



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ROLE STRESSORS AND
AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT: JOB SATISFACTION AS
MEDIATING ROLE**

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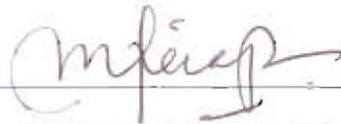
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**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ROLE STRESSORS AND AFFECTIVE
COMMITMENT: JOB SATISFACTION AS MEDIATING ROLE**

CHAI CHIEW CHING

This project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
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ABSTRACT

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ROLE STRESSORS AND AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT: JOB SATISFACTION AS MEDIATING ROLE.

Chai Chiew Ching

This study identified the relationship between role stressors and affective commitment, in which job satisfaction act as mediating role. There were two variables in role stressors, which were role ambiguity and role conflict. This study was conducted in one of the government link companies in Kuching. A total of 120 sets of research questionnaires have been distributed and 74 sets have been returned. However, there were only 70 sets of research questionnaires that usable. The data collected were analyzed by Pearson Correlation to test the relationship between two variables and Stepwise Regression Analysis to test mediating relationship. The results found that job satisfaction act as full mediator in the relationship between both role ambiguity and role conflict and affective commitment. Therefore, the hypotheses in this study accepted. Implication and recommendation for future research are discussed.

ABSTRAK

HUBUNGAN DI ANTARA PERANAN TEKANAN DAN PERASAAN SAYANG TERHADAP ORGANISASI: KEPUASAN KERJA BERTINDAK SEBAGAI PERANAN PENGANTARAAN.

Chan Chiew Ching

Kajian kes ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti hubungan di antara peranan tekanan dan perasaan sayang terhadap organisasi di mana kepuasan kerja bertindak sebagai peranan pengantaraan di sebuah organisasi separuh kerajaan di Kuching. Peranan tekanan untuk kajian ini mengandungi dua perkara, iaitu kekaburan peranan dan konflik peranan. Pengkaji telah menghantar sebanyak 120 set borang soal selidik untuk meneliti keadaan organisasi tersebut. Daripada 120 set borang soal selidik, 74 set sahaja dikembalikan dan hanya 70 set borang soal selidik yang digunakan. Penyelidik menggunakan Korelasi Pearson untuk menguji hubungan antara dua pembolehubah di mana Analisis Regresi Berganda untuk menguji hubungan pengantaraan. Keputusan menunjukkan kepuasan kerja menjadi peranan pengantaraan yang sepenuhnya di antara kekaburan peranan, konflik peranan dan perasaan sayang terhadap organisasi. Maka, kesemua hipotesis untuk kajian ini adalah diterima. Implikasi dan cadangan untuk kajian pada masa depan juga dibincangkan.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of nine sections. The first section will discuss the background of the study. The second section is the statement of the problem. The next section is about the research objective, which include general objective and specific objectives. Section four shows the conceptual framework of this study. There are four hypotheses stated in the fifth section. The significance of the study is explained in section six. Section seven will discuss the limitation in this study whereas section eight defines the important terms used in the conceptual framework and conclusion is elaborated in the last section, which is section nine.

1.1 Background of the study

In general, stress is defined as the adaptation of response to a situation that is perceived as challenging or threatening that will influence a person's well-being (McShane and Glinow, 2005). Stressors caused by stress, which include any environment condition, social factors that put the physical or emotional impact on the individual (McShane and Glinow, 2005; Dipboye, Smith and Howell, 1994). The subject of role stressors has long been concern in the organizational research, especially role conflict and role ambiguity (Conley & Woosley, 2000). Role stressor has been studied by researchers for at least fifty years (Tubre and Collins, 2000).

Traditionally, the result of role stressors, which include both role conflict and role ambiguity, is expanded to incorporate the outcome of organizational commitment (Schaubroeck, Cotton and Jennings, 1989). The result of role stressors only negatively influence on job dissatisfaction, tension, and also withdrawal of employees behavior, which include absenteeism and turnover intention. All of these outcomes are only directly affected by role stressors (Schaubroeck, Cotton and Jennings, 1989).

Recently, role stressor become more important especially for employers as their risk because once employees perceived high level of stressors, this can lead to changes in their organization (Fevre, Matheny and Kolt, 2003). Besides, Beehr, (1995) argues that role stress-outcome relationship is probably "not simple and direct", but, this relationship may be mediated or moderated by the others factors. Organizational commitment is one of the work outcomes. Employees who perceived role stressor will not directly affect the commitment toward organization, instead, job satisfaction that experienced by the employee play a

mediating role in the relationship between role stressors and organizational commitment.

There are different perspectives of role stressors between individual and organizational. In the individual perspective, role stressors will give negative effect for employees, for instance reduced efficiency, decreased capacity to perform, reduced interest in working, increased rigidity of thought, lack of concern for organization and colleagues, and loss of responsibility (Greenberg and Baron, 1995; Matteson and Ivancevich, 1982, as cited in Fairbrother and Warn, 2003), while, in the organizational perspective, role stressors is an “antecedent conditions within one job or the organization which require adaptive responses on the part of employees” (Jex and Beehr 1991). Thus, those employees who are unable to handle both their role stressors (role conflict and role ambiguity) well in performing their job will tend to experience low level of job satisfaction.

1.2 Statement of problem

Early research emphasizes that supervisory style is the factor that contributes to role conflict and role ambiguity among employees (Walker et al. 1975). Role stressors, is the causes of stress, which include any environment condition or social factors that will give negative impact on employees’ emotions and feelings. Role conflict and role ambiguity will lead to psychology strain (Cooper at al., 2001, as cited in Addae, Parboteeah and Velinor, 2008). This can directly affect the effectiveness and efficiency of organizational performance. Role ambiguity arises when an employee does not receive clear direction about what his supervisor or leader is expected from him or her role in the job or organization (Yousef, 2002) and also employee does not know where to direct his or her effort (Michael, Court and Petal, 2009). On the other hand, role conflict can

be referred as “incompatibility in communicated expectations that impinge on perceived role performance” (Rizzo et al., 1970, as cited in Yousef, 2002) and it is related to the differences in conceptual among workers and different supervisor about the content or important of job tasks required (Michael, Court and Petal, 2009). Therefore, if the employees fail to handle role stressors well in performing their job, this could lead to less commitment toward the organization and also the intention to leave organization is high.

Affective commitment can be defined as involvement in, identification with and also emotional attachment to the organizational with employee's sense of strong affective commitment to remain in the organization (Yousef, 2002). Inability of employee to handle his or her role conflict and role ambiguity in performing job had been a determinant of low affective commitment to organization. This is because incompatibility of expectation by supervisor and also the lack of clarity of information to perform their jobs would influence them emotionally to remain in the organization. Yousef (2002) argued that those employee who perceived high level of role stressors (role ambiguity and role conflict) as sources of stress in performing their jobs would be less committed to organization. Several studies have found that negative relationship between role stressors (role conflict and role ambiguity) and affective commitment (Yousef, 2002; Addae, Parboteeah and Velinor, 2008; Michael, Court and Petal, 2009).

Beehr (1995) argued that role stressors-outcome relationship is probably is not simple and directed. Job satisfaction is employee's positive or negative feelings about his or her job (Yousef, 2002). Yousef (2002) found that employees who are unable to properly manage their role conflict and role ambiguity in performing their jobs has been determinant less satisfy with their job, and as consequence, the willingness to remain in organization is less. Hence, job

satisfaction plays a mediating role in the relationship between role stressors and affective commitment.

Although numerous studies have been conducted, the role of job satisfaction as a mediator to affect relationship has not been addressed adequately (Yousef, 2002). On the other hand, Yousef (2002) stated that job satisfaction as mediating role in the relationship between role stressors and affective commitment is designed to address this issue in a non-western country setting, such as Malaysia. This study hopefully will be valuable for both academicians and also practitioners. For academicians, this study will improve their understanding of the potential of job satisfaction act as mediating role between role stressors and affective commitment in a non-western context (Yousef, 2002). In addition, this study will draw practitioners' attention on the effect of role conflict and role ambiguity as the sources of stress on employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment. As the consequent, there are requirement to solve these effect in order to improve job satisfaction among employees and also to increase their affective commitment toward organization.

Hence this motivate the researcher to conduct further study on the relationship between role stressors and affective commitment, in which job satisfaction as mediating role and is used to answer research questions as below:

- i. What is the relationship between role ambiguity and affective commitment?
- ii. What is the relationship between role conflict and affective commitment?
- iii. What is the effect of job satisfaction as a mediating role in the relationship between role ambiguity and affective commitment?
- iv. What is the effect of job satisfaction as a mediating role in the

relationship between role conflict and affective commitment?

1.3 Research objective

1.3.1 General objective

The main objective of this study is to identify mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between role stressors and affective commitment.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives are:

- i. To identify the relationship between role ambiguity and affective commitment
- ii. To identify the relationship between role conflict and affective commitment
- iii. To identify job satisfaction as a mediating role in the relationship between role ambiguity and affective commitment.
- iv. To identify job satisfaction as a mediating role in the relationship between role conflict and affective commitment.

1.4 Conceptual framework

This research framework is adapted from the study that conducted by Yousef (2002) on job satisfaction among the employees working in a number of organizations in the United Arab Emirates.

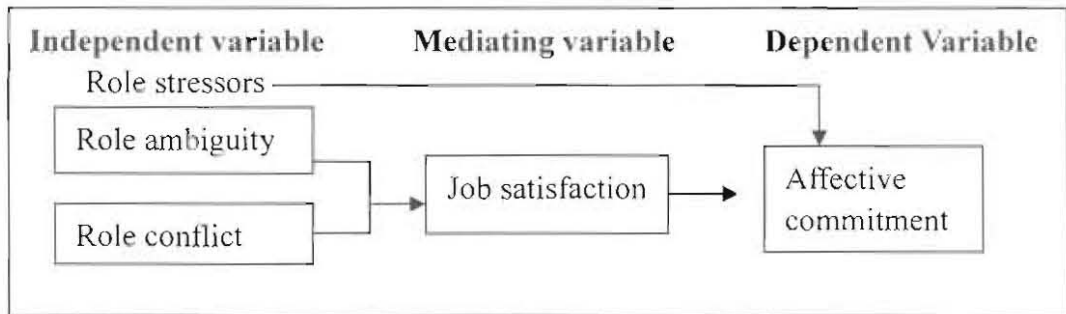


Figure 1.1: Relationship between role stressors and affective commitment:

Job satisfaction as mediating role.

Adapted from Yousef (2002).

1.5 Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study are:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between role ambiguity and affective commitment.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between role conflict and affective commitment.
- H3: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between role ambiguity and affective commitment.
- H4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between role conflict and affective commitment.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study will contribute to two major aspects, which are:

1.6.1 Significance to theory

The existing theory is more focus on job satisfaction, such as theory Y. It gives less emphasis especially role stressors and also affective commitment. Thus, this study will contribute to the existing theory and give better understanding about the relationship between role stressors (role conflict and role ambiguity), job satisfaction and affective commitment. Apart from that, this study also can further strengthen job satisfaction as a mediating role in the relationship between role stressors, especially role conflict and role ambiguity and also affective commitment.

1.6.2 Significance to practitioners

The findings of this study may be used for practitioners to understand the cause of lack of job satisfaction among employees and also to provide the best solution to help in minimizing this problem. Management should bear in mind that any action to improve employees' job satisfaction should take into account the fact that role stressors and affective commitment interact together in their influences on job satisfaction. Therefore, through this study can provide guidelines for practitioners to design the policies of organization to help to reduce stress among employees in order to increase their job satisfaction and affective commitment toward organization.

1.7 Limitation

There are several limitations in this study, which are:

- (i) The respondents can be affected by their mood when they are answering questionnaire distributed by the researcher.
- (ii) The research is only conducted in one organization. Thus, its finding may not be generalized to other organizations with different operation, backgrounds, vision and mission as well as business objective.
- (iii) This study is only using quantitative a method, which is based on questionnaires. The results collected are greatly based on the participants' honesty.

1.8 Definition of terms

1.8.1 Role stressor

Conceptual definition

Role stressor is the cause of stress which include any environment conditions that place a physical or emotion demand on a person (McShane & Glinow, 2005). There are two common elements of role stressors which are role conflict and role ambiguity.

Operational definition

Role stressor in this study refers to internal or external force that causes stress in order to performing their tasks, duties and also to identify their own role within organization. Normally, there are two elements of stressors that will cause stress in working situation such as role conflict and role ambiguity.

1.8.2 Role ambiguity

Conceptual definition

Role ambiguity can be described as the situation where an individual does not have a clear direction about the expectation of his or her role in job or organization (Rizzo et al, 1970).

Operational definition

In this study, role ambiguity refers to an individual that does not have clear direction and information about his or her role in the organization and what he or she is expected to do in his or her own job. It produces an unclear role perception because people are uncertain about their job scope, job description, superior's expectations and performance appraisal practiced.

1.8.3 Role conflict

Conceptual definition

Role conflict refers to incompatibility in communicated expectations that impinge on perceived role performance (Rizzo et al., 1970).

Operational definition

In this study, role conflict refers to an individual within the organization and his or her perceived difference expectations that will influence his or her performance. This conflict can be caused by conceptual differences between employees and their supervisors and incompatibility in terms of instructions received from superiors, organization objectives and job description.

1.8.4 Job satisfaction

Conceptual definition

Job satisfaction in this study refers to the extent to which a worker feels positively or negatively about his or her job (Locke, 1976).

Operational definition

Job satisfaction is described as the positive or negative feelings of an employee toward his or her job, whether he or she is satisfied or