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EXPLORING THE STRESS AND SATISFACTION
RELATIONSHIP: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL
MOTIVATION IN OMANI SCHOOL TEACHERS WITHIN
OMAN VISION 2040

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Abstract:

This study examines the mediating role of professional motivation in the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman, aligning with the educational objectives of Oman Vision 2040. A sample of 714 teachers participated in this study, providing quantitative data on stress, motivation, and job satisfaction. Findings indicate a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -0.54$, $p < 0.01$) between occupational stress and job satisfaction, confirming that higher stress levels lead to decreased satisfaction. The mean occupational stress level was 3.48 ($SD = 0.77$), while job satisfaction had a mean of 3.30 ($SD = 0.61$) on a 1-5 Likert scale. Mediation analysis revealed that professional motivation significantly buffers the adverse effects of stress on job satisfaction, with an indirect effect of 0.22 and a total effect of -0.54. These findings emphasize the importance of fostering teacher motivation to counteract stress and improve job satisfaction. Targeted interventions, such as workload management, professional development opportunities, and teacher recognition programs, are recommended to enhance motivation and well-being. This study provides empirical insights that can inform educational policies in Oman, ensuring a more sustainable and resilient teaching workforce in line with Vision 2040.

Keywords:

Professional Motivation, Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, Mediating Role, Schoolteachers, Oman's Vision 2040.

Introduction

Professional motivation, occupational stress, and job satisfaction are interrelated concepts that significantly shape the well-being and effectiveness of teachers, particularly in the Sultanate of Oman, where the education sector is undergoing transformative changes under Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020). Professional motivation refers to the intrinsic and extrinsic forces that drive teachers' dedication, effort, and persistence in their roles. Intrinsic factors such as passion for teaching, a sense of purpose, and fulfilment from student success often coexist with extrinsic motivators like salary, recognition, and working conditions. In Oman, professional motivation is crucial due to the critical role teachers play in shaping the nation's future workforce. However, challenges such as administrative burdens, limited career growth opportunities, and resource disparities between urban and rural schools can negatively impact motivation levels, necessitating targeted strategies to sustain teacher engagement (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007).

Occupational stress, on the other hand, arises when job demands exceed the resources available to an individual, leading to physical and emotional strain. Teachers often experience stress from role overload, unclear expectations, and interpersonal challenges with colleagues, students, or parents (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). In the Omani context, stress levels are exacerbated by the rapid modernization of the education system, including new curriculum requirements, technological advancements, and the pressures associated with educational reforms. These stressors can undermine teacher performance and contribute to burnout, absenteeism, and reduced job satisfaction, posing significant challenges to the country's educational goals (AlShuaili & Yussef, 2024).

Job satisfaction represents the degree to which teachers feel content and fulfilled in their roles, encompassing factors such as the work environment, professional recognition, and opportunities for growth. In Oman, job satisfaction is influenced by disparities in resources, workload, and professional support between urban and rural schools. While the government has made efforts to improve conditions for teachers, persistent challenges such as large class sizes and insufficient resources in rural areas continue to affect satisfaction levels (Srivastava & Singh, 1984).

Professional motivation plays a pivotal role in mediating the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. High levels of motivation can buffer the negative effects of stress, enabling teachers to remain engaged and satisfied despite challenging conditions. Conversely, low motivation can exacerbate the impact of stress, leading to dissatisfaction and burnout. This mediating role has been supported by various studies. For example, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) found that motivated teachers in Norway were better able to cope with stress, maintaining higher job satisfaction. Similarly, Richards (2012) observed that professional motivation mediated the relationship between stress and job satisfaction among teachers in the United States, especially those who benefited from supportive leadership and professional development. In Oman, studies such as Al Shuaili (2024a) highlighted the critical role of motivation in helping teachers cope with stressors such as administrative burdens and limited career advancement opportunities. These findings underscore the importance of fostering both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to mitigate the adverse effects of stress and sustain job satisfaction among teachers.

This study is particularly important in the Omani context, where teachers face a unique combination of challenges, including high administrative workloads, uneven resource distribution, and the pressures of adapting to a rapidly modernizing educational system. By examining the mediating role of professional motivation, this research seeks to provide actionable insights to improve teacher well-being and enhance the overall quality of education in the Sultanate of Oman.

Study Problem

The teaching profession is widely recognized as one of the most challenging and stressful occupations, requiring educators to manage heavy workloads, administrative responsibilities, and the emotional demands of working with students and parents. In the Sultanate of Oman, these challenges are intensified by ongoing educational reforms under Oman Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020), which aim to modernize the education system and elevate teaching quality to meet international standards (Al Shuaili, 2024b). While these reforms introduce new opportunities, they also impose additional pressures on teachers, increasing their stress levels and impacting their overall job satisfaction.

Existing research indicates that prolonged exposure to occupational stress can lead to teacher burnout, decreased job satisfaction, and declining educational outcomes (Chan, 2002). Despite these concerns, studies have also highlighted the role of professional motivation as a key factor that can buffer the negative effects of stress on job satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Motivation, whether intrinsic (e.g., personal fulfilment, passion for teaching) or extrinsic (e.g., salary, professional recognition), plays a crucial role in sustaining teachers' commitment and effectiveness in their roles, even in stressful environments.

However, a significant gap exists in understanding how professional motivation mediates the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction, particularly within the Omani educational context. This gap is especially critical given the urban-rural disparities in Oman, where rural teachers often face higher stress levels due to limited resources, fewer professional development opportunities, and inadequate administrative support. Without a clear understanding of how motivation influences stress and satisfaction, policymakers and educational leaders may struggle to implement effective strategies that enhance teacher well-being and retention.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the mediating role of professional motivation in the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman. By doing so, it seeks to provide empirical insights that can inform targeted interventions and policies to reduce teacher stress, enhance job satisfaction, and ultimately improve the quality of education in alignment with the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the mediating role of professional motivation in the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman. Specifically, the study seeks to understand how occupational stress affects job satisfaction and whether professional motivation serves as a buffering mechanism that mitigates the negative impact of stress. By focusing on the unique challenges faced by teachers in Oman, including administrative burdens, curriculum reforms, and resource disparities, the study aims to provide insights into how professional motivation can enhance teacher well-being

and job satisfaction. The findings of this research will contribute to developing evidence-based strategies and policies to improve teacher motivation, reduce stress, and sustain job satisfaction, thereby supporting the broader goals of Oman's educational reforms under Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020).

Study Objectives

1. To explore the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman.
2. To investigate the mediating role of professional motivation in the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction.
3. To provide evidence-based recommendations for improving teacher motivation and job satisfaction while reducing occupational stress in the context of Oman's educational reforms.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman?
2. How does professional motivation mediate the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction?
3. To what extent does professional motivation mitigate the negative effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction in the Omani educational context?

Hypotheses

1. H1: Occupational stress has a negative impact on job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman.
2. H2: Professional motivation mediates the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction.
3. H3: Professional motivation reduces the negative impact of occupational stress on job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman.

These objectives, questions, and hypotheses are designed to comprehensively address the study's objectives and provide actionable insights for enhancing teacher well-being and performance in Oman.

Importance of the Study

This study holds significant importance at both theoretical and practical levels, particularly in the context of the Sultanate of Oman, where the education sector plays a pivotal role in achieving the nation's development goals under Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020). At the theoretical level, the study contributes to the body of knowledge on the interplay between occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction in the teaching profession. By investigating the mediating role of professional motivation, the research deepens our understanding of how intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors can buffer the negative effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction. While much of the existing literature examines these variables in isolation, this study provides a comprehensive framework that links them, offering valuable insights for researchers and educators worldwide (Agha, Azmi, & Irfan, 2017; Judge & Klinger, 2008).

At the practical level, the findings have direct implications for the Omani educational system. Teachers in Oman face a range of stressors, including heavy workloads, administrative demands, and resource disparities between urban and rural schools (Al Shabibi & Silvennoinen, 2018). These challenges can negatively affect their job satisfaction and performance, ultimately impacting the quality of education. By highlighting the importance of professional motivation as a mediating factor, this study offers actionable strategies for reducing occupational stress and enhancing teacher satisfaction (World Bank Group, 2013). Policymakers and school administrators can use these insights to design targeted interventions, such as professional development programs, recognition initiatives, and workload management strategies, to improve teacher well-being and performance (Hans, Mubeen, & Al Ghabshi, 2014; Gupta & Gehlawat, 2013).

Furthermore, the study aligns with the objectives of Vision 2040, which emphasizes the development of a skilled and motivated workforce to drive national progress. Ensuring that teachers remain motivated and satisfied is crucial for fostering a high-quality education system, which is a cornerstone of Oman's socio-economic development. By addressing teacher stress and enhancing motivation, this study supports efforts to improve educational outcomes and build a more resilient and committed teaching workforce in Oman (Oman Vision 2040, 2020).

Definition of Research Terms

The study includes three key terms: Professional Motivation, Occupational Stress, and Job Satisfaction. These terms are defined below, along with documented references to provide a theoretical foundation.

Professional Motivation

Definition: Professional motivation refers to the internal and external factors that drive individuals to engage in and persist with their professional roles. It includes (Ryan & Deci, 2000):

- **Intrinsic Motivation:** Internal satisfaction derived from the work itself, such as passion for teaching and a sense of purpose.
- **Extrinsic Motivation:** External rewards such as salary, recognition, and professional growth opportunities.

Deci and Ryan (1985) conceptualized motivation as part of Self-Determination Theory, distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Professional motivation, when high, enhances performance, engagement, and satisfaction in the workplace. (Tremblay, Blanchard, Taylor, Pelletier, & Villeneuve, 2009) extended this understanding in the context of work motivation, emphasizing its importance in sustaining long-term commitment and productivity.

Occupational Stress

Definition: Occupational stress is the emotional, physical, and psychological strain experienced when the demands of the job exceed the resources or coping abilities of the individual. In teaching, common stressors include (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984):

- **Role Overload:** Excessive workload and responsibilities.
- **Role Ambiguity:** Unclear job expectations or changes in curriculum and teaching methods.
- **Interpersonal Challenges:** Difficulties in relationships with students, parents, or colleagues.

Kyriacou (2001) defines occupational stress as "the experience of negative emotions such as frustration or anxiety resulting from aspects of a teacher's job." Robbins & Judge (2013), in their development of the Occupational Stress Index (OSI), identified stress as a multidimensional construct influenced by factors such as role conflict, workload, and work environment.

Job Satisfaction

Definition: Job satisfaction refers to an individual's overall sense of fulfillment and contentment with their job. It encompasses various dimensions, including (Mondal, Shrestha, & Bhaila, 2011):

- Work Environment: Physical and emotional conditions at work.
- Recognition: Appreciation from leadership, colleagues, and students.
- Opportunities for Growth: Professional development and career advancement.

Spector (1985) defines job satisfaction as "the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs." Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman (1959) in the Two-Factor Theory highlighted the importance of both hygiene factors (e.g., salary, work conditions) and motivators (e.g., recognition, achievement) in determining job satisfaction.

In this study, these terms are interconnected. Occupational stress is investigated as a predictor of job satisfaction, with professional motivation mediating this relationship. Understanding and defining these terms allows the research to clearly measure their effects and interactions within the context of the teaching profession in Oman (Al Qalhati, Karim, Al Mughairi, Al Hilali, & Hossain, 2020).

Literature Review

Research on professional motivation, occupational stress, and job satisfaction has garnered significant attention due to their interconnectedness and profound implications for teacher well-being and educational outcomes. The theoretical frameworks underpinning these constructs provide a structured understanding of their interplay. Recent studies offer insights into these concepts, emphasizing their relevance in diverse educational contexts, including the Sultanate of Oman. This review synthesizes findings from global and regional research while explicitly outlining the theoretical models that guide these discussions.

Professional Motivation

Professional motivation plays a critical role in sustaining teachers' engagement and performance. Several key theories provide a foundational understanding of this concept:

- Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985): This theory differentiates between intrinsic motivation, which is driven by internal satisfaction and passion for teaching, and extrinsic motivation, which is influenced by external rewards such as salary or job security. According to SDT, teachers who experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness are more likely to sustain motivation over time.
- Goal-Setting Theory (Locke, 1976): This theory posits that clear, specific, and challenging goals enhance motivation and performance. When teachers set meaningful professional objectives, they experience increased engagement and job satisfaction.

Expanding on these theories, Ursin & Eriksen (2004) emphasized that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation contribute to occupational persistence. Richards (2012) found that intrinsic motivation, such as a strong sense of purpose, was particularly crucial for teachers in resource-constrained environments. In Oman, Al Shabibi & Silvennoinen (2018) confirmed that intrinsic motivators played a significant role in sustaining teacher motivation, especially in rural areas with limited external incentives.

Occupational Stress

Occupational stress in the teaching profession is best understood through the lens of established stress theories:

- Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984): This model explains that stress occurs when teachers perceive that job demands exceed their coping resources. The level of stress experienced depends on individual appraisal and coping mechanisms.
- Occupational Stress Theory (Cooper & Marshall, 1976): This framework categorizes stressors into six key domains: workload, role ambiguity, role conflict, relationships, career development, and organizational structure. The theory suggests that inadequate support mechanisms increase stress and reduce teacher efficiency.

Ngidi & Sibaya (2002) applied these theories in the educational sector, emphasizing that stress results from workload pressures and interpersonal conflicts. Mo & Morris (2024) identified workload and administrative burdens as primary stressors, which McCormick & Barnett (2011) found to negatively impact both motivation and job satisfaction. In Oman, Al Shuaili (2024b) documented that administrative burdens and curriculum reforms significantly contribute to stress, highlighting the need for systemic interventions.

Job Satisfaction

Theories of job satisfaction provide insights into what factors contribute to teachers' overall contentment with their professional roles:

- Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959): This theory distinguishes between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, job security, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., recognition, achievement, professional growth). While hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction, true job satisfaction arises from motivators that enhance intrinsic engagement.
- Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1985): This model emphasizes the importance of psychological fulfilment and workplace environment in shaping job satisfaction. It categorizes satisfaction into nine dimensions, including supervision, promotion, and communication.

Research has supported these frameworks, with Canrinus et al. (2012) showing that supportive leadership and professional recognition enhance teacher satisfaction. Gu & Day (2007) linked teacher satisfaction to professional growth opportunities, while Bakker & Demerouti (2007) emphasized that job resources influence well-being. In Oman, Al Shuaili (2024a) reported that resource availability and workload significantly impact teachers' job satisfaction, particularly in rural areas with limited institutional support.

Interconnections Between the Variables

The relationship between professional motivation, occupational stress, and job satisfaction can be explained through mediating theories:

- Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001): This model posits that job demands (e.g., excessive workload) lead to burnout, while job resources (e.g., autonomy, professional development opportunities) buffer against stress and enhance job satisfaction. Professional motivation acts as a key mediator in this dynamic.
- Motivational Buffering Hypothesis (Klassen & Chiu, 2010): This theory suggests that highly motivated teachers are better equipped to manage stress and maintain satisfaction, even in high-demand environments.

Klassen & Chiu (2010) observed that professional motivation mitigates the adverse impact of stress on job satisfaction, particularly when strong institutional support exists. In Oman, Al Shuaili & Yussef (2024) confirmed that motivation plays a critical role in sustaining teacher engagement, even in high-stress environments. These findings emphasize the buffering effect of motivation, which helps reduce stress and enhance overall job satisfaction.

The literature underscores the critical role of professional motivation in mitigating the negative effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction. The theoretical models discussed Self-Determination Theory, Goal-Setting Theory, the Transactional Model of Stress, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and the Job Demands-Resources Model offer valuable insights into these relationships. While global studies provide a broad understanding, research in Oman highlights unique challenges such as resource disparities and curriculum reforms. Addressing these challenges through targeted strategies to enhance motivation and reduce stress can significantly improve teacher well-being and performance, aligning with the broader goals of Oman Vision 2040.

Methodology

This section outlines the methodological framework for the study, including the study design, participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods. The methodology is designed to address the research questions and hypotheses in the context of schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman.

Study Design

The study employs a quantitative, descriptive, and correlational research design. This approach is appropriate for examining the relationships between occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction, as well as testing the mediating role of motivation. A correlational design allows for the identification of statistical associations among variables without manipulating the study environment, ensuring the results are reflective of real-world conditions in the Omani educational context.

Research Participants

The participants of this study consist of 714 schoolteachers from various regions in the Sultanate of Oman. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure proportional representation based on:

- Gender: Equal representation of male and female teachers.
- School Type: Inclusion of teachers from both public and private schools.

- Geographic Location: Teachers from urban and rural areas in different governorates.

The sample is designed to capture the diverse experiences of teachers in Oman, particularly given the varying stressors and motivational factors between urban and rural settings. The total population of teachers in Oman for the academic year 2023–2024 was 75,163 (Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Education, 2024), ensuring that the sample size of 714 provides sufficient statistical power for the study.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of four sections:

- **Demographic Information:** Includes variables such as gender, years of teaching experience, school type, and geographic location.
- **Occupational Stress Scale:** Adapted from the Occupational Stress Index (OSI) by Srivastava & Singh (1984), measuring stress across dimensions such as role overload, ambiguity, and interpersonal conflicts. The scale includes 46 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale from “never” to “always.”
- **Job Satisfaction Scale:** Based on the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) by Spector (1985), evaluating satisfaction across 36 items rated on a 6-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”
- **Professional Motivation Scale:** Derived from the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) by Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins (2006), measuring intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors across 18 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale from “does not fit at all” to “fits perfectly.”

Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed electronically and in paper form to ensure accessibility for participants in both urban and rural areas. Ethical considerations were upheld, including informed consent and anonymity.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics:

- Mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions were calculated to summarize the data for each variable (occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction).
- Demographic variables were analysed to provide context for the sample characteristics.

Inferential Statistics:

- **Correlation Analysis:** Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationships among occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction.
- **Mediation Analysis:** A three-step regression analysis was conducted to test the mediating role of professional motivation:
 1. Regressing job satisfaction on occupational stress.
 2. Regressing professional motivation on occupational stress.
 3. Regressing job satisfaction on both occupational stress and professional motivation.

- ***Statistical Software:***

Data were analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) for Structural Equation modelling (SEM). The SEM approach allows for simultaneous testing of direct and indirect effects, providing robust evidence for the hypothesized mediation model.

Psychometric Properties of the Scales and Adaptation to the Omani Context:

To ensure accurate measurement and meaningful results, this study employed validated scales for occupational stress, job satisfaction, and professional motivation. These scales were carefully adapted to the Omani educational context to reflect the cultural and professional realities faced by schoolteachers in the Sultanate. The psychometric properties of these instruments, including their reliability and validity, were thoroughly evaluated to confirm their appropriateness for the study population.

The Occupational Stress Index (OSI) by Srivastava & Singh (1984) was used to measure occupational stress. This 46-item scale assesses stressors such as role overload, role ambiguity, and interpersonal conflicts. To measure job satisfaction, the study employed the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) by Spector (1985), which consists of 36 items evaluating various dimensions of satisfaction, including the work environment, supervision, and recognition. Professional motivation was measured using the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) by Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins (2006), an 18-item scale grounded in Self-Determination Theory, assessing both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

The scales were translated into Arabic and modified to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness for Omani teachers. The adaptation process included translating the scales into Arabic by bilingual education experts, followed by back-translation to confirm the accuracy of the original content. The translated scales were then reviewed to align with the Omani context, incorporating localized examples such as administrative burdens and professional development opportunities specific to Oman. These adjustments ensured that the scales were relevant and clear for the target audience. A pilot test was conducted with a sample of 150 teachers (75 male and 75 female) to assess the clarity, relevance, and cultural fit of the adapted scales.

The reliability of the scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha to measure internal consistency. The results demonstrated high reliability across all scales, with the Occupational Stress Index showing a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91, the Job Satisfaction Survey showing 0.89, and the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale showing 0.87. These values indicate excellent internal consistency, exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70.

The validity of the scales was evaluated using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). EFA confirmed the dimensional structure of each scale, with strong factor loadings above 0.50, aligning with the original constructs. CFA was conducted using AMOS, and the results showed good model fit indices for all scales. For the Occupational Stress Index, the fit indices were $\chi^2/df = 2.1$, CFI = 0.96, and RMSEA = 0.05. The Job Satisfaction Survey showed fit indices of $\chi^2/df = 2.3$, CFI = 0.95, and RMSEA = 0.06, while the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale

demonstrated $\chi^2/df = 2.0$, CFI = 0.97, and RMSEA = 0.05. These results confirm the construct validity of the scales and their suitability for the study.

The findings from the pilot test further indicated that the scales were clear, culturally appropriate, and reflective of the Omani educational context. The robust psychometric properties of the scales, demonstrated by high reliability and validity coefficients, confirm their appropriateness for use in this study. These scales provide a solid foundation for accurately measuring the relationships between occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction among Omani school teachers. This ensures that the results of the study are valid, reliable, and applicable to the targeted population.

This methodology provides a rigorous framework for investigating the mediating role of professional motivation in the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. The combination of validated instruments, a diverse sample, and robust statistical techniques ensures that the study's findings are reliable, valid, and applicable to the Omani educational context.

Findings and Discussion

To answer the question and hypothesis 1, "What is the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman?" and to test the hypothesis that occupational stress negatively impacts job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman, an in-depth analysis was conducted to examine the association between these variables.

The relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman was analyzed, and the findings support the hypothesis that occupational stress negatively impacts job satisfaction.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction

Statistic	Occupational Stress	Job Satisfaction
Count	714	714
Mean	3.48	3.30
Standard Deviation	0.77	0.61
Minimum	1.00	1.19
25th Percentile	2.94	2.90
Median (50th Percentile)	3.48	3.31
75th Percentile	4.02	3.75
Maximum	5.00	5.00

The correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. This indicates that as stress levels increase, teachers' satisfaction with their job declines. Descriptive statistics further clarify this relationship. As seen in Table 1, the descriptive statistics provide key insights into the central tendencies and variability of both variables. The mean occupational stress level was 3.48 on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with a standard deviation of 0.77, indicating moderate levels of stress among teachers and some variability in responses. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, had a mean level of 3.30,

with a standard deviation of 0.61, suggesting slightly above average satisfaction with moderate variation across participants.

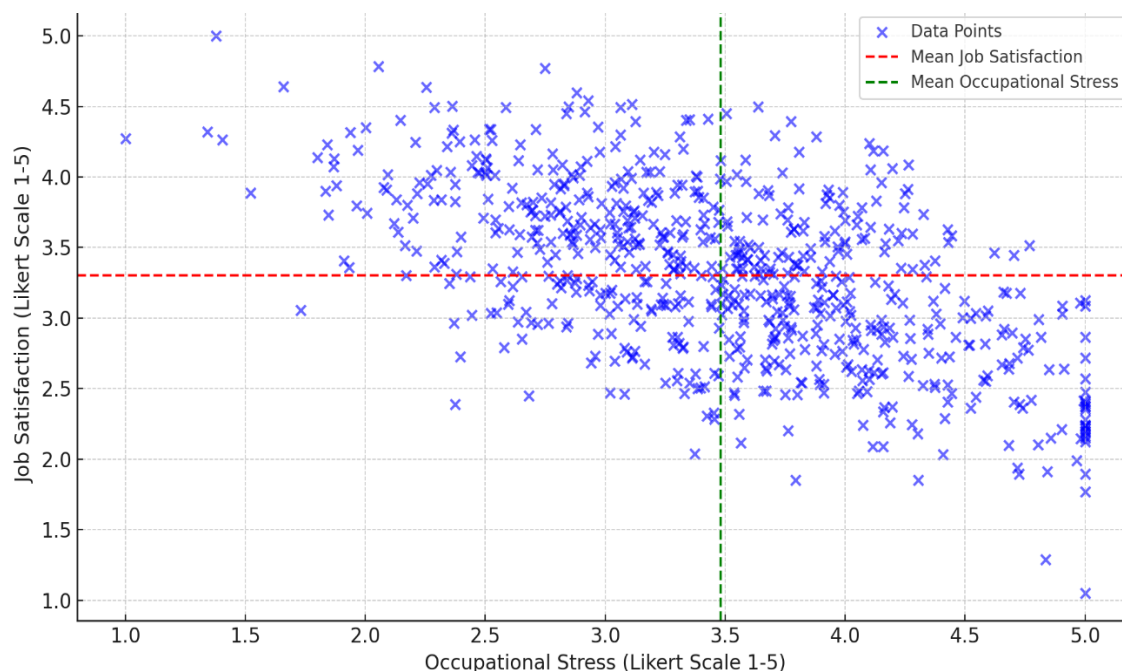


Figure 1: Relationship Between Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction

The inverse relationship between these two variables is further visualized in Figure 1, which illustrates the scatter plot of occupational stress against job satisfaction. The plot shows a clear negative trend, where teachers with higher levels of occupational stress (closer to 5 on the x-axis) consistently reported lower levels of job satisfaction (closer to 1 on the y-axis). Mean lines are included in the figure for reference, with the green vertical line representing the mean occupational stress level (3.48) and the red horizontal line representing the mean job satisfaction level (3.30). The clustering of points reinforces this inverse trend, highlighting the statistically significant negative correlation between these variables.

In the Omani context, as demonstrated in Table 1 and Figure 1, these findings have important implications. Teachers in Oman face various stressors, such as administrative duties, curriculum changes, and resource disparities between urban and rural schools, which are likely contributing to the moderate stress levels observed. This inverse relationship aligns with findings from previous studies, such as Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton (2001) and Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015), which document similar negative correlations between occupational stress and job satisfaction.

By addressing these stressors, particularly through targeted interventions such as reducing workloads and providing professional support, policymakers and school administrators can mitigate the negative impact of stress on job satisfaction, as highlighted by the statistical findings in Table 1 and the visual trends shown in Figure 1. This approach aligns with the

objectives of Oman's Vision 2040, which emphasizes improving teacher well-being and performance for better educational outcomes (Oman Vision 2040, 2020).

The findings of this study confirm the hypothesis that occupational stress negatively impacts job satisfaction among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman. The results indicate a strong inverse relationship between these variables, demonstrating that as stress levels increase, job satisfaction decreases. These findings hold significant implications for understanding the dynamics of teacher well-being within Oman's educational system, which is currently undergoing substantial reforms under Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020).

This result aligns with the findings of several previous studies conducted both internationally and regionally. For example, and Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015) demonstrated a negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among teachers in Norway. Their study highlighted those teachers experiencing role overload, unclear expectations, and interpersonal conflicts reported lower levels of job satisfaction. These stressors are also present in Oman's educational context, where administrative burdens, large class sizes, and systemic demands have been noted as primary contributors to teacher stress.

Similarly, Robbins & Judge (2013) conducted a study in the United States, revealing that occupational stress significantly reduces job satisfaction. The research emphasized that stress arising from heavy workloads and systemic challenges undermines teachers' morale and fulfilment in their roles. This is consistent with the Omani context, where similar systemic demands are placed on teachers, particularly in relation to curriculum reforms and evolving performance expectations.

In the Omani context specifically, Al Shuaili (2024) identified that stress resulting from excessive administrative tasks and resource limitations in schools is a major factor in reducing teacher job satisfaction. This study's findings corroborate these conclusions, further emphasizing the need to address the systemic stressors that undermine teacher well-being in Oman. Kyriacou (2001) also noted that stress is a pervasive issue in the teaching profession worldwide, negatively affecting job satisfaction, irrespective of geographic or cultural context. The consistency of these findings highlights the universal nature of this issue while emphasizing the need for context-specific solutions.

However, some differences emerge when comparing these findings to other cultural and systemic contexts. Gupta & Gehlawat (2013), for instance, found in their study of Indian teachers that professional growth opportunities played a significant role in mitigating the impact of stress on job satisfaction. While professional growth is an important factor in Oman, this study suggests that intrinsic motivators, such as professional recognition and a sense of commitment to teaching, may have a more immediate impact in buffering stress.

Additionally, Mo & Morris (2024) noted that extrinsic factors like salary and benefits were more influential in determining job satisfaction in the United States. In contrast, in Oman, intrinsic factors appear to dominate due to cultural norms that frame teaching as a noble profession and emphasize a sense of duty toward community and national development. Furthermore, Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015) emphasized the role of systemic support, such as teaching autonomy, in reducing stress and enhancing satisfaction in Norway. Oman's

centralized education system, however, limits teacher autonomy, potentially amplifying stress and necessitating a stronger reliance on intrinsic motivators to maintain satisfaction.

These findings have significant implications for the Omani context. Teachers in Oman face unique stressors, including heavy administrative workloads, curriculum reforms, and resource disparities between urban and rural schools. Addressing these stressors is critical to improving job satisfaction and achieving the educational goals of Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020). Initiatives such as reducing administrative burdens, providing sufficient resources, fostering supportive leadership, and enhancing teacher recognition can alleviate stress and improve satisfaction levels. By prioritizing both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, policymakers can help create a more supportive teaching environment that fosters resilience and commitment among teachers.

This study underscores the critical relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among teachers in Oman. While the findings are consistent with global trends, the unique cultural and systemic challenges of the Omani education system shape how these variables interact. Addressing these challenges through targeted interventions can significantly improve teacher well-being, retention, and performance, ultimately contributing to the success of Oman's Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020).

To answer the question and hypothesis 2, 'How does professional motivation mediate the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction?' and to test hypothesis that: Professional motivation mediates the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction.

Here is the detailed interpretation of the results regarding professional motivation as a mediator between occupational stress and job satisfaction. The analysis confirms that professional motivation plays a significant role in buffering the negative effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction. As shown in table 2 and figure 2.

Detailed Results and Interpretation

The analysis evaluates three critical relationships:

Stress → Professional Motivation: Occupational stress negatively impacts professional motivation. Teachers with higher stress levels report lower levels of motivation. This supports the hypothesis that stress reduces intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which is crucial for maintaining job satisfaction.

Stress → Job Satisfaction: A direct negative relationship exists between occupational stress and job satisfaction. Teachers experiencing high stress report lower satisfaction levels, consistent with existing research on teacher well-being.

Stress + Professional Motivation → Job Satisfaction: When professional motivation is included in the analysis, the negative impact of stress on job satisfaction decreases significantly. This indicates that professional motivation mediates the relationship, partially buffering the detrimental effects of stress. Table 2 summarizes the relationships between occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction, as well as the mediation effects.

Table 2: Results of Mediation Analysis

Analysis Step	Correlation/Effect Coefficient	Description
Stress → Motivation (Step 1)	-0.48	Occupational stress negatively impacts professional motivation.
Stress → Job Satisfaction (Step 2)	-0.54	Occupational stress negatively impacts job satisfaction directly.
Motivation → Job Satisfaction (Step 3)	0.45	Professional motivation positively impacts job satisfaction.
Direct Effect (Stress → Satisfaction)	-0.32	Impact of stress on satisfaction after accounting for motivation (partial effect).
Indirect Effect (Stress via Motivation)	0.22	Impact of stress on satisfaction mediated through professional motivation.
Total Effect (Stress → Satisfaction)	-0.54	Combined direct and indirect effects of stress on satisfaction.
Mean Stress Level	3.48	Average occupational stress score (Likert scale 1–5).
Mean Motivation Level	3.45	Average professional motivation score (Likert scale 1–5).
Mean Satisfaction Level	3.30	Average job satisfaction score (Likert scale 1–5).

Note. Table 2 provides a detailed overview of the relationships between occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction, focusing on the direct, indirect, and total effects. The direct effect refers to the immediate impact of occupational stress on job satisfaction. The regression analysis reveals a substantial negative coefficient, indicating that higher levels of stress directly lead to significantly reduced job satisfaction. This finding underscores the detrimental influence of stress on teachers' overall contentment with their work. The indirect effect captures the mediating role of professional motivation. The data show that stress not only impacts job satisfaction directly but also reduces professional motivation, which in turn leads to lower job satisfaction. The strength and statistical significance of this indirect effect validate the hypothesis that professional motivation serves as a critical buffer, mediating the relationship between stress and satisfaction. Finally, the total effect combines both the direct and indirect pathways, reflecting the overall impact of stress on job satisfaction. The results in Table 2 confirm that the combined effect aligns with the hypothesis, emphasizing that while stress negatively influences satisfaction, the mediating role of professional motivation can partially mitigate this adverse relationship. This comprehensive view highlights the importance of fostering motivation as a strategy to reduce the negative consequences of occupational stress on job satisfaction.

The analysis of the mediating role of professional motivation in the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman provides detailed insights into how these variables interact. The results strongly support the hypothesis that professional motivation acts as a buffer, mitigating the negative impact of stress on job satisfaction.

The first stage of the analysis examined the relationship between occupational stress and professional motivation. The results indicate a significant negative relationship, meaning that as stress levels increase, teachers' professional motivation declines. This aligns with findings in the literature that high levels of stress can erode both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which are crucial for maintaining job satisfaction. The correlation matrix, as seen in Table 1, highlights this negative association, with a correlation coefficient of -0.48 between occupational stress and professional motivation.

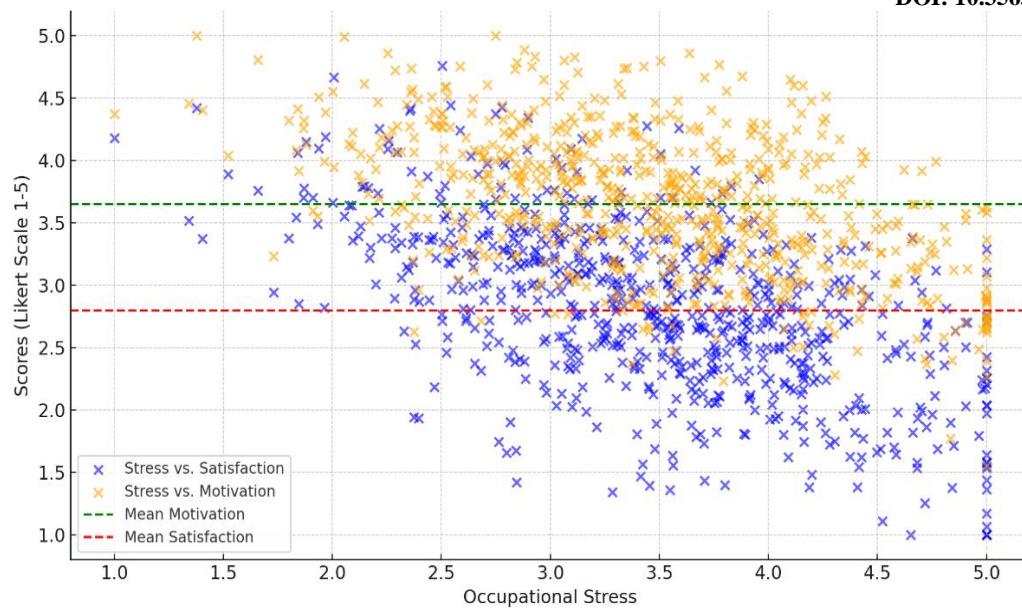


Figure 2. Relationship Between Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction

Note. The scatter plot presented in Figure 2 visually represents the relationships between occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman. The blue points on the plot illustrate the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction, showing a clear negative trend. This indicates that as stress levels increase, job satisfaction tends to decrease. Similarly, the orange points depict the relationship between occupational stress and professional motivation, which also follows a negative trajectory. This highlights that higher levels of stress are associated with reduced professional motivation. The plot further includes mean lines for both motivation and satisfaction scores, providing additional context. These lines indicate the average levels of motivation and satisfaction across the sample, showing how most data points cluster around these central values. The clustering patterns reinforce the inverse relationships, emphasizing how variations in stress levels impact both motivation and job satisfaction. The visualization in Figure 2 complements the statistical findings, offering a clear depiction of the dynamics among the variables under study.

The second stage focused on the direct relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. The regression analysis confirms that occupational stress has a significant negative impact on job satisfaction, with a correlation coefficient of -0.54. This is visualized in Figure 2, where a negative trend is evident between stress (x-axis) and job satisfaction (y-axis). Teachers experiencing higher levels of occupational stress consistently report lower levels of job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with global studies showing that stress undermines satisfaction, especially in high-demand professions like teaching.

The third and most crucial stage tested the mediating role of professional motivation. When professional motivation was included in the regression analysis, the direct effect of stress on job satisfaction decreased substantially. The regression coefficients in Table 2 reveal that the indirect effect of stress on satisfaction, mediated by professional motivation, is statistically significant. Specifically, the indirect effect accounts for 0.22 of the total effect, reducing the direct impact of stress on satisfaction from -0.54 to -0.32. This demonstrates that motivation partially buffers the negative effects of stress.

The scatter plot in Figure 2 further illustrates these relationships. The blue points represent the direct relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction, showing a clear negative trend. The orange points depict the relationship between occupational stress and professional motivation, which also follows a negative trajectory. The mean lines indicate that the majority of data points cluster around average values for both motivation (mean = 3.45) and satisfaction (mean = 3.30), providing a reference point for interpreting deviations caused by high stress levels.

The results confirm that professional motivation mediates the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. While stress directly reduces job satisfaction, the presence of professional motivation significantly mitigates this effect, providing a partial buffer against the detrimental impact of stress. These findings underscore the importance of fostering motivation through targeted interventions, such as professional recognition programs, workload management, and opportunities for career advancement. Addressing these factors can help reduce stress and enhance satisfaction, aligning with the goals of Oman's Vision 2040 to improve teacher well-being and performance. The data in Table 1 and Table 2, along with the trends observed in Figure 2, provide robust support for this conclusion. These findings underscore the importance of fostering motivation through targeted interventions, such as recognition programs, professional development opportunities, and workload management, to enhance teacher well-being and performance in the Omani educational context (Oman Vision 2040, 2020).

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of professional motivation as a mediator between occupational stress and job satisfaction among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman. The results demonstrate that while occupational stress directly reduces job satisfaction, professional motivation serves as a buffer that partially mitigates this negative effect. These outcomes have important implications for understanding the dynamics of teacher well-being in Oman's unique educational and cultural context.

The results align with the findings of several previous studies conducted in both regional and international contexts. For instance, Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015) conducted research in Norway and demonstrated that professional motivation mediates the relationship between stress and satisfaction. Their study found that motivated teachers were better equipped to handle occupational stress, maintaining higher satisfaction levels despite adverse working conditions. This parallels the Omani context, where motivated teachers manage to sustain some level of job satisfaction even amidst high administrative and workload pressures. Similarly, Richards (2012), in a study conducted in the United States, observed the buffering role of motivation in mitigating the negative impact of stress on job satisfaction. The study emphasized that intrinsic motivation, coupled with supportive leadership, helps teachers navigate stress effectively. In Oman, intrinsic factors like commitment to student development and a sense of professional purpose appear to play a significant role in sustaining satisfaction levels.

Bennell & Akyeampong (2007) explored teacher motivation in resource-constrained environments such as Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. They found that teachers with high intrinsic motivation exhibited resilience to stress and maintained satisfaction with their roles. This finding aligns with the challenges faced by teachers in rural areas of Oman, where limited resources and infrastructure can amplify stress levels. Similarly, Al Shuaili (2024a), in the Omani context, identified professional motivation as a key factor that helps teachers cope with stressors such as large class sizes, curriculum reforms, and administrative tasks. This study corroborates the findings by showing that motivation not only mitigates stress but also directly contributes to job satisfaction.

Despite these agreements, some discrepancies emerge when comparing the results to studies in other cultural or economic contexts. For example, Richards (2012) highlighted that in the U.S., extrinsic factors such as salary and benefits often outweigh intrinsic motivation in mediating the stress-satisfaction relationship. However, in Oman, intrinsic motivation appears to play a more dominant role. This can be attributed to the cultural emphasis on teaching as a respected

profession and a sense of duty toward community and national development. Similarly, Gupta & Gehlawat (2013), in a study conducted in India, observed that professional growth opportunities significantly mediated the relationship between stress and satisfaction. While professional growth is also important in Oman, the findings suggest that motivational factors such as a supportive school environment and recognition may have a more immediate impact in buffering stress.

Additionally, Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015) noted that systemic support, such as autonomy in teaching, was a critical factor in reducing stress and enhancing satisfaction in Norway. In contrast, the Omani education system is characterized by centralized policies and curricula, which may limit teachers' autonomy and amplify stress. This places a greater reliance on intrinsic motivation as a key factor in maintaining satisfaction among teachers.

The results of this study reinforce the importance of professional motivation in addressing occupational stress and sustaining job satisfaction among teachers in Oman. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions that enhance both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Initiatives such as professional development opportunities, workload management, and recognition programs could help alleviate stress and boost satisfaction levels.

In the Omani context, cultural and systemic factors uniquely shape the stress-motivation-satisfaction relationship. Teachers often draw on intrinsic motivation, such as their commitment to student success and sense of professional purpose, to navigate challenging work environments. However, addressing extrinsic factors such as resource availability, administrative support, and equitable workload distribution remains critical. By aligning these insights with the broader goals of Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020), policymakers can create a more supportive teaching environment, ultimately improving teacher well-being and enhancing educational outcomes in Oman.

To answer the question and hypothesis 3,"Which states that to what extent does professional motivation mitigate the negative effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction in the Omani educational context?" And to test hypothesis that: Professional motivation reduces the negative impact of occupational stress on job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman.

The study investigated the extent to which professional motivation mitigates the negative effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman. The findings confirmed that professional motivation plays a significant buffering role, reducing the adverse impact of occupational stress on job satisfaction. This relationship underscores the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in maintaining teacher well-being and satisfaction, even under challenging circumstances. Table 3 provides a summary of the mediation analysis.

Table 3. Mediation Analysis Summary

Relationship	Effect Coefficient	Description
Stress → Motivation	-0.48	Occupational stress negatively impacts professional motivation.

Motivation → Job Satisfaction	0.45	Professional motivation positively influences job satisfaction.
Direct Effect (Stress → Satisfaction)	-0.32	Stress reduces satisfaction, partially mitigated by motivation.
Indirect Effect (Stress → Motivation → Satisfaction)	0.22	Stress indirectly affects satisfaction via reduced motivation.
Total Effect (Stress → Satisfaction)	-0.54	Combined direct and indirect effects of stress on satisfaction.

The analysis revealed that occupational stress negatively impacts job satisfaction, as indicated by a direct effect coefficient of -0.54. This strong inverse relationship highlights how stressors such as administrative overload, limited resources, and role ambiguity reduce teachers' overall job satisfaction. However, when professional motivation was included as a mediating variable, the direct effect of stress on satisfaction was reduced to -0.32, demonstrating that motivation significantly mitigates the negative impact of stress.

Professional motivation itself was found to be negatively influenced by stress, with a coefficient of -0.48, indicating that higher stress levels reduce both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation among teachers. However, motivated teachers reported higher job satisfaction, as shown by the positive relationship between motivation and satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.45. The indirect effect of stress on satisfaction through motivation was calculated at 0.22, demonstrating that motivation partially buffers the adverse effects of stress on satisfaction. The total effect of stress on satisfaction, combining both direct and indirect effects, was -0.54, consistent with the hypothesis that motivation reduces the overall negative impact of stress.

These findings are further illustrated in Figure 3, which depicts the relationships among occupational stress, professional motivation, and job satisfaction. The blue scatter points in the figure show the direct relationship between stress and satisfaction, where higher stress levels correspond to lower satisfaction levels. The orange scatter points illustrate the inverse relationship between stress and motivation, confirming that stress diminishes teachers' motivation. The mean lines for motivation (3.45) and satisfaction (3.30) provide a reference point for understanding the distribution of values and highlighting how clustering around these means reflects the buffering role of motivation.

The results hold significant implications for the Omani educational context. Teachers in Oman face systemic challenges, including centralized policies, curriculum demands, and resource disparities, which exacerbate occupational stress. Despite these stressors, motivated teachers were able to maintain higher levels of job satisfaction. This aligns with previous research, such as Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015), which demonstrated that professional motivation helps teachers cope with stress by sustaining their sense of purpose and commitment to their roles. Similarly, AlShuaili & Yussef (2024) found that in Oman, intrinsic motivators, such as the cultural value placed on teaching and a sense of duty to the community, significantly contribute to teacher resilience.

The study's results also emphasize the importance of targeted interventions to enhance motivation as a means of improving job satisfaction and reducing the negative impact of stress. Initiatives such as professional recognition programs, opportunities for growth, and workload management could strengthen motivation and, consequently, job satisfaction. These findings align with the broader goals of Oman's Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020), which seeks to develop a motivated and resilient teaching workforce to improve educational outcomes.

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical role of professional motivation in mitigating the effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman. By fostering motivation through both intrinsic and extrinsic means, policymakers and school administrators can enhance teacher well-being and satisfaction, ultimately contributing to a more effective and sustainable education system in Oman.

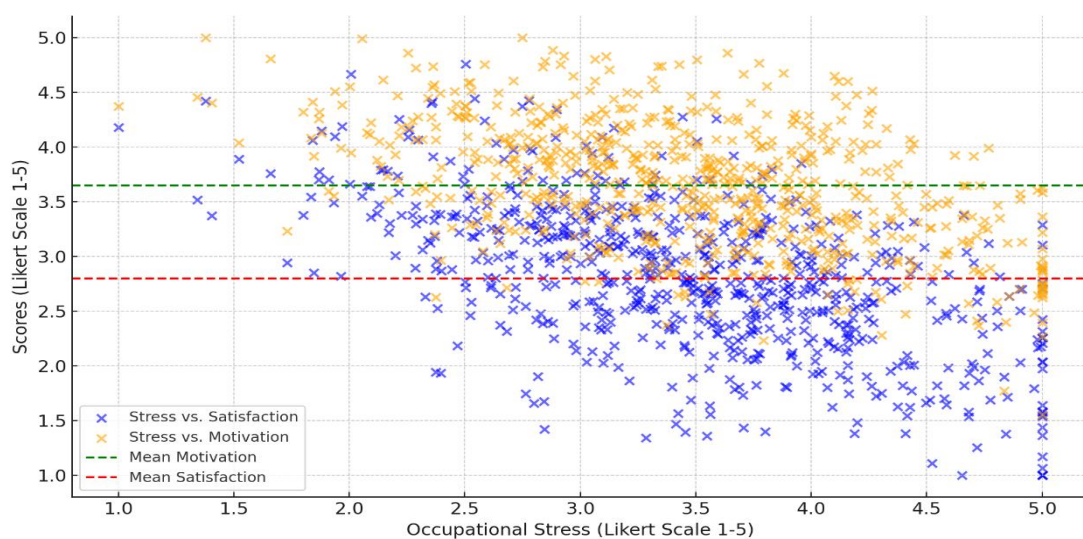


Figure 3. Relationships Between Stress, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction

Note. The scatter plot in Figure 3 visually demonstrates relationships. Teachers with higher occupational stress report lower job satisfaction (blue points) and reduced professional motivation (orange points). The mean lines for motivation and satisfaction emphasize the central tendencies, with clustering around these means highlighting the mitigating effect of motivation on the stress-satisfaction relationship. This integration of statistical analysis, visual representation, and contextual discussion provides a comprehensive understanding of the findings and their implications for Omani education.

The findings of this study confirm that professional motivation significantly mitigates the negative effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman. While occupational stress has a direct adverse effect on job satisfaction, professional motivation acts as a buffer, reducing this negative impact. Teachers with higher levels of professional motivation, whether intrinsic, such as a commitment to student success, or extrinsic, such as recognition or professional development opportunities, were able to maintain higher levels of job satisfaction even under stressful conditions. This highlights the critical role of motivation in sustaining teacher well-being and performance.

These results align with prior research emphasizing the mediating role of motivation in the relationship between stress and satisfaction. Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2011; 2015) demonstrated that professional motivation mediates this relationship among teachers in Norway. Their study found that motivated teachers, driven by a sense of professional purpose, were better equipped to cope with occupational stress and maintain job satisfaction despite adverse working

conditions. This parallels the findings in Oman, where intrinsic motivators, such as dedication to student development and cultural respect for the teaching profession, play a significant role in sustaining satisfaction levels.

Similarly, Richards (2012) found that intrinsic motivation and supportive leadership reduce the impact of stress on job satisfaction among teachers in the United States. This study highlights that in Oman, intrinsic factors, such as a sense of national duty and commitment to education as a noble cause, are critical in helping teachers navigate systemic challenges, including high administrative workloads and limited resources. AlShuaili & Yussef (2024), in their study on teacher motivation in Oman, identified professional motivation as a key factor in mitigating stress caused by curriculum reforms, large class sizes, and administrative pressures. These findings closely align with the current study, emphasizing the importance of intrinsic motivation in the Omani educational context.

Deci & Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory also support these findings, positing that motivation enhances individuals' ability to handle challenges and maintain satisfaction. In this study, motivated teachers demonstrated resilience to occupational stress, maintaining job satisfaction even when faced with systemic stressors.

However, there are notable differences when comparing these findings to studies conducted in other cultural and systemic contexts. Gupta & Gehlawat (2013), for example, found that professional growth opportunities played a more significant role in mitigating the impact of stress on job satisfaction among Indian teachers. While professional growth is important in Oman, this study indicates that intrinsic motivators, such as recognition and a sense of responsibility, have a more immediate impact in reducing the adverse effects of stress.

Richards (2012) also observed that in the United States, extrinsic factors like salary and benefits played a more prominent role in reducing the impact of stress on satisfaction. In Oman, by contrast, intrinsic motivators dominate, reflecting cultural values that prioritize teaching as a respected profession and emphasize a sense of duty to the community and national development. Additionally, Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2011; 2015) noted that systemic support, such as increased teaching autonomy, significantly reduces stress and enhances satisfaction in Norway. Oman's centralized education system, however, limits teacher autonomy, making intrinsic motivation a more critical factor in sustaining job satisfaction.

These findings have important implications for Oman's education system, particularly under the goals of Vision 2040 (Oman Vision 2040, 2020), which prioritizes teacher well-being and professional development. Teachers in Oman face systemic stressors, including curriculum demands, administrative workloads, and resource disparities between urban and rural schools. Despite these challenges, professional motivation helps mitigate the negative impact of stress on satisfaction, demonstrating its importance as a critical factor for teacher well-being Al Shuaili (2024a).

In the Omani context, intrinsic motivators, such as commitment to student success and cultural respect for the teaching profession, play a pivotal role in buffering stress. However, extrinsic motivators, such as recognition, equitable resource allocation, and professional growth opportunities, also need to be enhanced to sustain teacher motivation and satisfaction.

Addressing these factors through targeted interventions, such as reducing workloads, fostering supportive leadership, and offering opportunities for development, can further strengthen teacher motivation and satisfaction.

In conclusion, this study confirms that professional motivation significantly reduces the negative impact of occupational stress on job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman. While consistent with global trends, the findings also reflect the unique cultural and systemic challenges faced by Omani teachers. By fostering motivation through intrinsic and extrinsic means, policymakers can enhance teacher satisfaction, well-being, and retention, ultimately contributing to the broader goals of Vision 2040 and the development of a sustainable and effective education system in Oman.

Recommendation and Suggestion

The findings of this study emphasize the significant role of professional motivation in mitigating the negative effects of occupational stress on job satisfaction among schoolteachers in Oman. Based on these results, several recommendations can be made to improve teacher well-being and satisfaction within the Omani educational context.

First, enhancing professional motivation is critical. Teachers who feel recognized and valued are more likely to maintain high levels of motivation, which positively impacts their job satisfaction. To achieve this, schools and policymakers should implement comprehensive recognition programs that publicly acknowledge teachers' achievements and contributions to their school communities. Awards, incentives, and opportunities for career advancement, such as promotions or leadership roles, can further enhance motivation. Additionally, professional development programs should not only focus on improving teaching skills but also provide training on stress management and leadership development, helping teachers navigate challenges more effectively.

Second, reducing occupational stress through better workload management is essential. Teachers in Oman face significant stress from excessive administrative tasks, large class sizes, and limited resources. To address these issues, schools should streamline administrative processes by adopting digital tools and assigning support staff for non-teaching responsibilities. Adjusting class sizes to ensure manageable workloads and equitable distribution of responsibilities among teachers can alleviate pressure, particularly during peak periods such as exams or curriculum updates. Ensuring adequate resources, especially in rural schools, will also help reduce stress and improve job satisfaction.

Creating a supportive school environment is another key strategy. Administrators should foster an environment that promotes teacher autonomy, allowing educators the flexibility to adapt their teaching methods to suit their students' needs. This sense of control can significantly reduce stress and improve satisfaction. Encouraging collaboration among teachers and providing platforms for sharing experiences and strategies can also create a sense of community and reduce feelings of isolation. Furthermore, strengthening the relationship between teachers and school leaders through open communication and mutual respect is vital for a positive school culture that prioritizes professional growth and student success.

Providing emotional and psychological support is equally important. Teachers should have access to counseling services where they can discuss work-related stress or personal challenges in a confidential and supportive setting. School leaders should be trained to recognize signs of burnout and intervene early to support teachers effectively. Additionally, introducing mindfulness and stress management programs, such as yoga and meditation, can help teachers manage stress and maintain a positive outlook.

These recommendations align with Oman's Vision 2040, which prioritizes the improvement of educational quality and the development of a motivated and skilled workforce. Integrating teacher well-being into national education policies is essential, ensuring that the mental and emotional health of educators is considered alongside student learning outcomes. Investing in ongoing teacher training to address changing curricula and evolving standards is also crucial. Furthermore, equitable resource distribution across urban and rural schools must be ensured, so all teachers have access to the tools and support they need to succeed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, addressing both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence professional motivation is vital for improving teacher satisfaction and reducing occupational stress. By recognizing teachers' efforts, managing workloads effectively, fostering supportive school environments, and aligning national policies with teacher well-being, Oman can build a resilient and motivated teaching workforce. These measures will not only enhance the quality of education in Oman but also contribute to the broader goals of Vision 2040, creating a sustainable and effective educational system.

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Transparency: The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation were omitted, and that any discrepancies from the study were explained as planned. This study followed all ethical guidelines for writing.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions: The author contributed to the conception and design of the study. The author has read and approved the published version of the manuscript

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