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Fatinfarazira Mohd Aziz, Mohamad Fauzi Abdul Latib

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## Effects of Welfare Aspects on Royal Malaysia Police Officers at The Terengganu Contingent Police Headquarters

Fatinfarazira Mohd Aziz, Mohamad Fauzi Abdul Latib

Faculty of Applied Social Science, University Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA)

Email: fatinfarazira@gmail.com

### Abstract

As is well known, police officers face various challenges and are exposed to danger while on duty. Police respond to various criminal activities as well as carry out duties to maintain security in the country. Therefore, their welfare needs to be taken care of to ensure that the public interest is also guaranteed. The main objective of this research is to identify the impact faced by policeman in addressing welfare issues. This study is a qualitative study that uses a case study approach through in-depth interviews. This study was conducted at the Terengganu Contingent Police Headquarters. This study involved in-depth interviews of 11 police officers as study respondents. The selection of the sample was done purposefully and the data obtained were analyzed thematically. The results of the study found that there are two main effects of welfare on a policeman, namely the effect on work commitment and the effect on the policeman himself.

**Keywords:** Police Officer, Welfare, Effect

### Introduction

The task of policing is becoming ever-increasing and the diversity of new tactics of borderless criminal conduct, the increasingly critical, knowledgeable, and pressing state of society as a result of the expansion of globalization (Metcalf & Dick, 2000). As is well known, the police and the community are not separated and the police are civil servants who are always in touch with the community. As a result, police often experience emotional disturbances and inconsistent life balances (Patterson, 2009). In Malaysia, we as the people can still live in peace and tranquility because of the enforcement such as the police. Although not free from crime, but we should be thankful to be born as Malaysians and still free to do daily activities because we do not suffer the same fate as neighboring countries that always face crises and threats such as bombings. This is because we have enforcers who take care of national security as well as maintain public order especially the police and army. Both forces are national security forces responsible for safeguarding national security from external and internal threats.

According to John and Harris (2008); Jusoh and Nasudin (2013), the success of an organization depends on the job satisfaction of an individual because it affects the emotional expression shown through the actions of the individual in the implementation of social functions in the

workplace and in efforts to achieve goals and sense of belonging in the individual. As such, welfare is one of the important things that should not be neglected as it is the driver in enhancing the positive impact on an individual. However, according to Moradi et al., (2012); Graham, (2012); Ghoreishi et al., (2014); Bokti and Abu Talib, (2010); Abi and Jijo, (2012); Jusoh and Nasudin, (2013), individual needs are closely related to a good work environment and it is related to the needs that affect the impact on the organization. Significant changes in terms of psychology, physiological responses and employee behavior are due to failure to control responses effectively (Violanti et al., 1998; Arnetz et al., 2013; Azmi, 2005). The relationship between the police and the community will be affected when the policeman is not committed and not motivated when interacting with the complainant. This will indirectly create a negative perception of the police organization and thus will distance the relationship between the police and the community as well as the quality of delivery will be affected (Cheong & Yun, 2011). In fact, if a healthy lifestyle is neglected in the aspect of welfare it will invite other problems such as mental stress, depression and physical. Moreover, it will also harm relationships with family members and colleagues (Violanti et al., 2013; Yun et al., 2013).

Among the examples of welfare needed by police is welfare in terms of housing. According to a survey conducted at one of the police houses in Selangor, there were several large holes about half a meter wide in an alley in the housing area. This is very sad and very dangerous to the safety of the occupants in the housing of the policeman, especially at night and coupled with the broken street lights. Apart from that, the survey conducted in 2016 in two other housing units of policemen, namely in Sentul and Setiawangsa, was also very sad when it was described that the condition of the building in the housing had faded paint and the iron grille on the balcony was also rusty. It is very sad when the elevator has not worked for a long time. The situation is even sadder because pregnant women and elderly policemen are living in the residence. Therefore, all infrastructure damage in all police housing across the country needs to be taken immediate action so that police officers can live comfortably in the police housing provided. With the comfort of life, police officers can achieve the maximum level of job satisfaction. Therefore, this study examines the impact of welfare aspects on Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) members in the Terengganu contingent. This is because welfare factors play an important role in increasing the job satisfaction of RMP members. In return, employees who are satisfied with the welfare facilities provided by the employer will be able to help increase the employee's work commitment as well as have a positive impact on the performance of the organization.

### **Literature Review**

As is well known, there are various services provided by the police that involves the risk of losing the life of a police officer. According to Roberg, Novak, and Cordner (2005), police are often observed by the general public such as the social media community and advocates. Police duties are prone to controlling violence and area conditions (Perrot & Kelloway, 2006). According to Ivie and Garland (2011), a career as a law enforcer is often surrounded by burdens. Therefore, employers must be responsible to ensure that police officers receive welfare appropriately and commensurate with their duties to continue to ensure national peace.

According to the Inspector General Police, Abdul Hamid (2019), the establishment of the Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC) was established to protect the rights and welfare of all Royal Malaysia Police officers. This is because, every

member of the RMP has the right to receive benefits commensurate with the services and sacrifices in carrying out their duties to the country. The struggle to protect the fate of policemen is very much emphasized by the Inspector General Police because he was touched by the poor housing conditions and police stations due to the lack of provision to repair the damage.

Apart from that, there was a lot of damage that occurred such as the roof that leaked but was not repaired because there was no provision and it made the situation more difficult and gave a burden to the members who lived in the residence. According to Patterson, (2009), this is associated with the causes of stress among police officers caused by workload and personal problems such as financial problems, family, welfare, and so on. This will contribute to the decline in job performance as a result of the pressure faced by police officers. According to a study conducted by Wu et al. (2010) who showed that employment as a police officer tends to high work stress and is also believed to affect mental and physical health caused by work environment factors and personal factors. Therefore, in order to alleviate the pressure and burden of police officers, the welfare of police officers must be taken care of. This statement is further supported by the virtues done to the best of our ability in maintaining a relationship with God and fellow human beings. Virtue refers to all good deeds that bring virtue to every creature as demanded by the Shari'ah and will indirectly fulfill human demands as well. The spirit to help, cooperate and help is emphasized in applying the values of welfare to the organization and society either internally or externally (Khadafi, 2015).

### **Statement of Problem**

In the field of policing, according to Baker and Ibrahim (2015), pressures and challenges will be experienced by police enforcement. The term 'The Heavy Badge Syndrome' coined by Goldfarb and Aumiller (2008) describes the job dissatisfaction experienced by a police officer can result in stress while on duty. According to Miller (2006), among the identifiable factors are job dissatisfaction causing a person's failure to control emotions and work stress which tends to depression, drug abuse and suicide attempts among police officers. Lack of well-being of an individual will cause stress and will have an impact on work commitment which will affect the mental and physical health of the individual. Thus, according to Yun et al., (2013), declining work commitment as a result of work stress is usually associated with accepted welfare factors.

However, according to Baker and Ibrahim (2015), the police force in Malaysia also faces a similar situation where psychological problems among police officers in Malaysia are getting worse and there are cases involving police officers such as mental problems, suicide, murder and cases of injuring the public stemming from work stress. There were 14, 438 cases involving RMP members and officers over a period of four years from 2011 to 2015 which were reported through the RMP disciplinary statistics report. Statistics from the RMP Criminal Investigation Department (2014) show that there are three suicide cases involving policemen and four more cases of attempted suicide have been reported. The determination of an individual's career depends on the level of stress experienced with the extent to which it can be understood, evaluated as well as emotional expression. Thus, according to Boren (2014), to deal with the problem of job dissatisfaction that can result in stress, then an individual needs to have the skills to manage emotions. Lack of attention to welfare studies and commitment to police work in Malaysia and also in Southeast Asia encourages researchers to conduct studies related to welfare aspects and their impact on RMP members in the State of Terengganu. Therefore, the researcher feels that there is a need to conduct a study on the welfare of police officers

and its impact on RMP members in Terengganu because the study on welfare issues and work commitment among RMP members has not been fully studied.

### **Research Question**

What is the effect of the welfare aspect on RMP members in the Terengganu contingent.

### **Research Objective**

Identify the impact of welfare aspects on RMP members in the Terengganu contingent.

### **Research Methodology**

In this research conducted, researchers use qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are very important to obtain more accurate and in-depth information, especially information that involves other elements that can not be measured with a numerical scale and obtain information that involves the emotions of the individual (Othman, 2009). To carry out this research, the researcher used a case study approach. According to Chua (2006), knowing how individual behaviors or changes in social conditions occur, requires a systematic and in-depth collection of information about specific events, specific individual behaviors, or social conditions of respondents and it coincides with case study design.

The research location is at the Terengganu Contingent Police Headquarters, Terengganu Darul Iman. The majority of policemen in the Terengganu police are Malays. The total sample for this research is 11 people. The rationale of the researcher to choose 11 respondents as a sample for this research because only 11 policemen were successfully interviewed until the end of the interview session. At the initial stage of the research, the researcher interviewed 15 police officers with a purposeful sample selection to follow the interviews of this study. However, four policemen withdrew from further interviews because they were too busy with outside assignments. Sample selection for this research is using the purposive sampling technique. The study sample was selected by the department based on the main characteristics that have been set by the researcher, namely the rank from constable to sergeant to achieve the original purpose of the study on welfare among low-ranking members. Observation methods and in-depth interview methods are used by researchers to collect the required data. Through in-depth interviews with study respondents, researchers can observe respondents by looking at the world from their glasses (Alston & Bowles, 2003). The interviews were conducted between the researcher and the respondents individually and face to face with the topics determined by the researcher. The interviews were conducted using structured questions because they can focus on the objectives of the study that have been set so that respondents can give answers that are appropriate to the study. Besides, the researcher also conducted observations on the body language shown by the respondents during the interview sessions conducted. This is because the researcher wants to ensure safety and comfort between the researcher himself and the respondent is guaranteed. The researcher also obtained secondary data from Terengganu Contingent Police Headquarters such as other information and profiles related to the study conducted.

Then upon completion of all the interview sessions that have been conducted, verbatim information obtained from the interview sessions will be collected for the purpose of data analysis. The researcher will read each verbatim twice so that the researcher can appreciate and understand the essence of the data in more detail in order to ensure the accuracy of the information from the study respondents. After that, the data is extracted to unearth the available themes based on the information obtained. Components or fragments of ideas or



experiences will be combined to identify existing themes through all three of these components (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Next, the data obtained from the thematic analysis method were filtered to obtain the specific themes that had been mentioned by the respondents. Nevertheless, specific themes obtained from other respondents were analyzed to see differences between themes. Thereafter, to identify the similarities of the themes from each category of data obtained, the researcher analyzed the data horizontally and the themes were grouped as themes that had similarities. Next, the themes found were analyzed according to the objectives of the study and the research questions.

### Results and Discussion of the Study

The results of the research indicate that there are two main effects faced by police officers in relation to welfare issues. The two main effects are the effect on work commitment and the individual self. The effect on work commitment is divided into two, namely work commitment will be disrupted and job satisfaction will not be achieved.

The first effect related to the issue of the welfare of policemen is on the work commitment of policemen. The majority of study respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the level of welfare received. Respondents of the study said that they still need improvement from the existing welfare because there are often problems related to welfare issues among low-ranking police officers. Respondents also often mentioned welfare issues that caused their work commitments to be disrupted. According to Hackell and Violanti (2003); Miller, (2006); Rothmann and Strijdom, (2002), among the factors that can be identified are job dissatisfaction causing a person's failure to control emotions and work stress which tends to depression, suicide attempts and drug and alcohol abuse among police. However, the police force in Malaysia is also facing a similar situation where psychological problems among police officers in Malaysia are getting worse and there are cases of injuring civilians, suicide and murder cases due to mental health problems experienced by police officers due to their stress and work environment.

Thus, the consequences of the lack of welfare obtained by an individual will affect the way the individual controls his stress as well as his behavior. This will affect the work commitment of the individual and it will affect his mental and physical well-being. According to Yun et al., (2013); Anshel, (2000); Violanti et al., (2013); Watson et al., (2007); Violanti et al., (1998), declining work commitment as a result of lack of welfare provided by employers is also associated with stress in the workplace. Therefore, mental health status is assessed from the efficiency of performing the task. This is so because it depends on the emotional intelligence of the individual in producing more outstanding productivity and work performance (Violanti et al., 1998; Thrihandini, 2005; Thrihandini, 2005; Apparao, 2001; Anshel, 2000; Thrihandini, 2005).

*'With the situation that my friends and I are experiencing now, welfare does have an effect on my work commitment because if welfare is not taken care of, work commitment will be disrupted, work performance will decline, I will lose focus and work will be delayed. I will give a little example, for example I want to investigate and then I want to use a vehicle but the vehicle is used by someone else and he has to wait while the work has a date line to be sent and complete the report so the work will be delayed. '(Respondent 1)*

*'Hm, if charity is enough, it can be a positive effect of time for daily work. But for now, the negative feeling about virtue is not enough. So the work commitment is disrupted. If for me, it is a negative effect in terms of feeling slow and wanting to work. That's why I think of many other commitments. Then I want to think about work commitment again.'* (Respondent 5)

*'If the virtue given is perfect and the work is guaranteed, it will be perfect, smooth and for sure we will feel appreciated and for a high commitment in the work entrusted it will feel appreciated but if the virtue is not guaranteed and not perfect as desired or should be given, work commitments must be disrupted and affected. When there is a lack of welfare, commitment in the task is less satisfactory and the level of job satisfaction is reduced. A lot of work is delayed when superiors or colleagues are not for cooperation and cannot be tolerated while performing tasks.'* (Respondent 7)

*'To some extent, it can have a positive effect on daily tasks. The task will run as usual whether it is for virtue or not. But if the virtues are well received, then the work will be fun. Those who have strong finances do not feel burdened, while those with less income will feel burdened. In this matter, I think when less welfare is received, various commitments will be disrupted. Not just work commitments but mixed in with daily and family commitments.'* (Respondent 9)

Therefore, individual intervention sessions should be conducted on police officers to discuss the problems faced by them in order to address the problems that arise. Individual intervention sessions conducted will discuss issues on the welfare of police officers between social workers and police officers so that problems can be resolved and police officers can perform their work commitments smoothly. During the implementation of the intervention sessions, each session will be conducted in a systematic, structured manner using problem-solving process methods. Researchers argue that the use of problem-solving process methods is important. This is so because, in carrying out these individual intervention sessions, it will be able to assist the police in solving the problems they face in a more orderly manner. According to Miller (2012), the problem-solving process has three stages, the first is the beginning stage, followed by the intermediate stage and ends with the end-stage.

Next, the effect of welfare on the work commitment of police officers is that respondents do not achieve job satisfaction when the welfare that should be received is not guaranteed. The average respondent gave the answer of not achieving job satisfaction when they were not satisfied with the welfare received. This is because respondents need adequate welfare to achieve a level of job satisfaction. However, some respondents do not care about welfare and welfare does not affect his work. The results of Shea's study (2002) found that as many as 50.5% of the respondents said that they are satisfied but since their age increased in the range of 35 - 44 years, their level of job satisfaction began to decline and the overall level of job satisfaction among employees in Malaysia is on the descending ladder.

*'I don't think too much about welfare and welfare doesn't affect my work. But, if the welfare of the members is taken care of then the work will run more smoothly. That's it. Work commitment will also be higher. Right now my job satisfaction level is at the lowest level because there are several factors that affect it.'* (Respondent 4)

*'Hmm, there are a lot of effects that can actually arise in yourself. For example, feeling lazy to come to work, feeling very down, regretting joining the police and so on. But the feeling is, I am satisfied because the work is an act of worship and this is my ambition to become a policeman. Hm, if we don't work, we don't eat. Hehe. So it can be a negative effect when we do not achieve a sense of job satisfaction.'* (Respondent 6)

*'If the virtue given is perfect and the work is guaranteed, it will be perfect, smooth and for sure we will feel appreciated and for the high commitment in the work entrusted it will feel appreciated but if the virtue is not guaranteed and not perfect as desired or should be given, work commitments must be disrupted and affected. When there is a lack of welfare, commitment to the task is less satisfactory and the level of job satisfaction is reduced. A lot of work is delayed when superiors or colleagues are not for cooperation and cannot be tolerated while performing tasks.'* (Respondent 7)

*'If one of the required welfare factors is not given perfectly then we feel we will not achieve job satisfaction and job performance will decline. One more thing, since covid-19, the welfare of the members has been greatly affected because the real task is obligatory, but it is added with a new task to keep the peace during covid's.'* (Respondent 8)

The second major impact faced by police officers in relation to welfare issues is the impact felt on the individual self. The effects felt by the individual are divided into three effects, namely stress, 'burnout' and feeling unappreciated. The stress caused by the factor of lack of welfare obtained has had an impact on the police in dealing with welfare issues. Nine respondents were stating that they felt depressed when their welfare was not well taken care of. Past research evidence further reinforces this fact. The study conducted by Masilamani et. al., (2013) involving the police in Malaysia showed that police officers face work stress that is at the highest level. Nevertheless, the study conducted by Salmah (2009); Iran and Fadzil (2010) only showed that the level of stress among police officers was at a moderate level.

Therefore, the researcher argues that police officers should be given intervention sessions in groups. This is because, group interventions are more effective when compared to individual interventions (Corey, 2003). According to him, this is due to the response received by other clients who are in the same group will last longer. Sulaiman (2018), said that group intervention will reduce stress levels. Besides, the approaches learned in this group intervention will be practiced so that clients will work as hard as possible to challenge their self-destructive thinking.

*'When virtue is unsatisfactory and not well received it will make us stress because through perfect virtue the mind will be calm and emotions will not be disturbed. Because of the stress, for example, like in the middle of work, then the aircond is not working, the office room is very hot and restless to do normal work. Sometimes I feel lazy to do work because I am always stuck. But whether you want to or not, you still have to do it because it's your responsibility.'* (Respondent 2)

*'I always control myself to be able to do the job perfectly, there is no doubt that there are some negative effects, but I always try to increase my self-motivation. It is likely to make a member feel stressed when welfare is not guaranteed. For*



*example the effect for myself, I sat in police housing and worked office hours. By the age of 50 like me I was definitely suffering from joint pain plus I had a road accident 7 years ago and it caused my knee to break and I couldn't walk properly so I had to get a cane to help me walk. Here I want to convey that the effect I experience when welfare is not taken care of such as housing elevators that have long been damaged and still not repaired makes me more tired and sick to climb the stairs every time I repeat work on the 4th floor. Tired here is not only tired and sore feet but also tired of the brain because every time you want to go or come back from work must be remembered. Hmmm, back here, I have to go up the stairs again with a sore leg. So the fatigue that is brought back will cause a sense of stress. But whatever the force, that feeling needs to be suppressed because the task needs to be continued as usual to take care and earn a living for oneself and one's family.'* (Respondent 3)

*'The effect on me is that if the welfare is lacking, I will feel lazy to work, maybe it can be stress because there are many commitments to think about when the welfare is not channeled properly. The reason for me is that welfare can be said to be the main cause of policemen feeling secure when taken care of and feeling depressed when not taken care of because I said this is actually when policemen take care of the welfare of the public but who takes care of the welfare of policemen? That's what I mean. Perhaps this matter can be proposed to superiors for further action.'* (Respondent 6)

*'The effect on oneself will be feelings of depression, stress, being lazy to talk to people, or the other words are preferred to be alone.'* (Respondent 9)

The next effect on the individual self is burnout caused by the lack of welfare received by the respondents. Three respondents were stating that they experienced burnout when their welfare was not taken care of properly. A study conducted by Myendeki (2008) on the stress of police officers in South Africa proved that job stress causes a person to experience burnout.

*'Of course I will feel prolonged stress but now that I can slowly face the workload, it feels a little less. If in the past, the stress lasted until it was brought to the house. The first time I was on duty, I had to face my superiors and old colleagues, I was almost burnt out, but when I was calmed down, I started to think and accept the task that needed to be done and there were also some policemen who committed suicide because they couldn't stand work. I can't say the name of this member and where he works because of shame. But if you want to know, maybe you can search on google or any social media that may be available.'* (Respondent 1)

*'The effect will be negative feelings but I will still try to be positive because for me welfare does not affect my work. I can still do normal work. But in my opinion, a colleague of mine used to experience 'burnout' because he always felt a lot of pressure when doing work, he said the salary was not enough, high expenses, family in the village, and so on. So everyone may have a different point of view and experience a different situation.'* (Respondent 4)

*'If there is no welfare in a particular sector of employment then there is no harmony in oneself and the daily work environment where every time something unexpected happens. It can be burnout, stress, loneliness and other negative things.'* (Respondent 8)

The third effect of the lack of welfare received on the individual self is a sense of unappreciation. According to respondents, they feel unappreciated when their welfare is not given due attention by the employer. Most respondents said that, they need the welfare that they should receive from superiors or supervisors because when the welfare is not taken care of will cause a sense of stress.

*'For myself, I can still accept this lack of welfare, but when it comes to the welfare from superiors to subordinates, I feel a little impressed because I feel pressured by my superiors because it is not for good cooperation. Sometimes they get angry and don't think about other people. I say this because when they reprimand us, it's like they don't have respect. Yea, even though we are subordinates, try to reprimand well. At least we can accept that reprimand and there is a sense of appreciation when we respect each other. There's nothing wrong with that. All actions on ourselves right.'* (Respondent 5)

*'For me, the effect that I personally feel when given the welfare and the welfare given is perfect, I will definitely feel appreciated in the team, because during my 10 years of service, I have felt the bitterness of trials during my work in the team. I, who have been working for 10 years, have a lot of experience, not to mention the old people, seniors, retired gentlemen, they must have a lot of experience and trials during their service. For me, we just feel like we want to be appreciated and given the appreciation we deserve after being tired of working, not being scolded by our superiors as they please. When it comes to things that we don't want like this, there must be a feeling of stress. Whenever we will feel stress and down. Hmm, I don't even know how to express, who knows he will understand and who wants to be a policeman, get ready. It is not easy to be a policeman and it is not easy when you already be a policeman. Mentally must strong, can't be torn again when you got selfish superiors. Some people I can't name, have accepted bribes. The reason? It could be stress with work or it could be no satisfaction in work possible.'* (Respondent 7)

*'When you can't get the benefits that you should feel unappreciated. Sometimes it can be stressful with the work environment and will feel like rebelling.'* (Respondent 10)

## Conclusion

In summary, the findings of this study indicate that the majority of police officers who have been the respondents of the study were impressed with the welfare facilities received while serving in the police force. Therefore, the impact they face should be addressed immediately so that they can carry out their job commitments smoothly. This is because the police are the mainstay of the country in maintaining the welfare of the public and national security. Various alternatives can be implemented by the RMP management such as appropriate programs to help police officers to use certain approaches to deal with situations regarding welfare issues that arise.

Therefore, it is hoped that the top management of RMP can take appropriate action and need to take this issue seriously. Researchers are of the view that the best approach is to use the services of a social worker to help any police officer who has problems related to work as a police officer and personal problems. With the skills and abilities of a professional social worker, all problems experienced by RMP members will be able to be handled well and

effectively and can increase the work commitment of RMP members. Finally, the researcher hopes that research in this field should continue with more detailed methods and a smaller scope by future researchers. This is because, the results of the study conducted will be able to help the RMP to improve and get ideas to implement appropriate intervention programs in the future to all RMP staff.

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