

**JOB STRESS MEDIATES ANTECEDENT OF  
JOB SATISFACTION AND SPIRITUAL  
INTELLIGENCE AND EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE**

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JOB STRESS MEDIATES ANTECEDENT OF JOB SATISFACTION  
AND SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE

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## **ABSTRACT**

The local hotel industry in Malaysia is undergoing a challenging time due to the competition from other hospitality service providers. Since 2015, the hotel occupancy rate shows a decline from the previous years due to more competition from Airbnb lodgings, guesthouses and homestays. In this instance, hotels try to mitigate the competition risk by offering services, facilities and amenities that has always been a trademark of the establishment. As such, keeping well-trained employees is vital in ensuring the well-being of the organization. Due to intangibility characteristics of the service industry, it is vital for organizations to understand the factors that could affect the work performance of their employees. Therefore, in subsequent to the findings of the previous researches, this study explores the relationships between four variables; spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, job stress and job satisfaction amongst the hotel managers in Malaysia. A total of 352 managers of 4-star and 5-star hotels in Malaysia participated in this study. Data were collected through self-administered survey questionnaires. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis and multiple regression analyses were used in the data analysis. According to the empirical analytic results, Spiritual Intelligence is the most significant influence on job satisfaction. On the other hand, emotional intelligence indicated that it did not make any contribution to job satisfaction. However, regressions analyses of this study revealed that job stress mediated the relationship between spiritual intelligence and job satisfaction given that each dimensions of spiritual intelligence were found to be fully mediated by job stress. From the study, one can have a greater understanding of to what extent spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence can contribute to job stress and how job satisfaction could also be affected.

## APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised / read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, as a thesis for the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the PhD degree is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CET	Critical Existential Thinking
CSE	Conscious State Expansion
COR	Conservation of Resources
CWB	Counterproductive Work Behaviour
C & I	Competence & Innovation
D – C	Demand – Control
EAO	Emotion Appraisal of Others
ECI	Emotional Competence Inventory
EI	Emotional Intelligence
EQ	Emotional Quotient
EQ- i	Emotional Quotient Inventory
GAS	General Adaptation Syndrome
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
IQ	Intelligent Quotient
ISIS	Integrated Spiritual Intelligence Scale
I/O	Industrial Organization
JDC	Job Demand Control
JDI	Job Descriptive Index
JS	Job Satisfaction
KM	Knowledge Management
M	Mean

MAH	Malaysia Association of Hotel
MOE	Managing Others' Emotions
MSCEIT	Mayer, Salovey and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test
N	Total population
NA	Negative Affectivity
NCAAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
OB	Organizational Behaviour
PMP	Personal Meaning Production
RA	Role Ambiguity
RBV	Resource-Based View
RC	Role Conflict
ROE	Regulation of Emotion
S	Job Stress
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SD	Standard Deviation
SEA	Self Emotion Appraisal
SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management
SI	Spiritual Intelligence
SISRI	Spiritual Intelligence Self Report Inventory
SM	Strategic Management
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TA	Transcendental Awareness
UOE	Use of Emotion
USA	United States of America
US	United States

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Job satisfaction bears a life-long place in happiness indication of an employee. In many instances, being satisfied with one's job indicates a happy worker ([www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia](http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia), 2017). According to a survey in 2019 by The Conference Board Job Satisfaction, only 54% of employees in the United States (US) are satisfied with their current job. This number nonetheless was up three points from the previous year and it has marked the second biggest improvement in the survey's thirty-two year history. In 2013, the percentage of workers satisfied with their jobs was just 47.7%, well below the historical level of 61.1% in 1987, when the survey was first initiated. The overall job satisfaction continues to improve from its lowest point (42.6% in 2010), albeit at a disappointingly slow pace. (<http://www.conference-board.org>)

A survey on Malaysian workers by JobStreet.com in 2012 has shown that 78% of the respondents claimed that they were unhappy with their current job. While it is often perceived that the main reason many young talents leave a company is due to the low salary, only 17% out of the 1,145 respondents quoted salary as the main reason for influencing their unhappiness at their current job. Dissatisfaction with their scope of work was the top reason many felt unhappy at work. Most of these unhappy employees said they felt that they have too much work or that their work is predictable and boring. Another factor was also their poor relationship with their immediate supervisor or boss.

The remaining 22% of the respondents who are currently happy at work revealed the top three factors which influenced their happiness:

- 50% are enjoying their working experiences and working challenges
- 21% are happy with their bosses who appreciate and value their input
- 19% are enjoying their work because of their friendship with their colleagues

Overall, the employees agreed that the ultimate change in order to determine their wellbeing at work would need to include opportunities for career development and also work-life balance in the company. If the needs are not met, the majority (62%) said they would find another job to restore their happiness at work. One respondent said, “A company with strong management workflow that meets customer demands, good colleagues who can help one another with office politics at its minimum, and a good career opportunity is a pull factor for me to enjoy my job.” (<http://www.jobstreet.com.my/aboutus/malaysians-are-not-happy-at-work.htm>).

Job satisfaction research studies at work have been one of the most studied areas of research. Job satisfaction, from both an affective and cognitive perspective, has been studied by the fields of psychology, organization and management since the early 1930s (Brief & Weiss, 2002). Despite vast research on job satisfaction, there was yet a general agreement regarding what job satisfaction is hence it represents one of the most complex areas facing today’s managers (Aziri, 2011). Employees’ perspective on being satisfied towards their jobs takes more than having a good pay. Other factors that have been identified to become major concern among employees to achieve satisfaction include respect, trust, security, healthy environment and career path. Having a satisfied workforce greatly affects organizations in terms of lower turnover rate, higher productivity, increased profitability and employees’ loyalty.

War and Inceoglu (2012) defined satisfaction of employees as an emotional condition of the individual about his/her position at work, and that the final effects of his/her work depend on his/her satisfaction conveyed in terms of profit that the employee creates. This definition focuses on the end result of the well-being of the company. Whilst Locke's (1969) definition of job satisfaction contained both a cognitive aspect by the statement "an appraisal of one's job" and the affective statement with the words "emotional state" in the same sentence. It shows rational appraisal about the degree a job can provide satisfaction from an outcome, and shows that it can be a feeling held or received which is in the affective domain. This can be measured by careful observation of employee's opinions, feelings and experience within the working environment (Vorina, Simonic & Vlasova, 2017).

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The local hotel industry in Malaysia is undergoing a challenging time due to the competition from other hospitality service provider ([www.thestar.com.my](http://www.thestar.com.my), 2016). The occupancy of hotels in 2015 shows a decline from 66% to 54% compared to the previous year, and that this is because there was more competition from Airbnb lodgings, guesthouses and homestays. In this instance, hotels attempt to mitigate the competitive risk by offering services, facilities and amenities that have always been a trademark of the establishment. As such, keeping well-trained employees is vital in ensuring the well-being of the organization.

Job satisfaction is one of the most widely discussed issues in organizational behaviour, personnel and human resource management and organizational management. In simple terms, it is the extent to which one feels good about the job. Job satisfaction is about one's feelings or state of mind toward the nature of their

work (Shamima Tasnim, 2006). Extensive study has shown that job satisfaction has a direct impact on the performance of employees in different levels of the profession and it is also related to employee motivation (Ostroff, 1992). Not only that, a study from the American Sociological Association found that job-related dissatisfaction experienced in an employee in their 20s and 30s, can lead to overall health issues 10 to 20 years down the line (<https://www.huffingtonpost.com>, 2016). Additionally, an empirical research by Fleischer, Khapova and Jansen (2014) from a university in the Netherlands indicates the connection between the development of employees' professional competences and the contribution of employees to their employer's success.

According to Judge and Church (2000), people are more interested to work in those companies and service organizations from where they attain mental satisfaction. The study found that a politics-free work environment correlates significantly to an organization's performance. Research studies across many years, organizations, and types of jobs revealed that when employees are asked to evaluate different facets of their job such as supervision, pay, promotion opportunities, co-workers, the nature of the work itself generally emerges as the most important job facet (Judge & Church, 2000; Jurgensen, 1978).

The source of this job satisfaction not only arises from the job but also from the other factors like work environment (both physical and social), relationship with supervisors & peers, corporate culture and managerial style. These factors impact differently on different people and in a working environment, gender differences also influence the job satisfaction level. Herzberg, Mausner, Peterson, and Capwell (1957) revealed that the evaluation on job attitudes between male and female employees is of less interest than a study of the effects of the societal roles of male

and female employees on their attitudes toward jobs. They suggested that the job attitudes of gender depend primarily on the same determinants, but that determinants vary in the intensity of their effects.

Hulin and Smith (1964) maintained that if sources of correlated bias, such as pay, job level, promotional opportunities, and societal norms, are held constant or partially out, gender differences in job satisfaction will disappear, and they (Hulin and Smith, 1965) caution investigators "to draw distinctions between male and female." With increased competition, the employee workload also augmented that most of the time makes the employees and management unclear of their roles in the organization. This factor eventually results in increased stress level (Mathur, Vigg, Sandhar & Holani, 2007). In addition, job stressors tend to weaken effort-to-performance, performance-to-reward expectancies and thus commitment to the job and organization (Tubre and Collins, 2000). Ross (1997) stated that work stress has the potential to affect the performance of all levels of staff, ranging from senior management to the young and newly employed. Individuals involved in shift work often appear to have little time for non-work life commitments such as their health, their families and friends, household and vehicle maintenance, relaxation and hobbies. Prolonged working hours that are 12-hour shifts impose extra demands on individuals in monitoring productivity and safety at work (Ognianova, Dalbokova, & Stanchev, 1998) may lead to workers' increased levels of stress (Sardiwalla, 2003). It was found that there is a decreased in performance and increased subjective fatigue after seven months of 12-hour shift work and only slight improvement after 3.5 years of adaptation to this schedule (Rosa, 1991).

Furthermore, Harma (2006) has reported evidence that insufficient retrieval from lack or disturbed sleep is a common pathway linking shift work and work

stress with cardiovascular diseases. In addition, both shift-work and work-related stress can impede the quality of social and family life. Shift-work and schedules that involve night work, in particular, may limit both the quantity and quality of time spent with the family and involvement in social activities (Demerouti, Bakker, & Bulters, 2004). Similarly, work stress may reduce social contacts as individuals fail to unwind and detach themselves from their work problems (Simon, Kummerling & Hasselhorn, 2004). Many studies have shown that highly stressed working environments are mostly resulted in elevating the case of absenteeism, tardiness and workers' intentions to leave the organization, all of which harm the bottom line (McCunney, 1994).

Petchasawanga and Duchon (2012) believe that transformation can begin in the workplace when an organization opens itself to the cultivation of their employees' spirituality. As such, it would mean addressing employees as a whole human being in terms of their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs (Dehler and Welsh 2003). Research has shown that by addressing the spiritual side of human experience, the organization helps reduce stress, enhance creativity, and improve problem-solving skills (Tischler, Biberman and McKeage, 2002). Organizations have found an increase in job satisfaction by focusing on the spiritual qualities of meaningfulness and joy at work (Harung et al., 1996), enhanced job involvement, organizational identification, and work rewards satisfaction (Kolodinsky et al., 2008), greater honesty, trust, and commitment (Krishnakumar and Neck, 2002), and even improvement in work performance (Duchon and Plowman, 2005). Thus, spirituality intelligence plays an important role in job satisfaction.

The concept of spirituality as a form of intelligence emerged from Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences. This theory suggests that intelligence is best