

THE INVESTIGATION OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP
PRACTICES, ROLE STRESSOR, RELIGIOUS COPING AND
JOB INSECURITY WITH JOB STRESS AMONG
UNIVERSITY ACADEMICIAN IN PAHANG
AND JOGYAKARTA

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ABSTRACT

Stress can be found in all aspects of life. Stress is inseparable in every individual life aspect. Stress may have positive effects, but many cause negative effects. One type of stress that can engender negative effects is job stress. Job stress is major threats to modern organization that causes many negative impacts, either for employee or organization. In education organization, especially at higher-education setting, many studies concluded that lecturer, staff or administration personnel reported from middle level to higher level of job stress (Donders et al., 2003; Boscolo et al., 2008; Leung et al., 2000; De Nobile, and McCormick, 2007). This study aims to investigate the relationships between role ambiguity, role conflict, leadership practices to job stress and test the role of religious coping as moderator variable and job insecurity as a mediator variable to job stress in Malaysian academic staff in Pahang, Malaysia and Javanese academic staff in Indonesia's context. Beside, the present study wants to test moderation-mediation model of job stress in cross-cultural study. ANOVA and Path analysis using structural equation model used to test the research hypothesis. This study used mixed method cross cultural approach to test and examined theory and model of moderated-mediated job insecurity-stress among academic staff in two countries. In general it can be concluded that some independent variables have a significant relationship with job stress, but some others have no effect. The result of the mediation model showed that job insecurity significantly mediate the relationship between antecedents with job stress only in Pahang academic staff, not for Jogjakarta academic staff. While, religious coping as a moderator variable shows a variance result in two countries. In Pahang academic staff, religious coping significantly buffer the effect of antecedents to job insecurity, but not significantly buffer relationship between antecedents to job stress. In Jogjakarta academic staff, religious coping just significantly buffer the effect of the antecedents-job stress model, but not significantly moderate the effect of the antecedents-job insecurity model. It could be concluded that the moderated-mediated model in this study showed variant between two countries. Cultural and contextual factors may have influenced the variant result of this study, and this finding need to explore further.

ABSTRAK

Tekanan boleh dijumpai dalam semua aspek kehidupan. Tekanan tidak dapat dipisahkan dalam kehidupan setiap individu. Tekanan mungkin mempunyai kesan positif, tetapi ramai yang menyebabkan kesan-kesan negatif. Satu jenis tekanan yang boleh menimbulkan kesan negatif ialah tekanan kerja. Tekanan kerja adalah ancaman utama kepada organisasi moden yang menyebabkan banyak kesan negatif, sama ada bagi pekerja atau organisasi. Dalam organisasi pendidikan, terutamanya di peringkat pengajian tinggi, banyak kajian membuat kesimpulan bahawa pensyarah atau pentadbiran dilaporkan mengalami tekanan kerja dari peringkat pertengahan ke tahap yang lebih tinggi. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menyiasat hubungan antara kekaburan peranan, konflik peranan, amalan kepimpinan kepada tekanan kerja dan menguji peranan coping religius sebagai pembolehubah penyelerhana dan ketidakselamatan kerja sebagai pembolehubah pengantara kepada tekanan kerja dalam staf akademik di Pahang, Malaysia dan staf akademik Jawa di Jogjakarta Indonesia. Selain itu, kajian ini mahu menguji model mediated-moderated tekanan kerja dalam kajian silang budaya. ANOVA dan Path analisis dengan menggunakan model persamaan struktur digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis kajian. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah pendekatan silang budaya campuran untuk menguji dan mengkaji teori dan model mediated-moderated ketidakselamatan kerja-tekanan kerja di kalangan staf akademik di kedua-dua negara. Secara umum ia boleh disimpulkan bahawa beberapa pembolehubah bebas mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan tekanan kerja, tetapi sesetengah yang lain tidak mempunyai kesan. Hasil kajian model pengantara menunjukkan ketidakselamatan kerja mengantarai hubungan pembolehubah bebas dengan tekanan kerja hanya di kalangan staf akademik Malaysia di Pahang, dan tidak untuk staf akademik Jawa, di Yogyakarta. Sementara itu, coping religius sebagai pembolehubah penyelerhana menunjukkan hasil berbeza dalam kedua-dua negara. Dari pada staf akademik Pahang, coping religius menunjukkan kesan yang signifikan dalam menyederhanakan hubungan pembolehubah-ketidakselamatan kerja, tetapi tidak memiliki kesan secara signifikan dalam menyederhanakan hubungan antara pembolehubah-tekanan kerja. Bagi staf akademik Jogjakarta, coping religius hanya memiliki kesan dalam menyederhanakan hubungan pembolehubah-tekanan kerja, tetapi tidak signifikan dalam memoderasi hubungan pembolehubah-ketidakselamatan kerja. ia boleh disimpulkan bahawa model mediated-moderated dalam kajian ini menunjukkan variasi antara kedua-dua negara. Faktor-faktor budaya dan konteks mungkin telah mempengaruhi hasil variasi daripada kajian ini, dan hasil kajian ini memerlukan unntuk dikaji lagi di masa hadapan.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since early 1990s, the spread of globalization and its changes have begun to impact organizations far and widely. Globalization is something that cannot be avoided and it affects every aspect of life. The changes brought by globalization are also creating new demands, workload, and job complexity for employees. Among organizations in developing countries, the effect of globalization must be managed with many strategies. Among others, the organization should be able to create a strong competitiveness organization, maintain an effective organizational performance, able to adapt as quickly as possible, maintain flexibility when facing a problem, and apply new innovation to solve problems at hands. Within the workplace, changes also occur in the form of more workloads for employees, longer working hours, greater job complexity, work with a strict deadline and the emergence of role conflict among employees (Crampton et al., 1995).

In current time, employees are expected to learn different cultures, languages, rules and regulations of international trade, resulting in increased workloads, the

pressure to enhance job skills and long working hours (Cooper, 2006). Such changes in nature of how a job has to be done would increase the occupational stress of the workers, which in turn, will affect workers' physical and mental health (Dollard, 2003; Devereux et al., 2004). Then, the effects of job stress may influence employee's motivation, work performance, and productivity. Besides, the effect also reduces the effectiveness of organization in global term. Other negative conditions caused by job stress are the cost would be seriously detrimental to an organization in financial term, such as; cost by absenteeism, expenditure for medication, and low productivity (Salleh et al., 2008).

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

1.2.1 Problem in Global Context

Stress can be found in all aspects of life. Stress is inseparable in every individual life aspect. Stress may have positive effects, but many cause negative effects too. One type of stress that can engender negative effects is job stress. Job stress is the major threat to modern organization causing many negative impacts, either for employee or organization. Many studies concluded that job stress is a major factor causing some forms of disability (Sulsky and Smith, 2005). These include personal reactions such as anxiety and depression (Stoner and Perrewe, 2006; Gellis, and Kim, 2004), apathy, alienation, absenteeism (Kim et al., 2006), aggression, alcoholism and substance abused (Jones et al., 2006), unmotivated and low productivity (Jex et al., 2006). Health problem caused by job stress can affect employee through increased blood pressure (Mills et al., 2004; O'Connor et al, 2001), cardiovascular and coronary heart disease (Rosch, 2006; Lee et al, 2002), muscular tension (Devereux et al., 2004), internal fatigue (Friesen et al., 2008), atherosclerosis (Hintsanen, 2006), decrease natural cell activity (Morikawa et al., 2005), work-related

musculoskeletal disorders (Carayon et al., 1999), arrhythmogenesis (Qureshi et al., 2001), short menstrual cycle with women (Fenster et al., 1999), dryness of throat, and overproduction of acid gastric juice. If job stress is not handled and mitigated effectively, it will lead to severe type of job stress that is burnout (Park, 2007; Heiman and Kariv, 2005; Rice, 2005; Spangenberg, and Theron, 2005; Burke, 2002; Wilhelm et al., 2004). Burnout is considered to be a long-term stress response and is described as a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1993). Individual who suffers from burnout will experience a more acute type of stress. Burnout characterize with suffering feeling that involving exhaustion, meaninglessness and cynicism. In the research literature, burnout is defined as “a psychological syndrome of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy, which is experienced in response to chronic job stressors” (Leiter & Maslach, 2004, p. 93). Burnout is a cumulative stress reaction that traumatize person; make individual desperate to alleviate the painful feelings and demoralized.

Job stress has been identified too as a risk factor to mental health problems, including depression and anxiety (Rosch, 2006; Stansfeld and Candy, 2006). Moreover, job stress can damage health and quality of workers' life (de Jonge et al., 2000; Kudielka et al., 2005) and can result in direct social impact such as a frustration mood that spillover and disrupt communication in family; create discord and conflict to marriage partner; and economic costs such as cost for medication caused by work-related illness; as well (Dollard, 2003). In the workplace, stress can affect performance. Individual who in under too little stress may not make enough effort to perform at his/her best level, while those under too much stress are often unable to concentrate or perform effectively and efficiently. Then the relationship between stress and performance is complex (Sulsky and Smith, 2005).

These days many organizations have been concerned with the rising costs of stressed employees. Stewart (1990) stated that the job stress-related costs for companies estimated between USD100 to USD 300 billions per years. Crampton et al. (1995) cited from several researchers and concluded that the cost of job stress made major detrimental effect for many companies, including absenteeism, accidents, health care expenses, low productivity, 75% to 90% of all visits to primary care physicians are caused by job stress. Furthermore, according to Cooper, Liukkonen, and Cartwright (as cited in Glendon et al., 2006) 60% to 80% of the accidents are estimated to be caused by employee stress.

A Northwestern National Life survey indicated that one-fourth of employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives. Another insurance survey reported that problems at work are associated with more health complaints than any other stressor, including family and financial problems (Kohler and Kamp, 1992). A Princeton survey found three-quarters of employees believe that they have more on-the-job stress than employees do a generation ago (Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1997). Since job stress in public health workforce has not been specifically studied, it is clear that this is an important issue for 500,000 salaried public health employees in the U.S. that approximately 50,000 are nurses and 200,000 are local or state government agency employees (Gebbie and Merrill, 2001). The advanced age of these employees may introduce a unique strain. It is estimated that perhaps 50% of U.S. federal and 30% of state public health employees will retire by the end of the decade (Partnership for Public Service, 2003; Council of State Governments, 2008).

Some studies have been investigated to quantify the impact of stress on the economy Gross Domestic Product. In Denmark, works related to illness and the absence is estimated to be 2.5% of GDP, in Norway 10% and in the European Union 5-10% due to job stress. The effect of illness absence in UK economy is estimated to

be 12 billion pounds, 50% of which is estimated to be job stress related. In the United States, it is estimated that 54% of illness absence is job stress related (Dollard, 2003).

Surveys confirm widespread reporting of the experience of job stress. In Europe, 28% of 15,000 surveyed workers reported that stress is a work-related health problem (Paoli, 1997). In the US, 68% respondents in a survey reported that they had to work very fast, and 60% never had enough time to finish their work (Theorell, 1999). Kawakami (as cited in Dollard, 2003) reported that in Japan 63% of workers in a nationwide survey 1997 report “strong worry, anxiety or stress at work” or in daily working life, an increase of 12% since 1982. In Japan, the emergence of ‘*karoshi*’ (death of overwork) is an increasing social concern (Kanai, 2009).

1.2.2 Problem in Malaysian Context

In Malaysia, the same phenomenon may hold true (Kumaresan and Ramayah, 2005; Ahsan, et al. 2009). One of preceding factor is the weakening of global economy during the last several years; it has resulted in a substantial economic depression and downturn (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2001). This economic downturn made many organizations implemented efficiency policy in term of expenditure; implement new strategy to get as much revenue as possible; some business organization collaps, and lay off their employees; some push their worker to achieve difficult target with giving many tasks in limited time. This condition indeed burden employees with workload and challenges.

Prime Minister of Malaysia stated that as a developing country, Malaysia faces many challenges and remains struggle to become a developed nation. This action is both competitive and difficult. For the realization of national aspirations becoming developed country, a synergy effort is needed to increase nation’s

competitiveness, effectiveness and innovativeness (Ministry of Higher Education, 2007). In Malaysia, now there are 20 full-fledged public universities, 21 polytechnics and 37 community colleges (Ministry of Higher Education, 2007). There are three types of public university in Malaysia that is four researches, four comprehensive, and twelve focused universities respectively. Besides, there are 32 private universities, and university colleges, four branch campuses of international universities and 485 colleges offering a wide range of academic and vocational courses under the Ministry's supervision (Ministry of Higher Education, 2007).

The above situations and conditions would give pressure to employees to work harder and faster. It will influence the performance and effectivity of the company owners and especially the workers, because competitiveness may lead to higher demand and will drive workers to handle several jobs in limited time. These conditions may lead to job stress, which will finally decrease performance and productivity of workers.

In education organization, especially at higher-education setting, many studies concluded that either lecturer, staff or administration personnel reported from middle level to higher level of job stress (Donders et al., 2003; Boscolo et al., 2008; Leung et al., 2000; De Nobile, and McCormick, 2007; Blix, and Lee, 1991; Assadi, 2003; Jing, 2008; Winefield, and Jarrett, 2001). Ahsan et al. (2009) stated that the number of universities in Malaysia has increased tremendously for the past few years. Due to the increasing number of universities in Malaysia, university academic staffs may face more problems in their job as the management is facing competitive pressure from other universities. Many universities are now setting new goals to compete with other universities as well as the academic staffs are involving with the ultimate goal. This may cause university academic staffs to face plenty of stress and therefore, affect their satisfaction and even their physical or mental health.

In Malaysia context, several previous study have conducted to examine the incidences and the sources of stressors among academic staffs and teachers. Study by Huda's et al (2004) revealed from 73 lecturer respondent that prevalence of job strain (referred to as 'high job strain') in University Sains Malaysia lecturer was 23.3%. A significantly higher proportion of clinicians 34.1% in University Sains Malaysia reported high job strain compared to non-clinicians 6.9%. The prevalence of job dissatisfaction of lecturers at University Sains Malaysia was 42.6%.

Aeria (1998) conducted a comparative study on the level of burnout among 264 Petaling Jaya teachers with other studies sample and show increasing level of burnout experienced by Petaling teachers. Mean score for emotional exhaustion of Petaling teachers is 3.8 and proven higher than other studies sample (Hartford Connecticut teachers = 3.5; Victoria Australia teachers = 3.2; Massachusetts teachers = 3.4; Alberta Canada teachers= 3,4). Mean score for depersonalization of Petaling teachers is 2.3 and show higher than other studies sample studies above. Whereas the mean score for personal accomplishment of Petaling teachers is 2.6 and was the highest among other studies above. Based on several studies in the past, it can be concluded that incident of job stress among academic professions (teachers and lecturers) in Malaysia is high and it will continually increase in the future. Rosnita's (2006) research finding showed that stress of mathematics teacher in Kelantan region is 2.7 percentage for high value. The dominant source that caused stress was student problem and teacher's work load.

Hapriza et al. (2005) reported in their study that 62 from 180 academic staffs of University Technology Malaysia or 34.4% experienced moderate level of job stress. Rusli's et al., (2006) study showed that the prevalence of stress among dental healthcare workers of higher learning institution in Kelantan (54 respondent) was 22.2%. One dental healthcare worker (1.9%) experienced severe stress, while eleven (20.4%) dental healthcare worker experienced a mild to moderate stress.

1.2.3 Problem in Indonesia Context

In Indonesia, there are 2300 higher learning institutions consisting of Universities, Institutes, and Colleges, but in current evaluation, there are only 50 promising and top higher learning institutions having national accreditation according to an evaluation by National Education Department of Indonesia (www.dikti.go.id). Indonesian government currently apply national planning to increase the quality of higher learning institutions, in order to become a developed nation in the future. In order to achieve that goal, Indonesian Government facilitates and encourages many Universities and Institutes to produce more innovative researches, and has been giving research grants as well as push academic staffs to improve their ability and motivation to produce excellent research projects.

In Indonesia, the phenomena of job stress also happen. Several studies in the past concluded that every year, job stress cases in Indonesia increase rapidly and interfere many aspects of employees such as social, emotional, psychological and health-related problems. The research result from Sugijanto (1999) showed that from 326 teacher respondents, there were 168 (51.5%) teachers felt stress. It means almost 60% teacher respondents experienced job stress in his research. Another study by Arismunandar (2008) shown that 30.27% from 80.000 teachers experienced severe type of job stress. It means that the total number of teachers experienced job stress was 24.000 persons. This study showed too that job stress influenced and reduced teacher's performance rapidly, the higher the job stress level experienced by teachers, the lower the performance and productivity of teachers.

Badra, and Prawitasari's (2005) study indicated that the average score of job stress at academic staffs of Nursing College in Sorong Papua was a medium (56.72). Product-moment correlation test showed that the relationship between performance and work stress was -0.695. Its negative correlation score points that job stress has a

medium impact to job performance, when job stress is high, then job performance becomes lower.

Yulianti's study (2002) described that variables of organizational structure dimension, job design, workgroup and individual characteristic simultaneously had significant influence to lecturers' job satisfaction at Social Science Faculties of Airlangga University Surabaya. It means that the stronger the organizational stressors impact on lecturers, the lower the lecturers's job satisfaction. Another study from Widayastuti (2008) indicated that the organizational stressors variables simultaneously have significant influence on job satisfaction. It means that organizational stressors must be controlled and managed in order to prevent a stressful workplace condition that may lead to elevation of job stress among university academic staffs.

1.2.4 The Stressors of Job Stress in Academician

The sources of stress are known as stressors. Stressors are the cause of stress (Sulsky and Smith, 2005). The studies of teacher/academician's stress have found several sources of job stress. Several significant stressors that consistently increase job stress such as poor working conditions (inadequate facilities and resources; class sizes are too big), lack of support from management, lack of appreciation and benefits, limited participation in decision making, and lack of training how to cope with job stress (Khoury and Analoui, 2010), role ambiguity (Yousef, 2002), time pressure (Salas & Klein, 2001), job insecurity (Jordan, Ashkanasy and H'artel, 2002), role conflict (Alexandros-Stamatios *et. al.*, 2003), interpersonal conflicts (Narayanan, Menon and Spector, 1999), work overload (Wilkes *et al.* 1998), performance pressure (Cahn *et al.* 2000).

Study by Aziah, et al (2004) found three significant risk factors of job stress among laboratory technicians in Hospital University Sains Malaysia, namely: job insecurity (insecure about job stability in the future), physical exertion (overloads physical task), and total psychological stressors (such as time pressure, deadline task, excessive workloads, and conflicting demands). Other study by Baskaran (2004) found that the most common factors caused job stress among the lecturers were job overload, job nature and time management. While in term of the association, reward system ($r = 0.663$, $p = 0.000$) and relationship ($r = 0.649$, $p = 0.000$) showed significant correlations with job stress level.

Another study by Eddin (2009) found five separable factors that influence the nature of stress among laboratories staffs, namely: the community problems, family problems, financial problems, health problem, and work allocation. Study by Fazli (2003) found that there are five stressors that influence job stress among secondary teachers in Melaka, namely: students' misbehavior, workload, time and resource difficulties, professional recognition, and interpersonal relationship.

Beside, Fazli (2003) also found that there were significant relationships between students' misbehavior and age, teaching experience, monthly income, gender, marital status, subject taught, academic qualification, and school grade; the significant relationship between workload and gender, marital status, monthly income, subject taught, academic qualification, and school grade; the significant relationship between time and resource difficulties and age, teaching experience, gender, marital status, subject taught, academic qualification, and school grade; the significant relationship between professional recognition and gender, marital status, subject taught, academic qualification, and school grade; the significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and gender, marital status, subject taught, academic qualification, and school grade.