

The Level of Job Satisfaction and Early Retirement Intentions among Teachers in Perak, Malaysia

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v14-i1/24963> DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v14-i1/24863

Published Online: 29 March 2025

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the level and determine the relationship and influence between job satisfaction and early retirement aspirations of primary school teachers in Perak. This study uses a quantitative approach through survey methods in collecting data. A total of 379 respondents from primary schools in twelve districts in Perak were surveyed using the stratified random sampling method. The data have been statistically analyzed, descriptive and inferential. The findings showed that the level of job satisfaction was high (mean=3.97, sd=0.40) while teachers' desire to retire early was low (mean=2.32, sd=0.78). There are also differences in job satisfaction levels based on the location of the place of service. The variables of early retirement intention also showed differences in the level of demographic factors, location, place of service and also the length of service of the respondents.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Early Retirement Intention, Quantitative, Primary Teachers

Introduction

This study discusses the relationship of job satisfaction on teachers' early retirement intentions in the state of Perak. The public service sector, particularly education, plays an important role in the development of the country, but there is an increasing trend of early retirement among teachers before reaching the age of 60. This phenomenon is associated

with high workload, work pressure, changes in educational policies, and reduced levels of job satisfaction. The study aimed to identify teachers' job satisfaction levels, examine differences based on demographic factors such as gender, location, and length of service, and test the relationship between job satisfaction and early retirement aspirations. Several theories were used in this study, including the Resource Conservation Theory (COR) by Hobfoll (2018), the Job Satisfaction Theory by Spector (1985), the Planned Behavior Theory by Azjen (1991), and the Beehr Retirement Model (1986). The framework of this study examines how factors such as salary, promotions, incentives, col-relationships, and communication impact teachers' early retirement intentions.

The study questions discussed included whether there was a difference in job satisfaction based on demographic factors, the relationship between job satisfaction and early retirement intentions, as well as the main factors influencing teachers' decision to retire early. The study also put forward a number of hypotheses stating that there was no significant difference in the level of job satisfaction and early retirement intention based on demographic factors, and there was no significant relationship between job satisfaction and early retirement intention. The limitation of this study is that it only focuses on national school teachers in the state of Perak, and does not rule out the possibility that there are other factors that influence teachers' early retirement decisions. However, this study is of great importance to the Ministry of Education (MOE) in formulating better policies to retain experienced teachers. By understanding the factors that influence job satisfaction and early retirement aspirations, more effective intervention measures can be implemented to retain quality teaching staff.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted using a quantitative approach with a questionnaire method to obtain relevant data. This study is in the form of a quantitative survey where a questionnaire is used as a measurement tool to collect information on job satisfaction and early retirement intention among teachers. This study leverages the advantages of a quantitative approach such as the ease of data collection from a large number of respondents as well as the ability to analyse data using statistical tests. However, the disadvantages of this approach include the possibility that the questionnaire may not be returned or not fully answered by the respondent.

The study population involved 20,880 national school teachers in the state of Perak, which is under the administration of 12 District Education Offices (PPDs). Proportional stratified random sampling was used to ensure that all districts were represented in the study. Based on the formula of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size selected was 377 respondents, with the questionnaire distributed according to the percentage of the population of each district. The survey questionnaire consists of three main parts, namely Part A which includes the respondents' demographic questions such as gender, age, service location, academic qualifications and length of service. Part B is used to measure teachers' job satisfaction based on the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) by Spector (1994), which includes aspects of salary, promotion, incentives, rewards, supervision, colleagues, policies and regulations, job areas, and communication. While Part C is used to measure early retirement intention using the Nurses' Intention to Quit (NITQ) by Morgan Viklund (2017) which is modified for the educational context.

Data analysis was carried out using descriptive and inference statistics. Descriptive statistics are used to determine job satisfaction levels and early retirement aspirations. Independent t-sample tests and one-way ANOVA were used to assess differences in job satisfaction and early retirement intention based on demographic factors.

Results

The results of the data analysis obtained from 379 respondents were obtained to answer survey questions related to job satisfaction and early retirement intention among national school teachers in the state of Perak. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inference statistics such as t-test, and ANOVA to understand the relationship between these two variables. The demographic profile of the respondents showed that the majority of respondents were female teachers (68.1%), with most of them aged between 41 and 50 years old (42.2%). In terms of school location, 50.7% of respondents work in urban areas, while 42.4% are in rural areas. In terms of academic qualifications, 73.9% have a bachelor's degree, and 38% of teachers obtained general qualifications through the Post Degree Education Course (KPLI).

Teachers' job satisfaction levels are measured based on nine dimensions, namely salary, promotion, incentives, rewards, supervision, policies and regulations, colleagues, job areas, and communication. The results showed that the overall job satisfaction level was at a high level with a mean of 3.97. The dimension with the highest satisfaction was the task area (mean = 4.31), while policies and regulations (mean = 3.52) recorded the lowest level of satisfaction. Meanwhile, the level of early retirement intention among teachers was found to be low with an overall mean value of 2.32. While there is little desire among teachers to retire early, factors such as comfort in employment, economic stability, and social relationships influence their decision to continue serving.

The hypothesis analysis found that there was no significant difference in job satisfaction based on gender and length of service of teachers, however there was a significant difference based on school location, where teachers in rural areas recorded lower levels of job satisfaction compared to teachers in urban areas. In terms of early retirement desire, there is no significant difference based on gender, but there is a significant difference based on the location of the school, where teachers serving in the city indicate a higher early retirement desire.

Discussions

The study found that the overall level of teachers' job satisfaction was high, with the task area and supervision dimensions recording the highest mean scores, while the policy and regulation dimensions recorded the lowest scores. While job satisfaction is at a high level, there is still room for improvement in terms of salary, promotions, incentives, and communication. In the context of early retirement aspirations, the study shows that teachers as a whole have a moderately low desire to retire early, contrary to the increasing trend of early retirement applications recorded by the Public Service Department (PSD).

In terms of differences in job satisfaction and early retirement aspirations based on demographic factors, the findings showed that there were no significant differences based on gender and length of service, however there were significant differences based on school

location, where urban teachers recorded higher levels of job satisfaction but also had higher early retirement aspirations compared to rural teachers.

This study also has implications for theory, education policy, school administration, as well as teachers and educators. Implications for education policy include the need to balance teachers' workload, increase incentives and rewards, and reduce onerous administrative tasks. The study also recommends that the ministry improve the teacher management system, improve work-life balance, and introduce special assistant posts for teachers to reduce work pressure. In addition, further research proposals were also discussed, including the use of a longitudinal method to look at changes in job satisfaction and early retirement aspirations from time to time, as well as expanding the scope of the study to other categories of teachers such as special education teachers and vocational teachers.

Conclusions

Overall, this study asserts that job satisfaction plays an important role in determining teachers' early retirement intentions. Although the desire to retire early among teachers is at a moderately low level, work stress factors, administrative support, and organizational policies influence their decisions. This study highlights the need for a more comprehensive strategy to improve teacher well-being and ensure a more sustainable education system, in line with the goals of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013–2025.

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