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The Impact of Teacher-Student Relationships on Psychological Well-Being of Female Adolescent Students in Buea Municipality in Fako Division, Southwest Region of Cameroon

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ABSTRACT: This study investigated the influence of teacher-student relationships on the psychological well-being of female adolescent students in Buea municipality in Fako Division, Southwest Region of Cameroon. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design whereby 409 female adolescent students were sampled purposive and conveniently. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data in 10 secondary schools randomly involved in the study. Data were analyzed with the support of SPSS 21.0. The abstraction of data was reduced descriptively using frequency, proportion and multiple-responses analysis to aggregate scores withing conceptual components. Bivariate relationships were appraised using Chi-Square test of independence and Spearman's Ro correlation test. Significant and critical predictors of psychological wellbeing were depicted with the support of Binary Logistic Regression model. The findings unfold that 28.2% of female adolescent students were concerned with their psychological wellbeing. If academically-supportive relationship significantly enhanced psychological wellbeing of female adolescent students, this was not the case with non-academically supportive relationship that was actually a setback ($R = -0.360$; $P = 0.000$). Significant and critical predictors were teacher despising or ignoring the student in class because she has not consented sexual relationship with him, awareness of teachers dating and going out with girls in school, and teacher favouring other girls who are in relationship with them to prove those not consenting wrong. It was recommended regular awareness of teachers on the importance of psychological well-being of students especially female adolescent, and the need for them to go for trauma and mental-health-care-management course as to help these students and themselves psychologically, emotionally and physically.

KEYWORD: Teacher, Students, Female, Adolescent, Relationship, Psychological wellbeing.

INTRODUCTION

Girls' education in Cameroon is hindered by various challenges, including gender discrimination, early marriages, vulnerability to HIV, gender-based violence, and nutritional problems, which limit their access to education and healthcare. The adolescent years are a pivotal phase in a girl's life, marked by significant physical, emotional, and social changes that can impact her psychological well-being (Erikson, 1968). Female adolescent students in the Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon, are no exception, facing challenges that can affect their self-esteem, academic performance, and overall mental health (Nforngwa, 2020).

Psychological well-being in female adolescents refers to a state of positive mental health, characterized by the ability to navigate the challenges of adolescence, build resilience, and thrive in various aspects of life (Olsson et al., 2016). It encompasses emotional, social, and psychological functioning, and is often defined by feelings of happiness, life satisfaction, and fulfillment (Gilligan, 2015). One of the factors impacting the psychological well-being of female adolescent students in Fako Division is teacher-student relationships. Conversely, strained or unsupportive relationships can exacerbate stress, anxiety, and other mental health concerns (Shochet et al., 2006). This study explores the relationship between teacher-student and psychological well-being of female adolescent students in Fako Division, with a focus on emotional support from teachers and regular encouragement from teachers.

Fako Division, located in the South West Region of Cameroon, has a diverse population with varying socio-economic backgrounds. The region faces challenges related to access to education, healthcare, and resources, which can impact students' well-being (Nforngwa, 2020).

Our research problem focuses on the fact female adolescent students in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon, face significant challenges in their educational journey, with many experiencing difficulties in school that ultimately lead to dropout (Fonkeng, 2017). One critical factor contributing to this trend is the poor relationship between teachers and students, characterized by a lack of emotional support and regular

encouragement from teachers. This inadequate support can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, negatively impacting female students' psychological well-being, academic performance, and overall educational experience.

The consequences of poor teacher-student relationships can be far-reaching, including: decreased academic motivation and engagement, increased stress, anxiety, and depression, reduced self-esteem and confidence, higher dropout rates. It is from this perspective that the researchers seek to investigate the impact of teacher-student relation on the psychological well-being of female adolescent student in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon.

Statement of the Problem

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterised by significant biological, cognitive, emotional, psychological, and social transformations. During this period, adolescents increasingly negotiate questions of identity, autonomy, belonging, interpersonal relationships, academic expectations, and future aspirations. These developmental transitions may expose adolescents to psychological pressures that influence their emotional stability, self-esteem, life satisfaction, sense of purpose, and overall psychological well-being (Sawyer et al., 2018; World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). For female adolescents, these challenges may be intensified by gender expectations, body-image concerns, relationship pressures, discrimination, vulnerability to gender-based violence, and unequal social and educational expectations (UNICEF, 2021). Psychological well-being extends beyond the absence of psychological distress. It encompasses positive functioning in areas such as self-acceptance, positive interpersonal relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Within the school context, psychological well-being is particularly important because adolescents who experience emotional security, positive self-perceptions, supportive interpersonal relationships, and a sense of belonging are more likely to participate meaningfully in learning and cope effectively with academic and social challenges. Conversely, persistent experiences of rejection, anxiety, loneliness, humiliation, stress, and lack of belonging may undermine both psychological adjustment and educational participation.

The school constitutes one of the most important social environments in adolescent development because students spend considerable portions of their formative years interacting with teachers and peers. Within this environment, teachers occupy a particularly influential position. Beyond their traditional instructional responsibilities, teachers may function as mentors, role models, advisers, disciplinarians, and important sources of emotional and social support. Positive relationships with teachers can provide adolescents with a sense of security, recognition, connectedness, and confidence, thereby contributing to positive adjustment and engagement with school (Roorda et al., 2011; Quin, 2017). Teacher-student relationships should therefore be understood not simply as mechanisms for facilitating instruction but also as important components of the psychosocial environment within which adolescents develop.

Ideally, relationships between teachers and female adolescent students should be characterised by mutual respect, trust, empathy, fairness, open communication, emotional support, and responsiveness to students' individual needs. Research indicates that students who perceive their teachers as supportive tend to demonstrate stronger school engagement, greater motivation, better social adjustment, and more positive educational experiences (Cornelius-White, 2007; Roorda et al., 2011). From an attachment-informed perspective, supportive relationships with significant adults within schools may also provide students with a secure relational base from which they can explore their environment, manage difficulties, and develop positive perceptions of themselves and others (Pianta et al., 2003).

The importance of such relationships is particularly relevant within African educational contexts. African schools operate within complex social, cultural, economic, and institutional environments in which teachers frequently assume responsibilities that extend beyond classroom instruction. Yet educational systems in many African countries continue to experience challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequate educational resources, insufficient numbers of trained teachers, high workloads, and limited school-based psychosocial support services (UNESCO, 2020, 2021). These conditions can restrict the time and opportunities available for teachers to establish individualised, emotionally supportive relationships with their students.

In Cameroon, the psychological well-being of adolescents must similarly be understood within the broader social and educational environment in which they live and learn. The prolonged sociopolitical crisis affecting the North-West and South-West Regions has disrupted schooling, displaced families and learners, and increased concerns regarding children's safety and access to education (Human Rights Watch, 2019; UNICEF, 2020). Schools and students within Fako Division have operated within this broader context of uncertainty and disruption. Consequently, female adolescent students may simultaneously negotiate the normal developmental demands of adolescence and additional environmental, academic, social, and economic pressures.

Female adolescents may also confront gender-specific challenges that potentially influence their psychological well-being. Across sub-Saharan Africa, adolescent girls may experience pressures related to gender norms, domestic responsibilities, early relationships, sexual and reproductive health concerns, harassment, poverty, and unequal educational opportunities (UNICEF, 2021). These vulnerabilities make the presence of supportive adults within schools particularly important. Teachers who communicate respectfully, recognise students' individual difficulties, encourage their aspirations, provide appropriate emotional support, and establish psychologically safe classrooms may therefore constitute an important protective resource.

However, teacher-student relationships are not invariably positive. Relationships characterised by excessive authoritarianism, humiliation, discrimination, emotional distance, favouritism, intimidation, poor communication, or persistent conflict can potentially undermine students' sense of belonging and psychological safety. When students perceive teachers as inaccessible or unsupportive, they may become reluctant to communicate personal and academic difficulties or seek assistance when distressed. This may be particularly consequential for adolescent girls who require trustworthy and supportive relationships within the school environment.

Although considerable research has demonstrated associations between teacher-student relationships and educational outcomes, much of the established literature has focused on academic achievement, motivation, classroom engagement, behavioural adjustment, and school attachment (Cornelius-White, 2007; Roorda et al., 2011; Quin, 2017). Comparatively less attention has been directed towards understanding teacher-student relationships specifically in relation to the psychological well-being of female adolescent students within the sociocultural context of Fako Division, Cameroon. Findings generated in Western or other educational settings cannot automatically be generalised to this context because

relationships between teachers and students are embedded within cultural expectations, gender relations, disciplinary traditions, institutional conditions, and wider societal circumstances.

Furthermore, teacher-student relationships are multidimensional. Their influence may operate through teacher emotional support, communication, trust, respect, fairness, responsiveness, closeness, conflict management, and students' perceptions of teacher availability. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory provides an important basis for understanding this phenomenon because adolescent development occurs through interactions between individuals and the immediate social environments in which they participate. The school and the relationships developed within it constitute an important microsystem capable of influencing psychological development. Similarly, self-determination theory suggests that social environments that support individuals' needs for relatedness, autonomy, and competence contribute to more positive motivation and psychological functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The problem, therefore, is not simply whether teachers and female students interact, because such interaction is an inevitable part of schooling. Rather, the critical concern is whether the quality and nature of teacher-student relationships significantly influence the psychological well-being of female adolescent students in Fako Division and which dimensions of these relationships are particularly consequential. Without context-specific empirical evidence, educational stakeholders may underestimate the relational dimensions of female adolescent well-being and consequently concentrate interventions primarily on academic achievement while paying insufficient attention to the psychological quality of students' everyday experiences with teachers.

There is therefore a need for empirical investigation capable of establishing the extent to which teacher-student relationships influence psychological well-being among female adolescent students in Fako Division. Such evidence is important for teachers, counsellors, school administrators, parents, teacher-training institutions, and educational policymakers because it can provide a basis for developing relationship-centred interventions, strengthening teacher competencies, improving school counselling programmes, and creating psychologically supportive learning environments.

Against this background, the present study seeks to investigate the impact of teacher-student relationships on the psychological well-being of female adolescent students in Buea municipality in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon. Examining relevant dimensions of teacher-student relationships and their influence on psychological well-being, the study seeks to address an important contextual and empirical gap and contribute to the development of schools in which female adolescents are supported not only academically but also psychologically, socially, and emotionally.

Main Objective

The main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of teacher-student relationships on the psychological well-being of female adolescent students in Buea municipality in Fako Division, Southwest Region of Cameroon.

Specific Objectives

1. To examine the impact of academically-supportive relationships on the psychological well-being of female adolescent students.
2. To investigate the impact of non-academically-supportive relationships on the psychological well-being of female adolescent students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Psychological well-being encompasses various aspects, including emotional, social, and psychological functioning. Psychological well-being refers to a state of positive mental health, characterized by an individual's ability to realize their potential, cope with normal stresses of life, work productively, and contribute to their community (World Health Organization, 2018). It encompasses various dimensions, including emotional, social, and psychological functioning, and is often defined by feelings of happiness, life satisfaction, and fulfillment (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Psychological well-being is a dynamic and multifaceted construct that can be influenced by various factors, including personality traits, life experiences, and social relationships (Diener et al., 2018). Ryff (1989) defines psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct that encompasses six core dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Psychological well-being refers to positive mental health and includes aspects such as life satisfaction, purpose, and emotional resilience (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Advantages of Psychological Well-being and Emotional Support Lower levels of anxiety and depression: High emotional support has been linked to low levels of anxiety and depression (Cohen et al., 2015). Less stress: Emotional support helps you cope with daily and chronic stress, which can negatively impact your physical and mental health (Taylor, 2011).

According to Erikson (1963), adolescence is a critical stage in identity formation, where individuals explore and experiment with different roles and identities. For female adolescents, this process can be particularly complex, as they navigate societal expectations around femininity, beauty, and relationships. As Erikson notes, "the young woman's ego identity is often tied to her relationships and her sense of belonging" (Erikson, 1963, p. 92), Body Image and Self-Esteem.

Female adolescents with high psychological well-being tend to have positive relationships, a strong sense of self, and the ability to cope with stress and adversity (Kerr et al., 2017).

Research suggests that female adolescents are particularly vulnerable to body dissatisfaction and negative self-image. According to Slade (1994), "the cultural ideal of thinness can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem in young women" (Slade, 1994, p. 123). This can have serious consequences for their mental health and well-being. Female adolescents often prioritize relationships and social connections. According to Carol Gilligan (1982), "girls' sense of self is deeply rooted in their relationships and their ability to form and maintain connections with others" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 156). This emphasis on relationships can be both a source of strength and vulnerability for female adolescents.

Psychological well-being in adolescent females is a complex and multifaceted topic. During adolescence, females undergo significant physical, emotional, and social changes that can impact their mental health and well-being (Hankin et al., 1998). Some key factors that can influence psychological well-being in adolescent females include: Body image and self-esteem: Societal beauty standards and social media can contribute to body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem (Slater & Tiggemann, 2015). According to Erik Erikson (1963), adolescence is a critical stage in identity formation, where individuals explore and experiment with different roles and identities. For female adolescents, this process can be

particularly complex, as they navigate societal expectations around femininity, beauty, and relationships. As Erikson notes, "the young woman's ego identity is often tied to her relationships and her sense of belonging" (Erikson, 1963, p. 92).

Teacher-student relationships can significantly impact students' well-being, with positive relationships promoting resilience and negative relationships exacerbating stress (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Teacher-student relationships and emotional support are crucial for students' psychological well-being. Positive relationships can foster a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and motivation, while negative relationships can lead to stress, anxiety, and decreased well-being (Suldo et al., 2014). A positive TSR is characterized by warmth, support, and mutual respect, whereas a negative TSR is marked by conflict, neglect, or dismissiveness (Pianta, 1999). Research has consistently shown that positive teacher-student relationships are associated with improved psychological well-being, academic performance, and social skills (Suldo et al., 2014).

Emotional support from teachers refers to the provision of emotional comfort, empathy, and reassurance to students, helping them feel valued, understood, and supported (Verschuere & Koomen, 2015). This type of support involves teachers being sensitive to students' emotional needs, providing a sense of security and stability, and helping students develop emotional regulation skills (Pianta et al., 2016). Emotional support from teachers can take many forms, including active listening, validation of feelings, and provision of comfort and reassurance (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2015). Decades of research have shown that having emotional support in your life has many benefits, including mental health and physical health (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015). For example, emotional support has been linked to lower levels of anxiety and depression, better stress management, and improved physical health (Cohen et al., 2015).

Emotional support can take many shapes and sizes. It is essential to understand not only what type of emotional support you can offer but also what type of emotional support the other person wants or needs to receive (Burleson, 2003). For instance, your partner might come home from work very stressed and want to recharge. While they would like to tell you all about their stressful day, you would like to show your emotional support by hugging or kissing instead of listening empathically (Cutrona, 1996).

Regular encouragement from teachers refers to the provision of positive feedback, praise, and motivation to students, aimed at promoting their self-confidence, self-esteem, and academic engagement (Hattie & Yates, 2017). Encouragement from teachers can involve verbal feedback, written comments, or nonverbal cues, such as smiles or nods of approval (Sun & Leithwood, 2017). Regular encouragement can help students develop a growth mindset, persist in the face of challenges, and develop a sense of competence and self-efficacy (Dweck & Yeager, 2019).

Theoretically, Attachment Theory by John Bowlby (1969) and Positive Psychology Theory by Martin Seligman (2011) were used in this study. Attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby (1969), is a psychological model that describes the dynamics of long-term interpersonal relationships. According to Bowlby (1969), attachment is a fundamental human need that is present throughout the lifespan, and it plays a critical role in shaping an individual's emotional and social development. Attachment theory is highly relevant to this study because it provides a framework for understanding the importance of emotional support in relationships between teachers-students. Students who experience secure attachment in school from their teachers are more likely to have better emotional regulation, mental health, well-being and good educational performance.

Martin Seligman's theory of positive psychology (2011) focuses on promoting mental well-being and happiness, rather than just treating mental illness. According to Seligman, positive psychology involves cultivating positive emotions, strengths, and resilience to enhance overall well-being. This theory is highly relevant to this study because it provides a framework for understanding the importance of regular encouragement from teachers in promoting psychological well-being of female adolescents in secondary schools. When teachers are positive towards student, they feel loved and thus turn to work harder with self-confidence and at the end of the day they will perform well academically.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design, specifically a quantitative approach. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire which is typical survey instruments. Survey consists essentially of collecting people's opinion on a given issue. The study is cross-sectional because it makes just an appraisal or snapshot of the current situation.

Study Area and Setting

The research site for this study is Buea municipality in Fako Division in the Southwest Region of Cameroon. Fako Division is located on the slopes of Mount Cameroon. It is made of five Sub-Divisions including Buea, Limbe, Tiko, Muyuka and West Coast. Fako is host to major cities like Buea, Tiko and Limbe which are some of the fastest growing towns in Cameroon today with a mixed cosmopolitan setting. The area is facing a socio-political crisis since 2016 with major impact on the social, economic and educational sectors.

Population of the study

The parent population consists of all secondary school students for an estimated number of 32,387 people with female making up 18252.

Target population

The study targeted essentially female adolescent students aged 14 to 19 years.

Sampling technique

The study opted for non-probability sampling technique; non-probability sampling is used when the sample needs to be collected based on a specific characteristic of the population. Double-stage sampling approach was used for the schools that were sampled using simple random sampling technique notably the balloting approach while stratifying between public, lay private and confessional. The sampling was purposive and convenient because the study targeted essentially adolescent girls aged 14 to 19 years and they were involved in the study opportunistically as they assented or as their parents consented.

Sample

Sample size was estimated using sample calculation for one population proportion with the support of Epi Info 6.04d (CDC, 2001) as explained by Nana (2018).

$$n = \frac{NZ^2P(1-P)}{d^2 N - 1 + Z^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where N=total population here considering and infinite population, Z= Z value corresponding to the confidence level, d= absolute precision, P=expected proportion in the population, n effective=n*design effect (DEFF).

The following additional parameters were used to estimate the sample size:

d= 5%; d is the precision or margin of error; the smaller the precision, the higher the sample size, the reliability and validity of the data. Higher precision reduces the bias related to sampling effect.

P=50%; this is the probability value and 50% is used for optimal sample size. When the population is homogenous with respect to the characteristics under study, the variability is thus low, therefore implying either high or small probabilistic value. When this value tends toward 100%, the variability expressed in term of Standard Deviation reduces highly, thus the sample size. By taking 50%, that is the medium value of the variability, we have an optimal sample size.

DEFF=1.1. This is the Design Effect; it is greater than 1 because convenience sampling and not simple random sampling is used as to improve the variability. In fact, the only sampling techniques that give equal chance to all individuals in the population to be sampled are simple random sampling and systematic sampling. As for other sampling techniques, to compensate for bias as deriving from the high potential risk of clustering the sampling, higher DEFFs are used as to improve the variability.

Confidence interval=95% giving a $Z_{\alpha/2}$ =level of significance = 1.96.

The sample size estimated based on the parameters above was 410 participants with the lower bound at 360. This sample size was distributed equally to the sampled schools.

Instrument for data collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed on a Likert-scale format for the items addressing relationship and psychological wellbeing. As for the demographic characteristics, school, type of school, location, class, age, perceived economic status of the family and religion were targeted.

Validity of Data Collection Instruments

The validity of the data collection instruments was ensured through content, construct, and face validity procedures. A public health research supervisor and a statistician reviewed the instruments to assess clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives. A pilot study was conducted in GBHS Tiko, which was not included in the final sample, to test comprehensibility, feasibility, and contextual appropriateness. Feedback from the pilot informed refinements to the instruments' wording, response categories, and data collection procedures.

Reliability of Data Collection Instruments

The internal consistency assumption was verified using Cronbach Alpha Reliability coefficient that enables the researcher to ascertain whether the internal consistency of the responses was satisfactory to an acceptable level (Cronbach, 1951; Nana, 2018).

Table 1: Reliability of the questionnaire

Conceptual components	Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient	Variance	N _{cases}	N _{items}
Academically-supportive Relationships	0.714	0.027	409	6
Non-academically-supportive relationships	0.831	0.105	409	6
Well-being of female adolescent students	0.882	0.014	409	6
IVM	0.802	0.072	409	18

The internal consistency assumption was not violated for both the pilot data and the final data collected with very good reliability coefficient values of respectively 0.857 and 0.802. The overall variance was relatively close to 0, thus indicating that we were more likely to be faced with a skewed distribution with responses tilting more towards positive or negative conceptual polarization (table 1). The very good reliability coefficients indicated that questions were well understood, respondents were objective and that the necessary methodological technical requirements were abode upon during questionnaire development, data collection and exploratory statistics.

Ethical Considerations

An authorization to carry out research was obtained from the Ministry of Research, notably the Regional Center for Research and Innovation for the Southwest Region. Participants were informed about the study's purpose and procedures before data collection. Participation was voluntary, and respondents could decline or withdraw at any time without negative consequences. Informed assent was obtained from all participants before questionnaire administration and the consent of the parents of those adolescent girls aged below 16 years was sought. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by not recording personal identifiers; all information collected was backed up, used strictly for research purposes, and reported in summary form.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was entered using EpiData Version 3.1 (EpiData Association, Odense Denmark, 2008) and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Standard version, Release 21.0 (IBM Inc. 2012). These structured questions were analyzed using frequency, proportions

and multiple-responses analysis to aggregate score within conceptual component (IBM Inc. 2012, Nana, 2018). Statistics were presented in tables and charts while abiding to the proportion-conservation rule (Nana, 2025). Chi-Square test of independence and Spearman's Rho correlation test were used in a bivariate association while in a multivariate analysis, Binary Logistic Regression determined significant and critical predictors of psychological wellbeing. Spearman's Rho was used to this effect given that the normality assumption was violated for all the conceptual components (Shapiro Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov: $P < 0.05$). Significant predictors consider an asymptotic significant below Alpha set at 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) considering 95% Confidence Level (CL). As for the critical ones the OR (Odd Ratio) was to be greater than 1 and the LB-OR (Lower Bond of the Odd Ratio) expected to be greater than 1.

RESULTS

Demographic information

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of participants

Age range	n	%
14-17	314	76.8
18-19	95	23.2
School	n	%
GBHS Muea	41	10.0
GBHS Molyko	40	9.8
GBHS Bokwango	41	10.0
CUIB Molyko	41	10.0
Mount Camel	41	10.0
Julius Peters S.S.	41	10.0
BHS Soppo	41	10.0
St Therese International S.S.	41	10.0
Inter Comprehensive Molyko	41	10.0
Full Gospel S.S Bokwai	41	10.0
Type of school	n	%
Public	163	39.9
Lay private	85	20.8
Confessional	161	39.4
Location	n	%
Rural area	198	48.4
Urban area	211	51.6
Class	n	%
Form 1	12	2.9
Form 2	14	3.4
Form 3	48	11.7
Form 4	92	22.5
Lower Sixth	172	42.1
Upper Sixth	71	17.4
Perceived family economic status	n	%
Poor	21	5.1
Moderate	387	94.6
High	1	.2
Religion	n	%
Christian	399	97.6
Ancestricity / African Traditional Religion (ATR)	10	2.4

Adolescent girls were well stratified in their demographic characteristics (table 2). With respect to age, 76.8% (314) of them were aged 14-17 years and 23.2% (95) 18-19 years. They were sampled from 10 schools whereby 39.9% (163) were public, 60.6% (85) lay private and 39.4% (161) confessional. Both rural and urban schools were sampled with proportion shares of 48.4% (198) and 51.6% (211) respectively. Their classes sprayed from Form One to Upper Sixth. As for the perceived economic status of their family, they were mostly from moderate home 94.6% (387). They were dominantly Christian 97.6% (399) with the rest practicing Ancestricity / African Traditional Religion (ATR).

Teacher-female adolescent student relationship**Academically-supportive relationships****Table 3: Female-adolescent students' description of academically-supportive relationships**

Items	Stretched				Collapsed		Mean	SD
	SD	D	A	SA	SD & D	A & SA		
My teacher is caring and interacts with me fatherly with clear interest in my well-being and academic achievement	6.1% (25)	12.2% (50)	62.3% (255)	19.3% (79)	18.3% (75)	81.7% (334)	1.8	0.4
My teacher encourages and motivates me to achieve in my study	3.4% (14)	6.4% (26)	55.7% (228)	34.5% (141)	9.8% (40)	90.2% (369)	1.9	0.3
My teacher recognizes and acknowledges my personal academic struggles or effort	3.9% (16)	21.0% (86)	56.5% (231)	18.6% (76)	24.9% (102)	75.1% (307)	1.8	0.4
My teacher criticizes me constructively	18.8% (77)	36.4% (149)	29.3% (120)	15.4% (63)	55.3% (226)	44.7% (183)	1.4	0.5
My teacher pays attention to my feelings and challenges and regularly checks in to see if I have any concern or worry	11.0% (45)	26.9% (110)	46.0% (188)	16.1% (66)	37.9% (155)	62.1% (254)	1.6	0.5
My teacher uses friendly and constructive language to advice and counsel us on our sexual and reproductive life and health such that we should not be victim of sexual debauch and promiscuity	6.6% (27)	6.8% (28)	41.6% (170)	45.0% (184)	13.4% (55)	86.6% (354)	1.9	0.3
MRS	8.3% (204)	18.3% (449)	48.6% (1192)	24.8% (609)	26.6% (653)	73.4% (1801)	1.7	0.4

In aggregate, female adolescent students to a high extent with a proportion weight of 73.4% were satisfied with academically-supportive relationship. They mostly cherished the fact that their teachers encourage and motivate them to achieve in their study 90.2% (369) and least appreciated constructive criticism from their teachers 44.7% (183), as presented on table 3.

Non-academically-supportive relationships**Table 4: Female-adolescent students' description of non-academically-supportive relationships**

Items	Stretched				Collapsed		Mean	SD
	SD	D	A	SA	SD & D	A & SA		
I have been dated by my teacher asking me for sex	65.5% (268)	30.6% (125)	2.7% (11)	1.2% (5)	96.1% (393)	3.9% (16)	1.0	0.2
My teacher despises or ignores me in class because I have not consented sexual relationship with him	63.1% (258)	33.0% (135)	2.4% (10)	1.5% (6)	96.1% (393)	3.9% (16)	1.0	0.2
My teacher places false accusations on me because I have not consented sexual relationship with him	62.3% (255)	34.5% (141)	1.7% (7)	1.5% (8)	96.8% (396)	3.2% (13)	1.0	0.2
I am aware that teachers in my school date and go out with girls	31.5% (129)	27.1% (111)	23.5% (96)	17.8% (73)	58.7% (240)	41.3% (169)	1.4	0.5
My teacher does not mark my copies objectively and always try to portray me as a dull fellow	45.7% (187)	48.9% (200)	3.7% (15)	1.7% (7)	94.6% (387)	5.4% (22)	1.1	0.2
My teacher favours other girls who are in relationship with him to prove me wrong	51.1% (209)	40.1% (164)	5.4% (22)	3.4% (14)	91.2% (373)	8.8% (36)	1.1	0.3
MRS	53.2% (1306)	35.7% (876)	6.6% (161)	4.5% (111)	88.9% (2182)	11.1% (272)	1.1	0.3

In aggregate, female adolescent students to a very high extent with a proportion weight of 88.9% expressed contempt as far as non-academically-supportive relationship was concerned. They mostly agreed to have been dated by their teacher asking them for sex 96.1% (393), having the same proportion with those that agreed that their teacher despises or ignores them in class because they have not consented sexual relationship with them. They were least aware that teachers in their school date and go out with girls 58.7% (240), as presented on table 4.

Well-being of female adolescent students**Table 5: Female-adolescent students' description of their well-being**

Items	Stretched				Collapsed		Mean	SD
	SD	D	A	SA	SD & D	A & SA		
I often experience emotional distress and anxiety	15.9% (65)	33.5% (137)	36.7% (150)	13.9% (57)	49.4% (202)	50.6% (207)	1.5	0.5
I feel like not going to school again	41.1% (168)	32.8% (134)	14.2% (58)	12.0% (49)	73.8% (302)	26.2% (107)	1.3	0.4
I have lost confidence in myself being in this school	43.5% (178)	35.7% (146)	11.0% (45)	9.8% (40)	79.2% (324)	20.8% (85)	1.2	0.4
I don't feel encouraged in my future aspirations	42.3% (173)	35.9% (147)	13.7% (56)	8.1% (33)	78.2% (320)	21.8% (89)	1.2	0.4
I don't feel valued by my teacher or in this school	39.9% (163)	40.6% (166)	10.5% (43)	9.0% (37)	80.4% (329)	19.6% (80)	1.2	0.4
I cannot speak up in class, I am often afraid of judgment or despise from my teacher	35.0% (143)	34.5% (141)	14.2% (58)	16.4% (67)	69.4% (284)	30.6% (125)	1.3	0.5
MRS	36.3% (890)	35.5% (871)	16.7% (410)	11.5% (283)	71.8% (1761)	28.2% (693)	1.3	0.4

In aggregate, female adolescent students to a high extent with a proportion weight of 71.8% were satisfied with their wellbeing. They mostly felt valued by their teacher or in their school 80.4% (329) while they least experienced emotional distress and anxiety 49.4% (202), as presented on table 5.

Impact of teacher-student relationship on the wellbeing of female adolescent students**Table 6: Influence of teacher-student relationship on the wellbeing of female adolescent students**

	Spearman's rho	Wellbeing of female adolescent students
Academically-supportive relationships	R	0.009
	P-value	0.858
	N	409
Non-academically-supportive relationships	R	-0.360**
	P-value	0.000
	N	409

There was a very weak positive influence of academically-supportive relationship on the wellbeing of female adolescent students ($R=0.009$; $P=0.858$) while on the other side, non-academically-supportive relationships highly and significantly weighed against the wellbeing of female adolescent students ($R= -0.360$; $P=0.000$), as presented on table 6.

Predictive modelling for significant and critical predictors of wellbeing of female adolescent students**Table 7: Binary Logistic Regression depicting the explanatory power and the asymptotic significance of predictive components of wellbeing of female adolescent students**

Predictive components	Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients	Predictive / Explanatory Power (Cox & Snell R Square)	N
Demographic characteristics	$\chi^2=66.069$ $P=0.000$	$R^2=0.149$	409
Academically-supportive relationships	$\chi^2=34.513$ $P=0.000$	$R^2=0.081$	409
Non-academically-supportive relationships	$\chi^2=51.200$ $P=0.000$	$R^2=0.118$	409
Integrated Value Mapping (IVM)	$\chi^2=121.270$ $P=0.000$	$R^2=0.275$	409

The omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients indicate that the variability explained by the 3 sub-components and the IVM were very significant ($P=0.000$), with Predictive Power / Explanatory Power of 14.9%, 8.1%, 11.8% and 27.5% respectively. With roughly 73% variability lost, this implies there are other factors not considered in this study that shape the wellbeing of female adolescent students (table 7). Bivariate correlation (table 6) indicates that the influence of academically-supportive relationship was positive while that of non-academically-supportive relationship was negative but deviates from logistic regression by depicting a non-significant impact of academically supportive relationship. However, the data assumptions prompt more for Logistic Regression, thus bivariate relationship using composite variables only supports in the interpretation.

Table 8: Binary logistic regression depicting critical and significant predictors of wellbeing of female adolescent students after controlling for each other, considering demographic characteristics

Predictors	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Age range	.123	.274	.201	1	.654	1.131	.661	1.933
Type of school	.633	.133	22.707	1	.000	1.883	1.452	2.444
Location	1.695	.249	46.193	1	.000	5.445	3.340	8.876
Class	-.113	.106	1.131	1	.288	.893	.725	1.100
Perceived family economic status	.989	.689	2.064	1	.151	2.689	.697	10.366
Religion	.588	.813	.522	1	.470	1.800	.365	8.864

Only type of school significantly influenced the wellbeing of female adolescent students at bivariate association ($P=0.000$). But after controlling the predictors for each other, type of school and location emerged as significant and critical predictors ($P < 0.05$; $OR > 1$ and $LB-OR > 1$), as presented on table 8. Well-being of female adolescent students was mostly good in lay private schools 75.3% (64), followed by public schools 68.1% (111), with the least being confessional schools 52.8% (85), as presented on table 9. Wellbeing was better in rural area 78.8% (156) than in urban area 49.3% (260), as depicted by table 10.

Table 9: Association between type of school and wellbeing of female adolescent students

Type of school	Stats	Well-being of female adolescent students		Total
		Good	Poor	
Public	n	111	52	163
	%	68.1%	31.9%	100.0%
Lay private	n	64	21	85
	%	75.3%	24.7%	100.0%
Confessional	n	85	76	161
	%	52.8%	47.2%	100.0%
Total	n	260	149	409
	%	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%

Table 10: Association between location and wellbeing of female adolescent students

Location	Stats	Well-being of female adolescent students		Total
		Good	Poor	
Rural area	n	156	42	198
	%	78.8%	21.2%	100.0%
Urban area	n	104	107	211
	%	49.3%	50.7%	100.0%
Total	n	260	149	409
	%	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%

Table 11: Binary logistic regression depicting critical and significant predictors of wellbeing of female adolescent students after controlling for each other, considering academically-supportive relationship

Predictors	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
My teacher is caring and interacts with me fatherly with clear interest in my well-being and academic achievement	.101	.176	.333	1	.564	1.107	.784	2.344
My teacher encourages and motivates me to achieve in my study	-.059	.184	.102	1	.749	.943	.657	1.193
My teacher recognizes and acknowledges my personal academic struggles or effort	-.173	.178	.954	1	.329	.841	.594	.979
My teacher criticises me constructively	.665	.131	25.740	1	.000	1.944	1.504	3.281
My teacher pays attention to my feelings and challenges and regularly checks in to see if I have any concern or worry	-.247	.146	2.854	1	.091	.781	.586	1.309
My teacher uses friendly and constructive language to advice and counsel us on our sexual and reproductive life and health such that we should not be victim of sexual debauch and promiscuity	-.272	.141	3.730	1	.040	.762	.578	1.581

Two indicators notably ‘my teacher criticizes me constructively’ and ‘my teacher uses friendly and constructive language to advice and counsel us on our sexual and reproductive life and health such that we should not be victim of sexual debauch and promiscuity’ significantly influenced the wellbeing of female adolescent students at bivariate association ($P<0.05$). After controlling the predictors for each other, ‘my teacher criticizes

me constructively' and 'my teacher recognizes and acknowledges my personal academic struggles or effort' emerged as significant predictor ($P < 0.05$) while the former was a critical one ($P < 0.05$; $OR > 1$ and $LB-OR > 1$), as presented on table 11.

Table 12: Binary logistic regression depicting critical and significant predictors of wellbeing of female adolescent students after controlling for each other, considering non-academically-supportive relationship

Predictors	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
I have been dated by my teacher asking me for sex	.143	.262	.298	1	.585	1.154	.691	1.554
My teacher despises or ignores me in class because I have not consented sexual relationship with him	-.774	.310	6.241	1	.012	.461	.251	2.311
My teacher places false accusations on me because I have not consented sexual relationship with him	-.051	.271	.035	1	.852	.951	.559	2.191
I am aware that teachers in my school date and go out with girls	.284	.123	5.299	1	.021	1.328	1.043	1.114
My teacher does not mark my copies objectively and always try to portray me as a dull fellow	-.228	.222	1.059	1	.303	.796	.515	1.400
My teacher favours other girls who are in relationship with him to prove me wrong	-.694	.197	12.351	1	.000	.500	.339	1.501

In bivariate association, all the indicators of the conceptual component 'non-academically supportive relationship' significantly predicted the wellbeing of female student but after controlling for each other, three of them emerged as significant predictors ($P < 0.05$) namely 'My teacher despises or ignores me in class because I have not consented sexual relationship with him', 'I am aware that teachers in my school date and go out with girls' and 'My teacher favours other girls who are in relationship with him to prove me wrong'. Only 'I am aware that teachers in my school date and go out with girls' was a critical one ($P < 0.05$; $OR > 1$ and $LB-OR > 1$), as presented on table 12.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings show the relationship between teacher and their female adolescent student significantly shape their psychological well-being. This finding is in line with Hamre & Pianta (2001) who opined that teacher-student relationships can significantly impact students' well-being, with positive relationships promoting resilience and negative relationships exacerbating stress (Teacher-student relationships and emotional support are crucial for students' psychological well-being. Also, this finding ties with Suldo et al (2014), who said positive relationships can foster a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and motivation, while negative relationships can lead to stress, anxiety, and decreased well-being. Their findings equally proved that positive teacher-student relationships are associated with improved psychological well-being, academic performance, and social skills. This finding is also supported by Pianta (1999) who said that a positive TSR is characterized by warmth, support, and mutual respect, whereas a negative TSR is marked by conflict, neglect, or dismissiveness. Moreover, this work is in line with the Attachment Theory by John Bowlby (1969) and Positive Psychology Theory by Martin Seligman. To Bowlby, Students who experience secure attachment in school from their teachers are more likely to have better emotional regulation, mental health, well-being and good educational performance. Also, to Seligman regular encouragement from teachers will make student feel loved and thus turn to work harder with self-confidence and at the end of the day they will perform well academically.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the importance of fostering positive teacher-student relationships and providing emotional support and regular encouragement to promote psychological well-being of female adolescent students Buea municipality in Fako Division. This study on the impact of teacher-student relationships on the psychological well-being of female adolescent students is premised on the recognition that education is fundamentally both an academic and relational process. Adolescence is a period during which relationships with significant adults can contribute substantially to identity development, emotional adjustment, self-esteem, resilience, and psychological functioning (Sawyer et al., 2018). Given the considerable amount of time adolescents spend within schools, teachers constitute an important part of the social environment shaping their developmental experiences. The literature suggests that positive teacher-student relationships characterised by trust, respect, empathy, fairness, effective communication, emotional support, and responsiveness can strengthen students' sense of belonging, engagement, motivation, and psychological adjustment (Cornelius-White, 2007; Roorda et al., 2011; Quin, 2017). Conversely, persistent conflict, rejection, humiliation, discrimination, intimidation, or emotional distance within teacher-student interactions may undermine students' psychological safety and their willingness to participate meaningfully in school life. This reinforces the argument that the interpersonal quality of schooling should be regarded as an essential component of educational effectiveness. The study therefore highlights the necessity of moving beyond a conception of teachers solely as transmitters of academic knowledge. Teachers are important relational actors within the developmental ecology of students. Ultimately, the study concludes that the psychological well-being of female adolescent students is inseparable from the relational quality of their educational experiences. A school cannot be considered fully effective merely because students perform well academically if its interpersonal environment generates fear, rejection, humiliation, emotional insecurity, or social isolation. Conversely, classrooms characterised by respect, trust, encouragement, connectedness, and supportive teacher-student interactions can provide conditions within which female adolescents are better positioned to develop positive self-perceptions, resilience, emotional stability, healthy relationships, and a sense of purpose.

Consequently, strengthening positive teacher-student relationships should be considered an important educational and psychosocial intervention rather than an optional dimension of good teaching. Investment in healthy teacher-student relationships represents an investment in the

psychological well-being, educational participation, personal development, and future prospects of female adolescent students. For schools in Buea municipality and Cameroon more broadly, the challenge is therefore to develop educational environments in which academic excellence and psychological well-being are treated as mutually reinforcing outcomes of quality education.

LIMITATIONS

This study was conducted in a region facing socio-political instability since 2016, which made working in rural/remote areas challenging. Despite these constraints, the study objectives were optimally achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance the effectiveness of teacher-female adolescent students' relationship, it was recommended that school administrators at the beginning of each academic year, should remind teachers on the importance of psychological well-being of students especially female adolescent students, paying attention to their physical and emotional well-being.

All teachers should go for a satisfied trauma and mental health care management course which will enable them know how to help female adolescent and themselves psychologically, emotionally and physically.

Suggestion for further research

A study can be carried out to appraise pathways to improve the relationship between teachers and female adolescent students towards enhancing their wellbeing.

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Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in the submitted article are the author's own and not the official position of the affiliated institutions.

Competing Interest Statements

The authors declare no competing interests with respect to this study and publication, and all data used in this study are available.

Ethical Clearance Approval

An authorization to carry out research was obtained from the Ministry of Research, notably the Regional Center for Research and Innovation for the Southwest Region, Ref. No 046/MINRESI/RCC/C/09/2026.

Data Availability

Data for this study are available and can be accessed if requested.

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