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The Impact of Job Stress on University Teachers' Career Development: The Mediating Role of Social Support

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the impact of job stress on the career development of Afghan university teachers, considering the mediating role of social support. Using a cluster sampling approach, data were collected from 370 teachers in both government and private universities through questionnaires. The analysis utilized SPSS and SPSS AMOS for regression analysis, guided by the Job Demand-Control-Support (JDCS) model.

Findings indicate a negative relationship between job stress and career development across all stages: early, mid, advanced, and continuing professional development. Higher job stress correlates with lower career development, while social support mitigates these negative effects. This underscores the need for interventions that address job stress and enhance social support to promote positive career outcomes for university teachers.

Keywords- Job Stress, Social Support, Career Development, Early- Career Development, Mid- Career Development, Advanced- Career Development, Continue Professional Career Development**.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Job stress is a prevalent experience characterized by negative emotions such as anger, tension, anxiety, frustration, and depression resulting from work-related factors (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977). In the teaching profession, high levels of stress are well-known, with teachers facing significant emotional challenges related to job demands (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005). This stress not only affects personal well-being but can also hinder job performance and have adverse effects on student outcomes (Herman et al., 2018).

Understanding the impact of job stress on the career development of university teachers is crucial, particularly considering the potential mediating role of social support in mitigating the negative effects of stress. Previous research has indicated that social support positively affects teachers' well-being and reduces stress (Courson, 2021). Additionally, social support has been linked to higher teacher self-efficacy, improved student-teacher relationships, and greater student achievement (Burke & Greenglass, 1993). Therefore, this study aims to explore the relationship between job stress and career development stages among university teachers and investigate the mediating role of social support.

In Afghanistan, where the education system faces various challenges, universities play a critical role in addressing these issues and contributing to the country's growth. However, factors such as job stress can adversely affect the performance of university teachers

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and hinder the quality of higher education (Joshi & Pandit, 2019).

Given the unique contextual factors in Afghanistan, it is essential to examine the specific experiences of university teachers regarding job stress and career development. By understanding the stressors and challenges faced by teachers at different stages of their careers and examining the role of social support, recommendations can be made to support their well-being and professional growth.

This research aims to fill the research gap regarding job stress among university teachers, specifically in Afghanistan. By exploring the relationship between job stress and academic career development stages and investigating the mediating role of social support, this study seeks to develop strategies to support teachers and enhance their well-being. The findings will contribute to the existing literature on job stress and its consequences within the academic context and provide insights and recommendations to foster healthier work environments and promote positive career development outcomes for teachers.

The objectives of this research are twofold. First, the study aims to examine the job stress experienced by university teachers based on career development stages, including early career development, mid-career development, advanced career development, and continuing professional development. By analyzing the job stress levels at each career stage, the research aims to identify the specific stressors and challenges faced by teachers at different points in their careers.

Second, this study seeks to examine the job stress experienced by university teachers based on career development stages, considering the mediating variable of social support. By investigating the role of social support in the relationship between job stress and career development, the research aims to understand how supportive work environments and collegial relationships can alleviate job stress and enhance career development among university teachers. Social support can provide teachers with resources, guidance, and emotional assistance to cope with stressors, navigate career challenges, and maintain job satisfaction.

The significance of this research lies in both theoretical and practical aspects. Theoretically, there is a lack of research on the job stress experienced by university teachers based on career development stages, making this study valuable in contributing to the existing literature. By establishing a comprehensive model, the research design offers a unique framework that can serve as a basis for future models and theories in this area. Additionally, the study aims to identify the key stress factors that affect teachers at different career stages, providing insights into the specific challenges they face.

On a practical level, the research is particularly relevant in the context of Afghanistan's higher education sector, which has been impacted by political and social upheavals. The country has experienced changes in educational systems and curricula due to political transitions, which may have implications for teacher stress.

The findings of this research can inform interventions and support systems to mitigate job stress and enhance the well-being of teachers, ultimately contributing to the growth and development of higher education in Afghanistan.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Job stress is a significant issue for university teachers, characterized by unpleasant emotions such as anger, tension, anxiety, frustration, and depression arising from work-related factors (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977). The teaching profession is inherently stressful, and many educators face emotional challenges that can hinder their well-being and impact student relationships and academic outcomes (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005; Herman et al., 2018). Chronic stress can lead to professional burnout, which manifests as emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and decreased self-efficacy (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).

The connection between job stress and career development stages is critical; as teachers progress through their careers, the demands and challenges they face can vary significantly. The transactional model of stress posits that stress occurs when individuals perceive a mismatch between job demands and their coping abilities (Sapolsky, 1998). This imbalance can be particularly pronounced during transitional phases in a teacher's career, such as moving from novice to experienced educator. Research indicates that increased stress during these phases can lead to negative student behaviors, creating a cycle that further exacerbates teacher stress (Geving, 2007; Kokkinos, 2007).

Moreover, the evolving nature of work, driven by globalization and heightened efficiency demands, introduces additional pressures that can affect teachers at different career stages. Factors like job insecurity and insufficient resources contribute to occupational stress, adversely impacting both individual health and institutional productivity (Sang et al., 2010). Despite the academic profession's long-standing value, recent reforms have highlighted stress issues within higher education institutions, revealing that staff often experience stress levels higher than normative data (Gillespie et al., 2001; Tytherleigh et al., 2005).

Understanding the relationship between job stress and career development stages is crucial for addressing the needs of university teachers, especially in environments where supportive structures have diminished (McCormick & Barnett, 2011). Career development is a continuous process where educators gain insights into their professional identities and roles (Hansen, 1976). The literature on teacher career stages has provided frameworks for assessing educators' needs and planning professional development.

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The transactional model of stress, adapted from Lazarus and Folkman (1984), have been utilized to explore the interplay between job stress and career stages. This model helps clarify the key factors influencing teacher stress, including job demands, resources, and coping strategies (Jerusalem, 1993). Additionally, Tadic's (2005) career development model has been employed to analyze job stress across different stages of a teacher's career, providing a comprehensive understanding that informs future interventions and support systems.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Job stress is a significant concern among educators, defined as the physical and emotional wear and tear that individual experience while adapting to their work environments. This stress can manifest through various factors, including long working hours, role ambiguity, inadequate teaching facilities, and strained relationships with colleagues (Bhatti et al., 2017; Hemalatha, 2021). Such stressors not only affect teachers' well-being but can also lead to serious health issues and psychological disorders when experienced at high levels (Shahsavarani et al., 2015; Tucker et al., 2008). As teachers navigate their careers, they face unique challenges that influence their job satisfaction and overall performance.

The career development cycle for educators typically includes distinct phases such as apprenticeship, advancement, maintenance, and strategic thinking (Tadić, 2005). Each stage presents its own demands and requires specific support from both the individual and the organization. For instance, beginning teachers may struggle with feelings of incompetence and adjustment stress, while more experienced educators may face pressures related to career advancement and job security (Keller-Schneider et al., 2020; Meng & Wang, 2018). Understanding these stages is crucial, as they shape how teachers perceive their roles and manage the stressors associated with their profession (Arthur et al., 1989).

Social support plays a pivotal mediating role in the relationship between job stress and career development. Research indicates that support from colleagues, supervisors, and family can significantly buffer the impacts of stress, enhancing teachers' resilience and coping mechanisms (Brough & Kelling, 2002; Brough & Frame, 2004). Effective social support, particularly from supervisors, has been shown to improve job satisfaction and mitigate the adverse effects of stress (Brough & Pears, 2004). For example, positive communication among coworkers can create a supportive environment that reduces feelings of isolation and stress (Fenlason & Beehr, 1994).

Moreover, studies have demonstrated that higher job stress correlates with decreased job satisfaction and commitment, highlighting the importance of social support in maintaining teachers' well-being (Chaplain, 1995; Borg et al., 1991; Noblet & Rodwell, 2009). Components of social support, such as emotional and instrumental assistance, play a crucial role in how teachers navigate their careers. Emotional support can provide empathetic listening and validation, while instrumental support involves practical help in managing work-related challenges (Beehr et al., 1990; AbdelHalim, 1982).

Research on job stress among teachers has identified a variety of stressors and their implications for career development. For instance, studies have shown that factors such as workload, role ambiguity, and lack of recognition significantly contribute to teacher stress across different contexts (Hemalatha, 2021; Valkov & Peeva, 2020). Additionally, the relationship between job stress and burnout is well-documented, emphasizing how stress can erode job motivation and performance (Salami, 2011; Ali & Sardouk, 2022).

While substantial research exists on job stress and its impact on educators worldwide, there is a notable gap in the context of Afghanistan regarding the interplay between job stress, career development stages, and the mediating role of social support. Addressing this gap is essential for developing targeted interventions that support teachers at various stages of their careers, ultimately enhancing their professional growth and overall well-being. By understanding the interconnectedness of these factors, educational institutions can create more supportive environments that foster resilience and job satisfaction among teachers, enabling them to thrive both personally and professionally.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study employs an exploratory research design to investigate the relationships between job stress, social support, and career development among university teachers in Afghanistan. A quantitative approach is utilized, involving questionnaires and structural equation modeling (SEM) with SPSS AMOS for data analysis.

The sample comprises 370 university teachers from government and private institutions, selected through a cluster sampling method across five key provinces. Data were collected via questionnaires designed to assess job stress, social support, and career development, incorporating both primary and secondary data sources for context.

The Marufu and Reuben (2022) questionnaire, consisting of 34 items, was used to measure job stress, while a self-created questionnaire with 28 items assessed career development. Additionally, social support was measured using a 10-item questionnaire. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Data analysis was conducted with SPSS AMOS, allowing for the examination of complex relationships among variables. SEM was employed to test hypotheses and explore the interactions between job

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stress, social support, and career development. The questionnaire design underwent pilot testing to ensure validity and reliability.

According to following conceptual framework model, the Job Demand-Control-Support (JDCS) model is used to understand the relationship between job stress, job characteristics, and social support. The JDCS model, initially proposed by Robert Karasek in 1979, has been widely used in various occupational settings to assess the impact of job design on employee well-being and performance.

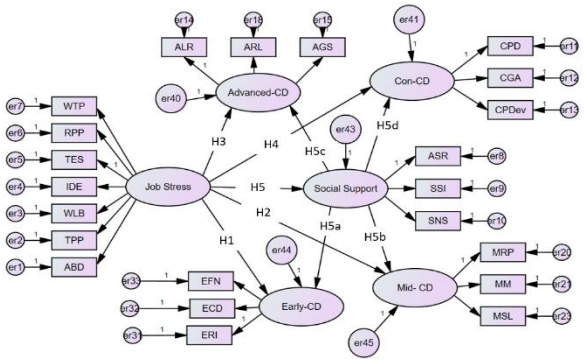

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Model

In the context of studying job stress among Afghan university teachers, the JDCS model can be applied to examine how specific job demands, job control, and social support factors influence their stress levels at different stages of their career development.

This study also explains the different elements of the JDCS model and their relevance to Afghan university teachers. Job demands refer to the workload and job-related stressors that teachers face, which can vary depending on the career stage. Job control refers to the level of autonomy and decision-making authority that teachers have over their work, which can increase as they progress in their careers. Social support, including support from colleagues, supervisors, and the institution, plays a crucial role in mitigating the impact of job demands on job stress.

By applying the JDCS model, researchers can gain insights into how these factors interact and influence job stress among Afghan university teachers. This understanding can inform the development of targeted interventions and support systems to enhance teacher well-being and career development.

Overall, integrating the JDCS model into the study of job stress among Afghan university teachers based on career development stages offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex factors contributing to job stress in this specific context. It provides a basis for exploring the interplay between job demands, job control, social support, and career development, ultimately leading to more informed strategies for improving the well-being and professional growth of university teachers in Afghanistan.

V. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Teaching is an emotionally demanding profession, and high levels of teacher stress are linked to negative outcomes such as burnout, absenteeism, and attrition (Herman et al., 2020). Chronic stress can result in reduced job satisfaction, lower teaching effectiveness, and increased feelings of burnout (Santoro, 2019; Bottiani et al., 2019). Early-career teachers often face significant challenges, including inadequate support and feelings of being unprepared for their roles. Effective induction programs and professional development can help alleviate these stressors and improve well-being (Admiraal et al., 2023).

H_1: *Job stress experienced by teachers has a negative impact on their career development in the early stage.*

This suggests that high job stress levels adversely affect early-career teachers' professional growth.

The mid-career stage is a critical period for teachers, marked by stabilization and opportunities for growth (Huberman, 1993). However, it can also bring feelings of frustration and disillusionment if teachers' needs are unmet (Frazier, 2019). This stage often prompts teachers to evaluate their career paths and may lead to increased stress due to balancing family responsibilities and professional aspirations.

H_2: *Job stress among university teachers negatively impacts their career development during the mid-stage.*

Increased stress adversely affects teaching excellence, research productivity, and engagement in leadership roles.

As teachers advance in their careers, they may take on leadership roles that come with increased responsibilities and expectations (Tang & Choi, 2009). Managing stress in these positions requires strong organizational skills and effective delegation. However, the added pressures can lead to heightened job stress levels.

H_3: *Job stress experienced by university teachers negatively influences their career development at the advanced stage.*

This includes impacts on research leadership, external engagement, and mentoring roles.

Professional development (PD) is essential for teachers to acquire the skills needed for career progression (Speck & Knipe, 2005). High job stress can hinder teachers' engagement in PD activities, ultimately affecting the quality of their professional growth.

H_4: The level of job stress experienced by teachers during continuing professional development negatively affects their engagement in growth activities and the quality of PD outcomes.

Social support is crucial in mitigating the effects of teacher stress. Research indicates that teachers with high job stress often report low social support (Griffith et al., 1999), while positive social interactions can alleviate burnout (Kahn et al., 2006).

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This study aims to explore the mediating role of social support in the relationship between teacher stress and career development.

H_{5a}: *Job stress among university teachers negatively impacts their social support.*

H_{5b}: *Social support moderates the relationship between job stress and career development stages.*

These hypotheses highlight the importance of social support as a resource for teachers, aiming to enhance their career progression and overall well-being. Understanding these dynamics can inform strategies to support teachers in managing stress and advancing in their careers.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Demographic Statistic Analysis: The given information in table (1) presents data on three demographic variables: age, gender, and experience, along with their corresponding frequencies and percentages. Additionally, the education level of the individuals is provided.

Age: The data reveals the distribution of individuals across different age groups. The largest age group is individuals up to 30 years old, accounting for 34.1% of the total sample size (126 individuals). The next age group, comprising individuals between 30-35 and 40-45 years old, represents 39.7% of the sample (147 individuals). A smaller proportion, 19.2% of the sample (71 individuals), falls within the 40-45 to 50-55 age range. Lastly, individuals between 50-55 years old and up until retirement make up 7.0% of the sample (26 individuals). The total sample size for age-related data is 370 individuals.

Table (1): Demographic Statistic Analysis

Age	up to 30	Frequency	126
		Percent	34.1%
	30;35 -40;45	Frequency	147
		Percent	39.7%
	40;45 -50;55	Frequency	71
		Percent	19.2%
	50;55 - up to retirement	Frequency	26
		Percent	7.0%
	Total	Frequency	370
		Percent	100.0%
Gender	Male	Frequency	291
		Percent	78.6%
	Female	Frequency	79
		Percent	21.4%
	Total	Frequency	370
		Percent	100.0%
Experience	1 – 5	Frequency	61
		Percent	16.5%
	6-10	Frequency	89
		Percent	24.1%
	11-15	Frequency	113
		Percent	30.5%
	more than 16	Frequency	107
		Percent	28.9%
	Total	Frequency	370
		Percent	100.0%
Education	Bachelor	Frequency	0
		Percent	0.0%
	Master	Frequency	257
		Percent	69.5%
	Ph.D. and more	Frequency	113

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	Total	Percent	30.5%
		Frequency	370
		Percent	100.0%

Gender: The data provides insights into the gender distribution within the sample. The majority of the individuals are male, accounting for 78.6% of the total sample (291 individuals). Females, on the other hand, represent 21.4% of the sample (79 individuals). The total sample size for gender-related data is 370 individuals.

Experience: The data showcases the distribution of individuals based on their years of experience. The smallest group consists of individuals with 1-5 years of experience, representing 16.5% of the sample (61 individuals). The 6-10 years' experience group comprises 24.1% of the sample (89 individuals), while the 11-15 years' experience group represents the largest proportion at 30.5% of the sample (113 individuals). Lastly, individuals with more than 16 years of experience make up 28.9% of the sample (107 individuals). The total sample size for experience-related data is 370 individuals.

Education: The data sheds light on the educational background of the individuals in the sample. The majority of the sample holds a Master's degree, accounting for 69.5% of the total (257 individuals). A significant proportion, 30.5% of the sample (113 individuals), possesses a Ph.D. or a higher qualification. The total sample size for education-related data is 370 individuals.

These statistics provide a comprehensive overview of the demographic composition of the sample, encompassing age, gender, experience, and education level.

Data reliability analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Table (2) shows Explanatory factor analyses, such as KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity, and commonality, were employed to verify the validity of the measurements. KMO and Bartlett's tests were performed; a value > 0.5 indicates the sample size is perfect. Bartlett's test of sphericity indicates there`s one significant correlation between all items in the variable someplace, with p<0.5 as significant.

Furthermore, a commonality test was performed, which describes the percentage of variation for each variable that can be explained by the factors, indicating that in this case, all variables have good extraction values that are all greater than 0.5.

Table (2): KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.959
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	12881.015
	Df	231
	Sig.	.000

Based on the results of the KMO and Bartlett's test, The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.959. This value indicates a high level of adequacy for factor analysis. Generally, a KMO value above 0.5 is considered acceptable, and a value close to 1 suggests that the variables are highly suitable for factor analysis.

The high KMO value and the significant result of Bartlett's test indicate that the dataset is suitable for factor analysis, and there is evidence to support the presence of underlying factors within the variables that are analyzed.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients according to table (3) for the variables in the analysis indicate high levels of internal consistency and reliability. Specifically, Job Stress, Social Support, Early Career Development, Mid-Career Development, Advanced Career Development, and Continue Career Development demonstrate strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.940, 0.985, 0.983, 0.976, 0.965, and 0.968, respectively. These values surpass the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7, indicating that the variables serve as reliable measures for their respective constructs.

Table (3): Reliability Analyses

Variables	**Cronbach Alpha**
Job Stress	0.940
Social Support	0.985
Early Career Development	0.983

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Mid-Career Development	0.976
Advanced -Career Development	0.965
Continue Prof. Career Development	0.968

Goodness of Fit (Model Fit)

The table (4) presents a summary of the various model fit indices and their threshold values to indicate good model fit.

Table (4): Model Fit Statistics for the Measurement Model

Measure of Fit	Value
CMIN (X2/df)	3.202
RMSEA	0.077
NNFI	0.953
CFI	0.967
GFI	0.865
RFI	0.944
TLI	0.967
IFI	0.967
RMR	0.042

The measures of fit for the model in this study indicate a reasonable or satisfactory fit. The CMIN value is 3.202, RMSEA is 0.077, NNFI is 0.953, CFI is 0.967, GFI is 0.865, RFI is 0.944, TLI is 0.967, IFI is 0.967, and RMR is 0.042. These values suggest that the hypothesized model fits well with the collected data.

Correlation Analysis

The correlation table (5) provided shows the Pearson correlation coefficients between different variables Job Stress, Social Support Career Development such as Continuous Professional Career Development (Continue Prof. CD), Advanced Career Development (Advanced CD), Early Career Development (Early CD), and Mid-Career Development (Mid CD).

The table also indicates the statistical significance of these correlations.

The statistical significance of the correlations is denoted by the p-values, which are all reported as significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), indicating a high level of confidence in the observed relationships.

Table (5): Correlations between variables

		Job Stress	Social Support	Continue CD	Advanced CD	Early CD	Mid CD
Job Stress	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	370					
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	-.889**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	370	370				
Continue CD	Pearson Correlation	-.740**	.727**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	370	370	370			
Advanced CD	Pearson Correlation	-.821**	.783**	.733**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	370	370	370	370		
Early CD	Pearson Correlation	-.825**	.799**	.699**	.782**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	N	370	370	370	370	370	
Mid CD	Pearson Correlation	-.821**	.783**	.733**	1.000**	.782**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	370	370	370	370	370	370

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Here are some observations based on the correlation coefficients:

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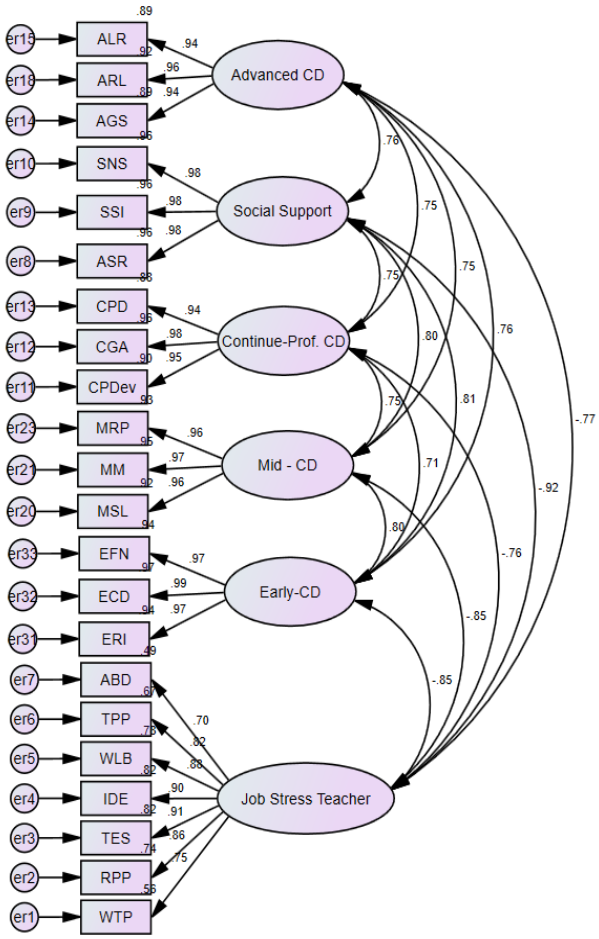

Figure (2): Correlation Analysis

Job Stress is negatively correlated with all other variables, indicating that higher levels of job stress are associated with lower levels of Social Support, Continuous Career Development, Advanced Career Development, Early Career Development, and Mid-Career Development.

Social Support is negatively correlated with all other variables as well, suggesting that higher levels of social support are associated with lower levels of job stress and higher levels of career development.

All career development variables (Continuous CD, Advanced CD, Early CD, and Mid CD) are positively correlated with each other, indicating that they are positively associated.

The correlations between the variables are generally strong, as indicated by the high correlation coefficients. The correlation coefficients range from -0.889 to 1.000.

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

The proposed model was graphically represented using SPSS AMOS version 24.0.0 to perform structural equation modeling (SEM) for data analysis. The maximum likelihood estimation method was used to estimate the model parameters. The aim of the SEM analysis was to test the hypotheses and determine whether the proposed model fit the data. The format of the SEM analysis involved testing the validity of a causal structure, following the method discussed in Byrne (2013).

Final Model

The following model in this study shows that job stress among teachers affects early career development, mid-career development, advanced career development, and continuous professional career development.

The following model presents standardized estimates.

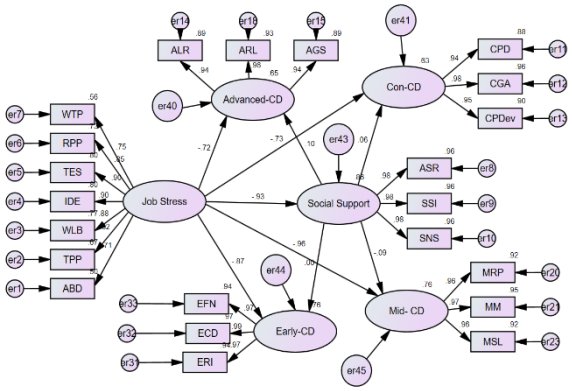

Figure (3): Standardized Estimates for the Final Model

ECDS <--- JST: The standardized regression weight between Early-Career Development Stage (ECDS) and Job Stress teacher (JST) is -0.872. This negative weight suggests a strong inverse relationship between ECDS and job stress. It indicates that higher levels of early career development support are associated with lower levels of job stress

MCDS <--- JST: The standardized regression weight between Mid- Career Development Stage (MCDS) and JST is -0.958. This negative weight suggests a very strong inverse relationship between MCDS and job stress. It indicates that higher levels of mid-career development support are strongly associated with lower levels of job stress.

ACDS <--- JST: The standardized regression weight between Advanced-Career Development Stage ACDS and JST is -0.718. This negative weight suggests a negative relationship between ACDS and job stress, but it is less strong compared to the previous two relationships. It indicates that higher levels of advanced career development support are associated with lower levels of job stress, but the relationship is not as strong as with Social Support and ECDS.

CPDS <--- JST: The standardized regression weight between Continue-Professional Career Development Stage (CP-CDS) and JST is -0.735. This negative weight suggests a negative relationship between C.PDS and job stress. It indicates that higher levels of continuous professional career development support are associated with lower levels of job stress.

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Social Support <--- JST: The standardized regression weight between Social Support and JST is -0.928. This negative weight suggests a strong inverse relationship between Social Support and job stress. It indicates that higher levels of social support are associated with lower levels of job stress.

The following model presents unstandardized estimates:

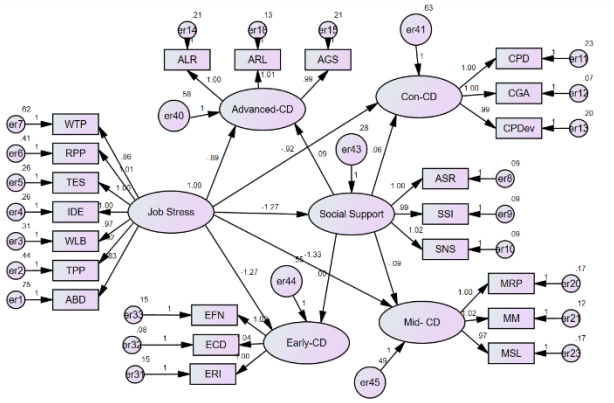

Figure (4): Unstandardized Estimates for the Final Model

Social Support <--- JST: The estimated regression weight between Social Support and JST is -1.272. This negative weight suggests that an increase in JST (the independent variable) is associated with a decrease in Social Support (the dependent variable). The standard error (S.E.) of the estimate is 0.046, and the critical ratio (C.R.) is -27.905. The p-value (P) is very low (*** denotes significance), indicating a highly significant relationship.

ECDS <--- JST: The estimated regression weight between ECDS and JST is -1.273. Similar to the previous row, this negative weight suggests an inverse relationship. The S.E. is 0.136, the C.R. is -9.349, and the relationship is statistically significant.

ACDS <--- JST: The estimated regression weight between ACDS and JST is -0.892, indicating a negative relationship. The S.E. is 0.133, the C.R. is -6.704, and the relationship is statistically significant.

C.PDS <--- JST: The estimated regression weight between C.PDS and JST is -0.923, again implying a negative relationship. The S.E. is 0.137, the C.R. is -6.744, and the relationship is statistically significant.

MCDS <--- JST: The estimated regression weight between MCDS and JST is -1.326. This negative weight suggests an inverse relationship between MCDS and JST. The standard error is 0.134, the critical ratio is -9.911, and the p-value is very low (*** denotes significance), indicating a highly significant relationship. This suggests that there is a strong negative association between MCDS and JST.

Table (6): Hypothesis Testing Results for the Relationship between Social Support, Job Satisfaction, and Career Development

	Hypothesis			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	
Direct Model	Social Support	<---	JST	-1.272	0.046	-27.905	***	Significant
	Early career Development	<---	JST	-1.273	0.136	-9.349	***	Significant
	Advanced Career Dev.	<---	JST	-0.892	0.133	-6.704	***	Significant
	Continue Prof. Career Dev.	<---	JST	-0.923	0.137	-6.744	***	Significant
	Mid- Career Development	<---	JST	-1.326	0.134	-9.911	***	Significant

Indirect Model	Early – Career Development	<---	Social Support	<---	JST	-0.092	0.093	-0.984	0.325	unsignificant
	Advanced Career Dev.	<---	Social Support	<---	JST	0.059	0.097	0.609	0.543	unsignificant
	Continue Prof. Career Dev.	<---	Social Support	<---	JST	0.086	0.094	0.915	0.36	unsignificant
	Mid- Career Development	<---	Social Support	<---	JST	0.002	0.095	0.016	0.987	unsignificant

As observed, that the findings suggest that social support acts as a mediator in the relationship between occupational stress and career development variables, namely MCDS, CPDS, ACDS, and ECDS. The results indicate that as the level of social support increases, the negative impact of occupational stress on career development diminishes across different stages. Notably, a distinct divergence is observed between the direct and indirect models. In the direct model, job stress exerts a statistically significant direct effect on career

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development variables. However, in the indirect model incorporating social support as a mediating variable, the influence of job stress on these variables becomes statistically non-significant. This suggests that job stress has a more pronounced impact on career development in the absence of social support, while the presence of social support weakens or neutralizes this effect.

In summary; the results provide information about the coefficients, t-values, and p-values for the relationships between job stress and different career development stages, as well as the interaction between job stress and social support on career development. Here's a detailed explanation based on the information provided in Table (7):

Table (7): the summary of Hypothesis

#	Hypothesis	Supported/ Not supported
1	*Job stress experienced by teachers has a negative impact on career development of teachers at the early of stage.*	Supported
2	*Job stress university teachers has a negative impact on career development of teachers at the mid-stage.*	Supported
3	*Job stress university teachers has a negative impact on career development of teachers at the advanced-stage.*	Supported
4	*The level of job stress experienced by teachers during the stage of continuing professional development is negatively affect with their engagement in professional growth activities and the quality of their professional development outcomes.*	Supported
5a	*Job stress university teachers has a negative impact on Social Support of teacher*	Supported
5b	*social support moderates the relationship between job stress teacher and career development stages.*	Supported

In summary, the results show that higher job stress is consistently associated with lower career development across different stages. Additionally, the interaction between job stress and social support amplifies the positive effects on career development.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study has analysis on the significant impact of job stress on career development among Afghan university professors. The findings underscore the challenges faced by educators in the unique context of Afghanistan, where socio-political instability and security concerns further exacerbate the stressors experienced in their profession. The research demonstrate that job stress can impede the professional growth and advancement of professors at various stages of their careers, from early-career academics to senior faculty members.

Additionally, the study has highlighted the crucial role of social support as a mediating factor in mitigating the negative effects of job stress on career development. The presence of strong social support systems, including colleagues, mentors, and university administration, has been found to buffer against the detrimental impact of job stress. This emphasizes the importance of fostering supportive work environments and collegial relationships to enhance the well-being and career outcomes of university teachers.

The theoretical contributions of this research lie in its extension of the investigation of job stress to different career development stages and its exploration of social support as a mediating mechanism. By considering both job stress and career development stages, the study offers a comprehensive perspective on the experiences of university teachers and contributes to the theoretical understanding of the relationships between job stress, social support, and career development.

From a practical standpoint, this research offers valuable insights for institutions to develop targeted interventions and support mechanisms for university teachers. By addressing the specific stressors faced by teachers at different career stages, institutions can design tailored programs and resources to alleviate job stress and create a supportive work environment. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of enhancing social support systems within institutions through mentorship programs, collaborative networks, and professional development opportunities. These practical strategies can contribute to the overall well-being, satisfaction, and professional growth of university teachers, ultimately improving the quality of education and fostering a positive academic community.

In conclusion, this study provides empirical evidence on the negative impact of job stress on career development among Afghan university professors and emphasizes the vital role of social support in mitigating these effects. The findings have theoretical implications for understanding the relationships between job stress, social support, and career development, while also offering practical insights for institutions to support the well-being and professional growth of their teachers.

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