

# Exploring the Relationships between External and Internal Motivation on Job Satisfaction among Primary Teachers in the Ministry of Education in Jordan: The Moderating Effect of Perceived Organizational Support

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## Abstract

This conceptual paper explores how external and internal motivations can enhance job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Jordanian public schools, with a particular focus on perceived organizational support as a moderating variable. The study confirms that perceived organizational support plays a important moderating role in the relationship between various job satisfaction factors and teachers' experiences. Challenges such as low wages, stressful workloads, and limited professional development opportunities highlight the need for a deeper understanding of how these intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors, along with perceived organizational support, influence teachers' morale and enhance their motivation. The proposed framework suggests that a supportive organizational context enhances the effects of both fundamental and psychological needs, thereby enhancing teachers' job satisfaction. By demonstrating the importance of perceived organizational support in enhancing job satisfaction, the paper aims to provide educational leaders and stakeholders with more practical strategies to address the diverse needs of teachers. This research contributes to the understanding of job satisfaction in the educational context of the Middle East and offers ways to improve teacher retention and create a more conducive work environment in Jordanian public primary schools.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Self-Determination Theory, Perceived Organizational Support, Motivations

## Introduction

In recent years, quality education has increasingly emerged as a central concern among scholars, policymakers, and practitioners (Guzmán-Valenzuela et al., 2021). In this regard, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which emphasizes quality education, identifies

several environmental challenges, including ensuring equitable access to educational resources, fostering inclusive learning environments, and addressing infrastructural and technological deficiencies particularly in under resourced and rural regions (Agbedahin, 2019; Mbithi et al., 2021). Consequently, the realization of these objectives necessitates a diverse range of organizational resources, such as natural, financial, scientific, technological, and most critically, human resources. Among these, human capital is considered the most essential, as it facilitates the activation and sustained utilization of other organizational assets (Olubiyi, 2023). Furthermore, within the context of organizational development, the retention of skilled and credible human resources is indispensable for achieving optimal performance. Indeed, employees who demonstrate strong performance tend to experience greater job satisfaction, which subsequently fosters loyalty and long-term commitment to their organizations (Novianti et al., 2024).

This dynamic is particularly evident within the education sector, wherein job satisfaction plays a pivotal role in both individual achievement and institutional effectiveness. Specifically, within Jordan's Ministry of Education, teacher satisfaction has emerged as a pressing issue requiring targeted attention to enhance overall educational outcomes (Dababneh et al., 2022). Notably, the Ministry faces persistent challenges that negatively impact teacher morale, including inadequate salaries, excessive workloads, limited professional autonomy, and insufficient opportunities for career development (Alnaimat et al., 2022; Queen Rania Foundation, 2021). These factors collectively undermine job satisfaction and obstruct the realization of sustainable educational development (Queen Rania Foundation, 2021). Moreover, additional concerns such as financial insecurity, lack of job stability, and the inability to fulfill higher-level needs particularly esteem and self-actualization are often compounded by inconsistent teacher training programs (Alkhlaifat, 2020; Queen Rania Foundation, 2021). Accordingly, addressing these multifaceted issues may benefit from the integration of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) within educational policy frameworks, as both offer valuable perspectives for improving teacher motivation and satisfaction.

Empirical evidence supports the view that enhancing job satisfaction largely depends on optimizing organizational factors such as compensation structures, workload distribution, working conditions, management styles, and leadership effectiveness (Abdulahi, 2020; Amayreh & Arshad, n.d.; Efendi & Yusuf, 2021; Y. Yang, Obrenovic, et al., 2024). Moreover, Aras & Gümüşsoy (2024) observed a growing concern among employees regarding job security, which has led many to contemplate leaving their positions. Therefore, a strategic focus on the root causes of job dissatisfaction within educational institutions may contribute significantly to reducing employee turnover and fostering greater levels of engagement and organizational commitment (Battaglio et al., 2022; Queen Rania Foundation, 2021; Rojas et al., 2023).

In addition, the importance of job satisfaction within the educational system is arguably more pronounced than in many other sectors (Lee et al., 1991). This is primarily because education extends beyond the simple transmission of knowledge; it plays an essential role in nurturing the holistic development of individuals and cultivating human potential (Patricia & Asoba, 2021). Therefore, achieving this overarching objective is feasible only when teachers experience a high degree of job satisfaction (Abdulahi, 2020). Moreover, the quality of

education and the broader developmental outcomes of students are closely linked to the psychological well-being and professional contentment of educators (Ortan et al., 2021). Indeed, when teachers feel fulfilled and valued in their roles, they are more likely to contribute meaningfully to student development and to the overall success of the educational system (Jackson, 2018). Addressing job satisfaction effectively can lead to numerous benefits: reducing teacher turnover, enhancing commitment and motivation, and cultivating a more stable and productive educational environment. From a policy perspective, the study offers actionable insights for school administrators, educational leaders, and policymakers to craft balanced strategies that address both extrinsic needs (such as compensation and job security) and intrinsic motivators (such as autonomy and professional growth). Moreover, this study fills a critical gap in the existing literature by focusing on the Middle Eastern educational context, where cultural and systemic factors uniquely influence teachers' job satisfaction. Unlike many Western-centered studies, this work tailors its approach to the socio-economic and cultural realities of Jordanian public schools, offering regionally relevant findings and recommendations. Ultimately, the study's significance lies in its potential to improve not only the lives and careers of teachers but also the quality of education delivered to students. By promoting a supportive work environment and addressing the comprehensive needs of educators, this research supports the long-term vision of sustainable educational development and human capital enhancement in Jordan and similar settings. Hence, the findings and policy implications derived from this study are valuable to a wide audience, including policymakers, education administrators, teachers, and scholars, making an impactful contribution to advancing educational success in the region.

This section introduces the research question, focusing on the urgent need for studies on job satisfaction within primary schools in the Jordanian Ministry of Education. There is limited literature on job satisfaction in the education sector in the Middle East and developing countries, highlighting a gap in understanding the factors and drivers of job satisfaction, including the importance of utilizing and integrating Maslow's hierarchy of needs and self-determination theory. This study aims to fill these gaps by examining the factors of job satisfaction in the education sector and Jordanian schools. Through its research question, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of job satisfaction specific to the context of primary schools in the Jordanian Ministry of Education. The research question for this study is:

What are the factors influencing job satisfaction among teachers in Jordanian public primary schools?

This paper is structured as follows: Section II provides a comprehensive review of previous literature and explains how the study's hypotheses were developed. Section III discusses the contributions of this research and presents conclusions drawn from the findings of the literature.

## **Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

### *Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction is a foundational concept within the field of organizational behavior, as it underscores its critical role in fostering a productive and harmonious workplace environment (Nurfaisal & Sunengko, 2023). The interest in this concept can be traced back to the early 1920s, beginning with the theories of Frederic Taylor, who proposed that productivity could

be enhanced through the scientific organization of work, the development of performance-based salary systems, and strategic efforts aimed at improving employee morale. Consequently, these foundational ideas highlighted the significance of job content as a central determinant of job satisfaction.

However, over time, the focus gradually shifted from the structural components of work toward the individual employee as the primary agent in influencing job satisfaction (Joanna & Jerzy, 2020; Varshney & Damanhour, 2013). Accordingly, job satisfaction has been defined as the result of the interplay among psychological, physiological, and environmental conditions (Hoppock, 1935). Furthermore, it plays a critical role in determining organizational success (Hasan & Sadat, 2023). Specifically, satisfied employees tend to demonstrate higher levels of engagement and commitment, which in turn enhance productivity and reduce employee turnover (Tsai & Wu, 2010).

Therefore, when employees are content with their jobs, they are less inclined to seek alternative employment opportunities, thereby assisting organizations in retaining valuable human capital and minimizing the financial and operational costs associated with recruitment and training (Hiltrop, 1999). Additionally, job satisfaction contributes to a more positive workplace climate by encouraging teamwork, collaboration, and organizational cohesion (Chang et al., 2009; Gaviria-Rivera & López-Zapata, 2019; Paredes-Saavedra et al., 2024).

Moreover, the importance of job satisfaction extends beyond the individual level and significantly affects the overall organizational performance (Gounaris & Boukis, 2013). For instance, organizations that maintain high levels of employee satisfaction frequently demonstrate improved financial outcomes, as intrinsically motivated employees are more likely to align their efforts with strategic organizational goals (Judge et al., 2020). Likewise, employee satisfaction has a positive influence on customer satisfaction, since workers who feel appreciated and supported are more inclined to deliver superior service and maintain constructive client relationships (Gounaris & Boukis, 2013).

Hence, this interconnection illustrates the close relationship between employee well-being and organizational success (Hasan & Sadat, 2023). To realize these outcomes, organizations are encouraged to adopt proactive approaches such as conducting regular employee engagement surveys and feedback sessions to identify areas of concern and implement evidence-based interventions (Knight et al., 2017). Ultimately, maintaining a sustained focus on job satisfaction enables organizations to nurture a stable, motivated, and high-performing workforce, which is essential for ensuring long-term growth and resilience (Raghvendra & Vijayendra, 2024).

#### *Underpinning Theories*

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is structured as a ladder-like progression comprising five levels: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization (Ihensekien & Joel, 2023; Rojas et al., 2023). Accordingly, this theory continues to be extensively utilized by scholars and practitioners to analyze human behavior, particularly within educational settings (Quinteros-Durand et al., 2023; Wood, 2022). In line with the current study, Maslow's framework is refined into three key subcomponents that reflect fundamental employee needs namely physiological, safety, and social needs. These dimensions are operationalized through

indicators such as psychological safety, performance-contingent pay, employee recognition, working environment, working conditions, training, and public service motivation, all of which are intrinsically connected to job satisfaction.

Conversely, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) presents a distinct yet complementary perspective on human motivation (Cassia & Magno, 2024; Deci et al., 1985). While Maslow emphasizes hierarchical fulfillment of needs, SDT posits that the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs, competence, autonomy, and relatedness is essential for fostering intrinsic motivation, personal growth, and well-being (Rigby & Ryan, 2018; Ryan, 2017). Therefore, when organizational environments nurture these psychological needs, employees are more likely to experience deeper engagement, greater satisfaction, and meaningful work involvement.

Moreover, unlike the Person-Environment Fit theory which primarily focuses on aligning personal attributes with job characteristics SDT offers robust mechanisms explaining how supportive contexts actively cultivate well-being and purpose (Greguras et al., 2014; Nikolova & Cnossen, 2020). Consequently, empirical research indicates that employees who perceive themselves as competent, autonomous, and socially connected tend to derive greater meaning from their work. This, in turn, enhances their engagement, productivity, and organizational commitment, thereby generating mutual benefits for both individuals and institutions (Allan et al., 2016; Deci et al., 2017).

#### *Justification for Integrating Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Self-Determination Theory*

The integration of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is well-founded, as both theories complement each other in exploring human motivation and well-being, especially within organizational settings. These frameworks underscore the importance of meeting individual needs to enhance job satisfaction, motivation, and performance.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs presents a sequential model where individuals must fulfill lower-level needs, such as physiological, safety, and society before they can address higher-order needs like esteem and self-actualization. In contrast, SDT highlights three fundamental psychological needs competence, autonomy, and relatedness that are essential for fostering intrinsic motivation and well-being (Deci et al., 2017; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Both theories agree that satisfying fundamental needs is essential to achieving higher engagement and fulfillment. For instance, Maslow's esteem needs, which include recognition and respect, align with SDT's emphasis on competence, while self-actualization aligns with SDT's focus on autonomy and competence, as individuals seek personal growth and meaningful work (Leroy et al., 2015).

Maslow's theory suggests that human needs are satisfied in a sequential order, beginning with basic survival needs and progressing to higher levels of motivation. In contrast, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) offers a holistic perspective, proposing that the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness can be nurtured simultaneously, with the satisfaction of basic needs forming a foundation for deeper psychological fulfillment (Rigby & Ryan, 2018). Combining these theories suggests that when employees' fundamental needs, such as safety and job security, are met, they are better positioned to fulfill their psychological needs, leading to increased job satisfaction and motivation. This approach supports the

notion that organizations can address basic needs while simultaneously fostering intrinsic motivation through a supportive work environment (Deci et al., 2017).

The integration of Maslow's Hierarchy and SDT is particularly valuable in organizational contexts, where employee motivation and satisfaction are essential to performance. Maslow's framework offers a structured approach to prioritizing needs, ensuring that organizations initially address essential aspects such as fair compensation, safety, and job security. Once these needs are met, SDT provides guidance for creating a work environment that supports competence, autonomy, and relatedness, which are essential for intrinsic motivation and sustained engagement (Deci et al., 2017). This integrated approach allows organizations to cultivate environments where both foundational and psychological needs are satisfied, resulting in higher job satisfaction, engagement, and productivity.

Research affirms the effectiveness of integrating these theories for understanding employee motivation and satisfaction. Studies have shown that satisfying core psychological needs competence, autonomy, and relatedness leads to enhanced intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction (Allan et al., 2016; Deci et al., 2017). Furthermore, combining Maslow's hierarchy with SDT underscores the importance of addressing both basic and psychological needs to support long-term employee well-being and organizational success (Nikolova & Cnossen, 2020). This integrated perspective provides a robust framework for fostering a motivated and satisfied workforce.

#### *Hypotheses Development*

The development of hypotheses on job satisfaction is informed by Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Self-determination theory as shown in figure 1. Supportive employee recognition (H1) is proposed to enhance job satisfaction by addressing employees' fundamental need for security and social connection, thus increasing their job satisfaction. Further, performance-Contingent pay(H2), psychological safety (H3) , working environment(H4), working conditions(H5), training(H6) public service motivation (H7) are expected to foster a sense of esteem and fairness, leading to greater satisfaction and commitment. According to SDT, autonomy (H8), competence (H8), and relatedness (H10) are central to intrinsic motivation; when employees feel empowered, skilled, and connected, they experience higher satisfaction.



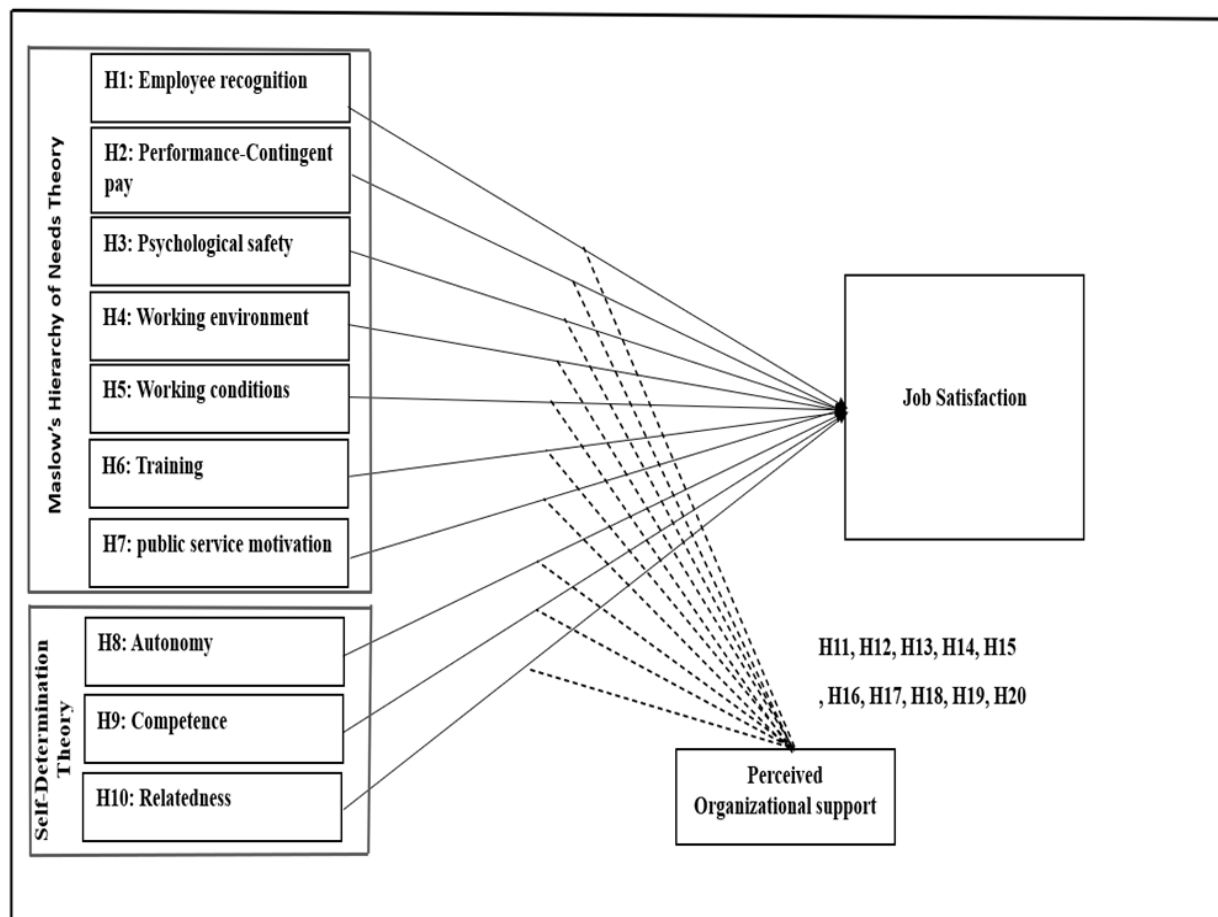


Figure 1 Research Framework

### *Employee Recognition*

Employee recognition is the acknowledgment of employees' performance and contributions, which enhances job satisfaction and motivates them to perform better (Kumar & Vasudevan, 2024). In fact, Employee recognition, a frequently employed incentive approach in management practices, is vital for organizations as it acknowledges employees and values their achievements in the workplace (Yang et al., 2022). Furthermore, our results address this important void by providing empirical evidence that recognition can significantly improve employee behavioral involvement (Montani et al., 2020). Finally, past studies show that recognition has significant positive influence on job satisfaction (Ali & Anwar, 2021; Tirta & Enrika, 2020). In opposite empirical studies have found recognition has no significant impact on job satisfaction (M. Z. Ali & Ahmad, 2017; ASUQUO, n.d.; Ndiango et al., 2024; Varshney & Damanhour, 2013). Based on these findings, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a positive relationship between Employee recognition and job satisfaction.

### *Performance-Contingent Pay*

Performance-contingent pay is a compensation system in which employees' remuneration is directly tied to their performance, as financial rewards are based on their achievements (Tu et al., 2024). Besides, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory suggests that performance-contingent pay can satisfy both physiological and esteem needs, thereby motivating employees, enhancing job satisfaction (Fikree, 1984). Furthermore, the performance contingency of pay significantly influences the relationships between motivation, need

satisfaction, and overall performance outcomes (Cerasoli et al., 2016). In addition, Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that Performance-contingent pay has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction (Cerasoli et al., 2014; Jenkins Jr et al., 1998). In opposite empirical studies have found Performance-contingent pay has no significant impact on job satisfaction (Akafo & Boateng, 2015; Mon & Khaing, 2023). Based on these findings, we propose the following hypotheses:

H2: There is a positive relationship between performance-contingent pay and job satisfaction.

#### *Psychological Safety*

Psychological safety is the feeling of being safe to take risks, make mistakes, and express oneself without fear of negative consequences in the workplace (Pang et al., 2023). It is described as a sense of being able to display and employ one's authentic self without negative repercussions (Kuppelwieser & Finsterwalder, 2011). Moreover, fostering psychological safety is essential for creating meaningful organizations by designing work environments that allow employees to maximize their potential (Mitterer & Mitterer, 2023). Additionally, studies have demonstrated that psychological safety significantly and positively impacts job satisfaction, highlighting the integral role of psychological safety in achieving organizational success (Kim & Kim, 2020; Pang et al., 2023). In opposite empirical studies have found psychological safety has no significant impact on job satisfaction (Kuppelwieser & Finsterwalder, 2011; Roh et al., 2018). Based on these findings, we propose the following hypotheses:

H3: There is a positive relationship between psychological safety and job satisfaction.

#### *Working Environment*

The working environment encompasses a range of factors, including physical conditions, hygiene standards, amenities, and open channels of communication, all of which organizations provide with the aim of enhancing job satisfaction (Pang et al., 2023). Moreover, it plays a pivotal role in shaping employee job satisfaction, as it comprises various physical, social, and organizational elements that directly affect employees' daily experiences and overall well-being (Putra & Kudri, 2024). In addition, Kim et al. (2024) argued that several key aspects such as safety and well-maintained workspaces, access to essential resources, equitable organizational policies, and strong support from both colleagues and supervisors contribute substantially to fostering a positive and fulfilling work atmosphere.

Furthermore, empirical evidence has consistently confirmed that the working environment exerts a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction (Fathurahman, 2022; Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). However, contrasting findings have also emerged in the literature; several studies have reported that the working environment has no statistically significant impact on job satisfaction (Anasi, 2020; Erlangga et al., 2021; Wahyudi et al., 2023). Therefore, considering these divergent findings, the present study hypothesizes that:

H4: There is a positive relationship between working environment and job satisfaction.

#### *Working Conditions*

Working conditions refer to the terms of employment, which encompass fair income, reasonable working hours, employee benefits, and labor contracts that collectively support employee satisfaction and overall well-being (Pang et al., 2023). Furthermore, work conditions play a fundamental role in establishing supportive practice environments (Paudel



et al., 2024). Additionally, these conditions include all physical aspects of the job, workplace psychology, and relevant labor regulations that can significantly affect both job satisfaction and productivity (Basalamah, 2021). Moreover, empirical studies have consistently shown that working conditions exert a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction (Akinsola et al., n.d.; Bashir et al., 2020). However, in contrast, some empirical studies have reported no statistically significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction (Bolatito & Mohamoud, 2024; Mokaya et al., 2013; Rong et al., 2022). Nevertheless, there is also evidence suggesting that working conditions are significantly associated with teachers' job satisfaction in schools, indicating that as educational institutions adopt better working conditions, both teacher satisfaction and school performance tend to improve (Awodigi et al., 2022). Therefore, based on the reviewed literature, this study hypothesizes that:

H5: There is a positive relationship between work conditions and job satisfaction.

### *Training*

Training refers to the opportunities an organization provides for employees to develop their skills, expand their knowledge, engage in personal growth, and receive guidance on workplace safety practices (Pang et al., 2023). Moreover, the empowerment of employees through structured training initiatives significantly enhances job satisfaction, as it positively influences both their overall well-being and professional performance (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Importantly, training is considered a strategic priority for addressing factors that improve job satisfaction, as it acts as a safeguard against workforce turnover and work-related stress (Dicke et al., 2020). In addition, training not only facilitates the acquisition of new competencies but also fosters a culture of knowledge sharing among employees, thereby improving individual capabilities and strengthening collective job satisfaction (Kanapathipillai & Azam, 2020). Furthermore, several empirical studies have indicated that training has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction (Azhari et al., 2024). However, in contrast, other studies have reported no statistically significant relationship between training and job satisfaction (Che Md Nor et al., 2021; Nalbandi & Zonoozi, 2019; Rong et al., 2022). Therefore, based on these mixed findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: There is a positive relationship between training and job satisfaction.

### *Public Service Motivation*

Public service motivation (PSM) is the intrinsic drive to engage in meaningful public service and recognize the interdependence of individuals in society (Tu et al., 2024). Organizations that recognize and reward contributions consistent with public service values are more likely to nurture a satisfied workforce (Bright, 2008; Hue et al., 2022). Moreover, offering opportunities for professional growth, such as skill enhancement, career progression, and collaborative initiatives, amplifies the beneficial effects of PSM on job satisfaction (Caoagdan et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2024). Employees with elevated PSM scores exhibit greater efforts, leading to enhanced job performance and satisfaction (Ha et al., 2023). Kim (2012) states that a higher level of PSM tends to reflect the higher level of loyalty and emotional attachment to their departments, such that PSM can facilitate the staff's organizational commitment. emphasizes that higher levels of PSM often correspond with increased loyalty and emotional attachment to one's department, ultimately fostering greater organizational commitment (Boyd & Nowell, 2023). Empirical studies have shown that public service motivation positively and significantly affects job satisfaction (Ha et al., 2023; Saputra et al., 2020; Tu et al., 2024). In opposite empirical studies have found public service motivation has no significant impact

on job satisfaction (Idris & Hidayat, 2024; Priscilla et al., 2024; Wahyudi et al., 2023). Based on these findings, we propose the following hypotheses:

H7: There is a positive relationship between public service motivation and job satisfaction.

#### *Autonomy*

Autonomy refers to the extent of control that employees possess over their work tasks, pace, and decision-making within their professional roles (Demircioglu, 2018). Moreover, granting employees greater autonomy has been shown to improve organizational performance, efficiency, and effectiveness while simultaneously enhancing job satisfaction (Saragih, 2011). According to Ryan (2017), autonomy represents one of the fundamental psychological needs essential for motivation and well-being. In addition, autonomy, as a critical organizational resource, contributes to job satisfaction by empowering employees to make independent decisions and assume responsibility for their work (Wu & Zhou, 2020).

Furthermore, autonomy is not only an instrumental means to achieving organizational objectives but also an inherently valuable goal that promotes employee satisfaction, personal growth, and broader organizational success (Deci et al., 2017). Specifically, empirical studies in the educational sector indicate that teacher autonomy encompasses the ability to influence instructional strategies, classroom management, school-wide policies, and overall working conditions (Kengatharan, 2020; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Somech, 2016).

Consequently, several empirical investigations have reported that autonomy exerts a significant and positive influence on job satisfaction (Demircioglu, 2018; Jing et al., 2021; Jong, 2016; Rizwan et al., 2014). Conversely, other studies have found no significant relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction (Arunika & Kottawatta, 2015; Fradkin-Hayslip, 2021; Fuadiputra & Novianti, 2020). Therefore, considering these contrasting findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H8: There is a positive relationship between autonomy and job satisfaction.

#### *Competence*

Competence refers to the capacity to utilize and enhance one's skills, knowledge, and abilities while simultaneously feeling appreciated and being afforded opportunities for growth within the workplace (Demircioglu, 2018). Furthermore, when organizations provide employees with autonomy in decision-making and cultivate an environment of respect and recognition, this can significantly strengthen employees' self-efficacy and perceived competence (Mustafa et al., 2019). As a result, these interrelated factors contribute positively to both employee motivation and overall job satisfaction (Fradkin-Hayslip, 2021). Moreover, competence plays a pivotal role in enabling organizations to achieve higher levels of job satisfaction and improved employee performance (Sabuhari et al., 2020). It is also intrinsically linked to the essential skills required for fulfilling core job responsibilities, which directly influences employees' satisfaction with their roles (Hajiali et al., 2022). Accordingly, several empirical studies have found that competence has a significant and positive effect on job satisfaction (Hajiali et al., 2022; Olafsen et al., 2024).

Conversely, other empirical findings suggest that competence does not have a statistically significant relationship with job satisfaction (Fradkin-Hayslip, 2021; Sharma & Sharma, 2024;

Zhang et al., 2022). Therefore, considering the mixed evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H9: There is a positive relationship between competence and job satisfaction.

#### *Relatedness*

Relatedness refers to the sense of connection and emotional support that employees experience through their interactions with colleagues, particularly during challenging work situations (Demircioglu, 2018). Specifically, in educational settings, relatedness encompasses the interpersonal relationships between teachers and administrators, as well as between teachers and students. Consequently, these relationships contribute significantly to increased motivation and enhanced job satisfaction (Fradkin-Hayslip, 2021). Moreover, the fulfillment of the need for relatedness involves feeling emotionally connected to others, both through caring for and being cared for, as well as experiencing a sense of belonging within workplace groups (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016). In addition, assessing workplace relatedness can help determine whether social connections serve as facilitators or barriers to employees' job satisfaction (Brunelle & Fortin, 2021).

Furthermore, previous empirical studies have consistently shown that relatedness has a positive influence on both individual and organizational outcomes, including higher levels of employee job satisfaction (Gillet et al., 2013; Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2014). Conversely, some studies have reported that relatedness does not significantly affect job satisfaction (Fradkin-Hayslip, 2021; Zhang et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2021). Therefore, based on this contrasting empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H10: There is a positive relationship between relatedness and job satisfaction.

#### *The Moderating Effect: Perceived Organizational support*

Perceived organizational support has been identified in numerous studies as a critical moderator in shaping employee outcomes. This concept refers to the extent to which employees feel that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1990). Past research has consistently shown that perceived organizational support plays a pivotal role in influencing the strength and direction of relationships between various organizational factors and employee attitudes, including job satisfaction, commitment, and performance.

Organizational support plays a pivotal role in amplifying the satisfaction of these psychological needs at work (Eisenberger, 2011). For instance, regarding autonomy, organizational support fosters a culture of independence by reducing micromanagement and promoting self-directed decision-making ((Macaspac, 2024).

In conclusion, the moderating role of perceived organizational support is critical for understanding how various organizational elements influence job satisfaction. The literature underscores its importance, highlighting that high organizational support can mitigate the negative effects of poor work conditions and enhance employee satisfaction and performance across various settings, particularly in the education sector. In conclusion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H11. The Positive effect Employee recognition on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H12. The Positive effect Performance-Contingent pay on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H13. The Positive effect psychological safety on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H14. The Positive effect Working environment on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H15. The Positive effect Working conditions on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H16. The Positive effect Training on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H17. The Positive effect public service motivation on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H18. The Positive effect Autonomy on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H19. The Positive effect Competence on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

H20. The Positive effect Relatedness on job satisfaction is stronger when perceived organizational support is high.

## **Methodology**

In this study, data will be gathered through a structured quantitative survey conducted within Jordanian public schools. Using a purposive sampling approach, we will identify respondents who are most relevant to the research objectives, specifically focusing on individuals with insights into the educational environment. This method will allow for targeted, in-depth responses, enhancing the study's ability to capture and analyze the factors affecting educational dynamics within this context.

## **Contributions and Conclusions**

### *Contributions*

**Theoretical Integration:** This paper will offer a novel contribution by combining Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to build a more comprehensive framework for understanding job satisfaction. By integrating these theories, it aims to address both extrinsic factors, such as basic needs like financial security and workplace safety, and intrinsic factors, including autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This integrated perspective will provide a dual approach to employee motivation, particularly relevant in the public-school sector.

**Contextual Relevance:** The research will focus on job satisfaction specifically within the context of Middle Eastern public schools, which are often overlooked in motivational studies. By concentrating on this setting, the study will aim to reveal insights into the unique cultural and economic factors that impact job satisfaction among educators in this region, thereby addressing an important gap in the literature.

**Policy and Practice Implications:** The paper will propose practical insights that policymakers, school administrators, and educational leaders can use to improve retention and job satisfaction in public schools. By highlighting the dual influence of extrinsic and intrinsic

motivators, it will suggest balanced approaches that schools could incorporate into policies, fostering a supportive and motivating work environment.

**Improving Retention:** The study will emphasize how meeting educators' comprehensive needs can help reduce turnover rates in public schools. By addressing the connections between extrinsic and intrinsic needs and job satisfaction, the study will highlight pathways to greater job engagement, offering actionable insights to improve retention across the sector.

## Conclusions

**Dual Motivational Focus:** This paper will argue that job satisfaction among educators can be enhanced through a balanced approach that includes both foundational needs and intrinsic motivators. By meeting these needs, public schools could foster higher job satisfaction levels and lower turnover rates, creating more stability within educational institutions.

**Recommendations for Retention:** It will conclude that addressing both types of needs could serve as a key strategy for reducing teachers' intention to leave. Establishing a secure environment to fulfill basic needs, coupled with intrinsic motivators that promote autonomy and professional growth, will be shown to enhance employee engagement and retention.

**Implications for School Policy:** The study will propose that school policies address both extrinsic incentives and intrinsic needs. Tailoring such policies within the unique Middle Eastern context, this study will suggest, may help schools optimize job satisfaction and retention.

**Cultural and Systemic Considerations:** Recognizing that the Middle Eastern public-school environment may differ culturally from other regions, this paper will highlight the importance of adapting motivational strategies to fit this specific context.

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