THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB STRESSORS AND MOOD STATES AMONG FIELD SUPERVISORS AT WKB PLANTATION, MIRI

Yong Ling

Bachelor of Science with Honours
(Human Resource Development)
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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB STRESSORS AND MOOD STATES AMONG FIELD SUPERVISORS AT WKB PLANTATION, MIRI

YONG LING

This project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honours (Human Resource Development)

Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
(2015)
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This declaration is made on the 25th day of June, 2015.

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ABSTRAK

HUBUNGAN ANTARA FAKTOR TEKANAN KERJA DAN KEADAAN MOOD DALAM KALANGAN PENYELIA LADANG DI WKB PLANTATION, MIRI

Yong Ling

ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB STRESSORS AND MOOD STATES AMONG FIELD SUPERVISORS AT WKB PLANTATION, MIRI

Yong Ling

This study aims to identify the relationship between job stressors and mood states among field supervisors. Job stressors and mood states of field supervisors received limited research attention. Correlational design and cluster sampling was used in this study. Data from 136 field supervisors working for WKB Plantation were collected. The result of the study indicated that weak relationship between job stressors and mood states among field supervisors in studied plantation. Respondents agree that role ambiguity, co-worker support and conflict at work were related to their mood states. Between the entire job stressors that was selected from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Generic Job Stress Questionnaire (NGJSQ), role ambiguity is the dominant factor that influence mood states of field supervisors. Furthermore, the theoretical and practical implications of the findings were discussed in detail and directions for future research were identified.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

These researches study the relationship between job stressors and field supervisor's mood states at WKB Plantation. This chapter included 9 sections such as background of the study, problem statement, objective, research question, research hypothesis, conceptual framework, significance of the study, limitation of the study, definition of terms and summary. First and foremost, researcher will introduce the profile of the organization in order to improve the understanding of reader in the background of the organization. Relevant literature of the past, newspaper clippings, related report and statistic was used to introduce some issues that pertinent to the topic or area of study. Besides, researcher will describe and argue with literature to support the problem statement that related to this study. Furthermore, research will provide the objective and hypothesis in detail and let the reader understand by laying down the research question which parallel with the objective.

Apart from that, conceptual framework was proposed with independent and dependent variables to describe the research framework which helps in strengthen the concept of the study. Indeed, definition of terms related to this study was defined for the purpose to increase the understanding of topic. Predicted contributions to the study are stated in significance of the study whereas the anticipated of this study was discussed in limitation of the study.
1.1 Background of the Study

1.1.1 Issues of Oil Palm Plantation in Malaysia

Recently, Malaysia turned to be one of the major producer and exporter of palm oil. Malaysia has 5.1 million hectares of oil palm, which makes up of 1.97% of the total 258.9 million hectares planted globally in December 2012. Oil palm plantations make up 15% of total land area in Malaysia. Yet, Malaysia can supply 10.0% which is 18.8 million tonnes of oil and fats globally (Palm Oil Facts and Figures, 2014). Palm oil in Malaysia helps to boost exports, foster economic growth, and create jobs in rural communities (Szulczyk, 2014). In Malaysia, the industry provides direct employment for about 570,000 peoples (Palm Oil Facts and Figures, 2014). Contextualizing the topic in Sarawak, there were 98,092 workers presently employed by the oil palm plantations (Planters Seek Government’s Nod, 2014). One of the famous oil palm plantations around Sarawak is W Plantation.

1.1.2 Responsibilities of Field Supervisors in WKB Plantation

WKB Plantation and WKT Plantation were under a W Plantation. By July 2013, W Plantation has 10,000 employees in which 8,000 are mostly Indonesians working in the oil palm plantations and the rest is locals (Sman, 2013). All of the foreign worker must be supervised by their field supervisors.

The responsibility of field supervisors in WKB plantation is to supervise the foreign workers which involve water management, fertilizer and nutrient management, integrated pests and disease management, replanting practices, nursery management and fruit picking management. Sometimes, field supervisors also included in weeding and paving management and solving conflict between foreign workers. Thus, field supervisors need to handle many things related to their job and it is undeniable that job stress will increase among field supervisors.
1.1.3 Job Stress and Mood States

Job stress has always been a hot topic as far as a job. Mansoor, Fida, Nasir, and Ahmad (2011) mentioned that job stress is considered the most critical workplace health risks in developed and developing countries. According to MacDonald, Deddens, Grajewski, Whelan, and Hurrell (2003), chronic job stressors such as conflict at work, high mental demand and low supervisory support were associated with fatigue among women. Job stressors are “the multiple psychosocial factors at work thought to impact the health and well-being of employees” (Wiegand, Chen, Hurrell, Jex, Nakata, Nigam, Robertson, and Tetrick, 2012, p. 350). For instance, when employees are low in their mood state, it will discourage them and decrease their job performance. Indirectly, it will also decrease the profit of an organization. Thus, most organization emphasizing on training, coaching and mentoring on individual mental health to enhance employee’s in good mood and increase the performance of employee at work in order to protect their profit.

According to Forgas (1998), people every day mood will be influenced by different social and psychological phenomena such as attributions, social decisions and judgement, and intergroup discrimination. Brown and Mankowski (1993) mentioned that mood was also influence by people’s self-esteem. Besides, Smith-Lovin (1990) claimed that people usually explains mood as one of the role of human behaviours.

According to George and Bettenhausen (1990), Pelled and Xin (1999), Zellars, Hochwarter, Perrew’e, Hoffman and Ford (2004) and Dyrbye, Freischlag, and Kaups (2012), mood states are important to be studied for many reasons. Firstly, mood states not only influence the individuals in their work condition but they also influence interaction with family member which deeply related to their behaviour. Secondly, a person with more positive mood state is very optimistic. They tend to give good and quality service. Besides, a greater sense of accomplishment was also shown by individual who have positive mood state. Thirdly, people with negative mood state may give poor service. Furthermore, frequent bad mood increase workers absenteeism, turnover rate and expected to contribute tendencies to depersonalize worker’s patient.
1.2 Problem Statement

1.2.1 Relationship between Job Stressors and Mood States has Less been Studied

During the 80s, researchers from western countries such as DeLongis et al. (1982), Eckenrode (1984), and Kanner et al. (1981) mention that, there have the increasingly percentage of everyday stressors that influence health and psychological wellbeing. Job stress is one of the stress that people may face in their working day (Bolger, Delongis, Kessler, & Schilling, 1989). Job stress can be defined in physical and emotional responses that occur when employee cannot match the requirements of the job in term of capabilities, resources, or needs (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health [NIOSH], 1998). Furthermore, NIOSH (1998) also provide some work condition that lead to job stress for example the design of task, management style, interpersonal relationship, work roles, career concerns and environment condition. There were many related research done by previous researcher such as job stress and job dissatisfaction (Mansoor, Fida, Nasir, & Ahmad, 2011), job stress and job performance (Bashir & Ramay, 2010; Ahmed & Ramzan, 2013), daily event and mood states (Bolger, Delongis, Kessler, & Schilling, 1989) and factor in job that lead to stress (job stressors) (Rahim and Psenicka, 1996). However, job stressor is an issue which seldom being study with mood states and it is less in focus in Malaysia context.

1.2.2 The linkage between Job Stressor and The Outcome

Previous research related to job stressor was done by MacDonald et al. (2003) to study about the relationship of job stressors (independent variable) with psychological distress which included anger, anxiety, fatigue and depression, perceived stress and job dissatisfaction (dependent variable). They found that relationships between independent and dependent variable existed. These features can affect the work performance of employee. However, there still a gap between to link job stressors to job dissatisfaction and work performance. MacDonald et al. (2003) therefore encouraged reader to further study the collective results in their paper which related to the association between job stressor and psychological distress, perceived stress and job dissatisfaction. Thus, researcher wants to study the relationship between job stressors and mood state to predict the linkages between job stressors and perceived stress or job dissatisfaction.
1.2.3 Mood States

Doan (2012) claimed that future research needs to put little effort to study or make better understanding in the transformation of an emotion into a mood. He also mentioned that every area of study define mood differently but the important point is how these mood states come about in the first place. It is crucial to explain their effects and addressing social disparities in mood-related phenomena such as depression (Simon & Lively, 2010) and intergroup discrimination (Forgas & Fiedler, 1996).

1.2.4 Determine Whether Mood State Cause by Certain Job Stressor

Murphy (2000) studied the relationship between mental health, workplace and outcome of anxiety, stress and mood. In the study, he encouraged future researcher to learn something from limitation of study that done by Rahim and Psenicka (1996). Rahim and Psenicka (1996) proposed a structural equation models on psychiatric symptomatology and use it as the key components to test the stress relationship. However, they are not aware of earlier stress researcher’s advice to differentiate types of social support (supervisor, co-workers, friends and family) that may influence mood states. This omission led to the result that social support was not found to be a significant moderating variable.

Furthermore, 29 items that related to psychiatric symptomatology was outlined as independent variable in the study done by Rahim and Psenicka (1996). The psychiatric symptoms (dependent variable) that they purported to measure included, first, cognitive disturbance that about difficulty concentrating or remembering things; second, anxiety; third, depression and fourth, anger which refer to frequency of losing control on temper, becoming easily upset about relatively unimportant things (Murphy, 2000). Later on, they developed a causal model known as stress paradigm which include all four of these conditions and that is the first in that research area.

However these authors made an error that they treat all psychiatric symptomatology as if they were the same. Therefore, Murphy (2000) argue that the results become less meaningful as the reader is left to guess what aspects of psychiatric symptomatology were significantly related to psychiatric symptoms, known as mood states by McNair, Lorr, and Droppleman (1992).
Therefore, researcher emphasizes in studying the relationship between job stressors and mood states of employee of in field supervisors. Field supervisors are core employee in the oil palm plantation industry because the achievement and success of plantation industry depended on their supervision. Employer need to consider field supervisors mood state because they spent large portion of their time in the plantation. According to MacDonald et al. (2003), certain job stressors have relationship with mood states of employee. Researcher want to conduct this study also due to Bolger et al. (1989) suggest that future researcher to study the relationship in specific stressors that should focus intensively on mood or emotion. The purpose of this study is to posit the conditions under which job stressors is more likely to lead which mood states via relationship study.

1.3 Research Objective

Objective of this research is divided into a general objective and 9 specific objectives. The general objective and specific objective is stated as follow.

1.3.1 General Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to determine the relationship between job stressors and mood states among field supervisors.

1.3.2 Specific Research Objective

In specific, this study was conducted:

a) To determine the relationship between role ambiguity and mood states.
b) To determine the relationship between role conflict and mood states.
c) To determine the relationship between supervisor support and mood states.
d) To determine the relationship between co-worker support and mood states.
e) To determine the relationship between mental demand and mood states.
f) To determine the relationship between conflict at work and mood states.
g) To determine the relationship between workload and mood states.
h) To determine the relationship between job security and mood states.
i) To identify the dominant stressor that influence mood states.
1.4 Research Question

This study attempted to find out the answer to the following question:

1.4.1 General Research Question

What is the relationship between job stressor and mood states?

1.4.2 Specific Research Question

a) What is the relationship between role ambiguity and mood states?
b) What is the relationship between role conflict and mood states?
c) What is the relationship between supervisor support and mood states?
d) What is the relationship between co-workers support and mood states?
e) What is the relationship between mental demand and mood states?
f) What is the relationship between conflict at work and mood states?
g) What is the relationship between workload and mood states?
h) What is the relationship between job security and mood states?
i) What is the dominant stressor that influences mood states?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

Research hypothesis is outline into a general and 9 specific hypothesis.

1.5.1 General Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between job stressor and mood states.
1.5.2 Specific Null Hypothesis

The specific hypotheses were formulated for this study as shown in Table 1.5.2.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₀₂</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between role conflict and mood states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₀₃</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between supervisor support and mood states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₀₄</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between co-worker support and mood states.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H₀₅</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between mental demand and mood states.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H₀₆</td>
<td>There is no significant relationship between conflict at work and mood states.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H₀₇</td>
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<td>H₀₉</td>
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</table>

1.6 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework includes independent variable and dependent variable. Independent variable have tendency to influence dependent variable. The purpose of study is to determine the relationship between selected job stressors and mood states. The independent variable in this study is selected job stressors that included role ambiguity, role conflict, supervisor support, co-worker support, mental demand, task control, conflict in work and job security which were taken from NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaire. On the other hand, dependent variable is mood states that included anger, confusion, depression, fatigue and vigour which were taken from Profile of Mood States. Conceptual framework of this study is shown in figure 1.6.