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## The Relationship between Job Stressor and Employees' Performance in Hotel Industry in Kota Tinggi, Johor.

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### Abstract

Employees performance is very significant for organization in achieving its organizational performance and profitability. Employees performance is related to their willingness and openness on doing assigned task, to increased their productivity which will lead to performance. Performance in return can become the source of satisfaction to employees who successfully completed their job. There are many factors that is associated with employee's performance and one of it is job stress. However, this study aims to investigate the relationship between four job stressor factors namely time pressure, workload, lack of motivation and role ambiguity and employees' performance. The study was conducted among 113 hotel workers in Kota Tinggi, Johor, by using structured questionnaires as the instruments of data collection method. The findings indicate significant relationship between lack of motivation and role ambiguity and employee's performance. Thereby, the recommendation following the findings is for the organization to have planned and detailed job objectives to minimize role ambiguity and to permit certain degree of empowerment among employees to maximize their motivation.

**Keywords:** Job Stressor, Employees Performance, Time Pressure, Workload, Lack of Motivation, Role Ambiguity

### Introduction

Employee's performance can be described as the amount of work effort that individual put into their job and are considered as essential component of a workplace (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Particularly, employee's performance is very important for an organization as a good performance of employees will contribute to a business success. This is supported by (Bevan, 2012) who stated that employee's job performance is a determinant to organization's profitability. Further, (Al-Omari & Okasheh, 2017) affirmed that a highly motivated employees will experience increase in performance and are able to achieve work-related goal. On the other perspective, (Sinha, 2012) asserted that employee's commitment and task performance

are positively correlated and very impactful on a workers' job performance as well as on workforce retention.

Adversely, a decrease in productivity and profitability as well as impairment of overall organizational are the consequences of inefficient performance of employees (Jayaweera, 2015). Likewise, employees who's their skill set does not match a job or not being supplied with the right resources to perform a job, both of their physical and emotional will be affected, leading to the symptom of stress at work (Murali, Basit, & Hassan, 2017). This is referred to as job stress. According to (Mahadevan & Liew, 2016), job stress defined as the destructive responses; physically and emotionally resulting from mismatch of worker's capabilities and resources with job requirements. The authors added that consequences to job stress may range from demotivation among employees, low productivity, constant errors in performance, absenteeism and results in lack of organizational commitment.

### **Problem Statement**

A survey involved 230 organizations, representing a combined workforce of 17,595 employees by Malaysia's Healthiest Workplace by AIA Vitality 2019 revealed that Malaysian employees are overworked, and sleep deprived, with 51 per cent suffering from at least one dimension of work-related stress as well as 53 per cent getting less than seven hours of sleep daily (Ram, 2019). Reportedly, statistic from a survey of health and safety at work by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) revealed that 1.3 million workers are suffering from work-related illness and almost half a million employees are experiencing work-related stress, depression or anxiety in Great Britain (2016). In 2013 a survey conducted by a company; Regus, which are a global workplace provider reported that almost 70 per cent of Malaysian workers were experiencing stress-related illness since the global economic recession (2013). The survey also found that 48 per cent of the Malaysian respondents felt their stress levels had risen and over 42 per cent reported that they were sleeping less due to work worries.

Additionally, British Safety Council reported 15.4 million working day lost due to work-related stress through 2017 and 2018 (Liversedge, 2019). This assured that the level of productivity of workers continues to decline due to high-stress levels in which education, health and social work are observed as the industries with highest average stress rates. Studies also show that scheduling and deadline pressure in many fields have adverse effects on performance as time pressure only increase speed but compromising the quality of work (Moore & Tenney, 2012). Realizing that work-related stress contributed to issues affecting employees' health and performance around the world, it is crucial that this study to be conducted in Malaysia. Thereby, the researcher decided to conduct this study in hotel industry in Kota Tinggi, Johor, aims to investigate the possible association between job stressor namely time pressure, workload, lack of motivation and role ambiguity and employees' performance.

### **Literature Review**

Many empirical studies found that job stress has significant impact on employees' performance. Hence, understanding the occupational related stress variables is an important endeavor. Needless to say, employees' stress level significantly influences their job performance (Azhar, Shamsudin, & Pourpunsawat, 2018). The researcher further stated that, employees' experiencing low level of stress is more motivated to perform well in their work and in return contribute to an improved organizational performance. On the contrary,

employees' performance can be significantly affected by high level of stress in workplace (Ehsan & Ali, 2019).

There are many variables related to job stress. Time pressure for instance, is defined as the difference between the time available and the time required to perform a task (Kayaalp, 2016). Time pressure entail people to work faster especially when tight datelines is assigned. Consequently, it limits the ability of ones in seeking for better options or solutions and lead to impairment of performance due to time pressure at the expense of the quality of work performed (Moore, & Tenney, 2012). In the meantime, (Murali, Basit, & Hassan, 2017) also found that increasing in time pressure would reduce employees' performance.

The next form of a job stressor present in terms of workload. Workload can be defined as the number of tasks to be completed by an employee in the given time (Gharib, Syed Ahsan, Ahmad, & Ghouse, 2016). Literally, workload occurs in the situation in which an employee's task assignment exceeded their abilities or resources to accomplish the task (Azhar, Shamsudin & Pourpunsawat, 2018). It is asserted that workload is a stressor that will lead to decrease in employees' job performance (Ali et al., 2014).

Another form of job stressor is lack of motivation. Generally, motivation refers to individual's internal or external state of desire that drive specific action towards achieving specific goals (Asiedu, 2017), (Vijayalakshmi & Yamuna, 2017), (Ibrahim & Brobbey, 2015). Without present of motivation, even most capable employees will refuse to energize their thinking and dedicate effort towards high performance (Mahazril, et al., 2012). It is further stated that poor communication contributed to decrease in work motivations among employees in workplace.

The last form of job stressor investigated in this study is role ambiguity. Role ambiguity increases when certain things are not explicit, vague and poorly defined (Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017). According to Ehsan & Ali (2019) role ambiguity could possibly cause by irregular feedback on employees' performance. On the other instance, role ambiguity might occur when employees are having difficulties in adjusting two or more roles at the same time (Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017), thus having clear job descriptions is crucial in defining employees' primary responsibility within their work scope (Mahadevan & Fam, 2016). (Harijanto, Nimran, Sudiro, & Rahayu, 2013) affirmed that, role ambiguity does affect employees' organizational commitment and significantly influence employees' performance (Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017).

## **Methodology**

This research used descriptive and correlational design method to investigate the relationship between variables. The collection of relevant data on research variables are performed through set of established questionnaires. The population of this research were hotel worker in Kota Tinggi Johor. Hotel industries are chosen as population of the study because the nature itself as servicing and hospitality industry that require vigilant attention to customers satisfaction. Thus, it is crucial to investigate any stressor that contributed to reduce in employees' performance. The sample size of this study was determined using simple random sampling technique. Out of total populations, 113 respondents took place in this survey and the researcher managed to received 100 per cent survey return rate. The data was analyzed

using the SPSS version 22 to determine possible relationship between dependent variables (employees' performance) and independent variables (job stressor).

### Findings

The findings of the research are presented in the following tables. In order to analyze the possible association between variables, the researcher used correlation analysis. The strength of relationship between independent and dependent variable are then interpreted using the Pearson Correlation Rules of Thumb. Based on the demographic findings of respondents, the result has shown that the majority of respondents participated in the survey are female with 63.7 per cent. Besides, 75.2 per cent of the respondents were aged between 20-30 years old with majority of the respondents are Diploma holder. Thus, it can be assumed that the respondents were sufficiently knowledgeable to respond and provide the information needed. Experience wise, 49.6 per cent of respondents are within the hotel industry for less than two years.

**Table 1. Relationship between Role Ambiguity and Employees Performance Correlation**

		Role Ambiguity
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	.322
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	113

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The above table presented the findings of relationship between role ambiguity and employees' performance. Based on the findings, it indicated that there is a weak relationship between role ambiguity and employees' performance in hotel industry in Kota Tinggi, Johor. The findings were consistent with the study conducted by (Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017) in which the findings indicated significant strong negative correlation between role ambiguity and employees' performance. In contrary, the study conducted by Mahadevan & Fam (2016), role ambiguity is found to be insignificant to employees' performance.

**Table 2. Relationship between Lack of Motivation and Employees Performance Correlation**

		Lack of Motivation
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	.262
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005
	N	113

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Based on the above table, the findings indicated that there is a very weak relationship between lack of motivation and employees' performance in hotel industry in Kota Tinggi Johor. The findings are consistent to the study conducted by (Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017) which affirmed that lack of motivation is significantly correlated to job performance. At the other spectrum, Jayaweera (2015) asserted that, motivation has significant effect on job performance in which employees perform better when they are motivated. Asiedu (2017) supported that an intrinsically motivated employees will have positive impact on their performance, commitment as well as better job satisfaction.

**Table 3. Relationship between Time Pressure and Employees Performance**

Correlation		Time Pressure
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	.157
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.097
	N	113

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Based on the findings of the above table, it indicated that there is no significant relationship between time pressure and employees' performance in hotel industry in Kota Tinggi, Johor. In contrast, a study conducted by (Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017) confirmed that time pressure is found to have a negative significant relationship with employee performance. In addition, a study conducted by Johari, Ridzoan, & Zarefar (2019) also revealed that time pressure are significantly correlated with auditor's performance.

**Table 4. Relationship between Workload and Employees Performance**

Correlation		Workload
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	.071
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.456
	N	113

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results in Table 4 indicated that there is a no relationship between workload and employees' performance in hotel industry in Kota Tinggi Johor. The findings are inconsistent with a study conducted by Gharib, Syed Ahsan, Ahmad & Ghouse (2016) and (Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017) which shown that workload is correlated with employees' performance. In the meantime, a study conducted by Johari, Ridzoan, & Zarefar (2019) revealed that there is positive relationship between workload and auditors' job performance.

### Conclusion

This research extends to investigate the occupational stressor related to employees' performance. The findings of the research indicated that out of four variables tested, only two variables which is role ambiguity and lack of motivation were found to have significant relationship with employees' performance. This research particularly contributes to fulfilment of existing research gap in Malaysian hotel industry. However, due to time constraint and the enforcement of Movement Control Order due to Covid-19 pandemic, the researcher can only manage to execute the survey within small scale of hotel workers' population in Kota Tinggi, Johor. For future research, it is suggested that future researchers able to extend the research in larger population in this industry and to include other occupational stressor factors so the findings can be generalizable to the other settings.

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