

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HABITUAL  
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, WORKLOAD AND  
GRATITUDE TOWARDS JOB SATISFACTION  
AMONG YOUNG LECTURERS IN UMS AND  
SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AS MODERATOR**



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**UMS**  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

**FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH**

**2019**

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AMONG YOUNG LECTURERS IN UMS AND  
SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AS A MODERATOR**

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**UMS**

**THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT WITH THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
PSYCHOLOGY**

**FACULTY OF FACULTY OF  
PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH  
2019**

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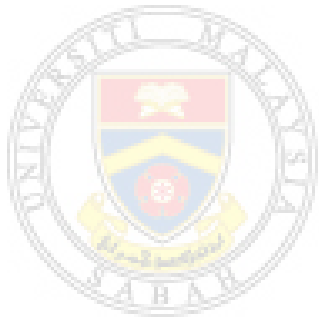
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## CERTIFICATION

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GRATITUDE TOWARDS JOB SATISFACTION  
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SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AS MODERATOR**  
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Assoc. Prof. DR. BALAN RATHAKRISHNAN

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## ABSTRACT

Jobs are one of the most essential requirements for humans in the 21st century. Without jobs or careers, individuals will not be able to fulfil their basic needs. Hence, by being employed, individuals have the income to purchase the necessities that they require to sustain their lives. Furthermore, jobs play a huge role in a person's life; a substantial portion of one's time is also being spent at his or her workplace. Thus, it is very crucial for employees that the satisfaction they experience at their workplaces is at its maximum in order for them to have a satisfied life. The same situation is applied to the educators among Malaysian higher education institutions. The educational sector is regarded as the backbone of a country since good leaders are born through the learning processes and learning curves that they encounter in their schooling lives. Hence, it is very important for the educators to experience high job satisfaction in order to produce quality and excellent students which will help in the upgrowth of the nation. The purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between habitual physical activity, workload and gratitude towards the job satisfaction that is being experienced by the lecturers of Universiti Malaysia Sabah. Spiritual leadership is used as a moderator between workload and job satisfaction. The survey design was adopted using validated instruments including Baecke Questionnaire for Measurement of a Person's Habitual Physical Activity (Beacke et al., 1982), Quantitative Workload Inventory (Spector and Jex 1998), The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (McCullough, Emmons and Tsang 2001), Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994) and Spiritual Leadership theory questionnaire (Fry, 2003). Thus, the result indicates that all the variables that are listed above do have a significant relationship with the job satisfaction that is being experienced by the lecturers. Besides, spiritual leadership does have a partial moderation effect as a moderator between workload and job satisfaction.

## **ABSTRAK**

### **HUBUNGAN ANTARA AKTIVITI FIZIKAL LAZIM, BEBAN KERJA AND KESYUKURAN TERHADAP KEPUASAN KERJA DI DALAM KALANGAN PENSYARAH MUDA DI UMS DAN KEPIMPINAN ROHANI SEBAGAI PENYEDERHANA**

*Peluang pekerjaan telah menjadi salah satu keperluan asas semua manusia dalam abad ke-21 ini. Tanpa pekerjaan atau kerjaya, seseorang individu itu tidak akan dapat menyempurnakan keperluan asas mereka dalam kehidupan seharian mereka. Maka, dengan memiliki pekerjaan, individu, masing-masing akan mempunyai sejumlah wang untuk membeli barangan keperluan demi meneruskan hidup mereka. Sejak pekerjaan memainkan peranan besar dalam hidup seseorang individu, sebahagian besar masa mereka akan diguna pakai untuk menyiapkan tugas mereka. Maka, ianya adalah amat penting untuk mereka memiliki kepuasan yang optimum dalam pekerjaan mereka supaya mereka dapat menikmati kepuasan yang lebih baik dalam kehidupan mereka. Situasi ini serupa dengan situasi yang dialami oleh institusi-institusi pelajaran tinggi. Sektor pendidikan dianggap sebagai tulang belakang negara kerana pemimpin yang baik dilahirkan melalui proses pembelajaran yang mereka lalui dalam kehidupan persekolahan mereka. Maka, ianya adalah amat penting untuk pengajar mengalami kepuasan kerja yang optimum supaya mampu mereka untuk melahirkan para pelajar yang berkualiti dan cemerlang demi pertumbuhan negara. Tujuan kajian ini juga adalah untuk mengenal pasti hubungan antara aktiviti fizikal lazim, beban kerja dan kesyukuran ke arah kepuasan kerja yang dialami oleh para pensyarah di Universiti Malaysia Sabah. Kepimpinan spiritual digunakan sebagai penyederhana di antara beban kerja dan kepuasan kerja. Reka bentuk kaji selidik yang digunapakai dalam usaha untuk mengesahkan instrumen ialah Baecke Questionnaire for Measurement Habitual Physical Activity Person (Dil Beacke., 1982), Quantitative Workload Inventory (Spector and Jex 1998), The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (McCullough, Emmons and Tsang 2001), Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994) dan soal selidik Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003). Maka, keputusan menunjukkan bahawa semua pembolehubah yang disenaraikan di atas mempunyai satu hubungan penting dengan kepuasan kerja yang dialami oleh pensyarah yang terlibat. Selain itu, kepimpinan spiritual mempunyai kesan kesederhanaan tahap separa moderator antara beban kerja dan kepuasan kerja.*

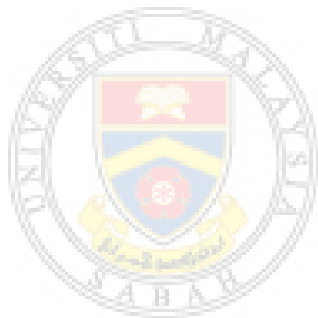


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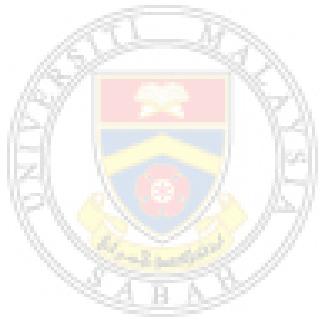
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Job or work has become the essential need of every human in the modern society. The work that an individual does for a living has become the label of whom or what the individual is about. Society rates and grades a person according to their occupation. A big part of an average individual's life is being spent on their work. Henceforth, the job satisfaction that is being experienced by an individual will affect the job performance and also the growth of their organization. This scenario also includes the individuals who work in the education sector. Since educational sector is one of the growing sectors in the country which consists of thousands of employees working in it which needs to be taken consideration.

Educational sector is always regarded as the backbone for a nation to develop at its full potential. The key of success that determines the educational sectors works at its best always depends on the educators who work in it. The educators could only perform at their best when they have a high level of job satisfaction towards their work.

In order for the learning process to be a pure success there are several criteria's which will play its role such as involvement, effort, and the educators (teachers, lecturers) professionalism. The educators or the academic staff's job

satisfaction, commitment and their control towards their job are very important for the success of any learning institution whether it's a kindergarten or a university. A positive vibe and a healthy condition that dwells around the learning institution interpret into inflated tutorial employees' job satisfaction. The healthy condition of the learning institution which is being experienced by the educational employees would not only increase the task that have been carried out by them but also improve the training setting and increase the productivity of the university. Additionally, it becomes significant to job satisfaction as a result of normal commendations and beliefs, plus a positive setting, carry with them energy for achievement.

The study about job satisfaction among workers in organizations have been a subject that is closely followed by the researchers since the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century after Maslow revealed his hierarchy of needs theory in 1943 (Rast & Tourasni, 2012). Job satisfaction can be defined in numerous ways. According to Locke (1976) who was a pioneer in job satisfaction studies defined job satisfaction as an individual who interprets a pleasurable or positive emotional situation which will be resulting in act of accessing an individual's job or the experiences gained by the individual.

Job satisfaction is a condition of the mind which decides by the extent in which the employee come to realise his or her job connection is being met (Evans, 1997). Job satisfaction also can be explained as emotional enjoyment that one experiences as a result of assessing ones' job as the achievement the person's values (Abu Saad & Hendrix, 1995). Job satisfaction is a process of development of the employees' attitude towards their job and the job condition that is being experienced by them (Luthans, 1994). Job satisfaction represents expressions of employees' attitudes variables (Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent rewards, Operating conditions, Co-workers, Nature of work and Communication) that are calculated. However, some feels concerned on the task that they do in their job, as well as totally different sides of their duty (Spector, 1997).



A case done in Malaysia by Abu Bakar (1985) on academic staff reported that academic staffs tend to experience lower job satisfaction towards their job aspects: achievement interpersonal relations, recognition, responsibility, the work itself, working conditions, advancement, job security, status, job and personal life. A study done by Hall, Pearson, and Carroll (1992) on Teachers' long-range teaching plans: A discriminant analysis, reported that they have found out the teaching workforce (lecturers) who decide to resign their profession earlier can be identified from those who decide to continue their profession by their work-related attitudes, perceptions, and reactions.

A study done by Ladson and Billings (1994) on the dream keepers: Successful teachers of African-American children reported that lecturers place vital role on the relationship between lecturers and with their fellow students. A study done on Factors Related to Teacher Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction by Heller, Rex Celine (1992) reported that the quality of job satisfaction experienced by the education workforce can be recorded by the success that have been achieved by their students.

## 1.2 Study Background

Studies on investigating job satisfaction among lecturers in universities around Malaysia have been a hot topic. In this study many factors have been mentioned to play roles in determining the job satisfaction that is being achieved by the lecturers.

According to Noordin and Jusoff (2009) a study done on levels of job satisfaction amongst Malaysian academic staffs found out that the job expectations that are being experienced by the academic staffs have been changed as the years passed by. This situation has led to an alarming merging of few factors such as elevation on job related stress, drastic decrease in both morale and job satisfaction experience by this academic staff. They reported that the satisfaction that is being experienced by the lecturers are in an alarming rate and they further suggest that appropriate action should be taken in order to curb this scenario.

In a study that is done to find the level of stress and job satisfaction among the lecturers in UTM reports that there are four factors that contributes to job satisfaction that is being achieved by the lecturers which are workload, interpersonal relationship, work environment and rules at workplace. They reported that the factor that contributed the most in job satisfaction of the lecturers is interpersonal relationship and the least contribution factor is given by the rules at workplace. They suggested that the management should take look in the factors that contribute towards job satisfaction of the lecturers and make a fundamental change in it. This will eventually help to boast the job satisfactions that are being experienced by the lecturers. (Jantan, & Mohd Konsin, 2009).

A study done on job dissatisfaction among lecturers in school of medical sciences in Universiti Sains Malaysia and faculty of medicine Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia by Huda, Rusli, Naing, Tengku, Winn, and Rampal (2004) found that there are no particular differences in the common job satisfaction achieved by both university lecturers which is 42.6% for USM and 42.9% for UKM.

Through the studies that have been done in the past it is clear that there are multiple reasons which affect the job satisfaction that is being achieved by the lecturers. It is also clear there are variations of job satisfaction that is being achieved by the lecturers where in some cases the lecturers achieve better job satisfaction and in other scenario the opposites happen. Thus, this study will fill in the gap on what is the job satisfaction level that is being achieved in Universiti Malaysia Sabah.



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### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Job satisfaction among academic staffs or to be specific lecturers is one of the key issues in the education sector and this is considered a topic that is very catchy to discuss about (Nor, & Hassan, 2014). There are a substantial number of study that have been done in past 80 years based on industrial and organization setting with job satisfaction (Platsidou, & Diamantopoulou, 2009). Job satisfaction has been studied multiple times in both primary and secondary schools education setting over and over. However, the informations that are being acquired by observations and experiments regarding job satisfaction in higher education professionals still lacks in the international literature throughout the world (Oshagbemi, 2003).

Platsidou and Diamantopoulou, (2009) have mentioned that most of the research that have been done on job satisfaction among studies are mainly focused on organizational business and industrial based workers. Evidences have clearly showed that job satisfaction of academic members in higher education settings of the developing countries is seriously lacking and has a gap which needs to be filled (Garrett, 1999; Hean, & Garrett, 2001; Ssesanga, & Garrett, 2005; Eyupoglu, & Saner, 2009). Santhaparaj & Syed (2005) who did a study on Job satisfaction among academic staffs in Private Universities in Malaysia mentioned that although there are many job satisfaction studies out there which have been done by other researches' but only few job satisfaction studies which focus the academicians have been done and most of the studies were reported before 1981. They also added that although there are studies on job satisfaction among academicians but most of it is focused on United States of America and United Kingdom, and the study of job satisfaction among academicians in Malaysia is still dearth (Santhaparaj & Syed, 2005).

Henceforth, the lack of study of job satisfaction among higher education professionals will be used as the gap and this research will be used to fill in this particular gap. Although there are studies exist in the field of job satisfaction but job satisfaction is a continuing topic for research purpose since the factors that affect it varies every time under different settings (Duong, 2014). There are many reasons that associated on the affecting factors of academic staffs job satisfaction in higher

education institutes which are pay, work environment, promotion opportunities, job security, management system, supervision, head of department behaviour (Al Hinai, & Bairacharya, 2014), demographic variable (Telman, & Unsal, 2004; Meller *et al.*, 2009) habitual physical activity (Kelly M.F, 2011), workload (Chughati, & Perveen, 2013), gratitude (Waters, 2012) and spirituality (Malik & Naeem, 2011).

One of the variables that contribute to job satisfaction is habitual physical activity. There are several researches have been carried out on habitual physical activity which indicates that the employees who maintain regular habitual physical activity practice and maintain the same level of fitness throughout the years have obtain a significant benefit by this particular practice (Norvell, & Belles, 1993: Wolfe, & Parker, 1994: Wattles, & Harris,2003).

Some of the benefits that were mentioned were a well-maintained level of blood pressure and an increased in the energy that is being felt by these individuals. However, another research done by Parfit, Rose, and Burgess (2006) in the psychological and physiological responses of sedentary individuals who prescribe and prefer habitual physical activity found out that about 60% of people who took up habitual physical activity program tend to stop in six months due to multiple reasons such as a busy lifestyle, family commitments and lack of time. There are some individual would think that they only need habitual physical activity one day in order to achieve its benefits. This is a misconception that is lurking among people. The key of maintaining a good physical fitness is by the individual maintaining a regular habitual physical activity routine in their everyday life.

According to Moore, 2010 many managers tend to support that healthy worker who is physically fit will create an environment for a healthy workplace which will not consists of absenteeism. A study conducted by Beacke, Burena and Frijters (1982) on 306 participants shows that there is a positive relationship between the lean body mass of the participants and the physical activities that they do daily in

their workplace. Besides, they also reported that such programs have positively influenced the workers in both physiological and the psychological variables. If a participant has benefited from the regular habitual physical activity practice they tend to stick to it and follow it in order to prolong the benefit that they have achieved (Wolfe & Parker, 1994).

Many employees tend to avoid themselves from participating in such habitual physical activity programs because they often miscalculate the level of fitness for an individual to be regarded as physically fit and the remaining of them are just too shy of the way their body looks (Dreyfuss,1996).

Even though there are clear benefits on employees who practice habitual physical activity regularly, there are also debate saying that habitual physical activity has an influence on employees' variable such as absenteeism and job satisfaction (Moore, 2010). Habitual physical activity on organizational setting has caught the eyes of many researches throughout the decade and these researches have shown a positive effect on job satisfaction that is being experience by the employees (Gebhardt, & Crump, 1990; Norvell, & Belles, 1993; Bellarosa, & Chen, 1997). However, there are studies done by other researches showing a non-significant result when comes to these variables (Kirkcaldy, & Cooper, 1993; Degroot, & Kiker, 2003). A study done by Wattles and Harris (2003) on comparison of the fitness level of employees and job satisfaction, and this could be a major reason why some past studies have proven to be insignificant or inconclusive. Therefore, this study will be used to fill in the gap to identify the relationship between habitual physical activity and job satisfaction in the setting of Universiti Malaysia Sabah lecturers.

The variable that is being used in the study by the researcher is workload. According to Spector (1997) workload can be defined as the demand of work that is given to employees be completed. When an employee is given a large pile of work to be completed on a given time frame both the employee and the organization tend to

be stressed out due to this situation (Mustapha, & Ghee, 2013). The workload that is being experienced by the academicians consists of many factors such as teaching hours, the involvement of committee that the academicians take part in, research time, community service, marking of students' assignment and exam and preparing the syllabus (Glazer, & Henry, 1994 & Porter, & Umbach, 2000). Workload can be defined as the amount of work that is given by the employer to the employee to be completed in a certain amount of time. However, the workload becomes a burden when the workload given is vast and the time frame that is given to be completed is short.

A study done among lecturers in UiTM Sarawak branch by Chin and Yen (2003) found out that the lecturers experience a total of 43 to 46 hours of workload every week on their working hours. Furthermore, the study also identified that about 47% of lecturers who took part in this study were getting themselves involved in research and publication.

When an employee tends to experience a high level of job demand, this particular situation will cause the employee to have a low job satisfaction, higher amount of stress and burnout which will eventually lead to retention (Mustapha, & Ghee, 2013). There are two ways to study workload that is experienced by the workforce. One of them is by using qualitative workload.

Qualitative workload is defined as the job task which the employee finds hard to complete either by physically or mentally (Spector, 1997). Among other facets of qualitative workload, the most common facet that affects the teaching workforce in higher institutions is time pressure. When the employees are exposed to work under an immense time pressure, this situation leads to the experience of burnout (Schmoldt *et al.*, 1994) which eventually leads to a higher level of stress and a lower level of job satisfaction (Visser, Smets, Oort, & de Haes, 2003).

According to Spector (1997) the second type of workload is quantitative workload. Quantitative workload is type of workload where the amount of work is being accomplished by the particular employee is taken in consideration. A study conducted by Lemkau, Rafferty, and Gorodn (1994) found out that the higher number of patients who got admitted in the hospital are related with the amounts of hours that they are spending working per week has a strong relationship with the emotional exhaustion that is being experienced by them. They also added that this is a clear sign of burnout among the employees. In another study by Ramsbottom-Luicer and Rich (1994) found that there is a strong relationship between employees' satisfaction with their workload. They also added the excessive workload that is being experienced by the employees are highly associated with the retention of young rural medical care academicians. In a similar manner Manious (2001) added that there is a strong bond between the level of job satisfaction experienced by the workforce with the workload and their intention to quit the job.

A study conducted among the academic staff of New Zealand University on workloads and job satisfaction found out that the staff there is moderately satisfied because they have their freedom to manage their workload by choosing their own working method. The level of responsibility that they undergo and the amount of variation on their jobs are different from one employee to another. (Don Houston, Luanna, & Shelley Paewai, 2006).

However, there are studies showing a non-significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction. Shahzad, Mumtaz, Hayat, and Khan, (2010) conducted study on the mediating effects of job satisfaction on the relationship of compensation and workload with academic quality among Pakistani academicians as the subject reported that there is a positive finding on the faculty compensation and a negative finding when comes to the workload and satisfaction that's is being experience by the academicians. There is a study conducted in Malaysian setting in University Technology MARA (UiTM), Kelantan by Zainuddin et al. (2010) reported that there is a non-significant result has obtained between the workload and job satisfaction that