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The relationship between professional stress and psychological alienation among physical education and sports teachers in middle school.

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Abstract:

Our study aimed to reveal the relationship between occupational stress and psychological alienation among physical education and sports teachers in middle school. We relied on a descriptive approach (correlational method) appropriate to the nature of this study. The study sample included 90 teachers randomly selected from a population of 170 physical education and sports teachers in middle schools in the province of Chlef. As for the study tools, we used two tools: the occupational stress scale, which includes 36 statements distributed across six dimensions, and we used three dimensions, namely (reasons related to working with students at school, reasons related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration, and reasons related to the relationship with other teachers). The psychological alienation scale consists of 70 statements distributed across seven dimensions, of which we used three: - Loss of meaning - Lack of sense of value - Loss of a sense of belonging. After analyzing and discussing the results, we arrived at the following key findings:

There is a statistically significant relationship between reasons related to working with students at school and loss of meaning. There is a statistically significant relationship between reasons related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration and lack of a sense of value.

Keywords: Professional stress; psychological alienation; physical education and sports teachers; middle school.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Professional pressures are among the most important issues in contemporary life due to the complexity of social life, the patterns governing social interaction, and the rapid pace of civilization, which requires contemporary humans to keep up with and monitor the changes that have affected all aspects of life (economic, social, family, and educational), prompting researchers to say that humans today live in an era characterized by fatigue, exhaustion, stress, and many stressful situations that have caused a state of and educational). This has led researchers to say that people today live in an era characterized by fatigue, exhaustion, stress, and many stressful situations that have caused psychological and physical imbalances, the effects of which vary among individuals and groups in society (Sharoun, Fennouch, & Bziou, 2023, p. 248)

Teaching is considered a stressful profession, as confirmed by numerous studies. Maslach and Jackson (1981) note that, as a result of working conditions, many teachers find that their feelings and attitudes toward themselves, their students, and their profession have become more negative than they used to be. They may experience various psychological reactions such as anxiety, anger, irritability, helplessness, or discouragement, and these individuals are described as suffering from work-related stress. Gibson and Forrest (2007) point out that health and safety reports in England indicate that teaching is the most stressful profession, with 41% of teachers reporting high levels of work stress compared to 13% in nursing and 29% in administrative jobs.

Physical education and sports are one of the educational processes through which educators try to help individuals reach their full moral, psychological, and intellectual potential. This is not ignored by the educational system in Algeria, where physical education and sports are included in the school curriculum, especially at the intermediate level, due to their importance and impact on academic achievement. However, it is noticeable that in our society, some consider it an unimportant subject and a waste of time and effort. This has led many teachers of the subject to not perform their duties to the fullest, as teachers need the school administration to create a suitable working environment for them, just like teachers of other subjects. However, they encounter unfavourable conditions that hinder their work in the field, such as the poor condition of the school premises and the large number of students in each class, which makes it

difficult to control them. This leads to an increase in problems resulting from this chaos with teachers of other subjects on the one hand and with the administration on the other (Qadadra, 2018, p. 307).

This creates a problem of psychological alienation, which is reflected in their alienation from themselves and members of their community, and a weak sense of belonging to society. This leads to apathy and the formation of negative attitudes towards the institution and a reluctance to take on responsibilities, which may result in poor performance of the educational and teaching tasks assigned to them.

Based on the subject of the study, we formulated the research problem as follows:

Is there a relationship between professional pressures and the psychological alienation of physical education and sports teachers in middle school?

The sub-questions are as follows:

- Is there a statistically significant relationship between the reasons related to working with students at school and loss of meaning?

- Is there a statistically significant relationship between the reasons related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration and the lack of a sense of value?

- Is there a statistically significant relationship between the reasons associated with the relationship with other teachers and loss of a sense of belonging?

2-Previous studies:

2-1 Studies that addressed occupational stress:

Al-Arabi Sahnoun's study (2009):

Entitled: Occupational stress and its relationship to achievement motivation among physical education and sports teachers

This study aimed to identify the occupational stress experienced by physical education and sports teachers and to determine their job satisfaction, in addition to identifying the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. The researcher used a descriptive approach. The research sample consisted of 100 physical education and sports teachers from secondary schools in the western provinces of Algeria (Sidi Bel Abbès, Mostaganem, and Oran). The researcher used a questionnaire as a research tool, and the most important results were as follows:



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- Physical education and sports teachers in the western provinces of Algeria face professional pressures that negatively affect their work performance.
- Physical education teachers are generally dissatisfied with their professional lives.
- Teachers' job satisfaction is influenced by their relationship with students and their interaction with physical education classes.
- Physical education and sports teachers have a strong relationship with teachers of other subjects.
- Teachers' monthly salaries cause psychological and professional stress, which negatively affects their job satisfaction.
- The lack of teaching resources causes physical education and sports teachers professional stress and job dissatisfaction.
- We associate physical education and sports teachers with poor management, which affects their professional performance.
- Physical education and sports teachers are dissatisfied with the inspector's decisions and the way he/she works with them during field visits.

Study by Qadra Shouki (2018):

Entitled: The Impact of Professional Stress on Physical Education and Sports Teachers – A Field Study at Secondary Schools in the province of El Oued.

This study aimed to determine the impact of professional stress on physical education and sports teachers and the important role that physical education and sports play in achieving general education. As for the scientific method used, the researcher relied on the descriptive method. The research sample consisted of 25 physical education and sports teachers in the province of El Oued, and the research tool was a questionnaire. The most important results were as follows:

- Several factors or causes affect the professional stress experienced by physical education and sports teachers, including the lack or absence of sports facilities and the unavailability of pedagogical tools, in addition to environmental and climatic factors.
- There are no statistically significant differences between professional experience reducing stress among physical education and sports teachers in secondary schools, i.e. professional experience does not affect professional stress.

Study by Murad et al. (2019):

Entitled: Sources of occupational stress among physical education and sports teachers in schools

This study aimed to identify the sources of occupational stress experienced by physical education and sports teachers in schools. The study was conducted on 27 physical education and sports teachers in the state of Biskra at the secondary and middle school levels, who were selected at random. A descriptive approach was used due to its suitability for the nature of this study. Mohammed Hassan Alawi's occupational stress scale was used, which contains six axes: working with students, material resources, monthly salary, educational guidance, the relationship between the teacher and the administration, and the relationship with other teachers. The researchers reached the following conclusions:

- Physical education and sports teachers do not suffer from occupational stress due to related sources (working with students, material resources, monthly salary, educational guidance, the relationship between teachers and administration, and the relationship between teachers and others).

Study by Nasir (2020):

Entitled: Professional stress among teachers and its relationship to certain academic variables.

The study aimed to measure the level of professional stress among physical education and sports teachers, identify the most important sources of professional stress that teachers face in the teaching profession, and determine the differences in the level of professional stress according to the variables of years of experience and academic qualifications. The study sample consisted of 65 teachers selected at random, and the results were as follows:

- The level of professional stress among physical education and sports teachers is low.

- The most important sources of professional stress experienced by teachers in the teaching profession are related to the material resources available at the school and the monthly salary of teachers.

- There are differences in the professional stress experienced by physical education and sports teachers due to the factor of experience.

- There are no differences in the professional stress experienced by physical education and sports teachers due to the factor of university qualifications.



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- There is a relationship between the source of professional stress related to working with students among physical education and sports teachers and the sources of professional stress related to (the school's financial resources, the relationship between the teacher and the school administration, and relationships with other teachers).

Study by Shroun et al. (2023):

The Impact of Occupational Stress on Professional Adjustment among Physical and Sports Education Teachers – A Field Study of Middle and Secondary School Physical and Sports Education Teachers in the Central Algiers Directorate of Education-

The study aimed to determine the extent to which professional pressures affect the professional adjustment of physical education and sports teachers. The researchers used a descriptive approach, and the study sample consisted of 234 teachers. The study tool used was a measure of professional pressures and professional adjustment.

The results of the study concluded that there is a negative impact of professional stress on the professional adjustment of physical education and sports teachers.

2-1 Studies that addressed psychological alienation

Awad's study (2003):

Entitled: Manifestations of psychological alienation among male and female teachers in public schools in the northern governorates of Palestine.

This study aimed to identify the prevalence of psychological alienation among male and female teachers in public schools in the northern governorates of Palestine and to determine the effect of the study variables on the prevalence of psychological alienation among them. The study population consisted of all male and female teachers in public schools in the northern governorates of Palestine, numbering 9,660, distributed across the governorate's education directorates. The study concluded the following:

- There are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level in the manifestations of psychological alienation among male and female teachers in public schools in the northern governorates of Palestine attributable to

the variables of governorate, gender, age, academic qualification, specialization, place of residence, and marital status.

- There are statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level in the manifestations of psychological alienation among male and female teachers in public schools in the northern governorates of Palestine attributable to the variables of experience and income level.

Al-Sharif's study (2010):

Entitled: Manifestations of Psychological Alienation among Physical and Sports Education Students and Their Impact on Psychological Tranquility: A Field Study in Some Universities of Eastern Algeria (Annaba and Souk Ahras)

This study aimed to identify the effect of psychological alienation on psychological tranquility (psychological security) and to understand its dimensions among physical education and sports students. The researcher relied on a descriptive approach in his study. The study sample consisted of 180 physical education and sports students from the University Center of Souk Ahras and students from the Department of Physical Education and Sports at the University of Annaba. The researcher used the psychological alienation and psychological tranquility scales as study tools, and the results were as follows:

- There is a strong negative relationship between psychological alienation and psychological reassurance among physical education and sports students.

- The feeling of self-centeredness is the highest, while the feeling of loss of meaning is the lowest among them.

- There are no statistically significant differences between physical education and sports students due to the gender variable in the level of general alienation and all its manifestations.

- There are statistically significant differences between (L.M.D.) students and classical students in the manifestation of non-compliance with standards.

- There are statistically significant differences between physical education and sports students in general alienation and in manifestations of lack of belonging and non-compliance with standards (helplessness, loss of purpose, loss of meaning, self-centeredness) according to the academic level at the university.

Study by Ibrahim et al. (2021):



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Entitled: Psychological alienation and its relationship to job satisfaction among physical education and sports teachers—A field study of some averages in the province of Chlef—

The study aimed to determine the relationship between psychological alienation and job satisfaction according to gender and training system among physical education and sports teachers in middle schools in the province of Chlef. The study sample included physical education and sports teachers in middle school, consisting of 100 teachers randomly selected from middle school teachers in the province of Chlef. The researchers used a descriptive-causal comparative approach in their applied study and relied on two tools: a psychological alienation scale and a job satisfaction scale, after confirming that they had achieved acceptable levels of reliability and validity. By applying statistical significance tests, namely the t-test for two independent samples and Pearson's correlation coefficient, the researchers arrived at the following results:

- There is a statistically significant inverse correlation between psychological alienation and job satisfaction.
- There are no statistically significant differences in psychological alienation between the classical system and the new system (LMD) among professors.
- There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction between the classical system and the new system (LMD) among professors.

3- Study hypotheses:

General hypothesis:

There is a relationship between occupational stress and psychological alienation among physical education and sports teachers in middle school.

Sub-hypotheses:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between the reasons related to working with students at school and loss of meaning.
- There is a statistically significant relationship between the reasons related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration and lack of sense of value.
- There is a statistically significant relationship between the reasons related to the relationship with other teachers and loss of a sense of belonging.

4- Research objectives:

The objectives of our study are as follows:

- To identify the relationship between the reasons related to working with students at school and loss of meaning.
- To identify the relationship between the reasons related to the relationship between teachers and school administration and lack of sense of value.
- To identify the relationship between the reasons related to the relationship with other teachers and loss of sense of belonging.

5- Importance of the study:

Theoretical importance: This is represented by the following:

- Revealing the professional pressures experienced by physical education and sports teachers within educational institutions at the intermediate level.
- Determining the extent of the impact of these professional pressures on the teacher's psyche and their reflection on their performance at work.
- Determining the extent of the relationship between professional pressures and the phenomenon of psychological alienation experienced by physical education and sports teachers in secondary education.
- Highlighting the phenomenon of psychological alienation among physical education and sports teachers in middle school.
- Finding appropriate solutions that help teachers work in decent conditions and avoid psychological alienation.

Applied importance: Making the most of the results and recommendations of the current study, which can help the relevant authorities find effective solutions to alleviate the pressures faced by physical education and sports teachers within educational institutions, while providing a suitable working environment to protect them from psychological alienation in their professional environment.

- Defining concepts and terms:

Occupational stress:

Terminological definition: Occupational stress is defined as a set of stimuli present in an individual's work environment that result in a set of reactions that manifest themselves in the individual's behaviour at work, or in their psychological or physical state, or in their work performance as a result of the interaction of individuals in their work environment .

These include stressors (Abu Abdullah, 2003, p. 15).



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Procedural definition: A set of circumstances, factors, and situations related to the nature of the work of physical education and sports teachers within an educational institution, whether or not these factors, situations, and circumstances cause psychological, emotional, or physical stress.

Psychological alienation:

Terminological definition: An individual's feeling of separation from others, from themselves, or from both, i.e., between the individual and the subject, between the individual and the things surrounding them, and between the individual and society. In other words, the individual's relationship with things and subjects is unhealthy, as they live in their society but in a circle of isolation and separation (Abu Abdullah, 2003, p. 317).

Procedural definition: It is what physical education and sports teachers in middle school suffer from, such as a loss of belonging, insensitivity to value, and a loss of meaning while performing their duties within educational institutions.

Physical education and sports teachers:

Terminological definition: Ishaq Muhammad states that teachers are the source of interactive relationships and have the ability to identify their students' strengths and weaknesses, which helps them to deal with them in a consistent manner based on understanding student behavior and identifying the reasons for their actions (Ben Hamed, 2007-2008, p. 13) .

Procedural definition: A teacher is a person responsible for teaching physical education and sports in middle school, who seeks to educate and nurture students cognitively, sensorially, and motorically through physical and sports activities to achieve the educational goals he aspires to.

6- Methodological procedures followed

Scientific method followed:

Based on the nature of our research topic, we relied on the descriptive method (associative approach) to identify the relationship between some dimensions of the occupational stress scale and some dimensions of the psychological alienation scale among physical education and sports teachers in middle school.

Exploratory study:

In order to ensure the smooth running of our research, we conducted an exploratory study aimed at measuring the reliability and validity of the two scales used in our study, namely: the occupational stress scale and the psychological alienation scale. We distributed the scales to a group of teachers, Reliability and validity were measured by testing and retesting the scales. The interval between the first and second tests was two weeks, and the correlation coefficient for the total score of the scales was calculated.

Study population:

Our research population consisted of 170 middle school physical education and sports teachers in the province of Chlef.

Our research sample included 90 teachers who were selected at random.

Fields of study:

Spatial field: represented by the middle schools at which physical education and sports teachers work in the research sample.

Temporal field: the research was conducted during the period from February 2, 2025, to February 27, 2025.

Human field: Represented by 90 physical education and sports teachers in middle school in the province of Chlef.

Tools used:

We used two tools in our research: the Occupational Stress Scale and the Psychological Alienation Scale.

Occupational stress scale:

This scale was designed by Mohamed Hassan Alawi to measure occupational stress among physical education and sports teachers. It includes 36 statements distributed across six dimensions. In our research, we used only three dimensions: reasons related to working with students at school, reasons related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration, and reasons related to the relationship with other teachers.

Method of assessing occupational stress:

Table No. (01): Shows the method of assessing occupational stress

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State ments	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent or not at all
Posit ive	5	4	3	2	1
Nega tive	1	2	3	4	5

Table No. (02): Shows the numbers of the statements related to the dimensions of the scale used in the research.

Scale dimensions	Statement numbers	Total
Reasons related to working with students at school	01,07,13,19,,25,31	06
Reasons related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration	05,11,17,23,29,35	06
Reasons related to the relationship with other teachers	06,12,18,24,30,36	06

Reliability and validity of the scale:

Table No. (03): shows the level of reliability and validity of the occupational stress scale.

Sampl e size	Degree of freedom	Statistic al significance level	Scale reliability coefficient	Internal consistency
10	09	0.01	0.68	0.82

Psychological alienation scale:

This scale consists of 70 statements distributed across seven dimensions (Naissa, 2012, p. 142).

Our research focused on three dimensions: - Loss of meaning - Lack of sense of value - Loss of sense of belonging

Method of evaluating the psychological alienation scale:

Table No. (04): shows the method of evaluating the psychological alienation scale.

State ments	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Positive	1	2	3	4	5
Negative	5	4	3	2	1

Table No. (05): Shows the numbers of the statements related to the dimensions of the scale used in the research.

Scale dimensions	Statement numbers	Total
Loss of sense of belonging	01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08,09,10	10
Lack of sense of worth	31,32,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40	10
Loss of meaning	51,52,53,54,55,56,57,58,59,60	10

Validity and reliability of the scale:

Table No. (06): shows the level of reliability and face validity of the psychological alienation scale.

Sample size	Degree of freedom	Statistical significance level	Scale reliability coefficient	Face validity
35	34	0.01	0.84	0.91

7- Presentation, analysis, and discussion of results:

7-1- Presentation and analysis of results:

Table No. (07): Presents the results of the first partial hypothesis, which states that:



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There is a statistically significant relationship between the reasons associated with working with students at school and loss of meaning.

Statistical methods Dimensions	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sample	Sig value
Factors related to working with students	**0.746	90	0.000
Loss of meaning			

Note: ** Statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level.

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level.

Table 7 shows that there is a statistical relationship at a significance level of 0.01, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.746 between the factors related to working with students and the factors related to loss.

Table No. (08): presents the results of the second partial hypothesis, which states that:

There is a statistically significant relationship between the causes associated with the relationship between the teacher and the school administration and the lack of a sense of value.

Statistical methods Dimensions	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sample	Sig value
Reasons associated with the relationship between teachers and school administration	**0.659	90	0.000

Lack of sense of value			
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Note:** Statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level

Table 8 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship at the 0.01 significance level, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.659 between the reasons associated with the relationship between teachers and school administration and a lack of sense of value.

Table No. (09): Presents the results of the third partial hypothesis, which states that:

There is a relationship between the causes associated with the relationship with other teachers and the loss of a sense of belonging.

Statistical methods Dimensions	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sample	Sig value
Reasons associated with the relationship between teachers and school administration	**0.698	90	0.000
Lack of sense of value			

Note:** Statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level

Table 9 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship at the 0.01 significance level, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.698 between the factors related to the relationship between teachers and school administration and a lack of sense of value.



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7-2-Discussion of results based on hypotheses:

7-2-1: Discussion of the first hypothesis:

Based on the results of the first hypothesis, which states that there is a statistically significant relationship between the reasons related to working with students at school and loss of meaning, and through the results of Table 7, it is clear to us that there is a relationship between the reasons related to working with students at school and loss of meaning. Researchers attribute the relationship between the two dimensions to the large number of educational groups and the large number of students in each class, in addition to the poor condition of the playground or the lack of sports facilities, which increases pressure on the performance of physical education and sports teachers and negatively affects the delivery of the educational unit, leading to an inability to achieve and achieve the procedural objectives set for each educational unit, leading to cases of dissatisfaction and discontent with work on the part of the teacher, which generates a loss of meaning as a set of symptoms resulting from the separation of man from his human existence. Marx (1977) believes that a person who is alienated at work does not simply lose himself, but rather as a qualitative being with human characteristics.

This is consistent with the study by (Qadadra, 2018) and the study by (Sabaiha & Saidi Zarouki, 2021), from which we conclude that the first hypothesis is confirmed.

7-2-2- Discussion of the second hypothesis:

Based on the results of the second hypothesis, which states that there is a statistically significant relationship between the causes related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration and the lack of a sense of value, and through the results of Table No. (08), it is clear to us that there is a relationship between the causes related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration and the lack of a sense of value. Researchers attribute the relationship between the two dimensions to the lack of responsiveness of the administration of the institution where the physical education and sports teacher works and its failure to meet his requirements for performing his educational work by providing the appropriate atmosphere and climate for work, such as providing sports facilities and the pedagogical means necessary to achieve the procedural objectives of each physical activity, in addition to discrimination in dealing

between him and teachers of other subjects in terms of material and moral incentives will inevitably increase the physical education teacher's suffering from professional pressure and make him feel unequal in treatment and unfairness and diminish the value of the work he does within the institution which will generate a lack of sense of value for himself and his subject, which is a factor that could lead to his psychological alienation within his professional environment. This is consistent with the study by (Sharoun, Fennouch, & Bziou, 2023). and the study by (Sabaiha & Saidi Zarouki, 2021), from which we conclude that the second hypothesis is confirmed.

7-2-2- Discussion of the second hypothesis:

Based on the results of the second hypothesis, which states that there is a statistically significant relationship 7-2-3- Discussion of the third hypothesis:

Based on the results of the third hypothesis, which states that there is a statistically significant relationship between the reasons related to the relationship with other teachers and the loss of a sense of belonging, and through the results of Table No. (09), it is clear to us that there is a relationship between the reasons related to the relationship with other teachers and the loss of a sense of belonging. Researchers attribute the relationship between the two dimensions to the poor condition of the practice area, the lack of rooms for physical activity, the large number of students in each group, and the lack of experience of the teacher, which sometimes leads to a lack of control and total control over them, which increases the professional pressure on the physical education and sports teacher and inevitably results in increase in the problems resulting from this chaos, which disturbs teachers of other subjects, leading them to resort to administrative measures such as complaining to the school principal, which results in interventions that are not in the teacher's favor. This makes physical education teachers feel that they are being treated unfairly and that no one is standing by them despite the difficult conditions in which they work and the nature of the subject, which requires movement, activity, and conversation among students on the one hand and between the teacher on the other, which makes them feel that they do not belong to the educational family of the institution and, consequently, suffer from psychological alienation within the institution. This is consistent with the study by (Ahmeida & Jarmoun, 2020) and the study by (Mohammed, 2003), from which we conclude that the third hypothesis is confirmed.



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8- Conclusion:

Occupational stress is one of the most prominent problems faced by workers in general and physical education teachers in particular, especially at the middle school level. This is due to the stressful situations that arise at this stage, such as long working hours, overcrowded classrooms, lack of teaching resources, human relations between the administration and teachers, and the view of other subject teachers towards physical education and sports. This increases the level of stress experienced by physical education and sports teachers, which often leads to feelings of psychological alienation in their professional environment. This is the conclusion of our study, which examined the relationship between certain aspects of professional stress (reasons related to working with students at school, reasons related to the relationship between the teacher and the school administration, reasons related to the relationship with other teachers) and some dimensions of psychological alienation (loss of meaning, lack of sense of value, loss of sense of belonging). Our findings show that there is a relationship between them. Therefore, the educational institution (middle school) is required to provide a suitable working environment for physical education and sports teachers within the institution, motivate them to perform better, and support them, which will increase their motivation to achieve and work, thereby achieving their general and procedural educational goals in class with their students. The administration's recognition of the efforts made by the teacher and the importance of the subject in the institution will give him a sense of psychological comfort and a desire to redouble his efforts. Support from colleagues teaching other subjects will inevitably increase the physical education and sports teacher's psychological stability and will have a positive impact on the teacher's pedagogical performance in particular and the institution's overall outcomes in general .

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