



The Relationship Between Working Environment and Employee Performance

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ABSTRACT

A positive working environment is vital in ensuring employee productivity to avoid unnecessary stress to the employees thus affecting their work performances. There are several working environment factors that contributed towards job satisfaction. Hence, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between the working environment and employee performance based on five dimensions of the working environment. The quantitative survey design was utilized in this study and data were collected by using questionnaires. The respondents of this study were administrators from different departments in a local municipality located in Kuching. The data were analysed by using Pearson's Correlation Analysis to measure the relationship between the variables. The finding shows there is a significant relationship between the working environment and employee performance. Support from supervisor was found to be the dominant variables in ensuring a positive working environment.

Keywords: Working environment; Employee performance; Municipality; Human resource; Health

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INTRODUCTION

Employees' performances decrease when they negatively perceive job safety and security. In turn, their attitudes change by

disobeying the rules which leads to an increase in accidents at the workplace. A number of work environment factors which affects job satisfaction includes supervisor support, relationships with colleagues, job safety and security, working ours, and esteem needed (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Job safety and security, which is one of the most important work environment factors, should be strictly imposed at the workplace in creating a comfortable working environ-

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ment and flexible working condition for the employees.

As indicated by Jain and Kaur (2014), three components of working environment included physical working environment, social working environment and mental working environment. The efficiency of an organization concerned with employee's welfare. The organization would provide their employees a pleasant working environment so that the employees can concentrate on their task and became more productive.

Employees performance can be affected by physical working environment which include lightings, temperature, noise, office layout and fresh air. All of those disturbances can cause health discomfort among the employees which lead to decreasing employees' performances. Temessek (2009) indicated that the functional décor and design of the workplace environment ultimately helped to improve employees' experience and necessitate better performance.

Haynes (2008) revealed that physical working environment was included into a tangible element which determined the abilities of employees to connect with their work roles and the quality of the physical working environment was considered impactful on how employees behave, performed their roles as well as their mental, physical and emotional states (Seghal, 2012; Oyetunji, 2014). Previous researchers stated that physical working environment helped to determine the abilities of employees to connect with their work roles and influence how they behave (Haynes, 2008; Seghal, 2012; Oyetunji, 2014)

A study had shown that conducive physical working environment can reduce absenteeism, and enhance employee performance (Chandrasekar, 2011; Hamed and Amjad, 2009). Thus, in order to retain the employee performance, organization had to improve the physical working environment. Charles, Reardon and Magee (2005) revealed that a suitable workplace temperature energizes an office occupier to work at employee's best. In line with this, organization needed to improve physical working environment according to the nature and demands of the jobs.

Awan and Tahir (2015) found in their study that the relationship with co-worker at the same hierarchical level and had no authority over one another (hanging sentence?). It was mentioned that in developing a conducive working environment, a relationship with co-worker must be good. They analyzed their results and it was proven that the relationship with co-worker had strong positive impact with employees' performance.

Co-workers relations and peers support will motivate employees to perform the tasks although not in the job description and feel comfortable in the organization. Oswald (2012) mentioned that supervisor support is crucial for the employees in completing their tasks. supervisor support was someone who were skilled and experienced to the employees and will help them to perform better in their current role and to assist them developed further into the future roles. An experienced and skillful supervisor supports employees in performing their work role and assist them further in developing effective roles.

Pailhe (2002) revealed that the important elements in determining work environment of an organization includes physical, biological, chemical risk in workplace, communication networks, working hours, employee empowerment, and work speed. Working hours refers to programs, policies and practices initiated by employees in scheduling working hours and adjusting the length of working time to meet their preferences (Brown & McNamara, 2011; Golden, 2012; Henly & Lambert, 2010).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Employee's performance in an organization is an important aspect in maintaining the productivity produced by the company. Unfortunately, the majority of industry or organization's working environment was considered unsafe and unhealthy. Borman (2004) claimed that the factors of workplace environment impacted employee performance.

Khamisa, Oldenburg Peltzer, and Ilic (2015) mentioned that more attention should be

paid in identifying and dealing with working environment because when employees have negative perception to their environment they sometimes suffer from chronic stress. Opperman (2002) stated that, working environment means processes, systems, structures, tools or conditions in the workplace that favorably or unfavorably impact individual's productivity. The working environment also includes policies, rules, culture, resources, working relationships, work location, internal and external environmental factors, all of which influence the ways that employee perform their job functions.

Past studies had viewed one direct relationship with one general factor that influenced job satisfactions such as pay and promotion, employee empowerment, psychological empowerment, remuneration, health facilities, work burden and working environment (Sun, 2016; Raziq and Maulabakhsh, 2015; Rizwan and Mukhtar, 2014; Breau and Rhéaume, 2014; Universities Case and Nyanchoka, 2017; Kamariah, Po Li, Zahirah, 2012).

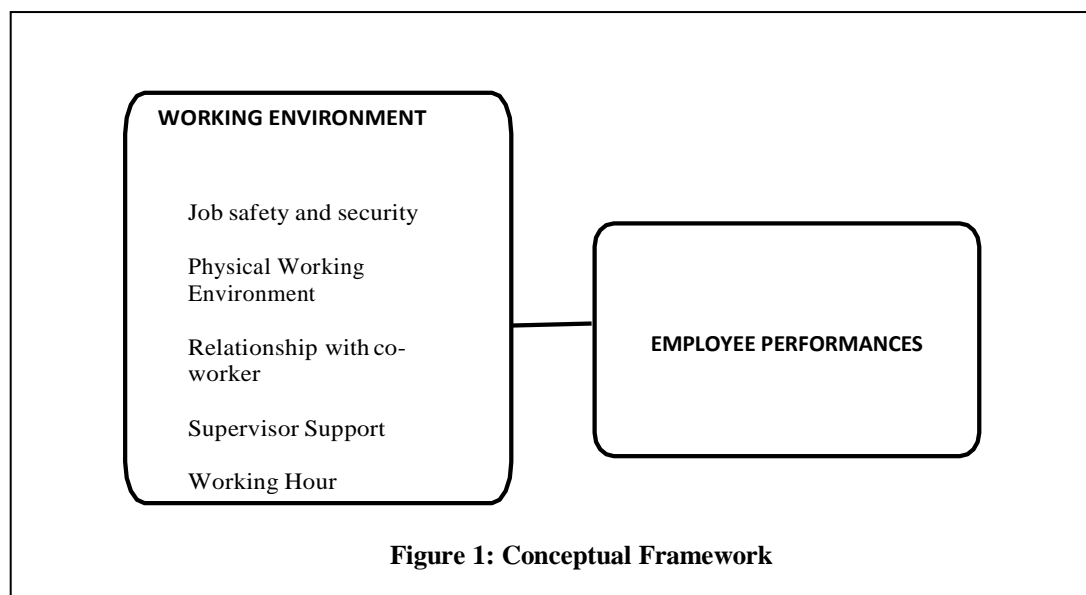


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Furthermore, some of the previous researchers focused on the relationship between physical working environment and mental working environment and job satisfaction (Jain and Kaur, 2014; Bojadjiev, Petkovska, Misoska & Stojanovska, 2015; Dawal & Taha, 2006; Kinzl et al., 2005). Employee's performance in an organization is an important aspect in maintaining the productivity produced by the company. Unfortunately, in a majority of industry or organization, their working environment was considered to be unsafe and unhealthy.

Borman (2004) mentioned that the factors of workplace environment work environment factors hugely impact employee performance. Thus, in order to explore and understand more about employee performance, it is requisite to investigate the direct relationship between work environment factors and employee performance on a few components in working environment such as working hours, job safety and security, supervisor support, co-worker relationship and physical working environment.

OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the relationship between job safety and security and employee performance; To determine the relationship between physical working environment and employee performance
2. To determine the relationship between physical working environment and employee performance; To determine the relationship between supervisor support and employee performance
3. To determine the relationship between relationship with co-worker and employee performance;
4. To determine the relationship between supervisor support and employee performance; There is a significant relationship between job safety and security and employee performance
5. To determine the relationship between working hour and employee performance; and
6. To identify the dominant variable in working environment factors with employee performance

METHODOLOGY

The research design of this study was quantitative and uses correlational study. The researcher used a simple random sampling as sampling method. Questionnaires were adopted from Borman (2004) on working environment and employee satisfaction. The questionnaire was divided into eight (8) sections and has a total of 42 items. The population of the respondents are from North Kuching city council is approximately 250, Based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970), 159 questionnaires were distributed. A total of 110 questionnaires were received after two (2) weeks, and only 100 of the questionnaires were considered to be valid. The other 10 questionnaires were found to have missing information. A reliability test was conducted, and the Cronbach alpha value was 0.931 which implies that the questionnaires was found to be reliable. The collected data were analyzed by using the Pearson Correlation Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis in IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software system Version 25.0 to test the relationships between variables and identify its dominant variable.

Table 1: Respondents Background

Characteristics	Sub-profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	59	59
	Female	41	41
Race	Malay	73	73
	Chinese	4	4
	Others	23	23
Length of service	< 2 years	3	3
	2 – 5 years	5	5
	6 – 10 years	10	10
	> 10 years	82	82
Age	21 – 30 years	4	4
	31 – 40 years	29	29
	41 – 50 years	49	49
	> 50 years	18	18

Table 2: Hypotheses Testing and Results

Research Hypothesis	Findings
Ha1: There is a significant relationship between physical working environment and employee performance	$r = 0.471$ (weak positive) $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.050$) Hence, fail to reject H_{a1}
Ha2: There is a significant relationship between supervisor support and employee performance	$r = 0.512$ (strong positive) $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.050$) Hence, fail to reject H_{a2}
Ha3: There is a significant relationship between co-worker relationship and employee performance	$r = -0.426$ (weak negative) $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.050$) Hence, fail to reject H_{a3}
Ha4: There is a significant relationship between job safety and security and employee performance	$r = 0.311$ (weak positive) $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.050$) Hence, fail to reject H_{a4}
Ha5: There is a significant relationship between working hour and employee performance	$r = 0.373$ (weak positive) $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.050$) Hence, fail to reject H_{a5}
Ha6: There is a dominant variable in working environment	$\beta = 0.294$ $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.050$) Job satisfaction scores the highest β value. Support by supervisor?

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 tabulated the demographic background of the respondents. Most of the respondents have been in service for more than 10 years and their age ranged in between 41-50 years old.

The results of the study are tabulated in Table 2. There is a significant relationship between the working environment factors and employee performance.

The findings indicated that all the independent variables such as physical working envi-

ronment, supervisor support, co-worker relationship, job safety and security, and working hour had significant relationship on the dependent variable (employee performance) and the dominant variables in the working environment is the support from supervisors.

According to H_{a1}, results shows $r=0.471$ and $p=0.000$ ($p<0.05$) which indicated that there is a significant correlation between physical working environment and the employee performance. This result is supported by Naharuddin et al. (2013), who also found evidence on disturbances (e.g., noise and improper office layouts) which caused discomfort among the employees and negatively affect the employee performance. Secondly, H_{a2} is accepted since there is strong positive significant relationship between supervisor support and employee performance, $r=0.512$ and $p=0.000$ ($p<0.05$). According to Awan and Tahir (2015) and Naharuddin et al., (2013), supervisor support leads to better employee performance especially when the employees face challenges dealing with their job by assisting them in matching as well as improving their skills according to the tasks given. Razak (2008) found that supervisor support was the vital key to inspire positive relations and increase the level of self-confidence which in return would boost up the employee performance.

Based on H_{a3}, it was found that there is a relationship between co-worker relationship and employee performance. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. The results show significant relationship between co-worker relationship and employee performance. Co-worker relationship plays a vital role in order to improve employee performance. This is because employees needed more

motivation in completing their tasks and be fully committed to the organizations. Employees who perceived a good relationship with other colleagues in the organization will feel responsible and obliged to reciprocate a good relationship to assist them in achieving their goals (Ariani, 2015; Thao & Hwang, 2017; Vischer, 2007).

The findings also indicated that H_{a4} failed to be rejected as it was found that there is significant relationship between job safety and security and employee performance with $r=0.311$ and $p=0.000$ ($p<0.05$). Job safety and security had significant relationship on employee performance since job safety and security can guarantee the quality of employee's job. It can enhance their motivations in choosing the right organizations to work with (Allaire et al., 2013). Job safety and security guarantee the employees with their promotions, compensation and benefits, safety in workplace, and career development, thus if organizations had low job safety and security towards the employees then they will not complete and do their job or task properly which will lead to the lower employee performance (Gayathiri & Ramakrishnan, 2013; Mun, Hu Ying, Lew, & Tan, 2017).

H_{a4} investigated about the relationship between working hour and employee performance. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between working hour and employee performance $r=0.373$ and $p=0.000$ ($p<0.050$). Working hour had weak positive significant correlation on employee performance as employees will work happily and feel comfortable if the organizations allows freedom in scheduling their work time and adjusting their own length of work hours (Act, 2007). The employees felt that

flexible working hours in organizations will enhance their performance due to the flexibility of the working time. They can go to work and finished their work at any time as long as the eight hours of working period is completed within a day (Henly et al., 2010).

Finally, it was found that the dominant variable in working environment factors is support given by supervisor. According to Venkataramani et al. (2013), supervisor support can enhance employee's behavior. They as supervisors plays a vital role in enhancing employee's behavior were such as giving support and feedback, sharing information and knowledge, promotion, recognition and rewards, and providing training. Supervisors play a vital role (e.g., giving support and feedback, sharing information and knowledge, promotion, recognition and rewards, and providing training) in enhancing employee's behavior. Naharuddin, Sadegi, Bakotić, Tomislav, and Chandrabose (2013) stated that supervisor support had significant relationship with employee performance but in few cases, supervisor support had negative relationship with employee performance. This happened because of miscommunication between supervisor and their employees when they delivered information or feedback on the job to the employees. So, because of the miscommunication, it will result to negative relationship between supervisor support and employee performance. As a result of miscommunication, negative relationships exist between supervisor support and employee performance.

In this era, different mind-sets from supervisor were argued in order to provide commitment towards the employees. Those different mind-sets of commitment had been an

intermediate between employees and supervisor whereas in fact, supervisor support can result in excellent employee performance through giving full commitment towards the employees (Mayer & Herscovitch, 2001).

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Based on the findings, working environment does indeed perceived as vital in ensuring employee productivity, hence, the supervisors in organization could engage their employees more and in task-planning and decision making and show concern for to their employees. Based on the findings, working environment is vital in ensuring employee's productivity. Therefore, apart from showing concern for their employee's well-being, the supervisors should frequently engage with their employees, especially in task-planning and decision making.

CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, there are direct relationship between job safety and security, physical working environment, relationship with co-worker, supervisor support and working hour with employee performance. Support by supervisor has the strongest impact on employee's performance.

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