

**OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG EMPLOYEES: A
CASE STUDY IN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-BASED
INDUSTRY MALAYSIA**

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**OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG EMPLOYEES:
A CASE STUDY IN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRO-BASED
INDUSTRY MALAYSIA**

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ABSTRAK

Tekanan di tempat kerja adalah salah satu isu yang telah dibincangkan dan dibahasakan secara menyeluruh. Selain itu, pada masa yang sama juga kepuasan dalam pekerjaan juga telah dianggap sebagai salah satu punca yang boleh mendatangkan tekanan kepada pekerja. Kajian ini tertumpu kepada perhubungan antara punca tekanan di tempat kerja dan kepuasan bekerja secara menyeluruh termasuk juga perbezaan di antara jantina di kalangan pegawai kumpulan Pengurusan dan Professional di MOA. Punca yang telah dikenalpasti telah dihadkan kepada beban kerja, konflik peranan dan persekitaran fizikal di tempat kerja. Kajian menggunakan reka bentuk penyelidikan kuantitatif yang mana data yang telah dikumpulkan melalui soal selidik. Soalan-soalan yang digunakan dalam soal selidik menggunakan "USDAW Stress Questionnaires" (untuk beban kerja dan persekitaran fizikal ditempat kerja), "NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaires" (untuk konflik peranan) dan "Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaires" (untuk kepuasan bekerja). Selain itu, didapati bahawa semua punca-punca tekanan di tempat kerja adalah berkait rapat dengan kepuasan bekerja secara keseluruhan, namun hanya konflik peranan yang mempunyai perhubungan yang positif. Sebaliknya, tiada perbezaan yang ketara ditemui di antara pegawai-pegawai lelaki dan perempuan dari segi kepuasan kerja secara keseluruhan. Pendek kata, kelaziman perhubungan antara punca-punca tekanan dan kepuasan kerja wujud dan didapati sama dengan kajian yang telah dilaksanakan sebelumnya. Walau bagaimanapun, varians diantara jantina dan kepuasan bekerja secara keseluruhan di MOA adalah tidak signifikan dan selaras dengan majoriti kajian awal. Melanjutkan kajian adalah sangat disyorkan bagi mengkaji perhubungan diantara konflik peranan dan kepuasan bekerja, kerana terdapat perbezaan antara hasil kajian ini dengan kajian yang terdahulu.

ABSTRACT

Occupational stress is one of the workplace issues that is widely discussed and recognised. In the mean time, job satisfaction is considered as one of the possible effects of the stress suffered by the employees. This study has focused on the discovery of association between causes of occupational stress and overall job satisfaction, as well as the gender differences on overall job satisfaction among the managerial and professional officers in MOA. The causes examined are limited to workload, role conflict and physical work environment. This study employed a quantitative research design, whereby the data were collected through questionnaires. The questions in the questionnaire use USDAW Stress Questionnaires (for workload and physical work environment), NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaire (for role conflict) and Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (short form) (for job satisfaction). It is found that all the causes of occupational stress are correlated with overall job satisfaction, with only role conflict having a positive relationship. In contrast, no significant difference has been found between male and female officers in terms of overall job satisfaction. In short, the prevalence of association between causes of stress and job satisfaction existed, similar to the previous studies. However, the variance between gender and overall satisfaction in MOA is not significant inconsistent with majority of earlier studies. Further studies are highly recommended on the association between role conflict and job satisfaction, since there is a difference between the findings of this study with the others.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Problem Statement	3
1.2	Research Question	5
1.3	Research Objective	5
1.4	Scope of the study	6
1.5	Significant of the Study	6
1.6	Limitations of the study	7

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Overview of the Occupational Stress	9
2.2	Causes of Occupational Stress	11
	2.2.1 Workload	12
	2.2.2 Role Conflict	15
	2.2.3 Physical Work Environment	18
2.3	Job Satisfaction	21
	2.3.1 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory on Job Satisfaction	22
	2.3.2 The relationship between Causes of Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction	24
	2.3.2.1 Job Satisfaction Vs Workload	25
	2.3.2.2 Job Satisfaction Vs Role Conflict	26
	2.3.2.3 Job Satisfaction Vs Physical Work Environment	28
	2.3.3 Gender and Job Satisfaction	30
2.4	Research Framework	35
	2.4.1 Hypotheses	36
	2.4.1.1 Hypotheses One	36

2.4.1.2 Hypotheses Two	36
2.4.1.3 Hypotheses Three	37
2.4.1.4 Hypotheses Four	37

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Personnel in MOA	38
3.2 Research Design and Population of Respondent	40
3.3 Collection of Data	41
3.4 Measurement / Instrumentation	42
3.5 Data Analysis	44
3.6 Operational Definitions	45
3.7 Pilot Test: A preview and Analysis	46

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Analysis of the Real Field Study and Discussion	48
4.1.1 Reliability Test of the Variables	49
4.1.2 Descriptive Statistic	50
4.1.3 Inferential Statistic and Discussion	52
4.1.3.1 The examination of Hypothesis One	52
4.1.3.2 The examination of Hypothesis Two	54
4.1.3.3 The examination of Hypothesis Three	56
4.1.3.4 The examination of Hypothesis Four	57
4.2 Conclusion of the Analysis	61

**CHAPTER FIVE : IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS
AND CONCLUSION**

5.1	Implication of the Study	63
5.2	Recommendations for Future Studies	65
5.3	Conclusion	66

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Appendix A - MOA: An Overview

Appendix B -The questionnaire

REFERENCES

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Statistics of Personnel in Public Sector In Malaysia by Gender and Group, 2006	10
Table 3.1	Total Number of Employees in MOA	39
Table 3.2	Number of Employees for Managerial and Professional group, in accordance to Gender and Post Held	40
Table 3.3	Sources and number of items in the questionnaire	42
Table 3.4	Range of Answer Used in the Questionnaire	43
Table 3.5	Reliability Value for the Variables in the Questionnaire	44
Table 3.6	Reliability Analysis for the Variables Involved in the Study	47
Table 4.1	The reliability Score for the variables	49
Table 4.2	Demographic Analysis for the study	50
Table 4.3	The Relationship between Workload and Job Satisfaction	52
Table 4.4	The Relationship between Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction	54
Table 4.5	Percentage of Role Conflict	55
Table 4.6	The Relationship between Physical Work Environment and Job Satisfaction	56
Table 4.7	The Difference between Male and Female on Job Satisfaction	58
Table 4.8	The Differences between Male and Female Officers on Facets on Job Satisfaction.	59

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Interactive Model of Stress	10
Figure 2.2	The Relationship between Workload / Overload, Performance and Health	12
Figure 2.3	Employee's Reactions towards Job Dissatisfaction	22
Figure 2.4	Research Framework of the Study	35

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Stress is one of the major health hazards in the modern world. It triggers anywhere, at any moment to anybody. It is natural epidemic for every human, in order to assess their strength and wisdom. Moreover, it is not a new issue in the working world. It is one of the popular topics to be discussed and studied in the twenty-first century.

Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly and Konopaske (2006) define stress as “feeling tense, anxious and worry”. Occupational stress is a condition where a person (or an employee) experiences a constraint, an opportunity or an excessive physical or psychological demand (Champoux, 2003). It also means “the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when the requirement of the job do not match the capabilities, resources or needs of the worker” (Gabriel and Liimatainen, 2000). Clark, Chandler and Berry (2000) argue that stress has been appeared to be increased in the changing “flexible” conditions of work with its business cost; concerned with absenteeism, litigation and compensation claim. Here, occupational stress is also interrelated with an organization’s business, of which it will provide effects on the cost of the organization and directly will affect its productivity and production. Nonetheless, occupational stress is not necessarily viewed negatively. It depends on one’s perception and response. If a person perceives a situation as bad, the imbalance between the stimulus (i.e. perceived demand) and the perceived ability to meet that demand will occur. In this condition, he or she will feel the distress and pressure.

Eustress works in the other way, where the employees will experience healthy and positive consequences from any stressful events (McShane and Von Glinow, 2008).

Job satisfaction can be defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job, an effective reaction to one's job and an attitude towards one's job (Marzabadi and Tarkhorani, 2007). Robbins (2003) defines job satisfaction as an individual's general attitude towards his or her job. Vechhio (2002) describes job satisfaction as one's thinking and feeling (that is, one's attitude) towards work". Marzabadi and Tarkhorani, (2007) argued that job satisfaction more than just about feeling and thinking, but also covers belief and behaviours that shape their attitude. In short, job satisfaction is about employees mind set on their works.

There are various studies that correlate the factors of occupational stress and job satisfaction. These studies proved that the stress suffered by the employees will affect their job satisfaction. These studies proved that the stress suffered by the employees will affect their job satisfaction as well. In the other words, those who are suffered from high level of stress tend to be less satisfied with their work (Chandrai, Agrawal, Aarimuthu and Manoharan, 2003). Furthermore, work and organizational sources of stress are the determinants of job dissatisfaction, since the senior civil servants in UK have been found to be dissatisfied with their works, as well as the organization they have worked for (Bogg and Cooper, 1995).

Occupational stress, in relation to job satisfaction can impinge on any sectors, including the public sector. In this study, the researcher will look at the cause of occupational stress in Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Malaysia and their correlation with the job satisfaction. It is hope that this will provide at least a brief view on the occupational stress and its relation with job satisfaction in the public sector, particularly in a federal level, in Malaysian context.

1.1 Problem Statement

A study by Wyatt (2008) through Global Strategic Reward survey states that 37 per cent out of about 15 million employees said that stress is their most important reason to leave their jobs. This is part of the latest phenomenon that happened towards the working people.

The experience of stress provides negative influence to the level of job satisfaction especially when it comes to conflict between work and personal life (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003). Noor Harun (2008) states that low level of conflict will lead to high level of job satisfaction. Rosli (1995/1996) notes that workload and organizational environment were correlated with work satisfaction. Pro and contra views upon the effect of occupational stress on the job satisfaction have created a gap between the studies and it still needs to be proven, especially in the Malaysian Public Sector.

A number of studies reviewed show mixture of results in assessing the difference between working men and women in terms of job satisfaction. The facts or factors that build job satisfaction have been proved to produce a significant difference between male and female employees (see Jung, Jae Moon and Sung, 2007; Kim, 2005; Garcia-Bernal et al., 2006; Haviland, 2004; Kiefl and Kler, 2007; Mason, 2001; Sousa-Poza and Sousa-Poza, 2003; Nurliyana, 2009.)

The Deputy Health Minister, Datuk Dr. Abdul Latiff Ahmad quoted from a study by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia that one out of five Malaysians is at high risk of getting into stress problem, which can lead him or her into early stage of mental illness. In addition, he

also added that stress is a “disease” which is more obviously harmed the professionals (Anonymous, 2008). This may include the management groups in the public sector. Furthermore, according to a report produced by Ministry of Health, Malaysia in 2006, quoted by Zafir dan Fazilah, stress at the workplace is the third cause of poor mental health among Malaysians.

Poor mental health due to stress will create unwanted incidents. Suicide attempt is one of the consequences. In Malaysia, there are seven new cases of suicide attempted everyday (Ministry of Health, 2007). In his speech, Dato’ Dr. Chua Soi Lek (2006) stated that suicide ranked in the third place that led to death among those in the range of 15 to 34 years old.

For instance, Lee Saw Fong, 32 was found guilty by Penang Magistrate Court for suicidal attempt on January 20, 2007. During the trial, they mentioned that she has seriously stressed at work, had financial problems and decided to end her sufferings by killing herself. She was sentenced to two-month imprisonment and RM 2000 as a fine (Rokiah, 2007). In Japan, “karoshi” has been treated as a serious social concern, of which it refers to a situation where a person died due to overwork. One of the reasons for “karoshi” is that the working hours are longer, compared to the employees in other developed nations. However, evidence is needed to determine the casual relationship between workload and “karoshi” (Haratani, 1998). This instance shows that stress at the workplace can get even worse if a person is unable to control it.

Mirza (1996), Santhapparaj and Syed (2005) shared the same views; gender is not significantly related to job satisfaction. A significant difference does not necessarily dominate

this situation, even though the number of studies supporting this idea outnumbered its opposition.

1.2 Research Questions

This study focused on the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA). The leading research questions are:

1. What is the level of occupational stress in MOA?
2. What are the causes of occupational stress on MOA officers?
3. How does that job satisfaction differ between male and female officers in MOA?
4. How will stress affect the officer's job satisfaction in MOA?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To determine the level of stress and job satisfaction among MOA officers.
2. To determine the causes of occupational stress on the officers.
3. To measure the gender differences among officers in MOA on job satisfaction.
4. To verify the relationship between causes of stress and job satisfaction among the officers in MOA.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study is conducted among the employees in MOA, located in Putrajaya. This study focuses on the managerial and professional group in this Ministry. Further information about the Ministry and the respondent profile are explained in Chapter Three.

1.5 Significance of the Study

First, this study provides an opportunity to highlight the stress problems and its reasons behind this phenomenon. It is also a chance to prove the existence of the workplace stress in MOA.

Then, the analysis on the difference between male and female officers in MOA will provide a view on job satisfaction related to gender perspective in the one of the Malaysian ministries.

The verification of the relationship between causes of occupational stress and job satisfaction can be used as a future reference in this country. The government can use this study as an orientation to develop new programmes or a policy to develop a happy and conducive workplace in the public sector.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The sampling can only be generalized to the federal agencies of a similar nature. In addition, the sampling chosen may not represent all public servants in other ministries in Malaysia. Different ministry may portray different result regarding the level of stress and job satisfaction.

The response rate is low, since some of the officers in MOA currently not available at the office (for example on leave, outstation or meeting) during data collection. This has affected the time taken for data collection.

Moreover, it is also understood that some of the respondents were reluctant to fill in the questionnaires for unknown reason and returned them unanswered.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

As the worldwide affected by globalization, stress among the employees in either private or public in sector becoming more and more obvious. Recently, 48 per cent of employees in 22 countries quit their job because of stress in the workplace in 2009/2010 (Business Times Online, Mac 16, 2011). Moreover, a study cited in the European Health Journal (quoted in BBC News, January 2008) states that stress will raise the risk of getting heart attack and other illnesses, and those under 50 who said their work was stressful were nearly 70 per cent more likely to develop heart disease than the stress-free.

Causes of stress are the main focus in this study, where these causes may or may not affect the job satisfaction among the public managers in MOA. In addition, this study will also look at the difference of job satisfaction between male and female employees. Nevertheless, it is important to understand about occupational stress and the underlying principals made under it.

This chapter address the general overview of occupational stress, followed by the causes use in this study and job satisfaction. Moreover, it provides a view on the association of these items, as well as a gender perspective on overall job satisfaction.

2.1 Overview of Occupational Stress.

Stress can be defined as “an event or sequence of events, non-physical in nature, perceived by the receiver as an attack resulting in a physical, mental, and or emotional fight or flight response” (Raitano & Kleiner, 2004). As for occupational stress, Houtman (2007) states that it is “a pattern of reactions that occurs when workers are presented with work demands that are not matched with their knowledge, skills / abilities and which challenge their ability to cope”. Moreover, the imbalance between demands and environmental / personal resources will create several reactions, which are physiological (e.g. high blood pressure), emotional (e.g. easily irritated), cognitive (e.g. loss of focus, reduced attention) and behavioural (e.g. aggressive, absenteeism). Therefore, it is understood that occupational stress is a state or condition where the employees feel that they are facing something that is unwanted, and attempts to react according to their assumptions, either psychological and / or physiologically.

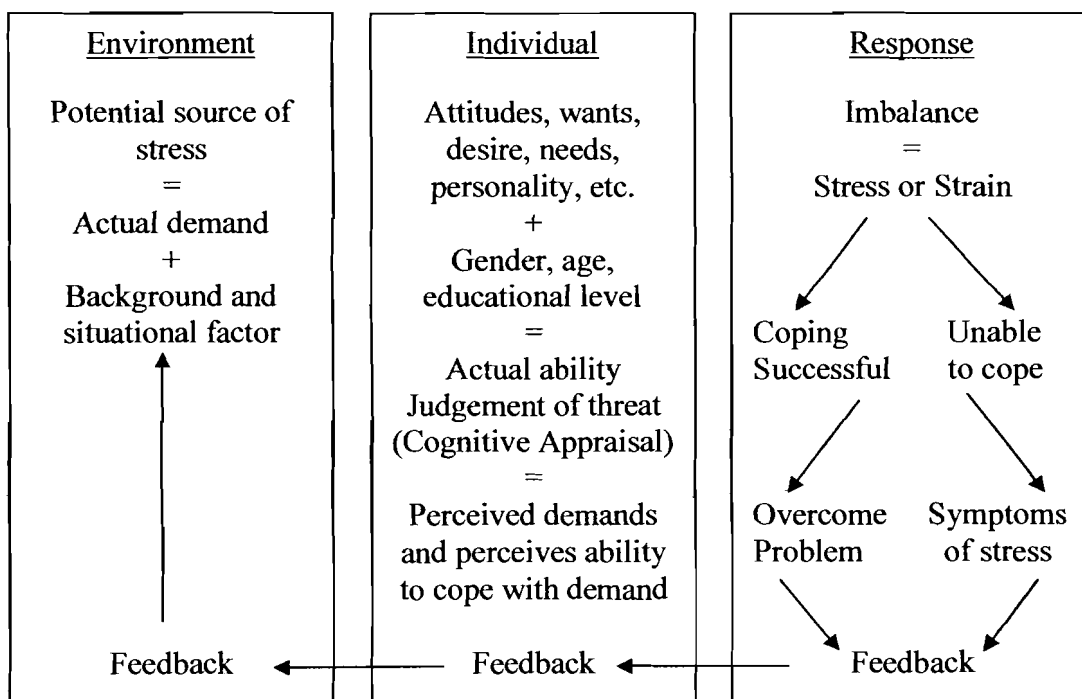
In studying about stress (particularly occupational stress), Sutherland and Cooper (2000) introduced one of many models involved, which is the Interactive Model. This model is a combination of the previous models, which concerns on the perceived potential sources of stress and how an individual reacts or responds to them. It has five main characteristics, which are (Sutherland and Cooper, 2000, page 55-56):

1. Cognitive appraisal – The subjectivity of stress, where stress is viewed accordingly by and individual.
2. Experience – The occurrence faced by the individual in the previous similar situation. It reflects the individual’s ability to deal with it.

3. Demand – A force resulted from the “individual’s actual ability, perceived ability, actual demand and perceived demand”. The perceived demand will be influenced by individual’s needs, desires and other matters concerned that reflect what he or she feels and think.
4. Interpersonal influence – The pressure from surroundings that affect the individual’s perception.
5. A state of stress – Inequity “between perceived demand and individual’s ability to meet the demand”. It will shape the coping process and the consequences of coping strategy applied.

This Model manifest the short - or long – terms exposure of stress that create feedback that can be used as the experience or knowledge was a similar incident occurs. The Model can be viewed in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1
Interactive Model of Stress



Source: Sutherland and Cooper (2000) page 11

2.2 Causes of Occupational Stress

There are several causes related to stress in an organization. It is more or less similar to stressor, where it is defined as “a potentially harmful or threatening external event or situation” (Gibson et al., 2006). Here, stress is the sequence of interaction between environmental stimulus (stressor) and an individual’s response.

A person may be in eustress (good stress) or distress (bad stress) whenever she or he faces a circumstances. Le Fevre, Mathery and Kolt (2003) illustrate that eustress relates to positive views built upon the stressor. Distress happens when a person is burdened by demands that exceeds his or her capability to cope with and unable to maintain homeostasis (Selye, 1956).

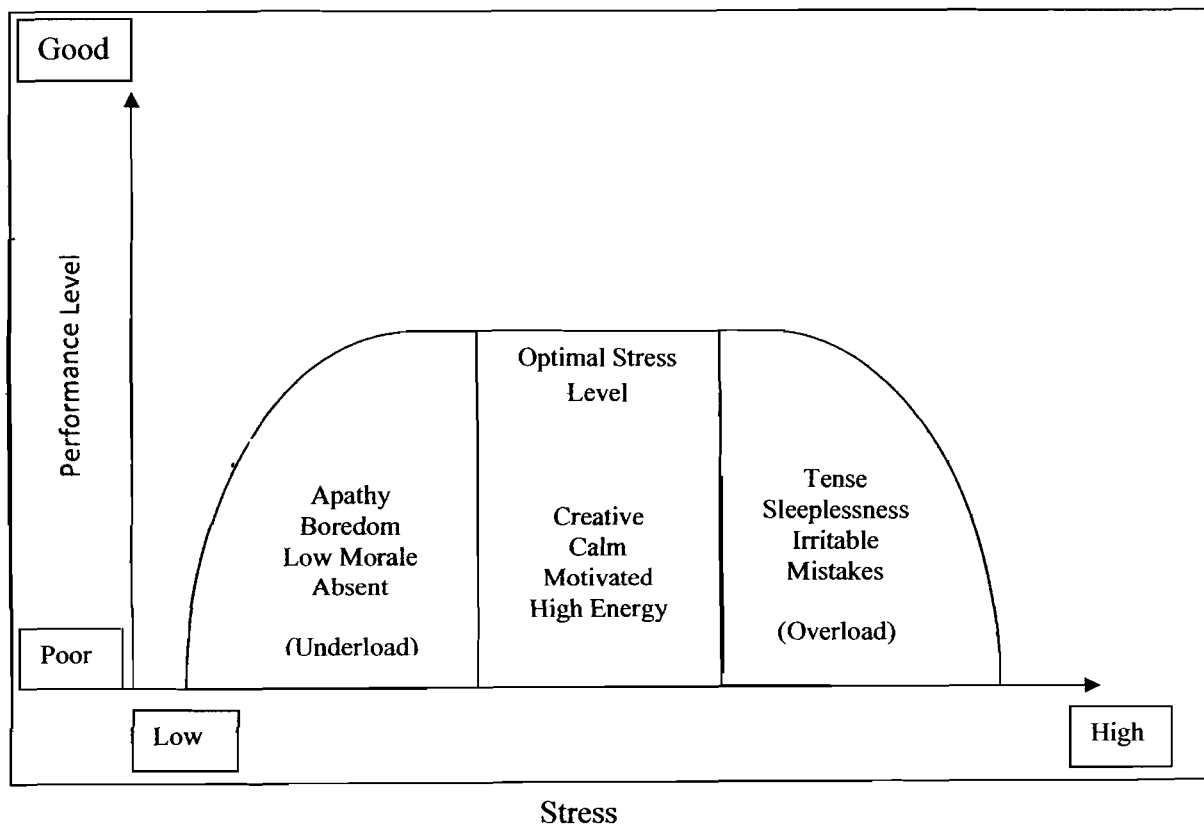
Under or over stimulation by the environment leads to distress, whilst moderate exposure results in eustress. Once again, it depends on the person’s nature and the sum of demand perceived and his or her assumptions on the other characteristics of the demand (Le Fevre, Mathery and Kolt, 2003).

In this chapter, three causes of occupational stress have been focused on. They are workload, role conflict and physical work environment.

2.2.1 Workload

Workload is normally related to the workplace stress. It is either under load (too little work) or over load (excessive work to do). In order to ensure an employee is at his or her optimum performance, a certain amount of stimulus is needed (Selye, 1956). During this moment, employee will feel motivated, full of creativity and calm. As the amount of stimulus surpasses, he or she will be exhausted, leads to 'burnout', and collapse (Sutherland and Cooper, 2009). This situation can be viewed as follows:

Figure 2.2
Relationship between workload, underload, performance and health.



Source: Sutherland and Cooper (2000) page 14

Under load and over load of work can be categorised under two points – quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative under and over load refers to the amount of tasks given to an employee (either too many or too little) within specified timeline, whilst qualitative over and under load is determined via the ability to perform the tasks given or lack of full utilisation of skills or potential ability in performing the tasks (French and Caplan (1973); quoted by Sutherland and Cooper (2000), page 67 – 68). Both under and over load will create distress (bad stress), that may harm employees and organizations. Nonetheless, the arousal of stimulus depends on a person's nature and the sum of demand perceived and other perception built from the demand's characteristics (Le Fevre, Mathery and Kolt, 2003).

Many reasons are cited in determining work load as the source of stress. In Salamatov's (2001) study, the Ukraine civil servant repeatedly said about over work, expended responsibility (due to transformation of the public sector in Ukraine) and poor working conditions. Kinman (1998) noted that diverse range of responsibility has increased the workload. A many as 53 per cent of his respondents strongly disagreed when they were asked whether their workload was manageable. In the same study, 85 per cent of the respondents have lounge complaints for frequent interruptions that lengthened their working hours and at the same time strived to meet the deadlines.

In another study conducted by Canadian Union for Public Employees in 2003, it was members have identified several points, which are:

1. Repetitive, bored and meaningless work.
2. Low pay, lack of career development opportunities and job instability.
3. Too many or too little work, over work and under – utilised of skills.
4. Additional, frequently inappropriate tasks stacked on top of the core duties.

The study by Amat, Fontaine and Chong (2003) also indicates that managers are stressed due to high workloads. Wong (1997) identifies that 64 per cent of assistant registrars in University Malaya (who comes under the professional and management category) have faced moderate stress and a further 26.5 per cent have had high and dangerous level of stress due to work overload. As for the work under load, the same study indicates that 64 per cent have confronted with moderate stress and 8.2 per cent for high and dangerous stress level. In sum, the same study showed that the stress level is higher for work overload than work under load, since the variance of high and dangerous stress level is significantly clear (26.5 per cent as opposed to 8.2 per cent).

On the other hand, negative correlation between occupational stress and work over load is proven to exist, as Aizzat, Ramayah and Kumaresan (2003) verified it in their study on electric firms in Penang. It may happen when the employers highly trust their employees in order to complete mountains of work. It is not possible if the stimulus is considered as a positive factor that would trigger them to them to complete the job. This condition is known as 'eustress' (Le Fevre, Mathery and kolt, 2003).

There are negative consequences due to the workload burdened. Among others is less time for socialization, either with the family or friends. CUPE (2003) indicates that its members have less days for rest breaks, days off, holidays and vacations. These insufficiencies will affect the quality of work and disturb the employee's family and social life. A study conducted by Rosli (1995/1996) ascertained that 56.1 per cent of his respondents complained that they had to do overtime and that situation created conflict between work and family.

Job insecurity and redundancy is also seen as the outcome of workload. The employees will work in longer hours, as they feel threatened by their current position. This is obvious for contractual and non-permanent employees (Sutherland and Cooper, 2000). For instance, Rosli (1995/ 1996) proved that 61 per cent from 123 respondents felt insecure about their works due to mistakes made during work time.

In brief, occupational stress and workload are both inter-related. Optimal level of stress due to the workload will ensure that the employees feel motivated, full of ideas and ways to carry out their duties, calm and work efficiently. On the contrary, under or over load of work can cause distress and affect adversely, not only on themselves, but also the organization they work for.

2.2.2 Role Conflict

Role conflict in an organization is one of the causes of stress. Sutherland and Cooper (2000) note that role conflict is the feeling of confusion towards differing demand or unsuited goals surrounding the job. Meanwhile, Lait and Wallace (2002) identified that role conflict occur when values, objectives and expectations contrast with the employer's expectation, especially in highly bureaucratic plants. Miles (1976) as stated by Hofstede (1994), supports this idea, where role conflict evolves in those involved in integration and boundary spanning activities, such as group leaders, managers and liaison officers. In a study by Lait and Wallace (2002), they found out that the professionals usually penetrate the workforce with unrealistic imagination of what they will do. Failure of recognising their roles in the early stage will make them feel a significant tense between daily work experience and professional expectations and values, and thus lead to stress.

Quick and Quick (1984), as cited by Cooper, Dewe and O'Driscoll (2001, page 38 – 39) outlined four different types of role conflict, which are:

1. Intra-sender conflict – Communication mismatch between supervisors or managers with the employees. For instance, the managers give the tasks to the employees with insufficient resource and information.
2. Inter-sender conflict – Trying to please employees/supervisors/managers, without knowing that others will feel unsatisfied.
3. Person-role conflict – Internal clashes when a person's values an expectation contrasting the organization's desires and needs.
4. Inter-role conflict – It is also known as role overload (Miles and Perreault, 1970). It happens when an employee possesses more than one role that may have different expectations and requirements, and it cannot be handled effectively.

Azzat, Ramayah and Kumaresan (2003) state that there is a positive relationship between role conflict and job stress. When employees are required to fulfil conflicting role requirement, they are likely to experience job stress. According to them, role conflict may create expectations that can hardly satisfy. A study by Amat, Fontaine and Chong (2003) among the Malaysian managers shows that there is a positive relationship between stress and role conflict as well as role ambiguity.

Siegall (2000) indicates that role stress (i.e. role conflict) is highly associated with the outcomes of stress, with regards to psychology strains. Wong (1997) found that 57.4 per cent of total respondents have moderate stress, while 32.8 per cent are facing high and dangerous

stress caused by the existence of more than one supervisor who impose various demands and create inter-role conflict.

Similarly, Popovich (2000) discovered that 12 per cent of his respondents in a public utility company were confronted with role conflict due to difference in expectations by co-workers and supervisors. In addition, Popovich (2000) also revealed that 26 per cent have dealt with lack of established and compatible policies and procedures. Both of these are related to high degree of role conflict.

Vijaya Kanni (2003) ranked role conflict as the third source of stress, after responsibility and identity. She performed ranking using the mean scores, with responsibility having the highest mean value (3.8029), followed by identity (3.7628) and role conflict (3.585). The higher the mean score indicates the higher is the perceived level of stress.

In sum, role conflict is one of the potential sources of stress. Studies indicate that positive association existed between role conflict and occupational stress, as confusion and misunderstanding often happen when there are unclear procedures and policies and difference in personality that creates different demands.

2.2.3 Physical Work Environment

Physical work environment is one of the potential factors that lead to occupational stress. It has been revealed in various studies. Physical work environment consists of several items. Such as lighting, space or size of working area, the quality of air, the temperature, the layout and other physical setting in the organization.

Vischer (2007) has clearly stated that workplace stress in relation to physical work environment is a feeling of mismatch by the employees, in which the environment is inappropriate or creates excessive demands on users, where they are unable to adapt and adjust themselves with it. It focuses ergonomic, or in other word, comfort of the employees working there. It recognises more than just safety and health and support the tasks and activities that are performed, in which the failure will result in workflow slow down.

Physical work environment is inter-related with the accomplishment of the job and creates an avenue for communication. The creation of positive climate like this eliminates the unwanted view of physical setting. If this subject is ignored, then it will lead to high level of stress (McCoy and Evans, 2004). In addition, McCoy and Evans (2004, page 222 – 231) have identified three core elements of physical organization environment, as follows:

1. Spatial organization – refers to the layout of the working area, including the size, shape, allocation and division of space or working area, furniture arrangement and circular route. It reflects the level of privacy, adjoining (with others) and the territoriality in the organization.

2. Architectonic details – highlights the usage of ornaments or materials with the intention to exaggerate the working environment. It depends on how they are used rather than what items need to be used. It can manifest the values and norms of the people and organization (Brill et al. 1984)
3. Ambience – includes “illumination, heating, ventilation and sound”. The indicators used for these are “thermal condition (the room temperature), lighting, air quality and level of noise”.

In a study by Chew, Poon and Mohd Fairuz (2006), it has been found that the employees preferred large working area, brighter lighting and low level of noise. Their current workplace was perceived as large working area with bright lighting but high level of noise. Moreover, 82.9 per cent of the respondents mentioned that their expectation on lighting in the office closely matched with their perception, similar to 55.9 per cent of their response concerning their preference with current noise level. However, 36 per cent of respondent required quiet working environment, as it can distract the employee’s concentration from work.

Iqbal, Soewardi, Hassan and Che Haron (2004) argue that employees tend to perform the repetitive task of working, while staying at the same positions all day long. Many workers are complaining of shoulder aches and lower back aches. The ‘aches’ is part and partial of the stress symptom. Thus, the position of conducting their jobs can contribute to stress. Conversely, Wong (1997) indicates that the respondents have moderate level of stress (59 per cent) over the working environment, due to crowded office, too hot or too cold (the temperature) and poor quality and quantity of food served in the canteen.

Aizzat, Ramayah and Kumaresan (2005) indicated the role of neuroticism in assessing the stress on the working environment. Neuroticism reflects instability of emotions such as fear, sadness and guilt. Those who suffered from this condition tend to have poor job attitudes, and high level of workplace stress. It has been found that high level of neuroticism is caused by high level unfavourable working environment. However, those with low level of neuroticism will experience the increment of the stress level, when the unfavourable working environment is high. It means that the employees who are less prone to neuroticism will feel more stress whenever the unfavourable working environment exists.

Nonetheless, Fairbrother and Warn (2003) provided different angle in this matter. Physical aspects of the workplace have no relationship with stress at the workplace. The study among the naval officers trainees reflect that they are not in stress, even when they are facing tough sea environment, i.e. exposure to cold environment, overcrowded workplace and high temperature during their sleep.

In sum, physical aspects of the workplace play a part in contributing to the occupational stress faced by the employees. Nonetheless, different studies may have different result.

2.3 Job Satisfaction

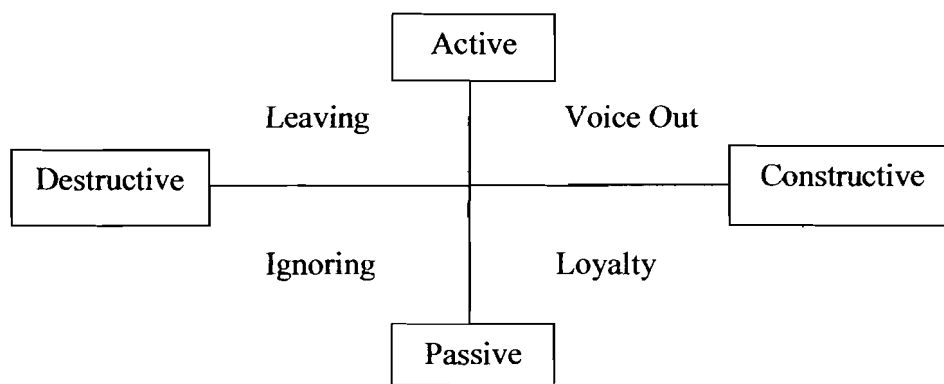
Job satisfaction among the employees is influenced by occurrences, especially stressful experiences (Vecchio, 2002). It seems that a person who is more satisfied with his or her job will perform well than those who are dissatisfied. It happens since dissatisfied employees will feel more stress and are prone to poor well-being (Marzabadi and Tarkhorani, 2007). Serious job dissatisfaction, are revealed by stress, can lead to various physiological disorders (such as arterial diseases) (Vecchio, 2002), as well as poor health (Marzabadi and Tarkhorani, 2007).

Moreover, job satisfaction will also determine the organization's ability to attract and retain qualified employees, besides avoiding extra cost of business due to high turnover rates, absenteeism, union-organizing activities and the filing of grievances (Vecchio, 2002). An employee may feel several effects if he or she feels dissatisfied, as well as the organization via the spill-over effects. Among others is effected productivity, increases absenteeism (Abdul Aziz, 2003; Vecchio, 2002), tardiness, turnover, union activities and aggressive actions, such as sabotaging the machineries and defaming the organization (Vecchio, 2002).

Abdul Aziz (2003) noted that an employee has the ability to respond to unfavourable circumstances (that make he or she dissatisfied) in two modes, either constructive reaction or destructive reaction. For both responses, they can be either active or passive way. For a active-constructive, the employee will try to speak up whether things that dissatisfies him or her to the management so that any possible actions can be taken to eliminate it. In opposition, passive-constructive employee will show his or her loyalty the organization, with the hope that management will sooner or later realise the problem and then provide solution to

overcome the problems. As for active-destructive, the employee will take a drastic action by leaving the organization and join the rival organization and condemning the former. Meanwhile, passive-destructive reaction makes the employee ignore the organization's weaknesses and let it become worse. Figure 2.3 explains the position of possible reactions towards dissatisfaction.

Figure 2.3
Employee's Reactions towards Job Dissatisfaction



2.3.1 Herzberg's Two Factor Theory on Job Satisfaction

In understanding further on job satisfaction, Herzberg's Two-Factor theory provides sufficient information for it. Herzberg Two-Factor theory is also known as 'Motivators-Hygiene Factor' theory. Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1993) state that this theory contains two sets of needs required by an employee, which are motivators and hygiene. Gibson et al. (2006) describe this theory as "...about job satisfaction, as a result from the presence of the intrinsic motivators and that job dissatisfaction stems from not having extrinsic factor".

Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1993) identified two factors which build the theory's premise, as follows:

1. Motivators (satisfiers) are needed in order to motivate the employees into high level of performance. The 'agent' of motivators are like achievement, recognition, responsibility for certain tasks, interest in the job, growth and advancement to the higher level tasks or positions and the work itself. Understanding this factor will help avoid unpleasant situation.
2. Hygiene (dissatisfiers) is important to avoid dissatisfaction among the employees. It does not lead to high motivation, but without them, the employees can be dissatisfied. It is operated via "removing health hazards from the environment" of an employee. Among the factors are working conditions, salary, status, security, quality of supervision, company policies and administration, interpersonal relations and personal life.

Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1993) also proposed two theoretical relationships between motivator needs, hygiene needs and job satisfaction:

1. When the motivator needs are met, the employees will be satisfied. When these needs are not met, the employees will not be satisfied.
2. When the hygiene needs are met, the employees will not be dissatisfied. When these are not met, the employees will be dissatisfied.

Here, it is understood that 'not dissatisfied' and 'satisfied' are two different terms, where 'not dissatisfied' means that there is no complaints about the job, but it does not lead to motivation. 'Not satisfied' then affects the motivation level among the employees. In short, 'not dissatisfied' is merely a neutral situation, since there is no complaint made, yet the motivation level is still low.

2.3.2 The relationship between Causes of Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction

There are studies that can be seen in correlating occupational stress and job stress. In a general study conducted by Nelson (1999), a negative correlation has been found. For the low stress level group has encountered a declined stress level, their job satisfaction is found to be inclining. However, it is a different thing for the high stress level group. When there is a reduction in their stress level, job satisfaction is also lowered. His study failed to mention the details about high stress level group, as well as low stress group. In other study by Marzabadi and Tarkhorani (2007), there is more significant influence in the occupational stress rather than in their job satisfaction.

In a comparative study by Muhammad Jamal (2008) on a multinational company in Malaysia and Pakistan, various sources of stress determined the level of job satisfaction among the employees in these companies. The outcome shows that role conflict, work overload, resource inadequacy and overall job stress is negatively correlated with job satisfaction. The same results has been discovered by Chandraiah et al. (2003), where low job satisfaction is caused by high level of stress on work overload, role conflict and ambiguity, under-participation in decision making, powerlessness and low status of job.

2.3.2.1 *Job Satisfaction versus Workload*

Hushim Salleh, Chief of Counselling and Career Division, University Malaya, explained that occupational stress is caused by the boredom about their current work. (Anonymous, 2002). The employees tend to seek for new challenges in their work, and if the situation does not change, they will lose their motivation to conduct their job properly. This situation is known as the 'underworked', where the organization does not allowed the employees to work within their full potential, and it also will cause job dissatisfaction. In short, the occupational stress that the employees faced may also affect the employees' job satisfaction.

Rosli (1995/1956) studied the level of job satisfaction among 123 service counter staff in *Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara* (herewith known as JPN), and found that majority of the respondents experiences low level of job satisfaction due to excessive workload and job insecurity. They needed to finish job either at the office (i.e doing overtime) or brought their work home. In addition, 61 per cent felt insecure with their current position since they must make important decisions immediately.

Hofstede (1994) observed the correlation between overload and job satisfaction. The result of his study showed that the job satisfaction will decline as the amount of work expected creates additional time on completing the job. In a survey conducted by Bruskin Research of Edison, New Jersey, on 1013 working men and women across the country, 57 per cent of respondents have mentioned that they are highly stressful due to high workload. Hence, the employee's satisfaction level declined. In January, 22 per cent of the respondents said that they loved their job, but in August, the number of the same respondents has been reduced to only

16 per cent (Anonymous, 2001). It seems like the employee's job satisfaction is deteriorated after some time.

Ellickson and Logsdon (2002) mentioned that even distribution of workload will affect employee's job satisfaction. In their study, it is found that the workload distribution significantly affected the level of job satisfaction among 1227 municipal government employees in the Midwest region of the US ($B=0.05$, $p<0.05$). In other words, if the work is unfairly distributed, the job satisfaction among employees will decline, and vice versa.

In a different view, job satisfaction is not directly related to workload. It is connected via under-utilization of skills by an employee. When he or she is unable to develop his or her full potential by utilizing his or her skills, he or she will feel dissatisfied with his or her tasks, management and pay (Steijin, 2002). In other words, the under-utilization of skills lessens the satisfaction (indirectly) over the workload.

In short, heavy workload will affect significantly on the happiness of the employee, so as the segregation of workload among them. Nonetheless, the workload is 'indirectly' affected their job satisfaction whenever they feel that they are unable to use the skills they have possessed. Overall, workload has given a significant impact on the employee's job satisfaction.

2.3.2.2 *Job Satisfaction versus Role Conflict*

It is proven that role conflict and role ambiguity negatively influence the level of the job satisfaction. Therefore, negative consequences may appear for the employees, as well as the

organization. In the same study, job satisfaction has become the mediating variable between role conflict and organizational commitment, where the decline in satisfaction due to role conflict resulted in less willingness to stay and work in an organization. For those who remain, they will wait there until new opportunities are available (Yousef, 2002).

The former evidence is also supported by these studies. Past studies have shown that the level of role conflict and role ambiguity is opposite to the level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Karadal, Ay and Curadar, 2008). Lui, Ngor and Tsang (2001) have quoted that role conflict has caused major dissatisfaction among employees. Role conflict is also related to commitment and tendency to leave the organization.

In a study among the Malaysian academic librarians at eight public universities (139 respondents to be précised), it is found that role conflict are negatively associated with job satisfaction ($r = -0.23, p < 0.01$). They prefer to have clearer roles in doing their job. In other words, the clearer their roles are, they will feel more satisfied (Noor Harun, 2008).

Fairbrother & Warn (2003) have mentioned that their respondents have negative job satisfaction when they are experiencing any stressful situation. In addition, the situation gets even worse when they are facing a conflict between work and personal life, as they are far from their family and difficult to control their personal life (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003).

The negative correlation between role conflict and job satisfaction has also being reported by Ussahawanitchakit (2008), where role conflict will result in the decline of job satisfaction among the employees. In addition, the job performance will also be affected via high role conflict. Another parallel discovery has been made by Boles, Wood and Johnson (2003);

negative relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction. Moreover, different facets of job satisfaction have been affected differently by role stressors.

In a nutshell, it is proven that role conflict provides a negative effect on the job satisfaction among employees. The higher level of conflict they faced, less 'happy' they will be with their work. This situation can badly affect the organization as a whole.

2.3.2.3 *Job Satisfaction versus Physical Work Environment*

Physical work environment has also provided an influence on job satisfaction. Hagihara and colleagues (1998) found that those working circumstance (i.e. layout of the workspace or size of the work area) is significantly correlated with low job satisfaction. It is because the employees are working in a relatively smaller room and it is impossible to change. Hofstede (1994) also found the same outcome, even though it was a weak and negative correlation between physical conditions and job satisfaction.

Based on the study conducted by Rosli (1995/1996), the JPN staffs is generally satisfied with their working environment, due to spacious and comfortable workplace. 65 per cent of the respondents said that JPN has provided proper equipments to do their work. Nonetheless, quarter of the respondents feels unhappy with high level of noise, since the service counter is usually full with customers. They have sensed that the customer's voice are irritating and make them loss their focus to do their job.

Oldham and Brass (1979), as cited by McCoy and Evans (2004), there are some employees reported on dissatisfaction over the open-plan offices, where they have felt that their jobs are less significant. Sunlight penetration and view have given positive impact on job satisfaction of the employees i.e. a significant relationship (<0.01). It has influenced well-being and attitude of the employees (Leather, Mike-Pyrgas and Claire, 1998). Chew, Poon and Mohd Fairuz (2006) stated that fewer disturbances in terms of noise will affect on the level of satisfaction, and 36.0 per cent responded to it.

Garcia-Bernal and colleagues (2005) has discovered an adverse result of job satisfaction against the 'job conditions', which includes physical and environmental conditions of the job. There is no relationship between these variables ($r = 0.064$, $p > 0.001$). Furthermore, there are three possible justifications for this result. Firstly, the employees are aware of the physical and environment conditions of the job in advance. Then, there are aspects that are barely vulnerable to unilateral change by the employees. Finally, some features are regularly rewarded by economic variables.

As an overall conclusion, job satisfaction indicates the level of happiness or unhappiness of an employee over their job. It has being a basis for a theory on organization's workforce to evolve i.e. the Two-Factor theory and other theories that are related. Moreover, it has certain effects on the occupational stress and its causes under specified circumstances. Thus, it helps the organization to realise the importance of work pleasure for the employees.

2.3.3 Gender and Job Satisfaction

In today's world, both men and women work. The prevalence of this phenomenon is well-recognised around the globe, regardless of the sectors they work in. In the Malaysian public sector, for instance, the number of women who are working is nearly at par with man. Table 2.1 illustrates the total workforce of Malaysian Public sector in accordance to gender and group service for 2006.

Table 2.1
Statistic of Personnel in Public Sector in Malaysia by Gender and Group

Group of Service	Member	
	Men	Women
Upper Management	1259	425
Managerial and Professional	111392	132227
Support	371032	331540
Total	483683	464192

**Note: Excluding Armed Forces and Royal Police of Malaysia

Source : Public Service Department of Malaysia, 2007

Souza-Poza and Souza-Poza (2003) mentioned that on average, women tend to have higher level of satisfaction, as compared to men. In their study, the scores for women's satisfaction in 1991 was 5.711, while those for men were 5.309. After ten years, higher satisfaction score is still 'owned' by women (5.411 as opposed to 5.206). Here, the women's dominance in job satisfaction score is still relevant, although the gap between the genders is getting smaller.

Generally, both have illustrated a downward trend of job satisfaction and again it is not obvious for men.

Working men and women do have different perception in determining the facets that make them feel satisfied. Some female civil servants in Korea are found to be satisfied in terms of their wages and work environment. It may happen if they are comparing themselves with unemployed women, rather than their male colleagues. As for the male civil servants, higher position in the managerial level makes them more satisfied (Jung, Jae Moon and Sung, 2007)

In the same environment, Kim (2005) found quite similar results out of 5,714 respondents in Seoul Metropolitan Government. Women are more satisfied with their pay, promotion, job security, social reputation, worth of providing public service and the work itself. However, this study has been done further, where there are two main points that determine their satisfaction, i.e. important motive in work life and work orientation. For the motive, women are more concerned on worth of providing public service, while men are focused on promotion, reputation and prestige. Work orientation for women is about valuing intrinsic rewards, as for men are adverse. Kim (2005) also outlined the reasons why women in Korean public sector are more satisfied. They are due to the comparisons made upon themselves with the women who are working in private sector; and the different values held by women and men in terms of job characteristics.

In other study by Garcia-Bernal et al. (2006), a significant difference in job satisfaction has been occurred in terms of interpersonal relations and work conditions. Men are linked with the former, while women are correlated with the latter. Nonetheless, both have the same

facets to be satisfied, which are personal development of the job and economic aspects. In terms of the arrangement of the factors for the job satisfaction, gender has no effect at all.

One country may have different factors that contribute to the level of job satisfaction between men and women. The country's nature on gender's treatment can be a possible cause of the difference. Haviland (2004) has compared three different nations in the assessment of the gender-effect on job satisfaction. The involved nations are the US, Sweden, (assumed as 'female-friendly' nation) and Japan ('female-unfriendly' country). The difference of job satisfaction between genders in the US prevailed despite work values and job rewards. These two factors, however, influences the level of job satisfaction in Sweden and Japan.

In terms of work values, the women of the US (for 1998 sample) and Sweden are higher if they are compared to men, while women in Japan have lower values. As for the job rewards, women in the US are satisfied in having interesting job for a job that helps other/society, more than men. The prevalence is for 1989 and 1998 samples, were both samples have showed to have no difference. The similar result occurs for Sweden, plus promotion. A different situation occurred in Japan, where men are more exposed to rewards rather women i.e they have known which job will provide then a potential from promotion (Haviland, 2004).

Wages, job security, and hours worked are part of the facet in determining job satisfaction among the employees. Kiefl and Kler (2007) used these facets in their study, and found out that only one facet has not brought any differences between men and women, which is the wages. Both are found to be satisfied with this facet. Satisfaction with job security seems to

be different in terms of longer working hours (for male) and higher hourly wages (for female). The male employees tend to be less satisfied with their hours worked rather than the females. This matter concerned about the part-time males who are interested in having full-time job, while the female employees are comfortable with their current positions.

In a study conducted by Mason (2001), the differences between male and female employees on overall job satisfaction is existed, where the managerial women are happier at the workplace rather than managerial men (1.66 as opposed to 1.61 in terms of the mean score). The facet of satisfaction are also different, where the male managers are more satisfied in terms of comparable pay, fair treatment, autonomy and job interest, while the female managers feel happier with their career advancement, feedback from the agents, external equity pay, co-workers and performance.

Nevertheless, there are some studies that are unable to find the correlation between overall job satisfaction and gender. In an observation conducted by Soleman (2005), it is discovered that there is no significant difference between gender and overall job satisfaction. Conversely, a significance difference between male and female social workers is obvious in terms of opportunities for promotion ($F = 9.42, p = 0.002$), workload ($F = 6.06, p = 0.015$) and quality of supervision ($F = 4.22, p = 0.041$). Rashed (2006) is also shared the same view; there is no significance difference between male and female civil servants, regardless of high score for the males as opposed to the females (3.4 against 3.32). Here, the significance prevailed only in terms of the facets, and not on overall job satisfaction. Moreover, male and female employees have the same level of happiness.

In another study by Mirza (1996), neither gender nor marital status has been correlated to job satisfaction. Santhapparaj and Syesd (2005) found that there is no significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction ($p = 0.099$). However, female respondents are more satisfied with pay, promotion, fringe benefits, working conditions and support of teaching. Generally, they have enjoyed their working environment and have low expectation in terms of wages and career advancement.

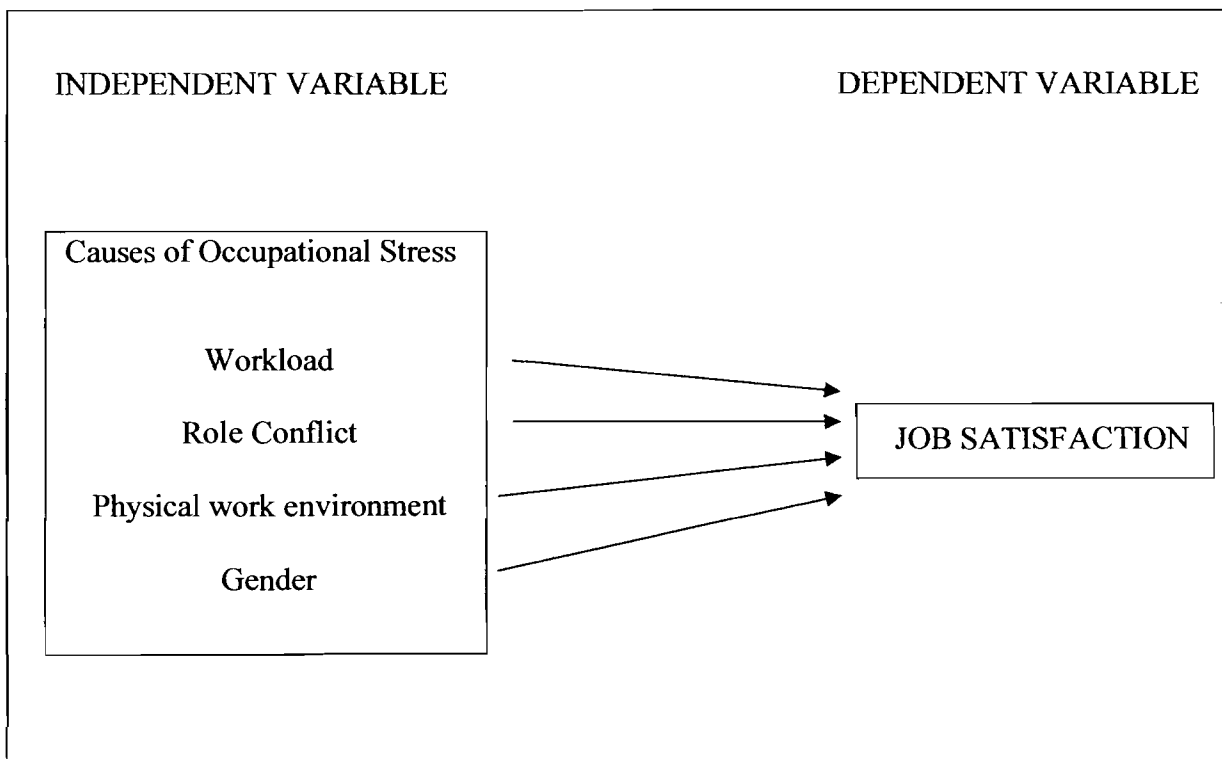
In a nutshell, the level of job satisfaction is different between male and female employees. Different factors have different impacts on their views and perspective. Generally, men are more satisfied with physical rewards such as promotion, while working women are more concerned on inner values in conducting their jobs.

2.4 Research Framework

The framework in Figure 2.4 shows the relationship between dependent variable used in this study (i.e. job satisfaction) and the independent variables (i.e. the cause of occupational stress studied) and gender.

The framework suggested is based on the Interactive Model of stress, since it indicates the researcher's focus on the main topic of the study i.e. the potential causes of occupational stress among the public managers in MOA, and how these causes affect their job satisfaction. The job satisfaction, as the response in this study will also be evaluated in terms of gender difference. This model also helps the researcher to conduct the study accordingly. The causes of occupational stress are determined as the independent variables.

Figure 2.4
Research Framework of the study



Furthermore, the Two-Factor theory introduced by Herzberg (1996) will be used as the guideline to assess the level of job satisfaction as a dependent variable. The instrument will assess intrinsic (satisfiers) and extrinsic (dissatisfiers) factors of job satisfaction, as outlined under this theory.

2.4.1. Hypotheses

For this study, there are four main hypotheses involved, which are:

2.4.1.1 *The Relationship between Workload and Job Satisfaction*

Hypotheses One

Ho: There is no significant association between workload and job satisfaction.

H1: There is a significant association between workload and job satisfaction.

2.4.1.2 *The Relationship between Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction*

Hypotheses Two

Ho: There is no significant relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction.

H2: There is significant relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction.

2.4.1.3 *The Relationship between Physical Work Environment and Job Satisfaction*

Hypotheses Three

Ho: There is no significant relationship between physical work environment and job satisfaction.

H1: There is a significant relationship between physical work environment and job satisfaction.

2.4.1.4 *The Relationship between Gender and Job Satisfaction*

Hypotheses Four

Ho: There is no significant difference between male and female officers on their job satisfaction.

H4 There is a significant difference between male and female officers on their job satisfaction.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is important to be outlined in any research. Here, it shows the necessary information about the research conducted by a person, in terms of the design and tools he or she will use. As for this study, there are several parts will be explained under this Chapter. It will include the profile or background of the place studied i.e. Ministry of Agriculture and Agro Based Industry (MOA), the research design and sampling, collection of data and data analysis.

3.1 Personnel in MOA

Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Malaysia (MOA), is one of the federal ministries in Malaysia. MOA' vision is to forefront in Agriculture Transformation. Besides that, MOA's mission is to transform the agriculture and agro-based industry into a modern, dynamic and competitive sector and also to develop the agriculture sector as the country's engine of growth. The main objective of MOA is to spearhead the transformation process within the agriculture sector via a planned, integrated and holistic approach based on an organizational collaborative effort in both intellectual and physical engagement towards realization of the Third National Agriculture Plan (DPN 3).

Generally, the structure of today's public service is according to New Remuneration System (NRS), effect from January 1992. There are two main groups, the Managerial and Professional and the Support group. For the Managerial and Professional group, the upper segment holds the Premier Civil Service positions, which is 'Jawatan Utama Sektor Awam (JUSA)', starting form super scale C. JUSA is considered as the leader of public service and

resides in Upper Management Level. As for the support group, there are two sub-divisions, Support Group 1 and Support Group 2. The entry for the Managerial and Professional group is a university degree, while for the Support group, highest qualification is diploma (Abdullah, Norma and Abdul Kuddus, 2003).

This structure exists in MOA, as it is one of the federal ministries in Malaysia. There are 1712 employees, including the Minister, Deputy Minister and Political Secretary as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1
Total number of employees in MOA

Position	Total
Minister	1
Deputy Minister	2
Political Secretary	3
Upper Managerial Group (Premier Civil Service, JUSA)	5
Managerial and Professional Group (Grade 41 – 54)	325
Support Group (Grade 36 and below)	1376
Total employees	1712

Source: Human Resource Department, MOA (2011)

3.2 Research Design and Population of the respondents.

Research design is determined in order to build a structure for collection and analysis of data and at the same time, it signifies which research method is appropriate (Walliman, 2006). It also reflects the purpose of the research conducted (Sekaran, 2003). This study is a cross-sectional study, as the data collected just once via self-administered questionnaire that was distributed in early May 2011.

As for the respondents, the researcher decided to focus only for the Managerial and Professional group in MOA. Thus, this study will focus more on the stress level and job satisfaction among the Managerial and Professional group. The reason of choosing the respondent from this group is because of the workload and pressure lingered among them. According to the information gained; there are 325 employees in this group. Since the researcher also concentrates on finding the difference between male and female in terms of occupational stress and job satisfaction. Table 3.2 signifies the division of the Managerial and Professional group in terms of gender and the grade of the post held.

Table 3.2
Number of Employees for Managerial and Professional group, in accordance to Gender and Post Held

Grade of the Post	Gender	
	Male	Female
Grade 54	13	5
Grade 52	10	9
Grade 48	18	38

Table 3.2 (Continued)
 Number of Employees for Managerial and Professional group, in accordance
 to Gender and Post Held

Grade of the Post	Gender	
	Male	Female
Grade 41/44 (Administrative and Diplomatic Officer)	56	69
Grade 44	35	41
Grade 41	15	16
Total	147	178

Source: *Human Resource Department, MOA (2011)*

From the total of 325 employees in this group, 10 were selected for the pilot test. After deducting the pilot test's respondents, the total employees left are 315. This is to reduce the priming effect. Respondents have been selected randomly from Managerial and Professional level and the total questionnaire that has distributed was 100.

3.3 Collection of Data

In this study, the researcher used primary source of data using a questionnaire (see Appendix B). The occupational stress questionnaire used is adapted from Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) (June 2006), United Kingdom and NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaire (for role conflict questions). As for the job satisfaction questions, Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (short form) is used. This questionnaire was developed by Weiss,

Dawis, England and Lofquist (1967). A pilot test was conducted before the actual distribution in order to refine the questionnaire and measure its reliability.

3.4 Measurement / Instrumentation

As being mentioned, a questionnaire was used in this study. This questionnaire has been adapted from three main sources. The sources of the questionnaire and the number of items included under the causes of occupational stress and job satisfaction in the questionnaire are as in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3
Sources and number of items in the questionnaire

Source	Variable	Number of Items
USDAW Stress Questionnaire	Workload	10
	Physical Work Environment	8
NIOSH Generic Job Stress Questionnaire	Role Conflict	16
Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Short Form)	Overall Job Satisfaction	20

Source: USDAW Stress Questionnaire (2006), NIOSH Job Stress Generic Questionnaire (1991) and Minnesota Job Satisfaction Index (Short Form) 1967.

There are five sections for this questionnaire. In Section A, it covers demographic information of the respondents. It contains the information about gender, age, ethnicity, grade of the post held, education level, years of experience and the department they work in. Section B to Section D retrieves the necessary data with regards to the causes of occupational stress in MOA. The causes assessed are workload (Section B), role conflict (Section C) and physical work environment (Section D). Job satisfaction in MOA is explored in Section E. The questionnaire was self-administered by the researcher.

The answer for each section in the questionnaire would have a different range, with the exception of Section B (Workload) and Section D (Work Environment). The range of each section could be seen as follows:

Table 3.4
Range of Answer Used in the Questionnaire

Variables	Range of Answer (in the Questionnaire)
Section B – Workload	1 (Never) 2 (Sometime) 3(Often)
Section C – Work Role	1 (Strongly Disagree) 2 (Disagree) 3 (Neither Agree nor Disagree) 4 (Agree) 5 (Strongly Agree)
Section D – Work Environment	1 (Never) 2 (Sometime) 3(Often)
Section E – Job Satisfaction	1 (Strongly Disagree) 2 (Disagree) 3 (Neither Agree nor Disagree) 4 (Agree) 5 (Strongly Agree)

Source: USDAW Stress Questionnaire (2006), NIOSH Job Stress Generic Questionnaire (1991) and Minnesota Job Satisfaction Index (Short Form) 1967.

In terms of the reliability, the details have been summarised in the table 3.5.

Table 3.5
Reliability Value for the Variables in the Questionnaire

Variables	Items	Alpha Value
Role Conflict		
Intra-group conflict	8 (No. 1 – 8)	0.86
Inter-group conflict	8 (No. 9 – 16)	0.85
Overall Job Satisfaction	20	0.9

Source: NIOSH Job Stress Generic Questionnaire (1991) and Minnesota Job Satisfaction Index (Short Form) 1967.

3.5 Data Analysis

Since it is entirely a quantitative study, the researcher relies on the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 11.0 to process the data that have been collected. Descriptive and inferential statistics are used to analyse the data.

The reliability of the instrument is examined using Cronbach-Alpha test. An independent T-test would be performed in order to test the difference between male and female officers in MOA, in terms of overall job satisfaction. As for the relationship between causes of occupational stress and job satisfaction, they are analysed using Pearson's Correlation.

3.6 Operational Definitions

Occupational Stress

Occupational stress is referred to the definition given by Houtman (2007), whereby it is “a pattern reactions that occurs when workers are presented with work demands that are not matched to their knowledge, skills / abilities and which challenge their ability to cope”. In addition, the possible reactions highlighted are physiological, emotional, cognitive and/or behavioural.

As for this study, the researcher focused on the cognitive reaction as the outcome of the occupational stress. Thus, occupational stress in this study is defined as a mismatch between the job demands and the employee’s knowledge and capability, in which possible cognitive response will occur as a result. The cognitive response refers to attitude of the employees when they are stressful, such as reduced attention and perception, low job satisfaction, forgetfulness and so forth. Moreover, occupational stress in this study is focused on three factors; workload, role conflict and physical work environment.

Job Satisfaction

This study utilises the operational definition of job satisfaction by Marzabadi and Tarkhorani (2007), in which it is defined as “a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job, an affective reaction towards one’s job and an attitude towards one’s job”. Therefore, the researcher understood job satisfaction as an enjoyment or happiness felt by an employee on their job, and it is reflected via their attitude and behaviour.

3.7 Pilot Test: A Preview and Analysis

Pilot test is a prelude of the real field test. It is conducted as the final stage of the questionnaire development. Here, the weaknesses of the questionnaire would be detected and the errors in the draft would be corrected before it is submitted to the real respondents. The respondents in the pilot test must differ from the final respondents. Nonetheless, it is better to have those who possess same characteristics as the real respondents, since it could help the researcher to improve the wording in the questionnaire and the category involved in the real research (Bailey, 1992).

The pilot test for this study has been carried out in late April 2011. There are two government agencies and ministry involved in the pilot test, targeted to those who are in the Grade 41 and above.

There are five sections in the questionnaire. The reliability would be conducted for all items from Section B until Section E of the questionnaire. It is to ensure that all items are stable and consistent in providing the results that are repeatable. High degree of reliability means high level of stability of the instrument used (Golafshani, 2003).

The reliability of the instrument used is analysed by using Cronbach-Alpha method 1 (space saver). The value earned for Alpha would determine which items are inappropriate to be uses in the study and which could be improved in order to increase the Alpha value. Here, the maximum value is 1. If the Alpha value obtained is less that 0.6, it indicates that the instrument used in the study has reliability (Zaidatun and Mohd Salleh, 2003).

Table 3.6 shows the result of the reliability analysis conducted for the pilot test.

Table 3.6
Reliability Analysis for the Variables Involved in the Study

Variables	Items	Alpha Value
Section B – Workload	10	0.8196
Section C – Work Role	16	0.8417
Section D – Work Environment	8	0.7405
Section B – Job Satisfaction	20	0.8897

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Through this chapter, the researcher explains on the findings and analysis for the study conducted. As for the pilot test, the analysis involved focuses only on the reliability of the instrument used i.e. the questionnaire. The final survey provides an in-depth analysis of the questionnaire and testing the hypotheses developed in Chapter Two. As mentioned in Chapter Three, SPSS 11.0 software is used to facilitate the analysis of the data recovered from the respondents.

4.1 Analysis of the Real Field Study and Discussion

Since this is a population study, the researcher has distributed the questionnaires to 100 respondents, starting from Grade 41. However, only 91 respondents responded to the questionnaire, representing 91 per cent of total population. The analysis made includes the reliability analysis of the variables, demographic analysis and through examination of the hypotheses built in the Literature Review.

4.1.2 Reliability Test of the Variables

The analysis of the reliability test is used as data reduction method to increase the reliability score of the variables. The current reliability score is needed in order to sort which items within the variables are reliable to be analysed in the study. The changes have to be done for the work role, as well as the working environment.

The item 'could get information from other groups' under the work role (which is the variable) is removed, similar to the 'noise' under the working environment. The reliability score increased drastically after the removal of these items, as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1
The reliability Score for the Variables

Variables	Number of Items (After the removal)	Alpha Value (Before Items Deleted)	Alpha Value (After Items Deleted)
Section B (Workload)	10	-NI*-	0.7627
Section C (Work Role)	16(5)	0.8295	0.8519
Section D (Work Environment)	8(7)	0.6990	0.7197
Section E (Job Satisfaction)	20	-NI*-	0.8437

* Note: NI – Not Involved (with items deleted within the variables)

4.1.3 Descriptive Statistic

Descriptive statistic is used to analyse the demography of the respondents involved in this study. The demography information can be viewed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2
Demographic Analysis for the Study (n=91)

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent
Gender		
Male	40	43.95
Female	51	56.04
Age		
20 to 30 years old	51	56.04
31 to 40 years old	32	35.16
41 years old and above	8	8.79
Ethnicity		
Malay	81	90.10
Chinese	3	3.29
Indian	6	6.59
Others	1	1.09
Working Grade		
Grade 41	38	41.75
Grade 44	11	12.08
Grade 48	16	16.48
Grade 52 and above	24	26.37
Not Responding	2	3.29
Level of Education		
Degree	69	75.82
Master	19	20.87
PhD	3	3.29
Working experience (Years)		
1 month to 1 year	14	15.38
2 to 10 years	48	52.74
11 to 20 years and above	21	23.07
21 years and above	6	6.59
Not Responding	2	2.19

From Table 4.2, it can be seen that the number of female respondents in this study are higher than the males (female = 56.04 % and male = 43.95 %).

There is a slight majority for the respondents aged between 20 to 30 years old (Table 4.2). It comprises of 51 out of 91 respondents (56.04 %). There are 35.16 per cent aged between 31 to 40 years old and 8.79 % is under the category of 41 years old and above.

According to Table 4.2, the majority of the respondents are Malay (90.10 %). Indian has been the second largest, which 6.59 % per cent. For this study, the Chinese and others are not well-represented since they only comprised of 3.29 per cent and 1.09 per cent respectively, out of 91 respondents.

From Table 4.2, it can be seen that the difference of respondents on four working grades for the Managerial and Professional group in MOA is quite obvious, where 38 respondents (41.75 %) are under Grade 41, a dominant grade in this study. The smallest number of workforce is currently under Grade 44, 11 respondents (12.08 %). Two respondents were reluctant to express their grades.

Majority of the respondents have a degree (75.82 %) while 20.87 per cent has a Master. Those having a doctoral degree are minorities, which are 3.29 per cent respectively (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 also shows the working experience of the respondents. Even though there are 91 respondents who answered the questionnaires, 2 of the respondents were reluctant to provide information about their years of experience. It is clear that 52.74 per cent from 91 respondents

have been working between 2 to 10 years, while those who are experiences between 11 to 20 years represent only 23.07 per cent out of 91 respondents.

4.1.4 *Inferential Statistics and Discussion*

In this section, the examination of hypotheses is conducted.

4.1.4.1 *The Examination of Hypothesis One*

Hypotheses one intends to find out whether there is a significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction.

Table 4.3
The Relationship between Workload and Job Satisfaction

		Workload	Job Satisfaction
Workload	Pearson Correlation	1	- 0.342**

** Note : Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

The analysis shows that there is a significant relationship between overall workload and overall job satisfaction ($r = -0.342$, $p < 0.01$) (Table 4.3). Thus, hypothesis one is accepted, and the null hypotheses is rejected. Moreover, the relationship between these variables is negative. It means that workload adversely affects the overall job satisfaction among officers in MOA i.e. higher overall workload will lessen their job satisfaction.

The results attained have supported several previous studies. In the study made by Hofstede (1994), where higher workload (in which needs more time to be completed) will lessen the employee's job satisfaction. In another study by Bruskin Research of Edison, New Jersey, the same outcome has been revealed, where 57 per cent out of 1013 employees have low job satisfaction due to stress of higher workload. Rosli (1005/1996) has shared the same view, in which majority of 123 respondents have complained on the excessive workload, and the 'excessiveness' has forced them to bring the work home.

Under-utilization of skill in performing their job is part and parcel of the workload. The incapability to use all the skills that the employees possessed will cause unhappiness at work (Steijn, 2002; Hushim Salleh, cited by Anonymous 2000), and caused a condition called 'underwork' (Hushim Salleh, cited by Anonymous 2000). These studies are in harmony with the significant finding of 'under-utilization of skills'.

Fair distribution of work in this study is also consistent with the study conducted by Ellicson and Logsdon (2002). They have stated that fair distribution of work among the employees is important to determine their job satisfaction. Fair work distribution will enhance the level of happiness among them, and it reflects the management's care upon them.

As a conclusion, overall workload is negatively associated with overall job satisfaction among the officers in MOA. Many previous studies have the same view over this matter, as workload is important to be concerned by organizations in making the workplace a 'happy field' for the employees.

4.1.4.2 The Examination of Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis reflects the existence of a significant relationship between role conflict and job satisfaction. Table 4.4 shows that a significant relationship between role conflict and overall job satisfaction existed ($r = 0.435, p < 0.01$).

Table 4.4
The Relationship between Role Conflict and Job Satisfaction

		Role Conflict	Job Satisfaction
Role Conflict	Pearson Correlation	1	0.435**

** Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

This finding is opposed to the findings in other studies in terms of the relationship, even though the significant is there. It may be because the officers in MOA are really concerned about their relationship between colleagues within their group, as well as other groups in the organization. They may not see that the conflict between them will negatively influence their happiness, or they have seen that there are no major conflicts that exist in the first place. The percentage in Table 4.5 show that most of the respondents like the harmonious situation (high per cent in positive statements – majority agree and strongly agree) and dislikes conflicts between them (high per cent in negative statements – minority agree and strongly agree).

Table 4.5
Percentage of Role Conflict

Items of Role Conflict	Percentage		
	D	N	A
In the group			
Harmony	75.0	4.8	90.5
A lot of bickering	45.2	20.2	4.8
Different opinion	65.5	15.5	39.3
Dissension	8.3	19.0	15.5
Supportive towards ideas	61.9	10.7	81.0
Clashes between subgroups	2.4	20.2	17.9
Friendliness	6.0	9.5	88.1
Have 'we' feeling	-	9.5	84.5
Between groups			
Disputes	67.9	25.0	7.1
Agreement	4.8	15.5	79.8
Harmony	1.2	8.5	90.2
Lack of mutual assistance	69.5	19.5	11.0
Cooperation	1.2	4.8	94.0
Personality clashes	53.7	25.6	20.7
Other create problems	72.0	20.7	7.3

** Note: D – Disagree, N – Neither Agree/Disagree, A – Agree.

Most of the previous studies have provided a similar premise; role conflict negatively influences the job satisfaction. Role conflict has resulted in unhappiness that will adversely affect the willingness to stay (Yousef, 2002), organizational commitment, tendency to leave and poor job performance (Yousef, 2002; Lui Ngor and Tsung, 2001; Ussahawanitchakit, 2008). It will become worse if there is a conflict between work and personal life (Fairbrother and Warn, 2003) and vague roles in carrying out their job (Noor Harun, 2008). Other than that, role conflict has affected differently on the faces of the job satisfaction (Boles, Wood and Johnson, 2003).

In short, the difference of the type of the relationship (role conflict vs. job satisfaction) may trigger new approach of looking at role conflict as something that is positive or even good to enhance their job satisfaction. It is possible for them to be more open in viewing other's judgement, and conflict helps then to voice out their opinions that has overcome the dissatisfaction over certain issues. It is in line with Herzberg's theory, of which whenever the motivation factor is fulfilled (high satisfaction with interpersonal relations), the employees will feel satisfied (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 1993). As for the officers in MOA, their satisfaction is about the openness and respect of individual differences.

4.1.4.3 *The Examination of Hypothesis Three*

The third hypothesis focused in this study is to identify whether there is a significant correlation between physical work environments. The analysis in Table 4.6 illustrates that the overall job satisfaction are negatively correlated with the overall physical work environment ($r = -0.433, p < 0.01$).

Table 4.6
The relationship between Physical Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

		PWE	Job Satisfaction
Physical Work Environment	Pearson Correlation	1	- 0.433**

** Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

The current finding obtained by the researcher is consistent with the previous studies (Hofstede, 1994), in terms of the working area and lighting (Hagihara et al., 1998; Oldham and Brass, 1979 (cited by McCoy and Evans, 2004)). In addition, views and sunlight penetration is also significant for having 'happy' workplace (Leather, Mike-Pyrgas, and Clair, 1998). Proper equipments are also necessary to be provided by the organizations in order to ensure that the employees are 'happy' to carry out their job (Rosli, 1995/1996). However, the non-inclusive of noise as the stress sub-item is opposed to the finding by Chew, Poon and Mohd Fairuz (2006), and Rosli (1995/1996), where job satisfaction is related to quiet environment (less disturbance).

In conclusion, the current study conducted has the similarity with the earlier studies i.e. the existence of correlation between physical work environment and overall job satisfaction. Nonetheless, 'noise' needs to be eliminated, since it affects the reliability score for the physical environment as an independent variable.

4.1.4.4 The Examination of Hypothesis Four

This section provides an in-depth analysis upon the difference between male and female on overall job satisfaction.

Through the investigation made, it has been found that there is no significant difference between male and female officers in MOA in terms of the overall job satisfaction ($p = 0.392$). Even so, male officers are more satisfied than the females (mean score of 3.8662, as opposed to 3.8) (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7
The Difference between Male and Female on Job Satisfaction

Mean		t-Test for Equity of Means		
Male	Female	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
3.8662	3.8000	0.861	81	0.392

The result of this study is in converse with some of the study viewed before. The prevalence of a significant difference between male and female in terms of their level of satisfaction is acknowledged (Jung, Jae Moon and Sung, 2007; Kim, 2005; Garcia-Bernal *et.al*, 2005; Haviland, 2004; Kiefl and Kler, 2007; Mason, 2004; Sousa-Poza and Sousa-Poza, 2003). Still, Rashed (2006) and Mirza (1996) have stated that there is no difference between male and female civil servants in Kuwait and Malaysia respectively; illustrating that both male and female has similar level of satisfaction.

Most of the previous studies also mentioned about the gender differences in facets of job satisfaction. Female employees tend to have higher job satisfaction in terms of working conditions (Jung, Jae Moon and Sung, 2007; Garcia-Bernal *et al.*, 2005; Santapparaj and Syed, 2005), worth of providing services or can help others (Kim, 2005; Haviland, 2004), the work itself (Kim, 2005; Haviland, 2004; Santapparaj and Syed, 2005), job security (Kim, 2005; Kiefl and Kler, 2007), pay (Jung, Jae Moon and Sung, 2007; Kim, 2005; Mason, 2001; Santhapparaj and Syed, 2005), promotion (Haviland, 2004; Mason, 2001; Santhapparaj and Syed 2005), performance and co-workers (Mason, 2001), as well as fringe benefits (Santhapparaj and Syed 2005).

All of these findings are prevailed in the facets of job satisfaction among male and female officers in MOA. However, neither male nor female officers ‘dominated’ all of the facets, since both of them shared equally in determining the things that make them satisfied. (i.e. 10 facets for the male officers, 10 for the females). In addition, the result attained is consistent with the earlier studies, where the female officers are more satisfied with their job, social reputation, able to help others, job security, wages, advancement, interpersonal relations and working environment. The females are also happier with their ability to use own judgement and method to conduct their job. Table 4.4 demonstrates the evidence.

Table 4.8
The difference between Male and Female Officers on Facets of Job Satisfaction (in %)

Facets of Job Satisfaction	Male			Female		
	DS	N	S	DS	N	S
Being able to keep busy all the time.	18.9	24.3	56.8	21.3	23.4	55.3
The chance work alone on the job.	8.1	5.4	86.5	4.3	10.6	85.1
The chance to do different things from time to time.	8.1	16.2	75.7	13	4.3	82.6
The chance to be somebody in the community.	5.4	21.6	73.0	6.4	10.6	83.0
The way my boss handles his/ her workers.	8.1	13.5	78.4	14.9	19.1	66.1
The competence of my boss when making decision.	5.4	13.5	81.1	8.5	14.9	70.2
Being able to do things that do Not go against my conscience.	-	13.5	86.5	8.5	14.9	76.6
The way my job provides for steady employment.	5.4	13.5	81.1	8.5	6.4	85.1

Table 4.8 (Continued)
The difference between Male and Female Officers on Facets of Job Satisfaction (in %)

Facets of Job Satisfaction	Male			Female		
	DS	N	S	DS	N	S
The chance to help other people.	2.7	5.4	91.9	-	4.3	95.7
The chance to tell people what to do.	2.7	10.8	86.5	6.4	12.8	80.9
The chance to do something that makes use of your abilities.	5.4	10.8	83.8	14.9	8.5	76.6
The way company policies are put into practice	8.1	10.8	81.1	12.8	10.6	76.6
My pay is worth it with the work I do.	13.5	13.5	73.0	4.3	10.6	85.1
The chances for advancement on this job.	5.4	8.1	86.5	8.5	2.1	89.4
The freedom to use my judgment.	10.8	13.5	75.7	12.8	4.3	83.0
The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.	10.8	13.5	75.7	12.8	8.5	78.7
The working condition is good.	10.8	5.4	83.8	10.6	-	89.4
The way co-workers get long together with each other.	2.7	5.4	91.9	4.3	-	95.7
The praise I get for doing a good job.	-	24.3	75.7	4.3	31.9	63.8
The feeling of accomplishment I get for the job.	2.7	2.7	94.6	6.4	4.3	89.4

** Note: DS – Dissatisfied, N - Neutral, S - Satisfied

On the whole, gender and overall job satisfaction is interrelated between one and another. Nonetheless, the gender difference on overall job satisfaction is not obvious, since there is no significance difference attained via the analysis made. Both male and female officers in MOA

have shared the same number of facets that make them happy at work, even though they have different perception on the.

4.2 Conclusion of the Analysis

From the analysis made, it is found that the respondents do not representing the Malaysian population, as the number of Malays is far higher than the other races. Most of them are the lower level officers (Grade 41) in the Managerial and Professional group. Other significant dominance within the demography is the age (majority aged between 20 to 30 years old), qualification (vastly owned a degree) and the working experience (between 2 to 10 years). As for gender, the difference is only 12.09 per cent between male and female officers (51 as opposed to 40 respondents).

Furthermore, the correlation analyses detected a significant effect of occupational stress on job satisfaction, of which three hypotheses made are accepted and not falsifiable. Workload is negatively correlated with job satisfaction, similarly with physical work environment and job satisfaction. An interesting fact found for the association between role conflict and the happiness at the workplace, where these variables are positively correlated. It means that a higher the conflict, the officers will feel happier, as they may have seen it as a positive trigger (eustress).

The contradiction between findings of previous studies is prevailed, in terms of the place that the studies are conducted. The current study clarifies which side of the studies abounds in Malaysia, especially in the public sector. Following the 'footsteps' of Israel and Kuwait, the is

no significant difference between male and female officers in the level of job satisfaction, and the hypotheses made has been falsified. It seems that they may have shared the same perception on their happiness at the workplace. Nonetheless, their perceptions on the factors that make them satisfied are dissimilar.

In a nutshell, the whole analysis of the study has the association between the causes of occupational stress and the job satisfaction among male and female officers, specifically in MOA. However, it fails to acknowledge gender differences in assessing the overall job satisfaction. There is plenty room for improvement for this study and it is hoped that it will become a significant reference for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Implications of the Study

Workload and job satisfaction has been proved to be interrelated. More workload means they are less happy with their workplace. Canadian Union for Public Employees (CUPE)(2003) has suggested for decreasing the workload and attaining sufficient number of employees can help it. Moreover, job redesigning is appropriate to be implemented, where the work is given to the employees in accordance to their capabilities (CUPE, 2003). These are among the ways that MOA can adapt in reducing the stress and increasing the officer's job satisfaction.

Despite the similarities over the findings, role conflict has possesses different 'characteristics' in this study. The previous studies have illustrates negative relationship between these variables, but the relationship is reversed in this study. Positive association may reflect of their readiness to upfront any circumstances in executing their job, regardless how bad the conflict can be. Other than that, they may not see a conflict at their workplace affect their job satisfaction. Theoretically, this is a new finding that can be referred in the future.

Although role conflict is positively associated with overall job satisfaction among the officers, MOA as an organization must always be prepared for any possible circumstances that may make the conflict obviously existed. The present situation acknowledged conflict as a silent matter that cannot 'kill' the organization. Future preparation is needed, so that the conflict is not going to be worse. Moreover, frequent discussion and smooth flow of information can lessen the possibilities of conflict 'eruption'.

Another cause of occupational stress which can affect the level of job satisfaction is the physical work environment of the workplace. Several attributes have been outlined under the workplace conditions, such as the layout of working area, the decorations used in the office and ambient conditions i.e. lighting, temperature, noise, level and ventilation (McCoy and Evans, 2004). A proper guideline can be established specifically to overcome any problems related to working environment by MOA, via looking at these attributes. This guideline provides not only the solutions, but also as the reference when MOA needs to rearrange or renovate its officers. It is an internal guideline, and proper reference must be made to other government agencies before proceed it.

Based on the previous studies, this study is an additional knowledge to recognise different causes of stress that effect employee's job satisfaction, and as an extra to the non-difference studies on job satisfaction, with regard of gender. Individually, it can help the officers to access themselves more thoroughly and acknowledge the different opinions and views of the others. The organization i.e. MOA is partly responsible in helping the officers to achieve inner and physical needs, in order to turn them into highly satisfied employees. Thus, this study allows MOA to create and organize some programmes, not only focusing on reducing the potential causes of stress, but also heighten their happiness at the workplace. Moreover, the programme arranged need to cover all of the officers, regardless of gender.

5.2 Recommendations for Future Studies

The study only focused to one federal ministry i.e. MOA, in representing all public officers in Malaysia. It is preferable for future studies to expand the coverage of the research conducted i.e. to several ministries and/or government agencies, for better representation.

On the other hand, the 'unsuitable' time of data collection has created several difficulties. This limitation is actually very subjective, and it changes relatively to the occurrence of circumstances. It is better to plan carefully before conducting the study, and try to find as much as possible the information regarding the upcoming events of the organization. It will help to identify the most 'suitable' time, with less disturbances on the data collection.

Further researches on the association between the causes of occupational stress and overall job satisfaction and gender studies are highly recommended. This study limits the association on three causes i.e. workload, role conflict and physical work environment. More factors of stress may have different implications, and the inclusiveness may improve the findings.

Besides, an in-depth study on gender differences is possible to carry out, in terms of finding a specific association between gender and the factors of job satisfaction (intrinsic and extrinsic factors separately). In addition, gender can be measured further as the moderating factor of causes of occupational stress, as well as job satisfaction.

5.3 Conclusion

The phenomenon of workplace stress is widely recognized and it is inclining year by year. It affects the level of job satisfaction among the employees, where a downward trend has been illustrated, not only in the news, but also in the previous studies. This study has provided a premise that occupational stress prevailed in MOA, despite the causes are limited. More or less, it has affected the happiness of the Managerial and Professional group at their workplace.

It is important for MOA to acknowledge the existence of occupational stress and the level of its employee's job satisfaction, particularly the officers. Programmes and guideline to overcome stress and increase the job satisfaction are essential if MOA wants its officers and other employees to be more productive and well performed in the future.

SUPPLEMENTARIES

Appendix A – MOA : An Overview

The agriculture sector is one of the key sectors of international trade given its importance in supplying food and raw material to the world's population. A country's capacity in developing its agriculture sector is an indication of its ability to providing sufficient food for its population. Developed countries such as the United States, Australia as well as the Netherlands have never neglected their agriculture sector. In fact the agriculture sector of these countries has been successfully developed into competitive and profitable business entity.

Though Malaysia blessed with fertile ground area, adequate rainfall distribution throughout the year and beautiful tropical climate, the country is still a net food importer and has never achieved a surplus in food trade balance. Realizing the opportunity and potential for the development of this sector, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry is entrusted with the responsibility to develop the agro food sector as a competitive entity and significant contributor to national income. Efforts in transforming the sector is indeed a Herculean task as it involves not only a change from traditional farming methods to advance and modern farming methods but it also entails the need for a mindset leap within the community from the old stigma that agriculture is a backward and low skill activity.

The shift in mindset and practices will only be made possible through the availability of accurate information on the importance and potential of this sector. Building from this, the Ministry hopes that information regarding the agro-food sector development can be dissimilated through this website to various stakeholders and interested parties.

Core Business Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry

Core Function 1

Legislate, plan and implement agriculture, development program's policies and strategies.

Core Function 2

Evaluate, coordinate and ensure the implementation of agro-food agriculture development projects/programs.

Core Function 3

Conduct R&D and innovation that enhance productivity and competitiveness in the agro-food sector.

Core Function 4

Promote foreign and local investment in the agro-food sector.

Core Function 5

Structure and implement an effective and efficient agro-food market chain.

Appendix B – The Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

**Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction among
Employees in MOA: A Study in the Public Sector**

Dear Sir / Madam,

This questionnaire is design to explore the possible cause of stress and how stress affects the job satisfaction in Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).

Your answer to this questionnaire will therefore be in valuable, as it will allow me to ensure the data collection is supporting my work and served to my research requirement and all information provided is strictly CONFIDENTIAL and anonymous.

It is hope that you will response as honestly and spontaneously as possible. I really appreciate for you to spend some time and participate in this survey.

Thank you for your support

Yours faithfully,

Wan Zetti Rafina binti Dato' Wan Mohamad Zuki

Student of Master in Human Resource

**TITLE : OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG
EMPLOYEES IN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (MOA) : A STUDY IN
THE PUBLIC SECTOR.**

SECTION A : DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Please tick (X) in an appropriate place and fill in the blank.

1. Age

Below 20 years

21 – 30 years

31 – 40 years

41 – 50 years

Above 51 years

2. Sex

Female

Male

3. Race

Malay

Chinese

Indian

Others. Please verify :

4. Education level

SPM

STPM

Diploma

Degree

Master

PHD

5. Working grade : _____

6. Employment Status ?

Permanent

Contract

7. Years of working

Less than 1 year

2 year but less than 5 years

5 year but less than 10 years

10 years and above

SECTION B : WORKLOAD

Please tick (X) in an appropriate answer.

	Do you find any of the following causes problems?	NEVER	SOMETIME	OFTEN
1.	Shift work			
2.	Inadequate break times / mealtimes			
3.	Unsocial hours			
4.	Very heavy workload			
5.	Unfair distribution of work			
6.	Repetitive / boring work			
7.	Meeting deadlines			
8.	Job insecurity			
9.	Poor supervision			
10.	Under utilization of skills			

SECTION C : WORKPLACE

Please tick (X) in an appropriate answer.

	Work situation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	There is harmony within my group.					
2.	In our group we have lots of bricking over who should do what job.					
3.	There is difference of opinion among the members of my group.					
4.	There is dissension in my group.					
5.	The members of my group are supportive to each other's ideas.					
6.	There are clashes between subgroup within my group.					
7.	There is friendliness among the members of my group.					
8.	There is "we" feeling among the member of my group					
9.	There are disputes between my group and other groups					
10.	There is agreement between my group and other group.					
11.	Other groups withhold information necessary for the attainment of our group task.					
12.	The relationship between my group and other groups is harmonious in attaining the overall organization goals					

	Work situation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
13.	There is lack of mutual assistance between my group and other groups.					
14.	There is cooperation between my group and other groups					
15.	There are personality clashes between my group and other group.					
16.	Other group create problem for my group.					

SECTION D : WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Please tick (X) in an appropriate answer.

	Do any of the following cause problems for you at work?	NEVER	SOMETIME	OFTEN
1.	Noise			
2.	Poor / Inadequate lighting			
3.	Excessive heat			
4.	Excessive cold			
5.	Overcrowding			
6.	Poor ventilation			
7.	Dust of fumes			
8.	Poor maintenance of equipment			

SECTION D : JOB SATISFACTION

Please tick (X) in an appropriate answer.

	Job satisfaction	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	Being able to keep busy all the time.					
2.	The chance work alone on the job.					
3.	The chance to do different things from time to time.					
4.	The chance to be somebody in the community.					
5.	The way my boss handles his/ her workers.					
6.	The competence of my boss when making decision.					
7.	Being able to do things that do not go against my conscience.					
8.	The way my job provides for steady employment.					
9.	The chance to help other people.					

	Work situation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
10.	The chance to tell people what to do.					
11.	The chance to do something that makes use of your abilities.					
12.	The way company policies are put into practice					
13.	My pay is worth it with the work I do.					
14.	The chances for advancement on this job.					
15.	The freedom to use my judgment.					
16.	The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.					
17.	The working condition is good.					
18.	The way co-workers get long together with each other.					
19.	The praise I get for doing a good job.					
20.	The feeling of accomplishment I get for the job.					

Thank you for your cooperation.

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