

## **Determinants Contributing to EFL Teachers' Motivation in The Ministry of Health Higher Education Institutions in Oman**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The purpose of the current study was to explore the intrinsic and extrinsic determinants that contributed to 57 EFL teachers' motivation who worked in 9 higher education institutions that functioned under the auspices of the Omani Ministry of Health. The study also proposed to examine the factors that hampered the EFL teachers' motivation and measure their motivation level as well. The theoretical framework of the present study was based on the self-determination theory (for instance, Ryan & Deci, 2000) especially the categories of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation which outline self-determination theory (Dörnyei, 2001, 2005). A mixed-methods approach was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data employing a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was administered to 57 EFL teachers and 15 teachers were interviewed. The findings revealed that the EFL teachers' motivation was governed by some extrinsic factors, for instance, apt work environment, gratifying pay, and perks, an atmosphere of geniality and companionability, administrative support, Head of Department backing, preferment system, availableness and accessibility of teaching resources, job description, cooperative colleagues, relationships with students and professional training and development. Further, the teachers were intrinsically motivated by their ardor for teaching, students' success and achievements, and entitlement to autonomy.*

**KEYWORDS:** higher education institutions, determinants, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, EFL teachers

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Teacher motivation is adjudged to play a pivotal role in the advancement and furtherance of teaching and learning perfectness. Research and study in the area of EFL teacher motivation have recently gathered momentum and lengthy treatises that are germane to teacher motivation in various parts of the world have made major contributions in this burgeoning realm (Khanal and Phyak 2021; Patil Vidyapeeth 2020; Börü 2018; Han and Yin 2016; Manuel and Hughes 2006; Shoaib

2004; Dornyei 2001; Al Hashmi 2004; Menyhart 2008; Kiziltepe 2008; Gheralis-Rouss 2003). Nevertheless, no previous studies or research were conducted on EFL teacher motivation in the Ministry of Health Higher Education Institutions in Oman. According to Mustafa and Othman (2010), teacher motivation is a key factor in the enhancement of teaching and learning caliber. Precisely, motivated teachers incline to inspire students to learn, maintain implementing the practice of education reforms, and have the feeling of fulfillment and satisfaction. Nonetheless, demotivated teachers may de-motivate students and hamper achieving the institution's educational goals. Teachers in general, compared with other professionals, display greater emotional symptom levels. On the one hand, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and stress can negatively influence teachers' job performance and motivation (Dai and Sternber, 2004). On the other hand, teachers with low motivation levels are inclined to perceive that their students' motivation levels are low (Johnson , 2017; Gorham and Millete, 1997). Although a lot of research and studies on teacher motivation have been conducted worldwide, there are no studies that have been carried out on teacher motivation in Oman. Thus, the present research fills this gap. The current study aimed to explore the intrinsic and extrinsic determinants that contributed to 57 EFL teachers' motivation. The study was conducted in 9 Ministry of Health Higher Education Institutions which are located in major cities throughout Oman. The 9 institutions functioned under the supervision of the Omani Ministry of Health to offer professional training education in nursing and some allied health disciplines. The institutions received secondary school leavers from different regions in Oman and place them in an intensive foundation English program.

### **Research Objectives**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the determinants which contribute to EFL teachers' motivation in the Ministry of Health Higher Education Institutions in Oman.
2. To identify factors that hamper EFL teachers' motivation.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section reviews literature that is germane to motivation with an emphasis on EFL teacher motivation. The literature review elaborates on the following themes: concept and meaning of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic determinants that contribute to teacher motivation. These comprise job satisfaction, the caliber of the work environment, relations with the administration, supervisors, and colleagues, community and social determinants, remuneration, professional training and development, and decision making.

### **Concept and Meaning of Motivation**

Motivation emanates from the Latin word *movers* which means to move or carry on. Motivation can be defined as determination and direction of action (Mullins, 2002). Motivation is likely about individuals' options for a preferred path of action and the reason they carry on with a chosen action, sometimes for a long period, challenging obstacles and hindrances (Ingham, 2000).

Some theories defined, discussed, and construed motivation such as Murray's need theory in 1938, Maslow's hierarchy of needs in 1954, McClelland's need achievement theory in 1960, Weiner's attribution theory in 1974, and Bandura's self-efficacy theory in 1994. It is claimed that one of the major discrepancies among the aforementioned theories is fundamentally the extrinsic and intrinsic motives (Vallerand, Fortier and Guay, 1997). This area of research was encapsulated by Deci and Ryan in the 1980s to develop into self-determination theory. It is argued that self-determination theory has been the most dominant and researched theory of motivation (Winn, Harley, Wilcox and Pemberton, 2006). Self-determination theory suggests that extrinsic motivation, which is linked to an individual's surroundings, can develop into self-determined (intrinsic) provided the presence of relatedness (being linked to one's surroundings), competence (feeling of self-efficacy) and autonomy (feeling of individual's control), (Deci and Ryan, 1985). According to Williams and Burden (1997), intrinsic can be defined as gaining something within any task, for instance, own enjoyment and interests, whereas extrinsic is connected to something outside oneself such as monetary return or passing an examination. Nevertheless, Williams and Burden further add that both extrinsic and intrinsic can have an effect on individuals' motivation at the same time. Despite suggesting that social duress (extrinsic) can be adverse to motivation (Heckhausen and Dweck, 1998), Ryan and Deci (2000) claim that extrinsic elements such as social expectation or duress can be internalized, advantageous, and combined with the sense of "self" provided the presence of material or physical gain.

### **Intrinsic and Extrinsic Determinants Contributing to EFL Teachers' Motivation**

The issue of EFL teachers' motivation, particularly in higher education institutions, is deemed to be one of the salient concerns of the institution's management (Sharma & Srivastava, 2019; Philip, 2012). According to Praver and Oga-Balwin (2008), there are two types of EFL teachers' motivation: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. On the one hand, intrinsic motivation is germane to teachers' internal desire to teach, connectivity between teachers and students, feeling of effectiveness in teaching, and accomplishment sense. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is about career stability, the autonomy and independence to opt for teaching methods and teaching materials, encouraging work relationships, and effective communication. One of the pivotal facets that affect teacher motivation is job

satisfaction. Wright (1985) argues that recognition plays a crucial role in teachers' satisfaction and motivation. Recognition and appreciation of teachers' performance, accomplishments, and achievements can boost their satisfaction. Further, Autonomy is among the factors which have an impact on teachers' satisfaction and motivation. Praver and Oga- Baldwin (2008) suggest that teachers should be entitled to exercise a high degree of autonomy and authority to design teaching materials, set students' learning goals, plan their lessons and decide on the appropriate teaching methods for their classes. The Calibre of the work environment has also an impact on teacher motivation. Johnstone (2004) points out that the quality of working conditions is amid many factors that can have a negative or positive force on EFL teachers' performance. Precisely, there is a strong link between physical work environments such as construction and design of the workplace, safe drinking water, clean indoor air, ergonomic workstation design, and employees' health because a healthy work environment affects employees' productivity and motivation.

Remuneration is one of the salient factors that impact teacher motivation. Money is considered to be an indispensable source of people's desire to work (Smith and Warner, 1993). Chandan (2010) asserts that income is an important factor that determines human conduct. He further stresses that money is not only utilized to satisfy people's biological needs but also expresses people's social status. There is a strong correlation between payment and motivation. Ingham (2000) claims that people who feel that they are unfairly paid are less satisfied with their work. This is can be true as money is believed to be a source of recognition and can be utilized to obtain different values, for example, leisure (MacClelland, 1991). Professional training and development are also among the elements which affect teacher motivation (Saleem, Gull & Dogar, 2022). Professional training and development are defined as obtaining new skills and utility of new methods which can benefit both employees and organizations (Dibble, 1999). The purpose of teacher training is to develop their teaching skills and to improve their academic performance as there is a strong correlation between training quality and performance enhancement (Yovita, 2019; Woodward 1992; Hill et al. 2005; Kane et al. 2006; Aaronson et al. 2007). Decision-making is also a pivotal factor that affects teacher motivation. According to Dessler (2007), permitting teachers to have their input into the education institution's policies and contribute to decision-making can intrinsically motivate them. Teachers' participation in decision-making can help increase their sense of self-worth and improve their academic performance (Kadzamira, 2006). In addition, teachers' involvement in decision-making can reduce their sense of alienation, empower them to develop and enable teachers to lead beyond the classroom (Benson and Malone 1987; Taylor and Tashakhori 1997).

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The present study was underpinned by the self-determination theory (for instance, Ryan and Deci, 2000) especially the categories of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation which outline self-determination theory (Dörnyei, 2001, 2005). According to Ryan and Deci (2000), intrinsic motivation is pertinent to internal feelings whereas extrinsic motivation is externally governed by instrumental features as sanctions avoidance and the acquisition of future precious returns. Accordingly, Ryan and Deci analyze the interaction between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation with an emphasis on any psychological elements that stimulate. Those elements incorporate the need for competence (feeling of self-efficacy), relatedness (being linked to one's surroundings), and autonomy (feeling of individual control). The three psychological elements are discussed below in more detail.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This section gives a thorough elucidation of the approach used to carry out the study. It comprises research design, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, data collection, and data analysis.

### **Research Design**

The current study adopted a mixed-methods approach or multi-methodology. The mixed-methods approach is a methodology that incorporates collecting, analyzing, and integrating both qualitative and quantitative data in one single study or research (Creswell, 2003).

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The current study adopted purposive sampling technique to sample 57 EFL teachers. According to Maxwell (1997), purposive sampling is a kind of non-probability sampling technique. Non-probability sampling addresses sampling techniques where research participants are examined based on the researcher's judgment. It is usually used with a fairly small sample. Purposive sampling enables the researcher to make generalizations about the study or research results.

### **Research Instrument**

The study data was collected via two instruments: a questionnaire (quantitative data) and a semi-structured interview (qualitative data).

### **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher. Furthermore, in designing the questionnaire, the researcher made use of Kassabgy et al. (2001) study which examined the motivation and job satisfaction of 107 EFL teachers in Hawaii and

Egypt. The questionnaire was divided into two sections comprising 29 close-ended items. The first section aimed to collect personal data on the participants such as age, gender, qualification, and teaching experience. The second section consisted of 5-point Likert scale items designed to examine intrinsic and extrinsic determinants that governed the teachers' motivation. In short, the questionnaire provided macro data about participants' background information, an exhaustive depiction of intrinsic and extrinsic motivating/de-motivating determinants, and EFL teachers' degree or level of motivation. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher.

### **Semi-structured Interview**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 teachers. Four questions constituted the interviews. The interviewees were selected from different regions to obtain a wide range of data from different MoH institutions in Oman. The interviews provided microdata. They allowed the interviewees to express themselves freely and they also provided valuable data from participants' contexts and experiences. The interviews were conducted via personal meetings and telephone.

The study instruments (questionnaire and interview) were carefully tested before using them for data collection. The questionnaire was given to 5 EFL teachers and another 5 EFL teachers were interviewed. After analyzing the findings, some questions were modified or revised for clarity and some were added. In addition, opinions from the Head of the Department assisted to examine the content validity of the study tools. The purpose of the pilot test was to make sure that the questions (close-ended and open-ended) in the two tools were unambiguous, lucid, and easy to understand. The semi-structured interviews were transcribed to ensure their internal validity.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

To code and analyze the obtained quantitative data from questionnaires, SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientist) was employed by the researcher. The collected data was presented quantitatively utilizing figures and tables. On the other hand, thematic analysis was utilized for the interview qualitative data to discern, encode, pigeonhole and categorize key themes pertinent to intrinsic and extrinsic determinants that contributed to EFL teachers' motivation in MoH institutions. The interview data also helped delineate, construe and define teachers' level of motivation.



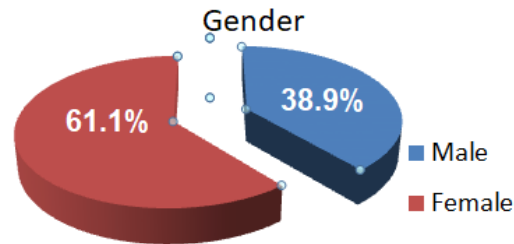


Figure 1: Teachers' gender

Figure 1 illustrates the respondents' gender. Out of the study sample of 54 EFL teachers, 61.1% were females and 38.9% were males. EFL teachers in the MoH Higher Education Institutions were female-dominated. The discrepancy between the female and male teachers' percentages can be attributed to the fact that there was a preference for female teachers as the generality of students was females.

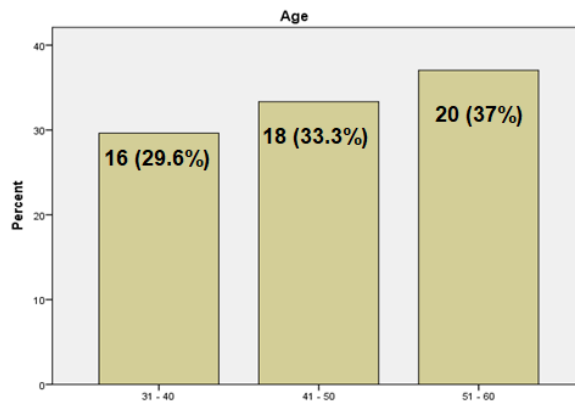


Figure 2: Teachers' Age Distribution

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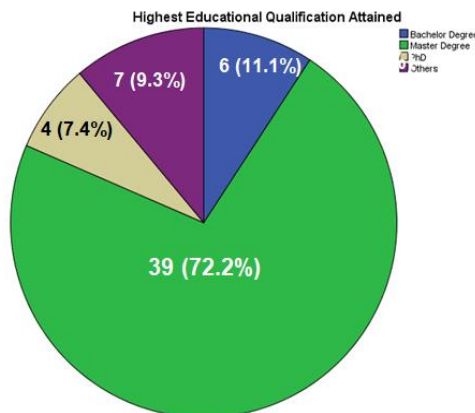


Figure 3: Teachers' Educational Qualifications

Figure 3 demonstrates the respondents' educational qualifications. The majority of the teachers (72.2%) held a Master's Degree, 9.3% held a Bachelor's Degree, 7.4% had Ph.D., whereas 11.1% had other qualifications. The MoH Higher Education Institutions offered a Bachelor's Degree in nursing which rationalizes the preeminence of Master's Degree holders.

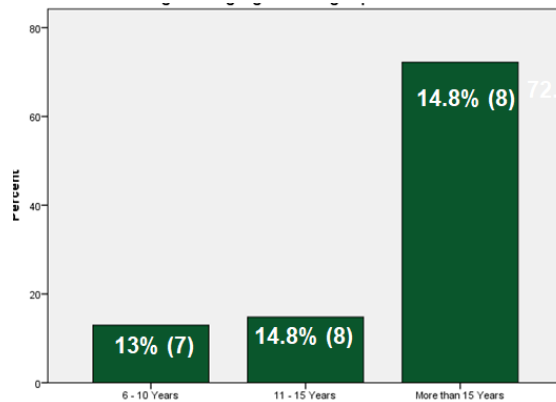


Figure 4: Respondents' Academic Experience

Figure 4 depicts the respondents' academic experience. It was found that a greater percentage of 72.2 (39 teachers) taught English for more than 15 years while 8 teachers (14.8%) had 11 to 15 years of EFL teaching and a lower percentage of 13% (7 teachers) worked for about 6 to 10 years as EFL teachers. There is a direct correlation between the age of teachers and their teaching experience.

Table 1

Respondents' rating for their level of job satisfaction

Job Satisfaction Determinants	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
a. My job provides me with the feeling of recognition by students, colleagues, and the administration.	26	48.1	28	51.9	-	-	-	-	-	-
b. I would like to receive more feedback about my teaching from Dean/administration.	11	20.4	38	70.4	5	9.3	-	-	-	-



c. My job description clearly defines my responsibilities and duties.	11	20.4	34	63	5	9.3	4	7.4	-	-
d. I am happy with my promotion prospects.	19	35.19	32	59.25	2	3.7	1	1.9	-	-
e. I am allowed to work autonomously and use my initiative in delivering lectures and managing my classes.	19	35.2	27	50	4	7.4	3	5.6	1	1.9
f. The institute provides me with all logistic facilities which help me teach effectively.	18	33.3	31	57.4	5	9.3	-	-	-	-
g. Generally, I derive great satisfaction from my work at this institute.	22	40.7	28	51.9	4	7.4	-	-	-	-

Table 1 introduces the respondents' ratings for their level of job satisfaction. Responding to whether the job provided the teachers with a feeling of recognition, 48.1% strongly agreed while 51.9% agreed. A high percentage of the teachers (70.4%) conceded that they needed to receive more feedback about their academic performance whereas 20.4% firmly agreed and 9.3% of the participants were not sure. Noticeably, the teachers were not provided with enough feedback from the Dean or administration.

As regards teachers' job descriptions, 20.4% of the respondents invincibly accepted that the job description defined their duties and responsibilities, 63% agreed, 9.3% were uncertain and 7.4% expressed dissent. Concerning promotion prospects given to the participants, 35.19% of the teachers completely agreed that they were happy with the promotion system, 59.25% agreed, 3.7% were unsure and 1.9% disagreed. In assessment of the level of autonomy given to EFL teachers in teaching and classroom management, 35.2% of the teachers solidly concurred that they were permitted to work freely, 50% were in unison with the degree of autonomy, 7.4% were undetermined, 5.6% were discordant while 1.9% strongly disagreed.

Seemingly, the MoH Higher Education Institutions supplied the EFL teachers with necessary and fundamental teaching resources that assisted them to teach effectively. As can be seen in table 1, a percentage of 33.3 of the teachers firmly agreed that they were given essential teaching facilities, 57.4% agreed, while 9.3% of the respondents were undecided. It is conspicuous that most of the respondents' level of job satisfaction was pretty high as 22 (40.7%) opted for agreeing, 28 (51.9%) selected strongly agree and only 4 (7.4%) of the respondents felt uncertain.

Table 2

Teachers' opinions on the quality of the work environment in MoH Higher Education Institutions

Work Environment Determinants	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
a. The institute's work environment is stressful.	2	3.7	6	11.1	3	5.6	33	61.1	10	18.5
b. The institute physical work environment (construction and design of the institute, safe drinking water, clean indoor air and ergonomic institute design) is healthy.	11	20.4	36	66.7	4	7.4	3	5.6	—	—
c. Working conditions in the institute increase my productivity as a teacher.	13	24.1	34	63.0	4	7.4	3	5.6	—	—
d. I feel unsecured being in this institute.	—	—	5	9.3	3	5.6	26	48.1	20	37.0

Table 2 reflects teachers' opinions on the quality of the work environment in MoH Higher Education Institutions. It was noticed that 61.1% of the respondents ran counter to the assumption that they worked under stress; 18.5% strongly opposed the statement, whereas 11.1% agreed and a low percentage of 3.7% decidedly admitted that the work environment was stressful.

Regarding the physical environment of the institutions, 20.4% of the teachers solidly agreed that the physical environment was healthy, a plurality of the respondents (66.7%) agreed, 7.4% were undecided and 5.6% articulated their disagreement.

There was a general concurrence among the participants on the way the working conditions contributed to maximizing their productivity as EFL teachers. Precisely, 13 (24.1%) teachers strongly agreed, a large number of 34 (63%) agreed, and at the same time, 4 (7.4%) participants were undetermined while 3 (5.6%) teachers showed disagreement. The last item appertained to workplace safety. On average, 9.3% of the respondents were under the impression that it was hazardous to work in their institutions whereas 5.6% were unsure of the risk level, 48.1% agreed that safety was maintained in the workplace and 37% greatly concurred with the statement. It is worth noting that the work environment in MoH institutions was not nerve-wracking, but antagonistically it was reassuring, healthy, and secure.

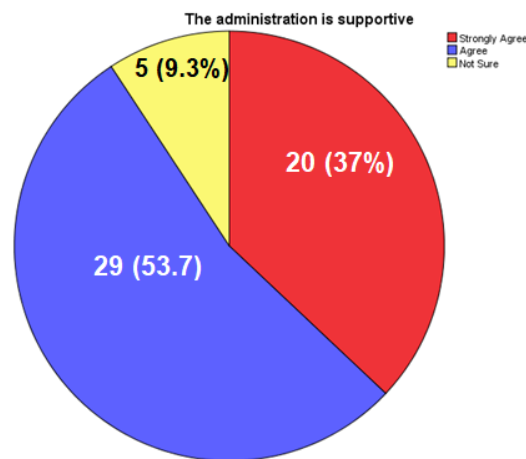


Figure 5: Relationship with the Administration

In conformity with figure 5, 37% of the participants resolutely concurred that the administration staff members were helpful; 53.7% agreed while 9.3% were undecided about the helpfulness of the administration department. The teachers received good assistance and backing from the administration staff.

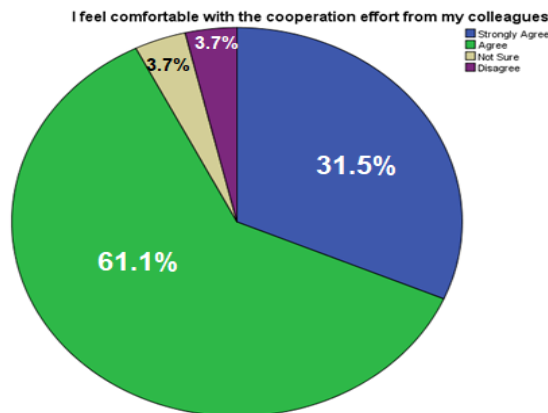


Figure 6: Teachers' Relationships with their Colleagues

Figure 6 exemplifies the outcomes of whether the EFL teachers were happy with their colleagues' cooperation in the workplace. As manifested below, 31.5% of the teachers strongly agreed, 61.1% agreed, 3.7% were uncertain and a similar percentage of 3.7% disagreed. It is worth mentioning that the sense of unity among EFL teachers was significant.

Table 3  
Teachers' Relationships with Head of English Department

Determinants	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
a. The Head of the Department regularly supervises/observes my classes and provides me with feedback.	10	18.5	35	68.8	5	9.3	4	7.4	—	—
b. The division of work within the English Department is unjust.	2	3.7	7	13.0	4	7.4	26	48.1	15	27.8
c. The Head of Department leads by example because of his high productivity.	10	18.5	37	68.5	4	7.4	2	3.7	1	1.9
d. My Head of Department supports and motivates me in a way that helps improve my effectiveness as a teacher.	18	33.3	31	57.4	3	5.6	1	1.9	1	1.9

Table 3 epitomizes the kind of relationship between the Head of the Department and the teachers. Concerning whether the Head of Department habitually supervised English classes and consistently provided feedback, 10 (18.5%) teachers greatly agreed, a large number of 35 (68.8%) agreed, a few numbers of 5 (9.3%) were unsure and a fewer number of 4 (7.4%) disagreed. Apropos of workload distribution among teachers, 3.7% of the participants fully concurred that the allocation of work was inequitable, 13% agreed, 7.4% were undetermined, 48.1% disagreed and 27.8% completely disagreed.

About teachers' perceptions of the Head of Department's leadership and level of productivity, a percentage of 18.5% strongly believed that the Head of Department was a role model and possessed a high productivity level, 68.5% agreed; 7.4% were unsure, 3.7% disagreed and 1.9% strongly ran counter to the statement. 18 (33.3%) teachers deeply agreed that the Head of the Department motivated, supported, and significantly contributed to teachers' teaching effectiveness, 31 (57.4%) agreed, 3 (5.6) were not sure, 1 (1.9%) disagreed, and very much alike percentage of 1.9% (1) strongly disagreed. Overall, the aforesaid data pinpoints the presence of a good

relationship between the Head of Department and EFL teachers; howbeit, the division of work among teachers needs to be revised.

Table 4

Teachers' Opinions on the Effect of Students' Academic Achievement on their Motivation

Determinants	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
a. My students' language learning achievement/success motivates me to carry on teaching.	22	40.7	30	55.6	2	3.7	—	—	—	—
b. I do not have a friendly relationship with my students.	1	1.9	2	3.7	—	—	28	51.9	23	42.6

Table 4 typifies the participants' opinions on the effect of students' academic achievement on their motivation and also discloses the type of relationship between teachers and their students. Concerning the findings exhibited below, 40.7% of the teachers firmly believed that the learning achievements of students influenced their motivation, a high percentage of 55.6% agreed whereas a low percentage of 3.7% had an air of uncertainty about the impact of students' success on teachers' motivation.

As for the non-existence of an amicable relationship between teachers and their students, a low percentage (1.9%) agreed that they did not have a friendly relationship with students, 3.7% agreed while a great percentage of 51.9% disagreed and 42.6% invincibly disagreed. It can be argued that students' achievement and success impacted EFL teachers' motivation. In Addition, teachers had an amicable relationship with students.

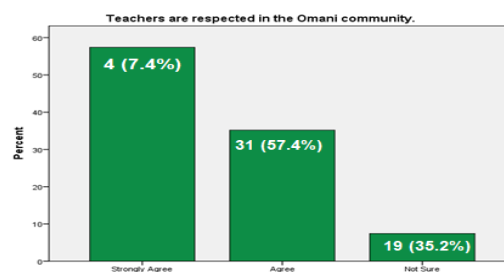


Figure 7: Teachers' Conviction and Beliefs in their Image in the Omani Society

Figure 7 explains teachers' convictions and beliefs in their image in Omani society. More than half of the participants (57.4%) were decidedly confident that the Omani society had a lot of respect for teachers, 35.2% agreed; on the other hand, a lower percentage of 7.4% were uncertain.

Table 5  
Teachers' Judgement on the Remuneration Packages Offered

Remuneration Determinants	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
a. The pay I get is worth the service I render.	27	50.0	19	35.2	4	7.4	2	3.7	2	3.7
b. My economic status has declined since I joined this institute.	—	—	1	1.9	3	5.6	23	42.6	27	50.0

The participants' judgment on the remuneration packages given to them is portrayed in table 5. Concerning the worthiness of pay teachers got in return for the work they did, half of them (50%) fully concurred that the pay was fair, 35.2% concurred, 7.4% were not definite, 3.7% disagreed and a similar percentage of 3.7% solidly disagreed. A low percentage of 1.9% felt that their economic status worsened as a result of working for MOH institutions, 5.6% were not certain, 42.6% disagreed and a higher percentage of 50% strongly opposed the statement. Correspondingly, it can be discerned that EFL teachers were content with the remuneration packages.

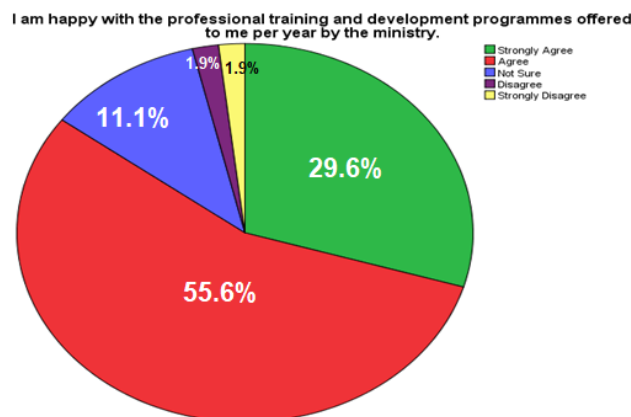


Figure 8: Professional Training and Development Offered

As can be seen in figure 8, the participants received sufficient training and attended adequate professional development programs. 29.6% of the teachers were

completely satisfied with the training and development programs offered to them by the ministry yearly, 55.6% were contented; 11.1% were undetermined; still, a low percentage of 1.9% were unsatisfied and a very much alike percentage of 1.9% was dissatisfied.

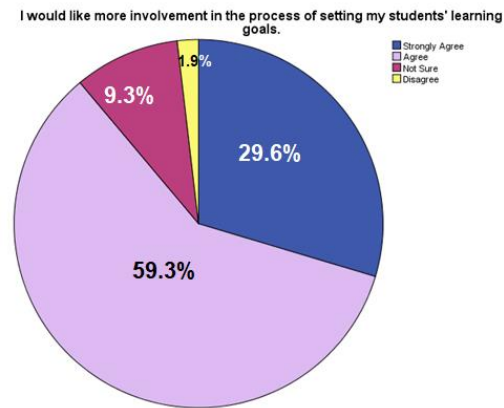


Figure 9: Teachers' Involvement in the Decision-making Process

Figure 9 interprets data vis-à-vis teachers' involvement in the decision-making process principally in setting their students' learning goals. 29.6% of the teachers strongly agreed that they demanded greater involvement in decision-making, a relatively high percentage of 59.3% agreed, a low percentage of 9.3% was not determined and a lower percentage of 1.9 % disagreed. The data establish the assumption that EFL teachers were not involved in taking decisions on their students' learning.

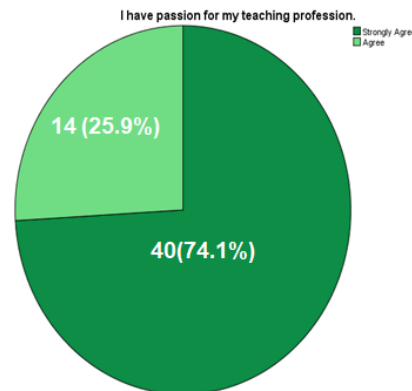


Figure 10: Teachers' Passion for the Teaching Profession

Figure 10 spotlights teachers' ardor for their teaching careers. A plurality of teachers (74.1%) completely sensed that they taught English passionately and 25.9% were in unison with the statement. The participants were indisputably fond



of teaching English as a foreign language, as evidenced by the previously mentioned finding.

### **Semi-structured Interview**

Paper-based semi-structured interviews were conducted to investigate and examine further responses and themes. The interview's principal objective was to diminish and curtail skepticism about the study results. A total number of 15 EFL teachers volunteered to partake in the semi-structured interview. The participants were asked 4 open-ended questions, as shown below, accompanied by inquiries that probed for more itemized and contextual data. Some interviews ran for a minimum of 14 minutes while other interviews ran for a maximum of 55 minutes.

To assure that the data were contextualized, as is the principal practice in the qualitative study, prodigious chunks of data were quoted to elucidate the meaning proposed by the participants. Extracts, which were taken from the interview transcripts, were marginally adapted to discard some hedges and digressions such as "erm", "err", repetition, and filters like "you know". The latter changes were crucial to making the text legible and those adaptations did not impact the meaning. Pseudonyms were used for the participants in the study.

### **Why did you join the English language teaching profession?**

The majority of the participants in the current study articulated a lot of reasoning behind their dogged determination to opt for EFL teaching as a profession. Passion was perceived to be one of the salient and most discernible reasons. Most of the participants had a fondness for teaching which was their driving force and impulse for being teachers. As a case in point, one of the participants, Sarah mentioned:

*"I wanted to become a teacher because I have a passion for teaching and I love communication."*

A parallel sentiment about teaching was wholeheartedly agreed upon by Ahmed who said:

*"I discovered my teaching talent during my graduation although I was always interested in the English language I mean I always had a passion for teaching."*

Teaching for some other participants was a childhood fantasy that they strived to fulfill. Those participants had a burning desire to teach English. Judith who has been teaching English for about 21 years, communicated:

*"During my childhood days, I had a lot of dreams, and to become a teacher was one of them. Architecture was my first option when I entered college, but since we can't afford that course I landed my second choice, education. I became an EFL teacher because maybe*

*God intended me to be one. English is my favorite subject and this is where I excel so I chose English to be my major."*

Meanwhile, a group of participants became EFL teachers because they felt dedicated and committed to edifying, enlightening, and educating others. Those participants had cogent credence that they could help others by educating them which might be beneficial for their future. This was evidenced by Fatima (Transcript 4) who stated:

*"It wasn't my dream to become an EFL teacher. But when I started working as a software support engineer in an American company, I realized that I have started to love the English language and I want to reach out to my fellow countrymen and help them in learning English. So I decided to study another course, which is Education, after that, I enrolled again for a Master of Arts in English Language Teaching. The rest is history."*

Another participant, Jenny, decided to teach English because she was incentivized by her EFL teacher who allowed her to voice herself in an English classroom. To illustrate, Jenny answered:

*"An EFL teacher whom I like a lot had encouraged and appreciated and motivated me to interact in the class that also helped me to choose this profession".*

### **Have you ever thought of changing your career? Why? Why not?**

A plurality of participants did not consider changing their careers because of some significant facets. According to those participants, the teaching profession was rewarding per se and provided them with great gratification, proficiency, and cognizance. Further, teaching helped the participants sharpen their skills and update their knowledge. Mary, for instance, divulged:

*"No, never because I feel the teaching profession is very rewarding compared to the other jobs. For example, I started my career as a teacher and want to continue this profession because I believe as teachers we learn other soft skills like management skills and student counseling skills. We upgrade our knowledge and teaching strategies according to the curriculum we are exposed to teach. I feel that I have learned a lot in this profession as a teacher."*

Some other participants never thought about changing their careers because teaching gave them a sense of well-being. This assumption was vindicated by Jeffery:

*"No, I mean I cannot do anything else better than teaching because teaching is my existence. I mean I can never stop myself from being a teacher."*

The foregoing opinion was reaffirmed by Dominic who reported that teaching had become an ardor for him and it also provided him with a feeling of fulfillment:

*"As I have learned to love the language, I also developed a deep passion for teaching. Teaching is running in my blood now. And I don't think of any other better job that will make me as happy as when I am teaching."*

Ashley, who also rejected the notion of changing her career, maintained that it was the admixture of ardor and feeling of competence that galvanized her to persist in teaching. Ashley averred:

*"Indeed, I have never thought about changing the profession, even when I am overburdened with homework. This is mainly because my passion for teaching is quite strong even today. The behavioral and linguistic change I bring about in the students provides enough motivation to continue."*

#### **What are the factors that motivate you in this institute?**

The interview revealed that there were key factors that stimulated and invigorated the participants at the workplace. Some of the participants were enthused by their student's achievements and the significant effect they had on their students. One of the participants disclosed:

*"My students. My motivation as a teacher is to be able to impart knowledge to students and see them improve and develop. I always wanted to be an inspiration to my students and have a positive impact on their lives by helping them to learn and succeed."*

Another group of participants was ostensibly motivated by other determinants, videlicet; remuneration or salary, and perks which were found to be crucial and pivotal stimuli that impacted teachers' motivation. In addition, an apt and fitting work environment, the Head of the Department, and the administration were among the determinants that influenced teachers' motivation. Further, cooperative colleagues, team spirit in the workplace, and students' respect and good behavior were considerable sources of motivation in the bargain. This was best expressed by Mohamed accentuated:

*"Our management as well as our department is very cooperative. There is no room for blaming each other for petty things. Work load is distributed equally without any disparities. We respect each other's feelings and work well as a team. The curriculum is very challenging which makes us learn many new things related to English language skills, vocabulary, grammar, science booklets, medical terms, and*

*many other things. The salary that we receive also is a motivating factor. There was a tremendous hike in our salaries and grades a few months ago. The allowances offered by the ministry motivated teachers to do their best. There is no mental stress about finances and teachers can put their efforts to bring up the standard of the trainees. I appreciate the ministry, department, and the management for their help and support at work."*

The unambiguous job description also motivated the participants. Job description briefed the participants on their roles and responsibilities in their institutions. Teresa, for instance, said:

*"My job description is very clear and explains exactly what I have to do so I needn't get confused about my roles or responsibilities."*

Presumptively, there was a consensus and degree of unanimity amongst the participants on the aforesaid determinants which invigorated them at the workplace and that was supported by Ahmed:

*"So many factors. As mentioned earlier, the respect that I receive from my colleagues and students is the main driving force for me to continue. The attractive remuneration and excellent facilities, my job description, the left package, and very good teaching environment, and of course the excellent support from the administration. These are the main motivating factors for me".*

#### **What are the factors that discourage you to work in this institute?**

Most of the participants rebuffed the existence of any de-motivating factors which could have repercussions on their motivation. This was highlighted by Celine:

*"Really nothing. This institution is a place close to my heart since I have been working here for the past 22 years. So, no factors prevail that discourage me to work here."*

Notwithstanding, some participants were inclined to feel less inspired because of some disheartening agents such as lack of feedback from the Dean or administration and insufficient involvement in the decision-making process. Teachers in the current study were inclined to be avid for ascertaining their weaknesses and strengths and consequently, they could pursue improvement. Feedback for EFL teachers could be a true manifestation of their personality traits and teaching quality. Ergo divesting teachers of feedback might be a source of de-motivation. Jenny, for instance, stated:

*"Not many things, but sometimes lack feedback from higher authorities about our performance. I wish the Dean of the institute to call each one of us for a confidential meeting to inform us about our drawbacks before sending our appraisal reports. There is going to be an area for improving our teaching-learning skills and it helps us in making an action plan through such annual feedback. They usually appreciate our efforts in general staff meetings, but I suggest it should be done formally."*

Several participants voiced concern about being less involved in the decision-making process, especially those that are germane to the teachers and students. For instance, Amer said:

*"I mean the management should include us in some decisions about us of course and students too."*

## **RESULTS**

At this juncture, the present section aimed to address the study objectives in line with Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) which was introduced and described as the theoretical framework for the study. The current study revealed the presence of several determinants or factors which influenced EFL teachers' motivation and they can be categorized into two prime types: intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors.

### **Intrinsic Factors**

The EFL teachers' motivation in the current study was governed by some intrinsic factors which are elucidated below.

- Passion was adjudged one of the salient motivational factors that touched on teachers' motivation. Initially, teachers were full of determination to be educators on account of their passion for EFL teaching. The passion ignited teachers' commitment, dedication, and enthusiasm for teaching students.
- Students' success and academic achievement played a notable role in teachers' motivation. Teachers were conspicuously motivated by their students' performance which they accounted as a bona fide intimation of their efforts and competency in teaching.
- EFL teachers' relationship with students mightily contributed to their intrinsic motivation. The nature of the relationship was divulged to be friendly which encouraged positive interaction between teachers and students.
- A further motivator that governed teachers' motivation was the professional training programs that were proffered by the Ministry of Health by the year. The professional development and training programs created a window of

opportunity for EFL teachers to keep abreast of modern teaching trends, track their learning and update their skills.

- Teachers' feelings of satisfaction with their job played a tremendous role in nurturing their motivation. Predominantly, teachers derived great satisfaction from the nature of their job which was evidenced by their compelling desire to persist with their careers. Teachers' level of job satisfaction was remarkably high under a positive constellation of attitudes about various aspects of the job.
- Teaching autonomy was a pivotal motivational factor for EFL teachers. The vast majority of teachers were entitled to exercise a great degree of autonomy and authority apropos planning their lessons and maintaining a defined set of professional freedoms such as determining their resource materials, methods of instruction, and classroom management.

### **Extrinsic Factors**

- Among the many factors which externally motivated teachers was their job description. Essentially, it maintained clarity and directness and thereupon avoided arbitrary interpretation of teachers' roles and responsibilities. The job description expounded MoH Higher Education Institutions' expectations from EFL teachers and apprised teachers of the duties that had to be covered by them.
- Another extrinsic factor that motivated EFL teachers was the promotion system that was implemented by The Ministry of Health. The promotion system, which was conceived as transparent, impartial, and unprejudiced, contented and satiated a plurality of teachers.
- MoH Higher Education Institutions provided EFL teachers with the necessary teaching facilities. The latter had a notable effect on teachers' motivation because they enabled them to teach effectively. In addition, the accessibility of teaching resources bolstered teachers' morale because they empowered them to shoulder their responsibilities as facilitators.
- The work environment in MoH institutions was a significant source of external motivation. To most of the teachers, the work environment was reassuring and secure. Furthermore, the physical environment within the institutions, viz. construction, and design of the institute, safe drinking water, clean indoor air, and ergonomic institute design, was well-conditioned, healthy, sound, and encouraging.
- Another important extrinsic factor that markedly nourished teachers' motivation was their relationship with the administration staff. The administration staff aided and supported teachers in diverse administrative issues.
- MoH institutions were characterized by the prevalence of a companionable and cordial atmosphere among EFL teachers. In addition, there was



considerable cooperation among teachers which extrinsically inspired them in the workplace.

- The Head of the Department was an impactful motivator for most of the teachers for many reasons. Primarily, they systematically observed English classes and provided teachers with feedback. Furthermore, the Head of the Department uniformly apportioned duties among teachers.
- Community and social determinants. The Omani community had a grudging respect for EFL teachers. Society was inclined to appreciate and understand teachers' role in educating students which complimentarily mirrored the public image of teaching as a reputable career. Being held in substantial respect by the community, EFL teachers were inspiringly heartened to develop a real and consuming ardor for teaching.
- The feeling of recognition was an inspirational determinant that galvanized teachers. Teachers felt that their endeavors were recognized by their colleagues, students, and the administration as well. Ergo, recognition developed a general sense of well-being and appreciation within the teachers.
- The remuneration system implemented by the Ministry of Health had a tremendous effect on teachers' motivation. Teachers were immeasurably gratified by the level of remuneration package which was adjudged rewarding and worth the teaching and non-teaching services they rendered. Further, teachers' economic status was ostensibly improved due to the pay package which symbolized a considerable pecuniary motivator.

#### **The factors that de-motivate EFL teachers in their career.**

**Feedback.** Teachers did not receive enough feedback that is germane to their performance either from Dean or administration. Teachers' reasons for wanting feedback on their teaching practices were an admixture of some professional and personal facets. Precisely, teachers were inclined to be avid for ascertaining their weaknesses and strengths, and consequently, they could pursue improvement.

**Decision-making.** Another de-motivating factor that existed among EFL teachers was the deficient and poor involvement in decision-making processes, particularly those pertinent to set their students' learning goals. Exclusion of teachers from decision-making could distress them and unfavorably sway their motivation as they yearned to partake assiduously in the learning/teaching process.

#### **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings, the present study put forward some recommendations that could be implemented by MoH institutions' management, Head of Department, and policymakers.

- It was propounded that EFL teachers should be given more incorporation and inclusion in the decision-making process notably when setting students'



learning goals. In doing so, teachers could be empowered to adopt and draw up fairish teaching strategies given their students' learning goals.

- The current study advocated that teachers should be provided with constant feedback from Dean and administration. Feedback assumed the role of a motivational power as teachers could be notified of the caliber of their overall academic performance to improve, modify or retain it.
- It is enjoined to conduct further research to reexamine and follow up on teachers' level of motivation. More precisely, teachers' poor involvement in decision-making and insufficient feedback given to them were found to be de-motivating determinants in the current study. Hence, it is vital to examine if there is any improvement that is germane to the aforesaid determinants.

### **Implications**

The teachers in the current study are highly motivated. Since low motivation levels lead to burnout (Barn, Han & Sari, 2018), the focus should be on the factors which cause teacher demotivation such as the unavailability of the feedback they receive on their performance. The current study is hoped to encourage other higher education institutions in Oman to gauge their teachers' motivation levels. Further, they current study is hoped to apprise the Omani Ministry of Health of the factors which motivate or demotivate the teachers.

### **CONCLUSION**

In the light of the findings of the current study, it can be asseverated that the generality of EFL teachers was eminently motivated by many intrinsic and extrinsic determinants. The analysis of qualitative data (semi-structured interview) and quantitative data (questionnaire) purveyed evidential outcomes that teachers were intrinsically motivated as they developed a real and great ardor for teaching. Further, teachers' high level of job satisfaction, feeling of recognition, and being respected by both students and society furnished a factual example of their motivation. Some extrinsic determinants contributed to teachers' external motivation, viz. apt work environment, gratifying pay and perks, the atmosphere of geniality and companionability, administrative support, Head of Department backing, preferment system, the availableness of teaching resources, job description, cooperative colleagues, relationship with students and professional training and development. In the same vein, teachers had every avowed and tenacious intention to take teaching as a career for life which unveils that teaching at MoH Higher Education Institution was a source of motivation.

Arguably, teachers were less motivated by two main determinants, videlicet, poor involvement in the decision-making process, and scant provision of feedback. Yet,

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those two factors did not influence teachers' motivation but they called for drastic action.

The present paper makes a pivotal contribution to research and studies in the field of teacher motivation. Motivation in teaching is a boost in bringing effectiveness in the teaching and learning process in general and the classroom in particular. A motivated teacher is crucial to an effective classroom and thus better learning outcomes. The study indicates that motivation and burnout are two phenomenon closely connected to the professional side and the academic advancement of teachers. Employees' motivation in the education institutions is one of the most pivotal issues starting from the responsibilities that they shoulder regarding the students' abilities and knowledge. Keeping teachers motivated can be a real challenge. Nevertheless, it is a vital part of students' overall achievement. Great teachers are those that are motivated to surpass and take pride in their students' progress both inside and outside the classroom.

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