

**THE IMPACT OF WORK STRESS TOWARDS JOB
PERFORMANCE AMONG MANAGERS IN
PRIVATE SECTORS IN
KOTA KINABALU
SABAH**

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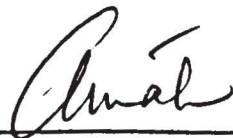
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material in this thesis is my own except for quotations, excerpts, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF WORK STRESS TOWARDS JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG MANAGERS IN PRIVATE SECTORS IN KOTA KINABALU, SABAH

The problem measure in this research is to identify the impact of work stress towards job performance among managers. This study has put forward five research questions. Firstly what is the level and impact of work stress on job performance?. Second, what is the source of work stress on job performance among managers?. Third, what is the relationship between the sources of work stress and job performance?. Fourth, what is the function of gender as a moderator between source of work stress and work stress among managers? Fifth, what is the role of work stress as a mediator between work stress and job performance?. To answer these research questions, this study has outlined five research objectives. First, to study the level and the Impact of work stress towards job performance. Second, to identify the source of work stress on job performance among managers. Third, to examine the relationship between work stress and job performance. Fourth, to identify impact of gender as a moderator between source of work stress and work stress among managers. Lastly, to examine the role of work stress as a mediator between work stress and job performance. This study is conducted in three private companies; Suria Capital Holdings Berhad, Warisan Hartanah Sdn. Bhd and Sabah Bank Development Berhad. The respondents are 105 middle to top management level/managers from those companies. Altogether six hypotheses are forwarded to be tested using Statistical Package Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 14.0. The test conducted had indicate that: i) there is a significant relationship between the sources of work stress towards work stress; ii) there is a significant relationship between sources of work stress and job performance; iii) there is a significant relationship between the impact of work stress and job performance; iv) gender is not a significant moderating variable between sources of work stress and work stress; v) feelings and behaviour is not a significant mediating variable between sources of work stress and job performance. A number of research limitations are identified and suggestions for future research are proposed.

ABSTRAK

Permasalahan yang diteroka dalam kajian ini adalah untuk mengenai pastu imbak stress kerja terhadap prestasi pekerja dikalangan pengurus. Kajian ini telah mengemukakan lima persoalan kajian. Pertama, apakah tingkat dan impak stress kerja terhadap prestasi pekerja?. Kedua, apakah punca stress kerja terhadap prestasi pekerja dikalangan pengurus?. Ketiga, apakah hubungan diantara punca stress kerja dan prestasi pekerja?. Keempat, apakah fungsi jantungina sebagai pembolehubah pengantara diantara punca stress kerja dan stress kerja dikalangan pengurus?. Kelima, apakah peranan stress kerja sebagai pembolehubah pengantara diantara stress kerja dan prestasi pekerja?. Bagi menjawab persoalan ini, lima objektif khusus telah digariskan. Pertama, untuk mengkaji tingkat dan impak stress kerja terhadap prestasi pekerja. Kedua, untuk mengenalpasti punca stress kerja terhadap prestasi pekerja dikalangan pengurus. Ketiga, untuk menguji perhubungan diantara stress kerja dan prestasi pekerja. Keempat, untuk mengenal pasti impak jantungina sebagai pembolehubah pengantara diantara punca stress kerja dan stress kerja dikalangan pengurus. Akhimya, untuk menguji peranan stress kerja sebagai pembolehubah pengantara diantara stress kerja dan prestasi pekerja. Kajian ini telah dijalankan di tiga buah syarikat swasta; Suria Capital Holdings Berhad, Warisan Hartanah Sdn. Bhd and Sabah Bank Development Berhad. Responden kajian adalah terdiri daripada 105 orang tingkat pertengahan hingga atasan/pengurus daripada syarikat berkenaan. Sebanyak tujuh hipotesis telah dikemukakan untuk diuji dan kajian ini telah mengguna pakai Pakej Statistik Sains Sosial (SPSS) Versi 14.0. Pengujian yang dilakukan ke atas model tersebut telah menunjukkan bahawa: i) wujud hubungan signifikan diantara punca stress kerja dan stress kerja; ii) wujud hubungan signifikan diantara punca stress kerja dan prestasi pekerja; iii) wujud hubungan signifikan diantara diantara impak stress kerja dan prestasi pekerja; iv) jantungina tidak signifikan sebagai pembolehubah pengantara diantara punca stress kerja dan stress kerja; v) perasaan dan kelakuan tidak signifikan sebagai pembolehubah pengantara diantara punca stress kerja dan prestasi pekerja. Beberapa limitasi kajian telah dikenal pasti dan cadangkajian masa depan telah dikemukakan.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Empirical study and a survey on human stress as a psychological construct have been discussed within the behavioural sciences and many researchers have found the impacts of stress towards an individual. The impact of stress has created an increased attention towards this topic especially in the field of industrial and organization in the job market. According to Cooper and Marshall (1976); Beehr and Newman (1978) and Schuler (1980) the antecedents and the impact of stress has several conceptualizations.

Stress definition also has been developed. For example, McGarth (1979) defines stress as a "psychological reaction" towards a certain situation such as the most important towards a person in terms of environmental demand, exceeds an individual's capabilities and a resource to meet the demand. It is fortunate for certain people who can escape from stress because escaping from all types of stress would be undesirable. Sometimes the types of stress can easily influenced a person behaviour and attitudes.

Most people while performing their daily life experience a certain optimum amount of stress. The most common type of stress can be viewed as unsatisfying where as the right type of stress can be view as satisfying. Other than that, French, Chaplin and Harrison, (1982) analysed that base from the definition comes from person-environment fit theory stress may result from an interaction between the individual and the environment that explain about the reaction to a misfit between environmental demands and the person's ability to achieved the demand or the needs for environmental supplies and individuals needs.



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Nowadays, work stress has become a major concern in recent years because of its potential in reducing the employee behaviour and performance. This excessive or sustained work pressure can lead to stress. In fact, occupational stress also poses a risk on the business and compensation payments for stress-related injuries that are rising.

Source of work stress as mentioned by Cooper and Marshall (1978) highlighted a number of job stressor that normally happens in most organization. For instant, work stress happens most common among managers in Malaysia. Since Malaysia is on of developing country, the source of work stress can be seen through daily work hassle. In the study of Mansor, Fountain and Choy (2003) conclude that the main sources which indicate work stress is due to high work loads although many number of hours has been reduce, but still there is no change in the workload.

In this study, it identified those sources of stress which was the job demand, supervisor and subordinate relationship and role ambiguity and measures how the work stress affects the performance of the employee within the organization.

In this chapter, it discussed the reason of this study that been done in part 1.2. Where as in part 1.3, this study stated out the problem statement that need to be examine according to the selected variables. In part 1.4, this study raised the research questions that answered at the end of this study. Followed by part 1.5, the study had identified the research objectives that need to had been obtained in this study. However, the scope of the study and the significant of the study had been explained in part 1.6 and 1.7 in this chapter.

1.2 Problem Statement

Work stress in today's work place always been related with failing to meet the job demands, poor job performance, poor relationship with colleague, poor productivity and a sense of dissatisfaction. For instant, this work stress was related with the organization's problems, Williams, Konrad, Scheckler, Pathman, Linzer and Mc Murry (2001). Failing to meet such demands and poor job performance especially among the employee will cause a lot of lost in that particular organization in terms of productivity and cost. Besides that the major affect of work stress was employee

might not be able to delivered and performed effectively in his or her job and this had lead to a poor performance of the employee.

Some past research mentioned that "one-fourth of employee view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives", North western National Life (1991). Where as according to Princeton Survey Research Associates (1997) there are "three-fourths of employees believe the worker has more on-the-job stress than a generation ago". Both of the research above does mention that job stress has become a common and costly problem in the American workplace.

According to Palmer, Cooper and Thomas (2004) highlights that there is an increase of stress at work and also stated that "in 2004, the Health and Safety Executive Annual Report revealed the astounding figure of 13.4 million days lost due to stress and the latest figure stated that estimated cost of work-related stress costs the UK economy \$7 billion a year in sick pay, lost production."

Work stress has the potential in affecting a person's behaviour and his or her performance. There is some research that had been done to point out the impact of work stress towards the job performance. One of them is Galinsky, Kim and Bond (2001) had found out that 66% of the employees who feel overworked report feeling nervous or stressed and 28% of the employee felt overwhelmed by how much work they had often or very often in the past 3 months. Other than that, Wheatley (2000) also mention that three quarters of executives identify that their health, happiness and home life as well as their performance at work are affected by work stress. According to Health and Safety Executive (2000) also highlights that employee who is under stress will encounter the need to do work that involves a fast pace and need to resolve conflicting priorities or a lack of understanding and support from their managers.

The previous research on work stress had managed to identify the sources of work stress and how does it affect the daily work life towards an individual. In order to know whether selected variables of work stress have significant relationship with the job performance, this study had done an appropriate measurement to identify the relationship.

1.3 Research Question

In this study, there are six main research questions been examined. The first research question is to identify the relationship between sources of work stress and the job performance. Other word, this study is to measure whether there is a significant relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable. Besides, second research question is there is also a need to know the level of work stress in the working environment which affects the job performance. According to Doherty and Tyson (1998), a person may experience stress when they are exposed to a wide range of work demand and in turn contribute to an equally wide range of health outcomes and it is important to recognize the stress in a state and not in an illness.

The third research question is to identify the source of work stress in that particular organization. It is important to know what may cause the work stress occur. There are three variables that fall under sources of work stress been measured in order to identify the relationship towards the job performance. Besides that, this research question was followed by the impact of the work stress in the organization towards the job performance, where it gathers information to know how strong the relationship is.

However, the next research question was based on gender as a moderator between the source of work stress and work stress. In terms of gender, previous research had found that, women feel more work stress than men while performing their job (Galinsky et al., 2001). As for the last research question which involve the mediating variable between the work stress and job performance. It examines how it affects the job performance personally. According to Tennant (2005), stress may affect the behaviour of an individual because stress and depression may cause brain integration to break down.

Here are the main research questions that are examined in this study:

- a) What is the relationship between sources of work stress and work stress among managers in private sectors at Kota Kinabalu Sabah?



- b) What is the relationship between the work stress and job performance among managers in private sectors at Kota Kinabalu Sabah?
- c) What is the relationship between sources of work stress towards job performance among managers in private sectors at Kota Kinabalu Sabah?
- d) What is the function of gender as a moderator between source of work stress and work stress among managers in private sector at Kota Kinabalu Sabah?
- e) What is the role of work stress as a mediator between work stress and job performance?
- f) What is the level of work stress on job performance among managers in private sectors at Kota Kinabalu Sabah?

1.4 Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between sources of work stress which are job demand, relationship between supervisor and subordinate and role ambiguity and the stress level towards job performance. Where as the dependent variable was the job performance and the mediating variable was the work stress which is the feelings and behaviour of the employee.

Specifically, this study aims to identify:

- a) The influence of sources of work stress on work stress among managers in private sector at Kota Kinabalu Sabah.
- b) The influence of work stress and job performance among managers in private sector at Kota Kinabalu Sabah.
- c) The influence of sources of work stress towards job performance among managers at Kota Kinabalu Sabah.
- d) The influence of gender as a moderator between source of work stress and work stress among managers in private sector at Kota Kinabalu Sabah.

- e) The influence of work stress as a mediator between work stress and job performance.
- f) To study the level of work stress among managers in private sectors at Kota Kinabalu Sabah.

1.5 Scope of Study

This study had look into the impact of work stress towards the job performance. In other words, this study measures the relationship between work stress and job performance while performing a given task. Therefore, the scope of study was at Kota Kinabalu because Kota Kinabalu has the largest population among other district.

The population of the subject in this study were the private sectors in Kota Kinabalu that are Suria Capital Holdings Berhad, Warisan Hartanah Sabah Sdn. Bhd and Sabah Development Bank. The subject or respondents identified for this study involves middle to top management level in that particular organization.

1.6 Significant of Study

The rapid growth development in Sabah, especially in Kota Kinabalu had created a challenging environment and a very competitive market demand especially in the private sector organization. The changes of economic pattern that leads to factors that cause work stress affect directly or indirectly between the relationship between work stress and the job performance.

Until today, there are still small amount of research which relates source of work stress towards job performance through mediating variable. There are few previous research which almost relates with this study that are 'work and non-work stress that effect on job performance' done by Moomaw (1990) and 'The impact of work related factors on stress' done by Abang Hussien (2004).

Besides that, in Malaysia's context especially in Kota Kinabalu Sabah, there are still few research been done in private sectors that study about the impact of

work stress towards job performance especially In Suria Capital Holdings Berhad, Warisan Hartanah Sabah Sdn. Bhd and Sabah Development Bank.

This study had contribute on how to handle and manage stress which is not only on non-work stress but also particularly on the works stress. By knowing the right relationship of work stress towards job performance, the result had provided new findings for the employer to focus more on the work stress and find new initiative to overcome the problem and at the same time enhance the productivity, create a healthy working environment and satisfied employees.

1.7 Summary

The main purpose of this research is to identify the influence of sources of relationship and work stress towards the job performance within the organization. Few variables been tested In order to obtain the types of Impact and relationship. Besides that this research also managed to identify the sources of the work stress in order to determine the impact of the work stress on job performance. This research examined the significant relationship between the independent variable and dependent variables with the exposure of the employee with such working environment and to know how the impact of work stress affects the feelings and behaviour of the employee towards job performance.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Elements determining the job performance can be established from any factors in working environment. As for this study, source of work stress and work stress are the selected elements that may directly or indirectly affect the job performance. Few concept and theories been used to explain in detail in this chapter in order to support this study.

2.2 Stress Concept

People cannot avoid or eliminate stress in their work as it is part of one's life. Stress is one factor that affects performance as well as one's quality of life. According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1996) stress was defined as "an adaptive response, moderated by individual differences, that is a consequence of any action, situation or event that places special demands on a person."

Besides than that, the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (1999) mentioned that stress was "the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, needs of the worker".

According to Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2006), they analysed that an excessive pressure and problems may occur from workplace towards employee's personal life. Besides, once the employee facing financial problem, emotional breakdown or relationship problem and unable to cope with it, later it may directly or indirectly affect the employee's ability to work effectively.

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2006) also highlights that there are six signs of stress. The first signs that indicate employees may be suffering from excessive pressure or stress that might changes the behaviour or the appearance of that person. Below are the types of changes that may occur:

TABLE 2.1: CHANGES OF BEHAVOIR THAT MAY OCCUR

WORK PERFORMANCE	REGRESSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declining or Inconsistent performance • Uncharacteristic errors • Loss of Control over work • Loss of Motivation or Commitment • Increases time at work • Lack of Holiday Planning and Usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crying • Arguments • Undue Sensitivity • Irritability or Moodiness • Over-reaction to problems • Personality Clashes • Immature Behaviour
WITHDRAWAL	AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arriving Late to work • Leaving Early • Extended Lunches • Absenteeism • Resigned Attitude • Reduced Social Contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious Gossip • Criticism of others • Vandalism and Shouting • Bullying or harassment • Poor employee relations • Temper Outbursts
OTHER BEHAVIOUR	PHYSICAL SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of Character Behaviour • Difficulty in Relaxing • Increased consumption of alcohol • Lack of interest in appearance and Hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervous Stumbling Speech • Sweating • Tiredness and Lethargy • Upset • Tension Headaches

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accidents at home or work ● Reckless Driving ● Unnecessary risk taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rapid weight gain or loss ● Constantly feeling cold
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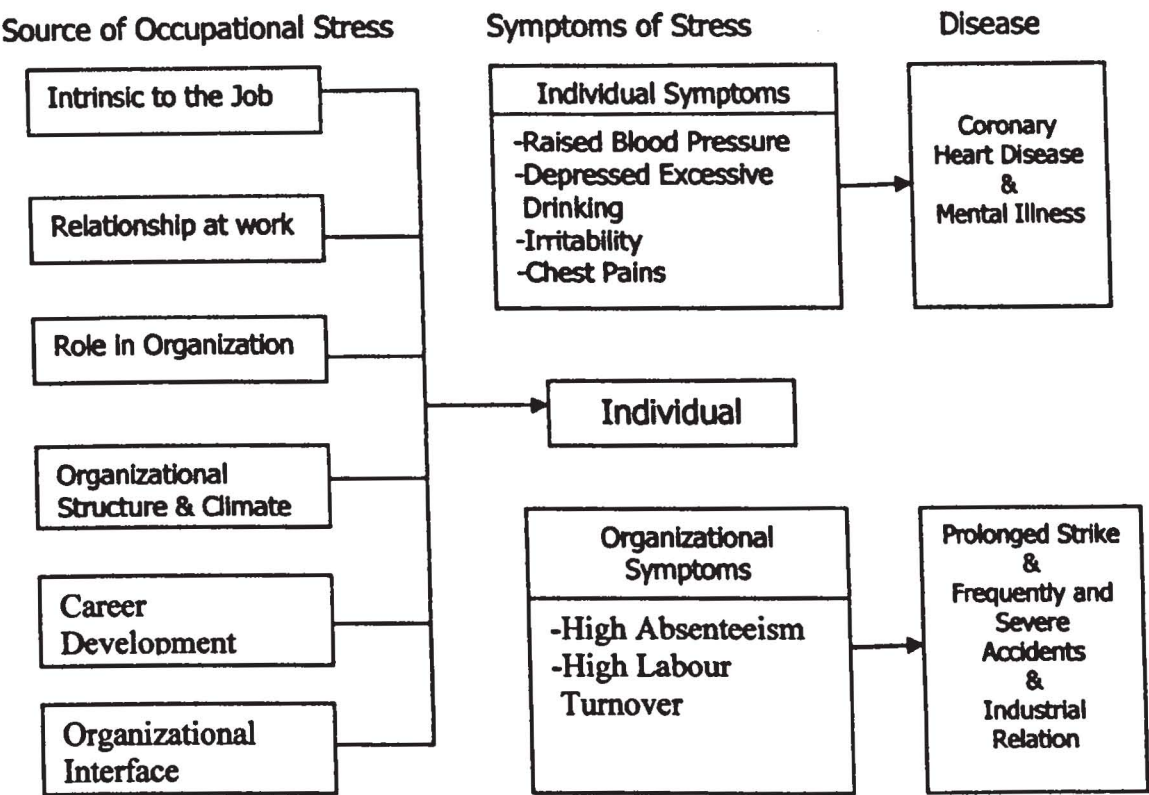
Source: Chartered Institute of Personnel And Development (2006)

2.3 Source of Work Stress Concept

According to the Sauter, Hurrell, Murphy and Levi (1997), generally there are six sources of work stress, in other words, there are six job conditions that may lead to stress.

Firstly, is the design of the task which involved heavy workload, infrequent rest break, do not utilize worker's skills, experience daily long working hours and shift work and provide little sense of control may create the employee to be at the point of exhaustion. Second, management style that experience lack of participation by workers in decision-making and poor communication in organization. Next is the interpersonal relationship which involved poor social environment and lack of support of help from the co-workers. As an employee, there is a need to have very good interpersonal skills in order to perform better in daily work. Other than that, work role also relates with some uncertain job expectations or conflicting or too much responsibility. Fifth, career concerns also may lead to stress upon certain employees. For instance, job insecurity and lack of opportunity of growth, advancement or even a promotion and a rapid changes for which the worker are unprepared. Lastly would be the environmental conditions which are unpleasant or dangerous physical conditions such as noises, air pollution, crowding and ergonomic problems.

FIGURE 2.1 : OCCUPATIONAL STRESS SOURCE



Source: Cooper and Marshall (1976)

Figure 2.1 explained the sources of occupational stress that consist of intrinsic to the job, relationship at work, role in organization, organizational structure and climate, career development and organizational interface. All those sources of stress affect the individual which created the symptoms of stress. Besides, Shuttleworth (2004) labelled that stress is a key issue that facing many organizations, even though the increasing awareness towards how it impact on business, many organizations are unsure the best way to find a strategy regarding how to fulfil their duty of care towards their employees.

Durbin (1990) studied that source of stress or stressor can be almost anything that frustrates, aggravates, annoys or put a person in a conflict that can lead to stress. Besides Durbin (1990) mention that source of stress can come from factors within the individual or from the organization such as If the Individuals has low self-confidence, that particular individual experiencing frequent stress like managerial, professionals to work 70 hours per week.

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