

# Antecedents of Job Satisfaction in Saudi Arabia: Impact of Industrial Sector

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Received: August 28, 2017

Accepted: September 28, 2017

Online Published: October 18, 2017

doi:10.5539/ijbm.v12n11p61

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v12n11p61>

## Abstract

The exhaustive effort of Government of Saudi Arabia to standardize HRM practices across different industrial sectors in the Kingdom is expected to enhance the participation of its nationals in private sectors including SME's. This study is an effort to understand the perceived level of job satisfaction, job stress, work place violence and role clarity after the enforcement of "Nitagat" program and various amendments in the present law to promote employee well being and employee participation in order to enhance job satisfaction.

The study reports a moderately better level of job satisfaction across all respondents but constrained by industry type. In spite of the best efforts of competent authorities to ensure better work environment by amending and designing regulations a significant higher job stress and work place violence is reported in private sector as compared to public sector which has fared better scores on Role clarity and lower scores on work place violence and job stress. As demonstrated through Structural equation model, the relations between job stress, role clarity and work place violence across industry sector (public vs private) further implying that key practices pertaining to HRM still remain a concern to be addressed.

**Keywords:** job stress, job satisfaction, role clarity, workplace violence, Saudi Arabia

## 1. Introduction

Like any other country in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia too has recognized the urgent need to switching its economy away from crude oil production alone to leading world producer of petrochemicals. (Mellahi and Woods, 2001; Mellahi, 2006). The efforts of the kingdom to dawn a new identity of progressed industrial state has shown a remarkable progress like increase in number of industrial units, growth in GDP despite slump in oil prices to name a few. The efforts exerted by the government for the support of industrial development covered several basic spheres including implementation of required infrastructure, construction of Jubail and Yanbu industrial cities, construction of industrial cities in various regions of the Kingdom, establishment of Saudi Industrial Development Fund (SIDF), and continued provision of other industrial support and incentives.

The urge and keenness of Government of Saudi Arabia for joint ventures and foreign investment in the country could potentially not achieved unless and until reforms are initiated in the conservative Saudi labor market, governed by 1969 Saudi Labor Law which gave employers in the private sector wide latitude to unlawfully exploit and abuse workers.

The labor market in Saudi Arabia is still dominated by expatriates, who are mostly low-skilled workers, even as unemployment rates among young Saudis remain high (Alshanbri et al., 2014; Alzalabani, 2004; Mellahi, 2007). The apathy of its own nationals towards private jobs coupled with fear of exploitation and abuse by private sector may further put a cork in the industrial growth trajectory which the kingdom would seldom like to happen. Growing unemployment on one hand and the religious, social and cultural taboo for private jobs have already made the task more intrinsic for government to ensure welfare and benefits for the existing work force. On the backdrop of this it would be interesting and worth studying the job satisfaction of Saudi national employed in both private and public sector after nearly two decades of Saudization by government and whether the core objective of this Saudization has been fulfilled. General job satisfaction and turnover intentions of public employees are different from those of private employees'. (Mihajlov & Mihajlov, 2016).

Job satisfaction is one of the best indicators of prevailing work environment in the organization. While some researchers have reported that public employees are more satisfied, others have shown that satisfaction is higher among private sector employees (Paillé et al., 2015). Numerous studies have stressed that Job satisfaction cannot be viewed in isolation and contribution of various factors such as Work place violence, Job stress and role clarity needs to be acknowledged. As some studies (‘Sunny’Hu & Cheng, 2010; Al-Ajmi, 2001; Boyne, Poole, & Jenkins, 1999) have claimed these factors and their relationships may differ between work places in the private and public sectors, this study will also empirically examine the relationships among these factors and the differences between industrial sectors. The study apart from understanding the perceived level of these antecedents to job satisfaction across various industries tries to take an integrated view of various antecedents of job satisfactions, their relations amongst themselves and their cumulative effect on job satisfaction across various sectors public or private in the rapidly burgeoning Saudi Arabian industrial economy.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Job Satisfaction*

There are several definitions of job satisfaction, such as “a positive (or negative) evaluative judgment one makes about one’s job or job situation” (Weiss, 2002, p. 175). Similarly, Robert and Angelo (2007, p. 192) defined job satisfaction as “an affective or emotional response toward various facets of one’s job.” Many factors have been found to influence job satisfaction, including supervisor support, co-worker support, training opportunities, participation in decision making, and tension at the workplace (Griffiths, Baxter, & Townley-Jones, 2011).

Recently, some studies have reported a strong negative relationship between job satisfaction and job stress (Ahsan et al., 2009; Griffiths et al., 2011; Klassen & Chiu, 2010) and with employees’ intent to leave (Paillé, Grima, & Dufour, 2015), as well as positive relationships between job satisfaction and self-efficacy (Klassen & Chiu, 2010), organizational commitment (Dirani & Kuchinke, 2011; Top & Gider, 2013), and organizational citizenship behavior (Paillé et al., 2015). Several factors, such as job stress, role ambiguity, and workplace violence, may hinder individuals from performing their duties effectively (Al-Ajmi, 2001). Griffiths et al. (2011) identified a strong relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. This result is in line with the findings of many studies (Ahsan et al., 2009; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Ram et al., 2011; Robert & Angelo, 2007), all confirming a significant, negative relationship between work stress and job satisfaction. Consequently, job stress has been used as an indicator of the level of job satisfaction (Griffiths et al., 2011) and has been identified as a main source of employee turnover (Alshanbri, Khalfan, & Maqsood, 2014).

### *2.2 Job Stress*

Job stress can be defined as “a situation in which some characteristics of the work situation are thought to cause poor psychological or physical health or to cause risk factors making poor health more likely” (Beehr, 2014, p. 11). Robert and Angelo (2007) argued that individual characteristics and psychological processes may play mediating roles in causing job stress, as they defined stress as “an adaptive response, mediated by individual characteristics and/or psychological processes, that is a consequence of any external action, situation” (Robert & Angelo, 2007, p. 599).

Job stress is caused by a lack of support, a lack of perceived control over the work, task characteristics, and work overload (‘Sunny’Hu & Cheng, 2010; Griffiths et al., 2011), and role ambiguity or role conflict (Ahsan et al., 2009; Ram et al., 2011; Showail, McLean Parks, & Smith, 2013).

### *2.4 Workplace Violence*

Chappell and Di Martino (2006, p. 10) defined workplace violence as “any action, incident or behavior that departs from reasonable conduct and in which a person is assaulted, threatened, harmed, or injured in the course of or as a direct result of his or her work.”

Neuman and Baron (1998, p. 391) considered workplace aggression to be a general term that includes any act by which individuals intentionally attempt to harm others at work or their organizations. Tabassum (2013) stated that job stress can manifest into harmful emotions such as “anxiety, aggression, irritability, dependency, withdrawal or depression” (p. 68), many of which could stimulate violent behaviors in workplace.

### *2.3 Role Clarity*

Role clarity “can refer to the presence or absence of adequate role-relevant information due either to restrictions on this information or to variations in the quality of the information” (Lyons, 1971, p. 100). According to Breaugh and Colihan (1994), employees are often unclear about how to do their jobs, when certain tasks should be performed and the criteria by which their performance will be judged. Years of research on role ambiguity has

shown that it is a noxious state which is associated with negative psychological, physical and behavioral outcomes (Jackson and Schuler 1985).

#### *2.4 Role Clarity and Job Stress*

Role conflict and role ambiguity are among the antecedents of work stress which have been most cited in the research literature (Fisher & Gitelson, 1983). Role conflict, that is pressure to perform in two or more incompatible ways, has been tied conclusively to occupational stress in Western research. It has also been demonstrated to be a factor in job dissatisfaction and propensity to leave the organization (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoeck & Rosenthal, 1964; Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970; House & Rizzo, 1972; Hamner & Tosi, 1974; Van Sell, Brief & Schuler, 1981; Stout & Posner, 1984; Fang & Baba, 1993; Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Role ambiguity, the lack of clear and specific information regarding work role requirements, has also been linked repeatedly with job stress and low job satisfaction (House & Rizzo, 1972; Hamner & Tosi, 1974; Ivancevich & Donnelly, 1974; Wright & Thomas, 1982; Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Job satisfaction is a result of many factors of which job stress is one of the important antecedent. In general, job stress has been viewed as an antecedent of job satisfaction, and the two constructs have been treated as related yet distinct (Stanton, 2002). An inverse relationship between job stress and job satisfaction among various populations has been reported consistently in the literature (Beehr, 1976) (Cotton, 2002); (Dua, 1994) (Hawe, 2000); (Heslop, 2002) (Lu, 1997); (Richardsen, 1991); (Ulleberg, 1997)

The cause of job stress can be attributed to various organizational and physiological reasons and one of the key contributors of job stress is lack of role clarity. (NSW, 2014)

Role conflict and role ambiguity are positively and significantly related to work stress and work stress was negatively and significantly related to job satisfaction. Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964) found that ambiguous role expectations (subjective) were associated with greater tension and less job satisfaction than were clear role expectations. Shepard (1969) reported a high negative relationship ( $R = -.47$ ) for industrial workers between job satisfaction and an "index of perceived meaninglessness in work. Smith (1957) found unclear roles in laboratory groups resulted in less group productivity in addition to less satisfaction and increased defensiveness. The correlations between role clarity and job tension were significant for both low and high need-for-clarity groups. (LYONS, 1971).

Work stress or job stress caused due to tight deadlines, long hours and worries about the economy. Some jobs are more stressful than others, which puts a great burden on employees. Sometimes stress becomes so overwhelming that violence erupts (Burney, 2015). Tabassum (2013) stated that job stress can manifest into harmful emotions such as "anxiety, aggression, irritability, dependency, withdrawal or depression" (p. 68), many of which could stimulate violent behaviors in workplace. As indicated in Gómez-Mejía, Balkin, and Cardy (2012), a prominent factor contributing to workplace violence is the stress caused either at work or from personal life. One of the outcome of job stress can be in the form of work place violence as documented in the above studies.

In sum it could be inferred that lack of role clarity leads to job stress which may often express itself in work place conflicts and violence leading to reduce job satisfaction.

In comparison with public sector private sector employees were found to be satisfied regarding role clarity. (Brunetto, 2011). Compared to private sector employees, employees in the public sector reported lower level of decision authority and role clarity. ( (Ronald.J.Burke, Noblet, & Cary, 2013)

The present study tries to use this theoretical base to study the interrelationships among all these variables instead of looking at each individual relation especially in the context of public sector and private sector considering the broader national interest of the Kingdom.

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1- To examine differences in job satisfaction , job stress, Work place violence and role clarity across public and private sector organizations operating in western Saudi Arabia
- 2- To understand the interrelations of various variables such as job clarity, work place violence and job stress in predicament of job satisfaction across various sectors in Yanbu.

Hence the hypothesis are based on the above studies

H<sub>01</sub>: The perceived level of job satisfaction, job stress, role clarity and work place violence are associated with nationality and sector of employment in Saudi Arabia.

H<sub>02</sub>: Variance in job satisfaction can be attributed to job stress, role clarity and Work place violence

Ho<sub>3</sub>: Work place violence and Job stress is positively related.

Ho<sub>4</sub>: Work place violence and Job stress are positively related with Role Clarity.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Sample

The respondents in this study were the employees of 11 organizations in the private and public sectors in the western region of Saudi Arabia, particularly Yanbu Industrial City. The sample includes employees from the largest companies in the area which have either private equity holding or public owned conglomerates.

The petrochemical industrial sector includes large corporations, often multinationals; for this study, 4 companies were selected, with a sample size of 207. The public organizations included 4 organizations that provide educational, medical, and municipal services, with a sample size of 219. The third group included 3 SMEs, with sample size of 129. Therefore, 555 usable questionnaires were returned, which represented 71% of the 780 distributed. Overall there are 7 private and 4 public sector companies included in the study. Table 1 presents the sample characteristics by sector. The large companies were multinational corporations conducting business in the petrochemical industry in Yanbu City and have both administrative and blue-collar employees, including operators and maintenance crews.

#### 3.2 Instruments of Measurement

##### 3.2.1 Job Stress

The items used to measure *job stress* were adapted from the job stress questionnaires developed by Roche (2009) and the American Institute of Stress (2015), and included five different statements which measure the different aspects of Job Stress. The respondents are asked to rate some of the statements such as “I find my work stressful”, “Find that family gets fed up with the pressure of your job” on a 5 point scale.

##### 3.2.2 Role Clarity

Role clarity was measured using a scale developed by George et al. (2010) for three different statements which measure the different aspects of Role Clarity. Some of the statements are “The work I am expected to do is very clearly defined”, “What counts as good performance is clearly understood”.

##### 3.2.3 Workplace Violence

Workplace violence was measured using a questionnaire developed by Quine (1999) for three different statements which measure the different aspects of Workplace Violence. The respondents are asked to “I tend to have frequent arguments with superiors, co workers or customers”, “I have the impression that I am repeatedly picked on/off discriminated against at work”.

##### 3.2.4 Job Satisfaction

The author used a five-item scale developed by Roche (2009). Four domains and general employee satisfaction were included: work conditions, hours of work, earnings, and perceived work interest. Some of the statements in this section “In general I am satisfied with my present work”; “I find my work interesting”; “I am satisfied with my earnings from present job”

### 4. Results

The survey participants included 555 employees from 11 organizations. Table 1 presents the results of the demographic analysis. The analysis of the data in this paper is structured in two parts. The first part attempts to assess the perceived overall levels of job stress, role clarity, workplace violence, and job satisfaction. The second part examines the relationships between these factors through SEM and direct and indirect effects of the antecedents of job satisfaction with various control variables. As observed from table 1, among the subjects, 36.6% were 20–30 years old, 38.4% were 31–40 years old, 19.1% were 41–50 years old, and 5.9% were 51–60 years old. In addition, 76.2% were Saudis and 71.4% were married. The majority of participants were university graduates, with 47.7% holding a bachelor's degree and 10.3% holding a master's degree or higher.

Table 1. Characteristics of sample (N=555)

		All		Sector					
				Large		Public		SMEs	
Characteristics	Categories	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%
Age	20–30 years	203	36.6	89	43	54	24.7	60	46.5
	31–40 years	213	38.4	61	29.5	84	38.4	68	52.7
	41–50 years	106	19.1	35	16.9	70	32	1	0.8
	51–60 years	33	5.9	22	10.6	11	5	0	0
Nationality	Saudi	423	76.2	148	71.5	178	81.3	97	75.2
	Non-Saudi	132	23.8	59	28.5	41	18.7	32	24.8
Marital status	Single	159	28.6	64	30.9	31	14.2	64	49.6
	Married	396	71.4	243	69.1	188	85.8	65	50.4
Qualification	High school degree	121	21.9	32	15.6	51	23.3	38	29.5
	Associate's degree	111	20.1	48	23.4	38	17.4	25	19.4
	Bachelor's degree	264	47.7	104	50.7	96	43.8	64	49.6
	Master's degree or higher	57	10.3	21	10.2	34	15.5	2	1.6

#### 4.1 Rates of Job Stress, Role Clarity, Workplace Violence, and Job Satisfaction

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations for job stress, role clarity, workplace violence, and job satisfaction. Job stress is somewhat high, with  $M=2.96$ , while workplace violence is low, with  $M=2.35$ . Conversely, role clarity and job satisfaction scored high, with  $M=3.53$  and  $3.35$ , respectively. It seems that apart from job stress other outcomes of prudent HR practices such as role clarity and job satisfaction to be satisfactory. But it worthwhile to investigate further that such satisfactory levels represent the entire industrial scenario or does it varies according to ownership such as public and private sector organization. More specifically, 56% of the respondents reported finding their job stressful ( $M=3.28$ ), and the same percentage said they return home from work exhausted ( $M=3.31$ ). Additionally, 54% thought their jobs were characterized by high responsibility but low authority. The workplace environment was not found to be pleasant or particularly safe by 52% of the respondents. Moreover, 55.4% of participants stated they have frequent arguments with superiors, coworkers, or customers and 52% felt they had very little control over their life at work.

In addition, the level of workplace violence in the surveyed firms was found to be low. Among the 21 items tested, only 7 variables had scores above 2.5. These included overwork ( $M=2.74$ ); unreasonable refusal on applications for leave, training, or promotion ( $M=2.64$ ); persistent attempts to belittle and undermine the target's work ( $M=2.57$ ); persistent unjustified criticism ( $M=2.56$ ); withholding necessary information ( $M=2.55$ ); and shifting of goal posts without informing the target ( $M=2.53$ ).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics (N=555)

Variables	Mean	SD
Job stress	2.96	.83
Role clarity	3.53	.93
Violence level	2.35	.94
Job satisfaction	3.35	.98

#### Differences in Job satisfaction, Job stress, role clarity and Workplace Violence according to Sector and Nationality

As one of the objectives of this research article is to review and compare differences in job satisfaction and precedents of sound HR practices such as Job stress, Role clarity and Workplace violence we inquire differences in mean score of these constructs according to sector such as public or private. A t test is used to understand the differences in scores amongst these constructs which are tabulated in table 3. It is observed that role clarity and job satisfaction levels does not differ significantly in public and private sector whereas significant differences in

work place violence and job stress are recorded across public and private sector. Further the level of job stress and work place violence are comparatively higher in private sector as compared to public sector. Though one of the objectives of nationalization program was to ensure enhanced participation of Saudi nationals equally it was important that no discrimination between expatriates and Saudi nationals shall emanate from the nationalization program as it would seriously hamper the image and prospects of the Kingdom to position itself as a global destination for technology, manufacturing and tourism. A t test was conducted to understand the difference in perception in regards to Job satisfaction, Job stress, and work place violence according to nationality. Table 4 revealed that no significant differences in job satisfaction levels, role clarity and work place violence are reported between Saudi and expatriate labor force.

#### 4.2 Interrelationship of Various Antecedents of Job Satisfaction

In this analysis, after removing missing value data sample size was reduced to 545. The output as demonstrated in table 5 shows that, model is perfectly fit with chi square =3.43, df=2, p=0.179 and moreover the ratio of Chi square/ df=1.71, further substantiates that model obtained is an excellent fit

Further, the fit indices indicate perfect fit between observed data and the model, standardized estimates of parameters are provided in analysis.

In this analysis fit criteria of Maximum likelihood method was used. It is a iterative process where prediction could be correct and it's depend upon maximization of likelihood of criterion variable.

On observing the regression coefficients from table 6 we infer that variation in Job stress is attributed to sector whether public or private company. Surprisingly a non significant coefficient surfaced for prediction in job stress in lieu of role clarity. Further as corroborated in the literature job satisfaction shall be driven by lower job stress, lower work place violence and much higher level of role clarity. One of the facts that warrant attention is that higher work place violence is reported in private sector as compared to public sector.

Table 3. Difference in Job stress, Job satisfaction, Role Clarity and WPV in different sector

Construct	F	Sign	t	Sign
Job stress	4.652	0.031	-3.220	0.001*
Role Clarity	7.706	0.006	-0.203	0.839
Work place Violence	1.090	0.297	-5.728	0.000**
Job satisfaction	4.373	0.037	0.896	0.371

#### 4.4 Model Fit Indices

This model was validated using chi-square, obtaining a value of 3.43 (df=2), p=0.179 (This test compares the best model to a full (saturated) model; a non-significant chi-square is therefore desirable). For this test, a ratio of chi-square to df which is equal to or smaller than 3 is considered acceptable (Schreiber et al., 2006).

This model is an excellent fit, due to following values RMR=0.019, GFI=0.997, AGFI=0.981, NFI=0.989, TLI=0.976, CFI=0.995, RMSEA=0.036, HOELTER=949, p=0.05

Table 4. Level of Job stress, Job satisfaction and WPV across nationality

Construct	F	Sign	t	Sign
Job stress	0.392	0.532	3.123	0.002*
Role Clarity	1.124	0.290	-1.757	0.079
Work place Violence	0.943	0.332	0.323	0.747
Job satisfaction	0.439	0.508	-1.549	0.122

#### 4.5 Path Diagram

Figure 1 presents the Standardized Path Diagram, indicating the various statistical relationships between Job Stress, Job Clarity, Work Place Violence, Industry Type and Job Satisfaction in terms of Standardized Coefficient Values and R<sup>2</sup>. Job stress is found to have a negative relationship with job satisfaction and such relationship is significant as reported by P value. Role Clarity is significantly and positively related with Job Satisfaction with its correlation coefficient value and it is significant enough as the P value is .000 which is less than 0.05 5% level of significance. Work Place Violence is positively related with Job Stress with its correlation

coefficient which is significant enough. As observed from table 7, 27% of variance in job satisfaction can be attributed to factors such as work place violence, job stress and role clarity. The highest contributor amongst all variables in this study to job satisfaction is Role clarity followed by job stress which accounts for 21% variance. 14% variance in job stress can be attributed to sector difference such as public or private ownership but on other hand the regression weight is non-significant for job stress and role clarity relationship. A significant regression relationship is noted for workplace violence and job stress where job stress accounts for 38% variance whereas sector public or private contribute to 14% variance.

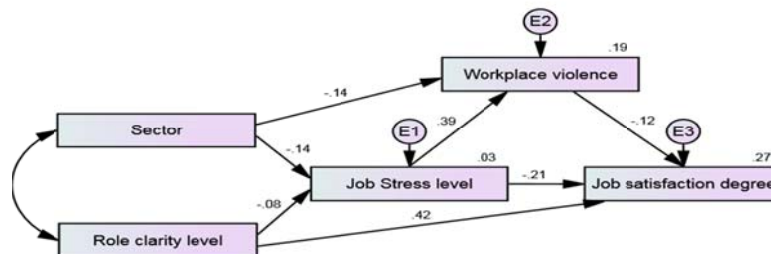


Figure1. Standardized Path Diagram

Table 5. Model fit indices

Indices	Recommended Value	Model Fit Indices
CMIN/df	< 3	1.718
p-value	≥ 0.05	.000
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.997
AGFI	≥ 0.80	.0.981
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.989
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.995
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.03
P Close	≥ 0.05	.000

Job Stress and Work Place Violence are reporting a positive and significant relationships Further, though Work place violence and Job Stress is positively related with Role Clarity, they are not significantly related as their P value is greater than 0.05 for 5% level of significance.

Table 6. Standardized Regression Weights

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Remark
Jobstress2	<---	Sector	-.253	.076	-3.343	***	significant
Jobstress2	<---	Roleclarity2	-.075	.037	-2.001	.045	Non significant
Tviolence2	<---	Jobstress2	.417	.042	9.917	***	significant
Tviolence2	<---	Sector	-.271	.075	-3.604	***	significant
Jobsatisfaction2	<---	Tviolence2	-.138	.045	-3.054	.002	Non significant
Jobsatisfaction2	<---	Jobstress2	-.254	.049	-5.198	***	significant
Jobsatisfaction2	<---	Roleclarity2	.446	.039	11.295	***	significant

The  $R^2$  indicates the variation in the dependent variable (job satisfaction) based on the variations in the independent variables. In the Path diagram of Fig 1,  $R^2$  indicates job stress, role clarity, and workplace violence account for 27% of the total variation in job satisfaction.

Table 7. Standardized Regression Weights

			Estimate
Jobstress2	<---	Sector	-.141
Jobstress2	<---	Roleclarity2	-.085
Tviolence2	<---	Jobstress2	.388
Tviolence2	<---	Sector	-.141
Jobsatisfaction2	<---	Tviolence2	-.122
Jobsatisfaction2	<---	Jobstress2	-.209
Jobsatisfaction2	<---	Roleclarity2	.415

## 5. Discussion

The intense efforts of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to ensure standardization of HRM practices across private sector in order to ensure enhanced participation of its citizens in private sector mandates sound Human resource management practices in order to ensure enhanced work satisfaction with decrease in stress and work place violence. A significant percentage of respondents (54%) reporting about abuse of Human Resource Management practices. This study's results call for private sector organizations to make significant changes to their human resources practices in order to improve job satisfaction and job performance (Ahsan et al., 2009; Tlaiss & Mendelson, 2014). The results also confirm Mellahi (2007) argument that some private sector employers exploit and abuse their workers. This problem may be aligned to the comparatively higher in both large and small organizations in private sector as compared to public sector. Accordingly, organizations should also conform to the Saudi labor law and its rules and regulations regarding workload, fringe benefits, employee development opportunities, etc.

Examining the relationship between the selected antecedents of job satisfaction indicated strong associations among all of the factors. Job stress and workplace violence are negatively associated with job satisfaction such that if the first two factors increase, then job satisfaction will decrease. On the contrary, role clarity and job satisfaction are positively associated with each other, such that if one increases, the other also increases.

This study's findings are in line with the results of previous studies (Ahsan et al., 2009; Griffiths et al., 2011; Ram et al., 2011; Robert & Angelo, 2007; Sofield & Salmond, 2003) in different locations and different cultures, which confirms the importance of HRM practices in any organization.

Additionally, the results indicated employees in public organizations are not exposed to workplace violence to the same degree as their counterparts in private organizations. In relation to this finding, it should be noted that the workplace violence behaviors vary among these groups, according to the respondents. While the most common factors reported by employees in large petrochemical organizations were (1) unreasonable refusal of applications for leave and problems with training or promotion, (2) overwork, and (3) withholding necessary information, in public organizations, the most common factors were (1) overwork, (2) undue pressure to work, and (3) persistent unjustified criticism and monitoring of the individual's work. In addition, the most correlated factors with incidences of violence were 1) shifting of the goal posts without telling the worker, 2) undue pressure to work, and 3) overwork. It appears that the most common attribute of workplace violence is job stress leadership practices of the work environment or immediate supervisor. This result is similar to the findings from the study by Galanaki and Papalexandris (2013) in Greece. Finally, verbal and non-verbal threats and physical violence were considered very rare occurrences of workplace violence in these organizations.

## 6. Conclusion

The study reports a moderately better level of job satisfaction across all respondents but constrained by higher levels of job stress and work place violence across sector type. In spite of the best efforts of competent authorities a significantly higher job stress and work place violence is still found to be in private sector as compared to public sector which has fared better scores on work place violence and job stress. As demonstrated through Structural equation model, a positive relation between role clarity and job satisfaction and negative relationship between work place violence, job stress and job satisfaction further implies that key HRM practices pertaining to private sector still remain a concern to be addressed.

The respondents indicated they are satisfied with their jobs and perceive their roles to be very clear. They also reported that the occurrence of violence is very rare in their workplaces. However, they admitted to having some forms of job stress.



The results of the present study are consistent with those of previous studies in that job satisfaction is moderated by factors such as job stress, role clarity, and workplace violence (Ahsan et al., 2009; Griffiths et al., 2011) based on a statistically significant multiple correlation ( $R=0.526$ ), and these factors are responsible for approximately 28% of the variation in job satisfaction.

The findings also indicate that organizational items such as job stress and workplace violence vary across industrial sectors. For example, job stress is more prevalent among employees in the private sector (SMEs and large organizations) more than in the public sector, which may be related to the existence of different rules and regulations. Of note, overwork was cited as one of the three major acts of workplace violence in all three sectors, while physical violence was rated as the least common act of workplace aggression. This study adds valuable knowledge because it tries to integrate the various determinants of job satisfaction such as role clarity, workplace violence and job stress across public and private sector. It is critical for employees and management to be able to diagnose the existence of workplace violence or other counter-productive behaviors so that the necessary steps can be taken (Branch, 2008).

If the intensity and pace of industrialization is ought to be maintained it is imperative for the government to ensure that private sector in line with public sector maintains an acceptable work culture where employees should not feel marginalized and vindicated. The study has brought to forefront key issues such as Workplace violence and Job stress which needs to be addressed by the private sector as sufficient evidence of their existence as compared to public sector is found in private sector.

## 7. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered in future studies. First, the potential for respondent bias combined with difficulty accessing the target population may constrain the study's generalization. Second, the survey was limited to one region of Saudi Arabia due to the location of such organizations. Moreover the role of various variables such as socio demographic attributes of the respondents could be incorporated to consider their role as moderator or mediators in such a relationship. Though role clarity, workplace violence and job stress account for variance in job satisfaction a moderately higher unexplained variance still remains unaccounted and various other variables could be incorporated to attribute this unaccounted variation. Future studies could explore job stress, role clarity, workplace violence, and job satisfaction in other Saudi cities or regions to help to understand the case of the Saudi work environment. Additionally, future studies should focus on measuring the quality of work life in these sectors.

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