



## Structural modeling of the relationship between occupational stress, occupational motivation, and job satisfaction among school teachers in the Sultanate of Oman

 Ali Sulaiman Talib  
AlShuaili<sup>1\*</sup>

 Muhammed  
Yussef<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Human Development,  
Sultan Idris University of Education, Tanjong Malim, Perak Darul  
Ridzuan, Malaysia.

<sup>1</sup>Email: [p20202001046@siswa.upsi.edu.my](mailto:p20202001046@siswa.upsi.edu.my)

<sup>2</sup>Email: [muhammed.yusuf@fpm.upsi.edu.my](mailto:muhammed.yusuf@fpm.upsi.edu.my)



(+ Corresponding author)

### ABSTRACT

#### Article History

Received: 12 December 2023

Revised: 22 January 2024

Accepted: 15 February 2024

Published: 17 April 2024

#### Keywords

Government school teachers  
Job satisfaction  
Occupational motivation  
Occupational stress  
Structural equation modeling  
Sultanate of Oman.

This study aims to explore the effect of occupational stress on occupational motivation and job satisfaction among teachers in government schools in the sultanate of Oman from the perspective of teachers. The study follows a cross-sectional research design and uses a research questionnaire as the main tool with standardized scales to measure occupational stress, occupational motivation and job satisfaction. The probability sampling method was used to select respondents randomly using a sampling frame obtained from the Ministry of Education. The sample size of the study comprises 410 schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman. Structural equation modeling was used to assess the relationships across the variables. The results showed a statistically significant effect of occupational stress on occupational motivation and job satisfaction, and a statistically significant effect of job satisfaction on occupational motivation. Awareness programs are recommended to help build the respect that teachers deserve for the essential roles they play in their work environment with respect to preparing the new generation for future endeavors.

**Contribution/Originality:** The study adds to the literature by focusing on occupational stress among elementary education teachers in government school systems in the Arabic and Omani contexts. The study outlines strategic recommendations and presents the output of the role of job satisfaction in promoting motivation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The attention given to work environments and their development has revealed many challenges in the occupational lives of workers in the production and service sectors. It was also observed that workers in the educational field in general and teachers in particular are considered the biggest segment of workers in these two sectors (Al-Ahmad, 2023; Suleman, Hussain, & Jumani, 2018).

Occupational stress has always been a major challenge in any work environment, and teaching is one of the jobs that is associated with stress (Mohamed, 2018). This stress is reflected negatively in the professional, social and economic lives of teachers and, consequently, affects the students' educational process and the quality of education in schools, which affects teachers in their profession. These effects have an indirect influence on the national economy (Mahfouz, 2018).

It has been observed that the influence of occupational stress among teachers in schools is common, which in turn affects their job satisfaction and occupational motivation for promoting the educational responsibilities among the new generation and their educational needs (Al-Abyad, 2021; Mahfouz, 2018).

When considering the Omani education sector regarding the advancements in knowledge, technological developments, and curricula development to keep up with the requirements of the Omani labor market and the Oman Vision 2040, there is a need to create and promote an advanced education that accompanies the aspirations and advancements of the industrial revolution and artificial intelligence. This calls for teachers to become responsible for these requirements and implement them to impart the required skills to students and enhance the quality of education (Al-Musharrafyah, 2021; Al-Rawas, 2019).

These tasks and requirements have brought new challenges and stress for teachers due to the knowledge changes in the field of education to keep up with global social and economic conditions. Additionally, since the Covid-19 pandemic, the world has witnessed rapid and successive changes and transformations that have affected the teaching profession.

The problem of the study is structured based on a review of the available literature and observing the nature of work among teachers, especially teachers in the government education system, and through meeting a group of teachers at various educational levels in schools in the Sultanate of Oman. These teachers have indicated an increase in the stress and occupational burdens placed on them, which have led to a decrease in their occupational motivation and low levels of job satisfaction (Al-Muqbaliyah, 2018; Al-Musharrafyah, 2021; Al-Rabkhi, 2016). Teachers are considered one of the most important occupational groups in society. Therefore, caring for this group of workers in the most important sector, the educational sector, is essential for the future of the Sultanate of Oman (Al-Rudainiyya, 2021).

The need for this study stems from recommendations made by authors of previous studies (Al-Amouriyah, 2021; Al-Rabkhi, 2016; Al-Rawas, 2019), who recommended investigating the relationships between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and occupational motivation among teachers in the government educational system. Hence, this study aims to explore the extent of occupational stress, occupational motivation and job satisfaction from the perspectives of teachers in government schools in the Sultanate of Oman.

The next section presents the literature review and hypothesis development, then the methodology is explained, and the results are interpreted, followed by a discussion of the hypothesis testing. Finally, the conclusion and limitations are presented (Al-Dhafriya, 2021).

### 1.1. Research Questions

A review of the available research related to the association between occupational stress and occupational motivation leads to questions regarding the Omani context in general and the government education sector in particular, hence the research questions for this research are:

*RQ1: What is the association between occupational stress and occupational motivation among government schoolteachers in Oman?*

*RQ2: What is the association between occupational stress and job satisfaction among government schoolteachers in Oman?*

*RQ3: What is the association between job satisfaction and occupational motivation among government schoolteachers in Oman?*

### 1.2. Research Significance

This research gains its significance from the nature of work in the educational environment, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic when teachers were majorly affected socially and in other aspects such as health. Maintaining a healthy work environment for teachers in government schools is essential because of the role they play in developing new generations in society; hence this study gains its importance by being an empirical investigation in

exploring the nature of the stress faced by teachers and its association with their satisfaction and motivation. Further, the study can be a source of evidence for policy makers of the need to focus on ensuring that the lives of teachers have a balance of achievement and satisfaction. Finally, the study can be a motivational factor for future research on the aspect of motivating teachers to work in the formal education system and create more success in Omani education in general.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Occupational Stress and Occupational Motivation

In a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between occupational stress and professional motivation among teachers, various studies have provided valuable insights. Al-Jundi and Al-Omari (2017) investigated the connection between occupational stress and diminished motivation. Al-Samarai (2021) emphasized the importance of support, involvement in decision making, and empowerment as means to reduce psychological burnout among teachers and enhance their motivation for achievement. Their findings revealed that teachers facing high occupational pressures and job responsibilities tend to experience a decline in motivation regarding their work.

Al-Atrsh and Ahmed (2020) and Al-Baqshami (2018) suggested that exposure to occupational stress tends to decrease professional motivation, while access to resources that boost motivation acts as a protective factor against stress. Al-Barrak (2017) reported that pressures sometimes affect the professional motivation of special education teachers, with material, moral, and parent-related aspects having an influence. Al-Dhafriya (2021) indicated a very weak and inverse association between work-related stress and achievement motivation among teachers. Ahmedi (2017) found a negative relationship between professional stress and achievement motivation among middle school teachers, suggesting that as professional stress levels decrease, achievement motivation tends to increase.

Based on this discussion, the study hypothesizes that:

*H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation.*

### 2.2. Stress and Satisfaction

Abu Mustafa and Al-Ashqar (2011) reported a negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among Palestinian teachers, and Aswayeb and Nwaira (2020) confirmed a significant correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction.

Sivakumar and Chitra (2017) indicated that the level of occupational stress experienced by teachers varies based on demographic factors, and there is a positive relationship between stress and job satisfaction. These occupational pressures had a notable negative impact on the job satisfaction of teachers.

Suwalha (2020) and Al-Dhafriya (2021) concluded that occupational stress negatively contributes to job satisfaction among teachers of third grade students. The same was also confirmed by Parveen and Bano (2019), who found a negative association between teachers' occupational stress and positive emotions in teaching and job satisfaction. Additionally, a negative association between occupational stress and job satisfaction was reported by Abdul-Hameed (2019) with respect to both male and female teachers. In addition to this, Walid (2020) affirmed a negative and significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction, indicating that as occupational stress increased, job satisfaction decreased among the teachers. This provides a sufficient foundation to theorize that occupational stress among teachers negatively contributes to their job satisfaction.

Based on this discussion, the study hypothesizes that:

*H2: There is a statistically significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction.*

### 2.3. Satisfaction and Motivation

Qasim, Wattoo, and Mahmood (2019) found a positive correlation between motivation and job satisfaction concerning gender, relationships with colleagues, and working conditions, and revealed gender differences in the

levels of job satisfaction and motivation to work. Further, Abdel-Halim (2020) affirmed that the relationship between job satisfaction and professional motivation does not differ based on gender.

Mpako Makolle (2015) demonstrated that the relationship between job satisfaction and professional motivation is negatively influenced when teachers' motivation toward teaching decreases. Mashaqbah (2018) pointed out deficiencies in financial incentives and rewards, the absence of a clear system to measure teachers' professional motivation and performance, and a lack of teacher involvement in educational decision making in their schools.

Salimon, Sabira, Maala, and Sleiman (2017) reported a statistically significant positive relationship between achievement motivation and job satisfaction among the teachers, and Nwakasi and Cummins (2018) concluded that teachers' motivation regarding adult education in Nigeria enhanced the quality of education, achieved learning goals, and improved student enrollment in schools.

In the same context, Mangaleswarasharma (2017) revealed that teachers preferred to stay in their current profession due to longer holidays and fewer working hours, indicating a high motivation level for their profession. Only a small percentage of teachers were completely dissatisfied and stated that they were seeking other jobs that better suited them.

Based on this discussion, the study hypothesizes that:

*H3: There is a statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and occupational motivation.*

The three hypotheses were developed based on the literature review, and this led to the following conceptual model in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Design

This study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional design. It follows a correlational approach to explore the relationships among occupational stress, occupational motivation, and job satisfaction from the perspective of schoolteachers in the government education system. A research questionnaire was used for data collection.

#### 3.2. Measurement

The study adopted standardized scales to measure the three main variables in the study. To measure occupational stress among teachers, a scale was adapted from Fimian (1984), which consists of 25 items. To measure job satisfaction, the scale from the Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire was adapted from Lester (1987), which consists of 19 statements. Finally, to measure occupational motivation, the Work Tasks Motivation for Teachers (WTMST) was adopted from Fernet, Senécal, Guay, Marsh, and Dowson (2008), which consists of 19 items. The items were slightly modified to fit the Omani context. The respondents were asked to give their opinion

of the items included in the research tool, and all the variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

### 3.3. Participants

The study used probability sampling to select the sample of teachers for the study with the help of the sampling frame obtained from ministry of education (Ministry of Education Sultanate of Oman, 2021). The selected participants were contacted through phone calls and emails, and the research tool was shared with them electronically using Google Forms. The sampled teachers were given 30 days to fill out the questionnaire, and they were sent one reminder. A total of 410 forms were collected, 171 from male teachers and 239 from female teachers.

### 3.4. Reliability of the Research Tool

The research questionnaire was distributed to 30 teachers in Muscat and Al Dakhiliyah governorates as a pilot study. Cronbach's alpha was applied to the collected data, and the output indicated that the research tool was considered valid and reliable as the respondents understood the research tool and its content. Further, Cronbach's alpha was found to be above the minimum acceptable threshold ( $> 0.70$ ). Particularly, the Cronbach's alpha values for the occupational stress items ranged from 0.496 to 0.808, from 0.466 to 0.792 for the occupational motivation items, and from 0.941 to 0.955 for the job satisfaction items, which facilitated the process of utilizing the questionnaire for data collection.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by following the covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) approach using IBM Amos software version 24, where confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is used to ensure the reliability and validity of the research model, and the structural model is also assessed to test the study hypotheses.

## 4. FINDINGS

This section presents the analysis output, which is divided into two main sections; the first section is the confirmatory factor analysis, and the second section is the structural model used to test the hypotheses.

### 4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using maximum likelihood estimation. The aim of doing this is to verify and establish the standards of reliability and validity of the research model.

Table 1 contains the CFA reliability assessment results. The values of the standardized estimates for all variables exceed 0.60, which indicates the actual contribution of each of these statements to the three latent and main variables in the model. In addition, the internal consistency values [Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and composite reliability (CR)] exceed 0.70, and the average variance explained (AVE) values exceed 0.50, which are the minimum requirements for establishing the reliability of the research model.

The four occupational stress variables are stress related to students and parents, stress related to work conditions, stress related to workload, and stress related to financial and organizational capabilities. Their respective standard loading factors are 0.928, 0.922, 0.962, and 0.836, and they are significant in their contribution at the 0.01 level of significance. The Cronbach's alpha and CR values exceeded 0.70 and the AVE values exceeded 0.50, which indicates that occupational stress is well explained by the four dimensions.

The two variables for occupational motivation are external occupational motivation and internal occupational motivation. Their standardized factor loadings are 0.962 and 0.661, and they have a significance level of less than 0.001. Further, they have alpha and CR reliability values exceeding 0.70 and AVE values exceeding 0.50, indicating that they contribute to explaining the variance in occupational motivation.

Finally, the third factor, job satisfaction, contains four variables, which are satisfaction related to the career path, satisfaction related to the nature of the work, satisfaction related to incentives and rewards, and satisfaction related to job security. Their standardized factor loadings reached 0.686, 0.637, 0.760, and 0.694, respectively, and they have a significance level of less than 0.001. In addition to that, their internal consistency assessment revealed they have alpha and CR values exceeding 0.70 and AVE values exceeding 0.50. This means that they contribute to explaining the variance in job satisfaction (see Table 1).

Table 1. Standardized and unstandardized loading values for the model variables.

Variable	Sub-variable	Non-standard value	Standard value	Significance	$\alpha$	CR	AVE
Occupational stress	Stress related to students and parents	0.883	0.928	***	0.917	0.907	0.678
	Stress related to working conditions	0.875	0.922	***			
	Workload-related stress	0.850	0.962	***			
	Stress related to financial and organizational capabilities	1	0.936	***			
Occupational motivation	Internal motivation	1	0.661	***	0.840	0.805	0.681
	External motivation	1.062	0.962	***			
Job satisfaction	Career satisfaction	1	0.686	***	0.802	0.789	0.784
	Satisfaction related to the nature of work	1.109	0.637	***			
	Satisfaction related to incentives and rewards	1.055	0.76	***			
	Satisfaction related to job security	1.173	0.694	***			

Note: (n = 410). \*\*\* means statistically significant at a significance level less than (0.001).

Figure 2 shows the output of the confirmatory factor analysis. The figure shows the three main variables (occupational stress, occupational motivation, and job satisfaction) under each of which is a group of straight single-headed arrows toward the sub-variables. There are also the loadings of the sub-variables toward the main variable. For example, there are four sub-variables under occupational stress. Each sub-variable is linked to the stress variable with a specific number, which is the value of the standardized estimate/loading of the sub-variable on the occupational stress variable. These values must not be less than 0.30 and preferably not greater than 0.70. These values are found in the standard value column in Table 1 and are depicted in Figure 2 on the arrows from the top four occupational stress factors measuring the occupational stress. Hence, the standard estimate values are the contribution of the variables toward measuring their latent factor. For instance, the stress related to financial and organizational capabilities has a standard estimate value of 0.94, which explains its contribution toward measuring occupational stress. Similarly, the other three variables have the values of 0.96, 0.92, and 0.93, explaining their contribution or loading toward occupational stress. In the same vein, occupational motivation has two factors with standard estimates of 0.76 and 1 (0.997), and job satisfaction has four variables with standard estimates of 0.69, 0.63, 0.75 and 0.70, as depicted in Figure 2. Since this is their contribution to their main variables, the remaining

percentage (1-the standard estimate) goes to the error term as it is not used to explain the concerned variable of the research model. The error terms are the small circles linked to the sub-variables, which are labeled with the letter (e) followed by a specific number.

This makes the three variables the main variables of the study, and the other circles attached to them are the sub-variables of the research model. Each sub-variable circle is linked to a group of straight arrows with one vertical arrow in the other direction connected to a rectangle, which represents one of the questionnaire statements belonging to the same latent variable. For example, the first circle represents “stress related to financial and organizational capabilities” and has eight straight single-headed arrows, each of which is linked to another rectangle.

These rectangles represent the statements in the questionnaire that fall under stress related to financial and organizational capabilities, while the numbers appearing on the straight lines are factor loadings or standardized estimates, but in the case of the second-order model, the focus is on the standard loading values for the sub-variables and not the standard loading values for the questionnaire statements because the focus is on that in the first-order variables only.

The small circles beside the rectangles in the resolution expressions and labeled with the letter “e” followed by a serial number, for example (e1, e2, e3), represent the residuals or error terms, which also represent the amount of variance that the statement in the questionnaire was not able to contribute toward the latent variable. For example, in the first variable in the figure “Stress related to financial and organizational capabilities,” the standard value of the loading for the first statement is 0.64. This means that the remaining 0.36 is the error term. The figure also shows curved double-headed arrows. There are two types of curved arrows in the figure below. The first type is the curved arrows that connect the circles of the second-order latent variables, the three main variables, with each other.

The number on the curved line represents the level of correlation between the two latent variables, for example, for the curved line between “occupational stress” and “occupational motivation,” the value shown is -0.69, and this value represents the level of correlation between the two variables, as the correlation between them is considered negative and of a moderate level. The curved line connecting the occupational stress variable and the job satisfaction variable shows a value of -0.60, which represents the average level of negative correlation between the two variables.

The second type of curved arrow shown in the figure are the modifications proposed by the algorithms to improve the quality of the model fit, as these curved arrows are drawn only between the error terms that belong to the variable itself and must also contain a high value.

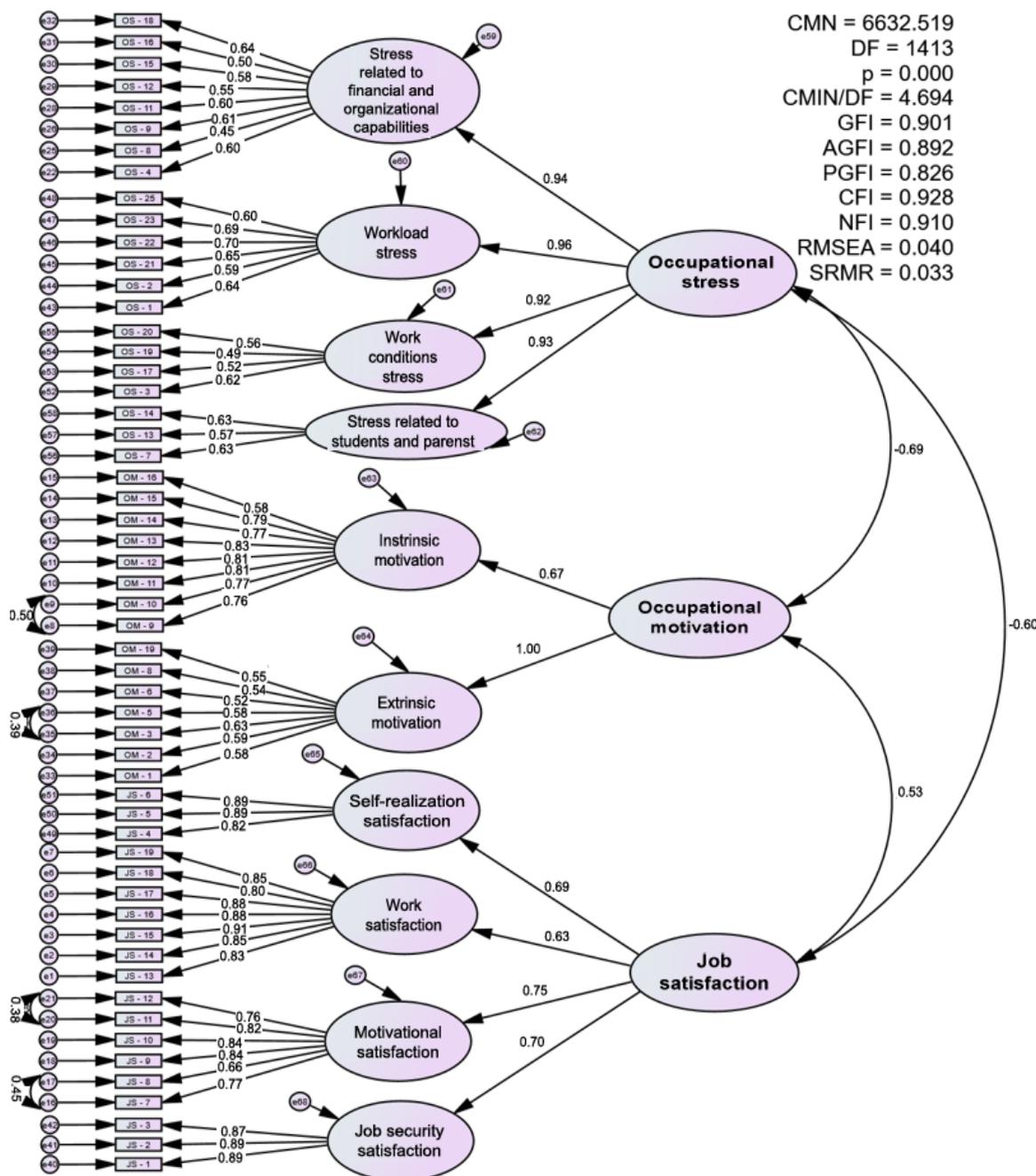


Figure 2. The standard model for factor analysis of the study.

Note: The figure shows the standard values for loading the variables on their latent factors as well as the correlation between the latent variables. OS = Occupational stress, OM = Occupational motivation, JS = Job satisfaction.

#### 4.2. Structural Equation Modeling (Hypothesis Testing)

After confirming the validity of the measurement model according to the goodness of fit indicators using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), it became possible to conduct a covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) analysis to test the study hypotheses through path analysis using IBM Amos software.

##### 4.2.1. Hypothesis 1 (H1) Test Results

H1 states: "There is a statistically significant relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation."

As shown in Table 2, occupational stress significantly affects occupational motivation among teachers in government schools at the 0.001 level of significance, with a standardized regression coefficient of -0.586, indicating

that the effect is negative, which means that the extra occupational stress experienced by teachers significantly reduces their occupational motivation. This supports the hypothesis set for the study stating that there is a statistically significant relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation.

4.2.2. Hypothesis (H2) Test Results

H2 states: “There is a statistically significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction.”

The results indicate that there is a significant and negative effect of occupational stress on job satisfaction among teachers in government schools. This is evident from the regression coefficient of -0.597 at the 0.001 level of significance. This unveils that more occupational stress experienced by teachers leads to less job satisfaction (see Table 2). Based on this, the hypothesis proposed for the study stating a significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction is supported as it was found to be significant.

4.2.3. Hypothesis (H3) Test Results

H3 states: “There is a statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and occupational motivation.”

It is also noted from Table 2 that the effect of job satisfaction on occupational motivation is -0.181, which indicates that there is a positive and statistically significant effect, and that any increase in the level of job satisfaction is offset by an increase in the level of occupational motivation among teachers. This supports the hypothesis. It should be noted that the standard model (R-squared) reached 50%, which means that 50% of the variance in occupational motivation can be explained by occupational stress and job satisfaction.

Table 2. Results of testing the study hypotheses for the model.

Hypothesis	Relationship/Path	Regression coefficient - non-standard values	Standard error	Critical ratio (CR)	Significance	Regression coefficient - standard values
H1	Occupational stress => occupational motivation	-0.470	0.031	-14.963	***	-0.586
H2	Occupational stress => job satisfaction	-0.511	0.029	-17.594	***	-0.597
H3	Job satisfaction => occupational motivation	0.170	0.029	5.924	***	0.181

Note: (n = 410). \*\*\* means statistically significant at a significance level less than 0.001.

Figure 3 shows the hypotheses testing of the relationships between occupational stress, occupational motivation, and job satisfaction among teacher in government schools. It also shows the causal relationships between the study variables and their statistical results according to the outputs generated using the CB-SEM through IBM Amos software. The figure also shows the three hypotheses that were tested according to the model, where the first arrow, from occupational stress to occupational motivation, represents the first hypothesis. The arrow shows a value of -0.59, which is the standardized regression coefficient and indicates that the relationship is negative between the two variables, and it also indicates that the effect of occupational stress on motivation is moderate (approaching 50%). The second arrow, from occupational stress to job satisfaction, represents the second hypothesis. The arrow shows a standardized regression coefficient value of -0.60, which indicates that the relationship is negative between the two variables and moderate. The third arrow, from job satisfaction to occupational motivation, represents the third hypothesis with a standardized regression coefficient value of 0.18, indicating a positive and moderate relationship between the two variables. The figure also displays straight arrows

from the main variables toward the sub-variables, and the values on them indicate the loading or saturation factors for each sub-variable toward the main variable.

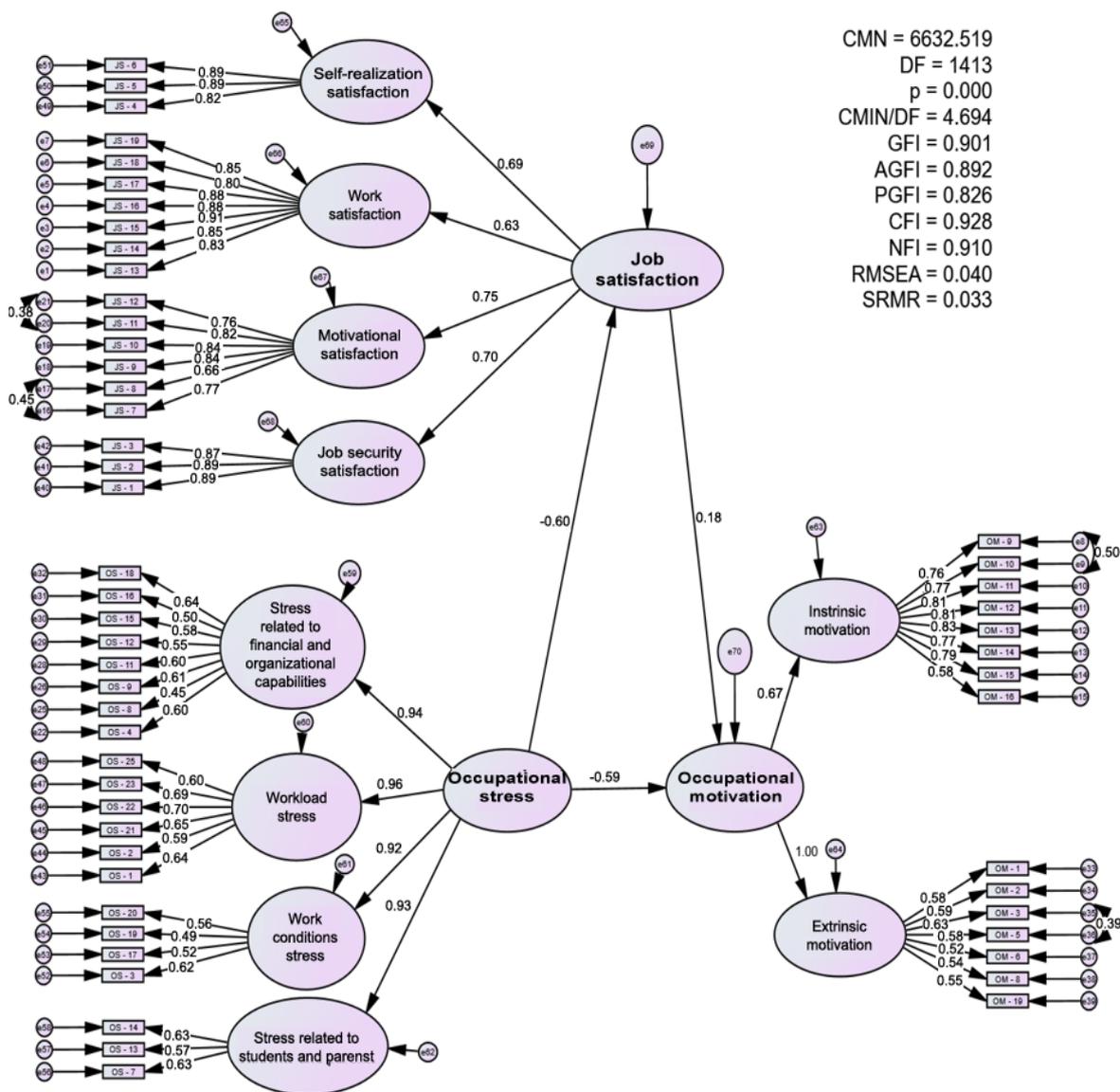


Figure 3. Sample for testing the study hypotheses.

## 5. DISCUSSION

### 5.1. Discussion of the First Hypothesis (H1): The Relationship Between Occupational Stress and Occupational Motivation

The results show that occupational stress negatively affects occupational motivation, as the standard regression coefficient indicates that there is a statistically significant inverse relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman. This means that any increase in the level of occupational stress is offset by a decrease in the level of occupational motivation among teachers. This supports the hypothesis set for the study stating there is a significant relationship between the two variables.

The significant effect of occupational stress and occupational motivation among teachers in the Sultanate of Oman can be attributed to stress related to financial and organizational capabilities, stress related to workload, stress related to students and parents, and stress related to working conditions. What teachers goes through in the Sultanate of Oman is reflected in their low morale and motivation regarding their love for and interest in their work. In addition to the large number of students in one class, which forces teachers to exert double effort in their work, there are also personal factors related to the teachers themselves, which appear in the form of anxiety and

tension, resulting in stress that limits their ability, weakens their effort and motivation, and affects their motivation negatively. This is consistent with the results of many previous studies (Kongcharoen, Onmek, Jandang, & Wangyisen, 2020; Sharma & Devasiachan, 2022).

According to the existing literature, the negative relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation among teachers indicates that teachers' exposure to the causes of occupational stress reduces occupational motivation, and that teachers' acquisition of the elements that increase their motivation reduces the rate of exposure to occupational stress. The lower the level of occupational stress, the higher the level of motivation to achieve. These studies also revealed that demographic factors and occupational motivation affect teacher stress.

It must be taken into account that the inverse relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation may fluctuate based on differences in the personal and psychological characteristics of teachers and their response to influencing factors. This will naturally affect the students' educational process. Despite this, stress may be a motivating factor for teachers to improve their level of work and performance, prompt them to adhere to school attendance times, be careful to utilize all their working hours, and complete their educational tasks on time.

Further, the literature presents other aspects which indicate that there is a positive relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation. When the level of work stress is very low or non-existent, teachers also decrease their level of occupational performance due to their lack of activity or motivation. Among the studies that have proven the opposite of this relationship is the study by Makhloufi (2015), whose results reported the existence of a positive correlation between occupational stress and occupational motivation among educational workers in middle education schools in Algeria. In addition to that, the study by Al-Rudainiyya (2021) found that there was an average level of motivation among teachers in Omani schools. The study by Kongcharoen et al. (2020) proved that financial and job stress have a positive effect on the motivation to work, which means that increasing this stress increases teachers' motivation to work.

There are also studies that did not find any relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation, such as the study by Qurit'e (2017), whose results indicated that there is no relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation among public school teachers in Gaza, Palestine.

On this basis, considering the result of this hypothesis, it can be said that occupational stress is among the basic problems that teachers suffer from within schools, and it results from known or unknown circumstances that greatly affect teachers' motivation and job performance.

## *5.2. Discussion of the Second Hypothesis (H2): The Relationship Between Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction*

The results showed that occupational stress significantly and negatively affects job satisfaction among teachers in government schools in Oman. This supports the hypothesis stating that there is a significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction.

This is consistent with previous research contributions, such as the study by Sudheeshkumer (2006), which concluded that there is a negative correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction among elementary schoolteachers in the Indian state of Kerala. The study by Parveen and Bano (2019) indicated that teachers' occupational stress was negatively related to job satisfaction. It was also found that there are positive feelings and negative feelings that are linked to the relationship between teachers' occupational stress and job satisfaction. Likewise, Sivakumar and Chitra (2017) found a high level of occupational stress among teachers in secondary schools in the city of Dharmapuri in Tamil Nadu, India, during the Covid-19 pandemic. Mwakasangula and Mwita (2020) indicated a high negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary schoolteachers in Tanzania.

Studies by Mondal, Shrestha, and Bhaila (2021) and Sadeghi and Sa'adatpourvahid (2016) concluded that there is a negative effect of occupational stress on the job satisfaction of schoolteachers in normal circumstances. Studies by Sivakumar and Chitra (2017); Hong, Liu, and Zhang (2021) and Bravo et al. (2021) concluded that occupational

stress negatively affects job satisfaction among schoolteachers in exceptional circumstances, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. Other studies, such as [Bhatti, Hashmi, Raza, Shaikh, and Shafiq \(2011\)](#) and [Saeed and Farooqi \(2014\)](#), demonstrated a negative effect of occupational stress on job satisfaction among university degree teachers.

This is inconsistent with the results of [Bouras, Belmqdam, and Amash \(2019\)](#), who reported that there is no positive relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction, but found a weak inverse relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among middle school teachers in Algeria. The study by [Al-Hamaki \(2020\)](#) indicated that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction among teachers in Al-Rass schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In addition to this, there are studies that did not find any correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction, such as [Mehta \(2015\)](#), who found no relationship between occupational stress on job satisfaction among teachers in public schools and private schools in the Indian capital, New Delhi.

Based on this, it can be said that occupational stress significantly reduces job satisfaction among government schoolteachers in Oman, which indicates a need to take action to improve the resilience of teachers and enhance the work environment in public schools.

### *5.3. Discussion of the Third Hypothesis (H3): The Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Occupational Motivation*

The results indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship and a positive effect of job satisfaction on occupational motivation. This means that increasing job satisfaction among teachers in the Sultanate of Oman results in an increase in their level of occupational motivation. This is attributed to the fact that teachers' satisfaction with their work leads to an increase in their motivation to carry out their occupational duties, thus leading to a reduction in the chances of leaving work, whether through absenteeism, neglect, or the lack of interest in teaching aspects. When appropriate incentives are provided for teachers with outstanding performance, a suitable work environment is provided for them, and attention is paid to their social and economic conditions, it will enhance their psychological sense of satisfaction, motivate them to work more, and encourage positive competition among their fellow teachers.

This result is consistent with the results of previous studies, such as [Skaalvik and Skaalvik \(2015\)](#) and [Njiru \(2022\)](#), who report a positive impact of job satisfaction on occupational motivation among schoolteachers. Further, the results are in line with [Amin \(2021\)](#), who found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and occupational motivation among teachers in public schools in Serang and Banten, Indonesia. The study by [Nyarko, Twumwaa, and Adentwi \(2014\)](#) demonstrated the existence of a positive correlation between teachers' occupational motivation and their job satisfaction at secondary level in schools in Accra, Ghana. [Sumanasena, Nawastheen, and Jayawardena \(2020\)](#) found that there is a significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and occupational motivation among teachers in Puttalam educational schools in Sri Lanka.

In the other aspects, some study results differ from those of the current study, such as [Al-Dhafriya \(2021\)](#), who revealed a negative and statistically significant correlation between occupational motivation and job satisfaction among life skills teachers. The study by [Abdel-Halim \(2020\)](#) indicated that there is a weak effect of job satisfaction on occupational motivation among schoolteachers in Minya Egypt, and the study by [Mpako Makolle \(2015\)](#) indicated the existence of a negative relationship between job satisfaction and occupational motivation among secondary school teachers in Fako Al-Hadari and Nadine Al-Rifa in southern Cameroon.

Furthermore, the results are inconsistent with [Ahmed \(2020\)](#), who showed that there is no relationship between job satisfaction and motivation for achievement among teachers in the basic stage at the Khartoum School for Special Education. The study by [Al-Ahmad \(2023\)](#) also found that there is no relationship between job satisfaction and occupational motivation among schoolteachers, and the study by [Shawash and Al-Ayeb \(2017\)](#) found that there is no statistically significant correlation between the level of pay and achievement motivation among primary school teachers in Ain Al-Baida-Oum El-Bouaghi, Algeria.

The results of these studies are attributed to the fact that job satisfaction reflects the attractiveness of work for teachers in schools, and therefore its increase reduces the chances of leaving to work elsewhere outside of the school. If educational leaders provide appropriate incentives for teachers, if teachers receive appreciation from society for the work they do, and if mutual relations with their fellow teachers are good, this will enhance their psychological sense of satisfaction, motivate them to work more, and encourage them to make achievement and occupational advancement. By training and qualifying teachers, adopting various methods to evaluate performance, and determining the best tools to measure performance to achieve fairness and transparency as much as possible, it will be positively reflected in their raised levels of motivation.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study successfully determined the types of stress that teachers face in the schooling system and the extent of the impact on their occupational motivation and job satisfaction, which made it possible to summarize the results and offer policy recommendations and implications. It revealed the significance of the relationships between occupational stress, occupational motivation, and job satisfaction among teachers in government schools. The study concludes that there is an earnest need to pay attention to strategies to alleviate occupational stress among less experienced teachers to improve their resilience.

The study has answered the questions raised in the research problem, which also led to achieving validity and reliability of the research tool. The results are in line with previous research and create opportunities for further studies to investigate an appropriate way to alleviate occupational stress that suits Arabic teaching methods and processes.

### 6.1. Research Limitations and Implications

Despite the efforts to complete this research as thoroughly as possible, there are still limitations that, if taken into consideration in future research, may result in a different output.

This study is limited due to focusing only on teachers in the governmental education system; research on the private education system may yield different results. Further, the study sample only comprises teachers in schools, so considering colleges and community colleges might yield a different outcome.

This research closely investigates the effect of occupational stress in the governmental secondary education system and presents a strategic guide that could be used by teachers to cope with stress and pay more attention to sources of occupational motivation. Further, the study presents evidence to policy makers regarding the levels of coping and tolerating stress sources while teaching in government schools. This could lead to the development of strategic tools to support teachers and regularize teaching jobs in government schools in a manner that ensures a conducive teaching environment.

**Funding:** This study received no specific financial support.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** The Ethical Committee of the Sultan Idris University of Education, Malaysia has granted approval for this study on 11 August 2022 (Ref. No. UPSIPS 1/6235).

**Transparency:** The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.

**Competing Interests:** The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

**Authors' Contributions:** Both authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study. Both authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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