

# Job Stress and Job Satisfaction Among Teachers in Public Secondary Schools of Johor Bahru, Malaysia

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**Abstract:** *This study aims to examine job stress and job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. Public secondary schools in Johor Bahru were selected as the research setting to explore the relationship between work stress and job satisfaction among teachers. Job satisfaction is used as an indicator of teachers' overall contentment with their work, and analyzing how work stress influences job satisfaction is crucial, as it directly affects the quality of knowledge transfer to students. Data was collected from 60 teachers using the convenience sampling method and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0 and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS version 3. The results indicated that only one dimension, role ambiguity, had a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction, while the other three dimensions—workload, physical environment, and workplace conflict—did not show a significant impact. The study recommends that school management and government authorities implement strategies to address role ambiguity in order to enhance job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools.*

**Keywords:** Job stress, Job satisfaction, Teachers' job, Workload, Public schools, Workplace conflict, Environment

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## 1. Introduction

In today's competitive world, employees across both private and public sectors are under significant stress due to the increasing demands of their roles and the expectation to manage multiple responsibilities simultaneously. This pressure can lead to higher stress levels and, consequently, a decline in job satisfaction (Mansoor, Fida, Nasir, & Ahmad, 2011). Among various professions, teachers have been identified as experiencing some of the highest levels of work-related stress (McCarthy, 2009). Teachers play a critical role in shaping the future of their students by imparting knowledge and nurturing them into responsible citizens. Research conducted by Lashkariani and Motevalli (2020) has reinforced the understanding that teaching is inherently a stressful occupation, attributed to factors such as role overload, an increasing number of students, excessive workloads, and larger class sizes (Diliberti, Schwartz, & Grant, 2021).

In Malaysia, the issue of work-related stress among teachers has become increasingly pronounced over time, as noted by Rajaendram (2019). This stress significantly impacts their

overall job satisfaction, which, in turn, contributes to some teachers contemplating leaving the profession. Research by Rama (2018) highlights that teachers in the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor districts are particularly affected, exhibiting the highest levels of stress compared to other regions. The intensification of parental demands and the growing expectations set by the Malaysian Ministry of Education further exacerbate the stress levels experienced by educators.

The repercussions of stress on teachers' job satisfaction are profound. Job satisfaction serves as a key indicator of how content teachers are with their roles and responsibilities. It is essential to evaluate job satisfaction, as it not only influences the quality of teaching and knowledge transfer to students but also impacts the mental well-being of educators. Alarming, Malaysia has witnessed a steady rise in suicide rates over the past decades, with emotional distress and stress-related factors being contributing causes. According to Hassan (2021), one of the leading factors behind these rising suicide rates is emotional pressure, with stress and depression being prevalent triggers for such extreme outcomes (Christina, 2020).

Stress can be broadly defined as the physical, emotional, or psychological strain individuals experience due to challenges or demands, whether at work or in their personal lives. It has implications that can affect an individual's physical health, emotions, and cognitive processes. Therefore, understanding the specific stressors that affect job satisfaction among teachers is essential. This study will delve into the various work stress factors influencing job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Johor Bahru, aiming to provide insights that can help address and mitigate these challenges.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) Is there a significant relationship between workload and job satisfaction among the teachers in public secondary school of Johor Bahru?
- 2) Is there a significant relationship between physical environment and job satisfaction among the teachers in public secondary school of Johor Bahru?
- 3) Is there a significant relationship between workplace conflict and job satisfaction among the teachers in public secondary school of Johor Bahru?
- 4) Is there a significant relationship between role ambiguity and job satisfaction among the teachers in public secondary school of Johor Bahru?

### **Research Objectives**

- 1) To investigate the relationship between workload and job satisfaction among the teachers in public secondary school of Johor Bahru.
- 2) To investigate the relationship between physical environment and job satisfaction among the teachers in public secondary school of Johor Bahru.
- 3) To investigate the relationship between workplace conflict and job satisfaction among the teachers in public secondary school of Johor Bahru.
- 4) To investigate the relationship between role ambiguity and job satisfaction among the teachers in public secondary school of Johor Bahru.

## **2. Literature Review**

A study conducted by Mansoor, Jinnah, Fida, Nasir, and Ahmad (2011) explored the impact of job stress on job satisfaction within the telecommunication sector in Pakistan. The research focused on a sample of 134 employees and examined various stress factors such as workplace conflict, workload, and the physical environment. The results indicated that these stressors—particularly workload, role conflict, and the physical environment—had a negative influence

on employee job satisfaction. The study underscored the importance of maintaining high job satisfaction for the success and productivity of an organization in today's competitive work environment. Further research by Riaz, Ahmad, Maryam, Murtaza, Khan, and Firdous (2016) investigated the relationship between job stress and employee job satisfaction, specifically within the Nursing Department of DHQ Hospital in Okara. The study used a sample of 100 nurses and examined workload, physical environment, and role conflict as stress variables. Quantitative data was collected via surveys and analysed using SPSS. The findings demonstrated that increased workload, an unfavourable physical environment, and role conflict negatively impacted job satisfaction among the nurses.

## **2.1 Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a significant aspect of an individual's life, as it encompasses most of their personal and professional time compared to other activities. It refers to the degree of contentment and fulfilment that employees feel regarding their work and working conditions. In evaluating job satisfaction, key aspects include employees' overall happiness with their career, their perception of fair treatment within the organization, their willingness to remain in their current job for an extended period, their prospects within the company, and their general satisfaction with their work environment.

## **2.2 Workload**

Workload is defined as the amount of work required to complete a task and can be a direct measure of job demands. It is closely related to task difficulty and has significant implications for employee health and performance. Excessive workload can lead to fatigue, increased risk of illness, and a decline in work performance, while insufficient workload can result in boredom and disengagement. This study will assess workload based on criteria such as the frequency of urgent job demands, tight deadlines, increases in workload volume, the effort required to complete tasks, and the level of concentration needed for job performance.

## **2.3 Physical Environment**

The physical environment refers to the physical conditions of the workplace where employees perform their daily tasks. This factor significantly influences employees' well-being and can impact both their perception of the workplace and their productivity. Various aspects of the physical environment, such as noise levels, lighting, temperature, and space constraints, can affect job satisfaction. For this research, the physical environment will be evaluated based on noise levels, poor lighting, uncomfortable temperature, overcrowding, and the general quality of the working space.

## **2.4 Workplace Conflict**

Workplace conflict is a common occurrence that can negatively affect employee relationships and the overall work atmosphere. It can disrupt decision-making, stifle creativity, weaken team performance, and erode trust among coworkers. This study will consider factors such as interpersonal harmony, unfriendly interactions, personality clashes, and frequency of conflict as measures for workplace conflict.

## **2.5 Role Ambiguity**

Role ambiguity occurs when employees lack a clear understanding of their job expectations, responsibilities, and the procedures required to fulfill their tasks. This uncertainty can create confusion regarding performance goals and contribute to stress. Role ambiguity can manifest in various ways, such as conflicting job requests, unclear responsibilities, tasks that are

inconsistent with one's role, insufficient resources, and being assigned non-essential work. This study will use these criteria to measure role ambiguity and its impact on job satisfaction.

## 2.6 Research Framework

The research framework developed for this study aims to examine the impact of work stress on employee job satisfaction. It identifies four independent variables—workload, physical environment, workplace conflict, and role ambiguity—while job satisfaction serves as the dependent variable. This framework guides the analysis of the relationships between each independent variable and job satisfaction, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how these stress factors individually contribute to overall job satisfaction. Additionally, this study seeks to determine which of the identified factors exerts the most significant influence on job satisfaction, thereby providing insights into the primary stressors that need to be addressed to improve employee well-being.

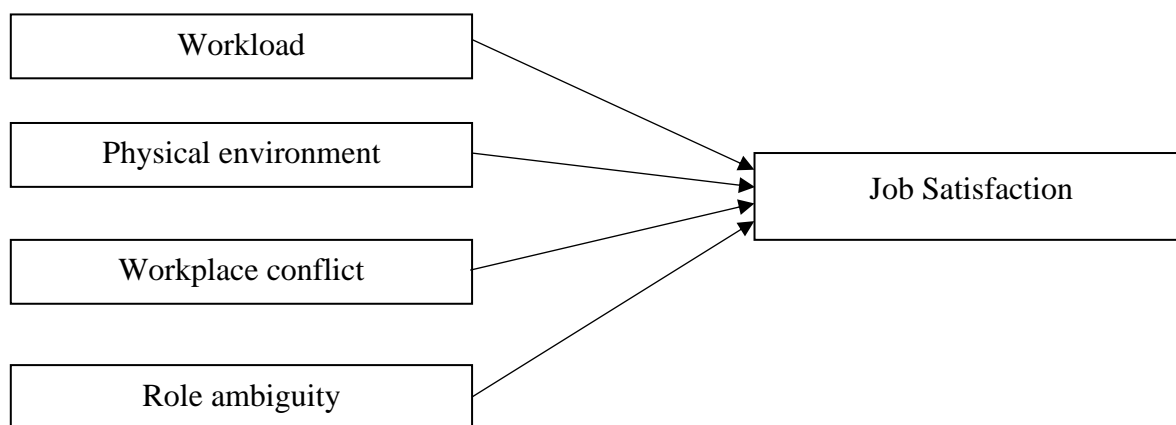


Figure 1: Research Framework

## 3. Methodology

This research aims to investigate the impact of workload, physical environment, workplace conflict, and role ambiguity on job satisfaction among public secondary school teachers in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. To achieve this objective, two primary analysis methods were employed to process and interpret the collected data effectively.

### 3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The first method utilized for data analysis is descriptive statistics, which serves as an essential tool for summarizing and describing the main features of a dataset. According to Thompson (2009), descriptive statistics provide an overview of the sample and help depict what has occurred within the collected data. This method is particularly effective in generating frequency distributions, which assist in detecting data entry errors and offer initial insights into the characteristics of the respondents.

In this study, descriptive statistics were applied to analyse the demographic profile of the participants. This process involved summarizing variables such as age, gender, educational background, and teaching experience. The use of descriptive statistics transforms raw data into a comprehensible form, facilitating a clearer understanding of the study's sample. Section A of the questionnaire, consisting of nine questions, was dedicated to gathering demographic information, enabling the researcher to outline the sample's basic characteristics and ensure an accurate representation of the population.

### 3.2 Regression Analysis

The second analytical method employed is regression analysis, which allows for a deeper examination of the relationships between the independent variables (workload, physical environment, workplace conflict, and role ambiguity) and the dependent variable, job satisfaction. Regression analysis is useful for studying how one or more predictor variables impact a response variable (Weisberg, 2001). In this research, regression analysis served two main purposes: assessing the overall relationships between work stress factors and job satisfaction and identifying which independent variable has the most substantial effect on job satisfaction.

Standardized Coefficient Beta ( $\beta$ ) values were used to determine the relative strength of the influence each independent variable has on the dependent variable (Kraha, Turner, Nimon, Zientek & Henson, 2012). A higher  $\beta$  value indicates a stronger relationship between an independent variable and job satisfaction, helping pinpoint the most influential factor among workload, physical environment, workplace conflict, and role ambiguity.

Additionally, R-squared ( $R^2$ ) was utilized to assess the proportion of the variance in job satisfaction explained by the independent variables.  $R^2$  represents the sum of the squared correlations between the predictors and the response variable (Kraha et al., 2012). The value of  $R^2$  ranges from 0 to 1, where a value closer to 1 indicates that a higher percentage of job satisfaction can be explained by the included independent variables. This helps to determine the collective impact of the stress factors and their ability to explain variations in job satisfaction among the teachers.

## 4. Findings

A total of 60 questionnaires were distributed and collected through an online format for this research, yielding a 100 percent response rate. Notably, all the returned questionnaires were fully completed by the respondents, ensuring the data's integrity. As a result, all 60 completed questionnaires were used for data analysis to examine and derive the study's findings.

### 4.1 Normality Analysis

**Table 1: Normality test output**

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
Workload	-0.965	0.410
Physical environment	-0.873	-0.039
Workplace conflict	-0.556	-0.804
Role ambiguity	-0.712	-0.710
Job satisfaction	0.555	-0.813

### 4.2 Reliability Test

**Table 2: Cronbach's alpha reliability test**

Variable	Number of Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)
Workload	5	0.958	0.967
Physical environment	5	0.933	0.950
Workplace conflict	5	0.964	0.972
Role ambiguity	5	0.935	0.951
Job satisfaction	5	0.945	0.958

### 4.3 Convergent Validity

**Table 3: Results of measurement of model for convergent validity**

Construct	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR
Workload	WL1		0.855	0.967
	WL2	0.954		
	WL3	0.908		
	WL4	0.932		
	WL5	0.915		
Physical environment	PE1	0.881	0.790	0.950
	PE2	0.880		
	PE3	0.830		
	PE4	0.907		
	PE5	0.943		
Workplace conflict	WC1	0.939	0.875	0.972
	WC2	0.939		
	WC3	0.931		
	WC4	0.943		
	WC5	0.925		
Role ambiguity	RA1	0.806	0.795	0.951
	RA2	0.933		
	RA3	0.948		
	RA4	0.904		
	RA5	0.860		
Job satisfaction	JS1	0.814	0.821	0.958
	JS2	0.905		
	JS3	0.923		
	JS4	0.945		
	JS5	0.939		

### 4.4 Discriminant Validity

**Table 4: Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity**

Construct	Job Satisfaction	Physical Environment	Role Ambiguity	Workload	Workplace Conflict
Workload	0.906				
Physical environment	-0.803	0.889			
Workplace conflict	-0.837	0.860	0.892		
Role ambiguity	-0.684	0.797	0.755	0.925	
Job satisfaction	-0.806	0.818	0.815	0.687	0.935

## 5. Discussion

Work stress among Malaysian teachers has been on the rise, as highlighted by Rajaendram (2019). This persistent stress can significantly impact their job satisfaction, leading some educators to consider leaving the profession. The need to juggle multiple responsibilities often results in heightened stress levels, which, according to Mansoor, Fida, Nasir, and Ahmad (2011), directly contribute to a decline in job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a critical determinant of a teacher's commitment, productivity, and overall performance. When teachers are content in their roles, they are more likely to engage effectively in their work and contribute meaningfully to the success of educational programs. This, in turn, supports Malaysia's broader



educational goals and vision (Abdullah, Uli, & Salahudin, 2017). This research aims to explore the relationship between workload, physical environment, workplace conflict, and role ambiguity with job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. Understanding these dynamics is essential for fostering a supportive environment that enhances teacher well-being and ensures high-quality education outcomes. Addressing these factors not only benefits teachers but also strengthens the foundation for achieving educational excellence and national progress.

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