A Study on the Influence of Social Support and Work Engagement on Secondary Teachers' Occupational Well-being in Sulaymaniyah-Iraq

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ABSTRACT

The educational system in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, faces significant challenges due to political instability, economic hardships, and conflict. These factors contribute to the stress and burnout experienced by secondary school teachers, affecting their occupational well-being. This research aims to investigate the relationship between social support and work engagement on teachers' occupational well-being, with the objectives of understanding how these factors interact and proposing strategies to enhance teachers' occupational well-being. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study utilized the Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire, the NIOSH Questionnaire, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale to collect quantitative data from 120 secondary school teachers in Sulaymaniyah. Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with a subset of 15 participants. The data were analyzed using SPSS 25 software for quantitative analysis and thematic analysis for qualitative insights. The results revealed a positive correlation between social support and work engagement with teachers' occupational well-being. Work engagement was found to mediate the relationship between social support and occupational well-being. Teachers expressed that a supportive work environment, opportunities for professional growth, and recognition contribute significantly to their job satisfaction and overall well-being. To promote teachers' occupational well-being, it is recommended that schools and policymakers focus on creating a supportive work culture, providing opportunities for professional development, and recognizing teachers' efforts. Implementing mentorship programs, facilitating collaborative learning communities, and offering incentives can further enhance teachers' work engagement and occupational well-being.

Keywords:- Secondary School Teachers, Social Support, Work Engagement, Occupational Well-Being, Iraq.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ACRONYMS

- SWB: Social Well-Being
- OWB: Occupational Well-Being
- SS: Social Support
- M3: Moderated Mediation Model
- MV: Mediator Variable
- MOD: Moderator Variable
- UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Over the years, the Iraqi educational system has experienced many difficulties and significant changes. The nation has a rich cultural heritage and a long history of education. However, the educational system has been significantly impacted by decades of conflict, economic sanctions, and political instability. Likewise, the teaching profession has also long been a challenging and demanding occupation, with teachers facing a range of issues that impact their job satisfaction, mental health, and overall well-being. Furthermore, political instability, economic hardship, and ongoing conflict have created significant barriers for teachers in Iraq. According to the report of the Iraq Education Cluster, Iraq's education system has been troubled by difficulties for many years as a result of various crises, including a long conflict, extended displacement, a recession, and the ensuing social and political unrest. In October 2019, there were waves of protests and public unrest; in March 2020, COVID-19 containment measures with their associated significant decline in oil prices created further economic challenges. These problems surfaced during the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020. These fresh challenges are impacting access to education and putting more strain on the already precarious educational system.

The UNICEF reported that The Iraqi government's ability to provide high-quality education services to all citizens has been undermined by years of conflict. The delivery of educational services has been hindered by violence, infrastructural damage, and the mass eviction of families and children. According to the report of UNICEF, Iraq's government has prioritized decentralizing the provision of services, including education. To monitor the execution of education policies and plans, the hiring and management of human resources, the oversight of schools, and the management of educational infrastructure, governorate-level education departments must be strengthened.

Improving the education system, student learning outcomes, and achieving overall educational excellence are facilitated by highly qualified educators who get ongoing assistance and preparation. Iraq has made attempts to improve the caliber of teachers and offer opportunities for professional growth. These programs seek to enhance educators' subject knowledge, teaching abilities, and instructional strategies. The capacity-building programs like (1) initial Teacher Education (ITE), (2) in-service training, (3) mentoring and coaching, (4) collaborative learning communities, (5) technology Integration, (6) teacher evaluation and feedback, (7) recognition and incentives to enhance the quality of teachers are provided by Iraq government for the well-being of and job satisfaction of teachers.

Gender inequality and diversity pose serious challenges to educational systems across the world, especially in Iraq. Ensuring equal educational opportunities for all students requires addressing these discrepancies and fostering gender inclusion. In addition, gender differences still exist, with girls frequently enrolling at lower rates and having less access to school, especially in rural and conventional areas. The following are some of the points about gender inequality and inclusion in the educational system in Iraq: (1) access to education, gender parity in enrollment, retention and completion rates, gender-sensitive curriculum, teacher training and gender sensitization, safe and inclusive schools, and empowering girls and women.

Therefore, Investigating the elements that affect teachers' well-being is crucial. Social support is one factor that is crucial for teachers' well-being. According to (Cohen & Wills, 1985), social support is defined as interpersonal interactions and connections that offer emotional and instrumental help when needed. Various people can provide social support, including coworkers, relatives, friends, and superiors. Colleague support has been found to enhance teachers' well-being by providing emotional and informational support, reducing job stressors, and increasing job satisfaction (Westman & Etzion, 2005). Administrators' social support has also been found to be crucial in enhancing teachers' well-being by providing resources, recognition, and feedback (Vesely et al., 2013).

B. Problem Statement

In Sulaymaniyah City, located in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, the situation for teachers is particularly difficult due to the ongoing political instability and insecurity in the region (Shareef & Atan, 2019).Despite the government's endeavors to enhance the education system, teachers in Sulaymaniyah City still encounter substantial levels of job stress, burnout, and turnover. Consequently, there is a shortage of qualified educators in the region (Abdullah et al., 2020). According to recent studies, teachers in Sulaymaniyah City report feeling emotionally exhausted, depersonalized, and experiencing low levels of personal accomplishment (Ismail, 2020). These negative outcomes are associated with the high workload, low salaries, and limited opportunities for professional development that are characteristic of the teaching profession in Iraq (Ali Jadoo et al., 2015).

In Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, where the education system is facing significant challenges, teacher well-being is of utmost importance. The teaching profession is a highly demanding and stressful occupation, with teachers facing a range of challenges that can impact their well-being. Stress is regarded as an accumulation of psychological risk that originates from a variety of sources and is thought to be the cause of numerous major illnesses. Stress seems to be a significant and complicated issue these days that affects relationships at work and in personal life(Galanakis & Alamani, 2020a). According to(Galanakis & Alamani, 2020b), occupational stress is the result of pressure on teachers obtained from the negative working environment and workload and is specified as a contemporary and complicated issue. Furthermore, teacher well-being is a crucial component of the quality of education and its

outcomes. Teachers often feel isolated and unsupported, with limited opportunities to connect with colleagues or seek help from family and friends. As a result, they are more likely to experience burnout and turnover, consequently, negatively affecting the quality of education in the city. Despite these challenges, it is crucial to address the issue of teachers' occupational well-being not only in Sulaymaniyah City but also in other cities in Iraq. Therefore, strategies to improve work engagement and social support for teachers are required to reduce job stress and burnout and to promote job satisfaction and quality education. Overall, there are a few studies on how social support affects teachers in Sulaymaniyah although the value of social support for teachers' well-being is widely acknowledged.

C. Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this research is to examine the correlation between social support and the occupational well-being of teachers. The study seeks to explore the link between social support and the overall sense of well-being among teachers as well as the role and examining whether social support affects teachers' occupational well-being in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. Therefore, the objectives of the study are as follows:

- To investigate the relationship among occupational well-being, social support, and work engagement,
- To examine whether work engagement mediates the relationship between social support and occupational well-being, and
- To examine the effect of social support on work engagement that leads to occupational well-being among teachers.

D. Research Questions

- How do social support and work engagement interact to influence occupational well-being among teachers?
- How does social support directly influence work engagement, and how does this engagement, in turn, contribute to occupational well-being?

E. Scope of the Study

This study employs a mixed methods approach to examine the relationship between social support and occupational well-being among secondary school teachers in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. The quantitative phase involves survey data collection using standardized measures to assess social support and occupational well-being. Additionally, qualitative data will be gathered through interviews or focus group discussions to gain deeper insights into teachers' experiences and perceptions.

F. Significance of the Study

This study has important implications for reducing teacher turnover and improving educational outcomes in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. By examining the impact of social support on teachers' occupational well-being and work engagement, the study can inform the development of effective interventions that improve working conditions and support the retention of teachers, particularly female teachers. The study has the potential to generate new knowledge on the factors that impact teacher well-being and to inform evidence-based interventions that promote a sustainable and equitable education system in Sulaymaniyah. The study's conclusions could have a practical impact on how administrators and policymakers design intervention programs to improve teachers' social support and well-being.

This dissertation is divided into four sections. The first section analyzed the existing literature regarding the effect of social support and work engagement on the well-being of teachers' occupations. The second section described the methodologies, utilized in this study. The third section explains the data analysis procedures and results from both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The fourth section provided discussions of the findings, and the final session presented the conclusion of this study.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature relating to social support, work engagement, and teachers' occupational well-being. The first section presents the key definitions of social support, work engagement, and educational well-being. The second section examines the potential relationship among these variables, and finally, the study proposes the hypotheses drawing from the existing literature.

A. Definition of Operational Key Terms

➢ *Social Support*

Social support may be defined as the subjective sense or experience of feeling appreciated and cared for, with the availability of aid from others, and being part of a supportive social network." This term highlights the requirement for both emotional and instrumental support (Muwonge et al., 2022).

➢ *Occupational Well-being*

Occupational well-being refers to the extent to which individuals experience positive emotions and fulfillment in their work, as well as physical and social health related to work (Warr, 1987). This construct encompasses multiple dimensions, including cognitive well-being, subjective well-being, physical-mental well-being, and social well-being (Keyes, 1998). The four main characteristics of occupational well-being for teachers are cognitive, subjective, physical and mental, and social, based on the approach(Viac & Fraser, 2020).

➢ *Work Engagement*

Work engagement is a term for being happy and satisfied at work. It consists of three components: intensity, commitment, and immersion (Fong & Ng, 2012). Vigor's symptoms of vitality include the following: power toughness of mind, and a desire to put out attempts at what one does (Bakker et al., 2014). Dedication is a state when someone is dedicated to their profession, they immerse themselves in it with fervor and take on each new task with eager anticipation (Bakker et al., 2014). Absorption refers to being completely absorbed in one's job, forgetting about time and surroundings, and experiencing a sensation of flow and satisfaction is all examples of absorption.

B. Work Engagement and Teachers' Occupational Well-being

Work engagement has been linked to positive outcomes in the workplace, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and productivity (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). In the teaching profession, work engagement is positively related to occupational well-being, which encompasses various aspects of a teacher's psychological and physical health (Wang et al., 2015). Occupational well-being is a multidimensional construct that includes various aspects of psychological and physical health, such as job satisfaction, burnout, job stress, and physical health (Ludwig et al., 2018). Job satisfaction refers to how satisfied an individual is with their job, while burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Job stress refers to the physical and emotional strain that can result from job demands, while physical health encompasses various aspects of physical well-being, such as sleep quality, diet, and exercise (Ludwig et al., 2018). Similarly, McClure found that among Dutch educators, there was a positive correlation between work engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (McClure, 2013). Moreover, De Simone argues that job satisfaction has beneficial effects on physical health but negative effects on stress in the workplace. This is true in many fields, including education, and should be taken into account (De Simone et al., 2014).

The positive relationship between work engagement and occupational well-being can be explained by several mechanisms. First, work engagement can provide a complete one's professional life, which can promote positive emotions and job satisfaction (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Second, work engagement can provide a buffer against the negative effects of job stress and burnout, as engaged employees are more likely to have the resources and resilience to cope with job demands (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Finally, work engagement can promote physical health by increasing the likelihood of engaging in healthy behaviors such as exercise and healthy eating (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). However, factors like job demands and available resources may moderate the positive correlation between work engagement and occupational well-being (Chamani et al.). Xanthopoulou et al. discovered that instructors with more workplace resources, like autonomy and social support, had a more robust positive link between work engagement and occupational well-being (Caesens et al., 2014; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Additionally, teachers who faced high levels of workplace demands, such as workload and emotional demands, had a lower link between work engagement and occupational well-being (Caesens et al., 2014). In conclusion, work engagement is positively related to occupational well-being among teachers.

Occupational well-being encompasses various aspects of psychological and physical health, including job satisfaction, burnout, job stress, and physical health. Work engagement can promote job satisfaction, act as a buffer against job stress and burnout, and promote physical health. However, The extent to which job demands and available resources influence the connection between work engagement and occupational well-being may depend on several factors (Chamani et al.).

➢ *The Dimensions of Work Engagement*

Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties.

Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge.

Absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties detaching oneself from work.

➢ *Relationship between Vigor and Occupational Well-Being*

Vigor, as a dimension of work engagement, involves high levels of energy and mental resilience at work. Employees who experience vigor often demonstrate higher levels of physical strength, emotional energy, and cognitive liveliness in their job roles. Research indicates that vigor correlates positively with job performance, which in turn enhances occupational well-being by fostering a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction in one's work life (Bakker et al., 2004).

➢ *Relationship between Dedication and Occupational Well-Being*

Dedication involves a significant emotional and psychological involvement in one's work. This dimension is characterized by feelings of enthusiasm, pride, and inspiration. Employees who feel dedicated are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction and less burnout, contributing positively to their overall well-being (Hakanen et al., 2008). The identification with one's work that comes from dedication also fosters a strong sense of personal accomplishment and alignment with one's core values, which are crucial aspects of psychological health.

➢ *Relationship between Absorption and Occupational Well-Being*

Absorption refers to being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, where time passes quickly and one finds it hard to detach from work. While absorption does not directly predict job performance, it enhances an individual's sense of work identity and can lead to profound personal and professional development, indirectly contributing to occupational well-being (Sonnentag, 2012) . However, it's important to note that excessive absorption can sometimes lead to work-life balance issues, which may negatively impact well-being.

C. Theoretical Perspectives

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007) provides a framework for understanding how these dimensions of work engagement influence occupational well-being. According to this model, job resources (like social support and autonomy) can foster work engagement, which in turn promotes well-being by buffering job demands and contributing to personal growth and achievement.

Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) also supports the link between work engagement and well-being by suggesting that individuals strive to obtain, retain, and protect their resources. Work engagement can be seen as a personal resource that helps individuals to achieve more with less strain, thus enhancing their occupational well-being. In conclusion, the different dimensions of work engagement—vigor, dedication, and absorption—each play a crucial role in enhancing occupational well-being. By fostering an environment that enhances these dimensions, organizations can not only improve performance but also enhance the overall well-being and job satisfaction of their employees. Future research should continue to explore these relationships, especially in varied occupational settings, to better understand how engagement can be effectively translated into sustained well-being.

D. Social Support and Occupational Well-being

It has been established that educators' social support is a crucial part of promoting occupational well-being. The phrase "occupational well-being" encompasses a wide range of factors, such as happiness for oneself, engagement, and mental health in the work environment as a whole. A person's level of satisfaction with his or her job is a measure of their occupational well-being (S. T. Wong et al., 2007). Teachers face multiple stressors in their work environment, such as high workloads, student behavior problems, and administrative demands (Kyriacou, 2001), which can negatively impact their well-being. Social support is an essential part of encouraging instructors' well-being on the job. Social support can come from various sources and take various forms, such as emotional, informational, or tangible resources. Social support refers to the provision of emotional, informational, or tangible resources by others that can be used to cope with stressors and enhance well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Social support can be provided by various sources, including colleagues, supervisors, family, and friends (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Emotional support, which involves expressions of empathy, concern, and understanding, is the most commonly reported type of support provided by colleagues and supervisors (Kokkinos, 2012). Tangible support, like helping with workload or tasks, is less frequently reported but can be particularly beneficial in reducing job stress (Kokkinos, 2012). Informational support, which involves advice, feedback, and guidance, can also help enhance job performance and confidence (Kokkinos, 2012).

Studies have consistently shown that social support is positively related to various aspects of teachers' occupational well-being, including job satisfaction, engagement, and commitment (Kokkinos, 2012). For example, a study found that higher levels of social support from colleagues and supervisors were associated with greater job satisfaction among Chinese teachers (Smith et al., 2018). Similarly, another study found that social support from colleagues was positively related to teachers' work engagement, which refers to the degree of energy, dedication, and absorption in one's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Studies have consistently found that social support is positively related to various aspects of teachers' occupational well-being, including job satisfaction, engagement, and psychological health. Social support can also buffer the negative effects of job stress on teachers' well-being. However, the effectiveness of social support may depend on various factors, factors include the stressor's kind, the connection's quality, and the help's speed. Social Support and Work Engagement.

Having someone you can lean on in times of need and believing in your abilities go hand in hand with significant importance within the teaching profession. Work engagement is an uplifting and fulfilling mental and emotional condition marked by intense focus on one's work (Caesens et al., 2014). Colleagues and supervisors are the primary sources of support for teachers, offering emotional, tangible, and informational support (Kokkinos, 2012). Teachers who receive social support from their colleagues and supervisors are more likely to experience work engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being (Wang et al., 2015). Social support can provide a sense of belonging, which can promote positive emotions and a sense of purpose in one's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Additionally, social support can provide resources and feedback that can enhance job performance and confidence, thereby increasing work engagement (Kokkinos, 2012). Finally, social support can mitigate the negative effects of job stress, which can increase work engagement by reducing the likelihood of burnout and exhaustion (Toker & Biron, 2012).

However, the effectiveness of social support may vary depending on several factors, such as the quality of the relationship, the timing of the support, and the type of stressor (Cohen & Wills, 1985). For example, researchers found that teachers' happiness may be predicted more accurately by the quality than the quantity of social support they received from their peers (Charos et al., 2021). Moreover, the timing of social support was critical, with early support being more effective in reducing stress than delayed support(Kokkinos & Kipritsi, 2012). Lastly, social support may be less effective in dealing with larger, systemic stressors such as organizational change or teacher evaluation (Kokkinos, 2012). Overall, social support is a crucial factor in promoting work engagement among teachers. It is a vital resource that can provide a sense of belonging, resources, and feedback, and mitigate the negative effects of job stress. However, the effectiveness of social support may depend on various factors, such as the quality of the relationship, the timing of the support, and the type of stressor.

E. Work Engagement as a Mediator Between Social Support and Occupational Well-being

Work engagement has been identified as a potential mediator in the relationship between social support and occupational well-being among teachers. Social support can enhance work engagement, which in turn may protect against the harmful impacts of job stress and burnout while simultaneously boosting desirable outcomes like contentment on the job and physical well-being (Caesens et al., 2014). He has discovered that the connection between social support and teachers' sense of job satisfaction is mediated, at least in part, by teachers' level of engagement in their profession (Caesens et al., 2014). However, the mediating role of work engagement may depend on various factors, such as the quality of the relationship and the type of social support provided.

Participation in meaningful work may mediate the connection between social support and teachers' sense of job satisfaction. This was learned after extensive study of the subject (Muwonge et al., 2022). Social support can enhance work engagement by providing resources and feedback that can enhance job performance and confidence, thereby increasing work engagement (Kokkinos, 2012). Moreover, social support has the potential to foster a sense of belongingness, leading to positive emotions and a sense of purpose in one's work, as highlighted by (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). The mediating role of work engagement in the connection between social support and occupational well-being has been a topic of investigation in various studies focusing on teachers (Torrente Barberà, 2014). For instance, research conducted by (Caesens et al., 2014) discovered that the extent of professional involvement among Chinese educators influenced the association between social support and workplace satisfaction. Similarly, (Baisley et al., 2022) found that the level of job satisfaction among Irish educators played a moderating role in the connection between social support from colleagues and psychological well-being (Kiwumulo et al., 2022). Furthermore, (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009)observed that work engagement partially mediated the relationship between social support and burnout among Greek teachers. The mediating role of work engagement in the link between social support and occupational well-being can be illuminated through various mechanisms (Bertoft et al., 2016). First, social support can enhance work engagement by providing resources and feedback that can enhance job performance and confidence, thereby increasing work engagement (Kokkinos, 2012). Second, work engagement can act as a buffer against the negative effects of job stress and burnout, thereby promoting occupational well-being(Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Finally, Employees who are actively involved in their workplaces report higher levels of happiness and health in many areas of their lives (De Leon, 2019). However, As outlined by (Bertoft et al., 2016), the mediating role of work engagement in the connection between social support and occupational well-being is likely influenced by several factors such as the quality of the relationship and the type of social support provided (McCarthy et al., 2017). For instance, Bobbio found that the mediating role of work engagement was stronger for emotional support than for instrumental and informational support (Bobbio et al., 2022). Similarly, the link between social support and resistance to burnout was moderated by teachers' enthusiasm for their work, but only if they were given significant latitude in how they went about their work (McClure, 2013).

Overall, teachers' social support and professional happiness interact with one another, and teachers' job satisfaction can serve as a mediator between these two factors (Muwonge et al., 2022). Social support can enhance work engagement by providing resources and feedback that can enhance job performance and confidence, thereby increasing work engagement. Work engagement, in turn, can act as a buffer against the negative effects of job stress and burnout and promote positive outcomes such as job satisfaction and physical health. However, Work engagement's mediating role may be influenced by a variety of circumstances, including the quality of the relationship and the sort of social support supplied (Annor, 2016).

F. The Empirical Evidence for the Work Engagement Mediation Effect Among Teachers
Empirical studies have substantiated the mediating influence of work engagement in the association between social support and occupational well-being among teachers. For instance, a study by (Eriksen et al., 2014) found that Among Dutch educators, work engagement moderated the connection between social support and job happiness (Caesens et al., 2014). Another study by (Tement & Korunka, 2013) found that work engagement partially mediated the relationship between social support and burnout among Slovenian teachers (Tement & Korunka, 2013). Moreover, a meta-analysis by Halbesleben and Buckley found that the connection between social support and contentment in the workplace and employees' level of involvement at work., organizational commitment, and turnover intentions among American healthcare workers (Caesens et al., 2014). These studies provide empirical support for the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between social support and occupational well-being among teachers.

Social support can enhance work engagement, which in turn can promote positive outcomes such as job satisfaction and reduce negative outcomes such as burnout. The JD-R model provides a theoretical framework for understanding the mechanisms through which social support can enhance work engagement and promote occupational well-being among teachers. In conclusion, According to empirical research conducted by Bertoft, it is indicated that work engagement acts as a mediator in the link between social support and occupational well-being among teachers (Bertoft et al., 2016). The JD-R model provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the mechanisms through which social support can enhance work engagement and promote positive outcomes among teachers. These findings highlight the importance of providing social support in the workplace and promoting work engagement as a means of enhancing occupational well-being among teachers.

G. Conceptualization and Measurement of Work Engagement
Work engagement is a psychological construct that refers to a positive, fulfilling, and work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Vigor refers to the level of energy and willingness to invest effort in one's work, dedication means having a sense of what's important, being enthusiastic, and feeling inspired. Absorption means being completely absorbed in one's work and feeling like time has stopped (Schaufeli et al., 2002). The conceptualization and measurement of work engagement have been widely studied in the literature. The most commonly used instrument for measuring work engagement is the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), which was developed by Schaufeli et al (Schaufeli et al., 2002). The UWES is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 17 items that measure three dimensions of work engagement: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Respondents rate their level of agreement with each item on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (always).

Several studies have supported the validity and reliability of the UWES in various settings and populations. For instance, a study by Schaufeli and Bakker found that the UWES had good internal consistency and concurrent validity in a sample of Dutch employees (Schaufeli et al., 2003). Similarly, a study by Halbesleben and Buckley found that the UWES had good construct validity and predictive validity in a sample of American healthcare workers (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). Moreover, a study by Shimazu et al found that the UWES had good cross-cultural validity in a sample of Japanese employees (Shimazu et al., 2008). The Job Demands-Resources Scale is just one of many tools designed to quantify workers' dedication to their jobs (Chamani et al.)and the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (Demerouti et al., 2001), which includes a subscale for measuring work engagement. However, the UWES remains the most widely used and well-established instrument for measuring work engagement.

The Job Demands and Resources model (JD-R) is a theoretical paradigm that suggests both job demands and job resources may have effects on workers' well-being. The JD-R model (Job Demands and Resources) incorporates this concept. Job demands refer to the physical, psychological, social, and organizational aspects of the work environment that require sustained effort and are associated with physiological and psychological costs. Job resources refer to the physical, psychological, social, and organizational aspects of the work environment that can facilitate goal attainment, reduce job demands, and promote personal growth. According to the JD-R model, job resources such as social support can enhance work engagement by providing feedback, resources, and emotional support that can enhance job performance and confidence (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Social support can also provide a sense of belonging, which can promote positive emotions and a sense of purpose in one's work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

The JD-R model gives a theoretical explanation for why teachers' work involvement may be the link between social support and their occupational well-being. Social support can be considered a job resource that can enhance work engagement by providing feedback and resources that can enhance job performance and confidence. The JD-R model provides a framework for understanding the mechanisms through which social support can promote occupational well-being and identifies effective ways to enhance work engagement and reduce job demands among teachers. Overall, The JD-R model provides a theoretical framework for investigating

the interrelationships among personal and professional resources for educators (Muwonge et al., 2022). Social support may be seen as a workplace asset that can raise one's satisfaction with their job by fostering greater dedication to their work (Zhang et al., 2023). Using the JD-R model, educators may gain an understanding of how social support can improve their sense of job satisfaction and learn practical strategies for increasing their enthusiasm for and commitment to their jobs. The JD-R model further elucidates the mechanisms through which social support might boost job satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2023).

➢ *JD-R Model for Teachers' Occupational Well-being*
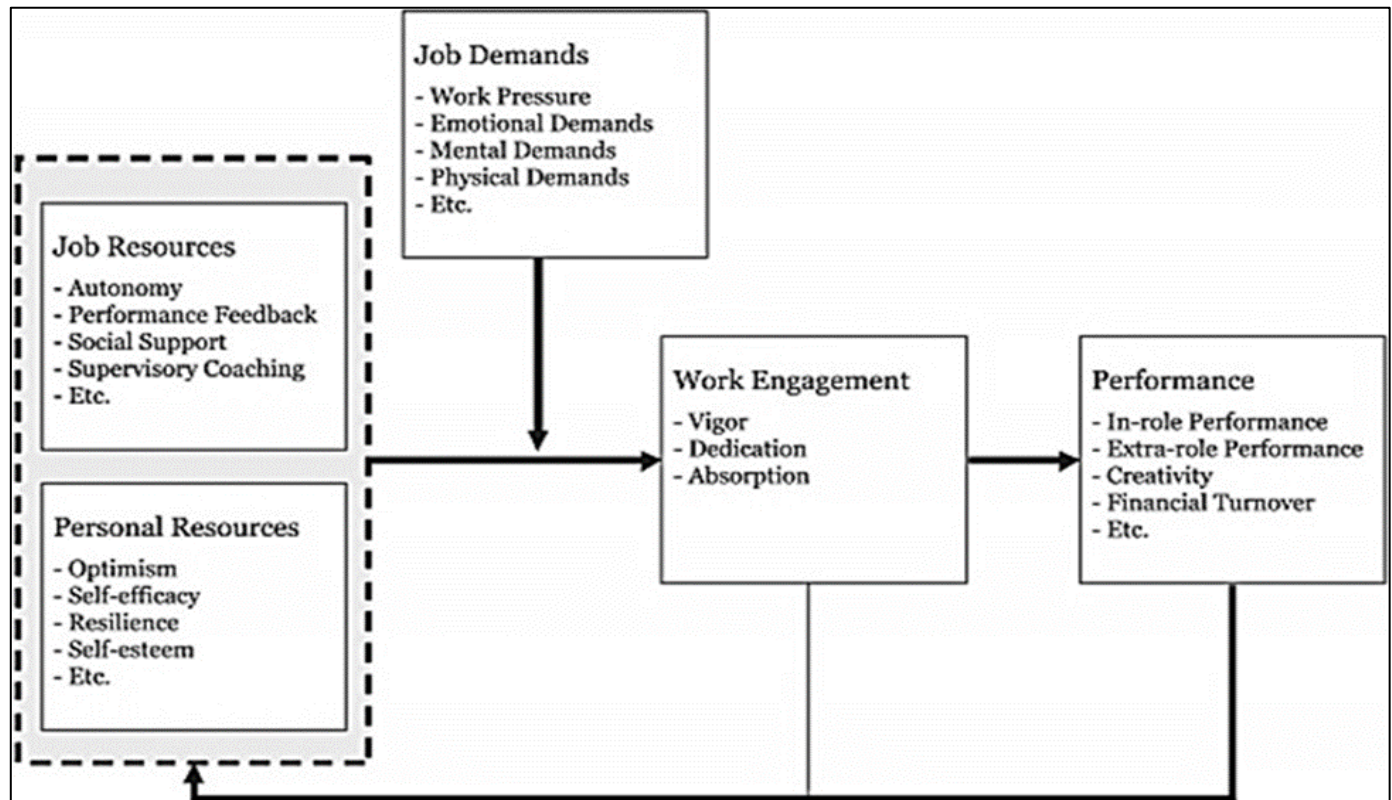
Fig 1: The JD-R Model of Work Engagement (Bakker et al., 2007)

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model is a common tool for analyzing the dynamics regarding demands at work, available resources, and feelings of fulfillment on the job, connecting it to the aforementioned theoretical model (Rapti, 2016). As stated by (Bakker et al., 2007), the term "job demands" pertains to various aspects of a job, including physical, psychological, social, or organizational factors that necessitate continuous physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills. These demands are associated with physiological and/or psychological costs that individuals may experience as a result. Most scholars have studied that teachers' occupational well-being is related to not only emotions but also the school environment. For example, the study of (Yin et al., 2016), have proved that the effective way of maintaining the teachers' well-being, emotional awareness, a positive school environment, emotional management, and the emotional atmosphere that is based on trust and cooperation.

According to (Gist et al., 2014), social support and work engagement can be considered job resources in the JD-R model, as they are factors that enable employees to achieve their work goals and reduce the negative impact of job demands. Additionally, occupational well-being can be considered a positive outcome of the JD-R model, which is influenced by job resources and job demands (Saks & Gruman, 2014). (Manasia et al., 2020)studied the job resources including the value of teaching occupation, financial ease, security, and status in society. The payment level also influences the teachers' occupational well-being. According to a study (Hendricks, 2014), 1.4 percent of teacher turnover can be reduced by increasing one percent of the payment. Furthermore, previous studies have stated that supporting mentoring activities and providing constructive feedback are also important for the teachers' occupational well-being.

Workload, time pressure, and emotional demands are all examples of job demands in the JD-R paradigm, which posits that they require constant attention and come with physical and mental consequences. Social support, feedback, and autonomy are examples of job resources that help employees succeed in their profession, cope with the challenges they face, and develop as individuals. According to the Job Demands and Resources (JD-R) model, job resources can mitigate the toll that work-related stress has on workers and boost things like job satisfaction, engagement, and productivity. Teachers in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq can benefit from workplace resources including social support and employee engagement if they adhere to the aforementioned theoretical framework.

H. The Mediation Role of Work Engagement Between Social Support and Occupational Well-being

The mediated mediation model is a statistical approach that can be used to investigate how the relationship between a mediator and an outcome variable is influenced. In the investigation of the relationship between social support, work engagement, and occupational well-being, the utilization of a mediated mediation model enables the exploration of how work engagement functions as a mediator in connecting social support to occupational well-being (Scarapicchia et al., 2017). This model permits researchers to examine the extent to which work engagement plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between social support and occupational well-being. For instance, they can investigate whether higher levels of social support lead to increased work engagement and subsequently, whether this increased work engagement contributes to improved occupational well-being (Scarapicchia et al., 2017). Understanding the mediating role of work engagement provides valuable insights into the underlying mechanisms through which social support influences occupational well-being. It suggests that social support may impact an individual's level of work engagement, which in turn affects their overall well-being in the workplace.

By focusing on work engagement as a mediator, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the importance of engagement in the workplace and its impact on occupational well-being. They can explore the specific mechanisms and processes through which work engagement influences occupational well-being, such as increased job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and enhanced psychological well-being (Scarapicchia et al., 2017). This knowledge can inform the development of interventions and strategies aimed at promoting work engagement and enhancing occupational well-being among individuals in various professions. By addressing both social support and work engagement, interventions can effectively promote occupational well-being and contribute to overall job satisfaction and productivity (Scarapicchia et al., 2017).

I. Research Gap

Despite extensive research on the impact of social support and work engagement on occupational well-being, several specific areas remain underexplored, particularly within the context of the teaching profession. Firstly, while the mediation role of work engagement between social support and occupational well-being is theorized, empirical evidence specifically targeting teachers is limited. This gap is critical as teachers face unique stressors and job demands that might alter these relationships compared to other professional settings. Secondly, existing literature often considers work engagement as a singular construct. However, this study aims to dissect the individual contributions of its dimensions—vigor, dedication, and absorption—to better understand their specific roles in mediating the relationship between social support and occupational well-being among teachers. Such dimensional insights are crucial for developing targeted interventions that address specific aspects of engagement. Moreover, the differential impacts of various types of social support (from colleagues, administrators, parents) on teachers' engagement and well-being are not well-documented. Understanding these variations can provide nuanced strategies to enhance teacher support systems effectively.

Additionally, the majority of the current studies are cross-sectional and do not capture the dynamic and evolving nature of these relationships over time. There is a significant need for longitudinal research to observe how these interactions develop, particularly in response to changes in educational policies and school environments. Lastly, the influence of cultural and contextual factors on these relationships is inadequately examined. Considering the global diversity of educational environments, studies that explore these variables in various cultural and regional contexts are essential. This study focuses on [specify the region or country if relevant], aiming to fill the existing research void by providing localized insights into how social support and work engagement influence the occupational well-being of teachers.

J. Research Hypotheses

➢ *Following the Previous Literature, this Study Proposes the Following Hypotheses:*

• H1: Social support is positively related to both work engagement and occupational well-being among teachers.
• H2: Work engagement mediates the relationship between social support and occupational well-being among teachers.

K. Clarifications about the Hypothesis

• **H1: Social support is positively related to both work engagement and occupational well-being among teachers.**

➢ *Clarification:*

This hypothesis explores the impact of social support on two key outcomes for teachers: work engagement and occupational well-being. Social support refers to the emotional, informational, or practical assistance teachers receive from colleagues, administrators, and possibly from friends and family. The hypothesis posits that higher levels of social support will correlate with:

• Higher work engagement: Teachers who feel supported are likely to be more involved, enthusiastic, and committed to their work. This engagement could stem from feeling valued, less isolated, and having access to resources and advice that facilitate easier and more effective teaching practices.

- Improved occupational well-being: Well-being in an occupational context includes factors like job satisfaction, reduced stress, and a general sense of fulfillment and accomplishment at work. The supportive interactions and networks within the workplace can mitigate job-related stress and enhance overall well-being by providing emotional backing and solving work-related problems.

- **H2: Work engagement mediates the relationship between social support and occupational well-being among teachers.**

➢ *Clarification:*
  This hypothesis builds on the idea that not only does social support directly impact occupational well-being, but it also does so indirectly through the mechanism of work engagement. In other words, it suggests a two-step relationship:

- First step (Antecedent to Mediator): Social support increases work engagement. Teachers receiving adequate support are more engaged due to enhanced morale, access to resources, and a supportive work environment that encourages dedication and a proactive approach to teaching.
- Second step (Mediator to Outcome): The increased engagement then contributes to greater occupational well-being. Engaged teachers experience higher levels of job satisfaction, less burnout, and overall better mental and emotional health because their engagement typically leads to positive experiences and outcomes at work.

  In summary, the hypothesis of mediation asserts that while social support directly influences well-being, a significant portion of its effect is channeled through how it affects engagement levels. This mediation suggests a dynamic process where social support boosts engagement, which in turn enhances well-being, highlighting the importance of fostering an engaging work environment as a pathway to improving overall occupational health.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

In our study, we embraced a mixed-methods strategy to deeply explore how social support influences the work engagement and occupational well-being of teachers in the challenging environment of Sulaymaniyah City, in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. We meticulously selected three specific instruments for our quantitative analysis: the Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire (NSSQ) to gauge the layers and efficacy of social support among teachers; the NIOSH Questionnaire to assess aspects of occupational well-being such as job satisfaction, workplace environment, and mental health; The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) is an assessment tool used to gauge the level of teachers' work engagement. It evaluates the intensity of their engagement by considering factors such as vigor, dedication, and absorption (Ehrlich & Milston, 2024). These tools allowed us to construct a comprehensive picture of the current state of teacher well-being. To complement the quantitative findings and gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' experiences, a qualitative component was incorporated. A subset of participants was selected for qualitative interviews, conducted using a semi-structured format. These interviews aimed to explore the teachers' perceptions and experiences of social support and its impact on their occupational well-being. The interview responses were transcribed and analyzed thematically to identify common themes and patterns in the data. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative findings, (Kiwumulo et al., 2022)aimed to offer a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between social support and occupational well-being specifically among secondary school teachers in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. The mixed-methods approach allowed for a more comprehensive exploration of the research topic, capturing both the breadth of quantitative data and the depth of qualitative insights. By combining these approaches, this study aimed to provide a more robust and nuanced understanding of the impact of social support on teachers' occupational well-being in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq.

B. Target Population

The participants in this research are specifically secondary school teachers located in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. These teachers hold a significant responsibility in educating and influencing the development of students during their crucial formative years. Data for the study was gathered through questionnaires using a quantitative research design. According to the Ministry of Education, Iraq (2018-2019), there are 45120 teachers in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. However, the sample size was determined based on considerations such as feasibility and the desired level of statistical power. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who met the inclusion criteria of being currently employed as secondary school teachers in the region. The selection of participants was based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study. Efforts were made to ensure diversity in terms of gender, years of teaching experience, and school types (public and private) to capture a broad range of perspectives within the target population. The final sample included a representative number of secondary school teachers who consented to participate in the study, thus providing valuable insights into the impact of social support on their occupational well-being in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq.

C. Research Instruments

The research instruments used in this mixed-methods study included the Norbech Social Support Questionnaire, the NOISH Questionnaire, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Questionnaire for quantitative data collection. These instruments assessed social support, occupational well-being, and work engagement among secondary school teachers in Sulaymaneyah, Iraq. Additionally, a semi-structured interview guide was developed to gather qualitative data, exploring teachers' experiences, perceptions, and contextual factors related to social support, occupational well-being, and work engagement. The use of these instruments allowed for a comprehensive examination of the research topic, combining quantitative and qualitative insights.

➢ *Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire (NSSQ)*

The Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire (NSSQ) was developed by Norbeck, Lindsey, and Carrieri in 1981. It is designed to measure social support by evaluating the quantity and quality of support from social networks, specifically focusing on the support perceived and received by individuals. The NSSQ assesses two main dimensions: social network size and composition, and functional support including emotional, informational, and material support. The NSSQ consists of various items that respondents answer to reflect their social support network's size and the support's perceived quality. Scoring involves summing responses to generate scores for overall social support, with higher scores indicating greater perceived social support. The instrument allows for the identification of specific types of support, such as emotional or instrumental, providing a multifaceted view of the individual's social support system.

➢ *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)*

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), introduced by (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), and (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2002), is a validated instrument used to assess work engagement. Work engagement is defined as a positive and fulfilling state of mind about work, characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. The UWES is based on the notion that engaged employees experience a strong and effective connection with their work tasks, and perceive themselves as capable of effectively managing the demands of their job (Candido et al., 2020). This scale provides a structured and reliable means of measuring the level of work engagement individuals experience in their professional roles. The UWES is available in two versions: a 9-item short version and a 17-item long version, covering three subscales - Vigor (VI), Dedication (DE), and Absorption (AB). Responses are provided on a

7-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (Never) to 6 (Always/Every day). Scores are calculated for each subscale as well as an overall engagement score, with higher scores indicating higher levels of work engagement.

➢ *NIOSH Worker Well-being Questionnaire*

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) develops tools and questionnaires to assess various aspects of worker health and safety, including well-being. These instruments are designed based on comprehensive research in occupational health and aim to evaluate the well-being of workers across different dimensions, including job satisfaction, workplace environment, and mental health. The specific structure and scoring system would depend on the exact NIOSH questionnaire used. Generally, these questionnaires include multiple items rated on a Likert scale, assessing different facets of occupational well-being. The scores are typically summed or averaged to provide an overall well-being index, with specific subscales providing insight into different aspects of workplace health and safety.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

No	Category	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha value	Interpretations
1	Work engagement	9	0.798	Good
2	Social support	10	0.903	Excellent
3	Well-being	11	0.804	Good

The coefficient values of Cronbach's alpha were utilized to test the reliability of questionaries. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), Cronbach's coefficient values that are higher than 0.7 are relevant, over 0.8 are good, and above 0.9 are excellent for the reliability of questionaries. As shown in above Table 6, Cronbach's Alpha value for work engagement is assumed to be good with a value of 0.798. As for the Alpha value of social support has an excellent level of reliability (0.903). Finally, Cronbach's Alpha value for social support is also a good level of reliability with a value of 0.804. Overall, questionnaires of variables have high reliability and validity for the study of occupational well-being in Sulaymaniyah and the analysis of the influence of social support and work engagement on the secondary teachers' occupational well-being in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq.

D. *The Demographics of Survey Respondents*

This study utilized the quantitative-qualitative mixed method and employed survey questionnaires for quantitative data analysis and interview data for qualitative data analysis. For the survey data, the data from the 120 respondents were collected and analyzed by the SPSS 25. According to the results of the data analysis, 52 male teachers (43.3 %) and 68 female teachers (56.7 %) answered the survey questions. Regarding the teaching experience of the respondents, it is found that 36.7 percent of the teachers have teaching experience 20 years and above, 8.3 percent of teachers have experience 5-9 years, 18.3 percent of teachers have 1-4 years of experience, 19.2 percent of teachers have 10-14 years of experience, and 17.5 percent of teachers have 15-19 years of experience. According to the data analysis, the age group of the respondents includes 25-30, 31-35, 35-40, and 40 and above. Firstly, most of the teachers (46.7 %) are in the 40 and above age group. Secondly, the least number of teachers (18.3%) are in the 31-35 age group. Thirdly,18.3 percent of teachers are in the 25-30 age group, and finally, 24.2 percent of teachers are in the 35-40 age group. According to data, it is found that most of the teachers (81.7%) in Iraq are bachelor's Degree holders and the least number of teachers (1.7%) are high school graduates. 9.2 percent of teachers are Master's Degree holders and only 7.5 percent of teachers are Doctorate Degree holders.

To examine the influence of social support and work engagement on secondary teachers' occupational well-being, this study employed the quantitative and qualitative mixed approach. For the qualitative data analysis, the fifteen secondary school teachers in Iraq were interviewed using semi-structured, open-ended interview questions. The interviewees are of different ranges of age, educational background, work experience, and gender. The list of interviewees is listed in Table 1.

Table 2: The List of the Interviewees

Respondent's Number	Age	Education	Work Experience	Gender
R1	23	Bachelor	5 years	Female
R2	35	Ph.D	8 years	Male
R3	38	Ph.D	15 years	Male
R4	26	Bachelor	3 years	Male
R5	45	Bachelor	10 years	Female
R6	40	Master	10 years	Male
R7	34	Bachelor	8 years	Male
R8	23	Bachelor	3 years	Male
R9	23	Bachelor	3 years	Female
R10	27	Bachelor	5 years	Male
R11	31	Master	6 years	Male
R12	25	Bachelor	3 years	Female
R13	29	Bachelor	7 years	Female

| R14 | 31 | Bachelor | 9 years | Female |
| R15 | 29 | Master | 6 years | Male |

According to the demographics of the interviewees, 60 percent of interviewees are male and 40 percent of interviewees are female.

➢ *Sample Selection and Representativeness of the Population*

In this study, the respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique designed to ensure that the sample accurately represents the broader population of secondary school teachers in Iraq. This method is crucial for qualitative research where the depth of understanding is prioritized, and the nuances of the participants' experiences are essential.

➢ *Purposive Sampling Technique:*

Purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on specific characteristics and criteria that are aligned with the central questions and objectives of the research. This approach is particularly beneficial when the researcher aims to reach a targeted group of people who can provide the most pertinent and insightful data due to their particular experiences or roles.

➢ *Criteria for Selection:*

• Teaching Experience: Teachers were chosen across a broad spectrum of experience levels, from novices with 1-4 years to veterans with over 20 years in the field. This ensures that the sample reflects the diversity of career stages found within the broader population of teachers, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the impact of experience on occupational well-being.
• Age and Educational Background: The selection included teachers from multiple age groups and with varying educational backgrounds, ranging from high school graduates to doctorate holders. This stratification helps ensure that the sample mirrors the demographic variability in the teaching workforce.
• Geographic and Institutional Diversity: Teachers from various educational institutions and geographic locations, including both urban and rural settings, were selected to represent the broad range of working environments within the country.

➢ *Ensuring Representativeness:*

The sample demographics (age, experience, education level, and gender) were carefully aligned with those of the broader teaching population in Iraq to ensure that the findings can be generalized. By matching the proportions of each demographic group in the sample with their representation in the total population of secondary school teachers, the study enhances the external validity of the conclusions drawn.

➢ *Sample Size Justification:*

A total of 120 teachers were surveyed, providing a robust sample size that balances comprehensiveness with manageability and ensures adequate statistical power to detect meaningful relationships within the data.

E. *Data Collection*

Data collection for this study involved a two-fold approach, incorporating quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative component, a sample of 120 secondary school teachers in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, completed self-report surveys. The surveys included the Norbech Social Support Questionnaire, the NOISH Questionnaire, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Questionnaire. The participants responded based on their experiences and perceptions related to social support, occupational well-being, and work engagement. In addition to the surveys, qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews. A subset of five teachers from the quantitative sample was selected for these interviews. A semi-structured interview guide was used to facilitate in-depth discussions, allowing participants to share their experiences and insights regarding social support, occupational well-being, and work engagement. Both the quantitative survey data from 120 teachers and the qualitative interview data from five teachers were collected and recorded for subsequent analysis. The data collection process followed ethical guidelines, ensuring informed consent and confidentiality of participants' responses. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the research topic, incorporating both numerical data from a larger sample and rich qualitative insights from a smaller subset of participants.

F. *Data Analyses*

The data collected in this study were subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analyses. For the quantitative data obtained through the surveys completed by 120 secondary school teachers, statistical techniques were applied. The quantitative data, including responses from the Norbech Social Support Questionnaire, the NOISH Questionnaire, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Questionnaire, were analyzed using appropriate statistical methods. The collected survey data are analyzed by using SPSS 25 software. These may include descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to examine the relationships between social support, occupational well-being, and work engagement among the teachers. Regarding the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews with five teachers, a thematic analysis approach was employed. The interview responses were transcribed and carefully reviewed to identify recurring themes, patterns, and key insights related to social support, occupational

well-being, and work engagement. These themes were then organized and interpreted to provide a deeper understanding of the experiences and perceptions of the interviewed teachers.

G. Ethics

This study adhered to ethical principles and guidelines to ensure the protection and well-being of the participants. All participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits before providing their consent. Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants had the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained, and personal identifying information was kept confidential and used only for research purposes. The research team obtained the necessary permits and approvals from relevant authorities before conducting the study. Data collected from the study were used only for research purposes and stored securely. The results of the study were disseminated in a manner that respected the privacy and dignity of the participants. Any potential conflicts of interest or biases were disclosed and addressed appropriately. The research team upheld the highest standards of professionalism and integrity throughout the study.

H. Study Delimitation

Several limitations affected the generalizability of the study findings. One limitation was the possibility of selection bias. The study recruited participants from a specific district in Sulaymaniyah, which may not have been representative of other districts or regions in Iraq. Additionally, the study recruited participants who were teachers in secondary schools, and the findings may not have been generalizable to other occupational groups. Another limitation was the possibility of response bias. Participants who chose to complete the questionnaires may have had different characteristics than those who chose not to participate, potentially affecting the study findings.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis and conclusions are presented in this chapter. The topics covered in the sessions include the elements that contribute to teachers' occupational well-being and satisfaction, the influence of social support and job engagement on the well-being of teachers in Iraq, and finally the relationship between these two aspects and teachers' well-being. The research has employed a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative analysis, utilizing both quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data. Using SPSS 25 software, the quantitative data gathered from the survey will first be examined. Second, content analysis will be used to code the qualitative information gathered from interviews. To investigate the influence of social support and work engagement on the teachers' occupational well-being, the study additionally reviewed worldwide reports, journals, and newspapers. After that, the conclusions based on the data analysis will be provided.

A. The Quantitative Data Analysis

➤ *Correlation Analysis*
According to the correlation analysis, it is found that gender, experience, and education level do not have a correlation with teachers' occupational well-being and they are also not statistically significant (shown in Table 6). However, social support and work engagement have a good correlation with teachers' occupational well-being and are also statistically significant with .000 < .05.

Table 3: Correlation

	WB	Gen	Exp	Age	Edu	SS	WEng
WB	1	-.026	.090	.097	.033	.587**	.567**
		.776	.329	.292	.719	.000	.000
	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Gen	-.026	1					
	.776						
	119	120					
Exp	.090		1				
	.329						
	119		120				
Age	.097			1			
	.292						
	119			120			
Edu	.033				1		
	.719						
	119				120		
SS	.587**					1	.442**
	.000						.000
	119					120	120
WEng	.567**					.442**	1
	.000					.000	
	119					120	120

Note: WB- well-being, Gen- Gender, Exp- Experience, Edu- Education, SS- Social support, Weng- Work Engagement

➤ *Analysis of Teachers' Occupational Well-being*
According to (Warr, 1987), the level to which individuals feel happy and fulfilled at work, in addition to the physical and social health associated with their profession, is referred to as occupational well-being. According to (Keyes, 1998), this concept has several dimensions, including social, mental, physical, and cognitive well-being as well as subjective well-being. Likewise, according to the concept of (Viac & Fraser, 2020), there are four primary components of occupational well-being for teachers: social, cognitive, subjective, and physical and mental. Similarly, (C. S. Wong et al., 2007) reported that a person's occupational well-being can be assessed by how satisfied they are with their work.

Regarding the influence of social support and work engagement on the teachers' occupational well-being in Iraq, it is found that there can be several factors that make a teacher continue to work at a particular school. These may include a positive and supportive work environment, effective leadership and communication within the school, opportunities for professional growth and development, good relationships with colleagues and students, and a sense of fulfillment in making a difference in students' lives. Additionally, factors such as salary, benefits, job security, and work-life balance can also influence a teacher's decision to continue working at a specific place. The findings of the quantitative and qualitative analysis are presented as follows.

In this study, a simultaneous multiple regression was conducted to examine the impact of public service motivation on the job satisfaction of public employees. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 4: Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis

Coefficients					
Variables	B	SEB	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	4.081	2.107		1.937	.055
WEng	.393	.078	.382	5.027	.000
SS	.330	.060	.419	5.516	.000

Note: R2 = .462, F (2,118) =49.866, p<.001

*** p<.001

Coefficients reveal the amount of variation of the dependent variable concerning the independent variables while all other independent variables are held constant. The examination of unstandardized coefficients, both social support and work engagement have positive effects on teachers' occupational well-being. If one unit of social support increases, 0.330 units of well-being will increase when all independent variables are held constant. Similarly, 0.393 units of well-being will be increased if one unit of work engagement increases while other variables are held constant.

- *The Model can be Defined by the Following Equation:*

Teachers' occupational well-being = .330 Social support + .393 Work engagement + 4.081

Furthermore, the model summary reveals that the value of R which is the multiple correlation coefficient (0.680), shows a high degree of prediction for the dependent variable (Shown in Table 8). The determination's coefficient, R-squared reveals that the independent variables explain 46.2 percent of variability dependent variables. Regarding the F-ratio in the ANOVA table, the overall regression model is a good fit for the data because the value $F (2, 118) = 49.866$, p <.0005, is statistically significant. Assessing the statistical significance of independent variables, it is found that the coefficients for both social support and work engagement are statistically significant, p< .05.

➢ *The Role of Work Engagement in the Relationship Between Social Support and Occupational Well-being*

According to Xu et al, teachers are more likely to have professional engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being when they receive social support from their supervisors and coworkers (Xu et al., 2015). Social support is commonly known as "the perception or experience of being valued and cared for, having assistance available from other people, and being part of a supportive social network (Muwonge et al., 2022)." This phrase emphasizes the need for both practical and emotional assistance (Baisley et al., 2022).

According to Cohen & Wills, social support is the availability of tangible, emotional, or informational resources from others that can be utilized to improve well-being and manage stress(Cohen & Wills, 1985). Colleagues, managers, family, and friends are just a few of the people who can offer social support (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The most often stated kind of assistance from coworkers and superiors is emotional support, which includes showing empathy, concern, and understanding (Kokkinos, 2012). Research has consistently demonstrated that social support has a favorable relationship with several dimensions of teachers' professional well-being, such as dedication, engagement, and job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2017).

Therefore, the data analysis shows that social support is positively related to work engagement and is statistically significant. According to the data analysis, it is evident that there is a positive relationship between social support and work engagement.

➢ *The Relationship Between Social Support and Occupational Well-being*

When all other independent variables are kept constant, coefficients show how much the dependent variable varies from the independent variables. According to an analysis of unstandardized coefficients, teachers' occupational well-being is positively impacted by both work engagement and social support. All other independent variables being held constant, an increase of one unit of social support will translate into an increase of 0.330 units of well-being. Overall, teachers are more likely to experience professional engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being when they receive social support from their supervisors and coworkers. Social support can foster a feeling of belonging, which in turn can promote happy feelings and a sense of purpose in one's work.

Research has repeatedly demonstrated a favorable relationship between social support and many dimensions of teachers' professional well-being, such as dedication, engagement, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, social support can offer tools and criticism to improve job performance and confidence, which raises work engagement. Supporting the existing studies, the result shows that work engagement is positively related to occupational well-being, and therefore the fourth hypothesis "H3: Social support has a direct positive effect on occupational well-being through work engagement" is supported. Lastly, by lowering the risk of burnout and tiredness, social support can lessen the negative impacts of job stress and boost work engagement and the results support

the previous findings of Toker and Biron (2012), Wang et al., (2015), Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), Muwonge et al., (2022) and Kokkinos (2012).

➢ *Analysis of Mediation Effects*

The purpose of a moderated mediation model is to ascertain whether or not a mediator variable influences a dependent variable, and if it does, whether or not the moderator, a third variable, moderates this mediation effect (Hayes, 2018). By employing the mediated mediation model, this study proposed the following conceptual framework to investigate how the relationship between a mediator and an outcome variable is influenced.

The following statistical procedure was applied for the analysis of the mediation effect to determine teachers' social support, job engagement, and sense of occupational well-being. First, regression analysis was used to determine the strength and direction of the links between social support, work engagement, and well-being. The concept of occupational well-being was used to analyze these connections (Muwonge et al., 2022). Second, the statistical significance of the moderated mediation effect was determined via bootstrapping. To do this, we calculated a confidence range for the effect size of moderated mediation and present its distribution (McClure, 2013). This statistical procedure allowed us to gain a better understanding of how social support and work engagement affect occupational well-being. Finally, to test the hypothesis that social support directly contributes to occupational well-being through work engagement, we employed the bootstrapping method (Muwonge et al., 2022). This involved generating a large number of random samples from the data set, calculating the direct effect for each sample, and estimating the distribution of direct effects to obtain a more accurate estimate of the effect size and a confidence interval.

According to (Hayes, 2018), the purpose of a moderated mediation model is to determine whether or not a mediator variable influences a dependent variable, and if it does, whether or not the moderator, a third variable, moderates this mediation effect. According to the result of the Sobel test (Shown in Table 9), the Z-value is 3.67277221, e=0.036167, p-value = 0.00023< 0.05, p-value = 0.00027< 0.05, and therefore the direct effect of social support on occupational well-being through work engagement is statistically significant (Shown in Table 9). Therefore, the third hypothesis "social support has a direct positive effect on occupational well-being through work engagement" is also supported.
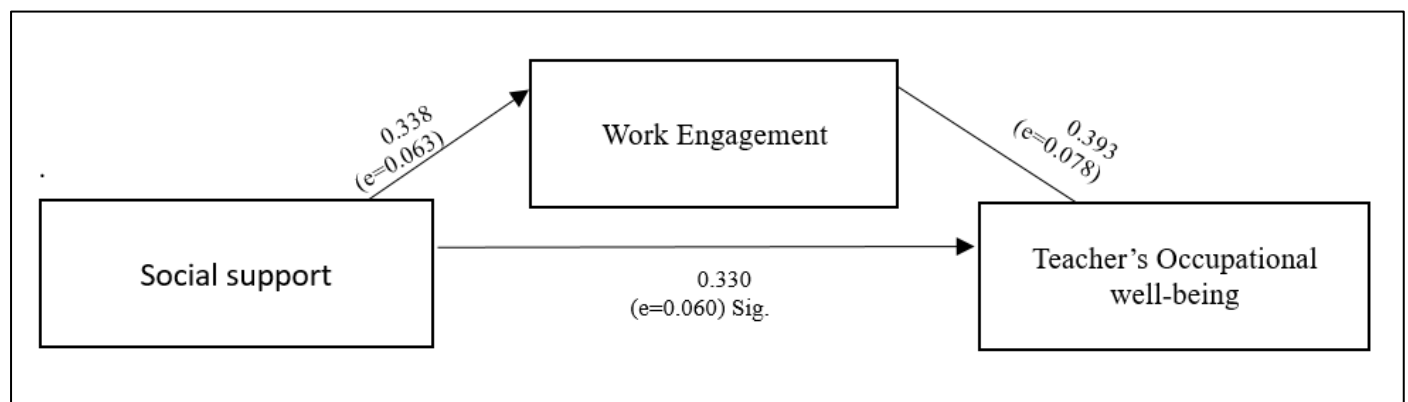

Fig 2: The Mediation Model Showing Direct and Indirect Effect

According to (Kokkinos, 2012), social support has the potential to augment work engagement through the provision of resources and feedback that can improve job performance and confidence. The author also has found that the provision of resources and feedback that can improve job performance and confidence, and social support can raise work engagement. Furthermore, (Baisley et al., 2022) also found that social support and well-being are interrelated with each other and work engagement also plays as a mediator between those two factors.

Furthermore, the empirical findings of the previous studies also highlighted that work engagement acts as a mediator completely or partially. According to research by (Caesens et al., 2014), work engagement among Dutch educators mediated the relationship between satisfaction with work and social support. (Tement & Korunka, 2013) discovered in another study that among Slovenian teachers, work engagement acted as a partial mediating factor in the link between social support and burnout. Furthermore, among American healthcare professionals, a meta-analysis by Halbesleben and Buckley discovered a relationship between social support and job satisfaction and workers' levels of involvement at work, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions (Caesens et al., 2014).

B. The Qualitative Data Analysis

➤ Analysis of Teachers' Occupational Well-being

According to (Warr, 1987), the level to which individuals feel happy and fulfilled at work, in addition to the physical and social health associated with their profession, is referred to as occupational well-being. According to (Keyes, 1998), this concept has several dimensions, including social, mental, physical, and cognitive well-being as well as subjective well-being. Likewise, according to the concept of (Viac & Fraser, 2020), there are four primary components of occupational well-being for teachers: social, cognitive, subjective, and physical and mental. Similarly, (C. S. Wong et al., 2007) reported that a person's occupational well-being can be assessed by how satisfied they are with their work.

Regarding the influence of social support and work engagement on the teachers' occupational well-being in Iraq, it is found that there can be several factors that make a teacher continue to work at a particular school. These may include a positive and supportive work environment, effective leadership and communication within the school, opportunities for professional growth and development, good relationships with colleagues and students, and a sense of fulfillment in making a difference in students' lives. Additionally, factors such as salary, benefits, job security, and work-life balance can also influence a teacher's decision to continue working at a specific place.

The results from interviews support the findings of the quantitative data analysis. The findings from interviews also imply that they feel happy, satisfied, and honored because of their noble profession, the physical support from their schools, mental support from their principals and colleagues. The teachers are satisfied with their profession because teaching is the profession that helps others to learn and grow. Most of the respondents feel that their job is meaningful to them because they have opportunities to improve the lives of others and themselves. Regarding this, the respondents answered:

"I am satisfied with my job because of my educational contribution, the opportunity to positively influence students' lives, and the chance to improve my professional and personal life".

Another respondent added:

"I chose to become a secondary school teacher because I am passionate about shaping young minds and contributing to their educational journey. I find fulfillment in guiding students through their academic and personal development".

According to the findings from the interview, it is revealed that most of the respondents have the passion to continue to work at their schools because of the strong sense of community, the shared commitment to educational goals, and the opportunities for growth and development that the school consistently provides them. In addition to this, most of the respondents believe that not only the lives of students but also their lives will be improved through working at their organizations. One of the respondents noted:

"I believe my life will improve at this place due to the continuous investment in professional development, a positive and collaborative atmosphere, and the school's dedication to creating a holistic educational experience for both staff and students."

Another respondent also added:

"What motivated me to stay in the teaching profession was the achievement I felt at the end of the school year when I saw the level of progress my students had achieved. I felt truly satisfied. Also, the teaching profession does not require a lot of time, so I was able to do some activities outside of working hours, such as learning an additional language or visiting friends".

The interview results reveal that many individuals are drawn to teaching because they have a passion for educating young minds and making a positive impact on students' lives. They may enjoy sharing knowledge, helping students to develop critical thinking skills, and fostering a love for learning. Additionally, they believe that being a secondary school teacher allows individuals to contribute to the growth and development of future generations. As one of the respondents expressed:

"My first degree was in teaching, that's why during my teaching practice at school I decided to continue working there. Plus, I've already had some experience in providing private lessons. Teaching doesn't bring you much money in my country but the job itself is honorable."

"I choose to be teaching as a profession to help others learn and grow. My work is very meaningful to me because I see many students have improvements in their lives. Consequently, this motivates me to feel energetic".

Overall, the interview results revealed that the teachers were satisfied with their jobs because of the multiple dimensions, including subjective well-being and a perception of an individual's social, mental, physical, and cognitive abilities, and the first hypothesis, "*H1:* Work engagement and teacher social support are positively related to occupational well-being" is supported and also assisted the findings of existing studies (Warr (1987); Keyes (1998); Viac and Fraser (2020); Wong et al., (2007)).

➤ *The Role of Work Engagement in the Relationship Between Social Support and Occupational Well-being*

According to Xu et al, teachers are more likely to have professional engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being when they receive social support from their supervisors and coworkers (Xu et al., 2015). Social support is commonly known as "the perception or experience of being valued and cared for, having assistance available from other people, and being part of a supportive social network (Muwonge et al., 2022)." This phrase emphasizes the need for both practical and emotional assistance (Baisley et al., 2022).

According to Cohen & Wills, social support is the availability of tangible, emotional, or informational resources from others that can be utilized to improve well-being and manage stress(Cohen & Wills, 1985). Colleagues, managers, family, and friends are just a few of the people who can offer social support (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The most often stated kind of assistance from coworkers and superiors is emotional support, which includes showing empathy, concern, and understanding (Kokkinos, 2012). Research has consistently demonstrated that social support has a favorable relationship with several dimensions of teachers' professional well-being, such as dedication, engagement, and job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2017).

Therefore, the data analysis shows that social support is positively related to work engagement and is statistically significant. According to the data analysis, it is evident that there is a positive relationship between social support and work engagement. These findings of the study are also supported by the results of interviews. For example, one of the respondents said:

"Teaching is not an easy profession but I am trying to overcome these challenges" [R3].

To enhance teachers' professional well-being, social support is important. Social support can be provided by a variety of means, including material, emotional, and informational resources (Kyriacou, 2001). However, it is found that the school provides them the emotional support and physical support. The respondents replied that they have job satisfaction, perseverance, and confidence because of their supportive working environment. One of the respondents also added:

"Even if things do not go well, I still perseverance and I do not give up easily" [R2]

According to(Kyriacou, 2001), tangible support including helping with workload can be especially advantageous in reducing job stress. Furthermore, Informational support like providing advice, feedback, and guidance can be also helpful for the enhancement of job performance and confidence. Regarding this, one of the respondents quoted:

"The school provides me with a supportive working environment. It is a great environment to work you feel confident by the way you do the best". [R6]

Other respondents also added:

"The school provides crucial support for my work through professional development opportunities, a collaborative teaching environment, and resources that enhance the learning experience for both students and educators". [R9]

"I value my working environment as it fosters a positive atmosphere for teaching and learning. The supportive colleagues, well-equipped classrooms, and a commitment to academic excellence contribute to a conducive space for both educators and students". [R11]

According to(Turland et al., 2018), higher levels of social support from colleagues and supervisors were associated with greater job satisfaction among Chinese teachers. Likewise, studies have consistently indicated that social support is positively related to different kinds of teachers' occupational well-being like job satisfaction, engagement, and psychological health. Most of the respondents revealed that:

"The school provided me with the best physical and mental support although the school I worked at was new which was built and opened around 2-3 years before I started working there. Plus, all the extracurricular initiatives were highly supported by the principal and other teachers including financial support. Therefore, I am delighted to work in this career and love this profession". [R15]

Another respondent also added:

"I always feel energetic at my workplace even though my job is challenging like any other teaching job". [R4]

According to(Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), colleagues, managers, family, and friends are also the people who can offer social support. Overall, it is clear that the schools in Iraq typically provide support for teachers in various ways. These supports include professional development opportunities, access to teaching resources and materials, mentoring programs, collaboration time with other teachers, and administrative assistance. Schools may also offer counseling services, technology support, and a supportive work culture that encourages open communication and collaboration among teachers.

The phrase "work engagement" refers to happiness and satisfaction at work. According to (Fong & Ng, 2012), it consists of three components: energy, commitment, and concentration. Positive outcomes in the workplace, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and productivity, have been associated with work engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). According to (Ludwig et al., 2018), occupational well-being is a multifaceted concept that encompasses a range of psychological and physical health factors, including physical and mental health, job satisfaction, burnout, and stress at work. Work engagement in the teaching profession is positively correlated with occupational well-being, which includes a range of psychological and physical health elements (Xu et al., 2015). Work engagement and occupational well-being are positively correlated; however, this relationship may be moderated by variables including job demands and resource availability (Sadeghi et al., 2023).

According to the data analysis, it is evident that there is a positive relationship between social support and work engagement, and is also statistically significant. The findings are also supported by the results of interviews that highlight the relationship between work engagement and occupational well-being in secondary schools in Iraq. For example, most of the respondents implied that they have to be involved in their jobs and they are happy with their jobs. Furthermore, they express that they always have energy, commitment, and high productivity because of their positive working environment. As one of the respondents noted:

"The work atmosphere in my school was wonderful. The school administration was very cooperative and the colleagues at the school were very cooperative".

According to the findings from the interview, the teachers feel happy and get involved in their jobs because of their good relationship with their colleagues and positive working environment. As one of the respondents noted:

"The environment was great; the staff and the principal were all welcoming and helpful considering although I was a newcomer teacher there and very young at that time".

Another respondent added:

"The reason why I continue to work in this place is making me feel comfortable with the staff, especially with my colleagues and principal".

Furthermore, the findings of the interview conclude that the working environment for teachers can vary depending on the school and its specific dynamics. Likewise, teachers work in classrooms, interact with students and colleagues, and often have responsibilities beyond the classroom, such as lesson planning, grading, and attending staff meetings. The working environment can be challenging at times, with high workloads and pressure to meet educational standards. However, it can also be fulfilling, as teachers have the opportunity to positively impact students' lives and witness their growth and achievements.

Overall, the second hypothesis "*H2*: Work engagement mediates the relationship between social support and occupational well-being" is also supported and aligns with the findings of the existing studies (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004); (Rajkomar et al., 2018)., (Chamani et al., 2023). The findings also support the findings of the existing literature (Wang et al., (2015); Cohen and Wills (1985); Muwonge et al., (2022); Lazarus & Folkman (1984); Lazarus & Folkman (1984); Smith et al., (2018); Lazarus & Folkman (1984); Kokkinos (2012); Kyriacou (2001)).

➤ *The Relationship Between Social Support and Occupational Well-being*
When all other independent variables are kept constant, coefficients show how much the dependent variable varies from the independent variables. According to an analysis of unstandardized coefficients, teachers' occupational well-being is positively impacted by both work engagement and social support. All other independent variables being held constant, an increase of one unit of social support will translate into an increase of 0.330 units of well-being. Overall, teachers are more likely to experience professional engagement, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being when they receive social support from their supervisors and coworkers. Social support can foster a feeling of belonging, which in turn can promote happy feelings and a sense of purpose in one's work.

Research has repeatedly demonstrated a favorable relationship between social support and many dimensions of teachers' professional well-being, such as dedication, engagement, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, social support can offer tools and criticism to improve job performance and confidence, which raises work engagement. Supporting the existing studies, the result shows that work engagement is positively related to occupational well-being, and therefore the fourth hypothesis "H3: Social support has a direct positive effect on occupational well-being through work engagement" is supported. Lastly, by lowering the risk of

burnout and tiredness, social support can lessen the negative impacts of job stress and boost work engagement and the results support the previous findings of Toker and Biron (2012), Wang et al., (2015), Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), Muwonge et al., (2022) and Kokkinos (2012).

C. Discussion

In addition to social support and work engagement, the findings of the interview data also revealed two more factors, educational purposes and challenges that influence the educational well-being of teachers in Iraq. The teachers are satisfied with their teaching job because of the factor, of educational purposes, which is an honorable profession, having self-improvement opportunities, and learning and growth for others. However, challenges are also found in the factors that negatively affect the well-being of teachers in Iraq. According to Kyriacou (2001), numerous challenges teachers encounter at work, including heavy workloads, disruptive students, and administrative requirements, can have a detrimental effect on their well-being. This is demonstrated by the results of the interviews. Following the findings of the interview, it is clear that social support is positively related to the satisfaction and happiness of the teachers. Likewise, the lack of social support, low level of wages, and lack of collaboration lead the teachers to feel disappointed. According to Hendricks (2014), the payment level also influences the teachers' occupational well-being, up to 1.4 percent of teacher turnover can be reduced by increasing one percent of payment. Therefore, it is revealed that the teachers may lose their well-being due to the low payment of salary. In the case of secondary teachers' occupational well-being in Sulaymaniyah-Iraq, the challenges mainly include low wages and personal feelings. the interviewees revealed that not only the low wage but also the payment delay are the factors that influence the teachers' educational well-being. The factors that are influencing the teachers' well-being are summarized in the following figure.
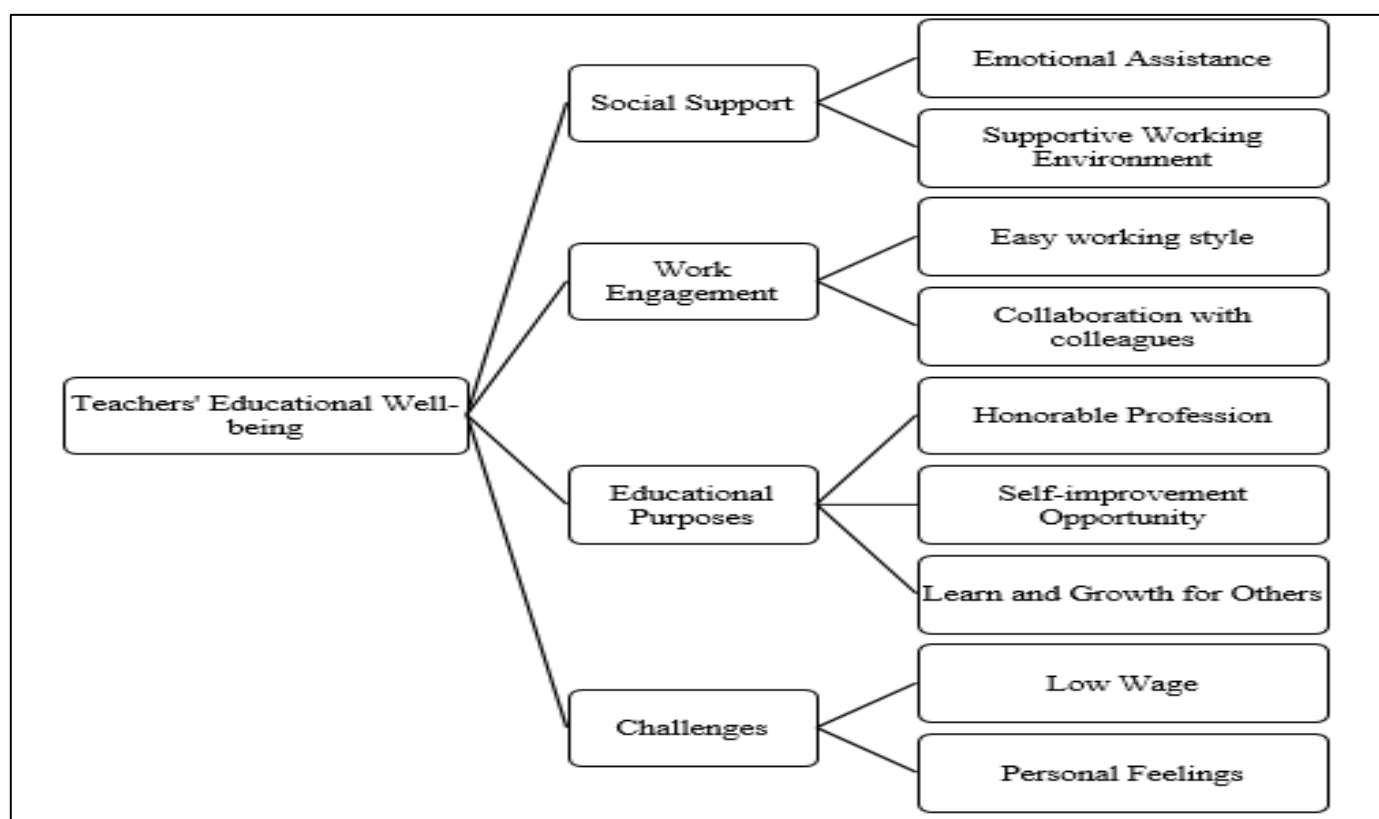

Fig 3: A Streamlined Code from Interview Data Sources

Globally and particularly in Iraq, gender inequality and diversity provide significant obstacles to educational systems. It is necessary to address these disparities and promote gender inclusion to provide equal educational opportunities for all pupils. Furthermore, there are still disparities in enrollment rates between the sexes, with girls often enrolling at lower rates and having less access to education, particularly in traditional and rural regions. However, it is interesting that most of the teachers who showed high occupational well-being are female teachers in Iraq. Overall, it is found that social support and work engagement are positively related to the teachers' occupational well-being in Iraq. Teachers may believe that their lives will be improved at a particular school if they feel supported, valued, and fulfilled in their work. This can come from having access to resources and support systems, opportunities for professional growth and advancement, a positive work environment, and a strong sense of purpose and satisfaction in their role as an educator. Additionally, if a school offers competitive compensation and benefits, it can contribute to an overall improved quality of life for teachers and their families.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

A. Summary of Findings

This chapter presents the findings from the mixed-methods approach utilized in this study, which combines quantitative and qualitative data to explore the impact of social support and work engagement on the occupational well-being of secondary school teachers in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. Given the complex challenges faced by educators in this region, these findings are essential for understanding the dynamics within the educational sector under conditions of political unrest, economic difficulties, and ongoing conflict.

➢ *Quantitative Findings*

● *Relationship Between Social Support, Work Engagement, and Occupational Well-Being*

Analysis of the survey data revealed a significant positive relationship between social support and work engagement, which in turn positively impacts occupational well-being, thus supporting Hypothesis 1 (H1). The findings suggest that:

✓ Social Support and Work Engagement: There is a strong positive correlation between the level of social support teachers receive and their engagement in work. Teachers who reported higher levels of social support demonstrated greater enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption in their teaching roles.
✓ Mediating Role of Work Engagement: Consistent with Hypothesis 2 (H2), work engagement was found to mediate the relationship between social support and occupational well-being. This mediation highlights the importance of engagement as a key mechanism through which social support translates into enhanced well-being.

● *Indirect Effects of Social Support on Occupational Well-Being*

The statistical analysis further confirmed that social support indirectly affects occupational well-being through its influence on work engagement. This pathway underscores the critical role that an engaging work environment plays in the overall health and job satisfaction of educators.

➢ *Qualitative Findings*

● *Enhancing Factors of Occupational Well-Being*

From the interviews with secondary school teachers, several key factors emerged that contribute positively to their occupational well-being:

✓ Supportive Work Environment and Leadership: Teachers highlighted the significance of having supportive leadership and a positive work atmosphere as crucial factors that enhance their job satisfaction and overall well-being.
✓ Opportunities for Professional Development: Continuous professional development and positive interactions with colleagues and students are vital for maintaining teachers' motivation and satisfaction in their roles.
✓ Sense of Fulfillment: Many educators expressed a deep sense of fulfillment from their ability to positively impact their students' lives, which significantly contributes to their sense of occupational well-being.

● *Impact of Compensation and Job Security*

Despite positive aspects, concerns regarding compensation and job security were frequently noted:

✓ Financial Challenges: Low wages and delayed payments were commonly identified as major sources of dissatisfaction and stress, adversely affecting teachers' well-being.
✓ Job Security and Work-Life Balance: Uncertainties regarding job stability and difficulties in maintaining a healthy work-life balance were also highlighted as significant stressors that impact teachers' decisions to remain in their positions.

● *Broader Educational Goals and Challenges*

Responses also shed light on broader educational goals and personal challenges affecting teachers' well-being:

✓ Alignment with Educational Missions: Teachers' alignment with their schools' educational missions provided motivation to persevere despite various challenges.
✓ Personal and Professional Struggles: Handling administrative pressures and managing classroom behaviors were noted as challenges that negatively impact their well-being.
✓ In conclusion, The data from this study illuminate the intricate relationships between social support, work engagement, and occupational well-being among teachers in Sulaymaniyah. The quantitative results, coupled with rich qualitative insights, highlight the necessity of fostering supportive work environments and addressing economic and professional challenges to enhance the well-being and retention of teachers in this challenging context.

B. Policy Recommendations

Based on the existing literature and findings of this study, the following policies are recommended to the schools and policymakers. Policymakers and schools can support work engagement and occupational well-being among teachers (1) by fostering a culture of support and providing resources for social support, (2) by providing resources for social support, autonomy, and professional development opportunities, (3) by fostering a culture of support and providing resources for social support, autonomy, and professional development opportunities, and by implementing initiatives that foster a supportive work environment, encourage employee engagement, and provide resources and opportunities for professional growth and development.

C. Contribution

This study is the very first study on the teachers' occupational well-being of secondary school, in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. This paper will offer an important contribution to the perception of social support, work engagement, and satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Iraq. Therefore, it is expected that this study will be helpful not only to the educational sectors but also to the country in fulfilling the job satisfaction and performance of the teachers, policy-making processes, knowledge-sharing processes, and developmental processes.

D. Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

Future research should strive to identify the most effective ways to provide support in diverse contexts, explore the mechanisms through which work engagement promotes occupational well-being, and identify the most effective ways to promote work engagement among teachers. Concerning the population in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, the amount of survey data collected from teachers is relatively small. Therefore, the generalizations of this thesis are limited to the whole area and country. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported measures of social support, work engagement, and occupational well-being, which may have been subject to bias or measurement error. Finally, the study used a cross-sectional survey design, which limited the ability to establish causal relationships between variables. Despite these limitations, the study provided valuable insights into the social support, work engagement, and occupational well-being of teachers in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, and informed the development of interventions to support teacher well-being. Overall, it is recommended that further research should be conducted for the improvement of occupational well-being among teachers in Iraq.

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APPENDIX

➢ *Please rate your responses to the following statements using the following Likert scale:*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

➢ *Demographic Information:*

- What is your age?
- What is your gender?
- How many years of teaching experience do you have?
- What is your highest level of education?

- **Work Engagement - UWES Questionnaire (Schaufeli et al., 2002):**

➢ *Please Rate your Agreement with the Following Statements:*

➢ *Vigor (VI):*

- When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.
- At my work, I feel bursting with energy.
- At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.

➢ *Dedication (DE):*

- To me, my job is challenging.
- My job inspires me.
- I am enthusiastic about my job.

➢ *Absorption (AB):*

- When I am working, I forget everything else around me.
- Time flies when I am working.
- I get carried away when I am working.

    Please rate your responses to the above statements using the Likert scale provided.

➢ *Occupational well-being - NIOSH Well-Being Questionnaire:*

➢ *Please rate your agreement with the following statements:*

- Overall, I am satisfied with my job.
- I am satisfied with my wages.
- I am satisfied with the benefits provided by the school administration.
- I am satisfied with my chances for advancement on the job.
- I can count on my supervisor for support when I need it.
- I can count on my coworkers for support when I need it.
- I feel my job is secure.
- I am given a lot of freedom to decide how to do my own work.
- I never seem to have enough time to get everything done on my job.
- The work I do is meaningful to me.
- The work I do serves a greater purpose.

    Please rate your responses to the above statements using the Likert scale provided.

- **Social Support - NSSQ (Norbeck Social Support Questionnaire):**

➤ *Please Rate your Agreement with the Following Statements:*

- There are people who care about me and would help me if I needed it.
- I have friends or relatives I can talk to when I have a problem.
- There is someone available to me who shows me love and affection.
- I have someone who can help me if I need advice about a personal problem.
- I have someone who can help me with household chores if I am unable to do them.
- I have someone who understands my problems and worries.
- I feel loved and wanted.
- There are people who would take me to the doctor if I needed it.
- I have someone who can help me if I am confined to bed.
- I have someone who can help me with transportation if I need it.

Please rate your responses to the above statements using the Likert scale provided.

Thank you for participating in this survey! Your responses will contribute to our research on work engagement, well-being, and social support among teachers.