

# Research on Work Performance and Job Design in Southeast Asia Countries: A Publication Review

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## ABSTRACT

Southeast Asia is a dynamic, competitive and full of expertise continent in various professions. The vibrant of working environment nowadays required employees to work hard and proactive. Performance and competence are key indicators to achieve the mission and vision of the organization. These situations transform the employees to work harder and multitask. As a result, employees are experiencing job stress and dissatisfaction with their working environment. Therefore, researchers are trying to discover what the elements that can motivate employees to excel are. These scenarios increase the research on work performance and job design among the employees in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, both concepts seem to be unpopular to study among the researchers as some of the industries are ignoring job design in the work performance study. Furthermore, the numbers of literature searches on both concepts are very limited. The objective of this paper is to identify a total of publication on work performance and job design among Southeast Asia researchers. The data was generated from few prominent databases. The data will help other researchers to study the factor contributing towards the aforementioned scenario. There are glaring grammatical errors throughout the text. Please find language editor and proof read

**Keywords:** Job design, work performance, Southeast Asia Countries, Records count

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asia countries are rich with cultural diversity and various economic activities. There are 11 countries in Southeast Asia, namely, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Laos, Brunei, East Timor, Indonesia, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Vietnam. According to statista.com, the population of Southeast Asia was approximately more than 640,600 million people. The rise of Southeast Asia began with the migration of Chinese people from China to the neighboring Asian countries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century until 1949 (Wee, 2017). The rising of the industries such as mining, manufacturing, and rubber are some of the impacts from the migration. Today the competitive working environments boost the economy of Southeast Asia. As a result, researchers from Southeast Asia are starting to study what are the factors to maintain the performance of the employees. Several methods have been used to measure work performance, namely, key performance indicator, audit, and assessment. However, most of the researchers are ignoring the job design as one of the important indicators to study work performance. Additionally, the total number of literature on job design is very low especially in some of the country in Southeast Asia. There are various spaces that researchers from Southeast Asia can explore to generate better work performance outcome. Research on how work performance contributes to the effectiveness as an outcome is still in its infancy stage

(Kahya, 2009). Furthermore, Rayburn (2014) shared that prior studies ignored work design element that contributes to working effectively.

Work performances and job design are not new vocabularies amongst researchers. Both concepts have been used to study organization success factor. In addition, both concepts also have been adapted ages in various fields. According to Goodson (1997), work performance has been used as standard evaluation during Wei-Dynasty. Similarly, Parker and Wall (1998) shared that the underpinning of job design research approach has started during the industrial revolution in Great Britain. Both concepts have evolved along with the industrial revolution and workplace changes in the workplace. Robert A Roe (1999) Perera, Khatibi, Navaratna, and Chinna (2014) and R A Roe (1996) defined work performance as the ability of employees to perform and fulfill task given to meet the organization's expectation. Similarly, work performance also refers to the employee's outcome, whether the employees able to perform well or not (Perera et al., 2014). On the other hand, job design can be defined as improving work standard, get rid of hazards for the better working process, and conserve the physical effort to fulfill and accomplish the job (Daxon & Filson, 1950). Job design also can be defined as how employee experiences work and task accomplishes effect on the task given to them with the element of opportunities and limitation of the job assigned (Hackman, 1980). Morgeson and Campion (2003) have developed an integrated work design framework to explain the broader perspective of job design and work performance. The framework proposes the job design will increase work performance among the employees. Not only that, the framework also discovered that the job design also will increase the competency of the employees. The framework opens a new perspective on how work performance was measured. Since that, a number of theories and conceptual have been developed to strengthen the relationship between work performance and job design.

Based on the previous research, there are numerous benefits of work performance and job design study. However, both concepts are still not popular among Southeast Asia researchers. The result from literature search shows that the number of literature in work performance and job design are very limited. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to capture and summarize the total publication by Southeast Asia researchers in work performance and job design fields. The records count can be used to identify the level of awareness of work performance and job design research in certain countries. The research may be limited to the several prominent databases but the databases that have been chosen are well established in work performance and job design fields.

### **1.1 Important of Work Performance and Job Design Study**

Studies on work performance and job design have been discussed in many types of research and still actively been studying until now (eg. Davenport, 2008; Locke, 1969; Oldham & Fried, 2016; S. Parker & Wall, 1998; Umstot, Bell, & Mitchell, 1976). Moreover, work performance and job design have been studied in various viewpoints such as well-being (Shupe, Wambaugh, & Bramble, 2015), psychological needs (Rayburn, 2014) and much more in organization behavior and psychology studies. A study in work performance and job design helps the organization to develop a proper direction of the organization. The changing environment of work place required the researcher to study job stress, motivation, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, there is still a gap for the researcher to study about work performance and job design. The conceptualized and the suitable of measurement for individual work performance are still been (Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, Vet, & Beek, 2014). Gyan-Baffour (1999) added the relation between employee participant and work design in work performance of organization has not been well studied. Additionally, there is no comprehensive conceptual framework of work

performance available (Koopmans et al., 2011). S. K. Parker (2014) added that most of the dominant moderator of work design is uncertainty.

## 1.2 Methodology

To generate a list of record count on work performance and work design in Southeast Asia, the researcher has identified several prominent databases to generate the data. The database was selected from reliable and credible online resources, such as Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar, Emerald, EBSCOhost, Science Direct, and Springer databases. The steps involved to generate the data were 1) identification of the potential database to use, 2) development of search statement 3) generation of the results, 4) filter by country, 5) filter by specific terms such as language, subject, and year (optional), 6) analyze the result, and 7) discussion. Figure 1 shows the sources of records count.

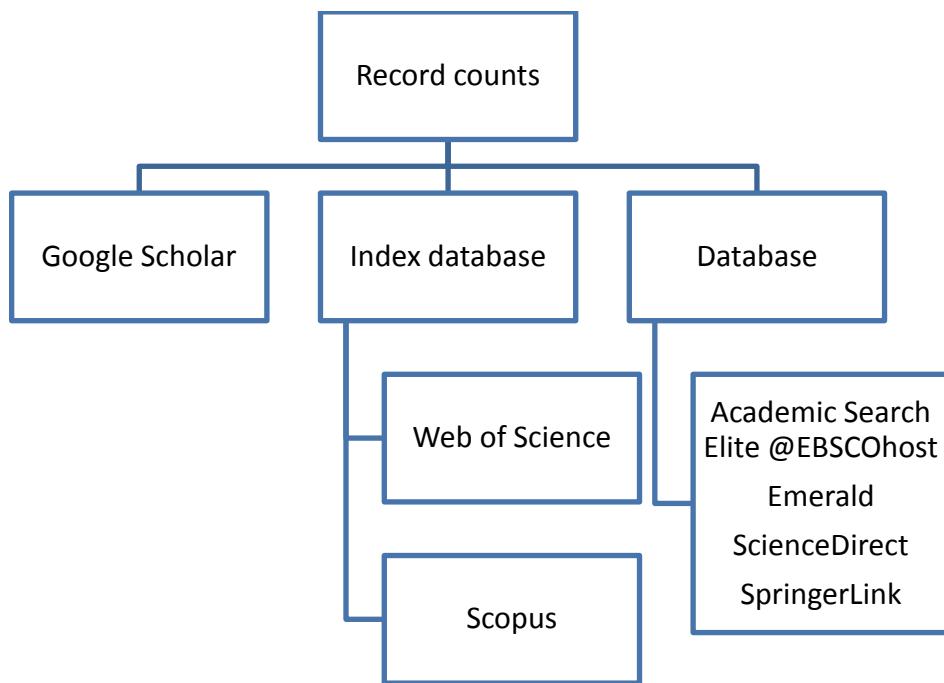


Figure 1 The sources of records count.

### 1.2.1 Search Statement

To develop search statement, the research uses Boolean search and quotation mark. The research identifies the related concept of the key words and combines it with Boolean concept namely, "AND" and "OR". Boolean search help research to filter the search results in the Google Scholar and the databases. Table 1.0 shows the search statement uses to develop search results.

Table 1 Search statement used to retrieve results

	Concept A	Concept B	Concept C
Key words	Work Design	Job Design	Countries
Boolean	AND OR		AND
Search statement	“Work design” AND “Job Design” AND “Countries” (e.g Malaysia)		
	“Work design” OR “Job Design” AND “Countries” (e.g Malaysia)		

## 2.0 GOOGLE SCHOLAR

Google scholar is one of the powerful search engines that help users to search for academic resources and scholarly literature (Sam Houston State University, 2017). As one stop center, Google scholar provides books, article journals, conference papers, and theses, to name a few. The research has developed a search statement to generate records count in Google Scholar. Based on the results in the Google scholar, the total number of research on work performance and work design in Southeast Asia that has been indexed is 1,511 results. Some countries in Southeast Asia produce a small number of publications related to both concepts. From Table 2.0, five countries recorded produced less than 20 materials that have been indexed in the Google scholar. There are Myanmar, Laos, Brunei, East Timor and Vietnam. The developed countries such as Singapore (490 results), and Malaysia (365 results) lead the research on work design and work performance in Southeast Asia countries. The main factor contributes to actively research on work performance and work design for both countries are because of the strong economic (Bouzanis, 2017). This will increase the activity of research related to work performance and work design. On the other hand, a total of 39 articles has been indexed in Google scholar by using "Southeast Asia" as a filter. The numbers are slightly low compared to "East Asia" as a filter with 97 results. Conversely, 705 records count shows as a result of using "Asia" as a filter in which it is slightly low compared to "United States of America" as a filter with 1,340 results. It can be concluded that several factors contribute to the active research on work performance and work design. Economy situation and social dynamic are the main factors that contribute to the aggressive research in this field.

Table 2 total of materials related to work design and work performances been index in Google Scholar

No	Countries	Number of research index in Google Scholar
1	Vietnam	123 results
2	Thailand	179 results
3	Singapore	490 results
4	Philippines	136 results
5	Myanmar	5 results
6	Malaysia	365 results
7	Laos	4 results
8	Indonesia	172 results
9	East Timor	0 result
10	Cambodia	20 results
11	Brunei	17 results
Total		1,511 results

Update: July 26, 2017

### 3. CITATION OF DATABASE

To generate records count research in work performance and job design, two citation databases have been used; Web of Science and Scopus. These citation databases allowed researchers to check total of publication that has been indexed in the database. Usually, most of the article that has been indexed in the databases are from scholarly articles, publish conference papers, books, and book chapters, to name a few.

#### 3.1 Web of Science (WoS)

To generate records count of the research on work performance and work design, it is equally important to check the records count in *Web of Science (WoS)*. WoS is a research platform which allows concurrent cross-searching of a range of databases and citation indexes. WoS provides research tools such as cited reference search, citation reports, and provide personalized features for users. Table 3.0 shows top 10 countries produce research in work performance in WoS. The most dominant countries that have produced work performance research are USA (970 records count) which followed with England (179 records count) and Canada (170 records count). Since 1981, a total of 2,424 publications in work performance has been index in WoS. The English language is the most dominant language used in research of work performance which is 96.535 %, followed by German (1.444 %) and Spanish (0.619 %). None of Southeast Asia countries are listed in the top 10 index in the WoS. However, Singapore still leads the research on work performance with 21 records to count in the WoS, followed by Malaysia with 10 records count and 4 records count from both Thailand and Indonesia. Table 4.0 listed the records count produced from the Southeast Asia countries in WoS. The number of records counts in work performance is still very low compared to other continents. This shows that more research in work performance should be conducted in Southeast Asia countries. The

cultural and demographic factors might influence the diversity of work performance research in Southeast Asia countries.

Table 3 Top 10 countries that have produced work performance research on WoS

No	Countries	Records count	% of 2424
1	USA	970	40.017
2	England	179	7.84
3	Canada	170	7.013
4	Australia	154	6.353
5	China	124	5.652
6	Germany	124	5.116
7	Netherlands	105	4.332
8	Sweden	92	3.795
9	Japan	66	2.723
10	India	65	2.682

Update: July 27, 2017

Table 4 List of records count produced from the Southeast Asia countries on WoS

No	Countries	Number of research index in Web of Science	% of 2424
1	Vietnam	0 results	0%
2	Thailand	4 results	0.165 %
3	Singapore	21 results	0.866 %
4	Philippines	0 results	0%
5	Myanmar	0 results	0%
6	Malaysia	10 results	0.413 %
7	Laos	0 results	0%
8	Indonesia	4 results	0.165 %
9	East Timor	0 results	0%
10	Cambodia	0 results	0%
11	Brunei	0 results	0%
Total		39 results	

Update: July 27, 2017

On the other hand, 793 records count on job design have been index in WoS. Table 5.0 shows the top 10 countries that have produced job design research on WoS. The most dominant countries produced job designs on WoS are USA (45.649 %), followed by England (12.736 %), and Australia (7.440 %). There are four main languages used in job design research, namely, English (96.091 %), German (2.396 %), Dutch (0.631 %) and French (0.504 %). However, none of Southeast Asia countries are listed in the top 10 index in the WoS. the number of publication on job design produced by researchers from Southeast Asia is 14 publication. It shows that the awareness of job design concepts among researchers in Southeast Asia countries is very limited. Table 6.0 shows the complete list of publication related to job design in Southeast Asia countries. Singapore (1.009%), Malaysia (0.504%) and Indonesia (0.252%) lead the publication on job design among other Southeast Asia countries.

Table 5 Top 10 countries that have produced research on WoS

No	Countries	Records count	% of 793
1	USA	362	45.649 %
2	England	101	12.736 %
3	Australia	59	7.440 %
4	Germany	57	7.188 %
5	Canada	54	6.810 %
6	Netherlands	50	6.305 %
7	Taiwan	26	3.279 %
8	China	21	2.648 %
9	Spain	20	2.522 %
10	France	19	2.396 %

Update: July 27, 2017

Table 6 The list of Southeast Asia countries with records count on WoS

No	Countries	Number of research index in Web of Science	% of 2424
1	Vietnam	0	0%
2	Thailand	0	0%
3	Singapore	8	1.009%
4	Philippines	0	0%
5	Myanmar	0	0%
6	Malaysia	4	0.504%
7	Laos	0	0%
8	Indonesia	2	0.252%
9	East Timor	0	0%
10	Cambodia	0	0%
11	Brunei	0	0%
Total		14 results	

Update: July 27, 2017

### 3.2 Scopus Index

Besides using Web of Science, Scopus is also one of the largest citation databases and abstract of peer-reviewed literature, such as books, conference proceedings and scientific journals. Even though WoS is considered to be the main benchmark in publishing, some academician also prefers Scopus index as a target to publish. Based on the results, the United States (7,919 records) leads the publication of work performance in the Scopus, followed by United Kingdom (1,759 records) and Australia (1,209). The dominant subject area in work performance in WoS is medicine (44.1%), others can not simply mention 'others', needs to be specific (environmental science, humanities, economic, mathematic, and much more, 32%), followed by engineering (17.5%) and social science (13.4%). Even though there are no Southeast Asia countries among the top 10, Malaysia leads the publication with 287 publications, followed by Singapore (145 publications), Thailand (73 publications) and Indonesia

(68 publications). Figure 2 summarizes the publication of work performance from Southeast Asia countries.

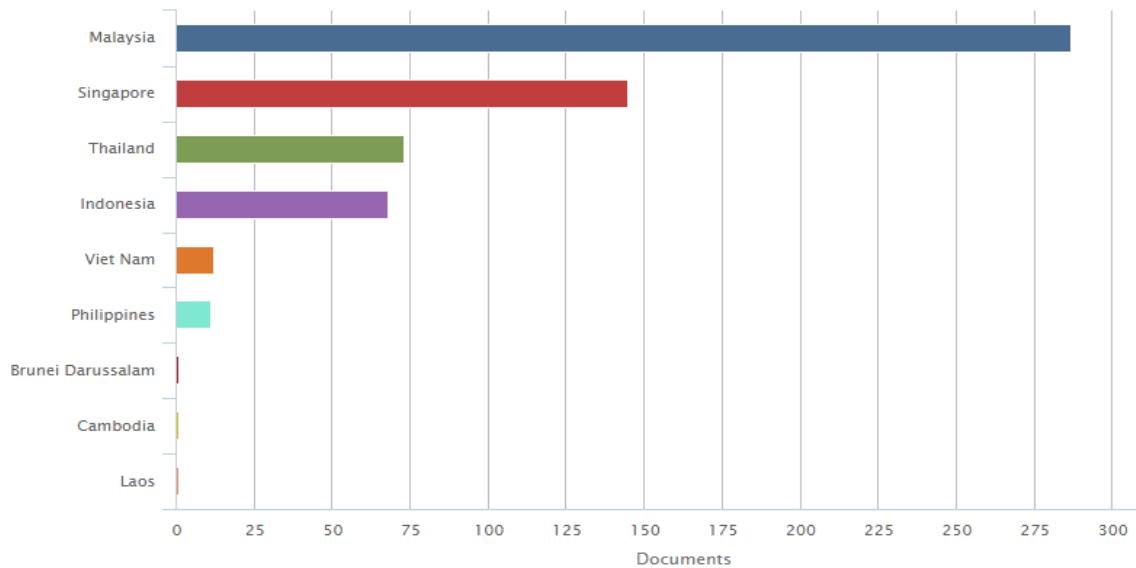


Figure 2 The publication of work performance from the Southeast Asia countries.

On the other hand, 10,082 articles in job design recorded index in Scopus. United States (4340 records) leads the chart followed by United Kingdom (1,107 records) and Australia (577 records). Business and management field (4,655 records) and Social Sciences field (2,817 records) are the dominant subject areas in work design research. Unfortunately, there are no Southeast Asia countries listed in the top 10 countries in work design research. However, Malaysia (112 records) leads the chart followed by Singapore (96 records), Thailand (30 records) and Indonesia (18 records). Figure 3 shows the details of publication on job design in Southeast Asia countries. Countries that are not listed in the chart have not produced any of work design research.

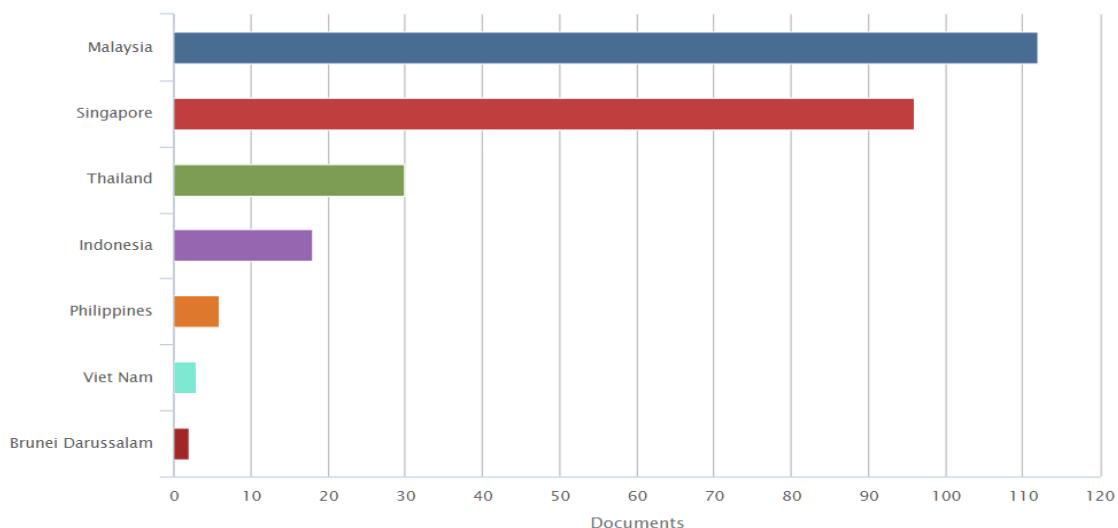


Figure 3 The details of publication on job design in Southeast Asia countries.

## 4.0 DATABASES

To generate total records of the publication produced in Southeast Asia, four prominent databases were chosen. The databases are Academic Search Elite @EBSCOhost (documents published since 1892), Emerald (documents published since 1977), ScienceDirect (documents published since 2008) and SpringerLink (documents published since 1972). Table 7.0 shows a total of the publications produced by Southeast Asia researchers.

Table 7 Total of publications produced by Southeast Asia researchers.

Database	Brunei	Cambodia	East Timor	Indonesia	Laos	Malaysia	Myanmar	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand	Vietnam
Academic Search Elite @EBSCOhost											
	0	1	0	5	1	25	0	6	9	3	2
	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Emerald											
	0	20	0	125	7	417	8	107	392	193	92
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
ScienceDirect											
	12	1	2	14	0	18	3	9	12	14	2
	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	4	0	0
SpringerLink											
	0	2	0	6	0	19	0	2	49	15	3
	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	7	0	2
Total	13	24	2	150	8	484	11	120	476	225	101

Last update 28 July 2017

Based on Table 7, the most consistent countries produce research in work performance and job design is Malaysia (484 publications), Singapore (476 publication) and Thailand (226 publication). Even though some of the countries produced some publication on work performance, the numbers are still low. Brunei, East Timor, Laos, and Myanmar published a small number of work performance publication that has been an index in the databases.

Likewise, work performance study, the number of publication of job design is also very limited. Singapore (14 publications), and Malaysia (5 publication) are the most consistent publishing material in job design. These results can be supported with Gyan-Baffour (1999) thought, whereby the relation between employee participant and job design in work performance of organization has not been well studied.

## 5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The total number of publications in work performance and job design is still low in Southeast Asia. The number of publications in both concepts are higher in developing countries such as the United State of America, Australia, and United Kingdom these are developed countries. Misunderstanding of the categories of countries badly affects this paper. It is unfair to compare the number of publications for two different categories . It shows that the economic tremors have been in line with studies in both fields. The revolutions of working environment change the motivation indicators of the employees. Therefore study in work performance and job design

should be aligned with the revolution of the working environment. The ignorance of this research will cause job dissatisfaction among the employees. Employees started to losing interest to work proactively to achieve mission and vision of the organization. As a result, researchers in Southeast Asia should explore work performance and work design. Even though there are various methods to study job satisfaction such as motivation, and psychology, a study in work performance and job design strengthen the motivation indicators. Job design study will support the measurement of work performance. This will promote job satisfaction and will increase the motivation of the employees. The awareness of work performance and job design in the organization will promote positive output for the organization. Based on the total of publication generated, the developing country such as Malaysia and Singapore lead the publications. Others development countries should promote research in work performance and job design to support the vibrant of the economic. The study will guide the organization to develop proper planning and training for the employees. The outcome in work performance and job design guide the organization to calculate the return on investment.

Table 8 The number of the publication produced by Southeast Asia researchers

<b>DATABASE</b>	<b>TOTAL RECORDS COUNT</b>
Google Scholar	1,511
Web of Science (WoS)	53
Scopus	225
Academic Search Elite @EBSCOhost	53
Emerald	1,364
ScienceDirect	94
SpringerLink	107
Total	3,407 Records

Table 8 shows a total of publication in work performance and job design in Southeast Asia. Total records count in work performance and job design is 3,407 records. The higher records count was recorded at Google Scholar followed with in Emerald database. 278 types of research have been index in Web of Science and Scopus. There is still a space need to discover by researchers in Southeast Asia to study work performance and job design. The cultural and the socio economy in some Southeast Asia countries are different. Therefore, the natures of the working environment are different. The outcome of the study will contribute to the body of knowledge in work performance and job design.

As a conclusion, the totals number of study in work performance and job design are still low compared to other developing countries in other continents. The only comparison is with developed countries as listed in table 3.0. Hence this conclusion in invalid. Even though the studies are limited to the several databases and focusing on one search engine, the records count are very low. Further research needs to be conducted to study these phenomena. Plenty databases can be used to study the total of the publication in Southeast Asia. The future

researchers also can generate the records counts from the Meta search engine, hybrids, directories, and other crawlers search engine such as Yahoo.

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