



## The Effect of Psychological Capital on Professional Compatibility: Analytical Research in The General Directorate of Administrative Affairs, The Headquarters of The Ministry of Education

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### Abstract:

This research explores psychological capitals influence on professional compatibility among its employees in the General Directorate for Administrative Affairs, Ministry of Education, Iraq. Psychological states include self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and flexibility, which are essential in preparing employees so they can adjust accordingly to their professional roles. In addition, it will examine professional compatibility through some of its dimensions such as the nature of work, work environment, relationships with colleagues, and relationships with supervisors.

The research showed a strong impact of positive psychological characteristics, including a proactive attitude and resilience, in the adaptability of an individual in the diversity of workplace challenges and alignment with the objectives of the organization. Moderate levels of psychological capital among employees with a combination of inadequate managerial support and dissatisfaction with the work environment inhibited the actualization of professional compatibility.

Emphasis on the study has been put forward for developing psychological capital through improved managerial practices such as open communication, participatory decision making, and a support-the-work environment. This is very vital for effective improvement in employee integration, satisfaction, and ultimately performance, which is expected to strengthen the overall effectiveness of the organization to accomplish its goals.

**Keywords:** Psychological capital, Professional compatibility, Employee Adaptability, Workplace Environment, Organizational Effectiveness, Ministry of Education.

**1. Introduction:**

Many management theories have emerged that refer to psychological capital, such as social cognition theory (Barbosa, 2017), work motivation theories, positive psychology, cognition and effectiveness theories (Amunkete, 2015), and resource theory, which is considered the most important resource in identifying the inner self by exploring strength through accessing human capital to address and develop the psychological strength and psychological capabilities of workers (Sahoo et al., 2015). Global interest began to increase in the late 1990s in this field, especially in the field of management, following the research and studies initiated by the head of American psychologists (Martin Seligman), in which he deduced the transformation of the course of psychological research from human disability such as mental illness to human assets, as this research was based on discovering and researching human strengths scientifically for individuals, groups, and even organizations (Lorenz et al., 2016). The emergence of the concept of professional compatibility has led to many radical changes in the social, professional, and psychological lives of workers, as it called for the need to harmonize and adapt to professional and environmental changes so that workers can perform the tasks assigned to them. Therefore, professional compatibility is considered a continuous process of interactions and adaptation of the person to his conflicts and overcoming the resulting stress (Dixit, 2014). The credit for inventing the concept goes to Schkade & Schultz, (1992), as they developed several theories to explain the concept, including the Minnesota theory of professional compatibility, which is considered one of the most prominent theories from which researchers started (Walder et al., 2021). The concept of professional compatibility spread widely in the twentieth century, until the beginning of the century revealed the initial signs of the need for compatibility in the personal and professional lives of workers, as industry led to the emergence of a large number of new professions and jobs with diverse wages (Hocenski, 2021). One of the most important objectives of the research is to establish the Ministry of Education's awareness of the necessity of adopting the concepts of psychological capital and professional compatibility as critical variables in the success of educational and teaching institutions, as psychological capital affects professional compatibility, and this is what the research results have reached, i.e. the positive psychological characteristics enjoyed by working individuals, including their desire to develop themselves, affect their ability to integrate and adapt to their professions.

**2. Literature Review And Hypothesis Development:**

Çetin, (2011) pointed out that psychological capital is the psychological state of the worker that is more important than intellectual capital in achieving and maintaining competitive advantage. Peng et al., (2019) showed that psychological capital is a positive individual resource, which has a similar effect to organizational resources, as it contributes to alleviating work stress and the negative effects of work requirements, in addition to reducing physical and mental fatigue. They emphasized that psychological capital is a basic resource for ensuring the "Good Life" of the worker, and depends in part on the surrounding social context. Dóci et al., (2023) also pointed out the importance of this resource in the worker's life. Similarly, (Dudasova et al., 2021) reported that psychological capital represents a state of positive psychological development of the worker, characterized by confidence in making the necessary efforts to achieve success in difficult tasks, and optimism about success in the present and future for the benefit of the organization. Psychological capital also enhances the pursuit of goals and overcoming challenges, which contributes to excellence and resilience when facing problems and difficulties.

Self-efficacy is a concept related to an employee's confidence in his or her ability to develop and improve his or her cognitive resources, motivations, and work styles to perform tasks in a given environment (Barbosa, 2017). According to a study by Cheung et al., (2011), self-efficacy was defined as an individual's personal belief that he or she has the ability to organize motivations, cognitive resources, and action paths to successfully perform certain tasks. Physiological and physical influences are one of the main sources of self-efficacy; an individual who anticipates failure in some tasks and experiences negative emotions such as illness, depression, or boredom is likely to perform poorly and have low self-efficacy. Conversely, high self-efficacy enhances the creation of positive emotions in the individual when dealing with tasks and activities (Iroegbu, 2015).

According to Santilli et al., (2014), people who are more optimistic in life can cope with, adapt to, and recover from complex events more quickly than their peers. Owens, (2017) noted that effective strategies for developing hope include helping individuals accept organizational goals by involving everyone in setting those goals, setting ambitious goals that go beyond what is required, and developing long-term strategic plans that include key milestones. This also includes learning how to adjust paths when they do not lead to the desired goals and dealing with challenges with a positive mindset and constructive behaviors. Cheung et al., (2011), also noted that hope is "the actual ability to identify paths to achieve desired goals, the motivation to initiate those paths, and the persistence and positive adaptation in the face of challenges" (Harms et al., 2018).

According to Barbosa, (2017), optimism can be considered a developable resource, as described by Seligman in the concept of "Learned Optimism," which is seen as a means of enhancing the interpretation of positive events based on internal and permanent personal causes, while negative events are interpreted as resulting from temporary and unstable external factors.

Optimism, on the other hand, is often seen as a personality trait or strength that people possess to achieve desired outcomes in the future. When it is forward-looking, optimism turns to pessimism, and thus this resource disappears as a valuable resource in how to relate to the characters you encounter (Bailis & Chipperfield, 2012). For this reason, it is a reactive approach, but it can also be proactive, with individuals resorting to economic or internal disengagement, such as employee monitoring (McGee, 2011). As Luthans et al., (2006) suggested, building awareness of one's assets, such as skills, talents, and social networks, including encouraging people to communicate about different options and can do so, it supports strong orientations in their assessment of available resources and expertise.

Huang & Yang, (2011) suggested that career adjustment is the individual's ability to adapt to his work environment, which includes a set of important factors such as job content, relationships with colleagues, supervisors, and management, as well as compatibility with environmental differences, work regulations, and work systems.

Jalilian & Karimianpour, (2018) indicated that the psychological and dynamic compatibility that the individual seeks is a response to the requirements and pressures of the professional environment. This compatibility includes the individual's understanding of the factors affecting him, such as relationships with others and job evaluation. Achieving this balance allows the individual to solve problems that he may encounter in his career, which enhances his effectiveness and efficiency at work (Uwem et al., 2021). For his part (Rizvi, 2016), considered that career adjustment is an ongoing process that requires the individual to modify his behaviors to enhance the relationship between him and the work environment.

The nature of work is related to how work positively affects the compatibility of workers with their environment. This nature includes several elements, including the type of relationships and interactions that occur between workers and managers or supervisors, the leadership style followed in the organization, the type of incentives provided to workers, and working hours (Jeong et al., 2021). An important element related to the nature of work is the concept of "role". A role is defined as the set of behaviors expected of a worker who performs a specific job.

However, role ambiguity can occur when a worker lacks a clear understanding of job expectations due to inaccurate job descriptions, lack of training, or changes in job requirements. Role conflict also expresses the tension that arises when two or more job requirements conflict with the interests and inclinations of the worker (Kumaran, 2012).

The work environment represents the physical, social, and cultural context in which work takes place. The physical factor consists of the physical tools and means that must be available in the workplace, while the social factor is the workers present in the professional environment, and the cultural factor includes the values, customs, and traditions present within the environment (Johansson, 2017).

(Robianto & Masdupi, (2020), state that the work environment includes all comprehensive work facilities and infrastructure surrounding the worker that can affect the implementation of his work, including the place, health supplies, cleanliness, lighting, and quietness. Hence, these people can practice their activities satisfactorily to achieve ideal results in work conditions (Robianto & Masdupi, 2020). The presence of a positive work environment leads to the creation of strong and cohesive work teams and positive social relationships between coworkers and management, thus helping workers overcome all obstacles that they may face in the career path (Arsat et al., 2022).

The relationship with colleagues is an important source in achieving the goals that the organization seeks to achieve, in addition to the relationships and mutual trust between employees, which positively affects employee satisfaction, which is reflected in their professional compatibility. Formal and informal relationships between colleagues constitute a valuable resource for the organization, which in turn complements the formal support received by the supervisor, which facilitates the proper performance of the employee in the organization. These positive relationships create positive feelings that increase the ability of employees to face organizational challenges (Kmieciak, 2021). The support of colleagues has a significant and positive impact on motivating and motivating employees, thus increasing employee productivity and work quality (Wijaya & Khan, 2024).

The relationship with the supervisor indicates that the supervisor's actions have an impact on the extent of employees' engagement in work and the quality of their performance, and thus the mental and psychological health of the employee, his attitude towards work and his behaviors can be affected by the supervisors' approach, whether positively or negatively, as the supervisor's positive behavior leads to improving the employee's engagement in work, and they should adopt a management style that enhances trust and cooperation among employees and develops work in decision-making (Navickas et al., 2023). According to some, the work environment is described as anything in the workers' surroundings that has a significant impact on their psychology when they perform the tasks they perform, and on the other hand it can be described as the place where the employee performs his duties, which is a work situation for the employee who lives with his peers (Edward & Purba, 2020). Thus, this dimension creates a sense of commitment between the two parties. The supervisor's relationship with his subordinates ensures that it is a largely reciprocal relationship, as this relationship contributes to increasing job satisfaction rates, which contributes to reducing burnout and stress within the organization (Taş & Özkara, 2020).

### **2.1 Hypotheses:**

The main hypothesis is that there is a significant effect of psychological capital and its dimensions on professional compatibility. The following sub-hypotheses emerged from it:

H1: There is a significant effect of self-efficacy on professional compatibility.

H2: There is a significant effect of optimism on professional compatibility.

H3: There is a significant effect of hope on professional compatibility.

H4: There is a significant effect of flexibility on professional compatibility.

**3.0 Methodology:**

**3.1 The Sample:**

The research community is represented according to Table 1, and the researchers rely on the random sample method, where the research community items were selected from the workers (lower and middle departments in the General Administration of Administrative Affairs), where the total sample amounted to 202 individuals, 197 of whom responded, and they were divided into a group (420) according to the records of the organizational structure and through the ministry’s review in which several community members participated.

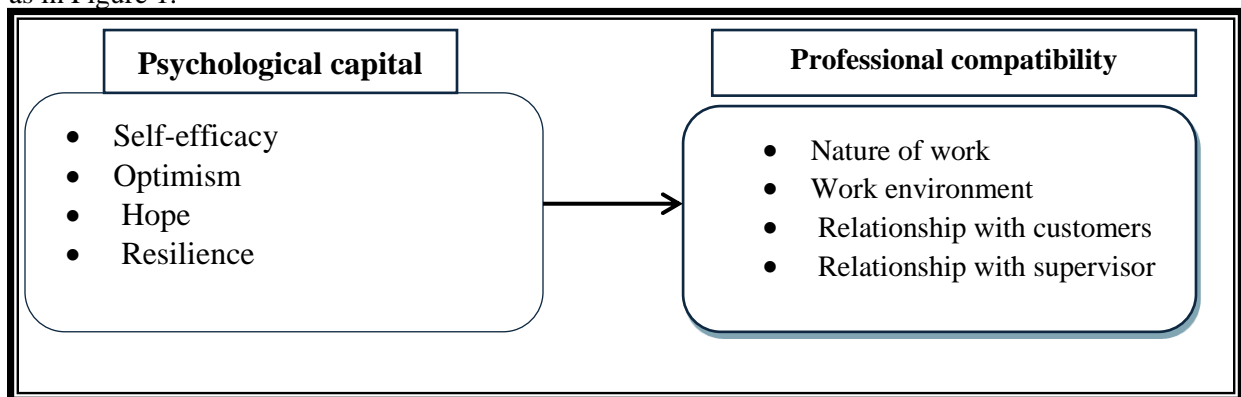
**Table 1:** The sample size (for respondents)

Status	Number	The percentage
The number of questionnaires distributed	202	100%
Not returned	5	10%
Returned	197	92%

**Source:** Prepared by the researchers

**3.2 The hypothetical scheme of the research.**

The hypothetical graph expresses the independent variable, which is psychological capital and its dimensions, and the dependent variable, which is professional compatibility and its dimensions, as in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** The hypothetical framework of the research

**Source:** Prepared by the researchers.

**4. Results:**

**4.1 The statistical description:**

**4.1.1 The statistical description of psychological capital and its dimensions:**

1. Table (2) shows the overall average of the self-efficacy dimension, which amounted to 3.25 at an average level and a standard deviation of 0.89. This means that there is a type of barrier between management and employees that prevents employees from developing and showing feelings of confidence in presenting all the ideas they want that may serve the interests of the organization and achieve its goals. Therefore, there is no seriousness on the part of management in encouraging employees to learn new skills and present useful ideas for the organization.

2. Table (2) displays the overall average of the optimism dimension, which amounted to 3.29 at a standard deviation of 0.86. This dimension received an "average" response level. This means that the individuals in the surveyed sample do not have a strong desire to accomplish additional tasks, do not feel a great positive view of the organization, and that their proactive behavior is characterized by shyness and hesitation in facing their problems at work.

3. Table (2) shows the overall mean of the hope dimension, which was 3.29 with a standard deviation of 0.88, and this dimension received an "average" response level. This indicates that employees may not have a positive vision of the future regarding their work within the organization. They also do not have a strong motivation to achieve the organization's goals and improve their performance, most likely due to their lack of participation in setting goals in advance, as these goals were determined exclusively by management.

4. Table (2) presents the overall mean of the flexibility dimension, which was 3.35 with a standard deviation of 1.080, and this dimension received an "average" response level. It indicates the desire to adapt and conform to events that occur during work and to conform to changes that occur within the organization, and this may not prevail greatly among a large segment of employees according to the answers provided previously, due to the management's policy and its dealings with employees in a very formal manner, which made these employees not take the initiative and adhere to the policies dictated by management towards changes that occur in the external environment.

The general average of psychological capital was 3.30 with a standard deviation of 0.72 and a response level of "average". This indicates that employees enjoy a somewhat acceptable level of positive psychological state towards work, which enables them to perform their work with high morale, but this state is insufficient and does not rise to high levels.

#### **4.1.2 Statistical description of the professional compatibility variable and its dimensions:**

1. Nature of work According to Table (2) the overall average of the nature of work dimension was 3.25 with a standard deviation of 0.653 and this dimension received an "average" response level, which means that the tasks and responsibilities assigned to employees in the organization under study do not largely agree with the knowledge, skills, and experiences they possess due to the instructions and regulations that the organization adheres to, which do not reflect its desire to assign tasks according to the knowledge and experiences of employees.

2. Work environment according to Table (2), the overall average of the work environment dimension was 2.94 with a standard deviation of 0.769 and this dimension received an "average" response level, which indicates that the physical work environment of the organization does not enjoy a high level of satisfaction among employees due to the lack of importance or priority given by management to such matters.

3. The relationship with colleagues, the overall average of the dimension of the relationship with colleagues was 3.16 with a standard deviation of 0.839. This dimension received an "average" response level, which is an indication that social relations within the organization are governed to some extent by formal aspects and do not go beyond them to a small extent. This may be due to the management's emphasis on following formal rules in dealing with neglecting other dealings based on social ties and friendships.

4. The relationship with the supervisor, the overall average of the dimension of the relationship with supervisors was 3.10 with a standard deviation of 0.718. This dimension received an "average" response level, which means that the psychological, logistical, and social support from officials towards their subordinates is not well received by subordinates, as there is a feeling among employees that their subordinates are clinging to administrative barriers, hierarchy and instructions coming from administrative references.

The overall average of the professional compatibility dimension was 3.11 with a standard deviation of (0.54) and a response level of (average). This means that the interactive behaviors practiced by employees towards their supervisors do not give them the great ability to interact positively with these supervisors and the ability to adapt to the decisions they make due to factors related to the behaviors of supervisors who only adhere to what is dictated to them by organizational regulations and the vision of senior management.

**Table 2:** The means, standard deviations, and coefficients of variation for the research variables and their dimensions.

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	The coefficient of variation
Self-efficacy	3.25	0.89	27.38
Optimism	3.29	0.86	26.13
Hope	3.29	0.88	26.74
Flexibility	3.35	1.080	32.23
psychological capital	3.30	0.721	21.84
Nature of work	3.25	0.653	20.09
Work environment	2.94	0.769	26.15
Relationship with customers	3.16	0.839	26.55
Relationship with supervisor	3.10	0.718	23.16
Professional compatibility	3.11	0.541	17.39

**Source:** Prepared by the researchers.

**4.2 Hypothesis testing:**

**4.2.1 Testing the main hypothesis:**

The main effect hypothesis was developed, which states that "psychological capital has a significant impact on professional compatibility." In light of the results shown in Table 2, the calculated value of the relationship between psychological capital and professional compatibility reached 102.309, which is the calculated F value, which is greater than the F-value (1.59) at a significant level of 0.000 and less than a significance level of 0.05, meaning that there is a significant impact of psychological capital on professional compatibility, and thus the hypothesis is accepted. As for the value of the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>), it reached 0.340, which means that the psychological capital variable can explain 34% of the change in professional compatibility. In comparison 56% is due to other variables not included in the research model. As for the value of the linear slope coefficient, it reached 0.442, which means that a change that occurs in the level of psychological capital by one unit leads to a change in professional compatibility by 0.442, and the constant value 1.660.

**4.2.1.1 The first sub-hypothesis:**

A first sub-hypothesis was established, which is "There is a significant effect of self-efficacy on professional compatibility." In light of the results in Table 2, the calculated F value between self-efficacy and professional compatibility reached 52.576, which is greater than the tabular F (1.59) at a significant level of 0.000, i.e. less than the significant level of 0.05, meaning that there is a significant effect of self-efficacy on professional compatibility, so this hypothesis is accepted. As for the value of the determination coefficient (R<sup>2</sup>), it reached 0.209, which means that self-efficacy can explain 20% of the change in professional compatibility, while 80% is due to other variables that do not include in the research model, and the value of the slope coefficient of the straight line reached 0.280, meaning that the change that occurs in the level of self-efficacy by one unit leads to a change in professional compatibility by 0.280 and the fixed value reached 2.206.

**4.2.1.2 Second sub-hypothesis:**

A second sub-hypothesis was established stating "There is a significant effect of optimism on professional compatibility" and in light of the results in Table 2, the calculated F-value between optimism and professional compatibility reached 54.246 which is greater than the tabular F (1.59) at a significance level (0.000) i.e. less than the significant level (0.05), meaning that there is a significant effect of optimism on professional compatibility, therefore, this

hypothesis is accepted. As for the value of the determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ), it reached 0.214, which means that optimism can explain 21% of the change in professional compatibility, while 79% is due to other variables not included in the research model, and the value reached the slope coefficient of the straight line is 0.291, meaning that the change that occurs in the level of optimism by one unit leads to a change in professional compatibility by 0.291 and the fixed value reached 2.158.

**4.2.1.3 The third sub-hypothesis:**

A third sub-hypothesis was established stating that "there is a significant effect of hope on professional compatibility" and in light of the results in Table 2, the calculated F-value between hope and professional compatibility reached 104.878 which is greater than the tabular F (1.59) at a significant level (0.000) i.e. less than the significant level (0.05), meaning that there is a significant effect of hope on professional compatibility so this hypothesis is accepted, while the value of the determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) reached 0.345 which means that hope can explain what is attributed to 34% of the change in professional compatibility, while 66% is due to other variables not included in the research model, and the value of the slope coefficient of the straight line reached 0.362, meaning that the change that occurs in the level of hope by one unit leads to a change in professional compatibility by 0.362 and the fixed value reached 1.925.

**4.2.1.4 The fourth sub-hypothesis:**

A fourth sub-hypothesis was established, which is "There is a significant effect of flexibility on professional compatibility" and in light of the results in Table 2, the calculated F-value between flexibility and professional compatibility reached 23.375 which is greater than the tabular F (1.59) at a significant level (0.000) i.e. less than the significant level (0.05), meaning that there is a significant effect of flexibility on professional compatibility, so this hypothesis is accepted. The value of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) reached 0.105, which means that flexibility can explain 10% of the change in professional compatibility, while 90% is due to other variables that do not include in the research model. The value of the slope coefficient of the straight line reached 164.0, meaning that the change that occurs in the level of flexibility by one unit leads to a change in professional compatibility by 164.0, and the fixed value reached 2.568.

**Table 2:** The hypothesis of a main effect was established that "there is a significant effect of psychological capital on professional compatibility" and in light of the results

The Independent Variable	Dimensions	F	$R^2$	Fixed value	B	Sig	The Dependent Variable
Psychological Capital	Overall	102.309	0.340	1.660	0.442	0.000	Professional Compatibility
	Self-Efficacy	52.576	0.209	2.206	0.280	0.000	
	Optimism	54.246	0.214	2.158	0.291	0.000	
	Hope	104.878	0.345	1.925	0.362	0.000	
	Flexibility	23.375	0.105	2.568	164.0	0.000	

Source: SPSS V.28 output

**5. The Discussion of Results:**

Professional compatibility in the studied sample did not indicate a high level because individuals do not feel that the jobs they work in resemble their thinking patterns or the skills and knowledge they possess. This is related to administrative and practical aspects. As for the social aspect, relationships with colleagues and superiors are not healthy relationships characterized by transparency. Rather, commitment to formalities is what describes these relationships. As a result, this negatively affects their compatibility with their professions. Psychological capital affects professional compatibility, which is what the research results reached.



This means that the positive psychological characteristics that employees possess, including their desire to develop themselves, affect their ability to adapt to their professions, and events that occur within the organization. This is logical, considering that one of the most important aspects of flexibility that employees can adapt to new knowledge and skills that can be introduced to work and tasks in the organization. This is what was observed through the analysis of the sub-hypothesis related to the effect of flexibility on professional compatibility. According to the results, optimism affects professional compatibility, meaning that the positive perceptions that individuals have about the organization's work give them the desire and ability to make themselves compatible with all aspects of the professions they perform within the organization. Self-efficacy affects professional compatibility, and this was observed through the analysis of the results of the questionnaire distributed to the research sample in the organization under study. This means that the positive perceptions that individuals have about themselves and their desire to participate with senior management in their decisions affect their desire to be compatible with the tasks and work included in their professions within the organization. As for the areas of benefit from previous studies, the researchers can identify many sources books, studies, research, and others related to the literature of the research topic. Some previous studies enabled the researchers to benefit from building some of the contents of the theoretical aspect of the research, formulating the hypothetical research, designing it for the research, benefiting from qualitative and quantitative indicators to achieve its goals, and formulating the items of the questionnaire. What distinguishes the current research from previous studies is that the current research can be considered one of the studies that took the initiative to integrate the variables (positive psychological capital and professional compatibility) into one model, according to the researcher's knowledge, and only a few other researchers have addressed it. Our current research was distinguished by the application of this research to a sample of administrative employees in the General Directorate of Administrative Affairs of the Iraqi Ministry of Education, as it is a unique experience of its kind. Most previous studies were applied in profit-making organizations, while our current research was applied in the Directorate of Administrative Affairs, which is a non-profit organization, and this is what distinguishes the current research from previous studies.

#### **6. Conclusions:**

It seems that the management in the organization under research follows an organizational culture that creates barriers between it and the employees. This is evident in its lack of seriousness in openness to the opinions of employees and its failure to encourage them to participate in making decisions related to the organization. As a result, employees feel hesitant to express their opinions and provide information that may benefit the organization and contribute to facilitating the decision-making process. It seems that employees feel a lack of confidence in their abilities to manage their affairs within the organization, which negatively affects their ability to carry out the tasks required of them flexibly. In addition, the initiative behavior of employees is weak and is dominated by hesitation and shyness, which limits their ability to present new ideas or perform additional tasks. The desire to adapt to emergency events and find innovative solutions seems very weak among employees. Management restricts employees to specific ways of dealing with problems, which leads to their lack of flexibility at work. Employees feel restricted by official regulations and do not have options or powers to change or improve the situation. There is a weakness in the positive psychological abilities of employees, which limits their psychological readiness to achieve the organization's goals due to administrative trends that follow a strict approach and do not encourage participation in decision-making. There is a gap between the skills and knowledge possessed by employees and the responsibilities entrusted to them. The organization still adheres to old administrative traditions that focus on instructions and regulations, ignoring the human and organizational aspects. The work environment in the organization, whether material or moral, does not meet the needs of employees.

Management does not pay sufficient attention to social and material aspects such as lighting and ventilation, which has led to employees feeling dissatisfied. Excessive formality in relationships: Relationships between colleagues are characterized by a commitment to formality, which negatively affects professional and social relationships. The absence of a healthy environment that encourages open communication between employees or between supervisors and their subordinates, as these relationships are governed by formal regulations. Despite all these challenges, it seems that employees who have a positive image of their professional future enjoy better professional compatibility, which enhances their integration into their tasks and motivates them to move forward in achieving the organization's goals.

#### **Authors Declaration:**

Conflicts of Interest: None

-We Hereby Confirm That All The Figures and Tables In The Manuscript Are Mine and Ours. Besides, The Figures and Images, which are Not Mine, Have Been Permitted Republication and Attached to The Manuscript.

- Ethical Clearance: The Research Was Approved by The Local Ethical Committee in The University.

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