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**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE JOB
DISSATISFACTION AND MENTAL HEALTH
AMONG ACADEMICIANS AND
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: CASE OF
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH**

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FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
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**PERPUSTAKAAN
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH**

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UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

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JUDUL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCES JOB
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AMONG ACADEMICIANS AND ADMINISTRATIVE
STAFF: CASE OF UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

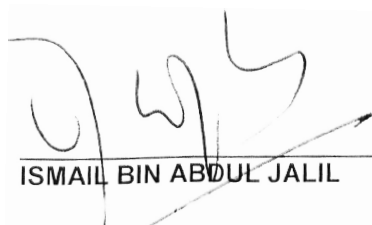
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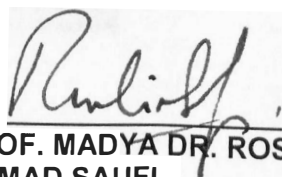


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DECLARATION

The materials in this thesis are original except for quotations, excerpts, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

Attempts to identify some important variables that contribute to job dissatisfaction and mental health among academic and administrative staff to estimate their direct and indirect effects on various outcome measures (such as mental health, job satisfaction and Sources of Stress). Based on previous research, proposes and tests a model to the academicians and administrative staffs. This study was done by using the Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI) investigated occupational stress in Universiti Malaysia Sabah. The questionnaire was administered to 87 staff of the University. The results showed the reliabilities and predictive validity of the OSI subscales were reasonably high in the samples. Through the test, relationships between job dissatisfaction and sources of stress provided did support findings obtained in Western countries. Moreover, the direct impacts of sources of stress also corroborated previous studies in Western societies. Result form the study also revealed that mental health was not fit with others sources of stress.



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ABSTRAK

FAKTOR YANG MEMPENGARUHI KEPUASAN PEKERJAAN DAN KESIHATAN MENTAL DIKALANGAN AKADEMIK DAN PEGAWAI TADBIR: KES UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

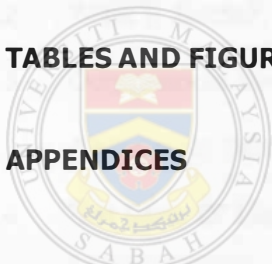
Tujuan kertas ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti pengaruh agen tekanan daripada kerja bukan dari ganjaran terhadap stres yang di hadapi oleh para akademik dan pegawai tadbir di Universiti Malaysia Sabah. Berdasarkan model yang telah di sediakan telah diuji kepada para akademik dan pegawai tadbir. Kajian ini menggunakan alat "Occupational Stress Indicator" (OSI) bagi tujuan penyelidikan faktor yang mempengaruhi stres di kalangan kakitangan di Universiti Malaysia Sabah. Soal selidik telah diterima daripada 87 orang kakitangan di Universiti. Hasil dari Ujian reliabiliti daripada OSI subskala adalah tinggi dari smpal. Dari Kajian yang telah dijalankan diantara kepuasan pekerjaan , kesihatan mental dengan sumber stress menyokong kajian yang telah di laksanakan oleh pengkaji barat. Lebihan lagi tiada kesan terus dari sumber stress dari kajian. Dari kajian ini mendapati kesihatan mental dengan sumber stres tidak disokong oleh keputusan kajian.



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Stress in the workplace is a growing problem, with extensive costs to individuals, organizations and society. A national survey conducted in the USA indicated that the proportion of workers who reported feeling highly stressed had more than doubled between 1985 and 1990 (Spielberger & Reheiser, 1994).

Over the past two decades, research from across the globe indicates that the phenomenon of Occupational stress in universities is widespread and increasing. In his review of the literature, Seldin (1987) states that the academic environment in the United States during the 1980's imposed surprisingly high levels of job stress on academics, and that the level of stress will continue to increase in future decades. Similarly, The United Kingdom Association of University Teachers study (AUT, 1990) found that 49% of university employees reported that their jobs were stressful and 77% reported an increase in occupational stress over recent years.

Closer to home, in a study on faculty stress in seven New Zealand universities, Boyd and Wylie (1994) report that half of the academics in their sample "often or almost always" found their work stressful, and 80% believed their workload had increased and become more stressful in recent years. In addition, 46% expected further increases in workload in the future. In the early 1990s, the Carnegie

Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching sponsored an international survey of the academic profession in which 14 countries participated (Australia, Brazil, Chile, England, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Korea, Mexico, The Netherlands, Russia, Sweden, United States). The data were collected from 1991-1993 (Altbach, 1996).

According to Altbach (1996) for a number of years, the professoriate has been undergoing change and has been under strain almost everywhere. Fiscal problems for higher education are now evident in all of these fourteen countries. In most of the nations, the somewhat unprecedented phenomenon of increasing enrolments has been allowed to supersede allocated resources, at the same time, professors in a number of countries are being asked to be more entrepreneurial – for example, in bringing research grants and contracts to their institutions.

A major source of dissatisfaction was institutional leadership. Altbach mentioned that an unusually large number express dissatisfaction with and doubts about the quality of the leadership provided by top-level administrators at their colleges and universities. In Britain, a national survey conducted by the Policy Studies Institute (1993) noted that almost one-third of respondents reported significant levels of stress as a result of their work, and more than half felt that their levels of stress had increased over the last five years.

The financial costs of occupational stress to business and industry are well documented. It has been estimated by the Health and Safety Executive that at least half of all absences from work are, in some manner, stress related (Cooper & Cartwright, 1994). A recent report published by the Institute of Management (1996) estimated that 270,000 people in Britain take time off work every day because of

work-related stress; this represents a cumulative cost in terms of sick pay, lost production and NHS charges of around £7 billion annually.

1.2 Research Problem

To some degree, stress is an unavoidable characteristic of life and work and, as such, is neither inherently bad nor necessarily destructive. There is, however, a clear difference between being 'under pressure' at work and being subjected to the kind of chronic stress that is potentially damaging to physical and psychological well being. Workplace stress can have a wide-ranging and negative impact on the well being of the individual and his or her day-to-day functioning. This is observable at a physical level (e.g. exhaustion, headaches, high blood pressure), a psychological level (e.g. depression, anxiety, low self-esteem), a cognitive level (e.g. absent-mindedness, failure of attention and memory), and a behavioral level (e.g. absenteeism, substance abuse, aggressive behavior). Occupational stress is now considered to be amongst the top five work-related health problems in the USA (Blix, Cruise, Mitchell & Blix, 1994). In the UK, a recent survey of workplace health and safety representatives by the Trades Union Congress (TUC, 1996) has named overwork and stress the primary workplace hazard.

1.3 Research Objective

The main objective of this research is to know the main sources of stress and the degree of job satisfaction and mental ill health among academician and administrative staff of the Universiti Malaysia Sabah. The specific objectives are as follows: -

- To identify the perceived sources of stress and consequence stress levels within the profession;
- To explore the possible presence of differences in stress levels and well-being base on the demography variables.
- To assess the impact of occupational stress on a range of work-related issues;
- To provide university staff working in the university with an opportunity to express their views on a number of issues relating to personal experiences of job-related stress.

1.4 Scope Of The Study

This study investigates the perceived pressure from work, and non-work .The study was conducted among employees of Universiti Malaysia Sabah. The sample will be chosen from the academician and administrative staffs of the university. The study will be done on five independent variables (Intrinsic to job, Career development, relation ship at job, organisational structure and climate and role of organisation). The dependent variables was Job satisfaction and mental health problem.

1.5 Significance Of The Study

According to Amat, Fontaine and Chong (2003), research on stress in Malaysian working environment limited and understanding the factors that contribute to occupational stress is necessary for improving stress management programs in Malaysia organisations. Such knowledge is important for both research and practical purposes. Human resource professional wishing to implement stress management

program need understand the source of stress and stress measure. It is hope the study will give a clear understanding whether the source of stress in the university can be identified and made known so that action can be taken and realize.

1.6 Organization Of The Study

This dissertation contains six chapters. Chapter 1 presented and overview of the study, the subject matter, the objectives of the study, and the scope of the study and the significance of the study. Chapter 2 highlighted the Universiti Malaysia Sabah, the role of the academician and the administrative groups. Chapter 3 mainly discussed about the literature review where conclusions and results from others researchers and studies were drawn and used to support the study. Beside that, definitions of the variables are carefully explained. Chapter 4 depicted the research framework and methodology of this study. Chapter 5 results of the study and Chapter 6 discussion and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH BACKGROUND

2.1. History of Establishment of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) was established on 24th November 1994. His Royal Highness the Pertuan Agung proclaimed the establishment of UMS under Section 6(1) of the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971.

This ninth university in Malaysia expanded rapidly since the early days of its inception. The management office started activities at the Ministry of Education, Kuala Lumpur later on shifted to Kota Kinabalu. Teaching and research commenced in 1995 in rented buildings. The physical development of permanent campus on 999-acre piece of land began in earnest in August 1995. The university's occupation of the permanent campus started in 1999 and completed in 2000. In the meantime, the government also granted approval to UMS to set up a branch campus in the Federal Territory of Labuan.

The physical development of the permanent campus on 999 acres pieces of land began in earnest in August 1995. The University's occupation of the permanent campus started in 1999 and completed by the year 2000. The government also granted approval to UMS to set up a branch in the Federal Territory of Labuan. This campus houses two schools, viz., The School of International Business and Finance, and The School of Informatic Sciences.

Years that followed the acquisition of building facilities for teaching and the research witnessed the emergence of an increasing number of schools, centres and units. Currently, there are 12 schools, 3 institutes, 2 centre and 2 units in the academic structure of the University.

2.2 Mission & Vision Statement Of The University

The Mission of Universiti Malaysia Sabah is;

"Universiti Malaysia Sabah strives to achieve academic excellence in various fields by gaining international recognition through learning and teaching, research and publication, social services and a balance specialisation of knowledge and personality development of student resulting in high productivity and quality in the context of the society and the nation".

The vision of UMS: -

"Universiti Malaysia Sabah strives to be an innovative University of global standing".

2.3 Role of Administrative Officers In The University

The administrative staffs are those graduates' staffs that are employed to work in the registry of the university. They are senior non-teaching staff and therefore perform non-academic tasks in the university. Their functions in the university are principally managerial. Administrative staffs are also referred to as "administrators" or "managers" in the university.

Managers make thousands of decisions throughout their careers (Stahl, 1995). Administrative staff, in their role as managers, makes a series of decisions in order to ensure that the day-to-day activities of the university are successfully carried out. Information is a vital resource to aid decisions making (Yadav, 1998). Nzota (1993) indicates that it is an essential factor in decisions making as appropriate information is required to guide a person to make a sound decision on any subject, at any level and in any circumstance. Hence administrative staffs require information to make official decisions on a daily basis.

Information is regarded as the life-blood of an organisation and it is the data that managers use to interpret and understand events in the organisation, as well as the operating environment (Daft, 1991). To keep the university running smoothly, administrative staffs are expected to have access to information, which would guide them to interpret and understand events, and therefore make realistic decisions on matters relating to the different areas of the university community.

There are different sources of information which administrative staff can consult to enable them make decisions with ease. Carysforth (1994) identifies four main administrative sources of information. These include:

- (1) Official paper-based information sources such as books, newspapers, journals, company documentation, brochures, leaflets and the company files;
- (2) Data held on computers;
- (3) People at the workplace or in other organisations; and
- (4) A person's memory and/or written notes.

Ramsey (1985) indicates that the major sources of problem solving and decision making information include books and reference materials, periodicals and

newspapers, publications of the United Nations and various governmental agencies, trade association data, and on-line computerised data banks. He adds that public, university, and business librarians can be especially helpful in locating and utilising these resources.

Pinkleton *et al.* (1997) observed that magazines are perceived as being a useful source of public affairs information by citizens but not newspapers, and that citizen who are highly involved in public affairs consider interpersonal conversation as an important source of information.

Daft (1991) notes that the manager obtains information from other people and scans written materials to stay well informed with the information he can use to make an organisation move forward.

Bull (1994) observes that higher education is an information intensive industry. Those involved in higher education direct their efforts towards collecting, using, processing and delivering information for the purpose of its administrative processes as well as for institutional management and decision-making. To make information processing in administration and management more efficient and effective, higher education administration and management may be supported by information technology.

Dallinga Hunter (1994) considers that a further emphasis has been placed on a requirement for up-to-date, correct and fairly complete information for decision makers as a result of competition between the institutions on a national and international scale.

The foregoing indicates the importance of information in the official decisional life of managers to which university administrative staffs belong. The universities require the effective utilisation of information for the smooth running of their institutions. As a result of competition among institutions on a national and international scale, decision makers in university such as the Delta State University, need to have access to, and make effective and efficient use of relevant information when making official decisions. This situation is not unique to this university, but is common to all universities worldwide.

2.4. Administrative Officers in the Universiti Malaysia Sabah

At the Universiti Malaysia Sabah, which is the institutional setting for this investigation, the administrative staffs are the graduates forming the senior registry staff who are also regarded as managers in the institution. The basic qualification for being employed as a member of the administrative staff at this grade is a good honours degree from a recognised university. They are non-academic staff occupying the following graduate posts

- Assistant registrar (N41)
- Senior assistant registrar (N44)
- Assistant registrar (N48) ,and
- Registrar (JUSA C)

An administrative staff member commences their career as an assistant registrar and can rise to become the registrar of the university.

As managers in the institution, they are involved in official planning: organising, budgeting and execution of these plans; implementing decisions made by the university and storing such information for future use; participating in making official decisions for the university on a regular basis.

Administrative staffs work in the different areas of the university where registry work is needed. This may be in the central administration, the offices of the vice-chancellor, deputy vice-chancellor, registrar, and central registry, registries of faculties and units and programmes that have boards. Administrative staffs generally cover meetings of boards and committees of the university. The duties they perform require access to, and use of, information.

2.5. Role of Academician In The University

The primary tasks of academics are in three areas, namely, teaching, research and administration and management. Together these tasks constitute the work of academics, although some people would argue that administration and management is of lesser importance to academics compared with the other two tasks. Indeed some would argue that the primary concern of academics is research excellence and that the other two tasks are of secondary importance.

These differences in views represent principal contentions in a debate of what universities are for (Oshagbemi, 1988, pp. 148-53). What is not contestable is that the work of academics is an important organisational activity, which may affect the job satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the workers. Work is one of the five indices incorporated in the Job Descriptive Index (JDI), a formulation that is used