

## Original Research Article

# A study on determining the predictors of job satisfaction among licensed social workers in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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### ABSTRACT

**Aims:** This study aimed to identify the predictors of job satisfaction and examine the relationship between job satisfaction and other important outcomes, such as employee engagement and turnover among licensed social workers in Jeddah region.

**Study design:** A descriptive cross-sectional study design.

**Place and Duration of Study:** The target population for this research comprises only licensed social workers who are working in different industries inside Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to fill the performed questionnaire through a duration, between June 2022 and May 2023.

**Methodology:** Sample: We included 172 licensed social workers participating in this study to fill a questionnaire that measures job satisfaction and turnover responses among them. **Results:** This study involved 172 licensed social workers participants from different age groups with a mean age of  $34.6 \pm 2.65$  years old, and mean experience years  $6.3 \pm 21.4$  years. The level of the Replacing Staff licensed social workers in Jeddah region was low with mean score 1.69. Regarding the responses to this study

participants toward the turnover, the study findings revealed that the level of the Replacing Staff licensed social workers in Jeddah region was low, as they reported that other people can be competent to them and their leaders are not satisfied enough with their work. **Conclusion:**It was observed that the level of job satisfaction among licensed social workers in the Jeddah region was found to be moderate, while, the level of turnover among licensed social workers in the Jeddah region was found to be low among licensed workers in Jeddah.

*Keywords: Predictors - job satisfaction - licensed social workers - Jeddah - Saudi Arabia*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social workers provide a vital and irreplaceable role in helping the improvement of the overall well-being of individuals, families, and communities [1]. However, the field of social work is distinguished by its challenging nature, which exposes practitioners to the potential hazards of job dissatisfaction and burnout [2]. Job satisfaction can be defined as the degree to which an individual perceives a sense of happiness and contentment in relation to their occupation [3,4]. The concept being examined is complex and influenced by various factors, including both internal factors such as personal views and interests, and external factors like as salary, benefits, and working conditions. Multiple research have provided evidence regarding the importance of job satisfaction in many areas. An exemplification can be observed in the association between job happiness and improved employee performance, productivity, and retention [5]. Moreover, there is a correlation between it and a reduction in absenteeism and staff turnover [6]. The significance of job satisfaction in the field of social work stems from its direct impact on the quality of care provided by social workers to their clients. A positive association has been seen between job satisfaction among social workers and their level of involvement and motivation in carrying out their professional responsibilities. The correlation between this relationship and the quality of outcomes observed by their clientele has been established [7-9].

The investigation of job satisfaction within the domain of social work is of considerable significance owing to various considerations [8]. The factors encompassed in this category consist of the intrinsic principles linked to the occupation, the financial consequences arising from employee turnover and absenteeism, the focus on achieving positive results for clients, and the necessity of drawing individuals with exceptional skills to the profession. Additionally, the occurrence of job dissatisfaction can lead to the occurrence of "burnout," a phenomena that can have adverse consequences for both social workers and the individuals they serve [3]. The discovery of elements that impact job satisfaction possesses the potential to increase working conditions, minimize absenteeism, improve staff retention, boost customer care, and facilitate the recruitment of qualified individuals to the profession [1]. The examination of job satisfaction within the realm of social work is considered to be both valid and of great importance [5].

The concept of job satisfaction is complex and influenced by a range of factors, including both internal factors such as personal values and interests, and external factors like as compensation, benefits, and working conditions [7]. Multiple studies have provided evidence regarding the importance of job satisfaction, since it has been found to have a favorable influence on various factors like employee performance, productivity, and staff retention. Moreover, a positive association exists between job satisfaction and reduced levels of absenteeism and employee turnover [9,10]. The significance of job satisfaction in the field of social work stems from its capacity to directly impact the quality of care provided by social workers to their clients. Social workers who derive job pleasure are more likely to demonstrate elevated levels of engagement and motivation in their professional capacities, hence potentially yielding enhanced outcomes for the individuals under their care [11].

There is a scarcity of scholarly study regarding the topic of job satisfaction among social workers within the specific setting of Saudi Arabia. However, just a few studies have been conducted. [10] A multitude of scholarly inquiries have been undertaken to examine the phenomena of job satisfaction in the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia, encompassing a diverse array of professionals [12]. Furthermore, it was noted that a fall in job satisfaction among surgical healthcare professionals coincided with the Hajj period, which is marked by a significant increase in demand for healthcare services [3]. The available

body of evidence suggests that job satisfaction is a complex construct influenced by various factors, including both internal and external aspects. The current amount of literature pertaining to job satisfaction among social workers in Saudi Arabia is limited in scope. Nevertheless, the scarcity of research conducted in this domain suggests that organizational attributes exert a substantial influence on the prediction of work satisfaction levels [12,13]. **Therefore, this study aimed to** Identify the predictors of job satisfaction and examine the relationship between job satisfaction and other important outcomes, such as employee engagement and turnover among licensed social workers in Jeddah region.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

### Study Design

This study used a descriptive cross-sectional survey design for identifying the predictors of job satisfaction among licensed social workers in the Jeddah region of Saudi Arabia for a duration extended to one year starting from June 2022 till May 2023.

### Study Setting

The study was conducted in all Jeddah regions of Saudi Arabia where the social workers are available to work and conduct this research.

### Target Population and sample Size

Using Epi program to calculate the sample size for this study to find that the sample size of 128 licensed social workers will be recruited for this study [14]. This sample size is sufficient to detect statistically significant relationships between the predictor and outcome variables among social workers who are eligible for the inclusion criteria which was recruiting all licensed Saudi Arabian social workers working in the Jeddah region of Saudi Arabia with experience years more than 2 years.

### Study Variables

The variables were measured in this study as: **Dependent Variable::** Intrinsic factors, extrinsic factors, job characteristics, and personal factors and **Independent Variable:** Job satisfaction, employee engagement, and turnover.

## Research Instrument and data collection

A self-administered questionnaire was used and obtained from Jiang (2015) [15] study, then get adapted and translated to be suitable for the study population, and region, then collecting data from the participants which included items to measure all of the study variables with covering a wide range of relevant factors, including:

1. **Job satisfaction:** Items 1-20 measure the employee's satisfaction with their job, including their income, work environment, and career prospects.
2. **Employee competencies:** Items 21-22 assess the employee's experience and skills, as well as their potential to reach their full potential.
3. **Company factors:** Items 23-30 evaluate the company's reputation, competitiveness, and long-range goals.
4. **Replacement difficulty:** Items 1, 4, 5, and 6 assess the difficulty of finding and training a replacement for the employee.

## Reliability and validity

The Internal consistency was measured and by reviewing the results of alpha cronbach, it is clear that the correlation coefficients between the scores of each item of the axe (job satisfaction) and the total score of the dimension are statistically significant at a significance level of 0.01. Additionally, all of these coefficients have positive values. This indicates a high level of internal consistency and a strong relationship between the axe and its items, thus demonstrating the overall validity of the items in the axe. Also, the results showed that Cronbach's Alpha for job satisfaction was 0.973, and for replacing staff was 0.676. These findings indicate that the study's tool, the questionnaire, exhibited good reliability (Table 1).

**Table 1: The Cronbach alpha for measuring this scale reliability**

Domains	No. items	Cronbach's Alpha
Job satisfaction	30	0.973
(Replacing Staff (turnover))	7	0.676

## Statistical Analysis

The data was analyzed using SPSS (version 25) statistical software. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample characteristics and the study variables. Bivariate and multivariate statistical analyses were used to examine the relationships between the predictor and outcome variables.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

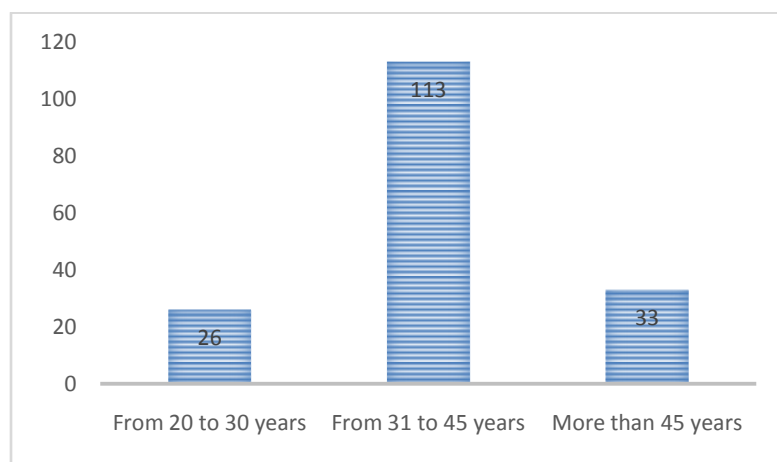
#### Demographic Characteristics

A total 172 licensed social workers were participating in this study with various demographic characteristics, revealing that there were 172 licensed social workers. Most of them (66%) were aged between 31 and 45 years, while 19% were aged over 45 years, and 15% were between 20 and 30 years. The majority (62%) were male, and 38% were female. In terms of educational qualifications, 54% held a bachelor's degree, 40% had a master's degree, and 6% had a diploma. Regarding marital status, the majority (60%) were married, 23% were divorced, 12% were single, and 4% were widowed. In terms of experience, 51% had more than 10 years of experience, 38% had between 5 and 10 years of experience, and 12% had less than 5 years of experience, as shown in the following table (Table 2) and figures (Figure 1 and 2),

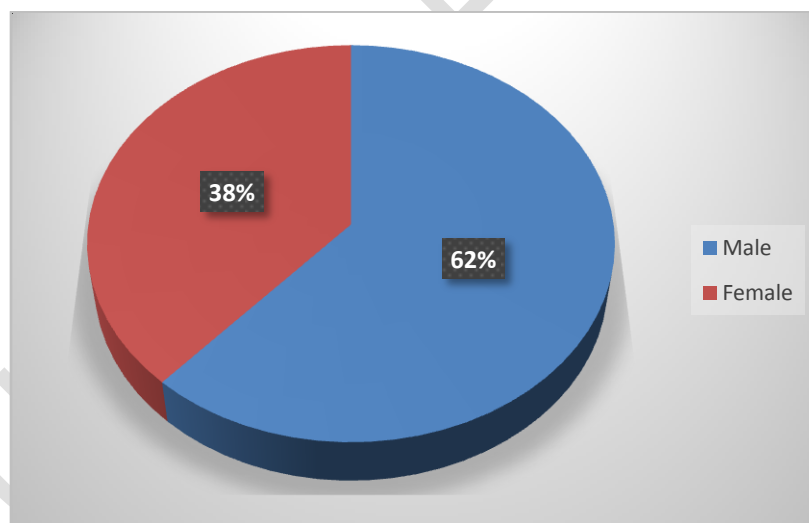
**Table 2: The demographic characteristics among the study participants**

VARIABLES	CATEGORIES	N	%
<b>AGE (34.6±2.65)</b>	From 20 to 30 years	26	15%
	From 31 to 45 years	113	66%
	More than 45 years	33	19%
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS</b>	Diploma	11	6%
	Bachelor	93	54%
	Master	68	40%
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	Single	20	12%
	Married	105	61%

<b>EXPERIENCE (6.3±21.4)</b>	Divorced	40	23%
	Widowed	7	4%
	Less than 5 years	20	12%
	From 5 to 10 years	65	38%
	More than 10 years	87	51%



**Figure 1: The age grouping distribution among participants in this study**



**Figure 2: The gender distribution among participants in this study**

### Responses of participants to job satisfaction

The results showed that the level of job satisfaction of licensed social workers in Jeddah region was moderate with score mean 2.25, about the highest Potential Risk Items were (Can you gain respect in your work?) with mean score 2.52, (Can you be accepted and trusted by the leaders and colleagues?) with mean score 2.48, and (How is your relationship with your colleagues?), and (Is the city in which you work your ideal place?) with mean score 2.41, the lowest Potential Risk Items were (Are you satisfied with the incentive mechanism?) with mean score 2.08, (How significant is job pressure in your company) with mean score 2.02, and (How is your strength in the same industry?) with mean score 1.76 (Table 3).

**Table 3: The total and detailed responses of participants to job satisfaction**

No	Potential Risk Items	Mean	SD
1	Are you satisfied with your income?	2.19	0.76
2	What is your pay relative to that of others in the same industry?	2.12	0.77
3	Is the salary system in your company reasonable?	2.26	0.77
4	Are you satisfied with the incentive mechanism?	2.08	0.80
5	Are chances for promotion fair?	2.28	0.74
6	Are you satisfied with your work environment?	2.25	0.75
7	Are you satisfied with the management system in your company?	2.26	0.73
8	Can you reach your full potential?	2.24	0.73
9	Can you be accepted and trusted by the leaders and colleagues?	2.48	0.71
10	Can you gain respect in your work?	2.52	0.71
11	Are you satisfied with your leaders?	2.31	0.76
12	How are the interpersonal relations and communication in your company?	2.35	0.72
13	How is your relationship with your colleagues?	2.41	0.77
14	How significant is job pressure in your company?	2.02	0.76
15	Is your mind at ease while you are working?	2.26	0.75

16	Are you enthusiastic about your work?	2.35	0.74
17	Would you like to spend more time on your work?	2.12	0.78
18	Would you like your child to have the same job with you?	2.20	0.80
19	Is your goal consistent with the goal of the company?	2.30	0.78
20	Does your specialty or knowledge match your position?	2.35	0.75
21	Is your job your ideal job?	2.26	0.82
22	Can you fulfill your career plans in your current job?	2.37	0.73
23	How are the chances for educational training and career development in your work?	2.22	0.76
24	Is the city in which you work your ideal place?	2.41	0.75
25	Do you and your spouse live in separate places?	2.55	0.71
26	How is the competition strength of your company?	2.17	0.76
27	How is your strength in the same industry?	1.76	0.76
28	How is the supply and demand for professionals in your position?	2.14	0.70
29	How are the long-range goals and prospects in your company?	2.20	0.74
30	How are the benefits in your company?	2.16	0.76
	Total	2.25	0.56

### Responses of participants to Replacing Staff (turnover)

The results revealed that the level of the Replacing Staff licensed social workers in Jeddah region was low with mean score 1.69, about the Potential Risk Items, the highest item was (How about your work performance?) with mean score 2.26, followed by (Are there other people who can be as competent as you are in your position?) with mean score 2.11, followed by (Can a new employee quickly achieve competence at your job?) with mean score 1.62, followed by (Are your leaders satisfied with your work?) with mean score 1.49, followed by (Is finding a replacement who can become competent within a short period of time difficult?) and (Do you have previous experience related to your present job?) with mean score 1.43, followed by (Are your subordinates satisfied with you?) with mean score 1.41 (Table 4).

**Table 4: The total and detailed responses of participants to Replacing Staff (turnover)**

No	Potential Risk Items	Mean	SD
1	Do you have previous experience related to your present job?	1.43	0.65
2	Are your leaders satisfied with your work?	1.49	0.71
3	Are your subordinates satisfied with you?	1.41	0.63
4	How about your work performance?	2.26	0.78
5	Are there other people who can be as competent as you are in your position?	2.11	0.75
6	Can a new employee quickly achieve competence at your job?	1.62	0.72
7	Is finding a replacement who can become competent within a short period of time difficult?	1.43	0.65
	Total	1.69	0.41

The correlation between job satisfaction and Replacing Staff showed that there was no significant difference between job satisfaction and Replacing Staff ( $r = -0.04$ ,  $P$ -value = 0.96)

#### **Predictors of job satisfaction**

The stepwise regression analysis to detect the best model, and the significant predictors. The entered variable Replacing Staff, age, gender, educational level, marital status, and experience, the results showed that the best models after conducting stepwise regression analysis, were two model the first was significant ( $F = 65.71$ ,  $P$ -value  $< 0.01$ ), with one predictor (Master education), where level of job satisfaction increases by 0.606 compared to bachelor education, ( $\beta = 0.61$ ), and this effect was significant ( $t = 8.11$ ,  $P$ -value  $< 0.01$ ), and the second model was significant ( $F = 38.77$ ,  $P$ -value  $< 0.01$ ), with two predictors, (Master education), where level of job satisfaction increases by 0.544 compared to bachelor education, ( $\beta = 0.54$ ), and this effect was significant ( $t = 7.16$ ,  $P$ -value  $< 0.01$ ), and Age from 20 to 30 years, where the level of job satisfaction decreases by 0.308 compared to who aged more than 45 years, ( $\beta = -0.31$ ), and this effect was significant ( $t = -2.97$ ,  $P$ -value = 0.03) (Table 5).

**Table 5: The regression analysis**

First model	F	P-value			
	65.71	< 0.01	$\beta$	t	P-value
	Master education Reference (Bachelor)		0.61	8.11	< 0.01
Second model	F	P-value			
	38.77	< 0.01	$\beta$	t	P-value
	Master education Reference (Bachelor)		0.54	7.16	< 0.01
	Age from 20 to 30 years Reference (more than 45 years)		-0.31	-2.97	0.03

## Dicussion

Job satisfaction among workers is very crucial to be carried out, this study aimed to Identify the predictors of job satisfaction and examine the relationship between job satisfaction and other important outcomes, such as employee engagement and turnover among licensed social workers in Jeddah region, total of 172 locensed social workers were randomly selected from different places in Jeddah, most of them were males and it is noticeable among all social working to be the majority of them are males [16]. They had high level of experience which drove this study to be more reliable and its findings are verified [17]. The results showed that the level of job satisfaction of licensed social workers in Jeddah region was moderate specifically towards respect to work and accepting leaders and colleagues, it is in agreement with Alqarni et al. (2022) [18] study, who found that regarding job satisfaction, 25 individuals expressed contentment whereas 74 individuals exhibited indecisiveness. The emotional tiredness score of male participants (M = 27, SD = 12) was found to be substantially greater than that of female participants (p = 0.049). Furthermore, it was observed that those with a monthly income exceeding SR 20,000 had a notably elevated level of overall job satisfaction, as evidenced by a statistically significant p-value of 0.041. The data indicate that there is a notable prevalence of stress and burnout among mental health practitioners, which merits careful consideration. Specifically, less than 25% of the participants expressed job satisfaction, also, it is agreed with Casillas (2016) [19] study, who revealed that there was no significant correlation

between the duration of employment and job stress in addition to satisfaction level ( $p = .119$ ). Additionally, no significant association was seen between the length of time on the job and job satisfaction ( $p = .248$ ).

In addition, these social workers reported that they are not satisfied with job stress and incentives' criteria in their industries, it is also agreed with Hooper (2016) [20] study, who reported a significant association was seen between the absence of job security and job unhappiness among both beginner and seasoned social workers. The research project aimed to address the existing gap in the health care community by gathering data that may offer significant insights and guidance to health care administrators. The objective was to identify specific areas of focus that could potentially lead to a reduction in turnover rates, an increase in productivity, and an improvement in the overall quality of patient care.

Regarding the responses to this study participants toward the turnover, the study findings revealed that the level of the Replacing Staff licensed social workers in Jeddah region was low, as they reported that other people can be competent to them and their leaders are not satisfied enough with their work, it is agreed with Geisler et al. (2019) study [21], who demonstrated a significant correlation between the quality of work and turnover rates, while also finding a relationship between professional self-concept and job satisfaction among social workers which increases their stability and reduce their turnover.

The predictors of job satisfaction revealed that masters education raised the job satisfaction more ( $p < 0.01$ ), getting higher level of education with less responsibilities and more comforts, also, the job satisfaction get decreased by younger social workers than oldest ones ( $p < 0.01$ ), it is in agreement with Stamper (2004) [22] study, who revealed that age was identified as a significant factor in relation to job satisfaction and spirituality. Additionally, the quantity of time employed by CFT was also found to be statistically significant in relation to job satisfaction and spirituality.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The results of the study indicated that the level of job satisfaction among licensed social workers in the Jeddah region was found to be moderate, with a mean score of 2.25. Additionally, the level of turnover among licensed social workers in the Jeddah region was found to be low, with a mean score of 1.69. Two predictors of job satisfaction were identified: individuals with a Master's education exhibited higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those with a Bachelor's degree, and individuals between the ages of 20 and 30 displayed higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those above the age of 45.

## ETHICAL APPROVAL

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of research involving human participants and was approved by the relevant institutional review board IRB with number **A01738**. Participants provided informed consent, knowing the risks and benefits, and can withdraw at any time. Confidentiality is paramount, with data handled discreetly.

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