The Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction and Burnout Between Job Stress and Organizational Commitment In The Saudi Private Sector

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Abstract

This study aims to measure the mediating effect of job satisfaction and burnout between job stress and organizational. A questionnaire of 27 items was distributed among private sector workers in Saudi Arabia, and 244 were collected for the purpose of this study. We hypothesized that job stress directly and positively is associated with burnout and negatively linked to job satisfaction. We also made a hypothesis that Job Stress could have an indirect effect on organizational commitment through job satisfaction. Besides this, job Satisfaction could also moderate the effect between burnout and organizational commitment. Additionally, job satisfaction is positively associated with organizational commitment. On the other hand, burnout could be a mediating factor between job stress and job satisfaction. There also could be a negative and direct relationship between burnout and job satisfaction. As expected, all our hypotheses were corroborated.

Keywords: Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, Burnout, Commitment.

Introduction

Job stress has been widely investigated to explore its negative and positive subsequent impacts. Over time, the nature of work is ever changing, which in return requires fast and effective adaptation from workers as well as organizations. With the increasing competition among employees and organizations, employees feel the urgency to exert themselves to meet performance expectations and gain their organizations the profits they seek. While employees try to catch up to these changes and adapt to them doing whatever it takes, they may get stressed out. Role overload, role conflict, leadership support, and working conditions are a few of many stressors. Stressing over work causes detrimental physical and emotional responses, especially when workers feel unable to meet the demands and requirements (Daniel, 2019).

In this research, we explored the effect of two stressors that have the most significant effect on other variables in the workplace, which are role stress and role overload. Job stress poses major threat to workers’ health and consequently to the survival of organizations. Employees experience work stress in various forms and some may have to deal with other aspects that stress leads to. Job dissatisfaction, burnout, and lack of organizational commitment are consequences of job stress.

According to Daley (1979) burnout reactions differ based on work stressors’ intensity and duration. Lack of recognition and necessary resources are two of many burnout symptoms. Burnout is one consequence of job stress which has been proven they are closely related, and that there is a positive relationship between these two variables. When employees work for long hours, lose motivation for and interest in the job, they are more likely experiencing burnout (Chiang & Liu, 2018).

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Burnout, on the other hand, leads to less job satisfaction. When employees going through high levels of burnout they are more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs, as a result to their dissatisfaction they are more likely to desert what causes them this discomfort which is their organization, which indicates less organizational commitment.

Job satisfaction meaning differs based on the context and situation, however it generally refers to the extent of how much a person likes her/his job (Ngirande, 2021). It is, according to Chiboiwa, Chipunza, and Samuel (2011), the pleasure of the job experience. Being satisfied with the job depends on many elements like the work environment, compensations, nature of the job, and job security. Personal characteristics, values, and needs also play a role in accomplishing satisfaction. Job satisfaction has caught the attention of many scholars because of how it predicts relevant outcome variables (Ida et al., 2022).

Ensuring that employees have high levels of job satisfaction is necessary for getting satisfying outcomes; as satisfied employees do satisfy their organizations. So it is essential to keep employees away from stress or at least minimize it. Many study results has shown that job satisfaction decreases as job stress increases. According to these studies, high levels of work stressors trigger depression, anxiety, and other mental and physical issues that decrease job satisfaction, and subsequently commitment to the organization. According to Mabasa and Ngirande (2015) job satisfaction is positively associated with organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment affects employees’ willingness to achieve organizational objectives, the way they seek profit maximization and the quality of exchange between employees and the organization (Van Knippenberg & Sleepos). Committed employees are of value to the organization as they lead it to gain huge amount of profits (Jigjiddorj & Zanabazar, 2022). For that reason, it is considered an important variable in which organizations must ensure their employees are scoring high. Job stress and job satisfaction highly affect the level of organizational commitment. For organizations to maintain certain levels of productivity and efficiency, they need keep their employees committed and with less stress (Ngirande, 2021).

Literature Review
The Relationship between Job Stress and Burnout

Stress is an emotional state that result when an individual faces threats to achieving the desired goals. Work-stress may originate from several sources such as: work load, role stress, physical conditions, and work schedule (Diandra M, Bailey, 2006). It has been proven that job stress negatively affects motivation, and the ability to perform well and produce on the job (Schultz & Schultz, 1990).

Burnout results when “job demands exceeds the resources available to the individual” (Diandra M, Bailey, 2006). Freudenberger was the first to academically use the term “burnout”, according to him working harder and longer while accomplishments look less and less is the first sign of burnout (Freudenberger, 1977). There are many definitions of burnout, according to Paul et al. (2018) burnout is a “state of emotional exhaustion where the individual feels overwhelmed by work to the point of feeling fatigued”. There are many studies that have found that burnout was the most direct influence of job stress (Chiang & Liu, 2018). Workload, long working hours, and work-family conflict have proven to be leading to burnout (Alrawashdeh et al., 2021).

Hock and other researchers have studied the antecedents of burnout and found that there was a link between burnout and job stress. According to Hock, employees who were exposed to high levels of job stress experienced high levels of burnout, which proved that job stress is linked to physical and psychological burnout (Hock, Roger, 1988). Supported by this findings, in 2006, Powell & Watson’s study on the nature of room attendants’ work reached to result that was due to the repetitive and heavy workload, employees will more likely suffer from burnout (Chiang & Liu, 2018). Agius, Blenkin, Deary, Zealley & Wood, 1996;
Bruke & Richardson, 1990, have also found that work overload, strict time constraints, emotional interactions with patients and staff, doubts in performing the job properly have caused mental and work-related stress which then led to burnout (Tziner, Rabenu, Radomski, & Belkin, 2015). In a survey conducted by Whittaker et al. (2018) half of the surveyed nurses responded that they had felt burnout to the point they called in sick. This study was supported by Sharma et al. (2014) study in which nurses reported that they rarely had any rest on the job because of the heavy workload.

A survey conducted in 1992 showed that employees in sales and service sector are most likely to suffer from burnout due to the contrast between organizational objectives and clients’ objectives. They find themselves pulled in different directions as they try to satisfy those conflicting objectives (Martineau, Jessica, 2008). Another research has named sales and service jobs as one of the most stressful occupations (Singh et al., 1984) because of that, workers in this sectors are candidates for burnout (Miller, Springen, Gordon, Murr, Cohen & Drew, 1988). Cass (2000) conducted a study on stockbrokers who the nature of their job include too much pressures, demands, and conflict to measure two components of burnout: emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. He found that they experienced high levels of burnout. Based on these studies we could formulate the following hypothesis:

**H1: There is a positive relationship between job stress and burnout.**

**The Relationship between Job Stress and Job Satisfaction**

Lo et al. (2018) surveyed over 46,000 nurses and the results indicated that job satisfaction is directly affected by job stress which Dagget et al., (2016) believe it results from long working hours, conflicting demands from management and patients, and the challenging nature of their work. Another study was conducted to examine job stress and job satisfaction in a transportation company, the result has proven that there is a negative relationship between the two variables (Sahukar, et al., 2014). Job satisfaction has been defined as worker’s feeling toward the job that motivates them to improve performance and produce effectively (Chaiphuak, Prasit, 2014). It has also been defined as a subjective experience of one’s job, which could lead to increase commitment, and efficiency (Aziri, 2011).

Qingfang & Sangob conducted a study on volunteer Chinese teachers in Thailand to explore whether job stress had an effect on job satisfaction. The results showed highest levels in workload and career development and low satisfaction levels for career advancement as they worry about their future career. Consistent with this study, Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979) findings that job satisfaction among teachers decreased when there was teaching assignment overload or too much stress. Therefore the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H2: There is a negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.**

**The Relationship between Burnout and Job Satisfaction**

Job dissatisfaction has been regarded as a consequence of burnout. According to an examination done by Peterson et al. (2007) on a sample of 3719, they found that individuals who face burnout are more likely to experience depression, which contradicts satisfaction (Lubbadeh, 2020). An investigation on teachers was done by Sotirios et al. in 2019 to explore their levels of burnout and how that affects their satisfaction with their jobs. The results showed a negative association between these two variables. Karavasilis findings in 2019 was consistent with those of Sotirios, as he also found that when there was low levels of burnout, high levels of job satisfaction were observed among Greek teachers (Safari, 2020). Burnout has been linked to performance issues, job dissatisfaction (Rupert & Morgan, 2005).

Several research (Belicki and Woolcott, 1996; Prosser and others, 1997; Razza, 1993; Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads, 1994) have discovered an inverse association between burnout and job satisfaction.
Job satisfaction is typically lower when burnout is high. Anbar and Eker's (2008) research of the relationship between Turkish academics' burnout and job satisfaction found that when their job satisfaction decreased, their burnout and emotional exhaustion increased.

In a similar line, Esfandiari and Kamali (2016) investigated the link between job satisfaction, burnout, and autonomy among teachers. Work satisfaction had a weak and negative relationship between teachers’ burnout and job satisfaction, according to the results. Furthermore, among physical education teachers, Koustelios and Tsigilis (2016) discovered a negative link between burnout and job satisfaction.

**H3: There is a negative relationship between burnout and job satisfaction.**

**The Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment is the psychological contract between employees and organization. Employees’ psychological attachment to the organization and its aims, as well as their desire to stay with that particular organization, is referred to as organizational commitment. It affects employees’ willingness to achieve organizational objectives, the way they seek profit maximization and the quality of exchange between employees and the organization (Van Knippenberg & Sleepos). Organizational commitment is split into three types by Mayer and Allen (1997), Cooper (2011), and Colquitt et al. (2015): affective commitment, continuation commitment, and normative commitment. “Continuance commitment” refers to a person’s commitment to the organization because of the costs of leaving it. Affective commitment is defined as a psychological and emotional attachment to the organization and working toward the organization’s aims and objectives. And normative commitment is employees’ feelings about the obligations that must be given to the organization based on particular norms and rules. Because of the pressure of these norms and standards, such as work time, work discipline, and a system of compensation for job achievement, employee dedication continues to work for the business.

Based on the results of a study conducted by Malik et al. (2010) on 151 branch managers of private sector commercial banks in Pakistan, job satisfaction is positively and directly linked to affective commitment, as the studies of Jenkins and Thonlinson, 1992; Clugston, 2000; and Meyer et al., 2002 have found.

However, according to Siew et al. (2011), studies have found that when certain aspects of job satisfaction are met, a nurse is more likely to be satisfied with her job and stay with her organization (i.e., high organizational commitment). Employee satisfaction with coworkers and organizational commitment are linked in a direct and meaningful way. Bakhtiari (1377), KY Lu (2002), and Wang's research (2012) supports this theory. As a result, if teachers in the organization in which they work find their colleagues to be driven, trustworthy, intellectual, active, pleasant, intimate, respected, respectful, responsive, and quick, they will show higher level of commitment.

**H4: There is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.**

**Job Satisfaction as Mediator between Job stress and Organizational Commitment**

Job stress has several implications on individual’s health and well-being that eventually impact one’s satisfaction with the job. Kossek & Ozeki (1988) have mentioned that there was a direct relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.

While Studies have found that there was a negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction, others have proven a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment and that job satisfaction leads to organizational commitment. Moreover, job satisfaction increases efficiency, productivity, and commitment, and decrease turnover and absenteeism. For employees to be committed to their organization they have to be satisfied with their jobs and organizations (Aksoy et al., 2018).
There are not many studies that suggest a correlation between job stress and organizational commitment. Yousef (2013), under an Arabic culture context, conducted a study to explore the impact of role ambiguity and role conflict on different aspects of organizational commitment. He found that job satisfaction mediated the influence of job stress on organizational commitment. Job stress influences health psychologically through job satisfaction (Pan et al., 2010). Meyer et al., (2002) study on teaching occupations supported that theory when it found that teachers may have strong commitment to their organizations if they are satisfied with their jobs. Based on these studies we could formulate the following hypothesis:

**H5: Job stress could affect organizational commitment via job satisfaction**

**Job Satisfaction as Mediator between Burnout and Organizational Commitment**

When employees are highly satisfied with their job, they are more likely to exhibit organizational commitment behaviors (Leong & Lee, 2005). Satisfaction with supervision, job, support, pay, and other factors of job satisfaction are signs of organizational commitment as studies like (Deconinck, 2009; and Rutherford, Boles, Hamwi, Madupalli, & Rutherford, 2009) indicated.

Ida et al (2022) have conducted a research to study the mediating effect of job satisfaction between burnout and organizational commitment. The study was conducted on a sample of 389 of public servants in DBKL. The results showed that there was a negative relationship between job satisfaction and burnout and that job satisfaction strengthens workers’ commitment to their organizations. They reached to a conclusion that burnout mediated by job satisfaction positively impact organizational commitment. Based on these studies we could formulate the following hypothesis:

**H6: burnout could affect organizational comment via job satisfaction**

**Burnout as Mediator between Job Stress and Job Satisfaction**

According to the research of Van Voorhis, Cullen, Link, and Wolfe (1991) discovered that cops who worked day shifts had a higher degree of stress, which led to burnout. In Hurst and Hurst’s (1997) Several contributing elements have been discovered in research focusing on the likely causes and consequences of stress leading to burnout among prison employees, Bakker et al. (2006) determined that stressors at work lead to burnout.

Tsigilis et al. (2004) discovered a negative association between burnout and job satisfaction among Greek academic librarians in a study examining the link between job satisfaction and burnout. Benazic and Ruzic also conducted a study on this matter among salespeople and reach to a similar conclusion that is burnout negatively affects job satisfaction.

Stressors as long working hours and shifts and extensive workload have been positively associated with burnout, these factors then cause job dissatisfaction as the study of Alrawashdeh et al. has proven. In consistent with this study, HAYES & Weathington’s (2007) study on optimism, stress, life satisfaction and job burnout in restaurant managers. These individuals may be less likely to become burned out on the job if they maintain reduced stress levels, and may love their jobs more, perform better, and have a greater level of overall life satisfaction if their risk of burnout is decreased. Based on these studies we could formulate the following hypothesis:

**H7: Job stress could affect job satisfaction via burnout.**

![Research Model]

Research model
Methodology

Sample and Data Collection

Data were collected via an online survey, which was conducted among private sector workers in Saudi Arabia. The private sector employs workers through non-government agencies, individual business owners and corporations.

The questionnaire consists of 27 items that measure job stress, job satisfaction, burnout and organizational commitment. There are three questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the workers (gender, age and years of service). The sample size was 244, 172 males and the females were 72. Majority of the workers were between 20-29 years with 39.2%, followed by 30-39 years with 30.2%. In terms of the years of service of private sector workers, highest percent is less than 5 years with 35.1%, more details are shown in Table 1.

Measures

The questionnaire consists of 27 items, all are adopted from reliable and valid measures used in previous studies. Job satisfaction was measured with 5 items developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975) and used 5-level Likert Scale where 5 is Totally Disagree and 1 is Totally Agree. Burnout was assessed with 7 items developed by (Kristensen et al., 2005) using 5-level Likert scale ranging from (5) Always to (1) Never. To measure organizational commitment, 5 items adopted by Rhoades, Eisenberger and Armeli (2001) was used in the questionnaire on 5-point Likert scale (1=Totally Disagree, 5=Totally Agree). As for job stress, we focused on role stress and work load. it was measured by using Kahn et al(1964) items. The responses were on 5-point Likert scale that ranged from (5) Always to (1) Never.

Data Analysis

Both Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) were used to analyze collected data. Before going into this step, we checked all of the responses to eliminate inconsistent ones. Using SPSS we performed descriptive statistics on the data to demonstrate demographic characteristics. To check reliability of all measures, we calculated Cronbach’s alpha. AMOS was supplemented for determining the best model fit, and testing the model quality.

Results

Reliability

To check the reliability of the measurement scales, Cronbach alpha was calculated. All variables have high Cronbach alpha, hence they all were retained. Cronbach’s alpha (α) ranges from 0.86-0.89, indicating that our scales have a good level of internal consistency. The recommended Cronbach’s alpha is 0.7 or higher.

Means, Standard Deviation and Correlations

Table 3 presents the means, standard deviation and correlations among the variables explored in our study. Job stress has a mean of (2.9939), and a standard variation of (.84761). Burnout has a mean of (3.3173), and...
a standard variation value of (.92773). The mean value for job satisfaction is (2.8320), and the standard variation id (1.01436). Organizational commitment has (3.3582) as mean value, and (.94266) as standard variation.

As for the correlations between the variables, burnout has a significant positive correlation with job stress (r=.614, p<0.01). Job satisfaction has a significant negative correlation with job stress (r=-.681, p<0.01), and a significant negative correlation as well, with burnout (r=-.598, p<0.01). Organizational commitment has a negative correlation with two variable; job stress (r=-.374, p<0.01) and burnout (r=-.252, p<0.01), however it has a significant positive correlation with job satisfaction (r=.503, p<0.01).

Testing Research Model Fit

To test the study’s hypotheses, we utilized path analysis. Table 4 below shows the fit indices from the default model as per chi-square, degrees of freedom ratio, comparative fit, incremental fit, and root mean square error.

According to the fit indices, the model fits the data when chi-square value is 2.805, RMSEA=.041, CFI=.994, TLI=.993, NFI=.992, GFI=.994, AGFI=.971. Based on these results, Figure 1 shows the best model that explains the relationships between the variables.

Table 5, summarizes the type and direction of each relationship. Job satisfaction and burnout have moderating role between job stress and organizational commitment. The results indicate that while job stress has a positive effect on burnout (.672), there is a negative effect on job satisfaction from job stress (-.603). besides job stress, burnout as well has a negative impact on job satisfaction (-.315). the last indicated result was the effect of job satisfaction on organizational commitment which is positive (.467).

Limitations and Future Research

There were some constraints concerning the methodology adopted conducting the research. To reach as many respondents as possible, and facilitate the process of collecting and analyzing the data, we were limited to the method of online questionnaire. The research could be improved by soliciting more demographic data. Gender, age, and years of experience were adequate, however collecting qualification and administrative level data will give the research more depth and reasonings.

We examined the implications of two dimensions of job stress on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, burnout, the effect of job stress on organizational commitment through burnout, and the effect of job stress on organizational commitment through job satisfaction. Instead of focusing on just two dimensions of job stress, future researches may study the impact of several aspects of job stress on these variables and reach to wider and more explained findings. The effect of job stress on turnover intention is another recommendation for future researches. This study was conducted on the whole private sector in Saudi Arabia. It could reach to interesting results when focusing on selected cities or industries as each

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<th>Table 4: Results of Model Fit</th>
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| Figure 1: The Path Analysis |

Table 5: Bath Analysis

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<tr>
<td>BURN</td>
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<tr>
<td>SATTIS</td>
<td>STR</td>
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<td>.068</td>
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<tr>
<td>SATTIS</td>
<td>BURN</td>
<td>-.315</td>
<td>.062</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMIT</td>
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<td>.467</td>
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has its own working conditions, lifestyle, employees in each city or working in specific industry may have distinct characteristics.

**Practical Implications**

We conducted this study with the aim of assisting private sector organizations in Saudi Arabia identify the causes of job stress and its antecedents. We discussed burnout, job satisfaction and what mediates the effect of organizational commitment. The study stresses the importance of human resources management role is mitigating work stressors in order to maintain a motivated and productive workforce that can be the organizations’ competitive advantage.

In order to sustain a competitive advantage of human capital, organizations must ensure their employees are satisfied and burnout-free to achieve organizational commitment. Employees, then, will feel more willing and motivated to take initiatives. They will perform and produce more to increase the overall productivity and profitability.

As previously mentioned, this research will help organizations seek actions to decrease job stress through multiple ways. First, companies must ensure that there is compatibility between workers, their jobs and the organization. Employees must feel they are capable of performing their duties. Besides ensuring compatibility, job roles and responsibilities could lead to burnout and eventually dissatisfaction, especially when they are overwhelming and beyond workers’ capabilities. It is not an easy task to find the right balance between giving challenging yet doable job duties. Third, an encouraging culture that allows autonomy to some extent and employees’ participation in decision making processes, does increase employee satisfaction with their jobs and organizations with leads to commitment. Taking these points into consideration hugely contribute to less stressed and highly satisfied and committed workforce as well as to healthy and encouraging environment.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Our study developed a causal model which investigated the effect of some important factors on private sector employees in Saudi Arabia. It investigates the effect of job stress and burnout in organizational commitment through job satisfaction. The model was analyzed through Path Analysis method. Our present study shows that there is a positive relationship between stress and burnout in H1 and it is in compliance with Sugawara et al Khamisa et al.’s study in 2017, the high level of workload and high energy expenditure to perform their tasks have less time for competitive pressures and changing procedures and policies. This condition increases the stress and psychological stress on nurses, which leads to an increase in burnout. Stressing over work causes detrimental physical and emotional responses, especially when workers feel unable to meet the demands and requirements (Daniel, 2019). Many factors could be a source for stress that leads to burnout such as: lack of support, work-family conflicts, isolation (Devin & Hunter, 2017.; Brown, 2017.; Khamisa et al., 2016) and workload which is the most discussed source of burnout according to Maslach and Leiter, (2008).

The second hypotheses and as proved in the research results, there is a negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. According to a study conducted by Tellenback, Brenner, and Löfgren (1983), teachers experience high levels of stress as a result of their jobs, which leads to dissatisfaction. In H3, there is negative relationship between burnout and job satisfaction as Koustelios and Tsigilis’s study (2005) found that burnout increased when job satisfaction decreases in their research on teachers. Personal distress, family conflicts, exhaustion, and sleeping disorder are, according to Maslach and Jackson (1981), some of the issues an employee may go through as a result of burnout. Kahill (1988) identified depression, high
levels of anxiety, and low self-esteem as signs of experiencing burnout. Torkaman et al. (2017) studied the statistical relationship between job satisfaction, burnout, and job stress among teachers in Qazvin Province, Iran. According to the findings, job satisfaction and burnout have a direct and significant link, with job satisfaction and burnout inversely connected with stress dimensions. Failure to meet these teachers’ motivating needs over time results in their dissatisfaction with the working process, which leads to job burnout and stress.

In H4, there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which means that higher job satisfaction leads to higher organizational commitment. These findings consist with Tomilson and Jankins’ findings, Chandan’s theoretical model, and Porter and Lawler’s performance-satisfactory hypothesis. Tella et al. (2007) discovered a link between perceived work motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment increases in job satisfaction leading to higher organizational commitment, which also consists with our findings. A study meta analysis of 48 research was conducted by Blegen (1993) on nursing job satisfaction. He found that job satisfaction is highly linked to stress (in a negative way) and organizational commitment (positively), this is consistent with our findings in H5 that job stress could affect organizational commitment via job satisfaction. In H6 organizational commitment could also be effected by burnout via job satisfaction. Sweeney and Quirin (2009) found that although there is not a direct effect from job stress on organizational commitment, job satisfaction mediates that effect. The seventh and last hypotheses and finding results is that job stress could affect job satisfaction via burnout and which consists with the study of (Forgarly, Singh, Rhoads, and Moore) that job burnout has a negative effect on job satisfaction and performance for accounting professionals.

In conclusion, Many researchers have discovered a remarkable relationship affecting job stress, the study is conducted on employee stress in Saudi organizations confirmed that the amount of job stress in Saudi market is high, particularly in the private sector.
References


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