



Troop Morale and Organizational Innovation Capacity Within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Josué NGWEJ MPANDAMAD¹, Eddy KAPEND YRUNG²

¹PhD Candidate and Researcher in Work Psychology, University of Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9318-6853>

²Brigadier General, Doctoral Researcher in Philosophy and Senior Lecturer, University of Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo

ABSTRACT : This study examines the relationship between military morale and organizational innovation capacity within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), with a particular focus on the 22nd Military Region of Lubumbashi. It is grounded in a work psychology perspective applied to the military field, considering that security performance and the modernization of armed forces depend as much on human factors as on material and technological resources. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the research combines a psychosocial survey, direct and participant observation, structured questionnaires, and documentary analysis. The sample consists of 53 military personnel, both men and women. Quantitative data were analyzed using the chi-square test, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic content analysis.

The results reveal a strong sense of institutional belonging and notable psychological resilience among military personnel, while also highlighting several significant demotivating factors, including precarious living conditions, irregular remuneration, insufficient continuing training, a lack of professional recognition, and certain organizational constraints. These factors indirectly affect engagement, creativity, and adherence to innovative dynamics. The study concludes that sustainable military innovation cannot be dissociated from a profound reform of the human factor. It advocates for the integration of psychological support mechanisms, continuous training, and participatory leadership in order to simultaneously strengthen morale, performance, and the innovation capacity of the FARDC.

KEYWORDS : military morale, organizational innovation, security, work psychology, FARDC.

Cite the Article: MPANDAMAD, J.N., YRUNG, E.K. (2026). *Troop Morale and Organizational Innovation Capacity Within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. *Contemporary Research Analysis Journal*, 3(10), 671-684. <https://doi.org/10.55677/CRAJ/07-2026-Vol03I10>

License: This is an open-access article under the CC BY 4.0 license: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Publication Date: October 12, 2026

**Corresponding Author: Josué NGWEJ MPANDAMAD*

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. General Context and Rationale for the Study

Security constitutes one of the essential foundations of the political, social, and economic stability of contemporary states. In countries facing persistent security challenges, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the armed forces play a central strategic role in protecting territorial integrity, safeguarding civilian populations, and maintaining institutional order. However, despite the crucial importance of this mission, debates on military performance are often dominated by a technicist approach focused on weaponry, personnel numbers, or logistical capabilities, to the detriment of the human and psychosocial dimension. As supported by Peter Daniels (2019) in his work on the development of national security strategies.

Bachelet (2007) and Vermeulen et al. (2010) indicate that contemporary transformations in security environments, characterized by the complexity of threats, the asymmetry of conflicts, the rapid evolution of technologies, and the diversification of military missions, require armed forces to develop greater capacities for adaptation, learning, and organizational innovation. In this context, military morale appears as a strategic variable likely to influence the discipline and cohesion of units, but also operational resilience and openness to innovative practices.

In the DRC, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) operate in a particularly challenging institutional and socioeconomic context. Budgetary constraints, often precarious living conditions, governance

Troop Morale and Organizational Innovation Capacity Within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

challenges, politico-military tensions, and constant security pressures weigh heavily on the professional experiences of military personnel. These realities raise fundamental questions regarding the state of mind of troops, their work engagement, and their capacity to embrace modernization dynamics. As highlighted by J. Ngwej Mpandamadi (2024) in his bachelor's thesis in occupational and organizational psychology.

The 22nd Military Region of Lubumbashi, covering a strategic area of the former Greater Katanga region, constitutes a particularly relevant field of study in this regard. It encompasses major security, territorial, and organizational challenges, while also illustrating the daily difficulties faced by military personnel in the performance of their duties. Studying morale and innovation in this context means examining, at the very heart of the military institution, the human conditions underlying security performance.

1.2. Military Morale and Innovation: A Blind Spot in Security Reforms

According to Caron J. F. (2015), security sector reforms in post-conflict states have historically prioritized structural dimensions, such as the reorganization of chains of command, demobilization, the integration of former combatants, and the modernization of equipment. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), although these reforms appear necessary for institutional reconstruction, they nevertheless remain insufficient when they fail to take into account the psychosocial factors that condition the actual effectiveness of military organizations.

Military morale, understood as the overall psychological state resulting from job satisfaction, a sense of recognition, cohesion, motivation, and institutional trust, constitutes a decisive lever of collective performance. High morale promotes engagement, discipline, cooperation, and the ability to cope with situations of extreme stress, whereas deteriorating morale may lead to disengagement, indiscipline, demotivation, and even deviant behaviors. In this regard, research conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Maynié (2023) highlights the central role of the human factor in the ability of armed forces to maintain their operational effectiveness and adapt to contemporary transformations in security environments.

Furthermore, military innovation is not limited to the introduction of new technologies or the acquisition of sophisticated equipment. It also encompasses organizational, managerial, and human innovations, such as improving leadership practices, promoting individual and collective initiatives, continuing education, information sharing, and organizational learning. These dynamics largely depend on the active involvement of military personnel and their psychological readiness to engage in change. Yet, in the Congolese context, few scientific studies have systematically analyzed the relationship between military morale and their capacity for innovation. As Augé (2023) points out, most existing studies adopt a macro-structural or geopolitical approach, leaving the internal dynamics experienced by field actors largely unexplored. This theoretical and empirical gap fully justifies the relevance of the present research.

1.3. Research Problem

Despite a strong sense of institutional attachment expressed by many military personnel (Germain, 1958; Schill, 2023), the FARDC regularly face difficulties in terms of operational effectiveness, internal cohesion, and sustainable innovation. These difficulties contribute to a sometimes negative social perception of the role of the military and weaken the relationship of trust between the military institution and the civilian population.

Therefore, a central question arises: how can the gap between the sense of belonging expressed by military personnel and the observed limitations in terms of engagement, performance, and organizational innovation be explained? More specifically, to what extent does military morale constitute an explanatory factor in their ability to become involved in innovative dynamics within the military institution?

This research problem leads to the consideration that military innovation cannot be imposed solely through hierarchical decisions or material investments, but rather depends fundamentally on the state of mind of the troops, their professional experiences, and the quality of the organizational environment in which they operate.

1.4. Research Questions

In light of this research problem, the present study is structured around the following questions:

1. What is the level of morale among military personnel of the 22nd Military Region of Lubumbashi, and how do psychosocial, organizational, and professional factors influence this morale, as well as their engagement and capacity for innovation?
2. What organizational strategies can strengthen military personnel's morale and promote their engagement and military innovation?

1.5. Research Hypotheses

- **H₁:** A deteriorated level of professional morale limits military personnel's engagement and willingness to innovate.
- **H₂:** Living conditions, remuneration, training, cohesion, and leadership quality significantly influence military personnel's morale.
- **H₃:** Continuing education, recognition of initiatives, and participatory leadership constitute levers that foster military innovation.

1.6. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this research is to analyze the relationship between military morale and organizational innovation capacity within the FARDC, based on the case of the 22nd Military Region of Lubumbashi. The specific objectives are to:

1. Assess the level of morale among FARDC military personnel and identify its main determinants.
2. Examine the impact of morale on work engagement and innovation dynamics, with a view to proposing psychosocial and organizational intervention strategies adapted to the Congolese military context.

II. THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Morale at Work: Conceptual Foundations and Theoretical Approaches

The concept of morale at work occupies a central place in psychological and organizational sciences, although its definition remains multifaceted. In occupational psychology, morale is generally understood as an overall psychological state resulting from the interaction between job satisfaction, motivation, sense of belonging, social recognition, and perceptions of organizational justice. It refers to the way in which an individual subjectively evaluates their work experience and their relationship with the organization.

The pioneering work of Elton Mayo (1933) highlighted, as early as the 1930s, the importance of psychosocial factors in work performance. The human relations school demonstrated that productivity depends not only on material conditions, but also on the social climate, recognition, and the sense of usefulness experienced by workers. This approach paved the way for a more humanistic conception of work, in which morale constitutes a key determinant of engagement.

In continuity with this perspective, motivational theories have provided more structured explanatory frameworks. Abraham Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs posits that the satisfaction of basic needs (physiological and safety needs) conditions access to higher-level needs, such as esteem and self-actualization. Applied to the military context, this theory suggests that precarious living conditions or economic insecurity may undermine morale and limit soldiers' psychological investment.

2.2. Military Morale: Specific Features and Psychosocial Determinants

Military morale constitutes a specific form of morale at work, shaped by the unique nature of the military institution. Unlike civilian organizations, the military is based on principles of discipline, hierarchy, loyalty, and permanent availability, exposing military personnel to increased physical, psychological, and emotional demands.

Military sociology emphasizes that troop morale cannot be reduced to an individual disposition, but rather forms part of a collective dynamic, strongly influenced by unit cohesion, the quality of command, and the perceived legitimacy of the mission. According to André Sauvage (2001), military morale plays a structuring role in the ability of armed forces to carry out complex missions, particularly in contexts of internal security or law enforcement.

Research conducted in military psychology shows that morale is closely related to resilience, defined as the ability to withstand stress, adapt to extreme situations, and maintain effective operational functioning. In environments characterized by uncertainty and violence, high morale constitutes a protective factor against psychological exhaustion, anxiety disorders, and deviant behaviors.

In sub-Saharan Africa, and more particularly in the DRC, several studies emphasize that military morale is weakened by structural factors such as irregular remuneration, insufficient continuing training, limited career prospects, and tensions between institutional norms and social realities. These factors contribute to a misalignment between the military ideal and lived experience, which may affect engagement and discipline.

2.3. Organizational Innovation: Concepts and Explanatory Models

Organizational innovation is generally defined as the introduction and adoption of new practices, structures, processes, or management methods aimed at improving collective performance. Unlike technological innovation, it relies primarily on human resources, organizational culture, and learning capabilities.

The model of innovation developed by Joseph Schumpeter highlighted the central role of change in the dynamics of organizations. Although initially focused on economics, this conceptual framework has inspired organizational analyses by emphasizing that innovation results from a break with established routines.

In the military field, innovation has long been associated with technological superiority. However, the work of Stephen Peter Rosen (1979) has shown that military innovation also depends on institutional and human factors, such as the training of military leaders, organizational culture, and the capacity of units to experiment with new practices. According to Rosen, an army may possess advanced equipment without necessarily being innovative if its members are not psychologically and organizationally prepared for change.

Contemporary approaches to organizational innovation emphasize the role of psychological climate, trust, and participation. An environment perceived as fair, supportive, and encouraging of initiative fosters creativity, whereas a climate characterized by fear, rigidity, or injustice hinders innovation.

2.4. Morale and Innovation: Contributions of Occupational Psychology

Occupational psychology establishes a close link between morale, motivation, and the capacity for innovation. The self-determination theory developed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2000) posits that optimal engagement is based on the satisfaction of three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and social relatedness. When these needs are satisfied, individuals develop intrinsic motivation that is conducive to learning and innovation.

In highly hierarchical organizations, such as the military, the satisfaction of the need for autonomy may appear limited. However, several studies show that autonomy does not mean the absence of rules, but rather the possibility of participation, recognition, and the valuing of competencies. Thus, participatory leadership can strengthen morale without undermining institutional discipline.

Research on work engagement, particularly that of Wilmar Schaufeli (2002), indicates that high morale is associated with vigor, dedication, and absorption in professional tasks. These dimensions promote perseverance in the face of difficulties and a willingness to become involved in innovative projects.

2.5. Morale, Innovation, and the Congolese Military Context

Within the context of the FARDC, the relationship between morale and innovation takes place in an institutional environment characterized by multiple challenges: budgetary constraints, security pressures, organizational legacies, and high sociopolitical expectations. Security sector reforms have often prioritized structural approaches, leaving the psychosocial dimension on the margins.

However, as several African analyses of armed forces reform emphasize, the sustainable effectiveness of military institutions depends on their ability to mobilize human capital. Deteriorated morale may hinder the adoption of innovations, generate resistance to change, and weaken internal cohesion. Conversely, strengthened morale may transform military personnel into agents of change, capable of actively contributing to the modernization of their institution.

The present study adopts this integrative perspective by combining contributions from occupational psychology, military sociology, and theories of innovation. It aims to fill a scientific gap by empirically analyzing the relationship between morale and innovation within a Congolese military unit, while taking into account contextual and cultural specificities.

III. METHOD AND STUDY POPULATION

3.1. Type and Research Design

The present study adopts a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches from a descriptive, analytical, and exploratory perspective. This methodological choice is justified by the complex nature of the subject under investigation, namely military morale and its relationship with organizational innovation capacity, two dimensions that are both measurable and deeply subjective.

The quantitative approach makes it possible to objectify certain general trends related to morale, engagement, and innovation through measurable indicators and statistical analyses. The qualitative approach, for its part, aims to deepen the understanding of military personnel's professional experiences, perceptions, daily experiences, and the meanings they attribute to their engagement and innovation within the military institution.

This mixed-methods design follows a logic of methodological complementarity, making it possible to cross-reference data, strengthen the internal validity of the findings, and overcome the limitations inherent in the exclusive use of a single method.

3.2. Study Setting and Research Environment

The study was conducted within the 22nd Military Region, a strategic entity of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC). This region covers a vast area corresponding to the former Greater Katanga, including in particular the provinces of Haut-Katanga, Lualaba, Tanganyika (Kalemie), and the Kamina area.

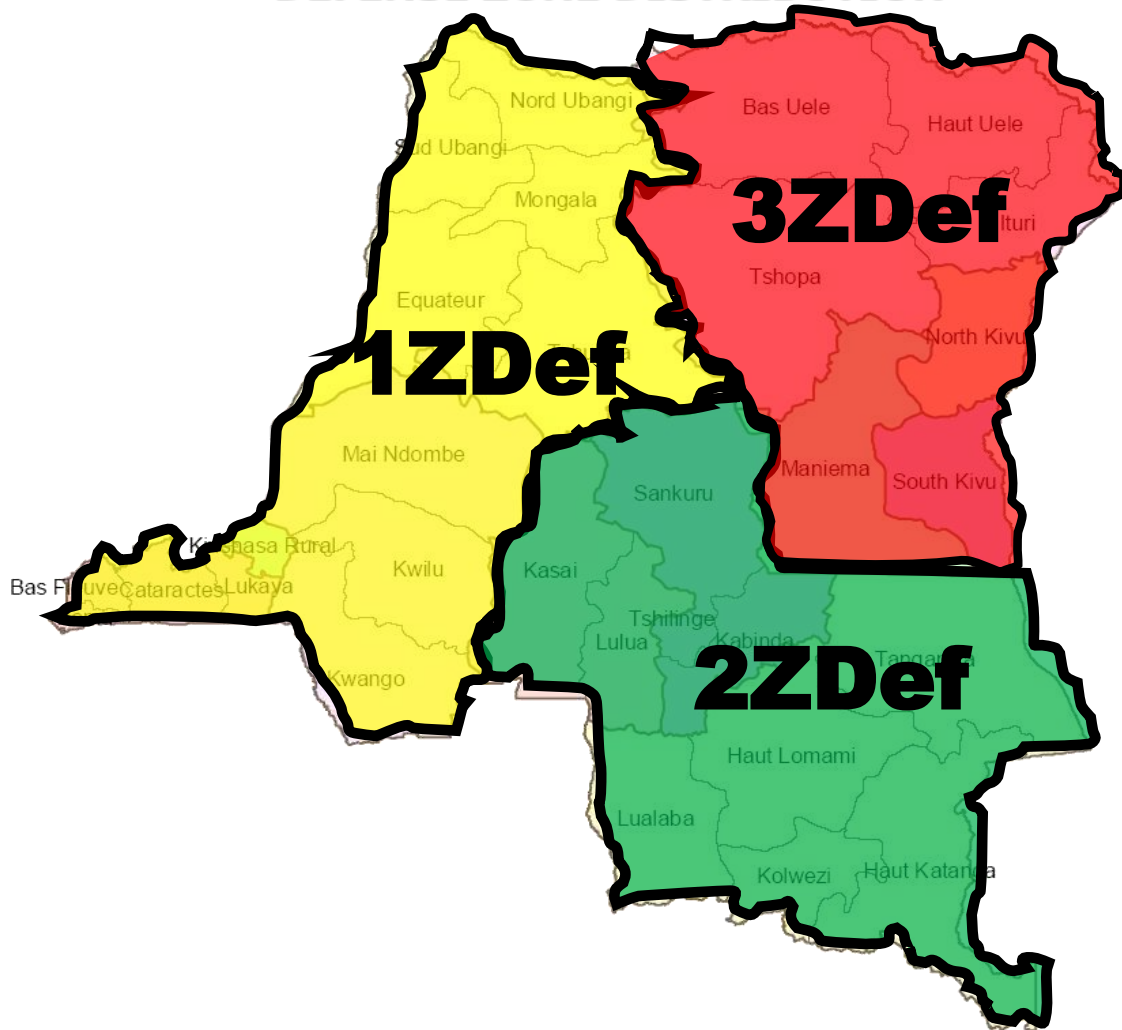
From an administrative and operational perspective, the 22nd Military Region plays a central role in internal security, territorial management, border surveillance, and the coordination of military operations in this part of the country. Its headquarters is based in the city of Lubumbashi, the capital of Haut-Katanga, making it a privileged observatory of organizational, human, and security dynamics within the FARDC.

The choice of this study setting is based on several criteria: (i) its national strategic importance; (ii) the diversity of missions carried out by the units composing it; (iii) the representativeness of the organizational and psychosocial challenges encountered by Congolese military personnel; and (iv) the accessibility of the field for conducting observations and surveys.

MEANING OF THE 22ND MILITARY REGION

- 1st (2nd) Defense Zone
- 2nd (2nd) Military Region within the 2nd Defense Zone

DEFENSE ZONE DISTRIBUTION



3.3. Study Population

The target population of this research consists of all military personnel assigned to the 22nd Military Region. However, due to the geographical extent of the territory covered, the permanent mobility of the troops, and security constraints, it was not possible to determine precisely the total size of this population. It is therefore considered statistically infinite.

This characteristic guided the choice of a sampling strategy adapted to the realities of the Congolese military field, while respecting the principles of feasibility, security, and research ethics.

3.4. Sampling and Participants

The study used convenience (or accidental) sampling, based on the actual availability of military personnel at the time of data collection. Although non-probabilistic, this method is commonly used in research conducted in constrained institutional settings, such as the military, where access to participants is subject to operational and hierarchical requirements.

The sample consisted of 53 military personnel, including:

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	5	9.43
Male	48	90.56
Total	53	100

Table 2: Distribution of the Sample by Educational Level

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	0	0
Secondary	5	9.43
University	38	71.69
Other	10	18.86
Total	53	100

Table 3: Distribution of the Sample by Rank

Rank Category		Frequency	Percentage
General Officers	Brigadier General	1	1.88
Senior Officers	Colonel	6	11.32
	Lieutenant-Colonel	6	11.32
	Major	10	18.86
Junior Officers	Capitaine	8	15.09
	Lieutenant	6	11.32
	Second-Lieutenant	6	11.32
Non-Commissioned Officers	Warrant Officer	4	7.54
	Sergent	5	9.43
	Second-Class Soldier	1	1.88
Total		53	100

The participants came from different units attached to the 22nd Military Region, including certain operational units, the 2nd Defense Zone, and the SECAS Regional Directorate. This diversity makes it possible to obtain a relatively broad view of perceptions of morale and innovation within the region under study. Although the sample size constitutes a limitation in terms of statistical generalizability, it remains sufficient for an exploratory analysis and for the use of non-parametric statistical tests, such as the chi-square test.

3.5. Data Collection Methods

3.5.1. Psychosocial Survey

The main method used in this research is the psychosocial survey, which is widely used in occupational psychology to analyze individuals' attitudes, representations, motivations, and behaviors within organizations.

This method made it possible to:

(i) The exploratory phase, aimed at identifying the psychosocial factors influencing military personnel's morale; exploring the relationships between professional experience, engagement, and innovation; and collecting data directly from the actors concerned.

(ii) The descriptive phase, which enabled us to subdivide and break down the factors related to morale and innovation among military personnel into their sub-components, with the aim of identifying the relationships that explain them. In this particular case, these are the explanatory factors or determinants of military personnel's behaviors, that is, examining their motivations, conditions of adaptation, and conditions of performance within this profession.

It also made it possible to have:

(i) An active and participatory approach that brought us closer to the study setting, with the aim of substantiating the facts identified in the hypothesis, in which we were subject to the principle of continuous intuition and direct apprehension of the realities of the said environment;

(ii) These limitations or drawbacks are related to the attempt at subjectivity and subjectivation, which demonstrates the necessity of separating the object of the research from its subject.

3.5.2. Observation Method

The research also employed the observation method, in both its direct and participant forms. This qualitative method made it possible to collect essential contextual information on: (i) interactions among military personnel; (ii) observable behaviors related to motivation, engagement, and discipline; and (iii) attitudes toward new initiatives and innovative practices. The observations were conducted during routine military activities, such as meetings, exercises, and certain collective work situations. The data obtained through observation served to enrich and contextualize the results obtained through the questionnaire. In accordance with methodological requirements, the limitations of this method were taken into account, particularly the risk of observation bias related to the researcher's presence and the possible modification of the behaviors being observed.

3.6. Data Collection Techniques

3.6.1. Documentary Analysis

3.6.2. Questionnaire

The documentary analysis was based on the systematic examination of diverse and relevant written sources, including in particular: (i) current institutional and regulatory documents; (ii) official reports issued by the competent authorities; (iii) previous studies addressing issues of security, defense, and organizational innovation; as well as (iv) scientific works in the fields of occupational psychology and military sociology.

The use of this technique made it possible to anchor the study within a solid theoretical and institutional framework, while providing an in-depth understanding of the structural dynamics and historical developments likely to influence military personnel's morale.

A structured questionnaire consisting of 15 items was specifically developed for this study. It covered several key dimensions: (i) sense of belonging to the military institution; (ii) job satisfaction; (iii) training and skills development; (iv) living and working conditions; (v) cohesion and leadership; and (vi) perceptions of military innovation.

Questionnaire Development

The construction of the questionnaire followed several methodological steps:

1. Preliminary survey : aimed at identifying the relevant themes;
2. Pretest : conducted with 30 military personnel, making it possible to assess the clarity and relevance of the items;
3. Revision and validation : of the questions;
4. Final version : administered to the main sample.

The questionnaire included both closed-ended questions (dichotomous or multiple-choice responses) and open-ended questions, allowing for a freer expression of perceptions.

3.7. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted in accordance with the institutional and ethical rules in force within the FARDC. The questionnaires were administered in a supervised manner, with prior explanations regarding the objectives of the research and the instructions for completing the questionnaire. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Respondents were informed that the data collected would be used exclusively for scientific and academic purposes.

3.8. Data Processing and Analysis Techniques

3.8.1. Quantitative Analysis

The data obtained from the closed-ended questions were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The chi-square test (χ^2) was used to examine the relationships between certain variables, namely: (i) morale and engagement; (ii) morale and living conditions; and (iii) training and innovation. This test was selected because of its relevance for the analysis of qualitative variables and its compatibility with the sample size.

3.8.2. Qualitative Analysis

The responses to the open-ended questions and the data obtained through observation were analyzed using thematic content analysis. This approach consisted of: (i) coding the textual data; (ii) identifying recurring themes; (iii) grouping meaningful categories; and (iv) interpreting the results in light of the theoretical framework.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

This research complied with the fundamental principles of scientific ethics, including: (i) the free and informed consent of participants; (ii) anonymity and confidentiality of the data; (iii) respect for the dignity and safety of participants; and (iv) the exclusive scientific use of the results. In a sensitive military context, particular attention was paid to protecting information that could compromise institutional security.

3.10. Methodological Limitations

Certain limitations must be acknowledged: (i) the relatively small sample size; (ii) the use of non-probability sampling; and (iii) possible biases related to self-reporting and observation. These limitations do not invalidate the results, but they call for cautious interpretation and suggest the need for future studies on a larger scale.

IV. RESULTS

4.1. General Presentation of the Data

The analysis of the results is based on data collected from 53 military personnel of the 22nd Military Region, using a structured questionnaire supplemented by field observations. The results are presented according to a dual logic: (i) description of the observed trends; and (ii) statistical verification of the relationships using the chi-square test (χ^2). The significance level adopted was $\alpha = 0.05$. The critical value of χ^2 varies according to the number of categories (df), in accordance with standard statistical tables.

4.2. Morale and Sense of Institutional Belonging

4.2.1. Sense of Belonging to the Congolese Army

Question: *Do you feel happy to belong to the Congolese Army?*

Table 4 : Sense of Institutional Belonging

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	52	98,1 %
No	1	1,9 %
Total	53	100 %

The results of this table indicate an extremely high sense of institutional belonging among the military personnel surveyed: 98.1% of respondents reported feeling happy to belong to the Congolese Army, compared with only 1.9% expressing a negative opinion. The χ^2 test reveals a statistically significant difference (calculated $\chi^2 >$ critical $\chi^2 = 3.84$), confirming that commitment to the institution is widely shared within the sample. This result highlights the strength of military personnel's institutional identification, constituting an important psychological foundation for engagement and organizational cohesion.

4.2.2. Stability of the Sense of Belonging Over Time

Question: *Since joining the army, have you maintained the same feelings that motivated you to join the army?*

Table 5 : Stability of the Sense of Belonging

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	39	73,6 %
Sometimes	4	7,5 %
Not at all	10	18,9 %
Total	53	100 %

The results presented in this table show that the sense of belonging to the military institution remains generally stable over time for the majority of the military personnel surveyed. Indeed, 73.6% of respondents stated that they always maintain the same feelings that motivated them to join the army, while 7.5% indicated that they experience them sometimes. Conversely, 18.9% of military personnel stated that they no longer experience these initial feelings at all. The χ^2 test reveals a statistically significant difference (calculated $\chi^2 = 39.66 >$ critical $\chi^2 = 5.99$), confirming that the stability of the sense of belonging constitutes a dominant trend within the sample. These results suggest that, despite institutional constraints and the difficulties of the military context, a majority of military personnel maintain continuity in their attachment to the institution. However, the significant proportion of respondents expressing a break with their initial sense of belonging highlights the existence of psychosocial vulnerabilities that may have a lasting impact on engagement, motivation, and organizational performance.

4.3. Training, Living Conditions, and Military Morale

4.3.1. Participation in Military Training

Question: *Do you participate in military training sessions?*

Table 6 : Participation in Military Training Sessions

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	7	13,2 %
No	46	86,8 %
Total	53	100 %

The analysis of this table reveals low participation among the military personnel surveyed in military training sessions. Indeed, only 13.2% of respondents reported participating in training activities, compared with 86.8% who indicated that they did not have access to them. This distribution highlights a significant limitation in opportunities for skills development within the institution. The χ^2 test confirms that this situation is statistically significant (calculated $\chi^2 = 28.69 >$ critical $\chi^2 = 3.84$), indicating that limited access to

Troop Morale and Organizational Innovation Capacity Within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

training is not due to chance. These results suggest that insufficient training mechanisms constitute a factor likely to negatively affect military personnel's morale, their sense of professional recognition, and their ability to engage in learning and innovation dynamics. In a military context characterized by increasing operational requirements, this deficiency may therefore represent a major obstacle to modernization and organizational effectiveness.

Question : *Morale affected by living conditions*

Table 7 : Living Conditions and Morale

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	7	13,2 %
Sometimes	14	26,4 %
Not at all	32	60,4 %
Total	53	100 %

The table reveals that the morale of military personnel is strongly influenced by their living conditions. A majority, namely 60.4%, reported not experiencing any positive impact, while 26.4% reported experiencing an effect sometimes, and only 13.2% reported experiencing an effect always. The χ^2 test (calculated $\chi^2 = 18.83 > \text{critical } \chi^2 = 3.84$) confirms the statistical significance of this distribution. These results highlight that living conditions constitute a determining factor in morale, and that improving them could strengthen motivation, engagement, and cohesion within the armed forces.

4.4. Leadership, Cohesion, and Professional Engagement

4.4.1. Leadership and Professional Disengagement

Question: *Does the quality of leadership influence your disengagement from military activities?*

Table 8 : Disengagement from Military Activities Influenced by Leadership Quality

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	13	24,5 %
Sometimes	15	28,3 %
Not at all	25	47,2 %
Total	53	100 %

The analysis of the data in this table indicates that 47.2% of military personnel consider that their disengagement from military activities is not at all influenced by the quality of leadership, while 28.3% report an effect sometimes and 24.5% an effect always. The χ^2 test (calculated $\chi^2 = 4.67 < \text{critical } \chi^2 = 5.99$) shows that the observed distribution is not statistically significant. These results suggest that, for this sample, leadership does not appear to be a determining factor in military personnel's disengagement from professional activities. However, this trend does not rule out other organizational or psychosocial influences that could modulate the motivation and engagement of the troops.

4.4.2. Troop Cohesion and Engagement

Question: *Does a lack of cohesion lead to disengagement in your career?*

Table 9 : Troop Cohesion and Engagement

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	7	13,2 %
Sometimes	15	28,3 %
Not at all	31	58,5 %
Total	53	100 %

This table shows that 58.5% of military personnel consider that a lack of cohesion does not lead to any disengagement in their career, while 28.3% report an effect sometimes and 13.2% an effect always. The χ^2 test (calculated $\chi^2 = 16.90 > \text{critical } \chi^2 = 3.84$) indicates that this distribution is statistically significant. These results suggest that, although the majority of military personnel do not perceive direct disengagement related to cohesion, a non-negligible percentage is affected. This highlights that troop cohesion constitutes an important factor in maintaining engagement and motivation within the military institution, and that any initiative aimed at strengthening relationships among military personnel could contribute to improving their professional involvement.

4.5. Morale, Resilience, and Military Performance

4.5.1. State of Mind and Resilience to Challenges

Question: Does your state of mind help you withstand major military challenges?

Table 10 : Morale and Resilience

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	90,6 %
No	5	9,4 %
Total	53	100 %

The examination of the data in this table reveals that 90.6% of military personnel consider that their state of mind contributes to their ability to face major military challenges, while 9.4% believe otherwise. The χ^2 test (calculated $\chi^2 = 34.88 >$ critical $\chi^2 = 3.84$) confirms that this distribution is statistically significant. These results highlight that morale plays a determining role in the resilience of military personnel when facing demanding situations. A positive state of mind therefore appears to be an essential lever for supporting operational performance and maintaining the motivation and engagement of the troops in complex contexts.

4.6. Morale and Military Innovation

4.6.1. State of Mind and Military Innovation

Question: Does military innovation depend on the state of mind of military personnel?

Table 11 : Morale and Innovation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	56,6 %
No	23	43,4 %
Total	53	100 %

The examination of the responses shows that 56.6% of military personnel consider that their state of mind influences military innovation, while 43.4% believe that this is not the case. The χ^2 test (calculated $\chi^2 = 0.92 <$ critical $\chi^2 = 3.84$) indicates that this relationship is not statistically significant. This suggests that there is no direct and systematic relationship between state of mind and innovation within the sample studied. However, the notable proportion of military personnel affirming the importance of state of mind suggests that other organizational and psychosocial factors may modulate this relationship and influence the capacity to adopt innovative practices.

4.6.2. Living Conditions and Innovative Strategies

Question: Does improving living conditions promote innovation?

Table 12 : Living Conditions and Innovation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	32	60,4 %
Sometimes	13	24,5 %
Not at all	8	15,1 %
Total	53	100 %

The examination of the results in this table shows that 60.4% of military personnel consider that improving their living conditions always promotes innovation, 24.5% report an effect sometimes, and only 15.1% consider that it has no impact at all. The χ^2 test (calculated $\chi^2 = 18.15 >$ critical $\chi^2 = 3.84$) confirms that this relationship is statistically significant. These results highlight that living conditions constitute a determining factor in military personnel's capacity to engage in innovative practices. They suggest that policies aimed at improving the living environment could strengthen not only morale and engagement, but also creativity and the adoption of innovative strategies within the military institution.

4.6.3. Recognition, Training, and Innovation

Table 13 : Recognition of Initiatives

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	29	54,7 %
Sometimes	16	30,2 %
Not at all	8	15,1 %

Troop Morale and Organizational Innovation Capacity Within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The results of this table indicate that 54.7% of military personnel consider that recognition of initiatives always promotes innovation, 30.2% observe an effect sometimes, and 15.1% consider that it has no impact at all. The χ^2 test (calculated $\chi^2 = 12.71 > \text{critical } \chi^2 = 3.84$) shows that this distribution is statistically significant. These results suggest that recognition of initiatives constitutes an important lever for stimulating military innovation. They indicate that valuing the efforts and initiatives of military personnel, combined with appropriate training, can strengthen their engagement, motivation, and capacity to adopt new strategies and practices within the institution.

Table 14 : Continuing Education and Innovation

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	35	66,0 %
Sometimes	12	22,6 %
Not at all	6	11,3 %

The observation of the data in this table reveals that 66.0% of military personnel consider that continuing education always promotes innovation, 22.6% observe an effect sometimes, and 11.3% report that it has no impact at all. The χ^2 test (calculated $\chi^2 = 26.52 > \text{critical } \chi^2 = 3.84$) confirms that this relationship is statistically significant. These results highlight that regular access to training constitutes a determining factor in developing the innovative capacities of military personnel. Continuing education thus appears to be an essential lever for strengthening morale, engagement, and the adoption of new practices and strategies within the military institution.

V. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1. Review of the Objectives and Logic of the Discussion

The main objective of this study was to analyze the relationship between military morale and organizational innovation capacity within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, based on the case of the 22nd Military Region of Lubumbashi. More specifically, the aim was to identify the psychosocial and organizational factors influencing military personnel's morale, examine their impact on engagement and resilience, and assess the extent to which these dimensions condition the emergence of innovative dynamics.

The discussion of the results is organized around four major areas:

1. morale and the sense of institutional belonging;
2. structural and psychosocial determinants of morale;
3. the relationship between morale, resilience, and performance;
4. the link between morale, organization, and military innovation.

The empirical results are compared with theoretical contributions from occupational psychology, military sociology, and theories of innovation.

5.2. High Morale and Sense of Belonging: An Institutional Paradox

The results show an extremely high sense of institutional belonging among the military personnel surveyed, with more than 98% stating that they are happy to belong to the army. This finding confirms that the military institution retains strong symbolic value, associated with honor, patriotism, and professional identity. This result is consistent with classical analyses in military sociology, according to which the army constitutes a highly integrative institution, producing lasting identity-based attachment, even in difficult organizational contexts.

However, this high sense of belonging coexists with significant weaknesses in morale related to living conditions, training, and recognition. This institutional paradox is particularly illuminating: it shows that symbolic commitment to the institution does not automatically guarantee optimal professional engagement or a favorable disposition toward innovation.

This result can be interpreted in light of the hierarchy of needs proposed by Abraham Maslow (1954). While the needs for belonging and identity appear to be generally satisfied, the needs for economic security, recognition, and self-fulfillment appear to be insufficiently met. According to this model, dissatisfaction of fundamental needs limits access to higher levels of motivation, particularly those related to creativity and innovation. Thus, military morale in the context studied appears to be structurally ambivalent: strong at the identity level, but vulnerable at the psychosocial and organizational levels.

5.3. Determinants of Morale: Partial Confirmation of Hypothesis H2

Hypothesis H2 postulated that living conditions, training, cohesion, and leadership quality significantly influence military personnel's morale. The results partially confirm this hypothesis, highlighting the central role of certain factors, while others appear to be less determining from a statistical perspective.

5.3.1. Living Conditions and Remuneration: A Structuring Factor of Morale

Statistical analyses show that living conditions and irregular remuneration exert a significant influence on military personnel's morale. This result is consistent with Frederick Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory, according to which hygiene factors (salary, material security, working conditions) do not directly produce motivation, but their absence generates dissatisfaction that may deteriorate morale. In the Congolese military context, irregular remuneration and precarious living conditions constitute major sources of chronic stress. These factors may weaken professional engagement, divert psychological energy toward survival strategies, and reduce the mental availability necessary for innovation.

5.3.2. Continuing Education: An Underexploited Lever

One of the most salient findings of the study concerns the low participation in military training, combined with a statistically significant effect of training on innovation. This finding confirms that continuing education plays a key role in maintaining morale and openness to change. This result is consistent with research on organizational learning and with the analyses of Stephen Peter Rosen (1979), according to which military innovation relies less on the acquisition of equipment than on the ability of organizations to train, socialize, and empower their members. An army that provides little training risks freezing its practices, even when its members are motivated at the identity level.

5.3.3. Leadership and Cohesion: Differentiated Effects

Contrary to initial expectations, leadership quality does not appear to be a statistically determining factor of professional disengagement. This result may be explained by the strong hierarchical normativity characteristic of the military institution, which tends to naturalize authority and limit the explicit expression of dissatisfaction toward command. By contrast, troop cohesion exerts a significant effect on engagement. This result confirms that military morale is above all a collective phenomenon. Cohesion acts as a protective factor, strengthening solidarity, mutual trust, and the capacity to cope with organizational constraints.

5.4. Morale, Resilience, and Performance: Strong Validation of H1 (Partial)

Hypothesis H1 postulated that morale influences engagement and the disposition toward innovation. The results show that, although the direct relationship between morale and innovation is not statistically significant, the relationship between morale and resilience in the face of challenges is, by contrast, very strongly established. More than 90% of military personnel consider that their state of mind helps them withstand operational challenges. This result confirms the contributions of occupational psychology and military psychology, according to which morale constitutes a central factor of resilience, making it possible to maintain effectiveness in contexts of high stress.

Research on work engagement, particularly that of Wilmar Schaufeli (2002), shows that vigor, dedication, and absorption are closely related to the quality of workers' psychological state. In the military context, this psychological resilience may compensate, at least partially, for certain organizational deficiencies. Thus, hypothesis H1 is indirectly confirmed: morale does not automatically generate innovation, but it constitutes a necessary condition for performance and adaptive capacity.

5.5. Morale and Innovation: An Indirect and Mediated Relationship

One of the most important findings of this study is the absence of a direct statistically significant relationship between morale and military innovation. This finding invites us to move beyond a simplistic view of innovation as an immediate product of individual motivation. The results suggest that the relationship between morale and innovation is mediated by organizational variables, notably:

- Continuing education;
- Recognition of initiatives;
- Improvement of living conditions.

In other words, high morale is not sufficient to produce innovation if the organization does not establish facilitating structures. This result is fully consistent with contemporary approaches to organizational innovation, which emphasize the role of psychological climate, learning opportunities, and recognition mechanisms. In the context of the FARDC, this means that military innovation cannot be reduced to an appeal to motivation or patriotism. It requires an organizational architecture capable of transforming potential engagement into effective practices.

5.6. Theoretical Contributions and Scientific Contribution

From a theoretical perspective, this study makes several original contributions:

1. It confirms the relevance of occupational psychology models in the analysis of military organizations, which are often approached from a strictly strategic or geopolitical perspective.
2. It highlights the non-linear nature of the relationship between morale and innovation.
3. It enriches the African literature on security sector reform by integrating an empirical psychosocial approach, which remains underdeveloped in the DRC.

From an empirical perspective, the study provides unprecedented data on the experiences of military personnel in the 22nd Military Region, contributing to a better understanding of the internal dynamics of the FARDC.

5.7. Limitations of the Discussion

Despite these contributions, certain limitations should be recalled:

- The small sample size;
- The use of non-probability sampling;
- The sensitive institutional context, which may influence the sincerity of the responses.

These limitations do not invalidate the results, but they call for further research, particularly comparative and longitudinal studies.

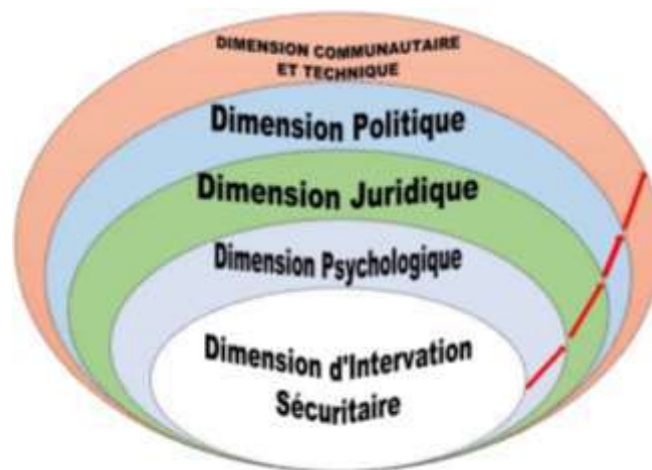


Figure 1 : Contribution

The security of military organizations rests on two major pillars: the pillars of security and the security intervention dimension. The pillars of Availability, Integrity, and Confidentiality (AIC) constitute the foundation of effective security. Availability guarantees access to essential resources and information in order to respond rapidly to threats. Integrity ensures the reliability and consistency of data and processes, thereby fostering trust and collaboration within the armed forces. Confidentiality protects sensitive information, strengthening security and organizational accountability.

The Security Intervention Dimension (DINSEC) adopts a comprehensive approach to threat management, based on prevention, anticipation, and coordinated action. It relies on psychological, legal, political, community, and technical dimensions, which ensure the well-being of military personnel, compliance with laws, understanding of the context, community engagement, and mastery of modern tools. The integration of these elements enables the armed forces to conduct legitimate, effective, and sustainable interventions, while contributing to stability, peace, and development.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the relationship between military morale and organizational innovation capacity within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), based on an empirical survey conducted in the 22nd Military Region of Lubumbashi. By drawing on the contributions of occupational psychology applied to the military context, the research adopted a perspective that goes beyond strictly structural or technicist approaches to security performance, in order to highlight the central role of the human factor.

The results show a very high sense of institutional belonging among the military personnel surveyed, reflecting the persistence of strong identity-based values such as honor, patriotism, and duty. However, this symbolic commitment coexists with significant weaknesses in morale, mainly related to precarious living conditions, irregular remuneration, insufficient continuing education, and a lack of professional recognition. The statistical analysis confirms that these structural factors significantly influence military personnel's morale and engagement.

By contrast, the direct relationship between morale and military innovation does not appear to be statistically significant. This result highlights the indirect and mediated nature of this relationship: morale constitutes a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for innovation, which depends heavily on organizational mechanisms such as training, recognition of initiatives, and improvement of working conditions. Conversely, the relationship between morale and resilience in the face of operational challenges is strongly established, confirming the determining role of morale in military personnel's ability to cope with stress, constraints, and the demands of the profession.

From a theoretical perspective, the study enriches the literature by confirming the relevance of occupational psychology frameworks for analyzing military organizations and by highlighting the non-linear nature of the relationship between morale and innovation. From a practical perspective, it emphasizes the need for modernization of the FARDC centered on human capital management, incorporating continuing education, institutional recognition, and psychological support. Despite certain

methodological limitations, this research opens promising avenues for comparative and longitudinal studies on military modernization in the African context.

REFERENCES

- 1) Alexandra, A. (2004). *Le Conseil de sécurité et le maintien de la paix internationale : Structures, fonctions et limites*. L'Harmattan.
- 2) Andrianjafy, H., & Mohamed, S. (2018). *L'industrie militaire et de la sécurité privée en Afrique : Enjeux de gouvernance et de régulation*. Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF). <https://www.dcaf.ch>
- 3) Augé, D. A. (2023). *Esprit de défense et forces morales dans la résilience nationale*. Commandement du combat futur.
- 4) Bachelet, J.-R. (2007). Moral, morale. *Inflexions*, 6(2), 29–38. <https://doi.org/10.3917/infle.006.0029>
- 5) Caron, J.-F. (2015). *La guerre juste*. Presses Universitaires de France.
- 6) Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01
- 7) Daniels, P. (2019). *National security strategy development in South Africa: A case study* [Working paper]. Centre for Strategic Studies in Africa.
- 8) Germain, J. (1958). La psychologie militaire en Espagne. *Revue de Psychologie des Peuples*, 21, 285–289. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40659129>
- 9) Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. B. (1959). *The motivation to work* (2nd ed.). Wiley.
- 10) Kenge Mukinayi, D. (2023). Crise sécuritaire persistante à l'Est de la République démocratique du Congo : Enjeux internes et dynamiques régionales. *Revue africaine de sécurité et de gouvernance*, 15(2), 45–67.
- 11) Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row.
- 12) Mayo, E. (1933). *The human problems of an industrial civilization*. Macmillan.
- 13) Maynié, L.-C. L.-J. (2023). *Place des forces morales : Leçons de 14-18 pour nos jours*. Commandement du combat futur.
- 14) Ngwej Mpandamadi, J. (2024). *Moral et innovation au sein des forces armées de la république démocratique du congo : etude menée sur la sécurité à la 22^{ème} région militaire de lubumbashi*.
- 15) Rosen, S. P. (1979). Victory and the problem of innovation in military organizations. *World Politics*, 31(3), 354–378. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2010070>
- 16) Sauvage, A., Bigo, D., Bonelli, L., & Dewerpe, A. (2001). *Armées et sécurité intérieure : Perceptions croisées des acteurs civils et militaires*. CNRS Editions.
- 17) Schaufeli, W. B., Salanova, M., González-Romá, V., & Bakker, A. B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two-sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 3(1), 71–92. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015630930326>
- 18) Schill, P. (2023). A warfighting army. *Revue Défense Nationale*, 863(8), 15–22. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rdna.863.0015>
- 19) Schumpeter, J. A. (1934). *The theory of economic development*. Harvard University Press.
- 20) Tshibonda, M. (2010). *Forces armées et sécurité nationale en République démocratique du Congo : Organisation, défis et perspectives*. Presses Universitaires du Congo.
- 21) Vermeulen, F., Bachelet, J.-R., & Rohaut, A. (2010). Manager le moral des troupes ? *Le Journal de l'Ecole de Paris du management*, 81(1), 9–16. <https://doi.org/10.3917/jepam.081.0009>