Work Related Stressor and Job Performance among Secondary School Teachers in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The teaching career is a professional at high risk for stress. Teachers have experienced stress and burnout from different sources and at different levels. This research attempted to determine the relationship between workload pressures; unsatisfied needs/wants, new technology and working environment with job performance among secondary school teachers in Malaysia. A total of 217 sets of questionnaire were distributed to teachers from cluster secondary schools in Kota Bharu. The list of cluster secondary school teachers was obtained from *Pejabat Pelajaran Daerah* Kota Bharu. Data was analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The findings supported all the hypotheses of the study. The findings also revealed that workload pressure give the highest impact on job performance among teachers, followed by new technology, unsatisfied needs/wants and working environment. Among all the independent variables, workload pressure was the highest contribution towards dependent variable (job performance).
KEYWORDS: Work, Stressor, Job Performance, Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is considered as a 'high stress' profession [1]. In [2] revealed that the job setting for teachers is greatly stress-provoking. Previous study done by[23] also proved that teaching is a stressful job. Among all the professions, teachers are the one which report highest level of stress compared with other occupation [3]. Teachers are likely to experienced stress and burnout from different sources at different levels. As commented by the President of National Union of Teaching Profession (NUTP), due to the increased of teachers' workload, level of stress among teachers in Malaysia keep increasing and become worrying since they need to face too many changes and challenges[4]. In [5] mentioned that teachers' in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur have to spend 74 hours per week in teaching, besides performed in other curriculum activities and they have been regarded as stressful teachers. Apart from that, with the current school system, the roles and duties of a teacher seem to be multitasked. Teachers' responsibilities appear different compared to few years back with the change of teaching culture and added with managerial duties. Nowadays, teachers' need to prepare themselves with the latest knowledge, teaching techniques and skills which is up to date. Besides, teachers also required to prepare themselves with the higher order thinking skills questions in order to make student think out of the box. Hence, teachers' have to be creative and critical thinking as well. Apart from teaching, teachers' also likely to do clerical work on a daily basis, documentation and conduct programmes. Most of them seem to suffer from burnout with so many roles to play [6].In [7] stated that increasing problems concerning mental illness among teachers is alarming in many countries. While these issues have been widely researched internationally, research in Malaysia on work related stressor among teachers has remained relatively limited. Thus, this study attempts to examine work related stressors and its relationship with job performance among secondary school teachers in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-Related Stressors

According to [8], work-related stressor can be described as physical and emotional response of an individual to the demands of job that is unequal with her or his needs, abilities and resources. The demands may be associated with the quantity and difficulty of work, time pressure or event to the failure to demonstrate one's emotions at work. Due to the dissimilarity between countries and national education systems, the main sources of teachers' stress also change [9]. As mentioned by [10], among the core source of employees' perceived job stressors are situational stressors for instance role uncertainty, role conflict, workload and social conflict. All these factors are believed to be negatively influence employee job performance. According to past studies, job

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stress not only causes emotional and physical harm but leads to employee workplace performance negatively as well including abusive conduct, aggression, increased insults and productivity reduction [11].

Job Performance

Teachers' job performance influenced by many factors such as attitude, skill and mental ability, subject expert, teaching methodology, individual characteristic, classroom setting, character and relationships with students. According to [12], there are many factors that influence the teachers' job performance such as ability, attitude, subject mastery, teaching methodology, personal characteristics, the classroom environment, general mental ability, personality and relations with students. Performance of teachers' also evaluated by how they manage their students and duties they need to be done within the time given. Additionally, classroom has the vital roles to measure how efficiently and creatively the teachers manage and shape their students. Besides, in order to improve confident level, personality characteristics of teachers also important. In [13] mentioned that teachers' can create fairness environment, maintain safe and conducive classroom setting and create a strong emotional climate for learning when they possessed a high rating performance.

Unsatisfied Needs/Wants

Job satisfaction in this perspective can be describe as the capability of teaching job to meet teachers' need thus increase their teaching performance. The happiness of teachers' job is not only essential to themselves as public servants, educational administrators and leaders but also students in schools [14].In [15] mentioned that predictor of teachers' retention and factor contributing to teachers' commitment are their satisfaction when in turn lead to school effectiveness. Job satisfaction is significant factors to teachers' commitment. Teachers' who are unsatisfied with their jobs and needs will not be dedicated and productive. Poor performance will apparent if teachers are not satisfied with their work environment.

Workload Pressure

Generally, workload can be defined as the amount of work people have to complete [16]. With the intensity of work assignment, employees have become more pressure with their work and further affect their health and performance. Workload pressure also can be defined as the change in the level of employees' stress due to change in the workload, which eventually affect the employees' performance [17]. Job stress with high workload may have negative impact on employees' performance and rise the occupational health threat risk. Sometimes, teacher feels more stress when facing too much work and more likely will demonstrate their anger to the students particularly when the students are problematic.

New Technology

Technology in education environment can be considered as a planned and systematic process of applying existing technology to increase the value of education. Thus, to facilitate this educational technology revolution is the teachers' main responsibility. In order to meet this responsibility, teachers' must obtain new technological and pedagogical skills to integrating new technology during classroom practices [18]. Teachers' who are confident using new technology are teachers' who likely to integrate technology in the classroom. In fact, the key factor in teachers' use of technology is confidence and it have been recognized as the key factor contribute to the act [19]. However, teachers' who are ambiguous and feel anxious about using technology will less likely to use technology in their practice. They will perceive bigger risks on learning and negative effects subsequent from potential technical issues and problem may arise from the technologies [20].

Working Environment

Working conditions, other than wages and other benefits mainly influence teachers' career plans [21]. Students' demographic characteristics and positive work condition of schools will encourage teachers' plans to loyal and more satisfied. Nowadays, although there are numerous working conditions matters to teachers, clean working conditions, well maintained facilities and ability to access to modern instructional technology are the most influential factor [22].
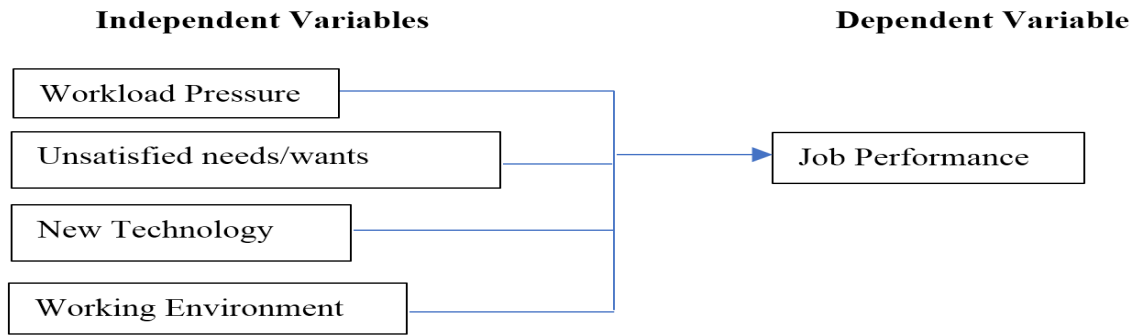
Independent Variables   **Dependent Variable**

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┌──────────────────────────┐
│   Workload Pressure      │
├──────────────────────────┤
│   Unsatisfied needs/wants│ ─────────────►  ┌──────────────────┐
├──────────────────────────┤                 │ Job Performance  │
│   New Technology         │                 └──────────────────┘
├──────────────────────────┤
│   Working Environment    │
└──────────────────────────┘
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Figure 1: Conceptual framework of relationship between independent and dependent variables

METHODOLOGY

The primary data for this research were collected through as structured questionnaire to answer the research questions and objectives. The questionnaires were distributed to 217 teachers in cluster secondary school in Kota Bharu with the return rate of 95%. The survey questionnaires were administered using quota sampling. The questionnaires consisted of six distinct sections in which all the questions in close ended questions including demographic section. Respondents was voluntarily participated and no compensation was offered. The questionnaire in Section B, C, D, E and F was instructed in five-point Likert Scale format which were 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. Section B focused on the workload pressure, Section C consisted of the items related to unsatisfied needs/wants, Section D identified the new technology element and Section E covering from the element of working environment. Section F on the other hand focused on the job performance. The following hypotheses were developed:

H_1: Workload pressure positively influence job performance
H_2: Unsatisfied needs/wants positively influence job performance
H_3: New technology positively influence job performance
H_4: Working environment positively influence job performance

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Among all of the respondents, more than half were female (81.5%) and the rest were male (18.5%). The largest group of the respondents were in the age of 41-50 years old, followed by 29.3% from the age of 31-40 years old. The least were in the group of 20-30 years old (4.9%). In term of salary, (37.1%) owned the salary of RM4001-RM5000, followed by 22.9% owned the salary of RM5001-6000. While, the least owned the minimum salary which is below RM2000-RM2500. As for years of service, the highest number of respondents (24.9%) had years of service of 16-20 years while the least (13.7%) had years of service of 26-30 years. Almost all of the respondents were married and the remaining were single.

Correlation Analysis

Table 1: Correlation analysis (n = 205)

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Correlation
Workload Pressure	3.6254	0.44	0.469**
Unsatisfied Needs/Wants	3.7229	0.46	0.441**
New Technology	3.8170	0.46	0.442**
Working Environment	3.6820	0.56	0.335**
Job Performance	3.9776	0.54	

Table 1 revealed the correlation analysis of the existence of any significant among variables. The above table also illustrates that independent variables (IVs) are statically significant with the p-value of 0.000 at 0.01 significant levels. Workload pressure has positive and moderate correlation with substantial relationship with job performance with the value of r = 0.469. Result from the Table 1 also showed positive relationship exist between unsatisfied needs/wants and job performance with the value of r = 0.441. It indicates that there is positive and moderate correlation with substantial relationship between those two variables. In addition, new technology formed the value of r = 0.442 which indicated that independent variable (new technology) has positive and moderate correlation with substantial relationship towards job performance. While, working

environment has the positive and low correlation with definite but small relationship toward the job performance with the value of r = 0.335. Hence, all hypotheses of this study were accepted.

Regression Analysis (Multiple Regression)

Table 2: Regression Analysis (n=205)

Model Summary			ANOVA		Coefficients			
R	R Square	Durbin-Watson	F	Sig.		Beta	t	Sig.
0.606[a]	0.368	1.805	29.079	0.000[b]	Workload pressure	0.368	6.164	0.000
					Unsatisfied needs/wants	0.135	1.673	0.096
					New technology	0.241	3.371	0.001
					Working environment	0.088	1.163	0.246

a. Predictors: (Constant), workload pressure, unsatisfied needs/wants, new technology and working environment.
b. Dependent Variables: job performance

Table 2 illustrates the summary of multiple regression analysis among all the independent variables towards job performance as dependent variable. The regression model is used to determine whether there is enough evidence of a relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable for the entire population. In order to strengthen the evidence, the researcher analyzed the values of R, and R-square which indicate the level of influences the independent variables have on dependent variable. The R value for the variables is 0.606. It also demonstrated that the value of R-square is 0.368. It can be concluded that workload pressure, unsatisfied needs/wants, new technology and working environment influence job performance at 36.8%. Among all the independent variables, workload pressure was the highest contribution towards dependent variable (job performance) with t-value of 6.164 and beta score 0.368 while other factors contributed less towards job performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aims to identify the relationship between work related stressors (workload pressure, unsatisfied needs/wants, new technology and working environment) with job performance among cluster secondary school teachers located in urban area in Kota Baharu, Kelantan. The findings supported all the hypotheses of the study. The findings also revealed that workload pressure give the highest impact on job performance among teachers followed by new technology, unsatisfied needs/wants and working environment. This study has delivered some perceptions that teachers' feel contributed to what they feel are heavy workloads. Ministry of Education and head teachers should concern of this matter and probably may afford the initial point for a wider dialog of how teachers may be better supported. Contributing factors towards all job related stress should be suitably handled and given serious consideration. Teachers' will develop and sustain high level of performance if they pleased with their job. Teaching learning practice create more efficient and effective that could produce great competitive learners.

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