

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

BORANG PENGESAHAN TESIS

JUDUL KAJIAN: THE INFLUENCE OF WORK RELATED FACTORS ON JOB STRESS AMONG OFFICERS IN THE SABAH HEADQUARTERS OF THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT OF MALAYSIA

IJAZAH: MASTERS IN HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

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"Nama Sivaya Vaalghe, Naathan Thaal Vaalghe,
Imai Pozhuthum Yennenjil Neengaadhan Thaal Vaalghe".

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to investigate the influence of work related factors on job stress among the immigration officers at the headquarters of the Immigration department of Malaysia in Sabah. The independent variables were job demand, supervisor-subordinates relationship and role ambiguity (work related factor). Personality (type A and type B) were investigated as moderator between work related factors and stress. Data for this study were collected through Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI) questionnaires. A total of 139 officers in the Sabah Immigration headquarters returned the questionnaires within the stipulated time. The result indicated that job demand has positive and significant relationship with stress with standard coefficient beta ($B = 0.188$), while t-value is 2.081 at $p > 0.05$, whereas supervisor-subordinate relationship and role ambiguity shown not positive, further indicating no significant relationship to stress respectively. The result for supervisor-subordinate relationship shown negative standard coefficient beta ($B = -0.213$), while t-value is 1.276 at $p > 0.05$, whereas for role ambiguity, standard coefficient beta ($B = 0.225$) and the t-value is 1.408 at $p > 0.05$. Type A and type B personality have no significant moderating effect between work related factors and stress, but act as stressor in this study. The result supported the Person-Environment theory that officers experiencing job stress towards accommodating higher job demand in the organization. The outcome of this study expected to expand the knowledge on impact and influence of stress factors which utilized as reliable input to formulate approaches to reduce the impact of stress and improve efficiency in the organization.

Keywords: Work related factors, Job stress, Job demand, Supervisor-subordinate relationship, Role ambiguity, Sabah state headquarters of the Immigration Department of Malaysia, and Occupational Stress Indicator.

ABSTRAK

Tajuk: Pengaruh faktor berkaitan kerja terhadap stress kerja di kalangan pegawai imigresen di Ibupejabat Jabatan Imigresen Malaysia negeri Sabah

Kajian ini adalah bertujuan untuk mengkaji sejauh mana faktor berkaitan kerja mempengaruhi stres di kalangan pegawai imigresen yang bertugas di Ibupejabat Jabatan Imigresen Malaysia negeri Sabah di Kota Kinabalu (JIM Sabah). Dalam kajian ini, tuntutan kerja, hubungan penyelia dan pegawai bawahan dan kekaburan peranan dikaji sebagai pembolehubah tidak bersandar bagi mengenalpasti sejauh mana signifikan terhadap kemampuan menyebabkan stres kerja di kalangan pegawai imigresen di jabatan tersebut. Selain itu, personaliti Jenis A dan B dikaji sekiranya menjadi faktor moderator diantara faktor berkaitan kerja dan stres. Sehubungan ini, satu set soal selidik Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI) yang dibangunkan berdasarkan teori Cooper (1978), digunakan untuk menilai impak setiap pembolehubah terhadap stres di kalangan pegawai imigresen dimana sebanyak 139 pegawai imigresen telah menyatakan maklumbalas dalam tempoh yang ditetapkan. Hasil kajian mendapati faktor tuntutan kerja menunjukkan hubungan positif dan signifikan terhadap stress dengan nilai 'standard coefficient beta' menunjukkan ($B=0.188$) dan nilai $t=2.081$, manakala hubungan penyelia dan pegawai bawahan menunjukkan nilai 'standard coefficient beta' ($B=-0.213$ dengan nilai $t=1.276$) dan kekaburan peranan ($B=0.225$, nilai $t=1.408$) dimana keputusan yang diperolehi mendapati kedua-dua faktor tidak menunjukkan hubungan positif dan tidak signifikan terhadap stres. Sementara itu, personaliti jenis A dan B juga didapati bukan faktor moderator disebabkan keputusan kajian tidak menunjukkan hubungan positif dan signifikan diantara faktor berkaitan kerja dan stress di JIM Sabah. Kajian ini dijangka dapat memberi satu gambaran jelas mengenai impak, pengaruh dan hubungan semua faktor yang dikaji terhadap stress di kalangan pegawai imigresen yang bertugas di JIM Sabah. Cadangan penambahbaikan telah diketengahkan menerusi diskusi kajian lampau dan diharap menjadi satu input yang berguna untuk tujuan merangka pendekatan yang efektif terhadap pengurangan stress di kalangan pegawai di Jabatan tersebut.

Kata kunci : Faktor berkaitan kerja, Stres kerja, Tuntutan kerja, Hubungan penyelia dan pegawai bawahan, Kekaburan peranan, Ibupejabat Jabatan Imigresen Malaysia negeri Sabah di Kota Kinabalu, Indikator Stress Pekerjaan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MHCM	-	Master of Human Capital Management
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Science
JIM Sabah	-	Sabah state Headquarters of the Immigration Department of Malaysia
PLS	-	Partial Least Squares
NKRA	-	National Key Result Area
PPPs	-	Public-Private Partnerships
ESSZONE	-	Eastern Sabah Security Zone



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

In rapid economic and social development era towards mission achieving as developed country, parallel to provide the best for the people, there will be engagement of all government agencies into performing the best in aspect of service and productivity as well as enforcement of law and order to the finest. Therefore proportionally, work related stress becomes a cliché among members in working organizations especially those aligned with improved strategic goals with higher target to meet better standard progressively. Officers are more exposed to pressure work scenario as to be susceptible to accommodate demanding job especially enforcement agencies that accountable to regulate law and order and maintain national security. According to Tolman and Rose (1985), stress is defined as "a hypothetical state that is induced by an environmental force such as stressors and is manifested by reactions at various physiological, psychological and social levels. While Harrell (2000) stated that some common physiological effects of exposure to stress are hypertension, change in eating patterns, sleep, lung diseases and substance abuse. Psychological consequences including depression, anxiety, helplessness, frustration, fear and despair (Thompson, 2002). Stress may give many effects mentally to a person such as lowered self-esteem of an individual and life satisfaction.

With prolonged exposure to work related stress and an inability to deal with the stressor or effect of stress, an individual's resources become depleted and begin to experience physical, emotional and psychological strain (Friedman, 2002). Practically, Job stress is one of the phenomenon and subject that become hot topics as it always seen influencing the performance of workers in their workplace

and directly proportional to depletion of service quality as well as organization's productivity (Simmons, Cochran and Blount, 1998). Many researchers have been carried out by the researchers worldwide to investigate the factors or stressors that cause stress in workplace which can be pressure from higher authority, culture of the job, organizational justice, unclear expectation, role strain, role overload or demand and the method to solve those stresses in workplace. This is because it is proven that increased level of stress in workplace will result high number of staff resigning, burnout, affect staff capability and performance, conflict and unhealthy working environment (Anshell, 2000). This indirectly will give a great impact to the organization as it may affect the productivity and instability of the firm.

In parallel, Malaysia is going towards providing best service for people parallel to 1Malaysia aspiration which prioritize "People First, Performance Now". The implementation of National Key Result Area (NKRA) are one of the developmental measure announced by Malaysian Prime Minister to uplift the socio-economy of the country in all aspects of development including national crime prevention which involving all enforcement agencies in Malaysia. Besides that, Secretary General to the Government of Malaysia, Tan Sri Ali bin Hamsa in his exclusive interview with The Business Year in 2016 has stated that one of his major measures to improvise public sector is by introducing concept of humanizing the public service which echoed the aspiration of 1Malaysia through people orientated public service.

This great initiative by Secretary General to the Government of Malaysia in 2012 were reflection of strategic improvement planning which accountable to all the ministries in Malaysia which based on six guided principles as follows:

- i. Openness – service transparency to the public;
- ii. Going down "on the ground"- accountability towards public issues;
- iii. Engagement – public service and people;
- iv. Striking a balance between spiritual and physical aspects;
- v. Camaraderie or a sense of belonging; and

vi. Collaboration and resource-sharing through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and NGO partnerships

Through this concept and implementation of strategic plans, every civil servant is accountable to support the aspiration as to provide best service to the public in every sector. In addition, parallel to achieve the strategic mission to provide best service to people, civil servants are expected to be "equipped" in sense of right human capital enhanced with efficiency in service delivery which targeted to exceed the expectations of people. This measure includes all aspects of public service to progressively improve, thus in angle of reality, this scenario creating a higher work load echoed by higher demand to cope with improving service delivery planning and implementation. According to Sparrow and Pettigrew (1988), in public sectors, the demand for providing better service for people, implementing "value for money" and enhance accountability has high potential of creating additional work pressures in their job sectors accordingly.

Therefore, increasing work pressure that occurring within the organization due to demanding work load will eventually lead to stress which this scenario cannot be denied among officers in public sectors nowadays. According to McHugh and Brennan (1992), organization that missioned to new targets on quality service and accountability and elevating to next level of competition are much potentially exposed to stress. The adverse effect of stress can be seen in different areas which includes psychological/emotional, physical and behavioral (Jex and Beehr, 1991). This includes poor job performance, high level of absenteeism, high number of turnover, discontent among officers, stress related health issues such as coronary heart diseases and high blood pressure. Thus, it is vital to learn more about these issues as these negative consequences of stress may cause in inefficiency to the targeted output. Thus, this created interest of researcher to further research in this area by looking into stress related factors in an organization.

1.2 Background of the Study

Immigration Department of Malaysia is one the crucial government enforcement organization which performing border control operation towards international entry inside Malaysia at authorized exit point by enforcing Immigration Act 1959/63, Immigration Regulations 1963, Passport Act 1966, Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act 2007 (Amendment 2010) as well as issuing passport, travel documents, visa, permit and passes to respected category of people. As more researchers mentioned that, law enforcement agencies are the non-profitable organizations that listed as top five most stressful jobs in the world (Danstzer, 1987), and since the scope of service provided by the immigration officers is wider and involving security of the country, the officers are believed to face major stress issues especially from Sabah where the enforcement were extended due to the international threat across the neighboring country since 2013.

Furthermore, the Immigration enforcement officers in Sabah believed became the victim of pressure as this department involved in all security measures (Toch, 2002), together with other respective authorities (joint operations) in order to maintain peace in the state after facing few hiccups along the boundary of the island especially in eastern part of Sabah which declared as Eastern Sabah Security Zone (ESSZONE). Ever since then, the responsibility of immigration department in Sabah measures many perspectives and its effectiveness to retain the society's assurance and the weightage of the responsibilities fall on the officers' shoulder especially in headquarters to hold the accountability to plan and execute reactive and proactive measures to ensure every gazette border entry should be highly monitored as well as internal enforcement to ensure safety and security in whole Sabah. Managing human capital and resource, planning and executing single and joint operations, regulating all immigrational functions including implementing security policies from time to time with limited resource especially during financial crisis era which imposed with higher demand in providing best service for public, are some of the major responsibilities hold by Sabah state headquarters of the Immigration department of Malaysia that accountable for the whole precious state. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, this department based in Kota Kinabalu

has been chosen as research setting as to measure influencing factors of stress in this specific enforcement sector, as less study is done related on stress faced by immigration officers in the literatures.

Furthermore, the reason to choose this department was echoed by the findings from respective divisions in the department through internal cases, meeting's report and personnel interview indicated that work related stress does really exist in Immigration department of Malaysia, particularly in Sabah. The need to manage the scenario was further supported by research done by Sigler and Tweatt (2003) on stress management for enforcement officers pointed out that majority of literature concerning on enforcement officers stress due to public opinion, justice system, incidents involving brutality, enhancing work demand are most likely the main stressors with which the enforcement authorities must learn to manage effectively as it can cause serious complications if an officer failed to cope with stress. Thus, this study aim to investigate the existence of job stress and the influence of work related factors on the stress among officers in Sabah state headquarters of Immigration Department of Malaysia (JIM Sabah).

According to Cooper and Marshall (1976), based on the model of job stress, they conceptualize five categories of workplace specific sources of stress within an organization which can be applied to variety level of employees. The first category, stressors that are intrinsic to the job, describes factors that increase the difficulty and complexity of the duties and heavy demand and workload that workers must perform. The second category is role within the organization and is used to reflect role ambiguity and role conflict. Role ambiguity can be defined as unclear duties and expectations for the employees while role conflict occurs when conflicting demands placed on the employee.

The third category as stated by Cooper and Marshall (1976), is career development in work specific stressor which used to encompass the factors affecting employee future such as promotion, job security and ambition. The fourth category will be relationship at work that describe on interaction between employee and their subordinates, co-workers and supervisors. And the final category is on the organization structure and climate that is used to describe how

the structure of the organization affects the employee. Few examples on this category will be employee's degree of decision latitude, organizational politics and communications between the organization and staff.

In this study, Type A and Type B personality among the immigration officers were taken as moderator in this study. According to Friedman's (1996) book on Type A Behavior: Its Diagnosis and Treatment, it can be defined that Type A personality appear very workaholics, ambitious, organized, highly status conscious, sensitive, impatient, anxious, proactive and punctual. He also wrote that three major dangerous symptoms of Type A behavior in which including free floating hostility, time urgency and impatience and final a competitive drive that causes stress and achievement driven mentality. Type B personality is contrast to type B as they work steadily, enjoy achievement and their activity rather than winning or losing. Theoretically, Type B personality individuals are less likely affected by stress. Therefore, parallel in measuring the existence of work related stress and investigating the stressor's influence among the officers, the findings is very much vital in managing the stress effectively to avoid negative consequences fall on name of the organization as well as reflection of reputation as government agency. Basically, in this study, researcher tested if personality did perform moderating effect between work related factors and stress.

1.3 Problem Statement

The interest for this study arose when there were observed negative consequences occur in Sabah state headquarters of Immigration Department of Malaysia (JIM Sabah) prior to indication of cases of absenteeism from work without reporting, less committed to task given, aggressiveness towards public and colleagues, working only when supervisor is supervising and health deterioration. According to Chiun Lo, Thurasamy and Tak Liew (2014), these are the stress strain that will be observed if the workers are experiencing job stress. Furthermore, data obtained from respective divisions in the department through internal cases, Human Resource meetings and personnel interview in related units in Sabah headquarters, merely indicating that stress issues really exist in the department which can't be taken easily and has to be managed carefully to avoid negative consequences. This

scenario has given the researcher to study further on impact of stressors on this organization as this issue may affect on their performance as well turnover statistics (Benkhoff, 1997).

According to Kiely and Peek (2002), the law enforcement agencies practically exposed to work environment which is more hazardous (i.e. often life threatening) and more stressful than most other professions. In this case, Immigration Department of Malaysia are standing on mentioned platform as this agency plays a vital role in regulating and enforcing law with high efficiency to maintain country's peace and harmony environment. According to Finn and Tomz (1998), working in a job that required dealing with other people's problem especially in medical and enforcement profession, the officers may suffer higher stress level compared to all other professions. Furthermore, by research, Simmons *et al.* (1998) found out that effect of job related stress on officers has indicated the cause of feeling of burnout especially emotional disruption which eventually causing to decrease of efficiency of productivity, increased cases of absenteeism, inclination to quit and turnover. Some common physiological effects of exposure to stress are hypertension, changes in eating patterns, sleep, lung diseases and substance abuse (Harrell, 2000).

In this case, JIM Sabah being a mandatory member as demand of the job in aspect of regulating law and order and providing best service for the public are critically putting the members of the organization into potential exposure of high level of stress. According to Eric, Hogan and Allen (2006), workers that exposed to demanding job and pressure in work every day may suffer in stress. Research have shown that law enforcement professions are practically stressful occupation that caused by internal factors within the organizations such as role conflict, role ambiguity, the relationship and support from supervisor, lack of teamwork and bonding, and less opportunity for promotion and carrier advancement (Anderson *et al.*, 2002; Gaines and Jermier, 1983; Toch, 2002).

In this case, good conducts of study needed to identify the potential causes of stress and the influence in the department so that the finding can be utilized for the betterment of the organization. Therefore, this research mainly to observe on

the influence of work related factors on job stress among officers in Sabah state headquarters of Immigration Department of Malaysia (JIM Sabah). Three main work related factors are taken into measurement within the department such as job demand, supervisor-subordinates relationship and role ambiguity in this study. The work related factors that tested in this study are valid as these factors were previously identified and demonstrated in Cooper and Marshall's job stress model.

Research on this topic is important as to enhance the officers work performance and productivity in department and at the same time all of the staffs in the department are practically protected and has equal opportunity to perform. Thus, the research problems were identified as per below:

- i) To which extend work related factors affect stress among officers in Immigration Department, Sabah Headquarters; and
- ii) To which extend Type A/B personality between job related factors and stress among officers and senior officers;

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, few questions were identified in order to achieve the aim of the investigation of this topic such as:-

- a) Which of the work related factors that influence job stress the most to the among officers in Sabah state Headquarters of Immigration Department of Malaysia in Kota Kinabalu; and
- b) What are the moderating effect of Type A/B personality on job related factors and stress among Immigration officers in Sabah state Headquarters of Immigration Department of Malaysia Headquarters in Kota Kinabalu.

1.5 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study was to determine the influences of work related factors on job stress in the department which is crucial for the performance of the officers. This research was conducted among immigration officers from JIM Sabah office.

The details of each of the objectives are:

- a) To examine the influence of work related factors towards causing stress among officers in Sabah state headquarters of the Immigration Department of Malaysia in Kota Kinabalu; and
- b) To investigate the moderating effect of Type A/B personality on job related factors and stress among officers and senior officers in Sabah state headquarters of the Immigration Department of Malaysia in Kota Kinabalu.

1.6 Research Scope

The scope of this study was among the officers in Sabah state headquarters of Immigration Department of Malaysia based in Kota Kinabalu. This study conducted to examine the impact of the work related factors such as job demand, supervisor subordinate relationship and role ambiguity which were classified as independent variables towards the job stress (dependant variable). Job stress once perceived that only occur to higher ranking officers but currently it is acknowledged that stress can occur in all level of ranking in any department (Williams, 2003). Thus, the evaluation focused more on the influence of each of the factors, generally on all Immigration officers who are experiencing stress without classifying ranking in Sabah headquarters as respondent for this study. The data collected within the department through internal reports and meetings minute showed that stress did exist in all level of officers in the department. Therefore, all level of Immigration officers are taken as target group for this study in order to participate in questionnaires which primarily measured by using Cronbach Alpha and Composite reliability to test internal consistency reliability measure.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study has been a great platform to the higher authority of the Immigration department to understand the depth of knowledge about stress that faced by the immigration officers. According to their current pro-active planning, the department is expected to design a complete strategy to enhance the productivity of the officers parallel to accommodating the demanding job and serving best for the public. According to Harrell (2000), productivity of an organization is inversely proportional to stress, therefore the output of this study is ultimately important to determine approaches in reducing work related stress among officers which will potentially contribute for the betterment of the organization. Practically, good management strategy is to care of the welfare and well-being of the officer because of the awareness that management, workers and productivity are interdependent.

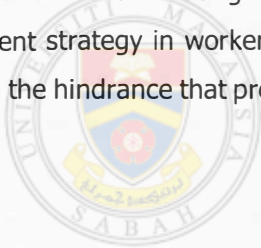
The output of this study also facilitated enhancement of knowledge on factors that impacting stress among officers as well as personality that expected to moderate the relationship between work related factors and stress in the department. It is expected this research can be taken as a good guidance and key by other similar enforcement operation organizations including the current government departments, students under government scholarship and statutory bodies. Furthermore, this research also will be helpful to the administration of the enforcement department to identify the working effect pattern of the officers to evaluate on the stress level due to job demand, relationship between staff and superior and job ambiguity.

Strategies can be formulated as approaches to reduce the cause and effect of the job stress towards the worker at the early stage and to prepare the officers before hand to manage their duties by implementing ideal changes or by executing other alternatives to fulfill their job responsibilities. Other than that, the research also expected to clarify expert about the role and the responsibilities of the officers to meet the expectation in order to upgrade their knowledge and the efficiency level towards their job scope which is in parallel with the Immigration Department

of Malaysia's vision "A World Class Immigration Services Management Towards 2020".

1.8 Summary

The outcome of the study can aid to evaluate the influences of determined factors towards level of stress faced by the officers which appeared as reflection of their effectiveness on their duty. At the same time, it also helps to improve the service of government servant as well as designing innovative strategies to motivate the target group to enhance their potential to higher level. Furthermore, the investigation also determined the factor that affect the staff's productivity in perspective of job stress and act as an input towards further study in this field. A stable officer potentially perform good work in all terms especially towards effective enforcement, thus this will indirectly give a great impact to the public in order to safeguard their security feeling in the state. The output of this has opened a wide view in formulating great strategies especially in integrating stress management strategy in workers' task and a new platform for more evaluation to determine the hindrance that prevent the officers to accomplish their job from time to time.



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