

Relationship between Stress and Job Satisfaction among Institute of Teacher Education Lecturers

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Abstract: *Early retirement rates among public service employees have been rising recently, particularly among lecturers in the Institute of Teacher Education Malaysia (ITEM). This study was suggested and carried out in order to understand the reasons for this unhealthy trend. The relationship between stress, job satisfaction of lecturers, gender, and marital status has been chosen as the main variables for the study. This study employed a mixed-methods research design. A total of 383 lecturers from 27 campuses of the Institute of Teacher Education Campus (ITEC) throughout Malaysia were involved in an online survey. Interviews and document analysis were also conducted to support the findings of the study. The analysis of quantitative data collected shows that the highest contributing factors to stress are Lecturer's Trust Duties (LTD), New Norm Duties (NND), and Research Work (RW). Follow-up interviews with study participants yield that LTD duties such as TS25 Elite Peer, Preparation and Marking of Coursework and Examination Questions, and Classroom Assessment Instructional Coaching are among the most onerous duties. The findings of this study are also supported by document analysis which shows that stress is the main factor that causes lecturers to opt for early retirement. In addition, this study also obtained two interesting findings: there is no significant difference between the mean stress of male and female lecturers, as well as the marital status of lecturers. In other words, differences in gender and marital status are not factors that influence the stress of ITEC lecturers. Results from the Pearson correlation test on stress and job satisfaction of lecturers showed that there was a significant inverse correlation even though it was not high. This finding indicates that high stress will result in low job satisfaction among lecturers, whereas low stress will bring out high job satisfaction. The findings of this study are significant as it opens space for the relevant authorities from ITEC and ITEM to plan and implement effective strategies or programs that would lessen the stress of the lecturers while, at the same time, bring up high job satisfaction among them in order to ensure the continued excellence of all the ITEC's, and ITEM as a whole.*

Keywords: Elite peer, classroom assessment, lecturer's trust duty

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, teaching is a really difficult career. This is undeniable due to the fact that a successful educational manager must be knowledgeable about the most recent advancements in education and is eager to handle the challenges of leadership, management, resource management, and the fulfilment of educational objectives (Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid, 1995). The demands of society and the nation on the responsibilities and calibre of work performed by each educator are rising as a result of the global education system, which is continually evolving due to advancements in human understanding, digital technology, and quick and borderless information delivery. Every educator, including ITEC lecturers, has faced a variety of burdens as a result of this predicament. They must continuously monitor advancements in the field of IR 4.0 education in order to stay ahead of the curve and evolve. The stress of trying to keep up with the quick speed of change will undoubtedly interfere with daily routines.

2. Literature Review

The stress endured will impair their emotional, psychological and physical self (Nobile and McCormick, 2005). (Nobile and McCormick, 2005). Based on his report to the Sinar Harian newspaper, Mohd Soffian Osman (2021), a public safety and health consultant, stated that the change in work culture brought on by the introduction of Covid-19 further raises work pressure amongst both commercial and public sector workers, particularly educators. They are under pressure from the new work ethic that has been

implemented, mainly being Work from Home (WFH). It involves teaching and learning methods via online learning platforms (Home-based teaching and learning), they still have a lot of work to do because the hours are flexible and the workload inevitably grows. They must establish plans, monitor work, and instruct. The major problems are stress when the workload together with hours of work is too much as well as a lack of enough sleep. People subjected to this stress may develop additional long-term illnesses, such as high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease, and one that is currently receiving a lot of attention: mental illness. If they are not given early treatment, mental patients may commit suicide.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), suicide is one of the top 10 killers worldwide (Noor Hisham, 2019). Even the WHO acknowledges that stress at work has negative effects on health and interferes with workers' physical, mental, and social wellbeing (Costa, 2003). In fact, by the year 2020, it will also pose a serious hazard to human health (Kalia, 2002).

It is undeniable that lecturers are the primary ITEM-appointed agents tasked with developing an education system of a calibre comparable to that of a university, with the goal of creating a labour force capable of becoming "global players" with superior, creative, productive, skilled, competitive, and resilient identities while being innovative to address all the problems brought forth by the tide of globalisation. Due to the numerous and difficult tasks, becoming a lecturer is not an easy job. In addition to giving lectures, lecturers often participate in creating and reviewing

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tests and coursework. In addition to conducting research, publishing, coming up with new ideas, consulting, supervising practicums, and providing research guidance in education. If stress is not managed properly and effectively, it may have an impact on the quality and productivity of employees. According to the Berita Harian article, more than 20,000 civil officials are said to leave their jobs early each year due to the difficulty of managing work pressure (stress) and a high workload (Harun, 2017). This number is quite concerning, and ITEC needs to take immediate action to balance the ratio of teachers to students. Studies both domestically and internationally link workload factors to the problem of early retirement amongst federal officials. Stress can have an impact on the workers by lowering their resistance to illnesses, interfering with regular sleep patterns, and impairing their ability to concentrate. When this issue continues, it may cause employees to be careless and are prone to making errors. If untreated, ongoing stress can have an impact on the effectiveness or productivity of an organization's activities, including the ITEC itself. The effectiveness of work performance or a key performance indicator (KPI) determines an organization's productivity. KPI is a straightforward, efficient measurement technique that can assist a business in determining the extent of employee progress and the services they hope to provide at work (Nordin & Hassan, 2019). The stress element is a significant phenomenon that is frequently linked to individual work performance, level of health, and productivity of an employee, claim Rohany and Fatimah (2006). The next step was to conduct a study in 27 ITEC across Malaysia to establish the primary causes of stress among ITEC lecturers and whether there is a substantial link between stress and work satisfaction.

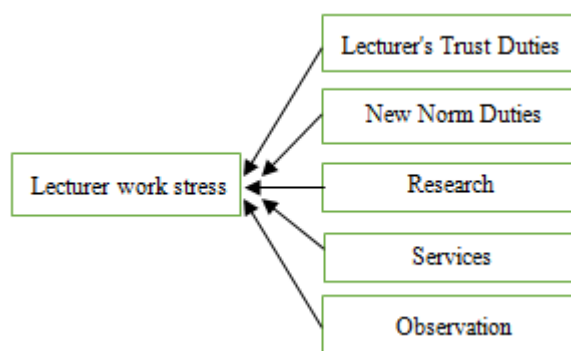


Figure 1: Lecturer stress modified according to the model of Boyle et al (1995)

Figure 1 demonstrates how the LTD, NND, research, service, and supervision duties contribute to the stress that lecturers experience at work. According to a study by Tajulashikin et al. and Burhan (2017), teachers in Malaysia who are required to teach and evaluate students as well as handle other responsibilities such as participating in extracurricular activities at school as well as attending courses and programmes with parents experience stress as a

result of their work. The teaching profession is getting increasingly difficult, and teachers are under a lot of stress due to the expanding responsibilities (Ismail and Abdullah 2019). This finding is consistent with Nelson and Quick's (2013) assertion that the current of globalization tends to cause uncertainty, poor forecasting, and instability in the workplace. Workers are easily subjected to stress while doing a job, which is a condition that is getting increasingly common (Ab. Wahid et al 2021). Additionally, studies in the literature demonstrate that stress levels and contributing factors vary depending on the sample size and measurement tools (Chan et al. 2015).

Recently, stressors have shifted and elevated anxiety, endangering both mental and physical health (Klassen and Chiu 2010; Oliver and Venter 2003; Zahiruddin and Vevehkanandar 2019). The circulation of technological inventions also contributes to increased stress (Zaidatol Akmaliah et al. 2011). However, Baharin and Mariam (2013), Klassen and Chiu (2010), Raja Maria (2011), and Sipon (2007) discovered that the added workload an individual receives is what triggers the stress factor. According to studies by Klassen and Chiu (2010) in Canada and Senthilkumar (2018) in Tamil Nadu, also found that the load of stress factors is dominant towards stress.

This study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods conducted on lecturers at ITEC throughout Malaysia. The design of this study is a survey research that uses the questionnaire method among 383 lecturers at ITEC. The research instrument consists of stress measurement components. In order to measure stress, this study adapted the criteria of the ASSET questionnaire, which was formulated based on the Trust of Lecturers' Tasks and the Performance Evaluation of Lecturers' Success. This study involves ITEC lecturers from various Departments, namely Academic Excellence, STEM, Research and Innovation, English Studies, Tamil Studies, Chinese Studies, Malay Studies, Islamic and Moral Education, Humanities and others.

Based on the work criteria specified by the ITEM, elements that contribute to occupational stress are measured for the quantitative analysis. Meanwhile, factors related to the teaching context, guidance and supervision, research, publication, and writing, as well as service and administration, will be used to gauge how satisfied lecturers are with their jobs. As a result, 23 documents were examined while following study ethics guidelines. To get accurate results, the particular lecturers were interviewed. Using SPSS software, data were analysed inferentially and descriptively using percentage, mean, frequency, t-test, correlation test, and multiple regression. For qualitative data, each theme is created manually through analysis. Figure 2 below serves as a summary of the research methodology;

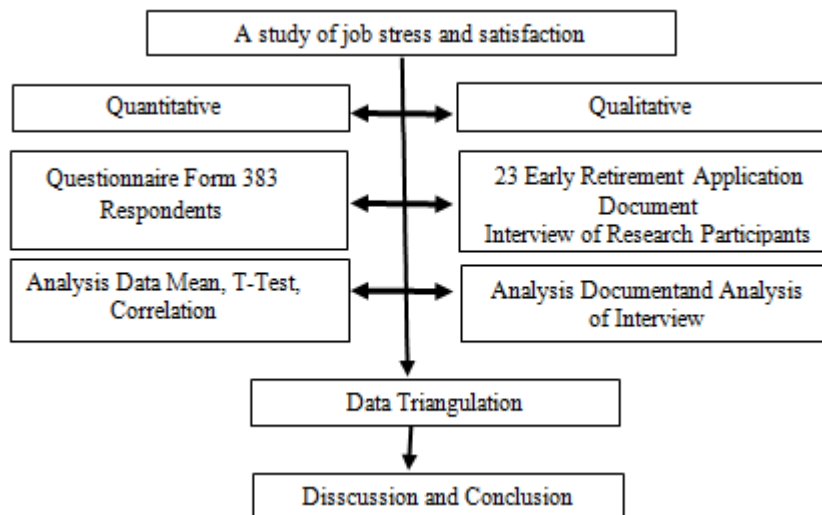


Figure 2: Research Procedure

3. Analysis and Discussion

The results of the analysis of the data obtained found that the highest contributing factor to stress among lecturers is in

carrying out the duties of the Lecturer's Trust Duties, followed by the New Norm Duties factor and the Research Work factor. Figure 3 displays factors contributing to lecturer stress.

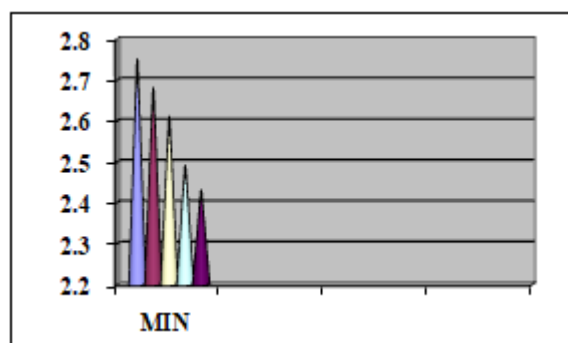


Figure 3: Mean of factors contributing to lecturer stress

Figure 3 shows factors contributing to stress among lecturers at ITEC. The LTD factor of a mean 2.75 is the highest score followed by a mean of 2.68 for the new norm duties and a mean score of 2.61 for the research work factor. Additional factors that may contribute to lecturers' stress are also studied. This environmental factor was found to contribute less to the lecturer's stress compared to the five main areas of

the lecturer's duties as shown in Figure 3. The mean value of the stress level from the environmental factor was 2.21 with a standard deviation of 1.07.

Figure 4 shows the analysis of the relationship between stress and lecturers' job satisfaction.

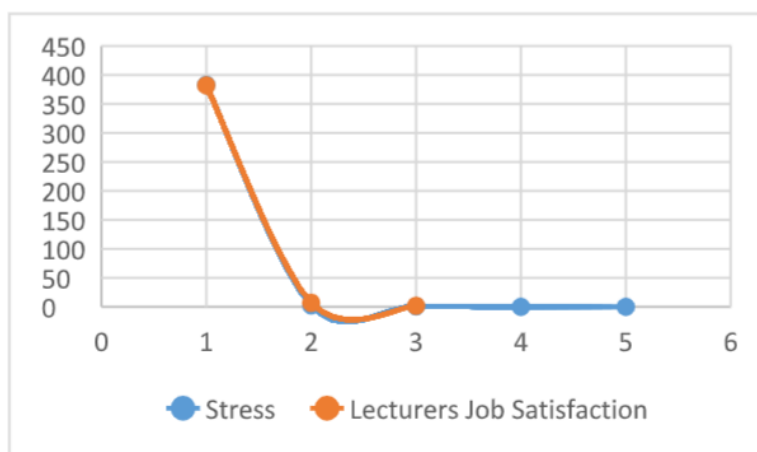


Figure 4: Result of relationship between stress and job satisfaction

From Figure 4, it can be seen that the results of the Pearson correlation test on stress (mean = 2.50, SP = .95) and lecturer

job satisfaction (mean = 7.03, SP = 1.66), show that there is a significant correlation, with a value of $r = -.32, p < .001$.

This result means that there is a significant correlation between lecturer stress and lecturer job satisfaction. Although this existing correlation is moderate, it is inverse, i.e. $r = -.32$. In other words, high stress will give lecturers low job satisfaction and for low stress, it will give high job satisfaction.

In addition, the findings of the study are quite interesting for the difference in stress levels between male and female lecturers, and the marital status of lecturers. Table 1 and Table 2 display the results obtained.

Table 1: The results of the t - test for the comparison of the mean stress of male lecturers and female lecturers

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Mean Standard Error	df	t	p
Male	190	2.46	1.01	.07	381	-1.24	.217
Female	193	2.58	.88	.06			

From Table 1, it can be seen that the t-test results for the comparison of the mean stress level of 190 male lecturers (mean = 2.46, SP = 1.01) and the mean stress level of 193 female lecturers (mean = 2.58, SP = .88), show that there is no significant difference, the value of which is $t(381) = -1.24$, $p = .217$. This result means that there is no significant difference between the mean stress level of male lecturers and the mean stress level of female lecturers.

Table 2: The results of the t - test for the comparison of the mean stress of married lecturers and unmarried lecturers

Status of Married	N	Mean	SD	Mean Standard Error	df	t	p
Married	351	2.50	.93	.05	381	1.44	.152
Unmarried	32	2.75	1.11	.20			

Table 2 shows the results of a t-test comparing the mean stress level of 351 married lecturers (mean = 2.50, SP = .93) and the mean stress level of 32 unmarried lecturers (mean = 2.75, SP = 1.11), showing that there is no difference which is significant, which value $t(381) = 1.44$, $p = .152$. This result means that there is no significant difference between the mean stress level of married lecturers and the mean stress level of unmarried lecturers.

Analysis of interviews with research participants found that the interviewed participants expressed a sense of stress in carrying out online teaching and learning tasks in the early stages of the MCO implementation. They must learn how to carry out lessons using a variety of platforms, including Google Meet, Google Classroom, What's App, chats, Telegram, and others. However, the findings of the interview indicated that the participants were quite anxious in carrying out concerns linked to management and administration, LTD and research activities.

According to a document examination, between 2018 and the end of 2021, approximately 20% of academics at one ITEC requested an early retirement option. The results of the document analysis indicate that stress is the primary driver of applications for early retirement. When each of the relevant lecturers was personally questioned, it became clear that a number of circumstances contributed to the participants' early retirement. The transition from a two-semester system to a three-semester system is one of the

major causes, burdening the participants both mentally and physically. The second aspect is the extremely high number of LTD hours worked by the participants (for example, assisting with teaching in a department without lecturers), which increases their workload. The participants' ongoing inability to handle ad hoc workload was the third problem that they mentioned. The outcomes of the document analysis offer a compelling justification for the research participants' early retirement-related issues.

The difficulties of online learning and dealing with numerous work-related issues were also mentioned by study participants over the age of 50. They are no longer willing to deal with the stress of the workplace, which worsens their health conditions. The majority of the study participants have chronic illnesses like high blood pressure, diabetes, vision issues, and so on.

Secondary Education, Form Six College, College Vocational, College Matriculation, and Institute Aminuddin Baki are the most popular destinations for ITEC lecturers seeking a transfer at the time. According to the findings of interviews conducted at numerous ITEC, the key factor driving study participants to request service changes is the possibility of modifying the structure of ITEC. Because of speculations that ITEC may be shut down and so on, lecturers are finding ways to avoid the ITEC system. It was a pushing element for the study participants as well as the spread of news whereby there is a switch from the school holidays scheme to yearly leave for ITEC lecturers.

The summary of the studies above demonstrates that addressing new, routine work during the pandemic is the component causing lecturers the most stress, followed by the issue of LTD. Tasks related to service, supervision, and research are additional stressors. However, the research by Wan Hanim Nadrah Wan Muda, Laily Paim, Khadijah Alavi, Jalihah Md. Shah, and Nor Aisah Jamil (2021) and Khairunesa Isa et al. indicates that university issues, societal factors, and individual factors have been recognised as the three main causes of stress for professors.

The preparation of exam questions, Classroom Assessment Instructional guides, course work questions, lecturer responsibilities as head of department, participation in the preparation of official manuals, modules, and summary of information, research tasks involving grants, the online auditing work process, and book writing process are just a few examples of the factors that put lecturers under stress. This phenomenon is consistent with the findings of the analysis of interviews with research participants who are similarly troubled by issues pertaining to the LTD.

Overall, the research demonstrates a significant inverse relationship between lecturer stress and job satisfaction. This inverse link suggests that if stress levels are high, task satisfaction will be low, and vice versa. The results of this study support Groot and VanDen Brink's (1999) hypothesis that job satisfaction will decline as working hours rise. In addition, it can be deduced that both male and female lecturers experience the same amount of stress, i.e., there is no appreciable variation in the mean level of stress between the sexes. This result is consistent with the research by

Adam et al (2020). This study has also identified that male and female students are still able to control the intense conflict they experience, according to this study's findings. The same is true for lecturers' marital status; whereby, there is no discernible difference in the mean degree of stress between lecturers who are married and those who are not. Studies by Bird and Ross (1993) and Mirowsky and Ross (1992), concur that highly educated people have a high rate of self-control in some job management and work leadership circumstances, have corroborate this conclusion. Self-control also enables people to prepare for situations that cannot be avoided or anticipated (Affizal Ahmad, 2008).

4. Conclusion

Given that stress has a significant negative influence on people, groups, and institutions, the issue should not be dismissed. There is a chance that the lecturers will experience health issues if they are unable to manage the stress they are under. Because of this, instructors who are overwhelmed at work will voluntarily request for a transfer or early retirement. Hence, the ITEM will suffer not only the loss of lecturers but also from the absence of expertise, knowledge, and experience. Therefore, administrators need to pay close attention to the workplace stress to avoid any further problems. For a lecturer, a comfortable, stress-free work atmosphere is essential. In order to continue providing the finest level of service to clients like student educators, the social community, and society at large, the lecturers' emotions and mindset need to be taken care of.

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