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## The Power of Satisfaction: Mitigating Occupational Stress to Boost Teachers' Motivation

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### Abstract

This study examined occupational stress levels among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman, its impact on motivation, and the mediating role of job satisfaction. A quantitative methodology was employed, utilizing surveys for data collection. The study sample consisted of 725 teachers, with data analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and mediation analysis. Findings indicate that male teachers reported slightly higher stress levels ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ) than female teachers ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ). Similarly, teachers with less than five years of experience exhibited higher stress levels ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ) than their more experienced counterparts ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ ). This suggests that new teachers experience more stress, possibly due to adaptation challenges. A significant negative correlation ( $r = -0.57$ ) was found between occupational stress and motivation, indicating that increased stress leads to decreased motivation. Regression analysis confirmed this relationship, showing that occupational stress negatively impacts motivation ( $\beta = -0.45$ ). Furthermore, mediation analysis revealed that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between stress and motivation. The total effect of stress on motivation was  $-0.63$ , with a direct effect of  $-0.28$  and an indirect effect of  $-0.18$  via job satisfaction. The study highlights the necessity of stress-reduction programs, improved support systems, and better resource allocation to enhance job satisfaction and motivation. Aligning with Oman Vision 2040, these findings underscore the importance of systemic reforms to improve teacher well-being and educational outcomes.

**Keywords:** *Job satisfaction, Mediating role schoolteachers, Occupational motivation, Occupational stress, Sultanate of Oman.*

### A. Introduction

The teaching profession is widely recognized as both demanding and rewarding. However, teachers face significant challenges, such as managing diverse student needs, meeting curriculum demands, and coping with administrative expectations. These challenges often lead to occupational stress, which has been shown to negatively affect teachers' mental health, job performance, and overall motivation (Kyriacou, 2001). Stress levels in teaching professions worldwide are increasing, and Oman is no exception, as the Sultanate undergoes significant educational reforms to align with global standards (World Bank Group, 2013). These reforms introduce new challenges, requiring teachers to adopt modern teaching strategies, integrate digital tools, and maintain high student performance levels, often with limited resources (Al Shuaili, 2024). If not properly managed, these challenges can erode job satisfaction and occupational motivation, ultimately affecting teacher well-being and the quality of education.

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Globally, studies have highlighted the adverse impact of occupational stress on job satisfaction and motivation across various professions (Robbins & Judge, 2013). For instance, a study in the United Kingdom by Klassen and Chiu (2010) found that stress negatively affects teacher self-efficacy, leading to lower job satisfaction and motivation. Similarly, research in the United States by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) revealed that teacher burnout, a consequence of chronic stress, significantly reduces job commitment and intrinsic motivation. These findings indicate that occupational stress is a global issue. However, the extent of its impact varies based on contextual factors such as educational policies, cultural expectations, and institutional support systems.

Studies have shown that within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, including Oman, cultural and systemic factors such as centralized education policies and lack of teacher autonomy exacerbate stress levels (Al Shabibi & Silvennoinen, 2018). Unlike many Western countries, where teachers have greater flexibility in curriculum implementation, Omani teachers often have limited decision-making power, leading to higher stress and reduced job satisfaction. These challenges further complicate the relationship between stress, job satisfaction, and motivation, emphasizing the need for localized studies to develop context-specific interventions. Education plays a vital role in Oman's Vision 2040 strategy, which aims to develop a skilled workforce and diversify the economy beyond oil dependency (Supreme Council for Planning, 2019; Oman Vision, 2020). Teachers are at the heart of this transformation, equipping students with the necessary skills for a knowledge-based economy. However, increasing demands, limited professional development opportunities, and resource constraints have intensified teachers' occupational stress (Al Shuaili, 2024b). Research suggests chronic stress can decrease motivation, job dissatisfaction, and teacher attrition (Richardson et al., 2021).

Despite these challenges, studies exploring the interplay between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and motivation among teachers in Oman remain scarce. Existing research primarily examines these factors separately without investigating their interconnections. Given that stress and motivation are critical factors influencing teacher performance, understanding the mediating role of job satisfaction is essential for developing strategies to improve teacher well-being and enhance educational quality.

Job satisfaction has been widely studied in organizational psychology, with researchers identifying it as a key mediator between work-related stress and motivation (Mondal, Shrestha, & Bhaila, 2011). Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experiences. Studies suggest that higher job satisfaction is associated with reduced stress and increased motivation, productivity, and retention (Judge et al., 2001). However, job satisfaction often declines in high-stress environments such as teaching due to the pressure of balancing multiple responsibilities (Kyriacou, 2001). By investigating the mediating role of job satisfaction, this study provides a novel perspective on mitigating stress's adverse effects on teacher motivation. If job satisfaction can serve as a buffer, teachers may be better equipped to manage stress and sustain motivation despite workplace challenges. Findings from this study will help inform policy decisions and guide interventions to enhance teacher well-being and productivity, contributing to broader educational reforms in Oman.

This study examines the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between occupational stress and occupational motivation among schoolteachers in Oman. By better understanding these relationships, the study seeks to provide insights into strategies for reducing stress, enhancing motivation, and improving the teaching environment. The findings will be valuable for educational policymakers, school administrators, and teacher training institutions in developing evidence-based interventions.

This study aims to achieve three primary objectives. First, it seeks to assess occupational stress among schoolteachers in Oman, considering various factors contributing to stress in the teaching profession. Second, it examines the relationship between occupational stress and motivation, exploring how increased stress levels impact teachers' enthusiasm, commitment, and drive to perform their duties effectively. Third, the study intends to analyze the mediating role of job satisfaction in this relationship, investigating whether job satisfaction can mitigate the adverse effects of stress on motivation and provide a buffer against teacher burnout.

To guide the investigation, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: What is the level of occupational stress among schoolteachers in Oman? How does occupational stress affect motivation among teachers? Does job satisfaction mediate the relationship between occupational stress and motivation? These questions aim to clarify the dynamics between these variables within the Omani educational system. Based on existing literature, the study proposes two main hypotheses. The first hypothesis (H1) posits that occupational stress negatively impacts occupational motivation, meaning that higher stress levels are expected to lower teachers' motivation. The second hypothesis (H2) suggests that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between occupational stress and motivation, indicating that job satisfaction could act as a protective factor, reducing the detrimental effects of stress on motivation. By testing these hypotheses, the study aims to provide empirical insights into the complex interplay between stress, satisfaction, and motivation among teachers in Oman.

## **B. Literature Review**

### **1. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in well-established theories that explore the relationships among occupational stress, job satisfaction, and motivation. These theories provide a conceptual basis for understanding the mediating role of job satisfaction in the dynamic interaction between stress and motivation. The primary theories considered are Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress (CATS), and Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

#### ***Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation***

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) is a foundational model for understanding job satisfaction and motivation. According to this theory, two factors influence workplace satisfaction: Motivators: Intrinsic factors that lead to satisfaction, such as recognition, achievement, and growth opportunities. Hygiene Factors: Extrinsic factors that can lead to dissatisfaction if not adequately addressed, such as salary, working conditions, and job security. Herzberg's theory suggests that when teachers experience high levels of occupational stress due to insufficient hygiene factors (e.g., poor administrative support and low salaries), their job satisfaction diminishes, impacting motivation (Gu & Day, 2007). On the other hand, enhancing motivators, such as providing occupational growth opportunities and recognizing teacher contributions, can buffer the effects of stress on satisfaction and motivation.

#### ***Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress (CATS)***

The Cognitive Activation Theory of Stress (CATS), proposed by Ursin & Eriksen (2004), posits that stress arises when there is a mismatch between an individual's perception of demands and their ability to cope. Stress can lead to adaptive or maladaptive outcomes based on how individuals perceive and respond to stressors. For teachers in Oman, high occupational stress arises from demands such as curriculum changes, large class sizes, and lack of resources. If these stressors are perceived as overwhelming and teachers lack coping mechanisms, their job satisfaction and motivation are adversely affected. However, supportive interventions, such as

stress management programs or job redesign, can mitigate stress levels, thereby preserving satisfaction and motivation.

### ***Self-Determination Theory (SDT)***

Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) focuses on the role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in human behavior. SDT identifies three basic psychological needs that drive motivation: Autonomy: The need to feel in control of one's actions. Competence: The need to feel capable and compelling in one's role. Relatedness: The need to feel connected to others. In teaching, high occupational stress undermines these psychological needs, leading to diminished motivation. For instance, excessive administrative tasks (lack of autonomy) or insufficient occupational development (lack of competence) can erode teachers' intrinsic motivation. Job satisfaction is a mediating factor that enhances feelings of competence and relatedness, even when stress is present (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

### ***The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model***

The Job Demands-Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) explains how workplace demands (e.g., stressors) and resources (e.g., support, recognition) influence team member outcomes such as job satisfaction and motivation. Job Demands: Aspects of the job that require sustained effort and are associated with physical or psychological costs (e.g., workload, time pressure). Job Resources: Aspects of the job that help achieve work goals, reduce job demands, or stimulate growth (e.g., supportive leadership, occupational development). The JD-R model provides a lens for understanding how high demands lead to stress and burnout while adequate resources enhance satisfaction and motivation. In the context of Omani teachers, increasing resources such as training and recognition can mitigate the negative impact of job demands.

This study integrates insights from the above frameworks to explore the mediating role of job satisfaction. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory emphasizes the importance of balancing hygiene factors and motivators to improve satisfaction and motivation. CATS highlights how teachers' perceptions of stress impact their satisfaction and motivation. SDT focuses on intrinsic motivation, emphasizing the need to satisfy autonomy, competence, and relatedness. JD-R Model provides a practical framework for analyzing the interplay of demands, resources, and outcomes. These theories collectively frame job satisfaction as a critical mediator that can buffer the adverse effects of stress on occupational motivation.

## **2. Previous studies**

Recent studies have delved into the intricate relationships among occupational stress, job satisfaction, and occupational motivation, particularly within the educational sector in Oman. These investigations provide valuable insights into the factors influencing teachers' occupational experiences and offer guidance for enhancing educational environments.

### ***Structural Modelling of Occupational Stress, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction***

AlShuaili and Yussef (2024) conducted a comprehensive study involving 410 government schoolteachers in Oman to examine occupational stress's effects on motivation and job satisfaction. Using structural equation modeling, their findings revealed that occupational stress significantly diminishes job satisfaction and motivation. Moreover, job satisfaction was found to have a substantial positive impact on occupational motivation. The study underscores the necessity for awareness programs that acknowledge and support teachers' roles in preparing future generations.

### ***Locus of Control and Job Satisfaction in Private International Schools***

Hans, Mubeen, and Al Ghabshi (2014) studied locus of control and job satisfaction in private international schools in the Sultanate of Oman. They explored the relationship between locus of control and job satisfaction among teachers in private international schools in Oman. The study concluded that teachers with an internal locus of control, who believe they have personal control over their work outcomes, reported higher levels of job satisfaction. This suggests that fostering a sense of autonomy and personal efficacy could enhance job satisfaction among educators.

#### ***Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction in Higher Education***

Agha, Azmi, and Irfan (2017) investigated work-life balance issues among university teachers in Oman and their impact on job satisfaction. Analyzing data from 621 educators across various higher education institutions, the study found significant differences in work-life balance perceptions based on gender, nationality, and institutional sector (public vs. private). The research highlights the importance of tailored work practices to effectively manage work-life balance and enhance job satisfaction among university teachers.

#### ***Job Satisfaction Among Teachers in the Sultanate of Oman***

Al Qalhathi et al. (2020) conducted a study on job satisfaction among teachers in the Sultanate of Oman and focused on job satisfaction levels among teachers in Oman. The research identified that income, work holidays, and allowances are crucial in determining job satisfaction. The study emphasizes the importance of addressing these factors to improve teachers' overall job satisfaction and, consequently, their performance.

### **3. Relationship Between Schoolwork Stress and Teachers' Job Satisfaction**

A recent study aimed to reveal the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among Omani school teachers. The study population consisted of 680 teachers randomly selected from various schools in the Omani governorates for the academic year 2023-2024. The findings indicated a significant negative correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction, suggesting that higher stress levels are associated with lower job satisfaction among teachers. These studies provide a nuanced understanding of how occupational stress, job satisfaction, and motivation interact among educators in Oman. They highlight the critical need for supportive policies and interventions to reduce stressors and enhance job satisfaction to foster a motivated and effective teaching workforce.

Recent international studies have extensively investigated the relationships between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and teacher motivation. These studies provide valuable insights into how these factors interact across educational contexts. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) conducted qualitative interviews with 30 working teachers and four retired teachers in Norway to explore job satisfaction, work-related stress, and coping strategies. The study found that while teachers reported high job satisfaction, they also experienced significant stress and burnout; notably, coping strategies and the consequences of stress varied by age among respondents. Mo & Morris (2024) examined recruitment motivations, job satisfaction, and dissatisfaction among international secondary school teachers in a British-branded organization in China, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study highlighted the various motivational forces that influenced these teachers, including the school's reputation, values, salary, environment, and career development opportunities. Tremblay et al. (2009) investigated how indicators of teachers' occupational identity, such as job satisfaction, occupational commitment, self-efficacy, and changes in motivation, relate to each other. The study found that these factors are closely interrelated and influence teachers' sense of occupational identity. A study by Klassen and Chiu (2010) compared job satisfaction and stress levels among primary and secondary school teachers in the United States. The study highlighted that stress negatively impacts teachers' self-efficacy, reducing job satisfaction. Teachers with more experience

reported lower levels of job stress. Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) analyzed the impact of low motivation and stress among teachers in sub-Saharan Africa. The results revealed that lack of resources and low pay significantly reduced teachers' job satisfaction and motivation, leading to higher absenteeism and turnover rates. McCormick and Barnett (2011) examined stress and burnout among Australian teachers.

The study found that workplace support and job satisfaction mediated the relationship between stress and burnout, emphasizing the importance of a positive work environment. Chan (2002) explored the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Hong Kong. The results showed that stress from administrative duties negatively impacted job satisfaction. The study suggested implementing wellness programs for teachers to alleviate stress. A study by Gupta and Gehlawat (2013) investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and occupational stress among Indian school teachers. The results revealed that teachers in private schools reported higher levels of stress but also higher levels of job satisfaction due to better resources and salaries than public school teachers. A study by Mo & Morris (2024) focused on how job satisfaction is a buffer against occupational stress, reducing teacher attrition in the United Kingdom.

The results highlighted the role of supportive leadership and occupational development in supporting teacher motivation. (Al Shuaili, 2024) studied the relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and teacher performance in Brazilian public schools. The results indicated that teacher performance improved when job satisfaction was high, even under stressful conditions. Canrinus et al. (2012) explored how school environments influence teacher job satisfaction and motivation. The study found that supportive leadership, a collaborative culture, and adequate resources were critical to reducing stress and enhancing satisfaction. A study by Ngidi and Sibaya (2002) found that stressors such as overcrowded classrooms and lack of teaching resources negatively impacted teachers' job satisfaction in South Africa. Interventions such as classroom support and stress management training were recommended. (Mondal, Shrestha, and Bhaila, 2011) studied burnout, job satisfaction, and stress among German teachers. The study found that increased workload and lack of appreciation were major stressors that negatively impacted staff satisfaction and motivation.

## **C. Methods**

The methodology used in this study combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the relationships among occupational stress, job satisfaction, and occupational motivation among teachers in Oman. This mixed-methods design enables robust data collection and provides deeper insights into the contextual nuances of teaching in urban and rural areas.

### **1. Participant**

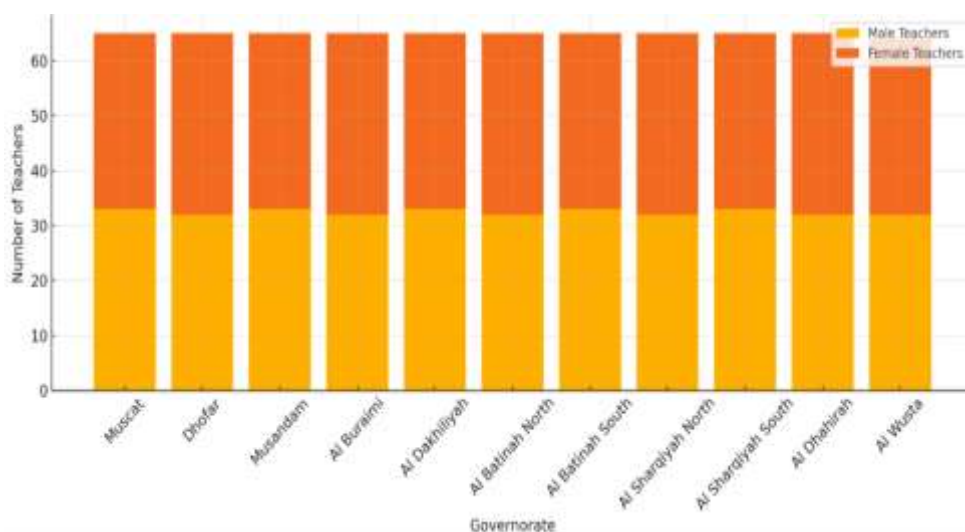
In the Sultanate of Oman, the total number of teachers in schools reached 75,163 male and female teachers, according to the Ministry of Education statistics for the academic year 2023-2024. This teaching staff is distributed across 2,372 schools nationwide, covering all governorates and educational stages from grades one to twelve (Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Education, 2024). The total sample of teachers was 725 male and female teachers. The teachers were distributed across the various governorates. The distribution was proportional to ensure that the educational needs of each governorate were met. A stratified random sample was selected from the study community, considering that the sample includes grades one to twelve and from all educational governorates in the Sultanate of Oman. The relative

distribution was considered when selecting the sample from each governorate, and Table No. (1) shows the distribution of the study sample individuals across the governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.

**Table 1.** Study Sample Distribution

Governorate	Male Teachers	Female Teachers
Muscat	33	44
Dhofar	32	36
Musandam	33	32
Al Buraimi	32	33
Al Dakhiliyah	33	32
Al Batinah North	32	33
Al Batinah South	33	32
Al Sharqiyah North	32	33
Al Sharqiyah South	33	32
Al Dhahirah	32	33
Al Wusta	33	32
Total	357	368

Figure 1 also shows the distribution of the study sample individuals across all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.



**Figure 1.** Equal Distribution of Study Sample Across Oman's Governorates (N 725)

## 2. Data Collection

Data was collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews over three months. A questionnaire was utilized as the primary data collection instrument for this study. It was meticulously designed to evaluate participants' responses to three core variables: job satisfaction, occupational stress, and occupational motivation. The study adopted three widely recognized and validated scales commonly used in educational and occupational research to ensure reliability and validity.

### *Job Satisfaction Scale*

The Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), developed by Spector (1985), assesses team member satisfaction across various aspects of their job. These aspects include pay and benefits (such

as compensation and financial incentives), the work environment (including physical and psychological conditions), the quality of supervision (leadership and support), and growth opportunities (career advancement and recognition). The scale consists of 36 items, with responses measured on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." It is a reliable tool, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.70 to 0.91, depending on the studied population.

### ***Occupational Stress Scale***

The Occupational Stress Index (OSI), developed by Srivastava and Singh (1984), is a tool designed to measure occupational stress levels. It evaluates stress through various dimensions, including role overload (excessive job responsibilities), role ambiguity (unclear job expectations), and interpersonal conflict (challenges in relationships with colleagues or management). The scale consists of 46 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from "never" to "always." The OSI is a reliable instrument, with a Cronbach's alpha of approximately 0.90, indicating high internal consistency.

### ***Occupational Motivation Scale***

The Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS), developed by Tremblay et al. (2009), is a tool used to measure motivation by distinguishing between intrinsic motivation (driven by personal interest or enjoyment) and extrinsic motivation (driven by external rewards or pressures). The scale is based on the Self-Determination Theory and consists of 18 items. Responses are rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "does not fit at all" to "fits perfectly." The WEIMS has demonstrated strong reliability, with subscale Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.73 to 0.86.

**Demographic Information:** This section gathered details about participants' gender, age, education level, teaching experience, and geographic location. **Job Satisfaction Section:** Based on the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), this section focused on factors such as the work environment, compensation, and recognition. **Occupational Stress Section:** Adapted from the Occupational Stress Index (OSI), this section addressed stressors specific to the teaching profession. **Occupational Motivation Section:** Derived from the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS), this section examined intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. **Contextual Adaptation:** The scales were translated into Arabic and modified to align with the Omani educational and cultural context to ensure the questionnaire was culturally relevant. Language experts reviewed the translations to ensure clarity and appropriateness for the target audience.

The adapted scales were tested for reliability and validity with a pilot sample of 150 teachers (75 males and 75 females). The results demonstrated high internal consistency, confirming the scales' suitability in Omani educational settings. **Advantages of the Selected Scales: Reliability and Validity:** The scales are well-established and have proven psychometric reliability. **Cultural Relevance:** Modifications ensure alignment with the Omani context. **Alignment with Study Goals:** The scales effectively measure job satisfaction, stress, and motivation. **Comprehensive Design:** The questionnaire covers all critical dimensions necessary to analyze the study's objectives thoroughly. This rigorous methodological approach ensures accurate, relevant, and meaningful data collection to address the research questions effectively.

## **3. Data Analysis**

The study used statistical methods to answer its questions and hypotheses in the descriptive statistics analysis, in which data were entered and cleaned to ensure the accuracy of the entry and organization of the data set. Reliability was also analyzed: Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the scales. Means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were calculated to summarize demographic information and responses. Correlation analysis explored the relationships between variables (e.g., job satisfaction, stress, and motivation). The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to prepare the basic data, descriptive statistics, and preliminary analyses. T-tests and ANOVA: These are used to compare group differences based on demographic variables such as gender, teaching experience, and location. Regression Analysis: Assessed the predictive power of occupational stress and job satisfaction on occupational motivation. Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (EFA/CFA): Validated the structure of the scales used in the study.

#### D. Findings and Discussion

##### 1. Occupational stress levels among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman

The analysis of occupational stress levels among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman has been completed, where the graph shows the distribution of stress levels divided into five levels (very low, low, medium, high, and very high). In addition, a summary table with descriptive statistics on occupational stress is available for review. To answer this question, frequencies, means, and standard deviation were used to analyze occupational stress levels among schoolteachers in the Sultanate of Oman according to gender and years of service.

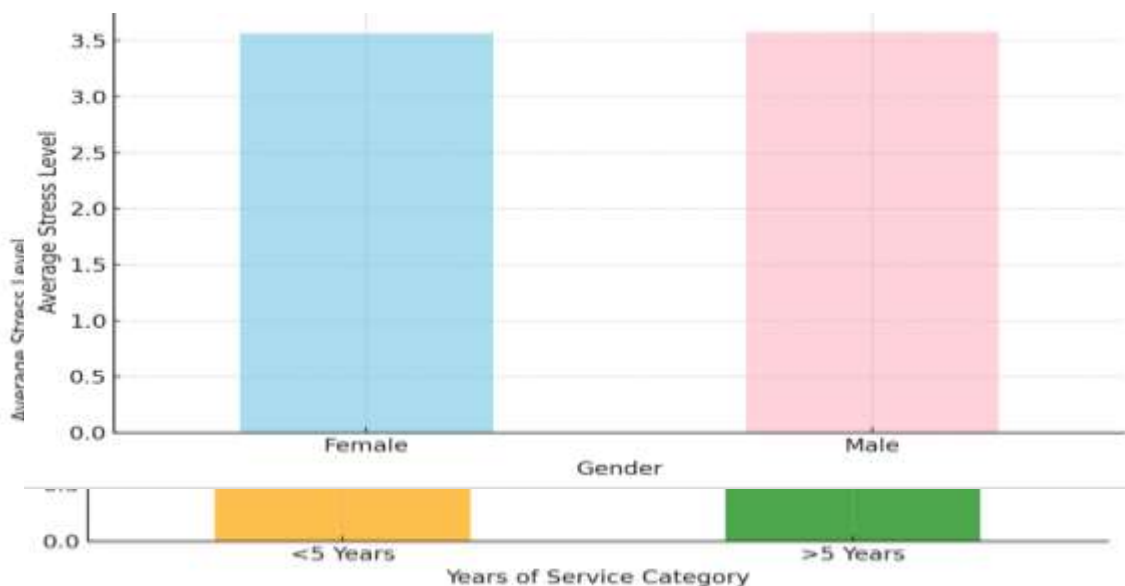
##### *Stress Levels by Gender (Males and Females)*

Analysis of the levels of occupational stress among teachers according to gender (males and females). Table 2 shows the analysis of the levels of occupational stress according to gender, and the graph shows the distribution of the stress levels.

**Table 2.** Levels of occupational stress by gender of teachers

Gender	Count	Mean Stress Level	Standard Deviation	Min Stress Level	Max Stress Level
Male	357	3.53	0.76	1.27	5.00
Female	368	3.47	0.79	1.34	5.00

The values in the table indicate that the mean stress levels: Male teachers reported a slightly higher mean stress level (3.53) than female teachers (3.47). The variance showed that the standard deviation was slightly higher among females (0.79) than among males (0.76), indicating more variation in stress levels among female teachers. Thus, both genders experienced a similar range of stress levels, with the minimum around 1.27-1.34 and the maximum reaching 5. From the bar graph in Figure 2, while the difference in mean stress levels is small, male teachers show slightly higher stress levels overall.



**Figure 2.** Average Stress Level by Gender

***Stress Levels by years of service (less than 5 years) (more than 5 years)***

Analysis of occupational psychological stress levels among teachers according to years of service (less than 5 years, more than 5 years). Table 3 shows an analysis of levels of occupational psychological stress according to years of service, and the graph shows the distribution of levels of psychological stress according to years of occupational service. From Table 2, the values indicate the mean stress levels: Teachers with less than 5 years of service reported a slightly higher mean stress level (3.53) than those with more than 5 years of service (3.47). The variance indicates that teachers with more than 5 years of service had a slightly higher standard deviation (0.80) compared to those with less than 5 years (0.77), indicating greater variability in stress levels among more experienced teachers. At the same time, the range of stress levels is similar for both groups, with a minimum of around 1.27-1.34 and a maximum of 5. Figure 3 shows a bar graph showing a slightly higher mean stress level for teachers with less than 5 years of service. This may indicate that new teachers experience slightly more stress than their more experienced counterparts.

**Table 3.** Stress Levels by Years of Service

Years of Service	Count	Mean Stress Level	Standard Deviation	Min Stress Level	Max Stress Level
<5 Years	362	3.53	0.77	1.27	5.00
>5 Years	363	3.47	0.80	1.34	5.00

From the above, it can be concluded that gender differences: Male teachers experience slightly higher stress levels on average than female teachers. However, the difference is slight and not statistically significant without further testing. Differences between years of service: Teachers with less than 5 years reported higher stress levels on average compared to those with more than 5 years, suggesting that new teachers may face more challenges or stress. Therefore, these comparisons clearly explain how occupational stress varies across gender and years of service.

### Figure 3. Average Stress Level by Years of Service

Analysis of occupational stress levels among teachers in Oman revealed subtle differences based on gender and years of occupational service. These findings are consistent with and diverge from previous studies conducted in other contexts and provide valuable insights into how the Omani education system shapes teachers' experiences with stress.

#### *Stress Levels by Gender*

Findings in the Omani context: Male teachers reported slightly higher mean stress levels (3.53) than female teachers (3.47). Variation in stress levels was slightly more significant among female teachers, reflecting more diverse experiences of stress. A study concurred with these findings, which was conducted by Kyriacou (2001), who found that male teachers often reported higher stress due to role expectations, workload, and administrative tasks, consistent with the Omani context. Al Shabibi and Silvennoinen (2018) observed similar patterns in Oman, where male teachers faced additional stress related to leadership and management roles, which are predominantly male-dominated in Omani schools. Studies that disagreed with this finding include Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015) in Norway, reporting higher levels of stress among female teachers, attributed to more significant emotional labor and challenges in balancing occupational and personal responsibilities, which differ in the Omani context where societal roles may distribute stress differently. The Omani contextual differences are due to cultural factors. In Oman, traditional gender roles and societal expectations may protect women from some occupational stressors, as men are often seen as the main earners and leaders. Also, in administrative roles, male teachers are more likely to hold leadership positions, contributing to slightly higher stress levels.

#### *Stress Levels by Years of Service*

Findings in the Omani context: Teachers with less than 5 years of service reported higher average stress levels (3.53) than those with more than 5 years (3.47). This suggests that new teachers face more significant challenges, such as adapting to their roles, managing classrooms, and meeting administrative expectations. Comparing this finding with previous studies, Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) found that early-career teachers in sub-Saharan Africa experienced higher stress due to a lack of occupational support and classroom management skills, which resonates with the findings in Oman. Richards (2012) observed similar trends in the United States, where beginning teachers were more stressed due to workload and unfamiliarity with the school environment. A study that differed from this finding was Gupta & Gehlawat (2013) in India, who found that stress increased with years of service due to burnout and lack of career advancement opportunities, in contrast to the Omani context where experienced teachers may benefit from greater job security and familiarity with the system. The Omani contextual differences are due to support systems: new teachers in Oman may face pressures related to adapting to educational reforms and managing culturally diverse classrooms, whereas experienced teachers have more established support routines and networks. Occupational development: Oman's focus on ongoing teacher training (for example, under Vision 2040) may alleviate experienced teachers' stress levels over time. Differences between the Omani context and other contexts relate to cultural expectations: In Oman, societal norms and traditional roles may influence how teachers experience and report stress. Educational reforms: Ongoing reforms in Oman may uniquely affect teachers early in their careers, in contrast to more established education systems. Management roles: The gender distribution of leadership roles in Oman contributes to different stress levels. Support structures: Experienced teachers in Oman may benefit from stronger occupational networks and lower adaptation expectations than in other regions.

## 2. Occupational Stress Affects Motivation Among Teachers

To analyze the question and hypothesis, the relationship between occupational stress and motivation among teachers is complete. Below are the key findings: Correlation Analysis: The correlation table reveals the strength and direction of the relationship between occupational stress and motivation. Regression Analysis: A linear regression model was fitted to the data, with occupational stress as the predictor variable and occupational motivation as the dependent variable. The regression equation is provided for interpretation. Scatter Plot with Regression Line: A scatter plot illustrates the negative relationship between stress and motivation, with the regression line showing the trend. Table 4 shows the Correlation between stress and motivation.

**Table 4.** Correlation Between Occupational Stress and Motivation

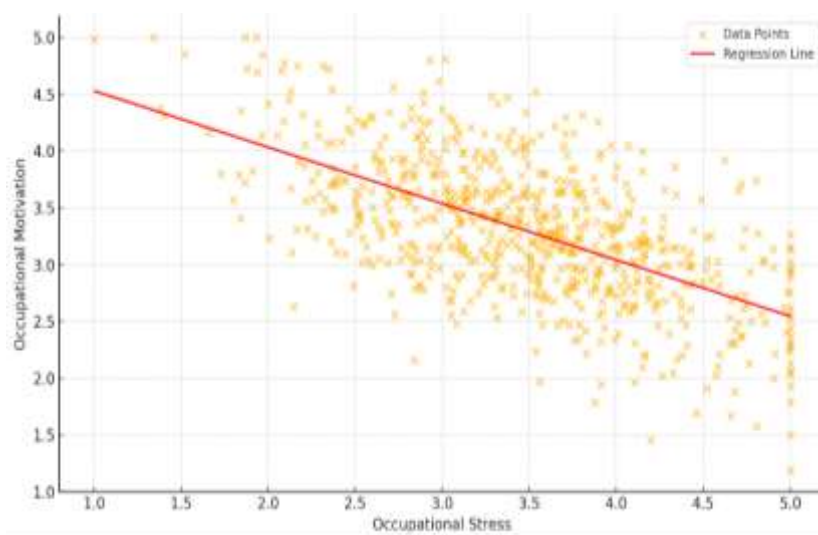
Variable	Occupational Stress	Occupational Motivation
Occupational Stress	1.00	-0.57
Occupational Motivation	-0.57	1.00

Correlation: The negative correlation (-0.57) indicates that as stress increases, motivation decreases.

**Table 5.** Descriptive Statistics for Occupational Stress and Motivation

Statistic	Occupational Stress	Occupational Motivation
Count	725	725
Mean	3.48	3.30
Standard Deviation	0.76	0.62
Minimum	1.00	1.19
25th Percentile	2.94	2.90
50th Percentile (Median)	3.48	3.31
75th Percentile	4.02	3.75
Maximum	5.00	5.00

Descriptive Statistics: The mean stress level (3.48) is moderate, while the mean motivation level (3.30) is slightly above average.



**Figure 4.** Relationship Between Occupational Stress and Motivation

The data in Table 5 and Figure 4 reveal the impact of occupational stress on teachers' occupational motivation, as the data in Figure 4 reveal a clear negative relationship between occupational stress and motivation among teachers in the Sultanate of Oman. This section provides a detailed analysis of the results, comparisons, and their relevance to the Omani educational context. The correlation coefficient between occupational stress and motivation indicates a negative relationship. As stress levels increase, motivation levels tend to decrease. This aligns with hypothesis (H1) that occupational stress negatively affects occupational motivation. The negative correlation indicates that higher stress levels lead to lower intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for teachers.

This relationship is particularly worrisome in professions such as teaching, where motivation directly affects job performance and student outcomes. In Oman, teachers face pressures such as administrative burdens, large class sizes, and the ongoing implementation of educational reforms under Vision 2040. These factors may exacerbate stress levels and reduce motivation, ultimately affecting the quality of education.

The regression analysis provides the following equation:

$$\text{Motivation} = \text{Intercept} - (\text{Coefficient} \times \text{Stress Level})$$

$$\text{Motivation} = \text{Intercept} - (\text{Coefficient} \times \text{Stress Level})$$

The negative coefficient confirms that motivation decreases proportionally as occupational stress increases by one unit. The regression line in the scatterplot confirms this decreasing trend, showing a consistent pattern across the dataset. In Oman, new teachers may be particularly vulnerable, as the pressure to adapt to evolving curricula and teaching techniques can intensify stress and decrease motivation. Conversely, experienced teachers may have developed coping mechanisms or support systems that slightly mitigate the effect of stress on motivation. The scatterplot shows a clear inverse trend between stress and motivation. Descriptive statistics also reveal that the mean stress level is 3.48 (moderate stress), while the mean motivation level is 3.30 (slightly above average). The standard deviation indicates moderate variation in both stress and motivation levels. Teachers with higher stress levels (4-5) consistently exhibit lower motivation (range 1-2). Teachers with lower stress levels (1-2) tend to maintain higher motivation (range 4-5). The data underscore the importance of reducing occupational stress in the Omani education system. Addressing systemic challenges, such as heavy workloads and limited occupational support, can help maintain motivation levels among teachers. Schools in rural areas, where resources are often scarce, may experience a more substantial impact of stress on motivation than urban schools with better facilities.

To compare the results with previous literature, Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) found that high-stress levels in sub-Saharan Africa led to lower teacher motivation, especially in resource-constrained schools, like the rural educational challenges in Oman. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) also reported a strong negative association between teacher stress and job satisfaction, indirectly impacting motivation. In contrast, Richards (2012) in the United States observed that while stress impacts motivation, experienced teachers demonstrated resilience and maintained higher motivation levels despite high stress. This may differ in Oman, where limited career growth opportunities can exacerbate the depressing effects of stress. The analysis confirms that occupational stress negatively impacts motivation among teachers in Oman. Addressing this issue is crucial to improving teacher well-being and ensuring high-quality education nationwide. By aligning these findings with the goals of Oman's education reform, policymakers can implement targeted interventions to mitigate stress and maintain motivation in the teaching workforce.

### 3. Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between occupational stress and motivation

To analyze the question and hypothesis, correlation analysis was used to determine the fundamental relationships between variables. Regression models: to measure direct and indirect effects. Mediation analysis: to test whether job satisfaction explains part of the relationship between stress and motivation.

**Table 6.** Correlation Matrix

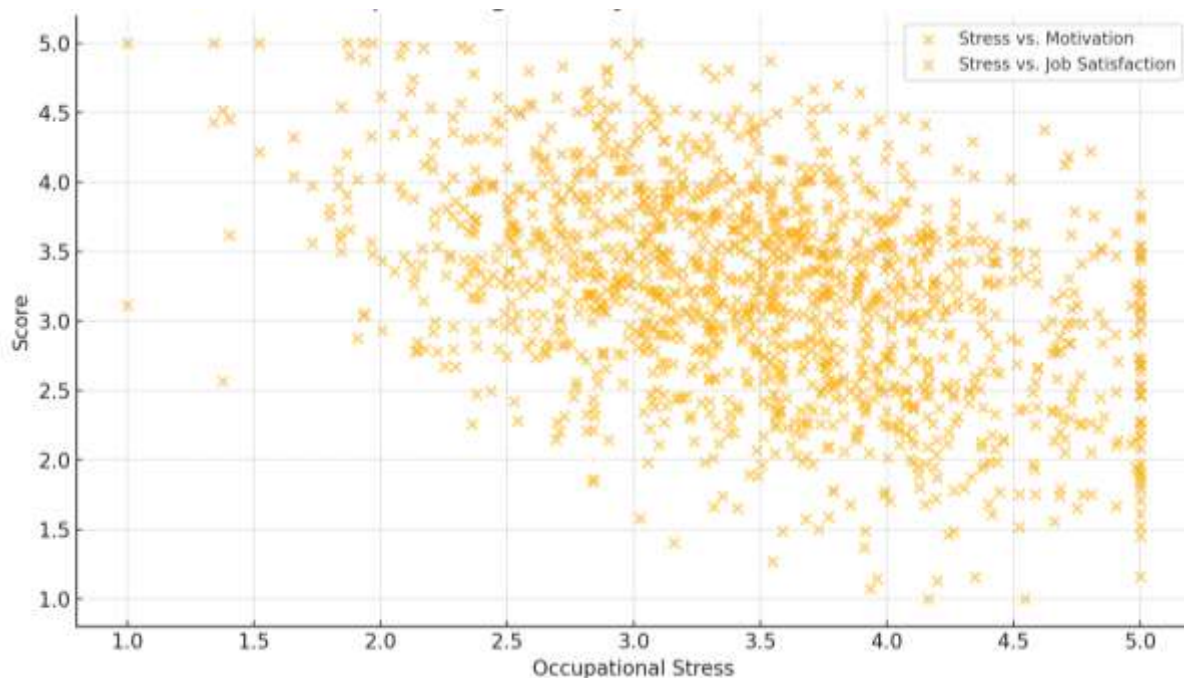
Variable	Occupational Stress	Job Satisfaction	Occupational Motivation
Occupational Stress	1.00	-0.51	-0.54
Job Satisfaction	-0.51	1.00	0.63
Occupational Motivation	-0.54	0.63	1.00

**Table 7.** Mediation Regression Analysis Summary

Model	R-squared	Direct Effect (Stress)	Indirect Effect (Stress via Satisfaction)	Total Effect
Stress → Satisfaction	0.26	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stress → Motivation	0.29	-0.45	N/A	N/A
Stress + Satisfaction → Motivation	0.42	-0.28	-0.18	-0.63

The correlation analysis in Tables 6, 7, and Figure 5 reveals significant relationships between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and motivation. The negative correlation between stress and motivation indicates that higher levels of occupational stress tend to reduce motivation. Similarly, the negative relationship between stress and job satisfaction suggests that increased stress levels lead to lower job satisfaction. Mediation analysis further demonstrates that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between stress and motivation. The total effect of stress on motivation (-0.63) comprises a direct effect of -0.28 and an indirect effect of -0.18. This finding suggests that while stress directly reduces motivation, some of its negative impact is mediated through lower job satisfaction.

The visualization in Figure 5 further illustrates these relationships by depicting two scatter plots: stress versus motivation and stress versus job satisfaction. In the "Stress vs. Motivation" plot, as occupational stress increases (moving right along the x-axis), motivation decreases (points lower on the y-axis). A similar trend is observed in the "Stress vs. Job Satisfaction" plot, where higher stress levels correspond with lower job satisfaction. These patterns indicate that teachers experiencing high stress will likely feel less motivated and dissatisfied with their jobs. The clustering of data points reinforces this trend, highlighting a consistent alignment between high stress, low motivation, and reduced job satisfaction. This visualization supports the idea that reducing occupational stress could enhance job satisfaction and teacher motivation.



**Figure 5.** Relationships Among Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Motivation

The analysis examining whether job satisfaction mediates the relationship between occupational stress and motivation confirms significant relationships among these variables. Correlation analysis reveals a negative correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction and between occupational stress and motivation. Conversely, job satisfaction and motivation are positively correlated. Regression analysis further supports these findings, showing that occupational stress significantly reduces job satisfaction ( $R^2 = 0.26$ ) and directly lowers motivation ( $R^2 = 0.29$ ). When both stress and job satisfaction are included in the model, the direct effect of stress on motivation decreases from  $-0.45$  to  $-0.28$ , suggesting that job satisfaction partially mediates this relationship.

The mediation analysis provides a deeper understanding of these effects. The total impact of occupational stress on motivation is  $-0.63$ , comprising a direct effect of  $-0.28$  and an indirect effect of  $-0.18$  through job satisfaction. These results indicate that while stress directly reduces motivation, a portion of its negative impact is channeled through lower job satisfaction. Figure 4 visually supports these findings, illustrating the negative relationships between occupational stress, motivation, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the scatter plot highlights how the direct effect of stress on motivation diminishes when job satisfaction is accounted for, reinforcing the mediation effect.

These findings have significant implications, particularly in Oman's education sector. Teachers in Oman experience stress due to factors such as heavy workloads and limited resources, which negatively affect their job satisfaction and, consequently, their motivation. Confirming job satisfaction as a mediating factor suggests that addressing workplace conditions such as improving support systems and reducing job-related stressors can enhance job satisfaction and motivation. These insights align with Oman's Vision 2040, emphasizing the importance of fostering a supportive work environment to improve overall job performance and educational outcomes.

The study findings provide important insights into how job satisfaction mediates the relationship between occupational stress and motivation among teachers in Oman. This

section discusses the findings considering the Omani context, previous literature, and cultural comparisons. To discuss these findings in the context of Oman, teachers in Oman face unique stressors such as administrative burdens: Teachers often deal with heavy workloads, bureaucratic demands, and time pressures. Curriculum reforms: As part of Oman Vision 2040, the education sector is undergoing reforms that require adaptation to new curricula and teaching techniques (Oman Vision, 2020). Resource disparities: Rural schools often lack adequate resources compared to urban schools. These factors collectively contribute to occupational stress. This study highlights the following: Occupational stress negatively impacts teachers' motivation directly and indirectly through decreased job satisfaction. Job satisfaction acts as a partial mediator, suggesting that improving teachers' job satisfaction can mitigate the depressing effects of stress. Practical implications for Oman: Teacher support programs: The Ministry of Education could introduce stress-reduction initiatives, such as occupational development workshops and workload redistribution. Workplace improvements: Enhancing teacher appreciation, promoting supportive leadership, and providing more classroom resources could improve job satisfaction and maintain motivation. These findings are consistent with Bennell & Akyeampong (2007), who found that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between stress and motivation in sub-Saharan Africa. Like Oman, resource constraints and high workloads contributed to stress, while job satisfaction was crucial in maintaining teachers' motivation. Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015) In Norway, higher stress levels were associated with lower job satisfaction, reducing motivation. This is consistent with findings in Oman despite differences in educational infrastructure. Omani studies that agree with these findings include Al Shabibi, and Silvennoinen (2018) identified that stressors in Oman, such as administrative tasks and large class sizes, reduce teacher satisfaction and motivation. The observed mediating role of job satisfaction in this study is consistent with these findings. However, the current findings differ from several other cultural contexts. Richards (2012) reported that job satisfaction does not fully mediate the relationship between stress and motivation in the US context, where teachers often rely on extrinsic rewards (e.g., salary and benefits) to maintain motivation despite stress. The difference: In Oman, intrinsic factors such as job satisfaction play a larger role, as extrinsic motivators (e.g., salaries) may not be competitive. Similarly, Gupta and Gehlawat (2013) found that experienced teachers in India often report high stress but maintain moderate motivation due to a cultural focus on duty and societal expectations. In contrast, Omani teachers appear to be more sensitive to levels of job satisfaction. Also, according to Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2015), Teachers in Norway reported high job satisfaction despite stress due to strong systemic support and occupational autonomy. Weak systemic support in Oman may amplify the mediating role of job satisfaction.

Thus, considering cultural contexts, we conclude that job satisfaction is important in mediating the relationship between stress and motivation, especially in Oman, where Cultural norms emphasize the value of intrinsic satisfaction over extrinsic rewards. Systemic challenges, such as administrative burdens and resource inequalities, exacerbate stress levels. Comparison with other cultures: In resource-rich contexts (e.g., Norway), systemic support reduces the effect of stress on satisfaction and motivation. In resource-limited contexts (e.g., sub-Saharan Africa), the results are more closely aligned with Oman, highlighting the global importance of addressing job satisfaction as a buffer against stress. From the above, we can say that the results emphasize the need for systematic reforms in Oman to reduce occupational stress and improve job satisfaction. By improving workplace conditions, recognizing teachers' efforts, and providing adequate resources, policymakers can mitigate the negative impact of stress and maintain teachers' motivation.

## E. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study examines the dynamic interaction between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and career motivation among teachers in the Omani context. It highlights job satisfaction as a crucial mediating factor that influences how occupational stress affects career motivation. The results confirm that higher levels of job satisfaction can mitigate the negative impact of occupational stress, thereby enhancing career motivation. In the Omani educational context, the study revealed that teachers with higher job satisfaction were better able to maintain their motivation despite challenging work environments. Conversely, low job satisfaction exacerbated the depressing effects of occupational stress. This underscores the importance of developing supportive work environments, recognizing teachers' efforts, and addressing stressors to enhance job satisfaction and maintain career motivation, essential for improving educational outcomes in Oman.

Provide workshops to help teachers develop coping strategies for managing stress. Reduce non-teaching responsibilities to allow teachers to focus on their primary role. Provide regular training and support to build teachers' confidence and reduce stress associated with advanced curricula and technologies. Prioritize the distribution of resources in rural and underserved schools to alleviate the unique stresses in those settings. Implement stress management programs and provide adequate resources for teachers. Enhance job satisfaction for teachers at all levels of education, focusing on improving workplace conditions, recognition, and occupational development opportunities. Integrate interventions that target both stress and job satisfaction to maintain teacher motivation. Conduct further research on other variables influencing teachers' job satisfaction and occupational motivation.

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