

## CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Law enforcement agencies, including the Royal Malaysian Police, play an important role in maintaining public safety and order. In this agency, emotional intelligence is a key determinant of organizational effectiveness and employee well-being. Emotional intelligence helps police officers cope better with stress in several ways. First of all, with emotional intelligence, police officers can identify the emotions they experience when faced with stress. By being aware of and understanding these emotions, they can manage emotions more effectively and avoid unnecessary or inappropriate responses.

In addition, emotional intelligence also allows police officers to communicate better in stressful situations. They can control their emotions, communicate clearly, and resolve conflicts more effectively, all of which can reduce stress. Emotional intelligence also helps police officers to make better decisions when faced with pressure. With the ability to clearly assess the situation, understand the emotions involved, and adjust their actions according to the situation, they are able to make more effective and appropriate decisions in managing the stress they face.

Work commitment, on the other hand, refers to the level of dedication, loyalty and involvement employees show in their work and the organization. Understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and work commitment among police officers is important to improving organizational performance, officer morale and public safety. Effective emotional intelligence can engender trust, motivation and loyalty among officers, leading to a more cohesive and efficient law enforcement

agency. By investigating this relationship in the context of IPD Sabak Bernam, valuable insights can be gained to improve leadership practices and promote a positive work environment for police officers.

The main purpose of this study is to examine emotional intelligence in relation to work commitment among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam. Identifying emotional intelligence levels that influence officer commitment and exploring strategies to increase work commitment in organizations, this study aims to contribute to the existing literature on law enforcement leadership and employee engagement.

## **1.2 Background of the Study**

Police Diraja Malaysia, or the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), consists of various ranks that make up their organizational structure. PDRM has 17 ranks which are divided into two categories, namely Senior Police Officers and Junior Police Officers and Constables.

Senior Police Officers start from the rank of Inspector to Inspector General of Police. Ranks in this category include Inspector General of Police (IG), Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), Commissioner of Police (CP), Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police (SAC), Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), and Superintendent of Police (SUPT). Junior Police Officers and Constables involve the rank of Constable to the rank of Sub-Inspector.

Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) are responsible for maintaining peace and order in the country. They perform tasks such as maintaining public order, fighting crime, investigating crime cases, and helping the community.

Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) is one of our national law enforcement body, which plays an important role in maintaining national security and peace (Sazif, 2011;

Yusoff, Abdullah, & Adnan, 2017). In relation to their job scope and nature, police officers' duty demands all time preparedness in the face of any possible contingencies (Yusoff et al., 2017). Police is a stressful, challenging, high-risk as well as emotionally challenging profession.

Department of Community Health of National University of Malaysia found that police profession is the most stressful profession (53.7%) as compared to other professions including prison officers, fire fighters, teachers, nurses, doctors, and assistant pharmacists ("Polis lebih", 2011). Masilamani et al. (2013) revealed that prevalence of stress in Malaysian police was 38.8%. Masilamani et al. explained that inspectors are the backbone of an investigation team in all departments, thereby they are more prevalence to stress.

In fact, police are under stress as they confront various situations and diverse human contact from victims to criminals (Abdullah, 2010). Abdullah (2010) expounded that stress could be due to long working hours, less likely to get leave, on-standby call at all times, and demanding jobs bounded to cumbersome rules, regulations and instructions. Additionally, the structure and climate of RMP organisation highly emphasised on discipline and assertiveness are the major contributors to stress amongst police (Zaidi & Raop, 2017). Unsurprisingly, police organisation is a bureaucratic military structured organisation that foregrounded discipline (Patterson, 2009). To sum up, the work nature and organisation climate structure are the main contributors of stress amongst police officers in Malaysia.

Police is indeed a challenging profession, as they have to ensure the safety of the public, as well as nation by tackling the high crime rates (Yaacob, 2012). Additionally, police officers are expected to deliver excellent services and being sensitive to the needs of the community (Abdullah, 2010). Generally, although police

provide excellent service to the public, the public always perceives police officers as an enemy (Suresh, Anantharaman, Angusamy, & Ganesan, 2013). Therefore, building a relationship with the public for effective community policing poses as a challenge for police. Due to the myriad scope of the job itself, certain personal qualities like fair-mindedness, courage, firm, patience, tolerance, and dedication are extremely required although those qualities are hard to develop (Abdullah, 2010; Alias, 2014).

Police jobs involve high-risk tasks (Abdullah, 2010; Patterson, 2009; Russell, 2014; Suresh et al., 2013). Police officers encounter various traumatic experiences that sandwiched them between death or life decisions (Patterson, 2009). According to Suresh et al. (2013), police profession has an adverse effect on the total life span of the police officers including their family, as they are more vulnerable to face prejudice, suspicion, and hostility from the public even during off duty. Datuk Seri Mohamad Fauzi Harun, the Director of Management Department, Bukit Aman reported that every day at least one police officer dies on duty (Kumarappa, 2014).

Police officers faced one of the highest rates of injuries and illnesses among all professions (Christopher et al., 2015). Particularly, junior police officers are more prone to threat as they are in the combat zone and are responsible to manage crime activities, control public safety and order, perform search, rescue, and escorting tasks (Public Service Department Malaysia, 2009). Therefore, it is common for police officers to be injured during an operation (Razali, 2018) or while helping the public (Ismail, 2018). Some unlucky one got shot by criminals (Randhawa, 2017) or attacked by public (“Latihan polis”, 2017).

In fact, Williams, Ciarrochi, and Deane (2010) claimed that policing is an emotionally challenging profession and police officers experienced high depression and mental health problems as they often suppressed or failed to identify their

emotions. Since, police is a highly bureaucratic military structured organisation (Patterson, 2009), rationality is given more importance compared to the emotions (Putnam & Mumby, 1993). Besides, police job nature associate with masculinity, therefore police officers mask their emotions (Martin, 1999) and practice higher emotional control (Daus & Brown, 2012). Police officers feel uncomfortable to express their emotions to colleagues. In this respect, junior police officers (ranked from constables to sub-inspector) who often deal directly with the public are expected to detach their emotions when dealing with public (Martin, 1999). Consequently, hardening emotions will reduce their receptivity to understand the public's problem, which may result in less responsive behaviour (Pogrebin & Poole, 1991). Eventually, the ability to understand others' emotions will be reduced. Besides, junior police officers must comply with the orders of higher ranking officers, regardless of their personal opinions, which may induce emotional dissonance (Yaacob, 2012).

Meanwhile, senior police officers (ranked from inspector to inspector general) hold higher authority and are the backbone of investigation team. Police officers at higher power tend to be less sensitive to others' emotions (Martin, 1999). At higher levels, the police officers are expected to maintain more emotional control by manipulating their emotions which eventually reduce their ability of being sensitive toward others (Daus & Brown, 2012). Generally, police officers practice "Silent Approach" by controlling their facial expressions in order to frighten the suspects during investigations (Arther & Caputo, 1959). Practicing higher emotional control may eventually reduce their vulnerability to be sensitive toward others (Daus & Brown, 2012).

As police's job nature exposed them to stressful and emotionally challenging tasks, strong emotional strength and endurance are extremely crucial (Abdullah, 2010;

Baker & Ibrahim, 2014, 2017; Yaacob, 2012). Emotional intelligence enables police officer to cope better with emotional demands (Baker & Ibrahim, 2014). Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ emotions, to discriminate among them and to use the information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (p. 189). Goleman (1995) on the other hand explained that emotional intelligence is any underlying personal characteristic that is not represented by cognitive intelligence. However, Bar-On viewed emotional intelligence as noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence an individual’s ability to cope with environmental demands and pressures successfully (Bar-On, 1997). By contrast, Petrides and Furnham (2001) defined emotional intelligence as a trait, and it is a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies. These various definitions of emotional intelligence have contributed to the development of three emotional intelligence models: (1) ability model, (2) mixed model, and (3) trait model.

Generally, the existing models have categorised emotional intelligence as personal intelligence and social intelligence. Salovey and Mayer (1990) explained emotional intelligence as understanding and managing one’s own (personal) and others’ emotions (social). Similarly, Bar-On’s mixed model of emotional intelligence included intrapersonal (personal) and interpersonal (social) dimensions (Bar-On, 1997). On the other hand, Goleman’s (2001) refined mixed model also focused on self-awareness and self-management (personal); social-awareness and relationship management (social). Likewise, Petrides and Furnham (2003) agreed that emotional intelligence construct is all about processing affect-laden information intrapersonally (personal) and interpersonally (social). Moreover, Goleman (1995) revealed that 80% of success at work is determined by emotional intelligence and only

20% by ordinary intelligence. Furthermore, Goleman (1995) awarded emotional intelligence as the key to success at work which involves more human contact. The police profession involves more human contact (Abdullah, 2010). Thus, emotional intelligence has a significant effect on policing. This study focused past studies on emotional intelligence in RMP setting.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Salovey and Mayer (1990) define emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor, control one's own feelings or emotions and those of others in one's environment and use them in thinking that will drive action. They state that individuals with emotional intelligence have skills in identifying, using, understanding and regulating emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). While Goleman (1995) divides emotional intelligence into five components, namely (i) self-awareness, (ii) self-regulation, (iii) self-motivation, (iv) empathy and (v) social skills. However, in the local context, Abdul Ghafar (1999) categorizes emotional intelligence into two main constructs, namely intrapersonal and interpersonal. The intrapersonal construct contains three elements of emotional intelligence, namely the ability to recognize one's own emotions, the ability to manage one's own emotions and one's own motivation. While the interpersonal construct contains two elements of emotional intelligence, namely the ability to handle effective relationships and recognize other people's emotions.

Work commitment refers to an individual's level of dedication, loyalty, and involvement in their work and organization (Hunger et al., 2016). It is a measure of the extent to which employees invest and engage in their work and their willingness to go above and beyond to achieve their organization's goals and objectives. Work commitment includes the attitudes, behaviours and values that individuals bring to

their work and their willingness to invest time, energy, and effort to fulfil their responsibilities and contribute to the success of their organization (Hunger et al., 2016). It can be influenced by factors such as job satisfaction, work environment, motivation, and the quality of life experienced by employees (Amatriain-Fernández et al., 2020). Fostering positive work commitment can lead to increased productivity, job satisfaction and overall organizational success.

In the context of the relationship between emotional intelligence and career commitment, there are many studies that show that emotional intelligence plays an important role in increasing the level of employee commitment to the organization. Emotional intelligence allows individuals to recognize, understand, and manage emotions wisely, which in turn has a positive impact on job satisfaction, loyalty, and the desire to continue serving well in the organization. The article that explains this relationship is a study conducted by Smith and colleagues (2019) in a public service organization. In the study, they examined how the emotional intelligence of officers is closely related to their level of career commitment. The results of the study show that officers with a high level of emotional intelligence tend to have a higher career commitment.

For example, employees who can understand and control their emotions well tend to face work challenges better, interact more effectively with colleagues, and show a willingness to make greater contributions to the organization. All the factors contribute to increasing their loyalty and commitment to their career and the organization as a whole.

#### **1.4 Aims of the Study**

This study aims to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and work commitment among police officers at Sabak Bernam District Police Headquarters, Selangor.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

Specifically, the following research questions are developed:

- i. What is the level of emotional intelligence among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam?
- ii. What is the level of work commitment among IPD Sabak Bernam police officers?
- iii. What is the relationship between emotional intelligence and work commitment among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam?
- iv. To what extent is the relationship between emotional intelligence and work commitment among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam?

#### **1.6 Research Objectives**

The research objectives are;

- i. to investigate emotional intelligence among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam
- ii. to investigate the level of work commitment among Sabak Bernam IPD police officers
- iii. to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and work commitment among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam

- iv. to investigate the extent of the relationship between emotional intelligence and work commitment among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam

## **1.7 Hypothesis**

Based on the research questions, there are four hypotheses formulated:

Hypothesis 1: The emotional intelligence of police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam is positively related to their level of career commitment

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the level of work commitment among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam

Hypothesis 3: Police officers with high emotional intelligence tend to show a higher level of work commitment

Hypothesis 4: The emotional intelligence of police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam is positively correlated with their level of career commitment, showing a strong relationship between the two factors.

## **1.8 Operational Definition**

### **1.8.1 Emotional Intelligence**

Petrides and Furnham (2001) defined emotional intelligence as a trait and it is a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies. These various definitions of emotional intelligence have contributed to the development of three emotional intelligence models: (1) ability model, (2) mixed model, and (3) trait model. Generally, the existing models have categorized emotional intelligence as personal intelligence and social intelligence. Salovey and Mayer (1990) explained emotional intelligence as understanding and managing one's own (personal) and others' emotions (social).

Similarly, Bar-On's mixed model of emotional intelligence included intrapersonal (personal) and interpersonal (social) dimensions (Bar-On, 1997). On the other hand, Goleman's (2001) refined mixed model also focused on self-awareness and self-management (personal); social awareness and relationship management (social). Likewise, Petrides and Furnham (2003) agreed that emotional intelligence construct is all about processing affect-laden information intrapersonal (personal) and interpersonally (social). Moreover, Goleman (1995) revealed that 80% of success at work is determined by emotional intelligence and only 20% by ordinary intelligence. Furthermore, Goleman (1995) awarded emotional intelligence as the key to success at work which involves more human contact. The police profession involves more human contact (Abdullah, 2010). Thus, emotional intelligence has a significant effect on policing. This article focuses on past studies on emotional intelligence in RMP settings.

### **1.8.2 Work Commitment**

Work commitment, a multifaceted construct, has been extensively studied in organizational behavior and human resource management. It refers to the psychological state in which employees identify with their organization and feel obligated to contribute to its success (Allen & Meyer, 1990). This review examines key theoretical frameworks and empirical findings on work commitment, highlighting its antecedents, consequences, and implications for organizational effectiveness.

Work commitment is a critical factor in organizational success. Understanding its theoretical frameworks, antecedents, consequences, and implications for organizational effectiveness is essential for managers and HR professionals to effectively manage and foster employee commitment. By implementing strategies that address organizational, individual, and social factors, organizations can create a work

environment that fosters high levels of commitment, leading to improved performance, employee well-being, and ethical behavior.

Work commitment can be defined as the level of dedication, loyalty and attachment that employees have towards their organization and their job. Work commitment can be measured through dimensions such as affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Van Der Hoek et al., 2021).

### **1.8.3 Police Officers**

The Royal Malaysian Police, or the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), consists of various ranks that make up their organizational structure. PDRM has 17 ranks which are divided into two categories, namely Senior Police Officers and Junior Police Officers and Constables.

Senior Police Officers start from the rank of Inspector to Inspector General of Police. Ranks in this category include Inspector General of Police (IG), Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), Commissioner of Police (CP), Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police (SAC), Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), and Superintendent of Police (SUPT).

Junior Police Officers and Constables involve the rank of Constable to the rank of Sub-Inspector.

Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) are responsible for maintaining peace and order in the country. They perform tasks such as maintaining public order, fighting crime, investigating crime cases, and providing assistance to the community.

Police officers refer to sworn law enforcement personnel who are actively involved in law enforcement duties within a police organization. This includes officers of different ranks, including constables, sergeants, lieutenants, and senior officers. It

does not include public employees or administrative personnel who do not have direct law enforcement responsibilities.

Police officers are responsible for maintaining law and order, preventing and investigating crime, enforcing traffic regulations, and ensuring public safety. They may also be involved in community policing, providing help and support to the public, and participating in crime prevention programs. Police officers can work in various units or departments within the police force, such as patrol, investigations, traffic, special operations and community policing. They may also have specialized roles, such as detectives, forensics experts or K-9 handlers. The specific duties and responsibilities of police officers can vary depending on the jurisdiction and the needs of the community they serve (Chong & Kee, 2019).

### **1.9 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research serves as a basic exploration of the critical relationship between the effectiveness of emotional intelligence and work commitment in the context of law enforcement. This research serves as a basic exploration of the critical relationship between the effectiveness of emotional intelligence and work commitment in the context of law enforcement. By examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and work commitment among police officers at IPD Sabak Bernam, this research provides a deeper understanding of how psychological factors such as emotional intelligence affect the level of employee commitment to the organization.

Findings from this research can provide guidance to management in law enforcement agencies to take appropriate steps in strengthening the emotional intelligence of police officers and, in turn, increase their level of work commitment.

With a better understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence and

work commitment, measures of professionalism development and individual development in emotional aspects can be strengthened to ensure the success of organizations in achieving the goals of public safety and order.

Therefore, in conclusion, this research plays an important role in contributing to knowledge about the factors that affect the effectiveness of law enforcement organizations through the exploration of the relationship between emotional intelligence and work commitment. With a deeper understanding, strategic and effective actions can be taken to increase the productivity, job satisfaction, and loyalty of police officers in carrying out their law enforcement duties with excellence.

