

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes: (1) the subjects, (2) the materials, (3) the procedures used in the collection and analysis of the data, and (4) the data analysis.

3.1 SUBJECTS

The population of this research was psychological officers in the three southern border provinces, namely Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. As of February 2009, there were a total of 144 non-commissioned and commissioned psychological officers in this area. Since the size of population was not very big, the data was collected from all of them.

3.2 MATERIALS

In this study, questionnaires were used as research instruments to find out the most significant occupational factor that has contributed to the stress of the psychological officers in the three southern border provinces. It consists of 3 parts as follows:

Part 1: Personal Information: There are five questions asking about age, rank, marital status, education background, length of service with psychological battalion.

Part 2: Occupational Stressor Questionnaire: This part of the questionnaire was adapted from the one developed by Patcharin Kotyajanatsaenyakorn (2008). It consists of 50 items of situation which can be divided into 5 groups of occupational factors that cause stress as follows:

- Work conditions from item 1 – 12 (12 items)
- Organization roles from item 13 – 18 (6 items)
- Work relationships from item 19 – 30 (12 items)
- Career improvements from item 31 - 35 (5 items)
- Organizational structure and climate from item 36 – 50 (15 items)

In part 2, subjects were asked to identify whether they faced the given situations or not. If not, they were advised to move on to the next item. If so, they were asked to rate the level of stress caused by that situation. Items can be rated by one of the 5-point Likert-type responses as shown in the table below.

Interpretation of the scale	Rates of opinion
Very high	5
High	4
Moderate	3
Low	2
Very low	1

Mean	Level of stress
4.21-5.00	Very high
3.41-4.20	High
2.61-3.40	Moderate
1.81-2.60	Low
1.00-1.80	Very low

Part 3: Additional Comment: This part consists of two questions. In the first question, the subjects were asked to specify their symptoms of stress. In the other question, the subjects were encouraged to put any of their comments about occupational stressors.

Validity and reliability of the instrument

In order to make sure that the wording in the questionnaire was understandable and contained no ambiguity, the researcher had the questionnaire content validity reviewed by a qualified consultant. Also, the researcher tried out the questionnaire by asking 15 psychological officers to fill out the questionnaire. Its Cronbach's alpha coefficient equaled 0.89 indicating good reliability.

3.3 PROCEDURES

First of all, the researcher sent a formal letter to the Psychological Battalion Commander for an approval and assistance for collecting data from all 144 psychological officers in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat. After the approval, copies of the questionnaire were sent to the commander of Psychological Company who worked in the area. Then he forwarded copies of the questionnaire to all of his subordinates who filled out the questionnaire by themselves. Then, the questionnaires were collected and sent back to the researcher. The questionnaires were sent back and forth between the researcher and commander by personnel who traveled between Santisuk Task Force Head quarter in Pattani and Somdej Pranarai Camp in Lopburi. The turnaround was within 15 days.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The personal information part, which focuses on age, education background, rank and length of service with psychological battalion, was described by percentage. Then, the data were analyzed by SPSS program. The results were presented in terms of percentage, frequency and mean.