

Role Stressors As A Determinant of Job Performance

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Abstract-

This study examines the correlation between role stressors and job performance using self-administered questionnaires gathered from 327 sample of security personnel's covers officers and other ranks which involved in administrative and on field operation. The quantitative research has been conducted on security personnel's who has been deployed in UNIFIL peacekeeping operation mission under United Nation mandate at a Middle Eastern Country. All the data's collected has been analyzed by using SmartPLS version 3.0 path model analysis resulted three important findings: first, role overload was not significantly associated with job performance. Second, role conflict was significantly associated with job performance. Third, role ambiguity was not significantly associated with job performance. These results confirm that role stressor (role conflict) is vital and act as important determinant of job performance in the studied organization. Further, this study will be thoroughly offer discussion, implications and conclusion.

Keywords: Role stressor, role overload, role conflict, role ambiguity, job performance, UNIFIL peacekeeping mission

1. Introduction

Stress is a universal element that affects employees worldwide. Stress factor had become a growing dilemma and caused unfavorable effects on job performance in organization. Stress is a universal element that affects employees worldwide due to essential of life needs in modern and expensive environments which will derived to the reduction of standard of living, stress become a familiar element in organization and nowadays, the workplace and ambience become more complicated which bring more negative impacts to the employees compared to positive impacts. Work stress is a real life problem that not only affects the organization, but the employees mainly become victims of stress. Stress on job can caused the reduction of individual performance, relatively due to the working environment from which he feels unsecured (Jamal, 1984).

Stress issue becomes a phenomenon at many organizations especially in service organizations since the nature of the work itself requires employees to face various types of customer's behavior and characters (Farah Syazreena, Siti Asiah, & Anisah, 2016). According to Bashir and Ramay (2010), stress defined as force, pressure, or tension subjected upon an individual who fights these forces and try to sustain its real state.

Peacekeeping is a United Nations (UN) humanitarian intervention mechanism that is used to stabilize hostile environments. These intervention packages can range from preventing war to delivering packages to an affected population. Peacekeepers are deployed with an objective to protect the vulnerable peoples who live in conflict area or to rescue them from the hands of evildoers.

Peacekeepers may expose to traumatic incidents is very high such scenarios: substantial possibilities of exposure to atrocities, horrible suffering and death; potentially and unpredictably dangerous and

life-threatening situations; stress related to the use of weapons; immersion in a potentially hostile foreign culture; and strict rules of engagement (UNDPKO, 1995).

The success of every organization or institution depends very much on the employee performance. The efficient they are the best that institutions will be. The good employee is the one who know to handle and accomplish their tasks on time with required quality accordingly. Past studies witnessed two theory of approaches on job performance. Firstly, Vroom (1964) explained, performance have five trait of theory which means performance of an employee is made up of skills, experience and creativity of the workers as well as personal awareness and the most important personality of the employee. Secondly, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) mentioned that, supervisory approach depicts that an employee has to execute those activities that his supervisor said to perform. According to Otley (1999), organizational productivity and success is depending on the employee performance. Higher the level of performance of employees, greater will be the organizational accomplishments. Herzberg et al. (1959) defined in terms of managerial aspect of the performance as "let an employee do what I want him to do." According to the study by Gloet (2006), Lewis (1999), and Mathis and Jackson (2011) job performance of an employee is the capability of a person to achieve its goals and targets as well as satisfying the expectations of his supervisors or achieving the organizational objectives which has been led down by the top management.

Larson (2004) stated that "any characteristics that possess a threat to workplace" is a job stressor. Kahn Wolf, Quinn, Snoek and Rosenthal (1964) argue that stress is the outcomes of three different stressors, i.e. role conflict, role overload and role ambiguity. Role Ambiguity: Role insufficient information concerning powers, authority and duties to perform one's role (French, & Caplan, 1972; Kahn et al, 1964). Role Conflict: Supervisors or subordinates place contradictory demands on the individual (Beehr et al, 2000; Caplan

and Jones, 1975; Kahn et al, 1964). Role Overload: Excessive work or work that is outside one's capability (French, & Caplan, 1972; Margolis et al, 1974).

Kahn et al. (1964), and Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970) refer to role ambiguity as the level of certainty and clarity an employee perceives with regard to his or her role's responsibility, expectations, and evaluations. Generally, role ambiguity means lacking of knowledge regarding employee's responsibilities and duties at his own workplace. According to Rizzo et al. (1970), it is observed as "the situation where an individual does not have a clear direction about the expectations of his/her role in the job or organization". Role ambiguity is only the perception in the mind of an employee that he does not have enough information about his role expectations and requirements.

Role conflict refers to the contradictory assignments, inconsistent expectations, or competing obligations experienced by an employee (Kahn et al., 1964; Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). According to the role theory, when there are contradictory demands between two persons which is the major cause of incompetent decisions, then role conflict occurs. In a very simple way when a person enters in an organization, he is provided with the job descriptions and objectives of the organization and clear about his role.

In Kahn et al.'s (1964) initial conceptualization, role overload was considered a particular type of role conflict. However, later studies (Glazer & Beehr, 2005; Tordera et al., 2008) suggested role overload, although having a high correlation with role conflict, have its unique quality. Role overload is defined by the degree to which an employee perceives his or her assignments or expectations as exceeding what his or her ability affords to handle with available resources without compromising quality (Jian, 2014; Tordera et al., 2008). Nowadays all the organizations are striving to attain their objectives in accordance with the day to day changing requirements of the new technological world by introducing new innovative ideas, hiring new human resource management, policies in order to increase the profitability and productivity of the organizations. The rate of this globalization has increased the escalation of the consequences of the work overload like mental distress, absenteeism, reduced productivity and commitment and the most vital lowering the employee performance at their workplaces (Armstrong, 2003; Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen, 2005).

1.1 Purpose of the Study

This study has three primary objectives: first, is to examine the correlation between role overload and job performance. Second, is to examine the correlation between role conflict and job performance. Third, is to examine the correlation between role ambiguity and job performance. Discussion of this paper is structured as follows: first, begins with providing theoretical and empirical evidence supporting the correlation between the variables of interest. After that, the SmartPLS version 3.0 has been used to measure the correlation between the variables of interest. Finally, discussion, implications and conclusion were deeply elaborated.

2. Literature Review

A number of previous research output has been cited as examples. Most of the studies are relatively using a direct effect model to investigate role stressor based on different samples from 132 staff of front-liners from various departments in shared service center in Malaysia (Farah Syazreena et al., 2016), 102 academic staff from all colleges at Dhofar University, Sultanate of Oman (Moaz Nagib Gharib et al., 2016). 103 junior workers having a mean age of 31 where their work involved road construction and maintenance drawn from the federal ministry of works of Nigeria (Iroegbu, 2014). Yilmaz Akgunduz. (2015), participants were drawn from 227 hotel employees in Kusadasi, Turkey, the outcome of the study indicated three patterns: role ambiguity and role conflict are

negatively associated with job performance; role overload is positively associated with job performance; and role ambiguity creates more role stress than role conflict or overload.

The influence of role stressor on job performance gained strong support from the essence of work related stress theory. The theory of role dynamics serves as the foundation (Kahn et al., 1964), according to the theory, a working individual has an implicitly or explicitly assigned role in an organization or a set of activities he or she is expected and/or demanded to perform. These role expectations and demands generate pressure or stress over the performing individual. According to their varied nature and quality, role stressors are differentiated into three types: role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload. The notion established in these theories have gained strong support from the workplace stress research literature. Role stressor can be explained through the workplace stimulant variables based on the workplace triggers (Code & Langan-Fox, 2001; Ismail, Suh-Suh, Ajis, & Dollah, 2009; Santos, Barros, & Carolino, 2010; Millward, 2005), rationality stream contexts (Ngo, Foley, Ji, & Loi, 2014), loneliness situations (Saygin, Akdeniz, & Deniz, 2015) and emotional deficiency (Santos, Barros, & Carolino, 2010; Millward, 2005; Saygin, Akdeniz, & Deniz, 2015; Lazrus, 2013). As a whole, it contributes to stimulant workplace phenomenon as strongly described by a number of researchers (Ismail, Suh-Suh, Ajis, & Dollah, 2009; Santos, Barros, & Carolino, 2010; Ngo, Foley, Ji, & Loi, 2014; Saygin, Akdeniz, & Deniz, 2015). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

- H1: level of role overload is associated with job performance.
- H2: level of role conflict is associated with job performance.
- H3: level of role ambiguity is associated with job performance.

3. Methodology

A cross-sectional research design has been applied because its allowed researchers to combine the roles and stressors literature, the semi-structured interview and the actual survey has been used as a main procedure to collect data to secured the research objectives. This research design will be appropriate and help the researchers to collect accurate, less bias and high quality data. This study involved security personnel who had involved in UNIFIL peacekeeping mission in Middle Eastern Country.

At the initial stage of data collection process, a survey questionnaire has been drafted based on the role stressors literature. Next, the semi structured interview has been conducted involving five experienced security officers comprising the commander, a senior officer on operations, a senior officer on training, an administrative officer and a logistic staff officer who have the relevant experience in peacekeeping missions. The feedback from this interview method has been used to understand the nature and characteristics of role stressors and job performance and the relationship between such variables in the context of this study.

The pilot study has been conducted to verify the content and format of the questionnaire for an actual study. Due to familiarity of the target respondents with the national language, i.e. Malay, a back translation technique was employed to translate the content of survey questionnaire from English into Malay in order to enhance the validity and reliability of research findings (Cresswell, 2012; Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).

The survey questionnaire has three major sections which developed from many validated scales such as Chandhok and Tyagi (2012), Parker and DeCotiis (1983), NIOSH (1999), Cousins et al. (2004), and Caponetti (2012): 5 items of role overload, 4 items of role conflict, 4 items of role ambiguity and job performance have 4 items that were adapted from role stressors literature and job performance scale. All items used in the questionnaires were measured using a 7-item scale ranging from "strongly never/strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly always/strongly agree" (7). Demographic variables were used as controlling variables because this study focused on employee attitudes.

A convenient sampling technique has been employed by distributing self-report questionnaires to Malaysian security personnel who involved in the UNIFIL peacekeeping mission. This sampling technique has been used because the list of registered Malaysian peacekeeping personnel cannot be reveal by the researchers due to confidential reasons. Moreover, the condition did not allow the researchers to randomly select participants in the organization. Total number of 400 distributed, however, 327 useable questionnaires were returned to the researchers, yielding an 81.7 percent response rate. The respondents participated in the survey voluntarily.

The response rate meets a good decision model as suggested by Krecjcie and Morgan (1970), and exceeds the minimum sample of probability sampling, showing that it can be analyzed using inferential statistics (Sekaran, & Bougie, 2011; Krecjcie, & Morgan, 1970). Further, the SmartPLS version 3.0 as highly recommended by prominent scholars like Henseler et al. (2009), Hair et al. (2017), and Riggle et al., (2009) was employed to analyzed the survey questionnaires and test the research hypotheses.

4. Results

In terms of sample profile, most respondents are male security personnels (98.5%), service in TDM (82.0%), aged group from 31 to 40 years old (52.3%), married security personnels comprises (75.2%), security personnels who served between 11 to 15 years (44%), SPM/MCE/SPMV holders (67.6%), served as non-ranking staff (36.1%), group structure as APC element (19.3%), and mostly first timers (95.1 percent) in peacekeeping mission.

The outcomes of confirmatory factor analysis were shown in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 shows that role overload, role conflict, role ambiguity, and job performance had the values of average variance extracted (AVE) larger than 0.5, indicating that they met the acceptable standard of convergent validity (Henseler et.al, 2009; Barclay et.al, 1995; Fornell, & Larker, 1981). Besides, the table shows that all constructs which had the diagonal values of \sqrt{AVE} were greater than the squared correlation with other constructs in off diagonal, showing that all constructs met the acceptable standard of discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2009).

Table 1: The Results of Convergent and Discriminant Validity Analyses

| onstruct | AVE | Job performance | Role ambiguity | Role conflict | Role overload |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Job performance | 0.585 | 0.765 | | | |
| Role ambiguity | 0.517 | 0.122 | 0.719 | | |
| Role conflict | 0.546 | 0.171 | -0.003 | 0.739 | |
| Role overload | 0.558 | 0.110 | 0.025 | 0.020 | 0.747 |

Note: \sqrt{AVE} shows in diagonal

Table 2 shows that all constructs loaded more strongly on their own constructs in the model, exceeding the specified minimum, 0.7, showing that the validity of measurement model met the criteria (Fornell & Larker, 1981; Chin, 1998; Gefen & Straub, 2005). Besides, the composite reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha had values greater than 0.8, indicating that the instrument used in this study maintained high internal consistency (Henseler, Ringle & Sinkovics, 2009; Nunally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 2: The Results of Factor Loadings and Cross Loadings for Different Constructs and Construct Reliability Analysis

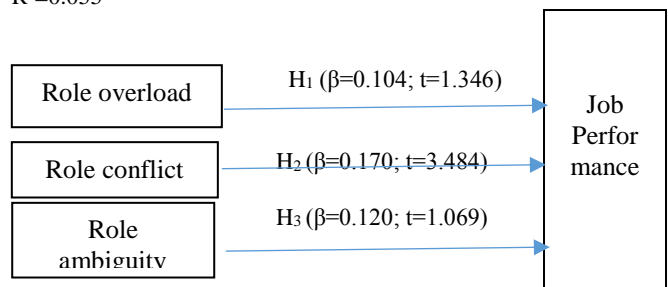
| Construct | Number of Item | Cross Factor Loadings | Composite Reliability | Cronbach Alpha |
|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Role overload | 5 | 0.545 – 0.861 | 0.860 | 0.823 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---------------|-------|-------|
| Role conflict | 4 | 0.710 – 0.764 | 0.828 | 0.726 |
| Role ambiguity | 4 | 0.548 – 0.926 | 0.805 | 0.776 |
| Job performance | 4 | 0.720 – 0.789 | 0.849 | 0.763 |

Figure 1: shows the outcomes of testing SmartPLS path model. The value of R² is used as an indicator of the overall predictive strength of the model. The value of R² is interpreted as follows: 0.19, weak, 0.33, moderate and 0.67, substantial (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2009; Wetzels et al., 2009). In this model testing, the inclusion of role overload, role conflict and role ambiguity in the analysis had explained 5.5 percent of the variance in job performance. The results of SmartPLS path model analysis revealed three important findings: first, role overload not significantly correlated with job performance ($\beta=0.104$; $t=1.346$), therefore H1 was not supported. Second, role conflict significantly correlated with job performance ($\beta=0.170$; $t=3.484$), therefore H2 was supported. Third, role ambiguity not significantly correlated with job performance ($\beta=0.120$; $t=1.069$), therefore H3 was not supported. In overall, this result demonstrates that role stressors (role conflict) is an important determinant of job performance in the studied organization.

Independent Variable Dependent Variable
(Role Stressors)

R²=0.055



Note: Significant at * $t \geq 1.96$

Figure 1: Outcomes of Testing SmartPLS Path Model

5. Discussion

The findings of this study had confirmed that role stressors in performing peacekeeping duties and responsibilities does act as an important determinant of security personnels’ job performance. In the context of this study, well trained security personnel only were selected to carry out peacekeeping duties and responsibilities in order to achieve the mission of the UNIFIL peacekeeping in a Middle Eastern country. According to the majority of the respondents, the levels of role overload, role conflict, role ambiguity, and job performance are moderate. This situation posits that majority of respondents feel that high levels of role stressors in executing challenging and dangerous works in chaotic environments have decreased the capability of security personnel to enhance job performance.

This study offered three important implications. In terms of theoretical contribution, the results of this study confirmed that role stressors (role conflict) are important determinants of job performance in the studied organization. This result is consistent with broadened studies has been conducted by Yilmaz Akgunduz (2015), Farah Syazreena et al. (2016), Moaz Nagib Gharib et al. (2016), and Iroegbu (2014).

With regard to the robustness of research methodology, the survey questionnaire used in this study has satisfactorily met the validity and reliability criteria. This may lead to produced accurate and reliable research findings. With respect to a practical contribution, the findings of this study may be used as useful guidelines by peacekeeping leadership in particular to upgrade the capability of security personnel in coping with negative work related stress in

executing peacekeeping duties and responsibilities. Most of the security personnel believed that stress is caused by the load of work they handle each day, the pattern of work and its design, as well as the work environment. The control environment has contributed to stress among UNIFIL peacekeeping mission security personnel. Due to characteristic nature of security agencies job scope and orientation, human resource practices in private sector organizations may not be directly applicable. Despite this, there are a few suggestions that are believed appropriate for this study. First, suitable administrative infrastructure should be provided whenever feasible in order to facilitate the security personnel to accomplish their mission satisfactorily. Second, cooperation among peacekeepers from Malaysia with security agencies from other countries should be enhanced in order to reduce role overload and role ambiguity. Third, better welfare programs should be provided to security personnel who are involved in UNIFIL peacekeeping mission. Fourth, staff have a responsibility to undertake and implement the recommended risk assessment process within their own areas, ensure good communication between officers and security personnel, particularly related to organization operation readiness. Finally, field stress training should be provided to all security personnel as part of their preparation to engage in special missions. If these suggestions are given more attention, it's may help the special security agencies to manage their stress at both individual and group levels.

6. Conclusion

This study confirmed that the inability of handling role stressors appropriately in managing the security personnels', the performance of duties of peacekeepers will be reduce. The result is consistent with the role stressors literature mostly published in Western countries. Thus, present research and practice within human resource development and management needs to role conflict as critical success factors of the role stressors domain. This study further strongly recommends that the capability of employees to cope with role stressors in performing challenging duties and responsibilities will strongly induce positive subsequent attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (e.g., service quality, compliance with law, satisfaction, commitment and ethics). Therefore, these positive consequences may lead to maintained and enhanced organizational performance in an era of global security and defense.

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