



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**WORK STRESS AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG THE ROYAL
MALAYSIAN POLICE (RMP) OFFICERS IN NEGERI SEMBILAN.**

Nurhafira binti Alfi

**Bachelor of Science with Honours
(Human Resource Development)**

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The project entitled 'Work Stress and Coping Strategies among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) Officer in Negeri Sembilan' was prepared by Nurhafira binti Alfi and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honours (Human Resources Development).

Received for examination by:



Dr Hana Hamidi
Deputy Dean (Undergraduate)
Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

(Dr. Hana binti Hamidi)

Date:

9/8/2021

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NURHAFIRA BINTI ALFI (67291)

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Dr Hana Hamidi
Deputy Dean (Undergraduate)
Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

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Supervisor's signature: 
Dr Hana Hamidi
Deputy Dean (Undergraduate)
Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
(Date)
9/8/2021

Current Address: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak,
Jalan Dato' Musa,
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ABSTRACT

Police throughout the world are confronting new problems in the globalized era. Concerns with crime control include terrorism, globalization, large-scale population migrations, and persistent socioeconomic issues. This study aimed to explore the work stress and coping strategies among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) in Negeri Sembilan. Researchers used a qualitative and case study approach, as well as a six-phase framework analysis to perform theme analysis. The result showed that the circumstance that causes police officer work pressure were excessive workload, irregular working hours, poor work-life balance, low salary, rank gap and public criticism. It is also found that there were two type of work stress effect by police officer in which were physical and psychological ill health. In this study also found that the approach to managing work stress of police officer were self-control, health and welfare management system of RMP and supporting family. Additional future studies was needed to solve the limitations, research gaps and literature gaps of work stress and coping strategies among police officer.

Keywords: the type of police work stress, the effect of work stress, approaches to manage work stress s

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The core of this research is to study the work stress and coping strategies among the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) officers in Negeri Sembilan. This chapter consists of several sections. The first section describes the background of the current study. The next section elaborates the problem statement followed by stating the research objectives and questions. The significance and limitation of the study were also discussed, then by defining several important terms used in this study. This chapter ends with a summary.

1.1 Background of Study

Work stress is an individual challenge that they frequently encounter, regardless of the type of work they do. Past studies have examined many of the factors that cause work stress and the impact of work stress on individuals. According past studies, job stress not only leads to negative effects, but can also have positive consequences if the worker makes the stress a motivator and an incentive to improve for the better. This explains that stress comes not only from external factors, but can also come from internal factors (KAMARUDIN, 2013). Police are often exposed to dangerous and traumatic events triggered by nature or human activity such as terrorist acts, so it is important to alert of the need to assess the psychological impact burden resulting from engaging in critical incidents (Regehr, 2019)

Burnout and stress among police officers had received increased attention from the research community and society due to the psychological distress they inflict on individuals, but also due to their impact on the performance of police officers and their experiences with

civilians, which has led to an increased likelihood that all interactions are considered a threat or a tendency to use excessive force (Cristina Queirós, 2020). When police officers work under pressure and treat people differently, thus an organization's negative reputation can be impressed where confidence and legitimacy are vitiated while trust and legitimacy are not easily recovered once lost. In this context, stress causes irritability, which reduces the continuity of officers' decisions and makes them vulnerable to aggression and rage (Shane, 2010).

Stress in the workplace has negative effects on employees and organisations psychological and physical health (Ivana Katić, 2019). Therefore, the physical health, psychological well-being, safety and efficiency at work are important factors for any police agency to consider. Fatigued or tired police officers are a danger to themselves as well as the public they serve (John M. Violanti, 2016). According to research on police officer stress stated that 39% of the officers in the study experienced some level of stress. The number of respondents in the extremely stressed category was very small. Combined this category with severe stress of the officers in the sample, 5.9% had experienced severe stress, 14.9% moderate stress and 18.0% mild stress (Retneswari Masilamani, 2013)

1.2 Problem of Statement

This research is aimed at to examine the factors of work stress and stress coping strategies among Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) officers in Negeri Sembilan. This is because policing is one of the most stressful occupations (Amrit Purba, 2019). Most of the previous researcher also have done a study about police officer.

One of the past studies is by Irniza R (2015) that explained the potential stress factors of the police officers. The factor that has been highlighted is that the work area of police officers is found to have a big impact of their work stress. For example, police who work at urban or city such Kuala Lumpur have faces stress because of financial challenges due to high living rates and low wages (The Star, 2013). Moreover, the risks of the work environment associated with law enforcement work, such as job shifts and high crime environments, can lead to tension (Lily Chi-Fang Tsai, 2017). Massive support for the employees would improve the levels of job satisfaction and psychological well-being among police (Dr. Tulsee Giri Goswami, 2015). Therefore, this research must also be carried out by the compilation of data in order to obtain more reliable responses.

Moreover, Police officers who are stressed at work tend to bring the stressful mood back home or even with the families (Satoris S. Youngcourt, 2005). According to Della-Rossa (2014), work family conflict has been describe as bidirectional, where family demand interfere work or where work demand hinder handling of family responsibilities. Officers are less likely to express work-related thoughts, worries and needs while at home. This causes them emotionally distant from their families and more secretive and suspicious. The inability to reconcile work and home life will influence marital and romantic relationships by impacting one's physical and emotional well-being. When people indicated that their work activities were incompatible with their planned actions at home, they anticipated a lot of burnouts. (Dacey, 2019).

Another study about integrity among RMP (Bakri et al. 2015). Finding of this past study shown that public perception about police susceptibility to unethical behaviour as rumours without empirical support. However, if people are dissatisfied with the actions of the police, this would be reflected in their attempts to support the police with factual information. In fact, it leads to a process of decreased productivity of the police, increased crime and more mistrust

of the police (Rout, 2017). It has been stated that the risk of being unfairly humiliated creates apprehension and an inability to obey the use of force rules that could threaten the life of officers. The perceived loss of community support has a negative effect on the stress of officers and can cause hesitation in the sector, placing officers at greater risk of injury and stress. (Jessica Saunders, 2019).

1.3 Objective

The objectives of this study are divided into two, that is general objectives and the specific objectives. Further explanation of this analysis are as follows:

General objective

This study aims to examine the factors of work stress and stress coping strategies among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) Officers in Negeri Sembilan.

Specific Objective

1. To identify the factors of work stress among Police Officer.
2. To examine the effect of work stress among Police Officer.
3. To study strategies to overcome work stress among Police Officer.

1.4 Research Question.

1. What are the factors that cause work stress on Police Officer?
2. What is the effect of work stress on the daily life of a Police Officer?
4. What is the strategies to coping work stress of Police Officer?

1.5 Research framework

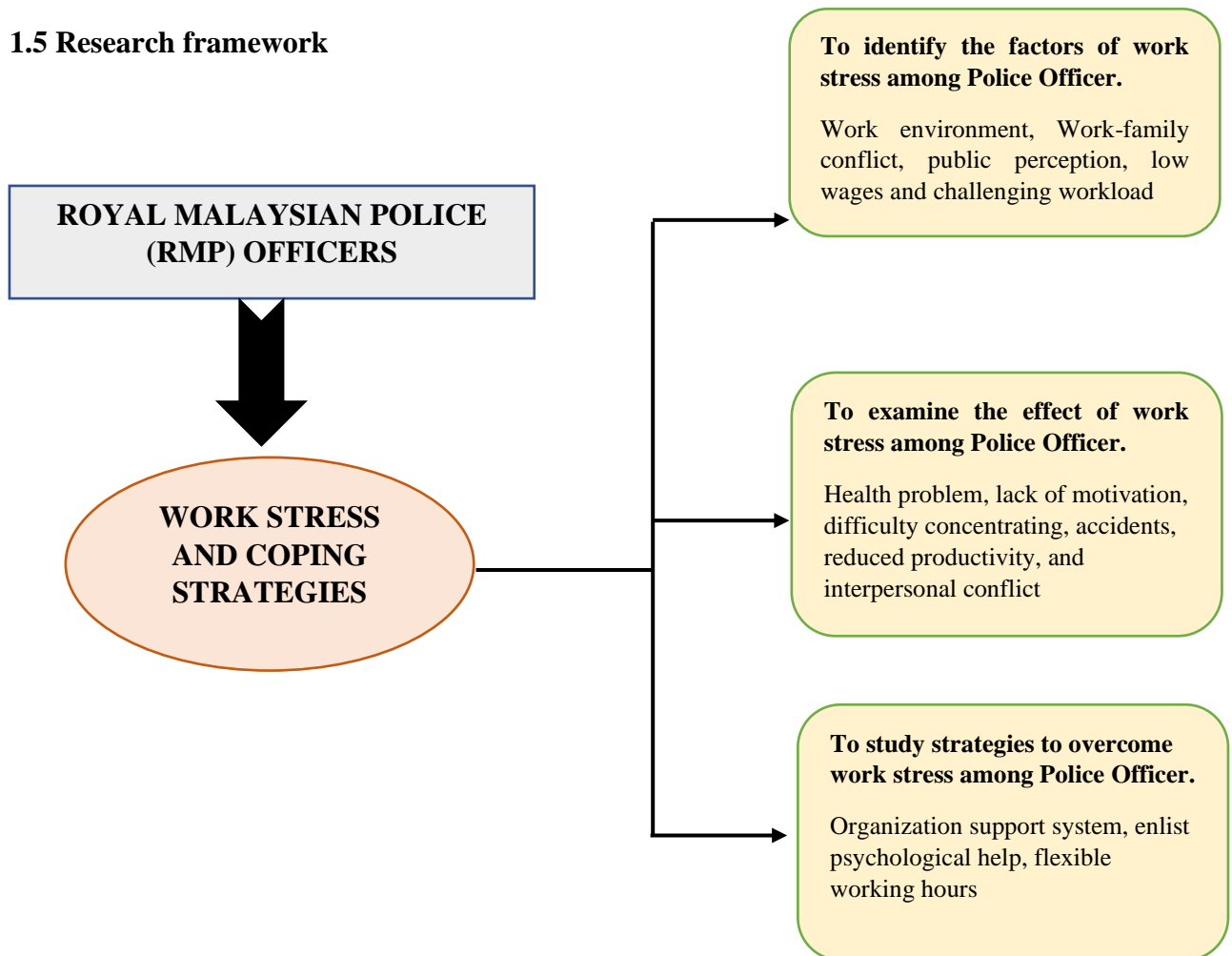


Figure 1: Research Framework

1.6 Significance of the study

This study relates in part to issues regarding work stress among Police Officers of Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). Workload can affect work performance and stress on a Police Officer. In the field of human resources, key aspects of staff development such as work stress problems in the workplace need to be given serious attention by management. This is because workers play an important role in influencing the productivity of a country. Through this study, it is hoped that the government can strengthen training in human resources in order to improve the quality of workers in performing their duties. In addition, the researcher hopes that this study can help future researchers in terms of study highlights. Future researchers can use this study as a reference. In addition, this study can add knowledge to anyone who reads this study.

Next, this study involves qualitative methods as a means of data collection. Qualitative method is a simple method for data collection study. This is because qualitative methods can be implemented through interview sessions and the information obtained is also more detailed. Researchers can dig deeper topics from respondents or informants. Through the interview session, the researcher needs to ask questions that are consistent with the study conducted. Qualitative methods help researchers to obtain affordable and clear data.

It is hoped that this study can provide benefits and awareness to the relevant parties, especially in the field of police. This study aims to help Police Constable in order to be more sensitive to work performance in carrying out daily tasks. They should also be wise in dealing with the work stress faced either from external or internal factors. Work stress can be reduced when an individual successfully identifies the stress that leads to self-frustration and can control self-emotion is the result of a well-managed level of emotional intelligence. Therefore, knowledge of the level of work stress among employees in an organization is very important to ensure that stress is successfully overcome effectively.

1.7 Limitation of Study

While doing this there are some limitations that need to be faced. The focus of this study is limited to one place only. The study was also conducted through interview methods and information that can be based on the respondents. Therefore, the information or data received may be different because it depends on the cooperation of the respondents while answering the questions. In addition, the number of respondents interviewed is also limited to a few people only. The study conducted only involved Police Officer. The study area conducted also has a limit that is only done in Negeri Sembilan. Respondents interviewed were Police Officers at the Police Contingent Headquarters (IPK), District Police Headquarters (IPD) and police stations around Negeri Sembilan. All findings from the results of the study conducted are only suitable to be generalized in the police organization only.

Next, the limitation of this study is to examine the work stress faced by Police Officers. Researchers only study the factors of work stress among Police Officers. The researcher also analyses strategies to overcome the work stress of Police Officers. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to further diversify studies on policing that affect job performance.

1.8 Definition of Term

Table 1: Definition of term

Terms	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition
Stress	Stress is triggered by a set of requirements (stressors), such as a lack of fit between what we need and what we can do and what we demand from our environment.	Stress is an adaptive reaction to potential threats or hazards with physiological, cognitive, emotional and behavioral components.
Royal Malaysian Police (RMP)	RMP is organized as a national service and its duties are very extensive. National here means the police force is organized as a non-State Federal body or service. It is controlled by the central government.	RMP is responsible for maintaining peace and national security as well as being responsible for intelligence functions. In the context of national security, the experience gained is invaluable and allows the RMP to face threats either from Communist or non-Communist.

Coping strategy	Coping strategy is an event, a sequence of actions or an idea mechanism used to meet or change one's reaction to a stressful or unpleasant situation	Steps to attempt to reduce stressors by taking direct action, increasing commitment and consistently attempting to deal with them.
Non-gazetted officer	A lower rank of police officers. The lower rank start with Sub inspector, Sergeant Major, Sergeant, Corporal, Lance Corporal and Constable.	Lower ranks of police officers apart from Sub-Inspectors wear their rank insignia on the right sleeve of their uniforms. Sub-Inspectors and higher ranks wear their rank insignia on epaulets on both shoulders.

1.9 Chapter Summary

In general, this chapter discusses the background of the study, objectives, research questions, significances of the study, limitations of the study and also definition of term. Apart from that, this chapter has also discussed the importance of the results of the studies conducted. The importance of this study will indirectly help future researchers. In addition, this study is important to human resource managers in ensuring that the training courses held will produce productive findings while producing proactive and highly skilled employees.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter elaborated further on the concepts, models and theories related to qualitative research on work stress and coping strategies among Police Officers in Negeri Sembilan. In addition, this chapter will also discuss past studies related to this topic.

2.1 Research issues

The issue of research is the busy shift of police officers who have less time to rest (C. Ma, 2015). They cannot spend time with their beloved family. The circumstance has put pressure on them. In addition, the workload is not sufficient for their job income. The wages of police officer in Malaysia between RM1,100 to RM1,140 and RM1,300 to RM1,700 per month is considered unrelated to the cost of living, especially in the case of capital (Fuad, 2019). Researchers noticed that this problem is placing pressure on police officers. During the interview session, the details on this issue will be highlighted.

2.2 Related Theory

2.2.1 General adaptation syndrome (GAS)

Dr Hans Selye introduced General Adaptation Syndrome (G.A.S). There are 3 basic levels of development that occur under stress, namely the level of preparedness and alertness (alarm reaction), the level of resistance (stage of resistance) and the level of fatigue (stage of exhaustion). Selye presents three general adjustment syndrome stages that include levels of anger response, levels of dismissal, and levels of fatigue. A worker suffering from job stress uses all his resources and energy to work intensely to cover his failure to work, if this occurs

in a short time, then stress may be something that helps workers work better, so if the stress continues for a long time, employees with high intensity can experience depression and physical, physiological, emotional and even mental problems as a result of high intensity employees (Crevecoeur, 2016).

2.2.2 Cooper and Marshall's model of work-related stress

Cooper and Marshall's model work-related stress (1976) describes the causes of stress at work, variables that decide how a person will respond to those stressors, undergo acute symptoms, and ultimately enter the process of chronic illness that affects one's physical and/or mental health. This model deals with the long-term effects of work-related stress, as well as the immediate manifestations of work-related stress, the causes of stress, and the individual features associated with it. (Sheena Johnson, 2005)

2.3 Discussion of past similar study

A research on job tension in police departments was carried out by Rogis Baker (2014): a report from the perspective of emotional intelligence. This past research revealed that as a police officer, the job is more vulnerable to work pressures than most civil servants. The career challenges faced by police officers are primarily from corporate bureaucratic systems, unpredictable workloads, operating hours, and demanding job demands. Based on the scientific research presented, it has been shown that the problem of job tension in the police organisation cannot be overlooked by both sides. Not only can the personality and physiology of the police officer themselves be influenced by job stress, but even more, in terms of the appearance and standard of service delivery to the society, it can have a negative effect on the police department.

2.4 Chapter Summary

Briefly, this chapter addresses the topics of events, models and related theories, as well as past research by previous scholars. In order to make the analysis more current and relevant to the present, these past studies were used as a reference.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will describe the study design, population, study sample and sampling methods, research instruments, reliability and validity, research ethics, data collection techniques and data analysis procedures will be discussed. All data collected will provide a comprehensive overview of the study design and why the instrument is used in conducting this study.

3.1 Research Design

3.1.1 Exploratory Design

According to Akhtar (2017), research design is the preparation of strategies to conduct this research is an important thing that should be considered in formulating research. Every information that needs to be achieved must be recorded to avoid ambiguity at the next level. Work in research design, beginning after problem selection and ending before data collection. The gap between the two should be carefully bridged with a planned research design. Therefore, it can be said that research design should contain detailed information on Research topics.

The reason of using exploratory design in this study is to explore and find out deep information of the concepts which are related to the study. In this study, the focus is work stress and coping strategy among police officer. The data and information collected will be based on the existing theories and models. The feedback from the informants was to explore the factors that cause their work stress and also to find the strategy to cope with the stress.

3.2 Research Method

3.2.1 Qualitative Research

Through this study, the researcher chose to use qualitative research. This is used to gain an understanding of the underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. This provides insights into problems or helps develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. Qualitative research is often used to unravel reasoning and opinion patterns and look further into issues. Any typical approaches include group meetings, individual interviews, and participation/observations. Sample sizes are typically limited, and respondents are chosen to fulfil particular quotas. Researchers also chose to use the interview method. This is to encourage informant to give their own opinions, freedom of ideas and recount their own experiences of work stress and problem strategies in users of police officers. From this interview method as well, the researcher can know for sure the opinions and perceptions given by the informants about this study clearly.

3.3 Population, sample and sampling procedures

In statistics, the population is a whole category that needs some knowledge to be calculated. When choosing a demographic for the study, the research issue or intent of the study will suggest the appropriate description of the population to be analysed in terms of position and weaknesses for a specific age group, gender or occupation. Population must be fully determined so that those included and excluded are clearly stated.

The population in this sample consists of policemen in the district of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. A total of 15 informants are required in this analysis since the data collected from these informants cannot always be included in total. In fact, the number of constable police officer who need to be interviewed is too difficult to estimate since certain informants do not

know how to state the questions to be answered correctly. Just five informants were required after the analysis. This is because the data has been at a stage of saturation.

The selection of the sample is directly sampled (purposive sampling) because this study only requires police officers in Negeri Sembilan District only. Sampling is used to gather information from a specific sample group and coincides with the objectives of the study. In this research its only focus on particular characteristic of a population which is the informant are a married Police officer and non-gazetted officers in RMP.

3.4 Research Instrument

3.4.1 Planned and Unplanned Interview

For this study, a planned interview, unplanned interview and audio recording were used as instruments.

Semi-structured questions will be prepared before the interview to help the researcher while the unplanned questions will appear during the interview to provide the researcher with additional information. During the session, extra data will be obtained for the research in accordance with the subject matter.

Audio recording or voice recorder is one of the tools that allows the researcher to return back to and hear the interview session again and again so that critical information is not missed during the data analysis session at a later stage.

3.4.2 INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is Nurhafira binti Alfi and I am currently enrolled in the third year of the University Malaysia Sarawak. I am conducting research in partial fulfilment of the criteria for the bachelor of science with honours in Human Resources Development (HRD).

- I want to remind you about the project as previously mentioned in my e-mail to you and what my goal is by talking to you today. I am conducting the factors of work stress and stress coping strategies among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) police officers in Negeri Sembilan.

- My goal is by conducting this interview, I would able to know what is the cause of constable officer work stress and find out how they coping the stress.

- While I want to listen to and tell others about your experiences, I want to assures all of your answers will be kept confidential and private if you don't want to share to anyone.

- I want your permission to record the interview so that the details I convey can be properly recorded. If you want to stop using the recorders or the interview at any point during the interview, please let me know then I will need to take notes.

- Reports: I will be writing a report based on the finding. I will do recommendations and suggestions based on the finding. Would you like to receive a copy of the report?

- Do you have any question about the project? Or about I have told you so far?

I am going to ask you question now about your experience in handling work stress and stress coping strategies among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP).

Introduction and about their career

Possible Probes:

- Can you briefly introduce yourself? What is your full name and how old are you?
- What is your job position in Royal Malaysian Police (RMP)?
- Can you describe the scope of your job position?
- How long you have been in the services?