

# Examining the Effect of Female Teachers' Job Satisfaction on Their Retention in Public Schools of Oman

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## Abstract

This study was about examining the effect of job satisfaction on the female teacher's retention within public schools in Oman. This was initiated as a result of increasing rate of female teacher turnover from the teaching profession causing gaps in many schools and the associated high costs of filling such gaps to maintain quality education in the province. The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of job satisfaction on retention of teachers. In order to achieve this objective, the population of 6740 female teachers, were considered for the study from which a sample of 378 female teachers was selected to constitute a sample. Survey questionnaires were administered to them online using their individual mails accessed from the ministry of education. A high response rate was obtained and data was analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), using Smart-PLS and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. The key findings were that there was a huge positive relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention because satisfied teachers were found likely to feel a sense of commitment to their schools and students. They are more inclined to invest their time and energy in their teaching responsibilities, resulting in greater dedication and retention within the profession. Besides that, it was established that, teachers who experience high job satisfaction were less likely to consider leaving their positions or seeking employment in other fields.

## Keywords

Job Satisfaction, Retention of Teachers

## 1. Introduction

Female teacher retention in Oman is a topic of great importance for the coun-

try's education system. According to [Alkharusi, Aldhafri, Al-Hosni, Al-Busaidi, Al-Kharusi, Ambusaidi, & Alrajhi \(2017\)](#) it is revealed that the rate of staff attrition is higher in female teachers than male teachers. This has had disastrous implication on the government policy aimed at promoting gender equality within the teaching fraternity. Female teachers serve as role models for female students, fostering gender equality within the classroom and society, so when they leave the profession gender imbalance then results ([Abdulrahman, 2015](#)). Thus, retaining female teachers ensures a diverse teaching workforce that reflects the student population and encourages female students' educational aspirations.

Research suggests several causes of low job satisfaction among female teachers in Oman. These causes can vary from individual factors to systemic challenges within the education system. In Oman, female teachers have been usually responsible for managing family internal affairs. There has been an additional responsibility for them, especially after marriage. As the family grows, it would become difficult, especially for female teachers, to pay the same attention to teaching responsibilities as usual. Subsequently, assuming of marriage roles might be partially accounted for female employees leaving the teaching profession after long periods of teaching in public schools ([Al-Musawi, 2014](#)). When teachers experience low levels of job satisfaction, it can have significant repercussions for both educators and students ([Smith & Ingersoll \(2017\)](#)). According to [Kyriacou \(2019\)](#), low levels of job satisfaction contribute to higher rates of teacher turnover, leading to instability in schools and disruptions in the learning process. Inadequate teacher satisfaction can result in a constant cycle of hiring and training new teachers, which can negatively impact the continuity and effectiveness of education.

Low salaries and inadequate benefits have been identified as significant factors contributing to low job satisfaction among female teachers in Oman ([Al-Kharusi, 2015; Abdulrahman, 2015](#)). Teachers' perceptions of unfair compensation or the inability to meet their financial needs can lead to dissatisfaction and demotivation. A lack of clear career advancement pathways and limited opportunities for professional growth can negatively impact job satisfaction among female teachers ([Al-Kharusi, 2015; Abdulrahman, 2015](#)).

The absence of promotion prospects and limited chances to take on leadership roles or specialized positions leads to a sense of stagnation and reduced job satisfaction among teachers. Other factors include heavy workload and administrative burden, lack of supportive work environment, lack of supportive work environment, limited autonomy and decision-making power, and challenging student behavior and parental involvement ([Al-Kharusi, 2015; Abdulrahman, 2015](#)). In the context of the teaching profession, job satisfaction has a direct impact on the quality of education provided and the overall effectiveness of the education system.

Studies have consistently shown that satisfied teachers are more likely to remain in their positions, contributing to educational stability and improved student outcomes ([Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Mo & Singh, 2008](#)). Retaining expe-

rienced and qualified female teachers ensures continuity and stability in the learning process. Teachers who are familiar with the curriculum, students, and community are better equipped to provide quality education and contribute to students' overall development (Abdulrahman, 2015; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Female teachers often possess unique skills and perspectives that contribute to creating a nurturing and inclusive learning environment (Abdulrahman, 2015; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Their presence enriches the educational experience for all students and promotes a balanced approach to instruction. In Oman, the retention of female teachers in public schools is crucial for maintaining educational continuity and fostering gender equality in the education sector. Understanding the relationship between female teachers' job satisfaction and their retention is essential for addressing challenges and implementing strategies to enhance teacher satisfaction and promote long-term commitment. Thus, the objective of this study was to examine the effect of female teachers' job satisfaction on their retention in public schools of Oman.

## 2. Literature Review

This section covers the review of the literature on the effect of job satisfaction on female teacher's retention. The effect of job satisfaction on teacher retention in Oman is a topic of importance within the context of the country's education system. Research suggests that job satisfaction plays a significant role in influencing teachers' decisions to remain in their teaching positions. Higher levels of job satisfaction among teachers in Oman are associated with increased retention rates. When teachers experience job satisfaction, they are more likely to remain in their positions, reducing turnover rates and promoting stability within the teaching workforce (Abdulrahman, 2015; Al-Kharusi, 2015). Job satisfaction contributes to a sense of commitment among teachers in Oman. Satisfied teachers tend to feel a greater attachment to their schools, students, and profession, leading to increased loyalty and a stronger desire to remain in their teaching roles (Abdulrahman, 2015).

Job satisfaction has a positive impact on work performance. When teachers are satisfied with their work environment, they are more motivated, engaged, and committed to their teaching responsibilities. This, in turn, can lead to improved teaching effectiveness and better student outcomes, which further reinforces their desire to stay in the profession (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Job satisfaction contributes to the creation of a positive organizational climate within schools. Satisfied teachers tend to foster a supportive and collaborative work environment, which can attract and retain other teachers. This positive climate helps to build a sense of belonging, job security, and professional satisfaction, all of which contribute to teacher retention (Abdulrahman, 2015; Mo & Singh, 2008).

Job satisfaction is inversely related to turnover intentions. Teachers who expe-

rience higher job satisfaction are less likely to consider leaving their positions or seeking employment in other fields. Increased job satisfaction can decrease turnover intentions and promote greater retention of teachers in Oman (Abdulahman, 2015). Knowing the reasons why employees stay in their profession is important for an organization management. Once the causes of retention have been pinpointed, the organization management needs to strengthen the factors that attain its employees. Thus, school leaders ought to know their teachers' internal and external long-term satisfiers in order to retain them for a long term. Many studies were done to assess the influence of satisfaction on employees' retention (Ashton, 2017; Huang, Chen, Liu, & Zhou, 2017; Kontoghiorghes, 2016).

Results extracted from these studies revealed that job satisfaction was a predictor of employees' turnover or retention. In other words, satisfied employees did not leave the organization whereas unsatisfied ones were more likely to search for a new organization. Although many researchers studied the relationship between these two subjects, Amah (2009) had a suggestion for a better understanding of this relationship. He suggested studying more variables such as situational variables expected to have an impact on turnover or retention of employees. Hence, providing training programs and development opportunities meant more satisfied employees, and as a result of this satisfaction, organizations were more likely to retain their desirable and qualified employees. Thus, the hypothesis of this study is: Job Satisfaction has a significant effect on female teachers' retention in public schools of Oman.

### 3. Methodology

As per discussion in the above literature, the independent variable of this study is teachers' job satisfaction and the dependent variable is teacher retention (refer to Figure 1). It is expected that there is a positive correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

The population of this study constituted of female teachers in public school in Muscat province, Oman. Total population of female teachers in Muscat were 6740 in 97 public schools. Following the Slovin method,  $n = N/(1 + Ne^2)$ , the sample size for this study was 378. Questionnaires were used as main instrument of data collection. The items for measuring job satisfaction were adopted from Fogleman et al. (1999) and items for teacher retention are adopted from Kinyili (2015). The questionnaires were circulated to the female teachers working in public schools only within Muscat. This study mainly used an online questionnaire as the questionnaires were sent to the teachers via their emails as a standardized survey instrument. Then the data were analyzed by employing the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Smart-PLS and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.

### 4. Results

Results are presented in Table 1 showing how study variables are measured and scored individually in different model.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework.

**Table 1.** Model fitting analysis for primary and modified measurement models of study variables.

Measure	Cut-off for good fit	Values	
		Job Satisfaction	Teachers' Retention
CMINDF	CMINDF < 5	2.601	2.446
RMSEA	RMSEA < 0.08	0.066	0.063
GFI	GFI ≥ 0.90	0.992	0.983
NFI	NFI ≥ 0.90	0.996	0.992
CFI	CFI ≥ 0.90	0.998	0.995
TLI	TLI ≥ 0.90	0.992	0.991

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to reveal the relationships and correlations between the retention of female teacher and the factors. The researcher used the following fit indices, 1) CMIN is the likelihood ratio chi-square test; 2) CFI (Comparative Fit Index) is a fit index that compares the saturated model with the independent model. CFI values can range from 0 to 1, values above 0.90 and close to 1 show good fit. CFI is in the group of fit indices based on independent models (Civelek, 2018); 3) GFI (Goodness-of-fit Indices) is a fit index which is used to assess the validity of the model; 4) RMSEA is a measure of fit that compares the mean differences of each expected degree of freedom that can occur in the population with each other and; 5) TLI (Tucker–Lewis index) highly relies on the conventional cut-off values developed under normal-theory Maximum Likelihood (ML) with continuous data (Civelek, 2018). Out of the 378 questionnaires that were sent 367 were received back and processed. Therefore, the findings of the study are based of 97% response.

CMINDF (Critical Minimum Fit Function): The cut-off value for a good fit is CMINDF < 5. In this case, the value is 2.601, indicating a good fit for the job satisfaction measurement. RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation): The cut-off value for a good fit is RMSEA < 0.08 (Civelek, 2018). The value recorded is 0.066, suggesting a good fit for the job satisfaction measurement. GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index): The cut-off value for a good fit is GFI ≥ 0.90 (Shaheen, et al, 2017). The value obtained is 0.992, indicating a good fit for the job satisfaction measurement. NFI (Normed Fit Index): The cut-off value for a good fit is NFI ≥ 0.90. The value reported is 0.996, indicating a good fit for the job satisfaction measurement. CFI (Comparative Fit Index): The cut-off value for a good fit is CFI ≥ 0.90. The value provided is 0.998, suggesting a good fit for the job satisfaction measurement.

TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index): The cut-off value for a good fit is  $TLI \geq 0.90$  (Savalei & Bentler, 2006). The value listed is 0.992, indicating a good fit for the job satisfaction measurement. Overall, the values suggest that the model fits well with the data, indicating a satisfactory representation of job satisfaction and teachers' retention. From the results it was established that female teachers job satisfaction had a significant positive impact on female teacher retention in public schools ( $\beta = 0.91$ ;  $p$ -value  $< 0.001$ ).

## 5. Conclusion

Research findings suggest that there is a significant positive effect of job satisfaction on female teacher retention in public schools. When female teachers experience high levels of job satisfaction, they are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and committed to their profession, which, in turn, increases their likelihood of staying in their teaching positions for a longer duration.

Research has consistently shown that job satisfaction plays a crucial role in employee retention across various industries, including the education sector. This result matches with the studies of Ryan et al. (2017), Halpin & Kieffer (2015), Warren & Sorges (2013) which showed that teaching stress is one of the causes of teacher attrition, the worry and fear of starting a job led teachers to end their careers, the stress experiences of teachers can result from their perception of the requirements and inability to meet these requirements. The result of this study goes along with the studies of Schaarschmidt & Fischer (1997) and Perie & Baker (1997), which associate the lack of commitment with the high stress that teachers are exposed to every day.

Higher job satisfaction among female teachers in Oman can lead to several positive outcomes for teacher retention:

Satisfied teachers are more likely to feel a sense of commitment to their schools and students. They are more inclined to invest their time and energy in their teaching responsibilities, resulting in greater dedication and retention within the profession.

Job satisfaction has been linked to improved work performance. When teachers are satisfied with their work environment and feel valued and supported, they are more likely to perform their duties effectively, resulting in positive outcomes for students and the overall educational experience.

Job satisfaction is inversely related to turnover intentions. Teachers who experience high job satisfaction are less likely to consider leaving their positions or seeking employment in other fields. This reduces teacher turnover rates and promotes stability within the teaching workforce.

Job satisfaction contributes to the creation of a positive organizational climate within schools. Satisfied teachers tend to foster a supportive and collaborative work environment, which can have a ripple effect on their colleagues' satisfaction and retention as well.

Addressing these factors and striving to improve overall job satisfaction among female teachers in Oman can have a significant impact on their retention

within the public school system. Thus, by prioritizing job satisfaction and creating a conducive work environment, Oman can enhance the retention of female teachers, ensuring educational stability and fostering a positive learning environment for students.

The study on the effect of job satisfaction on female teacher's retention in Oman contributes to the existing knowledge in several ways:

**Contextual Understanding:** The study specifically focuses on Oman, providing valuable insights into the unique factors and dynamics influencing teacher retention in the Omani context. By examining job satisfaction and its impact on retention within the specific cultural, social, and educational context of Oman, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the factors that shape teacher retention in the country.

**Gender Perspective:** The study explores the effect of job satisfaction on female teacher retention in Oman. By focusing on female teachers, it highlights the importance of addressing gender-specific factors and challenges that may impact job satisfaction and retention. This contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and needs of female teachers, as well as strategies to support their retention and career advancement.

**Policy Implications:** The findings of the study can have significant policy implications for the education sector in Oman. By identifying the influence of job satisfaction on teacher retention, policymakers can develop targeted interventions and policies aimed at improving job satisfaction factors such as compensation, professional development opportunities, work-life balance, and supportive work environments. This can contribute to the design and implementation of effective strategies to enhance teacher retention rates and create a positive and sustainable teaching workforce in Oman.

**Educational Continuity:** Teacher retention is crucial for ensuring educational continuity and stability. The study adds to the knowledge base regarding the factors that contribute to teacher retention, emphasizing the role of job satisfaction. Understanding how job satisfaction influences teacher retention in Oman can inform strategies to minimize disruptions in the education system, enhance student learning outcomes, and maintain the quality of education delivery.

**Comparative Studies:** The study's findings on the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention in Oman can also contribute to comparative research. By comparing the findings with studies conducted in other countries or regions, researchers can identify similarities, differences, and universal factors influencing teacher retention. This can facilitate cross-cultural and cross-national knowledge exchange and the development of best practices for promoting teacher retention globally.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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