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Job stress among academic staff: A cross-cultural Qualitative study

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to explore the sources of job stress and type of coping among academic staff from two countries; namely Pahang, Malaysia and Yogyakarta, Indonesia. This study used qualitative design, and phenomenology technique conducted to analyze the data. Twenty two academic staffs were involved in this study. The result found several interesting findings. Seven stressors categories were found; (1) inadequate role occupancy, (2) increasing work demands, (3) deficient role preparedness, (4) insufficient role support, (5) role ambiguity, (6) role conflict and (7) work-family conflict. There were four responses of stress that was showed by university academic staffs, namely: (1) behavioral responses, (2) emotional responses, (3) cognitive responses, and (4) physiological responses. The reason that lead respondents still continue work as academic staff are (1) being a lecturer was the choice of his/her life, (2) teaching was noble work, (3) could share knowledge with others/students, (4) love the profession as a lecturer, and (5) feel happy to teach and discuss with students. The coping strategy that always used by academic staffs to cope with job related stress were five coping strategy patterns, namely: (1) problem focused coping, (2) emotion focused coping, (3) seeking social support, (4) using religious coping, and (5) making meaning.

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1.   INTRODUCTION

One of the factors influenced the success of higher learning institution are their human resource and academic staff performance. High quality of academic staff is the major factor contributing to the high quality of learning atmosphere. The high quality of a teaching-learning atmosphere will give impact on the high quality of students' output. However, based on the previous study it found many academic staffs experienced a medium to high incidences of stress in the workplace. Several studies, concluded that the stressful condition experienced by academic staff increases their distress and vulnerability to psychological and behavioral problems such as depression, fatigue, low productivity, absenteeism, and several health problems [1]-[10]. Low performance that caused by job stress will influence nation competitiveness. It is because the academic staffs are unable to promote higher quality of graduates through an optimal teaching and learning process and produce a higher quality level of innovative research as one important resource to develop nation's civilization and competitiveness.

From an initial literature review, it found numerous stressors that have relation with job stress. Some of these stressors are intrinsic to the job, such as job insecurity, physical exertion (overloads physical

task), time pressure, deadline task, excessive workloads, and conflicting demands, work allocation, students' misbehavior, time and resource difficulties, professional recognition, interpersonal conflict, job satisfaction, and work-roles stressors, role ambiguity, and performance pressure. Some factors are extrinsic to the job, such as leadership ethics and practices, time management, community problems, family problems, homework interface, financial problems, health problem, and life stress [11]-[23].

The studies of teacher/academician's stress have found several sources of job stress. Several significant stressors that consistently increase job stress such as poor working conditions (inadequate facilities and resources; class sizes are too big), lack of support from management, lack of appreciation and benefits, limited participation in decision making, and lack of training how to cope with job stress [12], role ambiguity [24], job insecurity [13], role conflict [14], interpersonal conflicts [15], work overload [16], performance pressure [17].

However, all of these stressors need to reexamine again in Malaysia and Indonesia academic staffs. Especially, because previous studies conducted on a single group sample, not examine in cross-nation sample as present study do [18]-[23]. Furthermore, many previous studies conducted and examined work-related stress in a public university, without investigating it in a private university. It means there are many dynamical interrelationship possibilities between antecedent variables to job stress remain uncertain and questionable [16]-[22]. The present study investigates qualitative responses by interviewing several academicians in order to comprehend their perception, meaning and understanding related to work stress; also investigates the current source of job stress among university academic staffs especially in Pahang, Malaysia and Yogyakarta Indonesia. This study will solve those problems and fill the gap of knowledge in recent time. Based on this finding, many prevention programs can be created to solve higher incidences of job stress at university such as giving guided in developing counseling services, carrying out a stress management program, developing a new policy to reduce or prevent the increasing of job stress among academic staffs in higher learning institution setting, especially in Pahang, Malaysia and Jogjakarta, Indonesia.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Design of Study

Work-related stress lies in an employee's perception and interpretation of his or her condition [25]. According to Creswell (2003, 2005) individual's perception is difficult to force into categories of quantitative research that fits the participant's meaning. A qualitative research was employed to get the comprehensive understanding of individual experiential meaning (*verstehen*). The researcher used a phenomenological method to deduce the meaning and essence of participants' experiences related to work-related stressors. The phenomenological method analyzes the data based on their real meaning as it speaks to or show off to the world [26];[27]. The aim is to determine what the experience means to academicians who have had the experience; from it general meanings are derived [28];[29]. The interviews were transcribed and grouped into categories, themes, and codes for understanding the academic staff experiences of job stress.

Participants

In this study, the researcher offer consent form for qualitative study. A total of 22 respondents agreed to be interviewed; and researcher interviewed each participant at a site convenient to the participant. From 22 respondents, there are 11 academic staffs from Pahang, and 11 academic staffs from Jogjakarta.

To make interviewees effectively felt free to express their perspective and individual work experiences, Malay and Indonesian languages were used to conduct the interviews. A maximum of 60 minutes was spent with each interviewee. In the interview process, researcher acted as facilitator to assist the process of the interview and observation. The strategies of elicitation and clarification were applied to encourage interviewees to express their experience and perceptions. The researcher offered suggestions if asked by the participants.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Qualitative interviews explored the nature of work-related stressors from eleven Pahang academic staff and eleven Jogjakarta academic staff's insights. The main purpose of the qualitative approach is to probe the university academic staff from Pahang and Jogjakarta's perceptions about work-related stressors. The eleven interviewees were selected based on a variety of academic rank. The demographic profiles of the interviewees are summarized in Table 1 for Pahang group and Table 2 for Jogjakarta group.

Table 1: Demographic profile of Pahang interviewees (N= 11).

| Participant code	Academic rank	Employment status
PPR1	Professor	Fulltime
PAPR2	Associate professor	Fulltime
PAPR3	Associate professor	Fulltime
PAPR4	Associate professor	Fulltime
PSR5	Senior lecturer	Fulltime
PSR6	Senior lecturer	Fulltime
PSR7	Senior lecturer	Fulltime
PSR8	Senior lecturer	Fulltime
PJR9	Junior lecturer	Fulltime
PJR10	Junior lecturer	Fulltime
PJR11	Junior lecturer	Part timer

Note: *PPR*= Pahang professor respondent, *PAPR*= Pahang associate professor
PSR= Pahang senior lecturer, and *PJR*= Pahang Junior lecturer.

Table 2: Demographic profile of Jogjakarta interviewees (N= 11).

Participant code	Academic rank	Employment status
JPR1	Professor	Fulltime
JAPR2	Associate professor	Fulltime
JAPR3	Associate professor	Fulltime
JAPR4	Associate professor	Fulltime
JSR5	Senior lecturer	Fulltime
JSR6	Senior lecturer	Fulltime
JSR7	Senior lecturer	Fulltime
JSR8	Senior lecturer	Fulltime
JJR9	Junior lecturer	Fulltime
JJR10	Junior lecturer	Fulltime
JJR11	Junior lecturer	Part timer

Note: *JPR*= Jogjakarta professor respondent, *JAPR*= Jogjakarta associate professor
JSR= Jogjakarta senior lecturer, and *JJR*= Jogjakarta Junior lecturer.

Figure 1 with Fishbone diagram illustrates the categories and themes of the university academic staff work-related stressors from two group sample, Pahang and Yogyakarta. Seven stressors were identified: (a) inadequate role occupancy, (b) increasing work demands, (c) deficient role preparedness, (d) insufficient role support, (e) role ambiguity, (f) role conflict and (g) work-family conflict.
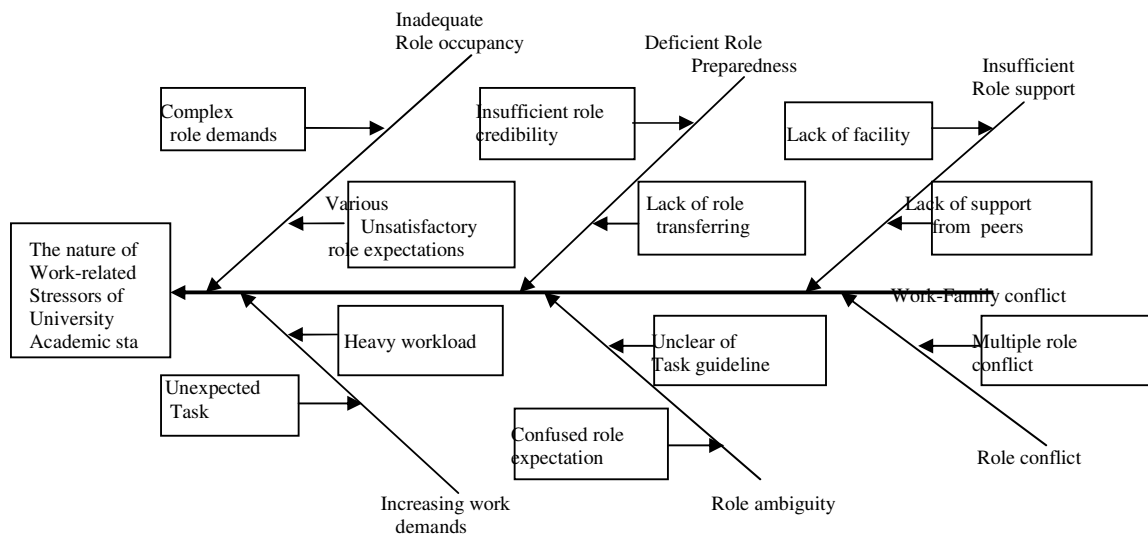
Figure 1. The categories and themes of university academic staff work-related stressors

Result of Research Question 1. What situations cause work related stress to university academic staff?

Role Ambiguity

Role ambiguity is the condition of unclear, vague and ambiguous expectations or rules in an organization that perceived by a focal person. Role ambiguity refers to the degree to which a given job is lacking in terms of, first the predictability of responses to one's behavior, and second, the existence or clarity of behavior requirements [30];[31].

One theme emerges is that there were confusing tasks and unclear task guideline faced by academic staff. These related to several things: first, the lack of clarity about instructions from superior or the organization. Secondly, lack of clarity about authority boundaries that should be conducted by the person. Third, related to the priority of tasks, which must be resolved first. All of these come from the absence of guidelines or standardized operating procedures provided by organization to academic staff.

Unclear guidelines and standards of the work lead academic staff difficult to complete their work, especially when they had to do administrative tasks, in addition to the main duty as a lecturer. These administrative tasks often became a source of role ambiguity, because of the lack of guidance on how to accomplish these administrative tasks, or which task was more important to be completed first, whether the administrative duties or main tasks as a lecturer such as teaching, researching, writing papers or did scientific publications. The following is some of the experiences expressed by academic staff in an interview session:

> *Last semester when I became a deputy dean... I also ever feel confused... when I come to my office, and I wonder what would be done first...because I thought that all these tasks are urgent.. But if I take all the tasks, it won't finish at all .... And at that time ... everything is not stable and regular.. Sometimes I play a role as a dean, although in fact I am not the dean ... there are unclear division of duties.* (JSR-8)

> *There is another thing that if I can interpret about my work condition in my organization, sometimes the decision is not firm .. Not exactly clear... and not consistent ...sometimes I ask myself what the management wants anymore ... what are they looking for. Sometimes management is given a dateline job that is not shared out in advance ... all of the tasks is suddenly.... One of many examples such as I get many ad hoc duties... Here I am sometimes confused about the workload of job assignments that have no clear description..(PJR-9)*

Unclear task guideline. This ambiguity is related to the process how to get things done, and the way to achieve the organizational goal [25];[32]. Then that condition creates a behavioral ambiguity that related to how the focal person expected to act in various situations, what the focal person's behaviors will lead to the needed or desired outcomes. The following is some of the experiences expressed by academic staff in an interview session:

> *It should be in my public relation bureau have three or four staffs to handle the job, but in fact it is just my own self…. I have to do several jobs, like from making a concept until type the letters…. undertake it to the public…. Invite reporters ... give an entertaining session to them...I do it by myself… there is no clear guideline how to perform the job.* (JAPR-4)

> *Role ambiguity was associated with… there is no guideline before, meaning .... we do not have any Guidelines ..   So we have to prepare for our own ... so in   terms   of ambiguity there must exist .... Because we do not have anybody to refer ... so because I appointed as coordinator so I   wrote   the   syllabus.. and we must make another guide too ..So I must get some ideas from another university or other lecturer.* (PAPR-2)

Role Conflict

Role conflict is a situation when a person plays and gives more than one role at the same time [31];[33]. Then this situation will clash each other. One theme that emerges is that there was multiple role conflict experienced by academic staff. Sometime academic staff did not only work as a teacher but at the same time became a head of the program or having a structural position in the university. Both roles would demand time and energy, this condition creates and causes role conflict among academic staffs.

Multiple role conflict occurred when one person has more than one job that structurally has different responsibility and task. Or person plays two or more roles which are in conflict each other [34]. Many academic staffs involved in a structural position at their university, for example became a member of accreditation team, became a member of the university project / department or became head of the program.

One respondent said that he sometimes felt overwhelmed because of structural job that conflicted with lecturer job. He said sometimes he had to work out of town until a few days. This situation made him finally replace the class. Sometimes the replacing of the class conducted at night; even he had to give a class on a holiday. He said he had been given the overload structural job, that these duties caused he neglected several lecturer's main duties such as teaching or writing a paper. The administrative tasks frequently became the sources of role conflict among academic staff in their daily work setting.

Multiple role conflict. Multiple role conflict occurred when one person has more than one job that structurally has different responsibility and task. Or person plays two or more roles, which are in conflict with each other [34]. Many academic staffs were involved in a structured job at their university, for example, became a member of an accreditation team, or become the head of a program. This structural job forced them to perform administrative tasks related to their position as a member of accreditation team. The administrative tasks that they perform were very much different from their main duties as academic staff which only focuses on teaching, researching, and giving consultation to students. Frequently, the administrative tasks often caused their main duty as a lecturer neglected (teaching, research, writing paper), because they had more to give priority to administrative tasks, such as making accreditation reports, filling out accreditation forms, writing the requirements in the accreditation form, etc. The following is some of the experiences associated with the multiple role conflict from the interviews:

> *In terms of academic achievement and intellectual work ... because the overload of structural job, … so for doing a research project was abandoned and marginalized… because to do a research it needs a full concentration ... needs ideas…. all of it takes a time …. And to make a research proposal too.... But the time is lost in vain because of structural job... just like that .. So I feel the responsibility as academic staff is abandoned.* (JAPR-4)

> *Then the last issue which makes me nervous that .... when I am now burdened with the structural job… and structural assignments, this actually hindered my primary duty as a teacher.... When I have a target to give a class... I have to work out of town ...sometimes until a few days ... finally I have to replace the class ... sometimes until night ... sometimes I have to teach in the holiday ... .Actually I do not feel comfortable as well and more, when I am given to overload structural job…. than my teaching class was abandoned…. and inappropriately done.* (JAPR-4)

> *Relation with the structural assignments I felt sometimes there is such a conflict ... conflict of duties,… which should be solved beforehand.. As if every task is urgent to be resolved in advance ... so that, sometimes all these tasks cannot be done because it confused me. When I came into the office, and will do what, I always get confused.... If I do all these tasks, of course it cannot be done... and I felt an overloading feeling.* (JSR-8)

> *At that time I confused how to manage my time ... the hours I spent was not counted ... then I continued to do everything that I can do .... When it comes to taking care my child, I do that… even while simultaneously correcting my student work ... so if I have few times then I do everything that I can do.* (JAPR-2)

Work-Family Conflict

Work-family conflict (WFC) has been commonly defined as a form of internal conflict in which the role pressures of work and family are mutually incompatible in some respect [33];[35]. Individuals basically have a certain, limited amount of energy. When involved in multiple roles, these roles tend to drain them and cause stress or interrole conflict [36].

Conflicts between family and work life can arise, because the increasing of demands and expectation within work and family domains. Besides the demands and expectation between work and family is not always compatible in nature. Work and family roles are the most important thing in the life course of adult. There are two types of conflict between work and family, and the relationship between work and family conflict is bidirectional in nature; there is work interfering with family (WIF) and family interfering with work (FIW) [37]. WIF occurs when the demands and obligations of the work role are deleterious to family life. FIW describes the conflict arising from family obligations that disturb one's work [36]. Several academic staffs confirmed in an interview session that they have experienced work-family conflict recently.

One respondent said that she often brought the work at home in order to finish it on time. This led to several house works abandoned. These conditions sometime led to her husband's complaint, because her husband evaluated that she seemed unable properly manage the time between housework and office work.

Even she felt that the number of office jobs caused her less paying of attention to the development of her children. The conflict between office works with family obligations sometimes made her feel guilty, especially to their husband and children. The following is some comments from academic staff in an interview session:

> *Well at that time, I often took my office work at home… although that time I had a baby ... which makes me often stressed that for,..because I have a baby to take care ... and I gave my baby exclusive breastfeeding ... but still then I have to teach in class and became a program head in my faculty... well at that time I often brought my office work at home .... then I done my work at home ... and even then it turned out later that I must give a consultation for students at home too,… and then my husband complained about it, then finally I stopped it... because I must give my time for teaching my children too,…when I bring my office work at home…my time to teach my children reduced as well ... I finally stopped to take my office work and give consultation for students at home. (JAPR-2)*

> *Sometimes I was often protested by my family ...when I have an interview with the client ...maybe in my university...because we entered the class should be fourteen times and then when the holiday, I also must keep teaching to reach that target.... Sometimes my family cannot receive it, because it is weird that I must have a class on holiday... maybe my kids and my husband did not accept it. (JSR-7)*

Inadequate Role Occupancy

Role occupancy is defined as a person occupying a position; it entails behavior patterns varying with the position [25];[32]. Role strain will occur, when complex task demands and various role expectations cause the academic staff's difficulties in satisfying their role occupancy.

Complex role demands. Role demand is one of the factors causing stress. According to Robbins (2003) and Hardy and Conway (1988), role demand appears when a person is required to perform various duties and desires related to a role set [25];[32]. Demands bring pressure to bear on individual role occupancy [32]. The academic staffs on the study felt that the characteristics of today's university students not only increase the complexity of role demand but also challenge their role occupancy.

The academic staffs felt that many students were not prepared to a become university students with several role expectations that they must meet. They evaluate that many students conducted inappropriate behavior, showed bad attitude and not having enough motivation to study in a university such as required. These student conditions made more demands to academic staffs in facilitating, directing and teaching them in order to achieve satisfactory academic performance and grade. Following are the comments from the interviewees:

> *Yes,..what make a stressful situation is student attitudes... we have made the rules....I learn as much as possible to make the lecture interesting....but I do not know why students sometimes are less responsive during lectures... less serious …I want an interaction right there.... I was happy when in the lecture given cases, but when I gave certain cases the class already jammed... it makes me nervous…the condition class like that ....Finally.... problem based learning system did not happen effectively….I do not know why students have a lack of responsiveness... it made me stress and create the fundamental pressure to me. (JAPR-4)*

> *The student's attitude also creates stress for me.. Because the type and personality of students are different… sometimes in the first meeting, we have created learning contract about a delayed, presence, tasks and so on ... including an assignments deadline ... but from all the students who come the class... actually just half of them fulfilled the task perfectly in accordance with prescribed ... sometimes when the deadline is finished, they would ask for time extension to collect the task. (JSR-5)*

> *When I am teaching, the student does not seem to respond positively …. they make crowded… noisy…. laughing .. Do not listen .... It also sometimes makes me stress .... What I have to do... it meant that I thought at that time to create a new strategy to handle that situation... usually if I cannot handle it... so I just take what I want .... And if students do not want to take attention, it's up to them ... I think sometimes the situation cannot be controlled, whatever the reason ... then I felt a certain pressure. (JSR-8)*

It has been several times ... last semester ... this semester.. .. It seems is not very comfortable for, and sometimes it made me a little emotional in class ... but then I reprimand the student .. I have felt taking the time .. I have done seriously all of my heart wants to share the knowledge but their attitudes are not responsive .. their chats each other... .. or playing hand phone .. lack of attention to lecture .. when I asked them, they are suddenly quiet ... but when I give a question, they cannot answer it...this condition made me feel uncomfortable ... I already took time for them .. but they are not seriously responses my class .. so that it sometimes made me stress rather high. (JSR-6)

Various unsatisfactory role expectations. Role expectation is defined as how a person's attitude, behavior, and cognition in the role occupancy must be consistent with others' anticipations [25]. During the organizational change, performance expectations are continuously increased. The academic staffs tried to satisfy varied role expectations in their teaching. They could not catch up with these unclear role expectations. The following are various expectations of academic staffs:

There is a negative argument from a student that said ... how the faculty gives a lecturer who cannot understand and teach the tools .... it does not mean that I do not know ... because all those tools are new, and the tool is different with the tool that I ever learned several years ago…. so there Were negative arguments from a student when I taught last semester. (PJR-10).

Increasing Work Demands

Work demand is the pressure on a person to function in his or her job [25]. In order to become a more competitive, university and their staffs often go through a period of changes. Therefore, unexpected tasks and heavy workloads challenge these academic staff's competencies as well as work-related stress.

Unexpected task demands. Robbins (2003) explained that when people occupy a position, they are required to enforce the tasks related to the job [25]. For the academic staffs, these tasks were unexpectedly and too difficult for academic staffs prepare themselves. The several unexpected tasks that sometime created a burden are such as implementation of the new policy, given a new role in a new project, or must make new module because of curriculum change. The following is some of the experiences associated with the unexpected task demands from the interviews:

Unexpectedly when I was appointed last year as head of department, there are big changes in management system at my university and required to implement standard operation procedure (SOP)... ... in order to obtain ISO certification..then to focus in it I need extra attention, because each month there are internal quality audits,... so far we have performed three times internal quality assessment by external auditors ... there are times when I must make new SOP, it cause me confused and then many tasks need to be finished, and also with preparations for accreditation,…then there is also a PHKI program that we have to make a proposal ... in fact, the structural job actually made me stress .... These additional duties burden me. (JSR-5)

If in bachelor degree.... Because the subject frequently changes, cause of the change of curriculum.... May be with the limited time, I must prepare to teach a new subject... this situation frequently made me stress. (JSR-7).

Heavy workload. Hardy and Conway (1988) defined workload in terms of quantitative and qualitative loads that role expectations and role demands may exceed one's capability and resources [32]. Too heavy a workload caused these academic staffs to have difficulty in carrying out their role obligations and role demands within a limited time frame. Work overload represents the weight of the hours, the sacrifice of time, and the sense of frustration with the inability to complete tasks in the time given. Gmelch et al. (1992) cited the time, pace, and pressure as major factors contributing to stress and burnout [38]. Several workloads that make burden and strain for academic staff such as heavy teaching loads, many administrative tasks, giving consultation for student, and task in some university project. The commentaries from the interviews are as follows:

Then I should take the time to the office.... To give consultation and guidance for students between my master class and structural work.... And that time my daily activities was just in college, take care my children ... continue to do my office work .... It was my daily life ... and I worked until the night … and I undergo to finish my master coursework too. (JAPR-2)

The peak of a crowded situation was when I have had three children, then served as head of a thesis affairs unit, then became a head of psychological services center, after that… I became a deputy dean and should have to undergo my master too and as a mother of three children... that was where the peak of a crowded situation of my job ... and that time I began to feel a hard career path…. because there is no more time to do all my duties.... And my thesis too, which delayed. (JAPR-2)

I personally evaluate... that the job stress which I feel is the heavy teaching load .. For instance I have to teach on the bachelor degree ...and also the master degree… and because of the master degree there is a professional psychologist program, that its more burden me... because I teach the psychodiagnostic subject.... And automatically besides teaching in the classroom… (JSR-5)

I also have corrected a lot of practicum work ... spend some time outside of class also for consultation with students .... So it may load three times compared with the lecturer who teach in a master of science program... so in addition to teaching, correcting, I also have to spend time for consultation With students. (JSR-7)

Deficient Role Preparedness

Sufficient role preparedness helps to reduce role obsolescence and increase role competency [25]. Role stress will increase when complex work-related demands and role expectations become greater than individual competency and performance [32]. Therefore, an academic staff's lack of role transition and insufficient role credibility leads to work-related stress and difficulty to become a professional academic staff.

Lack of transferring role. When people engage in new role occupancy, they need a period to transfer their role from old to new status [32]. Hardy and Conway said that role transition is the process of role socialization related to learning and developing a new role behavior. Role strain inevitably occurs. If the role can be successful, role strain will gradually be reduced. These academic staff felt role incompetence and incongruity for new role occupancy because of they were unprepared for how to teach, publishes a paper and facilitated the student. The following are some of the experiences associated with the lack of transferring the role from interviews:

"Because last semester, I have to give a new course, so I had to learn again.. I must browse the lecture note ... and it takes the time to learn more... for the new course... it is difficult for me." (JSR-6)

"Become a lecturer is my choice indeed.... But it is not accordance with my image before, when I become a lecturer..... To my knowledge, become a lecturer just only teaching.... scoring..... examining the final assignment ... but become a lecture I have to make a research project... have to take a master or doctoral degree... all I found is beyond my forecast." (PJR-10)

Insufficient role credibility. Ramage (2004) said that role credibility relates to adequate competency to be effective. Failure to maintain role credibility has caused the academic staffs in this study difficulty in facilitating the learning needs of student and satisfying their role occupancy. The interviewees commented as follows:

"if I did not prepare for the upcoming subject module .... like it preparation was apparently not enough ... that sometimes make me confused and stressed, and when I am not ready, it seems like I am unmotivated to teach student at that time." (JSR-8).

Insufficient Role Support

Role occupancy is relying on various types of social support to accomplish work tasks. According to Robbins (2003), role support is the process of interaction related to making adjustments in role occupancy [25]. Insufficient role support from others can make academic staffs frustrated in their work.

Lack of support from peers. Support from colleagues is most important for the role occupancy of academic staff [25];[39]. The lack of support from colleagues creates strain situation and increase interpersonal conflict between them. Beside that, the lack of peer support will create a problem in teamwork projects such as neglected some project task, or delays in work completion. The academic staffs unfortunately experienced some negative reactions from their peers as indicated the following comments:

"Stress which always I faced that time is because of my colleague's attitude... that time when I struggle to get promoted …. I feel.
like my colleagues who have been getting a promotion first, neglecting me ... not care about me….because that time when I was struggling.
to get a lecturer status, my working status was unstable and only
temporary…and they are who have achieved a permanent status
first…what I saw is they more focused on their own interest…their own thing ...they did not give me more support to achieve the level which I desired." (PSR-6)

"The difference in work speed and styles among personnel sometime made me stress... for example, I sometimes wish …. when I ask my colleagues to complete a task, but it was not immediately fulfilled in accordance with the deadline. It makes me uncomfortable so ... when there are friends who cannot complete a task according to a deadline … yes it made me angry.... Because of the completion of the job .. Especially associated with the application of teaching SOP and it's completion involves other people not my own… besides the task demands from my superior some time with a very tight deadline and should be fulfilled immediately,….. while on the other hand my colleagues cannot complete it as quickly as possible...it burdens me a lot as head of the program.". (JSR-5)

Lack of facility from the organization. Learning and teaching facility is an important factor for students' success. These facilities will give more learning opportunity for students to explore the subject, and understand it appropriately.

Teaching facilities such as book, LCD, computers, internet and comfortable classroom will facilitate the students to understand the materials presented by a lecturer. Through adequate learning facilities, student will be able to perform various exercises and assignments given by lecturers. Nevertheless, lack of teaching facilities will be burdened role occupancy of the academic staffs because they cannot achieve the obligation of their role as a lecturer, and performing their role in the more adequate level. The following is some comments given by the academic staff that showed the existence of lack of facility support:

"During the lecture, there are distinguished space constraints .. An example when I taught in the ITC room... there is no air conditioner and the temperature is hot, and many students complained it ... although there are ventilations but because the class at level four.. so the temperature is hot ... and the fan is not sufficient to eliminate the heat." (JSR-5).

I have ever experienced when teaching facilities damaged .... The LCD has broken… I did not know what was the problem… the laptop or the wires.. After 15 minutes went… then the problem did not resolve yet. (PAPR-3).

Another thing that makes me stress is sometimes teaching facilities are often damaged. This, of course, hinders the learning process with students, the time is so delayed, that it should be at 9 o clock we have started the class, then the class was delayed in 30 minutes" (JJR-9).

Secondly, when I want to teach, then there is an equipment which is not complete ...likely to forget to bring transference OHP ... do not take notes at all ... I forgot it exactly.. it makes me stress too.... it seems better I do not teach at all .... I feel stress ... or LCD equipment is damaged ... it also creates stress ... it means then if I will teach the student, what will I teach?... and how?. (JSR-8).

Result of Research Question 2. What responses of work related stress shows by university academic staff?

Responses of Stress
Gibson et al. (2006) divided the responses of job stress into four main effects namely: First, behavioral responses included as lack of job satisfaction, under performance, increasing absenteeism, increasing turnover, accidents in the workplace, and substance abuse cases. Second, emotional responses such as apathy, frustration, anger in, anxiety, trauma, annoyed, uneasiness, sadness, helplessness and fear. Third, cognitive responses such as lack of concentration, poor decision making, forgetfulness, and lack of creativity. Fourth, physiological responses such as increased blood pressure, high cholesterol, vulnerable to

coronary heart disease, increasing the secretion of stress hormones in the body like adrenaline, noradrenaline, thyroxine, and cortisol [39].

Behavioral responses. Some respondents showed behavior symptoms due to a stressful work situation such as smoke on work setting, or go out during office hours. In the meantime, some respondents indicated a decrease job satisfaction, and motivation. This fact was indicated by the following statement of some respondents:

First, I cannot concentrate on teaching because of a load stressors I faced…. I am not powerful then…. (JAPR-4)

I usually take a break and smoking in someplace to reduce my mind from distress issue…. (PJR-11).

If I am too stressed …. Sometimes I experience fewer good moods. Then I prefer quiet … not happy as usual...so it meant when I come home, I am still more to think about a problem in my job ... which one should not.. (PSR-5)

When I experience stress ... my appetite is often affected by stress ... not just my appetite but also decreased my sexual desire ... because I am too focused and thinking in my work assignments and other.. (PSR-8)

Emotional responses. When academic staffs experienced a stressful work situation, they later showed increasing emotional distress such as anger, frustration, and disappointment. While a negative mood that they felt later created tension and distress, and this situation causes decreasing job motivation and job satisfaction. This phenomenon is shown by some respondent's statements below:

Emotional experience that I felt was a guilty feeling, frequently angry with my child,… I feel too sensitive to my husband… I feel my husband not understand my condition…. that is my emotion…. (JAPR-2).

All of stressful workload made me distress….. and anxiety…. and sometime feel uncomfortable with many structural job…. sometimes… it contradictory with my conscience… (JAPR-4).

Emotionally, sometimes I am easily angered and become sensitive … when I hear something that makes me annoyed…. but when my anger is not directly expressed… so when I come home,… I easily become to grumble angrily…. (JSR-5).

Cognitive responses. State of stress not only affects person's emotion and behavior aspects, but also can reduce the person's cognitive functioning level. Some respondents had negative cognitive responses that induced by a stressful work situation such as forgetfulness, confusion, or concentration difficulty. This fact is indicated by the following statement of some respondents:

Because of the additional structural job, I was not able to concentrate fully on my main duties as academic staff…. (JAPR-4)

Which I feel now is that my concentration is easy to be distracted, and not full concentration.. Then sometime when someone asked something to me then I cannot give a quick response…. sometime I hear their voice and question, but it is not directly connected to my brain in order to give a quick response…. Sometime my concentration completely distracted.. (JSR-5).
Such as I am confused about what will I want to do now …. confused ... although there are targeting to be achieved,… for example, I have to publish two journals in this year… but sometimes I am still confused to find a momentum,… how to get started… I am still confused… (PJR-9).

Physiologic responses. Some respondents stated that they also experienced some physiological distress such as feel tired, lethargic and fatigue. Sometimes they also felt the muscle tension in the neck or stomach, and several respondents stated that they sometimes had sleeping disturbances. This physiological distress occurred when they were in a stressful work situation. Several statements from respondents below show the existence of physiological symptoms due to job stress.

I feel tired… and fatigue handled structural and administrative job…. (JAPR-4)

Usually in a condition of severe stress I cannot sleep well, and my sleep quality decrease…sometime I get an insomnia like symptom….(JSR-7)

Usually if I was under pressure ... I became difficult to get sleep .... Effect of stress is at that time I was pregnant.... So when I was pregnant I got a contraction earlier.... Internally I got stressed .... I got it when I was pregnant with five months ... That time, because of a contraction, I always go back to a hospital ...(PAPR-3).

Result of Research Question 3. What reason lead academic staff to continue choosing to work as an academic staff after encounters unforgettable stressful situations?

Reasons to Continue as Academic Staff

Being an academic staff for some people is a choice of life. The stronger the individual's dream and aspiration to be academic staff, the stronger the commitment of individuals to remain in the profession, despite   many challenges and problems that caused the stress. Some respondents said that being a lecturer was the choice of his life, another said that teaching was noble work, could share knowledge with others, love the profession as a lecturer, and feel happy to teach and discuss with students. All these reasons are indicated by some respondents on the following statement:

Became a lecturer I have a goal and not only just a career, actually, I also have my own goal for my own personal development, and also for students, I mean this. I would like to improve the morals of students, not just their knowledge, that reason makes me still survive as a lecturer ... (JAPR-2).

I like the profession of lecturer, because of the work time is not rigid, but more flexible… I think it fit for my career.. Although yes there are few things in this job that can cause stress… besides teaching is sharing a knowledge and according to my religion is rewarding.. so for me teaching is also a worship to Allah SWT… (JAPR-3).

Actually become a lecturer is the only goal of mine… I feel very grateful, although not directly… but step by step over time my prayer is fulfilled…. because I always want to become lecturer…. I believe if I did not have any money, but I have a useful knowledge… I imagine how wonderful if we could share knowledge with other people from not knowing to become know…. (JSR-6).

I like teaching… and I like knowledge sharing… So I choose this profession….. I very like with education and teaching atmosphere …. so until now I feel fit and comfortable to become an academic staff profession … ...(PSR-5)

As a lecturer I point of experience sharing … and from work time as a lecturer, I can manage the work time… more time…. more flexible and certain …. And I can give more attention to my family…. (PJR-9).

Result of Research Question 4. How academic staff copes with job related stress that they face in everyday work setting?

Pattern of Coping

Coping can be defined as cognitive and behavioral efforts to handle, manage, reduce or tolerate those demands from transactions of individual and environmental sources that tax or exceed a person's resources [40];[41]. Then, coping is part of the transaction between the person and the environment where that transaction is appraised as stressful [42]. Several coping patterns were used by academic staff when facing stressful situations in a work setting. Based on an interview with respondent, it was found five coping patterns that were always used when facing with a job related stressful situation, namely problem focused coping, emotion focused coping, seeking social support, using religious coping, and making meaning [43].

Problem focused coping. Problem focused coping is a type of coping that directly focuses on solving a problem. When an academic staff faces a stressful situation, he or she tried to find alternative solutions to reduce or eliminate these stressful situations. Through implementing the best solution, it was

expected that stressful work situation could be eliminated. In other words, this coping encouraged a person directly to solve the current problem that he/she faced. The following are some comments give by the academic staff that showed the using of problem focused coping:

> *To reduce the stressful workload, I created a rigid schedule, although as a result I felt physically tired to follow strictly the schedule that I created it…. (JAPR-2)*

> *The way I completed my workload is I do my task one by one at a time, for example, if there is student consultation, I can cancel it next week, so basically, I manage my task… if it can be postponed, I postpone it and I do more urgent task…. (JSR-7).*

> *To overcome it … usually I do based on priority, what task is first to submit with uses time as maximal as possible …. I cannot finish a task partially and delayed for tomorrow, if I work like it so it can affect me and make an overload job…..usually If there is a meeting, then I run to class to give an assignment that according to the topic…. because if… I postpone and postpone at the job again I don't know how to handle the job effectively next time…. (PSR-7).*

Emotion focused coping. Emotion focused coping is more oriented on how to reduce the emotional tension that one feels when he/she is in a stressful situation. He or she did not directly address the problem at hand, but more focused on ease his emotions that caused by a problem. Several coping subtypes in which academic staff used among others, using relaxation techniques, exercise or recreational activities than can relieve emotional tension. The interviewees commented as follows:

Religious coping. This type of coping refers to the use of religious activity when someone is facing a stressful situation. According to some experts, religious coping is a type of coping that has combination emotion-oriented coping and problem-oriented as well. On an emotion-oriented person used religious activities to calm the mind and feelings, such as through prayer to God in order to God gives a strength or patients in facing a problem. Through prayer also person hope God gives him a clue or a ways to find the best solution in order to solve the problem at hand. The following are some comments given by academic staff showing the use of religious coping:

> *The effort that is conducted in a stressful situation, I just istigfar.. Istigfar…. prayer and sholat… well if special efforts to handle the stress, it seems that I do not do that…. (JSR-5)*

> *I usually pray tahajud….I prayer to Allah after sholat…I hope I can perform to the best of my work with…and do not disturb my duty as a mother in the family…it is my hope always in every prayer, I do…..(JSR-7)*

> *I always trust in Allah … because I'm sure Allah would help me... that is why I believe no matter how the problem I am facing. Allah would help me … ..as long as I have not been quiet. I try to off it and I am rarely sharing my problem to anyone…(PSR-6).*

Seeking social support. This type of coping is focused on finding social support, in which person tries to find a friend or significant others to discuss, put feelings and thoughts, to share and disclose his grief, sorrow or anxiety, ask for advice and assistance, as well as emotional support from others. Support seeking may include asking for advice, concrete aid, emotional support, or justification for one's perceptions and/or actions (Thoits, 1986). Seeking social support involves elements of both problems focused and emotion focused coping. Several comments discussed by the respondent are as follows:

> *Then I communicate it with my husband, and I thought that time need to be intensified again, and I often complain about the workload to my husband. Alhamdullilah, my husband was willing to listen, because we work as a lecturer he can understand that structural job is time-consuming… then because of the understanding from my husband, then my guilt was slightly reduced….. (JAPR-2).*

> *If the job stress associated with the course module…. for example if I am not clear enough,…I can ask friends to help me….(JAPR-3).*

> *Sometime if I have a difficult problem, I usually discuss with my coworkers… ask for feedback…. it also helps me to understand the existing problems… (PSR-5).*

Making meaning. This type of coping is more focused on changing individual perspectives on the problem at hand. The person tries to seek wisdom behind the problem, find a positive meaning behind the problem and always think positively about the matter [43]. Some academic staff used this method in conjunction with other coping types when facing with a stressful work situation. The following are some of the statements and experiences presented by the respondents:

> *About the burden of work…. I I think yes, as I said earlier… more often we   experience it… the more experience we deal with these stressful situations… If the stressor is beyond my ability… yes I rest and relax,… chill it out… if I was not able to deal with it…. yes… why do I have to stress…. (JPR-1).*

4.   CONCLUSION

Eleven academicians from Pahang, Malaysia and eleven academicians from Jogjakarta have been interviewed. After transcribing the interview data, the researcher analyzed it based on categories, themes, and coding. Four categories emerge and become the phenomenon that was experienced by academician in both countries. The finding confirmed that job stress is still a problem among academician in daily working activity. In daily work activity, they sometimes experience with the situation that create and stimulate a stress reaction. Based on four categories, the conclusion of qualitative results is as follows:

The situations that cause work related stress to university academic staff have been identified. Seven categories stressors were found; (1) inadequate role occupancy, (2) increasing work demands, (3) deficient role preparedness, (4) insufficient role support, (5) role ambiguity, (6) role conflict and (7) work-family conflict. There were four responses of stress that was showed by university academic staffs. Four stress responses that experienced by academic staff are (1) behavioral responses, (2) emotional responses, (3) cognitive responses, and (4) physiological responses.

The reason that lead respondents still continue work as academic staff are (1) respondents said that being a lecturer was the choice of his/her life, (2) another said that teaching was noble work, (3) could share knowledge with others/students, (4) love the profession as a lecturer, and (5) feel happy to teach and discuss with students. The coping strategy that always used by academic staffs to cope with job related stress that they face in daily work setting are five coping strategy patterns, namely: (1) problem focused coping, (2) emotion focused coping, (3) seeking social support, (4) using religious coping, and (5) making meaning.

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