teacher well-being is crucial to prevent adverse effects on both educators and the education system.

The main objective of the present study was to study the significant difference between motivation and psychological well-being of educators with respect to number of years in the profession.

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## **METHODS**

### **Sample**

Responses were gathered from 101 educators in total, and groups were established based on the number of years each educator had spent in the profession. Subsequent to the removal of outliers, an analysis was conducted on a subset of 77 participants. Participants were chosen through purposive sampling, specifically targeting educators engaged in online teaching during the pandemic. While there were no age restrictions, the study exclusively included individuals from urban populations.

### **Tools Used**

The demographic data sheet was used to gain demographic details of the respondents (e.g. age, gender, experience and qualification).

Work extrinsic and intrinsic motivation scale (WEIMS) by Céline M Blanchard, et al. (2009) is 7 point Likert type response format with 7 point alternatives. There are 18 items in the scale which are based upon how you put efforts in reaching a goal or target in your day to day life. The values of correlation is above 0.50 for all the subscales and for internal consistency of its six sub- scales, it has Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from 0.64 (AMO) to 0.83 (INTEG).

Ryffs Scale for Psychological Well Being designed by Ryff, C. D., et al. (1995) is 7 point Likert type response format with 7 point alternatives. There are 18 items in the scale to describe their feelings about the environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, self-acceptance subscale. The test-retest reliability coefficient of RPWBS was 0.82. The subscales of Self-acceptance, Positive Relation with Others, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, and Personal Growth were found to be 0.71, 0.77, 0.78, 0.77, 0.70, and 0.78 respectively, which were statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

### **Procedure**

Data collection involved purposive sampling reaching out to educators from various academic institutions through an online format, utilizing Google Forms. Clear objectives and detailed instructions were provided to participants before filling out the form, allowing ample time for thoughtful responses. The study specifically included educators who engaged in online teaching during the pandemic, and data from 101 participants were collected. Stringent adherence to ethical guidelines was maintained throughout the research process to safeguard the rights and well-being of the participants. Preservation of confidentiality and anonymity was prioritized to guarantee the privacy of participants' data.

### **Analytical Strategy**

Following statistical analysis, outliers were excluded. The subsequent phase of data analysis utilized analysis of variance with the assistance of SPSS version 20.

## **RESULTS**

Upon obtaining descriptive statistics from SPSS version 20, which revealed insignificant values, we took a further step by conducting a Levene's test to evaluate the homogeneity of the data. The results of the Levene's test (Table 1) suggested that the data exhibited homogeneity, implying that the variances across groups were not significantly

different. This pivotal information guided us to proceed with a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), a statistical method employed to investigate potential differences among the means of multiple groups. The ANOVA was conducted with the aim of discerning any significant distinctions in means across the various groups under consideration. This analytical approach allows for a more nuanced exploration of the data and provides insights into the potential sources of variation among the groups. Additionally, using SPSS, a univariate analysis was performed on the RYFFS and WEIMS scales, specifically focusing on their subdomains. This analysis unveiled noteworthy differences in various subdomains of both WEIMS and RYFFS, as detailed in the following section of this paper.

**Table 1 indicates the results of Levene's test to evaluate the homogeneity**

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
WEIMS	.652	2	74	.524
RYFFS	1.167	2	74	.317

**Table 2 indicates the mean, standard deviation, F – value and significant difference obtained on the RYFFS and its domains**

Tool	Group*	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F- value	Sig.
Autonomy	1	21	11.4286	2.42	2.405	.097
	2	21	10.1429	1.68		
	3	35	11.5714	2.84		
Environmental Mastery	1	21	13.14	2.39	1.005	.371
	2	21	13.71	1.58		
	3	35	14.08	2.79		
Personal Growth	1	21	12.66	3.65	1.660	.197
	2	21	13.57	2.35		
	3	35	14.17	2.89		
Positive Relations with others	1	21	10.85	2.12	3.46	.037
	2	21	10.09	1.94		
	3	35	11.94	3.15		
Purpose in Life	1	21	11.71	3.01	1.967	.147
	2	21	10.47	1.80		
	3	35	11.57	2.004		
Self-Acceptance	1	21	11.23	1.72	2.294	.108
	2	21	10.80	1.12		
	3	35	11.80	1.96		
RYFFS Total		21	72.29	9.946	3.041	.054
		21	72.10	5.847		
		35	77.31	10.061		

Group 1 indicates the educators who have been in this profession for less than 5 years.  
 Group 2 indicates the educators who have been in this profession for 5 to years  
 Group 3 indicates the educators who have a teaching experience of more than 10 years.

**Table 3 indicates the mean, standard deviation, F – value and significant difference obtained on the WEIMS and its domains**

Tools	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F- value	Sig.
Intrinsic motivation	1	21	22.47	1.72	6.250	.003
	2	21	22.38	1.88		
	3	35	24.11	2.37		
Integrated Regulation	1	21	17.52	2.58	.341	.712
	2	21	18.14	2.45		
	3	35	18.00	2.65		
Identified Regulation	1	21	16.95	2.95	5.465	.006
	2	21	18.04	1.98		
	3	35	18.88	1.52		
Introjected Regulation	1	21	16.28	3.56	1.294	.280
	2	21	17.61	1.85		
	3	35	17.28	2.82		
External Regulation	1	21	17.52	2.85	.157	.855
	2	21	17.19	2.84		
	3	35	17.02	3.56		
Amotivation	1	21	16.04	3.801	.552	.578
	2	21	17.04	3.106		
	3	35	15.91	4.64		
WEIMS Total	1	21	101.71	13.244	.749	.476
	2	21	105.48	11.801		
	3	35	105.71	12.468		

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The one-way analysis of variance revealed a significant difference in educators' psychological well-being concerning their years of experience ( $p = .054, > .05$ ). Within the RYFFS scale, the positive relations with others domain displayed a significant difference of .037, indicating an impact on psychological well-being. Conversely, no significant difference was found between experience and educators' motivation. However, noteworthy differences were observed in the Intrinsic motivation (.003) and Identified regulation (.006) domains, highlighting distinct aspects of motivation among educators based on their experience. These findings offer valuable insights into the nuanced relationship between experience, psychological well-being, and motivation in education.

## DISCUSSION

Table 2, indicates the values of mean, standard deviation,  $f$  – value and significant difference of the means across the group. Table 1 investigated the groups for the homogeneity by Levene's test for homogeneity. Since the data came out to be homogeneous hence analysis of variance was conducted which indicated that there was a significant impact on the psychological well-being of educators while no significant impact on the motivation of educators was noted. These findings align with the study done by Dayal in 2023, titled "Online education and its effect on educators during COVID-19—A case study from India," that highlighted the impact of online learning on educators amid the pandemic. The findings of the study reveal that educators experienced heightened physical and mental health issues attributed to prolonged working hours and the uncertainties associated with COVID-19 lockdowns.

A substantial distinction emerged among groups concerning the positive relationship with others subdomain on the psychological well-being scale. This implies that participants, especially educators within group 2 (with 5 to 10 years of experience), faced challenges in establishing robust emotional connections, resulting in feelings of frustration, social isolation, and a dearth of support. This aligns with Kim's 2023 study, highlighting a general decline in educators' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a pronounced impact on elementary school educators. While no significant differences surfaced in other subdomains, the means underscored a significant influence of experience years on educators' psychological well-being, as outlined in Table 2. Educators with over 10 years of experience exhibited positive personal growth, whereas those with less than 5 years displayed a deficiency in personal development, potentially leading to boredom and stagnation. The Purpose in life dimension indicated lower scores for educators with 5 to 10 years of experience, signalling diminished psychological well-being, while those with over 10 years displayed higher scores. In the Self-Acceptance domain, educators with 5 to 10 years of experience manifested the lowest scores, indicating dissatisfaction. In summary, educators with 5 to 10 years of experience appear to be the most adversely affected group in terms of psychological well-being, as reflected across various subdomains of the assessment.

When scrutinizing educators' motivation amid online teaching, notable disparities emerged in the domains of Intrinsic Motivation and Identified Regulation (Table 3). Intrinsic motivation, reflective of engaging in an activity for inherent interest, peaked among educators with over 10 years of teaching experience (Group 3). Similarly, Identified Regulation, signifying engagement based on recognizing activity value, exhibited a significant difference, with educators in the 5 to 10 years' experience group scoring higher. Integrated regulation, entailing the connection of an activity to one's sense of self, demonstrated heightened responses in the 5 to 10 years' experience group compared to those with less than 5 years. Although Introjected regulation showed no significant difference, educators with 5 to 10 years' experience scored higher. External regulation, fuelled by extrinsic rewards, reached its zenith among those with less than 5 years' experience and found its nadir in the group with over 10 years' experience. Amotivation, encapsulating a lack of intention or passive action, displayed lower levels among educators with over 10 years' experience, while the 5 to 10 years' experience group exhibited higher levels. Contrarily, Toto's 2021 study underscored the challenges stemming from the exclusive reliance on digital technology across various contexts. The study highlighted the divergent dynamics shaping the impact of digital technology on teachers' practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. By exploring the correlation between extensive digital technology use and teachers' motivation and perceived stress, the study unveiled a negative association during the pandemic. Examining the motivation domains, Intrinsic Motivation stood out as a pivotal factor in educators' engagement during online teaching. This intrinsic drive, characterized by finding inherent interest and satisfaction in the activity itself, resonated most strongly among educators with more than a decade of teaching experience. Their prolonged immersion in the field seemed to foster a genuine passion and internal motivation for the teaching process. Identified Regulation, which involves engaging in an activity based on recognizing its value and accepting it as one's own, presented a significant difference among experience groups. Educators with 5 to 10 years of experience displayed higher scores in this domain. This finding suggests that educators in the mid-range of

experience were more attuned to the value and meaning of their teaching activities, contributing to their identified regulation of behavior. Integrated Regulation, where an activity becomes an integral part of an individual's sense of self, exhibited heightened responses among educators with 5 to 10 years' experience. This implies that educators in this experience range integrated their teaching activities into their identity, perhaps seeing it as a fundamental aspect of who they are. While Introjected Regulation, a form of regulation through self-worth contingencies like self-esteem or guilt, showed no significant difference among experience groups, educators with 5 to 10 years of experience scored higher. This suggests that the regulation of behavior through internalized pressures or rewards influenced educators in the mid-range of experience more than their counterparts. External Regulation, tied to doing an activity solely to attain external rewards, was most pronounced among educators with less than 5 years of experience. This finding aligns with the notion that newer educators may be more driven by external incentives as they establish themselves in the profession. On the other hand, educators with over 10 years of experience, having established themselves, exhibited lower levels of external regulation, emphasizing intrinsic or internally driven motivation. Amotivation, representing a lack of intention or passive engagement, displayed lower levels among educators with over 10 years of experience. This suggests that educators with substantial experience were less likely to feel directionless or passively engaged in their teaching activities. On the contrary, educators with 5 to 10 years of experience exhibited higher levels of amotivation, indicating a potential period of uncertainty or lack of direction in their teaching endeavours. In summary, the investigation into educators' motivation during online teaching revealed nuanced dynamics among different experience groups. While intrinsic motivation was heightened among seasoned educators, other regulation forms and levels varied across the spectrum of teaching experience. These insights provide a valuable understanding of the motivational nuances in the teaching profession, crucial for crafting targeted support strategies for educators at different stages of their careers.

In summary, the results of this study reveal that the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the psychological well-being of educators engaged in online teaching. It was observed that educators experienced notable changes in their psychological well-being as a result of the pandemic. However, interestingly, the study found no significant impact on the motivation levels of educators despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. These findings shed light on the complex effects of the COVID-19 crisis on educators' mental health and underscore the need for continued support and resources to address their well-being during challenging times. Examining educators' psychological well-being, a significant difference emerged in the positive relationship with others subdomain, indicating challenges in forming emotional connections, particularly among those with 5 to 10 years of experience. Aligning with Kim's 2023 study on educators' declining mental health during the pandemic, this finding underscores the impact on different experience groups. In motivation analysis, Intrinsic Motivation and Identified Regulation showed significant differences. Educators with over 10 years' experience exhibited the highest intrinsic motivation, while those with 5 to 10 years displayed increased identified regulation. Integrated Regulation, Introjected Regulation, External Regulation, and Amotivation also demonstrated nuanced differences, indicating the complex interplay of motivation factors across experience groups. Toto's 2021 study emphasized the challenges arising from exclusive reliance on digital technology, revealing negative correlations between extensive digital technology use, and educators' motivation and perceived stress during the pandemic. These insights deepen our understanding of educators' experiences, guiding targeted support for diverse career stages in the teaching profession.

- **This paper is an original work.**
- **Conflict of interests: None**

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