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Factors influencing job performance among police personnel: An empirical study in Selangor

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CHRONICLE	ABSTRACT
	This study examines the predictive factors of job performance involving work stress, social support and emotional intelligence. Using two stage cluster random sampling, data were collected from 424 police in Selangor, who responded to Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ), Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ), Emotional Intelligence Self-Description Inventory (EISDI) and Formal Performance Appraisals. The findings show that work stress, social support and emotional intelligence were significantly correlated with police job performance. In addition, regression analysis reveals that emotional intelligence was the most significant predictor of job performance. Implication of this study indicates the important of emotional intelligence in enhancing job performance among police personnel in Selangor. The paper concludes by highlighting future research directions which can offer a more comprehensive study in predicting job performance particularly in the context of Malaysia.

1. Introduction

The Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) has established various strategic plans such as the Police Strategic Plan (PSPDRM) 2015-2020 and the Police Integrity Plan 2016-2020 to increase the momentum in achieving maximum job performance. This is because the job performance of police personnel promises significant impact on their work and society. Excellence in an organization is dependent on an individual's performance in carrying out their responsibilities (Pushpakumari, 2008). The police organization is an institution necessary for maintaining security to ensure prosperity. Police responsibilities are specialized, complex and risky. The police work in a high-pressure environment and risking their lives is part of the job description (Chapman, 2009). Work stress is a complex issue and the work environment, workload, job security and rising standards of living (Yozgat et al., 2013). The policing is a profession riddled with severe stress and the failure of police personnel to deal with high-pressure situations affect their work performance (Chapman, 2009). Besides work stress, social support is also considered important because it involves a broad environment, where support in the workplace can affect behavior, thoughts and feelings in carrying out responsibilities. Social support is a process of interaction to improve self-esteem, a sense of belonging, how to cope, and show real efficiency in receiving the change of physical

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or psychosocial resources (Gottlieb, 2000). Therefore, good social support in the workplace is essential to ensure job excellence, especially for high-pressure occupations such as working in the police force. Emotional intelligence is also an important element required by police personnel. Individuals who can control their emotions are better equipped to manage the demands of the environment and the pressure (Petrides, 2011). This is particularly important when interacting with the public. Work pressure and social support are extrinsic factors, while emotional intelligence is an intrinsic factor (Page, 2005). The emotional intelligence helps individuals better collaborate with their social skills (Ornstein & Nelson, 2006). This suggests that emotional intelligence can influence the behavior of an individual in numerous ways. A high emotional intelligence will assist individuals to be more focused and motivated in their work (AbuAlRub, 2004). Numerous gaps exist on this issue, especially in Malaysia. No empirical studies have combined the three factors influencing job performance, namely work stress, social support and emotional intelligence, especially among police personnel. In addition, previous studies that investigated the supervisors and co-workers' support simultaneously is limited (Ng & Sorensen, 2008; Witt & Carlson, 2006).

In conclusion, effective management of work stress can have a positive impact on organizational excellence. While social support received from the organization can encourage the police to improve their job performance. Furthermore, the stability of emotional intelligence can affect the psychology, feelings and behavior of the police. Therefore, this study examines the combination of both factors influencing job performance among police personnel. In addition, support from supervisors and co-workers is examined simultaneously in this study. This study can explain in details the dominant factor of work stress, social support and emotional intelligence in predicting job performance among police personnel in Malaysia.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Job Performance: Definitions and Overview

Performance as the quality and quantity of work, which is the result of accomplishment efforts by individuals or groups (Schermerhorn et al., 2005). Job performance is also considered as the behavior involved while working (Jex & Britt, 2014). Various factors that affect job performance include individual and environmental (Byar & Rue, 2011) ability and motivation (Mangkunegara & Prabu, 2005). Individual factors include effort, ability and role/task perception. Environmental factors include the physical conditions, equipment, time, supervisors and others. The ability factor consists of the ability (IQ) and the ability of knowledge and skills while motivating factor is the individual's attitude in facing work related situations. Concerning performance in the context of organizations, June and Mahmood (2011) asserted that performance is an important factor in the management of employees. It has always been a key element in an organization's excellence. Model Campbell (1993) made a clear distinction among the components of performance, determining the performance and predictors of performance. Component performance is the performance dimensions which form a part of the overall work performance. 'Performance determinants' refer to the differences between individuals which are declarative knowledge (DK), procedural knowledge and skills (SMEs), and motivation (MOT).

The component of declarative knowledge (DK) understands the scope of work by knowing the facts field, principles, objectives and self-knowledge. While the procedural knowledge and skills (SMEs) included self-management, psychomotor, cognitive skills, physical, and interpersonal. Motivation (MOT) represents the combination effects of three behavioural options which choice to perform, the level and persistence of effort. (Campbell et al., 1993). Besides that, job performance theory emphasizes that every person acting through teamwork can improve the organization's performance when compared to acting as individuals (Tamkin, 2005). Excellent skills and qualifications contribute to the improvement of performance in the workplace (Mathew, 2003). This means that cultivating teamwork, and advancing employees' skills and qualifications should be encouraged for optimal performance.

2.2 Empirical Studies on Factors Influencing Job Performance

Several factors lead to increased pressure on employees as highlighted by previous researchers. Factors such as the blurring of roles, insufficient work-related knowledge (Rahim & Psenicka, 1996), over-burdening work demands and workloads, and an insecure work environment are all factors contributing to increased pressure and stress (Gill et al., 2006; Patterson, 2009; Silva, 2006). Furthermore, problems in the organization and operations are among the major contributors to job stress among police (Liberman et al., 2002; Shane, 2010; Slate et al., 2007). The work environment is a significant contributor to the stress experienced by employees (Yahaya et al., 2009). The cause of job stress is an element that causes a person's reaction to stress. Stress can have a positive and negative impact on a person depending on the levels of pressure (McGowan et al., 2006).

The findings show that there is a relationship between job stress and job performance (Rizan & Rozi, 2015). This study revealed that high levels of job stress affect a police work performance. In the context of the police, researchers have suggested three important aspects of stress, namely role ambiguity, role conflict and job control in the organization. In contrast, other studies have shown that work pressure is not related to job performance (AbuAlRub, 2004). The findings are interesting because work stress among workers is high, but employees still show good performance. The Job Stress Model developed by Cooper et al. (1987) states that stress results from a circumstance wherein the psychological and physical pressure exceed an individual's ability to maintain, control emotions, thoughts and a positive relationship with the environment. According to Cooper and Marshall (2013) a negative work environment results from high workload and role ambiguity leading to work pressure. Three types of problems cause job stress. These are technical problems, relationship problems and communication problems within the organization (Bibi et al., 2013; Qureshi et al., 2012; Qureshi et al., 2013).

Regarding social support at work, Shimazu et al. (2004) discussed in terms of supervisor and co-workers' supports. That supports from head or supervisor have different effects on the workers than support from colleagues (Chou & Robert, 2008). In addition, effective control on individuals in the workplace is more influenced by the head or supervisor rather than colleagues. Social support helps individuals deal work pressure more efficiently (Neveu, 2007). In addition, positive social support can produce good health (Albrecht et al., 2003; Lyyra & Heikkinen, 2006; Motl et al., 2009). This was supported, who stated that social support could lead workers to feel less alone in the workplace and reduced stress in the workplace (Iliffe & Steed, 2000). The social support was instrumental in making employees more enthusiastic because the support encourages and motivates work.

Social support (emotional) is a significant predictor of job performance (Searle et al., 2001). This suggests that social support has a positive relationship with job performance, where high performance is influenced by high social support. In other words, the social support received by the employee is able to influence their work performance. However, empirical evidence linking social assistance to job performance is still limited (Rees & Freeman, 2009). Social exchange theory refers to the concept of social exchange is an action that brings a reward to individuals (Blau, 1964). Social exchange theory considers the interaction of an individual with another individual is for securing reward and avoiding punishment. In a work context, this theory is associated with employee perceptions of supervisor support because they believe that the support encourages them to work harder and makes them feel needed by the organization (Korsgaard et al., 2010). Emotional intelligence is a concept which has been recognized in the financial management since 1990 (Ghoreishi et al., 2014). They stated that emotional intelligence is an element associated with a person's success. In addition, there are also emotional intelligence describes the abilities, skills, and abilities to see and identify, evaluate, control and manage the emotions of oneself and other people and groups. The contribution of emotional intelligence is perceived as an important element of modern life (George, 2000; Goleman et al., 2013). High emotional intelligence can develop individual creativity and help increase job performance (Ganji, 2011; Hasanzadeh, 2009). Stable emotional intelligence can make simple workers do a good job without the need to build a fortress among workers. Good

emotional intelligence facilitates communication within the organization and improves work performance (Ganji, 2011). Thus, an emotionally intelligent person is more competitive than those workers who lack emotional intelligence and are better positioned to achieve organizational goals. This is consistent with the Four Branch Ability Model (Mayer, 1997), which emphasizes the individual's ability to distinguish the feeling of action, emotions, explore emotions, and solve problems in the relationship. Previous studies examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. The results show that emotional intelligence affects performance in different working cultures (Garner, & Magadley, 2012; Kulkarni et al., 2009). Previous research explained that high emotional intelligence could affect the performance and behavior. In contrast, there is research concluding that emotional intelligence has no correlation with work performance (Adetula, 2016; Day & Carroll, 2004).

2.3 Research hypotheses

The research hypotheses tested in this study are as follows:

H1: There is a significant correlation between work stress and job performance.
H2: There is a significant correlation between social support and job performance.
H3: There is a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and job performance.
H4: Work stress, social support and emotional intelligence significantly predict job performance.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants and Procedures

The sample in this study comprises a total of 424 police personnel representing 257 (60.6%) males and 167 (39.4%) females. The majorities are ranked as a constable with 109 (25.7%). A descriptive survey was used to obtain the data for this study. Two-stage random cluster sampling was used to obtain samples of the Selangor Contingent Police Headquarters and three District Police Headquarters. During the process of distributing and collecting questionnaires, the researchers were assisted by a police officer in every the Police Headquarters was involved.

3.2 Instrument

The questionnaires were divided into five sections:

Section A: Demographic Profiling
This section asked about the demographic background of the respondents including age, gender, marital status, race, education level, rank level as well as period of service.
Section B: Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ)

The Police Stress Questionnaire (McCreary & Thompson, 2006) as modified by Irniza et al. (2014) was used to measure the pressure of police work. PSQ foraging 36 items divided into two subscales, namely operation and organization. Respondents were asked to evaluate based on seven scales ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree (sample item: "Time shift work, working alone late at night and overtime demands."). The highest score indicates high levels of stress. In this study, the reliability of this scale was 0.97.

Section C: Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ)

The study used eight items from the Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ) (Karasek, 1985) to measure the support of the supervisor ("Supervisor/head I care about the welfare of his subordinates.") and a colleague ("colleagues I helped to ensure works completed."). Respondents were asked to evaluate based on seven scales ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. A high score indicates high social support. In this study, Cronbach's alpha for the eight items is 0.90.

Section D: Emotional Intelligence Self-Description Inventory (EISDI)

Emotional intelligence was measured using the Emotional Intelligence Self-Description Inventory (EISDI) (Groves et al., 2008) which consists of 24 items divided into four subscales. The subscale consists of perception and appraisal of emotions (PE), facilitating thinking with emotions (FE), understanding emotion (EU) and the regulation and management of emotion (RE). Respondents were asked to evaluate based on seven scales ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree (sample item: "I can accurately identify the various emotions of my day-to-day"). Higher scores on each scale show the level of emotional intelligence is higher. In this study, the reliability of this scale is 0.92, which is consistent with Johar and Shah (2014), which has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92.

Section E: Formal Performance Appraisals

Formal Performance Appraisals (Pearce & Porter, 1986), as modified by Ngah et al. (2009) was used to measure the performance of the police. This scale has eight items, and respondents were asked to evaluate based on seven scales ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree (sample item: "On the whole, my performance is good" and "I can set up a task within the stipulated time frame"). This instrument was translated from English to Malay using back to back translation. A high score indicates excellent work performance. In this study, Cronbach's alpha was 0.95.

4. Result and Findings

The data was analyses using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. IBM SPSS statistical software version 20.0 was used to analyses the correlation to determine the relationship between work stress, social support and emotional intelligence and the job performance of the police. Multiple regression analyses were also used to identify predictors of job performance.

4.1 Work Stress, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence with Job Performance

Correlation analysis showed work stress (r =.23, p <.01), social support (r =.36, p <.01) and emotional intelligence (r =.60, p <.01) significantly correlated with performance work. Overall, the relationships between the study variables are interrelated. In summary, the mean value, standard deviations and correlations between variables are shown in Table 1.

Table 2 shows the regression analysis to identify predictors of job performance of the police. The results showed emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of job performance (F = 81.65, p <.01). In short, emotional intelligence is the dominant predictor compared to work pressure work and social support.

Table 1
Mean, standard deviation and correlations between variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. WS	4.13	1.33	-			
2. SS	4.86	1.11	.35**	-		
3. EI	4.77	.80	.30**	.44**	-	
4. JP	5.16	.95	.23**	.36**	.60**	-

All are significant at **p<.01; WS: Work Stress, SS: Social Support, EI: Emotional Intelligence, JP: Job Performance.

The findings show a positive relationship between stress and job performance. It proves that the performance of police work can be increased even when police are under pressure. Challenges and the optimum pressure levels help employees achieve the right goals and can increase employee productivity (Certo, 2015). Therefore, this study explains that the work pressure received in the workplace is not a cause deterioration job performance but a motivation for the police to perform their work better.

Job performance increases recorded by police personnel resulted from the positive influence of work stress on performing work-related tasks. This situation shows that job stress experienced by the police encourages them to achieve excellence in their service. Stress in the workplace received by the police that help them become more motivated in their work involves personal safety, time and job performance. This positive pressure (Eustress) means that someone will respond positively to the pressure (Bakar, 2012; Quick & Quick, 1984).

The eustress received and faced by the police has a positive impact on their behavior. While the police are under pressure at work, they are still able to perform well in their work because they can control the pressure. In conclusion, the positive pressure helps the police control, cope and adapt to complicated situations while performing their assigned tasks without experiencing a negative impact on their work performance.

This is consistent with the findings of Rizan and Rozi (2015) and shows that job stress does not affect police job performance in the headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. Work stress experienced by the police actually helps them be more competitive, motivated and provides excellent services. The success and failure of a person depend on how well they understand the pressures, and evaluates and express emotions properly (Ciarrochi et al., 2001). In conclusion, changes in the job performance of police depend on how they control pressure in the workplace.

The findings further indicate that support from supervisors and co-workers have a relationship with job performance. This situation shows that when supervisors and co-workers give their support to members, it directly encourages them to work more. The studies found that social work can improve work performance (Bakker et al., 2004; Park et al., 2004). The role of social support plays a great function within the police organization especially involving difficult tasks such as serious crimes.

Based on the findings of this study, the social support provided by the supervisor and co-workers has a major impact on the stability of the performance of the police. This proves that police personnel have a higher level of job performance. Supervisor support can help individuals reduce the negative effects of stress that occurs in work (Brough & Williams, 2007). Encouragement and support for the police help them become more motivated and excited to maintain and excel in their performance. This scenario shows that support provided by supervisors and co-workers has significant positive impact on work performance.

The high levels of social support could improve work performance (Madjar et al., 2002). Further, positive support fosters a sense of responsibility to the organization to serve with greater excellence. The positive encouragement given by supervisors and colleagues have created a feeling of responsibility among staff who responded positively to an organization's demands (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Therefore, the element of social support from supervisors and co-workers needs to be emphasized for a greater sense of confidence among police personnel in performing their task.

These findings are also supported by social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which describes the interplay between a supervisor and co-workers with employees. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) highlights that good reward by a supervisor and co-workers encourages people to commit more to work. The social support provided by the supervisor and colleagues has a major impact on the stability of the performance of the police. This suggests that the encouragement and support help police become more excited and motivated to do well at work.

The findings also showed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. The findings are consistent with previous studies (Al Ali et al., 2012; Jacques, 2009; Yusof, 2007). Emotional intelligence influences police personnel better execute their job demands especially tasks involving

the public. In other words, members of the police who have high emotional intelligence can positively affect their work performance.

A positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in this study is consistent with the Ability the Four Branch Model (Mayer, 1997). This model emphasizes the individual's ability to distinguish feelings, control and understanding emotions, and solve problems in relationships. The findings show that the police personnel who have positive emotional control while on duty are able to improve and maintain performance. In the context of the study, a high level of emotional intelligence requires physical and mental capacity fairly steady. This situation is aligned with the demands of the 4P concept outlined to the police, namely Protective, Performance and Outcome Oriented, Proactive, and People Oriented can maintain the performance of the police.

The high emotional intelligence can control emotions, cultivate positive relationships and encourage loyalty to the organization (Wong & Law, 2002). These contribute to better work achievement. Moreover, emotion among police personnel in the face of challenges at the workplace leads to better work performance. Furthermore, emotional intelligence can give a good impression of the police when communicating with the public.

Emotional intelligence among police personnel played a major role in delivering quality services to the public. Emotional intelligence in individuals can develop their creativity and help improves their work performance (Ganji, 2011; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). In short, emotional intelligence within the police helps them improve their communication skills, especially in the delivery of services.

4.2 Predictive Factor of Job Performance

The findings show that social support and emotional intelligence is predictor of job performance. However, emotional intelligence is the dominant predictor of the job performance of police (see Table 2). It positively and directly affects their work performance. One of the functions of emotional intelligence is easier communication, especially in the process of improving job performance (Ganji, 2011). In summary, findings showed that the actual function of the police in serving the communities improved with high emotional resilience.

Table 2
Results of multiple regression analyses

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients B	SE	Standardised coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.54	.24		6.52	.00
Work Stress	.02	.03	.03	.75	.46
Social Support	.10	.04	.11	2.55	.01
Emotional Intelligence	.64	.05	.54	12.38	.00

Note: * p <.05; **p<.01; *** p<.001

Emotionally intelligent police are better able to control and meet the challenges presented at the workplace. The police personnel with high emotional intelligence as possessing emotional management and have the ability to assess express and regulate emotions well. As a result, high emotional intelligence can affect the performance of the police (Greven et al., 2008).

Emotional intelligence is an important predictive factor for predicting work performance of employees in the organization (Cote & Miners, 2006; Law et al., & Li, 2008). High emotional intelligence can be displayed in the organization through improved job performance. In addition, workers who have high emotional intelligence more easily adjust to emotions and interact with others more positively thus contributing to improved job performance (Wong & Law, 2002)These findings were supported by some previous studies which concluded that social support (Cohen et al., 2013; Cote & Miners, 2006; Law, Wong, & Song, 2004) and emotional intelligence (Beehr et al., 2000) are predictors of job performance.

However, this study showed that work stress is not a predictor of job performance among police personnel. This scenario proves that the work stress experienced by the police did not affect the performance of police work. This situation shows stress received at the workplace is positive. Employees experiencing work stress do not necessarily suffer from performance problems. Therefore, the work stress positively received by members of the police has helped the police to be more motivated and perform their tasks better (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908).

4.3 Managerial Implication

This study benefits the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) in terms of a better understanding of the importance of enhancing job performance through cultivating emotional intelligence among police personnel. The organizations can be successful if they attract and retain people who have high emotional intelligence (Cote & Miners, 2006). In addition, this study has proven that positive work stress experienced by the police personnel can help them to improve job performance.

4.4 Limitation and Future Research

The current study involved only police personnel in Selangor. Therefore to achieve better findings generalization, the future study should include more participation of police personnel from Malaysia. This study employed self-reported questionnaire which can be improved by using more objective measurement in order to achieve more reliable data. In addition, a longitudinal study should be conducted to examine the cause and effect related to job performance among police personnel. Finally, this study only examined social support at work, which involves supervisors and co-workers' support. Therefore, support from family is also suggested to be used in future research as an important aspect in improving job performance. In an organization, informal support that is family-friendly affects employee behavior and attitudes toward their job more than formal support (Anderson et al., 2002; Behson, 2005).

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that job performance is an important aspect for individuals and organizations. Under such circumstances, the organization should be aware that these critical factors including work stress, social support and emotional intelligence could lead to enhancing the job performance of individuals. Emotional intelligence is recognized as an important predictor of the job performance of police.

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