

## The Association Between Work-related Stressors and Work Performance: A Case Study among Executives of Group Human Capital of Maybank Berhad

Izmayani Sa'adin, Abdul Malek A. Tambi, Sharifah Faezah Syed Abdul Karim and Nor Zarina Mohd Salim

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i1/3822>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i1/3822

**Received:** 20 Dec 2017, **Revised:** 12 Jan 2018, **Accepted:** 15 Jan 2018

**Published Online:** 03 Feb 2018

**In-Text Citation:** (Sa'adin, Tambi, Karim, & Salim, 2018)

**To Cite this Article:** Sa'adin, I., Tambi, A. M. A., Karim, S. F. S. A., & Salim, N. Z. M. (2018). The Association Between Work-related Stressors and Work Performance: a case study among Executives of Group Human Capital of Maybank Berhad. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(1), 490–498.

**Copyright:** © 2018 The Author(s)

Published by Human Resource Management Academic Research Society ([www.hrmars.com](http://www.hrmars.com))

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this license may be seen

at: <http://creativecommons.org/licences/by/4.0/legalcode>

**Vol. 8, No.1, January 2018, Pg. 490 – 498**

<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/IJARBSS>

**JOURNAL HOMEPAGE**

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at  
<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/publication-ethics>

## **The Association Between Work-related Stressors and Work Performance: A case study among Executives of Group Human Capital of Maybank Berhad**

Izmayani Sa'adin<sup>1</sup>, Abdul Malek A. Tambi<sup>2</sup>, Sharifah Faezah Syed Abdul Karim<sup>3</sup> and Nor Zarina Mohd Salim<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,3,4</sup>Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perak Branch, Seri Iskandar Campus, 32610 Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia, <sup>2</sup>Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Terengganu, Malaysia

### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to identify the relationship between work-related stressors and work performance among Group Human Capital executives of Maybank Berhad, the largest bank in Malaysia. A questionnaire survey was carried out at the bank's head office in Kuala Lumpur. The questionnaire utilized a five-point Likert scale to measure five constructs, namely work stress, situational work control, work intensification, work relationship and work performance. A total of 99 executives participated in this study. Standard statistical data analysis techniques were used to obtain descriptive and inferential statistics from the data. In particular, correlation and regression analyses were used to test the relationship between work performance and the other variables. The findings of the study showed that situational work control had no significant relationship with work performance. Also work intensification and work relationship were found to have a negative relationship with work performance.

**Keywords:** Situational Work Control, Work Intensification, Work Relationship, Work Performance, Work Stress

### **Introduction**

Over the past few decades, stress had become a growing dilemma in organization and can cause unfavorable effects on work performance. Stress is a universal element that affects employees worldwide. Work stress often affects the employees in the workplace, where each employee will experience it at least once in their workplace. According to Shah and Hasnu (2013), stress become a familiar element in organization and nowadays the workplace become complicated, which bring more negative impacts to the employees compared to positive impacts.

Stress among workers is greater than before which also effect on the whole performance of the employees. Stress may be a positive stimulator that helps to motivate employees in doing work. However, at certain level, the amount of stress might be too heavy for impacted people to cope with. In a working industry especially in financial sector, excessive work stress may create effects and declining in performance. Furthermore, the working environment of the business organizations in the service sector has evolved dramatically. Research also has proven that work stress is much linked to absenteeism, burnout, and turnover in organizations.

### **Problem Statement**

Moving towards its mission and vision of 2015, Maybank has been putting so much effort of being the regional financial leader in future. Maybank has succeeded in humanizing its services across Asia as it has been operating well in numerous neighboring countries such as Singapore, China and Indonesia.

However, tremendous growth in Malaysia's financial sector including Maybank blooms work-related stress climate for employees (Bank Negara, 2009). Yet, not only in Malaysia, have jobs in financial service sector one of the most stressful jobs in United States. This become a major concern for Maybank as well as when Job Stress Survey conducted by Employee Communication & Engagement Unit (ECE) during first quarter of the year had shown the significant percentage of decreasing in employee's performance in employees' well-being and productivity due to work-related stress. Research has proven that work stress is linked to employee's work performance.

The effect of work stress on employee's performance at Maybank can be look into their work productivity. 60% of the employees stated that they get ill easily as work stress too alarming, 65% are burnout, and 50% experience prolonged fatigue and tiredness. However, 80% loss their concentration and focus while doing job. Sickness and burnout promote higher rate of absenteeism while tiredness, fatigue and loss of concentration may dilute employee's productivity and work performance.

### **Research Objectives**

To identify the relationship between situational work control, work intensification and work relationships with employee's work performance.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Work Performance**

Performance refers to outputs or outcomes (accomplishment) and also about doing the work as well as being about the result achieved. (Armstrong, 2000). Work performance can be defined as a task or activity that have an added value towards job that performed by employees. It is also a standard that have been set by organization and achievable by employees (Razmi, 2004). Work performance relates to employee's effort and ability. For instance, they are able to solve a conflict and possess a good communication skill.

Furthermore, work performance among employees also relate to relationship between their employers. Both of them should create close relationship, so that it is easy for them to cooperate and avoid any grievance at a workplace. According to Razmi (2004), managers and supervisor should ask subordinate's opinion on important matters, shows respect for their ideas, place subordinate's suggestions into operation and gains their approval before making decision.

Meanwhile, according to Shah and Hasnu (2013), a poor work performance among employees will cause the organization create psychology problem, for instance, late to work, work slowly, workplace stress and strike. Furthermore, work performance depends on employee's ability and motivation, resources and collaborative environment.

Wong (2005) stated that work performance is a measurement of a person of how he or she performs in the job assigned. The work performance will be better if the organization provide rewards to the employees who perform well in their job. Besides, Shaukat (2014) stated that the most common factor that affect the employee's performance and create stress to them is heavy workload, poor work relationship, unable to control work and time pressure.

### **Work Stress and Work Performance**

In addition, there is an increasing concern about workplace stress in most developing countries including Malaysia. Workplace stress has been related to many organization's problems. Stress may lead to behavioral changes that affect the outcome of certain work. It will correspond back to state where behavior affects performance. Study on sources of stress at workplace in Malaysia found out that there are numerous unmeasured variables that can contribute to workplace stress. However, research on stress in Malaysia's working environment especially among banking employees still limited.

According to Oke (2006), work-related stress may differ from stress in general because it greatly depends on the nature of the organization. Thus, work-related stress varies across different organization as it relies on its environment, climate and work process. Nevertheless, it also depends on how employees respond to the stress, some are resilient than others.

Shah and Hasnu (2013) stated that work stress should identify at the early stage because most of the absence of an employees is because of the work stress experience at workplace and its discouraging them to perform well in their organization.

A case study at bank sector stated that the main or high tendency of getting stress is because of more time spend at their bank (Malta, 2004). Research in other occupational areas indicated that increased level of stress is likely to reduced job satisfaction. It has been suggested that job dissatisfaction may be associated with an increased risk of coronary heart disease. In addition, study conducted by Bashir and Ramay (2010) among 144 employees including managers and executives officer in a banking sector show a negative relationship with work performance. The result shows that majority banker felt that when the works stress increase, their work performance will decrease.

### **Situational Work Control**

Situational control refers to the scope to which person believe they can exert and manage over a specific aspect of their job, such as the pace of work or the events, task conclusion, scheduling of tasks and decision freedom (Oke, 2006). Employees might risk losing their control of work due to the needs of new portfolios, new task and new skills. In organization, restructuring and changes normally happen. It's does affect employee's work performance. They need to learn new things and skill to make them competent. (Cooper, 2000). Likewise, they tend to lose confidence and self-esteem in doing the job. This situation will eventually accumulate and cause stress which known as "qualitative excess". Qualitative excess is linked to low levels of self-esteem as individual lack the necessary ability to do a new job (Cooper, 2000).

There are plenty research which explores the importance of the work control and employees benefit as an important element for creating well performance in an organization (page 20). Work control is one of an important element that will make employees to experience job satisfaction and perform well because they have authority in their own task that they feel comfortable with the job (Cooper, 2000). According to prior studies by Nagami et al., (2010), work control has significantly and positively related with work performance. Bond and Flaxman (2008), conducted a study examined the relationship between work control increase learning and work performance among 448 employees from call center in United Kingdom. The study established a significant and positive relationship between work control towards learning and work performance. In a sample of 777 manufacturing employees in Japan, Nagami et al., (2010) found out that work control and co-worker support has significant and positively related to work performance.

### **Work Intensification**

The number of dissimilar work an individual has to complete can lead to extreme demand on the individual's time and may create doubt about the ability to complete these works adequately (Cooper, 2000). Massive and varies workloads can be a burden for employees especially when all of it have a short time frame to be completed. Working alone on different tasks will consume a lot of time as task to be done is much differentiated.

Focusing on each different task is needed as to fulfill each one of them precisely, however when there are too many task to be done at the same time, focus will scattered. This in fact that may condense employee's work performance as their focus is not there, the tendency for error to emerge is getting higher when concentration weak. At the end, when there is too much error, loss of focus may lead to stressful working climate. Work-related stress can occur when individuals faced too much work that they can afford to carry out. (Shahid, 2011). Usually work comes with deadlines. With work intensifying, employees will tend to spend more of their energy worrying on to ensure works are done on time. According to Haslam(2005), the pressure of need to do a lot of work while deadlines are just around the corner will increase the intensity of work stress and eventually contribute to low work performance. Employees feel stress as they feel anxiety pressured to do the job promptly and waiving the fact that quality should be mattered the most.

### **Work Relationship**

Work relationship is related to the relationship established among people who includes superior, peers and subordinates. According to Oke (2008), relationship at work with superior, colleagues and subordinates have been identified as potential stressors. It happens as different people may have different views of how work needs to be done, different personality in handling work and etc. In other word, differentiation may exert uncomfortable interaction in the relationship. As depicted by Gavin and Dileepan (2002), poor relationship with team members especially colleagues are among the most stressful factor within organization. Social support intercede the relationship between stressor and strain. He believed that negative relations and non-attendance of support from colleagues and superior can be a major stress for employees.

To support, McLean (1979), agreed that social support in the form of group cohesion and interpersonal trust is associated with decreased level of perceived job stress and better health.

He said that when interpersonal trust or rapport is built, employees able to communicate well with colleagues and supervisor which eventually hinder in relationship.

## **Research Methodology/ Research Finding**

### **Research Design**

Simple random sampling technique adopted in this study. Simple random sampling is chosen because unrestricted probability sampling allows every element to have an equal chance of being selected as a subject. The population of this study includes all of Maybank executive levels who are in the grade position.

The unit of analysis of this study is individual level as such, who are in a grade of BG50, BG51 and BG52 from four (4) different department; Centre of Expertise, Business Relationship Management, Operation & Strategic Program and Organizational Development and Governance & Resourcing.

### **Measurement**

The questionnaire utilized a five-point Likert scale to measure five constructs, namely work stress, situational work control, work intensification, work relationship and work performance. All the 20 items developed in a questionnaire was adopted from previous research by Mohamed & Tan (2011).

### **Data Analysis Method**

Standard statistical data analysis techniques were used to obtain descriptive and inferential statistics from the data. In particular, correlation and regression analyses were used to test the relationship between work stress and the other variables. For reliability analysis, Malhotra (1996) recommended that a value of .70 is considered acceptable, in ensuring reliability of the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The alpha value of the variable under these study were all found to have a value of above .70 and therefore acceptable to be used for further analysis.

### **Correlation**

A weak relationship is indicated between situation work control and employee's work performance ( $r= 0.05$ ,  $n= 99$ ,  $p<0.005$ ) (X-axis= Situational Work Control, Y-axis= Employees' Work Performance). Meanwhile, a moderate relationship is indicated between work intensification and employees' work performance ( $r=-0.475$ ,  $n=99$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). (X-axis= Work Intensification, Y-axis= Employees' Work Performance). Finally, there is a weak relationship between work relationships and employees' work performance ( $r= -0.217$ ,  $n=99$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), but even the negative relationship is weak, it still suggest that poor employees' relationships accumulate higher work-related stress that diminishes employees' work performance. (X-axis= Employee Relationship, Y-axis= Employees' Work Performance).

### **Regression Analysis**

Regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis develop. Regression analysis techniques used very often in business research. It provides a means of objectively assessing the degree and the character of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable:

the regression coefficients indicate the relative importance of each of the independent variables in prediction of dependent variable.

Table 1: Research finding of Regression Analysis on independent variables and dependent variable

Independent Variables	Beta	Sig.
Situational work control	.065	.487
Work intensification	-.236	.000
Work relationship	-.917	.003
R	.516	
R Square	.266	

Based on the finding presented in Table 1, coefficient of determination showed by R and R<sup>2</sup> (R=.516, R<sup>2</sup>=.266, p<.05). The value of R shows strong variance shared by both independent variables and dependent variable. This means, 51.6% of the variance in work performance has been significantly explained by three independent variables (situational work control, work intensification and work relationship).

On the other hand, R<sup>2</sup> shows 26.6% of the variance in work performance was significantly explained by the independent variables. However, the other 73.4% of the variance explained by other factors that were not used in this study. The value of R square indicates that the model does fit the data well. The result also shows that the beta score for work relationship is the highest (-9.17) compared to other variables. This indicates that executives of Group Human Capital at Maybank Berhad perceive work relationship is the main factor which contributes to the workplace stress that can affect work performance.

### Conclusions

In general, this research provides understanding on various type of stressor that can affect employee's work performance. The outcome help to strengthen the existing literature by further adding value through framework that being tested. Specifically, there are two predictors that affect employee's work performance; work intensification and work relationship. Thus, the outcomes of this research can help the organization to find alternative in extracting out the factor that may cause stress among executives of group human capital at Maybank Berhad.

### Acknowledgement

Special thanks and gratitude to all authors, Pn Sharifah Faezah and Pn Nor Zarina for the moral support and brilliant idea. Not to forgot, Prof Abd Malek for his guidance and knowledge sharing for the initial part of this study. Last but not least, to all staff of Maybank especially Group of Human Capital.

### Corresponding Author

Izmayani Sa'adin, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perak Branch, 32610, Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia, Email: izmayani107@perak.uitm.edu.my.

## References

- Armstrong, M. (2000) Performance Management: Key Strategies and Practice Guide Liner. United States, Kogan Page.
- Bank Negara Malaysia. (2009). *BNM Press Statements*. <http://www.bnm.gov.my>
- Bashir, U., & Ramay, M. I. (2010). Impact of stress on employee's job performance. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 2(1), 122-126.
- Chen, T.-H., Wu, K.-H., Lin, W.-J., Horna, W.-I., & Shieh, C.-J. (2010). Incorporating Workload and Performance Levels into Work Situation Analysis of Employees with Application to a Taiwanese Hotel Chain. *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, 7(5).
- Cooper, C. L., and Quick, J. (2000), *Stress and Strain*, Health Press, Oxford. [Google Scholar].
- Daley, D. M. (1986). Humanistic management and organizational success: The effect of job and work environment characteristics on organizational effectiveness, public responsiveness, and job satisfaction. *Public Personnel Management*, 15, 132-142.
- Bond, F. W., & Flaxman, Paul, E. (2008). The Ability of Psychological Flexibility and Job Control to Predict Learning, Job Performance, and Mental Health. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(1-2), 113-130.
- Giga & Hoel, (2003). Violence and Stress at Work in Financial Services. Retrieved from: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/papers/service/w p210.pdf>.
- Gavin, T. A., & Dileepan, P. (2002), —Stress!! Analyzing the culprits and prescribing a cure, *Strategic Finance*, (November), 50 – 55.
- Haslam, C., Atkinson, S., Brown, S. S., & Haslam, R. A. (2005), —Anxiety and depression in the workplace: Effects on the individual and organization, *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 88, 209-245.
- Mahmood, B., Hussain, S., Hannan, A., & Muhammad, N. (2010). The Relationship between Stress and Work Performance in an Industrial Environment of Faisalabad District. *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences*.
- Naresh, K., Malhotra, J. A., Peterson, M. (1996), Methodological in cross-cultural marketing research. *A state-of-art review, International Marketing Review*, 13(5), 7-43, <https://doi.org/10.1108/02651339610131379>.
- McLean A. (1979). Work Stress. *Addison-Wesley*, New York.
- Miller, A., Sprigen, K., Gordon, J., Cohn B. (1988). Stress on job. *Business Week*, 40-51.
- Sehat, M. R. M. (2004). Hubungan di antara persekitaran kerjasama dan kecerdasan emosi dalam mempengaruhi prestasi kerja. *Unpublished doctoral thesis*, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Kedah, Malaysia.
- Nagami, M., Tsutsumi, A., Tsuchiya, M., & Morimoto, K. (2010). Job Control and Coworker Support Improve Employee Job Performance. *Industrial Health*, 48(6), 845-851.
- Oke, A. (2006). The interrelationship between organizational culture and workplace stress: A case study of the Nigerian banking industry, *PhD dissertation*, University of Surrey.
- Shah, S. S. A., & Hasnu, S. A. F. (2013). Effect of Job Instability on Job Performance: Banking Sector of Pakistan. *Stud*, 2(1).
- Shahid, M. N., Latif, K., Sohail, N., & Ashraf, M. A. (2011). Work stress and employee performance in banking sector evidence from district Faisalabad, Pakistan. *Asian Journal of Business and Management Sciences*, 1(7), 38-47.



Wong, K. S., & Cheuk, W. H. (2005), —Job related stress and social support in kindergarten principals: the case of Macau||, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 19(3), 183-196.

Zikmund, W. G., Babin, B. J., Carr, J. C., & Griffin, M. (2009). *Business Research Methods* (8th ed.) USA: *South-Western College Publishing*.