Public Services Quality and the Individuals' Income as Determinants of Saudi Families' Standards of Happiness and Satisfaction within the Saudi Vision 2030's Perspective

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate public services' quality and individuals' income as determinants for citizens' standards of happiness and level of satisfaction.

In order to achieve this, the researcher used the social survey method and purposive sample technique to collect data from 900 participants using the questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The study covered nine cities from the main cities in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The responses were established based on the quintuple Likert scale.

The researcher used the statistical technique of Cronbach's Alpha to evaluate the credibility of the sample's responses. Also, the researcher implemented the descriptive analytical approach to examine all collected data. Findings indicated that the quality of services and income (socioeconomic factors) are the most significant determinants of citizens' satisfaction and happiness in Saudi Arabia within the 2030 Vision.

Therefore, economic factors indicate that social factors are the bases of satisfaction and happiness.

Keywords: Determinants, Families' satisfaction, Quality of Service, Individuals' Income, Quality of Service Dimensions, Saudi Vision 2030, Public Sectors.

Introduction

Governments make many attempts to provide trusted public services quality to achieve citizens' satisfaction (Abdulelah Alballaa et al., 2020). Yet, the overall enactments of public services in the local government are not satisfactory. Consequently, financial income and public services' quality reduce the citizens' trust toward the quality of public services (Gong, 2018). The solid perception about the low quality of public services, individuals' income, and happiness and satisfaction standards develops to be a significant issue for the Saudi government since public belief in the provided public services is essential. Specialists claim that public services' quality and financial income play a significant role in achieving public satisfaction. They are essential benefits provided by the government sector (Teng & Lingyi, 2011).

This supports the assumption that states there is an important correlation between public services' quality, individuals' income, public happiness standards, and satisfaction. This indicates that service quality and individuals' financial income are closely associated with the public satisfaction and standards of happiness (Bawakid et al, 2017). Economic and public concepts approve the idea that states that public services' quality and individuals' income may result in long-term correlation to create progressive work and achieve public satisfaction (Alshareef et al, 2020). Effective public

services' quality and satisfactory individuals' financial income will help individuals develop their knowledge and to realize the significance in achieving public happiness and satisfaction in the government sector because recurrent and high-quality public services and satisfactory financial income will produce greater public satisfaction.

Therefore, citizens with high-quality public services and satisfactory financial income have higher standards of happiness and satisfaction compared to those with lower public services and income (Amati et al, 2018). Consequently, an individual can achieve higher standards of family happiness and satisfaction by earning more money and receiving a high quality of public services. In addition, if government policy intends to increase the individuals' financial income and quality of public services entirely, then, there will be an improvement in the living style, standards of happiness and quality public services (Al- Hanawi et al, 2018). Similarly, investigations of developed, developing and under-developing countries indicated that there is a positive link between individuals' income, the quality of public services and their family happiness and satisfaction over the short run. That is, individuals of developed countries have high standards of happiness and high quality of public services because they are economically steady (Yu et al, 2020). Much research has inferred that, contrary to what economic and public concepts propose, a positive link between individuals' income, quality of public services, satisfaction, and happiness level is not always the case. This research project will study the correlation between the individuals' income and the Saudi families' standards of happiness within the proposed goals for a vibrant society presented in Saudi Vision 2030. Our research project will focus on the largest Saudi Arabian cities.

Literature Review

Satisfaction and happiness have been embraced earlier, even in the accounts of previous investigations and analysis. They are one of the most debated and general issues nowadays. Different specialists in the field of economy and social sciences are currently attempting to examine the determinants of citizens' satisfaction and happiness. Hanaa et al, (2018) examined the relationship between happiness and economic development in KSA. The study's findings indicated that socioeconomic factors were very essential determinants in achieving happiness and showed a positive impact on the contribution to economic growth in Jazan city.

Gong (2018) also studied the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction, loyalty, and happiness in five Asian countries, including (China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore). It also shows that overall service quality has a positive influence on customer satisfaction, which in turn leads to customer loyalty and customer happiness and that the general pattern of structural paths is valid in the five countries.

Similarly, Yu, et al (2020) investigated household income, satisfaction with standard of living, and subjective well-being. The results of the study showed that household income possessed a positive effect on the satisfaction that led to the positive effect on subjective well-being. Also, the findings of the study revealed that positive income-SOL satisfaction relation is negatively moderated by happiness materialism.

All these findings trigger scholars to critically examine the present literature related to happiness and satisfaction from the point of views of individuals, family members and society. Thus, not much research has attempted to incorporate these problems and on identifying happiness and satisfaction from an all-inclusive viewpoint within the 2030 Vision. Hence, this requires researchers to detect the gaps and to provide the agenda for prospective research in this upcoming field.

Research Problem

In the vibrant society depicted by Saudi Vision 2030, happiness and fulfilment of Saudi citizens play a pivotal role. Physical, psychological and social well-being can only be achieved through good quality of life and public services, a healthy lifestyle and an attractive living environment (vision 2030.gov.sa/en; 2019). Thus, it remains that many individuals are of the opinion that money, economic growth and high quality of public services are the determinants of happiness and public satisfaction. They assume that money and high quality of public services can achieve happiness and public satisfaction. This is almost a global case. In Saudi Arabia, families who receive low quality of public services and have limited income complain that they are unhappy and unsatisfied compared to others. They state that they are unhappy and cannot satisfy their needs due to low income and low quality of public services. That is, families in Saudi Arabia believe that the degree of their family happiness and satisfaction is determined by the level of financial income and high quality of public services.

Research Hypothesis

This research has been based on the following hypothesis:

- **H1** There is a correlation between public services quality and Saudi families' income and their standards of satisfaction and happiness.
- **H2-** There is statistically significant difference between the individuals' income and public services quality and Saudi families' happiness and satisfaction standards.

Research Objectives

This research intends to achieve the following objectives:

- 1. To investigate whether Saudi families who receive high quality of public services and have more money are happier and satisfied than others as entailed by Saudi Vision 2030.
- 2. To examine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the individuals' income and public services quality and Saudi families' happiness and satisfaction standards.

Research Questions

This research addresses the following questions:

- 1. Do Saudi families who receive high quality of public services and have more money are happier and satisfied than others as entailed by Saudi Vision 2030?
- 2. 'Is there a statistically significant difference between the individuals' income and public services quality and Saudi families' standards of happiness and satisfaction?

Conceptual Framework of the Study

As viewed in past research, there is a correlation between service quality, individuals' income and customers' satisfaction. In addition, the quality of service may be assessed based on the implementation of five main quality of service dimensions where the SERVQUAL measurement is the most commonly used. In connection, the present research's theoretical framework deals with satisfaction as transaction-specific based on two varied justifications of citizen's satisfaction (Andreassen, 2000).

As far as this study is concerned, citizens represent individuals who receive services from public sectors in Saudi Arabia, happiness and satisfaction relate to citizens' interest to sustain a service connection with the sectors, and it is additionally the approaches of citizens towards the services served to them by the public sector, whereas citizens' satisfaction in this research is the degree of

happiness and pleasure achieved by citizens for the services received from public or governmental sectors. Thus, it was confirmed that perceived service quality is a component of customer satisfaction (Parasuraman et al. 1988). Also, other scholars indicated that there is a connection between citizens' satisfaction and the quality of service provided to them (Yu et al. 2020).

Further, the SERVQUAL framework was confirmed to be the most appropriate method to evaluate the quality of service in both private and public sectors, particularly with the citizens' views. This notion creates a suggestion that the five main dimensions of SERVQUAL framework may contain a real connection with the citizens' satisfaction. The question arises here "what is the correlation between public services quality and the individuals' income and the Saudi Families' standards of happiness and satisfaction within the Saudi Vision 2030's perspective? In addition, it was proven that the quality of service is the general evaluation of citizens' service. Further, the SERVQUAL framework dimensions were confirmed to be the basic measure applied by many scholars in the assessment of the quality of service ((Parasuraman et al. 1985). The concept establishes a proposal that every dimension in SEQUAL framework can be a straight connection with the quality of service quality as depicted in Figure 1.

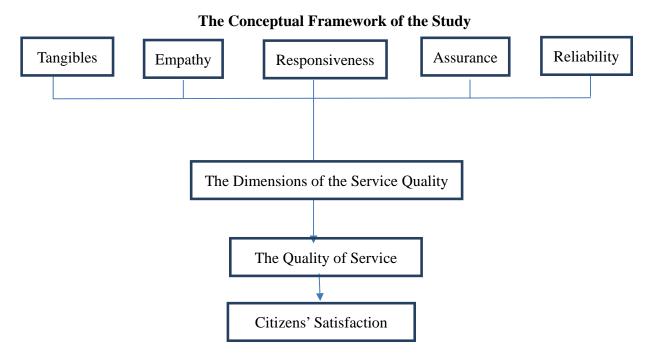


Figure 1. The Correlation between Citizens' Satisfaction and the Quality of Services

If citizens are in line and satisfied with the factors behind satisfaction about the quality of service; the quality-of-service measurement has an important connection with the quality of service and citizens' satisfaction, then an inference may be concluded that the quality of service is an important determinant for citizens' satisfaction, individual's income and with the quality-of-service dimensions. In here, the present study hypotheses were on the fact that the quality-of-service dimension possesses an important correlation with citizens' satisfaction and with the quality-of-service quality.

Methodology

Research Method

To collect the required data the study adopted the social survey method using the purposive sampling technique. A Social Survey involves obtaining information in a standardized from large groups of people. The main survey methods are questionnaires and structured interviews.

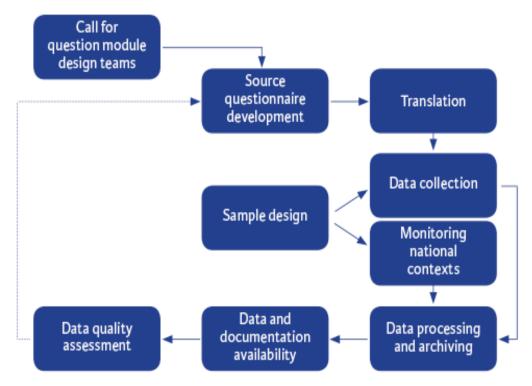


Figure 2. Research Methodology framework

Sampling Procedures

Sampling procedures give an extent of techniques that aid the researcher lessen the quantity of information required for research by viewing only information from sub-division compared to the entire potential components (Hothersall, 2019; Donna, 2019). Based on this, the researcher used the purposive sampling method. The researcher designed questionnaires for Saudi families' members and governmental employees' public operation, health systems, educational facilities, government documentaries, public transports, security services, social services etc. in major cities such as (Riyadh, Jeddah, Madinah, Tabuk, Makkah, Aseer, Hail, Jazan and Dammam). The researcher selected these public sectors because he needed to view the quality of services influence on individuals' satisfaction. Nine hundred participants were interviewed using purposive sampling technique from nine major cities in Saudi Arabia.

Data Collection

The study comprised both primary and secondary data. The former refers to the new data gathered for the actual purpose. Whilst, secondary data represent information that has been gathered for other tasks in the study. The questionnaire (www.stats.gov.sa/ar/survey/12705; www.surveymonkey.com/r/GQHWX8J; www.ust.edw/ojs/index.php/AJQAH/article/view/1013) was the study instrument implemented to elicit data from the partici-

pants or source of data (public sectors, individuals, family members) (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). For the purpose of this study, questionnaires were used to obtain data from the source that meet the requirements of this quantitative research. The questionnaires were structured based on Likert's 5-points scale. A pilot test was conducted to check the difficulty level of the questionnaires. The findings of the pilot test showed that most of the participants in the study could accessibly respond to the questionnaires but some participants complained about the language of the survey (English). As a result, the researcher translated the questionnaire to Arabic to avoid language problems. The researcher used survey-link to collect data from the participants because of the pandemic (COVID-19), which made transportation to some sites and cities difficult. The researcher found it the easiest way to gather data from them. The questionnaire link was sent to participants according to the sectors they work in (health services, educational institutions, public sectors in general in Saudi Arabia).

The survey took two months to be collected from participants i.e. August to October 2020 by then the researcher had gathered 900 completed survey. The gathered data emails from participants over a period of two months and even contacted customers and travelled to different cities in Saudi Arabia whenever secured permission during COVID-19 crisis. One of the causes the researcher had to travel and contact participants personally to avoid having the same groups of participants collecting 900 of them.

Data Analysis

The researcher used quantitative data for the ease of classification and categorization. Such data is measurable in terms of numerical values, quantitative and categorical variables (Rahman, 2017). However, categorical variables are ordinal, and interval information is quantitative. Based on the scope of my research, the researcher had nominal variables because my dimension scales were collections of categories. For example, categorical variables were examined, as shown in the following section:

- i. Individuals' Happiness and Satisfaction: 1-5 = satisfied, and 6-10 = dissatisfied
- ii. Quality of Service: 1-5 = agree and 6-10 = disagree
- iii. Age: 18-30 = <= 30, and 31-45 and >45 = >30
- iv. Quality of Service: 1-4 = Good = 1, 5= poor = 2 6= No comment = 3
- v. High quality services for Saudi family members and individuals= Good facilities: 1-5 = agree and 6-10 = disagree.

The researcher used descriptive data because he needed to display the data gathered in Tables and Graphs for clear understanding and readability. In addition, the researcher selected this type of data to analyze the findings (Taherdoost, 2020).

Results

This section presents the study results. Figure No. (4.1) shows the distribution of the study sample between the studied cities. As discussed, it can be viewed from the charts, individuals and citizens of cities were not equally distributed. The sample of the study comprised 65% males and 35% females. Relating to the city, Riyadh (150), Jeddah (135), Dammam (125), Madinah (115), Tabuk (135), Hail (80), Aseer (90) and Jazan (70) participants making a total of 900 participants. Figure 4.1 in the next section displays the number of participants in the study according to each city selected for the purpose of this study in Saudi Arabia.

Description of the study sample:

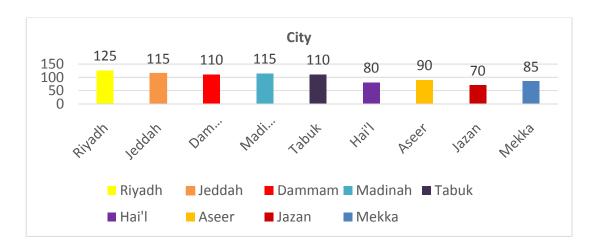


Figure 3. The distribution of the study sample between the studied cities:

The sample population included 900 citizens / individuals, those with ages equal to 30 presented a higher percentage (40%) than those ages greater than 40 (30%) and 50 (30%) years. Moreover, the majority of the respondents are males.

With regard to employment, 90% of the sample are employed while 10% are retired as indicated in Figure 4 below.



Figure 4. The distribution of the study sample by employment status:

Respondents satisfaction and the attitude towards quality of services:

Figure 5 below displays individuals'/ citizens' satisfaction and the attitude towards quality of services of public sectors in major Saudi Arabia. According to figure 4.3, it can be viewed that 46% of the sample individuals' were satisfied, whilst 44% were dissatisfied with the quality of service variable. Moreover, 90% of the individuals/ citizens agreed that that public sectors in their cities delivered quality services while only 10% disagreed. These findings agree with the conclusions of previous research such as Abdulelah Alballaa1et al (2020) and Al- Hanawi et al (2018).

Figure 5 below displays individuals / citizens' satisfaction and the attitude towards quality of services of public sectors in major Saudi Arabia

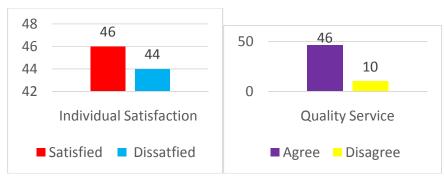


Figure 5. Individuals / citizens' satisfaction and the attitude towards quality of services of public sectors in major Saudi Arabia

What quality of public sector service means to the respondents:

Figure 6 below chart shows the distribution of the study sample what quality of public sector service means to them. 47% of the sample reported that, the quality of services means to them "accurate infrastructures" (housing facilities, building materials, information technology services, municipal services, family monthly income, annual expenses and income, health services, quality of life, educational services). While 36% of the participants reported that, the quality of service means a "welcoming staff" when seeking any of the mentioned services. 12% of the participants reported that, the quality of service is being qualified staffs in attending visitors at public sectors (hospitals, academic intuitions, etc.) 5% the sample stated that quality of service refers to staff's conscious to the issue of time.



Figure 6. Service Quality's meaning / Dimensions for Public Sectors in Major Saudi Cities

The sample recommendation for public sectors' services in major Saudi cities

Figure 7 in the next section displays the distribution of the study sample by the recommendation for public sectors' services in major Saudi cities'. 73% of the sample stated that they would recommend public sectors' services whilst 27% of them said they would not recommend public sectors' services. The difference in recommendation of public services is related the degree of satisfaction with the public services.

100 out of 125 individuals in Riyadh were satisfied and stated that they would not recommend public services' quality, 25 of them were dissatisfied. Meanwhile, 25 of the dissatisfied individuals / citizens reported that, they would not recommend public services' quality. In Jeddah city, 13 of them were satisfied, and 1 of them was not, in Dammam city 95 out of 115 were satisfied and 25 were dissatisfied, in Madinah city 78 out of 115 were satisfied and 37 was not, in Tabuk city 97 out of 110 were satisfied and 13 of them were dissatisfied, in Hail city 60 out of 80 were satisfied and 20 were dissatisfied, in Aseer city 56 out of 90 were satisfied and 34 of them were dissatisfied, in Jazan city 46 out of 70 were satisfied and 24 of them were dissatisfied, and in Makkah city 73 out of 85 were satisfied and 12 of them were dissatisfied. So, the participants differed between will recommend (46%) and will not recommend (44%) as displayed in Figure 7 below.

Table 1. Individuals / Citizens' Satisfaction and Sample Characteristics for Public Sectors 'Services

Sample Characteristic for Sample Size of 900	Satisfied No.	Dissatisfied No.
City		
Riyadh	100	25
Jeddah	95	20
Dammam	86	29
Madinah	78	37
Tabuk	97	13
Hai'l	60	20
Aseer	56	34
Jazan	46	24
Mekkah	73	12
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	420	80
Female	350	50
Age		
<=30	410	90
> 50	70	20
> 40	250	50
<u>Profession Status</u>		
Employee	600	70
Retried	200	30

Rating of service quality by study sample in nine major cities:

Furthermore, Figure 7 presents the rating of service quality by study sample in nine major cities. From the figure, it can be concluded that the rating of service quality was not correspondingly distributed amongst the sample, 46% of the reported that, the quality of services was good, 30% of them rated the quality of services at public sectors as poor, and 14% of them did not comment or rate the quality of services at public sectors.



Figure 7. The Rating of Service Quality by the study sample in Nine Major Cities

The Dimensions of Public Service Quality:

Table 2. Distribution of the study sample by the dimensions of public service quality

Sample Characteris-	Accurate	Welcoming	Qualified	Time Conscious
tic for Sample Size of	Facilities	Staff	Staff	Staff
900				
<u>City</u>				
Riyadh	70	30	18	7
Jeddah	45	28	25	17
Dammam	66	25	11	8
Madinah	57	29	20	9
Tabuk	68	23	10	9
Hai'l	40	15	15	10
Aseer	41	24	17	8
Jazan	31	18	8	3 5
Mekkah	39	20	21	5
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	380	124	54	46
Female	220	90	50	40
Age				
<=30	320	80	58	42
> 50	48	20	12	10
> 40	230	30	22	18
Profession Status				
Employee	438	90	72	70
Retried	140	40	27	23

The above table displays the dimensions of service quality and characteristics of the sample for public sectors' services in major Saudi cities. It can be viewed from the table that quality of services' dimensions was not correspondingly distributed amongst the gender sample. The male gender's population recorder greater numbers than female gender for those who reported that the quality of service refers to "accurate public services" in which 457 individuals out of 900 showed that in all cities; 212 out of 900 reported that service quality signifies "time conscious staff" for them and 145 said it means "qualified staff" and 76 of them stated that service quality means "welcoming staff". Therefore, male gender recorded the highest percentage in all the sample characteristics and variables for public sectors in major cities in Saudi Arabia.

Citizens at the age of 30 years recorded greater numbers than individuals with the age of 40 years, which came second in position followed by the age 50, which came third in position. The dimensions of services were correspondingly distributed amongst the cities' population. Out of all services' meanings provided for the quality, citizens from Riyadh, Madinah and Tabuk cities showed the greatest numbers, "Accurate Facilities" and "Time Conscious Staff" meaning recorded the least number. Additionally, employees had the greatest number compared to retired citizens. This goes in line with Alshareef, Angawi & Azaad (2020) findings. Table 3 depicts the findings for the quality of service's dimensions for public services in major Saudi cities.

Table 3. Findings for the Quality of Service's Dimensions for Public Services' Sectors in Major Saudi Cities

	Independent Variable Quality of Service's Di-	P-Value
Individuals'	mensions Welcoming Staff	0.189
Satisfaction	Accurate Public Facilities	0.002
	Qualified Staff	0.001
	Time Conscious Staff	0.005

From the above table, the p-value of "qualified staff", "Accurate facilities" and "time conscious staff" was < 0.05. Therefore, the HO hypothesis is not accepted for these dimensions and HA hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is a significant correlation between individuals' satisfaction and these quality of services' dimensions. In the meantime, P-value of "welcoming staff" > 0.05, therefore not rejecting HO for these dimensions and HA is not accepted. This means there is no significant correlation between individuals' satisfaction and such dimension. Additionally, Table No. (4) below, shows the quality of service quality and dimensions of service quality tests for public sectors in major Saudi cities.

Table 4. Findings for the Quality of Service and Dimensions of Service Quality Tests for Pub-

lic Sectors in Major Saudi Cities

	Independent Variable of the Dimensions of Service's Quality	P-Value
g .	W. I	0.000
Service	Welcoming Staff	0.000
Quality	Accurate Public Facilities	0.000
	Qualified Staff	0.000
	Time Conscious Staff	0.006

As indicated in the above table, the total dimensions of the service's quality entail P-values < 0.05. Therefore, the HO hypothesis is not accepted, and the HA is for the entire dimensions of the service's quality. This means that there is a significant correlation between the quality of service and the dimensions of the service's quality. However, Table 5 displays the findings for individual's satisfaction and quality of service for public sectors in major Saudi cities.

Table 5. Respondents Satisfaction and Quality of Service for Public Sectors in Major Saudi Cities

Individuals' Satisfaction	Quality of Service	P-Value = 0.269

The above table shows the findings of the test on the correlation between individuals' satisfaction and quality of service. P-value > 0.05, therefore, HO is not rejected, and HA is not accepted. This shows that there is *significant correlation between individuals' satisfaction and the quality of services*.

In this connection, Figure 9 below shows the study sample satisfaction with public services (housing facilities, building materials, information technology services, municipal services, family monthly income, annual expenses and income, health services, quality of life, educational services). It is clear that, 52% of the participants were satisfied with public sectors' quality of services whilst 48 % of the study sample were dissatisfied. On the other hand, 55% of the sample were happy about the public sectors' services while 45% of the sample were unhappy with the provided services by public sectors in Saudi Arabia as based on Vision 2030.

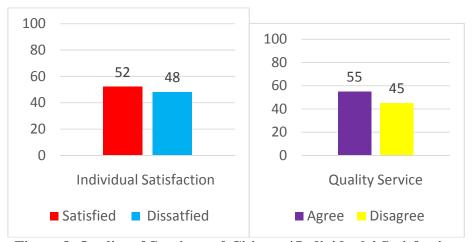


Figure 8. Quality of Service and Citizens / Individuals' Satisfaction

Figure 9 below shows the dimensions of the quality of service for the study sample. 46% of the sample of the study disagreed, and 30% of them agreed that public sectors' quality of services showed responsiveness as a characteristics. 14 % agreed while 86% of them disagreed that public sectors' quality of services revealed empathy as a characteristics. In addition, 17% of the participants agreed, and 83 % of them disagreed public sectors' quality of service showed reliability as characteristics.

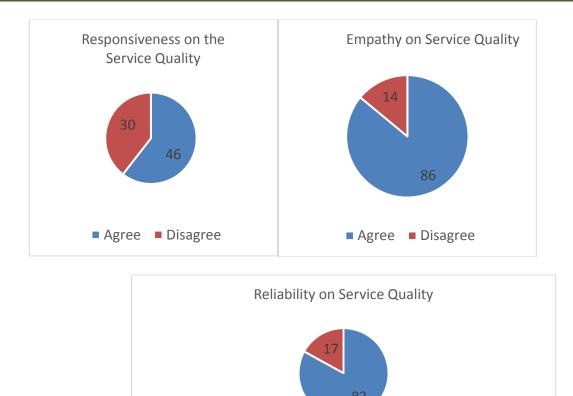


Figure 9. The Dimensions of Group Service's Quality

■ Agree ■ Disagree

Figure 10 below shows the correlation between individuals' income and families' standards of happiness and satisfaction. In accordance with the findings of the analysis, it can be stated that 82% of the individuals reported that there is a significant correlation between income, happiness and satisfaction, whilst 18% of them disagreed. That is, those who agreed are mostly with low monthly salaries below 6000 SR per month and those who disagreed are mostly those who get higher salaries more than 15000 SR per month. This result indicates that income is an important determinant for happiness and satisfaction.

The Correlation between Individuals' Income and Families' Standards of Happiness and Satisfaction:

Figure 10 below shows the correlation between individuals' income and families' standards of happiness and satisfaction. Most individuals stated a significant correlation between service quality at public sectors, monthly income, happiness and satisfaction of family members. This means that families who had greater monthly income / more money and receive high quality services were happier than those who had lower quality services and not much money. Therefore, it is clear that public sectors service quality and monthly income determine to a greater extent the degree of happiness and satisfaction of family members. These results agree with the findings of previous research such as those conducted by Amati et al (2018); Hanaa et al (2018) and Helliwell & Sachs (2019).

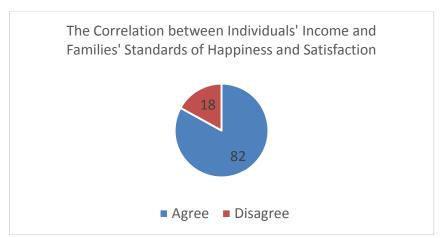


Figure 10. The Correlation between Individuals' Income and Families' Standards of Happiness and Satisfaction.

Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate public services quality and the individuals' income as determinants for the Saudi families' standards of happiness and satisfaction within the Saudi Vision 2030's perspective. The research questions were "what is the correlation between correlation between public services quality and the individuals' income and the Saudi families' standards of happiness and satisfaction as entailed by Saudi Vision 2030?"; "do Saudi families Saudi families who receive high quality of public services and have more money are happier and satisfied than others?"; "to what extent does the Saudi individuals' income and public services quality correlate with their family happiness and satisfaction?"; and "is there a statistically significant difference between the individuals' income and public services quality of the Saudi families' standards of happiness and satisfaction?".

The findings provide answers to the study questions. The findings revealed a significant correlation between individuals' satisfaction / happiness and the quality of services as based on Vision 2030. That is, families' members who receive high quality services and have much money appear happier and more satisfied as compared to others.

As for the second study question, the study showed that, there are statistically significant difference between the individuals' income and public services quality and Saudi families' standards of happiness and satisfaction.

Accordingly, it could be argued that, quality of services and the amount of income appear to be an important determinants to the Saudi families' satisfaction and happiness.

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