

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY IN
PERAK TENGAH DISTRICT**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this project paper is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan sama ada wujudnya perkaitan-perkaitan yang signifikan di antara kepuasan kerja guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris di daerah Perak Tengah terhadap pembolehubah-pembolehubah yang dipilih dengan jenis sekolah dan jantina responden. Soal selidik yang diubahsuai daripada Job Descriptive Index (JDI) oleh Dr. Patricia Cain Smith dan skala berbentuk Likert telah digunakan untuk memungut data bagi kajian ini. Kajian ini melibatkan sepuluh orang responden dari dua boleh sekolah berlainan di daerah Perak Tengah, iaitu SMK Iskandar Shah, Parit, dan SMK Sultan Muhammad Shah, Parit. Keputusan-keputusan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa hipotesis null tidak dapat ditolak, yakni tiadanya perbezaan signifikan yang statistik dalam kepuasan kerja guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris, iaitu di antara jantina respondent dan jenis sekolah. Dapatan-dapatan kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa kebanyakan guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris tidak pasti tentang pekerjaan sekarang, pendapatan dan elaun BISP, kemudahan-kemudahan, dan Sistem Saraan Malaysia. Hanya responden dari sekolah gred B menunjukkan bahawa mereka puas hati dengan tahap penyelia dan penyeliaan, tetapi sekolah ini juga turut menunjukkan bahawa responden lelaki tidak puas hati dalam kenaikan pangkat. Satu-satunya bidang kerja positif yang dinyatakan oleh responden ialah rakan sejawat.

ABSTRACT

This study intended to clarify whether there are significant relationships between the job satisfaction of the English Language teachers in Perak Tengah district toward the selected variables with respect to type of school and respondents' gender or sex. A questionnaire that was modified from Dr. Patricia Cain Smith's Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and the Likert-type scale were used to collect the data for this study. This study involved ten respondents from two different schools in Perak Tengah district, and they were SMK Iskandar Shah, Parit, and SMK Sultan Muhammad Shah, Parit. The results of this study showed that hypothesis null could not be rejected, that is there is no statistical significant difference in the English language teachers' job satisfaction between respondents' gender and types of school. The findings showed that most English language teachers were unsure about their present job, income and BISP allowance, facilities, and Malaysian Remuneration System. Only grade B school respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their supervisor and supervision, but this school also showed that the male respondents were dissatisfied in terms of promotion. The only positive facet of work of the selected respondents was in terms of co-workers.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In today's Information Communication Technology and globalization era, teachers' job becomes more challenging and demanding. If job of the last century's teachers was mainly teaching in limited number of classrooms, but today, teachers have to fulfill all the various tasks given by the Ministry of Education, the State Education Department, the District Education Department, and the school principal. Facing with a lot of challenges, most probably some of these teachers face job dissatisfaction.

Why should we bother about teachers' job satisfaction? The public often argues that teachers have many holidays compared to other civil servants, besides their half-day work. Many parents, students and even school managers say that teachers are paid for their job, so why teachers need to complain about their workload and job dissatisfaction? Everyone must try to understand that teachers are the direct, main agent of change for their nation, as they prepare and educate the current generations for the future. Therefore, if their job satisfaction is not taken care of by their superiors, there is a probability that they become inefficient and unproductive educators. This kind of retaliation actually brings loss to many parties, for example the students, the school, and other stake holders. It is a fact that the reforms done by the Ministry of Education from time to time, bring great impact on teachers' job satisfaction, as these reforms will result in more workload for them. At the same time, they still have to face the daily challenges, such as dealing

with students' discipline problem, clerical work, marking students' work, organizing co-curricular activities, and so on.

Parents' total reliance on teachers to look after their children's behaviour at school too, adds to the existing workload. This is because teachers have to take care of thirty to forty odd students per class. This task becomes more challenging as the number of serious discipline problems increase from time to time. For example from January to September 1997, there were more than twenty serious discipline cases received by the Ministry of Education. ¹ Among them were drug abuse cases, playing truant and smoking. In Perak alone, in April 2005, there were eleven drug abuse cases in secondary schools; 4,983 cases of truancy and 347 cases of smoking.²

Besides that, based on our Education Act 1996, Malaysia should move towards achieving our country's vision of attaining the status of a fully developed nation in terms of economic development, social justice and spiritual, moral and ethical strength, towards creating a society that is united, democratic, liberal and dynamic. On top of that, the mission of our education is to develop a world-class quality education system which will realize the full potential of the individual and fulfill the aspiration of the Malaysian nation. It is clearly shown in our National Education Philosophy:-

“Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonic, based on a

1. *Sunday Star*, 28th Sept. 1997, pg. 12

2. *Seminar Sekolah Efektif*, Jabatan Pendidikan Perak, 1995.

firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being, as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large.”

It is apparent that all the objectives contained in the above National Education Philosophy is under the responsibility of a teacher. This career is clearly different from other jobs because teachers have to face and educate human beings every day. The students are also not from the same family and educational backgrounds. Some are well mannered, but there are surely some students who are so badly behaved that they can even challenge the credibility of teachers.

Therefore, teachers' job satisfaction must be revised as often as possible in ensuring their level of productivity is sustained. Due to this fact too, the current researcher views that it is very important to revise these teachers' level of job satisfaction, as having teachers who are facing job burnout is hazardous for our education system.

Unfortunately, it is quite difficult to know what factor makes teachers feel satisfied with their job, as teachers' job satisfaction does not involve only one single factor, but many. Some of the important factors are students' behaviour, school atmosphere, teachers' autonomy in their given classrooms, parental involvement, principal's support and leadership, and salary. Therefore, it is the aim of this study to determine the level of job satisfaction of English Language teachers in secondary schools in Perak Tengah district. In short, this study is very important in order to improve the productivity of

schools in this district, by referring to these teachers' most important area of job satisfaction.

The present researcher views that positive values and attitudes shown by teachers towards tasks assigned to them by their principal at school refer to the concept of job satisfaction. On the contrary, if the subjects show negative values and attitudes in the questionnaire, for example if they mention that they are always stressed and supervisor is annoying refer to the concept of job dissatisfaction.

1.1 NEED FOR THE STUDY

Although many researches had been carried out in this area, it should be reviewed from time to time to see the changes and differences. This is because the older findings might not be applicable anymore. For example, serving teachers' rating of their job satisfaction were significantly correlated with their personalities (McDonald, 1989; cited by Boreham, 2004). This study estimated that 37% of the variance in teachers' job satisfaction was accounted for by variations in their personality scores. This was supported by another study that according to Cohen (1989), people who had a positive feeling towards life and their families were usually having high job satisfaction and positive attitudes towards their jobs (Cohen, 1989).

On the other hand, many other studies found different findings. For example, school principal's recognition towards tasks fulfilled by his/her teachers would enhance a more positive attitude towards their jobs and became highly motivated to increase their productivity (Du Toit, 1993). In another study, it was found that job satisfaction

dependent on the liberty to choose which subject to teach, teaching method and teaching aids to use (Haldaway, 1978). However, these findings need to be challenged by a more recent study in this area.

Another reason for the current researcher to choose this topic is due to the fact that teachers' role is considered very important in achieving Vision 2020, whereby teachers are seen as one of the major catalysts for our nation's future, as they prepare, educate and train the young generations. If teachers' contributions are neglected, then our country's future is at stake, as teachers are the most important group who should be given priorities, especially their needs to ensure their long-term job satisfaction.

Thus, based on the importance of teachers' contributions, everyone should admit that their level of job satisfaction must be checked and revised from time to time. The indication of job dissatisfaction or job burnout must be eliminated as early as possible so that it will not affect the smooth process of teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Naturally, if their needs and necessities are taken care of, they can become more productive, effective and efficient educators.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study is principally concerned with the English Language teacher's job satisfaction. Through the researcher's observation for four continuous years, English Language teachers in Perak Tengah district show great perseverance and high commitment towards their job, although they face many complaints from other teachers who teach different subjects.

Through the present researcher's observation, it was found that one of the biggest complaints from other teachers and school principals was that the number of passers in this subject did not change much compared to previous years. Some of them even daringly said that some of the English Language teachers were not competent to teach the increasingly important subject, particularly now Science and Mathematics are also taught through the English medium. It is a fact too that other teachers concluded that English language teachers should not get the critical allowance of teaching the subject, as that was those teachers' option during their college or university time. They added that only Science and Mathematics teachers were entitled the critical allowance, because they received their college or university education in Bahasa Melayu. Besides that, they were the ones who really struggled to teach the two subjects in different language, and not the English language teachers.

On top of that, they also made statement that these English Language teachers should be blamed for the decreasing number of students who passed in this subject, without considering the other important factors such as the learning environment, the level of parents' education, the society's contribution, the peer group pressure, and many others. It was quite sad to see that some school principals in this district agreed with those opinions. As a result, these English Language teachers experienced a more distressing situation, as they were urged by their principals and District Education Officer to work extra hard, just in order to get good results in the major examinations.

However, some of these English Language teachers still take the challenge from their principals positively. This type of teachers is the ones who show positive perception

towards their principals and their jobs. However, there are also some who cannot accept negative comments anymore. They say that the challenges to teach the students in the remote area who only speak Bahasa Melayu both at home and at school are already burdening them. These are the teachers who have a negative perception towards their principal's leadership behaviour and their jobs.

In fact, in a study done by Perak Education Department (JPN) in 1995, Perak Tengah district is actually at par with other districts in English language achievement. Only four districts showed average results with scale 3. Nevertheless, the other five districts still lied under scale 2, including Perak Tengah district. Therefore, it can be concluded that Perak Tengah district is not the only district that showed bad result, but there are other districts too that show almost the same performance.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to find out the level of job satisfaction of English Language teachers in Perak Tengah district, based on the seven facets of work. Specifically, this study focuses on the demographic background of the teachers with respect to type of school, and gender. The study intends to clarify how the teachers' gender and type of school are related to their job satisfaction.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study attempts to :-