

ROLE CONFLICT AND ROLE AMBIGUITY  
AMONG MALAYSIAN JOURNALISTS  
IN NEWSROOM DECISION-MAKING

FARIDAH IBRAHIM

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
UNIVERSITI PERTANIAN MALAYSIA

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by

**FARIDAH IBRAHIM**

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the  
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**FARIDAH IBRAHIM**

April, 1995

Chairman : Professor Sulaiman Mohd. Yassin, Ph.D.

Faculty : Centre for Extension and Continuing Education

The main objective of the study was to determine the relationship between some selected independent variables with role conflict and role ambiguity perceived by Malaysian journalists in newsroom decision-making.

The study was carried out among 226 randomly selected journalists from eight Malaysian print media organisations and a national news agency. A survey research method was employed and self-administered and structured questionnaires were used to collect data. Descriptive and inferential statistics, namely, frequency and percentage, Pearson's correlation coefficients, multiple regression and discriminant analysis were used for data analysis.



Apart from revealing that the perceived levels of role conflict and role ambiguity among the Malaysian print and news agency journalists were at moderate levels, the results of the study also showed that the level of role stress was influenced by some organisational, personal and interpersonal factors. Findings from the study suggested that the level of role conflict and role ambiguity among journalists could be made less pronounced if media managers would give due consideration to some of the critical variables examined in the study. The study found that the perceived levels of both role conflict and role ambiguity among the journalists were negatively related to the level of participation in newsroom decision-making, the level of participation in task decision, nature of task characteristics, leadership supportive behaviour and positively related to structure-oriented leadership behaviour. Role conflict was also found to be positively related to the deadline pressure experienced by the journalists in their newsrooms.

The salary of the journalists as well as the years of working experience that journalists had in the related field were also found to be related to the levels of role conflict and role ambiguity. The level of interpersonal trust, respect and liking as well as the communication relationships between journalists and their superiors were also related to journalists' perceived role stress. The study revealed that the level of role conflict among journalists was found to be higher in those who had high deadline pressure, low work experience, low regard for their task characteristics and low participation in task decision; while the level of role ambiguity tended to be higher among

those who had weak interpersonal relationships with their superiors, low regard for their task characteristics, low participation in decision-making and task decision, were younger in age and those who perceived their leaders to be more structure-oriented and less supportive.

Abstrak disertasi yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Pertanian Malaysia sebagai **memenuhi sebahagian** daripada keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah.

**KONFLIK PERANAN DAN KEKABURAN PERANAN  
DI KALANGAN WARTAWAN DI MALAYSIA  
DALAM BUATPUTUSAN DI BILIK BERITA**

Oleh

**FARIDAH IBRAHIM**

April, 1995

Pengerusi : Profesor Sulaiman Mohd. Yassin, Ph.D.

Fakulti : Pusat Pengembangan dan Pendidikan Lanjutan

Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan hubungan antara beberapa angkuabah bebas terpilih dengan konflik peranan dan kekaburan peranan di kalangan wartawan di Malaysia dalam proses buatputusan di bilik berita.

Kajian tersebut telah dijalankan di kalangan 226 orang responden yang dipilih secara rambang dari lapan buah organisasi media cetak dan sebuah agensi berita nasional. Untuk mengumpul data, kajian tersebut menggunakan kaedah tinjauan dan borang soal selidik berstruktur yang dijawab sendiri oleh responden. Statistik deskriptif dan inferensi seperti kekerapan dan peratus, korelasi Pearson, kaedah regresi dan diskriminan digunakan untuk analisis data.

Di samping mendedahkan bahawa tahap persepsi konflik peranan dan kekaburan peranan di kalangan wartawan media cetak dan agensi berita di Malaysia adalah di peringkat sederhana, hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa tahap tekanan peranan ini dipengaruhi oleh beberapa faktor organisasi, peribadi dan antaraperibadi. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa tahap konflik peranan dan kekaburan peranan boleh diusahakan supaya tidak begitu ketara sekiranya para pengurus media memberi pertimbangan sewajarnya kepada beberapa angkubah yang dikaji dalam kajian tersebut. Kajian mendapati tahap persepsi konflik peranan dan kekaburan peranan di kalangan wartawan mempunyai hubungan negatif dengan tahap penyertaan dalam buatputusan di bilik berita, tahap penyertaan dalam proses buatputusan berkaitan dengan tugas, ciri-ciri tugas, dan tingkahlaku kepimpinan yang bercorak kerjasama, serta mempunyai hubungan positif dengan tingkahlaku kepimpinan berorientasikan struktur. Konflik peranan juga didapati mempunyai hubungan positif dengan batasan waktu yang dihadapi oleh wartawan di bilik berita.

Pendapatan serta pengalaman bekerja dalam bidang kewartawanan di kalangan wartawan juga mempunyai hubungkait dengan tahap persepsi konflik peranan dan kekaburan peranan. Tahap perhubungan antaraperibadi seperti kepercayaan, kesukaan dan penghormatan serta perhubungan komunikasi antara wartawan dengan ketua, mempunyai hubungan dengan tahap konflik peranan dan kekaburan peranan di kalangan wartawan. Kajian tersebut menunjukkan bahawa tahap konflik peranan didapati lebih tinggi di

kalangan wartawan yang menghadapi batasan waktu yang terlalu tinggi, mempunyai kurang pengalaman bekerja dalam bidangewartawanan, tanggapan rendah terhadap ciri-ciri tugas dan tahap penyertaan yang rendah dalam proses buatputusan yang berkaitan dengan tugas. Manakala tahap kekaburan peranan didapati lebih tinggi di kalangan wartawan yang mempunyai hubungan antaraperibadi yang rendah dengan ketua, tanggapan yang rendah terhadap ciri-ciri tugas, tahap penyertaan yang rendah dalam proses buatputusan di bilik berita dan buatputusan dalam hal-hal berkaitan tugas, lebih muda dari segi usia dan mereka yang menanggap ketua-ketua lebih berorientasikan struktur dan kurang bersikap kerjasama.