Factors Affecting Job Performance: An Investigation in Malaysian Universities

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Stress can negatively impact one's health and productivity in any line of work. Stress at work leads to employee turnover and absenteeism, affecting individuals and organisations. Academics in Malaysia's public and private universities are subject to the same standards. The rapid developments in higher education have resulted in increasingly demanding work and stress for academics at both public and private colleges in Malaysia. This study examines the relationship between academicians' job performance, job insecurity, and work environment at Malaysian universities. The study looks at the various effects that occupational stress has on job performance, including the working environment, workload, and job insecurity. This study examines the relationship between workplace stressors and an individual's capacity to perform well through a thorough analysis of existing literature and a theoretical framework. The study focuses on the unique challenges academicians at Malaysian universities face. This study employs a quantitative methodology and data from academics at public and private universities in Malaysia to gain a deeper understanding of the elements that lead to academic performance and well-being. The findings of this study will guide programs meant to lessen the stress associated with college and enhance academic performance and student outcomes. This study enhances professional performance and fosters intellectual self-awareness. In light of this, this study aims to pinpoint the factors affecting academicians' performance to help academicians at public and private universities produce satisfactory outcomes.

1. Introduction

The global impact of work-related stress on workers' physical and mental health is well-documented, with substantial consequences for organisations. Unmanaged stress can lead to diminished motivation, reduced output, and employee turnover. The 2017 "Malaysia's Healthiest Workplace by AIA Vitality Survey" revealed a notable mental health risk among over 50% of the questioned workforce, which consisted of 5,369 workers from 47 organisations. Malaysians, on average, exceeded their contractual hours by 15 hours per week, which was the greatest among the three other nations. Contrary to expectations, the additional time did not result in higher production, as the study revealed that Malaysian workers saw one of the highest rates of performance decline (FMT Reporters, 2017). Studies within the education sector further emphasise the prevalence of stress among educators, with Mukosolu and Ibrahim (2015) highlighting its detrimental impact on job performance.

Job stress, often synonymous with occupational stress, arises from various workplace

challenges (Rosalie & Singaravelloo, 2020). Excessive workload stands out as a crucial source, with Ling and Bhatti (2014) emphasising that nearly all employees experience workplace stress at some point. Managing stress is crucial for organisations to ensure sustainable performance. Usman Ali (2014) aptly notes that stress disrupts health, attitude, and work behaviour, potentially leading to further detrimental consequences like depression.

According to Setiawan et al. (2018) and Darma & Supriyanto (2017), job performance, defined as the effectiveness and efficiency of fulfilling duties, has been extensively studied across various professions. In Malaysia, public and private university academics are experiencing heightened stress levels amidst the rapid growth of the higher education sector. This rapid expansion necessitates a highly trained and engaged workforce to support Malaysia's educational advancements and global aspirations. Academics are pivotal in shaping educational strategies, as outlined in the 11th Malaysia Plan (Prime Minister Department, 2015). Their responsibilities encompass diverse tasks, including teaching and supervising students, conducting research, managing academic affairs, and engaging in community service (Panatik et al., 2022). These many tasks and responsibilities need the academician to satisfy the employment demand caused by changes in the tertiary education system, which leads to diverse occupational stress. According to Hashim and Arma (2016), university academics experience occupational stress due to career progression and publishing requirements for promotion purposes.

Occupational stress has become a widespread issue at Malaysian universities, which might negatively impact the Job performance of academicians. Excessive work-related stress might induce feelings of underappreciation, ultimately resulting in a decline in performance. This is primarily due to employees' lack of engagement in their work and subpar performance. Stress in the workplace can have both advantageous and detrimental effects. Workplace stress may have positive effects when individuals are driven to work efficiently and achieve high performance. It will empower them to investigate novel opportunities, enhancing job efficiency. Conversely, it is counterproductive for workplace stress to raise the pressure on workers to perform without producing any positive outcome. Many other negative outcomes, such as increased illness, high employee turnover, low morale, high absenteeism, and low motivation, can result from stress in the workplace (Murugaiah et al., 2021).

The complex nature of occupational stress encompasses several aspects that significantly predict work performance. A report from the National Institute for Occupational Safety reveals that organisational stress, stemming from ineffective management, insufficient facilities, low motivation, weak relationships, and frequent worker reassignments or shifts, can result in subpar employee performance if left unaddressed (Ng'ang'a Karihe, 2016). Work stress factors are significant determinants closely linked to organisational job performance. This is due to their crucial impact on employees' physical and mental well-being. However, other occupational stress variables that have been considered include working environment, workload, and job insecurity.

Regarding the work environment at universities, research conducted worldwide indicates a concerning rise in occupational stress levels among university workers. Academician personnel, as a collective, reported elevated levels of stress compared to general workers (Othman, 2014). Research has shown that university lecturers experience stress due to

heightened work demands and additional responsibilities beyond teaching obligations (Bhargava & Trivedi, 2018). According to Basarudin (2016), the workload of academics at Malaysian universities may be categorised into at least five areas: publishing, inquiry and discussion, management tasks, and community service. Fulfilling students' diverse needs and performance expectations is a persistent challenge for the academic community at universities today. Conversely, the rising demands placed on academic staff to complete tasks have resulted in a complex and demanding work environment, leading to mental and physical distress among the personnel (Fong, 2023).

Annual key performance indicators (KPIs) for teaching, research, publishing, supervising, consulting, and community service evaluate these vast duties, affecting academicians' salary increases and career progression opportunities (Isa & Palpanadan, 2020). Academicians experience much stress because of this high-pressure environment and the responsibilities of balancing work and personal life.

However, the specific relationship between these identified stress factors and performance among Malaysian university academicians still needs to be studied. Exploring these connections could provide valuable insights for targeted interventions to enhance academic well-being and performance. Although it is well acknowledged that treating occupational stress in academic settings is crucial, there still needs to be more research regarding the specific stressors that occur every day in Malaysia and how they specifically affect work performance. The study investigates the relationship between working environment, workload, job insecurity, and job performance among academicians in Malaysian universities.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Job-Demand Control Theory of Job Stress

The Job Demand Control model (JDC), was created to forecast and elucidate work-related stress and motivation. It focuses on two crucial work environment variables: task demands and job control. The Job Demand-Control model has become influential in occupational stress and learning. The model simplifies many work-related stressors into two dimensions: psychological job demands, which are stressors connected to workload, and job control or job choice latitude, which refers to the options a person has in deciding how to satisfy these job demands (Verhofstadt et al., 2015). According to Verhofstadt et al. (2015), the relationship between job demands and stressors is most pronounced at the start of one's career, likely because of limited work experience. According to their claims, employees gradually adjust to the challenging conditions, developing innovative strategies to handle stressors. In addition, the correlation between job demands and learning follows a similar pattern. The strength of the connection between these two factors is highest at the beginning of one's career, likely due to limited work experience. Regarding job control, scholars have recognised that it is a process that will naturally evolve.

Conceptual Framework

In light of the literature review findings, it is possible to conceptualise and illustrate the link between occupational stress and employee performance in Fig. 1. This research aims to examine the relationship between the elements that would impact the work performance of

academicians in Malaysian Universities. The independent variables include the working environment, workload, and job insecurity. Furthermore, the dependent variable is the measure of work performance.
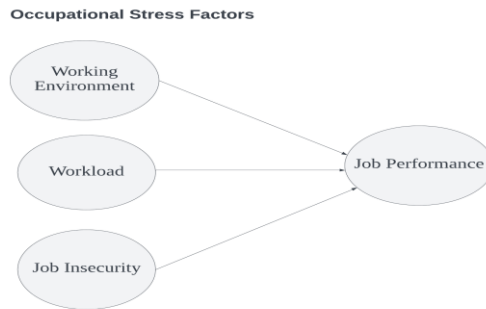

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

Hypothesis Building

Relationship between Working Environment and Job performance

According to Alam (2020), a significant and favourable relationship exists between the work environment and job performance. An optimal work environment may stimulate people to be more driven to do their tasks. In addition, a well-planned workstation, including the organisation of equipment, lighting, noise levels, and ergonomic comfort, may enhance employee productivity and foster a sense of tranquillity while working in their designated area.

Furthermore, research by Agba and Ocheni (2017) looked at the impact of electric power supply on the work performance of faculty members at both public and private institutions in Nigeria. Findings indicated that lecturers' productivity in the classroom, lab, and office was positively correlated with consistent and sufficient electrical power availability. Okiki (2013) also studied the research productivity of teaching faculty members at Nigerian federal institutions. The study found that poor internet bandwidth is a significant obstacle to research productivity among these faculty members. According to Amusa et al. (2013), there is a favourable correlation between the working environment and job performance. The work environment of librarians at public institutions in southwestern Nigeria consists of internal and external factors impacting their performance. Some of these characteristics include the following: easily accessible physical facilities, motivation, open communication, participatory management, staff remuneration, and training. Because they are so effective, these factors influence librarians' productivity on the job. They work out well for them.

Simultaneously, workers' stress levels increase when they encounter unsatisfactory working relationships with their colleagues, subordinates, and superiors. This occurs due to the significant amount of time individuals spend on the job, hence making bad working relationships have a detrimental impact on them. An effective professional connection in the workplace is crucial for individuals to thrive, accomplish their objectives, and contribute to the organisation's overall goals. Workplace happiness and employee engagement improve when individuals cultivate good connections. According to online sources, 40% of workers

said their working connection is crucial to job satisfaction, while 79% expressed contentment with their working relationship (Murugaiah et al., 2021). The data indicate a significant relationship between the working environment and job performance. This research aims to verify if the working environment positively affects the academic job performance of Malaysian universities. thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Working environment has a significant relationship with the job performance of academicians in Malaysian Universities

Relationship between Workload and Job Performance

Nugraha et al. (2018) conducted research that specifically examined the relationship between perceptions of excessive workload and the resulting stress and general fear. According to Melin et al. (2014), researchers have noticed that academic staff members who complain about having too much work struggle with their ability to solve problems and stay motivated. Extensive research has shown that job overload catalyses stress when workers face a high volume or challenging duties (Kimura et al., 2018). As the number and complexity of tasks grow, workers experience a corresponding increase in job-related stress. Several research has extensively investigated the interplay between workload, job stress, and job performance (Pace et al., 2019). As well documented, when employees face increased work demands, the typical outcome is a higher frequency of mistakes and delayed replies. Furthermore, Lyell et al. (2018) identified high task burden and task complexity as two factors contributing to a decline in performance quality.

Further research has shown a clear relationship between employee fatigue caused by workload and its impact on job performance (Genzorová, 2017). A gradual decline in performance may be noted when personnel are consistently burdened with excessive workloads over an extended period. Employees who experience work burnout are often seen to suffer from digestive disorders and elevated blood pressure (Awan, 2015).

Employees may be prevented from enjoying the satisfaction of feeling competent in their performance if they are employed in a position connected with many duties. As a consequence, this might lead to feelings of exhaustion and loss of motivation. To meet the requirements of their professions, which include administrative responsibilities, guidance, counselling, and supervision, academicians often put in extra work hours. According to Osaat and Ekechukwu (2017), lecturers' performance was affected by the amount of work they had to do. According to the referenced research, a heavy workload causes stress, which in turn causes a host of adverse health effects, including mental and physical fatigue, inability to focus, impaired effectiveness, tardiness or absence from class, anxiety, and depression. In addition, recent research has shown that professors' workload significantly impacts their performance (Amini-Philips & Okonmah, 2020; Shah et al., 2011). We may infer from this data that when personnel are given more work, their job performance decreases and vice versa. In contrast, several studies have determined that the stress arising from the workload of lecturers has a notable and beneficial impact on their teaching and research performance (Larestan, 2020; Usoro & Etuk, 2016). An excessive workload resulted in enhanced job performance among professors. Additional evidence in the literature suggests that workload has a minimal, favourable, but not statistically significant impact on workers' job performance (Pourteimour et al., 2021; Yousefi & Abdullah, 2019). This suggests that although giving academics a heavy workload may

enhance their job performance, the extent to which this occurs is due to random factors. Other research has shown no substantial relationship between workload and academic job performance (Balducci et al., 2021; Johari et al., 2018). These studies did not indicate the hypothesis's polarity (negative or positive) or relationship. Studies generally indicate a statistically significant and statistically insignificant relationship between workload and job performance among academics. Therefore, the hypothesis is presented as follows:

H2: Workload has a significant relationship with the Job Performance of academicians in Malaysian Universities

Relationship between Job Insecurity and Job performance

The current study posits that workers' responses to uncertain employment conditions might vary based on their subjective sense of job insecurity and perceived natural working environment. This assumption is supported by previous theories and research (De Witte et al., 2015). According to a recent study by Piccoli et al. (2021), individuals have two ways of dealing with uncertainty. They may either passively handle it, which negatively impacts their health and performance, or they can proactively address it by seeking out new sources of energy to enhance their job performance. The findings, however, indicated that work insecurity did not result in adopting reactive coping methods. Consequently, both the direct and indirect effects on job performance are expected to be unfavourable. The research often emphasises the detrimental impact of job insecurity on individuals' physical and mental well-being, as well as their attitudes and performance in the workplace. Nevertheless, the relationship between work insecurity and job performance remains ambiguous (Stankevičiūtė et al., 2021).

Moreover, research by De Witte (2016) and Jiang (2018) has shown that job insecurity can harm job performance, particularly for lower-level management positions. A study conducted by Probst (2017) examined the impact of job insecurity on employee performance in the United States. The study successfully confirmed a U-shaped relationship between job insecurity and performance. Performance assessment tends to fluctuate based on the level of job insecurity. When job insecurity is moderate, individuals may experience a decrease in their performance assessment. However, when job insecurity is either low or high, the performance assessment tends to increase, forming an inverted U pattern.

According to De Cuyper et al. (2020) research, the body of literature investigating the impact of job insecurity on job performance is still emerging. The evidence is weaker compared to other factors, but it is heading in the wrong direction, which results in a drop in individual performance. According to Nikmah (2021), the association between job insecurity and performance is generally negative and weaker in nations with robust social welfare protection. Besides that, according to Probst (2017), a few studies have revealed a favourable direction for the relationship. According to the COR theory developed by De Witte (2016), when employees experience high levels of job insecurity or are confronted with the possibility of losing valuable resources, this can encourage higher performance achievement. This is because employees think they can avoid being fired if they put in much effort (De Cuyper et al., 2020). Despite this, previous research on the correlation between job insecurity and job performance has shown inconclusive findings. This research aims to examine if job security hurts the work performance of academicians at Malaysian universities. Therefore, based on

the above debate, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H3: Job insecurity has a significant relationship with the Job Performance of academicians at Malaysian Universities

3. METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted in the area of capital city, Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. The research focused on public and private universities. This sampling frame was selected as the subject of investigation because all of the most prominent public and private universities in Malaysia either have headquarters or campuses located inside these states: lecturers and faculty members working in both private and public universities. The study adopted a simple random sampling. The sample was collected from five universities. The survey was conducted using an online questionnaire administered by academicians. Data collection was conducted for about two weeks. This study was bound to have a time limitation of only ten weeks.

The surveys consisted of three sections as depicted in Table 1. The first one was specifically designed to collect demographic information from the respondents. The second section aimed to gather information on the occupational stress experienced by the respondents. In the last part, the respondents answered questions related to their performance. Section A shall include data about the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B comprises questions related to the analysis of the independent variable. Section C will have inquiries that will assist in examining the dependent variable. Consequently, a five-point scale was used in sections B and C of the questionnaire. The response options for all measures were shown on a five-point scale, where one indicated "strongly disagree," 2 indicated "disagree," 3 indicated "neutral," 4 indicated "agree," and five indicated "strongly agree." The attitude measurement assessed independent and dependent variables, including factors related to occupational work stress: work environment, job insecurity, and workload and job performance.

Section A includes eight questions about demographic characteristics such as gender, age, marital status, nationality, qualification, university type, job positions, and years of experience. Sections B and C consist of five to six questions about general information provided to the respondents. The questions in this area are shown in the table below.

Primary data are initial observations researchers gather for research purposes and are used in statistical analysis, including historical records, literary texts, creative works, experiments, surveys, and interviews (Singh & Jain, 2015). This study will collect data physically and online, as it is the most appropriate platform for reaching the target audience. The primary data for the current research will be gathered via a structured questionnaire from academics at several universities. The questionnaire can be conveniently completed physically and online through Google Survey Form. A total of 74 questionnaires were collected out of 300 distributed. The questionnaires are sent using Google Forms and shared over email and Microsoft Teams. The instruments for the variables are validated and reliable as adopted from past empirical studies. This is a cross-sectional study. The research focuses on the target population—more precisely, the individuals selected to conduct the research constitute the target population. The selected targets are Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, which are near these two states. This specific group of states was chosen for investigation because all of Malaysia's

major public and private universities are based in these states or have campuses there. Professors and academic staff from private and public universities in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor are the target audience for this project paper.

TABLE 1 Questionnaire Section B

Variable	Questions
JOB PERFORMANCE (DV)	1. I am happy with my overall work performance as an academician
	2. I kept in mind the work outcome I wanted to achieve
Adebayo (2022)	3. I efficiently arrange my job assignments to guarantee timely completion
	4. I make an effort to remain informed with the newest advances and information related to my area of expertise
	5. I actively contribute to meetings, consultations, and collaborative discussions related to my academic responsibilities

Section C

Variable	Questions
Working Environment (IV)	1. I have access to the required tools and equipment to accomplish my work properly
	2. The physical condition of my workplace (e.g., noise level, temperature, lighting) promotes my performance
Chaudhry et al. (2021)	3. The provision of facilities (e.g., cafeteria, rest spaces) helps to my general well-being at work
	4. The structure and style of my workstation allow cooperation and communication with colleagues
	5. My workplace atmosphere is friendly and helpful
	6. I have positive working relationships with my colleagues
Workload (IV)	1. The workload in my present employment is manageable
	2. I regularly work past regular working hours to fulfil deadlines
Yousefi et al. (2019)	3. I frequently feel overwhelmed by the quantity of work I have to accomplish
	4. I am often interrupted or distracted from my work tasks
	5. I feel stressed or anxious due to the demands of my workload
	6. I routinely experience tight deadlines and time pressure in my job
Job Insecurity (IV)	1. I am concerned about my long-term employment prospects with this universities
	2. I feel exposed to job loss owing to economic issues or organizational reorganisation
Murugaiah et al. (2021)	3. I believe that my talents and contributions are underestimated by the universities, which increases my job instability

	4. Changes in the organisation's structure or policy make me feel insecure about my employment
	5. The universities' communication about job security is unclear or inconsistent
	6. I believe my job security is contingent on forces beyond my control

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia Official Portal (2021), Malaysia has 12,055 academicians at public universities and 9,487 at private universities in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. The researcher will concentrate on academic staff from different departments and faculties to ensure alignment with our research objectives. The academicians reached out through university email lists and professional networks, following ethical guidelines and providing informed consent from all participants.

The sampling size refers to the number of population items selected between each unit in your sample. The sample sizes might vary based on the population size (Fong, 2023). Samples are always smaller portions or subsets of the whole population available for study. The sample consisted of university academicians from selected public and private sector universities in Malaysia. The study's sample size was 74 respondents, who were obtained from various private and public sector universities. The sample methodology employed probability sampling techniques, which were mentioned earlier as a random sampling method, using the name list provided by the university faculty. The survey consent was obtained from five universities, including private and public universities. As for the analysis, SPSS software analysed multiple liner regression and correlation analysis. This software used as the model was not complex.

4. ANALYSIS

A total of 74 participants were selected for this study. Based on the demographic information of the participants. The sample has a higher number of females (49) than males (25). Females represent 66.2% of the total, with males making up 33.8%. A significant number of the participants in the study were female. The survey was administered to academics, and the age groupings were categorised into five categories: 18 to 24, 24 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 55, and above 55. The sample's age distribution indicates that the most significant proportion of respondents, accounting for 45.9% of the total, falls within the 45-55 age group. More precisely, 33.8% of the population falls within the age range of 35-44, whereas 10.8% falls within the age range of 25-34. In addition, 8.1% of the participants are aged 55 years or older. The age range of 18 to 24 is under-represented, comprising just 1.4% of the total responses. This suggests that the sample consists primarily of individuals in the middle age range. The dataset comprises 74 individuals and indicates that most respondents, precisely 83.8%, are married. Only 16.2% of the individuals in the sample are single. Based on the cumulative percentage, it is evident that all participants have been accounted for, and the dataset is primarily composed of married individuals. 67 individuals (90.5%) in the sample are Malaysians, while only seven individuals (9.5%) are non-Malaysians. To sum up, the majority of participants were Malaysians. It is indicated that most participants (57, 77.0%) possess a PhD. In addition, 13 individuals (17.6%) have a Master's/Professional qualification, while four

(5.4%) have a Bachelor's degree. Generally, the most prevalent qualification among the participants is a PhD, followed by Master's/Professional and Bachelor's degrees. The distribution of participants between public and private universities is equitable. Thirty-seven participants attended public institutions (50.0%), while 37 attended private universities (50.0%). Job positions have been categorised into two distinct groups. Approximately 70 individuals, or 94.6% of the total, hold academic posts. Four individuals, or 5.4% of the total, hold non-academic employment. A significant proportion of the participants (43.2%) had between 11 and 15 years of job experience. A smaller proportion of individuals, 14.9%, have fewer than five years of experience. The remaining individuals possess expertise from 5 to 10 years (13.5%) and above 15 years (28.4%). Based on the data, it can be concluded that many participants fall into the category of mid-career professionals, having accumulated 11 to 15 years of experience.

TABLE 2 Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Job Performance (Dependant)	.276	74	.000	.861	74	.000
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Table 2 above displays the results of the normality test conducted in this research. The normality of the findings was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests in SPSS. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test statistic for job performance is 0.276. The Shapiro-Wilk test statistic for job performance is 0.861. In the theoretical context, the p-value (also known as the significance value) must exceed 0.05 for the researcher to assert that the data in the study follows a normal distribution (Zurkifly et al., 2023). Based on the shown result, it is evident that the p-value for the significance of the dependent variable, job performance, is less than 0.05 in the normality test. Each test produced significant findings, with a p-value of 0.000 for each. The results of this test show that none of the variables are normally distributed. Consequently, the p-values for both tests are below 0.05, which indicates that we may reject the null hypothesis of normality.

TABLE 3 Descriptive Statistics for Dependent Variable and Independent Variables

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
JP	74	2.20	2.80	5.00	298.40	4.0324	.04618	.39729	.158	.588	.279	1.924	.552
WE	74	2.33	2.67	5.00	286.83	3.8761	.04896	.42115	.177	.310	.279	1.003	.552
W	74	2.67	2.33	5.00	255.83	3.4572	.05367	.46167	.213	.195	.279	.855	.552
JI	74	3.33	1.67	5.00	221.50	2.9932	.06214	.53453	.286	.729	.279	1.770	.552
Valid N (listwise)	74												

Table 3 provides a clear overview of the descriptive statistics for the variables, including the minimum and maximum values, mean value, standard deviation, variance, skewness, and

kurtosis. The study focuses on job performance (job performance) as the dependent variable, with the independent variables being the Working Environment (WE), Workload (W), and Job Insecurity (JI). The minimum and maximum values indicate the lower and upper boundaries of the data, respectively. Every variable has a minimum value of either 2.33 or 1.67, indicating a lower limit for the observed values. The highest observed value for each variable is 5.00, representing the maximum value.

The mean is a prevalent method for defining the central tendency in quantitative research (Murugiah et al., 2021). The average job performance level among the polled persons is 4.0324, as shown by the mean for job performance. The WE have a mean rating of 3.8761, indicating that, on average, it is somewhat less than job performance. The mean for W is 3.4572, indicating that the perceived effort is typically lower than job performance and WE. JI has a mean of 2.9932, which is the second-lowest. This suggests that JI is viewed as significantly lower than all variables.

The standard deviation gives insights into the distribution of answers, indicating whether they are tightly concentrated around the mean or widely spread out (Murugiah et al., 2021). Job Performance scores show moderate dispersion, with a standard deviation of 0.39729. The WE scores show slightly higher variability, with a standard deviation 0.42115. The W scores show a more comprehensive range, indicating greater respondent diversity. JI levels show significant variation, with the highest standard deviation of 0.53453. Just like standard deviation, JI shows the highest variance, while job performance has the lowest. Based on the Skewness and Kurtosis descriptive statistics, all the variables show a positive skewness, whereas kurtosis values are relatively near 3, which is the kurtosis of a normal distribution.

TABLE 4 Reliability Coefficient for items in the study (n=74)

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha (n=74)	Reliability
Job Performance	5	.804	Very Good
Working Environment	6	.762	Good
Workload	6	.631	Moderate
Job Insecurity	6	.790	Good
Total	23		

A reliability test is conducted to assess data consistency over a specific period, specifically to evaluate the level of dependability in the measurement used for reliability analysis. The Cronbach alpha coefficient is considered to be high when it exceeds 0.70. This indicates that the instrument is reliable for collecting data and producing consistent measurement findings, especially when several measurements are taken (Riyanto et al., 2017). Table 4 shows the outcomes of the reliability evaluation carried out on each variable. The table above shows that Job Performance (JP), Work environment (WE), Workload(W) and Job Insecurity (JI) variables have reliable data, as seen from Cronbach alpha values >0.70. This proves that this research can continue. However, the W value is 0.631, a Cronbach alpha value less than 70. Consequently, the variables JP, WE, and JI are deemed reliable for further analysis, whereas the variable W may require re-evaluation.

Spearman Correlation Analysis

This research used the nonparametric (distribution-free) method to analyse the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. We employed Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test to assess this relationship's strength. Spearman correlation analyses the rankings of the scores instead of the actual data values. The Spearman correlation coefficient is called "rs" (Zurkifly et al., 2023). Fig. 2 shows the interpretation of the coefficient strength suggested by Leclezio, 2015.

Spearman ρ	Correlation
≥ 0.70	Very strong relationship
0.40-0.69	Strong relationship
0.30-0.39	Moderate relationship
0.20-0.29	Weak relationship
0.01-0.19	No or negligible relationship

This descriptor applies to both positive and negative relationships.
(Adapted From Dancey and Reidy, 2004)[40]

Fig.2. Interpretation Table of Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficients (Leclezio, 2015)

Table 5 shows the result of the correlation analysis, showing the relationship between the dependent variable, JP, and the independent variables, WE, W, and JI. The findings show a significant positive correlation (Spearman's rho = 0.412, p < 0.01) between JP and WE. This indicates that job performance tends to increase as the working environment improves. The correlation between JP and WE is weak and negative (Spearman's rho = -0.042, p = 0.725) and is not statistically significant. Finally, JP and JI recorded a value of (Spearman's rho = -0.043, p=0.715), showing no significant relationship.

Hypothesis Testing

A Spearman Correlation Analysis was conducted to test the research hypothesis regarding the relationship between the variables.

H1: Working environment has a significant relationship with the Job Performance of academicians in Malaysian Universities

Based on the findings shown in Table 6, the study indicates a correlation coefficient (rs) of 0.412. The value of this correlation coefficient (rs) 0.412 falls under the coefficient range from ± 0.40 to ± 0.69. Therefore, the relationship between WE and JP is strong. There is a significant correlation between WE and JP. This is because the p-value of 0.00 is less than the threshold of 0.01. This investigation effectively refuted the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. The findings indicate a high correlation between academicians' WE and JP.

H2: Workload has a significant relationship with the Job performance of academicians in Malaysian Universities

According to the data shown in Table 7, the correlation coefficient (rs) of -0.042 is within the range of ±0.01 to ±0.19, suggesting a minimal or insignificant link. The negative correlation coefficient indicates a modest inverse association between variable WE and JP. The research demonstrates a correlation coefficient (rs) of -0.042 and a p-value of 0.725, above the threshold of 0.01. This signifies that the study has accepted the null hypothesis and has found no

evidence for the alternative hypothesis. The data suggests no statistically significant linear association between JP and WE.

H3: Job insecurity has a significant relationship with the job performance of academicians in Malaysian Universities

The correlation coefficient value between JI and JP, as seen in Tables 8 is (rs) -0.043. This value is between ±0.01 and ±0.19, suggesting a negligible association between the two variables. The p-value of 0.715 is higher than the significance level of 0.01, suggesting no statistically significant link between JI and JP. The JI variable has a negative correlation value of (rs) -0.043 with the JP variable. Thus, the null hypothesis remains unchanged, concluding that no statistically significant correlation exists between JI and JP.

TABLE 5 Result of Spearman Correlation Analysis

			JP	WE	W	JI
Spearman's rho	Job Performance (DV)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.412**	-.042	-.043
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.725	.715
		N	74	74	74	74
	Working Environment (IV 1)	Correlation Coefficient	.412**	1.000	.009	-.026
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.942	.828
		N	74	74	74	74
	Workload (IV 2)	Correlation Coefficient	-.042	.009	1.000	.170
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.725	.942	.	.149
		N	74	74	74	74
	Job Insecurity (IV 3)	Correlation Coefficient	-.043	-.026	.170	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.715	.828	.149	.
		N	74	74	74	74

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

TABLE 6 Result of Spearman Correlation Analysis between Working Environment and JOB PERFORMANCE

			Job Performance (DV)	Work Environment (IV)
Spearman's rho	Job Performance (DV)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.412**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	74	74
	Working Environment (IV)	Correlation Coefficient	.412**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	74	74

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 Result of Spearman correlation analysis between workload and Job performance

			Job Performance (DV)	Workload (IV)
Spearman's rho	Job Performance (DV)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.042
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.725
		N	74	74
	Workload (IV)	Correlation Coefficient	-.042	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.725	.
		N	74	74

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

TABLE 8 Result of Spearman Correlation Analysis between Job Insecurity and job performance

			Job Performance (DV)	Job Insecurity (IV)
Correlations				
Spearman's rho			Job Performance (DV)	Job Insecurity (IV)
	Job Performance (DV)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.043
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.715
		N	74	74
	Job Insecurity (IV)	Correlation Coefficient	-.043	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.715	.
		N	74	74
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Regression Analysis

When considered collectively, the R-value is the correlation coefficient between the dependent and independent variables. Based on the data shown in Table 9, this research's correlation coefficient (R) is 0.571. A strong and positive association exists between the dependent variable (Job Performance) and the independent variables (WE, W, JI). Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R-squared) is 0.326. The R-Square is a statistical measure that quantifies the proportion or percentage of the dependent variable's variability that can be explained by the independent variables (Chong et al., 2011). This indicates that the three independent factors can account for 32.6% of the dependent variable (Job Performance).

TABLE 9 Model Summary

					Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.571ª	.326	.297	.33300	.326	11.302	3	70	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), JS, WE, W									
b. Dependent Variables: Job Performance									

TABLE 10 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.760	3	1.253	11.302	.000ᵇ
	Residual	7.762	70	.111		
	Total	11.522	73			
a. Dependent Variable: JP						
b. Predictors: (Constant), JI, WE, W						

The ANOVA table assesses the overall significance of the regression model. Based on the information provided in Table 10, the p-value is 0.000, less than the alpha value of 0.05. This suggests that the regression model is statistically significant. The F-statistic value of 11.302 provides further evidence that the model is statistically significant, indicating that at least one of the predictors (WE, W, JI) has a meaningful relationship with the dependent variable (job performance).

TABLE 11 Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.437	.455		5.363	.000	1.531	3.344
	WE	.537	.093	.570	5.755	.000	.351	.723
	W	-.137	.090	-.160	-1.525	.132	-.317	.042
	JI	-.004	.077	-.006	-.055	.956	-.158	.150

a. Dependent Variable: JP

Based on Table 11, WE are significant in predicting this study's dependent variable (Job Performance). This is because the p-value for WE is 0.000, less than the alpha value 0.01. Next, W has a negative but not statistically significant relationship with Job Performance (p = 0.132). The effect of WE on JP is not conclusive. Even JI has a negligible and not statistically significant relationship with JP (p = 0.956). There is no evidence of a relationship between JI and JP.

TABLE 12 Ranking of Independent Variable based on Standard Coefficients Beta

Independent Variables	Standard Coefficients Beta	Ranking
Working Environment (WE)	.570	1
Workload (W)	-.160	2
Job Insecurity (JI)	-.006	3

Source: *Developed for this research*

Based on Table 12, the following equation is derived below:

Regression equations,

JOB PERFORMANCE= $\beta 0 + \beta 1$ WE $+ \beta 2$ W $+ \beta 3$ JI

$\beta 1$= Independent Variable 1

$\beta 2$= Independent Variable 2

$\beta 3$= Independent Variable 3

Job Performance = 2.437+ 0.537 (WE) -1.37 (W) -0.04 (JI)

The study revealed that the WE had the most significant influence on JOB PERFORMANCE, as shown by a (Beta =0.570), which signifies a substantial contribution to the variation in the dependent variable. Although a negative relationship existed between work environment and job performance (Beta = -0.160), this impact did not reach statistical significance. The JI variable had the least significant effect on the variation of work performance, with a (Beta = -0.006). The result demonstrates that among the examined factors, WE is the primary predictor of academicians' job performance in Malaysian universities.

According to the summary Table 13, only one hypothesis is supported based on the correlation analysis. The working environment significantly impacts job performance, so the hypotheses are supported. Unfortunately, the hypothesis regarding both workload and job insecurity is not supported.

TABLE 13 Hypothesis Result

Hypothesis Assumption	Analysis	Result
H1: Working environment has significant relationship with the job performance of Academicians in Malaysian Universities	N = 74 rs= 0.412 p=0.000 (p <0.01)	Supported
H2: Workload has significant relationship with the job performance of academicians in Malaysian Universities	N = 74 rs= -0.042 p=0.725 (p >0.01)	Not Supported
H3: Job insecurity has significant relationship with the job performance of academicians in Malaysian Universities	N = 74 rs=-0.043 p=0.715 (p >0.01)	Not Supported

Source: *Developed for this research*

5. DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this study is to examine the correlations between the working environment, workload, job insecurity, and job performance among 74 academicians from both the public and private sectors in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. Here is a comprehensive analysis of the findings focused on the current study's research objectives and questions. The current study uncovered various connections between the independent variables and the dependent variable, which is job performance.

H1: Working environment has a significant relationship with the job performance of Academicians in Malaysian Universities

The findings from the hypothesis in Table 13 indicate a correlation between the working environment and job performance among academicians in Malaysian Universities. The findings from the hypothesis testing have successfully addressed the research question and accomplished the research objective. Hypothesis 1 suggests a notable correlation between the working environment and job performance among academicians in Malaysian Universities. The results indicate a positive correlation between the working environment and job performance, with a moderate strength of rs = 0.412. The p-value of .000, less than 0.01, further supports this finding. Thus, hypothesis 1 is deemed valid in this study. The research conducted by Jayaweera (2015) has provided evidence that organisations can enhance employee performance by creating a conducive environment, be it physical or psychosocial. In a recent survey by Rahoo et al. (2017), most participants were female lecturers from different institutions. Ahmad et al. (2022) discovered a range of occupational factors that contributed to stress, including an unhealthy connection with coworkers. Areekkuzhiyil (2014) also mentioned that the office environment significantly impacts communication patterns and the culture of collaboration among employees. Furthermore, the study conducted by Disurya et al. (2022) provides additional evidence that enhancing the working environment positively

impacts academic staff performance. Insufficient equipment or resources in a workplace can significantly hinder the academician's effectiveness in fulfilling their assigned responsibilities. This emphasises the significance of cultivating a favourable work atmosphere to boost employees' motivation and productivity.

H2: Workload has a significant relationship with the job performance of Academicians in Malaysian Universities

The findings from the hypothesis in Table 13 indicate no significant correlation between the workload and job performance among academicians in Malaysian Universities. The conclusions of the hypothesis results have yet to address the research question and objective successfully. Hypothesis 2 suggests a negative correlation between the workload and job performance among academicians in Malaysian Universities. The results do not significantly correlate the workload and job performance, with a weak $rs = -0.042$. The p-value of .000, less than 0.01, further supports this finding. Thus, hypothesis 2 is not valid in this study. This study does not provide evidence indicating that workload negatively affects job performance among academicians in Malaysian universities. It appears that job performance does not vary across different levels when individuals are confronted with a heavy workload in their tasks. As per the findings of Yousefi and Abdullah (2019), the workload in Malaysian public universities does not impact academic staff performance. The current findings align with the research conducted by Eisenberger et al. (2005), which explored how academics perceive their workload and its influence on job performance. The study indicates that the impact of workload can differ based on the specific workplace and how roles are defined. This emphasises the critical role of organisational culture in how employees handle time constraints and aim for peak performance (Yousefi et al., 2019).

H3: Job insecurity has a significant relationship with the job performance of Academicians in Malaysian Universities

The findings from the hypothesis in Table 13 indicate no significant correlation between job insecurity and job performance among academicians in Malaysian Universities. The results of the hypothesis have yet to address the research question and the research objective successfully. Hypothesis 3 suggests a negative correlation between job insecurity and job performance among academicians in Malaysian Universities. The results do not significantly correlate between job insecurity and job performance, with a weak $rs = -0.043$. The p-value of .000, less than 0.01, further supports this finding. Thus, hypothesis 3 needs to be validated in this study.

This study needs to present evidence suggesting that workload harms job performance among academics in Malaysian universities. Job insecurity is a personal experience that arises from how individuals perceive and interpret their work situation. This means that different employees may interpret the same objective situation differently. Therefore, the following scenario could occur: Certain employees may have a sense of job security, although they will soon be laid off. On the other hand, some individuals may feel insecure about their jobs, even though their employment is not objectively at risk (De Witte, 2005). On the other hand, different studies have indicated that job insecurity does not significantly impact performance. Some studies have even suggested that job insecurity can motivate employees to perform better to safeguard their positions (Shin et al., 2019; Sverke et al., 2019). Thus, the present

discovery necessitates additional research and encourages ongoing discourse regarding the connection between job insecurity and JOB PERFORMANCE. Job insecurity may function as either a stressor that hampers performance or a stressor that presents a challenge (Piccoli et al., 2021).

Implication of the Study

This study explores the Job-Demand Control Theory of Job Stress, the Related Theory (Person-environment fit theory), and the Transactional Model of Stress. The study's results partly support the Job-Demand Control (JDC) Theory, specifically about the importance of the work environment in impacting job performance. the strong association between the working environment and job performance proves that job control, a crucial component of the working environment, may decrease stress and improve performance. On the other hand, there needs to be a significant relationship between workload, job insecurity, and job performance, which challenges the prediction of the JDC model. According to this model, high demands should only hurt performance with sufficient job control.

The study's findings offer compelling evidence for the Person-Environment (P-E) Fit Theory, emphasising the substantial influence of the working environment on the integration between academicians and their job roles. The significant link between the working environment and job performance implies that when the job environment aligns with the needs and abilities of academicians, job performance experiences an enhancement.

From a practical standpoint, we have determined that the working environment significantly impacts the academic staff employed in Malaysian universities.

Lastly, the result of this study did not reveal a significant direct relationship between workload and job performance. although job insecurity may not directly impact performance, it is still a concern that can indirectly affect employee well-being and morale. . The ways organisations treat their employees during these times will significantly impact their future (Rudolph et al., 2020). The uncertainty surrounding one's job can drive employees to actively search for explanations and signals regarding their work situation. People who can receive accurate and practical communication not only have a better understanding of what lies ahead but can also acquire more tools to handle the adverse effects of job insecurity. It is important to communicate future organisational plans to employees to reduce their exposure to job insecurity (Piccoli et al., 2021). This communication provides a valuable resource that increases predictability and understanding of the situation (Jiang & Probst, 2014).

Recommendation for Future Research

To broaden the applicability of the research findings, it would be beneficial to include additional regions within Malaysia in the study area. Therefore, a broader sample can be acquired. Future research should include a larger sample size and be conducted at multiple universities in Malaysia. This would help to ensure more reliable and valid results. Another suggestion that researchers can offer for future research is to expand the range of ideas or factors that impact academicians' job performance. This will give the respondents a broader range of options rather than being confined to our limited choices. As an illustration, we can ask participants to express their thoughts in response to the following question. As a result, respondents will not be restricted in their ability to answer our questionnaire and will have the

freedom to express their ideas. Streamlining the questionnaire by decreasing the length and quantity of questions is advisable. Reducing the questionnaire length may lead to a higher response rate since participants are likelier to engage (Allen, 2016). This also accelerates the data-collecting process and allows for a larger sample size to be gathered. Future studies should allocate more time to data collection.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The study investigates the impact of occupational stress on job performance among academics in Malaysian universities. It examines the relationship between the working environment, workload, and job insecurity. The results show that the working environment positively impacts job performance, while workload and job insecurity do not correlate. Malaysian universities should focus on developing strategies to address these independent variables. Unfortunately, the research does not consider the correlations between occupational stress and other factors, such as organisational culture and job autonomy. To address occupational stress issues among university academicians, further studies are needed to understand the correlations between occupational stress and other variables. The study also highlights the limitations and recommendations for future research.

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