



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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ISSN: 2222-6990

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i12/15924> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i12/15924

**Received:** 19 October 2022, **Revised:** 21 November 2022, **Accepted:** 06 December 2022

**Published Online:** 24 December 2022

**In-Text Citation:** (Rajandiran et al., 2022)

**To Cite this Article:** Rajandiran, S., Wahat, N. W. A., & Subramaniam, A. (2022). Psychosocial Safety Climate in the Malaysian Context: A Systematic Literature Review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(12), 1340 – 1350.

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**Vol. 12, No. 12, 2022, Pg. 1340 – 1350**

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## Psychosocial Safety Climate in the Malaysian Context: A Systematic Literature Review

Surekha Rajandiran<sup>1</sup>, Nor Wahiza Abdul Wahat<sup>2</sup>, Anusuiya Subramaniam<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia, <sup>2</sup>Department of Professional Development & Continuing Education, Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia,

<sup>3</sup>School of Business and Economics, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia.

Email: surekha\_2301@yahoo.co.uk, wahiza@upm.edu.my, anusuiya@upm.edu.my

### Abstract

As a climate that represents organizational engagement, management commitment, organizational communication, and priority regarding employee psychological safety health, the psychosocial safety climate (PSC) is envisioned as existing in every firm. As a chosen environment built for mental wellbeing inside the work environment, studies uncover that PSC is elucidated to numerous parts of mental wellbeing like burnout, depression, and anger. In Western literature, the topic of PSC has received more and more attention as a significant construct. However, in the Asian context, PSC has not been thoroughly examined before. This review's objective is to investigate PSC in the Malaysian context across various occupations. The reviewed articles were obtained from one main database, specifically Google Scholar. The search process made use of the keywords in the titles and abstracts, such as "psychosocial safety climate" and "psychosocial safety climate in Malaysia". It resulted in 10 articles that satisfied the requirements. This review identified the main factors as work engagement, emotional demands, emotional exhaustion, job performance, job resources, counterproductive work behavior and job content. Numerous studies on PSC are needed in the future to expand its influence on work and health outcomes. The evidence currently available is limited.

### Introduction

Health is at the heart of the bright future of Malaysian industry. Malaysian organizations are now more concerned about work-related stress; yet, 70% of Malaysian workers encounter work-related stress (Javaid, 2017). Only four industrial cases of "psychosocial issues" under "categories of diseases" and 344 cases of mental health were recorded by Malaysia's Department of Occupational Safety and Health and Social Security Organization by the year 2015. The industry in Malaysia is dominated by occupational diseases such as physical, chemical, biological and many other environmental factors (DOSH, 2016). The psychosocial

climate is often considered a global problem and has affected various occupations in the developed countries.

Psychosocial safety climate (PSC) is the common understanding of company guidelines, practices, and procedures for protecting workers' mental health and safety (Dollard & Bakker, 2010). When discussing working conditions, the terms "organizational factors" and "psychosocial factors" are frequently used interchangeably, which can lead to stress. (Ashforth, 1985). The concept of organizational climate is multifaceted and a social construct that represents how employees perceive both the organizational environment (such as household pressures) and personal characteristics that may affect the emergence of workplace stress. When referring to workplace situations that could cause stress, the terms organizational factors and psychosocial factors are frequently used interchangeably (Ashforth, 1985). The PSC model says that PSC is the foundation for work conditions that cause burnout, engagement, and performance (Idris et al., 2011). According to Zadow and Dollard (2015), the organizational climate may include a PSC component that is specific to a given facet. It is viewed as a corporate atmosphere made up of individual recognitions for practices, methods, approaches, and other desired outcomes, like productivity. These are exemplified by: 1) management's commitment and support; 2) management's prioritization of the PSC; 3) communication within the organization; and 4) participation within the organization and they are related to the regard for the psychosocial wellbeing and security of representatives within the work environment.

According to this definition, the organization is concerned with controlling and preventing psychosocial risks at work. The association at that point makes a climate of trust and respect, where representatives see that administration gives adequate significance to them, taking care of their mental well-being (Dollard & Bakker, 2010). In addition, encouraging a robust PSC implies a persuasive communication framework at all organizational levels, in which representatives and senior management converse about issues that will affect mental health and safety. Workers discuss safety and well-being issues, as well as how approaches and procedures handle this (Zadow & Dollard, 2015). Representatives, unions and representatives for health and safety are among the partners who must support and attend meetings for a strong PSC to be established within the context of global wellbeing and safety.

As a result, employees in organizations with a high level of PSC enjoy psychological fitness and well-being and the support of senior management (Bond et al., 2010). Along with not fearing repercussions, they feel that their worries about their psychological fitness may be addressed, discussed, and expressed at all levels of the business (Mansour & Tremblay, 2019). PSC is a prerequisite for workplace settings that deal with psychological risk and security. According to Dollard and Bakker (2010); Hall et al (2010); Idris et al (2014); Idris et al (2010), these in turn lead to psychological health deterioration.

However, Asian tradition has not fully explored the concept of PSC in the Malaysian context from a broader perspective. There is currently a lack of information regarding PSC in Malaysia in relation to various occupations in Asian nations. As a result, the goal of this review was to evaluate and synthesize the existing literature on PSC in Malaysia across a variety of occupations in a systematic manner.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Design**

A systematic review of the literature was carried out in this study using pertinent criteria from the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). There are

five sections to it: data abstraction, analysis, eligibility, search strategy, and inclusion and exclusion criteria.

### **Search Strategy**

Through Google Scholar and PubMed, two electronic databases, a methodical search approach was put into practice. The search procedure made use of keywords from the titles and abstracts, such as "psychosocial safety climate in Malaysia" and "psychosocial safety environment." 3750 documents from Google Scholar and PubMed were obtained as a result of this operation.

### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

A timeline was the first requirement for eligibility. The selection covered the five-year period from 2016 to 2021. The second inclusion criterion, document categories, was used to select research articles that used empirical data as primary sources. The third category included articles from business and management, organizational psychology, and social science. They were chosen to make it more likely that related articles would be found. The fourth addition concentrated on English-language articles. Only Asia was selected for this evaluation when it came to the sixth factor. The selection of employee samples from various occupations was the final step. Systematic reviews, meta-analyses, book chapters, review papers, non-research papers, English-language studies, and samples from sources other than workers were excluded, as shown in Table 1. These criteria resulted in the rejection of 4395 items, as depicted in Figure 1. Following the distinguishing strategy, 260 out of 152 papers were saved for the resulting stage.

### **Eligibility**

Sixty-four (64) articles were prepared for the eligibility stage, the third step. Articles are manually included or excluded from eligibility based on the authors' specific criteria. All of the articles' titles, abstracts, and primary contents were reviewed at this point to make sure they were suitable for the current study's purpose and met the inclusion criteria. Duplicate documents were removed before the eligibility process could be completed. A total of 17 articles were traced after duplicate articles were removed from both databases for the subsequent phase. The remaining 64 papers are now ready for analysis.

Table 1

*Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	From 2016 to 2020	< 2015
Types of papers	Journal (research articles)	Review papers, non-research papers, chapters in books, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses
Topical Area	Business and management, organizational psychology, and social science	Other than business and management, organizational psychology, and social science
Region	Asian	Other than Asian
Language	English	Non-English
Sample	Malaysian employees and workers	Patients, students, elderly, children, parents, and foreign employees

**Data Abstraction and Analysis**

After eligibility was determined, the remaining articles were evaluated, reviewed, and analyzed. By reading article titles, abstracts, and complete texts (in-depth), the data for the current study were extracted to identify significant topics and subthemes. The following were the requested responses during the evaluation process: (a) the heading b) the research approach c) the choice of the sample and the study area in (d) 64 items were identified as a result of the above search. After going over the abstracts, 54 papers were taken out because they did not relate to the goals of the research. PSC was either not tested or evaluated among students, patients, the elderly, children, parents, and employees from various nations in these missing papers. Ten articles remained after a thorough review of the entire texts. The summaries of each article included in this review can be found in Tables 2 to 4.

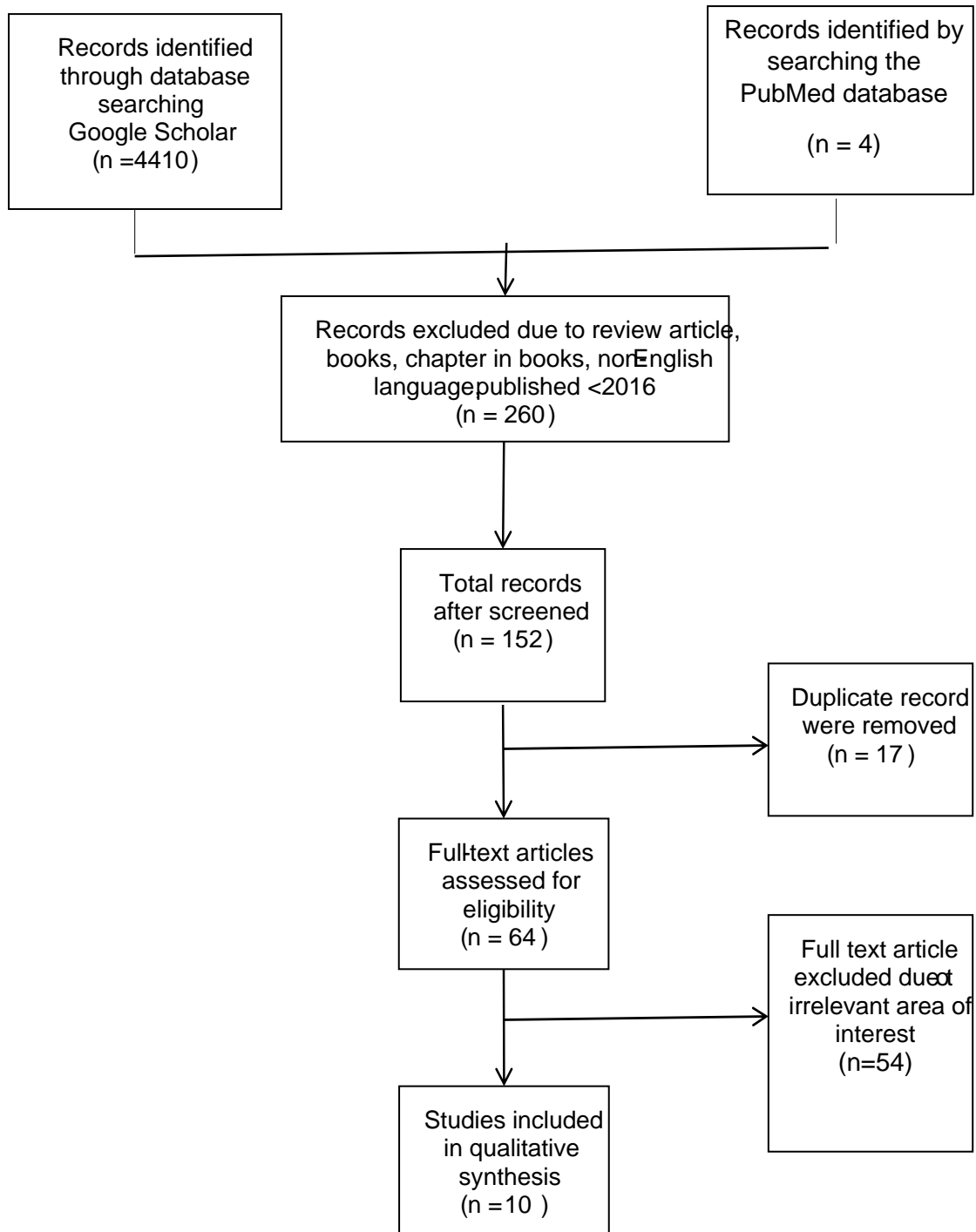


Figure 1: Flow diagram for the systematic literature review process

### Results

The results gave a detailed review of the current PSC and the most significant findings from the investigations.

### Country Setting and Sample Selection

The review comprised 10 studies in total. Each of the investigated studies was conducted in Malaysia, according to Table 2.

**Table 2**

Country

Country	Total
Malaysia	10

In the meantime, research on PSC have recruited samples from many sectors, including manufacturing industries, government and private organizations, healthcare workers, police officers, oil and gas industry employees, and others, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**

Sample

Sample	Total
Healthcare Workers	2
Police Officers	2
Manufacturing Industries	2
Private & Public Industries	2
Oil & Gas Industries	1
Petrochemical Industries	1
	10

### Research Design

The majority of studies (8 articles) used a cross-sectional design in regard to the research design displayed in Table 4, while three studies used a longitudinal design and only one study used a pretest and posttest design.

**Table 4**

Research Design

Research Design	Total
Cross Sectional Design	7
Longitudinal Design	1
Cross Sectional & Longitudinal Design	1
Pretest and Posttest Design	1
	10

### Research Findings

The review led to the identification of the factors and resources that influence the PSC of Malaysian employees in various occupations. There was a total of 10 articles reviewed, including two from healthcare workers. The main article expressed that PSC as a hierarchical asset is a more grounded mediator of the connection between profound requests and mental wellbeing than work task assets and second article found that job characteristics (such as emotional demands and rewards) are influenced by PSC, not the physical safety climate, and that individual outcomes (such as emotional exhaustion and general health complaints) are linked in an indirect way (2 articles from PDRM), The first article demonstrated that the level

of PSC is significantly correlated with team psychological safety and physical safety climate and the second article found that job characteristics (such as emotional demands) are influenced by PSC rather than the physical safety climate., if the PSC operated by enhancing job resources, it could increase workaholism in addition to increasing work engagement. However, this only exists under conditions of low PSC.

Workaholism and psychological distress are mitigated by the secondary function of PSC. Workaholism and psychological distress decrease when PSC is high, indicating that resources are able to perform their mitigation function. The paper provides new evidence in support of PSC's contribution to enhancing worker psychological health, confirming PSC as a leading indicator and highlighting the significance of a motivational path. It is followed by two manufacturing-related articles. Psychosocial stressors (such as job demands, resources, and the environment of psychosocial safety) had a significant impact on emotional exhaustion. The connection between PSC and uncontrolled eating behavior may be mediated by emotional exhaustion predicted by occupational stressors. Psychosocial stressors at work are huge supporters of close to home fatigue, which demonstrates a beneficial outcome on uncontrolled eating and BMI among male Malaysian representatives.

The eight factors that have been retained are as follows: Factor 1 (task and contextual performance), Factor 2 (demands of the job), Factor 3 (unproductive work behavior), Factor 4 (environment and equipment), Factor 5 (content of the job), Factor 6 (career development), and Factor 7 (interpersonal relationships at work). Psychosocial risk factors and work performance are found to have a significant relationship, as is the case with work performance. This study aims to find out if there are psychosocial risk factors in the manufacturing sector that could have an impact on worker performance and well-being.

Following will be two articles from the private and public sectors. The relationship between the Public Service Commission (PSC) and job engagement is mediated by performance feedback and role clarity, according to the first article. There is no direct correlation between job resources and the atmosphere of the team. As was anticipated, the study also revealed that job engagement acts as a mediator between PSC and team climate and job performance. This demonstrates the significance of PSC as the prelude to improved working conditions (i.e., job resources) and the indirect improvement of employee engagement and performance in the workplace. The second article revealed that improving the psychological contract can enhance employee well-being. In addition, a positive employment relationship has been found to play a significant role in employee wellbeing. Another article from the oil and gas industry confirms that psychological distress has a positive effect on safety behaviors when PSC is present. Not only in terms of the direct relationship between psychological distress and psychosocial safety, but also in terms of the indirect effect of PSC on safety behaviors, the findings of this study add significantly to the body of knowledge.

The first study conceptualizes and empirically tests the mediator between PSC and safety behaviors: psychological distress. Psychosocial work environment factor and mean arterial pressure were identified as health measuring variables that predict job demand variables, including quantitative demands, workplace, and emotional demands, in addition to work-family conflicts, job insecurity, and job resources like role clarity. The key findings indicated that both job demand and job resources predict worker health, in accordance with the predictions of the job demands-resources theory.



## Discussion

This review identified the factors and resources that influence the PSC of Malaysian employees in various occupations. According to the results of the review, all the studies conducted in Malaysia involved a variety of occupations, such as healthcare workers, police officers, manufacturing workers, oil and gas industries workers, petrochemical industries workers, private and government employees such as manufacturing workers, academician, federal and local government, bankers, IT employees, construction workers, and services employees (Loh et al., 2018; Loh, 2017; Nuruzzakiyah & Hanida, 2020; Mirza, 2019). Because of this, the sample that was used for this review limited both the generalizability of the findings and the inclusion of additional occupations from a variety of settings.

Concerning research design, the researcher discovered that self-reported data dominated the majority of cross-sectional studies (7 articles) (Loh, 2017; Nuruzzakiyah & Hanida, 2020; Mirza et al., 2019; Javaid et al., 2018; Rasdi et al., 2018; Yulita et al., 2020). In this review, one related study used longitudinal research design (Loh et al., 2018). This may be due to the fact that this design is more convenient and simpler to conduct all at once than longitudinal designs. One is a Pre-Test and Post-Test (Rasdi et al., 2018), and the last is a combination of cross-sectional and longitudinal studies (Yulita et al., 2020).

## Limitations and Recommendations

There may have been difficulties in attempting to generalize the findings among the reviewed studies due to the different sample characteristics, instruments, data collection tools, and operational definitions of the study variables. In addition, this review does not discuss common method bias in cross-sectional designs and there is little evidence to support the use of a longitudinal design to measure this phenomenon. A suggestion for what's in store is to incorporate a conversation of a few strategic constraints that were not sufficiently explored in this survey, like the combination of qualitative, mixed-method, and experimental research designs. Additionally, the time period should be longer than five years.

## Conclusion

This review offers a methodical approach for comprehending the state of psychosocial safety in Malaysia across a variety of data sources, research designs, and analyses. It is hoped that this systematic review will help future researchers gain a deeper comprehension of Malaysia's PSC. The review offers a few recommendations for future research, such as including more samples over longer periods of time and across occupations. Additionally, it is suggested that additional methodological issues, such as experimental, mixed-method, longitudinal, and qualitative research designs, be included in a subsequent review. More research should be done on the Malaysian context's PSC because of the commitment to addressing employee health and work-related outcomes.

Theoretical wise, psychological social climate (PSC) has been identified as a new element that could contribute as a predictor to the relationship between work and organizational factors with safety behaviors. It helps to enrich the Job Resources- Demands Theory. In terms of contextual contribution, the result of this review serves as a strong scientific proposition to further investigate the role and influence of PSC in Asian tradition since there has been lack of information regarding PSC in Malaysia in relation to various occupations in Asian nations.

## Conflict of Interests

The authors affirm that they do not have any competing interests.

## Acknowledgement

The Malaysian Ministry of Health's approval of the study's conduct is gratefully acknowledged by the authors. The administrators of the public hospitals and the nurses who took part in the study are also thanked by the authors.

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