

Indian Journal of Modern Research and Reviews

This Journal is a member of the 'Committee on Publication Ethics'

Online ISSN: 2584-184X



Research Paper

Behaviour of Civil Servants at Work for A Civil Service Freed: Myth or Reality

Pierre Daniel INDJENDJE NDALA^{1*}

Teacher-Researcher, Institut Supérieur de Technologie (IST)
Laboratoire de recherche en sciences de l'informatique et de Gestion (LARSIG)

Corresponding Author: * Pierre Daniel INDJENDJE NDALA

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13972303>

ABSTRACT	Manuscript Info.
<p>This paper attempts to show that the behavior of civil servants at work can liberate civil service in the African context. We mobilized theory Y and intrinsic motivation theory to explain this relationship. We adopted an exploratory and then confirmatory quantitative methodology following a hypothetico-deductive logic. A questionnaire was administered to 252 civil servants at their workplaces. Structural equation modeling was used to process the primary data to extract the behaviours of civil servants at work that explain Civil service freed. The results indicate that three types of behaviors of civil servants at work explain Civil service freed. Paradoxical obligatory behaviors that should normally recruit civil servants, obligatory behaviors, and individual voluntary behaviors. Paradoxical obligatory behaviors are composed of the execution of assigned tasks, hierarchical obedience or compliance with orders, dignity or no harm to the reputation of one's administration, self-denial or dedication to one's duties, professional secrecy or professional discretion, the duty to inform or the principle of free access to administrative documents. Obligatory behaviors are composed of probity or the principle of integrity or being disinterested in work, impartiality or neutrality or equal treatment or respect for the principle of secularism, and prevention of conflict-of-interest situations. Individual voluntary behaviors that first free civil servants, taking initiative, autonomy, responsibility, involvement, and empathy. These behaviors ultimately liberate the Civil service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ISSN No: 2584-184X ✓ Received: 27-07-2024 ✓ Accepted: 15-08-2024 ✓ Published: 19-10-2024 ✓ MRR:2(10):2024;13-21 ✓ ©2024, All Rights Reserved. ✓ Peer Review Process: Yes ✓ Plagiarism Checked: Yes
	<p style="text-align: center;">How To Cite</p> <p>Pierre Daniel INDJENDJE NDALA. Behaviour of Civil Servants at Work for A Civil Service Freed: Myth or Reality. Indian Journal of Modern Research and Reviews: 2024;2(10):13-21.</p>

KEYWORDS: Civil Service Freed, Civil Servants, Work Behaviours, theory Y, Intrinsic Motivation Theory, Structural Equation Model.

1. INTRODUCTION

The civil service faces challenges such as the management of limited resources, increasing demands from citizens and political pressures. These factors impact the behaviours of civil servants on a daily basis. It is therefore essential to understand the context in which civil servants operate, in order to identify potential levers for improvement. We study the behaviours of civil servants at work in this specific context to highlight the

different factors that influence the decisions and actions of civil servants within their work environment to become autonomous, free from all actions and suggestions. The work on the liberated company is still relevant (Jacquinot and Pellissier-Tanon, 2015; Vandermissen, 2015; Holtz, 2016). On the other hand, it is rare to come across work on a civil service freed (CPF). However, we can cite on the one hand, the article

by Fox and Pichault (2016) which addressed the subject. In addition, a rare case of liberated public organization in France, Social Security (Getz, 2017). Could this concept of liberated organization be extended and generalized to any private or public organization? Indjendje Ndala (in press) tried to answer in the affirmative. In the African context, the Civil service is very regimented and subservient, particularly by politicians and public managers. Arendt (1969) argues that "...the bureaucracy of public life is the form of governance in which everyone is deprived of political freedom, of the power to act [...] where everyone is equally powerless, we have a tyranny without a tyrant." At the dawn of the 21st century, organizations are seeking to free themselves with liberated employees to be more efficient, effective, efficient and innovative. But, reality shows the opposite. Civil service in French-speaking Africa are struggling to free themselves. The literature on liberated organizations indicates that liberation can come from the leaders or managers who are the detonators of the process, first, then from the employees who must take ownership of the process to carry it out. It is rare, to our knowledge, to find work on the behaviors of employees to liberate a public organization. El Khoury & al. (2022) point out that research is multiplying on the subject without reaching a consensus on its scope. Thus, we focus this research on the behaviors of civil servants at work that lead to a Civil service freed. We then ask ourselves: "to what extent can the behaviors of civil servants at work lead to a Civil service freed?" The objective of this research is to show that specific behaviors of civil servants at work make it possible to obtain a Civil service freed. If we see that the liberated company is already seen as a utopia and suffers from a deficit of information and knowledge (Holtz, 2017a). What would then be the case for a public organization like the Civil service? It is therefore interesting to extend the concept in public organizations, in particular, to study the conditions that would favor the liberation of a public service through the prism of employee behavior. It would also be interesting to glimpse the theoretical and managerial implications that would influence practices in public services in Africa. To answer the research question, we present a literature review and a theoretical anchoring, followed by the research methodology, and then we present the results, their discussions, and the contributions of the research, before concluding.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL ANCHORING

We present the obligations of civil servants at work and the behaviors that they can develop personally at work, and then we present the theoretical anchoring.

2.1 Obligations of civil servants at work

Civil servants are subject to the civil service status which governs their behaviour at work and implies not only rights but also duties, enshrined in the general civil service code.

These include: obligations to carry out the tasks assigned or execution of tasks or not to abandon one's responsibilities. Indeed, the civil servant is responsible for the execution of the tasks entrusted to him. He is not released from his responsibilities by what his colleagues or collaborators may do"; of hierarchical obedience or to comply with orders or not to compromise the public interest, that is to say, the civil servant is bound by the hierarchical principle. He must comply with the orders of his superiors, except when the order is illegal and likely to compromise the public interest; to devote himself entirely to his duties or not to combine his duties. In principle, a civil servant cannot combine his duties with another activity, private or public. However, there are exceptions and derogations. Some countries such as Cameroon and Gabon allow a civil servant to have an income-generating activity in parallel, but by avoiding conflicts of interest; of dignity or not to harm the reputation of his administration. The obligation of dignity means that the civil servant must not, by his behavior, harm the reputation of his administration such as a slanderous denunciation, a public scandal while drunk, etc.; of impartiality or not having any personal prejudice. The obligation of impartiality requires the civil servant to abandon any personal prejudice and to adopt an impartial attitude in his duties; of probity or the principle of integrity or to work in a disinterested manner, that is to say the obligation of probity requires the civil servant not to use his duties to derive personal profit from them. The principle of integrity also requires the civil servant to carry out his duties in a disinterested manner without charging for his services; of neutrality or to treat citizens equally or to respect the principle of secularism, that is to say the civil servant must treat all users equally, regardless of their origins, gender, political or religious beliefs, and respect their freedom of conscience and dignity. He is prohibited from expressing his religious opinions during his service; to prevent conflict of interest situations, the civil servant must ensure that he immediately ends or prevents conflict of interest situations in which he finds himself or could find himself; of professional secrecy or professional discretion, i.e. civil servants are bound by professional secrecy within the framework of the rules established by the penal code. They must exercise professional discretion for all facts, information or documents of which they become aware in the exercise of their functions; of the duty to inform users or the principle of free access to administrative documents, i.e. civil servants must satisfy requests for information from the public. This obligation is the statutory translation of the principle of free access to administrative documents. The duty to inform is however limited by professional secrecy and by the obligation of professional discretion; of reserve or to observe restraint in the expression of one's opinions or even of courtesy, i.e. the obligation of reserve obliges the civil servant, to whom freedom of expression is guaranteed, to observe restraint in the expression of his political opinions. He must be courteous.

Table 1: Behaviour of civil servants at work

Behaviors likely to free up the civil service	Behaviors likely to recruit the public service
Impartiality/ No personal bias	Carry out or execute the tasks assigned
Probity/ principle of integrity/ disinterested manner	Hierarchical obedience / Comply with orders / not compromise a public interest
Neutrality/ Treat equally/ Respect the principle of secularism	Dedicate oneself entirely to one's duties/ Do not combine duties/ Self-denial
Prevent conflict of interest situations	Professional secrecy/ Professional discretion
Autonomy	Duty to inform/ Principle of free access to administrative documents
Responsibility, not abandoning responsibilities	Dignité/ Pas porter atteinte à la réputation de son administration
Taking initiatives and decisions	
Work Involvement, Commitment, Motivation	
Empathy	

Source: Author 2024

All these obligations impose specific behaviours on public service agents. In addition, civil servants must observe other behaviors that are not directly listed in the general public service code. These are being autonomous, responsible, taking initiatives and decisions, being participative, committed, cooperative, motivated, involved, collaborative, empathetic, helpful, etc. These different behaviours make it possible to free or recruit the public service. If we were allowed to segment the behaviors of civil servants at work who recruit or free the public service, we would summarize them in Table 1. The task seems to be difficult to achieve a Civil service freed, if we consider the rules, the administrative procedures that are framed by the legislative and regulatory texts, the principle of hierarchy, bureaucratic management, labor relations and stakeholders such as politicians who subjugate the Civil service and the behavior of colleagues and public managers at work, and the incivility of users. All these elements present seem to come together to constrain or even imprison the Civil service. Even if talking about a Civil service freed seems paradoxical, we try to show that there are theoretical conditions, among others, the behavior of civil servants, which favor a Civil service freed.

2.2 Civil service freed: borrowed concept

The concept of a liberated company can be understood from the point of view of managers via their type of management as shown by Indjendje Ndala (in press) these are companies that have freed themselves from traditional controls and regulations. But it can also be approached from the point of view of employees, by granting them greater autonomy and recognizing their expertise and their ability to make decisions. This is the subject of this research. We transpose the notion of a liberated company to any type of organization, including the Civil service. Thus, we borrow from Getz (2012), that a liberated public service is an organizational form in which civil servants are autonomous, responsible and take initiatives and decisions in the actions that they deem good, them and not their boss, to undertake to achieve the vision of the Civil service. We are in a situation where public sector leaders would leave

a large part of their decision-making prerogatives to their civil servant collaborators. In this case, employees co-construct with managers the unique liberated organizational mode of their organization (Getz, 2012, 2017; Holtz, 2016).

2.3 Liberating behaviors of civil servants at work

According to El Khoury & *et al.*, (2022) a liberated company presents twelve "operationalizable" criteria, namely the flattening of the structure and the elimination of hierarchical relationships while providing support to employees; Culture focused on humanist and ethical values; the presence of a liberating leader who must promote an environment of autonomy and absence of hierarchical control; the autonomy of decentralized decisions and the replacement of traditional controls by behavioural standards; measures promoting equality; the implementation of collaborative systems by actively promoting collaboration among employees; the reduction of hierarchical control; the implementation of R&D policies to foster creativity; the promotion of employee accountability and the strengthening of their autonomy; promoting transparency providing access to information; mutual trust between leaders, employees and customers; the division into small autonomous teams. Responsibility within the Civil service is a determining factor for the motivation of civil servants. When they feel responsible and involved in decision-making and organizational processes, they have a sense of belonging and control over their work, which stimulates their intrinsic motivation. The active participation of civil servants, by giving them appropriate responsibilities, fosters a culture of trust and autonomy. Transformational leadership is a fundamental element in the creation and development of a liberated organization. This leadership style encourages and motivates employees to develop a common vision and to be motivated and engaged in their work. By focusing on building strong relationships of trust and mutual respect, transformational leaders manage to create a harmonious work environment that is conducive to quality of life and personal development (Colle *et al.*, 2017). As catalysts for change, civil servants inspire and influence their colleagues in a constructive, empathetic and caring manner. Thanks to their empathetic and visionary approach, these civil servants of change are able to unite around common projects and objectives. For their development, these civil servants should adopt strategies that promote work-life balance, such as flexible working hours, teleworking opportunities and sufficient paid leave, engagement in leisure and relaxation activities to reduce stress and avoid burnout. Ethics is an essential pillar of the civil service freed. Civil servants must be aware of their duty to society and commit to serving the public interest with integrity. They must be transparent in their actions, avoiding any conflict of interest or dishonest behavior. It is necessary for civil servants to respect ethical principles such as justice, fairness, impartiality and respect for human rights. Second (2023) notes that the philosophy of the liberated company intends to let employees take initiatives, rather than imposing directives and controls on them.

2.4 Theoretical anchoring

Theory X states that "employees have an intrinsic aversion to work and prefer to be directed to escape responsibilities" (McGregor, 1960). Thus, man at work must necessarily be commanded and controlled within the framework of a hierarchical and vertical structure. Employees in such a structure are constrained, adopt behaviours at work that are not conducive to performance, their development, job satisfaction, etc. Which does not promote their liberation or that of the Civil service. Therefore, theory X is not an appropriate analytical framework to explain a Civil service freed by the behaviours of civil servants at work. On the other hand, Mc Gregor's theory Y (1960) assumes that man is by nature trustworthy, aspires to freedom and is eager to invest himself in his work. The Civil service must therefore be thought of by placing this man at the centre, so that he can express his true nature. We add the theory of intrinsic motivation Deci and Ryan (1985) which consists of being the own engine of one's satisfaction leading to the development of the individual. It is determined by the satisfaction of three universal needs: autonomy, competence and the need to be in a relationship with others (Deci and Ryan, 2000, 2002). In addition, Carney and Getz (2016) interpret these needs as self-direction, self-realization and intrinsic equality. The liberated organization strives to create an environment that meets these needs. By exploiting theories Y and intrinsic motivation, we can obtain different variables and mechanisms that shape the liberating behaviour of civil servants. Thus, they allow us to show that these civil servants can free themselves and/or free the Civil service. A field investigation allows us to collect perceptions of civil servants to corroborate or not their own liberation and the liberation of the Civil service by their behaviours at work. We deduce the following hypotheses from the literature and theories:

H1: "work behaviours of self-denial, obedience to hierarchy, task execution, discretion, obligation to inform, recruit civil servants."

H2: "Work behaviors of involvement, empathy, dignity, self-denial, liberate civil servants."

H3: "Liberated civil servants are responsible, autonomous, fulfilled, impartial, disinterested, take initiatives and avoid conflicts of interest."

H4: "work behaviors of obedience to hierarchy, task execution, discretion, obligation to inform, recruit the civil service."

H5: "work behaviors of involvement, empathy, dignity, self-denial, liberate the civil service."

H6: "Liberated civil servants liberate the civil service. »

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We present the research data, the methodological approach and the data processing technique

3.1 Research data

The empirical data used in this research are primary and collected from a questionnaire administered to 252 Gabonese

civil servants in self-administration. The public administrations solicited were the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, and the Ministry of Fisheries. The questionnaire included several closed and open questions in order to explain certain points in detail and provide a sufficient understanding of the liberation of the civil service through the behaviour of civil servants at work. The themes covered in the questionnaire are, among others, the type of obligations of a civil servant at work, the perception of the characteristics of a good civil servant at work, knowledge of the general code of the civil service, the state of a liberated or regimented civil service, the perception of the liberation of the civil service, behaviours at work, the character traits of civil servants. The majority of the variables are operationalized by 5-level Likert scales. A summary of the responses of the civil servants interviewed is recorded in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of informants' responses (there were non-responses)

Responses greater than or equal to 3 on the Likert scale	Nb.	%
Probity/ principle of integrity/ disinterested manner	118	46,8
Impartiality or Neutrality/Treat equally/Respect for the principle of secularism	152	60,3
Prevent conflict of interest situations	90	35,7
Autonomy	115	45,6
Responsibility, not abandoning responsibilities	119	47,2
Taking initiatives and decisions	106	42,1
Work Involvement, Commitment, Motivation	98	38,9
Hierarchical obedience / Comply with orders / not compromise a public interest	100	39,7
Dedicate oneself entirely to one's duties/ Do not combine duties/ Self-denial	120	47,6
Professional secrecy/ Professional discretion	133	52,8
Duty to inform/ Principle of free access to administrative documents	75	29,8
Dignity / Not to harm the reputation of its administration	100	39,7
Carry out or execute the tasks assigned	103	40,9
Empathy	150	59,5
Flourishing, well-being, job satisfaction	90	35,7

Source: Author 2024.

3.2 Methodology and treatment technique

Our methodology is quantitative. It is based on the structural equation modeling technique. Indeed, this technique is justified because variables such as the Civil service freed and the freedom of civil servants are not measured directly. They are operationalized with items of civil servants' behavior at work, which in turn are measured by 5-level Likert scales. In addition, this technique makes it possible to model relationships with several variables simultaneously to understand the direct and indirect effects between the variables. We seek to validate the Likert scales relating to these variables by the Cronbach coefficient which analyses their reliability and internal consistency.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

We present the results of the validity and reliability of the scales and then the model of the structural equations of the

Civil service freed by the behaviors of the civil servants that we discuss.

The reliability of the scales is assessed by the Cronbach Alpha indicator (α). $\alpha = .717$ and Cronbach α based on standardized items = $.703$. The internal consistency of the scales is acceptable.

4.1 Search results

-Reliability of the scales

Table 3: Cronbach's α indicating the importance of the items of the latent variables

Latent variable	Items	Cronbach's α	Latent variable	Items	Cronbach's α
Work behaviour	Execute Task	,686	Civil Servant Released	Probity-Integrity-Disinterestedness	,702
	Involved, committed	,695		Responsibility	,704
	Dignity	,697		Autonomy	,708
	Self-denial	,701		Avoiding Conflicts of Interest	,713
	Discreet, Secret	,702		Taking initiatives and decisions	,720
	Empathic	,704		Impartiality-Neutrality	,723
	Duty to Inform	,708		Flourishing, well-being	,723
	Obeying Orders	,713			

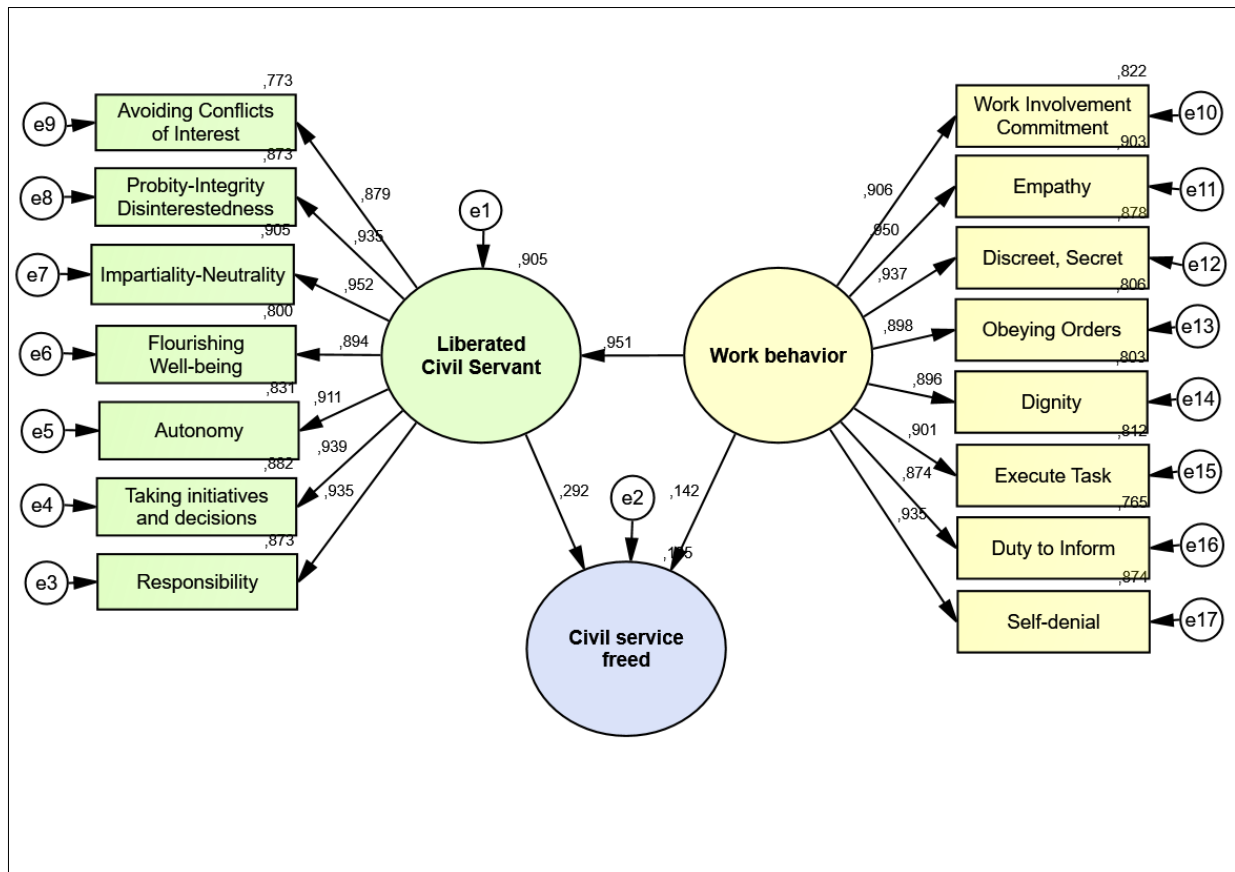
Source: Author 2024.

The Cronbach's α of the items of the latent variable "Work Behavior" indicate that all eight items are very important because their deletion would reduce the Cronbach's α to a value lower than 0.717. Concerning the latent variable "Liberated Civil Servant", the four items "Probity-Disinterested", "Responsibility", "Autonomy" and "No Conflict of Interest" are the most important.

Structural Equation Model

The Chi-square indicator (Degrees of freedom = 118, Probability level = $.000$) = 2885.177 indicates that the model obtained is globally validated and significant (see Appendix).

Fig 1: Structural equation model of the civil service freed



Source: Author 2024, Model of the Civil Service freed according to the behavior of agents at work.

The results of the model summarized in Figure 1 and Table 4 indicate that all the items that explain the latent variables are all significant because their p-value is less than 5%. The behaviours of civil servants at work significantly explain 95.1% of liberated civil servants. The behaviours of civil servants at work significantly explain 14.2% of Civil service freed. Liberated civil servants liberate the civil service at 29.3%. The variable “Work Behaviour” is positively and significantly explained by two types of behaviour at work: individual voluntary behaviours, in particular “involvement

and empathy” on the one hand, and paradoxical obligatory behaviours, “Discreet, Obedience to orders, Dignified, Execution of task, Duty to inform and Self-denial”, on the other hand. The variable “Liberated civil servant” is positively and significantly explained by obligatory behaviours “No conflict of interest, Integrity-disinterested, Impartial-neutral, Fulfilment, Autonomy, Taking Initiatives/decisions and Responsibility”

Table 4: Regression coefficients of relationships between variables

	Explanatory variables		Explained variables	C.R.	Estim.	p-value
	Work behaviour	<---	Liberated Civil Servant	,076	,951	,009
	Work behaviour	<---	Civil service freed	,010	,142	***
	Liberated Civil Servant	<---	Civil service freed	,010	,292	***
Liberated Civil Servant	Avoiding Conflicts of Interest	<---	Liberated Civil Servant	,028	,879	***
	Probity-Integrity-Disinterestedness	<---	Liberated Civil Servant	,013	,935	***
	Impartiality-Neutrality	<---	Liberated Civil Servant	,024	,952	,009
	Flourishing, well-being	<---	Liberated Civil Servant	,022	,894	***
	Autonomy	<---	Liberated Civil Servant	,016	,911	***
	Taking initiatives and decisions	<---	Liberated Civil Servant	,014	,939	***
	Responsibility	<---	Liberated Civil Servant	,014	,935	***
Work behaviour	Work Involvement, commitment	<---	Work behaviour	,059	,906	,021
	Empathy	<---	Work behaviour	,026	,950	,019
	Discreet, Secret	<---	Work behaviour	,035	,937	,003
	Obedying Orders	<---	Work behaviour	,024	,898	,012
	Dignity	<---	Work behaviour	,011	,896	***
	Execute Task	<---	Work behaviour	,014	,901	,013
	Duty to Inform	<---	Work behaviour	,017	,874	***
	Self-denial	<---	Work behaviour	,009	,935	***

Source: Author 2024, result from AMOS software.

Decision on the hypotheses

The results on the model allow us to invalidate and confirm the hypotheses retained.

Table 5: Decisions on the assumptions retained

Hypotheses	Decisions
H1: “Work behaviors of self-denial, obedience to hierarchy, execution of tasks, discretion, obligation to inform, dignity, recruit civil servants.”	Invalidated
H2: “Work behaviors of involvement/commitment, empathy, self-denial, liberate civil servants.”	Confirmed
H3: “liberated civil servants are responsible, autonomous, flourished, impartial, disinterested, take initiatives/decisions and avoid conflicts of interest.”	Confirmed
H4: “work behaviors of obedience to hierarchy, execution of tasks, discretion, obligation to inform, are recruiting the civil service.”	Invalidated
H5: “Work behaviors of involvement, empathy, dignity, self-denial, liberate the civil service.”	Confirmed
H6: “liberated civil servants liberate the civil service.”	Confirmed

Source: Author 2024.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Douglas Mc Gregor (1960) in his theory Y, states that employees aspire to freedom, are involved, are determined and

motivated so they are willing to invest themselves in their work. Our results confirm this assertion. We corroborate the result of Tessa et al. (2013) who indicate that public sector workers are more engaged despite their demanding environment. We also follow the idea of Getz and Carney (2012) who highlight employees visibly happy to be in "self-determination". These civil servants are satisfied at work, a sign of their fulfilment. The result on fulfilment is also in agreement with Wise (2002) who argues that humanization in the public service relates, among other things, to employee-centered satisfaction in programs such as work appreciation and training, paternity and maternity leave, human resource policies and work flexibility. Our results are in line with Grawitch (2006) who predicts that the adoption of progressive human resources management practices combines the interests of the organization and the well-being of civil servants. We follow the lead of El Khoury & al. (2022) who emphasize that the concept of liberated enterprise must be considered as a process, with its characteristics serving as steps towards its implementation. We have confirmed the criteria of El Khoury & al. (2022) on the liberated enterprise, by supplementing them with others in the context of a public organization such as the civil service. The results of this research must be

understood as theoretical factors that can transform a regimented public organization into a liberated public organization. The results of this research are generally in line with Colle (2010a, 2010b) who notes that a liberated organization would correspond more to employees feeling a strong need for self-determination. This result on liberated civil servants is in contradiction with Pesqueux (2006) who argues that New Public Management also leads to making the individual a "hostage" of managerial categories. Our result on commitment and involvement is in agreement with Bourdieu (1972) who underlines that if commitment or involvement was justified in an era of submission to authority, this is much less the case today. It is rather the commitment by neutrality of Heinich (2006). This result is in contradiction with Gilbert et al. (2017), in the African context, who underline that manager "create a work environment conducive to freedom of action, based on intrinsic equality between individuals and promoting self-motivation". It is also in contradiction, in our context, with Ballarin (2017) and Holtz (2017b) who emphasize that the objective of managers is to promote accountability, productivity and the development of their team. On the other hand, we agree with Galera et al. (2008) who argue that the deviances observed in public organizations generally take the form of a "non-involvement" of agents through resistance. However, our case shows that civil servants have a tendency to act, to take initiatives and responsibilities. The result on the autonomy of agents is in contradiction with Pesqueux (2006) who writes that: "the autonomy granted to public services tends to put the managerial role of public agents before the political objectives of the functioning of administrative services."

Theoretical and managerial implications

We present the theoretical and managerial implications of this research.

Theoretical contributions

The results of this research allow us to complete the criteria that characterize a liberated organization, in particular individual voluntarist criteria such as empathy and involvement, to the criteria already proposed by El Khoury & al. (2022) that we have categorized into paradoxical mandatory criteria and mandatory criteria. In addition, our results allow us to complete the determining factors that justify the use of theory Y and the theory of intrinsic motivation, in a liberated organization problem, namely fulfillment and ethics (with impartiality, neutrality, probity, disinterestedness, avoidance of conflict of interest).

Managerial contributions

Authorities should focus on the learning and training aspect for civil servants to acquire new skills to familiarize themselves with new technologies and strengthen their existing capacities in order to increase their autonomy. Parliamentarians can propose a text that grants, over a month of work, one day of freedom and professional development for civil servants,

because it will allow them to acquire new skills, stay up to date on best practices and adapt to developments in their field. Authorities should create leisure frameworks such as excursions to promote synergies, sharing a common vision and convergence of objectives between colleagues. They can set up simulation games for the empowerment of civil servants during the week, such as time devoted to fire safety simulation. Authorities can institute a day of hierarchical inversion where civil servants play the roles of managers and managers the roles of their civil servant colleagues to detect and correct management errors in a constructive spirit of the actors. Ethics is a crucial element of the behaviour of civil servants in the liberated civil service. It is imperative to establish clear and concise standards of ethical conduct to guide employee behaviours. This ensures that public servants act appropriately and with integrity when interacting with the public and making decisions within the organization. To ensure ethical conduct, it is necessary to put in place monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Public servants must be held accountable for their actions and decisions, and appropriate disciplinary action must be taken in the event of a violation of the code of ethical conduct.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have shown that a civil service can be liberated by the behaviours of civil servants at work. To achieve this, we asked ourselves "to what extent can the behaviours of civil servants at work lead to a Civil service freed?" We used two theories as an analytical framework to explain the liberation of civil servants and the liberation of the Civil service by the behaviours of said civil servants at work, namely theory Y and the theory of self-motivation. Our methodological approach was quantitative confirmatory following a hypothetico-deductive logic based on data collected from a questionnaire administered in self-administration to 252 civil servants. The data processing technique that we used is structural equation modelling. The result of the research is mainly the model of the liberation of the Civil service by the behaviours of civil servants at work. It confirmed that three types of behaviours of civil servants at work, namely, paradoxical obligatory behaviours, obligatory behaviors and individual voluntary behaviors, liberate civil servants, and they, by ricochet, liberate the civil service. In addition, we obtained two counter-intuitive results, namely, paradoxical obligatory behaviours and obligatory behaviours do not regiment civil servants or the civil service. This is what makes us say that it is not the rules contained in the civil service code that regiment the Civil service. It is their practical daily use by civil servants that regiments them and regiments the Civil service. We note that despite our encouraging and theoretical results, reality shows, nevertheless, that the Civil service remains relatively under control. We believe, despite everything, that there is hope of arriving at Civil service freed but the process is still long. Ultimately, voluntary actions are required from the actors who must necessarily adapt their behaviors at work to this transformation. There are still civil

servants, in the African context, who are still in a position of still-regulated executors. We therefore retain that the Civil service freed is a timid reality. We agree that the liberation of the Civil service is a process, so future investigations are necessary and longitudinal and processual approaches must be adopted to study the evolution of civil servants' behaviors in order to retain the determinants of the liberation of the Civil service. We confirm the result of Fox and Pichault (2016) that liberation within a public organization such as a ministry seems very fragile. There is indeed a relative well-being among civil servants but dissatisfaction regarding working conditions and work tools remains. The contributions of this research are theoretical and managerial respectively as we have indicated above. We note a limitation to this work relating to a single case, the Gabonese Civil service. It would be interesting to extend the research by considering other cases of Civil service in the sub-region or beyond, for better stability of the results. Other perspectives for this research are at the level of deepening investigations with civil servants to qualitatively study the reasons related to work tools and working conditions that would provide additional understanding of the state of Civil service in Africa. Despite the existence in African countries, especially French-speaking ones, of ministries of state reform that are created, national schools of administration and several reforms for more than 3 decades, we only timidly perceive the developments of Civil service in the direction of liberation. It is imperative to examine the actors.

REFERENCES

1. Arendt H. *On Violence*. New York: Harcourt; 1969.
2. Ballarin B. A la recherche d'un nouveau modèle d'organisation et de management chez Michelin. *Le Journal de L'école de Paris du Management*. 2017;126(4):38-44.
3. Bourdieu P. *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique précédée de trois études d'ethnologie kabyle*. Genève: Droz; 1972. 269 p.
4. Carney BM, Getz I. *Freedom, Inc.* Crown/Random House; 2016. Traduit en 8 langues dont en Français: *Liberté & Cie*, Fayard; 2012/Flammarion.
5. Colle R. Le rôle du sentiment d'auto-détermination dans la fidélisation des salariés. 21ème Congrès de l'AGR; 2010; St Malo.
6. Colle R. Flexible schedules and stress: the role of self-determination. 4th International Conference on Self-Determination Theory; 2010; Ghent, Belgique.
7. Colle R, Corbett-Etchevers I, Defélix C, Perea C, Richard D. Innovation et qualité de vie au travail: les entreprises «libérées» tiennent-elles leurs promesses? *Management & Avenir*. 2017;3:161-83.
8. Deci EL, Ryan RM. *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behaviour*. New York: Plenum; 1985.
9. Deci EL, Ryan RM. The “What” and “Why” of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and The Self-Determination of Behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*. 2000;11:227-68.
10. Deci EL, Ryan RM. *Handbook of self-determination research*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press; 2002. 480 p.
11. El Khoury M, Jaouen A, Sammut S. L'entreprise libérée: proposition de critères de caractérisation. *Revue de l'organisation responsable*. 2022;17:9-23.
12. Fox F, Pichault F. Au-delà des succès stories, quel processus de libération? Étude de cas au sein du secteur public belge. *Les Actes du colloque de Clermont-Ferrand*; 2016 July 7-8; Clermont-Ferrand: Programme d'Etudes sur les Organisations Post-managériales et la Libération des Entreprises, Groupe ESC Clermont.
13. Galera AN, Ortiz Rodriguez N, Lopez Hernandez AM. Identifying Barriers to the Application of Standardized Performance Indicators in Local Government. *Public Management Review*. 2008;10(2):241-62.
14. Getz I. La liberté d'action des salariés: une simple théorie ou un inéluctable destin? *Gérer et comprendre*. 2012;108:27-38.
15. Getz I, Carney BM. *Liberté & Cie: Quand la liberté des salariés fait le bonheur des entreprises*. Paris: Fayard; 2012.
16. Getz I. *L'entreprise libérée*. Paris: Fayard; 2017.
17. Gilbert P, Teglberg AC, Raulet-Croset N. L'entreprise libérée, innovation radicale ou simple avatar du management participatif? *Gérer et Comprendre*. 2017;127:38-49.
18. Grawitch MJ, Gottschakl M, Munz DC. The path to a healthy workplace. Critical review linking healthy workplace practices, employee well-being, and organizational improvements. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*. 2006;58(3):129-47.
19. Heinich N. Pour une neutralité engagée. *Questions de communication*. Actes. 2006;3:83-96.
20. Holtz T. Les pratiques managériales dans les entreprises libérées. Quelles singularités? Quels impacts sur la qualité de vie au travail? *Le cahier des RPS*. 2016;27:27-38.
21. Holtz T. Il faut libérer l'entreprise libérée. *Economie et Management*. 2017;162:33-9.
22. Holtz T. Mutations du leadership dans une entreprise en voie de libération. *Revue Internationale de Psychosociologie et de Gestion des Comportements Organisationnels*. 2017;23(56):125-40.
23. Indjendje Ndala PD. Influence du type de management sur une fonction publique embrigadée vs. libérée: cas du Gabon. *International Journal of Accounting, Finance, Auditing, Management and Economics*. In press.
24. Jacquinet P, Pellissier-Tanon A. L'autonomie de décision dans les entreprises libérées de l'emprise organisationnelle: Une analyse des cas de Google et de la Favi. *Revue Internationale de Psychosociologie et de gestion des comportements organisationnels*. 2015;21(52):365-84.

25. McGregor D. The Human Side of Enterprise. New York: McGrawHill; 1960.
26. Pesqueux Y. Le « nouveau management public » (ou New Public Management). 2006.
27. Second C. L'entreprise libérée, panacée ou miroir aux alouettes? Le Temps [Internet]. 2023 Jun [cited 2024 Jun 17]; Available from: <https://www.letemps.ch/opinions/lentreprise-liberee-panacee-miroir-aux-alouettes>
28. Vandermissen V. L'entreprise libérée: Un nouveau modèle de management pour l'économie sociale? Bruxelles: PLS; 2015.
29. Wise LR. Public Management Reform: competing Drivers of Change. Public Administration Review. 2002;62(5):556-67.

Creative Commons (CC) License

This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. This license permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.