

## Occupational Stress, Leadership Style, and Turnover Intention among Private School Teachers in Kathmandu Valley

Dhruba Prasad Subedi  
Kapil Khanal

### Article Info.

#### Dhruba Prasad Subedi

Assistant Professor,  
Shanker Dev Campus, TU  
subedidhrubap@gmail.com  
ORCID:  
<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-3802-5778>

Corresponding Author:

#### Kapil Khanal, Ph.D.

Associate Professor,  
Shanker Dev Campus, TU  
kapilkhanal848@gmail.com  
ORCID:  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3376-0348>

#### Article Received

Oct 11, 2025

#### Article Reviewed:

Nov 01, 2025

#### Article Published:

Dec 27, 2025

### Abstract

*This study investigates the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention among private school teachers in the Kathmandu Valley, with a particular focus on the moderating effect of leadership style. Teaching in private institutions often involves high workloads, low job security, and pressure to meet performance standards, leading to increased stress levels and the possibility of teacher turnover. Using a structured questionnaire, data were collected from 300 private school teachers and analyzed using correlation and moderation analysis. The results indicate that occupational stress has a significant and positive impact on turnover intention, suggesting that higher stress levels increase the likelihood of teachers intending to leave their jobs. Furthermore, the findings reveal that leadership style significantly moderates this relationship. Specifically, transformational leadership was found to weaken the positive link between occupational stress and turnover intention, indicating that supportive and inspiring leadership can buffer the negative effects of stress. These findings emphasize the importance of effective leadership in managing occupational stress and retaining teaching staff. The study offers practical implications for school administrators and policymakers to foster healthier work environments and adopt leadership approaches that reduce stress and enhance teacher retention in private educational institutions.*

**Keywords:** Occupational stress, turnover intention, leadership style, private school, Kathmandu valley

## Background

Teachers play a vital role in shaping the intellectual, emotional, and moral development of future generations, making their contribution to society. They not only deliver subject knowledge but also foster critical thinking, creativity, discipline, and ethical values among students (Day, 2004). However, despite their important role, an increasing number of teachers across the globe are experiencing high levels of occupational stress. This stress often arises from various interrelated factors, including excessive workloads, long working hours, administrative burdens, pressure to meet performance targets, and inadequate institutional support (Kyriacou, 2001; Klassen & Chiu, 2011).

In many cases, teachers are expected to manage large classrooms, implement frequent curriculum changes, respond to diverse student needs, and carry out non-teaching duties even though receiving limited recognition and compensation. These conditions can lead to emotional exhaustion, burnout, and a diminished sense of professional fulfillment (Maslach et al., 2001). In developing countries, these challenges are compounded by limited resources, low pay, and inadequate institutional support. Among the various consequences of occupational stress, one of the most concerning is its influence on teachers' turnover intentions. Teachers who experience chronic stress are more likely to consider leaving their jobs, which can negatively impact the quality and stability of education systems (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

In the context of Nepal, particularly within private schools in Kathmandu Valley, the issue of teacher stress and turnover is a growing concern. Unlike public school teachers who benefit from more secure employment and government support, private school teachers often work under more stressful conditions. They are burdened with heavier workloads, lower salaries, minimal job security, and high expectations for student performance (Ghimire, 2020; Koirala, 2018). These factors

contribute to emotional exhaustion, decreased motivation, and dissatisfaction with the profession. The frequent turnover of teachers in private schools has significant implications, including disruptions in the learning process, reduced student performance, and increased recruitment and training costs for school management (Acharya & Subedi, 2022).

Globally, a large body of research has examined the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intentions, particularly in service sectors like healthcare and education. Occupational stress is widely recognized as a significant predictor of turnover intention among employees (Taris, 2006). Leadership style has been identified as a critical factor in shaping employees' work experiences, influencing not only their motivation and job satisfaction but also their decision to stay or leave the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Nguni et al., 2006).

Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their employees, encourage professional growth, and foster a sense of belonging within the organization. On the other hand, transactional leaders focus on performance monitoring and reward-based systems. A supportive and empowering leadership style can help to safeguard the negative impact of stress and enhance teacher commitment. In contrast, unsupportive leadership may intensify feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction, thereby increasing the likelihood of turnover. Despite the relevance of leadership style in stress and turnover intention, few empirical studies have investigated this relationship in the context of Nepalese private schools. Most existing studies in Nepal have focused on stress and satisfaction among teachers in general, with little attention to how leadership practices influence these outcomes. Moreover, the moderating effect of leadership style on the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intentions remains largely unexplored in the Nepalese education sector (Poudel & Pokhrel, 2021).

Given the increasing reliance on private education providers in urban areas like Kathmandu Valley, there is an urgent need to understand the organizational dynamics that contribute to teacher retention. Considering this fact, this study seeks to address this gap by examining the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intentions among private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley, with a particular focus on the moderating role of leadership style.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To examine the effect of occupational stress on turnover intentions among private school teachers in the Kathmandu Valley.
2. To analyze the relationship between leadership style and turnover intentions of private school teachers in the Kathmandu Valley.
3. To assess the moderating role of leadership style in the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intentions among private school teachers in the Kathmandu Valley.

### **Literature Review and Hypotheses Development**

#### **Theoretical Review**

Occupational stress has become a widespread issue in the education sector, affecting the mental health, job satisfaction, and performance of teachers across the globe. Teachers are frequently expected to handle multiple responsibilities, including curriculum delivery, student management, administrative duties, and parental engagement, often within limited time and resources. These demands, when coupled with inadequate institutional support, can lead to persistent work-related stress (Kyriacou, 2001; Maslach et al., 2001). In the long run, such stress contributes to decreased morale, emotional exhaustion, and most importantly, increased turnover intentions.

Several theories help explain the relationship between occupational stress, turnover intention of teachers, and leadership style. This study is grounded in three major

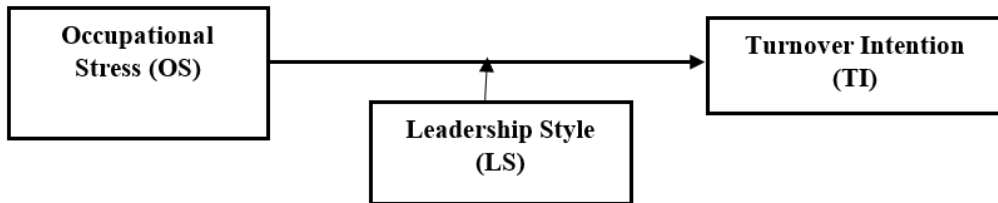
theoretical frameworks: the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, and Transformational Leadership Theory. The JD-R model, developed by Demerouti et al. (2001), posits that job characteristics can be divided into demands and resources. Job demands such as heavy workload, time pressure, and emotional exhaustion can lead to stress and burnout, while job resources such as support from supervisors or access to professional development can buffer these negative effects. In the context of private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley, excessive academic and administrative demands, combined with limited institutional support, represent a high job demand, low resource environment, potentially increasing turnover intentions.

Complementing this, the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) emphasizes that stress is not just the result of external pressures but also how individuals appraise and cope with those pressures. According to this model, teachers' perception of stress depends on whether they believe they have the resources to manage their workload. Supportive leadership can influence this appraisal process positively, making teachers feel more capable and less overwhelmed. Finally, Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985) suggests that leaders who provide vision, inspiration, and individual support can enhance employee motivation, satisfaction, and commitment. In educational settings, transformational leaders can play a crucial role in reducing the negative impacts of occupational stress by fostering trust, motivation, and a positive organizational climate. This theoretical lens positions leadership style as a key moderating factor in the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intentions. In environments where teachers are already under stress, the presence of transformational leadership may mitigate the likelihood of turnover by enhancing resilience and professional engagement. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how stress affects teachers and how

leadership can influence their decision to remain or leave the profession. Based on the theoretical frameworks discussed above, Figure 1 presents the theoretical model of this study.

**Figure 1**

*Theoretical framework*



Source: Demerouti et al. (2001), Lazarus & Folkman (1984)

**Empirical Review**

Teaching is widely acknowledged as a high-stress profession, often characterized by demanding workloads, emotional labor, limited resources, and increasing accountability pressures. Occupational stress arises when teachers perceive an imbalance between their job demands and their ability to cope (Kyriacou, 2001; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In many cases, such stress leads to physical exhaustion, emotional fatigue, reduced motivation, and ultimately, thoughts of leaving the profession. This connection has been well-documented in empirical studies, which consistently find a positive relationship between occupational stress and turnover intentions (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

**Occupational Stress and Turnover Intention**

Empirical studies across different countries and sectors have consistently demonstrated a significant positive relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention. High levels of occupational stress are linked to emotional exhaustion, job dissatisfaction, and a desire to leave the profession, particularly in the teaching field, where emotional and cognitive demands are persistent.

Klassen and Chiu (2010) found that teachers who reported higher stress levels were more likely to express intentions to leave the profession. Their study involving secondary school teachers in Canada revealed that occupational stress was a strong predictor of both burnout and turnover intention, with self-efficacy playing a mediating role. Similarly, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) concluded that teacher stress, caused by factors such as student behavior, workload, and lack of autonomy, was strongly associated with a desire to quit the profession. They emphasized that emotional exhaustion was the most critical factor leading to teachers' turnover intentions.

In the South Asian context, Chughtai (2013) examined Pakistani schoolteachers and found that occupational stress significantly influenced their turnover intentions. The study highlighted that role conflict, resource constraints, and lack of administrative support were key contributors to stress. In Nepal, Acharya and Poudel (2020) investigated private school teachers and identified that occupational stress was one of the most significant predictors of turnover intention. The study indicated that long working hours, high performance expectations, and insufficient compensation were primary stressors. Likewise, Shrestha (2022) emphasized the psychological and organizational sources of stress among Kathmandu-based private school teachers, showing that the more stressed teachers felt, the more likely they were to consider leaving their schools. This was particularly evident in schools where teachers perceived poor management and lack of recognition for their work. Thus, the literature consistently supports the existence of a strong and positive relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention across multiple educational contexts. Based on these, the following hypothesis has been tested:

*H<sub>1</sub>. Occupational stress has a positive and significant effect on turnover intention.*

## Leadership Style and Turnover Intention

Several empirical studies have demonstrated a significant relationship between leadership style and turnover intentions. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, has consistently been shown to reduce employees' turnover intentions. Alkhadher et al. (2023) found that transformational leadership negatively influenced turnover intentions among employees in Kuwaiti educational institutions, primarily by enhancing job satisfaction and emotional commitment to the organization. Similarly, Nawaz et al. (2022) examined the effects of transactional leadership and found mixed outcomes. While contingent rewards under transactional leadership decreased turnover intentions, the passive management-by-exception component was linked to higher turnover rates, suggesting that the effectiveness of transactional leadership may depend on its sub-dimensions.

On the other hand, servant leadership, which emphasizes ethical behavior, empathy, and employee development, has been associated with lower turnover intentions. Sun and Wang (2023) in the hospitality sector revealed that servant leadership significantly reduced turnover intentions by fostering psychological safety and job embeddedness among employees. These findings collectively highlight that leadership style is a critical factor influencing employees' decisions to remain with or leave an organization. On the basis of the above empirical evidence, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

*H<sub>2</sub>. Leadership style has a significant effect on turnover intention.*

## Occupational Stress, Leadership Style, and Turnover Intention

Occupational stress, leadership style, and turnover intention are interconnected factors that significantly influence employee behavior and organizational outcomes. Numerous empirical studies have demonstrated that high levels of occupational stress are positively associated with turnover intentions, while

supportive and effective leadership styles can mitigate the negative impact of stress and reduce employees' desire to leave their jobs.

Rafiq et al. (2023) examined the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention among employees in the education sector and found that job stress was a strong predictor of turnover intention. Employees experiencing workload pressure, lack of control, and role conflict were more likely to consider leaving their jobs. The study emphasized the role of organizational support mechanisms in buffering stress to reduce attrition. Leadership style has been identified as a critical moderating factor in this relationship. Similarly, Ahmed and Jameel (2022) found that transformational leadership significantly reduces occupational stress and turnover intentions in healthcare settings. Leaders who demonstrate empathy, motivation, and individualized support can lower perceived stress levels, which, in turn, decreases employees' intentions to leave.

Supporting this, Lee and Choi (2023) conducted a study in South Korea's corporate sector and reported that servant and transformational leadership styles were effective in reducing the negative effects of occupational stress on turnover intentions. Their findings highlighted that leadership behaviors promoting psychological safety, trust, and employee development not only reduce stress but also enhance employee retention. Moreover, Yazicioglu et al. (2022) explored the mediating role of job stress in the relationship between leadership style and turnover intentions. Their study confirmed that leadership styles indirectly impact turnover by influencing the stress levels experienced by employees, suggesting that leadership interventions can be a powerful strategy to reduce both stress and staff turnover. On the basis of these evidences, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

*H<sub>3</sub>. Leadership styles moderate the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention.*

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey method to examine the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention among private school teachers in the Kathmandu Valley, along with the moderating effect of leadership style. The design enabled the collection of data from a large population at a single point in time, facilitating statistical analysis to test the proposed hypotheses.

### **Population and Sample**

The target population of this study consisted of full-time teachers working in private schools within the Kathmandu Valley. A random sampling technique was applied to ensure representation across different school levels, including primary, lower secondary, and secondary levels. Based on the estimated population and using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, a sample size of 300 respondents was considered appropriate. Schools were selected randomly, followed by the random selection of teachers from each school.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Primary data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire distributed in both online and printed formats. Prior permission was obtained from school administrations, and confidentiality and anonymity of respondents were strictly maintained. Data collection was carried out over a period of one month. Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 represented "strongly agree." To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by three academic experts in educational psychology and human resource management. A pilot study was conducted with 30 teachers, and necessary revisions were made accordingly.

## Data Analysis Procedure

To analyze the relationships among variables, including the moderating role of leadership style, the study employed PROCESS Macro. This technique is appropriate for testing moderation effects and uses bootstrapping procedures to produce robust estimates, especially in cases involving small sample sizes or non-normal data distributions (Hayes, 2022).

## Data Analysis and Results

### Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 demonstrates the demographic profile of the respondents, which provides valuable insights into the composition of private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley. Out of 300 participants, 46% were male, and 54% were female, indicating a slightly higher representation of female teachers in the sample. In terms of age, the majority (41.3%) were in the 25–34 years age group, followed by 32% in the 35–44 age range, 14% below 25 years, and 12.7% aged 45 and above. This suggests that the teaching workforce in private schools is relatively young, with a significant portion in their early or mid-career stages. Regarding marital status, 64.7% of respondents were married, while 35.3% were single. The predominance of married teachers may have implications for work-life balance and stress management.

In terms of educational qualifications, the sample was well-educated: 50.7% held a Master's degree, 36% held a Bachelor's degree, 7.3% had M.Phil. or higher degrees, and only 6% had completed higher secondary education. This high level of academic attainment indicates that most teachers are professionally qualified, which may shape their expectations and tolerance for occupational stress. The teaching level distribution shows that 40% of respondents taught at the secondary level, 34% at the lower secondary level, and 26% at the primary level. Secondary-level teachers may face increased academic pressure and workload, potentially

contributing to higher stress levels. Finally, regarding teaching experience, 37.3% had 2–5 years of experience, 28.7% had 6–10 years, 18% had over 10 years, and 16% had less than 2 years of experience. This indicates that most teachers were in the early to mid-stages of their careers, a period often associated with greater uncertainty and career transition, which can influence both occupational stress and turnover intentions. In terms of monthly income, the largest proportion of respondents (39.3%) earn between 25,000 and 35,000, followed by 27.3% earning between 36,000 and 45,000. Meanwhile, 22% earn less than 25,000, and a smaller group (11.4%) earn more than 45,000 per month.

**Table 1**

*Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency (n)	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Male	138	46
	Female	162	54
<b>Age Group</b>	Below 25 years	42	14
	25–34 years	124	41.3
	35–44 years	96	32
	45 years and above	38	12.7
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	106	35.3
	Married	194	64.7
<b>Academic Qualification</b>	Higher Secondary	18	6
	Bachelor’s Degree	108	36
	Master’s Degree	152	50.7
	M.Phil. or above	22	7.3
<b>Teaching Level</b>	Primary Level	78	26
	Lower Secondary Level	102	34
	Secondary Level	120	40

<b>Teaching Experience</b>	Less than 2 years	48	16
	2–5 years	112	37.3
	6–10 years	86	28.7
	More than 10 years	54	18
<b>Income Per Month</b>	Less than 25,000	66	22
	25,000–35,000	118	39.3
	36,000–45,000	82	27.3
	More than 45,000	34	11.4

*Source:* Field Survey, 2025

### Reliability Analysis

Table 2 indicates that all study constructs exhibit high reliability, with Cronbach’s alpha values ranging from 0.82 to 0.88. These values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming satisfactory internal consistency. This suggests that the scales used to measure occupational stress, turnover intention, and leadership style are reliable. A summary of the reliability analysis is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Reliability Analysis*

Constructs	Number of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Interpretation
Occupational Stress	6	0.84	Good
Turnover Intention	7	0.82	Good
Leadership Style	6	0.88	Good

### Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics and correlation analysis of the three key variables; Occupational Stress, Turnover Intention, and Leadership Style reveal important insights about private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley. The mean score for Occupational Stress was 3.42, indicating that teachers experience a moderate level of stress related to their work environment, with a standard deviation

of 0.68 showing moderate variation among respondents. Turnover Intention had a mean of 3.26, suggesting that teachers somewhat consider leaving their jobs, and the higher standard deviation of 0.91 reflects greater variability in this intention across the sample. Leadership Style was perceived positively, with a mean score of 3.56, slightly above the scale midpoint, and a standard deviation of 0.68 indicating moderate differences in how leadership is viewed.

Correlation results show a significant positive relationship between Occupational Stress and Turnover Intention ( $r = 0.48, p < 0.01$ ), meaning that higher occupational stress is associated with stronger intentions to leave the job. Conversely, Leadership Style is significantly negatively correlated with both Occupational Stress ( $r = -0.28, p < 0.01$ ) and Turnover Intention ( $r = -0.34, p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that more effective or positive leadership is linked to lower levels of stress and reduced turnover intentions among teachers. Overall, these findings highlight the important role that leadership plays in reducing occupational stress and retaining teachers in private schools in Kathmandu Valley.

**Table 3**

*Descriptive Analysis and Correlation Coefficients*

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. Occupational Stress	3.42	0.68	1		
2. Turnover Intention	3.26	0.91	0.48**	1	
3. Leadership Style	3.56	0.68	-0.28**	-0.34**	1

*Note.* \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 4 presents the results of a simple linear regression analysis assessing the impact of Occupational Stress on Turnover Intention. The model summary indicates that the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.614, suggesting a moderate to strong positive relationship between the two variables. The R Square value of 0.377 shows that approximately 37.7% of the variance in turnover intention is explained

by occupational stress alone, indicating a substantial effect size for a single predictor. The Mean Squared Error (MSE) is 0.396, reflecting the average squared differences between the actual and predicted values of turnover intention.

The F-statistic of 102.41 with degrees of freedom ( $df_1 = 1, df_2 = 296$ ) and a p-value of 0.000 confirms that the regression model is statistically significant which means that occupational stress significantly predicts turnover intention. The coefficients, the constant is 1.64, which represents the predicted value of turnover intention when occupational stress is zero. The coefficient for occupational stress is 0.587, indicating that for each one-unit increase in occupational stress, the turnover intention increases by 0.587 units, holding all else constant. This effect is statistically significant, as shown by the t-value of 10.12 and a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the conventional threshold of 0.05. The 95% confidence interval for this coefficient ranges from 0.473 to 0.701, suggesting a high level of confidence in the precision of the estimate. Overall, the findings demonstrate a significant and positive impact of occupational stress on turnover intention among the respondents of private school teachers in Kathmandu valley.

**Table 4**

*Impact of Occupational Stress on Turnover Intention*

	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>P</b>
	0.614	0.377	0.396	102.41	1	296	0.000
<b>Model</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>	
Constant	1.64	0.21	7.81	0.000	1.227	2.053	
Occupational stress	0.587	0.058	10.12	0.000	0.473	0.701	

Table 5 presents the results of a simple linear regression analysis examining the impact of Leadership Style on Turnover Intention. In the model summary, the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.34, indicating a moderate negative relationship between leadership style and turnover intention. The R Square value is 0.116, which

means that 11.6% of the variance in turnover intention is explained by leadership style alone. While this is a modest proportion, it still signifies that leadership style plays a meaningful role in influencing employees' intentions to leave. The Mean Squared Error (MSE) is 0.712, which reflects the average squared difference between the actual and predicted values a lower MSE indicates a better-fitting model.

The F-statistic is 38.87 with degrees of freedom  $df_1 = 1$  and  $df_2 = 296$ , and the corresponding p-value is 0.000, showing that the regression model is statistically significant. This means that leadership style has a significant impact on turnover intention and that the observed relationship is unlikely to be due to chance.

The coefficients of the model is 4.02, indicating that when leadership style is zero (or at its minimum level), the predicted value of turnover intention is 4.02. The coefficient for leadership style is  $-0.356$ , which is negative and statistically significant ( $t = -6.24$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This means that for every one-unit increase in leadership style (i.e., more positive or effective leadership), the turnover intention decreases by 0.356 units. The 95% confidence interval for this effect ranges from  $-0.467$  to  $-0.245$ , which does not include zero, confirming that the effect is statistically reliable. Overall, this analysis suggests that effective leadership styles significantly reduce turnover intention of employees. The findings highlight the role of leadership in retaining teachers in private schools in Kathmandu Valley.

**Table 5**

*Impact of Leadership Style on Turnover Intention*

<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>P</b>
0.34	0.116	0.712	38.87	1	296	0.000
<b>Model</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
Constant	4.02	0.23	17.48	0.000	3.57	4.47
Leadership Style	$-0.356$	0.057	$-6.24$	0.000	$-0.467$	$-0.245$

Table 6 presents the results of a moderation analysis examining whether leadership style moderates the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention. The indirect effect of occupational stress on turnover intention through leadership style is 0.10, with a bootstrapped standard error of 0.029 and a z-value of 3.45, which is statistically significant ( $p = 0.001$ ). The 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect ranges from 0.045 to 0.159, and since this interval does not include zero, it confirms that the moderation effect is significant. This means that occupational stress influences turnover intention not only directly but also indirectly through its negative effect on leadership style.

Looking at the path coefficients, Path a (from occupational stress to leadership style) has a coefficient of  $-0.28$ , indicating that higher levels of occupational stress are associated with poorer leadership style. This effect is statistically significant ( $t = -4.67, p < 0.001$ ). Path b (from leadership style to turnover intention) has a coefficient of  $-0.36$ , suggesting that better leadership style significantly reduces turnover intention ( $t = -6.24, p < 0.001$ ). The total effect (Path c) of occupational stress on turnover intention is 0.39, which is significant ( $t = 6.50, p < 0.001$ ), showing that occupational stress positively predicts turnover intention. However, when leadership style is included as a moderator, the direct effect (Path c') reduces to 0.29, though still significant ( $t = 4.83, p < 0.001$ ), indicating partial moderation effect. In summary, the results demonstrate that leadership style partially moderates the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention. While occupational stress directly increases turnover intention, it also indirectly contributes to it by weakening leadership style, which in turn increases the turnover intention of private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley.

**Table 6**

*Indirect Effect of Occupational Stress on Turnover Intention through Leadership Style*

<b>Effect</b>	<b>Boot SE</b>	<b>Boot z</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>	
0.1	0.029	3.45	0.001	0.045	0.159	
<b>Path Coefficients</b>						
<b>Path</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t / z</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
a (OS → LS)	-0.28	0.06	-4.67	0.000	-0.40	-0.16
b (LS → TI)	-0.36	0.06	-6.24	0.000	-0.47	-0.25
c (Total Effect: Stress → Turnover)	0.39	0.06	6.5	0.000	0.27	0.51
c' (Direct Effect)	0.29	0.06	4.83	0.000	0.17	0.41

The results of the analysis provide strong support for the proposed hypotheses regarding the relationships among Occupational Stress, Leadership Style, and Turnover Intention. Specifically, occupational stress was found to have a significant and positive effect on turnover intention, confirming that higher levels of stress increase employees' intention to leave their organization. Additionally, leadership style demonstrated a significant negative influence on turnover intention, indicating that effective leadership reduces employees' desire to quit. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that leadership style mediates the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention, confirming that occupational stress indirectly influences turnover intention through its impact on leadership style. This suggests that occupational stress can impair leadership effectiveness, which in turn elevates turnover intentions among employees. Together, these findings underscore the critical role of leadership style in mitigating the negative effects of occupational stress on employee retention. A summary of the hypothesis testing results is provided in Table 7.

**Table 7**

*Summary of Hypothesis Testing*

Hypotheses	Predictors	Dependent Variables	Relationship	Finding
H1	Occupational Stress	Turnover Intention	Direct	Supported
H2	Leadership Styles	Turnover Intention	Direct	Supported
H3	Occupational Stress and Leadership Styles	Turnover Intention	Moderating	Supported

**Discussion**

This study aimed to examine the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention among private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley and to explore whether leadership style moderates this relationship. The findings revealed that occupational stress has a significant and positive effect on turnover intention, indicating that teachers experiencing higher stress levels are more likely to consider leaving their jobs. This result is consistent with previous studies by Zhang et al. (2020) and Kyriacou (2001), which also reported that occupational stress significantly contributes to teachers' intentions to leave the profession.

Moreover, the moderating role of leadership style was found to be significant in this study. Specifically, effective leadership styles, such as supportive and transformational leadership, were shown to weaken the positive relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention. In other words, when school leaders demonstrate strong leadership, the negative impact of occupational stress on teachers' intentions to leave is reduced. This aligns with the findings of Lambert et al. (2015) and Ingersoll and Strong (2011), who emphasized that leadership can act as a buffer against stress and promote teacher retention.

However, some contradictory results were found when comparing this study to other contexts. Klassen and Chiu (2011) reported that occupational stress did not always predict turnover intention directly, suggesting that cultural and systemic differences in educational settings may influence this relationship. Additionally,

Aydin et al. (2013) found that leadership style did not significantly moderate the relationship between stress and turnover in certain organizational settings, implying that the influence of leadership may vary depending on the institutional structure and leadership development culture.

Overall, the findings from this study support the notion that occupational stress is a strong predictor of turnover intention among private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley, and that leadership style plays an important moderating role. These results emphasize the need for school management to address stress-related issues and to promote positive leadership practices as strategies to enhance teacher retention and workplace well-being.

### **Conclusion**

This study investigated the relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention among private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley, with a particular emphasis on the moderating role of leadership style. The findings indicate that occupational stress has a significant and positive effect on teachers' turnover intention, suggesting that as stress levels increase, teachers become more likely to consider leaving their jobs. This highlights a critical issue for school management and policymakers, as excessive stress can undermine teacher stability and overall educational quality. Factors such as heavy workload, job insecurity, administrative pressure, and poor work–life balance were identified as key contributors to occupational stress, often compelling teachers to view turnover as a practical coping mechanism.

Furthermore, the study reveals that leadership style plays a crucial moderating role in shaping this relationship. Specifically, supportive and transformational leadership styles were found to mitigate the adverse impact of occupational stress on turnover intention. In school environments where leaders foster open communication, provide emotional and professional support, and encourage

teacher development, the negative consequences of stress are significantly reduced. Such leadership practices not only enhance teachers' resilience but also strengthen their organizational commitment, thereby lowering their intention to leave.

Overall, the findings underscore the importance of effective leadership in managing occupational stress and retaining qualified teachers, suggesting that schools should invest in leadership development initiatives to create a more supportive and sustainable working environment.

### **Implications of the Study**

The findings of this study carry several important implications for school management and policymakers. First, the significant positive relationship between occupational stress and turnover intention suggests that private schools in the Kathmandu Valley must prioritize stress management strategies. School administrators should focus on reducing excessive workload, ensuring fair distribution of responsibilities, and promoting a healthy work-life balance. Addressing job insecurity and minimizing unnecessary administrative pressure can also help in lowering teachers' stress levels and improving retention.

Second, the effective and supportive leadership style plays a critical role in educational institutions. School leaders should be encouraged to adopt transformational and supportive leadership practices, such as maintaining open communication, recognizing teachers' efforts, providing emotional support, and facilitating professional development opportunities. Training and development programs for school principals and administrators can be instrumental in enhancing leadership effectiveness, ultimately fostering a more positive and motivating work environment.

Third, for policymakers, the study underscores the need to formulate guidelines and policies that promote teacher well-being in private schools. This may include setting standards for reasonable workloads, ensuring job security, and encouraging

leadership accountability within educational institutions. By doing so, policymakers can contribute to improving teacher satisfaction and reducing high turnover rates in the private education sector.

### **Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

This study offers valuable insights in line with its predefined research objectives. However, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations and highlight potential directions for future research. First, the use of a cross-sectional research design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among occupational stress, leadership style, and turnover intention. Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias or social desirability effects. Third, the research was confined to private school teachers in the Kathmandu Valley, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or public-school settings. Additionally, only leadership style was examined as a moderating variable, while other potentially important factors were not included.

For future research, longitudinal studies are recommended to better understand causal relationships and changes over time. Researchers may also incorporate additional variables such as job satisfaction, organizational support, compensation, or work environment as mediators or moderators. Expanding the study to include public schools or different geographical areas would enhance generalizability. Furthermore, mixed-method approaches combining quantitative and qualitative data could provide deeper insights into teachers' experiences and organizational dynamics.

\*\*\*\*

## References

- Acharya, B., & Poudel, K. (2020). Occupational stress and turnover intention of teachers in private schools in Nepal. *South Asian Journal of Social Studies and Economics*, 7(3), 45–52.
- Acharya, B., & Subedi, D. (2022). Occupational stress and job satisfaction among private school teachers in Kathmandu Valley. *Journal of Education and Society*, 15(1), 45–58.
- Ahmed, S., & Jameel, A. (2022). The influence of leadership style on occupational stress and turnover intention in healthcare professionals. *Journal of Health Management*, 24(1), 78–91.
- Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Sage Publications.
- Alkhadher, O., Al-Hunaiyyan, A., & Al-Sharhan, S. (2023). The impact of transformational leadership on turnover intentions: Evidence from educational institutions in Kuwait. *Education and Management Studies*, 13(2), 45–58.
- Aydin, A., Sarier, Y., & Uysal, Ş. (2013). The effect of school principals' leadership styles on teachers' organizational commitment and job satisfaction. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 13(2), 806–811.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Sage.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1995). *MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire: Manual Leader Form, Rater, and Scoring Key for MLQ (Form 5x-Short)*. Mind Garden.
- Chughtai, A. A. (2013). Role stressors and turnover intentions: A study of university teachers in Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences*, 7(3), 641–655.
- Day, C. (2004). *A passion for teaching*. Routledge Falmer.

- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands–resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(3), 499–512.
- Ghimire, P. (2020). Teachers' job stress and coping strategies in private schools of Kathmandu. *Journal of Educational Studies, 8*(2), 32–44.
- Hayes, A. F. (2022). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. The Guilford Press.
- Ingersoll, R., & Strong, M. (2011). The impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers: A critical review of the research. *Review of Educational Research, 81*(2), 201–233.
- Klassen, R. M., & Chiu, M. M. (2011). The occupational commitment and intention to quit of practicing and pre-service teachers: Influence of self-efficacy, job stress, and teaching context. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 36*(2), 114–129.
- Koirala, S. (2018). Job stress among school teachers: A study of private and public schools in Nepal. *Tribhuvan University Journal, 33*(1), 77–88.
- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30*(3), 607–610.
- Kyriacou, C. (2001). Teacher stress: Directions for future research. *Educational Review, 53*(1), 27–35.
- Lambert, E. G., Qureshi, H., Frank, J., Keena, L. D., & Hogan, N. L. (2015). The effects of leadership on job stress and turnover intention. *International Journal of Organizational Theory & Behavior, 18*(3), 264–287.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer.
- Lee, H., & Choi, Y. (2023). Leadership styles, occupational stress, and turnover intention: Evidence from corporate employees in South Korea. *Asia Pacific Management Review, 28*(2), 112–121.

- Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology, 52*(1), 397–422.
- Nawaz, M. S., Abid, G., Arya, B., & Iqbal, Q. (2022). Linking transactional leadership with employees' turnover intentions: The mediating role of organizational commitment. *Journal of Management Development, 41*(1), 25–40.
- Nguni, S., Slegers, P., & Denessen, E. (2006). Transformational and transactional leadership effects on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior in primary schools: The Tanzanian case. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 17*(2), 145–177.
- Poudel, B., & Pokhrel, R. (2021). Leadership and teacher satisfaction: A study in Nepalese private schools. *Journal of Management and Development Studies, 31*(1), 65–78.
- Rafiq, M., Khan, M. A., & Ashfaq, S. (2023). Impact of occupational stress on turnover intention: The moderating role of emotional intelligence. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 31*(1), 54–70.
- Shrestha, S. (2022). Factors influencing turnover intention among school teachers in Kathmandu. *Journal of Education and Research, 12*(1), 55–68.
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2017). Still motivated to teach? A study of school context variables, stress and job satisfaction among teachers in senior high school. *Social Psychology of Education, 20*(1), 15–37.
- Sun, L., & Wang, Y. (2023). Servant leadership and employee turnover intention: The role of psychological safety and job embeddedness. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 54*, 11–20
- Taris, T. W. (2006). Is there a relationship between burnout and objective performance? A critical review of 16 studies. *Work & Stress, 20*(4), 316–334.

Yazicioglu, I., Koc, H., & Bayraktar, S. (2022). The role of occupational stress in the relationship between leadership and turnover intention: A study on frontline service workers. *Service Industries Journal*, 42(11-12), 881–900.

Zhang, Q., Zhang, D., & Yang, Y. (2020). Occupational stress, job burnout, and turnover intention among Chinese university teachers: A moderated mediation model. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(13), 4739.