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Research Article

### THE EFFECT OF WORK-RELATED STRESS ON WORKERS IN HEALTH INSTITUTIONS AND JOB SATISFACTION: STUDY OF HOSPITAL IN THE NAJRAN REGION, SAUDI ARABIA.

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**Abstract:**

*Healthcare workers are the strongest pillars in providing quality healthcare services and play a vital role in maintaining a healthy state and achieving health-related goals such as health promotion, disease prevention, health restoration, institutional care, and rehabilitation services. However, these healthcare workers remain an invisible workforce in the healthcare industry. This study investigates the effect of job-related stress on the job satisfaction of HCWs working in hospitals. Work stress is one of the most important health risks in the workplace for employees, and job satisfaction has been considered a critical factor in providing high-quality services and outstanding performance in hospitals. This study presents a field survey. Drawing on a sample of 357 healthcare workers working in Najran hospitals, we examined the degree to which stressors such as workload, conflict, career development, interpersonal relationships, and access to information influence aspects of job satisfaction such as the physical environment, job opportunities, and style. Management, job enrichment, rewards and job security. The results showed that conflict, heavy workload, and lack of job autonomy were negatively associated with all dimensions of job satisfaction. Conclusion: Healthcare administrators, especially HCWs administrators, should consider the factors that contribute to job dissatisfaction, work stress, and try to eliminate them by designing and implementing helpful policies and practices. One aspect that must also be addressed is an increase in continuing education programs for HCWs, especially programs that deal with stress and conflict management, strengthening coping mechanisms, enhancing personal skills and achievements, and updating knowledge.*

*Keywords:* Health-care worker, Work-Related Stress, job satisfaction, Saudi Arabia

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## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Occupational burnout is a common feeling among HCWs profession because HCWs is one of the most rigorous professions. Stress felt by the HCWs staff is due to the constant demands and conditions in the workplace resulting from the unwanted working conditions. This, in turn, compromises the well-being of the HCWs, causing them to experience burnout. Burnout is characterized by a decrease in the energy of the HCWs at work. This can be observed in the lack of motivation, feeling of frustration, and emotional exhaustion that reduce the HCWs efficacy [1].

However, it is important to investigate the prevalence of stress in certain health care professions, since HCWs are the backbone of healthcare systems [2]. Unlike the single occurrence that sparks stressful reactions or effects, it is essential that effects of daily career-related stressors investigated and reported with the aim of alleviating the occurrence of this condition. Thus, burnout is a negative effect caused by negative factors in the healthcare environment. A previous study by Dall'Ora *et al* showed that prolonged stress in the workplace could cause burnout among nursing staff. It has also been observed that burnout in the health sector often leads to lower efficiency of workers in providing health services [3]. Moreover, high workload, low levels of staffing, long shifts, and low control, also associated with burnout in HCWs.

Job satisfaction plays a key role in HCWs productivity, thereby influencing the delivered health service. In fact, job satisfaction proven to have a significant impact on the performance of working HCWs. HCWs found to have a safe haven amidst stressful situations when satisfying relationships established among their colleagues. These positive relationships buffer the work stress experienced by the HCWs, which means that these inter-collegial relationships have been proven a valuable component of job satisfaction [4].

Stress, Burnout, and low job satisfaction can lead to turnover among HCWs in Saudi Arabia. The relationship between job satisfaction and Stress, Burnout is important, and a lack of awareness and information aggravates this issue. As job satisfaction and Stress, Burnout is work-related phenomena; the research will investigate the relationship between the two. Most previous studies conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia focused on the main cities, and no study was found that focused on job satisfaction and Stress, Burnout in hospitals in small

cities [5-8]. Therefore, this study examines job satisfaction and Stress, Burnout of HCWs who work in hospitals in small cities in Saudi Arabia, where the hospital working environment is different from that in large cities in Saudi Arabia. It is necessary to address the issue and find a solution to the existing problem of burnout among the Saudi HCWs in Najran region.

The aim of this paper is to assess the impact of work stress on job satisfaction among HCWs in the health sector in the Najran region - Saudi Arabia.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS:

### 2.1. Study design and setting

The study will utilize a descriptive quantitative cross-sectional design to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and work stress of the HCWs Najran region - Saudi Arabia. A descriptive quantitative design will be used because the study will both describe the burnout level and job satisfaction of the HCWs, and the data will be collectively quantified to determine its extent. This design will enable the researcher to measure the levels of work stress and satisfaction and describe its relationship among the nurses working in Najran region - Saudi Arabia.

Ethical approval obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Directorate of Health in Najran. The study's goals and benefits described to the participants, and the importance of participant confidentiality and privacy explained.

### 2.2. Study participants

A convenience sampling design has been used to select the study respondents. Convenience sampling will allow the researcher to select HCWs who are available to participate in the study. The data were collected at ten hospitals in Najran region, Saudi Arabia. These ten hospitals have been chosen because they are general hospitals that provide different services and have registered HCWs (~5000) working in different departments. The total sample is (357).

### 2.3. Study instruments

A structured questionnaire was employed to carry out the survey. The measurement instrument was thoroughly evaluated before released. The instrument was developed by adapting existing multi-dimensional scales to capture occupational stress and HCWs job satisfaction. The Job-Related Tension Scale (JRTS) was adopted to measure job stress.

### 2.4. Statistical methods

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 23.0. The frequencies, percentage, mean and standard deviation were computed to describe the study variables and items. In order to conduct the statistical test, the normality was inspected using the one-sample

Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test; as a result, work stress was considered as parametric data, while job satisfaction was determined to be non-parametric data. A p-value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Socio-demographics of the participants

**Table 1.Sociodemographic traits of participants (n=71)**

Variable		n	%
Your gender	male	152	42.6
	Female	205	57.4
Your age	≤ 30 years	109	30.5
	31-40 years	114	31.9
	41 50 years	91	25.5
	≥ 51 years	43	12.0
Nationality	Saudi	174	48.7
	Non Saudi	183	51.3
Highest qualification achieved	High School	95	26.6
	Diploma	223	62.5
	BA	35	9.8
	MS/PHD	4	1.1
Years of experience	≤ 5 years	98	27.5
	6 - 10 years	85	23.8
	10 – 15 years	91	25.5
	≥ 16 years	83	23.2

As shown in Table (1), 357 HCWs working in the Najran Saudi health sector participated in the study, 42.6% male and 57.4% female. The sample participants were 51.3% non-Saudi and 48.7% Saudi. Most (62.5%) held Diploma degrees. Approximately (62.5%) of the participants were aged ≤ 40 years, and the (27.5%) were ≤ 5 years' experience.

3.2. *Descriptive analysis of work stress*

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of work stress

no	Questions	Mean	Std. Dev	RII (%)	T value	P value Sig	Rank
1	My job requires a lot of focus and attention	2.43	0.84	81.00	5.92	0.001 *	1
2	I feel insecure in my job	2.41	0.84	80.29	5.72	0.001 *	3
3	I make crucial decisions	1.59	0.80	53.04	-5.98	0.001 *	9
4	I find it difficult to perform the tasks assigned to me	1.93	0.94	64.23	-0.91	0.367	7
5	I suffer from a lack of information about my work performance	1.42	0.68	47.20	-10.02	0.001 *	14
6	I suffer from a lack of training necessary to perform the tasks assigned to me	2.20	0.89	73.48	2.68	0.008*	4
7	The necessary resources and tools are available to carry out the professional tasks assigned to me	2.42	0.89	80.54	5.48	0.001 *	2
8	I suffer from health problems because of my work	1.47	0.69	48.91	-9.08	0.001 *	12
9	I am bored and routine in my work	1.55	0.83	51.58	-6.37	0.001 *	10
10	Too many hours of work makes me tired and stressed after the end of work	1.81	0.94	60.47	-2.24	0.027*	8
11	There is not enough time to rest at work	1.45	0.65	48.42	-9.82	0.001 *	13
12	It bothers me to work in shifts	1.48	0.67	49.39	-9.12	0.001 *	11
13	The number of employees within the department is sufficient	1.38	0.72	45.99	-10.10	0.001 *	15
14	There is overcrowding and a large number of visitors in the hospital	2.01	0.95	66.91	0.09	0.929	5

15	I do not receive enough support from my bosses at work	1.97	0.94	65.69	-0.36	0.716	6
16	I suffer from a lot of noise in the workplace	1.32	0.62	44.04	-12.87	0.001 *	16
17	I suffer from poor lighting and ventilation in the workplace	1.32	0.62	44.04	-12.87	0.001 *	17
<b>All statements</b>		<b>1.774</b>	<b>0.795</b>	<b>59.13</b>	<b>-4.109</b>	<b>0.001 *</b>	

Table (2) shows the descriptive analysis of work stress. For the whole paragraph, the RII is equal to (59.131%). This means that workers in hospitals in the Najran region, Saudi Arabia, suffer from work pressure. Table (2) showed that the paragraph "My job requires a lot of focus and attention" was ranked first by the respondents within this group, with a relative importance index equal to (81.00%). This means that workers in hospitals in the Najran region require a lot of focus and attention, which generates work pressure. However, the paragraph "I suffer from poor lighting and ventilation in the workplace" ranked last by respondents within this group, with a relative importance index equal to (44.04%), which explains the interest of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in advancing the health sector.

### 3.3. Descriptive Analysis of Job Satisfaction

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis of Job Satisfaction

no	Statement	Mean	Std. Dev	RII (%)	T value	P value Sig	Rank
1	I feel satisfied with the work I do	0.86	0.39	95.38	26.05	0.001 *	11
2	The chances of promotion are equal for everyone	2.95	0.25	98.30	44.06	0.001 *	1
3	There is a remarkable development in all areas in the hospital	2.93	0.29	97.57	37.69	0.001 *	2
4	I feel an acceptable social status from the work I do	2.92	0.30	97.32	36.07	0.529	3
5	I feel satisfied with the vacations I get	2.88	0.38	96.11	26.87	0.001 *	8
6	I am satisfied with the salary I get	1.96	0.81	65.21	-0.63	0.529	15
7	I see that material incentives and income from work are commensurate with the tasks I do	2.81	0.49	93.67	19.23	0.001 *	12

8	The organization's wage system is characterized by its fairness	2.92	0.27	97.32	39.47	0.001 *	4
9	The wages I receive are sufficient for the costs of living requirements	2.88	0.34	96.11	30.02	0.001 *	9
10	I am satisfied with my retirement system	2.90	0.30	96.59	34.57	0.001 *	6
11	My boss treats me respectfully	2.89	0.34	96.35	31.02	0.001 *	7
12	My boss guides me in a good way when I make mistakes in my work	1.35	0.71	45.01	10.66	0.001 *	16
13	My superiors treat me with fairness and equality with others	2.62	0.75	87.35	9.70	0.001 *	13
14	There is an atmosphere of mutual respect with my co-workers	2.17	0.94	72.26	2.10	0.038*	14
15	My colleagues give me ample support and support	2.88	0.37	96.11	28.31	0.001 *	10
16	I feel satisfied with the number of working days	2.91	0.32	96.84	33.30	0.001 *	5
	All statements	2.55	0.45	89.22	25.53	0.001 *	

Table (3) shows the descriptive analysis of Job Satisfaction. For the whole paragraph, the RII is equal to (89.22%). This means that workers in hospitals in Najran, Saudi Arabia, have a high level of job satisfaction. Table (3) showed that the paragraph "The chances of promotion are equal for everyone" was ranked first by the respondents within this group, with a relative importance index equal to (81.00%), Test value = **44.06**, and P-value = 0.001 which is smaller than the level of significance ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this paragraph is significantly greater than the test value (2). This means that those in charge of managing hospitals in the Najran region support health workers in career development and promotion, which encourages them to provide the best health services. However, the paragraph "My boss guides me in a good way when I make mistakes in my work" ranked last by respondents within this group, with a relative importance index equal to (45.01%). This requires working on setting specific procedures for dealing with health workers, training them on an ongoing basis, and working on building a strong

working relationship between the manager and the employees.

#### 4. DISCUSSION:

Job satisfaction, related to job stress, is a subjective experience related to the subjective feelings and perceptions of HCWs. Job satisfaction is also linked to the workplace, so care must be taken in the work environment of HCWs and thus the quality of life of HCWs must be enhanced. The purpose of the study was to assess the impact of work stress on job satisfaction among HCWs in the health sector in the Najran region - Saudi Arabia.

The results of the current study reported that 89.22% of the respondents are satisfied and 10.78% are dissatisfied with the quality of their work life. Contrary to the results of a study conducted by Muhammad et al. on the quality of work life among primary health care nurses in Jazan region, they reported that primary health care nurses are dissatisfied with their work life [9].

In contrast, in a study conducted by Hamdan, on the quality of work life among nurses in the Hail region, it was described that the nurses have a moderate work-life quality [10]. The results of the current study also indicate that the majority of the participants are satisfied with the work environment, and they report that they are satisfied with their job, despite the shortage of staff in their unit, they were able to provide better quality care to patients. Participants described that they were able to communicate freely with their supervisor. On the other hand, the results indicated dissatisfaction with the workload and the difficulty of the nature of their work. They also reported that they do not enjoy independence in the decision-making process. Most of the participants reported that they face many challenges and many explanations in performing many tasks that negatively affect the quality of their work life. However, the result of this study was not consistent with several studies that found nurses to suffer from a high level of work stress and burnout, such as previous studies in Iran by [12] in Egypt [13], and in Saudi Arabia [14].

In contrast, the result of this study was consistent with some previous studies that found HCWs to experience a high level of job satisfaction in Ethiopia by [15], in Oman by [16].

The reasons for the low level of work stress and burnout among HCWs in Najran region hospitals is that each hospital followed the staff ratio policy of the Saudi Ministry of Health, which reduces the workload of the staff. Moreover, although the nature of the work of HCWs characterized by difficulty and exhaustion, and the HCWs faced pressure in their work, the HCWs did not experience prolonged stress. HCWs in the Najran region earn a satisfactory salary. In addition, the Najran Health Department followed a vacation plan that encouraged giving nurses their right to annual leave, which helped them move away from the work environment and reduce the associated stress.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS:

This study examined the relationship between job satisfaction and work stress among HCWs in several healthcare institutions in Najran region, Saudi Arabia. This influence affects not only the health organizations but also the HCWs career as a whole. Job dissatisfaction can be seen as a real component of the risk of burnout, which in turn poses an explicit threat to the role of HCWs practice and the quality of healthcare provided to patients. The results of this work have shown that the employees at the private

hospital agreed that job stress affects their job satisfaction. This is due to high volume of work, time pressure and a feeling of lack of job security. For future work, the authors suggest adding empirical data and statistical correlation to better understand the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. Finally, health care managers, especially HCWs, should consider the factors that contribute to job dissatisfaction and burnout and try to eliminate them by designing and implementing beneficial policies and practices, such as increasing the number of HCWs in health care settings, which in turn will reduce the level of work stress. HCWs increase job satisfaction. Focusing on meeting the personal and professional demands of HCWs is critical if high-quality health care services are to continue. A third aspect that needs to be addressed is increasing HCWs continuing education programs, especially programs that deal with stress and conflict management, strengthening coping mechanisms, enhancing soft skills and achievements, and updating knowledge.

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## Conflict of Interest

All authors declare no conflicts of interest in this paper.

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