TEACHER STRESS AND WORKPLACE DEVIANCE: DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE MATTER?

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Abstract: Malaysian education system has been the bedrock of the nation development. In order to meet Malaysian high aspirations amidst an increasingly competitive global environment, everyone plays a vital role, especially the teachers. The transformation in the Malaysian education system has affected the teaching profession. Teachers are facing more stress due to inevitable changes in the education system and this leads to inclination towards workplace deviance. The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of teacher stress on workplace deviance and how emotional intelligence on part of the teachers could moderate such relationship. 300 questionnaires were distributed to thirteen secondary schools in one of the districts in Terengganu, Malaysia. A total of 283 questionnaires were returned. Findings indicated that teacher stress has a direct effect on workplace deviance, but indirect effect on emotional intelligence; emotional intelligence also has an indirect effect on workplace deviance. Significantly, the outcome of this study revealed that teacher stress and emotional intelligence are important antecedents for workplace deviance and emotional intelligence should be acknowledged as an important moderator affecting the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance. The findings provide insights to teachers on stress and emotional intelligence management and forward practical implications as well as recommendations to the Ministry of Education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a major contributor to the development of Malaysian social and economic capital. It inspires creativity and fosters innovation, provides Malaysian youth with the necessary skills to be able to compete in the modern labour market, and is a key driver of growth in the economy. As education plays a central role in any country's pursuit of economic growth and national development, there is no better predictor of a nation's future than what is currently happening in its classroom. In today's global economy, a nation's success depends fundamentally on the knowledge, skills, and competencies of its people (Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2012). Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic, integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and devotion of God. Such an

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effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute towards harmony and betterment of the family, society and nation at large (Ministry of Education, 2016).

Teaching profession is synonymous with education in any part of the countries in the world. Teaching comes into a category of human services which are called "direct person-related jobs", similar to occupations as counselling, community service, nursing, and others (Kauts and Kumar, 2013). With the increasing focus on the universalization of education, the requirement of teachers has become an important issue (Kauts and Kumar, 2013). It can be more challenging than other professions in any country since teachers are seen as the most reliable person who have capabilities and abilities to educate human beings.

Teachers shoulder a huge responsibility in fulfilling the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia. The workload of teachers increase from year to year, especially among teachers who are involved either directly or indirectly with students sitting for national examinations; Primary School Achievement Test or *Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah* (UPSR), Form 3 Assessment or *Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3* (PT3), Malaysian Certificate of Education or *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM), Malaysian Higher School Certificate or *Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia* (STPM), and Malaysian Religious Higher Certificate or *Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia* (STAM) (Ministry of Education, 2016; Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2012).

The success of the MOE Malaysia in achieving it vision; quality education begets learned individuals for a prosperous nation, and mission; upholding a quality education system that develops individuals to their full potential and fulfil the aspirations of nations (Ministry of Education, 2016), are hence totally and fully dependent on the success of teachers in providing excellent teaching towards the Malaysian future generation. Evidently, education revolution and changing environments have set different demands on teaching profession.

Teachers are also constantly challenged by their working environments, such as, disruptive students, heavy workload, insensitive administrators, and parents' expectation (Noriah *et al.*, 2006). Such environment can lead to teacher stress. Job stress has destructive consequences on both individual and organization (Larson, 2004; Malik, 2011). Regardless of institution they serve, private or public schools; primary or secondary schools, teachers are having more stress due to revolutionary changes in the education system. This has been proven by Adams (2001) which concluded that occupational stress of school staff is not limited to particular types of schools. According to Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training (2002), Geving (2007), Kyriacou (2001), and McCormick (1997, 2000), in Australia, government schools make up the largest sector in school education, followed by Catholic systemic diocesan schools, whereas independent schools

comprise a smaller, third sector of schooling. Studies of schools in all systems have reported that teaching is a stressful occupation.

Thus, occupational stress has been increasing in the field of education and cited by researchers (Blix *et al.,* 1994; Sowa *et al.,* 1994; Chen and Miller, 1997; Chaplain, 2001; Gersch and Teuma, 2005; Plash and Piotrowski, 2006) with reasons given from work load to demands of the administrator and parents. Stress can make teachers become ineffective and inefficient in their roles (Eskridge and Coker, 1985; Farber, 1984; Schamer and Jackson, 1996). It can have a negative influence on schools, overall teaching performances, the physical and emotional well-being of teachers and students (Kyriacou, 1984; Philips, 1993).

A few researchers have studied about teacher stress (Otto, 1986; Adams, 2001; Kyriacou, 2001), workplace deviance (Kaplan, 1975; Robinson and Bennett, 1995; Bennett and Robinson, 2000; Appelbaum *et al.*, 2005; Spector and Fox, 2005), and emotional intelligence (Salovey and Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995; Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Wong and Law, 2002). In Malaysia, teachers serving in the secondary schools tend to face higher stress and this will either directly or indirectly affect their behaviours at school and also their way of teaching. Teachers who are stressful are subjected more to workplace deviance. Reducing teacher stress is required in order to minimize workplace deviance and optimizing emotional intelligence among teachers in secondary school is necessary to strike a balance within teachers' struggle in coping with stress.Evidently, some researchers have examined the relationship between stress and workplace deviance (Omar *et al.*, 2011; Farah Mardiana *et al.*, 2013; Mazni *et al.*, 2013; Mattew *et al.*, 2014; Golparvar *et al.*, 2015), stress and emotional intelligence (Kauts and Kumar, 2013; Belias *et al.*, 2013; Bartwal and Raj, 2013; El-Sayed *et al.*, 2014; John and Al-Sawad, 2015; Gorsy *et al.*, 2015), and between emotional intelligence and workplace deviance (Shaiful Annuar *et al.*, 2009; Mazni *et al.*, 2013; Mattew *et al.*, 2014).

Nonetheless,most of the past studies were conducted in countries such as India, Iran, Nigeria, Greece, Bahrain, and Egypt. Meanwhile, relatively few similar research can be found in Malaysia context, and none has probed into the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance over emotional intelligence among teachers serving secondary schools. The findings will be useful and served as a reference for teachers in understanding stress and its consequences on their deviant behaviour besides acknowledging the necessity of having emotional intelligence in helping them cope.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Stress and Workplace Deviance

Social exchange theory developed by Blau (1986) describes the motivation behind attitudes and behaviours exchanged between individuals. This involves interaction

with co-workers, supervisors, teams, and the organizations which garner social exchange relationships (Emerson, 1976), and working relationships (Shore *et al.*, 1999). This enables researchers to recognize the content of social exchange relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) which entail employees' feelings and social influences at the individual, dyadic, and organizational levels. In addition, researchers such as Glomb and Liao (2003) and Mitchell and Ambrose (2007) have employed social exchange theory to explain the phenomenon of workplace deviance. Emerson (1987) also suggested that social exchange involves the interaction between two actors in a person-environment relationship, for instance, the individual and the organization. Unfair treatment in the organization, as an example, is reciprocated with various negative behaviours (Colquitt *et al.*, 2006). Employees also tend to behave based on their relationships with the organization, which in ways consistent with the organizational norms if they believe the relationship is reciprocal in nature (Umphress *et al.*, 2010). However, when employees reciprocate the concern, fair treatment and trust in the relationship that they receive, deviant behaviour is less likely to exist.

In the context of education,some scholars refer stress as an adaptation to a physical or other demand resulting in physical and psychological effects (Adams, 2001), while other definitions which have been developed, relate it to the nature of stress itself. According to Otto (1986), stress is a sense of frustration, worry or threat caused by aspects of teaching. A widely used definition of occupational stress in relation to teaching also was developed by Kyriacou (2001), who defined teacher occupational stress as the experience by a teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work. This definition includes a more comprehensive set of stress effects than Otto (1986), and focuses on the work in schools.

McCormick and colleagues (De Nobile and McCormick, 2010; McCormick and Solman, 1992; McCormick, 1997a, b; McCormick and Shi, 1999; McCormick, 2003; McCormick *et al.*, 2006) have posited and tested empirically the attribution of responsibility for teacher stress model for teachers working in schools within educational systems. The point of departure for the model is the concept of loose coupling (Weick, 1976), which seems to be particularly relevant to educational organizations.The model also posits that school employees essentially blame their occupational stress on aspects of the work environment (McCormick, 2000; McCormick and Barnett, 2011). According to McCormick *et al.*, (2006), and McCormick and Barnett (2011), central to the model is the assumption that individuals tend to accept responsibility for success, but deny responsibility for failure, resulting in individuals attributing responsibility for their occupational stress to certain domains that represent aspects of the work environment.

Apart from that, teachers in an educational system may generally be expected to perceive their occupational stress as a negative phenomenon, and being

responsible for their own stress as a form of failure. In fact, teachers may generally be expected to attribute responsibility for their occupational stress to specific domains, conceptually organized in relation to self-schemas. This suggests that the teachers will attribute responsibility for their stress increasingly to entities increasingly distant from self (McCormick and Barnett, 2011).

Furthermore, applying the attribution of responsibility for teacher stress with different samples and contexts, McCormick and associates consistently have empirically measured four attribution stress domains (McCormick and Barnett, 2011). The domains are similar in concept to antecedents, and may include students, time demands, school administration, and demand from entities external to school (McCormick, 2000; McCormick and Barnett, 2011). For instance, McCormick *et al.* (2006) identified that the four stress domains are related, specifically, to student behaviour, personal feelings of adequacy toward their work, forces external to school, school administration practices. McCormick and Shi (1999) also identified domains of stress similar to the above as well as one relating to lack of control and powerlessness. Other antecedents of occupational stress identified in the context of schools include student behaviour problems, role overload, role ambiguity, role conflicts, lack of control, poor work environment, and poor relationships with colleagues (Adams, 2001; Borg and Falzon, 1991; Geving, 2007; Kyriacou, 2001; Otto, 1986; Troman, 2000).

On the other hand, according to Bennett and Robinson (2000), workplace deviance is an occupational crime that may vary along a continuum of severity, from minor acts such as embarrassing co-workers and leaving early, to serious acts, such as sabotage and theft. Examples of employee deviant behaviours include production deviance, sabotaging equipment, gossiping about co-workers, and interpersonal aggression. Research has proven that employee deviance leads to negative effects on individual employees and organizational performance, bringing enormous losses to organizations. Robinson and Bennett (1995) also defined workplace deviance as voluntary behaviour of organizational members that violates significant organizational norms, and, in so doing, threatens the wellbeing of the organization, its members or both. Voluntary or chosen behaviour would indicate that the employee is not motivated to conform or is motivated to act against established organizational norms. Besides, Kaplan (1975) referred workplace deviance to voluntary behaviour in that employees either lack motivation to conform to, or become motivated to violate, normative expectations of the social context. Workplace deviance can also be a response to job stressor and other conditions that induce negative emotions, or in other words, is a response to emotional-arousing situation in the organization (Spector and Fox, 2005).

In addition, the general strain theory has contributed to explaining criminology, deviance, and retaliatory behaviours in the organizations (Agnew, 2006). The basic tenet of this theory is that employees who are always worried and experience

stress often become upset and tend to act offensively. These employees are likely to commit crime to reduce or escape from their stress. For instance, an employee may assault his or her colleagues or engage in other workplace deviance to reduce their stress. Besides, employees exposed to or experiencing workplace strain will cope with it in various ways including adaptation of workplace deviance.

In addition, the general strain theory seeks to identify the stresses or strains that would cause deviant behaviour (Agnew, 1992). The prevalence of deviant behaviour is in a part due to strains which foster negative emotions such as anger, frustration, and depression. Consequently, the negative emotions create pressure for corrective action and deviant behaviour is one of the ways some individuals respond. Based on the general strain theory, stressors and strain are also interconnected with emotional states of employees due to their work circumstances (Hart and Cooper, 2001). Such emotions result in destructive behaviour (Spector, 2007b). Hence, the general strain theory is proven useful in explaining the relationship between an individual experiencing stress and his or her involvement with destructive behaviour.

According to Bennett and Robinson (2000), workplace deviance can be classified into two forms or scales; interpersonal and organizational deviance, and may differ from each other in terms of their antecedents. Interpersonal deviance is interpersonal and detrimental to individuals, whereas organizational deviance is non-personal and is aimed at harming the organization. Moreover, in order to adopt effective preventive policies or strategies for organizations to decrease different forms of employee deviance, examining whether work-related characteristics, for example, role stressors, have different degrees of effect on interpersonal and organizational deviance is necessary.

Researchers such as Georges (2009) and Robinson (2008) stated that, when these behaviours, target the organization and its benefits, they are called deviant behaviour toward the organization, and when they target the individuals, they are called deviant behaviour toward individuals. Job-related, organizational, constraints, such as role stressors and working conditions, may contribute more to the prediction of organizational deviance compared with individual disposition, whereas individual disposition, such as mood, emotion, and personality, may contribute more to the prediction of interpersonal deviance compared with organizational constraints (Bennett and Robinson, 2000; Lee and Allen, 2002). Past empirical evidence also has proven that job-related organizational constraints have a greater effect on organizational deviance than on interpersonal deviance (Fox *et al,* 2001; Hershcovis *et al.*, 2007; Penney and Spector, 2005; Spector *et al.*, 2006).

Significantly, past researchers found that work stress leads to various forms of destructive behaviour such as aggression, and violence (Martinko *et al.*, 2005; Vardi and Weitz, 2004). According to Spector and Fox (2005), deviant workplace

behaviour occurs due to employee's reaction to job stress and other factors that can induce negative emotions. Other studies also have shown that job stress is a major factor that causes several forms of deviance behaviour (Spector and Fox, 2005) and among the forms of deviance are absenteeism, alcoholism, substance abuse, low job motivation and low productivity (Safaria *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, one prominent variable as a direct and an indirect outcome of job stress is known as deviant behaviour (Golparvar *et al.*, 2012). Theoretical explanation and relatively strong evidence of the relationship between job stress and deviant behaviours have been presented by theoreticians and researchers from different countries (Appelbaum *et al.*, 2007; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2007).

A study conducted on 162 civil servants from a public organization in Malaysia revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between job-related stress and workplace deviance behaviour (Omar *et al.*, 2011). In fact, work-related stress can have many negative effects on an organization and its employees. Stressful situations and experience in the workplace can greatly influence employee behaviour because it can cause the employee to become frustrated, impatient, and irritated. This type of emotions very often can lead to a variety of deviant behaviours. Hence, in Omar *et al.*'s (2011) study, civil servants who experienced negative emotions such as frustration and irritation due to work-related stress were more prone to exhibit deviant behaviour at their workplace.

Another study conducted on 380 teachers from the schools in six regions of teaching and training in Esfahan, Iran revealed that there are positive significant relationships between job stress dimensions and deviant behaviours toward organization and individuals. Indeed, it is likely that when individuals cannot act deviant behaviours toward organizations and because of the proximity and interpersonal relationships between colleagues, the stress leads to high deviant behaviour toward individuals (Golparvar *et al.*, 2015).

A study conducted on 198 secondary school teachers from Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria revealed that there was a positive relationship between occupational stress and workplace deviance. This shows that occupational stress can significantly predict workplace deviance among teachers (Mattew *et al.*, 2014). Other than that, Farah Mardiana *et al.* (2013) also predicted that employees with high job stress have the tendency to exhibit deviant behaviour at the workplace. Meanwhile, Mazni *et al.* (2013) predicted that support personnel having work stress would be more inclined to be deviant. Hence, Mazni *et al.* (2013) proposed that there is a negative relationship between work stress and workplace deviant behaviour among support personnel. Based on the above discussions, the first hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H1: There is a positive significant relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu.

Teacher Stress and Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has been studied extensively in the recent years. Salovey and Mayer (1990) were the earliest who introduced the term emotional intelligence to show the ability of the people to deal with their emotions. They initially defined emotional intelligence as the competence of people to handle their own and others' emotions. They later defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

Besides that, Goleman (1995) also defined emotional intelligence as the abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope. Hence, it is the ability to manage oneself and one's relationships in a constructive and mature manner. Apart from that, Wong and Law (2002) explained that emotional intelligence is an ability to understand one's own emotions and those of others, and to control emotions in diverse situations.

Therefore, the emotional intelligence of employees is crucial as employees with a high level of emotional intelligence will be able to manage their emotions in order to display organizationally desired emotions (Moon and Hur, 2011). Moreover, Mayer and Salovey (1993) mentioned that emotionally intelligent people understand their own feelings better than other people and are better able to communicate them. Carmeli and Josman (2006) stated that employees who have high emotional intelligence achieve more in their personal life and the workplace. People with high emotional intelligence also are more likely to have a positive outlook and be reliable (Mayer and Salovey, 1993).

According to Cooper *et al.* (2001), an employee with high emotional intelligence can deal with work environment stress. In addition, a study conducted by Gohm *et al.* (2005) revealed that emotional intelligence was associated with relatively lower reported stress levels. Meanwhile, a study of 739 secondary school teachers who are selected from two clusters; Jalandhar, and Ludhiana districts of Punjab, India revealed that there is no significant difference between occupational stress of secondary school teachers with high and low emotional intelligence (Kauts and Kumar, 2013).

Apart from that, a study on 102 school lecturers who are working as P.G.T. government teachers in Government co-educational senior secondary schools located in five districts in urban and rural areas of Haryana revealed that occupational stress has a significant negative correlation with emotional intelligence (Gorsy *et al.*, 2015). A study conducted on 91 faculty members working in the

Faculty of Nursing Zagazig University during the academic year 2011 until 2012 also revealed that the occupational stress was negatively related with faculty members' emotional intelligence (El-Sayed *et al.*, 2014).

In addition, a study on 135 baccalaureate nursing students from second year to fourth year attending College of Health Sciences, Bahrain revealed that there was a highly negative significant relationship between the overall stress level and emotional intelligence. It shows that individuals with higher emotional intelligence scores are better able to regulate and express their emotions and to adapt to the demanding situations, experiencing lesser amounts of stress (John and Al-Sawad, 2015). Based on the empirical evidences, the second hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H2: There is a negative significant relationship between teacher stress and emotional intelligence among secondary school teachers in Terengganu.

Emotional Intelligence and Workplace Deviance

According to Mazni *et al.* (2013), emotional intelligence is also one of the individual factors apart from negative affectivity, conscientiousness and agreeableness, which is most likely to influence individuals' intentions to engage in aggressive or deviant behaviour, and which is also explaining the variance in workplace deviant behaviour. High emotional intelligence employees benefit the organization, specifically in public service organizations that provide efficient and quality customer services. Those with high levels of emotional intelligence are able to control and avoid themselves from doing such misbehaviour that will harm the organization they work with (Shaiful Annuar *et al.*, 2009).

An individual with high emotional intelligence is more inclined to be a better performer, implement ethical values in the workplace, and tends to be a better corporate employee towards his or her organization (Van Rooy and Viswesvaran, 2004). Besides that, research also concluded that people with high levels of emotional intelligence, engage less in deviant behaviour (Petrides *et al.*, 2004) than those with low emotional intelligence levels. On the other hand, Eisenberg (2000) stated that low trait of emotional intelligence may be a key factor in a variety of deviant behaviour. According to Brackett *et al.* (2004), lower scores on emotional intelligence are also linked to drug use, alcohol consumption and deviant behaviour.

In addition, Deshpande *et al.*'s (2005) study among 118 Chinese respondents revealed that there was a significant difference in aggregate deviant behaviours among high and low emotional intelligence groups; thus, suggesting that high emotionally intelligent people tend to be better corporate citizens and hold better ethical attitudes for their firms and work. In fact, people with high emotional intelligence are capable of controlling their behaviours and attitudes, and also managing and handling their life.

Apart from that, a study of 198 secondary school teachers from Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria revealed that there was a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace deviance. The finding showed that emotional intelligence contributed to employee's workplace deviance among teachers. This may be as a result of the fact that teaching as a profession needs emotional intelligence or interpersonal relationship skill for proficiency reduction of deviance in the workplace to be assured (Mattew *et al.*, 2014).

Meanwhile, a study conducted on 263 students from a public university located in the northern region of Peninsular Malaysia revealed that the measure of both deviant behaviours significantly correlated with emotional intelligence. The negative relationship indicated that high emotional intelligence were more likely to result in low deviance among students (Shaiful Annuar *et al.*, 2009). Mazni *et al.* (2013) also suggested that low emotional intelligence employees are more likely to act deviantly compared to high emotional intelligence employees. Hence, Mazni *et al.* (2013) proposed that there is a negative relationship between low emotional intelligence and workplace deviant behaviour among support personnel.

Mayer *et al.* (2000) also explained that, if employees' emotional intelligence improved, deviant behaviours related to organizational tasks would be remarkably reduced, thereby revealing negative relationships between emotional intelligence and employees' deviating behaviours. Besides, Martin *et al.* (1998) believed that employees' emotional intelligence plays a role in preventing negative behaviours. Based on the justifications, the third hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H3:   There is a negative significant relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu.

Teacher Stress, Workplace Deviance, and Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has been widely used as a moderator. Many researchers have treated emotional intelligence as a moderator of the relationship between different variables including; negative emotions and job insecurity (Jordan and Ashkanasy, 2002); conscientiousness and performance (Douglas *et al.*, 2004); stress and burnout (Gorgens-Ekermans and Brand, 2012); job stress and job performance (Yozgat and Bilginoglu, 2013); and workplace incivility and counterproductive work behaviour (Bibi *et al.*, 2103).

The findings of previous studies suggest that emotional intelligence may serve as a moderator in the link between teacher stress and workplace deviance. For example, emotionally intelligent people are more able to control themselves; thus, they are more able to avoid indulging in activities, such as deviant behaviours, that may harm their organizations (Petrides *et al.*, 2004). Shaiful Annuar *et al.* (2009) also found that emotionally intelligent people aptly control their emotions and are more able to avoid misbehaviour that could harm their organizations.

In addition, Martin *et al.* (1998) thought that employees' emotional intelligence plays a role in controlling deviant behaviour. Mayer *et al.* (2000) also found a negative relationship between emotional intelligence and employees' deviant behaviours. They argued that improvement in employees' emotional intelligence results in a decline in their deviant behaviours. Other than that, emotional intelligence also has been identified as one of the major protective factors against the stress (Lopes *et al.*, 2006). Hence, in line with the previous researches, people with different emotional intelligence levels respond to and cope with the stress environment differently. The severity of their response ultimately determines the degree to which they cause damage to the organization. Therefore, the proposed hypothesis is:

> H4: Emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu.

3. METHODOLOGY

Data was collected among teachers who were serving secondary schools in one of the districts in Terengganu, Northeastern state of Peninsular Malaysia. Due to some regulations and privacy concerns, some schools and teachers refused to participate. Convenient sampling technique was thus adopted to distribute 300 survey questionnaires to secondary school teachers through the assistance given by district education officers, school principals and school administrators. Questionnaire consisting of 63 items, is used as a single point of time to measure the studied variables. Section A gathers information about the demographic profile of the respondents such as gender, age, highest level of education, and teaching experience.

Section B collects feedback on teacher stress. This section consists of a modified version of the Teachers' Attribution of Responsibility for Stress Questionnaire (TARSQ) (McCormick, 2000) which is being modified by McCormick *et al.* (2006). In addition, seven items have been included to examine the extent to which stress originate from teaching students who sit for national examinations. In summary, this study adopted TARSQ from McCormick *et al.* (2006), which consists of five domains; student domain, school domain, external domain, personal domain and PT3/SPM/STPM stress, with 24 items. The respondents are asked to indicate on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = no stress to 5 = extreme stress, "how stressful each of the following statements is for you".

Section C is about emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is measured using Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) from Wong and Law (2002). The WLEIS consists of four dimensions; self-emotion appraisal, other's emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion, with 16 items. The respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with

the statements given by using a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

Section D is about workplace deviance. Workplace deviance is measured using a workplace deviance scale from Bennett and Robinson (2000), which consists of two scales; interpersonal and organizational deviance, with a total of 19 items. A seven-point Likert –type response scale is used to measure the extent to which respondents have engaged in workplace deviance during the past year. Item responses ranged from 1 = never, 2 = once a year, 3 = twice a year, 4 = several times a year, 5 = monthly, 6 = weekly, and 7 = daily.

To analyse the data, descriptive analysis is utilised to portray the profiles of respondents and also their perceptions on teacher stress, workplace deviance, and emotional intelligence. The computation of averages, frequency distribution, and percentage distributions are the most common means of summarizing the data collected from the targeted respondents.Besides that, reliability analysis is being conducted to ascertain the reliability level of the study. It is a measurement process which reflects the extent to which the measurement is neutral and no bias. The reliability of a scale also indicates how free it is from random error (Pallant, 2011). Pearson correlation analysis is used to measure the linear relationship between two metric variables. A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the data in order to determine the direction and the strength of the linear relationship between variables. Apart from multiple linear regression analysis, hierarchical linear regression analysis, as recommended by Kerlinger and Pedhazur (1973), and Cohen and Cohen (1983), is used to test the moderating effects of emotional intelligence on the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance.

4. FINDINGS

A total of 283 usable questionnaires was collected, yielding a 94% response rate. Cronbach alpha coefficient in this study was relatively highamong the studied variables: teacher stress 0.912, emotional intelligence 0.952 and workplace deviance 0.947. This indicates that the domains, dimensions, and scales used for each variable are highly reliable (Hair *et al.*, 2006; Nunnally, 1978).

Table 1.0 shows the demographic profile of the respondents in this study. Most of the respondents were female; 213 teachers (75.3%) and the rests of 70 teachers were male (24.7%). The respondents also were classified into four age groups as indicated in Table. The largest group (48.1%) of respondents was in between the age of 41 to 50 years, the second largest group (25.1%) of respondents was in between the age of 31 to 40 years, followed by (20.1%) of respondents in between the age of 51 to 60 years, and the smallest group (6.7%) of respondents was in between the age of 21 to 30 years. As for education level, 6.0% of the respondents; 17 teachers, were holding Diploma, 89.8% of the respondents; 254 teachers, were

holding Bachelor degree, 3.9% of the respondents; 11 teachers, were holding Master degree, and 0.4% of the respondents; only one teacher, was a PhD holder. Apart from that, the respondents in this study had various teaching background, 10 teachers (3.5%) were having less than one year of teaching experience and another 10 teachers (3.5%) were having one to five years of teaching experience. Besides, 40 teachers (14.1%) were having six to 10 years of teaching experience and 46 teachers (16.3%) were having 11 to 15 years of teaching experience. In addition, 97 teachers (34.3%) were having 16 to 20 years of teaching experience and 80 teachers (28.3%) were having more than 20 years of teaching experience. Most of the respondents in this study were having 16 to 20 years of teaching experience.

Table 1.0
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Profile	Frequency N=283	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Gender			
Male	70	24.7	24.7
Female	213	75.3	100.0
Age (years)			
21 - 30 years	19	6.7	6.7
31 - 40 years	71	25.1	31.8
41 - 50 years	136	48.1	79.9
51 - 60 years	57	20.1	100.0
Highest Level of Education			
Diploma	17	6.0	6.0
Bachelor Degree	254	89.8	95.8
Master Degree	11	3.9	99.6
PhD	1	0.4	100.0
Teaching Experience (years)			
Less than 1 year	10	3.5	3.5
1 - 5 years	10	3.5	7.1
6 - 10 years	40	14.1	21.2
11 - 15 years	46	16.3	37.5
16 - 20 years	97	34.3	71.7
More than 20 years	80	28.3	100.0

The perceptions of respondents on teacher stress, emotional intelligence, and workplace deviance were alsoexamined through the mean scoresover the three studied variables. The mean score for teacher stress among secondary school teachers in Terengganu is 2.724 over a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = no stress to 5 = extreme stress. This indicates that the respondents do not experience high level of stress. The mean score for emotional intelligence among secondary school teachers in Terengganu is 5.312 over a seven-point Likert-type

scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. This indicates that the respondents have relatively high level of emotional intelligence. Mean score for workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu is 1.477, over responses ranged from 1 = never, 2 = once a year, 3 = twice a year, 4 = several times a year, 5 = monthly, 6 = weekly, and 7 = daily. This indicates that the respondents have not reportedly committed much deviant behaviour at the workplace.

Table 2.0 shows the outputs of Pearson correlation analysis explaining the relationship among the three studied variables. Pearson correlation between teacher stress and workplace deviance is significant at 0.180. Thus, there is a positive significant relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu (r = 0.180, p < 0.01). This means that the higher the stress facing the teachers, the higher the tendency they are to be involved in workplace deviance. Therefore, H1 is supported. This findings are consistent with the findings of Omar *et al.* (2011), Farah Mardiana *et al.* (2013), Mattew *et al.* (2014), and Golparvar *et al.* (2015). Nonetheless, it is contrary to the findings by Mazni *et al.* (2013) which concluded that stress is indirectly related to workplace deviance.

Table 2.0
Pearson Correlation Analysis

	TS	EI
EI	-.152*	
WD	.180**	-.182**
TS: Teacher Stress	EI: Emotional Intelligence	WD: Workplace Deviance

Pearson correlation between teacher stress and emotional intelligence is significant at – 0.152. There is a negative significant relationship between teacher stress and emotional intelligence among secondary school teachers in Terengganu (r = - 0.152, p < 0.05). This means that the higher the stress facing the teachers, the lower their emotional intelligence are. Therefore, H2 is supported. The findings are consistent with the research done by El-Sayed *et al.* (2014), John and Al-Sawad (2015), and Gorsy *et al.* (2015). However, the findings contradicts results by Kauts and Kumar (2013) which reported no significant difference between occupational stress of secondary school teachers with high and low emotional intelligence.

Pearson correlation between emotional intelligence and workplace deviance is significant at – 0.182. There is a negative significant relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu (r = - 0.182, p < 0.01). This means that the higher the emotional intelligence level, the lower the tendency to be involved in workplace deviance. Therefore, H3 is also supported. The findings are consistent with Mayer *et al.* (2000), Eisenberg (2000), Petrides *et al.* (2004), Brackett *et al.* (2004), Deshpande *et al.* (2005), Shaiful Annuar *et al.* (2009), and Mazni *et al.* (2013).

Hierarchical linear regression analysis was used to assess the moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu, as depicted in Table 3.0. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity. Teacher stress was entered at Step 1, explaining 3.2% of the variance in workplace deviance.

Table 3.0
Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	R^2	*b*	*t*	R^2	*b*	*t*	R^2	*b*	*t*
TS	0.032	0.203	3.060	0.023	-0.266	-2.587	0.057	0.175	2.647
EI								-0.102	-2.695

Model 1: DV: WD (without EI as Moderator)
Model 2: DV: EI
Model 3: DV: WD (with EI as Moderator)
TS: Teacher Stress   EI: Emotional Intelligence   WD: Workplace Deviance

After the entry of emotional intelligence at Step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 5.7%, F = 8.418, p < 0.001. Teacher stress and emotional intelligence explained an additional 2.4% of the variance in workplace deviance, R^2 has increased by 0.024, F value has changed by 7.263, p < 0.001. In the final model, teacher stress and emotional intelligence were statistically significant, with the teacher stress recording a higher beta value (β = 0.155, p < 0.05) than the emotional intelligence (β = - 0.158, p < 0.05). Based on Table 3.0, R^2 for TS is 0.032. When EI is tested with TS, which is TS_EI, there is a significant relationship (R^2 = 0.057, b = - 0.102). This indicates that teacher stress is affected by emotional intelligence as the R^2 value increases when it is tested with emotional intelligence as a moderator. Besides that, this analysis also reveals that there is a negative moderating effect. This means that the lower the emotional intelligence level, the stronger the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu.The analysis revealed that emotional intelligence does moderate the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance (β = - 0.158, t = - 2.695, p = 0.007). Thus, emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu. Therefore, H4 was supported.

5. DISCUSSION

Findings gathered from the analyses reflected the accomplishment of research objectives. Significantly, the mean scores which originate from self-reporting by respondents over stress facing them, extent to which they are involved in deviant

behaviour in schools and level of emotional intelligence mastered individually, appear to be optimistic. Findings show that secondary school teachers in Terengganu have low levels of stress, despite changing environment and increasing demands posed by students, parents, government and stakeholders. This reflects their ability in coping with stress. Hence, it is not hard to comprehend the low mean score reported on workplace deviance. Teachers who participated in the study have not harmed the schools; either by directly affecting its functioning or property, or by impacting on their colleagues or students in a way that reduces their effectiveness. This also indicates that they are contented with teaching as their profession and the work environment they are in. The high emotional intelligence mean score fully explains and supports the comfort zone they are in whereby according to Moon and Hur (2011), employees with high level of emotional intelligence will be able to manage their emotions in order to display organizationally desired emotions.

In relation to hypothesis testing, there is a positive significant relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu. The findings of the present study are in agreement with the work of Mattew *et al.* (2014) who investigated the relationship between occupational stress and workplace deviance. The findings showed that occupational stress can significantly predict workplace deviance among teachers. Besides that, the findings are also in support of the findings of Omar *et al.* (2011) whose study investigated stress and job satisfaction as antecedents of workplace deviance behaviour among civil servants in Malaysia. Hypothesis 2 is also supported. There is a negative significant relationship between teacher stress and emotional intelligence among secondary school teachers in Terengganu. This means that the higher the teacher stress, the lower the emotional intelligence level. Thus, this indicates that teacher stress is an important antecedent of emotional intelligence among secondary school teachers in TerengganuThe findings are consistent with Mayer *et al.* (2000), Eisenberg (2000), Petrides *et al.* (2004), Brackett *et al.* (2004), Deshpande *et al.* (2005), Shaiful Annuar *et al.* (2009), and Mazni *et al.* (2013).

Hypothesis 3 is equally supported whereby there is a negative significant relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers in Terengganu. This is consistent with the hypothetical predictions. Teachers who exhibit low level of emotional intelligence are more likely to engage in deviant behaviour. The result of the present study is in line with the previous study (Shaiful Annuar *et al.*, 2009) which proved that there was a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and both, organizational and interpersonal deviance. In other words, when emotional intelligence is high, the tendency of committing deviant behaviour is low. Emotional intelligence is shown to have moderated relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance among secondary school teachers. This means that

when the emotional intelligence level is high, the relationship between teacher stress and workplace deviance is relatively low. This findings is supported by the previous studies (Jordan and Ashkanasy, 2002; Douglas *et al.*, 2004; Gorgens-Ekermans and Brand, 2012; Yozgat and Bilginoglu, 2013; Bibi *et al.*, 2013) which posits emotional intelligence as moderator.

As a conclusion, the findings of this study offers some insights on the extent to which teachers are stressful at school and if such situation lead to deviant behaviour. It also examines the importance of emotional intelligence as a tool which can help minimize the stress and workplace deviance among teachers. Consequently, the outputs can assist Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia in understanding domains of stress facing teachers and uplifting their emotional intelligence in battling with deviant behaviour which should not be tolerated in schools. Teachers remain the essential, intellectual assets in the Malaysian education and are vital in delivering the knowledge and guiding the Malaysian future generation. The well-being of teachers will ensure continued production of talented human capital for the nation.

There are, however, several limitations in the research which includes constraint of geographical coverage. Since the study was conducted in secondary schools in one of the districts in Terengganu, findings could not be widely generalizable. Besides, the approach of cross-sectional study is another limitation because the data was gathered only once; reflecting the points of view gathered represent only certain moment of time. Two studied variables, teacher stress and workplace deviance might be subjected to change from time to time depending on the seasons of teaching or semesters they are in. Therefore, the data and result collected in that period might be different compared to the viewpoint developed by the approach of longitudinal study for which the data are gathered at several points in time.

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