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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING STRESS OF THAI PRIVATE UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were: 1) to study organizational factors of Thai private university personnel; 2) to study the level of stress of Thai private university personnel; 3) to find a relationship between organizational factors and stress of Thai private university personnel; and 4) to analyze organizational factors affecting stress of Thai private university personnel. The samples used in this study were 380 employees working in Thai private universities located in Bangkok. The research findings showed that organizational factors, in total, were perceived at high level. In particular, time management had the highest mean value, followed by work uncertainty, work load, co-worker relationship, and work condition. Stress of Thai private university personnel, in total, was perceived at high level. In particular, mental stress had the highest mean value, followed by physical stress and behavioral stress. Organizational factors were positively related to stress of Thai private university personnel at the statistical significance of 0.01 level, which workload had the highest relationship with stress of Thai private university personnel. Organizational factors had an effect on stress of Thai private university personnel at statistical significance of the .01 level. The organizational factors which had the highest effect on stress of Thai private university personnel were work uncertainty, followed by time management, workload, work condition, and co-worker relationship. The forecasting equation from the results of Multiple Regression Analysis can describe the effect of organizational factors on stress of Thai private university personnel at 74.5 percent (Adjust $R^2 = .745$), whereas the rest 25.5 percent was the results of other variables which were not studied in this research.

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Introduction:-

At the present, Thai private university personnel are facing the same stress as faced by many employees of other organizations. The nature of Thai universities tends to create a stressful environment to employees more than before. When the Thai universities are struggling for economic survival, employees are forced to work hard and some may be unemployed due the economic recession caused by the COVID-19. Therefore, Thai university employees are living in a competitive age that can cause stress anytime. Employees with a higher percentage of stress causing from workload, work condition, work uncertainty, finance, social conflict and family problems may not be satisfied with their job. Therefore, they may not be happy to work in their universities. Thai private university personnel who are

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stressful may feel frustrated and burned out when they are facing problems that can lead to create stress. This may leave a negative impact to the organization itself. Stress destroys the morale, good feeling, intention, willingness and inspiration of employees to work in the organization. Channuwong et al. (2018) and Robson (2021) found that in the current situation of the world, human beings are impressed and satisfied with the innovation of new technologies. Some are impressed with the convenience in transportation, and communication. Some are impressed with satisfactory facilities like luxurious houses, car, telephone, computers, and many other electronic devices. It is obvious that technological growth and development can provide human beings with physical facilitations, but is not a main factor that can improve and create inner happiness into human life. Human beings are full of many mental sufferings caused from greed, anger, revenge, pressure, stress, worry and anxiety. Thus, it can be concluded that technological sophistication is not the main factor that can improve the ability of people to live satisfying, self-sufficient, healthy, peaceful, and happy lives. People still need to seek for more happiness and peace of their inner world. Al-Aameri (2003) and Channuwong (2012) found stress is a pressure, worry and anxiety caused by an accumulation of problems in human life. The factors causing stress are innumerable since every person may react differently in the same stress conditions. Extreme stress situations for one individual may prove to be mild and simple for another, and may not qualify as stress symptoms for some people. Many researches revealed that stress can be real and perceived. However, human brain reacts the same way to both causes of stress by releasing stress hormone, which is equal to the degree of stress felt. The brain does not differentiate between the real and imagined stress. Stress may occur from one's imagination, worry and anxiety even though the actual situations may not really occur. A significant amount of stress symptoms can be avoided and also aroused by the way one reacts to the stressors.

Sometimes, stress is created by what we think, and the way we react to the situation rather than by what has actually happened. Therefore, human beings need to learn how to deal with imagined and real stress because both of them can create mental and physical problems in the same level. Davis et al. (2005) and Hayman (2003) mentioned that one of the areas that most people can benefit from learning is how to handle and manage stress. Leaders and employees can gain benefits by learning how to manage their time and deal with stress. This useful tool could not only benefit the leaders and employees, but also the company could benefit from it since there will be less sick days, more productive working days, happier moods, and other side benefits.

The researchers consider that organizational factors consisting of time management, work load, work condition, work uncertainty, and co-worker relationship may have an effect on stress of Thai private university personnel. Therefore, the researchers are interested in conducting this study.

Literature Survey

As we live in the age of competition, everything is in rush. We need to accomplish the tasks within a limited time; effective time management plays a key role in completing any duties. Onuka et al. (2008) defined time management as the process whereby people spend their time to perform any activity. It is obvious that if time management is ineffective, the possibility of reaching one's goals is remote, and the rate of poor performance by those who did not manage their time effectively would be very high. Everybody is equally endowed in terms of time. Everyone has 24 hours to use, which can neither be reduced nor added to. Though time management is very precious and very scarce resource, it is a resource that every human has equal access to, but may be used either it effectively or ineffectively.

Several studies revealed that workload and time constraints are the factors causing stress. Davis et al. (2005) and Wilkes et al. (1998) found that workload and time constraints were significant contributors to work stress among community nurses. Work stress can be defined as reluctance to come to work and a feeling of constant pressure accompanied by the general physiological, psychological, and behavioral stress symptoms. Al-Aameri (2003) described in his study that one of the six factors of occupational stress is pressure originating from workload. Al-Aameri also found that low levels of job satisfaction are associated with high levels of work stress, and work stress leads to job dissatisfaction. Job stress is an indicator of job dissatisfaction and inclination to leave the organization.

Work condition is defined as the working environment and aspects of terms and conditions of job employment of employees. Working condition usually cover broad aspects of job employment such as work activities, training, skills, working time, work-life balance, payment and well-being of employees (International Labor Organization, 2022; Bashir et al., 2020). Some employees are worried about work condition and are reluctant to work if the terms and conditions of their employment do not meet with their expectations. They expect to receive fair and just remuneration in exchange of their work and effort. Organization should make a well balance between employee

performance and compensation given to them. Employees will be stressful, leave the organization and seek for other jobs if they found that there is an imbalance between their work and compensation (Dhammahansakul, 2020, Pollard, 2001).

Work uncertainty is a perception of employees about the degree of uncertainty related to job characteristics (Leach et al., 2013). Work uncertainty is the occurrence of unplanned events which interrupt the regular work flow and work schedule, and make it difficult to predict the future of the work. Work uncertainty may occur from internal and external factors. Internal factors can cause work uncertainty when employees have little information to perform their tasks and when there are some changes to their work schedule or even their job security. External factors refer to external environments such as changes within the organization caused by economic situations and social changes (Avgoustaki, 2016; Tang et al., 2020). Although work uncertainty is a constant event in the workplace, most employees feel that it is hard to manage because they really don't know what is going to happen. Therefore, work uncertainty can affect employees' mental health and eventually lead to create mental stress. Pollard (2001) found that work uncertainty was associated with depression and stress. Work uncertainty deteriorates employees' mental health because they cannot know about their future in the organization and role expectations. In this regard, Robson (2021) confirmed that due to fear of unknown, employees try to avoid work uncertainty because when it occurs, it is hard to prepare for potential risk.

People have different perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors based on the ways they are educated and raised; working with people requires appropriate relationship and interaction. If people cannot adjust themselves and cannot accept different attitudes and behaviors when working together, problems will occur and lead to conflict. Makin et al. (1996) found that having to work with other people is one of the most stressful aspects in the organization. This is also true of working relationship, which workers are required to have significant interaction with other people, whether colleagues, bosses or subordinates. These relationships can be a major source of stress.

Fletcher and Payne (1980) identified that a lack of satisfaction can be a source of stress, whereas high satisfaction on job can reduce job stress. This study also revealed that job stress and job satisfaction are interrelated. Hayman (2003) found that the causes of stress at work can be considered based on the following: 1. Demands (including such issues such as workload, work patterns, work condition, and working environment); 2. Control (freedom at work, how much power the person has in the way they do their work); 3. Support (including encouragement, sponsorship, support and resource provided by organization, line management and colleagues); 4. Relationship at work (which may include promoting positive working practices to avoid conflict or co-worker problem, and dealing with unacceptable behavior); 5. Role (which includes responsibility and action to the extent whether people understand their role within the organization and whether organization ensures that the person does not have role conflict); 6. Change (how organization change is managed and communicated in the organization); and 7. culture (the way in which organization demonstrates management commitment and have procedures which are fair and open; this may include the ways people act and practice in the organization).

Dunham (1992) defined stress as a process of behavioral, emotional, mental, and physical reactions caused by prolonged, increasing or new pressures that are significantly greater than the availability of coping strategies. The situations and pressures causing stress are called "stressors". Usually people think that stressors are negative, such as an argument and conflict, an exhausting work schedule or a rocky relationship. Smith (1989) found that anything that puts high demands on you or forces you to adjust could be stressful. This includes positive events such as buying a house, going to college, getting married, or receiving a promotion. What causes stress is very much dependent on how one perceives it. Something that one feels stressful may not faze someone else; they may even enjoy it. For example, one's morning commute may make him or her anxious and tense because he or she may worry that traffic will make him or her late. However, others may find the relaxing on trip because they allow more than enough time and enjoy listening to music while they drive.

Kolbasuk (2000) described that the impact of stress is measurable. From an individual perspective, scientists can measure the direct effects of stress on the cardiovascular system, the immune system, the endocrine system, the muscular system, and the gastrointestinal system. Stress can lead to serious forms of health issues, such as cancer, diabetes or thyroid dysfunction. From an organizational perspective, the effects of stress can be measured against an organization's profitability. The American Institute of Stress says that stress costs U.S. businesses \$300 billion annually in lost productivity, absenteeism, accidents, employee turnover, and medical, legal, insurance fees and worker's compensation awards.

Stress may also lead to physical symptoms such as headaches, neck pain, backaches, dizziness, chest pain, heart palpitations, and intestinal problems. Again, individual differences play a role in the effects of stress. For example, stress alters the heart rhythms and poses a risk for serious arrhythmias in people with heart rhythm disturbances. In addition, in women, chronic stress may reduce estrogen levels, which are important for cardiac health (Hayman, 2003). Peterson (2003) pointed out that stress is not something we can eliminate but is something we can learn to deal with and prevent. Stress can attack the hearing, hair, brain, digestive track, muscles, skin, and lungs.

Purposes of the Research

- (1) To study perceptions of participants on organizational factors of Thai private university personnel
- (2) To study perceptions of participants on the level of stress of Thai private university personnel
- (3) To find a relationship between organizational factors and stress of Thai private university personnel
- (4) To analyze organizational factors affecting stress of Thai private university personnel

Research Hypotheses

Ha1: Organizational factors have a relationship with stress of Thai private university personnel

Ha2: Organizational factors have an effect on stress of Thai private university personnel

Methodology:-

Populations and Samples

Quantitative research method was applied to this study. The population used in this research was 20,110 employees working in the ten private universities in located in Bangkok and suburban areas. The researchers used the formula of Taro Yamane to calculate a number of the sample sizes and 390 samples were obtained.

Variables Used in this Study

The variables used in this research included independent variable and dependent variable. Independent variable comprised of (1) time management (TM), (2) work load (WL), (3) work condition (WC), (4) work uncertainty (WU), and (5) co-worker relationship (CR); and dependent variable comprised of (1) physical stress (PS), (2) mental stress (MS), and (3) behavioral stress (BS).

Research Instrument Used to Collect Data

The researchers studied concepts and theories related to organizational factors and stress from books, texts, researches, research articles and academic articles in order to develop the conceptual framework and research questionnaire. The research questionnaire was divided into three parts: Part 1 consisted of six questions with regard to demographic profile including gender, age, marital status, educational level, monthly income and work experience of participants. Part 2 consisted of 15 questions with regard to organizational factors of Thai private university personnel. Part 3 consisted of 9 questions with regard to stress of Thai private university personnel.

Content Validity and Reliability Test

The researchers had developed a research questionnaire based on the literature survey and recommendations from research specialists. The research questionnaire was checked by three research scholars in order to find a consistency between the questions and research objectives, using Item Objective Congruence Index (IOC), and the IOC value of 0.90 was obtained. The researchers had conducted a try-out of the questionnaire with 30 persons who have the same characteristics but were not the samples in this study in order to find the reliability of the research questionnaire, and reliability value of 0.91 was obtained.

Data Collection

The researchers distributed the research questionnaires to 390 samples in ten Thai private universities with 39 questionnaires per each university, using convenience sampling, during May 1, 2022 to August 30, 2022, and 380 questionnaires were returned, which can be calculated as 97.43 percent. Then, the researchers had checked the completion and rightness of the returned questionnaires before conducting statistical analysis.

Criteria Used to Interpret Data

The researchers analyzed the collected data using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for Windows (SPSS). The criteria used to interpret data are as follows: 1 = least agree, 2 = less agree, 3 = moderately agree, 4 = strongly agree, and 5 = very strongly agree. The criteria used to interpret the mean score are as follows: 1.00-1.80= lowest, 1.81-2.60 = low, 2.61-3.40 = moderate, 3.41-4.20 = high, and 4.21-5.00= highest.

Statistics Used to Analyze data

The researchers used both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to analyze data in this study. Descriptive statistic consisted of frequency, percentage, mean and stand deviation and inferential statistics consisted of Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA). Frequency and percentage were used to analyze the demographic profiles of participants. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze organizational factors and stress of Thai private university personnel. Pearson Correlation was used to analyze a relationship between organizational factors and stress of Thai private university personnel. Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to analyze organizational factors affecting stress of Thai private university personnel.

Results:-

The researchers presented the research results in the following 4 parts:

Part 1: Perceptions of Participants on Organizational Factors of Thai private university personnel

In this part, the researchers analyzed the perceptions of participants on organizational factors of Thai private university personnel, using mean and standard deviation. The research results showed that the perceptions of participants on organizational factors of Thai private university personnel, in total, were at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.48$, S.D. = .88). In particular, time management had the highest mean value ($\bar{X} = 3.56$, S.D. = .80), followed by work uncertainty ($\bar{X} = 3.55$, S.D. = .90), workload ($\bar{X} = 3.53$, S.D. = .90), co-worker relationship ($\bar{X} = 3.40$, S.D. = .91), and work condition ($\bar{X} = 3.39$, S.D. = .92) respectively (Table 1).

Table 1:- Perceptions of Participants on Organizational Factors in Total and in Particular.

Organizational factors	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation	Ranking
1. Time management (TM)	3.56	.80	High	1
2. Workload (WL)	3.53	.90	High	3
3. Work condition (WC)	3.39	.92	Moderate	5
4. Work uncertainty (WU)	3.55	.90	High	2
5. Co-worker relationship (CR)	3.40	.91	Moderate	4
Total	3.48	.88	High	

Part 2: Perceptions of Participants on Stress of Thai private university personnel

In this part, the researchers analyzed the perceptions of participants on stress of Thai private university personnel. The research results showed that the perceptions of participants on stress of Thai private university personnel, in total, were at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.42$, S.D. = .81). In particular, mental stress had the highest mean value ($\bar{X} = 3.46$, S.D. = .80), followed by physical stress ($\bar{X} = 3.42$, S.D. = .81), and behavioral stress ($\bar{X} = 3.38$, S.D. = .82) respectively (Table 2).

Table 2:- Perceptions of Participant on Stress of Thai private university personnel in Total and in Particular.

Stress	\bar{x}	S.D.	Interpretation	Ranking
1. Physical stress (PS)	3.42	.81	High	2
2. Mental stress (MS)	3.46	.80	High	1
3. Behavioral stress (BS)	3.38	.82	Moderate	3
Total	3.42	.81	High	

Part 3: A Relationship between Organizational Factors and Stress of Thai private university personnel

Hypothesis 1: Organizational factors have a relationship with stress of Thai private university personnel
 In this part, the researchers analyzed a relationship between organizational factors and stress of Thai private university personnel. The research results showed that organizational factors consisting of time management, workload, work condition, work uncertainty, and co-worker relationship were positively related to stress of Thai private university personnel at the statistical significance of 0.01 level. The internal correlation among organizational factors was positive, which means each organizational factor had a relationship in the same direction with statistical significance at the .01 level. The correlation coefficient between organizational factors and stress of Thai private university personnel ranged from .702 to .893 with statistical significance at the .01 level, which workload had the highest relationship with stress of Thai private university personnel (Table 3).

Table 3:- Correlation Coefficient between Organizational Factors and Stress of Thai Private University Personnel.

Variables	TM	WL	WC	WU	CR	ST
TM	1	.845**	.723**	.828**	.734**	.812**
WL		1	.713**	.785**	.635**	.893**
WC			1	.812**	.728**	.791**
WU				1	.715**	.702**
CR					1	.765**
ST						1

** Statistically significant at .01 ($p < .01$)

Part 4: Organizational Factors Affecting Stress of Thai Private University Personnel

In this part, the researchers analyzed organizational factors affecting stress of Thai private university personnel using Multiple Regression Analysis with Enter Method. The research results showed that each variable of organizational factors had an effect on stress of Thai private university personnel with statistical significance at .01 ($F = 186.685$, $p = .000$). The organizational factors which had the highest effect on stress of Thai private university personnel were work uncertainty (Beta = .585, $p < .01$), followed by time management (Beta = .429, $p < .01$), workload (Beta = .428, $p < .01$), work condition (Beta = .265, $p < .01$), co-worker relationship (Beta = .165, $p < .01$). The forecasting equation from the results of Multiple Regression Analysis can describe the effect of organizational factors on stress of Thai private university personnel at 74.5 percent (Adjust $R^2 = .745$), whereas the rest 25.5 percent was the results of other variables which were not studied in this research (Table 4).

Table 4:- Multiple Regression Analysis of Organizational Factors Affecting Stress of Thai Private University Personnel.

Variables	Human Resource Management				p
	b	SE	β	T	
Constant	.238	.096		3.478**	.001
Time management (TM)	.424	.067	.429	2.044**	.000
Workload (WL)	.423	.058	.428	1.55**	.000
Work condition (WC)	.249	.053	.265	2.948**	.003
Work uncertainty (WU)	.583	.049	.585	4.353**	.000
Co-worker relationship (WR)	.163	.057	.165	2.971**	.003
$R^2 =$.780			F =	186.685*
Adjust $R^2 =$.745	SE =	.392	P =	.000

**Statistically significant at .01

The forecasting equation of organizational factors affecting stress of Thai private university personnel can be written in the form of unstandardized and standardized scores from higher to lower as follows:

Unstandardized Scores

Stress of Thai private university personnel = 583 Work uncertainty (WU) + .424 Time management (TM) + .423 Workload (WL) + .249 Work condition (WC) + .163 Co-worker relationship (CR)

Standardized Scores

Stress of Thai private university personnel = .337 (Constant) + .585 Work uncertainty (WU) + .429 Time management (TM) + .428 Workload (WL) + .265 Work condition (WC) + .165 Co-worker relationship (CR)

Discussion:-

The research results showed that perceptions of participants on organizational factors, in total, were at high level. In particular, time management had the highest mean value, followed by work uncertainty, workload, co-worker relationship, and work condition respectively. In this regard, Ogunsanya and Agu (1990) defined time management as the way managers typically spend their working days through proper apportionment of their time. In addition, Drucker (1967) described that effective time managers are not just content with starting tasks, but also with their time. In essence, they first find where their time goes, and then plan the use of their time. Mokuolu (2007) found that an ineffective time management is a cause of failure in doing any business, it can cause stress to workers if they

cannot complete the assigned jobs before the deadline. Thus, time management is an indicator for success and having the job done. In addition to skill and ability, time management is an important determinant of achievement in any human endeavor. White (1998) stated that one should first identify his vision and clarify the vision before proceeding to do any other thing including prioritizing a lesson plan. In order to achieve the objectives, one must do one thing at a time, organize one's plan by putting or pooling together all necessary events or materials in an appropriate order. Channuwong and Kantatian (2012) found that in order to solve problem caused by time management, participants should place great emphasis on strategies for reducing stress in time management, in which they might try to complete the urgent and important jobs before the due date in order to reduce work overload.

The research results showed that the perceptions of participants on stress of Thai private university personnel, in total, were at high level. In particular, mental stress had the highest mean value, followed by physical stress, and behavioral stress respectively. The result of this research is consistent with the finding of Channuwong and Ruksat (2022) who found that most people have more mental stress than physical stress. They are stressful and worried about their job and income caused by the negative impact of the COVID-19. Mental and physical condition are interrelated; one has an effect on another. Both mental and physical stress lead to behavioral stress and cause insomnia, negative attitude, aggressive behavior and high blood pressure.

The research results showed that organizational factors consisting of time management, workload, work condition, work uncertainty, and co-worker relationship were positively related to stress of Thai private university personnel at the statistical significance of 0.01 level. The correlation coefficient between organizational factors and stress of Thai private university personnel ranged from .702 to .893 with statistical significance at the .01 level, which workload had the highest relationship with stress of Thai private university personnel. The result of this study is relevant to the finding of Channuwong (2012) and Robbins and Judge (2007) who found that workload is a leading cause of stress and it is closely tied to time management. According their research findings, some people are worried about getting and keeping adequate employment. Some are worried about new type of work, new responsibilities or changes in work conditions. Some may have interpersonal trouble at work.

The research results showed that each variable of organizational factors had an effect on stress of Thai private university personnel at the .01 level of statistical significance. The organizational factors which had the highest effect on stress of Thai private university personnel were work uncertainty, followed by time management, workload, work condition, and co-worker relationship. The forecasting equation from the results of Multiple Regression Analysis can describe the effect of organizational factors on stress of Thai private university personnel at 74.5 percent ($\text{Adjust } R^2 = .745$), whereas the rest 25.5 percent was the results of other variables which were not studied in this research. The result of this research was consistent with the finding of Pollard (2001) who found that work uncertainty was associated with depression and stress. Work uncertainty deteriorates employees' mental health because they cannot know about their future in the organization and role expectations. Moreover, Avgoustaki (2016) and Tang et al. (2020) also found that work uncertainty is the occurrence of unplanned events which interrupt the regular work flow and work schedule, and make it difficult to predict the future of the work. Work uncertainty may occurs from internal and external factors. Internal factors can cause work uncertainty when employees have little information to perform their tasks and when there are some changes to their work schedule or even their job security. External factors refer to external environments such as changes within the organization caused by economic situations and social changes.

Conclusion:-

The perceptions of participants on organizational factors, in total, were at high level. In particular, time management had the highest mean value, followed by work uncertainty, workload, co-worker relationship, and work condition. The perceptions of participants on stress of Thai private university personnel, in total, were at high level. In particular, mental stress had the highest mean value, followed by physical stress, and behavioral stress. Organizational factors were positively related to stress of Thai private university personnel, which workload had the highest relationship with stress of Thai private university personnel. Organizational factors had an effect on stress of Thai private university personnel, which work uncertainty had the highest effect on stress of Thai private university personnel.

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