



## Antecedents to Job Satisfaction Among the ESL teachers in the Iraq

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The primary objective of the present study is to examine the influence of job stress on job satisfaction among instructors in the TSL (Teaching as a Second Language) sector in Iraq. In addition, the present study has conducted an examination of the mediating influence of self-efficacy and self-esteem on the association between job stress and job satisfaction within the context of TSL (Teaching as a Second Language) teachers in Iraq. **Methodology:** The selected research methodology employs a survey-based strategy, wherein questionnaires were distributed to a total of 600 English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in Iraq. The researchers have successfully received 430 completed questionnaires, out of which 390 were deemed suitable for inclusion in the subsequent analysis.

The instruments included in this investigation have been derived from previous studies, which have undergone validation and reliability testing. The assessment of the instrument's validity and reliability is conducted through the utilization of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and Cronbach's alpha, respectively. **Results:** The findings obtained from the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) study indicate a statistically significant positive association between job stress and job satisfaction among English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in Iraq. The findings of the study indicate that the presence of self-efficacy and self-esteem have notable effects as mediators in the correlation between job stress and job satisfaction. **Implications:** The potential consequences of these findings have great importance for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in Iraq. By gaining an awareness of the various elements that impact the job satisfaction of English as a Second Language

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(ESL) instructors, policymakers and program developers can create initiatives aimed at supporting teachers in effectively managing job-related stress and fostering higher levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem. **Novelty:** This study is a pioneering effort in examining the interplay between job stress, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and job happiness within the context of ESL teachers in Iraq.

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Job satisfaction (JS) is a subjective measure of an individual's emotional state that arises from their judgment of their job or work experiences, encompassing both good and negative aspects. Many previous researches have demonstrated that job satisfaction is a crucial determinant of employee performance and employee well-being (Abdullah et al., 2021). Teachers have a crucial role in shaping the nation since they contribute to the overall development and progress of society. The contentment and well-being of the teaching community are of utmost importance to the functioning and prosperity of the broader community. The teacher's profession is increasingly becoming more demanding as time progresses, particularly due to the use of information communication technology. The introduction of innovative pedagogical approaches has been a challenge for teachers in meeting the expectations placed upon them (Bagde, Bobde, & Bagde, 2021). The increasing levels of stress have prompted inquiries regarding the subject of JS. Specifically, there exists a discrepancy between the expectations of the profession and the teacher's capacity to effectively manage them, resulting in potential stress for the teacher. This phenomenon might potentially elicit a diverse array of negative emotions, including but not limited to anger, worry, stress, annoyance, and possibly even depressive symptoms. The matter of tension among educators is a noteworthy concern that possesses the capacity to escalate. One of the initial investigations into the job satisfaction of teachers revealed that a quarter of the participants in their sample acknowledged experiencing significant levels of strain and stress in their profession (Abdullah et al., 2022). Due to the potential negative consequences associated with stress among educators, including reduced job satisfaction, burnout, increased absenteeism, and turnover, educational institutions should implement strategies aimed at mitigating the stress experienced by teachers. This proactive approach is crucial for safeguarding the well-being and effectiveness of the teaching workforce. According to reports, there exists a correlation between consistent and extended exposure to occupational stress and the development of short- and long-term health issues, as well as burnout. These factors have been found to have a substantial impact on an individual's work dedication and performance (Guthier, Dormann, & Voelkle, 2020).

Many researchers and educational professionals have extensively documented various aspects that impact the job satisfaction (JS) of teachers. Among these factors, job stress (JSTR) emerges as particularly significant and influential, as it exhibits a direct and adverse influence on overall job satisfaction. In their recent study, Aktan and Toraman (2022) observed that the job satisfaction (JS) of instructors was mostly influenced by stress arising from suboptimal working conditions, specifically insufficient time for planning and preparation, as well as a heavy teaching workload. Another contributing element, in addition to stress, is self-efficacy (SE). Research indicates that instructors with high levels of self-efficacy are more inclined to persist

in the face of challenges compared to their counterparts with low self-efficacy (Baguri et al., 2022). Therefore, it is imperative for educational institutions to promote self-efficacy among teachers and equip them with effective coping mechanisms to address workplace stress, in order to mitigate its adverse impact on both classroom morale and productivity. The concept of self-efficacy among academics is a distinct notion that pertains to their belief in their ability to influence student achievement. Research has shown that a teacher's self-efficacy, or their conviction in their own capability to effectively perform their teaching duties, is a significant indicator of job happiness. Social engagement (SE) is widely recognized as a significant factor in fostering motivation and commitment among instructors. Existing research has demonstrated a correlation between elevated levels of teacher self-efficacy (SE) and reduced job turnover rates, as well as decreased absenteeism within the classroom. Conversely, teachers characterized by low SE tend to exhibit heightened work-related stress and encounter more challenging student circumstances (van Rooij, Fokkens-Bruinsma, & Goedhart, 2019). Educators who hold the belief in their ability to fulfill the majority of the expectations imposed upon them, along with their own professional goals, are more inclined to experience satisfaction in their work and exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction. Providing teachers with opportunities to raise their self-esteem and self-assurance can yield favorable outcomes in terms of reducing their stress levels and consequently augmenting their job satisfaction (Lavrijsen et al., 2023). This study has investigated the mediating effect of self-efficacy (SE) in the link between job stress and job satisfaction (JS).

One of the significant characteristics that characterize a teacher's personality is self-esteem, which refers to an individual's attitude toward oneself (Tus, 2020). Self-esteem is a significant factor in determining teachers' job satisfaction (JS) and has a crucial role in their general well-being and contentment, as well as their ability to adapt to various situations and maintain a strong feeling of self-worth (Ortan, Simut, & Simut, 2021). Individuals who possess elevated levels of self-esteem and attribute significant worth to themselves are inclined to experience greater life satisfaction, improved interpersonal connections, enhanced stability and productivity in their endeavors, and reduced susceptibility to the onset of mental and physical ailments, including anxiety, depression, and illness, in comparison to individuals who possess lower levels of self-esteem. People who possess a strong sense of self-worth generally experience greater levels of happiness and well-being compared to those with a diminished sense of self-value (Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2021). Therefore, the influence of self-esteem on teachers' job satisfaction is a noteworthy aspect that has received limited attention in the existing academic literature. The link between teacher qualities and job satisfaction (JS) in Irish primary schools exhibits a notable lack of consistency. This highlights the imperative to do research aimed at elucidating the aspects that contribute to JS among teachers in this context (Kelly et al., 2019). The effectiveness of educators is influenced by various factors, including their self-worth, confidence in their abilities, stress levels, and ability to handle challenging situations. In light of this, the study aims to investigate how self-esteem serves as a mediating factor in the connection between job stress and job satisfaction (JS) among teachers.

## 1. Hypothesis Development

Over the past few decades, there has been a notable shift in various research domains, encompassing pure sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities. Particularly in academia and focusing on the sample of educators, researchers employing diverse theoretical frameworks have explored factors contributing to enhanced teacher job satisfaction (JS). Among these factors, job stress (JSTR) emerges as a significant consideration. In contemporary organizations, the shift towards complex systems has led to a heightened need for addressing workplace stress and bolstering job satisfaction within the workforce (Mulang, 2022). A study revealed that a substantial portion, around 50-60 percent, of sick leaves can be attributed to workplace stress. This phenomenon, referred to as "work-related stress," arises when there is a discrepancy between job requirements and employees' actual skills, knowledge, or ability to cope, often termed as skill-role alignment (Knox, 2022). Numerous studies have converged on the finding that employees' exposure to both physical and psychological hazards in their work environment contributes to their experience of stress. The presence of potentially risky situations can exacerbate stress and anxiety levels in the workplace. Instances of psychosocial hazards within work settings encompass aspects like the social structure of the workplace, managerial practices, and organizational policies (McLoughlin et al., 2021). The adeptness with which individuals and organizations manage job-related stress holds considerable implications for their overall health, well-being, productivity, and commitment to the organization. The conceptual framework of the current study is depicted in Figure 1.

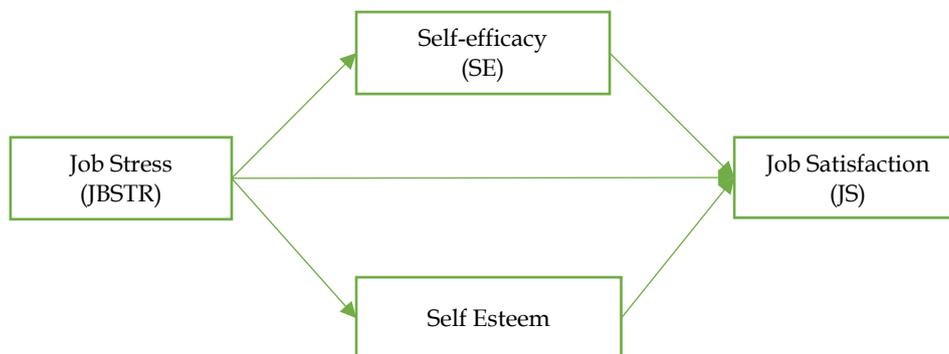


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Given the established correlation between elevated job stress and diminished job satisfaction, coupled with the demonstrated ability of Job Stressors (JSTRors) to predict both job discontentment and an elevated likelihood of employee turnover (Lee, Hwang, & Lee, 2019), empirical investigations have consistently identified JSTR as a paramount job-related factor influencing an employee's level of job satisfaction. The term "job satisfaction" encompasses an employee's overall sentiment towards their job and specific facets of their work. Aspects like compensation, benefits, and working conditions all fall within this purview. Recent studies suggest that prevailing employment practices could have adverse effects on workers' well-being and contentment in their work environment (Guerci, Hauff, & Gilardi, 2022). In distinction from negative affectivity, which is marked by reduced

distress, limited engagement in unpleasant tasks, and minimal anxiety, positive affectivity is defined by heightened levels of vitality, enthusiasm, and engagement in enjoyable endeavors. Stress in the workplace can yield both favorable and adverse consequences, encompassing heightened creativity and job satisfaction, as well as heightened irritability and compromised job performance. Employee responses to diverse stressors can be impacted by their level of job satisfaction. During the neoclassical era from 1920 to 1950, theories postulating a direct and causal link between employee contentment and productivity gained prominence. In this timeframe, many organizations actively pursued strategies to boost employee productivity (Kpognon et al., 2022). Employee dissatisfaction or stress in the workplace can detrimentally impact their efficiency, leading to heightened costs for the business. As a result, the imperative of enhancing work quality and productivity, while also ensuring a safe and healthy work environment, has emerged as a paramount global concern.

In recent times, significant attention has been directed towards the recognition that workplace stress poses a substantial threat to job satisfaction (Giménez-Espert, Prado-Gascó, & Soto-Rubio, 2020). Individuals subjected to prolonged periods of excessive work intensity will eventually experience its toll on their well-being, leading to job dissatisfaction. Moreover, when employees are burdened with workloads beyond their capacity, their physical and mental health are jeopardized. Numerous studies have established a connection between workplace stress and serious health issues such as heart disease, depression, and even cancer. The ramifications of workplace stress encompass dissatisfied employees, negative attitudes, high turnover rates, and increased employee absences – all of which impose significant costs on businesses (Ketkaew, Manglakakeeree, & Naruetharadhol, 2020). Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated that Job Stressors (JSTR) exert a significant influence on the Job Satisfaction (JS) of English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. JSTRs experienced by ESL teachers encompass a range of factors, including substantial workloads, overcrowded classrooms, student behavior challenges, inadequate compensation, limited resources, and restricted professional growth opportunities. These stressors contribute to heightened levels of burnout, absenteeism, and turnover within the ESL teaching profession. Additionally, JSTRs have the potential to adversely affect the mental and physical well-being of teachers, further impacting their overall job satisfaction and performance. Given these implications, educational institutions must acknowledge and proactively address the sources of JSTR among ESL teachers in order to enhance their job satisfaction and overall quality of life. Thus the current study has proposed the following hypothesis :

**H1:** JBSTR has significant impact on the teacher's satisfaction of ESL teacher

Self-Efficacy (SE) refers to an individual's capacity, determination, willpower, and confidence to accomplish their objectives and successfully complete tasks. Confidence, a crucial facet of SE, is evaluated through an individual's performance in specific job roles or situations. The connection between Human Resources (HR) and employee satisfaction has extensively explored SE as a precursor to Job Satisfaction (JS) (Wu et al., 2020). JS, in essence, signifies the level of contentment, happiness, and overall well-being an individual derives from their organization or workplace. Numerous prior research studies have underscored that SE acts as a precursor to teachers' performance, which subsequently

influences their overall job satisfaction. In an attempt to comprehensively comprehend the influence of Self-Efficacy (SE) on teacher satisfaction, [Zakariya \(2020\)](#) conducted a study that highlighted SE's substantial impact not only on teachers' Job Satisfaction (JS) but also on students' learning outcomes. This emphasizes the significance of cultivating a heightened sense of self-efficacy among educators as a pivotal approach to elevate the quality of education in Iraq. The study's findings underscored that an elevated level of self-efficacy contributes to heightened teacher satisfaction, which subsequently has the potential to impact teacher productivity, retention rates, and the overall quality of their students' educational experience.

Several studies have delved into the correlation between teachers' Self-Efficacy (SE) and their Job Satisfaction (JS) within the context of Iraq. Notably, a study conducted by [Alzahrani \(2022\)](#) explored this relationship among English language teachers in the Kingdom of Iraq. The research revealed a substantial impact of SE on JS, indicating that SE serves as a robust predictor of Job Satisfaction among English language teachers in Iraq. In a parallel vein, another study by [Kasalak and Dagyar \(2020\)](#) also examined the interplay between teacher SE, JS, and burnout in the Iraqi context. Their findings unveiled that educators with higher levels of SE were notably less prone to experiencing burnout and significantly more inclined to express contentment with their professional careers.

This research aimed to explore the correlation among Job Satisfaction (JS), Job Satisfaction with Salary (JBSTR), and Job Satisfaction with Job Security (JSSE) among ESL teachers within Iraq. The outcomes of this study are poised to offer valuable insights to English as a Second Language (ESL) educators in Iraq, potentially alleviating their workload and enhancing their overall Job Satisfaction by fostering greater self-confidence within the classroom environment. Enhancing teachers' sense of purpose and self-confidence can be achieved through avenues such as providing professional development opportunities. These platforms enable educators to acquire effective teaching techniques and insights from their peers. Additionally, implementing stress-reducing and productivity-enhancing classroom management strategies can prove advantageous, assisting teachers in effectively managing disruptive student behavior. This approach benefits both teachers and students alike. Thus, this study proposes a hypothesis as follows:

**H2:** JBSTR has significant impact on the SE of ESL teachers in Iraq.

**H3:** SE has significant impact on the JS of ESL teachers in Iraq.

**H4:** SE mediates the relationship between the JBSTR and JS of ESL teachers in Iraq.

Self-esteem, the individual's perception and evaluation of themselves, is constructed through a combination of internal thoughts and interactions with the external environment. This composite encompasses a spectrum of sentiments and sentiments, spanning from pride to shame, from achievement to disappointment, ultimately encapsulating the overall value attributed to one's self. As outlined by [Valkenburg et al. \(2021\)](#), self-esteem encapsulates a person's self-assessment of their intrinsic value, characterized by a spectrum spanning from broad to intricate. Maslow's influential framework on motivation delved into the concept of self-esteem needs, which he classified into two tiers—lower and higher—asserting that distinct behaviors are impelled by each

tier. Maslow's lower level of self-esteem needs pertains to the pursuit of recognition, fame, authority, control, or a combination of these factors. This level is characterized by a profound craving for external validation and approval from others. On the other hand, the higher level of self-esteem needs involves a profound sense of self-respect. It encompasses feelings of confidence, competence, accomplishment, mastery, autonomy, and liberty.

For a nation to establish and maintain an effective, efficient, productive, and resilient educational system, it is essential to attract and retain exceptional educators (Agasisti et al., 2021). According to Ansong and Darko-Adjei (2022), aside from institutional elements like salary, advancement prospects, management quality, benefits, monetary rewards, working environment, colleagues, job responsibilities, communication, and institutional environment, as well as personal factors such as age, gender, religion, and home life, individual traits like self-esteem play a crucial role in employee retention. Many previous studies have indicated that self-esteem significantly impacts the job satisfaction of academics. It is frequently emphasized that when a teacher values themselves and their profession highly, they are more inclined to deliver the utmost quality education to their students (Kouhsari, Chen, & Amirian, 2022).

The type of school where a teacher works, whether public or private, can impact their level of pride in their work and job satisfaction. In developing countries like Iraq, where the population is growing at a rate of 1.8% per year (2019), public sector educational institutions often struggle to meet the increasing demand (Radwan, Khan, & Elmanfaloty, 2021). Consequently, private sector educational institutions have shouldered a significant portion of the responsibility for educating the population. Both public and private institutions offer various incentives to retain their teaching staff. Government schools provide job security, consistent compensation, and pension plans; however, the rate of pay increase and opportunities for advancement are relatively slow (Badrolhisam, Achim, & Zulkipli, 2019; Idan, Eriksson, & Al-Yagon, 2022; Jakubowski & Sitko-Dominik, 2021). Teachers in private schools often receive higher pay and have more opportunities for career advancement. However, they also face the risk of dismissal if their students' academic performance does not meet expectations and the school's efforts to improve it are unsuccessful. An individual's sense of self-worth is a significant factor in determining their job satisfaction. In Iraq, educators encounter specific challenges that can negatively impact their self-esteem and their overall ability to perform their roles effectively, thereby affecting their job satisfaction.

The role of self-esteem as a potential mediator in the relationship between role stress and job satisfaction has garnered varying perspectives from researchers. Some argue that self-esteem, due to its explanatory power in understanding the influence of one set of independent variables on another set of dependent variables, may play a critical mediating role in the connection between job stress and job satisfaction. The mediating effect of self-esteem can be attributed to two potential explanations: increased resilience to stressful situations and enhanced coping abilities when facing challenges (Wen et al., 2021). Thus, this study proposes a hypothesis as follows:

**H5:** JBSTR has significant impact on the self-esteem of ESL teachers in Iraq.

**H6:** Self-esteem has significant impact on the JS of ESL teachers in Iraq.

**H7:** Self-esteem mediates the relationship between the JBSTR and JS of ESL teachers in Iraq.

## 2. Methodology

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the influence of Job Stress (JSTR) on Job Satisfaction (JS) among English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in Iraq. Additionally, the research also explores the potential mediating role of Self-Efficacy (SE) and self-esteem in the connection between JSTR and JS within the context of ESL teachers in Iraq. The research methodology employs a survey-based approach, involving the distribution of questionnaires to 600 ESL teachers in Iraq. Out of the received 430 responses, 390 were considered for analysis. The tools employed in this study are based on previously established research instruments that have been verified for validity and consistency. To assess the instruments' credibility and stability, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and Cronbach's alpha analysis are employed. The survey tool, drawn from earlier studies, encompasses a total of 37 queries. These queries are presented on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The survey questionnaire is divided into two sections: the first encompasses demographic information, while the second focuses on the research objectives. For data analysis, the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach is utilized.

## 3. Results

In this study, the SEM-PLS method is employed, known for its robustness in multilevel analysis within the field of social sciences. SEM-PLS is employed to explore both the direct influence of JSTR and JS, as well as to investigate how self-efficacy and self-esteem mediate the connection between JSTR and JS. The SEM-PLS approach comprises two main steps: the measurement model and the structural model (Hair & Alamer, 2022). The depiction of the measurement model can be observed in Figure 2 below.

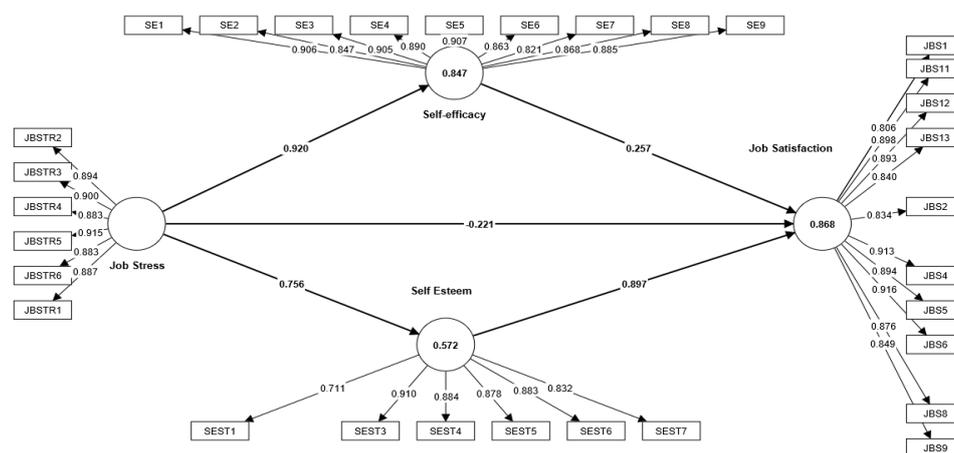


Figure 2: Measurement Model

The outer loading values of the measurement model are presented in Table 1 below. It is worth noting that items such as JBS3, JBS7, JBS14, and SEST2, which possess loading values below 0.70, have been excluded from the analysis.

**Table 1**

*Outer Loadings*

	<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>Job Stress</b>	<b>Self Esteem</b>	<b>Self-efficacy</b>
JBS1	0.849			
JBS10	0.806			
JBS11	0.898			
JBS12	0.893			
JBS13	0.840			
JBS2	0.834			
JBS4	0.913			
JBS5	0.894			
JBS6	0.916			
JBS8	0.876			
JBS9	0.849			
JBSTR1		0.887		
JBSTR2		0.894		
JBSTR3		0.900		
JBSTR4		0.883		
JBSTR5		0.915		
JBSTR6		0.883		
SE1				0.906
SE2				0.847
SE3				0.905
SE4				0.890
SE5				0.907
SE6				0.863
SE7				0.821
SE8				0.868
SE9				0.885
SEST1			0.711	
SEST3			0.910	
SEST4			0.884	
SEST5			0.878	
SEST6			0.883	
SEST7			0.832	

The reliability analysis results for the current model are displayed in [Table 2](#) below. These outcomes provide confirmation that the instrument utilized in the present study is dependable and suitable for regression analysis.

**Table 2**

*Reliability Analysis*

	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>(rho_a)</b>	<b>(rho_c)</b>	<b>(AVE)</b>
Job Satisfaction	0.968	0.969	0.972	0.757
Job Stress	0.950	0.950	0.960	0.799
Self Esteem	0.923	0.924	0.941	0.726
Self-efficacy	0.962	0.963	0.968	0.770

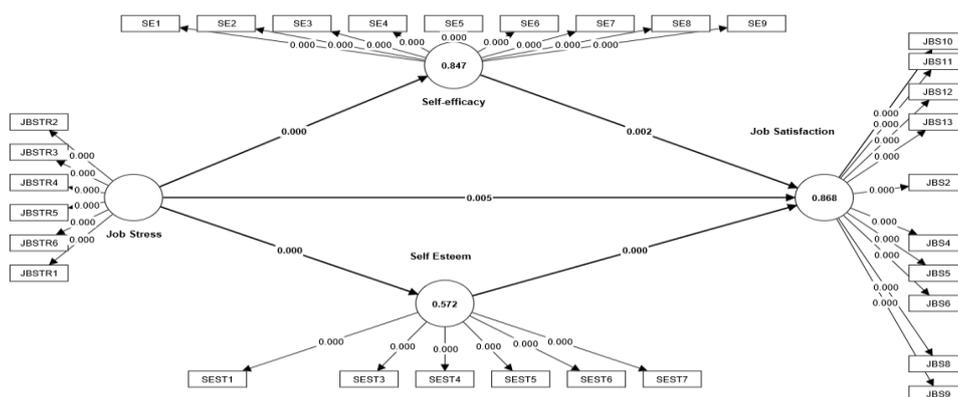
The outcomes of the Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant analysis are presented in Table 3. The findings indicate that all the diagonal values are larger than the other values, in line with the Fornell-Larcker criterion. This confirms the validity of the instrument utilized in the study.

**Table 3**

*Discriminant Validity*

	Job Satisfaction	Job Stress	Self Esteem	Self-efficacy
Job Satisfaction	0.870			
Job Stress	0.795	0.894		
Self Esteem	0.826	0.756	0.852	
Self-efficacy	0.738	0.720	0.762	0.877

A structural model is a statistical representation that depicts the connections among a group of variables. In structural modeling, the focus is on the theoretical and causal links between these variables, rather than solely describing their correlations. In this study, the bootstrapping procedure has been employed to estimate the structural model. The structural model itself is illustrated in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Structural Model**

The outcomes of the structural models are presented in Table 4 and Table 5. The findings validate the significance of all direct paths, including Job Stress -> Job Satisfaction, Job Stress -> Self-Esteem, Job Stress -> Self-Efficacy, Self-Esteem -> Job Satisfaction, and Self-Efficacy -> Job Satisfaction.

**Table 4**

*Direct Paths*

	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)	( O/STDEV )	P values
Job Stress -> Job Satisfaction	0.695	0.696	0.064	3.777	0.000
Job Stress -> Self Esteem	0.756	0.757	0.055	3.866	0.000
Job Stress -> Self-efficacy	0.920	0.920	0.015	4.693	0.000
Self Esteem -> Job Satisfaction	0.897	0.888	0.058	3.574	0.000
Self-efficacy -> Job Satisfaction	0.257	0.266	0.091	2.833	0.002

The results of the mediation analysis for the paths Job Stress -> Self-Esteem -> Job Satisfaction and Job Stress -> Self-Efficacy -> Job Satisfaction indicate that both self-esteem and self-efficacy mediate the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.

**Table 5**

*Mediation Analysis*

	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)	( O/STDEV )	P values
Job Stress -> Self Esteem -> Job Satisfaction	0.679	0.670	0.044	15.418	0.000
Job Stress -> Self-efficacy -> Job Satisfaction	0.237	0.245	0.083	2.841	0.002

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The results of the first hypothesis indicate a positive and significant relationship between Job-Related Stress (JBSTR) and job satisfaction among ESL teachers. This finding might appear counterintuitive, as typically, job-related stress is associated with negative outcomes such as burnout and intentions to leave a job. However, a potential explanation for this relationship could be that the ESL teachers in Iraq are facing a level of stress that is manageable and even motivating, rather than overwhelming. This manageable stress might be driving them to put in more effort and dedication, ultimately resulting in increased job satisfaction. It's also possible that the specific nature of stress experienced by ESL teachers in Iraq, within their unique roles and context, is perceived as fulfilling or rewarding in some way, contributing to their higher job satisfaction levels. The findings are consistent with the social cognitive theory.

The study's results reveal that the influence of Job-Related Stress (JBSTR) on job satisfaction is partially mediated by the level of Self-Efficacy (SE) among ESL teachers in Iraq. This suggests that SE acts as a mediator in the relationship between JBSTR and job satisfaction. The findings indicate that ESL teachers in Iraq are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction even when facing stress if they possess a strong sense of self-efficacy. These finding also align with social cognitive theory, which asserts that self-efficacy plays a significant role in shaping individuals' behaviors and motivations. According to the theory, individuals with high self-efficacy are more inclined to set ambitious goals, persist in pursuing them despite challenges, and ultimately achieve their goals even in stressful circumstances, as proposed by [Luszczynska and Schwarzer \(2015\)](#).

The study's results indicate a relationship between Job-Related Stress (JBSTR), self-esteem, and job satisfaction among ESL educators in Iraq who teach the Japanese language and culture. The SEM-PLS analysis highlights that the association between JBSTR and job satisfaction is mediated by the teachers' sense of self-worth. The findings reveal that higher levels of JBSTR are linked to lower self-esteem and reduced job satisfaction among ESL teachers in Iraq. In other words, the study suggests that the negative impact of JBSTR on job satisfaction is influenced by the teachers' self-esteem levels, indicating that when stress levels rise, it can lead to lower self-esteem and subsequently decreased job satisfaction among these educators in Iraq.

The study's outcomes highlight that there exists a noteworthy and affirmative correlation between JBSTR and JS among ESL teachers in Iraq. Furthermore, the research

findings suggest that the association between JBSTR and JS is influenced by the mediating factors of self-efficacy and self-esteem. Additionally, the study uncovers that both self-efficacy and self-esteem play vital intermediary roles not only in the link between JBSTR and JS but also in the interconnection between job burnout and job satisfaction. This reveals that the impact of job satisfaction levels among Iraqi ESL teachers can be partially understood by considering the influence of their self-efficacy. Educators might tend to exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction even in the face of considerable stressors if they hold a belief in their ability to effectively manage the challenges they confront. The connection between Job-Based Self-Transcendence Orientation (JBSTR) and job satisfaction is affected by an individual's perception of their intrinsic value and importance, commonly referred to as their self-worth. The theory suggests that educators with a strong sense of self-esteem are better equipped to navigate the challenges inherent in their profession, leading to a higher degree of contentment with their overall career experience.

## 5. Policy Implications

The outcomes of these findings provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders in Iraq. The study's conclusions propose that educators and policymakers can take measures to retain skilled workforce by understanding the elements influencing the job satisfaction of ESL professionals. These elements encompass gaining a deeper comprehension of the factors influencing their job contentment. To this end, employees can strive to achieve a harmonious equilibrium between their personal and professional lives and cultivate effective stress coping mechanisms, facilitated by an organization's human resources department. Such efforts could potentially contribute to improved student learning outcomes and achievements within the classroom.

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